

Paul Houghton

Digital Strategist

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Profile

The major issues for business, government and the community for the next few decades will be based around dealing with speed, complexity and information and have an inherent connection to how we think and communicate digitally. New businesses, industries and jobs will be established around ideas, knowledge and experience rather than materials, processes and products. Add to this a digital overlay that connects us all and we have potentially the most exciting period of new development for a long time. Paul is passionate about this digital future and has vision and experience in this world.

Policy and strategy

Paul has been involved in strategy development around complex issues and often shifting priorities for more than 20 years - critical in today's world for both government and the private sector. This ranges from short-cycle strategy-in-action through to the development of government policy that could last for years, mostly with an emphasis on information, knowledge management and digital issues.

This capability has been gained through work with diverse clients across all sectors including not-for-profit Centacare, Central TAFE, Polytechnic West and the WA Departments of Transport, Industry and Technology, Education and Training, Health as well as CSIRO, UWA and UnisysWest. Policy development with WA Premier and Cabinet and State Treasury set the groundwork for significant initiatives across government as agencies developed online services.

Management

With a degree in management and having managed teams from small, creative teams through to large teams on multi-million dollar projects, Paul has experience in management across a wide variety of situations. Key to this is having the right people involved and the right capabilities within the team (fixed or virtual) with total support of those around the team. Increasingly, these teams are rapidly assembled around projects to ensure the right skill mix.

This philosophy has been applied to large projects with the Australian Bureau of Statistics, Department of Transport and KT Studio. Many smaller and diverse projects have been managed with appropriate teams and processes, most recently in small, creative teams working on cross-disciplinary projects within strategic frameworks. Bringing to bear appropriate capabilities as needed is critical.

Research, Analysis and Modelling

The underpinnings of successful applied research, creative and strategic projects are a thorough understanding of the situation surrounding a project, the issues, constraints and underlying dynamics. Paul has had considerable experience in all aspects of this work and developed a range of engagement models, capability models and delivery models to deal with a wide range of project issues and opportunities.

This experience has come through directing and participating in teams formed around various applied research projects over the last 10 years with KT Studio. This work was varied done with clients like CSIRO, various agencies of the WA Government most notably Education, UWA, Schools and community organisations. Outcomes ranged from new learning models, knowledge spaces, online services and prototypes that went on to inform both strategic direction and production systems.

Creativity and Innovation

There is a key thread to the emerging economy which has become clearer over the last decade and that is the importance of sustained creativity and innovation. The largest companies in the world now are built on these. Understanding the role of creativity, design, learning and ideas has been central to the projects Paul has completed over the last 10 years. This experience is also key to digital strategy for many organisations.

The interplay of people and technology has been important in developing many prototypes and projects to built on to new ways of solving complex problems facing these and many other organisations now. Paul's leadership in the context of internal innovation with Unisys, communities of design with Form, distributed planning with CSIRO, creative community strategy with Training and new learning models with Education, Curtin University and some schools has greatly assisted in addressing these issues.

Experience

Director, KT Studio 2000 - 2011

Applied research group operating inside WA government across diverse clients in government, private and non-profit sectors. Focus on emerging models for learning, innovation and decision making supported by technology.

Director, Information Services, Department of Transport 1997 - 2000

Transport is a large organisation of over 2000 staff and then 44 offices across the State and under Paul, established new online services, developing major systems and infrastructure to meet the needs of the next century.

Principal Policy Analyst, Premier & Cabinet, Treasury 1990 - 1997

A change in emphasis from technology to information was a key policy shift in this time as the internet emerged as a force for change. This involved developing major policy document 'Managing the Information Resource'.

Various management roles, Australian Bureau of Statistics 1974 - 1989

Information analysis and design supported by consulting and process management to achieve significant National outcomes, custom State-focussed products and managing major projects such as the Retail and Agricultural Censuses.

Education

Bachelor of Commerce, University of Western Australia

RELEVANT PAPERS AUTHORED AND/OR PRESENTED.

Jeffrey K. Camkin, Paul Houghton, Keith L. Bristow, and Justin Story (2009). Integrated River Basin Management: The Role of Social Learning and Community Knowledge in Dealing with Complexity and Uncertainty, 3rd Yangtze Forum, April 2009

Quinton, S. Houghton, P. Fisher, D. & Dreher, H (2007). Tailoring Online Learning Environments for Mature Age People. Refereed paper in proceedings of the AERA 2007 Annual Convention & Exhibition conference held in Chicago, USA. April 9-13.

Quinton, S., Dreher, H., Fisher, D., & Houghton, P. (2006). Harnessing technology to empower mature age learners. In D. Fisher, D. Zandvliet, I. Gaynor, & R. Koul (Eds.), Sustainable communities and sustainable environments: Envisioning a role for science, mathematics and technology education. Refereed proceedings of the Fourth International Conference on Science, Mathematics and Technology Education. Perth: Curtin University of Technology. pp 490-99.

Quinton, S., and Houghton, Paul. (2006). Augmenting the Power of Networked Learning Communities. In D. Fisher, D. Zandvliet, I. Gaynor, & R. Koul (Eds.), Sustainable communities and sustainable environments: Envisioning a role for science, mathematics and technology education. Refereed paper in proceedings of the Fourth International Conference on Science, Mathematics and Technology Education. Perth: Curtin University of Technology. pp 500-08.

Quinton, S. Fisher, D. Dreher, H. and Houghton, P. (in press). An Iterative Design Approach to Creating Sustainable Learning Environments. Chapter to be published in "Sustainable Communities, Sustainable Environments". David B. Zandvliet and Darrell L. Fisher (Editors). (Accepted for publication)

Quinton, S. & Houghton, P. (2006). Rethinking the Role of Learning in an Economy of Ideas. Referred paper accepted for the Educause 2007 conference to be held Melbourne, Victoria. (Under review)

Kay, R. C., Alder, J, Houghton, P and Brown, D. (2003). Management Cybernetics: A New Institutional Framework for Coastal Management. Coastal Management 31(3): 213-227