



MP/MSP Ideas for 2016/19

Background

Since 2010 I have been exploring the way that technology and ideas are rolled out. My reasons for doing this was because I noticed that traditional sales methods were not working and that this process was playing a role in ineffective technology being developed and sold to schools and colleges.

I undertook some research to find out what the organizations who were achieving organic roll out were doing, and found that they did things very differently.

No one gets sales calls from Google, Facebook, Twitter, Amazon or Netflix but they have achieved mass market adoption to become market leaders in their field. It's not that these organizations don't "sell" their products and ideas... They do, but in a very different way to other organizations & sales methods.

For the last few years I have been trying to get various sectors, groups and people to adopt these methods, but without a great deal of success (yet!). This is because the conditions have not been right.

#IndyRef

In September 2014 , while minding my own business I happened to walk into an independence referendum rally and was extremely surprised at what I saw, given that this was a political rally.

This was special! The conditions were special... there was the potential to bring a nation together and could have seen huge changes like our inner cities being unslummed in the way that Jane Jacobs observed that Boston's North End did and areas of Chicago were re-vamped.

We had the kind of diversity that Jacob celebrates, where people from all backgrounds had come together in shared spaces. We had NEETs, not only sharing the same space, as the upper/middle class but there was none of the "Othering" or demonization of people who were different.

In one memorable encounter there was a NEET chanting all kinds of inappropriate, but hilarious, things like "VoteYes drugs are better than the #NoThanks crowd," a very well to do lady was laughing while texting his chants to friends"

In that space and time, if that young lad had said "Have you got any jobs where you work" there just might have be a "Yeah, I can think of some things you could do" or "Not at the moment but I could maybe mentor you or give you some contacts/advice"

At that time whole armies could have descended on an inner city area with paint brushes and brooms in hand and changed a neighbourhood.

Instead we used these conditions to get 100,000 members to join a political party, who then helped to send 56 MPs with the right colour of shiny badge into a parliament. Who does this help apart from the 56 MPs?

The organizers decided not to pay attention to the culture of #The45Plus, so today we have homeogenous "Cybernats." What interested me was the culture and diversity, which has now gone.



#GE2015: SNP Domination was Inevitable

The night before the election I wrote a post about [why the result was inevitable](#). I thought that the SNP would dominate. When the exit polls came out and people said “This can’t be right, can it? Let’s ignore the polls, they’ve been wrong before,” I was at home thinking, “Nope, they’re probably right!”

When the results were being announced there was disbelief at the record swings to SNP, for me these swings were to be expected.

When the pundits came on trying to explain it all, using political terms they were at a loss. Henry McLeish came closest to naming what was going on.

These comments above are not my attempts to be smug, but simply to say that I was looking at events through the lens of the roll out process.

On the 4th of May I wrote to SNP hopefuls and offered “4 ideas to attract Labour supporters,” the response I got was the first indication that I had that it was the beginning of the end of the cultural aspects that made the SNP special.

Since 24th September 2014 I have tried to speak to someone at the SNP to discuss some of the ideas that I had.

The first time I contacted them was with the most urgent message of all: That someone needs to guide the culture of #The45Plus. During the referendum there was the shared goal of Independence and this was achieved with good humour.

Post election someone needed to set the standard and say “This is who we are now... We’re inclusive”

Today any attempts to change the culture will be very difficult, the culture is that we voted Yes and if you disagree with anything we say, you’ll get a snarky comment or abuse.

For eight months I’ve tried to get in touch and no one has followed up with me, this includes when I offered social media advice to my own constituency candidate on the 5th March and again on the 19th April.

But why bother replying when you have 100,000 members, you’ve got all the help that you need. Does this sound like sour grapes on my part? Am I feeling slighted at not being heard?

Nope! I’m used to this treatment from politicians, it’s much worse than that. After 2 days at Westminster, I sense that the first of what Jim Collins describes as “The 5 stages” of is setting in: Hubris.



7 Principles from Tech applied to IndyRef

Please find below 7 ideas/principles that compares events from #Indyref with examples from the world of tech and how Google, Apple, Microsoft etc use them.

1) Social Proof

Some quick questions... Do you use Google, Microsoft or Apple products? What about Facebook, Twitter or Netflix? Yeah? How many sales calls have you had from these companies? None? How did you find out about them then? From friends and colleagues? Not a sales person in sight... Right?

These companies are still selling, but they are doing so in such an efficient way that you don't even see it. If there is any one thing you take away from this document, make sure it's this comment and video;

"No leader can hope to persuade, regularly and single handedly, all the members of the group. A forceful leader can reasonably expect, however, to persuade some sizable portion of group members. Then the raw information that a substantial number of group members has been convinced can, by itself, convince the rest. Thus the most influential leaders are those who know how to arrange group conditions to allow the principle of social proof to work maximally in their favour" Robert Cialdini

Social proof is used in every aspect of #Indyref, it will have been used internally, with "Yes Alliance partners," with "Yes" advocates and SNP members... and in the street.



Crossing the Chasm in Consumer Markets: A Visual Example

[It only takes one person to get the party started](#)



2) Collaboration Vs Co-opetition

While Google , Apple and Microsoft are rivals, that are also;

“Co-opetition there are many examples here of companies trying to kill each other in one market but working together in another — to better serve customers.

When you obsess about the customer, you end up defeating your competition as a byproduct,” said K.R. Sridhar, the founder of Bloom Energy, a fuel-cell company. “When you are just obsessed about the competition, you end up killing yourself” as a byproduct — “because you are not focused on the customer.” Via [Collaborate Vs Collaborate](#)

We can see this with the bipartisan “Yes Alliance,” collaborating with the competition... Inspired!

3) Let’s be Pirates

When the boardroom battles with Apple were going on with CEO Mike Scully and Founder Steve Jobs, Jobs was given an office in unit that was separate from the main campus.

Some reports highlight that this was designed to get him out of the way and stop meddling with various projects.

Jobs got a few designers and went to work on the Apple II while the Board got to work on the Lisa PC. When things were going wrong with the Lisa PC designers got frustrated (Due to a mix of poor culture, red tape and poor product features and the PC’s functionality).



The reformers gave up in frustration and defected to the Apple II. When Jobs needed more staff for the Apple II, he came up with his famous “Why join the navy when you can be a pirate” comment.

You need to get reformers together and give them free space to discuss their ideas. Steve Jobs did this with his Apple 2 team.

Jobs created a counter culture with his team, they had their own pace, had different ideas and a separate identity. Including a pirate flag flying above the office, opposed to any Apple logos/signs

Eventually the Lisa PC flopped and the Apple II saved the company. In addition to this, the counter culture of “Let’s be Pirates” was adopted across the organization, and save the org from the old culture too.

Establishing a counter culture with a small group of proponents may seem massively counter intuitive, but this method can deliver quicker results working with people who “get it” than trying to get everyone behind a strategy and constantly be dealing with any negativity. For more information please see

[The Problem with EdTech Integration: Educators don’t know how to sell](#)



4) #IndyRef Let's VoteYes

There are elements of this “Let’s be pirates” and a counter culture in the #IndyRef Vote Yes campaign.

All the “Yes” brand advocates (Yes for XYZ region/town, Academics for Yes, Business for Yes, Asians for Yes, Women for Indy etc), started out with 1 or 2 SNP/Independence advocates and they may have won people over one or two people and/or conversations at a time.

These conversations were also made possible by some exceptional

5) Community Management

Something that Vote Yes seemed to do exceptionally well, and could be the single biggest thing that had a knock on effect for everything that led to the #GE2015 result, is the way they empowered others to take ownership of the message.

The grassroots movement was inspired. It is this kind Community Engagement work that major brands use to grow and maintain their communities. This #Cmghangout is well worth a watch:

- [Scaling Personal Relations](#)

I have also curated a number of Community Manager resources that are invaluable to me and this can be found on the following link;

- [Community Manager Resources](#)

Community Managers are one of the top 5 hires in some US startups (esp Silicon Valley) but if you search for any jobs for Community Manager in Scotland in “My World of Work,” no results are returned.

There is however a service industry that, according to the BBC’s “How Scotland Works” is worth £84 billion and is largely made up of call centres. If you listen to Inbound Marketing or Social Selling experts they will tell you that these jobs will be hugely reduced, if not gone entirely in the next few years.

If the party used Community Management practices to good effect could help you advice local businesses. Obviously any politician that can help businesses to remain competitive and help with re-skilling the work force, should be looked on favourably.



6) Fair and Just Society

During the Independence Referendum the Yes campaign rarely mentioned any aspects of politics, there was the least reference to manifestos etc that I can recall.

Instead, for better or worse, there were Tweetable soundbites;

“A fair and just society”

“Bairns not Bombs”

Apple don't sell technology, they don't talk technology, they talk about what the technology can do for users. Steve Jobs referred to his products as "magical" and "revolutionary," advertising describes its products as possessing miraculous powers. A video celebrating the first year of the iPad featured a mother of an autistic child saying,

"I define a miracle as something that comes in and changes your life for the better in ways you did not expect." The miracle was the iPad and her son's enthusiastic engagement with it. In the same film, Ron Johnson, who oversaw Apple's stores at the same time, says, "The iPad has to be held, has to be touched to truly understand how magical it is"

While the message was different something that #Indyref could have done to take this further is with how the message was presented.

7) You Have the Ability to Change the World

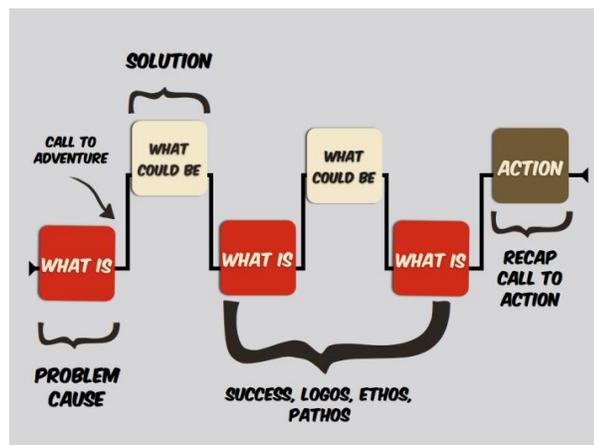
I don't think that any of the speeches from #IndyRef or #GE2015 were all that inspiring, although a highlight and what did stand out was Nick Clegg agreeing to appear on The Last Leg. This was different. It was interesting. It was fun. It was memorable.

Something else that is interesting, fun and memorable are Apple's product launches. Walter Isaacson says;

Steve Jobs is the greatest salesman of all time

Apple spend 250 hours preparing for a 20 minute product launch, and is something that Nancy Duarte highlights in her [Ted Talk: The Secret Structure of Great Presentations](#).

Nancy Duarte opens her talk by explaining that “You have the power to change the world, you really do... With an idea”



Then goes on to discuss how to present “What is” Vs “What could be,” which is something that Geoffrey Moore also advocates for in “Crossing the Chasm.”



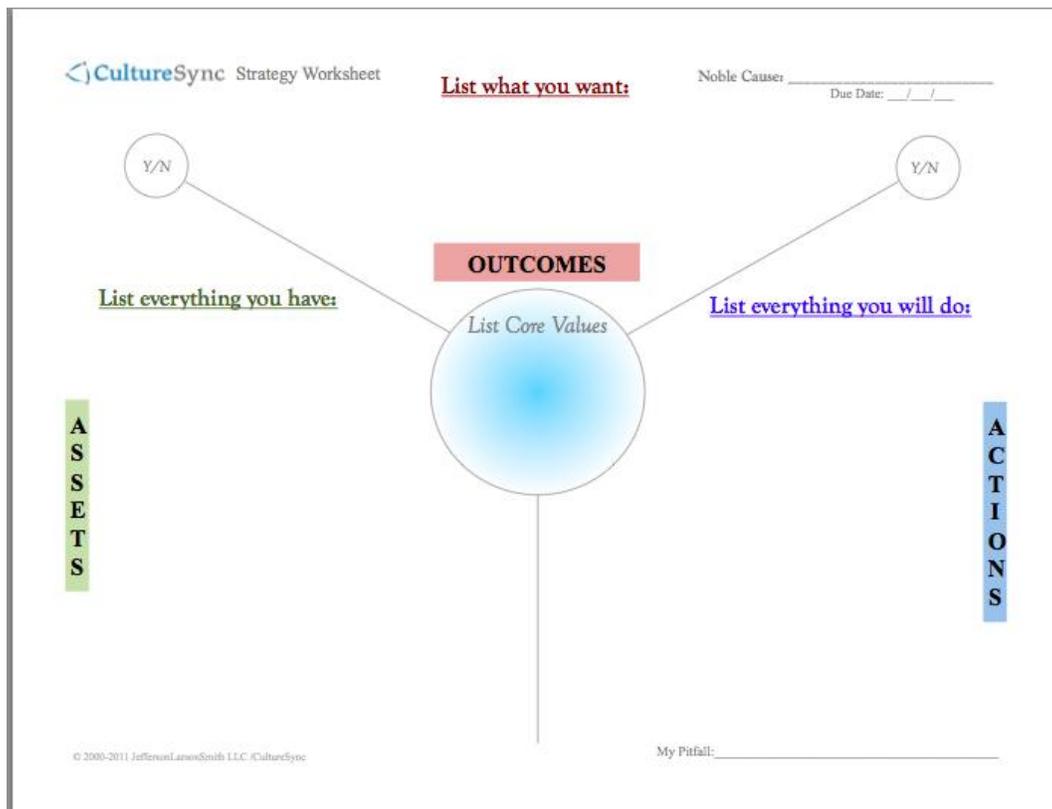
90 Day Strategy Format

“Until I came to IBM, I probably would have told you that culture was just one among several important elements in any organization's makeup and success — along with vision, strategy, marketing, financials, and the like... I came to see, in my time at IBM, that culture isn't just one aspect of the game, it is the game. In the end, an organization is nothing more than the collective capacity of its people to create value” Lou Gerstner, IBM CEO

Listening the media and I can sense that keeping the culture together in politics can be a challenge, to say the least!

Here is the template that Dave Logan recommends in [Tribal Leadership](#).

To identify core values please see the 2 steps that Logan recommends on this link [“Click Down” Core Values exercise](#)



As culture and unity is important something that I have found useful in the past is finding as many exercises that would be shared experiences, including reading some of the same books.

Ones that you might want to consider recommending for you team (Or sending as a gift) include;

[Click](#) , [Tribal Leadership](#), [Give and Take](#), [Good to Great](#), [What got you here won't get you there](#) & [Shackletons Way](#), [David and Goliath](#) In the short term ,this video and article should prove useful [Vulnerability as leadership skill](#) and [How David beats Goliath](#)



Canvassing Vs Networking

If candidates were looking to create new patterns of engagement this might involve doing a lot of what party's/candidates do already: visiting business, recruiting members for community outreach, calling people and canvassing them prior to an election.

Where things are different is when you carry out these activities and what you say may change.

For example, I have always said that I would vote for the politician/party that sent me a "Thanks for voting" card, or knocked on the door after the election. I receive 8-10 pieces of junk mail from each party in a 4 week period prior to the election. How refreshing it would be to get something post election

It would be so unusual that I would remember it in 4 years time! I am not kidding when I say that I do not hear from my MP for 4 years at a time. In 2012 when I had a serious issue that I needed help with, I needed to look up who my MP was... 2 years after the general election.

If candidates did some canvassing just now to say "What could we have done differently" you'd find that you'd pick up a lot of new support... because its so different and unexpected.

The founders of KIPP got SO MUCH good will by knocking on the door of their students door just to say "Hi" and/or to compliment the students' behavior to their parents.

As this was a low income area the only time they heard from the school was when the parent got call to the school (Which, as it was between 9am-3pm meant taking time off work, which caused stress because of boss complaining), for a disciplinary issue.

So, in this context, the teacher visiting them AND to pay a compliment was such a welcome change that it won the parents over. Instead of being anti-authoritarian and seeing educators as part of the same authorities as the police and council (Where the neighbourhood had fraught relations with these organizations), the parents got behind the teachers and became partners.

What the KIPP founders did was a "[5 minute favour](#)" something that only takes a moment, but has a big impact on the recipient



This practice of 5 min favours is something that the world's most connected person does [How the World's Top Relationship Builder Makes Introductions](#)



Selling Crazy Ideas to Colleagues

BBC's this week wondered "Can other parties recover from the election or will they be gone?" Personally, from where I am sitting I can see nothing but possibilities!

Other parties could see themselves in pretty good shape, if you look in the right places... the trick is going to be selling this kind of crazy to colleagues. The good news is... if you can successfully do this one of the toughest challenges the candidate/party might face could be won.

Scotland was Inevitable

I don't know how compelling an argument the one that I put forward in my "[Why SNP Domination was Inevitable](#)," post was, but I saw the result from GE2015 eight months. It was not a political party that you were up against, it was a very powerful process, as detailed above.

This is the process that allowed Google to unshirk Yahoo and Inktomi (The then undisputed, unassailable king's of search), or for Facebook to take on Friends Re-United and MySpace.

Today, SNP domination in 2016 is far from inevitable. Want proof? I've already highlighted that #The45Plus is an undisciplined mob, which again I saw coming in Sept (See [#The45Plus Where did it all go wrong](#)").

In Jim Collins "How the mighty fall" the first of 5 stages of decline is hubris, compare this Tweet from yesterday with the humility that Jim Collins advocates for in [Level 5 leaders](#).

In my opinion, from what I have seen since the 7th May, hubris has already set in. People are not trying to temper the mood of #The45Plus, they are fanning the flames;

For years a bundle of Daily Records has been delivered to Westminster for MPs to read. Today the bundle was left completely untouched #SNP56

RETWEETS
491

FAVORITES
447



12:32 PM - 13 May 2015 · Details

The irony and significance here is that 8 months ago the SNP **did have** the kind of humility in the above Level 5 Leader video. They were focused on that "burning compulsive desire for something that was greater than themselves" with Independence, they did so much right... The good news for other parties is that this provides the ideal conditions for to build on.



Goliath was the best thing that ever happened to David

With the right leadership, a humiliating defeat does not need to have the kind of autopsy, recriminations, doubt and inevitable blame that I am imagining might be taking place. In the right context, it could be celebrated as a huge opportunity. The paper mills were not working for Kimberly Clark, check how Darwin Smith handled this in [“The Misguided Mix-Up of Celebrity and Leadership”](#)

In [David and Goliath: Underdogs, misfits and the art of Battling Giants](#), Malcolm Gladwell highlights how T E Lawrence won by overcoming all the odds, by doing some crazy and unexpected stuff! He achieved the impossible by uniting the warring tribes (There’s that unity again!) and by attacking from the desert... not by sea, which is what everyone expected. So the coast was heavily defended, the desert route was not. You should read the first chapter of this book (I especially like the basketball team example, it’s inspiring and very funny).

Parties may not be in a position to try new things if they had “done all right,” in the election by getting the expected number of seats. If anyone suggested anything risky then people would be saying “But we did OK, let’s not rock the boat with any untested crazy ideas.”

May’s result means parties are in a far better position to do things that are unconventional! As long as these unconventional risks work, the more people will go with you... the more you get things right, the more others will join in, so leadership approval ratings will go up... all of which will establish cohesiveness and trust. You’ll be well on your way to unity and shaping the any core values and that noble cause.

In practice this could be “We’re going to beat XYZ party by truly listening to and engaging with people” what this would mean in practice is that every idea that your team brought you, you could ask “What have the people told you?” If PR gurus pull up a dry report from a clever consulting agency, people can say “No show me the Tweets, show me the constituency letters, show me the facebook or blog comments... What have the people said”

Apple: Never First to Market

By again applying a technology example to a political challenge, even the SNP’s success can be turned into a big positive for other parties.

Apple are rarely the first to enter any market, but when they do decide to get involved, they dominate! Without napster and the early mp3 players, Apple may not have entered digital music. There is a saying in tech; The pioneers often die with arrows in their back. The SNP have got so much right, but then reverted to the world of politics when the goal was achieved... these are ideal conditions for others to pick up on.

If you had stood up and said to your team in April 2014 “I think that politicians can have rock star status... or that 40% swings were possible or one party getting 56 seats in Scotland?” How many of your colleagues would have believed you? The independence referendum has shown what is possible with what I would describe as “Product Market Fit Politics”



Staying with Apple you can also differentiate yourself from the SNP/Tories with a “Why Join the Navy when you can be a Pirate” style message

Therefore...

So, from a leadership perspective, I think that a message of

“The general election was inevitable (Obviously, you would be welcome to use my post to support this argument). We are starting to get an idea about why the result was inevitable... we need to be thinking more like Google and Facebook than being concerned with what the SNP, the conservatives are doing or spending time making recriminations. Our heavy defeat not only means that we need look at different ways of doing things, but we are very well placed to do so.

Looking at some technology examples and we know that Apple isn't the first company to take a product to market when they do, they dominate it. If I was to say that the kind of popularity or results that the SNP had was possible 12 months ago, no one would have believed it.

Today we know what is possible, and we have an idea on how to go about replicating this. Some ideas along these lines will follow”

This would allow you to then allow you to follow up with a message along the lines of;

Guys Twitter played a huge role in the General Election, but this was down to the work that the SNP put into their grassroots campaign eight months earlier... which in itself was the result of a 2 year campaign. Building a social media strategy now with MPs, MSPs and candidates could pay dividends

Not everyone will agree with whatever course of action you suggest, there will be proponents, people with a neutral stance and detractors, this to be expected... This is where you establish a “Let's be Social Media Pirates” counter culture with the proponents and go back to any skeptics as and when you get any “wins” or case studies that would encourage others to #VoteYes... Erm, I mean #VoteXYZ Party