Image from Samira Makhmalbaf's film "Blackboards" from Alexandre Borovik's Mathematics Under the Microscope blog

New trends for science dissemination

Some things ALT has learned

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•About the Association for Learning Technology (ALT)

•Making a conventional closed academic journal Open

•Dissemination = ….

•Some broader issues

•Concluding points

About ALT "Learning Technology" **1/4**

"**Learning technology** is the broad range of communication, information and related technologies that can be used to support learning, teaching, and assessment."

"**Learning technologists** are people who are actively involved in managing, researching, supporting or enabling learning with the use of learning technology."
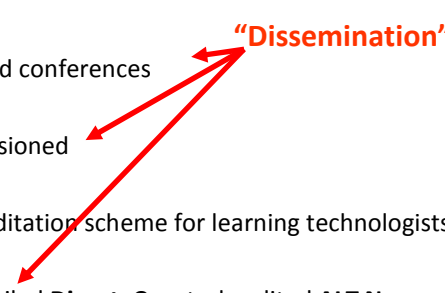
Computer science

Teaching & learning

http://alt.ac.uk/
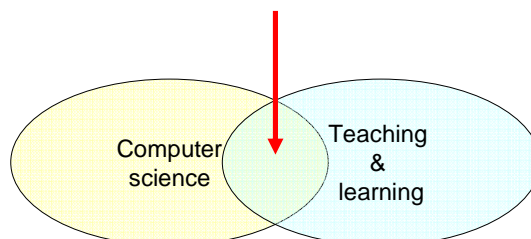
About ALT – young and quite small 2/4

- 18 years old

- 225 organisational and sponsoring members - stable

- 900 individual members – growing rapidly (432 in 2007)

- £0.45m turnover
    - £160k staffing - ~4 staff
    - £ 40k journal
    - £200k conference
    - £ 50k overheads

(all figures approximate)

About ALT - activities 3/4

ALT's Object: *"to advance education through increasing, exploring and disseminating knowledge in the field of learning technology for the benefit of the general public"*

1. Policy consultation responses

"Dissemination"

2. Workshops, free webinars, and conferences

3. Projects – bid for and commissioned

4. CMALT – a professional accreditation scheme for learning technologists

5. Publications – Fortnightly emailed **Digest**; Quarterly edited **ALT News Online**; the journal **Research in Learning Technology**; Open Access **repository**

About ALT - activities **4/4**
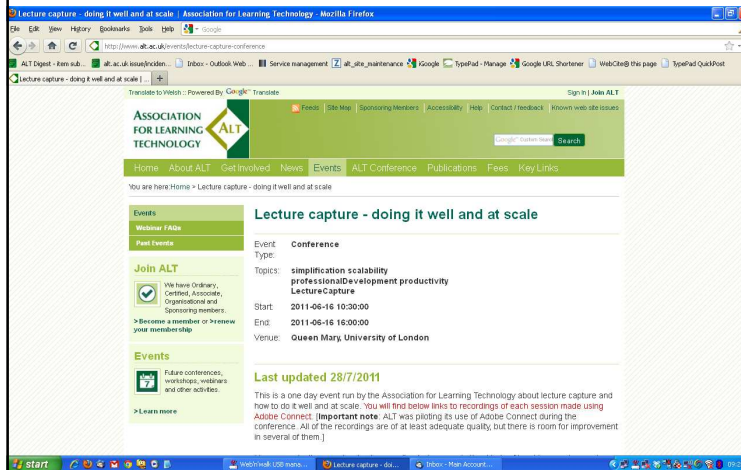
(From http://www.alt.ac.uk/events/lecture-capture-conference Where you will find: "Four years of automated audio-video-slide recordings using the EyA system" - Marco Zennaro and Enrique Canessa – ICTP http://goo.gl/YyWJr)

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• About ALT

• **Making a conventional closed academic journal Open**

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Research in Learning Technology – a traditional journal in transition **1/6**

- *Research in Learning Technology* "aims to raise the profile of research in learning technology….."

- 3 Issues/year, intending to grow to 4 or more

- 1000 subscribers (mix of organisations and individuals)

- Examples of recent special issues:
  - Transformational Impact of Learning Technology – V18, Issue 3, 2010
  - Mobile and Contextual Learning – V17, Issue 3, 2009
  - Learning and Teaching in Immersive Virtual Worlds – V16, Issue 3, 2008

- By agreement with Routledge our current publisher – back numbers > 18 months old hosted in our Open Access Repository

- From January 2012 Research in Learning Technology will be fully Open Access published in partnership with Co-Action Publishing in Sweden
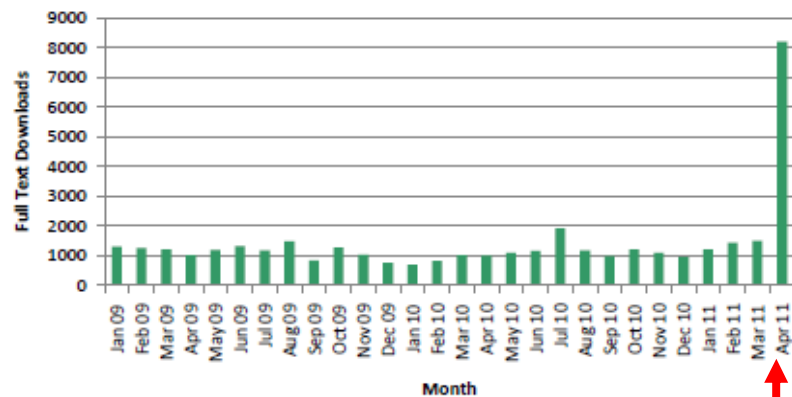

Material that is Open is more easily found **2/6**

Scholarly material is more widely used when it is Open **3/6**

Total Full Text Downloads on Informaworld by month Jan 2009 – April 2011

One month of openness

Volume 1 Issue 1 March 2011 — ISSN 2156-7069

Research in Learning Technology

The Journal of the Association for Learning Technology (ALT)

CLOSED FROM 1993 TO 2011

Routledge
Taylor & Francis Group

Volume 20, 2012 — ISSN 2156-7069

Research in Learning Technology

The Journal of the Association for Learning Technology (ALT)

OPEN FROM JANUARY 2012 (INCLUDING WHOLE "BACK CATALOGUE")

COACTION

Source: http://tinyurl.com/6xjk34j
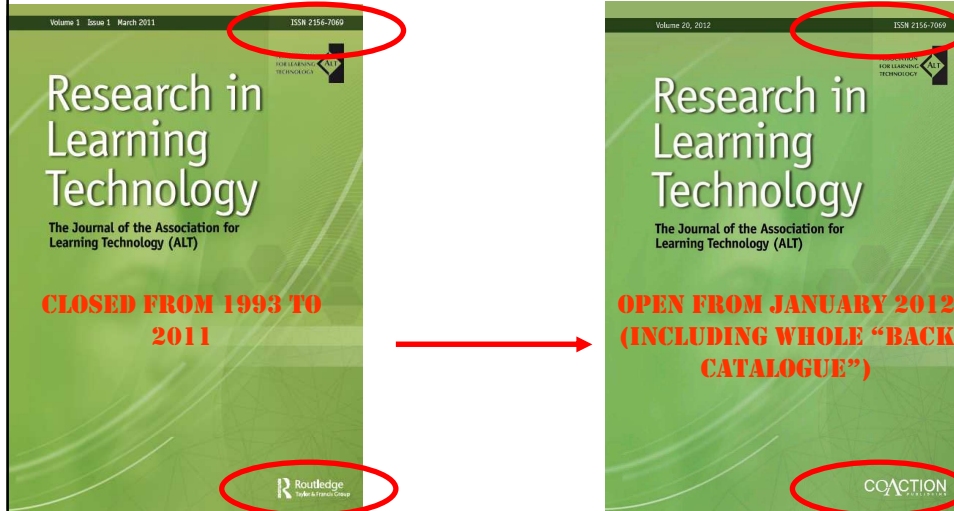
It is very early days

Our aim for our Open Access journal:

"growth in esteem, readership, submissions, citations, and overall influence and utility"

2014 is the earliest we will know if we've achieved this…….

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- About ALT

- Making a conventional closed academic journal Open

- **Dissemination = …..**

- Some broader issues

- Concluding points

Dissemination = giving users choice **1/5**
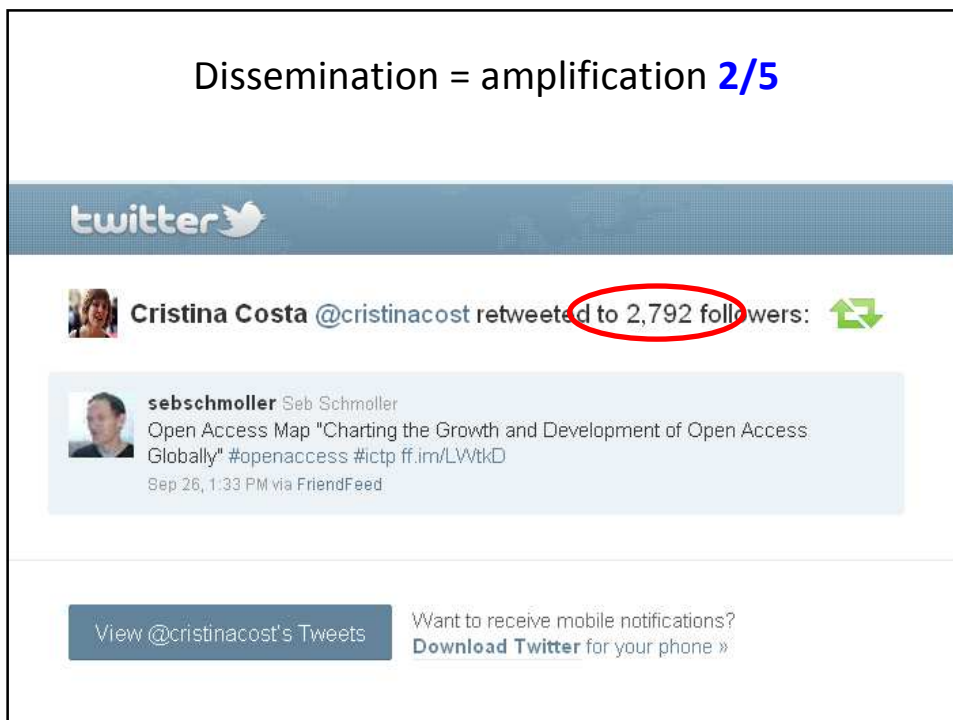
RSS Feeds

- RSS from ALT News.
- RSS from ALT Events.
- RSS from the ALT Online Newsletter.
- RSS from ALT-ANNOUNCE, an email announcements list that we use to distribute our Fortnightly Digest, the quarterly ALT News, and infrequent brief announcements about ALT. Alternatively, sign up to the list here.
- RSS from ALT-CINFO, an email announcements list we use to notify subscribers of major changes to the **ALT-C web site**, and of impending deadlines for things like submitting papers, and for registering for the conference. Alternatively, sign up to the list here.
- RSS from ALT's Twitter Channel.
- RSS from the ALT Open Access Repository.
- RSS from the ALT YouTube Channel.

From http://www.alt.ac.uk/feeds
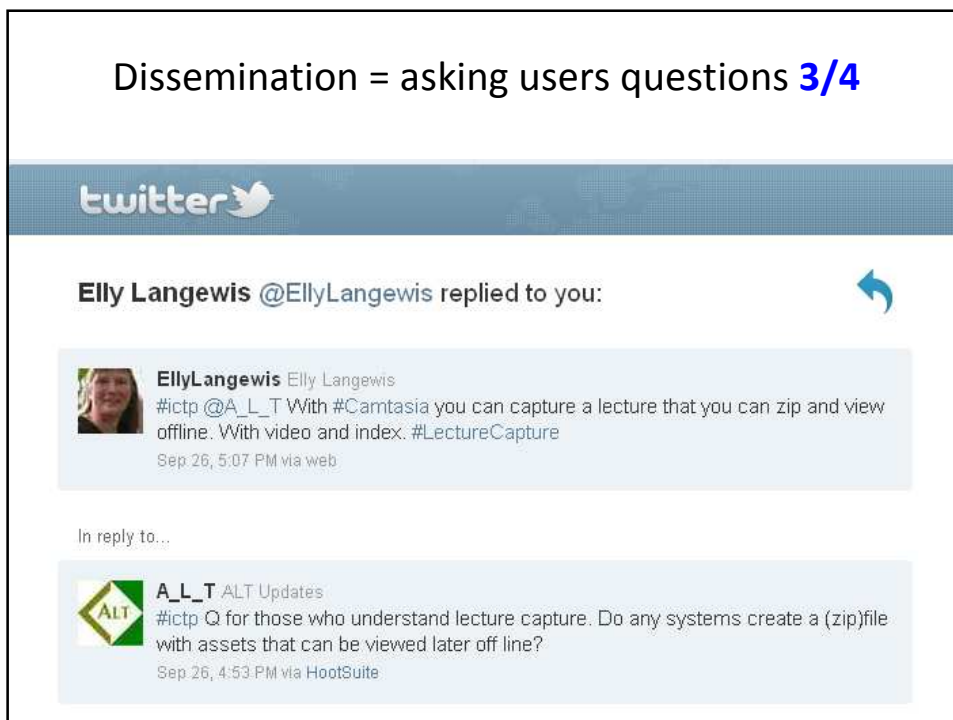
- RSS – do not underestimate its power, utility, and the control you retain
- Opportunity to sign up for email alerts
- Twitter – http://twitter.com/A_L_T
- An open networking website for our conference – http://altc2011.alt.ac.uk
- An Open Access repository – http://repository.alt.ac.uk/
- A Wordpress-based ALT News Online – http://newsletter.alt.ac.uk/
- Offer machine translation e.g. http://tinyurl.com/ALT-Site-in-Portuguese

Dissemination = amplification **2/5**

Dissemination = asking users questions **3/4**

Dissemination = observing users in action **4/5**

"Don't lecture me" (with Twitter track) - 8,506 views 10 months ago	"Don't lecture me" - Donald Clark at ALT-C 4,558 views 1 year ago	"The hole in the wall: self organising 4,348 views 10 months ago	"The hole in the wall: self organising 2,697 views 1 year ago	"A journey in innovation" - Martin 970 views 1 year ago	"Developing a learning ecosystem" - 878 views 10 months ago
Making group-work work 798 views 1 year ago	"How OL DL could help maintain the 589 views 1 year ago	"A student view on the use of ICT to 556 views 1 year ago	Closing Panel Session at ALT-C 2010 482 views 11 months ago	"When worlds collide - revisiting 435 views 11 months ago	"Mediated Culture/Mediated 389 views 1 year ago
Terry Anderson's closing keynote at 369 views 1 year ago	"A student perspective on the 338 views 1 year ago	"Creating learning environments that are 336 views 1 year ago	"It's the culture, stupid" - Frank 329 views 1 year ago	"The future of knowledge 310 views 11 months ago	"Evaluating learning designs using 305 views 1 year ago

http://youtube.com/clipsfromalt

Dissemination = deciding whom to tell **5/5**

Clayton R. Wright

Teacher Education via ODL From Reflections to Action' and 'The Significance of Education, ODL & ICTs to the People of Developing Nations

ASSOCIATION FOR LEARNING TECHNOLOGY — ALT

http://repository.alt.ac.uk/

RSS feed

Stephen Downes – http://downes.ca/

Two excellent resources from Clayton R. Wright based on his experiences teaching around the world, 'Teacher Education via ODL From Reflections to Action' and 'The Significance of Education, ODL & ICTs to the People of Developing Nations'. Take the time to carefully review both. The presentations make the case for the need for ODL (open and distance learning) in teacher education, but faces the realities of the developing world head-on, and is clear about the steps that have to be taken for such programs to succeed (including many of the things we take for granted here in Canada, like "pay teachers on time"). I really appreciate the emphasis on making decisions and taking actions. Worthy of mention as well is the superb photography that accompanies and supports the message.

100s of readers

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- About ALT

- Making a conventional closed academic journal Open

- Dissemination = users exercising choice

- **Some broader issues**

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Broader issues - paying attention **1/2**

Picture by J Daniel Ashton - http://tinyurl.com/66t8xk2

- You never know what's around the corner; and you must pay attention!

- Consider
  - SMS (texting);
  - the "bumblebee" that is Wikipedia;
  - the music industry's failure to embrace the Internet
  - Stanford University securing **200,000** enrolments to three free online computer science courses in the first three weeks of August 2011

For more on these see:

John Naughton's "The Elusive Technological Future" from the 2011 ALT Conference at http://altc2011.alt.ac.uk/talks/22311

Some observations of Stanford's free courses in my Fortnightly Mailing at http://fm.schmoller.net/2011/09/why-give-a-course-away-online-for-free.html)

Broader issues – forced private/public partnership 2/2

Many newer dissemination methods involve reliance on businesses with:

•potential for lock-in

•potential for privacy problems (real or feared?)

•transfer of your data from your own control to someone else's

•the risk of a key service being taken down
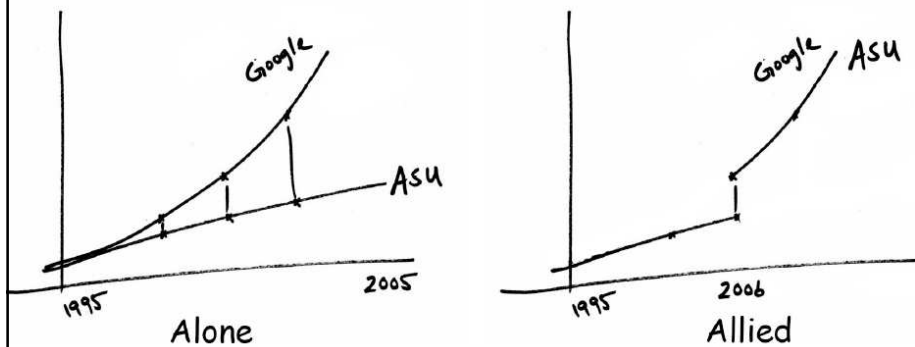
Source: talk at ALT conference by Google's Director of Research Peter Norvig http://www.alt.ac.uk/altc2007/

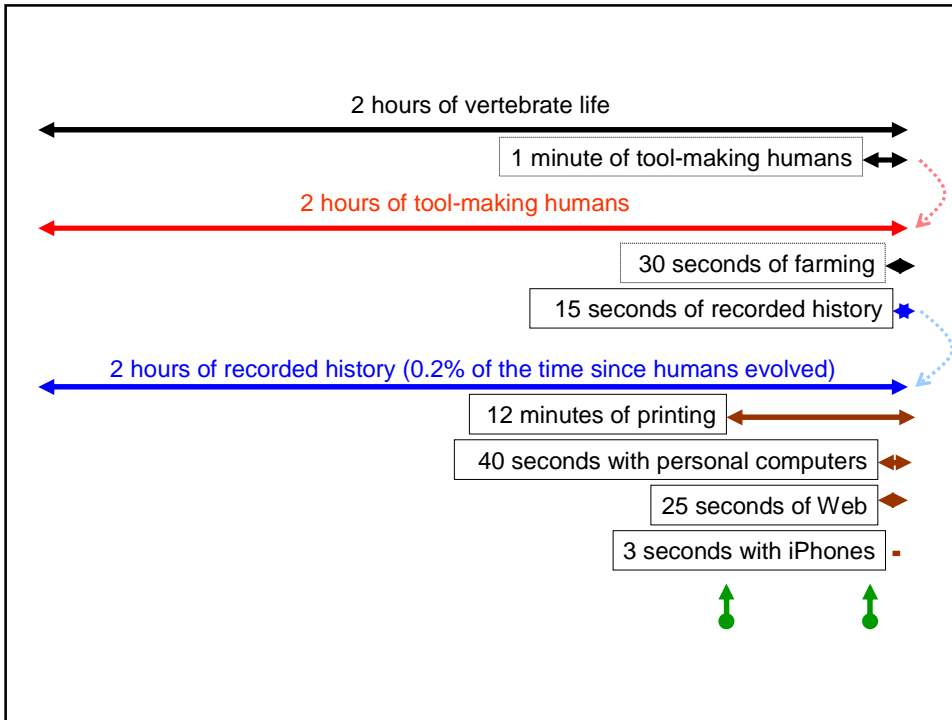# Broader issues – Open Source ≠ Open Content 3/3

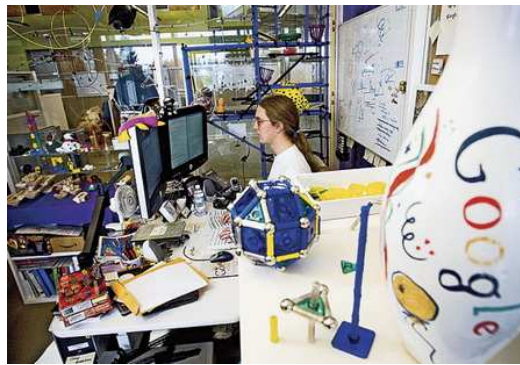| **Open Source Software**	**Open Content**
Anyone can see and modify the code	Anyone or nearly anyone can see and modify the content
Mission critical purposes therefore users will spend money to make sure it works	*Use is rarely mission critical*
Software can be made in a modular way enabling concentrated focus on one thing at a time.	The curriculum probably counts as modular?
Software code can be tested rigorously, cheaply, and quickly, to see if it performs	*Open Content can only be rigorously tested (if it can be at all) over a long period and at great expense.*
There are a range of established governance models (foundation; benevolent dictator)	*The governance models are not well developed (subject community?)*
There is an overlap between the production medium and the product (typically done by distributed teams over the Internet – all contributors are completely fluent in the production and distribution process)	*There is much less overlap between the medium and the product, and contributors are not necessarily fluent in the methods.*
Few institutional or policy barriers mean there is a very large base of potential users of the OSS (See also Stephen Weber's 2004 The Success of Open Source ISBN 06774012925)	*There are many institutional and policy barriers (this or that accreditor; this or that subject; this or that level) meaning that there are a lot of "niche" areas. Niche => Small; but we need big scale*

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- **Concluding points**

Concluding points

- Snippets and the limitations of "140 characters"

- Performance and fame: "The desire for privacy is strong; vanity is stronger."
(Nicholas Carr - http://www.roughtype.com/)

- The blurring of boundaries between dissemination & teaching, and between participation & learning

- The extent to which some of the services we will rely on will depend on their being offered at very big scale – a scale we may not be able to match at country or institution or discipline level

- The crucial role of search in dissemination – which sorts things "on the way out of where they sit" rather than them "having been sorted on the way in"

- Finally, a quirky diagram

2 hours of vertebrate life

1 minute of tool-making humans

2 hours of tool-making humans

30 seconds of farming

15 seconds of recorded history

2 hours of recorded history (0.2% of the time since humans evolved)

12 minutes of printing

40 seconds with personal computers

25 seconds of Web

3 seconds with iPhones

Thank you!

Seb Schmoller

http://alt.ac.uk/

@A_L_T

@sebschmoller

seb.schmoller@alt.ac.uk

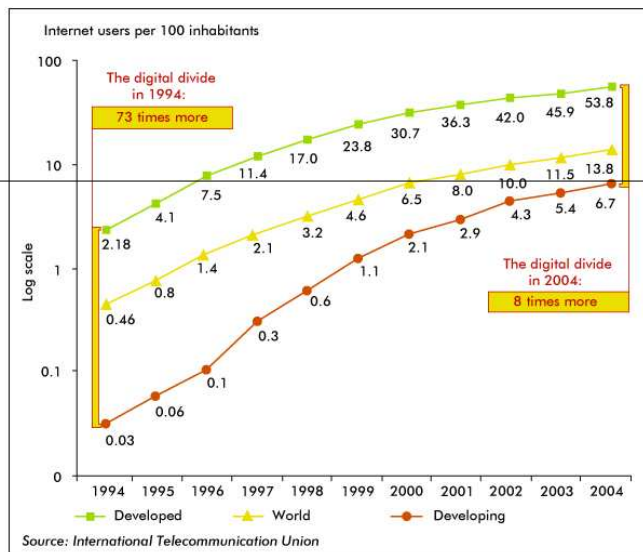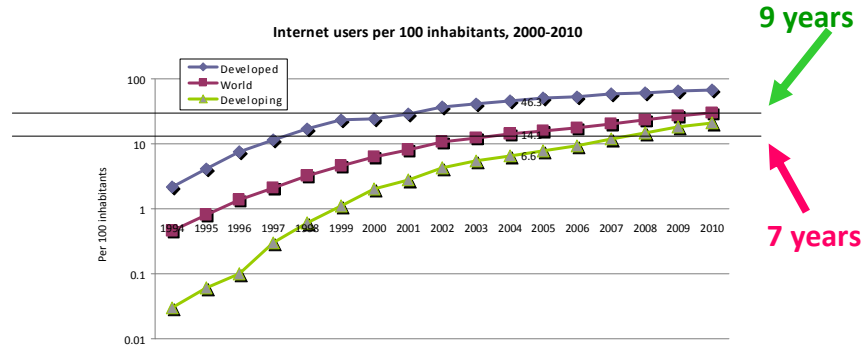http://fm.schmoller.net/

Image from Samira Makhmalbaf's film "Blackboards" from Alexandre Borovik's Mathematics Under the Microscope blog

Narrowing Digital divide

Internet users per 100 inhabitants

The digital divide in 1994:
73 times more

The digital divide in 2004:
8 times more

Log scale

Developed: 2.18, 4.1, 7.5, 11.4, 17.0, 23.8, 30.7, 36.3, 42.0, 45.9, 53.8
World: 0.46, 0.8, 1.4, 2.1, 3.2, 4.6, 6.5, 8.0, 10.0, 11.5, 13.8
Developing: 0.03, 0.06, 0.1, 0.3, 0.6, 1.1, 2.1, 2.9, 4.3, 5.4, 6.7

1994 1995 1996 1997 1998 1999 2000 2001 2002 2003 2004

Developed   World   Developing

Source: International Telecommunication Union

United Nations World Summit on the Information Society 2005 http://www.itu.int/wsis/tunis/newsroom/stats/

Widening Digital divide?

9 years

7 years

Internet users per 100 inhabitants, 2000-2010

The developed/developing country classifications are based on the UN M49, see:
http://www.itu.int/ITU-D/ict/definitions/regions/index.html