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## The idio-technopolis [Editorial]

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### Abstract

The rapid rise of social media has brought with it an emphasis on the distinct dimensions of the whole person. Social media recognizes that the individual has a personal network of extensions – a home life, a work life, a social life, a study life, a hobbyist life, and much more – some of these identities even hidden from full view. Each of these online value networks are now accessible by big business, where opinion leaders and early adopters are easily distinguishable, and where brand commentary between consumers matters manifold more than any form of targeted advertising.

### Keywords

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## ***EIC Editorial for June 2012 Issue by Katina Michael***

The *idio*-technopolis

The rapid rise of social media has brought with it an emphasis on the distinct dimensions of the whole person. Social media recognises that the individual has a personal network of extensions- a home life, a work life, a social life, a study life, a hobbyist life, and much more- some of these identities even hidden from full view. Each of these online value networks are now accessible by big business, where opinion leaders and early adopters are easily distinguishable, and where brand commentary between consumers matters manifold more than any form of targeted advertising.

When I started out as a pre-sales network engineer I would dimension traffic based on parameters such as the number of homes passed as in the case of cable television networks, or the amount of upstream and downstream data traffic going between the head office and the remote office branches typically measured in T1s. These measures while still important in the realm of availability, redundancy, optimization, expansion and unification of networks can be for the greater part now considered legacy thinking.

The next generation of networks will not be about the number of homes and businesses passed or about the school, bank, hospital or government building that need services- these will be all catered for by fibre-to-the-curb technologies and high-speed mobile broadband. Rather, the next generation of networks are about the “you” in the equation. The “you” encapsulates your mind space and your bodily space, everything that constitutes your life and every other life or thing it touches. In computing speak, it is about the person-to-person relationships, person-to-system relationships and person-to-object relationships. The “you” becomes an integral component in the web of things and people (WoTaP).

You cannot explicitly share ownership of the new applications. It is individuals who own Twitter accounts and LinkedIn profiles and Facebook pages and Skype contacts. And more often than not, technologies also belong to the individual- it is the “I” that maintains his/her own ipod, digital camera, smart phone, laptop, television and more.

Social media like location-based services have micronized the technopolis (i.e., the science park) to embody that which is distinct, separate, and different in the *anthropos* (the human). Yet the paradox of servicing the *idio*-technopolis has meant that everyone is seemingly on the same level playing field. Everyone is theoretically a “friend”, or a “contact”, or a “member”, despite that they might actually be your own father or mother, brother or sister, best friend or acquaintance, employer or work colleague, or even total stranger. In this flat hierarchy there is a great opportunity for expression but there is also the possibility of the complete loss of respect and potential for abuse. Social media allows for the externalisation of the personal and at the very same time the monetization of the human being. Thus, the “member” becomes the product that is ‘for sale’.

The paradox is that “one’s own” connections while “private” and “personal” (i.e., *idio*) are being made quite public and “common”. Not just in terms of accessibility by anyone/anywhere but in terms of becoming explicit. New mashups and data aggregation engines can tell you things about yourself that you didn’t even know, let alone knew existed. The risk in this type of profiling is that you are ranked and rated for just being “you”. The greater your online activity, the greater

importance you are to the network in all its forms. What does this *idio*-technopolis mean for the individual? For the family? For society?

I am excited about this special issue for the reason that the benefits and concerns of the new technologies are highlighted. I would like to thank Professor Michael Loui for guest editing this special issue. I know first-hand the many hours he took to put the papers through a rigorous two-stage review process seeking feedback from experts in the field and ensuring the papers met all the expected requirements. May I take this opportunity to ask you to place ISTAS12 in your diaries. It promises to be a great gathering. Paper submissions on themes regarding “technology and Asia”, and other traditional SSIT topics are now open. I hope to see you there.