
Assistive technology – reflections and perspectives

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AT related EU activities

- **Policy action plans** for Ageing well & ICT, e-Inclusion, e-Accessibility, Disability
- **Standardisation** in M376 and **legislation** in anti-discrimination Directive, revised telecoms Directives
- **Research and innovation** in Ageing well, Ambient Assisted Living and AT (FP7, AAL, CIP), for AT:
 - Assistive technologies based on BNCI research support (FP7)
 - Embedded accessibility in mainstream products & services including user simulation (FP7)
 - E-accessibility pilots in DTV, emergency services, e-accessibility networking and assessment for web, DTV, ATMs (CIP)
 - Next calls in early 2010: AAL Call 3 and CIP Call 4
- Studies into legal, market and ethical issues

Make your voice heard in defining post-i2010, FP7 WP 2011-12, and CIP 2010



(1) ageing is *the* driver

- Ageing/health consumer markets and ageing/health research are moving ahead rapidly, professional and institutional markets change but more slowly
- Ageing and disability organisations and companies are not natural partners historically (consumer interests vs citizen rights)
- Close linkage between ageing and disability, at European level, is a strength
- Much potential for cooperation and defending joint interests in research and product development



(2) Innovating AT business models

Business model

- *Direct-to-user (direct-to-consumer)*
- *Direct-to-professional/institution*
- *Partnerships (franchising, affiliate)*
- *Value networks (coalition)*

AT

- Often simple, little about reimbursement
- Some strong in information, training, legal context
- Some affiliate schemes (cataloguers)
- Few in assistive technology

Aging

- Often as sophisticated as regular (online) consumer
- Richer set of professional services: design, project development, fundraising,...
- More frequent in 'ageing market'
- More frequent in ageing and health

- In AT, professionalism of consumer markets is often missing
- 'Ageing markets' show richer set of business models
- Online presence seems to reflect low level of competition

Mainstream markets, from ageing and health to general consumer markets, provide many pointers for innovating in AT business models

(3) Technologies are merging and emerging

- ICT + nano, bio, gene, materials, manufacturing,...
- ICT + social sciences such as in training, gaming, virtual worlds....
- New research disciplines, e.g. social robotics
- Also in EU R&D programmes

Moore + collaborative innovation + consumer mainstream



(4) Stepping up innovation in AT

- Awareness, network effects, standardization as accelerating factors for ‘internal diffusion’ of innovation (Hall, 2007); clear message for policy
- Sectoral systems are determined by knowledge domain, interaction, institutions (Malerba, 2005):
 - Knowledge base discontinuity through open innovation: is this a path for design-for-all?
 - New business models increase dynamics with more opportunity for users and new suppliers, viz. ageing
 - Institutional interplay with innovation can be very successful for longer-term shaping of market, viz EC e-Accessibility Communication of 2008, addressing AT innovation + legislation

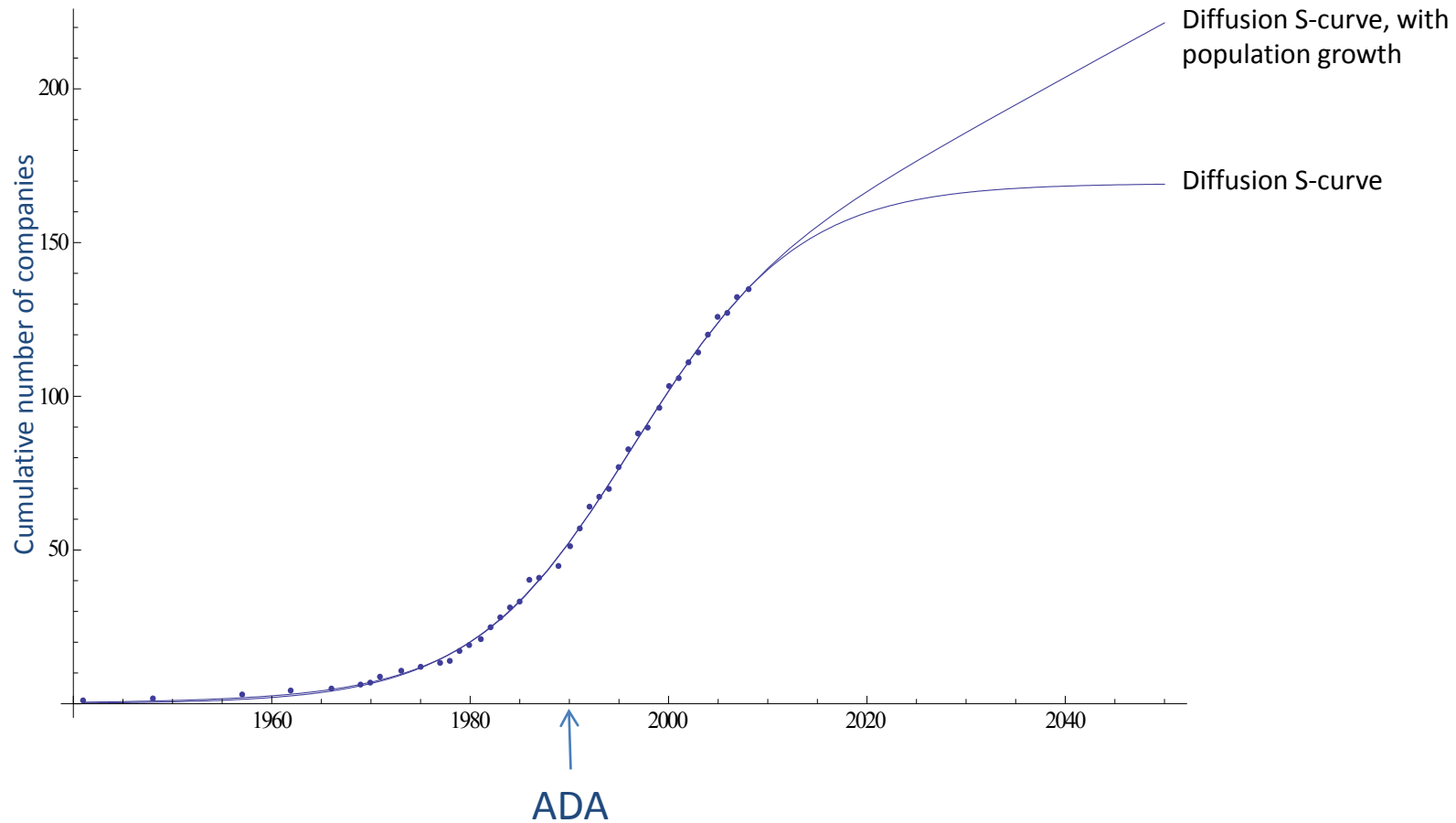


Design for All



Company creation

Founding dates of sample of 275 IT AT companies in USA, since 1940



(5) Smart use of legislation

- Focused and effective use of legislation in USA (ADA, Section 508, Education), resulting in product adaptation and increased take-up; European legislation is on its way
- Early stage innovation, e.g. company creation, more influenced by new technologies than by legislation?
- Put minds and hands together in long-term partnerships to combine research, standardization and legislation ... there is still a lot of low-hanging fruit...



(6) Social innovation

- ‘Finding creative solutions to social problems’
- Boosting productivity while keeping up with public expectations
- For climate change, demographic ageing, financial risks
- Social policy + innovation policy (e.g. EU Social Agenda + EU Internal Market Agenda)
- Of high interest for the assistive technology field



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