

Connections Oz 2015

14 – 15 December 2015

University of Melbourne

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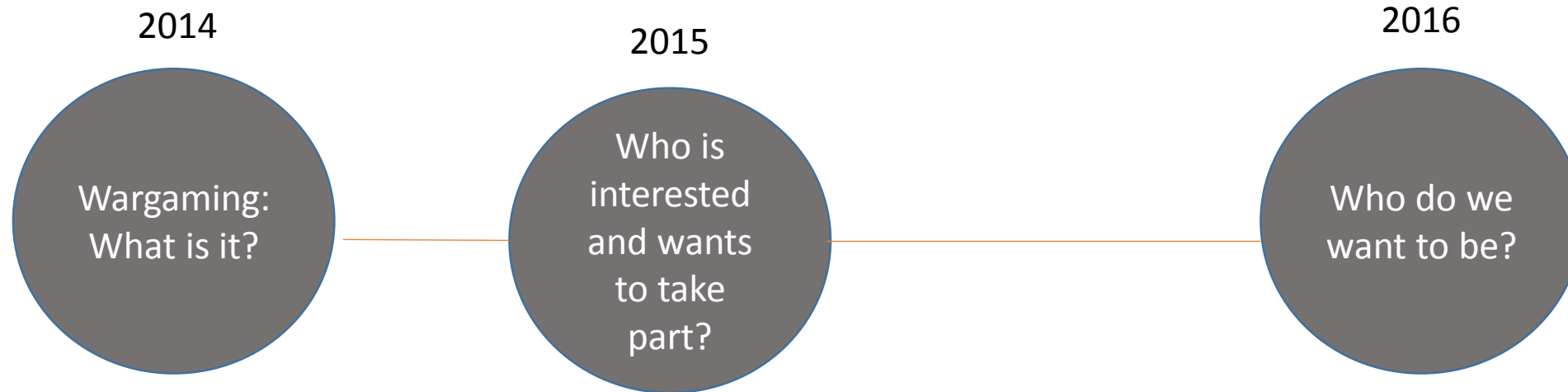
2014 Feedback: The Quant

- Two days:
 - Day 1 lecture
 - Day 2 playing
- Mixture of lecture and practical
- 40 attendees and agreed to cap it at 50
- <10 didn't make it to day 2
 - Citing other commitments
- 90% good or very good (more good)

Feedback: The Qualitative

- Feedback on
- Why play games?
- What is the purpose of Connections Australia?
- What do we want to make it?
- International and interstate representation
- Various dimensions of wargaming and simulation: Strategy, military, maps, law enforcement intelligence, wargaming used in insurance and banking, computational modelling
- Understand users and their needs to ensure this is a valuable experience

Our Journey



Key recommendations for Connections 2016

- Presentation on core gaming principles that are appropriate and applicable to all industries
- Use dinner space as conference gaming time – play games and eat pizza!
- Obtain a high-level sponsor to support and advertise the conference
- Build a good website (WordPress) and link it to King's College website. Leverage off USA and UK Connections success for advertising
- Distribute email addresses to all participants after the event to foster the growth of the community.
- Opportunity to advertise as part of tertiary interest
- Promote work through personal networks and known chat sites.
- Invite series hobby games/gamers
- One proposed structure for 2016 is:
 - Planner Community
 - Operator Community
 - Training Community
- Another proposed structure is the multiple game industry group allowing people to self-select what cohort they want to be in.

What I want Connections 2016 to be

Opportunity to understand what is happening in the wargaming community (for example, explore the advances in wargaming)	Clearer direction on the purpose and intent of Connections and what its objectives are.	Access to courses and learning development opportunities (for example, a seminar on game design or how to run wargames effectively)	A networking opportunity to meet, listen to and learn from other wargamers (conflict gamers)
Mixture of non-military gamers	An opportunity to study and practice games	Better accessible on a crisp website through Facebook and relevant email lists	More activities
Access to the presentations from day 1 2015 Connections	To have more presenters and contributors (for example, from a professional designer)	Senior managers to attend to learn 'why' wargaming matters so they can take ownership	More content on wargame design, principles, techniques and methods

What I liked about Connections 2015

Hands-on gaming activities and being able to play games	The practical application of theory	The format of presentations	The introduction to other organisations focus on wargaming
Free event	The variety of presentations	Networking Opportunities - Meeting practitioners from various industries	Participants joined in
Wargaming presentations with a simulation component like virtual Paramedic, Aftershock, Emergo train, Emerging technologies (glasses)	Demonstration of professional games like JSWAT and Aftershock		

Things we should do differently

Encourage a better understanding of gaming methodologies	Allow for more time to talk to presenters between presentations and ensure that their contact information is made available to everyone	More relevant wargaming content (the chess component was not as relevant and the balance between wargaming and simulation was not quite right)	The agenda needs parameters and themes linking presentations more coherently
Ask participants to commit a deposit for the dinner	Spread the presentations and games across the two days (could meet this need with the pizza/gaming event)	Broader and better advertising	Shorten the breaks (for example 30min for lunch instead of 1 hour)
Invite serious hobby gamers to attend	Explore business, conflict and policy planning gaming components of wargaming	Increase attendance by professional 'expert practitioners'	More recreational and historical gaming
			Include an introduction to wargaming

From the feedback, one proposed structure for Connections 2016 could be...

Purpose: To foster a war, conflict and business gaming community and to develop and promote education on wargaming and its techniques

DAY ONE

A. Introduction to Wargaming

B. Three gaming segmentations:

1. Planning Community (strategy, policy, business and corporate conflict gaming)
2. Operations Community (military, emergency services etc)
3. Training (how to design wargames; how to facilitate wargames etc)

c. Game play evening over pizza dinner (three stations – traditional tabletop wargame; conflict game like Aftershock and other)

DAY TWO

A. Keynote by professional wargamer

B. Wargaming for managers – *why you can't do without it*

C. Wargaming components – simulation, hobbyists and emerging technology

D. Exit tickets (quick feedback)

Key next steps

1. Build an awesome website (WordPress) with logos to Connections UK/US and King's College
2. Send feedback out
3. Scope out Connections 2016 (in particular, the right branding to attract the right people – using existing networks and new networks) to start building a program for 2016 from now!