

*Achieving fair and open access
to PSI for maximum returns*

PSI Alliance★

- To encourage constructive dialogue between the public and private sectors
- To share our knowledge at the EU level
- To support good practice and help expose the consequences of bad practice
- To brief EU politicians about the need to enforce existing policy or secure policy change

Michael Nicholson
OECD Workshop 3rd February 2008

The “wish” list.....

- Clarity about what PSI is available
- Terms aimed at maximising re-use
- Clarity over the remit of the PSI producers
- A level competitive playing-field
- A review process that is relatively swift, low cost, open, adequately independent and robust
- Transparent outcomes, properly implemented within a realistic timetable

An under-exploited marketplace



The PSI
Treasure

Fair
competition?

Effective
Appeal
process?

Reasonable
Terms?

What is
available?

- Encouraging extensive PSI re-use requires all and not just some of the current barriers to be removed.
- A complex PSI re-use policy is therefore unlikely to work well.

The eager
entrepreneur



Burned Out?



THE PSI GATE-KEEPER

The most important barrier?

- The threat of unfair competition from the PSI producer itself
- The PSI producer “public task” is normally poorly defined
 - Can be encouraged to exploit own PSI
 - Uses cross-subsidy to replicate existing market products
 - PSI coverage “mission-creep”.
 - Cover commercial product cost from revenue from public task activities
 - Too easy to justify new developments in “public interest”

PSI producers... what is their public task?

1. To provide for needs of good government?
2. To be as efficient as possible?
3. To maximise the use of PSI?
4. To encourage innovation and enterprise?
5. To avoid conflict (eg Competition Law)?
6. To make an appropriate financial return?

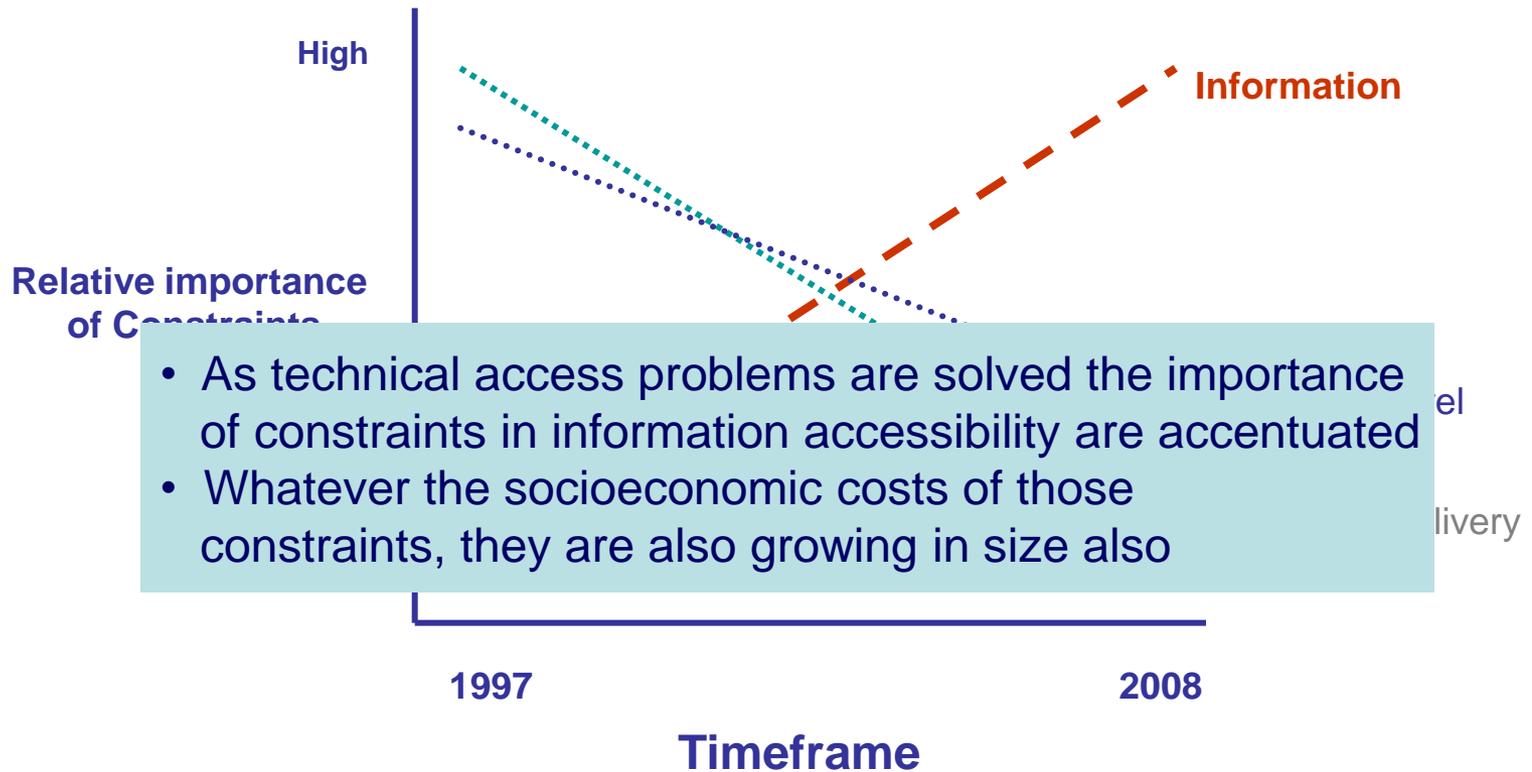
PSI producers... what is their public task?

6. To make an appropriate financial return?
5. To avoid conflict (eg Competition Law)?
1. To provide a public service?
 - The justification for State production of PSI needs to be tightly and objectively defined and publicised.
 - The role of the private sector re-considered also.
2. To be a public service?
3. To maximise the use of PSI?
4. To encourage innovation and enterprise?

Another model?

- The State defines the standards and scope of PSI needed for good government ... avoiding conflicts of interest
- The State also decides what it must own as part of the national information infrastructure and what it can license
- All that it must “own” it might distribute as PSI free to third parties
- Might not all PSI be originally collected by the private sector?

Why is it so urgent?



The economic cost to the public sector

- Protective licensing can be complex to develop and manage
 - Operational
 - Higher cost
 - Duplicated effort
 - Investment in unnecessary or higher-cost activities
- A 1% overall efficiency gain for the public sector (UK) through easier access to core infrastructure PSI is worth up to eight times the cost of collecting it

The economic cost to the private sector

- Complex
 - Less expensive
 - Risk of v
 - Higher cost of negotiating and managing licensing arrangements
 - Less economically efficient. Less competition. Higher cost.
- Using “free” PSI initially (Census and Electoral Roll), a single company, Experian, built its UK information revenue to £500,000,000 pa in the past 30 years

The economic cost to the citizen

- Knowledge is available but inaccessible
 - Time wasted
 - Loss of jobs
 - Higher taxes
 - Less choice?
 - Economic inefficiency?
- About £1.25 pa per UK adult Internet user covers the cost of providing Ordnance Survey data free

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- A complex PSI re-use policy is therefore unlikely to work well.

- The justification for State production of PSI needs to be tightly and objectively defined and publicised.
- The role of the private sector re-considered also.

- As technical access problems are solved the importance of constraints in information accessibility are accentuated.
- Whatever the socioeconomic costs of those constraints, they are therefore also growing in importance.

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- About £1.25 pa per UK adult Internet user covers the cost of providing Ordnance Survey data free.

PSI Alliance

Email: info@psialliance.eu or harriet@quintuspa.com