Mobile Communication Interest Group
Business meeting minutes

Online [pandemic – normally @Gold Coast, Australia]
May 11, 2020 – recorded

Chair: Rich Ling
Vice Chair: Keri Stephens
Secretary: Mariek Vanden Abeele

Agenda
1. Chair’s report (Rich Ling)
2. Division status (Colin Agur)
3. Pre-conference (Keri Stephens)
4. Doctoral consortium (Jordan Frith)
5. Mobile Media & Communication (Veronika Karnowski)
6. Awards (Jason Martin)
7. Bylaw update (Rich Ling)
8. Fall elections (Lynne Kelly)
9. Discussion item: session types (Rich Ling)
10. ICA 2021: Denver (ICA Executive/Rich Ling)
11. New officers (Jakob Ohme, Lara Wolfers and Hoan Nguyen)

1. Chair’s report (Rich Ling, Chair)

Our chair, Rich Ling presents some numbers on the state of our interest group:

- In terms of membership, we went down slightly from 250 to 224 members.
- The number of submissions were at 105 (down from 120).
  - These reductions are likely due to the “friction of distance” for traveling to Australia. Submissions are down, and that likely also explains the loss in members.
- Our finances are strong: We have a surplus.
  - No physical meetings means we get to save a bit of money.

Given that the trends observed above were observed across the board, these numbers are positive. They make for a healthy interest group. In addition to them, our interest group has a number of additional strengths that we can be very proud of:

- We are among the most global sections at ICA
- We have a healthy mix of senior and emerging scholars
- We offer multiple presentation formats (including a doctoral consortium and preconference)
- We continue to be an open and accessible scholarly community

As our chair, Rich represented the interest group in various board activities. The board meeting of 2020 is scheduled in a week’s time, so unfortunately there is not much that Rich can share at this point. One thing of note that Rich can already communicate:
There is an editor position available next year in the *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication* (JCMC). If interested, email Robin Nabi (nabi@ucsb.edu)

2. **Roadmap to division status** *(Colin Agur, member of the ICA Interest Group task force)*

Over the past few years, there have been some concerns over the proliferation of interests groups, that might potentially overlap. The role of this task force was initially to review the process by which people can take an idea for an interest group and petition ICA to turn that idea into an interest group. The task force has worked on some procedures and recommendations, such as the recommendation for a standing committee of second year board members who ask prospective interest groups for a two-pager to get a sense of whether there is truly a subfield deserving of an interest group.

There was some mission creep in this task force, as the task force noticed that the boundaries between divisions and interest groups are somewhat arbitrary, as sometimes fast-growing interest groups are of the same size as older – sometimes shrinking - divisions. The recommendation of the task force has been to dissolve the difference between divisions and interest groups, and transition to all ‘sections’ with equal status. However, so far it is nothing more than a recommendation at this point in time.

3. **Pre-conference** *(Rich Ling on behalf of Vice Chair Keri Stephens)*

Keri (vice-chair) developed a preconference at the Gallery of Modern Art in Brisbane, together with local liaison Larissa Hjorth (RMIT). Unfortunately the preconference was cancelled due to the pandemic…

Rich expresses his hope that we will be able to organize a preconference next year in Denver. He has more on this later (see below). He also thanks the organization committee on behalf of Keri Stephens.

4. **Doctoral Consortium** *(Jordan Frith)*

Jordan Frith reports back on the doctoral consortium (DC) that the MCIG organizes together with Katy Pearce and German Neuman the Communication and Technology section.

There were fewer applicants, probably also because of the distance. Nonetheless, there were enough submissions, so efforts were made (venue, matching with mentors, …). However, with the cancellation of the main conference, the decision was made to also cancel the consortium, as logistically, it would have been impossible to arrange synchronous mentoring across time-zones for an entire day. People who already registered were re-funded.

Plan is to host another doctoral consortium in Denver, but to perhaps have a virtual back-up plan for those who cannot attend in-person. Applicants of 2020 will receive preferential treatment.
5. **Mobile Media & Communication** *(Veronika Karnowski)*

As editor of the journal *Mobile Media & Communication*, Veronika Karnowski gives an update about the journal’s status. Although the journal has no formal relation with the IG, it informally grew from it, and several of the members of our group contribute to it, as author and/or as reviewer.

*Mobile Media & Communication* is doing very well, thanks to the fabulous work of the reviewers, for which Veronika thanks the community!). We are SSCI ranked for two years now. Last year’s impact factor was 2.6 (up from 1.6) which puts us at position 19/88 (up from 32/84) in the ranking of Communication Sciences journals. This entry is really good and promising position for the journal to be in, in this early stage.

Some stats and fun facts:
- Submissions continue to increase. There were 181 original submissions in the past year.
- As a consequence, the acceptance rate goes down (now 9%)
- There is an upcoming special issue guest edited by Mariék Vanden Abeele and Minh Hao Nguyen (“Digital Well-being in an Age of Mobile Connectivity”)
- Veronika again wants to express a big thank you to all reviewers and authors

6. **Awards** *(Jason Martin, chair of the Mobile Communication Awards Committee)*

- **Top Paper Award:**
  - “Digital Wellbeing as a Dynamic Construct” by Mariék Vanden Abeele (Tilburg U)
- **Emerging Scholar Research Award** (three awards at $500 each):
  - “Always connected: The context and consequences of ubiquitous screen media exposure among preadolescents” by Anneleen Meeus (University of Leuven, Belgium)
  - “Third person effect and mobile media use” by Archana Krishnan (SUNY Albany)
- **Registration Waivers** (in non-pandemic times, these are travel waivers):
  - Patrick Ndwiga, US International University, Kenya
  - Devina Satarway, U of Hyderabad, India
  - Edwin Tallam, U of the Witwatersrand, Kenya

On behalf of the entire Mobile Communication IG: Congratulations!!!

Next year we have the bi-annual Best Dissertation Award.

7. **Bylaw update** *(Rich Ling, chair)*

Rich notices there was nothing in our bylaws on the Emerging Scholar Award, and therefore Rich suggests to include this in the bylaws:

*Section 3: EMERGING SCHOLAR AWARD. This award will be offered annually for up to two winners for a grant of a sum to be determined for the support of a specific research project. The grant will be awarded for a project that is relevant to the field of mobile communication. The*
following criteria will be considered:

1) Only one proposal per person will be considered. If you submit as part of a team, this is the only proposal you may submit.

2) The competition is limited to submitters who are current members of ICA and MCIG.

The award committee will seek proposals from a diverse set of emerging scholars, which we define to include advanced graduate students, post-doctoral researchers, and other early-career scholars and professors. The submission must include a project summary of no more than 3 pages, single-spaced. It should provide an overview of the study, stressing the importance of the topic and the fit within MCIG. This section should include the research questions and hypotheses, and a description of where the project is situated with mobile communication literature, proposed methods, a summary of the anticipated contribution of the project to the field; and an explanation of how the grant will be used to accomplish the goals of the project (The committee recommends that applicants link the use of the grant funds toward data collection and related needs).

Rich emphasizes that suggestions for the by-laws can always be proposed.

8. **Fall elections** *(Lynne Kelly)*

In the fall, there is one position to fill: vice-chair. The vice-chair commits for four years. Lynne asks everyone to think about who might be a good vice-chair and asks to nudge and/or nominate people (self-nominations are accepted). You can also email Lynne with suggestions.

The timing is pretty sharp:
- End of June, early July: submit nominations
- Mid-August: the MCIG communicates the final list to ICA

The committee consists of Lynne Kelly, Keri Stephens and Jakob Ohme. The committee will soon present a call for the open positions and distributes this call to the members. Individuals can self-nominate or nominate others. A nomination involves submitting some materials, namely a CV and a brief statement of the candidate’s interests and qualifications. Out of the received nominations, the committee members select the two candidates they consider most eligible for the position. The nomination committee has a set of criteria against which it evaluates the candidates’ submissions. These criteria foremost concern the candidates’ qualifications and statements, where the committee evaluates aspects such as academic seniority, outreach and impact, affiliation and commitment to the mobile interest group, organizational experience and expertise and knowledge of and visibility in the wider ICA community. The committee strives for a board that is representative and inclusive for the diverse population of the interest group. Next, the candidate statements are sent out to the members during the election in the fall semester.

9. **Discussion item: session types main conference** *(Rich Ling, Chair)*

We were allotted 12 sessions in addition to the business meeting. Currently we have the following four formats to submit work to our interest group:
• Full papers, scheduled in a traditional 4-paper sessions (12min per paper)
• Extended abstracts, scheduled in high-density sessions (7min per paper)
• Escalator sessions (8-9 submissions, that went down to 4-5)
• Thematic panels (no proposals in 2020)

Should we consider other options? Examples are roundtables, book presentations or sessions by partners (e.g., MM&C or the Oxford Mobile Series).

10. ICA 2021 (Rich Ling, Vice Chair)

Next year, the conference takes place in Denver, Colorado, USA. And this is… the home town of our chair Rich Ling! Rich Ling shows us a wonderful overview of the area, and gives excellent suggestions for where to go for sightseeing, the best hikes and the best food.

Rich looks forward to hosting us in Denver!

11. Incoming officers (Colin Agur, Vice Chair)

We have two incoming officers!

The incoming Secretary is Jakob Ohme. Jakob is currently a postdoctoral researcher at the University of Amsterdam. Jakob was already present at the foundational meeting. He has been working on mobile methods and mobile government, and the effects of mobile communication on democratic behavior. Jakob hopes to contribute to shaping the boundaries of the field.

Some facts about Jakob:
• Postdoctoral researcher at ASCoR, University of Amsterdam
• Part of Digital Communication Methods Lab
• Works with mobile methods, such as experience sampling studies, mobile eye-tracking and survey apps
• Focuses on how mobile media change digital (political) news exposure and effects on democratic behavior
• PhD 2017, University of Southern Denmark
• Member of Mobile Comm IG since 2012

The incoming Student & Early Career Representative is Lara Wolfers. Lara is currently a PhD candidate at the Leibniz-Institut für Wissensmedien in Tübingen, Germany. She works on parental mobile media use and media use in the family context. She also looks at mobile media use for stress-coping.

Some facts about Lara:
• Works at the Leibniz-Institut für Wissensmedien in Tübingen, Germany.
• Focuses on how parents use their mobile devices and how this affects family life and the well-being of parents and children.
• Investigates how (mobile) media are used for stress management and coping and the circumstances of an effective use.

If you are an early career scholar and have any questions / ideas / problems, please contact Lara at l.wolfers@iwm-tuebingen.de. Lara also already advertises a few opportunities for early career scholars at ICA.

The incoming International Laison is Hoan Nguyen. Hoan is currently a PhD student at the USC Annenberg School for Communication. Hoan studies technologies for social change, community development and urban infrastructure. Hoan examines access to technology for marginalized communities. Haon is excited about the position, especially given that our interest group is one of the most international of ICA. Hoan will do her best to involve students across the globe in the interest group.
  • PhD student at USC Annenberg School for Communication.
  • Studies technology for social change, ICTD, digital humanities and inequalities.
  • Her published work concerns the role new media and digital technologies, such as the internet, mobile phones and social media, play in transnational migration processes, the empowerment of underserved communities, and various forms of socio-political changes.
  • Contact: hoannguy@usc.edu

Rich expresses his thanks to the two outgoing officers:
  • Mariek Vanden Abeele (secretary)
  • Raul Ferrer Conill (Student and Early Career Rep)

Rich thanks everyone for attending and adjourns the meeting. See you all in Denver!!!