

Demonstrating impact whose drumbeat are we dancing to?

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Summary

1. The puzzle: whose drumbeat?
 2. Insights from ‘Changing Landscapes for the Third Sector’
 3. Case studies - impact developments in practice
 4. Judgement devices
 5. Questions for discussion:
 - Does this resonate with your experience?
 - Do you face the same pressures?
 - How do you navigate these?
 - What scope is there for changing the terms of impact discussions?
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1. The puzzle: whose drumbeat?

- I. A supply-driven field: making a market?
 - Quality, Performance, Outcomes, Impact, Value
 - Frameworks: PQASSO; Outcomes star; SROI; social accounts
 - Champions: CES, NPC, SROI UK, NEF, SAN and 'Inspiring Impact'

- II. Contested dimensions – what's the problem?
 - Efficiency and value for money
 - Outcomes and social change
 - Compliance and learning

- III. Evidence of organisations struggling with impact...
 - Proportionality
 - Capability and support: why/how to measure; communication
 - Intangibles, measurables, complexity and contribution

2. Insights from ‘Changing Landscapes’

- Origins of impact pressure: sense of increasing competition and funders demand for accountability
 - the ‘race for impact’ amongst funders/organisations
 - sense of external pressure rather than internal organisational need
- Organisations describe a need for a narrative of impact to remain competitive:
 - *‘how do we clarify and package the work that we do in a way that the outside world understands us more?’*
- Yet a concern that price trumps quality in service contracts
- Wider added value of the sector, or depth of work, not appreciated by commissioners - some use of own frameworks to articulate/capture ‘added value’; awareness but scepticism of SROI

2. Insights from ‘Changing Landscapes’

- Third Sector Trends/TSO-50: Foresight, Enterprise, Capability, Impact

IMPACT	
Communicates role and impact successfully to relevant audiences	3.67
Beneficiaries appropriately involved in activities and development	3.61
Benefit to users is considered and assessed	3.73
Makes a positive contribution to the Third Sector	3.06
Seeks to maximise impact on social well-being	3.63
<i>Average sub-score</i>	<i>3.54</i>

Chapman et al 2010: 39

- 2009-12: ‘Thriving and rising’ (31) versus ‘Surviving and declining’ (15)
- 10 critical success factors for organisations, but none of these are ‘impact’ factors
- Collision course between the pragmatic positioning of TSOs and funders: a ‘pipe dream’ to think that TSOs can work to a common impact methodology

3. Case studies ('Real Times')

'Hawthorn'

- Small local organisation
- Family support
- A professionalisation and formalisation project
- From identifying unique beneficiaries
- ...to measuring distance travelled
- Internal dynamics
- External contracting environment
- Horizon threats

'Birch'

- Large local organisation
- Advice service
- Advanced activity monitoring
- Internal tensions on performance
- Struggles to capture outcomes
- Quality assessment – internal and external
- Pressures of a contracting environment

'Fig'

- Large national organisation
- Family support
- Anticipatory anxiety in 2010
- Investing in business development
- The 'old guard' and the new...
- Formal evaluation and performance management
- Increasing competition

3. Case studies ('Real Times')

'Hawthorn':

"where I want to be by the end of the year...a completely different organisation, a fresh new start and that kind of professionalism will be seen by our stakeholders...by the end of the following year we really would be in a good position to have the data, have a proven track record of delivering quality services, to go and get more funding"

'Birch':

"We can put on a fur coat easily. We can put on a show for anybody, it's whether we've got any knickers on that matters...they're just checking processes and systems, not really whether it makes a difference to people's lives"

'Fig':

"I think we could position ourselves as being real experts. If you put money on us, we can show you better returns...what we are about is making a difference in society, but also for us to be able to do that, we have to have a viable business and be able to compete successfully for that and therefore we need to think about it in that sort of competitive way"

4. Helping you choose....



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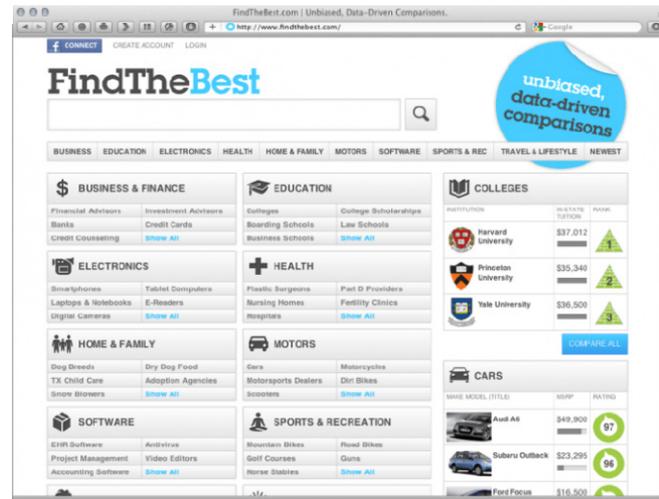
★★★★★ **This is a "Pro" in every sense.**, March 12, 2008

By [J. Shea](#) (Boston) - [See all my reviews](#)

In March 2008, I decided it was time to upgrade from a G4-based lap; whether to pay the premium for the "Pro" model. Ultimately, I decided

Construction quality
The aluminum case of the MacBook Pro reminds me of a product made together nearly seamlessly. The MacBook's case, however, is made fr wrists as I typed.

Ports
Compared with the MacBook, the MacBook Pro provides an additional connectors. The ExpressCard slot is useful for future expansion and s



4....in the voluntary sector?

Follow the brand?



voluntary action sheffield

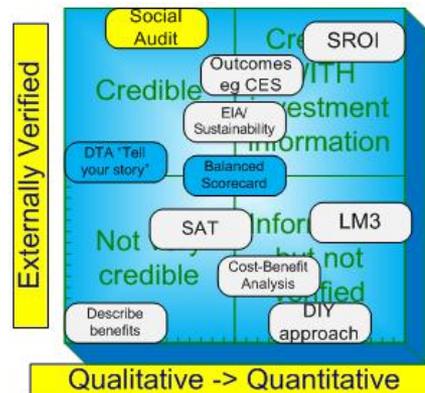
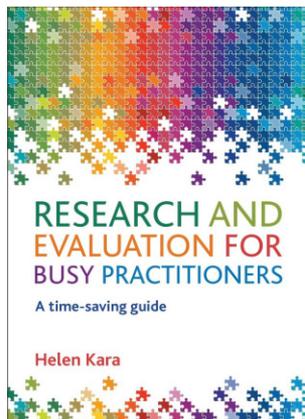


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Evaluation results?



Quality marks?



NAVCA
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4. Judgement devices

‘Singularities’ (Karpik 2010):

- Products and services which are: incommensurable, multi-dimensional and uncertain in terms of quality and results
- e.g. fine wines, lawyers, psychotherapists.....academic work?
- voluntary sector services?

‘Judgement devices’ - equipping the market to enable reasonable choices:

- *Networks* - involving personal and professional word of mouth
- *Cicerones* - critics and guides
- *Appellations* - quality marks, kite-marks, brands
- *Rankings* - listings, ratings, prizes
- *Confluences* - visibility, signposting and channelling people to goods and services.

5. For discussion

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