

# Learning Analytics

## Buzzword *or* For Real?

John Howell

Business Intelligence Manager  
j.howell@deakin.edu.au



**DEAKIN**  
UNIVERSITY

# GREAT EXPECTATIONS...

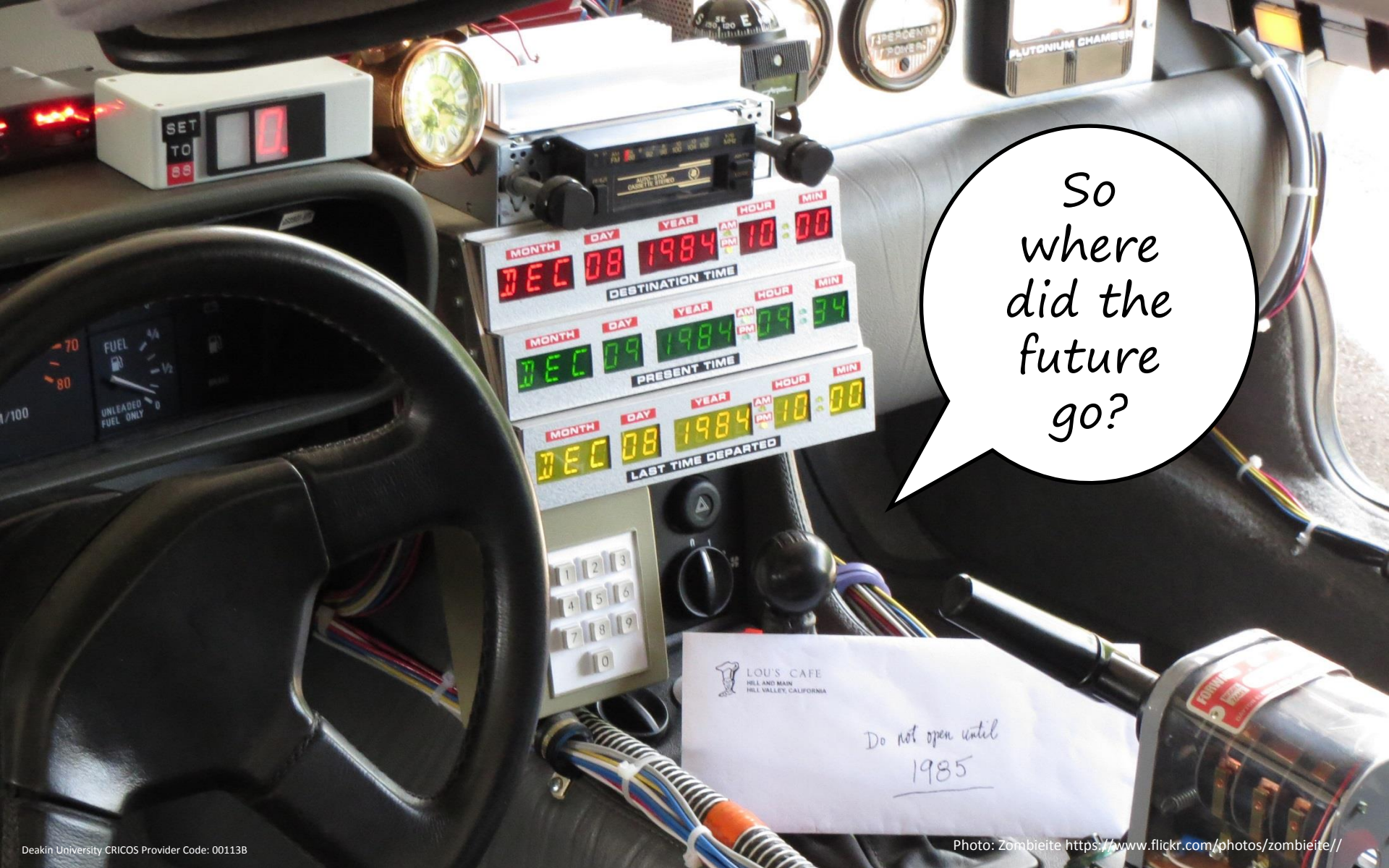
## New data

- Learning Management Systems
- Increasing personal information
  - Structured – demographic data, process-related etc
  - Big data – browser history, networks, library data, location etc

## New capabilities

- Greater storage power
- Big data
- AI, predictive analytics, location intelligence...

*...the potential to be enormously powerful for improving the student experience of university'*




So  
where  
did the  
future  
go?

1 2 3  
4 5 6  
7 8 9  
0

LOU'S CAFE  
HILL AND MAIN  
HILL VALLEY, CALIFORNIA

Do not open until  
1985





#1 - What is learning analytics anyway?

Learning analytics is the measurement, collection, analysis and reporting of data about learners and their contexts, for purposes of understanding and optimising learning and the environments in which it occurs.

*Society for Learning Analytics Research*

# TACTICS TO MAKE IT MANAGEABLE

- Student facing or staff facing?
- Practical or research?
- What are your university's motivations?
- Beware of big bangs
- Meld bottom up with top down

# SOME VISIONS

- Through excellent research and education, XXXX will discover, teach and collaborate with partners to meet the challenges of the age in service of national and international communities.
- XXXX's vision is that it will be a leading contributor to Australia having the best higher education system in the world, supporting the world's best educated and most innovative, cohesive and sustainable society.
- To provide world-class education, research and community engagement for the advancement of the prosperity and welfare of our communities.
- Page not found.
- We aim to create and sustain a university in which, for the benefit of both Australia and the wider world, the brightest researchers and the most promising students, whatever their social or cultural background, can thrive and realise their potential.

# KEEP YOUR EYE ON THE PRIZE

- Given my results up to now, what do I need to do to get a distinction?
- What units should I choose?
- What surprised me about my results? Why?
- Could I have found out the same things more easily / quickly / cheaply?
- What are the best learning materials to develop?
- How effective are my assessment methods?



#2 - It's not all new  
(we're already doing  
a lot of this)



# KEY ISSUES TO UNDERSTAND

- What systems are in place?
- What's already linked together?
- What tools do you have?
- Anything obviously missing?
- What processes are relevant?
- What's changing? When?

# KEY RELATIONSHIPS TO BUILD

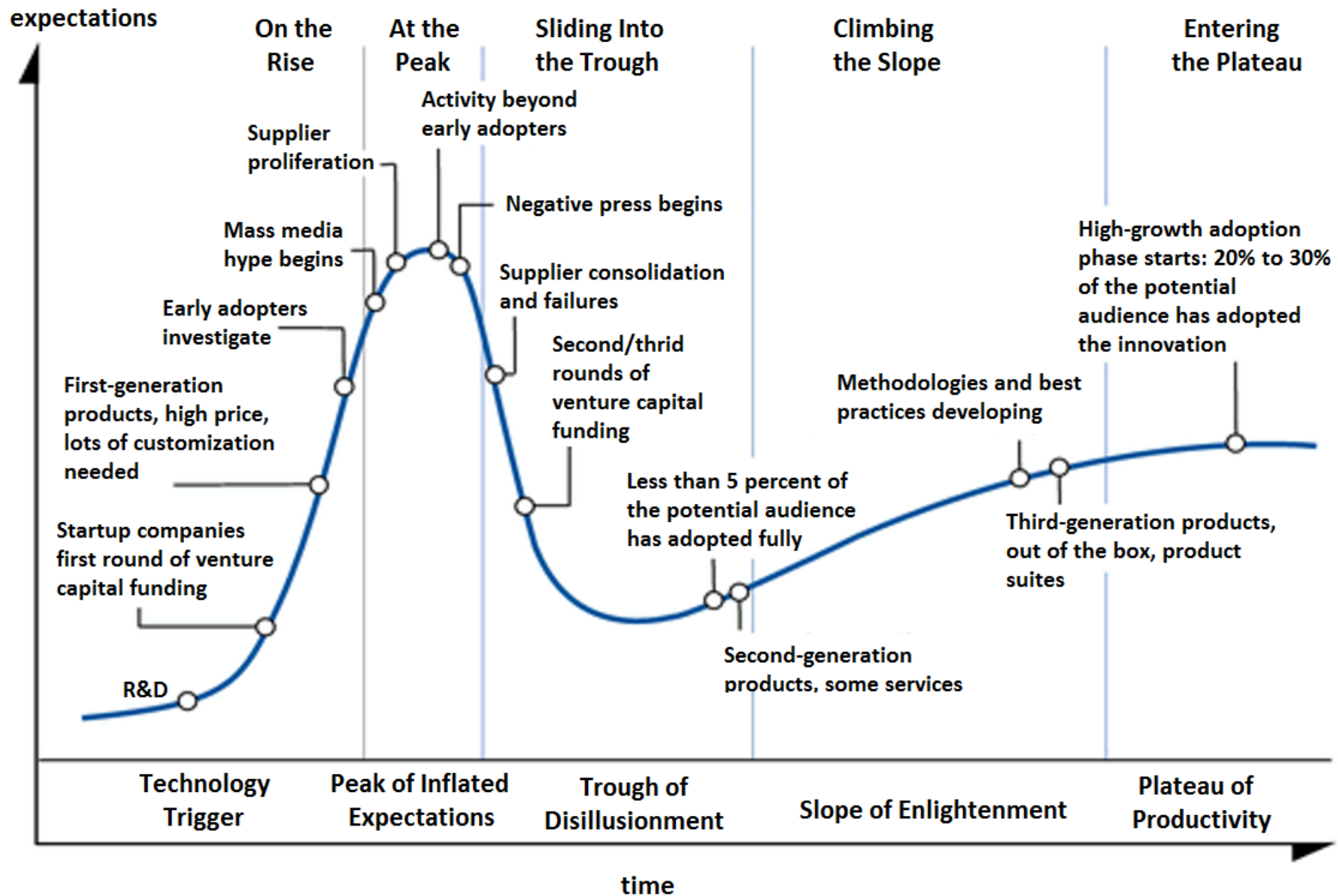
- DVC Education
- PVC Learning & Teaching (+ team)
- LMS Director (+ team)
- Education researchers
- CIO / IT specialists (as appropriate)
- Associate Deans of L&T
- Some real lecturers & some real students





#3 -  
The hype

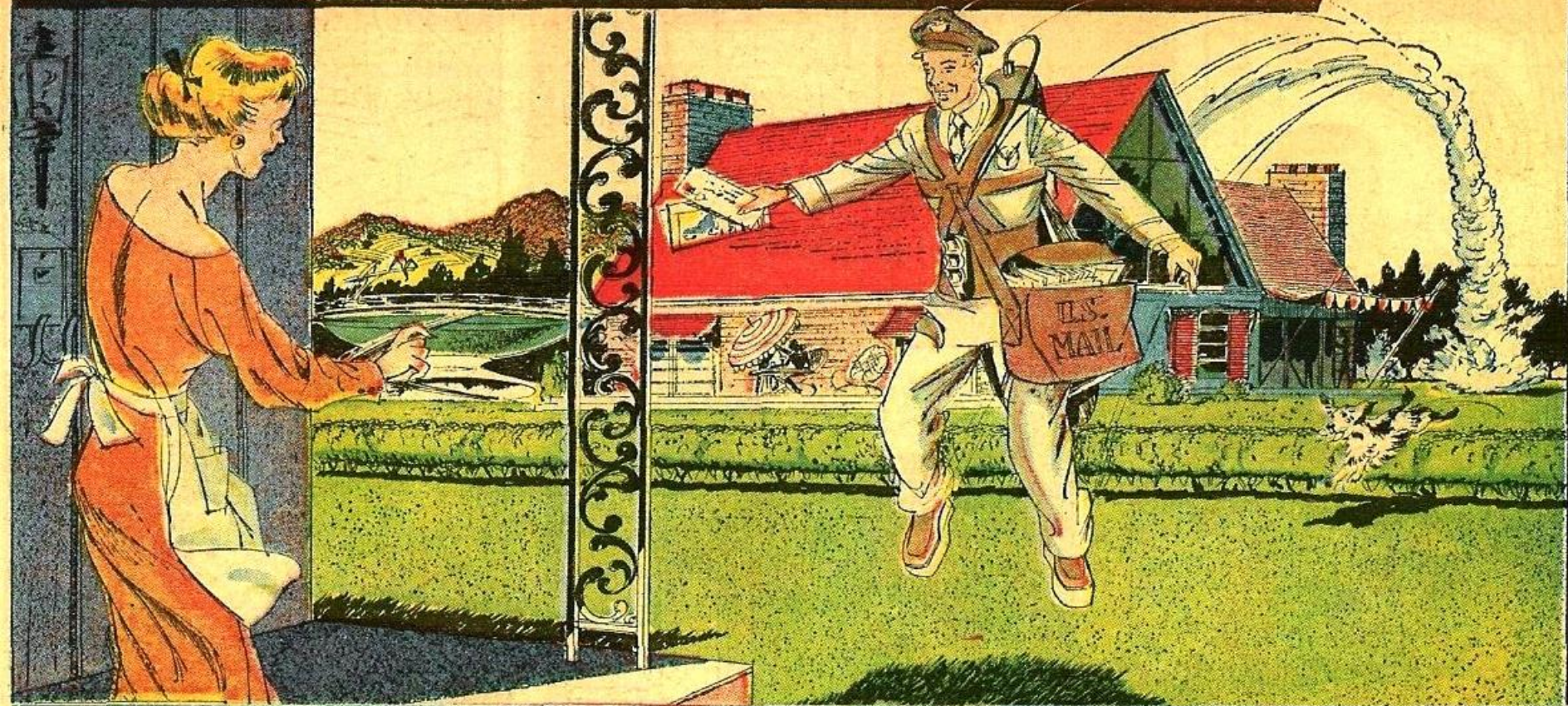






--- CLOSER THAN WE THINK!

by Radebaugh



**ROCKET MAILMEN** Uncle Sam's mailmen can look forward to going faster, getting farther, and doing so with less effort than ever before. All it will take will be a device like the recently perfected "rocket assists" which were originally developed to help infantrymen leap like grasshoppers.

Just how such equipment works is still a military secret. The designer,

Reaction Motors, Inc. is not permitted to say how large the device is, or how long it fires, or what kind of fuel it uses. But best guess is that the rocket fires intermittently, so that the wearer can bound from spot to spot as he wishes, with no more energy than it takes to walk. Also the mechanism is believed to be of small size, simply constructed and low-priced. What a boon for mailmen and others who



# HANDLING THE HYPE

- We're around peak hype at the moment
- Some projects may go ahead for the hype
- Some people may be here for the hype



#4 - Ethics



# ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

- It's *when* not *if* so be prepared
- Expect unintended consequences (!)
- Understand the legal line & the moral line
- Necessary as soon as you predict anything
- Opt ins/outs are difficult to retro-fit

The painting 'The Raft of the Medusa' by Théodore Géricault depicts a chaotic scene of survivors on a makeshift raft of planks and debris in the middle of a stormy sea. The sky is dark and turbulent, with a low sun or moon casting a dim light. In the foreground, several figures are shown in various states of distress and death. A man in a white shirt is being held by another man, while others lie motionless on the planks. In the background, a group of men are gathered around a large barrel, and one man is being hoisted into the air. The overall composition is dynamic and dramatic, capturing the intensity of the disaster.

#5 - The tools,  
the data...

The Raft of the Medusa, Théodore Géricault

# IMPLEMENTATION TACTICS

- Always check – should I make or buy?
- Keep focused on outcomes
  - It's not how big your data is, it's how you use it
- Keep pushing up source data quality
- Wait?





THIS IS PARADISE