

# Is Media Change Actually Very Slow?

 [blogs.lse.ac.uk/polis/2008/07/02/is-media-change-is-actually-very-slow/](http://blogs.lse.ac.uk/polis/2008/07/02/is-media-change-is-actually-very-slow/)

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I am obsessed by how journalists can survive and thrive in the face of rapid technological and social change – but is it that rapid?

I am speaking at [2gether08](#) which will bring together creatives at the cutting edge of New Media. They are looking to hook up with Channel 4's digital production fund, 4ID. To me this seems something that could not have even been thought of five years ago. The idea of a TV broadcaster becoming a multi-platform facilitator supporting new forms of public value communication and social interaction seems quite novel.

The multi-talented [Ben Hammersley](#) is hosting my session and his [blog](#) took me to this article by another Online pioneer [Tom Coates](#). He argues that mainstream media is actually exaggerating the pace of change:

*"I'm completely bored of this rhetoric of endless insane change at a ludicrous rate, and cannot actually believe that people are taking it seriously. We've had iPods and digital media players for what – five years now? We've had Tivo for a similar amount of time, computers that can play DVDs for longer, music and video held in digital form since the eighties, an internet that members of the public have been building and creating upon for almost fifteen years. TV only got colour forty odd years ago, but somehow we're expected to think that it's built up a tradition and way of operating that's unable to deal with technological shifts that happen over decades!? This is too fast for TV!? That's ridiculous! This isn't traditional media versus a rebellious newcomer, this is a fairly reasonable and incremental technology change that anyone involved in it could have seen coming from miles away."*

Tom's right on the technology. He's also right that we hide our laziness behind a fear of change. But the fact that we are frail humans and our organisations are cultural swamps means it takes longer for the use of technology to evolve than it does to perfect the machinery. And the point of this Web 2.0 technology is that it is unpredictable engineering. It has unforeseen consequences (both good and ill). In other words, we are making it up as we go along.

And that's partly what [2gether08](#) is all about.

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