



Data Needs and Challenges in Sustainable Procurement

Dr. Anastasia O'Rourke, Co-Founder, Big Room Inc.

National Academies Workshop, Dec 7, 2011



About Big Room



Advisory work

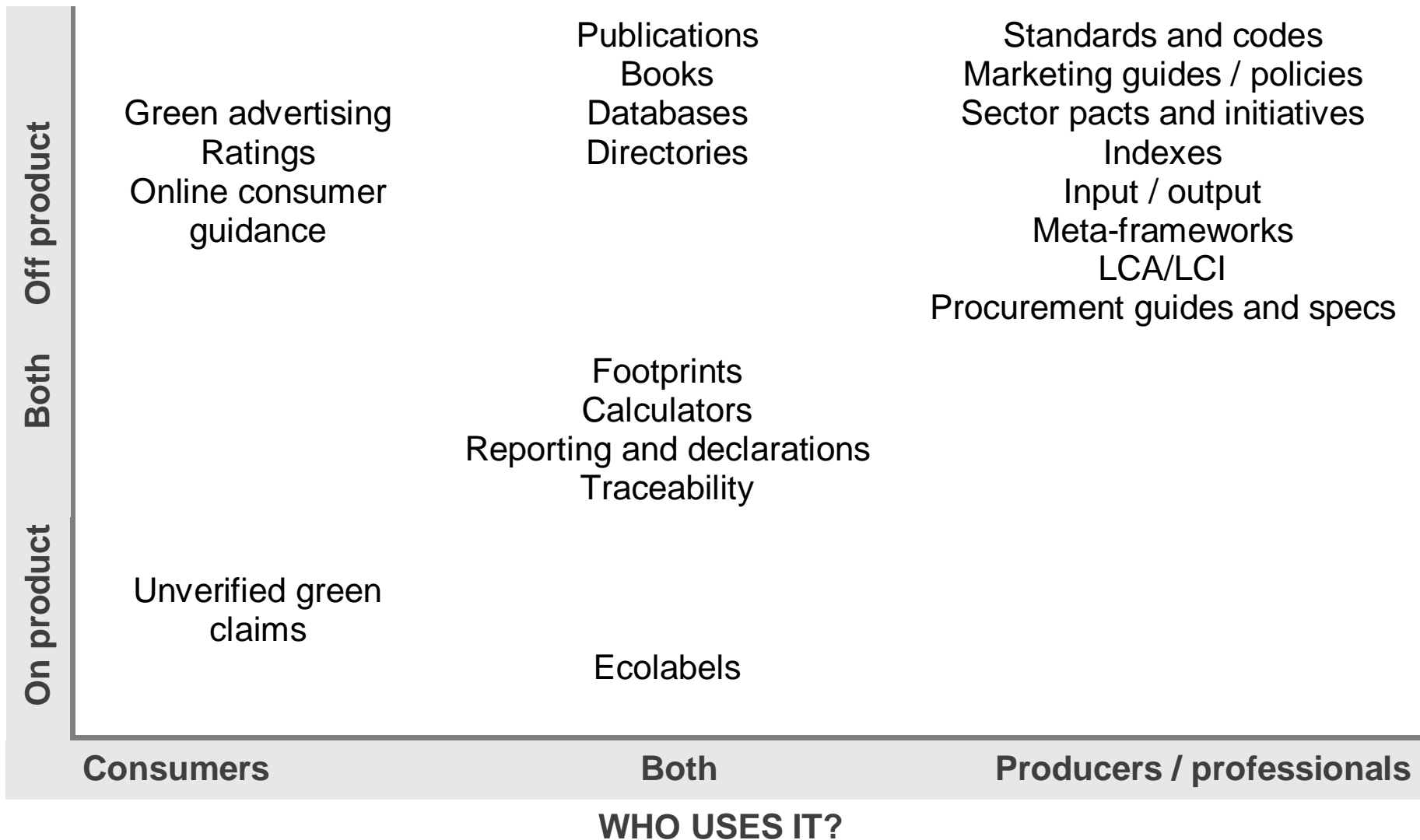
- + GSA (Section 13)
- + United Nations Environment Programme
- + Research with University of Minnesota/PE Five Winds/TSC
- + The Green Products Roundtable Steering Committee



Why identifying green products is complex

- + Intangible
- + Various attributes
- + Stakeholders with different views
- + Trade-offs
- + Differing methodologies, terminology, technical platforms
- + Several evolving initiatives

A Landscape of product sustainability tools



Making sense of the ecolabel landscape



[About](#) | [Press](#)

Home

Ecolabels

Subscribe

Advisory

News

Developers

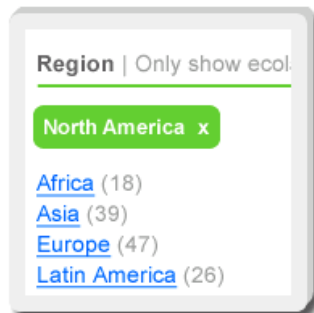
Search

Ecolabel Index is the largest global directory of ecolabels, currently tracking [426 ecolabels](#) in 246 countries, and 25 industry sectors.

Introducing Ecolabel Index **PRO**

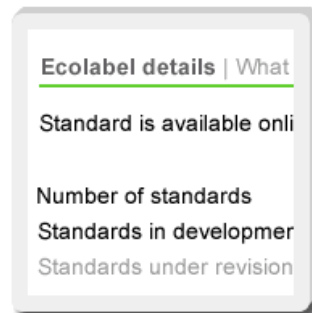
Ecolabel Index PRO gives you unlimited access to our database, including the ability to easily filter, research, and compare selected labels, and access relevant news and independent analysis.

FILTER



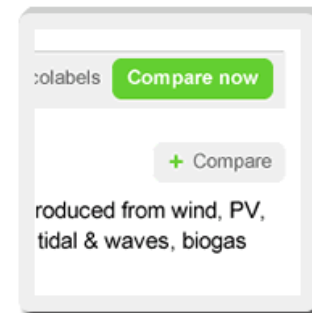
Refine Ecolabel Index to find the ecolabels relevant to you

RESEARCH



Access trustworthy data on ecolabels around the world

COMPARE



Side-by-side, which ecolabels meet your specs?

Keep up to date | Tweets, news, press

Tweets

#Ecolabels essential for corporate #sustainability report. New blog post up! <http://t.co/PhAywJdF>



News

[Ecolabels Essential for Corporate Sustainability](#)

[Historic Conference on Sustainable Palm Oil in M](#)

[New Eco-Label app for the iPhone and iPad](#)

Press coverage

USA Today | [FTC to issue new green guidelines, marketing claims](#)

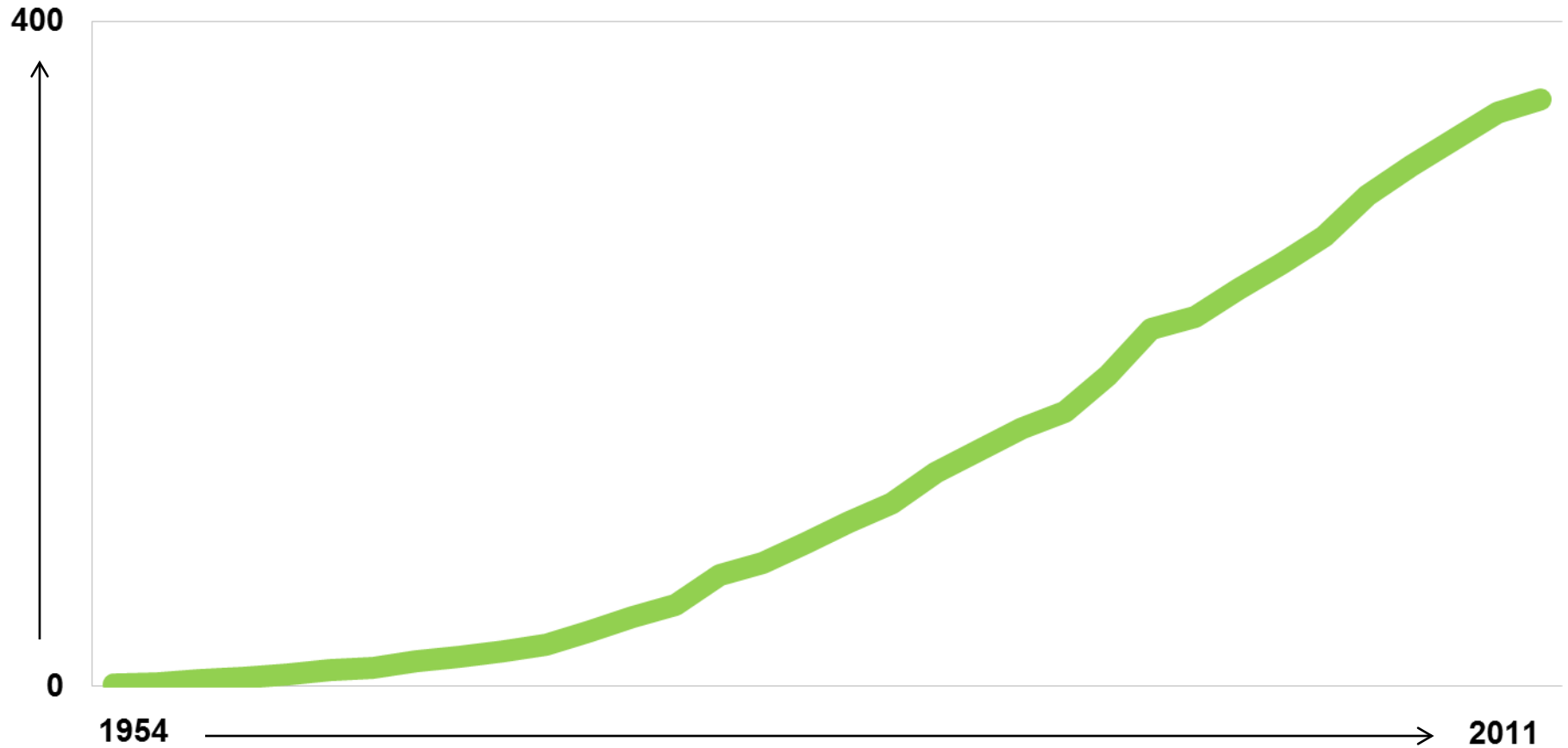
TriplePundit | [Is It Greenwashing Or Too Many Eco Problem?](#)

The Guardian (UK) | [Questioning and Evolving the](#)

[More mentions...](#)

Growth in ecolabels

ECOLABEL
INDEX



Information needs

- + What is green?
 - + need systematic approach, assess credibility
- + Products
 - + must meet policies, standards, codes
- + Outcomes
 - + Savings, environmental benefits

Signs of convergence



Consolidation

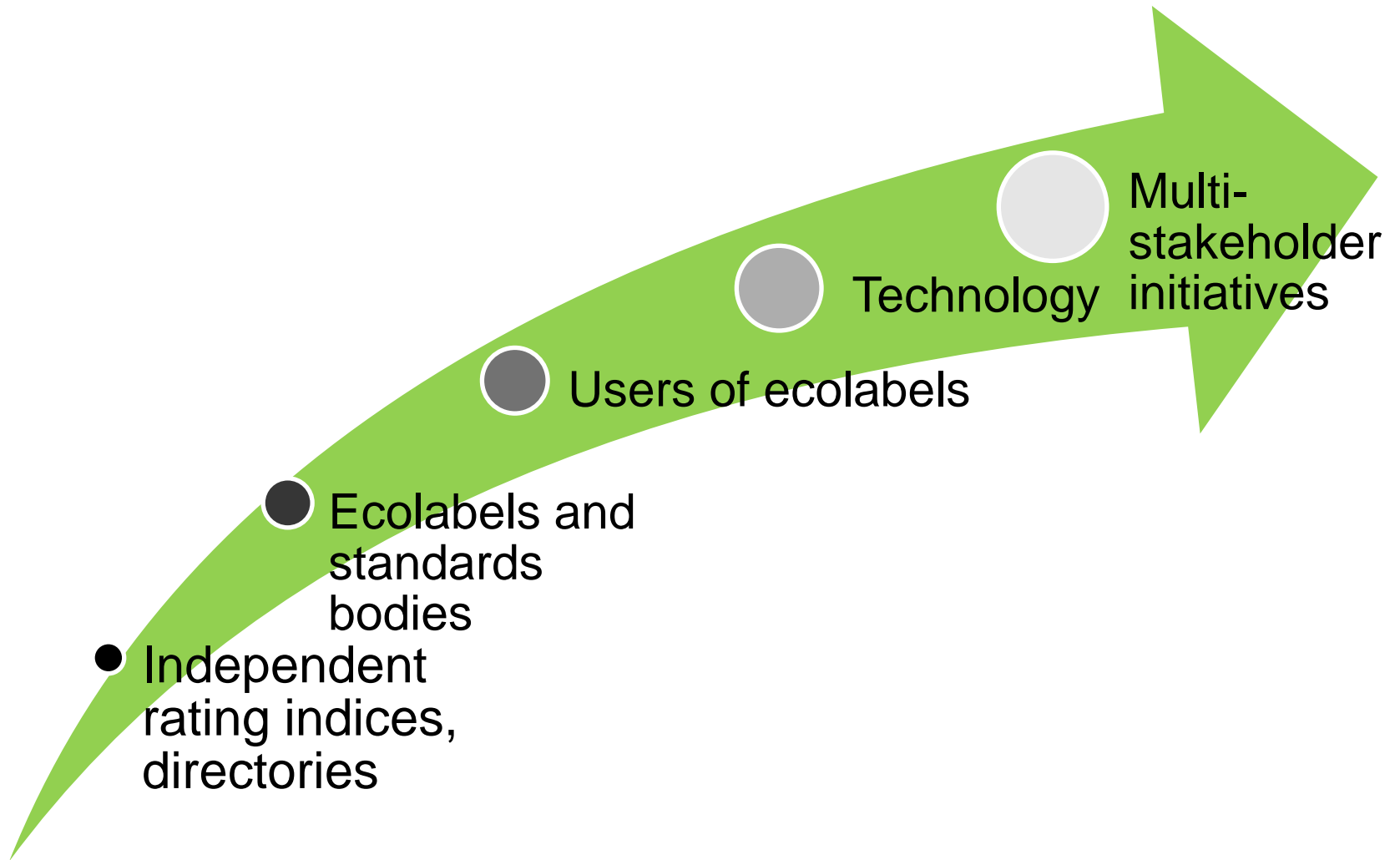


**Mutual
recognition**

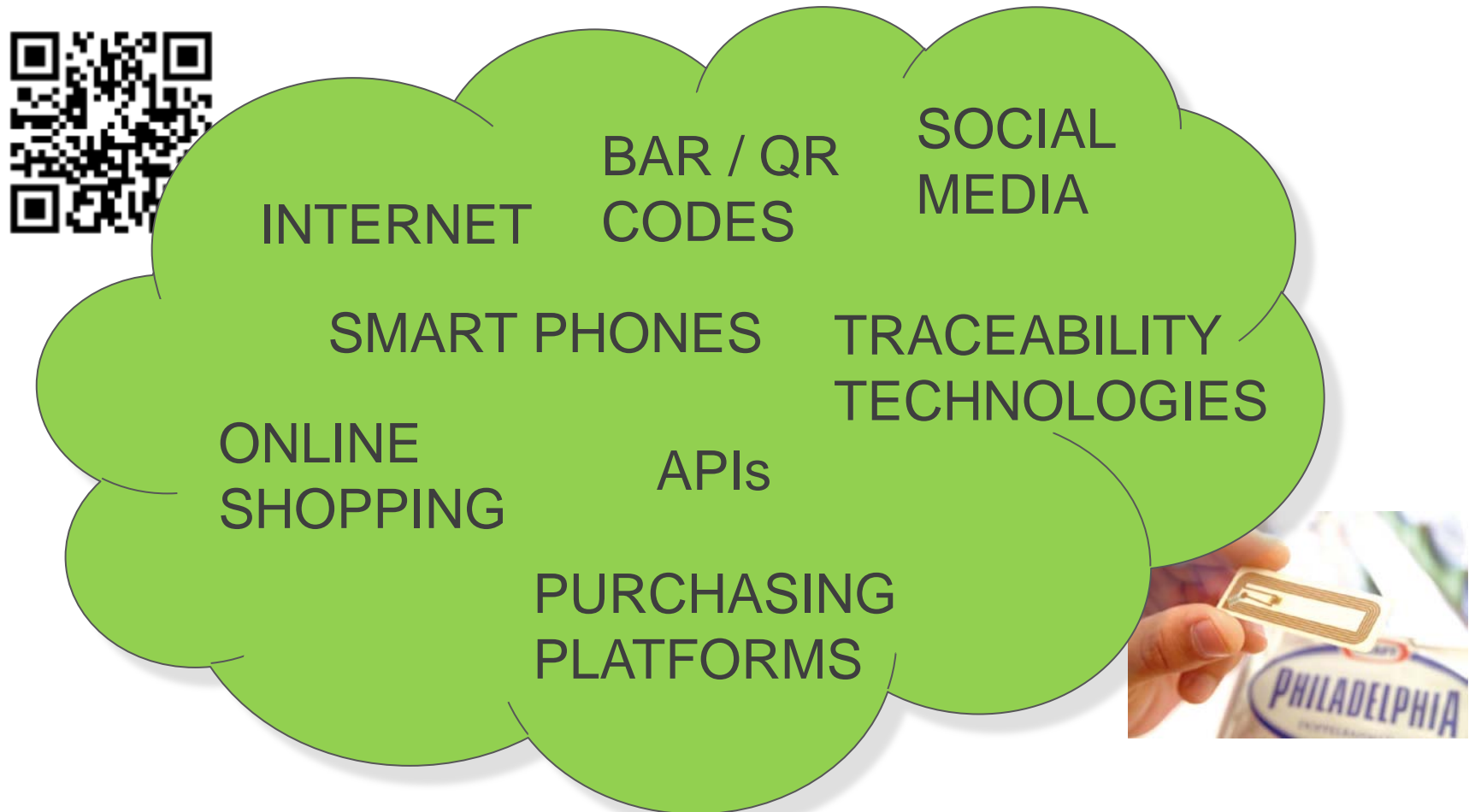


Interoperability

Drivers of convergence



Technology drivers for convergence



A way forward: interoperability

The ability of diverse systems and organizations to work together (to inter-operate) both now and in the future, without restricted access.

Types of interoperability

1. Technical – e.g. data formats
2. Business Process – e.g. protocols and standardized procedures
3. Semantic - same meaning systems to avoid “same data, different meaning”

Potential implications

Data flow
Accountability
Accessibility
Comparability
SCALE

What can buyers do?

- + Articulate information needs
- + Identify most needed tools
- + Develop common glossary / classification systems
- + Encourage mapping / comparing systems
- + Develop data frameworks / reporting templates
- + Participate in multi-stakeholder fora
- + Buy greener products
- + Track & communicate your results!



Thank you

Dr. Anastasia O'Rourke

Co-founder | Big Room Inc.

anastasia@bigroom.ca