

Bebo and Online Safety

Des Traynor 6th February, 2007

destraynor.com

What we're in for

- Introduction
- What is Bebo?
- Cultivating Fear, Uncertainty, and Doubt
- Education, staying safe on Bebo.
- Conclusions
- Questions

Introduction

- I'm a PhD student in NUI Maynooth

The logo for Bigulo! features the word "Bigulo!" in a red, serif font with a white outline, set against a light blue background with a subtle pattern of overlapping circles.

Find People You Know

- With a colleague I created Bigulo.com, which is **a search engine for social networks**.
- While building Bigulo, we discovered some interesting facts and figures about Bebo and its usage which we put into 2 press releases.

Bebo

- Bebo is a social network site
- Social networks are websites that allow you to create your own web page with your details
- You can then express relationships between you and other people on the network, usually in the form of "Friends".

Other Social Networks

- There are hundreds of social networks out there, For a variety of reasons Bebo gained a strong market share in Ireland
- Other networks include
 - MySpace
 - Facebook
 - LinkedIn
 - Friendster

Bebo

- Began in 2004 as a small website to allow you to stay in touch with friends from around the world.
- Was valued at \$8,000 at the end of 2004.
- Has experienced **significant** growth since then.

Bebo

2004 -\$8,000 2 employees

2007 -

Bebo

2004 -\$8,000, 2 employees

2007 -

\$1,000,000,000*

22 employees (as listed on website)

* Valuation according to Mashable.com

A quick tour of Bebo



The screenshot shows a Bebo profile page for a user named Des Traynor. At the top, there are navigation tabs: All, White Board, Photos, Blog, Quiz, and Comments. The profile name is Des Traynor <destraynor>. The profile picture is a large yellow smiley face. Below the picture is a red 'ONLINE NOW' badge. To the right of the picture, there is a bio: 'My name is Des Traynor, I go to XYZ School and I hang around with the following friends....'. Below the bio are three friends listed with asterisks: John Smith, Jane Murphy, and Michael Murphy. To the right of the bio is a quote: 'I spend my weekends - Hanging around in my hometown drinking'. Below the bio and quote are several statistics: Gender (Male), Age (25), Profile Views (1002 times), Last Active (Online Now!), Hometown (Castleknock), and Country (Ireland). Below these statistics is the user's URL: http://destraynor.bebo.com. At the bottom left, there are five links: Add Skype Now, Upload Profile Photo, Edit Profile, Change Skins, and Get a Bebo Badge! At the bottom right, there is a link: Add Other Half Of Me.

All White Board Photos Blog Quiz Comments

Des Traynor <destraynor>



ONLINE NOW

My name is Des Traynor, I go to XYZ School and I hang around with the following friends....

- * John Smith
- * Jane Murphy
- * Michael Murphy

I spend my weekends
- Hanging around in my hometown drinking

Gender
Male

Age
25

Profile Views
1002 times

Last Active
Online Now!

Hometown
Castleknock

Country
Ireland

Des's URL
<http://destraynor.bebo.com>

[Add Other Half Of Me](#)

- [Add Skype Now](#)
- [Upload Profile Photo](#)
- [Edit Profile](#)
- [Change Skins](#)
- [Get a Bebo Badge!](#)

<http://destraynor.bebo.com>,

It is worth noting the average Bebo page has a lot more public information than mine

What we can find on a Bebo page

- Name
- Location
- Contact Details
- Age / Gender
- Photographs
- List of friends
- Conversations with Friends
- Online Diary

The images demonstrating each of these have been removed for this section of the talk so as not to invade my privacy , or anyone elses.

To verify simply visit any bebo page

Too much Information!

- How difficult would it be to pretend to be that girl?
- Identity Theft made too easy
- Giving away far too much **personal information**

How did I get that page?

- You're probably thinking "*Des, thats the exception, not the rule*"
- Unfortunately, that's the rule , not the exception
- I got that page from www.bebo.com, and there are plenty more like it.
- About 25 million more

www.bebo.com



[Sign In](#) ➔

[Home](#)

[Bands](#)

[TV](#)

[Register](#)

[Help](#)



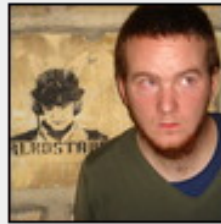
Bands



[delorentos](#)
<delorentosmusic>



[The Savage Jazz](#)
<the-savage-jazz>



[Ciarán Nestor Music](#)
<cnestor>



[The Ride](#)
<the-ride>



[Midnight Moses](#)
<midnightmoses>



[Psalms](#)
<ukarau>

Beboers



[<Away-With-Da-Fairies>](#)



[<xXorielXx>](#)



[<lindanolan25>](#)



[<nicnichola>](#)



[<-JenL->](#)



[<xxSarah-Mc-Donaldxx>](#)

Username or Email or [Register >>](#)







Featured Sponsored Profiles

www.bebo.com







The screenshot shows the Bebo website interface. At the top left is the Bebo logo. To its right is a search bar and a 'Sign In' link. Below these are navigation tabs for 'Home', 'Bands', 'TV', 'Register', and 'Help'. A large red banner with white abstract shapes is positioned below the navigation. The main content area is divided into two columns. The left column is titled 'Bands' and features a grid of six band profile cards. The right column is titled 'Beboers' and features a grid of six user profile cards. A blue arrow points from the word 'Here' (located between the two column titles) to the 'Beboers' title. At the bottom left, there is a registration form with the text 'Username or Email', a text input field containing 'BigulosMostWanted', and a 'Register >>' link. At the bottom right, the text 'Featured Sponsored Profiles' is visible.

Bands **Here** → **Beboers**

Bands Section:

-  [delorentos](#)
<delorentosmusic>
-  [The Savage Jazz](#)
<the-savage-jazz>
-  [Ciarán Nestor Music](#)
<cnestor>
-  [The Ride](#)
<the-ride>
-  [Midnight Moses](#)
<midnightmoses>
-  [Psalms](#)
<ukarau>

Beboers Section:

-  [<Away-With-Da-Fairies>](#)
-  [<xXorielXx>](#)
-  [<lindanolan25>](#)
-  [<nicnichola>](#)
-  [<-JenL->](#)
-  [<xxSarah-Mc-Donaldxx>](#)

Username or Email or [Register >>](#)

Featured Sponsored Profiles

So what can we do

- The goal is to educate people about whats sensible online, without scaring them or using fear tactics
- Unfortunately the media resorts to shock stories and the blame game, with no attempt to change the situation

A culture of fear

- When terrorist attacks were at their absolute peak, 75% of people said they were fearful of flying.
- They were 6 times more likely to die from food poisoning contracted from a bad airport restaurant
- But that doesn't sell newspapers

People don't understand probability

- That's why people play the lotto
 - It **could** be you. (But it's not likely)
- That's why bookmakers drive BMWs, but their customers are usually on their 7th NCT
- That's why people smoke cigarettes
 - No 100% guarantee of lung cancer, but in all cases your lungs will degrade until you have almost zero lung capacity.

The media and fear

- Fear sells. Education doesn't.
- Parents are easy targets for 2 reasons
 1. They care about their children
 2. They might not understand what it is they are being told to be afraid of
- Bebo isn't anything new, it's just made to look that way.
- We've seen all this before

1999

- " With the new craze of text messaging, Children are now **exposed** and **vulnerable** to receiving explicit text messages from sexual **predators**"

The Star, Front page.

2001

- "Camera Phones now mean that children can and **will receive pornographic images** without their consent direct to their mobile. Recently an **explicit** photograph was taken of a young girl in Cork which has been passed around cyberspace and now **every child has it**"

Mirror Ireland, Column piece

2004

- "Video phones now allow children to create, distribute and download pornographic images. Children as young as 7 own video phones with these capabilities, it's only a matter of time before paedophiles engage your children in video chat..."

2006

- "Schoolgirls putting details of themselves on the internet are at **extremely high risk** of falling victim to paedophiles. Read our chat transcript between a reporter and a suspected sexual predator"

Daily Mail 2006

Fear

- Lets agree that we won't be afraid or worried or uncertain of new technologies such as Bebo.
- Fear won't change anything, learning about them will.

Learning about Bebo

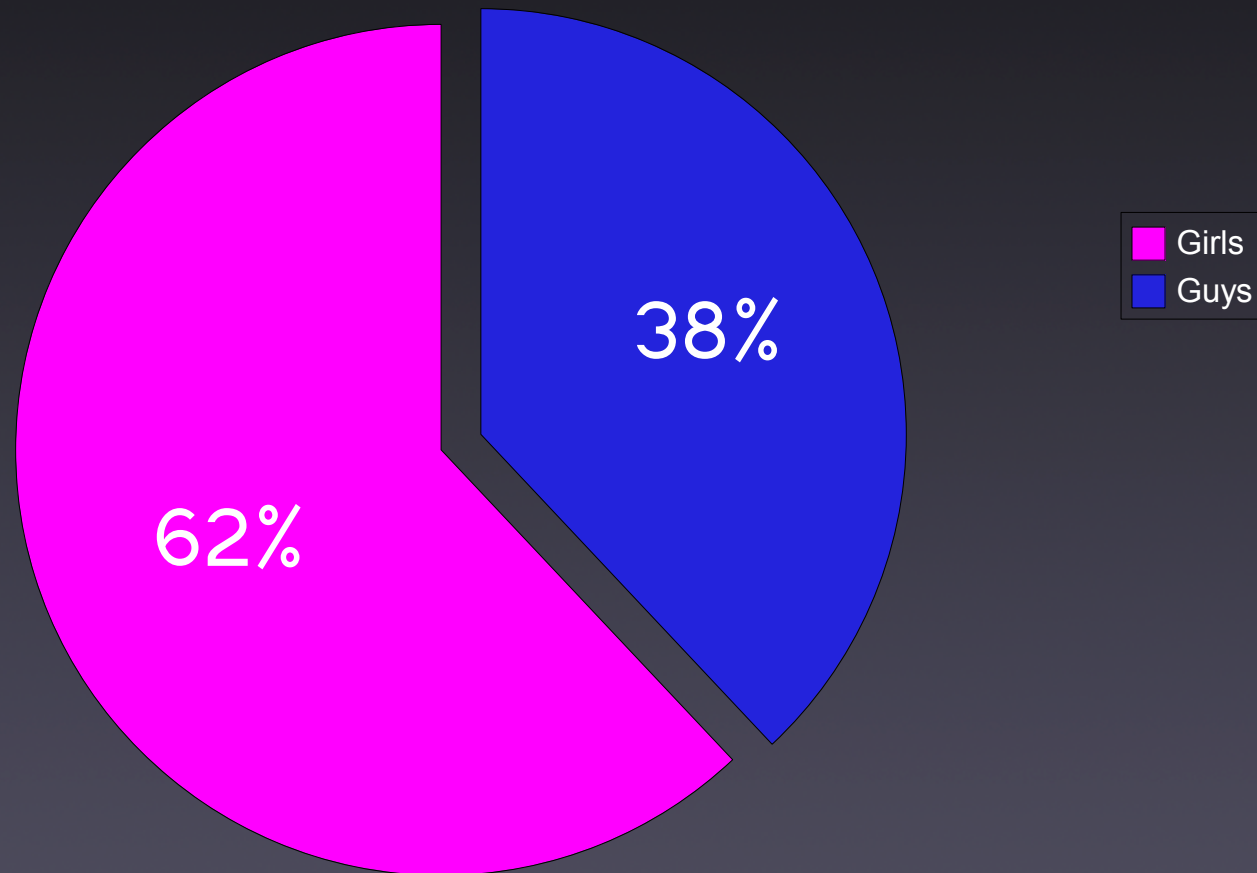


1,000,000

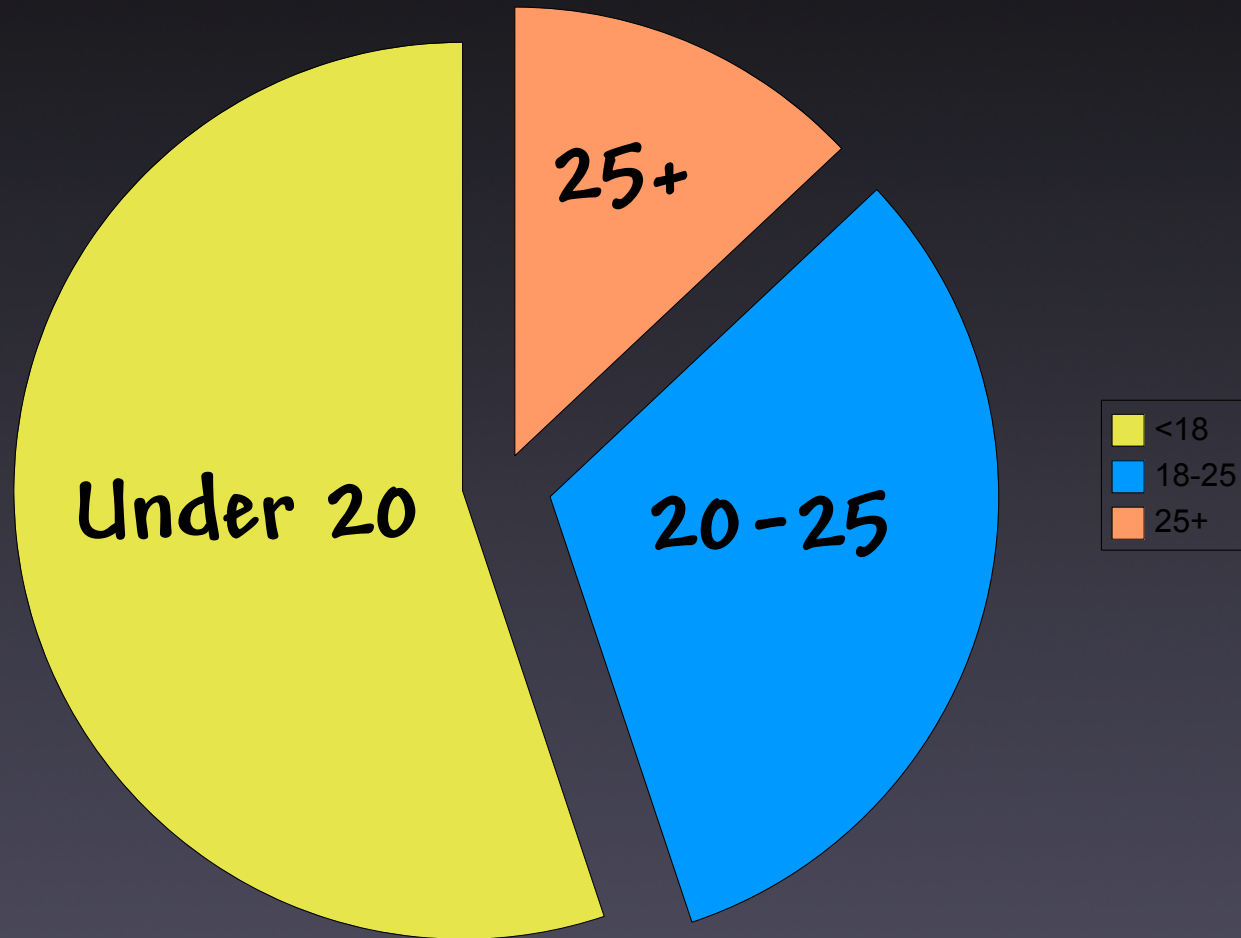
Irish accounts in 2006

Learning about Bebo

Gender Breakdown



Age Breakdown



The majority of Bebo websites are public

- A survey we ran through Bigulo.com revealed that most bebo websites are public.
- Public websites present some dangers
 - They allow for unrequested contact with strangers
 - They let people find too much information about you.

Rule #1 – Trust

- You should **only trust people** on Bebo that **you have met in real life.**
- Behind a monitor, anyone can be anyone, and you have no easy way to check.
- Lets have a look at a scenario

Sample scenario



Sample scenario

- Teenagers and particularly female teenagers are most likely to fall for these infatuations.
- At some point in the act the guy admits he is actually a **little older**, but would still like to meet up
- A naive girl might fall for it, if the dangers hadn't been explained accordingly.

Rule 1

- Don't trust anyone you haven't met in real life.
- In Bebo terms, don't accept anyone as a friend, unless you actually **are** their friend.

Rule 2. Be careful what you say

- 7% of the websites we studied contained enough personal information initiate contact outside of Bebo. i.e.
 - Phone numbers
 - Street names
 - Timetables
 - Plans for the weekend.
- This can land you in all sorts of trouble

Be careful what you say

- Everything you say online is there to be found by anyone.
- Insult your teacher, it can be found
- Give out about your boss, you can get caught.
- Placing this information on Bebo, is similar to posting it in a shop window. People read it.

Real Scenario

- (Names Changed)
- Gwen decides to go out drinking on a Thursday night.
- She announces her plans on Bebo, and her friends go out with her.

Friday Morning



Gwen rings in sick, telling her manager she has that "flu that's going around". The manager believes her, and tells her to rest over the weekend.

Friday Afternoon



With the hangover lifted, Gwen starts **posting pictures on Bebo** of the big night out.

Discussion breaks out about who is most hungover, and they plan another night out.

Monday Morning

Gwens manager **finds her Bebo page** either through internet history, bigulo, google, or other means.

Gwen shows up for work, telling everyone she feels much better having rested the whole weekend.

The pictures and messages say otherwise



Monday Afternoon



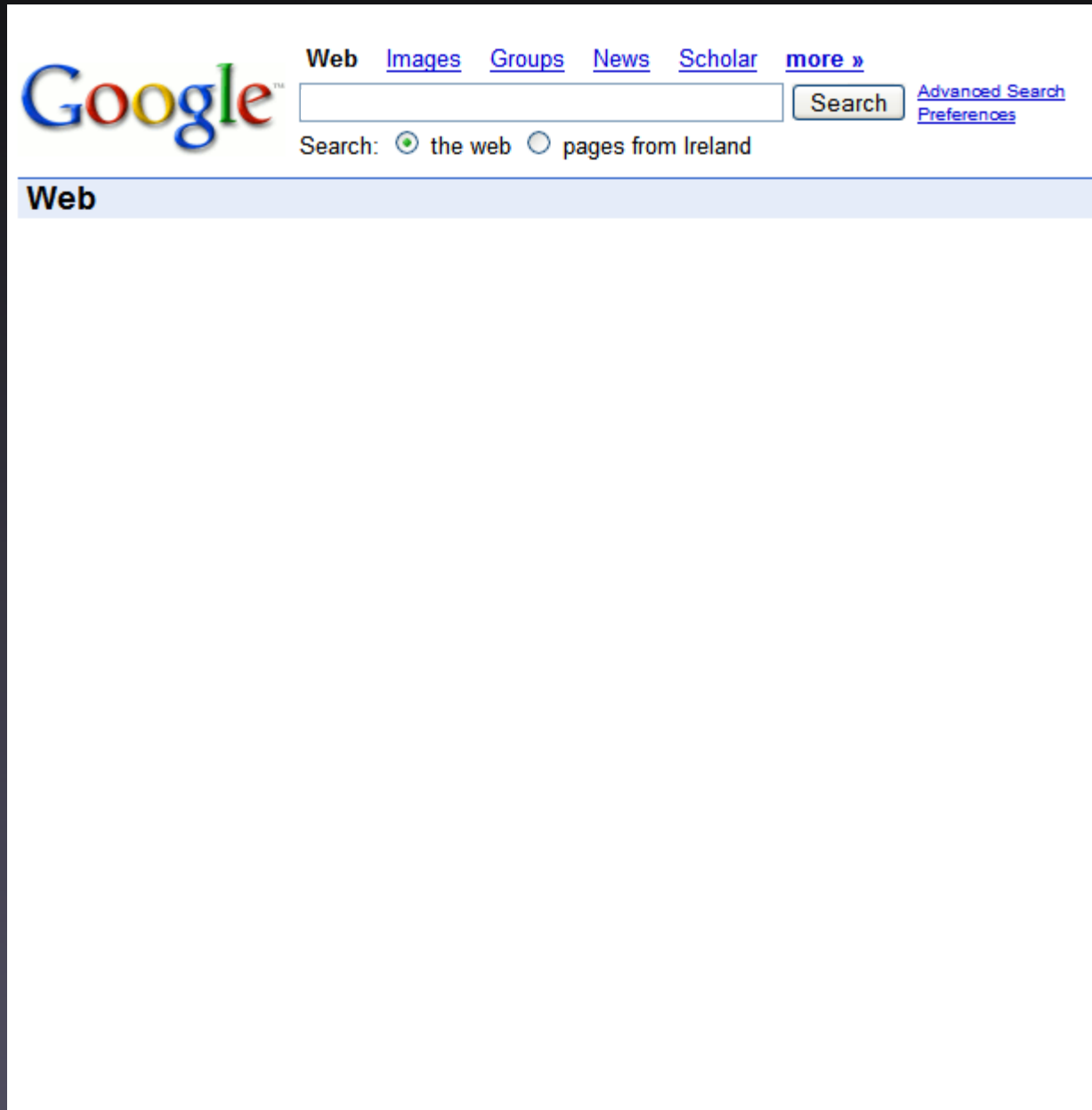
The image shows a screenshot of an Inland Revenue P45 form. The top left corner features the Inland Revenue logo and the text "1 PAYE Reference". The main header area is dark blue with white text that reads "Details of employee leaving work" and "Copy for employee ★". To the right of this header, it says "P45" and "Part 1A". Below the header, there are two input fields labeled "Office number" and "Reference number".

Gwen gets a surprise when she is presented with a shiny new **P45**, accompanied with print outs of her drinking tequila on Thursday night.

If its online once, it's online forever

- Sites such as www.archive.org store the entire history of the internet, every page, every day, all the details.
- Sites such as [google](http://google.com) scan the internet every day, there is no privacy unless your page is private.

Searching Google for íosagáin



168 results.
No doubt your
kids are in here
somewhere

Be careful what you display.

- If you want privacy, keep a private page
- If you want publicity, don't say things you don't want read.
- Deleting the content doesn't get rid of it. It's still archived.
- Same goes for pictures. Again, especially relevant to girls.

Final Rule

- Unless you know what you're doing, **keep a private profile.**
- Private profiles can only be viewed by friends, make sure you trust all your friends.
- It's important that children/teenagers know that what they say online can and will be read by anyone, forever.
- The pictures they post, or even email, can come back to haunt them.

Private pages vs Public

- Public pages provide you with a web address
 - e.g. <http://destraynor.bebo.com>
- Easiest way to spot a public page is in their details, you will see "Gwens URL:" , or "Cians URL:"
- If you don't see one, the page is private.

Communication

- Bebo is just another form of communication.
- The same old rules apply.
 - Don't talk to strangers
 - Be careful who you gossip with.
 - Don't lie (or get caught lying)
 - Don't say things you don't believe or wouldn't defend

How to see what they're up to

- View their history
 - Control + Shift + H in Internet Explorer
 - Look for bebo.com
- If it asks you to **log in**, that's a good thing! That means the page is private.
- You're not going to be able to monitor your children's online activity 24/7, so don't try.
- Additionally, don't go buying expensive software that claims it can do it!

At the end of the day

- It's all about trust and common sense.
- It's important to remember that, because the next technology is only around the corner.
- It will most likely be video chatrooms, or 2nd life, or something like that.
- The same principles apply.

In Conclusion

- The internet is only a scary place when you don't understand it.
- I hope I've erased some of the fears you may have with sites such as Bebo.
- I'll be around for questions.
- If you want the slides from this talk, you can get them at <http://destraynor.com/bebotalk/>

Thank you for your time

Des Traynor