Be pragmatic, be opportunistic

Strategies for 'Making the Case'

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The case for what exactly?

Ontology?

• In practice, the way the term ‘ontology’ is used within computing covers many quite different things:
  • Building OWL models,
  • Building high quality data models.

• It might help to work out what ‘ontology’ you are making the case for.

• On the other hand, it might not ...
From a marketing perspective, it may seem that there are immediate benefits in equivocating between the different senses/uses of ontology.

- Why not claim that building an OWL file will capture the meaning and guarantee inter-operability (as I have seen people do)?
- In the medium term, this undermines trust – which may not be a business issue for some people, but will be for others.
- How do we deal with this? Do we need a strategy for stopping people making seriously misleading cases?
No commercial case for ontology

One cannot, in principle, make a commercial case for ontology per se.

Ontology is a tool - one needs to make a case for using this tool to solve some problem(s).

Examples of problems:

- Semantic web interoperability
- Legacy modernisation
  - (this is one problem I work on)

One issue is that ‘ontology’ in its many forms has multiple uses across multiple problems.

- This will NOT sell – you need to pick a use/problem.
  - (Advice given to me 20 years ago.)
Where is ‘ontology’ on the diffusion curve?
• My guess – ‘innovator’.

So, you cannot sell on the basis of:
• “All the market leaders are using it.”
• “Here are a hundred and one sites using it.”

Need to:
• Sell a vision
• Sell to an innovator
• Work on greed and fear

Be opportunistic!!
• There is no strategy!