

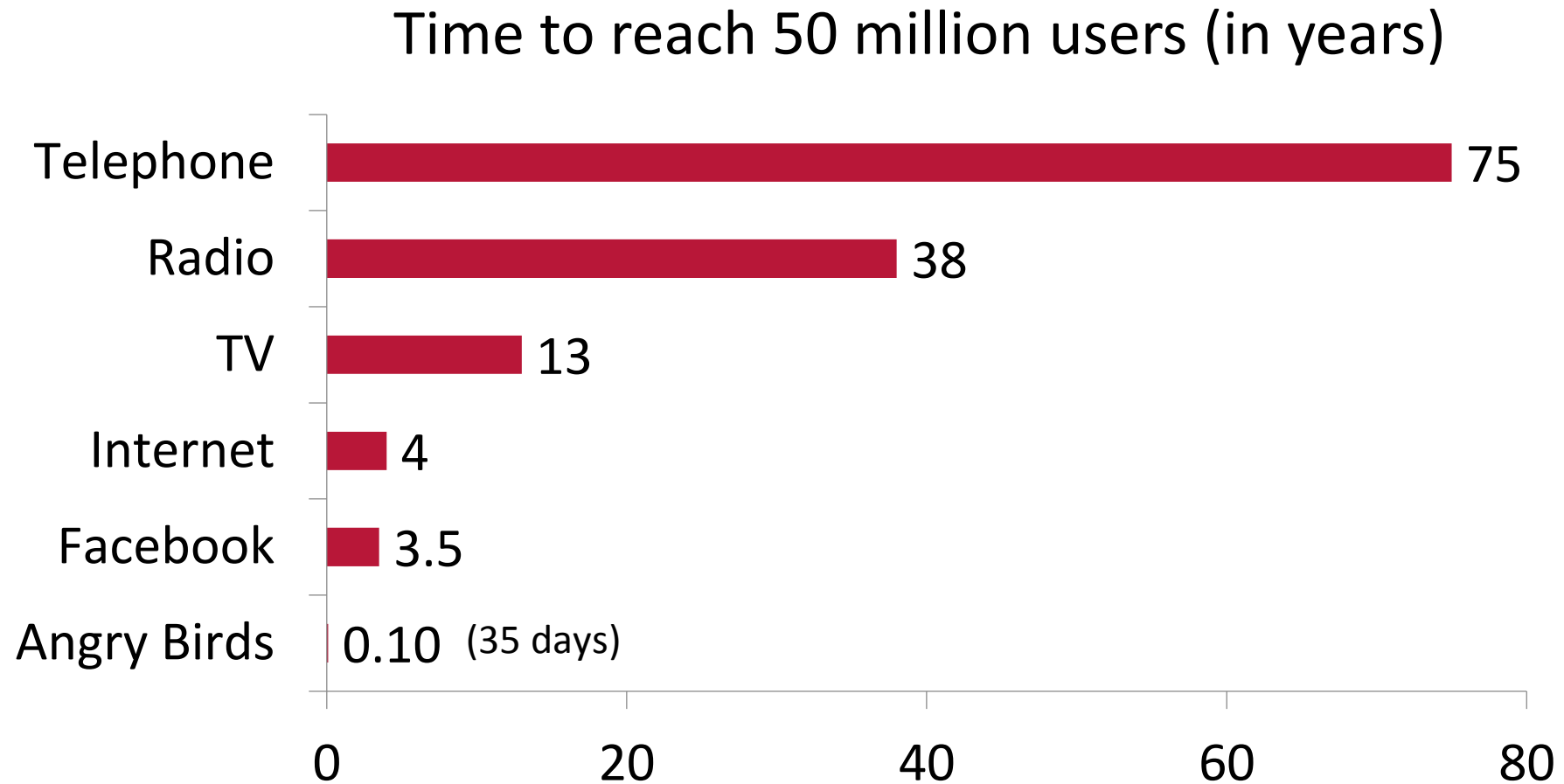
# Comments on World Development Report 2016

HKUST IEMS Conference on  
Urbanization, Structural change  
and Employment  
Hong Kong, Dec 13, 2015

Piotr Lewandowski

- The report is policy oriented, supposed to be accessible to a general public  
– but it's still secret so I refer to presentations
- Asks an important question whether the internet / digital revolution accelerates development and under which conditions it could do that best
- Uses a wide array of statistical tools, background papers and case-studies
- Is cautiously optimistic

# Acceleration is there, but does it really matter?



Source: Frey, Osborne (2015)

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# Accelerating Growth

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- Is it about sectoral impacts or general purpose technology?
- Aggregate growth impact:
  - Is the productivity paradox now solved?
  - Was the ICT contribution to growth in the emerging countries after 2005 really twice as big as in the developed countries?
  - Michaels & Graetz (2015) paper on industrial robots – sth similar possible?
- Do firm-level adjustments in ICT use translate into aggregate effects?

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# Expanding Opportunities

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- The interplay between technology and labour supply needs more attention
- Distinction between routine cognitive and routine manual tasks / jobs crucial
- What is the task content of occupations in low- and middle-income countries and how it relates to wages and offshoring globally?
- What is / will be the inequality of opportunity component of inequality driven by ICT revolution?

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# Policy Implications

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- Standard World Bank recipes
- How could we teach digital skills – it's not enough to have computers in schools neither just use them (Falck, Mang, Woessmann, 2015)
- Where is the Holy Grail of effective life-long learning?

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## Final remark / message to WDR team

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- Please make all the data collected for WDR digitally available to spur combinatorial innovation by the research community

Thank you for your attention

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