

# Collecting Social Media for the 2015 NSW Election

---

Brendan Somes – State Library of New South Wales  
Stephen Wan - Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial  
Research Organisation Data 61



Just In

Australia

World

Business

Sport

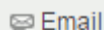
Analysis &amp; Opinion

Fact Check

Programs



Print



Email



Facebook



Twitter



More

# From pamphlets to tweets: Collecting New South Wales election material through the ages

702 ABC Sydney By John Donegan

Updated 12 Mar 2015, 1:19pm

Election campaigns and the way candidates communicate with voters have changed so much over the years that the State Library of New South Wales has asked for people to help identify important material it should keep for its collection.

The library is always on the look out for historic printed material and more recently turned its focus to digital election material.

Senior curator Louise Denoon said the collection went back to the 1840s, but one difficulty was understanding the meaning and importance of historic material as elections have changed so much over time.



PHOTO: A cartoon from a 1932 anti-Labor election pamphlet.  
(Supplied: SLNSW)

MAP: Sydney 2000



# Introduction

---

- State Library of New South Wales – to collect, preserve and make accessible documentary record of life in New South Wales
- Historically included collecting newspapers, books, serials,
- Now includes social media
- Social media is documenting life
- Working with CSIRO since 2012 and their social media analytics tool, Vizie, to collect social media.
- The NSW Election

# Presentation

---

- Related Work
- The Collection
- Vizie
- Lessons Learnt
- Conclusions

# The Challenges of Collecting Social Media about Elections

General social media collection:

- Set up queries, collect data, check for non-relevant content, refine queries

Social media collection for Events:

- Additional task: evaluating the topical and geographical coverage of the collection

Possible reasons for refinements:

- Gap in collection framework, evolving use of hashtags

# Related Work

---

Start with existing best practice to refine our data collection methods:

- Pandora project:
  - Provides organisation of data
  - Focuses on official and candidate-generated content
  - May not capture community-generated content on public forums
- Computation Social Science related work
  - Twitter studies of elections in the Netherlands, UK, Austria, Singapore
  - Predict outcomes, examine sentiment
  - Learn from different data collection mechanisms: variants of candidate and election names, accounts
  - Previous data sizes were “small”: approx. 7000-16,000 posts

# The Election

---

- State Election held 28 March 2015
- Lower House/Legislative Assembly – 93 seats/electorates
- Upper House/Legislative Council – 42 seats (21 each election)
- 504 candidates nominated for 93 electorates
- 394 candidates nominated for 21 Upper House seats
- Four major parties – Liberal, Labor, National, and Greens
- Total number of voters – 5,044,562

# Collection Framework

- Primary subjects based on NLA Pandora. Example: *Candidates, Parties, Interest Groups and Media*
- Secondary terms. Example: *Candidates – Australian Labor Party and Interest Group – Rural*
- #nswpol under *Topic-General*
- *Topic-Mining* included #CSG, #LiverpoolPlains, #nocsg
- #newapproach #noplanBaird #FoleyFail #RebuildNSW, #KeepNSWWorking.



# Identifying Content

1. Identify candidates, parties and their digital sites – eg Website, Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, Google Plus
2. Enter classification terms into Vizie
3. Enter queries – keywords, account names, RSS feeds, subscriptions - and assign to classification

For example - @mikebaird assign to Candidates – Liberal Party.

# Ongoing Collection

Ongoing monitoring of the election campaign and what was happening on social media.

*#leadersdebate #March4 #SolidaritySelfie*

Election Day - *“below the line”, “polling place”, “vote 1”, #electionday, #fourmoreyears, #newspoll, “NSW election day”, “vote nsw”, “vote today”, “voting nsw” and “voting today”.*

# Total Collection

December 2014 to April 2015

520,000 posts collected

3,800 queries and subscriptions

28 classifications

13,000 unique users

*#nswpol* (98,557 posts), *#nswvotes*  
(65,913), *@mikebairdMP* (30,667), *#csg*  
(20,248)

# Total Collection

Retrieved **520,664** posts with monitoring activity [All], media type [All], timezone [All], period [01.12.2014~30.04.2015] and word filter[None] [Export posts](#)



# The User Interface

**Vizie** Dashboards Overview Data Insights Engagements Config Help

Data Source Health Indicator: Facebook [✓] Google [✗] GooglePlus [✓] Instagram [✓] Twitter [✗] Youtube [✓] [Authorise Collection](#)

Retrieved 3800 queries and 38 monitoring activities in 38 top level groups.  
Found 14 queries matching: ELECTION DAY  
Filter type: ☒ Navigate ☐ Search

[CSV Import](#) [CSV Export](#) [Generate report](#)

Activity Context **ELECTION DAY** [Add Query](#) to this Context [Create](#) [Refine](#)

ELECTION DAY	Items to Report	Activity	Status	Data sources	Status	Date range	Annual	Date Status
<a href="#">Create Activity</a>	Check All: <input type="checkbox"/>		All	Display: All search: <input type="text"/>	All	Enter date ~ Enter date		All
<a href="#">Go up a level</a>	<input type="checkbox"/>	ELECTION DAY TOPIC General	<input type="checkbox"/>	#fourmoreyears	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	~	<input type="checkbox"/>	In range
	<input type="checkbox"/>	ELECTION DAY	<input type="checkbox"/>	morgan poll	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	~	<input type="checkbox"/>	In range
	<input type="checkbox"/>	ELECTION DAY	<input type="checkbox"/>	#newspoll	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	~	<input type="checkbox"/>	In range
	<input type="checkbox"/>	ELECTION DAY	<input type="checkbox"/>	"below the line"	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	~	<input type="checkbox"/>	In range
	<input type="checkbox"/>	ELECTION DAY	<input type="checkbox"/>	"vote 1"	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	~	<input type="checkbox"/>	In range
	<input type="checkbox"/>	ELECTION DAY	<input type="checkbox"/>	#electionday	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	~	<input type="checkbox"/>	In range
	<input type="checkbox"/>	ELECTION DAY	<input type="checkbox"/>	"polling place"	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	~	<input type="checkbox"/>	In range
	<input type="checkbox"/>	ELECTION DAY	<input type="checkbox"/>	election day	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	~	<input type="checkbox"/>	In range
	<input type="checkbox"/>	ELECTION DAY	<input type="checkbox"/>	polling booth	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	~	<input type="checkbox"/>	In range

# The User Interface

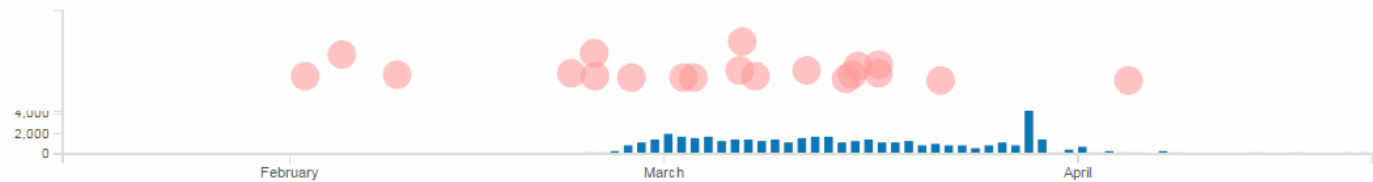
Retrieved 468,598 posts with category rule ["All"], monitoring activity ["All"], source ["All"], media type ["All"] and key word ["All"] and period [ 15/01/2015 ~ 30/04/2015 ] [search](#)

Rule-based categories ▼

[Reset conditions](#)

3756 : CATEGORY\_ELECTORATE\_MANLY  
3078 : CATEGORY\_ELECTORATE\_SYDNEY  
3062 : CATEGORY\_ELECTORATE\_NEWTOWN  
2628 : CATEGORY\_ELECTORATE\_LISMORE  
2395 : CATEGORY\_ELECTORATE\_NEWCASTLE  
1940 : CATEGORY\_ELECTORATE\_BALMAIN  
1458 : CATEGORY\_ELECTORATE\_LIVERPOOL  
1402 : CATEGORY\_ELECTORATE\_BALLINA  
1378 : CATEGORY\_ELECTORATE\_DUBBO  
1169 : CATEGORY\_ELECTORATE\_TAMWORTH  
903 : CATEGORY\_ELECTORATE\_PENRITH  
893 : CATEGORY\_ELECTORATE\_MAITLAND  
885 : CATEGORY\_ELECTORATE\_GOULBURN  
861 : CATEGORY\_ELECTORATE\_CAMPBELLTOWN  
807 : CATEGORY\_ELECTORATE\_SUMMER HILL  
754 : CATEGORY\_ELECTORATE\_OATLEY  
705 : CATEGORY\_ELECTORATE\_ORANGE  
686 : CATEGORY\_ELECTORATE\_NORTHERN TABLELAND  
593 : CATEGORY\_ELECTORATE\_CANTERBURY  
577 : CATEGORY\_ELECTORATE\_BATHURST  
572 : CATEGORY\_ELECTORATE\_MONARO  
562 : CATEGORY\_ELECTORATE\_KIAMA  
558 : CATEGORY\_ELECTORATE\_PARRAMATTA  
540 : CATEGORY\_ELECTORATE\_GOSFORD  
528 : CATEGORY\_ELECTORATE\_STRATHFIELD  
523 : CATEGORY\_ELECTORATE\_COOGEE  
513 : CATEGORY\_ELECTORATE\_VAUCLOSE  
513 : CATEGORY\_ELECTORATE\_PROSPECT  
465 : CATEGORY\_ELECTORATE\_COOTAMUNDRA  
464 : CATEGORY\_ELECTORATE\_BEGA  
463 : CATEGORY\_ELECTORATE\_MIRANDA  
442 : CATEGORY\_ELECTORATE\_RYDE  
440 : CATEGORY\_ELECTORATE\_THE ENTRANCE  
418 : CATEGORY\_ELECTORATE\_MURRAY  
414 : CATEGORY\_ELECTORATE\_SHELLHARBOUR  
397 : CATEGORY\_ELECTORATE\_UPPER HUNTER  
394 : CATEGORY\_ELECTORATE\_TWEED  
374 : CATEGORY\_ELECTORATE\_BLACKTOWN

**Trends** [Circles are shared websites and blue bars represent the volume of collected posts]. Fetch top  news. [Show or hide news in table](#)



**Sources**

82898 : SRC\_TWITTER\_STREAM\_TERM\_#NSWPOL  
64499 : SRC\_TWITTER\_STREAM\_TERM\_#NSWVOTES  
30670 : SRC\_TWITTER\_STREAM\_TERM\_@MIKEBAIRDMP  
20249 : SRC\_TWITTER\_STREAM\_TERM\_#CSG  
12510 : SRC\_TWITTER\_CONVERSATION  
11974 : SRC\_TWITTER\_STREAM\_TERM\_NSWLABOR  
8834 : SRC\_TWITTER\_STREAM\_TERM\_@LUKE\_FOLEYNS  
7173 : SRC\_TWITTER\_STREAM\_TERM\_GREENSNSW  
6818 : SRC\_TWITTER\_STREAM\_TERM\_#LIVERPOOLPLAIN  
6177 : SRC\_TWITTER\_STREAM\_TERM\_#CAC  
5662 : SRC\_TWITTER\_STREAM\_TERM\_#WESTCONNEX  
5296 : SRC\_SOCIALMENTION-#NSWPOL

**Media types**

380328 : microblog  
44137 : facebook  
22442 : misc  
10596 : news  
4268 : picture  
2520 : video  
2336 : blog  
814 : gov  
783 : comment  
192 : forum  
153 : question  
13 : profile

**Key words**

2993 : abbot  
2820 : privatisation  
1920 : electricity  
1789 : government  
1602 : good  
1483 : state  
1301 : great  
1254 : vote  
1247 : campaign  
1246 : community  
1233 : public  
1211 : premier


**Posts** [Analyse topics](#) [See more](#)

[Apr 23 11:20] :  
No description is available.  
<http://www.jobs-central.info/mobile/jobs.php?q=general-labor&l=Auburn%20IN&mi=&pn=1>

[Apr 23 11:19] :  
With Ernie Barfield at Bupa Berry's pre-ANZAC day service - a 103 year old veteran who saw action on the western front. A hero of our time - Lest we forget!  
<https://www.facebook.com/photo.php?fbid=10153259068045680>

[Apr 23 11:19] :

# Key Issues

**NEWS** 

LOCATION: **Canberra, ACT** [Change](#)

[Just In](#) [Australia](#) [World](#) [Business](#) [Sport](#) [Analysis & Opinion](#) [Fact Check](#) [Programs](#)

[Print](#) [Email](#) [Facebook](#) [Twitter](#) [More](#)

## NSW election 2015: Seven key issues to watch during the campaign

By state political reporter [Sarah Gerathy](#)  
Updated 18 Mar 2015, 3:21pm

**New South Wales politics has been anything but boring in recent times, and there are some unusual and complicated factors at play in the 2015 election campaign, too.** [MAP: NSW](#)

State political reporter Sarah Gerathy takes a look at some of the key things to watch ahead of the March 28 vote.

---

### 1. The first test for new leaders

Freshly anointed Opposition Leader Luke Foley has just two months under his belt in the top job.


After replacing John Robertson as the state Labor Party leader early in the new year, Mr Foley will have to work hard to ensure voters know who he is and what he stands for.

He also faces the additional challenge of having to secure a spot in the Lower House after sitting in the Upper House since 2010.

He is running for the relatively safe Labor electorate of Auburn, after incumbent MP Barbara Perry agreed not to recontest the seat, but is yet to prove himself on the hustings.

Mr Foley is also facing off against a Premier who is a seasoned campaigner and riding high in the opinion polls.

Mike Baird's personal approving ratings have been consistently impressive since he became Premier in April last year.



**A NEW APPROACH FOR NSW**

[Profile: Luke Foley](#)

The NSW Opposition Leader discusses faith, family and relishing the 'battle of ideas'.

## Key Issues

### EDUCATION

#### Clock ticks on Andrew's choice of trade



**ALEXANDRA SMITH** | Cuts to TAFE are shaping as a major election issue, as students face higher fees for many courses, teaching staff is reduced and the roll-out of a new computer system causes major headaches.

### TRANSPORT

#### Liberals' tunnel vision



**JACOB SAULWICK** | It's the major issue at the March 28 election but both the Liberals' and Labor's transport policies have experts warning that getting around Sydney is unlikely to get any easier any time soon.

### HEALTH

#### Beyond waiting lists and emergency rooms



**AMY CORDEROY AND HARRIET ALEXANDER** | Our health system is the envy of the world. We have some of the best outcomes and lowest costs in everything from cancer to hospital errors.

### SOCIAL SERVICES

#### Lewis's early intervention paves way to uni



**RACHEL BROWNE** | Welfare groups are lobbying the state government for better disability support and more assistance with the cost of living for struggling families.

### TRUST

#### Finding trust in the wake of ICAC



**MICHAELA WHITBOURN** | The ICAC inquiries have eroded trust in major political parties. It could deliver an electoral windfall to wildcard candidates.

#### Domestic violence shattering lives



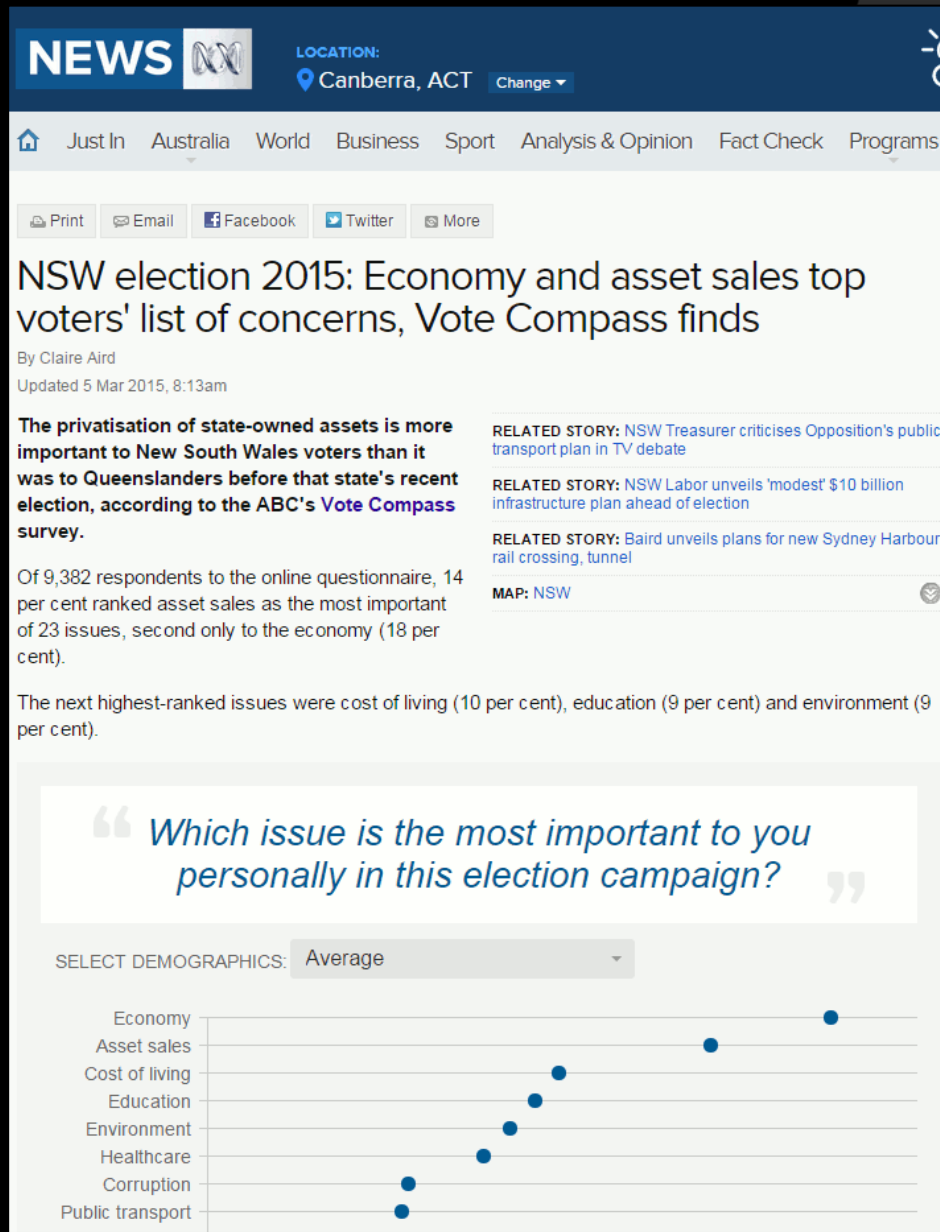
**RACHEL OLDING** | After working with the police and with battered women for two decades, Nardia Green thought she'd be the last person to let domestic violence creep into her own life.

#### Take the policy challenge



Choose which policy you like best and our ready reckoner will show which party you most align with.

# Key Issues



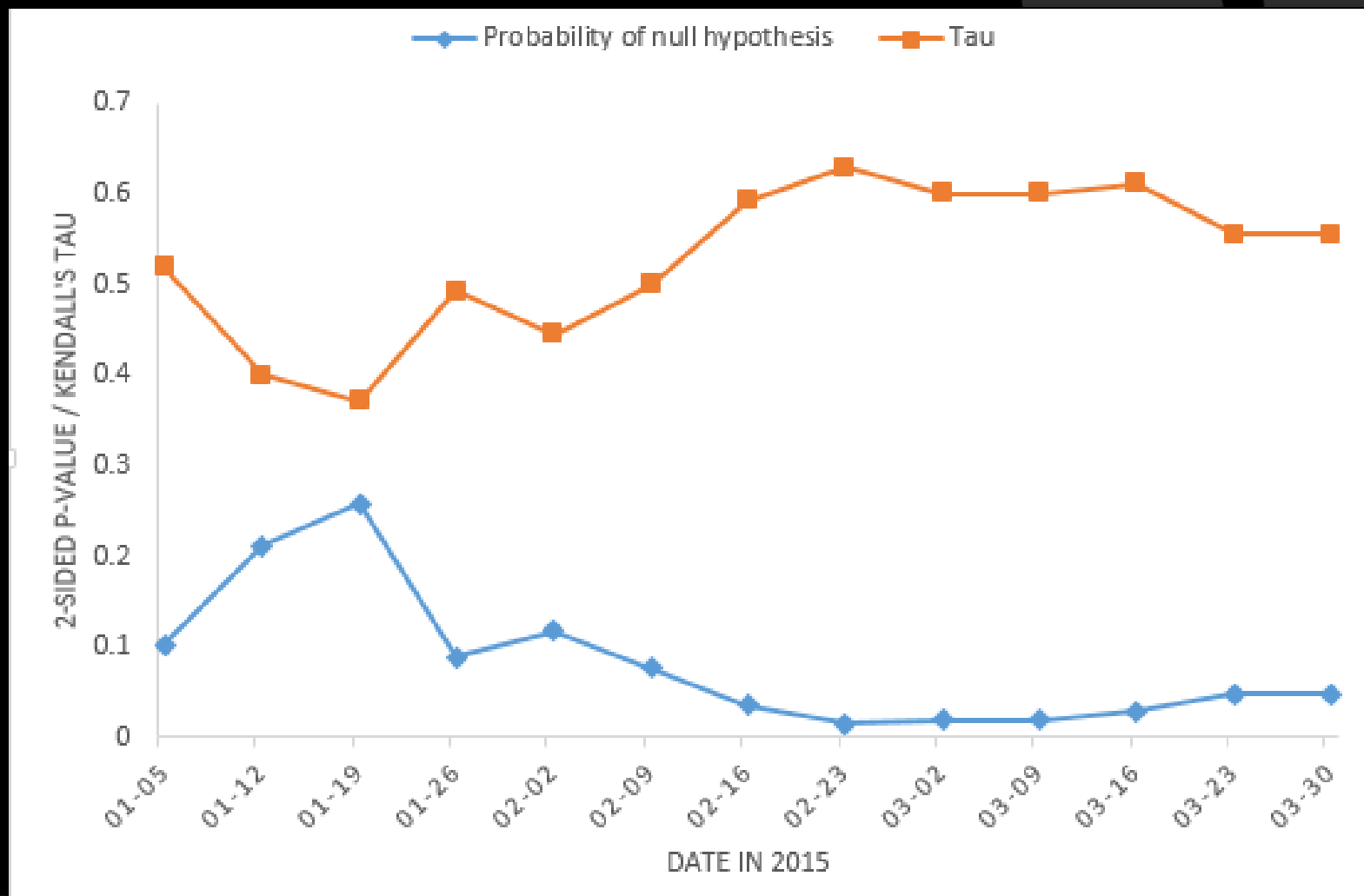


# ABC Vote Compass issues

#	Issue	#	Issue
1	Economy	13	Poverty
2	Asset sales	14	Housing
3	Cost of living	15	Taxation
4	Education	16	Defence
5	Environment	17	Population
6	Healthcare	18	Racism
7	Corruption	19	Petrol prices
8	Public transport	20	Drug abuse
9	Unemployment	21	Indigenous issues
10	Roads	22	Personal debt
11	Immigration	23	Drought relief
12	Crime		

Table 1: Ranked issues from Vote Compass.

# Lessons Learnt



# Conclusion

1. Social Media can be collected and queries curated
2. Quality Assurance – eg electorate coverage
3. Large scale collecting
4. Identifying candidates and their digital sites is resource intensive

# Last Word

Collected in real time

Made available in real time

Assist in understanding elections and life in  
New South Wales