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INFORMATION SHEET FOR PARTICIPANTS – 'MONETISATION IN THE MALAYSIAN BLOGOSPHERE' RESEARCH PROJECT

INTRODUCTION

I am Julian Hopkins, a PhD student at Monash University Sunway Campus. I started blogging in 2004, and I am now doing an anthropological study of the Malaysian blogosphere – in particular, I am looking at 'problogging' activities (i.e. bloggers using their blog to make some money). For example, I am interested to find out if some bloggers think that it is OK, or not, to use their blog to make money.

RESEARCH PROCEDURES

In order to gather data, I have started a blog so that I can try out the different aspects of blogging and problogging myself. You can see my blog at: www.julianhopkins.net.

However, I cannot only depend on my own experiences, so I am also gathering data by:

- Observing and archiving material from other blogs and commenters.
- Participating in online blogging-related activities.
- Participating in blogger events offline.
- Doing an online survey.
- Conducting in-depth interviews (either face-to-face or online).

RISKS AND BENEFITS

I do not believe that participants face any significant risks by participating in this research. However, some of this research may eventually be published or presented at conferences. So, material from your blog may be exposed to audiences you did not expect. Also, you may not approve of what I write about your blog and blogging-related activities.

I will do the following to guard against these risks and to protect your interests:

- **Protect your anonymity**: I will replace all blog names and blogger nicknames with non-related alternatives. In addition, to prevent direct quotes being traceable via a search engine, I will paraphrase any material taken from your blog. Your IP address will never be recorded.
- **Data security**: all data will be kept in a protected file on my computer, and any backups or hardcopies will kept in a locked cabinet.
- **Your feedback**: before presenting or publishing from the data I have collected with your help, I will make a reasonable attempt (e.g. emailing you drafts with a request to respond within a reasonable time period) to obtain your feedback and incorporate it into my work.

TIME AND LOCATION

- **Blog observation**: I will observe and archive blogs. You will not have to do anything for this.
- **Online survey**: The online survey is designed to be as short as possible. It will take about fifteen (15) minutes to fill out, and will stay online for a predetermined period.
- **Interviews**: Interviews will take about an hour, and will be arranged to suit your convenience. Preferably, they will be face-to-face, but online interviews are also possible

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FREEDOM TO WITHDRAW

Participation in this study is completely voluntary, and you may stop participating at any time you like. There will be no negative consequences if you do so. I would like to keep the data I have gathered, but you can ask me to destroy it if you like.

OFFER TO ANSWER ENQUIRIES

I look forward to having as much feedback as possible from participants, and have a sticky post on my blog especially for that. You may also contact me or my supervisor for further information:

Researcher name and contact details:	Supervisor name and contact details:
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Should you have any complaint concerning the manner in which this research (Project number: CF08/1410 - 2008000696) is conducted, please do not hesitate to contact the Monash University Standing Committee on Ethics in Research Involving Humans at the following address:

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