



INFORMATION RESOURCE CENTER

the U.S. Embassy in Ukraine

Information Technology E-Government E-Commerce

September 2007

“Internet in a Box” Brings Information to Developing World

Africa, India, Bangladesh, Azerbaijan, Haiti get eGranary Digital Library

<http://www.widernet.org/digitalLibrary/index.htm>

By Jeffrey Thomas
USINFO Staff Writer
17 July 2007

The eGranary grew out of the experience of Cliff Missen, a Fulbright scholar in Nigeria, who in 1999 witnessed how difficult it was for librarians to get good, fresh information into a patron’s hands. Missen, who now serves as co-director of WiderNet, started taking compact discs with information to the Nigerian university where he was teaching. That led to the concept of the eGranary.

People in developing countries “don’t have to wait for the Web,” Missen told USINFO. “Seven out of eight people in the world don’t have access to the Internet, and the few people in the developing world who do, spend an extraordinary amount of money to do so. With the eGranary they can have access overnight to 10 million documents without having to have any bandwidth.”

Yet the eGranary does more than provide instant access to books, journals and other documents; it offers “true information literacy,” Missen said. “It really does change the way people think about having access to information.”

<http://usinfo.state.gov/xarchives/display.html?p=washfile-english&y=2007&m=July&x=200707171533521CJsamohT0.8280146>



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INTERNET CENSORSHIP CONCERN FOR BUSINESSES AS WELL AS ACTIVISTS. Journalist Pain also
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VIOLENT TELEVISION PROGRAMMING AND ITS IMPACT ON CHILDREN. U.S. Federal Communications Commission. April 25, 2007. 07AD57907AD459



The average American family watches television 8 hours and 11 minutes daily, and children watch approximately 2 to 4 hours daily. By the time children begin first grade, they will have spent the equivalent of three school years watching television.

Both private and governmental entities are concerned about the adverse effects on children of excessive violence on television. Consequently, Congress asked the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) to investigate the negative effects of excessively violent programs, the government's ability to restrict broadcasts of these programs, and to

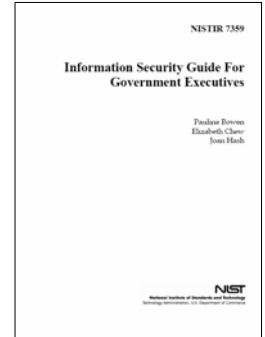
clearly define the phrase: "excessively violent programming that is harmful to children." This report is the results of the FCC's investigation.

http://hraunfoss.fcc.gov/edocs_public/attachmatch/FCC-07-50A1.pdf [pdf format, 39 pages]

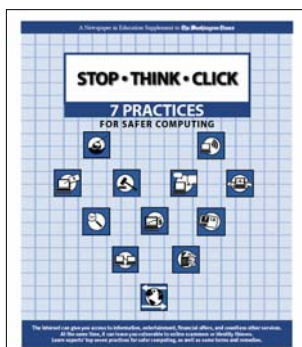
INFORMATION SECURITY GUIDE FOR GOVERNMENT EXECUTIVES. Pauline Bowen, Elizabeth Chew, and Joan Hash. Computer Security Division, Information Technology Laboratory, National Institute of Standards and Technology, U.S. Department of Commerce. January 2007.

Studies have shown that senior management's commitment to information security is the single most important element of the program's success. Meeting these needs requires senior leadership to focus on effective information security and integrate security strategies into daily operation. This report provides a "broad overview of information security program concepts to assist senior leaders in understanding how to oversee and support the development and implementation of information security programs."

<http://csrc.nist.gov/publications/nistir/ir7359/NISTIR-7359.pdf> [pdf format, 19 pages]



7 PRACTICES FOR SAFER COMPUTING. Federal Trade Commission. April 2007.



Thanks to the Internet, you can buy just about anything online, watch movies and t.v. shows, catch the latest news, discuss a topic that interests you, take classes, buy a book or download music and games, communicate with friends and family, meet new people...the list goes on. The flip-side, however, is that the Internet – and the anonymity it affords – also can give online scammers, hackers, and identity thieves access to your computer, personal information, finances, and more. The FTC believes that consumer education truly is the first line of defense for computer users against fraud and deception online. With awareness as your safety net, you can

minimize the chance of an Internet mishap. An aware computer user is more likely to

recognize a phishing e-mail, more likely to download a spyware detector, and far less likely to disclose, expose, or unwittingly share personal information.

The Federal Trade Commission (FTC), the nation's consumer protection agency, prepared this supplement with The Washington Times Newspapers in Education program. The articles provide practical tips to help you be on guard against Internet fraud, secure your computer, and protect your personal information. I hope you will keep them in mind as you take advantage of all the Internet has to offer—safely.

<http://www.ftc.gov/bcp/edu/pubs/consumer/tech/tec15.pdf>

THINK TANKS AND INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

A DIGITAL EDUCATION. By Timothy J. Ryan. American Enterprise Institute. July 20, 2007

The Internet puts you a few clicks away from the best college lectures in America. College is expensive. But if you are willing to settle for an education and don't need the extra frill of a degree, the Internet now offers a way to listen to first-rate instruction—the kind that would normally cost upwards of \$40,000 per year—for free. I'm referring to the rise of university podcasts: recordings of classes, lectures, and special events that are catalogued and made available online to anyone with the inclination to listen.

<http://american.com/archive/2007/july-0707/a-digital-education>

ECONOMISTS' STATEMENT ON NETWORK NEUTRALITY POLICY. Robert E. Litan, Senior Fellow, Economic Studies, Global Economy and Development; Robert Hahn, Nonresident Senior Fellow, Economic Studies. AEI-Brookings Joint Center for Regulatory Studies, March 2007

Network neutrality is a policy proposal that would regulate how network providers manage and price the use of their networks. Congress has introduced several bills on network neutrality. Proposed legislation generally would mandate that Internet service providers exercise no control over the content that flows over their lines and would bar providers from charging particular services more than others for preferentially faster access to the Internet. These proposals must be considered carefully in light of the underlying economics. Our basic concern is that most proposals aimed at implementing net neutrality are likely to do more harm than good.

<http://www3.brookings.edu/views/papers/litan/200703jointcenter.pdf>



THE US AND JAPAN PROVIDE THE STRONGEST ENVIRONMENTS FOR IT COMPETITIVENESS, FINDS THE ECONOMIST INTELLIGENCE UNIT. Business Software Alliance. July 11, 2007

Relatively few countries possess all the factors necessary to support a thriving information technology sector, but the United States, Japan, South Korea and the United Kingdom provide the strongest environments for IT competitiveness, a new study concludes.

As reflected in the Economist Intelligence Unit's "IT industry competitiveness index", these factors include an ample supply of skills, an innovation-friendly culture, world-class technology infrastructure, a robust legal regime and well-balanced government support, not to mention a competition-friendly business environment. Those countries possessing most of these "competitiveness enablers" are also home to high-performance IT industries: all but four of the top 22 countries in the Economist Intelligence Unit index are also among the world's top countries in terms of IT labour productivity.

<http://www.bsa.org/country/News%20and%20Events/News%20Archives/EIU-Study.aspx>

ILLEGAL DOWNLOADING AMONG YOUTH DROPS, REPORTS NEW STUDY. Survey Suggests Parental Rules Matter In Encouraging Good Internet Behavior. Business Software Alliance. May 22, 2007

The results of a recent nationwide survey released by the Business Software Alliance (BSA) show that illegal downloading of digital copyrighted works by youth (ages 8 to 18) has dropped by 24 percent in the last three years. The survey, first conducted in 2004, indicated that 60 percent of survey participants reported downloading software, music, movies, or games without paying for it; in 2006 the percentage of those who downloaded without paying dropped to 43 percent; and in 2007 the percentage decreased to 36 percent. Youth report that parental oversight is a significant motivator and key influencing factor in their online behavior.

<http://www.bsa.org/country/News%20and%20Events/News%20Archives/Illegal%20Downloading%20among%20Youth%20Drops.aspx>

THE 700 MHZ SPECTRUM: HOW ABOUT AN "OPEN" AUCTION? Jim Harper. Techknowledge, Issue #107. CATO. July 30, 2007

The Federal Communications Commission will soon vote on rules for a long overdue auction of licenses to use spectrum from 747 to 792 Megahertz. These frequencies, ideal for broadband wireless services, are currently used by UHF broadcast television stations, which must return the spectrum as they change their signals over from analog to digital.

Things are getting interesting as likely auction participants jockey for advantage, lobbying the FCC for their preferred auction rules. If the FCC grants special favors, the perverse result could be yet more lag in the development of competition in the market for broadband Internet access.

<http://www.cato.org/tech/tk/070730-tk.html>

GOOGLE SHOULD STICK TO WHAT IT KNOWS BEST. Timothy B. Lee. Techknowledge, Issue #106. CATO. July 6, 2007

Last month, the Washington Post reported that Google is swiftly expanding its lobbying presence inside the Beltway. As part of that effort, the company recently unveiled a new public policy blog which pledges to "do public policy advocacy in a Googley way."

The launch of Google's blog offers a good opportunity to review the debate over network neutrality regulation. In a recent post, Google noted the challenge of "defining what exactly the term means." Richard Whitt, Google's Washington telecom and media counsel, offered

details about what would and wouldn't be permitted under the company's ideal regulatory scheme.

The requirements Whitt enumerates closely mirror the terms of the Snowe-Dorgan bill, the most prominent network neutrality legislation introduced last year. Google wants to bar ISPs from imposing "surcharges on content providers that are not their retail customers," discriminating among packets based on their source, or building a new "fast lane" limited to content providers that paid extra to use it.
<http://www.cato.org/tech/tk/070706-tk.html>

WU ON WIRELESS: A SIMPLE SOLUTION? Timothy B. Lee. *Techknowledge*, Issue #103. CATO, June 1, 2007

Tim Wu is one of the most insightful left-of-center tech policy scholars writing today. A couple of years ago, he did a fantastic paper applying Hayek's insights about local knowledge to copyright and patent issues. And he's done some great work on Internet governance, censorship, and other subjects. His latest proposal, though, to impose new regulations on the wireless industry, leaves a lot to be desired.

When the digital television transition wraps up in February 2009, television stations will be required to give back the spectrum that is currently being used for analog television broadcasts. That spectrum will be awarded to the winners of an auction to be held next year. In a *Forbes* article published last month, Wu proposed that the FCC impose a "simple requirement" on the auction winners: "give consumers the right to attach any safe device (meaning it does no harm) to the wireless network that uses that spectrum."

Without that rule, Wu argues, wireless network carriers will use their control over the platform to stifle competition and innovation in both the handset market and the market for wireless applications. Wu notes that some wireless carriers have crippled the phones they sell to prevent cannibalization of the carriers' existing products and that the process for getting carriers' approval for a new wireless application is too expensive and cumbersome for the small start-ups that often produce the most innovative products.
<http://www.cato.org/tech/tk/070601-tk.html>

HOW ENDANGERED IS INTERNET RADIO? James Plummer. *Techknowledge*, Issue #102. CATO, May 18, 2007

As with satellite or broadcast radio, listeners "tune in" radio stations on the Internet to hear music their favorite DJs have selected for them. But new regulations which threaten the medium have spurred controversy. A recent decision issued by the Copyright Royalty Board would have online broadcasters pay what many of them consider to be prohibitive royalties for streaming copyrighted music online.

The CRB is a new and little-known agency of the Library of Congress Copyright Office, consisting of three "copyright royalty judges" appointed by the Librarian of Congress. The board was created by the 2004 Copyright Royalty and Distribution Reform Act and appointed only last year. The CRB is charged with setting the royalty payment structure for music and sound recordings in order to: maximize the availability of creative works to the public . . . afford the copyright owner a fair return for his or her creative work and the copyright user a

fair income under existing economic conditions;... reflect the relative roles of the copyright owner and the copyright user in the product made available to the public with respect to relative creative contribution, technological contribution, capital investment, cost, risk, and contribution to the opening of new markets for creative expression and media for their communication;... minimize any disruptive impact on the structure of the industries involved and on generally prevailing industry practices.
<http://www.cato.org/tech/tk/070518-tk.html>

BUILDING AN INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY INDUSTRY IN CHINA. James A. Lewis. CSIS. May 8, 2007

Government support, privatization, and a removal of barriers to foreign participation have been crucial for China's information technology (IT) success. But the degree and nature of this success can be easily misunderstood when China's performance is taken out of its global context. Data from the OECD show that China briefly overtook the United States as a high-tech exporter in 2005, but the Chinese government reported that 90 percent of these exports were made by foreign firms operating in China. China's leaders, who in the 1980s began to lay the groundwork for a modern IT industry, believed that China would be more secure if it did not depend on foreign IT and could instead use IT products made entirely in China. This report shows why their goal will be difficult to attain in an increasingly integrated and globalized industry.
http://www.csis.org/media/csis/pubs/070508_lewischinait.pdf



CYBER ATTACKS EXPLAINED. James A. Lewis. CSIS. June 15, 2007



The small Baltic country of Estonia was the target of a series of cyber attacks in May 2007. These were "denial of service" attacks, where an attacker floods the target network with bogus messages, causing its servers (computers that serve as a hub in a network) to slow or shut down.

The attacks caused grave concern among NATO officials, in large part because, at first, Russia was blamed. This attribution was wrong, in the sense that the attacks were not launched from Russian government computers. Like many things in cyberspace, it was difficult to tell who was at the other end of the Internet. Attribution in the Estonia case was made even harder by the use of "botnets." Botnets—short for robot networks—are the big new thing in cyber crime. A cyber criminal takes remote control of a computer by surreptitiously loading software on it. Most consumers don't know that their computers have been compromised. Some botnets are huge, using tens of thousands of computers around the world. Having these gigantic criminal networks simultaneously send thousands of messages every minute overburdened Estonian servers and caused them to crash.

Attacks, crashes, robots—sounds like a war—and many commentators saw this as the first "cyber war." This was, of course, completely erroneous. Botnets are used all the time—they are the source of most spam—and are nothing special for cyber crime. This was not the first time that a government had seen foreign protestors attack servers and Web sites with botnets,

hacks, and graffiti. China, Israel, India, Pakistan, and the United States have seen similar attacks, albeit on a smaller scale.

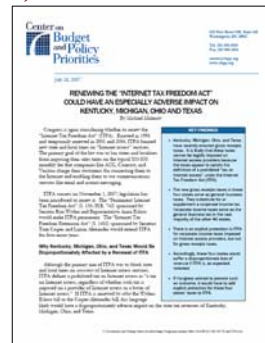
http://www.csis.org/media/csis/pubs/070615_cyber_attacks.pdf

RENEWING THE “INTERNET TAX FREEDOM ACT” COULD HAVE AN ESPECIALLY ADVERSE IMPACT ON KENTUCKY, MICHIGAN, OHIO AND TEXAS. By Michael Mazerov. Center on Budget and Policy Priorities. July 26, 2007

Congress is again considering whether to renew the “Internet Tax Freedom Act” (ITFA). Enacted in 1998 and temporarily renewed in 2001 and 2004, ITFA banned new state and local taxes on Internet access” services.

The primary goal of the law was to bar states and localities from imposing their sales taxes on the typical \$10-\$50 monthly fee that companies like AOL, Comcast, and Verizon charge their customers for connecting them to the Internet and enabling them to use communications services like email and instant messaging.

<http://www.cbpp.org/7-26-07sfp.pdf>



MEDIA MARKETS AND LOCALISM: DOES LOCAL NEWS EN ESPAÑOL BOOST HISPANIC VOTER TURNOUT? Felix Oberholzer-Gee and Joel Waldfogel. University of Pennsylvania & National Bureau of Economic Research (NBER). Web posted April 22, 2007. 07AD571

Americans use distant sources of news and entertainment rather than local sources. Critics of this globalization of information and entertainment “claim that transnational media undermine civic engagement, transforming locally engaged citizens into viewers . . .” This paper utilizes “the rapid growth of Hispanic communities in the United States to test whether the presence of local television news affects local civic behavior. Spanish-language local television news programming was available in 25 US metro areas in 2002, up from only 14 areas in 1994. Our estimates indicate that Hispanic voter turnout increased by 5 to 10 percentage points, relative to non-Hispanic voter turnout, in markets where local Spanish-language television news became available. We conclude that the tradeoff between integrated media markets and civic engagement is real.” [Note: Contains copyrighted material.]

<http://www.hbs.edu/research/pdf/07-062.pdf> [pdf format, 22 pages]



RESPONSIBILITY IN THE GLOBAL INFORMATION SOCIETY: TOWARDS MULTI-STAKEHOLDER GOVERNANCE. By: Jonathan Cave, Chris Marsden, et.al. RAND. 31 May 2007

In a world where information and communication technologies (ICT) are fast becoming ubiquitous and indispensable, the ICT industry has a crucial enabling role in social, economic and human development. Deploying ICT triggers changes in behaviour and governance. This has two effects: it magnifies collective problems, and it also creates the infrastructure for effective collective action to address the problems. The inability of national governments to regulate much of the Global Information Society increases the importance of cooperation



in finding solutions. More legitimate and inclusive corporate involvement is desired than simply classic ICT industry self-regulation through, for instance, standard setting. This novel approach to corporate involvement is described as ‘multi-stakeholder governance’. It means that roles and responsibilities in the global and highly dynamic environment enabled by ICT can be allocated on a temporary and contingent basis, according to inclusive and non-hierarchical relationships. This is not new. Roles have often shifted among governments, corporations and civil society. But a novel and fascinating attempt to achieve real global dialogue around responsibilities in the Global Information Society is developing, and may become a significant new governance paradigm. The report, which was prepared for British Telecommunication’s annual Hot Topic Series, assesses the ICT sector’s responsibilities, and identifies the kind of actions that can be taken through a ‘multi-stakeholder governance’ approach, to respond adequately to the challenges.

http://www.rand.org/pubs/technical_reports/2007/RAND_TR472.pdf

THE ECONOMICS OF INTERNET ADVERTISING: IMPLICATIONS FOR THE GOOGLE-DOUBLECLICK MERGER. Robert W. Hahn. Summary. AEI July 2007

Internet advertising is the growth engine that sustains the availability of free applications such as YouTube and MySpace. Without Internet advertising revenues, many believe that innovators would cease to develop these immensely popular programs. On the flipside, advertisers will only advertise on Web pages that have a strong following or that they believe have the potential to attract many visitors. What would happen if a new entity were created that controlled most of the ads appearing on the Internet? The Google-DoubleClick merger may do just that. Given the important role of advertising in Internet innovation, how should federal antitrust officials decide on the important issues involved in assessing the merits of the merger, such as the relevant market and barriers to entry? How should they assess issues specifically related to Internet advertising, such as the effect of one company's control of significant consumer data? By focusing on the potential costs and benefits of the Google-DoubleClick merger, panelists at this Joint Center conference examined the economics of Internet advertising and the role of such advertising in Internet competition.

<http://www.aei.org/events/filter.all,eventID.1539/summary.asp>

EMPOWERING GOVERNMENTS, TRANSFORMING LIVES . Jonathan Koh. CrimsonLogic Pte Ltd. Presentation to World Bank. 26 July 2007, Washington D.C. 26

CrimsonLogic, a leading IT and e-government solutions company from Singapore has a wealth of experience in designing, developing and implementing e-government projects in a range of countries including Singapore, Turkey, Saudi Arabia, India, Panama and Mauritius. Jonathan Koh, Director (Solutions and Consulting), CrimsonLogic presented some interesting perspectives on e-government that covered:

1. Key conceptual frameworks on e-government
2. E-government applications and tools applied in areas such as international trade, judicial and regulatory documentation processes, citizen registry
3. Latest technology and applications in areas of document security and fraud prevention



4. Experience in implementation of major Single Electronic Window or gateway projects for governments

The discussion concluded with Q&A, during which participants and CrimsonLogic discussed the challenges of change management, and the imperative for leadership in public sector reform. Without the latter, all participants agreed, even the best ICT solutions and systems may fail.

<http://go.worldbank.org/4HV4ZYSD10>

The presentation:

http://siteresources.worldbank.org/EXTDEVELOPMENT/Resources/CrimsonLogic_eGov.pdf?resourceurlname=CrimsonLogic_eGov.pdf

NATIONAL E-GOVERNMENT STRATEGIES: DESIGNING FOR SUCCESS. The World Bank e-Development Thematic Group, GICT and IT SLC, in partnership with USAID, USTTI, and the Development Gateway. June 19, 2007

This event was the last Global e-Government Dialogue of FY07, and a big success! It brought the latest knowledge in this area to developing country clients and Bank staff, and also formed an integral part of the USAID/USTTI e-Government training program for 18 Government officials from developing and transition economies.

In addition to featuring notable experts from various countries and within the Bank, more than 50 people participated in Washington DC, and an estimated 60 people in 9 client countries participated via video conference. Concurrently, over 80 people watched via the Internet and discussed the event using the online chat function, and contributed to the overall discussion. The effective use of videoconference and webcast technology allowed the event to maximize audience participation, while minimizing costs.

The event was rated as outstanding by most participants who noted the very rich content, high quality of organization; excellent combination of speakers from developed (US and Singapore), transition (Kazakhstan) and developing (India) countries; and the highly interactive nature of the videoconference.

<http://go.worldbank.org/CVGCGIMCY0>

EU: EGOVERNMENT IN THE EUROPEAN COUNTRIES. The eGovernment Observatory Editorial Team of European Dynamics for the IDABC eGovernment Observatory. European Communities, 19 June 2007

As part of its mission to inform the European eGovernment community about key issues of common interest, the eGovernment Observatory maintains a series of Factsheets presenting the situation and progress of eGovernment in 32 European countries: EU-27, Croatia, Turkey, Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway, providing for each one of them a wide and consistent range of information.

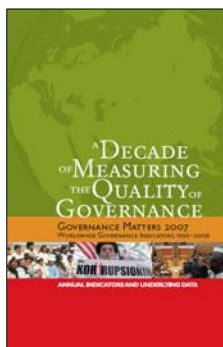
As a general rule, factsheets are updated every 6 months with a new Edition. Important updates between two Editions may result in a new Release. The version number of the factsheet consists of its Edition and Release number, i.e.: 'v.6.0': Sixth Edition, 'v.6.1': 1st Release of the 6th Edition, etc.

<http://www.epractice.eu/document/3090>

GLOBAL E-GOVERNMENT, 2007. Darrell M. West. Center for Public Policy. Brown University. August 2007.

Asian countries continue to dominate international e-government ratings, taking three of the top four spots in a global e-government study undertaken by researchers at Brown University. South Korea earned the top rank, followed by Singapore, Taiwan, the United States, Great Britain and Canada. The study shows that 28 percent of government agencies around the world are offering online services, about the same as in 2006. The seventh annual survey conducted by Darrell M. West, director of the Taubman Center for Public Policy at Brown University, and a team of researchers evaluates online government Web sites of 198 countries around the globe. The researchers evaluated government Web sites based on two dozen criteria, including disability access, the existence of publications and databases, the presence of privacy policies, security policies, contact information, and the number of online services. Studies of global e-government have been released annually since 2001. This year's study reviews 1,687 government Web sites in 198 countries during June and July 2007. <http://www.insidepolitics.org/egovt07int.pdf>

GOVERNANCE MATTERS 2007: GOVERNANCE INDICATORS FOR 1996-2006. D. Kaufmann, A. Kraay, and M. Mastruzzi. The World Bank, released on July 10, 2007



In the framework of a longstanding research program of the World Bank Institute and the Research Department of the World Bank: "The Worldwide Governance Indicators (WGI)", the first "Governance Matters" paper was released in 1999, with data for 1997/8, together with a paper describing the statistical methodology and uses of the indicators. Since then five updates of "Governance Matters" have been published, with successive updates of the data as well as a backward extension to 1996.

The last update, called "Governance Matters VI: Governance Indicators for 1996-2006", covers 212 countries and territories and measures six dimensions of governance between 1996 and 2006: Voice and Accountability, Political Stability and Absence of Violence, Government Effectiveness, Regulatory Quality, Rule of Law, and Control of Corruption. The aggregate indicators based on 33 individual data sources and hundreds of variables, capture the views on governance of a large number of enterprise, citizen and expert survey respondents in industrial and developing countries. http://info.worldbank.org/governance/wgi2007/pdf/booklet_decade_of_measuring_governance.pdf

STUDY FOR THE IMPACT ANALYSIS OF FP5 E-GOVERNMENT PROJECTS. Final Report. WING Framework Contract for Impact Analysis. April 2007.



The purpose of the study has been to carry out an analysis of the impacts achieved by the activities funded under the Fifth Framework Programme (FP5) for Research and Technological Development during the period 1998-2002 in the domain of eGovernment. Fifty-six projects were funded during FP5. This study has made a detailed analysis of the impacts of those 56 research projects in the context of four main objectives areas:

- i) Scientific and technological impacts
- ii) Economic impacts
- iii) Social impacts

iv) Policy and regulatory impacts

http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/activities/egovernment_research/doc/wing_final_%20report.pdf

An overview report is also available

http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/activities/egovernment_research/doc/wing_overview.pdf ►



FIRST ISSUE OF EGOVERNMENT AND CIP OPERATIONS NEWSLETTER PUBLISHED", 11 June 2007

The new Unit H2 at DG INFSO brings together skills and experiences from the eTEN programme, eGovernment policy as well as Framework Programme and research project management. Their mission is to support the development of policy in eGovernment, combining the work on policy, research and deployment. They will continue to support eTEN projects until their completion and manage the upcoming ICT Policy Support Programme's eGovernment projects, whilst at the same time provide the necessary support to the overall ICT PSP from an operational point of view.

This newsletter is the first one of a sequence of bi-monthly newsletters to our constituency, which will bring news about the activities and latest developments in the above mentioned fields.

http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/activities/egovernment_research/newsletter/newsletter_june.htm

VOTING TECHNOLOGIES. *The Bridge*. Volume 37, Number 2 - Summer 2007. National Academy of Engineering

Bridges, a magazine of the U.S. National Academy of Engineering for a general audience, has published this special issue on voting technologies. While it is intended primarily for a U.S. audience, the materials may be of interest to those in other nations.

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<http://www.nae.edu/nae/bridgecom.nsf/weblinks/MKEZ-744MLY?OpenDocument>



WIDGETS OFFER VIRAL MARKETING AND AFFILIATE REVENUE. By Michelle Megna. E-Commerce Guide, August 6, 2007

Widget mania is erupting across the Web, making it easy for both casual online sellers, such as bloggers and hobbyists, and serious e-tailers to expand their exposure and boost sales. For the former, simply cutting and pasting a snippet of code to your site can bring in bucks without setting up a storefront. For the latter, widgets can open new sales channels on places such as MySpace, where if you're lucky, members pass it on giving you a free viral marketing campaign.

Widgets are mini-applications that generally come packaged in a little window, and can be dragged and dropped onto a Web page and offer a scaled down version of features you would ordinarily get at a full-fledged site.

For e-tailers, this means you can, for instance, showcase your eBay listings on your social networking page, bringing your merchandise to interested shoppers who might not have found your storefront, and those who like what you're selling can even pass your widget on to their friends. Another way e-biz owners can earn extra revenue is by using affiliate marketing widgets at their Web store sites or blogs. Or, if you're new to e-commerce, widgets provide an easy access point to online selling.

Given all the buzz, it's no surprise that widgets are making news in the e-commerce world, popping up in all sorts of permutations.

<http://www.ecommerce-guide.com/solutions/affiliate/article.php/3692766>

SOCIAL COMMERCE: TREND OR FAD? By Jennifer Schiff. E-Commerce Guide. July 30, 2007

This July, JupiterResearch, a leading authority on the impact of the Internet and emerging consumer technologies on business, released its latest US Retail Consumer Survey. What the researchers discovered after surveying approximately 2,000 online shoppers was that a majority (53 percent) went directly to retailer and manufacturer sites to research and purchase products, rather than using shopping comparison sites or social and/or community networking sites.

"The use of traditional resources such as retailer Web sites continues to dominate shoppers' behavior," according to the JupiterResearch report. "While social and community sites and content offer some value, they are only driving a small portion of online shoppers (12 percent) to buy more than planned."

Similar research by MarketingSherpa, a research firm specializing in tracking what works in all aspects of marketing (and what does not), supports the JupiterResearch findings. "Social and community network sites have an impact," said Stefan Tornquist, the research director for MarketingSherpa, "but I wouldn't call that impact direct or considerable at this stage."

Does this mean that social and community sites have no place in an online retailer's marketing plan? Not necessarily, say both JupiterResearch Senior Analyst Patti Freeman Evans, who was the lead analyst on the survey, and Tornquist.

<http://www.ecommerce-guide.com/news/article.php/3691411>

ARTICLES FROM U.S. JOURNALS

THE WHOLE EARTH, CATALOGED. Ratliff, Evan. *Wired*, July 2007, pp. 154-159 AA07267

Summary: Obtaining maps and directions online has been a growing practice for about a decade, but further technological developments are allowing users to customize maps, and make them available to others in ways that redefine cartography. Sites like Platial.com allow users to share their commentary, photographs, or points of interest on map locations for other users. This development is more than another online pastime for the technologically adept, Ratliff writes. Mapmaking has always been a tool of dominance of the land, but now easy-to-use shareware allows anyone to become a cartographer. That can lead to entirely new views of the Earth in all its rich chaotic complexity. According to one expert quoted by Ratliff, "It's as close to Babel as we get." http://www.wired.com/techbiz/it/magazine/15-07/ff_maps

WORKING WITHOUT WIRES. Swope, Christopher. *Governing*, Vol. 20, No. 8, May 2007, pp. 28-34. AA07242

Summary: A number of cities in the U.S. are installing wireless broadband networks to provide free public access to the Internet. While these projects are usually public-private partnerships and limited to selected public areas, the city of Corpus Christi, Texas took a different approach. This city of 282,000 installed its own WiFi network covering 147 square miles and found that most use was by city agencies, not residents or businesses. The network provides high-speed data exchange between field employees, such as police, firefighters and building inspectors, and their offices, and allows real-time monitoring of public parks, city vehicles, and water and gas meters. Other uses are under development. While Corpus Christi recently sold its network to a commercial company which will maintain and upgrade the system and charge a fee for access, other municipalities continue to watch and learn from the city's experience with WiFi. <http://www.governing.com/articles/5wifi.htm>

INTERNET CENSORSHIP CONCERN FOR BUSINESSES AS WELL AS ACTIVISTS. Journalist Pain also discusses role of bloggers with webchat participants. By David Anthony Denny, *USINFO* Staff Writer. 11 May 2007

Washington – Internet censorship applies to economic as well as political topics and can have serious consequences for businesses, says Julien Pain, a French journalist and a member of Reporters Without Borders.

Pain participated May 10 in a USINFO Webchat May 10 sponsored by the State Department's Bureau of International Information Programs. The webchat was the second in a series of Democracy Dialogues on press freedom.

"Markets require information for investment and other decisions," Pain said. "And in countries such as China, how can you trust news media that are censored directly by the authorities? How can you get information about the level of corruption, about the problems faced by the Chinese economy?"

<http://usinfo.state.gov/xarchives/display.html?p=washfile-english&y=2007&m=May&x=20070511111320adynned0.99461>

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