

**The Future Digital Economy
Digital Content – Creation, Distribution and Access**

**Organised jointly by the Italian Minister for Innovation and Technologies and the
Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development**

30-31 January 2006, Rome, Italy

**Presentation by Richard Simpson, Director General, Electronic Commerce,
Industry Canada**

31 January 2006

Session 8a: Content creation: Building the right environment for innovation

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It is my great pleasure to participate in the Rome Conference on Digital Content Creation, Distribution and Access and to act as Chair of the session focussed on “Building the Right Environment for Innovation”.

The topic of “creating the right environment” is very much linked to the discussion that took place earlier in the conference about the role of government in the area of digital content and its online distribution. The respective roles of government and the private sector came up for debate in a very similar way in the early days of electronic commerce. In fact, the OECD Ministerial Conference on Electronic Commerce, which Canada hosted in Ottawa in 1998, addressed the question of governmental roles and responsibilities as one of its central tasks. One of the key results of that Conference was a strong consensus on what roles the government and private sector should play in promoting the growth and spread of electronic Commerce. Essentially, the division of labour was that industry should drive the development of e-commerce through investment and innovation, and that government should encourage and enable the private sector to invest and to ensure the online marketplace worked effectively by establishing the legal and policy ground rules - in other words, the marketplace framework that would create the most favourable environment in which electronic commerce would flourish.

We have a similar task before us now in creating the right environment for promoting the creation and use of digital content.

And to undertake this task, we have a panel of speakers representing great expertise and diversity - we have 3 private sector representatives and 2 from government; coming from 5 countries and 3 continents - (6 countries and 4 continents if you include the Chair.)

We have asked the panellists to address key areas of the environment that affect content creation and innovation that are outlined in the background paper for this conference:

- the knowledge environment - education and skills, R&D
- the investment climate - the general fiscal climate as well as venture capital and other investment needs;
- the marketplace conditions - the rules for IP protection, fair use; and
- the network platform - maintaining a universal Internet, open access, fair competition and technology neutrality.

We will ask each of our speakers to address aspects of these issues during their presentations.