



**Australian Government**

**Department of Communications,  
Information Technology and the Arts**

**OECD Working Party on the Information Economy  
Workshop on Public Sector Information  
31 May 2006**

**Item 5: Government Approaches: State of Play and New Models**

**Paper for circulation: Australia**

*Session questions: How far have governments developed Public Sector Information access and use in practice? What is the experience with different models? What kind of information is required to clarify and improve policy?*

**Summary**

Taking account of the completed OECD analysis and recent developments the following briefing on the Australian Government's experience draws on the following key sources:

- The Australian Government Management Information Office (AGIMO) E-Government Strategy: *Responsive Government – A New Service Agenda*, released in March 2006. Refer: [http://www.agimo.gov.au/publications/2006/march/introduction\\_to\\_responsive\\_government](http://www.agimo.gov.au/publications/2006/march/introduction_to_responsive_government)
- The National Broadband Strategy Implementation Group Digital Content Working Group, established to investigate relevant policy issues relating to digital content, including the delivery of government services.
- Australian Government commitments for industry development through the Digital Content Industry Action Agenda and development of a comprehensive Digital Content Strategy.

Key themes of relevance to the workshop are:

- A whole of government framework to improving services while reducing operational costs (AGIMO);
- Broadband priorities to develop strategies, such as the development of new applications and content, that will improve broadband use in health, education, local government and other key sectors; and consider the effective use of broadband by government to improve the delivery of services (National Broadband Strategy Implementation Group);

- The formation of alliances and partnerships in the delivery of PSI, eg coordination between education and culture, licensing for re-use of PSI. (*issues canvassed in pages 30 and 48 of the completed OECD analysis*); and
- Government industry development policy frameworks that support the digital content industry and have been recognised as an important driver for economic growth throughout the wider economy (eg take-up, improved competitiveness and productivity improvements).

Responding to the session question regarding information needs, Australian Government requirements are evolving. In the core public sector environment there is a greater emphasis (by AGIMO and the Auditor-General) on consistency and benchmarking using demand and value assessment methodologies. For monitoring technology service and take up issues the National Broadband Strategy Implementation Group (NBSIG) measures broadband take-up and use against 11 Key Performance Indicators. The NBSIG Yearly Update 2005 showed overwhelmingly, broadband has had a positive impact on users, with faster downloads and access the two main benefits. In the six months to June 2005 Australia had the ninth fastest growing broadband take-up in the OECD (in terms of total broadband lines added). Refer: [http://www.dcita.gov.au/data/assets/pdf\\_file/38911/NBSIG\\_Yearly\\_Update\\_2005.pdf](http://www.dcita.gov.au/data/assets/pdf_file/38911/NBSIG_Yearly_Update_2005.pdf)

Australia's digital content industry is seeking better access to PSI for commercial exploitation. While this is recognised as a licensing issue, the development of more efficient systems and mechanisms for accessing, tracking and exploiting PSI are in demand. Efficiency is a shared concern between industry and government, particularly in relation to dealings with cultural material. A useful research project, the Australian Research Council funded Linkage Project on *Copyright and Cultural Institutions: Digitising Collections in Public Museums, Galleries and Libraries 2003-2005*, generated guidelines to assist institutions with their clearance processes. Refer: <http://www.law.unimelb.edu.au/cmcl/projects/copyright.html>

Some innovative case studies, initiatives and examples are provided below for discussion.

## **Government Framework Approaches**

### **Broadband**

#### Increasing Accessibility of Public Sector Content - Digital Broadband Content and Australia's National Broadband Strategy

Australia's National Broadband Strategy, released in February 2004, identified digital broadband content as a key driver for broadband services and states:

*'Governments have a key role to play in encouraging the development of content and applications, particularly for the delivery of government services.'*

- One of the priority issues identified in the Strategy is that resources be directed to assist in the development of appropriate content and to improve the competitiveness of the Australian content development industry. Governments have a key role to play in encouraging the development of content and applications, particularly in the delivery of government services.
- It is therefore essential that the industry priorities and strategies to advance the digital content industry agenda be developed and implemented in close consultation with the cross-jurisdictional members of the National Broadband Strategy Implementation Group.
- It is recognised that broadband take-up and the availability of compelling content are inextricably linked.

### Audiovisual Australia Project

The Digital Content Working Group of the National Broadband Strategy Implementation Group has scoped an *Audiovisual Australia Project* to address the need for a national framework to support the supply of high quality Australian content to broadband users. The framework will assist Australian cultural, educational and research organisations to provide full-screen and full-motion video content to emerging broadband networks. A model for an Audiovisual Australia has been developed based on the successful Picture Australia service. The objectives of *Audiovisual Australia* are to:

- Help stimulate domestic demand for high capacity broadband services by providing a diverse range of high quality Australian video content;
- Address the shortage of Australian video content that is available for broadband users in an environment dominated by international content;
- Assist Australian cultural, educational and research organisations to release and distribute suitable video content for their respective users over broadband networks; and
- Explore new ways of copyright management to facilitate easier access to relevant audiovisual content including where appropriate the application of Creative Commons licensing.

### **Alliances and Partnerships**

#### Culture and education coordination.

In the 2006-07 Budget the Australian Government committed additional resources (via DEST) to The Learning Federation (TLF) to progress development of online curriculum content. TLF commissions curriculum content from industry and national Australian cultural institutions. [Refer <http://www.thelearningfederation.edu.au/tlf2/>] Over the next four years partnerships to open up access to the collections of national cultural institutions will be progressed at a national level.

### Licensing for re-use.

The Learning Federation (TLF) is implementing incentive based licensing models in line with the Commonwealth's *IT IP Guidelines* for industry and cultural institutions to re-use and exploit TLF commissioned resources. For Australian Government agencies producing social and commercially valuable data, licensing arrangements to balance community service obligations with private sector use were implemented through the Office of Spatial Data Management. Sample agreements are available at <http://www.osdm.gov.au/osdm/licensing.html> .

## **Industry Development**

### Digital Content Industry Action Agenda

The Digital Content Industry Action Agenda (DCIAA) Report was released by Ministers on 13 March 2006.

Key recommendations for industry action contained in the Report which form the basis of a 12-24 month industry-led strategic implementation plan are to:

- Establish an industry-based Investment Scoping Forum;
- Develop a cohesive trade strategy and investigate an industry-based market intelligence network;
- Extend industry-based training models;
- Work on priority-setting and commercialisation issues with publicly funded research institutions; and
- Progress longer-term issues relating to intellectual property, statistics and standards, in consultation with relevant stakeholders.

To support the industry implement its key priorities, options for appropriate Australian Government involvement were agreed for exploring within existing resources, including:

- Ensuring that, where appropriate, regulatory, tax and industry assistance structures are technology-neutral and do not inadvertently disadvantage digital content activities;
- Identifying Government programmes and initiatives that can assist the digital content industry achieve its priorities;
- Encouraging access through promotion and awareness of available Government programmes and support mechanisms of potential benefit for the industry;

- Participating in discussions initiated by the industry on education, investment, R&D and trade; and
- Assisting, where appropriate, with longer-term industry initiatives to clarify research priorities, industry definition, measurement and standards.

Summary Report of the Digital Content Industry Action Agenda is available separately.

*Some Innovative uses of digital content across the economy follow:*

#### *E-health*

FastSCAN, a face mapping technology originally used in the *Lord of the Rings* film trilogy, is now used in Perth's Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital<sup>1</sup> Radiation Oncology and Medical Technology and Physics Departments to construct immobilisation masks for patients undergoing radiation therapy.

Games for Health promotes best practices, community building, and research into how cutting-edge game design and development methodologies can aid in the creation of health tools that range from direct patient application, to personal health education, and workforce initiatives.<sup>2</sup>

#### *E-learning/training*

Project Air 87 is an e-learning tool developed by Catalyst Interactive<sup>3</sup> to provide training for the air and ground crew of the Australian Army's new reconnaissance aircraft, the ARH Tiger, in preparation for hands on experience with the aircraft.

Brisbane company Auran<sup>4</sup> has designed a special version of its Trainz simulator as a desktop driver training system for commercial railway operators in the UK and Germany. Since its first release in 2001, Trainz has sold more than 500,000 copies worldwide. The combination of gaming software with a training application broadens the export potential.

#### *Environment/ Design*

QANTM Studio developed *Green Home*, for Brisbane City Council. The product features an immersive 3D simulation of an environmentally friendly house. The user navigates through the house and interacts with objects to reveal practical building and household lifestyle guidelines for achieving a more sustainable and cost-efficient home.<sup>5</sup> The product won the Best Government category of the 11th Annual Australian Interactive Media Industry Association Awards.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.scgh.health.wa.gov.au/news/innovative.html>

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.gamesforhealth.org/>

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.catalystinteractive.com.au/default.htm>

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.auran.com/default.htm>

<sup>5</sup> [http://www.impart.com.au/docs/media\\_release\\_AIMIA\\_07\\_02\\_2005.pdf](http://www.impart.com.au/docs/media_release_AIMIA_07_02_2005.pdf)

### *Advertising*

Advertising company *Adshel*<sup>6</sup> has made advertising poster campaigns interactive. Hypertag technology allows the public to interact with the advertising panel through the infrared device in their mobile phone. In the first campaign of its kind in Australia, consumers were able to download mobile phone ring tones and wallpapers from specially outfitted posters in bus shelters.

### *Cultural/ Entertainment*

The new i-mode mobile phone service was trialed in Sydney's Museum of Contemporary Art where visitors were able to listen to the artists' commentary on their mobile phone as they walked around the room. The exhibition was brought to life as visitors were led through a journey, learning the background and meaning of paintings at their own pace.<sup>7</sup>

### *Agriculture*

The Australian Centre for Remote Sensing<sup>8</sup> provides satellite data and visualisation tools to assist with assessment and monitoring of vegetation types and their status, soil surveys, water resources planning and monitoring, agricultural property management planning and crop yield assessment.

### *Defence*

*America's Army*<sup>9</sup> is a first person shooter PC videogame available for free over the internet, officially released by the US army as a recruiting tool. It simulates soldiers' roles in squad based combat and training situations.

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<sup>6</sup> <http://www.adshel.com.au/>

<sup>7</sup> Data Communications Magazine by The Dept of Communications, Information Technology and the Arts, July 2005, p. 30, available online at:

[http://www.dcita.gov.au/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/31038/DATAJuly2005\\_issue9.pdf](http://www.dcita.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/31038/DATAJuly2005_issue9.pdf)

<sup>8</sup> <http://www.ga.gov.au/acres/index.htm>

<sup>9</sup> [www.americasarmy.com](http://www.americasarmy.com)