Responses on the 2007 Digital 21 Strategy

Continuing to build on our strengths

through technology across the community

TO:

Commerce, Industry and Technology Bureau

The Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region

From:
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Introduction

The research team at the Department of Social Work and Social Administration of the University of Hong Kong would like to take this opportunity to offer our supports and recommendation on the draft 2007 Digital 21 Strategy. The research team shares the same vision which underpinning the 2007 Digital 21 Strategy – "**advancing our achievements and seizing new opportunities: building on Hong Kong's position as a world digital city**".

Recommendation

"*Building an Inclusive, Knowledge-based Society*" is one of the key action areas identified by the Government in 2007 Digital 21 Strategy (Chapter seven, p. 46-53) for implementation between 2007-2010. Apart from the findings of a recent Impact Analysis Study on the Degree of Digital Inclusiveness in Hong Kong that is conducted by the research team (Chapter seven, Section 7.16, p. 51-52), we would like to elaborate our suggestions as in the followings:

1. Comprehensive Digital Inclusion Index

Comprehensive Digital Inclusion Index (CDII), which is constructed by the research team, can be measured and updated periodically. The CDII involves four dimensions namely, the accessibility, usage, knowledge, and affordability. Thus, the degree of digital inclusiveness can be easily measured and compared among disadvantaged groups and general population in Hong Kong. Perhaps, integrating the CDII with the annual ICT thematic household survey conducted by the Census and Statistics Department should be explored.

2. Digital Inclusion Programmes

There should be an organizational structure to co-ordinate the digital inclusion programmes funded by the government. The same body should also be able to coordinate the evaluation methods used for these programmes. The Government may include as much as possible those programmes which help promoting digital inclusion but did not receive direct government funding.

For each digital inclusion project that is sponsored by government funding, an evaluation mechanism should be built in. The Government may consider using the same conceptual model underlying CDII when designing its own evaluation research, so as to contribute to the general update of the CDII.

Digital inclusion programmes should target better towards disadvantaged groups. In-depth analysis study (i.e. establishing a focus group study) may be carried out to look into their needs

in ICT usage.   For example, faster Internet connections, relevant applications and content may affect the adoption of ICT among the groups.

Conclusion

As we understand that the Government would set up a task force in 2007 to formulate a strategy and initiatives for digital inclusion (Chapter eight, p. 59), we are looking forward to more research opportunities in collaborating with the Office of the Government Chief Information Officer (OGCIO); and the Education and Manpower Bureau (EMB) as well as the ICT industry.