

Editorial

Singapore Achieving e-Government for the People – Congratulations!

Strong and effective initiatives by the Singapore Government, under the leadership of the Infocomm Development Authority (IDA), are scheduled to be implemented in 2010 under the Making IT SOEasy program. This program consolidates government information services into a single environment, one-stop portal (www.gov.sg) allowing government agencies to achieve greater efficiency in Infocomm usage. It involves harmonizing desktop, messaging, and network environments across all government agencies. – in addition to raising e-Services to citizens and business, also may result in a S\$ 500 million savings for the Singapore Government.

A recent survey to determine the proportion of users who have transacted with the Government electronically and the extent of their satisfaction with these e-Government services found that almost 9 out of 10 (89%) transacted electronically – via the Internet, Voice Recognition System and Short Message Service (SMS). More than 8 out of 10 (86%) gave a rating of 4 and above on a 6-point scale on their satisfaction with the quality of Government e-Services.

As is strongly emphasized by the European Commission (see In Brief), true information societies cannot be achieved unless they provide accessibility to all citizens. Singapore has opened 28 Citizen Connect Centers to assist people with disabilities or who are not comfortable with interacting with Government through electronic channels. In addition, the estimated 10,000 Singaporeans who are hearing or speech impaired can send emergency messages to a new SMS helpline operated by the National Council of Social Service and Singapore Police Force.

Singapore has clearly achieved nearly the maximum benefits envisioned through optimization of information societies, and clearly its leaders will be successful in addressing new challenges of technology that relate to better services, as well as ensuring security, reliability and efficiency.

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