

Developing ICT in the Asia-Pacific region

Initiatives and opportunities

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Information and communication technology (ICT) is a major driving force in the development of countries today. Indeed it has become part of the core sector of national economies. This is why countries in the Asia-Pacific region are preparing to implement strong ICT policies in their economies. The Asian-Oceanian Computing Industry Organization (ASOCIO) is one organization that is actively promoting the development of ICT in the Asia-Pacific region. This article traces the growth and looks at the future of the ICT sector in selected countries of the region.

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Introduction

Today, Information and Communication Technology (ICT) is recognized as a major driving force in the digital world for jobs, leisure and services. By 2010, the daily jobs of 90 per cent of the global workforce will have been affected by this technology of the New Economy. In fostering growth in the ICT sector, the role of governments has become critical.

Recognizing the significance of this role, the Asian-Oceanian Computing Industry Organization (ASOCIO), has taken up the task of strengthening collaborative partnerships between government and industry. Being the leading voice of the ICT industry in the Asia Oceanic region, ASOCIO has been instrumental in promoting ICT to governments, non-profit organizations and private sector industry in the region. In December 2001,

members of ASOCIO agreed to recommend a common approach to government procurement policy.

Government procurement

In many nations in the Asia Oceanic region, governments are the most significant buyers of IT products and services. By adopting efficient means of procurement, therefore, governments can benefit from significant cost savings, improved cost predictability and considerable productivity gains. Citizens may also gain from reduced transaction costs, access to new services, improved access to government resources and interaction with government. ASOCIO's position paper is aimed at laying down guidelines and sharing best practices across the region, thus helping the public and private sectors to work in tandem.

Effective government procurement of ICT goods and services is a major