



**BROADBAND CONTENT
BUSINESS CASE**

How Broadband Content
can aid the delivery of
Regional and Devolved
Administration Economic
Strategies

NOVEMBER 2004



The DTI drives our ambition of 'prosperity for all' by working to create the best environment for business success in the UK. We help people and companies become more productive by promoting enterprise, innovation and creativity.

We champion UK business at home and abroad. We invest heavily in world-class science and technology. We protect the rights of working people and consumers. And we stand up for fair and open markets in the UK, Europe and the world.

The contents of this document are the result of close working and active partnership with:

- The English Regional Development Agencies
- The Scottish Executive
- The Welsh Assembly Government
- The Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment (Northern Ireland)

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Foreword

We are delighted to be able to commend this report on the contribution of broadband content activities and projects to economic development. This report is jointly presented by DTI, Regional Development Agencies, the Scottish Executive, Welsh Assembly Government and the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment (Northern Ireland), which is based on close co-operation between these organisations in conjunction with industry. It is the result of close co-operation between the DTI, England's Regional Development Agencies (RDAs), the Devolved Administrations and industry. It makes a strong case for including broadband content in strategic thinking and economic policy across the United Kingdom.

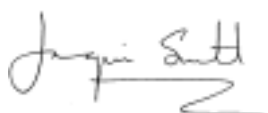
The way forward proposed in the report is based on collaborative working as the most promising approach for everybody. That means partnership within and among the nations and the regions, with local authorities throughout the United Kingdom, and with DTI and other government departments. And partnership with industry, contributing to the continued success of the UK's world class digital industries that provide so many benefits across the wider economy and society as a whole. Partnership with industry is also a key element of the Government's Innovation programme, and it will be important in stimulating public sector procurement of innovative broadband content.

A good start has been made in developing these multi-layered partnerships. This will often need a collective approach, and the series of workshops held around the country have succeeded – first in identifying where work was needed, and secondly in putting the work in train to make it happen. The involvement of the Broadband Stakeholder Group and the Digital Content Forum have been important in rooting this in the needs of industry, and we need to evolve further this relationship with business.

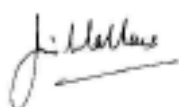
This paper represents a good first step in the journey towards making broadband content and applications an integral part of economic development. In a few years time, this will be a given, no longer even noticed. In the meantime, the initiative being taken by the nations and the English regions, in partnership with DTI and industry, is one that we heartily commend.



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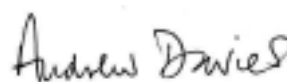
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Executive Summary

This paper, prepared in partnership between the DTI, the English RDAs, the Devolved Administrations and industry, sets out to demonstrate how integral broadband content and applications are to economic strategies, at all levels, and how such broadband content can assist in delivery of economic strategies. It recognises that the partnerships already in existence need to be deepened and developed to take this forward, and suggests a number of ways in which this can be done.

In particular, the paper considers how broadband content and applications can help deliver the required economic outcomes in four crucial policy areas – business, learning, the public sector, and the community.

Business

Broadband content and applications can underpin innovation and skills development, develop new markets (and address existing ones in a fresh way), and produce step changes in productivity. Business will need to exploit to the full the potential of broadband content and applications, if it is to remain competitive in the longer term. And this is not a single step process – our competitors in the rest of the world are seeking to gain the same advantage, so we need to run fast even to stay in the same place competitively. Embedding broadband content within economic strategies will bring benefits right across all industry sectors, but perhaps represents a particular opportunity to the Creative Industries, an important and fast growing part of the economy throughout the UK.

Learning

Broadband content has the potential of transforming the learning experience, improving cooperation between educational institutions, maximising their efficiency and the service they offer to students, and widening access to education. Actions in this area might include working with local public sector partners to influence e-learning providers through cluster based activities, and widening participation in basic skills development programmes by looking at new career models.

Public Sector

The public sector has a major role, both as huge customer and as a channel for aggregation of broadband demand, pushing broadband usage and capacity to new levels. In partnership with the private sector there are huge opportunities in areas such as eHealth and eGovernment to drive up the efficiency of the public sector and tremendously improve the service that the public sector provides to citizens. The paper recognises that many of the skills needed to properly commission broadband content and applications are currently in short supply within the public sector, and this is one of the areas where effective action might be taken.

Community

Inclusion and empowerment of communities can be achieved through broadband content use, stimulating social and economic activity in line with economic strategies, and helping to preserve the vitality and life of communities. This includes of course promoting opportunities in remote rural areas. Broadband content in the community context could be a major lever towards getting late adopters signed up and participating, especially those for whom speed of use is not a sufficient incentive for them to sign up.

The paper does not simply describe how broadband content and applications can effectively contribute to sustainable economic developments. To build on what is already happening, and consolidate collaborative working between partners wherever it makes sense to do so, it also recommends a number of focused actions to drive this forward.

Recommendations

- Agree broadband content outputs to be adopted by projects, including those currently underway
- Map other publicly funded activities already focussing on broadband content, including at a Local Authority level
- Identify regional partners already delivering broadband content activity, and work with them to maximise their impact. This includes working closely with industry and developing a directory of broadband content activities
- Put broadband content issues in the context of the national policy agenda, particularly on productivity and competitiveness, including procurement policy
- Make collaboration work, both within organisations and across borders

This is a major challenge, and endorsement at senior level within the English RDAs and the Devolved Administrations is a crucial step towards making it happen, and will help build on the existing strong partnership between the nations, regions, DTI and industry.

1. Introduction

This paper outlines the broadband content policy agenda for collaborative working between DTI, RDAs, DAs and industry, and demonstrates that it has a key role in influencing regional economic strategies so as to help deliver some of their objectives. This paper does not seek financial support for broadband content nor does it catalogue the current initiatives and research in this area.

As part of the Government's ambition to have the most competitive and extensive broadband market in the G7 by 2005, DTI's Digital Content and Publishing Unit has been developing a partnership with Regional Development Agencies (RDAs) and Devolved Administrations (DAs) on broadband content. DTI is keen that regional partners and industry work together to exploit broadband-based content, with a view to a more competitive and productive digital environment in which significant economic and social impact can be achieved.

The RDAs and DAs have already invested significantly in broadband infrastructure, including £30 million of DTI funding, and there is a compelling need to secure return on investment by exploiting the benefits of broadband content and applications. The full exploitation of broadband-enabled content¹, together with applications and services, can play an important role in helping the UK become a competitive, world-class knowledge-based economy. It is vital that the UK exploits the broadband opportunity to the full. Our global competitors are raising their game and we need to as well.

The work for which this paper seeks to obtain endorsement, is:

- i) continued close partnership in this area between the policies of the DTI and the strategies of the RDAs, and to inform similar discussions with the DAs;
- ii) focus on the key themes of Business, Learning, the Public Sector and the Community within which the RDAs and DAs can integrate broadband content activity and projects to stimulate significant economic impact; and
- iii) the RDAs and DAs positioning themselves to formulate broadband content policies in the context of regional economic development.

These themes need to be addressed within the RDA Tasking Framework² and DA targets.

¹ See Appendix 1 – What is Broadband Content?

² The Tasking Framework for England's RDAs is based on their five statutory purposes and, from 1 April 2005, on a set of core Public Service Agreements targets agreed between Departments and the RDAs. Their statutory purposes are:

- to further the economic development and the regeneration of its area;
- to promote business efficiency, investment and competitiveness in its area;
- to promote employment in its area;
- to enhance the development and application of skills relevant to employment in its area;
- to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development in the UK where it is relevant to its area to do so.

The core PSA targets will be supported by a menu of deliverables (outcomes and outputs) agreed between Departments and the RDAs. The new tasking framework will replace the current system of Tier 2 and Tier 3 Targets. RDA performance is monitored on achievement of the agreed targets against the forecasts in their Corporate Plans.

In the Treasury's 2004 Spending Review, three Public Service Agreements (PSAs) are relevant to broadband content.

- i) Objective I: Raising the rate of sustainable productivity growth.

Demonstrate further progress by 2008 on the Government's long-term objective of raising the rate of UK productivity growth over the economic cycle, improving competitiveness and narrowing the gap with our major industrial competitors. *Joint with HM Treasury*

- ii) Objective II: Promoting world class science and innovation.

Improve the relative international performance of the UK research base and increase the overall innovation performance of the UK economy, making continued progress to 2008, including through effective knowledge transfer amongst universities, research institutions and business.

- iii) Standards: Maintaining the UK's standing as one of the best places in the world for online business.

The metrics on business use of ICT will be based on the approach set out in the International Benchmarking Study. This approach has been developed through an iterative process since 1997 to provide a broad range of metrics as a means of measuring businesses' sophistication in the use of ICT. The standard is maintained if the UK maintains its average relative position on the indicators used in this study.

In line with its importance to business's use of ICT³ and to the wider economy, DTI will continue to monitor the development of the UK broadband market, building on the existing metrics for the relative international competitiveness of the UK broadband market. To qualify as broadband a service must be capable of delivering 'always-on' services to each individual at data rates in excess of 128 kbps.

Recommended actions for RDAs and DAs are outlined in section 5.

³ Business in the Information Age: International Benchmarking Study (IBS) 2003
<http://www.dti.gov.uk/bestpractice/management/benchmarking.htm>

2. Background

DTI and SEEDA jointly hosted the first national broadband content workshop in Weybridge in November 2003. At this workshop, DTI put forward its broadband content strategy statement⁴, endorsed by Stephen Timms, previous Minister for Energy, eCommerce and Postal Services, as part of the wider broadband agenda. Ministerial support for broadband content was subsequently reinforced by a Press Notice⁵, which included input from several of the Regions commending DTI's role as a catalyst for their own activities, and endorsing the importance of work in this area.

A second national RDA/DA workshop followed, hosted in Bristol in February 2004 by the South West of England RDA and a third one was hosted by the Welsh Development Agency in Cardiff in July. Overall, the focus of the National Workshops is to foster a partnership approach between Regions/Nations, DTI and industry, in order to promote inter-regional consultation and exchange of views and practices.

This collaborative working over the past twelve months has led to raising awareness levels in the Regions and Nations on broadband content activity. It also resulted in a "Task and Finish" group comprising representatives from DTI, RDAs, DAs, Broadband Stakeholder Group (BSG)⁶, and the Digital Content Forum (DCF)⁷ being set up, tasked with building a business case to demonstrate, in the context of RDA/DA economic strategies, the relevance and value of investment in Broadband Content. This paper is the output of that work.

4 See Appendix 2 – DTI's Approach to Broadband Content

5 See Appendix 3 – DTI Press Notice on Broadband Content

6 The BSG (<http://www.broadbanduk.org/>) is Government's key advisory group on Broadband. It provides advice on the Government strategy to meet its target for the UK to have the most extensive and competitive Broadband market in the G7 by 2005.

7 The DCF (<http://www.dcf.org.uk>) forms a two-way conduit between industry and government to gather views and input into policy-making processes. It brokers relationships, develops shared knowledge and undertakes activities to promote innovation and excellence in the content sector.

3. The Importance of Broadband Content

In a letter from the Chairman of the BSG, Keith Todd, to the Prime Minister in April 2004, he writes that broadband:

- i) will be the cause of profound economic and social change through the rest of this decade and will impact on all aspects of the economy, affecting growth, productivity and competitiveness; and
- ii) has the potential to equal the advent of the railways, the passenger jet or even domestic electricity in terms of its impact.

In his response, the Prime Minister has endorsed fully the future work of the BSG based on these statements.

Because of the substantial benefits broadband can offer, Regions and Nations have developed broadband strategies to accelerate coverage and stimulate take-up. Broadband opens the way to the creation of new markets through the development of increasingly interactive applications and new high-quality services. Beyond the emergence of new multimedia applications, a wide range of services is expected to grow in parallel with the take-up of broadband, delivering new economic and social benefits.⁸

Of course, the Regions and Nations recognise the importance of Broadband in contributing to their overall economic and social development and the level of their investment has already been mentioned. With the increasing availability of broadband infrastructure the next stage is take up and exploitation by businesses, the public sector and individuals, which will in turn drive greater levels of engagement with regional economic agendas.

Awareness of the central role that content and applications need to take in the successful exploitation of broadband is growing and is reflected in the work particularly of the BSG, which has evolved from focusing on infrastructure to a greater recognition of the importance of content. Content, whether a business tool, entertainment, a community portal or e-learning, is neither more nor less important than infrastructure – it is simply integral. It is important that any strategies for broadband fully take this into account.

⁸ See Appendix 5 (pt 3) – Some Broadband-Related Quotes from Regional Development Agencies' Regional Economic Strategies

4. Influencing and Delivering Regional and Devolved Administration Economic Strategies

We have said that the value added by broadband depends on the applications it enables, the content it makes accessible, and the way it is effectively used. Where it is appropriate for the public sector to be involved in broadband content development initiatives, these will generally benefit from being a collaborative effort, both between Regions and Nations, and between Regions/Nations, DTI, industry and other stakeholders. RDAs and DAs are well placed to be key drivers of the national policy agenda on broadband content, e.g. in the South West, the Broadbandshow (<http://www.broadbandshow.org>) provides an excellent illustration of the difference broadband content can make across industry as a result of an RDA initiative. The aim was to commission and integrate broadband content solutions into small and medium sized enterprises to generate new business benefits for them. From these, a wealth of demonstrations was used as inspiration for other companies at roadshows and other promotional events.

To enable such collaborative efforts, the RDAs and DAs need to consider the extent to which the broadband content agenda should influence their budgets and projects in pursuit of their economic strategies, ensuring that content, applications and services are linked as part of the RDA and DA agendas. The context in which the RDAs operate differs to that of the DAs as the latter have powers to form policy and take decisions in particular areas of responsibility including Economic Development. However, the requirement of a business case to justify investment in broadband content is the same for both the RDAs and DAs.

The RDAs' Regional Economic Strategies, launched in 1999 when they were set up (in 2000 for London), set out their visions for the medium to long term economic regeneration of their regions. The RDAs each review their Regional Economic Strategy at least every 3 years to ensure that the focus and content are right to deliver improvement in the region's economic performance. The RDAs will be able to justify action on broadband and broadband content to central government against relevant PSA targets under the new Tasking Framework. The focus of the RDAs is to influence and lever funding from other public sources to maximise the reach and economic impact of their existing investments and in so doing, help them align other public sector funding streams to the regional agenda.

Broadband content activity in RDAs and DAs should focus on:

- i) nurturing their indigenous content, application and service producers to create jobs and bring money into local economies through the stimulation of compelling content and applications for business, entertainment, communities, education, and government services. Encouraging the development of clusters for the creative and digital content industries is key to capitalising on these opportunities;
- ii) the use to which business users and consumers put broadband content and applications across all economic sectors and society as a whole.

Clearly there is a close relationship between the above two areas, which represents a key source of economic growth for Regions and Nations. The strategic responsibility for these activities will vary in RDAs and DAs, and it will be essential for them to forge the right contacts – both within the RDAs and DAs, and with their regional delivery partners.

To understand the potential for broadband content within regional economic strategies, the benefits and opportunities provided to target markets need to be understood. The four target markets where broadband content can effectively influence regional economic strategies have been identified as:

- Business
- Learning
- Public Sector
- Community

Each of these markets, which often overlap, provides a different context within which the RDAs and DAs can work with the digital industries, as well as harnessing the potential of broadband content as an enabler and stimulus for achieving RDA/DA targets.

Several studies have highlighted the importance of the digital industries in terms of projected revenue growth from on-line content across multiple channels. While these revenue projections are somewhat of an inexact science, three studies from independent consultants demonstrate the significant revenue growth opportunities.⁹ These figures support the case for RDAs/DAs to position their industries and nurture their digital content industry clusters to take advantage of the opportunities for developing content for consumers to purchase. While the on-line paid content market is mainly entertainment based, the figures also underpin the importance of two themes in the paper: Learning and Community-focused Broadband content, reinforcing the importance for RDAs/DAs to raise the performance of their companies to get a slice of the fast growing market for paid-content.

The most important theme for RDAs is the Business-focused one as this is the area in which RDAs, given their remit, can have the maximum impact. While entertainment also plays a very significant part in broadband uptake (See Appendix 1 – sub-section on 'Broadband and the Digital Content Industries'), the focus is on the above four themes for the purposes of this paper.

9 1. The growth of on-line paid content in Western Europe which was 361m euros in 2002, is projected to increase to 2.4bn euros in 2007 (Jupiter Research 2003) http://www.acten.net/uploads/images/374/IR-Paid_content-v7.pdf

2. A report for DTI in 2004 concluded that multi-channel services have revenue potential of £110.5bn by 2006 rising to £146.5bn by 2008 (Ovum) <http://www.dti-bestpractice-convergence.org/>

3. A report made available by the Department of Culture Media and Sport, produced by Spectrum Strategy in March 2004 (http://www.paidcontent.org/pc/arch/cat_bbc.html), focused specifically on UK Internet trends. The numbers show significant growth in on-line paid content:

- i) Paid-for content revenues from the fixed Internet will grow rapidly, from around £80m to £400m by 2007;
- ii) In mobile, the substantially larger customer base and existing payment methods mean that revenues are already nearly £500m and are forecast to increase to around £2bn by 2007.

4.1 How Business-focused broadband content activities can influence and deliver regional economic strategies

Regional economic strategies identify and invest in a number of common themes to achieve positive economic impact for business. These strategies include encouraging innovation, raising the level of workforce skills, increasing productivity and market development. These are relevant to the use of broadband content by UK business and the ability of UK business to create broadband content, which can be addressed through working with vertical clusters and industry sectors, and by providing public sector support for SMEs.

The importance of broadband to future economic development is widely understood and recognised by international economic bodies (including OECD, International Telecommunications Union, EU) and national governments, some of which have committed¹⁰ to invest directly in their broadband infrastructure (particularly: South Korea, Japan, Sweden and Canada¹¹). Recent research supports the assertion that new communication services can lead to large increases in consumer welfare and GDP growth in the US¹² and UK¹³. Achieving these economic benefits will be critical for the UK in a world economy that is becoming more competitive. Globalisation is a long standing trend, but the rapid deployment and take-up of broadband by businesses around the world has accelerated this process, leading to the outsourcing of business service and process operations. This is now extending across national economies, for example: small, and even micro, businesses are enabled by broadband to outsource business processes such as accounting, allowing them to compete on a more even footing with bigger competitors.

The UK has real strengths in creative media and software development, very often at the SME level. As broadband take-up continues to grow rapidly around the world, there is a major opportunity for UK companies and UK talent to exploit this new global market for broadband-enabled media, content and applications. However, the development of a strong domestic broadband market will be essential for UK companies in this sector to develop innovative products and services for the emerging global market.¹⁴

10 Several countries around the world have taken the decision to make large-scale public sector investments in the development of their national broadband infrastructures, for example through the provision of soft loans or direct subsidies. These investments were made on a 'leap of faith' rather than on the basis of hard economic evidence, largely because the evidence base simply didn't exist at the time. They were justified on the intuitive case that such a step change in the communications infrastructure would inevitably lead to increased innovation and improved productivity and would deliver significant economic and public value.

11 See international case studies prepared for the ITU's Broadband Workshop in April 2003 and the subsequent report entitled the Birth of Broadband. <http://www.itu.int/osg/spu/ni/promotebroadband/>

12 Crandall, Jackson and Singer (2003) estimated that the total annual consumer benefit from broadband in the United States would be between US \$ 64 and 97 billion per year if 50% of US households adopted broadband and could be more than US \$ 300 billion if broadband were to achieve universal diffusion in the United States. The authors also found that ubiquitous adoption of broadband would increase total US GDP by US \$ 180 billion and create 61,000 new jobs per year. See Competition in Broadband provision and its implications for regulatory policy', DotEcon and Criterion Economics (page 10).

13 November 2003, CEBR (Centre for Economics and Business Research Ltd) produced a report for the Broadband Industry Group entitled "The Economic Impact of a Competitive Market for Broadband". Its key findings on the economic benefits of broadband were that due to the growth in the number of broadband connections by 2015: annual UK GDP could be up to £21.9bn higher than it would otherwise have been; annual UK fixed investment is likely to be around £8bn per annum higher than would otherwise have been the case; annual government borrowing is likely to be around £13bn per annum lower.

Also, a May 2004 report by the Economist Intelligence Unit entitled 'Reaping the Benefits of ICT: Europe's Productivity Challenge' http://graphics.eiu.com/files/ad_pdfs/MICROSOFT_FINAL.pdf confirms the general view, backed by empirical research, that ICT is strongly linked to economic growth in developed countries. The report also states that Europe's weaknesses in IT are most acute among SMEs for a variety of reasons, for example, in innovation, taking advantage of new technology, lack of management skills and in adaption of business processes. Broadband penetration is one of the key measures used in the study.

14 See Appendix 5 (pt 4.1) – Some Broadband-Related Quotes from Regional Development Agencies' Regional Economic Strategies

Looking more widely across the economy, the BSG cites an increasingly solid body of evidence that almost all improvements in service delivery over the last 10 years have been driven by the exploitation of ICT.

- Broadband provides a step-change in the communications capacity of SMEs, opening up new commercial opportunities and providing a catalyst for change in the way businesses are organised and operate. Adopting broadband is only the start. The real benefits accrue when businesses adapt and ultimately absorb broadband into their operations and so improve their productivity¹⁵ and competitiveness.
- For larger companies, broadband can deliver significant supply chain efficiencies, as well as new and more efficient ways to interact and transact with customers (for example through online retailing). The exploitation of home working can also significantly reduce the requirement for and cost of office space for companies large and small.

The 2003 International Benchmarking report prepared for the DTI by Booz Allen Hamilton (<http://www2.bah.com/dti2003/>) demonstrates that, although broadband penetration among businesses is growing quickly, new ways of encouraging the take-up of broadband technologies need to be stimulated, developed and demonstrated.

SWRDA has produced two useful studies on the impact of ICT and broadband on business:

- i) EKOS Consulting measured the economic and social benefits of broadband for the actnow Broadband Cornwall project (<http://www.actnowcornwall.co.uk>) The findings demonstrate that broadband is having a positive impact on turnover, profitability and staffing, and as a result is improving businesses' contribution to Gross Value Added (GVA), and this impact is likely to increase significantly in the future as Broadband becomes more embedded within businesses and they effectively exploit broadband content and applications.
- ii) Another study by Broadband Access Strategies in 2003 (<http://www.connectingsw.net/downloads>), based on interviews with 2500 companies, found that companies that use ICT, on average, improved turnover by 6 per cent, whereas companies without have improved by 3.5 per cent. Broadband is having a major impact on ICT in the workplace, the study found, and is following a rapid take-up curve, yet 'the massive potential of content and applications is not yet understood'.

With broadband becoming essential as an enabler for business, providing a range of value added services as the economy becomes increasingly on-line, key challenges for RDAs and DAs to address include:

1. Encouraging marketing and business planning support for the exploitation of rich media content.

This activity will, for example, help SMEs to develop better websites by raising the awareness of new and existing content opportunities and exploiting the potential of rich media content, e.g. video streaming, digital audio.

¹⁵ According to research in 2004 by cable company NTL (<http://www.ntl.com>), broadband is helping businesses to recover an average 52 days per year in lost productivity with saving time, making money and improved customer communication cited as the key benefits.

2. Promoting knowledge sharing and the introduction of new digital technologies.

How businesses use and exploit broadband content and applications will underpin their interaction with all other sectors. The deployment of increasingly rich broadband content and applications is a key driver for delivering business benefit in areas that include:

- accessing utility computing to reduce the cost of capital and to facilitate collaborative R&D;
- using Application Service Provider (ASP) networks to save costs;
- evolving supply chain management with partners who demand on-line integration;
- introducing new collaborative working tools to enhance efficiency and effectiveness;
- providing flexible working in order to attract and retain employees;
- improving Customer Relationship Management (CRM) to meet and exceed customer expectations for sales and support;
- outsourcing activities to save costs;
- aggregating content to achieve efficiency gains; and
- linking the mobile workforce with the company and its data resources.

In this context, it is important to understand that one of the challenges in adopting broadband or any other ICT, is the necessary organisational and management changes that need to be made if the technology is to be deployed effectively – it is not just about the technology.

4.2 How Learning-focused broadband content activities can influence and deliver regional economic strategies

“e-Learning has the potential to revolutionise the way we teach and learn”, *Charles Clarke – July, 2003*. RDAs and DAs have an opportunity to engage with a broad range of independently funded partners operating at a regional level in support of developing e-learning strategies targeted at young people and adults at all levels of education.¹⁶

Priority areas for regional engagement with learning include widening and increasing levels of participation and encouraging innovation through new learning models.

These activities would range from education within schools, which is the most mature market currently engaged with e-learning (for example, in England through DfES’s Curriculum On-Line), increasing workforce engagement with skills development and addressing socio-economic exclusion through the development of new skills, e.g. through social enterprises.

There are many benefits that can be derived from the use of broadband within education, for example enhancing the learning experience, improving cooperation between educational institutions, exploiting new opportunities, improving efficiencies in existing educational provision, streamlined reporting, management and administration, including automation, and widening access to education.

16 See Appendix 5 (pt 4.2) – Some Broadband-Related Quotes from Regional Development Agencies’ Regional Economic Strategies

Given the diverse range of activities at central, regional and local levels connecting learning to broadband content, RDAs and DAs will need to focus on where they can make a difference. Examples of effective regional broadband content actions would include:

1. *Working with Local Education Authorities/Regional Broadband Consortia to diversify and influence learning provider markets for broadband content and applications through sector/cluster-based activities.*
2. *Widening participation by introducing new career models to address exclusion and raising success rates for basic skills development.*

Below are some examples of new learning models enabled by broadband:

- i) The Cambridgeshire Schools Broadband Project (<http://www.elhict.co.uk>) found that the use of broadband in the classroom resulted in better outcomes for teachers and learners. Classroom time was used more efficiently, attention and confidence levels improved, and the level of educational attainment increased.
- ii) The Notschool.net project (<http://notschool.ultralab.anglia.ac.uk>) looked at ways of re-engaging with young people who had been out of the traditional educational systems because of phobia, illness, disaffection, pregnancy or exclusion. Notschool.net provided an online learning experience that proved highly effective, with 50% of the teenagers achieving a formal accreditation.
- iii) The Northern Grid for Learning (<http://www.northerngrid.org/ngfl>) is a consortium of LEAs within the North East, working to provide on-line resources and better connectivity for schools, ensuring best value for schools and learning organisations across the region.

The British Educational Suppliers Association (BESA) has commented on this section of the paper and provided supporting justification on the way in which the education and skills agenda ties in with broadband and business performance¹⁷.

4.3 How Public Sector-focused broadband content activities can influence and deliver regional economic strategies

RDAs and DAs have a contribution to make in supporting broadband content activities in key areas such as electronic public services, e-health and promoting social inclusion, all of which have significant social and economic impact. Likewise, the Regional Aggregation Bodies (RABs), as facilitators for the aggregated procurement of public service ICT infrastructure, provide a significant opportunity to assist public sector engagement with business.

In 2002 the Government announced that it was co-ordinating its own planned spend on broadband (totalling £1 billion) in the three years to 2005 so that, as well as meeting the primary purpose of the expenditure, it promoted the availability of broadband for the citizen and small business, and the RABs were established to help deliver the benefits of the approach.

¹⁷ See Appendix 4 – BESA's contribution to how Learning-focused broadband content activities can influence and deliver regional economic strategies.

The widespread use of broadband in public sector delivery mechanisms (increasingly “next generation broadband”), constituting a step change on existing plans, will require a continuing improvement in broadband infrastructure. It will also require the development of appropriate applications and the raising of ICT skills, all of which can be managed in such a way as to provide wider benefit and to maintain and improve the competitiveness of the economy as a whole.

In the context of the e-Government agenda, RDAs and DAs have an essential role in encouraging better engagement between public services and private sector suppliers to enhance economic and social impact in local economies.¹⁸ In addition to the aggregation of public sector broadband, there is an emerging role for the Regions and Nations to bring together key procurement initiatives, in terms of aggregation, integration, and simplification, balancing the needs of the public sector against the economic growth opportunity for local SMEs.

At a regional level, opportunities that address these priorities would include:

- 1. Engaging with regional public sector partners on the effective use of broadband content and applications to achieve value for money in the delivery of enhanced public and commercial services online. One of the key partners in this work is likely to be Local Authorities.*
- 2. Stimulating engagement between the public and private sectors at the earliest opportunity.*
- 3. Facilitating e-government activities to reduce barriers and encouraging access to public services and online procurement.*
- 4. Encouraging the private sector to add value to the delivery of public services.*

The private sector has a major role to play in supporting the public sector to deliver public value in the three categories outlined by the Prime Minister’s Strategy Unit: outcomes, services and trust. At the same time, there is a need to improve the ability of the public sector to commission broadband content and applications effectively, and to facilitate opportunities for SMEs to bid for public sector broadband content projects. In this way, regions are both customers and commissioners of broadband content.

4.4 How Community-focused broadband content activities can influence and deliver regional economic strategies

RDAs and DAs support a number of projects providing content and services to communities, and through their regeneration activities have supported capacity building and community empowerment initiatives likely to utilise broadband content. In this context, citizens act as both consumers and creators of content.¹⁹

Priority areas where regional broadband content activity can stimulate social and economic impact in line with regional economic strategies are those that address inclusion and empowerment, the building or enabling of communities, and those initiatives that promote rural opportunity. Example activities would therefore include those:

- 1. Promoting engagement with communities – particularly late adopters of IT within those communities – to educate and empower them to create and share their own content and applications.*

¹⁸ See Appendix 5 (pt 4.3) – Some Broadband-Related Quotes from Regional Development Agencies’ Regional Economic Strategies

¹⁹ See Appendix 5 (pt 4.4) – Some Broadband-Related Quotes from Regional Development Agencies’ Regional Economic Strategies

2. Extending the reach of ICT and widening participation by stimulating social enterprise, facilitating communities of interest, and promoting sustainable activity.

3. Promoting rural opportunity by using broadband content and applications to open access to cultural assets, overcome rural isolation and stimulate rural economic activity.

Alston Cybermoor (<http://www.cybermoor.org>) is a good example of a project that has addressed issues of economic regeneration, lifelong learning and take-up of e-Government services, as well as low cost broadband provision. Cybermoor has empowered local people to create community content ranging from static web pages to multimedia content.

The eWiltshire (<http://www.ewiltshire.com>) and eSwindon (<http://www.eswindon.co.uk>) Smartplace Partnership is a £7 million initiative increasing access to broadband and helping those who already have access to take full advantage. The partnership comprises the RDA, County, District, Borough, Town Councils, Business Link, Wiltshire Learning and Skills Council, LearnDirect and representatives from the private sector. The five main themes are business, learning, communities, homes and campaigning.

Home2Home and Carpenters Connect on the Carpenters Estate in Newham (<http://www.newham.org.uk/wired/>) offer a radical solution to the challenges of getting disadvantaged communities on line and encouraging community activity and participation. The services deliver video on demand, Internet access, email, an estate Internet, multi-player video gaming, a 'PC on TV' service and 'free to air' TV channels. The aim is to provide local authorities with a powerful tool to support service provision and regeneration activity. Carpenters Connect has been implemented in a challenging environment in an area ranked in the lowest 3% by the Index of Deprivation.

5. Recommended Actions for Regional Development Agencies and Devolved Administrations

A number of useful initiatives are now underway at working level between DTI, RDAs, DAs, BSG, DCF and industry – but these activities now need high-level buy-in from the RDAs and potentially DAs. Working collaboratively where this makes sense will add value all around. It is essential that evolving strategies look beyond just infrastructure, and engagement with other stakeholders is now vital. Sharing knowledge, lessons and best practice is just the first important step.

The RDAs and DAs should be encouraged to consider how they can effectively exploit broadband content and applications through the following actions²⁰:

- 1. Agree broadband content outputs (in the form of projects/activities/case studies) to be adopted by projects, these can include existing projects if RDAs/DAs would like (convertible to measurable results as part of their Corporate Plans).*
- 2. Map other publicly funded regional strategies, already focusing on broadband/broadband content. Examples include Local Authorities, Regional Cultural Consortia, Media Agencies, Arts, Libraries, LEA and HEA strategies.*
- 3. Identify regional partners and resources already delivering broadband content activity and projects, and work with these partners to maximise and demonstrate their successes and overall impact, helping the whole to be greater than the sum of the parts. Engage more closely with business and showcase a directory of Broadband Content projects/case studies.*
- 4. Prioritise and understand broadband content issues in the context of the national policy agenda, identifying what types of RDA and DA activity in this area have the potential to make an effective contribution to productivity and competitiveness, including areas such as procurement policy (where necessary, taking into account State Aids).*
- 5. Ensure mechanisms are in place for policy leads (ICT/digital industries clusters) to collaborate and explore collaborative opportunities both internally and across regional borders and contribute to the national policy agenda on broadband content, e.g. through DTI, Other Government Departments, the Digital Content Forum and Broadband Stakeholder Group.*

We do not underestimate the scale and complexity of these challenges. This is about using broadband-enabled ICT, content, services and applications to drive business and process change across a Region and Nation, and between regions.

There are big prizes at stake for succeeding in these challenges:

- Transform delivery of public services in the region.
- Increase levels of trust in regional public sector institutions.
- Build a thriving content and media applications industry in each region.
- Make the region more attractive for inward investment.
- Boost education and the ICT skills base in the region.
- Increase regional levels of innovation, enterprise, competitiveness and productivity.

Endorsement at senior level in the RDAs and DAs will be a crucial step towards making this a reality, and cementing the already strong partnership between the DTI, RDAs, DAs and industry.

²⁰ The applicability and prioritisation will vary depending on the individual RDA/DA.

Acknowledgements and Sources

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The report draws principally upon:

- i) The wealth of knowledge, source materials and contacts of the members of the Task and Finish Group.
- ii) Comprehensive materials, published and unpublished, on Broadband, produced by the Broadband Stakeholder Group.
- iii) The report by PricewaterhouseCoopers in April 2004, 'Broadband Content and Services Strategic Issues', produced for EU Telecommunications Ministers at the Irish Presidency Informal Conference on Broadband, held at Dundalk from 21-23 April, 2004.
- iv) Communication from the Commission in April 2004, 'Connecting Europe at High Speed: National Broadband Strategies'.
- v) The website of the Office of Deputy Prime Minister
<http://www.localgov.gov.uk/page.cfm?pageID=315&Language=eng> which has a programme in place to fund a diverse range of national projects on local e-government.

Appendix 1

WHAT IS BROADBAND CONTENT?

“Broadband plays a major role in modernising economies and societies. As an enabling technology, it is at the core of the diffusion of the information society and of the development of information and communication technologies (ICTs). These technologies in turn are key drivers of productivity and growth. Broadband enables the delivery of new advanced content. It promotes the development of new services and improved delivery of those that already exist. It allows the re-organisation of working and production processes. All of these developments bring significant benefits to businesses, government and consumers.”

from Introduction to 2004 Communication from the EU Commission on ‘Connecting Europe at High Speed; National Broadband Strategies’.

There needs to be a clear focus on what is meant by broadband content, and why RDAs and DAs should support its development and promotion. As broadband becomes ubiquitous the driver will be what is delivered, not the delivery mechanism. Content is becoming the point of broadband – an enabler but also an important sector of the UK economy.

Neither “broadband” nor “content” lend themselves to definitive terms. Some content is simply better with broadband, some is broadband dependent. The term “broadband content” also includes applications and tools, important for enhancing business competitiveness.

To underpin the framework of this paper, the definition of broadband content is understood to mean:

“Content, applications and services, which will promote engagement with and the effective use of broadband technology.”

The BSG has an extended definition of broadband more generally, which also helps put into context the paper’s scope and purpose.

“Always on access, at work, at home, or on the move, provided by a range of fixed-line, wireless and satellite technologies to progressively higher bandwidths capable of genuinely supporting new and innovative interactive content, applications and services and the delivery of enhanced public services.”

More and more individuals and businesses now understand that Broadband supports the innovative use of content, networks, platforms and devices. It enables the creation and delivery of rich media business and consumer applications across multiple platforms ranging from the PC, the television and personal devices (e.g. Palm Pilots, MP3 players) to the mobile phone and networked games consoles. Applications include education, information, entertainment and communications across government, business and consumer markets. More applications and services are expected to become available as the market matures and users choose different broadband delivery platforms and connection speeds to meet their needs. Significant growth is expected in UK broadband adoption rates across multiple platforms, targeted at both the public and businesses. For instance, Korea, Taiwan and Japan provide strong evidence that broadband content, in particular entertainment, is a key driver of broadband uptake.

The Economic Importance of Broadband Content

Broadband is a key driver for economic growth, creating new opportunities for enterprise, creativity, productivity and innovation. These changes and opportunities will be driven by a

diverse range of companies that combine creativity and innovation with new modes of production, sales and distribution. As an enabling technology, broadband's benefits are realised through the delivery of advanced applications and services expected to bring about productivity gains both for businesses and public administrations:

- *e-commerce* and *e-business* become more convenient. They allow business deals to be concluded fast and reshape the supply chain.
- Distance education and learning are stimulated through real-time services, resulting in the upgrade of skills, improved human capital and life-long learning.
- In *healthcare*, high-speed Internet access allows diagnosis and patient treatment to be carried out independently of geographical location.
- In the context of *e-government*, broadband facilitates the on-line supply of existing and new public services. It improves the efficiency of public administrations and facilitates contacts between citizens and government, helping to realise some of the efficiencies required by the Gershon Review.
- Finally, *teleworking* and *videoconferencing* have become real and practical options.

The benefits of broadband play a crucial role in promoting progress towards an inclusive knowledge-based economy and ensure growth through improved competitiveness.

The Social Importance of Broadband Content

Because broadband is always-on and enables greater *collaboration* and *communications* between people, government at all levels and businesses, it has a major social impact. Broadband content offers a major opportunity for the delivery of better public services to ensure the welfare of citizens, including children, working people, the elderly and the excluded. In addition, broadband and the associated content and applications have significant potential to *enhance the quality of life*, and to overcome *the digital divide*.

To be truly an enabler, broadband content needs to comply with the Disability Discrimination Act 1995, Part 3 so as to ensure that those who cannot see, hear, or are limited by assistive devices, can get access to the information. For further information, refer to - Guidelines for UK Government websites section 2.4 Building in universal accessible - <http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/e-government/webguidelines> and e-Government Interoperability Framework v6 at <http://www.govtalk.gov.uk>

Broadband and the Digital Content Industries

The UK has world-class digital content industries, including publishing, music, software, web development, graphic design, computer games and broadcasting. It spans the whole range of companies that use the tools and functions of interactive media to bring new digital content products and services to market. The introduction of broadband technologies together with the growing number of distribution channels for digital content, provides significant opportunities for the digital content industry to make a substantial contribution to realising the economic strategies of the regions.

Issues on the horizon for digital content producers to consider are effective engagement between SMEs and the public sector, the delivery of e-learning and workforce development, and how to improve interaction and the level of communications with citizens. A number of technologies including Digital Rights Management, e-payment, identity management, security and interoperability, as well as the underlying standards, are all key to enhancing deployment of broadband content and services, and stimulating increased usage.

Appendix 2

DTI's APPROACH TO BROADBAND CONTENT

The Government wants the UK to have the most extensive and competitive broadband market in the G7 by 2005. The development of compelling digital content and applications has a key contribution to make to this vision. It will drive up demand for broadband and increase value for users through:

- improving business productivity and competitiveness, and transforming businesses,
- delivering improved public services through transformation of the public sector and increased access for citizens particularly to on-line education and health services,
- building an ever expanding digital marketplace for content and applications providers to commercialise new digital products,
- providing greater lifestyle choices (for example, increased home-working possibilities).

DTI will work to stimulate a competitive industry and a vibrant market for digital content and applications in the UK by providing strong leadership across the private and public sectors. We will:

- create the policy environment for innovation and growth,
- champion the importance of digital content and applications as part of the wider objectives of Broadband Britain, and help celebrate the achievements of industry,
- work closely with industry and key organisations such as the Digital Content Forum and the Broadband Stakeholders Group, to ensure our policies and actions take full account of business needs and experience,
- promote innovative approaches to key issues such as digital rights management and the development of new business models,
- develop and promote pilots and other best practice of how broadband content might be stimulated,
- engage with Regions and Nations who, with the deep knowledge they have of their industries, are well placed to stimulate digital content and applications within the context of their own broadband and overall economic strategies, through encouraging local initiatives, promoting and facilitating inter-regional knowledge sharing and collaboration.

November 2003

Appendix 3

DTI PRESS NOTICE ON BROADBAND CONTENT

P/2003/592

9 December 2003

BROADBAND CONTENT INITIATIVES RECEIVE RESOUNDING ENDORSEMENT

UK E-Commerce Minister Stephen Timms today added his endorsement to clear indicators showing the crucial role broadband content is playing in driving the competitiveness needed to reach the UK's challenging broadband targets.

Firstly a report on broadband content initiatives, "DTI Broadband Content Pilots Feasibility Study", (commissioned by DTI and Digital Content Forum (DCF) and written by Atos KPMG Consulting) received overwhelming support from both private and public sector stakeholders, and has inspired actions in a number of areas.

Furthermore a national workshop jointly promoted by DTI and SEEDA on 26 November and including senior representatives from the regions and Devolved Administrations, from the Digital Content Forum and from the Broadband Stakeholders Group gave unequivocal support in recognising the importance of broadband content in driving up competitiveness and productivity both regionally and nationally.

The workshop also agreed that there is clear added value in working collaboratively between the Regions and Nations and with central government, in close conjunction with industry.

Mr Timms said:

"Broadband content is an essential driver of broadband uptake, enabling users to gain increasing value from using broadband. It has a key role to play in helping us achieve our target of having the most competitive and extensive broadband market in the G7 by 2005.

"The way industry and other organisations have enthusiastically involved themselves in our work to stimulate broadband content is very reassuring. It shows we are initiating work in the right areas, particularly helping the development of broadband business models. It also demonstrates that industry are taking seriously the message that sustained and effective broadband uptake requires both access to infrastructure and compelling content and applications.

"I am particularly pleased to see the level of interest among regional bodies in driving broadband content in their areas and I look forward to further work being developed. The meeting of the Regions and Nations that took place in Weybridge on 26th November represents an extremely encouraging step along this path."

The feasibility study has helped to stimulate action within a number of RDAs and Devolved Administrations. For example within the North-West Region, the Liverpool Digital programme will enable organisations across the UK to create new kinds of digital content products for international markets, a key goal being to facilitate the emergence of viable business models. Michael Welch, Chief Executive of Digital Industries North West (established to promote the North West's growing ICT industry to a global audience) said:

“The strategic vision of the DTI within the digital content industry has galvanised collaboration between public and private organisations within the North West’s ICT sector.

“In support of the DTI’s digital content strategy the North West Development Agency (NWDA) is investing in a multi-million pound technology programme known as Liverpool Digital which will play a major role in future proofing jobs both in Merseyside and across the North West.”

Anne Scorer, CEO of the Broadbandshow, said:

“The recommendations in the report reflect our success with ‘the broadbandshow’ funded by the DTI. We’ve proved that commissioning broadband content stimulates the market in the South West and develops skills in creative media. Our tourism case studies show how richer content, and the use of broadband applications, result in business growth.”

DTI have been working closely with the regions and nations to look at how broadband content initiatives can further drive forward their broadband and wider economic strategies.

Anthony Dunnett, Chief Executive of SEEDA which has the policy lead among RDAs on broadband, said:

“SEEDA is committed to the rapid deployment and adoption of broadband as an essential building block of the knowledge economy, in pursuit of the south east’s sustainable economic development.

“A national take up rate of 150,000 new broadband users per month is a very healthy sign, but supporting the creation of innovative new content will be vital in sustaining this momentum and SEEDA has been working closely with the DTI and other RDAs in building an inclusive approach across the country.

“In support of this, we are pleased to announce our intention to deploy the Broadbandshow in the south east, a leading edge content demonstration capability, originally developed by the South West of England Regional Development Agency in collaboration with the Bristol Interactive Cluster.”

Note for Editors

1. The DCF, <http://www.dcf.org.uk>, an industry body representing some 30 Trade Associations and other membership bodies, acts as a two-way conduit between industry and government to gather views and input into policy-making processes, brokering relationships, developing shared knowledge and undertaking activities to promote innovation and excellence in the content sector.

2. The Atos KPMG Consulting ‘DTI Broadband Content Pilots Feasibility Study’ can be found at http://www.dti.gov.uk/industries/digital_content/broadband_pilots_report.pdf

3. The Bristol Interactive Cluster (BRIC) is a non-profitmaking membership organisation bridging the gap between new media and TV companies. See <http://www.cluster.org.uk>. The broadbandshow is a unique project funded by the South West of England Regional Development Agency from the DTI Broadband Fund. The £1.45 million contract was awarded to BRIC in July 2002 for a project to create broadband content/applications which are demonstrated at roadshows and targeted at SMEs in the tourism and aerospace sectors. See <http://www.broadbandshow.org>

Appendix 4

THE BRITISH EDUCATIONAL SUPPLIERS ASSOCIATION (BESA) CONTRIBUTION TO LEARNING-FOCUSED BROADBAND CONTENT ACTIVITIES AND REGIONAL ECONOMIC STRATEGIES

The Task and Finish Group requested BESA to provide an industry viewpoint on how learning-focused broadband content activities fit within the broader policy context for education. BESA outlines below three important education agendas (Skills Strategy, Learning and Skills Councils, and the Tomlinson Report) that provide opportunities for innovative broadband content.

Any regional e-learning/broadband input would seem more appropriate with the 14+ education sector in schools, colleges and the workplace. Regional economic strategies were highlighted in the recent **Skills Strategy** document, which focused on basic skills as being the most important factors for employers. The UK has a significant population who are functionally illiterate and innumerate and broadband locally must have a role to play in improving this. Employers are constantly concerned about these important skills, and people of all ages find it massively difficult to cope in the world and the workplace without them.

An important role needs to be played by the **Learning and Skills Councils**, whose remit covers the 16+ schools and college population: they are responsible for the education funding of this age group. They are also closely involved with the Skills Strategy objectives and local solutions to the problems outlined in the document, i.e. local solutions to local problems, working with employers, trade associations and Chambers of Commerce. Businesses must become more involved in this process if they are to get workers with the skills that they need to make profitable businesses. There is therefore a role for LSCs to scope and fund broadband projects.

The recent government report on 14+education, the **Tomlinson Report**, outlined a revolution in assessment and education to provide pupils with appropriate learning experiences and a vocational pathway. Much of this depends upon the involvement of employers and work-based training, so broadband will have a significant part to play in this. It could also impact upon assessment procedures and the collection of evidence, e.g. through e-portfolios. It is essential that employers, especially SMEs are aware of the impact of these changes and are piloting schemes from now on.

These three important agendas will need broadband infrastructure to operate successfully and will provide an opportunity for those within and without the traditional education sector to provide innovative content. The following important issues should therefore be put in a local context and be the focus of local content development:

- The confusion of the assessment system – what do they mean to employers?
- The lack of vocational skills in the UK
- Low staying-on rate: 31% leave at 16
- Disengagement of pupils at KS4
- Burdensome assessment system for students and teachers
- Poor basic skills/knowledge for employment, particularly in language/communication.

May 2004

Appendix 5

SOME BROADBAND-RELATED QUOTES FROM REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT AGENCIES' REGIONAL ECONOMIC STRATEGIES

The paper seeks to demonstrate clear linkages between the importance of broadband content, together with the four themes that the paper develops (Business, Learning, Public Sector and Community), and RDAs' Regional Economic Strategies (RES). A small selection of relevant quotes from the RESs are included below to illustrate the role of broadband content in the context of the overall economic and social agendas of the RDAs. The numbering below follows that of the main section.

3. The Importance of Broadband Content

"...in line with the Broadband Stakeholder Group, the region should plan for generations of Broadband, each delivering continuously improving levels of service."

"There are three principal users of ICT driving the digital economy: eBusiness, eGovernment and eLearning. In order to improve the performance of the regional economy, the objective must be to communicate the relevance of technology to each of these sectors, explaining in non-technical terms how the lives of East Midlands people, be they business, citizens or learners, can be improved using ICT."

East Midlands Regional Development Agency

"SEEDA, local authorities and business organisations working with Government (DTI and DfES) have a key role to play in managing the stimulation of Broadband uptake and co-ordination between the many users through the promotion of best practice."

"The take up of Broadband services and the application of the latest technologies is critical for the sustainable growth and competitiveness of the South East."

South East England Development Agency

"The drive to e-enable businesses, as well as public sector bodies, is taking on greater urgency and is contributing to the EU drive for an information society."

North East Regional Development Agency

"...broadband availability is only an enabler of economic development. For the full benefit to be realised, take-up of e-Business must be strongly increased and e-Learning and e-Government developed...."

"The widespread availability of broadband communications is a prerequisite for economic development. Recognising this, the region will strive to make broadband communications available to all businesses and 97% of households throughout the region by the end of 2004."

Advantage West Midlands Regional Development Agency

4.1 How Business-focused broadband content activities can influence and deliver regional economic strategies

“Online communities are beginning to spread out from Cambridge, and the links have demonstrated clear business benefits, bring new business opportunities, investment and employment.”

East of England Regional Development Agency

“Business demand for ICT, in particular access to high speed broadband telecommunications, is continuing with the Electronic Business Global Business programme. This supports the adoption of e-business, using the Internet for marketing, sales and trading transactions.”

North East Regional Development Agency

4.2 How Learning-focused broadband content activities can influence and deliver regional economic strategies

“The growing importance of ICT is evident in the way that it increasingly features in the delivery of learning in schools, colleges, universities and lifelong learning. The region needs to provide a consistent, integrated, high quality ICT learning experience to ensure the delivery of qualified, ICT-literate citizens, across the whole of the region.”

“...163 Access Centres have been established in the East Midlands providing opportunities for all citizens to learn how technology can enrich their lives and improve their skills.”

East Midlands Regional Development Agency

“Achieving broadband links throughout the region is a priority. This will encourage business- to-business networking, the development of business clusters and the growth of e-commerce. Improving ICT and getting individuals online is key to delivering skills training throughout the region.”

East of England Regional Development Agency – Broadband Fund Action Plan

4.3 How Public Sector-focused broadband content activities can influence and deliver regional economic strategies

“ The e-agenda is equally significant for the public sector. This includes local authorities, government agencies providing services to, or buying from, the business community or general public. These bodies are committed to providing the bulk of their services they source from private or public sector suppliers.”

North East Regional Development Agency

“The West Midlands Broadband Company has been established to develop a broadband network for the education, voluntary and health sectors, local authorities and other public bodies and public sector organisations at affordable cost throughout the West Midlands.”

Advantage West Midlands Regional Development Agency

“In partnership with the private sector, we are offering SME businesses in a number of Market Towns the opportunity to build their own web presence and have the ability to trade on-line.”

Yorkshire Forward Regional Development Agency

4.4 How Community-focused broadband content activities can influence and deliver regional economic strategies

“Take up by individuals and creating open access points in the local community will be important, opening up possibilities of remote working, learning within the home and easier access to information. The role of schools and the demand for broadband within the home generated by young people will be an important lever in changing behaviour. Content creation for broadband will drive up demand, and this will involve collaboration with a wide range of commercial and public sector partners.”

South East England Development Agency

“We will build on a number of exciting initiatives underway throughout the East of England to fund a ‘wired community’ in a market town and its outlying communities.”

East of England Regional Development Agency – Broadband Fund Action Plan



SCOTTISH EXECUTIVE



Department of
**Enterprise, Trade
and Investment**
www.detini.gov.uk

This document is also available as a PDF
http://www.dti.gov.uk/industries/digital_content/downloads.html



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