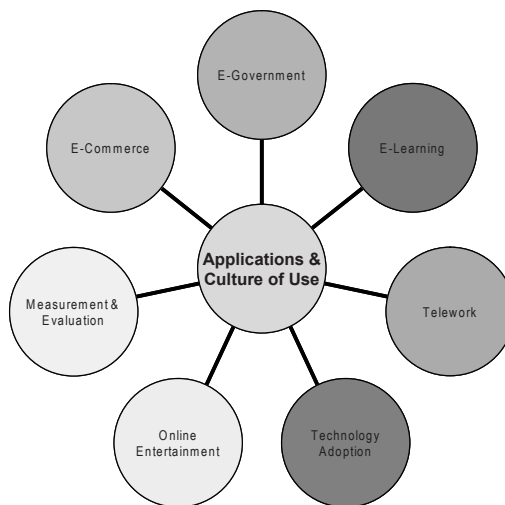


# Chapter V

## Creating Applications and a Culture of Use



*“This growing concern with urban sprawl, coupled with the nostalgic yearning which the ‘new urbanism’ movement represents, are evidence of sweeping changes in public attitude toward physical space....No technology in human history is having, or is likely to have, such tremendous influence on life and work and play, and in the transforming process, on our physical space, as the Internet.” (Eger, 2007, p. 1)*

**Overview:** Chapters I to IV have introduced the networked community and described its environment in terms of the Network Society, technology, telecommunication regulations and public policy, and the knowledge workforce. In this chapter, the focus shifts to the content specifics—the telecommunication and software applications found on the broadband networks. The usefulness of these

applications can stimulate the creativity of users, leading to a continuum of use, otherwise known as a “culture of use”. The difficulty in benchmarking innovative applications is that they change minute by minute; what is exciting today will probably be common tomorrow. Nevertheless, even established network applications should be considered because they represent innovations that might serve as springboards to next-generation production, making communities more distinctive, competitive, and creative. Several types of worldwide community innovations in applications are described here. This chapter will deal with:

- A description of applications and groupings of applications;
- An overview of sector-specific applications and some international examples;
- A discussion on technology adoption issues that should be considered in developing a culture of use;
- Measurement and evaluation approaches.

## **APPLICATIONS IN THE NETWORKED COMMUNITY**

**Key Concept:** *Networked communities employ a growing variety of devices, software and sector-specific applications to improve their social and economic standing. Wider collaboration among community stakeholders can lead to the development of carefully targeted applications that will offer solutions to the real problems communities face.*

Applications relate to the user content, products and services that make useful the telecommunication infrastructures of networked communities. Applications are the reason people want to make maximum use of information and communication technologies, and why they expend effort acquiring new systems and devices, and learning how to use them. Access devices include IP telephones, desktop computers, cable modems, satellite receivers, i-Pods, BlackBerries, game players, and cell phones, to name a few. Most of them are different ways to interface with the Internet. Sector-specific applications include the programmes and projects that are delivered through those devices and infrastructure, such as e-health, e-learning, e-commerce, e-government services, and the digital content and online services that enrich entertainment, leisure and quality of life.

These applications will originate from within the community and from outside stakeholders by means of Web portals, search engines, virtual networks, service providers, innovators, newsgroups, chat rooms, file sharing, e-mail, and gaming platforms. Satisfied users will have access to high-capacity, on-demand, two-way

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