

Chapter XIX

Information–Communications Systems Convergence Paradigm: Invisible E–Culture and E–Technologies

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ABSTRACT

This chapter is on cultural aspects of information-communications systems embedded into new media environment and invisible e-technologies, and on a new age of social responsibility for information technology professionals. Besides the key issues in information technology development that create smart environment and ambient intelligence, the chapter also discusses digital e-culture and the new media role in cultural heritage. From the viewpoint of information technology, the current information-communications systems converge with media. This convergence is about tools-services-content triangle. Thus, we are confronted with a new form of media mostly presented with the term digital, reshaping not only media industry but also a cultural milieu of an entire nation on a regional and global basis. The

discussion follows on the World Library idea that is rebuilding with new form of World Memory (World Brain), the shift from visible culture domination to the domination of invisible culture in the world of e-technologies predominance. From this scenario, information technology professionals coping with information systems projects, e-services development, and e-content design have more cultural responsibility than in the past when they worked within closer and inner cultural horizons and when their misuse of technologies had no influence on culture as a whole.

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

The information society is, above all, an economic concept but with important social and cultural implications. The new forms of direct access to

information and knowledge create new forms of e-culture. E-culture is a part of a culture. It not only concerns users but the community of information professionals as well. When one speaks of information technology, it is always from the Western point of view, whereas e-technology (especially its applications) takes place throughout the world, and every culture has a different understanding of it. The shift to an e-culture at the level of society in general is translated to the individual level, enabling cultural change to be described empirically. The term *e-culture* refers to the diffusion of new technology, its application for various purposes (especially information and communication), and shifts in related attitudes, values, and norms. E-technology may not be gnawing at the roots of our culture, but those roots are gradually absorbing it. As with all innovation, cultural or otherwise, this technology will reinvigorate, transform, and inspire older cultural forms. We are living in the era of globalization, the information economy, with borderless communities and multiple citizenships. E-culture literacy and attainment will require serious attention to new infrastructure, to the building blocks and platforms for e-culture. These are critical issues for the pursuit of information professionals' excellence, for creativity in an information society, as well as for fundamental imperatives for commerce and trade in a new media environment.

The main notion of the following text is on cultural aspects of information-communications systems embedded into a new media environment, on invisible technologies, and on a new age of cultural responsibility for information technology professionals. The key issues in information technology development that create invisible e-technologies and smart environments are under e-culture influence. From the viewpoint of information technology, the current information-communications systems converge with media. This convergence is about tools-services-content triangle. Thus, we are accepting a new form of media mostly presented with the term *digital*,

reshaping not only media industry but also a cultural milieu of an entire nation on a regional and global basis. The discussion follows on the new e-technology and information-communications systems convergence as the basis for defining pervasive computing and positive e-technologies. The findings at the end of this chapter explain the process of a fundamental cultural shift from the computer-based information technology to the computerless (invisible) e-technologies in which the e-culture is the essential factor of the success. The discussion section is about the role of information technology professionals coping with information systems projects, e-services development, and e-content design. They have more social responsibility than in the past when they worked within closer and inner cultural horizons and when their misuse of technologies had no influence on culture as a whole.

BACKGROUND ON INFORMATION COMMUNICATIONS SYSTEMS AND NEW MEDIA

One of the most valuable and essential processes that humanity can engage in and which is, therefore, essential to look at in terms of information technologies, is the process of self-determination. The principal of self-determination of people was embodied as a central purpose of the United Nations in its 1945 charter. The purposes of the United Nations are to develop friendly relations among nations based on respect for the principle of equal rights and self-determination of nations, and to take other appropriate measures to strengthen universal peace. Resolution 1514 (XV) of December 14, 1960, containing the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, stated that all nations have the right to self-determination; by virtue of that right, they freely determine their political status and freely pursue their economic, social, and cultural development (United Nations, 1960). In the 1990s,

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