1. Open lectures

Main issues arising from open lectures:

- The constraint on development is not money or technology, it is human capital. There is a need to focus on the development of people, not policy or technology. This should be a national priority. Training is a matter of survival, not a nice-to-have.
- There is a need to shift from policy development to implementation. It was found that companies often identify gaps more than regulators and policy-makers. From implementation, policy review and further development can then take place.
- There needs to be different streams of development focus: a priority for African telcos would be to get services to people and roll-out infrastructure. At the same time there is also a need to allow experimentation which would develop small players into big players. Application development is a high-growth area. Here South Africa can develop applications relevant to its needs.
- The role of the regulator can be one of a positive contributor to development - through building of trust, credibility and its independence. However, in preparation for the Next Generation Internet, regulators and operators need to adapt to an environment where both voice and data are allowed to flourish leading to further growth. Access should be easy and cheap to foster an environment to enable development.
- There are various implications for telcos in the changing skills that they require. At the same time tertiary institutions fail to respond to the changing needs and to deliver the right skills. The result is that people need re-skilling before they are usable in the workplace.
- Finally, over the next couple of years, the real growth will be in content and applications. In South Africa we need to position ourselves to take advantage of this and focus on developing both content and applications. Obviously, to do this we need to have the right skills profile.

Gillian Marcelle: Creating the Learning African Telco

Learning Opportunities

- Missing specific areas of telecommunications technical competence e.g.
- General lack of familiarity with state of the art equipment, and lack of operational experience with advanced equipment.
- Insufficient numbers of IT/IS specialists and expertise in information technology disciplines.
- Poor problem solving ability and skills

Learning Opportunities (2)

- Organisational climate not suited to accelerated learning. Bureaucratic attitudes and values, slow, rigid work practices or internal (non-market based) provision of service.
- Inadequate systems for customer service management and poor attitudes to customer service.
- Lack of up to date knowledge & familiarity with specific equipment and their operational & maintenance routines.

By way of conclusion

- Creating capabilities requires strategy, investment and concerted effort
- Variety of routes to creation of capability
- External environment exerts intended and unintended consequences on learning at the firm level
- Commercial relationships with equipment suppliers major impact on capability development

Prof. William Melody: Preparing for the Next Generation Internet (NGI): Creating Opportunities from the Lessons of Global Experience

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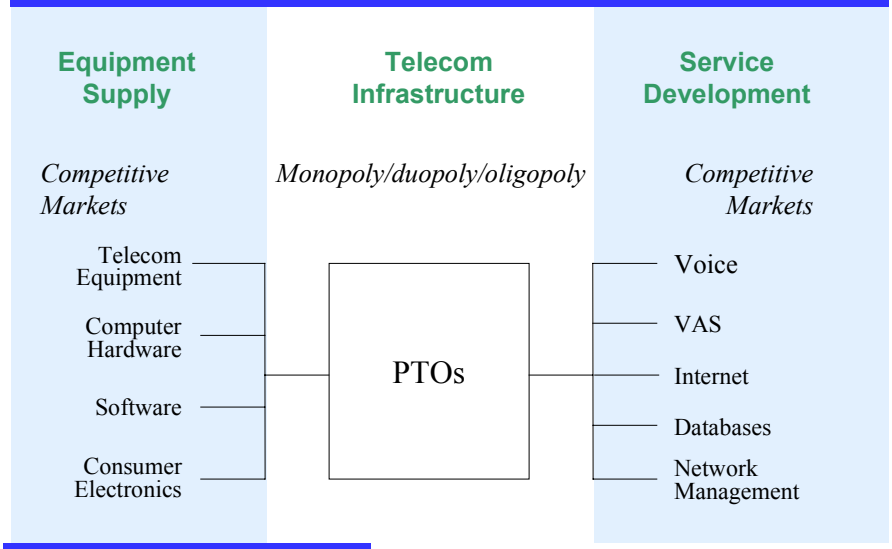
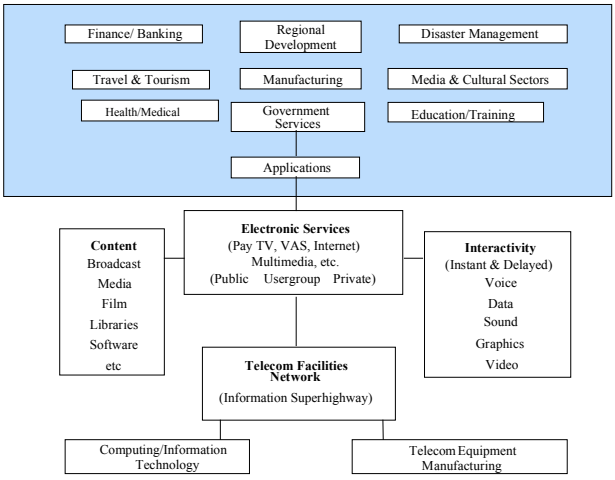
Telecom reform is transforming national and international telecom networks into information infrastructures for building knowledge societies. The extension of national telecom networks to provide access to voice services to more and more people can, at the same time, provide the capabilities for access to an ever-expanding range of Internet services. Throughout the latter half of the 1990s, major telecom reforms in many countries, developing and developed, have been driven by the synergy between telecom reform and Internet development. Different countries have followed different paths of reform, and a wide variety of experiences have been recorded and studied. By some international benchmarks, South Africa has achieved outstanding successes during this period. By others, certain South African reforms have been slower in taking root.

Most countries are now entering a new phase of the telecom reform and development process, the Next Generation Internet (NGI) phase. Rapidly expanding Internet services, ranging from email and web sites to IP telephony and electronic commerce, will drive the frontiers of telecom network development in both rich and poor areas. The challenge for all countries is to build on the accomplishments in the first phase of telecom reform so as to create new opportunities for growth and development during the next NGI phase. This presentation will discuss some of the lessons from global experience that South Africa may wish to consider in designing its policies for the next NGI phase of its telecom reform and development.

The telecom sector value chain: Getting beyond voice

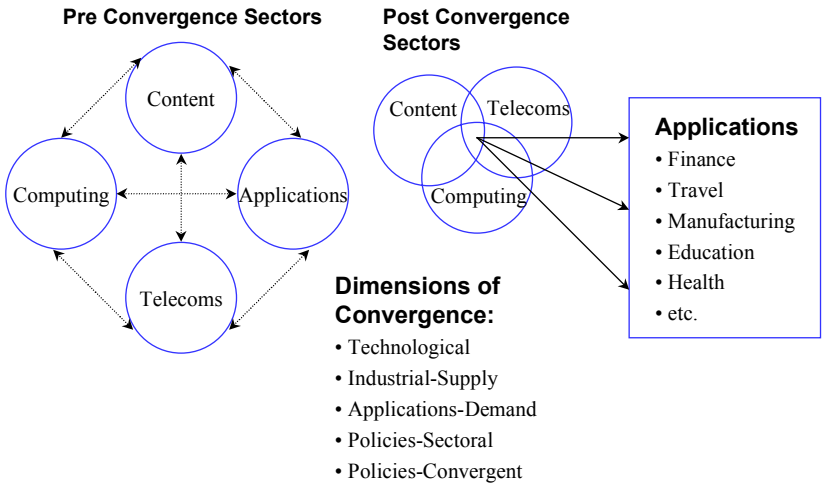


Creating the Networks for an Information Society



INFORMATION INFRASTRUCTURE

The Dimensions of Convergence on the Information Highway



Dimensions of Convergence:

- Technological
- Industrial-Supply
- Applications-Demand
- Policies-Sectoral
- Policies-Convergent