



中華人民共和國香港特別行政區  
Hong Kong Special Administrative Region of the People's Republic of China



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### 創新及科技發展新策略

去年中，創新科技署曾就創新及科技發展新策略的架構進行公眾諮詢。至去年十二月，當局公布有關新策略的架構和創新及科技基金的三層撥款新機制。

經閱覽由政府當局向立法會工商事務委員會提交的文件，我謹代表資訊科技界向委員會提交業界對新策略的意見，詳情請參閱見附件。

此外，就新策略的安排及運作，我謹期望政府當局可就下述問題作書面回應：

1. 新策略選取了四個範疇設立研發中心，把五個範疇納入香港應用科技研究院的重點研發工作；惟在過去獲創新及科技基金支援不少的資訊及通訊技術，則未正式納入其中。就此，當局沒有選取資訊及通訊技術作為新策略的重點範疇的原因為何？在新策略下，資訊及通訊技術將會擔當怎樣的角色？
2. 在新策略下，創新及科技基金的撥款將如何按三層撥款機制作出分配？預計各研發中心／核心主題將可獲多少撥款？有關釐定撥款金額的準則為何？
3. 按文件所述，在新策略下，大部份的創新及科技基金資源，將可能分配至由大學或公營機構承辦的研發中心。就此，當局有何機制及措施：
  - a) 鼓勵私人機構／個別研究人員投資及從事創新的研發活動？有關詳情為何？

- b) 確保創新及科技基金的撥款及資助項目，不會與大學其他研究撥款所資助的項目有所重複？
- c) 確保各研發中心與相關業界緊密合作，知悉及明白有關業界對技術研究及發展的需要，從而令業界獲取最大的益處？
- d) 確保創新及科技基金的撥款將適當地投放在創新的研發項目上？
- e) 確保研發中心提供有效途徑，讓公眾／個別研究人員可向研發中心提出創新的研發計劃建議，從而取得研發中心對有關計劃的支援？

敬希 安排！

立法會議員(資訊科技界)



單仲偕 謹啓

二零零五年一月十八日

# IT Matters for Hong Kong

資訊科技與香港的發展 息息相關  
Sponsoring Organizations 發起機構



## **IT must be a core area in our Innovation and Technology Development**

A few days ago the Chief Executive presented to Legco his 2005 Policy Address. In his review, over the seven years since Hong Kong's reunification with China, "we have travelled a rough and winding road", and he frankly recognised the inadequacies of his Administration in not "being alert enough to the looming challenges of globalisation and the knowledge-based economy", and "did not react in time to solve the structural problems of our economy or response promptly to the Mainland's economic advances". In reflecting over the failure to establish the vision of "people-based" governance, the CE promised to continue with the efforts to uphold this vision. The courage to acknowledge these inadequacies, from which valuable lessons have been learned and helped to chart our way forward, is welcome by all and hopefully is a sign of evolving maturity of the Administration.

The Policy Address reaffirms that, following economic revival, the principal mission is to further consolidate our achievements and accelerate economic restructuring, through consolidation of the four core industries (financial services, producer services, logistics and tourism), acceleration in the regional co-operation through CEPA and Pan-PRD initiatives, and consideration of new growth areas for our economy, particularly the development of "cultural and creative industries". While this directional intent is commendable, the Policy Address does not clearly spell out its synergistic linkage and position with respect to our industrial and innovation policy formulated over the last few years. The perception therefore of a disjointed and short-sighted approach to policy formulation is prevalent in recent editorials commenting on the Policy Address.

In particular, the four sponsoring professional/trade organisations for the "IT Matters for Hong Kong Campaign" firmly believe that IT has been neglected as an essential core industry among the key areas for strategic development being undertaken by the Innovation and Technology Commission.

## **The strategic role and position of IT**

Shortly after Hong Kong's reunification with China, the Chief Executive in 1998 established the Commission on Innovation and Technology, chaired by the late Professor C.L. Tien, with the objective to formulate policy measures to develop Hong Kong as a centre of innovation in Asia. Eighteen months of intensive work by the Commission led to the release of its landmark report in 1999 which recommends the strategic role and focus for innovation and technology in Hong Kong's necessary economic restructuring, the enhancement of our competitive advantages in the global markets, and the strategic positioning of Hong Kong in its regional cooperation within the PRD. Based on the recommendation of this report, the HK SAR Government established the HK\$5B Innovation and Technology Fund to fuel innovative projects in selected technologies including IT, which is specifically identified in the report as a core industry.

Given this impetus and the global dot-com boom, IT projects received a significant amount of funding during this period. However, with the bursting of the dot-com bubble, coupled with the shortfall with respect to the traditional and short-termed expectation in return-on-investment (which does not necessarily apply in R and D on innovation), has led to doubts on the long term and strategic benefits of IT. Though in our views definitely misleading, controversial articles on "IT does not Matter" which received wide spread attention and caused extensive debate, also produced a corollary and negative impact on the strategic role of IT.

The somewhat ineffective and lacklustre operations and performance of the Innovation and Technology Fund in the past few years have led to a high-level review which culminated recently in the change of the modus operandi with the future allocation of the Innovation and Technology Fund. Funding will now be focussed on a limited number of selective core technology/industry areas for reasons of effectiveness and better returns, as distinct from the previously fragmented and ad-hoc funding of projects across a wide-ranging spectrum of technologies and industries. Lamentably, development of IT as a core industry is not included as one of the target areas and, in our view, a strong signal from the Administration that IT as a core industry is not essential to the future of HK's economic well being, contrary to the strong support given to the development of our IT industry in earlier Policy Addresses, and contrary to the recommendations from the landmark 1999 Report of the Innovation and Technology Commission. The Administration is adamant in the rejection of this view, that IT is not sidelined by frequently pointing to the strong IT contents in most of the 13 areas currently being targeted for innovative development. We strongly refute this superficial argument, as such argument reflects a fundamentally mistaken and misleading understanding of the strategic role of IT.

Take the example of mathematics, the mother of science and technology. Given it is embraced in all scientific and technological applications and research, to say that mathematics is therefore no longer necessary to be treated as a core area for study and development, is ludicrous.

Apart from the fore-mentioned argument on the need for IT as a core area on a disciplinary level, that IT is the strategic asset to create societal wealth in any economy is universally recognised. In China, to meet the challenges of the rapidly changing technological, social and business environment of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the Central Government has decreed IT as:

- a strategic, leading and pillar industry to improve the national economy, fortify national security, enhance citizens' livelihood and foster societal progress, and
- the core industry able to accelerate the national economic transformation, and to speed up the national informatization programme

## **Recommendations**

Emphasising on our communal vision, viz

**Information technology is the strategic asset to create societal wealth through supporting and gearing our economic transformation for Hong Kong to compete effectively in the global market.**

The “IT Matters for Hong Kong Campaign” sponsoring organisations have the following recommendations:

1. In tune with the 2005 Policy Address, the Administration should immediately review and update, with appropriate public consultation, the existing formulation of the New Strategy of Innovation and Technology Development, so as to effectively support and assimilate the creation of the “cultural and creative industries”, and to support the continual strengthening of our four core industries.
2. The review of the New Strategy of Innovation and Technology Development must reconsider the strategic position of IT as a core industry for Hong Kong, and re-establish IT as a key and essential core area for Innovation and Technology development.
3. The Administration should establish an “IT Industry Development Committee” which would undertake the responsibility and task to set the

direction, coordinate with the industry, support the R&D activities, and implement programs to facilitate the commercialization of research results, for the directly IT-related focus areas, as well as coordinate with the IT-related needs for the other focus areas. The IT development council will be a steering organization with participation by the major IT associations in Hong Kong, and will aim to provide ongoing services to serve and coordinate between the various stakeholders, being the IT industry, other industries, R&D centers, Government, and the Mainland and international counterparts.

4. To create a specific R & D Centre for IT, focussing on applied research and development of common frameworks and standards for selected industries to enhance their differentiation and competitiveness in the global market.
5. Serious consideration should be given to the option of establishing this IT specific R & D Centre through active participation from the industry, the transformation and integration of the existing capabilities within ASTRI. The R & D Centre dedicated to the logistics industry, supply chain management and processes enabling technologies and the IT specific R & D Centre can collaborate closely for better leveraging of resources.

## **Conclusion**

In the 2005 Policy Address, to establish the vision of “people-based” governance, the Administration should be sufficiently mindful of “thinking what people think” and “addressing people’s pressing need”. The word “people” obviously embraces the entire community, including professionals and industry representatives.

Coupled with people-based governance, and the recognition in the Policy Address that “advances in information technology will bring about profound changes in different facets of community”, and that “only by increasing the knowledge contents of our economy and continuing to innovate can we maintain our advantages and sustain development,”, we sincerely wish the Administration to take heed of this document and implement its recommendations, to form a true and synergistic partnership with the IT industry for the betterment of the economy and future of Hong Kong .

(Author’s Note: This is a condensed and edited version of a paper written in Chinese. While it is not a literal translation of the Chinese version, this English version does reflect the essence of the original. For a fuller treatment of the subject, you are invited to read the original paper written in Chinese.) January 2005