
GOVERNMENT'S RESPONSE TO THE
RECOMMENDATIONS MADE BY THE
ADVISORY COUNCIL ON THE IMPACT
OF NEW MEDIA ON SOCIETY (AIMS) IN
THE REPORT "ENGAGING NEW MEDIA
- CHALLENGING OLD ASSUMPTIONS"

INTRODUCTION

1 Currently, the Government's light-touch approach that was introduced in 1996 to regulate the Internet has worked well. It has facilitated industry growth and free and easy access to information while protecting our young from harmful online content.

2 Since 1996, there have been rapid technological advancements such as the emergence of Web 2.0 technology. Coupled with the increasing adeptness of young Singaporeans in using the Internet, this technology has dramatically changed the way our people communicate as well as disseminate and exchange information.

3 These developments have made a big and significant impact on society. New technologies have created tremendous benefits and opportunities. But they have also brought about negative implications and complex challenges, for which there are no easy solutions in dealing with them.

4 Thus, in April 2007, the Government set up the Advisory Council on the Impact of New Media on Society (AIMS) to study the implications that the fast-developing new media technology would have on our society and recommend ways to the Government to manage them. AIMS is probably the first council of its kind specifically set up by government to study the impact of new media and to make recommendations to address the concerns.

5 AIMS has tapped on the experiences of other countries through study trips to the United States, Europe, the United Kingdom, Canada, Australia, China, Japan and South Korea. It has also sought views and ideas from a cross section of people through a six-week public consultation exercise.

6 AIMS has made recommendations in four key areas, namely, e-engagement, online political content, protection of minors, and intermediary immunity for online defamation.

7 Being a complex subject, it is not surprising that there were different and opposing views expressed, not just among AIMS members themselves, but also across the various groups that AIMS consulted. Where there was consensus on a recommendation, there were however different views on how the recommendation should be implemented.

8 The Government generally agrees with and accepts most of the AIMS' recommendations, although there are some differences in views on specific measures to take and the pace of implementation. The Government has accepted 17 of the 26 recommendations made by AIMS and has differing views with nine recommendations, as shown in the table below:

	AIMS' Recommendations	Government's Response	
		Accepted	Not Accepted
1.	E-Engagement		
1.1	Evaluate the capacity of the Govt. to communicate effectively online	√	
1.2	Rethink some of its current citizen engagement processes, e.g. closing the feedback loop and replying to online letters	√	
1.3	Engage voices outside of current government platforms		√
1.4	Set up a panel of young digital natives to serve as a consultative body		√
1.5	Give more space for civil servants to voice opinions		√
Sub-total		2	3
2.	Online Political Content		
2.1	Retain Class Licence Scheme	√	
2.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Update scheme by removing registration requirement for individuals, bodies of persons and political parties 		√
2.3	Extend positive list for Internet Election Advertising	√	
2.4	Liberalise the Films Act in phases	√	
2.5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Decriminalise the making of party political films 		√
2.6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Target only films that mislead viewers 	√	
2.7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish an independent advisory panel to decide on party political films 	√	
2.8	Retain section 35 of Films Act	√	
2.9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Spell out clearly the basis of any ban 		√
2.10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Independent advisory panel to advise on ban 		√
2.11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minister is obliged to give reasons for the ban 		√
Sub-total		6	5
3.	Protection of Minors		
3.1	Annual fund	√	
3.2	Dedicated coordinating agency	√	
3.3	Lift ban on 100 websites only when agency is satisfied that programmes are working effectively	√	
3.4	Focus on education	√	
3.5	Help parents monitor and control		√

	children's Internet usage by Government paying for Family Access Network service		
3.6	Develop research capabilities	√	
3.7	Collaborate with overseas counterparts	√	
3.8	Encourage spirit of volunteerism	√	
Sub-total		7	1
4.	Intermediary immunity for online defamation		
4.1	Provide a conducive and predictable legal environment for credible and responsible new media players to develop and flourish	√	
4.2	Enact legislation to confer limited immunity to intermediaries	√	
Sub-total		2	0
Total		17	9

E-ENGAGEMENT

1 The Government agrees with the AIMS' principles of e-engagement¹. It agrees with AIMS that as e-engagement will take some time to develop, it would be pragmatic to take an evolutionary approach towards e-engagement. It also agrees with the principle that for e-engagement to succeed, the community at large, especially the online community, has a vital role to play, and should use the online platform to engage responsibly with the Government.

2 The Government accepts the AIMS' recommendation to take concrete steps to establish e-engagement².

Evaluate the capacity of the Government to communicate effectively online

3 The Government has adopted a three-pronged approach to develop new media capability.

4 The first is to develop an understanding and appreciation of new media through research and studies into new media issues, trends and developments. It is critical for ministries and government agencies to have a deeper understanding of new media, be familiar with various new media platforms, and understand how best to utilise them to reach out and connect with the public and stakeholders. Continuing research and horizon scanning is vital to keep up with the rapidly evolving new media landscape and technologies.

5 The second is to develop capability in using new media. The Government fully agrees with the AIMS' recommendation that we need to invest in training government personnel to engage online, and that specialist manpower resources may have to be dedicated to e-engagement.

6 The Government's capability-building initiatives include sharing of new media research findings and studies among government agencies, briefings and presentations, seminars, and training programmes.

7 The third is to experiment with the use of new media to gain real hands-on experience. Government agencies are already using a variety of new media platforms, such as blogs, podcasts, online games, YouTube, Facebook and Flickr (see [Annex A](#) for details).

¹ Engaging New Media – Challenging Old Assumptions; pp46-47.

² Engaging New Media – Challenging Old Assumptions; pp48-49.

Rethink some of its current citizen engagement processes

8 The Government continuously reviews its citizen engagement efforts and introduces new initiatives to enhance the engagement. For example, in September last year, REACH launched the new 'Talk Abuzz' webpage which features public feedback and postings of government responses to some of the feedback to better close the loop with contributors. In doing so, recognition is given to good ideas and feedback, although it may not be possible to recognise every feedback in a similar manner. REACH has also produced publications featuring feedback that had led to policy changes.

9 Going forward, REACH will continue to explore more ways to close the feedback loop. One such measure being examined is how to formally recognise well thought-out suggestions and feedback every year to encourage more Singaporeans to come forward and be engaged.

Engage voices outside of current Government platforms

10 The Government accepts the need for e-engagement. However, it also recognises the pitfalls highlighted by AIMS. Hence, it would be sensible for the Government to e-engage on platforms with an established online presence and acceptance. REACH has been established for this purpose since October 2006. Since then, it has actively launched many e-engagement initiatives (see [Annex B](#) for details).

11 The Government notes some of the observations gleaned from public feedback to AIMS. Firstly, it is not practical or feasible to respond to all blogs or forum postings. Fragmentation on the Internet has made it "challenging for governments to communicate effectively with the masses in the same way as is possible with traditional media".

12 It also notes AIMS' comment that "there was a great deal of unhelpful commentary and discussions online [although] there were also reasoned and critical discussions".

13 In addition, "not all bloggers welcomed the Government's voice on their private blogs, while others simply attack the Government for the sake of venting their frustrations".

14 The Government will require a huge amount of resources to e-engage on a multitude of online platforms. This would not be realistic or efficient. In view of these concerns, the Government has decided to channel its resources to the dedicated REACH portal for e-engagement.

15 Hence, Government agencies will:

- (i) Engage citizens on policy and national issues in public consultations and forum discussions on the REACH portal; and

(ii) Reply to online letters carried in the online letter forums of the local mainstream media. As with forum letters in printed newspapers, not every online letter would warrant a reply. Agencies would assess each online letter on its own merit and consider if a reply is necessary.

16 This is a start, and the Government will increasingly adapt to the use of new media as it gains experience over time. As AIMS noted, e-engagement will take some time to develop, and the Government would learn valuable lessons along the way that would help it develop its online engagement.

Set up a panel of young digital natives to serve as a consultative body

17 AIMS has recommended the setting up of a youth panel to serve as a consultative body for the Government on new media and cyber safety matters. The Government would seek the views of a broad cross-section of Internet users, including young digital natives, in its regular consultations with the public on such matters. It would be more beneficial to tap on a larger and more representative pool of people as new media has an impact on almost every individual as well as industry stakeholders. On cyber safety, parents, teachers and the community each play an important role in promoting cyber wellness among our young.

Giving more space for civil servants to voice opinions

18 The current position of requiring civil servants to seek their Permanent Secretary's permission before giving their personal views on their work, organisation and the government in public has merits. To do their work effectively, staff need access to official and privileged information. Use of such information should be safeguarded.

19 Unlike members of the public who may need public channels for feedback, civil servants already have many internal channels to make their views known. To add value to a policy or contribute to the process of policy making, staff can offer their comments directly to the ministry or department concerned. Officers are also often expected to work in collaboration with officers from other ministries and agencies. In addition, they are already using internal mass channels such as the Staff Suggestion Scheme and Cut-Waste Panel to share their feedback and suggestions.

20 Once a policy is decided, civil servants have a duty to implement the policy. Allowing civil servants to publicly express their private views on government policy would compromise the performance of their duty by undermining discipline and trust within the civil service.

21 The Government, therefore, will not amend the Instruction Manual to allow civil servants to express their personal opinions on government policy.

22 Currently, civil servants are already allowed to participate in any media to share personal experiences on their hobbies, etc. that are not related to work if they do so responsibly in their own time and personal capacity.

23 The current civil service rules regarding communicating their personal views in public are not different from what many big organisations such as MNCs or other governments would require of their staff.

ONLINE POLITICAL CONTENT

The Films Act – Party Political Films

1 The Government accepts the AIMS' proposal to take a phased approach in liberalising the Films Act.

2 It notes the public feedback that there are those who are concerned about the negative side-effects of politically motivated and misleading films, and do not want to see the law repealed immediately. A phased approach was also supported by the Law Society of Singapore.

3 The pervasiveness of new media has enabled anyone to produce a video clip and pass it around on the Internet. The Government recognises that this is how our people communicate and engage one another online. Hence, it is appropriate to liberalise the restrictions on party political films.

Certain party political films will be allowed, and during election period

4 As a first step under the phased approach, the Government will amend the Films Act to allow for certain types of party political films. Films that are factual and objective, and do not dramatise and/or present a distorted picture will be allowed under the amended Films Act. These will include factual documentaries and footages, recordings of actual events, and biographies or autobiographies.

5 Political parties and their candidates will be able to use films allowed under the amended Films Act for their Internet election advertising during an election. This will include films about themselves, their campaign activities and election manifestos.

6 Since the Government is only disallowing what would be dramatised, sensationalistic and emotive party political films which will do harm to rational and objective political debate, there is strong reason to maintain the sanction against the making of such party political films.

Independent advisory panel to be set up

7 The Government also accepts the AIMS' recommendation to set up an independent advisory panel which will make up of citizens of high standing and who are non-partisan. The role of this panel is to advise the Board of Film Censors whether films are party political films and if they can be allowed under the amended Films Act.

8 The advisory panel will be chaired by Mr Richard Magnus, retired Senior District Judge and Chairman of the Casino Regulatory Authority.

9 The Government will have to study the impact of the changes carefully before it could consider whether section 33 should be repealed in the longer run.

Section 35 of the Films Act

10 The Government accepts the AIMS' recommendation to retain section 35 of the Films Act. As AIMS has rightly pointed out, section 35 is needed to deal with harmful videos such as the "Fitna" video.

11 Although section 35 empowers the Minister to prohibit a film, the decision to prohibit a film has to be exercised judiciously.

12 AIMS has also recommended that the independent advisory panel for party political films advises the Minister before a film is banned under section 35 and that the section be amended to require the Minister to give reasons for the ban. Films that may be banned under section 35 will not be party political films. Hence, there is no need to consult the advisory panel which the Government will set up for the sole purpose of determining party political films.

Extend positive list for Internet Election Advertising

13 The Government accepts the AIMS' recommendation to extend the positive list for Internet election advertising. It will allow election candidates and their political parties and agents to use podcasts, vodcasts, blogs and other new media tools for Internet election advertising. Examples include producing podcasts or vodcasts on election manifestos, election rally speeches, the party's press conferences and constituency tours to promote the election candidates.

14 Going beyond political parties and election candidates and agents, the Government will also allow individuals to participate in Internet election advertising. Individuals can participate by blogging or posting election materials. However, there should be some safeguards to try to maintain accountability and responsibility. The Government is studying how this could be done so that any safeguards introduced would still allow the people to participate freely and responsibly in Internet election advertising.

15 As AIMS pointed out, restrictions on Internet election advertising are not unique to Singapore. Countries like Japan, South Korea, Australia and Canada have varying degrees of restrictions on Internet election advertising. They all share a common fundamental objective, that is, to ensure the proper and fair conduct of election. Each country will have to develop its own model to suit its own environment and circumstances.

Remove registration requirement for individuals, bodies of persons and political parties

16 AIMS has recommended the removal of the registration requirement for political parties as well as individuals and bodies of persons who provide any programme for propagation, promotion or discussion of political or religious

issues relating to Singapore through Internet websites. AIMS argued that the removal of registration will allow people to participate freely.

17 The Government will retain the registration requirement for websites of political parties as well as for individuals or bodies of persons who provide any programme for the propagation, promotion or discussion of political or religious issues on the Internet. This is to maintain a higher level of responsibility and accountability of those behind such websites, as some members of the public had also advocated, and to remind them of the need to be responsible in such matters of public discourse.

18 The Government's light-touch approach has allowed for a free flow of information on the Internet. Netizens are already participating robustly and freely in cyberspace. Diverse views and critical comments on the Government and its policies are prevalent online. Political parties which have registered their websites continue to discuss national policies and issues freely and critically on their websites.

19 Far from discouraging socio-political discourse on the Internet, the light-touch regulation, coupled with the registration requirement, has enabled political parties and individuals to engage in lively discussions on politics and current affairs on new media platforms.

Retain the Class Licence Scheme

20 AIMS has acknowledged the benefits of the Class Licence Scheme as a light-touch regulatory policy and recommended that it be retained. The Government accepts this recommendation.

21 The Government had recognised the need to adopt a light-touch approach to deal with the Internet when it introduced the Class Licence Scheme in 1996. The light-touch policy has facilitated industry development and the free flow of information while protecting our young from harmful and undesirable content.

22 Under the light touch approach, Internet Content Providers are first given a warning or take-down notice by the Media Development Authority to take down any offensive content. They would usually comply and there would be no prosecution. This is an appropriate measure against the less serious offenders.

23 Abolishing the Class Licence Scheme would remove this less severe option. All errant content providers would then have to face prosecution under other laws like the Sedition Act or the Penal Code. This may not be desirable.

Update the Class Licence Scheme

24 AIMS has proposed that the Class Licence Scheme be reviewed and updated as it had existed since 1996.

25 During the period 2005-2006, the National Internet Advisory Committee (NIAC) had done a comprehensive review of the Class Licence Scheme to ensure that it remains relevant. The NIAC found that on the whole, the scheme remains robust and is relevant enough to deal with emerging technological trends. The Government will review the Class Licence Scheme in due course.

PROTECTION OF MINORS

1 The Government fully supports the AIMS' position to take a long-term, holistic and coordinated approach to provide protection to minors against harmful and inappropriate content on the Internet.

2 The AIMS' holistic approach embraces a number of measures³ which are very much in line with the Government's ongoing cyber wellness initiatives. AIMS' proposed measures reinforce the Government's approach, namely, public education, industry self-regulation and light-touch regulation.

Dedicated coordinating agency, public education and funding for the protection of minors

3 The Government accepts the AIMS' recommendation to set up a dedicated coordinating agency to focus on the protection of minors against harmful online content.

4 The Government will set up an Inter-Ministry Taskforce on Cyber Wellness to coordinate national efforts and to develop strategies and programmes for cyber wellness. Adequate resources will be provided to the Taskforce which will be co-chaired by the Deputy Secretaries from the Ministry of Information, Communications and the Arts and the Ministry of Education. It will work closely with the people-private sectors and leverage on existing efforts, particularly those by the Internet and Media Advisory Committee (INMAC) and community organisations.

5 The Inter-Ministry Taskforce on Cyber Wellness will build on the good work of the previous National Internet Advisory Committee (NIAC) and the Parents Advisory Group for the Internet (PAGi). These two bodies, whose members come from the people-private sector, had done a lot of substantive work in driving cyber wellness programmes and activities. (See [Annex C](#) for details.)

Ban on 100 websites

6 AIMS has recommended that the dedicated agency lift the symbolic ban on 100 websites only when it is satisfied that its programmes are working effectively.

7 In considering AIMS' recommendation to retain the symbolic ban for now, the Government has taken note of the differing views from public feedback. Those who favour lifting the ban contended that the symbolism "gives parents a false sense of security because the Net-savvy can easily get around the ban". Those who support the ban argued that there is value in symbolism. They feel that "it is important for society to clearly state what

³ Engaging New Media – Challenging Old Assumptions; pp104-107.

desirable values are” and that “symbols serve a social function”. Others feel that the ban could complement AIMS’ other recommendations as the two are not mutually exclusive.

8 The Government sees merit in the ban as it is a symbolic statement of our society’s core values. The blocking of harmful websites to protect children is not uncommon. Other countries have also developed lists of blocked sites for the protection of the young⁴.

9 Hence, the Government will review if the symbolic blocking of 100 undesirable websites should be lifted when it assesses that the culture and practice of cyber wellness is firmly entrenched. In continuing with the practice, there is no loss to anyone as the Government will continue to take a light-touch approach in dealing with online content. This light-touch approach has worked well as it protects our young from harmful online content while promoting industry development and allowing the free flow of information in Singapore.

Help parents to monitor and control their children’s Internet usage

10 AIMS has proposed that the Family Access Network service be provided free to household that wish to have it, with the monthly charge to be borne by the Government and the industry.

11 The Government notes that the industry already provides various broadband packages, many of which bundle in filtering services. For example, StarHub has given feedback that the overwhelming majority of their customers who signed up for its filtering service receive it free-of-charge. Furthermore, as there is filtering software available online for free, it would be more beneficial if parents themselves were to exercise responsibility and download such software for the protection of their children. This is a better approach as resources could be more effectively channelled for cyber wellness education of children and their parents.

12 Nevertheless, MDA will continue to encourage the industry to provide the Family Access Network service and to encourage parents and others to subscribe to it. This is an optional, hassle-free network filtering service which will filter out access to many websites with undesirable content, although it should be noted that no filtering software is completely foolproof. While the Family Access Network service may cost between \$2 to \$3 per month, some Internet Service Providers offer such filtering services as part of their broadband package at no extra cost.

² The Australian Communications and Media Authority has a list of some 1,300 blocked URLs and is working on a pilot test to extend it up to 10,000 URLs. The United Kingdom has a list of 800 to 1,200 URLs. In 2003, the Council of Europe had recommended member governments to “outlaw acts of racist and xenophobic nature conducted through computer systems”. This makes it illegal to distribute or publish anything online that “advocates, promotes or incites hatred (or) discrimination”, prompting some governments to implement mandatory filtering of such content.

13 In the case of low-income families receiving assistance under the NeuPC Programme, the Infocomm Development Authority will explore bundling filtering services together with the broadband subscription provided to such families.

INTERMEDIARY IMMUNITY FOR ONLINE DEFAMATION

1 The Government agrees with AIMS on the need for greater legal certainty regarding the liability of online intermediaries for defamatory content published online and that this is an area which warrants further study.

2 With increasing communications taking place online, more intermediary websites will be set up in the people, private and public sectors. Enacting legislation to clarify the liability of online intermediaries will thus provide legal certainty and benefit the online intermediaries operating in these sectors.

3 As reflected in the AIMS report and the public feedback on the topic, the issue of online defamation is not straightforward and legislating clear rules concerning the liability of online intermediaries would require careful consideration.

4 Singapore is not alone in facing the challenge to formulate an appropriate legal framework to address the issue. AIMS had observed that there is no consistent or standard international approach towards the treatment of online intermediaries for defamatory content. In fact, for countries such as the United States and the United Kingdom, their approaches to the issue have been keenly debated. For example, the United States' provision of blanket civil immunity to Internet Service Providers or Bulletin Board System operators has been criticised as being too liberal. This is because operators enjoy immunity even if they have knowledge of the defamatory material and refuse to remove it. Similarly, there have been criticisms of the wording and ambit of the new legislative form of defence of innocent dissemination established in the United Kingdom. There is some debate as to whether the new provisions were intended to abolish and replace the common law defence of innocent dissemination. In formulating Singapore's approach to the issue, the Government will be studying the various international approaches to extract relevant lessons from their experiences.

5 In considering what Singapore's approach should be to address this issue, the Government will bear in mind the important consideration that defamatory content should not be freely published and distributed online, while encouraging the growth of online communications in order to establish Singapore as a credible and trusted Internet hub. The Government recognises that there are benefits to encourage responsible self moderation among online intermediaries, and will aim to ensure that any new legislation will not contradict or undermine the current laws on defamation. We will also ensure there would be no derogation/dilution of the existing immunity granted to "network service providers" under Section 10 of the Electronics Transactions Act.

6 Specifically regarding AIMS' proposal for a "take-down and put-back" regime, the Government views it as one possible approach. This will however require further deliberation, especially since no other country has legislated such an approach. The implications and the details have to be worked out and

weighed before deciding whether the “take-down and put-back” regime is an appropriate and practicable option for Singapore. These include, for instance, determining the classes of intermediaries who should be eligible for immunity and the timeframe and steps to be followed when an intermediary receives a take-down/put-back notice.

7 Going forward, the Government will study the merits and implications of the AIMS’ proposal as part of our deliberations on the subject. We will also conduct a public consultation exercise at an appropriate time to seek feedback from the public and relevant stakeholders.

CONCLUSION

1 The Government has accepted most of the AIMS' recommendations. In doing so, it has taken upon itself an active role in driving cyber wellness initiatives through the setting up of an Inter-Ministry Taskforce on Cyber Wellness.

2 The Government has also taken significant progressive steps to expand the space for socio-political discourse for our citizens. It is allowing certain types of party political films and is also allowing political parties and their election candidates and agents as well as individuals to participate in Internet election advertising. The Government is also prepared to engage Singaporeans on policy and national issues in cyberspace.

3 Where the Government takes a different position with a few recommendations, the situation is not cast in stone. It recognises that the landscape is changing due to evolving technologies, coupled with increasing new media savviness of our young citizens in particular. The Government will continue with its light-touch policy on the Internet and will continue to review and update its policy positions to stay relevant as technologies continue to evolve and new ones emerge.

4 Overall, the AIMS' recommendations that have been accepted for implementation will go towards strengthening Government-People engagement and ensuring that Singaporeans will be able to tap the full potential of new media to better our society while minimising the adverse impact.

ANNEX A - Examples of New Media Initiatives by Ministries and Government Agencies

Ministry	Existing New Media Initiatives
MEWR	<p>MEWR launched the Sustainable Singapore website in July 2008 to gather feedback on sustainable development for the Inter-Ministerial Committee on Sustainable Development (IMCSD). The website allows the public to send in their feedback and suggestions on how to make the way we live, work, play and commute more sustainable.</p> <p>http://www.sustainablesingapore.gov.sg</p> <p>Over 1,300 views and suggestions were collected from members of the public covering topics such as energy efficiency, solar, recycling, cycling and biodiversity conservation.</p> <p>The IMCSD will take the next few months to study the feasibility of the suggestions raised and respond to the key ideas. These inputs will also be incorporated into the Sustainable Development Blueprint that is planned for release in early 2009.</p>
	<p>Youth Habitat (http://www.youthhabitat.sg/) is an online portal to give voice to youths' environmental effort and to allow Singapore youths to reach out globally. The portal is fronted by the Singapore Environment Council and supported by MEWR.</p> <p>The portal gives youths a platform to find out about environmental issues, as well as check out the environmental activities they can join in. Hopefully, youths will be inspired by what other youths are doing for the environment and be spurred to make a difference to the environment.</p>
	<p>The NEA website was revamped and launched in September 2008, with the following new media feature:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - An RSS feed was introduced to syndicate NEA's news releases; - An online newsletter called EnviroBytes was launched; and - Visitors could also give their feedback on specific issues using the ePoll facility. <p>The revamped NEA website now features a refreshing new look and feel that will make it more appealing to target audiences. Content has also been reorganised such that it is easier to locate and current happenings and campaigns are featured prominently on the homepage so that it can capture more attention.</p>
	<p>NEA has uploaded 4 television commercials on the smoking ban extension onto Youtube in Dec 08.</p> <p>http://www.youtube.com/user/NEAcampaign. The English version of the TV commercial has attracted 199 views in the first two weeks of the launch.</p>

	<p>The PUB website was revamped and launched in June 2008. Graphics and information have been updated to make the website even more interesting and easy to read:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Pictures of people enjoying water and doing their part for the waters on the different webpages emphasises our call for more people to take guardianship of our water; - Constantly monitored and updated with seasonal items and current events, eg. Free Water Wally E-card and info on Carnival and Countdown at Marina Barrage; - RSS feeds introduced to syndicate PUB's news releases and new issues of Pure magazine; and - Video streaming available for two of PUB's corporate videos. <p>PUB website is built with the intention to be always current and interesting. It plans to cater to an audience from different age groups and focuses (from industry to education etc).</p> <p>The revamp of the corporate website has allowed PUB to align their communication strategies to reach out to their target audience through a variety of different platforms.</p>
	<p>To promote and showcase Singapore International Water Week (SIWW), a website was set up which included downloadable newsletters and an interactive photo gallery where visitors can download high resolution images. The website offers viewers from around the world an insight into the highlights of SIWW through extensive photo galleries and event/promotional videos. A YouTube channel containing 9 corporate videos was also launched. The channel has a total of 166 views, and the most viewed video was watched 1,173 times. http://www.youtube.com/user/siww2008</p>
	<p>A fully interactive Flash website was set up for PUB's 10 Litre Challenge. Information found on the site, such as our 4 national taps, water saving tips and water saving devices, is presented in a fun and lively manner using animation. There are also games and a survey that people can take to find out how much water they use each day and how they can save more water. Designed with a younger audience group in mind, the site manages to convey the importance of saving water to youths in a fun and interactive way.</p>
MFA	<p>MFA's website features downloadable podcasts of Minister's remarks in parliament and interviews. It also has an RSS feed of MFA press releases, along with a subscription feature that enables users to choose the kind of information they would like to subscribe to e.g. announcements, press releases etc.</p>
	<p>MFA is also taking steps towards boosting its existing video capabilities by hiring an officer with specialised production/multimedia skills. Beyond capturing footage of the Ministry's events and activities for archival and publicity purposes, MFA is considering new modes of distribution for these video clips including online channels such as YouTube.</p>

	<p>To enhance the user experience, visitors to the MFA Web Portal would be able add widgets like currency converters and weather forecast tools.</p>
MHA	<p>Home Team’s presence on YouTube SPF, SCDF, CNB and ICA have set up dedicated YouTube channels for public education and outreach on Home Team issues. Videos, podcasts and vodcasts on crime prevention, counter-terrorism, drug abuse, anti-harboursing, as well as fire safety and emergency preparedness issues are available online.</p> <p>SPF’s 25 videos have attracted more than 19,300 views and 30 subscribers. The more popular videos include those featuring the true stories of former youth offenders as well as old CrimeWatch episodes. (http://www.youtube.com/user/SpfCommunityOutreach)</p> <p>SCDF’s 16 videos have seen more than 10,000 views and 17 subscribers. (http://www.youtube.com/user/SCDFvideos)</p> <p>CNB’s and ICA’s YouTube channels are fairly recent initiatives. One can find informational videos on the harmful consequences of drug abuse on CNB’s YouTube channel (www.youtube.com/CNBkNowDrugs), while on ICA’s channel, there are videos offering tips for travellers and on anti-harboursing (http://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=ICAOutreach&search_type=).</p>
	<p>Home Team’s presence on FacebookOne can also find SCDF on Facebook. Intended for public outreach and recruitment purposes, SCDF’s Facebook page utilizes the appropriate Facebook applications such as YouTube feeder and RSS feeds to the SCDF Corporate Blog to network and communicate with fellow Facebook-ers on fire safety and civil emergency issues. Photos of past Emergency Preparedness Days, as well as SCDF’s Operation Lionheart mission to help in rescue efforts of the Sichuan earthquake can be found at SCDF’s Facebook page. “Friends” of SCDF’s Facebook page can interact and “converse” with each other by posting their thoughts and comments on the Wall. (www.facebook.com/home.php?#/pages/Singapore/Singapore-Civil-Defence-Force/40555400582?ref=s). Within a month of its set-up, 184 people requested to be “friends” of SCDF’s Facebook page (figures are correct as of 2 Jan 2009).</p>
	<p>Posting of crime advisories on online forums SPF works with the moderators of seven online forums to post crime prevention advisories on selected discussion threads in these forums. Note: SPF is not a registered forum user on these sites and the advisories are posted by the forum moderators on SPF’s behalf. There have been more than 73,000 views and 550 comments from netizens. The forums which saw the highest number of views and comments were Singaporebikers.com, Hardwarezone, Sg Forums.</p>

	<p><u>Blogging: NCADA Anti-Drugs Campaign</u> CNB collaborated with NCADA to use blogging as a means to reach out to youths, through their peers, to communicate the anti-drug message. This was part of the NCADA Anti-Drugs Campaign 2007. Prominent bloggers were engaged by the advertising agency to blog about the NCADA Anti-Drugs Campaign. They were furnished with the necessary information and then were free to blog about whatever they wanted, in however they chose to do so. It was purely on a voluntary basis. Seven bloggers were invited to blog about the campaign and two of them went on to blog about it for an extended period of time. In addition to blogging, an interactive microsite was also used for the campaign, www.ifyouplayouppay.com (which has since been taken down).</p> <p>The youths complimented this ingenious approach of getting the anti-drug message across effectively. On the whole, the campaign won plaudits for using this unconventional advertising strategy which resonated with the youths' lifestyle. According to a TODAY report (20 Aug 2008, "Come blog about it"), one of the bloggers, Darryl Kang, wrote on his blog that this was certainly the "best campaign ad" he has ever seen.</p>
	<p><u>Replies to STOMP posting</u> When contacted by the STOMP administrator for a response, Police, SCDF and ICA have issued replies to explain their position or clarify misconceptions about their officers' actions as purported in some STOMP postings online.</p>
	<p><u>SCDF's Corporate Blog</u> Through their blog, "mySCDF", SCDF hopes to engage and connect better with the public on fire safety and emergency preparedness issues. This is made as as dynamic and interactive as possible through the use of captivating photos, videos, online polls. SCDF officers write for the blog, providing first-hand accounts of the fire and rescue operations they are involved in, or the training and simulation scenarios they are part of. (http://myscdf.wordpress.com/)</p> <p>Public comments left on the blog have been positive and encouraging. One netizen said it was "interesting, keep it up". Another was impressed by the posting on the factory fire at Woodlands Terrace and wrote in, asking for more close-up photos of the fire.</p>

	<p>Multimedia features on Internet websitesThe new media capabilities / features on the MHA website include RSS feeds. (http://www.mha.gov.sg). There are also videos online tagged to our press releases / statements e.g. the press statements on the 2002 arrest of the JI members are accompanied with the video files of the reconnaissance they took of Yishun MRT station; Changi Naval Base; Sembawang Wharf; US Embassy / Australian High Commission / British High Commission. The Singapore United website contains a collection of Community Engagement Programme (CEP) outreach materials such as videos and podcasts, including those aired on the radio last year, as well as downloadable ringtones of the Singapore United song. There are also RSS feeds on the Singapore United website. (http://www.singaporeunited.sg/cep/).SCDF's website boasts of podcasts / vodcasts which are mainly for public information on fire and civil emergency procedures. A range of e-services is offered through the website which includes booking of fire station visits, attendance of courses, payment of bills, etc. In addition to the usual text-based public education advisories, the SCDF website uses animation format contents which uses interactive multimedia online presentation. Another feature in the website is the Ready Mobile project, which allows viewers to the SCDF website to download the public education videos via WAP/3G on their mobile phones. This is the first-of-its kind civil service wide initiative. (http://www.scdf.gov.sg/)The Prisons website has videos and podcasts/vodcasts. These are mainly for community engagement and volunteerism purposes e.g. Yellow Ribbon Project. (http://www.prisons.gov.sg/)CNB website has online games and short docu-dramas on preventive drug education to reach out and resonate with the young. (http://www.cnb.gov.sg/)The website of Home Team Academy (HTA) has a dedicated "Featured Video" segment for the uploading of Home Team-related videos, podcasts and vodcasts. There are two videos online – one is HTA's corporate video and the other is on the Home Team recruitment fair (http://app.hta.gov.sg/HTGallery/PodcastVodcast/tabid/60/Default.aspx)</p>
MICA	<p>As part of NHB's efforts to promote SGCOOL, Singapore's first online repository of artefacts and artworks, a blogging competition for students was organised. Called New Kids On The Blog, the contest was positioned as NHB's first national blogging competition. The contest aimed to interest students in Singapore's unique heritage and culture by through a popular social media tool - blogs. By tapping on a new media medium that is highly popular with the younger generation, NHB hopes to better interest and engage our young in discovering and sharing Singapore's unique heritage and culture.</p> <p>A total of 768 students participated in the contest with 314 blog entries submitted and 59 quality blog entries published.</p>
	<p>To reach out to users on popular platforms such as YouTube and Flickr, NLB has uploaded exclusive interviews, videos and photographs on library programmes and conferences on these platforms. At present, over 300 videos are on YouTube and thousands of photographs are on Flickr. Videos on library programmes can be viewed on NLB's GoMedia microsite (gomedia.nlb.gov.sg) and photos can be viewed on NLB's Flickr SNAP (Singapore National Album of Pictures) at http://flickr.com/photos/snaps. YouTube videos of library events on NLB's Go Media website have registered almost 60,000 views (cumulative since its launch in mid-2008). Since its official launch on 2 Aug 2008, Flickr SNAP has received 1,521 public postings of photographs to date (in December 2008). Flickr SNAP has also received over 50,000 views since then.</p>

	<p>ii) For media businesses, the business-to-business Singapore Media Fusion (SMF) portal (www.smf.sg) markets Singapore's media industry by highlighting Made-by-Singapore content and production capabilities. Key features of the revamped SMF site will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A product showcase of companies' portfolios - A media business centre which articulates SMF's value proposition and offerings e.g. types of funding and support. - Case studies of successful companies and individuals - A media directory - A newsletter sent out via email subscription creates awareness of media-related events and initiatives taking place in Singapore.
	<p>iii) The MDA-hosted Interactive Digital Media Programme Office, operates a website (www.idm.sg) that features a blog. It also runs the www.ijam.sg site that enables partners to share and exchange ideas online. The Office also owns a facebook account to reach out to IDMPO partners and students on the latest IDMPO events and updates on their schemes and projects.</p>
	<p>iv) The Singapore Film Commission website (www.sfc.org.sg) provides information & updates on the film industry. Users can also view video trailers and listen to sample music from movie soundtracks. The website also provides information on the various SFC schemes.</p>
	<p>v) MDA also manages the Asean Media Portal (www.aseanmedia.net) with the ASEAN secretariat. The portal shares and promotes information about ASEAN. With the objective of forging a stronger sense of ASEAN identity to reach out to tech-savvy youths, the portal contains videos as well as an online game that teach and promote ASEAN culture, heritage and history in a fun and engaging manner.</p>
	<p>The Consumer Infocomm Portal (www.infocomm123.sg), supported by IDA, provides a wide range of informative and educational information, tips, guides, best practices and activities aimed to raise the infocomm awareness and adoption levels of low- to mid-level infocomm users in Singapore. It encourages user participation and user generated content through "iAsk. iAnswer" section where portal users can post and answer questions on infocomm, and allows portal users to be kept informed on the latest updates and activities of the Portal with portal features like widgets and RSS feeds. In addition, it hosts the consumer microsite for the Wireless@SG programme. The Portal also has infocomm starter kits with interactive videos and guides tailored to different profiles like senior citizens, students, working adults and homemakers. The kits provide users who are new to infocomm or the less infocomm savvy tips and advice on how they can leverage infocomm in their daily lives.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Portal organised an iTEST! activity in Sep 08 to engage four popular bloggers of differing profiles to review and blog on their experiences in using various infocomm products in their daily lives on the Portal. These bloggers also responded to requests by portal users to test out different aspects and uses of the infocomm products, thus educating the portal users on the benefits derived in using of infocomm to enhance their lives. - From November 2008 to January 2009, the Portal ran a Silver Blog Contest to encourage senior citizens to go online and try their hands on blogging as an infocomm activity. As part of the contest, the Portal also features three Silver Ambassadors, who are active senior bloggers, to share their own experiences in learning infocomm and blogging, thus encouraging fellow senior citizens to be more receptive to learn and use infocomm.

	<p>- The Portal has to-date attracted more than 224,000 unique visits since its launch in Feb 08, or an average of more than 22,000 unique visits per month.</p> <p>- iTest activity garnered a total of more than 20,000 unique visitors over a 10-day period. Many portal users gave feedback on how they have benefited through learning more about infocomm from these bloggers. They also noted that the participation of the senior blogger for iTest is an encouraging sign of senior citizens being active in using infocomm in their lives, and that these active infocomm-savvy seniors would have a positive influence in motivating other senior citizens to try out infocomm.</p>
MLAW	The iperckidz website provides educational resources in the form of e-learning modules, comics, IP-related articles and useful links for both educators and students.
	MinLaw is revamping the MinLaw corporate website and five micro-sites of MinLaw agencies to improve the sites' navigation structure and web usability to enhance public engagement.
	IPOS conducted 4 trial chat sessions with youths aged 14 – 20 on various IP issues onboard the InfoBus at Habbohotel. (This provided qualitative insights of youths' perception and understanding on IP.)
	SLA's spatial challenge 09 and an art competition to raise awareness and appreciation of heritage state properties will be done through social media platforms such as Facebook, a blog and youtube.
MINDEF	Staff are encouraged to contribute unclassified content to Wikipedia and hyperlink to information in the MINDEF corporate website on their own accord. (eg: RSAF Black Knights)
	NDP Exco launched a YouTube website to share NDP-related videos with the community.
	MINDEF has set up a Youtube (http://www.youtube.com/user/cyberpioneertv) and Flickr page (http://www.flickr.com/photos/cyberpioneer) to share interesting photos/videos of MINDEF events and operations with the public.
MND	MND rolled out MyHomeTown.SG on 16 Jan 2008 (beta version for functions testing). A scoring system was implemented to encourage users to be more active on the website to increase their chances of winning real prizes. Chat functions, video gallery have since been added. Members are able to share, comment and rate on the videos and photos now.
	BCA launched the Green Mark Portal (www.greenmark.sg), an interactive and informative portal targeted at homeowners, to create awareness about BCA's Green Mark Scheme. To generate an even greater awareness of living in green homes, BCA will be introducing an interactive game where users can build their own homes with green features and invite friends to visit them.

	<p>URA launched the Marina Bay Countdown microsite (http://www.marinabaycountdown.sg) with photo competition and invitations to public to send in their video/SMS dedications as well as to 'Make A Wish' to encourage public participation. Public will also be able to watch the live webcast of the 08/09 Countdown fireworks on the microsite.</p>
	<p>URA also launched the Central Area Discoverer's online library (www.ura.gov.sg/rediscover) under its homepage provides plenty of stories, videos and a 1000 picture gallery for a compelling showcase of Singapore's urban planning efforts in key central and downtime areas.</p>
	<p>NParks has set up a gardening blog (http://www.nparks.gov.sg/blogs/garden_voices) to provide an online platform for everyone who is interested in gardening.</p>
	<p>NParks has partnered HP Singapore to pilot a self-conducted virtual tour called HortPark Mediascape to enrich park goers' experience in HortPark using technology. Mediascapes are mobile, location-based experiences that incorporate digital media with the sights, sounds and textures of the world around the user. A mediascape can blend digital images, video, audio and interactions with the physical landscape, creating games and guided walks. Targeted at upper primary and lower secondary school students, visitors are engaged while touring the gardening hub through quizzes, games and activities.</p>
	<p>The first of its kind in the region, the wireless learning trail at Sungei Buloh Wetland Reserve developed by NParks, enables students with special portable devices (Ultra Mobile PC), to receive text, images, video and audio files on the sights and sounds of the wetland reserve, from bar codes located along the Mangrove Boardwalk. This makes learning experience in an outdoor classroom more engaging for youngsters.</p>
	<p>NParks regularly updates entries on major parks, nature reserves and programmes in Wikipedia. This allows both local and the international community to obtain accurate and updated information on our parks and nature reserves in this online encyclopedia.</p>
MOE	<p>Flickr is used as a centralised photo repository, and to host images for online publications like Schoolbag.sg. Google video is used to archive and display videos such as excerpts of selected speeches and student projects.</p>
	<p>MOE created a blog called Schoolbag.sg which aims to provide parents with the latest information on education in Singapore and stories from schools and teachers. It was launched in July 2007 and now draws around 11,000 unique visitors each month. Other blogs created are used for a myriad range of purposes, from documenting the saving of Singapore's habitat to covering graduation ceremonies.</p>
	<p>Teachersday.sg is an annual celebration of our teachers' work. This year, we asked students to submit a 6-word message thanking their teachers and we received 8,773 responses. MOE also has a small blog to obtain public feedback in order to improve the MOE website.</p>
	<p>Schoolbag.sg receives approximately 15,000 visits per month. Feedback obtained from a survey conducted a few months ago showed that parents were extremely satisfied with the content available on Schoolbag.sg and look forward to articles featuring tips for parents.</p>

MOF	<p>Live webcast of the Budget Speech was available on the Singapore Budget website on 15 Feb 07.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Each section of the Budget Speech was rolled out as soon as the section was delivered. <p>There were 375,942 page views on the Singapore Budget website on Budget Day itself. The live webcast had 9,705 hits, an increase of 40% over the previous year.</p>
	<p>A new simulation game called "If I Were The Finance Minister" was launched on the Singapore Budget website in Feb 07 and continued in 2008.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - It provides a hands-on experience for users to understand the impact and consequences of choices made when designing the Budget. - This year's game is a significant enhancement over previous versions, with charts and graphics updated in real-time to illustrate the fiscal position. - For an added dose of realism, players can experience the effects of unexpected fiscal shocks, e.g. a flu pandemic or economic boom, and formulate a response to these scenarios.
	<p>MOF has tied up with Razor TV to have a live screening of the 2009 Budget Debate Challenge for Schools. There will be interactive elements during the screening itself and pre & post event activities (eg. audience voting, contests, etc).</p>
	<p>For Budget 2009, the following new initiatives will be introduced: - Users can sign up to receive SMS snippets of Budget Highlights during the speech- Segmented videos of the budget speech will be made available for viewing and downloading.</p>
MOH	<p>MOH launched a blog for the nursing profession in Dec 2007. The blog serves as a new media platform for promoting Nursing as a choice career and to encourage bonding among the nursing community. Videos and photos from the nurses blog are also housed on YouTube and Flickr for greater promotion. MOH website has also been upgraded, with podcast and vodcast capabilities, to broadcast senior management speeches.</p>
	<p>HPB has developed new interactives for "Let's Talk About Sex" website. Interactive features such as Quiz, Game, Screensavers, eCards, wallpapers are added.</p>
	<p>HPB's Individualised Mobile Diet Tracker: The individualised Diet Tracker is a Java-based mobile phone application which uses profile information (e.g. gender, age, weight) and lifestyle (e.g. type of job, amount of physical activity) to calculate an individual's daily diet requirements. It allows individuals to keep track of their own fat and calorie intake.</p>
MOM	<p>The public can check the validity of work permits via SMS.</p>
	<p>MOM also organised a contest for in its magazine targeted at FDWs (Foreign Domestic Workers), where readers submitted contest entries via SMS</p>

MOT	<p>1. Live feed of Minister's speech and Q&A session on RAZOR TV for Singapore Press Club on 5 Sep 2008</p> <p>2. The Land Transport Authority (LTA) launched PublicTransport@SG (www.publictransport.sg) in October 08, a one-stop public transport portal providing information covering all public transport operators and a real-time SMS bus arrival information service. Features include interactive maps for basic and premium bus routes, locations of public transport nodes (bus interchanges, MRT / LRT stations, Park & Ride locations), bus service information (routes, fares), taxi service information and latest news on public transport initiatives.</p> <p>3. With the growth in the low cost carrier (LCC) travel market, the CAAS launched a travel portal in November 2008 to promote LCC travel and transfers through Singapore (www.viasingapore.com). In collaboration with SIA, a microsite was created (www.makingmomentsunforgettable.com) to promote travel on SIA as the carrier of choice and Changi Airport as the preferred hub. The microsite contains promotional fares offered by SIA, transit privileges at Changi Airport, online reservations for flights and hotel, travel promotions, flight schedules, travel tips and events happening in each destination on the portal.</p>
MTI	<p>HQ had started introducing audio webcasting for QES (Quarterly Economic Survey) press conferences on its website since mid May 2007.</p>
	<p>STB has introduced RSS on the VisitSingapore.com portal (http://www.visitsingapore.com/publish/stbportal/en/home/apps/rss.html).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - As part of STB's strategy to increase traffic to and visibility of VisitSingapore.com, RSS feature has been added to allow third party websites and blogs to aggregate STB's content onto their sites. - The RSS contains snippets of content from VisitSingapore.com with links to the full content on the portal and also alerts users of new content on VisitSingapore.com. The RSS feature is currently available for its events calendar, "What to see" and Highlight"
PMO	<p>The Overseas Singaporean (OS) portal is a one-stop and first stop portal targetting Overseas Singaporeans. It serves to facilitate community building among the Overseas Singaporeans and update them of development in Singapore through e-features such as the e-forum, blog threads and web chat. The portal also allows Overseas Singaporeans to extend their social network by searching for fellow Singaporeans in their area.</p>
MCYS	<p>To leverage on Youtube, MCYS created a page - http://www.youtube.com/thinkfamily which hosted the 3-min Family TVC in four languages. The TVC aimed to promote the importance of family was released end June. The TVCs were uploaded on Youtube and attracted more than 23,000 viewers.</p>
	<p>ThinkFamily.sg website, maintained by the National Family Council secretariat, serves as an interactive site that features family related matters and provides the platform for public to voice their views:- Includes latest news, events, and introduction of the National Family Council- Interactive components comprise blogs, discussion forums, polls, questionnaires, feedback, FAQs and chatrooms which allow users to discuss family related issues. - The website enjoys an average monthly hit rate of 101,589.</p>

	<p>A microsite (http://www.singapore2010.sg/can) has been developed to create buzz and attract runners for an event surrounding the launch of the Youth Olympic Games' official logo. The SYOGOC team is working with a group of youth to organise the mass run, sports try-outs and concert for more than 2000 individuals in January via a blog (http://can2009.wordpress.com/) and facebook group (http://www.facebook.com/home.php?#/group.php?gid=52759484064&ref=nf)</p>
	<p>Members of Singapoports.sg can build their own Social Networking through the 'find kaki' feature. They can find other members that have same interest in specific sports and add them as friends. Singapoports.sg has accounts on social networking sites such as Facebook and MySpace to allow easier networking. Singapoports.sg also has its own "Youtube" that hosts various sport events videos and Let's Play TVCs.</p> <p>Singapoports.sg currently has over 1450 members with an average hit rate of 310012 since May 2008.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> '- Build up a local sports community - Interaction between sports-minded people - Increase of Interest to Local Sports
	<p>Singapoports also has a monthly e-newsletter where registered members and corporate individuals will be provided with fun and exciting sports content. Content in the e-newsletter include stories, Singapore Sports Council's comprehensive event calender and a sports guide. This is to update and create awareness to the local sports community</p>
	<p>The REACH website (www.reach.gov.sg) was launched in October 2006 and hosts various new media channels to facilitate two-way engagement with citizens for their views on various policy issues. Several key features include e-consultation paper, e-poll, e-townhall ('live' webchat), discussion forums, and blogs. Among them, the e-consultation paper and e-poll are platforms regularly tapped on by government agencies for public consultation. Moving forward, the REACH website will be enhanced to gradually support multi-lingual functions on the website and on our discussion forums. A ranking system will also be introduced to classify our members to encourage active participation in our discussion forums and blogs.</p> <p>SMS Approximately 500 SMS received, as at Dec 08</p> <p>Discussion Forum One of the features of the REACH portal is a Discussion Forum "Your Say" which allows netizens to create their own discussion threads. This platform is popular with netizens, with over 11,000 postings as at Dec 08.</p> <p>Blog The website also allows the People's Forum members to create their blogs. Approximately 660 blogs were created as at Dec 08.</p> <p>e-Consultation Paper A platform for agencies to post a summary of their policy papers for public consultation. A total of 10 government agencies and statutory boards posted 19 consultation papers for online consultation, as at Dec 08.</p>

	<p>e-Poll Online survey questionnaires to solicit quantitative feedback on policies/issues. Over 7,000 responses received for 19 e-polls posted, as at Dec 08</p> <p>e-Townhall Meeting Launched in Feb 2007 and held for the first time on Budget 2007, this real-time webchat platform allows net-savvy Singaporeans here and overseas to engage the Government on major issues. During the e-townhall on National Day Rally 2007, REACH worked with the Overseas Singaporean Unit (OSU) for the first time to invite overseas Singaporeans to participate in the website. In addition to English webchats, Chinese and Malay webchats were also introduced in this year's NDR feedback exercise. We had four our webchats this year and the sessions attracted a good participation of 119 participants, both here and overseas. Quick poll Approximately 1,500 responses to seven quick poll topics, as at Dec 08.</p>
	<p>To stay ahead of new media developments, REACH recently launched a new webpage "Talk Abuzz", introduced RSS feed, podcasts and vodcasts on our website, and started a new youth column "Youth Vibes".</p> <p>"Talk Abuzz" was launched in Sept 08 and features summaries and quotes of hot issues. The webpage is updated on an almost daily basis to keep it current, informative and useful for our readers. Currently, REACH is working on enhancements to the webpage to make it more interactive by adding a "comments" feature for netizens to share their views on the hot issues. Approximately 34 topics created with 6,500 views, as at Dec 08.</p> <p>Podcasts and vodcasts were introduced in Nov 08 to capture and share with netizens, snippets and soundbytes from REACH's dialogues sessions, forums and events. Six audio files created with 176 views since Nov 08 and four video files created with 203 views since Nov 08.</p> <p>RSS channels are also offered for our podcasts and vodcasts to given our viewers the option of automatic updates of fresh content.</p>
	<p>Youth Vibes is an interactive webpage created in Jan 09 as part of REACH's commitment to engage youths in the feedback process. The new platform aims to raise the level of awareness of national issues in youths, create an avenue for youths to reflect and express their opinions on issues that matter to them, and also encourage and promote youth participation in shaping government policies.</p>
	<p>REACH has a quarterly e-newsletter where registered members will be informed of policy reviews and changes, provided with updates on REACH's events and activities, and notified of enhancements and additions to our consultation channels. To-date, REACH's database has over 9,800 registered members</p>

	<p>As part of REACH's effort to further engage the net-savvy Singaporeans both here and overseas on their views, REACH launched the Reach Singapore Group on Facebook on 27 June 2008 to complement our existing feedback channels. The key features are the wall and discussion board that REACH is tapping on to solicit views from the Facebook users. In fact, when Reach Singapore Group was first launched, some of the members were very eager in initiating their own topics of discussion to share their feedback. For hotly discussed issues, REACH will compile the feedback and forward the write-up to the relevant agencies for information. As at Dec 08, there are 1704 postings from 1729 members who have joined the REACH Singapore Facebook Group. To better engage our Facebook memebrs, we will be publicising our activities online to invite them to participate and attend our events.</p>
	<p>In the near future, REACH will introduce "Twitter" as a new online feedback channel. "Twitter" is a social networking tool which REACH will tap on to communicate and stay connected with our netizens.</p>

Annex B

1 REACH is cognizant of the increasing impact of new media on government-citizen engagement. However, as active online citizens remain largely the younger and more educated ones, even as REACH rolls out new media platforms to engage them, there remains a need to tap on traditional channels to engage the other segments of the population. REACH, therefore, has both new and traditional feedback channels which include SMS, discussion threads on our website, blogs, Facebook, web chats and podcasts as well as emails, letters, phone calls and dialogue sessions.

E-engagement

2 On e-engagement, REACH has been organising live web chats for netizens to engage our government leaders on important issues, such as the Prime Minister's National Day Rally Speech and the Budget. Such interactions provide another channel for netizens to raise their concerns to the Government.

3 In addition to regular dialogue and tea sessions to find out Singaporeans' views on policies, REACH also uses other channels such as blogs, web chats and discussion forum on its website to engage Singaporeans. The discussion forum allows netizens to initiate discussion threads on issues they are interested in, likewise for the blogs. These platforms facilitate ground-up feedback, and netizens have been actively initiating discussion threads on numerous issues. This is something REACH encourages. It will continue to seek ways to facilitate ground-up feedback. REACH has also started using Facebook since June this year to engage netizens, and this has also enabled it to reach out to overseas Singaporeans.

4 REACH has also launched the Junior REACH Ambassadors' (JRA) Programme, whereby the JRAs surface feedback raised by their peers and friends on issues that concern them. REACH has recently appointed some of the JRAs as its roving reporters who will surface issues on the ground to the Government. In September this year, REACH has started a new webpage 'Talk Abuzz', which puts up summary of current hot topics which are being discussed on its different feedback channels.

5 Another recent addition is the podcast/ vodcast where netizens can catch snippets of REACH's events, such as dialogue sessions, and hear what our government leaders have to say about important issues.

6 REACH's platforms have a sizeable audience. Going forward, REACH will continue to enhance its use of new media and allow for more interactive and spontaneous online citizen engagement. It has created a 'comments option' on 'Talk Abuzz' for netizens to post comments on current hot issues and start a conversation among themselves. In addition, REACH has just introduced "Youth Vibes", an interactive webpage for youths to reflect and express their opinions on issues that matter to them. Through the webpage,

REACH hopes to encourage and promote greater youth participation in shaping government policies.

NIAC

1 The NIAC, which was set up in 1996, had emphasised the need for a coordinated, multi-pronged approach in making the Internet and new media platforms safe for all, especially children. It sees the need for the Government, industry and the public to work cohesively to handle the new challenges posed by the Internet and other new media services.

2 Over the years, the NIAC had launched many initiatives. In 1999, the NIAC encouraged the industry to roll out the Family Access Network (FAN), a filtering tool which enables parents to better supervise their children's access to the Internet. In 2001, it developed an Industry Content Code to help foster a culture of responsibility among Internet industry members and encourage industry co-regulation.

3 In 2002, the NIAC set up a special Cyber Wellness Task Force to develop a body of cyber wellness values, ethics and best practices and to look into strategies to promote cyber wellness. The Task Force launched the world's first cyber wellness programme in 2004. With the support of over 80 strategic partners, the cyber wellness programmes successfully reached out to more than 140,000 Singaporeans in 2006.

PAGi

4 The NIAC was also instrumental in establishing PAGi in 1999. The aim of PAGi was to educate parents, teachers and concerned guardians on Internet safety issues and the positive use of the Internet. During its six years of existence⁵, PAGi had reached out to more than 90,000 children, youths, parents and volunteers. Some of its outreach initiatives included Safe Surfing 2001; the first international convention on online safety; and PAGi Families Week, a programme comprising public talks and roadshows educating families on online safety. PAGi had also worked with 30 countries in support of Insafe (the European Internet Safety network) in celebration of Safer Internet Day.

Ongoing Internet and Media Literacy Initiatives

5 In 2007, the NIAC was reconstituted to form the current Internet and Media Advisory Committee (INMAC). INMAC, which comprises members from the private, people and public sectors, advises MDA on public education programmes and initiatives to promote media literacy and cyber wellness.

6 Over the past few years, INMAC and MDA have put significant resources into developing and promoting cyber wellness programmes and activities. In 2006 and 2007, MDA facilitated many cyber wellness initiatives with its partners. These included the National StrITwise Competition,

⁵ In 2006, PAGi was integrated into the Community Advisory Committee under the NIAC.

GetNETSafe, cyber wellness talks at the libraries, Office Guide for the Online Generation, and Parenting in The Digital Age Seminar. In 2007, MDA reached out to more than 300,000 participants, encouraging them to use the media responsibly for work, learning or play.