An Investigation into the Nationally Funded ICT-related Initiatives in Tasmania: 1996 to 2005

by

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Abstract

Over the past twenty years regional Australia has been the recipient of publicly funded development and stimulus initiatives that are premised on assumptions about the benefits that Information and Communications Technologies (ICTs) can bring to a region.

In Tasmania, the Australian Federal Government, through projects such as the Intelligent Island Board, and the Launceston Business Development fund, has made funding available to stimulate and encourage existing and new service providers to develop innovative, new, high tech business applications, content, and infrastructure.

The objective of this research is to seek to gain an understanding of the perceptions, motivations and actions of key people involved in establishing and administering these publically funded ICT-related programs within Tasmania during the ten year period of 1996 to 2005.

The research methodology adopts an interpretivist epistemology and employs qualitative analysis of a series of case studies of a single timeframe and related programs; extracting data interpretively from a series of distinct interviews to derive a series of effect-outcome models, and to gain a rich, deep interpretation of the intentions of the key people involved in the process of establishing and administering these programs. The research is exploratory, in that is based on raw data gained from interviews with experts, and is theory building, because it seeks to build models of relationships between the input factors and outputs of these research programs.

This research seeks to gain insight into the motivations and actions of these key individuals as they implemented these programs in an Australian region, and to identify the key factors that influenced decision making in these programs. The outcomes of this research are relevant to both academics and practitioners interested in the process of establishing and administering programs designed to stimulate and encourage ICT-related programs within an Australian regional economy.
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