

SEEDNet Gives Birth to Taiwan's Internet Services

The Institute for Information Industry (III) was established as the leading locomotive that steered IT applications, especially advanced ones, in Taiwan. In 1990, the III actively worked on the project of SEEDNET. The objective for its first stage in 1991 was to connect with large networks in foreign countries, which was followed by extensive connections to industry-related public associations and consortium databases. Thus it would build for Taiwan's IT industry a treasure house of connections with the most comprehensive information retrieval systems.

Previously, Internet service providers (ISP) offered the public accesses to the Internet through the following means of connections: dial-up networking, ADSL (asymmetric digital subscriber line), data line, fiber-optic or mobile network. Some providers even offered domain name registrations, web hosting and lo-location services.

The III coined the word "SEED" by combining the acronyms of Software Engineering Environment Development. In Taiwan, SEEDNet has indeed planted seeds that grow into Internet propagation. To motivate business people or the IT circle to use the Internet, a provision of databases, contents and services is necessary.

In joint efforts with the Ministry of Economic Affairs, the III has launched Industry & Technology Intelligence Service (ITIS) that establishes for Food, Biochemical, Shipping and other industries a periodically updated database. Through SEEDNet, databases for subordinate divisions of the Ministry of Economic Affairs and other consortiums also grow rapidly within a short space of two years.

As information technology keeps progressing and industries stay ever-changing, the Institute for Information Industry decides to present SEEDNet to the island's information industry. Only by having a good grasp of the latest news of the world's standard organizations, product specifications, trends and markets can Taiwan sharpen its competitive edge on the international stage. Meanwhile, the public will also find it easy to learn the usage of computers and the Internet.

SEEDNet has carried out a number of cross-industry cooperation projects, one of which being the collaboration between SEEDNet and Holix, a content-based website. Users of the website can obtain three hours' free online surfing and a free making of personal webpage or business network. They can log in Manpower Bank without being charged. In addition, Notebook computers, 100 hours' online surfing, FarEas Tone pre-paid phone cards and others are prizes they can win.

Domestic Internet service providers initiated a content website with Chinese articles in eight categories. It aimed to become the biggest content website in the Chinese community. It started with guidance instructions on how to look for search engines, followed by Political Council, Educational Websites, Channel T, High Technology News, Child King, Manpower Bank, and I-Show E-People. Altogether, more than 38 content websites were launched in the same period.

As to the domain of Cable TV network, SEEDNet joined KG Telecom in ventures to explore the potentials of Cable network commercialization. Computer viruses are a hidden threat to the Internet. To cope with the threat, SEEDNet joined hands with Trend Micro in carrying out online anti-virus operations.

SEEDNet is the major business of the reinvested corporation of the Institute for Information Industry. In 2000, the government set up Fixed Networks Sector. Since then, three private enterprises have participated in the new telecom era. In 2007, SEEDNet worked with Sparq of the Far Eastern Group in developing Internet phones. It also cooperated with FarEas Tone Telecom in the application of WAP (Wireless Application Protocol) that aimed to stimulate e-commerce growth. As the Institute for Information Industry represented an official consortium to some degree, SEEDNet later merged with FarEas Tone Telecom to avoid being accused of vying against private sectors for profits. In 2008 the two integrated to promote Fixed Networks services in Taiwan.

In 1983, the American MCI Inc. inaugurated low-cost email services that resembled telegram sending and receiving of the Telecom Corp, with computers acting as the transporting vehicle. By the end of 1984 Chinese computer networks and emails were seen in Taiwan. In 1985 emails took the place of the half-century-old telegraphs. In 1986 the academia started exchanging emails through International Academic Network. Due to the unpopularity of Chinese computers, telephone fax machines had to offer transitional services at that time. The so-called emails are actually telephone faxes. In 1990 MCI also offered to expand email markets with Taiwan government.

By 1993 Internet Emailing has evolved into a new technology. The original Directorate General of Telecommunications was privatized and became Chunghwa Telecom. In 1994, HINET of Chunghwa Telecom, SEEDNET of the Institute for Information Industry, and TANET of Taiwan academia all started providing email services to the public, marking a new milestone for Taiwan's Internet penetration.

16 種子網路催生台灣網際網路服務

資訊工業策進會成立是扮演資訊科技應用的火車頭，特別是先進的資訊應用，1990年，資策會緊鑼密鼓規劃種子網路(SEEDNET)計畫，第一階段目標是1991年以連接國外大型網路，再擴及資訊工業各相關公會及財團法人資料庫，為國內資訊界建立最完整的資訊檢索連線寶庫。

網際網路服務供應商透過早期的撥號連線、後來的ADSL(非對稱數碼用戶線路)、數據專線、光纖或是行動網路等方式提供網際網路存取服務，一些供應商還提供域名登記、網頁寄存和主機託管等服務。

Software Engineering Environment Development Network 軟體工程環境發展網路，資策會取名為「Seed」種子網路計畫，確實是為台灣網際網路應用播下種子，如何讓企業界或資訊族想要上網路，就必須建置資料庫、內容與服務，產生使用的動機。

資策會整合經濟部執行「全國產業科技資訊服務體系」(ITIS)，已為食品、生化、船舶等產業建立定期更新的情報資料庫，經濟部各處室及財團法人資料庫，也逐步與種子網路連通，都在兩年內見成果。

針對資訊科技進步神速，產業瞬息萬變，資策會選擇先為資訊業提供SEEDNET，唯有掌握世界標準組織最新動態、標準規格制定、產品趨勢及市場等，才能增強國際競爭實力，也教育電腦與網路易學易用。

SEEDNET有許多跨行業的合作計畫，專業內容網站為主的賦力慧科技與SEEDNET合作，贈送SEEDNET免費上網3小時，個人網頁、企業網路免費製作，人力銀行免費登錄；另抽筆記本型電腦、100小時上網時數、遠傳易付卡等獎品。

國內網路服務業者首開內容網站先例，為八大華文內容網站聯合發表，企圖成為華人社區最大的內容網站，先推出入門網路「搜尋引擎」，「參政會」，「教育網站」，「Channel T」，「High Technology News」，

(孩子王),「人力銀行」,「愛秀異族」網站,推出超過 38 個內容網站。

有線電視網路領域,資策會種子網路(SEEDNet)與和信合作探尋有線電視上網路商用化的可能性。電腦病毒是網際網路隱憂,SEEDNET和趨勢科技合作線上掃毒。

SEEDNET 變成資策會轉投資數位聯合電信公司主要業務,2000 年政府開放固定網路業務,有三大民間業者進入新電信時代,SEEDNET 2007 年和遠東集團速博合作網路電話,也開始和遠傳電信進行 WAP 無線應用協定(Wireless Application Protocol)的電子商務合作推廣,由於資策會具有官方財團法人色彩,為避免與民爭利,2008 年數位聯合電信就和遠傳電信結合,SEEDNET 就成為遠傳電信業務,推動固網等服務。

美國 MCI 電信公司 1983 年發表低成本的電子郵遞服務,類似電信局收發電報,只是載體改為電腦,1984 年底台灣也有中文電腦網路與郵件,1985 年電子郵遞開始取代逾半世紀的電報機。1986 年學術界開始利用國際學術網路互通電子郵件,由於中文電腦還不流行,所以電話傳真機是過渡服務。所謂的電子郵件其實是電話傳真。1990 年 MCI 也想和我國合作電子郵件。

1993 年網路能發電子郵件已成為新科技,電信總局服務也確定要民營化(privatization)為中華電信公司,1994 年中華電信 HINET、資策會 SEEDNET、台灣學術界的 TANET 陸續啟用電子郵件服務,台灣網際網路應用進到新里程碑。