

“The future of e-Content development in Kenya is very bright”

factfile

Population of the country: 39,002,772 Total no of Universities: 13 (Public Universities); 24 (Private Universities)

Number of Individuals with Internet Access: 3,000,000
Internet hosts in Kenya: 27,376 (2008)

No. of individuals with computers: 150,000 Total number of household having TV/cable TV: 730,000 (2003)

Total Number of PC installations: 441,000 (2004)
(http://www.nationmaster.com/graph/med_pc-media-number-of-pcs)

Literacy Rate: 85.1%

Number of telephone connections: 264,800 (2007)

Total number of mobile connections: 11.44 million (2007)

Broadband connections: 3,000,000

Percentage of youth population: 10887916

Percentage of educated population: 85.1%

Sources:

<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ke.html>
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<http://www.Internetworldstats.com/af/ke.htm>
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http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Demographics_of_Kenya

How would you define the meaning of e-Content in your country in terms of its true meaning and practical implication?

e-Content in Kenya is taken to mean text, images, clips and applications that can be accessed online. This issue has recently gained a lot of focus because of the rapid developments in infrastructure which has expanded access to Internet to increasing numbers of the population. Our mobile service providers have also rolled out 3G networks covering the whole country, making it easy to browse from mobile phones.

5 pillars

of e-Content development in Kenya

- ↳ Government commitment and support because Government is the largest consumer of goods and services in any economy
- ↳ Infrastructure and affordable access
- ↳ Quality assurance and certification
- ↳ Skills development
- ↳ Customization and localization

Q What is the current status of e-Content in your country - across all industry and aspects?

Previously, e-Content development has been disjointed and uncoordinated in part due to the multiple players on the ground. This factor was one of the motivations for establishment of Kenya e-Learning center, to coordinate and harmonize e-content development in Kenya's public sector.

All players have invested heavily in a terrestrial cable network infrastructure in readiness for the landing of the undersea cables linking Kenya to the external world. This investment has covered the whole country and will also link the surrounding countries in this network. It is therefore a logical progression that the focus has now fully shifted to e-content development to enable the country leverage the establish infrastructure.

Q What area of e-Content is best developed in your country? For example, e-health, e-biz, e-culture, e-gov, e-entertainment, e-learning, e-science, or e-inclusion.

The best examples are:

- >> Digitization of primary and secondary school curriculum by Kenya Institute of Education
- >> Customization and rollout of e-Learning capacity development courses by KeLC (Online tutoring, e-Learning technology, content development and course production, Instructional design, e-Learning management)
- >> Online access to primary and secondary school national exams results through the web access or Mobile SMS
- >> Tracking of status of passport and ID applications through web access and Mobile SMS.
- >> Online recruitment into Government
- >> Online Monitoring of implementation of community projects through the Community Development fund.
- >> Online tax submission through Kenya Revenue Authority

>> Online company registration

Q Which sector in your country is more aggressive in developing e-content - business or private sector; government or civil society?

Private sector and civil society have previously taken the lead in e-Content development due to extensive links to regional and international networks that facilitate technology and skills transfer. However, since 2005 and more recently through establishment of KeLC, there has been a marked increase in e-Content development in public sector, with more than 60 e-Learning courses being developed already.

Q How would you describe the gradual progress of development of e-content in your country in terms of its rise? Any timelines?

As indicated above, the efforts to develop e-Content were disjointed and ineffective, with duplication of efforts and resource wastage. With the launch of e-Learning capacity development courses by KeLC in 2005, there has been a marked improvement in these development efforts due to ongoing capacity development. Previously, there was a serious lack of skilled personnel trained and experienced in e-Content development. Most of those existing were in private sector, experienced in expensive proprietary software. The unique difference with KeLC's capacity development programmes is that they focus on utilization of open source tools. This has enabled resource-constrained institutions to effectively develop e-Content leveraging on the skills of our alumni and using open source tools.

Q Can you list the major initiatives, which influenced and aggravated the development of e-Content in your country?

The major mobile operators in Kenya have rolled out national 3G networks that have enabled access via mobile phones. This has also spurred development of mobile content.

Q How would you describe the major bottlenecks on the path of e-Content development in your country?

Major bottlenecks include:

1. Skills gap across all sectors
2. Poor and high cost of Internet access, especially in rural areas where 80% of population lives.
3. Lack of national strategy and implementation plan. This has led to disjointed and uncoordinated efforts, leading to ineffectiveness and inefficiency.
4. Lack of a quality assurance and standardization regime. This has exposed consumers to foreign content with little or no relevance to our national development objectives, and sometimes harmful to our moral and social values.

Q In majority of the countries, e-Content development is significantly dependent on ICT infrastructure and ICT facilities. But, in some countries that are quite developed, ICT has become part of daily life and e-content development is primarily subjected to the initiatives of an individual/organization/government, etc. Whereas, in some countries, especially those, which are developing and under developed, e-content development is largely dependent on ICT infrastructure. What is the situation in your country? Please explain in detail.

The situation in Kenya can be viewed in a dual perspective. In some parts of the country the status of e-Content development is dependent on ICT infrastructure and technical capacity. In others, mostly urban, content development is mostly fuelled by students in tertiary institutions as part of their class projects. In this case, there is ready access to infrastructure through school or commercial cyber cafés, and also via 3G enabled mobile phones.

There is also a rapidly developing local music and film industry with local players very active in utilization of ICT in the development and marketing of their products.

Q How do you see the future of e-Content development in your country?

The future of e-content development in Kenya is very bright due to the following:

1. Government commitment. There is an initiative to develop a national e-Content development and implementation strategy through partnership between KeLC and Ministry of Information and communications.
2. There has been massive investment in infrastructure, both under-sea and terrestrial cables, including

computerization of all Government departments and processes. This scenario also exists in private sector and civil society.

Q Please explain which medium is the most preferred medium for e-content development? Print? Or TV? Or Internet/Web? Or Radio? Or Mobile/Wireless? Or a combination of some of these?

A combination of the above, with this being dependent on the specific environment; developers, target group, infrastructure available, existing policy framework.

Best Practices

E-GOVERNANCE

The Government established the Directorate of e-Government in March 2004 (www.e-Government.go.ke) to coordinate implementation of e-Government across Government. This is for improved efficiency and effectiveness of public service delivery

Government has launched the VISION 2030 as a strategy to achieve a middle income status by 2030. A vision 2030 implementation board was recently inaugurated to oversee this. The board draws membership from all key stakeholder sectors.

The Government has also

established a national ICT Board to coordinate implementation a multi sectoral project that seeks to develop Kenya as the preferred ICT services hub in Africa.

E-HEALTH

Through Kenya's Directorate of e-Government, the Ministry of Health has established the National e-Health working group to harness synergies across sectors for promotion of e-Health.

Other initiatives include: Online data entry on diabetes by Kenya Medical Research Institute (KEMRI)

Disease surveillance on ten selected diseases including

avian influenza, malaria and TB

KEMRI and Jomo Kenyatta University are providing telemedicine training at post-graduate level

Moi university and AMREF have a joint programme through which training of nurses and other health workers is implemented through e-Learning

AMREF has established a database with pool of health specialist for their outreach programmes for emergence consultation, expert diagnosis, treatment, follow-ups

E-LEARNING

Kenya e-Learning Center

(KeLC) has been established to coordinate and promote e-Learning for capacity building in public sector. KeLC is an initiative of Directorate of e-Government, office of the President, and Ministry of Education and operates on a PPP basis. We currently have over 60 agencies in the network from all sectors.

Kenya's National e-Government strategy and ICT policy both specifically highlight the critical role that e-Learning will play in capacity development in public sector. Investments have been made in content development, training and infrastructure to facilitate this.