

# “It is a “120,000 PC Country””

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

El Salvador is still working in making the technology to access information on line more accessible to a larger number of the population. Banking, Government and some commercial enterprises have been increasingly publishing more contents, forms, applications and general information. So, part of our challenge is to continue and expand the institutions that publish systematically, information on the web, but the main objective should continue to be to extend the possibilities for the population to learn and use proactively the ICT devices and connections.

## factfile

Population of the country: 7 Million (July 2008)  
No of Universities: 26  
Total Number of Internet connections: 700,000 Internet users as of December/07  
Internet hosts in El-Salvador: 11,434 (2008)  
No. of individuals with computers: 120,000  
Total number of household having TV/cable TV: 600,000  
Total Number of PC installations: 1,20,000  
Number of telephone connections: 1.08 million (2007)  
Cellular subscription percentage = 6.137 million (2007)

Sources:

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/El\\_Salvador](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/El_Salvador)  
[http://www.unesco.org/iau/online/databases/list\\_data/df-nw.html#EL\\_Salvador](http://www.unesco.org/iau/online/databases/list_data/df-nw.html#EL_Salvador)  
<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/es.html>  
<http://www.pressreference.com/Co-Fa/El-Salvador.html>

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## 5 pillars of e-Content development in El Salvador

- ↳ Human resource
- ↳ Infrastructure
- ↳ Legal framework
- ↳ e-Government
- ↳ ICT industry

**Q** What is the current status of eContent in your country - across all industry and aspects.

There is an increasing interest in having e-contents published for different purposes all across the various sectors in the country. Private enterprises are using it to advertise and promote their brands and products, performing email-marketing, and also a few are providing electronic transactions. Academic institutions are offering more and more courses and / or support for conventional courses via their web pages. Government dependencies are renewing and relaunching

their web sites, with more offerings and functions available for the citizens in their web spaces.

**Q** What area of eContent 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.

In El Salvador, after a late start up, e-banking has developed very aggressively, providing customers with several services. In some cases, e-government has also improved its presence in cyberspace. E-entertainment, specially sports and leisure activities,

is also an area that has been developed over the last few years. E-learning is just starting to make its entrance, and some schools, colleges and universities are setting up interesting services through their web sites.

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

In general terms, the private sector is ahead in providing better and innovative services to the community. There are a couple of government institu-

tions that are doing interesting things. These are the National Center of Registrations ([www.cnr.gob.sv](http://www.cnr.gob.sv)) and the Ministry of Finance ([www.mh.gob.sv](http://www.mh.gob.sv)). Also, there is a lot of development made by ordinary people, promoting their services, such as artists, photographers, painters, and other professionals.

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

El Salvador got connected to the Internet in a direct fashion in December 1995. The domain registration for ccTLD "SV" remained free of charge until December 2003, and this helped the local institutions, both from the public and private sectors, to experience publishing and "playing" with their cyberpresence. After that period, domain names, both ending in SV and ending in some other Top Level domain name, have been growing and developing with more quality and in a more professional ways, and with a more systemic approach.

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

Infocentros ([www.infocentros.org.sv](http://www.infocentros.org.sv)), winner of the World Summit Award in E-Inclusion in 2003, certainly has to go in the first place, since this project helped develop not only the critical mass in El Salvador for accessing the web, but also built an infrastructure for making the publication and reviewing the news and some other e-content for salvadoreans. Other initiatives include the national contest "Arroba de Oro", and more recently,

the national strategy "ePaís" ([www.epais.gob.sv](http://www.epais.gob.sv)).

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

Lack of resources, in several ways, like: human, financial, bandwidth. The absence of a local Internet Exchange Point (IXP) or Neutral Access Point (NAP) has stopped some e-content development. Also, a lack of real political will among the political leaders has delayed the adoption of some aggressive ideas and initiatives, both in the government and rest of the country.

**Q** In majority of the countries, e-content development is significantly dependent on ICT infrastructure and ICT facilities. But, in some 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.

Of course, it is related with the ICT infrastructure, but since El Salvador is a very small country (21 thousand square kilometers), it is not so hard to provide coverage of connectivity in all the territory. That does not mean there are no shortages of computers and skilled teachers, professionals, etc. Step by step, very slowly, some part of the population has been having access to this technology, and they are beginning to use it. The more ICT we manage to deploy, the more good results we should expect, both in e-

content development, as well as a productive usage of the means.

**Q** How would you describe the ICT scenario in your country? Please describe in terms of infrastructure, penetration, acceptance and policies.

There are something like 20 Internet connectivity providers (ICP), and they are offering dedicated connections to households of 1 MB for \$55 a month, among other offerings. It is still expensive and prohibitive for the majority of the population, but it has been improving, both in bandwidth and prices, since there is a lot of competition. However, the entire country has mobile coverage, and all the major cities have Internet access and there are many private cybercafes. There are also the Infocentros, a project that is still working in creative ways to develop our country into one Information Society.

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

Promising, according to the evolution I have been able to follow in the Arroba de Oro contest from 2002 to the present. There is more competition, and more innovation and creativity in the usage of the new medium.

**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?

Due to their richness, radio and TV are still the preferred medium for development of e-content. However, through the youth, huge amount of e-content is developed on the Internet.

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## Best Practices

### E-LEARNING

[www.miportal.edu.sv](http://www.miportal.edu.sv)

A very good educative portal, designed and prepared originally by the Ministry of Education, but currently accepted and adopted by many schools, students and teachers, as a means to communicate between colleagues, mates and beyond. Also, the schools set up their own web sites in this portal and teachers are beginning to share materials.

[www.miportal.edu.sv](http://www.miportal.edu.sv)

An educative portal published by the Ministry of Education that, among other things, include several spaces for exchanging information and helpful developments as learning aids, developed by other teachers.

### E-GOVERNANCE

[www.mined.gob.sv](http://www.mined.gob.sv)

Well designed government site. It covers several areas and it is divided by topics of interest to teachers, students and parents, as well as general public.

[www.cnr.gob.sv](http://www.cnr.gob.sv)

National Center of Registrations

[www.mh.gob.sv](http://www.mh.gob.sv)

Ministry of Finance

### E-BUSINESS

[www.fotosdeelsalvador.com](http://www.fotosdeelsalvador.com)

The photographs published in this site are all for sale, and so, it is a very good example of doing business in the new economy. You

may see a low resolution of the picture and ask for it or some other similar.

### E-CULTURE

There is an on going effort carried out by a private, civil society organization called **Fundación Click**, that is doing a good job in promoting within the art and culture communities the use of ICT. Also, it is aiming at developing new forms in the so called digital art.

### E-ENTERTAINMENT

[www.clic.org.sv](http://www.clic.org.sv)

A pioneer in El Salvador, in setting up and arts and culture agenda, thru e-content. Also, the organi-

zation behind it has supported and held in several times the digital art exposition.

### E-SCIENCE

[www.astro.org.sv](http://www.astro.org.sv)

This, sadly, is one of the fields least developed. A good initiative is presented by the local astronomy association.

### E-INCLUSION

**El Salvador Development Gateway**

Part of a worldwide network, this project is struggling to serve and involve more people in the use of the new ICT for their own benefit and in their own activities.