

Conference for the IV Sessions of the INDOEM (Information, Documentation & Enterprises)

By

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“The digital enterprise in the Communication Society”

I. The Internet today

- It seems as if the Internet has already exploited.
- Which is what I had already anticipated in my Conference in Murcia, at the Club “La Opinión”, in 1998 and which this Newspaper decided to titled “The Revolution is coming”¹,
- And we should maybe add that two years later, the evolution – or should I maybe say, the r-evolution – **is already here.**
- To confirme it, here there are these IV International Sessions for Information, Documentation & Enterprises, sponsored by the University of Murcia and caja Murcia, which seeks, nor more nor less, that to “think also from the point of view of those who believe that globalisation can be pernicious”².
- As well as to be a forum for debate and reflection about all these **significant** changes that lead to a more flexible system of the information and communication methods, which are also more

¹ “La Opinión”, 10. February 1998, page 14.

² See <<http://www.um.es/indoem/presentación.html>>

oriented to their users, trying to help them to survive in this recent competitive environment³.

- It is true that at this moment we are experiencing a saturation of the Internet phenomenon in all its aspects⁴.

II. *The Industrial Society limited Growth⁵ and the limitless Growth of the Digital Society*

This title, reveals an old issue presented to national and international Communities, after the call for attention of the CoR (Club of Rome) in 1972 and the following petrol crisis that most of the European countries went through as a result of the changes after the six days War in Yonkipur.

At that moment it was announced for first time to the industrial Society, that its growth will not be unlimited and that the progressive damage of our ENVIRONMENT as a result of the industrial production, would have to be taken in consideration (people at that time did not even think of the digital society), and it is necessary, continued the CoR, to maintain a better balance between the planetary ecosystems⁶.

On the contrary, the development of the digital Industry and the IT do not seem to have these constraints. First of all, as digital customers we eliminate the paper, as we read and write on the screen..., how many Hectares of Forest are we saving per minute?

³ This paper is trying to solve it. It will be, for the reader and the participant in this IV Sessions, to judge if it has reached its aim or not.

⁴ Recently, in March 99, it was formed in Paris, after one of the extraordinary sessions of the Internet Society (ISOC) and of its Board of Trustees (BoT) in its strategic meeting for the XXI Century, the ISTF (Internet Societal Task Force) group which was presided by Vinton G. Cerf, the creator together with Kahn of the Protocol IP/TCP, to be the support, as the previous IETF (Internet Engineering Task Force) to progress and later development of Protocols, Names and Standards that form the skin bone of the Internet. In the future we will often have to refer to the actual approach and the results of this ISTF Group formed by 21 people with very different origins.

⁵ See "The Limits to growth", The first report to the Club of Rome written by Denis Meadows in 1972, New York. See as well, "Mankind at the Turning Point. The Second Report to the Club of Rome", Mesarovic and E. Pestel, 1974 and the RIO ("Reshaping the International Order"), Dutton & Co. Inc. New York, 1976.

⁶ From the time when the three First Reports of the CoR were published until today, the damage of the environment is evident in this year 2000 with a serial of different and worrying atmospheric phenomena. It is only necessary to remember recent the damages and deaths in Poland, Denmark, Austria, Switzerland, France and Spain, just to mention the main countries in the European Continent..

How much wood? How much energy for its transportation... the most contaminating of the three Ts?⁷

The situation in the *Digit@l* Europe is as follows:

In the first place of the classification is the *Stockholm – Helsinki corridor*, in which the penetration of the “e-mobile revolution” is reaching levels, that as the IHT⁸ says “Are not even happening in Palo Alto, in the middle of Silicon Valley in California”. Ericsson’s and Nokia’s potential will be, due to the huge potential in Infostructures for mobility, together with Motorola, the greater promoters of the “Mobile Internet” that will be working between 600 million people in 4 years, around the year 2004.

1. A first group of Northern Countries, that includes the three Scandinavian and specially the Northern country of Finland, which is ahead in the introduction of the Internet and Mobility as an absolute leader with more than 62% of the market, as contrasted with Denmark and Sweden with more than 50%, similar to Norway and Iceland.
2. A second group, formed by UK and Ireland, together with the Benelux countries, where the level of market penetration reaches in some cases 35%.
3. Then Germany, Spain and Italy, would be in a third market penetration group, regarding mobility, Spain and Italy would be around 20%.
4. Finally France, Portugal and Greece show also clear increasing tendencies in the use of the NN.TT⁹.

III. *But what is the situation in Spain ?*

⁷ See my Conference at the Rovira i Virgili University of Tarragona (10th of may), about “Internet Education for the main issues on International Politics towards the year 2050”. The three most contaminating Ts of the Earth Planet are Transport, Tourism and Territory (management and damage).

⁸ See page 13, from the edition in Monday 17th of April.

⁹ I would like to comment the case of France as I believe that an explanation to the actual situation could be the “Minitel”, a French version and a previous step into the Internet and the strong centralisation typical of Paris.

The situation of the NN.TT. in Spain, after the decisions taken at the extraordinary Minister Council of the EU in Lisbon last 23 – 24¹⁰ of March, can make some things change, but please allow me to transcribe, though a little adapted, some paragraphs of my speech at the Symposium “The Information Society for Everybody”, organised by the Presidency of the Spanish Government, and with the participation - by Video Conference from Washington DC of President Aznar - and Ministers Piqué, Arias Salgado and Rajoy ¹¹.

The citizen in the Information Society

Despite the initial difficulties, many of the projects, even the most recent ones, need to be able to survive the challenge of such fast changes and what it is more important, they must be able to **give way** to an active and participant *endogenous power* coming out to the electronic innovating communities such as the Internet Society (ISOC), the IETF (The Internet Engineering Task Force), the IAB (The Internet Architectural Board), the ICANN (The Internet Council for Assigned Numbers & Names), the very recent ISTF ((Internet Societal Task Force) or the SIGs, groups of News, Chattings and specially the communication that is usually generated through Civic Networks, that is **when the citizen has a more important role**.

In my opinion these **NECESSARY** actions in the medium, short and long term (from the year 2000 to the 2010) are obvious:

At a short term, that is to say from today to the year 2002, it is necessary to be able to count on:

- *A quick installation of cable infostructures in all the Autonomous Communities of Spain¹².*

¹⁰ The references to Lisbon are necessary to explain the creation of 20.000.000 jobs in 10 years. The NN.TT and the IS will certainly be the key of this success, if we work with flexibility in the “values” world, that for that time might be more clear. Matters as labour flexibility regarding working time tables and locations, intensification of the digital education by the different University Departments and the Enterprises of the Sector ... etc.

¹¹ Organised in Madrid on the 13th and 14th of April 1999 by the Government’s Presidency, the Ministry for Industry and Energy and the Ministry for Fomento under the name “Everybody’s Information Society”.

¹² The great effort of all the Spanish Municipalities for the implantation of digital Infostructures has recently been recognized in a very interesting article published in May on the Magazine of the Financial Times, “Connectis”, Issue 3, pages 52 and next. The headline of the article was “Local authorities keep abreast of new technology” and it was presented together with an excellent descriptive map showing the

- A generalised grant of a reasonable access to the Net for all citizens. The needed **flat** rate.
- Give priority to the *financing* “campaigns” for information and use of the Net at Primary and Secondary Schools, among young unemployed or handicapped people.
- Set-up of the **digital signature** as a mean to validate transactions on the Net.

At a medium term, around the year 2005, the following ideas will be already spread over:

- A *digital community concentration* around professional free areas – as the ones in the Civic Networks, Chapters of ISOC or of its later evolution through the ISTF – which will maintain the net free of restrictions, compromises and unnecessary regulations.
- At that time it would be positive to start getting use to the freedom of speech and *the right to be heard*.
- The citizen will already possess a technology *as easy as broad*, which will allow him to communicate with other people with no limits, at any time, from any where and in any language.

At a long term (2010)

The citizen of the first decade in the coming Century, should be able to establish values which today are only “detectable” at Civic Networks, such as optimism, tolerance, global vision and local commitments, as a result of an innovating and anticipating training during a decade...learning from the future!

However, it is necessary to favour from today on, a new dimension in the management of the Networks, which could be contained in the following hypotheses:

task carried out in Spain with references to the URLs of Catalonia, Madrid, Valencia and the Basque Region.

- Give priority to the “bottom up” digit@l movements together with the private sector and Public Administration’s initiatives.
- Give a bigger support, from the respective City Halls and Regional Governments, to the new kind of associations such as Civic Networks, ISOC, the IETF, the IAB, the GIS’s, News groups, ...etc.
- Settle a firm and progressive connection between all these citizen Networks and the Universities, specially with it’s education and R+D Departments, as well as to the regional Political and Financing Institutions interested in the development and promotion of this matter such as the Saving Banks and other Commercial institutions.

IV. What is the situation in the Region of Murcia

Not without a dose of boldness, I would dare to ask: how is the IT in the Region of Murcia? What is its real situation regarding this avalanche of the NN.TT., specially in the last months, at two footsteps of this “brink” of the the new millennium?

I live far from Murcia, but I am very well informed through the Net about the technological development of the Region, and I have participated, since the beginning, in those Chattings at <arrakis.es> when there were discussions about giving a name to Ciez@net, even though, and I repeat, not without a great dose of boldness, I dare to make an outline of the NN.TT. and the IT world in this Region, in the following way:

- The Autonomous Government, through its own Presidency, but specially in collaboration with the Labour, Social & Political ‘Consejeros’ the Education, Tourism and Cultural ‘Consejerias’, impulse the diffusion and application of the digital technologies. We also have to mention the support of the Economica and Financing authorities with their pioneering and important work with Foundations as “Integra”, supporting already the consolidated local Network of [Ciez@net](#), and other Nets and nodes in Molina del Segura, Yecla, Jumilla, Lorca, etc.

- There is an excellent University, dynamic, aggressive and committed, with a very serious Infostructure of deep digital dimension, which is ready to continue with the process of direct application of the NN.TT. to the University, and specially with an important experience in the technology of the Smart Cards¹³.
- There is also an excellent Institute of Fomento whose project called ESSIMUR, included in the European initiative RISI to establish a Plan of the IS (Information Society) in the Region of Murcia.
- The Saving Banks and the Banks of the Region of Murcia had compromised themselves, from the very beginning, with the change and the supply of more 'on-line' services.
- The huge potential of a Non-Governmental Organisation, as "Tocaos del Ala" and the Federation for handicapped people of the Region of Murcia, will have to be properly incorporated when an I.A.P. (Immediate Action Plan) is to be created.
- But moreover, the Region of Murcia has many Servers and Web pages perfectly distributed in almost all the City Halls and Villages which are pioneering projects that will increase the interest for educational issues, even in the way of understanding education, leisure, the handicapped environment, the adults world as well as the ecological and cultural citizen projects.

V. Areas in which the creation of employment could be possible

I will just mention a broad outline to how this objective could be fulfilled:

1. The **electronic trade** is going to need a lot of new jobs specialised in Offering punctual services, in Networks, in Video Conferencing, in the creation of the so known 'Contents' of the Web. In some occasions, important initial investments will not be necessary, but we have to take good care of the training in these issues. The ideas are free but they can be joint and we must look

¹³ I can personally confirm the excellent acceptance that the SC – Smart Card – of the University of Murcia had in the Danish Universities DTU in Copenhagen, Århus, Roskilde and Ålborg, on which some Sessions in Spain, at La Manga del Mar Menor, had to be postponed until Nov-Dec 2000.

for them on-net-with-the-others which is much easier and besides that it's cool !

2. Area of ecological products. The “**Mediterranean diet**” has a lot to say about new uses and new on-global-net enterprises. They complement, selected product offer, it's presentation and competitive price, which should be available to all the Markets, **but we must enlarge our aims.....!**
3. **Rural and agrarian tourism.** Regional Culture available to the visitant. Rural tourism creator's organisations.
4. Are of **clean** energies, maionly solar energy. Development of Enterprises for the wind power sector. As well as **the** Water issue, its uses and mainly its de-salination. The serious busniess concerning **Waste management.**
5. Increase of the use of the **University Smart Cards**, and their possibility of global reading with the Smarty Card. I+D in the commercial applications of the SC.
6. All the aspects of the **Business creativity world.**
7. For this reason, and making use of the boldness I mentioned before I am making the following proposal in this IV Session of the Business Information and Documentation:

At the end of this Session *the BASIS action of the Information Society and the NN.TT. in the Region of Murcia* would be created. It will be integrated by the Vice-president of the Government and Labour and Social Politics Counsellor, and the Counsellors for Education, Yourism & Culture, NN.TT. Industry and Trade, Economy and Financing, plus the Rector of the University of Murcia, the Institute for Fomento, the NGO “Tocaos del Ala”, the Federation of Associations for handicapped, the Chambers of Commerce, the Saving Banks ‘Caja Murcia’ and ‘Caja MED’, and others considered useful.

The **BASIS** should start its activitis, *with names and <e-mails>* of the people, with proved experience and cserious ommitments in the numerous telematic projects designed in the Region of Murcia, and mainly in the ESSIMUR project, trying to support the three following sectors:

1. To conduct properly the **generated power**, to be able to carry out the ESSIMUR Conclusions, specially with a view to create employment (fast adaptation to flexibility in the uses of work, part time jobs, tele-work, stationary and sedentary work, the disabled environmen, the *e*-Economy and *e*-Commerce¹⁴ ... etc) by using the NN.TT.
2. The punctual financing and following of Diffusion and Education Projects as well as mentalisation Programs for the political, commercial, cultural and labour groups, about the need to proceed immediately to the execution of the Conclusions of the ESSIMUR Project, as **the** Basis of an integral study of the situation in the IS in the Region of Murcia.
3. An exact and complete Documentation and Information **about it**, easy to access by all citizens, what will, shortly the supporting power to be able to continue building *e*-volutionally the IS using the NN.TT. without risking to “discover” the Mediterranean Sea.

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¹⁴ The amazing possibilities of this new way of working are explained in the excellent article “Connectis” published in the Financial Times Magazine, vol. 3., pages 38 and next. “Wap-out! Surfboards just got smaller”.