

**Panel on Revitalization of Local Community and  
Ubiquitous Network Society  
Summary of Minutes (5th Meeting)**

**1. Date and Time**

Monday, March 5, 2007, 14:00 to 16:00

**2. Location**

Special Conference Room 3, 9<sup>th</sup> floor, Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications

**3. Attendees (honorifics omitted)**

(1) Panel Members

Shimizu (Chair), Ohyama (Deputy-Chair), Iizumi, Uemura, Kotani, Kondo (Proxy: Wakamiya), Shimada, Sudo, Taki, Tsubota, Tsuyuki, Hatano (Proxy: Takahashi), Wasai (Proxy: Tanaka)

(2) Observers

Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology; Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare; Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries; Ministry of Land, Infrastructure and Transport

(3) MIC Representatives

Taniguchi (Parliamentary Secretary for Internal Affairs and Communications), Katsuno (Deputy Director-General of Minister's Secretariat), Imabayashi (Director of the Regional Communications Development Division), Uematsu (Director of the Local Governments ICT Promotion Office), Nakata (Deputy-Director of the Regional Communications Development Division)

**4. Minutes of the Meeting**

(1) Opening

(2) Introduction of the panel members and checking of distributed documents (Secretariat)

- Attendance of the members

- Absent members: Aida, Kiyohara, Nagayoshi, Muraki
- Proxies: Wakamiya for Kondo, Takanashi for Hatano, and Tanaka for Wasai
- Distributed documents were checked

(3) Summary of Minutes of the Last Meeting (Secretariat)

Reference 5-1 was reviewed as the summary of minutes of the last meeting.

(4) Agenda

○ Presentation by Uemura

Mr. Uemura gave a presentation based on Reference 5-2, which was followed by a Q&A session.

[Questions and Answers]

- The “Audio & Visual Tour Guide with Mobile Phone” that is introduced on Page 16 is technically feasible and may be relatively easy to provide in foreign languages, but it has not been officially introduced in any region as far as we know.
- We (Tohokushinsha Film Corporation) planned and developed the content for each of the regions covered in the “Little Kyotos” program without assuming it would be used by other parties. In the future, we will make the content widely available by taking some measures such as conducting an advance investigation (into prospective uses).
- It is possible to envisage models of cost collection for the use of CS broadcasting, but what are the possible business models for the Internet use? It is difficult to charge for the information provided on the websites. Ideally, the cost should be assumed by the beneficiaries. Cost collection in a manner like the contingent fee system may be an option.
- When distributing local video content over the Internet, it is reasonable to use existing technologies like YouTube. It must be noted, however, that TV broadcasts have been illegally posted on the YouTube site. The extent to which the use of the content should be permitted needs to be decided in advance.

- People watch TV four hours per day on average, but a survey revealed that about the half of the time, people do something else with TV on.

○Presentation by Mr. Kotani

Mr. Kotani made a presentation based on Reference 5-3, which was followed by a Q&A session.

[Questions and Answers]

- Keihin Electric Express Railway Co., Ltd. provides the “Keikyu Kids Land Video Distribution Service” listed on Page 13 at three daycare centers it owns along its railway line. The service is well received, as some users commented that it is very helpful to know the activities of their children from remote locations.
- In promoting local ICT, businesses will play a significant role, and businesses and local communities should be directly involved with each other in other areas, in addition to job creation and tax treatment. Although some companies have been contributing to the local communities through activities such as cleanups or nature conservation, efforts to raise corporate awareness are needed in regard to how to revitalize their relationship with the local residents. What we should do is to create opportunities for those efforts.
- In the future, the use of “PASMO” may become a decisive factor in developing the areas along the railway lines. In our future discussions, we should take into consideration the case where the “Suica” card is combined with the resident registration card.
- Today’s presentation pointed out that broadcasting is extremely crucial. In light of this, I remember that I once heard from a local government official that broadcasting rather than the Internet is the key to the success of any project in local communities. A broadcasting service is first provided, then it becomes available for mobile phone reception, and finally it becomes available over the Internet—That’s the possible order of events. Many local cable TV broadcasters are in financial

difficulties and may not be able to shift to the digital broadcasting smoothly, and there is also the issue of literacy in the elderly. In-depth investigation and study of the business model are required. The need for cooperation between local governments, chambers of commerce, and NPOs should be stressed.

- The purpose of cable TV is the revitalization of local communities. Being very concerned that it had become rare to see challenging spirit in local communities, we created a 30-minute program in which we focus on the people who are taking on a challenge within the community and consequently contribute to the community. A financial institution that saw our program offered to establish a fund for them. The institution initially provided 100 million yen, which has grown to 300 million yen today. Additionally, a business model that uses the network of a shinkin bank to create sales channels was developed. This case shows that creation of TV programs through close collaboration between a cable TV broadcaster and local media plays a leading role in the process of problem solving with ICT.
- The “ID number information” on Page 18 of the distributed reference means the ID number on the card. The ID number is used as a key to identify an individual. The system used in this case is different from the PASMO system. A separate system needs to be developed for the sole purpose of ID number sharing. The proposed initiative to provide information on the safety of possible disaster victims is based on the assumption that the service is provided in a limited area, not in an extensive area.
- We once conducted a survey on the difference in information literacy between the generations. The survey revealed a polarization, even in the same generation, between those who watch TV while doing something else and those who actively obtain information over the Internet. We need to create a scheme that encourages the active people to be more active and the passive people to be active, possibly by giving some incentives. The emerging initiatives to generate video content locally are notable. Reportedly, some young people travel by themselves based on the information they obtained via SNS. Today, local information can be disseminated via SNS or other means--The new move seems very promising.

- Through our activities, we sometimes think that most pioneering IT users must be some of those senior users. In developing IT, we need to listen to their opinions and understand their needs, rather than simply labeling the seniors IT illiterates.

○Support Measures for Promoting Local ICT Use

The secretariat explained the support measures using Reference 5-4, which was followed by a Q&A session.

- What is important for promoting local ICT use must be the human interface.
- Demonstrations of the R&D projects on Page 3 should be conducted in various areas other than research facilities, including YRP.
- In local communities, something happens only when there is stimulation. NHK's "Gokinjo no sokojikara (Underlying strength of our neighbors)" is a good program. It shows how a local community can be revitalized when people or issues are brought into the community. The key is to establish a system that makes it happen. Adding a function that provides such opportunities to the "perspectives" is an option.

○Free Discussion

[Parliamentary Secretary for Internal Affairs and Communications Taniguchi]

Thank you for taking time from your busy schedule to participate in today's meeting and for your valuable opinions. For further promotion of local ICT, there must be good business opportunities. In FY2007, MIC is launching the Local ICT Use Model Building Project, aiming at building business models based on the creativity of local communities. We will invite public comment to further stimulate ICT use. We will also direct the working-level officials to continue the study for FY2008 budget requests.

- Following the first issue, of how to send out information from local communities, we need to consider where the information should be sent. The challenge at that

stage is how to research the effect from the information sent out. Once terrestrial digital broadcasting is nationally launched and the convergence between broadcasting and communications begins, broadcasting services will become two-way. A possible model at that point is to first send out some information nationwide, and then continue to send the information by focusing on the communities that are responding favorably.

- Some elderly people say that they can use PCs more easily than remote controllers or mobile phones. We expect that some initiatives to incorporate the advantages of PCs into TV sets or mobile phones will be taken.
- Although it has long been said that promoting local ICT means sending out information from local communities, there are not many successful examples. Asahiyama Zoo suddenly became a national brand, although it has continued its effort to send out information, because of the excellent content—everyone can share the experience. The key to success is to create a wave of information sharing and provide attractive information to be shared.
- Local experiments should be conducted not only through collaboration between local government, industry and academia, but also through collaboration with other local communities. Deep collaboration is particularly needed to create backyards.
- Local governments that have human resources and expertise may be able to effectively optimize granted projects, otherwise following up or tracking the progress may be required. It is critical to establish a framework in which the projects will continue even if the responsible persons change. Today's meeting gave me a big clue toward it.