FOSTERING QUALITY AND EFFICIENCY OF INFORMATION EXCHANGE IN DIGITAL GOVERNMENT AND BUSINESS PROCESSES

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Abstract: The World Summit Award (WSA) is a global initiative to select and promote the world's best e-Content, started in 2003 in the framework of the United Nations' World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS). This paper presents six of the best projects from around the world in the categories of e-Business and e-Government, which have been judged by independent experts to be outstanding examples of how consumer ICT can strengthen SME's on the marketplace, support and optimize business and administrative processes and strengthen participation of citizens in information society decision making beyond past limitations of space and time. Key facts of the applications are reported and the judgments of the WSA Grand Jury are presented in order to provide an informative overview of how culture is made rich with a good use of ICTs.

1 INTRODUCTION: BEST PRACTICE IN DIGITAL CULTURAL CONTENTS

The new information and communication technologies (ICT) are opening a new horizon not just for exchange of messages or business applications, but they can empower citizens and support and optimize processes – be they of public administrative origin or business related. This paper presents six of the best projects from around the world which were selected from entries from 168 United Nations member states and judged by independent expert jury from 36 different countries to be outstanding examples of how ICT can support SME's on the marketplace and strengthen participation of citizens in information society applications beyond past limitations.

2 MANUSCRIPT PREPARATION

The paper reports best pratice in terms of the six winners in the e-Business and e-Government categories of the World Summit Award (WSA) and the global contest in 2007. Projects from 168 countries were submitted after national best contests or expert panels to the Grand Jury of WSA which met in Brijoni in early September 2007 and was hosted by the e-Croatia and organized by the Internet Institute of Croatia.

In the following presentation the key facts of the applications are reported and the judgments of the WSA Grand Jury are presented in order to provide an informative overview of how ICTs strengthen citizens as well as businesses on a worldwide scale.

Technology offers tools. It is a fundamental fact of the Information Society development that the performance of the tools increases faster than the human capacity to use them. This creates the Content Gap: ICTs offer more capacity to produce, store and transmit than humans can use, fill, read or consume.

3 METHODOLOGY: ASSESSING CONTENT QUALITY

The category of e-Business is defined within the WSA as addressing projects which foster the support

and optimization of business processes, the creation of new business models in e-commerce and m-commerce, B2B, B2C, internet security and other areas, and which support SMEs on the marketplace1.

The category of e-Government is dinfined within the WSA as addressing projects which help to empower citizens and serve public services clients, foseter quality and efficiency of information exchange and communication services in governmental and public administrative processes, and strengthen participation of citizens in information society decision making

3.1 A Worldwide Networking Effort

The World Summit Award is an Austrian initiative in the context of the United Nations World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS). It is an invitation project and a global activity, rather than an organization. Started in 2003 for the Geneva Summit conference, the WSA has been an unprecedented success due to the strong networking of professional associations, the national chapters of the Internet Society, multimedia education and research institutions, electronic chambers of commerce, non-governmental groups and foundations, government offices for IT and Information Society development and many others.

The WSA is the result of an active engagement of all these players in WSIS and of the shared conviction that quality contents are essential for a quality Information Society. Contents inspire, inform and allow the exchange of information and knowledge.

3.2 The Content Gap is Growing

Over the last 50 years, Information and Communication Technologies have become exponentially more powerful and radically cheaper and smaller. E-Content does not keep up with technology in terms of speed of development, economies of scale and simplicity of consumption. This results in a dynamically created structural gap. This gap is widening as we move on into the Information Society.

The Content Gap is not just one of technological versus human capacity. It also has awareness aspects and results from social and economic structures.

There is an imbalance of pay and an inequity of investment. Post-industrial societies spend enormous sums of money on equipment, gadgets and 'tech things'. They invest far less in quality stories, knowledge and insight. In the context of the global economy, it is the content industries which offer the opportunity for local and regional economic development. Basic software, hardware and netware have become global industries with a high degree of global concentration.

Contents are tied to culture and language. They are largely local and regional. Most creative producers – save the ones working for the Hollywood industries and in English – have culturally restricted audiences and markets. This gives countries opportunities to develop economically. The WSA is strengthening these opportunities in giving exposure to the best producers and showing a way for the development of the content industries.

The Digital Divide adds a further dimension to the Content Gap. The 'information poor' have not only less or no access to Internet and other digital platforms. They also get lower quality contents and applications. The Digital Divide widens the Content Gap, as info trash clogs the networks and quality contents move to pay-modes.

The threat of a widening Content Gap runs counter to the promise of the Information Society. The capacities of technologies, systems and tools to generate, distribute and store content increase exponentially, but content markets are not transparent or open.

WSA showcases which high-quality contents exist and thus counteracts oligopolies in the content sector. It demonstrates the cultural diversity of and the opportunities for small and medium sized producers to be successful. In addition, it increases the capacity of individuals to gain an overview of what is available on the markets, thus decreasing the marketing powers of a 'chosen few'.

3.3 Cultural Richness: Bridging the Gap

The World Summit Award and this presentation place their emphasis on cultural diversity and identity, the creation of varied information content and the digitalization of educational, scientific and cultural heritage. These are core issues of a high-quality Information Society in which people might be happy to live.
The goal of the WSA is to break the awareness barrier and the marketing deadlock where big

promotional budgets or market dominance decide what is available and known in e-Content. It also aims to help overcome linguistic and cultural barriers and the smallness of national markets, to generate an international showcase and to stimulate an interchange of quality multimedia.

It is a curious fact of the emerging Information Society that many people – even the ones who are deeply involved in industry and policymaking – have little information about what quality contents are. They lack opportunities to see, use and experience the power of great e-Contents.

This presentation deals only with 6 of the 40 best products in the world. They were judged to be the best ones in the world in 2007 from more than 160 countries. One might disagree in one or the other case, but one might also see this as an interesting demonstration of what is best practice in e-Business and e-Goverment around the world.

4 CITIZEN DK

For a number of years Danish citizens have demanded one portal to the public sector. Consequently Local Government Denmark (LGDK), the national association of local authorities in Denmark, and the Ministry of Science Technology and Innovation started working together in the conception and development of citizen.dk.

With the launch of citizen.dk in the beginning of 2007 Danes have one online entrance to the public sector. The portal provides the Danish citizens with easy access to public information and digital self-services, as well as forming a general view of the public sector across public authorities.

Citizen.dk offers general information and provides answers to general questions concerning the public sector. The portal also helps citizens find the correct authority or service when more detailed information is needed. Citizen.dk includes articles, self-services and publications concerning 18 overall topics including family and children, disabilities and residence and building. By clicking on one of the overall topics, the citizen is lead to several articles relating to the topic.

When citizen.dk was launched, it contained roughly 600 self-services from the State, regions and municipalities – a number that is extended continuously. Self-services include digital services in a wider sense. Citizen.dk also contains general information about and digital maps of the municipalities in order to make further contact to local authorities easier – also citizens can compare

different key figures regarding the different municipalities.

In addition citizen.dk contains a shared public database (FOA). The database offers the citizens access to contact information for authorities and a number of public employees. Citizens are also offered insight in the democratic process including insight in legislation (Status) and public hearings (Høringsportalen): Furthermore citizen.dk has a search machine, which visually and functionally resembles the Google search machine.
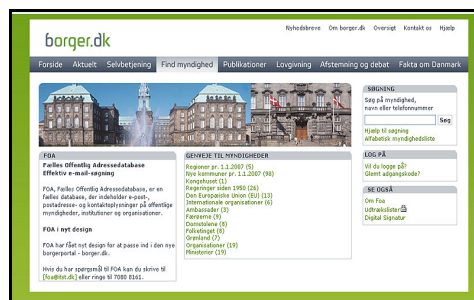

Figure 1: Screenshot citizen.dk.

Citizen.dk is what we like to call a thin portal. Or in other words, its primary function is to act as a looking glass, thus gathering and presenting all digital services known in the public sector, and introducing them as a coherent whole to the Danish citizens. The overall responsibility for the solutions still lies with the authorities so that a local sense of responsibility and the best quality possible in each of the specific solutions is ensured. Borger.dk has quite naturally now become the platform from where the development of important common guidelines and standards is cultivated. The portal therefore also acts as the lever for a service-oriented architecture.

4.1 Reason for National Nomination

Citizen.dk offers the citizens a better service on the Internet – as a result of this the citizens are in focus during the further development of the portal. The citizens are involved and consulted through tests involving articles, navigation, design etc. The results are used in the continuous work with developing citizen.dk. Also organizations representing people with disabilities are consulted in the developing process.

4.2 WSA Jury Evaluation

Public citizen portal, citizen.dk, is a result of landmark decision of the government to offer one-

window public portal for all requirements and needs of the citizen.

With the launch of Denmark's shared public citizen portal, borger.dk, Danes have gotten a single online entrance to the public sector. The portal provides easy access to all public information and digital self-services. It functions as a looking glass, thus gathering and presenting all digital services known in the public sector, and introducing them as a coherent whole to Danish citizens. The portal is the result of the largest digital cross-sector project ever seen in the Danish public administration. Borger.dk includes also media articles, interactive services and transactions concerning 18 overall topics including family and children, disabilities and residence and buildings.

4.3 Producer

The National IT and Telecom Agency, which is part of the Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation (Science Ministry), has a vision about creating the groundwork for digitalisation of Denmark. This aims to make the everyday life of citizens easier, businesses richer and the public sector better, or in other words: Digitalisation should be easy, useful and relevant to all.

5 ATM EXPRESS GOVERNMENT

Express Government Modules (EGM) are advanced ATMs developed with state-of-the-art technology. They involve an Internet process that receives payments in cash and credit card (vehicle services only). For protection of personal data, the CURP ID (Population Registry Unique Code) is required to use the services, and by a series of validations, which restrict access, it presents only the necessary data for each request.

Modules are located in main cities of the state and there is also one in México City. Prototype and process designs belong to the Government of Chiapas with patent pending. In addition, administrative applications of each one of the services are own and exclusive, constituting a unique model that offers a best service to citizenship without additional cost.

EGM brings main public services to citizenship, offers its services 24 hours, 365 days of the year, and facilitates the opportune tax payment, with efficient and anticorruption processes.

Other aspects of innovation in the module are for example a digital camera that automatically frames the users, dispenser of Vehicle's plates, collection device that receives and gives change in bills and coins of any denomination and detect damaged or false bills and much more. In total, the Express Government ATMs offer 59 fully automated services to the common citizen.

Figure 2: Screenshot ATM Express Government.

5.1 Reason for National Nomination

In the less developed countries most of poeple lack access to the technology necessary to connect to the internet. This makes it difficult or even impossible for them to use for instance the Internet to communicate with the government. The use of technology for administration and operation needs to take into account that citizens might neither have the possibilities nor the basic knowledge to access the WWW.

Gobierno Express is an excellent example of how the use of ITC under an ATM model can help the government to deploy better ways to serve the community on official duties like taxes, certificates and driver licensing. It is a very clever solution to overcome the necessity of having human tellers and the installation necessary to dispatch citizen on common proceedings.

5.2 WSA Jury Evaluation

It's the dream of all citizens plagued by unresponsive bureaucracies. The Express Government ATMs are advanced automatic teller machines and offer 59 fully automated services to the common citizen. The 22 modules are distributed over 16 cities in the state of Chiapas and are available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year allowing one to pay taxes, obtain Birth Certificates, Driver's Licenses and Vehicle Plates. It is government service within minutes. Thus operating costs were

reduced, productivity increased, and public access improved. Finally, it is clean public administration as the ATM Express Government cannot be corrupted.

5.3 Producer

Jorge de Jesús Figueroa Córdova is an Engineer in Computer Science, graduated from ITESM, Campus Monterrey in Nuevo León, México. For his ample labor experience in the design and develop of computer processes and institutional planning he has occupied diverse orders. In order to coordinate coordinating the implementation of the principal public services in an electronic way in the Express Government project Jorge joined the Ministry of Treasure as Chief of the Informatics Unit. He also coordinated the Public Virtual Library project, which gives the opportunity to democratize the knowledge for the whole State. At current, he is Under-Secretary of planning at the Secretary of Planning and Sustainable Development.

6 LOWER HOUSE OF GERMAN PARLIAMENT

The internet site www.bundestag.de is the principal website of the Lower House of German Parliament. Its main aims are to make the work of the Lower House of German Parliament transparent for all citizens, to make it easy for citizens to follow the proceedings and to provide interactive features as far as it is meaningful.

In order to achieve the aim of transparency, the Lower House of German Parliament provides background information about all Members of Parliament, all Committees, other organizational bodies as well as the parliament's administration, all rules and regulations that govern the proceedings of the Lower House. Furthermore it provides information about third parties that are registered (lobbies), current information such as general news, news about the work of the committees, agendas of the plenary chamber, live video streaming of plenary sittings as well as public hearings, which are archived, and much more. Most of this information is distributed via one of five newsletters or RSS-feeds.

In addition the Lower House provides information, that is not directly related to its constitutional function: The Reichstag, one of Germany's most famous buildings, has a unique

architecture, that is described in detail. Also, the other parliamentary buildings built or reconstructed after Germanys reunification attract a lot of visitors. Virtual tours (Quicktime Virtual Reality) cover all these buildings. Art work donated to or bought by the Bundestag is also presented.

Another section covers history, providing in depth information about previous legislation periods of the Lower House's history as well as parliamentary history in Germany. All this information is structured thematically.

Figure 3: Screenshot Lower House of German Parliament.

A sophisticated search enables simple searches as well as complex search operations. Also available: keyword index, sitemap, glossary. For citizens with limited understanding of the Bundestag a virtual eagle can answer natural language questions about most topics relating to the Bundestag.

Navigational assistance is provided via menu, bread crumb navigation and a tag cloud at the bottom of the homepage. If a citizen is interested in printed material, he can order brochures and other publications online.

The result: one of the largest and most lively parliamentary sites in the world that has a huge following in the German public.

6.1 Reason for National Nomination

Lower House of German Parliament offers the utmost of multimedia, interactivity and participation (streaming-video, video-dl, podcast) as well as online petitions etc. It won in at least one German Contest, therefore it was selected to the national pre-selection, were it was judged and chosen by 21 distinguished experts out of 159 Entries.

6.2 WSA Jury Evaluation

Democracy demands transparency. The principal website of the Lower House of German Parliament

is a world class show case on how to make it easy for citizens to follow parliamentary proceedings. More than 60.000 HTML-Pages, 80.000 PDF-files, 6.000 hours of video are augmented by interactive features such as online-petition procedures, discussion groups, online reservation for visits. In depth analysis of current topics and sophisticated search functionality add democratic value. About 100 editors keep background information about members, structure and organization, committees, lobby groups, same-day minutes and proceedings up-to-date. A history section offers a virtual tour through the famous Reichstag building. Sub-sites for youth address the future.

6.3 Producer

Dr. Rainer Babiel studied economics and computer sciences at the University of Muenster, Germany. He co-founded the Babiel GmbH in 1991. Together with his team he has been building up the website of the German Bundestag since 1995.

Hartwig Bierhoff - Head of Online Services and Parliamentary Television, a division of the German Bundestag's administration.

Hans-Peter Neumann - Managing Editor of the German Bundestag's web site and officer in the Bundestag's division for Online Services and Parliamentary Television he was also the Project manager for creating the Bundestag's website in 1995.

Georg Babiel studied economics at the university of Muenster, Germany. He is a co-founded the Babiel GmbH and helped building up the website of the German Bundestag since 1995.

7 KIVA MICRO FINANCE

In a little over a year, Kiva has rapidly grown to become the most trafficked site in microfinance with +80,000 Internet lenders generating +$9 million in loans to thousands of entrepreneurs in +36 developing countries – all with a +1% default rate thus far.

Kiva is staffed and governed by experienced consumer internet and microfinance leaders. In addition, a number of major internet partners are supporting Kiva, including PayPal, YouTube, Google, MySpace and Microsoft. Kiva has also received wide acclaim from the blogosphere (+4,000 blogs), mainstream media and development experts (featured at the 2006 Clinton Global Initiative and 2006 Global Microcredit Summit).

Headquartered in San Francisco, Kiva is a 501(c)3 non-profit internet start-up that has a rare opportunity for dramatic growth and profound systemic impact. KIVA has also developed a program that will accelerate the growth of microfinance institutions through the use of accounting software. This is a valuable tool that can be used to lower transaction costs, reduce paperwork, automate procedures and increase access to further capital.

Furthermore, Kiva will author a client side desktop application that MFIs can use to communicate with the Kiva.org website. Because the application sits on the desktop, partners can use it without being constantly connected to the Internet. In a dial-up environment where page loads take 20 seconds, this vastly improves efficiency.

Figure 4: Screenshot KIVA Micro Finance.

Further, Kiva.org hopes to implement exception-based accounting principles. Micro-clients pay back 97% of the time world-wide. It is tedious to require to record every repayment since they occur 97% of the time. Instead, it makes more sense to record exceptions to perfect repayment. Exception based accounting is a method pioneered by the Grameen bank Mifos project which reduced payment recording by 97% on average. Finally the product will reduce internet connection fees for our partners.

7.1 Reason for National Nomination

Kiva.org is a non-profit web site revolutionizing the fight against global poverty by enabling socially-conscious internet users to connect with and make personal loans to low-income entrepreneurs in the developing world. An exceptional social software solution, Kiva acts as the world's first person-to-person lending marketplace for the poor. Anyone can make a direct loan of as little as $25 to someone

in a developing country. This affordable capital helps low income entrepreneurs start or expand their small businesses, creating a path towards economic self sufficiency. Specifically, Kiva.org has developed also a program that will accelerate the growth of microfinance institutions through the use of accounting software.

7.2 WSA Jury Evaluation

Kiva.org is a well-focused, efficient and easy-to-follow platform that enables person to person micro lending. KIVA micro finance is probably the world's first online lending platform connecting online socially conscious organizations and individuals with entrepreneurs in poor communities. This system serves as an excellent example of how can we use the power of the internet and other existing ICT technologies for higher and better purposes.

7.3 Producer

Matthew Flannery began developing Kiva.org in late 2004 as a side-project while working as a computer programmer at TiVo Inc. In December 2005 Matt left TiVo to devote himself to Kiva.org full-time. As CEO, Matt has led Kiva.org's growth from a pilot project to an established online service with partnerships across the globe a dedicated band of staff and supporters closer to home. Prior to starting Kiva.org, Matt spent time in Uganda, Tanzania and Kenya filming stories of micro-businesses started by Village Enterprise Fund. It was this time in East Africa that inspired him to develop Kiva.org. Matt is a 2006 Global Social Benefit Incubator entrepreneur and a featured blogger on the Skoll Foundation's Social Edge website. He graduated with a BS in Symbolic Systems and a Masters in Analytical Philosophy from Stanford University.

8 i-KIMONO

i-komono's mission is to create a market for used kimono and spread the culture of low-priced kimono internationally. The aim of this service is to pass on the kimonos that older generations have stored with loving care to the younger generations.

It is difficult for ordinary people to estimate the value of a kimono. In order for them to find out what a fair price would be and how good the quality of the kimono is, i-kimono offers the Mekiki system, an

appraisal system, which should help to create the precious antique kimono market.

i-kimono also provides the e-kimono NPO Support Program. Many grants for nonprofit organisations don't cover administrative costs. Therefore, many Japanese nonprofits repeatedly experience cash flow problem. To break through such a problem, i-kimono provide civic groups with proceeds from their internet charity auction.

Figure 5: Screenshot i-kimono.

The Program works in the following way: A Japanese nonprofit organisationasks its members and supporters to donate antiques kimono. i-kimono then puts those kimono items onto the internet auction. A successful bidder receives the item after i-kimono has received the full bidding amount, and i-kimono gives the proceeds to the nonprofit organisation, only deducting i-kimono's service charge. "i-kimono" aims to be a 'Social Company' supporting the Community.

8.1 Reason for National Nomination

i-kimono is different from other e-commerce sites based on the following view points : The succession of the culture is promoted from senior citizens to younger people through this web site. Secondly, i-kimono helps to promote the 3R system (recycle, reuse, reduce),because it provides a wise use of the antique kimono. Most importantly, a new business model for funding of nonprofit organizations is offered on the website. i-kimono proposes and promotes the culture of harmony through kimono.

8.2 WSA Jury Evaluation

i-kimono's creates an on-line market for used kimonos and spreads the culture of the kimono internationally. The site services are intended to

serve commercial and cultural interests: kimonos stored by older generations with loving care can be passed to younger generations and brought to use in today's culture and societies. The site features a Kimono Appraisal System in order to find out the fair price for an old garment thus creating a market for the precious antique kimono, so that every one can enjoy freely kimonos for various uses. The unique i-kimono charity auction system supports Japanese non profit organisations by creating proceeds from internet auctions from members and supporters.

8.3   Producer

Born in Kyoto, Japan in 1957. Mr. Kitaoka Yuki graduated from Department of Economics at Ritsumeikan University in 1990. He studied the business and the Chinese language in Macao from 1990 to 1991. Since 1991 Mr Kitaoka has been managing the company of kimono business, and produces the web page of the kimono industry groups since 1998. Mr Kitaoka established "I-kimono", a virtual antique kimono company as a company president in 2000.

9   THE MERINO INNOVATION PORTAL

The Merino Innovation portal takes users on a sensual journey from inspiration to implementation. A broad panoramic landscape invites them on a globetrotting jaunt from alpine peak to urban streetscape and demonstrates the versatility of merino.

The information is structured to show merino in diverse contexts, reveal its multiple benefits, and provide details on potential business partners. A "Benefits" section sets out the case for merino in six key categories of performance, style, comfort, safety, easy care and natural.

More than twenty CSIRO-researched downloadable PDF Fact Sheets credibly communicate the proof of merino's remarkable range of attributes. This carefully considered content is wrapped in vibrant colours and sensual images to complete merino's extreme makeover from scratchy non-entity last seen in ill-fitting school jumper to the slinky high-fashion fibre of now.

In the past, wool's marketing efforts had been directed at the consumer but consumers are followers not instigators of shifts in fashion.

Consequently, this website was targeted at the people who make things happen in the fashion world - the designers, manufacturers and retailers. Only by opening their eyes to the possibilities of merino could we hope to achieve our ambitions for this critical Australian primary resource.

The fashion world is always looking for something fresh to take to market and this site presents them with a fibre ripe for reinvention. It allows them to see merino in contexts beyond their current frame of reference, and gives them information that they can exploit in terms of the garment's performance and its marketing. It also provides designers with sourcing guides for textile manufacturers, and tutorials on technical matters like dyeing. Australian Wool Innovation has been inundated with requests from designers and retailers who want to follow the lead of Akira Isogawa and Kookaï in working with this wonderful "new" product, Australian Merino.

The sweeping panorama on the homepage breaks down age-old perceptions that wool is something to be worn only by mountain climbers and frumps. With a single creative execution, the target market has been re-educated that merino is a fabric that can be worn in diverse climates by those of a discerning fashion sensibility. The innovation Timeline is informative but more critically it conveys the sense that wool is a product that has evolved with the changing needs of consumers.

In the Proof section, a diagram of the merino fibre has been used to illustrate its complexity in comparison to cotton and synthetics, to demonstrate its extraordinary range of properties and to reinforce its natural origins.

The Merino Innovation site has helped shift perceptions about merino among the most influential thinkers in the industry. Within hours of the site going live, a well-known fashion retailer - inspired by the Kookaï Posh Merino story - had called Australian Wool Innovation wanting to find a way to incorporate merino in their range. Since then, AWI is daily contacted by fashion industry people from around the world who say that the site has opened their eyes to the remarkable properties of merino. Inquiries have come from Australia, the States and the Europe as well as the extraordinarily important Chinese and Asian markets. As Australian Wool Innovation Senior Product Manager, Sam Guthrie says, "I feel incredibly proud of what has been achieved."

Figure 6: Screenshot the Merino Innovation Portal.

9.1 Reason for National Nomination

Australian Wool Innovation (AWI) is charged with a mission of critical national importance. Due to stiff competition from lower-priced cotton and increasingly technical synthetic fabrics a global decline in wool sales has been registered with significant consequences - not just for woolgrowers but the entire Australian economy. To allow Australian sheep farmers to remain on the land that many of their families have been tending for more than six generations, and to help ease the worrying pressure on a worsening trade imbalance, AWI needed to find new ways to help sell more of Australia's world-leading but currently undervalued merino wool.

Merinoinnovation.com was created by Devotion as the key element in a strategy to rejuvenate the fortunes of this iconic Australian product.

9.2 WSA Jury Evaluation

In response to fierce competition from lower-priced cotton and increasingly technical synthetic fabrics the Australian Wool Innovation uses a web portal to help sell more of Australia's world-leading often undervalued merino wool.

Merinoinnovation.com was created as the key element in a strategy to rejuvenate the fortunes of this iconic Australian product and the sheep farm industry of the country. The web site demonstrates the versatility of Merino wool in many engaging interactive formats. It takes users on a sensual journey from inspiration to implementation. It addresses different audiences from designers to consumers and has been successful in positively shifting perceptions and gaining a number of large international clients for Merino wool producers.

9.3 Producer

Chris Lorang – CEO: After a background as a Strategic Planner for traditional advertising agencies such as Leo Burnett & Batey, Chris recognised the opportunity presented by the net to develop brands in more creative and cost effective ways. In 2002, with Creative Director Simon Lester, he created Devotion.

Simon Lester – Executive Creative Director: After a grounding in print and agency environments, Simon found his interactive calling in 1995 when working for British Telecom and was instrumental in turning Yell into the Number one hit site in the UK. After emigrating to Sydney he has worked on online projects for brands such as Deutsche Bank, Sony, Bank of Ireland and Samsung.

Anna Fitzgerald - Head of Strategy: Anna was General Manager of Corporate Communications at British Telecom before becoming Marketing Director for one of Australia's most highly trafficked websites, ninemsn. After a stint in a similar position for rival The Seven Network, including marketing Seven's 2000 Olympics site, she joined Devotion in its formative stages and has been instrumental in the strategic direction and implementation of the company's award winning work for AWI, CanTeen and others.

Allen Palmer – Senior Writer: Allen's background was as a screenwriter, developing TV series for the BBC, and films for Dreamworks and Working Title. Returning to Australia, he joined Devotion to explore the narrative possibilities of new media and has since worked on the innovative launch of Nike Plus in South East Asia, and AIMIA award winning campaigns for AWI and CanTeen.

10 CONCLUSIONS

Contents and their quality are difficult to judge, more so than technology. In the case of technology, the parameters are clear and objective; the performance of chips can be measured in Hertz, the throughput of networks in bits per second, and the storage capacity of disks can be calculated precisely in bytes. Such simple parameters do not exist for the quality of content.

Yet, quality needs to be assessed: users need to know what they get or buy, clients need to order according to certain standards, producers and designers need to have best practice models and quality comparisons.

This is where the World Summit Award (WSA) meets a real demand. The WSA is presently the only existing mechanism to search and find out which quality contents exist around the world and how they meet criteria such as depth of content, ease of use, value adding of interactivity, aesthetics of design and interface, and technical realization[2]. The categories of the WSA address all aspects of social life, including e-culture.

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[2] The criteria used in the evaluation process both by national contests and the Grand Jury are the following: 1. Quality and comprehensiveness of content; 2. Ease of use: functionality, navigation and orientation; 3.Value added through interactivity and multimedia; 4. Attractiveness of design (aesthetic value of graphics/audio); 5. Quality of craftsmanship (technical realization); In addition, the strategic importance for the global development of the Information Society of a product is rated separately.