



# Newsletter

INFORMATION RESOURCE CENTER  
Embassy of the United States of America  
Budapest · Hungary

## Information Technology E-Government • E-Commerce

June 2009



In this Wednesday, May 13, 2009 photo, Scott Ault with the Tennessee Department of Transportation measures the "ride-ability" of a new bridge on Interstate 40 in Knoxville, Tenn. Ault's vehicle is outfitted with a laser and computer that measures the road surface and that information is used to grind the concrete until it meets TDOIT mandates. ▲

The Department of Energy's Oak Ridge National Laboratory in Oak Ridge, Tenn. released this photograph Monday, Nov. 10, 2008, showing some of the 284 computer cabinets making up the lab's Jaguar supercomputer. The lab announced Jaguar has achieved more than one quadrillion mathematical calculations per second \_ making it the fastest computer in the world for open scientific research. ▼



In this Wednesday, April 15, 2009 photo, a computer screen, rather than a live auctioneer, is the focus for fish buyers, Wednesday, April 15, 2009, at the Portland Fish Exchange, in Portland, Maine. Now that the auctioneer has been replaced by a computer program, buyers now snap up of fresh pollock, hake and cod by the click of a computer space bar. ▲

Entertainment America president Kaz Hirai discusses what he called "the worst kept secret of E3": the PSP go, a small wi-fi enabled handheld device that relies only on downloads instead of discs, at a news conference at the Shrine Auditorium in Los Angeles Tuesday, June 2, 2009. The new system will not replace the exciting PlayStation Portable. ▼

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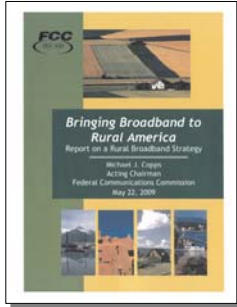
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## INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION

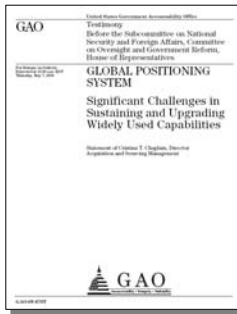
### GOVERNMENT DOCUMENTS



**BRINGING BROADBAND TO RURAL AMERICA: REPORT ON A RURAL BROADBAND STRATEGY.** Federal Communications Commission. May 22, 2009.

Concluding that all rural Americans must have the opportunity to reap the full benefits of broadband services, Federal Communications Commission releases a report. It provides a starting point for the development of policies to deliver broadband to rural areas and restore economic growth and opportunity for Americans residing and working in those areas. [PDF format, 83 pages].

[http://hraunfoss.fcc.gov/edocs\\_public/attachmatch/DOC-291012A1.pdf](http://hraunfoss.fcc.gov/edocs_public/attachmatch/DOC-291012A1.pdf)



**GLOBAL POSITIONING SYSTEM: SIGNIFICANT CHALLENGES IN SUSTAINING AND UPGRADING WIDELY USED CAPABILITIES.** U.S. Government Accountability Office. May 7, 2009.

The Global Positioning System (GPS), which provides position, navigation, and timing data to users worldwide, has become essential to U.S. national security and a key tool in an expanding array of public service and commercial applications at home and abroad. The United States provides GPS data free of charge. The Air Force, which is responsible for GPS acquisition, is in the process of modernizing GPS.

<http://www.gao.gov/new.items/d09670t.pdf> [PDF format, 15 pages].

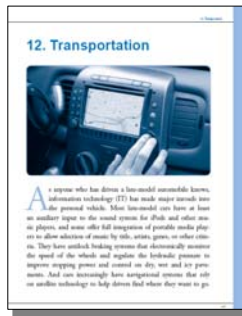
### THINK TANKS AND INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

**HEALTH 2.0: ADOPTING HEALTH INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY IN THE UNITED STATES.** Brookings Institution Event Transcript, May 4, 2009

With more than \$19 billion planned in new federal expenditures on health information technology, the Obama administration is taking serious steps towards modernizing the U.S. health care system to reduce health care costs and medical errors. Yet, implementing health IT requires fast data networks, interoperable software systems, and devices to enter and track patient data. Moreover, few hospitals, clinics and private practices have the funds to pay for new technology.

On May 4, the Brookings Institution hosted a panel discussion on what needs to get done to bring the benefits of information technology to health care. Darrell West, Brookings Vice President and Director of Governance Studies and co-author of *Digital Medicine: Health Care in the Internet Era* (Brookings Institution Press, 2009), moderated the discussion with Nancy Johnson, co-chair of Health IT Now!; Dr. Charles Friedman, Deputy National Coordinator for Health Information Technology in the Office of the Secretary for Health and Human Services; and Senator Sheldon Whitehouse (D-RI).

[http://www.brookings.edu/~media/Files/events/2009/0504\\_health\\_tech/20090504\\_health.pdf](http://www.brookings.edu/~media/Files/events/2009/0504_health_tech/20090504_health.pdf)



## DIGITAL QUALITY OF LIFE: TRANSPORTATION. ITIF's report

As anyone who has driven a late-model automobile knows, information technology (IT) has made major inroads into the personal vehicle. Most late-model cars have at least an auxiliary input to the sound system for iPods and other music players, and some offer full integration of portable media players to allow selection of music by title, artists, genre, or other criteria.

They have antilock braking systems that electronically monitor the speed of the wheels and regulate the hydraulic pressure to improve stopping power and control on dry, wet and icy pavements. And cars increasingly have navigational systems that rely on satellite technology to help drivers find where they want to go. The report explores the impact of IT on transportation.

<http://www.itif.org/files/DQOL-12.pdf>



## THE CARBON FOOTPRINT OF EMAIL SPAM REPORT. McAfee. April 15, 2009.

Until now, spam's impact has been measured in time, money, and aggravation. It turns out there is a massive environmental impact as well. Experts find that the energy consumed in transmitting and deleting spam is equivalent to the electricity used in 2.4 million American homes, with greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions equivalent to 3.1 million passenger cars.

[http://img.en25.com/Web/McAfee/CarbonFootprint\\_12pg\\_web\\_EV\\_NA.pdf](http://img.en25.com/Web/McAfee/CarbonFootprint_12pg_web_EV_NA.pdf)

## KNOWPRIVACY: CURRENT STATUS OF WEB PRIVACY, DATA COLLECTION, AND INFORMATION SHARING. U.C. Berkeley, School of Information. Joshua Gomez et al. June 3, 2009.

The authors compare users' expectations of privacy online and the data collection practices of website operators. They also strive to identify specific practices that may be harmful or deceptive and attract the attention of government regulators. [PDF format, 44 pages].

[http://www.knowprivacy.org/report/KnowPrivacy\\_Final\\_Report.pdf](http://www.knowprivacy.org/report/KnowPrivacy_Final_Report.pdf)

## BEYOND THE INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY AGREEMENT: HARMONIZATION OF STANDARDS AND TRADE IN ELECTRONICS. Policy Research Working Paper, World Bank. Alberto Portugal-Perez et al. Web posted April 28, 2009.

Product standards can have a dual impact on production and trade costs. Standards may impose additional costs on exporters as it may be necessary to adapt products for specific markets. In contrast, standards can reduce exporters' information costs if they convey information on industrial requirements or consumer tastes that would be costly to collect in the absence of standards. The authors examine the impact of internationally-harmonized European standards on European Union imports. They find that European Union standards for electronic products that are harmonized to international standards have a positive and significant effect on trade. [PDF format, 36 pages].

[http://www-wds.worldbank.org/servlet/WDSContentServer/WDSP/IB/2009/04/28/000158349\\_20090428084810/Rendered/PDF/WPS4916.pdf](http://www-wds.worldbank.org/servlet/WDSContentServer/WDSP/IB/2009/04/28/000158349_20090428084810/Rendered/PDF/WPS4916.pdf)

## ARTICLES FROM U.S. JOURNALS

### MICROSOFT'S BING STARTS WITH A BANG. By Stuart J. Johnston, June 8, 2009

Microsoft's new search engine Bing is apparently off to a good start, even surging slightly ahead of Yahoo, if only for a day.

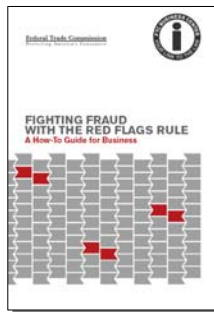
Instead of being a groundswell for Microsoft, though, analysts said that the spike may only indicate consumers' trying out the newest search engine on the block.

For whatever reason, on Thursday at least, Bing was the second-place search engine worldwide, according to net metrics tracking firm StatCounter, which claims to monitor "in excess of ten billion page loads per month [globally]."

StatCounter's report says that on Thursday, Bing garnered second place status with 16.28 percent of searches in the US. That put it ahead of Yahoo, which had 10.22 percent of searches for that day. Of course, both still ran well behind Google which had 71.47 percent. <http://www.internetnews.com/search/article.php/3823816/Microsoft+is+Bing+for+a+Day.htm>

## E-GOVERNMENT & E-COMMERCE

### GOVERNMENT DOCUMENTS



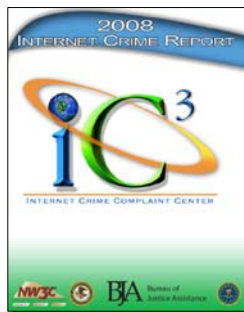
### FIGHTING FRAUD WITH THE RED FLAGS RULE: A HOW-TO GUIDE FOR BUSINESS. Federal Trade Commission, June 2009

The Red Flags Rule requires many businesses and organizations to implement a written Identity Theft Prevention Program designed to detect the warning signs – or "red flags" – of identity theft in their day-to-day operations. Are you covered by the Red Flags Rule? Read *Fighting Fraud with the Red Flags Rule: A How-To Guide for Business* to:

- 1./ Find out if the rule applies to your business or organization;
- 2./Get practical tips on spotting the red flags of identity theft, taking steps to prevent the crime, and mitigating the damage it inflicts; and
- 3./Learn how to put in place your written Identity Theft Prevention Program.

By identifying red flags in advance, you'll be better equipped to spot suspicious patterns when they arise and take steps to prevent a red flag from escalating into a costly episode of identity theft. Take advantage of other resources on this site to educate your employees and colleagues about complying with the Red Flags Rule.

<http://www.ftc.gov/redflagsrule>



### 2008 INTERNET CRIME REPORT. Bureau of Justice Assistance, U.S. Department of Justice. March 2009.

The Internet Crime Complaint Center (IC3) reports on the number of Internet crime complaints received in 2008. A total of 275,284 complaints were received in 2008, up from 206,884 (33 percent) over 2007. Total dollar loss reported in 2008 was \$265 million, up from \$239 million in 2007. The average individual loss was \$931. [PDF format, 28 pages].

[http://www.nw3c.org/downloads/2008\\_IC3\\_Annual%20Report\\_3\\_27\\_09\\_small.pdf](http://www.nw3c.org/downloads/2008_IC3_Annual%20Report_3_27_09_small.pdf)

**RESULTS OF THE 2009 SECTION 1377 REVIEW OF TELECOMMUNICATIONS TRADE AGREEMENTS.** Office of the U.S. Trade Representative. Web posted April 27, 2009.

The review addresses fixed and mobile call termination rates, problems with major suppliers, transparency and regulatory independence, and failure to update World Trade Organization (WTO) commitments. [PDF format, 20 pages].

<http://www.ustr.gov/sites/default/files/Results%20of%20the%202009%201377%20Review.pdf>

## WHITE HOUSE DOCUMENTS

**CYBERSPACE POLICY REVIEW: ASSURING A TRUSTED RESILIENT INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS INFRASTRUCTURE.** The White House. May 29, 2009.

The President directed a 60-day, comprehensive, "clean-slate" review to assess U.S. policies and structures for cyber security. Cyber security policy includes strategy, policy, and standards regarding the security of and operations in cyberspace, and encompasses the full range of threat reduction, vulnerability reduction, deterrence, international engagement, incident response, resiliency, and recovery policies and activities, including computer network operations, information assurance, law enforcement, diplomacy, military, and intelligence missions as they relate to the security and stability of the global information and communications infrastructure. [PDF format, 76 pages].

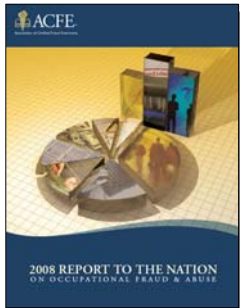
[http://www.whitehouse.gov/assets/documents/Cyberspace\\_Policy\\_Review\\_final.pdf](http://www.whitehouse.gov/assets/documents/Cyberspace_Policy_Review_final.pdf)

**WHITE HOUSE 2.0. [THE WHITE HOUSE BLOG].** May 1, 2009.

In the President's last Weekly Address, he called on government to "recognize that we cannot meet the challenges of today with old habits and stale thinking." He added that "we need to reform our government so that it is more efficient, more transparent, and more creative," and pledged to "reach beyond the halls of government" to engage the public. Today the White House is taking steps to expand how the Administration is communicating with the public, including the latest information and guidance about the H1N1 virus. In addition to WhiteHouse.gov, you can now find us in a number of other spots on the web: *Facebook*, *You Tube*, *Twitter*, *My Space*, *Flickr*, and more.

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/blog/09/05/01/WhiteHouse/> [HTML format, various paging].

## THINK TANKS AND INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS



**2008 REPORT TO THE NATION ON OCCUPATIONAL FRAUD AND ABUSE.** Association of Certified Fraud Examiners (ACFE)

A water department cashier extracts residents' personal information from a database and then sells that data. A municipal court employee improperly accesses the system to alter values for citations issued.

Everyday reliance upon technology makes it possible for so many fraudulent schemes to unfold. The Computer Security Institute (CSI), an educational organization for information security professionals, conducted its 13th Annual Computer Crime and Security Survey in 2008. The survey found that financial fraud ranked as the costliest type of IT incident, with an average reported cost of \$500,000 per incident.

<http://www.acfe.com/documents/2008-rttn.pdf>

**INNOVATION IN GOVERNMENT: HOW TO MAKE THE PUBLIC SECTOR FASTER, SMARTER AND MORE CONNECTED. A Governance Studies Event. Brookings**

The Obama administration recently launched a long-awaited Open Government Initiative, which invites citizens to submit ideas via the Internet for creating a more transparent, collaborative and participatory government. Few developments have had broader consequences for the public sector than the introduction of the Internet and digital technology. When used in the public sector, technology has the potential to make democracy stronger and enable governments to meet citizens' needs more simply, quickly and efficiently. On June 17, Brookings hosted an event on how new technology can make the public sector perform faster and smarter. Brookings Vice President and Director of Governance Studies Darrell West released a new study, "Comparing Technology Innovation in the Private and Public Sectors." West was joined by Beth Simone Noveck, New York University Law Professor, deputy chief technology officer of the White House Office of Open, and Carmen Sirianni, author of *Investing in Democracy: Engaging Citizens in Collaborative Governance*  
[http://www.brookings.edu/events/2009/0617\\_public\\_sector\\_tech.aspx](http://www.brookings.edu/events/2009/0617_public_sector_tech.aspx)

**BUSINESS SOFTWARE ALLIANCE: SOFTWARE AND OPENNESS ISSUES FOR eGOVERNMENT. BSA, May 2009**

As recognized in the W3C working draft, Improving Access to Government through Better Use of the Web ("Improving Access draft"), making the initiative a functioning reality will require software tools and standards to be developed and adopted. In deciding how best to identify and choose software for these purposes, the draft touches on the question of whether commercial or open source software is best suited to eGovernment needs. BSA believes that the choice should be made on the basis of neutral performance and cost criteria necessary to improve citizen access to government -- such as ease of use, interoperability, security, and total cost of ownership and deployment -- and not on whether the software tool is made available on commercial terms or through open source licenses.  
<http://www.bsa.org/country/Research%20and%20Statistics/~ /media/F763EB4E9B3D40DBAFABDCF2E7E0B3BF.ashx>



**NECESSARY ELEMENTS FOR TECHNOLOGY GROWTH. BSA White Paper**

The global economy may have faltered in 2001, but advances in information technology and e-commerce continue to transform personal communication and global business at an astounding pace. Although these advances promise to bring a substantial percentage of the world's population online in the next five years, they also present significant challenges to industry and policymakers alike. According to NUA Internet Surveys, over 510 million people worldwide are linked to the Internet. Experts predict that global Internet usage will nearly double between 2000 and 2003, making e-commerce an ever more significant factor in the global economy. Estimates suggest that by 2006, some 36 percent of all business-to-business (B2B) commerce will be conducted online. At the forefront of these changes are the member companies of the Business Software Alliance (BSA) who develop the software and hardware tools that drive the Internet and power e-commerce. As a group, they understand that the dynamic nature of the New Economy, and particularly the Internet, calls for decision makers to develop policies that stimulate growth and advance consumer interests.  
<http://www.bsa.org/country/Research%20and%20Statistics/~ /media/96FC7EAF93E84436AF62C3B393F207B1.ashx>

**REGULATION OF ELECTRONIC SPEECH AND COMMERCE. Chapter 30, Cato Handbook for Policymakers, 7th Edition (2009)**

Congress should

- resist the urge to regulate offensive content on the Web,
- allow the market to address privacy and security concerns,
- let technical solutions have the primary role in suppressing spam and spyware,
- formally disavow authority over the management of Internet addressing,
- reject preemptive regulation of radio frequency identification technology, and
- decline to compel Internet retailers to collect out-of-state sales taxes.

<http://www.cato.org/pubs/handbook/hb111/hb111-30.pdf>

**ONLINE INFORMATION ABOUT KEY LOW-INCOME BENEFIT PROGRAMS: Links to Policy Manuals, Descriptive Information, and Applications for State Food Stamp, TANF, Child Care, Medicaid, and SCHIP Programs. Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, Revised April 27, 2009**

Virtually all states have made information regarding the five main state-administered low-income benefit programs — food stamps, Medicaid, SCHIP, TANF and child care — available to the public via the internet. There is significant variation between what online information is provided across states. Some provide a simple description of each program on their agencies websites. Others offer additional information, such as application forms, eligibility screening tools, and policy and procedure manuals used by state agency caseworkers. A number of states allow individuals to apply for certain types of benefits online. This report also provides links to online government benefit screeners and calculators.

<http://www.cbpp.org/cms/index.cfm?fa=view&id=1414>

**LITERATURE REVIEW ON THE IMPACT OF PUBLIC ACCESS TO INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGIES. Araba Sey, Michelle Fellows. CIS Working Paper No. 6. Center for Information & Society, University of Washington. April 2009**

Information and communication technologies (ICTs) are widely acknowledged as important resources for socioeconomic development. Due to resource constraints, shared access forms the dominant mode of access to these technologies in most developing countries. Governments, non-governmental institutions and business entrepreneurs have invested significant amounts of human and financial resources in public libraries, telecenters, internet cafés and other forms of public access, without clear evidence on what the ultimate outcomes will be and the actual costs. This report presents a review of empirical research on the impacts of public access to ICTs in order to document what is known about this approach to ICT service delivery.

<http://cis.washington.edu/depository/publications/CIS-WorkingPaperNo6.pdf>



**FEDERAL GOVERNMENT POLICY ON THE USE OF PERSISTENT INTERNET COOKIES: TIME FOR CHANGE OR MORE OF THE SAME? By Daniel Castro. ITIF Report, May 26, 2009**

In the digital world a decade is a long time, yet federal government websites are using the same restrictive policy on “cookies”—small data files stored on a user’s computer—established during the Clinton administration. In this report, ITIF looks at the origins of this federal government policy, the current uses of persistent cookies, and proposes a new framework for the use of persistent cookies on government websites given current trends

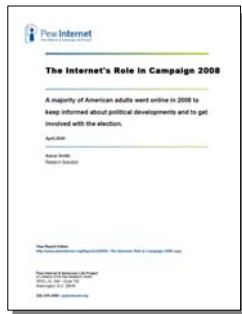
in e-government. The goal, ITIF argues, should be to loosen the restrictions on the use of cookies and balance privacy against other equally important goals such as usability, accessibility and transparency.

<http://www.itif.org/files/2009-FederalCookies.pdf>

**ONLINE CLASSIFIEDS. Pew Internet & American Life Project. Sydney Jones. May 2009.**

The number of online adults who have used online classified ads has more than doubled in the past four years. Almost half (49%) of internet users say they have ever used online classified sites, compared with 22% of online adults who had done so in 2005. On any given day about a tenth of internet users (9%) visit online classified sites, up from 4% in 2005.

<http://www.pewinternet.org/~ /media//Files/Reports/2009/PIP%20-%20Online%20Classifieds.pdf>



**THE INTERNET'S ROLE IN CAMPAIGN 2008. Pew Internet & American Life Project. Aaron Smith. April 15, 2009.**

Some 74% of internet users, representing 55% of the entire adult population, went online in 2008 to get involved in the political process or to get news and information about the election. This marks the first time that a Pew Internet & American Life Project survey has found that more than half of the voting-age population used the internet to get involved in the political process during an election year. [PDF format, 92 pages].

<http://www.pewinternet.org/Reports/2009/6--The-Internets-Role-in-Campaign-2008.aspx>

**PRIVATIZING THE PUBLIC TRUST: A CRITICAL LOOK AT CONNECTED NATION. Public Knowledge. March 23, 2009.**

Connected Nation conducts mapping and broadband demand surveys around the country through subsidiary organizations. The report argues that Connected Nation's policy restricts the collection and use of information gathered from the telecom companies and other incumbents that make up its board. "Quite simply, Connected Nation's strategy is to accept public funds for collecting information from its sponsors which is then kept largely private, hidden behind strict non-disclosure agreements (NDA). This privatized data gathered with public money is a violation of the public trust," says the author. [PDF format, 49 pages].

<http://www.publicknowledge.org/pdf/connected-nation-report-20090323.pdf>

**BUILDING A DIGITAL EUROPE. RAND Corporation. Neil Robinson et al. June 3, 2009.**

This paper presents pointers on what is required to deliver a secure e-Government environment for mobile European citizens, based on the lessons learned from existing services and initiatives and identified challenges in the national and pan-European environments. The paper builds on a review of policy documents, scientific literature and an assessment of existing Pan-European eGovernment Services (PEGS; Solvit, eLimosaí, DG TAXUD, Secure Telematics (sTESTA)) and other multi-stakeholder systems developed in the private sector (Single European Payments Area; SEPA). It also draws on the presentations and discussions of a Working Conference on this theme held in Brussels in mid-November 2007 and the efforts of the SecurEgov (pan-European Secure e-Government Services) study conducted by RAND Europe for DG Information Society and Media between 2006 and 2007. This paper takes a look forward at what possibilities exist for regulatory intervention by the European Commission to

meet some of the challenges related to the deployment of secure Pan European e-Government Services (PEGS). PEGS should provide an inclusive, seamless and cross-border service to citizens (and possibly other residents and visitors) in Europe. For the basic assessment, lessons from pan-European government-to-business (G2B) and business-to-consumer (B2C) services are also taken into account. Thus, the paper is not meant to be an academic treatise on the various security aspects of PEGS, rather a document intended to be of direct policy benefit for the European Commission and other stakeholders in preparing the ground for the eventual implementation of PEGS. [PDF format, 39 pages].

[http://www.rand.org/pubs/technical\\_reports/2009/RAND\\_TR597.pdf](http://www.rand.org/pubs/technical_reports/2009/RAND_TR597.pdf)

## ARTICLES FROM U.S. JOURNALS

**TALES, TECHS, AND TERRITORIES: PRIVATE INTERNATIONAL LAW, GLOBALIZATION, AND THE LEGAL CONSTRUCTION OF BORDERLESSNESS ON THE INTERNET.** Slane, Andrea. *Law and Contemporary Problems*, vol. 71, no. 3, Summer 2008, pp. 129-151

Summary: The author, executive director of the Centre for Innovation Law and Policy at the University of Toronto, notes that the Internet has often been described as "borderless." Slane writes that this parallels the "borderless" notion of globalization, a collection of trends that transcend national or regional boundaries. The author notes that the popularity of Internet use and globalization rhetoric in the 1990s has affected the interpretation of the legal significance of Internet technology. The Internet's borderless nature has shaped the legal understanding of the Internet in two ways: first, by framing the issues arising from the application of local law as a conflict between cosmopolitanism and parochialism; secondly, by framing procedural issues as a contest between simple and complex approaches in determining new legal circumstances. Without such a critical examination into the legal framing of Internet borderlessness, the author believes that one cannot fully appreciate the substantive and procedural aspects of Internet-related cases. Slane writes that this is something that, the author believes, U.S. online-jurisdiction cases generally have not taken into account.

[http://www.law.duke.edu/shell/cite.pl?71+Law+&+Contemp.+Probs.+129+\(summer+2008\)](http://www.law.duke.edu/shell/cite.pl?71+Law+&+Contemp.+Probs.+129+(summer+2008))

**FACEBOOK SEES PROFITS IN NEW PAYMENT SYSTEM: AS FACEBOOK CONTINUES TO BOTH GROW AND AVOID PROFITABILITY, CAN THE SOCIAL NETWORKING SITE MAKE MONEY BY EMPLOYING A SITE-WIDE E-COMMERCE PLATFORM?** By Michelle Megna, June 4, 2009

As social networking use continues to increase at a staggering rate, is Facebook on the way to decreasing its reliance on ads as it attempts to achieve profitability?

It appears that may be the case, if the social networking site can successfully employ a unified payment system for virtual goods used in games at the site, therefore putting the company in a position to get a slice of the revenue.

Facebook began early roll-out of an internal payment system allowing members to buy "credits," then use those to purchase virtual goods from third-party applications, such as games, that run on the site, according to the *Financial Times* Web site.

If reports are true, it could mean that the social networking site is making some progress at earning some money from its 300 million members. "Facebook hopes that by offering a site-wide currency it will encourage more commerce on the Web site. By serving as the payment provider, it will capture a percentage of every transaction," according to the *Financial Times*.

<http://www.internetnews.com/webcontent/article.php/3823496/Facebook+See+Profits+in+New+Payment+System.htm>

**IMSHOPPING ADDS A HUMAN TOUCH TO ONLINE SHOPPING. By Vangie Beal. June 1, 2009**

IMshopping is a service that aims to bring a human touch to online shopping. With the IMshopping social media site, CEO and Founder, Prashant Nedungadi, said the company has created a level of human assistance resulting in a deeper level of e-commerce satisfaction that doesn't exist on the Internet today.

"There is a lot of information out there, but very little help when online shoppers need specific answers that will make or break a purchasing decision," said Nedungadi. "At brick-and-mortar stores, human experts fill such a void, but on the Web, it doesn't exist."

The IMshopping service also fills an information void in online shopping. Most shopping sites tend to focus on providing answers to technical-focused questions, not the general shopping and product questions that shoppers submit on the IMshopping Web site.

**<http://www.ecommerce-guide.com/news/news/article.php/3822841>**

**MOBILE COMMERCE, TWITTER TO SAVE E-COMM SALES? comScore says mobile commerce and social marketing may be the savior of the future for online sales. By Michelle Megna. May 15, 2009**

While e-commerce growth was flat for the first quarter, the sector likely bottomed out, with online sales increases likely to hover around 5 percent for the second half of the year, comScore Chairman Gian Fulgoni said during a Webinar going over the research firm's Q1 findings.

Though e-commerce had seen double-digit growth for the past several years, Fulgoni said the worst may be over, as he cited mobile commerce and social network and video site marketing at sites such as Twitter and Hulu as opportunities for bolstering sales in the near future.

"The good news here is that I think it's bottomed out, in the second quarter we saw 13 percent growth, that dropped to six in the third quarter of 08, in Q4 it was minus three, now flat in the first quarter, so we're not seeing a continued downward trend," said the comScore (NASDAQ: SCOR) chief.

**<http://www.internetnews.com/ec-news/article.php/3820481/Mobile+Commerce+Twitter+to+Save+EComm+Sales.htm>**

**E-COM REPORT: THE 8TH ANNUAL MERCHANT SURVEY. By Vangie Beal, May 8, 2009**

Optimization is the new buzzword according to the E-tailing Group's Eighth Annual Merchant Survey, which provides responses from 190 merchants in the first quarter of 2009. The survey addresses trends in strategy, merchandising and marketing online.

The survey showed that all merchants with e-commerce responsibilities recognize that the online channel is a key element of multi-channel success. According to Lauren Freedman, president of the e-tailing group, "the pressure for performance is greater than it has ever been, as senior management seeks profits while customers demand more from every e-commerce experience."

**<http://www.ecommerce-guide.com/news/news/article.php/3819386>**

**DESIGNING E-PARTICIPATION WITH BALKAN JOURNALISTS. Ella Taylor-Smith and Kathy Buckner. International Teledemocracy Centre, Napier University, 2008**

This paper describes the use of scenarios as a central part of the design methodology, in a project to create an e-participation initiative, working with the national news agencies in 3

Western Balkans countries. The stakeholders in the project came from a variety of backgrounds, with different skills, experiences of technology and ideas about participatory democracy. For design purposes, the most important stakeholders involved are journalists from the Balkan news agencies, as these will be major users of the tool, creating content and managing e-participation processes. Scenarios were used to put these journalists at the centre of the design and specification process. This method also provided the diverse stakeholders with a focus for discussion and shared understanding. The use of scenarios influenced the design of all aspects of the e-participation initiative, including the format of the online tools, the rules and methods for managing online discussions and the offline path of influence with those in power.

**[http://www.teledemocracy.org/ITC/Documents/Designing\\_e-Participation\\_with\\_Balkan\\_Journalists.pdf](http://www.teledemocracy.org/ITC/Documents/Designing_e-Participation_with_Balkan_Journalists.pdf)**

**NATIONAL TELEMEDICINE INITIATIVES: ESSENTIAL TO HEALTHCARE REFORM.**  
**Rashid L. Bashshur and Gary W. Shannon. Policy White Paper. *Telemedicine and E-Health*, VOL. 15. NO. 6. July/August 2009**

This document reflects the strongly held views and perspective of a diverse group of healthcare academicians, researchers, providers, and industry representatives from across the country who share a belief in the necessity of healthcare reform and the centrality of telemedicine—or information technology-enhanced healthcare—in that reform. The need for reform stems from long-standing problems in our health system, and the central role of telemedicine derives from an ever-expanding body of research and experience that attests to its merit in addressing these problems.

(...)Much attention has been devoted to the utility of the electronic health records (EHRs) as a means to improving the healthcare system. Yet, despite its potential benefits, the EHR represents only a partial solution to the problems we face. A broader focus on telemedicine (also frequently referred to as telehealth or e-health) that incorporates EHRs is a more prudent and effective approach. We believe that an exclusive concern with developing system-wide EHRs, while laudable and potentially valuable in improving one sector in healthcare delivery, would ultimately increase the cost of care without contributing to necessary changes in the rest of the system.

**<http://www.liebertonline.com/doi/pdfplus/10.1089/tmj.2009.9960>**