



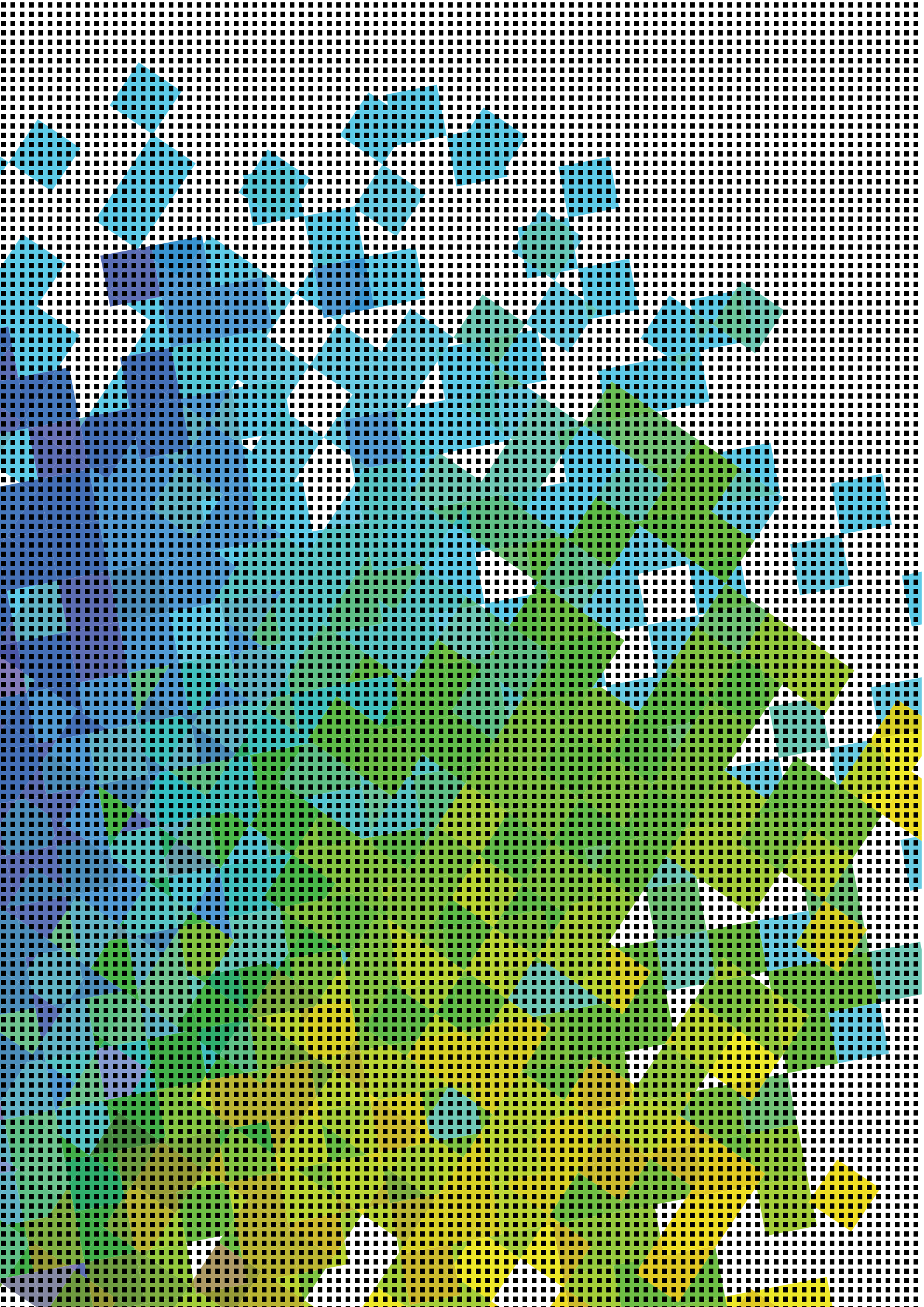
ANNUAL REPORT 2009



Information Technology Authority
Sultanate of Oman

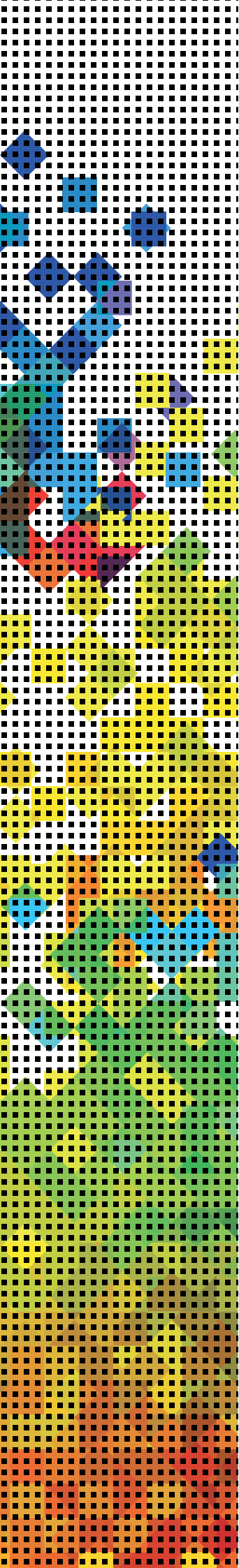


e.oman

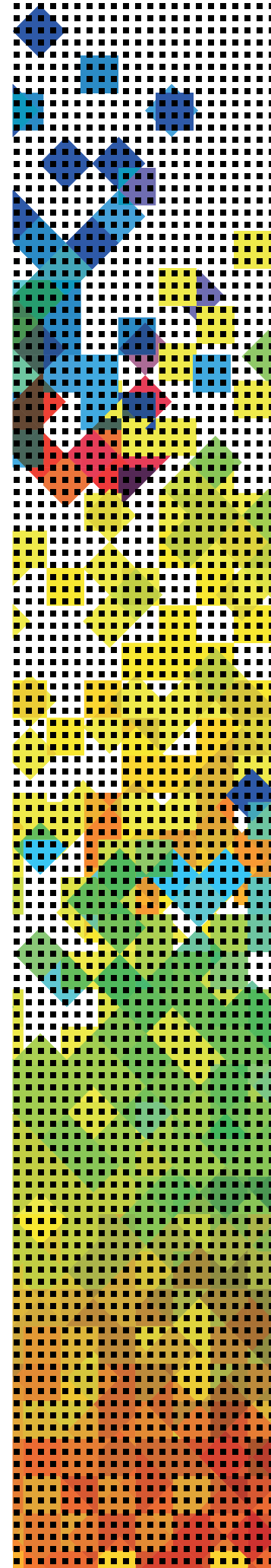




His Majesty Sultan Qaboos bin Said Al Said



Chairman's Message	8
Board of Directors	10
ITA's Most Notable Achievements in 2009	12
The Report in Brief	16
CHAPTER 1	
Digital Oman Strategy	
His Majesty's Vision	18
Digital Oman Strategy	18
The e.oman Initiative	19
Information Technology Authority (ITA)	19
New Brand for e.oman	20
Achieving e.oman	21
ITA's Goals and Objectives for 2008-2010	22
Board Meetings	23
Organizational Structure	24
ITA Organizational Growth	26
Internal Administration and Human Resource Activities	26
CHAPTER 2	
Digital Infrastructure	
Official eGovernment Services Portal (www.oman.om)	28
Unified Government Network	29
ePayment Gateway	31
Donations Portal for Charitable Organizations	32
National Data Centre	32
CHAPTER 3	
Enhancing Government Performance	
Consultancy Services for Ministries	34
Innovations and Support Centre (ISC)	37
Microsoft Programs - Workshop Plus	38
Technical Services for Government Agencies and Institutions	39
eTendering	40
CHAPTER 4	
Capacity Building	
Government IT Training & Certification	42
Community IT Training Program	43
National PC Initiative	44
Linking Schools to the Internet	45



CHAPTER 5

Safe Online Environment

eTransactions Law	46
Draft of Anti-cyber Crime Law	47
Centre for Information Security (CIS)	49
National Computer Emergency Response Team (CERT)	52
The World Telecommunication and Information Society Day	55

CHAPTER 6

Developments in eGovernment Services

UN Ranking of the Sultanate's eReadiness	56
The World Economic Forum	57
The UN Public Services Award	58
WSIS Award	59
e.oman Award	59

CHAPTER 7

Events and Activities

New Brand for e.oman	62
National Data Centre	62
Launch of the Official eGovernment Services Portal	63
2nd eGovernment Services Exhibition	63
2009 Salalah Tourism Festival	64
World Telecommunications and Information Society Day	65
Launch of the Donations Portal for Charitable Organizations	66
ePurse Project	67
Participation in InfoConnect - Kuwait	67
Workshop on eContent Development	67
Oman Web Awards	68
Promoting eCulture Campaign	69
Arab Innovative Teachers Forum	70
Open Day for the Computer Science Group of SQU	70
Community Knowledge Centre - Salalah	71
Community Knowledge Centre - Muscat	71
International Conference on Communication, Computer and Power	71

CHAPTER 8

The 1st GCC eGovernment Conference

1st GCC eGovernment Award	73
1st GCC eGovernment Exhibition of eGovernment Services	75
1st GCC eGovernment Conference - Key Papers	75
Conference Recommendations	76
GCC eGovernment Committee holds 6th Meeting	77

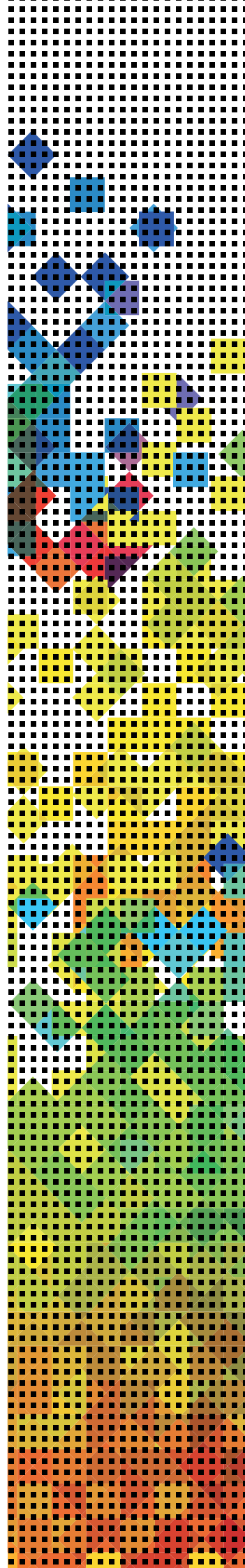
CHAPTER 9

Memoranda of Cooperation	78
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FINANCIAL STATEMENTS	83
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CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

This Third Annual Report comes with the country celebrating the 40th National Day, where the Sultanate witnesses great national joy covering all parts of the country, in expression of thankfulness and gratefulness to His Majesty Sultan Qaboos bin Said, may Allah protect and preserve him, for all that has been realized, of the great achievements, progress and prosperity under the prudent leadership and wise policy of His Majesty.

Drawing on His Majesty's emphasis on Information and Communication Technology (ICT) as the main driver of development in this third millennium, and building on His Majesty's keen interest in developing a national strategy to promote citizens' capabilities and skills in dealing with ICT as well as developing eGovernment services, continuous effort was made in the implementation of the Government IT Training and Certification. Moreover, community training in IT has continued through Community Knowledge Centres, which were opened in different governorates and wilayats of the Sultanate, aiming to eradicate digital illiteracy. In addition to the above, a number of projects and initiatives supporting the digital infrastructure and strengthening the IT sector have been implemented within the Sultanate. The launch of the official portal for eGovernment services represented a new leap towards providing information and services to all community sectors, and to facilitate the conclusion of government transactions electronically.

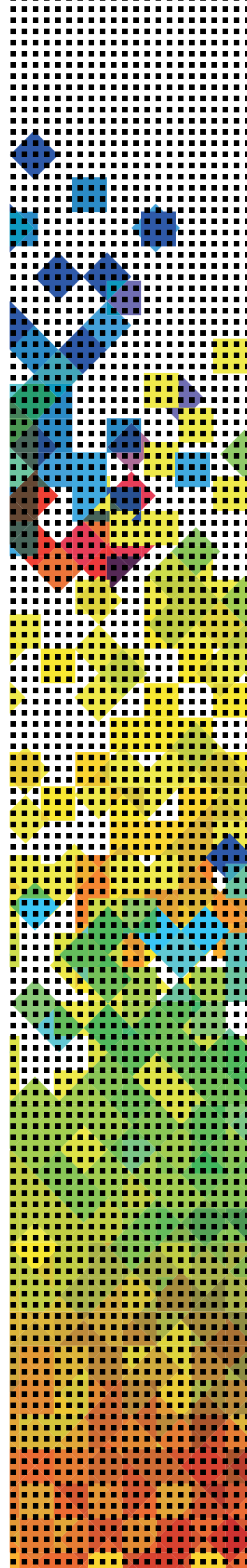
Last year was filled with important events, especially the organization of the 1st GCC eGovernment Conference. Heads of eGovernment Authorities and programs in the GCC countries and a large number of regional and international experts participated in this conference. The conference sessions witnessed great debates while exchanging GCC and international experience and expertise in eGovernments, it also addressed challenges.

Consequently, important recommendations came out of the conference. Moreover, the conference witnessed the launch of the GCC eGovernment Award. eProjects from all GCC countries competed for this award. The continuation of the conference and award on an annual basis is considered an important factor to strengthen eGovernment integration in the GCC.

This report sheds light on different aspects of the Information Technology Authority's (ITA) work as well as the initiatives and projects pursued or accomplished at all levels during the past year. It reflects the continued growth and development in implementing the National Strategy plans and programs to establish Oman's Digital Society and eGovernment. It also presents a clear picture of the diverse events and activities conducted throughout the year. Moreover, it also reflects the extent of e.oman's projects and initiatives contribution to the development of eServices in the Sultanate. We hope that the efforts of government institutions will interlink among themselves and integrate with those of the private sector and society towards promoting the ICT sector; and, in turn, contribute to building a knowledge society and knowledge based economy.

Mohammad Nasser Al Khasibi

Chairman of the Board of Directors



ITA BOARD OF DIRECTORS



HE Mohammed Nasser Al Khasibi
Chairman of the ITA Board of Directors
Secretary General, Ministry of National Economy



HE Sheikh Al Fadhel Mohammed Al Harthy
Deputy Chairman, ITA Board of Directors
Undersecretary for Development Affairs, Ministry of National Economy



HE Eng. Ahmed Hassan Al-Dheeb
ITA Board Member
Undersecretary for Commerce and Industry,
Ministry of Commerce and Industry



HE Dr. Mohammad Ali Al Wahaibi
ITA Board Member
Undersecretary for Communication,
Ministry of Transport and Communication



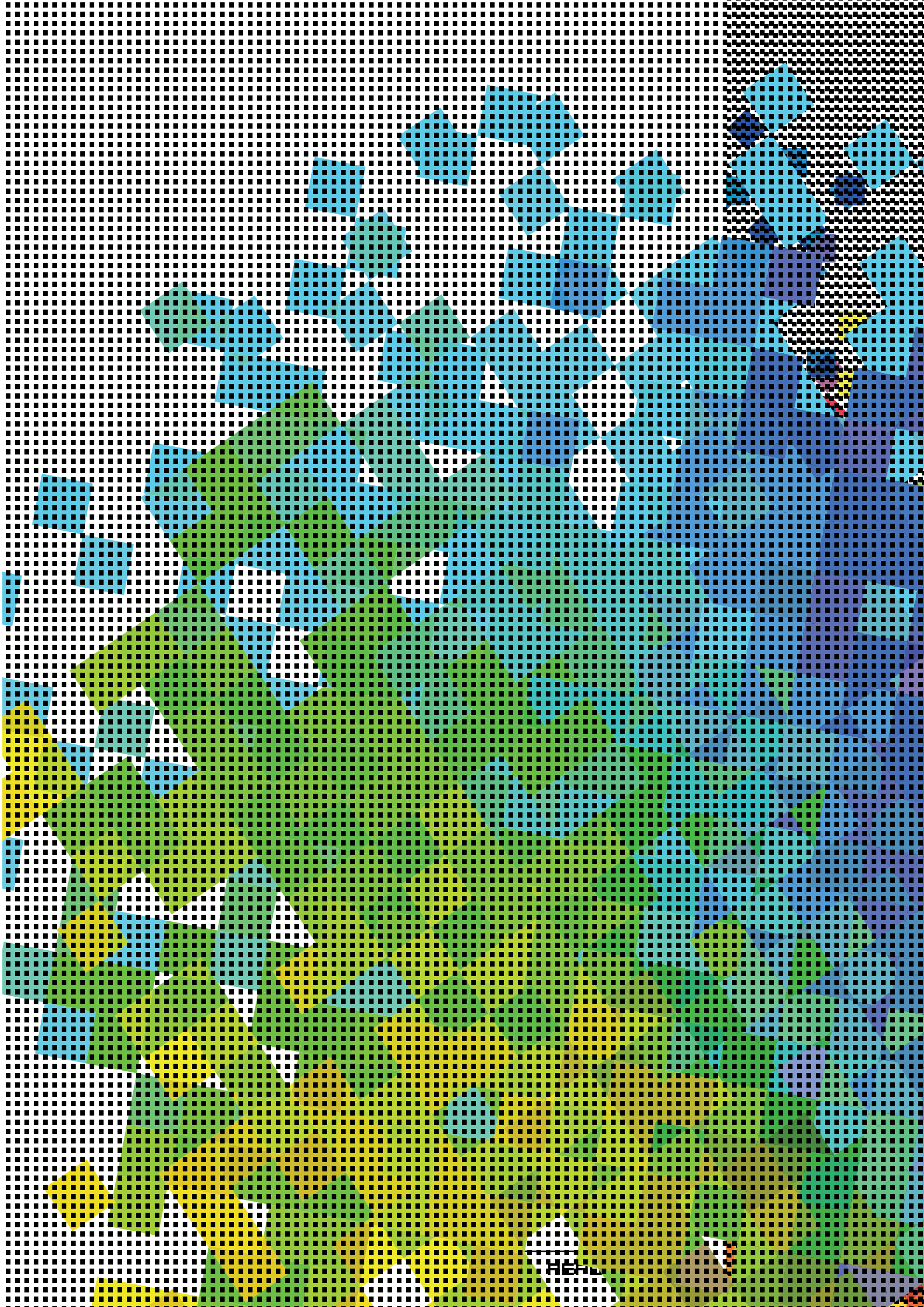
Eng. Nashia Saoud Al Kharusi
ITA Board Member
Member, Telecommunications Regulatory Authority



Dr. Hamad Salim Al Rawahi
ITA Board Member



Dr. Salim Sultan Al Ruzaiqi
Chief Executive Officer, ITA



During 2009, the ITA made several achievements in its continuing projects. The ITA also continued implementing its plans to reinforce the infrastructure of Oman's digital society. This was pursued through a number of initiatives, which established their services via the internet, like the ePayment services, reinforcements of infrastructure and legislative support, in addition to strengthening the basic and legislative infrastructure and, lastly, capacity building.

Implementing the Digital Oman Strategy has contributed directly towards the Sultanate achieving the 50th place in the 2008/2009 World Economic Forum Report.

In its pursuit of the implementation of the Digital Oman Strategy, the ITA has managed, through several projects, to accomplish a number of achievements. The following are but a few of these achievements:

FIRST: Community and Human Resources Development

The ITA endeavored to develop the community capabilities to deal with modern digital technologies through embarking on initiatives that aim to:

- Link schools to communication networks.
- Establish Community Knowledge Centres (CKC) to train the community.
- Train civil service employees in IT.
- Provide specialized training in IT.
- Develop a National Strategy for Training and Development.
- Provide affordable PCs.
- Establish internet services with high speed and capacity.

The ITA has taken several steps to establish the digital infrastructure, such as:

Opening 4 CKCs to provide training programs for nationals in Muscat, Sohar, Sur and Salalah.

Implementing the Government IT Training and Certification project, which entails training 93,000 civil servants in basic IT programs. 3500 civil servants were trained by the end of 2009.

Announcing the National PC Initiative.

Preparing for a pilot project whereby internet services are provided free of charge in one area of Muscat.

Analyzing IT specialization needs of the public and private sectors and then determining technical training needs for the specialists.

Launching specialized training programs aimed at enabling participants to pass specialized certification tests.

Cooperating with a major communications company to supply and install intra-communication networks for 100 schools, which was accomplished successfully.

SECOND: Improving Government Performance

The ITA endeavored to simplify government procedures and modalities by utilizing information systems adopting initiatives that aim to:

- Use eTendering.
- Standardize IT government contracts.
- Guarantee government business continuity.
- Make software licenses available to government organizations.
- Secure government information systems.
- Establish the Computer Emergency Readiness Team (CERT).

These efforts produced several fruitful results, summarized below:

77 projects, using Microsoft software, were implemented in government agencies. Also, more than 800 support requests were attended to through the Innovation Support Centre.

36 consultancy services were rendered to 26 government agencies. Also, 17 government organizations were supported in executing their projects.

Piloting the eTendering project in 5 government organizations.

Operating the Centre for Information Security and rendering all its services available to all government institutions. This resulted in the following:

- The Centre protecting more than 77 government websites.
- The Centre installed 6000 versions of antivirus software.

Operating the CERT and rendering its services to the society. The CERT launched, during the year, an awareness campaign *Towards a Safe Online Environment*.

Developing the IT Standards and Specifications for the government, where the specifications for the technical structure were completed. Each government institution was checked for compatibility with the technical infrastructure requirements.

Commencing the drafts of Electronic Authentication and Cyber Crime laws.

Microsoft and Oracle software licenses were renewed.

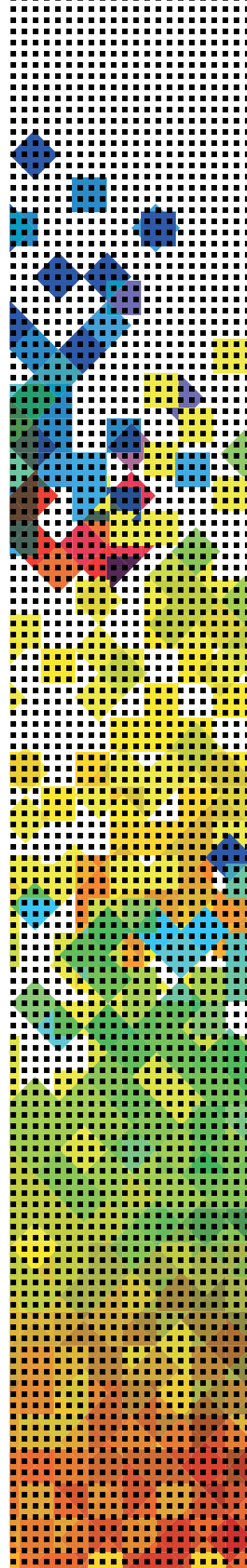
THIRD: Developing the IT Industry

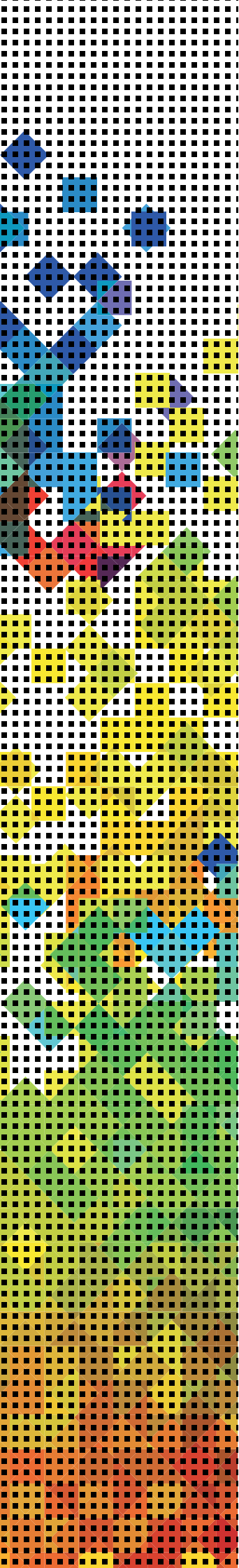
Among the main goals of the National Strategy for Oman's Digital Society and eGovernment is to promote and support the IT industry. Hence, during 2009, the following has been achieved:

Preparation of a standardized and integrated program to establish and promote small and medium enterprises for IT, known as Technical Incubators.

Steps were taken to announce the tender for the construction of the eContent Centre.

Cooperation has been established with a specialized agency to prepare a study on the development of the IT sector in the Sultanate.





Collaboration has been set with the Ministry of Commerce and Industry to classify IT as an industrial activity and, subsequently, enable the sector to avail of the privileges available to industrial companies.

FOURTH: Basic IT Infrastructure

The ITA endeavored to establish a basic infrastructure to support the development and integration of the government information systems through activating the following projects:

- Official eGovernment Services Portal
- Central Call Centre
- National Data Centre
- Unified Government Network
- Public Key Infrastructure and Certification Centre
- ePayment Gateway
- Infrastructure for integrating government applications

During 2009, the Sultanate achieved the following:

Completion of the National Data Centre and equipping it to host systems of government institutions. The following systems are being hosted: Official eGovernment Services Portal, eTendering, and infrastructure for information security and CERT.

Launch of the Official eGovernment Services Portal; adding 600 information services and linking 30 eGovernment services to the portal.

Linking more than 295 government websites to the unified government network, after adding 104 government sites in 2009.

Processing more than 66,000 transactions through the ePayment Gateway. The next phase of the gateway is being commissioned.

Launching of the first phase of the ePurse project using the ID card, in collaboration with Royal Oman Police and Bank Muscat.

Launching of the Central Call Centre to be the first stop receiving all support requests addressed to the Authority (ITA).

The Donations Portal for Charitable Organizations winning the 2009 Arab eContent Award.

FIFTH: Awareness and Marketing

Since its inception, the ITA has pursued reinforcing an eCulture within the community through launching and organizing the following key campaigns:

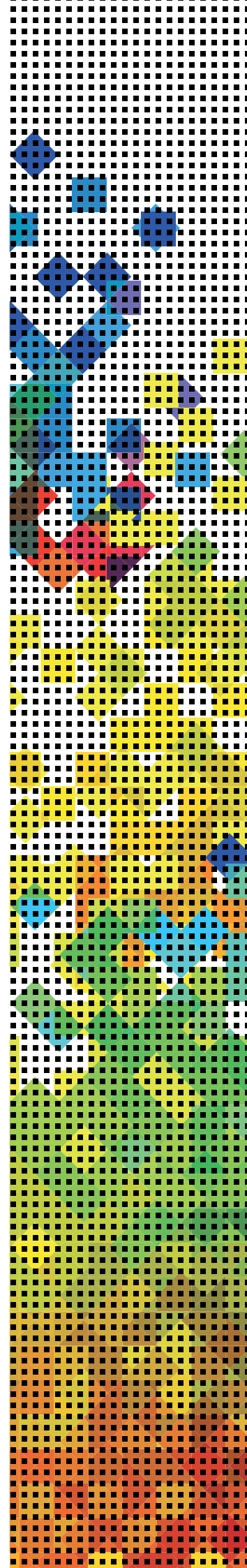
- New e.oman brand
- 2nd Government eServices Exhibition at COMEX 2009
- Official eGovernment Services Portal
- 2nd e.oman Awareness Campaign
- ePayment Brand and Awareness

As well, over the course of the year the Information and Awareness Division also developed a multitude of focused awareness campaigns for other projects and initiatives.

SIXTH: International Ranking

As a result of all the efforts exerted by the Sultanate, several achievements were made which will be mentioned in detail in later chapters. However, it is worth noting here that, during 2009, the following has been achieved:

- The Sultanate was ranked 50th among countries in the 2008/2009 World Economic Forum Report.
- The Sultanate was ranked 39th in terms of e-readiness, according to the same report.
- The Sultanate was ranked 22nd in terms of providing developed products for IT systems.



THE REPORT IN BRIEF

This year, the 3rd ITA Annual Report comes following the execution of solid steps emphasized by the ITA, during previous years, through building the digital infrastructure for Oman's digital society and eGovernment, in addition to the serious efforts exerted by the ITA towards promoting an eCulture in the community. This was timed after launching several projects, which in totality lead to the fulfillment of the goals of the e.oman Initiative.

In nine chapters, this report reflects persistence and dedication through showcasing the steps taken, the status of our projects and shares what the ITA aspires to achieve during the next few years. Each chapter covers one aspect or activity of the ITA strategy and the main developments achieved in that aspect or activity during the period of this report.

Chapter One outlines His Majesty's vision and sheds light on His Majesty's address, which has enthused all government units to fully benefit from ICT. By extension, this benefit will spread all over the country. The chapter also sheds light on the ITA, its activities, organizational structure, 2008-2010 Business Plan, the Board of Directors, and events during the period of the report. Chapter One also explains details of the e.oman Initiative and its development during 2009.

In Chapter Two we outline the exerted efforts that aim to create a developed digital infrastructure in the Sultanate through a number of projects and initiatives implemented by the ITA.

Chapter Three outlines the role of the ITA in enhancing government performance through a number of initiatives focusing on internal processes and provision of technical consultancy and technical support to government units. This chapter also sheds light on the criteria adopted by the ITA.

Chapter Four focuses on capacity building and technology management skills through highlighting the Government IT Training & Certification project, Community Knowledge Centres (CKC) and Specialized Training in PC skills.

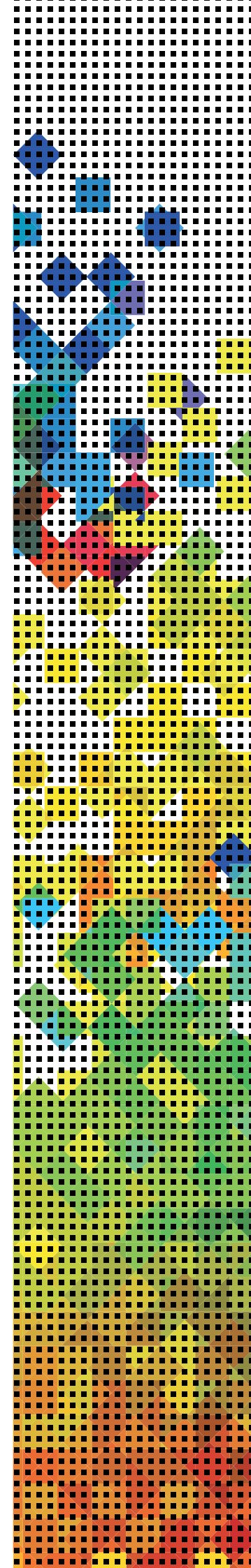
Chapter Five is based on the premise that information security has become a pressing demand due to fast development in the IT field. The chapter outlines legislation created by the ITA and sheds light on the Centre for Information Security and the National Computer Emergency Readiness Team (CERT) and their roles in safeguarding information security in the Sultanate.

Chapter Six demonstrates the extent of the Sultanate's e-readiness, according to a number of international reports concerned with IT evaluation. The chapter also discusses some of the international competitions where the Sultanate managed outstanding top finishes. It also outlines the e.oman Award, its objectives and the role it played in encouraging government institutions to enhance their services.

Chapter Seven focuses on the most significant events and activities implemented by the ITA during 2009; most notably, launching the new e.oman brand and participating in the 2009 Salalah Tourism Festival, in addition to participating at the 2nd eGovernment Services Exhibition, plus other events which aimed to relay to the community the mission of the National Strategy for Oman's Digital Society and eGovernment.

In Chapter Eight, the report briefly outlines the 2009 1st GCC eGovernment Conference along with the events that accompanied the conference. Among those events are the GCC eGovernment Award and Exhibition. The chapter also outlines key papers presented during the conference.

Chapter Nine presents some of the local and international agreements implemented by the ITA during the year; in order to activate some of the projects being implemented and to facilitate their accessibility to different community sectors.



His Majesty's Vision

His Majesty Sultan Qaboos bin Said has consistently emphasized the importance of science and knowledge in all his speeches. In his address at the inauguration of the annual session of the Council of Oman, on 11 November 2008, he highlighted this aspect where he said: "We have always emphasized the importance of learning and knowledge and we have always been open to the adoption of new developments in this field.

Information technology and communications have now become the main elements that move forward the development process in this third millennium; therefore, we have accorded our attention to finding a national strategy to develop the skills and abilities of citizens in this domain with the aim of further developing eGovernment services. We are closely following the important steps that we have made in this regard. We call upon on all government institutions to speedily enhance their performance and to facilitate their services, by applying digital technology to usher the Sultanate into the constantly evolving spheres for applying knowledge."

Hence our endeavours and attention to realize His Majesty's vision regarding the main infrastructure projects and training on IT at all levels, in addition to supporting e-projects in all government units and providing consultancy and technical services.

Digital Oman Strategy

The Digital Oman Strategy, or e.oman for short, at the outset, aims to provide appropriate services electronically to citizens, residents, the private and public sectors and the community; in order to transform the Sultanate into a knowledge-based community that is able to achieve the objectives of sustained development. Through the efforts exerted by those supervising strategy projects and due to the importance of its national objectives, the Council of Ministers approved the e.oman Strategy in November 2002, seeking to realize development, in an effort to realize the objectives of development. Thus, the Executive Committee for Information Technology was formed in 2003, to supervise the implementation of the Digital Oman Strategy and e.oman Initiative. This committee continued its operation until the Information Technology Authority (ITA) was established by Royal Decree No. 52/2006, issued in May 2006. The establishment of the ITA was based on recommendations and visions expressed by the Executive Committee during the period 2003–2006.

The Digital Oman Strategy aims to achieve several key goals and objectives, most notably:

- To provide eGovernment services to citizens and the private sector in an effort to curb bureaucracy.

- To enable a knowledge-based industry and to develop the local ICT sector.
- To create a competitive environment for the IT industry.
- To provide job opportunities for Omani youth.
- To provide a better health care system.
- To develop educational opportunities.
- To promote tourism.
- To support social development.
- To prepare the Sultanate to attract foreign investment in this field.

The e.oman Initiative

The e.oman Initiative includes a number of projects and mechanisms, which were designed and prepared to upgrade the efficiency and effectiveness levels of government services, enhance the business sector and furnish citizens with the skills and knowledge required to effectively interact with eServices. This will respond to the needs and aspirations of society and serve as a support for the Sultanate's drive towards a sustainable and knowledge-based economy.

The move towards a knowledge-society entails enabling the society to use ICT in all aspects of life in an easy and evolving manner. So, the initiative seeks to implement a number of major infrastructure projects such as: the Unified Government Network, National Data Centre, ePayment and related eServices projects. Bearing in mind that some laws, criteria and legal frameworks accompany implementing those initiatives; in order to enhance efficiency and effectiveness of government services.

Moreover, a number of capacity building projects are being implemented to supply the public sector and society with the skills and knowledge required for interaction with eServices.

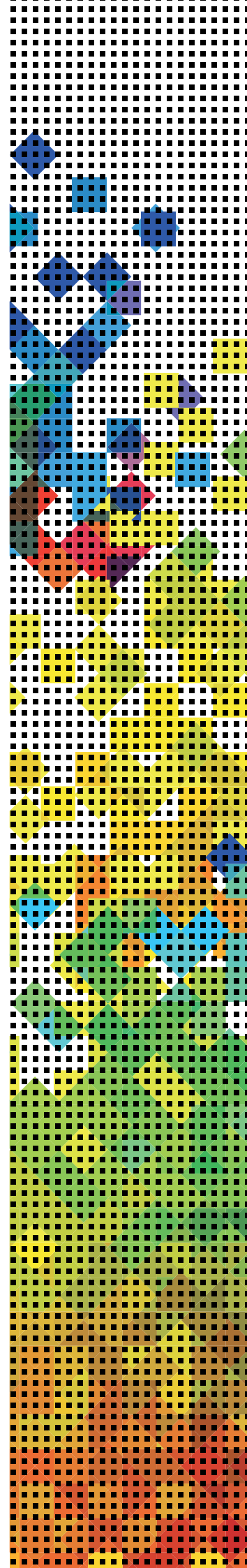
Information Technology Authority (ITA)

Most countries of the advanced world have developed independent bodies to undertake the responsibility of supervision and coordination in the ICT field. Thus, the Information Technology Authority (ITA) was established, following the same principle, to adopt the e.oman Initiative and bear its national vision and objectives.

Also, it should work towards achieving those goals and objectives through several ICT projects, as part of its plans, to transform the Sultanate into a sustainable knowledge-society; aiming to enhance government services, enrich business sectors and enable individuals.

The Information Technology Authority was established, by Royal Decree No. 52/2006, promulgated on 31 May, 2006, as a financially and administratively independent national authority.

The ITA is deemed to be an autonomous government unit tasked with implementing the National Strategy for Oman's Digital Society and eGovernment, instilling awareness of ICT and supervising all infrastructures, eServices and the different projects pertaining to e.oman.



Since its coming to light, the ITA has been exerting persistent effort to implement the strategy. During 2009, it achieved several major accomplishments on the course of realizing a knowledge-based society.



New Brand for e.oman

In a step heralding the advent of a new world of electronic transactions in the Sultanate of Oman, and in keeping with international developments witnessed by the ICT sector around the world, the ITA launched the new brand for the e.oman Initiative.

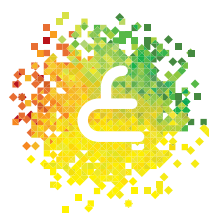
The new e.oman brand established the advent of a new and categorical phase of digital transformation witnessed by the Sultanate in all sectors and at all levels. This new brand is meant to express the objectives and values of the e.oman Initiative adopted by the ITA to transform the Sultanate into a sustainable knowledge-society, in accordance with the Economic Vision 2020.



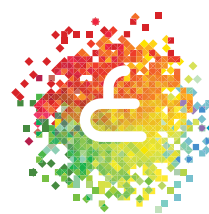
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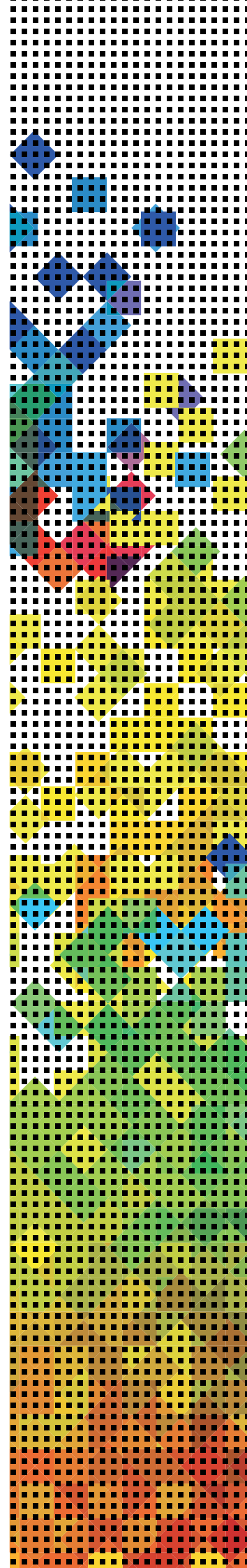
The new brand emphasizes originality and modernity at the same time. It also reflects the continuous, persistent and tireless nature of work associated with the Omani tradition. This can be observed from motifs of movement and colors borne by the new brand, characterized as self-renewing. It represents modern technology that is continuously evolving. Its forms and

colors bear the characters of change and renewability. The new brand was designed to look digital, by virtue of the surrounding illuminated pixels, which give it special dynamism and versatility; changing colors and form continuously. Moreover, the new brand expresses the values assumed by the e.oman initiative such as evolution and continuous change in forms of business transactions through the use of modern technology.

Achieving e.oman

The ITA works according to a comprehensive three-year plan, which is reviewed annually focusing on what has been achieved. The plan is composed of clear mechanisms that are carefully determined; to implement the e.oman Initiative in phases.

The ITA 2008-2010 plan seeks to complete a number of projects, which have been commissioned since the establishment of the ITA. Through several operational phases, these projects are expected to be completed by the end of 2010.



ITA Goals and Objectives 2008-2010

The ITA pursues the accomplishment of its 2008-2010 plan goals and objectives, summarized as follows:

- To review the organizational structure and appointment of professionals to realize the main objectives and key performance indicators (KPIs), as well as qualifying the ITA to be a think tank in the IT field in the Sultanate.
- To work towards improving the recognition of the ITA in project and quality management, and maintenance of such recognition.
- To innovate and apply IT to enhance operational efficiency and effectiveness of the ITA, and facilitate its internal procedures.
- To guarantee effective management of the ITA resources to achieve the highest levels of customer satisfaction.
- To design, enhance and develop e-strategies to realize the e.oman vision of coordination among other planning and organizational bodies within the Sultanate.
- To follow up coordinating and implementing plans of concerned authorities aiming to achieve the Digital Oman Strategy.
- To explore, plan and monitor commercial opportunities and return on investment in IT projects adopted by the ITA and other government agencies.
- To play a pivotal role in coordinating the implementation of IT in the public and private sectors.
- To draft IT policies, standards and criteria to ensure compliance of other institutions through guidance and audit.
- To provide technical advice and expertise to other institutions in the IT field through organized systems and procedures.
- To promote the development of the ICT industry; to play a pivotal role in implementing the vision and objectives of e.oman through foreign investment attraction and provision of new opportunities for existing and new Omani companies.
- To take the initiative of organizing general and specialized programs for citizens and government employees at all levels.
- To raise the standard of e-living in the Sultanate through utilizing computers and high-speed internet, at reduced rates, as well as furthering the use of internet services and resources.
- To coordinate and follow up the implementation of e-living plans with other concerned authorities, while focusing on the use of high-speed internet services and bolster statistics of internet use in the Sultanate.
- To execute major infrastructure projects, aiming to create essential building blocks of IT infrastructure for the government and public sector.
- To ensure the security of the IT infrastructure in the Sultanate and electronic transactions through the e.oman Initiative.
- To collect ICT data and information, and translate these data to enable analysis of progress and decision making support in the Sultanate.
- To represent the Sultanate at national and international levels in IT related events and activities.

Board Meetings

During 2009, the Board held five meetings. The first was on 4 February, 2009. In this meeting the ITA Business Plan was reviewed and approved. Members of the executive management of the ITA were present. The second meeting was on 21 March, 2009 and the third was held on 3 May, 2009. In the fourth meeting, held on 27 June 2009, the Board approved the estimated ITA budget for 2010. The last meeting, the fifth, was on 26 October, 2009.

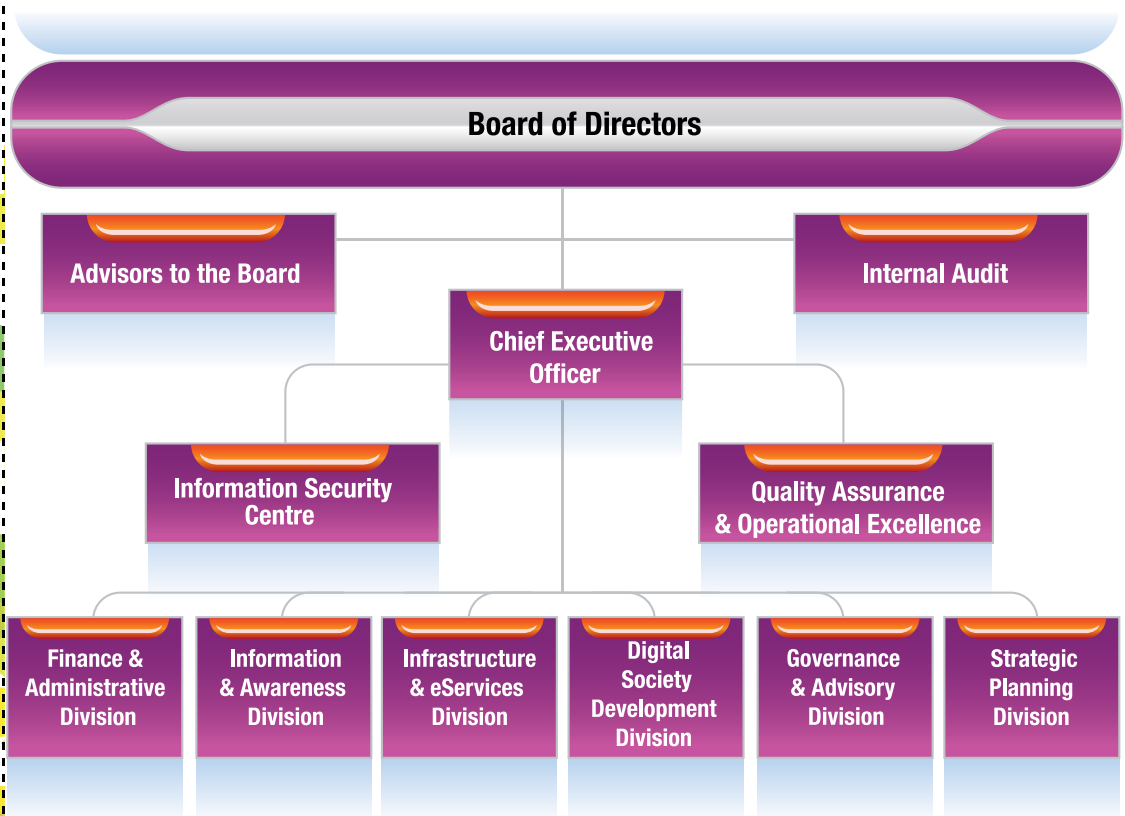
During the five meetings of 2009, the Board discussed several important issues of interest to the IT sector. It also approved the launch of the Official eGovernment Services Portal, which occurred in November 2009, as well as agreeing to organize the 1st GCC eGovernment Conference, which took place in December 2009. The Board also reviewed issues pertaining to the ITA and work improvement; to reach the best results in pursuit of realizing the e.oman Initiative.



Organizational Structure

There are six divisions that report to the CEO, each of which executes its tasks and duties related to realizing the e.oman Initiative.

The divisions are as follows:



Strategic Planning Division

This is the division that is primarily concerned with strategic planning, proposing project related initiatives and managing the ITA master plan. It is also concerned with investment analysis, project budgeting and ITA total resource management. Data and information drawn from this sector is used to analyze the return on investment and the impact of IT initiatives.

Governance and Advisory Division

This division aims to ensure implementing initiatives, projects and IT systems (in progress) according to unified and predetermined specifications and standards. It also aims to guide all government institutions in the Sultanate to adopt these standards and specifications when implementing IT systems.

This division provides technical support to government agencies in applying and implementing ICT systems. It also coordinates ITA's relations with other agencies and bodies in the Sultanate.

Digital Society Development Division

This division aims to develop the IT industry in the Sultanate. It is responsible for managing projects and initiatives, which target developing the society and transforming it into a digital society. Moreover, this division implements digital awareness projects in addition to organizing awareness campaigns, training programs, seminars and workshops. It also pursues the development of ICT in the Sultanate.

Infrastructure and eServices Division

This division aims to develop and implement IT infrastructure and direct eServices and applications as well as facilities and utilities used by government organizations to provide eServices to the society. It is also responsible for designing the ITA's IT infrastructure. Moreover, it has been modeled according to the technical architecture proposed in the Digital Oman Strategy.

Information and Awareness Division

This division aims to educate the populace about the e.oman initiative and promote it locally and globally through events, awareness campaigns, and various media and publications.

The division is also responsible for public relations in addition to international relations and cooperation between the ITA and similar international organizations in different countries of the world. The division is also responsible for collecting and updating IT-related statistics and data in the Sultanate.

Finance and Administrative Division

This division is tasked with the continuing administrative issues of the ITA. It is also concerned with financial aspects such as procurement and budget, in addition to Human Resources development and management.

In addition ITA has units that govern both security and quality assurance:

Centre for Information Security (CIS)

The CIS sets standards, criteria, policies and procedures to ensure information security. The CIS continuously develops security measures and procedures, and acts as a think tank providing technical and knowledge support in this field.

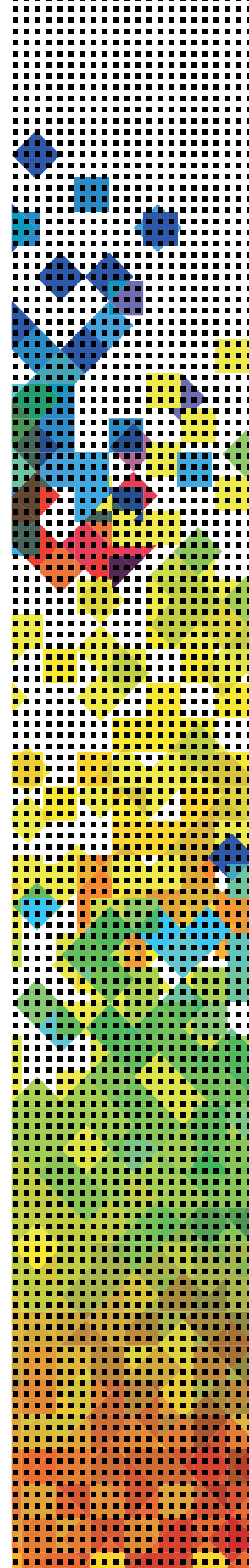
ITA Quality Management System

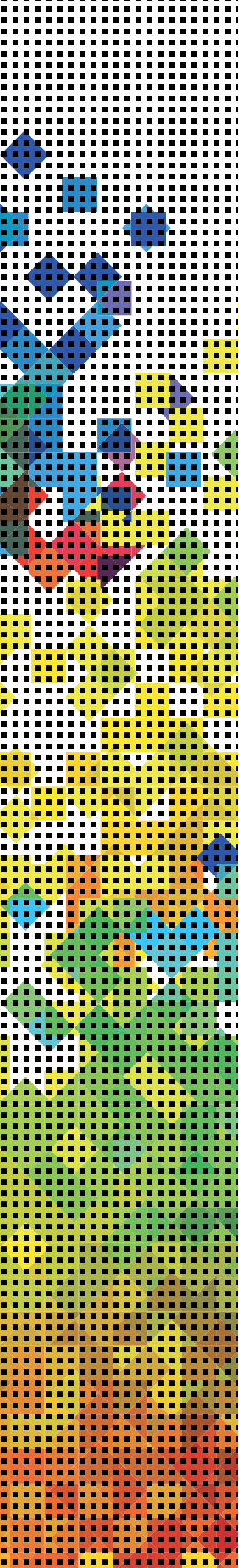
In order to ensure the quality of implementing the ITA initiatives and projects, a Quality Management System (QMS) was established. The Quality Assurance and Operations Excellence Division applies the QMS to all ITA divisions following the ISO 9001:2008, which is a group of criteria and standards for quality management systems endorsed by the International Standards Organization and managed by certifying bodies.

The effective implementation of the QMS requires changing the organizational culture pertaining to the behavior of individuals and teams, in order to become an integral part of daily practices of the ITA, instead of being viewed as a separate program/track.

FIRST: Implementing the Quality Management System

In pursuit of developing and qualifying the team in charge of the QMS, a training program for the select team was offered in 2009. The team reflected a cross section of all divisions, who were qualified to perform audit processes. The internal relations within the ITA were analyzed through a number of activities. A Quality Guide was developed to outline the quality policies





and objectives. The QMS team furthered awareness about the ISO standard and its importance for the continuous betterment of the ITA performance.

During 2009, results of the first round of internal audit for senior management were presented; in order to enhance quality within the fabric of the ITA. Approval was also granted to conduct several projects required to ascertain quality, such as:

- Customer Satisfaction Survey
- ITA Staff Satisfaction Survey
- Warehouse System
- Corporate Incident Management System

SECOND: Pre-certification Audit

The QMS unit, in collaboration with Protivity Co., conducted a Pre-certification Audit, which aimed to ascertain whether the ITA is ready for the final certification audit. The final audit will be performed by a specialized company, to be determined later, which will issue the ITA with the ISO Certificate. The team also prepared a full report on the audit results, upon which the date for the final audit will be determined, as well all required preparation.

ITA Organizational Growth

On the course of developing IT projects in the Sultanate, it was necessary to choose qualified cadres to activate the e.oman initiatives and projects. Accordingly, the ITA, during 2009, recruited 40 people to occupy several technical and administrative jobs. By the end of 2009, the number of the ITA employees reached 164 members, contributing with their expertise in realizing the objectives of the Digital Oman Strategy.

Internal Administration and Human Resources Activities

During 2009, the Human Resources Department conducted a summer internship program within the ITA divisions for 18 male and female students from different colleges and universities. The internship was for two months within the period June to August 2009.

Also, the Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system was implemented and ITA employees were trained on using the application for all requirements related to the Financial and Administrative Division.

The ITA also participated in the Job and Training Fair at the Sultan Qaboos University during the year.

Training Programs

In order to develop capabilities of staff within the ITA; enabling them to perform their duties, several programs were conducted during 2009, most notably:

- Crestcom training for Managers was commenced. It entails 12 administration modules, at the rate of one module per month.

- Several training programs were conducted internally and externally for the ITA employees in a variety of fields, such as:
 - Administrative areas
 - Personal skills and capacity development
 - Information Technology
 - Attendance of conferences and seminars inside and outside the Sultanate.

Utilization of IT in the ITA

The Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system contributed to achieving several benefits, as it included several applications pertaining to the Financial and Administrative Division. The system was effectively used on 1 September, 2009. It contributed to the enhanced coordination among the several sectors, raising efficiency and reducing cost. It also contributed towards simplifying daily routines within the various departments.

The ERP system also provides the most effective and quickest means to access data and information required for decision making accurately. Moreover, it assists in monitoring actual costs of the various projects and procurements.

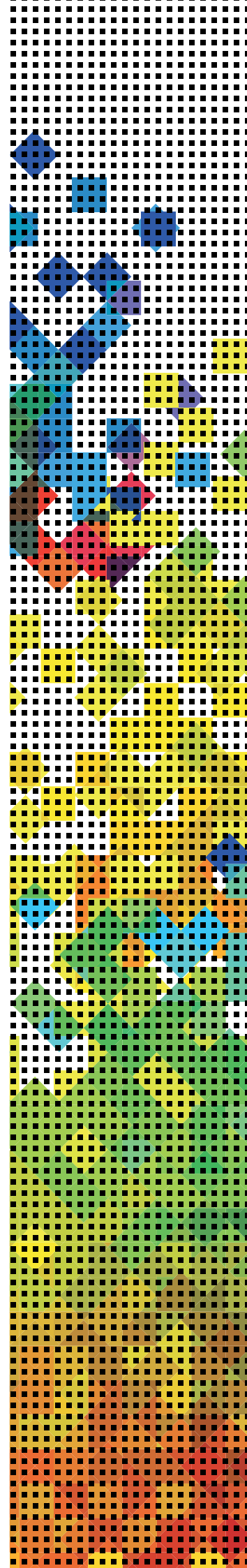
ITA Day

On 31 May of every year, the ITA observes ITA Day; celebrating the establishment of the ITA by Royal Decree No. 52/2006, issued on 31 May, 2006. On this day, best performers are recognized and honored by ITA senior management. Moreover, Appreciation Certificates are awarded to long-serving employees and to those who have actively contributed towards realizing the e.oman Initiative.

ITA's Away Day

The ITA organizes, at the beginning of every year, an Away Day for all its employees. It is usually spent in one of the hotels or resorts away from work. In 2009, it was spent at Al Nahdha Spa and Resort in Barka. On such days, members of staff participate in team building exercises. It also allows a longer and more relaxed time for dialogue and discussions among colleagues, since work or related stress might prevent them from talking to each other during normal working hours.

The Away Day has a great impact on the ITA staff. It enables them to better understand the directions of the ITA and strike a balance between personal views and common goals. It also helps in forming personal commitments in the short and long terms to engender a culture of performance and accomplishment, which is linked to team spirit.



CHAPTER TWO

DIGITAL INFRASTRUCTURE

The ITA continues its efforts towards building Oman's digital society by launching purposeful initiatives and projects, paying due attention to modern technologies and sciences and better utilizing them to achieve more progress and development, and strengthen the Blessed Renaissance.

The ITA has focused in its initiatives and projects on creating a developed digital infrastructure in the Sultanate. This was pursued through a number of infrastructure projects which will, in turn, make a qualitative jump in digital transactions in the Sultanate, in addition to activating the use of IT in all fields to further promote and enhance eGovernment services.

Official eGovernment Services Portal (www.oman.om)

The Official eGovernment Services Portal was launched during 2009. It is the main electronic outlet to access government information and services on the internet. Several supporting features and factors were applied in the portal, which render delivering eServices more flexible and comprehensive. For example, eForms, which enable users to download, fill out, and submit requests for all eGovernment services. Moreover, access to eGovernment services on this portal will not be confined to websites only, as the portal is accessible through mobile and interactive phones.

The portal includes a number of government institutions. The services offered are categorized into three sectors of users: individuals, represented in nationals and residents; businessmen; and visitors to the Sultanate.

The Official eGovernment Services Portal seeks to offer electronic services to all individuals (whether national or residents). The portal facilitates access to several governmental agencies and enables them to receive eServices pertaining to personal matters, immigrations, health, education, culture, entertainment and other services. The portal has also been made accessible to persons with disabilities.

Portal Content and eServices

Services of 25 government agencies exist with more than 600 information services accessible to users. Services are distributed on the main sectors of the portal: individuals and the business sector, distributing the services according to each sector's lifestyle.

eServices for the Ministry of Agriculture were launched.

Call Centre (80077777)

The Call Centre was launched to assist Portal visitors and users of eGovernment services, 24 hours a day, by calling the free number 80077777, as well as responding to email queries.

The support rendered by the Call Centre was expanded to include responding to queries about the National Data Centre, Unified Government Network and the Centre for Information Security.



Training Programs and Seminars

The ITA conducted a workshop for all government agencies and institutions, inviting them to offer their services on the portal. The experiences of the ministries offering their services on the portal and the realized benefits were presented during the workshop. Those present included the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Social Development and the Central Bank of Oman.

Unified Government Network

The Unified Government Network is considered a national communication infrastructure linking all government institutions, in order to support e.oman projects on course to developing public services and enhancing eServices offered by these institutions.

The Government Network is characterized by its ability to support data, audio, images and video in its infrastructure, which was designed to ensure smooth service delivery.

This network was designed to cope with future requirements of integration in eService delivery, as well as developments associated within the digital society structure, which the Sultanate seeks to realize.

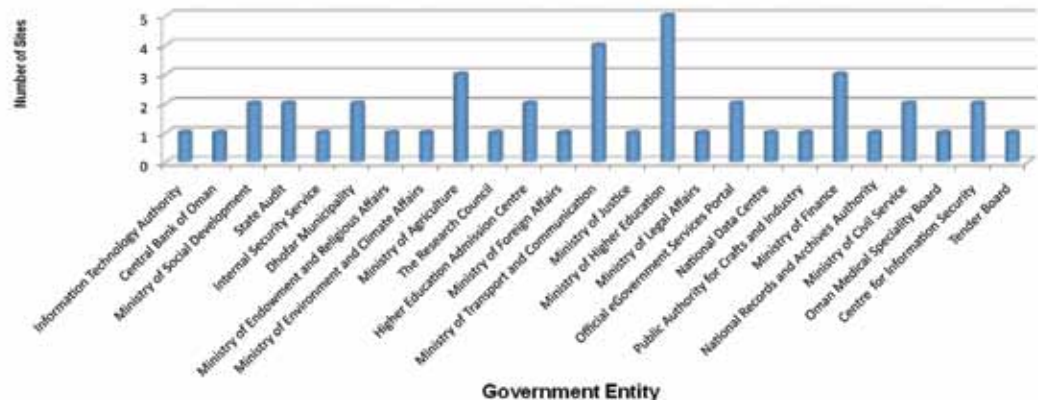
In June 2006, an agreement was signed with OmanTel to build and operate the Unified Government Network. The Network employs advanced technologies to deliver reliable services.

104 additional sites linked in 2009

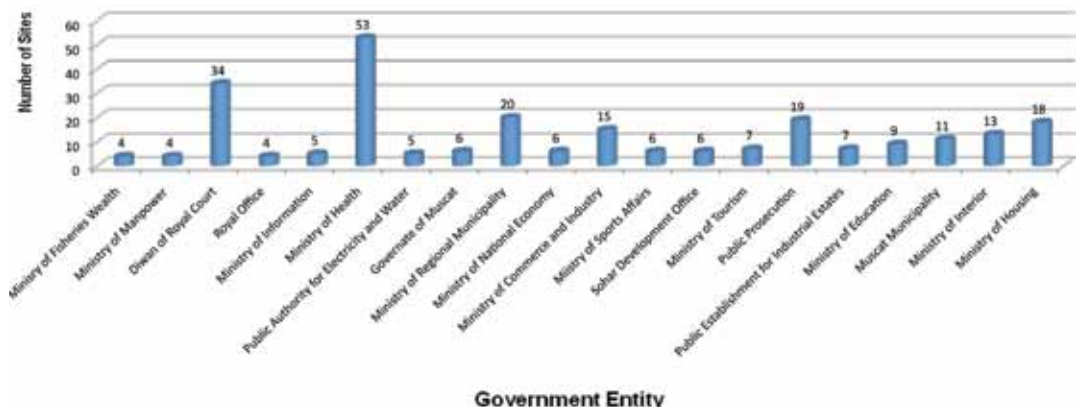
Among the main objectives of the Unified Government Network during 2009 was the addition of at least 75 sites to the Network. The Network managed to exceed its target by 38%, as 104 sites were linked. Also, 16 government institutions joined the Network this year, increasing the number of sites on the Network to 295 sites, belonging to 45 government agencies and institutions.

The chart below illustrates the distribution of sites according to government agencies linked to the Network.

Number of Unified Government Network Connected Sites December 2009



Number of Unified Government Network Connected Sites December 2009



Training Government Employees on Network Monitoring

The Unified Government Network Team, in collaboration with OmanTel, trained a number of government agencies' employees on using the network monitoring site, which contains network reports. The trainees managed to understand the importance of this site and its use to achieve the best results from available services.

The Network provides network specialists in government agencies with the ability to monitor network performance and status of lines, in addition to receiving periodical reports detailing network performance, extent of its use, and downtime periods.

Specialized Training on Networks

During 2009, the Government Network Team offered specialized training programs in networks for network staff and specialists in government agencies. This aimed to develop their technical knowledge and expertise. The first course, organized in May, focused on Multi Protocol Labeled

Switching (MPLS). The second course, organized in August, entailed an intensive training on networking: Cisco Certified Network Associate (CCNA).

Government Network Linkages and Interactions

Among the most important benefits of the Network is to provide a linking option between government agencies and institutions. During 2009, the Government Network managed to link 12 government agencies and institutions with the Ministry of Finance and 11 with the Ministry of Civil Service. Also, the Network provided inter-linkages among 20 government agencies and institutions, in order to facilitate communication between government agencies' systems.

ePayment Gateway

The ePayment Gateway is a complete and integrated set of rules and programs provided by the ITA to facilitate secure ePayment processes. This Gateway works under an umbrella of rules and laws that ensure the security and protection of purchase procedures and service delivery. This Gateway offers ePayment in full to acquire services through the internet anywhere and anytime, without the need to physically go to the institution. The Gateway provides individuals and the business sector the option of ePayment of service fees, as well as paying for different products through a secure, effective and guaranteed channel.

The ePayment Gateway was launched in 2008, and this Gateway was first used by companies, the public sector and individuals. The Gateway engendered eTransaction effectiveness in the Sultanate and simplified ePayment transactions for services. It also granted merchants in the Sultanate an opportunity to sell their products and services on the internet to customers all over the world.

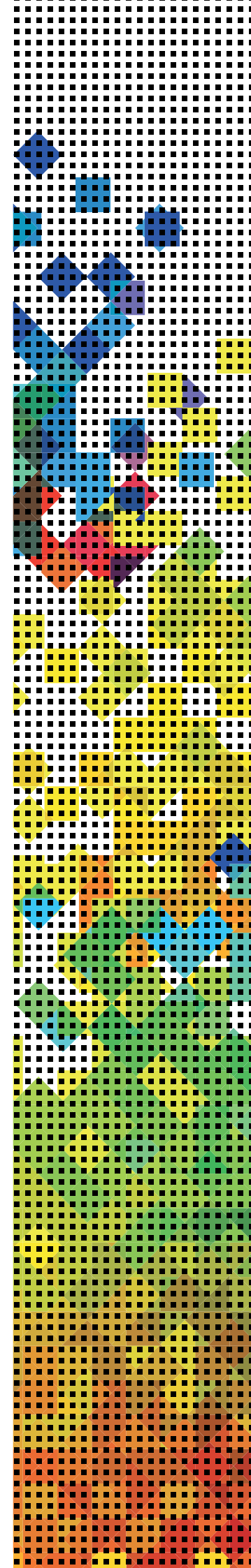
Currently, the second phase of ePayment is being coordinated. It will entail payment through ID cards, mobile phones and transfers from one account to another.

The number of organizations which joined the ePayment Gateway during 2009 included eight organizations, as follows:

- Ministry of Manpower
- Muscat Municipality
- Tender Board
- OmanTel
- Tamimah Computers and Communication Technology Company
- Omani Medical Association
- Omani Environment Society
- Dar al 'Atta Association

The total value and number of transactions or purchases, which were conducted through the ePayment Gateway during 2009 are shown in the table below:

Total Number of Transactions	Monthly Average of Transactions	Total Value of Transactions (R. O.)	Monthly Average of Purchases (R. O.)
60, 072	5150	1,787, 729.580	144, 265



Donations Portal for Charitable Organizations (www.onlinedonations.org.om)

In an attempt to activate the ePayment Gateway, the ITA launched, in January 2009, the Donations Portal for Charitable Organizations. It is considered as one of ITA's key accomplishments, since the ITA worked very hard, in cooperation with the charitable organizations in Oman and with the support of the Ministry of Social Development, to design this portal and make it into a reality from a mere idea.



The Donations Portal for Charitable Organizations, www.onlinedonations.org.om, receives donations through the ePayment Gateway from bank cards, issued by local banks. The donations are then relayed to participating charitable organizations, including: Al Noor Association for the Blind, Early Intervention Centre, National Association for Cancer Awareness, Omani Society for the Disabled, Association for the Welfare of Disabled Children and Environment Society Oman.

The table below shows the total number and value of donations processed through the portal in 2009.

Number of Charitable Societies	Number of Donations	Total Value of Donations (R.O.)
6	232	2624.400

The National Data Centre

The National Data Center (NDC) was launched during 2009 to be a multi-purpose Centre with high readiness. The NDC is available to host government agencies and institutions' data and electronic systems. It also determines solutions to mitigate disasters and achieved business continuity for the various IT systems. Moreover, the NDC hosts the ITA infrastructure projects and systems.

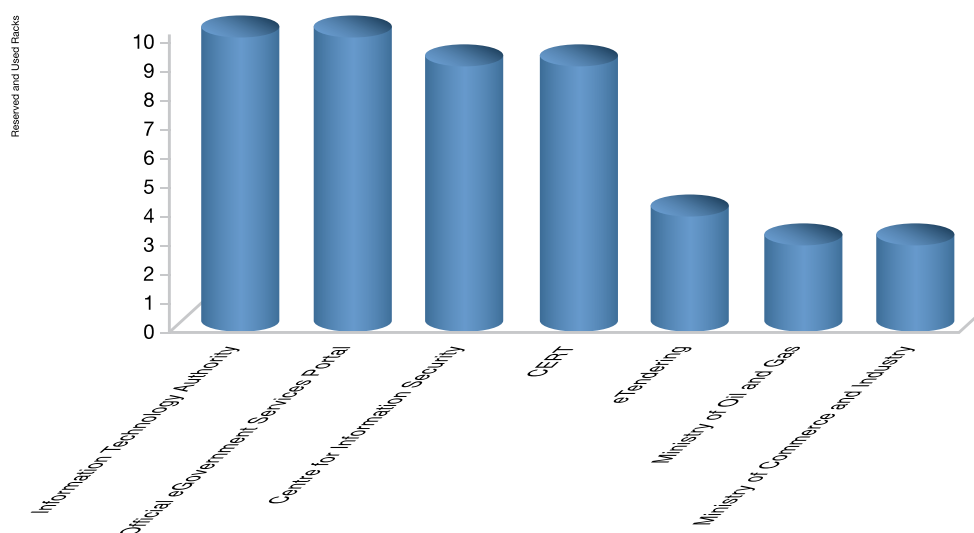
During the year, the NDC hosted data of several government agencies and institutions as well as data of e.oman projects, whether it was pertaining to basic operation or disaster recovery, as shown in the following table:



Project and Parent Institution	Status
Information Technology infrastructure equipment	Hosting and operation
Essential equipment of the Official eGovernment Services Portal	Hosting and operation
Equipment for the Centre for Information Security	Hosting and operation
Main equipment for the CERT	Hosting and operation
Essential equipment for the eTendering Project	Hosting and operation
Essential equipment of the Disaster Recovery Site for the Ministry of Oil and Gas	Transfer in progress
Essential equipment of the Disaster Recovery Site for the Ministry of Commerce and Industry	Transfer in progress

Illustration

Government Institutions and e.oman Projects



CHAPTER THREE

ENHANCING GOVERNMENT PERFORMANCE

The ITA has exerted consistent efforts, in cooperation with several government agencies, to enhance the government performance at large. This was achieved through consultancy services and the provision of a large portion of the ITA consultancy services to government agencies. The ITA continues, through the Governance and Advisory Division, to assist government agencies and institutions, including ministries, as well as to evaluate and implement IT projects and eServices initiatives.

These consultancy services have succeeded in organizing and completing initiative plans; to realize the goals and objectives of the e.oman Initiative and to ensure that these projects comply with international standards and specifications. These initiatives are often concerned with strengthening the automation of work procedures; re-engineering and re-developing existing applications; providing new eServices and handling information security issues in intra-networks of different government agencies and institutions. These consultancy services were provided by highly technically qualified specialists from the ITA, who possess a profound understanding of the infrastructure requirements.



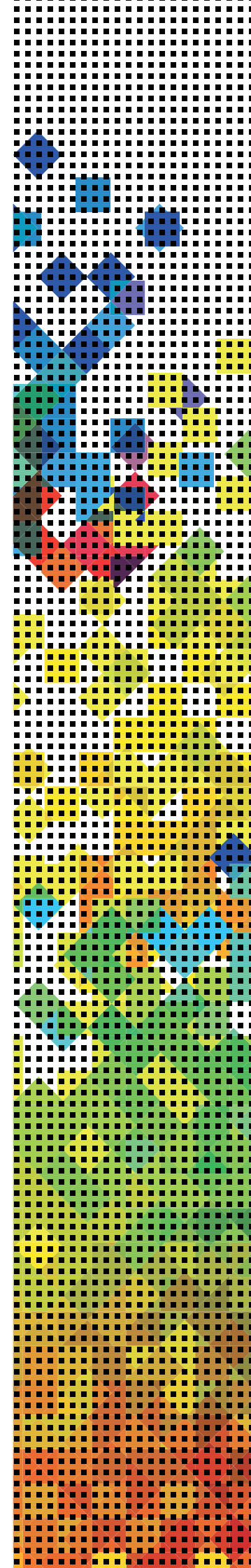
Consultancy Services for Ministries

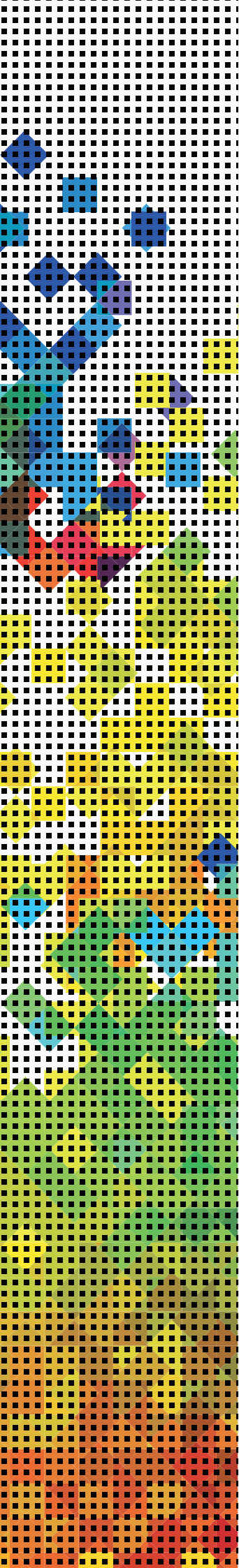
In 2009, the ITA provided a number of consultancy services to different government agencies and institutions. They varied between evaluating investment proposals, studying and analyzing functional needs, preparing proposals and specification documents for bidders, evaluating offers and others.

The ITA also developed the standard documents pertaining to IT technical specifications.

The following table shows some of the consultancy services offered to a number of government agencies and institutions. It outlines the type and nature of rendered services:

Government Institution	Consultancy Description
Ministry of Higher Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preparation of technical studies and tender documents for the fiber optic project • Preparation of an IT strategy for the College of Applied Sciences in Salalah • Preparation of a study for updating, upgrading and developing the Ministry website
The State Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluation of the infrastructure and present applications and drafting a strategic plan for IT in the Council • Review and evaluation of present programs and technologies at the Council
Ministry of Regional Municipalities and Water Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preparation of technical studies and tender documents pertaining to transfer of data centre • Preparation of tender documents for the data centre at the Ministry headquarters • Analysis and evaluation of bids pertaining to the Ministry data centre • Assistance in overseeing the implementation of the data centre project • Study of technical requirements and budget required to interconnect regional municipalities to the Ministry
Higher Committee for Town Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Upgrading the antivirus program and renewal of licenses
Ministry of Finance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementation of information security management system at the Ministry • Study and review of the Ministry contract for the proposed financial system
Ministry of Information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of tender documents for OmanNet project • Study of the requirements for setting up a wireless network at the Ministry
Ministry of Tourism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluation of bids submitted for self-service system
Tender Board	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preparation of a tender document and evaluation of bids to establish a data centre at the Board
National Records and Archives Authority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consultancy study on documentation and archiving management system • Preparation of tender document for equipment room and the infrastructure at the National Records and Archives Authority • Analysis and evaluation of bids to establish the data centre
The Secretariat General for Taxes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of the tender document for Secretariat General of Taxes Portal
Ministry of Foreign affairs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preparation of information security policy at the Ministry • Preparation of the IT strategic plan for the Ministry • Coordination with the Centre for Information Security for renewal of the antivirus systems licenses
Public Authority for Industrial Estates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of the IT Strategic Study
Capital Market Authority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preparation of an IT strategic study
Public Authority for Social Insurance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluation of bids pertaining to the document management system • Preparation of tender documents for the provision of an IT consultant





Office of the Minister of State and Governor of Dhofar	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preparation of an IT strategic study
Ministry of Interior	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Study of the IT infrastructure at the new Ministry building
Ministry of Commerce and Industry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Study on financial cost of the additional technical requirements for the one-stop project
Oman Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preparation of a study on the IT requirements for of the new Council building
Majlis A'Shura	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preparation of an IT strategic study and coordination of linking to the Government Network
The Research Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of the information security policy at the Council • Evaluation of bids relating to the Council gateway project
Ministry of Justice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preparation of tender documents for the court case management project • Preparation of a document to provide consultants on the data centre and court case management project • Preparation of technical study to link court complexes in Sohar and al-Buraimi to the court complex in Muscat
Ministry of Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preparation of tender documents for the communications centre at the Ministry • Implementation of information security management system at the Ministry
Dhofar Municipality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluation and analysis of bids relating to the resources planning project
Ministry of Agriculture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technical consultancy during the implementation phase of the agricultural data centre
Ministry of National Economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Study of the cost of connecting schools to the government network • Study of the required budget to develop the human resources program at the Ministry of Civil Service • Evaluation of bids pertaining to the setting up of the General Census website
Public Authority for Stores and Food Reserve	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preparation and implementation of the IT strategy
Ministry of Civil Service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluation of the offer relating to development of the Ministry website
Ministry of Defense	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluation of bids pertaining to the development of resources project
Ministry of Legal Affairs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technical consultancy on information security
Telecommunication Regulatory Authority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Study on the use of the internet domain names and identifications
Royal Oman Police	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing technical consultancy on the automated custom statistics system project

The ITA has also provided assistance to government agencies in the following projects:

Services booklet provided by the ITA

Framework for the Technical Consultancy provided by the ITA.

Innovation and Support Centre (ISC)

The Innovation and Support Centre began its operations in April 2007. The Centre was officially launched in January 2008, with a core team comprised of 14 members. Until 2009, the number of staff working at the Centre exceeded 20; 5 of whom are employed by Microsoft and 16 employed by the ITA.

The vision of the ISC is to establish a local Centre for ICT with the capabilities of international standards; to employ and manage highly trained local Omani talents. Its mission is to create innovative solutions, disseminate latest technologies, train local Omani talents, and support the environment through the use of IT and best practices for enhancing government services, as well as assist individuals and government agencies to realize their potentials.

Objectives of the ISC

The Innovation and Support Centre works according to the following objectives:

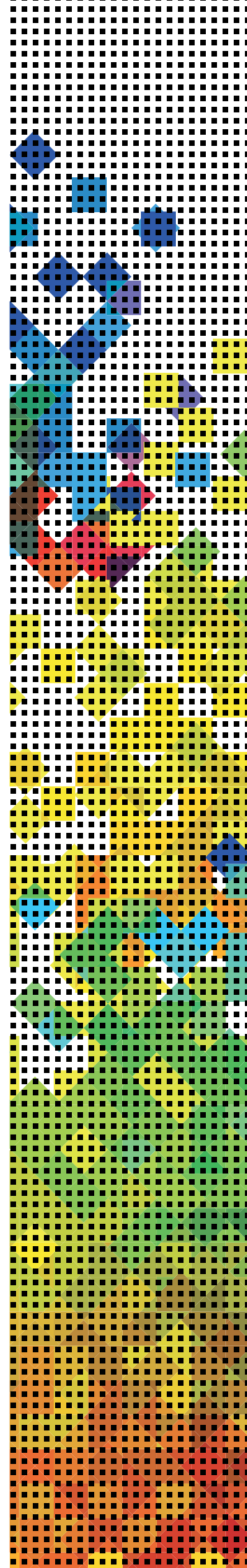
Enabling individuals to acquire skills and knowledge through specialized training programs for government agencies and institutions, in addition to providing specialized training in some of the Centre's projects. Also, training local Omani talents in accordance with the best practices and industrial standards. The ISC seeks to become a key Centre for the receipt of training grants in IT.

Improving the efficiency of government services through determining features and characters of government institutions; performing health and environmental investigation to verify the competency of work environments; establishing IT road maps for government agencies and institutions, and working on programs that can be recycled and re-utilized in other government agencies and institutions.

Strengthen IT sections through institutional agreements, the use of the latest Microsoft software, and sharing development with other organizations. This will help create solutions and develop services for government agencies and institutions.

Excellence of provision of operational support, through high quality servers, either as preemptive precautionary services or via the exchange of practical experience with all organizations.

The ISC is committed to the transfer of knowledge accumulated by its employees to the government agencies and institutions for providing good services. The Centre seeks to transfer its expertise through its specialized technical staff to the various organizations. The Centre is orientated to the service of government agencies and institutions. Working on creative



and innovative thinking to address challenges faced by government organizations, the ISC is designed to create solutions that are customer-centred using the latest technologies for operations management and customer support.

The ISC offers three main services: Consultancy Services, Support Services and Technical Training Services. It has the necessary capabilities to serve customers with the skills and expertise of the Centre's employees, gleaned over a number of years working in several countries, major companies and leading companies in the IT industry. It also has specialized teams in several areas of technology such as development technology, messaging and work methodology. The Centre has an additional advantage; it has a direct association with Microsoft and its resources all over the world.

Microsoft Programs – Workshop Plus

The Innovation and Support Centre, during 2009, organized several rounds of training on Microsoft Workshop Plus, as part of its efforts on capacity building through technical support and training.

The table below shows names of workshops and number of participants in each workshop.

Workshop	Number of Participants
An approach to Windows Vista	8
Windows Vista installation	6
Windows Vista: Easy Management and Productivity, Security and Performance	12
Online Correspondences Supplier (OCS)	15
Introduction to Building Networks Infrastructure	8
Windows Server 2008 – An Overview	8
Introduction to Active Directory Windows Server 2008	7
Active Directory Installation: Windows Server 2008	7
Backup and Restoration: Active Directory	13
Active Directory: Problem Solving	9
Approach to System Centre Operation Manager (SCOM)	8
Introduction to System Centre Compiling Management (SCCM)	17
An Approach to Windows Updating Supplier (WSUS)	10
Installation of System Centre Compiling Management (SCCM)	12
SharePoint Supplier Compiler (SharePoint) 2007	8
SharePoint Applications Programming 2007	14
Safety Management in Windows Networks	10

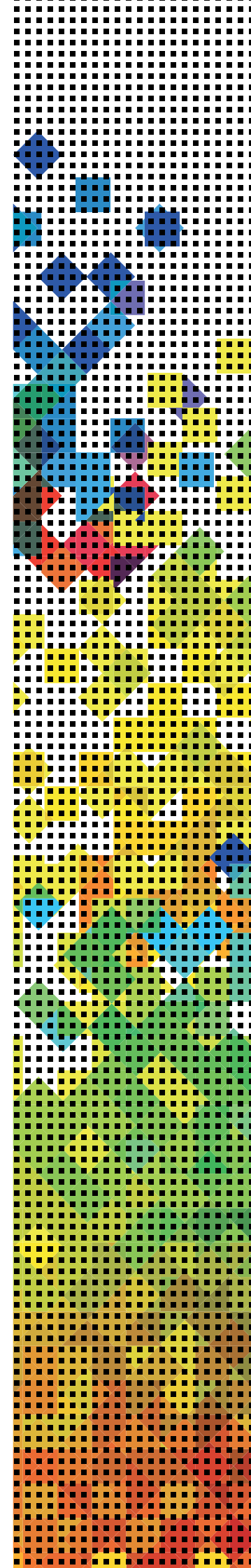
Introduction to Correspondences System - Exchange 2007	11
Problem Solving: Exchange 2007 Correspondence System	5
Enhanced Correspondence Exchange System (Exchange Clustering) 2007	10
Introduction to Correspondence System - Exchange 2007	7
Migration to Correspondence System - Exchange 2007	5
An approach to basics of Windows Clustering	7
Development and Programming (MOSS Development)	6
An Approach to Basics of SQL Server (Server 2005)	10
Windows 7: Applications Compatibility	8
Backup and Restoration of Active Directory	10
Virtual Simulation Technology (Hyper V)	8
Total	255

Technical Services for Government Agencies and Institutions

The Innovation and Support Centre provided a number of technical services for different government agencies and institutions throughout 2009.

The table below shows the most important of these services and government agencies to which these services were rendered during the year:

Government Unit	Project
The Research Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Installation of Email Server (Exchange 2007) • Installation of Proxy System Server (ISA 2006) • Installation of Windows Updates Server (WSUS)
Tender Board	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preparation and Installation of Active Directory Windows Server 2008
Town Planning Higher Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Upgrading of Active Directory to Windows Server 2008
Sultan Qaboos University	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Installation and setup of Active Directory Windows Server 2008
Sultan Qaboos University Hospital	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Installation of Microsoft Tools System Server (MDT)
State Audit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Installation of OSC • Installation of Proxy Server ISA 2006 • Installation of WSUS
Salalah Technical College	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Installation and setup of Windows Active Directory 2008
Salalah Civil Airport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Installation of Proxy Server ISA 2006
Royal Oman Police	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Installation of SCCM
Royal Court Affairs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Installation of File-Sharing System DFS • Installation of MDT Server



Royal Army of Oman	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Installation of Proxy Server ISA 2006 • Installation of MDT Server
Public Authority for Electricity and Water	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhancing the Email Server - Exchange 2007
Oman Investment Fund	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Installation of Windows Updates Server WSUS
Oman Holding Company for Environment Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Installation of Proxy Server ISA 2006 • Installation and setup of Windows Active Directory 2008
Ministry of Sports Affairs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Installation of Microsoft MDT Server • External Email Server – Exchange 2007 • Upgrading Active Directory to windows Server 2008
Ministry of Social Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Upgrading Active Directory to Windows Server 2008
Ministry of Regional Municipalities and Water Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Installation of SCCM Server
Ministry of Manpower	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Installation of Microsoft MDT Server • Upgrading Active Directory to Windows Server 2008 • Installation of WSUS Server • Installation of SCOM Server
Ministry of Higher Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Installation of SCCM
Ministry of Finance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Installation of antivirus system (Forefront for Exchange) • Installation of WSUS Server
Ministry of Civil Service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Upgrading Active Directory to Windows Server 2008
Ministry of agriculture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Installation of WSUS Server
Faculty of Education Ibbi	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Upgrading Active Directory to Windows Server 2008 • Installation of Proxy server - ISA 2006 • Installation and Setup of MDT Server • Installation of WSUS Server • Upgrading Active Guide to Windows Server 2008
Diwan of Royal Court	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Upgrading Active Directory to Windows Server 2008
Ministry of Transport and Communication - Civil Aviation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Renaming of Active Directory to Windows Server 2008
Information Technology Authority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Upgrading Active Directory to Windows Server 2008

eTendering

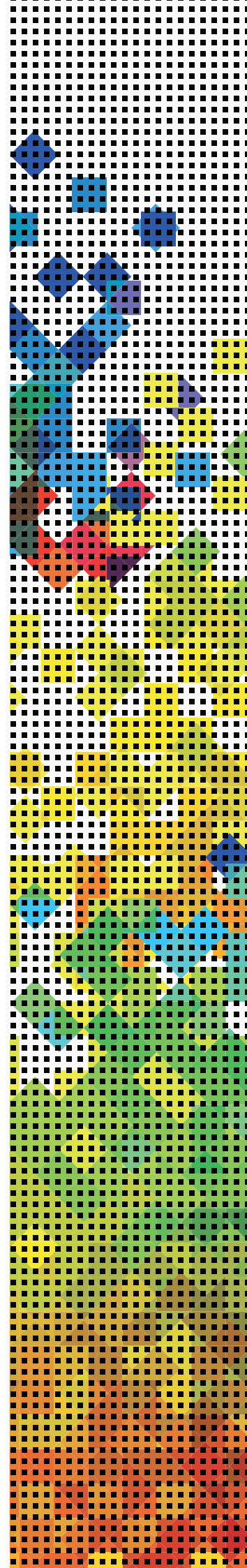
The eTendering project was awarded to a consortium of companies, in September 2008. The project aims to automate the business processes of the Tender Board; managing and developing a system for new eTenders. The project also aims to complete all processes automatically and electronically and replace all necessary manual procedures during the phases of tendering, bidding and training of the Board's staff and specialists in the new technology; to guarantee efficient use and effective management and monitor the eTendering system.

The commencement of the eTendering project is a the foundation stone for electronic procurement as part of eServices and commercial applications, which the ITA plans to develop in cooperation with other government agencies and institutions.

The eTendering system will be totally automatic to include the submission of bids and company registration which will be made available on the internet through the Tender Board website.

During 2009, the ITA managed to achieve the following in this project:

- Assisted the Tender Board in determining the appropriate applications interface to integrate with other applications to ensure continuity of service without interruption.
- Moved and installed the eTendering project equipment at the National Data Centre and backup location at the Tender Board.
- Presented the new eTendering system to 55 government agencies and institutions.
- Final touches (eTendering) were completed as per the requirements of the Tender Board and all government organizations.
- An eTendering Support Centre has been set up at the Tender Board, and appropriate human resources have been trained for this Centre.
- The eTendering system was linked to the ePayment gateway and SMS service.



CHAPTER FOUR

CAPACITY BUILDING

The national project to train and build local capacities follows the Royal Directives of His Majesty Sultan Qaboos bin Said and the attention he pays to human resources and development of their scientific and practical competencies as the basis for real development. His Majesty the Sultan, in his address to the Council of Oman in November 2008, stressed upon the great care and attention particularly accorded by him to the National Strategy for Oman's Digital Society and eGovernment. IT, His Majesty said, is the main driver for development in the third millennium. His Majesty also explained his enlightened vision to create a long term national plan to develop the skills and capacities of citizens in dealing with the modern digital technology. The plan will also develop eGovernment services. From this premise, the training project will contribute significantly to the development of functional competencies and enhancing eGovernment services. This will subsequently provide better services to citizens, residents, and visitors alike, and will lead to positive results on all developmental and economic fields.

Government IT Training & Certification

In February 2008, the ITA launched, in cooperation with the Ministry of Civil Service and Ministry of Education, a major project to train and qualify more than 93,000 civil service employees in PC-handling and IT skills. Upon conclusion of training, they will be granted an IC3 certificate. The project will continue for three years and will be extended to all governorates and regions of the Sultanate. This project falls under the National IT Training and Awareness Initiative (NITTA) and is part of the strategic plans to build Oman's digital society and eGovernment.



The first phase of this training project will span across a number of regions and will include more than 1600 employees from different government organizations in the Al Batinah Region. The project will continue in other governorates and regions of the Sultanate, where placement tests were conducted for a large numbers of trainees. Accordingly, appropriate training programs have been developed for every employee.

The number of trainees reached 7644 by the end of 2009, and 1575 obtained their training certificates.

The number of centres reached 269 by the end of 2009, spread over government schools and buildings and training institutes. The number of government organizations, employees of which have been trained, reached 35 organizations, all adopting the Ministry of Civil Service system. A number of employees, belonging to five government organizations, were trained at home.

Community IT Training Program

The Community IT Training Program initiative aims to activate continuing education with all social strata; developing their capacities and skills in handling digital technology and interacting with eServices. This was delivered through training programs offered by the Community Knowledge Centres (CKCs), which were established in some parts of the Sultanate.

Community Knowledge Centres

Community Knowledge Centres (CKCs) are key to the Community IT Training program. This will limit digital illiteracy and render training on digital technologies available to different societal strata, subsequently creating more opportunities to reach higher horizons in IT. As a result of this attention accorded to training nationals, four CKCs were opened in 2009: Muscat, Sohar, Sur and Salah.

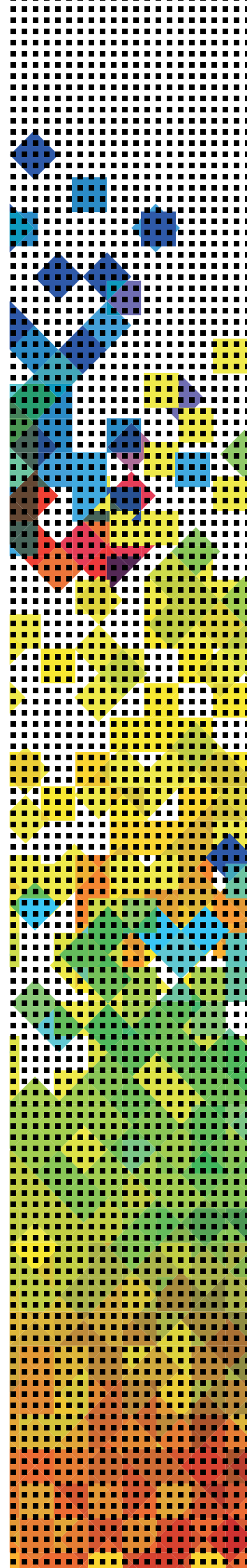
Establishing permanent CKCs is part of the Community IT Training program, which falls under the National IT Training and Awareness Initiative (NITTA). The ITA aims to establish additional CKCs in the different regions and wilayats of the Sultanate.

Enrollment in CKCs is available to all those who are serious about learning IT and benefiting from the offered training courses. They have to be literate and should not be younger than 15 years old. Registration can be done at the nearest CKC in the region.

Specialized IT Training

Specialized IT training aims to train all government employees working in IT related jobs. A number of specialized training courses were provided from IT service providers, along with awarding trainees a certified international certificate at the end of training. Accordingly, a number of specialized courses were set aside for companies such as Microsoft, Oracle and Cisco. This was based on current needs for the required licenses in government agencies and institutions.

In 2009, a number of training sessions were organized within the framework of providing specialized IT training for IT staff at government agencies and institutions. These courses included, for example: System Engineer, System Administrator, and Microsoft (MS) Certified Solution Developer. In total, 39 employees were trained as MS System Certified Engineers in addition to providing 77 training opportunities for fresh IT graduates.





Seminars were organized as well with Adobe Company, on its products and document management, for select audiences in Muscat and Salalah. The targeted audience who attended these seminars reached 475 participants from various government, educational and commercial entities. Education and electronic documents management was highlighted. Periodical training programs were also organized with several organizations such as Gartner, Microsoft, Mideast Data Systems, Oracle, Cisco and BSI (British Standards Institute) for system management.

As part of the licenses agreement between the Sultanate and Microsoft, a number of IT specialized training seats were provided by the agreement, as shown in the following table.

Certificates	Total Trainees	Total Awarded Certificates
MCSA: Microsoft System Administrator	51	31
MCSE: Microsoft System Engineer	55	31
MCSD: Microsoft System Developer	26	13
Grand Total	132	75

The ITA also benefited from 20 training opportunities for the Training of Trainers through a Microsoft agreement, for the training of employees and the public. These training opportunities will be further utilized during 2010.

National PC Initiative

The National PC Initiative aims to promote the spread and use of PCs and the internet in the community, through supporting Omani families to purchase a PC, encouraging its use, and benefiting from the internet and e.oman Initiative projects.

The National PC Initiative is one of the most important ITA initiatives. Its basic idea is to create a package of facilities and features, including a PC and basic training programs, that are

affordable by local community standards. This package was designed to enable different social strata to avail of this opportunity.

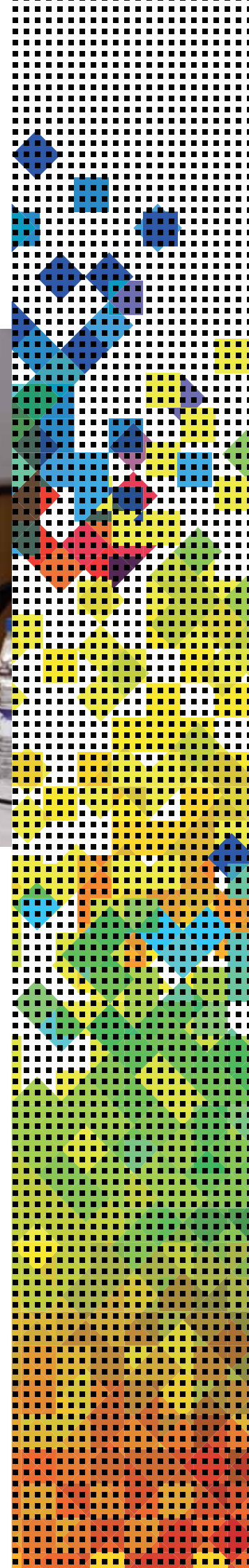
This project will contribute towards enhancing the ICT sector through developing local techniques and technologies for joint services, equipment, training and software. Subsequently, the program will achieve several benefits and will enhance the spread of PCs and internet use. This will effectively contribute towards developing local potentials and abilities, heralding the development of a strong knowledge-based economy in the Sultanate.



This program is in the pre-launch stage, where the implementation plans have been prepared and a tender for the supply and distribution of PCs has been called. It is expected that the program will be launched in 2010.

Linking Schools to the Internet

This project is another one of the e.oman Initiatives. The ITA developed the idea and drafted the requirements in cooperation with the Ministry of Education, having also prepared the tender documents. The ITA is evaluating the bids and will then award the project to the most appropriate offer. Initial evaluation has been completed, and a comprehensive technical evaluation will commence soon. It is expected that the project will take 8-10 months from the awarding date. It is also expected that the project will link a minimum of 256 schools to the internet and education portal during year one of the project.



Oman's digital society initiatives require wide legal protection for all official and personal electronic transactions. The ITA has taken proactive steps in drafting legislation regulating eTransactions in the Sultanate. This was done in collaboration with the concerned agencies and stakeholders to strengthen the confidence of individuals and business sector in eTransactions. This was culminated in the promulgation of the eTransaction Law by Royal Decree 69/2008. The law addresses key issues such as: legality of eTransactions, Intellectual Property Rights (IPR), taxation, data protection (private life), and legality of e-signatures and emails, and the validity of ePayments, in addition to issues pertaining to emails, privacy and security.

The ITA worked on supporting its e-projects with frameworks and criteria which regulate eTransactions and create a safe digital environment of high quality and competency. These frameworks are comprised of sets of procedures which document, audit and disseminate the ITA's standards. They also adopt and implement international standards and guidelines related to eTransactions and integrate them into eGovernment services mechanisms; creating a unified protocol for their use.

eTransactions Law

The promulgation of the eTransaction Law, by Royal Decree 69/2008, is considered a qualitative jump in the legislative infrastructure in the Sultanate. This was envisaged to consolidate the confidence of individuals and business sector in eTransactions. The law provides a wide legal coverage and protection of all ICT official and personal transactions.

In pursuit of raising the awareness level within the society about this law and its role in establishing a safe working environment in eTransaction, the ITA, during 2009, conducted the following activities:

FIRST: Raising Legal Awareness

The ITA, represented by the Governance and Advisory Division, conducted a series of awareness seminars as follows:

General lectures throughout Al Batinah North, Al Batinah South, Sharqiyah North, Sharqiyah South, Dakhiliya, Al Buraimi and Dhofar.

Specific lectures to the Ministry of Interior and Capital Market Authority.

The ITA also organized a seminar on eTransactions for judges, members of the public prosecution, lawyers and heads of legal departments in government ministries, agencies and institutions.



SECOND: Consultancy

During 2009, the ITA submitted several legal studies and opinions pertaining to the eTransaction Law, as follows:

Body/Institution	Type of Consultancy
General Secretariat for the Council of Ministers	About the Pan Arab Agreement on Combating IT/Cyber Crimes
Ministry of Justice	Draft model law on eCommerce
Ministry of Justice	Electronic Collection of Judicial Fees
Central Bank of Oman	Draft amendments to the Banking Law
The Research Council	IPR for computer software.
Oman Establishment for Media, Publication and Advertisement	Terms and conditions of website use

THIRD: Organization

In this context, during 2009, the following was achieved:

- Draft bylaws of the eTransaction Law
- Draft amendment of Article Five of the eTransaction Law
- Translation of the eTransaction Law into English and printing it in two languages: Arabic and English
- Establish bases for electronic authentication.

Draft of Anti-Cyber Crime Law

In view of the rapid and concurrent changes in IT; the growing number of inventions in computers, internet and communication (3rd generation of mobile phones) and the rise of

crimes related to computers and the internet or what is commonly known as cyber crimes; the ITA was keen to put in place a legislative framework to combat abuse of ICT. Upon the approval of the Council of Ministers and in cooperation with some experts at the Ministry of Legal Affairs, the ITA prepared a special draft law to address the abuse of ICT. The draft has been referred to the concerned authorities for final review and will be called Anti-Cyber Crime Law.

This draft law aims to:

- Assist in realizing cyber security.
- Retain rights arising from unlawful use of computers, networks and the internet.
- Protect public interest, morals and public order.
- Protect the national economy.



The Electronic Authentication Project

The Electronic Authentication Project is an application of the eTransaction Law. The ITA has been keen to study it well and approach it measurably and gradually on several phases as follows:

Phase I: Learning from International Experience

Specialists at the ITA conducted several visits to learn from international experience. In this regard, the team was exposed to Egyptian, Tunisian, Korean and Saudi Arabian experiences. Moreover, they participated in several events related to electronic authentication in Algeria, Saudi Arabia and Tunisia.

The ITA organized a joint workshop with the Tunisian National Agency for Electronic Authentication on this subject.

Phase II: Preparation of Documents

In this regard, the specialists prepared a package of project related documents as follows:

- Project implementation procedures
- Report to the Board of Directors on the project
- Tender Document (Design, Execution and Management), where the document was presented to division heads in May 2009, and was approved in July of the same year. An international tender was offered in mid-October 2009 for project implementation.

Centre for Information Security (CIS)

The CIS is one of the ITA's key initiatives. It aims to address security risks and build information security awareness within the Sultanate. The CIS serves both the public and private sectors, as well as nationals and residents through providing a wide range of information security related services.

The CIS services add high value to the state institutions through providing security support for eGovernment services, technology wise and knowledge wise. The information and data, applications, systems and networks are considered of high value and must be protected from intentional damage, negligence, natural disasters or technical failures.

Hence, the ITA, represented by the CIS, provides security services to governmental agencies and institutions according to best practices to guarantee information confidentiality, integrity, and access.

The CIS Objectives

The CIS aims to create an safe, secure and regulated working environment; protect information and databases and restrict internal and external security breaches.

In addition to the above, the CIS aims to create confidence among employees and customers in commercial transactions; integrate crisis mitigation as well as business continuity plans and prevent information security incidents.

The CIS also aims to detect incidents; evaluate its impacts; mitigate the resulting damages impacting work and continuously develop information security procedures.

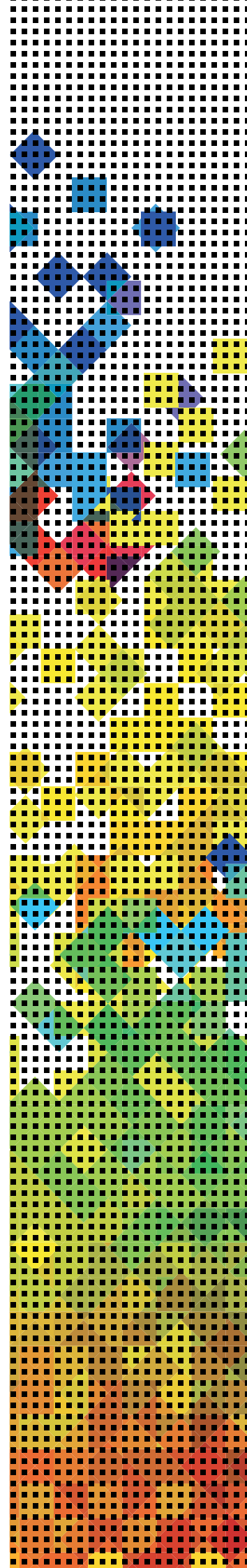
Security Threat Mitigation Programs

During 2009, the CIS achieved the following in the field of security threat mitigation programs: Providing anti-virus protection alongside licensing and software support in government organizations, in addition to arranging the training of staff on installations and setups, if required.

Providing protecting software and support for servers, clients, mail exchange against viruses, spyware and breach.

Installing anti-virus protection in 22 government agencies and institutions.

Obtaining 6000 licenses for Trend Micro.



Protecting Government Websites

During 2009, the CIS achieved several important steps in protecting government websites, most importantly:

Preventing attacks and attempts of sabotage and breach by using Web Application Firewalls for website applications.

Organizing and monitoring the huge influx of entry requests and browsing processes, by using security services attached to the firewall application.

Providing a flexible mechanism to access websites that require identifying the user or employee.

Implementing protection measures for the Official eGovernment Services Portal.

Activating and securing the Ministry of Commerce and Industry website.

Internet Connection Security System

This service enables employees from all government agencies to access the internet and benefit from all resources available on government institutions' websites without going through the government network. It also ensures keeping viruses and spyware outside the domain of the network.

Moreover, this service allows flexibility of control and monitoring of employees' access and browsing through a central unit. It also provides high authorization flexibility for different categories with several setups.

Security Loopholes Management

This service entails taking stock of all equipment and components of the internal network of a government agency or institution, services provided by systems and applications and all security policies in place for the IT infrastructure in the said agency or institution. It also entails providing a comprehensive investigation of the IT environment infrastructure.

Moreover, it entails the study and analysis of potential threat, evaluation of discovered loopholes risks, and provision of advice and opinion on addressing the discovered security errors and loopholes.

Securing the Internal Government Network

The provision of security and protection for the government network interlinking organizations, through an encrypted network was achieved by ensuring:

- Data confidentiality.
- Data integrity and uniformity.
- Authorized personnel access only.
- Provision of the following equipment and software:
 - Firewall supplied with breach detector and anti-breach facilities
 - Virtual Private Network
 - Network monitoring devices and monitoring status of connection with linked units for all equipment supplied and installed by the ITA

By the end of 2009, 77 government sites were successfully secured.

Security Training and Awareness

Since staff members need security training and awareness, it was imperative to raise the level of their awareness of information security and brush up their skills and behavior in dealing with important data, vital services and high value equipment.

To spread awareness on information security among government agencies and institutions' employees, the ITA conducted several activities, as follows:

Seminars and workshops on themes such as information security management systems, risk management, business continuity management and post disaster recovery

Awareness campaigns within government agencies and institutions, and training IT staff on actualizing and spreading a culture of information security within their organizations

Distribution of leaflets, posters and stickers in government institutions

Evaluation of information security awareness among employees through testing and monitoring of their behavior with information and peripherals

Ensuring the existence of mitigation measures – protecting and curing at the same time – which will contribute towards minimizing errors cause by an absence of information security awareness

Workshop on information security

Participation in the 2009 2nd Annual Middle East Conference for Information Security Executive officers.



Security Operations

The Operations Section in the CIS is in charge of ensuring that all services rendered by the information security division is operational and available at all times. It also monitors all equipment, infrastructure and other services to avoid any malfunction that might occur.

The following is a sample of services delivered by the Operations Section:

- Maintaining the information security infrastructure in continuous operations
- Building an operations team capable of providing technical support services and assistance at all levels for the security services offered by the CIS
- Building a set of integrated solutions which provide the ability of managing and monitoring services around the clock
- Establishing all business operations in compliance with best practices and internationally recognized operations, such as ITIL V3.

Preparing Information Security Auditors

The CIS organized a course on information security for government organizations' employees in February 2009, at the Ministry of National Economy. It was entitled Audit Management in Information Security. It was an advanced course for preparing information security auditors. The course was certified by the British Standards Institute (BSI) and targeted IT Directors in government agencies and institutions, as well as information security specialists and network engineers.

These courses were part of a series of courses conducted by the ITA as a training plan for government employees. They also aimed to increase awareness with management and leadership of the importance of information security, threat and risk mitigation, based on the latest international standards of information security management.

National Computer Emergency Response Team (CERT)

CERT is another key ITA initiatives. It is considered one of the important e.oman Initiative projects launched along with the ePayment Gateway, National Data Centre, Centre for Information Security and Unified Government Network, which all complement each other to form the infrastructure to build Oman's Digital Society and eGovernment.



The CERT aims to analyze and treat information security incidents on the internet, as well as to enhance information security awareness and culture among different social strata, whether individuals or institutions. The CERT was established in May 2009 to serve a wide group of ICT users, particularly the national infrastructure institutions and major industries, in addition to nationals and residents. It provides a diverse set of information security related services.

The Centre also aims to build confidence in the use of eGovernment services on the internet, as well as to build competent Omani cadres qualified to respond to security incidents and detect them. In addition to the above, it aims to build and enhance information and computer security oriented awareness and culture among different societal strata. Moreover, it aims to timely provide accurate data on threats and risks and means of protection against them. It also aims to create precautionary measures and steps to avoid or minimize exposure to security threats; to effectively and swiftly respond to security incidents; to limit the extent of their impact through coordination and collaboration with similar Centres regionally and internationally; and strengthen research and development in the information security field.



The periodical monitoring of websites is a service that targets the collection and analysis of all data pertaining to security incidents, such as website modifications, alteration or cancellation. During the year, the following was achieved:

First: Responded to a number of cyber crimes and incidents and followed them up in coordination with the concerned authorities, through:

Receiving security incidents, classifying and analyzing them before responding to them.

Investigating the incidents through records analysis and tracking sources of breach.

Providing the required support for response to incidents through assisting the victims and directing them to overcome impacts of incidents remotely or by fax, phone or email.

Work on coordinating among impacted parties to respond to incidents.

Second: Information Security Risks Detection in Cyber Space

The CERT is provided with the latest capabilities to detect new risks in cyber space. The team monitors threats and analyses records collected through specialized software, in order to determine the means and route through which hackers managed to break into the system and, at the same time, discover system defects.



CERT – Training and Awareness

In pursuit of a security oriented culture, the CERT conducted the following:

First: Launched the National Awareness Campaign Towards a Safe Online Environment, which aims to:

- Indoctrinate ethics of technology use and respect of the rights of others.
- Outline the method of reporting incidents and handling them.
- Change the inappropriate behavior when handling technology.
- Inform users of their security responsibility.
- Use creative awareness technologies continuously.

Second: CERT's Participation in the 2009 Salalah Khareef Festival

Daily presence in the Municipality Centre:

- Introducing the CERT and offered services.
- Introducing the national campaign *Towards a Safe Online Environment*.
- Distributing leaflets and stickers on information security.

Daily courses on computer and internet security, which included the following:

- Introducing Information Security
- Introducing Security Threats
- Safe Use of the Internet
- Backup and Restoration of Data
- Updating the system and application systems

Specialized Courses in Information Security, which included the following:

- Wireless networks security
- Protecting children in the Cyber Space (the Internet).
- Emergency and Business Continuity plan
- Judicial templates for cyber crimes.

The World Telecommunication and Information Society Day

Stressing upon the attention and care accorded by the Sultanate to provide information security in society, the ITA celebrated, in May 2009, the World Telecommunication and Information Society Day (WTISD) under the theme of Protecting Children in Cyberspace. It aimed to lay the foundation for a safe cyber-world in the future; and to ensure access of children to the internet, and its valuable resources, without concern over falling prey to conscienceless people in cyber space.

Based on the ITA's care and attention paid to all social strata, including children, through education in ICT, during the celebration, the ITA launched the national awareness campaign Towards a Safe Online Environment targeting children, students, parents and other social groups concerned with ICT, through awareness measures at the website, and the use of education software and tools, technologies and training.



CHAPTER SIX

DEVELOPMENTS IN eGOVERNMENT SERVICES



During 2009, the Sultanate accomplished several solid steps on the course of realizing the vision of the National Strategy for Oman's Digital Society and eGovernment. This has qualified Oman to advance her ranking in the area of e-readiness. In this Chapter we will review the most significant accomplishments in the area of eGovernment services and most important projects executed by the ITA to raise the level of government services during the year.

UN Ranking of the Sultanate's eReadiness

The ICT sector in the Sultanate of Oman is geared to face a huge jump in growth. This has taken a particular significance after His Majesty's directives to all government agencies to enhance their performance and services through the adoption of digital technology. Government agencies have continued their efforts to transform the Sultanate into a digital society, following a harmonized and consistent approach, providing essential infrastructure and digital technology in all projects aiming to build capacities.

The 2008/2009 a UN study, entitled From Electronic Government to Connected Governance, pointed that all governments are going forward in developing eGovernments. It also said that most advanced and highest developing countries have achieved varied progress in eGovernment applications towards integrated and connected governance.

The Sultanate has achieved a remarkable progress in the eGovernment ranking as she jumped from 112 in 2005 to 84 in the year 2008/2009. Moreover, Oman's e-readiness index reached 0.4691, which is higher than the international average of 0.4514.

The advancement of the Sultanate's ranking by 28 points, over a period of three years, was due to the several projects, initiatives and programs launched by the Information Technology Authority (ITA) since its establishment in 2006.

This jump also shows the swift response towards eGovernance and related activities from the public and private sectors in the Sultanate.

The e.oman Initiative has provided a major momentum and interaction especially within the public sector organization, in terms of providing information, interfacing and achieving higher levels of development in performance and eServices.

The Sultanate was also ranked 60th (among 192 countries) in e-participation, with an index value of 0.2045. This was achieved through the provision of government information through websites and the development of policies, programs, budgets, laws, regulations and other information that target the public interest.

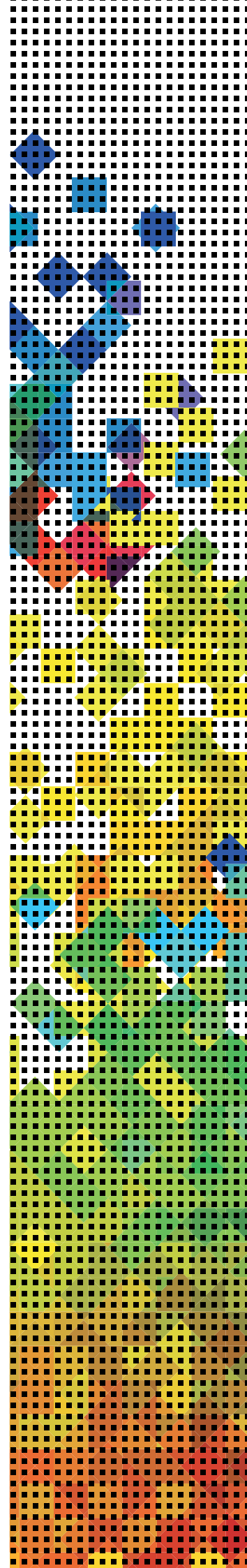
The e-participation index measures whether the information dissemination measures were taken at the appropriate time to reach and use public information, including internet forums, mailing lists, and news and chat rooms. Several public sector organizations use emails and SMSs to reach citizens in time, for related information updates and service delivery.

The World Economic Forum

Oman was globally ranked 50, among 134 countries, in the 2008/2009 Global Report on Information Technology, issued by the World Economic Forum. In 2008, the Sultanate was ranked 53, among 131 countries. This progress was due to the development in the infrastructure of the IT sector, eServices, legislation, ePayment facility, the IT regulating policies in the Sultanate, as well as a higher level of awareness among the populace.

The Sultanate advanced its ranking in several fields. For example, in terms of providing developed IT products, she has advanced to the 22nd rank globally, in terms of e-readiness, advanced to the 39th rank and in terms of the number of ICT users, she advanced to 45th rank. This is all due to the government's sincere pursuit to further strengthen the IT sector and to provide government services via the internet, in addition to the quality and efficacy of IT tools available in the public sector.

The Global IT Sector Report is part of the Global Competitive Report which was recently issued and it is the most comprehensive evaluation of its kind in the world.





The UN Public Service Award

The Civil Status Registration System of the Royal Oman Police (ROP) was honoured with a UN Certificate of Excellence of the UN Public Service Award for improving the delivery of services category in 2009. It was nominated as one of the best ten projects globally. This award is one of the most important internationally, as it is awarded by the United Nations. This was considered a great achievement at the national level and a fruitful result of the collaboration between the ROP and ITA in utilizing modern ICT in enhancing eProjects and the quality of their delivery. This will render the delivery of the ROP eServices easy and accessible for different social strata. The award ceremony was organized at the UN Headquarters and was attended by high level dignitaries and other winning organizations from all over the world.



WSIS Award

The SMS based Recruiting Project of the Royal Court Affairs in 2009 prevailed at the World Summit on the Information Society Summit (WSIS) and won an award, in the eGovernment category, as one of five top practices at the global level. The same project won the 2009 Arab Award for eContent, within the eGovernment category.

The concept of this project can be summarized as follows: to electronically link the Royal Court Affairs to the Ministry of Manpower through the National Manpower Register. An interfacing program was designed to compare between the job requirements specified by the recruitment office at the Royal Court Affairs and the qualifications of job seekers kept at the aforementioned national register. The result of the comparison is relayed automatically to the applicant or registered job seeker. This brief process takes a maximum of 10 seconds.

The Donations Portal for Charitable Organizations also won the 2009 Arab Award for eContent.

e.oman Award

In April 2009, the ITA launched the e.oman Award which is considered the first of its kind in the Sultanate. It aims to encourage government organizations to develop innovative and value-added projects in an effort to enhance eGovernment services. The Award had five categories. The first category is Best eContent; where the Award aims to support and develop eGovernment websites and enhance their design and look on the internet. It also aims to honor creativity and use of technology in an integrated, interactive manner of high quality and ease of use. The second category is Best eService; where the Award is given to the most integrated eService offered on the internet that demonstrates high quality and excellence and has direct benefit to the service of the public to enhance individual lives. The third category is Best eMaturity; where the award is given to the one with the best e-infrastructure, according to standards, security, and safe infrastructure in terms of information management.



The fourth category is Best eProject; where the award is given to eGovernment projects that are highly innovative and add great value; saving time and cost and serving a wider mix of society. The fifth category is Best eEconomy; where it is awarded to the projects that implement the best practices in the use of ICT contributing in the process to the economy of the country, directly or indirectly.

Twenty-six government organizations participated in competing in these categories with a total 54 projects, distributed as follows: 15 projects competed in the Best eContent category; 14 projects in the Best eService category; 6 projects in the Best eMaturity category 13 projects in the Best eProject category and 6 projects in the Best eEconomy category.

The results were announced during an official ceremony.



Best eContent

In the first category, the Royal Oman Police (ROP) website won 1st place and the Ministry of Regional Municipalities and Water Resources took 2nd place.

Best eService

In the second category, the Muscat Municipality won 1st place for the facility of ePayment through mobile phones. The 2nd place was won by the ROP for the eServices offered through their websites.

Best eMaturity

In the third category, the Ministry of Manpower was awarded 1st place and Muscat Security Market won 2nd place.

Best eProject

In the fourth category, the Civil Status Registration System of the ROP took 1st place honours, while the 2nd place went to the Education Portal of the Ministry of Education.

Best eEconomy

In the fifth category, the Muscat Security Market won 1st place for the security when dealing with the mobile phone service. The 2nd place went to the Central Bank of Oman for their cheque scanning service.

The e.oman Award jury decided to award the Ministry of Civil Service with a certificate of appreciation in recognition of the exceptional level of their e-recruitment project, which competed in the category of Best eService. Another certificate of appreciation was awarded to the Ministry of Higher Education, in recognition of the exceptional level of the Unified Admittance Centre, which competed within the Best eProject category.



CHAPTER SEVEN

EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES

Over the course of 2009, ITA expanded its activities to raise awareness about Oman's digital projects and eGovernment services. These activities, organized by the ITA or wherein the ITA participated, provided a unique opportunity to reach the largest possible number of the public and, consequently, better delivery of e.oman to different strata of society.



New Brand for e.oman

The ITA launched, in August of this year, the new e.oman Brand Initiative. A press conference was held under the auspices of HE Sheikh Al Fadhel bin Mohammed Al Harthy, Under Secretary for Development Affairs of the Ministry of National Economy; ITA Board members; and Dr. Salim bin Sultan Al Ruzaiqi, ITA's CEO; in addition to a large number of officials from public and private organizations.

During the press conference, the new face of e.oman was introduced and the objectives behind choosing the new logo were explained, in addition to what the new brand will offer in support of the delivery of the e.oman message and its projects.

National Data Centre

Under the auspices of HE Ahmed bin Abdul Nabi Macki, Minister of National Economy and Deputy Chairman of the Financial Affairs and Energy Resources Council, the ITA launched the National Data Centre in May 2009. The Centre is considered a new and an important building block added by the ITA in pursuit to create a developed IT infrastructure in the Sultanate.

Launch of the Official eGovernment Services Portal

In November 2009, the ITA launched the Official eGovernment Services Portal, one of the e.oman initiatives arising out of the National Strategy for Oman's Digital Society and eGovernment.

The launch was presided by HH Sayyid Haitham bin Tariq Al Said, and attended by HE Mohammed bin Nasser Al Khasibi, Secretary General of the Ministry of National Economy and Chairman of the ITA Board, in addition to a number of their Excellencies the Ministers and Under Secretaries; Director Generals; and IT specialists within government agencies.



2nd eGovernment Services Exhibition

The 2nd eGovernment Services Exhibition was held in 2009 in conjunction with COMEX. It witnessed excellent participation from 18 government agencies, which offered several new eGovernment services under the umbrella of the e.oman Initiative. The exhibition provided a platform for exchange of expertise and creation of a sense of cooperation and integration among the various agencies. This was designed to offer incentives to these agencies to develop their eServices and educate the public on how to gradually shift to the use of eGovernment services.

Introducing 'Arif

The 2nd eGovernment Service Exhibition (2009) witnessed the introduction of 'Arif to the public. 'Arif is an Omani cartoon character which was created to disseminate knowledge and awareness about IT and its application to the public in a simple and easy manner. The ITA aimed for such a character to deliver the e.oman Initiative to as large as possible a segment of the populace, removing any barriers or inhibitions between people and IT. The target audience were individuals with limited or no knowledge of IT.

'Arif's character was designed to reflect the young and intelligent Omani personality, aged 14 to 21 years.

'Arif represents the inquisitive, knowledge-seeking and active personality. He is also able to adapt to different environments. He is enthusiastic, proactive and positive.

2009 Salalah Tourism Festival

The ITA participated in the 2009 Salalah Tourism Festival, as part of the second awareness campaign of the e.oman Initiative. The theme was Promoting eCulture. This was the fourth time ITA participated in the festival at this magnitude. The campaign entailed several activities including informing visitors about the e.oman Initiative and its projects and information security, in addition to several events, programs and shows presented by the ITA at its location at the Festival Grounds.



The 2nd e.oman Awareness campaign came as a continuation of the 1st Awareness campaign, May 2006 to February 2007. It entailed several seminars, programs, shows and presentations about e.oman. The campaign spread over the Governorate of Muscat and a number of the Sultanate's governorates and regions. It targeted different groups of society and strata. The 2nd campaign, however, focused solely on promoting eCulture. This campaign was a continuation of the 2008 Salalah Tourism Festival of last year, based on a vision of the primacy of knowledge and awareness and its impact creating a desirable social interaction with IT. These campaigns were driven by the ITA's belief in the urgency to involve all government agencies, civil society organizations, individuals, and private sector organizations in realizing the goals and objectives of the National Strategy for Oman's Digital Society and eGovernment. This will, consequently,

lead to a qualitative transformation in awareness levels and eParticipation, which will, in turn, support the continuous national efforts to transform the Sultanate to a thriving digital society.

The ITA worked to deliver a number of training programs for Omanis during the 2009 Salalah Tourism Festival. That was part of its ongoing project to train and qualify society to effectively handle using IT. The ITA previously organized training programs, where in 2007 and 2008 the two ITA batches were trained, and in 2009 another batch was trained on PC-handling skills and other key ICT skills, enabling all of them to harness the potentials of digital technology in their scientific and professional careers.

Other training programs were also conducted in 2009 in Salalah, Rakhyut and Mirbat.

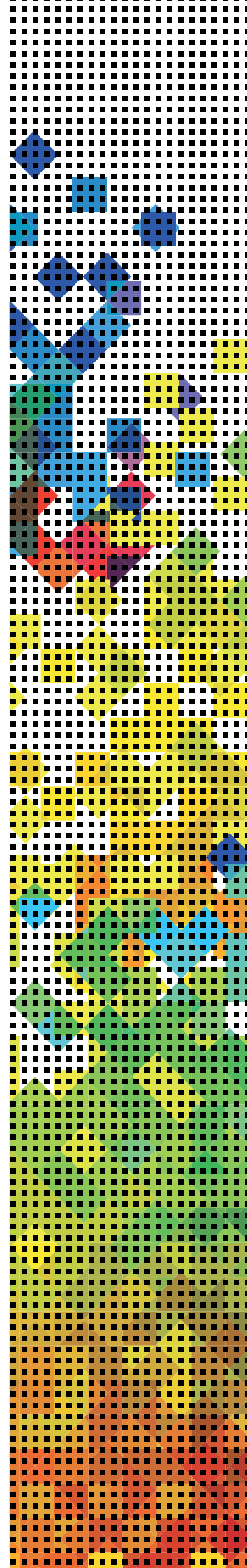
The ITA participation in the Salalah Tourism Festival included awareness campaigns on the Civil Service Employees' Training Project. These were conducted through visits to several government agencies to explain the project and its benefits, which have since facilitated its actual implementation in the form of the Government IT Training & Certification Program.

As well as part of the 2nd e.oman Awareness Campaign, during the 2009 Salalah Tourism Festival, the ITA organized general awareness lectures targeting individuals and government agencies, in addition to the education sector in Salalah and adjacent wilayats in the Governorate of Dhofar. Visits conducted to these wilayats aimed to promote eCulture and explain the National Strategy for Oman's Digital Society, eGovernment and e.oman projects. It also aimed to educate the public about the eGovernment projects implemented and local and international awards received, plus informing the public about the e.oman Award, its objectives, categories and winning projects for this year.

World Telecommunication and Information Society Day

The Sultanate being fully committed to providing information security in the society, the ITA celebrated the World Telecommunication and Information Society Day in May 2009. The ceremony was held at the Grand Hyatt Muscat Hotel, under the auspices of HE Yahya bin Sa'oud a'Sulaimi, Minister of Education. It was attended by HE Mohammad bin Nasser Al Khasibi, Secretary General of the Ministry of National Economy and Chairman of ITA's Board and the Telecommunication Regulatory Authority, in addition to Dr. Salim bin Sultan Al Ruzaiqi, CEO of the ITA.

During the celebration, the national campaign Towards a Safe Online Environment was launched. This campaign aimed to build and reinforce a culture of security of information and personal computers within all social strata. Moreover, it aimed to educate about the risks and challenges, safety and security and the ethical of use of technology.



Launch of the Donations Portal for Charitable Organizations

The ITA launched in January 2009, at its office in Knowledge Oasis Muscat, the online donation portal. This accomplishment was the result of the ITA's dedication and sincere efforts, working closely with the charitable organizations in Oman and the Ministry of Social Development, to make this portal a reality.

The Donations Portal for Charitable Organizations, www.onlinedonations.org.om, is one more example of how ICT can be utilized for the service of charitable organizations in Oman, raising funds and collecting donations through one website, hence eliminating the need to visit each site or office separately.

Sultanate of Oman
Donations Portal For Charitable Organizations
الوقف باللغة العربية
Thursday, Sep 09, 2010

Make a donation today

HOME ABOUT US OUR CHARITIES NEWS CONTACT US

Menu
» Our Vision
» Our Mission

Zakat Account Numbers
Ministry of Awqaf & Religious affairs - Zakat can be entered on the following Account Numbers:
Bank Muscat
A/C 37-500040081011
Oman Arab Bank
A/C 3104-704650-500

Oman Charitable Organization
Oman Charitable Organization official Bank Account Numbers for Donations.

Sponsored by
e.oman
Sponsored by Information Technology Authority.
Approved & supported by the "Ministry of Social Development" Oman.

Donate Online
The likeness of those who spend their wealth in the way of Allaah, is as the likeness of a grain (of corn); it grows seven ears, and each ear has a hundred grains. Allaah gives manifold increase to whom He wills. And Allaah is All-Sufficient for His creatures' needs, All-Knower.

Dar Al Atta'a Charity - Donation Type

Sadaqa	Donate Now
Ramadan Ration	Donate Now
Eid Clothes	Donate Now
Family Care	Donate Now
Student Care	Donate Now

[read more ...](#)

National Association for Cancer Awareness
National Association for Cancer Awareness objective is to Create public awareness for all types of cancers.
[read more ...](#)

[Donate Now](#)

Al Noor Association for the Blind
It is an NGO whose program, for the benefit of all blind people in Oman, is financed via donations. Association serves the interest of the Blind in social, economic, welfare, education, health and training.
[read more ...](#)

[Donate Now](#)

Environment Society of Oman
Oman is a beautiful country, blessed with unique habitats and landscapes, ranging from pristine beaches and coral reefs to high mountains and breathtaking desert sands.
[read more ...](#)

[Donate Now](#)

The Association of the welfare of the Handicapped
The Association serves children from the age of 6 to 14 through comprehensive program of education, health, physical and academic services.
[read more ...](#)

[Donate Now](#)

Association of Early Intervention for Children with Special Needs
Association serves children from birth to 6 years, who are at risk or disabled, with a comprehensive early intervention programme that covers social, medical, physical, academic and therapeutic services.
[read more ...](#)

[Donate Now](#)

Donations Raised To Date!
Raised: 11404 OMR
Contributors: 949

LATEST Online Donations

4 Hours Ago
5 Omani Rial
Contributed To: Dar Al Atta'a: Family Care

8 Hours Ago
200 Omani Rial
Contributed To: Dar Al Atta'a: Eid Clothes

12 Hours Ago
1 Omani Rial
Contributed To: Association of Early Intervention for Children with Special Needs

Use of Donations

How Money are spent
Dar Al Atta'a Report for 2009
[See Report](#)

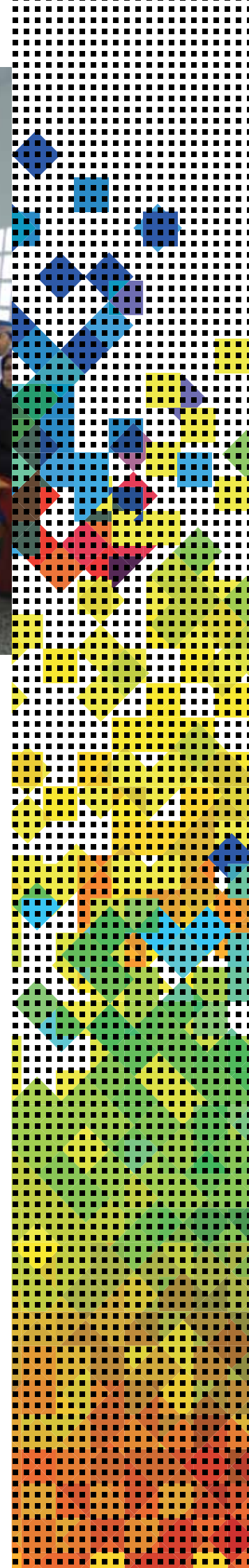
Newsletter
Dar Al Atta'a Newsletter 2006-07
[View Newsletter](#)

Video
Dar Al Atta'a Charity Video
[Watch Video](#)

Arab eContent Award

Winner of Arab eContent Award
[Read More](#)

Donations Portal Winning Award
[Watch Video](#)



ePurse Project

The ITA and Royal Oman Police (ROP), in collaboration with Bank Muscat, launched the ePurse project in conjunction with the country's celebrations of the Renaissance Day in July 2009. The official launching ceremony was held at the headquarters of the Directorate General of the Civil Status Register under the auspices of HE Ahmed bin Abdul Nabi Macki, Minister of National Economy and Deputy Chairman of Financial Affairs and Energy Resources Council.

Through the ePurse, citizens and residents can pay electronically for services rendered by ministries and other organizations, such as paying traffic fines and government services fees. The first phase of the project, managed by Bank Muscat under the supervision of the ITA and ROP, will develop solutions and specifications which will be implemented over a period of six months.

Participation in InfoConnect – Kuwait

The ITA participated in the 28th International Information Technology, Office Systems and Communications Exhibition (InfoConnect) in Kuwait in January 2009, under the theme Using IT in Business. Visitors were introduced to e.oman projects and initiatives such as the ePayment Gateway, the Official eGovernment Services Portal, and the Unified Government Network.

Workshop on eContent Development

In March 2009, the ITA organized a workshop entitled Developing the Arabic eContent Industry, in the context of the ITA's endeavor to encourage and develop the level of the Arabic eContent industry in the Sultanate.



Oman Web Awards

In March 2009, results of the fourth round of the Oman Web Awards were announced, under the auspices of the ITA. The ceremony was presided over by HE Mohammad bin Nasser Al Khasibi, Secretary General of the Ministry of National Economy and Chairman of the ITA Board. This annual web award competition is considered one of the most important competitions that brings attention to the digital space. The Award aims to bring together, in a spirit of fair and honest competition, website development companies and independent amateur website designers and website owners. All were competing for the Best Website Award in 24 website categories.

This competition was designed to be an initiative encouraging all sectors to showcase their websites. It was meant to contribute towards shaping the IT sector. Through this competition, participants are provided with the opportunity to expand communication and network among themselves, in addition to strengthening cooperation, knowledge and exchange of information. The competition this year included 24 categories of sites, to include: companies, eCommerce organizations, banks and financial institutions, education ministries and government agencies. Three awards are presented in each category. The selection takes into account several crucial aspects, in addition to the extent of the use of modern technology.

The ITA presented 3 awards to the top three government websites. This is a gesture of support from the ITA to these websites; to encourage them to exert further efforts to enhance their services.

Promoting eCulture Campaign

First: Rustaq

The ITA organized its 2nd Awareness Campaign Promoting eCulture in March 2009, at the College of Applied Sciences in Rustaq, presenting a seminar about e.oman initiatives and projects. Held under the auspices of HE Sheikh Ahmed bin Abdulla Al Kindi, of the Wali of Rustaq, it was attended by their Excellences the Walis of the Al Batinah Region, their Excellencies Members of the Majlis a'Shura, Dr. Salim bin Sultan Al Ruzaiqi, ITA's CEO, and members of the public.

Second: Sur

In April 2009, at the College of Applied Sciences in Sur, a seminar on e.oman initiatives and projects was presented as part of this same Awareness Campaign to promote eCulture. The event was hosted under the auspices of Sheikh Sultan bin Abdulla Al Battashi, Assistant of the Wali of Sur and was attended by dignitaries from the wilayat and members of the public.

Third: Ibra

The ITA also organized in April 2009, at the Technical College in Ibra, a seminar on e.oman initiatives and projects as a continuation of 2nd Awareness Campaign, promoting eCulture. The organization of this event was aligned with the objectives of the e.oman Initiative pursued by the ITA to build Oman's Digital Society. The seminar discussed a number of issues, most notably introducing e.oman to the public.



Fourth: Dhofar

Still within the context of the 2nd e.oman Awareness Campaign promoting eCulture, as part of its participation in the 2009 Salalah Tourism Festival, the ITA organized a number of lectures in Salalah, Mirbat, Sadah, Rakhyut and Taqa. These lectures aimed to introduce the e.oman Initiative, actively pursued by the ITA to build Oman's Digital Society.



Arab Innovative Teachers Forum

The ITA co-facilitated the 2009 Arab Innovative Teachers Forum, organized by Microsoft in collaboration with the Ministry of Education, in September 2009.

The Forum in its fifth round, hosted fifteen teachers from various schools in the Sultanate to dialogue with their fellow teachers from Arab countries who took part in this forum. The activities of the Forum were designed to allow the participants to exchange expertise, innovation and projects on the use of ICT in education, without inhibitions or barriers and in a profoundly civilized manner.

The Ministry of Education selected the fifteen teachers representing the Sultanate through a national competition among all teachers. It is important to note that such forums are annual events, where teachers making use of the 21st Century educational technologies in classrooms are recognized and honored. These skills will, in turn, then be passed to students through several teaching tools and aids.

Open Day for the Computer Science Group of Sultan Qaboos University

In February 2009, Sultan Qaboos University (SQU) organized an open day for the Computer Science Group (CSG) under the auspices of Dr. Mohammad bin 'Awadh Al Mashikhi, Dean of Student Affairs. Several colleges, agencies, companies and other bodies took part in the open day activities. The event was sponsored by the ITA and Towell Group of Companies.



Community Knowledge Center - Salalah

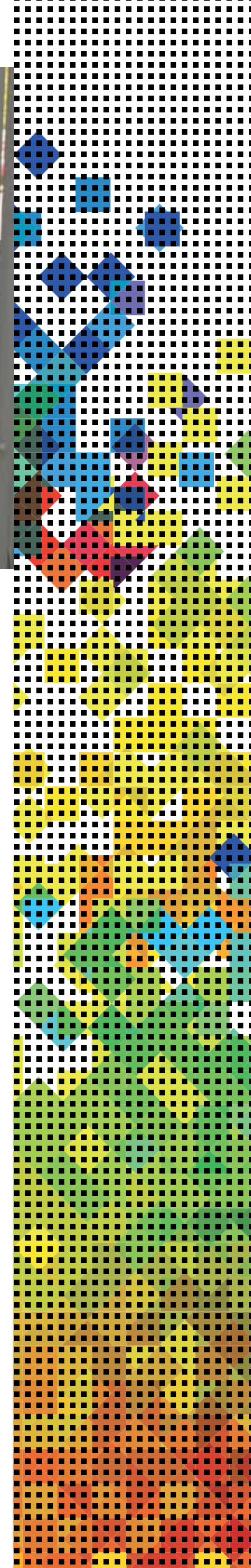
In October 2009, the ITA launched the Community Knowledge Center (CKC) project in the Governorate of Dhofar. The first of the CKCs in the region, the launch was hosted by the Technical College in Salalah, under the auspices of HE Sheikh Abdulla bin Saif Al Mahrooqi. The event was attended by a number of their Excellencies, Members of the Majlis a'Shura in the Governorate, Dr. Salim bin Sultan Al Ruzaiqi, the ITA's CEO, and a number of IT specialists and members of the public.

Community Knowledge Center – Muscat

Also in October 2009, the ITA launched the Community Knowledge Center (CKC) project at the Sultan Qaboos Sports Complex, in the Governorate of Muscat. The launch was under the auspices of HE Eng. 'Ali bin Mas'oud Al Sinaidi, Minister of Sports Affairs. The event was attended by HE Mohammed bin Nasser Al Khasibi, Secretary General of the Ministry of National Economy and Chairman of the ITA Board, a number of ITA's Board Members, with Dr. Salim bin Sultan Al Ruzaiqi, CEO of ITA, and other officials also in attendance.

International Conference on Communication, Computer and Power - Exhibition

Also in February 2009, the ITA participated in an exhibition held alongside the International Conference for Communication, Computer and Power (ICCCP'09), organized by the Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering at Sultan Qaboos University, in collaboration with Oman's Chapter of the Institute of Electrical and Electronic Engineers (IEEE). With a number of companies sponsoring the conference, and taking part in its proceedings, student groups from the College of Engineering were given the opportunity to participate in the exhibition and show their student projects. e.oman Awareness presentations were delivered during this exhibition as well.



CHAPTER EIGHT

THE 1ST GCC eGOVERNMENT CONFERENCE



The ITA proudly organized the 1st GCC Conference on eGovernment, between 21 and 23 December 2009, under the auspices of HH Sayyid As'ad bin Tariq bin Taimur Al Said. The 1st GCC eGovernment Award was also awarded at this conference.

The conference enjoyed a wide participation from experts, specialists and stakeholders in IT and eGovernment fields at the GCC and international levels. The conference objectives focused on the exchange of ideas and expertise in the delivery of eServices; capacity and electronic performance building; learning from others how to measure achievements and developments accomplished vis-à-vis the digital knowledge economy and providing IT government authorities in the GCC countries with opportunities to exchange expertise in eGovernment applications and services.

Through its deliberations, the conference addressed important issues pertaining to the development of ICT and its uses in the region as the GCC countries pursue global developments in this field. Among the most significant issues discussed in this conference: eGovernment policies, strategies and challenges in the GCC countries; the evaluation of network readiness in these countries to move from eGovernment to i-government, as per regional and international standards; the future of technology and its impact on eGovernment; partnership between the public and private sectors; the impact of eGovernment on the economy; the exchange of ideas and expertise vis-à-vis the delivery of eServices and real-life challenges in implementing eGovernment plans.

The contribution of ICT to the national GDP posed itself significantly throughout the conference, especially as the ICT sector has become one of the main supporting streams to the economy. ICT has become a common wealth in its own right, supporting the transformation into a knowledge society, especially as it is continuously developing and increasingly used in socio-economic fields.



1st GCC eGovernment Award

This important conference witnessed the launch of the GCC eGovernment Award, which will be an annual event of competition and recognition of pioneering projects in the areas of eGovernment services at the GCC level.

The Award has five categories: eService, eContent, eMaturity, eEconomy and eProject.

The Award ceremony was held in the Al Bustan Palace Hotel and presided over by HE Ahmed bin Abdul Nabi Macki, Minister of National Economy and Deputy Chairman of the Financial Affairs and Energy Resources Council.



eContent category:

The State of Qatar was awarded 1st place in the eContent category for its website Islam Web. The 2nd place was awarded to the Jeddah Governorate Portal, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. The 3rd place was awarded to the General Civil Aviation Authority (GCAA) of the United Arab Emirates.

eServices category:

In the eServices category, the Qatar General Electric & Water Corporation was awarded 1st place. In 2nd place came the Dubai Electricity and Water Authority (DEWA) for its electronic invoicing and payment service. The 3rd place went to the eGovernment Authority of the Kingdom of Bahrain for the eBirth service.

eProject category:

The Al Yusr Installment Transaction System of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia was awarded the 1st place in the eProject category for their government integration channel service. The Najem Integrated Criminal Investigation System of the Kingdom of Bahrain was awarded the 2nd place for its central criminal system. 3rd place went to the UAE's SAP (IS-Utilities) Billing and Customer Relation Management (CRM) for invoices and customer relations management.

eMaturity category:

The eGovernment Authority of the Kingdom of Bahrain won the 1st place in the eMaturity category for the integrated platform service for eServices delivery. The Roads and Transport Authority (RTA) of the United Arab Emirates came 2nd for its Roads and Transport Authority eServices. Representing the Sultanate, the Official eGovernment Services Portal was awarded 3rd place standing.

eEconomy category:

In the eEconomy category, the ePayment system in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia came in 1st place, with the Muscat Security Market coming in 2nd place for its mobile phone trading service. The 3rd place was awarded to the Kingdom of Bahrain for the elnvestor service.



1st GCC eGovernment Exhibition of eGovernment Services

Alongside the 1st GCC eGovernment Conference there was an exhibition of eGovernment services. It was a great opportunity to introduce eGovernment programs in the GCC, especially the success stories. Delegations from the GCC countries participated in the exhibition, each showcasing six projects that were either completed or about to be implemented, in areas of eGovernment at the regional and international levels. The exhibition was organized in the spirit of providing communication channels between eGovernments in the GCC, businesses and individuals, with the objective of learning about accomplishments in a knowledge economy, as well as educating regional and international organizations concerned with ICT about the advanced digital projects, initiatives and accomplishments being executed by government agencies in the GCC countries.

On the other hand, the Sultanate showcased a number of pioneering eGovernment projects, most notably the Official eGovernment Services Portal, the ePayment Gateway, the Ministry of Manpower Portal, the Ministry of Education Portal, the Civil Registration System of the Royal Oman Police and the one-stop-shop for the Ministry of Commerce and Industry.



1st GCC eGovernment Conference – Key Papers

Several specialized papers by ICT experts from the Austria, Denmark, Egypt, Netherlands, Sweden, United States of America, the United Nations and the World Economic Forum were delivered during the 1st GCC eGovernment Conference. The conference provided great opportunity for participation and debate between decision makers, CEOs from the GCC eGovernment initiatives and Authorities. Among the most notable speakers in the conference were the CEOs of the GCC eGovernment Authorities and programs, as well as Mr. Seah Chin Siong, CEO of Singapore's Info-communication Development Authority, who shed light on the future of eGovernments, focusing on how to set them up keeping in mind the future transformation of them to i-governments.

Other key speakers included Dr. Adriana Alberti, Coordinator for the UN Public Service Award Program; Mr. Jeremy Millard, Senior Consultant at the Danish Technological Institute; Dr. Irene Mia, Senior Economist and Director at the World Economic Forum; Dr. Jamal Shahin, Lecturer at the University of Amsterdam and Vesalius College (Brussels); Mr. Shadi Abou- Zahra, Coordinator of the Web Accessibility Initiative in Europe; Mr. Richard Kirby, Senior Inter-Regional Advisor on eGovernment in UNDESA; Mr. Ali Faramawy, Vice President for MENA – Microsoft International, and Dr. Dennis Anderson, Professor of Information Systems at Pace University, USA.



Conference Recommendations

The 1st GCC eGovernment Conference recognized the high importance of eliciting frameworks at different levels and in several fields, exchange regional expertise and learn from best practices. It recommended that such frameworks entail conducting similar conferences and specialized workshops, organizing periodic eGovernment Awards for GCC countries and developing models of successful projects for circulation.

The conference also recommended that a special eGovernment section is created at the official website of the GCC Secretariat General to further cement joint efforts in this field, through documenting GCC conferences and associated events and activities; developing a database of joint projects; delivering joint services; creating links to portals of the GCC countries and establishing a forum for the staff working in the eGovernment portal projects.

Moreover, the conference recommended enhancing the level of cooperation between the GCC countries in the study and analysis of eGovernment-related international indicators and indices, endeavoring to raise the ranking of these countries, as well as looking into developing a unified GCC index. The conference also called for placing the GCC eGovernment Authorities and programs on the global development map, in all knowledge fields, but especially in the ICT fields, through linking the GCC work and efforts with World Summit on Information Society (WSIS)

recommendations and programs of action. Furthermore, the conference recommended that further studies are conducted on success stories worldwide as well as disseminating GCC success stories. The conference stressed upon the importance of establishing all laws and regulations necessary to integrate ICT into all functions and processes employed by the public and private sectors and civil society organizations; creating, in the process, incentives for organizations and individuals encouraging them to benefit from eGovernment services, while gradually reducing the presence of the traditional service channels.

The conference requested to further encourage cooperation between research centres and universities in the GCC countries, which will create strategic links between eGovernment projects and economic development; to develop open source software; to develop indicators to measure the IT sector's contribution into the GDP and to take necessary measures to guarantee the efficacy of eGovernment services, in attracting investment and economic development with direct impact on the lives of individuals and society.

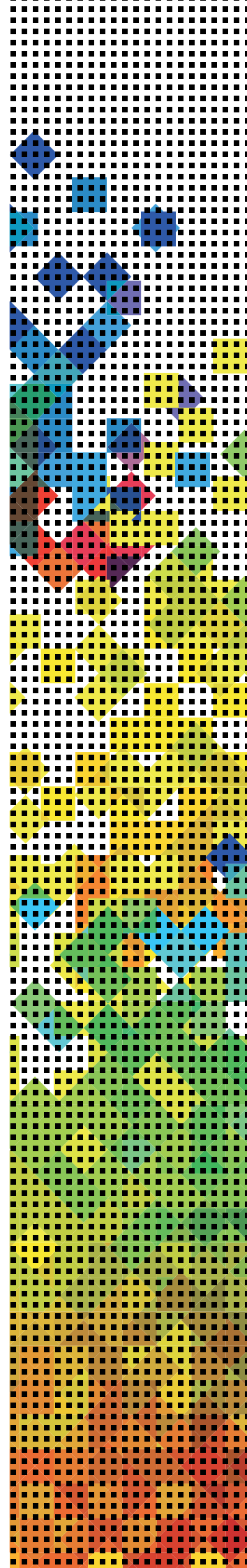
GCC eGovernment Committee holds 6th Meeting

The GCC eGovernment Committee held its 6th meeting for the Chairmen of the GCC eGovernment Authorities and programs at the Al Bustan Palace Hotel in Muscat.

The Committee reviewed several key issues, most notably the recommendations from the Committee's fifth meeting regarding the reference point and authority of the eGovernment Committee. The Committee welcomed the decision of the Ministerial Committee for Planning and Development in its nineteenth meeting (June 2009/ Muscat) stipulating the status of the eGovernment Committee as an independent committee within the framework of committees setup in the GCC Secretariat General.

However, due to differences among GCC countries, vis-à-vis reference points and level of eGovernment, the Committee recommended that a specialized ministerial committee to be established, composed of ministers concerned with eGovernments in the member states. The Committee also discussed the recommendations of the 1st GCC eGovernment Conference and the results of the eGovernment Awards. Committee members commended the conference and its organization in the Sultanate of Oman. They expressed their thanks to HE Chairman of the ITA Board, its CEO and all staff for their hard work and exerted effort to make the Conference and Award such a success. They also expressed their appreciation for the generous hospitality and warm reception.

The Committee looked at the conference recommendations and agreed to have them circulated to all government agencies in each member state. The Committee expressed its comfort and satisfaction with the level of professionalism exhibited in the execution of the eGovernment Award and the fairness of jury processes and results. During the meeting, the Committee discussed the date for the 2010 eGovernment Conference and Award, and the State of Kuwait expressed its desire to host the 2nd GCC eGovernment Conference, Exhibition and Award for 2010.



CHAPTER NINE

MEMORANDA OF COOPERATION



During the course of 2009, the Information Technology Authority managed to further strengthen local, regional and international collaboration in the IT field through the conclusion of several agreements. This year saw the ITA consolidating its efforts and bolstering its internal and external relations, in addition to several collaborative agreements in the IT field.

MoU for ePurse Project

In January 2009, an MoU was signed between the Royal Oman Police and ITA, in addition to Bank Muscat and Gemalto N.V., with regards to the ePurse project related to the Oman Civil Identity Card project. The signing ceremony took place at the Royal Oman Police Officers' Club in Wattaya.

The goal of this MoU was to activate the ePurse project, which comes within the framework of the National Strategy for Oman's Digital Society and the eGovernment services. This will be achieved through activating the special ePurse chip in the civil identity card. The chip will be loaded with money electronically and used in banking networks to settle amounts and fees.

MoU Signed with the Singaporean IT Sector

In January 2009, the ITA signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the IDA International Limited, a subsidiary of the Info-communications Development Authority of Singapore. The signing ceremony took place at Knowledge Oasis Muscat (KOM). The MoU covered the development and implementation of ICT initiatives, in addition to strengthening and bolstering cooperation between ICT sectors in Singapore and the Sultanate of Oman.

Both parties aim, by virtue of this MoU, to boost the bilateral collaboration in various ICT fields in Singapore and the Sultanate of Oman, especially in the use of ICT in government and different economic clusters such as education, law and justice, trade and commerce, customs, etc.

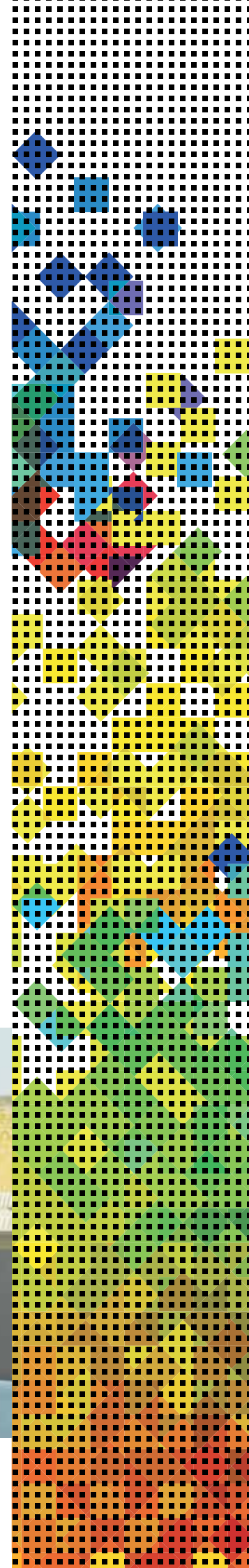
MoU Signed to Provide Wireless Networks to 100 Schools

In January 2009, at the ITA offices in the Knowledge Oasis Muscat (KOM), an MoU was signed between the ITA and Huawei Technology and Investment Company. By virtue of this MoU, the Company will provide wireless internal networks for 100 schools of the Ministry of Education.

MoU Signed for Electronic Authentication

In March 2009, the ITA, at its headquarters in KOM, signed an MoU with the National Agency for Electronic Authentication, of the Ministry of Communications Technology in the Tunisian Republic. HE Mohammed bin Nasser Al Khasibi, Secretary General of the Ministry of National Economy, Chairman of the ITA Board, received at his office at the Ministry of National Economy, Dr. Sami Al Ghazali, Director General of the Tunisian National Agency for Electronic Authentication. During the meeting, both sides stressed upon the distinguished bilateral relations between the Sultanate and the Tunisian Republic. They also discussed ways and means to further strengthen cooperation in fields related to electronic authentication services.

The MoU was signed on behalf of the ITA by Dr. Salim bin Sultan Al Ruzaiqi, ITA's CEO, while Dr. Sami al-Ghazali, Director General of the Tunisian National Agency, signed the MoU on behalf of the Agency. This MoU is a positive step towards bolstering collaborative relations in the fields of transaction security and electronic authentication entailing promotion of the exchange of expertise and experts and creating conducive circumstances to stimulate mutual cooperation in electronic authentication fields. At the same time, the MoU aimed at stressing the exchange of information and data periodically and regularly in the fields of transaction security and electronic authentication, as well as promoting cooperation between the two parties to execute joint projects.



Construction and Operation Contract Signed for the Oman National Computer Emergency Readiness Team (CERT)

The ITA signed, in March 2009, a contract with the Singaporean e-Cop Company for the construction and operation of the National Computer Emergency Readiness Team (CERT) in the Sultanate. Accordingly, the CERT will be set up and operated within twenty months from the date of signing the contract. Thereafter, the management and operation of the National CERT will go back to the Authority.

MoU Signed for the Establishment of a Community Knowledge Center in Sur

In May 2009, the ITA signed an MoU with the Ministry of Sports Affairs, at its headquarters, regarding the establishment of a Community Knowledge Center (CKC) in Sur's Sports Complex. The MoU was signed on behalf of the Ministry of Sports Affairs by HE Sheikh Rashad bin Ahmed Al Hinai, and on behalf of the ITA by Dr. Salim bin Sultan Al Ruzaiqi, ITA's CEO.

As per this MoU, the Ministry of Sports Affairs will provide one of its facilities in the Wilayat of Sur for the establishment of a CKC. Such facilities have been selected with utmost care and attention in order to ensure accessibility to all in terms of centrality of location and ease of reach, as well as the availability of the necessary equipment for delivering the training programs.

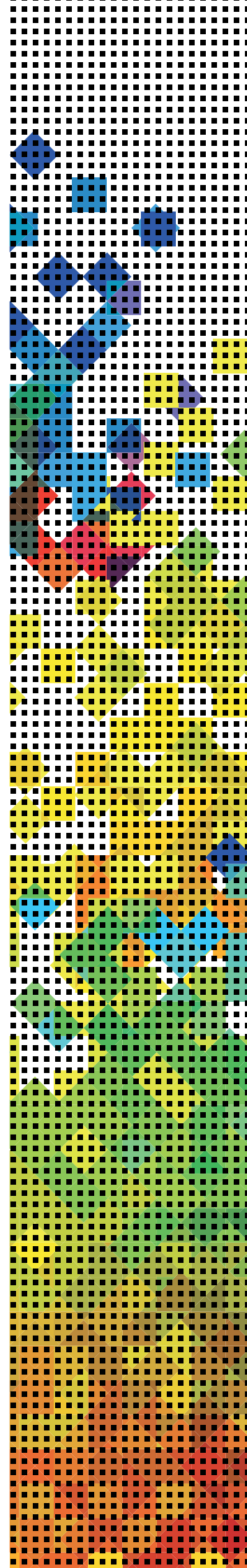


Consultancy Agreement Signed for the Development of an eGovernment Architecture Framework

In March 2009, within the context of the visit of HE Silan Pan Ramanathan, President of the Republic of Singapore, an agreement was signed between the ITA of Oman and IDA International Limited, a subsidiary wholly owned by the Singaporean Info-communications

Development Authority, on the delivery of consultancy services to develop an eGovernment architecture framework. The signing was attended by HE the Singaporean President, HE Mohammed bin Nasser Al Khasibi, Secretary General of the Ministry of National Economy and Chairman of the ITA Board, HE Sheikh Al Fadhel bin Mohammad Al Harthy, Under Secretary for Development Affairs of the Ministry of National Economy and Deputy Chairman of the ITA Board, a number of their Excellencies the Ministers and Under Secretaries and members of the visiting Singaporean delegation.

The agreement was signed on behalf of the ITA by Dr. Salim bin Sultan Al Ruzaiqi, ITA's CEO, and on behalf of the Singaporean side by Mr. Seah Chin Siong, CEO of IDA International. This agreement is part of the ITA's endeavors aimed to further strengthen and reinforce linkages among various governmental units in one electronic structure, through the use of technology as a strategic tool. This will, in turn, empower these units to deliver high quality services to the public, stimulate productivity and encourage innovation, through approving technical and practical frameworks and criteria, enabling the realization of a Government Continuum. The ITA has been working to adopt this goal through guaranteeing the execution and operation of Governmental IT projects and system initiatives, within a framework for the government that is in line with best practices in IT.

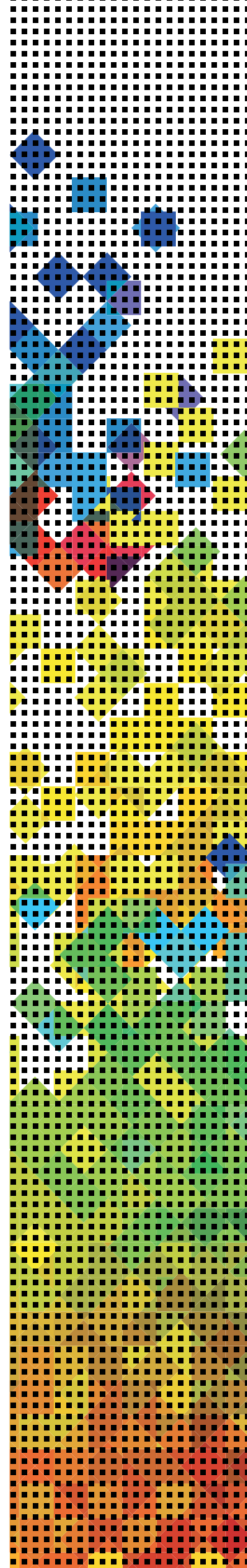




**FINANCIAL STATEMENTS AND
INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2009**

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Independent auditors' report	84
Statement of financial position	85
Statement of receipts and expenses	86
Statement of movement in retained surplus	86
Statement of cash flow	87
Notes	88



INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT

To the Board of Directors of
Information Technology Authority
PO Box 1807
PC 130, Al Athaiba
Sultanate of Oman

REPORT ON THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

We have audited the accompanying financial statements of INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY AUTHORITY ("the Authority") which comprise the statement of financial position as at 31 December 2009, the statement of receipts and expenses, statement of movement in retained surplus and statement of cash flows for the year then ended and a summary of significant accounting policies and other explanatory notes.

MANAGEMENT'S RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

The Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in accordance with International Financial Reporting Standards. This responsibility includes: designing, implementing and maintaining internal control relevant to the preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements that are free from material misstatements, whether due to fraud or error; selecting and applying appropriate accounting policies; and making accounting estimates that are reasonable in the circumstances.

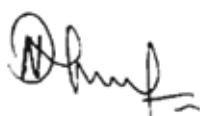
AUDITORS' RESPONSIBILITY

Our responsibility is to express an opinion on these financial statements based on our audit. We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing. Those standards require that we comply with relevant ethical requirements and plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements are free of material misstatement.

An audit involves performing procedures to obtain audit evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. The procedures selected depend on our judgment, including the assessments of the risks of material misstatements of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error. In making those risk assessments, we consider internal control relevant to the entity's preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the entity's internal control. An audit also includes evaluating the appropriateness of accounting principles used and the reasonableness of the accounting estimates made by management, as well as evaluating the overall presentation of the financial statements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

OPINION

In our opinion, the financial statements set out on pages 3 to 18 present fairly in all material respects, the financial position of INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY AUTHORITY as at 31 December 2009, and of the results of its operations and statement of cash flows for the year then ended in conformity with International Financial Reporting Standards.



ABU TIMAM

(Chartered Certified Accountants)

11 April 2010

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

	Notes	31 December 2009 RO	31 December 2008 RO
ASSETS			
Non-current assets:			
Plant and equipment	4	1,797,256	1,326,355
Intangible assets	5	8,078,648	1,696,126
Capital work in progress	6	15,456,566	12,977,747
Total non-current assets		25,332,470	16,000,228
Current assets:			
Inventory	7	11,475	-
Accounts receivable and prepayments	8	2,509,983	2,589,401
Cash and cash equivalents	9	2,019,280	5,284,360
Total current assets		4,540,738	7,873,761
Total assets		29,873,208	23,873,989
EQUITY AND LIABILITIES			
Reserves:			
Retained surplus	10	16,231,046	14,971,679
Liabilities			
Non current liabilities:			
Long term payable to Microsoft	11	1,700,128	-
End of service benefits		36,410	22,455
Total non current liabilities		1,736,538	22,455
Current liabilities:			
Accounts payable and accruals	11	11,305,140	8,332,050
Unearned revenue	12	600,484	547,805
Total current liabilities		11,905,624	8,879,855
Total liabilities		13,642,162	8,902,310
Total equity and liabilities		29,873,208	23,873,989

The financial statements on pages 85 to 98 were approved by the Board of Directors on 31 March 2010 and were signed on their behalf by:



HE MOHAMMED BIN NASSER AL KHUSAIBI
CHAIRMAN



DR SALEEM BIN SULTAN BIN SALEEM AL RUZAIQI
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

STATEMENT OF RECEIPTS AND EXPENSES

	Notes	Year ended 31 December 2009 RO	Year ended 31 December 2008 RO
Revenue from Government contribution		12,958,638	16,949,700
Reinvestment income		874,218	754,960
Other income	13	343,365	121,130
Total revenue		14,176,221	17,825,790
Reinvestment cost	14	(822,314)	(754,960)
Amortization of intangible assets		(3,382,787)	(2,945,316)
Depreciation of property plant and equipment		(554,368)	(264,153)
Distribution costs	15	(558,585)	(384,871)
Administrative expenses	16	(2,193,413)	(1,077,066)
Staff costs		(3,824,182)	(2,577,873)
Other operating expenses	17	(1,581,205)	(442,421)
Total expenses		(12,916,828)	(8,446,660)
Surplus for the year	10	1,259,367	9,379,130

The accompanying notes on pages 86 to 98 form an integral part of these financial statements.

STATEMENT OF MOVEMENT IN RETAINED SURPLUS

	Retained surplus RO
At 1 January 2008	5,592,549
Surplus for the year	9,379,130
At 31 December 2008	14,971,679
Surplus for the year	1,259,367
At 31 December 2009	16,231,046

The accompanying notes on pages 86 to 98 form an integral part of these financial statements.

STATEMENT OF CASH FLOW

		Year ended 31 December 2009	Year ended 31 December 2008
	Note	RO	RO
Surplus for the year		1,259,367	9,379,130
Adjusted for depreciation and amortisation	5	3,937,155	3,209,469
Operating surplus before working capital changes		5,196,522	12,588,599
Changes in working capital:			
Inventory		(11,475)	-
Account receivables and prepayments		79,418	4,491,710
Unearned revenue	5	52,679	(382,464)
Accounts payable and accruals		2,987,045	2,704,902
Net cash from operations		8,304,189	19,402,747
Investing activities:			
Purchase of plant and equipment		(1,025,269)	(1,262,131)
Purchase of intangible assets		(9,765,309)	(1,389,088)
Acquisition of Microsoft licence		1,700,128	-
Capital work in progress		(2,478,819)	(12,103,072)
Net cash used in investing activities		(11,569,269)	(14,754,291)
Net (decrease)/ increase in cash and cash equivalents		(3,265,080)	4,648,456
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the year		5,284,360	635,904
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the year	9	2,019,280	5,284,360

The accompanying notes on pages 87 to 98 form an integral part of these financial statements.

1 Nature of operations

The principal activities of Information Technology Authority (“the Authority”) are:

- Transform the Sultanate of Oman into a knowledge based economy for achievement of social and economical benefits of the Omani society;
- Assist Government units in implementing Information Technology projects;
- Implement National Information Technology structure projects and supervise all projects related to eOman Strategy implementation;
- Prepare regulations and implement measures necessary for the fulfilment of digital Oman society requirements and realization of integration for electronic service delivery.

2 General information and statement of compliance with IFRS

Information Technology Authority (“the Authority”) is 100% owned by Government of Oman. The Authority came into existence by the issue of the Royal Decree No 52/2006 (Setting up Information Technology Authority).

The operations of the Authority are solely supported by the government contributions. Periodical contributions are received from Ministry of Finance.

The address of Information Technology Authority’s registered office and its principal place of business is P.O. Box 1807, Postal Code 130, Al Athaiba, Sultanate of Oman.

The financial statements of the Authority have been prepared in accordance with International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS) as issued by the International Accounting Standards Board (IASB).

3 Summary of accounting policies

3.1 Overall considerations

The significant accounting policies that have been used in the preparation of these financial statements are summarised below:

The financial statements have been prepared using the measurement bases specified by IFRS for each type of asset, liability, revenue and expense. The measurement bases are more fully described in the accounting policies below:

3.2 Presentation of financial statements

The financial statements are presented in accordance with IAS 1 Presentation of Financial Statements.(Revised 2007).

3.3 Foreign currency translation

Information Technology Authority’s financial statements are presented in Rial Omani (RO), which is also the functional currency of the Authority.

Foreign currency transactions are translated into the functional currency of the Authority, using the exchange rates prevailing at the dates of the transactions (spot exchange rate). Foreign exchange gains and losses resulting from the settlement of such transactions and from the remeasurement of monetary statement of financial position items at year-end exchange rates are recognised in the statement of receipts and expenses under “other income” or “other expenses”.

In the Authority’s financial statements, all items and transactions of the Authority with a functional currency other than the Rial Omani (the Authority’s presentation currency) were translated into functional currency. Assets and liabilities have been translated into Rial Omani at the closing rate at the statement of financial position date. Receipts and expenses have been translated into the Authority’s presentation currency at a fixed rate.

3.4 Revenue recognition

The grant is recognised as income over the period necessary to match them with the related costs, for which they are intended to compensate, on a systematic basis as per International

Accounting Standards (IAS 20 Government Grants and Disclosure of Government Assistance). Contributions from Ministry of Finance (MOF) are recognised on the following basis:

- Contributions against general and administrative expenses are recognized according to approvals from MOF during the concerned period.
- Contributions against capital expenditure are recognized according to the cash calls raised by the Authority.

Reinvestment income is recognised on the basis of contract which stipulates reinvestment yearly for a period of three years in respect of Job seekers programs or any other approved activities. Reinvestment instalment is initially recognised under unearned revenue as a liability and then transferred to revenue to the extent of the expenditures incurred.

Interest income is recognized in the Statement of receipts and expenses as it accrues.

All other income is recognized on accrual basis.

3.5 Operating expenses

Operating expenses are recognised in statement of receipts and expenses upon utilisation of the service or at the date of their origin.

3.6 Plant and equipment

Plant and equipment are stated at acquisition cost less subsequent depreciation and impairment losses. The cost of plant and equipment is written off in equal instalments over the estimated useful lives of the assets. The periods generally applicable are:

Furniture and fixtures	4 years
Motor vehicles	4 years
Office equipment	3 years
Hardware and terminals	3 years

Depreciation is charged on a straight line basis over the estimated useful lives of asset. Capital work in progress is not depreciated.

Full depreciation is charged for the month in which asset is put in use and no depreciation is charged for the month in which asset is sold.

Material residual value estimates are updated as required, but at least annually, whether or not the asset is revalued.

Gains or losses arising on the disposal of plant and equipment are determined as the difference between the disposal proceeds and the carrying amount of the assets and are recognised in statement of receipts and expenses within 'other income' or 'other expenses'.

3.7 Capital work in progress

Capital work in progress is stated at cost. When completed the hardware component is transferred to appropriate plant and equipment category and depreciated in accordance with the Authority's policy. The software and license component is transferred to intangibles.

3.8 Intangible assets

Intangibles assets comprises of software and license.

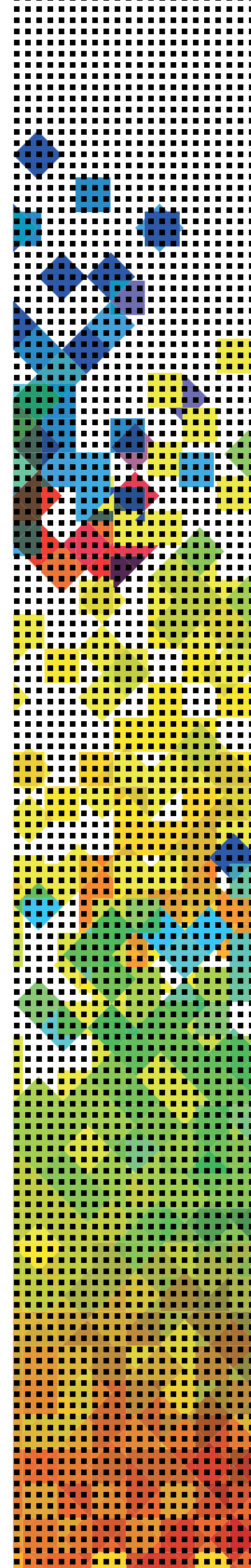
Assets with definite useful life are amortized over its estimated useful life.

Intangible assets with definite and indefinite useful lives are tested for impairment annually.

3.9 Impairment

At each reporting date, the Authority reviews the carrying amounts of its tangible and intangible assets to determine whether there is any indication that those assets have suffered an impairment loss. If any such indication exists, the recoverable amount is estimated in order to determine the extent of the impairment loss.

The loss arising on an impairment of an asset is determined as the difference between the recoverable amount and the carrying amount of the asset and is recognised immediately in the statement of receipts and expenses.



Where an impairment loss is subsequently reversed, the carrying amount of the asset is increased to the revised estimate of its recoverable amount and recognised in the statement of receipts and expenses immediately, provided that the increased carrying amount does not exceed the carrying amount that would have been determined had no impairment loss been recognised earlier.

3.10 Cash and cash equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents comprise cash in hand and demand deposits, together with other short-term, highly liquid investments that are readily convertible into known amounts of cash and which are subject to an insignificant risk of changes in value.

3.11 Financial instruments

Financial assets and financial liabilities are recognised when the Authority becomes a party to the contractual provisions of the financial instrument.

Financial assets are derecognised when the contractual rights to the cash flows from the financial asset expire, or when the financial asset and all substantial risks and rewards are transferred.

A financial liability is derecognised when it is extinguished, discharged, cancelled or expires.

Financial assets and financial liabilities are measured initially at fair value plus transactions costs, except for financial assets and financial liabilities carried at fair value through profit or loss, which are measured initially at fair value.

Financial assets and financial liabilities are measured subsequently as described below.

Financial assets

All financial assets which are mainly receivables are subject to review for impairment at least at each reporting date. Financial assets are impaired when there is any objective evidence that a financial asset or a group of financial assets is impaired.

Receivables

Receivables are non-derivative financial assets with fixed or determinable payments that are not quoted in an active market. After initial recognition these are measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method, less provision for impairment. Discounting is omitted where the effect of discounting is immaterial. The Authority's cash and cash equivalents, trade and most other receivables fall into this category of financial instruments.

Financial liabilities

The Authority's financial liabilities include trade and other payables which are measured at amortised cost using the effective interest rate method.

Financial liabilities are recognised when the Authority becomes a party to the contractual agreements of the instrument. All interest-related charges and, if applicable, changes in an instrument's fair value that are reported in statement of receipts and expenses are included in the statement of receipts and expenses line items "finance costs" or "finance income".

3.12 Post employment benefits and short term employee benefits

The provision for employees' terminal benefits is based upon the liability accrued in accordance with the terms of employment of the Authority's employees at the statement of financial position date, having regard to the requirements of the Oman Labour Law, 2003 and the Civil Service Law, 1991.

3.13 Government contribution

The Authority follows income approach for recognising Government contribution. Under this approach the funds received are transferred to statement of receipts and expenses. Any surplus over the total costs is transferred to retained surplus.

3.14 Provisions, contingent liabilities and contingent assets

Provisions are recognised when present obligations will probably lead to an outflow of economic resources from the Authority and they can be estimated reliably. Timing or amount of the outflow may still be uncertain. A present obligation arises from the presence of a legal or constructive commitment that has resulted from past events. Provisions are not recognised for future operating losses.

Provisions are measured at the estimated expenditure required to settle the present obligation, based on the most reliable evidence available at the statement of financial position date, including the risks and uncertainties associated with the present obligation. Where there are a number of similar obligations, the likelihood that an outflow will be required in settlement is determined by considering the class of obligations as a whole.

All provisions are reviewed at each reporting date and adjusted to reflect the current best estimate of Authority's management.

In those cases where the possible outflow of economic resource as a result of present obligations is considered improbable or remote, no liability is recognised.

Probable inflows of economic benefits to the Authority that do not yet meet the recognition criteria of an asset are considered contingent assets.

3.15 Significant management judgement in applying accounting policies

The following are significant management judgements in applying the accounting policies of the Authority that have the most significant effect on the financial statements. Critical estimation uncertainties are described in 3.16.

3.16 Estimation uncertainty

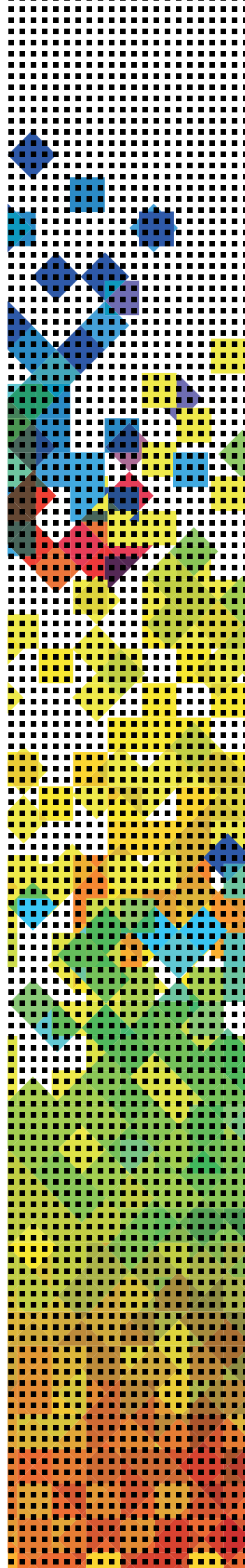
When preparing the financial statements management undertakes a number of judgements, estimates and assumptions about recognition and measurement of assets, liabilities, income and expenses.

The actual results may differ from the judgements, estimates and assumptions made by management, and will seldom equal the estimated results.

Information about significant judgements, estimates and assumptions that have the most significant effect on recognition and measurement of assets, liabilities, income and expenses are discussed below.

Useful lives of depreciable assets

Management reviews the useful lives of depreciable assets at each reporting date. At 31 December 2009 management assesses that the useful lives represent the expected utility of the assets to the Authority. The carrying amounts are analysed in note 4. Actual results, however, may vary due to technical obsolescence, particularly relating to software and IT equipment.



	Furniture and fixtures RO	Motor vehicles RO	Office equipments RO	Hardware and terminals RO	Total RO
Cost					
At 1 January 2009	491,494	80,050	171,144	931,555	1,674,243
Additions	41,283	-	64,819	83,074	189,176
Transfer from capital work in progress	-	-	-	836,093	836,093
At 31 December 2009	532,777	80,050	235,963	1,850,722	2,699,512
Depreciation					
At 1 January 2009	121,004	42,517	31,777	152,590	347,888
Provided during year	119,195	19,752	63,473	351,948	554,368
At 31 December 2009	240,199	62,269	95,250	504,538	902,256
Net book value					
At 31 December 2009	292,578	17,781	140,713	1,346,184	1,797,256

4 Plant and equipment

	Furniture and fixtures RO	Motor vehicles RO	Office equipments RO	Hardware and terminals RO	Total RO
Cost					
At 1 January 2008	270,717	80,050	16,143	45,202	412,112
Additions	161,330	-	47,010	225,545	433,885
Transfer from capital work in progress	59,447	-	107,991	660,808	828,246
At 31 December 2008	491,494	80,050	171,144	931,555	1,674,243
Depreciation					
At 1 January 2008	34,103	22,504	7,396	19,732	83,735
Provided during year	86,901	20,013	24,381	132,858	264,153
At 31 December 2008	121,004	42,517	31,777	152,590	347,888
Net book value					
At 31 December 2008	370,490	37,533	139,367	778,965	1,326,355

For the comparative period the carrying amounts can be presented as follows:

5 Intangible assets

		Licenses and software
		RO
Cost		
At 1 January 2009		7,886,635
Additions		6,626,981
Transfer from capital work in progress		3,138,328
At 31 December 2009		17,651,944
Amortization		
At 1 January 2009		6,190,509
Provided for the year		3,382,787
At 31 December 2009		9,573,296
Net book value		
At 31 December 2009		8,078,648

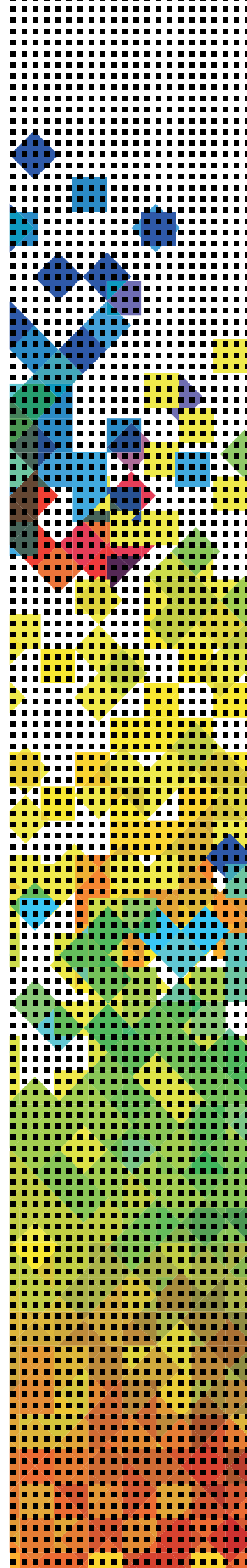
Costs include license costs of RO 5,100,382 acquired from Microsoft for products for a period of three years.

Cost of acquisition is amortized over the period of the license of three years till 30 June 2012.

		Licenses and Trademarks
		RO
Cost		
At 1 January 2008		6,497,547
Additions		1,250,968
Transfer from capital work in progress		138,120
At 31 December 2008		7,886,635
Amortization		
At 1 January 2008		3,245,193
Provided for the year		2,945,316
At 31 December 2008		6,190,509
Net book value		
At 31 December 2008		1,696,126

For the comparative period the carrying amounts can be presented as follows:

	31 December 2009	31 December 2008
	RO	RO
Security Infrastructure	9,667,566	5,853,911
National data centre	4,704,364	3,836,312
E-payment gateway	65,934	23,673
Ubar portal project	-	3,263,851
E- tendering	725,085	-
E-purse	64,499	-
ERP	229,118	-
	15,456,566	12,977,747



6 Capital work in progress

	At 1 January 2009	Additions	Transfer to plant and equipment	Transfer to intangibles	31 December 2009
	RO	RO	RO	RO	RO
Security Infrastructure	5,853,911	3,813,655	-	-	9,667,566
National data centre	3,836,312	868,052	-	-	4,704,364
E-payment gateway	23,673	42,261	-	-	65,934
Government eServices portal project	3,263,851	710,570	(836,093)	(3,138,328)	-
E- tendering	-	725,084	-	-	725,084
E-purse	-	64,500	-	-	64,500
ERP	-	229,118	-	-	229,118
Total	12,977,747	6,453,240	(836,093)	(3,138,328)	15,456,566

Movement in capital work in progress:

During the year the Government E-Services portal (UBAR) project was completed and the respective amounts were transferred to the appropriate categories under tangible and intangible assets.

7 Inventory

Inventory is in respect of the printing and stationery consumables purchased for office use.

8 Accounts receivable and prepayments

	31 December 2009	31 December 2008
	RO	RO
Receivable from Ministry of Finance against:		
Government network	494,899	-
Advance to suppliers	1,385,729	2,576,469
Reinvestment receivable from Microsoft	554,400	-
Accounts receivable	61,159	-
Other receivables and prepayments	13,796	12,932
	2,509,983	2,589,401

Receivable from the Ministry of Finance is for the Government network contract which would be paid to vendors on receipt of invoices. In 2007, the Government vide circular no. 8/2006 effective January 1, 2007, has instructed the Authority that payments to Oman Telecommunications Company SAOG (Omantel) against leased lines and internet related services provided to all the Ministries shall be routed through the Authority. Subsequently, it was similarly decided to also route the payments related to the use of governmental networks (MPLS).

Reinvestment receivable from Microsoft is in respect of the reinvestment amount which the Authority is required to reinvest as per the contract with Exceed towards the job seekers program.

Accounts receivable comprises of amounts to be received from entities towards the sponsorships of events hosted by the Authority.

9 Cash and cash equivalents

	31 December 2009 RO	31 December 2008 RO
Cash at bank	2,017,819	5,283,222
Cash in hand	1,461	1,138
	2,019,280	5,284,360

10 Government contribution

During the year the Authority booked revenue as contribution from Ministry of Finance of RO 12,958,638 (2008 – RO 16,949,700) from the Government of Oman to support its operations. The contribution received is based on capital and operating budgets and the Authority raises the requisition for government assistance at periodic intervals based on budget.

Movement in the retained surplus account is as follows:

	31 December 2009 RO	31 December 2008 RO
At 1 January	14,971,679	5,592,549
Surplus for the year	1,259,367	9,379,130
At 31 December	16,231,046	14,971,679

11 Accounts payable and accruals

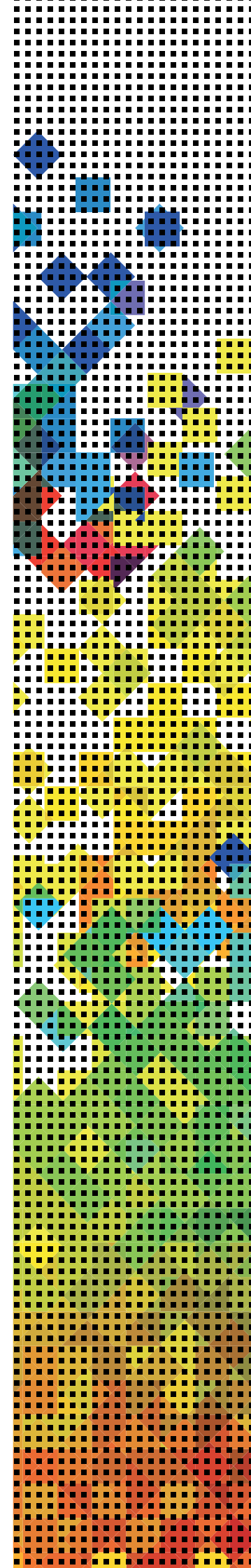
	31 December 2009 RO	31 December 2008 RO
Current portion of liability relating to acquisition of license	3,400,255	-
Liability against Government network	494,899	24,576
Accounts payable and accruals	2,702,370	2,857,664
Accrued expenses	4,666,634	5,405,672
Advance from customers	33,159	5,780
Provision for doubtful debts	7,500	-
Other payables	323	38,358
	11,305,140	8,332,050

Accrued expenses are mainly in respect of the project expense incurred. The carrying value of accounts and other payable and accruals are considered to be a reasonable approximation of their fair value.

Amounts payable to Microsoft:

	31 December 2009 RO
Within one year	3,400,255
After one year and within five years	1,700,128
Total liability	5,100,383

The above amount is in respect of the agreement with Exceed towards the renewal of licenses in the current year 2009. The contract is effective for three years till 30 June 2012.



12 Unearned revenue

	31 December 2009 RO	31 December 2008 RO
Balance at 1 January	547,805	930,269
Unearned revenue booked during the year	926,897	372,496
Transferred to income	(874,218)	(754,960)
Balance at 31 December	600,484	547,805

During the year the amount transferred to income of RO 874,218 is in respect of the total expenses incurred of RO 822,314 and the acquisition of fixed assets of RO 51,904.

In accordance with the agreement with International Information Technology Co. LLC, Microsoft Large Account Reseller and Microsoft Gold Certified Partner (MS LAR) is required to reinvest an amount of US \$ 1,920,083 per annum for a period of three years in respect of implementation of the ICT programs and initiatives or any other approved activities. Reinvestment instalment due is initially taken to unearned revenue and transferred to revenue to the extent of expenditures incurred. Funds that have not been allocated or utilized within one year can be carried over to the next year. However, no funds can be carried over beyond the three year duration of the agreement.

In respect of the job seekers program, no amounts have been transferred during the year from the unearned revenue to the income, as no costs have been incurred towards the programme.

13 Other income

	Year ended 31 December 2009 RO	Year ended 31 December 2008 RO
Interest income	45,693	40,590
Other income	297,672	80,540
	343,365	121,130

14 Reinvestment costs

The expenses incurred of RO 822,314 (2008 – RO 754,960) pertains to utilisation of funds from Microsoft towards implementing IT initiatives in the country. Reinvestment revenue is normally the same as expenses incurred except in case of purchase of capital assets for the same

15 Distribution costs

	Year ended 31 December 2009 RO	Year ended 31 December 2008 RO
Giveaways and others	339,330	152,914
Project launching expenses	152,892	-
Advertisement expenses	66,363	231,957
	558,585	384,871

16 Administrative expenses

	Year ended 31 December 2009 RO	Year ended 31 December 2008 RO
Office expenses	794,185	361,524
Consultancy fees	617,949	221,471
Travelling expenses	246,783	246,064
Rent	224,960	193,958
Utility	124,048	-

Advisory fees	77,469	-
Seminars and workshops	37,570	9,383
Sitting fees	20,700	-
Vehicle maintenance expense	19,890	10,020
Professional and legal expense	18,169	34,646
Bad debts	7,500	-
Repairs and maintenance	4,190	-
	2,193,413	1,077,066

17 Other operating expenses

	Year ended 31 December 2009 RO	Year ended 31 December 2008 RO
Government training fees	1,130,783	-
Project related maintenance costs	381,988	442,421
Operational management	68,434	-
	1,581,205	442,421

18 Taxation

No provision for taxation has been made in the financial statements in view of the fact that the Authority is exempt from tax.

19 Financial instrument risk

Risk management objectives and policies

The Authority is exposed to various risks in relation to financial instruments. The Authority's financial assets and liabilities by category are summarised in note 3.11. The main types of risks are market risk, credit risk and liquidity risk.

The Authority's risk management is coordinated in close cooperation with the board of directors, and focuses on actively securing the Authority's short to medium-term cash flows by minimising the exposure.

The Authority does not actively engage in the trading of financial assets for speculative purposes nor does it write options. The most significant financial risks to which the Authority is exposed to are described below.

19.1 Foreign currency sensitivity

Currency risk is the risk that the value of a financial instrument will fluctuate due to changes in foreign exchange rates.

The majority of the Authority's foreign currency transactions are either in United States of America (USA) Dollars or in currencies that are linked to US Dollar. The rate of exchange between the Rial Omani and the US Dollar has remained constant since 1986.

19.2 Interest rate sensitivity

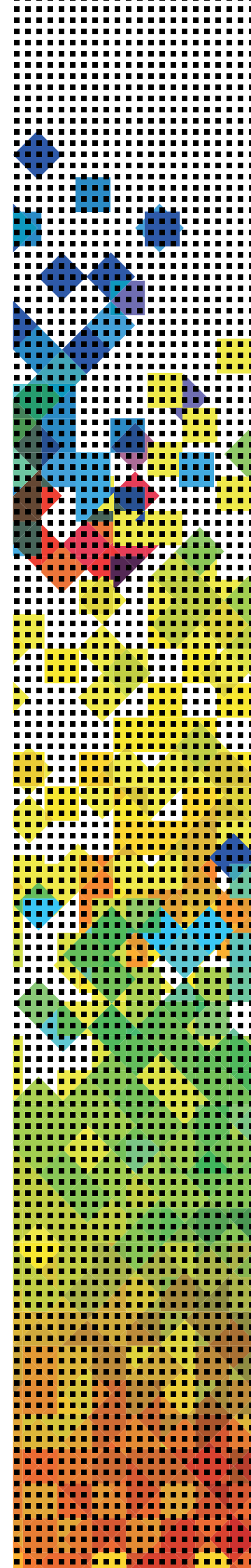
Interest rate risk is the risk that the value of a financial instrument will fluctuate due to changes in market interest rates.

The Authority is not subject to any interest rate risk.

19.3 Credit risk analysis

Credit risk is the risk that one party to a financial instrument will fail to discharge an obligation and cause the other party to incur a financial loss.

Credit risk on bank balances is limited as bank balances are held with reputable local banks. The Authority manages credit risk with respect to receivables from customers by monitoring in accordance with defined policies and procedures. The Authority is not exposed to any credit risk.



19.4 Liquidity risk analysis

Liquidity risk also referred to as funding risk is the risk that an enterprise will encounter difficulty in raising funds to meet commitments associated with financial instruments. Liquidity risk may result from an inability to sell a financial asset quickly at close to its fair value.

Liquidity requirements are monitored on a regular basis and the management ensures that sufficient funds are available to meet any future commitments.

As at 31 December 2009, the Authority's liabilities have contractual maturities as summarised below:

	Within 6 months	6 to 12 months	1-5 Years	Total
	RO	RO	RO	RO
Liability towards acquisition of licenses	-	3,400,255	-	3,400,255
Liability towards Government network	-	494,899	-	494,899
Trade payables	-	2,702,370	-	2,702,370
Provisions and accrued expenses	323	7,500	4,666,634	4,674,457
Advance from customers	33,159	-	-	33,159
	33,482	6,605,024	4,666,634	11,305,140

19.5 Market risk

Market risk is the risk that the value of a financial instrument will fluctuate as a result of changes in market prices whether those changes are caused by factors specific to the individual security or its issuer or factors affecting all securities traded in the market.

The Authority does not have any financial instrument which is exposed to market risk.

19.6 Fair value of financial instruments

Fair value is the amount for which an asset could be exchanged or a liability settled between knowledgeable, willing parties in an arm's length transaction. Differences can therefore arise between the book values under the historical cost method and fair value estimates. Underlying the definition of fair value is a presumption that an enterprise is a going concern without any intention or need to liquidate, curtail materially the scale of its operations or undertake transactions on adverse terms.

The management believes that the fair values of the financial assets and financial liabilities are not materially different from their carrying values.

20 Contingent assets and other contingent liabilities

There are contingent liabilities outstanding as at 31 December 2009. (2008- Nil).

21 Post-reporting date events

No adjusting or significant non-adjusting events have occurred between the reporting date and the date of authorisation.

22 Comparative figures

The comparative figures have been regrouped to conform to current year financial statements' presentation. Such reclassification does not affect previously reported net assets or equity. Last year's financials have been audited by an audit firm other than Abu Timam Grant Thornton.

