

Smartphones to drive the digital future

Smartphones are expected to drive significant future growth in mobile communications and further unlock major opportunities in the digital economy for innovative content and applications, according to an ACMA report on technology developments.

The report, *Technology developments in the digital economy*, analyses major developments in information and communications technologies and explores the implications of these changes.

'Digital technologies are really starting to have an enormous effect on the interactivity of individuals and organisations that now communicate using multiple forms of media in environments that are mobile, fast, and virtual,' said Chris Chapman, Chairman of the ACMA.

'The report assists the ACMA, government, industry and the community to understand just how rapid is the pace of technology change, how it is impacting Australia and how we might ensure all Australians reap the benefits.'

According to the report, the following three broad groups of technologies are significant to the development of networks and services that support the digital economy:

- > infrastructure technologies
- > smart technologies
- > developments in the digital community.

Infrastructure developments have continued the trend towards high bandwidth network upgrades and the transition to internet protocol platforms, with many of the network improvements making their way into the residential environment through home networking technologies.

Sustainability concerns are creating a new convergence between the telecommunications industry and utilities and are driving the development of smart applications. Smart technologies are being used to control the growing demands of the information and communications sector as well as manage the exponential increase in information made available through the internet.

The combining of location-based information with other information sources in the digital community has provided a range of rich commercial and social applications that provide features beyond those of the original information sources—but the consumer experience of these enhanced features is equally raising interest in their privacy and security impacts.

'The technologies covered in the paper reflect a snapshot in time in what is a dynamic and complex environment,' said Mr Chapman. 'The paper acknowledges the fundamental role of technologies as the foundation of convergent communications and media services in the digital economy.'

A copy of the report is available on the ACMA's website at www.acma.gov.au (go to About ACMA: Publications & research > Research > Technology developments in the digital economy).

