

CS's Speech at the iProA Anniversary Event 2010 –

Movie Premiere

9 June 2010

Dr. Winnie Tang, Dr. Eric Cheng, Mr. Gabriel Leung, Distinguished
Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

My warmest congratulations to the Hong Kong Internet Professional Association (iProA) on your 11th Anniversary. Since 1999, the Association has indeed become, dare I say – our “A Team” for bridging the digital divide.

Today, the Internet is an integral part of our daily life – at work and at leisure. We can do business, learn, communicate, find a job, play games, shop and relax using the Internet. You can even check out a preview of tonight's film online.

However, there are still a significant number of people in our community who – for one reason or another – are excluded from all that the web has to offer.

Building an inclusive, knowledge-based society is a key focus of the Government's Digital 21 Strategy. We are determined to ensure that all citizens, especially the less privileged, can participate in, and benefit from the development of information communications technology.

Our initiatives include setting up district cyber centers, a WiFi programme providing free wireless Internet access, and building a dedicated portal to provide a convenient one-stop information service for the elderly.

The Government is also providing financial support and training services so that low-income families can benefit fully from the Internet.

Our plan for barrier-free Internet access cannot be achieved without valuable input from our close partners including iProA.

Through the professionalism and commitment of your members, iProA has been able to make a significant impact in various areas of our community regarding information sharing and Internet access.

Allow me to mention a couple of outstanding contributions from your Association over the years. One example is your work in promoting collaboration between health care and IT professionals in disease tracking and control through an eHealth Consortium during and after the SARS outbreak.

The Consortium also plays a significant role in the territorial- and population-wide electronic health record system, a cornerstone of our healthcare reform. Through training, seminars and conferences, the Consortium prepares our medical practitioners for the digital age of healthcare. It also advises the Government on the implementation of the system.

iProA spearheaded the WebCare Campaign in 2001 to promote equal opportunities on the web for persons with disabilities. It promulgates guidelines to assist and educate the public to build barrier-free websites, and awards those who help improve internet accessibilities.

While the internet offers unlimited potential for exchange and innovation, if used irresponsibly, it may have negative impact on our privacy, security and our next generation. In response to this, iProA

joined hands with other organisations to form the Online Service Providers Alliance this February. The Alliance aims to uplift the quality of our internet services by protecting the freedom of speech on one hand and championing a more responsible internet community on the other. Through the establishment of a platform for online service providers and “netizens”, the Alliance gathers views and advice for the Government and the community to make the internet safe and healthy.

We also commend iProA for your valuable support in advising the Government on the formulation and implementation of IT in Education strategies.

I look forward to continued close collaboration with iProA in promoting Internet access for all, because – to borrow a line from the “A Team”: “I love it when a plan comes together.”

One key area for further collaboration is the West Kowloon Cultural District. At an early stage of this project, we already see the pivotal role of IT as a significant element to achieve our mission to bring arts to the people and to bring people to the art.

We hope to use IT in the most innovative way to help visitors

from all over the world to experience the unique cultural district. IT will also be instrumental to our outreach efforts on arts education and audience building. It will also form the backbone of the multimedia which now becomes new canvas and material for imaginative artists.

When planning the project, we need the IT profession's input to ensure that we lay the IT infrastructure in the district in such a way that it will be able to keep pace with the most advance IT developments in many years to come. And I am glad that iProA has set up a working group to give us your invaluable input.

I thank iProA and your many members for your work and contributions in bridging the digital divide over the years. I also wish iProA continued success in the future.

Enjoy the movie, have a great evening, and thank you.