The Vision

ITA works with a vision to transform the Sultanate of Oman into a sustainable knowledge society by leveraging information and communication technologies to enhance government services, enrich businesses and empower individuals.

Message from
His Majesty Sultan Qaboos bin Said

“We have always emphasised 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 e-government services. We are closely following the important steps that we have made in this regard.

We call upon all government institutions to speedily enhance their performance, and to facilitate their services, by applying digital technology in order to usher the Sultanate into the constantly evolving spheres for applying knowledge.”

His Majesty Sultan Qaboos bin Said
The Annual Session of the Council of Oman
11th November 2008
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“This Report reflects the consistent efforts exerted throughout the last year. It showcases the accomplishments achieved on the course of implementing the National Strategy for Oman’s Digital Society and eGovernment, which aims to reinforce the comprehensive development in the country.”

This is realized through harnessing the great potential and opportunities presented by the rapid developments in ICT in the 3rd millennium to build a knowledge based economy, and to place Oman within the league of advanced countries.

Last year’s efforts were crowned with several accomplishments. Perhaps, the most significant of which is winning a United Nations Public Service Award for the fifth year consecutively, where the State Audit Institution was awarded 1st place in the category of Preventing and Combating Corruption in the Public Service for their project ‘Complaints Window’. The Ministry of Regional Municipalities and Water Resources was also ranked first in the category of Improving the Delivery of Public Service for their project ‘Injaz Hall’.

Furthermore, Omani projects attracted attention in December of the same year by collecting 7 GCC eGovernment Awards, which were received during the 3rd GCC eGovernment Award, Conference and Exhibition in Dubai in the United Arab Emirates.

A further success in the cyber security field is the Sultanate designation to host the first Regional Cyber Security Center, affiliated with the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) and the Organization of IMPACT. Moreover, Oman’s National CERT was elected to chair the Board and Steering Committee of national CERT centers in the Organization of Islamic Cooperation. This is clearly international recognition of Oman’s leading role in cyber security.

The same year witnessed the launch of some important national projects, most notably, the Sas Programme and Center for Entrepreneurship. This is a center dedicated to incubating ICT projects and developing IT technologies related to the SMEs in the Sultanate.

In 23rd December 2013, we launched the National Digital Certification Center, which has been tasked with the establishment and operation of the digital certification infrastructure. This step further fulfills the eTransactions Law and its recommendations issued by Royal Decree No. 69/2008 to support electronic transactions and further advance the eGovernment Transformation Plan.

In conclusion, on behalf of all ITA staff I would like to extend our great thanks to all agencies and individuals for their support and cooperation to achieve Oman knowledge society.

Dr. Ali Masoud Al Sunaidy
Chairman, ITA

Dr. Ali Masoud Al Sunaidy
Chairman, ITA
"It gives me great pleasure at the outset of the 7th annual report of the Information Technology Authority for the year 2013 to express my sincere thanks and appreciation to the ITA Board and staff for their concerted efforts during the previous year."

These efforts have culminated into several accomplishments and tangible successes on the roadmap of the national strategy for Oman’s Digital Society and eGovernment. This Report comprises eight sections which describe, in facts and figures, the extent of the development achieved in 2013. The Report starts with highlighting the role of the ITA in enabling the Omani citizen to acquire digital knowledge through various training opportunities.

Our second section has been allocated to highlight the exerted efforts to reinforce the role of the eGovernment, through focusing on the Official eGovernment Services Portal (Omanuna), and the eGovernment Transformation Plan. These two initiatives serve as the foundation upon which several other ITA projects are based.

The third section addresses the ICT industry in the Sultanate. In this section we highlight the role of the ITA in supporting youth innovation and the launch of initiatives such as Sas Programme and Center, and the Free and Open Source Software Initiative. Confidence building is always associated with information security; thus, we have allocated the fourth section to highlight the Oman National CERT and its great efforts in cyber security and child online protection, as well as information security awareness programmes.

Building on the premise that governance standards and policies work to provide an appropriate working environment for eTransactions, it is imperative to highlight in section five the ITA efforts in terms of providing consultancy services, developing standards and unifying them, and issuing the required laws to support the digital society.

In the sixth section, we review the most noteworthy of accomplishments in the field of the National Infrastructure Development and its role in the implementation of the National Strategy for Oman’s Digital Society and eGovernment. Since Promotion and Awareness have an influential role in spreading digital culture, we have dedicated the seventh section to reviewing the awareness campaigns with respect to the ITA’s vision and mission, efforts done to encourage people to join this national cause, as well as urge them to benefit from ITA’s initiatives.

Finally, I would like to reiterate my thanks and appreciation to all those who have contributed and continue to contribute to the building of Oman’s digital society.
ITA Board of Directors

HE Dr. Ali Masoud Al Sunaidy
- Chairman of ITA Board of Directors
- Minister of Commerce & Industry

HE Eng. Ahmed Hassan Al-Dheeb
- Deputy Chairman of ITA Board of Directors
- Undersecretary of Ministry of Commerce & Industry

HE Hamoud Sangour Al-Zadjali
- ITA Board Member
- Executive President of the Central Bank of Oman (CBO)

HE Said Hamdoon Saif Al Harthy
- ITA Board Member
- Undersecretary of the Ministry of Transport & Communications for Ports and Maritime Affairs

HE Dr. Hammed Salim Rashid Al Rawahi
- ITA Board Member
- CEO of Telecommunication Regularity Authority (TRA)

Eng. Matar Saif Al-Ma'amri
- ITA Board Member
ITA Management Team

Sitting Members (From left to right)

1. Mr. Yaqoob Dar Al Balushi
   Deputy CEO for Infrastructure & eServices

2. Dr. Salem Sultan Al Rustagi
   ITA CEO

3. Mr. Omar Al Shanfari
   Deputy CEO for Operations

Standing Members (From left to right)

1. Mr. Mohammed Al Dhiuli
   Director General of Governance & Advisory

2. Mr. Khalid Al Kharusi
   Director General of Information & Awareness

3. Mr. Abdulaziz Al Khasei
   Director General of Investment & Sourcing

4. Mr. Maged Boulos
   In-charge of Strategic Planning

Standing Members (From left to right – Cntd.)

5. Mr. Fahad Al Abe
   Director General of Digital Society Development

6. Mr. Khalid Al Syabi
   Director General of eServices

7. Mr. Abdullah Al Barwani
   Director General of Infrastructure

8. Dr. Badar Al Mandhari
   Acting Director General of Information Security

9. Mr. Badar Al Sahli
   Director of Oman National CERT

10. Mr. Qais Al Rubashi
    Director General of Finance & Administration
Oman ranked 1st in ITU Global Cyber Security Index across the Arab world

Conferences 9
Workshops 15
Exhibitions 8
Conducted by the I&A Division

29,521
Government employees trained in IT Literacy

1st of its kind in the Middle East, Mobile Public Key Infrastructure (PKI)

Completed
Oman’s 1st
Government eReadiness Assessment Report

116,000
Total number of PCs distributed since the NPC program launched

90
sites secured and their security managed by Information Security Division (ISD)

Completed
Officially Launched

25,096
Government employees obtained IT Literacy certification

209,393
ePayment Gateway transactions processed

500,721
authentication certificates issued on the eID

Oman CERT
has been elected to be the Chair of the OIC-CERT

7,164
Citizens trained in IT Literacy

112
sites connected through the Oman Government Network

Published the 1st ICT-related Omani SMEs list
highlighting SMEs capabilities relevant to ICT industry projects and business opportunities

34
eTransformation Plans reviewed and approved

50
transactional services have been linked to Omanuna

12,000
internet modems (e.g. 3G, 3.5G and DSL) distributed country wide

5,164
Citizens trained in IT Literacy

209,393
ePayment Gateway transactions processed

34
eTransformation Plans reviewed and approved

7,164
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transactional services have been linked to Omanuna

12,000
internet modems (e.g. 3G, 3.5G and DSL) distributed country wide
Society & Human Capital Development

This section is considered as one of the key pillars upon which the e.oman Strategy is built. This is based on the fact that society is the ultimate goal of development. Consequently, the Authority has set a number of objectives aimed at serving this section, namely:

- Developing the National IT Training & Awareness (NITTA) Framework. Train citizens and government employees in IT basics, with the goal to eliminate digital illiteracy.
- Introducing school students to the IT basics. Provide advanced training programs to IT industry workers.
- Offering specialized training courses to IT industry workers, so as to qualify them for certification.
- Providing PCs as well as internet accessibility for the community at affordable prices.

### National IT Training & Awareness (NITTA)

The National IT Training & Awareness Framework (NITTA) initiative is a governmental nation-wide e.oman initiative aimed at developing Information Communication Technology skills capabilities and increasing ICT awareness and proficiency within the Government and the community. NITTA has given rise to the following projects and initiatives:

#### 1.1 Community IT Training

The Community IT Training (CITT) Project is regarded as a fundamental part of the National Training & Awareness Initiative. It aims at activating sustainable learning at all levels of Omani society as well as enhancing citizens’ abilities and skills in understanding and knowing how to use modern digital technology. The CITT project delivers IT literacy training programs to the community through the use of Community Knowledge Centers (CKC) and Women Community Knowledge Centers (WCKC).

Community Knowledge Centers (CKC)/Women Community Knowledge Centers (WCKC) Set up in communities throughout the Sultanate, CKCs & WCKCs aim to reduce computer illiteracy and bridge the digital divide by providing basic computer and internet skills. The CKC & WCKC assist and help people to expand their access to information, improve productivity, enhance quality of life, and enrich culture and tradition by promoting communication and interaction.

**Achievements in 2013**

- To date, 19 CKCs & WCKCs have been established.
- 44,034 citizens have been trained in digital literacy since the launch of the program.
- Sponsorship from Oman Oil has been secured to train people with special needs.
- 25 WCKC trainers were trained in “Build Your Business (BYB)” program through Microsoft Partnership.
- Digital Society carnivals were launched in Sohar, Sur, Nizwa and Ibrai.
- CKC trainers were trained in eLearning and effective office management skills.

The following table shows the number of employees who have benefited from Government IT Training & Certification (GITTC), since the launch of the program in 2009 up to the end of 2013:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of Civil Service employees</th>
<th>Trainees</th>
<th>Certificate holders</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>74,965</td>
<td>59,764</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total number of citizens trained on digital literacy in 2013:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Training type</th>
<th>Total No. of people trained in 2013</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Community Knowledge Centers (CKC)</td>
<td>2,820</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women Community Knowledge Centers (WCKC)</td>
<td>1,016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other community training initiatives</td>
<td>3,328</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Trained in DL</td>
<td>7,164</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### 1.2 Government IT Training & Certification (GITTC)

This project aims to provide all Civil Service employees with information and digital skills, consequently allowing them to benefit from every opportunity to develop their ability to offer eGovernment services.

The Government IT Training & Certification (GITTC) program has extended the contract with the Arab Oman Training Institute (AOTI) to April 2014. A total 25,096 employees from 23 ministries were certified in 2013.

The following table shows the number of employees who have benefited from Government IT Training & Certification (GITTC), since the launch of the program in 2009 up to the end of 2013:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of Civil Service employees</th>
<th>Trainees</th>
<th>Certificate holders</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>74,965</td>
<td>59,764</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### 1.3 Specialized IT Training (SITT)

This program focuses on providing specialized IT training courses and granting opportunities to obtain specialized certificates, thereby increasing the number of holders of specialized certificates in the different fields of information technology. Moreover, the program contributes to meeting the current needs for the ICT industry in the public and private sectors, as well as satisfying future needs so as to enhance the growth of the local ICT sector.
In this way, competencies, skills, and experiences necessary for the development of the ICT industry are provided, in addition to contributing to the different initiatives to achieve the objectives of the e.oman strategy and eGovernment in the Sultanate.

Bridging the gap between the knowledge graduates acquire during their academic study and the practical experience required by the labour market in both the public and private sectors is the overall aim. Consequently, emphasis is placed on some specialized programs and courses instead of others, in co-operation with pioneering ICT companies.

The total number of people trained in SITT in 2013:

- Certification Tracks: Government employees / Job seekers
  - CompTIA Certification: 162
  - Cisco Certification (From OGN): 53
  - Cisco Certification (From Cisco): 24
  - Microsoft Certification: 92
  - Free Open Source Software: 201
  - New Government Employees: 71
  - Total: 603

- Practical Training & Job Attachment
  - SAP: 38
  - HP (via Unified Operations Solution): 5
  - IBM (via GBM): 6
  - Total: 49

1.4 **National PC Initiative (NPC)**

This initiative targets several categories of Omani society including social insurance families and teachers, as well as students enrolled in their first year of higher education studies. The goal is to enable these individuals to own PCs and, subsequently, to increase the number of PC and internet users in Oman. Encouraging users to become acquainted with modern knowledge, to benefit from eServices, and to keep abreast of the latest technological and cognitive developments is the overall aim.

The table below shows the total number of PCs distributed during 2013, for all targeted segments:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NPC Target Segment</th>
<th>Total number PCs distributed during 2013</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SWB Families</td>
<td>2,452</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SWB Students</td>
<td>3,679</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Higher Education Students (First Year)</td>
<td>26,945</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>4,956</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>38,032</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*The above-showing statistics are till Nov. 2013*

Prior to the National PC Initiative execution of ITA, the penetration rate of PCs in the Sultanate as per the year 2010 census was 53%.

- As per the results of the ‘Access to and Use of Information and Communications Technology (ICT) by Households and Individuals 2013’ survey administrated by ITA in 2013, the percentage per household increased to 83%.
- At the end of 2013, an increase in the growth of the PC and Internet penetration rates was noted from 2011 to 2013. While the credit for this growth cannot fully be attributed to the ITA due to other societal factors occurring at the same time, the NPC initiative certainly contributed to the jump in percentages.

The increase in the PC and internet penetration rates (since the beginning of the NPC project):

- 90%
- 80%
- 70%
- 60%
- 50%
- 40%
- 30%
- 2013
- 2010
Enhance eGovernment & eServices
Enhance eGovernment & eServices

Development of the IT sector can be measured by the accessibility of services electronically instead of through complex and time-consuming traditional methods. Therefore, the Authority endeavors to enhance eGovernment services through a series of continuous procedures, including:

- Determining the means of enhancing eGovernment services, as well as re-engineering government operations.
- Promoting the use of free and open source software (FOSS) and licensed packages at government institutions.
- Ensuring the governmental infrastructure necessary for providing and promoting online services.
- Updating government applications with a view to offering online services.
- Developing business continuity systems across all Governmental IT departments.
- Securing and safeguarding Government systems and data.

2.1 Omanuna
The Information Technology Authority (ITA) endeavours to transform the Sultanate of Oman into a sustainable knowledge society. It uses Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) to enhance government services, enrich businesses and empower individuals. The website of the Official eGovernment Services Portal was renamed in 2012 to ‘Omanuna’ – ‘our Oman’ – and serves as an outlet through which the user can access the various services and information offered by different government departments spread across the Sultanate of Oman.

Omanuna provides a wide range of services for citizens, residents, visitors, businesses and government officers. It provides a single sign-on to the portal services enabling people to complete their transactions safely, as it checks the user’s identity card number, mobile number and finger print. Omanuna offers greater availability and accessibility through other channels such as mobiles and call center services. Achieving efficiency through eGovernment technology is what ITA seeks.

Achievements in 2013
- Mobile applications have been centralized for Government entities and are now accessible through the Portal.
- The Portal design has been further enhanced with a new look and feel, enriched content, with new information and services such as the GIS System and Podcast facilities.
- The first phase of the Open Data project was launched.

2.2 eGovernment Transformation
The eGovernment Transformation Strategy was approved by the Ministerial Cabinet on 12 June 2012, with clear instructions and targets having been given to all government agencies to improve the quality of the eServices provided to the public.

Subsequently, the eGovernment Transformation Plan was formally launched in October 2012. The goal of the eGovernment Transformation Plan is to increase delivery, integration and quality of eServices and drive their adoption by citizens, residents and businesses.

To assist in this process, ITA rolled out six stages of the Government Transformation Plan which include the following:

1. ePresence Stage: As the most basic form, governments publish simple and limited information on their web sites, such as the agency’s vision and mission, office hours, contact information, and official documents. Government agencies have to publish in both Arabic and English. Government agencies also have to update their websites, which must be linked to the Oman eGovernment Official Portal.

2. Interaction Stage: This stage provides simple interaction between the government agency and the public that includes email systems, basic search engines and official form downloads. Government agencies should also have a call Center to receive both phone calls and sms. Government agencies will also interact among themselves online through email, sms and digital data exchange.

3. Transactions Stage: This stage enables the public to conduct complete online transactions such as license applications, course registrations and personal information updates. This stage includes the ability to carry out e-payments. Government agencies can use a mixture of internet and telephony technologies.

4. Transformation Stage: This stage provides value-added, public-oriented eServices. It focuses on services from public’s perspective and convenience. These eServices involve both vertical (i.e. government agencies in the same Line of Business such as health and education) and horizontal integration (i.e. government agencies in different Lines of Business but carry out similar function like HR). This transformation requires detailed coordination work and improving business process.
5. eParticipation Stage: This is a long-term goal for eGovernment development. By offering tools such as online voting, polling and surveys, government agencies can improve their government performance through social participation and citizen involvement. At the same time, eGovernment gradually changes the way in which the government and people interact to make consensus and transparent government decisions.

6. eBorder/eRegional Stage: Another long-term goal is to offer collaborative services with the neighboring countries and countries in the region. It requires sharing and exchanging dynamic data among the countries with agreed SLAs. At least Stage 4, Transformation, should be reached before embarking on this stage.

Accordingly in 2013, the Information Technology Authority has:
- Attended more than 200 meetings with Government entities
- Conducted 5 different workshops attended by more than 800 attendees
- Established an organizational structure for the Task Force with roles and responsibilities
- Designed an ITA projects RFP floating template
- Recruited eBusiness Consultants to facilitate Government entities’ eTransformation
- Conducted one-to-one workshops with Government entities to document services
- Facilitated the improvement of services at 6 Government entities
- Supported Government entities in developing strategies for eLearning and Social Media
- Organized an ‘eGovernment Transformation and Change Management’ workshop and Accessibility Day event
- Facilitated a study to improve the Mawred program with the purpose of expanding its user base
- Held 12 kick off meetings
- Hosted 10 service documentation workshops

2.3 One Stop Shop

In December 2013, the Sultanate signed an agreement with Nortal Gulf Company from the Republic of Estonia to develop the Ministry of Commerce & Industry project – the One Stop Shop (OSS), Business and Technology Transformation Project – to take a step further in the development of the eGovernment and to support the eTransformation plan. The project is expected to improve business processes through providing over 66 eServices available through mobile apps or the website over two years.

Nortal Gulf also signed 4 agreements with four Omani SMEs to allocate 10% of the OSS project, namely: Global Computers, OSSS SANAD Center, Capital Experts, and Tomorrow Technical Investment. As part of the One Stop Shop (OSS) project, the eServices of the following government entities are to be enhanced, namely: Royal Oman Police, Ministry of Manpower, Muscat Municipality, Oman Chamber of Commerce, Ministry of Environment and Climate Affairs, Secretariat General of Taxation, and Capital Markets Authority.

Sultanate signs agreement to develop the national One Stop Shop (OSS) Project
Enable ICT Industry Development
Enable ICT Industry Development

The significance of this theme stems from its focus on developing the IT industry in Oman in terms of digital content and the development of applications. The overall aim is to be able to develop and market Omani IT products locally and abroad, consequently rendering positive impact on the local market and bolstering the Omani economy towards a comprehensive and sustainable development, ultimately enhancing the Sultanate’s global ranking in the field of ICT. And to make this goal a reality, the ITA has adopted a number of procedures, which include:

- Encouraging multinational companies to establish branches and operate in Oman.
- Focusing on developing the IT industry by providing IT solutions.
- Developing the capacity of Oman’s IT industry in the areas of digital content and developing applications and market its products on the local and external levels.
- Supporting the partnerships between Omani IT corporations and their international counterparts.
- Creating support services for the IT industry to pave the way for multinational companies to launch their activities from within the Sultanate.
- Providing the necessary administrative, financial and technical support for SMEs through respective incubation programs.
- Boosting the role of associations in building partnerships and developing means of cooperation between the companies operating in the sector.

3.1 Sas Programme & Center for Entrepreneurship

The Sas Programme and Center for Entrepreneurship is an ICT business development initiative and a state-of-the-art business designed to help promote small and medium enterprises (SMEs) build a robust ICT sector in Oman.

‘Sas’ is an Arabic concept that refers to any solid foundation. Hence the Sas Programme is designed to provide the foundation for creating a new and vibrant ICT industry, thereby fostering an entrepreneurial spirit in the ICT sector in Oman. Targeting small and medium ICT businesses, students, and jobseekers of any age interested in starting a business, the Sas Programme seeks to develop an internationally competitive ICT industry in Oman, attract investment in the ICT sector, encourage and support innovation by contributing to the introduction of new technologies to create innovative products, solutions and services, and encourage young graduates to create their own businesses through the development and implementation of entrepreneurship culture-building activities.

Achievements in 2013

- Launched the Sas Center
- Incubated 12 companies in Sas
- Signed an MoU with Nizwa University to establish Sas hubs across the Sultanate
- 7 incubated companies in Sas secured business from ITA worth 50,000 OMR
- Welcomed 229 students in Sas from a total of 11 universities, schools and initiatives
- Hosted 19 VIPs including HRH The Prince of Wales to promote business in Sas

The below table shows the numbers of Omani developers and the type of training received:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Training</th>
<th>Nos.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Coding Training</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mobile app training</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summer of Code (via FOSS)</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Location Based Services (via FOSS)</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entrepreneurial skills (via Inzaj) in 9 regions</td>
<td>1,472</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Trained 2 Sas companies in specialized training abroad (USA & KSA) to strengthen their technical skills conducted the following:
  - 3 selection panels for this year with a total of 10 businesses interviewed
  - An induction workshop (8 sessions in 5 weeks) instructing how to draft business plans for 35 potential incubates
  - 8 internal networking sessions for incubates
- Participated in the following events and exhibitions:
  - Salalah Festival
  - COMEX 2013 Exhibition, showcasing 9 incubates
  - COMEX 2013 Conference
  - GITEX Exhibition (Dubai), showcasing 2 incubates
  - SME Exhibition organized by the national SME authority showcasing 6 incubates
  - SME Exhibition organized by the Minister of Commerce and Industry
  - A workshop at the College of Applied Sciences in Nizwa
- The following career fairs:
  - Higher College of Technology
  - Middle East College of Information Technology
  - Applied Science College – Sur
3.2 Center of Excellence for eContent & Application Development

The Center of Excellence for eContent Application Development aims to establish an eContent industry in the Sultanate, as well as enrich the domestic eContent via providing a suitable environment and infrastructure necessary for meeting the various needs for eContent development.

Objectives

- Develop an eContent industry within the Sultanate and further boost Omani exports to Arab states in this field.
- Enrich domestic and Arab internet content, especially services-related ones, so as to ensure locals and residents benefit from the internet as a value-added service available for all, with the final goal of achieving “Knowledge Society” criteria.
- Train and qualify specialists and enthusiasts into the field of eContent management and design according to international standards.
- Focus on achieving integrity in applications for creating innovative solutions and services.
- Design and develop specialized contents for various uses at the domestic level.
- Provide the know-how and consultations relevant to identifying, designing, developing, and producing all types of Arab digital content such as animations, 3D contents, imitations, and cyber (virtual) labs.
- Locate infrastructure that could be used by the various governmental bodies in the field of developing and designing their own content.
- Implement national projects offering a group of services targeting locals and residents of the Sultanate.

The overall aim is to establish a common and strategic framework for eContent development in the Sultanate to further support the Oman Digital Strategy.

Center Specializations

- Develop and manage applications and mobile applications;
- Develop virtual reality and multimedia projects.

Achievements 2013

- 80 trainees have been successfully trained in the field of virtual reality.
- The top 10 graduates of the VR training program were selected and announced during the graduation ceremony to participate in further specialized VR training.
- One company specialized in VR has successfully been formed.
- The first and second batches of trainees in Phase 2 of the program were assigned projects to work on and are on track to start earning income.
- Students worked on 15 pilot projects and, 5 of these received funding from ITA and will be showcased in the center.

3.3 Free & Open Source Software Initiative

The Free & Open Source Software (FOSS) initiative is part of the eoman strategy which aims to support all applications, technologies, and solutions that are used to develop the IT sector in Oman. The initiative seeks to:

- raise awareness of the existence of free & open source software (FOSS) and its various applications;
- present free & open source software (FOSS) applications as an alternative to the proprietary software;
- build the capacity required to use, develop and support FOSS through specialized training;
- encourage research and development, creativity, and innovation in FOSS best practices, development and deployment;
- provide the technical support required for the development and deployment of FOSS solutions on the public sector;
- promote and encourage the use of FOSS in the public entities as well as for individuals; and,
- contribute to raising awareness about intellectual property rights by encouraging the public to use FOSS, to reduce/eliminate the use of pirated software.

In 2013, the FOSS initiative achieved the following:

- Co-hosted the inaugural Free & Open Source Software Conference (FOSSC-Oman 2013) jointly with the Communication & Information Research Center (CIRC) at Sultan Qaboos University
- Conducted a PHP course for Ministry of Education
- Participated in COMEX 2013
- Launched FOSS labs in Sultan Qaboos University and Nizwa University
- Evaluated and awarded FOSS summer training opportunities to 4 companies
- Participated in a workshop about FOSS in both Salalah and Ibra Colleges of Technology
- Trained 205 IT specialists in various FOSS programs during FOSS summer training
Information Security & Cyber Security

This theme is of paramount importance in terms of providing a secure environment that guarantees the protection of computer users, whether during internet surfing or domestic use, which could yield positive impact in achieving the objective of e.oman Strategy and providing information security and consequently increasing the IT beneficiary segments in the Sultanate. Therefore, the Authority is seeking to achieve a number of goals in this regard, which include:

- Establishing a reliable call center to report any security accidents relating to ICT.
- Building trust in terms of using eGovernment services.
- Raising security awareness concerning the Oman cyberspace.
- Building a security capacity in order to handle any security accidents relating to PCs or the Internet.
- Providing accurate and updated information on any security threats, as well as any current or potential weaknesses and analyzing the same.
- Providing proactive measures so as to minimize security accidents.
- Responding to security accidents and mitigating their impacts.
- Encouraging research and development in the field of information security.
- Coordinating with computer emergency response teams on the regional and international levels.

### 4.1 Information Security Division (ISD)

The Information Security Division (ISD) was established with the vision to be the leader in government information security excellence in Oman. ISD aims at developing and promoting effective security solutions to safeguard all government end customer operations to ensure business continuity, data integrity and security according to international standards and security best practices. To achieve its mission, ISD currently provides a number of security services to government organizations such as secure communication, secure web portals, secure Internet access, end-point security, security operations, and security assessment.

#### Achievements in 2013

- Secured 70 government sites through the ISD Secure Communication Service and conducted 35 site visits as part of providing this service
- Secured 12 web portals:
  - eReadiness Assessment Portal
  - 1 environment (ISC cloud hosting environment)
  - ISS, Oman SME, MTC, ISC Cloud Environment, and the ISC Website
  - Oman Council, MHC, TAX Oman, Royal Guard of Oman Technical College, and the Donations Portal
- Performed a comprehensive security assessment to for 15 organizations
- Provided Secure Internet Access to 4 organizations
- Sent 41 security notes to 41 different organizations highlighting critical vulnerabilities found in their web portals with recommendations on how to close them
- Prevented and analyzed 1,084,369 malicious attempts against government portals, and 19,171 malicious attempts against government networks
- Scanned 9,890 IPs and discovered 25,827 vulnerabilities through the ISD Security Assessment Service and sent detailed reports to organizations with recommendations to fix
- Analyzed 10,940 spywares and 941,079 malicious wares to determine the main cause of infection and prevent it from the source
- Prevented and analyzed 659,090 web violations and sent detailed analysis reports to the respective government organizations
- Investigated and solved 114 availability and performance incidents and implemented 77 change requests related to the services provided to various government organizations
- Designed, verified, tested, and implemented a staging environment for the e.oman portal
- Released the ISD Annual Security Report for 2012, which contains in-depth analysis of the top threats against the government portals and networks with detailed recommendations to improve security
- Reviewed, enhanced and verified the design of securing ITA kiosks to make it more scalable and secure
- Reviewed and enhanced the change and incident management processes
- Implemented and integrated the RADIX network server to the SOC network to enhance access control and authentication
- Installed and configured the free SEIM tool Splunk to further extend ISD incident handling and analysis capabilities
- Reconfigured (managed to adapt) the web application firewall to support Exchange 2013. This was done in-house by the team saving more than 21,000 OMR.
- Completed the implementation of a new security event and incident management tool to further enhance the capabilities of ISD SOC and improve its visibility over the government network
- Participated in the following events:
  - 14th Expo-Sciences International 2013 (ESI 2013) in Abu Dhabi
  - Trained 2 students in security operations and incident response
  - COMEX 2013

### ITA Fact

There are a total of 413 Ambassadors enrolled in the OCERT Cyber Security Ambassador Program.
In 2013, OCERT discovered and handled more than 1,635 malware through the OCERT Intelligence gathering System.

Cyber Security Incident Response
Since the establishment of OCERT in 2010, OCERT has been continuously working to effectively improve its cyber security incident response capabilities, keeping up-to-date with the advancement of the ever changing cyber security threats in Oman’s Cyberspace.

Cyber Security Monitoring
Cyber Security Monitoring is a service that provides the constituents with a proactive and reactive response to cyber security attacks, threats and incidents in real-time. OCERT’s Cyber Security Monitoring services monitors live sites for discovering advanced persistent threats and attack attempts and reports such to the constituents should there be an attempt or successful breach.

In 2013, all local Government domains (.gov.om) were added to the OCERT monitoring system.

Cyber Security Intelligence Gathering
OCERT’s Intelligence Gathering team continuously monitors the cyber space of Oman against cyber-attacks. Such monitoring is considered to be one of the most proactive cyber security services offered by OCERT. The detection of such cyber-attacks helps in taking proactive measures to control the attacks and minimize its impacts and consequences.

In 2013, OCERT discovered and handled more than 15,855 security attacks through OCERT Intelligence gathering System.

Malware Statistics
Malicious Software, or Malware for short, is a general term used to describe any kind of software or code specifically designed to exploit a computer or the data it contains, without consent. Its primary design, whether in the form of software, downloadable script or code, is to disrupt computer operation, gather sensitive information, or gain unauthorized access to computer systems. Malware includes computer viruses, worms, Trojan horses, spyware, adware, most rootkits, and other malicious programs.

In 2013, OCERT discovered and handled 1,635 malware through the OCERT Intelligence gathering System.

Vulnerability Assessment & Penetration Testing (VAPT)
Vulnerability Assessment and Penetration Testing (VAPT) Services help organizations to identify and mitigate network vulnerabilities and system security issues. OCERT’s network vulnerability assessment assesses security and vulnerabilities in IT infrastructures via risk assessment, asset identification and evaluation, creation of vulnerability management architecture and risk mitigation.

OCERT’s penetration testing service provides a standardized methodology for scoping, planning, performing, reporting, and managing security and vulnerability assessment to determine the risks and vulnerabilities inherent in the network.

In 2013, OCERT conducted 17 major vulnerability assessment and penetration tests for government and critical national infrastructure organizations.

Digital Forensics
OCERT’s Digital Forensic Service uses science to investigate and establish facts and evidence in criminal court, by the acquisition, examination, analysis and reporting of information found on any digital device that has the capabilities of storing, transporting and ciphering digital data. This is to determine if the accused devices have been used for illegal or unauthorized activities, or if the accused are the “victims” of an illegal attack themselves.

OCERT’s Digital Forensic Service offers the following services and consultancy to the constituency:
- Computer Forensics
- Mobile Device Forensics
- Data Recovery

In 2013, OCERT handled 87 digital forensics related to both mobiles and computers.

Cyber Security Training & Awareness
OCERT’s Cyber Security Training and Awareness department aims to improve the capabilities of cyber and information security awareness advocacy in the Sultanate, as well as serves as the primary advocate for Cyber Security Awareness across the Arab Region.

Cyber security Workshops, seminar and conferences are designed to establish a professional connection and networking between OCERT and the private sector, professional bodies and IT societies in the sultanate and regionally.

OCERT has successfully organized or participated in events showcasing OCERT services, either through conferences, exhibitions, seminars and public speaking.

Achievements
- Launched the ‘Secure your Mobile’ campaign Tour by Limousine, which visited 6 regions across the Sultanate
- Issued the OCERT Cyber Security newsletter
- Hosted the national strategy workshop on Child Online Protection
- Organized the 1st ITU Regional Cyber Drill for the Arab region under the activities of the Regional Cyber Security Center
- Hosted the 1st Regional Cyber Defence Summit in cooperation with ITU-IMPACT
- Developed an Intelligence Gathering Portal for the Regional Cyber Security Center
- Organized an ‘Enterprise IT Security and Compliance’ seminar in cooperation with Insight Company
- Organized a ‘CERT Establishment Train-the-Trainer’ workshop under the activities of the Regional Cyber Security Center

National Participation
- Participated in the ‘My Family, My Pride’ campaign in Dhofar under the Child Online Protection national strategy
- COMEX 2013, launching the national cyber security campaign and road show on mobile security
- Muscat Festival
- Salalah Festival
- Sohar Cyber Security Day

International Participation
- Participated in ITU Telecom World 2013 in Bangkok, Thailand
- Participated in the 5th Annual General Meeting of the OIC CERT member states of the Organization of the Islamic Conference, Indonesia
Key OCERT Projects in 2013:
Intelligence Gathering Portal for the Regional Cyber Security Center

This Project is an application that was developed in-house to gather, filter and classify different cyber-attacks with the following features:

- Gathers all the different attacks on one screen, so it shows the global view of different attacks in the world in multi-colors based on the type of attacks.
- Shows the three main types of attacks: Malware, Web Attacks and Network Attacks.
- Contains a “dashboard” that gathers all yearly and monthly statistics.
- Details every type of attack such as Top Source Countries of Attacks and Top Attacker IP.
- Has search capabilities based on certain criteria such as, Month, Year, IP address and Country.
- Has online malware analysis capabilities.

Cyber Security Ambassador Program
Updates 2013

In 2011, OCERT launched the OCERT Cyber Security Ambassador Program as a national initiative addressing cyber security. The program was introduced to create a permanent link between OCERT and its constituents.

In 2013, 100 new Ambassadors registered for the OCERT Cyber Security Ambassador Program. Currently there are a total of 413 Ambassadors enrolled in the OCERT Cyber Security Ambassador Program.

Prominent Events in 2013

- The ITU Regional Cyber Security Center was officially launched and initiated a regional cyber security road map study for the Arab region.
- OCERT was elected as the Chair of the Board of Directors and the Steering Committee of the Organization of the Islamic Conference-Computer Emergency Response Team (OIC-CERT)

The following chart outlines OCERT statistics:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Q1</th>
<th>Q2</th>
<th>Q3</th>
<th>Q4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Incidents Handled &amp; Responded</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>133</td>
<td>121</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sites Monitors</td>
<td>166</td>
<td>166</td>
<td>169</td>
<td>169</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Published TNAS</td>
<td>168</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>187</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Governance, Standards & Regulations
Governance, Standards & Regulations

Standards Review Consultancy
A range of consultancy services are provided by the Authority and include: evaluating investment offers, studying and analyzing job requirements, preparing and organizing tenders, and evaluating the performance of agents and brokers, among other consultancy services. Other services also include forming an IT-governing framework to ensure the implementation of IT initiatives, projects and systems, in compliance with the e.oman Strategy.

Achievements in 2013 include:
- Carrying out preparation and planning activities to improve the current version of the OeGAF.
- Confirming the scope of changes, resources and key milestones for the new version of OeGAF (referred to as ‘OeGAF Ver. 2.0’).
- Working on 4 parallel areas of OeGAF Ver. 2.0.
- Collected data from 13 government agencies to be populated into eKIT (eGovernment Knowledge & Information analysis tool).

5.1 eAccessibility
To provide fair and equal life opportunities to people with disabilities and the elderly people through the use of Information & Communication Technologies (ICT), the Information Technology Authority (ITA) has adopted an eAccessibility policy for people with disabilities and elderly people.

In COMEX 2013, the ITA launched a new initiative called “Awn”. Awn is an Arabic word that means “Help”. This program aims to assist disabled individuals to get jobs and to start their own business, as disabled people often face challenges that able-bodied individuals do not, when it comes to finding a job.

Another goal of the initiative is to provide fair and equal life opportunities to persons with disabilities through the use of information & communication technologies (ICT). Putting this goal into practice, the Information Technology Authority has already employed two visually-impaired individuals as a start.
National Infrastructure
Development
National Infrastructure Development

This theme is concerned with the procedures taken to create and develop IT infrastructure and activate integrated projects aimed at developing government performance in the Sultanate. The following are the most important objectives set under this theme:

- Enhancing the eGovernment Services Portal and using the same as an access to online government services.
- Deploying self-service devices on a large scale to make it easy to benefit from government services.
- Providing and enhancing channels which make it possible to benefit from government services via mobile devices.
- Providing wired and wireless broadband services at affordable rates across the Sultanate.
- Linking more government websites to the Oman Government Network.
- Developing a platform for integrated government services and applications to interlink and integrate government services.
- Providing a set of infrastructure components and applications by means of modern technologies, such as cloud computing, with the aim of supporting the development of government services through using standard components.
- Completing the ePayment infrastructure along with incorporating more ePayment options within the same.

6.1 eVisa

The Sultanate of Oman is looking to enhance its eGovernment services to support tourism, business and investment sectors. To facilitate this objective the Government, represented by the Royal Oman Police (ROP) and ITA, appointed Société Internationale Télécommunications Aéronautiques (SITA) to implement a state-of-the-art eVisa Project solution.

This project aims to simplify the process of obtaining a visa by converting the existing manual processes to an automated electronic process that integrates online payment procedures by using ITA’s ePayment Gateway. The solution will also introduce visa stickers as per the international standard International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO). In addition, the solution will share data with all relevant government stakeholders involved in the visa issuing process or tourism industry. Moreover, the solution aims to improve the existing network and information security.

A key goal of this project is to recruit and develop young Omani’s to be able to handle the new system and to ultimately have operational independence. This will be achieved through on-the-job training and knowledge transfer with the deployment of a shadow team to work closely with SITA experts.

Achievements for the eVisa in 2013

- The design phase has been completed and the project is currently in the development phase.
- System development for VIS, eVisa, Entry/ Exit and the eVisa Portal has commenced and is progressing well.
- The Government team and SITA have met with all airlines to discuss the project requirements for airlines and to encourage them to get active on the project.
- The APP system is in the test phase and has started receiving data from 4 airlines.
- SITA has developed a long term knowledge transfer path for the Government team, which was kick-started with a J2EE training session.
- The marketing and communications RFQ was released to potential vendors, with proposals having been received and evaluation for the same completed.
- The physical security policy has been drafted and part of it implemented to safeguard physical assets.

6.2 Public Key Infrastructure Technology (PKI)

Public Key Infrastructure (PKI) is a system of policies, procedures, people, hardware, software and services that support the use of public key cryptography to obtain secure communication. PKI technology is used to maintain a more secure environment. It provides an increased level of confidence for exchanging information over an increasingly insecure Internet.

PKI typically involves usage of digital certificates (also known as public key certificates) which are generated securely by ITA as the trusted Root Certificate Authority (RCA) in Oman PKI Center. A digital certificate provides an electronic means of proving identity in order to securely conduct business online.

Achievements for the PKI in 2013

- Bolton Integration with MoCI went “live” in July 2013
- Kiosk Integration for PKI part deployed on all kiosks
- More than 360,000 certificates have been issued
- Official launch of the 1st Mobile PKI in the Middle East
- Omantel, Nawras and MoCI ready for Mobile PKI production testing
- eID digital signatures totaled 80 certificates for the Mobile PKI and approximately 30 other types of certificates
- Officially launched the National Digital Certification Center
6.3 Portal Kiosks
These devices facilitate access to eGovernment services which the Authority seeks to make available across the different regions of the Sultanate.

The following are the most important achievements carried out during 2013:
- A total 30 kiosks have been distributed across Oman
- 25 kiosks actively offer services
- One kiosk has been placed with the PKI Development Team for testing purposes

6.4 ePayment Gateway
The ePayment Gateway is a complete set of tools and solutions provided by the ITA, so as to facilitate secure electronic payment processes. Since it was launched, the ePayment Gateway has been used with confidence by companies, the public sector and citizens. This Gateway has contributed to confirming the effectiveness of eTransactions in the Sultanate, as well as simplifying electronic transactions and services.

In 2013, the following achievements were met:
- An Annual Maintenance Contract for the ePurse phase one application was signed between Bank Muscat and the vendors
- Total number of transactions in 2013 stands at 209,393 transactions with a value totaling approximately OMR 10,057,827

6.6 National Data Center
The National Data Center (NDC) was established as a multi-purpose Center with high readiness and is available to host government agencies and institutions’ data and electronic systems. It also determines solutions to mitigate disasters and achieve business continuity for the various IT systems. Moreover, the NDC hosts the ITA infrastructure projects and systems.

The National Data Center (NDC) achievements for 2013 include:
- A contract for interim operation and preventative maintenance was signed between ITA and MDS, pending moving to new operations and maintenance providers
- NDC availability in terms of infrastructure during 2013 was 100% with no down time recorded
- NDC capacity is 120 racks out of which 96 are Server Racks for co-location services:
  - 25 clients are hosted in NDC (6 national projects + 19 Government entities)
  - 7 customers in a transition period
  - Two (2) clients are utilizing the NDC server room to host their fireproof safes for backup tape vaulting

6.7 Oman Government Network
The Oman Government Network (OGN) is a national communication infrastructure linking all government entities to support all e.oman projects and enhance public services. The OGN links all ministries and different government units and promotes some eServices.

OGN achievements for 2013:
- Approximately 10,250 incidents were reported and resolved, including performance, faults and troubleshooting
- More than 60 government organizations were connected to the OGN
- More than 100 change requests were handled in 2013
- 64 new requests for connections were submitted during 2013
- The OGN Team is creating a feasibility study to explore owning, building and operating the OGN
- OGN is in the process of utilizing Nawras MPLS service as a second option for connect government sites

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Charity</th>
<th>Donation amount received (OMR)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1st Al Rahma Charity</td>
<td>27,709.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd Dar Al Atta Association</td>
<td>18,556.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd Oman Charitable Organization</td>
<td>16,280</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| In use                               | 75%                            |
| Un-utilized                          | 14%                            |
| Reserved                             | 11%                            |
Promotion & Awareness
Promotion & Awareness

The significance of this section stems from the segments targeted by the outreach and awareness campaigns, which include both citizens and residents, as well as public and private employees. The focus of this section is on enhancing the sense of ownership in regard to the e.oman Strategy and its initiatives, along with encouraging the transformation towards using electronic transactions for availing services in place of traditional paper-based transactions, which, in-turn, would help in the implementation of the Strategy and raise the global ranking of the Sultanate in this regard.

The following are the most important objectives set under this theme:

- Developing promotional and awareness campaigns in an effort to raise awareness about the e.oman Strategy.
- Organizing and participating in IT events.
- Continuing to promote the indicators and accomplishments globally.
ITA Internal Awareness Initiatives:

> Business Continuity Management System (BCMS)
  - BCMS initial BIA (Business Intelligence Analysis) study conducted
  - Completed and presented findings to BCMS Steering Committee
  - BCMS new scope approved and executed (based on BCMS Steering Committee directives)
  - Extended scope BIA approved
  - BCMS Phase I (i.e. documentation) completed

> Integrated Management System (HSE & EMS)
  - Conducted Health, Safety & the Environment (HSE) Induction Awareness program for new employees
  - Hosting events for Occupational Health & Safety at ITA (i.e. COMEX 2013, HM Award, CKCs, WCKC, Sas Programme)
  - IMS & QMS Surveillance Audit successfully completed resulting in certification maintained
  - Conducted ITA Health Day 2013, Green ITA day 2013
  - Provided one specialized training programs (Fire Warden) for KOM4 emergency team
  - Conducted two fire drills for KOM 3 & KOM 4

ITA Achieved Events 2013

Local participations
International participations
Delegates visit ITA
Global Ranking

This section reflects the progress level of the pillars of the e.oman Strategy through highlighting most important achievements and awards granted to national projects and initiatives at the regional and international levels, in addition to showcasing the Sultanate’s position in the field of IT advancement through rankings as set by certain neutral bodies.

The international ranking of any organization is linked with measuring the level of progress made by such organizations, based on statistics and indicators showing the objectives that have been achieved. Despite its short life, the Information Technology Authority (ITA) has achieved much progress in implementing the e.oman Strategy.

The ITA has been seeking to build well-established relationships with regional and international ICT specialized organizations, through continuous presence in the regional and international arenas, as well as by collaborating and consulting in various relevant fields and projects, which allows the Sultanate to make use of international experiences and further build national capacity.

The Information Technology Authority represents the Sultanate in the international arena in specialized technical meetings related to the eGovernment sector and the measurement of statistics and uses of information and communication technology.

This includes representing the Sultanate as member of the eGovernment Executive Committee in the Cooperation Council for the Arab States of the Gulf, which holds regular meetings for officials in charge of eGovernment initiatives in GCC States. Such meetings enable the exchange of experiences in this field and permit discussion of the methods for expansion of application thereof, since GCC States are currently in the process of creating an eGovernment Common Strategy.

The ITA regularly cooperates with Telecommunications Regulatory Authority in providing the International Telecommunications Union with statistics on the growth of IT sector in the Sultanate, in addition to updating the website of general administration relative to the United Nations and World Summit on the Information Society Forum with recent information about projects in progress in the Sultanate.

During 2013, the following survey was undertaken:

> A pilot study entitled “Access to & Use of Information and Communications Technology (ICT) by Households & Individuals Survey 2013”, which targeted 11,000 randomly selected households, throughout the eleven governorates of the Sultanate. Results will be compiled and released in 2014.

Other significant achievements & International Ranking in 2013:

8.1 World Economic Forum: Global IT Report 2013

The annual Global IT Report 2013 issued by the World Economic Forum Report on Information Technology compares the developments in ICT sector in various world countries against the previous year. The report also includes several indexes, which include the illiteracy rate among young people and secondary school enrolment, educational system quality, land telephone line spread rates and mobile broadband service spread rates, access to the Internet services, use of social networking media, and use of the Internet for business purposes.

The following table shows the Sultanate’s ranking in the Global IT Report for 2013:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Global Recognition</th>
<th>Rank</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Networked Index (overall index)</td>
<td>40 ←</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environment: Political &amp; Regulatory – Business &amp; Innovation</td>
<td>37 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Readiness: Infrastructure &amp; Digital Content – Affordability – Skills</td>
<td>56 14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Usage: Individual – Business – Government</td>
<td>37 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impact: Economic – Social</td>
<td>41 1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This section reflects the progress level of the pillars of the e.oman Strategy through highlighting most important achievements and awards granted to national projects and initiatives at the regional and international levels, in addition to showcasing the Sultanate’s position in the field of IT advancement through rankings as set by certain neutral bodies.

The international ranking of any organization is linked with measuring the level of progress made by such organizations, based on statistics and indicators showing the objectives that have been achieved. Despite its short life, the Information Technology Authority (ITA) has achieved much progress in implementing the e.oman Strategy.
8.2 United Nations Public Service Awards (UNPSA)
The Sultanate participated in the United Nations Public Service Awards Ceremony 2013, which was held in the Kingdom of Bahrain and attended by a number of high-level officials from various world countries. The ceremony was in recognition of the projects that contributed to facilitating the provision of services to the beneficiaries from different world countries. The United Nations Public Service Award is one of the top international awards in the eServices field granted to outstanding service institutions. The Sultanate won two prizes as shown below:

United Nations Public Service Awards
Preventing and Combating Corruption in the Public Service State Audit Institution: Complaints Window 1st
Improving the Delivery of Public Services Ministry of Regional Municipality and Water Resources: INJAZ Hall 1st

8.3 World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) Forum
The Sultanate of Oman, represented by the Information Technology Authority (ITA), participated in the WSIS Forum 2013 as the government strategic partner in organizing the international event alongside the participation of some government entities, namely the Royal Oman Police, the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Transport and Communications, the State Audit Institution, and the Telecommunications Regulatory Authority.

The Sultanate participated with a number of workshops that introduces successful national ICT projects carried out by a number of government entities in different fields, which have earned global recognition in various international forums.

The WSIS Forum is organized annually upon invitation from International Telecommunications Union (ITU), under sponsorship of UN Development Program and UNCTAD, with a view to building the world information society through utilizing knowledge and ICT in serving development and enhancing the usage of information and knowledge to achieve internationally agreed development goals. Such goals include those stated in the UN Millennium Declaration, tackling new challenges facing the information society nationally, regionally and internationally and, analyzing and evaluating the progress made towards bridging the digital divide.

8.4 World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) Projects Award
The Ministry of Health’s ‘Mother and Child System’ proudly took home a WSIS Project Prize in Geneva, Switzerland, in the category of ‘ICT Applications – e-health’. The award given to the Ministry of Health recognizes the success of the maternity and childhood care system of the Ministry, in its provision of comprehensive prenatal and postnatal healthcare, as well as encouraging birth spacing at the different primary health care centers and hospitals.

The prizes, awarded for the second year running, recognize excellence in the implementation of projects and initiatives, which aim to further the goals of the World Summit on the Information Summit (WSIS) in improving connectivity to information and communication technologies (ICTs). With more than 280 projects from 64 countries nominated, for the Sultanate to have won for the second year in a row, Oman has clearly made an indelible mark at the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS).

8.5 GCC Recognition
The Sultanate won 7 awards at the 3rd GCC eGovernment Award, Conference and Exhibition. The event aims at honoring the leading eServices and the outstanding ICT solutions across the GCC countries. Oman, represented by the Ministry of Interior, Muscat Municipality, Public Authority for Consumer Protection and the Information Technology Authority (ITA), remarkably won 7 awards out of 14 categories.

The below table shows the categories and the GCC ranking:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GCC Recognition</th>
<th>Rank</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GCC eGovernment Awards 2013</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Best Government-to-Government Shared Service</td>
<td>Ministry Of Commerce &amp; Industry: One Stop Shop</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Best e-Initiative</td>
<td>Information Technology Authority: ITA e-Inclusion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Best Government e-Service</td>
<td>Ministry of Interior: Electronic Elections System</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Best Government Interoperable Service</td>
<td>Ministry of Manpower and PASI: Employment Collaboration Project</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Best Government e-Participation Initiative</td>
<td>Muscat Municipality: Talk To Muscat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Best Government-to-Government Shared Service</td>
<td>High Education Admission Center: Data Exchange Portal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special Excellence Award</td>
<td>Public Authority for Consumer Protection: Complaints Portal</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>