Case Study XXII

Cape York Digital Network

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Power comes in all manner of media — economic, legislative, industrial, cultural and social — with each level of power intertwined into a massive network of inter-relationships. The cliché, “knowledge is power,” has been the catch cry of organisations and people from the disenfranchised to the elite, from community and civil rights activists to business and government over many years.

Information and communications technology (ICT) represents a marked departure from what has come before, by shifting the knowledge/power relationship away from centralised decision making to distributed consensus. The technology does this through low-cost internetworked distribution of information and knowledge in digital format using the standardised Internet protocol (IP) platform. It provides the opportunity for a fundamental shift in the dynamics of many traditionally dependent relationships, such as those of indigenous communities and individuals in the way they relate to the mainstream public and private sectors. With aboriginal people throughout Australia facing massive changes
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