Chapter III

Enterprise Information Infrastructure (EII)

STRATEGY AND RATIONALE

The American business in the Information Wave in the 21st century increasingly relies on computer and information networks for the conduct of vital operations. The computerized telecommunications networks, customer interfaces, services, applications, and related technologies create the Enterprise Information Infrastructure (EII). The industry which supports the development of EII and other information infrastructures (NII – National Information Infrastructure, GII – Global Information Infrastructure, and Local Information Infrastructure) is valued domestically at about $1 trillion in 2000. Not surprisingly, with this kind of money at stake, the emerging technologies that will define information infrastructures in the future have become the subject of much discussion and many grand schemes.

But suppliers are not the only ones anticipating benefits from the new information infrastructure. Business users also hope to increase their productivity and quality of life through the application of technologies and services in a wide variety of contexts. But despite all the great expectations of industry insiders and technology users, the general business practitioners remain largely unaware of exactly what is taking place because the majority of these services are invisible to the naked eye.

The EII includes more than just the physical facilities used to transmit, store, process, and display voice, data, images, and video. It encompasses:
A wide and ever-expanding range of equipment including cameras, scanners, keyboards, telephones, fax machines, computers, telecom switches, compact disks, video and audio tape, cable wire, satellites, optical transmission lines, microwave nets, switches, televisions, monitors, printers, and much more,

The information itself, which may be in the form of print-outs, scientific or business databases, images, sound recordings, library archives, video programming, and other media,

Applications and software that allow users to access, manipulate, organize, process, and digest the proliferating mass of information that EII’s facilities will put at the users’ fingertips,

The network standards and transmission codes that facilitate interconnection and inter-operation between networks, and ensure the privacy of persons and the security of the information carried, as well as the security and reliability of the networks,

The people—largely business professionals—who create the information, develop applications and services, construct the facilities, and train others to tap its potential.

Hence, the EII is an array of computerized networks, online devices, intelligent appliances, applications, standards, and services that people use to interact with digital information. One feature that distinguishes the EII from the previous computing environment is an unprecedented degree of distributed user empowerment. Never before in the history of communication has anyone possessing relatively an inexpensive, networked personal computer had such access to and control over information.

The goal of EII is to support the urban, agricultural, industrial infrastructures in order:

1. To empower an enterprise in better positioning itself in the marketplace through the optimization of using resources from other infrastructures (urban, agricultural, industrial, etc.),

2. To empower an enterprise’s workers and executives in broadening their cognition about operated/managed processes and resources.
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