

INFORMATION AGE PARTNERSHIP

August 2004

1. INTRODUCTION

The Information Age Partnership (IAP) was created in March 1998 to help the UK to achieve leadership in the Information Age. It was structured so as to contribute in four ways:

- (i) A regular, open and honest dialogue between Government Ministers and key figures in the IT, electronics and communications supply industries.
- (ii) Identifying the key issues where partnership between Government and industry can make a difference.
- (ii) Bringing commitment and resources to joint initiatives developed and delivered through working groups.
- (iv) Undertaking new initiatives, and adding value to existing initiatives, to accelerate the move to the early adoption of the Information Age across business and society.

That the IAP has contributed effectively is beyond doubt. It has evolved to recognise the importance of the 'content' industries; the great majority of its recommendations have been acted upon by Government; far-reaching industry-wide initiatives on matters such as skills provision are in train; and joint Government/industry task forces on Information Age issues have won credibility and, in consequence, attract industrial representation of a high calibre.

At its meeting in November 1999, the IAP took stock of its achievements in its first 21 months with a view to leveraging its many strengths to make yet faster progress to realising its vision of UK leadership of the Information Age. To that end, it commissioned a rapid review of the way the IAP operates.

This document is the essential deliverable from that review. It proposes, in economical format, the overriding purpose of the IAP, the key principles on which the IAP's ways of working should be based, the priorities which the IAP should adopt, and a suitable method of working.

It takes as its starting point a vision for the IAP unchanged since its inception:

UK Leadership of the Information Age

2. OVERRIDING PURPOSE OF THE IAP

To act to enable Britain to take maximum global advantage of the technological, economic and political developments which characterise the Information Age.

3. KEY PRINCIPLES

- (i) Regard the IAP as a permanent partnership, borne out of opportunity rather than necessity.
- (ii) Engage CEOs and those of equivalent level in Government, trade associations and other stakeholder organisations as Champions of the Information Age.

- (iii) Act as a Board. Maintain an uncompromising focus on the overriding purpose; define the challenges; provide strategic leadership; ensure that effective action is taken; delegate and empower.
- (iv) Adopt and maintain simple but demanding global benchmarks and measures of success.
- (v) Consider the IAP to be driven by trade and industry on behalf of the whole community of interest, engaging the wider interests as appropriate.
- (vi) Transact the business of the IAP openly, recognising the essentially pre-competitive nature of its work.
- (vii) Work imaginatively to scope choices and to shorten cycle times in decision making.
- (viii) Seek a long-range perspective, with a view to Britain driving future waves of global developments rather than responding to them.
- (ix) Notwithstanding the need for work programmes at a meaningful level of detail (to maintain focus and facilitate teamwork), value the flexibility to respond effectively to global discontinuities.
- (x) Recognise when the IAP is moving from considerations of policy, to strategy, to implementation, and adapt the ways of working appropriately.

4. **PRIORITIES**

- (i) Raise awareness of the strategic challenges/opportunities for business and the public services in the Information Age. Facilitate rapid and successful adoption.

Outcome: Rapid attainment of world-class leadership in the use of Information Age technologies and services to improve competitiveness across all types and sizes of UK business and the public services.
- (ii) Create the conditions for a well developed internationally competitive UK supply base of Information Age technologies, services and content based on high levels of UK-led innovation and UK-sourced added-value.

Outcome: High global market share in added-value Information Age services and products developed in and/or sourced from the UK (cf. UK success in the pharmaceutical sector).
- (iii) Facilitate and champion business-led initiatives to create user trust and confidence in Information Age services and products.

Outcome: Impartial, effective and well-resourced schemes of self-regulation to provide appropriate levels of user confidence.
- (iv) Support the Government's initiatives to increase rapidly the use in the public sector of Information Age technologies.

Outcome: World-class delivery of public sector services.
- (v) Identify key issues for public policy (both domestic and international) to support these first three priorities. Ensure that Government and business-representative organisations are fully equipped to resolve them.

Outcome: Effective and rapid domestic policy-making; UK policy leadership in international forums.

- (vi) Identify and review key measures of UK success in the Information Age.

Outcome: Clarity in measuring progress towards the IAP's Vision.

5. **METHOD OF WORKING**

5.1 **Overview**

A method of working is suggested which:

- (i) Is consistent with the Key Principles.
- (ii) Widens the IAP's access to the knowledge, insights and opinions of the broader community of interest, including particularly users.
- (iii) Unlocks the industrial and governmental resources necessary to support the IAP's work.
- (iv) Drives the IAP's programme at an increasingly fast pace.
- (v) Provides the essential continuity of leadership as the IAP enters a new phase of its existence.

A three-element structure is proposed:

- (i) A **Partnership Meeting**, convened twice-yearly, to recognise the breadth of interest in the IAP, exchange insights into the technical, economic and political developments which characterise the Information Age, review progress, and endorse the IAP's goals and strategies. Numbers attending to be restricted to a maximum of 35 to allow for adequate discussion to take place.
- (ii) An **Executive**, meeting six times per year, to drive forward the IAP's programmes.
- (iii) A number of **Task Groups**, aligned with the IAP's priorities, organised on an ad hoc basis, charged with meeting specific goals, and evolving ways of working appropriate to those goals.

The terms of reference of the Partnership Meeting, the Executive and the Task Groups are outlined in the following paragraphs.

Participation in the IAP will be open to all stakeholders although some activities will be on an invitation only basis.

5.2 **Partnership Meeting**

5.2.1 **Role**

- (i) Be the champions of the Information Age Partnership; own its Overriding Purpose; and be accountable for its performance.
- (ii) Exchange insights into the technical, economic and political developments which characterise the Information Age.
- (iii) Set the IAP's priorities, and endorse the goals and strategies appropriate to those priorities.

5.2.2. Chair

The Secretary of State for Trade and Industry.

5.2.3. Attendance

At the personal invitation of the Secretary of State to named individuals, and comprising:

- (i) ITEC industrialists at CEO or Chairman level, so as to comprehend at least 80% of the economic and technological activity in the UK ITEC industry.
- (ii) The Ministers responsible for Information Age policy matters (e.g. ITEC skills, ITEC and content industries, e-commerce) or their senior officials.
- (iii) The Head of the e-Government Unit.
- (iv) Leaders of relevant industry bodies (e.g. CBI, Intellect) and other bodies with a relevant voice, at Director-General or equivalent level.
- (v) Leaders of relevant campaign groups which are able to offer informed opinions representative of groups of Information Age users (e.g. InterForum).
- (vi) Members of the IAP Executive not included in any of the above categories.

5.2.4 Secretariat

A small, permanent Secretariat working also for the Executive (but not for the Task Groups – see paragraph 5.4.4), provided by the CBI with a funding contribution from the DTI.

5.2.5 Modus Operandi

- (i) Meets twice per year, in May and November.
- (ii) Agenda and any background papers to be circulated at least one month in advance, to allow time for consultation and deliberation. (No standing agenda, to avoid the Partnership Meeting becoming enmeshed in routine agenda items and leaving insufficient time to consider key issues in depth).
- (iii) An IAP website, for the reporting of progress, the consultation of IAP members and the exchanging of views between Partnership Meetings.

5.3 Executive

5.3.1 Role

- (i) Translate the policy and strategic guidance offered by the Partnership Meetings into focused programmes and drive them forward.
- (ii) Commission Task Groups as the primary delivery vehicles, and ensure that they relate to one another synergistically.
- (iii) Support and co-ordinate with the information age users group (to be created by the CBI) in order to facilitate direct communication by the Partnership with the wider community of final users and intermediaries.

- (iv) Keep the IAP fully briefed on progress and issues, and be accountable for the overall briefing and consultation processes (including the Partnership Meeting).

5.3.2 Chair

A senior ITEC industrialist, appointed by the Secretary of State and who will enjoy ready access to the Secretary of State, after consulting the Partnership, for a term of eighteen months.

5.3.3 Membership

- (i) A maximum standing membership of twelve (including the Chair), appointed by the Secretary of State, after consulting the Partnership, comprising the following in approximately equal numbers:
 - (a) Senior ITEC industrialists.
 - (b) Senior civil servants.
 - (c) Leaders of relevant industry bodies and other bodies able to demonstrate that they can unlock resources which may be applied to the IAP's programmes.
- (ii) An ex-officio membership comprising the Chairs of the Task Groups and the Chair of the Information Age Users Group.
- (iii) The e-Envoy.

Role

- Translate the discussions of the Partnership Meetings and member contributions into focused activities and drive them forward.
- Endorse Working Groups under the championship of IAP members where appropriate and ensure that they are coordinated and progress.
- Support and enhance Working Group activities operating on behalf of the IAP membership where necessary
- Operate in an open and transparent way, keeping the IAP members fully briefed on progress, activities and issues via the IAP website and interim communications from the chair.

Chair

Appointed by the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry for a term of eighteen months.

(Larry Hirst, Chief Executive IBM UK November 2003-May 2005)

Members

- IAP member champions of the respective working groups, supporting staff from IAP member organisations supporting individual working groups
- Other IAP members at the request of the chair

Limited to 10 permanent members with membership running for 1-2 years.

Leslie Stretch, Microsoft(?), Duncan Mitchell, Clive Ansell
Liz Kanter, Nick Penston, Chris Francis/Richard Barrington

- DTI officials on behalf of the Secretary of State
- Meetings will be open to IAP members wishing to discuss or suggest issues or activities suitable for the full IAP meeting

Operation

IAP secretariat to act in support of IAP and IAP executive.

Members to act on behalf of the full IAP community within the UK rather than particular organisations

Activities and communications to be carried under the brand of the Information Age Partnership or in collaboration with other intermediaries as appropriate.

5.3.4 Secretariat

Shared with Partnership Meetings, as described in paragraph 5.2.4.

5.3.5 Modus Operandi

- (i) Meets six times per year.
- (ii) Agenda and any background papers to be circulated at least two weeks in advance, to allow time for deliberation.
- (iii) A password-protected area on the IAP website, for the exchanging of information and views between Executive meetings.

5.4 Task Groups

5.4.1 Role

- (i) Be the primary delivery vehicles of the IAP, constituted to match the nature of the task in hand, whether it be information-gathering, consultation, policy formulation or programme execution.
- (ii) Provide the means of accessing the wider community of interest, including in particular the users and intermediaries.

5.4.2

The decision to take a particular issue forward must come from the IAP Executive [see Executive Terms of Reference for Information].

Each working group needs to have a Champion at the Executive level. The Champion should be someone personally or professionally interested in the issue, and someone prepared to commit resources to the work.

Champions may identify additional people who may manage the work on a day-to-day level, i.e. where they have an appropriate expert resource within their organisations.

Identify Government or other relevant stakeholders contacts. The IAP is a partnership and, when appropriate, it is important to engage the relevant Government (or other stakeholders). This person or team should be identified early on.

Wide member engagement and keeping members up to date is very important. The IAP website is maintained by the Secretariat, and working groups will have their own public and private areas.

Process to start work

The process outlined below is for guidance. The main guiding principle for the work is partnership approval, which means the explicit approval of the Executive and the “by proxy” approval wide communication and consultation with members can offer.

Background paper

Champion/team should produce a summary or background paper to make other members aware of the issues being addressed.

This will also help focus thoughts, and provide a common starting point for the workshop

Workshop

The running of a workshop, engaging with the Government stakeholders, the IAP Champion and the wider membership in an open forum has proved extremely effective to date.

The goal of the workshop should be to formulate a basic action plan and some activities to take forward.

Ongoing work

The issue and the work identified by the working group will largely dictate what activities are undertaken.

The role of the Champion is akin to that of the chair of the group, and it would be expected that the Champion would drive this work forward.

Executive Approval

Given that the working groups are usually started on very basic outline from the Executive, it is the role of the Champion to ensure that the Executive is aware, and approves, of the direction the working group has chosen.

Resources

Working groups must be self-resourcing. The Secretariat will provide some support, but only as a backup, and cannot fully resource all work. Typically, the responsibility to ensure the resources are in place should reside with the Champion.

This also applies to associated costs and overheads; where funding is needed it must be raised through sponsorship or contribution (either monetary or in-kind).

IAP Website

Each working group will have a dedicated area of the website. It should be used to inform members, and others interested, of the areas being worked on and progress. Content should be produced by the working group, but will be uploaded by the Secretariat.

Conflicts of interest

It is not anticipated that this would raise a serious issue, but members must advise the Executive if they feel their involvement in a working group or activity is likely to create a conflict of interests either for them or for their company.

Executive Teamship rules

Role

- Translate the discussions of the Partnership Meetings and member contributions into focused activities and drive them forward.
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Terms of Reference for Working Groups