

Minister's Foreword

I am always impressed by the way in which community organisations, iwi, whanau and hapu readily seize on opportunities presented by new technology to meet the needs of the people they work with.

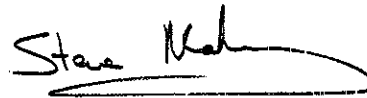
The examples in this booklet– a few of a growing number of initiatives – illustrate some of the ways information and communications technology (ICT) is being used in communities.

The ingenuity of organisations is clearly demonstrated by the adaptation of new technology to a diverse variety of purposes. That it can be used to coordinate tree plantings, provide health support, and build connections in neighbourhoods shows the Internet is a valuable addition to the suite of tools available.

As well as developing relevant content, organisations are well placed to develop initiatives that provide access to ICT for members of communities who would otherwise go without. Organisations can bring together local knowledge, volunteers and resources, and build trust within communities. This means innovative projects, such as Wairoadotcom and Computers in Homes, can achieve their potential.

However, getting online is not all plain sailing. While this booklet showcases the benefits and potential of using ICT, it also provides valuable lessons. I hope the frank advice provided will help others to successfully get connected.

It is vital for this country that communities embrace information and communications technology. Not only will this contribute to the effectiveness of the organisations themselves, but it will also enhance the quality of our knowledge and skills base. This is essential for New Zealand's future success in the global economy and as a cohesive society.



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Minister responsible for Community and Voluntary Sector

