

2007 ISOC Board Book (condensed)

Public policy strategic outlook 2007 - 2009 and Public Policy programs for 2007

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Strategic vision for Public Policy 2007 - 2009

The Internet Society's public policy programs for 2007 through 2009 build on a sustained leadership position in the **Internet governance** space and an expectation among the ISOC community and beyond that ISOC will play an growing central role on key issues of import to the Internet. As Internet policy matters increasingly come to the fore, a broadening range of key stakeholders are seeking input and information on Internet matters. This demand has made obvious a policy void on certain key evolving issues in the Internet space, a void that ISOC will be filling during this critical period.

ISOC's public policy programs will broaden and deepen for the 2007 to 2009 period to address some unprecedented challenges facing the Internet of today and tomorrow. The "open development, evolution, and use of the Internet for the benefit of all people throughout the world" is under significant pressure from a range of commercial, technical and policy challenges that will shape the Internet like no other.

To address these challenges, ISOC will be rolling out a major new strategic policy program under the umbrella of the "**User Centric Internet campaign**" to address those existing and future efforts that are seeking to shape, indeed change, the Internet and what it represents.

This major program is clearly inline with our SOP, and in particular has as its goal the pursuit and promotion of the following core value from the Strategic Operation Plan:

The genius of the Internet is that its decentralized architecture maximizes individual users' power to choose (or create) and use the hardware, software, and services that best meet their needs, and if the Internet is to continue to be a platform for innovation and creativity, its open, decentralized nature must be preserved.

Without such a policy focus this core value is in jeopardy.

Both the "User Centric Internet" and the Internet governance policy programs are the Public Policy team's major multi-year focus areas, and will most likely be pursued beyond 2009. Strategically, the first will establish ISOC as a central player and thought leader in the discussions over the future of the Internet; the second will ensure ISOC's continued leadership role in the ongoing Internet governance discussion. Both are concrete responses to current and future challenges to the Internet; both are Internet-shaping programs of essential import to ISOC's future.

We will be also significantly increasing our **Public Policy presence** over the 2007-2009 period, through a range of initiatives. Importantly, we will be implementing a series of outreach actions designed to maximize our policy presence both inside the ISOC community - through a greater level of engagement with Chapters and the overall membership - and external to the ISOC and Internet communities. We will drive our policy leadership from an international level to a more regional, national and effectively local level will be a core focus during the period 2007 – 2009. Our ongoing regionalizing and localizing through the Regional Bureaus and the Regional Policy Advisory Groups will obviously continue

Finally, ISOC will see another area of focus brought to the fore in the period 2007 – 2009, that of **policy and education programs** in the developing world. There are a number of intersect “small but substantive” areas that ISOC will be leveraging into 2007 and beyond, with a likely focus on security, access and multilingualism and local content, issues of critical importance to Internet take-up and usage.

Key Public Policy programs for 2007

ISOC’s Public Policy mandate:

- 1) To adopt, assert, and actively defend policy positions consistent with our mission and core values;*
- 2) To promote awareness of public policy issues and activities that affect the Internet.*

In accordance with ISOC’s Public Policy mandate, the Public Policy team will focus in 2007 on four program areas where ISOC can provide real added value:

1. The User Centric Internet
2. Internet governance leadership
3. Internet policy presence
4. Policy/Education intersect

Each of these is discussed below.

1. The User Centric Internet

The continuity and evolution of the Internet are fundamental to ISOC’s vision and mission. This implies ensuring that the Internet as we know it with its openness, reach and user centricity (hence user centric Internet) continues to play an essential part of the converged communications environment of the future.

We envision a future in which people in all parts of the world can use the Internet to improve their quality of life because standards, technologies, business practices, and government policies sustain an open and universally accessible platform for innovation, creativity, and economic opportunity. (ISOC Strategic Operating Plan)

A range of issues could threaten this future. Issues such as Network Neutrality, NGN, and others may impact the Internet as we know it like never before. Ensuring that this future becomes a reality is no trivial issue given its complexity and breadth, and it will require that

highest level of engagement across ISOC, the IETF, IESG and the IAB, our membership, the Internet community and other key stakeholders. Understanding, contributing to and helping to shape the regulatory and policy environment and responses to these pressures on the Internet will be a significant task. Fragmenting or replacing the Internet through commercially and/or politically driven alternatives is something that ISOC must guard against.

Understanding, contributing to and helping to shape the regulatory and policy environment and responses to these pressures will be ISOC's main public policy task for the foreseeable future. It will be no insignificant task. The continuity and evolution of the Internet are fundamental to ISOC's vision and mission. Ensuring that the Internet as we know it with its openness and reach continues to play an essential part of the converged communications environment of the future will be a critical activity. Responding to and anticipating these challenges will necessitate ISOC being front and center in the policy discussion.

2. Internet governance leadership

ISOC will continue to play its central role in the Internet governance discussions ensuring that developments do not imperil or hinder the Internet, its deployment and its administration and management. The Internet Governance Forum will continue to play center-stage, and will be important at least through 2010 (the IGF has a 5-year mandate). We expect the debate to be further fuelled by the anticipated report on enhanced cooperation, the implementation of the USDoC-ICANN JPA, the push for a more expansive role for the ITU, etc.

The Internet governance program will focus on building and leveraging the central role that ISOC and the Internet community have had in the discussions and on regionalizing and localizing ISOC's Internet governance leadership through increased engagement with Chapters and the membership. Building a regional dialogue on Internet governance issues – increasing the understanding of the issues, the players, the participation mechanisms, and increasing the identification of what is critical in the discussion, particularly for developing nations, through INETs, roundtables, workshops, etc.

We will refocus on the core principles of the Internet administration and management model while emphasizing its multi-stakeholder and participatory nature, including steps taken to engage across stakeholders and meet the expectations established in the Tunis Agenda. Part of that education will leverage the successful Internet community outreach in the Internet governance area (and beyond) using the Internet Pavilion model.

Finally, heading off a renewed politicization of the Internet governance debate as IGF Rio looms on the horizon. Much of this will be worked through engaging with our broader community and pursuing and building upon the important relationships with governments and other stakeholders that were built during the WSIS process. Continued education of government and policy makers will be central while recognizing that much of the politicization of the issue has little to do with Internet politics and more with geo-politics.

3. Internet policy presence

ISOC's policy presence to date is largely characterized by 2 things: technical expertise and Internet governance expertise. While successful in both, it is time to build and grow within and beyond these two areas. The demand for more information on the Internet, on how it is managed, on its architecture, etc., will only increase as the number of stakeholder interested in Internet policy matters increases. This, in turn, grows the range of issues that ISOC will have

to address and creates an expectation of a much bigger presence, and therefore role, in the policy arena.

This presence can take many forms. For example, in 2006 ISOC increased its global reach through two new programs: the regional Bureaus and the Regional Policy Advisory groups. These have and will continue to give ISOC unprecedented reach and depth and will contribute to a much greater policy awareness and regional tailoring of policy programs.

In 2007, however, there will be a concerted program to build ISOC's Internet policy presence at all levels:

- A more substantial engagement model in policy matters and policy discussion with the membership. ISOC's policy processes vis-à-vis the membership will be more structured, proactive and responsive (in conjunction with the Membership pillar). This will be done in conjunction with the Chapter Development Program.
- A further globalized and deepened ISOC Public policy presence. Greater efficiency in this area will be attained through an outreach program to work more closely with other stakeholders, and international organizations and Civil Society in particular.
- A more structured and targeted outreach for greater policy impact. The goal is clearly to provide a broader community (i.e. the Internet community, governments and public of developed and developing countries) with expert material. Opinion pieces, interviews and other more public facing outreach will give ISOC's policy presence greater visibility and impact among influencers and policy makers around the globe.

4. Policy and Education Intersect

ISOC has an unprecedented opportunity to bring additional value to the ICT related development agenda around the globe. With, inter alia, new leadership at the ITU, national development program work starting for the next WTDC in 2010, ISOC's role in the Global Alliance, the development focus of the IGF and an opportunity to work more locally through ISOC's Bureaus and Chapters, the opportunities for a new voice in development and capacity building and impactful policy work has never been greater.

At the core of this program is the close cooperation of the Policy and Education pillars in the "intersect" areas where there is both a clear technical educational and policy shaping aspect to a particular issue. Understanding how technology and enabling environments can bring economic benefit to the developing world is logical extension of our existing policy and education activities. ISOC's Chapters, Regional Bureaus, Regional Policy Advisory Groups, are well placed to be able to guide ISOC's work in this respect.

We anticipate working closely with the Education pillar on "roadmap" and tool kit type approaches in three areas have been identified as being possible foci for development-focused "small but significant" project work:

- Multilingualism and local content;
- Security;
- Access.