

Singapore Government

PRESS RELEASE

Media Division, Ministry of Information & The Arts, 36th Storey, PSA Building, 460 Alexandra Road, Singapore 0511. Tel: 2799784/5.

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**SPEECH BY DR ONG CHIT CHUNG, PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY
(HOME AFFAIRS & LABOUR), AT THE SIGNING OF
A MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN
THE SINGAPORE POLYTECHNIC AND SINGAPORE TELECOM,
AND LAUNCHING OF POLYVIEW
AT THE BOARD ROOM, SINGAPORE POLYTECHNIC
ON WEDNESDAY 16 OCTOBER 1991 AT 10.00 AM**

I am very happy to be invited this morning to witness the launching of the joint project between two organisations which are leaders in their respective fields. One, the Singapore Polytechnic, is a leader in technological manpower training, and the other, Singapore Telecom, is a leader in telecommunications.

Singapore's vision is to become a developed nation by the end of the '90's. To achieve this, Singapore has to position herself strategically as an attractive centre of economic activities. Over the years, she has emerged as a successful hub in the region for banking and finance, shipping and air transport, petrochemical, telecommunications and manufacturing industries.

To a large extent, Singapore has won the confidence of the investors because of our strong telecommunications infrastructure and skilled technical manpower. If we are to maintain our competitiveness, we not only have to sustain our earlier efforts, but also find new areas to strengthen our position.

Singapore's economic success has been possible because of our foresight in investing in Information Technology, or IT,

for short. But to develop into a total business hub in the Asia Pacific region, we must intensify our IT efforts.

And to be an international IT centre, Singapore must further develop in three key areas. Firstly, Singapore has to set up an extensive IT infrastructure to generate, develop and support various IT related functions and activities. Secondly, Singaporeans must be knowledgeable and skilful in the use and utilisation of IT to enhance business competitiveness.

Finally, Singapore has to establish extensive information services to link up with other key information providers and IT centres in the world. Indeed, our IT and economic activities must take a complementary and interdependent role. Businesses must also be encouraged to build up a strong IT culture.

This is where organisations like the Singapore Polytechnic and Singapore Telecom can contribute. Singapore Telecom has invested and spent much effort in providing the Televue system. An educational institution like the Singapore Polytechnic, which is in the forefront of the business of training, can take the lead to show how IT can be applied to daily living.

The Poly is making an important contribution by training its students, who are the future supervisors and middle managers, to be knowledgeable and skilful in using, developing and exploiting IT. This Memorandum of Understanding on collaboration to promote the use of Televue in areas related to education is strategic and gives Poly students an early exposure to this application of IT. The fact that half the students in the Singapore Polytechnic have home computers will extend the usefulness of Televue to their homes, making it a significant part of their lives.

When PM Goh recently announced the IT masterplan, "IT2000", he outlined the four major areas in which IT would

benefit Singapore. These were widening the use of IT, using IT as an educational tool, using IT to strengthen social bonding, and using IT to improve the quality of life. The collaboration signed today between the Singapore Polytechnic and Singapore Telecom certainly echoes and confirms these four major thrusts of "IT2000".

In using the Teleview system as the base IT infrastructure, the Singapore Polytechnic has been able to introduce PolyView, which is her own unique application of Teleview features. This is significant as it illustrates how, with a well-developed and available IT infrastructure, corporations and institutions like the Singapore Polytechnic, can utilise and maximise the system to introduce new and innovative services to people from all walks of life.

I am pleased to note that the Teleview terminals donated by Singapore Telecom will be placed in different parts of the campus. This will facilitate easy access by the large potential base of the Polytechnic's 16,000 full and part-time student population. This is a good example of bringing IT closer to the masses.

The Polytechnic has incorporated in PolyView many innovative features to teach its own target groups, namely, the students and their parents, the graduates and industry. These different groups have to cope with the fast pace of life and frequent changes. There is therefore a demand for an instantaneous and conveniently accessible information service. The Polytechnic's response in providing the PolyView services, such as ParentLink, PolyChat, PolyMart, ClubLink, AlumniLink and IndustryLink, serves as the information highway or linkage for gaining access to information required. PolyView, as a continual one-stop and interactive electronic messaging service, demonstrates that IT can be used to enhance the linkage between service providers and users.

I can see that PolyView is a valuable educational tool. The students in the Polytechnic can tap into the Teleview services which is an electronic sea of knowledge. I believe that the concept of distance-learning which is available through the On-Line Learning service will provide the workforce with the opportunity to upgrade at their own pace through the Polytechnic's training programme.

On this note, I would like to wish both the Singapore Polytechnic and Singapore Telecom success in their collaboration, and hope that this joint venture will bear other fruits of IT applications. Your contributions will bring Singapore a step closer to achieving her aim of becoming the IT hub in the region.

I would also like to congratulate the Singapore Polytechnic for its innovative use of IT technology in introducing the interesting and varied services under PolyView. PolyView will certainly put Singapore Polytechnic campus on the IT map and spur the emergence of a stronger IT culture in the Polytechnic and Singapore at large.

Ladies and gentlemen, it is now my pleasure to officially launch the PolyView system.

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