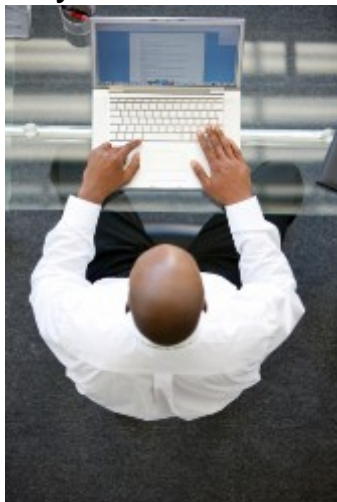


SA ranks well in connectivity scorecard



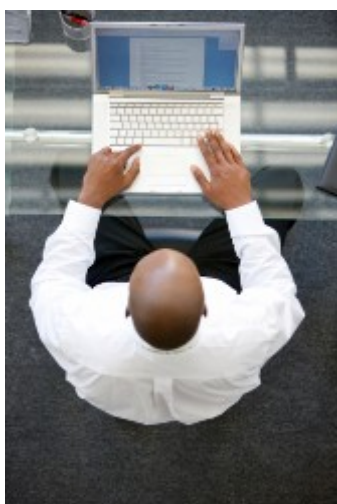
South Africa ranked fourth among Resource and Efficiency Driven economies in a recent telecommunications connectivity study, scoring ahead of all African countries as well as the BRIC nations.

Brazil, Russia, India and China (BRIC) all scored below South Africa in the 2009 Connectivity Scorecard Report which ranks countries according to the quality and quantity of ICT usage and how the countries use ICT to realise social and economic prosperity.

According to the report, businesses in South Africa spend more on computer services than any other resource and efficiency driven economy.

The high spending from both government and business sectors bodes well for South Africa's future in ICT, with the report maintaining that the country is "better placed than most to quickly ramp-up on ICT".

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The study was commissioned by Nokia Siemens Networks and conducted by the London Business School's economic consulting firm LECG. Fifty countries were included in the 2009 report and were divided into 25 'Resource and Efficiency Driven' and 25 'Innovation Driven' economies. The former list was topped by Malaysia, Turkey and Chile, while the latter was topped by the USA, Sweden and Denmark.

South Africa scored 5.76 (out of 10) in the survey, doing particularly well in business and government related indices.

"[South Africa shows] high levels of business and government spending on computer software, hardware and services. The high penetration level of secure servers suggests that there is a very sophisticated user base within South Africa" said the report.

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The challenges facing South Africa's ICT industry included lack of broadband uptake, and the need for improvement in workforce skills and education. Confusing regulations and policies for would-be entrants in the fixed line sector were also said to hinder further growth.

The survey suggested that South Africa could better maximise the potential of ICT investments by "addressing increased broadband rollout and a deregulation of the fixed-line telecommunications sector. An investment in human development would also help provide more workers with greater ICT skills."

For more information, visit www.connectivityscorecard.org.