

**Survey Research on e-Learning
in Asian Countries - Fiscal Year 2002
(Country Specific Report - Myanmar)**

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1. Market: Market Trends of e-Learning

1.1 Status of IT Promotion (Centered on the Internet)

1.1.1 Outline of the Internet

The Internet is not widespread in Myanmar. However, in major hotels in Yangon and other cities, mail addresses can be acquired to send e-mails.

According to the statistics of ITU (2001), Internet users in Myanmar in 2001 numbered approximately 10,000, which makes up a low 0.02% of the population. However, considering the fact that the number of users was approximately 500 in 1999, it can be said that the number of Internet users is rapidly increasing.

The Myanmar government restricts the usage of the Internet to e-mail only. Viewing websites on the Internet is not permitted due to regulations.

As for e-mail services, there were two private service providers until 1999. However, the government has ordered them to suspend business, and thus it has been said that there are no private service providers in the country.

In January 2000, the government announced Internet regulations, which include the banning of websites with political contents or contents that have a detrimental effect on the government. If a modem not registered with the government is used, a prison sentence may be imposed. On the other hand, the government has started a public website called "Golden Land" advertising Myanmar for access from abroad.

Internet usage regulations in Myanmar announced in 2000 are as summarized below:

Table 1-1 Main Regulations

- | |
|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Any writings detrimental to the interests of the Union of Myanmar are not to be posted;- Any writings directly or indirectly detrimental to the current policies and secret security affairs of the Government of the Union of Myanmar are not to be posted;- Writings related to politics are not to be posted;- Only the person who is granted an Internet account is to use the Internet;- A person with an Internet account is prohibited from hacking the Web and entering and destroying the security system of MPT;- Hacking the web and entering and destroying the security system of other Internet users are prohibited;- Persons who hold an Internet account are forbidden to misuse the account of other Internet users;- Internet users are to inform MPT of any threat on the Internet;- Internet users are to obtain prior permission from the organization designated by the state to create Web pages;- Applicants for an Internet account are held accountable for the veracity of facts contained in the application form;- MPT has the right to amend and change regulations on the use of the Internet without prior notice. |
|---|

1.1.2 Outline of ISP

ISP businesses are limited only to those run by Myanmar Posts and Telecommunications (MPT). The government is on guard against the activities through the Internet by antigovernment organizations in and out of the country.

The state-owned MPT is the only ISP in the country to run the Internet business.

As of April 1999, there were two websites of Myanmar domain. The MM-NIC is responsible for the registration and management of Myanmar domain; however, "mm" domain registrations are not being accepted at the present time. The other website is Myanmar Information Gateway, which offers a variety of information regarding Myanmar.

Table 1-2 Website of Myanmar Domain

Company/Organization	URL
MM-NIC	http://www.nic.mm/index.shtml
Myanmar Information Gateway	http://www.infogate.com.mm/index.htm

1.2 Status of Education and Training System

1.2.1 Higher Education

Higher education institutions include universities, two-year colleges, training institutes, etc.

Concerning universities, there are general universities and professional institutes. Professional institutes focus on applied sciences such as medicine, dentistry, veterinary medicine, agriculture, forestry, and computer science. There are universities for teacher training, arts and social sciences as well. The term is four years for arts and social sciences and other science courses; five years for computer science and agriculture; six years for dentistry, veterinary medicine, and forestry; six and a half years for medicine.

Two-year colleges grant diplomas to the graduates.

Training institutes include agricultural institutes, technological institutes, and commercial schools. The term of study is three years for agricultural institutes and technological institutes, one year for commercial schools.

Higher education institution that offers correspondence courses is the Workers' College, Yangon, established for adult education. The term is five years, and the graduates are given degrees.

1.2.2 Vocational Education

Information unavailable.

1.3 IT Human Resources Required

Computer education in Myanmar began in 1971 when the Universities' Computer Center, Rangoon, was established. Graduate courses were opened in 1973, but the number of the students was extremely limited. Undergraduate courses were started in 1986, and 90 students were enrolled each year until 1988.

Presently, there are University of Computer Studies, Yangon (UCSY) and University of Computer Studies, Mandalay (UCSM) under the Ministry of Science and Technology. A total of 800 students enroll in these universities each year.

In addition, the Myanmar government has approved the operation of private computer schools. Such schools offer software application courses and international diploma courses, and each year 3,000 students graduate with qualifications.

(1) University of Computer Studies, Yangon (UCSY)

The foremost higher education institution in Myanmar that grants degrees in computer related fields is UCSY in Yangon. UCSY began as the Universities Computer Center (UCC) of the Rangoon University (now Yangon University) in 1971. Thereafter, several courses were added and it became an independent institute of technology in 1988, and was renamed UCSY (the current name) in 1998. In 1993, with the cooperation of the National Computing Centre Ltd (NCC) in the U.K., the internationally accepted International Diploma in Computer Studies (IDCS) Course was established. Most of the middle and upper level personnel in government and private computer fields are graduates of this university.

(2) Private institutions for computer education

Private institutions for computer education also play a major role in developing the human resources for information technology in Myanmar. Presently, there are over 65 computer schools in the city of Yangon alone. With regard to the level of education, they have established courses for internationally accepted IDCS and higher HDCS qualification with the cooperation of NCC in the U.K., and offer computer education comparable to that of UCSY. Most of the teaching staff of private educational institutions are graduates of UCSY or Yangon Technological University.

1.4 E-Learning Market Trends

Information unavailable.

It seems that nothing exists in Myanmar that can be called e-learning market or industry.

2. Technology: Trends of e-Learning System (Synchronous & Asynchronous)

Cases of e-learning experiments and implementation are scarce in Myanmar, so the e-learning situation considerably lags behind other Asian countries.

As part of the "SOIASIA Project", promoted by Keio University, UCSY had been used as one of the receive-only earth stations to receive lectures delivered via satellite based Internet. The whole university received this course and approximately 80 students from the latter term of the doctorate course and master's course attended. The Japanese university delivered and received audio visual data using 500kbps line, while the participants in Myanmar responded several times using e-mail.

One of the other few cases currently confirmed is described below.

2.1 eLearning Center

<http://www.e-commerce.com.mm/elearning/>

The eLearning Center, which has been established with the aid of Japan's Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry, offers preparatory materials on WBT for IT Engineer Examination.

Judging by the country's Internet situation, it seems that this service is only available through LAN within the center, and accessing via the Internet from outside is difficult.

According to the center's website, there is an "MBA Programme" being carried out separately, and 180 students have thus far graduated from this course. However, the program is conducted in a classroom setting, and is not likely to be directly related to e-learning.

Table 2-1 Curriculum of the MBA Programme

Core Courses	Elective Courses
General Management	Strategic Management
Financial Management	Entrepreneurship and Small Business Management
Marketing Management	Organisational Design and Development
Production and Operations Management	International Trade
Management Accounting-I	Management Information Systems
Management Accounting-II	International Business Management
Macro-Economic Environment	Managerial Economics
Decision Sciences	Business Ethics
Mathematics and Statistics for Management	Business Communication
Managerial Computing	Industrial Management
Legal Framework for Business	Privatization
Human Resources Management	Taxation (Seminar)
	Banking (Seminar)
	Insurance (Seminar)
	Capital Markets (Seminar)
	Marketing Research
	Consumer Behaviour

Source: eLearning Center Website

Detailed information about the instructors and the specific level of education is not supplied.

However, if this curriculum is actively implemented, support in providing the courses with e-learning materials as part of the support to the training at the eLearning Center would be worthy of consideration in the future.

3. Advanced Activities

Information unavailable.

4. Government Policy and its Vision (Mid- and Long-term Direction)

4.1 Status of IT Policies

As Myanmar's national ICT strategy, an "IT Master Plan (Information Technology Master Plan)" was formed. It is a ten-year plan from 2001 to 2010.

The main goal is the establishment of a lasting information infrastructure as well as the establishment and operation of an active IT industry. This is divided into seven categories as shown below:

- 1) Wide implementation of IT in business, enhancement of productivity, as well as improvement of customer service.
- 2) Utilization of IT as an infrastructure, promoting social and economic stability and smooth and effective operation of commercial enterprises.
- 3) Development of IT so that it will become the mainstay of the national economy.
- 4) Wide utilization of IT as an educational tool with the aim of improving the national educational standard.
- 5) Corporate utilization of IT developments in order for various fields of industry to enter the international market.
- 6) Planning and implementation of human resource development to meet the requirements of the IT industry and IT application.
- 7) Transforming the entire nation into an IT literate community.

The four priority issues are as follows:

- 1) IT for application
- 2) IT in education and training
- 3) Foundation of the IT industry
- 4) Information infrastructure

4.2 E-Learning Related Measures as Part of IT or Educational Policies

With the cooperation of the government, industry, and the private sector, computer-based classes have been introduced to high schools. The aim is to spread basic computer knowledge to the majority of students. There are two IT universities and 24 computer colleges. Presently, there are 164 educational institutions that are considered to be multimedia schools.

The government has authorized the opening of private computer schools. The aim is to train capable personnel by introducing computer applications. Presently, there are 70 schools in operation in Yangon.

- The goal is set for all graduating students to be computer literate.
- There are plans to introduce multimedia classes to primary education. In August 2002, multimedia classes will be introduced in three schools.
- There are 150 universities in Myanmar. There are moves toward the introduction of a computer training center as a facility under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Education since April 2000.

(1) E-Education Internet System (under consideration)

The Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Information are considering a joint interactive system. Included in this plan is e-learning, and it is called "e-education" as a

method of the distance education. Information exchange is planned to be done between universities and between institutions under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Education.

The main objectives are as follows:

- To enable every citizen to acquire basic education.
- To provide technical education to elevate morals and to pursue the national interest.
- To train skilled workers.
- To enable the citizens to receive a university level education and to acquire sufficient intellectual abilities.
- To provide a graduate school level education to graduates and to make continuous learning possible for workers.

4.3 Laws Regulating Rights for Intellectual Property and Personal Information in e-Learning
Information unavailable.

4.4 Vision
Information unavailable.

4.5 International and National Conference
Information unavailable.