

The number of PCs in Australian homes is estimated at 1,748,000. (Yearbook Australia, 1994, published by the Australian Bureau of Statistics).

Australia has a good reputation for acceptance of new technologies; for example, there is a penetration rate of 75% for VCR uptake in the nation's 6 million households, and 29% of households have a PC. Australia's per capita computer power is second only to that of the United States. The country has half the personal computing power of the United States and twice that of Japan, with 175 PCs per 1,000 people (compared to 265 in the United States and 84 in Japan).

Skillshare Centres

A national initiative, of the Commonwealth Employment Service, skillshare centres are community based training centres. 385 skillshare centres exist throughout the country and are equipped with computer mediated communications and other technologies for learning.

TeleCottages

TeleCottages, appear to have great potential for delivery of education services and to overcome some of the disadvantages suffered by people living in rural and remote areas in Australia. Facilities enable multiple user and cost sharing and are co-ordinated by a facilitator who trains users and supervises usage. The Centres also provide access to the Commonwealth Government information and access service, "Countrylink", which provides information and access to all Commonwealth departments and agencies. Services and programs such as education, health, taxation, social security, employment and training, business and farm management, citizenship, immigration and community development are all accessible via a toll free telephone, electronic communication and local facilitators. In 1992, the Commonwealth Government, Department of Primary Industries and Energy, allocated \$2.8 million for the establishment of telecottages to facilitate distance education over the next four years. Each centre has technologies available for users including computers, printer, modem, telephone, facsimile and various software applications.