

Emerging Business Applications of ICT

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Abstract: This article traces the business applications of the Information and Communication technologies (ICT) from the time technology was used to automate manual processes to recent times where they provide decision support to managers. The applications discussed include MRP, ERP, SCM, CRM, KM, BI and M-Commerce. This has led to the development of hybrid services like 'telematics' used in the auto industry. The enabling technologies like WAP, bluetooth and broadband are also discussed with their applications in the field of smart products. The poor security in the financial transactions over the net is seen as a major deterrent to the growth of ICT applications in business. However, the development of Mew chip by Hitachi is expected to provide bright prospects for the future while raising concerns about privacy.

Introduction

Moore's Law (see Box) has come true and it is showing up in every aspect of our life. Every twenty years since 1900, the amount of computational power that can be bought with one dollar has increased by a factor of a thousand. Since 1950, there has been more than a million-fold increase. If the same had happened to automobiles, a Rolls Royce should cost just one dollar. The ten-second pre-recorded musical greeting-card has more processing power than any computer in 1950. The Sony Play Station video game (1995) at \$299 had more power than Cray-I that cost \$20 million when introduced. The new Chevrolet has more computational power than what was there in the Apollo spacecraft in 1969.

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