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Beyond the Internet

By **Cynthia Ann Peterson**

The Internet has enabled plenty of knowledge-sharing and innovation for the development of technology here, but to move higher up the technology value chain, development does not stop at building Internet infrastructure.

To this end, Mimos is driving KnowledgeGRID Malaysia, formerly known as the National Grid Computing Initiative. It was relaunched in August this year. The R&D outfit has been tasked to spearhead this under the

KnowledgeGRID Malaysia Rollout

Phase 1: Currently underway, it involves linking all the local universities to undertake basic research in collaboration with MIMOS which is undertaking applied research. It also includes hooking up selected industry players to run pilots on the grid.

Phase 2: Expected to be rolled out in 2008, it will involve major industry players; grid-enabling all Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation (Mosti) agencies; and connecting all State ICT centres as well as all skill development centres to the grid.

Phase 3: By early 2009, it will see KnowledgeGRID Malaysia providing content, applications, services and computational power to all sectors in Malaysia.



ABDUL WAHAB: Next knowledge infrastructure for the nation

Ninth Malaysia Plan (9MP). KnowledgeGRID Malaysia aims to provide a national infrastructure that maximises high performance computing resources to accelerate research and industrial development for national wealth and value creation.

'The only change the National Grid Computing Initiative has gone through is focusing beyond the research community and reaching out to all the other sectors. It is now known as KnowledgeGRID Malaysia due to a much more significant role it plays in providing the knowledge infrastructure for the nation,' says Datuk Abdul Wahab Abdullah, president and chief executive officer, Mimos.

He asserts that taking the country beyond the Internet is part of

KnowledgeGRID Malaysia.

'It will be the next knowledge infrastructure for the nation that will increase Malaysia's competitiveness in technology advancement regionally and globally, transforming it from technology as tools to becoming an enabler and finally as a sector,' explains Abdul Wahab.

Collaboration

Grid computing pools together resources to provide computing power to enable data-heavy processing to take place. It is a cost and time-effective way to crunch the heavy loads of information typically produced in research work.

'It will be the knowledge collaboration platform that brings super computing power to all sectors nationwide

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including industrial, government, agriculture, international community, education, research, financial and business and enterprise segments. Specifically, KnowledgeGRID Malaysia will provide computing resources and data capabilities to the nation's weather modelling, earthquake simulation and protein folding, DNA, and drug design research. This will accelerate Malaysia's advancement in biotechnology, forecasting of natural disasters and animation content initiatives at significantly lower costs,' says Abdul Wahab.

Collaborations

KnowledgeGRID Malaysia is being rolled out in phases (see sidebar). Mimos hopes that the country will be a pioneer in having a national grid infrastructure that provides access to the grid to communities nationwide through telecentres.

According to Abdul Wahab, the response from the industry and universities has been positive.

'Mimos has partnered with multinational companies such as IBM, Altair Engineering, SGI, and Cisco to provide affordable tools and resources for

local researchers and industry players to jumpstart into the K-economy. To date, Mimos has forged research collaborations in frontier technologies with 13 local universities who serve as Mimos virtual research centres and will undertake basic research in frontier technologies to complement our applied research to build technology competencies in driving centres of excellence,' he says.

Mimos is also piloting KnowledgeGRID Malaysia with the animation industry for rendering and simulation, while Proton is also piloting it for car production, says Mimos. **mb-e**