Green

Digital Policy

Vision

The Green Party envisions an Aotearoa New Zealand in which digital[1] services and products:

- Enhance our democratic processes
- Enable equitable access to information
- Contribute to our personal, educational, professional, community and corporate relationships by facilitating communication and learning
- Sustainably increase productivity, innovation and efficiencies in our industries and businesses
- Decrease resource use through appropriate application of technologies
- Recognise the individual right to privacy and treat personal data ethically and responsibly

Key Principles

1. The appropriate and innovative use of digital services, particularly telecommuting, virtual mobility and better design, should be used to significantly enhance productivity and reduce resource use.
2. Information sharing, enabled by digital services, should be used to promote accountability and informed, appropriate public decision-making.
3. Digital services and opportunities should be accessible to all. They are fundamental to inclusion economically, socially, and politically. Their benefits need to be shared amongst all members of our society and not be used to enhance or entrench existing inequalities, or create new layers of inequality.
4. Development of digital services must proceed in a socially responsible and sustainable manner.

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1 In this policy, *digital* is used to encompass all information and communications technologies, and includes hardware and software, products and services, online and offline.

5. Free and Open Source software should be used, where practical, as a means of encouraging appropriate technology and local and indigenous solutions to local problems.

Specific Policies

1.   Equity and Access

Our lives are increasingly conducted online; from entertainment, to business to engaging with Government departments. Increasingly there is important information which is primarily, if not solely, made available on the Internet. In Aotearoa New Zealand there is a digital divide between those who have access to the Internet and digital tools and those who do not.

Policy Positions

1.1   Develop a nationwide digital divide strategy to monitor and address digital division, to ensure the benefits of digital services are experienced by all and access issues do not generate new economic, social or political inequalities

1.2   Establish publicly accessible digital services in areas with a significant digital divide, such as community technology hubs in schools, tertiary institutions, public libraries and other community centres, including free wireless internet access of a reasonable quality.

1.3   Support training opportunities for individuals, community groups and businesses to make best use of digital services.

1.4   Ensure that all government websites are accessible to people with disabilities by increasing website standardisation and supporting the development of assistive technologies for those with disabilities.

1.5   Work towards providing up-to-date information on government websites in both Te Reo Māori and English, and ensuring all communities can access government information regardless of language or other barriers.

1.6   Investigate ensuring free wireless internet access on public transport in metropolitan centres.

1.7   Support legislation and government policies that ensure internet rights such as net neutrality, data access, and disconnection rights.

1.8   Ensure regulation of online content is consistent with promoting human rights of all members of society.

1.9   Ensure that public buildings and spaces do not become sites for the marketing and commercialisation of digital products or services.

A. Government Databases

All levels of government have extensive and growing collections of publicly-owned information. Access fees, inappropriate use of copyright, and excessive use of proprietary formats create barriers which limit our ability to benefit from this knowledge.

Policy Positions

1.10 Ensure that all government databases which are eligible to be released into the public domain under the Official Information Act are made freely available (or available at a reasonable cost) in a format which enables the reuse, adaption and analysis of the information.

1.11 Ensure that information that cannot be made available (due to privacy or commercial sensitivity) is made available in anonymised aggregate form.

2. Initiatives to encourage sector growth

The Green Party sees huge potential in the digital products and services sector to innovate, connect and help transform the ways we live and work.

Policy Positions

2.1 Encourage initiatives that promote competition and network resilience in the provision of internet services.

2.2 Support visits to export markets to facilitate media exposure of our successes and to influence foreign companies to work with our digital businesses.

2.3 Establish an Aotearoa New Zealand centre of digital excellence and support promising Aotearoa New Zealand digital innovators to visit key digital clusters overseas and gain experience there.

2.4 Include digital apprenticeships and digitally-focussed forms of training in our apprenticeship scheme and encourage digital companies to develop their own training schemes and/or work with tertiary institutions to provide up to date educational initiatives.

2.5 Develop and support digital clusters to assist the growth and resilience of new digital enterprises.

2.6 The development of independent software ventures in Aotearoa New Zealand, to encourage the development of the industry.

2.7 Work with industry to:

a) Develop a strategy to enhance the availability of venture and seed capital for local commercial software companies.

b) Develop a Research and Design industry and other industry programmes that are attractive to new graduates in Aotearoa New Zealand, to encourage talent retention.

c) Promote positive solutions to online infringing based on legal alternatives and new business models.

d) Support the incubation of Aotearoa New Zealand's creative edge and ingenuity in software development – especially where this addresses or builds on our most urgent issues (e.g. climate change), successful industries (e.g. agriculture) or recent experience (e.g. emergency management).

2.8 Require Government agencies procuring digital products and services to:

a) Report digital expenditure to overseas and domestic digital companies.

b) Use a procurement system that enables domestic providers to bid for the work.

c) Consider the benefit of local procurement to the domestic economy and digital industry when making procurement decisions.

d) Require government agencies to use Free and Open-Source Software where practical and use open standards for documents and databases.

3.   Digital Infrastructure, Risk and Security

The Green party recognises the need to avoid security risks to Aotearoa New Zealand, ensure government retains the ability to regulate vendors in the public interest and ensure that human safety and the integrity of crucial democratic processes are not jeopardised by failure of digital systems.

Policy Positions

3.1 Ensure that digital infrastructure and systems are developed and maintained by companies operating solely under Aotearoa New Zealand laws.

3.2 Encourage public scrutiny of any digital system that is responsible for the safety of human life (e.g. transportation), or is responsible for crucial democratic processes (e.g. electronic voting).

3.3 Support the development of a system of professional registration for people working on safety-critical applications.

3.4 Promote collaboration and provide opportunities for enhanced communication between the government, the digital sector and users on digital security issues.

3.5   Ensure that software and digital infrastructure used in the state sector is reviewed for security issues on an ongoing basis.

3.6   Ensure that legislation prohibits the circumvention of lawful security measures and digital security services and products with the intention of performing an illegal act.

3.7   Develop regulations requiring digital vendors to disclose security weaknesses in their products in a timely manner so users can take remedial action.

4.   Internet Content Management and Copyright

Policy Positions

4.1   Develop copyright law that is responsive to the realities of digitalisation, with the public interest in information flow in mind, ensuring that copyright, as defined in Intellectual Property (IP) law, applies to digital works, and that:

   a) Aotearoa New Zealand's copyright protection makes exceptions for processes that are unique to digital works, so that technologies such as i) caching digital works on Internet servers to economise on bandwidth, or ii) hyper-linking to material are not deemed as copying.

   b) Copyright protection extends to all communicated works, but not the signals that carry them.

   c) The right of consumers who have lawfully obtained copyrighted works to make copies for their own lawful use is protected.

   d) The removal of identifying data, and distribution of altered digital work is prohibited.

   e) The right to de-compilation and error correction is protected.

   f) ISPs and hosts are not liable for any intellectual property or copyright infringing material stored or cached on their networks or web space. ISPs should not remove or disable access to any copyright infringing material unless they have been specifically ordered to by a court of law.

4.2   Ensure that the rights of consumers are not circumvented by manufacturers of media or media players that function to restrict consumers' rights.

4.3   Ensure that ISPs are not liable for anything that their customers do or transmit via the Internet service they provide.

4.4   Ensure that ISPs must, within the constraints of legal requirements, provide a censorship free service for users who do not want any form of censorship.

5.   Privacy

Digital technology makes the storage and correlation of personal data much more prevalent than it has been in the past. The nature of the technology means that it is easy to gather and use information of all sorts, including accurate and inaccurate information. Once information is placed in a database it can last there indefinitely. This information should be collected, stored, and treated ethically, and access to this information by New Zealanders is paramount. See our Privacy and Security Services policy.

6.   Digital Workforce Issues

Digital services can enhance productivity, but can also affect workers' rights, health, existing protections and livelihood.

Policy Positions

6.1   Ensure that the introduction of new digital systems into workplaces is accompanied by retraining and that effective steps are taken to minimise disruption to people's working lives.

6.2   Ensure that potential health impacts from the use of digital services is considered as part of workplace health and safety, including people working remotely.

6.3   Ensure that possible harms are researched prior to the introduction of new digital technologies and services.

7.   Digital Systems and Education

The Green Party would like to see digital services sourced and used appropriately to support a good-quality education to enhance learners research skills and abilities, provide timely access to knowledge resources, provide innovative styles of learning, and assist learners to develop technological literacy, and explore their creativity.

Policy Positions

7.1   Support the balanced use of digital systems in education, as a means of enhancing access and fostering technological literacy, critically evaluating and using technology, and providing hands-on experience for students interested in gaining technology-focused employment.

7.2   Encourage the development of educational digital service providers.

7.3   Support the further development of digital distance learning while maintaining face-to-face contact with instructors, tutors, and students.

7.4   Ensure that the use of digital systems in schools is supported by clear guidelines to maintain teacher and student health.

7.5   Ensure that the Ministry of Education takes a proactive role in digital system procurement to provide quality, open-source, learner-focused digital products and services that work best for learners and their communities, and to ensure schools do not become sites for the marketing and commercialisation of learning products.