

Publications

Beyond Access : ICT and Social Inclusion

Bridging the digital divide is about more than simply improving access to technology. For excluded groups in particular, there is little relevant content available on the Internet, which is driven by the market and aimed at affluent consumers.

Despite the Government's many innovative programmes for improving access, hardware and skills, the evidence suggests that excluded groups still lag behind in the take up of ICT: many simply cannot see the point in accessing the new technology.

The best solution is to let people develop content for themselves. Written by Samantha Hellowell, *Beyond Access: ICT and Social Exclusion* features studies of innovative projects which are doing just that. Drawing on these, this major new report proposes a radical approach to delivering an inclusive information society. The case studies show how excluded people can be engaged in using technology on their own terms, and how technology can be used as a tool for social inclusion more generally.

The report concludes that for both access and content it is the views of excluded groups that should prevail. It is time for professionals to take a deep breath, sit back, and let go.

Beyond Access: ICT and Social Inclusion by Samantha Hellowell, £12.95, ISBN 0 7163 3054 7

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