

e-Post: Department of Posts, Government of India

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ABSTRACT

The postal department of the Government of India has introduced a web-based value-added service, namely, e-Post. Through e-Post, messages are downloaded at identified post offices and delivered to the addressees as hard copies, thereby connecting individuals without access to the PC/internet and thus reducing the digital divide. The department launched the service nationwide on 30 January 2004. Using prepaid cards, which are available through Head Post Offices in denominations of Rs 500 and Rs 1000, this service is also available to the users who have access to the internet. Paid users can send messages in 10 different Indian languages. Presently, around 800 e-Post centres are operational. In addition to sending messages digitally across the country, the system also generates various MIS reports, so that the senior management can monitor the revenue and performance of e-Post centres in various postal circles.

Service Provided: G2C

The e-Post service was launched by the secretary of the Department of Posts on 30 January 2004. The service is currently running successfully in around 800 centres throughout India.

Objective

The internet revolution has enabled the rapid exchange of messages through e-mail. However, the internet has not yet reached most of rural India. To bridge this digital divide and to bring the benefit of the revolutionary internet technology to people living in these areas, the Department of Posts has introduced the e-Post service.

e-Post is a service under which printed or even handwritten messages of customers are scanned and transmitted as e-mail through the internet. At the destination offices, these messages are printed, enveloped and delivered by postmen, like other letters, to the given postal addresses.

Overall Description

e-Post was developed using the PostgreSQL data base, under the Redhat Linux operating system. It has been implemented in around 800 head post offices around the country. Operational training was given to every e-Post centre to run the software. A Help Desk has been created at NIC Dak Bhawan, to provide online support to remote locations, if problems occur.

Future Plans

At present, software modification is being carried out for the Army Postal Service (APS) in order to meet their requirements. To generate more revenue, the Department of Posts is planning to start a greeting cards service using e-Post.

Conclusion

e-Post is providing services in rural areas. A handwritten message in any language can be scanned at an e-Post centre and sent to destination post offices. The destination post office will take a print and deliver it to the addressee for just Rs 10.

If users buy a prepaid card, they can, sitting in another country, send a message to their loved ones in rural India easily.