

## **Information Technology Authority: A Bridge to Development in the Sultanate of Oman**

Through connectivity, the Information Technology Authority (ITA) is at the heart of Oman's transition to knowledge-based economy that will achieve social and economic benefits for the people of the Sultanate.

It does this in three ways:

**Infrastructure Services** – Including a nationwide telecommunications network that interconnects government agencies, data centers, and e-payment systems.

**Advisory Services** – Helping to implement e-government initiatives and IT investments.

**Capacity-Building** – Expanding Oman's human resources capabilities in ICT through initiatives geared toward strengthening digital literacy among Omani citizens.

Because connectivity is key to the development of any nation, the ITA is supporting some of the nation's initiatives:

**National Broadband Strategy** – Boosting the quality and speed of broadband connections and facilitating pivot among the country's telecoms majors to embrace markets created by new technologies, such as service around "smart city" installations, big data and cloud services. (*Oxford Business Group*)

**Digital Oman Strategy** – Increasing IT skills, digital literacy, and the advancement of new technologies incorporating training and human resources development, eGovernment, governance and regulations, public awareness, and the like.

**Oman Logistics Strategy** – Securing a position for Oman among the top logistics-centered economies of the world. This strategy is enhancing capacity by investing in infrastructure and technology for the upgrade of ports, airports, and new road links.

Since the Internet was introduced in the Sultanate by Omantel in 1997, the country has seen dramatic gain in access. Oman was ranked #1 in the Middle East and #24 globally among 75 countries in a 2017 Inclusive Internet Index commissioned by Facebook and developed by the *Economist Intelligence Unit*. The index highlighted the country's infrastructure as a key strength, propelling Oman to #17 of the 75 countries surveyed on the strength of their 4G coverage.

"The long-term vision and objective of the eOman Strategy is to become a 'smart nation'. Our aim is to digitally transform the society, businesses, and government so that our society as a whole becomes savvy in using digital technologies. We want to *produce*, not just consume, through digital products and services revolving around acquired knowledge and advanced skills." - *Dr. Salim Sultan Al-Ruzaiqi, CEO of the ITA*