

COMPUTERIZATION DEGREE APPRAISAL IN PLATARESTI COMMUNE, CALARASI COUNTY ON THE LEVEL OF RURAL ENVIRONMENT BUSINESS

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Abstract

Computers nowadays – can't live with them, can't live without them. In these times information travels very fast and spreads even faster with the help of the Internet. It brings knowledge, fresh news, it helps us work and manage our business, and along with the internet connection it helps us connect with anyone else who is also equipped, no matter where they are – even if we are referring to a small village on top of a mountain, a spread commune or locality in the pains of the country, the continent, or the world. The paper aims to highlight the importance of computerization in the rural areas of Romania – bringing forward a study case. We have performed a qualitative, quantitative and comparative as regards to the data collected from Plataresti commune in Calarasi County, Romania. Results showed that people are curious and interested as to the benefits this new technology may bring them. Also it highlights the problems small business in the rural environment encounter regarding computerization, problems that have solutions – few of which we are going to propose.

Keywords: computerization, business, rural environment, internet

INTRODUCTION

Computers nowadays – can't live with them, can't live without them. In these times information travels very fast and spreads even faster with the help of the World Wide Web – the Internet. It brings knowledge, fresh news, it helps us work and manage our business, and along with the internet connection it helps us connect with anyone else who is also equipped, no matter where they are – even if we are referring to a small village on top of a mountain or a spread commune or locality in the pains of the country, the continent, or the world.

We have approached this subject because our professional opinion reinforced by our professional work experience have showed the computers and internet may very well lead to the economic growth of a small scale business – either we refer to finding customers for products or for making

merchandise or raw materials orders from the supplier and for the better management of our operations.

At only a 20 km distance from Bucharest and Budesti, on no. 301 national road, at 42 km from Oltenita, on no. 4 national road we find the 4 villages that build-up Plataresti commune/locality, respectively: Plataresti, Dorobantu, Podu Pitarului, and Cucuieti. [3] Each settlement has made itself known over time both due to the local resources (forest, hunting fund, fishery, mental diseases hospital, monastery, etc.) and to its people (approx. 4400 inhabitants - declared) who live and develop their activity on these lands. [2]

The telecommunications network is characterized by a positive evolution during the past 5 years (since the EU accession) as regards to the coverage area and the quality, ensuring a high level of access to the

inhabitants as to the national and international communication network (radio, television, telephone), although regarding the economic activity in the area does not fully prove this evolution. [4]

MATERIAL AND METHOD

The present paper has been performed based on the data collected directly from the local hall and from the field in February 2012.

The methods used were: comparative analysis, qualitative and quantitative analysis of data, in view of attaining edifying results on the computerization degree in Plataresti Commune, Calarasi County that may thereafter allow us to draw the right conclusions and make informed proposals for the improvement of the local business environment.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Internet is a system of computers that communicate through the Internet Protocol Suite (TCP/IP). The World Wide Web (www) or simply web is a vast source of information that can be accessed through the Internet. Few of the resources this brings to our life are electronic mail (e-mail), file transferring and sharing and online chat. The Internet permits people from around the world to share data, ideas, and experiences on any subject. [1]

Electronic mail is a method of communication used internationally, between friends, colleagues, business partners, and so on. It also includes a system of creating, storing, and forwarding mails. It may consist of text messages with attachments of audio-visual clips. One can also download or upload files using the Internet. As compared to telephonic conversation, both e-mail and online chat are cost saving. [1]

As the graph below shows the most common business is the grocery store. 3 of these use computers due to the management choice. The clinic and pharmacy also use computers, although in their case it was not a choice, but a mandatory condition in order to comply with the requirements of the public health system.

Table 1 Plataresti village computerization degree

No.	Type of business	No. of businesses	Internet connection	No. of computers
1	Grocery store	15	3	3
2	Construction materials	2	0	1
3	Hairdresser	2	0	0
4	Clinic	2	1	2
5	Pharmacy	1	1	1
6	Distillation centre	1	0	0
7	Clothing store	1	0	0

Private businesses benefit only from 5 internet connections – through wireless data devices (modem type) with relatively low speed and little capacity.

Also, there are 7 computers that support the activity if the local businesses detailed in Table no. 1, that are not properly equipped, 3 of these being obsolete considering the rapid advancements in the field of computerization.

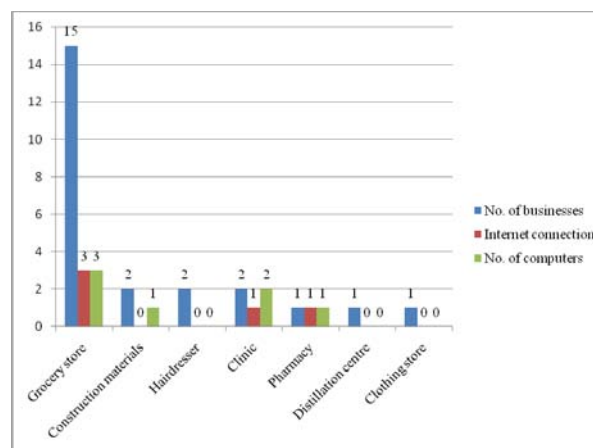


Fig.1. Plataresti village computerization degree

Table 2. Cucuieti village computerization degree

No.	Type of business	No. of businesses	Internet connection	No. of computers
1	Grocery store	5	0	0

In Cucuieti village there are only five local business operational that have a computerization degree of zero – no internet connectivity, no computers.

Table 3. Podu-Pitarului village computerization degree

No.	Type of business	No. of businesses	Internet connection	No. of computers
1	Grocery store	3	1	1
2	Clinic – emergency point	1	1	1
3	Veterinary clinic	1	0	0
4	Clothing store	1	0	0
5	Authorized hunting fund	1	0	0
6	Tataru Fishery	1	0	0

In this case we have found that there are only 2 businesses that have internet connectivity and computers – one being by management choice and one being a mandatory condition.

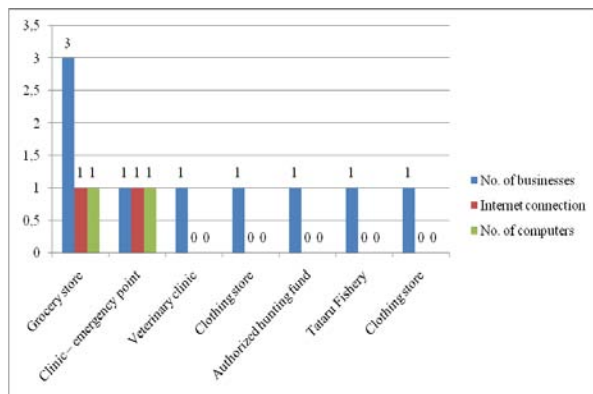


Fig.2. Podu-Pitarului village computerization degree

In both cases the internet connection is through wireless data devices (modem type) with relatively low speed and little capacity.

Table 4. Dorobantu village computerization degree

No.	Type of business	No. of businesses	Internet connection	No. of computers
1	Grocery store	11	0	0
2	Construction materials	1	0	0
3	PVC carpentry workshop	1	1	1
4	Clothing store	1	0	0
5	Bakery – fireplace oven	1	0	1
6	Water treatment plant – executed through EU funds	1	0	2

The computerization degree is also very low in this village, although there is a local business of PVC carpentry that receives offer requests, orders and even sells its products through the help of a website and social networks pages.

Also the commune adds up 15 centres of gas cylinders and 3 agricultural associations.

None of the 15 centres of gas cylinders have any kind of computerization.

The agricultural associations do not have any computers, although their managers use their personal computers in order to operate better.

From the institutional perspective on computerization the situation is somehow better than the private perspective, in the sense that there are few computers in the local hall, schools and hospital.

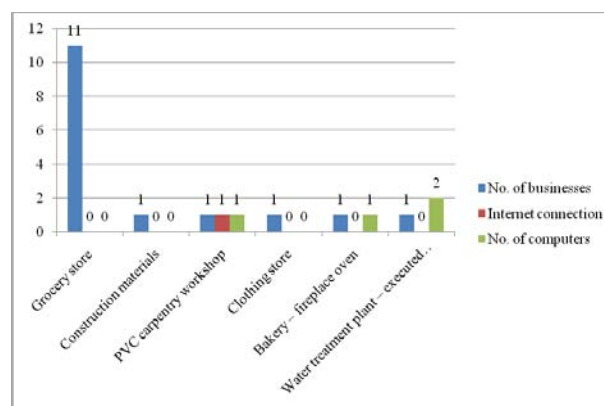


Fig.3. Dorobantu village computerization degree

Table 5. Local institutions computerization degree

No.	Institution	No. of businesses	Internet connection	No. of computers
1	Local Hall	1	1	11
2	Hospital	1	1	5
3	Achieve	1	0	3
4	School primary cycle (1-4)	4	0	0
5	School general cycle (5-8)	1	0	16
6	School (kinder garden/pre-school)	4	0	0
7	Church	4	0	0
8	Monastery	1	0	0

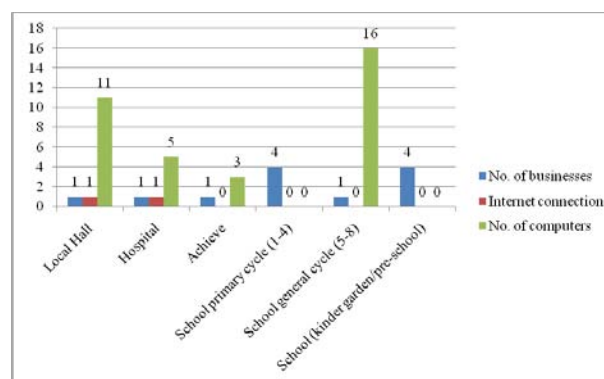


Fig.4. Local institutions computerization degree

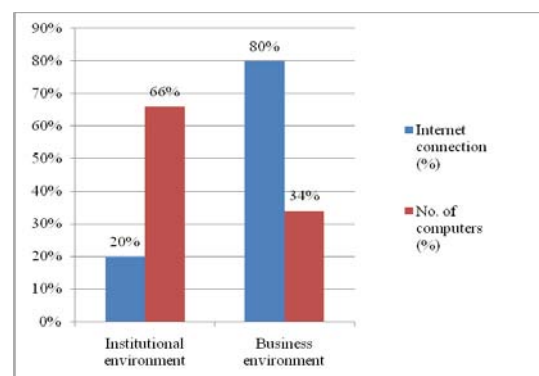


Fig.5. Comparative analysis between the local public and private business environment computerization degree

Comparative analysis shows that the business environment benefits from a higher number of

internet connections that local institutions do, even though institutions have more computers. The computers in schools are used for educational purposes and the ones in the local hall are used for administrative purposes.

CONCLUSIONS

Computers cost, it is also the case of internet connection, still, on the long term, and these “investments” may prove to bring many more benefits, than the opportunity cost of not having them. From the business perspective it is important to realize the advantages computers and internet connectivity bring, such as:

- lower transportation costs – producers do not necessarily need to travel to meet the client in order to show the products, being possible to post pictures of the products on a website;
- lower communication costs – the internet has the cheapest communication cost, only the internet connectivity costs (either you send one mail or 1000 mail, or you chat 1 minute or 3 hours with a client establishing the detail of a collaboration);
- it helps learn new things on what the seller/producer has to do in order to operate;
- it allows access to the government institutions and to the legislation in force;
- it saves time on placing orders for supplies, raw materials, etc;
- it is a relatively cheap way to have advertisement and make the business noticed on the market, etc.

Only 1 business in this commune/locality has really understood that computers and the internet – the PVC carpentry workshop. The general manager of this small business stated that the webpage was set approximately 1 year previous to our interview and the sales and the activity of the workshop has increased about 350 times than before, fact that has led the business to grow, buy more specialized machinery and hire 6 people from the village – who were also trained for the carpenter position.

Our proposal is for the local hall to encourage people to use computers, and even direct these people towards the programs that offer funds for the acquisition of computers (e.g. Ministry of Telecommunications).

Also we have to draw attention over the fact that this locality has no other production businesses. It is located close to the capital of the Country and if cable internet connection would be possible this would to a little extent improve the investment opportunities.

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