

Title:

Vietnam takes Off - Online in an offline world

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Abstract:

The Internet has only really been available to ordinary people in Vietnam for a little over a decade. Nevertheless and despite quite low per capita income by world standards, usage growth rates and growth in bandwidth used are among the highest in Asia. Almost one in three people now use the Internet. Much of the traffic is Intra-Asian and business related. However, for many ordinary people, using the Internet has become an increasingly mundane yet vital activity.

So what does Internet use in Vietnam look like? How is it used why are people spending increasing amounts of their time online? How do people think the Internet? What types of discourses surround it? Drawing on long term anthropological ethnographic fieldwork conducted in homes and Internet cafes in Ho Chi Minh City this paper presents a cursory look at some different types of Internet use, popular sites and controversies that emerged in recent years.