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New Research

Survey Confirms Online Voting Set To Turn 66% Of Non-Voters Into Voters

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*Potential impact of technology on voting could lead to
5.5 million non-voters voting*

London, 20 July 2005 – Sixty-six percent of British citizens that did not vote in the 2005 election would have been more likely to have voted if online voting was available, according to research released by Cisco Systems today. The research confirms the potential impact e-voting will have on citizen involvement in the British democratic process if and when it is introduced.

The research undertaken by YouGov on behalf of Cisco Systems revealed that older non-voters would have been more likely to vote using new technology than younger demographics. The research shows that 74% of non-voters over the age of 50 would have been more likely to have voted if e-voting was made available. This contrasts to 63% of 30-50 year old non-voters, and 65% of 18-29 year old non-voters.

According to Simon Culmer, Director of Operations – Public Sector, Cisco Systems UK, the results of the survey reflect a desire in the community for new ways of interacting with the government, and the political process.

“The role that technology is playing in connecting governments with citizens has never been more important than it will be in the next five to ten years,” he said.

“It is highly encouraging to see such a high level of support for online voting amongst British citizens reflected in this research, and an associated desire to connect with the political process. It is particularly encouraging to see the older demographic viewing online voting as way to increase their involvement in our democratic process,” said Mr Culmer.

Angela Salt, Director of Communication at The Electoral Commission said, “While we don't believe that e-voting would, on its own, solve the problem of lower voter turnout, we do know that voters want a choice of convenient, secure ways to vote. Provided that levels of security and confidence in those methods can be ensured, we are committed to working towards a 21st century democracy where electors choose the method, day and time to vote.”

The research coincides with Cisco Systems launch of Connected Government in the UK, a series of essays by political leaders that discuss the role of technology in opening up access to Governments around the globe. The book features fourteen essays from senior political figures around the world, including Ian Watmore, Head of e-Government, UK.

“Connected Government is designed to encourage and promote understanding of e-government across the world. The book is relevant to each individual nation – supporting debate of e-government issues and providing a platform for sharing best practice and experience. Connected Government will help nations explore the issues involved in developing compelling national e-government strategies and implementing them on a country-wide basis.” Mr Culmer continued.

Regional Breakdown

Scotland topped British regions more likely to use online voting. The research revealed 73 percent of non-voting Scottish respondents would more likely have voted if they could vote online.

Those more likely to vote per region if online voting were available include:

- Scotland 73 percent
- London 68 percent

- North England 67 percent
- South (not including London) 65 percent
- Midlands and Wales 64 percent

Only 20 percent of respondents confirmed they would not have been more likely to vote if they could have voted online, with 14 percent unsure if they would have or not.

The research was commissioned by Cisco Systems and undertaken by YouGov. The research was completed online between 1st – 3rd June 2005 from a nationally representative sample size of 2,136 British 18+ adults. Results were weighted to be representative of the British adult population.

EDITORS:

For further information on Connected Government and a copy of the book, please contact Brands2Life on 020 7592 1200.

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