Is government keeping up with the pace of technological change?

Press release, Canterbury Software, 15-Jul-14, Christchurch, NZ: **Canterbury Software is hosting a special event for members and guests to hear the politicians' ideas for the future of the technology sector. Date:** Tuesday 5 August, 2014

Time: 5:30pm-7.30pm
Where: Jack Mann Auditorium, University of Canterbury's

College of Education Campus, 53 Solway Ave, Ilam , Christchurch
Free Parking: Car Park 1 off Parkstone Avenue
Price: Canterbury Software Members - free; Guests - $10.00 incl GST

Government policy plays a huge role in the success of the ICT industry - from the Christchurch rebuild and the Innovation Precinct, software development government RFPs, access to ultrafast broadband, R&D grants, export assistance, quality education, skilled migrants, compliance, and more. In recent years the NZ ICT sector has experienced strong year on year growth, and export earnings from this sector are predicted to rise significantly over the next decade.

On Tuesday 5 August, speakers from National, Labour, Greens, and Internet MANA parties will share their policy ideas for this growing industry at a Canterbury Software Cluster hosted event to be held at the University of Canterbury's Jack Mann Auditorium. During the event, four panellists – Hon Amy Adams, Clare Curran, Gareth Hughes and Laila Harré - will be asked questions chosen from online submissions, as well as questions from the floor.

Canterbury Software Cluster Chair, Geoff Brash, says: "The speed at which technology is driving change in our society is phenomenal - from how we communicate with others, buy things, share things, to how we work, learn, run our businesses, run our lives, and more. We rely heavily on government to support our values, keep our infrastructure running smoothly, and to help New Zealand businesses keep ahead in international markets. With the elections fast approaching, this event is our chance to ask politicians how they understand these technological changes, and what plans they have for our technology future."

To register for the event go to http://www.canterburysoftware.org.nz/events/august-2014-event/ by 2nd August. **This event is by registration only** and spaces are limited.

If you have a question that you'd like us to put to the panel, please tweet it to @CSCluster and use hashtag #CSAskGovt.

- Ends -

For further information please contact:
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Biographies

Hon Amy Adams, National Party

Amy Adams is the Minister of Communications & Information Technology. She believes that greater use of ICT offers huge opportunities for New Zealand across a range of sectors. During her time as the Minister, Amy has overseen substantial positive change in the sector, including continuing the successful rollout of the $1.65 billion Ultra-Fast Broadband and Rural Broadband initiatives, ensuring New Zealanders have access to 4G networks, and the development of a product disclosure code to improve the transparency of broadband product information for consumers. Amy has also taken action to address the high cost of mobile roaming rates between New Zealand and Australia, leading to significantly lower costs.

Clare Curran, Labour Party

Clare Curran currently leads Labour's ICT Policy development, working to ensure the digital divide does not become a new measure of poverty. She is the member for Dunedin South and has been outspoken about the need for a telecommunications watchdog.

Gareth Hughes, Green Party

Gareth Hughes is one of the youngest and most tech-savvy MP's in parliament. He is also the Greens Musterer (Whip) and spokesperson for ICT. He recently launched the first crowdsourced bill by a political party in New Zealand, the Internet Rights and Freedoms Bill, and he campaigned for a second Internet cable for New Zealand and copyright reform. He also helped establish the cross-party IT forum which has improved the technical accessibility and literacy of Parliament.

Laila Harré, Internet MANA Party

Laila Harré has had a long career in industrial relations and politics, first entering Parliament in 1996 as an Alliance MP, then serving as a Cabinet Minister from 1999-2002 under the Labour-Alliance coalition government. In May this year, Harré was appointed leader of the newly established Internet MANA party. She returned to politics because she wanted to encourage young people to vote, to reconnect disenfranchised people with the political system, and to bridge the digital divide.