

Remote and Connected: Re-making Place with Web Technologies

The Web offers new possibilities to link remote and rural places into economic, political and social activities in ways that transcend earlier restrictions of distance. Indeed, some social theorists have long predicted that this possibility will transform the world into a global village (McLuhan 1964) and this has been confirmed by Castells and Negroponte in their later and more specific analysis of the Web. Meanwhile, other more recent accounts have argued that place continues to matter in the 'information age' but that the nature of place may be re-shaped through its global interconnections (Halford and Dyb 2009). In this context, the island of Dyrøy, situated off the Northern coast of Norway, presents the opportunity for new research to explore these possibilities. Dyrøy has a small and declining population, with an economy historically based on fishing and agriculture. Local economic development officers on the Island are currently pursuing a range of strategies to re-make Dyrøy as a sustainable place for the future. Dyrøy currently has the fastest broadband connection in Norway, and this is being used to:

- develop a range of services to provide cutting-edge health services to residents
- support collective community identity and action
- encourage new inhabitants by offering well-supported digital opportunities to work and live in a connected community
- place the Island on the social and cultural map by broadcasting conferences and concert premieres on the Web
- promote the Island nationally and internationally using social networking applications

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