1. Electronic Commerce (50%)

The U.S. Government supports the broadest possible free flows of information across international borders. This includes most informational material now accessible and transmitted through the Internet, including through World Wide Web pages, news, and other information services, virtual shopping malls, and entertainment features, such as audio and video products, and the arts. This principle extends to information created by commercial enterprises as well as by schools, libraries, governments, and other nonprofit entities.

[Adopted from The Framework for Global Electronic Commerce.]

U.S. negotiators seeking to open global telecommunications markets could not have asked for a more effective ally than the Internet. It is a global medium that didn’t require a multilateral agreement to advance traditional U.S. trade objectives. It is dramatically reducing the cost and increasing the speed with which services can cross national borders. The speed with which the Internet has surged onto the scene has also disarmed many that might have otherwise opposed or tried to manage its entry. Telecommunications providers around the world have been left scrambling to get on the Internet bandwagon, while regulators have been used to interject competition and provide telecommunication services that bypass the excessive rates charged in Asia and Europe.

[Adopted from Global Telecommunications Rules by Beltz.]
2. Distribution Systems and Information Technology (50%)

The technical information content in buyer-seller communication is related to the technical aspects of a product or a service. Exchange of technical information is concerned with the buyer's need of assistance in problem solving in specific procurement situations. Sometimes a customer will need advice for choosing the specification, which will give optimal performance from among the standardized product range of a supplier. This may relate to the choice of size, tensile strength or degree of corrosion resistance. The technical information then regards "what" to buy. It is important thus for a producer to make this kind of information available in one way or another.

Commercial information is information to be used by the customer for the evaluation of various suppliers when a purchasing decision is to be taken. Commercial information is thus used to establish who the exchanging partners in specific business transaction will be - that is to address the question "who" in a buying-decision process. Commercial information includes conditions regarding price levels, delivery times, etc. of the suppliers that are considered. To became a potential supplier producers therefore must in some way be able to transfer this information to the end-user. This can be done in different ways: through personal information exchange, through price-lists and product brochures or through computer links that can be continually up-dated.

[Adopted from INFORMATION SYSTEMS IN LOGISTICS AND TRANSPORTATION, edited by Bernhard Tilanus.]