Broadband Adoption and Digital Literacy

Presentation to the IAC
March 08, 2012
Being connected is no longer a convenience; it is a necessity
The digital divide is an opportunity divide.
• Economic Opportunities

• Educational Opportunities

• Healthcare, e-Gov, and Information Opportunities
But, the U.S. home adoption rate is only 68%
100 million Americans still without home access

- elderly
- minorities
- Residents of Tribal Lands
- low-income
- low-education
- people with disabilities
- students
Reasons for non-adoption

1. Cost
2. Digital literacy
3. Relevancy

Identified in National Broadband Plan research
Connect to Compete

- A new non-profit effort to connect all Americans to broadband
- Housed within One Economy
- Supported by a board of non-profit and industry leaders
- Initial focus: School Lunch Eligible Families

[www.connect2compete.org]
Low-cost Broadband Internet
For families eligible for Free School Lunch

- Two years of $9.95 + tax broadband Internet, with no installation fees and a no- or low-cost modem rental fee
- Service area reaches all 50 states
- Minimum speed of 1 Mbps; most ISPs will offer more
- Three-year sign-up window
- School Lunch families must not subscribe to broadband currently or owe payments to the ISP

Participating ISPs include: BendBroadband, Bright House Networks, Cablevision, Charter, Comcast (via Internet Essentials), Cox Communications, Eagle Communications, GCI, Insight, Mediacom, Midcontinent, Sjoberg’s Cable, Suddenlink, Time Warner Cable
Low-cost Computers

I. Redemtech will offer a $150 + tax laptop or desktop. Offer includes:
   • Corporate class specifications
     • Core 2 Duo processor
     • 2 GB Ram
     • 80 GB hard drive
     • DVD player
     • Wireless card
   • Windows 7 Home Premium and MS Office software suite
   • 90 day warranty
   • Phone tech support
   • Family settings

II. Microsoft will offer new education laptops starting at $250.
Digital Literacy

**Best Buy:** In-person basic digital literacy training beginning in 20 cities, including training the trainers, with plans to expand to additional communities.

**Microsoft:** Basic digital literacy training and advanced training including Microsoft Office, beginning in 15 states with plans to go nationwide. Includes a new online training portal.

**Public libraries:** Over 6,000 public libraries currently offer formal digital literacy classes.
- Formal training classes in 38% of the 16,600 public library locations
- About 50% in urban areas, but only 25% in rural areas
In context of other adoption efforts

- Lifeline Broadband Proposal
- CenturyLink Internet Basics
- Digital Literacy Corps Proposal
- Connect America Fund
- Comcast Internet Essentials
Digital Literacy Corps Proposal
Digital Literacy

- Digital literacy is the 21st Century skillset needed to use a computer and access the Internet
- Over 66 million Americans lack basic digital literacy skills
- Digital skills are key to finding and holding a job and can reduce the job skill mismatch
Digital Literacy Corps Proposal

• FCC proposal to allocate $50 million from Universal Service Fund savings to support digital literacy trainers at libraries and schools

• There are 16,000 public library locations, but only 38% (~6,000) offer basic digital literacy classes and only 25% offer classes in rural America

• Potential goal to increase libraries with training programs to more than 60% (10,000 locations)

Comments Due: April 2
Reply Comments Due: May 1
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