

Community Use of Digital Technology Assessment



The ability of individuals, businesses and public organizations to use digital tools is a key component of a community's connectedness. Leaders in Connected Communities identify, develop and implement programs that increase the ability of residents and organizations to use computers, productivity software and the Internet to meet their goals and aspirations. Communities that only focus on Internet infrastructure face the risk of increasing the digital divide between those that already use and understand the benefits of information technology and those that don't.

Community leaders must understand how residents and businesses as well as public and nonprofit organizations are using information technology to determine where to focus efforts to increase digital capability in the community. This assessment will help you better understand how telecommunications services and digital technologies are being used across the community. Your assignment is to complete the assessment for residents, businesses, nonprofit and public organizations in your community.

This assessment tool is designed to quickly assess where the community stands today, a rating of Level 1 is the lowest, Level 4 the highest. Please work within your group to complete the questions. Someone in the group should be designated as the table spokesperson and will be responsible for reporting on the table's findings as well as for completing a summary sheet for the facilitator.

* Adapted from CENIC Self Assessment Guide for Communities -

<http://broadbandsummit.mel.org/toolkitresources/GigabitBroadband-Self-AssessmentGuideforCommunities.pdf>

Connecting Communities Community Use of Digital Technology Assessment

Stage	Residential	Commercial (Manufacturing/Retail/Service)	Public (Government/Schools/Healthcare)
1	<p>Less than half of the homes have an Internet connection.</p> <p>Email and browsing are the only Internet applications used by most adult Internet users.</p> <p>Some students use the Internet for school assignments.</p>	<p>Few local businesses have Web sites.</p> <p>Some businesses use the Internet to communicate with customers and suppliers and search for supplies.</p>	<p>There is limited public discussion about the benefits of technology in the community.</p> <p>Few local governments and nonprofits have Web sites that provide detailed information about the organization and its services.</p>
2	<p>About half of the homes have an Internet connection.</p> <p>Some adults use the Internet to compare prices for big ticket items.</p> <p>Very few of the homes with broadband access have a broadband connection.</p> <p>Most K-12 students use the Internet to access school assignments.</p> <p>Some of the older adult population use email to communicate with family and friends.</p>	<p>The majority of businesses in the community have informational Web sites.</p> <p>Some businesses allow some employees periodically to telework.</p> <p>Some larger businesses encourage employees to take work-related classes online.</p>	<p>Most local public entities have Web sites that provide detailed information about the organization and its services.</p> <p>Local government web sites have a calendar and provide forms for some government services.</p> <p>Classes about the Internet and computers, free access and high speed Internet are available at a public site.</p> <p>Most schools have web sites offering access to homework assignments and communication with teachers.</p> <p>Hospitals and clinics are evaluating telemedicine.</p> <p>At least one organization is working to increase the availability and adoption of broadband in the community.</p>
3	<p>A majority of the homes in the community have an Internet Connection.</p> <p>Many residents purchase broadband service where it is available.</p> <p>Some high school seniors are taking college-level classes online.</p> <p>The majority of parents with K-12 students use the Internet to track assignments or communicate with teachers.</p> <p>Many older adults use email to communicate with family and friends.</p> <p>The community has a job center where residents can go to seek on-line job opportunities and post resumes.</p>	<p>Some businesses allow employees to telework one or two days a month.</p> <p>Many local businesses have web sites that allow customers to purchase goods online.</p> <p>Employee training on new technology is a priority.</p> <p>Many businesses are using VoIP (Voice over Internet Protocol) phone service.</p>	<p>Telecommunication infrastructure is included in the community's comprehensive plan.</p> <p>Some government applications are available online and many forms such as building permits are downloadable.</p> <p>All schools have interactive web sites offering access to homework assignments and communications with teachers and administrators.</p> <p>Some healthcare providers have informational Web sites.</p> <p>Hospitals and clinics routinely transmit lab reports and medical images electronically as well as participate in staff training online.</p> <p>Classes about the Internet and computers, free access and high speed Internet are available at most public sites.</p>
4	<p>Most residents purchase broadband service where it is available.</p> <p>Many adults are taking classes or continuing education online.</p> <p>Many older adults are accessing healthcare information online.</p> <p>Most residents are capable of accessing job/employment sites at home.</p> <p>Broadband at home is sufficient to support video conferencing (i.e. Skype) and the viewing of movies on-line.</p>	<p>Several retailers and manufactures sell goods out of state or internationally.</p> <p>Many businesses permit some employees to telework one or two days/week.</p> <p>Many businesses encourage employees to take work-related classes online.</p>	<p>Public entities have Web sites that enable residents to respond to surveys, pay bills, and register for events online.</p> <p>Hospitals and clinics have secure web sites that allow patients and doctors to access medical records.</p> <p>School Web sites enable parents and students to access student records, homework assignments and pay fees online. There is a designated computing center for residents to access high speed Internet and computers along with training opportunities.</p>
My Rank	Today _____ YR 1 GOAL _____	Today _____ YR 1 GOAL _____	Today _____ YR 1 GOAL _____