

“Our leaders now have the choice to let access to technology divide us further into ever more distant economic camps or to give the people who are being left behind by innovation the ability to help themselves join the new economy.”

Rey Ramsey
CEO
One Economy



Rural Broadband - will it every happen?

The answer is yes.....

But the solution is not just building **Access**, but also insuring

Affordability and Adoption



Rural Broadband Updates

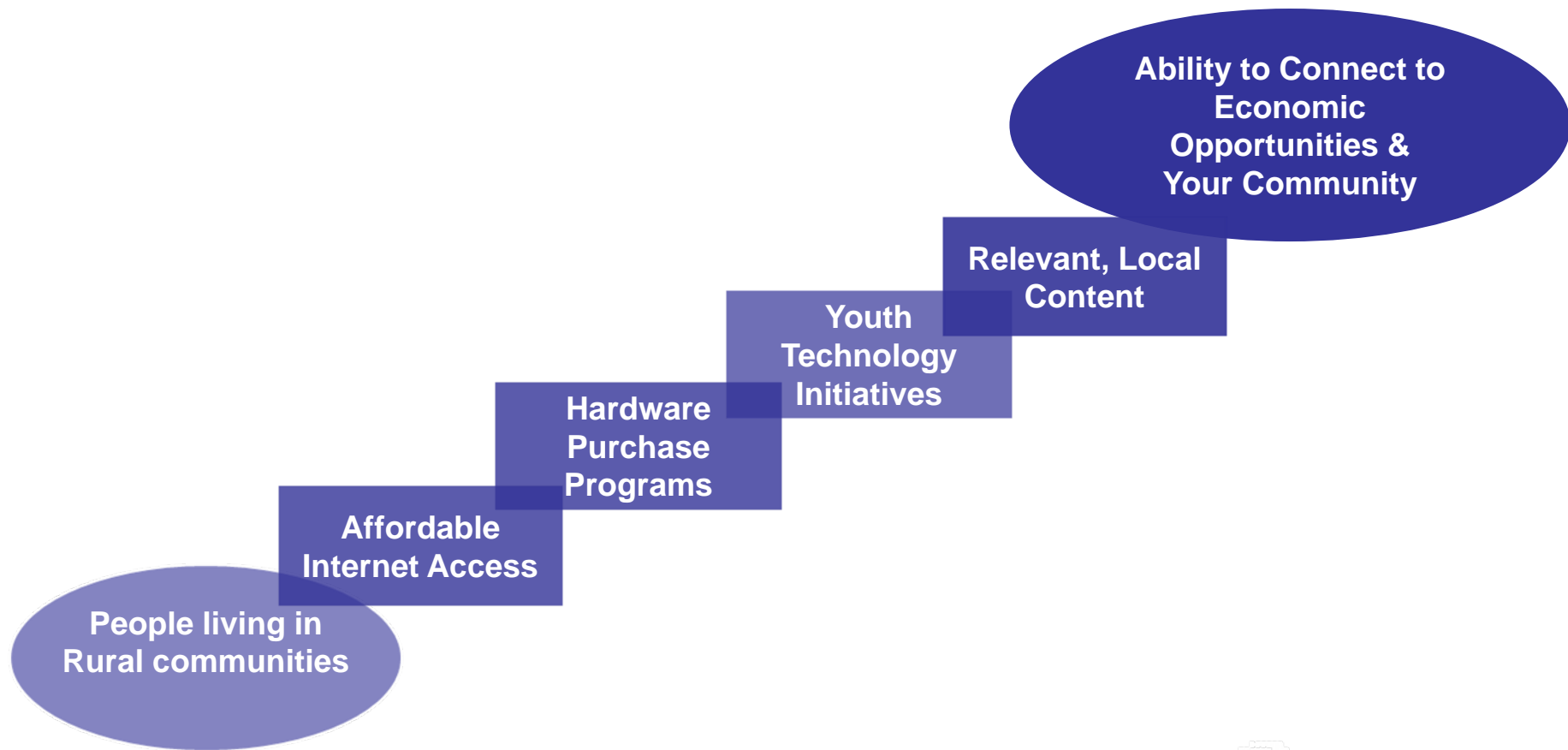
President Obama has made broadband deployment in rural areas a priority

However, 35% of dial-up users say that the average monthly subscription for broadband of \$34.50 is not affordable

Price won't improve without competition which means rural areas must create a demand so that there is competition



How do you create demand?



Affordable Access Options

Getting Started building affordable access solutions:

Seek partnerships to open up all broadband networks in your community

Libraries

Schools

Government buildings

Establish shared services where possible

affordable housing developments

neighborhoods

Consider Main Street Hot spots



Hardware Solution – tied to your early access plan

Rural communities will be waiting for a while for wired solutions

So match your hardware plan to your access solution – push laptops if your initial affordable access is not in the home



Getting ready for ISPs – Training your Community

Using technology is also a barrier to widespread broadband use

Solve this issue with creative computer and internet training – put the youth in your community to work.



Create Content that everyone wants

Access is the easiest part of the puzzle –

When you can create demand then you will have the key ingredient for a digital community

Demand comes when there is a reason you want to get online

Relevant content that interests and assists the internet user - using the internet is now important to their daily activities



Where does a community start?

Initially do a technology asset map

- Where is Broadband being used?
- Who has technology resources?
- Which stakeholders are interested?



What are the issues in our community?

- How could information and resources diminish them?

Rural Success Stories

- Bertie County, NC
 - Established community technology centers, opened up broadband access points
- Chillicothe, MO
 - A majority of affordable housing has shared data networks
- Lincoln, WV
 - Very rural community is now sharing a satellite broadband connection





Environment

Transitioning of Tobacco Farmers
50% high school drop out rate
Less than 25% entering college
Negative business growth

The beginnings

Digital Inclusion in Greene County began with a vision within the school system that technology could be used as an accelerator to learning and that all students needed access to a computer everyday, all day long.





Digital Inclusion in Greene County began with a vision

- Improving communications infrastructure
- Short and long-term economic development plan
- Encourage the growth of agricultural enterprises
- Technology is an accelerator for educational advancement





Hardware Solution

Apple iBooks for every 6 – 12 grade student, teacher and administrator – 2000 units in the community

Affordable Access Solution

A wireless company with a grant from the Dept of Commerce TOP program built a wireless internet network that covers the county making it possible for 90% of the residents to get affordable high speed access. The hardware is owned by the county.

Community Adoption

- One FT Program Director and PT Digital Connector and Training Coordinator
- Digital Connector program - at least 30 youth are employed each year, 120 have participated in the program
- Free technology training for residents using a 30 – unit mobile lab- more 600 trained
- A content rich Greene County Beehive



Local Content for Greene County

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[Jobs & Careers](#)

[Starting & Owning a Business](#)

[Family](#)

[Housing](#)

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Greene County
Health
Chat



Welcome to the Beehive : Greene County



Connect with Your Family

No matter where in the world your family is, there are ways to keep in touch. ▶



Beehive News Flash

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[Connect With Your Family](#)

About the Beehive:

Find the help you need to create a better life. The Beehive connects you to important information—plus the local help to make it happen. Life's about to get a lot sweeter.

Email Feedback: [Click Here](#)

Community
Announcements



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Queen Bees of the Month ▶

Thanks to the SEED School of Washington, DC, the Beehive team got two new members last month. [Read more.](#)

[Snow Hill, NC](#)

[Get the 10 day forecast](#)



89 °F

Partly Cloudy

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Enter city/zip



Greene County
Marketplace

Greene County
Ag Center

Pest Alert!



1 Economy
Corporation



Improved Broadband Availability

- **400 households are now connected to the Internet**, nearly a 200 households waiting for connection on the county's wireless.
- Embarq has increased its coverage area, providing more competition and choice for residents. 500 approx customers
- 89% of Greene County has access to broadband
- Nearly 25% of the households have purchased broadband for their home.
- More than two dozen church and community buildings have become **hot spots for free internet access**.
- Early beginnings of community wireless – residents share service with neighbors





Economic Impact

- **20 new businesses were attracted and opened** in Greene County since the project began, reversing several years of negative business growth.
- Before Beyond Tobacco less than 5 of the 200 small businesses has websites. In less than 2 years, **nearly 33% of the county's small businesses have websites** and all of most of these companies are reporting increase revenues due to their online presence.
- In less than a year on going online, **2 companies reported 50% growth** in sales due to online purchases and marketing.





Educational Impact

- High school **SAT composite scores increased 41 points** in 2 years from 930 to 971.
- **84% of the 2007 senior class applied to college** (80% of the 2006 senior class applied to college) compared to less than 26% the year prior to the iTech program's beginning in 2003.
- High school **proficiency scores increased** from 53% to 78.4 % in the first year and they have met adequate yearly progress each year.
- Decrease in student drop out rate
- Increase in Honors Courses taken due to classes being offered online with other educational partners
- Teenage pregnancy dropped from 2nd in the state to 18th (out of 100 counties)
- Higher parent / community confidence



Recommendations - Getting Started

Digital Inclusion Partnership

- Build a public, private & philanthropic partnership
- Ensure that access and equipment is affordable
- Provide training and connections that make technology accessible
- Create online community development applications that are useful
- Set goals that clearly articulate expected outcomes
- Measure results



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