

DEMOCRACY IN ACTION
A CASE STUDY OF INTERNETFOREVERYONE.ORG

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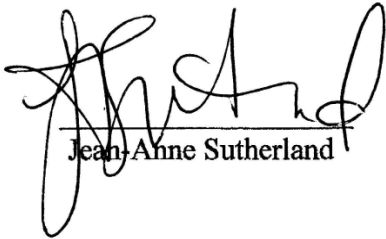
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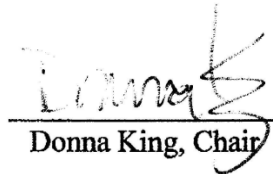
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TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT.....	iv
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	v
DEDICATION.....	vi
INTRODUCTION.....	3
MEDIA REFORM.....	3
FREE PRESS AND INTERNETFOREVERYONE.ORG.....	5
METHODS.....	10
RESEARCH QUESTION AND DESIGN FOR A CASE STUDY OF INTERNETFOREVERYONE.ORG	10
DATA COLLECTION.....	11
GRADUATE INTERNSHIP IN MEDIA POLICY AND RESEARCH.....	13
CASE STUDY FINDINGS.....	19
THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK.....	19
GOALS AND OBJECTIVES.....	21
Development of InternetforEveryone.org Goals.....	22
Internal and Public Faced Goals.....	23
STRATEGY.....	26
Inside Outside Strategy.....	26
Strategic Planning.....	28
<i>Positioning</i>	28
<i>Reaching Important Publics</i>	29
<i>How Important Publics Can Benefit InternetforEveryone.org</i>	32
TACTICS.....	35
Communication Tactics.....	36
<i>Internet</i>	38
<i>Video</i>	44
<i>Telephone</i>	49
<i>Print</i>	51
<i>In Person</i>	52
Event Tactics.....	53
<i>Historical Context</i>	53
<i>Town Hall Meeting</i>	54
<i>InternetforEveryone.org Coalition Member Meeting</i>	61
ALTERNATE POSITION: EFFECTS OF STIMULUS PLAN ON INITIATIVE.....	63
EVALUATION.....	67
DISCUSSION.....	69
APPLICATION OF RESOURCE MOBILIZATION THEORY.....	69
Mobilization of Resources.....	69
Linkage of InternetforEveryone.org to other Groups.....	71
Dependence of InternetforEveryone.org Upon External Support.....	72
Tactics Used by Authorities.....	73
DEMOCRATIC PRACTICES OF INTERNETFOREVERYONE.ORG.....	73
Goal of InternetforEveryone.org.....	74
Process of Public Engagement.....	74
Internal Operations of InternetforEveryone.org.....	75

ROLE AS A PUBLIC SOCIOLOGIST	76
RECOMMENDATIONS	78
LITERATURE CITED	81
APPENDIX A.....	85
APPENDIX B.....	87
APPENDIX C.....	89
APPENDIX D.....	95
APPENDIX E.....	96
APPENDIX F.....	97
APPENDIX G.....	98
APPENDIX H.....	99
APPENDIX I.....	103
APPENDIX J.....	104
APPENDIX K.....	118
APPENDIX L.....	134

ABSTRACT

In this research, I investigated the process by which a media reform organization involves the public in informing media policy. Through a case study I examined the InternetforEveryone.org initiative of the media reform organization Free Press, and the democratic development of media policy, specifically the framework for a national broadband plan. I performed my research within the larger framework of the United States democracy. For that reason, I investigate the democratic values and practices of the initiative. To inform my research, I engaged in multiple forms of ethnographic methods, including participant observations, open-ended in-depth interviews, and examination of internal and external documents. I analyzed my findings according to the initiative's goals, strategies, and tactics and framed them within resource mobilization theory (RMT). My findings reveal the initiative's operations support the basic tenets of RMT. I also found that the initiative was operating in a democratic manner on three levels. Their primary goal and the manner in which they engaged the public and their coalition members were all democratically significant. In addition, I call attention to the role of public sociology in civil society. As an intern at Free Press, I had the opportunity to engage in public sociology with policy implications. I reflect on this experience and the tension between being a public sociologist and working in the field. Lastly, I recommend further research into the successful adoption rates of policy recommendations developed through deliberative town hall models such as InternetforEveryone.org's. I also recommend further research into the effect the Internet in general, and the use of social networking sites specifically, is having on modern organizing.

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this graduate public sociology internship project to my Mom and Dad. Without their endless support, this project would never have come into fruition. Along all of the paths I have taken, they have always encouraged me to follow what is in my heart and do what I love. It is because of them I am on a course that fulfills me both academically and personally. Thank you, Mom and Dad, for always supporting my dreams.

INTRODUCTION

MEDIA REFORM

In a broad sense, media reform includes any attempt to change an aspect of the media (Media Development 2004:2 as cited in Carroll 2006). However, government and business entities are typically the ones altering our media system (Carroll 2006). In fact, communication information policy has been a main concern of Congressional activity, exceeding their focus on other social issues such as women's rights, civil rights, environmental and human rights (Mueller, Page, and Kuerbis 2004). Despite its proliferation in Congress, the public is rarely aware of media reforms. Through restricting substantive news coverage, corporate interests strive to keep their media reform operations in Washington, D.C. from entering public debate.

Corporate media lobbyists and the government have a mutually beneficial relationship. Government entities create media policies, regulations and subsidies while corporate media owners receive vast sums of money from political actors to run their campaign advertisements. As can be imagined, close friendships exist between those who run the media and those who run our country (Stotzky 2004; McChesney 1997). The relationship between private entities and the government has severely compromised our media's autonomy, limiting the scope, quantity and quality of information that reaches the public (Stotzky 2004). This has serious consequences for America's democratic process. When government and corporate interests restrict media reform issues from entering the public arena, they become the sole overseers of media policy reforms and in effect have the freedom and power to make public decisions based on private agendas (Alger 1998; McChesney and Nichols 2002).

Taking a historical look at the development of our media system, the disproportionate influence of corporate and government entities is apparent. In the early 1920s, radio emerged as

a popular medium. To operate a radio did not require extensive knowledge, and this allowed for a plethora of local stations to flourish with people operating out of spaces such as garages, attics and basements. In 1926, Congress created the Federal Radio Commission to impose a regulatory structure to govern the airwaves' use and reception. Unfortunately, powerful commercial interests such as broadcasters with their lobbyists, lawyers and special interest firms significantly influenced the development of such regulatory structures. By 1931, NBC and CBS accounted for nearly seventy percent of United States broadcasting (McChesney 2008). Only a few corporations had essentially come to control radio, a once democratic medium that was open and available for public operation.

Since the creation of the Federal Radio Commission, now known as the Federal Communications Commission or FCC, there has been a history of private control over public policy by a handful of powerful commercial interests. With the advent of television broadcasting, the same dynamic between Congress and commercial interests took place with the same results. Eventually, a few commercial interests came to control television to the extent that five conglomerates now own roughly 90 percent of the total television medium, creating profit driven barriers that make it nearly impossible for an independent channel to exist (McChesney 2004). Upon the arrival of cable, the same scenario occurred with similar results. With all of these media a policy structure came to exist that compromised the public interest by allowing a consolidated group of corporations to dominate the system.

Now, in the 21st century, we have a privately owned media system, controlled by a conglomerate of elites, politicians and advertisers such as Time Warner Cable, Viacom, Walt Disney, News Corp and General Electric (Ryan, Carragee, and Schwerner 1998; McChesney 1997; McChesney 2004). There is astonishing and disproportionate power in media

consolidation. Those who control our communication systems are able to determine our political and social discourse and control the primary means to political and economic power (McChesney 2004; Stotzky 2004). News coverage often goes to those with whom corporate entities have beneficial relationships, such as advertisers and politicians (McChesney 2004). As a result, social movements are routinely denied access to the media as a resource (Lee 2007).

In an effort to combat the undemocratic practices that control our media system, media reform activists seek to enhance democratic values and practices, such as public discourse and collective decision-making, through efforts to change media messages, practices, institutions and contexts (Hackett 2000 as cited in Carroll 2006). Media activism made a start in the United States during the 1970s and has seen a resurgence of citizen interest since the 1990s (Carroll 2006; Stein 1999). Ultimately, those involved in media activism do so because they believe that communication is an integral means of achieving peaceful and democratic social change (Stein 1999).

FREE PRESS AND INTERNETFOREVERYONE.ORG

Engaging in democratic means of media activism is Free Press, a national non-profit media reform organization. They engage in education, organizing and advocacy to promote diverse and independent media ownership, strong public media, and universal access to communications. At the time of this writing in 2009, Free Press is conducting several campaigns focused on multiple media issues, including media consolidation, public media, quality journalism, and the future of the Internet, the latest communications infrastructure.

InternetforEveryone.org is an initiative of Free Press's Open Internet campaign to protect the future of the Internet. The mandate of InternetforEveryone.org is to support open access and distribution of media content by ensuring that any website can function as a TV or radio

network. To do this is to circumvent the problem of monopolies controlling the cable and broadcasting space and remedy their limiting of choices and distribution methods for independent producers.

InternetforEveryone.org is a coalition of “public interest, civic and industry groups [working] to bring the benefits of a fast, affordable and open Internet connection to everyone in America” (<http://www.internetforeveryone.org/>). Those working at Free Press on Internet-related issues value the mounting significance that the Internet has in the world today. While the Internet is a revolutionary tool for many reasons beyond the scope of this research, InternetforEveryone.org recognizes that the Internet allows all forms of media to converge into one. With high-speed Internet connection, users are able to read the newspaper, listen to the radio, or even watch television and movies. Increasingly the Internet is becoming the major communication infrastructure, with people depending on it for information, news, education and communication. Yet, at the same time we are ever more growing dependent on the Internet, we as a nation do not have a proper plan to ensure this vital infrastructure’s open and democratic accessibility.

InternetforEveryone.org organizers and members believe an incredible challenge lies ahead not to repeat the same mistakes made over the past eighty years in media policy. An Internet regulatory policy structure has yet to develop, and as with all prior media, commercial interests are ready and waiting in the wings. Recognizing and identifying this threat to the public’s interest will influence InternetforEveryone.org’s ability to mobilize constituents to support their cause (Downing 2003; Garcelon 2006; Thomas 2006; Van Dyke 2003). The threatening history of communication policy, the political and economic power of oppositional commercial interests and the realization that collective action is the only way to safeguard the

Internet's future are all factors informing the need for coalition work (Van Dyke 2003). As we move further into the 21st century, it is within the context of public participation in media policy that InternetforEveryone.org approaches the development of a plan for the Internet, our latest democratic media.

Compounding our need for an Internet regulatory policy in the public interest is the fact that the United States has slipped globally in terms of broadband access, despite our reliance on its ever-increasing social, economic and political benefits. Since 2001, the United States has fallen from fourth in the world in broadband adoption to fifteenth. In addition, in 2007 there were twenty-one countries with less expensive monthly broadband rates and thirteen countries with faster speeds. We have a digital divide, the gap between those with effective access to digital information technologies and those with little to no access, that has three dimensions: economic; geographic; and racial/ethnic:

Economic: The transition from a competitive, inexpensive dial-up market to a much less competitive and more costly broadband market has only exacerbated the economic digital divide. Only 35 percent of households with annual incomes under \$50,000 (approximately half of the country) have broadband—while 76 percent of households with higher annual incomes are connected.

Geographic: Rural America is not sharing in the benefits of broadband. Only 39 percent of rural households subscribe to broadband, and nearly 10 million rural households are in areas not served by **any** broadband provider.

Racial/Ethnic: While 55 percent of non-Hispanic white households have broadband, only 40 percent of the rest of the country's homes subscribe. This disparity is essentially unchanged from the dial-up era. (http://www.freepress.net/files/IFE_Brochure.pdf).

Free Press along with elected officials such as FCC Commissioner Jonathan Adelstein, companies from the industry sector such as Google, academics from schools such as Columbia and Stanford Law, and grassroots organizations such as Common Cause have recognized it is imperative to create a national broadband plan. It is out of this understood need for a national broadband plan that InternetforEveryone.org formed a coalition with the backing of these and many other constituents. In addition to having the support of various political, industry-based

and grassroots organizations and academics, the United States now has an administration that encourages technological advancements and recognizes the public benefits of the Internet.

President Barack Obama demonstrated his support for increasing United States Internet adoption rates by allocating \$7.2 billion in The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, which passed in early 2009, for broadband deployment

(http://www.usda.gov/wps/portal/!ut/p/s.7_0_A/7_0_1OB?contentidonly=true&contentid=2009/03/0063.xml). Unlike the Bush administration, which did not support Internet policy or technological advancements, the Obama administration offers a political opportunity for InternetforEveryone.org to present Internet issues as a political imperative that deserves serious consideration in Washington, D.C.

An excerpt from the “About Us” section of the InternetforEveryone.org website, www.InternetforEveryone.org (see appendix A to view website), describes the initiative as

[t]o make sure everyone can benefit from the new economy and guarantee that all citizens play an active role in our democracy, our nation must embark on a national campaign to connect every person to a fast, affordable and open Internet. The InternetforEveryone.org initiative calls on Congress and the president to act in the public interest by enacting a plan for the wired and wireless Internet built upon the following principles: Access, Every home, business and civic institution in America must have access to a high-speed, world-class communications infrastructure; Choice, Every Internet user must enjoy real choice in online content as well as among high-speed Internet providers to achieve lower prices and faster speeds; Openness, Every Internet user should have the right to freedom of speech and commerce online in an open market without gatekeepers or discrimination; and Innovation, The Internet should continue to create good jobs, foster entrepreneurship, spread new ideas and serve as a leading engine of economic growth. (<http://www.internetforeveryone.org/principles>, Retrieved February 10, 2009)

Based around the four principles of access, choice, openness and innovation are the coalition and all its deliberations. Ultimately, they foresee a national broadband plan as being drafted around these four principles, which act as containers for all discussions and ideas. When InternetforEveryone.org members sign up to join the coalition, they are agreeing that these four principles are necessary to the development of a national broadband plan. Coalition

organizational members include national organizations, state and local organizations and small businesses (See Appendix B for full list of members). Individuals can also join the coalition. InternetforEveryone.org embraces national town hall meetings and open-ended interviews as their main sources of public engagement and ascertainment. To reach and engage an even wider audience, they also maintain a “Digital Town Hall”. The “Digital Town Hall” allows users to join the discussion and voice their opinions regarding the Internet’s future (See Tactics section for further discussion of the town hall meetings, citizen interviews and Digital Town Hall).

A well functioning democracy requires a knowledgeable, objective, informative and independent media, open debates that contribute to the political decision-making processes, and the right for organizations to promote political and social involvement (Stotzky 2004). In essence, InternetforEveryone.org is exercising their right to promote political and social involvement to ensure that our only standing democratic communications infrastructure, the Internet, remains capable of providing the knowledgeable, objective, informative and independent media that our democracy so desperately needs. In the words of Free Press’s policy director, Ben Scott the Internet is “the greatest engine of free speech and commerce since the printing press” (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h9lJQMHaQk>).

METHODS

RESEARCH QUESTION AND DESIGN FOR A CASE STUDY OF INTERNETFOREVERYONE.ORG

In this study, I investigate the process by which a media reform organization involves the public in informing framework for media policy. Through case study I examine the InternetforEveryone.org initiative of the media reform organization Free Press, and the democratic development of media policy, specifically the framework for a national broadband plan. Free Press is seeking to construct a broadband plan within the larger context of American democracy. By involving the public and encouraging them to express their ideas, thoughts and concerns regarding the future of the Internet, Free Press wants to inform, and potentially draft, media policy that truly represents public interest. To inform my research, I engaged in multiple forms of ethnographic methods within my case study, including participant observations, open-ended in-depth interviews, and examination of internal and external documents.

It is important to examine the socio-historic context in which Free Press is working to involve the public in the creation of a national broadband plan. Given America's current state of economic recession in 2009, recently elected President Barack Obama has invested over 200 billion dollars into The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act with the hope of boosting the economy out of recession. As part of the package, President Obama invested 7.2 billion dollars into broadband development. This massive and rapid investment in broadband is an unprecedented enterprise. Free Press's efforts to engage the public in media policy development are also unlike any previous efforts. For these reasons, a careful examination of Free Press and the manner in which they seek to achieve their goals is the best way to study the phenomenon of public engagement in media policy development.

DATA COLLECTION

Participant observations were particularly helpful in informing my research because they allowed me to become quickly familiar with the InternetforEveryone.org initiative and the many elements that contribute to the initiative's work. It also afforded me a historical record that allowed me a greater understanding of the time constraints in which the initiative operated. In-depth interviews allowed me to inquire further into the themes I saw emerging in my field notes. In addition, through conducting interviews with three key staff members I gained multiple and sometimes diverse perspectives of the initiative's operations as well as the benefit of learning from their various areas of expertise.

I took on the overt role of participant as observer in order to enhance the understanding of my observations (Seale 2006). This method of gathering evidence provided me the vantage point of being able to understand the reality of operating in a media reform organization. This allowed me to observe the obstacles that such an organization must overcome in their everyday operations, obstacles potentially not identified in documents. In addition, this provided me further insights regarding the effectiveness of the decisions they made in an effort to achieve their goals. Throughout my observations, I took daily field notes concerning decisions and events while they were still fresh in my mind.

I supplemented my observations with qualitative, face-to-face and telephone interviews that I carried out with the use of an interview guide. For two of my three interviews, I used similar interview guides. For my third interview, I constructed a guide unique from the first two. (Attached in Appendix C are my three interview guides, in the order I used them). The interviews were non-standardized, which meant I had a set of topics that I wanted to cover, but the exact order in which I asked the questions and the wording of questions varied (Seale 2006).

This enabled me to guide the interview to allow the interviewee to speak at length about distinct goals and practices of the organization and any obstacles they may have faced.

During my case study, the following two facts may have worked to my advantage. First, I was an intern and a media activist like those involved in my participant observations. Staff likely viewed me as another member of the team and a media reformer, thus an additional resource for the organization and the movement. Second, the group also may have seen me as a source of promotion for their organization and for their efforts to engage the public in democratic media reform (Seale 2006). Thus, they may have perceived me as supporting their efforts through my research and ability to speak articulately about the benefits of involving the public in a democratic process of media reform.

My sources of evidence do present some reliability issues, as do any sources of evidence. Concerning my participant observations, I was cognizant of reflexivity, the fact that those within the organization may have been aware that I was observing them and thus proceeded differently. Additionally, I was aware of my own bias in the situation and potential to manipulate events. However, Stanley and Wise (1993) argue, “we should not try to remove the researcher’s values. Instead, we need to understand the political implications of our location as researchers” (Seale 2006:25). Following this logic, I do not think that it was possible for me to eliminate my biased values, nor do I think that it would have been beneficial to my research. Instead, I am aware that my research has policy implications and that I play a crucial role in generating knowledge with the potential to benefit proponents and activists for a democratic media movement. To ensure that my research is trustworthy, I left a documentation trail consisting of my data, methods and decisions made during my investigations and asked my direct supervisor, the coordinator of InternetforEveryone.org, to review my findings for accuracy (Seale 2006). Before I describe

findings from my case study of InternetforEveryone.org, I will first describe my duties and research activities as graduate intern for the organization.

GRADUATE INTERNSHIP IN MEDIA POLICY AND RESEARCH

In the summer of 2008, Free Press offered and I accepted their graduate internship position for twenty-five hours per week, from early January to the end of April. In November 2008, shortly before the start of my internship, the Program Manager e-mailed me a description of the project I was to work on at Free Press. (See Appendix D for full description). The focus of the project was the “Digital Town Hall”, the online forum that complements the InternetforEveryone.org face-to-face town hall meetings, which I discuss further in the “communication tactics” section of my paper. I was to be responsible for promoting the “Digital Town Hall”, moderating and contributing to the discussions, helping to spark conversation and dialogue, and analyzing and thematically coding the content. My data analysis would then contribute to the town hall data, with the intent of presenting the compiled information to the organizational members. As I outline in the “events tactics” section of my paper, the organizational members were then to use the information derived from this analysis to inform a national broadband plan framework and possibly make policy recommendations. As I discuss during my description of the “Digital Town Hall”, however, the forum was not producing the anticipated results and consequently there was not enough data to analyze. In light of the lack of public participation with the “Digital Town Hall”, I undertook alternative projects regarding outreach and data management.

During my internship at Free Press, I almost exclusively worked with the InternetforEveryone.org initiative, primarily under the supervision of Campaign Coordinator. When I joined the campaign in January 2009, InternetforEveryone.org was preparing for their

second town hall meeting, which was taking place in Durham, North Carolina. The decision to hold the town hall meeting in North Carolina was made in January, and thus they were still in the early stages of local outreach to establish potential organizational allies and town hall meeting participants. In addition to helping them build an initial list of potential ally organizations in the area, I took on the responsibility of conducting outreach to potential academic constituents, inviting them to join InternetforEveryone.org and participate at the town hall meeting. To do this I utilized my network of academic associates in North Carolina, asking them to introduce me to their networks, or forward relevant e-mails explaining InternetforEveryone.org and the upcoming town hall meeting in North Carolina.

In addition to utilizing my networks, I contacted many potential allies with whom I had no prior connection. In doing this, I researched the universities neighboring Durham, North Carolina, and their relevant courses. Schools I contacted included University of North Carolina Chapel Hill, North Carolina Central University, Duke University, North Carolina State University, University of North Carolina Wilmington, and North Carolina School of Science and Mathematics. The relevant courses I identified included: communications studies; computer science; criminology; sociology; education; film studies; liberal studies; management; entrepreneurship and business development; environmental studies; instructional technologies; political science; marketing; music; public policy; mass communication; public administration; applied science program; computer information science; computer information systems; graphic communication; humanities and social sciences; and, science technology and society. I proceeded to contact via e-mail all professors who were teaching the relevant courses. In addition, I contacted relevant student organizations from the aforementioned schools. Student organizations tended to fall in the categories of activist, arts, cultural, international, media

publications, political science, and special interest. In total, I contacted over one hundred and fifty potential academic constituents.

In making my initial contact, it was important that I personalized the e-mail. Personalizing the e-mail involved addressing the recipient by their name and not sending a mass e-mail. It also required that if I had any connection to the recipient, that I identified that connection in the opening of the e-mail. In addition, during my academic outreach I referenced my position as a graduate student at the University of North Carolina Wilmington. I did this to identify our shared network, the University of North Carolina school system, in an effort to create a greater sense of connection and potential accountability on their part.

In addition to conducting outreach, I assisted in other preparations for the town hall meeting. I was largely responsible for cleaning up the presentation of the PowerPoint, facilitator guide, discussion guide and agenda, as well as ensuring that all said documents were representing identical information. The Campaign Coordinator entrusted me to use my discretion and alter the PowerPoint questions to facilitate a more logical order. During the Los Angeles, California town hall meeting, the first town hall meeting InternetforEveryone.org held, they were not able to complete all of their polling questions. Unfortunately, the organizers had to skip over five polling questions due to time restraints. It was my responsibility to rearrange the questions and combine them where possible to ensure that future participants could answer all questions. In doing this, I kept in mind that the importance of maintaining the original questions as best as possible to collect data comparable to that of the Los Angeles, California town hall meeting.

My largest responsibility while interning at Free Press was entering, coding and analyzing the data collected from the InternetforEveryone.org Los Angeles, California and Durham, North Carolina town hall meetings. I first focused on the Los Angeles town hall data. I

entered over two hundred records. Data comprised of participants' answers to four discussion questions: 1) How has the Internet improved your life? If you do not have Internet access, how do you think it could improve your life?; 2) What could be done to increase Internet access and create more choices for communities nationwide?; 3) What actions need to be taken to keep the Internet open for users and innovators?; and, 4) What steps can InternetforEveryone.org take to advance these goals? At the town hall meetings, the data derived from these questions was themed on site by a feedback team. However, because the feedback team only had roughly thirty minutes to theme the answers to each question, the themes were not exhaustive and systemically coded. When the feedback team themed the recommendations, there were nineteen themes for two hundred and four records, some of which only contained one record. It was my responsibility to re-theme them in a more systematic manner.

After I entered the Los Angeles data, I developed a coding scheme. I coded each record according to the action proposed and the purpose of the action. I used red font to code the action, or verbs, of the statement, and blue font to code the purpose of the action, or the noun. Here is an example: **opening** up more **public airwaves**. This streamlined my theming processes because it allowed me to focus on the main points of the recommendations in an effort to develop and operationalize themes based that information. In addition, the coding scheme provides easily recognizable evidence for anyone who wants to revisit the data and examine the rationale for the themes. I developed ten themes: government intervention; grassroots efforts; infrastructure development; legislation; local access; network neutrality; political activism; public education; public utility; and, technological innovation.

The themes I created were broad and acted as an umbrella under which multiple recommendations could fit. From there, I created thirty-five sub-themes, to further analyze the

information. I did all of this without the use of analyzing software. I then created an outline of the themes and sub-themes to show to the coalition members at the InternetforEveryone.org Coalition Member Meeting. From this outline, I designed a closed, qualitative survey instrument. I used the demographic questions as well as questions two, three and four from the town hall meetings and operationalized the themes as answer choices. The purpose of the survey was to collect additional data from a wider public and potentially jump-start the activity on the “Digital Town Hall” by providing users with material to which they could respond.

After InternetforEveryone.org staff returned from the town hall meeting in Durham, North Carolina, they brought with them the data they collected from the meeting. My job was to synthesize the newly collected data with the Los Angeles dataset. To do this, I entered the data into the same Microsoft Excel document and used the same coding scheme, themes and sub-themes. After sorting and analyzing the data in this manner, I realized that the themes were still too broad to refine into concrete recommendations to present to the coalition members or operationalize for the survey. For this reason, I then created a new theming category called strategy. I reexamined the data, and sorted it accordingly. I made some minor changes to the themes, and employed the sub-theme category for identifying the aim of the recommendation, or the blue element of the code, and the strategy for identifying the action of the recommendation, or the red element of the code. While this was a lengthy procedure, it immensely aided my process of operationalizing the data for use in the survey.

Once I properly coded and analyzed the data, I revised the survey to incorporate the Durham, North Carolina data. At this stage of the survey development, I met with my supervisor and we analyzed the content together. My intentions were to assure that InternetforEveryone.org organizers were satisfied with the content of the survey before moving to rework wording of

answer categories. Upon eliminating and further rewording some answer choices, it was time to involve Campaign Director to make some executive decisions regarding the content of the survey. At the town hall meetings, participants did not always answer the polling questions thoroughly. Despite the fact that I provided instructions for table facilitators to explain the importance of identifying who, what, where, when, why and how when developing their recommendations, those details were often not included. Thus, it was up to InternetforEveryone.org organizers to make inferences regarding recommendation specifics. The Campaign Director used his experience and expertise with Internet related issues and policy to adjust the survey answer choices in a way that would provide respondents with concrete choices, while still maintaining the integrity of the public's recommendations.

Upon the finalization of the survey, I was responsible for uploading it into the survey developer, SurveyMonkey. In uploading the survey, I deferred to researched recommendations regarding web-based surveys (Dillman 2007). Such recommendations influenced my decisions regarding the use of a bar indicating the percentage complete of the survey, how many questions to ask, what to put on the introduction page and how to instruct the participants to answer the questions. I also aided in the dissemination plans for the survey. InternetforEveryone.org organizers are going to disseminate the survey to all organizational members, and in some cases, the organizers will ask the members to forward it on to their members. In addition, I compiled the demographics from town hall participants, compared them against the demographics of the larger United States population, and identified underrepresented populations at the town hall meetings. I then used that information to create targeted e-mail outreaches, explaining InternetforEveryone.org's goal of developing a national broadband framework informed by all members of society and urging them to take part in the survey.

CASE STUDY FINDINGS

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

As a sociologist, I engage in the scientific study of the social world, and in this case, the world of media reform. As a *public* sociologist, I am responsible to share that knowledge with those I have studied and the public at large (Burawoy 2005). My research goal is to encourage a civic dialogue intended to advance our collective understandings of how to effectively engage the public in media reform policy and hence advance the media reform movement itself. As part of my engagement as a public sociologist, I will be disseminating my project to InternetforEveryone.org staff so that my research may be delivered back to the public I have studied.

Applying my public sociology skills in a real life setting has given me firsthand experience and an understanding of public sociology's potential contribution to civil society. To highlight this, I have chosen to weave past research into my findings. This is different from typical thesis papers, which normally present a review of the literature as a separate section delegated to the beginning of the paper. I feel my style will enhance the reader's understanding of the context in which my findings exist. It is also my hope that as a result of integrating past research with my findings, I will bring past research to life and exemplify its practical applications while creating a document that interests and serves both academics and the public.

I examine my findings within the framework of resource mobilization theory (RMT). RMT "examines the variety of resources that must be mobilized, the linkages of social movements to other groups, the dependence of movements upon external support for success, and the tactics used by authorities to control or incorporate movements" (McCarthy and Zald 1977:1213). For the purpose of this research, I draw from McCarthy and Zald's (1977) definition

of a social movement as “a set of opinions and beliefs in a population which represents preferences for changing some elements of the social structure and/or reward distribution of a society” (1218). In the case of InternetforEveryone.org, the social structure they are seeking to alter is twofold. First, through altering the policy structure of the Internet to represent public interest and incorporate the four principles of access, choice, openness and innovation, InternetforEveryone.org is seeking to decrease the digital divide, the gap between haves and the have nots of online access, and its accompanying benefits. Second, as a result of their effort to bring together public and private sector groups in an unprecedented initiative to inform broadband policy, they are in effect altering the policy making process. InternetforEveryone.org is providing a new model for a more democratic means of informing and constructing media policy.

In applying RMT to the process by which the InternetforEveryone.org initiative is engaging the public to inform media policy, it is important to recognize that researchers have historically applied RMT to more traditional forms of media. Access to and support from the media is an important element to a social movement’s success (Ryan et al. 1998; Gamson and Wolfsfeld 1993 as cited in Thomas 2006). Having access to the media affects a social movement’s ability to influence public policy, the popular understanding of political issues, and the reward distribution of resources to marginalized communities (Ryan et al. 1998). Langman (2005) has called into question the applicability of RMT to contemporary social movements due to our current technologies of communication, specifically the Internet. The Internet “...has enabled new means of transmitting information and communication that has in turn enabled new kinds of communities and identities to develop. These new kinds of Internet-based social

movements, cyberactivism, are fundamentally new and require new kinds of theorization” (Langman 2005:44).

Contemporary applications of RMT attempt to gain a new understanding of social movements within our media-saturated environment. The nature of the media used by a social movement produces its own unique consequences. The Internet has allowed social movements to break from their total dependence on broadcast media as their main communicative resource (Garcelon 2006). The Internet’s decentralized communication networks allow social movement participants to take advantage of its capability to deliver information across any geographical distances (Garcelon 2006:57). The Internet allows for a peer-to-peer (p2p) exchange of information, information expressed from the many to the many, through the uploading of articles and comments to Internet servers (Garcelon 2006). Consequences of the Internet are that democratic interaction is encouraged due to the free flow of information (Reinhold 2002, as cited in Langman). While the Internet has transformed the way movements organize, allowing now for online organizing efforts to take place, through my examination of InternetforEveryone.org, I have found it is possible to apply the basic tenants of RMT. Through my findings, I have discovered that InternetforEveryone.org utilized a variety of resources, linked their efforts to other groups, relied on external entities for support and involved elected officials in their efforts.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

One of the most powerful capabilities in a democratic society is to mobilize a previously un-mobilized constituency to affect change (Cornelius 1998; Van Dyke 2003). The Internet community represented an un-mobilized constituency. They were not in an organized position from which they could guide the policy debates that would shape the Internet’s future. For this

reason, Free Press saw the need to organize the Internet community and guide them through the process of informing a national broadband plan that may become the foundation for policy.

Development of InternetforEveryone.org Goals

When Free Press staff first conceived the idea to form the InternetforEveryone.org coalition in the spring of 2008, they quickly asked themselves what results they were seeking. Primarily, they knew that a main goal of the coalition would be informing a national broadband plan to lead to national broadband legislation. In May of 2008, Free Press hired Internet Campaign Coordinator. Since her hire, the Campaign Coordinator has played an important role in helping to develop and refine the InternetforEveryone.org goals. Through her past organizing experiences, the Campaign Coordinator has come to believe strongly that organizing efforts are fruitless without clear goals. It was very important to figure out initially what the goals were to facilitate the organizers' understanding of how to structure the coalition in order to achieve those goals. Additionally, when setting goals it is very important to ensure a clear understanding of the goals to all members, as well as to the organizers. Having a clear understanding of the goals helps people understand the rationale behind the group's strategies and tactics. When people have questions, it is then easier to answer them within the context of their goals.

Coalition members also played a role in the development of the InternetforEveryone.org goals. Once InternetforEveryone.org had approximately fifty organizational members, they held their first organizational call. InternetforEveryone.org valued the need for a participatory process to the extent that they even incorporated it into the coalition's internal operations. The initiative organizers presented members with a document that outlined their goals, objectives and vision for InternetforEveryone.org proceedings. On the call, they asked members for their input regarding the goals, objectives and town hall structure. InternetforEveryone.org organizers

informed the coalition members that although they would produce the initial suggestions for the public ascertainment process, including the town hall meeting structure, they sincerely wanted the coalition members to be responsible for informing, dismantling and reassembling that structure so that it represented the coalition's group conscience. They ideally were seeking to create a back and forth process so that all the coalition members were actively informing the town hall meetings.

Out of InternetforEveryone.org's first organizational call came an explanation document that InternetforEveryone.org subsequently forwarded to current and potential members. The document worked as a pitch document, which took about a month to develop. This pitch document essentially contained the information they planned to present to potential allies during the buy-in process. The goals have since developed to meet the evolving group conscience of the coalition.

Internal and Public Faced Goals

While the primary goal of InternetforEveryone.org is to bring fast, affordable and open Internet access to everyone in America, the organizers may present to their various constituencies sub-goals aimed at advancing their progress toward the primary goal. To their coalition members, InternetforEveryone.org presents three sub-goals. At their town hall meetings, they have one sub-goal and three objectives, and on their website, they reference only the primary goal. The three sub-goals InternetforEveryone.org communicates to their coalition members are to inform a national broadband plan, build new relationships and strengthen existing ties while allowing their allies the same opportunity, and to use the initiative as an opportunity to educate the public. At the town hall meetings however, the sub-goal is to "[b]uild a public mandate for better Internet in America and forge new alliances that will form a strong

constituency in [location of town hall meeting] to support InternetforEveryone.org's efforts by engaging a large and demographically diverse group of citizens in a town meeting about the benefits of universal and open Internet access" (InternetforEveryone.org Table Facilitator Guide 2009). Accompanying the town hall meeting sub-goal are three objectives. Objectives of the town hall meeting include: 1) "Identify public priorities for a policy framework to be developed by InternetforEveryone.org members and delivered to Washington", 2) "Support participants to commit to actions that will advance the goals of InternetforEveryone.org and connect them to an infrastructure that supports that action", and 3) "Expand InternetforEveryone.org's network of local and national endorsers". Lastly, on their website, InternetforEveryone.org identifies the primary goal as "working to bring the benefits of a fast, affordable and open Internet connection to everyone in America" (InternetforEveyone.org).

Working in the field of media reform organizing is not as scientific a process as it may be in the organizing literature. The Campaign Coordinator made this point to me when I asked her to speak to the specific wording and presentation of their goals. InternetforEveryone.org words and presents their sub-goals differently depending on the constituency they are communicating with and the role that constituency is going to play in the initiative. Because of this, the wording and presentation are adapted to fit the relevant needs of the situation while always striving toward the ultimate goal, to inform a national broadband plan based on the four principles of access, choice, openness and innovation. In particular, the sub-goals of building and strengthening relationships with allies and educating the public are most relevant to the InternetforEveryone.org members, who work intimately with the coalition from an internal position. Strengthening existing ties and creating new constituents enhances public support for a movement (Mauss 1975 as cited in Howley 2004). By establishing these as two of the three sub-

goals before the coalition, they are recognizing the importance of garnering public support for their efforts and building the coalition through the creation of new allies.

In strengthening their relationships with existing allies, InternetforEveryone.org has taken advantage of their networks developed through Free Press campaigns, such as SavetheInternet.com. Networks such as this can influence a potential participant's decision to join a movement by structurally connecting them to participation opportunities, socializing them to protest issues and shaping their decision to become involved (Passy and Giugni 2001). Free Press structurally connects SavetheInternet.com members to InternetforEveryone.org. In addition, participating in SavetheInternet.com socialized members to Internet related issues and the principle of openness that is central to both campaigns. Twenty-nine of the 160 InternetforEveryone.org members are also members of SavetheInternet.com, exemplifying the influential role that networks have in a participant's decision to join a movement. It was important to InternetforEveryone.org organizers, however, that they were not simply rallying the "usual suspects," hence their goal of building relationships with new constituencies.

Given InternetforEveryone.org members' role in advancing the cause, the sub-goals of strengthening ties, building relationships with new constituencies and educating the public are very relevant. However, these same sub-goals are not necessarily relevant to the everyday citizen who may be interested in informing the national broadband framework but not necessarily helping to shape the coalition and its maneuvers. Thus, those sub-goals are the organizational members' purpose for working with the coalition, while the overarching intent to ensure broadband to everyone in America is the only goal mentioned to the public via the website (see appendix A). In addition, at the town hall meetings it is very relevant to inform participants that the sub-goal of the event is to garner their community's support and input while facilitating them

through the process of informing a national broadband plan and expanding their own network of endorsers. These sub-goals are town hall meeting specific and would not be relevant to the organizational members or public. For these reasons, InternetforEveryone.org organizers see their sub-goals as having two faces, an internal face, presented to members and to town hall participants, and a public face, presented to the public or any individuals that may join the coalition. While InternetforEveryone.org presents the two faces of their sub-goals slightly differently to the public than to their members or town hall participants, the overarching goal is the same, to ensure that every home and business in America has access to a fast, affordable and open Internet connection.

STRATEGY

Inside Outside Strategy

An initiative strategy is a big picture or overall plan outlining how the initiative intends to achieve its goals and objectives. This includes provisions for who will be involved in the campaign and to which important publics they will direct their message. InternetforEveryone.org follows an “inside outside” strategy. This strategy outlines the importance of cultivating relationships among insiders and powerful constituents in Washington, D.C. while engaging in complementary grassroots organizing outside the beltway. It is essential to achieve a balance between the credibility of the policy experts and creativity of the field (Karr and Aaron n.d.). In addition, identifying a means of access to the political system and allies within can influence the mobilization of constituents (Van Dyke, Dixon, and Carlon 2007).

The “inside” part of the strategy recognizes that in order to mobilize the grassroots support, it is often helpful to know what is happening in Washington, D.C. to anticipate their activities and mobilize accordingly. InternetforEveryone.org has the advantage of being an

initiative of Free Press, which has an office in D.C. and thus has “inside” experts, researchers and lobbyists. This inside knowledge helps them know the right decision makers to target and the right times to do so. In addition, the office of Senior Program Director Craig Aaron is located in Washington, D.C. This further assists the program team in Massachusetts to stay in touch with the activities in Washington, D.C.

The “outside” part of this strategy proposes that if you want Washington, D.C. insiders to recognize and attend to an issue, you need to demonstrate that there is grassroots support for the issue. Organizations can exemplify the power of a movement through their ability to gain public support and transform potential constituencies into large numbers of mobilized participants (Dixon, Roscigno, and Hodson 2004; Jenkins 1983; McAdam 1982, 1988; McCammon 2001; McCarthy and Zald 1977; Morris 1981; Taylor 1989 as cited in Van Dyke et al. 2007; Van Dyke 2003). InternetforEveryone.org understood that if they were to have their desired effect in Washington, D.C. they needed to garner public support and form a coalition that equally represented civic and industry organizations, and community leaders and academics, thus making it obvious that this issue cuts across all sectors of society. This reflects the notion that a social problem is not inherently a problem until “it is made a problem by the entrepreneurship of various interest groups, which succeed in winning over important segments of public opinion to the support of a social movement aimed at changing that condition” (Mauss 1975:16 as cited in Howley 2004:237). Having a diverse group of constituents participate in the coalition will allow InternetforEveryone.org to take all the data amassed from their public engagement and use it to show that almost every constituency whether it be by age, race, economic status, etc., is represented in this conversation. It allows them to sustain the public’s viewpoint in Washington,

D.C. because it is strategically much harder for antagonists to criticize a position when it has the support of a broad and diverse constituency.

InternetforEveryone.org's use of an "inside outside" strategy exemplifies research findings that social movements essentially function to communicate their message to two distinct targets, power holders and the public. Social movements address political authorities with the intent of gaining recognition and enhancing their demands. They address the public in an attempt to gain support, which is very important to any social movement (Passy and Giugni 2001). It also exemplifies research findings that a social movements' identity, how they frame social issues and their actions, are influenced by the interactions of government officials, corporations and those considered allies and enemies (Van Dyke 2003). These findings relate to the InternetforEveryone.org initiative because it represents a leading coalition within the larger context of the media reform movement.

Strategic Planning

When thinking about the big picture of the InternetforEveryone.org strategy, it is helpful break it down in terms of their strategic planning. A strategic plan includes how to:

- position the campaign
- reach out to important publics
- how important publics can benefit the campaign

Positioning

Free Press has been working on Internet issues since 2005 and has an Open Internet campaign that incorporates the InternetforEveryone.org initiative and their SavetheInternet.com campaign. While SavetheInternet.com is not the focus of this research, it is worth mentioning the

difference between the SavetheInternet.com campaign and the InternetforEveryone.org initiative. The purpose of SavetheInternet.com is to lobby elected officials to enact a policy that ensures Network Neutrality. Network Neutrality prevents Internet providers from blocking, speeding up or slowing down Web content based on its source, ownership or destination (<http://www.savetheinternet.com/=faq>). InternetforEveryone.org, however, specifically decided to position their campaign as one that is not pushing policy and thus did not form with the intent of lobbying to enact a particular policy.

Instead of pushing policy, organizers positioned the coalition as one that sought to inform policy through developing a national broadband framework based on the four principles of access, choice, openness and innovation. Members joined the coalition because they wanted to ensure that no matter what specific broadband policy the federal government enacted, it would at least include the InternetforEveryone.org four principles. Positioning the campaign as one that was not pushing policy allowed InternetforEveryone.org to the garner the support of organizations from a wide spectrum of sectors. Several different staff members reiterated the distinction between pushing and informing policy, indicating to me that the positioning of this campaign as opposed their SavetheInternet.com campaign was one of significance.

Reaching Important Publics

Specifically developing the four principles to be very general, or ideologically broad, aided InternetforEveryone.org in communicating a message that was far-reaching and could garner the support of a large and diverse group of constituents. The development of these four principles of access, choice, openness and innovation was a deliberative process of engagement and participation with organizations outside of InternetforEveryone.org. Early in the formation of the coalition, InternetforEveryone.org held meetings with some of the organizations that Free

Press had previously worked with on Internet policy issues. Through their engagement with such organizations, it became apparent to them that there existed a common and universally agreed upon set of Internet-related principles. Out of this process of engagement, InternetforEveryone.org was able to compose a list of these more commonly agreed upon principles. The organizers then presented the list of principles to their initial members and through further collaborating, they refined the list to include the four principles of access, choice, openness and innovation. They continued to gather feedback on the four principles by holding small meetings with groups from both the public and private sectors.

Once InternetforEveryone.org reached a critical mass in consensus among their already existing members regarding the four principles, they began a more widespread recruitment process. At this point, they asked themselves some questions regarding what they wanted the coalition to look like. Such questions included: What were the different sectors they wanted represented in the coalition? With whom have they already worked? With whom have they yet to work? Whom were they missing? Throughout all the coalition work, InternetforEveryone.org continues to think about whom they might be missing and makes efforts to include those who may be un- or under represented.

In order to engage a broad and diverse group of coalition members, InternetforEveryone.org promoted as a selling point the fact that they were not pushing any specific policy, but instead were rallying around four very broad principles of access, choice, openness and innovation. InternetforEveryone.org informed the potential members that the coalition is seeking to engage the public and discover sentiment regarding how to provide everyone in the United States with fast, affordable and open Internet service. The understanding was given that their engagement would eventually inform a national broadband framework. The

coordinators understood that it is easier to rally a broad and diverse group of people around four equally broad principles, but it is much harder to rally that same group around a specific policy or policy recommendations. The hope was that the four very broad principles would help the coalition members to find a common ground upon which they could all agree, creating a broad consensus which would then make the process of openly passing polices and legislation that much easier.

Part of strategic planning is thinking about not only how to position the initiative and who the important publics are, but also how those publics were going to be reached in a way that facilitated their awareness and education of the initiative and its issues. How a potential constituent perceives a social movement organization's efficacy is influential in their decision to take part in the movement (Passy and Giugni 2001). For this reason, it makes sense that InternetforEveryone.org includes educating the public on their issues as one of their organizational member goals. Educating potential constituents that a social justice problem exists will influence their decision to take part in the movement (Wiggins, Wiggins, and Zanden 1994 as cited in Johnson 2005). One of the most important tools used to inform the public and promote the initiative in the beginning was the beta form of the website, which has gone through a major transformation since. Early on, the beta version was InternetforEveryone.org's primary means of providing information to the public about what InternetforEveryone.org was and what it stood for. InternetforEveryone.org staff also used a series of e-mail pitches followed by phone calls to promote the initiative and spread the word.

InternetforEveryone.org worked diligently from June to December of 2008, both internally and externally, to build membership buy-in, and continued to engage in ongoing recruitment efforts through the life of the initiative. The initial recruitment process involved

engaging more groups across the United States and asking them to join the InternetforEveryone.org coalition. The only criterion for joining the coalition was to agree that the four principles of access, choice, openness and innovation are the core issues of importance regarding the future of the Internet. InternetforEveryone.org was self reportedly very successful at getting many diverse political, business and social groups to sign on to these four principles.

How Important Publics Can Benefit InternetforEveryone.org

When recruiting, evidence suggests that some attempts are more successful than others (McAdam and Paulsen 1993). How an organization undertakes recruiting a participant, affects the subsequent intensity of that participant's involvement. Both recruitment by a strongly involved activist and recruitment through strong ties increase a participant's intensity of involvement (Passy and Giugni 2001). For example, to recruit high profile organizations to be InternetforEveryone.org coalition members, the Executive Director of Free Press or someone from Free Press that had an already established connection with that organization, contacted the potential organizational member about joining the coalition. Because the level of involvement asked of organizational members is high, it was prudent for InternetforEveryone.org to utilize their most high profile staff and already established connections.

To inform a national broadband plan supported by a broad range of constituents that cut across all sectors of society, InternetforEveryone.org knew they would have to increase and ensure the public's voice by creating a campaign in which a deliberative public process was central. They wanted to operate in a way that advanced the coalition's goals and empowered the public through a participatory and democratic process of gathering input. One of the main tactics they strategically planned to execute was to hold a series of deliberative town hall meetings across the county. These town hall events are so central to the campaign that their discussion

receives its own section under the “event tactics” heading in this paper. InternetforEveryone.org specifically designed a series of town hall meetings to encourage discussions around the four principles and brainstorm ideas for how to achieve a fast, affordable and open Internet connection for every home and business in America.

During the fall of 2008, InternetforEveryone.org staff members were having weekly meetings to help them hammer out what their first town hall meeting was going to look like. During the meetings, they focused on moving every element of the initiative, including how they were going to structure the town hall meetings and conference calls (I discuss conference calls in the “communication tactics” section of this paper), enlarge the coalition, and keep members engaged. As an aside, I think it is interesting to note that originally InternetforEveryone.org referred to themselves as an initiative and not a coalition. Early on, they were uncertain if their activities could qualify as coalition practices and were aware that they should not call themselves a coalition if in fact they were engaging in un-coalition like practices. Coalition work involves an alliance among various organizations whose focuses may be different on immediate causes, but who all function within a broad ideological agenda (Van Dyke 2003). As the campaign developed and continued to move forward, however, the organizers felt like it transformed into a coalition based on the way it was functioning. InternetforEveryone.org’s members represented a broad cross section of society, yet despite their primary interests, ranging from business, politics and technology to social, economic, racial justice and beyond, they were all able to rally around the four broad principles of Internet access, choice, openness and innovation for all

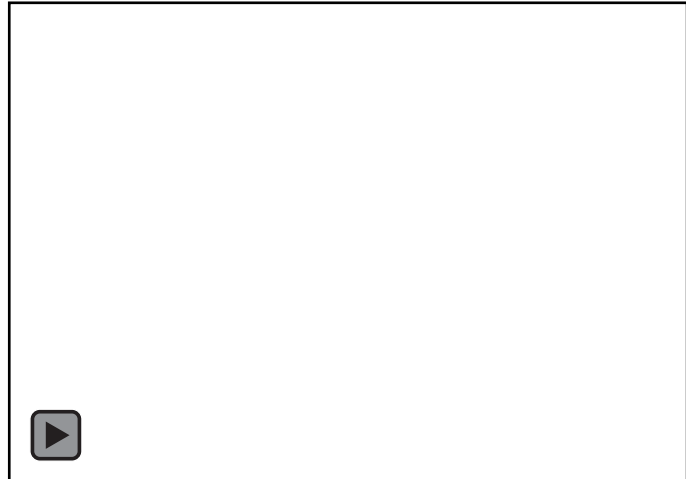
After InternetforEveryone.org held their first town hall meeting, the staff stopped holding their weekly internal meetings. Essentially, the coalition organizers needed that first town hall model, after which the Campaign Coordinator, and Campaign Director, had the liberty to make

more decision on their own. The Campaign Coordinator and Campaign Director continued to work closely on a daily basis through calls, e-mails, instant messaging, etc. This allowed them to know what components each other were leading and thus hold one another accountable to manage and complete their responsibilities.

Although the staff may have ceased their weekly internal meetings, internal means of communication were still very important to the success of the campaign, they just occurred through other modes. InternetforEveryone.org used an online collaborating and organizing project management and task software called Basecamp to continue internal communications (<http://www.basecampHQ.com/>). This software system is relatively new to InternetforEveryone.org and Free Press. As can be expected, the use of this communication and collaboration system is not flawless and thus staff is still in the process of figuring out best practices for its use.

Another means of internal communication are weekly cross-team communications meetings held every Friday at Free Press. During these meetings, time is devoted to InternetforEveryone.org announcements. InternetforEveryone.org announcements include press updates and releases as well as America Offline updates and video releases (America Offline is a video project that is a part of InternetforEveryone.org. It acts as another way to engage and educate the public while further promoting the InternetforEveryone.org message. I discuss America Offline in further detail in the “communication tactics” section of this paper). During one particular cross-team communications meeting in mid January, the Free Press staff member responsible for the America Offline project gave an update regarding her recent Washington, D.C. trip where she shot some America Offline footage. In the video, she was able to capture twenty children as they asked president Obama to give them broadband. She mentioned the need

to make this video “viral”, which means to promote their videos so they are widely viewed by many, and asked for suggestions from the rest of the group (Double click box to view video).



In addition, at the cross communication meetings staff also

discusses town hall logistical, travel and outreach plans, such as on the ground site visits, identifies areas to address further, and provides press updates. For example, at the same meeting when the staff member responsible for the America Offline project discussed the Washington D.C. America Offline video, the communications coordinator discussed the advertising and press rollout plans for the InternetforEveryone.org town hall event. Lastly, InternetforEveryone.org organizers have also used this time as an opportunity to encourage staff to visit and comment on the “Digital Town Hall”, which I discuss in further detail in the “communication tactics” section of this paper.

TACTICS

The activities specifically designed to execute the strategy in a way that will allow InternetforEveryone.org to reach their goals and objectives are their tactics. They are the tools that the organization uses to expose the coalition and its message to their important publics. To describe the InternetforEveryone.org initiative, I break their tactics down into two different types, communication tactics and event tactics. Communication tactics are an organization’s verbal tactics, which use speech, written words or visual imagery to communicate their message. Such tactics can include newsletters, flyers, brochures, mailings, advertisements, slogans,

websites and videos. Event tactics are an organization's non-written, non-verbal tactics such as special events, demonstrations, exhibits, community contributions etc.

Social movements often utilize communication media as provided by society's infrastructure as a tactic to achieve their goals (Downing 2003; Garcelon 2006; Hackett and Adam 1999; McCarthy and Zald 1977). Media outlets are one way to engage and inform the public regarding social issues. For this reason, the media has the ability to play an integral role in many social conflicts (Carroll 2006; Stein 1999). Unfortunately, due to over eighty years of media reform practices organized in the interest of private corporate wealth, we do not have a mass media system that acts as a truly accessible resource for grassroots, democratic social movements. However, the rise of the Internet presents social movements with an accessible communication infrastructure through which they can engage and inform the public.

InternetforEveryone.org certainly highlights the importance of the Internet not only through their messages, but also through their messaging, for they use the Internet as one of their primary means of communication.

Communication Tactics

Communication tactics are the verbal tactics used by InternetforEveryone.org; they can be oral, written and/or visual. InternetforEveryone.org's communication tactics are conducted via:

- Internet, such as through:
 - E-mail outreaches
 - InternetforEveryone.org website
 - "Digital Town Hall"
 - Social networking sites

- Videos, including:
 - America Offline project
 - Publicize upcoming events
 - InternetforEveryone.org launch
- Telephone, for the purpose of
 - Conference calls
- Print, such as:
 - Postcards
- In person by means of:
 - On the ground organizing

A society's "ability to define, debate, publicize and ultimately resolve social problems and conflicts depends first and foremost on the communication processes" (Stein 1999:5). By communicating their message through media outlets, movement actors are able to bring an issue to the public's attention, affect the popular understanding of an issue, generate concern and support, and influence public policy (Best 1990; Garcelon 2006; Ryan et al. 1998).

Some InternetforEveryone.org tactics use multiple forms of communication to advocate their message to important publics. For example, InternetforEveryone.org's press relations use the Internet, print and radio to promote the campaign. In addition, some of their communication tactics intersect with one another, such as their use of the website to promote America Offline videos or use of e-mails to announce upcoming conference calls (See Appendix E for example). In light of this, it is important to keep in mind that their communication tactics are not separate from one another, but often related to and dependent upon one another. For the ease of understanding, however, I have chosen to talk about them in somewhat distinct terms.

Internet

To reach their goals, InternetforEveryone.org primarily utilizes the Internet for their communication tactics. Through the Internet, they send e-mail outreaches to segments of their list of 500,000 activists, maintain website presence, write op-eds and blogs while also utilizing their network of other bloggers, writers and opinion leaders, share their research in Washington D.C. and engage in grassroots communication work. The Internet plays a big role in InternetforEveryone.org's communication tactics and is a common means through which activists often communicate their message (Smith, McCarthy, McPhail, and Augustyn 2001). The InternetforEveryone.org initiative has an inherent advantage in the fact that those who are most concerned about the Internet, bloggers, online activists and the high-tech community, have a strong web presence and therefore are invested in the success of InternetforEveryone.org. For these reasons, Internet related issues such as those InternetforEveryone.org tackles are "more conducive in online organizing than just about any other issue" (Silver April 6, 2009).

E-mail outreaches are an important way InternetforEveryone.org engages coalition members and activists, communicates with coalition members, potential allies and town hall participants, and keeps everyone informed of the latest InternetforEveryone.org activities. For example, when promoting the town hall meeting in Durham, North Carolina, InternetforEveryone.org used a series of e-mail outreaches to inform potential participants of the event (See Appendix F for an e-mail example). E-mail is one of the primary ways InternetforEveryone.org communicates with their members. In addition, one of the ways they promoted a multi-media report they produced was via e-mail (See Appendix G to view Five Days on the Digital Dirt Road report). I discuss the multi-media report in further detail when I discuss the America Offline videos.

Concerning e-mails, however, there is a recent phenomenon known as e-mail fatigue. From the time when e-mails became a popular means of communication in the late 1990s, people have increasingly used them as a means of communication. We are now at the point, in the early 21st century, where there is such a proliferation of e-mails that recipients are more likely to delete the e-mail than they are to read it (Silver April 6, 2009). This is something to keep in mind when using e-mail as a major means of communication.

Another important communication tool used by InternetforEveryone.org is their website. At their website, www.InternetforEveryone.org, an interested visitor can learn about the coalition and upcoming events, read informational resources, view America Offline videos, participate at the “Digital Town Hall” and join InternetforEveryone.org. Under the “About Us” tab, InternetforEveryone.org lists their overarching goal, provides information about the four principles, and lists all the coalition members and links to their websites. Under the events tab, InternetforEveryone.org not only provides written information regarding the logistics of

upcoming events, but also an informational video from their latest town hall meeting in North Carolina (double click the box to the right to see video).

Resources provided include the print materials for the events such as the discussion guide and a report entitled One



Nation Online, which provides statistical information regarding the digital divide and broadband deployment, adoption, quality and prices in the United States as compared to other countries (See Appendix H for the full report).

The “Digital Town Hall” is also located at the InternetforEveryone.org website. In addition to the town hall meetings that Free Press is hosting across the country, they have an interactive forum to allow those who cannot be physically present at the town hall meetings to join the conversation. Such a model is new to Free Press and they are still trying to figure out the best ways to promote it and fashion it to encourage robust dialogue and free flow of thoughts and ideas. In doing this, InternetforEveryone.org organizers are trying to figure out how to make the site not just another place to go on the Internet. At the “Digital Town Hall”, one can join the conversation and comment under any and all of the main topics of access, choice, openness and innovation (See Appendix I to view front-page from Digital Town Hall).

Unfortunately, the “Digital Town Hall” is not taking off as InternetforEveryone.org organizers had anticipated. One of the reasons they believe the “Digital Town Hall” is not meeting their expectations is because it has not yet been fully promoted. InternetforEveryone.org first engaged the “Digital Town Hall” in a slow rollout, which acted almost as a pilot study for the site. InternetforEveryone.org invited only some of their coalition members to visit and comment on the “Digital Town Hall”. Before they could promote the site to the public at large, they needed to have posts available to engage visitors and spark conversations. In addition, they wanted to gather feedback from their members regarding the site. Through the slow rollout, they discovered that the “Digital Town Hall” might not produce the desired results.

Another potential reason for the “Digital Town Hall’s” lack of success is that when you ask people to write something such as a blog post, which is essentially how people interact with the “Digital Town Hall”, it is often a bar to participation set too high. InternetforEveryone.org organizers, however, are not giving up on the “Digital Town Hall” and are taking steps to revive it. In order to make it a site that people want to visit and continue to engage with, they are

considering new ways to spark the robust conversations that they are seeking, such as through live events. One of the live events that they are going to use is to post a survey on the “Digital Town Hall” (See section “Graduate Internship in Media Policy and Research” in this paper for further discussion of the survey). It is easier for people to fill out a survey and answer some simple multiple-choice questions than it is for them to comment independently at length.

Another approach taken to engage people with the “Digital Town Hall” is through actually recruiting some of their members, staff and other important publics to comment on the “Digital Town Hall”. Recognizing that they still need to promote the “Digital Town Hall”, the plan is to get a broader engagement piece by contacting the various InternetforEveryone.org organizational coalition members and asking them to forward the survey to their activists. In addition to the survey, they plan to provide their members and their members’ members the opportunity to take any number of actions, ranging from those that are quite easy like filling out the survey, to those that require more involvement like writing a complete comment or blog post on the “Digital Town Hall”. InternetforEveryone.org thinks that providing those options will guarantee that they get a higher rate of response than they currently have.

In addition to e-mails, their website and the “Digital Town Hall”, InternetforEveryone.org makes use of social networking sites. The most effective online organizing usually involves very simple actions such as signing a petition, putting a name on a letter or simply clicking a button that in turn creates some sort of activist response. Some refer to this as clicktivism, cyberactivism, or derisively as slacktivism. InternetforEveryone.org organizers, however, recognize the truth to this trend is that many people simply do not have time to commit beyond simple web-based actions. Social networking sites include but are not limited to Facebook, Myspace, YouTube and Twitter.

The InternetforEveryone.org organizers recognize that these social networking sites have incredible potential to spread their message to new constituents, or at least to those on that network. Facebook, for example, has roughly 175 million active users. The potential audience is there if an organization can figure out how to effectively use that network to spread their ideas and messages out beyond their core group of friends. While there is an incentive to take advantage of clicktivist tactics such as online petitions, as with the use of e-mail, people are increasingly ignoring online petitions due to their prevalence. Thus, people are signing less and less petitions with the belief that they are not effective. They are also not forwarding even the compelling petitions because they are aware that their friends likely suffer from e-mail and petition fatigue as well.

Aside from petition fatigue, the reality is that online petitions do not carry that much weight in Washington, D.C. Online petitions and pre-written letters to local congress people are tactics used by many organizations. Often times, unless the activist sending the letter or signing the petition personalizes it somehow, members of Congress feel like they are receiving spam. They are aware that these petitions and letters ultimately come from a social movement organization and therefore disregard them. If the individual constructs a more personalized letter that does not look copied and pasted from Free Press, then the letter is more effective. Interestingly, however, the Executive Director of Free Press mentioned that phone calls to an in-district member continue to be important. If a member of Congress sees an incoming phone call from their district, they are more likely to answer. For this reason, targeted phone call campaigns from that member's constituents are still effective.

InternetforEveryone.org has been using social networking sites for the past six to nine months. Although they consider themselves an organization that utilizes these sites better than

most, they are still new to it and recognize they have more to learn. Although they are very keen to utilize them for organizing purposes, InternetforEveryone.org Campaign Director admits that InternetforEveryone.org has yet to perfect the use of such sites. One way they continually try to improve their effective use of social networks is by learning from other organizations and examples of excellent organizing through social networks. For example, when Facebook changed its privacy terms to allow advertisers to learn more about its members and push targeted advertising, MoveOn.org and a few other activist groups organized Facebook members to the extent that Facebook changed its terms. By looking to such examples, InternetforEveryone.org hopes to learn more about organizing through social networks so when the next big Facebook moment comes, they will be prepared to seize the opportunity. In addition, keeping in mind the issues of e-mail and petition fatigue, Free Press is aware that they should not bombard users with announcements via the social networks. Instead, the Executive Director suggests they “keep their musket dry”. In other words, he believes they should make fewer and more targeted announcements so when they do post something on a social networking site people are more likely to notice and be interested.

It is interesting to note that in the past, research has recognized the news media as benefiting social movements. According to such research, news media can potentially allow social movements to reach prospective constituents who they might not otherwise reach through movement-oriented outlets, and validate the cause as being worthy of support (Gamson and Wolfsfeld 1993 as cited in Thomas 2006). I would call into question whether the news media still serves this role for social movements and if it has ever served such a role for the media reform movement. Given the fact that the media reform movement seeks to reform the very news media that this research claims to serve social movements, I find it highly unlikely that they

would cover relevant stories in a way that would serve the movement. Despite the fact some journalists covering social movements may exist, social networking sites seem to be replacing the role that news media played in advancing a social movement's message.

While it is not the primary purpose of social networking sites to serve social movements, recent organizing efforts are certainly exploiting them for such purposes. As my findings show, they provide a means to reach potential adherents who might otherwise not encounter the social movement organization. In addition, sites such as Facebook have "cause" applications that allow the user to take actions to garner support for the cause. Such actions include inviting your friends to join, donate money, and check out the cause's website. The user then has the option to post their action as a news feed that allows the user's friends to view their recent activity. This, in a sense, helps to validate the cause by demonstrating that there is prior support for the issue and people are actively working to advance the cause. If nothing else, it helps put the cause on the radar of other social networking users.

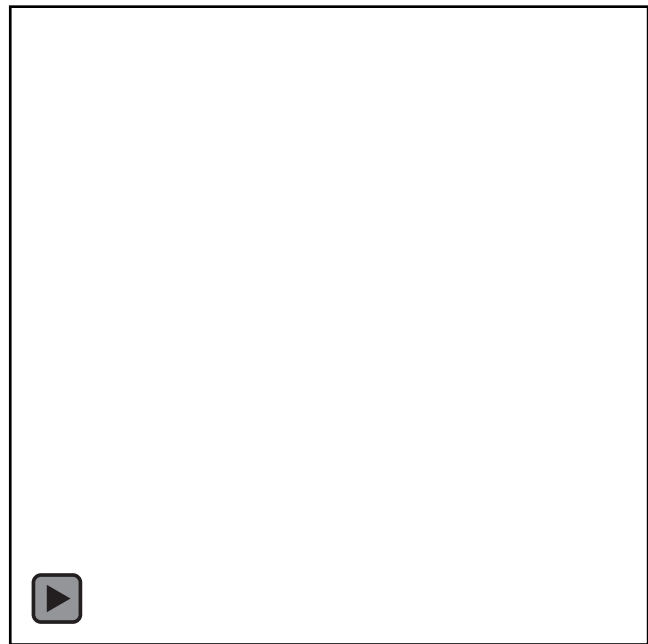
Video

Tied to InternetforEveryone.org's electronic communication tactics, is their use of video for the America Offline project. America Offline is another way InternetforEveryone.org is working to inform and educate the public about the initiative and why the issues related to it are important. The project sheds light on the fact that millions of Americans live without regular Internet access or lack the training and equipment to get online. This supports the organization's need to affect how people think about social problems by highlighting the injustice faced by those without Internet access (Hirsch 1990; Polletta and Jasper, 2001; Wiggins, Wiggins, and Vander Zanden 1994 as cited in Johnson 2005). A small reporting team that heads America Offline travels to communities across the country to capture the stories of Americans without

Internet access. They also hire local videographers to help them with the projects. Using local videographers allows them to not only save money in transportation costs, but also work with people who know and have a connection to the community.

As to be expected, a challenge of these interviews is finding the people who are offline. To do this, the America Offline coordinator identifies, contacts, and arranges the citizen interviews through organizations aimed at helping connect people to the Internet. The team then travels to interview the identified citizens about a month before the next town hall meeting in that area. The footage captured in the America Offline videos are akin to open-ended interviews

and are sometimes internally referred to as citizen interviews (double-click box to the right to view an America Offline video). The video project allows InternetforEveryone.org to interview people around the country in an effort to obtain real life perspectives on Internet issues. It is for this reason that the America Offline videos are so instrumental in helping to bring beltway policy into



reality. In the words of the America Offline Coordinator, stories equal power.

In addition to utilizing their website to publicize the America Offline videos, InternetforEveryone.org also publicizes the videos through of the “Digital Town Hall” by posting them as a comment and on social networking sites like YouTube. In fact, the America Offline videos have a detailed plan for how to make their videos go “viral”. In addition to YouTube and the “Digital Town Hall”, America Offline also promotes their videos by making

use of their connections to Free Press. This includes promoting videos on the Free Press and SavetheInternet.com websites, as well as by e-mailing them to staff. They also use press releases, e-mail lists, blogs, Facebook, Myspace, Twitter, and their coalition members' websites.

YouTube enables viewers to post video responses via a public comment. The comments posted in response to the America Offline videos provide some insight as to whether viewers consider the issue of Internet access to be legitimate. Whether or not a person interprets an issue as legitimate partially determines her or his decision to participate in the relevant social movement (Passy and Giugni 2001). I was surprised to see there were negative comments about the America Offline D.C. video, which was also their most viewed video. While some comments reflected viewers' perceptions of this as a legitimate issue, others did not.

Examples of comments that supported the legitimacy of InternetforEveryone.org's goal included "Unless these kids get access to high-speed Internet, they will be left behind in our increasingly digital world." and "This is a more important issue than a lot of people realize. Without information, we are all likely to be misled and exploited. That is why the entire nation needs Internet." Negative comments included, "Duh, where does it say in the Constitution of the United States state that the Access to the Internet is a RIGHT? Well so isn't owning a gun, but I don't see the government buying me one..." and "Dear Barack, For Christmas I want free internet, free healthcare, a new car, an earned income tax credit (welfare), free gas, free public transportation, free college education, and funding for my abortion I will have in 6th grade. Could you please give me all these things King Obama so that I could become even more dependent on a bankrupt government who steals money from working class citizens under the false claims of a "stimulus package" that will benefit "all Americans." and "We didn't have the

Internet in our classrooms, and we BUILT the Internet.” Essentially, the negative posts reflected the commenter’s perception of the issue as illegitimate.

In the similar vein that news media used to serve social movements, researchers also found that television in general served social movements. This is in part because of the significant power television has over viewers due to its potential for graphic images and a large-scale audience (Best 1990; Kepplinger 2007; McChesney 1997; Stotzky 2004). While YouTube is not an equal counterpart to television, it does allow for graphic images and is the dominant provider of online video in the United States with a market share of around 43 percent. In January of 2009 alone, they had more than six billion videos viewed (<http://www.comscore.com/press/release.asp?press=2741>). In November of 2008, YouTube ranked as the third most viewed website, behind Yahoo! and Google (http://www.alexa.com/site/ds/top_sites?ts_mode=global&lang=none).

I believe you can make the argument that YouTube certainly has the potential to advance a social movement if organizers are able to capitalize on its ability to reach countless potential and existing constituents. This is especially relevant given recent technologies merging television and the Internet. According to the Executive Director, “YouTube is making a huge difference in politics, political discourse and entertainment. As download speeds increase and the quality of the delivery software increases, YouTube will no longer be a grainy small video but it will be a high definition quality video streaming on your computer or television” (Silver April 6, 2009). The difficulty with using sites like YouTube to publicize InternetforEveryone.org is distribution. When making the comparison of television to YouTube, television has the advantage of easily reaching a mass audience, whereas with YouTube videos, a viewer generally must first be aware

the organization's existence in order to search for the video. Despite this, the Executive Director recognizes the importance of Internet video in communicating information.

InternetforEveryone.org uses the America Offline videos to publicize their events, such as the town hall meetings and the upcoming InternetforEveryone.org Coalition Member Meeting (which I discuss in further detail in the "event tactics" section of this paper). The video shot in Washington, D.C. during the month of January 2009 acts as a good example of how the America Offline project is using videos to not only allow people to express their situations and needs, but also to promote InternetforEveryone.org. In addition to highlighting the children's messages, there is also footage of a teacher explaining why the Internet is important to children's learning and how lack of access is affecting their education. Overall, America Offline has made and posted fifteen videos, all of which are now on YouTube. The aforementioned Washington, D.C. video has been the most popular, as of March 16, 2009, with 5,825 hits. Collectively, the fifteen videos have received 11,477 hits, and counting; that is an average of 756 views per video. Some of the videos are polished sixty-second clips featuring the America Offline Coordinator's voice over footage discussing the need for broadband. Other videos, however, focus on the citizens' dialogue and last up to twice as long.

Not only has InternetforEveryone.org made use of video footage through America Offline, but they also have featured the InternetforEveryone.org launch meeting as well as some other early InternetforEveryone.org explanation videos. The InternetforEveryone.org launch meeting featured multiple speakers, including: Robin Chase, co-founder and former CEO of Zipcar; Michael Winship, president of Writers Guild of America East; Van Jones with Green for All; Brad Burnham with Union Square Ventures; Jonathan Adelstein, FCC Commissioner; Lawrence Lessig of Stanford Law School; Jonathan Zittrain of the Berkman Center for Internet

and Society; David All with TechRepublican.com; Tim Wu of Columbia Law School and Chair of the Free Press Board; and Josh Silver, the Executive Director of Free Press.

The America Offline videos also act as another avenue through which InternetforEveryone.org receives media hits. In addition, press for the event takes place on a local and national level via all media, including print, radio, television and the Internet. For example, with the rollout of the town hall meeting in North Carolina, the press coordinator publicized the event via the Huffington post. In addition, they contacted all local bloggers and asked them to blog about the upcoming event. In addition, they used online calendars to post the upcoming event.

Telephone

Online means of communication, however, are not the only way that InternetforEveryone.org communicates. Utilized in the beginning of InternetforEveryone.org and still proving to be an important mode of communication is the good old-fashioned telephone. In addition to e-mail, a weekly or monthly call is one of the primary ways InternetforEveryone.org communicates with their members. They are able to do this by using a phone system that provides a number and code specific to the call, allowing multiple callers to be on the phone at once (See Appendix E for example).

On the calls, a facilitator, sometimes an in-house and sometimes an outside facilitator, aids the flow of conversation. This person receives a call agenda and provides guidance to allow for an effective phone call. Such guidance includes reminding people of unfortunate but necessary time restraints and the need to mute their phones as to avoid noise interference. The call agenda often includes an introduction to the initiative by the Campaign Director. Discussion time to allow InternetforEveryone.org organizers to network with their members' allies, form

new allies, and strengthen ties with existing allies is also included in the calls. In addition, InternetforEveryone.org uses this opportunity to inform callers of America Offline videos and town hall specifics such as date, location, logistics and next steps. Next steps have included upcoming announcements, e-mail outreaches and discussions regarding how to continue engagement with participants.

As mentioned before, InternetforEveryone.org organizers are regularly seeking feedback from their members and for this reason they include time in the call to answer any questions from the members, ask the members questions and listen to their feedback. Examples of common questions include inquiries about who the coalition's target audience is or what the rationale for choosing a specific town hall location was. The organizers have asked members for their thoughts regarding who they should ask to speak at the meetings, how to best incorporate creative presentations at the town hall meetings and recruit people without Internet access. Suggestions for speakers have included elected political officials, public school superintendents, and the vice president from the institute of minority development center, former professors and the founder of a local credit union. Suggestions regarding how to recruit participants without Internet access included publicizing the event through school Facebook networks, Spanish newspapers, Native American newspapers, centers for non-profits, the institute of minority economic development and action for children and at libraries via flyers, postcards and posters. Recommendations also included sending home flyers with children and making use of vistas and the North Carolina Triangle United Way database of families in need. Coalition members have also highlighted the importance of involving funders early in the process. When seeking feedback InternetforEveryone.org gives members on the call a chance to voice their ideas and if none percolates, they inform them to contact a relevant InternetforEveryone.org organizer after

the call if any ideas do come to mind. People on the calls have included industry group representatives such as Catherine Sloan from the Computer and Communications Industry Association (CCIA). The CCIA promotes open markets, open systems, open networks, and full, fair, and open competition (<http://www.ccianet.org/>) and their members include some high profile companies such as Google, eBay, Microsoft, T-Mobile and Yahoo.

Print

In addition to these somewhat more technologically advanced means of communication, InternetforEveryone.org also uses postcards to communicate with town hall participants. At the town hall meeting, participants fill out their name, physical address and e-mail address on a post card. On these post cards are six personal commitment action statements with check boxes next to them. The participants check off all actions that they are willing to take after the day's event. Actions include: Tell two friends to join InternetforEveryone.org; Post a comment or video on the "Digital Town Hall" at www.InternetforEveryone.org/townhall; Reach out to local organizations in my own community; Write an op-ed or letter to the editor of my local newspaper; Urge my elected officials to speak out in support of InternetforEveryone.org; and add me to InternetforEveryone.org e-mail list.

InternetforEveryone.org maintains a Microsoft Excel document of all the participants' information according to whether they registered via pre-registration, walk-in or did not register. InternetforEveryone.org used the postcards as a way to update and verify participants' information and to indicate the actions each participant was willing to take. As of now, April 2009, InternetforEveryone.org does not have a mechanism for utilizing the information to target participants based on their specific commitments, such as through targeted e-mail outreaches. Their rationale for the postcards is much simpler. The organizers believe the sheer act of writing

down their commitments will further cement the participants' personal accountability to stay involved. InternetforEveryone.org highlights the "Visit the 'Digital Town Hall'" commitment and adds a personalized statement encouraging them to "help advance the conversation (fill in name)!" The intention for adding the personal touch is to make the participants feel included and entice them to continue their involvement.

In Person

Lastly and very importantly, a communication tactic utilized by InternetforEveryone.org is in-person, on the ground organizing. A point stressed by InternetforEveryone.org coordinator is that if you expect to build relationships, you have to talk to people. Although this type of organizing is labor intensive and expensive, it is nonetheless necessary. On the ground organizing affords the benefit of having one-on-one communications with people. In such a meeting, an InternetforEveryone.org organizer is able to learn why the issue is important to the potential ally, discuss the initiative and reveal how their values connect. Supported by research findings is the importance of emphasizing shared interests, noting its positive influence on an organization's ability to mobilize constituents (Carroll 2006). In fact, Executive Director of Free Press believes that their "most successful moments in terms of [their] organizing on Internet issues, however, really have been when [they] have been able to marry the online organizing with the offline organizing" (Silver April 6, 2009). To exemplify this point, he referenced a moment in their Save the Internet campaign when they used online organizing and petition drops to get in-district meetings in several cities across the country, equipped with television crews and groups of twenty to thirty activists armed with Save the Internet signs.

In addition to recognizing shared interests, a one-on-one meeting allows the potential constituent to connect a face to the organizer's name. The organizer shifts from being a name on

an e-mail or a voice on the phone to a real person with whom the potential constituent met, had a conversation with and potentially grew to like. This helps with relationship building because the next time the person receives contact from the organizer, they are more inclined to remember her or him and favorably respond to the outreach. In preparing for the town hall meeting in North Carolina, for example, the InternetforEveryone.org Campaign Coordinator spent a week in early January 2009 meeting with potential and existing allies all day, every day. They have learned the hard way the importance of this type of organizing. Resulting from their abundant on the ground grassroots organizing efforts was their recent North Carolina multi-media report, *Five Days on the Digital Dirt Road* (See Appendix J).

Event Tactics

InternetforEveryone.org has two main event tactics:

- nationwide town hall meetings
- InternetforEveryone.org Coalition Member Meeting taking place May 13, 2009

Historical Context

To frame properly the rationale for InternetforEveryone.org's choice of the town hall format as one of their main event tactics, it is important to examine the historical context of Free Press organizing. To this end, I first am going to discuss the event tactics Free Press has used in the past and why the town hall format is different and more conducive to the goal and sub-goals of this initiative. In the early days of Free Press organizing, they utilized the forum format as one of their event tactics. A forum is the FCC's public hearing process of deciding policies on media ownership. To hold a forum, the FCC rents a large public hall, which is then flooded with a mass of agitated people. At the front of the room sits a panel of "experts" from the field that speak to the issue at hand and sometimes deliver prepared speeches. After the panel members finish

speaking, the floor opens up to the audience. If a public attendee desires to speak, they do so at a microphone located in front of the “expert” panel.

The forum format only allocates each public attendee two minutes to make her or his voice heard. This process can go on for four to five hours. Unfortunately, during the time allotted for public commentary, the so-called experts often leave the room. In addition, the participant’s time at the microphone amounts to little more than an airing their grievances. Elected officials enter their comments into the public record, file them in an archive at the FCC and often never regard them again. Public engagement is not a top priority in this format; it does not allow for communication that would lead to any demonstrable and constructive results.

Town Hall Meeting

Free Press and InternetforEveryone.org organizers believed that not only does Washington, D.C. have to change, but they also had to change in the way they organize. They were compelled to adopt a deliberative process of public engagement, which they hope will fix the problem of private corporate interests controlling media policy reforms in the United States and give the public a chance to participate in the policy making process. To do this, they are engaging citizens in nationwide conversations via town hall meetings, during which they are documenting and synthesizing their feedback. Ultimately, the ideas recorded from these conversations become deliberative recommendations and a deliverable framework that InternetforEveryone.org can take to Washington, D.C. This process will also show Congressional officials and the FCC a model for creating better media policy that truly engages the public and serves public interest.

Free Press debated internally whether or not they should adopt the participatory style of a town hall meeting versus the forum format, with which Free Press was traditionally more

comfortable. Often times, different tactics carry with them different connotative identities and those identities influence an organization's notion about which ones are instrumental, strategic, effective and political, hence influencing their decision regarding which ones to use (Polletta and Jasper 2001). For example, those who work more closely with policy may identify more with the forum format, which engages elected officials on-site and can tend to be rather wonky during the "experts" discussions. In addition, while the forum does act as a mass demonstration of power via packing a large room full of supporters, it does not provide avenues for those supporters to offer their input in a meaningful way. In contrast, those who work more closely with grassroots organizations may identify more with the town hall meeting format. The town hall meetings more closely connote a democratic identity because they directly engage the public to influence elected officials in their decision-making, creating an opportunity to have their opinions not only heard but also meaningfully considered.

When recruiting potential constituents, it is important for organizers to convince them that the institutionally provided mechanisms for participation and reform are not sufficient to achieve desired changes and that other means are necessary to advance the cause (Hirsch 1990). InternetforEveryone.org's decision to use the town hall format instead of the forum format reflected this. They recognized the institutionally provided forum format was not well suited for garnering public input to inform policy and that other means were necessary, such as the town hall meetings. In seeking to reform media in a way that represents, serves and reflects all people, national bodies must build means of communication that hold officials accountable to the public and are genuine mediums for the formation of public opinion (Stein 1999). These participatory forums allow InternetforEveryone.org to fill this need and shift toward a more democratic approach in their media reform organizing. A democratic means of media reform seeks to

enhance democratic values and practices and influence our media structure through public discourse and collective decision-making (Hackett 2000 as cited in Carroll 2006).

To help them achieve the public deliberations that they were envisioning, InternetforEveryone.org modeled their town hall meetings after *AMERICASPEAKS*' 21st Century Town Meetings. The town hall meeting format had a revolutionary influence on InternetforEveryone.org and the way they engaged the public. *AMERICASPEAKS* is an organization based out of Washington, D.C. whose mission is to reinvigorate American democracy by engaging citizens in a public decision-making process around the issues that affect their lives. Their 21st Century Town Meetings “give citizens an opportunity to have a strong voice in public decision-making within the increasingly short timeframes required of decision-makers. As a result, citizens can impact decisions and those in leadership positions can make more informed, lasting decisions” (<http://www.americaspeaks.org/>). InternetforEveryone.org spent from September to December of 2008 consulting with their members and *AMERICASPEAKS* to decide how to construct their first town hall meeting. Although the process was rather lengthy, the campaign organizers felt secure in the fact that the coalition members played an immense role in informing the format.

InternetforEveryone.org structures their town hall meetings based on the *AMERICASPEAKS* 21st Century Town Meeting methodology to engage in a very participatory approach to town hall meetings. *AMERICASPEAKS* consultants, and InternetforEveryone.org coalition members and organizers all contributed to the design of the town hall meeting. As a result, InternforEveryone.org has developed their unique town hall meeting model. Instead of having people at the front of the room, talking down to an audience, they purposefully structure the space in an alternative manner to better facilitate discussions. There are no “experts” and the

people are not an audience, but rather equally important participants. They hold the meeting in large halls or auditoriums with multiple round tables of roughly ten people from different background talking about the issue at hand.

InternetforEveryone.org organizers made considerable efforts to invite a truly diverse and representative group of participants and facilitate their interactions with one another. In an effort to ensure robust conversations and reach their goal of allowing allies to strengthen and build their networks, InternetforEveryone.org arranges the seating structure so participants are at a table with people whom they do not yet know. InternetforEveryone.org strove to have the town hall meetings be truly representative of the community's demographic. Over the course of several town hall meetings, they sought to have the participants be representative of the broader United States demographic (see Graduate Internship in Media Policy and Research section in this paper for further discussion regarding matching demographics).

InternetforEveryone.org wrote and published a discussion guide and consulted *AMERICASPEAKS* to review the guide and offer additional edits and advice. This guide structures the conversations at the town hall meetings (See Appendix K). At every table there is a trained facilitator ensuring everyone has the opportunity to speak her or his mind and that no one person dominates the conversation. InternetforEveryone.org organizers provide the table facilitators with a guide outlining a detailed agenda as well as her or his role throughout the day. To direct the table facilitators and overall structure of the day, InternetforEveryone.org event staff makes use of a PowerPoint presentation on a large screen at the front of the room (See Appendix L). The power point presentation introduces participants to the goals and objectives of the event, various speakers and staff, and polling questions and results. Polling questions gather information regarding the participants' demographics, Internet use, and ideas for fostering

access, choice, openness and innovation. InternetforEveryone.org made use of a wireless keypad response system, Turning Point Technology, to administer the polling questions, collect the data and display the results onto the PowerPoint presentation in real time.

The table facilitator uses note cards to record the thoughts and ideas that emerge among participants. It is then the job of table runners to collect the cards and deliver them to the feedback team. The feedback team is a group of people who are responsible for reading all of the ideas and sorting them based on the themes that emerged. Displayed back to the entire group via the PowerPoint presentation are themed recommendations the feedback team identified. The event's lead facilitator, often an outside consultant, then invites everyone in the room to use their keypads to vote on the recommendations they believe to be most important. This methodology creates an environment that fosters equal recognition of all ideas, regardless of whose they are.

The rationale for holding town hall meetings is to compile through participatory and transparent process information generated by public consensus. By the end of the meeting, InternetforEveryone.org arrived at well-documented recommendations that will go ultimately into the hands of decision makers. This allows InternetforEveryone.org to use a democratic process of public engagement and deliver the results in a way that will lead to better policymaking. InternetforEveryone.org has been engaging in this town hall format for the past six months and thus is still new to the process. Despite the fact that they are still new to the process, they have a fervent faith that it does allow people to become informed enough to make intelligent recommendations. In their experience, InternetforEveryone.org organizers have witnessed the deliberative process transform participants' understanding and confidence in their abilities to make solid communication policy recommendations.

As of this point, I have discussed four deliberative and democratic processes that InternetforEveryone.org has engaged in:

- The development of the principles
- The development of the goals
- The development of the town hall structure
- The process of engagement via the town hall meeting

Therefore, it is not surprising that the development of the discussion guide and polling questions was also a participatory process informed by the coalition members. InternetforEveryone.org began with the creation of the discussion guide. They constructed the discussion guide to provide participants with basic, unbiased information about the four principles. Their intent was to dig a little deeper into the overarching principles of Internet choice, access, openness and innovation and present them in a way that would prompt participants to understand their importance. From there, they turned their attention to the polling questions and asked themselves what they wanted to get out of the discussions. They knew they wanted questions that would help the participants go beyond understanding the importance of the four principles to expressing why they are important to them and what policy options are available to ensure and preserve the principles in the Internet's future.

In an effort to arrive at the questions best suited to achieve their goals, InternetforEveryone.org first did some vetting of the questions and then engaged the coalition members via a conference call to discuss their thoughts and opinions. On the call, members provided feedback regarding the polling questions, which included questions that pertained to participants' demographics, the town hall discussions and potential future actions. The InternetforEveryone.org organizers incorporated the coalitions' feedback and accordingly

developed more refined and targeted questions, which they again took back to the members for further feedback. From there, they again revised the questions. InternetforEveryone.org coordinator estimated that they modified the questions on a group call three or four times.

InternetforEveryone.org fashioned a small working group of five members who wanted to further engage and refine the discussion guide and polling questions. To form the working group InternetforEveryone.org organizers asked coalition members if they would like to be more involved in the creation of the guide and polling questions. In forming this working group, once again, InternetforEveryone.org wanted to allow for the benefits of diversity to prevail. For this reason, the group consisted of public advocates like the ACLU, private sector organizations like Google, grassroots groups like the Center for Media Justice, mostly small and independent Internet service providers (ISPs) such as the Mountain Area Information Network and some from the business sector. The group incorporated their suggestions, performing edits and revisions, and engaged in a subsequent examination and revision process. InternetforEveryone.org also worked with *AMERICASPEAKS* as a consultant for the question development process. *AMERICASPEAKS* helped them to tweak further the questions to draw participants out and move them toward the ultimate goal in the ascertainment process, making recommendations and forming a consensus as to which recommendations they should push toward a national broadband plan. InternetforEveryone.org organizers believed that the process of informing the polling questions was one of the best processes they took back to the coalition as a model for future decision-making.

Returning to the point made earlier that organizing is not always as orderly as it may appear in literature, it worth noting that InternetforEveryone.org organizers were continuing to modify the questions until the night before the first town hall meeting, despite having already

engaged in an intensive editing process. In fact, when I arrived as an intern after the first town hall meeting, I made some further edits to the questions, which I discuss in more detail in the section in this paper on Graduate Internship in Media Policy and Research. Having now had two town hall meetings, however, the coalition wants to avoid making any further changes to the questions. Maintaining consistency in the questions will allow InternetforEveryone.org to collect meaningful and comparable data from the town hall meetings because all the participants will have answered the same questions.

InternetforEveryone.org Coalition Member Meeting

Since 2003, Free Press has held four conferences entitled National Conference for Media Reform (NCMR). This year, 2009, Free Press is not holding a NCMR, but instead is holding a Policy Summit on May 14, 2009 entitled, Free Press Summit: Changing Media. In light of the fact that they are not holding a conference this year, the policy summit is to be Free Press's signature event. Originally, the summit was to be an Internet policy event, but since has changed into a media policy event on all fronts.

The day before the Free Press Summit, InternetforEveryone.org will be holding an event entitled InternetforEveryone.org Coalition Member Meeting. While both the InternetforEveryone.org Coalition Member Meeting and the Free Press Summit are taking place at the Newseum in Washington D.C., they are separate events. InternetforEveryone.org wanted to ensure that their event was separate from the Summit for two reasons. First, having a separate event dedicated to InternetforEveryone.org highlights the importance of the coalition and their mission. Second, because InternetforEveryone.org's position is not to push policy but rather inform policy, the organizers wanted to ensure they respected this distinction, which would have

gotten blurred had they been an offshoot of the Policy Summit for which policy reform is the primary focus.

Invited to the InternetforEveryone.org Coalition Member Meeting will be all 160 of the InternetforEveryone.org organizational members. The purpose of the meeting is to engage organizational members with the data collected from the town hall meetings, national survey, “Digital Town Hall”, and America Offline videos. I was largely responsible for entering, managing, coding and analyzing this data as part of my internship with Free Press. I discuss the process I followed to operationalize a comprehensive set of themes that emerged from all of InternetforEveryone.org’s data collection in this paper in the section Graduate Internship in Media Policy and Research. In addition to presenting the organizational members with a report of the data, InternetforEveryone.org will also use America Offline videos to exemplify these issues. They anticipate the video will be ten to fifteen minutes long and synthesize previous footage to illustrate how Internet policy is affecting real citizens’ lives, highlighting the need to ensure the four principles are included in a national broadband policy.

The focus of the InternetforEveryone.org Coalition Member Meeting is to examine the public’s recommendations and develop a plan to put them into action. By informing a framework, they are not actually drafting primary legislation but building a model for policy around InternetforEveryone.org’s principles and the recommendations derived from the public engagement process. The framework is the structure within which lawyers in Washington, D.C. and public interest advocates will write final legislation. The purpose is to “light the path and show the way to create the kind of containers within which policy is made better guided by principles and recommendations and then to allow for a fairly transparent drafting process that actually gets us to the final document” (Karr March 4, 2009).

In preparing for the InternetforEveryone.org Coalition Member Meeting, the organizers have taken into account considerations similar to those during their preparation for the town hall meetings. For instance, they have asked themselves how they should structure the members' discussions. Organizers anticipate that informing this and other considerations will require a process similar to that of when they developed the town hall meeting guide and questions. It will most likely be a participatory process; however, this time Free Press staff will be informing their decisions as opposed to the coalition members. To ensure they cover all the necessary preparations, Free Press has formed multiple subcommittees. The subcommittees focus on the programmatic day, policy documents, logistics, public ascertainment, technology and new media. Free Press Executive Director stressed that he does not want staff to see this event as being in addition to their work, but rather to think about how their work feeds into this signature event. The event is as important as the NCMR, only smaller, less elaborate and intensive.

ALTERNATE POSITION: EFFECTS OF STIMULUS PLAN ON INITIATIVE

In February of 2009, recently elected president Barack Obama implemented The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, a stimulus plan, which included an investment of over seven billion dollars into broadband infrastructure. Prior to the efforts of InternetforEveryone.org and the stimulus plan, however, the Internet was not widely recognized as a political issue. The onset of the stimulus plan and its broadband provisions revealed Internet-related issues as political. This was an important development during the InternetforEveryone.org initiative. It is important to examine the effects of the stimulus plan on the initiative, as it is necessary to accompany all examinations of social movements with an examination of the political context in which they are operating (Passy and Giugni 2001). With this new provision from the Obama administration, it is now the task of the FCC to develop and

implement a national broadband plan within one year. While the InternetforEveryone.org coalition intends for their efforts to inform the broadband plan the FCC enacts, they are also looking beyond the stimulus package. They do not believe that the stimulus money will solve the Internet issues America faces.

Through using the data collected via their town hall meetings, “Digital Town Hall”, national survey and open-ended interviews, InternetforEveryone.org plans to develop a framework to inform the broadband policy needs of the nation. They are going to form an InternetforEveryone.org working group to synthesize and distill their collected data and develop a set of policy recommendations. As with past working groups, this will be a diverse assemblage of InternetforEveryone.org members whose organizations likely draft policy and have some experience with this line of work. At some point, InternetforEveryone.org hopes the Free Press policy team will play a role in developing the recommendations.

InternetforEveryone.org’s original position was to inform policy by constructing a framework; they made it specifically known that they were not a coalition seeking to push policy. However, the stimulus package and accompanying media coverage regarding plans to develop a national broadband plan has had an effect on the campaign that one cannot ignore. The stimulus package has forced InternetforEveryone.org to think about, in retrospect, whether it was a good idea to highlight in their pitch for joining the InternetforEveryone.org coalition that they did not intend to push policy. At a time when Internet policy is receiving so much media attention, it seemed like a natural assumption that a coalition called InternetforEveryone.org would somehow involve themselves in related conversations. As the stimulus package passed, a few other coalitions formed around broadband and received media coverage regarding their position toward the stimulus plan. Political opportunities create competition amongst those trying

to advocate for social causes that require political attention (Koopmans 2004; Smith et al. 2001). That was a time when InternetforEveryone.org should and could have had a voice in the media. Having a voice in the media at such a time would have helped them with recognition, which would have helped with membership, which would have helped with all related aspects of initiative work.

Unfortunately, when Congress was deciding what language to include in the broadband stimulus provisions, InternetforEveryone.org organizers believed it would have been presumptuous of them to make claims regarding the package; they did not think their members were ready to become involved in those conversations. They are now addressing the question, however, of whether they are going to take advantage of such opportunities for advocacy at some point. Critical to a movement's success is the ability to be aware of and respond actively to political opportunities as they arise (Koopmans 2004). That situation made it very clear to them that they need to start thinking about the direction of the coalition and the fact that they cannot miss more opportunities like the stimulus package.

As the drumbeat gets progressively louder for a broadband plan, InternetforEveryone.org needs to address their coalition members regarding the direction the campaign should precede. The public sentiment, which InternetforEveryone.org became aware of through their public engagement process, largely recognizes the need for a policy framework and accompanying advocacy to ensure the federal government adopts their framework. The organizers recognize that if they are going to pivot towards pushing policy or engaging in advocacy, they need to determine at the InternetforEveryone.org Coalition Member Meeting how comfortable their members are with making that transition. The InternetforEveryone.org coordinator senses that a good portion of members will be OK with pushing policy but recognizes that some members

may not. The organizers need to explain to the membership that they and the public want the coalition move toward pushing policy, believing that if policy is the solution to providing Internet for everyone, they should consider engaging in advocacy.

When it comes to advocating for a particular policy, the coordinator recognizes, however, that it may be hard to pull together a broad coalition to write or inform policy because everyone has competing interests, goals and priorities. A lot of give and take, understanding, and education must happen before a group of one hundred and sixty plus organizations can agree on a specific set of policy recommendations; it is a lot easier to arrive at an agreement on four broad principles. The Campaign Director, however, has a lot of faith in the process. He believes the deliberative process that they engaged in will allow people to drill down their recommendations to a level of making informed decision about specific recommendations. The director does also recognize, however, that they may lose some members when they move into an advocacy phase. Some organizations may not feel comfortable with committing to the proposed next steps and that often comes with the territory. A participant's level of commitment to a social movement is a specific decision they make because it does come with costs. However, those who are committed to a social movement group or cause feel such costs are worth it if their commitment will help enhance the movement's cause (Hirsch 1990).

There is no quota regarding a necessary level of agreement when deciding the recommendations to put forward. The Campaign Director believes if they demonstrate that the process was truly open and participatory that all of the organizations who have been involved with InternetforEveryone.org thus far should have no objections to taking it to the next step, which will likely be to advocate for those recommendations. Often times, group-based political processes, such as group decision making, induce movement participants to sacrifice their

personal welfare for the group cause (Hirsch 1990). Any organizations that have been involved in this process should feel at least that the process is sound and it represents public sentiment around this issue.

EVALUATION

The campaign Director believes that the InternetforEveryone.org initiative thus far had been a success. The Campaign Coordinator believes that there have been multiple successes but they still need to make specific efforts if the initiative is to be an overall success. Some of the success the Campaign Coordinator cited include: the diversity represented within the coalition; the newly formed partnerships; their public engagement efforts, i.e., town hall meetings format vs. forum format; the way they are working with the coalition; and the fact that they have had many groups from across the political, business and social spectrum to sign on to the four principles of Internet access, choice, openness and innovation. In order to be an overall success, the Campaign Coordinator believes that they need to increase their ascertainment process to include more people from across the nation, and that they need to dedicate more time to engage members, despite the fact that when you have 160 organizations it gets somewhat tough to keep them all engaged. They want everyone to feel like a real member so the coalition is able to maintain its momentum. The Campaign Director defined success as the complete adoption of the national broadband plan in Washington, D.C. that follows the guidelines and framework that came out of the InternetforEveryone.org deliberative process.

Early in the initiative, there were a few membership benchmarks, such as to solicit one hundred organizational members, which they have since surpassed. They also have some town hall meeting benchmarks. One town hall benchmark was to ensure participants at the town hall meeting represented the diversity within that region or town. Another benchmark is that they are

engaging the community and do not just fly in and out without leaving follow up plans. One more town hall benchmark is to hold four meetings, which they are working towards, with two under their belt as of March 2009.

InternetforEveryone.org coordinator recognizes that the coalition should be thinking more long term with their benchmarks. The Campaign Coordinator believes this would include looking at the overall plan and goal, which they were beginning to reexamine in February 2009. After the InternetforEveryone.org Coalition Member Meeting in Washington, D.C., they are going to set additional benchmarks and goals to outline their findings and a plan to determine goal indicators. After drafting their broadband framework, the initiative will mostly likely then advocate for the specific recommendations that they feel will best ensure every home in America has access to a fast, open and affordable Internet connection. At that point they can say, here are the policy recommendations that the nation supports and “if you don’t go to work on them we’ll use their voices to go to work on you” (Perez February 21, 2009). Assuming that Congress adopts the plan put forth by InternetforEveryone.org, InternetforEveryone.org sees their coalition relationships continuing under a different context. The Campaign Director believes it is imperative to continue the relationships because in order to organize successfully around an issue, Free Press needs lasting relationships with a broad range of constituents whom they can continue working with on other issues related to the Internet.

DISCUSSION

APPLICATION OF RESOURCE MOBILIZATION THEORY

Upon the examination of my findings, I believe that InternetforEveryone.org's practices support resource mobilization theory and demonstrate the theory's applicability toward this modern social movement, at least in the case of InternetforEveryone.org. The basic tenets of RMT involve an examination of "the variety of resources that must be mobilized, the linkages of social movements to other groups, the dependence of movements upon external support for success and the tactics used by authorities control or incorporate movements" (McCarthy and Zald 1977:1213). In the case of InternetforEveryone.org, my findings reveal that the initiative had to mobilize a variety of resources, link their efforts to other groups and depend on external support for success. In addition, I found that government authorities did engage in tactics to incorporate InternetforEveryone.org's efforts.

Mobilization of Resources

According to McCarthy and Zald (1977), the resources that a social movement organization must mobilize typically include money, volunteer and staff labor, facilities and those that ensure an organization's legitimacy. In terms of mobilizing monetary resources, Free Press is a non-profit organization and they do not take money from industry groups or government sources (<http://www.freepress.net/donate>). As an initiative of Free Press, the same non-profit practices apply to InternetforEveryone.org. However, aside from that basic knowledge I did not delve into the funding practices of InternetforEveryone.org. However, my findings did provide me with an understanding of their other resources, including labor, facilities, and legitimacy.

InternetforEveryone.org made use of both paid and volunteer labor. The initiative required the assistance of Free Press staff to operate the multiple elements of the campaign. The Campaign Coordinator and Campaign Director were the two primary Free Press employees responsible for InternetforEveryone.org. In addition, a Free Press Campaign Coordinator and two Outreach Coordinators also contributed to public outreach, engagement and the planning of the town hall meetings. The Campaign Coordinator was responsible for the America Offline piece of the public engagement process. The Outreach Coordinators were largely responsible for handling town hall meeting and Member Meeting logistics and outreach. In addition, two Free Press Communications Coordinators, another Campaign Coordinator, and the Senior Program Director assisted in promoting the initiative, running necessary technologies and editing documents. The Communications Coordinators were responsible for the press relations, proofreading and editing documents, the Campaign Coordinator assisted in the utilization of technology and the Senior Program Director helped to finalize documents and outreaches.

InternetforEveryone.org also hired outside help to assist them in their efforts. InternetforEveryone.org organizers hired local videographers to film America Offline videos, lead facilitators to guide the town hall event and *AMERICASPEAKS* as a consultant for the event. *AMERICASPEAKS* assisted in the development of the town hall meeting and of the discussion guide. In addition, InternetforEveryone.org asked people to volunteer at the town hall meetings. Paid volunteers included town hall meeting table facilitators and individuals to who drove busses of people to the town hall event.

To hold the town hall meetings, travel and logistical planning was necessary. Before holding the town hall meetings, staff traveled to meet with potential constituents and verify potential venues. As I discussed in the “Communication Tactics” section in this paper, one-on-

one organizing is important, despite the fact that it is labor intensive and costly. In addition to mobilizing the resources necessary to verify a particular facility for the town hall meeting, staff also had to coordinate their travel plans to arrive at the town hall meeting as well as lunch, parking and bus accommodations for participants.

Also included in the event's logistical planning were procedures for using PowerPoint presentations and Turning Point Technology. To utilize successfully these technologies required somewhat labor-intensive preparations and planning. I verified that all of the PowerPoint slides were presentable, represented the correct information and were in alignment with the day's agenda. In addition, for the first town hall meeting, InternetforEveryone.org hired Turning Point Technology staff to operate the software. At the second town hall meeting, a Free Press staff member operated the software. This required they become familiar with the technology and have an InternetforEveryone.org staff member on-site to operate the technology throughout the event.

Lastly, InternetforEveryone.org had to coordinate resources throughout the initiative to present themselves as a legitimate cause in the eyes of the public. Bringing together a broad and diverse group of constituents to take part in the coalition is one way they helped establish the initiative as legitimate. They also made use of their networks of bloggers and writers to promote the initiative. The more coverage the initiative could receive, the more it helped their position as a legitimate cause in the eyes of the public. To increase the breadth of their public reach they also made use of social networking sites such as Facebook and YouTube.

Linkage of InternetforEveryone.org to other Groups

InternetforEveryone.org clearly linked their initiative to other groups. InternetforEveryone.org knew that if government officials and the public were to take their initiative seriously, they had to form a broad and diverse coalition of organizations that

represented a cross sector of society. Included in their coalition are over one hundred and sixty organizations. To form the coalition they made use of their additional networks such as Free Press and SavetheInternet.com. They also reached out to new organizations. In addition, InternetforEveryone.org had to rely on community organizations that connected people to the Internet in order to locate interviewees for their America Offline videos.

Dependence of InternetforEveryone.org upon External Support

InternetforEveryone.org had to depend upon external support for success. McCarthy and Zald (1977) identify external support as provided by individuals, constituents, or institutional structures. As my findings reveal, the initiative relied heavily on the input of their coalition members to carry out the InternetforEveryone.org initiative. InternetforEveryone.org members provided advice and input, created and edited documents, and helped shape the town hall meetings and the overall operations of the initiative. In addition, at the InternetforEveryone.org Coalition Member Meeting, the organizers will rely heavily on members to decide the direction of the collation; they will decide which recommendations to take before Congress.

InternetforEveryone.org also depended on *AMERICASPEAKS* to help them develop their town hall meeting format. It was from *AMERICASPEAKS* that InternetforEveryone.org originated the idea to hold a deliberative town hall meeting. Without that assistance of *AMERICASPEAKS*, the InternetforEveryone.org town hall meeting structure may not have developed into the lively and deliberative process of engagement that it was.

InternetforEveryone.org was dependent upon several societal structures to assist them in their efforts for the InternetforEveryone.org initiative. They heavily depended on media outlets, mainly the Internet. As I outlined in my findings, they used the Internet at the primary means through which they executed their communication tactics. They made use of e-mail, blogs, the

"Digital Town Hall" and America Offline videos. In addition, they used the Internet to promote their initiative via online magazines, calendars and websites and to coordinate their on the ground visits. Additional media outlets the initiative depended on included print, television and radio. For the most part these outlets were not mass media, but often local and independent. Lastly, even if to a small degree, they depended upon the United States Postal Service to deliver postcards to town hall participants.

Tactics Used by Authorities

Finally, several elected officials have chosen to incorporate into their tactics the efforts of InternetforEveryone.org or Internet issues in general. InternetforEveryone.org recognizes the importance of having elected officials supporting their efforts and the reality of having to monitor and respond accordingly to the tides in Washington D.C. For this reason, they strove to include elected officials in the initiative. For example, FCC commissioner Jonathan Adelstein and Representative Maxine Waters (D-Calif.) have openly supported InternetforEveryone.org. In addition, President Barack Obama has recognized Internet issues as political and incorporated them into his efforts to revive the economy from recession. Investing over seven billion dollars into broadband development is certainly evidence of a political authority incorporating the issues into tactics.

DEMOCRATIC PRACTICES OF INTERNETFOREVERYONE.ORG

In addition to supporting RMT, my examination of the InternetforEveryone.org initiative provided insight into the democratic pursuit of involving the public in informing media policy. Democracy can be defined as "...an exercise –and an experiment– in collective self-governance in which the sovereign power resides in the people as a whole and is exercised either directly by

them or by their representatives, usually officials elected by them” (Stotzky 2004:119).

InternetforEveryone.org’s efforts reflect their desire to enhance the public’s sovereign power and their means taken to attain that goal represent democratic action on three levels: the goal of the initiative, their process of public engagement, and the internal operations of the coalition.

Goal of InternetforEveryone.org

First, their intent to create a format that empowered the public to participate in the governing of America’s Internet infrastructure is in and of itself a democratic pursuit. InternetforEveryone.org recognized that the current system of involving the public in communication policy was not sufficient or democratic. The public’s role in media policy formation under the FCC’s forum format was more of a formality than their exercise of power in the policy making process. To remedy this situation, InternetforEveryone.org organizers took it upon themselves to create a structured environment of learning and participation in which the public can play an authentic role in the process of media policy formation.

Process of Public Engagement

In order arrive at recommendations that represent public consensus, InternetforEveryone.org engaged diverse populations in multiple forms of public ascertainment. InternetforEveryone.org recognized the existence of barriers to participation in policy discussions faced by certain demographics. To ensure that everyone had a say in this process, InternetforEveryone.org organizers made special efforts to include typically underrepresented populations. Through the entirety of their process, they sought to garner information from a population that was representative of the larger United States demographic. They also took into consideration that government and industry entities are typically the main creators of

communications policy, which is part of the problem. Because of this, they ensured academic, grassroots, civic, social justice and faith-based organizations had a voice in the discussion, as well as those from industry and business sector.

The town hall meetings allowed for a deliberative process in which all participants had an equal chance to make their voices heard and have their suggestions considered. The recommendations derived from the meetings truly reflected the consensus of the participants. They took special note to foster an environment in which a basic understanding of the Internet needs of America was provided and the exchange of ideas was encouraged. The town hall meetings were just one of the multiple ways that InternetforEveryone.org sought to engage the public. In addition to the meetings, the America Offline videos, the "Digital Town Hall" and their online survey provided the public at large, including those who are typically left out of media policy discussions, with a way to contribute their ideas and make their Internet needs known.

Internal Operations of InternetforEveryone.org

Lastly, even the internal operations of InternetforEveryone.org represented a democratic process of informing the initiative and its maneuvers. InternetforEveryone.org internally engaged in multiple deliberative and democratic processes, such as the development of the principles, goals, town hall meeting structure, discussion guide and polling questions. When informing these aspects of the initiative, the organizers sought to engage a diverse population of coalition members. Throughout the entirety of the coalition's existence, InternetforEveryone.org organizers have stressed that it is the responsibility of the coalition to steer the initiative and that the organizers respect their input.

ROLE AS A PUBLIC SOCIOLOGIST

Studying a media reform organization working to engage the public in a democratic process of informing policy provided me with insights into my research question as well as the role of public sociology in civil society. My skill sets as a public sociologist proved to be very useful during my time with InternetforEveryone.org. The value of data collection, management, and analysis came to life during the initiative's process of public engagement. I saw the utility of knowing how to code and analyze data and operationalize terms to design a survey with the intent of informing policy. The important roles these skills can play in developing policies that represent public interest became apparent.

It was also eye opening to wear the hat of both researcher and media reform advocate. In this position, I experienced the tension between public sociology's use of a strict and methodological science and the reality of a fast-paced media reform environment where the resources and desire to attend to stringent scientific practices are not always present. I wonder if this is an inherent tension of public sociology. While the importance of methodological rigor is obvious, in order to serve the public in a realistic and timely manner, a balance had to be struck.

My engagement with InternetforEveryone.org forced me to continually bear in mind the context in which I was applying my public sociology skills. I had to recognize that the purpose of my scientific engagement was not to produce generalizable results to be peer reviewed and placed in a scholarly journal, but rather was to ensure that scientific methods of data collection and analysis preserved the integrity the public's policy recommendations. If the intent of public sociology "seeks to bring sociology to publics beyond the academy, promoting dialogue about issues that affect the fate of society" (Burawoy 2004), then I feel it must be recognized that in doing this the reality of the field in which public sociology is being practiced may present its

own unique set of challenges. Political viability, time restraints and lack of data analysis software proved to be my challenges. Despite those obstacles, however, the essence of public sociology remained intact. The tools of sociology were applied in a real life setting and allowed the public and elected officials to engage in a dialogue regarding the future of the Internet.

RECOMMENDATIONS

My inquiry into the process by which a media reform organization engages the public in a democratic process of informing media policy has raised some questions for further consideration. Based on my case study of InternetforEveryone.org, I have developed recommendations. As part of my engagement as a public sociologist, it is important that I use and disseminate my findings to the public I have studied and provide practical recommendations. My recommendations include:

- Other social movement organizations adopt the InternetforEveryone.org model for public deliberation and engagement.
- Social movement organizations endeavoring to influence policy recognize the likelihood of advocacy.
- Social movement organizations make use of data analysis software.
- FCC recognizes the insufficient and undemocratic nature of their current forum format and adopt a model for better incorporating public opinion into their policy making process.

First, I would like to discuss the recommendations as they pertain to Internet policy. The ultimate goal of InternetforEveryone.org is to develop Internet policy recommendations to present to the Obama administration. As I mentioned in the discussion section, my engagement with the InternetforEveryone.org initiative reflected public sociology in practice, even down to the recognized need for policy recommendations. Unfortunately, my internship with Free Press ended before the culmination of their Internet policy recommendations. With that said, I have gained insight into the model InternetforEveryone.org used to engage the public in the development of policy recommendations. Based on my study, I have developed

recommendations to help social movement organizations engage the public in of policy development by using a process similar to that of InternetforEveryone.org's town hall meetings.

As I discuss in my paper, the town hall model as used by InternetforEveryone.org allowed them to engage a diverse group of citizens in focused conversations that encouraged brainstorming, the exchange of ideas, and the development of policy recommendations. In addition, not only does this model provide the public with a means through which they can actively participate in informing policy, but it also allows policy to develop that has the backing of a potentially broad and diverse group of people. When a broad consensus supports a policy recommendation, it is more likely to sustain in Washington, D.C. and is easier to adopt. If a social movement organization uses the town hall model to engage a broad group of citizens in informing policy recommendations, it can allow the public to engage in meaningful participation that is more likely to lead to the adoption of legislation.

I also recommend, however, that if an organization seeks to involve the public in informing policy, they recognize that eventually there will be the need to push for their policy recommendations. As InternetforEveryone.org learned, it makes little sense to involve the public in a lengthy and comprehensive process of informing policy without the intent to advocate for the recommendations derived from that process. I think further research is necessary into the rate at which policy recommendations provided by the public through democratic processes, such as the ones InternetforEveryone.org followed, are enacted into legislation. Given the role of the Internet in InternetforEveryone.org's efforts, I think conducting further research into the effects of the Internet in general, and the use of social networking sites specifically, on modern organizing will prove to be helpful to contemporary social movement organizations.

I also recommend that any organization collecting data from their constituents, acquire data analysis software to help them utilize their data effectively and in a timely manner. For example, if InternetforEveryone.org had data analysis software I could have drastically streamlined my analysis. A quicker analysis would have affected the development of the online survey, which in turn could have allowed InternetforEveryone.org more time to make more targeted contacts with potential respondents. Given the time restraints a social movement organization faces, such as those resulting from political opportunities, I believe that if an organization intends to collect and analyze data, it only makes sense for them to invest in such software. In addition to streamlining their process, I think the systematic use of data analysis software will strengthen the results of the analysis. While I am a trained public sociologist and thus have data analysis skills, software would provide further evidence to support the results of my analysis.

I recommend the use of InternetforEveryone.org's model of garnering public input not only for other social movement organizations, but also for the FCC. It is important that the FCC recognize that their forum format for engaging the public in matters pertaining to media policy is insufficient. I believe they can begin to remedy this situation by setting up a mechanism for accepting input from the public regarding policy issues and incorporating that input into their policy decisions.

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APPENDIX A

Internet for Everyone | Help define the future of the Internet in America.

GET INVOLVED
SIGN UP FOR EMAIL UPDATES

[ABOUT US](#) [EVENTS](#) [RESOURCES](#) [AMERICA OFFLINE](#) [DIGITAL TOWN HALL](#) [JOIN NOW](#)

One Nation Online in 2009

Make this the year America commits to connecting everyone to a fast, open and affordable Internet.

North Carolina Speaks Out

Hundreds of people came together on March 7 for InternetforEveryone.org's second [town hall meeting](#).

Let your representatives in Washington know that now is the time to build out the Internet in America.

Add your voice to the conversation at the ["Digital Town Hall."](#)

**NEW REPORT:
FIVE DAYS ON THE DIGITAL DIRT ROAD**

WHAT WE STAND FOR

- ACCESS**
Every home, business and civic institution in America must have access to a high-speed, world-class communications infrastructure.
- CHOICE**
Every Internet user must enjoy real choice in online content as well as among high-speed Internet providers to achieve lower prices and faster speeds.
- OPENNESS**
Every Internet user should have the right to freedom of speech and commerce online in an open market without gatekeepers or discrimination.
- INNOVATION**
The Internet should continue to create good jobs, foster entrepreneurship, spread new ideas and serve as a leading engine of economic growth.

Broadband Penetration: How does your community stack up?

Survey after survey shows American broadband quality and access falling perilously behind countries in Europe and Asia. Getting everyone connected to an open Internet should be a national priority. Click on your state below to learn more about Internet access in your area.

America Offline

Follow our trek across rural North Carolina as we document the struggles of people living and working without access to the Internet.

[WATCH THE VIDEOS »](#)

Digital Town Hall

What do you think the future of the Internet should look like? Post your thoughts, add a comment, and hear what others have to say.

[JOIN THE CONVERSATION »](#)

file:///F:/...hip%20Project/Data/Internet%20for%20Everyone%20_%20Help%20define%20the%20future%20of%20the%20Internet%20in%20America.htm[3/31/2009 6:06:25 PM]

GET INVOLVED
SIGN UP FOR EMAIL UPDATES

[ABOUT US](#) [EVENTS](#) [RESOURCES](#) [AMERICA OFFLINE](#) [DIGITAL TOWN HALL](#) [JOIN NOW](#)

About Us

InternetforEveryone.org is a national initiative of public interest, civic and industry groups that are working to bring the benefits of a fast, affordable and open Internet connection to everyone in America.

As the Internet has become a critical part of our daily lives, it is clear that everyone in America must have access to play a part in our economy and democracy. High-speed Internet, or "broadband," is no longer a luxury; it's a lifeline to contemporary society. Our broad alliance is working together with citizens across the country and national leaders to create a plan to bring a high-speed Internet connection into every home and business, at a price all of us can afford.

Building Blocks for a Better Internet

To make sure everyone can benefit from the new economy and guarantee that all citizens play an active role in our democracy, our nation must embark on a national campaign to connect every person to a fast, affordable and open Internet. The **InternetforEveryone.org** initiative calls on Congress and the president to act in the public interest by enacting a plan for the wired and wireless Internet built upon the following principles:

Access

Every home, business and civic institution in America must have access to a high-speed, world-class communications infrastructure. [More »](#)

Choice

Every Internet user must enjoy real choice in online content as well as among high-speed Internet providers to achieve lower prices and faster speeds. [More »](#)

Openness

Every Internet user should have the right to freedom of speech and commerce online in an open market without gatekeepers or discrimination. [More »](#)

Innovation

The Internet should continue to create good jobs, foster entrepreneurship, spread new ideas and serve as a leading engine of economic growth. [More »](#)

America Offline



Follow our trek across rural North Carolina as we document the struggles of people living and working without access to the Internet.

[WATCH THE VIDEOS »](#)

Digital Town Hall



What do you think the future of the Internet should look like? Post your thoughts, add a comment, and hear what others have to say.

[JOIN THE CONVERSATION »](#)

APPENDIX B

FULL MEMBERS LIST

NATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

[ACLU](#)

[ACME](#)

[Acorn Active Media Foundation](#)

[Alliance for a Better Community](#)

[American Distance Education Consortium](#)

[American Federation of Musicians](#)

[American Library Association](#)

[Artists Recording Collective](#)

[Association For Community Networking](#)

[Archive.org](#)

[BE THE MEDIA](#)

[BitTorrent](#)

[blip.tv](#)

[Boxcar Communications](#)

[Care2](#)

[Center for Rural Affairs](#)

[Center for Rural Strategies](#)

[CEOs for Cities](#)

[Children Now](#)

[CitizenSpeak.org](#)

[ColorofChange.org](#)

[Common Cause](#)

[Communications Leadership Institute / The](#)

[SPIN Project](#)

[Community Partners](#)

[Computer & Communications Industry](#)

[Association](#)

[Consumer Electronics Association](#)

[Consumer Federation of America](#)

[Consumers Union](#)

[Craig Newmark](#)

[Credo Mobile](#)

[CTC VISTA](#)

[CuWin Foundation](#)

[DemocracyinAction.org](#)

[Digital Sisters/Sistas Inc.](#)

[Disability Media Institute](#)

[Ebay.com](#)

[EDUCAUSE](#)

[Ella Baker Center for Human Rights](#)

[Entertainment Consumers Association](#)

[Ethos Group](#)

[Facebook.com](#)

[Free Press](#)

[FreeCulture.org - Students for Free Culture](#)

[Freenetworks.org](#)

[Future of Music Coalition](#)

[GoLoco](#)

[Google](#)

[Green For All](#)

[Hip-Hop Association](#)

[IAC \(InterActiveCorp and its companies\)](#)

[IFP \(Independent Film Producers\)](#)

[Inst. for Analytic Journalism](#)

[Interfaith Worker Justice](#)

[Internet 2](#)

[Intuit](#)

[Main Street Project](#)

[Meadow Networks](#)

[Media Alliance](#)

[Media Democracy Fund](#)

[National Association of](#)

[Telecommunications Officers and Advisors](#)

[\(NATOA\)](#)

[National Baptist Convention of America](#)

[National Baptist Convention, USA Labor](#)

[Roundtable](#)

[National Council of Women's Orgs](#)

[National Hispanic Christian Leadership](#)

[Conference \(NHCLC\)](#)

[National Hispanic Media Coalition](#)

[National Organization for Women](#)

[Native Public Media](#)

[NextGenWeb](#)

[New America Foundation](#)

[NTEN](#)

[One Economy](#)

[OneWebDay](#)

[Open Source Wireless Coalition](#)

[OpenDNS](#)

[Participatory Culture Foundation \(nonprofit](#)

[creator of Miro Internet TV\)](#)

[PathFinder](#)

[Postsecondary Electronic Standards Council](#)

[- PESC](#)

[Progressive National Baptist Convention](#)

[Progressive States Network](#)

[Prometheus Radio Project](#)

[Public Citizen](#)
[Public Knowledge](#)
[Samuel DeWitt Proctor Conference](#)
[SEIU](#)
[Skype](#)
[Slatecard.com](#)
[Sojourners/Call to Renewal](#)
[Sony Electronics Inc](#)
[Sunlight Foundation](#)
[TechNet](#)
[TechRepublican](#)
[The Media Justice Fund](#)
[The Praxis Project](#)
[United Church of Christ](#)
[USAction](#)
[US PIRG](#)
[Vuze](#)
[WGA-East](#)
[WGA-West](#)
[WIA](#)
[YouthNoise!](#)
[YouTube](#)
STATE AND LOCAL ORGANIZATIONS
[AbsoCom Corp.](#)
[Access Humboldt](#)
[Amarillo College](#)
[Appalshop](#)
[Boston's Wireless Initiative](#)
[Case Western Reserve University](#)
[CCTPG](#)
[Center for Media Justice](#)
[Chamber of Commerce, George West, Texas](#)
[Chicago Media Action](#)
[City of Marshall](#)
[Communications Workers of America Local 9000](#)
[Community Technology Network of the Bay Area](#)
[digiTenn](#)
[Esperanza Peace and Justice Center](#)
[Foundation for Successful Solutions \(Project T.E.C.H.\)](#)
[Freedom Journal.TV](#)
[Information Society Project at Yale Law School](#)

[Institute for Policy Democracy and the Internet](#)
[Internet Society of New York](#)
[Little Tokyo Unplugged](#)
[Manhattan Neighborhood Network](#)
[Maple River Networks LLC](#)
[mayfirst people link](#)
[Media Bridges Cincinnati](#)
[Media Mobilizing Project](#)
[Montana Independent Telecom Systems](#)
[Mountain Area Information Network](#)
[New Mexico Literacy Project](#)
[NYCwireless](#)
[Office of Governor Pat Quinn](#)
[OneCommunity](#)
[Open Neighborhoods](#)
[Orange Networking](#)
[People's Production House](#)
[Puerto Rico Sun Communications](#)
[Reclaim the Media](#)
[Rural Opportunities Inc.](#)
[San Diego Common Cause](#)
[SeaKay, Inc.](#)
[Texas Media Empowerment Project](#)
[The North Carolina Department of Administration Commission of Indian Affairs](#)
[Triangle United Way's Teaming for Technology \(Raleigh, Durham, Chapel Hill\)](#)
[Twin Cities Media Alliance](#)
[WordSouth Public Relations, Inc.](#)
SMALL BUSINESSES
[180 Connect, Inc](#)
[The Added Edge, Inc.](#)
[Broadband in a Box](#)
[CostQuest Associates](#)
[Contract Travel](#)
[Daverto design](#)
[DFJ Gotham Ventures](#)
[Internet Television Network](#)
[Minor Ventures](#)
[MoveSmart.org](#)
[Proxim Wireless](#)
[RampRate](#)
[Union Square Ventures](#)

APPENDIX C

Interview Guide- Misty Perez, Campaign Coordinator IFE

What is the process by which a media reform organization, Free Press, involves the public in formulating framework for media policy, specifically the creation of a National Broadband plan?

Conception

1. When was the IFE campaign first conceived?
2. How did the idea to start the IFE campaign first come about?
 - a) What were some of the thoughts and feelings surrounding the notion of having an IFE campaign?
3. Was there a period of time between the initial idea to have the IFE campaign and the actual formation of the campaign?
 - a) If so, how long was this period of time?
 - b) What transpired during this time that may have either helped initiate to the formation or prolonged the formation?

Formation

4. What the formation of the IFE campaign a formal or informal process?
 - a) Please elaborate with details.
5. What was the process by which those to be involved in the IFE campaign were decided?
6. How was it determined who would play what roles in the campaign?
7. Does the policy team play a role in this campaign?
 - a. If so, what is their role and responsibilities?
8. In retrospect, is there anything that you would now consider to have been instrumental in the early development of the IFE campaign?

Communication

9. Can you describe the internal communication methods that surround the IFE campaign? Please provide specific details.
 - a) How have they been helpful?
 - b) How could they be improved?
10. Once the idea to have an IFE campaign was formed, how long was it until the IFE campaign was made public?
 - a) What work transpired between then and its public debut? Please give specific details.
 - b) How did you promote the campaign to the public?
11. Can you describe the external methods of communication that surround the IFE campaign? 'please provide specific details.
 - a) How have they been helpful?
 - b) How could they be improved?
12. How do you use social networking in this campaign?
13. What is the aim of the IFE campaign?
 - a) Is there a final document you are intending to produce?
 - b) Is it formalized in writing somewhere?
 - c) Has it been made publicly known?

Evolution

14. Has the IFE campaign evolved since from its initial conception?
 - a) If so, how?
 - b) To what degree? Cite specific examples
 - c) What do you think has allowed for or even encouraged this evolution?
15. How does the stimulus package affect the campaign?
16. Is there an intended/anticipated lifespan for the IFE campaign?
 - a) Once the specific aim have been met, is IFE planned to disband, or to evolve and identify new, related goals?

Evaluation

17. Do you feel as though the IFE is a successful campaign?
 - a) How do you define success?
 - b) If so, what do you think contribute most to its success? Top 5 contributions.
 - c) If not, what do you think is hindering the success of the IFE campaign? Top 5 pitfalls
18. If the IFE campaign was your only responsibility and the only responsibility of other contributing staff, is there anything that you think would be done differently? Please give specific details.

Interview with Tim Karr – Internet For Everyone Campaign Director
Interview Guide

Conception and Development

1. How did the idea to have the Internet For Everyone campaign first come about?
2. What transpired, needed to happen, between the idea for the campaign and the time it went public? What work was done?
3. Misty mentioned that early on the policy team had a bigger influence on the development of Internet for Everyone. Can you describe how the policy team influenced the campaign?
 - a) Also, she said since the public ascertainment process it has been revealed that Internet for Everyone now has competing priorities from the policy team, can you tell me what these competing priorities are?
 - b)
4. What was the process by which you drafted the discussion guide around the 4 principles?
 - a) What were your motivations for asking the questions you did?
 - b) What were the background experiences of those on the working group that helped further craft the discussion guide and polling questions?
5. Your role in the Internet for Everyone campaign?

Educating

6. Misty had mentioned that part of what the Internet For Everyone campaign is trying to do is to use this opportunity to educate and engage the public.
 - a) Can you describe to me what the efforts are that the Internet For Everyone campaign is making to educate the public?
7. Are the Internet For Everyone members engaging and educating their organizations' members about the Internet For Everyone campaign as well?
8. Can you describe to me how you are using social networking to promote this campaign?
 - a) Do you think it has been effective?

Town Hall Format

9. I have heard it mentioned by Misty and Josh Stearns that the format being used in the Internet For Everyone campaign is different than previous means that Free Press has tried to reach out to the public.
 - a) Is this referring to the format of Town Hall vs. forums?
 - b) Can you please explain the difference to me and how you think they differ in terms of effectiveness?

Use of Data

10. Can you explain to me how the difference between informing a framework for policy and informing policy/crafting policy?

11. If the Internet for Everyone campaign does in fact decide to switch gears and craft policy rather than simply inform it, what effect do you think that will have on the campaign now and in the future?
- a) Do you think you might lose members because they feel like they didn't sign up for that, crafting policy?
 - b) Do you think it will be worth the loss of membership for the opportunity to craft policy?
12. How is the Internet For Everyone campaign planning on appealing to ADD legislation?

“Digital Town Hall”

13. Where did the idea for the digital Town Hall come from?
14. How have you been promoting the “Digital Town Hall” to people?
15. I know the DTH is not doing as well as it had been hoped, can you speculate as to why this is?

Policy Summit

16. Has Internet For Everyone given any further consideration to new media that it might use at the policy summit?
17. Do you have a more clear idea at this point as to how the Internet For Everyone part of the policy summit is going to play out?

Evaluation

18. Would you describe the campaign as being successful?
- a. How do you plan on defining success?

Interview with Josh Silver, Executive Director of Free Press

RQ: How does a media reform organization, Free Press, engage the public in informing media policy, national broadband plan?

Want to follow up on your comment that proliferation of e-mail outreaches is overwhelming recipients and organizers need to utilize innovative communication tools to engage and organize constituents.

In my experience, research on 21st social movement organizing is sparse, which includes any research on how to effectively utilize the Internet to advance a cause. Being that you are an effective media reform organizer operating in the 21st century, I would love to learn from your experiences.

- o In your experience, how is organizing different now than has been in the past? Pre-Internet, early Internet, even 5, 10 years ago
- o Can you speak to the Internet's role in social movement/media reform organizing?
- o What has your experience been with using e-mails to engage and organize activists?
- o Why do you feel the need to move away from e-mails and begin to incorporate new communication tools?
- o Any knowledge of/experience with innovative online communication tools?
- o How can social networking sites be used? YouTube? Twitter? Facebook/Myspace?
- o Do you think these sites are effective in advancing social issues? In advancing media reform?
- o Do you think online petitions and other "clicktivist" activities are taken very seriously by government officials given the low level of involvement needed to engage in that type of activism?
- o Based on your experience, are barriers to access to media to advance do you think media reform organizations encounter unique obstacles to raising public awareness as opposed to other social movement organizations?

"Unprecedented initiative bringing together public and private sector groups to raise public awareness about America's digital divide and build the political and popular will to address the problem"

“One of the biggest obstacles to adopting a national broadband policy is that the Internet is not seen as a political issue. And even if it were today the community that uses the Internet is not sufficiently organized to guide the policy debates that will shape its future”

APPENDIX D

Project description:

You'll be working with our newest campaign, InternetForEveryone.org. InternetforEveryone.org is a national initiative of public interest, civic and industry groups that are working to see that the Internet continues to drive U.S. economic growth and prosperity. We believe every American must be connected to a fast, affordable, and open Internet to serve as an active citizen in a 21st-century democracy and to prosper in today's economy. High-speed Internet is no longer a luxury; it's a lifeline for all Americans. Our broad alliance is working together to see that our nation's leaders adopt a national plan to bring open, high-speed Internet connections into every home, at a price all of us can afford.

One of the central pieces of this work is a national "listening project" focused on a series of town hall meetings. This nationwide series of public conversations is designed to bring together people to formulate a broadband plan for the new administration and Congress. America's digital decline is a national problem that must be faced by our new leadership. Putting America back on top and bringing open, high-quality, affordable Internet connections into every home and business will require a comprehensive and innovative approach. It will require input from federal, state and local governments, businesses large and small, nonprofit organizations and public advocates, civic groups, churches and schools. InternetforEveryone.org is ensuring that everyone can play a role.

In addition to these in-person Town Hall events we'll be launching an unprecedented online digital town hall designed to allow people across the country an opportunity to weigh in and contribute to the conversation about the future of Internet in America. The digital town hall will provide a place for people to post their ideas and suggestions, comment on other's ideas, and discuss what America needs as part of a national broadband strategy. We will collect public feedback from the in-person meetings and via the "Digital Town Hall", to help formulate a framework for a national broadband plan. This plan will be delivered to new leadership in Washington as a people-powered guide to building a better Internet in America. Our goal is not only to convey a public vision but to promote a tangible plan for action.

You will be the key point person on the "Digital Town Hall", helping to promote it and encourage people's participation. In addition, you will moderate it and contribute to the discussion, helping spark conversation and dialogue. Additionally, you will be reviewing submissions and identifying good examples to pull out and highlight as well as analyzing the themes and trends in the online testimony. This digital town hall will be the largest collection of public testimony on broadband policy ever collected. Your analysis will help inform the national broadband framework and contribute to the national dialogue on the future of the Internet.

Josh Stearns
Program Manager
Free Press :: www.freepress.net
413.585.1533 ext. 204

reform **media**. transform **democracy**.

APPENDIX E



Dear _____,

We are pleased that you will be attending the InternetforEveryone.org member conference call. In this e-mail you will find the conference call details.

Jan. 15 at 3 p.m ET/ 12 p.m. PT
Conference call number: ###-###-####
Access code: #####

Agenda:

3:00 -- Brief Introductions
3:10 -- InternetforEveryone.org updates
3:20 -- Plans for the New Year
3:25 -- Town hall meeting in February
3:40 -- Working groups
3:45 -- Next steps

Talk with you soon!

Misty Perez Truedson
Campaign Coordinator
Free Press: <http://www.freepress.net/>
mperez@freepress.net
413-585-1533 ext. 217

1 guest or guests attending

Please print or save this message for your personal records

Event Coordinator
Free Press: media reform through education, organizing and advocacy

InternetforEveryone.org is a national coalition of individuals, public interest and industry groups who are working together to see that the Internet continues to drive free speech, economic growth and prosperity in America. Learn more at www.internetforeveryone.org/

APPENDIX F



Dear Katie,

Last night, President Barack Obama made high-speed, open and affordable Internet for everyone a priority in his national recovery plan.

It's now up to the people of North Carolina to see that he does it right.

Please Join others from across the state on Saturday, March 7, for the second in a series of town hall meetings on building a better Internet in the United States.

WHAT: InternetforEveryone.org town hall meeting in North Carolina

WHEN: Saturday, March 7, 2009, 11:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

WHERE: Durham Marriott Convention Center
201 Foster Street
Durham, N.C.

RSVP: [Reserve Your Place](#)

(Only 250 seats are available. RSVP today.)

At the town hall meeting, we will discuss the realities of life on both sides of the digital divide. We will look at what kind of Internet we want and how we all can share in its benefits. We will craft a plan for building a better Internet for everyone.

Space is limited, but we want you to have a seat at the table: [RSVP today!](#)

We each have a special part to play in bringing Internet to everyone/or, in bringing a high-speed connection to every American home and business. It's going to take innovative solutions and true public participation to address our current economic issues. We are calling on you to send a strong message to the Obama administration and to Congress that universal access to fast, affordable and open Internet is essential to America's future.

Join the movement to make a better Internet a reality for all.

Thank you,

Misty Perez
Campaign Coordinator
Free Press

<http://www.internetforeveryone.org/>

<http://www.freepress.net/>

1. Read "One Nation Online," our new fact sheet on the state of America's broadband:
http://www.freepress.net/files/IFE_Brochure.pdf

2. Learn more at <http://www.internetforeveryone.org/>

3. Join the InternetforEveryone.org Facebook community and invite your friends:
<http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=17607359573>

You (kgay@freepress.net) are receiving this e-mail as an opt-in subscriber to Free Press' e-activist list. You can [unsubscribe](#) or [manage your account](#) at any time.



InternetforEveryone.org is a national coalition of individuals, public interest and industry groups who are working together to see that the Internet continues to drive free speech, economic growth and prosperity in America. Learn more at www.internetforeveryone.org/

APPENDIX G



Dear Katie,

InternetforEveryone.org just traveled down North Carolina's "digital dirt road" to hear from people struggling without a fast Internet connection. People told us firsthand stories about the real challenges that North Carolinians face living "off the grid."

You can watch their video stories by following this link:

[Watch Five Days on the Digital Dirt Road](#)

This multimedia report is just the start of an important week in North Carolina. The report's video profiles will be featured at this Saturday's InternetforEveryone.org town hall meeting in Durham, N.C.

Please join me and other motivated citizens as we shape a plan for getting everyone in North Carolina and across the country connected to high-speed Internet:

WHAT: InternetforEveryone.org town hall meeting in North Carolina
WHEN: Saturday, March 7, 2009, 11:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.
WHERE: Durham Marriott Convention Center
201 Foster Street
Durham, N.C.
RSVP: [Reserve Your Place](#)
(Only 250 seats are available. RSVP now.)

High-speed Internet is more than a luxury; it's a necessity for participation in our 21st-century economy and democracy. Yet in North Carolina alone, nearly 50 percent of homes are without a high-speed connection.

President Barack Obama has made universal Internet access a priority for his new administration. We're holding this meeting, along with others across America, to show him and other leaders in Washington how to get the job done right.

Your voice is vital to this national conversation about our digital future. Please join us on Saturday, and speak up about what changes are needed to improve the Internet in America.

[Reserve Your Seat Now!](#)

I look forward to seeing you there,

Misty Perez
Campaign Coordinator
Free Press
<http://www.internetforeveryone.org/>
<http://www.freepress.net/>



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DONATE NOW



High-speed Internet, or “broadband,” is one of the most transformative communications technologies in human history. In just over a decade, broadband has completely changed commerce, public discourse, and how we interact with each other and the rest of the world. Broadband is no longer a luxury—it’s a public necessity.

Broadband’s potential to unleash innovation, promote free speech and encourage learning makes this technology the key to the future success of the U.S. economy and American democracy. But to unlock broadband’s limitless potential, it must be universally available and affordable.

WE NEED INTERNET FOR EVERYONE. HERE’S WHY:

There Is a Growing Digital Divide in America

ECONOMIC DIVIDE: The middle class and those less fortunate are falling behind as Internet access becomes more and more expensive. Only 35 percent of homes with less than \$50,000 in annual income have broadband, while 76 percent of households earning more than \$50,000 per year are connected.

GEOGRAPHIC DIVIDE: The principle of universal service is a cornerstone of

U.S. communications law. But while we’ve ensured that rural Americans have equal access to telephones and TV, we’re a long way from making universal broadband a reality. Currently, nearly 20 million Americans live in areas that are not served by a single broadband provider, while tens of millions more live in places where there is just a single provider for high-speed Internet access.

RACIAL/ETHNIC DIVIDE: Broadband can serve as a conduit for education, information and civic participation, which creates the potential to address many inequities that pervade American society. Unfortunately, broadband’s promise is not being realized equally across all racial and ethnic groups. Only 40 percent of racial and ethnic minority households subscribe to broadband, while 55 percent of non-Hispanic white households are connected.

America Is Ceding its Role as a Global Internet Leader

FALLING BEHIND ON BROADBAND DEPLOYMENT AND ADOPTION: Since 2001, the United States has fallen from fourth in the world in broadband adoption to 15th. While U.S. consumers face high prices and few choices, many of our European and Asian counterparts have robust, competitive broadband markets. Moving to the top of these rankings would mean millions of new jobs and hundreds of billions of dollars in increased economic activity.

FALLING BEHIND ON BROADBAND QUALITY: Americans pay far too much for far too little compared to citizens in other countries. We have the eighth-highest monthly rates for broadband service among leading developed nations. For years, consumers in countries like France and Japan have had access to connections with speeds that still aren't available in America.

TECHNOLOGY IMPROVES BUT MILLIONS ARE LEFT BEHIND

By the turn of the millennium, the Internet had emerged as an essential communications technology for a majority of the country. But millions of Americans were still standing on the wrong side of a newly created "digital divide."

By 2001, more than half of all U.S. homes were connected to the Internet, most via "dial-up" technology. But as Americans became familiar with the Internet's capabilities, they demanded technology that could do more. Dial-up's reign was short-lived; broadband was ascendant.

In just six years, broadband replaced basic Internet access as the "essential" communications technology. But this technological progress has not closed the digital divide; it has merely transformed it into a more challenging problem. Today, approximately half of all households subscribe to broadband (see Figure 1).

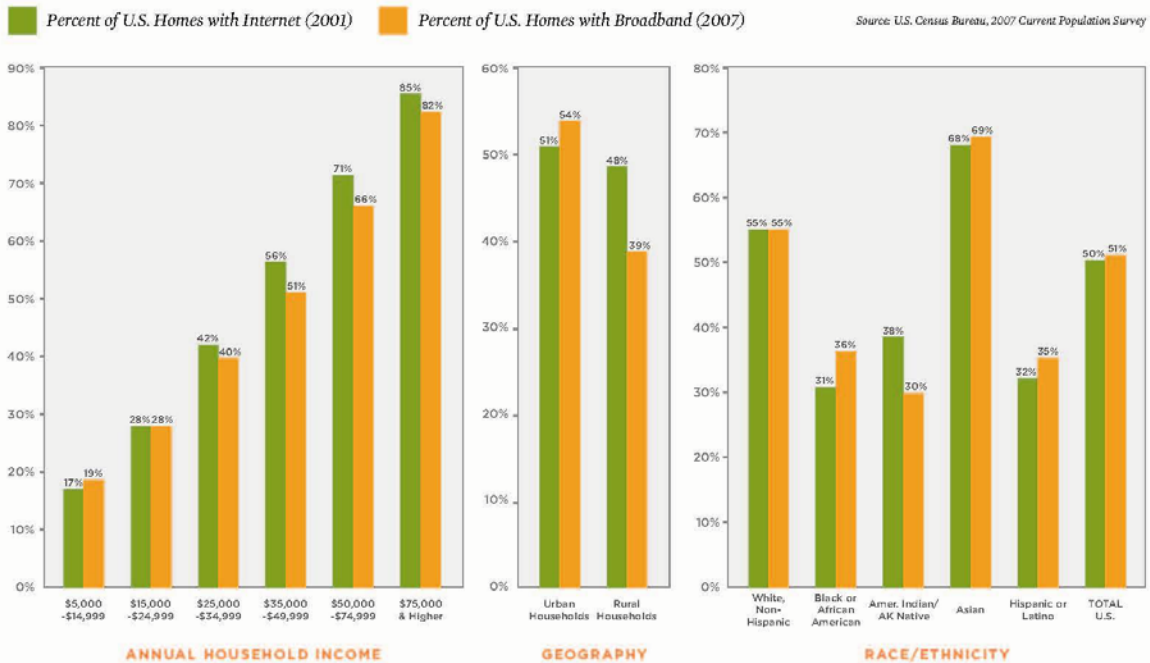
The digital divide has three basic dimensions:

ECONOMIC: The transition from a competitive, inexpensive dial-up market to a much less competitive and more costly broadband market has only exacerbated the economic digital divide. Only 35 percent of households with annual incomes under \$50,000 (approximately half of the country) have broadband—while 76 percent of households with higher annual incomes are connected.

GEOGRAPHIC: Rural America is not sharing in the benefits of broadband. Only 39 percent of rural households subscribe to broadband, and nearly 10 million rural households are in areas not served by *any* broadband provider.

RACIAL/ETHNIC: While 55 percent of non-Hispanic white households have broadband, only 40 percent of the rest of the country's homes subscribe. This disparity is essentially unchanged from the dial-up era.

Figure 1: The Digital Divide



THE BROADBAND DECLINE THREATENS AMERICA'S GLOBAL ECONOMIC LEADERSHIP

The United States is the birthplace of the Internet and home to most of the companies that are making the greatest innovations utilizing broadband technology. Americans are tech-savvy, rapidly adapting to technological change and weaving digital communications into nearly every facet of their daily lives.

Numerous studies of "digital readiness" also show that America is a global leader in the ability to make productive use of information and communications technologies.

But despite America's readiness and willingness to make use of advanced communications technologies, we are falling behind the rest of the world. In 2001, America stood near the top of global rankings of broadband adoption; a few short years later, we have been leapfrogged by our European and Asian competitors (see Figure 2).

Broadband adoption isn't the only statistic that matters. Maybe more important is whether high-speed Internet services are of high quality and value.

Unfortunately, *we are doing even worse* when it comes to price and speed. The average broadband offering in Japan is 10 times faster than the average service available to U.S. consumers—at half of the cost (see Figure 3).

Figure 2: The U.S. Broadband Decline

Change in Broadband Penetration Rankings 2001-2007

RANK	2001	2007
1	South Korea	Denmark
2	Canada	Netherlands
3	Sweden	Iceland
4	▶ United States	Norway
5	Belgium	Switzerland
6	Denmark	Finland
7	Netherlands	South Korea
8	Iceland	Sweden
9	Austria	Luxembourg
10	Germany	Canada
11	Japan	United Kingdom
12	Switzerland	Belgium
13	Norway	France
14	Finland	Germany
15	Spain	▶ United States

Source: OECD Broadband Statistics as of December 2001, 2007

Figure 3: The United States Broadband Market—Price and Speed

Broadband is far more expensive in the United States

RANK	COUNTRY	Avg. Monthly Subscription Price (USD, PPP)
1	Finland	\$31.18
2	Germany	\$32.22
3	Switzerland	\$32.69
4	United Kingdom	\$33.34
5	Sweden	\$34.00
6	Japan	\$34.21
7	Denmark	\$34.34
8	France	\$36.70
9	Netherlands	\$39.06
10	Ireland	\$40.41
11	Korea	\$40.65
12	Italy	\$41.09
13	Greece	\$41.77
14	Belgium	\$46.08
15	New Zealand	\$48.66
16	Turkey	\$50.04
17	Austria	\$50.08
18	Luxembourg	\$50.84
19	Canada	\$51.07
20	Australia	\$52.26
21	Portugal	\$52.61
22	▶ United States	\$53.06
23	Norway	\$55.74
24	Poland	\$56.57
25	Hungary	\$57.22

Broadband is slow in the United States

RANK	COUNTRY	Avg. Advertised Broadband Download Speeds (Mbps)
1	Japan	93.7
2	France	44.2
3	Korea	43.3
4	Sweden	21.4
5	New Zealand	13.6
6	Italy	13.1
7	Finland	13.0
8	Portugal	13.0
9	Australia	12.1
10	Norway	11.8
11	Luxembourg	10.7
12	United Kingdom	10.6
13	Germany	9.2
14	▶ United States	8.9
15	Canada	7.8
16	Spain	6.9
17	Greece	6.6
18	Hungary	6.4
19	Belgium	6.3
20	Czech Republic	6.0
21	Denmark	6.0
22	Switzerland	5.5
23	Netherlands	5.3
24	Slovak Republic	5.2
25	Austria	4.9

Source: OECD Broadband Statistics as of December 2007



Broadband's potential to **unleash innovation, promote free speech and encourage learning** makes this technology the key to the future success of the U.S. economy and American democracy.

OUR GOAL: A FAST, AFFORDABLE, OPEN INTERNET FOR EVERYONE

There is no single answer to closing the digital divide or reversing America's technological decline. We must focus not only on increasing broadband deployment, but also on increasing broadband demand.

Putting America back on top and bringing open, high-quality broadband connections into every home at an affordable price will

require innovative solutions. It will also require input from federal, state and local governments, businesses large and small, nonprofit organizations and public advocates, civic groups, churches and schools. **Everyone** must play a role.

InternetforEveryone.org is an unprecedented initiative bringing together the users, content

creators and innovators who power the Internet. The goal of our work is to see that every American gets connected to a fast, affordable and open Internet. This effort will organize popular support, economic clout and political momentum behind a comprehensive national broadband plan that restores America's international standing and delivers the benefits of broadband to all Americans.

InternetforEveryone.org is united by four basic principles:

1. ACCESS

Every home and business in America must have access to a high-speed, world class communications infrastructure.

2. CHOICE

Every consumer must enjoy real competition in online content as well as between high-speed Internet providers to achieve lower prices and higher speeds.

3. OPENNESS

Every internet user should have the right to freedom of speech and commerce online in an open market without gatekeepers or discrimination.

4. INNOVATION

The internet should continue to create good jobs, foster entrepreneurship, spread new ideas and serve as a leading engine of economic growth.



The time to act is now: Join us at www.InternetforEveryone.org

APPENDIX I

ABOUT US EVENTS RESOURCES AMERICA OFFLINE DIGITAL TOWN HALL JOIN NOW

What Do You Think the Future of the Internet Should Look Like?

This conversation begins here at the [Digital Town Hall](#). [Login](#) to post your thoughts — or add your comments to the posts below.

InternetforEveryone.org is convening town hall meetings across the country — including this **Digital Town Hall** — to inject your voice into a national broadband plan. This plan will be delivered to the Obama administration and congressional leaders in Washington as a people-powered guide to building a better Internet in America.

OBAMA:
"Here in the country that invented the Internet, every child should have a chance to get online."

Help define the future of the Internet in America.
[Join the conversation.](#)

Access

Dean Triplet writes on Wednesday, Apr 1

 My group has created our American Youth Congress Bill. American Youth Congress is where students from all over WNC come together to vote on 'simulated' bills. Although the bills may be fake, there have been several instances of bills being introduced into the North Carolina General Assembly. I am posting the bill to get constructive feedback.

1 comment
1 of 47 »

Choice

Dean Triplet writes on Wednesday, Apr 1

 My group has created our American Youth Congress Bill. American Youth Congress is where students from all over WNC come together to vote on 'simulated' bills. Although the bills may be fake, there have been several instances of bills being introduced into the North Carolina General Assembly. I am posting the bill to get constructive feedback.

1 comment
1 of 10 »

Openness

Dean Triplet writes on Wednesday, Apr 1

 My group has created our American Youth Congress Bill.

WNC come together to vote on 'simulated' bills. Although the bills may be fake, there have been several instances of bills being introduced into the North Carolina General Assembly. I am posting the bill to get constructive feedback.

1 comment
1 of 9 »

Innovation

Dean Triplet writes on Wednesday, Apr 1

 My group has created our American Youth Congress Bill. American Youth Congress is where students from all over WNC come together to vote on 'simulated' bills. Although the bills may be fake, there have been several instances of bills being introduced into the North Carolina General Assembly. I am posting the bill to get constructive feedback.

1 comment
1 of 19 »

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presents

5 DAYS ON THE DIGITAL DIRT ROAD

InternetforEveryone.org is working to shed light on the millions of Americans who live without regular Internet access or lack the training or equipment to get online. A small reporting team is traveling to communities across the country to tell their stories. In February, Free Press' Megan Tady spent one week interviewing residents of rural North Carolina.

FOLLOW THE TREK ONLINE AT WWW.INTERNETFOREVERYONE.ORG

INTRODUCTION

In North Carolina alone, nearly 5 million residents don't have high-speed Internet. According to a July 2007 study, 30 percent or more of the state's population in 21 rural counties did not have high-speed Internet connectivity. In many cases, telephone and cable companies have refused to provide service to people living in the remote and rural areas of the state, while some people are simply priced out of buying expensive broadband service.

It's becoming increasingly clear, however, that Internet connectivity is key to a sound economy and could help revitalize local communities hit hard by the economic downturn. North Carolina is the second-largest textile employer and the third-largest apparel employer in the United States, and it has suffered numerous plant closures over the last decade. The state has continued to hemorrhage jobs in the face of our current economic recession, losing 34,900 jobs in December 2008 alone. Over the past year, 120,200 jobs have vanished, and the state's unemployment rate is high at 8.7 percent.

Replacing these lost jobs with opportunities offered by the Internet — home-based businesses, telecommuting, and bringing current businesses into the digital age — could help save America's economy, and stabilize the lives of people floundering in places like North Carolina.

The e-NC Authority, a state initiative to expand Internet access, has been sounding the alarm about the digital divide since 2001:

"There is a critical need for broadband expansion in North Carolina. As the world economy becomes increasingly globalized, access to broadband infrastructure is vital in order for communities to remain competitive. The rural areas of North Carolina are being left behind."

Free Press traveled across the state in February to meet people trying to raise families, go to school, start and maintain businesses, and participate in the global economy using antiquated dial-up service and unreliable satellite Internet connections. Their stories are a testament to why high-speed Internet is vital for America's future, and why our leaders in Washington should be approaching broadband expansion with the same urgency and commitment given to past projects like highway expansion, rural electrification and clean drinking water.

DAY ONE: PEMBROKE



“When is our time going to come? When are we going to be able to access and get what we need? When are we going to be able to rise above? When are we going to rise above where we’re at right now and overcome?”

**RHONDA
LOCKLEAR**

Doug Locklear’s handshake is engulfing, and meeting his gaze sometimes requires shielding your own eyes from the sun. Doug is a restless part-time pastor and full-time resource coordinator for the Lumbee Nation. Caring for people is woven into his every interaction.

And the people of Pembroke — the heart of the 40,000-member Lumbee Tribe — need caring for. Robeson County, which includes Pembroke, has an unemployment rate of 9.7 percent. Between 1993 and 2003, Robeson County lost 10,274 manufacturing jobs, and the current economic downturn isn’t helping to bring them back to the area.

These numbers wouldn’t be so jarring if Robeson County and the Lumbee Tribe could have transitioned fairly seamlessly from the industrial era to our current digital one, replacing lost jobs with opportunities provided by high-speed Internet — including home-based businesses, telecommuting, and online college classes. But the digital era remains elusive — and Pembroke has been left stranded.

The Cost of Getting Connected

There are no clear numbers on how many Lumbee Tribe members have broadband access, but Doug is emphatic: “Many, many people can’t afford it.”

With broadband prices ranging from \$40 to \$60 per month, high-speed Internet is a luxury in Pembroke, even as it’s become a necessity in the rest of the country.

“A lot of our people unfortunately don’t have the high-speed Internet service, and they have to [do things] the old-fashioned route,” Doug says.

Fiercely proud, the Lumbee Tribe has been fighting for their rightful place in America for decades — taking on the Ku Klux Klan and the government, too. Although the federal government officially recognized the tribe in 1956, it withheld the full benefits of federal recognition, which the Lumbees are still trying to gain.

The Dial-Up Divide

The Lumbee logo — a black and red circle — is prominently displayed at the tribal center in Pembroke. Representing the Circle of Life, the logo is divided to represent the four Lumbee qualities of a balanced life: the spiritual, the emotional, the physical and the intellectual. The aspirations of the Lumbees are high, but the obstacles to achieving that balance are formidable.

Rhonda Locklear (no relation to Doug) says her family has been priced out of high-speed Internet access. Rhonda works as a housing specialist

for the tribe. She's able to get a high-speed connection at work, but at the end of the day when she turns off her computer, she also turns off her link to the outside world.

Recently, her 12-year-old son came home from school with a seemingly easy assignment: research census information for the tri-county area. But their dial-up connection turned a simple assignment into hours of aggravation. "It's discouraging, it's hurtful," Rhonda says. "It's hard to watch him go through so many emotions and try to keep him calm."

Because Rhonda helps people find homes, she's privy to a lot of personal information, and sometimes she does more counseling than anything else. But she knows what's going on behind closed doors, and how something as simple as the lack of Internet access is harming Lumbee families.

"I've got residents here who want to get an education and who want to further their education, and they don't have transportation to get to school," Rhonda says. "If they had high-speed Internet access, they could take online courses at home and get their education at home. Transportation wouldn't be a problem."

The Internet Lifeline

When asked what people in Robeson County do for work, Rhonda is anguished. "Right now, honestly, I don't know what people are going to do because everything is closing down," she says. "If you've got a job, you better hold on to it and hope and pray that you don't lose it. Things are just that bad."

With so many families struggling, the Internet is not their first concern. "Families are looking at, 'Well the light bill and the rent are more important than the Internet access,'" Rhonda says. "Groceries are more important than being able to access the Internet."

But she also knows that Internet access is more than just checking e-mail or shopping online; it's a lifeline to the outside world, and a chance to overcome the limits of location, poorly funded schools and a sinking economy.

And being left behind is hurting the Lumbee Nation: "I think some of our tribal members feel that maybe we're just not worthy," Rhonda says. "When is our time going to come? When are we going to be able to access and get what we need? When are we going to be able to rise above? When are we going to rise above where we're at right now and overcome?"

DAY TWO: PERSON COUNTY



“Here at the farm, I might want to check markets. I might want to get on a Web site to look at a piece of equipment or order some parts or order vaccine for my hogs. But when you try to get to the Web site, you twiddle your thumbs and wait for the site to come up and it takes forever.”

**JAY
FOUSHEE**

Jay Foushee was running late. A retired farmer in the county had chest pains, and Jay, a member of the volunteer fire department, was dispatched. He would have gotten home sooner, but he had trouble getting hold of the farmer’s wife.

“We were calling his wife and the phone was just ringing and ringing,” Jay says. “And then I thought, well hey, she might be on the Internet. Finally we called her sister who lives next door, who went over and got her.”

Their phone line was tied up because of the dial-up Internet connection? What year is it? For many in America, getting online via dial-up is a thing of the past, meaning Jay and his community are stuck there, too.

Phone and Cable Companies Have Stopped Short

And so it goes in rural Person County, where the retired farmer can see from his driveway the exact end of the cable lines, a lifeline to the outside world that is just beyond his grasp. Across the country and across North Carolina, telephone and cable companies have stopped short of bringing high-speed Internet to millions of rural families.

“I have called our local phone companies numerous times asking, ‘When can we get [high-speed Internet]?’” Jay says. “I keep getting, ‘Well, it’s coming, it’s coming.’ And this has been going on for about three years now.” Jay is a fourth-generation farmer who raises soybeans, corn and hogs on his 1,000 acres of land.

In Person County, population 37,341, 40 percent of the population does not have high-speed Internet, even as the county’s Web site claims the area “offers a strategic location for business and industry.”

Jay’s neighbors have been organizing residents to appeal to the state government for help. One letter to state Rep. Bill Faison describes the ways their community is suffering on the wrong side of the digital divide, including:

- “Putting our children at a disadvantage in their education and ultimately their employment prospects;
- Creating more barriers to economic retooling of our agricultural community; and
- Suffering from income, class and mobility discrimination.”

This is the first time in 100 years the Foushees won’t be planting tobacco. Jay says his father feels the twinge of heartbreak in seeing this long-lived crop vanish from their fields; Jay, on the other hand, wants to move forward with the times.

The Education Divide

But Jay can only move so far when the technology isn't moving with him. "We have dial-up; it takes forever," Jay says. "Here at the farm, I might want to check markets. I might want to get on a Web site to look at a piece of equipment or order some parts or order vaccine for my hogs. But when you try to get to the Web site, you twiddle your thumbs and wait for the site to come up and it takes forever."

Jay's 16-year-old daughter Julia has to take extreme measures to get online to do her homework, driving to her mother's office — just recently outfitted with DSL — several nights a week.

"I watched her one night sit there and wait for page after page to come up, and it's frustrating," Jay says. "She could check it real quick instead of wondering or worrying or having to call somebody or take a bad grade because she didn't have quick access to look up something."

Julia demonstrates the family's agonizingly slow connection with a click and a wait. And wait. Ten minutes after she logs in, she finally reaches her e-mail inbox, which brings news that elicits a groan. Someone has scheduled a last-minute online chat for her 4-H group, and now Julia has to trek out into the night to find a broadband connection so she can participate.

Julia's mother Kim is understandably chagrined. "We want to be able to have her here at home where we could oversee what's being looked at on the Web and to help her if she had any questions on something," Kim says.

Kim is director of operations at the Orange County Speedway, where business just got a little easier with their DSL connection. But after work, Kim comes home to the slow lane.

"If anyone ever gets a taste of high-speed Internet versus dial-up, they'll never want to go back," Kim says. "It's like driving a Corvette when you used to drive a Pinto."

DAY 3: SMOKY MOUNTAINS



“I don’t know how many people would be employed setting up the infrastructure, but a heck of a lot of people would be employed on their computers with high-speed Internet who otherwise could not, just simply couldn’t compete.”

**BROOKS
TOWNES**

WEAVERVILLE

Brooks Townes has been frustrated ever since he moved to the mountains 11 years ago. His heart and his home are on the West Coast, near the boats and the salty, warm sea air.

He moved to “these hollers” — the Smoky Mountains of Weaverville, N.C. — to help care for his ailing mother. Thinking the move would be temporary, Brooks didn’t worry much about his career as a maritime writer for publications like *Wooden Boat* and *Professional Boat Builders*, even though he’s now four hours from the ocean. With dial-up Internet, he could file his stories from the “puckerbrush.”

But that was more than a decade ago. Brooks’ resilient mother lived to be almost 99 years old, and telecommuting via dial-up was only practical when everyone else was on the same slow connection. Unable to get high-speed Internet, Brooks has been marooned in the mountains and forced into early retirement.

Crawling with Dial-Up

“The Internet at first was a great boon,” Brooks says. “I had no idea what I was going to do when I first got here to look after my mother. But as time went on, and more and more people in the rest of the world got high-speed Internet and we were still stuck with dial-up — 36-what’s-its a minute — well, I lost my ability to stay with it.”

Brooks says it’s frustrating to watch the rest of the world whiz by while he’s stuck crawling.

“Web sites are much more complex,” he says. “To go to a Web site and browse takes me so much longer than anyone in civilization. After a while you say, ‘Why am I doing this?’ I ought to grow potatoes or something. I would be more effective.”

Brooks grew up with an insatiable love of boats. He built his first when he was 11 years old, naming it *Mom’s Worry*. But his upbringing wasn’t all-things nautical. His father, William A. Townes, was a newspaper man. Brooks worked as a copyboy in the bustling heart of one of his father’s newsrooms, gaining a reporter’s instinct and learning the unshakable thrill of words.

The Coffee-Shop Commute

He returned to writing when he was 30 after a stint at sea as a professional sailor. “I didn’t want to be an old salty character on a dock somewhere telling stories,” he says. Instead, he wanted to write them.

Yet something that he never considered took the wind out of his sails: the lack of high-speed Internet. When Brooks realized that dial-up would not meet his needs, he began driving to coffee shops to work and download large files.

“The biggest frustration is going to a café and you get a little tiny table,” Brooks says. “You bring files with you, but there’s no place to put it. Not being able to swivel around and open a drawer and pull out something pertinent to what you’re doing is kind of like a car mechanic that’s only got a crescent wrench and no other tools to work on a complicated machine.”

Brooks’ mother passed away in 2008, and he and his wife are finally moving back to his beloved West coast. But Brooks says that lack of broadband has deeper reverberations than his own career.

“I might still be doing my maritime work from here and not thinking about moving back to the oceanfront if I had high-speed Internet,” Brooks says. “That may be a small impact on the economy of Asheville because my wife and I spend our money here. But if you multiply me by several hundred or thousand people who live in these hills and hollers ... ”



MARS HILL

“We have learned from the B&B business that if they don’t find you right there ready to roll, they move on to somebody else... We can’t afford to lose a single customer.”

Martha Abraham is devoted to her Web site, tending to it the way others spend hours in their gardens coaxing flowers. She knows that to make it in the bed-and-breakfast world, she has to have a flashy site that sets her business apart.

But Martha doesn’t spend hours at her computer for the joy of editing her site. High-speed Internet is not available in her area — 30 minutes from Asheville — and dial-up Internet and even her recently acquired satellite connection make building a business with an online presence tedious, time-consuming and expensive.

“I found out real quick that I had just as good a chance of getting a reservation than the guy who had been in the business for 20 years as long as I had a good Web site,” Martha says. “But it was very difficult to do when I realized that I was limited to dial-up. In the beginning, I didn’t know the difference between dial-up or DSL or whatever you computer people call them, but I knew the difference between fast and slow.”

Satellite Internet has been marketed as the high-speed answer to people living in places where the phone and cable companies refuse to bring broadband. Yet installation and monthly fees are often very expensive, and the satellite connection can be unreliable.

“We have learned from the B&B business that if they don’t find you right there ready to roll, they move on to somebody else... We can’t afford to lose a single customer.”

**MARTHA
ABRAHAM**

"On some days, [satellite] is not any better than dial-up, and you don't know when it's going to be working and when it's not," Martha says. "Rainstorms, it's down. Snow, it's down. Wind, it's down."

Competitive Disadvantage

Even though Martha is doing all of the right things to market her B&B, the lack of dependable broadband puts her at a competitive disadvantage. As the economy falters, Martha's reservation book is looking empty. Today, there are no guests, and for several weeks, the phone didn't ring at all. And Martha fears that not having broadband puts her business at greater risk.

An almost obligatory question for travelers these days is, "Do you have Internet?" Even romance-seeking couples want to tow their laptops. Martha's reply: "Yes, I have it, and if we're lucky it will work when you get here." It's definitely a deal-breaker.

Another deal-breaker: slow online reservation pages. "If [people] don't find you right there, ready to roll, they move on to somebody else," Martha says. "If that satellite and that online booking isn't working, and they can't continue with pushing a few keys, they will definitely go to somebody else. And being as small as we are, we can't afford to lose a single customer."

Martha's cheery, worry-free nature disappears as she thinks about what's at stake. "We went into this business for all the right reasons," she says somberly. "We've worked really hard on our product. But it's like giving a party and nobody coming. It's hurting our pocketbooks. We're baby boomers. We thought we did everything right for our retirement. This was a great stage to go into do something really worthy in a beautiful part of the country. But we certainly didn't do it to fail at it."

Yet Martha's tenacity may be no match for a situation beyond her control — the decision by Internet service providers to bypass her community.

"You've got very sophisticated people with very sophisticated businesses that are living in the mountains," she says. "And we need to be served just like everybody else. There's no difference except for the hill that's in the way."

DAY FOUR: SPRING CREEK



“I would encourage [the Obama administration] to move as quickly as possible to get us the basics that we need here for high-speed Internet... I would tell [Obama], ‘Let’s get this done yesterday if we can, because every day that is delayed is one more day lost.’”

**LAYTEN
DAVIS**

Getting to Spring Creek takes a certain dedication, but once you start there’s no going back. There are few places to turn around driving on the twisting road whittled from the mountain. The only option is to continue up and onward, until, finally you break from the mountains and reach a long, flat stretch of valley.

The people of Spring Creek — about 1,500 families — know they have a barely noticed treasure that has escaped the condo developers and hotel chains. They are fiercely protective of the land and what it means to live in Spring Creek.

Even the township’s rudimentary Web site gives a clear warning: “If you have come to our community to develop large tracts of land for multimillion dollar homes on small lots, pollute our streams and springs, and take what we have and give back nothing, you have come to the wrong place.”

Spring Creek’s Internet Drain

Lady Cerelli, who moved to Spring Creek four years ago, says there’s something healing about the mountains that encircle the town she’s found unusually accepting. “That’s what’s so beautiful about this community,” she says. “It doesn’t matter what your religion is; nobody falls alone. Everybody comes together to pick you up.”

But Spring Creek is struggling. The area is so remote, many people must commute over the mountains for work, and some who leave for jobs don’t come back. Economic conditions are tough, and high-speed Internet is, save for a few pricey satellite connections, non-existent; the township is lucky enough to get dial-up.

In an effort to revitalize the area, residents have embarked on a massive undertaking to renovate the old school building into a community center with a restaurant called “Grits,” a library, a computer lab, a gym, a convenience store, and space for small businesses. The center, only partially complete, is a gathering place, a space to talk about the past and imagine the future.

Lady knows that the future — and the vitality of the local economy — is dependent on getting high-speed Internet.

“We don’t have malls; we don’t have industry,” she says. “The purpose of the [community] center is to entice other business to come here. We have rooms to rent for businesses. Access to broadband would be a big plus for someone who would want to move in.”

Flipping the Switch

Layten Davis, 71, was born in Spring Creek, and remembers running up and down the halls of the school. "See those squares on the floor," he says, pointing to spots on the wooden floor in the restaurant. "That was the principal's desk."

Layten likens the need for the government to invest in broadband infrastructure to the rural electrification projects of the 1930s. While nearly all urban residents in the country had electricity, few rural residents did. And private utility companies gave the same excuse that telephone and cable companies give today: It's too expensive to build service to rural and remote areas. The Roosevelt administration stepped in where private industry bowed out, helping to finally light up the homes, schools, hospitals and streets of rural America.

Layten says Spring Creek was one of the last places to get electricity. It was 1948; he was 10 years old.

"I remember what an exciting day it was when we were able to turn the lights on in the house that we had wired a year-and-a-half earlier," he says. "All the technology was there. We could turn the switches on and nothing would happen. It's pretty much the same thing now knowing that the technology exists but we can't turn the switch on to get the [broadband] turned on."

Getting It Done

In a booth next to Layten and Veda, his wife of 49 years, two strangers realize they're cousins. "The second question anyone asks around here is, 'What's your mother's maiden name?'" Layten says. Several teenage boys tramp through the tiny store in search of an after-school snack. The restaurant owner's son sweeps the lint of snow off the front porch.

But without a broadband connection, it's hard to imagine the next generation wanting to stay in this close-knit community.

"I would encourage [the Obama administration] to move as quickly as possible to get us the basics that we need here for high-speed Internet," Layten says. "I would tell [Obama], 'Let's get this done yesterday if we can, because every day that is delayed is one more day lost.'"

Veda, mostly quiet and nodding as Layten talks, punctuates his final point: "We need it. Now."

DAY FIVE: RUTHERFORD COUNTY



“Moving out here was digital culture shock in a way. I assumed wrongly that I would at least be able to get cable out to the house, or DSL. As it turned out, neither of those are even close to where we live.”

**SAM
ADAMS**

Rutherford County's first textile plant opened in 1874 but burned to the ground only a few months later. It could have been taken as a foreboding sign of what was to come, how the textile industry would momentarily boost an economy, and then be wiped out almost completely.

In the 1990s, when the textile industry skipped town to countries like Taiwan and Korea, Rutherford County was left to sift through the rubble, and its economy would never be the same again.

“The recession everyone is talking about now started more than a decade ago here,” says Tim Will, executive director of Foothills Connect Business & Technology Center. Foothills is one of seven “telecenters” created by North Carolina’s e-NC Authority to serve as technology and entrepreneurship resource centers for rural, economically distressed counties.

No Broadband = No Development

From 1996 to 2006, more than 150,000 jobs vanished from North Carolina’s textile industry, and the current state of the economy hasn’t made life any easier. In Rutherford County, population nearly 63,000, people are barely hanging on.

“Two churches and a town have approached me to say that the food bank has run out of food, if that’s any indication of how bad it is here,” Tim says.

Tim believes the key to turning things around is high-speed Internet. “If you don’t have broadband, you don’t get economic development,” he says. “If you don’t have access to broadband, no company is going to move into your area because they’re going to demand broadband.”

Harnessing opportunities from broadband — the ability to start home businesses, telecommute, and get an online education — will reinvigorate the local economy, Tim says.

Despite its isolation, Rutherford County is only 50 miles from Asheville, the largest city in Western North Carolina. “So we are within proximity to a huge market, but to connect to that market we need communication, i.e., the Internet. If we don’t have access to the Internet, all of those customers do not know we are here and we can’t conduct Internet commerce.”

Can’t Settle for Less

When Sam Adams relocated to Rutherford County from Raleigh with his wife to care for ailing family members, he could barely do his telecommuting job. Sam is a senior IBM researcher who can’t settle for anything less than broadband.

"Moving out here was digital culture shock in a way," Sam says. "I assumed wrongly that I would at least be able to get cable out to the house, or DSL. As it turned out, neither of those are even close to where we live, and even our regular phone line, when it rains out here and the ground gets good and wet, our phones crackle and sometimes go out."

At first, he tried to use a wireless data card, but that proved insufficient. "It got to be a real barrier when you're on the phone with some senior VP up in New York somewhere and he says, 'Why don't you send me your charts?' " he says. "And I say, 'Well, it's 20 megabytes and given my little data card, it will take about an hour-and-a-half.' And he's on the phone going, 'I want it now.' That was a real problem."

But Sam didn't want to return to the big city. "The quality of life here is just unmatched," Sam says. "So the question was, how do I continue with my job, continue to do what I know how to do to make money, and live where I want to live?"

Locked Out

After settling for mediocre satellite service for two years, Sam eventually made a bold — and expensive — move, erecting his own wireless tower "to bounce a signal off a nearby mountain that's given me reasonable broadband."

His solution cost nearly \$10,000, an expense that most people can't shoulder. Sam says his experience has given him a unique perspective on the digital divide. "What about the millions of Americans who are still stuck on dial-up?" he says. "They are just really locked out."

"How are you going to attract a business to the area when you say, 'The best you're going to get is medium-quality cable type access?' " he asks. "And, 'Oh yeah, everyone you bring here for your factory or your corporation, they're all going to be severely downgraded for their digital access.' That's just a non-starter.

"If innovation is about competing and getting to the market, whether that's the marketplace of ideas, or ideology or economy, the slower you move, the worse you're off."

The logo for Internet for Everyone.org features a stylized target symbol (a circle with a dot in the center) to the left of the text "Internet for Everyone.org". The text is in a bold, sans-serif font, with "Internet" and ".org" in a larger size than "for Everyone".

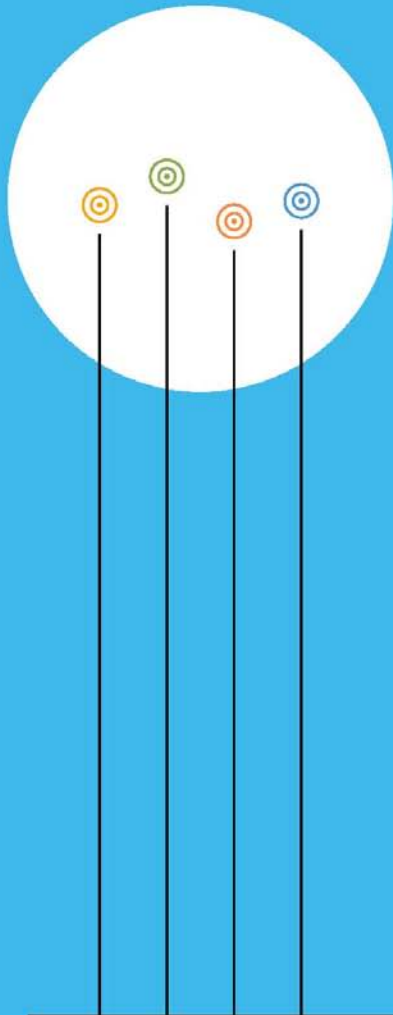
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TOWN HALL MEETING

Help Define the Future of America's Internet

DISCUSSION GUIDE • DURHAM, N.C. • MARCH 7, 2009

CONTENTS

Why InternetforEveryone.org? —————>	2
Introduction: The Internet in America —————>	3
The Four Principles —————>	4
One: Access —————>	5
Two: Openness —————>	7
Three: Choice —————>	9
Four: Innovation —————>	11
InternetforEveryone.org Members —————>	Back Cover



If it weren't for the Internet, [Michael] wouldn't have been able to go to the school he is. ... His "Big Brother" got on the Internet and found him a scholarship.

Margaret Ibarra (photo w. Michael)
Grandmother
El Monte, California
InternetforEveryone.org video profile. Watch Margaret and Michael's interview at www.internetforeveryone.org.

WHO WE ARE

InternetforEveryone.org is a national coalition of public interest, civic and industry groups that are working to bring the benefits of a fast, affordable and open Internet connection to everyone in America.

Internet services play an indispensable part in our 21st-century economy and democracy. For millions of Americans, a high-speed connection is no longer a luxury; it's essential to their work, education, family life and civic involvement. Our broad alliance is working together with citizens and leaders across the country to create a plan to bring broadband into every home and business, at a price all of us can afford.

One Nation, Online

WHY INTERNETFOREVERYONE.ORG?

America is the birthplace of the Internet and home to many of its greatest ideas and innovators. But since high-speed Internet became available, we have failed to deliver its benefits to all Americans. As a result, millions in the United States still stand on the wrong side of the “digital divide,” at an enormous cost to our society.

The United States has fallen to 22nd place in the world today in terms of high-speed Internet adoption.¹ American consumers face high prices and few choices. Countries in Asia and Europe are far closer to achieving the goals of universal, affordable access and real competition. Bringing the country’s high-speed Internet services to a competitive level with our overseas counterparts would translate into millions of new jobs and hundreds of billions of dollars in increased economic activity for the United States.

Closing the “digital divide” is a national challenge that must be faced by new leadership in Washington. Putting America back on top and bringing an open, high-quality, affordable Internet connection into every home and business will require a comprehensive and innovative approach. It will require input from federal, state and local governments, businesses large and small, nonprofit organizations and public advocates, civic groups, churches and schools. InternetforEveryone.org is ensuring that everyone can play a role.

WHY ARE WE COMING TOGETHER?

Strengthening America’s Internet infrastructure is crucial to our prosperity as a nation. Everyone stands to benefit. And building a better Internet for everyone starts with the American public, in local conversations about our online future.

As new leaders in Washington consider their agenda for broadband, they need to hear from all of us about the ways we can work together to create a more accessible, open and affordable Internet. Town hall meetings are where these conversations begin.

¹ International Telecommunications Union.

WHAT WILL WE TALK ABOUT?

We’ll be looking at what kind of Internet we want and how we can all share in its benefits. Some of the questions we will focus on:

- How do we ensure Internet services for everyone in America?
- How do we expand consumer choice and lower costs for Internet services?
- How can the Internet be a catalyst for economic growth, jobs and prosperity?
- How do we preserve the Internet’s level playing field so everyone can access the content, applications and services of their choice?
- What roles should be played by the federal government, local governments, private industry and everyday citizens to build a better Internet?

WHAT IS MY ROLE?

Americans know better than anyone else what changes are needed to improve the Internet in this country. You don’t need to be an expert to take part in this conversation. Bring your own experience and concerns and express them to others at your table. A facilitator will help collect your ideas, which will then be shared with the larger group. You’ll have a wireless keypad for voting on your preferred ideas throughout the day.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN AFTER TODAY?

InternetforEveryone.org is convening town hall meetings across the country to develop a national broadband plan. This plan will be based on the public feedback collected from your meeting and other meetings, and via an online forum — the Digital Town Hall at www.InternetforEveryone.org/townhall. The plan will then be delivered to the Obama administration and congressional leaders in Washington as a people-powered guide to building a better Internet in America. Our goal is not only to convey a public vision, but to promote a tangible plan of action.

Introduction

THE INTERNET IN AMERICA — CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Right now, the United States lacks a national broadband plan. With new leadership in Washington, we have the opportunity to launch a grassroots initiative that will restore America's global leadership in the information economy.

High-speed Internet is one of the most transformative technologies in human history. In little more than a decade, broadband has completely changed how we do business, engage with our government, teach our children, and interact with one another and the rest of the world.

Having a connection to a fast, open and affordable Internet is no longer a luxury — it's a public necessity.

But America is suffering from a "digital divide." Tens of millions of people can't get online for reasons of class, location, race and ethnicity.

→ **CLASS:** Income is key to determining who has broadband access. Only 35 percent of homes with less than \$50,000 in annual income have broadband, while 76 percent of homes earning more than \$50,000 per year are connected.²

→ **LOCATION:** Rural areas are being overlooked. Nearly 20 million Americans live in places that are not served by a single broadband provider, while tens of millions more live in places where there is just one.³

→ **RACE:** Broadband's promise is not being realized equally across all racial and ethnic groups. Only 40 percent of ethnic minority households subscribe to broadband, while 55 percent of non-Hispanic white households are connected.⁴

We can start solving these problems by bringing everyone in the country together in an open and public discussion about the future of the Internet.

This is not just about national pride. We're talking about serious money, the creation of good jobs, better education and health care, and reviving an economy in crisis.

² U.S. Census Bureau, 2007 Current Population Survey

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ *Ibid.*

THE FOUR PRINCIPLES

The diverse public- and private-sector groups that make up the InternetforEveryone.org coalition have identified four defining principles that provide a basis for any effort to get America's digital future back on track. These four principles will guide our town hall discussion today:



WHAT'S AT STAKE?

A 2007 study by the Brookings Institution and MIT estimated that a one-digit increase in U.S. per-capita broadband penetration equates to an additional 300,000 jobs. If our broadband penetration were as high as a country like Denmark's, we could expect approximately 3.7 million additional U.S. jobs.⁵

Glossary of Terms

Broadband: High-speed Internet services that can transmit video, audio and other rich media to and from Internet users. DSL, cable, fiber and wireless networks are considered broadband services.

Dial-up: Internet access through telephone lines. Via a modem connected to a telephone line, the user's computer dials in to an Internet service and establishes a link. Dial-up Internet connections are too slow to be considered broadband.

DSL: A high-speed Internet connection that uses the wires of a local telephone network. An acronym for "digital subscriber loop," DSL can be used at the same time and on the same telephone line as regular telephone voice services.

Cable: A form of high-speed Internet access that uses cable television infrastructure. Internet services are layered on top of existing cable

connections, just as DSL uses existing telephone networks. Cable networks and telephone networks are the two predominant forms of high-speed residential Internet access in the United States.

Fiber: A glass or plastic fiber that can transmit high-speed Internet signals over longer distances and at higher data rates than other available broadband services. While fiber Internet connections are faster than most other broadband services, the infrastructure is expensive to build. At present, only 1 percent of U.S. Internet users connect via a fiber network.

Wireless: Internet services that utilize public airwaves to transmit high-speed Internet signals. Wireless networks can deliver Internet services to people using mobile devices and portable laptops as well as those living in remote regions beyond the reach of land-based or "wired" networks.

⁵ Robert Crandall, William Lehr and Robert Litan. "The Effects of Broadband Deployment on Output and Employment: A Cross-sectional Analysis of U.S. Data." June 2007.



PRINCIPLE 1

Access

Every home, business and civic institution in America must have access to a high-speed, world-class communications infrastructure.

Millions of Americans use the Internet on a regular basis for work or school, to stay in touch with friends, to find information, and to purchase goods and services. Still, approximately 40 percent of all U.S. homes are not connected to the Internet or use slow dial-up technology.

As people become more familiar with high-speed Internet's capabilities (to do things like watch video, listen to music or share photographs), the technology we use needs to keep up. Broadband has already replaced dial-up Internet access as the "essential" technology. But this new demand for high-speed Internet has not closed the digital divide; it has only transformed it into a more challenging problem.

UNEQUAL ACCESS

Broadband in America today is not equally accessible. Broadband subscribers are largely middle- or upper-class and living in urban or suburban areas. Poorer communities and communities of color as well as communities in rural settings have been largely left off the grid.

One of the main problems faced by those on the wrong side of the digital divide is the difficulty

of participating in civic affairs. Where political discussions and decisions increasingly occur via the Web, there is significant risk that groups without adequate Internet access will be under-represented in our democracy.

WHY INVEST IN ACCESS?

Building a nationwide network for high-speed Internet access is estimated to cost in the tens of billions of dollars.⁶ As our resources are limited in the current economic crisis, our leaders need to carefully weigh the value of investment in Internet infrastructure against other demands.

Funding for broadband buildout is necessary to improve our economic, educational and health care systems and to keep the United States competitive globally. Recent studies demonstrate that improving broadband infrastructure generates more jobs, greater business investment, and higher tax revenues. The long-term economic benefits of a better Internet could justify the investment today.⁷

⁶ Michael Kende's slides for analysis, delivered at Columbia University's "The State of Telecom" conference, October 19, 2007; and Stephanie N. Mehta, "Verizon's Big Bet on Fiber Optics," *Fortune*, February 22, 2007.
⁷ "A \$376 Billion Opportunity for California," in CENIC and Gartner, One Gigabit or Bust Initiative.

Options for Better Access

Private Industry. Internet companies have invested billions of dollars to build out new broadband networks into areas where they perceive healthy market demand. They usually seek regulatory accommodations such as tax incentives from local, state and federal government to connect lower-income or rural communities.

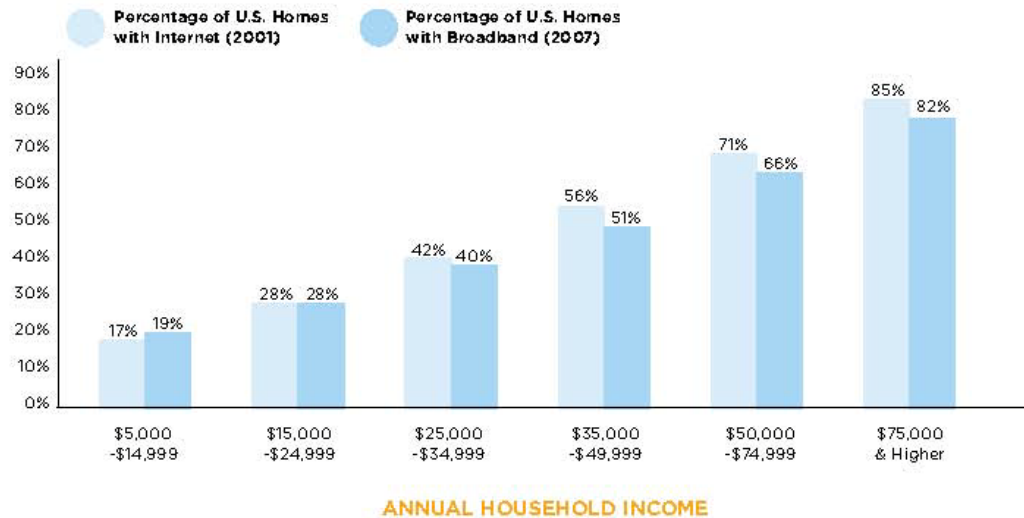
Federal Government. Over the past century, bringing electrical and telephone services to rural areas and building the Interstate highway system all required substantial U.S. government investment. Government funding for Internet infrastructure has proven successful in Canada, England, Japan, South Korea and other developed countries that have adopted broadband access plans. The United States could also consider adopting the type of matching-grant program used in Canada, where the federal government, the province and the network owner each contribute one-third of the funding for every broadband construction project.

Local Communities. Recently, towns and cities have experimented with municipal broadband networks, deploying wireless or fiber networks and other infrastructure to provide Internet access. Cities and communities have also struck agreements with providers to guarantee wiring of low-income neighborhoods, schools, libraries and community centers in exchange for access to public streets and power lines to deliver their commercial services.



I am an online seller of day lilies. [Dial-up] makes it virtually impossible to download all of the images of the various varieties of plants. It makes it very cumbersome to communicate.

Jack Kennedy
Day Lily grower and seller
Rutherford County, N.C.
InternetForEveryone.org video profile. Watch Jack's interview at www.internetforeveryone.org.



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2007 Current Population Survey



PRINCIPLE 2

Openness

Every Internet user should have the right to freedom of speech and commerce online in an open market without gatekeepers or discrimination.

Openness is the defining characteristic of the Internet. A high-speed connection is useful only if you can connect to everyone else online. This openness principle was built into the basic architecture of the Internet — leaving ultimate control over your Internet experience with you, the user.

However, there is currently no federal requirement to provide consumers with access to all the legal Internet services, applications and content they need and want.

MANAGING THE NETWORK

Some network operators are considering charging extra money to allow users to go where they want and to do what they want online. Others are considering using technology that would sift through and filter the content that you share with others online. By inspecting Web traffic, they seek to prevent the sharing of data-rich or illegal files or the use of certain applications.

Internet providers say they need to be able to better manage content through filtering or content inspection to contend with increasing consumer demands for high-speed access. They also have spoken of the need to generate more income and new markets by creating new tolls

on the information superhighway. These new tolls would allow providers to steer users toward their applications and services and away from those provided by competitors.

The result of these practices could lead to an Internet where control over information shifts from you — the user — toward the company that provides the connection.

LEGAL PROTECTIONS?

These new traffic management practices would fundamentally change the open architecture of the Internet. The Internet's founding idea was that every Web site should be accessible without discrimination. That's how bloggers can compete with CNN or *USA Today* for readers. That's how up-and-coming musicians can build underground audiences before they get their first mainstream hit. Ideas on the Web rise and fall on their own merits.

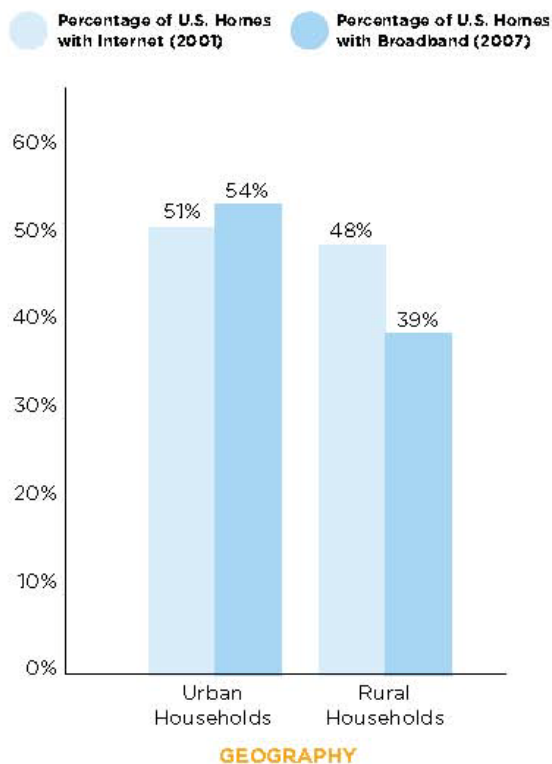
The question comes down to whether the ideal of openness requires a legal guarantee — and what kind. The network operators fear that too many openness requirements will inhibit their ability to innovate. But discrimination endangers the open and level playing field that has made the Internet so democratic.

Options for Openness

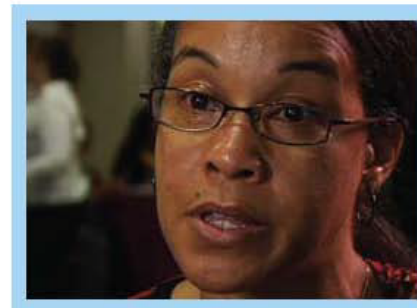
Private Industry. With increased user demand for broadband services, Internet providers say they need more leeway in managing the flow of information on the Web and are experimenting with technology that allows them to filter, limit and even block content. Providers have pledged not to interfere with customer access to applications and content on the Web, but their customer service agreements still give them the right to cut off any user's Internet connection without explanation.

Federal Government. The Federal Communications Commission has a "Broadband Policy Statement" that guarantees consumers the right to access the content and applications of their choice. The federal agency recently used its statement to sanction a cable company that was blocking customers' access to certain high-speed Internet applications. Many are calling upon Congress to pass stronger laws to safeguard consumers and protect against Internet gatekeepers. Others fear that such laws would inhibit Internet providers' ability to manage their networks.

Local Communities. Many local governments and community groups have sought to build high-speed Internet networks with openness guarantees. Local governments and communities can also ask for openness guarantees when striking agreements with providers that need to access public land to build out commercial networks. Such guarantees can prevent network providers from favoring certain content or services and tilting the Internet's level playing field.



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2007 Current Population Survey



As more information related to health, employment and economic success moves online, it tends to be rich, multi-media content. I think the only way people can really benefit from that is to have broadband access.

Karen Wade,
CTCNet Los Angeles
InternetforEveryone.org video profile. Watch Karen's
interview at www.internetforeveryone.org.



Choice

Every Internet user must enjoy real choice in online content as well as among high-speed Internet providers to achieve lower prices and faster speeds.

The United States has fallen behind other developed nations when it comes to broadband speeds and prices. A substantial part of the problem is the lack of competition among broadband providers in local markets.

HOW WE'RE GETTING THE INTERNET

There are 11 major Internet service providers (companies with more than a million customers) in America, and more than 15,000 smaller providers.⁸ But those numbers can be deceiving. Most communities that have high-speed Internet access are only served by one cable company and one telephone company. And a significant number of rural and low-income communities lack any broadband options. Alternatives to broadband access via phone and cable systems, like wireless Internet and broadband transmitted over power lines, still fail to offer viable competition due to technical challenges and limited infrastructure.⁹

With few real choices, Americans are left paying much more for Internet connections that are much slower than what's available to consumers in Western Europe and Asia. To solve this problem,

we need to take an honest look at the lack of choice among Internet service providers and encourage more competition among providers and more options for users.

BUILDING BLOCKS OF CHOICE

Getting more "last-mile" Internet service to homes requires using public infrastructure such as airwaves, telephone poles and sidewalks. Some argue that we should make more network infrastructure available on a "wholesale" or "open access" basis, opening up resources such as the airwaves to more competitors.

Federal funds and policies that foster competition can spark the creation of more local networks. This may include encouraging the development of "Community Internet" systems by cities, public-private partnerships and local groups. The promotion of bigger, better commercial wireless networks as a competitor to phone and cable services is another option. This would be done by opening up more of the public airwaves to new wireless providers.

⁸ Alex Goldman. "Top US ISPs by Subscriber," ISP-Planet, August 29, 2008. See also: "Internet Service Providers in North America, B.L.C.
⁹ S. Derek Turner. "Broadband Reality Check II," Free Press, August 2006.

Options for Better Choice

Private Industry. Technological developments have created innovative means to deliver high-speed Internet services. But new businesses seek policies that lower barriers to entry, so they can introduce their new products and services, compete with the dominant players, and give people more choices. Examples of these advances include new handheld mobile devices that allow users to surf the Internet while on the go.

Federal Government. Governments can play a role in lowering barriers to entry to the marketplace by opening up more public assets — such as the airwaves — for new Internet services. They can also redistribute financial resources — such as the Universal Service Fund — to companies connecting rural customers. Other options include stipulating “open access” conditions and providing government grants and tax incentives for companies seeking to compete with the incumbent phone and cable providers.

Local Communities. In the absence of competitive market choices, hundreds of communities have invested in broadband infrastructure to solve their access problems themselves. Public ownership of local networks — both wired and wireless — allows communities to offer an affordable alternative to profit-driven commercial providers.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Open Access: Under open access conditions, a network owner or manager would make network access available without discrimination at a “wholesale” cost to customers and other service providers. Open access requirements helped foster competition in dial-up Internet and long-distance telephone service, but they have yet to be applied widely to broadband.

Community Internet: Community Internet networks are locally based Internet services. New wireless and wired technologies have allowed hundreds of local governments, public-private partnerships, schools and community groups to offer low-cost, cheap and reliable Internet service as an alternative to commercial phone and cable services.

Public Airwaves: Portions of the electromagnetic spectrum that are commonly used to transport information — such as television, radio, cell phone and Internet signals. In the United States, access to the public airwaves for these purposes is managed by the federal government.

The U.S. Broadband Market — Price and Speed

BROADBAND IS FAR MORE EXPENSIVE IN THE UNITED STATES			BROADBAND IS SLOW IN THE UNITED STATES		
Rank	Country	Avg. Monthly Subscription Price (USD, PPP)	Rank	Country	Avg. Advertised Broadband Download Speeds (Mbps)
1	Finland	\$31.18	1	Japan	93.7
2	Germany	\$32.22	2	France	44.2
3	Switzerland	\$32.69	3	Korea	43.3
4	United Kingdom	\$33.34	4	Sweden	21.4
5	Sweden	\$34.00	5	New Zealand	13.6
6	Japan	\$34.21	6	Italy	13.1
7	Denmark	\$34.34	7	Finland	13.0
8	France	\$36.70	8	Portugal	13.0
9	Netherlands	\$39.06	9	Australia	12.1
10	Ireland	\$40.41	10	Norway	11.8
11	Korea	\$40.65	11	Luxembourg	10.7
12	Italy	\$41.09	12	United Kingdom	10.6
13	Greece	\$41.77	13	Germany	9.2
14	Belgium	\$46.08	14	United States	8.9
15	New Zealand	\$48.66	15	Canada	7.8
16	Turkey	\$50.04	16	Spain	6.9
17	Austria	\$50.08	17	Greece	6.6
18	Luxembourg	\$50.84	18	Hungary	6.4
19	Canada	\$51.07	19	Belgium	6.3
20	Australia	\$52.26	20	Czech Republic	6.0
21	Portugal	\$52.61	21	Denmark	6.0
22	United States	\$53.06	22	Switzerland	5.5
23	Norway	\$55.74	23	Netherlands	5.3
24	Poland	\$56.57	24	Slovak Republic	5.2
25	Hungary	\$57.22	25	Austria	4.9

Source: OECD Broadband Statistics as of December 2007



PRINCIPLE 4

Innovation

The Internet should continue to create good jobs, foster entrepreneurship, spread new ideas, and serve as a leading engine of economic growth.

The Internet was the great surprise of the 20th century. No one who initially developed the network imagined it would become such a powerful engine of economic, social and political growth. The Internet's success was largely due to its open architecture, which makes the Internet accessible to anyone to use and further develop, guaranteeing maximum competition, participation and innovation.

The Internet's unique architecture made the right to innovate open to anyone, anywhere. This in turn created a tremendous range of important and economically valuable breakthroughs.

Some of the most dynamic developments in the history of the Internet — from the creation of the World Wide Web by a Swiss researcher, to the development of the first peer-to-peer instant messaging chat service by Israeli students, to the launch of the Google search engine by grad students in their dorm room — were innovations by outsiders.

PROSPERING IN THE INFORMATION AGE

These innovations have created immense opportunities for newcomers while generating trillions of dollars in gross domestic product for our country. But innovation is not limited to economic gain. Creative new tools for organizing social networks and sharing information have given voice to disenfranchised groups, pried open governments, and engaged millions of people in political and civic affairs.

The Pew Internet & American Life Project reports that in 2008, more than 46 percent of Americans used digital communications to get news about political campaigns, share their views and mobilize others.¹⁰ Innovative online organizing tools and social networks have brought people together as a virtual political force.

The Internet has made it possible for one person's good idea to blossom into a movement of millions. The challenge before us now is to make this engine of innovation accessible to everyone so that we all will have a chance to prosper in the information age.

¹⁰ "The Internet and the 2008 Election," The Pew Internet & American Life Project, June 15, 2008.

Options for Innovation

Private Industry. New ways of providing Internet services to customers are often driven by the private sector, frequently companies and individuals working at a very small scale. Much of this upstart innovation needs capital investment to get new ideas to the marketplace. But investors need a level of certainty that their support of innovation won't be stifled by dominant market players or overly cumbersome regulation.

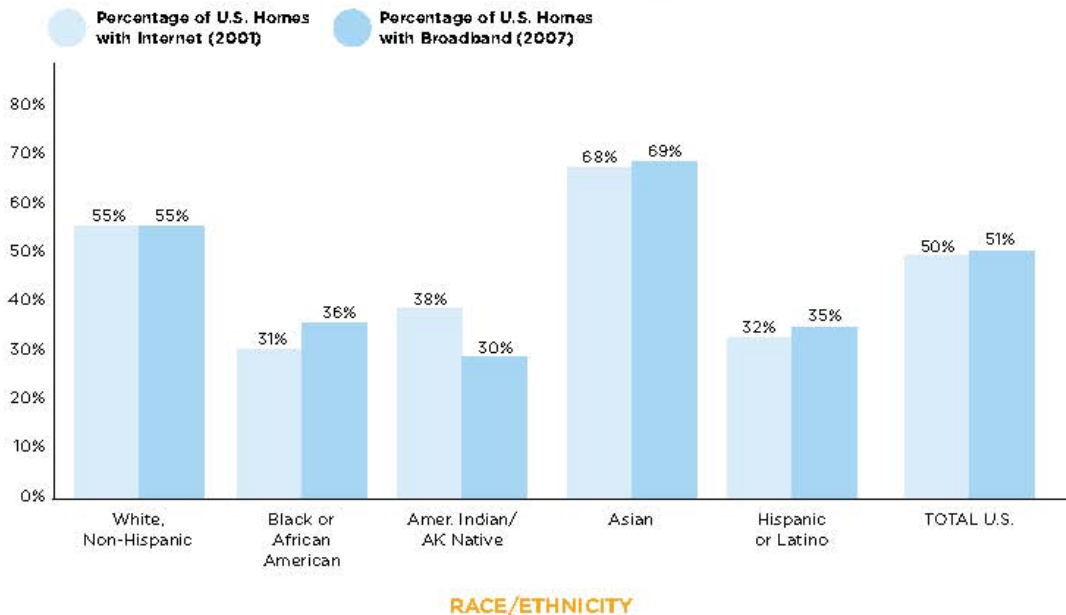
Federal Government. Government can provide research and development incentives to help foster the next generation of online innovations. It can also help safeguard open access to online marketplaces so that innovators can compete, without gatekeepers dictating which innovations will succeed and which will fail. Government can also relax regulation of the airwaves and allow use of vacant spectrum to provide room for new market innovations.

Local Communities. Building a municipal broadband system is an expensive and complicated task. But cities wishing to remain competitive economically see publicly owned networks as a development strategy that can attract entrepreneurs and businesses and engage more people in local self-governance.



A lot of our students do not have Internet access. So a lot of the activities and things we do here at school they can't expand upon at home. The learning stops here.

*Ashea Williams, Teacher
Academy of Art & Technology,
Public charter school
Washington, D.C.
InternetForEveryone.org video profile. Watch Ashea's
interview at www.internetforeveryone.org.*



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2007 Current Population Survey

InternetforEveryone.org Members:

180-Connect, Inc
AbsoCom Corp.
Access Humboldt
ACLU
ACME
Acom Active Media Foundation
Alliance for a Better Community
Amarillo College
American Distance Education Consortium
American Federation of Musicians
American Library Association
Appalshop
Archive.org
Association For Community Networking
BE THE MEDIA
BitTorrent
blip.tv
Boston's Wireless Initiative
Boxcar Communications
Care2
Case Western Reserve University
CCTPG
Center for Media Justice
Center for Rural Affairs
Center for Rural Strategies
CEOs for Cities
Chamber of Commerce, George West, Texas
Chicago Media Action
Children Now
CitizenSpeak.org
City of Marshall
ColorOfChange.org
Common Cause
Communications Leadership Institute / The SPIN Project
Communications Workers of America Local 9000
Community Partners
Community Technology Network of the Bay Area
Computer & Communications Industry Association
Consumer Electronics Association
Consumer Federation of America
Consumers Union
Contract Travel
CostQuest Associates
Craig Newmark
Credo Mobile
CTC VISTA
CuWin Foundation
Daverito design
DemocracyinAction.org
DFJ Gotham Ventures
Digital Sisters/Sistas Inc.
digiTenn
Disability Media Institute
Ebay.com
EDUCAUSE
Ella Baker Center for Human Rights
Entertainment Consumers Association
Esperanza Peace and Justice Center
Ethos Group
Facebook.com
Foundation for Successful Solutions (Project T.E.C.H.)
Free Press
FreeCulture.org - Students for Free Culture
Freedom Journal.TV
Freenetworks.org
Future of Music Coalition
GoLoco
Google
Green For All
Hip-Hop Association
IAC (InterActiveCorp and its companies)
IFP (Independent Film Producers)
Information Society Project at Yale Law School
Inst. for Analytic Journalism
Institute for Policy Democracy and the Internet
Interfaith Worker Justice
Internet 2
Internet Society of New York
Internet Television Network
Intuit
Little Tokyo Unplugged
Main Street Project
Manhattan Neighborhood Network
Maple River Networks LLC
mayfirst people link
Meadow Networks
Media Alliance
Media Bridges Cincinnati
Media Democracy Fund
Media Mobilizing Project
Minor Ventures
Montana Independent Telecom Systems
Mountain Area Information Network
MoveSmart.org
National Association of Telecommunications Officers and Advisors (NATOA)
National Baptist Convention of America
National Baptist Convention, USA Labor Roundtable
National Council of Women's Orgs
National Hispanic Christian Leadership Conference (NHCLC)
National Hispanic Media Coalition
National Organization for Women
Native Public Media
New America Foundation
New Mexico Literacy Project
NextGenWeb
NTEN
NYCwireless
Office of Governor Pat Quinn
One Economy
OneCommunity
OneWebDay
Open Neighborhoods
Open Source Wireless Coalition
OpenDNS
Orange Networking
Participatory Culture Foundation (nonprofit creator of Miro Internet TV)
PathFinder
People's Production House
Postsecondary Electronic Standards Council - PESC
Progressive National Baptist Convention
Progressive States Network
Prometheus Radio Project
Proxim Wireless
Public Citizen
Public Knowledge
Puerto Rico Sun Communications
RampRate
Reclaim the Media
Rural Opportunities Inc.
Samuel DeWitt Proctor Conference
San Diego Common Cause
SeaKay, Inc.
SEIU
Skype
Slatecard.com
Sojourners/Call to Renewal
Sony Electronics Inc
Sunlight Foundation
TechNet
TechRepublican
Texas Media Empowerment Project
The Added Edge, Inc.
The Media Justice Fund
The North Carolina Department of Administration Commission of Indian Affairs
The Praxis Project
Twin Cities Media Alliance
Union Square Ventures
United Church of Christ
US PIRG
USAAction
Vuze
WGA-East
WGA-West
WIA
WordSouth Public Relations, Inc.
YouthNoise!
YouTube

Visit www.internetforeveryone.org to join

APPENDIX L




Internet for Everyone.org
TOWN HALL MEETING

ONE NATION, ONLINE

Objectives

Objectives:

- Convene town hall meetings across the country where participants create a framework for an open and affordable Internet for everyone.
- Deliver our framework to a new administration and Congress in Washington as a people-powered vision for a better Internet.
- Forge a tangible plan of action so people can work together to make this vision a reality.



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Agenda

11:00	Welcome
12:10	Demographic Polling
12:15	Access & Choice
12:35	Table Discussion: Access & Choice
1:20	Openness & Innovation:
1:35	Table Discussion: Openness & Innovation
2:20	Speaker and Video
2:40	Themes from Access, Choice, Openness & Innovation
2:50	Table Discussion: Taking Action
3:20	Call Outs
3:35	Speaker
3:50	Next Steps for InternetforEveryone.org
3:55	Evaluation and Closing



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Ground Rules


- Listen carefully and allow others to participate
- Accept different perspectives
- Work together for best solutions
- Stay focused on task at hand



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Introductions


- Name
- Where you're from
- How has the Internet improved your life?
- If you do not have Internet access, how do you think it could improve your life?



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Themes from Introductions

- *How has the Internet improved your life? If you do not have Internet access, how do you think it could improve your life?*
 - **Communication:** Staying in touch with family/friends
 - **Work:** Finding jobs, starting businesses, telecommuting
 - **Political involvement**
 - **Education:** homework, applying for school, online classes
 - **Entertainment:** blogs, e-bay, movies, reading
 - **Info Gathering:** personal/prof research from health to directions
 - **Everything I do!**



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Twenty Minute Discussion

- How has the Internet improved your life?
- If you do not have Internet access, how do you think it could improve your life?

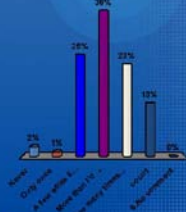
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Demographic Polling

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Have you ever lied to your mother?

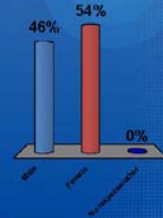
1. Never
2. Only once
3. A few white lies
4. More than I'd like to admit
5. Too many times to count
6. No comment



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With what gender do you identify?

1. Male
2. Female
3. No response/other



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How old are you?

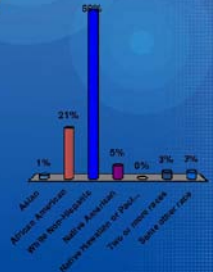
1. Under 20
2. 21-34
3. 35-44
4. 45-55
5. 56-65
6. 66 or better



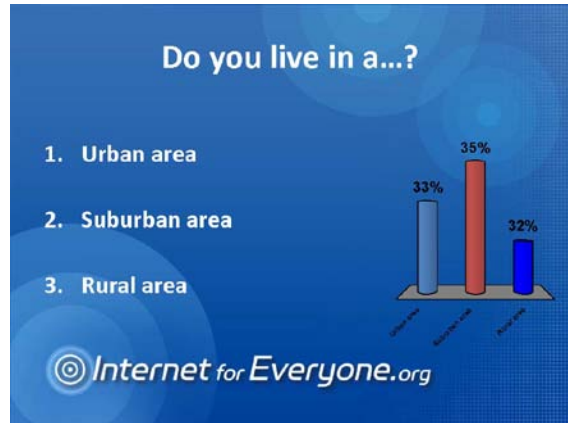
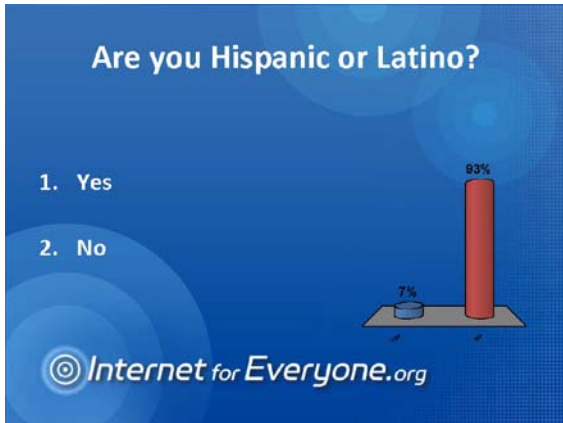
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With what race/ethnicity do you identify?

1. Asian
2. African American/Black
3. White Non-Hispanic
4. Native American
5. Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander
6. Two or more races
7. Some other race

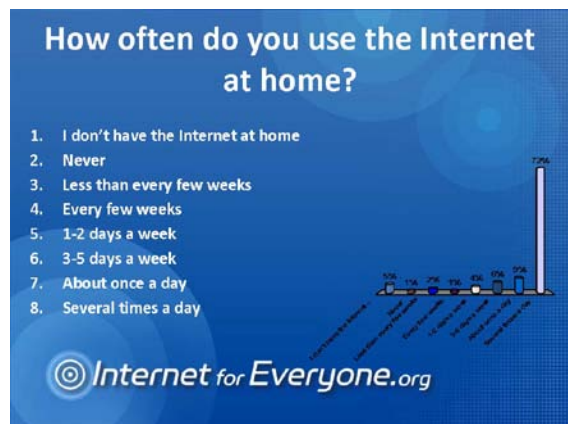
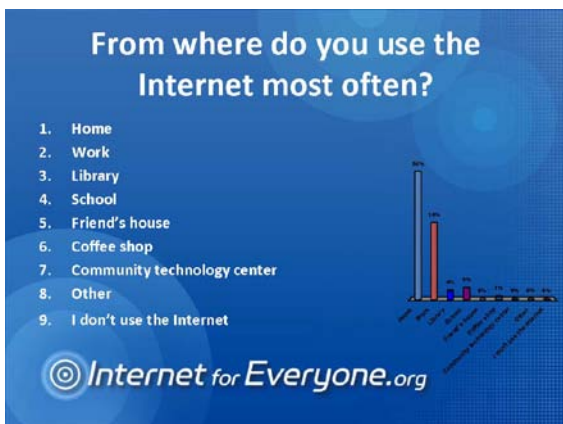


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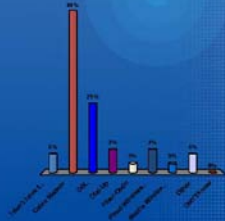
Access & Choice

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What do you use as your primary Internet service at home if any?

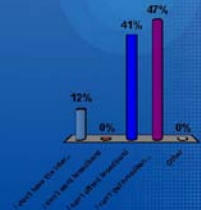
1. I don't have the Internet at home
2. Cable Modem
3. DSL
4. Dial-Up
5. Fiber-Optic
6. Fixed Wireless (e.g. community wireless service)
7. Mobile Wireless (e.g. iPhone or Blackberry)
8. Other
9. Don't know



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If you don't have high-speed Internet ("broadband") at home, why?

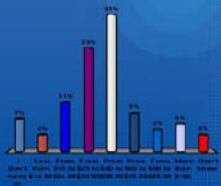
1. I don't have the Internet at home
2. I don't want broadband
3. I can't afford broadband
4. I can't get broadband where I live
5. Other



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How much does your Internet cost each month?

1. I don't have or pay for Internet
2. Less than \$14.99
3. From \$15 to \$24.99
4. From \$25 to \$39.99
5. From \$40 to \$59.99
6. From \$60 to \$79.99
7. From \$80 to \$99.99
8. More than \$100
9. Don't know



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Access & Choice

Access

- What obstacles do you or your community face in getting high-speed internet access?
- How do these obstacles affect you?

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Access & Choice

Choice

- What would it look like for communities throughout the United States to have real choices in Internet service?
- Consider issues of cost, new technologies and equality of access.

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Access & Choice

Action

- What could be done to increase Internet access and create more choices for communities nationwide?

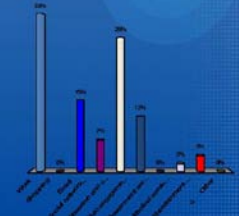
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Openness & Innovation

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For what activity do you primarily use the Internet?

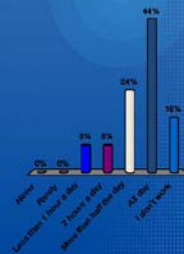
1. Work
2. Shopping
3. Email
4. Social networking
5. Research and study
6. Civic engagement and activism
7. Government services
8. Medical services
9. Entertainment (video, music, etc.)
0. Other



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How often do you use the Internet in your work?

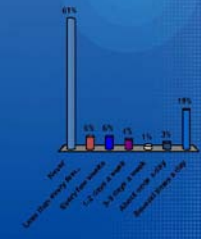
1. Never
2. Rarely
3. Less than 1 hour a day
4. 2 hours a day
5. More than half the day
6. All day
7. I don't work



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How often do you use a cell phone to access the Internet or send an email?

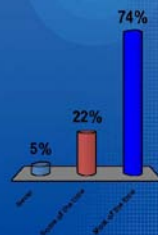
1. Never
2. Less than every few weeks
3. Every few weeks
4. 1-2 days a week
5. 3-5 days a week
6. About once a day
7. Several times a day



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How often are you using the Internet now to do things that you couldn't do with the Internet 5 years ago?

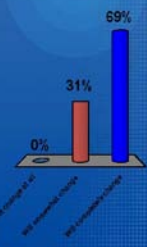
1. Never
2. Some of the time
3. Most of the time



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To what extent do you think changes in the Internet over the next 5 years will change our lives?

1. Will not change at all
2. Will somewhat change
3. Will completely change



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Openness & Innovation

Openness

- What are the benefits of an open Internet?
- What are the threats to an open Internet?



Openness & Innovation

Innovation

- How could we use the Internet to foster new ideas, economic growth, political participation and other advances?
- Think about economic, personal, political and other new opportunities provided by the Internet.



Openness & Innovation

Action

- What actions need to be taken to keep the Internet open for users and innovators?



Taking Action

- What steps should our governmental leaders take to advance our top priorities?
- What steps can InternetforEveryone.org take to advance these goals?



Action Priorities for Access & Choice

1. Make computers available for everyone
2. Revise the Universal Service Fund
3. Revise state and federal legislation to mandate standards for speed, affordability, and access
4. Support community created infrastructure
5. Increase competition
6. Enhance public education
7. Create public/private partnerships and incentives for small businesses
8. Government funding for broadband infrastructure
9. Changes to utility regulations
10. Nationalize broadband infrastructure



Priority	Percentage
1	10%
2	15%
3	25%
4	70%
5	10%
6	15%
7	10%
8	10%
9	10%
10	10%



Action Priorities for Openness & Innovation

1. Government regulation for Net Neutrality
2. Educate policy makers on open Internet
3. Enhance public education
4. Keep government out as much as possible
5. Increase bandwidth availability
6. Ongoing grassroots organizing for Internet issues
7. Require transparency for Internet providers
8. Increase competition among Internet providers
9. Use "open source" technology
10. Create grants/incentives for tech investment



Priority	Percentage
1	70%
2	10%
3	15%
4	10%
5	15%
6	10%
7	10%
8	10%
9	10%
10	10%



Action Priorities

Access & Choice:

- Nationalize broadband infrastructure
- Revise state and federal legislation

Openness & Innovation:

- Government regulation for net neutrality
- Create grants and incentives for tech investment

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Taking Action

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Action Call Outs

- Govt cr
- Government infrastructure for broadband – inner-state high-way model
- Private/public partnerships
- Expand grassroots effort/ more “5 Days” profiles
- Universal broadband service with

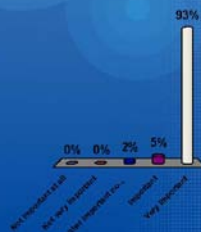
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Evaluation

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How important to you is using the Internet?

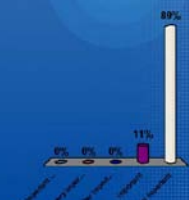
1. Not important at all
2. Not very important
3. Neither important nor unimportant
4. Important
5. Very Important



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Rate how important it is to make high-speed Internet available to everyone in the U.S.

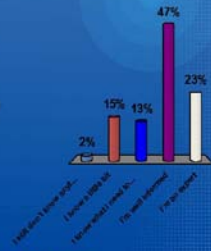
1. Not important at all
2. Not very important
3. Neither important nor unimportant
4. Important
5. Very important



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Now that you've attended today's meeting, how much do you think you know about the Internet?

1. I still don't know anything
2. I know a little bit
3. I know what I need to know
4. I'm well informed
5. I'm an expert



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How would you rate the quality of the meeting?

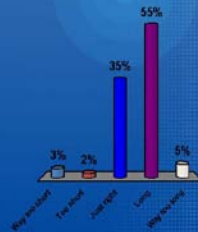
1. Poor
2. Fair
3. Good
4. Excellent



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How would you rate the length of the meeting?

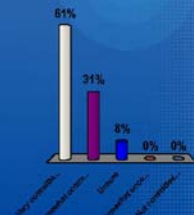
1. Way too short
2. Too short
3. Just right
4. Long
5. Way too long



Internet for Everyone.org

How committed are you to the goals of InternetforEveryone.org?

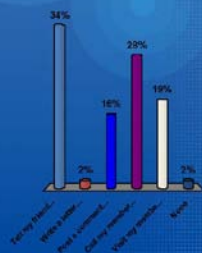
1. Not committed at all
2. Somewhat uncommitted
3. Unsure
4. Somewhat committed
5. Very committed



Internet for Everyone.org

Which of the following actions might you be willing to take?

1. Tell my friends about InternetforEveryone.org
2. Write a letter to the editor
3. Post a comment or video on the Digital Town Hall at InternetforEveryone.org
4. Call my member of Congress
5. Visit my member of Congress
6. None



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Thank You!

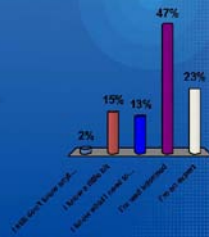
For participating in the InternetforEveryone.org town hall meeting in Durham!

To stay engaged visit www.InternetforEveryone.org or Call 1-877-585-1533

Internet for Everyone.org

Now that you've attended today's meeting, how much do you think you know about the Internet?

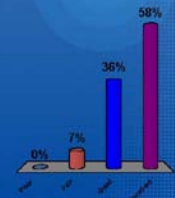
1. I still don't know anything
2. I know a little bit
3. I know what I need to know
4. I'm well informed
5. I'm an expert



Internet for Everyone.org

How would you rate the quality of the meeting?

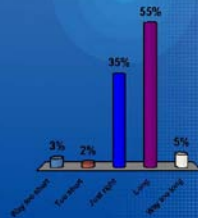
1. Poor
2. Fair
3. Good
4. Excellent



Internet for Everyone.org

How would you rate the length of the meeting?

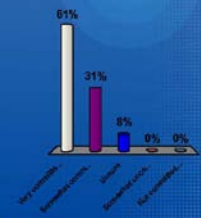
1. Way too short
2. Too short
3. Just right
4. Long
5. Way too long



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How committed are you to the goals of InternetforEveryone.org?

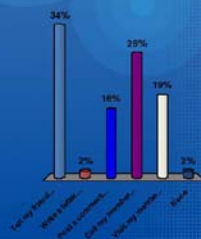
1. Not committed at all
2. Somewhat uncommitted
3. Unsure
4. Somewhat committed
5. Very committed



Internet for Everyone.org

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1. Tell my friends about InternetforEveryone.org
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5. Visit my member of Congress
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