

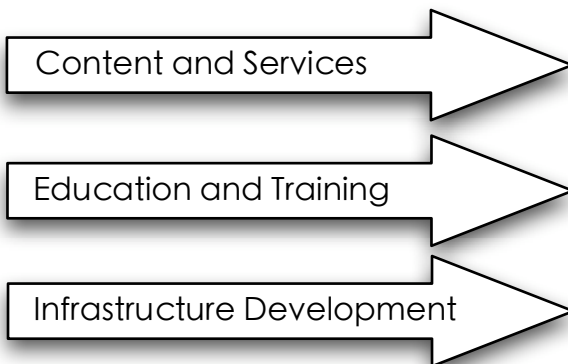
Content and Services: Creating Demand for Broadband

Key concepts

- You have to give people and businesses a reason to buy broadband services
- Infrastructure does not have to come first in a community technology plan
- Don't worry about the "right" content

Parallel Process Planning

- Each activity has its own timeline, plan, and budget
- Minimize dependencies between activities to keep things moving
- It is a mistake to put too much focus on infrastructure
- Goal is to create a marketplace that attracts private investment



Typical community services

- Community Web site with a daily news focus
- Affordable Web hosting for community groups
- Mailing lists
- Email accounts
- Community directory, especially of businesses
- Online calendars
- Discussion forums
- Small group collaboration tools

Case Study: Blacksburg

- The Blacksburg Electronic Village (BEV) project had no funding for infrastructure development
- By 1999, Blacksburg was widely hailed as the "most wired community in the world"
- Private sector investment wired Blacksburg, not government grants
- A focus on the development of rich local content created a reason for people to get online
- Education goes hand in hand with content--teach people to create content of interest to them
- The BEV trained people to create and maintain their own Web sites
- Civic sites, youth groups, churches, sports clubs, and special interest groups created a "connected" community
- Ordinary citizens became savvy users of the Internet, and were ready for broadband as it became available

The Best Software is Free

- Open Source software is mature and robust
- It is less expensive to install, administer, and maintain than commercial software
- Upgrades and new features are typically released more often
- The software works on a wide variety of operating systems and hardware
- There is a rich variety of products

Selecting Open Source

- Get help identifying a few good packages
- Check how long product has been out and how many times it has been downloaded
- Products with a large feature set are not always "best," as they may require more administration and support

The LAMP Platform

- Linux, Apache, MySQL, PHP
- Linux operating system (BSD and Mac OS X are also good Unix platforms)
- Apache Web server is the most widely used in the world
- MySQL database is fast and easy to install
- PHP programming language was designed specifically for Web applications

The Association for Community Networking (AFCN) provides information on Open Source tools
www.afcn.org/opensource/

