

Technology In Our Lives

A Speedier Internet Is Good For The Economy

(NAPSA)—After hearing the results of recent research, you may wonder if your Internet connection is up to speed.

New research from the Communications Workers of America (CWA) indicates that nearly half (49 percent) of U.S. residents' Internet connection speeds fall below the Federal Communications Commission's (FCC) minimum broadband speed standard.

Currently, only 1 percent of U.S. Internet connections meet the FCC's broadband speed goal for the year 2015.

"Speed matters on the Internet, enabling innovations in telemedicine, education, economic development, energy conservation and job creation," said Julius Genachowski, chairman of the FCC.

Many Internet connections are not fast enough to support emerging online services that save money and improve lives, such as home health monitoring or distance learning, which enables a student to participate in a class discussion via a video hookup.

Without broadband Internet access, people cannot participate in important activities. Most job applications today are submitted online. People apply for and get public services via the Web. Kids need the Internet to do school assignments. Teachers communicate with parents through digital technologies.

The FCC has released a National Broadband Plan to address the challenges of high-speed Internet access. The plan lays a framework for all Americans to have access to affordable, high-speed Internet, but it has been stalled in part by debate on net neutrality.



To advance economic growth and maintain sustainable communities, all Americans need access to high-speed Internet connections.

One solution recommended in the National Broadband Plan—which CWA agrees with—is to update the Universal Service Fund (USF) to include broadband Internet access support. Currently, the USF program only supports telephone service to rural areas and low-income families.

"CWA applauds the FCC for its commitment to improving access to high-speed Internet and recent decision to protect an open Internet," said Larry Cohen, president, Communications Workers of America. "Improving broadband deployment, connection speeds, and adoption will help facilitate job and business growth across the nation."

To find out if your Internet connection is up to speed, you can take the Speed Matters test created by CWA. To report the real-time connection speed, the test sends an HTTP request to the nearest server and measures the time it takes to receive a response. Participation is voluntary.

To learn more and to take the speed test, go to www.SpeedMatters.org.