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Connect Iowa Releases 2011 Residential Broadband Adoption Survey Results

37% of Iowa residents still do not have broadband at home

Des Moines, IA – Today, Connect Iowa released new residential broadband adoption survey results revealing the top trends in technology use among key demographics in Iowa. The preliminary indicators from the survey are available [online](#), which gives a comprehensive view of the challenges and opportunities for expanding broadband in targeted sectors. According to the survey, approximately 37% of the population still does not subscribe to broadband. Most notably, the majority of low-income, senior, disabled adult, and Hispanic households are without broadband at home, leaving them facing an uphill battle in keeping up with essential online resources, job and educational opportunities, and social services.

“Improved broadband connectivity is vital in terms of spurring economic development,” said Debi Durham, director of the Iowa Economic Development Authority. “Better broadband access stimulates job creation, boosts productivity, improves educational resources for tomorrow’s workforce, and ultimately enhances the state’s economic standing in the international arena.”

This survey is conducted in support of Connect Iowa’s efforts to close the state’s digital gap. The survey explores the main barriers to adoption – cost, digital skills, and relevance – and also provides unique insights into the national broadband landscape.

“These findings are key to helping us create custom local and regional broadband deployment plans,” said Connect Iowa Program Manager Amy Kuhlers. “Connect Iowa’s goal is quality broadband access, adoption, and use across all corners of the state.”

The survey reveals that:

- **45% of Iowans living in rural areas do not subscribe** to broadband service at home.

- When comparing to the **63% of all households that *do subscribe***, there remain large gaps among key demographics:
 - 62% of low-income households;
 - 66% of seniors *are without broadband*.
- **42% of low-income households with children** are without access to this essential tool at home.
- The biggest gap is among low-income seniors. Only **26% of low-income seniors subscribe to broadband** and only 41% have a computer at home.
- The largest barrier to non-adopters is relevance - **26% of non-adopters say there isn't Internet content worth viewing**. The second most commonly cited barrier is that it is too expensive.
- The top reasons lowans say **they started using broadband is because they realized it was worth the cost or it became available**.

These results and comparisons to many others are available on Connect Iowa's new consumer trends widget. This interactive tool gives people the ability to view, share, and download the results. Connect Iowa will use these survey results to target solutions in communities based on the demographic and economic barriers that the surveys indicate are most relevant to those communities.

This release comes on the heels of the FCC's newly released plans to launch a comprehensive public-private initiative called Connect to Compete, aimed at extending digital literacy training and providing employment assistance to communities. Connect Iowa's parent organization, Connected Nation, is one of the top strategic advisors in the national initiative.

Connect Iowa's 2011 residential survey was conducted in the summer of 2011 and includes responses from 3,600 residents. The survey was conducted as part of the State Broadband Initiative (SBI) grant program, funded by the U.S. Department of Commerce, National Telecommunications and Information Administration, and by the American Recovery and Reinvestment of 2009.

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About Connect Iowa: Connect Iowa is a subsidiary of Connected Nation and operates as a nonprofit in the state of Iowa to promote broadband access, adoption, and use. The Iowa Economic Development Authority (IEDA) is leading the initiative to increase broadband Internet access throughout rural Iowa. Connect Iowa was commissioned by the state to work with all broadband providers in Iowa to create detailed maps of broadband coverage and develop a statewide plan for the deployment and adoption of broadband. For more information visit: www.connectiowa.org.

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