Small Business Survey Report

Future Generations Graduate School
West Virginia Broadband
Opportunities Program
Year 1 Service Areas

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A baseline small business study and report developed for the
Future Generations Graduate School's West Virginia Broadband
Opportunities Program to expand broadband and educational
access through 60 volunteer fire departments across West Virginia.

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Project Summary

In 2010, the Future Generations Graduate School launched the West Virginia Broadband Opportunities Program to make computers and the internet more accessible and useful to West Virginia's families. This program partners with one of the state's strongest volunteer networks—local fire departments and rescue squads.

With support from the 2009 American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, over the next three years, this program will set up 60 public computer labs in the community centers of local fire departments.

A computer mentor selected by each fire/rescue station will offer basic computer skills classes. Other training partners, including the Monongahela National Forest, Mission WV, Bayview Medical Center, and the WV Partnership of African American Churches, will offer additional classes to make broadband more useful for families. Volunteers from the communities are also encouraged to share their skills and knowledge through these new learning centers.

About the Future Generations Graduate School
The Future Generations Graduate School is an accredited institution of higher education based in Pendleton County, West Virginia, offering a Master's Degree designed for community leaders worldwide. The Graduate School is an outgrowth of Future Generations, an organization based in West Virginia since 1992, specializing in community-led development.

Survey Methodology

In October-December 2010, the Future Generations Graduate School conducted a baseline Small Business Survey representing each of the 30 communities of this project's year- One service areas. This survey serves three functions:

> A. Collect data for evaluating program impact and change in small business broadband subscription rates
> B. Assess the training needs and interests of small businesses in computer skills and online marketing strategies
> C. Share insightful data with current and potential partners to scale up program impact and efficacy

> Methodology:

> Future Generations Staff conducted 248 surveys using a stratified sampling method to equitably represent each business community in the 1st year of the West Virginia Broadband Opportunities Program. By identifying all employers with 15 or less employees within each geographic area served by partnering Fire and Rescue Stations, the sample was then narrowed to include a proportional number of businesses from each area.
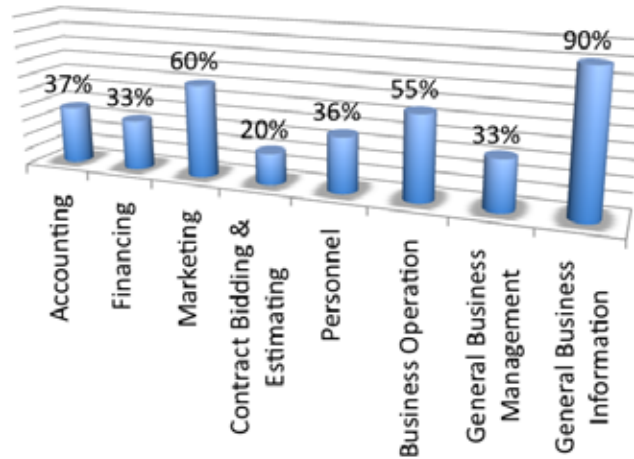
> Future Generations Staff then mailed out 600 surveys with a letter and program information to selected businesses. After receiving only 28 completed surveys, the remainder 228 surveys were conducted by telephone.

# Key Findings: Computer & Internet Use

1.1

Sample Size Per Community

Community	Sample Size
Lewis	45
Hinton	14
Kimball	2
Harts	5
Grantsville	8
Beverly	5
Mt. Hope	16
Meadow Bridge	2
Mathias Baker	13
Ghent	3
Upper Laurel	1
Mabscott	2
Bradley	4
Morrisvale	2
Wharton-Barett	1
Gilbert	9
Buffalo Creek	2
Matewan	3
Cora	3
Logan	32
Madison	22
Flatwoods	2
Gilmer	13
Moorefield	21
Maysville	5
South Fork	3
Upper Tract	3
Cass	2
Circleville	3
Bartow-Durbin	2

1.2 Internet Uses of the 67% of Businesses Connected Online

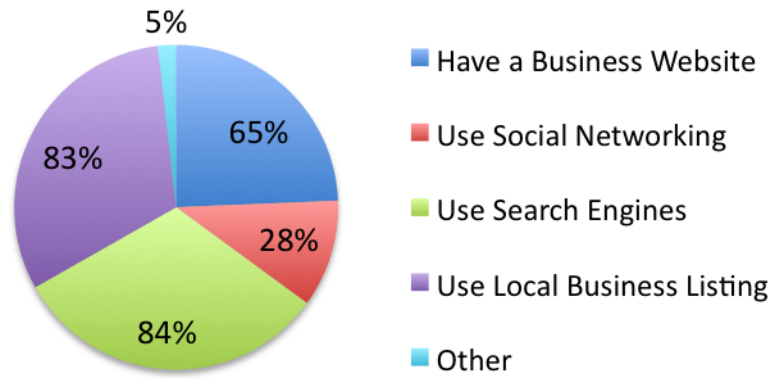| Accounting	Financing	Marketing	Contract Bidding & Estimating	Personnel	Business Operation	General Business Management	General Business Information
37%	33%	60%	20%	36%	55%	33%	90%

1.2   More than any other activity, small businesses have been using the internet to research and gather information.

1.3 Computer & Internet Use Among Small Businesses

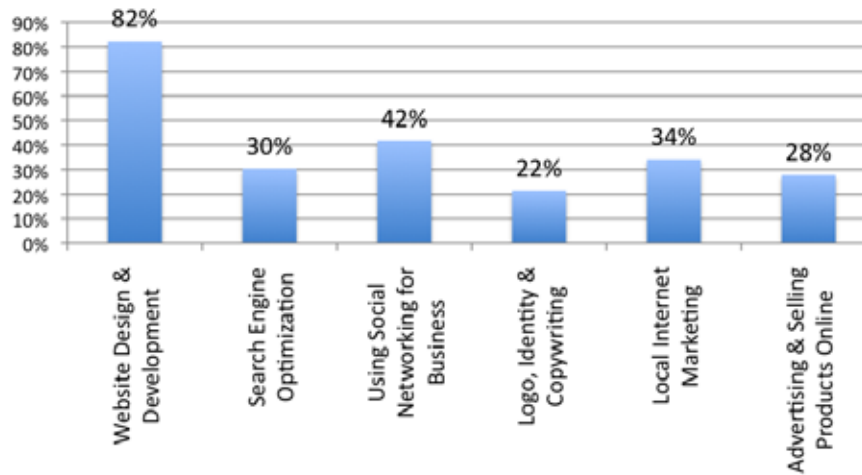| Businesses that use computers	Businesses that use internet	Businesses using internet marketing
78%	67%	41%
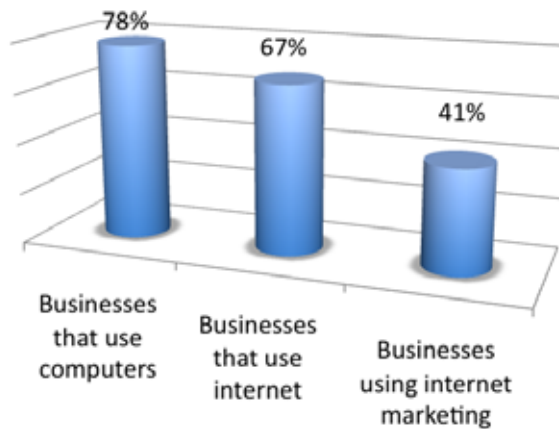
1.3   Participants were asked if they used a computer for business purposes. Of the 33% of survey participants that do not use internet in operations, 68% of them explained that they "do not need it."

1.4 Of the 41% of Businesses that Use Online Marketing...

Legend:
- Have a Business Website — 65%
- Use Social Networking — 28%
- Use Search Engines — 84%
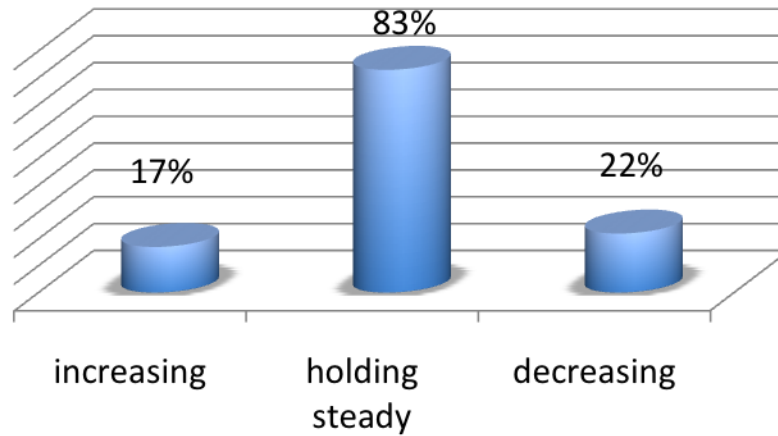- Use Local Business Listing — 83%
- Other — 5%

1.4   Businesses that engage in online marketing (102 or 41%) estimate an average of 16.4% of their revenue as a result.

1.5 Internet Marketing Training Requests (from the 32% of businesses intererested in trainings)

Category	Percent
Website Design & Development	82%
Search Engine Optimization	30%
Using Social Networking for Business	42%
Logo, Identity & Copywriting	22%
Local Internet Marketing	34%
Advertising & Selling Products Online	28%

1.5   The trainings above are proposed trainings to be offered at Fire and Rescue Computer Labs. Business owners and managers also requested training in computer-based bookkeeping, basic computer skills, and Microsoft programs.

1.6   **Perceived Business Status**

1.6   Businesses were asked how they perceived the growth of their business.

Other Key Findings

- 11% of businesses surveyed have at least one employee working from home
- Businesses that engage in online marketing estimate an average of 16.4% of their revenue as a result.
- Small businesses request website design and development more than any other training opportunity.
- Of the businesses connected online, 64% use DSL, 31% use cable, 6% use satellite, 1.2% use fiber optic, and less than 1% use dial-up internet.

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