



Comcast's Internet Essentials Program: Bridging the Digital Divide

August 2016



“Ralph and Brian have instilled within our culture the driving ethos of our community investment philosophy, which is when the communities we serve thrive, the Company thrives as well. Our resolve to close the digital divide is stronger than ever, and we invite everyone who shares that vision to work with us to create even more digital opportunity in the year ahead.”

David L. Cohen

*Senior Executive Vice President
Comcast Corporation*

America Faces a Digital Divide

25% of Americans do not have high-speed Internet at home.

Though home Internet adoption has increased substantially since 2000, 1 in 4 households do not have high-speed Internet at home.

Those least likely to have an Internet subscription are:

- Senior Citizens
- Adults with less than a high school education
- Households earning less than \$25,000 per year
 - Compare: Over 90% of households with incomes >\$100,000 subscribe to a high-speed Internet connection while under 50% of households with incomes <\$25,000 have a high-speed Internet connection.

The main reason these households don't connect is a complex mix of a **lack of digital literacy skills and an understanding of the relevance of the Internet**. Following this, they cite the **cost of computers and the cost of home Internet service**.

Source: Pew Internet & American Life Project Surveys, March 2000-Sep. 2013. American Community Survey 2014.

Comcast is Committed to Bridging the Digital Divide

Comcast addresses all three barriers to get families connected.

Internet Essentials is designed to be a wraparound solution to directly address every barrier to adoption by affordable internet, subsidized computers, and free digital literacy training to eligible low-income families.

Affordable Internet Access

Eligible families receive fast, affordable internet at 10/1 Mbps speeds for **\$9.95 per month** + tax.

- No contract
- No activation or equipment fees
- No installation fees

Low-Cost Computer

Families may also purchase a low-cost computer for **\$149.99** + tax.

- Internet-ready laptop or desktop with a 90-day warranty
- Equipped with Windows 7, the Microsoft Office suite, and Norton antivirus





Digital Literacy Training

Additionally, families may participate in **free digital skills training** to better understand the internet and the many ways it can benefit them.

- Access-the-nation access to training in person, in print, or online

But to make sure we're targeting the right population, interested households apply for the program to show they're eligible.

Households are eligible for Internet Essentials so long as they:

-  Are located where Comcast offers Internet service;
-  Have not subscribed to Comcast Internet service within the last 90 days;
-  Do not have outstanding Comcast debt that is under one year old;
-  Have at least one child eligible for the the National School Lunch Program OR receive HUD housing assistance

And they can apply either over the phone or online. If we can determine their eligibility from their service address or from their school, we will auto-approve them with no further proof required. If we cannot, we ask them to provide us with proof of eligibility via mail, email, or fax. Once approved, we offer the choice of a self-install kit or complimentary professional installation.

And so far it's been working.

As of December 2015, we've we've achieved a number of key accomplishments with our partners:



Connected more than **600,000 low-income families** (an estimated 2.4 million Americans) to the power of the Internet in their homes, most for the very first time.



Provided **47,000 subsidized computers** to Internet Essentials families.



Welcomed **5.3 million visitors** to our websites and fielded **3.9 million phone calls** to our call center, both available in English and Spanish.



Distributed nearly **51 million pieces of Internet Essentials marketing materials** at no cost and aired more than **8.3 million public service announcements**, valued at over \$100 million.



Generated more than **7 billion impressions** across print, online, broadcast, and radio.

With our partners' help, we continue to improve.

We work each day to improve this program so it can benefit more families across the country. Our enhancements are a direct result of our partners' feedback:



Increased Speeds Three Times in Three Years

We now offer **up to 10 Mbps downstream** – more than 10x the speed offered at the beginning of the program.



Made More Households Eligible for the Program

We expanded eligibility 9 times since 2011, including a piloted expansion to low-income seniors and community college students, an Amnesty program for families with a past due Comcast debt– **regardless of the amount** – over one year old, and our latest **eligibility expansion to all households that receive HUD housing assistance** including Public Housing, Housing Choice Vouchers, and Multifamily.



Reached More Diverse Communities

English- and Spanish-speaking families can call our dedicated in-language call centers or apply online at InternetEssentials.com or es.InternetEssentials.com. Materials for Internet Essentials are available in 12 languages beyond English and Spanish, such as Somali, Chinese, Hmong, Korean, and Russian.



Streamlined the Enrollment Process

Households whose service address matches a HUD-designated Public Housing Development **are instantly approved** when they apply for Internet Essentials.

Get Involved to Bring More Families Online

We need your help to spread the word.

Since launching Internet Essentials, we have learned a great deal from our day-to-day experience, our survey research, and your feedback. Together we can get residents connected through:

Training

Training and education are necessary for families to appreciate and use the Internet.

- **Host informational sessions** to introduce residents to the Internet and its many uses: schoolwork, jobs, social networking, news, government services, healthcare.
- **Make training classes accessible and relevant to residents** by working with local libraries and non-profits.

Engagement

Higher community involvement leads to increased Internet adoption.

- **Reach out to trusted community partners** such as local churches, libraries, and schools to ensure they are aware of Internet Essentials and are informing their community.
- **Co-host an event with us** so that families can learn about Internet Essentials and sign up for service.

Awareness

Awareness of Internet Essentials through handouts and word of mouth helps drive interest in – and support of – the program.

- **Commit to speaking about Internet Essentials** in your community through events, newsletters, speeches, radio, and in conversation.
- **Visit InternetEssentials.com/partner** and register for information and free materials for distribution in your community.

Work with our local Internet Essentials leads to coordinate outreach to your residents.

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