



AS I SEE IT BERT KRAMER

How broadband can lead to marketing success

Monday, June 11, 2007

Pennsylvania isn't the same workplace it was a generation ago. Technology has changed the face of our employment and economic development.

While change does not always come easily, this transition was facilitated by the dedication of pioneers in technology and early investments in our state's communications networks. These investments have been encouraged by the government's decision to leave the Internet unregulated.

Ben Franklin Technology Partners has been instrumental in providing Pennsylvania the resources needed to succeed in the technological era. The program is dedicated to growing the state's technology-based economy. From regional centers in various parts of the state, Ben Franklin Technology Partners drives economic expansion by providing access to capital, business expertise and a network of resources to foster statewide innovation, growth and success. Through this type of public and private initiative, Pennsylvania provides support to traditional companies transitioning to a high-tech world and to new companies that have technology as an integral part of their DNA.

These programs would not be possible without access to high-speed broadband networks. The digital economy runs on data flowing instantly from one location to another. Broadband access makes any location -- rural or urban, corporate or home office -- an equal player in the marketplace.

With broadband access, employers can pull together the best people for their companies, regardless of where they want to live and work. By connecting to company networks and by using voice over the Internet, employees can work from anywhere.

Students can learn from the best teachers, or attend college classes from their homes through distance education using broadband. Employees in shrinking industries can learn new skills at night by studying online, without leaving their families.

Working parents in rural areas don't have to take a day away from the office to take their children to a specialist in an urban medical center. Their primary doctor can bring the specialist in for an online consultation, using features of telemedicine.

D&E Communications has placed an enormous emphasis on the deployment of broadband networks in central Pennsylvania. We know what a difference this service can make and its importance to the state's economic growth. That's why it is imperative that lawmakers keep the Internet free from regulations, so we can continue Pennsylvania's progress in reaping the full benefits of the broadband era.

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