



Connect BELP Household Technology Survey Executive Summary

Connect BELP is a collaborative effort to provide broadband Internet access to the Eastern Kentucky counties of Breathitt, Estill, Lee, and Powell. ConnectKentucky conducted residential surveys aimed at discovering the current state of technology adoption and determining the best path to increasing household technology use in the four-county area.

Among survey respondents, 93% own a computer, but only 37% subscribe to home broadband service. An even larger share (39% of respondents) subscribes to home dial-up service. This means that more than one out of five households in the community do not subscribe to any home Internet service at all. The most popular locations for accessing the Internet are home (71%) and work (62%). Libraries (11%), a friend or family member's home (4%), and schools (3%) are being used for Internet access at considerably lower rates.

Each of the four counties reported computer ownership rates between 90%-94%. However, the disparity in broadband adoption is much larger. The highest rate of broadband adoption is in Estill County (53%), followed by Breathitt (36%), Powell (31%), and Lee (26%). This shows that many individuals own a computer, but do not subscribe to broadband for some other reason. The most popular reason for not having home Internet access is a lack of broadband availability combined with a lack of interest in subscribing to dial-up (64%). The second most popular obstacle to adoption is the price of subscribing (20%).

Individuals with higher incomes are only slightly more likely to own a computer. A more substantial indicator of computer ownership is the individual's age, with 98% of respondents age 35-44 owning a computer, compared to 71% of respondents age 65 or older. While there is a large disparity in computer ownership, the survey showed little connection between age and broadband adoption.

The most popular online activities among respondents are information searches, communicating with friends and family, and business transactions. The survey makes it clear that individuals with Internet access will take advantage of that access. Region-wide, 98% of all respondents reported that either they or another member of their household used the Internet in the past 30 days. Additionally, 41% of respondents who access the Internet spend three hours or more online on an average day. This is further evidence that once people have access to the Internet, they will likely take advantage of that opportunity.

Methodology:

ConnectKentucky surveyed 504 adults living in Breathitt, Estill, Lee, and Powell counties in April and May, 2010. Surveys were conducted through a variety of methods, including RDD telephone interviews, in-person interviews, and online survey instruments. This research was designed to measure technology adoption and establish benchmarks for these metrics in the four-county BELP region.