Digital Dodge City

Overview – July 2013

The Dodge City Public Library, The City of Dodge City and the Dodge City Community College have been leading "Digital Dodge City," a community wide initiative to determine the digital future of Dodge City. Community leaders have participated in public events and completed a "stakeholder alignment" survey to help define Dodge City's current and future needs, as well as the resources necessary to ensure community members have access to and understand how to use information technology. The objective is to stimulate community-wide discussion and engage diverse stakeholders in planning efforts to create and support a healthy, prosperous and cohesive 21st century community – not leaving people behind as Dodge City matches the accelerating pace of technological change.

Overview

Scope

- Community initiative aimed at expanding access to and use of information technology.

Stage

- Formation.

Location

- Dodge City and surrounding Ford County, Kansas.

Stakeholders

Lead Local Institutions and Organizations
- Dodge City Government
- Dodge City Library
- Dodge City Community College

Supporting External Institutions and Organizations
- Institute for Library and Museum Services (ILMS)
- OCLC
- Kansas Statewide Broadband Initiative
- Center for Digital Inclusion, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
- WayMark Systems

Different Types of Stakeholders Involved
- 31 different types of stakeholders:
    1. Local City and County Govt (general)
    2. Elected City Officials
    3. Public Agencies (general)
    4. Library Staff/Leadership
    5. K-12 School Educators/Administrators
    6. Higher Ed, Community College Educators/Administrators
    7. Higher Education, University Educators/Administrators
    8. Adult Education Training and Devt. Program Educators/Administrators
    9. Economic Development Agency Staff/Leadership
    10. Community Center Staff/Leadership
    11. Public Housing Agency Staff/Leadership

12. Regulatory Govt Agency Staff/Leadership
13. Other Public Agency Staff/Leadership
14. Not-for-profit Community-Based Organizations (general)
15. Not-for-profit Religious Leaders
16. Not-for-profits Serving Low Income and Homeless
17. Not-for-profits Serving People with Disabilities
18. Not-for-profits Serving Ethnic Communities/Cultures
19. Not-for-profit Labor Organization Staff/Leadership
20. Other Not-for-profit
21. Business (general)
22. Broadband Service Providers
23. Technology Association Staff/Leadership
24. Chambers of Commerce and Other Business Groups
25. Other Business Organization Staff/Leadership
26. Local Media (TV, Radio, Newspaper)
27. Public Energy Utility
28. Health Care Providers
29. Community Residents (general)
30. Resident in Neighborhood with High Speed Broadband
31. Resident in Neighborhood not Served by High Speed Broadband

Number of Stakeholders Surveyed
- 111 stakeholders surveyed in April/May 2013

Motivation
- Increasing access and opportunities for the most disadvantaged in society (low income, elderly, and disabled)
- Expanding educational services (K-12, technical skills, and higher education)
- Enabling local business and regional economic development
- Improving access and outcomes in health care
- Building a stronger, more resilient community
- Ensuring that Dodge City is not left behind at a time of accelerating technological change

Main Findings

Potential Points of Alignment
- Broad agreement on the value of increased education on digital matters.
  - *Sample comment: "Educating and enabling the entire community on a digital level would help things run more smoothly as well as break down barriers that exist here. . ."*

- A generally shared value on increasing opportunities for the most disadvantaged and bridging across cultures in society through access to digital resources.
  - *Sample comment: "There is a definite divide between demographics in Dodge City and people want to change that."*
- A generally shared value on increasing capabilities at all levels of the education system so students are better prepared for a digital economy.
  - *Sample comment: "That technological literacy is necessary for full inclusion in the community. That folks who don't have digital literacy are at a disadvantage. That digital literacy is a necessary skill for the future"*
- A generally shared value on improving the lives of community residents though increased digital services from public and private sectors.
  - *Sample comment: "Desire to improve the lives of residents."*
- A broadly shared view that increased coordination is needed among community organizations with respect to digital technologies.
  - *Sample comment: "It is widely shared that digital access is essential. However there is no coordinated strategy for moving the community toward such access." Also, see the chart below for quantitative date reinforcing the importance of this issue.*
- Top priorities for digital services to be made more broadly available are: K-12 Education Programs, College and University Education Programs, Health Care Information, Public Safety Information, and Workforce Training.
  - *See the "leader board" in the full report on page 23.*

Potential Points of Misalignment
- A key point of contention involves questioning the role of the public sector in facilitating digital inclusion – raising questions about alternative use of public resources.
  - *Sample comment: "To what extent should tax payers' money as well as grant money go to providing low income, disabled, or senior citizen households with information and/or Internet access?"*
- A second point of contention involves questioning what are seen as "cross subsidies" with private sector fees for digital services.
  - *Sample comment: "I think that internet access is still a privilege, and I am not willing to pay more for my access just so lower-income families and such do not have to pay or get a reduced cost for theirs."*
- ***Additional note:*** On many issues there is a core group of 4-6 stakeholders (out of 111) with very negative views, with over a dozen stakeholders holding negative views on some issues.

Comparing "Importance" with current "Adequacy" on aspects of digital inclusion
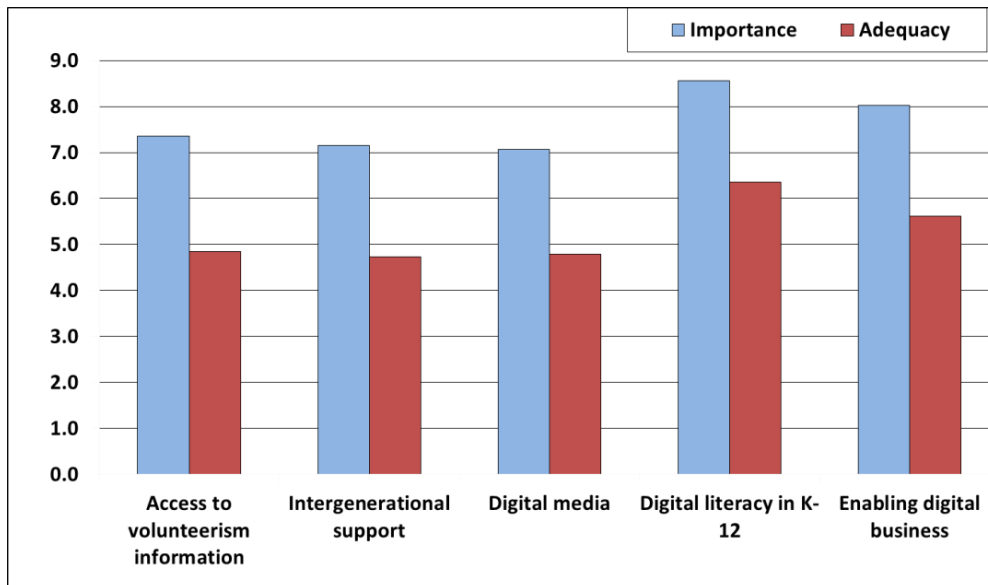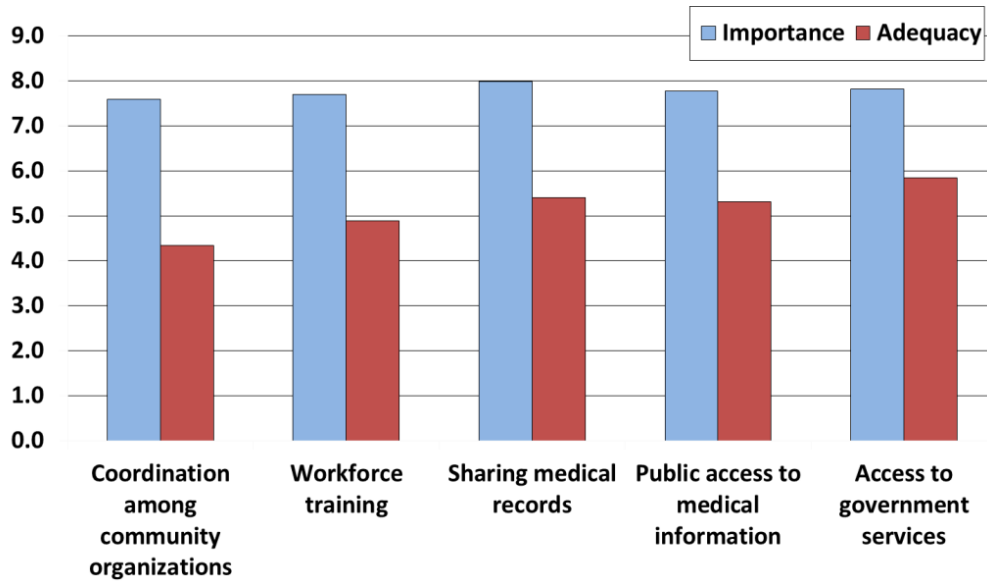
Analysis: On all ten dimensions there is a substantial gap between how "important" an item is, versus how "adequate" it is at present. Digital literacy for K-12 is the most important overall. While sharing medical records electronically ranks next in importance, nearly half of the stakeholders did not respond to this item – indicating either a gap in knowledge or a reluctance to answer this question. The biggest gap between "importance" and "adequacy" is around coordination by community organizations – a key issue to address.

Change Process
- Convene stakeholders
  - A. Define stakeholders
  - B. Survey stakeholders and share results
  - C. Identify points of alignment
  - D. Identify points of misalignment
- Develop a shared community understanding of digital inclusion
  - A. In-person full community meetings
  - B. Working group meetings
- Create a community action plan
- Implement the plan
- Evaluate and revise the plan

Note: *The overall change process is from "Building Digital Communities." It integrates tools and methods for stakeholder alignment from "WayMark Systems."*

Milestones   **As of July 2013**

OCLC Process and Associated Tasks	Q1 2013	Q2 2013	Q3 2013	Q4 2013	2014
Pre-Process * Selection of Dodge City as OCLC pilot. * Stakeholders defined.	■				
A. Convene stakeholders * Stakeholder alignment focus group dialogue sessions (4 in April). * Stakeholder alignment summit session (May). * Potential working groups identified.		■			
B. Develop a shared community understanding of digital inclusion * In-person meetings and online survey. * Digital Dodge City overview and full report distributed to stakeholders. * Additional data collected.		■	■		
C. Create a community action plan * Working group leaders and members confirmed. *Working group goals and demonstration projects defined. * Working group goals merged into a cohesive plan with reasonable milestones identified. * If necessary, funding sources identified.			■	■	

D. Implement the plan * Working group demonstration projects implemented. * Coordination with parallel initiatives.			█	█	█
E. Evaluate and revise the plan * Process for evaluation and revision to be determined.					█

Immediate Next Steps – Working Groups

- ***Increased Technical Support***
  - Goal: Increased affordable technical support for all, particularly community members struggling to use digital tools.
  - Data Needed: Resource mapping of local technical support.
- ***Increased Access to Digital Resources (merged Awareness of Existing Digital Resources with Increased Access to Local Resources)***
  - Goal: Increased awareness of existing digital resources (local and national).
  - Data Needed: Resource mapping of local computer and internet access, wifi access, training and technical support.
- ***Affordable Internet Service***
  - Goal: Increased availability of affordable internet service.
  - Data Needed: Broadband service offerings by price, speed and area available.
- ***Increased Cultural Understanding***
  - Goal: Increased cultural understanding through integration of the multiple cultures in Dodge City and the associated technology uses and needs.
- ***Increased Community Involvement***
  - Goal: Increased community involvement and parental engagement resulting in more volunteerism in schools and general community activities.
- ***Local Business Strengthened***
  - Goal: Increased communication between businesses and between customers and businesses resulting in increased sales of local businesses.
  - Data Needed: Resource mapping of local business technical and social media support.
- ***Strengthened K-12 Education***
  - Goal: Community resources supporting K-12 technology initiatives, particularly community involvement in K-12 technology and at home and public internet access.