

THE PACKET

February 5, 2006
Volume 2, Issue 1



Muskoka Community Network, 111 Manitoba Street, Bracebridge, ON, P1L 2B6 P:(705) 646-9044
www.mcnet.ca

What's new at MCN

Our Project Assistant, Laurie Hutcheson has come onboard in January. Laurie will be developing the "Best Practices" workshops and delivering these workshops throughout the Muskoka and Almaguin regions. At the moment, Laurie has been assisting with compiling the survey data that been flooding our office from businesses and residents around the Muskoka region. Thank you for your responses!

Our web site content has been revamped and now highlights our current projects. We will be keeping the site up to date with news on our broadband deployment project and our workshop schedules.

Best Practices Workshops

High speed internet opens up a world of possibilities for people and organizations. The majority of people use the Internet for e-mail and web-browsing, however, many more possibilities exist. The Best Practices Workshops will focus on the opportunities that will soon be available to market your business online. How would a company website benefit your business, add value to your customers, increase your sales and lower your costs? What kinds of technology should I integrate into my business to give our business a competitive advantage ?

We want to hear from you! Please send us your suggestions on what your business needs are regarding technology. We have a "workshop interests" survey available so you can tell us where you're at and what you need to know, so we can tailor our workshops to you. The Workshop survey is available on our website or you may email mcn.info@mcn.net to get your copy.

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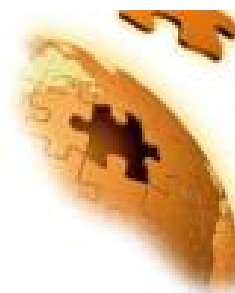
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High Speed Survey in Muskoka Region

Responses to our survey on unserved broadband areas have been tremendous! Word of mouth between neighbors, emails to associations and our local advertisements has resulted in approximately 500 surveys being returned to date. We will easily be able to locate the clusters of unserved users who need high speed internet. Although we had posted a deadline to receive the survey, it is still important that we continue to receive feedback from users in the area who are in need of high speed. The survey will still be available on our website and we encourage you to spread the word about our efforts in delivering high speed to Muskoka.

"There will come a time when big opportunities will be presented to you, and you've got to be in a position to take advantage of them."

- Sam Walton



WWW.MCNET.CA

Broadband Application Development

Integrating information technology and communications technologies into your business can lead to:



- Increased competitiveness and better bottom line
- Better sales and marketing
- Better quality management and operational efficiencies.

As your business grows, broadband access will enable your company to integrate the latest trends in technology into your business processes.

FedNor intends to commit \$10 million in funding over the next three years to support applications that make effective use of the broadband network. Such applications could include distance education and videoconferencing, telehealth suites for distant patient consultations, Picture Archiving and Communications Systems (PACS) that store and distribute digital scans and X-rays, and online financial networking and Geographic Information Systems (GIS) for local governments and emergency services.

Muskoka Community Network will work with organizations that are interested in accessing Broadband application funds.

Many technology applications for small business fall under the category of "e-business". This isn't necessarily buying or selling goods and services on line; it also refers to business processes that are facilitated and supported by technology, such as accounting, marketing and operations.

Please contact MCN if you would like to talk to us about a technology project or trend.

Is E-Business for your business?

It's important to distinguish between e-commerce and e-business:

E-Commerce is the use of electronic mediums to engage in the buying and selling of products and services.

E-Business is the commercial application of internet and emerging technologies. It may include e-commerce but also refers to the electronic exchange of information not directly related to sales.

There are different levels of e-business. The first level is a basic website which gives you an online presence to your customers and provides a business profile featuring your products or services and contact information. Database-integrated web applications, intranets, extranets, employee portals, online order entry and product catalogs are higher-level applications that would be advantageous to manufacturers and specialty shops. There are dozens of creative applications for business owners that could support your business strategy.

Our "Best Practices" Workshops will be focusing on the technologies and trends you want to know about and how these will add value to your business.

Complete our 'Workshop' survey & return it today!
www.mcnet.ca/pdf/ws.pdf



Check out our website for more information on the Muskoka Community Network

www.mcnet.ca

Our Workshop Survey is now available on our website!

We are looking for ideas from you to help us offer workshops that focus on your business needs.

www.mcnet.ca/pdf/ws.pdf