

California BROADBAND COUNCIL

Success Story

Surplus Equipment Tech Fair with Tech Exchange

The Challenge

Too many people in California don't have access to a computer and Internet at home. Being digitally connected is integral for children and adults to be successful in school, access governmental and health services, and contribute to a modern economy. How do you get computers into the hands of those who need them?

The Solution



The California Broadband Council (CBC), along with the State Surplus Equipment Task Force members and community partner Tech Exchange, sponsored a Technology Fair in Oakland. The CBC contributed free, refurbished desktop computers and related equipment to qualified households and individuals. Technology Fair participants also learned about training resources

and affordable Internet services with payments as low as \$10/month. The computer equipment came from state surplus property.

The Goals

The goal of the Technology Fair was to provide local Oakland community members with affordable Internet, computers and connections to community organizations.

All goals were achieved.

The Provider

- The California Broadband Council
- California Department of Technology
- California Department of General Services
- Tech Exchange
- La Clinica
- East Bay Broadband Consortium
- Get Connected Oakland
- California Emerging Technology Fund



The Results

- 141 households (300 people) attended - an average of one computer distributed every 1.25 minutes for 3 hours straight
- 36 families signed-up on the spot for low-cost Internet
- Tech Exchange will follow-up with 88 additional households who indicated they would benefit from the \$10/month options

Refurbishing 141 computers =

- Removing 80 cars from the road for a year
- Reducing the toxic mercury level found in 680,000 tuna
- Saving enough energy to power 45 homes for a year
- A cost benefit to the environment of \$1.3 for every dollar spent

calculations based on EPA Electronics Environmental Benefits Calculator.

The Customer/Community

Households receiving HUD housing assistance, CalFresh, SSI, or free/reduced lunch were eligible.

The Implementation

As a member of the CBC, the California Department of Transportation donated 200 computers that were “wiped” and then refurbished by Tech Exchange staff. The event was marketed at Oakland schools and community service centers via social media and community outreach programs.

A number of volunteers, including CBC members, participated in the event to register recipients, guide them through the process, answer questions about the services offered and distribute computers.



Key Success Factors

- 1 The stated goals were clear and attainable
- 2 The team of nonprofits, private sector partners, volunteers and California Broadband Council worked collectively to eliminate red tape and burdensome processes to efficiently distribute computers, information and resources
- 3 The event was modeled after other successful Tech Exchange events

