



Report Shows Digital Divide in South Carolina Shrinking

Contact: Jessica Ditto
jditto@connectednation.org
(202) 251-4749

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Erin Kleinlein
ekleinlein@connectsc.org
(803) 318-5639

Broadband adoption gap between rural residents and statewide average closed by six percentage points in two years

[Read the Report](#)

COLUMBIA, SC – A new report from Connect South Carolina, released today in conjunction with the South Carolina Economic Developers' Association's midyear meeting, shows that efforts across the state to close the gap in broadband adoption are working. Data based on socio-economic factors gathered by Connect South Carolina's 2010, 2011, and 2012 Residential Technology Assessments was used to illustrate how the broadband adoption gap between rural residents and the statewide average closed by six percentage points in two years. In 2010, the adoption rate among rural residents was 46% compared to 62% statewide; by 2012, that gap had narrowed with 56% of rural residents adopting broadband compared to the statewide rate of 66%

"The digital divide in South Carolina is becoming a prominent issue as the prosperity of a community becomes more dependent on broadband adoption in businesses and households," said Connect South Carolina State Program Lead Heather Jones. "The efforts of many to increase these adoption rates have produced excellent results in closing the gap, but these efforts must continue in order to prevent future decline or stagnation. We are extremely satisfied with the

progress that has been made and are looking forward to working with communities to continue improving the lives of South Carolinians."

Additional key findings* from the report include:

- The broadband adoption gap between the statewide average and African Americans, the elderly, and rural South Carolina residents has decreased since 2010.
- The broadband adoption gap between African Americans and the state average has diminished by five percentage points between 2010 and 2012.
- The broadband adoption gap between low-income households in the state and among those with no college education has increased slightly between 2010 and 2012. This suggests that without a concerted effort, these individuals may end up further behind in their technology adoption and usage.
- On average, the gap in broadband adoption was 13% between rural and non-rural residents across the state in 2012, but this figure is not consistent across different demographics.
- In 2012, when rural adults with a college education are compared to urban and suburban college-educated adults, the gap in broadband adoption is closer to 8 percentage points.
- Also in 2012, non-rural Caucasians are 7% more likely to adopt broadband at home compared to rural Caucasians. By contrast, non-rural minorities are 17% more likely to have broadband at home than rural minority adults.

[*See the report for full details.](#)

"I am very pleased to see the data represent the great progress being made in the state of South Carolina to increase broadband adoption," said Connect South Carolina Community Technology Advisor Lindsay Conrad. "There have been many economic and social benefits for groups devoted to lessening the broadband adoption gap, but developing new and creative initiatives to overcome the barriers that prevent certain groups from subscribing to broadband will continue to be a priority for Connect South Carolina."

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About Connect South Carolina: As the State Broadband Initiative, Connect South Carolina is leading the effort to increase high-speed Internet access, adoption and use to ensure South Carolina's competitiveness in the connected global economy of the twenty-first century. Connect South Carolina is a public-

private partnership designated by the state to work with all broadband providers to create South Carolina's first interactive map of broadband coverage. This work serves as a foundation for addressing remaining service gaps while also engaging state, regional and local leaders in workforce development activities designed to bridge South Carolina's digital divide. For maps, research or to get involved with efforts in your community please visit: www.ConnectSC.org.

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