



Digital Literacy Initiative

Fact Sheet



We Live in an Internet Economy

- Global online transactions currently total an estimated \$10 trillion annually.¹ In the United States alone, according to the U.S. Census, domestic online transactions in 2008 were estimated to total \$3.7 trillion annually.²
- By one estimate, American jobs related to the Internet contributed an estimated \$300 billion of economic activity to the U.S. gross domestic product in 2009.³

Digital Literacy is Necessary for Today's Jobs

- Ninety-six percent of working Americans use new communications technologies as part of their daily life, while sixty-two percent of working Americans use the Internet as an integral part of their jobs.⁴
- Between 1998 and 2008, the number of domestic IT jobs grew by 26 percent, four times faster than U.S. employment as a whole. By 2018, IT employment is expected to grow by another 22 percent.⁵
- According to one estimate, as of 2009, advertising-supported Internet services directly or indirectly employed three million Americans, 1.2 million of whom hold jobs that did not exist two decades ago.⁶
- High-speed Internet access and online skills are not only necessary for seeking, applying for, and getting today's jobs, but also to take advantage of the growing educational, civic, and health care advances spurred by broadband. For example, an increasing amount of activities – such as taking college classes, monitoring chronic medical conditions, renewing your driver's license, tracking your child's school assignments – are now commonly conducted online.

Digital Literacy Training is Needed

- Despite the growing importance of the Internet in American life, 28 percent of Americans do not use the Internet at all.⁷
- Nearly one-third of U.S. households (32 percent) lack broadband service.⁸
- The two most commonly cited reasons for not having broadband Internet access at home are that it is perceived as not needed (46 percent) or too expensive (25 percent).⁹
- There are notable disparities between demographic groups: people with low incomes, disabilities, seniors, minorities, the less-educated, non-family households, and the non-employed tend to lag behind other groups in home broadband use.¹⁰
- While there is no single solution to closing the broadband adoption gap, increasing digital literacy skills among non-users is key to bringing them online and opening doors to opportunity.

DigitalLiteracy.gov Provides Easy Access to Free Resources and Tools

- www.DigitalLiteracy.gov is an online portal that makes it easy to find resources and tools that teach computer and online skills. Practitioners in service-oriented organizations — such as libraries, schools, community centers, community colleges, and workforce training centers — can provide feedback on and share digital literacy content and practices. Anyone can use the web portal to identify the skills needed for various jobs, locate suitable training, and search for employment.

DigitalLiteracy.gov Includes:

- **Workforce development materials** such as tutorials, presentations, and reports that teach individuals how to find a job, create a resume, and use productivity software such as word processing and spreadsheets.
- **Curriculum materials** such as lesson plans, student handouts, and class exercises that teach basic computer and online skills in formal and informal classroom settings.
- **Train-the-trainer materials** such as presentations, handouts, and exercises used to teach individuals how to teach digital literacy skills to others.
- **Games and interactive tutorials** that teach digital literacy skills to various audiences through active use.
- **Reports and articles** on a range of digital literacy topics.

Interactive and User-Friendly Features

- **Easy Navigation:** A user-friendly taxonomy and search feature helps visitors find resources by general topic, skill type, skill level, format, audience, user-rating, and keywords.
- **Collaboration:** Discussion threads allow users to post comments and share ideas on a wide-range of digital literacy topics.
- **Rating System:** A star rating system allows visitors to provide feedback on resources.

Digital Literacy Partners

- DigitalLiteracy.gov was created by the Department of Commerce's National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) in collaboration with the Department of Education and other federal agencies: the Corporation for National and Community Service, the Federal Communications Commission, the Institute of Museum and Library Services, and the Departments of Agriculture, Energy, Health and Human Services, Housing and Urban Development, and Labor.
- DigitalLiteracy.gov augments NTIA's [Broadband Technology Opportunities Program](#), a Recovery Act grant program that is investing in projects to expand broadband access and adoption in America. Many of these projects are teaching digital literacy skills, and www.DigitalLiteracy.gov is a central location where grantees can upload and share content and best practices with other practitioners and the general public, leveraging the

value of these projects. In launching www.DigitalLiteracy.gov, NTIA is building on knowledge gained from managing its broadband grants program in order to provide digital literacy resources to all Americans.

- NTIA is partnering with the American Library Association and the Institute of Museum and Library Services to promote the use of the portal by the nation's 16,600 public libraries where, in 2009, over 30 million people used computers to seek and apply for jobs.

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¹ Information Technology and Innovation Foundation (ITIF), *The Internet Economy 25 Years After .com* (Mar. 15, 2010), <http://www.itif.org/publications/internet-economy-25-years-after-com>.

² U.S. Census Bureau, *E-Stats*, May 27, 2010, <http://www.census.gov/estats/2008/2008reportfinal.pdf>.

³ See John Deighton et al., *Economic Value of the Advertising-Supported Internet Ecosystem* (2009) at 12, available at <http://www.iab.net/media/file/Economic-Value-Report.pdf>.

⁴ Pew Internet and American Life Project, *Most Working Americans Now Use The Internet or Email at Their Jobs*, Sept. 24, 2008, <http://www.pewinternet.org/Reports/2008/Networked-Workers/1-Summary-of-Findings.aspx>.

⁵ U.S. Department of Commerce Internet Policy Task Force, *Commercial Data Privacy and Innovation in the Internet Economy: A Dynamic Policy Framework*, Green Paper (Dec. 2010), http://www.ntia.doc.gov/reports/2010/IPTF_Privacy_GreenPaper_12162010.pdf.

⁶ *Economic Value of the Advertising-Supported Internet Ecosystem* at 6.

⁷ *Digital Nation: Expanding Internet Usage*, NTIA Research Preview (Feb. 2011) at 5, http://www.ntia.doc.gov/reports/2011/NTIA_Internet_Use_Report_February_2011.pdf.

⁸ *Id.* at 2.

⁹ *Id.* at 24.

¹⁰ *Id.* at 2.