



SUMMARY

REGIONAL CONSULTATIONS

CRANBROOK

FEBRUARY 5, 2004

PREMIER'S TECHNOLOGY COUNCIL

This document is a summary only of presentations made during the regional consultations in Cranbrook on February 5, 2004 and written submissions provided to the Premier's Technology Council. Every effort has been made to consider all input presented and be as accurate as possible. However, errors or omissions may have occurred. Please notify the PTC of any significant inaccuracies at

Premiers.TechnologyCouncil@gems8.gov.bc.ca.

CRANBROOK CONSULTATIONS

<p>Date : Thursday, February 5, 2004</p> <p>Time : 09:00-17:30</p> <p>Location : Chief David Room Delta St. Eugene Mission Resort 7731 Mission Road, Cranbrook</p>	<p>In attendance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Jim Mutter, PTC President - Dr. Don Rix, PTC Council Member - Len Juteau, PTC - Director of Operations - Pratibha Sharma, PTC - Analyst
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AGENDA

Time	Organization	Name	Page
09:00-10:00	College of the Rockies	Donna Lomas Heather Schneider Toni O'Keeffe	1
10:00-11:00	Ktunaxa/Kinbasket Tribal Council	Don Maki Kathryn Teneese	3
11:00-12:00	District of Sparwood Chamber of Commerce - District of Sparwood Village of Radium Hot Springs Columbia Mountain Open Network Kaiser Valley Health Care Cooperative	Cal McDougal Danny Dwyer Paul Wortley Greg Deck Kevin McIsaac Grace Williams	4
13:00-13:30	East Kootenay Regional Hospital	Dr. Joseph Kotlarz Tracey Parnell	6
14:00-14:30	City of Kimberley	Ron McRae Bruce Irwin	7
15:00-16:30			
	Rocky Mountain Networks Ltd.	Bill Therens	7
	City of Cranbrook	Jim Montain	8
	Cranbrook Public Library	Ursula Brigl	8
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	General observer:		
	City of Kimberley	Ron McRae Bruce Irwin	

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COLLEGE OF THE ROCKIES (COTR)

Donna Lomas, Heather M. Schneider, Toni O'Keeffe

COTR's role in Cranbrook:

- One of the original 6 community colleges part of BCCampus
- Can reach outside the region and resolve student enrollment issues (in regions such as lower mainland), but most of the e-learning is still delivered within the region

Issues:

- Proposal from BCCampus to have same tuition fees across the board is not feasible, lower fees is a competitive advantage, if everyone has to adhere to the same tuition levels COTR may have to opt out
- Maintaining independence in terms of courses offered is important, reflecting local culture and needs

E-learning courses:

- Faculty has been very supportive, learning new technologies and participating in the formulation of strategies. Faculty focuses on content and accessibility
- Helpdesk at both college and through BCCampus
- Business – 1st year courses are offered online, 20 students per class
- Linked to high schools – offer AVT (Adult Vocational Training) programs – 22 students enrolled, of these 19 finished successfully
- Criminal Justice certificate – offered as part of the commitment to Ministry to meet lower mainland demands
- Ed2Go – continuing education courses, variety of courses, doubled enrollment after recent marketing campaign

Experiences with e-learning

- E-learning enrollment outstrips face to face enrollment
- Students enjoy the freedom and flexibility as well as savings of time due to weather/distance constraints
- Average age of students is 37 years
- Use of videoconferencing has had mixed results

Challenges

- 2 recent surveys conducted to examine process and e-learning strategies being used, as well to examine online support and find challenges
- Inconsistent level of access & quality – multiple providers (4 or more), each with their own level of service, students sometimes experience difficulty and loss of service
- First two weeks of a course are crucial to the experience
 - Students get easily frustrated and want fast access
 - Enrollment is hard to predict as they sign up at the last minute
 - Incredible flexibility is required
- PLNet has inconsistencies
 - quality of service is not good for smaller campuses, different bandwidths, all campuses have minimal bandwidth but not sufficient or consistent
 - repairs and contracts affect service levels
 - In rural areas, instructors and students only have dial-up access
 - Students have to use faxes to submit documents rather than through the internet

- Registrations and all other work is dependent on bandwidth
- Videoconferencing has technical issues including audio related issues, have to use teleconference as well videoconference

E-Health - Programs

- Practical Nursing is offered online
 - all students are from lower mainland
 - students come to Cranbrook in June-July period for practicum
 - all students have been successful in exams, proving that the quality is good
- Licensed Practical Nurses program
 - rotates from campus to campus every 12 months
 - smaller communities get access to a high-end program and more students are able to access the program
 - Health industry traditionally does not have experience or skills in this area

Challenges

- Small health providers (clinics, hospitals), do not have access to broadband, therefore healthcare professionals cannot access e-learning courses properly
- Resistance to technology with some – technology as well as human factor
- Trying to incorporate lab components online is difficult as it uses video streams, manipulations and the costs are high, it is time consuming to put science programs online
- Students pay full cost recovery since these programs are not part of college's funded programs
- Course revisions - Health area requires rapid changes and typically has 3 year rotation period

Local Technology Industry

- Working with Rocky Mountain Business Development Center, Community Futures and Western Economic Diversification to conduct a feasibility study for an enterprise center
 - to develop strategies
 - identify needs and priorities
 - provide access to dollars and prioritization
- Enterprise study, will help address identified needs
- Most students leave the region, through Enterprise Feasibility study hope to create an environment to help them stay
 - People usually come back in mid-career for lifestyle change
- Region is an importer of skilled workforce
 - Would like to foster environment for better jobs and to keep people in the region

Digital Divide

- Alpha Route Online Literacy Outreach Project helped learners acquire basic skills. Funded by National Literacy Secretariat - funding runs out in April 2004
- Traditionally e-learning is thought of being completely online, but students require human-tutor support as well as helpdesk support
- currently reallocating college resources to patch e-learning on back of traditional learning, need to target specific \$\$
- New Min. of State Resorts – hope to expand growth in Tourism British Columbia
 - Need reservation systems, adventure programs, and contacts with clients worldwide through access to broadband
- A small technology industry - designing web pages, developing video games
- Broadband access will enable
 - Videoconferencing, streaming video along with audio, currently not able to do it

- Proper E-learning, it should be easy and effective to use, lack of broadband causes frustration
- Internet should be used to reduce costs, such as long distance costs

BCCampus

- BCCampus is pushing for common pricing of courses. Not feasible, as online courses should match up face to face costs
- No consensus on marketing in BCCampus – whose look and feel should be used, no unified marketing strategy.
- Registrars offices/advisors should work together to provide access to courses
- Quality exists; no real inhibitors exist to cooperating and offering courses to students outside the region.

Message to the PTC:

- BCCampus
 - Proposal from BCCampus to have same tuition fees across the board is not feasible, lower fees is a competitive advantage
 - Maintaining independence in terms of courses offered is important, it reflects local culture and needs
- PLNet has inconsistencies
 - all campuses have minimal bandwidth but not sufficient or consistent,
 - quality of service is not good for smaller campuses, rural areas only have dial-up access
- Need broadband access in order to allow people who live in the region to work from home, as well as to enhance e-learning through videoconferencing
 - Internet would also help to reduce costs, such as long distance costs
- Smaller health providers (clinics, hospitals), do not have access to broadband, therefore healthcare professionals cannot access e-learning courses properly and do not acquire these skills
- Need support on the following:
 - Increased access to consistent broadband internet service across the region
 - Increased funding opportunities to allow for development and staffing of e-learning opportunities
 - Support for an Enterprise Center that will allow for development of technology opportunities in the region

KTUNAXA/KINBASKET TRIBAL COUNCIL

Kathryn Teneese, Don Maki

- Nation comprised of 5 communities an hour apart
- Technology is seen as something for future, but the need is to utilize it now
- Ktunaxa - Only 35 people speak the language. 70% are over the age of 60 and in ill-health. Currently working on preserving this language through technology applications
- Need broadband connection between 5 communities to provide services in the social sector for health, education, children
- Children are sent to US for education, when they return their education is not recognized
- Currently have 56k dial up, working on huge projects, exchanging documents is an issue
- Treaty process – cannot deliver GIS (Geographic Information Systems) maps, have to deliver them in person
- Infrastructure is not only roads but also T1s

- Broadband Pilot programs: BC had secured 11/16 grants due to superior plans which were economically feasible, potential to be a pilot region is incredible as it has full community support. Matching funds is a problem
- Calgary doctors treat patients from this region – e-health applications would be welcome
 - 50-300 patients visit Calgary
 - e-health cannot be implemented due to billing issues
- Capacity problems – participating in the First Voices program
 - One of 15 groups in pilot projects for First Voices, contract to get 2,000 words into the databases. One word currently takes 1.5 minutes to load on dial up access

Message to the PTC:

- Broadband access is essential to the region in order to support
 - current initiatives in language preservation
 - services in the social sector for health, education and children
 - collection and analysis of First Nations data

DISTRICT OF SPARWOOD, Cal McDougal; Danny Dwyer;
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE - DISTRICT OF SPARWOOD, Paul Wortley
VILLAGE OF RADIUM HOT SPRINGS, Greg Deck
COLUMBIA MOUNTAIN OPEN NETWORK, Kevin McIsaac
KAISER VALLEY HEALTH CARE COOPERATIVE, Grace Williams

Background:

- Traditionally resource based community, would like to have better connectivity than ADSL, use of fiber can provide that
- Economic development is primary, need to diversify via communications
- Currently ready to roll with the project, Axia as the AB partner to connect via SuperNet
- The region has a community college and will be building a new high school in 2006, currently connected through PLNet, wireless and DSL
- Community co-op (no hospital) uses telecommunications to videoconference for health applications
- Need an anchor tenant to work with the region, to make the project feasible

Education:

- Many educational advantages to obtaining broadband
- Province needs to create a level playing field, regional schools unable to get classes due to smaller class sizes
- New High School in 2006 – would like to incorporate new technology into it, and keep education delivery costs down

Grace Williams

- IT extends to health, recruitment and retention of health professionals
- Average age of nurses is 47, need continuing education for staff
- Can retain staff if through videoconferencing they can access specialists around the world
- Challenges
 - Waitlist for surgery, AB already has computerized waitlist management, where patients can see their status
 - Currently in the “grant trap” – finite amount is allocated, and 2-3 groups who due to lack of communication cannot make meaningful use of grant

- IT could be used as a solution to erosion of rural Canada
- Through spliced access can use videoconference capabilities at college, co-op has access to interior health authority systems

Paul Wortley

- Traditionally a resource based town
- Many satellite offices locally, with head offices located elsewhere, managers spend time on travel, and so productivity is lost
 - Access to broadband may even get head offices to locate here
- Training and retention of employees is affected by lack of access to broadband
 - Small businesses cannot retain employees due to lack of training opportunities and many people leave
 - education opportunity is important for employees – training and self improvement increases sales and improves attitudes
- Sparwood would like to provide fiber to each home and treat it as utility, expand it out to rural areas outside Sparwood – working with CMON

Kevin McCassuck

- Connectivity alleviates geographical limitations
- RDEK (Regional District of East Kootenay) A project includes Sparwood – matching funds is currently an enormous task
- Need Provincial government as anchor tenant
- Contractual relationships with vendors is hard

General Discussion:

- Infrastructure includes telecommunications
- Province should embrace an open communication system as in AB where owner of network is not the provider of services
- Province could move their contracts in this area as a test bed,
- Telus needs to change operating structure, government should participate in market to foster open network and help level the playing field
- It should be like BC Hydro, Province can affect the market as a large consumer
- CMON would be the owner & not service provider
- CMON has done studies on sustainability/affordability of building the network
- Leveraged savings for the Province, by aggregating the contracts with Telus rather than using aggregation to demand better service
- Municipality can own & operate telecommunications infrastructure for education, health and youth initiatives
- It is challenging within local communities to convince constituents of the usefulness of broadband, but 3 districts have rallied and are willing to raise money on their own
- Growth industries in the region are tourism and adventure
 - These businesses have realized that having a web site is not optional, they get more business when they do have a web presence
- Region experiences educational, economic, health disadvantages due to lack of broadband

Message to the PTC:

- Need broadband access for economic development of the region, region experiences educational, economic, health disadvantages due to lack of broadband

- Schools need access to broadband in order to cater to the needs of students, and to keep people from moving away
- Need to recruit and retain health professionals by providing access to specialists through e-health
- Local businesses are affected by lack of broadband, satellite offices and retention of employees is an issue
- Government should embrace the concept of open networks and support it
 - Use this region as a test bed for open networks by moving existing contracts over to support the pilot project
 - Need the province as an anchor tenant to make the pilot project feasible

**EAST KOOTENAY REGIONAL HOSPITAL
Dr. Joseph Kotlarz, Tracey Parnell**

- Hospital is a regional centre, serves 80,000 residents from Golden to AB border
- Already have access to the best surgeons, so do not need trauma support from Vancouver
 - Trauma cases are flown to Calgary instead, so pilot with VGH is not practical
- Need help with internal medicine, oncology, pharmacy, and psychology
- Videoconference of rounds was not as good as face to face rounds
- Current use of tele-health
 - Orthopedic technology is being used between Fernie, Invermere, and Cranbrook
 - Tele-Pharmacy is being used between Fernie, Cranbrook, and Creston
 - used to provide supervision in labeling by looking at medication and drugs over net,
 - addresses the need for pharmacists when none are available
 - saves time and is centralized
 - Tele-Thorasics – 10 out of 13 patients with lung cancer were saved from making the trip to Kelowna
 - Tele-Oncology – Kelowna and Cranbrook, travel time is saved
 - Other areas could be Rheumatologists and Dermatologists where tele-health could be used
- Linking to Vancouver or Kelowna is not useful
 - It is pointless to link to Vancouver or Kelowna, since patients are not sent there. Calgary is a better choice, and patients get their tests done the same day as well
 - No discussions have transpired with Calgary regarding tele-health, there may be an interest but funding is an issue
- Cardiology/ICU is the main requirement here, since recruiting Cardiologists is harder in this region
- Setup
 - The communication response time is almost immediate within the interior setup, but there are problems in bridging different systems together due to lack of common structure

Message to the PTC:

- E-health pilot programs
 - do not need trauma support from Vancouver, patients flown to Calgary instead, so pilot with VGH is not practical
 - need help with internal medicine, oncology, pharmacy, and psychology
- Tele-health would be useful in Radiology, Internal Medicine, Cardiology as well as in Orthopedics, Pharmacy, Thorasics, Rheumatology, and Dermatology

- Tele-health link to Calgary is needed, but fee charges would be an issue

CITY OF KIMBERLY

Ron McRae, Bruce Irwin

- Health and Education are the two priorities
- College of Rockies provides distance learning opportunities and is expanding education opportunities
- Hospital in Kimberly was closed, and now its building will be used to build a Health Centre connected to the Interior Health Authority in order to provide tele-health
- The City is moving from relying on TeckCominco to tourism and hospitality centre
 - Internet access is used primarily for marketing and advertising to support and build the tourism and hospitality sectors
- People in community are currently operating home based businesses, and are dependent on technology
- Currently three providers – Telus, Rocky Mountain, Monarch Cable – Shaw
- E-learning opportunities are presented but feel a lack of skills, due to lack of education, lower socio-economic strata
- College of Rockies – success rates are good for e-learning but not as well as for traditional methods

Message to the PTC:

- City is moving from traditional resource based center to tourism and needs broadband access for the support of this sector and for smaller businesses to thrive
- Need access to e-learning opportunities to increase skills and address education needs

ROCKY MOUNTAIN NETWORKS LTD.

Bill Therens

- Have expanded and put \$2M into the network over the past two years. Provide service to everything north of Cranbrook
- New OFDM technology will make it possible to get it into homes
- Price of equipment is prohibitive
 - Charge \$50/month/home and it's \$48,000 to get access to a fraction of T1
 - \$350/school
 - each site takes 8,000 gallons of propane
- Can partner with government and other organizations to provide access
- Have no formula to compete with Telus, equipment has to be amortized over 5 years, currently it costs \$75, but once covered you could drop as low as \$25 to serve remote areas and provide T1 equivalent service

Message to the PTC:

- Use wireless to provide access to towns and schools which may never get access to broadband any other way
- Wireless networks can be used in emergency situations

CITY OF CRANBROOK
Jim Montain

Message to the PTC:

- Need transparency and consolidation of municipal needs
- Systems should be consistent across municipalities, government is seen as one body
- Challenge is that municipalities may lose independence

CRANBROOK PUBLIC LIBRARY
Ursula Brigl

- Technology plays central role in providing resources
- Increased public demand for use of technology
 - people cannot afford computers or internet
- Costs are prohibitive, need to meet the demands of patrons. No resources to replace or repair. Need influx of funding
- main issues: staff and connectivity
 - have had 2 employees through the grant – Youth @ BC Provincial program, student provide training. Grants ended in Dec 03, cannot produce any such service anymore in absence of external grants
 - connectivity in most regions, mostly dial up

Message to the PTC:

- Public expects libraries to provide technology related resources, sometimes it is the only way they can have access to the internet
- Library relies on grants to obtain hardware and staff support
- Main issues: support staff and connectivity

SCHOOL DISTRICT #5
Doug Hogg

- Schools are 5 years behind the needs, PLNet has not met the needs
- Elementary level media enriched material so capability of current h/w is inadequate. Need more powerful multimedia capable machines for applications
- School system is being developed as a web based system, schools will need to be part of it, but may not be able to participate because of old computer hardware and lack of funding to replace or upgrade it
- Lack of properly allocated funding
 - Ministry funding goes to Board yearly; if schools have to choose between teacher versus technology – teacher is preferred
 - Need targeted funding, not enough funding to do everything that needs to be done
- Need to provide service/training for people within schools to make the experience worthwhile
- Access to online tools and broadband can provide service to students wishing to take specific subjects which are hard to find such as Physics 12.
- Government has removed e-learning as an IRP (Integrated Resource Package)
- Alternate programs such as home schools don't have capabilities to obtain access to e-learning content yet, using a variety of commercial packages

Message to the PTC:

- Current school systems are 5 years behind the needs
 - Schools are increasingly moving towards systems which require better hardware and connectivity, due to media rich applications and web based systems
 - PLNet does not cater to the needs of schools and many are looking for alternate networks
- Lack of targeted funding affects opportunities for e-learning, which in turn affects student enrollment and it becomes a vicious cycle