



A project of

John S. and James L. Knight
Foundation

and the

Aspen Institute
Communications & Society
Program

Approach

- As we face a news media crisis, what are the news and information needs of local communities?
What should be done to meet them?
- The Commission looked at the local geographical community as that is still the focus of political decisions and community life.
- Vision of “informed communities.”

Informed Communities

- Communities need information to coordinate, solve problems, establish public accountability, and develop a sense of connectedness
- “Information is as vital to the healthy functioning of communities as clean air, safe streets, good schools and public health.”
- Information ecologies serve personal as well as civic information needs.

Objective I
Maximizing the Availability of
Relevant and Credible Information

- Recommendation 1 Direct media policy toward innovation, competition, and support for business models that provide marketplace incentives for quality journalism.
- Recommendation 2 Increase support for public service media aimed at meeting community information needs.

Objective I

Maximizing the Availability of
Relevant and Credible Information

- Recommendation 3 Increase the role of higher education, community and nonprofit institutions as hubs of journalistic activity and other information-sharing for local communities.
- Recommendation 4 Require government at all levels to operate transparently, facilitate easy and low-cost access to public records, and make civic and social data available in standardized formats that support the productive public use of such data.

Objective I
Maximizing the Availability of
Relevant and Credible Information

- Recommendation 5 Develop systematic quality measures of community information ecologies, and study how they affect social outcomes.

Objective II

Enhancing the Information Capacity of Individuals

- Recommendation 6 Integrate digital and media literacy as critical elements for education at all levels through collaboration among federal, state, and local education officials.
- Recommendation 7 Fund and support public libraries and other community institutions as centers of digital and media training, especially for adults.

Objective II

Enhancing the Information Capacity of Individuals

- Recommendation 8 Set ambitious standards for nationwide broadband availability and adopt public policies encouraging consumer demand for broadband services.
- Recommendation 9 Maintain the national commitment to open networks as a core objective of Internet policy.

Objective III

Promoting Public Engagement

- Recommendation 11 Expand local media initiatives to reflect the full reality of the communities they represent.
- Recommendation 12 Engage young people in developing the digital information and communication capacities of local communities.

Objective III

Promoting Public Engagement

- Recommendation 13 Empower all citizens to participate actively in community self-governance, including local “community summits” to address community affairs and pursue common goals.
- Recommendation 14 Emphasize community information flow in the design and enhancement of a local community’s public spaces.

Objective III

Promoting Public Engagement

- Recommendation 15 Ensure that every local community has at least one high-quality online hub.

Reed Hundt/HEEDS

- -any society and economy depends upon widespread, secure, and very cheap public goods for healthy communities and sustainable economic growth
- - Ubiquitous, secure and very low priced broadband (measured in ever increasing bits/second per dollar: the broadband value metric) is the platform for critical public goods
- The five key public goods that should be available for near-zero price to everyone all the time everywhere through ubiquitous broadband are (1) health care, (2) energy efficiency measures, (3) education, (4) democracy, and (5) security. (HEEDS)
- The Knight Commission report in detail explains how democracy would be promoted by all-inclusive, localized, very cheap, and secure access to information – meaning over a very high bits/second per dollar broadband network.

Conclusion

“The information issue is everyone’s issue.”

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