

Executive Summary

We have developed a team of experts to create portable computer classes to teach older adults (aged). Our goal is to remove as many barriers to entry as possible to encourage adults age 60+ to get online and stay there. We also intend to be as cost-effective as possible. Portable computer centers can serve a wide area of students by moving to where groups of students are. One day, a center can be in a retirement community; the next in the community room of a mall; after that, in a town's community center or library.

Our reason for this approach is based on lessons learned through our Executive Director's experience as an eldercare consultant, as a [REDACTED] at the 2005 White House Conference on Aging, and as a former Executive Director of [REDACTED]. In each of these positions, she learned that older Baby Boomers and younger seniors often perceive a social stigma in traditional Senior Centers or programs geared towards the "aged." At the same time, the older seniors (age 75+) often are more comfortable learning in smaller groups of their peers. Even in the same town, the two groups often won't mix.

By using laptops and wireless broadband, we can move our computers with our instructors. Instead of having to build multiple centers, we can have the same "center" serve multiple communities.

We will develop exciting, project-based curriculum to drive the need for broadband in addition to the basics of "how to use a computer." We intend to offer social networking and other "fun" things like sharing photos, video-conferencing, etc. Plus, will develop a series of webinars to teach people how to use the Internet to reach Medicare, Social Security, and other government agencies, how to start an electronic medical record, how to safely surf the Internet, how to shop online, and more. We also will develop an intergenerational component – using the computers as the enticement for teenagers to work with older adults to teach/learn social networking, etc. We believe that this will encourage a two-way mentoring relationship. Our teaching methods will include classroom instruction, computer lab time, and webinars/distance learning.

Finally, we have partnered with [REDACTED] so that students who have completed our courses can receive a discount on the purchase of a computer (similar to the ones they have learned on so there is less intimidation in using it). We also will be partnering with broadband providers to negotiate a discount for our students. Our goal is to remove the intimidation factor and make the purchase of computers and broadband access easy.

Our end result is that we want educated students, an easy way for them to get online, and creative course offerings that teach them to safely use all that the internet has to offer.

We fully intend to create a replicatable system so that our business model can be scaled and shared with other organizations and our curriculum can be licensed.

To achieve these goals, we have assembled a team of experts with outstanding experience in technology, education, healthcare, eldercare, and community outreach.

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Our bottom line: portability, flexibility, ease of use, and high quality instruction and programming combining to result in older Baby Boomers and the aged adopting broadband.