

Broadband USA Applications Database

Applicant Name: Oregon Employment Department

Project Title: Worksource Oregon Broadband Upgrade Project

Project Type: Public Computer Center

Executive Summary

(a) Statement of Need

Thousands of job seekers use the WorkSource Oregon Employment Department computers weekly for their job search activities. Some do not have their own computers and rely on WorkSource Oregon Employment Department computers to provide a meaningful and necessary electronic link. Computer websites have increasingly become more complex. Employer Web pages frequently contain graphics and video features. A number of employers require that applicants use their Websites for application processes. Increased broadband service adoption throughout WorkSource Oregon Employment Department facilitates the demands of employers and meets the needs of job seekers.

Current performance can be significantly degraded at some sites when multiple individuals attempt to access online trainings containing videos. Multimedia presentations containing video clips are a common feature on employer and job training websites. Upgrading performance will enable all users to access the job services they need, without impairing other users at the site. The higher capacity bandwidth that broadband enables will bring a more productive and efficient technology platform to job seekers and those assisting them.

(b) Overall approach

WorkSource Oregon Employment Department offices will have broadband. That platform will offer additional services. As an example, Webinars could be remotely produced and transmitted to many offices statewide. These could be on popular workshop presentations for businesses and job seekers such as interview techniques, job search tips, or personnel handbooks. This would save on resources as a limited number of staff would be utilized to reach hundreds of job seekers or employers. The Webinar would be interactive and provide direct answers to audience questions. Videos could also be streamed into offices to meet the needs of employers as well as job seekers.

(c) Demographics of population served

Worksource Oregon serves job seekers of all kinds, including unemployed claimants. Overall, the population reflects 75% having obtained a high school diploma or less. As such, this is less than the statewide average. Part of our role is to assist job seekers obtain the training they need to advance in new or existing careers. Attachment E provides a complete demographic breakdown by site for all field offices. Approximately 7,000 people are served on a weekly basis, with a 10% growth anticipated to 7,700 with enhanced broadband service.

(d) Qualifications of implementation team

The Oregon State Data Center (SDC) provides a comprehensive, centrally managed, highly available, and secure network with all key network locations equipped with redundant connectivity, power and equipment. The SDC network infrastructure includes multi-layered security and intrusion detection, a redundant network core to ensure continued uptime, 24/7, 365-day response, hosted from a Tier 3 facility. OED and SDC have an excellent operational partnership including an integrated interagency, ITIL compliant, change management process and a growing number of successful jointly executed projects including a world class IP telephony call center infrastructure.

(e) Jobs saved or created

Worksource Oregon provides services to job seekers, including unemployed claimants. A snapshot of the unemployment situation in Oregon is provided in Attachment H. The number of unemployed in the state is 2.5x what it was one year previously. From 100K job seekers looking for job matching and career services in April 2008, we now have 242K unemployed who are seeking assistance. Reemployment services is a key focus of ARRA funds the Department has received, which will play a role in getting people back to work.

We are not on the job supply side, but rather our role is that of intermediary in providing quality candidates which have the right skillset to meet employer demand. Deployment of broadband will allow operations to run more efficiently, job seekers to obtain the necessary online training to enhance their skillset, and the latest job matching technology to be utilized.

In addition to providing higher quality candidates to local labor markets, broadband has the capability to transform lives, especially in the more rural parts of the state. This will enable Oregonians to be competitive in the global labor market, with the skills needed to compete.

With respect to direct job creation, there may be some temporary jobs created as a result of the work orders to local community telecommunication providers. Sites that require special construction (to lay broadband underground, for example) may create additional jobs for construction crews. The infrastructure upgrades will have a positive impact on local communities indirectly while the work is being completed.

(f) Overall cost of project

The overall cost of the project is \$433,784. This includes one-time installation costs (including any special construction costs) and the monthly increase in service charges due to the higher capacity performance. The Oregon Employment Department will pay the 20% match, which is \$86,758.