Executive Summary

The proposed project, Salinas’ Broadband Initiative (SABI), is designed to be implemented over a 3 year-period; including 1) handcrafted awareness campaign, 6 Tech Camps held for a week, twice a year each year; and 2) workshops and awareness sessions running simultaneously after the first 2 quarters of the initiative, at least 2 per month.

The organization for this project involves an active participation of the Municipality of Salinas, Puerto Rico, as the local government entity, together with HLB Morales Padillo & Co, as principal applicant for the initiative. Media Marketing, PRATP, TCP Technologies and Emergence Corporation are also joining forces in this project to provide experience, commitment and knowledge.

Salinas’ mayor is interested in broadening Internet awareness in order to provide their constituents better opportunities to improve their personal and economical development. This opportunity will be an encouraging improvement for a great number of socially disadvantaged families within the municipality.

“I have not stopped thinking on how this opportunity will serve as an enabler for our communities. As a mayor I had been able to provide these communities their basic needs; unfortunately technology is not one of them.” – Hon. Carlos J. Rodríguez, Mayor of Salinas, Puerto Rico

Statistics by the American Community Survey 2005-07 present a bleak scenario for the Municipality of Salinas: a high unemployment rate of 30%, less than 10% of its population holds a bachelor’s degree and more than half of its population lives under the poverty line. In addition, people with disabilities, around 26% of the population, have neither the resources nor the opportunities to use computer technology for their development and integration in society. Another interesting statistic is that less than 17% of Salinas’s households have Internet connectivity.
Now with an economy crisis impacting businesses, state and local governments and individuals, the near future is less than promising. The local government has been running a deficit for the past years and with regional businesses closing, a decrease in income from local tax and patents can be expected. As a result, the local government does not have sufficient funds to invest in its people, modernize public services and revitalize the local economy nor can receive them from the state government.

The Sustainable Broadband Adoption program complements the effort on establishing high-speed connectivity and computer centers while simultaneously using the tool of education to bring knowledge regarding the benefits of broadband access into everyday life. As part of the SBA, we are planning to carry-out a local media outreach campaign, targeting regional radio, newspaper and television, web resources, advertisement, summer technology camps and a publication dedicated only to this initiative. Courses have been designed in addition to several Train the Trainer’s sessions. It is crucial that as the population learns and understands what the broadband technology offers, that they have the opportunity to experience, gaining confidence and becoming computer and Internet advocate, they will recognize the importance of having this technology in their residences.

With the distribution of printed material like; flyers, posters, notices in regional newspapers and productions of radio capsules, we will emphasize Broadband awareness. Through polls, interviews and word of mouth we will energize community leaders. Preliminary research shows that we will need to manage fear, ignorance, hopelessness, and social and aging disparities, among others. We are certain we have addressed them through our preliminary selection of awareness/marketing series design. There are many ways that can be used to overcome such barriers; the presentation of information, benefits, and uses is one of them. Being able to “feel” and “experiment” technology will provide a firsthand experience. The development of technological camps and road shows for broadband exposure will provide such access to communities.

Media Marketing Partners, one of our key partners, have vast experience in this marketing methodology, including the production of specialized magazines. Our resources pool have the expertise and background necessary to make sure this initiative is a complete success. Furthermore, the lead instructor and project manager, Eng. Roque Pagán has not only the experience and preparation, but the commitment with the Project. Having worked as technology director for many Technology Conventions/Expos held at the Puerto Rico Convention center he has the “know how” and details to perform and surpass expectations in relation to awareness campaigns and technology expositions. Additionally, Mr. Josue Brenes (winner of 3 overseas Press Club awards), a well known mass communications professional, offers expertise in television and radio production and marketing; including producing daily TV newscasts, promotions and commercials. Furthermore, he is an expert on defining and establishing indicators and measurement tools.
All cost items were carefully analyzed and examined. Contractual services and advertising costs have been pre-negotiated with suppliers. Furthermore, as part of our research procedures we examined other similar projects and ascertained our budgeted costs within the costs experienced in other projects. An ensured costs are competitive. The Project total costs, including eighty seven thousand dollars ($87,000) (11%) related to in-kind contributions, totals $836,225.

We expect to generate a minimum of 1,200 new household subscribers which represent a 10% increase, this number could fluctuate toward a 15% or 1,800 depending on the startup of the campaign. Additionally, a total of 3,500 users is expected to be generated. 20 FTE jobs will be created.

“It not only because we know, it because we care” – SABI team