



III. STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS

Partnering With South Carolinians

Over the past five years, South Carolina's citizens, businesses, governmental agencies, municipalities, etc. have often reached out to Connect South Carolina with questions about broadband related issues. In each case, CSC has responded promptly with information or suggested solutions based on the team's provider relationships, ongoing research, and community partnerships. In this regard, Connect South Carolina has become the central go-to organization for broadband related issues. In addition to being recognized as the broadband expert in public and private sectors, the organization has raised the visibility of broadband successes and challenges through frequent press releases highlighting the most recent public policy updates, survey results, and community accomplishments, as well as formal presentations to various statewide leaders and associations.

Hampton County, one of the most rural communities in South Carolina, is faced with some of the greatest broadband accessibility challenges in the state. Connect South Carolina helped the Hampton County Literacy Council secure refurbished laptops through Every Community Online to be used for GED preparation and testing as well as digital literacy training.

South Carolina Broadband Advisory Council

In 2013, the Connect South Carolina team organized and established the South Carolina Broadband Advisory Council, consisting of key statewide stakeholders tasked with identifying and removing barriers to broadband access, while also determining opportunities for increasing broadband applications and adoption in the state. Council members include representation from broadband providers, related trade associations, state agencies, and even leaders in the entrepreneurial community. During the quarterly meetings, issues affecting the deployment and use of broadband in South Carolina are discussed. In addition, council members are regularly updated on the latest national broadband policy implications by Connected Nation experts. As leaders come around the table to discuss broadband in a comprehensive fashion, solutions and opportunities are examined so that South Carolina can work towards ensuring the best possible broadband service and use exists for its citizens.

Summits

In partnership with IT-oLogy, Connect South Carolina hosted two annual summits that were titled **Connections** in 2013 and 2014. Each event was designed to showcase innovative uses of technology and the need for robust broadband infrastructure to support the variety of applications. A third summit is planned for May 2015. Each summit had attendance of more than 150 and drew stakeholders from government, healthcare, education, information technology, and public safety, in addition to individual South Carolina citizens with vested interest in broadband.

IT-oLogy

In 2013, Connect South Carolina has also partnered with IT-oLogy, a Columbia, South Carolina-based, non-profit collaboration of businesses, academic institutions, and organizations dedicated to growing the IT talent pipeline, fostering economic development, and advancing the IT profession. Connect South Carolina and IT-oLogy partnership shows the mutual commitment to helping more communities get connected and helping more workers increase their skills through technology expansion in South Carolina.

When we look at the supply chain for talent with digital skills that can be applied in business, this partnership triggers some key things. Connect South Carolina adds to the content package delivered to rural communities, and IT-oLogy broadens the access to populations of new talent.

Lonnie Emard
IT-oLogy President

