Introduction

A diverse group of leaders from across Philadelphia came together over five years ago due to a problem of growing concern - the digital divide. As technology made life more convenient for some in our city, others were being left behind. Unemployed adults were having trouble applying for jobs because they did not have an email address or know how to fill out an online application. Students were unable to finish their homework because they did not have a safe space to use a computer.

KEYSPOT launched in Fall 2010 as a response to the growing digital divide in Philadelphia. Today, this public, private, and non-profit partnership supports a network of 50 community-based public access technology centers in all neighborhoods of Philadelphia.

This strategic plan was created to:

• Explain how lack of technology directly impacts education, economic, and social outcomes.
• Clearly describe who is served by KEYSPOT and provide information about the current structure of KEYSPOT.
• Equip KEYSPOT with goals for the next three years of programming (2016-2019).
• Respond to emerging trends so this plan can adapt and change moving forward.
The Digital Divide

The digital divide is directly linked to inequality, and has a clear impact on Philadelphians’ ability to increase economic, educational, and social outcomes. Barriers like the cost of internet, access to technology, and lack of digital literacy training have resulted in Philadelphia’s position at 23rd out of the 25 largest cities in the U.S. for broadband-penetration rates.1

While the modern economy has benefited greatly from widespread digitization, broadband adoption remains low among marginalized groups: only 46.8% of households with annual incomes under $20,000, and 54.1% of those without a high school diploma had broadband subscriptions in 2014. Lower adoption rates were also seen among those who were not in the labor force (69.7%) and those who were 65 years or older (64.5%).2 These national trends mirror Philadelphia: 46% of seniors 65+ and 27% of low-income city residents do not have access.3

In 2016, any strategic effort or approach to reducing unemployment rates, increasing education levels and improving standards of living, must include technology to be effective in achieving sustainable positive outcomes. Across the nation, approximately 70% of teachers assign homework requiring access to the Internet.4 More than 80% of Fortune 500 companies require online job applications.5 Households with internet access can also see annual savings of up to $10,504 for housing, transportation, insurance, entertainment and apparel purchases.6

Looking Ahead: Trends in Technology

Called “the biggest shift since the internet began,” mobile internet usage exceeded public computer internet usage in 2014.7 While computer usage has started to stagnate, smartphones are rapidly becoming the main source of internet access, especially among young adults, minorities, those with no college experience and those with lower household income levels.

Digital literacy is also increasingly critical for work. A study conducted by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics found that more than 50% of today’s jobs require some degree of technology skills, a percentage that experts say will increase to 77% in the next decade.8 Among employed Americans, 86% of employed Americans use the internet or email at least occasionally.9

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total Domestic Employment by Skill Level (2013)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Position (millions)</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>High -Skill -</td>
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<tr>
<td>Digital Middle - Skill -</td>
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<tr>
<td>Non -Digital Middle Skill -</td>
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<td>Low -Skill -</td>
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Andrew Soergel for USNWR; Source: BLS, Burning Glass Technologies, Capital One
Middle-skills occupations, which are defined as jobs that pay more than the median national living wage of $15 an hour and require more than a high school education but less than a college degree, comprise 39% of U.S. employment. Nearly eight in ten middle-skill jobs require digital skills, with spreadsheet and word processing listed as baseline requirements for 78% of these opportunities.

In Philadelphia, technology is one of the fastest growing industries. 5,100 tech businesses have created an ‘innovation economy,’ with increasing demand to train Philadelphia’s diverse workforce to be able to better compete for technology-related jobs. Several promising programs have been focusing on training low-income and low-skilled Philadelphians in areas such as coding and IT support.

Finally, Philadelphia’s commitment to Open Data, and the adoption of an Open Data policy in 2012, reinforces its ongoing commitment to providing open, transparent, and accessible information about city government. However, as information from city government is increasingly available online, it is critical that all Philadelphians, including those among marginalized groups who are without basic high-speed Internet, are able to access this information.

**KEYSPOT: Past and Present**

KEYSPOT launched through the Freedom Rings Partnership in September 2010, with funding from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act’s Broadband Technology Opportunities Program (BTOP). Partners included Philadelphia Parks and Recreation, the Office of Innovation and Technology, Drexel University, and the Free Library of Philadelphia, and a variety of community organizations. This program originally included over 80 community-based public access technology centers, predominantly in low-income areas of Philadelphia.

KEYSPOT has operated continuously since April 2011. When BTOP ended in June 2013, the City of Philadelphia was determined to build on the momentum of the KEYSPOT program, which had already served 450,000 visitors. After championing ongoing city funding for KEYSPOT, the city assumed major fiscal responsibility of the program. Today, a broad coalition of the original – and some new – public, private and nonprofit organizations continue to operate 50 public-access computing centers.

KEYSPOTS are operated by several lead partners: the Office of Innovation and Technology (OIT), Philadelphia Parks and Recreation (PPR), the Free Library of Philadelphia (FLP), the Office of Adult Education, and Drexel University.

“Here in Philadelphia, KEYSPOT is working to bridge the digital divide and increase digital literacy for our residents as they look for jobs, help their kids do homework, and access other vital online resources.”

– Mayor Jim Kenney

Empowering Communities Through Technology
KEYSPOT sites bring a variety of age groups into their locations:

![Bar chart showing Patron Age by Site Affiliation, 4/14 - 7/16](chart.png)

**Key Points:****
- Many KEYSPOT patrons have little to no prior experience with computers or the Internet. To help these patrons, sites hold dedicated open hours for learners to come in for one-on-one sessions with KEYSPOT Lab Instructors.
- For learners seeking specific skills, KEYSPOTs hold free, open trainings throughout the year. Trainings range from typing tutorials to introductions to web design, covering a wide spectrum of digital literacy.
- To stay relevant in a world of rapidly changing technology, KEYSPOT must evolve to survive. Emerging trends including the rapid increase of mobile phones and other handheld devices, must be a critical part of the strategy for KEYSPOT moving forward. For example, the Dornsife Center KEYSPOT’s Bring Your Own Device training and the Free Library’s E-Gadget Helpdesk help patrons make full use of their tablets, smartphones, and laptops. At the same time, KEYSPOT must continue to focus on our core strategies: community-based, open access to computers and other technology, free connections to the internet, and digital literacy trainings.

**References:**

KEYSPOT: Into the Future

The chart below represents KEYSPOT’s shared vision for the next three years, and reflects input from KEYSPOT sites, lead partners, and other stakeholders. As a network, we will use the priority areas and goals below to align our efforts in improving quality across the network.

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<tr>
<th>Priority Area</th>
<th>Goals (FY ‘17, ‘18, ‘19)</th>
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<td>1. Foster Innovative Programming</td>
<td>Goal: Develop and maintain innovative programming and partnerships that focus on improving education, economic, and social outcomes through the use of technology.</td>
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<td>Goal: Leverage KEYSPOT as a tool to strengthen Philadelphians’ connections to local government and city services and benefits.</td>
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<td>2. Build the Capacity of our Organizations and Staff</td>
<td>Goal: Provide regular professional development and technical assistance opportunities to staff at sites.</td>
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<td>Goal: Support volunteers and partners who are working at sites with KEYSPOT clients.</td>
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<td>3. Strengthen the KEYSPOT Network</td>
<td>Goal: Bring together lead partners, sites, and others involved in KEYSPOT virtually and in-person to facilitate an open forum to share ideas, resources, etc.</td>
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<td>4. Generate Awareness among Targeted Audiences</td>
<td>Goal: Market and promote efforts to entities including community members, partners, City Agencies, funders, and other entities who should know about our work and are in a position to contribute.</td>
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<td>5. Expand our Reach</td>
<td>Goal: Ensure for a high-quality experience for clients at all KEYSPOT sites during open access hours.</td>
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<td>Goal: Expand open access hours when possible through the use of volunteers and other approaches.</td>
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<td>Goal: Continue to strategically expand the number of sites in the network in high-needs areas of Philadelphia.</td>
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<td>6. Use Data Efficiently</td>
<td>Goal: Use data to evaluate the effectiveness of what we do and better understand the digital divide in Philadelphia.</td>
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KEYSPOT Locations

Map Legend

- PPR
- FLP
- Non-profit

Empowering Communities Through Technology

KEYSPOT™