Rural Broadband: Committed Community Providers

Every day NTCA members work hard to deliver for the country's rural communities. Their steadfast and longstanding commitment to serving the communities they call home makes them rural America's trusted communications solution providers.
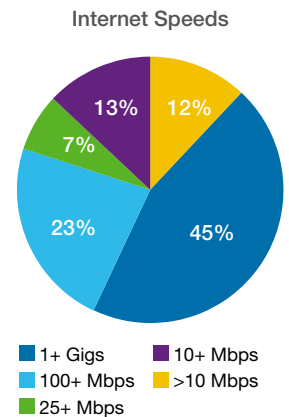
- NTCA advocates on behalf of nearly 850 independent, community-based broadband providers that promote innovation in rural and small-town America.

- Small rural telcos serve rural customers in 45 states, covering more than 35% of the nation's landmass.

- Population density in most telco service areas is roughly 5–10 customers per square mile.

Rural Broadband: Moving America Forward

NTCA members have worked for decades to invest in our nation's future by deploying essential state-of-the-art, advanced communications infrastructure in the most rural, hard-to-reach areas of the country. These dedicated telecom providers ensure rural Americans have access to affordable, reliable and robust broadband services to connect their homes, businesses and communities to the rest of America and the world.

- 81% of customers have access to 25 Mbps broadband service or better.*

- 68% of customers have access to 100 Mbps or better.*

- 45% of customers have access to Gigabit service or better.

- Over 110 providers have been recognized as serving Smart Rural Communities[SM] through collaboration with local leaders on broadband-enabled solutions.

Internet Speeds

Pie chart — Internet Speeds:
- 45% — 1+ Gigs
- 23% — 100+ Mbps
- 7% — 25+ Mbps
- 13% — 10+ Mbps
- 12% — >10 Mbps

Legend:
- 1+ Gigs
- 100+ Mbps
- 25+ Mbps
- 10+ Mbps
- >10 Mbps

Rural Broadband: Overcoming Challenges to Connect Rural America

While advancements have been made in technology and innovation, many challenges still exist for the small, community-based rural telecom providers. NTCA members are finding solutions to build upon what has worked to date, while incorporating innovative ways to overcome the continuous challenges of operating in rural areas.

The cost to deploy fiber networks was cited by 88.7% of survey respondents as the No. 1 barrier to its widespread availability in rural America.*

* Based on results from the "NTCA 2020 Broadband/Internet Availability Survey Report"

NTCA members serve an average of nine public safety entities (police, fire, etc.) and seven schools in their service areas with fixed broadband.

INSTITUTIONS SERVED IN EACH NTCA SERVICE AREA ON AVERAGE

7 Primary/ secondary schools

2 Community colleges

9 Public safety entities (police, fire, etc.)

3 911 Call Centers

3 Public libraries

4 State universities and extensions

8 Hospitals/ medical clinics