

or to seek and gain access to information on an on-demand basis, as opposed to a broadcast basis.

Interoperability

The condition achieved among information and communication systems when information (i.e., data, voice, image, audio, or video) can be easily and cost-effectively shared across acquisition, transmission, and presentation technologies, equipment, and services.

Grant

Financial assistance award authorized by law to support autonomous projects or activities of state or local governments, or non-profit groups. This term does not include direct United States government cash assistance to an individual, a subsidy, a loan, a loan guarantee, or insurance.

Model

A project that employs a novel, innovative, and replicable approach. The ultimate impact of a model project should extend far beyond the community or communities to be served by the project itself.

National Information Infrastructure (NII) Initiative

A Federal policy initiative to facilitate and accelerate the development and utilization of the nation's information infrastructure. The Administration's vision for the NII is of a seamless web of communications networks, computers, databases, and consumer electronics that will put vast amounts of information at users' fingertips. For more detailed information on various aspects of the NII initiative, see e.g., The National Information Infrastructure: Agenda for Action, 58 FR 49,025 (September 21, 1993).

Planning Project

A deliberative process in which an organization, or group of organizations, develops plans and strategies for the enhanced application of information infrastructure. The outcome of a planning project should be a plan for improved delivery of social services, economic development, or increased citizen access to information resources.

Scalability

The ability of a system to accommodate a significant growth in the size of the system (i.e., services provided, end users served) without the need for substantial redesign. A scalable

approach that is demonstrated on a small scale can also be applied on a larger scale.

Social Services

Activities performed by public or private entities to meet basic community needs. Examples include education, health care and public health, public information, public safety, and economic development.

Underserved

End users who are subject to barriers that limit or prevent their access to either social services or information infrastructure. In terms of information infrastructure, these barriers may be linguistic, geographic, economic, or cultural. A rural community may be physically isolated from circuits adequate to allow for data access; inner city neighborhoods may contain large numbers of potential end users for whom ownership of computer hardware is unlikely; residents of isolated ethnic communities may lack the requisite language skills to permit ease of access to on-line information resources.

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