

COMMUNITY TECHNOLOGY CENTERS' NETWORK

ctcnet

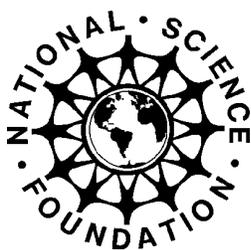
CENTER START-UP MANUAL



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Community Technology
Centers' Network

Center Start-Up Manual

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Preface

What is Community Technology Centers' Network (CTCNet)?

CTCNet supports community technology centers so that they may better serve their constituencies. CTCNet offer resources to enhance each affiliated center's capacity to provide technology access and education to its community. CTCNet actively encourages online and in-person communication among organizations and individuals working to expand access to technology.

CTCNet affiliate members are independent community service, social action, and/or alternative education agencies or programs. All share a commitment to providing technology tools for those who otherwise might lack access to them, along with a willingness to be active in the CTCNet community, open to sharing expertise, success, failure, and resources.

CTCNet is an expansion of the Playing To Win Network, which itself was an outgrowth of Playing To Win's Harlem Community Computing Center. That Center, established in 1983, was the first public access computer facility in the country to be located in a low-income neighborhood. Thus, CTCNet brings to the development of this manual 20 years experience in starting, operating, supporting, and sustaining neighborhood technology access programs. For more information about CTCNet, please visit the Web site at <http://www.ctcnet.org>.

Evolution of this manual

Early in 1996, CTCNet was asked to assist Georgetown University in preparing a manual for the US Department of Housing and Urban Development's Neighborhood Networks initiative. In agreeing to work with Georgetown, and recognizing that much of the content would be coming directly from its affiliate members, CTCNet retained the

right to amend or extract text and information that could contribute to its own manual. Georgetown was extremely cooperative and even provided CTCNet with copies of the disks containing the text of the HUD publication with full permission to use as it saw fit. Accordingly, a first draft of this manual was made and distributed to all CTCNet affiliates at the June '96 All-Affiliates Conference.

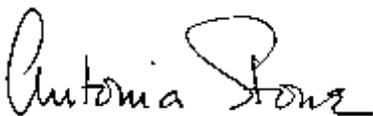
Affiliates were asked specifically to critique the content, the sequence, and to identify missing or slighted areas as well as those that could be shortened or omitted. Most importantly, they were encouraged to offer anecdotal support from their own experience so that this final version can reflect the broadest expertise possible.

The willingness to share experience is the cornerstone of CTCNet, and this manual has been enriched by that willingness on the part of CTCNet affiliate members and potential affiliates, so many of whom have given so generously of their time - to read and reread, critique and offer constructive feedback, supply documentation, and, most importantly, share their hard-won successes and even some of their mistakes so that others may find a clearer and easier path.

CTCNet and EDC staff, too, have invested time and energy in the preparation and countless revisions of this material. Karen Zgoda took the lead on editing and revising the 2002 edition. To each of them, my personal thanks, and, in particular, to Stephen Ronan without whom it simply would not have happened.

Dedication

This manual is dedicated to all Community Technology Centers, past, present, and future, and to the people who make them happen and keep them open to serve those who otherwise would have little or no opportunity to engage the power of technology in service of their own life and learning goals.



Antonia Stone
Founder, CTCNet

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How to Use This Manual

Read It

Regardless of the needs you have to address, the state of your plans or your operation, you'll want to have an idea of what this manual addresses and where you can go for the information you need when you need it. So, browse through the entire manual.

You'll see that each chapter separator contains a detailed guide to that specific chapter. In general, you'll see that each chapter addresses specific issues, that there is a section reporting experience of affiliates relevant to these issues, and, in many cases, an appendix of potentially useful materials and/or resources.

In browsing the manual, you'll also note that there is lots of white space. The manual has been formatted to provide ample room for your notes and comments.

Use the Sections as They Become Applicable to Your Needs

Not everyone is in the same place at the same time. While the sequence of the manual is designed for start-up centers, there is plenty of material that is applicable to centers already in some stage of operation. If you are in a funding crunch, Chapters 8 & 9 (Funding the CTC, and How to Prepare a Business Plan) may be helpful. If you're thinking of expanding your software library, Chapter 5 may give you some insights. If you need to replace or take on additional staff, you might want to look carefully at parts of Chapter 4, and so on. It is our intention that this manual may outlive your start-up phase, producing guidelines for addressing operational issues as they arise.

Please note that you are welcome to photocopy part or all of the manual in order to share material with colleagues for non-commercial purposes.

Tell CTCNet About Your Experience Using the Manual

The success of this manual in addressing the multiplicity of issues confronting the vast variety of CTCs depends overwhelmingly on its ability to represent the actual experiences of centers. Enlarging on the experience already contained can only enrich the content and substantially assist centers that may be using this manual in the future. Communication is key. So let CTCNet know what is useful, what is not, what you'd like to see in future editions, and most importantly, what your own experience has been.

1

chapter

Timeline and Process

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1 chapter Timeline and Process

"In the world today you have to have some computer experience and I still didn't know a thing about computers. But what could I do? I had no money for computer classes or transportation to get them and I certainly didn't have money to buy a computer."

*Nancy Farrow, as submitted by Linda Berno
CTC @ Ryal School*

Why is Community Technology Needed?

The community technology movement began as a grassroots, community response to provide access to technology resources where inequities existed. Community technology centers, or CTCs, allow low-cost or free access to all sorts of computing technologies in an environment supportive of learning. Those able to harness and apply the power of technology have access to a wide variety of opportunities that span education, employment, arts & media, and communication. Community technology helps ensure that people are not deprived of such opportunities due to a lack of personal resources while at the same time fostering community development and connectedness.

An Annie E. Casey Foundation report found that:

- CTCs are popular with children, youth, and adults. Both the people who come to learn about computers and the staff who run CTCs recognize that computer proficiency is associated with success in school and in the workplace. Mastering this complex, modern tool is a powerful, affirmative experience -- one that offers challenge as well as hope.
- CTCs address a wide variety of needs and interests, both community and individual. These include becoming literate, learning business computer skills, practicing math skills, creating newsletters and brochures, playing games, performing research online, assembling a computer, and administering a computer network. Often community members create online information systems about their neighborhoods, cultures, or families. They experience the computer as a powerful and versatile tool. ("Computer and Com-

munications Use in Low-Income Communities: Models for the Neighborhood Transformation and Family Development Initiative," available at <http://www.ctcnet.org/casey>)

CTCs can make a clear statement about the importance of embracing diversity by thinking and planning for all members of the community. This is especially true for those organizations providing access to and training on technologies that facilitate participation and independence for people with disabilities. CTCs have an opportunity to play an influential role in increasing access within their organizations and communities. All people benefit from an environment in which it is easier and safer to move and function.

Disability is a universally common occurrence and characteristic of the human condition. The US Census Bureau states that in the United States there are 54 million people with disabilities – or nearly one in five people – with a disability. People with disabilities are the nation’s largest minority. (National Organization on Disability. Closing the Gap — Expanding the Participation of American with Disabilities (N.O.D./ Harris Survey of Americans with Disabilities — A Summary). A disability is a condition caused by an accident, trauma, genetics or disease, which can affect or limit a person’s ability. A disability can affect or limit a person’s mobility, hearing, breathing, vision, speech or mental function. A disability can be visible, such as a spinal cord injury necessitating wheelchair use, or invisible, such as diabetes, heart disease, epilepsy, hearing loss, mental retardation or a learning disability (Kailes, J.I. & Jones, D, *Guide to Planning Accessible Meetings, Independent Living Research Utilization (ILRU) Research and Training Center on Independent Living at TIRR, Houston, 1993.*)

Nearly everyone has been affected by disability whether by contact with a family member or through personal experience. There is an 80 percent chance that most people will experience a significant temporary or permanent disability at some point in their lives. The incidence of disability is highest in communities of color, poor and rural communities. 67% of all adults with disabilities are unemployed. Disability (seen or unseen) is a part of every community and it is critical that everyone move toward a more accessible environment.

Community technology has become a tool of both individual and community empowerment. The technology we have today enables people to take charge of their own lives, allowing a richer experience because it does not channel what one is doing. Rather, technology allows for greater self-expression, self-directed learning, and opens up new pathways for community interaction. New technology will continue to develop in response to and in anticipation of our needs, and our communities have a responsibility

to ensure that these technologies are accessible to all community members. Hence, CTCs are a vital, community-building resource, providing opportunities for continuing technology literacy amidst a backdrop of larger societal inequities.

What is a Community Technology Center (CTC)?

Describing the role of CTCs, Seattle City Planner, David Keyes stated:

CTCs are stepping-stones to opportunity, equality and civic participation for youth, senior citizens, minorities, low-income people and new residents. These centers also serve as focal points for job skill development, lifelong learning and community building. CTCs may be stages for cultural activity, electronic hearings, public events and conferencing. CTCs are often part of larger programs and can be found in community centers, public facilities, non-profit agencies and schools, housing communities, and libraries. CTCs provide a range of services from general access to advanced training. They usually include access to computers and the Internet and may be linked to other community network technology services such as web or email hosting. CTCs use a range of information technologies and applications to do their work.

In essence, a CTC is a community service, social action, and/or educational facility where computers and related communications technologies are available to people who otherwise might have little or no opportunity to use or learn to use these technologies. A CTC may be an independent agency dedicated to this mission, or it may be a program within a nonprofit organization.

Each CTC has its own unique qualities, yet all share a commitment to technology access and a belief that a CTC can be a means for participants to increase their self-sufficiency. A successful CTC offers opportunities to improve education levels, gain job-related skills, and build personal and community capacity. It can offer a place where participants gather together and link with the entire community. An important criterion for success will be the degree to which the CTC becomes an integral part of its community. Participants can and should take part in the planning process and have a real role in directing and sustaining center operations.

How is a CTC Created?

The start-up process for a CTC generally moves through the following steps:

1. Form a CTC Steering Committee to serve as the governing body for the CTC or as an advisory committee to the agency's existing governance structure.
2. Engage in a process of community mapping to identify interests and needs of prospective participants. This process should also identify assets and strengths available through community enterprises and community members themselves.
3. Form partnerships and develop commitments for assistance from members of the community (e.g., space, volunteers, funding, equipment & furnishings, etc.).
4. Research community technology needs. Structure program offerings in response to identified needs and interests (e.g., adult education, afterschool sessions, job preparation, elder services, family and pre-school programs).
5. Conduct a pilot program to test the planned programming structure and to further refine conclusions relating to community interest and need.
6. Consider and plan for the operational needs of the CTC (e.g., space, hardware, software, personnel, and resulting financial requirements).
7. Develop a business plan identifying the CTC's operational and financial projections so interested parties and funders can buy into the effort.
8. Engage in whatever additional fund-raising, space and equipment acquisition, staff and volunteer recruitment is necessary to make the plan operational.

Note -- Do not plan to start full operations until the Steering Committee is satisfied that the CTC has sufficient backing to stay in operation for at least 12 months.

How Long Will it Take to Create a CTC?

The time required to create a CTC depends upon many variables, such as staff, computers, participants, space, and available funds for operations. For example, a CTC can be established within a short time if a supervisor, hardware, and space is readily available. In general, however, it is likely to take at least a year to establish a CTC. This timeframe

assumes that Steering Committee members have constraints upon their time, such as full-time jobs and families, which means that the time given to the CTC will be limited.

The following is a *suggested* timeline for the creation of a CTC, beginning with the decision to proceed:

Months 1-4

- Form the CTC Steering Committee (see below).
- Conduct the first meeting of the Steering Committee; establish subcommittees of the Steering Committee.
- Institute community mapping of neighborhood institutions (see Chapter 2).
- Research the creation and establishment process of other CTCs in your local region.
- Identify agencies to partner with.
- Conduct the second meeting of the Steering Committee, including new members identified through community mapping.
- Gather in-depth information regarding intended constituency needs and assets (see Chapter 2).
- Formalize Steering Committee membership to reflect constituency needs, assets, and information obtained in community mapping process.
- Determine governance structure for the CTC and, if necessary, initiate process for obtaining non-profit status.
- Design a fund-raising plan (see Chapter 8).

Months 5-8

- Hold Steering Committee meetings once a month.
- Determine the programmatic focus(es) of the CTC to reflect identified needs and interests of the community (see Chapter 3).
- Build partnerships with neighborhood institutions.
- Develop all elements of a business plan (see Chapter 9).
- Implement the fund-raising plan.
- Design a strategy for ongoing operations and conduct a pilot program.
- Acquire physical space for the CTC.

Months 9-12

- Hire a professional to run the CTC (see Chapter 4).
- Identify software programs for the program needs of the residents (see Chapter 5).
- Acquire computers and software (see Chapters 5 and 6).
- Develop a memorandum of understanding for each partnership, clarifying partner roles and responsibilities.
- Prepare and move into space.
- Welcome the assistance of volunteers with initial orientation sessions (see Chapter 4).
- Conduct pilot program and finalize strategy for ongoing operations.
- Plan a grand opening event. Be sure to conduct outreach to the local media for coverage of this event (see Chapter 7).
- Open the CTC.

How Should a CTC Steering Committee Be Formed?

One of the most important tasks that the CTC will undertake is assembling the Steering Committee. Assembling the Steering Committee is important because the CTC organizer rarely has all the experience needed to establish a CTC. The CTC organizer can marshal the expertise needed by recruiting and selecting people who possess the necessary skills and experience to develop and grow a CTC.

Therefore, at a minimum, the Steering Committee should consist of:

- CTC organizer
- Representatives from the proposed CTC constituency
- Representatives of the local business community
- Representatives from the educational community
- One or more professionals

The number of members of the Steering Committee is a function of the CTC needs. As

key neighborhood institutions, as defined in Chapter 2, are identified, their representatives may be added to the Steering Committee.

This section will discuss the roles and basic tasks of each Steering Committee member.

CTC organizer

This is the prime mover/organizer whose idea it is to establish a CTC - the agency head or an employee, a community activist, a teacher, an owner/manager of property. The organizer pulls the pieces together and makes, or delegates, key decisions about how to make the CTC operational.

It may be that the CTC organizer becomes the Center Director, or, when a Center Director is hired, delegates the bulk of the operational decisions to the Director. In the latter case, the relationship between the organizer and the Center Director becomes collegial, similar to that between a CEO and the Board Chairperson (see the Staffing section of Chapter 4).

Community representatives

The CTC is being designed to serve residents of the immediate and/or the surrounding community. Residents must active participants on the Steering Committee from the beginning. Tenant organizations, neighborhood associations, local religious institutions, community service agencies, PTAs, etc. are good sources for community representatives. In addition, someone with expertise in meeting the technology needs of people with disabilities and functional limitations (for example, someone from an ATA Assisitive Technology Resource Center) should be involved.

Community representatives serve as the liaison with the intended CTC participants. They publicize the development of the CTC in and for the community, and their experience serves to inform the Steering Committee of the needs, interests, and assets present in the community.

Business community representative

Representatives from the local business community can bring special skills, expertise, and possibly other business support to CTC development. For example, a local technology company representative may be able to offer knowledge about computer hardware and software; a corporate representative from a human resources company may offer expertise in staff development and training; and an employment services representative could help with job preparation and placement. Such folks are typically well-connected to other business leaders in

the community and can offer feedback on local commerce needs. Consider connecting with area business associations and local Chambers of Commerce.

Professionals

The CTC will need a variety of professional advice and/or service at various stages of its development. For example, an accountant is needed to set up the accounting system. Tracking and reporting of income and expenses is important for several reasons. First, if federal funds are being used to start the CTC, the CTC may have to have an **independent accountant** certify that the costs of the project were what the CTC said they were. This certification will be difficult and costly without an accounting system in place that generates regular income and expense reports.

Second, the accounting system will assist the organization in keeping within its budget. Third, funders will want to see the CTC's track record. The records generated by the accounting system are an important piece of the track record. This accounting system should be computerized and the staff must receive training in its use.

The CTC should consider obtaining the services of **an attorney** to assist in the establishment of the CTC. The kinds of activities for which a lawyer may be needed include:

- establishing the CTC as a nonprofit corporation under state and federal law;
- entering into subcontracts or partnerships;
- reviewing leases and/or obtaining variances from the local planning body as necessary for use of the proposed space as a CTC; and
- reviewing any insurance policies.

A **marketing/public relations professional** can also provide a valuable service to the CTC in the creation of a marketing and community outreach plan, and as an advisor on the issue of developing a strategy for the long-term future of the CTC. These professionals have the following expertise: ability to write press releases and place them in newspapers; experience writing grant proposals; and access to local media organizations such as television, radio and cable stations. Marketing/public relations professionals may include a public relations company executive, a public relations specialist from a local corporation, or a professor of public relations.

Representative of the educational community

Representatives from the educational community (local schools and their PTA's, colleges, and universities, libraries, museums, and adult education programs) will be valuable members of the Steering Committee. Educators not only will know what the school system offers but also may provide entry to the other systems as well. The educational community also may be a valuable source of volunteer instructors, professional development opportunities, education programs, and so forth.

Other members

After several months, the Steering committee may discover a need for adding new members. For example, people with knowledge of equipment acquisition, fundraising, and hiring may be valuable. In addition, as neighborhood institutions with resources that the CTC can tap into are identified by the Steering Committee (see Chapter 2), representatives of these potential partners should be added.

What Will CTC Governance Structure Look Like?

One of the first issues the Steering Committee must address is that of governance. Committee members must agree upon a framework under which the CTC will operate and they must specify the nature of the decisions that are to be the responsibility of the different components of that framework. There are multiple options. The most likely include:

- **Governance by an existing non-profit agency.** If the CTC is to be an addition to offerings of an existing service agency, no separate governance structure may be needed. On the other hand, it is strongly recommended that the agency establish a sub-committee of its existing board or a separate advisory group, similar in membership to that recommended for the Steering Committee, to assist the Center director in handling issues peculiar to CTC operation. Such issues might include outreach and program promotion, hardware and software donations, technology-skilled volunteers, resource identification, and fund-raising opportunities.
- **Governance by the community.** Here, the Steering Committee develops organizational documents (such as articles of incorporation, bylaws, a mission statement) that are required for the establishment of a nonprofit entity that is tax-exempt according to section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. This entity would then be governed by an elected board of

directors whose primary responsibilities would be to make sure that the CTC:

- is clear about its purpose;
- has enough money; and,
- does what it is supposed to do.

An alternative to launching a new non-profit corporation or similar entity is for the Steering Committee to seek a collaboration with an existing non-profit that is willing to serve as **fiscal agent**. Having a fiscal agent buys time for the Steering Committee to proceed with planning and operationalizing the CTC before becoming bogged down in the technicalities of setting up a formal governance structure of its own. The disadvantage is that the fiscal agent charges a fee to cover the expenses incurred, usually between 5% and 15% of the gross revenues earned by the CTC.

- **Governance by the property owner or manager.** If a property owner or manager is the primary catalyst for the creation of the CTC and/or providing a majority of the financing, he or she will make the decision as to whether the CTC will be under the management control of the for-profit enterprise or independently run under the auspices of a non-profit organization, which might either be one that is established specifically for this purpose or, perhaps, an existing nonprofit that provides other services to residents. In making this decision, the owner/manager must recognize that for-profit entities seldom qualify for donations or grants that are tax-deductible for the donor. Property owners often find that governance by a non-profit organization helps ensure stronger ties to the community, increasing the program's likelihood of success.

Whether the Steering Committee of the CTC is constituted as a Board of Directors or as an Advisory Board, it should meet on a regular basis. It should consist of between 5 and 15 people to allow for orderly meetings and constructive work to be performed. Subcommittees should be constituted to allow inclusion of non-members. The Board/Committee's major responsibilities, both in the organization and implementation phases, are policy development, fiscal oversight, and fund-raising. Its major CTC contact is the Center Director.

Documentation

The process described in this chapter should result in the production of certain items that will be necessary in formulating a business plan (see Chapter 9) and assist in the day to day operation of the center:

- a list of Steering Committee members with their affiliations, addresses, phone numbers and email addresses;
- minutes of all Steering Committee meetings;
- a timeline for opening the CTC together with a preliminary list of tasks to be addressed and the designation of those responsible for follow through (this timeline will be added to and made more detailed as plans for the CTC progress); and
- a description of the proposed governance structure for the CTC, along with any documents required for non-profit status application (should that be the determined governance structure).

Additional Resources

- **Board Cafe**

<http://www.boardcafe.org>

- **BoardSource - Building Effective Nonprofit Boards**

<http://www.boardsource.org/main.htm>

- **bridges.org - Guides to Running a CTC**

<http://bridges.org/resources/practical.html#RunCTC>

- **Computers In Our Future Toolkit - CTC StartUp Checklist**

<http://www.ciof.org/toolkits/startup-checklist/index.htm>

- **Developing Your Strategic Plan**

http://www.managementhelp.org/np_progs/sp_mod/str_plan.htm

- **Free Complete Toolkit for Boards**

<http://www.mapnp.org/library/boards/boards.htm>

- **Greater Boston Broadband Network — Politics of Public Access Cable and the Community Technology Movement**; Sponsored by the CTC Vista Project and the College of Public and Community Service at UMass-Boston, available as video on demand

<http://www.bnntv.org/gbbn/>

- **Internal Revenue Service — Charities & Non-Profits**

<http://www.irs.gov/exempt/display/0,,i1%3D3%26genericId%3D15048,00.html>

- **Neighborhood Networks Lessons Learned in Starting and Running a Neighborhood Networks Center - June 1999**

<http://www.hud.gov/nnw/resourcesforcenters/nnwguide009.html>

- **Sample of a Board of Directors Committee Work Plan**

<http://www.managementhelp.org/boards/brdwkpln.htm>

- **Starting and Understanding Your Nonprofit**
http://www.managementhelp.org/np_progs/np_mod/orgs_crs.htm
- **Twelve Guidelines for Making the Net Work for Organisations**
<http://www.makingthenetwork.org/tools/oguide.htm>
- **U.S. Department of Education — Tool Kit for Bridging the Digital Divide**
http://www.ed.gov/Technology/tool_kit.html

2 chapter

Mapping Community Resources

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2 chapter

Mapping Community Resources

"The success of the Cyber Cafe @ Malden Center is really two stories. It's the story of people like Sophia, Mary-Ann, and countless others who are no longer disenfranchised, but are part of the world of technology that is redefining every facet of their lives. The second story is about community leaders coming together in a partnership at the grassroots level to create a new community resource, one that truly bridges the gap in the digital divide."

*Tony Abate, as submitted by George Moriarty, Executive Director of the Career Place Community Technology Access Coalition, Cyber Cafe @ Malden Square
<http://maldensquare.org>, email cybercafe@maldensquare.org*

Introduction

The Steering Committee must have as much information about the community as possible before attempting to determine the nature of the program to be offered at the CTC. The success of that program will depend in large part on how well it complements existing programs and addresses interests and needs currently unmet within the community. Ideally a CTC will be created in response to an unmet community need.

Inevitably, the CTC will be judged within the community according to how well it understands and reflects community priorities, even though the community may not be openly articulate about those priorities. Where the CTC is to be an independent program, the Steering Committee will need information about the proposed participant population as well as about community programs and resources. When an agency is establishing a CTC to broaden or enlarge an existing service program, the participants' demographics and interests may be known, but the process of identifying community resources and potential partnerships specifically relevant to the CTC is still a worthwhile endeavor.

This chapter outlines strategies that can be used to obtain information about the community and about the proposed participant population.

Who Will Participate? What Are Their Interests?

Every community or neighborhood is made up of many different groups of people. The Steering Committee will need general information about the people it intends to serve in order to make sensible choices and decisions regarding:

- space and location requirements for the CTC (including access to public transportation)
- hardware and software
- types of workshops and/or classes to be offered
- multilingual capacity of CTC staff
- scheduling to maximize opportunity to use the CTC
- numbers and types of teachers and volunteers needed

Census data can be used to obtain information regarding:

- size and density of targeted population
- breakdown of population by age range, sex, ethnic background, language of choice, level of education, disability status, and religion
- proportion of employed to unemployed, average income level, predominant types of employment or occupation

Other sources for this sort of information include mandatory reports filed with city, state, or federal agencies by housing authorities or other neighborhood programs, and any community surveys that have been conducted recently by other neighborhood agencies.

The Steering Committee will also want to establish the level of community interest in the CTC along with perceived need, among its targeted constituency, for education programs, job skills development, afterschool activities, programs for young children, recreation, elder services, and business interests.

The SC will also be interested in skills and/or talents that participants could offer in service to the CTC:

- Is there a plumber who might offer to fix a leaking pipe, an electrician to help wire the center?
- Are there people already skilled in specific skill areas or certain computer technologies who can serve as volunteers?

- Are there unemployed or elderly community members who would contribute reception services or childcare?
- What other skills are available as resources to the start-up and on-going operations of the CTC?

Community residents on the Steering Committee should be good sources for this kind of information. The Steering Committee might consider organizing and conducting a series of community meetings or focus groups at which SC members can explore these questions with neighborhood residents in person.

How Do You Approach Information Sources?

Start with the positive: a general description of the proposed CTC, then ask about interest in using or participating, inquire about skilled contributions that the individual, family, or institution might make. Then proceed to the information needed to help structure the center to meet those needs. [See Exhibit 2-1]

Locating the Needed Information

Among the many ways to gather information about community residents, consider these first:

- US Census information: Census data, although incomplete, may nevertheless provide much of the quantitative data you need. Census data is available through your local or regional Census office or on the World-Wide Web (<http://www.census.gov>).
- Steering Committee members may, through positions they hold within other local organizations, possess the knowledge needed or have access to past surveys conducted by municipal or civic organizations that may complement or enhance or update Census data.
- Representatives of local governmental agencies may have knowledge of data sources through reports submitted to their offices. Check your state web site by visiting <http://www.state.XX.us>, where XX is your state's initials. For example, the web site for the state of New York is <http://www.state.ny.us>. Federal agency resources may be accessed via the FirstGov portal at <http://www.firstgov.gov>.
- Key community leaders and heads of other community service organizations may contribute previously gathered information.

- Neighborhood/block meetings, focus groups of community residents who share common interests (e.g. seniors, business owners, family support groups including families with kids with disabilities, unemployed people, PTA families, tenant groups, children & families in playgrounds, etc.) may provide more personalized data.

If, after exploring all the above methods, the Steering Committee still lacks what it deems absolutely necessary information, it may want to consider initiating a “community survey.” CTCNet recommends circumventing this eventuality by whatever means possible. One such method is to postpone more detailed survey questions until community residents start coming to the CTC (or to a pilot program). If a community resident turns out to be a regular user, s/he should be more willing to respond to questions regarding interests, needs, and potential contributions than would the inexperienced community at large. (See Chapter 7 - Section on CTC assessment.)

Identifying Local Institutional Resources

“It takes a community to raise a child.” -- African Proverb

Because operating resources for CTCs are typically limited, the Steering Committee must look to other organizations to see if their programs or assets can be useful to the CTC. These “Institutional Resources” can be found at neighborhood agencies, public and private.

Creating this inventory will assist the Steering Committee in developing partnerships. Any partnership must offer benefits to both entities involved. As you think about how a partnership with a specific agency or institution might benefit the CTC, think also of what resources the CTC might offer to that agency or institution.

Step 1: List all the neighborhood and community institutions most likely to relate constructively with the CTC:

- Schools (public and private) including preschools, elementary, middle and high schools, and vocational-technical schools serving the neighborhood. Community School Board members should be contacted, as should school district personnel such as the local computer coordinator.
- Post Secondary Institutions - including technical, junior and community colleges and/or university departments or extension services that may be located in or near your neighborhood. Many departments are fertile fields for volunteer solicitation, and many institutions today have community liaisons or offices that coordinate volunteers.

- Fraternities & sororities or outreach programs associated with those colleges & universities.
- Libraries and museums.
- Assistive technology resource centers (similar to an ATA center, <http://www.ataccess.org>).
- Local business organizations: Chambers of Commerce, Kiwanis and Rotary Clubs, BPOE, VFW, Professional Women's Organizations, union locals.
- Major manufacturers or business concerns in or near your neighborhood: restaurants, travel agencies, data services, police, etc.
- Religious institutions and associated special interest groups.
- Community-based organizations: United Way, YMCA's, Boys & Girls Clubs, 4-H, senior centers, credit unions, clinics, homeless shelters, community action agencies, literacy programs, cultural or ethnic clubs or associations, arts councils.
- Press & media: local newspapers, cable access stations, radio stations, magazines, circulators of advertising, billboard companies.
- Local or regional freenets or other telecommunications providers, technology companies, additional businesses in the community.
- Nonprofit development centers or management support organizations for nonprofits.
- See Exhibit 2-3 for a graphical representation of "putting the community into community technology."

Your Steering Committee can brainstorm additions to this list based on their knowledge of the local scene.

Step 2: List the needed CTC resources. Your list might look something like this:

- space/facilities where the CTC could be located
- rehab for space including wiring
- equipment: hardware, furniture & furnishings, copiers, etc.
- people: potential staff and/or volunteers, people with expertise that the CTC is likely to need (accounting, equipment maintenance, evaluation, etc.)
- distance learning programs/courses available through telecommunications

- complementary programs (e.g., adult literacy, afterschool, job training and/or placement, recreational, elder services, Head Start or Even Start)
- jobs for participants who acquire new skills at the CTC
- economic capability (e.g., the ability to buy in bulk, to share educational software licenses, to offer free Internet accounts)
- publicity and ways to promote the CTC
- money—good old cold hard cash contributions to the CTC
- other (your Steering Committee can doubtless add to this list)

Step 3: Use the information developed in Steps 1 & 2 to determine those neighborhood agencies and institutions with which partnerships might be the most beneficial to both parties.

Construct a database of community resources listing contact information for key institutions, the potential resources from each and, if possible, the potential benefit for that institution from collaboration or partnership with the CTC.

What Should the Steering Committee Do?

1. Using the chart showing the institutions to be contacted and the potential resources (Step #3 above), apportion contact tasks among Steering Committee (SC) members so that the entire list is covered.
2. Provide an introductory scenario for SC members to use (see Exhibit 2-1).
3. Provide a tabular format that SC members can use to record the results of their conversations and meetings (see Exhibit 2-4).
4. Assemble the results and prepare a summary report.
5. Discuss this report at the next SC meeting and decide which partnerships to pursue in the short term, and which might be more suitably pursued at a later date.
6. Confirm the agreed upon partnerships, formally or informally.

Community Partnerships That Have Worked for CTCNet Affiliates

Schools

These examples illustrate the kinds of relationships that can exist between a local school and a CTC:

- "We are in the process of finally having the school district be receptive to our services as being an enhancement to the services they already provide. This we credit to first forming a relationship with the PTA's (principal in particular), asking the principal to provide a volunteer to represent her/him on our board. From that we let the relationship grow and annually increased requested support as needed. We have found that principals are very resourceful and have authority to make decisions in most cases for their facilities. We suggest to start by getting a letter of support from the school district, then a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), without setting any limits." (JoeAnne M. Thomas-Joseph, The J Connection, Inc.)
- "Community Technology Centers here in Zanesville, Ohio are working with pre-school and kindergarten children 4 days a week on a software program called aerobics. The children are learning skills like the differences in the letter sounds. The software allows them to learn rhyming words and what sounds an object makes along with a follow up step 2 that shows them math skills and letter reconciliation." (Tricia Dupler, tlush13@yahoo.com)
- "I coordinate 4 CTCs in Connecticut with funds from the U.S. Department of Education. Two of our Regional Access for Technology (RAFT) Centers are in public schools (elementary) and one is in a child care facility. The two things that stand out in my mind are 1) the hesitancy of schools to be open to the public regarding the traffic a CTC would generate & the general safety of the children, 2) payment and availability of a custodian to be on site at all times as required by the public schools. Once you work out these two issues things are all set to start up. The best way to go for #1 is to choose a location (if available) within the school where you can have a dedicated entrance/exit separate from the main entrance of the school. This makes parents and school districts much happier. We also did a lot of reassuring folks in the beginning that the public would not disrupt the public school. We work hard at respectfully voicing this issue to the public on a regular basis." (Paula M. Cymbala, RAFT Regional Access for Technology)

- "Our work with schools has developed over the past 3 years beginning with summer workshops for teachers in basic skills. From that we springboarded into working on-site at schools with teacher-student teams using computers to complete academic tasks. We affiliated with two local colleges to offer degree credits and worked the program into a 3 credit graduate class. We have offered this opportunity multiple times at a fee with success." (Harold Smith, CyberSkills/Vermont)
- "Keep in mind when working with teachers that you don't have to be a techie to work with technology. Learning how to troubleshoot computers doesn't necessarily come from memorizing an overwhelming amount of computer facts. Understanding how to identify that something is wrong, to record observations, and knowing where to find information that provides potential solutions is at the heart of being able to troubleshoot. The only way to learn how to solve computer complications is through practice and hands-on experience. Students who have learned basic computer applications, such as the word processing and graphics programs, can become basic troubleshooters, as long as they have confidence in themselves and they learn the process of observation and information gathering that helps them find answers." (Rahsaan Harris, Playing2Win)

Colleges

The following examples illustrate the relationships that can exist between a local college and a CTC:

- Graduate students from a local college serve as volunteers at Playing to Win (New York, New York) and many other CTCs.
- The Media Lab at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology contributed equipment and its staff donated its time in developing the program philosophy and concept for The Clubhouse at the Computer Museum (Boston, Ma).
- Bristol (CT) Family Center and the Somerville (MA) Community Computing Center have served as test sites for program development of the Hands-On Universe—a project of Lawrence Berkeley Laboratories in California.
- The Community Literacy Center is a community/university collaborative of Pittsburgh's 80-year-old Community House and the Center for the Study of Writing at Carnegie Mellon University.

Libraries

The following examples illustrate the relationships that can exist between a local library and a CTC:

- Brooklyn Public Library operates 5 learning centers with over 150 volunteer tutors to facilitate learning among 850 low-income adult learners.
- Most public libraries now offer at least limited Internet access.
- Washington, D.C. Public Library offers adult literacy courses using computers.

Local businesses

The following examples illustrate the kinds of partnerships that can be established between local businesses and a CTC:

- Local corporations contribute funds to many CTCs.
- Somerville Cable Access Television (SCAT) asked a local restaurant owner to serve on its Board. In turn, the restaurant owner provided low-cost catering for SCAT functions.
- Plugged In obtained the support of corporations and their staff in the following different roles:
 - as corporate sponsors. All the computer equipment was donated by companies such as Bay Networks, Apple Computer, Inc., and Hewlett Packard. Corporate support also accounts for approximately one-third of Plugged In's budget.
 - on the Board of Directors.
 - on the Executive Advisory Council (East Palo Alto, California).

Specific government agencies

The following examples illustrate the types of partnerships a local government can have or facilitate with a CTC:

- The City of East Palo Alto's Community Services Department has sent nine different groups of students to Plugged In as part of their Summer program. Students learn basic computer skills.
- The City Manager of the City of East Palo Alto sits on the Board of Directors of Plugged In.
- The Lansing Housing Commission in Michigan received funding through HUD's Drug Elimination Program to institute a computer program along with community policing, with police officers establishing rapport with

youngsters while helping them learn computer skills.

- Out of the City of Waco's Community Development Block Grants (CDBG), \$75,000 has been awarded to Mission Waco to develop adjacent commercial properties that had been boarded up for years due to crime, blight and social dilemmas. At the site, Mission Waco is preparing a Community and Youth Development Program, including a computer lab.

Religious institutions

Religious organizations have started community technology centers in communities throughout the United States. As just a few of the many examples that can be found among CTCNet members:

- El Centrito De La Colonia is a bilingual bicultural community center located in the Mexican American community of Oxnard, California, known as La Colonia. Sponsored by Sisters of St. Joseph Ministerial Services (SSJMS), it operates a free After School Drop-In Computer Program.
- In 1960, Friendship Community Church was placed by Pittsburgh Presbytery in the heart of a densely populated urban area, adjacent to the Pittsburgh's largest housing development. The Church has emphasized youth programs, starting the New Beginnings Learning Center in 1989 to enhance, encourage and support the academic performance of community youth.
- The Jewish Community Center of the St. Paul Area serves the social, cultural, educational and recreational needs of more than 15,000 persons of all ages in the St. Paul area. To support the community surrounding the Center, it will be offering computer classes in several languages including Spanish, Laotian, Vietnamese and Russian.
- The Association of Christian Community Computing Centers (AC4, <http://www.ac4.org>) was formed in 2000 to support Christian community computer centers across the world in their effort to provide access, skills and relationships needed to succeed in the information age. The initiative grew out of PREP Community Computer Center of Bruce Wall Ministries in Boston.

Community-based organizations

The following examples illustrate the relationships that can exist between community-based organizations and a CTC:

- The East TN Technology Access Center is providing training to CTCs in the

Knoxville area on using basic assistive technology tools with a broad range of students.

- Plugged In has developed partnerships with a wide range of community-based organizations. For example, Next Generation Daycare is a child care program in the Palo Alto area. A group of 5 and 6 year old children in the program went to Plugged In to learn basic computer skills.

Documentation

The work outlined in this chapter should result in the following records:

- A database of community resources including individuals, service agencies, and institutions. You will expect to update this database periodically and to use it to research new partnerships and/or potential collaborations, new board/steering committee members, and other resources as the need arises.
- A report or spreadsheet giving community demographics and tabulating expressed interests and needs of community residents. This record, too, will be updated from time to time, and will continue to be useful as you frame grant proposals and requests for funding.

Additional Contact Information

Paula M. Cymbala, LEARN Project Coordinator, RAFT Regional Access for Technology, <http://www.learn.k12.ct.us>

Rahsaan Harris, Executive Director, Playing2Win, 1330 5th Avenue, New York, NY, 10026, <http://www.playing2win.org>, rharris@playing2win.org, 212-369-4077

JoeAnne M. Thomas-Joseph, The J Connection Inc. Southwest Florida Community Technology Centers, 31108- 6th Street W, Lehigh Acres, FL 33971, <http://thejconnection.freewebspace.com>, (239) 368-8167, jconnect@strato.net or thejconnectionlcitt@yahoo.com

Harold Smith, Co-Director, CyberSkills/Vermont, Old North End Community Technology Center, 279 North Winooski Avenue, Burlington, VT, 802-860-4057

Additional Resources

- **ABCD Training Group (Asset-Based Community Development)**
<http://www.abcdtraininggroup.org/>
- **Introduction to Creating Partnerships**
<http://www.partnerships.org.uk/AZP/part.html>
- **IPR Research Asset-Based Community Development Institute**
<http://www.nwu.edu/IPR/abcd.html>
- **Making the Net Work Toolkit — Involving the Community**
<http://www.makingthenetwork.org/tools/involve.htm>
- **Making the Net Work Toolkit — Local Resources Checklist**
<http://www.makingthenetwork.org/tools/findhelp.htm>
- **Neighborhood Technology Resource Center**
<http://www.northwesttower.com/mainpage.html>
- **Randal D. Pinkett Papers et al.**
<http://www.media.mit.edu/~rpinkett/papers/index.html>

Exhibit 2-1

Community Partnership Interview Scenario:

1. Introduce yourself and mention the name of the person who gave you the contact information.
2. Make an appointment to meet with the person, if possible. If the CTC is operational, or in its pilot phase, invite the person to visit. If a meeting is inappropriate, ask if the person has time now or if there's a more convenient time when you could call back.
3. Describe very briefly the plan to develop the CTC. The Steering Committee can formulate this statement to be used by everyone making these contacts.
4. Describe very briefly the prime reason you are making this contact (i.e. to explore possible available space, complementary programs, etc. - whatever you think the most likely shareable asset from this institution might be).
5. Explore what interest the contact may have in assisting you.
6. List briefly other resources the CTC is interested in identifying.
7. Ask for referrals to other people and institutions that might be interested in helping.
8. Thank the contact for time and for whatever assistance has been suggested or pledged.

Follow-up:

1. Fill in the information on the contact sheet.
2. Follow through with any referrals you may have been given.
3. Write a short note to the contact, saying thank you and describing steps that you have taken as a result of that conversation.
4. Make sure the contact receives an invitation to the next CTC open house.

Exhibit 2-2: CTC Resource Worksheet

Resource	<i>What do we have already? What do we need? Where could these resources come from?</i>	<i>Who will coordinate this?</i>	<i>What issues or questions do we have to resolve?</i>
Community Involvement (Advisory committee and ongoing participation)			
Mission Statement, Needs and Audience Identification (What is driving the center and for whom)			
Programs (Classes, Open Lab Time)			
Oversight and Management (Who will advise? Who will make decisions? Who will implement?)			
Staff for program coordination, training, etc. (paid volunteers)			
Volunteers			
Technical Support (who will provide ongoing equipment maintenance?)			
Facilities (space, electricity, air, entry)			
Furnishings (desks, lights)			
Hardware (equipment)			
Software (computer programs appropriate to your needs)			
Networking (i.e. for sharing printers)			
Internet (connection and services)			
Marketing (for classes and volunteers)			
Resource-raising (How are you going to continue your program?)			
Evaluation (How will we know if we're successful: for each individual, for our organization, for our community. What specific measure will we use to check this?)			

Submitted by David Keyes; Produced by the City of Seattle Department of Information Technology (206) 684-0600; <http://www.cityofseattle.net/tech>

Exhibit 2-3

Putting the Community into Community Technology

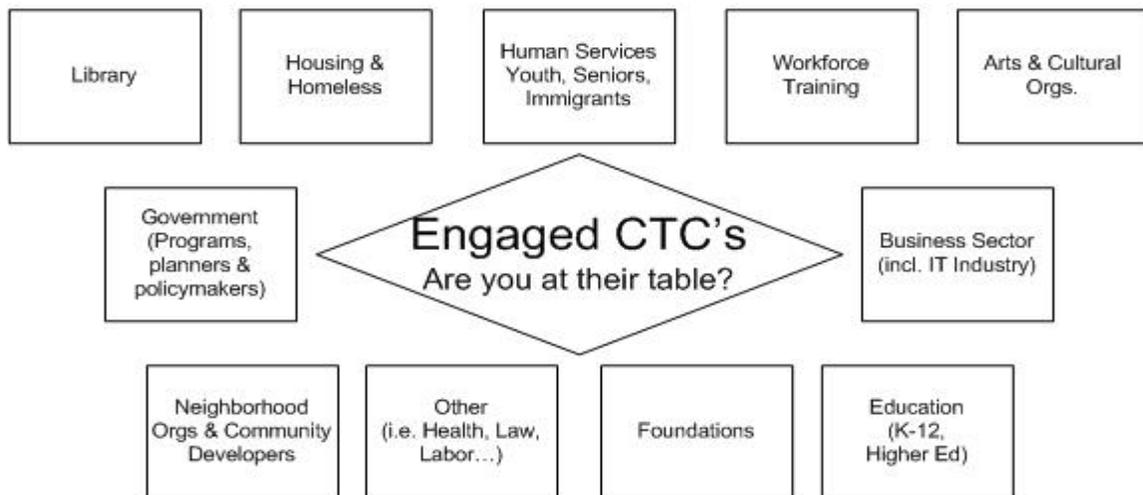
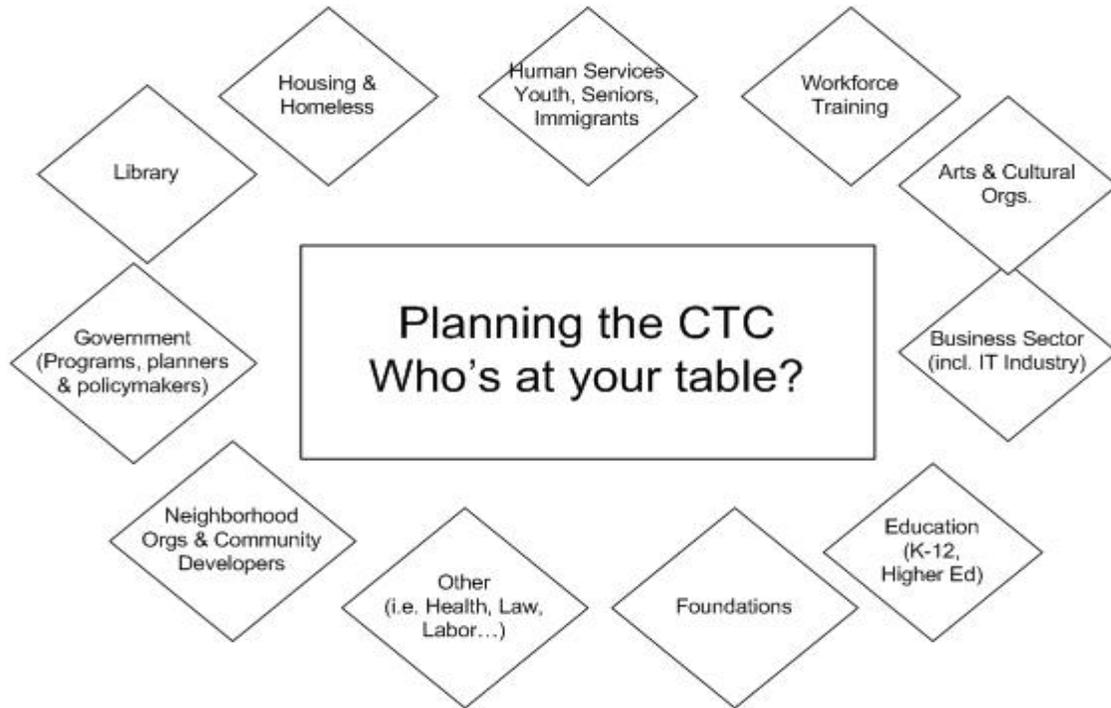


Exhibit 2-4 Partnerships with Local Institutions		
Institution name and address:	Notes on contacts made:	Resources available to CTC (including estimated value):
Contact name, phone, fax, email:		Resources CTC can offer to institution:
Institution name and address:	Notes on contacts made:	Resources available to CTC (including estimated value):
Contact name, phone, fax, email:		Resources CTC can offer to institution:

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chapter

Determining Program Focus

"He wants nothing more than a job. Times have been rough . . . with the recession and the attacks on September 11th, jobs are scarce. He comes in 2 to 3 days out of the work week to search for jobs online. He searches for, and corresponds with, potential employers via the Internet. He entered our community center with no knowledge of how to do so. We showed him how to set up an email account, how to read, compose, reply and forward emails, and search the Internet. He does not hesitate to ask any member of staff for assistance."

*As submitted by Amanda Hartt, Program Coordinator
Korean American Community Services, Chicago*

Introduction

Providing opportunity to use and/or learn to use computer technology is of course the fundamental rationale for a Community Technology Center. Learning to use a computer without some sort of constructive purpose in mind would be like learning to use a hammer without something to pound. Having access to computer technology means having access to a new set of tools—tools that can be used in myriad ways to help achieve work, life, and learning goals. Because computer applications range over such a vast area, it is useful for a start-up CTC to identify specific areas in which to concentrate its programming activities. This remains the case even if the CTC is being created in a larger agency amid a backdrop of other services.

This chapter will discuss likely focus areas for CTC programming and the process that the Steering Committee should follow in planning CTC offerings. The data gathered through Mapping Community Resources (Chapter 2) will guide the Steering Committee in making decisions about programming in general and will determine specific offerings or concentrations, and hence, what software will be needed.

The area(s) of program focus chosen by a CTC will also help with accessibility planning. While certain standards need to be met regardless of age range or program activities, a

youth program might indicate a different organization of space or prioritization of assistive technology.

While establishing an initial focus for the CTC and engaging in preliminary program planning are essential steps, the results must not be regarded as set in stone. It is more than likely that, as the CTC grows, focus areas may change or broaden. It is probably wise, in the beginning, not to try to accommodate every need or interest, but to leave room for constructive response once usage patterns emerge and active participant needs can be identified. It is most important to learn about your target population, what content is important to members, and develop criteria and content in response to that need. In the long run, this is better than choosing a particular product. As far as curriculum is concerned, this chapter will help fine-tune your evolving content development strategy.

What are Likely Program Areas for a CTC?

Most CTCs will plan program offerings in two or more of the following areas:

- Public Access or Open Lab Time, Basic Internet Access
- Pre-school and Family Activities
- Afterschool Activities, Youth Education, and Youth Development
- Adult Education, Literacy, and ESL
- Elder Services
- Career Development, Job Preparation, and Workforce Development
- Technical Assistance, Financial Literacy, and eCommerce
- Electronic Publishing (including print, video or multi-media)
- Social Services and Advocacy
- Computer Recycling or Refurbishing

A description of each type of program area follows. Please note that none is exclusive of others; overlap in terms of program focus area and required software is anticipated.

Public Access, Open Lab Time, or Basic Internet Access

Although the media touts Internet access as a route to information, most centers offering Internet access have found that self-publishing and email for initiating and maintaining contact with friends, colleagues, and relations in distant areas are just as important for many participants. Self-publishing encompasses the development of personal web pages, publishing stories, recollections, poetry, music, still pictures, and video to a world-wide audience. Internet chat and instant messaging tend to be instant attractions for youth.

Some people may need a degree of computer comfort with a variety of applications before they are willing to launch themselves into cyberspace; others may want to start browsing the web on day one. Hence, a CTC with Internet access as its focus should still plan on offering introductory courses aimed at equipping its participants with basic computer skills. Most centers will want to include some public access and/or open lab time.

- Public Access offers members of the community the opportunity to use computer and communications technologies to explore their own interests, to develop skills, and to discover what the technology can do.
- Open Lab Time provides those otherwise involved through structured classes with opportunities to practice what they are learning or to branch out into further explorations.
- Some centers ask for a small voluntary contribution from participants in open labs. This sum can help to defray the costs of printer paper and cartridges, and disks.
- Consider asking participants to volunteer in exchange for open access.

Important considerations

- It may be necessary to designate some times specifically for children and other times for older teens and adults.
- It is important to schedule some times during the day and some in the evening.
- Special rules limiting one person's access time may need to be instituted for CTCs with a large volume of users.
- It is advisable to have introduction programs for the most popular software (see Chapter 5). These are available both as on-screen tutorials and in audio

form (if you use the audio versions, get earphones for the users).

- At least one staff person or volunteer should be experienced with customizing the computer setup for participants with diverse physical, sensory or cognitive requirements.
- This will normally be a heavy usage time with a variety of individuals each doing different things. Thus it is advisable to have a high concentration of staff or volunteers present: at least one for every ten users.
- If public access is to include Internet access, more than one phone line or a high-capacity access line may be needed. Many CTCs have migrated to broadband and wireless connectivity options. While requiring greater costs, these options typically allow for very high bandwidth usage.
- It is imperative to set ground rules for the CTC during open access time. These rules should explicitly cover policies on headphones or speakers, downloading materials, saving material (on floppy disks, hard drives, CD-ROMs, etc.), printing, chatting and meeting with strangers from the Internet, email and attachments, and pornographic materials. Penalties for abuse should be clearly specified. With children and teenagers it may be helpful to quiz them on ground rules from time to time or prohibit access until they understand the guidelines on their behavior in the CTC. Using a guiding phrase and corresponding philosophy such as "You can do whatever you want in the CTC except break the rules" is one way to positively redirect negative behavior. If possible, cover this information with CTC participants before they begin their activities.
- Some CTCs have found it helpful to involve youth in establishing center rules, helping to foster a sense of ownership for participants. In addition, these sites may prefer to reframe their rules in terms of expectations. The guiding philosophy of such a site might be "While rules may be made to be broken, Expectations are made to be met: Respect yourself, Respect others, and Respect our tools and equipment." Center staff can have some really interesting discussions with youth about what respect means to them and how they know when someone respects or disrespects them. Youth should also be engaged in the process of determining what happens when expectations are not met. Generally, kids will be more harsh when meting out consequences than adults would be, so they will need guidance. It is also important to be consistent and apply the consequences evenly and fairly. (Mercedes Soto, IT Resource Center)

Examples of successful public access/open lab programs

- PTW/Harlem CCC was founded in 1983 on the concept of public access but

quickly learned that free availability did not guarantee participation. Talking to children and family members in playgrounds, distributing invitation map-cards, and outreach through other community organizations were some of the strategies employed to inform the community of the opportunities available.

- At the Family Learning Center's Computer Center (Marietta, OH), community members use the resources to perform job hunts on the Internet, write and print resumes, research school projects, research for personal satisfaction, improve keyboarding skills, design quilts, and play games. When the computer center is not open for public access, the Adult Basic and Literacy Education and Literacy Volunteers of America participants use the equipment in their work to improve their basic skills in reading, math, writing, and computer skills.
- In partnership with other local organizations, the Austin Free-Net (<http://www.austinfreenet.net>) in Texas has developed the East Austin Media Lab, a multimedia development center for disadvantaged youth. The design elements of the project include: open access periods at each lab; basic training on Internet/Web page development; intensive training and mentor/protege relationships for small groups of teens; and internships with local companies.

Pre-School and Family Activities

Pre-school and family programs include:

- Times when parents can bring young children and work together with them to explore appropriate software such as drawing, animation, and learning games.
- Opportunity to partner with a local Even Start, Head Start, or day care program that may not have access to computers.

Important considerations

- The attention span of young children is limited, so such sessions should be short—a half hour or 45 minutes at most.
- Young children may not be able to reach the mouse or keyboard comfortably from ordinary chair height. If you don't have adjustable chairs, stock plenty of telephone books or pillows.
- Children with disabilities will provide a great opportunity for the use of creativity in making appropriate use of assistive technologies, e.g. picture-

based keyboards, switch activated toys, cause and effect software.

- Parents may need prior guidance in using the software to enable them to work effectively with their children. Plan on an introductory session or two for the parents.

Examples of pre-school and family programs

- The Durham County Literacy Council offers a computer-assisted reading program, Parents' Part, that teaches parents to use computers to help their children learn to read. This project, funded by the Triangle United Way, Bank of America, Verizon, and IBM, provides a new approach to family literacy. In Parent's Part, pairs consisting of a parent and a child, aged 4-7, work together at computers over 16 sessions to accomplish several goals. Parents master basic word-processing and "parent as teacher" skills. At the same time, their children use multimedia, phonics-based software to develop reading readiness. Reading "offline" is stressed through homework assignments and a "free" bookstore providing participants a chance to develop a home library of age-appropriate, high-quality children's books. Parents Part workshops are held at many community sites including the YMCA, day care centers, the public library and various public schools. Teaching materials are presented in easy-to-read, bilingual format. Reader's Powered Up, developed with grants from the CISCO and AOL Foundations, provides a second option for Parents Part graduates and children in 2nd-3rd grades. Using the Internet, parents and children access online reading and writing sites that provide useful information to parents and literacy practice to children. (Lucy Haagen, Durham County Literacy Council)
- Established in October of 2000, the RAFT center in Stonington, CT enjoys strong community support, actively engaged partnerships, and a diverse client base from Connecticut as well as Rhode Island residents. In addition to RAFT's involvement with the West Broad Street's families, they also offer classes to all of the preschoolers housed at West Broad Street School. This not only includes the district's preschoolers, but also the Family Resource Center's preschoolers and Head Start program. (Paula M. Cymbala, RAFT Regional Access for Technology)
- "Our most successful Department of Education CTC programs thus far at CyberSkills/Vermont has been the distribution of refurbished computers to parents and children from low-income areas. They have a local job training agency working with technicians refurbishing computers. The computers are then sold to the program as a part of the U.S. Department of Education CTC grant. Parents and Parent/Child teams sign up for a 6 hour training in

Windows, Internet use and Internet Safety, how to set up and maintain the computer, and how to access the Internet. They receive a free 6 month ISP subscription. After training they take their computers home. Cyberskills/Vermont did this two years ago and received local recognition for it and have now set up 10 sessions this year for a total of 100 participating families." (Harold Smith, CyberSkills/Vermont)

Afterschool Activities, Youth Education, and Youth Development

These can be structured for different age groups or offered as open lab time for children. It may be helpful to contact and/or partner with national youth service organizations for assistance with activities, curriculum, and possibly financial assistance. Some possibilities include the Boys & Girls Clubs of America, YMCA, National Urban League, and the Intel Computer Clubhouse. In addition to giving children an opportunity to acquire skill with basic computer applications, some will enjoy:

- **Subject-Area Activities.** Commercial software that offers homework help, tutorials, and other activities covering subjects, such as reading, writing, math, sciences, and other subjects, is readily available (see Chapter 5 for evaluation guidelines.)
- **Games.** Games can be effective tools for getting children and young adults interested in learning more about computer technology. Exercise caution in choosing games—some are violent, others are mindless (see Chapter 5 for evaluation guidelines). Encourage children to play two-player games together. Children may be excited about a game of the week contest; be mindful about selecting games for different age levels of children. Do not be surprised if most children want to play games much of the time and consider the environment the child is coming from; there is nothing wrong with enjoying the luxury of recreation from time to time. Indeed, this may be one of the few sources of regular fun a child has access to enjoy. Consider developing a curriculum around gaming, especially in light of the increasing workforce opportunities for game developers.
- **Exploring the Internet.** Once children are equipped with basic computer skills, they may wish to test and improve them by “surfing” the Internet, using the World Wide Web (WWW) as a research tool, or communicating with far-flung peers through electronic mail.
- **Multimedia Publishing:** designing personal web pages, constructing family or neighborhood profiles, creating project reports for school.
- **Music-making:** learning about and/or writing music and songs (may

require additional hardware and software).

Important considerations

- Know every child. Enforce sign-in and sign-out procedures. Be sure you can notify an appropriate person if special circumstances arise.
- Make sure all children know the rules of the center and where to find what they need.
- Young people working alone need frequent attention. To facilitate peer tutoring and collaborative learning, encourage two or more to work together at a single computer.
- There is an opportunity here for staff to help kids explore assistive technology options that they might not have available in the school, and also help them and families advocate for access in the schools if appropriate.
- Assign more knowledgeable children to work with the less knowledgeable.
- Provide ample space to move around, stow bookbags, coats, etc.
- Successful youth programs often engage youth in program planning and design. Consider starting a rotating member, youth advisory board.

Examples of successful afterschool activities

- In the January 2002 a new program, “The DISKovery Hour,” was implemented through collaborative efforts among the West Broad Street School, Family Resource Center, Stonington High School and the RAFT Center in Stonington. The “DISKovery Hour” targets 12 children at risk and provides them with an extended opportunity to learn by offering homework and reading support in a safe and educational environment. The goals of the DISKovery Hour is to offer enrichment activities that are specifically designed to assist third and fourth grade students to develop competency in a technologically rich environment while providing homework assistance. This program was created in order to decrease students after school isolation through fostering teamwork, friendships and strengthening group dynamics. The program also incorporates mentoring opportunities for Stonington High School Honor Society students thus enhancing learning opportunities for young children through the integration of community service and technology. (Paula M. Cymbala, RAFT Regional Access for Technology)
- Malden Access Television Studio (Malden, MA) has offered a program for

children brought to the studio by the local YMCA to learn animation software using Fractal Design, Dabbler, and D-Paint.

- The Intel Clubhouse at the Museum of Science provides a place where young people ages 10 to 15 can use computers to create their own computer-based projects. Computer-using professionals and graduate students serve as mentors, offering educational guidance and inspiration to participating youth.

See Exhibit 3-1 for additional information on curriculum and resources for youth.

Adult Education, Literacy, and ESL

Establishing a comprehensive adult education program will involve far more than computer access. There will need to be classroom or tutorial space for non-computer-based learning and instructors with the experience and qualifications needed to teach these classes. Rather than developing an adult education program from the ground up, a collaboration or partnership with an existing program in the community may serve the goals of both. Adult education generally includes:

- **General Equivalency Degree (GED) training.** Participants are taught certain skills to prepare them to take a test to obtain the equivalent of a high school diploma.
- **English as a Second Language (ESL) courses.** These programs teach the basic skills to speak and understand English. The class concludes with a test measuring students progress towards fluency in the English language.
- **Adult Basic Education (ABE) classes.** These classes enable residents to develop the ability to read, write, and perform basic math. Learners progress to GED classes.
- **Life-long Learning Opportunities:** Extension courses, distance learning, or online learning opportunities.
- **Basic computer comfort and introduction to technology.** These workshops introduce people to the keyboard, the mouse, how to turn the machine on and off, and some basic applications which will enable them to use the computer without supervision and prepare them for more advanced computer training in the future.

Important considerations

- Many adults must bring their children with them. The CTC should establish simultaneous classes for the children and/or a play area.

- Some adults prefer to learn among other adults rather than in a class integrated with children. The CTC should, if possible, set aside teaching time specifically for adult instruction.
- Many adults work; accommodate these schedules.
- It may be possible to locate the CTC within a local school equipped with computing facilities as most schools are available in the evenings.
- Many of the tools designed for individuals with reading related disabilities are also great tools for those learning English as a second language.
- Computers are good tools for practicing memorization skills.

Examples of successful adult education programs

- The Marietta Area Community Computing Center (Marietta, OH) offers ABE classes 4 hours per day on 10 computers in their Apple/Macintosh Center. The adults often return during public access hours to learn other software applications such as word processing, spreadsheets and graphics design.
- The Henry Street Settlement (New York, NY) offers programs for mentally challenged adults aimed at building their self-esteem, teaching them to work and play with other people, and helping them learn problem-solving tools.
- At the Brooklyn Public Library in New York, adult learners work together in collaborative, learner-centered projects using wordprocessing and other productivity tools to develop a foundation of knowledge of writing, reading, problem solving, and information and literacy skills.

Elder Services

Some older persons particularly enjoy:

- Connecting to other older adults
- Mentoring younger people
- Exploring their hobbies and interests
- Games such as chess, go, or backgammon
- Telecommunications contact with relatives and friends
- Telecommunications and CD-ROM-based travel explorations

- Financial planning assistance
- Family tree programs and family history productions
- Health care and other services information
- Just “being part of” the communications age

Holly Harrison of the Alamo Area Community Information System (AACIS) recommends the following for working with Seniors:

- Use Youth Mentors - At a neighborhood senior center we successfully tested an intergenerational training strategy that it will use throughout our work with 50 senior centers. In this strategy, students from an alternative high school serve as tech mentors to senior citizens. Results: Seniors appreciate the time to spend with youth and respect their mastery of the technology. Youth improve their self-esteem and benefit from seeing seniors struggle to learn new things, receive stay-in-school support, and develop positive relationships with adults.
- Recognize that it takes insight and time to create a culture among senior citizens that appreciates the value of technology and what it can do. AACIS uses “project-based learning” for seniors and for each of its targeted customer groups. Project-based learning is really a simple concept that says that learners learn best and sustain interest in learning when their instruction focuses around things of interest to them. A coordinator surveys seniors and provide feedback to mentor-trainers. These results are integrated into handouts as well as informal instruction sessions. Our survey results from a pilot site on most popular technology uses among seniors are: 1. email; 2. beauty web sites; 3. health information; 4. I don’t know what it can do — show me! Actually, we try to incorporate “show me” into all of our work.
- We start with where users are, what their interests are, and then broaden and deepen the topic. Often our new users may have no idea what you can do on a PC or with the Internet. We have to show them the potential. We have to be patient with them watching other users be successful and giving them time to come around. How we measure success and the time frame for getting to “success” must accommodate time for this shift. Having the right tools is equally essential: large font, big screens, and easy-to-use mice with trackballs.

Important considerations

- Seniors often prefer to learn about computers in classes made up of other seniors. Offering “seniors only” courses may go a long way to making them

pleased to be at the CTC and likely to return. In addition, like any other population, seniors learn better in smaller classes and need to be listened to.

- Some seniors truly enjoy working with young people. Consider forming a senior volunteer corps to assist during lab times open to children. Young people may also be eager to staff senior classes.
- Some seniors have a hard time trying to get the mouse to stay put; some are afraid of the mouse. A wheel mouse may facilitate scrolling.
- Seniors often prefer activities during daytime or normal business hours. This may allow for more efficient use of the CTC if it would otherwise be empty when children are at school and adults are working.

Examples of successful elder service

- The Seattle Human Service Department and the Mayor's Office for Senior Citizens has a volunteer program entitled "Seniors Training Seniors". Computer literate volunteers (50+) receive 14-16 hours of training in a very unique and special curriculum specifically designed to teach older people computer basics, email and the Internet. Four, 2-hour classes are taught each month at various senior and community centers in a relaxed and non-intimidating atmosphere where elders learn to expand their horizons with new technology. (Patti-Lyn Bell, City of Seattle, Mayor's Office for Senior Citizens)
- CyberSkills/Vermont works with seniors in training seniors from the local senior centers in the use of email and the Internet. This is one of the parts of a U.S. Department of Education CTC grant. The staff run short, 1.5 hour workshops for up to 6 participants over a 4 week training time. They will train approximately 60 seniors this year, providing access to computers when the senior center is full. They have worked in developing meaningful curriculum for seniors through the senior center for over 2 years. (Harold Smith, CyberSkills/Vermont)

See Exhibit 3-2 for additional tips on working with senior citizens.

Career Development, Job Preparation and Workforce Development

As with Adult Education (see above), a comprehensive job preparation focus will entail additional, non-computer classroom space along with instructors who have the experience and qualifications needed to conduct the classes. Job preparation generally includes both job skills training and job search activities. *Job skills training* includes

classes teaching basic computer literacy, keyboarding skills, word processing, graphics applications, spreadsheets, databases and other office skills classes. *Job search activities* include resume writing workshops; classes teaching interviewing skills such as what questions to ask and what is likely to be asked; how to dress; workplace behavior training; and, how and where to look for a job. A focus on job training cries out for collaborative relationships with existing community services (e.g., those that perform job placement). If a CTC offers job placement to complement its job training program, such activities may replicate services available at employment agencies.

Important considerations

- The factor most likely to produce a successful job preparation program is the availability of real jobs to those who complete the program. If Job Preparation is to be a CTC focus, the Steering Committee should form an Employer Advisory Council that will match the types of training offered, software selection, and program emphasis to the types of jobs actually available in the community.
- A technique proven to be particularly motivating in engaging young people in job preparation courses is to present them with promised employment after successful completion of the CTC course. An Employer Advisory Council can take the lead in lining up these jobs.
- Staff should be able to refer participants with disabilities pursuing a vocational goal to their state department of vocational rehabilitation (different name in each state) for services as appropriate.
- It is imperative to research the main types of jobs that are available in your community to get a better sense of what local employment needs are. It may be helpful to work with other workforce development programs to ensure that the CTC fills a niche in the community.
- It will be helpful to develop a database of how to find available jobs in the community. Jobs can be researched through the Steering Committee and/or through neighborhood partnerships. Other sources include newspapers (and their respective web sites), trade journals, local magazines, web sites (may be local, statewide, national, or international in scope of job offerings), and electronic bulletin boards. Idealist.org (<http://www.idealists.org>) may be particularly useful as a listing of nonprofit jobs and regional career fairs. Note that databases require regular maintenance to remain up-to-date.
- Job Preparation students, as an activity, may wish to prepare a database of available local jobs and a second database of their own skills and desired types of employment. Note that databases require regular maintenance to remain up-to-date.

- The Employer Advisory Council (see Job Preparation) can recruit local businesses to notify the CTC of vacant or soon-to-be vacant positions together with advance notice on the skills required for those positions.
- Job openings can be posted on a bulletin board, a community electronic bulletin board, and/or published in a CTC Job Listings Newsletter. Performing these tasks can be assigned to participants in the program.
- The CTC can organize and/or host a “Job Fair” with participants doing the research and implementation as a project. Alternatively, participants can be encouraged, and prepared, to attend job fairs sponsored by other agencies in the community.

Examples of successful job preparation programs

- Jobs for Youth (Boston, MA). Industries, such as environmental technology and biotechnology development companies, send representatives to the CTC to establish computer classes for skills that are needed by the companies. Persons trained at the CTC in these classes are later hired by the companies.
- The Seward Adult Learning Center in partnership with AVTEC (Alaska Vocational Technical Education Center) is an adult basic education program serving local citizens plus students who arrive from all over Alaska to acquire computer literacy, basic reading, math and language skills.
- SER Jobs for Progress, Inc. was formed in 1972 as a joint effort by the two oldest and largest U.S. Hispanic volunteer organizations, the American G.I. Forum and the League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC) to provide better opportunities to disenfranchised Austin residents. The organization is developing an Internet-Based Interactive Career Center.
- The NOVA Private Industry Council of Sunnyvale, California and its partners unveiled Youth@Work, an on-line community service connecting employers with youth seeking work in Santa Clara and San Mateo Counties. NOVA supports school staff in the use of the system and also maintains public access sites throughout the two counties where out-of-school youth who don't have home Internet access can use terminals free of charge.

Technical Assistance, Financial Literacy, and eCommerce

Electronic commerce is a term used to describe a variety of business activities that can be conducted at the CTC. These types of business activities include outsourcing, small

business support, self-employment, and entrepreneurship. It is imperative that the CTC is cognizant of the local business community as both a resource and as competition for services.

- **Outsourcing** is an activity in which the CTC is hired by an organization or business to undertake a task it usually performs itself, such as payroll processing, data processing, and inventory. The CTC might be able to perform tasks for local businesses, certain government agencies, community-based organizations and schools for a fee, thereby employing CTC participants to do the work and earn revenue they share with the CTC.
- **Small business support** is an activity where the CTC is made available to CTC users to support their business operations, such as by using computers for accounting, tracking inventory, billing, advertising and so forth.
- **Self-employment** is an activity for which a CTC participant uses CTC facilities to perform work for a fee, such as designing fax sheets, producing brochures, providing technical assistance to establish a computer system, and/or creating homepages on the Internet. Individuals who use the CTC in this way should expect to recompense the center from their earnings.
- **Entrepreneurship** is a business activity created by a CTC member or former member in which the person establishes a business at home or at another location using skills learned at the CTC.

Important considerations

- The CTC is likely to need new or additional equipment and the latest software in order to compete in the marketplace.
- Teenagers and young adults could work with the CTC in fulfilling business contracts, learning business skills, and developing relationships with the business community.
- Both the CTC and individuals would make money.
- The CTC must develop a system for sharing profits.
- Written contracts are extremely helpful for clarifying responsibility, quantity and quality of work to be completed, timeline obligations, and appropriate recourse in the event of a problem.
- It may take significant time for profit to defray start-up costs; plan accordingly!

Examples of successful programs

- At the Owerri Digital Village, a community technology center in Nigeria created and managed by Youth for Technology Foundation (YTF), a revenue-sustaining model that has been established is in the area of communications technologies. The center has one general mailbox where mails are received from individuals in urban areas of Nigeria or abroad. The individuals sending these e-mail messages are account holders at the Owerri Digital Village where they pay a nominal fee every month for up to ten e-mail deliveries each month. Owerri Digital Village staff members then sort through the e-mails and twice a week deliver the e-mail messages to loved ones, family members or friends in the rural communities. This approach ensures that the lack of access (at the grassroots level) doesn't exclude underserved community members from communicating with the outside world. (Njideka Ugwuegbu, Youth for Technology Foundation)
- At Plugged In, students learn technical skills, such as mastering multimedia programs and hypertext mark-up language (HTML), which enable them to offer a service. The students also learn business skills, including how to meet with clients, bid on contracts, negotiate agreements, and develop business plans. In the first two months of operation, Plugged In Enterprises grossed approximately \$3,000.
- A "friends of RAFT" campaign has been crafted for individuals as well as corporations to make donations to our program. Along these lines it is important to stress community outreach. For example, after a presentation to recruit interns from a group of graduate students enrolled in a program in Workforce Education & Development, staff from RAFT was approached by an engineer who wanted to know if they were interested in "corporate giving." This person was impressed by the presentation and the project and felt his pharmaceutical corporation would be interested in making a donation to RAFT. In other words you never know who is in an audience. (Paula M. Cymbala, RAFT Regional Access for Technology)
- Over the past 3 years CyberSkills/Vermont has deliberately worked to create revenue streams to keep this CTC alive. Without sources of money from places other than the government the organization would have been out of business long ago. Staff work diligently in setting up relationships with other NPOs as well as social serving government agencies such as DET, PATH, and VR. They sit on the local Adult Ed Council and attend meeting with each of these agencies. Their full program of public enrollment classes provides some opportunities to DET and PATH participants to gain computer skills. Their other work has been in developing a full ladder of opportunity for individuals to progress from no computer skills to job skills involving technology. Over the last 3 years they have developed

programs called Getting Ready To Work, Making It Work 1, Making It Work 2, and most recently STEP-IT UP. The STEP-IT UP program provides qualified individuals with over 100 hours of training from the very basics to the level of work in web development programs such as Dreamweaver, Fireworks, and Front Page. CyberSkills/Vermont recently ran this program at Dale Correctional Facility for Women with great success. Revenue is where you find it and you can only find it if you are looking for it through a variety of channels including other NPO needs, government channels, and through advertising. Most significantly, the CTC does this with a full-time staff of 6, work experience people from DET and PATH, interns from the local college, and volunteers from other NPOs. (Harold Smith, CyberSkills/Vermont)

Computer Centers in Faith-Based Organizations

The following content was submitted by Andrew Sears from the Association of Christian Community Computer Centers.

"A Christian Community Computer Center is any ministry using computers as an outreach to serve the community and address the Digital Divide, which is the gap that separates those with access to and skills with computers to those without such benefits. Some of the way Christians are addressing the Digital Divide include:

- After school programs which integrate technology into their activities
- Computer classes offered either at low cost to unemployed adults and at-risk youth
- Adult basic education classes using computers
- Job training and placement programs which offer computer training
- Walk-in computer centers that offer free computer access in low-income areas
- Technology entrepreneurship programs where youth do Web page design, graphic design or other work
- Computer refurbishing that takes used computers from companies and individuals and refurbishes them to provide low cost computers to individuals
- Computer ministries in churches of teams of volunteers to support computer centers

"Part of what makes Christian community computer centers unique is that they are trying to address spiritual needs in addition to physical, economic and educational needs. We believe that learning computer skills is one of the best ways for people to be able to make a living. We also believe that a good spiritual foundation is the best way for people to make a life and find happiness.

"There are currently over 200 Christian community computer centers on our list across the USA and many developing in other countries. The key goal of AC4 is to assist churches and Christian organizations to become a major driving force behind computer literacy just as they were with basic literacy.

Social Service and Advocacy

Many CTCs are increasingly partnering with social service agencies in their communities to address a broad range of needed services. Often technology programs are an added benefit to such programs and may help with sustainability. While there is no set formula for creating such a CTC, the following examples may prove helpful:

- Philadelphia Concerned About Housing (PCHAH) was founded in 1981 to be a "next step" for homeless families coming from shelters. Its mission is to help low income, single parent, formerly homeless families reach true, long-term self-sufficiency by providing these families with comprehensive, intensive, integrative, supportive social services in tandem with housing. It has developed 148 mostly scattered site housing units and continues to manage 129 of these. In December 1999, PCHAH opened its computer center that focuses on assisting clients with their education and employment goals. Aside from computer and multimedia equipment and broadband Internet connectivity, the center provides computer training and activities, intensive individual and group tutoring for parents and children, after school and summer activities, education and career assessment, counseling, planning and placement, child care subsidies and transportation subsidies. Each PCHAH client family has a social worker that helps integrate computer center services with other PCHAH services such as case management, drug and alcohol counseling, life skills workshops, psychological counseling, family recreational and cultural enrichment activities, leadership development activities, housing and home-ownership counseling. (Terry Guerra, Philadelphia Concerned About Housing)
- DePaul University and the Association House of Chicago, a non-profit community-based social service agency, collaborated to create the DePaul Learning By Association CTCs. They are located in the West Town and Humboldt Park areas of Chicago. University students provide technical expertise, academic tutoring assistance, and general lab support. They

work with the various departments of the agency to create targeted workshops and programs. Examples include: the inquiry-based project in which children in the after school program team up with university education majors to work on research projects; Los Monstros del High Tech in which youth in the alternative high school learn hardware and software skills to support various departments within the agency; and the Senior Memoirs Project in which senior citizens learn to use various technological resources to create their memoirs. (Roxanne F. Owens, Ph.D., DePaul University)

- The broad goal of the Morehouse School of Medicine Community Technology Centers project is to lessen the “digital divide” by making educational technology available to indigent populations. A narrower goal is to demonstrate to both the indigent consumers and publicly-funded health care systems that hospital-based Community Technology Centers can enable populations to better educate themselves about their own health and the health of their children. Facilitating the ability of low-income populations to educate themselves about their own health and the health of their children will meet national and local needs by: a) Increasing people's understanding of the important ways in which such technology can facilitate their learning and functioning; and b) Providing skill-building to enable them to use the technology. The Morehouse School of Medicine Prevention Research Center (PRC) in cooperation with the Emory University School of Medicine, Grady Health System, and the City of Atlanta Parks and Recreation Department has established a health-focused Community Technology Center dispersed in three sites: (1) Grady Memorial Hospital, (in particular, the Teen Services Clinic), (2) Hughes Spalding Children's Hospital (in particular, the Young Men's Clinic), (3) Thomasville Recreation Center, a neighborhood center in the area targeted by the Prevention Research Center. The two hospitals serve the indigent population in Atlanta. Their catchment area encompasses the area served by the neighborhood recreation center enabling hospital clients to continue to learn about their health and develop computer skills without having to return to the hospital. A mini-site in the PRC's offices (1 computer) has also been set up for use by community board members. The computer is equipped with foundation information and Internet access to enable them to find information helpful in writing their own grant proposals for the benefit of the community. (Marion Howard, Ph.D., Morehouse School of Medicine Community Technology Centers Project)

How Does the Steering Committee Determine a Program Focus?

The Steering Committee must now use the data obtained through the processes described in Chapter 2 together with the material presented above to determine the program focus for the CTC. It will be helpful to have a summary report of findings related to interests and needs of neighborhood residents together with a report summarizing complementary programs already available in the community.

The data will likely provide good indication of what initial offerings a CTC should provide and which populations need to be served. Decisions should certainly be made in light of the data, but should not be regarded necessarily as final or “cast in concrete”.

Suppose that the data relating to neighborhood residents’ interests and needs indicates that a large percentage have only a grade school education or less, and have not had any experience using computer technologies. It would seem reasonable to rank “Adult Education” high on your focus list. If, however, the Steering Committee is not ready to commit to a full-fledged Adult Education program, it might be possible to collaborate with an existing agency, providing computer accessibility to them in return for other services.

A CTC, established as part of an existing program, may be presented with an opportunity or a need to expand, and thus have recourse to the community mapping data. It may be that the focus of the CTC parent agency dictates the general focus of the program but that the data can be used to determine other aspects of the offering.

- The Somerville CCC was given space by the Somerville Center for Adult Learning Experiences (SCALE) so that SCALE students could acquire computer skills. It was agreed that when SCALE students and teachers were not using the center, it could serve other groups as well as the general public. This partnership led to the very comprehensive program now run by the SCCC including pre- and after- school groups, elder services, and public hours in addition to SCALE access.
- At The Bridge (Jacksonville, FL), the CTC was introduced to enhance the job skills of pregnant and parenting teens. No community mapping process was undertaken until more recently when the opportunity to expand the program arose. The recent data indicated that a partnership with one of the local schools would provide access to students afterschool and would give The Bridge access to school services such as software licenses, technical expertise, and volunteers.

See Exhibit 3-3 for a CTC programming worksheet, Exhibit 3-4 for policies and regulations, and Exhibit 3-5 for a lab policy violation letter.

Documentation

Reports generated by work specified in this chapter will include:

- A summary of community interests and needs;
- A summary of partnership building efforts and results (Exhibit 2-2 provides a useful model);
- A statement of program focus areas determined by the Steering Committee; and
- Minutes of Steering Committee deliberations on the above issues.

Additional Contact Information

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Njideka Ugwuegbu, Executive Director, Youth for Technology Foundation,
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425-681-3920

Additional Resources

- **ACC-Resources-Program Design**
<http://www.americconnects.net/resources/default.asp?topicid=42>
- **Alliance for Technology Access Resources Library**
<http://www.ataccess.org/resources/default.html>
- **AskERIC — Education Information**
<http://ericir.syr.edu/>
- **AskEric — Educational Technology**
http://ericir.syr.edu/cgi-bin/res.cgi/Educational_Technology
- **Association of Christian Community Computer Centers**
<http://www.ac4.org/>
- **Discussion logs for EDTECH Email List**
<http://h-net.msu.edu/cgi-bin/logbrowse.pl?trx=lm&list=EDTECH>
- **edtech — Technology Foundations Knowledge and Skills K-12 Matrix**
<http://edtech.sandi.net/tech/matrix/matrixoverview.html>
- **Getting Involved in Seattle Community Technology - Info Age Campaign**
http://www.cityofseattle.net/tech/get_involved/infoage.htm
- **Technology Literacy Benchmarks for Nonprofit Organizations**
<http://www.benton.org/Library/Stratcom/TechLit.pdf>

Exhibit 3-1

The Best

of Curriculum and Resources for Youth

by Mary Margaret Pavan, AmeriCorps *VISTA Member

Introduction

“The Best” is a quick-reference for the longer report, “Curriculum and Resources for Youth.” The full report contains more sections, including ones on projects others have actually done and software and is available at <http://www.preposting.org/acccc/curricula/report.html>

For Curriculum

YouthLearn is the best general site for lesson plans and help in making your own curriculum at a Community Technology Center. This web site by the Morino Institute (<http://www.morino.org>) addresses issues related to working with youth and technology, specifically in out-of-school settings. This site offers advice on *how* to plan as well as actual lesson plans. You can also subscribe to their list service. <http://www.youthlearn.org>

A good web site for fairly academic lesson plans is **Tammy’s Technology Tips for Teachers**. This page includes curriculum plans for computer projects, including Word Processing/Drawing, Spreadsheets/Databases, Internet Projects, and Multimedia. These projects seem appropriate for a school-like setting. Most projects are for 4th-8th graders. This site also offers presentations about teaching technology well. <http://www.essdack.org/tips/page1.htm>.

In addition there are significant curriculum resources for youth at the Association of Christian Community Computer Centers Website at www.ac4.org. For digital art curriculum, see the **Faces of Tomorrow** web site. Not only will you see some results of this project, but you will also find a nice pdf-format manual about the project. This free manual includes some lesson plans for digital art projects. <http://www.cyberfaces.org>. Also check <http://www.youthlearn.org/creations/feelings.html> for ideas on digital photography projects.

For Youth

There are several websites that stood out for youth. In general, these sites are fairly educational, colorful, and interactive. **Discovery Online** for kids (and teachers!), grades K-12, has *tons* of information. Youth can type in a math problem and it will explain *how* to find the answer. There are also entries from a slave about what slavery was like and guidance about how to plan a science project. This site is *very educational!* There are also resources for teachers and parents. <http://school.discovery.com/>

I Know That is a free e-learning website for younger children, ages 2 to 12. This site is very educational and truly aimed at young children by being fun, colorful and interactive. There’s an on-line sticker book of dinosaurs or ancient Egypt, art activities and educational games with math, science, geography and phonics. When children complete an educational activity successfully, they can print an award certificate. Kids can also save completed projects. <http://www.iKnowthat.com>

PowerUp has several sites for children. These sites are good starting places for kids, because they link to other kids’ sites. They also have a theme for each month and a related activity to direct kids in surfing the web. These could be particularly useful in a walk-in center environment to encourage youth to look up something besides WWF and lyrics.

- PowerUp Kids is for grades K-3. <http://www.powerup.org/powerup/kids/>
- PowerUp Kids Plus is for grades 4-6. <http://www.powerup.org/powerup/kidsplus/>
- PowerUp Teens is for grades 7-9. <http://www.powerup.org/powerup/teens/>
- PowerUp Teens Plus is for grades 10-12. <http://www.powerup.org/powerup/teensplus/>

New York Public Library’s fun sites for kids has some great links, especially on its Science and Technology page (you can view earth from real satellites!). Additional sections include Arts & Games, People &

Places, and Sports among others. Many of the links are to ThinkQuest sites (student-made sites). <http://www2.nypl.org/home/branch/kids/>

Web Page Design

Web Monkey for Kids teaches HTML-based web page design. It is the best (and only) site I have found for teaching youth web page design. This site includes a basic “Lessons” section that makes learning HTML un-intimidating. Kids make a web page right away. There is also a “Projects” section, where kids can see examples of web sites, view the HTML code and are encouraged to copy, paste, and change the code to make it their own. The codes include comments to help kids understand. The projects are a good step from lessons to more advanced work, without more tedious lessons. The site offers Shockwave videos to watch during “Playground” time. Finally, there’s a “Tools” section that not only has software download information, but also a list of all HTML tags and a chart of web color codes. Finally, there’s a Planning Guide for parents and teachers.

Please note, however, that there is a lot of reading and although witty, it may be intimidating/boring for young children. You may want to adapt the lessons so you’re the teacher instead of the website. It would probably be fine for middle school and older for self-study if an adult is around for questions. <http://hotwired.lycos.com/webmonkey/kids> (You can also link to this site at the bottom of <http://www.webmonkey.com> which is a popular site for web page designers).

Black History

I have really enjoyed using **AFRO-America’s Kids Zone** with K-7th graders, especially the Myths & Fables section, which allows students to become familiar with clicking through web pages even as they work on their basic reading skills. There is also “Brain Teaser,” which includes puzzles, African animals and a Black History quiz. There are great maps in “Discover Africa” and, of course, games in “All Fun and Games.” <http://www.afroam.org/children/children.html>

For Girls

Three sites stand out as fun, interactive sites specifically for girls: **Girl Tech** (<http://girltech.com>), **Girl Power** (<http://www.girlpower.gov/>), and **The Adventures of Josie True** (<http://www.josietrue.com>). Girl Tech predominantly encourages girls to communicate on-line. Girl Power focuses on health issues (it’s sponsored by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services). The Adventures of Josie True is an educational game that stars a Chinese-American girl and allows youth to practice their math skills as they go through history.

For older girls and women (high school and up), check out **WOW/EM** (<http://raven.dartmouth.edu/~wowem>), **Girls Inc.** (<http://www.girlsinc.org>), and **The Gale Group: Celebrating Women’s History Month** (<http://www.galegroup.com/freresrc/womenhst>). WOW/EM offers resources to girls interested in both the arts and math/science/technology. Girls Inc. encourages girls to be “strong, smart and bold.” Celebrating Women’s History Month focuses on women’s history.

Homework Help

Ask Jeeves Kids is a great and popular homework help site. It’s simple: Students type in their question and Jeeves gives them possible subjects that probably include the answer they want. This is appropriate for any age level.

Andrew Sears, Association of Christian Community Computer Centers, 670 Washington Street, Dorchester, MA, 02124; <http://www.ac4.org>

Exhibit 3-2

SENIORS TRAINING SENIORS IN COMPUTER BASICS

Tips & Lessons Learned Teaching Elders

- Provide small classes with a ratio of 1:3 for optimum, one-on-one learning
- Senior instructors without adult-learners, teaching background may require more training time with a “seasoned” instructor (12 – 16 hours)
- Follow lesson plan as closely as possible, but adapt for varying levels of students
- Realize that most attendees are between 65+ to 90 years old with very little or no knowledge of keyboarding skills
- Senior instructors (over 50+) and assistants will help each student individually throughout the four, 2-hour classes
- Physical limitations such as eye-hand coordination; stiffness in fingers; limited vision and hearing loss increase instructor’s individualized attention to students
- Remember that teaching this technology to elders is like teaching an elderly person how to drive for the first time!
- Avoid excessive computer terminology – it is intimidating – relate to what they know from past experience
- Develop early on a comfortable and relaxing atmosphere among the students and yourself – let them know they do not need to learn everything in these first 4, 2-hour classes. We would like them to feel comfortable about returning.
- Do not lecture; break your day’s lesson into timed sections (i.e., 10 minute introduction; 15 minutes practice; 10 minutes Q & A)
- Do not push beyond what each one can do individually – have series of exercises for varying levels of competency as you assist each student
- Build in practice time where they can search for or work on what they would like to do. Adult learners like to make decisions for their learning.
- Enjoy their amazement. Have a great sense of humor. Create a comfort level so they will return and have lots of fun with your students.

***-- STS Tips and Lessons Learned, Created 5-02 / pb / Nancy Birdwell, Instructor
The City of Seattle Human Services Department, Mayor’s Office for Senior Citizens
618 – 2nd Avenue, Suite 250, Seattle, WA. 98104***

Exhibit 3-3 -- CTC Programming Worksheet

CTC Programming			
Lab Environment	Choices	What will it look like?	How will you get there?
Signage What does your lab environment look like? Is it inviting? Is it updated? Do you have client work up on the walls? Are specific lab procedures posted and clear?	Client work Lab rules Posters		
Requesting Help How do your users request help?			
Overall Feel Is there a friendly, welcome feeling when users come in? Welcoming staff, sign-in, inviting?			
Course Design	Choices	What will it look like?	How will you get there?
Drop-in	A Safe Place Tutoring Homework		
Integration into "non-tech" courses	Courses with a product Research Activism Collaboration Academic Skills		
Tech Specific Courses	Websites Programming Robotics Newsletters Applications		

-- *Salesforce.com/foundation, 1 Market Street, Landmark Bldg., ste. 300, San Francisco, CA, 94105, <http://www.salesforcefoundation.org>; <http://www.youthspace.net>*

4

chapter

Staffing

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4 chapter

Staffing

"Within the span of a year and a half, he had gone from knowing nothing about computers to being able to give back by teaching others in their native language. Teaching the classes opened up another opportunity within the agency when he was hired as a full-time project director. Stories like this remind staff, funders, and others why our services are so necessary and will be needed for a long time to come."

*"Ali," as submitted by Ingrid Kirst, Computer Lab Director
Lincoln Action Program, Nebraska*

"He heard that La Plaza was in need of volunteers and decided he could not only help out the community, he could learn more about computers and Internet technology by working there. His father was aware that Mike would need computer skills for future employment opportunities and supported him in his decision to work at La Plaza as a volunteer."

*Mike Ortiz
La Plaza Telecommunity, Taos, New Mexico*

Introduction

No other single factor is so important to the success of a CTC as the quality of its staff and volunteers. Resourceful, friendly, helpful, reliable staff are essential to making the CTC a place people want to come to, be in, and return to.

The Steering Committee may wish to engage a staff person to work with them through the setting-up stages of operationalizing the CTC. Their choice may be a person who will be the CTC director or coordinator; alternatively they may decide to take on a community outreach director first. Both are logical choices.

In considering its staffing plan and in thinking about the individuals who will, in the long run, be the reason the CTC succeeds, the Steering Committee should bear in mind

these essential qualities:

- Interpersonal skills are more important than technical expertise. Technical skills can be learned, bought, volunteered, but the ability to relate easily with a wide range of people, to give them confidence, to recognize and appreciate the abilities they already have — that is the gold.
- Staff should be able to converse in the languages predominantly spoken by participants. Otherwise both parties are at a disadvantage. If a center serves a variety of non-English speaking people, perhaps bilingual volunteers can be found to assist communication.
- Flexibility is key. Staff will need to relate easily with people in many different age groups, with a variety of interests and needs and abilities, different incomes, widely varying backgrounds, and vastly different expectations of the CTC and of themselves.
- Common sense is essential.

What are the Tasks?

Before plunging into a staffing plan or even making a first hire, it is wise to consider all the tasks that make up successful CTC operation. In CTCNet's experience, these fall roughly into five categories: Administrative, Community Outreach and Development, Direct Services, Facilities and Equipment, and Clerical Support.

1. Administrative

- Program development, management, and assessment
- Fiscal accountability
- Liaison with governing/advising bodies and funders
- Staff and volunteer management

2. Community Outreach and Development

- Cultivating and sustaining relationships with the community
- Promoting collaborations within the community and beyond
- Overseeing public relations and development planning
- Researching, writing, and follow-up for grant proposals and other funding
- Reaching out to the entire community, including those with disabilities and

functional limitations

3. Direct Services

- Supervision of CTC activities
- Insuring that the facility and services are accessible to people with disabilities and functional limitations
- Educational activities
 - Teaching/supervising classes
 - Orienting individuals, volunteers, and groups
 - Creating and facilitating special projects
 - Counseling re jobs, health, personal issues
 - Preparing for, and documenting, all of the above
- Reception
 - Welcoming visitors and participants
 - Answering and routing phone calls
 - Monitoring sign-in/sign-out procedures
 - Providing information about CTC activities & classes
 - Scheduling orientation sessions

4. Facilities and Equipment Maintenance

- Site management
 - Security
 - Housekeeping
 - Refuse removal
- Maintain and improve the physical accessibility of the site so that people with disabilities and functional limitations can get into and use the facility
- Technical support
 - Trouble-shooting hardware problems

- Arranging repair, maintenance, and upgrades
- Storage of back up supplies
- Registration, warranties, and insurance
- Technology planning and recommendations for future purchase

5. Clerical and support services

- Generating publications and announcements, including publications and materials in accessible formats and appropriate languages
- Assembling and organizing mailings
- Sorting and routing incoming mail
- Updating bulletin boards and CTC information packets
- Maintaining inventories
- Record-keeping and filing related to finance, attendance, scheduling, resources, etc.
- Knowledge of community resources, such as interpreters (multiple languages and sign language); knowledge of relay services

This is an imposing list and, even so, may not include all the tasks required for successful operation. The Steering Committee should brainstorm additional tasks and responsibilities to ensure that the final list is all-inclusive.

For a pilot program or small center, all tasks may be the province of a single paid staff person supported by a judiciously selected group of volunteers and, of course, the Steering Committee itself. Larger operations require a greater number of paid staff. Consider, too, the possibility that participants themselves may, in time, take on operational tasks.

Preparing the Staffing Plan

Once the tasks have been determined, but before an actual plan is laid out, the Steering Committee must consider a number of other factors:

Budget Limitations

What makes staffing a CTC so difficult is that so many centers are shoestring operations. Among CTCNet affiliates, some centers are fortunate to have many

paid staff. Several survive with a part-time coordinator and volunteers. Regardless of the stringency of the budget, CTCNet does not recommend staffing a center entirely with volunteers. There **must be one person who is responsible for the overall management and direction and is empowered to make operational decisions.** That person should be paid a salary with benefits and accorded the respect owed to a professional.

Ideally, a CTC will have at least one staff person in each of the above task areas, and perhaps a number of specialists in the “education” area of “Direct Service”. The PUENTE center in Los Angeles is a high end example with space and staff to serve close to 2000 people of all ages every day.

Security

Budget limitations are not the only factors influencing the staffing plan. Another is the security of the space. Staff, volunteers, and participants must feel safe entering and leaving the CTC if they are to return. Post emergency procedure and contact information after it is used to train staff and volunteers. It is advisable to have at least one paid staff member on site at all times who is familiar with emergency procedures. In addition, in some high-crime areas, some staff and volunteers may feel more comfortable with a staff or security escort into and out of the CTC. Honor their requests. Work with local law enforcement authorities to conduct periodic patrols of the area if necessary.

The SCCC, with its 40+ computers, is located in three inner rooms of a secure building that maintains its own security force. Thus, supervision of classes and open hours can be done by volunteers without the presence of any paid staff. Because the Playing To Win Harlem Center, on the other hand, is a storefront operation in the heart of a high-crime neighborhood, and cannot ask volunteers to take sole responsibility for the security of the space or the occupants at any time, a minimum of two paid staff must be present during all center open hours.

Size of center and hours of operation

The third major determining factor is the size of the center and the usage hours projected. In CTCNet’s experience, in order to provide effective help and guidance, one staff person (paid or volunteer) should be present and available for every 10 computer stations (between 10 and 20 participants) in use. If the center is not located in a building that houses other active services (i.e. if there is no one who can be easily summoned in an emergency), it will be advisable to have two staff persons on duty at all times that the center is open to participants.

Once these factors have been taken into account, the next steps are quite simple.

1. Take the task list (a spreadsheet is useful) and opposite each task create four columns headed “Paid Staff”, “Volunteer”, “Steering Committee/Board”, and “Participant”.
2. Move through the task list indicating for each task the type of personnel to whom it can be assigned. NB: You may have checks in more than one column for a given task.
3. Sort the tasks into these four categories.
4. Take the list for each category and sort once again according to necessary skills. For example, the volunteer category may contain reception, clerical, and teaching tasks. Different skill sets are required in each, so you will need to re-sort this list according to skill set.
5. The resulting lists will define the required staff and also provide the basis for developing job descriptions for each position.

See Exhibit 4-1 for a CTC Staffing Resource Worksheet.

Staff Minimum Qualifications

Administrative tasks

In addition to documented experience in the areas itemized in the task list, persons employed for administrative tasks should be articulate, comfortable with budgets and accounting procedures, and be comfortable and interactional in staff supervision roles. They should also view technology as essential to the execution of their tasks since they will, in a real sense, be serving as role models for CTC participants.

Community outreach & development

The ideal candidate here is someone with the zeal of a community activist, demonstrated capacity in community development and fund-raising, with excellent communications skills (both verbal and written), and general attitude of openness and inclusive approach. Initiative and follow-through are key qualities.

Educational activity

Here you will be looking for someone with experience in basic technology applications, a learner rather than a teacher, a person who may reply to a question

with a question rather than an answer. Imagination and creativity are essential ingredients. The person will need to have the capacity to both develop projects for participants and work with the fund-raiser to develop ideas for directions the CTC can take “educationally” which can be turned into proposals. The head teacher is unflappable, straightforward, a no-nonsense person who does not rely heavily on didacticism.

Many centers will start out with a minimum number of software packages. The head teacher will need familiarity with these, but also must possess the kind of creativity that can turn a word processor into a coloring book project for a low reading level participant. The teacher should also have knowledge of different learning styles and reading and writing software programs that can support the learning process for people who have learning difficulties. Knowledge of the access features in operating systems is also desirable.

At CTCNet we often use the “gardener” analogy. A gardener is not interested in producing replicas of him/herself. A gardener cannot impart knowledge to a plant. Instead, a gardener uses his/her knowledge of plant culture to feed, weed, prune. A gardener is interested in the health, growth, and fecundity of his/her charges. A gardener provides space in which each plant can achieve maximum success according to its own nature. Instructional staff with this sort of philosophy tend to be more successful than others.

For personnel at their centers, the Lansing Housing Authority uses the word “coach” for both paid and volunteer teaching staff. The concept is similar, with the context one of athletics rather than horticulture.

Reception Area

The qualifications for this position are quite obvious: friendliness, patience, human interest, unflappability, a sense of order and decorum. In most cases, the reception people will be the “front” for the center, the first encounter most participants will have. They will also manage the telephone and provide information about the center, and thus should have the ability to communicate with all callers, including people who are deaf or hard of hearing, using the state’s relay systems (mandated by federal law, check with the Federal Communications Commission for current information at <http://www.fcc.gov/cgb/dro/trs.html>) or a TTY. It is important that this person be patient and comfortable with a diverse community and makes all people feel welcome.

If volunteers are recruited for this position, training in telephone response may be necessary since some residents have little experience with using a telephone. Role play is very helpful in preparing a volunteer for this position.

Facilities & equipment

A number of the tasks in this category can be farmed out, either through steering/advisory committee members (e.g., computer maintenance, trash pickup, janitorial services) or through the facilities management. What cannot be farmed out is the constant picking up and putting back of software, paper, disks, files, etc.

Regular inventory checks are likewise essential since otherwise it may be hard to tell if anything substantial is missing. A CTC without someone who takes these tasks seriously can quickly become not only a mess, but a prey to people who pick up whatever they can (e.g., mouse balls, disks, toilet paper, cleaning supplies, books, pens, etc.).

Clerical and support services

Qualifications in this area are fairly standard and coincide with generally accepted qualifications for clerical positions. In CTCNet's experience, if a person is hired, or a volunteer recruited, for these tasks, an orientation and training period is essential. Perks that can be provided include scheduled time to improve technology skills, use the Internet, etc. Experience with the clerical and support services within a CTC can also constitute a rung in the training ladder for participants in any job-training program housed at the center.

Summary

Many of the qualifications described above are admittedly qualitative—difficult to specify as bulleted items in a job description. Yet it is these qualities of personnel that will be important for sustainability of the CTC. See Exhibit 4-2 for a CTC Position Description Worksheet.

Staff Recruitment

The Steering Committee will probably want to recruit and hire the senior personnel. Assembling the rest of the crew can then be the responsibility of those hires.

Types of Staff

Salaried

As stated above, at least one person must be salaried. Although administration may seem like the “biggest” job, actual daily interaction with participants at the center is more probably the arena in which success or failure of the CTC will be determined. Participants as well as management will feel more comfortable knowing who is in charge (where the buck stops). They will also appreciate seeing a familiar face, being greeted or having regular contact with the same person. In some CTCNet centers, the administrative and head “teacher” tasks are performed by a single individual.

If a sponsoring agency already employs a “Human Services Director” or equivalent, it is conceivable that person could take on either the administration or the head “teacher” role, where the rest of the tasks are performed by volunteers or steering/advisory committee members.

Volunteer

Many tasks can be handled by volunteers. Some tasks will require technology skills or expertise, but many will not. Community residents can be considered for a variety of duties including instructional supervision but also reception, clerical, outreach, escort services, evaluating software, housekeeping, etc.

In considering potential volunteers, the resources available through the center’s advisory board or steering committee should not be neglected. Appropriate tasks are those that do not require regular daily or weekly scheduling. Individual members or subcommittees can handle such areas as technology planning, acquisition and repair, community outreach and participant recruitment, grant writing and solicitation, public relations, etc.

Lastly, center participants themselves often make the best volunteers and center mentors. Once the center is in operation, consider establishing a youth corps, a senior corps, or a mentoring corps from amongst the most avid center users.

Please heed the following words of caution regarding volunteers. Many CTCs make the mistake that volunteers are “free labor,” and that you should never turn away a volunteer. Volunteers should be treated as staff, especially since they are helping your CTC function, and will require resources to manage. Volunteers should be reassigned or “fired” if they are not doing a good job or violate CTC

volunteer policies. See Exhibit 4-3 for a Guide to Developing Volunteer Job Descriptions, and Exhibit 4-4 for a sample Volunteer Host Site Memo of Understanding.

Consultants

It helpful to work with a paid consultant who has experience with CTC development. If there are other CTCs in your community, you may want to connect with them as they may offer technical consulting services or provide you with a recommendation for a particular consultant. Be sure to spell out the terms and services you expect from the consultant. See Exhibit 4-5 for a sample Contract for Consultant Services.

Local sources of potential staff and volunteers

The immediate residential community: Since the most important criterion for staff is that they know and understand the community and be able to relate well with their participants, and to communicate with them in their language of choice, it is natural to look first at the resident community for potential candidates. People with disabilities -- folks with expertise and talents that might not be so obvious -- need to be included as potential candidates.

Educational Institutions: Colleges and universities (technology, education, library services departments; job placement bureaus and internship programs) are a rich source for staff. It's important to bear in mind, however, that students are often transient and require flexibility with regard to their schedules. They may also require increased supervision or management to comply with school requirements. Students may prefer a short-term, targeted volunteer assignment identifying learning objectives and tasks to complete. Many high schools (public and private) have community service programs. The local PTA may be the best source of staff/volunteers among parents in the community. In addition, colleges and universities often have disabled student services programs that can be mined for sources of expertise on adapted computers.

Religious Institutions: A number of national projects in this past decade have funded computer offerings through religious institutions. Should there be such a project in your community, people who have led or participated may be candidates for staff or volunteer positions.

Other Community Service Organizations: The outreach/community mapping tasks should have identified a number of these organizations that use or teach people to use technology resources.

Computer “User” Groups and Cyber-Cafes: These will usually post job-offerings and volunteer opportunities on their electronic and actual bulletin boards.

Local Government Agencies: The Mayor’s Office for Volunteerism, the Human Services Department, the Senior Services Division—all these are worth exploring.

Corporations and Small Businesses: Again, representatives serving on the Center’s oversight (steering/planning) committee may provide liaison.

Local and Regional Newspapers, Radio, and Cable TV Stations will often offer free space to non-profits for job postings and calls for volunteers.

Online Volunteer Listing Services, such as Idealist.org (<http://www.idealist.org>) and VolunteerMatch (<http://www.volunteermatch.org>) may offer free or reduced price ads to your nonprofit. In addition, they have the benefit of reaching a wider pool of potential volunteers. If your CTC is located in a population sparse region, listing your volunteer ad on the Internet may not bring in many volunteers. Larger urban areas probably stand to benefit most from this option, but it doesn't hurt to try.

Lastly, one could consult local employment agencies, but generally that means paying a fee.

Hiring Process

Step 1: Develop job descriptions for each of the paid staff positions. Job descriptions should contain:

- a brief description of the CTC and its mission or purpose
- position description, title, and supervising authority
- duties and responsibilities
- qualifications
- salaries and benefits
- application deadline
- request for references

N.B. If the position requires writing (reports, grant proposals, PR materials), it is advisable to request a writing sample from the applicant.

Step 2: Institute the search

The Steering Committee may want to constitute a search sub-committee. Members of the sub-committee should be familiar with anti-discrimination laws. Additional members of this committee may be recruited from among neighborhood residents and from partnering neighborhood agencies or institutions. If the position requires a bilingual person, some member of the Search Committee should be fluent in that second language.

- All Steering Committee members will be expected to circulate the job description(s) to their own constituencies.
- Members of the sub-committee should be familiar with anti-discrimination laws and know questions that are appropriate and inappropriate to ask.
- Job descriptions should be placed in newspapers, posted on community electronic bulletin boards and to other CTCNet affiliates, and circulated to neighborhood institutions, producers of community newsletters, local businesses, and employment agencies. In this latter case, inquire in advance about fees for placement.
- A word-of-mouth network is important, particularly since it is highly desirable to be able to make the hire from the community itself.

Step 3: Making the decision

The Search Committee will:

- Cull potential candidates from resumes submitted and recommendations made
- Check references through personal telephone calls
- Schedule initial personal interviews with members of the Search Committee, and
- In the case of senior personnel, schedule an interview with the entire Steering Committee.

The Steering Committee should consider asking candidate finalists to meet with a group of participants, take on the role of instructor of the pilot program during an hour or two, and/or to prepare a formal written response to a potential issue arising at the CTC.

In the early days of the Playing to Win Harlem Center, asking potential teachers to “audition” by conducting a guest workshop paid repeated dividends. A young

man who seemed reserved and unsociable in an interview blossomed when interacting with center participants. Had it not been for this encounter, he might not have been hired. Another candidate with strong teaching credentials found it difficult to function in such an informal hands-on environment and withdrew his application.

Step 4: Sealing the bargain.

For both paid staff and volunteers, specify the hire in a written letter. In this letter, outline the position responsibilities, the remuneration and benefits (if any) and indicate any trial period during which either party may sever the relationship without penalty (it is important to specify such a trial period, especially for volunteers), and required time commitment.

Personnel Policies

If the CTC is going to have employees, it must develop personnel policies. This is true whether there are one or ten employees. Personnel policies set out the legal responsibilities of the employer and the benefit packages available to employees. They also spell out grievance procedures and any performance review process. CTC policy with regard to promotion, pay increase, and severance is also normally included. While the entire content may not be applicable to volunteers, they should receive a copy of the personnel policies and the relevant areas should be discussed with them for liability purposes.

Legal responsibilities

If the CTC pays an employee, such action triggers certain obligations under state and federal laws. To ensure that it is meeting its obligations, the CTC should contact the local IRS and state employment tax offices to find out the CTC's filing obligations. The Steering Committee should also contact the State department of labor or department of commerce/business to find out the CTC's obligations concerning unemployment insurance, workmen's compensation, disability, and other labor practices.

Benefit packages

The CTC must consider whether to offer benefits to its employees. Benefits can include health, dental and life insurance and vacation and personal leave. No matter what the benefit package arrangements are, a written policy should be prepared and distributed to the employees to whom it applies. The Steering Committee should be aware that benefit packages can cost the CTC an additional

15%-25% of employees' salary. These costs must be reflected in the CTC financial projections.

Grievance procedures

Although one hopes that the occasion never arises, it is a good idea to be prepared for grievances that may be lodged by participants against staff, or by volunteers against staff or participants, or by staff against volunteers, peers, or superiors.

Grievance procedures should set forth a formal series of steps that must be taken in the process of lodging and settling grievances. These steps must include:

- Documenting the grievance in writing.
- Submission of the documented grievance to the appropriate superior.
- Discussion of the grievance with the superior for the purpose of settling the grievance (this discussion should also be documented and signed by both parties).
- A system for submission of the grievance to the next higher authority in the event that initial discussion fails to settle the matter.
- Specification of the "last court of appeal"—the person or group whose decision on the matter will be final.

Staff assessment

An annual performance review is the most common type of staff assessment. However, it is not perceived as helpful by many people. Increasingly, human resource professionals prefer a style that features continual feedback to the employee in order to reinforce good performance and stop poor performance quickly. Under this "coaching" concept, the year begins with the employee and the supervisor or Steering Committee meeting to set goals for employee performance in the coming year. These goals are related to the overall goals of the CTC as well as to the specific assignment of the worker and his or her stage of professional growth. Goals must be agreed to by both the employee and supervisor.

As the year moves forward, the supervisor should frequently let the employee know how he or she is doing. Praise is important as well as constructive criticism. References to the mutually agreed upon goals should be a regular part of these conversations. Adjustments should be made in the performance standards and goals as the year goes by.

The supervisor should take on a greater role in the employee's achievement of his or her goals. If the employee's performance has not been satisfactory, the supervisor should help the employee get on track. If progress has been good, both can enjoy the success, and presumably the CTC's goals are being met as well. Quarterly or annual reviews should be routine meetings and few surprises should arise. If feedback is constant (even daily, in some cases), these more formal reviews are typically used for adjustment (up or down) of the goals and performance standards for the employee for the year. Proponents of this system believe it is a very effective means of staff assessment for an organization that wants continually to improve its performance.

Conditions for severance

In the best of all worlds, personnel will be reliable, will relate well with participants, and will perform ably the tasks they have agreed to perform. It is also advisable to have formal dismissal procedures on file and reviewed with all staff. It is nevertheless important to specify actions that will lead to a required probationary period or even immediate dismissal such as:

- Physical or verbal abuse of participants or fellow workers
- Theft or destruction of CTC property
- Introduction of inappropriate or illicit software
- Sexual harassment
- Drug use or dealing

Orientation

A structured orientation program is important for any new staff. Such a program should include:

- A warm welcome
- Introduction to the mission and goals of the CTC
- Introduction to Steering Committee members, other agency staff or any CTC staff already on board
- Introduction to personnel policies
- An opportunity to become familiar with CTC resources - where things are kept, what software is available, what procedures are in place.

One CTCNet affiliate devised a hands-on orientation strategy

Stage a scavenger hunt. Provide each pair of participants with a blank map of the CTC space and a list of things that are to be located. Ask each pair to locate the items and label their maps accordingly. This procedure had the virtue of being fun, acquainting the volunteers with CTC resources, and serving as a role model of the kind of hands-on learning experiences that CTC staff hoped the volunteers would provide for participants.

For volunteers, the orientation should provide an opportunity to meet with their specific supervisor to discuss their assignments, establish an individual schedule, and review and countersign the commitment letter.

Staff Development

Because contentment of talented and able staff is vital, and because the CTC probably does not offer the highest salaries, staff development is an essential activity for the CTC. Staff development includes both opportunities for further education and increasing job satisfaction. Topics for further education should include enhancing knowledge and skills on computers, learning software packages, and discovering the newest developments in computer technology. Techniques to increase job satisfaction include soliciting and responding to feedback, giving employees and volunteers more responsibility, adding more activities, developing flexible hours, providing job sharing, and matching jobs with individuals' interests.

Volunteers work without pay, but not without rewards. The most important rule concerning volunteers—thank them frequently and appropriately. Means of rewarding volunteers for their services can include:

- an annual volunteer recognition dinner, picnic, or social event at which an award certificate or gift is given to each volunteer;
- personal time on the computers;
- Internet time for personal use;
- a mass transit pass for personal use;
- free tickets to sporting, cultural, or recreational events; and,
- paid expenses to CTCNet's annual conference and/or regional meetings.

Affiliation with CTCNet affords a number of opportunities for staff development. Through telecommunications linkages with other CTCs, staff can share problems and solicit suggestions; through regional meetings and the National Conference, affiliate staff can participate in and/or conduct workshops, plan collaborative projects, and exchange information with others in similar centers.

Volunteer Development & Management

Centers often find that it is not difficult to find and recruit volunteers to assist a CTC with its operation. There are always skilled and enthusiastic people who are eager to render their services and give back to the community. The challenge of working with volunteers, however, lies in the ability of a CTC to utilize and draw upon their varied skill sets. Although volunteers are not compensated, their roles are valuable and possibly critical to the day-to-day activities of a center.

Before recruiting volunteers, ask yourself the following questions:

- Do we have the capacity to manage the volunteers?
- How do we keep them engaged and interested so that they will keep coming back?
- How can we effectively utilize the volunteers?

For CTCs that are currently working with volunteers or are planning to utilize volunteers in the future, CTCNet encourages the development of a Volunteer Policy. Volunteers may have much-needed expertise in certain areas; nevertheless they also need supervision to understand and fulfill the expectations attached to their role. The purpose of a Volunteer Policy is to provide guidance and direction to both staff and volunteers and to ensure effective volunteer usage.

The policy should include operational procedures for the volunteer management process. In creating a Volunteer Policy, CTCs should consider the following components:

Volunteer Position Development

- Types of Projects - Consider that it can be difficult for volunteers to make a long-term commitment. Short-term and clearly defined projects are more likely to attract interested volunteers.
- Job description - Like paid staff, volunteers require a complete description of the position they fill. A clear project scope will help staff attract and

identify the right volunteer for the job. Include :

1. The need to be addressed
2. Outside skills and knowledge required
3. Estimated time commitment

Recruitment

- Locating Volunteer Sources - Identify appropriate places to post your volunteer description including: newsletters, newspapers, local schools, the center web site, and online listing services (VolunteerMatch, Idealist.org, Volunteer Solutions, to name a few.)
- Application process - Basic information about a volunteer (e.g. contact info, skills, and time commitment) must be obtained. This information can also be used for screening and qualification purposes.
- Interviewing - All volunteers should be interviewed, even if very informally, to assure that the center and the volunteer are a good match, and that the volunteer has the interest, qualifications, and commitment necessary for the position.
- Screening - Screening generally involves reference checks, background and criminal record investigation, and driving records. Each center has its own set of requirements. Select a process that most appropriately reflects your center's needs.
- Selection - Consider starting the volunteer on a trial basis. After the trial period, meet again with the volunteer to make sure that the arrangement is working out on both sides. You may find that, due to a variety of unforeseen reasons, the match will not work out. Take what you have learned and apply it to future interaction with volunteers.

Orientation

- Orientation/training - All volunteers should be briefed on the work mission and philosophy of your organization. Specifically, the purpose of and duties accompanying the volunteer position should be clearly explained.
- Volunteer standards - Standards of performance should be established for all volunteers such as basic rules of conduct, dress code, and confidentiality issues.
- Expectations - A project agreement should not only state what is expected of the volunteer but also what a volunteer can expect from your organization.

Volunteer Management

- Volunteer supervision - Designate a staff member or personnel as the primary supervisor to be responsible for direct volunteer management of the volunteer's work. Remember that volunteers need a lot of guidance and encouragement. A person must always be available to the volunteers for assistance and consultation.
- Documentation - Keep track of any work the volunteer has done, especially if it's technical in nature. There's nothing worse than having a volunteer leave and not being aware of major changes that have been made to your CTC's configuration. It will also ease the transition of new volunteers into the CTC.
- Evaluation - Designing a simple evaluation for volunteers to complete will help your center obtain a general picture of your volunteer's experience and highlight areas of improvement for the volunteer program.
- Risk Management and Liability - Having a clear policy of liability is important, especially in circumstances where accidents or injuries occur to a volunteer. This policy must be presented to the volunteer prior to the start of the project to avoid future complications and legal battles.

Recognition

- Purpose - Volunteers should be thanked and recognized for their service and contribution to your organization. Consistent appreciation of your volunteers will give them a sense of belonging and prevent volunteer turnover.
- Methods - Center should develop ongoing methods to recognize your volunteers. These efforts should be both informal and formal. Some ideas include: "thank yous", volunteer certificates, highlighting their service on your newsletter, including them in a decision-making process, presenting them with small tokens of appreciation, and participating in National Volunteer Week activities (<http://www.pointsoflight.org/>).

This outline is by no means complete. Volunteer policies can be as detailed or as simple as you wish, depending on the working culture of the center. The underlying message is that it is important to have a Volunteer Policy in place. It is an effective approach for a CTC to take full advantage of a volunteer's time and skill.

(Contributed by Trang T. Le, Project Coordinator, CTCNet)

The CTC VISTA Project

Is your CTC struggling to write grants, conduct targeted outreach, create training curriculum, or develop program materials? Are you in need of assistance with volunteers, building community partnerships, fund-raising, or developing your organizational infrastructure? In essence, are you looking to build the sustainable capacity of your CTC? An AmeriCorps *VISTA member may be able to help.

One of the major ways to help your organization meet the above needs is by tapping into the AmeriCorps *VISTA program (<http://www.americorps.org>). Commonly referred to as the country's "domestic Peace Corps" program, President Lyndon B. Johnson created AmeriCorps *VISTA, or Volunteers in Service to America, to combat poverty as part of the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964. Although this 35 year-old program is slated by the current Administration to undergo major organizational changes, it has been supporting digital divide projects for several years. The CTC VISTA project — a national demonstration collaboration led by the College of Public and Community Service at UMass-Boston specifically for CTCNet affiliates — has been awarded a three year grant through August 2003 to assist with the recruitment, placement, and support of more than 100 AmeriCorps *VISTA members to help with capacity-building efforts at CTCs across the country. Through the CTC VISTA project, CTCNet affiliates have low-cost access for supporting people to work as technical assistants, training and educational program developers, and resource providers to enhance programs that nurture the effective use of technology by those who ordinarily do not have access to such opportunities.

Examples of VISTA projects include:

- developing technology course materials, including materials in languages other than English
- assisting in teaching and developing technology courses
- providing program support by developing volunteer-supported staffing for computer labs
- engaging in community outreach
- enriching and developing programs which may involve creating and maintaining web pages, newsletters, and computer resource guides
- grant-writing and other endeavors which enhance program sustainability

CTC VISTAs also create web pages to describe the service they are performing for their communities. To view these pages, please visit <http://www.cpcs.umb.edu/vista/directory2.html>.

CTC VISTAs are eligible for a variety of on-site or off-site training opportunities including distance-learning opportunities sponsored by the College of Public and Community Service at UMass-Boston, which offers a certificate in Community Media and Technology. VISTA members commit to a year of service and receive a living stipend set at the local poverty level, health insurance coverage, travel to the CTCNet Annual Conference, and a post-service education award worth \$4,725 or \$1,200 cash stipend. VISTA positions are available on a rolling basis.

The CTC VISTA Project is rapidly growing and is open to all CTCNet affiliates. If you are interested in bringing a VISTA on board, are interested in service opportunities, or would like additional information, please visit the project web site at <http://www.cpcs.umb.edu/vista>.

Documentation

- Task List and Staffing Plan
- Job Descriptions for all positions (paid and volunteer, full- and part-time)
- Personnel Policies: Benefits, Grievance Process, and Performance Review

Additional Resources

- **LCTC Professional Development Curriculum**
<http://www.lctc.org/go/class/profdev/>
- **Modules for Training Telecentre Staffs**
http://www.itu.int/ITU-D/univ_access/telecentres/documents/ModTrainingTelecStaff.pdf
- **Schools Online - Technical Assistance Resources**
<http://www.schoolsonline.org/resources/index.htm>
- **ServiceLeader.Org, volunteer management and volunteerism resources**
<http://www.serviceleader.org/>
- **Staffing and Supervision of Employees and Volunteers**
http://www.managementhelp.org/np_progs/sup_mod/staff.htm
- **TechSoup.org - Volunteers**
<http://www.techsoup.org/articles.cfm?topicid=7&topic=Volunteers&cg=content&sg=mainVolunteers>
- **Volunteer Management - Energize's Volunteerism Resources for Directors of Volunteers**
<http://www.energizeinc.com/>

Exhibit 4-1- CTC Staffing Resource Worksheet

This is intended to be used as a guide tool to help you figure out how to allocate your staff time. We suggest that the table represents a week, though it could be used differently or parts extracted. You may want to make copies and fill one out for your existing situation and another one out for where you would like to plan on being in six months or a year.

STAFF (incl. Volunteers)					
	Person	1	2	3	TOTALS
	Title or role				
	Total hrs per week				
LAB TIME					
Classes and programs (Optional list each)					
Open lab					
Maintenance					
OTHER AREAS					
Outreach and marketing					
Class/program registration					
Volunteer recruitment and management					
Professional or organizational networking					
Staff training					
Evaluation & reporting					
Program planning					
Development/fundraising					
Staff meetings					
Other administration					
Other:					

-- Submitted by David Keyes; Produced by the City of Seattle Department of Information Technology, (206) 684-0600; <http://www.cityofseattle.net/tech>

Exhibit 4-2: CTC Position Description Worksheet

MAYOR'S OFFICE FOR SENIOR CITIZENS
618 Second Avenue, Suite 250, Seattle, Wa. 98104
"Seniors (& Others!) in Service to Seattle"
Volunteer Matching Program

206.684.0639

AGENCY NAME (Host Site): _____	
ADDRESS: _____	Zip _____
CONTACT PERSON: _____	
Phone: _____	Fax # _____
Email _____	Cell Phone _____

POSITION "TITLE": _____

JOB DESCRIPTION SUMMARY:

SKILLS REQUIRED	MAIN RESPONSIBILITIES
1. _____	1. _____
2. _____	2. _____
3. _____	3. _____
4. _____	4. _____

What personality traits are necessary to perform job well?

What are some of the "benefits" of this position to the volunteer?

- Computer Training Lunch Bus tickets Classes
- Complimentary tickets to: _____
- Learn new skills, such as: _____

- Volunteer Recognition (e.g. certificates, etc.) _____
- Other: _____

Are computer skills necessary?	Yes (see boxes)	No
1. Word processing:	<input type="checkbox"/> Extensive <input type="checkbox"/> Moderate	<input type="checkbox"/> Some <input type="checkbox"/> Will train
2. Spreadsheet:	<input type="checkbox"/> Extensive <input type="checkbox"/> Moderate	<input type="checkbox"/> Some <input type="checkbox"/> Will train
3. Data entry:	<input type="checkbox"/> Extensive <input type="checkbox"/> Moderate	<input type="checkbox"/> Some <input type="checkbox"/> Will train
What software do you use? _____		

LENGTH OF COMMITMENT

- Indefinite _____ Month(s) Minimum _____ Month(s) Maximum
- Project Based One-Time Only (DATE: _____) _____ # of Weeks

TIME COMMITMENT

- Hours flexible Set Hours: From _____ to _____
- Days flexible Set Days: M T W Thr Fri
- Weekends Sat Sun

APPROXIMATE # HOURS PER WEEK _____ **PER MONTH** _____

What training / orientation will you provide the volunteer before they begin their job? (e.g., equipment training, tour of facility, department guidelines, etc.)

Is this volunteer position created in lieu of a paid position? Yes No

What other information would you like a potential volunteer to know about your company / department and the position?

Exhibit 4-3 Guide for Developing Volunteer Job Descriptions

Job Title

This will be the volunteer's identification. Give this as much prestige as possible.

Major objective

A short concise statement, reflecting the ultimate goal of the service to be performed.

Qualifications

Include all things necessary for the effective performance of duties, listing requirements from physical to human qualities desired. Be careful not to over qualify the position, you could lose some excellent volunteers due to stringent educational requirements. Specifics such as a car, proper insurance, if needed, etc., should be noted.

Responsibilities

As specifically as possible, list each duty and responsibility of the job.

Orientation/Training

This includes the nature of, specific content needed in, and the approximate hours for orientation and training, identifying persons who will conduct the training.

Time and Place

This should include the exact duty hours, which days of the week and the place where the volunteer is to perform the services. BE SPECIFIC.

Commitment

The minimum number of months you need from the volunteer based on your investment in training and supervision becomes the minimum length of commitment for the volunteer. A maximum time commitment should also be specified.

On the Job Supervision

Name of the supervisor or the position of the supervisor. In most cases, this will be the staff person with direct responsibility for the service. Include schedule of supervisory sessions.

Benefits

List any available benefits to the volunteer, e.g., free parking, coffee, mileage reimbursement and insurance.

Frustrations

Those aspects of the job which can be frustrating, e.g., the record keeping.

Satisfactions

Those aspects of the job which can give the volunteer real satisfaction and learning.

Exhibit 4-4: Volunteer Host Site MOU

MAYOR’S OFFICE FOR SENIOR CITIZENS (MOSC)

Human Services Department
 618 Second Ave. – Room 250, Seattle, WA. 98104

SENIORS (& OTHERS!) IN SERVICE TO SEATTLE
Volunteer Matching Program

206.684.0639

MEMO OF UNDERSTANDING

AGENCY (“Host Site”): _____
ADDRESS: _____ **ZIP** _____
CONTACT PERSON: _____
DIRECT PHONE: _____ **FAX:** _____
E-MAIL: _____ **WEB PAGE:** _____

PURPOSE OF MEMO

To outline the roles and responsibilities of each party participating in the Mayor’s Office for Senior Citizens (**MOSC**), “Seniors (& Others!) in Service to Seattle” (**S.I.S.**) Volunteer Matching Program. **Agency (Host Site)** and the **MOSC Volunteer Matching Program** agree to follow these guidelines for a successful volunteer placement.

AGENCY (HOST SITE) GUIDELINES

1. Assign a **CONTACT PERSON** to communicate with the **S.I.S** Volunteer Manager
2. Contact **referred** volunteer(s) as soon as possible to initiate interview process
3. Inform **S.I.S.** Volunteer Manager regarding results of volunteer interviews
4. When a “volunteer” is selected for position, inform **S.I.S.** Volunteer Manager
5. Conduct personal &/or professional references of volunteer, as needed by Agency
6. Conduct criminal background check, if required by agency
7. Provide “volunteer insurance coverage” clause in your organization’s policy.
8. Provide orientation to your Agency, and training for volunteer position
9. Go over volunteer job description with him/her and have them sign & date

10. Inform **S.I.S.** Volunteer Manager if position changes from initial matched position
11. Support volunteer (s) and provide safe & receptive atmosphere
12. Alert the **S.I.S.** Volunteer Manager of any potential conflicts or challenges
13. Promote and acknowledge, when possible, the role of the Mayor's Office for Senior Citizens in matching volunteers to your agency through our volunteer program "Seniors (& Others) in Service to Seattle".

RESPONSIBILITIES OF "SENIORS (& OTHERS) IN SERVICE TO SEATTLE"

1. Register and promote Agency volunteer positions through various mediums (i.e., City Website, MOSC Newsletters, Volunteer Match.com, articles in newspapers, brochures, flyers)
2. Interview, and screen (phone or in-person) volunteer(s) regarding the skills / talents needed for positions within Agency
3. Call or email **CONTACT PERSON** at agency regarding potential volunteer(s)
4. Fax a resume (if there is one) of volunteer to Contact Person upon request
5. Provide a copy of the **S.I.S.** Volunteer Application, if requested.
6. Communicate with Contact Person on a regular basis regarding volunteer(s)
7. Communicate on a regular basis with placed volunteers regarding opportunity
8. Act as Mediator, if necessary, with any conflicts or challenges involving volunteer(s)
9. Arrange occasional publicity of organization and volunteer(s) for various newsletters
10. Honor volunteer(s) throughout year, as appropriate, with cards, letters, etc.
11. Arrange special recognition luncheon, if budget allows
12. The undersigned have read this Memo of Understanding and understand their responsibilities and expectations regarding the MOSC "Seniors (& Others!) in Service to Seattle" Volunteer Matching Program.

DATE: _____ **HOST SITE:** _____

CONTACT PERSON: _____

DATE: _____ **MAYOR'S OFFICE FOR SENIOR CITIZENS**

"Seniors (& Others!) In Service to Seattle"

Volunteer Programs Manager

Exhibit 4-5: Contract for Consultant Services

This Agreement (“Agreement”) made this [DAY] day of [MONTH], [YEAR] by and between LTSC Community Development Corporation (**CONSULTANT**) and [BUSINESS/NONPROFIT/INDIVIDUAL] (**AGENCY**).

Now, therefore, the parties mutually agree as follows:

1. **Services:** The **CONSULTANT** agrees to provide the following consulting services for the **AGENCY**:
 - [ENTER DESCRIPTION OF SERVICES HERE]
 - [ENTER DESCRIPTION OF SERVICES HERE]
2. **Compensation:** **AGENCY** agrees to compensate the **CONSULTANT** by payment of a fee in the amount of \$[RATE] per hour. Reimbursement of expenses of the **CONSULTANT** which are reasonably related to providing the services to program, including such items as travel and telephone expenses, should first be approved by **AGENCY**. **CONSULTANT** will invoice **AGENCY** for fees and description of services rendered within 5 (five) business days of completion of services.
3. **Term:** The term of this Agreement shall be [LENGTH OF CONTRACTED SERVICES OR NUMBER OF HOURS]. The final ending date of this Contract shall be mutually agreed to by **CONSULTANT** and **AGENCY**.
4. **Termination:** The services of the **CONSULTANT** are to commence upon the execution of the Agreement and the work required shall be undertaken and completed in an expeditious and business-like manner. Failure to do so, or violation of any the covenants, agreements or stipulations of this Agreement by the **CONSULTANT** shall give **AGENCY** the right to terminate this Agreement provided the **CONSULTANT** is notified in writing five days prior to the effective termination date. If so terminated, **CONSULTANT** and **AGENCY** will have no further liability for payments due under this Agreement. **AGENCY** reserves the right to reduce the total amount of the fee, based on its determination of poor performance or nonperformance of any of the covenants, agreements or stipulations of the Agreement by the **AGENCY**.
5. **Reporting:** The **CONSULTANT** shall periodically provide progress reports to **AGENCY**.
6. **Cooperation:** **AGENCY** agrees to cooperate with the **CONSULTANT** in carrying out the purposes of this Agreement.
7. **Location of Service Delivery:** The **CONSULTANT** shall primarily operate and provide services at the **AGENCY**, except for meetings and other services under this Agreement that may require travel to other locations.
8. **Amendments:** **AGENCY** may from time to time request changes in the scope of services of the **CONSULTANT** to be performed. Any changes in the number of hours required by **CONSULTANT** to complete the services will be reflected in the invoice submitted by **CONSULTANT**.

5 chapter

Software Selection and Criteria

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5 chapter

Software Selection and Criteria

"At the clubhouse, young people become designers and creators—not just consumers—of computer-based products. Participants use leading-edge software to create their own artwork, animations, simulations, multimedia presentations, virtual worlds, musical creations, Web sites, and robotic constructions."

*Mitch Resnick
LEGO/Papert Professor of Learning Research, MIT Media Lab*

Introduction

Having come to agreement about the intended programmatic focus of the CTC, the Steering Committee's next task is to determine what software is required, and plan for hardware acquisition. If the Center Director or Coordinator has been identified, he or she should be involved directly in the process of software planning or, in some cases, the task can be delegated entirely to the Center Director or Coordinator.

Software selection is not an easy task but selections should always be reflective of the CTC mission; software that does not help your CTC achieve its mission should be avoided. The quantity of commercially available software titles is vast and grows every day. Even fifteen years ago, it was estimated that, in the field of educational software alone, there were more than ten thousand current titles. Thus any comprehensive review is beyond the bounds of this manual. While specific titles are referenced as typifying certain kinds of software, no guarantee is made that any software cited is still in commercial circulation nor that it represents the best of its specific type.

The Basic Package

Regardless of its size, constituency, programmatic goals, hardware configuration, or budget, every CTC must make certain kinds of software available to its participants. These fundamental computing tools are:

- word processing and desktop publishing
- spreadsheets
- databases
- graphics
- Internet browsers
- slide show or presentation software
- email programs and services
- software to build homepages
- software to read or play special files (pdf, mp3, ram, wav, mov)

Variously referred to as “productivity tools”, “applications software”, or “business applications”, such software forms the building blocks of computer comfort and skill. They are also referred to as office software as these are the most common computer applications used in a workplace. In fact, much of the existing commercial software library has been created using combinations and permutations of these tools. Creative teachers and instructors can find ways to use these tools in the service of many disparate objectives such as adult literacy, job training and job-seeking, pre-school education, homework help, virtual travel, group projects, etc.

Some General Considerations

1. Hardware connections?

Knowing that your center must have this basic software set means facing up to some hardware issues. It’s not clear whether increased memory in hardware is driving software configurations or vice versa, but the fact of the matter is that the more recent the productivity tool software package, the more memory it requires on a computer hard drive or server. Most software packages will list the minimum memory and hardware requirements to run the software properly; be sure to check these requirements before a purchase.

If the center contemplates serious desktop publishing, it will be necessary to have additional hardware that can scan images (scanners) or even develop snapshots as digital images by connecting the camera directly with the computer.

If sound (music, audio help, sound effects, etc.) is a feature of center software, participants will need earphones connected to the hardware system.

For fast, efficient use of the world wide web (WWW) and other communications tools requiring transmission and reception of graphic images, either high speed modems are needed to enable computers to communicate over standard analog telephone connections or other, more expensive, adapters must be acquired to enable the use of special phone line switching arrangements (e.g., ISDN) or special communications lines (e.g., T-1, frame relay).

Centers using older equipment can still do very well with older versions of many software productivity tools. The processes are generally the same and older versions, without so many bells and whistles, are often easier to learn to use than newer, more gimmick-laden versions.

Centers need to know that their software goals will affect their hardware choices, and vice versa. For example, a CTC's decision to use a server rather than stand-alone machines may determine what version of a particular package the center must acquire. For those whose hardware capability has been predetermined by circumstance (such as a donation from a company that is upgrading), they will need to keep firmly in mind the memory capacity and other hardware system limitations when choosing software packages.

2. Bundled or separate packages?

Several companies sell a "bundled" package of these productivity tools. Some popular bundles you may have heard of are Microsoft Office, AppleWorks, Star Office, Open Office, and 602 Office. Similarly, hardware systems often come "bundled" or preloaded with a variety of software packages.

Alternatively, there are single packages that contain a variety of software tools. AppleWorks, for example, is a single program that includes a word processor, a spreadsheet, a database, graphics tools and a graphics library, and communications software. This latter type of package has much to offer a CTC: procedures, menus, keystroke shortcuts are common to all the applications. Furthermore, it is easy to clip from one application and use that clip in another. The disadvantage, that no one program has all the features of a full-fledged stand-alone package, may, in the case of a CTC, also be an advantage for learners who don't need to start out using so many options.

The availability of software donations or other circumstances may result in a center having separate packages produced by different companies. In most cases, it will still be possible to "clip" from one and "insert" in another, but the procedure may not be either direct or easy.

3. *Level of sophistication?*

It is important not to underestimate the ability of participants to learn sophisticated and complex programs. Early in the development of educational software, it was thought that children would need highly simplified and watered down versions of productivity tools. Now everyone knows that kids can perform complicated tasks that many adults shy away from (e.g., programming a VCR!) and are likely to be able to master complex software much more readily than their elders.

Because participants at a CTC may be ignorant—of computers, of reading or writing, of the English language—it does not follow inexorably that they cannot learn complex or sophisticated processes. It is, therefore, not necessary to find programs that are easy to learn. It is important that the programs be easy to use. For example, in an early version of WordPerfect, four keys had to be simultaneously depressed in order to mark off a block of text—a fairly routine and commonly used function. The outcry from users was intense, and the developers responded with a far simpler procedure for later versions. In asking around, find people who use a particular program. Find out if they think it is easy to use. Pay less attention to instructors in commercial training programs (or teachers in schools) who may tell you that a program is easy to learn.

This all may seem at variance with the preceding section where the suggestion was made that a package of several applications but lacking some of the features of a stand-alone application could be an advantage in a CTC. Not so. The example cited, AppleWorks, is a fully professional set of programs, as are others of its genre. That the multiplicity of functions is somewhat less than those included with, say, the latest version of Microsoft Word, will not be of prime importance to the majority of users.

Nor is it the case that all applications designed for children are inappropriate for adults or for general usage. For example, KidPix, a drawing and painting program designed as per its name for kids, is an excellent general purpose introductory graphics program. Many sophisticated features of higher end graphics programs are included, and additional features, designed to make using the program “fun” for kids, also make it fun for adults.

4. *Language?*

Many CTCs will confront the issue of language. With a participant population that is predominantly Spanish speaking, or Haitian-Creole speaking, or Korean speaking, would it not be important to have these fundamental productivity tools with text in their own languages?

The resounding consensus among CTCNet affiliates who have confronted this issue is NO! Their other-language speaking participants have indicated an overwhelming preference for learning to use productivity tools with English menus. They feel, understandably, that the English menus will better prepare them to use these in the workplace. On the other hand, many have indicated that it would be nice to have some more recreational types of software available in their own languages.

There is a piece of “shareware” that can assist other-than-English speakers and writers in including correct accent marks for communications in their own languages. Called PopChar, it will display all available accented letters. The required accented letter will appear in the text when the user clicks on the PopChar image. Doubtless there are a variety of similar products. For additional information on PopChar, head to: www.unisoftwareplus.com/products/popchar

5. *Teaching aids?*

Introductory On-Screen Tours: Some hardware packages include introductory tours with the system software; likewise, some productivity tools also provide such introductory material. Some are good; some are not. The Introduction to the Macintosh that used to come with the purchase of a Macintosh computer was excellent. Hands-on examples were built in. The text was simple and enhanced with graphical representation of the keyboard and other needed peripherals. The “try-it-yourself sections” were fun and instructive and the feedback for incorrect keystrokes was kind and encouraging.

Manuals and Other Texts: Not only do manuals accompany most software packages, but books and books of explanatory text have been written for many of the more popular software applications. While it is good to have these texts available in a CTC “library”, they are not the best learning tools for beginners, particularly those who have low reading skills. Standard practice in a CTCNet affiliate is to ask participants to come in with some project they would like to accomplish and to learn the appropriate computer tools in the context of that project, assisted by instructors or other learners.

On-screen “Help”: Although most programs provide “on-screen” help, using this capability has many drawbacks. First, it is often difficult to find the section of the help that deals with the specific problem the user is encountering. Second, of course, is the reading problem - lots of text. Lastly, some on-screen help is limited to lists of keystroke equivalents to menu items. For all three reasons, CTC participants may be more frustrated than assisted by on-screen help.

Audio Tapes: Audio tapes have the following advantages: 1) the equipment needed (a “Walkman” or equivalent tape player with earphones) is inexpensive

(and many participants will actually own their own); 2) the participant can start, stop, rewind, or fast forward the tape at will; 3) since the user has ear phones, other participants are not bothered; 4) progress through the tutorial is entirely self-paced by the participant; and 5) the participant has little need to oscillate between teaching medium and keyboarding. He or she can keep hands on the keyboard at all times. Most computers also come equipped with CD-ROM drives. The disadvantages are only that a tape cannot answer randomly posed questions and that most instructional material of this sort requires that the user follow a set sequence rather than pursuing a personal project. As such, it is advisable to have a follow-up discussion after the participant finishes the material to answer any questions and foster comprehension of the material.

Video Tapes: Popular, but not effective, video tapes require that the participant constantly shift between the viewing screen and the computer screen. Unless earphones are available, the tape's audio can be distracting to others (as can the video). It is more difficult for a user to stop, restart, or rewind a video tape. The temptation to use video tapes with groups of people counteracts the individualization of learning progress. And of course video tapes have the same disadvantages of audio tapes (see above).

CD-ROMs and DVDs: Many new computers come equipped with drives that play CD-ROMs and/or DVDs. Prices for DVDs are similar to videotapes yet require equipment you probably already have on hand, namely a computer and headphones or speakers. The benefits of using DVDs and CD-ROMs are similar to those of audio tapes and videotapes, but they allow for interaction with the participant.

CD-R & DVD-R: CTCs can use the very simple tools at their disposal to create their own teaching aids and curriculum for participants. Many new computers will come with, or include the option for, what are commonly referred to as CD and/or DVD burners or writers. Essentially another disk drive on the computer, this hardware allows you to place your own files and videos onto a CD or DVD. Ideal peripherals you may want handy include a microphone, digital camera, scanner, and DVD video camera. Creating such materials will be labor-intensive but may be especially appealing as special projects offered to participants, volunteers, interns, etc.

People: The very best learning aid is other people: an instructor or volunteer, a tutor, a peer, a young person or a senior—anyone who can offer personalized assistance when that assistance is needed. In addition, getting one person excited about learning tends to have a beneficial domino effect on other participants to want to learn similar material. For example, if a child creates a web page and shows that page to friends, more than likely you will have an eager group of would-be web developers at your disposal.

Extending the Basic Package

Determining factors

Budget, number of computer stations, and hours of operation will, in part, determine how much additional software is needed for the CTC. The most important determining factor, however, will be the wants and needs of the participating population. In order better to ascertain these needs and wants, the CTC should start off with a modest amount of additional software in a variety of categories. In choosing this first “extension of the basic package,” it will be important to look for the most versatile packages and those that have appeal to a wide range of ages and individual needs. CTCNet choices for an initial selection are marked with an asterisk (*) below.

As the participating population becomes familiar with the software available, they should be able to be more specific about other titles in other areas that they would like to see represented in the CTC library.

Software for first time users

It is particularly important to have software on hand that can be used successfully by participants who are sitting at a computer for the very first time. The following have been successful over time in a variety of CTCNet centers with a variety of ages and ability levels:

Print Shop/ Desktop Publishing (or equivalent): Enables the user to produce a greeting card, flyer, letterhead sample, banner, and, in some versions, a personalized calendar. Ideal for a first time user of any age since a product can be designed, produced, printed, and taken home usually within the first half or full hour of use. Children enjoy making cards as an introduction to the computer to give to a parent, teacher, friend, etc. Once they learn to master this skill it may have an adverse effect on your printing budget, so be sure to specify your printing policy to participants.

Solitaire: Familiar to many users already, Solitaire (or Canfield) may even be included as part of the operating system of many computers. Because of existing familiarity with the game, this is an excellent and usually enjoyable way to get participants used to controlling the mouse, dragging and clicking, and other such very basic computer comfort skills.

Screen Savers: These programs are designed to protect computer screen from “burned-in” or shadowed images of text or graphics that have been left on the

screen for too long a period. The program is timed to replace the user's screen with a moving graphic (e.g., swimming fish, flying toasters, rotating designs, etc) until any key is pressed. Choosing a screen saver graphic is a matter of personal taste, but the best of these programs allow you to create your own pattern, and many CTCNet centers have individualized their screen savers with information about the center itself.

Typing Tutors (*Mavis Beacon Teaches Typing or equivalent): Many, if not most, participants will arrive at the CTC without touch typing skills. While CTCNet definitely does NOT subscribe to the oft-cited opinion that touch-typing is a prerequisite for computer use, we have found that people lacking these skills soon ask if such a tutor is available. The computer is an infinitely patient drill-master, and most typing programs are "jazzed up" with graphically-based speed drills that make learning much more fun than it used to be at a manual typewriter. It is important, even necessary, to make a typing-tutor program available. Look for one that introduces finger placement graphically, that offers constructive feedback (special keys to work on) and automatically provides drill appropriate to the user's skill development. Be sure, too, that game-type speed and accuracy test formats are non-violent and free of gender or ethnic stereotypes.

Design-A-Blank Kits: The blank can stand for -a-room, -a-house, -a-game, -a-garden, -a-car, -a-plane, -a-dress, -a-toy - whatever; all these and more are available. The idea springs from graphics and allows people to indulge in wishful and/or practical thinking, also gaining experience with the particular subject area covered by the program. The better ones include the capability for 3-D viewing and/or "virtual" testing, and many provide for printing out groundplans or patterns or "blueprints" that can be turned into paper models.

Construction kits (Music Construction Kit, Pinball Construction Kit, *The Incredible Machine, or similar): Similar to design kits, these programs allow the user to construct a mechanism or a piece of music and then play it or make it run in a virtual environment. Excellent for group activity and for a variety of ages and interests, most contain examples as well as challenges, and all stimulate creativity.

N.B. Special purpose packages such as label makers, business card creators, a calendar-maker, and such may seem useful additions to a CTC library, but in fact would be a waste of money since any such application can quite easily be created using a wordprocessor or desktop publishing program. And learning to use a wordprocessor for these sorts of applications broadens the experience and skill of center participants.

Digital Music Mixing: The following description of digital music mixing software was contributed by Andrew Sears of the Association of Christian Commu-

nity Computing Centers (or AC4, on the web at <http://www.ac4.org>).

“One thing we’ve noticed at our computer center is that most urban youth are into music. To help make technology attractive, we’ve been having a lot of our youth work on mixing music digitally, and it has been one of the most successful things we’ve done. In fact, we find that most of our youth are more interested in mixing music than even using the web. Both programs we use, allow youth to take thousands of prerecorded tracks of drum beats, guitars, vocals, bass, etc and mix them into their own songs. We then have a CD burner that we let them use (after buying a CD from us for \$2) to make their own CD to take home. We’ve had a lot of kids do this, and then they show their friends their CD, and then their friends start coming in.

“The two main programs that we use at our center are:

“1. Hip Hop eJay II. Very easy to use and looks attractive. This program requires the CD to run (but you can share it across a network as described below). Cost is \$39.95, and you can try to get a donation from them for up to 6 copies by sending a request on letterhead. You must be a non-profit social service organization. Their Web site is <http://www.voyetra.com> Seth Dotterer Voyetra Turtle Beach, Inc. 5 Odell Plaza Yonkers, NY 10701

“2. Acid Music Hip Hop. A little more advanced and not as easy to use, but you can do more with this and they also have more professional tools that can integrate with it. You can get it at shopping.yahoo.com for \$39.95, and the company’s Web site is <http://www.sonicfoundry.com> They also give donations to some community based organizations.

“If you want to share one of these CD’s across a network (or other CD’s) you can purchase Virtual Drive from Farstone (<http://www.farstone.com>). This allows you to put an image of a CD on a server and share it across the network so you don’t have to keep handing out CD’s (and get them scratched).”

“Educational” software

Software is no substitute for education. School subject related drill and practice programs are not part of CTCNet’s recommended purchase strategy. Most applications are quite narrow, multiple choice dominates over original input, and the content is determined by traditional school curriculum. We see CTCs as providing opportunities for all ages to encounter computer applications that complement and enrich learning activities, thus enhancing self-esteem.

In recent years, developers of educational software have produced more of the open-ended variety where student input can be creative and individual. Unfortu-

nately, the best of these packages also require a teacher well grounded in using them, often making them the centerpieces of month-long class projects. For the most part, these programs are not suitable for use in a CTC due to staff time and limitations of expertise.

With these caveats in mind, it is still possible to make recommendations of off-the-shelf software that has educational value.

Preschool packages: For parent/child sessions, excellent choices include simple learning games for colors, letters, numbers/quantities, time-telling, and concepts such as high/low, inside/outside, large/small, above/below, etc. There should be sufficient variety so that a child can return to the program happily time after time, still deriving pleasure and skill from each encounter. For more specific suggestions about software, please see the discussion on Sept 13-14, 2002 at <http://www.ctcnet.org/americaconnects/acc2/index.htm>. And note for example, in that thread, Mercedes Soto's word of caution that those considering use of technology with youngsters under the age of seven should read "Failure to Connect" by Jean Healy, Ph.D.

Simulations: The best known of these is the "Sim-" series: * Sim-City, Sim-Town, Sim-Theme Park, Sim-Earth, Sim-Ant, and more. Other simulation games are available online, such as MUDs, that allow for real-time game playing with users all over the world. Best for grade- and high-school students, the user constructs an environment (a city, a planet-scape, an ant-colony) and the program generates natural reactions to that environment so that the virtual inhabitants either thrive or not according to decisions made by the user together with natural phenomena introduced by the program. Suitable for group participation, most of these programs are excellent learning experiences and participants enjoy them.

Other titles that have received enthusiastic reviews include Three Mile Island (managing a nuclear plant), and The Incredible Laboratory (the care and feeding of alien life forms in a lab environment). There is also a program simulating the fishing industry where participants manage fishing fleets with the almost inevitable result that the supply of fish is totally depleted and the fleet owners go out of business. This program is so well constructed that it has been used at corporate retreats as a market-saturation simulation.

Lastly, *Flight Simulator which puts the user in the pilot's seat of a plane and teaches elements of measurement, physics, and navigation as well as piloting techniques is popular, as are its close relatives that deal with driving a car.

Play Detective (Where in the World is Carmen Sandiego? or equivalent): Many different kinds of programs employ the "you are the detective" strategy. Carmen Sandiego, the prototype, has been so successful that a PBS TV show has been designed around the program concepts.

Take a Trip: Oregon Trail, where the student assumes the role of a pioneer and must plan supplies, devise routes, and collaborate with others in order to survive the western journey, is perhaps the granddaddy of such programs. But today, you can take a trip through the human body, explore the solar system, unearth Mayan ruins, sail with Columbus—all and more. Be sure to check out current software titles from National Geographic and the Magic School Bus series.

Drill & Practice: As noted above under “Typing Tutors”, the computer is a super drill master. The trick is in knowing when drill, or rote learning is advisable. A general rule of thumb consists of asking the question, “Is this knowledge that you want to have without thinking about it?” Touch typing, or keyboarding, is an obvious “Yes”. Foreign language vocabulary, spelling, and math facts are also candidates for drill and practice learning. While there are successful software packages in all these categories (the Math Blaster Series is an outstanding example), children and adults can gain computer experience by developing their own drill and practice programs or aids using wordprocessors and/or spreadsheets.

Integrated Learning Systems (ILS): Comprehensive school curriculum covering a variety of subjects and often a variety of grade levels has been automated for computer use by a number of different companies (Computer Curriculum Company (CCC), US Basics, and Jostens are three of the better known). Designed to be teacher-substitutes, these programs pre-test students and route them accordingly to appropriate exercises. Monitoring and grading are also automated.

It has not generally been in the nature of integrated learning systems to promote exploration and discovery or to enhance a students' ability to master computer applications and turn them to their own uses.

If a CTC is intent on offering an ILS, its staff should:

- Review the system thoroughly, bearing in mind the evaluation criteria given later in this chapter,
- Talk with many teachers (use the Internet) who have used the system over time (not just those suggested by the ILS salespeople), and
- Provide equivalent time in the CTC schedule for students using the ILS to explore and learn to use other broader applications of technology.

Writing and Reading: The best route toward encouraging reading and writing skill development is simple wordprocessing, desktop publishing, email, chat, and ebooks. There are, however, some off-the-counter packages that go a ways toward engaging the interest of children and young people in acquiring or enhancing these skills.

Recreational software

It is difficult to separate “recreational” and “entertainment” software, since the best of either has qualities of the other. A number of the categories described above refer to programs that someone else might characterize as primarily recreational, yet because of their special purpose or educational value, they’ve been described under a different label.

Board and/or Strategy Games: Electronic versions of Othello, Checkers, Monopoly, Chess, Backgammon, Go, Bridge, etc. are good additions to a CTC software library. Often particularly popular with seniors, these provide challenge for those who have trouble finding an appropriately skilled opponent. They also help develop strategy and planning skills. And they don’t cheat! Look for a version that has different levels from beginner to advanced, that offers clear instructions for those new to the game, and where the graphics are not overly fussy (e.g., for card games, the cards must be easy to read).

TV Games: Electronic versions of Wheel of Fortune or Jeopardy are always popular and may have some peripheral educational value in terms of spelling, word sense, and miscellaneous information. Try to find types where users can enter their own challenges for each other.

Adventure Games: Similar to the “Take a Trip” learning games, in these, the user plays the part of a character in a fictional (rather than real life or historical) environment. A quest is usually involved. The most overwhelmingly successful of these is a program called *Myst*, created by the same team who developed *Manhole* (see above). *Myst* has spawned clubs, special interest groups on the Internet, books on strategy, and magazine and newspaper articles. It is relatively non-violent as such games go, is free of ethnic or racial stereotypes, has superb graphics, and is sufficiently complex in terms of its response to user input that it can be played for hours, even days on end (users can “save” their adventure progress to date—a necessary feature for such a complex program).

Eye/Hand Coordination Games: The archetype, Pong, and its successor, Pacman, were among the very first games designed for personal computers. Neither had much to recommend it, apart from being free of ethnic, gender, or racial stereotypes, but they were nevertheless addicting for many. The genre has produced some really horrible examples, dominated by violence and target practice in one form or another, but there is at least one, Tetris, that actually has some value in developing, in addition to eye/hand coordination, concepts of spatial relations. Tetris has the additional value of being available at no cost from a variety of different sources including some online gaming sites.

Reference libraries

The advent of CD-ROM disks has made it possible to purchase entire encyclopedias, almanacs, and atlases in addition to the dictionary and thesaurus capability already mentioned. A judicious selection of these works is a valuable addition to a CTC software library since many of the participants will not own these in book form and students may need them for research. Make sure that any such reference works do not have copyright restrictions.

Museum collections are also available: the Smithsonian, the Louvre, and many of the other world-famous museums have made their collections available pictorially on disk or even from their web sites.

And lastly, clip-art images, sound clips (music and/or sound effects), and font libraries, all of which are useful for desktop publishing and in the creation of web pages are available for purchase or downloadable from the Internet. Such collections may supplement collections that come bundled with other software packages.

Evaluative Criteria

Throughout the previous sections, various criteria have been described in connection with specific packages or software genre. While no single product may meet all of the criteria summarized below, those that succeed in maximizing the positives and avoiding all the negatives are the better choices.

Look for software that...

- Enables users to do something they couldn't otherwise do, or to do things better or more efficiently
- Is multi-purpose and open-ended
- Appeals to a wide range of ages and interests
- Is easy to use (not necessarily easy to learn)

- Offers constructive feedback (both positive and negative)
- Encourages creative, individualized, original input
- Enhances content through electronic presentation (very important)
- Provides instructions or on-screen help that is clear and useful
- Employs tasteful and attractive graphics that are
 - Non-violent
 - Free of gender or ethnic stereotypes
 - Representative of user population (very important)
- Provides a tangible **product**
- Is fun to use and gives users a sense of accomplishment
- Has a clear and fair copyright and licensing agreement

Avoid software that...

- Limits user interaction to pressing return or making a choice between presented options
- Requires simultaneous depression of several keys in order to accomplish a routine or frequently used function
- Has large amounts of text on the screen
- Does not allow the user to control sound levels, timing, or other intrusive features
- Presents content in a violent, racist, sexist, or condescending fashion
- Does not significantly add to a user's knowledge base in a meaningful way
- Is little more than an automated workbook (after all, workbooks are much cheaper and easier to maintain)
- Repeats exaggerated or lengthy graphics displays that have little to do with the advertised "content"

Copyright & Licensing Considerations

Rights:

All commercial software is copyright protected. The purchased package will contain a licensing statement to which the purchaser agrees by the action of opening the package. Consider contacting the vendor if you read this agreement and have any questions. If the CTC is planning to use a local area network (LAN) to deliver software to all of its computers, it will be necessary both to be sure, when purchasing, that the software is compatible with the specific server to be used and also that the licensing agreement accepts LAN use as legal. Alternatively, if the CTC wants the software to be available on each station (without using a server), arrangements can be made for a “site license” or permission to install the software on all the systems of the specified site. Both these sorts of arrangements affect the price paid for the software and accompanying license. If the CTC has connections with business or educational institutions in the community, it may be that those institutions have negotiated site license agreements that can be extended to the CTC.

Because CTCs must obey the law for their own protection and must serve as exemplars for their participants, it is important that they abide by copyright laws. For this reason, CTCNet centers do not allow participants to remove copies of center software in violation of copyright laws, nor, in most cases, do they allow participants to bring their own software into the center. In cases where software has been donated to a center, it is imperative that the donor supply the center with a copy of the licensing agreement together with a transfer of ownership statement.

An advantage of the licensing agreement is that a registered owner (registration cards are also included in the software package) can usually obtain upgrades at far less than the full market price.

Public domain/shareware:

Some software is free and not copyright protected. Usually referred to as “Public Domain Software,” such packages are freely copyable and/or transferable. Other software, called “shareware” is offered freely to one and all through user-groups or over the Internet with the suggested proviso that someone copying or downloading such a program voluntarily send a small amount of money to the creator/developer of the software. Shareware operates on the honor system so CTCs using shareware should be particularly careful to follow the on-screen instructions for remunerating the developer.

Shopping Hints

Start small—supply the basics and a selection of other programs

In choosing the elements of the basic package, it may be advisable, particularly if job preparation is a CTC goal, to ascertain what business applications are in most common usage among potential community employers. On the other hand, developing skill with a particular word processing program will certainly make learning a second one much easier, and this should be true of graphics, or spreadsheets, or databases, or communications software.

When shopping for additions to the basic package, take it slowly, limiting each shopping expedition to one type of program. It will take quite a while just to consider the quantity of board games available, for example.

Be aware of hardware compatibility

Examine each software package carefully, noting the type of hardware, the memory requirements, and the required system software. Determine whether additional peripheral hardware such as speakers, scanners, earphones, etc., will be necessary to make the program perform at its best in your CTC or will require regularly upgrading equipment.

Preview

Many of the criteria listed above require careful examination of software products. Patronize only stores and/or catalog sources that permit you to preview packages. Software vendors often do not permit returns so be sure to road-test evaluation and demo versions of software with CTC participants. Many software companies offer free demos or trial versions of their packages from their web sites. Retail outlets specializing in computer equipment and supplies offer facilities for trying out software and frequently have knowledgeable salespeople who can help. Unless you are certain that you know the exact title and version of the software you are looking for, don't order from a company that doesn't offer this option.

Resources

Catalogs

The minute that you purchase any hardware or software, you will start receiving

catalogs from hardware and software vendors. These make good reading, for center administration and for participants. They list and describe new software titles, titles that give ideas for future purchases, bargains, etc., but give virtually no information about program quality. As per the above “Shopping Hint”, try to make purchases only from vendors that offer a trial period. Then use the trial period to evaluate the purchase.

Use your own experience and that of others whose opinion you value to identify reliable sources. If you’re not receiving catalogs from these sources, write and request them. In the field of educational software, CTCNet has found Sunburst, Tom Snyder Productions, and Broderbund fairly reliable regarding product quality and service.

Other software users

When soliciting opinions regarding software purchases from other users, remember that they may not have the same criteria that you do, they may not have the same purpose in mind, and, most importantly, they may never have worked with a population similar to the participants at a CTC. Preview their recommendations as you would any other product. You will soon discover whether their suggestions are suitable for CTC use.

Magazine, newspaper, and on-line reviews

Magazines devoted to personal computers abound. Often these target a specific type of hardware (e.g., PC or Mac). All include announcements of new products, software reviews, and sometimes “ten best” lists. Again, it is wise to “get to know” your reviewer so that you can more accurately rate his or her opinions in relation to your needs. Newspapers with large urban or regional audiences often have “technology” sections and print software reviews periodically. The same caveats apply as they do to products described on the Internet or World Wide Web.

Center participants

Make catalogs and computer magazines available to your center participants. Solicit their ideas for products to add to the CTC software library. Get them involved in the preview/evaluation work too.

CTCNet

CTCNet’s email lists and other on-line connections facilitate information sharing about software needs and recommendations. Queries from

affiliates have included questions about recreational software in Spanish, “good” learning programs for ESL and Adult Literacy instruction, and recommendations of interesting science software. In each case, the questioner has received lists of suggestions, each coming from a center that has had experience with the specific software titles. For this reason alone, membership in CTCNet would be a valuable asset for any CTC. In addition, archives of the CTCNet-America Connects Consortium (ACC) sponsored online panel focusing on software in CTCs can be accessed from <http://www.ctcnet.org> and from <http://www.americconnects.net>.

Documentation

Planning and acquiring software for the CTC should result in the following:

- An inventory (database) of software including, as applicable: version number, date purchased, date registered, price, number of copies, location in CTC, intended use. It is extremely important to keep this inventory up to date. It will be needed for annual audits, and will serve as part of the orientation of new staff and volunteers.
- A list of any hardware specifications necessitated by intended software use: memory size, LAN, peripherals, phone lines or switching devices, etc.
- Consideration of the types of software needed, such as those in the following checklist:

Standard programs			
	wordprocessing		anti-virus programs
	spreadsheets		databases
	graphics		communications
	typing tutor		greeting card/sign maker
	drawing and painting		screen saver
Software designed for:			
	adult education		pre-school education
	after school activities		job preparation
	job placement		elder services
	electronic commerce		recreation

6 chapter

Space, Hardware, and Security

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6 chapter

Space, Hardware, and Security

We need to sit people down before PCs but remember that the people come first then the technology and ICT applications -- the primacy of human agency, using ICT to add value to the ideas of people and what they wish to achieve, is the determining characteristic of a successful project/initiative/program of activity.

*Andrew McDonald
Manager - CCIS Teleport
Craigmilller Community Information Service*

Introduction

With the focus of the CTC determined and a plan decided on for software acquisition, the next issues facing the Steering Committee and the Center Director/Coordinator are space and general ambiance; hardware selection and acquisition; and risk management.

Physical Space and Furnishings

General Ambiance

Equally important as the available software will be the center environment. A successful center is one that people want to come to, want to be in, and want to return to. Some of the features that can contribute include:

An open, friendly reception area: Flyers about the center, membership applications (if appropriate), center schedules, and class registration information should be available and current. A person (paid or volunteer) should be there to welcome people and dispense information. Walls can be used to display photos of center staff and volunteers (with names and relevant information), lists of sponsors and donors, newspaper articles about the center and its participants. A community bulletin board where participants can post notices of meetings,

services, or opportunities can further heighten the impression that this place is of, and for, the community.

Some comfortable, non-computer social and/or work space: Not everyone will want to spend every minute at a computer. Some may have to wait for a machine, others may have to wait to pick up children. Users may want to take time for a break, to relax, to exchange information with others, to read a magazine, or to do pencil & paper work in connection with their computer projects. If possible, situate this social space within eye-shot of the center itself so that people who may feel shy (e.g., parents) can get a sense of what goes on and may be intrigued enough to participate themselves.

Computer placement to encourage sharing: Frequently, a participant may see someone else doing something interesting. “Hey, I’d like to learn to do that” is a response that you want to promote. Arrange computer stations so that users of one can see the screens of as many others as possible.

Space for collaborative work: Working together with a partner or small group facilitates learning and lessens the load on the center supervisor. Space the computers so that two or three chairs can be located around each.

Toddler area: Parents often have to bring babies or toddlers: If space permits, set up a play area for youngsters and engage a volunteer to supervise. If space is not available, try to make an arrangement with a nearby daycare facility so parents can drop kids off for the hours that they will be in the CTC.

Safety and accessibility: Everyone needs to feel that the center is a safe place to be and a safe place to come to and leave. This may mean exterior and interior lighting, it may mean handicap accessibility, it may even mean that a youth escort service needs to be part of center planning.

Temperature and air quality: Less a necessity for the equipment than for the participants, temperature can rise when lots of people and lots of heat-generating equipment are concentrated in a small space. Make sure that ventilation is adequate and install air conditioning in locations where daytime temperatures exceed 80 degrees.

Wall space: Fill the walls with participant work, or jackets from new software offerings, or “Club News” , or anything that relates to, honors, or informs the participants. Encourage participants to create special holiday or project displays. Organize a committee to take on this responsibility and make sure that displays are updated or changed periodically.

Staff space: It is important that center staff (paid and volunteer) have space to call their own. This can be a desk, or a room. But there must be some space.

Amenities: Think about where participants will hang coats or lodge bookbags and other personal paraphernalia. Provide recycle bins for paper (centers generate lots of paper waste). Don't allow food or drink at computer stations. Post this and other center rules prominently.

Personal files: Provide filing space for participants who may wish to maintain an individual data disk or printed (hard copy) versions of work in progress.

Suggestion box: Consider creating an opportunity for center staff, participants and visitors to informally offer comments and suggestions.

In summary, do everything you can to make the space serve the participants' needs. An advisory committee that includes participant representatives from various age groups will be invaluable in identifying ways to improve center ambiance, service, and software library.

Where Should the CTC be Located?

Much will depend on the sponsoring organization. If the CTC is an expansion of existing services within an agency such as a Y or community center, that organization may already have space in mind. A housing complex may have common space or a vacant apartment that can be allocated; a library, religious, or educational organization may be able to rearrange space usage to accommodate a CTC.

These same entities may be able to provide space to an independent group wishing to start a CTC. Storefronts and trailers are other possibilities. One CTCNet affiliate in Los Angeles heard that a gas station was closing down and persuaded the fuel company not only to give them a long term lease, but to fund the needed renovations.

Accessibility is the key. People need to be able to find the place easily, and they need to feel that they can come and go without expense, without anxiety, and without physical obstacles. This means ramps as well as steps, elevators in addition to stair wells. It means a well lit exterior. It means a location central to the intended participants; it may mean easy access by public transportation.

Another key feature is cost. Free space with no strings is great, but rare. More likely is a case where an existing agency provides space and in return the CTC agrees on a certain amount of use by participants at that agency and perhaps a certain amount of training for agency staff.

How Much Space is Needed?

There must be room for computer stations (20 square feet per station), a reception area, office, relaxation/work areas, and general traffic. Restrooms must be included or conveniently available and there must be a way to accommodate strollers, coats, and other personal belongings.

In addition, it makes sense to think about possible expansion. Look for space that is large enough to allow additional computer stations together with the necessary additional staff.

To get a rough idea of how many computer stations it will take to serve the number of participants you anticipate, divide the intended number of participants by the anticipated number of hours per week that the CTC will be open. For example, based on serving 200 people each week during 40 hours of open time, 5 computer stations will give each attendee one hour per week but if the same number of people are expected to come every day for an hour, you'll need 25 stations.

Consider your staffing plan as well: a single teacher/supervisor can handle up to 10 stations assuming one or two people using each. And, of course, your budget: for new hardware, about \$1500 per system (see Hardware, below).

What About Electrical Connections?

The advice and assistance of a technical expert will be needed to determine and plan the CTC's exact wiring configuration. The following should be part of the plan:

- Floor and wall outlets for computers (maximum: 6 systems per outlet) and for printers, scanners, and copiers.
- Telephone connections for reception and office telephones and fax machines.
- Wiring for a local area network (LAN) with broadband connection to the Internet.
- Adequate lighting.

Furniture & Furnishings

The reception area:

- Sign—outside and on the door—telling people where they are

- Desk and chair for reception personnel
- Chairs or benches for waiting people
- Files for participant records
- Sign in computer or other mechanism (sheet/clipboard)
- A large wall clock
- Display area for CTC news, programs, membership advice, etc.

One CTCNet affiliate mounted a large local area map on one wall of the reception area and encouraged each participant to place a pin on his/her home location. Not only was this an attractive display, it also encouraged a sense of personal ownership among participants, and it made a simple and clear method of informing visitors about where participants came from.

The computer area:

- Tables for the computers and other hardware. Those designed for the purpose often have sliding shelves bringing keyboards to the proper height for easy use, and may have troughs to contain the various cables that otherwise have a messy appearance. Built-in counters are more expensive and don't give you the flexibility of changing your arrangement as experience dictates.
- Consider one or two rolling carts for computers. These can be wheeled into areas of greater privacy for those that need it. They can also be wheeled to other places in the building for presentations, demonstrations, or special work. One CTCNet affiliate in Boston affectionately refers to its computer cart as its "Cow" (computer on wheels).
- Chairs for participants (2 per computer) need to be adjustable if you expect a mixture of children and adults. They also need to be comfortable (try before buying). A caution though, children can turn chairs on wheels into bumper cars!
- Files, cabinets, and shelving for software, supplies, participant records and work-in-progress.
- Indirect, glare-free lighting.
- Bulletin board space for participant work and project display.

The office

The CTC staff needs a professionally equipped workspace:

- Desks, chairs, files, supply cabinet(s), shelving
- Administrative computers with telecommunications capability
- Telephone(s), fax, copier

Hardware

While software represents the “content” of your program, hardware is the “vehicle” by which participants have access to that content.

New vs. Recycled Hardware

Although the availability of new hardware may be a draw for participants, there are reasons to consider used or recycled systems:

The pros

- available for free or for far less cost
- often fully capable (at one time were “state of the art”)
- even new systems will be “old” in a matter of months
- can be used in combination with new systems for limited functions:
 - client database and attendance records
 - dedicated Internet stations
 - as a router and firewall

The drawbacks

- the “hand-me-down” impact
- may not be able to run newer software versions
- may not have enough memory
- may be difficult to find replacement parts and/or supplies

Don't be afraid to decline donations of outdated equipment. Accepting all donations can in the end be a disservice to your clients. Establish criteria for what equipment you will accept and turn down offers that do not at meet at least that standard.

Platform

Hardware choices begin with platform: that is, will your center be Macintosh-based, or PC-based, or will it offer a variety of hardware? The platform selected will determine what versions of commercial software are needed or vice versa.

Macintosh-based?

- relatively easy to learn to use and maintain
- preferred by many graphics and multimedia professionals

PC-based?

- predominates in the business arena
- relatively inexpensive due to competition between manufacturers

Mixed platforms?

- offers participants broader skill development
- broader software availability

Note that there are now computers on the market that can read (use) both Macintosh and PC-based software.

Capacity and Capability

The hardware must be able to run the software you're planning to use. The following are general guidelines:

- Internal hard drives with at least 15 gigabytes (GB or "gigs") of disk capacity are desirable for newly purchased equipment. For recycled hardware, you may need to purchase a separate hard drive.
- CD-ROM or DVD drive is needed.
- Random Access Memory (RAM) should provide at least 128 MB of storage; more is preferable. Additional RAM can be purchased for older machines.
- Keyboards (standard with most systems) with special features can be purchased separately. The "ergonomic" variety is likely to slow touch typists but may help in the avoidance of carpal tunnel syndrome.

- Mouse alternatives include track balls and touch pads. The "mouse" advantage is being able to substitute a working one for a dysfunctional one (touch pads are built-in). Since mouse balls are easily extracted and may leave the CTC in pockets of youngsters, consider the purchase of optical mice, which also have the advantage of not deteriorating due to dust build-up. Scrolling wheels on mice can be especially useful for people with shaky hands.

Necessary Peripherals

- **Printers**—one for every 5-10 computer systems (these can be linked to a LAN)—are absolutely essential. These are some of your choices:
 - Laser - for business quality printouts
 - Color laser - not essential
 - Color ink-jet - economical to purchase, expensive to operate because of the cost of color cartridges. Let the ink dry before touching the print!
- **Copier** - participants often want multiple copies of their work. The cost of copying is typically less for a copier than for a printer. The CTC will probably need a copier for office work anyway.

Monitors

Aside from candy-colored plastics, perhaps the most visible change taking place in desktop computer hardware today is the proliferation of the flat-panel LCD monitor. Displacing the traditional clunky CRT monitor, the flat panel invasion is about more than just sex appeal. There are sound ergonomic, economic and environmental reasons to pursue the rapid deployment of LCD monitors on the desktop. Before I discuss them, let me try to clear up what they are.

CRT = Cathode Ray Tube. This is the traditional monitor technology, employing the same kinds of parts as your average television set. This is a 1920s technology! Essentially, electromagnets steer the stream of electrons fired by an electron gun at the back of the monitor to strike rows of phosphors behind the glass, which glow red, green or blue.

LCD = Liquid Crystal Display. Generically termed a flat panel monitor. Comes from the same family tree as your digital wristwatch. By flowing tiny electric currents through segments of each pixel, you can make them change color. Segments for red, green and blue constitute a single color pixel. A backlight illuminates all of the pixels.

LCDs are foremost a pleasure to work with. They virtually eliminate eye strain. They save gobs of precious desk space. They offer the sharpest, straightest and clearest pictures. They bombard the user with less electromagnetic radiation than CRTs by far. They consume substantially less power, consequently producing very little heat. Although working with any monitor under fluorescent light is an assault on the senses, LCDs do not suffer from 60Hz flicker. Nor do they suffer from distortion or jitter due to interference in close quarters with other monitors and equipment. Publishing mavens tend to decry LCDs; they point out that CRTs are still better suited to the kind of careful management of color balance that professional quality output demands. For all but the most exacting high-end color-balancing needs, there is no reason to fear LCDs.

Confusingly, measurements such as diagonal size or viewable area often cannot be easily correlated between LCDs and CRTs. Manufacturers of CRTs commonly advertise the diagonal size of the entire picture tube, a great deal of which is hidden behind the mask that borders the glass on all four sides. For example, the viewable area of a 17" CRT may really be 15". The advertised size of an LCD more accurately reflects the size of the picture.

Fortunately, the viewable area is not as important as the actual resolution of the monitor, because of the higher pixel density that LCD technology comfortably supports. Better yet, those used 14.x" and new 15" displays will pack the same number of pixels (typically 1024x768). That means, that as long as the density of the 14" display does not make text and graphics too small to see comfortably, there are no functional differences among them. The quality of the display is much more significant than its actual size.

Unfortunately, because LCDs are such a visible new technology, manufacturers initially priced LCDs into the stratosphere, but market economics are finally catching up to that reality. For example, the cost of a new 15" LCD monitor has dipped below \$300, down from \$1000 a few years ago.

One way that LCDs can indirectly drive up costs is through more expensive graphics cards. Many new LCDs have a digital interface in place of the customary analog VGA connection that requires a graphics card with a digital output. While the digital route yields the most pristine graphics, flat panels with traditional analog VGA connections abound--particularly at the low end. The only caveat in this case is that the picture quality of an LCD monitor is highly dependent on the quality of the analog signal it receives from the graphics card, which varies a great deal among manufacturers. On the other hand, perhaps the recurring costs are more important. The lower power consumption and lessened heat load on air conditioners will tend to lower the operating costs of LCDs in the form of smaller electric bills.

CRT technology is being phased out of production not just because of the technological superiority of LCDs, but also because of the environmental liability. Chock full of poi-

sonous heavy metals and other wholesomeness, many waste management companies won't accept CRTs as common household garbage, but now designate them as toxic waste that incurs a special disposal fee. As the cost of discarding a CRT grows, this further helps to tip the balance of costs in favor of more environmentally friendly and technologically superior LCDs.

LCD monitors are definitely consuming the market share of CRTs.

(This section on monitors was contributed by Tom Sobczynski, 8/2002)

Necessary Supplies

Your planning should include secure storage areas for the following:

- Data disks for participants. Do not allow participants to bring in and use their own disks or software. Outside disks may be contaminated with viruses (see Risk Management).
- Extra ink and/or toner cartridges as well as paper for all printers, copiers, and fax machines
- Back up hardware
 - Extra mice (and mouse balls)
 - Extra cables
 - Any extra keyboards and monitors that you can store

Optional Multimedia Equipment

Almost a necessity for personal publication and production, add these as your budget allows:

- **Flatbed scanners** - to digitize photographs, newspaper articles, and other print materials so that the computer can reproduce them for editing, inclusion in documents, etc.
- **Camcorders** - to create video sequences for web pages and other multimedia productions (may require special software as well).
- **Digital cameras** record your snapshots on disks that can be read directly into the computer.
- **Microphones, speakers, and headsets** - to integrate spoken sound

- **Midi-boards or other sound-digitizing equipment** for musical effects
- **Headphones**

Digital Music Studios

Some CTC programs have successfully engaged youth in projects that involve creating and editing music using digital studio techniques. The following information was contributed by Trevor Shroeder, the Technology Manager for the Intel Computer Clubhouse Network concerning music studios of the Intel Computer Clubhouse program (August 2002 online panel).

The Computer Clubhouse provides a creative and safe after-school learning environment where young people from underserved communities work with adult mentors to explore their own ideas, develop skills, and build confidence in themselves through the use of technology. Starting with a single Clubhouse in Boston in 1993, we have grown to serve youths age 10 to 18 in approximately 75 Clubhouses worldwide (slated to reach over 100 by 2005). You can visit us on the web at <http://www.computerclubhouse.org/>.

In the collection of tools we provide to our young people is a studio equipped with all the necessary bits to turn out their own musical creations. I'll describe our particular setup, highlight why we made those choices, and include some pointers for those wanting to change things up a bit.

The studio itself is a closed off space within the Clubhouse. This prevents the work going on in the music studio from interfering with those working in the rest of the Clubhouse. The more sound insulation the better, as members often like to turn the volume WAY up. Soft surfaces (carpeting on the floor; carpets, corkboard, egg cartons, etc on the wall; noise insulating ceiling tiles) also help keep the echoes down inside the room and baffle the sound escaping the room. Typically members will want to work with their friends, so space in the studio for two to five others is ideal. As it's an enclosed space, it's also good to have a window both for checking in on what's happening in the studio and also to tie the two spaces together for the members.

Our base equipment configuration is a PC, MIDI keyboard, microphone, mixer, studio monitors (speakers), headphones, and software.

The PC is the center of our digital audio editing setup. Any reasonably new machine will do but the more disk space the better. CD quality audio takes up 175KB/s so a full CD's worth of stuff is about 600MB. Disks are cheap, buy a nice 40GB or 80GB disk. We equip our audio workstations with a Sound Blaster Audigy which provides high quality (24bit, ensuring no quality is lost when mixing down to 16bit for CD quality audio) low

latency (ensuring that live accompaniment/editing is not thrown off by delay in the soundcard) multichannel (allowing for different tracks to be assigned to different channels so that mixing may be tweaked in real time) audio recording/playback as well as an interface to MIDI devices (such as our keyboard). We use Sonic Foundry ACID PRO, Cakewalk SONAR XL, and Sonic Foundry Sound Forge (which comes with ACID) for editing. These are mid-range multitrack recording packages for raw audio and MIDI.

We include both ACID and SONAR because each has its strengths. ACID tends to be very easy to start with and for many people loop-based composition is just fine. On the other hand, SONAR is more complex but offers a wider range of capabilities including good MIDI scoring. If ACID is removed, some other audio editor should be added to take the place of Sound Forge which comes with ACID.

A cheaper sound card could also be substituted, but it's key that whatever you get be low latency and have the ability to playback and record at the same time ("full duplex"). If you're going to have a keyboard it needs to have a MIDI interface as well.

We also equip our studios with a Roland XP-30 MIDI keyboard. This is a computer controlled (MIDI) 64-voice (meaning it can play back 64 different notes at once) keyboard with a large patch bank for different sounds. In addition to the ability to record/playback scores on the keyboard, many members also use it as a source of raw audio material by simply recording the sounds of the notes as they play them and then working from there with the sounds themselves. Another MIDI keyboard could be substituted though the XP-30 is especially nice because of the large bank.

For vocals we have Shura Beta 58A microphone and mic stand.

Finally, for previewing tracks, we have a nice set of studio monitors (JBL LSR25Ps) and a pair of headphones (Sony MDR-V900). Other speakers and headphones could be substituted to save money.

This is all tied together with a Behringer Eurorack MX1604A (4 mono + 4 stereo channels, microphone preamp, dual buses). Again, if cost is an issue, another mixer could be substituted. A typical 4 channel DJ mixer would probably be adequate for most things, providing an input for the mic, keyboard, and PC with output back to the PC and monitors.

Robotics

Some CTCs have been integrating robotics into their technology programs. Discussion of such activities took place in an August 2002 online panel on hardware (<http://www2.ctcnet.org/lists/panel12/>). In particular, CTCs have used the robot invention

kits created by Lego Systems of East Longmeadow, MA, which has a product line called Mindstorms and Spybots (<http://mindstorms.lego.com>).

According to Youth Technology Specialist Angie Milakovic of the Center for 4-H Youth Development,

“Our 4-H Technology Program in North Dakota has LEGO Robotic sets. We use catalogs from a company called PITSCO (Science programming materials) which has a separate catalog called “LEGO DACTA” which is filled with robot sets. Currently we have the R2D2 set, the Amusement Park, and the Intelligent House sets. They are just a WONDERFUL resource. But, as someone previously mentioned, they are not inexpensive. The 3 sets we have cost upwards of about \$1000 dollars in the end. But, these were also bought over time. Also, programmable bricks and other components don’t come with the sets... more often than not they are “extras” even though they are essentially the “motherboard” if you will, for the robotics set. You can call PITSCO for catalogs (they are on the web) to see what is out there, but you need to ask for the LEGO division — it’s a separate department. It’s fun to look!”

According to one technology manager, “We have a real difficulty getting our young people engaged in robotics not because there is no interest but because there is a perception that it’s nerdy or immature (being Legos and all) or too hard. When a mentor, adult, or young person comes in and actually sits down and does compelling projects on an ongoing basis, especially if they’re stuff that *isn’t* in the manual, that often sparks some interest. But it’s something that really takes some long term exposure to get across to those who aren’t already into it. “

“So to those looking to get their feet wet with robotics, I would suggest starting with Lego Mindstorms or Crickets, start small but structured (themed contests are a typical approach—like Lego sumo wrestling), and get in experts to help you out. A lot of times local colleges can be your source of experts or expert learners.” Lloyd Spencer suggests that, “FIRST Robotics Competition, First Junior Robotics and 4-H Technology Clubs all offer students and mentors the opportunity to discover the rewards of science, math and technology through brainstorming, teamwork, project management, and friendly competition.” Lloyd suggests that to get started you might contact the FIRST Lego

League <<http://www.firstlegoleague.org>> of a local 4-H technology club.

Internet Connection

Here's the kind of solution that could be appropriate in some locations: Use a 384K DSL line to connect a local area network to the Internet, using a 24 port 100BaseT hub to provide Ethernet backbone for the network, with a router that provides Network Ad-

dress Translation (NAT) and firewall capacity. In other locations, a cable, T1 or wireless solution may be a preferred alternative.

Saving Energy and Money

The following was contributed by Emily Sadigh, Communications Coordinator / Researcher, FAS Computer Energy Reduction Program, Harvard Green Campus Initiative, <http://www.greencampus.harvard.edu/CERP>

Here are some top tips we have developed for saving energy and money:

1. Make sure your computers are turned off at night, on weekends, and when they are not going to be in use for more than an hour or two.

Contrary to what you may have heard, turning computers off when they are not in use will not damage the equipment and will probably extend their life due to reduced heat stress and mechanical wear.

Windows 2000 and XP operating systems offer a convenient 'hibernate' option, which allows you to almost entirely power down the computer but maintain the state of the desktop when it is next turned on. If you have this option, one suggested power scheme is to let the monitor go into sleep mode after 10-20 minutes, depending on your user's needs, and set the computer to hibernate when not in use for more than 1 hour. When turned on from hibernate, the computer presents the desktop just as you left it: Open programs and windows appear in the same place. (You may need to enable hibernate: Go to start --> control panel--> power options/settings--> hibernate tab --> enable hibernate.)

2. Enable power management, particularly for monitors.

CRT monitors can use 2/3 of the total energy of the computer system, so monitor power management is an effective way to save energy without dealing with any glitches that might need to be worked out when you put the hard drive on stand-by.

If your CTC doesn't currently have power management enabled on all its computers (i.e., hibernation, stand-by) we encourage you to start off by using a setting which will cut the energy use of the monitor but not interfere with the hard drive. The monitor will go into a low power mode that it can come out of quickly when the mouse is moved. You may need to devise signs which will educate users to try moving the mouse first so that they don't accidentally hit the power button and restart the computer.

The EPA offers the following free software tools: EZ Save Network Based Software Tool

for small organizations with a mixture of operating systems that want to start a comprehensive monitor power management program. EZ Wizard Web Based Software Tool for small organizations without centrally controlled logins. End users can enable power management on their computers in seconds. (<http://www.energystar.gov/powermanagement/small.asp?orgtype=small>)

3. Consider purchasing flat-panel monitors.

If you are considering the purchase of new computer systems, factor into your decision the long-term cost and environmental savings of purchasing a laptop or flat-panel (LCD) monitor. A laptop uses one-fourth the power of a desktop, while a flat panel monitor uses one-third the power of a regular CRT screen.

These sites give more details about the benefits of flat-panel LCD monitors:

EPA Energy Star: <http://yosemite1.epa.gov/estar/consumers.nsf/content/LCDorCRT.htm>

Total Cost of Ownership Information:

From EPA: [http://yosemite1.epa.gov/estar/consumers.nsf/attachments/LCDCosts.jpg/\\$File/LCDCosts.jpg](http://yosemite1.epa.gov/estar/consumers.nsf/attachments/LCDCosts.jpg/$File/LCDCosts.jpg)

From Manufacturers: http://www.hp.com/sbso/advice/articles_computing19.html (HP) <http://www.necmitsubishi.com/markets-solutions/tco/> (NEC) <http://www.redclaycreative.com/tco/calc.asp> (Phillips) [http://www.sharp-business.com/Calculator/calc.asp\(Sharp\)](http://www.sharp-business.com/Calculator/calc.asp(Sharp)) Dell white paper discussing the TCO advantages of flat panel monitors: http://www.dell.com/us/en/biz/topics/tco_learn_monit_tco.htm

In any case, seek out Energy-Star-labeled computers, monitors, and peripherals: (<http://www.energystar.gov/products/>)

4. Minimize printing.

Paper production is even more energy-intensive than printing per page, so plan to print less. Some steps you might consider encouraging users to take are editing and print previewing on screen, saving files to disk (particularly web pages), reducing margins, and printing more than one page per sheet of paper.

For more information on responsible printing, please see CERP's printing page, University of Delaware, Steps to Reduce Your Paper Usage (<http://www.udel.edu/topics/printless/how.html>), Rice University, Printers (<http://www.ruf.rice.edu/%7Erecycle/guides/printers.htm>), or Colby College Information Technology Services on Green

Computing (<http://www.colby.edu/info.tech/green/>).

A one-time expense of several hundred dollars will allow double-sided printing on your laser printer, which, in the long term, will conserve both paper and energy. Duplex features can be purchased at CDW via the Internet at www.cdw.com.

Using less paper to print documents also means faster print jobs and less time that users must wait in line for the printer!

5. Keep peripherals off when not in use.

Turn on peripherals (printers, speakers, etc.) only when they are needed. If feasible, turn off power strips at night so equipment and transformers do not continue to draw power unnecessarily.

Risk Management

Risk management encompasses issues of security for the CTC and insurance of the CTC property, employees, and the public. The Steering Committee should investigate and examine any local regulations that may be germane to risk management and incorporate them in its planning.

The best way to minimize risk in a CTC is to promote a sense of ownership and pride in the CTC among its participants and in the community at large. Certain routine measures can, however, be taken to secure the CTC, its staff, visitors, and equipment, and thus protect the CTC from unrecoverable loss and from certain types of claims.

Risk to systems, software, & data

Center management should be aware that there are risks to data and content on disk drives as well as to life, limb, and equipment. To address risks to data and software, the CTC should:

- Prohibit the use of disks or software brought in by participants. Install virus protection software on all systems.
- Educate participants about the dangers posed by viruses and the effects that virus introduction could have on the ability of the center to function.
- Encourage CTC staff and participants to monitor internet advisories regarding new viruses that may enter the center's system through internet usage.
- Be sure to have effective procedures in place to easily restore system and application software to a stable condition if they have been corrupted.

Insurance policies that guarantee against loss of data and software due to viruses are available, but are expensive and thus not recommended to CTCs that take reasonable precautions such as those outlined above.

Risk to life, limb, and equipment

Damage or harm could come to the CTC building/room/space, its hardware, software, furnishings, personnel, and participants. Such harm includes theft, vandalism, accidents, aberrant behavior, and natural disasters. For example, an overhead pipe may burst, putting a number of systems out of operation and damaging clothing and personal possessions of participants. Someone may trip over a cable and fall. Or a participant (or staff member) may have cause to claim sexual harassment or child molestation.

Establishing a risk management program means first, treating the risk as real; second, establishing preventive measures designed to minimize risk; and third, insuring that staff and participants are knowledgeable regarding those measures and do their best to follow the specifics of the preventative program.

Examples of preventive measures include but are not limited to:

Minimizing the opportunity for accidents

- Establish rules of behavior such as “No Running. No Ball-playing. No Food or Drink by the Computers.” Post these rules in an obvious place. Make sure all CTC users are familiar with them (if necessary, read the rules out loud to them). Make certain that staff (including volunteers) understand, abide by and enforce the rules. Allow participants to help create and add to the rules to cultivate a "sense of ownership."
- String cable over the ceiling instead of on the floor. Contain extra cable length in bins or behind stations. Use extra twist ties (like the ones found in your grocer's produce department) to bundle long cords and wires.
- Have available roll-out carpet or mats by any outside entrance.
- Use power surge protectors on all systems.
- Regularly check any overhead installation of plumbing or wiring for defects.

Limiting harm to employees and the public

- Provide escorts for any person leaving the building after dark.
- Provide escorts for any senior citizen coming to or leaving the CTC.

- Ensure that more than one person staffs the CTC in the evening.
- Arrange for additional police attention to the CTC neighborhood (offer classes for the police).
- Hire a security guard, if appropriate.
- Educate all staff and volunteers as to appropriate behavior with young children and persons of the opposite sex.

Minimizing opportunities for theft and vandalism:

- Limit, and maintain a list of all people who have keys to the CTC.
- Change the locks periodically and immediately after any employee is separated involuntarily.
- Install a buzzer system and keep the CTC locked otherwise.
- Secure computers, keyboards, printers, and other hardware to desks or tables.
- Lock all portable equipment in closets when not in use.
- Store software backups in a secure space or off the premises.
- Keep the lights on at all times when the CTC is not in use by participants.
- Install an alarm system.
- Install security cameras inside and/or outside the CTC.
- Consult with local police for additional suggestions.

Once the risk management plan has been determined, distribute copies of the plan to all staff, assigning and scheduling routine implementation.

Insurance Coverage

Before purchasing any insurance, the Steering Committee should consult the local fire department, planning office, and health department to learn what regulations will govern the CTC. These may include fire or zoning codes, occupancy limits, or cleanliness regulations.

A CTC can insure its employees, visitors and property by purchasing an insurance policy or by self-insurance. Self-insurance requires the CTC to set aside a certain amount of money to cover any claims against it and to protect CTC employees, visitors

and property from damage or harm.

When a CTC rents or leases space, the owner may have property insurance. In all likelihood, such insurance will have to be augmented by the CTC to cover staff and CTC property.

Generally, insurance coverage applicable to a CTC is of 3 types:

Liability insurance

- **Definition.** Liability insurance protects a business against lawsuits and other claims arising from harm to persons on the business property. In general, a liability insurance policy contains a yearly maximum coverage. This means that the insurance company will not pay any claims that exceed a certain amount within a year.
- **Coverage.** A commercial general liability policy includes personal injury claims (such as slips and falls), fire damage, and medical payments. Liability insurance would also protect a business against claims arising out of contracts it enters with others, such as the lease of the property and elevator maintenance agreements. A business can also choose to cover employees under the liability insurance. This would give employees coverage for any bodily injury or property damage employees cause during their employment.

Property insurance

- **Definition.** Property insurance protects a business against damage to the building, furnishings, and equipment. Most property insurance uses a deductible system which requires the insured to pay a portion of the loss up to a certain amount-the deductible. The insurance company pays the rest of the loss.
- **Coverage.** There are four types of coverage: basic, broad, special, and difference in condition coverage.
 - **Basic** coverage includes losses caused by events such as fire, lightning, explosions, smoke, vandalism and mischief, and sinkhole collapses.
 - **Broad** coverage includes losses covered in “basic” coverage and also water damage, glass breakage, and damage caused by freezing and falling objects.
 - **Special** coverage includes everything not excluded by the policy. “Special” coverage is the most comprehensive because in the

event of loss, the insurance company must find an exclusion in the policy to deny the claim rather than the insured having to find a coverage in the policy which applies.

- **Difference in Condition** coverage usually includes coverage for those occurrences excluded by the other types of coverage, such as earthquakes, tidal waves, and floods.

Workmen's Compensation insurance

- **Definition.** Workmen's Compensation insurance protects a business from injuries to or illnesses of employees arising from the workplace.
- **Coverage.** The CTC must call the state department of labor to find out its obligations regarding this type of insurance. The extent of coverage and its limits vary from state to state.

Documentation

Space

- A floor plan
- An inventory of all furniture and furnishings purchased or otherwise acquired (with date, price or value, and supplier)
- A plan outlining potential expansion capability

Hardware

- An inventory of all purchases and acquisitions, with model numbers, registration numbers, dates, sources, purchase price or value, warranties
- A list of sources for maintenance and repair for each type of equipment

Risk Management

- A risk prevention plan, including staff assignments and responsibilities
- A list of applicable insurance policies, including numbers, agents, emergency phone numbers

Exhibit 6-1: Checklist of Start-Up Physical Needs

Space Needs and Utilization		
rent		heat, ventilation, air-conditioning
partition walls		installation of closets/secure space
Hardware		
computers (including monitor, keyboard, and mouse)		
printers		modems
server		scanner
service contracts		additional warranties
Computer Supplies		
disks		back-up media (e.g., tape, zip disks)
toner cartridges		
Furniture		
computer tables		rolling carts
sign-in table		work tables, desks
chairs for desks, computers, tables		couch
lighting for all areas		bulletin boards
a large wall clock		coat racks
filing cabinets		anti-static floor covering
carpet		CTC signs (interior and exterior)
Electrical Considerations		
expansion of power capacity		telecommunications lines
installation of electrical outlets		installation of overhead lights
telephones		telephone installation
computer cables		computer wires
extension cords		surge protectors

Office Supplies			
	white and colored printing paper (letter/legal)		white and colored photocopy paper (letter/legal)
	pads of paper		pens/pencils
	crayons		colored markers
	rulers		file folders
	toilet paper		soap/paper towels
	first aid kit		cleaning equipment
Office Equipment			
	copier		fax
	computer		printer
	modem		

Exhibit 6-2: *Sample Rules*

Welcome to Public Access at The Somerville Community Computing Center

When you sign in, you agree to abide by the following:

- 1.** All users must sign in before sitting down to work.
- 2.** If you are able, please contribute \$2.00 for the use of the computers, it really does make a difference.
- 3.** No food or drink at or near the computers!
- 4.** If the application you are using has sound, please turn it off or use headphones.
- 5.** Users under the age of 14 are welcome in the center until 7:00, when they are asked to leave.
- 6.** Children under the age of 10 must be accompanied by an adult.
- 7.** Adults and youth have equal access rights to the computers during the times both are present.
- 8.** The Center staff and volunteers reserve the right to ask anyone to leave the Center at any time for any reason.
- 9.** Copying software from any of the computers and/or intentionally deleting or altering contents of the hard drive will be cause for expulsion.
- 10.** Users of the center are asked to remain in the labs, the hall ways connecting the labs and the restrooms to avoid disturbing other classes.
- 11.** No Rollerblades (or other skates) in the labs.
- 12.** When the volunteers ask you to finish up because it's closing time, please be considerate and do so.
- 13.** The computer labs are only open for public access during posted hours; if you arrive before public access hours begin, please wait in the front hall.

Exhibit 6-3: *Energy Use FAQ*

1. How much damage can my computer operations cause the environment?

One typical computer system left on all day results in the emission of 1600 pounds of CO₂ in a year. It would take 100 to 500 trees to offset that amount of extra CO₂ released into the atmosphere! The energy it takes to power 15 computers for one year emits as much greenhouse gases as a 4WD Ford Explorer does in the same time period.

2. How much does it cost to supply electricity to a computer on 24/7?

One computer left on all day can cost more than \$110 a year to power.

3. I've heard that turning off my computer is bad for my hardware. Is this true?

No. Studies conducted at the Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory (<http://www.greencampus.harvard.edu/CERP/LBNL.pdf>) have found that hard disks are not affected by frequent shut-downs. In fact, your hardware may actually last longer due to reduced heat stress and mechanical wear.

4. Don't computers use less energy when they're "idling" anyway? Why should I use an energy management program?

Unfortunately, this isn't true. Computers use about the same amount of power whether in use or not (about 45 watts for your CPU and 80 watts for your CRT monitor). The CPU draws only slightly more energy when under heavy use, like opening up an application. As a result, an energy management program is very important in order to reduce wastage.

5. What about screen savers? Don't they save energy?

Screen savers were developed in order to lengthen the life of monochrome monitors. Technological developments have made them obsolete: they certainly don't save energy or the environment! Disable your screen saver today and replace it with monitor power management.

6. Isn't it true that when you turn your computer on, a power surge consumes so much energy that leaving your equipment in normal operating mode wastes less energy than turning it off?

No, start-up current surges are of very short duration and at most they consume a few seconds of average running time energy.

7. Where can I find more information about green computing?

Many universities and colleges are working to reduce their energy consumption and have created informational websites. Some of these include:

State University of New York at Buffalo UB Green Program on Green Computing (<http://wings.buffalo.edu/ubgreen/content/programs/energyconservation/greencomputing.html>)

Colby College Information Technology Services on Green Computing (<http://www.colby.edu/info.tech/green/>)

Tufts Climate Initiative Computer Energy Saving Initiative (<http://www.tufts.edu/tie/tci/Computers.html>)

University of Michigan Guide to Green Computing (http://www.energymanagement.umich.edu/ems/Green_Computing.html)

Radcliffe IT Energy Conservation and Waste Reduction in Technology (<http://www.radcliffe.edu/rito/tips/conservation.html>)

Missouri University's Guide to Green Computing (<http://www.cf.missouri.edu/energy/greencom.stm>)

University of New South Wales, Australia, PC UNSwitch Turn Off Your PC Campaign (<http://www.cf.missouri.edu/energy/greencom.stm>)

Thank you for your efforts!

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7 chapter

Scheduling, Outreach, and Evaluation

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7 chapter

Scheduling, Outreach, and Evaluation

"Over 30 Bosnian refugee families have received recycled computers. The computers have helped them learn English, the kids are getting better grades, and the parents have gotten better jobs. Many other low-income families and those with other social and economic barriers are receiving first time exposure to computer technology -- this program is helping to bridge the 'Digital Divide' in our community."

*As submitted by Bruce McComb and Ronda Evans
Realizing Every Community Asset (RECA) Foundation, <http://www.tcf.org>
Kennewick, Washington*

Introduction

This chapter outlines the remaining issues that the Steering Committee should consider in order to make the CTC operational. The Steering Committee can use this chapter as a resource to help it:

- determine the schedule for operations;
- design a community outreach and marketing strategy; and
- plan for regular self-assessment of the CTC's success and operations.

Scheduling

The CTC operational schedule must be responsive to projected participants' needs, must reflect the focus areas determined by the Steering Committee, and must be realistic in terms of the demands it makes of staff, space, and budget.

User Projections

User projections are the CTC's best guess of how many people are going to use the CTC. The projections will vary by program area and by season, by time of day and by day of the week. For example, will there be fewer people or more people using the CTC during the summer or during holidays? The data gathered and tallied about community interests and needs (see Chapter 2 and Chapter 3) may be useful in estimating how many people are likely to use the CTC.

Look at:

- The immediate neighborhood population, the total constituency of the agency incorporating the CTC, etc.
- The number of neighborhood agencies that are likely to bring classes or groups to the CTC, and the size of those groups.
- The participation levels in any pilot program that has been established.
- Projections for classes, trainings, or workshops

Realize that in a start-up operation, being unable to serve all those who might want to come to the center provides a powerful argument for expansion.

Constraints

The Steering Committee will, of course, want to establish a schedule that maximizes the number of hours and times of day and week that the center is open, yet it will inevitably be constrained by the following:

- The amount of money it has for operations and staff
- The number of volunteers it can recruit and manage
- Whether volunteers can manage it independent of paid staff

Scheduling Structure

The proposed schedule must reflect the focus areas determined by the Steering Committee. But equally important, accommodating neighborhood residents' needs means taking their work and living schedules into account.

Possible Groups	Possible Times
Open Access	Determine consistent weekly schedule.
Pre-school with Parents	Short morning classes. Morning labs for tots and parents.
School-aged	Afterschool classes. Afterschool and/or weekend labs. Special club or project sessions on Friday and Saturday evenings.
Older teens	Afterschool and/or evening classes. Afterschool, evening, and/or weekend labs. Special club or project sessions on Friday and Saturday evenings.
Adults, ESL groups, and Immigrant populations	Day and evening classes. Day and evening labs.
Seniors	Late morning or early afternoon for classes or labs.

Important Considerations:

- It may be advisable to set aside a generally available time such as Saturday mornings for CTC orientation. This would be a time when participants can be introduced to the CTC, when volunteers can be given orientation sessions, and when leaders/teachers of participating neighborhood agencies can receive training in using the center.
- If a focus is job preparation, schedule some classes after school for in-school teens, some classes in the evening for working adults who may nevertheless want to develop job skills, and some classes during the day for unemployed people.
- If the focus is adult education, again, provide both day and evening slots to accommodate those who are and are not employed.
- If public access/lab times are to be included, schedule some for young people only, some for adults only, and some for anyone. Plan for availability during both day and evening times. Sometimes offering less open lab time serves as an incentive for participants to use it wisely and may spark their interest in signing up for classes to learn more about the computers. Be sure that those staffing open access times, both paid staff and volunteers, can handle the inevitable variety of personal and technical problems that may arise, especially if they will be the only available staff.

- If seniors participate in a local lunch program, consider arranging to have lunch delivered to the CTC one or two days a week and schedule senior activities around the lunch period.
- Solicit feedback from participants regarding the schedule; if you want them to return they will be your best source of scheduling information.
- Do not forget that CTC staff will need both time for preparation and cleaning up, but also time for personal breaks.

Exhibits 7-1, 7-2, and 7-3 are schedules in use by CTCNet affiliates including one from a start-up program (can you guess which it is?).

If the Steering Committee is proposing to open the CTC to neighborhood organizations, their scheduling needs must be taken into account. The CTC schedule can either make certain blocks of time available to outside organizations (such as a day of the week when the CTC would otherwise be closed) or it can solicit the requirements of these organizations and schedule its activities around them. How this is done will generally depend on whether these outside groups provide an important revenue source for the CTC.

Schedules can be changed bi-monthly, or by season (in fact, this is recommended), but once established for a given time period, they should be reliable. If the CTC is to be closed due to an emergency or a holiday, ample notice should be given to participants and to the neighborhood.

Copies of the schedule should be available in the reception area and should be posted in locations where members of the community are likely to see them (supermarket bulletin boards, laundromats, community centers, other community agencies, and building foyers). A local newspaper might be prevailed upon to publish the schedule of public access hours. If the CTC has a Web page, the schedule can be posted there as well.

Community Outreach

Community outreach or public relations is the process of publicizing the activities and accomplishments of the CTC. These activities are critically important to generating community interest in the CTC and to increasing the visibility of the CTC. Ultimately, a successful public relations campaign will result in a substantial amount of goodwill towards the CTC and continued and increased financial support.

Guiding community outreach and implementing public relations campaigns for the CTC are among the tasks of an outreach coordinator. This person can be an employee, a

member of the Steering Committee, a volunteer, or someone hired for specific periods or occasions but should have some experience in media presentation.

Accessible outreach and promotional materials and public information.

All printed materials and information should be available in accessible formats to meet the individual needs of patrons. For example, make materials available in an electronic format that can be easily converted to Large Print or produced and distributed on CD or disk or audio tape. Materials should also be available in the primary languages of the surrounding community.

Effective Communications Strategy

The Benton Foundation's Communications Capacity Building Program recently released a toolkit titled "Strategic Communications in the Digital Age," featuring a section called "Think it Through: What it Takes to Design & Fund an Effective Communications Strategy." The following content is taken from this section (see Additional Contact Information at this end of this chapter for more information).

"Communications is much less about the technology or medium chosen as a vehicle and more about advancing the cause of your organization. An effective communications strategy reflects your organization's mission, goals and objectives, and is well integrated into daily operations. It requires a clear articulation of audience, clarity of message, and choice of media platform. It also consists of an ongoing feedback relationship between planning and evaluation.

- **Planning.** Good planning is key to the success of your project. This is true whether it's for designing goals and objectives for your organization, mapping out a communications project, or figuring out what your Web site should look like.
- **Audience.** Identifying your audience, then understanding as much as you can about them is key to your communications plan. Considerations include: "Who do we want to reach? What's the best way to reach them? What characteristics do they share?" These details and more will guide your communications effort.
- **Message Shaping.** Your message has to be appropriate for your various audiences and platforms. For example, the way you communicate your organization's message to the press might be very different from the way

you communicate with your members. Writing for the Web is very different from writing for print and radio.

- **Media Choices.** The media (or platforms) that you choose to disseminate your message will be impacted by decisions you make about who your audience is and what message you have for them. Similarly, which platform you select will also impact your message and limit your audience. In addition, as media platforms increasingly go digital and start to converge, opportunities for using multiple platforms increase.
- **Evaluation.** A good communications strategy takes evaluation very seriously. This component is often overlooked, but is highly regarded by funders. Make sure that you keep evaluation in mind when you create and implement your communications plan.
- **Funding.** No matter how great your message is or how well you have planned your communications efforts, nothing gets done without the right resources— financial and otherwise. But good planning, and strong integration of technology and communications into your organization’s objectives will help get you the support you need.

What Should the CTC Publicize?

The First Year -- CTC Activities & Accomplishments

The first year goals of the CTC’s marketing strategy should be to:

- create a brochure for the CTC stating mission, basic services, general hours of operation, and contact information
- introduce itself to the community
- become a familiar organization in the community
- broaden its participant base
- generate interest in its activities among the community
- All public materials should contain a statement that reflects the grantee’s accessibility policy. For example, the organization’s brochure should contain a statement that reads - “XYV, Inc. complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act. All XYZ, Inc. materials are available in alternative formats upon request.”

The Steering Committee should be aware that organizing activities of the CTC are its first public relations acts. After organizing is completed, the CTC should

try to publicize every activity and accomplishment as widely as possible. The kinds of activities that should be announced to the public include the:

- establishment of the CTC
- appointment of the Steering Committee
- hiring of CTC staff
- grand opening of the CTC
- schedule, including public access time
- classes offered
- foundation and grant awards
- in-kind contributions from neighborhood institutions
- accomplishments of the students, such as getting jobs, passing English fluency tests, earning GEDs after attending GED preparation classes at the CTC
- any partnership and/or electronic commerce activities it undertakes. For example, if the CTC is set up to receive outsourcing contracts, then this fact should be advertised not only in general circulation media but also in specialized publications that may generate new business. Likewise, if the CTC is seeking to provide small business support, then this activity should receive similar marketing treatment.

The Second Year & Thereafter

After the first year, the public relations goals of the CTC should be to maintain its visibility in the community, to further promote itself, and to broaden and continue to stimulate interest in the activities of the CTC within the community. The CTC, therefore, should publicize noteworthy activities and accomplishments.

These should include:

- new program offerings
- new partnerships
- the appointment of new Steering Committee members
- creating CTC web pages on the Internet
- success stories of participants

- feature articles on staff and special volunteers
- a “Year in Review” piece about the CTC
- any foundation or grant awards
- special attention the CTC receives from government officials, corporations, the media, or community organizations
- designing a logo
- publishing a monthly newsletter about the CTC

The CTC’s activities and accomplishments will involve most CTC staff members and users. In order to use their names and photographs in articles, press releases, and video footage, the CTC must obtain a general release (Exhibit 7-4). If the CTC operates on a membership basis, a general release can be included in the membership form. Note that having a release in hand does not exempt you from notifying participants of their inclusion in PR materials. Inform them in advance if possible and make copies of any print materials available to them.

Developing an Outreach Plan

After the Steering Committee decides what activities and accomplishments to boast about publicly, the CTC must consider a community outreach strategy. This means:

- **Who should know about these activities and accomplishments in the community?** The list of neighborhood institutions developed during Community Mapping is a good starting point.
- **Why does the CTC want them to know?** For example, the CTC is having a grand opening and wants to encourage community residents to attend.
- **What do they need to know?** Using the above example, the CTC will want to publicize the location, the opening day, whether food and refreshments will be provided, the CTC program areas, the grand opening’s sponsor, who to call with questions, and how to become a member.
- **How should they be told?** For example, return to Exhibit 2-2 and for each organization listed, identify the form of communication that is likely to be the most effective way to reach the organization’s members or employees. Means of communication can include:
 - informal conversations;
 - addressing community meetings;

- putting up posters;
- distributing flyers;
- letters of invitation;
- providing copies of the business plan; and,
- working with the print and broadcast media as discussed in the next section.

An example of the Steering Committee's conclusions might look like this:

CTC Target Audience for Marketing	The Purpose of the CTC Marketing Efforts	What the CTC Should Publicize	How the CTC Will Market Itself
Public housing residents	-To attract participants -To attract volunteers	-Its purpose -Program areas -Hours -Volunteer/staffing needs -How to participate	-Flyers -Meetings -Articles in community newsletter -Radio and TV PSAs -Online listings
Local churches, synagogues, and mosques	-To attract participants -To attract volunteers -To encourage the donation of funds and equipment	-Its purpose -Its location -How to participate	-Letters to clergy -Have representatives speak at services

How Can a CTC Reach its Target Audience?

Managing the CTC's public relations

Open and regular communication between the CTC Steering Committee, Director and outreach coordinator is crucial to the timely dissemination of information. The outreach coordinator needs to be aware of all CTC activities so that pertinent information is circulated promptly throughout the community. It is unimportant that the outreach coordinator be present at the CTC as long as he or she is networked with the Director and Steering Committee and will know CTC news.

Creating media opportunities

The CTC will want news of its activities to obtain the widest circulation possible within the community and should rely on the community outreach opportunities explored in the previous section. The CTC must identify and contact various types of media in order to get this type of exposure. In addition, the CTC should identify the print and broadcast media available in most communities:

- **Newspapers, including dailies, weeklies, supermarket papers, high school and college papers.** In addition to standard opportunities, the CTC will want to learn about any special sections, such as community activities sections, special Sunday editions on technology, and “Person of the Week” feature story opportunities. See Exhibit 7-7 for a sample press release.
- **Television stations, including networks with community news and cable stations.** The CTC will want to know if stations offer free airtime for Public Service Announcements (PSAs).
- **Radio stations, including network stations and college stations.** The CTC will want to find out about PSAs, talk shows that would be interested in interviewing the CTC Director or Chairman of the Steering Committee and a community partner, and opportunities for getting on-the-air during a telethon.
- **Publications of the various CTC community partners, including corporate newsletters, school newsletters for staff and administration, and flyers of community-based organizations.** A press release should be written each time CTC partners with a neighborhood institution and this press release should be placed in that neighborhood institution’s newsletter or flyer, if one exists.
- **Community bulletin boards or kiosks.** These would be places to post the schedule and CTC staff openings for both paid and volunteer positions.
- **Trade publications.** The CTC should identify trade newspapers, magazines and other publications (such as journals of higher education and philanthropy) in which to place articles and press releases. The CTC may gain publicity and, perhaps, offers of technical assistance and funds.
- **Magazines.** Find out if a monthly magazine is published in your area.
- **Media contacts list.** Create a local media contact list describing the type of media (radio, print, television, etc.), name of publication, contact person, address, telephone and fax numbers, email address, web site, publication deadlines, and preferred method of submission.

Showcase your CTC by Building a Web Site

In the game of public relations, it does not hurt to be your own best cheerleader. One of the easiest and quickest ways to get your message about the CTC across to a large amount of folks is to build a web site. Such folks include participants and staff, potential participants, donors, researchers, prospective employees, community members, funders, students, volunteers, interns, etc.

According to Susan Tenby from TechSoup, in her article "Why the Web?" (see Additional Contact Information at this end of this chapter for more information):

"A creative and sustainable web presence is becoming essential to nonprofits. Whether your organization is using the Web for fundraising, information retrieval, for communication or for publicity, it can provide a cost-effective way to reach thousands of people instantly."

According to Tenby, a web site is:

- a means to publicize and promote your organization. By putting everything from contact information to a description of your services and your philosophy on the Web, you allow people all over the world to discover you, understand what you do, and contact you if they need to.
- a forum to share articles and other written information with members, clients, funders, and the general public.
- a way to attract new participants. If you implement features such as message boards, it can also build community among existing members.
- a potential source of online donations
- becoming increasingly vital as a source of information about an organization

Spend some time to effectively plan out your web site before actually building the site. The most effective web site is integrated into the larger communications strategy of the CTC. As such, it may be necessary to involve the CTC staff, board, and other interested parties to plan a site that will complement your agency's mission and be integral to your strategic plan. Involving these folks will also encourage buy-in for the project and help make sure that everyone's voice has been heard.

CompuMentor (see Additional Contact Information at this end of this chapter for more information) has created a New Web Site Development Worksheet containing the following questions to frame your thinking about the CTC web site:

- **What is your message?** What is it you want to say on your site?
- **Who are you targeting?** Who is your audience? Who would use your site? Why would they come to your site?
- **What is the budget available in your organization for web development?** How much for setup and how much for maintenance? What are the ways that you could get funding for your web site? Do you know what type of web site you can afford (large-scale database type, or online brochure type?)
- **How can you present your point of view effectively?** What kind of voice is appropriate for your audience? What kind of content will be available? What are your featured categories? Should your site be consistent with other collateral materials in your organization? Do you have several other sites that you want to emulate?
- **What will your web site accomplish?** Will your web site be a research or a development tool? What would your site's main use be? How will it improve what you do have? What will be the benefits of online exposure? What will it bring that you don't already have?
- **Can you do it in-house?** How will you reassign staff duties to provide for ongoing maintenance and updating? If not in-house, do you know whether you would like an individual consultant or a web design firm?

Marilyn L. Gross offers a sensible set of tips in an article "The Nonprofit Web Site: Tips for Attracting and Retaining Visitors":
http://www.uwnyc.org/technews/v4_n6_a2.html

Evaluation & Assessment

The Steering Committee needs to know whether its plans for the CTC are working and what the CTC can do to improve its effectiveness. Establishing procedures to provide this sort of information is called making a "self-assessment" plan or engaging in "formative" or "process" evaluation.

Funders, too, like to know that their grantees are tracking results. Tracking results is called "summative" or "outcome" evaluation. Too often, CTCs put self-assessment and evaluation on the back burner, only to find later, when an evaluation is required under a particular grant, that procedures have to be imposed on an already functioning operational plan.

Self-assessment in the area of accessibility is critical. Accessibility is a continuum, and the most important step in increasing it may well be an accurate assessment of current access realities. It enables a center to accurately depict itself in this area as well as develop a plan to move forward. It is recommended that in each area of center operations, one staff person be assigned to assessment and the development and implementation of accessibility plans.

The best course is to build strategies for data collection and opportunities for participant feedback into the operational plan for the CTC from the very beginning. Think about instituting some or all of the following:

- Membership application to track participant demographic data (often helpful for writing grant proposals and obtaining funding)
- Sign-in/sign-out procedures to provide a record of who uses the CTC, how often, and for how long
- Participant folders to contain journals of computer use, work-in-progress, data disks, and copies of completed projects
- Teacher/instructor logs to include plans for classes together with follow-up notes, anecdotes regarding specific occurrences or specific accomplishments of participants, and class evaluations filled out by participants
- Volunteer logs to describe tasks assigned and accomplished, difficulties encountered, suggestions for change
- A comments box prominently located to enable participants to make suggestions, requests, and even offer criticism
- Regularly scheduled meetings that include groups of participants, volunteers, and staff to provide opportunities for direct feedback
- Appointing a participant representative to the Steering Committee

Virtually all CTCNet affiliates have procedures in place to record attendance. For smaller centers, a dedicated computer provides a good mechanism. The sign-in program can be tied to a database that can generate weekly or monthly reports. Of course, if the center is large, or if a large group arrives all at once, the computer sign-in can be time-consuming. If the arrivals are in a group and there is a group leader, the leader can enter the information for everyone.

Paper and pencil will do when a dedicated computer is not available. If paper and pencil is it, it is very important to summarize the attendance information daily or at least weekly. Otherwise it becomes too cumbersome to go back through sheets and sheets of paper and the task often remains undone.

A particularly effective and easy technique for collecting attendance data was devised at Playing To Win's Harlem Center. The center operates on a membership basis. Each member answers certain questions that constitute a basic member profile. This information is entered into the membership database. The member is then given a membership card with a bar code. Each time the member arrives and leaves, s/he passes the card through a barcode reader and the attendance data is automatically collected. The database can then be used to print out periodic reports showing breakdowns of center use by any of the categories in the member profile.

The Somerville Community Computer Center takes a different approach to assessment and evaluation. Its Steering Committee decided to conduct a fairly intensive evaluation, but to do this during one and only one month each year. During May, questionnaires are given to all participants, all volunteers, and all teachers who staff or use the center. The questionnaires (see Exhibits 7-5 and 7-6) provide data for both self-assessment and outcome evaluation.

Note: CTCNet, as part of its obligations under the 1995-2000 grant from the National Science Foundation, conducted a research and evaluation effort that included intensive study at four CTC sites together with a quantitative study of all CTCNet affiliate programs. One of the goals of this research was to provide affiliates with instruments and mechanisms that will assist them in their own research and evaluation. This and other studies, including an evaluation toolkit, can be found at:
<http://www.ctcnet.org/publics.html>

Documentation

The business plan will include the following information from Chapter 7:

- One or more weekly schedules
- Sample publicity material (flyers, brochures, a sample newsletter)
- Assessment implementation plan

Additional Contact Information

Benton Foundation, 1625 K Street, NW -- 11th floor, Washington, DC, 20006,
<http://www.benton.org/Practice/Toolkit/thinkthru.html>,
karenm@benton.org, 202-638-5770

Sheetal Singh, c/o CompuMentor, 435 Brannan Street, Suite 100, San Francisco,
CA, 94107, <http://www.techsoup.org>, sheetal@compumentor.org, 415-633-
9332

Susan Tenby, TechSoup.org, 435 Brannan Street, Suite 100, San Francisco, CA
94107, <http://www.techsoup.org>, susan@techsoup.org

Additional Resources

Outreach

- **Basic Press Outreach for Not-for-Profit and Public Sector Organizations**
<http://www.coyotecom.com/promote2.html>
- **Benton Foundation Strategic Communications in the Digital Age**
<http://www.benton.org/Practice/Toolkit/>
- **Business Benefits of Accessible Web Design**
<http://www.w3.org/WAI/bcase/benefits.html>
- **CAP - Grand Opening Guide**
<http://cap.ic.gc.ca/english/3001.shtml>
- **Designing and Marketing Your Programs**
http://www.managementhelp.org/np_progs/mkt_mod/market.htm
- **Evaluating Your Outreach Efforts**
<http://www.benton.org/MTM/Pages/ten.html>
- **How to Get Publicity - International Schools CyberFair**
<http://www.globalschoolhouse.com/cf/info/getpr.html>
- **Making the Net Work Toolkit — Guidelines for Web Design**
<http://www.makingthenetwork.org/tools/webguide.htm>
- **UK Online Centres Marketing Toolkit**
<http://toolkit.centres.ngfl.gov.uk/>
- **Usable Web -- Tips and Techniques for Building Reader-Friendly Web Pages**
<http://www.pantos.org/atw/usable.html>

Evaluation & Assessment

- **ACC — Assessment Tools for CTCs**
<http://www.americaconnects.net/resources/CTCassessmt3.asp>
- **CTCNet Evaluation Toolkit (doc)**
<http://www.ctcnet.org/evalkit.doc>
- **Evaluating Your Programs**
http://www.managementhelp.org/np_progs/evl_mod/evl_mod.htm
- **Evaluation — Think It Through**
<http://www.benton.org/Practice/Toolkit/evaluation.html>
- **Evaluation Resources - America Connects**
<http://www.americaconnects.net/resources/default.asp?topicid=43>
- **Evaluation Toolkit — A Work-in-Progress (pdf)**
<http://www.benton.org/e-rate/evaltoolkit.pdf>
- **United Way Checklist of Nonprofit Organizational Indicators**
http://www.managementhelp.org/org_eval/uw_list.htm

The Future Center @ the Children's Capital Museum

	Mon.	Tues.	Wed.	Thurs.	Fri.	Sat.				
9:00							9:00			
9:30							9:30			
10:00		Adult Classes	OPEN LAB	Adult Classes	ADULTS ONLY LAB	OPEN LAB	10:00			
10:30										10:30
11:00										11:00
11:30										11:30
12:00										12:00
12:30					12:30					
1:00							1:00			
1:30							1:30			
2:00							2:00			
2:30							2:30			
3:00		KIDS ONLY LAB	OPEN LAB	Youth Classes	OPEN LAB	3:00				
3:30									3:30	
4:00									4:00	
4:30									4:30	
5:00									5:00	
5:30					5:30					
6:00		Adult classes		Adult Classes		6:00				
6:30						6:30				
7:00						7:00				
7:30						7:30				
8:00						8:00				
8:30						8:30				
9:00						9:00				

Exhibit 7-1 Sample Center Schedule

Exhibit 7-2: Sample Center Schedule

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday			
9:00	Seniors	Seniors	Seniors	Seniors	Seniors	ACT/SAT H.S. proficiency test prep.	9:00		
9:30							9:30		
10:00	GED Youth		10:00						
10:30							10:30		
11:00	GED Adults		11:00						
11:30							11:30		
12:00						OPEN ACCESS	12:00		
12:30							12:30		
1:00	Employment Enhancement	Employment Enhancement	Employment Enhancement	Employment Enhancement	Employment Enhancement		1:00		
1:30							1:30		
2:00	Employment Enhancement	Employment Enhancement	Employment Enhancement	Employment Enhancement	Employment Enhancement		2:00		
2:30							2:30		
3:00	After School Recreation		3:00						
3:30							3:30		
4:00							4:00		
4:30							4:30		
5:00	OPEN ACCESS	Youth Tutorials		Youth Tutorials	OPEN ACCESS		5:00		
5:30							5:30		
6:00		OPEN ACCESS		OPEN ACCESS			OPEN ACCESS	OPEN ACCESS	6:00
6:30									6:30
7:00									7:00
7:30									7:30
8:00							8:00		
8:30							8:30		
9:00						9:00			

PLAYING TO WIN, INC.: The Harlem Community Computing Center

9:00	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	9:00
9:30	Hamilton Madison Houses 20: 10-13 yrs girls	Police Athletic League 15: 10-12 yrs. old	Police Athletic League 15: 10-12 yrs. old	Metropolitan Community United Methodist Church 20: 8-11 yrs. old	ADULT & TEEN WORKSHOP HOURS		9:30
10:00							10:00
10:30		Metropolitan Hospital CAP 15 teens	East Harlem Urban Center 20: 6-12 yrs. old	The Nurturing Collective 12: 6-12 yrs. old	The Nurturing Collective 12: 6-12 yrs. old	ADULT & TEEN WORKSHOP HOURS	10:30
11:00	East Harlem Urban Ctr. 20: 6-12 yrs. old						11:00
11:30							11:30
12:00		Staff Meetings	Children's Aid Society 20: 9 & 10 yrs. old	Hamilton Madison Houses 20: 5-6 yrs. old coed 20: 10-13 yrs. old boys	Greater Brownsville 8-13 yrs. old	OPEN HOURS 12:00-2:00	12:00
12:30	Barnard S.T.E.P. (through Aug. 3)						12:30
1:00							1:00
1:30							1:30
2:00							2:00
2:30							2:30
3:00	OPEN HOURS	Martin Luther King Towers Day Camp 30: 6-12 yrs. old	Manhattan & Bronx Team Lounge 10: 13-17 yrs. old	The Bridge 12 Adults	OPEN HOURS	OPEN HOURS	3:00
3:30							3:30
4:00		MINDBUILDERS 20: 7-13					4:00
4:30							4:30
5:00							5:00
5:30							5:30
6:00		ADULT & TEEN WORKSHOP HOURS	SMALL BUSINESS WORKSHOP & ADULT & TEEN WORKSHOP HOURS (to be announced)	ADULT & TEEN WORKSHOP HOURS		ADULT & TEEN WORKSHOP HOURS	6:00
6:30							6:30
7:00							7:00
7:30							7:30
8:00							8:00

Exhibit 7-3: Sample Center Schedule

Exhibit 7-4: General Release Form

I, _____, for valuable consideration, do hereby irrevocably give my consent to _____, to use my name, any photographs of me involved in CTC activities as well as any of my involvement in activities conducted by the CTC at any time for editorial, illustration, promotional, advertising, and other similar purposes in connection with the CTC's publications and other activities.

Applicant Signature: _____

Date: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____

Exhibit 7-5: Volunteer Evaluation Form

Somerville Community Computing Center

VOLUNTEER EVALUATION

1. What do you think the best aspect of the Public Access program is?
2. Who—which people—get the most out of public access (for example, teens who knows computers and want to get homework done, or self-motivated seniors who...)?
3. What do you think needs to be improved? Talk software, hardware, hours, setup, Internet, whatever... (and use the back if you need to).
4. What do you like most about being a volunteer?
5. What do you like least?
6. If you could change any one aspect of being a volunteer during Public Access, what would it be?
7. When did you first start as a volunteer here? _____
8. If you are no longer a volunteer, when did you stop? _____
9. *Why* did you first start as a volunteer here?

Exhibit 7-6: SCCC Participant Questionnaire

- 1) How many times in the past 6 months have you used the computers here?
 Once 6-10 times
 2-5 times More than 10 times
- 2) What kinds of software have you used here? (please check all that apply)
 Graphics Spreadsheets
 Database Typing
 Desktop Publishing Word Processing
 Tutorials Educational/Games
 Internet Scanning
 CD-ROMs Other _____
- 3) Is there any software program that we don't have which you feel we should add? What program(s)?
- 4) Which tasks have you used the computers at the SCCC for? (please check all that apply)
 Develop job skills Build resumé
 Get comfortable w/computers Email/surfing web
 Print documents Have fun
 Homework Use educational software
 Learn a specific program Other _____
- 5) If you use the Internet here, what have you used it for? (check all that apply)
 E-mail Job searching
 Homework/Research Chatting
 Fun Political activism
 Practicing English General information
- 6) If we offered a specific class to the public, which one topic would you choose? (please choose only one)
 Intro to Mac Graphics/desktop publishing
 Intro to PC & Windows95 Scanning
 Advanced Mac/PC class Internet for work and fun
 MS Office (Word, Excel, PowerPoint) Intro to programming
 Meeting job recruiters Making a web page
- 7) How would you describe the environment at the SCCC? (e.g. noise level, atmosphere, etc.)
- 8) I am Female Male
- 9) My age is:
 under 8 25-35
 8-13 35-45
 13-18 45-60
 18-25 over 60
- 10) My ethnic background is:
 (e.g. African-American, Pacific Islander, Haitian, etc.)

- 11) The level of education I've completed is:
 some elementary school
 some high school
 high school diploma
 2-year degree
 4-year degree
 graduate work
- 12) I do do not have a physical disability.
- 13) My yearly income is:
 Under \$10,000
 \$10,000-\$25,000
 \$25,000-\$45,000
 over \$45,000
- 14) The total number of people I live with and/or support is: _____
- 15) My first language is: _____
- 16) I do do not receive some kind of federal or state assistance.

**Please
Flip Over
To 2nd side!**

*All information you write on this form is completely confidential.
Thanks for taking your time to help us out!*

1997 SCCC Participant Questionnaire

Page 2

17) Do you have access to a computer elsewhere? If so, why do you come to the SCCC?

18) Has learning computers make a difference in your life? If so, please describe how. And if this is your first time using computers, what do you hope to accomplish?

19) Have you found a job as a result of learning computers at the SCCC? If so, please tell us the story!

Is there anything else you'd like us to know? Please be encouraged to comment on any improvements you'd like to see, anything that was particularly helpful or useful to you that you haven't already mentioned. Also, feel free to discuss particular volunteers whom you found especially helpful.

thanks a lot for..

... helping us out!

All information you put down is completely confidential.

**Please put in the Evaluations Box at the SCCC
or mail to SCCC, 167 Holland St., Somerville MA 02144**

Exhibit 7-7 CTC Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT:

[Name]

[Title]

[Telephone (evening and daytime)]

[Fax]

[Email address]

[Web address]

[Name of CTC] Offers Technology Access for [Locals, residents of interest]

[City, State, Date] — [CTC] plays a vital role in bridging the digital divide in [community] with [event: its new hours, new program, e.g.]. Community technology centers like [Name of CTC] are one place where people can get low- or no-cost access to technology such as the Internet.

According to a recent Department of Commerce study, there is still a large gap in use between those who can easily afford technology access and those who cannot. Fully 86.3% of households earning \$75,000 and above per year had Internet access, compared to 12.7% of households earning less than \$15,000 per year. The October 2000 study also found that Black (23.5%) and Hispanic (23.6%) households were less than half as likely to have Internet access than White (46.1%) and Asian American and Pacific Islander (56.8%) households. Without access to a computer in the home, where do people go to get connected?

In [city or other locality] you need only look as far as the [Name of CTC] located [place] to see community technology at work.

[Insert here quotes / stories from your participants on why they visit the center: what services they use, what their personal goals are. For example,

“I like to use email” says Jane Doe, a 66-year old resident of Residents Villa. “I have a granddaughter at Springfield State University, and I can tell her how her cousins are doing. In general, I just love staying in touch with my family this way. My oldest daughter calls me the cyber granny.”]

[Insert major services, what populations are served, how many years the organization has been serving the community.]

Over the past decade, more and more Community Technology Centers (CTCs) have

been established around the United States to offer basic IT training and computer access (often either at a low rate or at no charge) to those living in low-income or disadvantage areas. Such availability gives people the chance to enhance their IT skills or gain skills to make them marketable in the job workforce. Just as important: CTCs give community members a place to meet and understand that they are not facing adversity or challenges on their own.

“CTCs are places that allow men and women to increase their own effectiveness and opportunity,” said Karen Chandler, Executive Director of the Community Technology Center’s Network, or CTCNet (<http://www.ctcnet.org>) . “You can go to a Community Technology Center if there’s one in your neighborhood and immediately start taking classes – even if you don’t have a diploma.”

Because CTCs empower people with an understanding of technology, they, in turn, are able to empower a community to make a positive change and make its members feel better about themselves. For children, it becomes a safe haven for learning and interaction. For young and older adults alike, it provides a location to succeed in areas they never expected and to share experiences. In essence, a CTC quickly becomes a community’s platform to a larger world of opportunities.

#

For additional information, contact: [all contact information]

[Summarize services one last time]

[CTC History (try to do this in one short paragraph)]

—Submitted by Marissa Martin, Project Coordinator, CTCNet

Exhibit 7-8 Outreach Flyer

SENIORS CITIZENS “OPEN UP NEW WORLDS!”

The City of Seattle’s Human Services Department and the Mayor’s Office for Senior Citizens (206.684.0639) offer unique training classes called **“Seniors Training Seniors”**. These four, 2-hour classes open up a new world to seniors as they learn about the computer, e-mail and the internet (world wide web).

There are eight training centers located in the Greater Seattle Area. Adult learners attending are greeted by their peers – Seniors who have been trained to teach a unique curriculum specifically designed for the older, yet wiser, population. You do not need to have a computer at home to attend.

Students feel right at home as they begin hands-on learning from day one with senior instructors and assistants who provide a relaxed, fun and non-threatening atmosphere. Learning the computer, e-mail and internet gives all learners an opportunity to “rediscover the world” and “connect” to friends and family and myriad of resources (travel, art, associations, clubs, etc).

Isn’t it time for you to see what you have been missing? Go ahead, pick up the phone and call the center closest to you. Leave your name, phone number and which center you want to attend – a friendly person will back to register you for the next available classes. Classes will be offered through June, and begin again in September.

Garfield Community Center	206.233.7255	2323. E. Cherry St.
Rainier Beach Community Center	206.722.1390	8825 Rainier Ave. S.
Midtown Commons	206.322.1162	2016 E. Union
Wallingford Sr. Center	206.461.7825	4649 Sunnyside Ave. N.
South Park Community Center	206.762.7780	8319 8 th Ave. South
West Seattle Senior Center	206.932.4044	4217 S.W. Oregon
Delridge Community Center	206.933.8629	4501 Delridge Way SW
Central Area Senior Center	206.726.4926	500 – 30 th Ave. South

**—Submitted by The Department of Information Technology for the City of Seattle
700 Fifth Avenue, Suite 2700, Seattle, WA 98104-5065
<http://cityofseattle.net/tech>**

Were the following resources useful?

a. Orientation session/meeting at the CTC placement site:	1	2	3	4	N/A
b. Online volunteer orientation materials (FAQ and tips):	1	2	3	4	N/A
c. The CTC Support Project Website:	1	2	3	4	N/A
d. The monthly project opportunities email list:	1	2	3	4	N/A

What other resources would have helped you?

Based on this experience, would you consider being a volunteer for the CTCSP again?

Yes No Why or Why Not?

Please share with us your overall experience as a volunteer and ways that the CTCSP staff can work to improve the experience of future volunteers. (If needed, please use back of sheet)

Note: Comments may be used on the CTC Support Project website or other materials.

—Submitted by Community Technology Center Support Project (CTCSP) at CTCNet

8 chapter

Budgets, Funding and Sustainability

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8 chapter

Budgets, Funding & Sustainability

"I may not be what you might call a computer expert, but I have used the PC to change my life in a positive fashion. It has been a bridge to the past and to the future for me, and my friends. If I can do it anyone can."

*Ellen Wood, as submitted by Craigmillar Community Information Service (CCIS),
Edinburgh, Scotland, <http://www.ccis.org.uk>*

Introduction

Finally the chapter you've been waiting for... how to find money to start and operate the CTC. Sorry, there is no magic formula. There is no guaranteed source of funding. But every CTCNet affiliate center is testament to the fact that it can be done, and every affiliate will have suggestions about how your Steering Committee should proceed.

First comes the budgeting process. This must have two parts: funds needed for start-up, and funds needed for operation.

- **A start-up budget** details the one-time costs of setting up the CTC and the sources of funds that will be used to cover these costs.
- **An operating budget** details the ongoing costs of operating the CTC and the likely sources of funds that will be used to meet these costs.

In formulating the budget, the Steering Committee should start with its "ideal". It should then look carefully at the various sources of revenue available to the CTC. The ideal in budgeted expenses may have to be revisited and some compromises made if the gap between expenses and reasonably expected revenue is too high. It should also be noted that there are funding sources available to individuals and families to provide assistive technology as appropriate.

It will be highly advantageous to use spreadsheet software for the work of this chapter. Not only will a spreadsheet make the task somewhat less laborious, but it will provide an electronic record and template for recording "Budget vs. Actuals" during the year in

preparation for developing the following year's budget. Exhibit 8-1 is provided on CTCNet's Web site (<http://www.ctcnet.org/ex8-1.xls>) as a prototype worksheet on for projecting expenses; Exhibit 8-2 (<http://www.ctcnet.org/ex8-2.xls>) provides a prototype for examining sources of income. This chapter will explore each exhibit in-depth followed by an examination of potential sources of revenue and aspects of proposal writing.

First Steps

Download Exhibit 8-1 from the CTCNet Web Site to set up a spreadsheet worksheet for your CTC. You will need only the column headings and the list of line items at the left to start with. The following sections of the budgeting part of this chapter will take you through the categories and suggest formulas that can be entered in appropriate columns. [Alternatively, make several copies of Exhibit 8-1, and use pencil and a hand-held calculator.]

You will note, on the worksheet, a right hand section labelled "Income Sources." For the moment, these include only three columns: In-kind Start-up, In-kind Monthly and an "Other" column where you make notes about special funding sources.

The In-kind income columns are extremely important. Your CTC will inevitably depend to some extent on contributed services or goods. In each case where you have a pledged contributor or anticipate volunteered services, you will be making a matching pair of entries in the spreadsheet, one under expenses and one under income. The result is:

- a more realistic budget (you'd have to purchase these goods or services if they weren't contributed)
- evidence of support (funders being approached for grants and/or dollar contributions will be impressed that you already have substantial support)
- a leg up on your income/revenue planning (see Exhibit 8-2: Income Projection Worksheet)

A Word about Start-up Expenses

Start-up expenses include the cost of getting everything ready before you actually open the CTC. There are two kinds of start-up expenses:

- Capital expenses and one-time expenditures such as renovations to the space, purchase of office equipment, furniture and furnishings, and utility deposits as required by utility companies such as electric, heat, phone, etc.

- Expenses that will continue through for the life of the CTC such as salaries and benefits, professional fees, space and utilities, equipment maintenance and replacement, software and computer supplies, promotion & outreach expenses, telecommunications costs, educational materials, and miscellaneous others.

The cost of hardware can be assigned to either category. If you are planning to acquire all of the hardware before opening the CTC, cost is a capital expense, and operating expense is limited to equipment maintenance and replacement. On the other hand, you may be planning to start with a small number of computer systems and peripherals and add as demand and resources indicate. In such a situation, it makes sense to consider hardware purchases among the on-going expenses.

On the worksheet, you will see a column headed “Start-up Amt.” As you work through the spreadsheet, section by section, you will enter appropriate expenditures in that column. When you have completed the entire worksheet, you will have a start-up budget as well as monthly operating amounts to be entered into the final model.

The Expense Projection Worksheet: Section by Section

Personnel

This section has four sub-sections: Salaried persons, hourly employees, benefits, and professional fees (on which no benefits are paid).

It is extremely important to include, in the list, all anticipated volunteer assistance. Volunteer services are important in-kind contributions. You probably couldn't operate your center without them so they must appear in your budget. As noted above, whenever you enter an expense representing volunteer services, you will immediately post the same total for each on the income side in the appropriate In-Kind column.

Salaried

First, the formulas:

Under “monthly” (cell G5 in the model), write a formula (e.g., $E5 \cdot K5 / 12$) that multiplies the annual base by the percent of time and divides the result by 12. Copy that formula down the column for all salaried employees (lines 5-8 in the model).

Use a sum function to total the “monthly” and “start-up” columns on the line following the arrows (line 9 in the model).

Second, enter the information for each employee: name, position, % of time, annual base salary. The formula previously entered will provide the entry under “monthly”.

Third, if that employee is to be hired before the center is in operation (as is likely with either the Center Director or the Outreach Coordinator), determine from your timetable (see documentation for Chapter 1) the number of months assignable to startup. In the “Start-up” column, enter a formula taking the monthly amount and multiplying by the number of months the person will be employed before start-up.

Example: The Center Director will be employed for two months before the CTC opens. The Outreach Director will work 20% time for the same period.

Salaried	Position	% Time	Annual base	Monthly	Start-up
Dale K	Center Director	100%	\$27,00	\$2,250	\$4,500
Lou M	Outreach Director	20%	\$24,000	\$400	\$800

Hourly

Here you will enter data regarding people who work on an hourly basis. These may be teaching assistants, part-time receptionists, clerical personnel, janitorial personnel, or other. It is likely that you will include here your regular volunteers in whatever category of service.

Your “monthly” formula (column G) will multiply the # of hours by the hourly rate. You will have to estimate the number of hours in a month (you can use 21 working days per month, or 4.2 working weeks to help you out). Again, you’ll want to put a sum formula at the bottom of both monthly and start-up columns.

Example: A part-time receptionist will be employed for 10 hours each week and will come in for two hours of training before the CTC opens. Line 12 in the model will show:

Hourly	Job	#Reg hrs	Rate	Monthly	Start-up Amt
Chris C	Reception	42	\$6	\$252	\$12

Fringe benefits

Most benefits can be calculated on a percent of wages paid. On each line, you must find or determine the rate, and then in the monthly column, multiply the sum of your monthly salaries and hourly wages by the appropriate rate. In the start-up column, use the sum of the start-up salaries and hourly wages and multiply by the rate.

List on the income side in the “In-Kind” column, any amounts under monthly or start-up that result from listing volunteers on the expense side. Remember that if you were actually paying for such services you'd have to pay for benefits as well. Thus by contributing services volunteers also contribute to “fringe”.

One of the items under benefits is “Vacation”. The CTC must have a vacation schedule for staff (see Chapter 4), and may have to hire temporary personnel in replacement. The cost of the temporary personnel is what goes on the Vacation line.

Professional fees

Lawyers, accountants, and other professional consultants usually charge a fee based on days. Others may charge by the hour. Honoraria, if and when paid, are usually for a particular meeting. Estimate the number of occasions (day, hours, or meetings) on each line for the month. Enter the rate. And again, in the monthly column, enter a formula that multiplies the number of occasions by the rate.

If the CTC has been able to acquire “pro bono” services (free services), enter the cost on the expenses side as if it had to be paid, and enter the same amount in the In-Kind column on the Income side.

It is likely that legal services may be high during start-up and lower during regular operations. Adjust accordingly.

Total personnel

Put a formula in the monthly and start-up columns that sums the four subtotals above. Be careful not to sum the entire column, just the subtotals.

Other Operating Expenses (OOE)

Site costs

For start-up amounts, unless major renovations to space are planned, one month's expenses will probably be sufficient.

Even if the CTC has been given free or reduced-rent space, enter the going rate for an equivalent square footage, and list the difference between that and what the CTC must pay in the In-Kind column.

Estimate the monthly utility costs from what others with similar space and load pay. If you are unsure, over-estimate to start with.

Water and sewage rates are usually obtainable from a local Building Department or Small Business Bureau.

In many urban locations, garbage cannot be hauled by the Department of Sanitation and a private contractor must be engaged.

Maintenance supplies include mops, buckets, sponges, brushes, toilet paper, paper towels, and cleaning supplies. Try to get an estimate from an agency with similar space.

Security and insurance

Most of these costs are monthly or yearly. Divide any yearly cost by 12 for the monthly amount. Remember that if the space is used prior to opening, you must enter appropriate amounts for the start-up period.

Hardware & software

Even if the total complement of hardware is to be purchased as part of start-up costs and so will be listed in the worksheet section following Other Operating Expenses, some amount should be included in the budget for replacement and/or expansion. If you put down \$200/mo, you'd be estimating \$2400/yr. for replacement expense.

Hardware maintenance should include the cost of any maintenance contracts on computers, printers, or other peripherals, or an estimate of what repairs will cost (this estimate should increase as the hardware gets older), and assistive technology tools and upgrades.

Software purchase for start-up will probably be larger than the monthly amount. Say 30 pieces constitute the planned library and the CTC intends to start with 20 of these. Put the cost of 20 in the Start-up column and the cost of one piece in the monthly column.

In estimating computer supplies, try to find an operating center of similar size or a commercial venture that rents computers by the hour and ask for their help.

Office expenses

Equipment maintenance includes maintenance contracts on copiers, fax machines, or other office equipment. Equipment replacement is, as it is for hardware above, a set-aside toward the inevitability of replacing the piece of equipment.

Stationery refers to letterhead, envelopes, business cards, labels—anything printed with the name of the CTC. If named individuals are to be listed on stationery, don't order a year's supply all at once. The names may change. Some of this cost can be assigned to start-up expenses as can probably a month's worth of copier paper and miscellaneous supplies.

Communications

On-line service is the monthly charge the CTC will be paying for its Internet connections and will depend on the type and nature of that service.

Telephone includes monthly bills for calls and faxes. If a pay phone is to be installed in the CTC for participant use, there will be a monthly charge for that as well.

Postage and shipping must include estimates for regular mail, for dissemination of outreach and PR materials, and for overnight mail charges.

CTCNet

If you are reading this, it is a reasonable assumption that your CTC is, or is about to become, an affiliate member of CTCNet, so annual membership should be in the budget. You can find updated membership information at <http://www.ctcnet.org>

Costs for attending meetings should include transportation and, if needed, costs of substitute personnel. Regional meetings are usually half- or one-day affairs and within car or public transport reach. The CTCNet Annual Conference will probably require air or train fare and a 3-night stay in conference lodgings.

Outreach and public relations

Media advertising includes ads placed in newspapers, on radio and/or television. It could also include posters, or placards in buses and subways. The CTC probably won't do much of this for real dollars, but may be able to get free advertising through public service announcements, the local press, or even the Advertising Council. If such is the case, don't forget to match the estimated cost with an entry in the In-Kind incomes columns.

Brochure and newsletter estimates can be obtained from local printers. Others can include banners (or special exterior display), or any special materials (e.g. film processing costs) required for presentations at conferences or meetings.

Since the CTC will need to launch its outreach campaign during the start-up phase, a generous portion of outreach and PR costs can be listed under Start-up.

Educational materials

Books include reference works, texts devoted to specific hardware, software, or the Internet. If a focus of the CTC is job training or adult education, other books may be necessary.

Periodicals include magazines and newspapers. The CTC should have a judicious collection of magazines devoted to technology. Subscription to a local daily or weekly newspaper is also a good idea. Try for gift subscriptions and list both the expense and the in-kind contribution.

Travel, Professional Development, and Recognition

Think about field trips for participants, reward dinners for volunteers, open house sessions at the CTC, regional or national conferences (in addition to the CTCNet conference) that staff should attend. Fund-raising may also call for travel, but CTCs should not have to wine and dine funders.

Disability Accommodation

Estimated costs should be provided for improving access for people with disabilities and functional limitations. Sometimes making ADA-related changes is relatively inexpensive and easy; the majority of modifications cost less than \$500. To establish sources of funds, be sure to:

- Determine if your organization's government funding sources have additional monies available for barrier removal.

- Create a line item in every budget for reasonable accommodation and barrier removal. Don't forget to include these line items in grant proposals and contracts.

Some access-related changes can be made immediately, and some will be made over a period of several years so a permanent line item in the budget is important. Funders will most likely allow these costs. An example of language for the budget narrative is:

“\$ xxx.00 Reasonable accommodation and barrier removal: to improve access (grab bars in bathroom, railing for steps); to contract for sign language interpreters as needed; to caption the video used to teach computer skills; to modify a work station; to purchase assistive technology; or to reproduce print materials in large print and on audio cassette.”

Other

Miscellaneous fees include bank charges, municipal fines for non-removal of snow, or any of the other little things that one finds one has to pay for. In addition, it will be helpful to get an accounting system in place to track expenses.

Discretionary funds are usually estimated at a percent of operating expenses (3-10%) and are reserved for special emergency expenditures.

Total other operating expenses

As with personnel, enter totals in both monthly and start-up columns of the subtotals in all the categories under Other Operating Expenses. Again, take care to total only the subtotals, not the entire column.

Grand total personnel and OOE

The sum of monthly “Total Personnel” and monthly “Total Other Operating Expenses” will be the monthly operating “nut” for the CTC. To look at the estimate for operation of the CTC for a year, multiply this number by 12.

You will need a similar total in the Start-up column, but this will eventually be added to the One-Time Start-up Costs total of the next section.

One-Time Start-Up Costs

In all categories, continue to enter cost of donated equipment or services, and then make a similar entry in the In-Kind column.

- Site preparation -- Most of the items here will be contracted by the CTC.
- Furniture -- In this section, list for each item, the number of pieces and the estimated cost of each. Use a formula to find the total cost (multiply number of pieces by cost of each).
- Office equipment -- Follow the same procedure as with furniture, above.
- Computer equipment -- Again, follow the same procedure as with furniture in reference to all purchasable items. For cables and installation, you may have a contractual amount.

Totals

Insert a total for all the startup costs listed. You don't have to worry about subtotals here; just total the column from Site Preparation on down.

Then, under GRAND TOTAL START-UP, sum the "Grand Total Personnel and OOE" and the "Total One-Time Start-up Costs" to get the Grand Total of Start-up.

CONGRATULATIONS! The hardest part of the worksheet is done! But now...

The Income Projection Worksheet

First steps

Using Exhibit 8.2, construct a spreadsheet (or make copies for pencil and calculator work).

On the TARGETS line, enter the Grand Totals for both Start-Up and Operating Expenses from your Projected Expenses worksheet. Note that the total Operating Expenses should be for a full year. If you haven't already done this, multiply the monthly grand total on the Expense worksheet by 12 and enter the result.

In-Kind

Under INCOME, the first category is In-Kind. All the subsections from your

worksheet appear here. Enter the subtotals from the expense worksheet in the matching “Start-up” or “Operating” columns on the Income worksheet.

You’ve already put some figures in the In-Kind column. Total these now, both for Start-up and On-going Operations.

Center revenues

This is where you will enter money that the center earns through its operations. Notice that the Start-up column is X’d out.

If the CTC will not be charging any fees or soliciting any contributions from participants, this section can be skipped. Otherwise:

- enter the estimated number of members the CTC will have in a year
- enter the amount of the membership fee (add rows for different types of membership)
- in the “Operating” column, enter a formula that multiplies the number by the fee

Follow the same process for the remaining applicable items.

Government grants

Itemize here any federal, state, or local public funding for which the CTC is or will be applying. Enter the total amount requested, then a percent representing the likelihood of receiving the grant, and in the appropriate column multiply the amount requested by the rate of likelihood.

Funding can sought from local, state, and federal funding sources. Usually, any government application process requires evidence of the CTC’s track record. Furthermore, projects for which the CTC is requesting funds must closely match the funding criteria of the grant-making department. In contemplating application for government funding, a collaborative proposal with a more established non-profit, such as a college, university, or library, may be the preferred route.

Local and State

The community mapping process (see Chapter 2) should have identified specific local government agencies and their grant-making resources. The Steering Com-

mittee should inform itself about the potential of securing funds from any Community Development Block Grant program or other local initiatives.

Federal funding

Following are some of the grant-making federal agencies. Visit appropriate government agency web sites or write requesting guidelines relating to grant availability. Congressionally-approved grant-making programs are also described in the Federal Register. A number of federal agencies maintain Web pages that describe funding availability, most of which are accessible from FirstGov (<http://www.firstgov.gov>). Do remember that all federal monies come with obligations to comply appropriately with non-discrimination regulations.

- **U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).** The property owner of HUD-insured or HUD-assisted housing developments may apply to HUD for permission to use certain funds under certain conditions. Be sure to check HUD's Neighborhood Networks web site for possible funding opportunities (<http://www.hud.gov/nnw/nnwindex.html>).
- **U.S. Department of Labor.** Offers funding primarily for employment and training programs and purposes (<http://www.dol.gov/>).
- **U.S. Department of Education.** Funding for educational programs, educational research, library programs, adult education. There is a special office for Educational Technology. Be sure to research the Department's CTC program (<http://www.ed.gov/offices/OVAE/AdultEd/CTC/index.html>).
- **U.S. Department of Health & Human Services.** Grants for preschool and afterschool activities. Check with your local HeadStart and Even Start programs for more information (<http://www.dhhs.gov/>).
- **U.S. Department of Commerce.** Offers grant support for electronic commerce. The Department web site will be your best bet for current information (<http://home.doc.gov/>). Maintains an annual competitive grant program under its National Telecommunications Information Administration (NTIA). Look for the Technology Opportunities Program (TOP) at <http://www.ntia.doc.gov>.

Foundation grants

Itemize here any grant applications the CTC is or will be making to private and corporate foundations. Follow the same procedures as with "Government Grants" above, entering the total amount applied for, a likelihood rate, and then the resulting product.

Although there are occasional exceptions, most private and corporate foundations award grants only to non-profit organizations that are qualified for designation as “not a private foundation” under IRS code section 501(c)(3). If the CTC has been incorporated as a non-profit, or if its parent organization already has 501(c)(3) status, then it should pursue grant funding.

Sources for information about foundations include:

- The Foundation Center is a national, nonprofit clearinghouse for information on private and corporate foundations and grants. The Center assists in matching foundation interests with nonprofit needs by publishing reference books on grantmakers and disseminating information on grants (<http://www.fdncenter.org/>).
- The local public library should have manuals listing foundations by location, kind of activity, and level of funding. Begin with the foundations in your state. Ask the librarian for assistance in locating directories such as *1000 Foundations*, *Computer Grants Directory*, *Directory of Computer and High Tech Grants*, and *National Directory of Corporate Giving*.
- The yellow pages telephone book under “foundations.”
- Other neighborhood non-profit agencies that may be willing to share their grant-seeking experience.
- Local business associations (e.g., Chamber of Commerce) may make helpful local referrals.

Note: The United Way is a leading funding organization worth investigating. Many corporations, however, do not award grants to United Way fund recipients.

Business & industry cash contributions

Itemize here any cash contributions anticipated from local businesses.

- A supermarket chain may offer to match 5% of participating shoppers’ purchases during a specific week.
- The local Chamber of Commerce may help organize a canvassing of local business people.
- A local restaurant may designate a special day when a percent of its sales will be donated.

Collaborations and subcontracts

The CTC may have identified other neighborhood agencies that are applying for grants, either federally or from private foundations. If another agency is the prime applicant but the CTC is included as a recipient of grant funds, the income potential should be itemized here.

Special events

Fund-raising events are labor intensive and the dollar return is usually not high, but they are extremely useful in heightening community awareness of the CTC and they also give many people the opportunity to support the CTC with relatively small contributions.

If the purpose of an event is to heighten awareness of the CTC and get a lot of people involved, begin a tradition of an annual event such as a bike trip, a walkathon for which people collect pledges, or an auction (where, among other things, a Web page designed by CTC members can be auctioned). Other ideas include a dance, a block party or a fair where CTC members can display and sell their work or where CTC members who are self-employed can sell their goods and contribute a percentage of the proceeds to the CTC.

Itemize on the income worksheet any such events that have been or will be planned during the year. Provide a goal amount and a likelihood rate and enter the product as a total in the appropriate column.

Direct mail

Every CTC should mount an annual or even semi-annual solicitation of funds by mail. Steering Committee members should not only be counted on for contributions but also for lists of their friends and associates.

The solicitation can be in the form of a letter relating some particularly touching CTC success story. A contribution form should be included giving suggested amounts. Space can also be provided for people to list friends and associates who should be added to the list. Records should be kept (use a database) of contributions received, and these should be acknowledged.

In the beginning both the list and the rate of return will undoubtedly be small, but in time this method should not only be reduced to a science (saving labor) but produce increasingly rewarding results.

A good target amount for a first year can be found by taking the number of people on the Steering Committee and multiplying by 100. The likelihood rate

can then be estimated by a judicial guess as to how many Steering Committee members actually could or would contribute \$100.

Other

Itemize here any other fund-raising schemes the Steering Committee may have dreamed up, for example:

- Hiring a Director of Development or consultant to design fund-raising plan
- Individual contributions
- Telethons
- Contribution boxes in local computer hardware and software retail stores
- Contribution envelopes mailed in the monthly “coupon package” often distributed locally by a direct mail agent (try to get that agent to cover the cost of the contribution envelope)

Note: Door-to-door canvassing of residences, while used by some, is not recommended, particularly in urban areas. It requires a large number of volunteers and an even larger supply of public relations materials.

Totals

When the last brainstorm has been squeezed out of the Steering Committee and all resources checked and double checked and all appropriate entries made, enter a total in each of the Start-up and Operating columns.

Margin (shortfall)

The amounts here are found by subtracting the TARGET amounts at the top of the worksheet from the TOTAL amounts you just entered at the bottom. If there is a positive result (margin), that's good news. More likely is that a negative amount, or shortfall, will show up.

A shortfall figure means that the Steering Committee will have to revisit the Income worksheet and identify additional sources, or that it will have to revisit the Projected Expenses worksheet and make cuts in the budget, or both. Unfortunately, the task of budgeting for the CTC is not over until the expenses and income either zero out or a plus margin has been achieved.

The Grant Solicitation Process

Solicitation of funds and in-kind contributions involves both informal and formal means. When a Steering Committee member asks a business associate or friend to contribute funds or to make an in-kind contribution, this is informal fundraising. A request from a friend or longtime associate is a very effective means of raising money. Each Steering Committee member should be asked to be responsible for raising a set amount of funds, whether in cash or in-kind contributions.

Formal solicitation from private and corporate sources requires a four step process.

Step 1: Define the project.

Know exactly what you are requesting the funds for:

- What is the need being addressed?
- What is the goal of the program?
- How will the project achieve this goal?
- How will progress/achievement be measured?

Step 2: Research

Use the sources suggested earlier in this chapter to begin a database of potential funders that you will add to periodically as you get new referrals. Each record should contain the following information:

- Name of foundation
- Street Address
- Telephone and Fax numbers
- Email and Web addresses
- Name and title of suggested program officer
- Name of person who referred you to this program officer
- Grant-making areas (e.g., youth, elderly, educational technology, etc.)
- Geographic area of concentration (e.g., particular city or state)
- Range of grants awarded and size of average grant

- Preferred method of initial approach (e.g., phone call, letter, proposal)
- Deadlines for application
- Space to record your actions with their dates: (phone calls, letters, proposals submitted (with amount requested), acceptance/rejection, resubmission, etc.)

Next steps:

Call each foundation and ask them to send their latest annual report. If your research has not given you the name of a program officer to contact, this is a good time to ask for that, and any other information you still need.

After reviewing the annual report, call the identified program officer. Remember that foundations not only want to give their money away, but they are required to do so. Their job is to identify the best or most promising recipients, so more often than not they are willing to engage in preliminary explorations over the phone. In some instances, a program officer may even be willing to make a site visit before asking for a full proposal. In other instances, the program officer may be able to make recommendations of other foundations to which you can apply.

Step 3. Write, and send, the proposal

Proposal writing can be arduous and time-consuming. For this reason, it is helpful to have a “master-proposal” that can be sent to many foundations along with an individualized cover letter specifying the particular way in which the CTC program matches the foundation’s grant criteria.

The CTC Business Plan, outlined in Chapter 9, provides all the major elements of a master proposal, and, if word-processed and preserved on disk, can easily be cut or added to if a particular foundation or corporation has special requirements. Be careful to note on each foundation record the version or date of the master proposal sent. You do not want to send the same proposal twice to the same foundation.

Likely elements of a master proposal include (compare the above with the Program and Operations sections of the Business Plan):

- **A summary.** In the business plan, this is called the Executive Summary.
- **A narrative.** Five to six pages including the following parts:
 - statement of need—what issues the CTC is addressing

- project description—what the CTC is and is trying to do
- statement of capability—strengths and timetable for the CTC plan
- staffing plan—who will do what
- **A budget.** Identical to the Financials section of the Business Plan.
- **Attachments:** Resumes of senior staff, a roster of the Steering Committee, press clippings, letters of support, and brochures or PR materials, a copy of the CTC's 501(c)(3) designation from the IRS, and, if the business plan itself is not to be used as the master proposal, a copy of that document.

Step 4: During the review process:

If you have not yet met with the program officer, call a week to ten days after sending the proposal to request a meeting.

Inform all members of the Steering Committee that the proposal has been sent to this foundation and ask them to pursue any contacts they may have with the foundation's officers or board.

Although the foundation may take months to consider and respond to your proposal, keep the program officer informed by sending press clippings, news of other grant awards or equipment donations as they occur.

Invite the program officer to any open house or special event that the CTC is sponsoring.

After acceptance :

Upon notice of acceptance, write a thank-you letter.

Upon receipt of grant funds, write another thank-you letter. Continue sending news clipping and invitations to special events. Be diligent about meeting deadlines for requested reports.

About six months after the grant, call and ask about procedures for reapplication.

After rejection:

Call the program officer and try to find out why the proposal was rejected. Ask how the proposal could have been more effective.

Ask when the CTC is eligible to reapply. Write a note thanking the program officer for taking the time to talk with you. Continue sending news clippings and invitations to special events.

Soliciting In-Kind Donations

The process is not dissimilar. Corporate sources can be added to your foundation database. Try to establish phone contact before sending a proposal. Discuss your needs and try to establish if a real potential exists.

Suppose you have been asked to send a proposal requesting a hardware donation. Prepare a plan that includes the following:

- a statement of how the software and hardware will benefit your program (for example, it might facilitate educational tasks, administrative tasks, or public access to the CTC);
- a description of minimum acceptable standards, the number of hardware systems you need and can physically accommodate, required peripherals, operating systems, and other software required for the intended use;
- the number of staff able to use the equipment and the number remaining to be trained;
- sources of assistance in providing staff development, program development, and technical assistance; and,
- the amount in the budget to support the above activities.

Once the contribution has been committed, get details of any donation from the donor. Such details include:

- the name, title, address, and phone number of the donor;
- how the donated systems and software differ from the plan with respect to type, components, memory, practicality of use, need for staff development, and so forth;
- the working condition of the hardware;
- the legal right of the donor to give the CTC the software and the legal right of the CTC to use it; and,
- the donor's willingness to pay for the delivery of the equipment to the CTC.

If the donated equipment is several years old, before acceptance, research the availability of repair services and spare parts.

With regard to any in-kind donation of hardware, do not agree to provide the donor with a written dollar evaluation of the donation. Do not accept a lower grade or earlier model than that which the CTC already owns unless there is a specific use for it. Finally, do not accept equipment in poor condition unless the funds are available to repair it and such repair will be cost effective.

A Word on Sustainability

Funders, users, and neighborhood institutions are all going to want to know that what the CTC is asking them to invest in or to partner with is going to be “sustainable” or around beyond the first year. When developing the CTC’s budget and the financial plans sections of the business plan, be sure to emphasize how sustainable the Center will be after start-up and the first year’s operations. In fact, as described in the *Financial Plans* section of Chapter 9, the CTC will have to provide annual budgets for the first three years of operations to reflect “sustainability.” Experienced non-profit fundraisers will quickly tell fellow grantseekers that building a relationship with the funder is the cornerstone to a successful funding relationship. Look for ways that will build your relationship with local funders. More often than not, people give to people, not to words on paper. Obviously, multi-year commitments of money or in-kind contributions make the CTC more sustainable and will provide everyone with a degree of comfort that their investment will prove worthwhile.

Documentation

The process a CTC uses to solicit funds needs to be carefully documented.

- The spreadsheets created for estimating expenses and income are actually so important that the CTC should preserve them in several ways: on a hard drive, on an archive disk, and in hard copy.
- Research on corporate and private foundations should result in a database.
- Lists needed for canvassing local business and industry people should be maintained.

Additional Resources

- **ACC-Resources-Sustaining a CTC**
<http://www.americconnects.net/resources/default.asp?subid=4>
- **Alliance for Nonprofit Management — FAQs by Topic**
<http://www.allianceonline.org/faqs.html>
- **America Connects Consortium Panel on Sustainability**
<http://www.ctcnet.org/americaconnects/panel7/index.htm>
- **Basic Guide to Non-Profit Financial Management**
http://www.mapnp.org/library/finance/np_fnce/np_fnce.htm
- **CTCs Keys to Successful Planning, Implementation & Sustainability**
<http://www.ctcnet.org/pub/telecommunity2000/planning.html>
- **Developing Your Fundraising Plan**
http://www.managementhelp.org/np_progs/fnd_mod/fnd_raise.htm
- **DOC Illinois Web Site**
<http://root.visualhighway.net/DOCIllinois/index.asp>
- **Foundation Center - Your gateway to philanthropy on the World Wide Web**
<http://fdncenter.org/>
- **Grants Collection Orientation Manual**
<http://www.lib.ci.tucson.az.us/grants/grantcon.htm>
- **Managing Your Nonprofit's Finances and Taxes**
http://www.managementhelp.org/np_progs/fnc_mod/fnance.htm

Exhibit 8-1: Keys to Successful Planning, Implementation & Sustainability

Resource Paper Prepared for: "TeleCommunity 2000," 3rd Annual Community Network Technology Conference, December 11-12, 2000, Omni South Park Hotel, Austin, Texas

Presenters:

Paul Lamb, Founder, Street Tech, San Pablo, CA, <http://www.streettech.org>

Michael Roberts, Director, Information Technology Initiative, United Neighborhood Houses of New York, New York, NY, <http://www.unhny.org>

The Scope

A community technology center (also called by many other names including: computer labs/rooms, computer learning centers, CTCs) in its broadest possible form is a multi-purpose education and training facility that can provide a wide range of computer technology related services to many different kinds of people. There is no one ideal type or model for a computer technology center. CTCs are located all over the United States in churches, housing projects, job training centers, settlement houses, cable public access centers, shelters, schools, human service organizations, museums, etc. Some are stand-alone programs in their own site. Others are a part of a larger organization. Some CTCs are fully staffed with paid, well trained program managers, computer instructors and computer systems support personnel. Others are staffed solely by volunteers (including senior citizens and college/high school students). Some CTCs are equipped with fairly modern, networked, multi-media computers with high speed Internet access, laser printers, scanners and digital cameras while others have outdated computers, slow printers and dial-up Internet access.

Guiding Mission

Over the past 15-20 years, community technology centers have been at the fore front of a growing community-based, national movement. Their shared mission is to provide underserved populations in rural and urban communities with access to free and/or low cost computer and information technology resources. Officially more than 450 CTCs are members of the Community Technology Centers Network (CTCNet), the premier national membership organization that is one of the early pioneers in this movement. Countless other community based computer instructional programs quietly

exist throughout the country unaffiliated with CTCNet or other community technology consortia.

Their Potential

When carefully planned and successfully managed, community technology centers can have a major impact on the lives of people as well as support the skills development and learning goals of an organization's programs. They can operate up to six days a week, eight hours or more a day, serving over a thousand individuals a year. Community technology centers can:

1. Provide an opportunity for participants and staff from different programs within an organization (i.e., community-based, multi-service agency) to learn computer skills. In such cases, the services provided by the CTC to each program within that organization are value added (FUNDABLE) components of those programs.
2. Serve as an income generating resource through fees for courses, membership dues and use of the CTC by outside groups or individuals.
3. Play a significant role in upgrading the employability skills of by providing computer technology resources to underserved community residents and groups.

How a computer technology center is planned and ultimately implemented depends on many factors including: an organization's priorities, needs (and those of the people/groups it serves), budget, resources (staff, physical site), planning skills, and an ability to get good answers to very technical questions.

Exhibit 8-2: *Planning and Sustaining a CTC Worksheet*

Participants	Don't Know This	Completed or Area of Strength	Want to Learn More
<p>Who will the CTC serve and why?</p> <p>Potential groups include: Agency program participants, drop-ins from the community, children, youth, adults, seniors, families, the homeless, unemployed youth/adults, at risk youth, agency staff (staff training), staff from other organizations.</p>			
Programs/Services	Don't Know This	Completed or Area of Strength	Want to Learn More
<p>What kinds of programs and services will the CTC offer to the targeted group?</p> <p>Types of services include: scheduled computer applications classes; computer workshops; advanced technology training (for example: A+, Network+, MSCE, Cisco) for specific employment opportunities; open access (use of computer equipment & software for self-paced learning/practice by groups mentioned above); group technology projects by youth in after-school programs; renting CTC facility to outside groups, etc.</p>			

Staffing	Don't Know This	Completed or Area of Strength	Want to Learn More
How do you identify a diverse (skills, ethnicity, gender) staff that is sensitive to the differing socio-economic backgrounds, cultures, languages, educational levels and learning styles of the people attending the CTC?			
What is the staff's role in fostering a welcoming environment in the CTC that is safe, professional and reflects the diversity of the surrounding community?			
How do you ensure that staff has the opportunity to upgrade their skills in line with the new technologies and software they will need to train others to use?			
How do you retain good staff?			
Management	Don't Know This	Completed or Area of Strength	Want to Learn More
What days/hours will the CTC be in operation?			
How will the CTC be staffed - Full-time, part-time, volunteers, student interns (paid, unpaid)?			
Who will be responsible for scheduling the use of the CTC?			
Who will be responsible for maintaining computer systems (including installing software, trouble-shooting, configuring computers and printers, cleaning systems)?			
How will the CTC be promoted throughout the community and/or within its parent organization?			

Computer Systems	Don't Know This	Completed or Area of Strength	Want to Learn More
What kinds of computers, printers, scanners, etc. will be in the CTC?			
How will the computer systems be configured (networked or stand alone)?			
If systems are networked, what is the strategy for providing appropriate levels of access to various users to computer applications and files?			
What kinds of applications will be installed on the computers?			
Who will maintain the computer systems and other equipment in the CTC?			
Physical Space	Don't Know This	Completed or Area of Strength	Want to Learn More
Where will the CTC be located in the organization, or if a stand-alone center, in the community?			
Physical layout of CTC?	Don't Know This	Completed or Area of Strength	Want to Learn More
Appropriate furniture for computers, printers, peripherals, sitting, software, books, etc.?			
Security of room (doors, windows) and computer systems?			
Ventilation (heating, air conditioners, pipes)?			

Budget	Don't Know This	Completed or Area of Strength	Want to Learn More
How much will it cost to operate the CTC in the first year? In the second year?			
Purchase and maintenance of computer systems and peripherals			
Supporting staff salaries - instructors, consultants, computer network support			
Software, computer literature, disks, computer paper, toner, etc.			
Furniture			
Phones and Internet access			
Membership fees, conferences			
CTC utilities			
Special events			
Funding & Sustainability	Don't Know This	Completed or Area of Strength	Want to Learn More
<p>How will the CTC be supported? Main sources of funding are:</p> <p>Grants - Federal, state and local government, private foundations, corporations, local businesses, individuals</p> <p>Fees - from classes, public access use, membership fees</p> <p>Donations - equipment and other computer related items, individual time (volunteers)</p>			

Assessment and Evaluation	Don't Know This	Completed or Area of Strength	Want to Learn More
<p>How will you document the use, value, effectiveness and impact of the community technology center's programs and activities on the individuals and groups who participate in such computer learning activities?</p>			
<p>How do you use these findings to improve the quality of the programs offered through the CTC?</p>			
<p>How do you use these findings to secure additional resources for the CTC?</p>			

9 chapter

Preparing a Business Plan

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9 chapter

Preparing a Business Plan

"The purpose of this program was to provide the ladies from the halfway house with basic but marketable job skills. Many of the ladies have spent time in jail, been addicted to drugs and have had various other hardships in life. Some have never even had a job that required any specific experiences or skills. Now, all of that is changing thanks to the CTC."

*Written by Janeen B. Glah, reviewed by Jacob Ortiz
Howard University Center for Urban Progress -- Community Technology Center
Washington D. C.*

Introduction

Creating business plans has not been one of the routine tasks of non-profit directors or boards as it is in the for-profit sector, but, as non-profits are forced to model themselves more and more after for-profits, it is not a bad idea to look at and perhaps learn from some of standard for-profit strategies.

Not all business plans follow the same outline, but all contain similar elements. The process and outline that follows is presented only as a guide and will be most appropriate for those Steering Committees and CTC Directors who have little experience in developing documents of this nature. For an alternate structure, Exhibit 9-2 presents a business plan developed by one of CTCNet's affiliate members.

A business plan is a verbal picture of your project. It tells other people what you are going to do and how you plan to do it. It lets others know that you are serious about your project, and that you have taken time to consider all the relevant pieces. A business plan can serve the CTC in a number of ways:

- As a guide to help set up and run the CTC
- To illustrate, to partners and funders, why you need their help

- As a boilerplate for fund-raising proposals
- As background material for staff and volunteers
- As documentation accompanying the yearly formal audit
- As a basis for developing CTC budgets for ensuing years, and,
- In HUD funding applications, as a substitute for a “Computerized Community Connection Plan (CCCP)”.

The CTC Steering Committee and management staff should reexamine the business plan annually. Experience may dictate changes or require that certain sections be completely rewritten.

The Business Plan: Process and Outline

Schedule a series of meetings of the Steering Committee (or sub-committees) with CTC management staff to work through each section of the business plan.

The documentation developed in the course of working through the preceding chapters will form the basis of your business plan. In particular, the material on budgeting and fund-raising (see Chapter 8) is absolutely necessary for preparation of the financial section of the business plan.

Assemble your documentation according to the outline in the following table, and provide a package to each person who will be working on the plan. The documentation will be used to produce the Business Plan narrative (see below). When the narrative has been completed, you will write an executive summary to precede the narrative, assemble the specified attachments, produce a table of contents, design a cover page, and bind the entire product in a manner befitting its importance. Please note that although different funders may require different documentation requirements, this particular plan covers a range of basic requirements and is especially helpful in a time crunch.

Business Plan Section	Subsection	Documentation	Chapter Source
Operations	Organization, governance and staff	Organizational chart Staffing plan	1 4
	Timeline		1
	Start-up needs and/or on-going operational needs	Staffing plan Software and hardware plans Space plan	4 5 & 6 6
	Communications and outreach		7
	Self-assessment and program evaluation		7
	Possible problems and solutions		
Financials	Start-up expenses		8
	Start-up income		2 & 8
	On-going expenses		8
	On-going support		2 & 8
	Projections (3-yr)		

The Business Plan: Section by Section

Program

This section describes the program focus for the CTC and explains why it is the right program for the intended participants. It has five subsections: mission statement, needs assessment, program description, community partners, user projections, and fees.

Needs assessment

The narrative in this section must answer the question, “What are the important needs among intended participants?” It must also set the stage for the program section to follow, convincing the reader that a) adequate data has been obtained, and b) that the data points strongly to the program focus identified.

The narrative should:

- include the mission statement of the CTC, spelling out the vision, mission, and values of the program. Also mention of the value of inclusiveness and diversity, non-discrimination, etc.
- define the community to be served: existing agency clients? residents of a housing complex? neighborhood residents generally? participants from collaborating community agencies? community demographics and statistics?
- describe the steps the Steering Committee has taken to determine community needs (conducting focus groups, interviewing members of the community, developing partnerships and collaborations with other community agencies)
- summarize the resulting data

Actual reports may be included as attachments.

Program description

The narrative in this section answers the question, “In what areas will the CTC focus its program and what offerings will it provide to address the identified community needs?” This section forms the basis for operational sections to follow: staffing, scheduling, financing, etc. The reader will need to be convinced that a) a variety of alternatives have been considered, b) other community

resources have been taken into consideration, and c) the resulting program is the ideal program for the community to be served. If the Steering Committee has developed a mission statement, it can be used (or referred to and included as an attachment) here.

The narrative should go on to describe, for each program area:

- the name of the program (e.g. open hours, GED instruction, job preparation, etc.)
- the scope, goals and objectives of the program (what will participants be doing?)
- the hours when the program will be offered
- the staff (paid and volunteer) who will supervise the program, and
- the anticipated outcomes

These descriptions need not be long or overly detailed. A description of an afterschool program might look something like this:

The goal of the afterschool program will be to broaden the computer knowledge of grade school children by introducing them to software applications not generally part of their school curriculum. The program will be supervised by one teacher for every ten children and will be held every afternoon, Monday through Friday, from 3-5:30 pm. The activities will center around multimedia projects using sound and visual imaging. The children will use the World Wide Web as a resource for project materials. The result will be that children will do better in school, will improve their language and communication skills, and that fewer will get into trouble.

Community partners

This section will summarize the Steering Committee's work in mapping community assets and establishing partnerships and collaborations with other community agencies. It will answer such questions as:

- "How were the community partners identified?"
- "What specific collaborations have been established?"
- "What is the role of each partner and what will that partner expect in return?"
- "How will the relationship be sustained?"

As you review the documentation from Chapter 2, remember that community

partnerships can take many forms and reap many different kinds of benefits: in-kind contributions of space, hardware, software, furnishing, or renovations; participation by professionals and agency representatives on the Steering Committee or its subcommittees; technical advice and assistance, computer maintenance and repair; volunteers for a variety of staffing needs; an agency that wishes to bring its participants to the CTC; and so on.

The narrative should be very specific and inclusive as to the pledges made by each partner. Support letters and MOUs from each partner (individual or agency) should be included as attachments.

User projections

This section should answer these questions:

- “How many people will attend in each of the CTC program areas?”
- “What increase in participation is anticipated as the CTC becomes established?”
- “What will a weekly (or monthly, or seasonal) schedule look like?”
- “How will the schedule change during holidays and vacation periods?”

In preparing this section, remember that a projection is only a “best guess”. As months of operation go by, you will accumulate attendance figures that will improve the validity of your projections for ensuing years. In the initial stages, the projections will be based on information from the focus groups, any pre-registration figures from collaborating agencies or advertised classes, and the results of any pilot program. The narrative should mention any currently envisioned caps on participation due to space, budget, or staffing restrictions.

Narrative statements can be as simple as:

Six seniors from the Community Center lunch program attended the focus group. Five of these indicated that they would attend Computer Orientation classes. Since over 100 seniors are involved in the lunch program, we anticipate an additional 10% of these to register for the classes in the first month.

It will be appropriate to include as attachments sample schedules showing the various offerings, the times these will be available, and the anticipated number of participants in each.

User fees

The purpose of this section is to indicate any revenues that can be anticipated from fees charged or contributions solicited from participants. The documentation resulting from the work outlined in Chapter 8 together with the user projections above should provide this information.

The narrative can follow an outline such as:

Membership fees are ___ for adults and ___ for children under 16. It is anticipated that the CTC will have an initial membership of 50 and will triple in size during the first year.

Outside groups that use the center to offer their own classes will be charged ___ per participant per session. Arrangements have been made with ___ organizations to bring classes for ___ week sessions, resulting in an estimated _____ of revenue.

Participants in public access sessions will be asked for a donation of ____, but any amount will be accepted and no one will be turned away for lack of a contribution. Based on user projections for these sessions, we estimate revenues of _____ per week.

Should any participants use the CTC for business activities, they will be asked to contribute ___ % of their earnings to the center. Although no such profit sharing is anticipated during the first year, this may be a source of revenue in the future.

The total anticipated revenue from user fees during the first year of operation is _____.

If no fees are to be charged for membership or classes, and it is not the intention of the Steering Committee to ask for participant contributions, this section need not be included.

Operations

This section of the business plan outlines the nuts and bolts of your plan for getting the CTC started and keeping it going. It has the following sections: organization, timeline, start-up needs, on-going needs, communications, and possible problems and solutions.

Organization

This section will answer the following questions:

- “What body will govern the CTC? Who are its members? What are their major responsibilities?”
- “Who will be in charge of the day-to-day operations of the CTC? To whom is this person responsible?”
- “What other staff will be required? What will their duties and hours be? To whom will they be responsible?”
- “What is the nature of the performance review process?”
- “What strategies will be employed to reward and recognize staff and volunteers?”

The narrative should describe the governance structure and include the chart of organizational structure developed as documentation in Chapter 1.

In describing the day-to-day administration, the staffing plan developed in Chapter 4 will be helpful. The narrative should summarize the tasks to be performed by paid full-time and part-time staff and by volunteers, together with qualifications required for each. It should detail hours, salary, and benefits for staff, and, in the case of volunteers, include plans made for coordination and supervision as well as plans for ***support and recognition***.

Timeline

This section answers the questions, “When do the steps in the process of setting up the CTC happen? Who is responsible for making them happen?”

A sample timeline was given in Chapter 1. Your Steering Committee modified this to form its own timetable and the results were documented. Review that document now and make any additions, subtractions, and other adjustments according to what has taken place and what future actions have been planned.

The narrative should reproduce and annotate your timetable, indicating period for accomplishment of the task, deadline, and positions of people (staff and/or committee or subcommittee chairs) responsible for seeing that the task is completed.

Start-up needs

The purpose of this section is to demonstrate care of planning and consideration of all relevant detail. The narrative should reassure the reader that all start-up aspects of the CTC have been considered and planned for. It may be the case that a CTC that has been in operation for some time is only now getting around to

developing a business plan. In this case, the section on start-up needs will not be included in the business plan.

Start-up needs include all items, services, and expenses that need to be acquired and/or paid for prior to opening the CTC, including space, staff, equipment, and supplies. Start-up needs do not include items, services, and other expenses to be acquired or supported after the CTC has opened.

The narrative should list the needs (space and utilities, salaries, software, hardware, furniture and supplies) and indicate what the timing and arrangements are for acquiring each. For example, the Steering Committee may have engaged a Center Director 3-4 months in advance of expected opening. Not only the salary and benefits for that period, but also the costs of that person's workspace, necessary equipment and supplies will be regarded as start-up needs.

A more detailed list of start-up needs can be included as an attachment. This should include itemizations of software, hardware, and supplies as well as necessary furniture and furnishings purchases. It should specify the pre-opening cost of space, utilities, and alterations. It should include any expenses related to outreach, promotion, and, of course, associated fees and salaries. In addition, it should list any necessary modifications to make the facility accessible to people with disabilities and functional limitations.

On-going needs

Again, the purpose of the section is to convince the reader that you've thought of everything—that every contingency has been covered. The on-going needs are the day-to-day expenses of running the center and cover, at a minimum:

- Space (rent, utilities, security, insurance, maintenance, trash removal)
- Staff (including salaries, benefits, and perks for volunteers)
- Outreach and promotion
- Equipment and furnishings (repair and replacement)
- Software (acquisition, upgrades, and replacement)
- Computer and office supplies
- On-line services and internet accounts
- Periodicals and reference material

- Special events budget

These can be summarized and described in the narrative, and a more detailed listing can be made available as an attachment.

Communications and outreach

Readers of your business plan will want to know how you intend to inform the community of the existence and location of the CTC and its intended services, membership options, hours, and classes.

As noted in Chapter 7, a popular misconception about CTCs is that you put computers in a room, open the doors, and people come. In fact, there are many reasons that this simply doesn't happen: people don't know about the CTC; they don't think it's there for them; they are shy about their self-perceived ignorance; they have no idea what being able to work with a computer can do for them. So public communication and outreach is an essential piece of your operations plan and hence of your business plan.

Marketing and Outreach is discussed in detail in Chapter 7. Use the documentation to inform the narrative for this section:

- What media will you use?
- What promotional materials will you generate?
- What meetings are targeted for personal presentations?
- What kinds of promotion can be expected from community partners?
- How will you approach intended participants who may not read, who may speak a different language, who seldom leave their homes, or who cannot hear or see?

The narrative should include a description of the process you went through to develop your outreach plan, and it should provide specific answers to the kinds of questions listed above as in the following example:

We plan to communicate with local religious institutions. We would like to encourage service attendees to come to the center. We would like to open the door for these institutions to donate funds or provide interested and able volunteers. We plan to tell them personally about the CTC, what it intends to offer and whom it intends to serve. We plan to make contact by letters and phone calls to appropriate clergy and religious leaders and hope to be permitted to speak at services and distribute brochures and flyers to attendees. Religious institutions that we have been in touch with include ____, ____, and ____.

Self-Assessment and program evaluation

Readers of the business plan will need assurance that the CTC is monitoring its own performance. This section describes the steps that will be taken to accumulate data and examine quantitative and qualitative outcomes in relation to the goals and objectives specified in the program description. Refer to the self-assessment plan developed as documentation for Chapter 7.

Possible problems and solutions

It is important to discuss what might possibly go wrong with your planning. The object here is twofold: a) to give the reader a sense that your plan is real - not just pie-in-the-sky—that you *know* things will go wrong, and b) to add further substance to the impression that you really have considered all the contingencies and are prepared.

This particular topic has not been directly addressed in the preceding sections of this manual. By working through each chapter, the Steering Committee and Center Management team have probably arrived at a good idea of what obstacles to program success may lie in wait.

Bite the bullet and make a list of these. Here are some possibilities:

- Hardware breakdown or malfunction—no technical assistance present
- Not enough participants—OR too many participants
- Scheduling plan not appropriate for those who most want to use the CTC
- Failure of fund-raising initiatives
- Inability to recruit and retain effective volunteers
- Space problems: too hot, too cold, not enough space, access difficulties
- Understaffing, inability of staff to respond to participants, staff turnover

Pick two or three that seem most likely to occur, given your planning, and write a short paragraph describing each and indicating strategies and mechanisms that the CTC will employ to overcome the obstacle. Here is an example:

Participants resent and rebel against rules established for the CTC. They refuse to sign in OR they insist on bringing their own software OR they take sodas and food to the computer stations,

or otherwise behave in bizarre and threatening ways. The center director will meet with such participants and explain the rationale for the CTC rules, and solicit their cooperation. If behavior is not improved, the center director will deny these participants further access.

Financial Planning

The object of this section is to demonstrate the capability of the CTC to raise sufficient revenue to support its expenses. The narrative will summarize what the previous section projected in terms of expenses and income. You will be attaching a cash flow worksheet (see Exhibit 9-1 and documentation from Chapter 8) detailing expenses for start-up and on-going costs over at least one year. The narrative in this section must describe the strategies the CTC will use to achieve sufficient income to match these expenses.

If the business plan were being prepared by a for-profit technology center, the preparation of the cash flow worksheet might necessitate returning to the User Fee section (above), and adjusting the fee schedule so as to bring revenue into balance with expenses. Since the CTC is being established to serve people who otherwise would not have the opportunity to use technology because they can neither afford the technology itself nor the training, it is unlikely that a fee structure designed to support the center would allow the CTC to achieve its fundamental goal. Other revenue options have been discussed in Chapter 8.

Preparing the cash flow statement

Exhibit 9-1 is a completely fictional cash flow worksheet, yet by examining it carefully, you will probably have a good idea how to use the budget information arrived at in Chapter 8 to prepare your version.

You will have 15 columns across. The first will be used to identify your line items. The next will specify expenses and income for start-up. Following will be monthly budgets for operating expenses. The last column will give the total for the year.

In the first column, the line items will parallel the sections (not all the line items) in your worksheets. An additional item in the Cash In section is Bank Interest. This is listed under “other” on Income worksheet in Chapter 8.

Since the income worksheet prepared in Chapter 8 shows annual figures, you may want to use your timetable and the grant decision dates from your funding research to place anticipated grant amounts in the months where they are most likely to come in. This will give a sense of reality to this statement. Similarly, if

certain expenses are payable annually or quarterly, you may want to enter the appropriate amount in the month when payment is due.

The “Cash Flow” line shows the difference between the “Total Cash In” line in the upper portion and the “Total Cash Out” line in the lower section. Note that it is not unusual for this figure to be negative. What is important is that “Ending Cash” not enter the negative area. The “Cash Flow” figure in the final column represents the “Beginning Cash” figure for the following year’s Cash Flow Statement.

The financial narrative

Although both income and expense projections are just that—guesses—it is likely that readers of the business plan will be more interested in the probability of the CTC’s being able to meet expenses than in questioning the expenses themselves.

The narrative will describe the budgeting process undertaken by the CTC. It will also describe the research effort made and underway to uncover appropriate sources of support. Should the cash flow statement indicate negative cash flow areas, the narrative must address concretely the ways in which the CTC proposes to address these areas, and should include as many alternative income sources as possible along with conservative estimates of return from such alternative sources. For example, suppose that the estimate of start-up costs produces the following situation:

Start-up Costs		\$14,600.
Anticipated revenue		\$12,500.
National Bank	\$4,500.	
Housing Authority	\$500.	
Foundation Grant	\$7,500.	
Shortfall		(\$2,100.)

It would not be reasonable to anticipate raising this money from bake-sales or washing cars or mowing lawns or shoveling snow or even a combination of these. Why? Because the return is small for the organizational effort involved, and because the sum needed would involve an effort over a considerable length of time. More reasonable might be a statement such as:

To meet this shortfall, the CTC will secure \$100 contributions from twenty-one local businesses. Each will receive a certificate of appreciation of their efforts as founding members of the CTC.

Presentation and revision

Unless an accountant has been working with the Steering Committee on the business plan, the completed draft of the Financial section, the narrative and the cash flow statement should be given to a person familiar with financial statements for review and feedback. Appropriate changes should be made.

Even after the section is completed to everyone's satisfaction, it is important to use the cash flow statement (or the expense and income projections from Chapter 8) throughout the year to monitor and adjust the projections. This should be done monthly, using actual income and expense figures from CTC operation. Examination of the "Budget vs. Actual" statements should be a regular feature of Steering Committee meetings. They will also be invaluable in determining more realistic projections for following years.

Presenting the Business Plan

With all the internal sections completed, the time has come for some finishing touches to make the business plan easy to read, substantiate the contents with attachments, and make it look like the important document that is. Be aware that some funders receive a large amount of grant applications and may specifically request that you not send additional attachments. Check with an individual funder before sending in additional documents.

Attachments

Suggestions have been made throughout the chapter for attachments. These include any documentation used to support the narrative, brochures, flyers, letters of support, press releases that aired or are in print from local media, statements from participants, a floor plan for the CTC, support letters from collaborators and those who have pledged in-kind support, an organizational chart, resumes of senior staff, personnel policies, and, of course, your cash flow statement.

Executive summary

The executive summary is the first item readers will see after the Table of Contents. It should excite the interest of readers so they continue reading the plan. It must be short, not more than two pages and preferably limited to a single page. And it should present the highlights of the plan starting with an introduction of the entity presenting the plan. Make sure you answer the following questions:

- Who Are You? (Describe the Committee or Sponsoring Agency)
- What are you planning? (Describe the CTC)
- Why are you planning it? (Describe the need)
- How will you do it? (Describe your plan)
- When will you do it? (Describe your timeline)
- What will happen? (Describe anticipated outcomes)

Table of contents

The table of contents appears after the cover page and should list in order the sections of the business plan starting with the Executive Summary. Subheadings may be included under Program, Operations, and Financial Planning, as appropriate. Page numbers should be provided including a page number where the Attachments start.

Cover page

The cover page states the name of the CTC, the name of the sponsoring agency or of the Steering Committee members, the fact that this document is a business plan, and gives the month and year of publication.

Binding and distribution

Choose a binding that looks professional and yet is not expensive. Three ring binders or velo binders are appropriate and allow you to insert colored tabs as section separators. These binders can be purchased at office supply stores and the assembly can be done by the Committee or CTC staff. There is a further advantage to this type, namely that extra binders can be used for other purposes.

Spiral binding is nice but has to be done professionally. A local printer can give you costs. If you go this route, you'll need a good estimate of the number of copies required. Cost will probably diminish as quantity increases, but on the other hand you don't want to have a closet full of unused or outdated business plans hanging around.

In estimating quantity, think about the following people who will need copies:

- Steering Committee members and/or Board members of the sponsoring agency

Additional Resources

- **A Proposal Writing Short Course**
<http://fdncenter.org/learn/shortcourse/prop1.html>
- **Apple - Education - Technology Planning Guide**
<http://www.apple.com/education/planning/>
- **Business Planning (for nonprofits or for-profits)**
http://www.mapnp.org/library/plan_dec/bus_plan/bus_plan.htm
- **Education Leadership Toolkit - Change and Technology Planning**
<http://www.nsba.org/sbot/toolkit/index.html>
- **National Center for Technology Planning**
<http://www.nctp.com/>
- **Sample grant proposal from Plugged In**
http://www.pluggedin.org/tool_kit/sample_grant.html
- **Strategic Technology — Dynamic Planning for Organizational Effectiveness**
<http://www.strategictechnology.net/>
- **TechAtlas - the tech planning tool for nonprofits**
<http://www.techatlas.org/tools/>
- **TechBuilder, GrantWriter, Technology Planning**
<http://compaq.edmin.com/>
- **YouthSpace** -- Sample CTC Business Plans
<http://www.youthspace.net/>

Exhibit 9-1

Cash Flow Worksheet

	Startup	Month 1	Month 2	Month 3	Month 4	Month 5	Month 6	Month 7	Month 8	Month 9	Month 10	Month 11	Month 12	Total Year 1
Beginning Cash	0	32,265	30,468	28,462	26,605	24,505	22,445	20,132	17,754	15,112	12,587	9,787	6,991	
Cash In:														
User fees		60	100	100	100	160	160	160	200	200	200	240	240	1,920
Fundraising		200		200		200		200		200		200		1,200
Grants	46,000													46,000
Value of In-Kind Contributions	16,500	600	600	600	600	600	600	600	600	600	600	600	600	23,700
Interest on Savings Account	3,125	1,613	1,523	1,423	1,330	1,225	1,122	1,007	888	756	629	489	350	15,481
Total Cash In	65,625	2,473	2,223	3,323	2,030	2,185	1,882	1,967	1,688	1,756	1,429	1,529	1,190	88,301
														0
Cash Out:														
Start-Up Expenses:														0
Utility deposits	300													300
Office Equipment	5,000													5,000
Computer Hardware	15,000													15,000
Computer Software	2,000													2,000
Renovations	3,000													3,000
														0
On-Going Expenses:														0
Salaries	3,000	1,500	1,500	1,500	1,500	1,500	1,500	1,500	1,500	1,500	1,500	1,500	1,500	21,000
Health Insurance	1,000	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	3,400
FICA	370	185	185	185	185	185	185	185	185	185	185	185	185	2,590
Workers Comp	80	40	40	40	40	40	40	40	40	40	40	40	40	560
Unemployment Insurance	110	55	55	55	55	55	55	55	55	55	55	55	55	770
Professional Fees		100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	1,200
Insurance	400	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	2,800
Telephone	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	2,600
Water	200	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	1,400
Electricity	300	150	150	150	150	150	150	150	150	150	150	150	150	2,100
Rent	1,600	800	800	800	800	800	800	800	800	800	800	800	800	11,200
Security	50	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	1,250
Equipment maintenance		200	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	2,400
On-line services		50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	600
Advertising	100	100	100				100	100						500
Printing	100	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	340
Postage		20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	240
Newsletter		50		50		50		50		50		50		300
Equipment Replacement		100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	1,200
Supplies	50	100	60	60	60	95	95	95	110	110	110	135	135	1,215
Educational Materials	500		50	50	50	80	80	80	100	100	100	120	120	1,430
Total Cash Out:	33,360	4,270	4,230	4,180	4,130	4,245	4,195	4,345	4,330	4,280	4,230	4,325	4,275	84,395
Cash Flow:	32,265	(1,797)	(2,007)	(1,857)	(2,100)	(2,060)	(2,313)	(2,378)	(2,642)	(2,524)	(2,801)	(2,796)	(3,085)	3,906
Ending Cash:	32,265	30,468.3	28,461.7	26,604.7	24,505	22,445.2	20,132.5	17,754.1	15,111.8	12,587.4	9,786.79	6,991.13	3,905.68	

Please note that these numbers are purely for example. They are not based on any actual situation. You will need to get estimates for all of your center's costs as described in the financial section of the manual.

Exhibit 9-2: *Draft Business Plan*

Draft Business Plan Prepared by New Beginnings Learning Center, Pittsburgh, PA

Staff

Director

- certified teacher, B.A. - Carlow College, M.A. - University of Notre Dame
- 33 years experience teaching and administration elementary through college and community education programs
- training and experience in community organizing
- hired April, 1991

Computer teacher

- B.A. Geneva College
- experience teaching all elementary and high school grades
- experience working in community education and community service programs training and experience in current technology, hardware and applications
- hired January, 1995

Assistant/Secretary

- experience in secretarial work
- experience working community programs
- continuing education credits in computer technology
- hired August, 1995

Uniqueness

- Storefront - street access
- Location - connecting two communities; one mixed residential, one low income public housing
- Hub for a number of activities which include preschool classes, public school collaborative activities; JTPA youth employment classes; church youth programs; Pittsburgh Literacy Council adult tutoring
- provides a safe, constructive community alternative place for children to enjoy out of school time
- integrates learning and using technology with other learning activities
- electronically networked with local public schools and community centers
- networked with the Community Technology Centers' Network, formerly Playing to Win, an international community technology access program
- Site for video conferencing job training in collaboration with Three Rivers Employment Service. This training is unique on the East Coast.

- Video teleconferencing capabilities open opportunities for a variety of other community possibilities including communication between neighborhood groups, agencies, healthcare and other services and gang peace negotiations in a safe, non-threatening environment.

Strengths

- Six years presence in the community as a technology and tutoring center training hundreds of children and youth in the use of computer.
- A history of collaboration with other community programs, institutions and agencies including Breachmenders, Inc., Friendship Church, Open Doors community - school collaborative, Pittsburgh Public Schools, Carlow College, University of Pittsburgh, Carnegie Mellon University, City of Pittsburgh, Hill House Association
- well qualified staff
- State of the art technology including two Pentium computers with large memories, laser and ink jet printers, a Local Area Network, a Wide Area Network and dedicated ISDN lines for internet and teleconferencing, World Wide Web, and a growing software inventory. We have our own Web page and Internet accounts.
- Excellent location between two diverse communities and on the border between the residential community and the university district of Pittsburgh

Need

Technology, including communications and leaning technology is mushrooming all over the world.

- For people in low income communities access is prohibitive because cost of wiring, software, hardware and maintenance is beyond their means *cf. Market Research and Assumptions, p.6*
- knowledge of and familiarity with technology and the culture of computers is becoming increasingly important for living, employment and maximum access to educational resources.
- There are thousands of children, youth and adults in the Hill District area who will not have adequate access to technology without this resource in their community
- Community access centers are evolving from this need all over the country and in Europe.

Goals

- Expand and renovate physical space to accommodate increasing clientele and growing technology
- Transition to broader service, broader use of technology
- Network with a variety of schools, community agencies and Community Development Corporations for education, job development and economic development activities

- With these new linkages, to become an interconnected, networked community model to be duplicated with adaptations in other parts of the city, county and country
- Develop a serious fund raising plan which includes a three to five year transition grant
- Cultivate wider collaboration with other efforts in the Pittsburgh Public Schools, Pittsburgh Partnerships for Community Development, Pittsburgh Partnerships for Job Training and Development, community agencies and programs such as Hill House and Youth Fair Chance
- Change demographic focus from an autonomous learning center whose primary service focus is youth 3-15 years old, to a center connected to other centers and local schools while we serve children and youth, teenagers, young adults and parents / guardians and other family and community members
- Change scheduling from four days a week, primarily after school, to five or six days weekly with more daytime activities

Methods

- Recruit renovation crew, funds from church partners for physical upgrades
- Additional simultaneous activities for technology use
- More days, hours
- More diverse programs, population
 - youth
 - adults
 - market study - what do businesses need; what do individuals need to build a business
 - specifically job-related skill development
 - classes related specifically to college prep
 - skill development specific to economic development, owning businesses, franchises
 - data entry, word processing, desktop publishing; architecture/construction

Funds Sought

*Funding is being sought to secure the following positions and costs:

Staff

Director	30,000	+11,719
Assistant	22,000	+14,700
Computer Teacher(2 p.t.) @12,000	24,000	+16,700
Group Tutors	3,500	-----
Benefits	17,000	+13,500
Total	96,500	+56,619

Overhead

Update Technology	3,000	+3,000
Rent	3,900	+1,500
Gas	2,200	+1,100
Electric	1,300	+ 650
Telephone	1,000	+ 450
Maintenance/ Security	600	+ 150
Janitorial	600	+ 300
Hardware Maintenance	450	+ 300
Total	13,050	+7,450

Program

Computer Software	1,500	1,000
Grand Total	111,030	+65,069

Budget Narrative

A. Director/Fundraiser

Develops programs; oversees staff; programs; communicates with board, other agencies and outside collaborators; develops relationships with, writes proposals for funders, maintains relationship with Presbytery, immediate and broader community; carries out goals and direction as approved by the Friendship Ministries board

B. Assistant

Assists director in daily program operations; oversees activities; maintains physical order of the center; keeps statistics on registration, attendance and progress of students, attends to clerical, secretarial tasks

C. Computer Teacher

Teaches classes; follows up on attendance at classes; develops curriculum with director; orders, maintains hardware and software; stays abreast of developments in hardware and software and other community programs and resources

Sources of funding

- Pittsburgh Presbytery
- Individuals
- Churches, church-related organizations
- In kind contributions- i.e., Breachmenders - rent reduction
- Foundations
- Scholarship Fund

What investors receive in return:

- Participation in the activities of the learning center
- A state of the art, leading program with the potential to enhance the quality of life in our city, the quality of public education and the employability of an at risk sector of our society
- An annual report for accountability
- Annual open house
- Availability of tours of facilities, programs
- Periodic updates with samples of projects and anecdotal reports of activities

Use of funds and dollar amount:

- \$600 will give one person a one year scholarship
- See attached budget

Mission Statement**The New Beginnings Learning Center****1990 Mission Statement**

New Beginnings Learning Center is an education program designed to enhance the academic and social skills of neighborhood residents. Through equal access to learning resources such as computers, tutoring, and the library, the New Beginnings Learning Center stands as a visible commitment of neighborhood and church to empower students and parents/guardians as they seek to enhance the quality of their lives. The New Beginnings Learning Center is a tangible demonstration of Christ's reconciling love. It provides a critical link in the network of youth programs in the West Oakland community.

Vision

The vision for New Beginnings includes transition to broader service, broader use of technology, networking with a variety of schools, community agencies and CDCS for education, personal development, improved job opportunities and economic opportunities. With these new linkages and collaborations, to become an interconnected, networked community model to be duplicated with adaptations in other parts of the city, county and country.

	<i>YEAR I</i>	<i>YEAR II</i>	<i>YEAR III</i>
Activity hours change	96-97 -Add a.m. classes; evening classes -additional open hours	97-98 more evening and Saturday classes	98-99 stabilize and evaluate
# of users 200 in 95-96	250 (25% increase)	300 (20% increase)	stabilize and evaluate 330 (10%)
# staff	-increase computer teacher from 1/2 time to full time -1/2 time director -increase assistant from 1/2 time to full	-1/2 time director	stabilize and

Objectives and Strategies

1. Increase the number of users and programs offered using computer applications such as data base, spread sheet, word processing, internet, teleconferencing and other programs

Strategy - Offer classes for specific interests, populations

- a. SAT- college preparation classes
 - b. Remedial classes specific to skills need This could be coordinated with schools
 - c. Literacy programs with the Pittsburgh Literacy Council
 - d. Introductory & intermediate classes in computer applications and internet use for adults
 - e. Classes in desktop publishing
 - f. Coaching in writing a business plan
 - g. High school remedial classes
 - h. G.E.D. test preparation
2. Increase the number and quality of relationships in local and global networks
 - a. teach classes in how to use networks
 - b. provide passwords, mailboxes for internet
 - c. schedule open hours for use
 - d. do collaborative programming with schools, agencies and organizations in all networks; i.e. - letter writing; other cooperative projects

Program Description

History

Friendship Community Church was placed in the heart of the West Oakland/Terrace Village community by Pittsburgh Presbytery in 1960. Located in a dense urban area immediately adjacent to Pittsburgh's public housing development, the church has established a long history of reaching out to meet needs and support families of the neighborhood.

One of Friendship's major emphases has been on youth. For the past ten years, an after school youth club and a summer youth program that serves over 85 children have given neighborhood youth from five to fifteen years old enriching experiences through recreation, art, travel, music, and Christian study. These activities led the people of Friendship Church to recognize the need to bolster the education component of the youth program. Thus began the founding of the New Beginnings Learning Center in the fall of 1989, for the purpose of enhancing, encouraging and supporting the academic performance of community youth. One of the objectives of the center is to help make the possibility of college or vocational training a reality for youth who are unlikely to consider such alternatives without learning and technological exposure beyond that of the normal school situation.

The Center

The Learning Center, since 1994 a program of Friendship Ministries, Inc., a nonprofit corporation of youth programs of Friendship Community Presbyterian Church, is a two room storefront located across the street from the church. It has a computer classroom designed to motivate students and give them access to computer technology and practice which they may not otherwise receive. A one-on-one tutoring/mentoring program utilizes over twenty five volunteer tutors from the community and local colleges, universities and area churches.

Around 100 students ages 3-16 are currently involved in our formal programs with several students on the waiting list in need of some academic assistance. Others just stop in to borrow library books or play various strategy games with other children. Currently adults are also registering for our computer programs also.

In addition to our many volunteers, a part-time computer teacher augments the current staff of one full-time director, a part-time secretary and two part-time group tutors who meet with 4-5 children each four days a week after school.

The Center's linkages with public and private schools have been instrumental in tracking students' progress, assessing their needs, and closing gaps between school, community and home. We draw children from over fifteen public and private schools in the area, including A. Leo Weil and Madison Elementary, Margaret Milliones Middle and Schenley High School. These schools educate most of the children from our immediate community.

Situation Analysis

1. **Our strengths** are marked by technical opportunity, stability and experience
cf. page 2
2. **Our weaknesses** include our need for staff; materials and programming to maximize our potential impact in the community
3. We are in a **location that affords us an excellent market opportunity** since we are in a community with hundreds of people with a bare minimum of technology and access. *cf. attached articles*
4. As **members of the Playing to Win/Community Technology Network** international community computing network for five years, we are in an excellent position to know the needs and possibilities nationwide. Our online networking and program planning with the Pittsburgh Supercomputer Center, the City of Pittsburgh, the Pittsburgh Public Schools via the Common Knowledge project, the Hill House Association, and other community technology programs situate us well for broader impact and opportunity in our region.

Market Research & Assumptions

1. **Opportunity:** A survey we conducted in 1995 shows a 92% interest in this type of learning center; 89% of those surveyed said they would send their children and/or grandchildren to such a program; 73% said they thought their neighbors would send children. *cf. attached report*
2. **Consumer profile:** The 1989 census shows that the median family income for people in the community the learning center serves is \$5,400 in Terrace Village and between \$10,000 and \$17,000 in West Oakland. Unemployment is 42% in Terrace Village and 11.6% in West Oakland. Less than 15% of the adult population of Terrace Village attended college, about 30% in West Oakland. Thirty two percent of the population of Terrace Village is between 5 and 15 and 25% is the 18 - 30 age group. This gives us a large pool of children, youth, young adults and adults who are under-employed, unemployed and under-educated from whom to draw for our services.
cf. attached census figures
3. **The barriers** this effort encounters and will continue to face include:
 - Fear: fear of technology; fear of success; fear of the unknown
 - Depression: for a variety of social and personal reasons. This can suppress motivation and turn into anger.
 - Preoccupation with survival
 - Life contingencies that frustrate efforts to succeed, i.e., unemployment, under-employment, family, health, personal issues; access to transportation, poor orientation to social expectations

4. Geographic Market factors

- Area The West Oakland Terrace Village will be our primary target for users with a minimum of 90% of our usage by people of this area. Census figures show that this area has an abundance of people who could use this service. Outside community people will be charged additional user fees beyond initial registration fee with the exception of persons who make arrangements through the Hill District network collaborations.

5. Recruiting (How)

a. Identify population

Adults - community agencies, organizations, churches, word of mouth

Youth - schools, churches, youth organizations

Children - schools, adult references, youth, organization

b. Satisfying an expressed need

Identify specific needs for programs with surveys of given populations and institutions and developing programs answering those needs

- community surveys
- institutions who have identified needs
- needs identified by collaborations with other agencies, etc.
- conversations with current students
- market needs pertinent to the population served validated by neighborhood network connections

c. Contact/outreach/promotion

- online networks
- personal networks
- community leaders, networks
- institutional contacts through announcements, distribution of fliers, bulletin boards, recommendation of specific persons

Service and Delivery

How do we treat people/how do we keep programs meaningful to the client after successful marketing:

1. Programs should be carefully planned, monitored, reviewed in staff meetings and retreats.
2. Programs should be carried out with sensitivity to the students' needs.

This requires adequate staff with good planning, individually and collectively; stable, consistent organization; knowledge of the material and how to effectively communicate the goals and skills of the program to the students. The learning center will be a place for questions, problem solving, sometimes discovering answers, always knowing the dignity, respect and creative experience of pursuing one's own questions in the context of a supportive group with competent mentors.

- To achieve this goal the learning center will increase staff as noted in the chart on page 5.
- Staff will be screened for competence in their areas of service, sensitivity to the community served and ability to work with the total staff.
- Staff will meet biweekly for 1 1/2 hours to evaluate and plan, and they will converse daily, as possible, on the status of programs.
- Written course evaluations will be given to every student to be returned and used for future planning.
- Creative problem solving, which includes staff and students will be an integral part of training, teaching and philosophy of the center as opposed to a static, didactic model of teaching/learning.
- Once a year, in August, staff will meet for a three day period to review the prior school year's programs; to evaluate and plan for the coming learning year. At this time they will review and revise the learning center business plan and create additional planning documents as necessary. At this time, they will:
 1. review the needs, resources and budget of the center
 2. review the needs of the community as perceived through personal experience, feedback from the students and input gleaned from other sources mentioned in the marketing plan
 3. develop project programming for the coming work year
 4. present the above recommendations to the Friendship Ministries, Inc. Board of Directors for approval

