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**Aspen Institute
Communications & Society
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Approach

- **As we face a news media crisis, what are the news and information needs of local communities? What should be done to meet them?**
- **The Commission looked at the local geographical community as that is still the focus of political decisions and community life.**
- **Vision of “informed communities.”**

Informed Communities

- Communities need information to *coordinate, solve problems, establish public accountability*, and develop a sense of *connectedness*.
- **“Information is as vital to the healthy functioning of communities as clean air, safe streets, good schools and public health.”**
- Information ecologies serve *personal* as well as *civic* information needs.

Objective I

Maximizing the Availability of Relevant and Credible Information

- **Recommendation 1: Direct media policy toward innovation, competition, and support for business models that provide marketplace incentives for quality journalism.**
- **Recommendation 2: Increase support for public service media aimed at meeting community information needs.**

Objective I

Maximizing the Availability of Relevant and Credible Information

- **Recommendation 3**: Increase the role of higher education, community and nonprofit institutions as hubs of journalistic activity and other information-sharing for local communities.
- **Recommendation 4**: Require government at all levels to operate transparently, facilitate easy and low-cost access to public records, and make civic and social data available in standardized formats that support the productive public use of such data.

Objective I

Maximizing the Availability of Relevant and Credible Information

- **Recommendation 5: Develop systematic quality measures of community information ecologies, and study how they affect social outcomes.**

Objective II Findings

Enhancing the Information Capacity of Individuals

People need tools, skills, and under-standing to use information effectively.

- **All people have a right to be fully informed.**
 - *“There need be no second-class citizens in informed communities.”*
- **Funding to meet this goal is an investment in the nation’s future.**
- **Americans cannot compete globally without new public policies and investment in technology.**

Objective II

Enhancing the Information Capacity of Individuals

- **Recommendation 6: Integrate digital and media literacy as critical elements for education at all levels through collaboration among federal, state, and local education officials.**
- **Recommendation 7: Fund and support public libraries and other community institutions as centers of digital and media training, especially for adults.**

Objective II

Enhancing the Information Capacity of Individuals

- **Recommendation 8: Set ambitious standards for nationwide broadband availability and adopt public policies encouraging consumer demand for broadband services.**
- **Recommendation 9: Maintain the national commitment to open networks as a core objective of Internet policy.**

Objective II

Enhancing the Information Capacity of Individuals

- **Recommendation 10: Support the activities of information providers to reach local audiences with quality content through all appropriate media, such as mobile phones, radio, public access cable, and new platforms.**

Objective III
Promoting Public Engagement

- **Recommendation 11: Expand local media initiatives to reflect the full reality of the communities they represent.**
- **Recommendation 12: Engage young people in developing the digital information and communication capacities of local communities.**

Objective III

Promoting Public Engagement

- **Recommendation 13: Empower all citizens to participate actively in community self-governance, including local “community summits” to address community affairs and pursue common goals.**
- **Recommendation 14: Emphasize community information flow in the design and enhancement of a local community’s public spaces.**

Objective III

Promoting Public Engagement

- **Recommendation 15: Ensure that every local community has at least one high-quality online hub.**

Reed Hundt/HEEDS

- -any society and economy depends upon widespread, secure, and very cheap public goods for healthy communities and sustainable economic growth
- - Ubiquitous, secure and very low priced broadband (measured in ever increasing bits/second per dollar: the broadband value metric) is the platform for critical public goods
- The five key public goods that should be available for near-zero price to everyone all the time everywhere through ubiquitous broadband are (1) health care, (2) energy efficiency measures, (3) education, (4) democracy, and (5) security. (HEEDS)
- The Knight Commission report in detail explains how democracy would be promoted by all-inclusive, localized, very cheap, and secure access to information – meaning over a very high bits/second per dollar broadband network.

Conclusion

“The information issue is everyone’s issue.”

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