Regional Action Partnership
Shared Work Center/Telecommuting Committee

Recommended Action

Sacramento 2005
Demonstration Centers

Project Description
January, 2000

Background

The Sacramento Region initiated in 1995 a public-private collaborative process to develop a set of strategies to improve both the regional economy and the quality of life. This process convened business leaders and community members to form action teams around issues identified in the visioning and research phases.

Participants at the June, 1998 Regional Economic Summit adopted seven initiatives for action. A new organization, the Regional Action Partnership, was established to oversee the implementation of the seven initiatives. A committee of interested community members directed each initiative. Improving "access-to-work" was at the core of two of the initiatives, the Shared Work Center Initiative and the Home-Based Telecommuting Initiative.

The Shared Work Center Initiative is intended to satisfy multiple goals of reducing traffic congestion and air pollution, reducing commute times, increasing employee productivity, providing work opportunities for those in need, supporting small business growth, as well as improving the access of employers to a particular labor force. An ultimate goal is to create a community asset that can link businesses, the labor force, residents, schools, students, community resources, and others, increasing the capacity of the community and the current and future labor force to take advantage of the opportunities presented by technology.

A feasibility study of the prospect for implementing an economically viable system of shared work centers in the Sacramento Region was completed in September, 1999.

Study Findings

The feasibility study concluded:

- Attempts to develop shared work centers elsewhere in the nation have unsuccessfully deployed traditional office products. A shared work center for improving access-to-work will require a new type of office product. A demonstration project should deploy several innovative options in order to determine market preferences.

- The telecommuting work option (home- or facility-based) will require an adjustment in corporate culture. "Telecollaboration" by a distributed work force will eventually gain acceptance by employers. In order to increase the rate of adoption, employers need the opportunity to try out a variety of office facilities and receive coaching in how to use new network tools.

- Freelance workers, home-based entrepreneurs, and other small businesses also need the opportunity to try out a variety of office facilities and receive coaching in how to use new network tools.

- There is a critical mass of institutional partners both inside the region and outside that have shelf-ready programs that could be combined to form the community asset originally envisioned for the access-to-work project. This community resource could include the shared work demonstration center and training site; a virtual call-center for transit-dependent employees; access to community services including health care, education, job training, and small business assistance; and County services.

- A demonstration of such a facility would directly support growth in the Information Services, Electronics Manufacturing and the Health Care Clusters in the regional economy.

- A successful model of a community center that incorporates access-to-work and access-to-service will find an interested audience among new community builders and in-fill developers.

- A demonstration project will need to be supported by a high profile regional marketing campaign.

Description

The *Sacramento 2005 Demonstration Centers* are being proposed by the Shared Work Center Committee in order to introduce private businesses, public institutions and the general public to innovative facilities, technologies and business practices that will meet the goals of the Initiative. With collaborative action, these Centers can be established and operated in order to demonstrate a near term future which could be substantially realized by 2005.

The plan is to establish two 13,000 square foot facilities in areas targeted by the SHRA for improvement – one in the north and the other in the south.

In each case, the core facility will include:

1. A *prototype shared work center* with a few types of work station configurations and environments.

2. A 4,800 square foot *meeting space* that could be re-configured into 6 rooms of 800 square feet, or used as one big room or any variation in between. Portable video conferencing units, speaker phones, communicating white boards or other electronic aids would be available to each room.

3. Two *computer centers* with 18 computers each in 1,200 square feet of space each (total 2,400 square feet).

4. *Virtual Call Center* – assume 12 stations (total 36 in the 3 centers) in about 1,000 square feet.

5. *Exhibit space* for corporate or government exhibits and demonstrations that can change weekly or daily, thereby providing a continuing stream of something new, and also creating a source of income. About 1,000 square feet required.

6. *Administrative offices*, foyer, circuit rider public meeting areas, storage – 1,800 square feet.

Several optional elements can be added independently to each facility. A more detailed example of a demonstration center, including potential applications, is attached

Funding Sources

Obtaining reaction to this Prospectus is the first step in the process of estimating the potential contributions from each of the following possible funding sources. A rough estimate of cost for this demonstration project is between $1 and $2 million for the initial investment and 3 years of operation.

- Grants offered by governments and foundations could be the source of start-up funding.

Short term or sustaining funding can be shaped from the following sources, the exact mix depending on the specific circumstances.

- SHRA can, in some circumstances, contribute to the building rehabilitation or tenant improvements.

- The exhibit hall should generate income.

- Corporations might want to sponsor parts of the project.

- Some portion of the region's TEA21 allocation could be granted to the project for enhancing mobility.

- On-site advertising could be sold.

- The opportunity for consumer-reaction research should attract in-kind investments.

- The County and the City each have CDBG funds that can be granted for programs meeting certain guidelines.

- A Business Improvement District or an Owner Improvement District could contribute.

- The property/building owner might discount the rent due to the activity that the project will generate for adjacent businesses.

- After a demonstration period, program provider organizations such as Los Rios Community College District could be charged for access. Alternatively, *Sacramento 2005* could tack on a value added fee to consumer charges for classes or medical services.

- Membership fees or fees-per-use can be charged.

- Facilities such as the computer centers and the video conferencing meeting rooms can be commercially rented some of the time.

- There can be a commercial cross-subsidy – operate a for-profit futuristic photocopy service and share the profits with the non-commercial elements of the demonstration.

- School district resources from bond proceeds for new facilities or the Universal Service Access Fund might, under some circumstances, be shared with the project.

- Land developers might want to invest in the regional marketing organization in order to ensure the viability of the shared work element of the community facility that each will build into its new subdivisions, modeled on *Sacramento 2005*.

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Sacramento 2005
Demonstration Centers

Facility Description
January, 2000

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The title, *Sacramento 2005*, suggests the demonstration of a near-term, realizable future in which network technologies are used to address several of the region's most serious problems. The problems that will be addressed include access to work and services, work force preparation, access to the digital economy, traffic congestion, and air pollution.

The prevailing network culture of business, government and residents tends to trail the capabilities of network technologies. The Demonstration Centers promise to close the gap between capabilities and practice by showcasing the region's leading network applications developed by private corporations and public institutions located in the region. The Centers will introduce many of the innovations that can help Sacramento maintain its quality of life while absorbing high rates of growth.

The Demonstration Centers will simulate a new kind of community resource that could be replicated in neighborhoods and at village scale throughout the County. The idea is to concentrate at a mall or "campus" many elements that will be commonplace in the near future but that are just being introduced today. The effect should leave visitors and users with a holistic idea of how new building and office products, transportation products, tools for working, and organizational practices can be combined in one environment to meet a number of public and private goals.

The demonstration will be both practical and developmental. It will be practical in that it will actually operate and serve real clients. It will be developmental in that it will offer low risk opportunities for businesses and residents to experience a wide range of highly innovative technologies and applications, all supported by guides and training programs. Participants, from private technology companies to public institutions, will learn a great deal about the markets for new tools, services and practices.

Core Facility

Each site will have a core facility with optional elements. Both the applications that are run through the core facility and the choice of optional elements will vary as each site is crafted to meet the needs of the residents and businesses in its service area. The core facility will consist of about 20,000 square feet with the following elements.

1. A *prototype shared work center* with a small number of various types of work station configurations and environments. For example, entrepreneurs and corporate employees might be able to choose from:

- a simple open cubicle with "tenants" changing each day (or by the hour – Kinko's with telephones),
- a traditional office holding 3 desks that is rented to a single work group of 9 to 12 people, all of whom rotate through it during the course of a month,
- a "Correspondent" or personal desk that folds into a cube and roles away when not used (manufactured by Haworth),
- a suite of Steelcase "Harbors" rented by the month by various corporations interested in experimenting with various forms of collaborative work, or
- the innovative work station product of any manufacturer interested in seeing it tested.

The facility should be "self-serve" in order to reduce staff costs. Estimate 2,000 square feet will be needed.

2. A 4,800 square foot *meeting space* that could be re-configured into 6 rooms of 800 square feet, or used as one big room or any variation in between. Portable video conferencing units, speaker phones, communicating white boards or other electronic aids would be available to each room. This shared space would be used for all of the following:

- Meetings – in-person, video conferences or audio conferences (3 sites would facilitate government agencies and private corporations in the County holding some of their meetings all or partly electronically instead of strictly face-to-face).
- Distance education courses
- Vocational training/workforce preparation classes,
- Small business development programs
- Telemedicine services
- Electronic "field trips" to remote museums such as Museum of Television and Radio, Museum of Tolerance, or the Orange County Marine Institute

3. Two *computer centers* with 18 computers each in 1,200 square feet of space each (total 2,400 square feet). The functions would include:

- Public access to computers, buy E-Stamps, pay bills online,
- Computer literacy training,
- Internet training,
- County sponsored and staffed tours of government web pages and portals,
- Rental to private corporations as a training center on proprietary software for their own employees.

Another significant use of either or both computer centers would be as a *groupware training facility*. Corporate work groups (or supply chain work groups, or work groups that include employees and outside consultants) would attend for one to three days of training on tools essential to competing distributed work. This could include:

- WebEx (by ActiveTouch, Inc.) for conducting on-line meetings with up to 12 participating computers, including the capability to chat, share documents, jointly view PowerPoint presentations, demonstrate software, or tour web sites
- Office "hoteling" practices and tools for better management of central office space
- Lotus Notes for work group e-mail, calendaring, and document sharing
- PC Anywhere (by Symantec Corporation) for logging onto the computer back in the central office
- Video conferences between multi-media desk-top computers
- Groupware of any kind

4. *Virtual Call Center* (co-produced with Infocast) – assume 12 stations (total 36 in the 3 centers) in about 1,000 square feet.

5. *Exhibit space* for corporate or government exhibits and demonstrations that can change weekly or daily, thereby providing a continuing stream of something new, and also creating a source of income. About 1,000 square feet required. The following are examples of exhibits/demonstrations that could be held today:

- An exhibit of Internet portal/hosting services that could be used by retail businesses in Sacramento County. This could lead to local development of new portals specifically for Sacramento businesses.
- Manufacturers demonstrate the latest tools for web retailing. Today, such tools would include those that allow web pages to contain objects in 3-dimensions that speak, or 3-dimensions that rotate through a full 360 degrees.
- Hands-on use of the Motorola i500Plus multi-service digital wireless phone.
- Palm Pilot VII demonstration.
- Vue Care's "C-Phone" for providing video communications to deliver in-home services to chronically ill patients (has been beta tested in Pennsylvania with nation-wide roll-out next year).
- Hewlett Packard demonstrating several new products, including electronic "Payment 2000," its vendor-hosted vertical market trading community for managing the electronics components distribution supply chain, and its electronic stethoscope.
- Advanced home wiring packages by Clearworks.net
- The "Teach Tech" road show sponsored by ScanSource as a strategy for growing the reseller channel by educating and recruiting VARs for point of sale, bar coding and computer telephony products (for local small business development).
- Technological novelties such as visitor photographs printed on plain paper as a 2 dimensional bar code, with scanners spread throughout the facility to reconstitute the visitors picture on video screens (especially for children).

6. *Administrative offices*, foyer, circuit rider public meeting areas, storage – 1,800 square feet.

Optional Elements on the City of the Future Campus (extending about a 1/4 mile radius around the core)

- Drop-in day care center (6,000 square feet)

- U-Check Grocery Store (with self scanning check-out)

- Pocket retail stores – combination of electronic access to store catalogue and in-store goods that normally sell in high volume. Picture a Nordstrom's Pocket in 25,000 square feet.

- Video production/audio production studios for multi-media web pages and cable tv distribution (possibly a facility run by the County's cable television public access corporation).

- Periodic markets such as swap meets for used electronic equipment, or for locally produced arts and crafts.

- Advanced technology home entertainment suites for group rental.

Transportation

Electric vehicles have two especially attractive qualities. First, electric engines are less polluting than internal combustion engines. Second, inexpensive, off-the-shelf electric vehicles perform best at slow speeds over short distances – exactly the qualities for personal transportation that are most compatible with community-based assets like shared work centers and shared service centers.

As previously discussed as a potential partner, Toyota is currently searching for demonstration sites in which to introduce its latest innovation in electric cars. The new technology is the "E-Com," a neighborhood electric car with a 50 mile range and 60 mph top speed. This transportation innovation complements well the *City of the Future* demonstration sites.

A number of these vehicles could be made available for travel between the 2 or 3 demonstration sites. Their radius and speed characteristics are compatible with a round trip using freeway segments. Charging stations provided by SMUD at each site would keep the E-Coms charged.

Circulation internal to the campus or mall could be handled by electric golf carts or by electric buses. Advanced bi-, tri-, and quad-cycle technologies could also be deployed. Each technology has its own niche with industry leaders looking for a demonstration opportunity.

Regional Transit could also play a role by enhancing bus service to the participating sites.

Sacramento 2005
Demonstration Centers

Scenario

On a typical day at the northern demonstration center, the following might occur:

A local corporation is using 10 of the Shared Work Center offices to train 20 of its employees on how to conduct a meeting live over the Internet.
There are 6 State Dept. of Finance employees using work stations on a one week trial. The remaining 14 work stations are being used by local entreprenuers, 8 of whom are regulars.

The meeting space has been divided into 5 rooms; 4 at the smallest size of 800 square feet and one at 1,600 square feet.

- The first meeting room is being used without technology by a neighborhood association meeting to discuss its pending incorporation.
- The second is being used for a board meeting by a local non-profit corporation that has 10 people present with 2 audio participants (requiring a speaker phone and 2 ports of the audio bridge).
- The third room is being used for 4 scheduled consultations between different patients and a remote medical specialist (requiring one of the desk-top video conferencing units on a cart).
- The fourth room is being used by SACOG which is holding a meeting of transportation planners gathered from around the region to discuss congestion management issues (with participants gathered at either the northern or southern centers and connected by an interactive video conference, requiring one of the full-size video units on a cart).
- The large room is holding a product introduction training session for a private corporation (delivered by satellite and displayed over a large screen television)

One computer center is completely filled with kids doing homework assignments. The other has been rented by a private corporation to train its employees on new software.

A representative of the Social Security Administration is occupying the circuit rider work station and is conducting 30 minute appointments all during the day.

Hewlett Packard has set-up a two-day exhibit and demonstration of a new electronic stethoscope and other innovative products in its medical technology line. Medical professionals from around the region are dropping in for a modest hospitality and a chance to use the stethoscope. Each completes a product reaction form as they leave.

A tour consisting of the California Chapter of the American Institute of Planners is being briefed in the foyer prior to their walk-through of the facilities. Four employees are at work in the office.