

The logo features a stylized, abstract design composed of overlapping green and blue geometric shapes, resembling a map of the Wheatbelt region.

WHEATBELT DIGITAL ACTION PLAN

GROWING THE DIGITAL WHEATBELT



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Acknowledgements

The Wheatbelt Digital Action Plan was developed with assistance from the Wheatbelt Digital Action Plan Steering Committee. The Committee comprised the following individuals who generously contributed their time and expertise:

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- Gr Geoff Erickson (Avon Midland Zone Representative)
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- Rebecca Kelly (Wheatbelt Development Commission)
- Alan Heydon (Department of Commerce)
- Elizabeth Brennan (RDA Wheatbelt Inc.)
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- Gary Tuffin (RDA Wheatbelt Board Member)
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The Facilitator for the process was Sue Middleton of Grassroots Development.

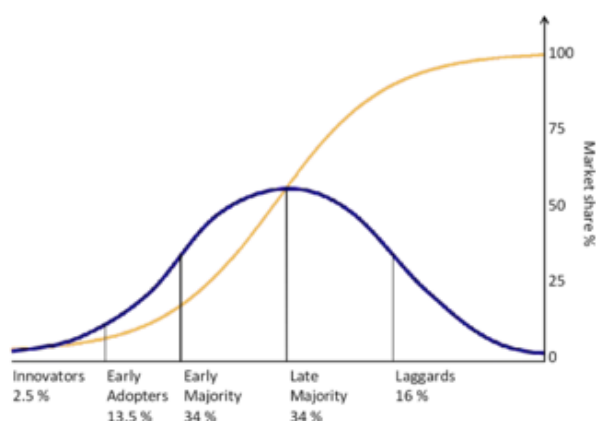
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The primary aim of the Wheatbelt Digital Action Plan is identify strategies that will maximize uptake and utilization of NBN infrastructure when it is rolled-out to the region and to highlight niche opportunities for a digitally enabled Wheatbelt. To achieve that long term target, the Action Plan has detailed a targeted approach that uses Diffusion of Innovations theory. The diagram featured below shows the innovation curve and the various stages of adoption of a new idea/technology¹.



The theory seeks to explain how, why and at what rate new ideas and technology spread through cultures. Diffusion is the process by which an innovation is communicated through certain channels amongst the members of a social system.

The Digital Action Plan has attempted to define where key sectors are on the innovation curve to adopting digital technologies and applications. This has been done to identify what type of investment would best drive adoption in that sector. The Action Plan also has used the approach of targeting the early adopters in digital and using those key people or organizations to be innovation champions for the Action Plan process.

The Action Plan has focussed on this concept of innovation diffusion strongly. The key sectors that were engaged in the process were:

1. **Industry sectors of focus** - agriculture, manufacturing and retail businesses
2. **Service delivery sector** – Health, Education/Learning, and Regional Development
3. **Community sector** – Local Government services, and on-line communities
4. **Environment** – sustainable farming and living services

An interesting discovery was that regardless of the sector that was engaged, the outcome and investment that needs to be made is similar or the same. Therefore the Action Plan has resulted in a **cross-sectoral approach where all sectors are targeted under key actions**, rather than resulting in a sector by sector set of actions.

An Engagement Framework was designed which ensured the planning process occurred at the local and regional level, and used local partnerships wherever possible to drive engagement. This is described in more detail in the section on 'Who was included in the Action Planning Process'.

The overall key findings for the Action Plan were to invest in five focus areas:

1. **Digital Learning** – overcoming learning gaps with relevant, local demonstration of benefit and outcomes, followed by practical support to get more on-line and develop the regions capabilities.
2. **Connectivity and Access** –further research and active problem solving into key areas of service need, technology options and investment capacity will be required to overcome this key business productivity issue.
3. **Leadership and Advocacy** –generating a high degree of collaboration and cooperation between all key organizations and amongst communities. A governance model for the action plan has been proposed to achieve this.
4. **Building Community and Services on-line** – support key service providers and communities to move on-line to drive and grow demand, and to capture new residents choosing to work, live or invest in the region.
5. **Building Digital Innovation** – work with the exemplars and inspire and promote digital technology uptake, and support key sectors where adoption is already high and benefits well understood.

All the actions work together to achieve not just a targeted approach using innovation diffusion, but an overall investment for the region in the digital space. The Action Plan creates a framework which can be delivered by stakeholders across the Wheatbelt region, and invite collaborators from within the State and across Australia to help deliver on this timely opportunity.

¹Diffusion of Innovations, Everett Rogers, 1962, P 150

Action Plan at a Glance

Areas of Focus	Digital Learning	Connectivity and Access	Leadership and Advocacy	Building Community and Services On-line	Building Digital Innovation
Objective	Overcome Learning gap with local demonstration of benefit and outcomes	Support local communities to improve their mobile and internet access opportunities	Provide Digital Leadership and Advocacy and ensure region speaks with one voice on digital issues and opportunities	Supporting service providers and community to move into an on-line environment	Working with Exemplars who have already demonstrated strong digital innovation capacity to support to drive adoption
Actions	<p>Build small business skills through pilot local trading platforms</p> <p>Get Local Government on-line through trialling on-line Development Application system in 3 shires</p> <p>Develop "Flying Squad" of regional capacity that builds skills and demonstrates benefit at local level</p> <p>Organise one-click Regional Digital Expo bringing together tools, technologies, speakers and knowledge experts, run as face to face and on-line event</p>	<p>Audit NBN technology and outcomes for communities, identify gaps between delivery and need, supply information on technology options.</p> <p>Expand mobile coverage and capacity through new investment models</p> <p>Create WiFi spots in pilot communities and build local platform for visitors</p>	<p>Build implementation team from RDA, WDC and Local Govt</p> <p>Develop a united Wheatbelt Digital Voice</p> <p>Build a network of exemplars, industry and govt supporters and continue to build the "narrative" for people to understand the change process</p> <p>Engage young people to define the digital future for the Wheatbelt</p>	<p>Invest in Heartlands to host and present digital content and become the delivery mechanism for supporting communities to move on-line</p> <p>Pilot demonstration communities and projects to move into on-line format via devolved funding program</p> <p>Work with Health MoU group to support e-health enablement</p> <p>Work with all training and education providers to provide training on-line, and address infrastructure and system issues</p>	<p>Promote APP of the month, fund an annual APP competition and link digital innovators to Innovation Centre</p> <p>Work with Wheatbelt NRM to fund a program to use digital technology to learn how to live more sustainably</p> <p>Work with Heartlands to develop Inward Migration Strategy that is implemented digitally</p> <p>Work with grower groups to further grow productivity through digital technology</p>
Regional and Local Partners	<p>Avon Business Alliance</p> <p>Jurien CCI</p> <p>Wheatbelt Business Network</p> <p>Heartlands Inc</p> <p>Shires Dandaragan, Gingin and Chittering</p> <p>CRC network</p> <p>ICT providers</p> <p>Digital Innovators</p>	<p>Wheatbelt Development Commission (WDC)</p> <p>Local Government</p> <p>Community Resource Centre (CRC) network</p> <p>RDA Wheatbelt</p>	<p>RDA Wheatbelt</p> <p>WDC</p> <p>Local Government</p> <p>ICT Industry</p> <p>Wheatbelt Digital champions</p>	<p>Heartlands WA Inc.</p> <p>Local Communities that become pilots</p> <p>Health MoU group</p> <p>CRC's</p> <p>Department of Education (Regional Office)</p> <p>WA Country Health Service (WACHS)</p> <p>Registered Training Organizations (e.g. C.Y.O'Connor & Directions)</p>	<p>Wheatbelt NRM</p> <p>RDA Wheatbelt</p> <p>WDC</p> <p>Wheatbelt Grower Groups</p> <p>Heartlands WA Inc.</p>
Other Partners	<p>SBDC</p> <p>WALGA</p>	<p>Service Providers</p> <p>NBN Co</p> <p>Department of Broadband, Communications & the Digital Economy</p>	<p>Department of Regional Development & Lands</p>	<p>Education Department</p> <p>WA Education Institutes</p> <p>South West WA</p> <p>Medicare Local</p>	<p>Innovation Centre</p> <p>Curtin University (APP competition)</p> <p>Immigration</p>
Proposed Funding	<p>Innovation Capability Development Program</p> <p>WALGA Online</p> <p>Digital Local Govt Program</p> <p>Digital Regions Initiative</p> <p>WDC Blueprint</p>	<p>Regional Mobile Communications Project</p> <p>Royalties for Regions</p>	<p>Royalties for Regions</p> <p>Country Local Government Fund</p> <p>WDC – Regional Grants Scheme & Blueprint</p> <p>RDA Wheatbelt's Youth Connections program</p>	<p>RfR</p> <p>Bill Gates Foundation</p> <p>WA Education Institutes</p> <p>SIHI/ WACHS</p> <p>Telehealth Pilot Program</p> <p>Digital Local Govt Program</p>	<p>Grains Research & Development Corporation</p> <p>Community NRM Grants</p> <p>CSIRO</p> <p>Department of Agriculture WA</p> <p>CFOV</p>

HOW WILL THE ACTION PLAN BE IMPLEMENTED?

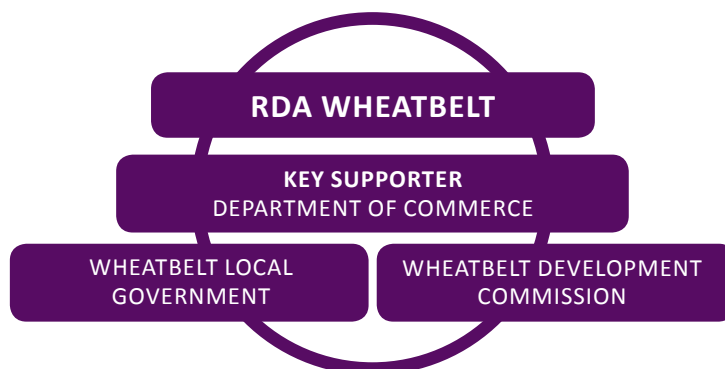
The implementation structure for the Action Plan has been defined at two main levels:

1. Core Governance Structure (RDA Wheatbelt, Wheatbelt Development Commission, Local Government) that has strategic oversight of the implementation of the plan. The Implementation Team will not necessarily implement all actions in the plan, but will facilitate the implementation.
2. Enabling Partners who can support the implementation of the Action plan in key areas of mutual interest or benefit.

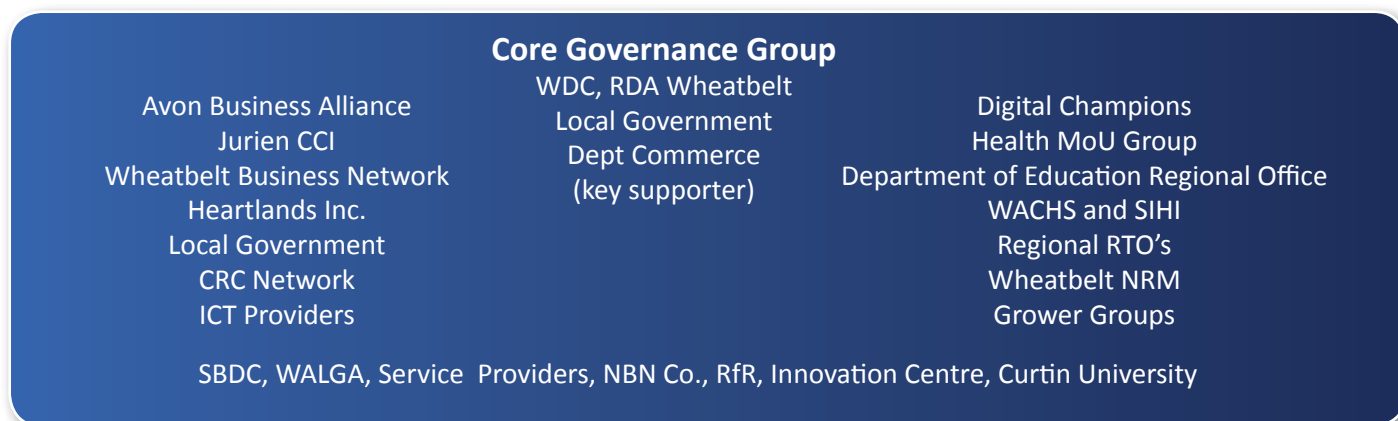
DIGITAL ACTION PLAN IMPLEMENTATION TEAM

Supported by:

Project Officers RDA Wheatbelt and WDC



The Implementation Team will work with a greater group of Stakeholders that are seen as the “enablers” of the Action Plan. The Implementation team will review the Action Plan and update the actions and ideas in the plan on an annual review cycle.



KEY ACTIONABLE FIRST STEPS

WHAT	HOW	TIMEFRAMES
Report Release and feedback period	Send to all Action Plan participants, databases of WDC and RDA Wheatbelt, receive feedback and incorporate	May - June 2013
Endorsement RDA Wheatbelt Board	RDA Wheatbelt Board give final feedback and endorse	June 2013
Prepare and implement Communication Strategy	Launch Strategy and invite partnership development with enablers Broadly engage the region in the process through presentations and other engagement processes	June – July 2013
Alignment planning	Based upon the partnership responses, develop implementation processes and players and coordinate implementation Develop Applications for funding, and implement	August 2013

REGIONAL OVERVIEW - WHAT IS HAPPENING IN DIGITAL FOR THE WHEATBELT?

There will be significant changes in the way our communities and region communicates, learns, shops, belongs and works. Businesses and industries have the opportunity to move to digital applications to manage their businesses and completely change the way they communicate with their customers, find new suppliers, build new markets and compete in any market in any location they are competitive in. Government services are moving on-line, and for those that can move into an on-line environment, the tyranny of distance can be reduced. In home applications are moving at a fast pace and this will enable people to manage all household digital applications in an on-line format.

The direct contribution of the internet to the Australian economy is worth approximately \$50 billion or 3.6% of Australia's Gross Domestic Product in 2010. This contribution is similar value to the retail sector or Australia's iron ore exports.

- Access Economics 2011

The Wheatbelt is in the process of its NBN roll-out and all communities will receive high speed broadband through three different types of technology – fibre to the home, fixed wireless or satellite.

NBN Co's current three year roll-out plan will see the following Wheatbelt communities receive fibre to the home connections:

- | | | |
|----------------|--------------------|------------|
| • Bakers Hills | • Merredin | • Narrogin |
| • Toodyay | • Southern Cross | • Pingelly |
| • Northam | • Wagin | • Brookton |
| • Moora | • Cervantes | • Beverley |
| • Wongan Hills | • Jurien | • York |
| • Cunderdin | • Lancelin | |
| • Kellerberrin | • Woodridge Estate | |

Some Wheatbelt residents are already benefiting from faster broadband speeds offered by NBN Co's Interim Satellite Service. A recent announcement that NBN Co that they will not lift the cap on how many people can access the interim service could mean that many Wheatbelt residents will be unable to access a basic broadband service until at least 2015 as the current cap of 48,000 is expected to be reached in early 2013. All service delivery will provide bandwidth, data speed and reliability that will be higher than achieved with existing technology. There are also combinations of existing technology that communities can use to improve the outcomes they receive under NBN.

The Wheatbelt has also received 16 new mobile phone tower sites under the RMCP project funded by RfR and delivered by Telstra. This will improve mobile connectivity in areas that have formerly had no service and were mobile blackspots. These areas are:

- | | | |
|-----------------------|----------------|-----------------------------|
| • Arthur River North | • Kondinin | • Wickepin East |
| • Ballidu | • Koorda | • Wongonderrah (Dandaragan) |
| • Bencubbin | • Miling | • Woodridge (Gingin) |
| • Breton Bay (Gingin) | • Mukinbudin | • Woottatting (Northam) |
| • Clackline | • Narembreen | |
| • Flint (Beverley) | • North Gingin | |

Digital technologies are creating new impacts that will support the Wheatbelt to grow and develop. Some of these impacts are likely to occur.

- New work practices and new small business models that enable telecommuting as a standard work format. Many organisations support staff to spend part of their work hours at home, and many small home based businesses operate from home work environments. This can be a key positive for people who wish to move to the Wheatbelt and “bring their job” with them. It is also a work format that suits the dispersed population model that is a key feature of the Wheatbelt.
- Opportunities for businesses to source services in a broader environment. For example there are CRC’s in the Wheatbelt whom provide free-lance services to customers who are off-shore or in different parts of Australia. The market place has opened up significantly for businesses and service providers due to digital technology.
- Businesses with a model that does not yet include on-line may find they are less competitive in the future. With the advent of high speed broadband, people will be able to download more content from the web, and source from anywhere. The trend to moving on-line is a strong trend, and the survey conducted in this strategy process indicates that the Wheatbelt adopters are already sourcing and finding on line, although not yet trading and managing their business on-line.
- Smart technologies can support communities to monitor their consumption in areas like energy and water and encourage more sustainable living. This can help to reduce cost of living and enhance relationships with nature, which can be a key positive rationale for moving to the Wheatbelt.
- Demand for shortened service and response times due to expectations created by digital technologies and the emerging phenomena of “always being in touch” will challenge businesses with a traditional model of servicing in a face to face format that costs customers time.
- Disruptive communication will become an expected feature and support tools to enable people to access communities will be expected and demanded. Communities that can form on-line trading, information and communication processes will be more competitive.



Digital TV switchover for the Wheatbelt is more problematic for communities who have owned and operated retransmission facilities for analog television. Switchover funds are not available to build and operate digital retransmission services. Four communities have upgraded their Retransmission services to digital: Wongan Hills Town, Koorda, Jurien and Cervantes. Residents in this area are still eligible for the Australian Governments Satellite Subsidy Scheme (SSS). The impact for these communities in the future is they will be responsible for maintaining this infrastructure.

There are subsidies for individual households to purchase and install satellite digital services. The switch to digital television will therefore present a substantial cost for those with multiple televisions, such as hotels, motels and van parks. In addition the cost of specialists and equipment for regional areas for maintenance is an issue. Motels, hotels, van parks, schools, hospitals, multi-dwelling buildings and retirement living facilities will require new satellite fed Mater Antenna Television (MATV) digital head ends with an estimated cost of \$12,000 to \$60,000 (based on rooms and TV requirements).

It is evident there is a significant process of change to be managed in local communities and some of the key strategies need to be managed at the regional or “group of local communities” level. The Action Plan defines a process of managing the change at a regional level and supporting local communities to gain the most advantage from the digital economy and technology.

AN EXEMPLAR DIGITAL BUSINESS... JURIEN BAY SKY-DIVE

Jurien Bay Sky Dive, recently awarded the Best Regional Business in WA (2012) is an exemplar business operating on the coast in Jurien Bay. The business offers adventure tourism experiences of the coast, with an opportunity to sky dive onto the beach at Jurien and in the process appreciate the stunning marine and bush environment surrounding this community.

What is the business doing on-line

- You can fully book your service on-line and are offered a number of innovative options for booking, including jumping for charity which gives you extra seconds in free fall
- You can view the video of your jump via a You Tube link
- You can hire a car, be connected via Facebook, be linked to the local Chamber of Commerce so you get information on the local community



ADOPTION OF DIGITAL IN THE WHEATBELT

The Wheatbelt has already adopted digital technology and applications in many sectors. The following Self Assessment tool developed by Explor² was utilised to assess the baseline of different sectors for the region based upon information gathered in workshops and via the digital survey. This table was then filled out on the basis of the information gathered. The result is that some sectors are across the spectrum from undeveloped to developed.

Uptake Baseline – Wheatbelt WA

	Undeveloped	Emerging	Developed	Leading
Connected Households		Many homes have connections, most have dial up. Infrequent users	Most homes have the internet and many have broadband. Some work from home online.	
Local Information	Local information through paper publications with ad hoc use of online services.	Local information is available from ready to use websites. Content is informative but limited sources.		
Vibrant and Sustainable Living		Some people use on-line to connect with others. Some online tools to manage energy and carbon.		
Community Health and Wellbeing	Few people have the opportunity to access online information and services.	Some people use on-line services to access information and services for health and well-being		
Community Education and Skills	Few online courses, few students use	Some students access digital resources and online education.		
Community Safety and Security		People can access online services for some information on local safety and security risks. This is a key area of demand for emergency services.		
Democracy and Open Government	Digital tools are not used to engage people in govt decision making.	Some govt information is online.		
Online Government Services		Govt information is available on line. Some basic transactions are available on-line.		
Key Economic Sectors	Businesses in key econ sectors make little use of on-line service channels.	Many businesses have websites that provide some information.	Businesses in key economic sectors (Agriculture) have strongly adopted digital tools and online services.	
SME Sector	SME's make very little use of digital tools and online services.	Some use of online services. SME's have websites that provide some information.		
ICT Sector and Digital Work Force	Very few local ICT businesses. Limited access to support.	Small but growing ICT sector employing a range of professional and technical staff.		

The work in researching the Wheatbelt baseline has indicated that parts of our regional community are ahead of the curve and demand may be exceeding supply in key instances. Organisations that have moved to digital format find that about 50% of their target market works comfortably in an on-line environment, and is ready to move into more on-line services. Interestingly, the survey indicated that although people have moved into an on-line environment that it has not stopped them also using face to face format and print media for gaining information and services in the region.

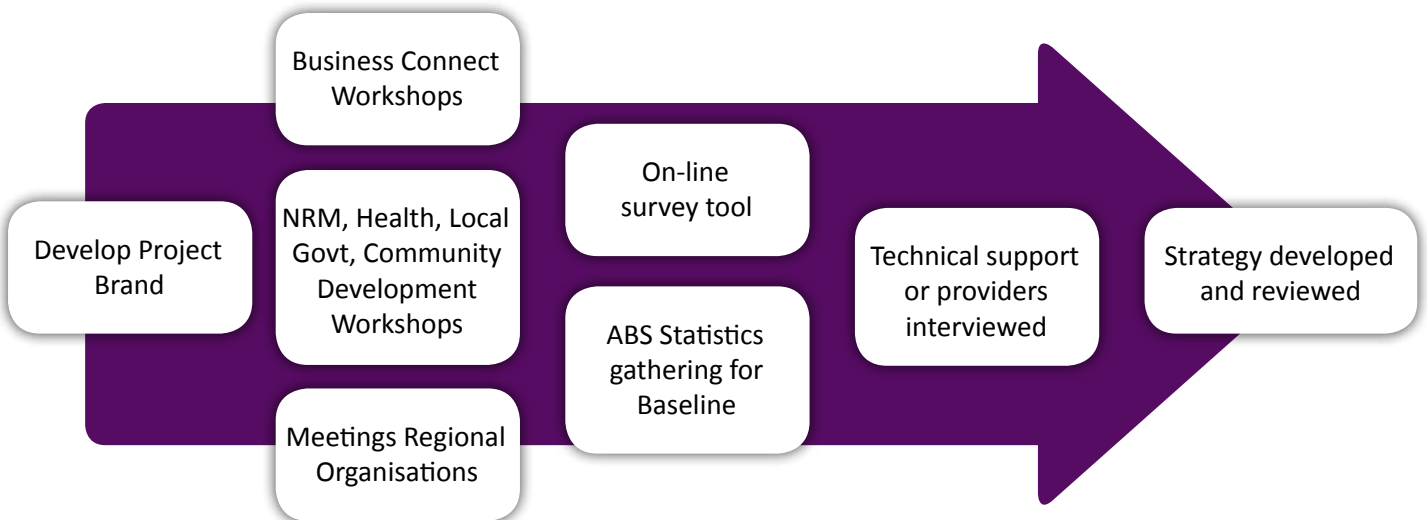
For businesses in the Wheatbelt a key finding was that people are searching for information on-line and many of them are looking for contacts and suppliers on line. Consumers are doing a large amount of “connecting and finding” on line. Wheatbelt businesses need to be “on-line” to make the connections.

Key sectors where uptake of on-line services was lagging were Health and Education. Both sectors have specific infrastructure, systems and management of change issues which are on a much wider scale than just this region. This will require targeted support.

²Self-Assessment Tool, Explor. Consulting, Hobart, Tasmania (03) 6226 6600

ACTION PLANNING PROCESS

The engagement process to develop the Action Plan was designed to engage at the regional through to local level. The overall goal of the process was not to simply engage people in the process of the plan, but to build a network of keen community, business and government digital leaders who would become the foundation upon which the action plan implementation could commence. Overall the engagement process achieved the task of achieving breadth with 320 participants involved, and depth within the processes and across sectors, and has identified the key organisations to help drive implementation.



BRAND

A brand was developed to enable the planning process to move into implementation and for the link to be made by regional players that the projects being implemented were as a result of the planning process.

WORKSHOPS/MEETINGS

Business Connect Workshops were organised by RDA Wheatbelt for the communities of Merredin, Jurien Bay, Northam and Narrogin. A workshop was also held for Community Resource Centres (CRC's) and Community Development Officers (CDO's) to focus on the topic of community development. A specific health workshop was organised, and two Local Government Regional Organization of Council (ROC) meetings were attended in Darkan and Trayning and a mini-workshop held in each. A workshop/meeting was held with Wheatbelt NRM, Regional Manufacturing Association, and various other agency and industry contacts were interviewed in a face to face format or over the telephone. In total 120 people have been involved across the workshop and meeting processes.

ON-LINE SURVEY TOOL

An on-line survey was developed to understand usage patterns, needs, understanding and capacity of people in relation to digital services and applications. The Survey was distributed to RDA Wheatbelt's contact database, Wheatbelt Development Commissions database, and the distributed to workshop attendees, CRC network, CDO network and the Regional Manufacturers network. 225 Surveys were commenced and 200 full replies received. Survey analysis provided vital information for the baseline development.

BASELINE

The survey tool was the main tool to gather information for the Wheatbelt. ABS statistics for the local and regional level on usage was also used to support the survey.

TECHNICAL SUPPORT

A range of technical support organisations were contacted to better understand the range of options for improving connectivity and access. These included Telstra, Information Communications Industry Association, Mr Mal Bryce, and a local ICT provider in the Wheatbelt.

WHAT DID PEOPLE TELL US ABOUT THE REGION AND DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY ADOPTION?

Digital is seen as being a potential game changer in this region. The planning process demonstrated there is a lot of opportunity to be gained from investing in digital technology, capacity and applications for the Wheatbelt Region.

The key message emerging from this process is that the region is one of great resilience, strong community connections and capacity to manage change. The key for the Wheatbelt to be able to participate is to have quality infrastructure and the capacity to maximise the opportunities.

WHAT DID THE WORKSHOPS TELL US?

The workshops clearly demonstrated that the Wheatbelt is a region in transition and has both growth and decline pressures occurring at the same time across the length and breadth of the region. The Western and Avon Zones are experiencing growth and development and are envisaging an exciting and dynamic future where the key question about development is how to ensure the quality of growth. The Eastern and Southern Zone, primarily the Agricultural zone is experiencing extremely strong adjustment pressure and impact from weather variability. Participants from these areas expressed uncertainty about the future given the major industry base is under threat. This is also having an impact on community cohesion and efforts to maintain strong and capable communities. The Central zone is experiencing neither fast paced growth nor decline.

Regardless of the context, all zones have the drive to develop competitive advantage related to natural or created assets. People's passion for the future of their community is no less, but the clear message is the community's capacity and strength is being tested.

All consultation yielded the same answer to the question – what is the future vision for your community?

All workshop participants want their community's future to be prosperous, dynamic, and sustainable and offer opportunities for new and old residents.

Furthermore what is evident from the engagement process is that community, as both a practice and an experience, is still strong. Although there is quite significant pressure on communities, there are still record high volunteering rates across the region, which is used as a proxy indicator for community strength.

Excess infrastructure is mainly placed in inland towns which are older; more established and have 2 or 3 growth cycles of building and rebuilding community infrastructure. The coastal communities are younger, and have had less growth cycles, but have stronger growth pressure. Hence community infrastructure needs to be built and rebuilt to maintain service delivery for growing populations and for communities that are striving to be competitive and retain growth opportunities. **Both areas of high and lower demand require a high degree of innovation to successfully plan and fund and build key infrastructure that will be an enabler for the community's future.** Communities are working hard across the region to generate or regenerate their community in various ways and although they describe being "planned out" they still express desire to be involved in on ground action initiatives to further their pursuit for growth and development.

The workshops all highlighted that there is a large number of fragmented efforts to provide leadership in the Wheatbelt, and that many communities are still in a "competitive" rather than cooperative paradigm in relation to regional development efforts. This was described as **"fragmentation" of effort and leads to people and communities pulling against each other**, rather than pulling together for their sub region or the region as a whole. This was seen as a key issue for the Wheatbelt.

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WHAT DID THE SURVEY TELL US?

The survey indicated the opposite is true for people engaged in a digital world in the Wheatbelt. They believe that digital has brought benefit to their lives and has enhanced their lives socially. This is a key finding and indicates that there may be a range of benefits to a region such as the Wheatbelt where people can both live in a small rural community and live in a digital environment. People are not using digital to remove themselves socially in a community setting, they are using it to enhance their participation, and they still believe print media and 'word of mouth' within their community are essential forms of communication.

In the work setting people are using the internet for:

1. Finding and connecting
2. Communicating
3. Managing their business

In the community setting people are using the internet for:

1. Being connected for emergencies
2. Community engagement
3. Managing their personal lives

The level of finding and connecting happening on the net indicates that all business and government services require some kind of on-line presence in the Wheatbelt. **People who are high users of the internet however are not managing on-line to the same degree they are connecting and communicating on line, and this is a key finding and capacity gap.**

A very important finding in the area of access and connectivity, is that people want improved mobile coverage. Data speed was also considered important, but mobile coverage was overall more important to them. They are mainly using the internet at home and at work and are not using institutional organizations for access, however public sites such as WiFi zones in Cafes and CRC's are used. Mobile connectivity is seen as being the key infrastructure issue for the wheatbelt and is having the greatest impact on business productivity.

The final key finding is important for government, business and communities in the Wheatbelt. **There is clearly a very e-savvy network of community members, using 3-5 different types of digital devices, who are meeting their service, commercial and social needs in an on-line environment.** It is not age specific, in fact survey respondents were in the majority over the age of 41. This is different to the assumption made in designing the planning process, as it was assumed there would be a generational gap in usage. The Action Plan implementation should not discount the Baby Boomers and their on-line capability, and they may in fact prove to be the best resource each local community has in created on-line communities.

Given the group we have surveyed are likely to be early adopters or early majority in adoption curve terms, it is likely that this trend will continue, and will likely accelerate as the early majority grow and then bring the late majority on line. **This is a key trend for a region that wishes to be competitive, attract new and retain its existing population.**



STRATEGIES TO CREATE A POSITIVE FUTURE FOR THE WHEATBELT

FOCUS AREA 1: DIGITAL LEARNING

The early adopters of digital technology in the Wheatbelt readily recognise and appreciate the value-add to their lives that Digital technology can bring. For many however, there is a learning gap which needs to be overcome with relevant, local demonstration of benefit and outcomes, and followed by practical support to get on-line and develop their capabilities.

The action planning process has identified two key targets for learning activities:

1. Retail business community – to enable them to capture increased value from the digital economy, find new markets, find suppliers on-line, communicate with customers, and manage their business on-line to achieve greater cost efficiencies. This business community will include Tourism operators and Manufacturing businesses.
2. Local Government – to enable them to adopt on-line communication, decision-making and planning tools that will enable them to positively engage with their communities

The wider community will be able to access a “flying squad” built from within the region to bring ideas, inspiration, demonstration and skills development to enable community members to access digital technology and applications.

	Actions	Scope/approach	Proposed Lead Agent/s	Stakeholders	Possible Funding Source	Time Frame
1.1	Build small business skills through 4 pilot Local Trading Platforms	<p>Stage 1: Build Framework Pilot Local Trading Platforms Work with four different types of business groups (see proposed), work with businesses to get them on-line, communicating with customers on-line, sourcing on-line, and building their capacity to manage their business on-line.</p> <p>Stage 2: Trading on-line Support required is face to face contact demonstrating benefit and outcomes, and followed by practical support to get businesses on line and then growing their skills. Heartlands is a key regional organization to support implementation through a funded project.</p>	Heartlands WA – Growing the Digital Wheatbelt project	Business Groups: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avon Business Alliance • Jurien CCI • Wheatbelt Business Network • Narrogin CCI Small Business Development Corporation CRC network	Innovation Capability Development Program	2014 – 2016 (Dependent on funding)
1.2	Local Government Decision making on-line	<p>Trial on-line Development Application planning system in three high growth Shires, and roll-out across all Wheatbelt Shires.</p> <p>Encourage Local Government to participate in Gov HACK which involves releasing data sets to allow IT specialists to develop solutions to problems</p>	RDA Wheatbelt to coordinate with WALGA and Trial Shires (Dandaragan, Gingin & Chittering)	WALGA Shire of Dandaragan, Gingin and Chittering All Wheatbelt Local Governments	WALGA Online LG program	Trial to commence Jan 2014
1.3	Build on-line community capacity and confidence	<p>Develop “flying squad” of regional capacity that tours the region demonstrating benefits, and conducts skills development at a local level eg Crowd funding.</p> <p>Organise one annual CLICK! Digital Expo bringing together exhibitors of tools, technologies and services, speakers and seminars by digital experts.</p>	RDA Wheatbelt WDC	CRC Network ICT providers Digital innovators University Under-grads	Digital Regions Initiative	On going from July 2013

FOCUS AREA 2: CONNECTIVITY AND ACCESS

The action planning process has highlighted that connectivity (for both mobile devices and for the internet) is one of the key business productivity issues in the Wheatbelt. Furthermore, some communities are concerned about their future competitiveness as a place to live, work and invest if they can only access satellite NBN services, as they have concerns about reliability and data speed.

Further research into key areas of service need and investment capacity of local communities should be undertaken. Consultation with technology specialists indicate there are opportunities to use other technologies as well as consider the convergence of technologies (NBN and mobile delivery) to deliver outcomes in the Wheatbelt. The five areas targeted for investment target the key digital infrastructure issues.

	Actions	Scope/approach	Proposed Lead Agent/s	Stakeholders	Possible Funding Source	Time frame
2.1	Expanding mobile coverage and capacity	<p>Additions to the RMCP network should be planned based on need and where local investment models for mobile telephony infrastructure can be developed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Audit areas of low service (eg. promote application that monitors mobile black spots), and work with local community to understand need/usage patterns and opportunities Promote use of repeater technology to improve local coverage (where possible) Lobby for RMCP project to continue investment Encourage use of Phone apps within region to access local information, eg. Trails, best location for coffee, how to access fuel out of hours etc. 	WDC	Department of Commerce Telstra Local communities RfR	RfR	Ongoing
2.2	Create WiFi access in communities	<p>Work with local governments to fund WiFi spots in pilot communities.</p> <p>Support the building of local platforms that provides information to visitors and locals as they enter WiFi zones. Promote use of disruptive communication techniques in communities.</p> <p>Encourage use of Phone apps within region to access local information, eg. Trails, best location for coffee, how to access fuel out of hours etc.</p>	Heartlands WA – Growing the Digital Wheatbelt project	ROC's/ Zones and Individual local govts Business Groups Community Resource Centres	RfR – CLGF Digital Local Government Program	2014
2.3	Bandwidth speed enhancement and ensure QOS (Quality of Service) enhancement and ensure QOS (Quality of Service)	<p>Conduct an audit of existing technology and service provision and what is planned under NBN and develop a comprehensive regional map.</p> <p>Develop a policy position on what is required in each locality and determine if future technology will provide it. Identify key gaps.</p> <p>Research technology that can value-add existing or future planned bandwidth.</p> <p>Work with Local Government and ICT industry to progress.</p>	Digital Action Plan Implementation Team	Local Government ICT providers	RfR	2014-2015
2.4	Address System Incompatibility issues	Investigate creation of a regional digital “ecosystem” including Health and Education to problem solve incompatibility issues in platforms.	Digital Action Plan Implementation Team	Department of Health WA Department of Education WA	Internal Departmental Funding	
2.5	Enable Digital TV access	Monitor ongoing issues in Digital TV conversion eg. funding for group homes/hotels/van parks to convert to digital.	RDA Wheatbelt (Digital Switchover Liaison Officer program)	Local Government Wheatbelt Business & Community Members	RfR	Ongoing post June 25 switchover date
2.6	Create public digital spaces and facilities	<p>Create digital precincts in local communities to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide up to date information about the communities to visitors and locals Increase access to education on-line (in libraries, CRC's and other public zones) Encourage content development and uploading by people to generate crowd sourced information for the local area 	Local government	Community Groups CRCs	RfR - CLGF	As funding permits

FOCUS AREA 3: LEADERSHIP AND ADVOCACY

The community engagement process raised the issue that the region lacks a cohesive voice to speak on behalf of the Wheatbelt. Leadership is characterised by many agendas, and as a consequence there is no “united voice”. To generate a digital future for the Wheatbelt will require a high degree of collaboration and cooperation between all the key organizations and amongst communities and the spirit for partnership was evident.

The action planning process has identified that leadership has two components:

- Governance Structure for the Action plan to be implemented
- Key enablers from the region to develop partnerships with the organisations that are providing the governance

	Actions	Scope/approach	Proposed Lead Agent/s	Stakeholders	Possible Funding Source	Time Frame
3.1	Provide Digital Leadership and Advocacy	A Digital Action Plan Implementation team consisting of the three levels of Government (Aust , State and Local Govt) to be formed and include RDA Wheatbelt, the Wheatbelt Development Commission and Wheatbelt Local Governments. The organizations will become exemplars for working digitally. The group will have three key roles: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promoting the role of digital in our region • Supporting and or providing advocacy on key issues and opportunities for digital in the region • Developing partnerships to implement the action plan, reviewing and updating it annually. As part of that, establishing KPI's for measuring outcomes. 	RDA Wheatbelt WDC	Local Government Department of Commerce WA	Organisational funding	July – Dec 2013 to form the implementation team
3.2	Develop a United Wheatbelt Voice	Organise ongoing leadership forums to bring together the digital champions, exemplars, ICT industry and key government people to create connections and continue to drive implementation, and build partnerships with enablers. Support the ongoing on-line surveys of different sectors and target groups to continue to build knowledge and understanding of how digital can be used to generate direct and real benefit to people, and hence drive adoption quickly.	Digital Action Plan Implementation Team	ICT industry Digital champions	Digital Regions Initiative	Ongoing
3.3	Build a Digital Champions Network	Support a network of the businesses, organizations, and individuals who demonstrate the benefit of digital technology and application. Continuously build the “narrative” for digital – by enabling the network to tell the stories that help people manage the change process eg. Social Bakers.	Digital Action Plan Implementation Team	ICT industry Digital champions	Digital Regions Initiative	Ongoing
3.4	Young people building the Wheatbelt Future	Engage young people who are digitally engaged in projects that help them to define the digital future for the Wheatbelt. The project scope can be created by the young people, by providing the space and resources for the projects to develop. Partner with mentors that are using on-line in exciting ways eg. Space Cubed, E-group and other mentor organisations such as True Blue Dreaming.	RDA Wheatbelt through the Youth Connections program	RDA Wheatbelt Space Cubed E-group True Blue Dreaming	RDA Wheatbelt	Jan – Dec 2014

FOCUS AREA 4: BUILDING COMMUNITY AND SERVICES ON-LINE

Supply of on-line services, information and products will be increasingly demanded by the consumers of the region. Key service providers can move into an on-line environment to meet future demand, but also to ensure the Wheatbelt is a regional location for residents choosing to work, live and invest in the region.

	Actions	Scope/approach	Proposed Lead Agent/s	Stakeholders	Possible Funding Source	Time Frame
4.1	Build Digital Portal for the Wheatbelt	Further invest in Heartlands to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Build the platform to host and present digital content about the region – the platform needs to have crowd sourced content presented in engaging ways (via a contribution process). Build the Heartlands business model to generate greater sustainability of funding the platform. Encourage use of the content platform - work with all local governments, state agencies and regional groups to build regional content within the platform to support regional and local decision making 	Heartlands WA - Growing the Digital Wheatbelt project	Local Governments	Innovation Capability Development Program Digital Local Government Program	Jan 2014 – Jan 2015
4.2	Build on-line communities	At a local level, encourage pilot communities to build on-line content to mirror the way the community works eg. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Move community newsletter to on-line format and encourage crowd sourced data Community groups to move communication with members, minutes/ agendas, AGM reports, projects on-line to encourage collaboration between groups Build a digital presence for the community in an engaging and information manner with Facebook and twitter presence resourced Support home based businesses to network and build a peer support base Pilot communities would apply for a local grant and then become “demonstration” communities. 10 to be selected across the region.	Heartlands WA - Growing the Digital Wheatbelt project	Target communities that express interest	Social Innovation Grants Program	2014 - 2016
4.3	Building a Healthier Wheatbelt Community	Support work of Health MoU group to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support redesign of facilities in wheatbelt communities so they are e-enabled Build the demand side in line with supply through projects that create an awareness of how your personal health can be managed on-line Work with SIHI and NBN to build reliability and move to Enterprise grade technology and put in place Service Level agreements to ensure quality (QOS). Support Tele-health pilots through SIHI Primary Health Care Demonstration Site Program 	Health MOU	WA Country Health Service Southwest WA Medicare Local	NBN enabled tele-health Pilot Program Southern Inland Health Initiative Medicare Local e-health initiatives	Timeframes will align with initiatives being implemented by Medicare Local & WACHS
4.4	Quality education and training on-line	Four key actions to achieve this are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support Regional Education to implement the technology plan Work with CRC's and WA Education Institutes to actively broker on-line courses for all areas of need for the Wheatbelt, extend to overseas universities over time. Move toward digital device provision for school students through private/public provision. Encourage CRC's to provide hot desk facilities to encourage them to be used as a regional base for professional learning and training. 	Digital Action Plan Implementation Team	Schools, Local Government, CRCs WA Education Institutes Department of Education WA	Department of Education WA RfR NBN Enabled Education and Skills Services Program	2014-2016

FOCUS AREA 5: BUILDING DIGITAL INNOVATION

There are a number of innovative organisations, businesses and industries who are leading uptake of digital technology and applications in the Wheatbelt. They are exemplars who can inspire and demonstrate the benefit of the digital industry. A key approach of the action plan that is recommended is to work with those people and organisations to support them to inspire the region, and to promote technology and improvement in business outcomes and lifestyles possible through exciting and visual engagement of the region.

Specific areas of engagement with Digital exemplars that are proposed in this focus area:

- Wheatbelt NRM who have piloted a number of key digital initiatives and are demonstrating that the region is very prepared to work and volunteer on-line. It is likely to become a preferred method of managing volunteerism in a virtual future world, and pioneers such as Wheatbelt NRM are key exemplars.
- The Agriculture industry has a very high rate of adoption of technology to improve business efficiency and productivity and adoption of smart devices is considered to be high. They can be used as an exemplar industry which will move almost fully to smart phone/tablet devices to manage daily in paddock.
- A digital Inward Migration Strategy is recommended for development so people who are seeking to move to WA can fully consider the option of living near the city but in the country. Decision support making tools and resources can be provided in a digital format to support inward migration to the Wheatbelt.
- The final action area is to continuously promote the use and creation of applications to support adoption and innovative development of applications within the region, to solve the regions issues or build on their opportunities.

	Actions	Scope/approach	Proposed Lead Agent/s	Stakeholders	Possible Funding Source	Time Frame
5.1	Promote use and creation of Applications	Promote “app of the month” through several key organisations that communicate with the region eg. WNRN, RDA Wheatbelt, WDC, Health, Education, Training, and through business associations and networks. Support an annual competition to develop a mobile app, choose a Wheatbelt winner, and encourage applications to the state innovation program. Link to Curtin Ignition program and support one or two positions on their annual innovators training program held in September. Link other digital innovators to the Innovation Centre of WA.	Digital Action Plan Implementation Team	Key regional organisations Curtin University Innovation Centre WA	Industry sponsorship	2013-2014
5.2	Digital Sustainable Living	Support Wheatbelt NRM to identify digital technology that supports people to live more sustainably and fund a program on Digital Sustainable living and pilot in communities across the Wheatbelt.	Wheatbelt NRM			2014-2016
5.3	Digital Inward Migration Project	Support Heartlands to develop their platform with a specific section to support decision making for inward migration to the Wheatbelt. Part of process to include Interviewing and surveying recent migrants and determine the key decision points and information required to support a choice to settle in the region, develop content, test, amend, launch and monitor.	Heartlands WA - Growing the Digital Wheatbelt project	Immigration and Migration service providers		2014-2016
5.4	Supporting digitisation of Agriculture	Support Grower groups, DAFWA, LCDC's and future farming groups to build digital use in agriculture. Link to CSIRO to develop SMART farm technology in the region.	Digital Action Plan Implementation Team	DAFWA, Grower groups, Land Conservation District Committee's, best practice farming groups CSIRO	DAFWA GRDC CfoC Community NRM Grants CSIRO	2014-2016

IMPLEMENTATION FRAMEWORK

The Action Plan has been developed to target opportunities to support early adopters or where there is significant challenges that need to be overcome for change to be enabled. This means the focus for the Action Plan should be about getting results quickly and demonstrating benefit to other stakeholders to encourage more uptake and positive change. Key feedback from already existing innovators was “we want to meet more people in the region who think this way”.

The Framework requires initial resources to be sourced from existing organisations to catalyse the implementation. A diversified investment model is required to ensure that key parts of the Action Plan are delivered over the next four years

GOVERNANCE FRAMEWORK

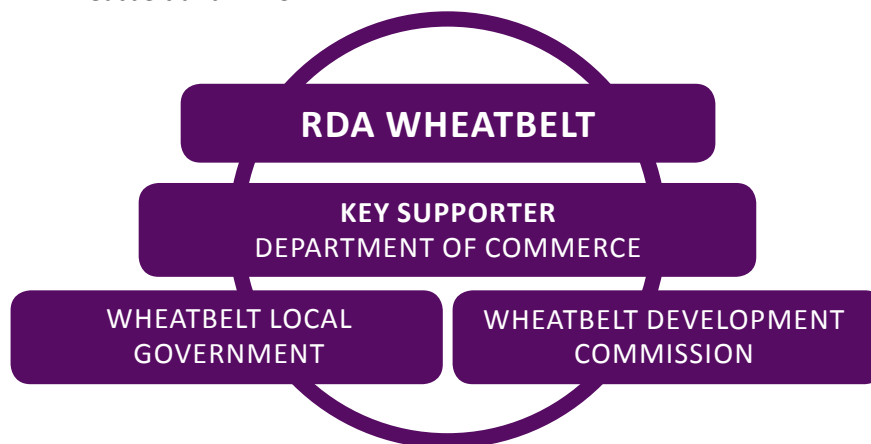
The implementation structure for the Action Plan has been defined at two main levels:

1. Core Governance Structure (RDA Wheatbelt, Wheatbelt Development Commission, Local Government) that has strategic oversight of the implementation of the plan. The Implementation Team will not necessarily implement all actions in the plan, but will facilitate the implementation.
2. Enabling Partners who can support the implementation of the Action plan in key areas of mutual interest or benefit.

DIGITAL ACTION PLAN IMPLEMENTATION TEAM - WHO IS IT?

Supported by:

Project Officers RDA Wheatbelt and WDC



The Implementation Team will work with a greater group of Stakeholders that are seen as the “enablers” of the Action Plan. The Implementation team will review the Action Plan and update the actions and ideas in the plan on an annual review cycle.

Core Governance Group

Avon Business Alliance
Jurien CCI
Wheatbelt Business Network
Heartlands Inc.
Local Government
CRC Network
ICT Providers

WDC, RDA Wheatbelt
Local Government
Dept Commerce
(key supporter)

Digital Champions
Health MoU Group
Department of Education Regional Office
WACHS and SIHI
Regional RTO's
Wheatbelt NRM
Grower Groups

SBDC, WALGA, Service Providers, NBN Co., RfR, Innovation Centre, Curtin University

KEY ACTIONABLE FIRST STEPS

WHAT	HOW	TIMEFRAMES
Report Release and feedback period	Send to all Action Plan participants, databases of WDC and RDA Wheatbelt, receive feedback and incorporate	May - June 2013
Endorsement RDA Wheatbelt Board	RDA Wheatbelt Board give final feedback and endorse	June 2013
Prepare and implement Communication Strategy	Launch Strategy and invite partnership development with enablers Broadly engage the region in the process through presentations and other engagement processes	June – July 2013
Alignment planning	Based upon the partnership responses, develop implementation processes and players and coordinate implementation Develop Applications for funding, and implement	August 2013

PRINCIPLES IN IMPLEMENTATION

The Action Plan is fundamentally about creating, building and cementing a change process within the region.

Lasting change is a slippery goal, but there are several key components to be able to “make change stick”. The projects proposed to be achieved first have been proposed with these change principles in mind.

Firstly, what are the key principles for making change stick and how do they relate to this Action Plan:

- **There needs to be a Pressure for Change.** People need to place a high priority on it and need to see the benefit in it. The action plan has been designed to focus on this principle –build benefit, demonstrate it, and then developing skills and capacity for those that want to follow.
- The **Purpose for Change** needs to be understood and it needs to be regularly communicated. The “added value” that digital can create needs to be articulated, not just the activities that are being implemented. It’s important to keep telling people “why” and also how they are making a difference to the long-term outcome which is too far away to be a motivator. People need to identify with the purpose and be included in the journey. The Action Planning process has built a foundation upon which a strong engagement approach can be continued.
- There needs to be **Capacity for Change.** People need the skills and resources to change. They need time, training, and the ability to plan and implement the changes. If the changes is just “piled on top” of everything else they have to do its unlikely to stick. The activities therefore have to provide a great “value-add” to people for them to create the time in their schedule to participate.
- **Actionable first steps** are important so the change can start immediately and benefits reflected as quickly as possible. It is critical to “encourage small wins”. This is frequently where change processes stall – the first steps are too complex, unresourcable and too difficult to achieve so the change process becomes perceived as too hard and people give up. The Action Planning process demonstrated that people really do appreciate the benefits that digital can provide so the “actionable first steps” have been chosen to demonstrate greatest benefit.
- **Modelling the way is critical.** The organizations involved in implementing the Action Plan need to be digitally focussed and on-line to demonstrate the practice of the behaviours that reflect the purpose. Actions must be consistent with the words, so all organizations (e.g. RDA Wheatbelt, WDC and Local Government) need to move on-line at a rapid pace to reflect the benefits to the region.
- **Reinforcement of Change** is about reviewing and reporting and demonstrating the benefits of change. The action projects need to be promulgated quickly and successfully through the region to ensure the adoption strategy works.
- **Continuously evaluate and improve** by monitoring people’s responses, what is being learnt, what behaviour has changed and what results have it generated. All four levels are necessary to cement change processes.

WHERE DOES THIS ACTION PLAN FIT IN WITH THE OTHER PLANS THE WHEATBELT HAS?

The Wheatbelt Strategic Framework 2012, was developed collaboratively by RDA Wheatbelt and the Wheatbelt Development Commission to ensure that key stakeholders in the region have a common strategic framework as a basis for influencing policy direction and implementing initiatives. The Vision for the Wheatbelt is “A ‘possibility belt’ that grows as a result of vibrant and diverse people, industry and environment (built and natural)”. The key components of the Strategic Focus that the Action Plan directly answers are:

- Vibrant economy, Objective 4: Key Strategic Infrastructure is identified and invested in. The Wheatbelt Digital Action Plan is an action required by Strategic Focus area of moving from a production emphasis to embrace the knowledge economy.
- Liveable communities, Objective 1: Communities innovated, cooperate and value diversity – better networked and inclusive communities.

The other key part of the Strategic Framework that the Action Plan delivers on is the marketing and perceptions section which outlines that the Wheatbelt is seen internally and externally as an ideal place to live, work, invest and visit.

Wheatbelt Workforce Development Plan, was developed by the Department of Training and Workforce Development and was designed to be an important reference point for all stakeholders as it identifies the challenges, agreed solutions and organisations that have a key stake in its implementation.

This plan aims to build, attract and retain a skilled workforce to meet the economic needs of the Wheatbelt region. It contains a range of priority actions which were identified by local stakeholders to address local workforce development challenges. The plan aligns with the State Government’s Skilling WA – A workforce development plan for Western Australia, which provides a framework for government and industry’s response to Western Australia’s skill and workforce needs.

The Central Wheatbelt Tourism Strategy 2009 – 2014, was developed by the Central Wheatbelt Visitor Centre Working Group to move toward a more regional approach and encourage the sharing of resources, ideas and practices to ensure best practice in the industry. Relevant recommendations in the plan that can be enhanced by the delivery of this Action Plan include:

- Work collaboratively on choosing one brand for the region – this is endorsed by this Action Plan, and the brand chosen by the Digital Action plan is Heartlands

Towards a Wheatbelt Infrastructure Plan Report 2 2011/12, was developed by the Wheatbelt Development Commission to identify Wheatbelt Infrastructure priorities for the CLGF Regional component, and to contribute to the process of developing a Wheatbelt Infrastructure Plan. To develop the priorities in this plan, five planning sessions were run with regional Local Government groups. Telecommunications was raised as a key issue along with Health Care and Aged Care for the Wheatbelt in this plan, and subsequent versions.

Wheatbelt Infrastructure Framework, developed by the Department of Planning during 2012 with input from a Regional Advisory Committee, the Wheatbelt Regional Infrastructure Framework aims to identify current and future priority government investment in the region. At the time of writing, this report was in draft form, awaiting release for public comment.

Draft State Planning Strategy, developed by Department of Planning and WAPC (2013) outlines that WA is on the cusp of sustained growth; it is a period of great promise and opportunity for all Western Australians. The Draft Strategy articulates strong support for building the competitive and collaborative advantages of the regions as a key principle. The Vision outlines that the State will be a connected state where distance will not be a barrier to connecting people, places and enterprises to resources and information. Affordable high speed communications will connect communities and enable regions to build diversity, international competitiveness and employment.

National Digital Economy Strategy, was developed by the Department of Broadband, Communications and the Digital Economy. The National Digital Economy Strategy outlines the government's vision for Australia's digital economy and outlines eight Digital Economy Goals that focus on the areas of:

- online participation by Australian households
- online engagement by Australian businesses and not-for-profit organisations
- smart management of our environment and infrastructure
- improved health and aged care
- expanded online education
- increased teleworking
- improved online government service delivery and engagement
- greater digital engagement in regional Australia.

The Australian Government's aim is that, by 2020, Australia will be among the world's leading digital economies. Ensuring that Australia becomes a leading digital economy will contribute to Australia's productivity, maintain our global competitiveness and improve our social wellbeing. The government's commitment to build the enabling infrastructure for the digital economy, the National Broadband Network (NBN), is a key step towards this vision.

Other plans that will outline the imperative for investing in digital but are not yet released include:

- **Wheatbelt Regional Investment Blueprint:** During 2013, the Wheatbelt Development Commission will be engaging with a broad range of stakeholders to develop the Wheatbelt Regional Investment Blueprint. The Blueprint intends to provide a framework to help facilitate an integrated and comprehensive approach to regional development in the Wheatbelt. It will consider all strategic planning and investment by public, private and not-for-profit sectors, and arrive at priority investment, over time. The Blueprint will be released by February 2014.
- **Regional Education Plan**, which is not yet released.

The Western Australian Government has not yet released a State Digital Strategy. In the absence of a Strategy or policy position, it is envisaged that the action plan implementation process will work closely with the key department to influence and guide strategic thinking for the Wheatbelt Region.

WHEATBELT NRM – AN EXEMPLAR ORGANISATION

Wheatbelt NRM are a regional organisation who work with a database of over 800 people, about 50% of whom have a preference for communication on-line. The organisation works with a range of smaller environment and community groups who all have a nominated person who works on-line.

WNRN are moving to all funding applications being on-line to increase efficiency. This will be done through an application they have designed with technical collaborators called PANDORA. Project officers will be able to access information in-field on smart devices whilst working with project applicants. They will connect to project management databases and have instant links between on-ground and project management processes. WNRN also use QR codes on all printed newsletters and flyers to enable quick access to their web features. This also enables them to track what information people access.

Tablets and smart phone applications are the way of the future for groups like Wheatbelt NRM, because one of their main target groups, farmers have adopted on-line technologies to a high degree. Other key target groups like "friends of..." groups have a member that can be the electronic link so they can achieve rapid communication and engagement outcomes at a lower transaction cost.

Future plans include recording traditional knowledge on-line so people can upload and learn on-line, creating a spatial on-line interface with the regional strategy to enable real time monitoring and providing visitor information at geographically significant sites via smart devices.

ATTACHMENT 1: SURVEY RESULTS

WHEATBELT DIGITAL ACTION PLAN

Digitally Enabling the Communities of Western Australia's Wheatbelt

Sue Middleton

1/2/2013

This report summarises the information that was provided via Survey Monkey in the Wheatbelt Digital Action Plan process. The survey was conducted on-line from 19th December 2012 to 20th January 2013 (just over 4 weeks) to develop a baseline of current use, needs, capacity and understanding of residents in the Wheatbelt.

225 people started the survey, and in total 200 people completed the survey. The survey was sent out via email to the RDA Wheatbelt and Wheatbelt Development Commission email lists. It was subsequently sent to all participants who had attended workshops in the planning process to date, and sent to Local Government CDO's and all Wheatbelt CRC's to distribute to local business and community lists. A final survey request was sent to the membership list of the Regional Manufacturers Association of WA. After each new database was contacted the survey responses would rise, plateau, and then drop off. That then signaled the need to prompt a new database and this constant feed approach resulted in the 200 responses.

By using the on-line survey format, the survey process was highly efficient and received a good result. It did however result in a sample that is already likely to be working and communicating in an on-line environment. It is likely the respondents are early adopters or early majority in the adoption curve of digital technology and use. The process is not likely to have generated responses from people who are not on-line at least weekly.

KEY FINDINGS

The workshop participants expressed concern that in a digital world we would be better off economically, but worse socially. They were concerned about the creation and process of "community", and everyone felt that this is a key competitive advantage to Wheatbelt towns. They expressed concern that the value of community would be eroded or would decline in a digital world.

The survey indicated the opposite is true for people engaged in a digital world in the Wheatbelt. They believe that digital has brought benefit to their lives and has enhanced their lives socially. This is a key finding and indicates that there may be a range of benefits to a region such as the Wheatbelt were people can both live in a small rural community and live in a digital environment. People are not using digital to remove themselves socially in a community setting, they are using it to enhance their participation, and they still believe print media and 'word of mouth' within their community are essential forms of communication.

A very important finding in the access area, is that people want improved mobile coverage. Data speed was also considered important, but mobile coverage was overall more important to them. They are mainly using the internet at home and at work and are not using institutional organizations for access, however public sites such as WiFi zones in Cafes and CRC's are used.

In the work setting people are using the internet for:

1. Finding and connecting
2. Communicating
3. Managing their business

The level of finding and connecting happening on the net indicates that all business and government services require some kind of on-line presence in the Wheatbelt. **People who are high users of the internet however are not managing on-line to the same degree they are connecting and communicating on line, and this is a key finding and capacity gap.**

People are using digital to be more sustainable in their lives. Whilst we do not have the data to demonstrate this is a trend, there is some early evidence that digital can benefit the environment in the Wheatbelt.

The final key finding is important for government, business and communities in the Wheatbelt. **There is clearly a very e-savvy network of community members, using 3-5 different types of digital devices, who are meeting their service, commercial and social needs in an on-line environment.** It is not age specific, in fact survey respondents were in the majority over the age of 41. This is different to the assumption we started the project with, as we assumed there is a generational gap in usage. The Action Plan should not discount the Baby Boomers and their on-line capability.

Given the group we have surveyed are likely to be early adopters or early majority in adoption curve terms, it is likely that this trend will continue, and will likely accelerate as the early majority grow and then bring the late majority on line. **This is a key trend for a region that wishes to be competitive, attract new and retain its existing population.**

SURVEY DESIGN

The survey was designed to move respondents through a series of questions that told us usage, needs, and tested capacity and understanding.

What their current usage was, including:

- Devices they used
- Where they access the internet and frequency of access
- What they are using digital technology for, and what they using it for personally (multi-layered question)
- If they are connected at home, and what type of connection, if broadband – what type of connection, internet speeds
- Do they use it to study and if so, what mode of study, study load, is course online, learning institutes access to digital resources/online services, when studying where they use the internet
- Do they use the internet for work, and what do they use it for work
- Do they link with back-end systems, and which automated systems are they using (capacity and understanding question)
- What do they do online in their community
- What do they do online with healthcare
- How has digital encouraged them to be more sustainable (question testing if they were using digital to lessen their environmental footprint in any way)

Needs

- What is most important to them (set of benefits – they tell us how important the benefit is)
- What are their challenges (each one allocated from agree to disagree)
- Perceptions of the internet statements that they rate (this was to test their concerns about the internet)

Demographic questions

- Postcode, industry of employment, gender, age

SURVEY RESPONSE

200 responses was the target suggested in the first meeting, so the result of exactly 200 completed was acceptable. It would not be accurate to say this is a valid sample of the entire Wheatbelt population (it is 1/3 of 1%), but it is a valid sample size (11.5%) of the population group that was sent the survey.

How has this been worked out? The RDA Wheatbelt database is around 400 people and the Wheatbelt staff sent to their project groups, so we have assumed that is approximate 1,500 in total. We also then sent to an additional 240 in other databases, so the total number sent the survey was approximately 1,740. 200 divided by 1,740 is 11.5%.

WHAT DID THE SURVEY TELL US?

A PDF of the survey results is attached. This section will discuss those results, so they should be read together, particularly if you prefer a visual format.

Devices

Mobile Phone (77.9%), Laptop (80.6%) and Desktop Computer (76.1%) are all highly used devices. There is not much difference between these types of devices. Mobile Phone is higher than expected, as the assumption was that lack of connectivity in some areas would limit that devices usage, however clearly people can use it and get around the lack of reception in some areas, by using it in connected areas. Mobile Phone digital use is expected to be the source of the next major growth area in digital, so it will be interesting to see in the next baseline that the Wheatbelt conducts if there is a strong trend in that area.

The two surprising responses in this answer were that 45% are using tablet devices, and 11% are using digital (Smart) TV's and using the internet on their TV. Tablet adoption rates are high and also use of internet on TV is high. The people who responded to this survey are using up to 3, and in some cases 5 different types of digital devices to stay connected. Statistically compared to Australian averages, that is a high level of device use.

Where they access the internet?

The majority of people access the internet at home (81%) and at work (78%). This is to be expected. What is interesting in this answer however is that very few use libraries (86% never connect in a library) or an educational institution (84% never connect). These are locations that would logically be connectivity zones in communities, but clearly not in the Wheatbelt.

Where they do connect other than home or work, is a friend, neighbour or relatives house (32% less than once a week) and at public access points or internet café (26% less than once a week). Whilst not being frequent it is about 1/3 of all respondents are using public WiFi sites. 13% connect at a government agency daily which could be assumed to be a CRC statistic.

What are they using the internet for?

97% are using the internet for personal use, and 97% are using it for work use. An interesting statistic in this question is that 50% are using the internet for community information and government information, which is slightly higher than those using it for education at 49%. Only 23% are using it for health.

Categories that are high in personal usage are online banking (92%), Emailing friends and family (90%), news and general research (82%), and online shopping (82%). Accessing government services usage rate is 78% and social media usage is 72%. The unexpected statistic is the high social media use - almost three quarters of the sample are communicating via social media. 45% are downloading music and movies and 38% are using it for video calls.

90% are connected at home and 94% are connected via the broadband. Connection type is varied, with the largest category represented being mobile wireless at 29%. DSL is next highest at 25% and fixed wireless at 20%. Satellite is 12%. Satellite use is 4 times higher than the national average if the assumption that national average is 3% is correct.

The internet speed question is not valid as it didn't receive many responses as most people skipped the question. It appears there is not a high level of knowledge about how to test your upload and download speeds so this will become a part of the strategy.

Students

We had only 19 students in our sample and the majority of those were tertiary and studying externally (95%) and part-time (90%). 74% answered that their course or study is online but interestingly 21% answered they were unsure if their learning institute had access to digital resources and using on-line services to allow participation.

90% of people studying utilise the internet at home, and 68% at work. 37% use a CRC or other local facility. Not many used their educational facility (16%).

Internet at Work

97% of the sample uses the internet at work. The majority of uses at work are to find and connect eg. Accessing company websites (84%), accessing enquiry/contact facilities (87%), sourcing suppliers (70%) or market research (48%).

The next most common use is to communicate with customers (70%).

Managing work on line is the lowest usage with online ordering and tracking (62%), data management (37%) and online accounting programs (31%).

The clear outcome from this is that a business may not need a large and expensive on-line presence, but given the high amount of finding and connecting that is done on-line, that even a low cost on-line presence is essential to be able to access business to business servicing opportunities.

Automated and Back End Systems

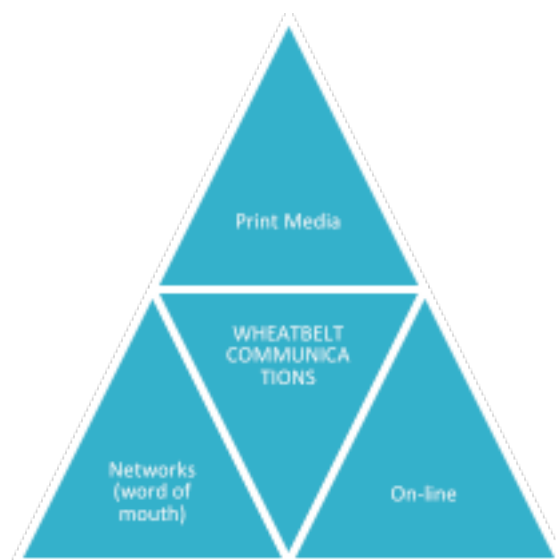
The majority were not sure if they were using automated systems (61%) or back end systems (52%). However 21% are using back-end systems. In the other category people responded that they are doing company back-ups, client retention system, on-line training system and HR systems. The response demonstrates a low level of understanding or capacity of how to manage business on-line which matches the statistic about how the internet is being used at work.

What happens in my community...

This question more than any other has demonstrated where the Wheatbelt is at with digital. 87% of people learn about what is happening in their community from "word of mouth". 86% learn about what is happening from reading print media. 66% look up information on local websites, 60% research online and receive e-newsletters and 40% participate in interactive on-line networks.

This demonstrates that whilst our target group is on-line and to a high degree and high frequency, they are still connecting in person, and they are still reading print media.

Any Strategy to communicate with people in the Wheatbelt still needs to be three pronged as a result, as all three forms are as important and used equally.



Communication Interaction on the Internet

53% either regularly or intermittently receive updates from police, fire or emergency services on the internet, and 45% never receive updates.

67% connect with communities of interest either intermittently or regularly, and 32% never do.

72% engage with government via online tools and surveys, whilst 27% never do.

The interesting statistic in this group however, is that 89% access government services on-line, whilst 8% never do. 3% only access government services on-line.

This question demonstrates how critical it is for all government services to be on-line in the Wheatbelt because for e-enabled people, it is a popular choice for being serviced. This trend will continue as digital capacity spreads into the late majority.

Healthcare

This question asked respondents to choose one answer only as we wanted to know what the main use on the internet for healthcare. 50% are using it for research on health and well-being. 14% are using it for searching for a service or medical professional, whilst 28% are not doing any health care services on the internet.

Using the Internet to be more sustainable

Actions that people digitally to lessen their environmental footprint are:

- Send emails instead of using postal services: 46% do most of the time, and 45% do always
- Reduce travel for meetings: 37% do somewhat, 16% always do, and 20% rarely do
- Manage energy consumption: 26% do somewhat, and 21% never do
- Receive bills and statements electronically: 35% do most of the time, 24% all of the time, and 27% some of the time
- Telework (work from home): 16.2% of the sample always work from home and 26% do sometimes

The sample is clearly skewed toward people that use the internet to be home based in business, so the statistic of 16.2% which is double the national average is not surprising for this sample.

What is most important?

The two most important benefits that people would like are:

1. Better mobile coverage (67%)
2. Data speed (56%)

The third is that 30% of people would like more alternative internet service providers.

Key Challenges

Not surprisingly given the response above, the key challenge that people noted was Internet speed (59%), followed by security at 39%.

Perceptions about the Internet

The following areas demonstrate both people's perception of the internet plus also the benefits they are finding from using the internet:

- Online banking - people are confident to use (90% agree or strongly agree)
- Personal Security – people are concerned about security (67% agree or strongly agree)
- Shopping on-line – 83% agree or strongly agree
- Social benefit to internet – 64% agree or strongly agree
- Seeking employment opportunities – 51% agree or strongly agree
- Receive regular e-newsletters – 80% agree or strongly agree
- Do professional networking – 63% agree or strongly agree
- Has made their life easier – 88.3% agree or strongly agree

Demographics

37% of survey respondents work in the government sector, 14.5% in the not for profit sector, and 14% in agriculture. All other categories were fairly evenly spread.

65% of respondents were female, and the largest age group to answer was 56+ at 24%. There was otherwise an even spread across age groups, however a generalisation is that the majority were 41 and over.

ATTACHMENT 2

WHEATBELT DIGITAL ACTION PLAN

Digitally Enabling the Communities of Western Australia's Wheatbelt

Sue Middleton

1/2/2013

This report summarises the key approaches that were designed to develop the Wheatbelt Digital Action Plan, and the outcomes that were achieved. The report and attachments give a sense of the regional community's response to the key questions in the process, and this will be further articulated in the Action Plan.

The ACTION PLAN will outline in summary form the engagement process and the results, so this report is intended to be a more detailed document for RDA Wheatbelt and the Steering Committee Members to be able to interrogate the planning process. Any planning gaps can be noted and addressed in final planning work to be completed.

Original Brief

The original brief was to conduct a planning process that resulted in two key outputs:

1. Baseline on current use
2. Action Plan that will ensure the Wheatbelt is well prepared for the digital age

The plan was also to include the following outcomes:

- An assessment in gaps in current utilisation of online technology in the region and opportunities to improve this
- Identification of opportunities to address regional priorities through the use of digital technology
- Identification of barriers to regional growth and development due to infrastructure provision (NBN) or lack thereof
- Identification of activities that will achieve 100% uptake of NBN across the region

Project Plan

A Steering Committee Meeting was held on the 6th of September at which the group brainstormed the key sectors that were impacted by or had the greatest opportunity from digital technology. They were Industry (economic generators), Service delivery industries (health, education/learning, aged care, childcare, and government services), Community and social sector and the Environment.

The key processes that were developed to achieve the engagement of these sectors were outlined as:

- Engage region in 5 nominated sub-regions and engage the sectors at that level – community development, business, learning, health and government
- Assess uptake using a distributed electronically on-line tool to business, community and government contact lists with the return via the RDA Wheatbelt website
- Consult State and Australian Government Contacts in Perth or Wheatbelt and summarise findings

The Steering Committee further resolved that the regional engagement be developed through:

- Using the Business Connect events
- Creating an engagement framework that flows to the most local level
- Uses local partnerships to drive it
- Finds the champion communities in this space and work with them

These processes and principles were followed in the planning approach.

ENGAGEMENT AND COMMUNICATION PLAN

- Following the Steering Committee Meeting a new planning format was developed which detailed
- Engagement activities and supporting communication
- Workshop suggested schedule and format
- This outlined the following activities:
- Developing branding for the project, including a web presence on the RDA Wheatbelt site
- Establishing a survey tool
- Using media opportunities (sending media releases at key project points)
- Organising workshops
- Organising specific meetings with key agencies
- Establishing a database of stakeholders
- Building partners
- Establishing a project champions network
- Research other projects and ideas from across Australia
- Establishing database of reports for interested stakeholders

The workshop schedule was developed as:

- Champion community workshops (Jurien Bay, Bruce Rock, York, Wongan Hills)
- Service providers – consult individually
- CCI's - hold sundowners
- Hold Health Industry workshop in a central location
- Hold Education Industry workshop in a central location
- Hold Development Industry workshop in a central location
- Visit Local Government ROC meetings
- Attend Regional Government managers meeting

PLANNING PROCESS OUTCOMES

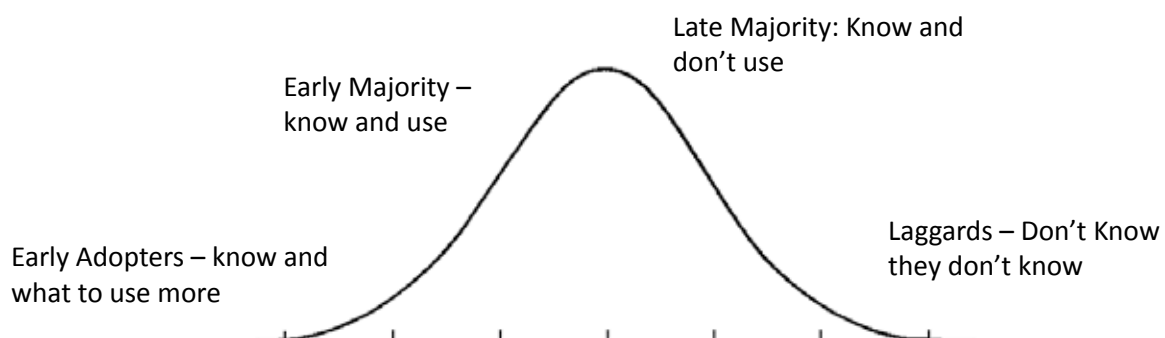
The following section outlines what was achieved against each of the planned outcomes.

Branding and Website

A Project Brand was developed and this logo has been used on the project survey and in the final planning document. It will be a valuable branding tool for future implementation as it promotes an informal digital looking brand, which is fun and digital, incorporates the project name and Regional Development Australia – Wheatbelt. Project Updates have been listed on the website.

Survey Tool

An on-line survey was developed by RDA Wheatbelt staff person, Liz Brennan through a meeting format. The survey was designed for two key groups of respondents. In adoption curve terms we determined that people would be in one of the following categories:



We assumed that a digital on-line survey would not be taken up by the Late Majority or Laggards because they either would not respond to any advertising because they either aren't in the digital space, or wouldn't consider doing an on-line survey without a lot of prompting and resource use. We therefore assumed we would be talking to early adopters or early majority.

The survey was structured to understand usage patterns, needs, individual understanding and capacity of people in relation to digital services in the Wheatbelt.

The survey structure was as follows:

- What devices do they use
- Where do they access the internet and how often
- What do they use it for
- If used for personal use, what do they use it for
- Do they have it connected at home
- What type of internet connection do they have
- If broadband, what type of connection
- What are internet speeds
- Are they a student (yes/no answer then led to certain area of survey)
- If student – what mode of study, study load, is course online, learning institutes access to digital resources/online services, when studying where they use the internet
- Do they use the internet for work
- What do they use it for at work
- Do they link with back-end systems
- Which automated systems are they using
- What do they do online in their community
- What do they do online with healthcare
- How has digital encouraged them to be more sustainable (environment question)
- What is most important to them (set of benefits – they tell us how important the benefit is)
- What are their challenges (agree to disagree)
- Perceptions of the internet statements that they rate (agree to disagree)
- Demographic questions – Postcode, industry of employment, gender, age

The survey was distributed to RDA Wheatbelt's contact database and Wheatbelt Development Commission's database in December 2012. Following this mass distribution, it was then distributed to the workshop attendees, the CRC network, the CDO network, and the Regional Manufacturers network. In all emails respondents were asked to forward the survey link on to other contacts.

At the cut off date of 20th January, exactly 200 surveys were successfully completed, which was the target that we set. 225 number had been commenced but had not been fully completed (they stopped in the process of completing the survey).

The results from the survey will be compiled in a separate report and sent to you this week, and will be summarised in the Action Plan.

Baseline Established

The survey process was seen as the main tool to gather information on the baseline for the Wheatbelt. Alan Heydon from the Department of Commerce also recommended using ABS statistics that are available on a local and regional level to support the survey information. This information has been gathered for all Wheatbelt Shires.

Media Opportunities

A media release was sent to outlets in conjunction with the Workshop invitations. The response was excellent and resulted in over 40 email queries and a dozen calls just from the media release.

There have been no other media releases sent as the process did not require any other public engagement. We can however expect a good response to Media concerning the launch of the Action Plan. It is suggested that this could be made into an event that doubles as an opportunity to gain feedback on the Plan.

Workshops

Funding obtained for the Business Connect Workshops was highly valuable as it enabled RDA Wheatbelt to employ David Bartlett. David was a key attractor for the events. Even with David however, we cancelled two afternoon workshops because we did not have sufficient numbers to run the events. Overall we had 58 participants, which were broken up between the following venues:

- Merredin – 15 participants
- Jurien Bay – Local Government Day session – 8 participants
- Jurien Bay – Night time business session – 7 participants
- Northam – 17 participants
- Narrogin – 11 participants

A specific Community Development Workshop was held in York and we invited all Community Resource Centres and Community Development Officers for the Wheatbelt. 12 participants attended this workshop and this consisted of a mix of CDO's, CRC staff and an RDL staff member. 2 people were repeats from the Business Connect workshops. A specific Health Workshop was organised after we did not receive many responses to the day time workshop organised for Northam. 8 people attended this workshop which has held at the WA Country Service offices in Northam. We brought David Bartlett in on Video Link, as well as two other participants. Key people from SIHI, Regional Health, Medicare Local, Wheatbelt GP network and State Health attended. Several contacts have been followed up after the workshop.

Two Local Government ROC meetings were attended in Darkan and Trayning, with approximately 20 people between both meetings. We were unable to secure a meeting date before the end of the year with the other two ROC's. We were also unable to secure a date before the end of the year for the Senior Regional Managers meeting, so we have been unable to engage with that specific target group.

Grassroots Development was separately contracted by Department of Commerce to facilitate the Regional Digital Roundtable event in December. This enabled key contacts to be made which have been followed up separately including Telstra, Tourism WA and the Australian Information Industry Association. Space Cubed – a co-working, collaboration and innovation space in CBD Perth was also visited and the Manager was interviewed. A workshop was organised with Wheatbelt NRM and interested staff early in February 2013.

Other Consultations

Other sectors were identified as being important from an examination of the Wheatbelt Statistics. The GVP of the Wheatbelt show the following key sectors:

Sector	Annual GVP	% Regional GVP
Agriculture	\$3.2B	57%
Mining and Minerals Processing	\$1.3B	23%
Manufacturing	\$500M	9%
Retail	\$336M	6%
Tourism	\$195M	3.5%

On the basis of this information, it seemed evident that Manufacturing is an important sector in the Wheatbelt, hence the Regional Manufacturers Association were followed up. They have 120 members in Western Australia, many of who are based in the Wheatbelt. There are 288 recorded manufacturing businesses in the Wheatbelt. John Henchy who is the joint EO for the Regional Manufacturers and the Farm Machinery and Industry Association of WA was interviewed to understand digital issues and opportunities for their sector.

Tourism was reported to be a key emerging area, particularly for the Eastern Wheatbelt that is doing a range of development activities. The Central Wheatbelt Tourism Plan was reviewed and Kylie Whitehead, the Central Wheatbelt Tourism Research and Projects officer was engaged in the process.

Agriculture was the other key area to be followed up as there was little engagement of farming businesses in the processes to date. A grower group (SEPWA) that has conducted survey work on digital uptake in farming was identified and their research work was reviewed, and the officer interviewed. It is acknowledged that SEPWA are outside the Wheatbelt area however the Esperance growing area is very similar in adoption stages to much of the Wheatbelt. This is also the only farming group from a large network of Grower Groups that has conducted relevant research, so it has been used.

Mal Bryce was consulted to discuss technical options, as was the Industry Association for the ICT industry. Kitty Prodonvoch from the Regional CCI WA has been contacted for information on regional digital business needs who referred us to the CCI's one of whom has been contacted. Heartlands WA (Suzanne Woods, Carol Redford, Wayne Simpson and Caroline Robinson) who have provided written feedback to the process and Suzanne has been contacted for further information. Alan Heydon from Department of Commerce has been used extensively in the process for networks, contacts, knowledge and very useful tools.

NBN Co Limited has not been consulted directly but the Facilitator attended an information session for one of the sub-regions. Further consultation will be required once the draft plan is completed and there is clarity around the connectivity needs and issues for the region

Database of Stakeholders

A database of contacts from the Region has been developed and this can be used as a key group for implementation of the Action Plan as they have shown interest in the topic and are people that are involved in leadership activities in their communities, industries and within the region.

Building Partners

There has been a lot of support for the topic as most people who got involved recognised the issue as a key emerging one that will have a lot of impact on problems the Wheatbelt has experienced for years. There is also recognition that there is a fundamental shift occurring in how the world is going to organise itself, communicate and how wealth will be created. However, there is also some inertia around the topic (a sense of this is not the most important thing and can wait 6 months) so the Action Plan needs to be delivered in a very dynamic and lively fashion to have impact and to build partnerships successfully. The planning process has built a good foundation, and this can be built on with the WDC, the ROC's, the CRC's, the Health industry and the CCI's. It is however a crowded space with a lot of other development activities and issues on people's desks. Getting to the top of people's priority lists is going to be a challenge but an essential one and the Action Plan will address this topic.

Establishing a Project Champions Network

A range of projects and businesses have been identified that will be built up into mini-case studies for the Action plan. This could form the beginning of a Champions Network that would function as a support network to individuals, groups, or businesses seeking to really establish a digital presence and delivery mode. This will be a strategy in the Action Plan.

Researching other Projects and Places around Australia

Two communities were mentioned continuously by everyone interviewed about where to visit to see Digital technology in action – Geraldton and Mandurah. Geraldton has been visited and the CEO of the City of Geraldton Greenough, Tony Brun was interviewed and a range of information about their approach has been reviewed. One of the stakeholders interviewed mentioned the Great Southern Digital Planning process, and a visit was organised to the Great Southern RDA (Simon Lyas and Pene Cuthbert) for ideas sharing and to link the projects.

Tasmania was also seen as a leader when asking about interstate models so David Bartlett has also been interviewed in Hobart early in the process.

Establishing a Database of Reports

A range of reports have been reviewed for the Action plan and have been summarised briefly. They include:

- Wheatbelt Strategic Framework 2012
- Wheatbelt Workforce Development Plan
- Central Wheatbelt Tourism Strategy
- Towards a Wheatbelt Infrastructure Plan Report 2, 2011/12
- Draft State Planning Strategy
- National Digital Economy Strategy

Other digital reports have also been reviewed.

It is suggested that the project develop a Drop Box that makes reports on digital opportunities and issues readily available to Stakeholders who are interested in learning more about the topic. It does take time to follow up and chase down all the regional reports in a process such as this and it is recommended that a drop box research area is developed and the link shared with stakeholders. This could be extended to allow stakeholders to drop box relevant reports which could be quickly reviewed by RDA Wheatbelt staff members and loaded if relevant.

TECHNICAL SPECIALIST

In my original quotation I noted that it may be necessary to employ a technical specialist to assist in identifying technical solutions or opportunities to technology challenges identified, and to identify international best practice to innovate or create new solutions for the Wheatbelt. In my consultation with Mal Bryce he mentioned that this is work the South West conducted to be able to develop their 25:5 lobbying position, which is 25 mb/sec down and 5 mb/sec up. This has now moved to 50 down, and 10 up and it goes on from there. The key issue is that you have to know what to ask for, and we also need to be able to monitor what is being delivered under the NBN to support addressing access issues.

There are two key issues that have been consistently raised in all consultation – mobile telephony access and digital speed and in particular concern over speeds to be achieved under NBN Satellite. The majority of the land area of the Wheatbelt is going to be covered by NBN Satellite, and it is not clear what percentage of the population that will be. The irony of that percentage under satellite arrangements is that they are mostly going to be the farming community and other communities in the Eastern Wheatbelt. The farming community is the highest adopting industry of technology in the Wheatbelt by all accounts, is the largest industry by GVP, but is going to be the least well serviced. Most of the technology that is being developed for farming requires mobile connection. There is a key impact in that education and health services that cannot be delivered via satellite mode. So a core issue for the Wheatbelt is that we may have a NBN digital divide in our region, and between our region and other regions of Australia.

I've endeavoured to cover this area by talking to as many people as possible who understand the issue. At this stage I'm proposing to put this as a key investment area under the Action Plan, because even David Bartlett acknowledged that this is the most digitally disadvantaged region that he has ever visited. Most of the strategy will focus on doing more with what we've got, as a key principle. We can get so much more advantage from our current speeds and the survey indicates many people are getting great speeds from existing arrangements. However a lot of our region falls outside the range of fibre and the Action Plan needs to put in place a process that is on-going that addresses that issue.

ATTACHMENT 3: BUSINESS CONNECT WORKSHOP REPORT

WHEATBELT DIGITAL ACTION PLAN

Digitally Enabling the Communities of Western Australia's Wheatbelt

BUSINESS CONNECT WORKSHOP REPORT

1/2/2013

This report summarises the information gathered at Workshops held across the Wheatbelt for National Telework Week. The workshops were held to promote Teleworking and to gather information for the preparation of the Wheatbelt Digital Action Plan by Grassroots Development.

This summary is a verbatim record of the Workshops and provides a source of primary data for the Digital Action Plan. The format of the workshop was a presentation from the Hon David Bartlett, Explor, which summarised the potential and capacity of digital opportunities to assist the region to achieve its aspirations.

A workshop session was then jointly facilitated by David Bartlett (Explor) and Sue Middleton (Grassroots Development). The information gathered was in three main categories and each location followed a different flow of conversation. Information was consistently gathered in the areas of Aspirations, Challenges and Risks, and Opportunities for the Wheatbelt in the digital space.

This information will be used in the compilation of the Wheatbelt Digital Action Plan. Key sectors being consulted include Business, Learning, Health and government and Community Development. The result will be a detailed action plan detailing opportunities to address regional priorities through the use of digital technology. The action plan will ensure the Wheatbelt is prepared for the Digital age and the opportunities it will offer.

MERREDIN WORKSHOP

Aspiration

- Growth SME sector
- Attract other businesses
- Better health outcomes
- Better education outcomes
- Better job opportunities
- Agricultural diversification, much more value-adding
- Crowd funding
- Retail – deal with seasonal factors
- See on-line as opportunity not competition
- Increase in population
- Massively collapsed value chain
- Access to venture capital
- Positive region – everything has gone down in last 40 years
- Innovation – break open mono-culture
- What makes the region tick – age balloon at each end, service industry importance
- Be a town that grows from Tourism eg. Marg River
- Be a place the government invests in, there is a perception that there is nothing here

Risks

- Who benefits?
- Risk of not funding project or government using this to avoid their responsibilities eg. Health.
- Wealth distribution – is there funding to innovate?
- Risk of building a culture of always working, never having down time
- Suggested reading: Hamlets Blackberry – building a good life in the digital age
- Key is understanding the change and managing it
- Government throw \$'s at different regions, if you're not that region – creates a perception that there is nothing here.

Context

- What makes the region tick?
- What are the demographics eg age balloon at each end, and what are the service industry implications

Opportunities

- Tourism eg. Margaret River has grown from tourism
- Wheatbelt speaking with one voice
- Wheatbelt believing in itself
- Need to form the Coalition of the willing!

JURIEN BAY LOCAL GOVERNMENT WORKSHOP

Aspirations

- Define our markets and develop a different competitive advantage - build strength as a region.
- Education – VET programs – civic building providing real time virtual classrooms to retain secondary and tertiary in the region
- Kids who don't like to board – connect them with opportunities that don't involve boarding
- Housing – attract private investment – use digital opportunities to build different capital models
- Young people – connect via mobile phones eg. Sunshine Coast TAFE

Challenges

- When Government doesn't speak with one voice – Government can pick and choose.
- Health services have been defined by MPS Model
- Regional hub and spoke delivery model wastes time in travel
- Education subsidy structure

Opportunities

- Retail, hospitality and tourism
- Business development – service, waiting times,
- need SME targeted model – understanding capacity, infrastructure and building service culture
- Council – on-line services – where do LG's think they are from 1 to 10 in the on-line world? Just above 1.
- Provide citizen centric services – such as common town planning guidelines, Wheatbelt "open for business" on-line DA and tracking system for development proponents

JURIEN BAY BUSINESS WORKSHOP

Aspirations

- Jurien as a tourism Mecca for outdoor/adventure tourism
- Jurien has an enormous amount of potential but its under-utilised

Challenges

- There is a perception that Jurien will grow, how the right business expertise is not here – how do we get the message out to attract new businesses?
- Current advertising is a waste of money – need to get it out in the mobile world.
- Getting existing businesses to engage in new technology is difficult because the benefit is hard to see, there is resistance to change, and many people are here for a retirement/lifestyle business. They don't want more debt.
- There is a perception that the growth in economy will drive social issues
- Lot of crown land that can't be developed in next 5 yrs, 10 – 15 yr scenario will be totally different

Opportunities

- Build exposure through competition on face book
- NACC has developed an APP for beach monitoring (good example of what can be done)
- WiFi hot spots – using network to communicate with people who are visiting
- Training and capacity building
- WiFi hotspots
- Digital Champions network
- Focus on retail, hospitality and tourism sectors
- Network and work with state/national industry associations
- CCI to go digital
- Embrace surrounding communities
- Speak with one voice so will be heard
- Coastal strip shire

NORTHAM WORKSHOP

Aspirations

- Success is to be in harmony with family and community.
- Redefine wealth - more about intangibles, how much you drive wealth for all should be a measure of success. “Brothers love one another when they are equally rich”.
- Future for communities going through current restructuring isn’t clear yet.
- Opportunities for shrinking communities are greater now.
- Much more regional collaboration.
- We are in regrouping stage as the crisis in the Wheatbelt deepens; economically we have to get our act together.
- Farmers will have bigger markets from NBN
- Part of a national health reform – health is about well-being and healthy communities, so there is more focus on social determinants of health – we need a healthy and sustainable workforce (18% growth in demand for health services, 2-3% increase in supply).
- FIFO is an opportunity for the Avon Arc communities – need to welcome them, connect them, build lifestyle, provide land, create community and link them to their community.
- Opportunity from digital economy is to harness the amazing skills and talents that people have and make them available to the region and world.

Challenges

- Concerned for farming industry – severe weather events, insurance industry, what’s happening in Greece.
- Cyber bullying is a massive problem
- Link to tertiary education can be hard – if they don’t want to board and they want to get to uni
- In the health are the only way is up
- Worried about social inclusion eg. Young Aboriginal people – isolated and not a part of the picture.
- What part of the strategy deals with the Threats?
- Social infrastructure will be an issue – we are only as strong as our weakest point, as long as we have socially disadvantaged people there is not justice, people are not being included in decision making and there may be less communing, leading to less community spirit
- Shrinking of community, district high schools that are struggling to stay relevant, if you want your child to go to University you almost have to send them to Perth
- Farm aggregation
- Youth suicide – high proportion of young men

Risks

- Psychic distance caused by the technology

Opportunities

- Rebranding Wheatbelt, imagine the Wheatbelt we want, capture that conversation, integrate it off-line and meet personally. Comment was made that Heartlands is the Wheatbelt Brand.
- Work at community level bringing them together to identify social capital. Generate ideas at the local level and link to the regional level.
- Link to Education eg have Eng Lit teacher working in virtual classroom across Wheatbelt.
- Link talented people in local communities eg. Musician - link via digital on-line tool
- Develop on-line markets – trade services and talent in a network.
- First step networks are there (NB Identify networks).

- Early childhood investment critical for social inclusion especially for Aboriginal kids – it's not about education, health, learning, parenting by itself.
- There are many service providers but difficult to encourage creative, innovative and collaborative responses – there are also logistical challenges to using facilities.
- Need to build capacity – website skills and capacity, encouraging people to use on-line commerce, crowd sourcing.
- Reach out to people who are inbound migrants – the culture of the Wheatbelt relates well to the culture of people from other countries because of the strong value of community and family – develop an Inward Migration Strategy.
- As the pendulum swings from global back to local, we can capitalise on this.

NARROGIN WORKSHOP

Aspirations

- Use digital opportunities to create permanent and connected communities.
- Create opportunities and spaces for young people that give them an option of staying in the Wheatbelt.
- Help businesses to develop business models that will make them viable, and access new markets.
- Fill empty houses with people that can work virtually and create fabulous places to live.
- Agriculture to grow – connect to Asia and growth opportunities.
- We need to not put our heads in the sand – we need to seize the day

Challenges

- Lack of confidence in the community.
- Young people won't stay in the Wheatbelt as it is currently; want education, employment, social life.
- Believe that with the digital world, economically we will be better off, but socially we will be worse off.
- Lake Grace – is getting fibre through town but can't access it. Newdegate and Lake King also have infrastructure issues.
- Woodanilling – NBN is going to school but Shire cannot connect it.
- Losing population – transient population.
- Lake Grace population drop, check all Central South populations. Where and why is the decline greatest?
- Year 7 now have to leave the community- less likely to move back
- Retail buying on line – having no people contact
- Support for local sporting clubs diminishing
- Less direct employment – people not required for front-line sales jobs anymore.
- Ageing sector – not on line
- Human heart – want to see people in person still – challenge is how to adapt your business accordingly.

Opportunities

- Need on-line shop fronts
- Infrastructure is one thing, but it's the conversation in the community that matters.
- NBN to every household (100mbit/s) at affordable prices
- Business to embrace this opportunity and become web enabled and build confidence by demonstrating it is secure
- Embrace change and be positive
- Harness the tech savvy people we have
- Start trading to bigger markets – ag markets, education
- Franchise business and have consistent product through central I.T systems
- Focus on young people – use as champions
- Build youth friendly communities
- Build niche businesses eg. T-shirt business
- Provide education in country so can choose to stay here
- App for visitors to link to town
- Shire cover cost of connection to staff housing.
- Keep kids at home – alternative to sending them to boarding school, also prevents Mums and families from leaving.
- Public education/residential colleges opportunity
- Use it to create an economic “plug hole” keep money and people in the w'belt.
- Reduce travel costs – 2hrs drive for a 1 hr meeting
- Use it improve social aspect.

ATTACHMENT 4: LOCAL GOVERNMENT WORKSHOP REPORT

WHEATBELT DIGITAL ACTION PLAN

Digitally Enabling the Communities of Western Australia's Wheatbelt

LOCAL GOVERNMENT WORKSHOP REPORT

1/2/2013

This report summarises the information gathered at two Local Government ROC meetings held in West Arthur with 4WD and Trayning with NEWROC. The purpose of the meetings was to engage Local Governments from the Wheatbelt in the development of the Digital Action Plan.

This summary is a record of the ideas generated in the two meetings. The format of the workshop was a presentation which summarised the potential and capacity of digital opportunities to assist the region to achieve its aspirations. A round-table meeting style feedback session was then conducted.

The ideas from the meeting were gathered and presented here in verbatim format.

This information will be used in the compilation of the Wheatbelt Digital Action Plan. Key sectors being consulted include Business, Learning, Health, Government and Community Development. The result will be a detailed action plan detailing opportunities to address regional priorities through the use of digital technology. The action plan will ensure the Wheatbelt is prepared for the Digital age and the opportunities it will offer.

WEST ARTHUR

Where do Local Government think they are on a scale of 0 to 10 in Digital Technology and application?

2 out of 10 was the consensus answer

Examples include:

- Minutes on line
- Agendas on line
- Rates on-line (West Arthur)
- Using Wikie 4WD (L to be added for Lake Grace)
- Newsletter on line
- SMS from Bushfires
- I-pads for Councillors
- One has completed consultation on line, for their childcare centre

Believe it has a role to play in uniting the Wheatbelt. It's a very diverse region with lots of small communities which are very proud and parochial.

Believe there is a generational issue in adoption.

What is important to invest in?

- Get training to a lot of people
- Young people leave the community and then older people don't take up the technology
- Need policies for risk management and providing appropriate security

NEWROC

Where do Local Government think they are on a scale of 0 to 10 in Digital Technology and application?

About 2 out of 10.

- Using Drop Box, I-pads for Councillors
- 2 have a feedback form on-line
- Website information on-line
- SMS messaging
- Muka website has 39 likes
- Shire of Koorda u-tube
- www.merredin.com good website
- FESA uses txt messaging to call people
- NB voice to text not working
- Time frames for messages to arrive a real issue, raise it as a complaint but the waiting time to complain is also an issue
- Information Portal for Wheatbelt – sell opportunities, single point of access
- Mobile coverage within townsites an issue eg. Koorda – getting a phone tower early next year
- Need more information about retransmitting – what are Telstra products – can use existing towers and other high spots
- Bencubbin – under construction

What is important to invest in?

- Need to upgrade phone exchanges – cost
- Big focus on education to prevent kids being sent away, enhancement to local schools and quality teaching on-line
- Support for higher education on-line training eg. Nursing/teaching
- Want to see CRC's used as much as possible
- WiFi spots – close to CRC
- Businesses – getting them online, for example tradies have no presence on-line but its one of the most required business services
- Will communications improvement help value adding eg. Biscuit/flour mill? Reduce transport costs?

ATTACHMENT 5: HEALTH WORKSHOP REPORT

WHEATBELT DIGITAL ACTION PLAN

Digitally Enabling the Communities of Western Australia's Wheatbelt

HEALTH WORKSHOP REPORT

Sue Middleton

1/2/2013

Attendees: *David Naughton (Director SIHI), Amy Collins (Southern Country Health Service), Irene Oram (Regional Telehealth Coordinator, SCHS), Peter Costantino (IT Manager Wheatbelt GP Network), Tim Shackleton (Virtual Health), Michelle McClure (Area Manager Wheatbelt SW Medicare Local) via Video conference, Alan Hamilton (Manager Statewide Telehealth Services) via Video Conference, David Bartlett (Explor) via Video Conference, Sue Middleton (Grassroots Development, Facilitator)*

This report summarises the information gathered at a Telehealth workshop held at Southern Country Health Service's offices in Northam on the 17th of December 2012.

This summary is a verbatim record of the Workshops and provides a source of primary data for the Digital Action Plan. The format of the workshop was a presentation from the Hon David Bartlett, Explor, which summarised the potential and capacity of digital opportunities to assist the Health industry in the region.

A workshop session was then facilitated by Sue Middleton from Grassroots Development.

This information will be used in the compilation of the Wheatbelt Digital Action Plan. Key sectors being consulted include Business, Learning, Health and government and Community Development. The result will be a detailed action plan detailing opportunities to address regional priorities through the use of digital technology. The action plan will ensure the Wheatbelt is prepared for the Digital age and the opportunities it will offer.

PRESENTATION: DAVID BARLETT

Transformations in Health

1. Telehealth Solutions
 - Medicare rebate able to be claimed for on-line consultation
 - Ubiquity will drive transformation
 - Need to build capability/confidence
 - Pilot work stage still – hasn't transpired into public policy
 - Skype meeting – prescription sent to Pharmacy
2. System Inefficiencies
 - Machine that goes "bing" and saves a babies life always gets more investment than servers
 - Needs to be driven by Clinicians
 - Needs massive investment
 - Mobile devices and personal health records – share ability – will take significant resources
3. Personal Health Devices, Records and Applications
 - Commercial – eg. Fit Bit
 - Non-commercial – community models that whole communities can embrace them
 - Could we get people to pay us to be healthier?

4. Communities of Interest Health Solutions

- Iron overload disorder – previously had a static website, moved to socially enabled content, which is crowd sourced with crowd funding mechanism (pay wall), which hires clinicians of their own to be on-call to people suffering from the disorder.
- US Model – allergy menu which is an allergy sufferers website, content aggregated with commercial sponsors

DISCUSSION WITH DAVID BARTLETT

Fundamental issues with ACT (Alan Hamilton)

- Inability to deliver fundamental base-line systems and there is a wide chasm between base-line functionality and disruptive level
- Need to also balance expectations and delivery outcomes
- Its like an iceberg – the 10% you can see is above the water and that is what policy makers focus on, but the bit that matters is the 90% below the surface

SIHI (David Naughton)

- Focus on primary health care
- As roll out occurs, those things that are “human services” – how we live and work, are the key issue. We can use technology to solve some of these issues eg. Outpatient care.
- Key issue is about what staff think with respect to the changes coming with technology and what they think can sometimes not be current. For examples recent AMA commentary about nurse practitioners and Telehealth – these are additional services, not GP replacement. .
- SIHI is an enabler, it needs to build capacity in the time that the funding is there, so that it can be sustained
- Need to re-design health facilities so that can be e-enabled

Security (Alan Hamilton)

- Raised the issue that Google collects personal information on people’s searches. There is a lot of information gathering going on in the web environment.

NBN (David Bartlett)

- Will increase speed more equitably
- Catalyst for conversation is about what is good about the NBN
- Stop focussing on the Infrastructure and start focussing on the narrative (things you will do with it)
- Alan commented on a report called the last 3% - those on Satellite, low-band video.

GENERAL DISCUSSION

It’s about integration eg. With Silver chain – use it to change the way we do things

Reliability is an issue – ready to hit the “go” button

- On-line appointments
- On –line bookings
- On-line interface “health hubs”
- Web space is a commodity

Radiation oncology – patient swipes an electronic attendance card when presenting for each appointment as an alternative to seeing a receptionist and manual entering into the patient notes. Streamlines and improves the efficiency of the process.

Patient Appointment software “Aus Doc” already used – people can request repeat scripts and referrals without seeing a GP

Telehealth survey conducted with 72% response rate, showed 50% of GP’s are using telehealth services

E-health is a step in the right direction; it starts slowly but evolves quickly as a tool because it solves problems
Potential in targeting consumer groups.

WHAT ARE THE POINTS OF TRANSFORMATION?

We are a long way from ubiquitous health services

- Systems aren't operable
- Big vendors buying into this space
- Needs to be scalable and interoperable
- We have 2/3 telehealth networks and they are a long way from enterprise grade
- systems are not interoperable – NGO's, private, public sector – this is vital for rural health

Some of the investments will set us up into the future

- It can be leveraged with the right incentives – standards underpin everything, adopt standard and provide the portal, provide the independence
- E-health may not provide a whole new platform, but could provide a platform for all systems to talk – need to leverage off existing systems

Small steps – choose the “winnable wins”

- Get people to talk to each other
- Web Pas – first ever patient identifier which can track patients through systems
- Wheatbelt has five Database
- Trial in Great Southern that is putting all clinical systems into electronic form
- Will happen in the Wheatbelt in 2015
- Notification and clinical discharge summary – more electronic

Public needs to drive

- Has been a significant change in the last 5 years
- Patients go to new services because it meets their needs eg. Nurse Practitioners have scope to do digital
- Telehealth has been driven by champions not by need
- Jo-blow public need so to push it, to do that it needs to do one of two things
 1. Increase access
 2. Increase efficiency

Key Gaps

- Chronic disease
- Mental health
- Elderly

Partnership

- Working together on a need is critical
- Need Dept heads to understand the need (attitudes are an issue)

Results

- There has been early results from SIHI – self sufficiency (number of patients receiving hospital care locally) was approximately 45%, now risen to over 50% with target of 60%.
- Shift is good and in the right direction.
- Metro wait list has dropped – getting more people through locally.
- Digital is an enabler
- Monitoring patient flows eg. Jurien Bay – review of PATS (patient assisted transport) shows that most choose to go to Joondalup, not across to Moora.
- Emergency Telehealth Services (ETS) -ED's hooked to specialists in Perth

Narrative is needed

- Need to be able to describe the service/options for the public – they don't know they can ask for it
- Find the stock take of what is able to be delivered
- ARM – voluntary directory
- We don't know what the potential is
- Need to cast the vision and the narrative across the community

Healthy Communities Model

- Self management plans
- Link to other parts of the market
- Have complete flexibility of how to treat a patient – assess their need and link to other providers/other parts of the market
- Campaign style health promotion programs work as part of a bigger change process. E.g. with anti smoking advertisements came public legislation about where people could smoke, increased taxation, a change in community attitude, increased awareness and a subsequent reduction in smoking - takes many years.

Personal Health Devices

- Conveys health data, nurse rings if anything is amiss
- What has been found is they were having more admissions but less hospital days (so over more cost efficient)

Integration and Collaboration

- Need resources to “glue” things together
- Need resource for engagement
- Need the narrative
- Need information sharing across different systems, don’t reinvent the wheel, pick one database and use it
- It’s about prioritising - Converting small hospitals to primary health sites

Population Health perspective - Education side

- On-line web casts are available for people
- Authoritative place to get information on health
- Innovation community - health tube
- Eg. Stemming the tide – program delivering on PND

Journey is provider needs driven

- Business case and work flow models for tele-health are not there yet
- Need to be careful of expectation of consumers and ability to deliver are matched
- Need soft approach – don’t want expectations to be built
- Consumers will come along when they see something tangible
- Need health providers to get on-board – they need to embrace it
- Eg. Smart phones – roll out, slow at first, gains momentum as more get on board.

ATTACHMENT 6: COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT WORKSHOP REPORT

WHEATBELT DIGITAL ACTION PLAN

Digitally Enabling the Communities of Western Australia's Wheatbelt

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT WORKSHOP REPORT

1/2/2013

This report summarises the information gathered at the Community Development Workshop held in York with Community Resource Centre Staff and Board members and Community Development Staff from Local Government. The purpose of the workshop was to engage CRC's and CDO's from the Wheatbelt in the development of the Digital Action Plan, to brainstorm future aspirations for the region and brainstorm digital solutions to the challenges, barriers and opportunities.

This summary is a verbatim record of the Workshop and provides a source of primary data for the Digital Action Plan. The format of the workshop was a presentation which summarised the potential and capacity of digital opportunities to assist the region to achieve its aspirations.

A workshop session was then facilitated by Grassroots Development. The first session gathered information on the views of participants on where they viewed their community was on the economic and social axis presented. Each participant then moved on the axis on the basis of the difference they believed digital technology would make to their place. The conversation of workshop participants was gathered and presented here in verbatim format. The workshop then worked in small groups to brainstorm key challenges and digital solutions to the key issues. Each small workshop outcomes are presented here in verbatim format.

This information will be used in the compilation of the Wheatbelt Digital Action Plan. Key sectors being consulted include Business, Learning, Health and government and Community Development. The result will be a detailed action plan detailing opportunities to address regional priorities through the use of digital technology. The action plan will ensure the Wheatbelt is prepared for the Digital age and the opportunities it will offer.

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL AXIS

Aspiration

- Lots of growth potential in west of Wheatbelt – feel very positive about the potential
- Successful projects making a difference to the community
- Proximity to Perth - digital economy gives us access to Tree Changers with land values good for FIFO workers
- Great opportunities for Wheatbelt – people want products and services and we can deliver them
- Positive impact on farming – young farmers embracing technology will slowly and gradually improve profitability and sustainability
- Some communities will diversify, others will decline
- Use technology as the “stepping stone”

Risks

- Who benefits?
- Small towns and therefore small opportunities – hard to combat the cycle of decline with shops shutting and little employment opportunities, towns next door are larger
- Agriculture is at the coal face of climate change – we need govt support and understanding
- Farming affects small business, fear that technology won't be rolled out quick enough
- Need education to grasp concept and the demographics of small business is older operators who are not as able to change, younger generation will embrace it but it will be slow
- Fear the technology application will be slow although technology implementation will be quick

Context

- What makes the region tick? There is lots of positive community development activity.

Opportunities

- Using the technology to welcome new residents in small communities.
- CRC's have an opportunity to support and be champions and provides examples of best practice
- Social media tools will be more applicable than web-pages
- Digital can be a catalyst for growth as we need to be able to diversify but our mindset needs to change

SMALL GROUP WORKSHOPS

Challenges/Barriers	Opportunities / Solutions/ Innovative Ideas
Education system engaged – school bureaucracy	What niches can we add to a crowded curriculum? Build great products eg. Case Study Qld – virtual classrooms – learn from one teacher, and from other students across state
High School students – keeping them in Education System	Offer learning opportunities for kids that stay What do they need to learn? Work out how to meet needs of Voc Ed.
Parents wanting education for their children	Scholarship Promote what people have achieved Inspiring virtual mentors (storytelling) Create connections
Climate change	Monitor to affect behaviour change and harness alternative energy to good effect The way we use technology to discuss problems and affect solutions- use NBN to create our own energy solutions eg. Shire could turn on/off water sources for gardens etc.
Communications not ready to embrace technological change	Become the portal to resources and information for the community Network needs to get smart, effectively outsourcing resources eg. Pingelly outsource web pages to India CRC's are the only portal in regional WA to be that portal. Priority has to be excellent, reliable fast internet. CRC's need to have the respect of government in their value and relevance to regional WA.
If you were geographically isolated you could still connect to reliable internet	NBN would be great
NBN can't supply and then leave the area	Give a man a fish and he will eat for a day, teach a man to fish and he will have food for life. Giving us the speed is the opportunity. The solution is to ensure we have the skills and resources to use it properly.

Challenges/Barriers	Opportunities / Solutions/ Innovative Ideas
Communication plan/strategy for communities – people knowing about what goes on and being engaged	Email solution – quality assessment –ask % of people to CRC response increase after use Mail outs – point of difference Newsletter – Crowd Sourcing content – vetted by editor Lake Grace – Online community “community stix” Not everybody wants to get their information the same way – multiple mediums – newspaper, email, website, social media Use SMS alerts eg. for community events Coordinated approach
The threat of on-line shopping affecting local business	E-mail ordering like it is on-line – need to be confident to do this – CRC can assist The investment of time would be of benefit – people get what they are after and proprietors know what to order (no wastage)

Challenges/Barriers	Opportunities / Solutions/ Innovative Ideas
Community integration of new residents / community members	<p>Make “different” the same</p> <p>Cultural differences – embrace them or at the very least understand them</p> <p>Mentor/welcome centre to meet and greet new resident, digital space like on-line dating agency but this would be on-line new resident agency where you get matched up with an existing resident, accompany with Welcome Pack</p> <p>Corporate/social bowls – engaging and involving community members and residents both old and new</p> <p>Facebook on-line community board – advertise events and experiences, market events</p> <p>Put faces for staff in businesses, shire, CRC – put on email signatures</p> <p>Teach people how to belong in a rural town (on-line)</p> <p>On-line family tree “faces of x town” so we know who is related to who and also who is who</p> <p>Need ‘warm body’ to get ‘in’ – still need real relationships</p>

Participants:

Karen Dore	Shire of Chittering
Jo Hayes	Quairading CRC
Robyn Richards	Quairading CRC
Anna Painter	Dept RDL
Lee Steel	Pingelly CRC
Chantelle Jennings	York CRC
Melissa Stone	Dowerin CRC
Debbie Kemp	Williams CRC
Sharon Moore	Williams CRC
Heidi Cowcher	Shire of Williams
Jenny Gemund	Shire of Tammin
Mike Lynch	Small Business Centre Corrigin
Sue Middleton	Grassroots Development



For more information visit
www.rdawheatbelt.com.au