



NEWS RELEASE

Cisco Helps to Bridge the Digital Divide in the U.S. with Rural Broadband Network Solutions for Service Providers

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News Summary:

- Cisco unveils its network solutions to help service providers close the digital divide through U.S. Government funded programs
- Cisco technology and U.S. Government funding help TruVista to upgrade its core network to reach unserved rural customers in South Carolina
- Cisco announces its Rural Broadband Innovation Center in North Carolina, featuring the latest internet technologies to extend connectivity to rural communities

SAN JOSE, Calif., September 9, 2020 – Delivering on its commitment to power an inclusive future where everyone has access to the internet, Cisco today unveiled its network solutions for rural broadband designed to help U.S. service providers extend and improve the cost-efficiency of their networks for infrastructure buildouts in rural areas.

According to the U.S. Federal Communications Commission (FCC), nearly 30 million Americans still do not have high speed internet access. Being able to connect to high speed internet opens many doors, and more opportunities are created through education, skill sharing, access to better healthcare, and so much more.

Cisco's 2020 Inclusive Future Report estimates that providing internet access to unconnected parts of the world has the potential to lift 500 million people out of poverty globally. The report also asserts that internet usage and lower levels of inequality often have a close correlation, making digital communications infrastructure essential to attain equality.

Taking action

Today, Cisco announced plans with [MuralNet](#) to launch a Sustainable Tribal Networks program to provide consistent internet access and services to the 574 federally recognized, sovereign, Native American Tribes (close to three million people) to foster better economic, health and educational opportunities. Approximately 1.5 million people on these reservations do not have basic wireless services, and more than a third of those living on Tribal lands don't have access to high-speed broadband. Cisco is providing financial support, legal, technical and market expertise, among other resources.

Government Assistance

Through a series of programs involving \$37 billion in federal funding, the U.S. Government has committed to closing the digital divide in America, particularly in rural areas where broadband is insufficient.

TruVista, a telco service provider in Chester, South Carolina, is planning to deploy 257 miles of fiber-optic cables to expand its network and offer high quality, low latency broadband services to 81 square miles of unserved communities. Thanks to a \$9.1 million grant from the USDA Re-Connect program, it can cost-effectively extend broadband services to reach over 1,700 additional homes. With the addition of Cisco's Rural Broadband network solutions, TruVista's best-in-class IP transport network will have the increased backbone capacity to meet both current and growing demand.

"We began our journey to deploy an end-to-end IP architecture with Cisco five years ago, and throughout they have been a guiding light, helping us work through pros and cons to make more intelligent decisions," said Sam Fitzgerald, Senior Director of Engineering and Operations, TruVista. "Since deployment, we have yet to see a single glitch -- not one. When you find a great partner up front and can choose the right solutions that scale, it just works."

"Closing the digital divide is an imperative for government decision makers and all of society," said Ron Westfall, Senior Analyst + Research Director, Futurum Research. "The necessary move to more remote working and learning is proving that access to affordable, reliable internet access is essential to fulfilling the unique demands of rural communities in top-priority areas such as public safety, public health, education, and communications. Rural communities must be able to join the emerging digital workforce and ecosystem to survive and prosper."

New Cisco Rural Broadband Innovation Center

Stemming from its *Internet for the Future* launch in December 2019, Cisco has been actively investing in an inclusive future, working with service providers around the world to transform the economics of networking and improve the cost structure to connect more people and reach underserved communities.

This Fall, the company will unveil its Rural Broadband Innovation Center, in Raleigh, North Carolina where it will showcase to customers the steps for converging wireline and wireless infrastructure and services to enable more cost-effective broadband networking. The innovation lab will feature Cisco's routing and optical platforms, including the new Cisco 8000 Series routers powered by Cisco Silicon One, Cisco Cloud Services Stack providing a validated Telco Cloud environment and its service provider network automation and security solutions.

"I'm proud that Cisco has been very vocal and actionable in our effort to bridge the digital divide," said Jonathan Davidson, Senior Vice President and General Manager, Mass-Scale Infrastructure Group, Cisco. "Everyone should be able to connect to the internet. As technology leaders, we have the power to change lives and shape the future through inclusion. It is critical for people to be connected to each other and to information now more than ever before. With our network solutions for rural broadband, we are providing our customers with the critical tech infrastructure they need to reach the underserved rural communities as soon as possible."

Supporting resources:

- [Cisco Rural Broadband Network Solutions](#)
- [MuralNet and Cisco Launch Sustainable tribal Networks Program](#)
- [Cisco 2020 Inclusive Future Report](#)
- [Bridging the Digital Divide for All Americans: FCC Initiatives](#)
- [FCC Rural Broadband Auction Programs](#)
- [Blog: Three Innovations to Bridge the Digital Divide in Rural Areas](#)
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