

NRE² BUILDING RURAL CAPACITY IN THE NEW ECONOMY

Communication Tools and Resources in Rural Canada

Springhill

David Bruce
Mount Allison University



Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada / Conseil de recherches en sciences humaines du Canada

About the Communications Inventory

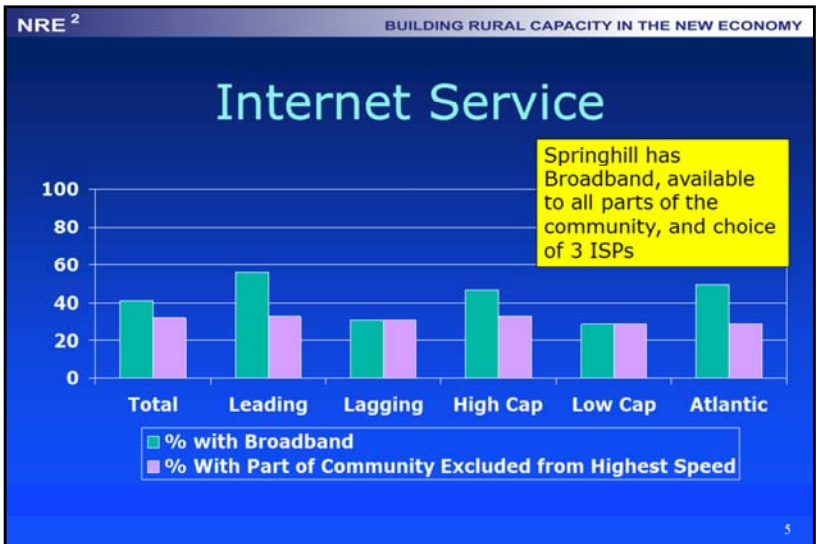
- Information collected Summer 2003
- 22 Sites
- Will be repeated in Summer 2005
- Data uses
 - Assess communications assets
 - Monitor changes over time
 - Provide background information for upcoming projects

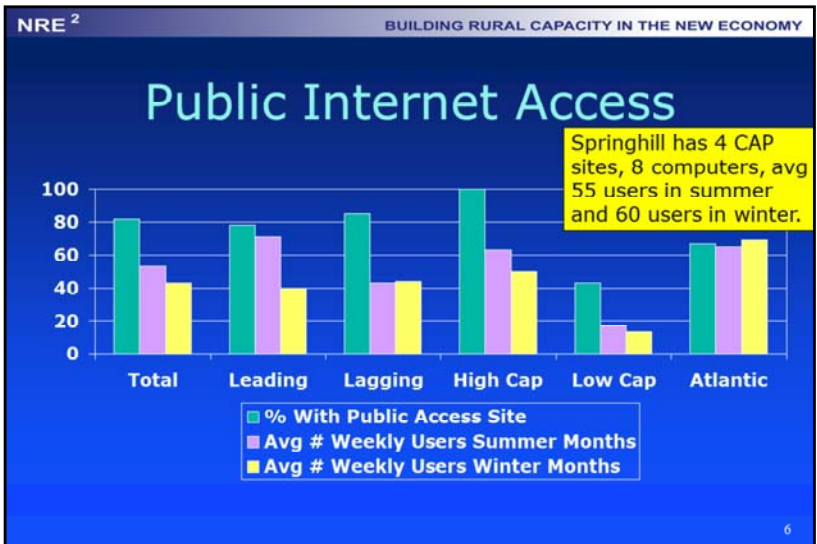
Information Collected

- Cable television and community programming
- Direct broadcast satellite
- Internet service provision and access
- Public Internet access (CAP sites) and usage
- Community websites
- Local, regional, provincial and national newspapers
- Community newsletters
- Community radio
- Community bulletin boards
- Interpersonal communication (gathering places, events, meetings)
- Community identifiers (symbols, slogans)

Importance of Communication

- Effective communication can mobilize a community to take action
- Metaphors
 - Glue – holds the community together
 - Oil – lubricates our togetherness
 - Web – connects us to one another
- Communication in action
 - Sending information using the right tools
 - “Ritual” for reminding us about who we are
 - Audience may be internal or external
 - “Who” participates varies each time
 - There are different levels of interaction
 - The # of participants also varies each time



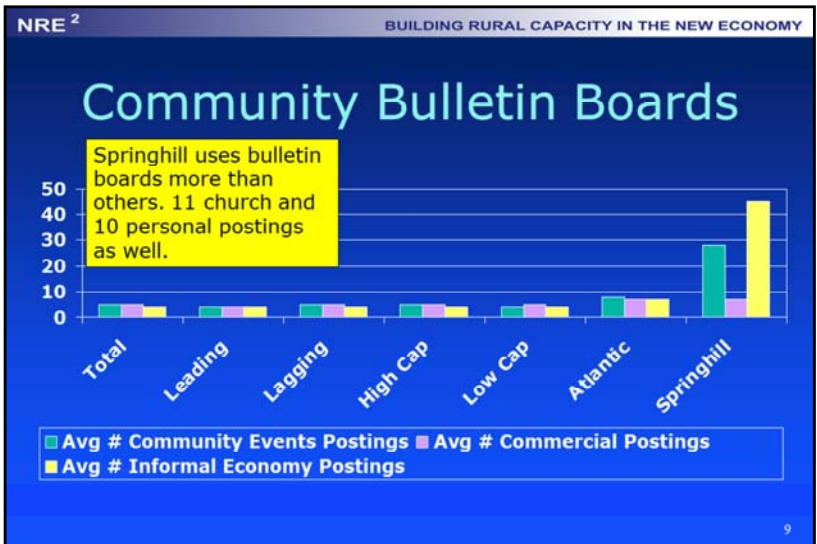


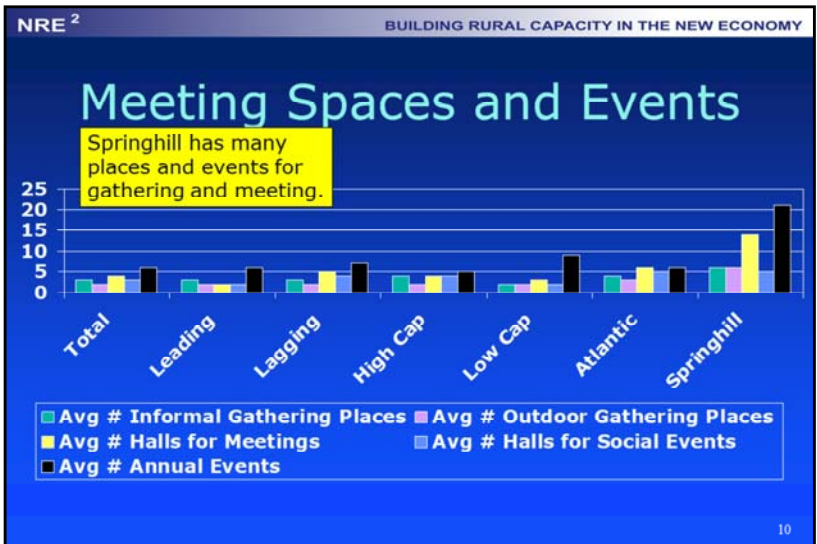
Newspapers

- 27% of sites have a local newspaper
- 44% of leading sites
- Almost all places have at least one regional newspaper available
- Springhill has a weekly plus several regional weekly and daily papers available

Newsletters

- 68% have a community newsletter
- Mostly in sites without a local newspaper
- Important tool in absence of newspaper
- Springhill has one newsletter produced by the Heritage Group





Summary for Springhill

- Broadband access, choice of ISPs
- Better than average public Internet access with good usage rates
- Good access to local and regional papers
- One newsletter in town
- Many bulletin boards with lots of use
- Many more halls and events than others
- Also has a community cable television channel
- Overall – lots of communication infrastructure for community use

Other Communication Projects

- Technology-Mediated Learning Project
 - David Bruce, dwbruce@mta.ca
- Communication Strategies and Media Project
 - Ivan Emke, iemke@swgc.mun.ca
- Traditional Media in the New Economy
 - Doug Ramsey, ramsey@brandonu.ca
- Use of the Internet in Rural Households
 - Derek Wilkinson, derek@nickel.laurentian.ca

Contact Information

- NRE2 Project
 - <http://nre.concordia.ca>
- Communications theme
 - <http://www.mta.ca/rstp/nre.html>
 - David Bruce, dwbruce@mta.ca, 506-364-2395