

Message to AgriBusiness

How many times a day do you use the internet? Email, online order inquiries, freight shipment status, research, weather, and news are all part of our everyday life. You use it because once you click, the page displays in a few seconds. Do you remember what it was like 10 years ago? Well unfortunately 80% of your customers are stuck in 1995 connection speeds. This 80% use the internet less than 2 times a week and they use it for just a few minutes. Why? - because they have to dial up and are connecting at speeds as much as 20 times slower than the one you are using. Your web site, your online information, your research papers - these are .not being accessed because the connection is too slow. Broadband users access the internet 95% more per week than narrowband users. Your customers are being disenfranchised - they are being denied one of the great resources that our current technology can provide. While it is important for you to consider the success factors of your customer and to assist him in becoming successful, there is a self interest factor in his getting broadband. Thirty years ago connectivity between manufacturers and distributors was phone calls and faxes. Fifteen years ago we were just starting to think about email and EDI purchase orders. Now we have online connectivity and purchase orders, inventory, sales reporting, invoices and inventory movement are all online and transparently visible. It doesn't take a crystal ball to predict that collaboration, forecasting, educating and training programs with your customer are going to become more important in the near future. You will want them to come to your web site to see why your product has an advantage. And you want to tell this story using rich media, flash, video and sound. Sure you can do it by mailing CDs, television ads or radio but the medium that can drive your message costs to < \$.01 per contact is email and the internet. Your story cannot effectively reach your customer without broadband. The Broadband Alliance for Agriculture is the organization that is dedicated to making affordable broadband happen in rural America. Our education and advocacy programs need your help. We need your name as one of our supporters and we need your donation to continue this work. Go out to www.broadbandalliance.org and take a look at what we have to offer. Then join us with your endorsement and your support.