



e-VT Castleton Re-Cap

The e-Vermont Community Broadband Project is a partnership between seven statewide organizations and leaders in two dozen Vermont towns to help close the digital divide through innovative use of Internet tools and training. Initiatives in Castleton were spearheaded by the Castleton Free Library along with Castleton Elementary School, the community center, town government, and other individuals and organizations. In just over a year, this team succeeded in bringing the following accomplishments to Castleton:

- Forty-five netbook packages for Castleton Elementary School, including Dell netbooks, netbook cases, printers, USB cables, extra ink cartridge, and Microsoft Office Pro 2010 – plus an additional six netbook packages purchased by the school – to ensure that every student in grade 5 receives a 21st century education;
- Weekly training with community-based, NETS-S coordinated technology lessons for students and teachers in grade 5;
- A free online neighborhood forum at frontporchforum.com that 348 subscribers in Castleton and neighboring Hubbardton (out of 1940 households in the towns) used more than 940 times during their e-Vermont year – and continue to use – to buy and trade household items, promote local events and volunteer needs, share wildlife sightings, and recommend local businesses;
- An enhanced and expanded municipal website that uses the e-Vermont template can be accessed at CastletonVermont.org;
- A community portal site to connect residents and visitors to local businesses, local events, and community resources – as well as to the municipal and library websites – at WelcometoCastleton.com;
- Two iPads and two laptops with Deep Freeze and extended warranties to help more residents and migrant workers access the Internet, find social services and jobs, and connect to research and educational opportunities;
- A flatbed scanner to digitize the community's collection of historic documents;
- An Internet Intern from Vermont State Colleges has been available to Castleton Free Library patrons, providing assistance with Web searches and other basic computer task;
- Workshops on the topics of *Getting Your Business Online* and *Using Social Networking* conducted by the Vermont Small Business Development Center for business owners and entrepreneurs;

- One-on-one assistance from the Vermont Small Business Development Center for Castleton businesses establishing websites and developing online marketing strategies;
- A new platform for the Front Porch Forum e-newsletter that includes a comprehensive web-based community calendar, synthesizing all community events into one central place and freely allowing them to be displayed on WelcometoCastleton.com, CastletonVermont.org and other local websites;
- For teachers, a complete program of lesson and unit plans, worksheets, Internet links, advice, instruction, video tutorials, and grant writing resources so that cutting edge classroom education can continue in 2012-2013 and beyond;
- Ongoing webinars for businesses and individuals, available at e4vt.org;
- A tool kit of case studies, lessons learned, and best practices, available at e4vt.org;
- Regional workshops, a statewide conference, and continuing programs of e-Vermont partner organizations.

e-Vermont congratulates the Castleton team for its collaboration and accomplishments over the past year and wishes them well in continuing to close the digital divide, use Internet tools to advance local goals, and serve as a model for rural towns all over Vermont and across the United States.

Please stay posted on future developments by visiting e-Vermont at www.e4vt.org and by following e-Vermont on Facebook (e-Vermont).

-Seán Sheehan, e-Vermont Community Director
May 29, 2012