



Study: Broadband users less likely to leave labor force

By Gautham Nagesh - 08/18/11 11:41 AM ET

Americans that use the Internet are less likely to become discouraged and drop out of the labor force, according to a study from the free-market think tank Phoenix Center.

Last year researchers [found](#) broadband users are 50 percent less like to give up the job search despite long-term unemployment, while dial-up users are 30 percent less likely to become discouraged.

By examining data from 2009 the researchers were able to confirm their earlier findings showing access to the Web, whether at home or through shared public computers, prevents workers from abandoning their search for a new job.

"It appears that all forms of Internet use, including dial-up and public shared use, are important tools for job search, reducing discouragement by a sizable and statistically significant amount," wrote Phoenix Center chief economist Dr. George Ford.

Ford noted that the benefits were not restricted to users with home Web connections. He said policymakers should not disregard the potential of public computing centers in favor of "a rigid requirement that broadband be built to everyone's home," which he called "a prohibitively expensive undertaking."

Ford also noted that mobile broadband has become the preferred method for many Americans, particularly low-income households, to connect to the Web. He said there are still meaningful shortfalls in wireless coverage in rural areas and said private investments such as AT&T's pledge to build out next-generation mobile broadband coverage to 97 percent of the country could help improve the efficiency of rural labor markets.

Source:

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