

A light blue outline of the state of Minnesota is centered on the slide, serving as a background for the title and subtitle text.

Minnesota Computer Ownership Considerations

Broadband Task Force

November 13, 2025

Today's Meeting

- Introductions
- Overview
 - Computer ownership
 - Data snapshot
 - Minnesota's Digital Opportunity Plan
 - Examples and sharing
 - Recent publications
 - Q & A

About Digitunity

- 40 years old, 501(c)(3) nonprofit
- We help more people own a computer by shaping and strengthening the systems that make it possible
- Our focus is on systems change, not one-time interventions
- National projects, advisory engagements, 1,600+ member practitioner network, advocacy and influence

National Deployment Network

- 1,600+ direct service organizations
- Nonprofits, schools, public agencies
- Currently 17 active in Minnesota



Computer Ownership Concepts and Terminology

- Large-screen
- Ownership
- Non-deviced/underdeviced homes
- New vs. refurbished computers
- Meeting needs and use
- Supply, preparation and deployment
- Adoption
- Ecosystem

Computer Ownership Impacts All Sectors

- Civic participation
- Educational attainment
- Connectedness
- Economic mobility
- Health outcomes
- Access to information, government benefits, and services
- Workforce participation
- Healthy environment

Computer Ownership

- Computer ownership is fundamental for broadband adoption
- Recent peer-reviewed research from Dr. Amy Gonzales of UCSB shows computer ownership is more important for internet benefits than in-home internet service
- Smartphone use = more affordable access to internet

U.S. 2024 Data Snapshot

- Over 17.7 million households (13.31%) do not have a large-screen computer
- Equivalent to 33 million residents
 - *includes households without any computing device (3.4%) and those who rely on a smartphone (9.9%)*

DIGITUNITY®

1 in 7

Households in the United States are without large screen computers.



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2023 American Community Survey, Table S2801 "Types of Computers and Internet Subscriptions"

U.S. Data Snapshot

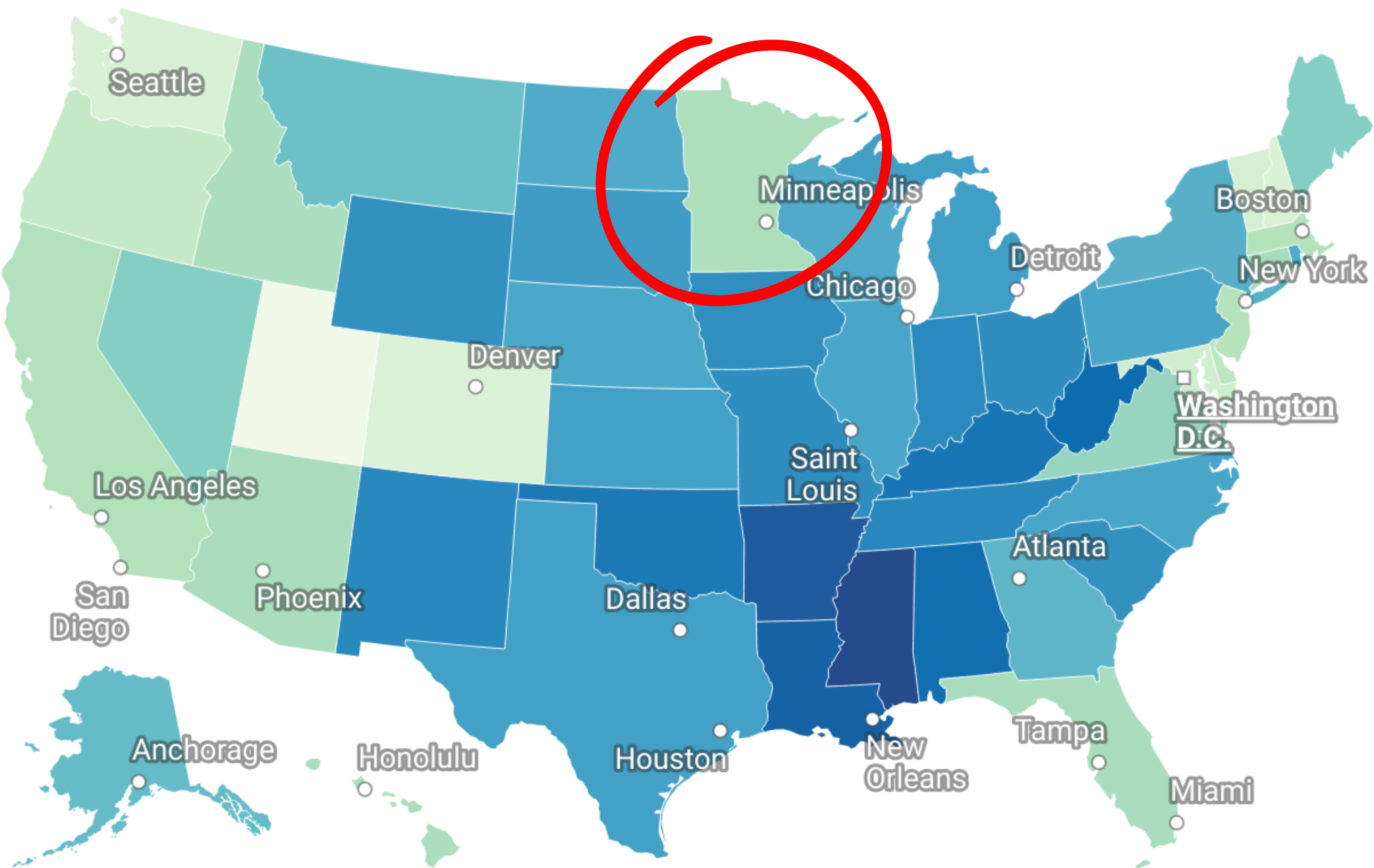
Who's most likely to lack a home computer?

- Older adult: 1 in 5 older adults (65+)
- Education level: ~ 1 in 3 adults without a HS diploma
- Employment status: Unemployed adults are 4x more likely to lack computers compared to employed adults.
 - 1 in 10 unemployed adults rely only on a smartphone to go online.

Percentage of Households Without Large-Screen Computers, by State (2024)

This map uses 2024 American Community Survey (ACS) data to illustrate the percentage of households in each state that do not have a large screen computer. The data point of large screen computer includes: (1) households solely reliant on a smartphone for their internet connectivity and (2) households without any type of computing device.

Percent of Households Without a Large-Screen Computer



Minnesota 2024 Data Snapshot

- About 1 in 9 households lacked a large-screen computer or 11.2% of all Minnesota households
- This is equivalent to 264,918 households with no large-screen computer including:
 - 186,144 smartphone only households
 - 78,774 households without any type of computing device

Persistent, systemic barriers prevent a large segment of the U.S. population from obtaining a computer, leaving them unable to participate fully in the modern economy and society. Cost is the primary barrier, and no widespread, coordinated solutions exist. But there is hope....

Minnesota's Digital Opportunity Plan

Objective: Increase Minnesotans' access to large-screen devices, such as laptop and desktop computers

Baseline: 82.1% in 2023, 93.7% in 2028

Computer ownership is rising among adults ages 60-plus but still lowest among age groups

Many assets: Public access, nonprofit refurbishing organizations

An outline map of the United States, including the 48 contiguous states, Alaska, and Hawaii. The map is rendered in a light gray color against a dark blue background. The text is centered over the map.

**What are other states
doing regarding
computer ownership?**

Other States

- Building on existing resources
- Centralizing info for residents on computers, internet and skills
- Collaborative efforts
- Diversifying funding
- Hub and spoke model
- Policy changes
- Statewide group focused on computer ownership



Considerations

1. Supply, preparation, deployment
2. Policies
3. Braided funding
4. Multi sector/agency investment
5. Data collection and research
6. Computer repair, help desk, technical support, warranty

Recent Digitunity Publications

- Large-Screen Computer Ownership: A Call to Action (2025)
- Supportive and Sustainable Computer Ownership Ecosystems for Rural America (2025)
- Why Computers Matter: A Conversation with Dr. Amy Gonzales (Interview, 2025)
- Rural Communities & Digital Device Ownership (2022)



Q & A