

# Wall Street Journal Profiles Kentucky's Global Economic Development Leadership



**Contact:** Kasey McCrary  
[kmccrary@connectky.org](mailto:kmccrary@connectky.org)  
1-866-923-7501

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
August 12, 2008

*ConnectKentucky's broadband efforts highlighted in Journal's Special Report on Seven Global Examples of Creative Efforts to Successfully Grow Economies*

**Frankfort, Kentucky:** The Wall Street Journal recently recognized Kentucky as one of the world's seven outstanding economic development leaders, highlighting the efforts of ConnectKentucky to bring high speed Internet (broadband) benefits to every Kentuckian. Featured in the Journal's Special Report on economic development, the article highlights the dramatic impact that technology growth has had on the lives of millions of Kentuckians as the cooperative effort has created an innovative environment for job growth, healthcare improvements, better education and improved quality of life. The story illustrates the all-inclusive nature of ConnectKentucky's efforts through the story of local citizens and businesses who joined together to bring broadband and jobs to rural Pendleton County.

"We are very pleased about this positive national attention for the Commonwealth of Kentucky, but there is much work yet to do," said Kentucky Governor Steve Beshear. "Currently, only half of Kentuckians take advantage of available broadband access. With greater use of available technologies, Kentucky can provide more opportunities for telework, which can grow jobs while protecting our environment. In the months and years to come, we must actively educate and encourage citizens to embrace broadband technology and take advantage of the many associated benefits it offers."

The Wall Street Journal's special economic development report included the following editor's note:

Seven places, seven ideas. That's the concept behind this Journal Report on economic development – to identify cities and states around the globe that have found creative, and seemingly successful, strategies for growth. We specifically wanted to find areas that weren't just playing the old incentives game, where state and local governments dole out tax breaks to companies that promise to move in and create jobs. Too often that's a losing proposition, as tax breaks are given to companies that would have relocated anyway, for jobs that never materialize.

Instead, we take you to rural Kentucky, where a public-private partnership is creating new jobs by expanding the availability and use of broadband Internet connections. Or to Omaha, Neb., which has built a thriving downtown through annexation and renewal. Or to Kobe, Japan, which recreated itself as a biomedical center after a devastating earthquake.

Seven ideas for growth. None of them may be a cure for hard times. But face it: These days, every little bit helps.

"ConnectKentucky staff and partners have demonstrated that committing to a plan that gives life to a vision can change history," said John R. Hall, ConnectKentucky Chairman and retired Chairman and CEO of Ashland Inc. "We are honored to have Kentucky included in the Wall Street Journal economic development report, recognized as a leader in technology and economic development on the global stage."

Over the past four years, the Commonwealth of Kentucky has invested approximately \$7 million through ConnectKentucky toward broadband acceleration, realizing more than \$750 million of private infrastructure investment in return. In addition to efforts in the private sector, more than 4,000 Kentuckians participate as volunteers in local ConnectKentucky teams, fulfilling the non-profit organization's mission to create awareness and drive increased technology literacy and use of broadband-related technology. The local activity prompted investment in the general range of "3 times more, 3 times faster" from private companies into broadband services.

ConnectKentucky has garnered national, industry-wide recognition as a national best practice model for broadband expansion. The model includes extensive broadband asset mapping, a public-private partnership and local eCommunity Leadership Teams. Based on success in Kentucky the model has been replicated, through a parent company called Connected Nation, in numerous states across the country. The United States Congress is considering bills that would enable every state in the nation to replicate the success of ConnectKentucky and bolster the competitive position of the U.S. economy.

To learn more about ConnectKentucky, visit [www.connectkentucky.org](http://www.connectkentucky.org). To read the entire Wall Street Journal article, visit [Wall Street Journal](#).

# # #

**About ConnectKentucky:** *As a non-profit technology-based economic development organization, ConnectKentucky is working to ensure that Kentucky remains the place of choice to live, work and raise a family. A public-private partnership, ConnectKentucky partners with technology-minded businesses, government entities and universities to accelerate technology in the Commonwealth.*