

Warroad Area BBC Pre-registration Survey

Updated 1/11/22

How do you think businesses and industries in the Warroad Area are using technology [internet] in an innovative way?

1. Being a local government agency, almost 100% of our state reporting and communications are through online transactions. Slow or spotty connections have been a problem.
2. Not fast enough and frequent disconnects, unable to get work done at times
3. I have Dial up internet.....
4. The Emergency Management Office is dependent on good internet connectivity. We are often invited to and attend online meetings due in part to COVID restrictions.
5. It's integral to my businesses from ordering products to communicating with the world. When ordering product, it's vital to have a quality high speed connection.
6. When I moved to town from Duluth in 2020, access to high speed broadband was a major factor in choosing the house I bought. Without this access it would be difficult for me to work when I'm away from the school or when issues arise and I need to start troubleshooting from home. During distance learning this importance was underscored with needing to attend numerous virtual meetings and conference calls as well as still supporting the network infrastructure, all from home. Without high speed internet, most of this would be difficult, if not impossible to accomplish. For the school, having access to gigabit fiber optic internet and 1:1 devices is invaluable. This connectivity allows our staff, students, and about 1,500 devices daily access the internet at school. With this connectivity our students, through their Chromebooks, are able to learn and explore the world without leaving the classroom. For example, our Elementary Music teacher likes to bring in Sowah Mensah through video calls with her students where they can learn about African Drumming techniques.
7. Slower speeds cause delays in Customer transactions.
8. At home, we plug into Wiktel's fiber. It works really well and is fast. At work, we have some periodic outages but mostly good coverage now that we moved to our new location.
9. The NWRDC serves local businesses, older adults and persons with disabilities through a voice over internet service known as Senior LinkAge Line which links older adults and caregivers to services. This service is dependent upon adequate broadband.
10. As an entrepreneurial incubator center and coworking space, consistent, reliable high speed is essential. I'd love to become a gigazone!
- 11.
12. Internet connectivity is helpful in education. Students, staff, families, and the entire community benefit from the learning and communication which an internet connection supports.
13. The Internet at the brewery suffices for our purposes. We use it for our POS, accessing email and to run the physical brewery controls.
14. n/a

15. I work for Marvin but work at home. Many times the internet connection can be spotty and ineffective. When I need to do any uploading of video work, I have to go into the office as the internet upload speeds with current internet service is not workable.
16. I work as a trainer and support person for students, staff, and families of Warroad School District. Throughout the district from our youngest ECFE and preschool classes to our oldest High school programs, we are continuously using technology resources for school work and community communication. Having access to high quality internet is hugely impactful on the learning and communication experience of all of these stakeholders. As technology is already intimidating to most of these stakeholders, when the internet isn't supportive of the bandwidth needed to run the resources reliably the buy-in and user experience is at a disadvantage before we even begin. However, when the program can run smoothly and reliably those intimidation factors can be mitigated by demonstrations and training.
17. As an educational provider in the Warroad area, I would like to ensure access to high speed internet for all residents.
18. Members of my household use internet to perform work from home
19. It allows me to work remotely from my home office, and conduct other non-employment functions.
20. We have a copper fed internet connection, which limits our streaming capabilities also constraints when more users at peak times of the day.
21. We have family businesses in Warroad. Currently our production facility requires a Verizon hotspot in the office. Our building downtown is nearly \$70/month for a storefront for poor cable service. Our downtown shipping center we use the Verizon Hotspot as well. Not ideal
22. Witel service is acceptable in my home today but looking forward to getting fiber connected. It has been pulled up to my home and office onsite....just not connected.
23. I am working to bring broadband internet to the Warroad community and as I do this working from home compared to Bemidji its a cost and speed difference that is quite drastic.
24. I live in an area where I can get cable broadband but the speed and quality of signal is all over the place and invariably, if I work from home it is dropping multiple times per day. Additionally, the speeds I pay for are rarely the speeds I actually get.

Please share your thoughts on how the Warroad Area is positioned to provide the high-quality workforce.

1. This is a work in progress, however, reliable high-speed internet is critical to the overall process.
2. great leaders in community will help drive improvements needed to attract new workers in everchanging workplace
- 3.
4. The Warroad area supports large manufacturing and is dependent on strong broadband support.
5. Warroad has the land, school, local amenities, and recreation opportunities to attract and keep a quality workforce

6. I believe our area is primed to grow, and with it, will come a high quality workforce. We are seeing a shift in the workforce in our post-covid world where many organizations are starting to allow remote work and with this shift, employees are starting to re-think where they want to live. I think the days of living in the cities to work in a professional job are starting to go and people are going to move into more rural areas such as Warroad due to the small town quality of life, great schools, sports, abundant outdoor activities, and lower cost of living, etc. The only piece missing is reliable and expanded access to high speed internet which will help attract these types of people to move here. We as a school also have a responsibility to help train this next generation of kids to enter the workforce with the necessary skills to be successful, and I believe we are doing it right now with the systems, tools, and staff we have in place.
7. n/a
8. The quick answer is saying that Marvin is positioned for a high-quality workforce. But, we also have a high level of driven people up here that are entrepreneurs or remote workers. With increased internet resources, we could be an even better remote working community.
9. Warroad is uniquely positioned between Roseau and Baudette which offers larger manufacturing organizations, casino and healthcare entities. Workforce shortages have impacted smaller and local businesses.
10. More work needs to happen. Not there yet. Service is spotty, and not where it needs to be for today and future growth opportunities.
- 11.
12. The Warroad area is positioned to provide a high-quality workforce based on the number of professional, technical, skilled labor, and community service jobs available in the region.
13. I think world is positioned well...housing is a main issue I see.
14. being positioned on the border of Canada may have some benefits for trade, etc.
15. Being able to provide broadband access to employees of many employers including Marvin, School, Clinic - provides an avenue and freedom for employees to work from almost anywhere in the area and do their jobs effectively.
16. At Warroad Schools we are dedicated to preparing our students for the work force of tomorrow. The students of our district have access to high quality technology and many programs which build skills and the working knowledge students will need in the work force. Most importantly students need grit, problem solving, and collaborative skills in addition to being trainable in the rapidly changing and advancing workforce. Having access and exposure to quality technological resources in their education, will propel them in to becoming the high-quality workforce Warroad Area needs to thrive.
17. Northland is offering onsite educational programming in Warroad, accessible and reliable internet access is a crucial piece of advancing the workforce with educational resources.
18. Warroad area has been working towards accomplishing these goals for at least 3 years. It's a mature team, with a well-thought out plan to make this a reality.
19. With 2 international businesses headquartered in the Warroad area (Roseau County) high-quality accessible broadband will aid in attracting a workforce needed to sustain and then grow this workforce.

20. I believe there is opportunity to access high speed connections in the area, but with that said to deliver a fiber to the home or business network it will take a substantial investment in design, labor and infrastructure!
21. We have a lot of momentum with vision, leadership and people doing the work. That is the recipe of building anything meaningful. The rural migration is real and Warroad is primed to be a home for many telecommuters. We also HAVE TO prop up those in poverty. 17% is unacceptable and internet is a key enabler.
22. We face multiple struggles across our community and especially in the neighborhoods that are low income. We have a very high poverty level in our community - significantly higher than Roseau County or State of MN average. With the influx of 'brain gain' happening in Warroad as the metro areas see attrition bleed to outstate, those professionals need broadband quality to operate their remote offices, virtual operations and connectivity for their households. Without broadband, these families and/or professionals will choose other communities that are not as rural and remote as Warroad.
23. It's a rapidly growing community with a lot of entrepreneurs that have been starting businesses all over the state.
24. Reliable high speed internet service is an essential utility to attract a high-quality workforce and citizenry.

How do you think businesses and industries in the Warroad Area are using technology in an innovative way?

1. I believe many rely on technology. I also believe there is much room for growth in this area.
2. not 100% sure on this but a lot are letting employees work from home, encouraging people to think of new ways of doing things, like automation
- 3.
4. With the advent of COVID and now it's resurgence as well as new variants identified industry will continue to depend on a robust broadband to enable people to meet virtually.
5. Although this pertains to other communities, Warroad's ability to connect people thru mobile communication evens the playing field with larger communities that have access to those people already living there.
6. At the school we are using technology in an innovative way by providing a personalized learning experience for each and every student. We are able to accomplish this by leveraging several online learning platforms that adapt to the needs of each student. These tools also help teachers identify needs of each student and where they may need additional instruction and or help. Our IT department also helps foster innovation across the district where we use technology to find efficiencies in processes, automate tasks where possible, and investing in our network infrastructure so we are able to adapt to changing needs. For example, during the 20-21 school year when distance learning was announced, we were able to provide admin staff with take home VOIP phones so they could continue their work during this time. This was possible due to being innovative and having the infrastructure in place to adapt to the ever changing needs of the district. Another example is we are moving away from traditional computer labs and instead deploying virtual desktops which can be accessed both in and out of

school. This is a more efficient use of school resources since each student already has a Chromebook issued to them and it is beneficial to their education because they can now access this resource outside of school for homework.

7. The challenge of working remotely with limited high speed capabilities.
8. I work at a co-working space in town. Before the pandemic, we had high remote work traffic. I think that has only increased in our area with many people opting to stay at home or work in a hybrid capacity.
9. unknown
10. More work to do in the space. I believe we can be a catalyst to help smaller businesses in the technology space. High speed is essential!
- 11.
12. Technology is used innovatively on a daily basis beginning with communication within businesses and industries in the area. Many companies and agencies are continually seeking new ways in which technology can enhance and benefit the work experience. Innovation involves pace, path, and modality of experience.
13. Clearly the work from home situation over the past 2 years
14. N/A
15. I do not have an answer for this question.
16. Considering the remoteness of Warroad Area, the most primary way we can use technology to boost innovation is to use it to increase our connectedness to the world outside of our area. The next is to ensure that the use of technology within the Warroad Area parallels the use in the competitive market outside of this year. It is important that just because we are rural, that our ability to train, support programming and support innovation isn't hindered. At the school, we are doing this through our CTE department, school wide 1:1 chromebook initiative, and use of personalized digital programming which adjusts to student learning needs and offers real time data for instructors to respond to those student needs personally. Our students graduate from our schools with those real world skills to make use of learning platforms and document processing in a way that is comfortable and expandable.
17. I can't speak to this.
18. The large manufacturing facility is relatively self-sufficient. The majority of smaller businesses manage in a piece meal manner.
19. To communicate with a customer/dealer base that is international. Also, using technology to communicate with vendors outside the area which supply critical components to grow company market share.
20. Well I think the larger businesses have found adequate communication connections to support their technologies, but smaller businesses and residences do not have the money to build and access these services.
21. Ecommerce is big. Bringing people to Warroad digitally needs to be a part of every business
22. Marvin has found a way to source what they need to support their business. Other businesses and city offices are subject to the same poor quality connectivity as individual residents.

23. Marvin is the classic example who are using technology to change how manufacturing can be done in a hybrid environment.
24. I think businesses and industries are using technology in the current state business as usual way which has rapidly expanded since the beginning of COVID and will continue to do so over the years ahead.

How do you see unequal access [digital equity] to technology and the internet creating a divide in the Warroad Area? If you have an example either from your family or someone you know, please share it.

1. I know some people who are trying to work from home, however without reliable high-speed internet, that has been difficult.
2. With so many things using streaming services (TV, Zoom meetings, on-line education, etc.), if unable to afford internet you can't take advantage of new opportunities
- 3.
4. I do not have an example of this.
5. Students who didn't have access to the internet or quality internet during the pandemic were at a severe disadvantage.
6. Distance Learning was a real eye opener to many of us at the school. There are so many families in our area who lack access to any internet, through no fault of their own other than where they live. There were also many families who lacked sufficient internet at their home to allow the kids to attend distance learning and the parents to work remotely. We saw many families where kids weren't able to do any of their school work until the evening when the parents were done with work for the day. And we also saw a significant number of families who simply couldn't afford the internet available in their area which in turn forced us to purchase 50 Verizon hotspots to check out. And in the end, this caused a significant learning divide between the kids who had access and those who did not.
- 7.
8. I don't have an answer to this one.
9. Healthcare providers, home and community-based organizations that offering services during the pandemic would not be able to offer services or discontinue services such as telehealth, mental health wellness check ins or virtual respite are essential in rural isolated communities.
10. Everyone needs it! and the sooner the better. In town, out of town. It's essential.
- 11.
12. Access to technology has created divide in the educational experiences offered for some learners and their families. Paperless communication is one example in which having equal access to technology is important for families to be involved in education.
13. I would imagine the largest impact would be on families that don't have access to the Internet at home
14. N/A

15. Having affordable and effective broadband access for all frees up everyone, irrespective of income level to have access to the latest technologies available - whether its to do you job from home or to attend schooling online.
16. Especially during distance learning, we discovered there are significant areas of signal dead zones in our school district. These dead zones can be so stark that not even the school issued hotspots can pick up or provide a signal to the devices in those homes. We had several families during distance learning that had to come to sit in the school parking lot in order to obtain wifi signal strong enough to run school programing, even as basic as accessing Schoology assignments, let alone the more robust personalized and interactive programs.
17. I don't have specific knowledge of this.
18. My understanding is it comes down to income. We need to focus on affordability to be able to provide service to the people who could most benefit.
19. For sure, inequity in the education system when virtual/remote learning is required. It may also affect an employee's (or potential employee) ability to have options for remote work
20. I believe an affordable network build out to all interested is key. Once the system is in place there are programs to help people that are not able to afford certain levels of service.
21. 17% poverty is a reality. \$100/month fiber will create a divide. Accessibility is key
22. Given our high rate of poverty in this desert area, there is an automatic divide that happens. In addition, our rural/remote community faces challenges in connectivity and reliability that creates divide from other areas in northern MN. Our Laotian and Indigenous communities suffered greatly during the pandemic when school was virtually based. There was palpable divide in these households and in low income households.
23. It's mainly based on income levels. Internet prices here are high with such low speeds so families who have many users struggle to pay for it and struggle even worse to use it.
24. With COVID education from home, I know many students likely lost a year of education because of no internet access at home to join virtual classes or do their homework. Additionally, cable TV is likely to continue to dwindle as more and more streaming services replace this historical format for consuming media. When cable TV is no longer available due to large scale cancellations - those without reliable high speed internet will have very limited access to media.

How do local organizations communicate with community members? Is this a two-way discussion? How is technology used? What are the messages [advocacy] the Warroad Area is sending out to the world to attract people and investment?

1. ??
2. NA
- 3.
4. Again a number of community meetings are being held in person, however, it is vitally important to have a robust broadband system in place should businesses and the government sector be forced to return to more online meeting platforms.
5. Definitely a two-way discussion. Organizations and people want to send/ receive information in different ways. It's a challenge to communicate with everybody one way.

6. We engage in both types of communication as a school, and we leverage technology in varying degrees to help us accomplish this task whether it be our social media platforms to our emergency alert systems which can call/text parent/guardian phones.
- 7.
8. As a community without a newspaper, I think we rely heavily on social media for information. I know as a community event planner, we do a lot of blogging, vlogging, and social posting to get our event information out. We also have an initiative called Warroad -Live, Live, Here that is focused on a website and social platforms to showcase what Warroad has to offer and encourage people to check it out as a potential place to live. We have many initiatives to encourage people to invest and to increase the quality of life here and I think the word is getting out. I think one of the issues with this is that we are reaching a younger demographic versus the older portion of our community.
9. Technology can assist with creating more opportunities for employees to work from home. This could be an incentive to recruit and retain workforce with specialized skill sets.
10. I'd love to have a conversation around these topics. Glad this team is forming and some focus is being applied for our community.
- 11.
12. Online communication is the most common way the Warroad area is sending out information to attract people and investors to the area.
13. I think the hub does a good job with their monthly newsletter... I also like the letter from the mayor. My 2-cents most communication I get is via email.
- 14.
15. Social Media, Online forums, etc. Can be 2-way but probably not so much at this time.
16. With the lack of a local newspaper, the school district relies heavily on the use of social media and web based communication. We post announcements across multiple platforms as well as provide real-time assignment updates, grades, attendance callers, and you tube broadcasting of school concerts, ceremonies, and board meetings just to name a few. Often these are one-way communications, but several smaller scale meetings will often include the option for online attendance with specialists our community otherwise can't provide, parents and family members who want to stay involved, but are not in our immediate area, and stakeholders needing to be conscientious of their involvement due to health concerns. Recently we had a teacher who held a networking meeting with content instructors from her field with over a hundred attendees from districts spread far and wide. This teacher discovered that when she shared an idea, the use of technology allowed her to share that concept with others in a way that made the space separating us non-existent.
17. I am not knowledgeable about this.
18. There is no local newspaper. There is a local radio station. City, township and county government rely on limited news in print which is sporadic in its coverage. City and county have web based information sights with updates and meeting information. County meetings can be accessed remotely.
19. From my limited perspective, I believe efforts are made through all mediums of media, and in-person opportunities as well.

20. I think all communication tools are still being used, but the focus on internet is a concern in most areas now. Without that option obviously the discussions are limited.
21. I'm not as informed on this
22. Without a local newspaper (print), we rely on a community newsletter from the City and social media. That presents another issue as there are multiple social sites that carry the message those residents who are able to access these sites online. We also have many in our community who have access but choose not to participate in any social media.
23. Communication is very one-sided and somewhat decentralized within Warroad. Warroad Community Development and Warroad Community Partners.
24. Growing stable employment, rich tradition of hockey town USA, wealth of natural resources in Lake of the Woods, Beltrami Island state forest, available and affordable land to own some wide open space, snowmobile and ATV trails, local brewery, new Hampton Inn hotel, the Warroad river and the riverbend skate path to mention a few.

Sustainability initiatives strive to meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. They can also help businesses become more competitive as they use materials, water and energy more efficiently in their production cycle. How are people and organizations in the Warroad Area adopting sustainable practices in their operations? What barriers to sustainable practices exist?

1. ?
2. NA
- 3.
4. I am not familiar with sustainability initiatives in the Warroad area.
5. From a recycling perspective distance is a barrier. We live a long way from recyclers. The cost of shipping is not worth it.
6. To me, sustainability in this regard means the ability for an organization to financially maintain the technology investments that they currently use. We as a district are constantly trying to balance the financial needs of the district with maintaining a high quality education and current technology for our staff and students to use. For us as an organization the biggest barrier has been financial, technology isn't cheap and it has to be replaced at regular intervals in order to stay operational and useful to the people we serve. This can often times become a juggling act as we decide what to spend money on each summer as a capital project.
- 7.
8. I don't have an answer to this one.
9. unknown
10. I'd love to think more on this thoughtful question.
- 11.
12. Future generations are learning through technology. Having access to broadband is important in building skills in the Warroad area.

13. In the craft beer industry being sustainable is key... Honestly we take our impact on the environment seriously. We use state of the art equipment that minimizes amount of waste water, etc. We would love to have some solar options...but start up costs for that are a barrier.
- 14.
15. I do not have an answer for this question
16. The way Warroad School district addresses sustainability is to consider renewal cycles and purchasing of devices and programing that can endure for a life span acceptable for replacement and longevity. This is important to consider when looking at the use of one time grant funds. It is often exciting when we can acquire new devices and programing, but we need to be careful to ensure that those devices and programs can be supported and otherwise continuously implemented without hinderance. Again, buy in comes with stability and sustainability so we need to ensure what we are providing can be continuously supported.
17. I'm not knowledgeable about this.
- 18.
19. I do not have enough information to answer this question.
- 20.
21. Intentional community planning. Support by Marvin and other key organizations. Consistent leadership. Large volunteer base of movers and shakers. All of these will drive sustainable solutioning.
22. Not knowledge enough to answer.
23. Being honest I moved here three months ago so I am learning all that can be done to achieve this.
24. I see many active recycling efforts, hunting and fishing for sustainable food, land conservation, tree planting, etc.