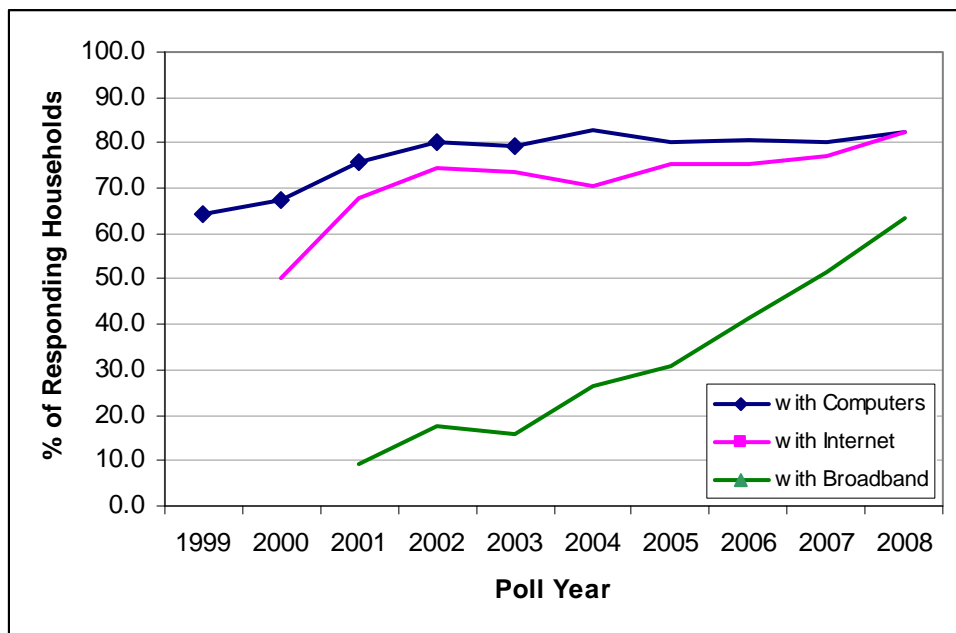


Household Internet ubiquitous, broadband connections rising, digital divides remain.

Summary

In Vermont the percentage of households with computers has held steady around 80% for several years (see Figure 1). However 2008 is the first year that fully 100% of responding computer-owning households are shown to also have Internet connections, and broadband connections,



Source: University of Vermont Center for Rural Studies, *Vermont Poll, 1999-2008*.

Measuring Computer Ownership and Internet Connections with the *Vermont Poll*

For more than a decade, the *Vermont Poll* has collected data on computer ownership and Internet connectivity among Vermont households. Other than tracking computer ownership and Internet connectivity, this data has more recently been used to explore facets of the *digital divide* in Vermont. The digital divide is a term that refers to inequalities in the abilities of people to access information technology and Internet resources.

A vast majority of respondents (77%) were in favor of having their city or town involved in such an effort. When the question was focused to ask if respondents were in favor of an effort exclusively in fiberoptic infrastructure, much faster than typical broadband, a majority (73%) said yes once again. When looking at the data from the viewpoint of the rural-urban divide, there was no discernible different in the support for local efforts overall, but more rural households (74%) were in favor of the fiber-exclusive concept than urban households (68%) with suburban in the middle. Overall the local effort concepts had much more support in households with computers and Internet than in