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# Why broadband is so essential in today's economy

## One-third of N.H. businesses surveyed said they lacked adequate Internet connectivity to conduct core business operations

BY CHARLIE FRENCH



Erik Dodier and Thomas Obrey, known as TJ by his friends, co-founded a multimedia communications, marketing and media firm 20 years ago out of a garage-sized office in Dover. Today, their company, PixelMEDIA, has grown to a multimillion-dollar firm employing close to 70 people at its Pease International Tradeport offices.

Obrey says they picked their Pease location because, among other things, "it had infrastructure that we needed to grow — especially broadband Internet."

It's not just technology firms that need high-speed Internet. Hospitals, legal and financial firms, even educational institutions do as well. The fact is, you can't compete in any of these professions today without high-speed Internet. Moreover, what was considered fast five years ago — two or three megabits per second download — does not suffice for today's uses.

Today, fast means more than 25 megabits per second download and 3 megabits per second upload. That is the Federal Communication Commission's newly updated definition of broadband. With that speed, one can connect to work remotely through a virtual private network, or VPN, stream high-definition video content and videoconference with colleagues and clients in remote locations.

But even that isn't fast enough for some key business functions, such as transferring large databases from a pharmaceutical production facility to another facility, or serving high-definition videoconferencing through a bridge to multiple sites.

And it is insufficient to allow high-quality, real-time medical imaging and consultation between a health practitioner and a patient at a remote site.

