

7 Reasons



WHY AFRICAN
AMERICANS
CAN'T LIVE
WITHOUT THE
INTERNET!

Reason #1:

Jobs.

The Internet is becoming more and more essential to getting and keeping a job. Increasingly, companies are moving their recruitment efforts online, and larger numbers of job-seekers each day are putting their resumes onto career sites on the Web. More and more frequently, those without Internet access find themselves taking what's left after the electronic job matches already have been made. And those already "on the job" are finding that the Internet is giving a whole new meaning to the term, as more and more people are working remotely from home, using PCs to stay connected to the office. Office workers without Internet access will be increasingly at a disadvantage, as companies move to increase their numbers of "teleworkers."

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Reason #2:

Government

These days, the words "government" and "downsizing" often are heard in the same sentence. On the local, state, and federal level, the Internet is a big part of efforts to slim down government budgets. The idea is to make interactions with the public more efficient, by putting information online and cutting down bureaucracy. In the near future, those without Internet access may find themselves holding the phone longer, with fewer and fewer government workers on the other end to answer.

7

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Reason #3:

Health Care

If you need emergency treatment for a toothache, how do you find a dentist, in the middle of the night? Many HMOs now offer benefits and enrollment information 24 x 7 x 365, on the Web. Diabetes is one of many ailments that affect African Americans disproportionately. What's the best way to manage it? Some medical facilities now have the ability to monitor diabetic patients' blood-sugar levels remotely, online. More and more hospitals, private practitioners, and medical researchers are turning to the Web, putting up sites offering valuable information to the general public. American medicine is the most technologically advanced in the world, but Internet access is essential to getting the best it has to offer.

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Reason #4:

Business

Small businesses owned by African Americans are multiplying rapidly in the U.S., and the Internet is becoming an essential part of doing business. More and more large companies and government entities are turning to the Web to choose contractors and suppliers, using business-to-business, or B2B, sites. Some economists have estimated that B2B e-commerce purchases will reach \$4.4 trillion by 2003, with \$135 billion of that representing minority procurement activity. Businesses not on the 'Net will find it difficult to survive on a smaller and smaller share of the pie.

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Reason #5:

Education

The Internet is transforming education in the US. America's public schools are working under a government mandate to get wired to the Internet, and all schools -- public and private, K-12 and college -- are making use of it: distributing and collecting homework by e-mail; holding virtual classes in chat rooms; broadcasting lectures by streaming video; and more. "Distance learning," using information technology, is one of the fastest-growing segments of adult education. Even many professional tutors are taking their services online. And for prospective college students, the Internet offers the best way to search for scholarship dollars. Those without Internet access will miss out on many educational opportunities.

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Reason #6:

Shopping

More and more consumer transactions are being done online. It is more efficient and definitely more convenient for shoppers, because it allows them to shop from the comfort of their own homes. Consumers are able to take advantage of the best prices through online auctions, which allow shoppers to name their own prices for goods or services. And, when "traditional" routes fail, the Internet often is the only way to get that hard-to-find item you really want, or need.

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Reason #7:

Communication

E-mail is by far the most inexpensive and Efficient way to communicate with persons outside of local calling areas. Many Web sites now offer e-mail service free of charge. Internet Web sites, e-mail, and more advanced technologies such as Internet phone service and videoconferencing, are incomparable tools to organize communities and strengthen social bonds within and between African-American communities.