



What is the Digital Divide in education?

Simply speaking; Digital Divide refers to the inequality in access to information technology, including computers, Internet and other digital equipments. Those who have access to and have the ability to use digital information easily are referred to as the “haves”, while others are the “have-nots”.

Our Website explores the Digital Divide in education – the gap between students, schools and countries.

Why is the Digital Divide a global social issue?

Knowledge is power. Knowledge is vital to ending several global issues, key to making an unprecedented impact in ending extreme poverty. Realizing that education is arguably the key to ending poverty, in September 2000, as part of the Millennium Development Goals (MDG), the international community agreed to secure equal access to education for all children by the year 2015 to substantially reduce poverty. We need to empower individuals, especially the younger children, by providing them with equal access to information.

As computers and the Internet are growing in importance as essential tools for accessing information globally, owning these, and being IT-literate are crucial to compete in the new millennium. As a result, the digital gap between the “haves” and “have-nots” are quickly growing. Closing this gap is the foundation for a lasting social change.

*ITU estimates that about 800,000 villages – representing around **one billion people worldwide** – still lack connection to any kind of information and communication technology.*

There are still 30 countries with an Internet penetration of less than 1%.

Is there a solution for the Digital Divide?

There is no short answer for this question. Digital Divide is not a binary division. Ownership of a computer does not equate to being IT-literate. For example, giving modern desktops to a school would not help if the students do not know how to operate them nor where to look for help. Digital and human barriers – the ability to use software, access digital content, and the access to teachers with IT skills – are the two barriers often over-looked in importance. Bridging the Digital Divide for the young generation requires a united effort of the society, the school, teachers, parents, and the students themselves to lift the physical, digital, human and socioeconomic barriers. The international community holds the keys to addressing these challenges. Committed nations and individuals, working in tandem with committed local, regional, and national development organizations can meet the challenge: ensuring equal access to information globally.



What is the aim of eDivide?

Our Website aims at raising awareness of this global issue among students, teachers, educators and the general public. Through a series of interviews, games, photos and animations, the visitor is encouraged to discover the concept of the Digital Divide interactively and has the opportunity to understand what they can do to resolve the issue.

The world can beat this divide, but we need concerned citizens like you to get involved. If you find this topic interesting and are ready to make a real difference, we hope the information on the Website, stories about our actions and accomplishments will inspire you to act now. Beating the divide may seem like an overwhelming challenge, but it shouldn't. We have the 'know-how' and resources to make this happen. True and meaningful change can happen, only when people from all walks of life, in rich and poor countries alike, work together. This change can start right now with all of you.

There are lots of ways you can take action: Check our Website for new ideas! Our efforts and results have been extraordinary, so read our inspiring stories and start planning what you'll do to get involved. Read more about what type of action our team took; the more you learn about what others like you are doing to fight this global challenge, the less overwhelming the issue will seem.

How can I help to bridge the Digital Divide?

Here are some of the ideas on bridging the Digital Divide:

- **Raise awareness of the issue to the community**
 - » "Together we are better". A united effort is needed to bridge the Digital Divide. Visit our website to understand more about the current situation and the efforts being done to fill the access gap. Get empowered with knowledge so you can educate and rally your peers to bridge the gap.
- **Donate used computers to schools**
 - » Second-hand computers can be donated to organizations, which in turn distribute them to schools in need.
- **Build websites for specific social groups**
 - » Lack of Websites of interest discourages users from minor social groups to use information technology. By building Websites of interest targeted at these users, you can help to bridge the content gap.
- **Use IT in teaching**
 - » There is a significant shortage of teachers with IT literacy who can enrich the students' learning experience with modern technology. Read our website to understand how teachers and educators can both help to bridge the Digital Divide
- **Know which barrier you can help to lift**
 - » There are four barriers in the Digital Divide: physical, digital, human and socioeconomic. Read our Website to understand what contributes to each barrier and how you can help to lift them.

This brochure is designed by: ThinkQuest eDivide team.

www.e-divide.com