



High-Speed Internet Revitalizes Business Centers



Photo: Steve Rynecki

“In the early days of our operation, the BIC really helped us to improve our image and our management. We really couldn’t have grown as quickly without the services of the BIC.”

- Anna Slavtova, Operations Director for Classic Inc.

Internet access in larger cities of Ukraine is growing rapidly. The increased presence of computer training centers and cyber-cafes in larger cities demonstrates the demand for information communications technology in Ukraine. However, connectivity in rural areas is poor. With the support of USAID, five project offices known as Business Internet Centers (BIC) were opened in various rural locations across the country.

BICs introduce basic business management training and high-speed Internet access to rural and disadvantaged communities. The offices are equipped with a high-speed Internet connection, and have at least five computer workstations for customers to use. The center serves commercial clients including Classic Inc., a cabinet-making company, which has used the center to conduct market research using the Internet, establish e-mail accounts, set-up a website, and improve their marketing plan through training.

BICs also have a positive impact on youth, seniors, the unemployed, and women seeking to improve their skills. They learn about the value of the Internet and computer skills in building local professional capacity, which helps reduce migration from rural communities to larger cities. “Around 60% of our clients are women interested in starting their own business or looking for ways to improve their business skills,” says Helena Dutko, BIC director in Novovolynsk, a rural community in northwestern Ukraine.

First Person

