

Upstate New York business leaders make the case for sustaining economic growth by strengthening small cell infrastructure: An AT&T survey conducted by Global Strategy Group.

In November 2017 an AT&T survey of 401 Upstate New York business leaders examined the role wireless connectivity plays in sustaining the growth of emerging technology-enabled industries and research institutions such as universities and medical centers. The survey explored how quality, reliable, high-speed, high-capacity wireless connectivity is essential for Upstate New York’s cities and towns to compete with neighboring regions and to continue participating in the innovation, startup, and high-tech industries of the future.

The survey specifically examined the contribution to the State’s economic development plans of new Small Cell technology—described as shoebox-sized equipment installed by cellular carriers to improve connectivity and speed, and to help wireless networks handle increasingly large amounts of traffic.*

Business leaders unequivocally say Upstate New York’s recent tech-enabled economic successes are directly related to the availability of modernized wireless Internet access, and they look to policymakers to facilitate the deployment of that new technology.

How important do you think it is for each of the following to have high-speed wireless Internet service:

	<u>Essential</u>	<u>Important but not essential</u>
Medical centers and other health care facilities	92%	7
Higher education institutions in Upstate New York	84%	15
Businesses and business owners in Upstate New York	84%	15
Students.....	72%	25
Residents living in Upstate New York	60%	38

They also believe improved high-speed wireless Internet service can help attract and retain more long-distance commuters and remote workers such as students. Competing for, attracting and retaining these workers is a centerpiece of the Governor’s economic development agenda. Small cell wireless technology can contribute significantly to those plans.

* The survey provided Upstate business leaders with examples how Small Cell wireless Internet can impact various sectors of the economy. Before reading those descriptions, 16% say they are very familiar with Small Cell wireless technology, 24% somewhat familiar, 20% not that familiar and 40% not familiar at all. After reading about the technology, 95% support state and local initiatives to facilitate its development in Upstate New York.



Key findings from AT&T's survey of business leaders:

Business leaders say high-speed wireless Internet (5G) is essential for the region's industries and businesses. Overwhelming majorities of Upstate business leaders say high-speed wireless internet service is “essential” for the region’s leading industries, especially for the region’s medical centers (92%), higher education institutions (84%), and businesses (84%). Majorities also believe that access to high-speed Internet is essential for the region’s students and residents.

Upstate New York’s business leaders overwhelmingly support initiatives to improve wireless high-speed Internet. Business leaders overwhelmingly support state and local initiatives to facilitate the development of high-speed Internet in Upstate New York, including the use of small cell infrastructure to improve wireless connectivity and speed (50% strongly support, 93% support overall).

Business owners and executives respond to the idea of government and service providers working together to improve wireless connectivity in New York State. This group believes government working with Internet and cell phone providers to improve high-speed wireless Internet would be overwhelmingly positive. Among the fields business leaders believe would be most positively impacted by this partnership are Upstate New York’s technology sector (65% very positive impact), health services sector (57%), and quality of life for residents who live, work, and play in Upstate New York (52%). They also see benefits for the success of small businesses (49%), for attracting and retaining businesses in the State (48%), and for promoting economic development in Upstate New York (47%).

If cities and towns worked with Internet and cell phone providers to improve high-speed Internet, what positive impact, if any, do you think that would have on the following?

	Very	Somewhat	None/Neg
Upstate New York's technology sector.....	65%	26	9
Upstate New York's health services sector	57%	36	7
Quality of life for residents who live, work and play in Upstate New York	52%	38	10
The success of small businesses in Upstate New York	49%	37	14
Attracting and retaining more businesses to the state	48%	37	15
Economic development in Upstate New York	47%	43	10
Attracting and retaining a more skilled and educated workforce...	44%	38	18
Attracting and retaining more long-distance commuters and remote workers	41%	38	21

Business leaders believe strengthening small cell infrastructure should be part of the Governor’s economic agenda for the region. Business leaders are equally supportive of initiatives to help strengthen high-speed Internet in the region – including the use of small cells – in the Governor’s economic agenda for Upstate New York (53% strongly support, 95% support overall).

Conclusions:

As wireless technologies have evolved, mobile carriers have expanded and strengthened their networks to meet demand and improve capacity. Wireless Internet service has helped Upstate New York keep pace with competing regions by providing the connectivity businesses, higher education, healthcare and households expect.

Upstate New York business leaders say high-speed, high-capacity wireless infrastructure is needed to sustain the recent economic momentum. This small cell infrastructure allows networks to keep pace with ever-increasing wireless data traffic and to provide startup companies and high-tech industries, as well as New York's nationally-ranked universities and medical centers, the connectivity they need to effectively compete. That's why business leaders and wireless carriers seek coordination by policymakers to ensure this new wireless technology can be deployed.

Notes about this survey:

Global Strategy Group conducted an online survey of 401 business leaders in Upstate New York from November 15 through 31, 2017. Care has been taken to ensure the geographic and demographic divisions of business leaders in Upstate New York are properly represented by the survey respondents.

Upstate Business Leaders surveyed in this poll were defined as business owners and high-level executives at the Director level and above located outside of the five boroughs of New York City and outside of the counties of Suffolk, Nassau, Rockland, Westchester, Orange, Putnam, and Dutchess.

To obtain the survey results and more information, contact Benjamin Roberts of AT&T at br0881@att.com and 716-686-5443

