

DIGITAL

DRIVEN TO
CONNECT



ANNUAL REPORT

2023

Our progress is a reflection of our unwavering dedication to our Community, Connectivity, Collaboration, Culture, and the spirit of Cleveland. As we move forward, we remain Driven to Connect, committed to creating a digital future where every resident has the tools, knowledge and support to succeed.

MESSAGE FROM THE CEO



JOSHUA EDMONDS

DigitalC, Chief Executive Officer

Community

Connectivity

Collaboration

Culture

Cleveland

Funders, Partners and Friends,

Completing my first full year as Chief Executive Officer of DigitalC in 2023 felt like stepping back into a community poised on the edge of a digital renaissance. I see digital inclusion as a cornerstone for thriving communities, understanding that connectivity empowers education, fosters economic opportunities, and strengthens civic engagement. My role at DigitalC embodies a deep-rooted desire to see Cleveland not just overcome the digital divide, but to emerge as a model of digital equity and innovation.

This past year has been groundbreaking, bolstered by the largest investment in our history—more than \$50 million from the City of Cleveland and various public and private sources. This historic funding is set to propel Cleveland into a future where digital equity is not just an aspiration but a reality.

Reflecting on this journey, it is not just the technology or the infrastructure that excites us; it is the stories of connectivity touching lives, bridging gaps, and fostering growth. Every subscriber, every partnership, and every neighborhood we reach echoes our belief in the transformative power of access. As we chart the course forward, our commitment to our mission is unwavering, driven by our five Cs of Community, Connectivity, Collaboration, Culture and Cleveland!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'J Edmonds', written in a cursive style.

Joshua Edmonds
Chief Executive Officer
DigitalC

2023 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

JOSHUA EDMONDS

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PRESIDENT, CLEVELAND DEVELOPMENT ADVISORS

EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT, FINANCE AND OPERATIONS, GREATER CLEVELAND PARTNERSHIP

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BORIS MAYSEL

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EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER, CLEVELAND PUBLIC LIBRARY

TOM WALTERMIRE

TEAM NEO (RETIRED)

CHAS WITHERS

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER, DIX & EATON

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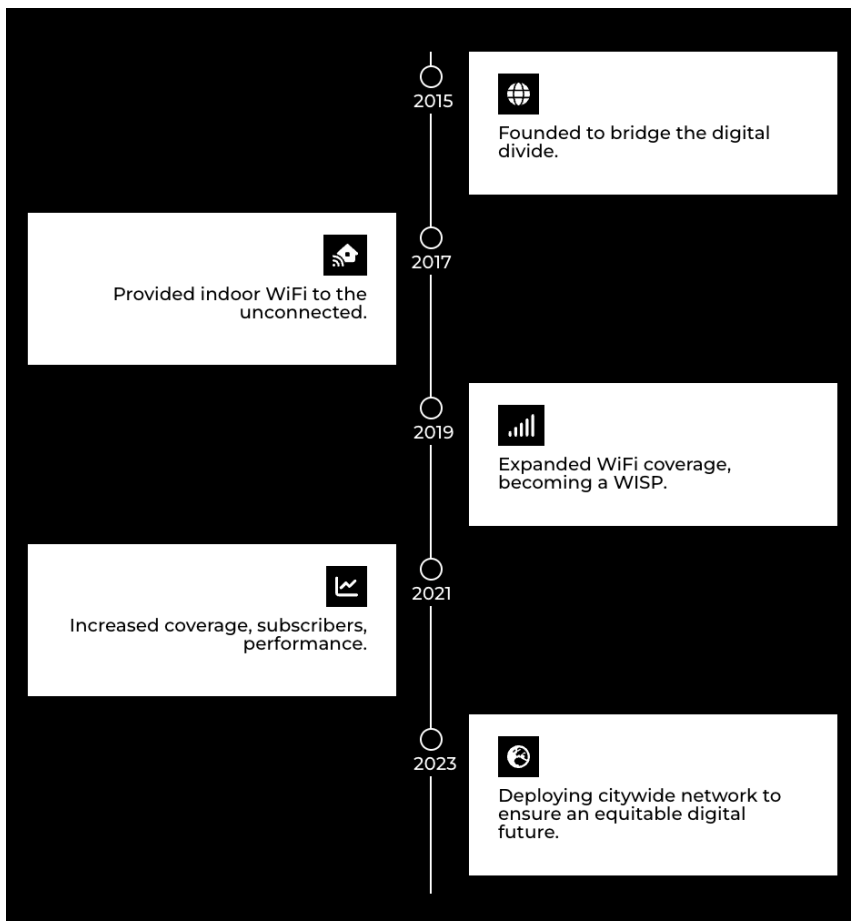
HIGHLIGHTS

Bridging the digital divide - for good.



EVOLVING AS DIGITALC

From our inception as “One Cleveland”, to our change to “One Community”, to our transformation to DigitalC, our fundamental drive to connect Cleveland has remained a constant beacon. Now, as a nonprofit technology social enterprise, we have navigated the ever-evolving digital landscape, consistently staying true to our roots while adapting to meet the future head-on. Our history is a tapestry of innovation, collaboration, and an unwavering commitment to connect our community.



Bridging the digital divide - for good.

NETWORK: UPGRADING CLEVELAND'S CONNECTIVITY

Our hybrid network, blending fiber and tower usage, is expanding to cover Cleveland, ensuring those grand oak and buckeye trees are no match for our robust digital infrastructure.



HybridX6 represents boldly fused technology delivering unrivaled internet performance. Experience connectivity like never before, where next-generation technology meets relentless speed and reliability.

HYBRIDX6
BOLDLY FUSED TECHNOLOGY DELIVERING
UNRIVALED INTERNET PERFORMANCE —

Our hybrid network, blending fiber and tower usage, is expanding to cover Cleveland, ensuring those grand oak and buckeye trees are no match for our robust digital infrastructure. With 100/100 mbps speeds, and an infrastructure that maneuvers through tree canopies and withstands the roughest storms, our network is not just reliable and accessible – it is a powerhouse of adaptability and resilience. This speed and service model allows our customers not only to take in information but also enables them to harness the equal power to contribute and share their content with the world and position them as worthy producers of knowledge, not just consumers of products and services.

2023 at the MidTown Tech Hive began with a warm welcome back to Cleveland for our Chief Executive Officer, Joshua Edmonds, showcasing some of DigitalC’s historical accomplishments as well as the vision forward. This celebration with the broader ecosystem of partners demonstrated the collective dedication towards a future where every household is empowered, connected, and thriving in the digital age.



INNOVATING AND COLLABORATING AT THE TECH HIVE

Cleveland has been ranked one of the “worst-connected cities in the country (ACS Community Survey, 2022). DigitalC and local partners united in their plan to change that reality.



PUBLIC MEETING

In June, DigitalC’s Public Meeting showcased the organization’s leadership team, key partners, and our plan to connect Cleveland.

Throughout the year, the Tech Hive was buzzing with activities from coding and cybersecurity classes for all ages, to our monthly Third Friday Pull-Up, a coworking day party! We are proud to witness the Tech Hive become a space where Cleveland’s entrepreneurial spirit and community ties can come alive, fostering collaboration and powering up new partnerships. Our programming and educational seminars from “The History of Digital Redlining” and “Building our Tower Technician Workforce” have all been pivotal in bringing people together to expand their professional networks, as well as to upskill and share information on tech careers for our own city residents. With this activity, we’ve seen a fusion of technology, education, and community engagement, that resonates with DigitalC’s, mission to bridge the digital divide – **for good.**

Bridging the digital divide - for good.



BREWING ENGAGEMENT WITH THE HIVE CAFE

In November of 2023, DigitalC proudly unveiled the new Hive Cafe, a significant addition to our headquarters at the MidTown Tech Hive.

Operated by Cleveland's own Chef Stacey Stoudemire, the cafe has become a beacon for community engagement and cultural exchange. Designed to foster a sense of belonging and collaboration, the Hive Cafe has catered to an array of community groups, family celebrations, business meetings, and local events. Its presence has not only enhanced the vibrancy of the Tech Hive but also strengthened our connection with the Cleveland community. By offering a welcoming space for people to gather, connect, and share ideas, the Hive Cafe has played a pivotal role in advancing DigitalC's mission of creating accessible community spaces. It stands as a testament to our belief that technology and culture, when woven together, can drive meaningful social interaction and community development.



EMPOWERING WITH CLICK, DIGITAL SKILLS TRAINING

In preparation for 2024, we've turbocharged our digital skills programs, now known as Click, and celebrated numerous success stories across Cleveland! From empowering seniors with digital know-how to fueling young minds with coding skills, our training programs are the keystones in building a digitally savvy community. Testimonials from residents like the Wilsons, who switched to DigitalC's Canopy service and have benefited from our training programs, highlight the transformative power of serving every resident to the fullest, as we bridge the digital divide across generations!

"By dismantling barriers, expanding digital infrastructure, advocating for fair labor practices, and investing in digital literacy programs, we can empower gig workers in the urban core to thrive in the digital age and access the economic opportunities available through gig work."

- Chief Executive Officer Joshua Edmonds' quote in the published article, "The Adverse Effects of Digital Redlining on Gig Workers in the Urban Core".



"We found DigitalC advertising in the Fairfax flyer, so we inquired and we found out the price was very reasonable. Once we got it installed, we were very satisfied and we haven't had any problems since." - Carl Wilson



"The first thing I've been doing with my friends and neighbors is telling them that the price is excellent, number one, and the service has been great. I was just so happy and so satisfied that we changed to DigitalC." - Carolyn Wilson



The image shows two young women sitting at a desk in what appears to be a classroom or computer lab. They are both smiling and looking at a laptop screen. The woman on the left has dark hair tied back and is wearing a light-colored sleeveless top. The woman on the right has long, wavy blonde hair and is wearing a yellow cardigan over a white top. The entire image is overlaid with a semi-transparent teal color. The word "INITIATIVES" is written in large, white, bold, italicized capital letters across the center of the image.

INITIATIVES

HOSTING THE PHOENIX VILLAGE BLOCK PARTY

Embracing one of our longest partnerships, we celebrated with Cuyahoga Metropolitan Housing Authority residents in Phoenix Village by hosting a block party, with an electrifying blend of education, technology, and communal festivity. We leveraged this opportunity to introduce the neighborhood to our state-of-the-art network, provide interactive experiences, and deepen our understanding of the community's needs and aspirations, reinforcing our commitment to tailor our services and initiatives accordingly.



Bridging the digital divide - for good.

PARTNERING WITH THE CLEVELAND SIGHT CENTER

In March, DigitalC partnered with the Cleveland Sight Center (CSC) to support Cleveland's workforce and to enhance and streamline our customer service offerings. Nearly a month after the CSC started to receive DigitalC's inbound customer service calls, we received a 98% customer satisfaction rate. This collaboration signifies DigitalC's ongoing efforts to put innovation and empowerment at the forefront of our service to the community.

98%
CUSTOMER
SATISFACTION RATE

SHOWCASING DIGITALC AT FUTURELAND

On the journey to scale our organization, addressing the multifaceted challenges of digital redlining and prioritizing the different needs for the residents in Cleveland is at the forefront of our charge. We were thrilled to have our CEO, Joshua Edmonds, serve as a keynote speaker for Futureland, showcasing DigitalC's innovative plans to rewrite the narrative of our beloved city, one connection at a time.



REFRESHING OUR BRAND



We launched an exciting brand refresh under the strategic vision of our Chief Executive Officer. This revitalization was not just a cosmetic change but a deeper realignment of our brand identity with our core mission and values. The refresh encompassed a more modern, bold and unapologetic visual identity alongside a clearer, more compelling messaging strategy that resonated with both our current stakeholders and a broader audience.



EXPANDING OUR TEAM

In June, DigitalC announced the expansion of its leadership team with new roles in Finance, Marketing and Communications, and Human Resources. This expansion reflects DigitalC's growth and its commitment to enhancing our organizational capability, so we can bring Cleveland the change it deserves on a streamlined path forward. DigitalC's Commitment to Diversity is not just a policy but a cornerstone of our identity. We're dedicated to cultivating a best-in-class, diverse, and inclusive team, integral to fulfilling our expansive mission to serve Cleveland.

EMBRACING THE FUTURE

Recognizing the pivotal role of technology in shaping the future, we have strategically adopted relevant AI tools in each of our departments as well as overhauled our backend digital systems to enhance our operational efficiency and service delivery. As we harness AI and software solutions to increase our internal workflows, we remain committed to utilizing these advancements responsibly, ensuring that they align with our mission of driving digital equity and inclusion. This responsible approach to embracing future technologies not only prepares us for upcoming challenges but also cements our role as a leader in the digital revolution, staying true to our spirit of being Driven to Connect.



IMPACT: BY THE NUMBERS

300+

TECH HIVE RESERVATIONS

From hosting board meetings of prominent nonprofits and community foundations to being the backdrop for family reunions, birthday celebrations, and dynamic

poetry slams, the Tech Hive buzzed with diverse gatherings. While it's impossible to highlight each of 300+ bookings that graced our versatile meeting rooms and coworking spaces, some frequent visitors stood out: The United Black Fund, Futureland, Cleveland Classical Guitar, and The Cleveland Foundation were among those who most frequently energized our space.

3085+

RESIDENTS TRAINED

Aligning with our network deployment path throughout the city, we queue up training classes for our residents who benefit from learning everything from computer basics, to coding,

to utilizing assistive telehealth technologies. Since 2021, over 3,085 residents in our coverage areas have been able to receive digital navigation services or participate in digital skills training. Teaching these critical skills ensures that technology serves as a bridge, not a barrier, for our community's growth and prosperity.

90%

SUBSCRIBER INCREASE

These remarkable achievements are not only witnessed internally, but our customers have come to know the reliability in our service as well, as demonstrated by our steady

growth over the years. From 2022 through the end of 2023, we have seen over a 90% increase in households connected!

100/100

MINIMUM MBPS SPEEDS

Our network performance outclasses the competition, delivering a blend of technologies delivering symmetrical 100/100 Mbps speeds, pioneered by our Hybridx6 technology. This

service model is critical if we are going to move the needle towards empowering those who study and work from home.

1590

SUBSIDIES PROVIDED

In 2023, we were able to provide subsidies to 1,590 Cleveland households. We are proud to be able to celebrate our partners that can see the value in providing subsidies to make DigitalC's internet and

service model available to all Clevelanders. Dollar Bank and the MetroHealth System, Huntington Bank, The Cleveland Foundation, Cleveland Metropolitan School District, Dominion Energy, and Citizens Bank are among our generous partners that have demonstrated unwavering support for connecting residents in their footprint and beyond.

A photograph of a man with a grey beard and mustache, wearing a light-colored checkered suit jacket over a white shirt and a dark tie. He is smiling broadly, looking towards the left. The entire image is overlaid with a semi-transparent teal color. The word "PARTNERS" is written in large, white, bold, italicized capital letters across the center of the image.

PARTNERS

PARTNERS

Ashbury Senior Community Computer Center (ASC3)

Benjamin Rose Institute ESOP

Broadband Ohio

Burten, Bell, Carr Development

Cleveland City Council

City of Cleveland

Cleveland Clinic

Cleveland Metropolitan School District

Cleveland Neighborhood Progress

Cleveland Public Library

Cleveland Sight Center

Connect Your Community

Cuyahoga Community College

Cuyahoga County

Cuyahoga Metropolitan Housing Authority

Eliza Bryant Village

Famicos Foundation

MetroHealth System, Institute for Hope

Towards Employment

United Way Greater Cleveland



DONORS

CERTIFICATE OF RECOGNITION

This certificate is awarded to

[Signature]

In recognition of your participation in
HTML Coding Class at Mary B. Martin School
in May - June 2023

We acknowledge your commitment to learning this valuable skill.
We recognize that the investment of your time has expanded your knowledge of
computer science, and will certainly benefit your future endeavors.

[Signatures]
LADONNA ROSSIE HANNA SMITH DEBBY MCDONOUGH

digital© United Way HIT CLE CLEVELAND FOUNDATION

CERTIFICATE OF RECOGNITION

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[Signature]

In recognition of your participation in
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[Signatures]
LADONNA ROSSIE HANNA SMITH DEBBY MCDONOUGH

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DONORS

Carmela Beltrante and Carl Anthony

Anna Brandt

Citizens Bank

Cleveland Clinic

Cleveland Guardians

Cleveland Metropolitan School District

Cuyahoga Metropolitan Housing Authority

Cleveland State University

Kyle and Jillian DiFrancesco

Dollar Bank Foundation

Dominion Energy Foundation

Emergency Connectivity Fund

EY

The Fred A. Lennon Charitable Trust

The Irving and Gloria Fine Foundation

Lance Frew

The George Codrington Foundation

The George Gund Foundation

Jonathan and Karry Hatch Family Fund

Huntington Bank

JACK Cleveland Casino

Chris and Christina Keller

India Lee

MAC Installations

The Jack, Joseph, and Morton Mandel Foundation

Medical Mutual

Microsoft Airband

The David and Inez Myers Foundation

Nurenberg Paris

Shaina Schlegel

Tiffany Sedlacek

Chris and Sami Sopko

Felton Thomas

United Way Greater Cleveland

United States Department of Justice

US Ignite

Yield Giving

FINANCIAL REPORT

Revenue

2023

Grants received

\$5,973,502

Individual & corporate contributions

225,109

Subscriber revenue

440,681

Rental revenue

155,611

Other revenue

5,614,402

Total Revenue

\$12,409,305

Expenses

Personnel costs and outside consultants

\$4,113,716

Household equipment and installation

677,870

Engineering and related expenses

259,459

Rent and related expenses

470,303

Advocacy

109,255

Marketing, sales, and customer service

149,576

Other operating expenses

625,228

Total Expenses

\$6,405,407

Net Operating Revenue

\$6,003,898

Unaudited 2023 Financials

2023

ANNUAL REPORT

DIGITALC.ORG

MIDTOWN TECH HIVE

6815 EUCLID AVENUE

CLEVELAND, OHIO 44103