

How to use this information

1. Review this information so you capture the simple, easy messages it attempts to share.
2. Customize materials with your local information. For your convenience, all articles have been formatted and sent in Microsoft Word. If you need assistance, please let RIITA staff know.
3. Use the articles in company newsletters or send them to your local newspaper. Follow up to answer questions and offer local examples.
4. Take an opportunity to speak to a local group (Rotary, Lions, Community Betterment) and use the talking points from above or from the articles. Use your own specific examples.
5. Talk with legislators and regulators about these issues – using the language offered or your own examples to make the point. The more they hear the same issue, stated in the same way, the more impact we will have.

Quick Facts

- There are 154 independent telecommunication companies in Iowa – more than in any other state.
- The rural independent telephone companies provide phone service to 15% of the population and one-third of the geography in Iowa.
- 100% of RIITA members offer high-speed Internet, also known as broadband.
- As “carriers of last resort,” local telephone companies are required to provide service to anyone legally requesting it, regardless of the expense.
- RIITA members have lost 20% of their customers over the last seven years to wireless, Internet and competing local phone providers.
- RIITA members spend a total of \$100 million annually on infrastructure investment, or an average of \$550 per line per year.
- Property taxes for local phone companies are extremely complex and are assessed on all plant, property and equipment. On average, RIITA members pay \$40.32 per year per telco line in property taxes, compared to cable television companies at \$12.42 per line per year, and wireless companies at \$3.50 per line per year. In essence, local phone companies pay as much as 11 times more than their competitors in property taxes.
- Despite increased competition and advances in technology, local phone service is still heavily regulated; while wireless, cable, Internet and VOIP have very little oversight.
- Local telephone companies are subject to audits and filing multiple reports to both state and federal regulatory agencies, as well as the National Exchange Carriers Association (NECA) and the Universal Service Administrative Corporation (USAC). Many of these reports are overlapping or duplicative, costing a significant amount of time and money to prepare.

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