

Case Study

Operation Connectivity (OpCon)



Client	The Texas Education Agency (TEA)
Project	Operation Connectivity, initiated by Governor Greg Abbott and backed by the Texas Legislature and the Texas Education Agency (TEA), aimed to provide digital access and ensure reliable high-speed home connectivity for the 5.5 million public school students in Texas.
Objective	Grow was selected to assess the current state and develop a strategic plan, project manage the implementation of a digital solution and provide ongoing support and monitoring of the Operation Connectivity program goals.
Strategy	<p>GROW's responsibilities for this project include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A detailed assessment of the existing broadband environment across the entire State of Texas 2. Statewide stakeholder engagement, including legislative testimony and "listening tours" at the State, County and municipal level 3. Ongoing data collection and reporting on evolving infrastructure projects 4. Short-term, medium-term and long-term planning for wide-spread broadband build-out and adoption 5. Federal grant application writing, application management and implementation oversight 6. Risk and asset management on behalf of statewide stakeholders <p>Operation Connectivity followed a three-phase approach. Phase 1 focused on swiftly providing devices to 4.5 million students across the state. GROW took responsibility for ensuring that each student received a suitable device during this phase. In Phase 2, the emphasis shifted to driving broadband access and adoption in households where existing infrastructure was lacking. Finally, in Phase 3, GROW collaborated with counties, municipalities, and local agencies to design and construct new broadband infrastructure in unserved and underserved areas of Texas.</p>



Operation Connectivity | A Three Phase Initiative

Operation Connectivity Launch		PHASE 1: BULK PURCHASE & REIMBURSEMENT				PHASE 2: TEA CONNECT TEXAS PROGRAM I: DEVELOPING MAPPING & DRIVING ADOPTION FOR STUDENTS USING EXISTING INFRASTRUCTURE				PHASE 3: DESIGN & DEVELOPMENT OF NEW INFRASTRUCTURE	
Launch of Operation Connectivity	Initial Fieldwork & Report	Trage Device Procurement	Device Shipping & Delivery	LMBP*	PPP**	Mapping of Access & Adoption of New Service for Eco Dis Students by LEA	Determine if TEA Connect Texas (TEACT) Eligible Students	Negotiate Contract Pricing & T&Cs for LEAs	TEA Connect Texas (TEACT) Search and Oversight	TEACT for New Technology: Explore New Broadband Tech	Work with Local Cities and Counties and the Texas BDC to Secure Funding for Pilot Programs for New Infrastructure and Adoption
May '20	June '20 – July '20	July '20 – August '20	Sept '20 – Jan '21	Sept '20 – Dec '20	Nov '20 – Feb '21	January '21 – March '21	Jan '21 – March '21	Mar '21 – June '21	May '21 – Ongoing	Sept '20 – Ongoing	August '21 – Ongoing
✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	→	→	→

✓ Completed → In Process

Results

The GROW team's leadership of Operation Connectivity resulted in significant outcomes:

- Enabled home connectivity for over 1 million students.
- Supplied equipment cost savings to school districts of close to \$300 million through negotiated discounts.
- Closed the device equity gap by 43 percentage points for Texas' most economically disadvantaged communities.