

## **MITN**

### **Challenge**

Shift from industrial to knowledge-based economy

Increasing dependence on intellectual capital

Examples:

Doubling-time of knowledge base if 5 years

In many professions such as engineering, formal education has become a lifetime commitment

Impact

Companies cannot maintain staff at cutting-edge without access for formal continuing education

Cannot recruit or retain best people

See this particularly in regions like western Michigan which is one of the most attractive regions for such economic development...but which does not have access to the necessary knowledge infrastructure

Senator Gast approached us with concerns about this in Benton Harbor

### **State Resources**

Michigan has invested heavily to build world-class resources in these areas at its four research universities

These institutions have long experience in delivering high quality continuing education to regional constituents through traditional classroom, television, and computer based methods

Each has included in past budget requests proposals for expansions of these regional efforts

But need is state-wide!

### **Technology to the rescue**

In recent years it has become possible to utilize modern telecommunications and computer networks to do this.

Using satellite-based interactive video links, supplemented with high-speed computer data interchange, we believe that we can build a highly-cost effective network that can deliver the extraordinary resources of this state's research universities to industry and communities throughout the state.

In response to Senator Gast's request, UM, MSU, MTU, and WSU have developed a proposal to develop such a network.

We believe that such a network could be developed through state support of modest startup costs of \$12.6 M over the first 4 years of operation, along with subscriber fees which would eventually cover the operational costs.

### **Importance of the Michigan Information Technology Network**

We view this as a critical component of the knowledge infrastructure necessary for Michigan's long term economic prosperity. It would provide every company, community, and eventually every citizen in the state with direct access to the resources of Michigan's research universities.

But beyond that, it provides an extraordinary opportunity to take an important step toward coordinating Michigan's system of higher education.

As the Governor's Commission on the Future of Higher Education pointed out, the lack of coordination among our institutions of higher education frequently leads to proliferation and duplication of resources.

MITN represents an effort by the state's four research universities to work together to respond to the needs of Michigan industry. It will serve itself as a vehicle to couple these institutions together in a highly cost effective manner -- just as it couples them to communities throughout the state.

**Indeed, MITN is not only an extraordinary way to deliver** badly needed services to Michigan industry that will be critical to Michigan's future prosperity...

**But it represents an important step toward better** coordination of and cooperation among Michigan's research universities.