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Mayor Daley, Speaking at Comdex



Mayor Daley has taken a remarkably visible and effective role in developing substantive changes to Chicago's technology and Internet landscape, beginning last year. At Comdex in 1999, he unveiled a Technology Initiative designed to help keep firms in Chicago and Illinois.

At that time, Mayor Daley proposed a \$10 million dollar seed capital and early-stage fund as part of an overall program; by the end of 1999 and following on the footsteps of Andrew "Flip" Filipowski's announcement of a \$1 billion or more Internet fund, the Mayor expanded the size of the fund to \$100 million. The larger fund is called the Big Shoulders InterTech Fund and should start making investments in the near future.

This year at Comdex, the Mayor held a press conference and had many advances to be proud of for the community. Understanding that K-12 education is at the core of a successful long-term strategy to attract and retain the architects of the new economy, he presented the "Chicago Education Technology Integration Plan," completed by the Mayor's Council of Technology Advisors. The detailed blueprint will address the need for training tech savvy employees, connecting employees with

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meaningful jobs in the new economy, and using technology to enhance learning throughout the public and private school systems.

Using creative means, the Mayor also pointed out that venture capital firms can expect to be asked for grant money to close the "digital divide" in Chicago. VCs are just one of the funding sources Chicago Mayor Richard Daley will go after to fund the City's Action Plan for Technology in Education. Daley's plan calls for new computer hardware, networks and infrastructure for Chicago schools. The plan comes with implementation guidelines for curriculum and making the programs and equipment available on "an equal basis." MarchFirst (born out of the merger between Whittman-Hart and USWeb/CKS) donated \$750,000 worth of time to develop the initial plan.

In addition to VC dollars, Julian Green, an assistant press secretary in the Mayor's office, said the tech action plan wants contributions of hardware and software from companies like Motorola, Microsoft and Dell and federal dollars for wiring classrooms from the federal e-Rate program.

When Comdex 2001 arrives, we can all expect that Mayor Daley will have again succeeded in establishing new milestones and goals for closing the digital divide.

 **RELATED WEBCAST** This year at Comdex, the Mayor held a press conference and had many advances to be proud of for the community
Filmed by Fritz Golman, President of [Internet TV](#).



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