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Communication Resources - Mississippi 1982

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**A SYNOPSIS OF MISSISSIPPI'S ECONOMY —
DIRECTIONS FOR THE '80s**

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for the

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Communication Resources

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Rapid changes are occurring around the world in all areas of activity but perhaps no change is as dramatic as that occurring in the communication, or knowledge-processing, industry. It is clear that the communication industry will continue to be a growth industry, and it is also clear that Mississippi needs to be ready for this growth.

The present status of the communication industry in the state can be quickly summarized. There are 126 newspapers in the state — 26 dailies and 100 weeklies. Approximately 5,800 people are employed in publishing and printing, with many of these in the newspaper business.

There are 136 radio stations and 10 commercial television stations in the state. A total of 11,400 people were listed as being employed in the communication industry, which includes radio and television among other occupations.

Public relations and advertising are also considered communication industries. Presently, there are 25 separate agencies in the state with numerous other in-house agencies.

The U.S. Postal Service serves over 2.6 million people with an employment level of more than 4,900 people. Additionally, there are several private companies for express, package, or priority delivery.

There are numerous companies now in the information transmission business—a business which incorporates what we used to call telegraph. The technology explosion is particularly apparent in this business.

In addition to the Bell System, which services about 85 percent of the state, there are 21 independent telephone systems. The telephone companies now not only provide calling capability, but they also provide energy management, bill-paying services, and numerous other services only dreamed about 10 years ago.

After summarizing the status of the industry, it should be mentioned that the communication industry is clearly not as advanced in Mississippi as in many other states. The major reason cited is the lack of development of the human resources necessary to manage and use the developing technologies.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. A public school system which will adequately prepare students both to operate and to use the advanced communication techniques must be developed; and
2. Appropriate incentives for the development of communications-based industries must be provided in Mississippi.