MIDDLETON PUBLIC LIBRARY
SPACE NEEDS & BUILDING STUDY

APPENDIX

January, 2016
MIDDLETON PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Angela West Blank  Term Start Date: July 2013/16
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Christopher Clay  Term Start Date: July 2010/16
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Kathy Olson (Council Liason)  Term Start Date: April 2015
Email: district1@ci.middleton.wi.us

Jeremiah Tucker - President  Term Start Date: September 2013/July 2014 (eligible for 2 renewals)
Email: jeremiahtucker@hotmail.com

BUILDING COMMITTEE

Chair Rob Seltzer
Steve Soeteber
Angela West Blank

Deb Haeffner
Eileen Kelly
David Reed
Joan Gillman

Rebecca Light
Pamela K. Westby

LIBRARY DIRECTOR

Pamela K. Westby, Library Director
Middleton Public Library
7425 Hubbard Avenue
Middleton, WI 53562
Phone: 608-827-7425
Email: pamela@midlibrary.org

2. Branch Library Program List, draft dated 06-19-2015


14. Group Input Statements
   ✓ Friends of Middleton Public Library Input
   ✓ Middleton Area Historical Library Input
   ✓ Senior Center Input

15. Himmel & Wilson April 1997 Community Discussion Groups Report


29. Middleton Public Library Collection Analysis

30. Middleton Public Library Levels of Service compared to Department of Public Instruction (DPI) Levels of Service Standards, 2014; charts.


34. Option D: Addition/Renovation of Existing Library – Hubbard Avenue Cost Estimate and Floor Plans

35. Option E: Addition/Renovation of Existing Library – Terrace Ave Expansion Cost Estimate and Floor Plans


Alternative Public Facilities Needs Assessment & Library Impact Fee Study Worksheets

2010 - 2030 Excellent Service Level Standard for Volumes
### Table 1 - Historical and Projected Population Data

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Historical Population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1970</td>
<td>8,246</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980</td>
<td>11,848</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>13,785</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>15,770</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>17,170</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2020</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2025</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2030</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Population Projection</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>18,261</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>19,422</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>20,656</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>21,969</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes:
(1) Source: US Census Bureau.
(2) Source: City of Middleton Planning Department. January, 2011.
Chart 1 - 1970-2030 Population

Historical Population
Population Projection
### Table 2 - Library Service Area Circulation and Population Analysis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>City of Middleton</td>
<td>398,454</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>17,170</td>
<td>21,969</td>
<td>4,799</td>
<td>55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-resident</td>
<td>404,979</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>10,335 (2)</td>
<td>14,238</td>
<td>3,903</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>803,433</td>
<td></td>
<td>27,505 (3)</td>
<td>36,207</td>
<td>8,702</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes:
(1) Source: Middleton Public Library; 2010 Wisconsin Public Library Annual Report, Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction.
(2) Estimated equivalent population based upon non-resident usage (from 2009 DPI data).
(3) Total equivalent service area population.
### Table 3 - Existing Library Facility Space

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area (1)</th>
<th>Facility Space (Square Feet) (1)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Collection Space</td>
<td>10,488</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General/Meeting Room Space</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reader Seating</td>
<td>3,298</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff Workspace</td>
<td>3,221</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computer Lab</td>
<td>405</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meeting Room Space</td>
<td>1,645</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children’s Area/Storytime</td>
<td>534</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Study Rooms</td>
<td>570</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Subtotal General Space</strong></td>
<td><strong>9,673</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special Use</td>
<td>1,751</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Book Sale Room/Storage</td>
<td>1,768</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nonassignable Space</td>
<td>8,320</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Facility Space</strong></td>
<td><strong>32,000</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes:
(1) Source: City of Middleton Library Director, February, 2011.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Holding</th>
<th>Actual Level of Service</th>
<th>Wisconsin Public Library Service Level Standards</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Current Holdings (1)</td>
<td>Current Holdings Per Unit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Basic Holdings Standard (2)</td>
<td>Moderate Holdings Standard (2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Volumes</td>
<td>88,809 per capita</td>
<td>3.229</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Periodicals</td>
<td>245 per 1,000</td>
<td>8.907</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Audio Recordings</td>
<td>9,716 per capita</td>
<td>0.353</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Video Recordings</td>
<td>12,147 per capita</td>
<td>0.442</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computer Terminals</td>
<td>50 per 1,000</td>
<td>1.818</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FTE Staff</td>
<td>21.2 per 1,000</td>
<td>0.777</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population (5)</td>
<td>27,505</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes:
(1) Source: City of Middleton 2010 Public Library Annual Report, Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction.
(3) Total equivalent service area population taken from Table 2.
### Table 5 - Recommended Library Facility Space at the Desired Service Level

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2010 Existing Space (sq. ft.)</th>
<th>2010 Recommended Space (sq. ft.)</th>
<th>2030 Recommended Space (sq. ft.)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Collection Space</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Books (13 volumes per sq. ft.)</td>
<td>8,675</td>
<td>11,419</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Periodicals (display--1 sq. ft. per title)</td>
<td>245</td>
<td>290</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nonprint - Audio and Video (13 items per sq. ft.)</td>
<td>1,682</td>
<td>2,172</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Access Computers (45 sq. feet per terminal)</td>
<td>1,800</td>
<td>1,800</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Subtotal Collection Space</strong></td>
<td>10,488</td>
<td>12,401</td>
<td>15,681</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Reader Seating Space</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reader seating (4.00 seats per 1,000 population x 30 sq.ft.)</td>
<td>3,298</td>
<td>3,298</td>
<td>4,341</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Work Space</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff Work Space</td>
<td>3,221</td>
<td>3,221</td>
<td>3,851</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Meeting Room Space</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meeting Room Space</td>
<td>1,645</td>
<td>1,645</td>
<td>2,165</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Study Rooms</td>
<td>570</td>
<td>570</td>
<td>750</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children's Area/Storytime</td>
<td>534</td>
<td>534</td>
<td>703</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computer Lab (45 sq. feet per terminal)</td>
<td>405</td>
<td>450</td>
<td>450</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Subtotal Meeting Space</strong></td>
<td>3,154</td>
<td>3,199</td>
<td>4,069</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Special Use Space</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Book Sale Room/Storage</td>
<td>1,768</td>
<td>1,768</td>
<td>1,768</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special Use allocation (15% of gross space)</td>
<td>1,751</td>
<td>4,831</td>
<td>5,705</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Nonassignable Space</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nonassignable Space (3)</td>
<td>8,320</td>
<td>8,320</td>
<td>8,320</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Gross Area Space</strong></td>
<td>32,000</td>
<td>37,039</td>
<td>43,735</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Notes:**

1. Taken from Table 3.
2. 2010 and 2030 required space needs based on guidelines in *Public Library Space Needs: A Planning Outline*, Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, 2009.
3. Nonassignable space anticipated to remain the same through 2030 because current amount (8,320 sq. feet) exceeds the standards (current and future space) listed in *Public Library Space Needs: A Planning Outline*.
4. City's actual service level standard for reader seating space was used for this category since the actual service level exceeds the standards (2.25 seats per 1,000 population x 30 sq. feet) listed in the *Public Library Space Needs: A Planning Outline*. 
### Table 6 - Library Allocation of Facility Improvements to Existing and Future Development

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Footage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Existing Footage</td>
<td>32,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Required Footage for Current Service Area Population (^{(1)})</td>
<td>37,039</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Existing Surplus/(Deficiency)</td>
<td>(5,039)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Required Footage for 2030 Service Area Population (^{(1)})</td>
<td>43,735</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Additional Footage Required for 2030</td>
<td>11,735</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Existing (Deficiency) Share of Recommended Expanded Space</td>
<td>42.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Future (Growth) Share of Recommended Expanded Space</td>
<td>57.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note:

\(^{(1)}\) Taken from Table 5.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 7 - Library Project Cost Estimate and Fee Calculation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Needed Additional Space to serve 2030 Population (square feet)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Estimated Cost per Square Foot (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Estimated Cost of Addition to Library</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Growth Share of Addition Cost, at Desired Service Level</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cost Attributable to Future Growth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City Share of Future Growth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cost Eligible for Recovery through City Impact Fee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010-2030 Projected City Population Growth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impact Fee per capita</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes:
(1) Based on estimated construction costs in the Madison area for libraries of various sizes from RSMeans construction cost data, compared against the estimated cost per square foot for the City of Fitchburg Public Library currently under construction.
### Table 8 - Impact Fee Summary Table

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Per Unit</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Impact Fee Per Capita</td>
<td>$151.59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Studio and one-bedroom apartment <em>(1)</em></td>
<td>$227.38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two-bedroom unit <em>(2)</em></td>
<td>$341.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Three-bedroom unit or single-family home <em>(3)</em></td>
<td>$454.77</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes:
(1) Assumes 1.5 persons per household.
(2) Assumes 2.25 persons per household.
(3) Assumes 3.00 persons per household.
### Table 9 - Effect of Recommended Impact Fees on Housing Affordability

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Housing Prices and Income Requirements</th>
<th>$225,000 House</th>
<th>$400,000 House</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Without Impact Fees</td>
<td>With Proposed Impact Fees (4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home Price</td>
<td>$225,000</td>
<td>$226,695</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Down Payment</td>
<td>22,500</td>
<td>22,669</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amount Financed (1)</td>
<td>$202,500</td>
<td>$204,026</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annual housing Cost</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principal and Interest Payment</td>
<td>$13,173</td>
<td>$13,272</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taxes (2)</td>
<td>$4,275</td>
<td>$4,307</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insurance</td>
<td>$300</td>
<td>$300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annual Housing Cost</td>
<td>$17,748</td>
<td>$17,879</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Income Required (3)</td>
<td>$63,386</td>
<td>$63,854</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Additional Income Required</td>
<td>$468</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Additional Income as Percent of Total</td>
<td>0.7%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Notes:**
1. Assumes 5.0 percent annual interest rate, 30 year fixed rate mortgage.
2. Assumes a tax rate of $18.967 per thousand of equalized value.
   Tax payment does not include lottery tax credit or first dollar credit.
3. Based upon standard conventional mortgage underwriting guidelines.
4. Includes the proposed impact fee of $454.77 plus the existing impact fees totaling $1,240 per SF-Home.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Room #</th>
<th>Room Name</th>
<th>Net SF - Approx.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Branch Library</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Entry Lobby-Vestibule</td>
<td>350</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Multi-Purpose Room</td>
<td>1,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Storage</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pubic Toilets &amp; Janitor</td>
<td>350</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Circulation Desk-Open Holds-Self Check-outs</td>
<td>250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Librarian's Office</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Staff Workroom</td>
<td>250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Records, Safe</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Staff Breakroom &amp; Toilet</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Catalogs, computers, displays</td>
<td>350</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Adult Collection</td>
<td>2,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Seating Areas</td>
<td>600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Quiet Reading Room</td>
<td>350</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Children's Library</td>
<td>2,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Family Toilet Room</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tweens &amp; Teens</td>
<td>1,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Study Room</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Study Room</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Proctoring</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Shared Kitchen</td>
<td>250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Book Drop Room</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>General Storage</td>
<td>500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Branch Library Total</td>
<td>12,465</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library Name or Avg</td>
<td>Circulation Per Capita</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------</td>
<td>------------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MA - FORBES LIBRARY</td>
<td>15.12</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IA - BURLINGTON PUBLIC L.</td>
<td>15.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PA - SHALER NORTH HILLS</td>
<td>14.98</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KS - LEAVENWORTH PUBL.</td>
<td>14.92</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TX - WILLIAM T COZBY PUB.</td>
<td>14.90</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MA - JONES LIBRARY, INC.</td>
<td>14.75</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IL - MCPHERSON PUBLIC LIB.</td>
<td>14.72</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WI - FITCHBURG PUBLIC LI.</td>
<td>14.66</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OR - SANDY PUBLIC LIBRA.</td>
<td>14.59</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PA - LITITZ PUBLIC LIBRARY</td>
<td>14.58</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MN - NORTHFIELD PUBLIC</td>
<td>14.52</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NY - NEW CITY FREE LIBRA.</td>
<td>14.39</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TX - SOUTHLAKE PUBLIC LI.</td>
<td>14.38</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IA - URBANDALE PUBLIC LI.</td>
<td>14.19</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OR - FOREST GROVE CITY</td>
<td>14.16</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MI - SALINE DISTRICT LIBR.</td>
<td>14.12</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OH - RODMAN PUBLIC LIBR.</td>
<td>14.12</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OH - TIFFIN-SENECA PUBLI.</td>
<td>14.06</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WI - DOOR COUNTY LIBRA.</td>
<td>14.05</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PA - WARREN LIBRARY AS.</td>
<td>13.94</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OR - TILLAMOOK COUNTY</td>
<td>13.92</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NY - Guilderland public.</td>
<td>13.88</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NY - PORT WASHINGTON P.</td>
<td>13.87</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WI - MARSHFIELD PUBLIC L.</td>
<td>13.83</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MI - ORION TOWNSHIP PUB.</td>
<td>13.82</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IN - GOSHEN PUBLIC LIBRA.</td>
<td>13.82</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NJ - MONROE TWP PUBLIC.</td>
<td>13.77</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NY - GATES PUBLIC LIBRA.</td>
<td>13.75</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
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KY - GREENUP COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY 8.63
MI - PETER WHITE PUBLIC LIBRARY 8.58
OH - CHAMPAIGN COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY 8.57
NE - HASTINGS PUBLIC LIBRARY 8.57
MO - TEXAS COUNTY LIBRARY 8.53
NY - PENINSULA PUBLIC LIBRARY 8.53
IL - ALPHA PARK PUBLIC LIBRARY 8.51
PA - ELIZABETHTOWN PUBLIC LIBRARY 8.49
PA - MILANOFSCHOCK LIBRARY 8.41
NY - WOOD LIBRARY ASSOCIATION 8.38
AZ - MARICOPA PUBLIC LIBRARY 8.37
NY - AMITYVILLE PUBLIC LIBRARY 8.37
LA - DESOTO PARISH PUBLIC LIBRARY 8.36
CO - MONTROSE REGIONAL LIBRARY 8.36
WA - STEVENS COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY 8.36
KY - WOODFORD COUNTY LIBRARY 8.34
CT - HAMDEN PUBLIC LIBRARY 8.34
MD - QUEEN ANNE'S COUNTY LIBRARY 8.32
NY - BALDWIN PUBLIC LIBRARY 8.31
MD - RUTH ENLOW LIBRARY 8.29
KS - HUTCHINSON PUBLIC LIBRARY 8.29
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KY - SCOTT COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY 8.26
OH - PERRY COUNTY public library 8.22
OH - AUGLAIZE COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY 8.21
NY - DEER PARK PUBLIC LIBRARY 8.18
NC - HICKORY PUBLIC LIBRARY 8.15
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MI - CLARKSTON INDEPENDENT LIBRARY 8.07
MI - COMMERCE TOWNSHIP LIBRARY 8.04
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PA - UPPER MERION TOWNSHIP PUBLIC LIBRARY 7.85
OK - STILLWATER PUBLIC LIBRARY 7.83
KY - NELSON COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY 7.83
IN - AVON-WASHINGTON TOWNSHIP PUBLIC LIBRARY 7.81
MA - TURNER FREE LIBRARY 7.81
TN - LUCIUS E. AND ELSAprivatEB LIBRARY 7.80
UT - WASATCH COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY 7.78
NY - MASSAPEQUA PUBLIC LIBRARY 7.78
WI - SUPERIOR PUBLIC LIBRARY 7.78

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<td>KY - CARTER COUNTY PUB.</td>
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<tr>
<td>AR - PUBLIC LIBRARY OF C.</td>
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<tr>
<td>TN - LENOIR CITY PUBLIC L.</td>
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<tr>
<td>TX - DONNA PUBLIC LIBRA.</td>
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<tr>
<td>PA - J. LEWIS CROZER LIB.</td>
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<tr>
<td>TX - CRANDALL-COMBINE</td>
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<tr>
<td>TN - MUNFORD-TIPTON ME.</td>
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<tr>
<td>CT - PEQUOT LIBRARY ASS.</td>
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<td>CA - EL CENTRO PUBLIC LI.</td>
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<tr>
<td>TX - SERGEANT FERNAND.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>CT - BILL MEMORIAL LIBRA.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>IL - NORTH CHICAGO PUBL.</td>
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<td>AR - WEST MEMPHIS PUBLI.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>MS - PINE FOREST REGION</td>
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<tr>
<td>MO - STONE COUNTY LIBR.</td>
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<td>MS - MARSHALL COUNTY L.</td>
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<td>AL - ST. CLAIR COUNTY LIB.</td>
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<td>NJ - PERTH AMBOY FREE P.</td>
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</table>
Circulation Per Capita

Library Name or Avg

CT - EAST GLASTONBURY 0.25
PR - YAUCO PUBLIC LIBRA 0.21
VT - FRANKLIN-GRAND ISL 0.19
IL - EAST ST. LOUIS PUBLIC 0.14
AL - NORTHWEST REGIONA 0.11
PR - JUNCOS PUBLIC LIBR 0.05
TX - RHOME PUBLIC LIBRA 0.04
AZ - GILA COUNTY LIBRAR 0.02
PR - COROZAL PUBLIC LIB 0.01
PR - SAN GERMAN PUBLIC 0.01
PR - CENTRO DE BENDICI 0.00
PR - AGUADA PUBLIC LIBR 0.00
PR - AGUADILLA ELECTRO 0.00
PR - CAMUY PUBLIC LIBRA 0.00
PR - CANOVANAS BARRIO 0.00
PR - CIDRA ELECTRONIC M 0.00
PR - FAJARDO ELECTRONI 0.00
PR - GUAYAMA ELECTRONI 0.00
PR - GURABO PUBLIC LIBR 0.00
PR - LAS PIEDRAS MUNICI 0.00
PR - MANATÍ MUNICIPAL LI 0.00
PR - MOCA MUNICIPAL TEC 0.00
PR - THE JANE STERN DOR 0.00
PR - YABUCOA PUBLIC LIB 0.00
Connected Learning

“Connected Learning,” American Library Association, October 8, 2014

Social and digital media available via the internet connects students and young people to each other and to a host of formal and informal educators, providing limitless opportunities to seek and acquire new knowledge and skills. Connected learning is learning that is “highly social, interest-driven, and oriented toward educational, economic, or civic opportunity.” [1]

How It’s Developing

Connected learning takes advantage of the vast amount of digital and social media available on the internet and the connectedness of today’s culture. It capitalizes on research that has shown that students achieve higher-order learning outcomes when their work is focused on topics that are personally interesting and relevant to them. [2] Connected learning also creates peer-supported learning environments, allowing students to learn together (and with experts) through interaction, sharing, and providing feedback [3] In order to succeed in the academic environment, connected learning seeks to provide activities and opportunities that are personally interesting and peer-supported and that connect to academic subjects. Advocates argue that traditional models or learning and activities in school may have been too limiting and may not prove productive in an age of lifelong learning. [4]

Connected learning is focused on production, taking the diversity of activities and interests that can be pursued through technology and the network of peers and experts available in a connected environment and allowing students to produce, create, experiment, and design. Through this model of learning and with a focus on production, students and young people can develop skills and knowledge relevant to their formal education and that will be meaningful in future work and social settings. [5]

Connected learning advocates highlight its potential to bridge the gap between formal education methods and settings and interactive, hands-on learning that can happen at home and in other spaces outside of school. [6] By leveraging digital technology and social networking that is increasingly accessible across socio-economic backgrounds, connected learning might also help level the playing field between the have-nots and the haves. [7]

Why It Matters

By encouraging exploration and interaction with resources, connected learning may re-engage learners with some of the fundamental benefits of libraries, including access to a broad range of information and the freedom to learn at one’s own discretion. [8]

Connected learning happens across learning networks including school, home, libraries, and community centers. [9] Connected learning also supports the idea that learners achieve best when learning is reinforced and supported in multiple settings, providing opportunities for libraries to engage other institutions as partners in connected learning environments. [10]

In order for connected learning to help level the playing field between the haves and have-nots, students must have regular access to new and emerging technologies and the internet. Libraries that provide access to new technologies and the internet will be better able to integrate themselves into connected learning environments. Those libraries interested in becoming more supportive of connected learning environments will need to ensure that they provide communities with access to these essential components of the learning model.

With a focus on production, connected learning could provide opportunities for libraries to engage communities in the production of new knowledge and resources that could further connect and integrate the community’s role in the library.

Connected learning might also serve as a model for faculty, professionals, or even the community, encouraging the use of technology and connection to advance professional development or even community development. [11] Connected learning might also inspire teachers to engage librarians as well as authors, administrators, and parents, integrating many different peers into a connected learning model. [12]
Notes and Resources


http://www.ala.org/transforminglibraries/future/trends/connectedlearning
Digital Natives


Children and young people born into and raised in a digital world (post 1980) may work, study, and interact in very different ways from “digital immigrants,” those who were born just a generation before.

How It’s Developing

Marc Prensky introduced the concepts of digital natives and digital immigrants in his 2001 On the Horizon article, “Digital Natives, Digital Immigrants.” The article argues that the advent of new digital technologies have fundamentally changed young people so much so that they “think and process information fundamentally differently from their predecessors,” making them “‘native speakers’ of the digital language of computers, video games and the Internet.” [1] They are distinct from digital immigrants, who might still shows their “accents” as demonstrated by their use of the internet as a reference source, their adherence to use manuals, or editing on paper rather than on screen.

Distinctions between digital natives and digital immigrants might play out in workplaces, the classroom, or even in families. Prensky identified the classroom as a key area for concern, where digital immigrants were working to educate a population of digital natives that may not have seen the world in the same way, whose minds might not work in the same way, and who not regard information and collaboration in the same way. [2] Digital natives will likely seek to incorporate more technology into their professional lives, which may be used to improve workplace efficiency or increase productivity, but they may also seek increased access to technology, more virtual and physical spaces for sharing with colleagues and peers, more comfortable working environments to support work-life blurring, and more sustainable work environments. [3] Increasingly, differences are identified in the ways that digital natives and digital immigrants conduct business, gather news and information, spend money, define personal privacy, experience entertainment, and engage socially. [4]

Why It Matters

Digital natives have grown up with internet access and depend heavily on mobile devices, are heavy consumers of social networking services, consider speed to be among the most important characteristics of digital products and services, and multitask across devices and between work and entertainment. [5] Combined, these characteristics may require libraries and librarians to adapt services and programs to the new unique needs and expectations of digital natives.

At the same time, according to research by the Pew Internet and American Life Project, younger Americans’ media and technology behaviors straddle the print and digital environments and they use and appreciate library spaces as both places for quiet study and as places to collaborate and hang out. [6]

As with most broad labels, the characteristics of digital natives may not apply universally to all people from this generation. Young people who grew up in low-income communities, who are immigrants or the children of immigrants, or who simply have alternate preferences may not have experienced the same level of digital and technological influence in their early lives. [7] Libraries and librarians may still provide an opportunity for digital natives to experience new technologies, resources, and collaborations that might otherwise have been missed.

Within our multi-generational workforce, collaboration between digital native and digital immigrant professionals may be particularly important, especially as libraries seek to serve users across a broad generational spectrum.

Research on the brain’s response to electronic media suggests that digital natives might have higher activity in the parts of the brain responsible for short-term memory, the sorting of complex information, and the integration of sensations and thought; other research suggests similar exposure to electronic media might diminish the ability to develop empathy, interpersonal relations, and nonverbal communication skills. [8] This may influence how librarians work with each other and with the public.
Notes and Resources


http://www.ala.org/transforminglibraries/future/trends/digitalnatives
DOWNTOWN PARKING
NEEDS ASSESSMENT

CITY OF MIDDLETON
MIDDLETON, WISCONSIN

Prepared for:
City of Middleton

March 12, 2013

DRAFT DOCUMENT
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The City of Middleton, Wisconsin (the “City”) engaged Walker Parking Consultants (“Walker”) to evaluate the need for additional parking supply in downtown Middleton. The intended purpose of the study is to evaluate the current and future parking adequacy and clearly identify the parking inventory, utilization and availability in Downtown Middleton.

In addition, this evaluation provides ways to improve the efficiency of the parking system, while balancing changes in a way that is supportive of economic development initiatives. Walker’s evaluation is intended to provide decision-making information for the City as it considers near- and long-term planning decisions. Based on this analysis Walker developed recommendations for the City to consider. The results of this work are summarized in the Key Findings and Recommendations section and presented in their entirety in the subsequent report.

KEY FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The overall analysis of current parking conditions indicates that the existing downtown parking system can support some increase in the total downtown parking demand. However, because some parking facilities demonstrated higher utilization rates than the overall average, the actual availability of specific parking resources will vary depending on location, level of convenience and restrictions (time limits, tenant parking only, etc.). This results in localized parking deficits that have the ability to shape overall perceptions of parking adequacy for the entire study area. The challenge with parking in downtown Middleton relates more to gaining access to available supply, rather than an actual shortage of supply.

CURRENT PARKING ADEQUACY

The defined study area is generally bound by University Avenue to the north; Terrace Avenue to the south; Bristol Street to the east; and U.S. Highway 12 (Beltline) to the west. A total of 1,898 parking spaces are located in the study area. Of the total supply, 244 spaces are located in public lots, 448 spaces are located on-street, 1,132 spaces are located in privately owned and controlled lots, and the remaining 74 spaces are ADA accessible.

A series of forty-two (42) parking utilization counts were conducted during a two-day observation period to identify local parking characteristics. The primary field observations occurred on Saturday, November 3rd, 2012 and Wednesday, November 7th, 2012, with subsequent field observations conducted during the weeks of December 17th, 2012 and January 14th, 2013. The observed parking occupancy was compared to the effective supply to determine the current parking adequacy during typical market conditions.

The peak weekday demand occurred near the hour of 11:00 AM with a total of 872 parked cars. This translates to an actual occupancy rate of approximately 46 percent with 1,026 vacant spaces. Peak weekend (Saturday) occurred near the hour of 1:00 PM with a total of 549 parked cars, or approximately 29 percent occupancy with 1,349 vacant spaces. Downtown parking utilization is presented in Figures 1 and 2, on the following page.
Figure 1: Current Weekday Parking Occupancy

Weekday Parking Utilization - Typical Wednesday

Observation Period: Wednesday, November 7, 2012
Weather Conditions: Partly Cloudy, Temperature: Mean = 39°F, Max = 41°F, Min = 37°F, No Precipitation
Sources: Walker Parking Consultants and Henneman Engineering, November 2012.

Figure 2: Current Weekend Parking Occupancy

Weekend Parking Utilization - Typical Saturday

Observation Period: Saturday, November 3, 2012
Weather Conditions: Partly Cloudy, Temperature: Mean = 38°F, Max = 45°F, Min = 31°F, No Precipitation
Sources: Walker Parking Consultants and Henneman Engineering, November 2012.
Some downtown community members shared a concern that parking located at Saint Luke’s and Saint Bernard’s may not be available for public use. For the purpose of this study, both locations are included with the understanding that employees would likely use the supply and it would not be intended for use by downtown visitors. These parking lots are positioned on the furthest north and east edges of the study area and reflect viable options for long-term employees. It is common for churches in downtown settings to share parking resources for the greater good of the community. Though these locations may currently have some use restrictions during the weekday, the churches are part of the downtown community and within an acceptable walking distance for downtown employees.

For illustrative purposes, the church parking supply is removed from the baseline inventory to demonstrate the impact on overall parking adequacy. The actual supply becomes 1,542 spaces and effective supply changes to 1,372 spaces. When compared to peak weekday conditions, actual parking capacity exceeds demand by 670 spaces and when allowing for the effective supply cushion a 500-space surplus is calculated. This demonstrates the overall impact if the churches decide to segregate and protect their parking supply from public use during peak weekday conditions. In either case, a parking surplus exists within the downtown study area.

FUTURE PARKING ADEQUACY

The calculation of future parking adequacy is based on commercial development, redevelopment and vacancy absorption assumptions applied to downtown Middleton. The projected future parking adequacy considers new demand generated by 54,669 square feet of office space, 16,388 square feet of retail space, approximately 50 additional TDS Telecom employees, and approximately 60 additional library visitors during peak weekday conditions. These assumptions represent potential changes in the study area that may occur over the next 12 to 36 months. Any changes to the program assumptions will impact projected future parking demand. Program assumptions were provided by community stakeholders, local real estate professionals, and the City of Middleton.

Our future projections show a need for an additional 309 spaces during peak weekday conditions if build-out and vacancy absorption occurs as projected. There is an effective surplus of 813 spaces during peak weekday conditions, including 587 private spaces, 65 public spaces, and 147 public on-street spaces. The existing surplus is greater than the need, and could in theory accommodate all of the projected downtown growth in the next one to three years.
RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CONSIDERATION

The field observations and calculations of current and future parking adequacy do not support building new parking supply in the form of a ramp. We recommend that the City undertake an in-depth analysis of the possibilities for making better use of the private parking supply by opening up as much of it as possible, to the public. We think this option should be investigated regardless of new growth, because it will make the existing parking system work more efficiently.

It is recommended that the City, in coordination with the Downtown Middleton Business Association, consider developing a formalized parking management plan that clearly communicates locations for employee, resident and visitor parking. Many of the localized parking challenges can be addressed through improved management of the existing resources.

If the City elects to proceed with the construction of a new parking ramp, it is recommended that the project be considered in relationship to and impact on the traffic flow; the pedestrian experience; activity patterns; downtown aesthetics; density; and sense of place. Another consideration is how to most effectively integrate a parking ramp with the current parking system. At present, the parking system is fee-neutral and parking is managed through regulations and enforcement. Under a fee-neutral system, the addition of supply may not alleviate parking congestion during peak periods since on-street parking will remain the most convenient and first choice for many downtown visitors and employees. Simply adding supply without economic incentives that help redistribute parking demand may result in an underutilized ramp.
INTRODUCTION

The City of Middleton, Wisconsin (the “City”) retained Walker Parking Consultants (“Walker”) to evaluate the need for additional parking supply in Downtown Middleton. The purpose of the study is to provide a quantitative evaluation of the current and future parking adequacy that clearly identifies the parking inventory, utilization and availability in Downtown Middleton.

BACKGROUND

In 2007, the Middleton Plan Commission recommended approval of a Downtown Circulation Study1, which outlines the downtown parking needs, transit circulation recommendations, bicycle and pedestrian circulation considerations, streetscape recommendations, and a traffic analysis consideration. The Downtown Circulation Study found that while “the downtown currently experiences parking lot capacity issues in the Hubbard Avenue area during lunchtime, the conditions are not severe, and do not indicate a need to expand parking with a ramp.”

Since the Downtown Circulation Study was performed, conditions in the downtown have changed. Specific changes in Downtown since 2007 include the relocation of the Middleton Police Department from City Hall to a new location on Donna Drive, which freed up some on-street parking on Hubbard Avenue. The downtown now has a farmer’s market, which operates in the summer on Tuesday afternoons from May to October. The building that formerly housed the Middleton Antiques Mall (1819 Parmenter Street) was rebuilt and is now home to the National Mustard Museum as well as commercial space. The historic Opera House building (1811 Parmenter Street) has three new tenants: Creative Look Photography Studio and the Neena and Chauette apparel stores. Stark Realty (formerly 1818 Parmenter Street) has left Old Middleton Centre and the retail/office lease space that it formerly occupied is now vacant. There have been other business changes in Downtown Middleton and there are several vacant spaces. In part, these vacancies have prompted calls for providing more parking in Downtown Middleton.

In 2011, the Downtown Middleton Business Association submitted a petition to the City requesting that the City build a parking ramp between the Senior Center and City Hall to provide an additional 100+ parking stalls downtown. The Plan Commission referred the petition to City staff and the City’s Tax Increment Financing consultant to develop initial ideas and comments regarding a parking ramp. It was determined that the first step in the due diligence process was to determine the need for additional parking in Downtown Middleton, before evaluating optimal development sites, facility design configurations, and the financial feasibility of building, operating and maintaining a public parking ramp.

This study provides a basis for evaluating the need for a new parking ramp in Downtown Middleton. The Scope of Services for this study is provided in the following section.

1 Ayres Associates and SRF Consulting Group Inc. (January 2008) Middleton Downtown Circulation Study
SCOPE OF SERVICES

To identify the need to increase parking supply with a new ramp, Walker was authorized to perform the following Scope of Services.

A. Meet with Middleton representatives to clarify study objectives, review the scope of work and finalize project schedule.

B. Contact stakeholders to discuss the study process and obtain stakeholder input with regard to parking in Downtown Middleton.

C. Obtain information from the City and community representatives with regard to existing and projected future land uses and development in Downtown Middleton.

D. Confirm the inventory of on- and off-street parking spaces within the study area and tabulate and summarize on a block-by-block basis.

E. Perform field data collection of parking occupancy within the designated study area on a typical Wednesday and Saturday. For each observation day, collect parking occupancy data in one-hour intervals during the following timeframe:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Start Time</th>
<th>End Time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6:00 AM</td>
<td>11:00 AM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:00 PM</td>
<td>5:00 PM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7:00 PM</td>
<td>9:00 PM</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

   Collect parking occupancy data in 30-minute intervals during the following timeframe:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Start Time</th>
<th>End Time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11:30 AM</td>
<td>1:30 PM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5:30 PM</td>
<td>6:30 PM</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

F. Analyze existing parking demand on a block-by-block basis based upon the parking occupancy counts collected.

G. Graphically depict the calculated parking demand to the existing parking supply to determine parking occupancy on a block-by-block basis in the study area.

H. Develop a shared parking analysis utilizing current and projected land use (current and future land use information provided by City of Middleton) to determine future parking surplus and/or deficiency by block within the study area.

I. Summarize the supply/demand and shared parking analysis in a report submitted to the City.
STUDY APPROACH

Walker conducted a physical inventory of all parking spaces within the study area. The inventory was tabulated by block and categorized as either on-street, off-street, public or private. A series of forty-two (42) parking utilization counts were conducted during a two-day observation period to identify local parking characteristics. The primary field observations occurred on Saturday, November 3rd, 2012 and Wednesday, November 7th, 2012, with subsequent field observations conducted during the weeks of December 17th, 2012 and January 14th, 2013. The observed parking occupancy was compared to the effective supply to determine the current parking adequacy during typical market conditions.

To calculate the projected future parking demand, Walker reviewed proposed future developments and vacancy absorption assumptions in downtown Middleton and applied parking demand ratios according to the type of land use. The projected increase in parking demand was added to the baseline parking utilization data and then compared to the current effective parking supply to determine future parking adequacy.
STAKEHOLDER INPUT

Stakeholder interviews were held with a sample of individuals and business leaders in the downtown community that are directly impacted by public parking policies and decisions. Information was obtained from stakeholders through telephone calls and individual meetings. Each stakeholder was asked to provide insight with regard to the current parking conditions in downtown Middleton based on their experience. The following summary highlights common subjects and reflects key comments obtained from community members.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Comment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Enforcement</td>
<td>The Library Lot is used by library visitors, restaurant patrons, and employees during the weekday. Very little attention is given to the four-hour limit and enforcement is inconsistent. While Library employees do not park in this lot, it is used by other downtown employees.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Enforcement</td>
<td>There seems to be a lack of parking enforcement in the public lots. This creates a situation where short-term parkers are competing for spaces with employees. Private business owners should direct their employees where to park during the daytime and encourage them to leave the on-street and four-hour lots for customers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 On-Street Parking</td>
<td>On-street parking is preferred over parking in a surface lot. It would be practical for the City to invest in adding more on-street parking spaces rather than build a ramp on top of existing parking supply.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 On-Street Parking</td>
<td>The City should investigate opportunities to install more angled parking, similar to the on-street spaces located at the west end of Elmwood. It may cost a lot to relocate some sidewalks, but it would cost a lot more to build a parking ramp. Focus on maximizing on-street parking supply.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Time Limits</td>
<td>Two-hour on-street time limits are generally fine, if enforced. The purpose of on-street time limits is to encourage turnover and free up more parking for other patrons. If someone wants to stay longer than two hours they should park in one of the City lots.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Time Limits</td>
<td>Two-hour on-street time limits do not provide enough time for someone to attend an appointment, shop and dine. The time limit should be increased to encourage a longer stay downtown.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 Parking Signage</td>
<td>Each property owner has their own parking signage with stated regulations. The inconsistency makes it difficult for infrequent visitors to know where they are allowed to park. A centralized parking identification program should be implemented by the City in cooperation with private lot owners and the Downtown Middleton Business Association.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 Terrace Ave. Lot</td>
<td>The Terrace Avenue Lot is underutilized because of the location and lack of centralized regulation of parking. This lot should be used by employees.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 Private Parking</td>
<td>Most private parking lots are restricted to specific user groups. Very few owners officially share parking during peak times of the day even when they have available supply.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 Private Parking</td>
<td>Some employers with limited or no parking are willing to pay for access to parking supply at Old Middleton Center, Staybridge Suites, M &amp; I Bank, or St. Bernard's Church. The challenge is that most owners of private parking prefer not to lease a portion of their supply even though spaces are available.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 Senior Center Lot</td>
<td>The Senior Center Lot is used by Senior Center visitors, downtown visitors, and employees during the weekday. Employees park in this lot four hours or more. Many times visitors of the Senior Center will choose to park on-street rather than hunt for a parking space in the lot.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Topic</td>
<td>Comment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 Walkability</td>
<td>University Avenue is too busy to walk across, even though there are multiple lights and crosswalks. The distance and road crossing limits the use of parking north of University Ave. for downtown visitors. People in Middleton do not want to walk that far.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 Walkability</td>
<td>The railroad crossing from Terrace Avenue Lot to the Library Lot presents a challenge for some patrons. A possible improvement to the crosswalk may include better lighting along the walkway and in the Terrace Lot.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 Parking Need</td>
<td>There is no need for a parking ramp in downtown Middleton. The demand peaks when there are large events, but quickly returns afterwards. The City should not plan to accommodate peak conditions that occur infrequently. Rather, the City or Downtown Middleton Business Association should manage the existing parking supply.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 Parking Need</td>
<td>Businesses are leaving downtown Middleton because of the poor parking conditions. Those who have relocated or closed their businesses needed more employee and visitor parking. A parking ramp would attract more small businesses downtown.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 Parking Need</td>
<td>The community should not be asked to subsidize parking for a select few without parking for their building(s) or employees. If a ramp is built, patrons should pay to use the ramp or business owners should pay on behalf of their customers to maintain the ramp.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17 Parking Need</td>
<td>There is no need for a parking ramp in downtown Middleton. The City should invest in managing the existing resources in cooperation with the private owners.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 Parking Need</td>
<td>A new parking ramp would make it easier to attract small business downtown. It is difficult to lease vacant space in commercial properties especially without parking accommodations. The proposed location of the ramp may not be the best option.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19 Parking Need</td>
<td>Additional parking is not needed in downtown. Space is always available within a block of your destination. Run a campaign that educates people on the parking resources and encourages them to walk and experience downtown Middleton.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 Parking Need</td>
<td>Parking along Hubbard Avenue and Parmenter will always be a challenge during busy times of the day, but on-street spaces are almost always available if you drive a block east or west on Elmwood or Terrace Avenue. A parking ramp downtown is not necessary, but it may be a good idea if built with a taxable development.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21 Parking Planning</td>
<td>Parking is required for downtown commercial real estate to succeed. By building a public parking ramp, the private developers could use the public supply to meet parking code requirements.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**STUDY AREA**

The study area is defined for the purpose of this analysis as the geographical area generally bound by University Avenue to the north; Terrace Avenue to the south; Bristol Street to the east; and U.S. Highway 12 (Beltline) to the west. The 18-block geographical area represents two market components, one from which the majority of existing and potential parking patrons will be drawn, and another in which the primary parking resources are located. The 18-block study area is not uniform in size or shape, nor does it extend equally in all directions. Rather, this purposeful configuration encompasses the wide variety of land uses and captures the unique parking characteristics within Downtown Middleton.

A map of the study area is presented in the following exhibit.
CURRENT CONDITIONS

The assessment of current conditions includes a comprehensive review of parking inventory, the effective parking supply, parking occupancy trends, and parking adequacy during peak conditions.

CURRENT PARKING INVENTORY

A total of 1,898 parking spaces are located within the defined study area. Of the total supply, approximately 60 percent is privately owned and controlled, 13 percent is located in public lots, 23 percent is located on-street, and the remaining 4 percent are ADA accessible parking spaces. For this analysis, private parking is classified as supply that is privately owned and restricted to specific user groups. Inventory by block and type are presented in the following exhibit.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Block Number</th>
<th>Public</th>
<th>% of Total</th>
<th>Private</th>
<th>% of Total</th>
<th>On-Street</th>
<th>% of Total</th>
<th>ADA</th>
<th>% of Total</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>249</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>292</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>122</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>166</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>218</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>229</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>118</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>147</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>122</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>124</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>119</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>113</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>130</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>244</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>1,132</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>448</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>1,898</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

% of Total    | 13%    | 60%        | 23%     | 4%         | 100%      |

EFFECTIVE PARKING SUPPLY

When discussing the utilization of a parking system, it is important to consider the concept of an effective supply. Effective supply is the maximum number of parking spaces that can realistically be used within a given system. An effective supply cushion helps to protect against the inevitable loss of spaces resulting from temporary disturbances such as construction, misparked cars, snow removal, etc. This cushion also helps to decrease traffic congestion by minimizing the amount of time visitors must spend looking for an empty space. For on-street parking we generally recommend an effective supply equal to 85% of the total capacity. This allows a sizable cushion of spaces so that traffic does not back up on surface streets (such as the through traffic on Elmwood and Hubbard streets). Off-street parking requires less of a cushion – generally 90% to 95% of the actual supply, depending on the type of facility and the anticipated user group. Smaller cushions are needed for long-term parking, since employees tend to be familiar with the facilities and their spaces are not subject to frequent turnover. For the off-street facilities in downtown Middleton, we expect that much of the traffic is generated by a combination of frequent visitors and employees, and therefore use an effective supply of 90% of the total capacity. The parking supply may be perceived as inadequate even though there are some spaces available in the parking system. Thus, when we evaluate whether the system is currently impacted, we do not look for occupancy rates of 100% but rather occupancy rates over 85% for on-street or 90% for off-street. A weighted average of those effective supplies in the Middleton parking system is 89% of the total supply.

The study area includes a total of 1,898± spaces before any adjustments are made to account for an effective supply. After the effective supply factors are applied, the study area’s effective supply is 1,685± spaces, as shown below.

Exhibit 5: Effective Supply Factor

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parking</th>
<th>Actual Supply</th>
<th>Effective Supply Factor</th>
<th>Effective Supply</th>
<th>Operating Cushion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Public</td>
<td>264</td>
<td>0.90</td>
<td>238</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private</td>
<td>1,186</td>
<td>0.90</td>
<td>1,067</td>
<td>119</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On-Street</td>
<td>448</td>
<td>0.85</td>
<td>380</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>1,898</strong></td>
<td><strong>0.89</strong></td>
<td><strong>1,685</strong></td>
<td><strong>213</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CURRENT PARKING OCCUPANCY

In order to project the future impact of parking demand generated by proposed land uses, we must first determine how much parking demand is generated by existing downtown businesses. The current occupancy data reflects performance-based parking demand and serves as a baseline for typical weekend and weekday conditions.

PEAK WEEKDAY OCCUPANCY

Peak conditions occur near the hour of 11:00 AM on a weekday with a total of 872 parked vehicles. When compared to the actual parking supply of 1,898 spaces, there is a 1,026-space parking surplus. When the peak demand is compared to the effective supply of 1,685, there is an 813-space parking surplus.

Exhibit 6: Current Weekday Parking Occupancy

Observation Period: Wednesday, November 7, 2012
Weather Conditions: Partly Cloudy, Temperature: Mean = 39°F, Max = 41°F, Min = 37°F, No Precipitation
Sources: Walker Parking Consultants and Henneman Engineering, November 2012.
PEAK WEEKEND PARKING OCCUPANCY

The parking occupancy rates documented during on a typical Saturday are summarized and presented in the following exhibit.

In summary, peak conditions occur near the hour of 1:00 PM on a Saturday with a total of 549 parked vehicles. When compared to the actual parking supply of 1,898 spaces, there is a 1,349-space parking surplus. When the peak demand is compared to the effective supply of 1,685, there is a 1,136-space parking surplus.

Exhibit 7: Current Weekend Parking Occupancy

Observation Period: Saturday, November 3, 2012
Weather Conditions: Partly Cloudy, Temperature: Mean = 38°F, Max = 45°F, Min = 31°F, No Precipitation
Sources: Walker Parking Consultants and Henneman Engineering, November 2012.

The current weekday peak parking occupancy and adequacy is presented on a block-by-block basis in the next four exhibits.
Exhibit 8: Current Weekday Peak Parking Occupancy by Block (%) at 11:00AM

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parking Type</th>
<th>Peak Occupancy Rate</th>
<th>Parked Cars</th>
<th>Effective Supply</th>
<th>Available Supply</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Public Off-Street</td>
<td>72%</td>
<td>169</td>
<td>238</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private Off-Street</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>480</td>
<td>1,067</td>
<td>587</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On-Street</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>223</td>
<td>380</td>
<td>156</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>52% Rounded</td>
<td>872</td>
<td>1,685</td>
<td>813</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Legend:
- 80% or greater Adequacy on-street
- 50% - 79% Adequacy on-street
- 49% or less Adequacy on-street
Exhibit 8: Current Weekday Peak Parking Availability by Block at 11:00AM

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parking Type</th>
<th>Peak Occupancy Rate</th>
<th>Parked Cars</th>
<th>Effective Supply</th>
<th>Available Supply</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Public Off-Street</td>
<td>72%</td>
<td>169</td>
<td>238</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private Off-Street</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>480</td>
<td>1,067</td>
<td>587</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On-Street</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>223</td>
<td>380</td>
<td>156</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>52% Rounded</strong></td>
<td><strong>872</strong></td>
<td><strong>1,685</strong></td>
<td><strong>813</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Exhibit 9: Current Weekend Peak Parking Occupancy by Block

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parking Type</th>
<th>Peak Occupancy Rate</th>
<th>Parked Cars</th>
<th>Effective Supply</th>
<th>Available Supply</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Public Off-Street</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>118</td>
<td>238</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private Off-Street</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>232</td>
<td>1,067</td>
<td>835</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On-Street</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>199</td>
<td>380</td>
<td>181</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>33% Rounded</td>
<td>549</td>
<td>1,685</td>
<td>1,136</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Legend - Current Adequacy Weekend
- Study Area
- Blocks Numbers
- 80% or greater Adequacy off-street
- 50% - 79% Adequacy off-street
- 49% or less Adequacy off-street

Weekday Peak - Saturday near 1:00 PM

1. 18%
2. 68%
3. 42%
4. 11%
5. 73%
6. 106%
7. 20%
8. 17%
9. 30%
10. 3%

Exhibit 9: Current Weekend Peak Parking Occupancy by Block

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parking Type</th>
<th>Peak Occupancy Rate</th>
<th>Parked Cars</th>
<th>Effective Supply</th>
<th>Available Supply</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Public Off-Street</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>118</td>
<td>238</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private Off-Street</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>232</td>
<td>1,067</td>
<td>835</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On-Street</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>199</td>
<td>380</td>
<td>181</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>33% Rounded</td>
<td>549</td>
<td>1,685</td>
<td>1,136</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Exhibit 11: Current Weekend Peak Parking Availability by Block

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parking Type</th>
<th>Peak Occupancy Rate</th>
<th>Parked Cars</th>
<th>Effective Supply</th>
<th>Available Supply</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Public Off-Street</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>118</td>
<td>238</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private Off-Street</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>232</td>
<td>1,067</td>
<td>835</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On-Street</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>199</td>
<td>380</td>
<td>181</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>33% Rounded</strong></td>
<td><strong>549</strong></td>
<td><strong>1,685</strong></td>
<td><strong>1,136</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Legend - Current Adequacy Weekend
- Study Area
- Block Numbers
- 80% or greater Adequacy on-street
- 50% - 79% Adequacy on-street
- 49% or less Adequacy on-street

Weekday Peak - Saturday near 1:00 PM
SUMMARY OF CURRENT PARKING CONDITIONS

The overall analysis of current parking conditions indicates that the existing downtown parking system can support some increase in the total downtown parking demand. However, because some parking facilities demonstrated higher utilization rates than the overall average, the actual availability of specific parking resources will vary depending on location, level of convenience and restrictions (time limits, tenant parking only, etc.). This results in localized parking deficits that have the ability to shape overall perceptions of parking adequacy for the entire study area. As shown in this section, the challenge with parking in Downtown Middleton relates more to gaining access to available supply, rather than an actual shortage of supply.

It has been Walker’s experience that an overall performance based parking ratio of approximately 3.0 parking spaces per 1,000 square feet of commercial space represents a generally acceptable level of parking supply for mature business districts with a semi-urban character such as downtown Middleton. This accounts for sharing parking spaces. Specific conditions vary, of course, from location to location, but this provides a useful “rule of thumb” to determine the overall adequacy of the available parking supply. Our analysis indicates there are approximately 3.80 parking spaces per 1,000 square feet of commercial space located in the study area. When compared to the effective supply, there are approximately 3.09 parking spaces per 1,000 square feet of commercial space.

Some downtown community members shared a concern that parking located at Saint Luke’s and Saint Bernard’s may not be available for public use. For the purpose of this study, both locations are included with the understanding that employees would likely use the supply and it would not be intended for use by downtown visitors. These parking lots are positioned on the furthest north and east edges of the study area and reflect viable options for long-term employees. It is common for churches in downtown settings to share parking resources for the greater good of the community. Though these locations may currently have use restrictions during the weekday, the churches are part of the downtown community and within an acceptable walking distance for downtown employees.

For illustrative purposes, the church parking supply is removed from the baseline inventory to demonstrate the impact on overall parking adequacy. The actual supply becomes 1,542 spaces and effective supply changes to 1,372 spaces. When compared to peak weekday conditions, actual parking capacity exceeds demand by 670 spaces and when allowing for the effective supply cushion a 500-space surplus is calculated. This demonstrates the overall impact if the churches decide to segregate and protect their parking supply from public use during peak weekday conditions.
FUTURE PARKING CONDITIONS

The calculation of future parking adequacy is based on commercial development, redevelopment and vacancy absorption assumptions applied to Downtown Middleton. Walker obtained market assumptions from community stakeholders, local real estate professionals, and City staff. These assumptions represent potential changes in the study area that may occur over the next 12 to 36 months.

FUTURE MARKET ASSUMPTIONS

The projected future parking adequacy considers new demand generated by 54,669 square feet of office space, 16,388 square feet of retail space, approximately 50 new TDS employees, and approximately 60 new library visitors during peak weekday conditions. Future parking needs are based on the following development assumptions and any change to the assumptions will impact the projected future parking demand.

Exhibit 12: Future Development Assumptions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Block</th>
<th>Office (SF)</th>
<th>Retail (SF)</th>
<th>TDS</th>
<th>Library</th>
<th>New Parking</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>31,266</td>
<td>3,888</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
<td>Cayuga Court Office &amp; Retail - Vacancy Absorption</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>3,403</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
<td>7601 University Avenue Building - Vacancy Absorption</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>50 Emp.</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
<td>Downtown Middleton TDS Office - Employee Consolidation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>15,000</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>New Office Space - Redevelopment Project</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>5,000</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
<td>New Retail Space - Redevelopment Project</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2,500</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
<td>Proposed Retail Development Site</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>5,000</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
<td>Old Middleton Center - Vacancy Absorption</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2,500</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
<td>Commercial Building - Vacancy Absorption</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>60 Visitors</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
<td>Public Library - New Children's Programs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2,500</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
<td>National Mustard Museum Building - Vacancy Absorption</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>54,669</td>
<td>16,388</td>
<td>50 Emp.</td>
<td>60 Visitors</td>
<td>10 Spaces</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Supply gained from Terrace Avenue Reconstruction Project is excluded from the calculation of future adequacy.
Sources: TDS Corporation, Middleton Public Library, City of Middleton Department of Planning, Walker Parking Consultants Stakeholder Interviews.
LIMITING FACTORS

Walker has relied on community stakeholders, real estate professionals, and the City to provide the estimate for the one to three-year build-out and reabsorption of vacant space. This report assumes that 100% build-out and absorption does occur as it is outlined in Exhibit 11. We also assume that new downtown businesses will be successful and generate parking demand at a level consistent with national averages. If for any reason there are changes to the square footages or land-use projections, future parking demand may also be affected. Also, the addition of new parking facilities or the destruction of existing supplies will have an impact on the future adequacy projected later in this report.

SHARED PARKING MODEL

In order to project the demand generated by future developments in downtown Middleton, we created a shared parking model. The model estimates the number of cars that will be generated by the combination of land uses in the study area over the course of a day, week, and year. The Walker model is initially based on parking ratios that have been established for many different land uses by transportation industry research. The ratios describe the number of cars that are generated per 1,000 square feet (measured in gross leasable area when available) of a given land use. A restaurant, for example, can generate many more people per square foot than an office, and thus requires a higher ratio.

Some of the typical base, unadjusted ratios include the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Land Use</th>
<th>Community Retail</th>
<th>General Office</th>
<th>Quality Restaurant</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Employee</td>
<td>0.8 cars/1,000 SF GLA</td>
<td>2.85 cars/1,000 SF GLA</td>
<td>1.8 cars/1,000 SF GLA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visitors</td>
<td>3.2 cars/1,000 SF GLA</td>
<td>0.15 cars/1,000 SF GLA</td>
<td>15.2 cars/1,000 SF GLA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peak Period</td>
<td>1:00 PM</td>
<td>11:00 AM</td>
<td>6:00 PM</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

However, any given study area will have unique characteristics that make it different from the averages developed through national research. Walker uses its knowledge of parking patterns, research on the study area, and client input to adjust the model to reflect conditions in the project area. Specifically, we look at local use of transit (or other alternatives to driving), captive market effects, and other local factors that may affect parking demand (such as a particularly dense office complex that may be generating at a higher rate than average). Having adjusted the ratios used in the model to reflect conditions in the local area, we further adjust the model to account for the fact that not all land uses will be at their peaks at the same time. For example, restaurants peak on weekend evenings when offices are at their lowest. Therefore, it would be an error to plan the parking system such that spaces are built to accommodate both peaks at once (though this is how spaces are planned according to many city codes) - this would result in an oversupply of parking, which is wasteful. The adjustment for hourly, daily and seasonal fluctuations is the basis of a shared parking analysis.

The projected new parking demand generated during peak weekday and weekend conditions are presented on the following page.
### Exhibit 13: Projected New Peak Weekday Parking Demand

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Land Use</th>
<th>Unadj Demand</th>
<th>Month Adj December</th>
<th>Pk Hr Adj 11:00 AM</th>
<th>Non Captive Daytime</th>
<th>Drive Ratio Daytime</th>
<th>December 11:00 AM</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Community Retail</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>99%</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employee</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>95%</td>
<td>98%</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>98%</td>
<td>98%</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employee</td>
<td>184</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>98%</td>
<td>98%</td>
<td>177</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TDS Employee Consolidation</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>98%</td>
<td>98%</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employee</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>98%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library - New Daytime Programs</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>98%</td>
<td>95%</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employee</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>98%</td>
<td>98%</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Subtotal Customer/Guest Spaces</strong></td>
<td>64</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Subtotal Employee/Shared Resident Spaces</strong></td>
<td>195</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>187</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Subtotal TDS Employee Consolidation</strong></td>
<td>55</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Subtotal Library - New Daytime Programs</strong></td>
<td>18</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Parking Spaces</strong></td>
<td>332</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>309</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

% reduction: 7%

### Exhibit 14: Projected New Peak Weekend Parking Demand

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Land Use</th>
<th>Unadj Demand</th>
<th>Month Adj December</th>
<th>Pk Hr Adj 1:00 PM</th>
<th>Non Captive Daytime</th>
<th>Drive Ratio Daytime</th>
<th>December 1:00 PM</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Community Retail</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>95%</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>95%</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employee</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>95%</td>
<td>98%</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>98%</td>
<td>98%</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employee</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>98%</td>
<td>98%</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TDS Employee Consolidation</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>98%</td>
<td>98%</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employee</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>98%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library - New Daytime Programs</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>98%</td>
<td>95%</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employee</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>98%</td>
<td>98%</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Subtotal Customer/Guest Spaces</strong></td>
<td>54</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Subtotal Employee/Shared Resident Spaces</strong></td>
<td>31</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Subtotal TDS Employee Consolidation</strong></td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Subtotal Library - New Daytime Programs</strong></td>
<td>33</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Parking Spaces</strong></td>
<td>118</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

% reduction: 20%

NET IMPACT OF FUTURE MARKET ASSUMPTIONS

The future parking adequacy is measured according to the impact of projected new demand on the total effective surplus during peak conditions. The impacts are shown in the following exhibit.

Exhibit 15: Impact of Projected Development on Total Effective Surplus

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Weekday</th>
<th>On-Street</th>
<th>Off-Street</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Public</td>
<td>Private</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Actual Supply</td>
<td>448</td>
<td>264</td>
<td>1,186</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effective Supply</td>
<td>380</td>
<td>238</td>
<td>1,067</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current Peak Demand (Wednesday 11:00 AM)</td>
<td>-223</td>
<td>-169</td>
<td>-480</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current Effective Surplus</td>
<td>157</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>587</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Future Supply Added</td>
<td></td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Future Demand Added (Peak Weekday 11:00 AM)</td>
<td>-309</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total Peak Weekday Adequacy**: 514

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Weekday</th>
<th>On-Street</th>
<th>Off-Street</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Public</td>
<td>Private</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Actual Supply</td>
<td>448</td>
<td>264</td>
<td>1,186</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effective Supply</td>
<td>380</td>
<td>238</td>
<td>1,067</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current Peak Demand (Saturday 1:00 PM)</td>
<td>-199</td>
<td>-118</td>
<td>-232</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current Effective Surplus</td>
<td>181</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>835</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Future Supply Added</td>
<td></td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Future Demand Added (Peak Weekday 1:00 PM)</td>
<td>-94</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total Peak Weekend Adequacy**: 1,052

SUMMARY OF FUTURE PARKING CONDITIONS

Our parking analysis showed an effective surplus of 587 spaces vacant in the private supply at the weekday peak hour. Our future projections showed a need for an additional 309 spaces if build-out and vacancy absorption occurs as projected. The existing surplus in the private supply is greater than the need, and could in theory accommodate all of the projected downtown growth in the next one to three years.

We recommend that the City undertake an in-depth analysis of the possibilities for making better use of the private parking supply by opening up as much of it as possible, to the public. We think this option should be investigated regardless of new growth, because it will make the existing parking system work more efficiently.
PARKING PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

While parking is clearly one important part of downtown development, it should not detract from intrinsic qualities such as a pedestrian-friendly environment and a unique sense of place that make downtown Middleton the distinctive destination that people seek. This unique environment and combination of attractions bring people downtown. With that in mind, parking should be viewed as a supportive tool to help make downtown attractions easier to access. Based on the analysis of current and future parking adequacy, there is a surplus of parking in downtown during peak weekday conditions. This section of the report presents opportunities to make better use of existing parking resources and capitalize on the strengths already in place. In addition, this section provides information on parking management, an overview of parking economics, and basic parking geometrics for the City to consider.

ACCEPTABLE WALKING DISTANCES

Though a total parking surplus exists in downtown Middleton during peak conditions, the type of parking and perceived walking distances are a concern to some downtown community members. These concerns are based on expectations that parking options should be adjacent to or on the same block as a destination. It is important to note that standards for visitors and patrons should differ from downtown employees. On-street parking is intended for short-term patrons visiting downtown businesses, while parking areas such as the Terrace Avenue Lot and University Avenue Lot are intended for long-term employee parking. This allocation of supply aligns with reasonable expectations for walking distances. Downtown Middleton offers safe and walkable streets that connect parking locations and destinations and already support a park-once environment.

When planning for parking solutions that include shared parking or the location of a future parking facility, it is important to consider the walking distance from parking facilities and the intended user’s final destination within the study area. Walker has developed the Level of Service (LOS) approach to parking design. The Level of Service classification system is similar to the grading system used in traffic engineering: LOS A is best or ideal, LOS B is good, C is average, and D is below average but minimally acceptable.
The following table includes the level of service walking distances for various parking environments. Walker applies the level of service for outdoor/uncovered parking when considering shared parking opportunities in downtown Middleton.

**Exhibit 16: LOS Conditions: Walking Distances**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level of Service</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>D</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Outdoor/Uncovered</td>
<td>400 ft.</td>
<td>800 ft.</td>
<td>1,200 ft</td>
<td>1,600 ft</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Through Surface Lot</td>
<td>350</td>
<td>700</td>
<td>1,050</td>
<td>1,400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outdoor/Covered</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>1,000</td>
<td>1,500</td>
<td>2,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Climate Controlled</td>
<td>1,000</td>
<td>2,400</td>
<td>3,800</td>
<td>5,200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inside Parking Facility</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>600</td>
<td>900</td>
<td>1,200</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Parking, May/June 1994, Butcher, T. and Smith, M.

**Exhibit 17: Downtown Middleton Parking Level of Service A and B**

Majority of Parking Supply is Located within a 3 to 5 Minute Walk
In comparison, the parking used on average or typical days at shopping centers is designed to provide LOS A and B, while the parking that only gets used for a few hours on the busiest days of the year might be designed for LOS C. Additionally, employee parking at a shopping mall is most often provided at LOS C, due to the willingness of employees to walk farther than customers and the desire to provide customers with the most proximate parking options.

Exhibit 18: Shopping Mall Parking Level of Service

The following figures provide reference points and walking distances to available parking supply in Downtown Middleton. Even though research shows a parking level of service A is within a 400 ft. radius, there are anomalies in every community that require more proximate parking options. For example, the Middleton Senior Center requires proximate parking that is easy to navigate for drivers and pedestrians. In addition, the Middleton Public Library requires proximate parking that accommodates families with young children and mitigates street crossings. These considerations are represented in our analysis of viable parking options.
Exhibit 19: Level of Service A Walker Distances from Key Areas of Demand
Exhibit 20: Shared Parking Opportunities – Weekday Peak at 11:00 AM

**Manage Parking Demand**
Goal: Move Employee Parking Out of Core and Increase Short-Term Parking Availability On-Street and in the Senior Center Lot and Library Lot.
- Enforce On-Street Parking Time Limits
- Enforce Off-Street Parking Time Limits
- Clearly Sign Visitor Parking Areas
- Communicate Policies to Downtown Employers
- Establish Shared Parking Agreements with Churches, Hotel, Bank and Old Middleton Center
PARKING MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS

There are areas of downtown Middleton that temporarily experience high levels of demand that strain local parking supply, while nearby areas experience a parking surplus. Even though available supply may exist within one or two blocks, these localized challenges form perceptions that parking is inadequate. The community can either address the parking challenges by building more supply or better managing the existing resources. Many suburban communities are rethinking how best to address the challenges of downtown parking and pursuing management solutions before committing to a long-term capital investment. This course of action may improve perceptions and increase access to available supply.

There are cases where parking management alone is not the solution. While an organized parking system provides the framework for future growth, additional supply in the form of a parking ramp may be required to support new development. It is rare that a community would build a fully subsidized, stand-alone parking ramp without clear plans for new commercial development. The preferred approach is to develop new parking in coordination with a high-density mixed-use project. This approach maximizes development space by integrating parking into the development program.

The following exhibit provides an overview of how communities are starting to think about parking planning.

Exhibit 21: Community Approach to Parking Planning

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Old Parking Paradigm</th>
<th>New Parking Paradigm</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“Parking Problem” means inadequate parking supply.</td>
<td>There are many types of parking problems (management, pricing, enforcement, etc.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abundant parking supply is always desirable.</td>
<td>Too much supply is as harmful as too little. Public resources should be maximized and sized appropriately.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parking should be provided free, funded indirectly, through rents and taxes.</td>
<td>Users should pay directly for parking facilities. A coordinated pricing system should value price parking with on-street the highest.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Innovation faces a high burden of proof and should only be applied if proven and widely accepted.</td>
<td>Innovations should be encouraged. Even unsuccessful experiments often provide useful information.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parking management is a last resort, to be applied only if increasing supply is infeasible.</td>
<td>Parking management programs should be applied to prevent parking problems.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
There is a resistance in some downtown communities to charge for parking out of fear that the added cost will turn customers away. Our research has identified that customers are more concerned with availability than having to pay a nominal fee to park their car. A fee-based parking program serves as a management tool that aims to increase availability on-street, while offering lower-cost alternatives for long-term patrons. Parking challenges often arise from a community’s desire to offer free, convenient and available parking at all times. The reality is that only two of the three objectives can be achieved simultaneously. The figure below illustrates three possible options.

Exhibit 22: Parking Triangle

Source: Walker Parking Consultants

OVERVIEW OF PARKING ECONOMICS

This section provides a general overview of basic parking economics that an owner must consider when planning for a new parking ramp. A brief discussion is provided on capital costs, operating expenses, breakeven pricing, structural repair budget, and minimum parking dimensions.
CAPITAL COSTS

Walker understands that future parking improvements in downtown Middleton may be developed as a stand-alone parking ramp or incorporated with the design of a future mixed-use building. A parking facility that is built into a project as either the upper or lower floors of that development, compared to a stand-alone parking facility, requires that the garage use short-span construction. Short-span construction uses an increased number of columns to support the weight of the structural elements above it. In short-span construction, the column grid is roughly 30 feet on center. The efficiencies of short-span construction are less than long-span construction because of the column projections that interfere with the parking layout. A typical short-span construction garage has an efficiency in the range of 400-450 square feet per space, depending upon the geometrics of the footprint. If the ramp is a stand-alone structure, the columns can be located at the front of the parking stalls so that there are no column projections; this is long-span construction. The efficiency of the garage can be increased to an approximate range of 315 to 350 square feet per space, depending upon the geometrics of the footprint. The increase in efficiency is due to the ability to increase the number of parking spaces inside the same footprint.

A general guideline for determining the conceptual estimate of probable cost for a parking ramp is to apply a cost per space figure to the target capacity. The cost of parking ramps vary greatly based on location, architectural features, sustainability features, and whether the facility is above or below-grade. A reasonable range for an above-grade, 200-300 space parking facility is $15,000 to $18,000 per space, assuming long-span construction. The cost per space can increase significantly when built below ground.

OPERATING COSTS

Expenses can vary dramatically since these depend on a number of independent variables. Traditional expenses can include costs associated with labor, utilities, daily maintenance, supplies, management and accounting, and insurance. Key factors in determining operating costs include the proposed hours of operations, type of parking access and revenue controls, and the application of active or passive security measures. The operating expenses for a parking facility are typically presented on a cost per space basis. Walker’s 2012 research indicates actual operating expenses that range from $150 to over $1,000 per space annually. The operating costs are lower at facilities that do not maintain revenue and access controls, and have limited hours of operation. Conversely, operating costs are higher at facilities that are staffed; monitor access to the property with revenue and access controls; and operate 24 hours, 7 days a week. All facilities require some degree of daily janitorial service that includes trash removal, sweeping, and minor repairs and maintenance such as lighting replacement. These responsibilities are often delegated to a city’s public works department, if a parking department does not exist.
BREAKEVEN PRICING

The City of Middleton does not presently charge patrons to park on-street or in any of the public surface lots. However, the following table provides a contextual reference of the breakeven price needed for a freestanding parking ramp to breakeven. If we assume a $15,000 to $18,000 range for cost per space, and annual operating expense of $150 to $200 per space, the breakeven monthly income per space would range from $117 to $142. This table demonstrates why most municipal parking ramps are financed and operated as part of a larger parking system. The insolvent parking ramps are often subsidized by more profitable on-street parking within a system. This allows for a municipality to charge fees that are below breakeven if lower market rates dictate.

Exhibit 23: Breakeven Considerations – Monthly Income Required to Breakeven

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cost per Space</th>
<th>Annual Operating Expense Per Space</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$25</td>
<td>$50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$1,000</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$3,000</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$5,000</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$8,000</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$9,000</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$10,000</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$11,000</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$12,000</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$13,000</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$14,000</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$15,000</td>
<td>107</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$16,000</td>
<td>114</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$17,000</td>
<td>121</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$18,000</td>
<td>128</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$19,000</td>
<td>135</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$19,500</td>
<td>138</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$20,000</td>
<td>142</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$21,000</td>
<td>149</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Assume 100% Financed, 20-Year Term, 5.5 Percent
Source: Walker Parking Consultants
STRUCTURAL REPAIR BUDGET

In addition to operating expenses, Walker highly recommends that funds be set-aside on a regular basis to cover structural maintenance costs at a minimum of $75 per structured space annually, to be placed in a sinking fund. Once a sinking fund is established, contributions to this fund accumulate over time and are available to cover structural maintenance and structural repairs. Even the best designed and constructed parking facility requires structural maintenance. For example, expansion joints need to be replaced and concrete invariably deteriorates over time and needs to be repaired to ensure safety and to prevent further deterioration. The structural maintenance cost typically represents the largest portion of the total maintenance budget. Property owners tend to grossly underestimate the structural maintenance cost and do not budget adequately for timely corrective actions that must be performed to cost effectively extend the service life of the structure. The cost of structural maintenance is relatively small considering the potential waste of the improvements associated with the failure to perform proper maintenance on a timely basis.

The periodic structural maintenance includes items such as patching concrete spalls and delaminations in floor slabs, beams, columns, walls, etc. In many instance there are maintenance costs associated with the topping membranes, the routing and sealing of joints and cracks, and the expansion/construction joint repairs. The cost of these repairs can vary significantly from one structure to another. The factors that will impact the maintenance cost include, but are not limited to the value the owner places on the maintenance of the facility, the local climate, and the age of the structure.

A review by a restoration specialist is usually necessary to identify the preventive maintenance needs of a facility. In addition to the annual or other periodic inspections, material testing and examinations may also be necessary to determine and recommend maintenance measures. One example of this is the chloride monitoring testing that is necessary to monitor the effectiveness of sealer and coatings. The chloride testing also helps to determine the frequency and extent of sealer reapplications. The results of the periodic inspections may also indicate the need for other material examinations and laboratory testing.
MINIMUM PARKING STRUCTURE DIMENSIONS

There are several variables and options to consider when selecting the type of structure, including the desired traffic flow (one way or two way), the type of users, the Level of Service (LOS), and height restrictions. The following table provides the minimum dimensions for two types of structures, as well as a variation on the level of service. Characteristics of a single-threaded helix include two-bays, two-way traffic flow, and 90-degree parking, with the motorist ascending one floor for every 360-degree revolution. By contrast, a double-threaded helix features angled parking and one-way traffic flow, providing a continuous travel path up and then down through the structure. In a double-threaded helix, the motorist climbs two levels for every 360-degree revolution, thus requiring a longer site than a single-threaded helix. These are examples only and do not represent a specific site or design. The dimensions do not include required setbacks or green space; therefore, each site would likely need to be five to ten feet wider to provide for these set-backs.

Exhibit 24: Minimum Parking Structure Dimensions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Garage Type</th>
<th>Traffic</th>
<th>Space</th>
<th>LOS D Dimensions</th>
<th>LOS A Dimensions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Single Threaded Helix</td>
<td>Two Way</td>
<td>90°</td>
<td>120' x 135'</td>
<td>120' x 187'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Double Helix</td>
<td>One Way</td>
<td>75°</td>
<td>112' x 188'</td>
<td>112' x 282'</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Parking structures could be built on smaller footprints. However, implied in this discussion is the desirability to achieve a relatively efficient parking structure design, as measured by square foot of floor area per space.
THE ECONOMIC CONTRIBUTION OF WISCONSIN PUBLIC LIBRARIES TO THE ECONOMY OF WISCONSIN

University Research Park
510 Charmany Drive
Suite 275C
Madison, WI 53719

May 1, 2008
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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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- Jessica MacPhail - Racine Public Library
- Alan Zimmerman - Department of Public Instruction

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- Phyllis Davis, Director - South Central Library System
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- Christopher Gawronski, Director - Milwaukee Public Library, Bay View Branch
- Mike Gelhausen, Director - Hartford Public Library
- Demita Gerber, Director - Monona Public Library
- Jim Gingery, Director - Milwaukee Co. Federated Library System
- Enid Gruszka, Director - Milwaukee Public Library, Washington Park Branch
- Robert Hafeman, Coordinator - Manitowoc-Calumet Library System
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- Bev Kennedy, Director - Pardeeville Public Library
- Kathy Klager, Director - Pauline Haass Public Library
- Kelly Krieg-Sigman, Director - La Crosse Public Library
- Rick Krumwiede - Outagamie Waupaca Library System
- Molly Lank-Jones, Director - Sherman & Ruth Weiss Community Library
- Mark Merrifield, Director - Nicolet Federated Library System
- Nancy Miller, Director - River Falls Public Library
- Ruth Ann Montgomery, Director - Arrowhead Library System
- Richard Nelson, Director - North Shore Library
- David Polodna, Director - Winding Rivers Library System
- Barbara Roark, Director - Franklin Public Library
- Krista Ross, Director - Southwest Wisconsin Library System
- Marla Sepnafski, Director - Wisconsin Valley Library Service
- Kris Stabo, Director of Youth Services - Menomonee Falls Public Library
- Vickie Stangel, Director - Dodgeville Public Library
The Economic Contribution of Wisconsin Public Libraries

- Ted Stark, Director - Menomonie Public Library
- John Thompson, Director - Indianhead Federated Library System
- James Trojanowski, Director - Northern Waters Library Service
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This study, commissioned in October of 2007, was led by Dr. David J. Ward, President, and Alan J. Hart, Vice President and Director of Operations of NorthStar Economics, Inc., in Madison, Wisconsin. Dennis K. Winters, Consultant and former Director of Research for NorthStar Economics also provided valuable assistance with the project.

The conclusions and opinions in this paper are those of the authors of this study. The authors accept full responsibility for any errors or omissions that may appear in this report.

Dr. David J. Ward, President
Mr. Alan Hart, Vice President
NorthStar Economics Inc.
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Wisconsin public libraries contribute to the Wisconsin economy and are of growing importance to the citizens of the state. The total economic contribution of Wisconsin public libraries to the Wisconsin economy is $753,699,545. The return on investment in library services is $4.06 for each dollar of taxpayer investment.

Wisconsin public libraries serve a total state population of over 5.6 million people and the use of public libraries by citizens of the state is growing. In the past ten years, library visits have grown by 28% and other key measures such as circulation of library materials, attendance at children’s programs, computer access, and electronic access to library catalogs have also shown healthy growth.

Surveys of library users and focus groups conducted for this study show that public libraries play an important role in the quality of life in a wide range of communities. Libraries provide free access to information and technology and level the playing field for many low income people.

The results of this study are similar to the conclusions drawn from studies done in Indiana, Ohio, Florida and several other states.

Direct Economic Contribution

The direct economic contribution made by public libraries to the Wisconsin economy is over $326 million. This economic contribution comes from spending by staff, spending on library operations and construction, and spending by visitors. The table below summarizes the economic contribution that comes from spending.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Contributor</th>
<th>State Economy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Library Operations</td>
<td>$ 114,618,459</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff Spending</td>
<td>197,404,830</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visitor Spending</td>
<td>14,604,543</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Contribution</strong></td>
<td><strong>$ 326,627,832</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Job Generation

The money that public libraries spend on payroll, benefits, construction, operating costs and services generates Wisconsin jobs in four ways: the direct staff jobs at public libraries, jobs generated by non-payroll library expenditures, jobs that result from people that serve the public library workforce in their professional and private lives, and jobs generated by visitor spending. Public libraries directly employ 3,222.42 full time employees. An additional 3,058 jobs are created indirectly. Wisconsin public libraries are responsible for the creation of a total of 6,280 jobs in the state.
The Economic Contribution of Wisconsin Public Libraries

Income and Sales Tax Revenue Generation

The income from jobs created by Wisconsin public libraries generates income and spending, which are taxed through personal income and sales taxes. The total regional income, sales, and property tax revenue generated by public library economic activity in the state totaled almost $24 million in 2006.

The Market Value of Public Library Services

This study takes a market value approach to determine the economic value of public library services. The value of each type of library service to a library user is measured in terms of what it would cost users to buy the same services in an open marketplace.

The total economic value of those library services covered in the statistics of the annual Wisconsin Public Library Service data report is $427.9 million. This economic contribution does not include a host of other services such as community meeting space that provide real economic value but currently lack a statistical database. The table below summarizes the market value of public library services:

Summary Table: The Economic Value of Public Library Services

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>2006 Circulation or Attendance</th>
<th>Economic Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Children’s materials</td>
<td>20,836,885</td>
<td>$91,682,294</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adult Materials</td>
<td>37,243,815</td>
<td>$272,997,164</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reference Transactions</td>
<td>4,760,201</td>
<td>$27,609,166</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computer/Internet Access</td>
<td>7,123,690</td>
<td>$28,494,760</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children’s Programs</td>
<td>1,471,411</td>
<td>$5,885,644</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adult Programs</td>
<td>207,551</td>
<td>$1,245,306</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Economic Value</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>$427,914,334</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Return on Investment

The total economic contribution of public libraries including the direct economic contribution and the market value of public library services is $753,699,545. Public libraries serve a total state population of over 5.6 million people. Public library services are largely supported by public tax dollars. The return on investment in library services is $4.06 for each dollar of taxpayer investment. The table below shows the per capita economic benefit of public libraries, the per capita amount of taxpayer support and the return on investment for every dollar of taxpayer support.

This calculation does not include a number of other services that provide significant return on investment but currently lack a statistical database. In addition, a considerable amount of state-level funding has not been taken into account, including funding for online database resources such as BadgerLink, as well as the activities of the regional public library systems that provide services such as partial funding for online catalogs, additional online databases, continuing education, consulting services, delivery of
The Economic Contribution of Wisconsin Public Libraries

materials between libraries, and more. Consequently, the figures cited below represent a very conservative estimate of the return on investment of Wisconsin public library services.

### The Return on Investment of Public Library Services in 2006

| Total Economic Contribution of Public Libraries | $753,699,545 |
| Wisconsin Population Served by Public Libraries | 5,617,744 |
| Economic Contribution Per Capita | $134.16 |
| Public Tax Support Per Capita | $33.07 |
| **Dollar Annual Return Per Dollar of Public Tax Support** | **$4.06** |

### Public Input and Library Usage Patterns

Part of this study included a public survey of library usage. The survey questionnaire was designed to gather input regarding library use and approximately 2,400 individuals from all over the state responded to the survey. Because survey respondents consisted primarily of regular library users, it should be noted that these data are probably not illustrative of all Wisconsin residents (library users and non-users) as a whole.

### Use of Libraries by the Public

A majority of respondents (93%) are regular card-carrying public library users of the library and more than 90% report that they use the library at least once per month. Over 60% of respondents indicated that the library website was frequently used as a means to gather information and reserve library materials. In addition, more than a quarter of respondents contact the library by telephone. A majority of respondents (about 82%) contact reference librarians for assistance, and a significant majority (88.3%) of those who contact reference librarians do so in person.

Books remain the most popular items for library users to borrow. Approximately ¾ of respondents reported checking out DVDs or videos, while nearly half check out audio books and nearly a third check out periodicals.

Over ½ of survey respondents (about 56%) access the Internet at the public library, though only about 7% of all respondents are dependent on the library as their only means of access. Approximately 2/3s of respondents attend special events, classes, or programs held at public libraries.

About 30% of respondents indicated that when visiting the public library, they are likely to stop at nearby businesses that they would probably not have shopped at otherwise. Of those respondents who reported an amount spent on side trips to other businesses, the average amount spent was $24.93.
Library Alternatives

Respondents were asked about a number of ways that their lives would be affected if they did not have access to a public library. Specifically, respondents were asked to estimate the amount they would spend if they had to pay for the same services elsewhere by purchasing or renting materials they currently have the option of borrowing from the library. Respondents who chose to answer those questions reported saving approximately $205 per month as a result of using the public library.

Attitude Toward Public Libraries

Respondents were surveyed about their attitude toward public libraries and the extent to which they value the presence of public libraries in their communities. Almost all respondents felt that public libraries contribute in a meaningful way to the quality of life in their community, and that funding public libraries was a good use of tax revenue.

43% of respondents donate their time and/or money to public libraries. The average annual donation reported was $130.07, while the average amount of volunteer time reported was 66.68 hours per year, or about an hour and a quarter per week.

SWOT Analysis

A basic step in evaluating the role of any institution or organization with respect to economic development is to assess its strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities, as well as threats to its development. This process is commonly referred to as a SWOT analysis. The information for the SWOT analysis of Wisconsin public libraries was obtained through public input at 29 focus group sessions held around the state.

Strengths

Strengths cited by participants included access to a wide range of information and materials, the fact that libraries are a community hub or gathering place, the public access to computers and the Internet, and access to resources to those who would otherwise be unable to afford them. Other strengths noted included services (such as interlibrary loan, classes, and job assistance), knowledgeable staff, and the library's encouragement of reading.

Weaknesses and Threats

The challenge cited most frequently was a lack of funding, which leads to a diminished level of service and/or the lack of ability to expand services. A lack of physical space was mentioned almost as frequently. Participants at almost every library we visited felt that the lack of physical space compromised the ability of their public library to provide a level and range of services that they would like to see. People also mentioned the
Internet as a challenge, and a decline in library use by people who seek information online instead of visiting a library.

**Opportunities**

There are a number of opportunities for public libraries to contribute to economic development and quality of life in communities throughout Wisconsin. Participants felt that public libraries must strive to keep library collections and technology as current and up-to-date as funding will allow. Another opportunity was to continue to build interest in reading and to continue recruiting new readers, particularly young readers, through initiatives like summer reading programs. There was also a strong sentiment to see libraries develop more collaborative partnerships with schools and universities, social service agencies, non-profit groups and community programs, as well to reach out to the business community for deeper involvement.

**The Role of Public Libraries in the Information Economy**

Although a number of participants expressed concern that libraries *could* become less important, most feel that public libraries would remain at least as important, if not more so in the an information based economy. As noted above, many people felt that the importance of libraries is a constant, and that libraries will remain important to them regardless of overall trends among the public or changes in technology.

Interestingly, the increasing availability of online content lead some to conclude that libraries are less important than they used to be in light of the ubiquity of the Internet, while others felt that libraries were more important as a result.

**Conclusion**

Public library use has increased as libraries continue to provide a broad range of services and adapt to changing technology and the needs and expectations of their clientele. Despite facing a wide range of challenges, from a need for funding and physical space to an erroneous public perception of declining library use, public libraries continue to make a valuable economic contribution to the State of Wisconsin. Public libraries are a significant driver of Wisconsin's economy, contributing more than ¾ of a billion dollars to the state economy on an annual basis, and returning a benefit of over $4.00 to taxpayers for each dollar spent, both of which are in fact conservative estimates.

Public libraries benefit their communities in many other ways beyond those which are quantified in this report. As noted consistently by focus group participants all over Wisconsin, library users all over the state value their public libraries as community gathering places, as a resource for promoting reading and literacy, as a resource for small businesses, and a place where technology and information is available to everyone, regardless of income level.
CHAPTER 1:

INTRODUCTION

The Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction's Division for Libraries, Technology, and Community Learning commissioned this study to measure the return on taxpayer investment in public libraries in Wisconsin. The study is designed to determine the economic benefit of public libraries for Wisconsin residents, and how the public library contributes to their overall economic well-being and quality of life. Focusing on the array of services provided by Wisconsin public libraries, the expenditures from local, state and federal sources for those services, and the use and spending habits of library users, this study aims to capture and quantify the range of economic benefits offered by Wisconsin public libraries.

Public input was sought and data was collected to describe the economic impact of public libraries in Wisconsin communities, and to establish the general taxpayer return on investment for supporting public libraries in Wisconsin. The objectives of this study are several, including identifying those activities and services supporting economic development, as well as those circumstances and factors that contribute to the success of public library involvement in economic development. Additional objectives include establishing how Wisconsin public libraries are used by individuals, families, students and businesses, and finally to determine alternative costs and services for users in the absence of a public library.

The scope of this study encompasses Wisconsin public libraries as a whole. Although data was collected from respondents statewide, all data has been aggregated for analysis, and this report illustrates the economic benefit of Wisconsin public libraries when viewed as a whole. Individual reports quantifying the economic benefit of selected libraries in the state may follow, but analysis and conclusions specific to particular libraries or systems in the state is beyond the scope of this report.

Wisconsin has 388 public libraries, participating in 17 regional library systems, with total operating expenditures of more than $223 million per year. Collectively, the libraries own more than 20 million books and serial volumes, more than 1 million audio materials, nearly 1.5 million video materials, and over 50,000 periodical subscriptions. More than 5,000 computers are available for use by the public, with more than 4,000 available for public Internet use. These resources and materials are used by more than 3 million registered borrowers, who made nearly 33 million library visits in 2006, and conducted more than 4.5 million reference transactions. Libraries offered more than 65,000 programs, with total attendance of approximately 1.7 million. Wisconsin public libraries employ more than 3,000 people, who collect nearly $150 million in wages and benefits. Libraries receive in excess of $200 million in government funding, including municipal and county appropriations, as well as state and federal funds. Wisconsin public libraries received nearly $230 million in income in 2006. These figures were all derived from the most recent database available, the 2006 Wisconsin Public Library Service Data.
The Economic Contribution of Wisconsin Public Libraries

Clearly, there is significant economic input related to Wisconsin public libraries and the people who use them. In summary, the goal of this study is to analyze that economic activity and quantify and report the significant economic and other benefits enjoyed by Wisconsin residents as a result of the presence and operation of public libraries in their communities.

Review of Prior Studies

A number of prior economic impact studies involving public libraries were reviewed. Below are summaries of the economic impact portion of several of those studies:

- **Florida (2004)**

  This study measured the economic impact of Florida's public libraries. The project placed Florida libraries into an evaluative framework that measured their economic impact in a manner comparable to other economic impact studies of other types of organizations. It used standard models of economic values, most notably the model developed by Regional Economic Models, Inc., and the Contingent Valuation Method. The study reported a return on investment of $6.54 for each dollar of taxpayer support. It also reported that public libraries enhanced the quality of life in communities and helped to build a stronger state economy.

- **Indiana (2007)**

  The Indiana study measured the economic impact of public and academic libraries on the Indiana economy. The study measured the direct economic impact of library spending and the indirect impact of that spending. The study presented a cost to benefit ratio of $2.38 that measured the direct economic benefit compared to each dollar of library cost.

- **Ohio (2006)**

  This study covered libraries in the southwestern part of Ohio. It reported a direct economic impact of nearly four times the amount invested in their operations. The value the libraries' cumulative expenditure of about $74 million returned a quantifiable direct economic benefit of $238.6 million, or $3.81 for each dollar expended in 2005. The study also recognizes that these libraries add significant value to their users and communities that cannot be assigned a dollar value including improved economic prospects and an enhanced quality of life.
The Economic Contribution of Wisconsin Public Libraries

- **Pennsylvania (2006)**

The Pennsylvania study measured the value of public libraries on a contingent valuation basis (what if there were no public libraries). The study estimates how much it would cost consumers to get needed information, how much the economy would lose if the salaries of public library staff didn’t exist, and how much would be lost in a halo effect by businesses who would not get the spending dollars of library patrons who would use these businesses as they went to or from a public library. Altogether, the Pennsylvania study estimates that the taxpayer return on investment would be $5.55 for every tax dollar spent.

- **South Carolina (2005)**

The South Carolina study was completed in 2005 and reported on the perceived value of libraries to library users and the economic impact of public libraries in the State of South Carolina. The study measured the direct and indirect economic impact of library expenditures, the value of circulation of library materials, and the value of reference services. The study calculated a total direct and indirect return on investment of $4.48 for each $1 expended on public libraries.

- **Vermont (2007)**

The Vermont Department of Public Libraries published a study on the economic impact of public libraries in the State of Vermont. The study followed the methodology used in the South Carolina study. The Vermont study reported both a direct and indirect return on investment. The direct economic ROI which included the value of library services was $5.05 per dollar of tax support. The indirect ROI, the value of the multiplier effect of direct spending, was $1.91 in benefits for each dollar of tax support. The overall return on investment for each tax dollar was $6.96.
CHAPTER 2:

THE ECONOMIC CONTRIBUTION OF PUBLIC LIBRARY SPENDING TO THE WISCONSIN ECONOMY

Public libraries are a source of economic activity in every region in the state. The overall economic contribution of public libraries is measured in two ways:

- The direct economic contribution that comes from staff spending, staff salaries and other operating expenditures of libraries, construction spending to build and maintain facilities, and the spending of visitors.

- A second form of economic contribution is the value of library services offered to businesses and consumers. This value is based on market costs to provide these services.

This chapter deals with the direct economic contribution of public libraries that comes from the expenditures by staff, public library organizations and visitors.

The second form of economic contribution is derived from the market value of the services of public libraries and this contribution will be covered in the next chapter of this report.

A third chapter will tie together the two forms of economic contribution to the state economy and present a return on investment calculation which measures the economic benefit to state citizens that comes from tax support of public libraries.

Public Library Revenue Sources

In 2006, public libraries derived revenue from the following six sources:

- Municipal appropriations
- County appropriations
- State funds
- Federal funds
- Contract income
- Other income

Revenue received from each of these sources is summarized in Figure 2-1 below.
Figure 2–1

Revenue Sources
Fiscal Year 2006

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Revenue Source</th>
<th>Amount</th>
<th>Percent of Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Municipal Appropriation</td>
<td>$136,681,201</td>
<td>59.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>County Appropriation</td>
<td>49,074,055</td>
<td>21.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State Funds</td>
<td>17,443,552</td>
<td>7.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Federal Funds</td>
<td>1,790,751</td>
<td>.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contract Income</td>
<td>1,230,938</td>
<td>.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Income</td>
<td>23,662,732</td>
<td>10.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total Revenue** | **$229,883,229** | **100.0**


Public Library Expenditures

Public libraries in Wisconsin spent $210,397,739 on operating expenditures and $13,134,087 on capital outlays. Expenditures on staff salaries and wages (gross payroll) amounted to $107,549,911. The salaries and wages paid to employees are spent largely in the local economy.

It should be noted however, that a significant amount of the payroll expenditures of public libraries does not go to benefit the state economy, but instead is spent on federal income tax withholding and social security taxes that leave the area and are sent to the U.S. government. The study adjusts for the economic impact of this large amount of “leakage” by deducting these payments before calculating the overall economic impact of spending on staff salaries and wages.

Public library expenditures for goods, services, and employee benefits (beyond direct salary and wage payments) totaled $102,847,828. Much of this spending benefits the regional economy and this impact is explained later in this report.

A breakdown of the public library expenditures is shown in Figure 2-2.
The Economic Contribution of Wisconsin Public Libraries

Figure 2–2
Wisconsin Public Library Expenditures
Fiscal Year 2006

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Expenditure Item</th>
<th>Amount</th>
<th>Percent of Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Net Pay to Staff</td>
<td>$81,192,035</td>
<td>36.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Withholding Taxes Paid to Federal/State Governments</td>
<td>26,357,876</td>
<td>11.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employee Benefits</td>
<td>41,018,069</td>
<td>18.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library Materials</td>
<td>24,960,936</td>
<td>11.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contract Services</td>
<td>2,630,343</td>
<td>1.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spending on Other Library Operations</td>
<td>34,115,869</td>
<td>15.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capital Expenditures</td>
<td>13,134,087</td>
<td>5.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Expenditures</strong></td>
<td><strong>$223,409,215</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Economic Contribution of Public Library Expenditures

Public library spending contributes to Wisconsin’s economy through direct spending on goods and services, payroll, and visitor spending. This direct spending then multiplies through the regional economy as these expenditures finance the operations of regional state businesses which in turn spend the money on payroll, benefits and operating costs. That money in turn is spent, resulting in many rounds of indirect spending.

Direct Spending

Direct public library spending in 2006 totaled $223,409,215. Most of that spending benefited sectors of the Wisconsin economy. The primary components of that spending are non-payroll operating expenditures and employee payroll (salary and wages).

In addition, public libraries and their staffs attract visitors from all over who spend money in Wisconsin. There are also visitors who are vendors and service workers who spend money in reaching the library destination. Finally, there are people who will visit to attend library events, to use special collections and who will use the historical and genealogic resources of local public libraries. The value of visitor spending is based upon original survey data obtained in economic impact studies for the University of Wisconsin-Madison and the University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh. We have estimated this visitor spending to be $8,865,933 and have included this amount in the direct economic impact analysis.

Figure 2-3 shows the economic contribution from institutional spending, spending of staff, and visitor spending. This contribution is derived from an economic model that adjusts for spending items such as income tax withholding that is sent out of the region and other "leakages". Other leakages would include spending on library materials and subscriptions purchased from firms outside the state. In this study, it is assumed that
The Economic Contribution of Wisconsin Public Libraries

95% of the money spent on books, subscriptions and other library materials is spent outside the state and therefore doesn't directly contribute to the Wisconsin economy.

The direct contribution (not counting the economic multiplier effect) that public libraries make to the Wisconsin economy in fiscal terms includes an impact of approximately $142,219,703.

Total Economic Contribution

The total economic contribution that public libraries make to the Wisconsin economy due to spending on staff, staff benefits, operating expenses, construction spending and visitor spending is much greater than the direct spending made by the libraries, its employees and visitors. All of the dollars spent by public libraries, their employees and visitors on goods and services recycle through the state economy to be spent again on goods and services by the businesses and citizens that serve the public libraries. This rippling effect of spending is captured in economic multipliers (mathematical factors representing fiscal dollar flows through the economy) that are applied to the direct public library spending.

The total economic contribution made by public libraries to the Wisconsin economy is over $326 million. Spending by staff accounts for $197,404,830 in economic impact on the state. The economic impact of library operating expenses accounts for $114,618,459 in economic impact. Visitor spending accounts for $14,604,543 in economic impact. (See Figure 1-3)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Contributor</th>
<th>State Economy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Library Operations</td>
<td>$114,618,459</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff Spending</td>
<td>197,404,830</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visitor Spending</td>
<td>14,604,543</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Contribution</td>
<td>$326,627,832</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Job Generation

The money that public libraries spend on payroll, benefits, construction, operating costs and services generates jobs for Wisconsin citizens. Jobs attributable to public library spending occur in four ways. The first is the direct staff jobs for people working for public libraries. The second job creator is the jobs generated by non-payroll library expenditures. The third job creator is the jobs that result from the people that serve the public library workforce in their professional and private lives. The fourth job creator is the jobs generated by visitor spending. Figure 1-4 summarizes jobs created by each of these components.

Public libraries directly employ 3,222.42 full-time employees (FTEs).
Public library payroll and benefits (staff spending), public library operating and construction spending, and visitor spending create an additional 3,058 jobs.

**Figure 2–4**
**Job Creation**
**Fiscal Year 2006**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Job Generator</th>
<th>Number of Jobs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Direct Employment</td>
<td>3,222</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library Operating Spending</td>
<td>1,453</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff Spending</td>
<td>1,349</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visitor Spending</td>
<td>256</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Jobs Created</strong></td>
<td><strong>6,280</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The total number of jobs created in Wisconsin due to the presence of Wisconsin public libraries is 6,280.

**Income and Sales Tax Revenue Generation**

Not only do public library employees pay state income taxes and sales taxes on their purchases, but their economic activity helps to build the local tax base. As shown above, the money public libraries spend generates jobs. Those jobs, in turn, generate income and spending. That subsequent income and spending are taxed through personal income and sales taxes. The total regional income, sales, and property tax revenue generated by public library economic activity in the state totaled almost $24 million.

**Figure 2–5**
**Tax Revenue Generation**
**Fiscal Year 2006**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tax Revenue Generator</th>
<th>Tax Revenue</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>State Income Tax</td>
<td>$9,102,927</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sales Tax</td>
<td>5,158,998</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Property Tax</td>
<td>9,654,319</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Tax Revenue Generated</strong></td>
<td><strong>$23,916,243</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Economic Contribution of Wisconsin Public Libraries

Summary

The operating revenues of public libraries in Wisconsin in fiscal year 2006 were over $229.9 million. County and municipal funds accounted for 81% of funding support for public libraries. State funds provided 7.6% of operating revenue while the Federal government contributed less than 1% of library operating funds. Public libraries generated approximately 11% of funding through fines, printing charges, donations, revenue from support groups, contract service payments, and other revenue generating activities.

Total state spending attributable to public libraries was over $223.4 million in fiscal year 2006. All of the dollars spent by public libraries, their employees and visitors on goods and services recycle through the state economy to be spent again on goods and services by the businesses and citizens that serve the public libraries. The total economic contribution made by public libraries to the Wisconsin economy is over $326 million.

Public libraries employ a workforce of 3,222 FTEs. Public library related economic activities including the spending of staff, operating expenses, construction projects, and visitor spending resulted in the creation of another 3,058 jobs. In total, 6,280 jobs are created as a result of the economic activity of public libraries.

Public library economic activity also contributes to the generation of tax revenues. In 2006, the economic activity of public libraries in Wisconsin generated state income, sales, and property tax revenues of almost $23.9 million.
CHAPTER 3:

THE ECONOMIC CONTRIBUTION OF
PUBLIC LIBRARY SERVICES TO THE WISCONSIN ECONOMY

In the last chapter, the economic impact of public libraries that comes from the spending of staff, the library operations, and visitors was quantified. That overall impact in 2006 was $326 million. This economic impact is a part of what libraries contribute to the Wisconsin economy. The other measure of value is the market value of public library services to consumers, businesses, governmental bodies and other sectors of the economy.

This chapter extends the analysis of the economic value of public libraries to the market value of services provided to the citizens of Wisconsin by Wisconsin’s public libraries. The use of market value as opposed to the cost of the service is an important differentiation to keep in mind. Many studies of economic impact look at what it costs a library to provide a service. This cost concept is used as a basis for determining the economic impact of public libraries.

This study takes a market value approach to determine the economic value of public library services. The value of each type of library service to a library user is better measured in economic terms by what it would cost that user to buy the service in an open market place. Thus in this chapter, the value of library services is measured by market value to the library user.

The Value of Library Services to the Wisconsin Economy

As the studies reviewed in Chapter 1 show, there are a number of ways of evaluating the value of public library services. In the following sections, the value of Wisconsin public library services and the general methodology for calculating market value are shown and explained.

Children’s Materials

In 2006, Wisconsin public libraries reported a total statewide circulation of 20,836,885 transactions from children’s materials collections. According to the 2006 edition of Wisconsin Public Library Service Data (WPLSD), each transaction represented the act of lending an item from the library’s collection for use outside the library. There is no way of knowing definitively how many additional items were used within the library facility, although surveys have been conducted in the past to arrive at an estimate. In 2005, it was estimated that in-house use was equal to about 26% of reported circulation.

The common practice in most economic impact studies is to value each circulation item based upon the market cost of the item. There appear to be two general methodologies used for calculating the value of book circulation. For books, many studies use a relatively low percentage of the average price of new book cost on the theory that a
library patron may be able to obtain the item on the used book market at a discount to the full price of a new book. In the Indiana public library economic impact study, the average cost of new books as reported in Bowker’s *Books in Print* is discounted by 80% to derive a market resale price that is used to calculate the market value for book circulation.

A second methodology for valuing book circulation is based upon the average cost of books purchased by public libraries. This methodology takes into account the efficiency and volume discounts of a large book purchaser and then again discounts that value by a significant percentage. In the South Carolina public library impact study, the average cost of a hardcover book is discounted by 50% to get a cost based value for book circulation.

To derive the value of other non-print items in the library collection, generally most studies research used market prices for CD’s, DVDs, and other audio and video material.

In this study, the value of circulation is based upon the market value approach as opposed to a cost of materials method. The circulation value of books, audio and video materials is weighted by their proportion in the overall state library collection and this weight is applied to a market price for used materials in each category. See Chapter 7 for more information on the methodology employed to determine the value of materials.

Following the general methodology described above, the value of the circulation of over 20,000,000 children’s items is shown below.

**Economic Value of Children’s Materials Circulation = $91,682,294**

**Adult Materials**

In 2006, Wisconsin public libraries reported a total statewide circulation of 37,243,815 transactions for adult materials. The definition of a circulation transaction is explained above and the use of adult materials used within the library is not included in the circulation number.

Adult circulation numbers, as is the case with children’s materials, are not categorized by item such as books, CDs, DVDs, etc. What is recorded is a total circulation number for all items by patron category such as children’s material and adult materials.

Following the general methodology described above for children’s materials, the value of the circulation of over 37,000,000 adult items is shown below.

**Economic Value of Adult Materials Circulation = $272,997,164**
Reference Calls and Transactions

In 2006, Wisconsin public libraries reported total statewide reference transactions of 4,670,201. The definition of a reference transaction is explained in the 2006 Wisconsin Public Library Service Data (WPLSD) publication. According to the WPLSD publication a reference transaction “involves the knowledge, use, recommendation, interpretation, or instruction in the use of one or more information sources by a member of the library staff.” Further the WPLSD publication indicates that the reference request “may come in person or by phone, fax, mail, or electronic mail from an adult, a young adult, or a child.”

Reference transactions may involve print or non-print information sources, machine readable databases, library catalogs, and other libraries or institutions. Reference transactions do not include questions regarding operating hours, directions involving library facilities, or library policies.

The economic value of a reference transaction is a function of the time spent per transaction and the intrinsic value of the time of the librarian answering the reference request. In most other statewide library impact studies, the value of a reference librarian’s time is determined and that amount and the amount of time spent on each reference call determines the market value of each reference transaction.

In this study the value of a reference transaction is based upon the average hourly wage of librarians is $23.19 as reported by the Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development. It is assumed that the total time (answering the call, researching data, follow up, record keeping) spent on reference calls is 15 minutes. The time estimate falls in the mid range of public library economic impact studies reviewed for this report.

Following the methodology described above, the market value of reference transactions is shown below.

**Economic Value of Reference Transactions = $27,609,166**

Computer/Internet Access

In 2006, Wisconsin public libraries reported that there were 5,386 computers available statewide for library patrons. About 80% or 4,369 of those computers were connected to the Internet. High levels of use of these computers were reported in every library that hosted a group session for this economic impact study.

Many people interviewed as part of this study indicated that the library was their only access to the internet because they could not afford a personal computer and or the monthly charges for home internet access.

The economic value of computer access is a function of the number of hours that computers are used by library patrons and the approximate market value of that access. Many prior public library studies assign a fairly nominal value such as fifty cents to each
hour of available computer time. This value is usually based upon an amortization of the hardware costs for a desktop computer, operating software, and internet access.

Most private sector studies conducted by firms such as the Gartner Group assess the cost of computer hardware as a minor part of the annual total cost to operate a computer. These studies suggest that operating costs such as maintenance, administration, system operations, down time, and electricity are seven to thirteen times the annual hardware costs. This observation was confirmed in talking to CIOs for several state university systems.

A second market test for the value of computer access for library user is the cost of accessing a personal computer with an internet and printer connection. Firms such as Kinko’s provide such a service and a very cursory survey of costs showed market prices of 20-30 cents per minute for high end personal computers.

For this study, it is estimated that the public library computers in Wisconsin are used about 2/3s of the available time or about 1,322 hours per year. The value of each hour of use is set at $4 reflecting about 50 cents in annual hardware costs and $3.50 in operating costs (or a 7:1 ratio of operating costs to hardware purchase costs). Following this methodology, the value of computer and internet access is shown below.

**Economic Value of Computer/Internet Access = $28,494,760**

**Children’s Programs**

In 2006, Wisconsin public libraries reported a total statewide attendance at children’s programs held in Wisconsin public libraries of 1,471,411. A program is defined as a single session that provides information through presentations of talks, readings, dramas, films, demonstrations and similar activities.

Many people interviewed as part of this study mentioned summer reading programs as an important element in children’s programming at public libraries.

The economic value children’s programming is a function of the approximate market value of a session and the number of children who take part in these programs. Market values were taken from a sample of children’s programs offered by park and recreation departments, YMCA and YWCA’s, and other organizations. An average value for attendance at a children’s program was set at $4.

Following the methodology described above, the economic value of children’s programs was calculated and is shown below.

**Economic Value of Children’s Programs = $5,885,644**
The Economic Contribution of Wisconsin Public Libraries

Adult Programs

In 2006, Wisconsin public libraries reported a total statewide attendance at adult programs held in Wisconsin public libraries of 207,551. A program is defined as a single session that provides information through presentations of talks, readings, dramas, films, demonstrations and similar activities.

The economic value adult programs is a function of the approximate market value of a session and the number of adults who take part in these programs. The value of an adult program was set at $6 based upon prior library economic impact studies and a brief survey of community adult programming in Wisconsin.

Economic Value of Adult Programs = $1,245,306

Total Value of Library Services

The total economic value of those library services covered in the statistics of the annual Wisconsin Public Library Service data report is $427.9 million. This value does not include a host of other services that provide real economic value but currently lack a statistical database. In addition, a considerable amount of state-level funding has not been taken into account, including funding for online database resources such as BadgerLink, as well as funding for the regional public library systems that provide services such as partial funding for online catalogs, additional online databases, continuing education, consulting services, delivery of materials between libraries, and more. Consequently, the figures cited below represent a very conservative estimate of the total economic value of Wisconsin public library services.

Figure 3-1
Summary Table: The Economic Value of Public Library Services

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>2006 Circulation or Attendance</th>
<th>Economic Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Children’s materials</td>
<td>20,836,885</td>
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<tr>
<td>Adult Materials</td>
<td>37,243,815</td>
<td>$272,997,164</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reference Calls</td>
<td>4,760,201</td>
<td>$27,609,166</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computer/Internet Access</td>
<td>7,123,690</td>
<td>$28,494,760</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children’s Programs</td>
<td>1,471,411</td>
<td>$5,885,644</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adult Programs</td>
<td>207,551</td>
<td>$1,245,306</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Economic Value</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>$427,914,334</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Other Services

There are a number of other services provided by public libraries which have significant economic value, but for which there is not enough data to make an economic contribution calculation. Below are several examples of these services:
The Economic Contribution of Wisconsin Public Libraries

- **Meeting Rooms** – Wisconsin public libraries host a large number of community meetings for non-profit and other groups. Meeting space was identified as a strength or asset that a public library brought to a community. The value and importance of this meeting space varied by location. In rural settings, often libraries are a central community gathering space and the public space for meeting rooms was very highly valued. In larger cities, libraries again served neighborhoods and nearby community groups who often could not afford private meeting space. The average cost of renting a meeting room elsewhere is nearly $100.\(^1\)

- **Career and job information** – Another asset commonly identified by focus groups in this study was the value of job and career information that could be accessed from the public library. With the increasing use of the internet by prospective employers, access to the internet and job posting through the public library has become more important, particularly in low income poorer parts of the state.

- **Periodicals and Subscriptions** – A significant asset of Wisconsin public libraries is the periodical holdings. There is observable daily traffic of patrons who come in to read magazines, newspapers and other periodicals. The 2006 WPLSD publication reports that Wisconsin public library had a total of 51,331 periodical subscriptions.

- **Electronic Databases** - BadgerLink databases, as well as other local and system-funded databases are available both at Wisconsin public library facilities and online. The state, library systems and local libraries all purchase subscriptions to electronic databases that are available through computers in the library facilities, and often through remote access to library users at home, school, and/or their places of business. These databases provide quality information on a wide variety of subjects, most of which is not available on the Internet for free. In 2006, there were 18,846,700 BadgerLink searches statewide. In 2007, 62 local public libraries funded databases and reported 420,000 user sessions, and 7 public library systems funded databases and reported 214,000 user sessions.

- **Materials for People with Disabilities** – Books on tape, large print books, digital readers and other devices that serve specific populations with physical handicaps are available at libraries throughout the state, with the largest selection available through the Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped at the Milwaukee Public Library. In some public libraries, there are library resources available to serve patrons with diminished eyesight and other physical challenges, and all libraries in the state can acquire them from the Milwaukee library. The specific economic value of these library materials is especially significant to a small part of the millions of Wisconsin library users.

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\(^1\) Based upon an informal survey of 33 locations all across Wisconsin, the average cost of a half-day rental of a meeting room is $99.27.
The Economic Contribution of Wisconsin Public Libraries

- **Wi-Fi Access** - According to data collected in 2007, 64% of Wisconsin public libraries, representing 87% of the state's population, offer free wireless (wi-fi) Internet access. While the economic value is difficult to quantify, wi-fi access is a valuable service provided by public libraries. In a time when restaurants, hotels, and other retail establishments are increasingly making this service available, meeting this need is essential to continuing to draw people in to spend time in their local libraries.
CHAPTER 4:

THE RETURN ON INVESTMENT FOR PUBLIC LIBRARY SERVICES IN THE WISCONSIN ECONOMY

This chapter summarizes the economic calculation of direct economic impact and the value of library service that were discussed in Chapters 2 and 3 of this report. In addition to summarizing the total value of public library services, that analysis is extended to include an approximate measure of return on investment that provides a base of comparison and an overall measure of economic value of public libraries.

As stated in Chapter 2, public libraries are a source of economic activity in every region in the state. The overall economic contribution of public libraries is measured in two ways:

- The direct economic contribution that comes from the spending of staff, operating expenses of libraries, construction spending to build and maintain facilities, and the spending of visitors.

- A second form of economic contribution is the value of library services offered to businesses and consumers. This value is based on market costs to provide these services.

The direct economic contribution of Wisconsin’s public libraries that is derived from economic activity including payroll, operating, visitor, and construction spending is shown in Figure 4-1 below. Overall, public libraries have an economic impact of $326,627,832 on the Wisconsin economy.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Contributor</th>
<th>State Economy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Library Operations</td>
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<td>14,604,543</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Contribution</strong></td>
<td><strong>$326,627,832</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In addition to the direct economic impact, public libraries contribute valuable services to Wisconsin citizens and businesses. The value of most of these services was calculated in Chapter 3. Figure 4-2 below summarizes the value of public library services to Wisconsin citizens and businesses. The value of those services is $427,914,334.
Figure 4-2

Summary Table: The Economic Value of Public Library Services

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>2006 Circulation or Attendance</th>
<th>Economic Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Economic Value</td>
<td></td>
<td>$427,914,334</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Measuring the Overall Economic Impact and Return on Investment

Figure 4-3 below summarizes the economic contribution from library operations and the contribution of the value of public library services. Together, these two economic contributions total $753,699,545.

Figure 4-3

The Total Economic Contribution of Wisconsin Public Libraries

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>2006 Economic Contribution</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Direct Economic Impact</td>
<td>$326,627,832</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Value of Library Services</td>
<td>$427,914,334</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Economic Contribution</td>
<td>$753,699,545</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Measuring the Overall Return on Investment

One way to look at the overall economic contribution of libraries is to calculate a return on the support provided by taxpayers. For every dollar of public taxpayer support, what is the return in the value of services or direct economic contribution that comes from libraries?

Figure 4-4 shows the economic contribution of libraries per dollar of taxpayer support.

Figure 4-4

The Return on Investment of Public Library Services in 2006

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Economic Contribution of Public Libraries</td>
<td>$753,699,545</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wisconsin Population Served by Public Libraries</td>
<td>5,617,744</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic Contribution Per Capita</td>
<td>$134.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local and County Tax Support Per Capita</td>
<td>$33.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dollar Annual Return Per Dollar of Public Tax Support</td>
<td>$4.06</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Economic Contribution of Wisconsin Public Libraries

The economic return to taxpayers is $4.06 per dollar of taxpayer support. The ROI is calculated by dividing the economic contribution of public libraries per capita ($134.16) by the public tax support per capita ($33.07). This return per dollar of taxpayer funds comes back to taxpayers in the form of the value of public library services and the direct economic contribution of public libraries to the state economy.

In addition to the measurable services and expenditures that add value to the state economy, there are numerous other services that are valuable but at this time can’t be calculated from available data. The contributions of public libraries to overall literacy, to helping people with special needs, to supporting the efforts of pK-12 schools, to providing community gathering space, and to supplying data needs of big and small businesses are additional and valuable contributions to the state economy.
CHAPTER 5:
PUBLIC INPUT: LIBRARY USAGE PATTERNS AND VALUE OF LIBRARY SERVICES

Public input for this study was gathered through a couple of avenues, a survey questionnaire, and focus group interview sessions. Data and information obtained through the focus group sessions is discussed in detail in Chapter 6.

Survey Questionnaire

The survey questionnaire was designed to gather input regarding library use all over the state. Survey respondents were asked questions in a variety of categories:

- Library Use
- Library Alternatives
- Attitude about Public Libraries
- Demographic Information (zip code, age, gender, marital status, household income, educational attainment, home ownership)

The survey was made available online in both English and Spanish through a web-based survey tool\(^2\). A link to the online survey was placed on the NorthStar Economics website\(^3\), and the survey was promoted in a number of ways. Libraries all over the state were provided with signage, encouraging people to take the survey online. In addition, packets of hard copies of surveys were distributed to selected libraries in each library system. Focus group sessions, whose participants consisted of both library users and non-users, were asked to complete the survey, and library directors and staff - both public and academic - informed the public about the survey through publications and e-mailing lists. NorthStar staff assisted several visually impaired library users with replying to the survey by telephone. More than 2,500 individuals responded to the survey. Figure 5-1 below illustrates the residential address of each survey respondent. Each point in Figure 5-1 represents a zip code from which at least one response was received. However, the total number of responses is considerably higher than the number of points plotted, as certain zip codes include as many as 50 respondents.

Inasmuch as survey respondents consisted primarily of library users who cared enough about the issues to participate in the study, it must be noted that these data are probably not illustrative of Wisconsin residents (inclusive of both library users and non-users) as a whole. However, given the high number and the geographic distribution of responses, the data provide valuable insight into the characteristics of regular Wisconsin public library users. See Chapter 7 for more information on survey methodology.

\(^2\) http://www.surveymonkey.com
\(^3\) http://www.northstareconomics.com
Library Use

A substantial majority of respondents (93%) are regular card-carrying users of the library, with more than 1 in 5 respondents reporting that they hold library cards for more than one library or system. It should also be noted that while some respondents may only have reported holding a single library card, that card may allow them access to other libraries in a consortium. Survey respondents tended to be avid library users, with more than half reporting that they use the library once a week or more, and more than 90% reporting that they use the library at least once per month. Nearly all survey respondents frequently visit a library in person, and 4 out of 5 often access the library online. In addition, more
than a quarter of respondents contact the library by telephone. These data are summarized in Figures 5-2 through 5-4 below. Note that data in Figure 5-3 do not sum to 100%, as many respondents access the library in more than one way.

**Figure 5-2**
Frequency of Library Use

![Graph showing frequency of library use](image1)

**Figure 5-3**
Means of Library Access

![Graph showing means of library access](image2)
Although a significant majority of respondents (89%) report that they typically use the library closest to their residence, 23% tend to use the library closest to their school or workplace, either instead of or in addition to the library closest to where they live, while nearly as many (21%) use other libraries, usually in addition to other libraries. Quite a few respondents report using more than one library on a regular basis. Data is summarized in Figure 5-5 below. Again, note that data does not sum to 100% as many respondents use more than one library on a regular basis.
Respondents reported a variety of reasons for using other libraries despite what would seem to be their less convenient locations. The most commonly reported reason for using other libraries was a greater selection or wider variety of materials available at other facilities. Several respondents also noted that they travel or have reason to be closer to other branches and they routinely stop at whatever library is closest to the community they happen to be in at the time. Some respondents also noted aesthetic reasons for the choice, such as the friendliness of the staff or the relative comfort of a particular library facility.

Books remain the most popular items for library users to borrow. Nearly all respondents reported checking out books. However, approximately three quarters of them reported checking out DVDs or videos, while nearly half check out audiobooks, and nearly a third check out periodicals. A significant number of respondents also check out other materials, music CDs being cited most frequently. Only about 1% of respondents forego checking out any materials. The most common number of items borrowed per visit is 3 or 4, though the percentage of respondents who borrow more than that is nearly equal, as is the number who typically borrow fewer items. This information is summarized in Figures 5-6 and 5-7 below.
Not surprisingly, nearly all respondents report that they check out materials for themselves. However, a significant number of respondents report borrowing materials for others as well. More than 30% of respondents report borrowing items for their children, and 40% report that they check out items for other members of the household. A significant number of respondents also borrow materials for their employer. Parents and friends were frequently mentioned as other intended recipients of borrowed materials. Data is summarized in Figure 5-8 below.
Nearly all respondents (98.4%) reported borrowing media for personal use and enjoyment, while 69.6% reported using the library for educational/research materials for school, work or special projects. 8% reported using the library for other things.

A substantial majority (93.6%) of respondents reported finding, at least occasionally, that materials they wanted to borrow from their local library were not in stock at the time. On those occasions, the overwhelming majority of respondents reserve the item (about 95%) or request the item through interlibrary loan (90%). Very few respondents were unaware of those options. The frequency with which respondents reported finding items out of stock, making reservations, and requesting interlibrary loans is shown in Figure 5-9.

### Figure 5-9

**Respondents Who Find Items Out of Stock, Reserve Items, and Request Interlibrary Loan**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RESPONDENTS WHO REPORTED:</th>
<th>Find Items are Out of Stock</th>
<th>Reserve Item</th>
<th>Request Interlibrary Loan</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Never</td>
<td>6.6%</td>
<td>4.8%</td>
<td>8.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occasionally</td>
<td>73.2%</td>
<td>21.6%</td>
<td>33.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frequently</td>
<td>17.2%</td>
<td>25.8%</td>
<td>24.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All the Time</td>
<td>3.2%</td>
<td>47.5%</td>
<td>31.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unaware of the Option</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>0.6%</td>
<td>1.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Reservations and loan requests were most frequently made online, though approximately half of respondents make them in person at the library as well. A small but significant number (approximately 10%) make their requests by telephone, as shown in Figure 5-10.

### Figure 5-10

**Respondents' Means of Making Reservations of Requesting Interlibrary Loan**

[Diagram showing method of making reservations and interlibrary loan requests: 44.6% In Person, 51.8% Online, 79.5% Online, 68.7% Online, 10.4% Telephone, 10.9% Telephone.]
A majority of respondents (82.5%) contact reference librarians for assistance, and a significant majority of them (88.4%) do so in person. More than a third (37.4%) of respondents report contacting reference librarians by telephone, while a mere 13.2% seek assistance via e-mail or online chat. Figure 5-11 below summarizes the survey data regarding reference librarians.

Figure 5-11
Frequency of Respondents’ Contact with Reference Librarian

2/3 of respondents attend special events, classes, or programs held at public libraries. More than 1/3 of respondents do not have children or grandchildren. Nearly 2/3 of those who do have them report that their children or grandchildren attend library events, at least occasionally. Data regarding event and program attendance appears in Figure 5-12 below. Data with respect to children or grandchildren reflects the percentage of only those respondents who have children or grandchildren.

Figure 5-12
Frequency of Event Attendance by Respondents and their Children / Grandchildren
Respondents were asked to report the amount in a typical year that they pay in late fees for failure to return borrowed items on time. Over one-third of all respondents (33.9%) report never paying any late fees. The vast majority of the remaining two-thirds pay less than $25.00 per year in late fees. 6.4% pay between $25 and $50 per year, with only 1.6% paying fees in excess of $50.00 per year. Late fee data is summarized in Figure 5-13 below.

**Figure 5-13**
Late Fees

![Late Fees Paid by Respondents in a Typical Year](chart)

Over half of survey respondents (about 56%) access the Internet at the public library, though only about 7% of all respondents are dependent on the library as their only means of access. Data regarding Internet use at the library is summarized in Figure 5-14 below.

**Figure 5-14**
Frequency of Respondents' Use of the Internet at the Public Library

![Frequency of Internet Use at the Library](chart)
Survey respondents are nearly as likely to stop at the library on their way to or from another appointment or errand (72%) as they are to go out for the express purpose of visiting the library (79.2%), with numerous respondents responding that they are likely to do both. About 31% of respondents indicated that when visiting the public library, they are likely to stop at nearby businesses that they would probably not have shopped at otherwise. Errands such as going to the bank and post office, as well as stopping for purchases such as groceries and gasoline were among the most frequently reported stops. Respondents were asked how much they typically spend on these stops. Although this spending cannot reasonably be included in an economic impact calculation (as the users would certainly have bought their gasoline and groceries at other establishments in the state regardless), it is worth noting that particular establishments enjoy increased business as a result of their proximity to the library. Of those respondents who reported an amount spent on side trips to other businesses, the average amount reported was $24.63 spent on stops that they would not have made but for their trip to the library.

As noted above, a significant majority of respondents reported accessing the library online. The frequency with which they do so is illustrated in Figure 5-15 below.

![Figure 5-15: Frequency of Respondents' Use of Public Library Websites](image)

**Library Alternatives**

Respondents were asked about a number of ways that their lives would be affected if they did not have access to a public library. Specifically, respondents were asked to estimate the amount they would spend if they had to pay for the same services elsewhere by purchasing or renting materials they currently have the option of borrowing from the library. While over half of all respondents reported that they would do without at least
some of the materials that they typically borrow, approximately the same number indicated that they would purchase more books and periodicals if they did not have the option of borrowing them from the library. Nearly half indicated that they would rent more DVDs and videos, and do more research online. A smaller but significant percentage of respondents indicated that they would purchase more DVDs and videos, and attend more classes and programs elsewhere. Although this section of the survey was designed specifically to address the financial ramifications of the theoretical absence of public libraries, respondents were also invited to offer comments with respect to other ways their lives would be affected. Approximately 10% of respondents offered comments, indicating that their lives would be negatively affected in any number of ways beyond the issue of incurring additional expenses. Many respondents noted that they would be upset or unhappy, that they would borrow materials from friends and family, that they would work to establish a library in their community, or that they would travel as far as they had to in order to find another library.

Responses are summarized in Figure 5-16 below.

Figure 5-16
Potential Effects of Lack of Public Library Access

![Bar chart showing potential effects of lack of public library access]

- Would do more research online: 58.8%
- Would purchase more books: 46.0%
- Would rent more DVDs/videos: 47.0%
- Would purchase more DVDs/videos: 20.3%
- Would do without materials: 56.9%
- Would take more classes elsewhere: 16.4%
- Other effects: 11.8%
The Economic Contribution of Wisconsin Public Libraries

Respondents were asked how much money they save as a result of being able to borrow items from the library and attend classes and programs there as opposed to having to purchase or rent items, or pay to enroll in classes elsewhere. On average, respondents who answered those questions reported saving over $200 per month. Their responses are summarized in Figure 5-17 below.

Figure 5-17
Average Monthly Amount Saved by Borrowing Materials from the Public Library

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LIBRARY ALTERNATIVE:</th>
<th>AMOUNT SAVED PER MONTH:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Buying Books and Periodicals</td>
<td>$104.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Renting DVDs and Videos</td>
<td>$36.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buying DVDs and Videos</td>
<td>$46.56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attending Events Elsewhere</td>
<td>$17.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL SAVED:</strong></td>
<td><strong>$205.08</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Attitude Toward Public Libraries

Respondents were surveyed about their attitude toward public libraries and they extent to which they value the presence of public libraries in their communities. Almost all respondents felt that public libraries contribute in a meaningful way to the quality of life in their community, and that funding public libraries was a good use of tax revenue. These results are not surprising, inasmuch as the overwhelming number of survey respondents were regular library users. However, a recent statewide survey of Wisconsin residents, which was prepared for the Wisconsin Public Library Consortium included a random representative sample of both library users and non-users indicates that even among the population as a whole, the vast majority of Wisconsin residents value their public libraries, as summarized in Figures 5-18 and 5-19 below.

Although the number of respondents who "strongly" agreed was higher among the NorthStar survey, which included fewer non-library users than the WPLC survey, more than 85% of respondents to both surveys agreed that libraries enhance quality of life, and support funding libraries with their tax dollars.

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4 A small number of respondents reported exceptionally high figures with respect to the amount they would spend. To ensure a more reliable response that is indicative of the average respondents, the outliers consisting of the top and bottom 1% of reported figures were removed before calculating the averages.


6 http://www.wplc.info

7 Note that the questions in the two surveys - while analogous - differed to some degree. The WPLC data in Figure 5-17 represents responses to the question: "Public libraries enhance my quality of life", while the question in the NorthStar survey was "I feel that the public library contributes in a meaningful way to the quality of life in my community." Both surveys inquired about tax implications, but while the NorthStar survey asked "Funding public libraries is a good use of a portion of my tax dollars", the WPLC survey inquired "I would support a referendum that would increase funding for my public library." "No Opinion" was not an option for either question in the WPLC survey.
Respondents were asked whether they typically donate their time or money to public libraries, Friends of the Library groups, or Library Foundations. Although a majority of respondents (nearly 57%) do neither, users are more likely to make a monetary donation than volunteer their time, as indicated in Figure 5-20 below. The average annual donation reported was $130.07, while the average amount of volunteer time reported was 66.68 hours per year, or about an hour and a quarter per week.
A majority of respondents (about 61%) indicated that access to a public library was at least somewhat of a factor in choosing their place of residence, with about half that number indicating it was a strong factor. The remainder of respondents indicated that library access was not a factor in deciding where to live, though several people noted that they were happy to be near a library, or that they considered it "a bonus", even if it was not a factor in their decision. Data are revealed in Figure 5-21 below.
Demographic Information

Finally, respondents were asked for demographic information. Not surprisingly, some respondents, despite an assurance of anonymity, were reluctant to reveal their age or household income. Nevertheless, a sufficient number of respondents (about 90%) answered the questions, which provides valuable insight into the clientele served by public libraries all over the state. 48 was the average age reported. Nearly 4 out of 5 (78.3%) respondents were women, and about 70% were married. Respondents covered the entire spectrum of educational attainment, though holders of graduate degrees represented the single largest cohort. An impressive third of all respondents have attained a graduate or professional degree, and fully three-quarters have graduated college, as indicated in Figure 5-22 below.

As with educational attainment, a wide range of income levels were represented among respondents. Household income levels are reported in Figure 5-23 below. The results of the current survey were similar to the results of the WPLC survey covering both library users and non-users, suggesting that household income for regular library users does not differ dramatically from that of the general state population, which has median household income of $48,772. The vast majority of respondents (87.8%) are homeowners (or

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8 Median household income is reported in 2006 inflation-adjusted dollars. National median household income for 2006 was $48,451. Source: United States Census Bureau, American Community Survey for 2006.
members of a privately owned household). Residential status is indicated in Figure 5-24 below.

**Figure 5-23**
Household Income of Survey Respondents

This information reveals quite a bit about the average library user. Although both genders, all ages, income brackets and educational levels are represented, the typical Wisconsin public library user is a well-educated middle-aged woman living in her own home, with household income of approximately $60,000.
CHAPTER 6:
SWOT / GAP ANALYSIS AND THE RELATIVE VALUE OF LIBRARIES IN A KNOWLEDGE ECONOMY

SWOT / Gap Analysis

A basic step in evaluating the role of any institution or organization with respect to economic development is to assess its strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities, as well as threats to its development. This process is commonly referred to as a SWOT analysis. We have also included a discussion of services or resources which are missing altogether, commonly referred to as a gap analysis.

The SWOT analysis is a process used to assess the challenges and strategies for economic development. A SWOT analysis can be used as a framework to gather public input and to engage the public in thinking about the current economic condition and the economic opportunities for the future. The analysis with respect to Wisconsin public libraries asks five basic questions:

- What are the most important strengths, contributions or benefits of public libraries to each community or region?
- What are the biggest challenges to or weaknesses of public libraries in each community or region?
- What are the major threats to the future operations of public libraries in each community or region?
- How can libraries best contribute to the future economic development and quality of life in each community or region?
- Are there any services or resources currently missing (gaps) that would help to improve the function and value of public libraries in each community or region?

In completing this assessment, focus group sessions were held in each library system in the state. A large amount of information was obtained through public input as the consultants conducted 29 focus group sessions, interviewing more than 200 people in the process. For focus group dates and locations, see Appendix 2.

Other sources of information for the SWOT analysis included Wisconsin Public Library Service Data, other published studies, demographic and statistical data obtained from government sources such as the Census Bureau, the Bureau of Labor Statistics, and the Bureau of Economic Analysis.

Based upon these data sources, the following represent a summary of the major points with regard to strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats related to Wisconsin public libraries.
**Strengths**

Focus group participants identified numerous strengths of public libraries in their communities. Mentioned most frequently were free access to a wide range of materials, the fact that libraries are a community hub or gathering place where everyone is welcome, and that they provide resources to those who would otherwise be unable to afford them. A summary of responses appears below.

- Wealth of resources and materials available (books and periodicals, educational materials, professional journals, travel resources, audiobooks, DVDs, videos, music, and other materials for entertainment purposes, historical collections, materials and information for entrepreneurs)
- Services (interlibrary loan, classes and special programs, availability of home delivery, services for the disabled, assistance with resumes and job searches, tax forms, children's programs, bookmobiles)
- Mission (encourages young people to read, constantly growing collection of resources and materials, everyone welcome, literacy programs, free service)
- Technology (computers and Internet access, specialized equipment for the disabled, online content, specialized databases, only means of access for lower income families and individuals)
- Community gathering place ("living room" experience, meeting and conference rooms available, all-inclusive, safe and friendly environment, unique forum for social networking, book clubs and reading groups, quality of life issue)
- Staff (knowledgeable reference librarians and staff, class instructors, volunteers, people committed to maintaining the library)

**Analysis**

Focus group participants had no problem identifying strength of libraries. The primary strengths of public libraries are those aspects that make them unique institutions. Public libraries stand alone with respect to two important factors: supplying a large collection of materials, and doing so at no direct cost to consumers. Of course, libraries are subsidized by tax revenue, but everyone has access to library materials regardless of whether they pay property taxes, and without having to pay any fee or cost to rent the materials. Even as the addition of computers and work stations, and providing for meeting space for events and programs compromises the amount of physical space for collections of books and periodicals, the ability to borrow materials from other library facilities all over the state through the interlibrary loan program, and the increasing availability of online content and digital media means that there is more material available for checkout all the time. Even the wealthiest consumers are unlikely to purchase as many materials and resources as are available to them at the library.
The Economic Contribution of Wisconsin Public Libraries

The availability of so many resources allows the public to review and enjoy a wide variety of materials for both educational and entertainment purposes, including many specialized materials they may have difficulty locating elsewhere. Library users have increasingly been able to borrow materials from other libraries through the interlibrary loan program. Figure 6-1 below illustrates the growth in use of the interlibrary loan program from 1989, when only about half a million volumes were loaned or received, to 2006 when that number had grown to more than 6 million items.

![Figure 6-1](public-library.usage.interlibrary.loan.png)

**Figure 6-1**
Public Library Usage - Interlibrary Loan

The fact that so many materials are not only available, but available to be borrowed without paying a fee is of paramount importance. Many focus group participants noted that libraries "level the playing field." While many people of higher socioeconomic status routinely purchase books, subscribe to periodicals, and conduct their research online without ever visiting a library, many lower income individuals and families do not have that option. 21% of Wisconsin workers earn poverty level wages. Universal access is one of the most important strengths of the library. The availability of resources, technology, and educational opportunities provide everyone with the availability to improve themselves and their life circumstances. Even those patrons in higher income brackets need to prioritize their spending, and the fact is that even those who could afford to purchase more books and materials appreciate having a large collection available for checkout.

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9 Figure reflects the percent of workers earning a wage that cannot lift a family of four above the poverty level, even with full-time year-round employment. Source: National Center for Children in Poverty, Columbia University Mailman School of Public Health
Technology has become increasingly important, and the issue of a level playing field is particularly important in this regard. Although home computers and Internet service have gotten considerably less expensive in recent years than they were a decade ago, the fact remains that they are still a luxury that a sizeable segment of the population cannot afford. In 2003 (the most recent year for which data is available) 38.2% of Wisconsin households were without computers, and 45.3% of Wisconsin households were without Internet access. What was once a luxury has increasingly become a necessity, as many businesses, organizations, and individuals rely on websites and online resources. Certain job opportunities, events, and programs, and other resources are primarily if not exclusively advertised and made available online, and libraries open the door for everyone to enjoy these opportunities even if they would be otherwise unable to afford to do so.

The role of the library as a community gathering place was stressed repeatedly at focus group sessions. Whether discussing concerts, classes, and other events, book clubs and other social groups, or simply a forum where people could come and sit, talk, and read, quite a few people expressed their appreciation that libraries stand alone in many communities as a gathering place. Although many towns also have community centers and parks, Wisconsin winters render such options unavailable a significant amount of the time. Many interviewees place a great deal of importance on the value of a comfortable public library facility where they can gather, especially as opportunities for social interaction have decreased in the wake of more people seeking out services online.

Weaknesses

Although focus group participants were largely enthusiastic about public libraries, a majority of people were able to identify a number of weaknesses or challenges faced by public libraries. By a huge margin, the challenge cited most frequently was funding. Maintaining a physical facility, growing a collection of materials, maintaining a knowledgeable staff, providing computers, Internet access and other technology, sponsoring events, classes, and programs, all cost money. In every community we visited, interviewees feared losing funding, and consequently facing a diminished level of service, or lamented the inability to offer increased services and resources that additional funding could make possible. The lack of funding is discussed in more detail below as a threat to the future operations of public libraries.

A lack of physical space was mentioned almost as frequently as the funding issue. With the exception of a couple of recently built facilities, participants at every library we visited felt that the lack of physical space compromised the ability of their public library to provide a level of service and range of services that they would like to see. Interviewees held a wide range of opinions with respect to how they'd like to see additional space used. More conference and meeting space, more computers, more reading and workspace, and larger physical collections of books and materials were all mentioned by members of our focus groups. While most people appreciated all that their

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10 U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, October 2003
The Economic Contribution of Wisconsin Public Libraries

libraries had to offer, almost all felt that more could be offered if limited physical space was not an issue.

Discussed in more detail below as a threat, a significant number of interviewees mentioned the Internet and a decline in library use by people who have turned to seeking out information online instead of visiting a public library. According to the recent WPLC survey, nearly two-thirds (64.2%) of people used Google or another Internet search engine to answer a research question at least once in the previous 4 month period, and approximately one-third (33.7%) did so more than 20 times. According to a recent PEW study\textsuperscript{11}, more people turned to the Internet that any other source of information and support, including experts, family members, government agencies, or libraries. According to the PEW study, only 13% went to the public library when they had a research problem to address.

It should be noted that not everyone blamed the Internet for the decline in library use, at least not exclusively. Numerous people cited a concern about declining library use as a challenge, noting in particular that young people seem to have lost interest in using libraries, or never cultivate such an interest in the first place.

Although those concerns were most frequently cited, there were several other issues that came up in our interviews. Weaknesses and challenges cited are summarized below:

- Funding (lack of funds available for state-of-the-art technology and updated collections and equipment, libraries not a budgetary priority on the part of politicians, government officials and the public)
- Space (not enough room for books and materials, computers, meetings and events, comfortable and inviting reading environment, parking)
- Technology (more people using Internet instead of libraries, libraries can't keep up on current technology, libraries need to expand web-based services, lack of online programming, need better A/V equipment, DVDs and other media damaged)
- Awareness of / Interest in Library Services (not enough marketing and advertising, public unaware of all that the library offers, not enough initiative on the part of libraries to promote themselves, declining interest among the public, people/kids not reading as much as they used to)
- Services (not open long enough hours, not enough collaboration/cooperation with schools, too much staff turnover, not enough classes offered, not enough help with computers and software)

\textsuperscript{11} Information Searches That Solve Problems: How people use the internet, libraries, and government agencies when they need help, PEW / Internet & American Life Project and Graduate School of Library and Information Science, December 30, 2007
Analysis

Public libraries will constantly face the challenge of making smart and effective choices with respect to how best to allocate funds and available space. In order to address the funding issue, libraries may be well served by attacking the problem of the perception of waning interest in and support for libraries. Curiously, the perception on the part of focus group participants that library use is declining is inaccurate, at least on the whole. While it is possible that use at particular library facilities has declined, Wisconsin Public Library Statistics maintained by DPI clearly indicate that circulation of library materials has continued to increase in recent years, as illustrated in Figure 6-2 below. Given that the data shows that library use has in fact increased in recent years, it is imperative to correct the erroneous perception on the part of users that public library use is on the decline. Effective marketing and promotion of library services - and the growing demand for those services - to public officials, potential consumers and donors alike could facilitate raising funds and justifying an increased level of service.

Figure 6-2
Public Library Usage - Circulation

![Circulation of Wisconsin Public Library Materials 1989-2006](chart)

Source: Wisconsin Public Library Statistics, Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction

Opportunities

There are a number of opportunities for public libraries to contribute to economic development and quality of life in communities throughout Wisconsin. Wisconsin residents who participated in focus group sessions enthusiastically identified several such opportunities. Quite a few participants felt that public libraries must strive to keep as current and up-to-date as funding will allow, both in terms of making the latest
information and technology available, as well as updating their physical collection of materials and resources available for checkout.

Another concern that came up throughout the state was the need to encourage people to read and to continue recruiting new readers, particularly young readers, through initiatives like the summer reading program. Emphasizing children's programming was one of many suggestions made that does not represent a new idea or initiative, but rather the hope that libraries will remain committed to doing those things that they already do well, including providing classes and educational opportunities, serving as a community gathering destination, and continuing to make materials and technology available to people who would not otherwise be able to afford to access them.

There was also a strong sentiment among focus group participants to see libraries develop more collaborative partnerships with schools and universities, social service agencies, non-profit groups and community programs, as well to reach out to the business community for deeper involvement, in the hope that corporations would be willing to support the libraries in their communities both financially as well as by cooperating on programming and volunteering time to establish a working relationship with the libraries and their users.

Focus group participants identified dozens of opportunities, which are summarized below:

- Encourage reading (youth programming, literacy programs)
- Be a community gathering place (continue to welcome everyone; provide an aesthetically pleasing facility; a stress-free environment conducive to studying as well as rooms for meetings and conferences)
- Provide quality programming and educational opportunities (classes in computers and effective Internet use; GED programs; student help - tutoring, mentoring, and help with homework)
- Provide resources (keep technology and hard copy collections up to date; provide specialized materials for professionals and researchers; provide tax forms; maintain community archives and historical records)
- Public outreach and marketing (develop a stronger advertising campaign; keep the public and community businesses apprised of services and resources available as well as upcoming library events; develop partnerships with other organizations, collaborate with local businesses; seek input from staff and users; collaborate with schools, universities, and academic libraries; consider alternative means of disseminating information to reach more people, such as school board newsletters)
- Provide career and employment assistance (classes on resume writing; assistance with searching for job opportunities and filling out applications; instruction on use of applicable websites, etc.)
Accessibility / Provide for the disenfranchised (keep resources available at no cost for those who would otherwise be unable to afford similar services, offer bilingual materials, emphasize diversity, provide resources and technology for the disabled; consider statewide ID or library card which would allow statewide access, maintain interlibrary loan program; expand library hours; locate in neighborhoods; increase number of locations)

Staffing and personnel issues (maintain friendly and knowledgeable staff, make reference librarians and materials available as often as possible, make better use of volunteers - make people aware of how they can help, consider appointing a volunteer coordinator at each library)

Entertainment (arts and cultural events, live music, book discussion groups, computer clubs)

Economic development (support regional economic initiatives - New North, Grow North, Centergy, Thrive, Momentum Chippewa Valley, M-7, etc.; provide services and research materials for entrepreneurs)

Online options (continue to expand the number of resources and services available online; maintain and update website on a regular basis; establish user-friendly holds policy)

Plan for the future (establish forward-thinking vision for libraries and their role; strive to serve their changing demographics and aging clientele; be flexible and open to change)

Analysis

Focus group participants provided a wealth of information and plenty of ideas. It is clear that people all over the state feel that Wisconsin public libraries are already doing many things very well, and feel that in many ways, the best way for libraries to contribute to future economic development and quality of life in the state is simply to continue doing those things that they do so well. Of course, the specifics of each library facility and the materials and services offered vary from one community to another, but generally speaking, Wisconsin public libraries provide free access to a wide range of materials to all segments of the population, and they must continue to do so. Even as libraries must continue to provide these services and materials, they must also continue to change and grow and adapt to the needs of the population, especially by embracing technology and remaining as current possible with respect to computers, the Internet, and the information available beyond what can be housed within their walls.

Focus group participants in particular communities offered specific suggestions which merit serious consideration throughout the state. Inasmuch as the concern over adequate funding is not likely to disappear, it is imperative that libraries seize opportunities to maximize their services while minimizing their cost. A number of people we spoke to were not even aware that they could volunteer at libraries. Reaching out to volunteers and appointing a particular volunteer to coordinate their efforts at each library or system could go a long way toward providing more opportunities for library users and expanding the role of libraries in their respective communities.
Outreach and collaboration is also of paramount importance. Again, as funding is certain to remain an issue, involving other organizations can help boost library use and defray the cost of promotion and marketing. Libraries share an educational mission with a variety of social service, non-profit, and educational institutions. If these organizations encourage their members and clients to use the library, the results would benefit everyone concerned. Business leaders must be made to see that libraries are a quality of life issue which can serve to draw new workers to the region. By hosting events at libraries, corporations can promote their own business, as well as establish themselves as community leaders, which will in turn benefit the libraries as their employees learn more about the resources and services available, and will hopefully become active library users.

**Threats**

There are several significant threats that stand in the way of Wisconsin public libraries realizing their full economic growth potential. As with weaknesses, the threat most frequently cited by our focus group participants was the concern over adequate funding. As tax-subsidized institutions, libraries are in competition with a multitude of other public institutions and programs for their piece of the budgetary pie. Maintaining current technology, comprehensive collections, and a knowledgeable staff all cost money, and the extent to which libraries can provide these things will always be limited by the funding available.

Another concern raised at almost every focus group session was a lack of adequate physical space. Library users expect to be able to find the latest books and materials on the shelves, and adding to the collection requires more space. At the same time, much of the space that was once devoted to housing the physical collection must now be devoted to providing computers and Internet access. Providing a sufficient number of computer work stations to allow several users to use computers at the same time requires a significant amount of space. Also, if public libraries are to maintain their role as community hubs, they need ample space for people to sit and read, as well as conference rooms for special events, meetings, and community gatherings.

The other concern raised most often was the threat represented by the Internet. As more and more information is available online, many people who used to turn to the library for answers now simply stay home and use Google, Wikipedia, or other online resources to find what they are looking for. Many focus group participants were quick to point out that the library remains a more reliable source of accurate information than some of the information that can be found on websites like Wikipedia. Nevertheless, it is the perception on the part of many people that any information they require can be found online that represents the threat to public libraries. This threat can be minimized by continuing to make the Internet available at the library. In the PEW study, of the people who reported going to the library to solve a problem, 65% said that access to computers, particularly the Internet, was the key reason they go to the library for help. 62% of the people who went to the library for help actually used the computers at the library. 12

12 PEW/Internet study, Summary Page vi.
As a related issue, recent years have seen an explosion in more affordable media and on-demand entertainment options available to consumers in the home, not only online, but through cable and satellite television, as well as cellular telephones and other electronic devices.

Although other concerns were not raised with the same frequency, focus group participants did identify a number of other potential threats, including:

- Keeping up with technology
- Poor public relations - lack of awareness among the general public of all the library has to offer
- Attitude of local government/officials
- Competition with other cultural opportunities and institutions for peoples' time and attention
- Facility maintenance (ADA compliance, etc.)

**Analysis**

Many of the concerns that were raised - keeping up with technology, maintaining an adequate library facility, etc. - are directly related to the funding issue. Given the myriad ways in which services could be expanded, the real challenge is to prioritize the needs and to allocate the available funds in the most efficient and practical manner.

The Internet represents both an opportunity and a threat. Given the ubiquity and convenience of the Internet, it is likely that some people will continue to seek information online rather than going to the public library for information. Public libraries can best combat this threat by continuing to expand their own web presence, and using the Internet as a vehicle for recruiting new users, promoting their value and spreading the word about the services they provide.

Wisconsin public libraries have already shown a great deal of initiative combating the physical space issue. Many libraries throughout the state have been either completely rebuilt or substantially remodeled within the last decade. Nevertheless, it remains one of the primary concerns raised by library users. Public libraries face a significant challenge in setting priorities with respect to allocation of the available space. Libraries must accept the challenge of their changing role in the New Economy. What was once primarily an issue of housing a diverse collection of materials has now increasingly become an issue of making room for technology and providing sufficient space for the facility to be effectively used as a community hub, in addition to maintaining a comprehensive collection.

Finally, the issue of the perception of waning public support must be explored. As noted above, public library use in Wisconsin has actually continued to increase in recent years. Nevertheless, a contrary perception among interviewees was common. A majority of focus group participants were enthusiastic library users, many of whom lamented what
they perceived as a decline in library usage, particularly by young adults, and a lack of awareness among the public about the services available through the library. Wisconsin public libraries provide very valuable services, but a lot of respondents felt that too many people don't know about them, don't appreciate them, and simply don't use them. Combating this threat is essential for the survival of public libraries in the New Economy.

**Gaps and Barriers to Improving the Value of Public Libraries in the Future**

In expansion of the traditional SWOT analysis, focus group participants were asked not only about weaknesses and threats, but whether there are services or resources that are missing altogether. While some redundancy with previous responses is to be anticipated, participants did identify a number of resources or services which were missing, as opposed to merely weak.

One of the primary concerns raised was the lack of an effective marketing campaign. Although some libraries are featured in regular columns in local newspapers, and events and programs are advertised with varying degrees of success, what is missing is a more focused initiative to "sell" the public on the value of libraries. As noted above, many people simply don’t use public libraries. Many non-users could become users and supporters of the public library if they were more aggressively recruited. Of course, many forms of advertising cost money, which may be prohibitive in light of the constraints on library finances, but by partnering with a variety of organizations who have a vested interest in the educational mission of the library, it may be possible to spread the word about library services and events in a cost-effective manner, which could help sustain libraries in the future as more people in the state become regular library users.

**Libraries in the Knowledge Economy / New Economy**

In addition to assessing strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats and gaps, focus group participants were asked to explore the role of Wisconsin public libraries in the New Economy. While "New Economy" is a term and concept that was familiar to many focus group participants, some required explanation. The New Economy is an increasingly global economy in which businesses compete and communicate in a worldwide marketplace. High-technology and information-based goods and services are dominating today's economy. Businesses must take advantage of technological advances in order to survive and thrive in the New Economy. There is increasing value placed on knowledge and information. The ability to effectively organize and communicate that knowledge and information is of paramount importance to the success of a New Economy business. Knowledge-based and high-technology businesses have more potential for growth and value gains than businesses rooted in tangible assets and production of goods. It was our intention to explore to which these same trends apply to Wisconsin public libraries. As libraries have always been repositories of information, it seems intuitive that as institutions, public libraries would be particularly affected by the shift into the New Economy. Focus group participants were asked for their perspective on several related issues. First:
Do you think that public libraries are more or less important in our modern economy (sometimes called the Knowledge Economy or New Economy)? Why?

Focus group attendees expressed a range of opinions, though most cited the same issue: the Internet. Interestingly, the increasing availability of online content lead some to conclude that libraries are less important than they used to be in light of the ubiquity of the Internet, while others felt that libraries were more important as a result. On the one hand, the argument can be made that libraries are less important because they are simply not being used as much anymore, as more people seek answers online instead of consulting their local library. There are simply more resources available now for people to conduct research and gather information. However, many participants felt that the increase in online content has made libraries more important than ever, as they can serve as a filter and an authoritative information source, separating out much of the unverified and unreliable information available online from that whose accuracy can be relied upon.

It should also be noted that a number of interviewees felt so strongly about the role of libraries in their life that they were uncomfortable characterizing the level of importance as "more" or "less", simply noting that public libraries have always been very important to them, and that relative importance has not changed as a result of the New Economy or the resultant changes in information technology.

Next, focus group participants were asked:

Do you think public libraries will be more or less important to the future (5-10 years from now) economy in the State of Wisconsin? Why?

Although a number of attendees expressed concern that libraries could become less important, many remained optimistic that libraries would remain at least as important, if not more so. Many interviewees discussed this question in the context of the SWOT analysis, noting that their answer was dependent upon a prediction with respect to how libraries face the challenges and threats discussed earlier. If libraries effectively build on their strengths and seize opportunities for further development, while effectively combating the threats and challenges they face, they have the potential to cement their position as important institutions. If not, they face the possibility of losing relevance in the future.

As noted above many people felt that the importance of libraries is a constant, and will simply remain important - at least to them - regardless of overall trends among the public or changes in technology.
Next, focus group participants were asked:

**In your current occupation or in your current life, is information or knowledge more or less important compared to five years ago?**

The vast majority of focus group attendees felt that information was more important, or at least as important as it was in their lives five years ago. As the people we interviewed tended to be very intelligent and concerned with acquiring knowledge, some were uncomfortable characterizing information or knowledge as more important than it used to be, inasmuch as they always felt that it was of paramount importance. Nevertheless, a majority of people indicated that they felt information and knowledge was increasingly important, in light of the fact that more and more information is available all the time. The amount of information available for consumption has increased exponentially in recent years, due not only to the explosion in the amount of information available digitally and through new media, but also to the increasing ease of accessing online content through a broader range of devices, including PDAs and cellular telephones, in addition to the more traditional computer access.

Ironically, it is that same trend of the increasing availability of information that caused some people to characterize information or knowledge as less important to them than it used to be. In light of the overwhelming amount of information now available, some interviewees felt that quantity dwarfed quality, and without adequate filters for identifying the truly important information, information has become less important to them. Of course, focus group participants came from a variety of different life situations and career paths, and some people indicated that information was less important simply because they were retired and no longer affected by the demands for new information previously placed on them by their former professional circumstances.

Finally, focus group participants were asked:

**Should libraries be in the business of educating people about and providing people and businesses with access to new information sources and technologies?**

A majority of people who participated in focus group sessions concurred that libraries should be in the business of providing education and information regarding new information sources and technologies. A number of people noted that the question was in fact consistent with or analogous to the mission statement of the public library. However, several attendees felt the need to comment on the inclusion of businesses in the question. The consensus among interviewees was that the primary function of public libraries is to serve the individuals in their respective communities, and that concerns of individuals ought to take precedence over concerns of businesses. That said, several participants offered a counterpoint to that position - that corporate entities have the greatest capacity and financial ability to afford state-of-the-art technology, and that the library ought to continue to provide all of the relevant information that it can, so that if there are new information sources that they are unable to provide directly, they can serve...
as a useful resource for those who can do so to conduct research and obtain the most current information regarding the available technology.

Although they were clearly the minority, there were those focus group participants who disagreed that the role of the public library should be to provide education and information regarding new information sources and technologies. In most cases, people who held this point of view focused on the issue of funding, feeling that as underfunded, publicly subsidized institutions, it was simply not fair or reasonable to expect public libraries to keep current and up-to-date on new information sources and technologies, especially as information technology advances so rapidly in the New Economy. While nearly everyone agreed that it has become increasingly important for libraries to provide access to the Internet (which of course can be used to research new sources of information and technology), many people felt that providing the new sources of information and technology itself was beyond the scope of what public libraries can afford to provide.
CHAPTER 7:

METHODOLOGY

This chapter provides additional detail on the methodology and sources of information for each chapter of the report.

Chapter 1

Page 5 – The data in the last paragraph describing the library sector in the State of Wisconsin was drawn from 2006 Wisconsin Public Library Service Data. This report can be accessed online at http://www.dpi.wi.gov/pld/dm-lib-stat.html.

Pages 6-7 – The library study summaries are drawn from the executive summaries or the full report on the economic impact of public libraries in the selected states. These reports may be accessed through links on the DPI website at http://www.dpi.wi.gov/pld/dm-lib-stat.html.

Chapter 2

Figures 2-1 and 2-2 – The data in these figures come from the 2006 Wisconsin Public Library Service Data, Table 1, State Totals

Figure 2-3 – The economic impact of spending on library operations is derived by eliminating out of state spending such as a percentage of the spending on collections and multiplying that net in-state spending by a statewide economic multiplier for Wisconsin that is supplied by Minnesota IMPLAN Group (MIG), an econometric modeling firm located in Stillwater, MN.

The same methodology is applied to staff payroll spending. Income tax and Social Security tax withholding is deducted from payroll and a small percentage of leakage for out of state spending is deducted. The net payroll spending is then multiplied by the appropriate MIG economic multiplier to calculate economic impact.

The calculation for visitor spending is based upon prior studies at the University of Wisconsin Madison and the University of Wisconsin Oshkosh. Business visitors including vendors and service technicians and spending for visitors to staff families are calculated and multiplied by the appropriate IMPLAN multiplier to calculate the economic impact of visitor spending.

Figure 2-4 - IMPLAN also provides employment multipliers that are used to calculate jobs created based upon the categories of economic impact shown in Figure 2-3.

Figure 2-5 - State income and sales taxes are calculated based upon the basic model used by the Wisconsin Department of Revenue. A portion of spending is subject to the state sales tax at a rate of 5% and the earnings from direct employment and jobs generated by
the economic activity of public libraries is subject to the state income tax. Property taxes are estimated based upon prior studies in Wisconsin that survey employees about homeownership and property taxes paid.

Chapter 3

Children’s Materials - The value of children’s materials is based upon the average 2006 price for children’s books as reported in Bowker’s Books in Print discounted by 80%. This leaves a residual used book price of 20% of the new book price. Values for audio and visual materials are derived from online used materials prices and prices of commercial operations such as Blockbusters. Circulation of these materials is assumed to be in proportion to the library holding of each category and weighted cost of children’s material is calculated. Circulation is then multiplied by the resulting per transaction figure ($4.40) to get the total value of the circulation of children’s materials which is $91,682,294.

Adult Materials - The value of adult materials follows the same methodology for children’s materials. The weighted average value per adult transaction is $7.33 and this is multiplied times the adult circulation number in 2006 to derive the total value of $272,997,164.

Reference Transactions – Most of the methodology for determining the value of a reference transaction explained in Chapter 3. The use of an average statewide wage for librarians is more conservative than some studies and more liberal than the South Carolina study.

Computer/Internet Access – The basic methodology for calculating the value of computer and internet access is explained in Chapter 3. This methodology differs from that used in most of the library studies summarized in Chapter 1. The market prices to own and operate computers were drawn from private groups such as the Gartner Group and from input of chief information officers at two university systems.

Children’s Programs – The value of children’s programs is determined by taking total attendance and multiplying by a market price proxy for the value of a typical program. The market proxy was gathered from prior studies such as the Indiana study and further confirmed by a brief survey of children’s programs offered in Wisconsin.

Adult Programs – The value of adult programs was determined following the methodology used for children’s programs.

Chapter 4

Figure 4-1 and 4-2 – These tables are drawn respectively from Chapters 2 and 3 of this report.
Chapter 5

The data in Chapter 5 come from a survey questionnaire that was distributed in hard copy to a selected number of libraries and was also available online.

Survey Questionnaire
A survey questionnaire was designed to gather input regarding library use all over the state. Survey respondents were asked questions in a variety of categories:

- Library Use
- Library Alternatives
- Attitude about Public Libraries
- Demographic Information (zip code, age, gender, marital status, household income, educational attainment, home ownership)

The questionnaire was reviewed by the project steering committee and edited in accordance with feedback received. Once the questionnaire was finalized, it was distributed both online, and in hard copy form. Packets of hard copies were distributed to selected libraries in each system, and also brought to focus group sessions. In addition, the online survey was widely advertised through libraries and other distribution lists.

Chapter 6

The state of Wisconsin has been divided into seventeen public library systems, each serving a different geographic region of the state.

Wisconsin Public Library Service Data for 2005 was examined to determine the service population for each library system. Focus group sessions were scheduled, with the number of sessions corresponding proportionately to the service population of each system. A minimum of one group interview session was held in each system with a population of fewer than 300,000 people, at least two sessions in each system with a population between 300,000 and 600,000 people, at least three sessions in each system with a population between 600,000 and 900,000 people, and at least four sessions in the system containing more than 900,000 people. This resulted in a total of no fewer than 27 group interview sessions, proportionately spread across the entire state as follows:
In fact, a total of 29 sessions were held, including additional sessions in Madison and Appleton. Over 200 people participated in these interview sessions. Scheduling group interview sessions according to this proportional scheme was designed to ensure a representative sample with respect to the geographic distribution of the overall population. To ensure a representative sample with respect to users, non-users, and organizations, library system directors were asked to arrange for interview participants representing a cross-section of the community, although it was expected that library users would represent the majority of interview respondents. See Appendix 2 for guidelines issued to directors to assist with the arrangement of focus group sessions. In some instances, additional members of the community, such as Chambers of Commerce and school districts were contacted to participate in sessions as well.

To insure uniformity of input, an interview script was followed at each focus group session. Focus group participants were asked for their input regarding the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats facing libraries, as well as the role of public libraries in the New Economy era. The interview script appears in Appendix 3.
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APPENDIX 1 - SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE

THE ECONOMIC IMPACT OF THE WISCONSIN PUBLIC LIBRARY SYSTEM

SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE

NorthStar Economics, Inc.
PREFACE
NorthStar Economics, Inc. has been retained by the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction to study the economic impact of public libraries in Wisconsin. To gather information for the study, we are interviewing a representative sample of library users and non-users throughout the state, as well as gathering additional input through this survey. We appreciate your time in filling out this survey. There are no right or wrong answers to the survey. Please answer all questions, using your best recollection or estimate in cases where you are uncertain. All answers will be held in the strictest confidence.

If you have a disability which affects your ability to complete the survey, or you have any questions or concerns, please call (608) 441-8060 or e-mail nstar@northstareconomics.com and we would be happy to assist you with responding to the survey.

SECTION 1: PUBLIC LIBRARY USE
1. I use a public library:
   _____ Never _____ A few times a year _____ Once a month or more
   _____ Two to three times per month _____ Once a week or more

2. I access the public library (check all that apply):
   _____ In person _____ By telephone _____ Via a bookmobile
   _____ Online _____ Other (please specify:___________________)

3. I have one or more public library card(s):
   _____ Yes (one) _____ Yes (more than one) _____ No

4. Public libraries used (check all that apply):
   _____ I typically use the library closest to where I live
     (Library or branch name: ________________________________)
   _____ I typically use the library closest to where I work or attend school
     (Library or branch name: ________________________________)
   _____ I typically use other libraries
     (Library or branch name(s): ________________________________)

NorthStar Economics, Inc.
The Economic Contribution of Wisconsin Public Libraries

4. (Continued)

I use other libraries because:

________________________________________________________________________

Total number of libraries or branches used on a regular basis: ______

5. I typically check out the following materials (check all that apply):

_____ Books          _____ Periodicals (newspapers/magazines)
_____ DVDs / Videos   _____ Audiobooks on CD or cassette tape
_____ Other (specify: ____________________ )

_____ I don’t check out library materials.

6. How many items do you check out on a typical library visit?

_____ None    _____ One or two    _____ Three or four     _____ Five or more

7. I typically check out items for (check all that apply):

_____ Myself (personally) _____ The business or company where I work

_____ My child(ren)       _____ Other members of the household

_____ My grandchild(ren)  _____ Other (specify: ____________________ )

8. I find that books or other materials that I want to borrow are not in stock or listed in the catalog at my local library.

_____ Never   _____ Occasionally  _____ Frequently    _____ All the time

9. If books or other materials are listed in my library’s catalog but are not in stock when I want to borrow them, I make a reservation so that I can borrow the items when they are back in stock:

_____ Never   _____ Occasionally  _____ Frequently     _____ All the time

_____ I was not aware I had that option (Skip to Question 11)

10. I make these reservations

_____ In person    _____ By telephone  _____ Online
11. When materials I want to borrow are not listed in the catalog of my local library, I request that the library obtain the materials from another library:

_____ Never _____ Occasionally _____ Frequently _____ All the time

_____ I was not aware I had that option (skip to Question 13)

12. I make these interlibrary loan requests

_____ In person _____ By telephone _____ Online

13. I contact a reference librarian at the public library for assistance:

_____ Never _____ Occasionally _____ Frequently _____ All the time

14. I contact a reference librarian (check all that apply):

_____ In person _____ By telephone _____ Via online chat or e-mail

15. I attend educational programs and special events held at the public library:

_____ Never _____ Occasionally _____ Frequently _____ All the time

Recent events or programs attended: ________________________________

16. My child(ren) or grandchild(ren) attend educational programs and special events held at the public library:

_____ Never _____ Occasionally _____ Frequently _____ All the time

_____ I don't have children or grandchildren.

Recent events or programs attended: ________________________________

17. In a typical year, I pay late fees for not returning borrowed items on time:

_____ Never _____ Less than $25.00 _____ $25.00 to $49.99

_____ $50.00 to $74.99 _____ $75.00 to $99.99 _____ $100.00 or more

18. I access the Internet at the public library. _____ Yes _____ No

19. The library is my only means of accessing the Internet. _____ Yes _____ No
The Economic Contribution of Wisconsin Public Libraries

20. When visiting the library (check all that apply):

   _____ I stop on the way to or from work or another appointment or errand.
   _____ I go out for the express purpose of visiting the library.

21. When visiting the library, I stop at nearby businesses that I probably would not have shopped at otherwise.

   _____ No   _____ Yes (Specify businesses: ____________________ )

22. If you answered yes to #21, please estimate the amount spent at nearby businesses on a typical visit to the public library:

   ($___________ )

23. I use the library for (check all that apply):

   _____ Reading material and media for personal use and enjoyment
   _____ Educational/research materials for school, work, or special projects
   _____ Other (please specify: ________________________________ )

24. I access the public library online:

   _____ Never _____ A few times a year _____ Once a month or more
   _____ Two to three times per month _____ Once a week or more
   _____ I was not aware I had that option
SECTION 2: LIBRARY ALTERNATIVES

25. If visiting a local library was not an option (check all that apply):
   _____ I would do more research online
   _____ I would purchase books, audiobooks and periodicals more often
   _____ I would rent DVDs/videos/CDs more often
   _____ I would purchase DVDs/videos/CDs more often
   _____ I would do without the materials I typically borrow rather than renting or purchasing them
   _____ I would take classes or attend other events and programs elsewhere
   _____ Other (specify: ____________________________________________ )

26. Estimated amount saved by borrowing books, audiobooks and periodicals that I would otherwise purchase:
   $__________ per month

27. Estimated amount saved by borrowing DVDs/videos/CDs I would otherwise rent:
   $__________ per month

28. Estimated amount saved by borrowing DVDs/videos/CDs I would otherwise purchase:
   $__________ per month

29. Estimated amount saved by attending library programs and events instead of events and programs held elsewhere:
   $__________ per month
SECTION 3: ATTITUDE ABOUT PUBLIC LIBRARIES:

30. I feel that the public library contributes in a meaningful way to the quality of life in my community:
   _____ Strongly agree   _____ Agree   _____ No opinion
   _____ Disagree   _____ Strongly disagree

31. Funding public libraries is a good use of a portion of my tax dollars:
   _____ Strongly agree   _____ Agree   _____ No opinion
   _____ Disagree   _____ Strongly disagree

32. In a typical year, I make a monetary contribution to my public library, a Library Foundation, or Friends of the Library group:
   _____ No   _____ Yes (Amount: $_________________ )

33. In a typical year, I volunteer my time to my public library, a Library Foundation, or Friends of the Library group:
   _____ No   _____ Yes (Amount: _____________ hours)

34. Access to a good public library was a factor in deciding where to live:
   _____ A strong factor   _____ Somewhat of a factor   _____ Not a factor
SECTION 4: DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

35. In what zip code do you reside? ____________

36. What is your age? _____

37. What is your gender? _____ Male _____ Female

38. What is your current marital status?
   _____ Single (never married)       _____ Married
   _____ Widowed / divorced / separated

39. What is the highest level of school you have completed?
   _____ Grade school or some high school       _____ Graduated college
   _____ High school diploma / GED              _____ Some graduate school
   _____ Some college (includes junior college) _____ Graduate school
   (Masters / Ph.D.)
   _____ Technical / vocational / trade school _____ Professional Degree
   (M.D. / J.D.)

40. What is your approximate annual household income?
   _____ less than $20,000        _____ $40,000 to $59,999   _____ $80,000 to $99,999
   _____ $20,000 to $39,999      _____ $60,000 to $79,999   _____ $100,000 or more

41. Where do you reside?
   _____ In a home or condominium owned by me and/or my family
   _____ In a rented apartment      _____ In student housing on campus
   _____ Other (specify: ___________________________ )
## APPENDIX 2- FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEW SESSION SCHEDULE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DATE:</th>
<th>LIBRARY</th>
<th>SYSTEM:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>River Falls</td>
<td>Indianhead Federated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 22, 2008</td>
<td>Menomonie</td>
<td>Indianhead Federated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 25, 2008</td>
<td>Hayward</td>
<td>Northern Waters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>La Crosse</td>
<td>Winding Rivers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Appleton</td>
<td>Outagamie Waupaca</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 26, 2008</td>
<td>Kaukauna</td>
<td>Outagamie Waupaca</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 27, 2008</td>
<td>Green Lake</td>
<td>Winnefox</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 27, 2008</td>
<td>Neenah</td>
<td>Winnefox</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Mid-Wisconsin Federated</td>
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<td>South Central</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>South Central</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<tr>
<td>March 13, 2008</td>
<td>Shawano</td>
<td>Nicolet Federated</td>
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<tr>
<td>March 13, 2008</td>
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<td>Kenosha (Southwest)</td>
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<td>March 14, 2008</td>
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<td>Eastern Shores</td>
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### FOCUS GROUP SESSION LOCATIONS

[Map of Wisconsin showing the locations of the focus group sessions]
Wisconsin Public Library Impact Study

Group Interview Sessions

Purpose:
The primary purpose of these sessions is to get public input on the economic impact of public libraries.

Length of Group Interviews:
We try very hard to do these interviews in an hour. We try to start promptly and to end on time. Occasionally a group really gets going and we use discretion in extending the session so that everyone has a chance to be heard.

Format and Protocol for Group Sessions:
We use a standard interview script that introduces the public library economic impact study, the purpose of the session, and a brief background on who is doing the study. All sessions are moderated by NorthStar Economics staff.

Group Size:
Based upon our experience, a group size of 5 -15 is workable. The ideal size is 8-10 people.

Composition of the Group:
We want a cross section of the community including library users and if possible non-users. We would also like to have a wide range of people from sectors such as health care, business, non profits, government etc. The composition of a group does not have to be perfect. We are doing enough interviews and the large number of those being interviewed compensates for the balance issues of individual groups.

Location:
We want to hold these sessions in public libraries.

Dates and Time of Day:
We are scheduling interviews the weeks of February 25, March 3, and March 10. We can do these sessions during the day, late afternoon, or early evening.
APPENDIX 4 - FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEW SCRIPT

WISCONSIN PUBLIC LIBRARY ECONOMIC IMPACT STUDY

Interview Script

FEBRUARY, 2008

Introduction to share with interviewees:

The purpose of this study is to determine the economic benefit of public libraries for Wisconsin residents and for the overall Wisconsin economy. This study covers all public libraries in the State of Wisconsin. This interview session is part of the study and is designed to get public input and information that may be useful in determining the economic benefits of public libraries.

This study will provide several outcomes that will be useful to public libraries in the State. First, the study will provide a measure of economic impact of the business operations of libraries. Second, the study will help to define the role of public libraries in the economic development of regions and of the State of Wisconsin. Finally, the study will help to guide libraries in future planning of facilities and services that better align public libraries to the economic and social needs of their communities and regions.

This study is supported by funding from the federal Library Services and Technology Act. In Wisconsin, these funds are administered by the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction. This study builds on a number of state and national studies on the role and impact of public libraries on regional and state economies.

The consultant for this study is NorthStar Economics of Madison, Wisconsin. Dr. David J. Ward is the principal investigator for the project. Dr. Ward will be assisted by Mr. Alan Hart of NorthStar Economics and the staff at NorthStar Economics, Inc.

In the course of this interview session, you will be asked to complete a Wisconsin Public Library Economic Impact Questionnaire and you may be able to complete it during the interview hour or return it later. In the interview session, you will be asked to respond to a number of additional questions that will help gather information for this study and the final report. There are no right or wrong answers to the questions in this interview or questions on the questionnaire. Your knowledge and or perceptions with respect to the questions asked are valuable in completing the study.

All information and responses gathered in interviews will be kept confidential. We respect your privacy and want to assure you that candid responses will be held in the strictest confidence.
I. Public Libraries – SWOT ANALYSIS

1. What are the most important strengths, contributions or benefits of public libraries to your community or region?

2. What are the biggest challenges to or weaknesses of public libraries in your community or region?

3. What are the major threats to the future operations of public libraries in your community or region?

4. How can libraries best contribute to the future economic development and quality of life in your community or region?

5. Can you think of any services or resources that are currently missing (gaps) that would help to improve the function and value of public libraries in your community or region?
II. Libraries in the Knowledge Economy / New Economy

1. Do you think that public libraries are more or less important in our modern economy (sometimes called the Knowledge Economy or New Economy)? Why?

2. Do you think public libraries will be more or less important to the future (5-10 years from now) economy in the State of Wisconsin? Why?

3. In your current occupation or in your current life, is information or knowledge more or less important compared to five years ago?

4. Should libraries be in the business of educating people about and providing people and businesses with access to new information sources and technologies?
III. Other Thoughts or Comments

1. Please feel free to express other thoughts and comments about the current and future role of public libraries in the Wisconsin economy.

Thank you for your participation.
Purpose
Library building projects are often on a 20-year cycle, so it's important to consider the long-term trends that might reshape their location, design and financing. Identifying and prioritizing those trends is important to early planning. While accurate forecasts are impossible, it is possible and prudent to realize just how flexible the plan and the facility must be.

This 90-minute brainstorming session might suggest topics for further research and discussion.

Participants
- Joan Gillman
- Deb Haeffner
- Eileen Kelley
- Robert Seltzer
- Steve Soeteber
- Pamela Westby
- Angela West Blank
- Tina Gordon (Dimension IV)
- Jim Gersich (Dimension IV)
- Derrick Van Mell (facilitator)

Trends (preliminary prioritization in blue)
I DEMOGRAPHICS & SOCIAL NEEDS
   A Increasing need for social gathering, personal interactions, and, therefore, gathering places. Need for more openness in the gathering place.
   B Library needs will differ widely by demographic cohorts
   C Aging population and older supporters
   D Smaller households
   E Higher socio-economic groups have less need for a library
   F Increasingly divergent needs between young and older patrons
   G Increasing responsibilities for the homeless and needy
   H More school kids are homeless and hungry
   I Students less able to get to the library
   J Students have declining proficiency in English
   K Growing need to serve multi-lingual population

II TECHNOLOGY
   A More automation throughout the library
   B Almost everyone will have a device; they will need help with their devices and with connectivity
   C Increased need for meeting room technology

III ADMINISTRATION & STAFFING
   A Need for much more staff training
   B Greater need for marketing and communications
   C More management and leadership abilities needed
   D Need for greater interpersonal skills
   E Increasing dependence on volunteers and interns
   F Library science education is changing
   G Use of technology will change staff roles and recruitment
   H Increasingly hard to keep up with staff compensation needs
   I Utilities becoming more expensive
IV PROGRAMMING
A Need for more 1-on-1 services, e.g., “book a librarian”
B More phoning in for services
C Increasing interest in genealogy
D Increasing interest in adult education
E Increasing need for literacy program, particularly early literacy
F Need for connecting to nature and the use of outdoor spaces
G Scholarly research will be in specialized libraries
H Desire to interact with innovations, more experiential
I More 3D materials (not just 2D books and reading material)
J Increasing need for displays, somewhat like a local museum
K More collaborative work, tutoring, distance learning and proctoring
L Need for multi-media creation
M Library will not just be for Middleton, but more regional
N Declining support for traditional library functions (e.g., quiet reading)
O Less need for storage (collections will be distributed)
P More interest in wellness and nutrition

V COMMUNITY TRENDS
A Middleton will be an even great “importer” of jobs, more commuters
B Sustained community support for library capital and operating donations
C Government funding will not keep up with inflation
D Middleton Library rated #1 in city survey—and hopes to continue
E Middleton will continue to grow
F Increase in corporate donations and book sale income
G Middleton is landlocked; there will be more infill projects
H Middleton will continue to protect its green spaces
I There will continue to be ~50% multi-family housing in Middleton
J Growing interest in recycling, reuse and sustainability
K Local traffic will become busier

VI TRANSPORTATION
A Increasing connections and uses of cars and bikes, walking, bus, Uber, etc.
B Increased need for parking
C More congestion
D Public transportation not improving soon
E More extreme weather will alter how people get to the library

VII GOVERNANCE & PARTNERSHIP
A More partnering generally
B More inter-library cooperation
C More opportunities to partner in economic development, incubation of ideas, and training
D More partnerships at all levels of government
E Possible consolidation among library systems
Things to think about
- Needs for data research?
- Improve articulation and prioritization?
- Shared articles
- How can we demonstrate library technologies in the building project?
- Other?
Flipped Learning


Flipped learning – or flipped classrooms, backward classrooms, inverted classrooms, or reverse teaching – utilizes a model where students review content online via video lectures and assignments are completed during class meeting times with students and teachers working through and solving questions together.

How It’s Developing

Flipped learning utilizes a method that encourages students to first study topics at their own pace (online video lectures, etc.) and then apply the knowledge in the classroom with peers and teachers. Flipped learning takes advantage of popular and educational technology such as online video and course management systems, allowing teachers to use class time for hands-on learning, coaching, and mentoring instead of content delivery. The method aligns with theories that students learn more deeply when they have opportunities for hands-on and interactive learning. [1]

Early variations on this approach were introduced and advocated for by Barbara Walvoord and Virginia Johnson Anderson in their book Effective Grading (1998) and Maureen Lage, Glenn Platt, and Michael Treglia, who advocated the term inverted classroom, in their 2000 article “Inverting the Classroom: A Gateway to Creating an Inclusive Learning Environment” (The Journal of Economic Education). [2]

The “flipped classroom” finds its origins in the work of Colorado teachers Jon Bergman and Aaron Sams, who in 2007 began experimenting with technology to improve their face-to-face classroom time with students. [3] Initiatives such as the Khan Academy, a nonprofit founded by Salman Khan and supported by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and Google, have also helped advance flipped learning by providing free instructional videos on a range of subjects. [4]

Several groups have defined key elements for flipped learning. One set of requirements includes an opportunity for students to gain first exposure prior to class; incentives for students to prepare for class; mechanisms to assess student understanding; and in-class activities that focus on higher level cognitive activities. [5] A second set of requirements includes flexible environment; learning culture; intentional content; and a professional educator. [6]

Why It Matters

Transitioning to a flipped learning approach may require a significant amount of work for educators, including finding time and resources for recording, uploading, and managing lectures. [7] These might all be services that librarians and information professionals might be consulted on or proactively seek to support.

Library instruction, whether integrated into a course or presented as stand-alone sessions, may seek to adopt flipped learning models. [8]

Continued access to and management of many of the learning elements involved in the flipped learning environment may fall to library and information professionals.

Students and other learners, seeking environments where they can view recorded lectures without distraction, may seek out spaces in the libraries for focus and serious study. [9]

Notes and Resources


and


http://www.ala.org/transforminglibraries/future/trends/flippedlearning
Forecasting the Future of Libraries 2015

Trends in culture, community, and education point to increased potential for expanding the role of libraries of all types

By Miguel Figueroa | February 26, 2015

I used to think being trendy was a bad thing—a sign of someone who lacks individuality or perhaps is fickle. But in a world of rapid change where people are more and more aware of the latest technology, news, and innovation, being trendy—or at least knowing what’s trendy—is almost essential.
In 2013, the American Library Association (ALA) announced the formation of a Center for the Future of Libraries. The project, initially supported by a grant from the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS), focuses much of its work on identifying emerging trends relevant to the libraries, the librarians, and the communities they serve.

Why trends? Well, as many of us already know, it’s nearly impossible to accurately predict the future. But we can identify trends, and they can be key to understanding what the future might bring. Identifying and organizing trends helps us think about the changes happening in the world and the potential effects they will have on our future. (See Edward Cornish, *Futuring: The Exploration of the Future*, World Future Society, Bethesda, Md., 2005.) Awareness and understanding of trends can help us actively plan for our own work and for the work with the communities we serve, open new opportunities to innovate and experiment with and within these “currents” shaping society, and better enable us to envision the integral role we can play in the future.

ALA’s center is modeled on the American Alliance of Museums’ (AAM) very successful Center for the Future of Museums (CFM), which promotes social, technological, political, and economic trends to its members and highlights the many ways that museums are innovating within those trends. CFM and its founding director, Elizabeth Merritt, have used their popular blog (futureofmuseums.blogspot.com), Dispatches from the Future of Museums e-newsletter, and annual TrendsWatch report, to help members and the general public think proactively about what the museum might look like and what they could provide in the next 10, 50, or even 100 years. AAM’s and Merritt’s work continue to inspire and influence the Center for the Future of Libraries, and we benefit from their support and expertise.

Many libraries and librarians have already proven their exceptional ability to spot trends and integrate them into their programs and services. But even the best of us can be overwhelmed by the pace of change, the amount of information, and the multiple sources and sectors from which we piece together our understanding of trends.
This special section focuses on some of the key trends shaping libraries. It pairs with *American Libraries*’ annual coverage of the ALA Emerging Leaders. These librarians are, after all, representative of a new wave of library leaders who will help shape our futures—and likely have already contributed to, influenced, or led the trends that we will cover.

The first piece, “Trending Now,” is a quick introduction to the Center for the Future of Libraries’ “trend library.” The *trend library* is designed to provide the library community with a centralized and regularly updated source for trends—including how they are developing; why they matter for libraries; and links to the reports, articles, and resources that can further explain their significance. As a collection, it will grow to include changes and trends across society, technology, education, the environment, politics, the economy, and demographics.

Makerspaces are playing an increasingly important role in libraries. Four librarians from three library makerspaces—Tampa–Hillsborough County (Fla.) Public Library System’s The Hive, the Free Library of Philadelphia’s Maker Jawn, and the Innisfil (Ont.) Public Library’s ideaLAB—talk about how maker culture is transforming their libraries and share ideas about this important trend’s direction, in “Making Room for Informal Learning.”

Keeping up to date with changes in education is important for all of us but especially for those of us working in academic and school libraries. Joan K. Lippincott shares her thoughts in “The Future for Teaching and Learning” on how academic libraries can leverage growing interest in active learning, new media and information formats, and technology-rich collaborative spaces within the higher education environment.

Natalie Greene Taylor, Mega Subramaniam, and Amanda Waugh, all of the University of Maryland’s College of Information Studies, look at how school librarians can integrate three trends—the mobility of information, connected learning, and learning in the wild—to keep up with the future of K–12 education in “The School Librarian as Learning Alchemist.”
There is news from two library science programs’ initiatives exploring what’s ahead in library education, in “The Future of the MLIS.” This focus on the education of librarians is important for all of us.

For many of us, thinking about the library of the future begins with thinking about the future of the library as space and place. To help illustrate that future, we asked some of the winning architects from International Interior Design Association’s (IIDA) and ALA’s Library Interior Design Awards to talk about current and future trends that influenced their designs, in “The Future, Today.”

MIGUEL FIGUEROA is director of ALA’s Center for the Future of Libraries.

Ever since the people of ancient Nineveh began storing and classifying their books nearly 3,000 years ago, libraries have been hollowed and largely unchanging bastions of learning. But in the information age, libraries have been caste with a new identify, and the future is evolving into a very different place.

Ten years ago, as the Internet began to take off, many in the tech elite were predicting the death of the public library. What the critics failed to predict, however, was libraries’ stirring ability to reinvent themselves. Much like plants that flourish with good soil, water and sunshine, libraries have actually begun to thrive in our information-rich environment.

Such is their resurgence that today, libraries are going through an age of rebirth. Intent on making them the crown jewels of the community, cities from Vancouver to Prague are investing heavily in public libraries, producing opulent, multi-story structures equipped with cutting-edge technology. From rather hidebound monuments to knowledge laboratories, libraries are now evolving into interactive research and leisure centers. Yet this change, impressive as it is, is only the beginning.
2029 SCENARIO

To see how, let’s step through the doorway of a city library in 2029. In the past, libraries housed seemingly endless miles of shelving stacked with finely printed books, but now only a few remain. In much the same way that living creatures adapt to their surrounding environments, libraries have grown into a bidirectional feeding tube connecting the life-giving digital data streams and the user populations that nourish them. People are no longer satisfied with information flowing one way. They want to participate in it, add their own contributions, and take ownership of it.

Traditional lending has been replaced with downloadable books, which are never out of stock, formatted for electronic tablets and readers. A bigger change, though, has come with the very concept of what a book is. Where once a customer would passively read and, hopefully, absorb a book, every volume now is more akin to an online forum, with authors, experts and other readers available to discuss and answer questions on almost every important book ever written.

In contrast to just a couple of decades before, almost the entire canon of book knowledge has been formatted for computers, making in-depth searches possible for even the most obscure tomes. But with many people now using this service in their homes, libraries have stayed ahead of the curve by installing high-tech spherical displays and holographic imaging that allow users to shift viewing angles and probe individual parts of complex data. Space imaging technologies have also made it possible to search the planets and stars, allowing the swarms of school kids who come here to embark on their own voyages into deep space.

With technology having improved so dramatically, a central feature of this library is the Search Command Center, where a team of experts, both real and virtual, assists with complex searches that now incorporate not just words, but sounds, textures and even smells. While many visitors come here to recapture a fond fragrance or a familiar noise, these searches have more practical applications too. Restaurateurs, for example, are frequent visitors here, using the search tools to rediscover certain smells and tastes without having to rake through endless ingredients and recipes.

And chefs are far from the only people doing business in the library. With the Internet having put increasingly powerful business tools into the hands of individuals, more people are working and operating businesses from home. To such people, the library offers not just a refuge from the isolation of their house, it also provides temporary office space complete with podcast recording studios, conference rooms and editing stations. At the same time, the library has developed into an entrepreneurial zone where business people from various backgrounds coalesce, work together and then disperse in much the same way that film production crews have always done.

Business colonies have become commonplace, forming around common business themes such as gamer colonies, video colonies, photonics colonies, and biotech colonies. In each situation the libraries evolve to meet the needs of the user populations, providing vital services for the colony as well as for the community at large.

Yet perhaps nowhere are libraries’ new found attitudes more manifest than in their surroundings. Long operating in a rather high-minded domain, where many of them viewed market demand as little short of vulgar, libraries today are often situated right in the heart of larger complexes with businesses that complement their services. Crèches offer somewhere to drop off the kids, stationary stores and restaurants
tick over with student business, and patrons from fitness centers borrow magazines and audio books from the library to enliven their conditioning routines or stop in to do research on exercise and nutrition.

In our fast-changing world, progress is too often seen as a zero-sum game, where innovation inevitably comes at the expense of the old. Yet libraries are showing that innovation always brings opportunity, too. While retaining its traditional functions, the library of the future will be home to myriad informational experiences, where great ideas happen, and people have the tools and facilities to act on them.

By Thomas Frey
In 1519 Leonardo da Vinci died and left behind one of the world’s largest collections of art comprised of well over 5,000 drawings, sketches, and paintings, the vast majority of which the general public would not become aware of until over 400 years later.

The largest portion of this collection was left in the hands of Francesco Melzi, a trusted assistant and favorite student of Leonardo. Sixty years later when Melzi died in 1579 the collection began a lengthy, and often destructive, journey.

In 1630 a sculptor at the court of the King of Spain by the name of Pompeo Leoni began a very sloppy process of rearranging the collections, sorting the artistic drawings from the technical ones with scientific notations. He split up the original manuscripts, cut and pasted pages and created two separate collections. Some pieces were lost.

In 1637 the collections were donated to Biblioteca Ambrosiana, the library in Milan, where they remained until 1796 when Napoleon Bonaparte ordered the manuscripts to be transferred to Paris. Much of the collection “disappeared” for the next 170 year until it was rediscovered in 1966 in the archives of the National Library of Madrid.
Libraries played a significant role in the preservation of the da Vinci collection and we often wonder about other brilliant people in history who didn’t have libraries to preserve their work. Some we will never know about.

**Archive of Information**

Throughout history the role of the library was to serve as a storehouse, an archive of manuscripts, art, and important documents. The library was the center of information revered by most because each contained the foundational building blocks of information for all humanity.

In medieval times, books were valuable possessions far too expensive for most people to own. As a result, libraries often turned into a collections of lecterns with books chained to them.

In 1455 Johann Gutenberg unveiled his printing press to the world by printing copies of the Gutenberg Bible. Later Gutenberg had his printing press repossessed by Johann Fust, the man who had financed his work for the previous 10 years. The sons of Johann Fust were largely responsible for a printing revolution that saw over 500,000 books put into circulation before 1500.

A huge turning point in the evolution of libraries was architected by Andrew Carnegie. Between 1883 and 1929 he provided funding for 2,509 libraries, of which 1,689 of them were built in the US.

Leading up to today libraries have consisted of large collections of books and other materials, primarily funded and maintained by cities or other institutions. Collections are often used by people who choose not to, or cannot afford to, purchase books for themselves.

But that definition is changing.

**Beginning the Transition**

We have transitioned from a time where information was scarce and precious to today where information is vast and readily available, and in many cases, free.

People who in the past visited libraries to find specific pieces of information are now able to find that information online. The vast majority of people with specific information needs no longer visit libraries. However, others who read for pleasure as example, still regularly patronize their local library.

**Setting the Stage**

We have put together ten key trends that are affecting the development of the next generation library. Rest assured that these are not the only trends, but ones that have been selected to give clear insight into the rapidly changing technologies and equally fast changing mindset of library patrons.

**Trend #1 – Communication systems are continually changing the way people access information**

Communication systems have been rapidly evolving. If you were to construct a trend line beginning with the 1844 invention of the telegraph, you will begin to see the accelerating pace of change: 1876 – telephone, 1877 – phonograph, 1896 – radio, 1935 – fax machine, 1939 – television, 1945 – ENIAC
Certainly there are many more points that can be added to this trend line, but as you think through the direction we’re headed, there is one obvious question to consider. What is the ultimate form of communication, and will we ever get there?

While we are not in a position to know the “ultimate form” of communication, it would be a safe bet that it is not writing and reading books. Books are a technology, and writing is also a technology, and every technology has a limited lifespan.

**Trend #2 – All technology ends.** All technologies commonly used today will be replaced by something new.

Media formats are continually disappearing. The 8-track tape was replaced by the cassette tape, which in turn was replaced by the CD, which is currently in the process of disappearing altogether.

The telephone industry has gone from the dial phone, to push button phone, to cordless phones, to cell phones, to some sort of universal PDA, cell phone, music player, satellite radio, game machine device that will be totally unrecognizable by today’s standards. Eventually the cell phone device will disappear. We don’t need to see technology to interact with it.

In a similar fashion, every device, tool, piece of hardware, equipment, and technology that we are using today will go away, and be replaced by something else. That something else will be faster, smarter, cheaper, more capable, more durable, work better, and look cooler than anything we have today.

**Trend #3 – We haven’t yet reached the ultimate small particle for storage. But soon.**

We live in an awkward time where technological advances related to information storage are quite routine and expected. Each new breakthrough barely raises an eyebrow because they happen so often. However, Moore’s Law will not go on indefinitely.

There are physical limits to how small we can make storage particles. Within the coming years, advances will slow and eventually stop altogether as we transition from our grand pursuit of tinyness to other areas of information efficiencies such as speed, reliability, and durability.

Once we conquer the ultimate small storage particle, we will be able to set standards – both standards for information and standards for storage. This becomes extremely important as we try to envision the stable information base of the future, and the opportunities for libraries to interact with it and build new and exciting “information experiences”.

But perhaps the most critical component of stabilizing information storage will surround the issues of findability.
**Trend #4 – Search Technology will become increasingly more complicated**

Many people today think our present day search technology is fairly simple, and it is. But the simple search days are numbered.

The vast majority of today’s search industry is based on text search. Text search is being expanded to cover the various languages of the world and some forms of image, audio, and video search are currently in place. However, next generation search technology will include the ability to search for such attributes as taste, smell, texture, reflectivity, opacity, mass, density, tone, speed, and volume.

As we achieve the ability to conduct more and more complicated searches, the role of the librarian to assist in finding this kind of information also becomes more and more important. People will not have the time and skills necessary to keep up on each new innovation in the search world, and they will need a competent professional to turn to.

**Trend #5 – Time compression is changing the lifestyle of library patrons**

The spectrum of human need is continually expanding. The paradigm of “need” is changing, evolving, and most importantly, speeding up. Time compression is affecting nearly every aspect of our lives, but as we compress our time, we are also compressing our needs.

People today sleep, on average, two hours less per night than 80 years ago, going from 8.9 hours per night to 6.9 hours. 34% of lunches today are eaten on the run. 66% of young people surf the web & watch TV at the same time. In a recent survey, 43% of the people in our society are having trouble making decisions because of sheer data overload.

Basically, we have more needs faster.

So as the spectrum of human need grows, the opportunities for libraries to meet these needs is also growing. However, “needs” are a moving target, so the library of the future will need to be designed to accommodate the changing needs of its constituency. One of the needs that will be going away is the need to use keyboards.

**Trend #6 – Over time we will be transitioning to a verbal society**

Keyboards remain as our primary interface between people and electronic information even though inventors have long felt there must be a better way. The days of the keyboard are numbered. As mentioned earlier, all technology ends and soon we will be witnessing the end of the keyboard era.

Dr William Crossman, Founder/Director of the CompSpeak 2050 Institute for the Study of Talking Computers and Oral Cultures, predicts that as we say goodbye to keyboards we will begin the transition to a verbal society. He also predicts that by 2050 literacy will be dead.
While the accuracy of his dates and the wholesale transition from literacy to a verbal society may be debatable, there will undoubtedly be a strong trend towards verbal information. Computers will become more human-like with personalities, traits, and other characteristics that will give us the sense of being in a room with other humans.

**Trend #7 – The demand for global information is growing exponentially**

Many secrets in tomorrow’s business world lie in the writings of people who did not speak English or any of the other prominent global languages. A company’s ability to do business in a foreign country will be largely dependent upon their ability to understand the culture, society, and systems within which that country operates.

The National Intelligence Council predicts “the globalization of labor markets, and political instability and conflict will fuel a dramatic increase in the global movement of people through 2015 and beyond. Legal and illegal migrants now account for more than 15 percent of the population in more than 50 countries. These numbers will grow substantially and will increase social and political tension and perhaps alter national identities even as they contribute to demographic and economic dynamism.”

Our ability to learn about and understand the cultures of the rest of the world are key to our ability to prepare ourselves for the global societies of the future. At the same time that we learn about global societies, a new era of global systems will begin to emerge.

**Trend #8 – The Stage is being set for a new era of Global Systems**

Most people don’t think in terms of global systems, but we have many existing systems that have evolved over centuries that now play a significant role in our lives.

Our present global systems include international trade, global sea transportation, the Metric System, global news services, global mail systems, time zones, global air transportation, and global stock trading. Two of the newest global systems include the GPS system and the Internet. Few people think in terms of global systems and what they represent. But as we move towards more homogenized cultures and societies, the need for creating cross-border systems will also increase.

Examples of future global systems include global accounting standards for publicly traded companies, global intellectual property systems, global tax code, global currency, global ethics standards, and an official earth measurement system. People will begin to develop these new global systems because each one represents a multi-billion dollar opportunity just from the sheer efficiencies created along the way.

Libraries will play a key role in the development of global systems because they will be charged with archiving and disseminating the foundational pieces of information necessary for the new systems to take root. Libraries themselves are a global system representing an anchor point for new systems and new cultures.
Trend #9 – We are transitioning from a product-based economy to an experience based economy

As the world’s population ages and the Baby Boom generation approaches retirement, many of them will begin to shed their belongings to create a more free and mobile lifestyle. Each item that a person owns demands their attention, and the accumulation of physical goods to demonstrate a person’s wealth is rapidly declining in importance. Experience becomes the key.

How would you rate your last library experience? Chances are that you’ve never been asked that question. However, in the future, the patron experience will become a key measurement criteria.

Gone are the days of the solemn book-reading experience in the neighborhood library. Activities will be diverse and varied as a way of presenting and interacting with information in new and unusual formats.

But more importantly, books themselves will transition from a product to an experience. As books change in form from simple “words on a page” to various digital manifestations of the information, future books will be reviewed and evaluated by the experience they create.

Trend #10 – Libraries will transition from a center of information to a center of culture

With the emergence of distributed forms of information the central role of the library as a repository of facts and information is changing. While it is still important to have this kind of resource, it has proven to be a diminishing draw in terms of library traffic.

The notion of becoming a cultural center is an expansive role for the future library. It will not only serve as an information resource, but much more, with the exact mission and goals evolving and changing over time.

A culture-based library is one that taps into the spirit of the community, assessing priorities and providing resources to support the things deemed most important. Modern day cultural centers include museums, theaters, parks, and educational institutions. The library of the future could include all of these, but individual communities will be charged with developing an overall strategy that reflects the identity and personality of its own constituency.

Recommendations for Libraries

Libraries are in a unique position. Since most people have fond memories of their times growing up in libraries, and there are no real “library hater” organizations, most libraries have the luxury of time to reinvent themselves.

The role of a library within a community is changing. The way people interact with the library and the services it offers is also changing. For this reason we have put together a series of recommendations that will allow libraries to arrive at their own best solutions.
1) **Evaluate the library experience.** Begin the process of testing patron’s opinions, ideas, thoughts, and figure out how to get at the heart of the things that matter most in your community. Survey both the community at large and the people who walk through the library doors.

2) **Embrace new information technologies.** New tech products are being introduced on a daily basis and the vast majority of people are totally lost when it comes to deciding on what to use and what to stay away from. Since no organization has stepped up to take the lead in helping the general public understand the new tech, it becomes a perfect opportunity for libraries. Libraries need to become a resource for as well as the experts in each of the new technologies.
   a. Create a technology advisory board and stay in close communication with them.
   b. Recruit tech savvy members of the community to hold monthly discussion panels where the community at large is invited to join in the discussions.
   c. Develop a guest lecture series on the new technologies.

3) **Preserve the memories of your own communities.** While most libraries have become the document archive of their community, the memories of a community span much more than just documents. What did it sound like to drive down Main Street in 1950? What did it smell like to walk into Joe’s Bakery in the early mornings of 1965? Who are the people in these community photos and why were they important? Memories come in many shapes and forms. Don’t let yours disappear.

4) **Experiment with creative spaces so the future role of the library can define itself.** Since the role of the library 20 years from now is still a mystery, we recommend that libraries put together creative spaces so staff members, library users, and the community at large can experiment and determine what ideas are drawing attention and getting traction. Some possible uses for these creative spaces include:
   a. Band practice rooms.
   b. Podcasting stations.
   c. Blogger stations.
   d. Art studios.
   e. Recording studios.
   f. Video studios.
   g. Imagination rooms.
   h. Theater-drama practice rooms.

We have come a long ways from the time of da Vinci and the time when books were chained to lecterns. But we’ve only scratched the surface of many more changes to come. Writing the definitive history of modern libraries is a work in progress. Our best advice is to enjoy the journey and relish in the wonderment of what tomorrow may bring.

By Thomas Frey
ADDITIONAL LIBRARY ARTICLES:

- Future Libraries: Nerve Center of the Community
- The Future of Library Series: Part 3 – The Electronic Outpost
- The Future of Library Series: Part 2 – The Search Command Center
- The Future of Library Series: Part 1 – The Time Capsule Room
- The Future of Education
- Creating the Ultimate Information Experience: Planning Our Next Generation Libraries

By Thomas Frey
Gamification


Gamification (the application of game elements and digital game design techniques to non-game settings) and game-based learning (game playing that has defined learning outcomes) are seeing greater adoption and recognition in educational and professional settings.

How It’s Developing

The popularity of gamification and game-based learning is evident in gaming’s increasing role in professional training situations; integration into elementary, high school, and even higher education settings; and use in solving social issues, as evidenced by the work of Jane McGonigal, game designer, author, and director of game research and development at the Institute for the Future, whose games seek real-world solution to pressing issues. [1] Improvements in technology have allowed for the growth of gaming and mobile gaming has made it easier for people to access games wherever they are. Advances in virtual reality technologies will likely offer more and new ways to engage in play. [2]

Gaming advocates promote the spatial reasoning, math, and logic often required for game mastery, skills that have become more important with a focus on STEM, but gaming is also increasingly credited with promoting curiosity, socialization, and the continuous processing of information. [3]

Games in educational settings have been a regular option to help make learning more playful and to engage learners. But more recent pushes for gamification seek to expand games’ importance from just fun and engaging, to more important roles in teaching learning, monitoring learning progress, and practicing skills. [4]

A Joan Ganz Cooney Center (http://www.joanganzcooneycenter.org/) survey of 694 K-8 teachers found that nearly three quarters (74%) used digital games for instruction, with 80% of those teachers reporting playing games at least monthly and 55% at least weekly. [5] Gaming’s use in education, however, may need to be balanced as educators focus on delivering content required by local, state or national curriculum standards. The Cooney Center’s survey found that few teachers were using immersive learning games, the kind that encourage deep exploration, and instead utilized short-form games that likely were easier to map to curriculum standards. [6]

Gamification, game based learning, and gaming may also pose challenges. It may be over-applied, with users believing that simply applying “game rewards” (points, leveling, badges) will make activities more interesting and achievable. [7] Gaming, and especially video games, may prove addictive, which even in the context of education may prove harmful. [8] And there have been long-held concerns with violence and gender and diversity issues.

Why It Matters

Gaming offers and important opportunity to develop emerging and traditional forms of literacy. With minimal instructions, players are motivated to seek out information about how games work, including communicating with experts, watching or creating tutorials, or reviewing how-to texts (online or in print). [9]

Libraries, recognized as spaces for interest-driven learning and self-directed discovery, are ideal for the type of learning and discovery promoted by games. Equally important, libraries as public gathering spaces can capitalize on the benefits of co-play, helping to improve players’ social skills by encouraging play together, in small groups, or large classes. [10] The social setting of the library may also encourage users to be reflective in their play, building awareness, asking questions, and processing what is being learned through play. [11]

The skills that games help develop - digital literacy and understanding how systems (computer and otherwise) work, for example - will become increasingly important in a work environment where jobs and responsibilities are regularly changing. [12] Libraries and librarians interested in supporting next generation job skills may find benefit in promoting games and game-based learning.
Notes and Resources


http://www.ala.org/transforminglibraries/future/trends/gamification
Dear Middleton Library Board Members,

The Friends of the Middleton Public Library is a group with members from the city and surrounding areas who work to enhance and improve library services. We are the primary provider of funding for library programming and consistently fund $30,000-40,000 annually for library programming. We help the library make a difference to our community by:

- Sponsoring of Award winning programming for all ages.
- Seeding innovations that the library budget can’t always provide.
- Enhancing our Library collections (books, compact discs, and movies on DVDs).
- Providing for lively cultural events, presentations of special topics, author visits, guest speakers and children’s performers that attract residents to our library.
- Supporting computer and other equipment enhancements that support a multitude of users needs.

Clearly, the Friends organization is an integral part of the Middleton library and it’s continued excellence. As such, we would like to express our space needs as they relates to the library’s future building plans. In the immediate future, 2015, the Friends organization would like to see no reduction in the current spaces we use including the book sorting room, the book sale room and the book collection bin in the front entry. The Friends Board would support any expansion to these current spaces especially to enhance the book/library store concept and/or coffee shop and book shop model. We also support the need for no reduction in the current programming spaces such as the Archer room and would support any expansion of spaces for library programming. The Board also supports the use of library space during “off hours” to host major fundraising events such as performances or other fundraising events.

As we look to the future, the Friends Board would anticipate in the next 20 years to still strive to provide the majority of funding for library programming. It is our opinion that book sales will continue to be a source of income but we may also seek revenue through a coffee shop/library store and perhaps through the rental of e-reading devices and sales of downloads of media to e-reading devices. Sales like these will allow for increased opportunity to sustain funding for library programming and make books affordable to those who want to purchase them. Therefore, spaces to sort, store and sell books and other items will still be a necessity. In addition, spaces for programing will still be needed and in formats that support flexible layouts and usage of the rooms. Finally, spaces for performances and other fundraising events will be needed to allow the Friends organization to host these revenue generating functions.

Thank you for your consideration of the Friends in your future building plans for the library, Sincerely, Friends of the Middleton Public Library Board of Directors
Middleton History Center

A Proposal

Like the City Library, the Middleton Area Historical Society (MAHS) is also in need of greater space ... additional room for historic photographs, documents and artifacts that are currently housed primarily at the Rowley House Museum (across Hubbard Ave. from the library). Therefore, the Middleton Area Historical Society proposes that when designs for the Middleton City Library expansion are developed, that a part of the library be dedicated to the creation of a Middleton History Center consisting of a Display-Reference Room and a MAHS Office-Research Room. The Center would then house MAHS's historic documents and photographs along with other Middleton historical documents and reference materials.

The Middleton History Center's Display-Reference Room, open to the public during normal library hours, would serve a twofold purpose: (1) to house changeable displays showcasing various materials that would help promote an interest in Middleton's history; (2) to contain all Middleton historic materials currently in the City Library including newspaper microfilms. Other Wisconsin historic reference material in the Library could also be relocated to the History Center, as well as Historic documents currently stored at Middleton High School. The Display-Reference Room would help concentrate all of Middleton's historic materials, yet still maintain public access to the Library's collections.

The MAHS Office-Research Room, containing documents and photographic collections relocated from Rowley House, would be open to the public only when staffed by MAHS volunteers. Although access would be regulated, the Office-Research Room would be staffed for several hours on one or more specified days of the week throughout the year, or by special appointment. This arrangement would provide much greater year-round access to the Middleton Area Historical Society information than is currently available at the Rowley House Museum. Furthermore, the Office-Research Room could be open during evening hours if an appointment is made and volunteers are available.

Office space at Rowley House is limited to two rooms containing 92 and 94 square feet respectively. These small rooms contain the complete collection of MAHS's historic Middleton documents and photographs along with computer work stations, office supplies and one small table for use by history researchers. The situation is far from ideal, especially when more than one person is trying to find materials that are on file, or a quiet corner for studying documents. Not only is space an issue, but research is limited to the hours when Rowley House is open ... 1:00 to 4:00 pm on Tuesdays and Saturdays (6 hours per week) between mid-April and mid-October. Additionally, Rowley House, built in 1868 does not provide the best environmental
conditions for safe storage of the valuable historic materials, most of which were donated to MAHS with the understanding that they would be safeguarded forever.

A Middleton History Center within the City Library would provide those who wish to conduct historical and genealogical research with a greater window of opportunity for reviewing the materials. This would double the roughly 6-month timeframe that now exists at Rowley House.

When conducting historical research, people need to be able to spread out the materials for detailed study. With the History Center as part of the Middleton City Library there would be ample room for perusing documents. Research could be conducted entirely within the Office-Research Room or materials could be properly signed out and taken to spacious library tables or to a Library Study Room. In either case, research would be conducted in comfortable and quiet surroundings ... conditions that are usually lacking at Rowley House.

Valuable historic Middleton documents and photographs would have a secure home in the History Center. The storage conditions in Middleton's City Library are ideally suited for preservation of historic papers and photographs. Donors should feel confident that their valuable materials will be stored under the safest conditions.

To ensure that all parties have a complete understanding of how such a combined venture would work and who would be responsible for each aspect and detail of the arrangement, a Memorandum of Understanding should be formulated. This MOU would describe the responsibilities of Middleton Public Library, the City of Middleton and the Middleton Area Historical Society.

Materials maintained by MAHS are a valuable community resource and should be readily accessible to those who wish to conduct history research, family genealogy and similar work. A Middleton History Center housed in our City Library would increase public access and generate greater awareness of Middleton's past and the City's development over time. Having Middleton’s history on display in a prominent place gives Library visitors, including our many school children, a great opportunity for continually comparing the old with the new.
**Date:** 5/20/2015

**Type:** Interview with Jill Krantz

**Location:** Senior Center

**Program or Meeting Content:**
I met with Department Head Jill Kranz to find out how she and the staff believes the library can serve the community better.

They will be deconstructing their PC labs, so the library's lab will be even more vital to the community. They also stressed the desire for continued access to books and audiobooks, more one-on-one technology opportunities, more programs, more meeting spaces (for 25-30 people), sound proof spaces, an entertainment center for small group performances and informational meetings and a coffee bar. The idea of a food service and gift shop run by students with disabilities came up as an excellent way to partner with the school and help grow real-life business skills.

**Comments / Application to the Library:**
The growing needs of those with life challenges: hunger, chronic mental health, transportation also came up. It was suggested that we consider having an on-sight social worker. Great session and lots of food for thought!

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**Date:** 6/17/2015

**Type:** Interview with Penni Klein

**Location:** Email

Penni suggests a “cradle to grave” approach to reading and using the library, as follows:

- Combining the senior center space with the library (that way seniors can check out books and read and have access to the center’s staff, as well.)
- Having food and a coffee shop on the main floor. (Contract with a private business like Madison Public Library does, offering food, bakery items and coffee. In her opinion, books, food and coffee go hand in hand, similar to the way bookstores have done. In her opinion, libraries are no different.)
- Daycare on the main floor.
- Library on mid floors.
- Assisted living and space for disabled people on the upper levels
- Use a developer to build something huge like heritage center with several floors and all types of populations served.
Quotes from Penni: I support multi use type building with community center library senior center arts center recreation center tourism information center all on various floors all under one roof vs several buildings

- I'd also maximize local businesses for food and beverage on main floor like Madison did. Daycare services or elder care services too. So families of all types can utilize this building for more than just library services.
- And do you want to merge city hall and various depts as well. City hall is old and in need of repairs And changes. Several depts could be served with a better set up too. I don't know but it should be discussed at this time.. do we need two types of city facilities. Most gold medal cities have community centers with senior centers recreation tourism and libraries all merged under one roof now.
- You could also utilize a developer to build something like heritage center with private living for seniors and disabled along with the community services and other areas all under one roof to use tif funds for downtown redevelopment vs tax dollars.....makes best use of private non tax dollars for development...so that when the whole building grows it can be left as senior living space in downtown on the end....close to everything walkable community etc..
- Last move rec center art center and all those passive rec class rooms to this building. Think yoga for seniors. Young engineers and artists classes. All in same building...mom can read a book while Jr is in young Rembrandts and grandpa is in yoga and they all come and go at same times....dual use building. Dual use programs. Dual use and shared use by several depts. Tourism could fit in too.
- How many floors can you have.
- I like how we use if to pay for it. And sharing space floors building for multi purposes. People are lazier than the old days. They want one stop shopping and All under one roof so one trip vs many. And whatever families exist in the future will be multi generational like our parents had to endure...live in relatives older and younger and kids and elder parents and someone disabled.
- But you get the gist of it blending private And public facilities is hot topic and a way to save taxdollars also good for social equity blending aged disabled families and all under one larger roof.
MIDDLETON PUBLIC LIBRARY
Community Discussion Groups

Prepared by
Ethel E. Himmel
Library Consultant
Madison, WI

April 1997
Background

Sixty-eight people participated in six focus group discussions during the last week of February in 1997. The purpose of the discussion groups was to gauge the community's satisfaction with the Middleton Public Library (MPL) and to explore future directions for the library. Most of the participants were regular users of the MPL. Eleven were Madison residents; however, comments made during the discussions suggest that more than these eleven lived outside the City of Middleton, with some coming from areas west of the City.

Most participants said they used more than one library, with the central Madison Public Library or the Sequoia Branch of the Madison Public Library being the other library they used. Some identified libraries on campus or other area public or school libraries as ones that they regularly used. For some people the question of which library or libraries they used was confusing because they used access to the LINKcat system, either at the MPL or from their homes, to identify materials that they wanted from throughout the South Central Library System. Once they had located the item, they either went to the library that held the item or had it sent to the MPL for them to pick up. Some thought of this as using a Middleton Public Library service; others thought of it as using other libraries in the LINKcat system.

A majority said they used the MPL for pleasure and entertainment--books, videos, and CDs, but many also mentioned doing their personal and professional research from the MPL and getting materials from other libraries through LINKcat or ILL. Many talked about bringing their children to the MPL for programs, summer reading, and getting library materials for reading, viewing, and listening.

What do you think the Middleton Public Library does really well? What is really outstanding about this library?

Most often the participants said the staff was what was really outstanding about the library. The children's librarian in particular was mentioned, but the general sentiment was that the staff overall is really friendly and very helpful. (Representative comments follow in italics.)

- They're friendly; they know your name, go above and beyond to find things for you.
• When I have things on hold, they have them ready for me when I come to check out. (I don’t even have to ask for what’s being held for me.)
• This library has a real sense of community. You feel as if everyone’s welcome here.
• (The children’s librarian) is wonderful; she gets away from the desk and comes to the kids.
• Service is splendid. The phone never rings more than twice before it’s answered.

The second most frequently cited feature of the Middleton Public Library that users thought was outstanding was being a part of a system that made it possible for them to borrow materials from other libraries. Sometimes this was mentioned specifically as the LINKcat system that allowed them to see (and borrow) books from other libraries. (Note that there are more comments related to LINKcat under the technology question below.)

• They can get anything for you—LINKcat makes everything available.
• I’ve gotten books from every library in the system at one time or another.
• I figure I can get 95% of the books I want.
• The LINK system is wonderful, lets you draw from all over. It’s very accurate and much more direct than interlibrary loan.

When they were asked about particular collections, services, or programs being outstanding, the participants most often talked about the children’s collections, services and programs.

• Outstanding children’s opportunities.
• Family fun night. We really look forward to those.
• Children’s programs and collections are good.
• I think the children’s collection is good, but the usage is very high...it’s good that they are being used, but this also means they get worn and shabby looking.

Participants also like the general "feel" of the library, its attractiveness, layout and signage. They appreciate the user friendly library policies.

• The library is open, light, friendly; even late books are okay.
• It’s a very laid back kind of place and a nice place to sit around.
I think it's a very attractive environment to come to. It's well lit; I can appreciate that. There's easy chairs to sit in. It's a customer friendly facility.

Love renewing by phone.

What suggestions do you have for improving the library? Are there areas where changes would make the library better for you?

The participants were unwilling generally to be critical, but they were willing to talk about what would be better for them, or as one lady said, "this is sorta our wish list, right?" Sunday hours was the most frequent suggestion. However, the groups were unable to agree upon which hours they would give up if that were necessary to have Sunday hours. The students pointed out that a majority of high school students have jobs and work on Saturdays so Sundays are their only weekend days to do homework. Others liked the idea of being able to spend family time or browsing time at the library on Sunday. Later hours on Fridays were also suggested.

- Sunday hours would be good. (I'd like) later hours on Fridays so I could stop on my way home too. Wish they could be open until 6 pm on Friday and Saturday.
- I find it inconvenient that it's not open on Sunday, because that's when I do most of my (school) work.
- I think Sunday is an ideal browsing day.

The other suggestion that was repeated by participants in more than one focus group session related to being unable to meet the demand for school assignments.

- Never enough copies when there are school assignments.
- I've noticed that when a class is working on a particular topic, there may not be a lot of books available unless you get here first.

Participants had few comments on improving policies (most seemed quite satisfied with current policies), but they did suggest specific additions to the collections, programming for older children, and small group meeting and study spaces. Several comments were also made about the downside of LINKcat being that people at other libraries also borrow from Middleton, and that makes finding some materials at MPL difficult.

- (Need) more books on tape.
- Nonfiction collection could be better.
The children's collections are woefully underfunded. What's here is good, but it's so heavily used and gets worn.

I used to use videos more here, but since LINKcat came up you really have to know what you want and request it in advance. There's not much left to browse through.

Same is true with books on tape or music--LINKcat sorta wiped things out.

What works well in the present facility? What do you think about the layout, the organization, or building features?

People are very satisfied with the facility. Many remember the old library ("that wasn't even a library really!") and think the present facility is wonderful. Parking was mentioned in several ways--some thought it was great, especially in comparison with downtown Madison; others were unaware of the parking lot across the tracks and complained that the proximity to city hall sometimes meant the lot beside the library was full.

- I really like the physical structure. They built something that was attractive. It's a good site with a feeling of some kind of civic center. It's got some warmth to it.
- The design is good overall, the entrance is easy to get in, seems to be lots of room for expansion.
- Even the parking is good. It's very pleasant to be able to do what I need to do quickly and leave.
- Layout of the collections makes them easily browsable, especially things near the door.
- The chairs are very comfortable and they're big enough that you can hold a child in your lap to read.

What suggestions do you have for reconfiguring the building for library use? How might the library use the additional space on the lower level?

Participants talked about what might be moved to the lower level to provide more space on the ground level. Generally the discussions included comments that indicated people felt a need for more study space, i.e., carrels and study tables; more meeting spaces, i.e., small study rooms where several people could work on projects together and talk without disturbing others, and perhaps a second regular meeting room for public meetings; and more space for computers and learning to use computers (or technology) in groups.
The participants also grappled with trying to find noisy and quiet spaces within the library. Some participants thought the library was too noisy at times.

- It would be nice to have a separate room for working on group projects. Maybe little meeting rooms where people can talk. It might get some of the older kids feeling a little more comfortable in coming to the library.
- Put reference and electronic stuff downstairs along with a viewing and listening area. I'd like to see an electronic resource center here, along with tables and places to do your stuff.
- As more and more resources become available there'll be a problem of where to put them and the staff will get bigger and bigger. Can you put more of the electronic stuff downstairs?
- I like the idea of study areas downstairs, for a person who has some serious studying to do.
- I'd like to see a training lab for older people who are trying to learn computers. Downstairs would be fine.
- My child is a teenager. I wonder how disruptive her group is. Could the basement be space for a study area? Or, maybe the upstairs conference room could be made into a quiet area for study and then move the conference room downstairs?
- I'm surprised at how noisy it is sometimes. The time of day makes a difference. Sometimes it's crowded and noisy.

One suggestion that came up in each of the groups was moving the children's services area downstairs. None of the groups thought that was the best approach.

- Move the children's space and library offices downstairs. Provide a separate space for children that way.
- Maybe move children's downstairs so they could be noisy. Put chairs there too so parents could read while kids were in story time.
- Don't move the kids downstairs. I have fond memories of the children's area with such lovely light and the trains going by.
- What about moving the story time downstairs? Then they could come back upstairs to check books out.
- Put all the adults in the basement. Little kids shouldn't have to be silent.
- I'd hate to see the kids' library moved. If they need to move one area, I would guess it would be fiction.
Other suggestions included moving older or less used materials downstairs, and expanding or adding another community meeting room. Concern was expressed that staff workspace was cramped and the area behind the circulation desk needed more space. A suggested solution was to move staff work areas downstairs.

- Start archiving things that aren't used as much and put them downstairs.
- Public space seems marvelous, but the staff working space is very cramped. There aren't enough chairs and they're not ergonomic. Staff shouldn't have to work like that!
- They didn't anticipate the shelf space they need for all the hold books people have.

While the comments show no overall consensus, one group suggested the library put up an architectural model with the various potential arrangements and ask for public input.

- It's a non-problem; (the library should) just do it. (Just) get the community involved in what it's going to look like.
- It's a lot better to be dealing with a growing library than a shrinking library!"

What do you think about the technology at the Middleton Public Library? Are you comfortable in using it?

Participants represented a wide range of comfort and familiarity with technology. For a large number of the participants technology at the MPL meant LINKcat and the discussion centered on how they liked or disliked using the "automated card catalog." As indicated earlier, having access to the materials at other libraries electronically and having dial access from their homes and offices are perceived as very important and positive services. The issues for those who were uncomfortable with LINKcat evolved around the need for more training and for what might be called ease of use. Few of the participants seemed to be very familiar with any other technologies at the library although they thought it was good that the library did or could make those technologies available to the community. Some thought the library needed more PCs and terminals People wanted to be sure the use of technology did not replace books in libraries.
Representative LINKcat comments:

- I think LINKcat is easier to browse than the card catalog.
- I have a hard time finding things by category.
- It takes me less time to walk through the stacks than it does to look through the computer.
- I almost always check things from home...boom boom boom...I come and get my book and leave.
- I use LINKcat almost every day, but since they updated it, I find that the old way worked better.
- I have trouble finding specific things. Probably my search technique is wrong, but if you know it's in there, it's easy to get discouraged. You know it's there, but you just can't get to it.

LINKcat training:

- I'd like more directions on using LINKcat. There should be once a month searching classes. Maybe offer a basic class and an advanced class.
- Could they periodically offer an "idiot course" on how to use the system? I would come. I'm learning from my children and it's embarrassing.
- I learned everything by trial and error, but it's pretty self explanatory.
- I don't use it regularly and the it's hard to remember what to do.
- Suggest they have lots of training sessions available when they update the computer with a new version.

Other technologies:

- I don't even know which computer has the CD ROM!
- In time they will need more terminals for Internet access. That will take up a lot of space and be very expensive.
- Libraries really have to start branching out and providing more.
- Internet is slow and you can't download things.
- Library is to be complimented on getting on-line, but it will need money to get fiber optics in.

Other comments:

- Library needs computers just for typing. Not everybody has a computer at home.
- I'd like a course on how to find information on the Internet.
- Sometimes it seems like I'm taking too long at the computer (with other people waiting) and I want to print it out so I can take it home with me, but then I worry about all the paper being used.
- Need another terminal in the children's area.
Adult terminals are in a very busy area of the library—in the middle of constant traffic.

Participants sometimes answered the question about technology with comments on books and the card catalog. People in all of the focus groups want books at the library.

- In the future I hope that libraries are still about books. There’s something so good about books.
- I want to be sure money isn’t taken away from books to buy technology.
- Never forget the books!
- I miss the stupid card catalog. I wish they would have kept both. I know some elderly people who are really frustrated with the computers and are embarrassed to ask for help.
- I think a huge percentage of people tried that machine (LINKcat) once and gave up. I’ve tried it lots of times.

Other comments and suggestions?

Many other individual comments and suggestions that did not fit directly under the above groupings of topics were offered during the discussions. These comments and suggestions were compiled in a long list and given to the library staff and board. Some representative comments follow as examples.

- Library really needs more money. Have to be creative with fund raising.
- I hope they don’t let City Hall move in here; they need to keep it as a library.
- There aren’t any foreign newspapers (here), like the London Times. I’d like to get different views from various parts of the world.
- I’d like to see the (book) rental system used here.
- The categories of videos and cassettes aren’t always clear. It’s hard to browse the shelves because of the way they’re set up.
- My kids want an after school story hour now that they can’t come to a story hour. (too old for pre-school story times)
Middleton Public Library Staff (August 2007)

Row 1:  Margie Pearce, Lia Vellardita, Lynne Heneghan, Elizabeth Nelson, Alita Loper, Katie Adkins, Svetha Hetzler, Sarah Wendorf, Jennie Vosen, Katie O’Brien, Sarah Hartman  
Row 2:  Gale Nelson, Heidi Bartling, Vijaya Raman, Sunhyung Geurts, Anna Seaberg, Yvonne Muller, Mark Goad, Liz Dannenbaum, Debi Lycke-Scheurell, Jennifer Das, Elizabeth Bauer, Carol Utter.  
Row 3:  Jessica Brooks, Katrina Fingerson, Roslyn Reilly, Kathy Rausch, Pat Williams, Adam Schneider, Paul Nelson, Rick Kurz, Wendy Schmidt, Rebecca Van Dan, Lori Bell  
Row 4:  Dick Wiringa, Joe Goad, Barbara Henderson, Sara Simpson, Nate Snortum, Jason Boak, Cindy Zellers, Lori Esenther, Peter Matiash, Jean Javenkoski, Christine Smith  

The Middleton Library represents the best of the award’s criteria: sense of place in the community, municipal support, stellar staff, creative and popular programming, great holdings, and an exceptionally engaged community. Board President Patricia Bornhofen says, “Anyone who has worried that libraries might be becoming obsolete in the new electronic era should go to the Middleton Library to see how unfounded that concern is. We’ve had almost three years now of unprecedented records for circulation and attendance. The real concern may be parking.”  

In fact, following a remodeling and expansion project that was completed in 2004, circulation is up substantially and program attendance has increased an amazing 300%. That’s not surprising, given the friendly and knowledgeable staff team, led by Director Paul Nelson, and their focus on tailoring service to their users. The engaged library board, active Friends group, and strong support from city officials also position this library to provide exemplary service.  

City Administrator Mike Davis says, “Middleton Public Library serves as the hub of a dynamic Downtown Middleton, inviting visitors to explore our City both at the Library and beyond.”  

The Middleton Public Library just might be one reason Money Magazine ranked the city number one on their 2007 list of “Best Places to Live.”  

-----as noted on Wisconsin Library Association’s award citation
Middleton Public Library “Tenth Anniversary” Focus Group Discussions

In 1997 the Middleton Public Library held a series of focus group discussions to gather your assessment of the Library and to find out what future directions you wanted us to take. Based on that input, we added Sunday hours, expanded our services to teens, and created a quiet space on the library’s lower level.

Having accomplished much of what was asked of us then, we again turned to you in 2007 to assess new challenges to be addressed. In March, we sponsored a series of six focus group discussions, which were conducted by Library Consultant Ethel Himmel, who provided the same services for us in 1997. The general responses were very positive and confirm the fact that we are indeed moving in the right direction. Unlike 1997, we uncovered no “big ticket” items; the most common responses pointed to the need for us to do more of what we already do.

Here’s a brief summary of questions & answers.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What do you like best?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>☑ Friendly and knowledgeable staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☑ Absence of fines</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☑ Sunday hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☑ Programs for adults, teens, and children</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What about the idea of a branch library?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>☑ Preference for a full-service facility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☑ Additional financial support for more materials, programs, and staff for current facility</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Where would you like to see improvements</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>☑ More programs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☑ Larger browsing collections, particularly for audiovisual materials</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☑ Year-round Sunday hours and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☑ Later Friday evening hours</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How do you like recent expansion &amp; remodeling?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>☑ Project gets rave reviews</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☑ “Absolutely beautiful” offered more than once</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☑ Lower level quiet area is a great asset.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Record Year for Program Attendance

In 2007, the library hosted a total of 513 programs attracting a total attendance of 12,210.
The Middleton Public Library’s “Growth Chart”

A tremendous amount of growth has taken place since the new library facility opened. At face value, this growth may look uneven, based on the percentages in the table below, but it truly represents the library staff’s best efforts to meet the changing and expanding needs of the people we serve.

What follows is a snapshot of the library’s growth in from three key years:

1990: A new library facility opens for business
2003: The library begins a 6-month remodeling and expansion project.
2007: Our best year yet!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Library Service Data</th>
<th>1990</th>
<th>2003</th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>1990-2007 % increase</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hardcover books</td>
<td>40,076</td>
<td>52,136</td>
<td>71,428</td>
<td>80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paperback books</td>
<td>3,340</td>
<td>13,500</td>
<td>16,150</td>
<td>385%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Audiovisual materials</td>
<td>2,687</td>
<td>13,918</td>
<td>16,357</td>
<td>510%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Magazines &amp; newspapers</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>284</td>
<td>295</td>
<td>48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annual circulation</td>
<td>255,011</td>
<td>523,796</td>
<td>716,348</td>
<td>180%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internet access computers</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>31</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fulltime-equivalent staff</td>
<td>10.0</td>
<td>15.5</td>
<td>20.125</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annual hours of operation</td>
<td>3,016</td>
<td>3,528</td>
<td>3,528</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annual budget</td>
<td>$358,825</td>
<td>$987,280</td>
<td>$1,439,513</td>
<td>268%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City of Middleton share</td>
<td>$301,620 (84%)</td>
<td>$621,571 (63%)</td>
<td>$927,218 (64%)</td>
<td>205%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dane County share</td>
<td>$57,205 (16%)</td>
<td>$365,709 (37%)</td>
<td>$512,295 (36%)</td>
<td>800%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Inside the Numbers

- The Middleton Public Library’s collection has one of the highest turnover rates in the state. On average, each item circulates an average of 7 times, compared with a statewide average of 2.6.
- Of the 387 public libraries in Wisconsin, Middleton’s annual circulation ranks 18th.
- An average of 203 items per hour are checked out of the library, compared with 84 in 1990.
- The 31 Internet access computers were used a total of 87,500 hours during 2007.

Some of the titles chosen for our adult, teen, and parent/child book discussions in 2007:

- *Louise Erdrich* - The Mountains Between, Singing Clean
- *Alice McDermott* - After This
- *Elizabeth Hand* - Blue to Night
- *Yolonda's Genius* -<br>Chasing Verity

- *Leisure Sena Webster* - Eldest
Professional Librarian Staff at the Middleton Public Library

Paul Nelson (Director) 
Pat Williams (Head of Information Technology) 
Liz Dannenbaum (Head of Adult Services) 
Elizabeth Bauer (Head of Circulation Services) 
Rebecca Van Dan (Head of Young Adult Services) 
Svetha Hetzler (Head of Children's Services) 
Lori Bell (Youth Services Librarian) 
Sarah Hartman (Adult Services Librarian)

Library staff (Katie Adkins, Elizabeth Bauer, Paul Nelson, Jenny Carr, and Rebecca Van Dan) show off their “Library of the Year” t-shirts.

Thanks for making 2007 the Middleton Public Library’s most successful year yet! And I sincerely thank the entire community of Middleton for the privilege of serving as Director for the past 22 years. I’m sure the Library will continue to be in very capable hands after my retirement.

Paul Nelson, Library Director
12% of e-book readers have borrowed an e-book from a library. Those who use libraries are pretty heavy readers, but most are not aware they can borrow e-books.

Kathryn Zickuhr
Research Specialist, Pew Internet Project

Lee Rainie
Director, Pew Internet Project

Kristen Purcell
Associate Director for Research, Pew Internet Project

Mary Madden
Senior Research Specialist, Pew Internet Project

Joanna Brenner
Web Coordinator, Pew Internet Project
Summary of findings

12% of readers of e-books borrowed an e-book from the library in the past year. But a majority of Americans do not know that this service is provided by their local library.

E-book borrowers appreciate the selection of e-books at their local library, but they often encounter wait lists, unavailable titles, or incompatible file formats.

Many Americans would like to learn more about borrowing e-books.

58% of Americans have a library card, and 69% say that their local library is important to them and their family.

Library card holders are more than twice as likely to have bought their most recent book than to have borrowed it from a library. Many e-book borrowers purchase e-books, too.

Library card holders use more technology, and they report that they read more books.

Leading-edge librarians and patrons say that the advent of e-books has produced a major transformation in book searching and borrowing at libraries.

Imagining the future of libraries

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Quantitative data

Qualitative material

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The strained relationship between libraries and publishers

The current state of play between libraries and publishers

The rise of Amazon

About this research

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Summary of findings

12% of readers of e-books borrowed an e-book from the library in the past year. But a majority of Americans do not know that this service is provided by their local library.

Some 12% of Americans ages 16 and older who read e-books say they have borrowed an e-book from a library in the past year.

Most e-book borrowers say libraries are very important to them and their families and they are heavy readers in all formats, including books they bought and books lent to them. E-book borrowers say they read an average (the mean number) of 29 books in the past year, compared with 23 books for readers who do not borrow e-books from a library. Perhaps more striking, the median (midpoint) figures for books reportedly read are 20 in the past year by e-book borrowers and 12 by non-borrowers.

But most in the broader public, not just e-book readers, are generally not aware they can borrow e-books from libraries. We asked all those ages 16 and older if they know whether they can borrow e-books from their library and 62% said they did not know if their library offered that service. Some 22% say they know that their library does lend out e-books, and 14% say they know their library does not lend out e-books.

These findings are striking because more than three-quarters of the nation’s public libraries lend e-books.¹

In the general public, even many of those who presumably have an interest in knowing about the availability of free library loans of e-books are not sure about the situation at their local library:

- 58% of all library card holders say they do not know if their library provides e-book lending services.
- 55% of all those who say the library is “very important” to them say they do not know if their library lends e-books.
- 53% of all tablet computer owners say they do not know if their library lends e-books.
- 48% of all owners of e-book reading devices such as original Kindles and NOOKs say they do not know if their library lends e-books.
- 47% of all those who read an e-book in the past year say they do not know if their library lends e-books.

E-book borrowers appreciate the selection of e-books at their local library, but they often encounter wait lists, unavailable titles, or incompatible file formats.

Focusing on those who do borrow e-books from libraries, two-thirds say the selection is good at their library: 32% of e-book borrowers say the selection at their library is “good,” 18% say it is “very good,” and 16% say it is “excellent.” Some 23% say the selection is only “fair,” 4% say it is “poor,” and 8% say they don’t know.

We asked those who borrowed e-books whether they had experienced several of the difficulties that could be associated with such borrowing, and found that:

- 56% of e-book borrowers from libraries say that at one point or another they had tried to borrow a particular book and found that the library did not carry it.
- 52% of e-book borrowers say that at one point or another they discovered there was a waiting list to borrow the book.
- 18% of e-book borrowers say that at one point or another they found that an e-book they were interested in was not compatible with the e-reading device they were using.

Many Americans would like to learn more about borrowing e-books.

We also asked all those who do not already borrow e-books at the public library how likely it would be that they might avail themselves of certain resources if their library were to offer them. The results:

- 46% of those who do not currently borrow e-books from libraries say they would be “very” or “somewhat” likely to borrow an e-reading device that came loaded with a book they wanted to read.
- 32% of those who do not currently borrow e-books say they would be “very” or “somewhat” likely to take a library class on how to download e-books onto handheld devices.
- 32% of those who do not currently borrow e-books say they would be “very” or “somewhat” likely to take a course at a library in how to use an e-reader or tablet computer.

Those most interested in these services include some groups that librarians are especially eager to reach. African-Americans, Hispanics, and those who live in lower-income households are more likely than others to say they would be interested in borrowing pre-loaded e-reading devices and take classes about how to use the devices and download books.

58% of Americans have a library card, and 69% say that their local library is important to them and their family.

Some 58% of those ages 16 and older have a library card, and 69% report that the library is important to them and their family. Women, whites, and parents of minor children are more likely to have library cards than other groups, and having a library card is also strongly correlated with educational attainment: 39% of those who have not completed high school have a library card, compared with 72% of those with at least a college degree. Those living in households making less than $30,000 per year,
those living in rural areas, and adults ages 65 and older are less likely than other groups to have a library card.

At the same time, African-Americans and Hispanics are more likely than whites to say that the local library is important to them and their families. Overall, 38% of Americans ages 16 and older say that the public library is “very important,” and 31% say it is “somewhat important.” Some 17% say it is “not too important,” while 13% say it is “not important at all.” By comparison, some 48% of African-Americans say the library is very important to them, along with 43% of Hispanics, compared with 35% of whites.

When it comes to specific library services, African-Americans are more likely than whites 1) to use the local library to get access to historical documents or genealogical records; 2) to use the library to get access to databases such as legal or public records; and 3) to use the library to access or borrow newspapers or magazines or journals.

**Library card holders are more than twice as likely to have bought their most recent book than to have borrowed it from a library. Many e-book borrowers purchase e-books, too.**

In our December 2011 survey, 78% of those ages 16 and older said they had read a book in the past year. We asked those book readers about their borrowing and buying habits.

Among those who had read a book in the previous year, 48% say they had bought their most recent book; 24% borrowed it from a friend; 14% borrowed it from the library; and 13% got it another way.

Among library card holders, a similar proportion (47%) say they had bought their most recent book, while 20% borrowed it from a friend, 20% borrowed it from the library, and 12% got it another way.

Among those who read e-books, 41% of those who borrow e-books from libraries purchased their most recent e-book.

We also asked book readers about their general preferences when it came to getting books. Fully 55% of the e-book readers who also had library cards said they preferred to buy their e-books and 36% said they preferred to borrow them from any source—friends or libraries. Some 46% of library card holders said they prefer to purchase print books they want to read and 45% said they preferred to borrow print books.

When it comes to e-book borrowers, 33% say they generally prefer to buy e-books and 57% say they generally prefer to borrow them.

The importance of buying books to e-book borrowers is also apparent when it comes to the places where they get book recommendations. Some 71% of e-book borrowers say they get book recommendations from online bookstores and websites; 39% say they get recommendations from the staff at bookstores they visit; and 42% say they get recommendations from librarians.

Asked where they look first when they are trying to find an e-book, 47% of those who borrow e-books from libraries say they first look at online bookstores and websites and 41% say they start at their public library.
Library card holders use more technology, and they report that they read more books.

Library card holders are more likely to own and use digital devices than those who don’t have cards. Card holders are more likely than others to be internet users (87% vs. 72%), more likely to own a cell phone (89% vs. 84%), and more likely to have a desktop or laptop computer (81% vs. 67%). And they are more likely than others to say they plan to purchase an e-reader or a tablet computer.

Library card holders also report they read more books than non-holders. In the 12 months before our December survey, library card holders report that they read an average (the mean number) of 20 books, compared with 13 books for non-card holders. The median (midpoint) figures for books reportedly read are 10 by library card holders and 5 by non-holders.

Leading-edge librarians and patrons say that the advent of e-books has produced a major transformation in book searching and borrowing at libraries.

In addition to conducting a representative phone survey, we also solicited thousands of comments online from library staff members and library patrons about their experiences in the relatively new world of e-books and e-book borrowing. Here are some of the main themes in their answers:

- **Book-borrowing habits are changing.** Some of the most avid library users report they are going to library branches less and using the library website more for book and audio downloads. Additionally, patrons’ browsing is moving from in-library catalogs to online searches of library websites. As a result, “routine” traditional library interactions between patrons and librarians are receding in some places as interactions shift to online communications and downloads.

- **Library holdings are changing.** A number of librarians report that some funds for purchasing printed books have been shifted to e-book purchases. Others’ libraries have cut back on other media purchases, such as CD audiobooks, to free up funds for purchases of e-books.

- **Librarians’ roles are changing.** A majority of the librarians who responded to our query said they are excited about the role that e-books have played in their institutions and the way that e-books have added to patrons’ lives. At the same time, many report that much more of their time is devoted to providing “tech support” for patrons—both in their hardware needs and mastering software and the web—and away from traditional reference services. Librarians often are anxious about the new set of demands on them to learn about the operations of new gadgets, to master every new web application, and to de-bug every glitch on a digital device. A notable portion of librarians report they are self-taught techies. Staff training programs often help, but librarians report wide variance in the quality of some training efforts.

Imagining the future of libraries

Patrons and librarians were fairly uncertain about the exact way that libraries would function in the future. Overall, most librarians from our online panel thought that the evolution of e-book reading devices and digital content has been a good thing for libraries, and all but a few thought that the evolution of e-book reading devices and digital content has been a good thing for reading in general.
Still, there was a strong sense in answers from librarians and users that significant change was inevitable, even as readers’ romance with printed books persists. Some patrons talked about libraries with fewer printed books and more public meeting and learning spaces. Some librarians struggled to see past a murky transition. There was a combination of apprehension and excitement in their answers without a clear consensus about the structure and shape of the institution.

In brief: About this research

Quantitative data

All the statistics in this report, including all specific data about various groups, comes from a series of nationally-representative phone surveys of Americans. They were conducted in English and Spanish, by landline and cell phone. The main survey, of 2,986 Americans ages 16 and older, was conducted on November 16-December 21, 2011, and extensively focused on the new terrain of e-reading and people’s habits and preferences. This work was underwritten by a grant from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.

Several other nationally-representative phone surveys were conducted between January 5-8 and January 12-15, 2012 to see the extent to which adoption of e-book reading devices (both tablets and e-readers) might have grown during the holiday gift-giving season, and those growth figures are reported here. Finally, between January 20-February 19, 2012, we re-asked the questions about the incidence of book reading in the previous 12 months in order to see if there had been changes because the number of device owners had risen so sharply. In general, however, all data cited in this report are from the November/December survey unless we specifically cite the subsequent surveys.

Qualitative material

The qualitative material in this report, including the extended quotes from individuals regarding e-books and library use, comes from two sets of online interviews that were conducted in May 2012. The first group of interviews was of library patrons who have borrowed an e-book from the library. Some 6,573 people answered at least some of the questions on the patron canvassing, and 4,396 completed the questionnaire. The second group of interviews was of librarians themselves. Some 2,256 library staff members answered at least some of the questions on the canvassing of librarians, and 1,180 completed the questionnaire. Both sets of online interviews were opt-in canvassings meant to draw out comments from patrons and librarians, and they are not representative of the general population or even library users. As a result, no statistics or specific data points from either online questionnaire are cited in this report.

Acknowledgements

About Pew Internet

The Pew Research Center’s Internet & American Life Project is an initiative of the Pew Research Center, a nonprofit “fact tank” that provides information on the issues, attitudes, and trends shaping America and the world. The Pew Internet Project explores the impact of the internet on children, families, communities, the work place, schools, health care and civic/political life. The Project is nonpartisan and
takes no position on policy issues. Support for the Project is provided by The Pew Charitable Trusts. More information is available at www.pewinternet.org.

Advisors for this research

A number of experts have helped Pew Internet in this research effort:

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Bobbi Newman, Blogger, Librarian By Day
Carlos Manjarrez, Director, Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation, Institute of Museum and Library Service
Mayur Patel, Vice President for Strategy and Assessment, John S. and James L. Knight Foundation
Sharman Smith, Executive Director, Mississippi Library Commission
Francine Fialkoff, Editor-in-Chief, Library Journal

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Part 1: An introduction to the issues surrounding libraries and e-books

The emergence of digital content has disrupted industries and institutions that have enjoyed relatively stable practices, policies, and businesses for decades. News organizations, record companies, broadcast and movie producers, and book publishers have all been dramatically affected by the change.

So have libraries. Interest in e-books took off in late 2006 with the release of Sony Readers, and accelerated after Amazon’s Kindle was unveiled a year later. And this public interest prompted many libraries to offer e-books to borrow, and this patrons’ interest in e-books has only grown over time.

For instance, the Buffalo & Erie County Public Library system found several months ago that “circulation of the system’s 10,346 electronic volumes is skyrocketing—at the same time that circulation of traditional materials has been remaining steady or dropping slightly,” according to an article in The Buffalo News. “In a four-day period after Christmas,” the article reports, “library cardholders downloaded 3,028 library-owned electronic titles onto devices including home computers, [cell phones] and digital readers such as NOOKs and Kindles.”

These changes are systemic. There are over 16,600 library buildings in the nation’s 9,000 public library systems in the United States, according to the American Libraries Association, and some 76% of them now offer e-books for patrons to borrow—up from 67% last year. Though overall use of e-books is still relatively low compared to print books and other types of digital content, libraries across the country have seen significant growth in patron demand for e-book titles, especially new releases and bestsellers.

OverDrive, a global distributor of digital content to library patrons, reported that in 2011:

- Its library website traffic more than doubled to 1.6 billion page views and visitor sessions also doubled to nearly 100 million.
- Mobile device use increased to 22% of all checkouts. During the year, the OverDrive Media Console (a free e-book and audiobook app) was installed on 5 million devices, up 84% during the year and making the total install base 11 million users.
- 35 million digital titles were checked out of libraries in 2011, with 17 million holds on e-books that people were waiting for.

The company also reported in March 2012 that more than 5 million visitors viewed 146 million pages in 12.6 million visits to the firm’s hosted digital catalog. On average, e-book catalogs hosted more than 408,000 visits each day. Visitors viewed 11.6 pages and browsed the site for 9 minutes 34 seconds on

---

3 [http://www.ala.org/tools/libfactsheets/alalibraryfactsheet01](http://www.ala.org/tools/libfactsheets/alalibraryfactsheet01)
average. The firm also reported that e-book browsing is an evening activity: Visitors are most active from 8-9 p.m. in their respective regions, followed by 7 p.m. and 10 p.m.

According to OverDrive, about 60% of those accessing the collection browsed public library e-book collections to discover new content, rather than searching for a specific title. Among those browsers, romance was the most popular genre, followed by all fiction, mystery and suspense, historical fiction, and science fiction and fantasy.

Libraries are sometimes hard-pressed to keep up with this demand. Extremely long waiting lists for popular books are common. In Fairfax County in suburban Washington, D.C., for instance, “officials more than doubled the inventory of e-book copies from 2010 to 2011, to more than 10,000, but demand for the books tripled in that time,” according to The Washington Post. “Now the average wait time [for an e-book] is three weeks.” On a typical day in early December 2011, about 80% to 85% of the system's e-books are checked out, Elizabeth Rhodes, the collection services coordinator for the Fairfax library system, was quoted as saying. But after the holidays when the number of e-reader owners and tablet computer owners exploded, 98% of the collections were spoken for.7

More change is inevitable. There are several major efforts underway to digitize books, especially older, out-of-print, non-copyright protected books, including at Google, the Internet Archive, and Harvard University. And a recent survey of 411 publishers found that 63% plan to publish a digital book in 2012, and 64% said they were primarily interested in publishing non-fiction and technical digital content—a sign that publishers see a host of business and educational opportunities for the format and devices that can read e-material.8

**The strained relationship between libraries and publishers**

These changes have brought significant tension to the relationship between libraries and major publishers. Many publishers are worried about the effect that unlimited library lending of e-books will have on sales of digital titles and about piracy of digital material. In an open letter to librarians explaining its switch to limit the number of check-outs a library can offer on an e-book, HarperCollins said that its previous policy of “selling e-books to libraries in perpetuity, if left unchanged, would undermine the emerging e-book eco-system, hurt the growing e-book channel, place additional pressure on physical bookstores, and in the end lead to a decrease in book sales and royalties paid to authors.”9 Similarly, Simon & Schuster’s executive vice president and chief digital officer Elinor Hirschhorn says that the company does not make its e-books available to libraries at all because “[w]e’re concerned that authors and publishers are made whole by library e-lending and that they aren’t losing sales that they might have made in another channel.”10

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Meanwhile, libraries and their allies argue that library lending of digital works introduces those works to a wider audience and ultimately increases the demand for them. An August 2011 survey of 2,421 adults by Library Journal found “that over 50% of all library users report purchasing books by an author they were introduced to in the library,” according to Rebecca Miller, Library Journal’s executive editor. Miller maintained that the findings “[debunk] the myth that when a library buys a book the publisher loses future sales. Instead, it confirms that the public library does not only incubate and support literacy, as is well understood in our culture, but it is an active partner with the publishing industry in building the book market, not to mention the burgeoning e-book market.”

The current state of play between libraries and publishers

At the moment, two of the “big six” publishers, Simon & Schuster and MacMillan, do not sell e-books to libraries at all or allow any digital library lending of their titles. A third and a fourth, Hachette and Penguin, do not generally sell to libraries but are embarking on pilot programs to test models for e-book borrowing. A fifth publisher, HarperCollins, limits library lending to 26 check-outs per e-book, after which libraries may repurchase the title to continue lending it. The firm recently ended its relationship with OverDrive and is testing a new lending system with the 3M company. And the sixth major publisher, Random House, places no restrictions on its digital titles. At the same time, Random House recently raised its prices for e-book sales to libraries so that the cost for some titles as much as tripled. For instance, to purchase a newer title that is available in print as a hardcover will now cost a library anywhere from $65-$85, while titles available as paperbacks will generally be in the $25-$50 range.

In general, publishers’ e-book lending restrictions often attempt to mirror the logistics of print lending—for instance, only allowing an e-book to be lent out to one patron at a time through a “one book, one user” arrangement. According to a November 2010 survey from Library Journal and School Library Journal, “one book/one user” was the standard use license for about four in ten of responding public libraries; about one in ten had unlimited access, and another four in ten had both.

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11 More about the survey: “The data is being collected with the help of Bowker PubTrack Consumer. The first issue summarizes the findings of an August 2011 survey pinpointing usage patterns of library patrons, with special attention to e-book usage. In all, 3,193 people participated in the initial survey, and that number was screened so that the frequency of library patronage and book buying behaviors were similar to statistically derived norms,” resulting in a sample of 2,421. Responders were all U.S. residents aged 18 and over.”
13 http://americanlibrariesmagazine.org/e-content/ebooks-promising-new-conversations
14 See http://online.wsj.com/article/SB1000142405270230489870457747917405124172.html
15 This circulation limit “was arrived at after considering a number of factors, including the average lifespan of a print book, and wear and tear on circulating copies.” http://www.libraryjournal.com/lj/home/889452-264/harpercollins_puts_26_loan_cap.html.csp
16 Penguin recently ended its relationship with OverDrive, and as such has stopped offering e-books and digital audiobooks to libraries (until it can find a new distributor). http://paidcontent.org/article/419-penguin-ends-relationship-with-overdrive-no-e-books-in-libraries-at-all/
A central issue in these debates is whether libraries own their e-book titles as they do print titles, or if they merely lease access to them as they would subscription to an external digital database. Jo Budler, the state librarian of Kansas, recently ended her state’s libraries’ contract with OverDrive over this issue. According to Library Journal, Budler refused to renew the libraries’ contract with OverDrive when the distribution service attempted not only to significantly raise fees, but also to rewrite the terms of the contract in such a way that would prevent the libraries from ever transferring their holdings to a different provider. The State Library of Kansas then decided to transfer the libraries’ existing digital content to a new e-book lending service from technology company 3M, although Budler said that they first had to secure individual publishers’ permission to transfer the titles. (The libraries were able to transfer about two-thirds of their content.)

Similarly, the Douglas County Libraries in Colorado have made agreements with publishers “that will allow the library to purchase outright and manage the digital rights for e-books, furthering the library’s effort to replicate the traditional print purchasing model for electronic content.”

The rise of Amazon

Prior to 2011, e-book borrowers were able to check out several formats of e-books from their local libraries. The formats available were compatible with devices such as Barnes & Noble’s NOOK, the Sony Reader, and the Kobo reader, but not Amazon’s Kindle. In April 2011, however, Amazon announced that it was partnering with OverDrive to allow library patrons to check out Kindle books. Kindle Library Lending, which became available September 21, 2011, allows library patrons who own Kindles to borrow Kindle books from over 11,000 public and school libraries in the United States. It also allows borrowers to make notes in their copy of the e-book and to highlight certain passages; these markups are visible only to that user, not other library patrons or Amazon users. The service is only available to libraries, schools, and colleges in the U.S.

With Kindle Library Lending, any title the library owns that is available via OverDrive can now be downloaded by patrons who own Kindles, or who have devices running the Kindle app, such as Android devices; iPads, iPod touches, and iPhones; desktop computers, including Macs and PCs; BlackBerry devices; or Windows Phones. The library patron is technically not downloading the library’s copy of that e-book, but a copy directly from Amazon that corresponds to the library’s title—although the title will still be “unavailable” to other patrons when it is checked out to a Kindle. This means that libraries do not need to convert any files from ePub or other formats in order to have those titles available via Kindle.

As a result, one controversy surrounding Kindle Library Lending is that library patrons who choose to download a Kindle e-book are redirected to Amazon’s website, where they must log in with an Amazon account (as opposed to completing the entire process within their library’s system). This has raised
questions of privacy, as Amazon is able to track library patrons’ borrowing habits in a way that many librarians are uncomfortable with.\textsuperscript{26}

Amazon itself has declined to provide exact figures as to its number of overall customers, number of Amazon Prime members, or number of Kindles sold. A recent press release said only that in December 2011, “customers purchased well over 1 million Kindle devices per week.”\textsuperscript{27}

\textbf{About this research}

This report explores the world of e-books and libraries, where libraries fit into these book-consumption patterns of Americans, when people choose to borrow their books and when they choose to buy books. It examines the potential frustrations e-book borrowers can encounter when checking out digital titles, such as long wait lists and compatibility issues. Finally, it looks at non-e-book-borrower interest in various library services, such as preloaded e-readers or instruction on downloading e-books.

To understand the place e-reading, e-books, and libraries have in Americans’ evolving reading habits, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation has given the Pew Internet Project a grant to study this shifting digital terrain. Libraries have traditionally played a key role in the civic and social life of their communities, and this work is aimed at understanding the way that changes in consumer behavior and library offerings might affect that unique relationship between libraries and communities.

This report is part of the first phase of that Gates Foundation-funded research. Subsequent reports will cover how people in different kinds of communities (urban, suburban, and rural) compare in their reading habits and how teens and young adults are navigating this environment. Further down the line, our research will focus on the changing landscape of library services.

\textbf{Quantitative data}

The Pew Internet Project conducted several surveys to complete the work reported here. All quantitative findings in this report, including all specific numbers and statistics about various groups, come from a series of nationally-representative phone surveys. The first was a nationally-representative phone survey of 2,986 people ages 16 and older between November 16 and December 21, 2011. The sample was conducted 50% on landline phones and 50% on cell phones and in English and in Spanish. In addition, the survey included an oversample of 300 additional tablet computer owners, 317 e-reader owners, and 119 people who own both devices. The overall survey has a margin of error of ± 2 percentage points.

Beyond our December 2011 telephone survey, we asked a modest number of questions about tablets and e-readers in two telephone surveys conducted in January on an “omnibus” survey. These surveys involved 2,008 adults (age 18+) and were fielded between January 5-8 and January 12-15. Those surveys were conducted on landline and cell phones and were administered in English. We fielded them to determine if the level of ownership of e-readers and tablets had changed during the holiday gift giving season—and in fact it had. We reported that the level of ownership of both devices had nearly doubled in

\textsuperscript{26} http://blog.libraryjournal.com/ljinsider/2011/04/20/after-kindle-lending-the-deluge/
a month—from 10% ownership for each device in December to 19% in January. The margin of error for the combined omnibus survey data is ± 2.4 percentage points.

Finally, we asked questions about book reading and ownership of tablets and e-books in a survey fielded from January 20-February 19, 2012. In all, 2,253 adults (age 18+) were interviewed on landline and cell phone and in English and Spanish. The margin of error for the entire sample is ± 2 percentage points.

In general, all data cited in this report are from the November/December survey unless we specifically cite the subsequent surveys.

Qualitative material

The qualitative material in this report, including the extended quotes from individuals regarding e-books and library use, comes from two sets of online interviews that were conducted in May 2012. The first group of interviews was of library patrons who have borrowed an e-book from the library. Some 6,573 people answered at least some of the questions on the patron canvassing, and 4,396 completed the questionnaire. The second group of interviews was of librarians themselves. Some 2,256 library staff members answered at least some of the questions on the canvassing of librarians, and 1,180 completed the questionnaire. Both sets of online interviews were opt-in canvassings meant to draw out comments from patrons and librarians, and they are not representative of the general population or even library users. As a result, no statistics or specific data points from either online questionnaire are cited in this report.

Throughout this report we quote from individual patrons’ answers about their experiences checking out e-books and their reactions to this relatively new service being offered by libraries. The majority of our patron respondents are female, and about half were in their forties or older. Their most common community type was “a small city or suburb,” followed by “a large metropolitan area or big city.”

Among the library staff who completed questionnaires, a strong majority were female. They were generally ages 25-64. The most common position title was “librarian,” followed by “director” or “chief officer.” The most common community type for their library was a small city or suburb, followed by a large metropolitan area or big city. About half of the libraries had 50,000 or fewer patrons.

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28 The results of the omnibus surveys were reported here: http://pewinternet.org/Reports/2012/E-book readers-and-tablets.aspx
Part 2: Where people discover and get their books

As part of our exploration of the new ecosystem of books, we asked respondents in our December 2011 survey about the way they discover books and then obtain them. We found that personal recommendations dominate book recommendations. At the same time, logarithms on websites, bookstore staffers, and librarians are in the picture, too.

In our December 2011 survey, we asked all the respondents if they ever got book recommendations from several sources and they reported:

- 64% of those ages 16 and older said they get book recommendations from family members, friends, or co-workers. Those most likely to cite these sources include: women (70%), whites (67%), those under age 65 (66%), college graduates (82%), those in households earning over $75,000 (81%), parents of minor children (69%), suburban residents (66%), and all types of technology users (tablet owners, e-reader owners, internet users).

- 28% of those ages 16 and older said they get recommendations from online bookstores or other websites. Those most likely to get online recommendations include internet users who are: women (38%), those ages 30-64 (38%), college graduates (47%), those in households earning more than $75,000 (46%), tablet owners (51%), and e-reader owners (64%).

- 23% of those ages 16 and older said they get recommendations from staffers in bookstores they visit in person. Those most likely to get recommendations this way include: college graduates (28%), those living in households earning more than $75,000 (30%), parents of minor children (27%), technology owners and users, urban and suburban residents, and those connected to libraries.

- 19% of those ages 16 and older said they get recommendations from librarians or library websites. Those most likely to get recommendations this way include: women (23%), 16- and 17-year-olds (36%), college graduates (26%), owners of e-readers (25%), those who have read a printed book in the past year (23%), and those who have listened to an audiobook (37%).

We did not specifically ask about the role of professional book critics as a source of book discovery because we assumed they would be a source that factored into all these options.

Library users and library fans were more likely to cite all these sources of book recommendations, perhaps because they read more than non-library users. Among those who said the local library was very important to them and their family, 32% said they got book recommendations from librarians. Library card holders also got recommendations from all these sources at greater levels than non-card holders (28% vs. 7%).

Our online patron respondents said they received recommendations from a variety of sources, with the vast majority saying they get recommendations from family and friends, book reviews, and website recommendations.

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29 Such as library users, library card holders, and those who said the local library was very important to them and their family
“If I hit on a genre I like,” one reader on our panel said, “I’ll go to Amazon.com, look up a book I’ve read and enjoyed, and then look to see what other books Amazon thinks is like the book I just looked up. I also use social networking book sites, like Good Reads, to get ideas. I also use recommendations from Facebook friends as a place to start.”

**Where people get book recommendations**

*Among Americans ages 16+

| Source: Dec. 2011 results are from a survey of 2,986 people ages 16 and older conducted November 16-December 21, 2011. The survey was conducted in English and Spanish and on landline and cell phones. The margin of error is +/- 2 percentage points.*

In addition to friends and family, our online query respondents frequently mentioned book clubs as the recommendation source of their most recent book. Some also turned to browsing (both a library’s physical stacks and external websites), podcasts, TV and radio reviews, and award lists for more recommendations.

**The way people prefer to get books in general: To buy or to borrow?**

In our December 2011 survey, we found that 78% of Americans ages 16 and older read or listened to a book in the past year. We asked those book readers how, in general, they prefer to get their books, and found that a majority of print readers (54%) and readers of e-books (61%) say they prefer to purchase their own copies of these books rather than borrow them from somewhere else. In contrast, most audiobook listeners prefer to borrow their audiobooks; just one in three audiobook listeners (32%) prefer to purchase audiobooks they want to listen to, while 61% prefer to borrow them.
When you want to do the following, do you prefer purchasing your own copy, or borrowing it from a library or some other source?

*Among Americans ages 16+ who in the past year read print books, e-books, and audiobooks, respectively*

![Bar chart showing preferences for reading formats](chart.png)

Source: Dec. 2011 results are from a survey of 2,986 people ages 16 and older conducted November 16-December 21, 2011. N for print book readers in the past 12 months= 2,295. N for e-reader owners in the past 12 months=793. N for audiobook listeners in the past 12 months=415. The survey was conducted in English and Spanish and on landline and cell phones.

Looking more closely at preferences by format, we find:

- **Among print readers**: Men are more likely than women to want to purchase their books, and print readers in households making at least $75,000 per year are more likely to want to purchase their books than those in lower-income households. Those who own tablet computers or e-readers are more likely than non-owners to want to purchase printed books. Conversely, those who do not own such devices are more likely than owners to want to borrow books.

- **Among e-book readers**: Readers of e-books in households making at least $50,000 per year are more likely to want to purchase their e-books than those in lower-income households. E-reader and tablet owners are considerably more likely than non-owners to say they prefer to buy their e-books.

- **Among audiobook listeners**: There is an interesting division of preferences among audiobooks of different genders, as men are almost equally likely to prefer purchasing their audiobooks (47%) as borrowing them (45%), but women are much more likely to prefer borrowing (74%) to purchasing (19%).

Looking specifically at library card holders, we find they are buyers as well as borrowers of books. At the same time, they are more likely to say they borrow than are the book readers who are non-card holders. Audiobook listeners with library cards are much more likely than others to prefer borrowing their audiobooks, and those without library cards are more likely to prefer buying their own copy.
Library card holders are book buyers, too, and are more likely to want to borrow books

Among Americans ages 16+ who read print books, e-books, and audiobooks, respectively, the percentage who said they generally prefer to purchase or borrow that type of book

**Print book readers**

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<th>Library card holder</th>
<th>No card</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Purchase own copy</strong></td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>68%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Borrow</strong></td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>25%</td>
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**E-book readers**

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<th></th>
<th>Library card holder</th>
<th>No card</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Purchase own copy</strong></td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>76%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Borrow</strong></td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>18%</td>
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**Audiobook listeners**

<table>
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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Library card holder</th>
<th>No card</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Purchase own copy</strong></td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>52%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Borrow</strong></td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Source:** Dec. 2011 results are from a survey of 2,986 people ages 16 and older conducted November 16-December 21, 2011. N for print book readers in the past 12 months= 2,295. N for e-book readers in the past 12 months=793. N for audiobook listeners in the past 12 months=415. The survey was conducted in English and Spanish and on landline and cell phones.

Our online group of e-book borrowers offered some insight into how they decide whether to borrow or buy their books. Generally tech-savvy, our respondents are also particularly heavy readers. When it comes to e-book borrowers, 33% say they generally prefer to buy e-books and 57% say they generally prefer to borrow them.

Many respondents in our online panel said they liked to purchase books they might want to re-read or share with others, especially spiritual and self-help books. Many also preferred to purchase books for reading to children (although others cited their children’s voracious reading appetites as the reason for regular library trips). Graphics-heavy books, reference books, and books that are part of a series were also frequently mentioned as best for purchasing. At least one student mentioned a preference for purchasing used books, “so I can highlight and mark pages at will.”

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30 For instance, about half of our online questionnaire respondents said they read at least 20 print books per year, and about half read at least 11 e-books in the same time frame. And though audiobooks were not as popular as print or e-books, about half of the respondents had listened to at least one audiobook in that time—also significantly more than the general population we polled in our representative phone surveys.
Finally, some found the permanence of a personal print copy reassuring. “I know that electronic devices can fail,” one respondent said. “If [a device] does fail, what I once thought was permanent... isn’t.”

Where did the most recent book come from?

We asked book readers about the most recent book they read in any format, print, audio, or e-book: How had they obtained it? Almost half (48%) of readers ages 16 and older said they had purchased it. About a quarter (24%) said they had borrowed it from a friend or family member, and 14% said they borrowed it from a library.

| Source: Pew Research Center’s Internet & American Life Reading Habits Survey of 2,986 people ages 16 and older conducted November 16-December 21, 2011. The survey was conducted in English and Spanish and on landline and cell phones. N for people who read a book in any format in the past 12 months=2,474. |

The profile of those in each category varies:

- **48% of book readers had purchased the book.** Whites (49%) were more likely than minorities to have purchased their most recent book. Those living in households earning more than $75,000 (59%) were more likely than those in lower-income households to have bought their most recent book.

- **24% had borrowed the book from a friend or family member.** Some 30% of African Americans had gotten their most recent book this way, compared with 23% of whites. Those with high school diplomas (29%) were more likely than those with higher education to have borrowed their latest book from family or friends. Those living in households earning less than $75,000 (26%) were more likely than those in households earning more (18%) to have gotten their latest book this way. Some 31% of non-internet users borrowed their most recent book, compared with 22% of internet users. And those who chose to take our survey in Spanish were
considerably more likely than English speakers to have borrowed their most recent book from a family member or friend.

- **14% had borrowed the book from the library.** Fully 37% of the 16- and 17-year-olds in our survey got their most recent book from the library, and 20% of those ages 65 and older followed suit. Those whose most recent book came from the library tended to be those in the least well-off households—those earning $30,000 or less. Non-tech owners—those who don’t have tablets or e-readers or cell phones or internet access—were more likely than tech owners to have gotten their most recent book from the library.

Those who are audiobook consumers are particularly likely to rely on the library for their recent books: 24% of those who listened to an audiobook in the past year had borrowed a book from the library, compared with 13% of those who didn’t consume audiobooks.

In terms of device ownership, those who own e-readers or tablets are more likely than non-owners to have bought the last book they read—and they are more likely to say they prefer buying books than getting them other ways. Some 64% of e-reader owners purchased their last book, compared with 46% of non-e-reader owners. For tablet owners, 59% purchased their last book, compared with 47% of non-tablet owners.

**Owners of e-readers and tablets have different acquisition behaviors**

*Among Americans ages 16+ who read a book in the past 12 months, the percentage who got their most recent book from each source*

![Bar chart showing acquisition behaviors for e-book reader owners and non-owners, and tablet owners and non-owners.]

**Source:** Pew Research Center’s Internet & American Life Reading Habits Survey of 2,986 people ages 16 and older conducted November 16-December 21, 2011. The survey was conducted in English and Spanish and on landline and cell phones. N for people who read a book in any format in the past 12 months=2,474.

Beyond device ownership, those who had read an e-book (on any device) in the previous year were also more likely than print readers to have bought their most recent book: 55% of e-book readers had bought their most recently read book of any format, compared with 49% of print readers.

**A closer look at libraries**

Asked where they got the most recent book they read, library card holders are just as likely as non-card holders to have purchased the book, but much less likely to have gotten it from a family member or friend.
friend and more likely to have obtained it from the library. Overall, some 20% of book readers say their most recently read book came from the library.

Library card holders are also notably more likely than others to be consumers of other kinds of content, especially material in electronic form: 62% of card holders say they regularly read daily news or a daily newspaper (vs. 52% of non-card holders) and most of them say they read such material on a computer or handheld device. Some 55% of library card holders regularly read magazines and journals (vs. 39% of non-card holders) and 35% of those card-holding readers say they read such material on a computer or handheld device.

Our online panel respondents outlined the complex paths they often take to find and pursue books that catch their eye. One respondent read the *Hunger Games* series along with her 13 year-old daughter: “We got the books from the library after waiting a long time for reserved copies. We loved them so much that we are going to purchase the whole series tomorrow from the school Scholastic book order form. Also I have all them on my new iPad Kindle app and my son is now able to start reading them.”

Another online panelist wrote that she had found her latest book by chance at the library, which she described as “a complete fluke since I rarely browse physical shelves these days. I have a preschooler and he rarely stays put still long enough for me to find something while we’re in the library.” She added, “Usually, I find books in the catalog, go to Amazon to read reviews about it, request books for pickup at my local branch and then pick them up on our way to the children's section in the library.”

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**Library card holders have different book-acquiring strategies**

*Among Americans ages 16+ who read a book in the past 12 months, the percentage who got their most recent book from each source*

| Source | Pew Research Center’s Internet & American Life Reading Habits Survey of 2,986 people ages 16 and older conducted November 16–December 21, 2011. The survey was conducted in English and Spanish and on landline and cell phones. N for people who read a book in any format in the past 12 months=2,474.**
Many of our online respondents described how the library fit into their book discovery process as a way to “try out” new authors and genres before committing to a print purchase. “I like to read new-to-me authors by borrowing from the library,” one said. “If I enjoy the book, I will then purchase it.” Many of our online panelists wrote that even when they preferred to borrow a book, they often purchased books that had long wait lists or were unavailable at their local library, or if they thought the book would be too long to finish in the allotted time.

The library was also an important source for the many respondents who described themselves as voracious readers, as it freed their reading habits from the constraints of budget and storage space. Still, there some who buy the book after having read a borrowed copy. “The only time I buy a book to keep is when I have read it and liked it enough to feel like I want to have it forever and read it again and again,” one wrote.

The e-book ecosystem: Where do e-book readers start their search?

In our December 2011 survey, three-quarters of people who read e-books (75%) said that when they want to read a particular e-book, they usually look for it first at an online bookstore or website, while 12% said they tend to look first at their public library.

When you want to read a particular e-book, where do you look first?

Among Americans ages 16+ who read an e-book in the past 12 months

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Option</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>At an online bookstore/website</td>
<td>75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At your public library</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Someplace else</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t know</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Dec. 2011 results are from a survey of 2,986 people ages 16 and older conducted November 16-December 21, 2011. The survey was conducted in English and Spanish and on landline and cell phones. N for people who read an e-book in past 12 months=793.
Among those who read e-books, men are more likely than women to look first at online booksellers, and whites are more likely to look online than African Americans. E-book readers with at least some college experience are more likely to look at online booksellers first than those with less education, and e-book readers who live in households making at least $50,000 per year are more likely to look online first than those making less (who are more likely to say that they don’t know where they would look first).

One in twenty e-book readers said that they usually first look for e-books someplace other than an online bookseller or their public library. It’s possible that among these sources is Amazon’s Kindle Owners’ Lending Library (KOLL), which allows Amazon Prime members to check out one e-book at a time up to once a month. Outside of the Kindle Lending Library, Amazon has an option that allows Kindle e-books to be lent to another individual once for 14 days, although not all titles have this option enabled.

Even e-book borrowers take their cues from commercial sources. Some 71% of e-book borrowers say they get book recommendations from online bookstores and websites; 39% say they get recommendations from the staff at bookstores they visit; and 42% say they get recommendations from librarians.

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Part 3: Library users

Our December 2011 survey showed that 58% of Americans ages 16 and older said they had a library card.

### Library user demographics

Among each group of Americans ages 16+, the percentage who say they have a library card

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>% who have a library card</th>
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</thead>
</table>
| All Americans ages 16+   | 58%  
| Men                      | 48%  
| Women                    | 67%  
| **Race/ethnicity**       |      
| White, Non-Hispanic      | 59%  
| Black, Non-Hispanic      | 56%  
| Hispanic (English- and Spanish-speaking) | 47%  
| **Age**                  |      
| 16-17                    | 62%  
| 18-29                    | 56%  
| 30-49                    | 60%  
| 50-64                    | 58%  
| 65+                      | 52%  
| **Household income**     |      
| Less than $30,000/yr     | 50%  
| $30,000-$49,999          | 62%  
| $50,000-$74,999          | 60%  
| $75,000+                 | 65%  
| **Educational attainment** |      
| No high school diploma  | 39%  
| High school grad         | 50%  
| Some College             | 64%  
| College +                | 72%  
| **Geographic location**  |      
| Urban                    | 59%  
| Suburban                 | 61%  
| Rural                    | 48%  
| **Parental status**      |      
| Parent of minor child    | 66%  
| Not a parent             | 54%  

**Source:** Pew Research Center’s Internet & American Life Reading Habits Survey of 2,986 people ages 16 and older conducted November 16-December 21, 2011. The survey was conducted in English and Spanish and on landline and cell phones.
Women, whites, and parents of minor children are more likely to have library cards than other groups, and having a library card is also strongly correlated with educational attainment: 39% of those who have not completed high school have a library card, compared with 72% of those with at least a college degree. Those living in households making less than $30,000 per year and those living in rural areas are less likely than other groups to have a library card, and seniors ages 65 and older are somewhat less likely to have one as well.

These findings are in line with the results of a January 2011 ALA/Harris Interactive poll, which found that 58% of adults ages 18 and older said they had a library card. (Our survey found 57% of those ages 18 and above had a card.\textsuperscript{34})

Technology users are more likely to have library cards than non-users. For instance, those who use the internet are more likely to have a library card than non-internet users (62% vs. 37%); cell users are more likely to have a library card than non-users (59% vs. 47%); and those who own e-readers (like an original Kindle or NOOK) are more likely to have a library card than non-users (69% vs. 56%). However, tablet owners are no more or less likely to have library cards than non-owners.

**How important are libraries?**

Beyond the particulars of library card holding, we asked respondents about the role of the local library in their life. Almost seven in ten Americans (69%) say that public libraries are important to them and their family: 38% of Americans ages 16 and older say that the public library is “very important,” and 31% say it is “somewhat important.” Some 17% say it is “not too important,” while 13% say it is “not important at all.”

Many groups that are less likely to have a library card are also more likely to say that the public library is not important to their family, including men (compared with women), those who have not completed high school (compared with those with higher levels of education), rural residents (compared with urban and suburban residents), and people without minor children living at home (compared with parents).

At the same time, minorities are generally more likely to say libraries are important than whites and minorities are notably more likely to say libraries are very important: Some 48% of African-Americans say that and 44% of Hispanics say that, compared with 35% of whites. Though the number of Spanish-speaking respondents was relatively small in the sample (89 cases), they were more likely than English-speakers to say the library was very important to them and their families. Fully half (50%) of parents with minor children say that libraries are very important to them and their families, compared with 35% of non-parents who have that view.

On the other hand, the youngest respondents (those 16-17 years old) were substantially less likely than adults to say that libraries are “very important”—just 13% of this youngest age group say this, compared with over a third (39%) of adults ages 18 and older.

How important is the public library to your family?
Among Americans ages 16+ in each group, the total percentages of those who said the library was important (“very important” or “somewhat important”) and not important (“not too important” or “not important at all”)  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Total important</th>
<th>Total not important</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All adults 16+</td>
<td>69%</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Men</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Race/ethnicity</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White, Non-Hispanic</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black, Non-Hispanic</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic*</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Age</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16-17</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18-29</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30-49</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50-64</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65+</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Household income</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than $30,000/yr</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$30,000-$49,999</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$50,000-$74,999</td>
<td>69%</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$75,000+</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Educational attainment</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No high school diploma</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High school grad</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some College</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College +</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Geographic location</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suburban</td>
<td>69%</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Parental status</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parent</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not a parent</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Pew Research Center’s Internet & American Life Reading Habits Survey of 2,986 people ages 16 and older conducted November 16-December 21, 2011. The survey was conducted in English and Spanish and on landline and cell phones.
There are others who are particularly likely to say the library is important to them: Those who have listened to an audiobook in the past year are more likely than others to say libraries are very important (49% vs. 39%). Those who read at least monthly for their own pleasure are also more likely to say libraries are very important (41% vs. 29%). And those who read monthly to keep up with current events are more likely to say libraries are very important (39% vs. 33%).

In our survey we asked if respondents had any physical or health conditions that make reading difficult or challenging for them. Some 17% of respondents said they had an issue like that in their lives and those who have health or physical issues that make reading difficult are more likely than others to say the library is very important to them—44% vs. 37%.

**Library users are more engaged with all kinds of reading**

Those who have library cards and think well of the library’s role in their lives stand out in several ways from others. For starters, they are more likely to say their own quality of life is good or excellent.

When it comes to technology, library card holders are more connected than those who don’t have cards. They are more likely than others to be internet users (88% vs. 73%), more likely to own a cell phone (89% vs. 84%), and more likely to have a desktop or laptop computer (81% vs. 67%). And they are more likely than others to say they plan to purchase an e-reader or a tablet computer.

Library card holders read more books than non-holders. In the 12 months before our December survey, library card holders say they read an average (the mean number) of 20 books, compared with 13 books as the mean number of books read by non-card holders. The median (midpoint) figures for books read were 10 by library card holders and 5 by non-holders.

On any given day, those who have library cards are considerably more likely to be reading a book than non-card holders: In our survey, 53% of card holders said they had read a book “yesterday”—or the day before we reached them to take the survey. Some 31% of non-card holders responded yes to that question.

These library card holders are also more likely than non-card holders to have read a book in the past year in every medium, as shown in the following chart.
Library card holders are more likely to consume books in every format

Among Americans ages 16+ who have read a book in each format in the previous 12 months, the percentage who read books in the following formats

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Format</th>
<th>Library card holder</th>
<th>No card</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Printed book</td>
<td>95%</td>
<td>88%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E-book</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Audiobook</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Pew Research Center’s Internet & American Life Reading Habits Survey of 2,986 people ages 16 and older conducted November 16-December 21, 2011. The survey was conducted in English and Spanish and on landline and cell phones. n=2,474 people who read a book in the past 12 months.

When it comes to people’s different purposes for reading, library card holders are more likely than others to say they read for every reason that we queried in the survey—for pleasure, to keep up with current events, to conduct research on subjects that were personally interesting to them, and for work or school. Card holders are also more likely to read more often for each of those purposes.

When asked what they most like about reading, library card holders are similar to other readers, but they are a somewhat more likely to say they enjoy the escape that reading gives them and chance to use their imaginations.
Library card holders read for more reasons

Among Americans ages 16+ in each group, the percentage who say they read for each reason

Source: Pew Research Center’s Internet & American Life Reading Habits Survey of 2,986 people ages 16 and older conducted November 16-December 21, 2011. The survey was conducted in English and Spanish and on landline and cell phones.
Part 4: How people used the library in the past year

We asked respondents if they had used the library in the past year for a variety of purposes, including research, book-borrowing, and periodicals like newspapers and magazines. Some 56% of those ages 16 and older said that they had used a public library at least once in the past year for one of the activities we queried:

- **Borrow printed books**: 35% of Americans ages 16 and older used their library in the past year to do so. That translates into 48% of all those who read a printed book in the past year. Women who read printed books are more likely than men to borrow them from the library. Even more strikingly, those ages 16-17 are the heaviest print-book borrowing cohort: 64% of the printed-book readers in that cohort borrowed a print book from the library.

- **Access historical documents or archives or genealogical records**: 25% of Americans ages 16 and older used their library in the past year to do so. African-Americans are more likely than others to have done this: 29% used the library this way, compared with 23% of whites and 19% of Hispanics.

- **Access specialized databases such as legal or public records**: 22% of Americans ages 16 and older used their library in the past year to do so. African-Americans are notably more likely than others to use the library for this: 33% have done so, compared with 21% of whites and 18% of Hispanics.

- **Get research help from a librarian**: 20% of Americans ages 16 and older used their library in the past year to do so. Some 29% of African-Americans seek out research assistance from librarians, compared with 18% of whites and 22% of Hispanics.

- **Access or borrow magazines or journals**: 15% of Americans ages 16 and older used their library in the past year to do so. That translates into 30% of those who regularly read magazines and journals. Fully 37% of the African-Americans who regularly read magazines use the library for this, compared with 27% of whites who regularly read magazines and 29% of Hispanics.

- **Access or borrow newspapers**: 14% of Americans ages 16 and older used their library in the past year to do so. That translates into 25% of those who regularly read daily news or newspapers. Some 35% of African-Americans who regularly read news accounts use the library to access news material, compared with 23% of news-consuming whites and 21% of news-consuming Hispanics.

- **Borrow audiobooks**: 4% of Americans ages 16 and older used their library in the past year to do so. That translates into 38% of all those who listened to audiobooks in the past year.

- **Borrow e-books**: 2% of Americans ages 16 and older used their library in the past year to do so. That translates into 12% of all those who read an e-book in the past year.
Library use in the past year
Among Americans ages 16+ in each group, the percentage who have used the library for the following purposes in the past year

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Total used library in the past year</th>
<th>Total used the library...</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>For research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All 16+</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Men</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Race/ethnicity</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White, Non-Hispanic</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black, Non-Hispanic</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic (English- and Spanish-speaking)</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16-17</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18-29</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30-49</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50-64</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65+</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Household income</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than $30,000/yr</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$30,000-$49,999</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$50,000-$74,999</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$75,000+</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational attainment</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No high school diploma</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High school grad</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some College</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College +</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geographic location</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suburban</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parent</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not a parent</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Pew Research Center’s Internet & American Life Reading Habits Survey of 2,986 people ages 16 and older conducted November 16-December 21, 2011. The survey was conducted in English and Spanish and on landline and cell phones.

Looking at the people who use the library for any purpose in the past year, several trends stood out. Those 65 and older are the least likely to have used a library in the past 12 months, while those ages 16-17, virtually all of whom are still students, are by far the most likely ages group to have visited a library, especially for research purposes. Additionally, 16-17 year-olds (as well as 30-49 year-olds) are more likely than others to have used the library to borrow books in the past year.
Women are more likely than men to have used a library, especially for borrowing books (42% vs. 28%). Hispanics are less likely than whites or African-Americans to have used a library in the previous year, and African-Americans are more likely than others to use a library for research. Those with at least some college experience are more likely than those who had not attended college to use the library for any reason. Those in higher income brackets are generally more likely to have used a library to borrow books, and parents are more likely to borrow books than non-parents. Overall, we find that 40% of those ages 16 and older had used a library in the past year for research, and 36% had used a library to borrow books. Some 22% borrowed periodicals like newspapers and magazines, or journals.

### The basics of library use in the past year

**Among all Americans ages 16+, the percentage who have used the library for the following purposes in the past year**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Purpose</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>For research (all)</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To borrow books</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To borrow newspapers / magazines</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total used the library</td>
<td>56%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Source:** Pew Research Center’s Internet & American Life Reading Habits Survey of 2,986 people ages 16 and older conducted November 16-December 21, 2011. The survey was conducted in English and Spanish and on landline and cell phones.

These findings are similar to the results to a January 2011 ALA/Harris Interactive poll, in which 65% of respondents said they had visited the library in the past year. The poll also found that women are significantly more likely than men (72% vs. 58%) to have visited a library in the past year, “especially working women, working mothers and women aged 18-54.”

It is important to note that we asked no questions about technology use at libraries because that was outside the scope of this research. Other studies by Pew Internet and others has documented that library patrons are often eager users of computers and internet connections at local libraries. Thus, it is

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likely that a number of additional Americans use their libraries for access to technology and the overall number of “library users” is greater than 56%. Indeed, we heard repeatedly from librarians who responded to our online canvassing that technology use and technology support is a major aspect of their work with patrons. There is more commentary from librarians on this topic in Part 8 of this report.

**Book-borrowing patterns**

**Print books**

Of all the readers we surveyed in December 2011, print readers were the most likely to have borrowed that format of book from the library: Among those who had read a print book in the past year, almost half (48%) borrowed a print book from the library in the same timeframe. This works out to 34% of all those ages 16 and older.

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**How many times in the past 12 months have you borrowed print books from the library?**

*Among Americans ages 16+ who read a print book in the past 12 months, the percentage who borrowed print books from the library in that time period*

---

Overall, women who read print books were significantly more likely to have borrowed a printed book from a library that men who read print books (54% vs. 41%). Those ages 16-17 who had read a printed book in the past year were the most likely to have borrowed a print book from their public library in that time, with 65% having done so. Adults ages 30-49 are the next likely group to check out print books (53% had done so). However, those older readers are somewhat more likely to be frequent borrowers, while 16-17 year olds are more likely to have borrowed print books five times or less. Parents are also more likely to check out print books than non-parents. The print book readers who have college degrees or live in households earning more than $75,000 were also more likely than others to have borrowed a
printed book from a library and they went to the library more times than other book readers to borrow a book.

When it comes to technology, print book readers who use technology are more likely than others to have borrowed a print book from the library. Fully 50% of the internet users who read a print book in the past year borrowed a printed book in the same period, compared with 32% of non-internet users. Also, those who own e-readers were also more likely than non-owners to have borrowed a printed book from the library in the past year.

**Audiobook borrowers**

Among those who had listened to an audiobook in the year prior to the survey, 38% used a public library to borrow audiobooks. This works out to 4% of all those 16 and older. About half of these audiobook borrowers had done so five or fewer times.

**How many times in the past 12 months have you borrowed audiobooks from the library?**

Among Americans ages 16+ who listened to an audiobook in the past 12 months, the percentage who borrowed audiobooks from the library in that time period.

![Chart showing audiobook borrowing frequency]

**Source:** Pew Research Center’s Internet & American Life Reading Habits Survey of 2,986 people ages 16 and older conducted November 16–December 21, 2011. The survey was conducted in English and Spanish and on landline and cell phones. N for the number people who listened to an audiobook in the past 12 months=415.

Though the sample size for audiobook borrowers from libraries is too small to do detailed statistical analysis of subgroups, such borrowers are more likely to be female than male and most likely to be white, college educated, and over the ages 30 or older. They are also more likely to be heavier readers.

**E-book borrowers**

E-book readers were the least likely to have borrowed that format from the library. As of December 2011, 12% of those who read e-books had borrowed or downloaded one from a public library in the year prior to the survey. This works out to 2% of all those 16 and older. About half of these e-book borrowers had borrowed an e-book five or fewer times in the past 12 months.
The sample size for e-book borrowers from libraries is too small to do detailed statistical analysis of subgroups, although our available data suggests some trends. For instance, borrowers of e-books from libraries at the moment seem to be relatively equally diverse in their demographic profile. Those with college degrees who generally read e-books are a bit more likely than others to have borrowed an e-book from a library.

E-book borrowers are also quite attached to their libraries, saying they are very important to them and their families and especially likely to say that they look first for e-books at their library. They also skew toward those who generally read heavily. E-book borrowers say they read an average (the mean number) of 29 books in the past year, compared with 23 books for readers who do not borrow e-books from a library. Perhaps more striking, the median (midpoint) figures for books reportedly read are 20 in the past year by e-book borrowers and 12 by non-borrowers.

(Note: You can read more about e-book readers who do not check out e-books from the public library in Part 7 of this report.)

### How many times in the past 12 months have you borrowed e-books from the library?

*Among Americans ages 16+ who read an e-book in the past 12 months, the percentage who borrowed e-books from the library in that time period*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-5 times</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-10 times</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11-25 times</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25+ times</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do not use the library for this</td>
<td>88%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Source:** Pew Research Center’s Internet & American Life Reading Habits Survey of 2,986 people ages 16 and older conducted November 16-December 21, 2011. The survey was conducted in English and Spanish and on landline and cell phones. N for the number of those who read an e-book in the past 12 months = 793.

### Using the library for research

**Research resources and periodicals**

We also asked about whether respondents used various library resources, such as specialized databases or periodicals. Notable numbers of library patrons were performing these research activities. At the
same time, very little of the research was accessed or used on e-readers or tablet computers. Some of the main findings include:

- Among those 16 and older who regularly read magazines or journals, three in ten (30%) accessed magazines or journals at a public library. One percent did this with a tablet or e-reader.

- One in four respondents (25%) accessed historical documents or genealogy records. One percent did this with a tablet or e-reader.

- Among those 16 and older who regularly read daily news or newspapers, about one in four (25%) used a library to access or borrow newspapers or news articles. One percent did this with a tablet or e-reader.

- Overall, about one in five those 16 and older (22%) accessed specialized databases, such as legal or public records in the year prior to the survey. Less than 1% of those 16 and older did this with a tablet or e-reader.

African-Americans are generally more likely than other ethnic groups to make use of these services at libraries, especially accessing newspapers or news articles and accessing specialized databases such as legal or public records. Those with at least some college experience are also generally more likely to use these services than those with lower levels of education, and those with the lowest household incomes are generally more likely to use these services than those with the highest household incomes. The main exception to this trend was accessing or borrowing magazines or journals, which was more popular with African-Americans than with whites and more popular with 18-29 year-olds than those ages 30-49 and 50-64.

**Get research help from a librarian**

One in five people ages 16 and older (20%) has used a public library to get research assistance from a librarian in the past twelve months. Easily the most active group was 16-17 year-olds, 43% of whom have gotten research help from a librarian in the past year—significantly more than any other age group. Although the sample size of teen library users is too small for detailed analysis, in general the 16-17 year olds who went to the library for research assistance in the past year tended to do so five times or less. (Adults ages 65 and older are also less likely than other age groups to get research help at a library.)
How many times in the past 12 months have you gotten research help from a librarian?

Among Americans ages 16+, the percentage who have gotten research help from a librarian in the past year

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-5 times</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-10 times</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11-25 times</td>
<td>2%</td>
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<tr>
<td>25+ times</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do not use the library for this</td>
<td>80%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Pew Research Center’s Internet & American Life Reading Habits Survey of 2,986 people ages 16 and older conducted November 16-December 21, 2011. The survey was conducted in English and Spanish and on landline and cell phones.

African-Americans are also more likely than whites or Hispanics to go to the library for research assistance from a librarian. Finally, those with at least some college and those in households making less than $30,000 per year are also relatively more likely than other groups to use libraries’ research services.

It is also worth noting that internet users are more likely than non-users to have gone to the library in the past year and gotten help from a librarian: 22% of internet users have done that, compared with 12% of non-users. And, as a rule, the more intense a person was as a book reader, the more likely it was that she had sought reference help from a librarian. On the other hand, those who asked to take our survey in Spanish were considerably less likely than others to have been to have gotten help from a librarian.
One in five Americans ages 16 and older has obtained research help from a librarian in the past year

Among all Americans ages 16+, the percentage who have gotten research help from a librarian in the past 12 months

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>% who got research help from a librarian</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All those 16+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Men</td>
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<tr>
<td>Women</td>
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<tr>
<td>Race/ethnicity</td>
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<tr>
<td>White, Non-Hispanic</td>
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<tr>
<td>Black, Non-Hispanic</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hispanic (English- and Spanish-speaking)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Age</td>
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<tr>
<td>16-17</td>
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<td>18-29</td>
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<td>30-49</td>
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<tr>
<td>50-64</td>
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<tr>
<td>65+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Household income</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than $30,000/yr</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$30,000-$49,999</td>
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<tr>
<td>$50,000-$74,999</td>
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<tr>
<td>$75,000+</td>
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<tr>
<td>Educational attainment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No high school diploma</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High school grad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some College</td>
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<tr>
<td>College +</td>
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<tr>
<td>Geographic location</td>
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<tr>
<td>Urban</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suburban</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural</td>
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<tr>
<td>Parental status</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not a parent</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Pew Research Center’s Internet & American Life Reading Habits Survey of 2,986 people ages 16 and older conducted November 16-December 21, 2011. The survey was conducted in English and Spanish and on landline and cell phones.
Many librarians from our online panel report seeing a dramatic decrease in use of traditional reference services. “Short answer reference questions have been replaced by Google,” one library director told us. Another librarian said, “The main thing that's changed in the last decade or two is how patrons access research materials. Instead of print indexes or even online databases, many people just Google everything and if they find something 'good enough,' they don't come to or contact the library for help.”

These responses echo the findings of OCLC's 2010 report, which found that 28% of library users asked for research assistance at the library in 2010, down from 39% in 2005. While half of the respondents in that survey said that the top purpose of the library was to “provide information,” the report found that search engines are the starting point of information queries for 84% of respondents and none started at a library website. However, the report also found that among Americans who have used a librarian in a research query, 83% agree librarians add value to the search process.

While many librarians reported a decrease in traditional reference services, they said that patrons are requesting information in other ways. They might see an uptick in use of IM reference, or steady use of a specialized resource (such as having a medical librarian on staff). “When asked, reference queries tend to require more in-depth research skills (e.g., knowledge of USPTO patent searching, Census databases, etc.),” one librarian said.

A common theme was the increasing “self-reliance” of patrons. “Even in the last couple years, patrons are more willing to use databases to find articles and are better able to understand that ProQuest or other databases with journals are different than the open web,” a librarian respondent wrote. “Combine that with the uptick in genealogy users, and we are using our databases much more.”

These thoughts might tie to the transition librarians are seeing as patrons request more technology help and less help finding books. Perhaps, some suggested, this shift might indicate change in knowledge acquisition strategies – less built on books and more built on technologically-enabled access to digital content.

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While libraries are considered more trustworthy than search engines in general, respondents have a high level of confidence in themselves to use search engines to find trustworthy information. http://www.oclc.org/reports/2010perceptions.htm
Part 5: Libraries in transition

How patrons’ book-borrowing habits are changing

The findings reported in this chapter come entirely from the online canvassings of patrons and librarians. The patron respondents in our opt-in sample were frequent visitors of both their library’s physical branch and website. They use their library’s website regularly to reserve books and download e-books, while physical branches were for print check-outs and the occasional research query. One patron’s description of her library habits was representative of many in our online panel: “I go to the library branch much less often and I use the library website several times per week. Before I got my e-book reader, I visited my library at least weekly and almost never used the website, except to reserve books.”

Many librarians echoed this. “Our customers are still using the library but in different ways. They browse our catalog online, place reserves on the items they want, then pick them up at their location of choice. Many fewer browse the collection in person,” one library department head told us. Another librarian observed, “We have so many people who only call us to update their library card so they can borrow e-books online.” A patron respondent had a similar story: “Fifteen years ago, I regularly visited the library twice a week. Now I go about once a month and often that is just to drop off books that are due or pick up books that I have reserved. I would prefer to do ALL of my library business online and have many more materials available in e-book format.”

Many patrons who were already using their library’s website to reserve books and then picking the books up; e-books allow them to do the same thing entirely online:

- “Before I got my NOOK I would borrow 3-4 books a week from the library. I would always reserve it on the website and have it ready for me when I got there. Now I don’t go near as often. Maybe once every couple of months for myself, but I take my kids there often.”
- “In the past, I had to stop in the library to pick up print books I had reserved. Now that I can also download e-books, I go to the building less often, but my total check outs are increased.”
- Patrons with limited access to their library’s physical branch, including adults living with disability and those who live in very rural areas, mentioned how e-books helped them read more. “A few months ago I was housebound due to a nasty illness,” one told us, and “thanks to the digital download system I was able to check out books and was able to keep on reading. That was an immense help since I live by myself and there was no one who could go get books for me.”

Librarians likewise said that the rising interest in e-books was one of the most striking changes to patrons’ habits. One library director described the sharp increase in demand for e-books in the last few years: “I graduated from library school in 2008 and there was little or no demand for e-books, mainly because the Kindle wasn’t compatible with the e-book lending services until very recently and the NOOK didn’t come out until 2010. Once the NOOK came out and the Kindle had become popular the demand for e-books increased significantly.” Another respondent told us, “People are asking for digital content. Anything digital. They are hungry for it.”

Some patrons said that all that has changed is that they use the website for e-books more, but still visit the library’s physical location as much as they did before. Others said that their physical visits have
increased: “I go to the library more because in searching for e-books, I’ll often find a book I want to read that is not available electronically, so I reserve it in print, and go to the library to pick it up. While I’m there, my children browse, and we take home more books.”

Yet even as some adults shifted to e-books, they wrote that they still returned to the library for print books for children and young adults. “The biggest change is that I download e-books more frequently,” one parent wrote. “However, with five kids, we are at the library a lot. It is our home away from home. We love our local library and truly can’t imagine life without it.”

Many librarians said that patrons were now interested in a wider variety types of digital and multi-media holdings—encompassing not only e-books and audiobooks, but also video games and DVDs. Yet many library staff members said that digital media are not necessarily replacing traditional materials. “Patrons increasingly request e-book content, but this seems to be in addition to their already-established library habits, and has not replaced any existing hardcopy media,” one library staff member told us. Similarly, patrons often wrote that e-book borrowing often complemented their established reading habits. “I don’t feel that my e-book reader has changed any of my patterns involving the local library. I still visit it frequently, and I still check out books in print. However, I feel that I do read more often with my e-book reader because there are just that many more things available to read (and I can acquire them almost instantly),” one e-book borrower said.

As one librarian pointed out, the prevalence of online systems for checking out e-books, reserving print books, and paying fines means while that patrons may have less “routine” interaction with library staff, they require more “specialized help” in the form of tech support. Many others echoed this. “It seems that most people who actually contact a librarian are looking for help navigating the site and downloading e-books,” one librarian told us. Another wrote, “We spend a significant part of our day explaining how to get library books onto e-book readers.”

The issue is even more pronounced with patrons who have not had much experience with technology in the past. One librarian detailed how the increased popularity of e-book reading devices has resulted in library staff spending more time on the basic tech support: “Many of our older patrons received electronic devices as gifts over the past two years. This group of library users asks for lots of help with their devices, from plugging them in to turning them on to trying to make them interface with the e-book portion of the library website.” (For more about this topic, please see Part 8: Future Thoughts.)

It should be noted that even among our panel of librarians whose libraries lend out e-books, not all face a huge demand for their electronic titles. “My library serves an economically challenged area so we have not had the demand for e-books that other libraries are experiencing,” one director wrote. “Large numbers of our patrons have not been able to invest in e-book readers or tablets.” However, she added that the library had also seen “an increase in people using their mobile phones to access library services.”

**Librarians: Changes in library holdings**

As noted in the first section of this report, the scope and popularity of most libraries’ digital holdings have increased and increasing levels of usage are driving the change. Our online panels reflected this trend, with most of the library staff who responded to our online questionnaire reporting that e-book circulation at their library had more than doubled in the past year (compared with the previous year).
In our online questionnaire, library staff described how they are attempting to fund e-book collections in response to rising patron demand. One common strategy mentioned by these librarians was to shift some funds allocated from printed collections to digital collections. Others mentioned cutting increasingly obsolete resources, like collections of cassettes or VHS tapes, as well as databases that are rarely used:

- “We have increased our budget for digital content by 500% in the past three years. We have cut the budget for CD audiobooks and print materials to free up funds for downloadable content.”
- “We have no budget for digital content. We will need to cut somewhere in the future to free up funds for e-book purchases.”
- “We initially started with grant money to fund e-books and downloadable audio. Last year the amount was increased using funding from the co-op. This year each library has had to add additional funds (ours was from the materials budget) to try and keep up with the demand, but with the increase in prices we have not been able to keep the same hold to book ratio as we do with print materials.”
- “There has been a decrease in the collection budget for reference materials and serials to meet the need for digital content.”

Among the library staff who responded to our questionnaire, about half said that their library pays for patron access to e-books out of a collection budget. The next most common response was that the library participates in a consortium that pays and provides access to all consortium members, as public libraries in Wisconsin have recently done. In this collective agreement, Wisconsin libraries will “pool their resources and create a $1 million fund to lease new e-content in 2012.”

According to Library Journal’s 2012 Book Buying Survey, print books account for on average 61% of libraries’ spending on materials, compared with 20% for media and 4% for e-books. The survey found that libraries’ book budgets declined 2% over the past year, even as most libraries increased their spending on e-books. And, according to the ALA’s 2011-2012 Public Library Funding & Technology Access Study, 57% of libraries report flat or decreased operating budgets in FY2012.

The changing roles of librarians

Over half of the librarians among our online respondents said that the evolution of e-book reading devices and digital content has had a good impact on their role as a librarian:

- “I think it’s had a good impact. I think patrons are excited when we help them navigate the world of e-books and they actually get an e-book onto their reader for the first time. Not only are they able to read the book at no cost, but it gives them a sense of technological accomplishment. Using e-books motivates them to power through all of the roadblocks—they might have given up otherwise, but the incentive here is great enough that they keep going.”
- “Since e-versions of books and information do not require physical space, handling, can’t be lost or easily destroyed; can be controlled in terms of check-out, [they] eliminate a whole range of...

customer service problems that present themselves in a physical environment—no late fees for an e-book because the check out period can be completely controlled. For those reasons, it is extremely efficient and effective way to provide service. It preserves information in a new way and allows access in a manner most convenient to the end user—all good. Only access to the technology poses a problem.”

Others were more ambivalent:

- “Patrons are rediscovering the librarian as a helper and knowledge-bank. This is good. But we, as librarians, are more tech gurus than librarians to patrons with e-book readers and other mobile devices. This is not as good. But the library as an institution is changing, so changes in our role is to be expected. Younger librarians and an ever-growing group of tech-savvy patrons will create new relationships.”

- “I think it has challenged me a bit to keep up with all of the politics/trends/information that is out there. I also feel that it has made my job to select titles with my community in mind less important.”

Most library staff respondents said that they feel the availability of e-books brings new patrons into the system, although they generally did not feel that the advent of e-books necessarily brought younger readers into contact with the library more often. One librarian said that while she was happy that e-books brought in “21st century readers,” she felt that libraries did not have enough control over the terms of this new format. “There is not much out there in workshops dedicated to e-books because of the wariness in approaching this new form that doesn't seem to be too library friendly,” she wrote. “But more and more people are buying books in digital format because of ease and use. This trickles down to the library and its traditional role of lending, which makes for more patron usage.”

One of the biggest frustrations that many librarians mentioned was their new role as tech support for their community. “Customers expect the librarians to be proficient on all mobile devices,” one branch manager wrote, adding that “[m]ore and more the librarian’s role has evolved to that of a teacher.”

Another librarian, however, did not see the emphasis on technology as new to the role. “Showing patrons how to use digital content and e-book readers is not much different than showing people how to use the micro-film machine or our public computers except it might take a little more time,” she said. (For more about this topic, please see Part 8: Future Thoughts.)

**The move to e-books**

**Staff training**

With so many patrons relying on library staff to troubleshoot their e-reading devices, the issue of training staff members themselves on those devices is an important one, according to some of the respondents. However, the training experiences of the respondents to our librarian questionnaire were mixed.

The library staff members that had the most positive training experiences often mentioned having extensive hands-on instruction with the devices, especially when the library or individual staff members were given devices on which to practice at home. Enthusiastic staff members who shared what they learned with each other, as well as flexible training programs, were also frequently cited as part of a
productive training environment. Many also mentioned their personal experiences reading on these devices as useful in helping answer patrons’ questions:

- “We had a series of online assignment for staff. We also have ‘technology training kits’ that hold a variety of current e-book readers, and staff can ‘play’ with them so they become familiar with them.”
- “The staff, bless them, are up to the challenge of managing this moving target. We mostly learn new devices as we encounter them—there is no way we can see them all in advance. We looked at how to download from OverDrive in a staff training session and that was helpful for the process on the web site but mostly useless for getting to individual devices. Most of our staff are personal users of e-books and e-audio so they are happy to learn how to do it.”
- “We provided staff training in preparation for staff providing patron training. Well-received. We also provided $75 reimbursements for staff to purchase their own e-book reader or tablet, and that was very well received and provided much hands-on learning.”
- “Many of us learned by trial and error along with our patrons. Those of us that had our own e-reading devices were glad to show our co-workers how they worked, and those that we savvier with the downloading process tended to receive many of the patrons asking questions. We would often look over each others’ shoulders when someone would demonstrate downloading on a device we were unfamiliar with. Because we lacked a concrete plan for training, the process was difficult and we were very late in offering instruction to our patrons, thus compounding the problems we faced.”

Meanwhile, the hallmarks of poor training experiences were clearly spelled out by respondents. They included disorganized training programs, out-of-date materials, and “theoretical” training that did not include staff members using the devices in question. A common theme was the difficulty of keeping up with the pace of technological change. “Keeping up with procedures, formats, and devices, especially when the landscape changes daily is difficult,” one library staff member told us. “Tutorials and handouts do not stay up to date.”

Another library staff respondent described the process as “very difficult and ongoing”:

“The is no past tense for a system that is constantly evolving. Some staff take ownership to learn themselves, and others want to but do not grasp the fundamentals. In our library there is one person I can confidently say can answer all e-book questions, and maybe one third of our staff can manage everyday e-book questions. This is the state after multiple staff trainings and a lending program where staff were asked to take e-book readers home and practice.”

Others had similarly frustrating experiences:

- “It is difficult. We have an older than average workforce, many of whom do not understand concepts like DRM, formats, software issues, hardware issues. We bought two sets of e-book readers and iPads to engage in staff training, one set is in constant rotation to the branches so they can do their own staff training and patron demos. Some of the branch staff are so scared of breaking them or doing something wrong that they just lock up the case until it’s time to send it on.”
• “Training was difficult because staff could not gain hands-on experience. Most of us knew theoretically how to use each device, but it did not become clear until we were able to work with patrons' devices.”

• “Getting staff to attend the classes was like pulling teeth. We purchased various readers for staff to checkout and train themselves. For the most part, they weren't interested in helping patrons with them. They just wanted to refer all questions to our Digital Resources Manager. It finally took Administrative staff to assign certain staff to a committee and made them learn it. Then they went out and trained others in the branches. With the advent of OverDrive making Kindle downloads available last September staff seem to be more willing to be involved in the process.”

Many respondents said that their training experiences fell somewhere in the middle. One staff member told us that the training process in her library system was “very gradual”:

“A few early adopters learned to use OverDrive when we first subscribed and became the go-to people at their branches. Other staff learned from shadowing them and asking questions. We had a device or two at our library branch to learn the technology at our own pace. Some staff members were daunted by the technology—some are still shy to help patrons with download questions but many others bought e-book readers this year and became confident users and instructors.”

**Patron training**

Among the librarians who answered our online questionnaire, the vast majority of respondents said their library offered at least some form of instruction on e-readers and e-books for patrons. In-person classes and printed tutorials or FAQs were the most frequently cited forms of instruction on e-readers and the digital check-out process. Some also offered online tutorials, although these were not as popular. “We have classes monthly and an overwhelmingly successful eight-hour drop-in day soon after Christmas, which brought 120 e-book reader users to the library,” one department head wrote.

For libraries that offered patrons training on how to use their e-reading devices, the shifting technology landscape could be overwhelming for the instructors. One librarian said that while her library initially offered classes to patrons, “there were too many different devices and everyone wanted individual instruction on not just OverDrive, but their [specific] device.”

Most of our online patron panel said they taught themselves how to use their e-reader and download books from their library. A majority said that their library did offer classes on how to use e-readers and check out e-books, but for those whose library did not offer such classes, most said they would not be interested in attending such classes even if their library did offer them. A few others turned to YouTube tutorials, in-store help from Barnes & Noble store staff, Amazon tutorials, and various online instructions.
Part 6: A closer look at e-book borrowing

Overview of responses in our online panel

Our online panel, unsurprisingly, was a relatively tech savvy group. The vast majority of library patron respondents owned a desktop or laptop computer, as well as a cell phone. Over half owned an e-reader, and about half owned a tablet computer—far higher than the 19% of the general population who own such devices.

A large number of the respondents discussed how technology is used in many parts of their lives. “I live on the internet. My devices keep me connected to friends and family. I also do a lot of traveling so the ability to take service with me (instead of relying on wireless connections) has been really key.”

Many of the more tech-savvy patrons said that they like gadgets, but usually wait for price to go down (and bugs to be worked out) before purchasing. “I like for things to be on the market a while before I buy. I do a lot of research and listen to other people's experiences before I jump in. Once I'm in, I love it,” one e-book borrower told us. Another described herself as a “gadget lover on a budget. I usually get last year's model.”

Many also mentioned that since they use computers all day for work, they enjoy using e-readers and tablets in the evenings as a change of pace. “I work in technology, and tend to not want it in my personal life,” one said.

Among the online respondents who did not see themselves as very technically inclined, many mentioned that while they are not usually an early adopter, they now love their e-reader. As one put it, “I am very techno-challenged!! But I love my Kindle, don't know how I would live without it ... I am a bit intimidated with technology but definitely see the need for it. I just need to take my time to learn new things.”

Another patron wrote, “I'm not a Luddite, but I tend to cringe when new technologies are introduced. Thank goodness for our rural library staff who assist me in downloading e-books. I feel like I am a bit behind the curve of technology, but am aware of what is 'out there.' I use my smartphone for everything from surfing the web to social networking to emailing, playing games, and research. The free apps I've been able to download help me identify prescriptions I have been prescribed, identify possible illnesses by listing symptoms,” as well as “figuring out how much of a tip to leave at a restaurant, reading QR codes, calculating, taking notes and keeping lists, mapping a trip, shopping online auctions and much more. Gee, maybe I am 'with it'!”

Many mentioned having a spouse, child, or friend who is more tech-savvy than them and serves as an inspiration or teacher:

- “My husband is a techno-geek; I follow his lead.”
- “I'm naturally a slow adopter of new technologies, but I've been pulled along by my faster technology adapting friends. I only got my first laptop a few years ago, but now suddenly I have a laptop, iPhone, and NOOK. And I love them.”
- “I spend most of my work day on a computer and hate having to learn new things/programs. I depend on my college age child to help me with keeping up and cleaning up my devices. I LOVE
my e-book reader (constant companion and my preferred way to read books) and I use my iPod almost exclusively for listening to audio books.”

Checking out e-books

How they find out about the process

The patrons who responded to our online questionnaire generally learned about e-book lending at their library either at their library’s physical branch or through direct online communication from the library. One patron learned about e-book lending from signage inside the library, but added, “Our library director uses the Facebook page to communicate, which works really well for me.” (About seven in ten libraries use social networking tools such as Facebook, according to the ALA.) Additionally, many patrons heard about e-book lending from their library’s newsletters (both print and email).

Some patrons saw announcements on their library’s websites—especially patrons who were already using the library’s website regularly to reserve books. Still others simply noticed the option for e-books in online catalogues by chance. “I heard libraries starting to lend e-books in the general media, so I went to my library website to see if they offered that service. The library doesn’t communicate with me very well, except for overdue/pickup notices,” one e-book borrower in our online panel told us, adding that she wished the library would make use of social media. “I want to feel more connected to what is happening there, but don’t find out about anything until I visit the branch and see posters on the walls.”

Others learned of the program through word-of-mouth or local newspaper ads. “A friend told me,” one patron told us. “In a small town word of mouth is always the most effective way to communicate.”

Finally, many had been unaware of whether or not their library offered e-books, but started seeking out information on e-book borrowing once they had purchased an e-reader (or were thinking of getting one).

Many librarians told us that they wanted to increase their advertising efforts. “I’d like to partner more with local business to get the word out and do some more in-house advertising,” one said.

Another librarian pointed out that while the local library system publicized its e-book collection on the library’s website and social media accounts, these methods were best at reaching patrons who were already “plugged in” to the library’s services:

“We publicize on the library website, the library’s Facebook and Twitter accounts, and in house. The trouble is that libraries don’t tend to have money available for marketing. We’d love to spread the word in places where we might catch the attention of people who don’t regularly use the library; we just can’t afford to.”

Another respondent described the struggle to reach new audiences:

“I think by now most patrons realize that we offer e-books. However, my greater concern is all the people in town who aren’t patrons and don’t come to the library. We have a low rate of card holdership in our working-class, immigrant-heavy small city, especially compared to the

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surrounding libraries in our mostly-wealthy county. I think if more people here knew we offered e-books we could drive up our card-holder and usage stats. We need more marketing and outreach outside the building, but we're seriously short-staffed at the moment and certainly don't have any [money] to spend on advertising.”

For some e-book borrowers, however, system labels and nomenclature was not necessarily intuitive. One patron wrote, “I was with a friend at the branch who told me. I then picked up a card with the URL. The name of the program is OverDrive which makes no sense. I would have had no idea of what it was if the person I was with had not given me the hint.” A librarian also mentioned that awareness was not everything. “I think most patrons know about the services, but some are not quite sure how to go about actually downloading titles,” he said.

Finally, though many library staff members said that they could do more to raise patrons’ awareness of e-book lending, some said that there was no need to bring in more e-book borrowers until their e-book holdings could handle them. “I am concerned that demand so far outstrips the availability in our community that I will create too many dissatisfied users with more publicity and no more funds or availability of titles,” one director told us. Another respondent added, “At this point we are almost able to keep up with demand for titles with no special promotion. There is no plan for a special promotion until collection is larger.”

The checkout process

Among the librarians who took our online questionnaire, the most common platform for e-book lending mentioned was OverDrive, although many said they used services such as TumbleBooks, NetLibrary, and Project Gutenberg. 41

Some patrons gave an overview of the sometimes complicated process and their reactions:

- “The e-book has to be ‘checked out’ from the library website, downloaded to my computer, opened with Adobe Digital editions, and transferred to my NOOK.”
- “Borrowing e-books in Kindle format is incredibly easy. Most are downloaded through wireless connection, while a few publishers have restricted downloading on their e-books and that must be done through downloading to a PC and then transferring to Kindle. But even then is easy and quick.”
- “I download the books on my home computer. I ‘borrow’ them from the library’s website, which then sends me to my Amazon account, where I can download the book. Because my Kindle is an older version with only 3G and not wi-fi (the Kindle 2), I need to download the book to my computer and transfer it via cable, which is perfectly fine with me.”
- “In one word: UGH. I download at home, and have to transfer them to a device. With audio, I browse and checkout on the computer and then download directly on my iPhone.”
- “Painful! It’s hard to find out what books are available as e-print, it’s hard to know if they are available for check out, and the actual check out process involves multiple steps. Borrowing an e-book from the library is very convoluted as opposed to one-click purchasing from Amazon or Apple.”

41 Note: This was not an exhaustive list, and respondents could choose multiple answers. And though our opt-in online questionnaire focused on public libraries, staff from many types of libraries participated.
Most respondents said their e-books could be checked out for two or three weeks on average, and many could choose how long they wanted that period to be (one, two, or three weeks). In general, our e-book borrowers said that 21 days was usually enough time to read a book, but many wished for the ability to renew. Many also mentioned that they can’t or don’t know how to return e-books before the check-out period is up, which could contribute to longer wait lists for other patrons.

“Most books [can be checked out for] two weeks, which is plenty of time,” one patron told us. “I don’t work and can devote many hours a day to reading if I want to. Most books, of average length, I can finish in a few hours of reading time. Some of the very popular books are one week, which is enough for me.”

Some respondent were ambivalent about the two-week check-out period at their library. “Depending on the book, that can be somewhat short,” one e-book borrower wrote, “Especially if one has to share the iPad with a spouse who’s always Angry Birding or something when you’d like to use it to read something.” Another added, “[Two weeks is] not long enough because there are so few e-book copies available that I almost always have to place a hold first and then inevitably, 2-4 come available at the same time and between work, school and family, I can’t get through them all in that time.”

As one patron said, “you are constantly watching the calendar, because if the checkout period expires while you are reading it, it could be months before you are able to check it out again.”

**Borrowing e-books: The good, the bad, and OverDrive**

**Selection of e-books in libraries**

In our nationally-representative phone survey, the 12% of e-book readers who borrow e-books from libraries are generally positive about the selection they are offered. Among those who borrowed e-books from a public library in 2011, almost two-thirds say the selection at their library is “good” (32%), “very good” (18%), or “excellent” (16%). Some 23% say the selection is only “fair,” and 4% say it is “poor.”

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**How is the selection of e-books at your local public library?**

_The percentage among Americans ages 16+ who borrowed an e-book from their local public library in the past 12 months_

![Bar chart showing the percentage of respondents who rated the selection of e-books at their local public library as Excellent, Very good, Good, Fair, Poor, and Don’t know.]

**Source:** Pew Research Center’s Internet & American Life Reading Habits Survey of 2,986 people ages 16 and older conducted November 16-December 21, 2011. The survey was conducted in English and Spanish and on landline and cell phones. N for people who borrowed an e-book from the library in the past 12 months=111.
Though the samples of subpopulations were usually too small to do detailed analysis, the people who were most tied to their libraries and felt most strongly about the library were more satisfied with the selection of e-books that was available to them.

All this evaluation by patrons comes amidst growing demand for e-book lending by libraries. According to the “2011 E-book Penetration & Use in U.S. Libraries Survey” by Library Journal and School Library Journal, 66% of public libraries “reported a steep increase in e-book requests” in the previous year; they generally expect e-book circulation to double in the coming year.42

Issues patrons have encountered

We asked those who borrowed e-books whether they had experienced several of the difficulties that could be associated with such borrowing and found that:

- 56% of e-book borrowers said that at one point or another they had tried to borrow a particular book and found that the library did not carry it.
- 52% of e-book borrowers said that at one point or another they discovered there was a waiting list to borrow the book.
- 18% of e-book borrowers said that at one point or another they found that the e-book they were interested in was not compatible with the e-reading device they were using.

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**Have you ever wanted to borrow a particular e-book from the public library and found that...**

*Among Americans ages 16+ who borrowed an e-book from their local public library in the past 12 months*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Difficulties</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Don’t know</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>It was not compatible with your e-reader</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There was a waiting list</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The library did not carry it</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Source:** Pew Research Center’s Internet & American Life Reading Habits Survey of 2,986 people ages 16 and older conducted November 16-December 21, 2011. The survey was conducted in English and Spanish and on landline and cell phones N for people who borrowed an e-book from the library in the past 12 months=111.

For the sake of comparison, we asked in our December 2011 survey if those who had read an e-book in the past year had experienced several e-book problems at bookstores or online retailers and found that 30% of e-book readers found the store or website did not carry the e-book they wanted and 8% found that the store/website version was not compatible with their digital-reading device.

Have you ever wanted to download or purchase a particular e-book from an online store and found that...

Among Americans ages 16+ who read an e-book in the past 12 months

![Bar chart showing responses to the question](image)

Source: Pew Research Center’s Internet & American Life Reading Habits Survey of 2,986 people ages 16 and older conducted November 16-December 21, 2011. The survey was conducted in English and Spanish and on landline and cell phones. N=793 people who read an e-book in the past 12 months.

Availability

The most common complaint among those who checked out e-books from their public library was lack of availability, with 56% of e-book borrowers saying that a book they wanted to borrow was not carried by their public library.
Have you ever wanted to borrow a particular e-book from the public library and found that the library did not carry it?

Among Americans ages 16+ who borrowed an e-book from their local public library in the past 12 months

Our online patron focus groups frequently spoke of wanting more e-books available at their libraries, especially for bestsellers—“More copies of books, more books available, longer checkout times,” one suggested. However, despite patrons’ frustrations, they were often aware of the constraints (budgetary and otherwise) their libraries faced. One respondent wrote, “The collection could be improved, but I trust the collection will grow as the technology becomes more ingrained into society.”

The average public library has 4,350 e-books available for check-out. As OverDrive spokesman David Burleigh told the Washington Post, it is possible that the relative scarcity of digital titles may be unavoidable due to the rate of technological change. “Libraries have had decades to build their physical catalogues,” he said, while the demand for e-books is a relatively recent phenomenon. For instance, at the Chicago Public Library, Computer World reported in January that “there are currently 6,443 e-book titles for borrowing, comprising about 3% of the total collection.”

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Source: Pew Research Center’s Internet & American Life Reading Habits Survey of 2,986 people ages 16 and older conducted November 16-December 21, 2011. The survey was conducted in English and Spanish and on landline and cell phones. N for people who borrowed an e-book from the library in the past 12 months=111.

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Perhaps unsurprisingly, availability was a less of a problem for e-book purchasers. Among all e-book readers, 30% had found that an online store did not carry a particular e-book they wanted to purchase.

**Waiting lists**

Even when a library has a digital title in its holdings, the e-book may still be unavailable for quite some time due to long wait lists. In our survey, 52% of e-book borrowers in 2011 had found that there was a waiting list for an e-book they wished to borrow from the public library. Of course, it is often the case that popular titles in printed books are also subject to wait lists.

![Bar chart](chart.png)

**Have you ever wanted to borrow a particular e-book from the public library and found that there was a waiting list?**

*Among Americans ages 16+ who borrowed an e-book from their local public library in the past 12 months*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Don’t know</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Percentage</strong></td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source:* Pew Research Center’s Internet & American Life Reading Habits Survey of 2,986 people ages 16 and older conducted November 16-December 21, 2011. The survey was conducted in English and Spanish and on landline and cell phones. N for people who borrowed an e-book from the library in the past 12 months=111.

Among the library staff who responded to our online questionnaire, a majority said that on average the waiting lists for the most popular books were a few weeks, although many also said that waiting lists were often several months for the most popular titles.

The DC metro area offers one example of how the high demand for e-books is creating extremely long waiting lists. In Fairfax County, for instance, “officials more than doubled the inventory of e-book copies from 2010 to 2011, to more than 10,000, but demand for the books tripled in that time,” according to the Washington Post, resulting in an average wait time of about three weeks. The article cited Elizabeth Rhodes, collection services coordinator for the Fairfax library system, who said that while up to 85% of the system’s e-books are checked out on a typical day, this percentage grew to 98% after the holiday
gift-giving season—a time period when tablet and e-reader ownership nearly doubled among American adults.46

The patrons in our online panel had encountered many wait lists for popular titles. “I don't think I've ever found a single book I wanted to check out without a waiting list, and my tastes are pretty broad,” one told us. The waits were not necessarily very long for some titles—“a week or two generally”—but they make it that much harder to find something available now. Some patrons said they often put holds on a number of books with long wait lists, only to find that many of the books become available simultaneously: “Wait times are long for popular titles, no way to stagger requests (if waiting on 5 titles and all become available at once, it’s use it or lose it), and the selection isn’t real great.”

Many patrons found the specific restrictions on digital content counterintuitive. One mused that it “seems absurd that there is only ONE copy of an e-book in demand and that only one person can use it at a time. That makes sense for a print copy, but not for an e-book.”

*Compatibility*

With the wide variety of e-book reading devices and e-book formats available, compatibility between devices is a major concern for libraries with digital collections.

One way this issue is managed is by partnering with an e-book distributor such as OverDrive, which manages an array of digital content for 18,000 libraries and schools in 21 countries, including 15,000 in the United States.47 OverDrive generally charges public libraries a set fee for use of their checkout system, as well as a fee per title for patrons to borrow.48 The OverDrive catalog for libraries now includes 700,000 copyrighted e-book, audiobook, music, and video titles in 52 languages. Some 35 million digital titles were checked out via OverDrive in 2011.49

Prior to 2011, e-book borrowers were able to check out several formats of e-books from their local libraries—including ePUB, the free, “universal” e-book standard set by the International Digital Publishing Forum (IDPF) since 2007, used by Kobo, Barnes & Noble, Sony, and Google Books.50 However, e-book borrowers could not check out books on Amazon’s Kindle, the predominant e-reader at the time.51 In 2011, however, Amazon partnered with OverDrive, and in September 2011 library patrons who own Kindles were able to borrow Kindle books from public and school libraries in the United States.52

At the end of 2011, compatibility with the patron’s e-reader was not the most prominent problem among those who borrowed e-books from a public library in the past 12 months; about one in five e-
book borrowers (18%) said they had wanted to borrow a particular e-book from their public library and found that it was not compatible with their e-book reading device.

For many in our online respondent pool of e-book borrowers, tracking down the right file format was an occasional but persistent headache. “The muddling of different formats can be a pain,” one wrote, “Especially if a book you want is available, but not in your preferred format. I always have to set my searches to leave out audiobooks, since I rarely am interested in those.” Others found it difficult to locate the correct copy. “On numerous occasions I was not paying attention and checked out the wrong format for my reader,” another respondent said.

The library staff we interviewed said they often found themselves helping patrons find the right format, particularly patrons with limited technical experience. One librarian said he encountered issues with “[t]he concept of DRM, differences in formats (ePub, PDF, AZW) and trying to explain the one-copy at a time, one patron lending model,” adding that for most of the library’s patrons, “digital means copy freely.”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Have you ever wanted to borrow a particular e-book from the public library and found that it was not compatible with your e-book reader?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Among Americans ages 16+ who borrowed an e-book from their local public library in the past 12 months</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Pew Research Center’s Internet & American Life Reading Habits Survey of 2,986 people ages 16 and older conducted November 16-December 21, 2011. The survey was conducted in English and Spanish and on landline and cell phones. N for people who borrowed an e-book from the library in the past 12 months=111.

Similarly, e-book compatibility was not a major frustration for e-book purchasers: Among all e-book readers, only 8% had found that compatibility was an issue when they wanted to download or purchase an e-book from an online store.
Other issues

Many patron respondents said that the e-book check-out process is relatively easy. They appreciated features like wishlists and lists of recommended e-books, the instant access, and the lack of overdue fines, as well as not having to physically return to the library when a book was due. Said one: “The site can be used with minimal learning, which is good for someone like me who is not tech savvy. It is a very quick process, which is good when I want to get a book to read right away.” Similarly, librarians often cited the ease of lending, the lack of overdue fines, and the ability of patrons to check out e-books from home as major pluses. “There is also 24 hour access to the e-books, so patron do not have to wait for the library to be open to check out a book,” one director pointed out.

However, the difficulty of browsing e-titles was a major issue for many in our online panel. A common thread in the responses was a frustration with library websites’ search and browsing capabilities. One librarian told us that “patrons often have a hard time finding titles and then downloading them to their particular device. It is a cumbersome, nonsensical, multi-part process in which we lose too many people along the way.” Many of the patrons in our panel had hit upon a workaround in commercial interfaces, which often include reviews, recommendations, and other ways of discovering new titles: “I will sometimes go to Amazon to find titles I might like, then search them in OverDrive, since Amazon’s interface is so much more reader friendly (tells you what else you might like, etc.)”

The process for checking out an e-book, which usually involved multiple services and log-in screens, was also unpopular. (As one patron put it, “It requires a lot of clicks and a lot of waiting.”) A librarian noted that, “with ePUB format the patrons need a PC in addition to their e-book reader; they also have to create an Adobe Digital editions account and download the software; with Kindle they are transferred to their Amazon account”—and for a library with multiple e-book vendors, patrons may have to go to even more sites to find their e-book. As a result, many respondents (both patrons and librarians) longed for e-book titles to be integrated into the main library catalog in order to streamline the process.

One thread that ran throughout the responses to our library staff questionnaire was the ever-growing incidence of being asked to help patrons learn how to use their own devices. Issues ranged from patrons’ inexperience with technology (such as setting up and remembering their email address) to the shifting gadget landscape, which made it even harder for librarians to stay up to speed themselves. “It takes a long time to explain and walk patrons through the downloading process—about half an hour from start to finish most times—and we often feel rushed at the public assistance desk because there are often other demands on our time,” one staff member told us. Another wrote, “Many people who purchase or receive e-book readers as gifts have never turned them on before coming to the library to check out e-books. ... Getting these patrons up to speed can be overwhelming.” (For more on this topic, please see Part 8: Final thoughts.)

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How to improve the process for the future

Many patrons mentioned wanting more titles and more copies available to decrease wait lists for popular books, as well as longer lending periods for the e-books they did check out. Some wanted more input into the selection process for new titles, while others wanted to help out directly. “It would be great if people could donate specific e-books to the library,” wrote one. “I have a couple favorites that I would love to see added to the collection.”

Some patrons also disliked having to go through external sites such as OverDrive and Amazon. Most cited problems with the inefficiency of the process. Others raised privacy-related reasons. They also mentioned wanting more ways to discover content, especially improved search and browsing of e-book catalogs, including mobile browsing. (Some 15% of library websites are optimized for mobile devices, according to the ALA’s 2011-2012 Public Library Funding & Technology Access Study, while 7% of libraries have developed smartphone apps for access to library services. 54) Many patrons also said that they would like to have more staff members available to answer questions about e-books, similar to Apple’s “Genius Bar.” Overall, however, the patrons in our focus groups were not frustrated at the libraries themselves for issues related to licensing or lack of funds. “They’re doing all they can,” said one.

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We also asked patrons what their vision of e-book lending at their library would be. “Fast, easy, plentiful,” was one common response. Patrons’ answers usually mentioned increased availability, unlimited access, access to all formats, and a more streamlined discovery and check-out process:

- “That the libraries would be able to loan e-book readers to patrons, that the children’s section would have greater technology resources that introduces them to e-reading at an early age.”
- “That every book ever published would be available, both as audio books and as lavishly and colorfully illustrated e-book versions.”
- “To have all books that are available in hard copy be available as e-books.”
- “All books would be available at all times. The process would be easy. I’d like to see the library focus on media and less on ‘books’ only. I like that they have videos and music too.”
- “Expand access to specialized and expensive research books that are super expensive on Amazon and not available in most libraries, and make easy access to great collections of books and manuscripts at places like the British Museum, Yale, etc.”
- “The ability to check out tablet readers (all models) to test, and having training sessions for all models.”

The library staff members in our focus groups had similar dreams for e-book lending. They wrote of a world of “no holds,” integrated catalogs, unlimited tech support, even an “e-book reader petting zoo” for patrons to experiment with devices.

One librarian said that her ideal vision of e-book lending would be “books and e-book readers/e-books living in harmony.” She added, “Books are essential, because the power can go out. They are our special collections and cultural heritage. Digital access to books is incredibly important. Libraries must adapt to technological development and welcome e-lending as microlocal demand changes.”

However, many library staff respondents identified larger concerns related to the rise of e-content, and noted that some of these issues went beyond budgetary concerns:

- “Money is not the major obstacle for us; the major obstacle is the lack of publishers and titles in OverDrive. We are purchasing NOOK devices and loading them with bestsellers to add to our OverDrive titles.”
- “The obstacle right now is our confusing and unclear copyright and intellectual property laws, which can’t be fixed with money alone.”
- “Overall, periodical databases and e-book licensings mean that the library no longer owns the copies. Once we cease a subscription the material is gone. Until publishers and the library community are able to work out fair deals that also benefit patrons, e-book lending will be a problem.”
Librarians and publishers

Echoing the comments from our online patron panel, librarians’ frustrations with the e-book lending process frequently revolved around cost and availability of titles. These issues are often related to the terms for lending set by publishers—terms that most of the librarians in our online focus groups found painfully restrictive. Most librarians said that they do not have direct contact with publishers themselves, but were very frustrated by the current terms under which they could purchase and lend e-books—especially regarding the confusion that the patrons felt:

- “We are beginning to see more and more issues with publishers pop up. We boycott HarperCollins due to their use limitations (books must be repurchased after 26 checkouts). We can only purchase one copy per title from Penguin (resulting in extremely long hold lists and disgruntled patrons). Random House has upped their prices to around $100 per copy, so we are only purchasing the top ten bestsellers from this publisher. I fear what will happen in the next year.”

- “Our library does not deal directly with publishers, since we use OverDrive to lend e-books. However, there’s a lot of animosity between major publishers and OverDrive, which really prevents us from providing the best service we can. ... I'm really upset that many of the biggest publishers don't want to do business with libraries or OverDrive, because patrons see our failure to acquire a specific title as a failure of the library and the services we provide when we are given absolutely no legal way to procure many of the titles they ask for, since the publishers refuse to let libraries access them. Their stubbornness is damaging to both the library's reputation and the publisher’s, frankly, because many of the people that want to borrow an e-book are unlikely to purchase it anyway and may in fact believe that the title is not available as an e-book because the library does not have it.”

- “It is impossible to provide many of the e-book titles patrons request, and it can be difficult to explain all the hoop-jumping to patrons.”

- “We have chosen not to purchase from some of the publishers because we disagree with the stipulations or the pricing of the items. It's frustrating because our clients don't understand why we can't get some of the titles that they want. There has to be a way to make the technology easier to use for the average person and be fair to publishers and authors as well. Libraries are used to sharing with each other, which is especially important for smaller libraries in rural areas that can't afford to buy multiple copies or a collection of e-books. I think the inability to do that with e-books inhibits what we do and those in rural areas are penalized again for where they live. We have areas that do not have access or affordable access to high speed Internet.”

- “We abide by the DRM standards, we expose their authors to thousands of readers and we pay for the books and e-books, so why can't they make more of an effort to work with libraries instead of restricting library users on their options to read digitally?”

- “Our consortium is so large and demand is so high for e-books that most of them are checked out, and patrons are very frustrated that they have to place holds on the items they want. Also, because many of the Big Six publishers are refusing to sell licenses to libraries, many patrons feel that our selection of e-books is small and see it as a fault of the library—unless we tell them that most publishers will not lend to us, they feel that the library is not doing its job and allocating its resources properly when the truth is that it's beyond our control.”
• “Publishers and vendors alike have made the process for getting an e-book much more difficult than it should be, especially given the interest in e-book collections among older users. These folks are often less comfortable with the technology, and frequently have trouble even getting started with the process. Another frustration for us is the licensing model for e-books. Rather than owning titles, as in the print world, or e-book collections are ephemeral, and if we leave OverDrive, our substantial investment in titles disappears. The loss of first-sale rights is another area of great concern for us. We would like to be able to own our e-book content and deal with it in a way that is similar to how we work with print materials. Users are bombarded with ads about how easy e-books are and how they should have a NOOK, Kindle, or iPad, but in reality using these tools is only easy when you are buying titles, not trying to borrow them from the library.”

• “Over the years, libraries have been valuable customers to publishers. We purchase not only their bestsellers, but their midlist and backlist titles. We introduce readers to their authors. Now some of the publishers have publicly stated that they need to add "difficulty" to the process of borrowing e-books from libraries, either with restrictions on the loan period, or limits on circulations.”

• “Without ownership we risk losing a significant part of our history. Publishers are not in business to preserve content for historical purposes, and as a commercial entity, I’d argue a potential conflict of interest. Yet, no one else is allowed to own the material—where will it go?”

One respondent, echoing the thoughts of many from our panel, said that her dream would be for her library “to have the ability to purchase, own and offer any book we chose in an electronic format with cross-device compatibility, setting our own lending parameters and integrating seamlessly an e-book collection with the rest of the library collection.”
Part 7: Non-e-book borrowers

Fully 76% of libraries lend e-books to patrons, according to the ALA. Yet, most citizens, even those who are library patrons, are unsure of whether their local library offers this service. Asked if their public library lent e-books to patrons, 63% of those ages 16 and older who do not already read or borrow e-books from libraries are unable to say if the library does or does not lend them. Some 22% say that their library does lend out e-books, and 14% say that it does not.

As far as you know, does your public library loan out e-books?

*Among Americans ages 16+ who do not read e-books, as well as e-book readers who do not get e-books at the public library*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Don’t know</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>22%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>63%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Source:** Pew Research Center’s Internet & American Life Reading Habits Survey of 2,986 people ages 16 and older conducted November 16-December 21, 2011. The survey was conducted in English and Spanish and on landline and cell phones. N=2,874 for people who did not read an e-book in the past 12 months and people who read an e-book in the past 12 months but don’t check out e-books from the library.

Even among library fans and patrons, many are relatively in the dark about whether their local library offers e-book lending in the first place:

- 58% of all library card holders say they do not know if their library provides e-book lending services.
- 55% of all those who say the library is “very important” to them say they do not know if their library lends e-books.
- 53% of all tablet computer owners say they do not know if their library lends e-books.

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• 48% of all owners of e-readers such as original Kindles and NOOKs say they do not know if their library lends e-books.

• 47% of all those who read an e-book in the past year say they do not know if their library lends e-books.

Among the 22% of non-borrowers who said their libraries did offer e-book borrowing, those who were most likely to say their library lent out e-books included: those ages 50 and older, those with at least some college experience or a college degree, those living in households earning $50,000 or more. The non-e-book borrowers who were most likely to say their local library did not facilitate e-book borrowing included: African-Americans, Hispanics, and those under age 30 (especially those ages 16-17).

Many librarians say that despite their increasing use of technology, libraries are still seen as collections of print books and the occasional microfiche machine. “People still think of libraries as old dusty books on shelves, and it’s a perception we’re always trying to fight,” the director of information technology at the Boston Public Library told the New York Times in 2009. This impression has still been slow to change. In fact, the OCLC’s recent report, “Perceptions of Libraries, 2010: Context and Community,” found that if anything, the association of libraries with books has become stronger in recent years. “As new consumer devices and online services have captured the information consumer’s time and mindshare, his perception of libraries as books has solidified,” the report said, with 75% of survey respondents saying that “books” is the first thing that comes to mind when thinking about the library—up from 69% in 2005.

For more about how libraries communicate with patrons about services, please see the section titled “Checking out e-books” in Part 6 of this report.

Why not borrow e-books?

In the December 2011 national phone survey, we asked the 88% of e-book readers who did not borrow e-books from libraries in the past 12 months whether they had tried do so: Only 4% reported that they had attempted this, and 96% had not. Looking specifically at e-book readers, we find that 84% of those who read an e-book in the previous year did not try to borrow one from their local library.


Have you ever tried to borrow or download an e-book from a public library?

Among Americans ages 16+ who read e-books but do not get e-books at the public library

Source: Pew Research Center’s Internet & American Life Reading Habits Survey of 2,986 people ages 16 and older conducted November 16-December 21, 2011. The survey was conducted in English and Spanish and on landline and cell phones. N=2,874 for people who did not read an e-book in the past 12 months and people who read an e-book in the past 12 months but don’t check out e-books from the library.

There was no one dominant reason as to why e-book readers who do not borrow books from their public library do not do so. About one in five (22%) cited issues of convenience, often saying it was easier to obtain e-books another way. A similar number (19%) said that they didn’t know their library offered e-books in the first place. The full list of reasons is shown in the following table.
What would you say is the main reason you do not borrow e-books from your public library?

Among Americans ages 16+ who read e-books but do not get e-books at the public library

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>% of e-book readers who do not get e-books at the public library</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Inconvenient/easier to get another way/easier to download</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Didn’t know I could/didn’t know library offered e-books</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t use library/no library nearby</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No interest/no real need</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Just found out about it/haven’t had a chance to try it yet</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E-books still new to me/no time to learn</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Just never thought to</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t read a lot/don’t use e-reader much</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prefer to own my own copy</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My library doesn’t offer e-books</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prefer print books</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor e-book selection at library</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do not have format I need</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cumbersome process/wait list/short borrowing period</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Pew Research Center’s Internet & American Life Reading Habits Survey of 2,986 people ages 16 and older conducted November 16-December 21, 2011. The survey was conducted in English and Spanish and on landline and cell phones. N=2,874 for people who did not read an e-book in the past 12 months and people who read an e-book in the past 12 months but don’t check out e-books from the library.

Help and training from librarians

We also asked those who do not already borrow e-books at the public library how likely they would be to take advantage of certain resources if their library were to offer it. The results:

- 46% of those who do not currently borrow e-books from libraries say they would be “very” or “somewhat” likely to borrow an e-reading device that came loaded with a book the wanted to read.
- 32% of those who do not currently borrow e-books from libraries say they would be “very” or “somewhat” likely to take a library class on how to download e-books onto handheld devices.
- 32% of those who do not currently borrow e-books from libraries say they would be “very” or “somewhat” likely to take a course at a library in how to use an e-reader or tablet computer.
How likely non-e-book-borrowers would be to use the following resources if offered by their local public library

Among Americans ages 16+ who do not read e-books, as well as e-book readers who do not get e-books at the public library, the % of those who say they would use the following resources

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Resource</th>
<th>Very likely</th>
<th>Somewhat likely</th>
<th>Not too likely</th>
<th>Not at all likely</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Classes or instruction on how to use handheld reading devices like e-readers &amp; tablet computers</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classes on how to download library e-books to handheld devices</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E-book readers already loaded with the book you want to read</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Pew Research Center’s Internet & American Life Reading Habits Survey of 2,986 people ages 16 and older conducted November 16-December 21, 2011. The survey was conducted in English and Spanish and on landline and cell phones. N=2,874 for people who did not read an e-book in the past 12 months and people who read an e-book in the past 12 months but don’t check out e-books from the library.

While about three in ten people ages 16 and older are interested in taking classes on e-readers or downloading e-books, the most popular idea was pre-loaded e-readers: almost half (46%) said that they would check out e-readers already loaded with the book they wanted to read. Currently, this practice is not particularly widespread at public libraries; some 15% of public libraries circulate preloaded e-reading devices (up from 5% the previous year), and 26% expect to in the future, according to the 2011 survey from Library Journal and School Library Journal.58 Meanwhile, according to the ALA’s 2011-2012 Public Library Funding & Technology Access Study, 39% of libraries offer e-readers to patrons for check-out.59

How likely non-e-book-borrowers would be to use the following resources if offered by their local public library

Among Americans ages 16+ who do not read e-books, or those who read e-book but do not borrow e-books from the library, the % of those who say they would use the following resources

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Classes on how to use handheld reading devices (e-readers/tablets)</th>
<th>Classes on how to download library e-books to handheld devices</th>
<th>E-readers already loaded with the book you want to read</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All 16+</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>46%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Men</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Race/ethnicity</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White, Non-Hispanic</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black, Non-Hispanic</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic (English- and Spanish-speaking)</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Age</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16-17</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18-29</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30-49</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50-64</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65+</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Household income</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than $30,000/yr</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$30,000-$49,999</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$50,000-$74,999</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$75,000+</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Educational attainment</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No high school diploma</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High school grad</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some College</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College +</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Geographic location</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suburban</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Parental status</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parent</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not a parent</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Pew Research Center’s Internet & American Life Reading Habits Survey of 2,986 people ages 16 and older conducted November 16–December 21, 2011. The survey was conducted in English and Spanish and on landline and cell phones. N=2,874 for people who did not read an e-book in the past 12 months and people who read an e-book in the past 12 months but don’t check out e-books from the library.
All three possibilities are most popular with minorities, those under age 65, those in households making less than $30,000 per year, those who had not completed high school, and parents of minor children. Among the other significant findings:

- Women who do not currently borrow e-books from libraries are more interested than men in taking classes on how to use handheld reading devices such as e-readers or tablets.
- While adults ages 65 and older are the age group least likely to be interested in any of the ideas, adults ages 50-64 are more interested in taking classes on using e-readers or downloading e-books than any other age group.
- Urban users are more interested than suburban or rural users in pre-loaded e-readers, while rural users are the least interested geographic group. Urban users are also somewhat more likely than users in other areas to be interested in classes on using handheld reading devices.
Part 8: Final thoughts

How patron’s reading habits have changed since reading and borrowing e-books.

While some of the respondents to our online queries of patrons said that their reading habits had not changed, many said that they are indeed doing more “impulse” reading since the advent of e-books due to the ease of obtaining and reading books wherever they are. They are also catching up on the classics (due to free, legal public domain copies online), and checking out titles they would not have noticed otherwise. “I am reading a lot of self-published books now since they are often offered for free. I am also downloading a lot of classics, for the same reason,” one online respondent told us. Others were even branching out into new genres due to availability. “I was never a huge mystery fan but now read a lot of those because when I was searching for free or low-priced e-books, a lot of the ones I found were mystery,” another respondent wrote. “Now I am really into the mystery genre!”

Many patron respondents echoed our recent e-reading report’s findings about attitudes toward e-books and the ease of “on the go” reading. As one frequent traveler put it, “my suitcase is so much lighter!” Other respondents mentioned similar benefits:

- “I am reading more because it is easy and accessible. A book I have on my tablet at home is ... also on my phone so I can read it on my lunch break. I can read at night without bothering my husband with a light. I do not have to do all of that irritating ‘leaving the house’ business to get a new and interesting book to read.”
- “My Kindle fits in my purse, so I can carry my Kindle places I wouldn’t carry a book. I find myself taking it almost everywhere I go so if I find myself with a free couple of minutes, I can read a couple of pages.”
- “I have always been a reader, but I’m reading more books now that I have an e-book reader, and I’m getting through them more quickly. ... I find that my family members and I also spend more time discussing the books that we are reading because my brother, my mom, my cousins and my aunts all have Kindles and can share books with each other more easily.”
- “I read a lot more with e-books. I’ve ventured out into new genres and authors that I would never have found in the print world—my local library doesn’t have them and neither does our local book store.”
- “I read multiple books all the time. An audiobook for my car and commute. An e-book for ‘whenever’ and print books for relaxing at home. I’m an impulse reader with my Kindle, not so much with print books.”

Larger changes in library services

Many of the library staff members who responded to our online questionnaire wrote that they not only provide access to technology, but also must help patrons learn tech fundamentals. Their patrons often

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need help with many basic tasks, from setting up an email account and filling out online forms, to finding and navigating necessary websites. As one library staff member explained, “The greatest change has been the need not only for computer access, but computer assistance. Since people are required to apply for jobs and government services online, and many people in our area lack the skills to do so, we have seen a substantial rise in the need for computers, computer classes, and especially one-on-one assistance.”

According to the ALA’s 2011-2012 Public Library Funding & Technology Access Study:

- 90% of libraries offer formal or informal technology assistance to library users, and 35% offer one-on-one technology training by appointment.
- 36% of libraries report increased use of library technology training over the previous year.
- 62% of libraries report that they are the only source of free public access to computers and the Internet in their communities.
- 91% of public libraries provide free Wi-Fi, and 74% of libraries report use of Wi-Fi increased in 2011.61

One library department head framed it another way. “Many of the needs are the same, but access has changed. Patrons still need help with resumes, but now they use computer templates. They still need to apply for jobs, but now they do it online and MUST have email accounts. They still need encyclopedias, but they want electronic access to them. They still have to prep for tests, but the test prep is available through a database or website.”

One librarian added that, after the holidays, “Many ‘grandmother’ types called for help with the e-book-reader they got for Christmas. They do not have a home computer so registering the items and downloading from their non-existent home computer is difficult, to say the least.” The process is especially difficult when staff members are not up to speed on all the devices. “Many of the staff do not understand the process—so how can they show the patrons how to do it?” one librarian wondered.

Even communities that have not seen a strong demand for e-books are still facing more patron demand for technological services. One library staff respondent described the habits of her library’s community, which serves a relatively older population with many retirees:

“Unlike our sister library systems in larger, metropolitan cities, we have not yet seen a strong shift to digital technologies, but there are signs that it’s coming. ... Because 60% of our population is 65 or older, we have also seen an increased demand for technology courses to be taught in the libraries: getting started with computers, basic computer maintenance, getting started with web browsing, learning Word formatting, and the occasional ‘hot topic’ such as Facebook, Twitter, etc.”

One library director in our online panel summarized the technology demands a modern library can face:

“You need enough computers to meet demand for users of all ages. You need enough tutor rooms available for small group study. You need to know how to download an e-book and

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audiobook. You need to know what is better - the Kindle, the NOOK or the iPad? You need to have enough e-books to meet demand. You need to know what URL accesses the state's unemployment and food stamp sites. You need to have enough electrical plugs for laptop or cell phone chargers. You need to provide service of some kind seven days/week (i.e. website, mobile app, etc.) You need to have a good media collection.”

Beyond technology, respondents also reported a shift in the library’s role to that of a community gathering space. “The library has become a community center and meeting space as much as a place to do research and borrow books,” one library director told us. Library staff mentioned increased interest in activities such as craft classes and children’s storytime.

The future of libraries

Patrons

We asked our patron focus group about the future of libraries in a digital world. Among our respondents, most said that it was “very important” that libraries continue to provide physical copies of books. “I really like books in print,” one told us. “I don't think my e-book reader will ever replace that.” Added another, “I really like e-books, but there will always be the joy of holding a hard copy of a book, curled up on the couch in a blanket, drinking a warm beverage while the snow falls outside and a cat sitting on your feet.”

Others mused on the future of reading, and libraries:

- “I believe that the library of the future is going to look very different. I don't think it is going to be any less important to a community, but I do think it will be very different from what it is now. I don't think it will have as many physical books and I think it will be more of a meeting place, a place where meetings are held or study sessions. I think that librarians will find their jobs changing much like people in the media have had to adjust to new technology. But I hope that libraries will still be there in the future because I can't imagine a world without them.”

- “The biggest drawback of e-books for me is that I miss the feel and smell of the paper. I even miss the little signs of previous readers—margin notes, cookie crumbs, forgotten bookmarks, etc. E-books are always very ‘sterile.’ I also very much dislike the fact that, unlike paper books, the e-book publishers can (and do) limit the number of times, or even completely prevent me from sharing the e-books I purchase. And as far as I am aware, there is no such thing as a ‘used’ e-book market. Once the file has been downloaded to my device, I can read it or delete it, but I am unaware of any method by which I can give or sell it to someone else when removing it from my device.”

- “Our library is a critical link in our community. It provides access to books, computers, knowledge, and is a critical social center.”

- “E-books are amazing. As an adult I find it easier to attain a book digitally. However I still like print books for my children especially since they are not computer savvy yet. I still like the luxury of knowing my children can access a book without me being around. They just have to pull it off the shelf. Print books are not obsolete. I hope my library continues to expand their digital media & still have children's print books.”
• “Libraries are more than collections of books—no matter what format. Libraries are community centers, the gateway to childhood literacy, the poor man's university, centers for lifelong learning, provide support for economic development, develop job skills, offer training, education, and enrichment, bridge the information gap, and are vital to the quality of living and infrastructure of each community a library serves. The importance of libraries and their impact on their users cannot be overstated.”

• “There's a long way to go with the devices. So far, these things all seem to have been designed by people who love computers. A lot of us don't love computers, and use them because they help us accomplish things. That doesn't mean we enjoy thinking about file types and file names and frozen screens and little bitty buttons that aren't labeled and aren't intuitive.”

• “I think our libraries are valuable resources for so many reasons. Maintaining the physical printed book is as important to me as a growing library selection of e-books and audiobooks. People are so used to going online and having instant gratification—I don't think that this is something that can or should be ignored. Having available e-books is also invaluable to keep our youth interested in reading. They are growing up accustomed to this, and if we want to keep them reading throughout their lives, we must provide books in the formats that they will use.”

• “The frustration is incredible—different platforms, different cords, needing power source, twisting cords. I really wish e-books had never been invented. This is technology that has taken a very simple process and made it so incredibly complicated that is takes the joy out of reading. I LOVE the Internet and technology, so for me to say this is serious. It has made my job so complicated, and my pay is staying the same. One of my biggest worries about e-book readers is the conversations about reading that will never occur—if you cannot see what another person is reading, how can you start a conversation? You can always hide a book cover but if you are reading an e-book reader, people are much less likely to approach you and say ‘great book’ or ‘are you enjoying that book?’ Also—a HUGE worry of mine is the amount of energy and resources being devoted to the ‘cloud.’ No one talks about that because no one wants to give up their gadgets. Another worry is the compensation of authors, the loss of a true publishing house and editors. Ownership of the book—do you really own it? The worry that the book may not be the exact version the author wants you to read. I do think that more people will read because it is so easy.”

• “My sister is disabled and losing her eye sight and nearly home bound. I bought her a NOOK Color to help with reading in a larger print. Large print books are too heavy for her to hold up for very long and the print is still too small. She depends on her library and used OverDrive daily for audio books. I'm trying to teach her how to use the new systems for her NOOK. She and many, many more would suffer if they didn't have access to the library and the programs they provide for us for no fees.”

Librarians

Overall, most librarians from our online panel thought that the evolution of e-book reading devices and digital content has been a good thing for libraries, and all but a few thought that the evolution of e-book reading devices and digital content has been a good thing for reading in general. “I love the ecological benefit of not having the waste of needing to buy a lot of copies and then having to discard half of them two years later,” one library department head told us. “I love that we don't have to hassle patrons to bring e-materials back. I love that there are no damages, no worn out items, no sticky stains.”
However, most are unsure what sort of roles libraries will take on in the future:

- “It all feels pretty murky. Some clarity and good advice would be nice. It’s OK for libraries with big budgets to plunge into e-book readers. As a small library with limited collection funds, we have to be more careful.”

- “I have observed that Barnes and Noble and Amazon have really pushed the e-media phenomenon, and it was only around the time that Barnes and Noble made e-books their most-advertised product through the layout of their stores, etc., that library patrons started to ask about them often. Therefore, this is a corporate-driven phenomenon, and libraries should be wary of diverting funding, services, and collections to something that is designed primarily as a consumer product for the profit of the distributing companies. It is good for libraries to offer things that patrons are asking for, but at the same time, it would be dangerous for libraries to make e-media a significant focus or majority of their offerings because e-media requires patrons to possess (and therefore purchase outside of the library) a desktop computer, an internet connection, and in most cases an e-book reader. This amounts to thousands of dollars. Where does that leave those who are often the bulk of our users—patrons who are economically downtrodden?”

- “I am interested in seeing where this goes and how this will affect library service in the long term. I see a great many benefits and I do not see us giving up physical books or closing down libraries. Much like when we started providing computers with internet access and recognized that there was a significant need for librarian assistance and user instruction, I think that if e-books pick up at the same rate as the internet, we will have a lot of job security not less!”
Methodology

Reading Habits Survey

Prepared by Princeton Survey Research Associates International for the
Pew Research Center’s Internet & American Life Project

December 2011

Summary

The Reading Habits Survey, conducted by the Pew Research Center’s Internet & American Life Project, obtained telephone interviews with a nationally representative sample of 2,986 people ages 16 and older living in the United States. Interviews were conducted via landline (n_L=1,526) and cell phone (n_C=1,460, including 677 without a landline phone). The survey was conducted by Princeton Survey Research Associates International. The interviews were administered in English and Spanish by Princeton Data Source from November 16 to December 21, 2011. Statistical results are weighted to correct known demographic discrepancies. The margin of sampling error for results based on the complete set of weighted data is ±2.2 percentage points. Results based on the 2,571 internet users have a margin of sampling error of ±2.3 percentage points.

Details on the design, execution and analysis of the survey are discussed below.

Design and Data Collection Procedures

Sample Design

A combination of landline and cellular random digit dial (RDD) samples was used to represent all adults in the United States who have access to either a landline or cellular telephone. Both samples were provided by Survey Sampling International, LLC (SSI) according to PSRAI specifications.

Numbers for the landline sample were drawn with equal probabilities from active blocks (area code + exchange + two-digit block number) that contained three or more residential directory listings. The cellular sample was not list-assisted, but was drawn through a systematic sampling from dedicated wireless 100-blocks and shared service 100-blocks with no directory-listed landline numbers.

Contact Procedures

Interviews were conducted from November 16 to December 21, 2011. As many as seven attempts were made to contact every sampled telephone number. Sample was released for interviewing in replicates, which are representative subsamples of the larger sample. Using replicates to control the release of sample ensures that complete call procedures are followed for the entire sample. Calls were staggered over times of day and days of the week to maximize the chance of making contact with potential respondents. Interviewing was spread as evenly as possible across the days in field. Each telephone number was called at least one time during the day in an attempt to complete an interview.
For the landline sample, interviewers asked to speak with the youngest adult male or female currently at home based on a random rotation. If no male/female was available, interviewers asked to speak with the youngest adult of the other gender. This systematic respondent selection technique has been shown to produce samples that closely mirror the population in terms of age and gender when combined with cell interviewing.

For the cellular sample, interviews were conducted with the person who answered the phone. Interviewers verified that the person was an adult and in a safe place before administering the survey. Cellular respondents were offered a post-paid cash reimbursement for their participation. Calls were made to the landline and cell samples until 1,125 interviews were completed in each. Once those targets were hit, screening for e-book and tablet owners was implemented. During the screening, anyone who did not respond with having an e-book or tablet device was screened-out as ineligible. All others continued the survey until approximately 700 e-reader/tablet owners were interviewed overall.

**Weighting and analysis**

The first stage of weighting corrected for the oversampling of tablet and e-reader users via screening from the landline and cell sample frames. The second stage of weighting corrected for different probabilities of selection associated with the number of adults in each household and each respondent’s telephone usage patterns.\(^62\) This weighting also adjusts for the overlapping landline and cell sample frames and the relative sizes of each frame and each sample.

This first-stage weight for the \(i^{th}\) case can be expressed as:

\[
WT_i = \begin{cases} 
\frac{1}{\left(\frac{S_{UL}}{S_{CP}} \times \frac{1}{AD_i}\right)} & \text{if respondent has no cell phone} \\
\frac{1}{\left(\frac{S_{UL}}{S_{CP}} \times \frac{1}{AD_i}\right) + R} & \text{if respondent has both kinds of phones} \\
\frac{1}{R} & \text{if respondent has no land line phone}
\end{cases}
\]

Where  
\(S_{UL}\) = size of the landline sample  
\(S_{CP}\) = size of the cell phone sample  
\(AD_i\) = Number of adults in the household  
\(R\) = Estimated ratio of the land line sample frame to the cell phone sample frame

The equations can be simplified by plugging in the values for \(S_{UL} = 1,526\) and \(S_{CP} = 1,460\). Additionally, we will estimate of the ratio of the size of landline sample frame to the cell phone sample frame \(R = 1.03\).

\(^62\) i.e., whether respondents have only a landline telephone, only a cell phone, or both kinds of telephone.
The final stage of weighting balances sample demographics to population parameters. The sample is balanced to match national population parameters for sex, age, education, race, Hispanic origin, region (U.S. Census definitions), population density, and telephone usage. The Hispanic origin was split out based on nativity; U.S born and non-U.S. born. The White, non-Hispanic subgroup is also balanced on age, education and region. The basic weighting parameters came from a special analysis of the Census Bureau’s 2010 Annual Social and Economic Supplement (ASEC) that included all households in the United States. The population density parameter was derived from Census 2000 data. The cell phone usage parameter came from an analysis of the July-December 2010 National Health Interview Survey.

Weighting was accomplished using Sample Balancing, a special iterative sample weighting program that simultaneously balances the distributions of all variables using a statistical technique called the Deming Algorithm. Weights were trimmed to prevent individual interviews from having too much influence on the final results. The use of these weights in statistical analysis ensures that the demographic characteristics of the sample closely approximate the demographic characteristics of the national population. Table 1 compares weighted and unweighted sample distributions to population parameters.

### Table 1: Sample Demographics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parameter (16+)</th>
<th>Unweighted</th>
<th>Weighted</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gender</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>48.6</td>
<td>47.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>51.4</td>
<td>52.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Age</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16-24</td>
<td>16.0</td>
<td>15.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25-34</td>
<td>17.3</td>
<td>14.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35-44</td>
<td>17.0</td>
<td>14.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45-54</td>
<td>18.7</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>55-64</td>
<td>14.8</td>
<td>17.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65+</td>
<td>16.2</td>
<td>21.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Education</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than HS Graduate</td>
<td>16.8</td>
<td>11.5</td>
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<tr>
<td>HS Graduate</td>
<td>33.8</td>
<td>26.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some College</td>
<td>23.1</td>
<td>23.3</td>
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<tr>
<td>College Graduate</td>
<td>26.3</td>
<td>38.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Race/Ethnicity</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White/not Hispanic</td>
<td>68.0</td>
<td>73.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black/not Hispanic</td>
<td>11.7</td>
<td>10.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hisp - US born</td>
<td>6.4</td>
<td>6.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hisp - born outside</td>
<td>7.5</td>
<td>4.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other/not Hispanic</td>
<td>6.2</td>
<td>5.3</td>
</tr>
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</table>


64 The phone use parameter used for this 16+ sample is the same as the parameter we use for all 18+ surveys. In other words, no adjustment was made to account for the fact that the target population for this survey is slightly different than a standard 18+ general population survey.
### Region

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Northeast</th>
<th>Midwest</th>
<th>South</th>
<th>West</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>18.5</td>
<td>15.8</td>
<td>18.2</td>
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### County Pop. Density

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Density</th>
<th>1 - Lowest</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5 - Highest</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lowest</td>
<td>20.1</td>
<td>23.6</td>
<td>20.3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>20.0</td>
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<td>20.1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>20.1</td>
<td>22.3</td>
<td>20.4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>20.2</td>
<td>17.6</td>
<td>20.2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Highest</td>
<td>19.6</td>
<td>15.2</td>
<td>18.9</td>
<td></td>
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### Household Phone Use

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Use</th>
<th>LLO</th>
<th>Dual/few, some cell</th>
<th>Dual/most cell</th>
<th>CPO</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>9.3</td>
<td>41.7</td>
<td>18.5</td>
<td>30.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dual/few, some cell</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>51.7</td>
<td>20.6</td>
<td>22.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dual/most cell</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>19.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CPO</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>30.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Effects of Sample Design on Statistical Inference

Post-data collection statistical adjustments require analysis procedures that reflect departures from simple random sampling. PSRAI calculates the effects of these design features so that an appropriate adjustment can be incorporated into tests of statistical significance when using these data. The so-called "design effect" or $deff$ represents the loss in statistical efficiency that results from systematic non-response. The total sample design effect for this survey is 1.46.

PSRAI calculates the composite design effect for a sample of size $n$, with each case having a weight, $w_i$ as:

$$deff = \frac{n \sum_{i=1}^{n} w_i^2}{\left( \sum_{i=1}^{n} w_i \right)^2}$$

**formula 1**

In a wide range of situations, the adjusted standard error of a statistic should be calculated by multiplying the usual formula by the square root of the design effect ($\sqrt{deff}$). Thus, the formula for computing the 95% confidence interval around a percentage is:

$$\hat{p} \pm \left( \sqrt{deff} \times 1.96 \sqrt{\frac{\hat{p}(1-\hat{p})}{n}} \right)$$

**formula 2**
where \( \hat{p} \) is the sample estimate and \( n \) is the unweighted number of sample cases in the group being considered.

The survey's margin of error is the largest 95% confidence interval for any estimated proportion based on the total sample—the one around 50%. For example, the margin of error for the entire sample is ±2.2 percentage points. This means that in 95 out every 100 samples drawn using the same methodology, estimated proportions based on the entire sample will be no more than 2.2 percentage points away from their true values in the population. It is important to remember that sampling fluctuations are only one possible source of error in a survey estimate. Other sources, such as respondent selection bias, questionnaire wording and reporting inaccuracy, may contribute additional error of greater or lesser magnitude.

Response Rate

Table 2 reports the disposition of all sampled telephone numbers ever dialed from the original telephone number samples. The response rate estimates the fraction of all eligible respondents in the sample that were ultimately interviewed. At PSRAI it is calculated by taking the product of three component rates:65

- Contact rate—the proportion of working numbers where a request for interview was made66
- Cooperation rate—the proportion of contacted numbers where a consent for interview was at least initially obtained, versus those refused
- Completion rate—the proportion of initially cooperating and eligible interviews that were completed

Thus the response rate for the landline sample was 14 percent. The response rate for the cellular sample was 11 percent.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 2: Sample Disposition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Landline</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>66,518</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2,876</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3,004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32,283</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3,844</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24,495</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1,281</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7,092</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>118</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

65 PSRAI’s disposition codes and reporting are consistent with the American Association for Public Opinion Research standards.

66 PSRAI assumes that 75 percent of cases that result in a constant disposition of “No answer” or “Busy” are actually not working numbers.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>16,004</th>
<th>22,106</th>
<th>Contacted numbers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Contact Rate</td>
<td>65.3%</td>
<td>60.7%</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>902</th>
<th>3,485</th>
<th>Callback</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>11,408</th>
<th>14,644</th>
<th>Refusal</th>
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</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>3,694</th>
<th>3,977</th>
<th>Cooperating numbers</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cooperation Rate</td>
<td>23.1%</td>
<td>18.0%</td>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>104</th>
<th>129</th>
<th>Language Barrier</th>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1,960</th>
<th>2,362</th>
<th>Child's cell phone / Oversample Screenout</th>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1,630</th>
<th>1,486</th>
<th>Eligible numbers</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Eligibility Rate</td>
<td>44.1%</td>
<td>37.4%</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>26</th>
<th>Break-off</th>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1,526</th>
<th>1,460</th>
<th>Completes</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Completion Rate</td>
<td>93.6%</td>
<td>98.3%</td>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>14.1%</th>
<th>10.7%</th>
<th>Response Rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Qualitative material**

The qualitative material in this report, including the extended quotes from individuals regarding e-books and library use, comes from two sets of online interviews that were conducted in May 2012. The first group of interviews was of library patrons who have borrowed an e-book from the library. Some 6,573 people answered at least some of the questions on the patron canvassing, and 4,396 completed the questionnaire. The second group of interviews was of librarians themselves. Some 2,256 library staff members answered at least some of the questions on the canvassing of librarians, and 1,180 completed the questionnaire. Both sets of online interviews were opt-in canvassings meant to draw out comments from patrons and librarians, and they are not representative of the general population or even library users. As a result, no statistics or specific data points from either online questionnaire are cited in this report.
On May 2 and 3, 2014, eighty librarians and representatives from organizations that work with libraries met at the Library of Congress to discuss the future of libraries. Inspired by five nationally recognized speakers and their own table discussions, participants engaged in wide ranging conversations about the trends in society that libraries will have to address and how librarians might prepare, respond, and, in fact, lead libraries into that future. The results of the discussion will inform the development of a Center for the Future of Libraries to be initiated by the American Library Association in the spring of 2014.

Participants were challenged with remarks by author and journalist Stephen Dubner, “How to Think Like a Freak,” on thinking differently in order to plan for the future. Lincoln Professor of Law, Culture, and Values at Arizona State University Joel Garreau asked, “What Are Libraries Good For?” in discussing culture, values, and society. Chancellor and President of the University of Houston Dr. Renu Khator challenged the group to consider “Education in the Future – Anywhere, Anytime.” Executive Director and Senior Futurist at the DaVinci Institute Thomas Frey described a transition “From an Internet of Things to a Library of Things.” Library Futurist Joan Frye Williams concluded the conference with a summation of key points discussed throughout the two days.

In addition to the key speakers, participants also had the opportunity to discuss each speaker’s comments in a facilitated table discussion; to contribute their personal reflections on the speaker’s remarks; to consider key elements in the Declaration for the Right to Libraries; and hear remarks from Dr. James Billington, Librarian of Congress. At the opening of the Summit, participants were asked to select “two words” that reflected their thoughts on the future of libraries as they began the Summit. Throughout the Summit, they had the opportunity to add to these words on ribbons attached to their name badges.

This report will summarize the comments by the key speakers and the responses from the participants, including identification of key issues and ideas on the future of libraries.

Key Issues

Even though the topics were different, there were remarkably similar issues identified and discussed in the table discussions and the personal reflections for all of the speakers. There were different emphases depending on the topic (for example, the focus was heavily on the role of libraries in education following Dr. Khator’s presentation). In the discussions, Summit participants frequently referred to the “community.” This is understood to mean the community or constituency that the type of library serves – for example, students, faculty, and administrators, plus other stakeholders for school and academic libraries; employees and maybe clients of special libraries; a designated geographic area for public libraries. Throughout the discussions the overarching themes were:
• Role of libraries in the future
A key topic of discussion in all sessions was: What is the role of libraries in the future? This was debated in multiple guises inspired by the speakers. Is the basic mission of libraries changing? Do libraries need staff with different skills? How should library education change to prepare librarians with different skills? Should libraries decide this future role on their own or through conversations with user (and non-user) groups?

• The values expressed in library service
These values included both those adopted by libraries in serving users (privacy, neutrality) and the value that the community seems to place on libraries (trust, equity). Participants recognized that deeply shared core values, such as those reflected in the Declaration for the Right to Libraries, need to shape our response to the future even though the specific forms that library service takes are likely to change dramatically.

• The need to re-envision library service
All of the speakers challenged the participants to think differently about the future of libraries and the Summit participants responded enthusiastically, suggesting ways for libraries to reconsider how library operations are traditionally done, including examples of libraries that have already developed new approaches to serving their communities. As part of this discussion, participants recognized that librarians must be encouraged to take risks and experiment and not be afraid to fail as they learn new ways to serve current and new constituencies. Many different library services were suggested with a particular emphasis on education as a result of Dr. Khator’s remarks.

• Libraries as community hubs
Regardless of the community served (public, school, academic, or special), the emphasis was that the library needs to be intricately involved in the community it serves and devote considerable effort in determining the needs and priorities of that community. This theme included emphasis on the importance of networking and collaboration with governing bodies and community organizations or constituent groups.

• The need to “rebrand” libraries
Throughout the discussions there was recognition that for many in the public, the perception of libraries reflects a traditional and sometimes negative or irrelevant attitude. Participants made suggestions to increase awareness of the value of libraries with emphasis both on “stories” about the impact of libraries on individual users and on the need to collect data to prove the impact of libraries on individuals and communities.

• Obstacles that libraries face
The tone of the Summit and the comments by participants were primarily, in fact overwhelmingly, positive, with an emphasis on the ways that libraries can prepare for and lead
into the future. However, there was also a recognition of obstacles that libraries face, including reluctance by librarians to face change. These are summarized at the end of the report.

How to Think Like a Freak – Stephen Dubner

Dubner challenged the Summit participants to look behind what seemed to be an obvious problem to seek the real issue that libraries are dealing with, and to think creatively about solutions. He spoke about the importance of measurement and the need for storytelling about library successes and—most importantly—of integrating storytelling with data. He challenged librarians to say “I don’t know but I’ll find out” more often and to set aside our moral compasses in looking for solutions to problems. While immoral solutions would not be chosen in the end, they can lead to creative ways to solve problems differently from traditional library solutions. (Joan Frye Williams raised this issue in her summary asking why librarians are so concerned about privacy when many of our patrons seem less so and are excited about communicating online with other library users.) Dubner urged us to rethink libraries in general and offered two lessons for thinking creatively: redefine the problem (what is the real problem?) and face limits that are there, but reject limits that are artificial. One of his remarks described an imaginary context that has become true with e-books.

There is nothing about the library’s continuing strength that was foreordained. Like a lot of institutions, it is to a degree the product of an accident of history. If a relatively small group of people hadn’t decided, many years ago, that the public library was an institution that deserved funding, and tending, and recognition, would we still have them? If, that is, the library were an idea that was proposed anew today, would it come into existence? I’m not so sure. Can you imagine the conversation with the publishers? Yes, we’d like to buy one copy of your book and then let 1,000 people read it, for free. Ha! All books come equipped with some self-destruction device that would blow it up after five readings.

Table Discussions - Dubner

Not surprisingly, considering the topic of Dubner’s presentation, a key theme in the table discussions was that libraries need to “think differently” about their mission and their future. Participants commented that librarians need to redefine what problems librarians are trying to solve and asked the same question that Dubner asked: What would libraries look like if just created? One asked, “What if we closed all physical buildings and used library funding to give everyone an iPad? Would they form neighborhood “pop-up” libraries anyway? How important is the “real estate” the library provides?” Another, “What if libraries are not run by librarians but by the patrons? What would they do? How can we engage communities in new ways and capture that information?” A final comment in this theme was that librarians need to “create the future rather than reacting to it...making and taking bets... taking risks.”

A second major theme was how the library can and should respond to its community. For example, we make assumptions about our users’ needs, that “we know better” when we should be aggressively seeking the needs of the community from the community. This presumed expertise is a “barrier and an
illusion.” We should not confuse librarian interest and passion with users’ passions and needs. Four participants specifically said that librarians should become “embedded” in the community, actively participating in community organizations to achieve community goals, and bringing in new voices and different people. Tied into this theme was the concept of the library as a community hub, a “public square,” a “space” for people to come together to build community.

A third major theme was the values that drive library operation and librarian decisions. The groups responded to Dubner’s urging to leave our moral compass at the door. The concrete example from one table was potential stereotypical opinions about some populations or the homeless. Another was librarian commitment to protecting privacy when many users are very willing to give up their privacy in return for sharing opinions and ideas with other library users. There was also recognition that one strength of libraries is their moral compass -- that they are perceived as a “trusted and safe place” and “neutral, accessible, and communal.”

A final discussion theme was the need to rebrand the library as essential to the community it serves. Again, the participants responded to Dubner’s call for storytelling about the library and using impact data in support of the stories. One participant said, echoing Dubner, that libraries developed as a “happy accident with intrinsic value but this is not an underlying truth we can rely on to sell libraries any longer…Not everyone believes in free access to information in libraries.”

**Personal Reflections**

The personal reflections expanded on the themes above. Four reflections that stood out are:

*I think we are focused on finding a solution to a problem that we haven’t identified or fully explored. To do this we need to 1) put aside our assumptions/passions for libraries; 2) talk to those who are not as passionate as us (policy makers, community leaders, etc.) to understand their arguments against libraries or maybe in support of other institutions. We need to talk to people who don’t agree with us!*

*Dubner’s admonition to set aside one’s moral compass when approaching a problem and solution is quite challenging but makes a lot of sense. We often ground our search for solutions in values – and other foundational principles. But by starting with a foundation too weighted, one limits where and how the solutions may be rooted. Values are important – but how important and/or at what time do you bring them in?*

*Thoughts on “measurement” – important to evaluate experiments. We are often so pressured to succeed that even when we do experiment, we don’t stop to evaluate the results, just assume success.*

*Users are not coming to us for authoritative information anymore. We should stop trying to insert ourselves in that process, support authority when possible, and find new needs to meet.*
What Are Libraries Good For? -- Joel Garreau

Garreau emphasized that libraries need to reexamine the role they play in their respective communities. He emphasized the importance of library as “space” and the way communities use that space to come together for human interaction and face-to-face experiences. He specifically mentioned the concept of the “trust” role of libraries in communities. Garreau felt that the future of libraries isn’t about books or computers but about building communities; the more we digitize, the higher the value of what we can’t digitize. He quoted Adam Kahane in saying, “A system is perfectly designed to produce the results it is now producing,” a call similar to Dubner’s for libraries to think differently. Garreau’s book, Radical Evolution, dealt with alternative paths to human evolution and survival. He extended this theme to libraries and felt they had a role to play in the improvement of society and “for libraries to prevail, they need to help the species prevail.” The species will prevail because humans will come up with new ways to solve emerging and changing world issues. Libraries will prevail because they are in the business of creating human achievement and community.

Table Discussions – Garreau

Not surprisingly, Garreau’s emphasis on community and space sparked similar discussion at the tables. The librarians spoke more of the integration of technology and space, particularly the space created by the replacement of print resources with more current online resources. Participants used words such as “commons”; “third place” (home and school/work being first and second place); “human touch”; “central gathering place”; “community hub”; and “social space” to describe this new role of the library. One described it as a “playground and resource.”

Garreau’s remarks also prompted a discussion of what expectations communities have of libraries and how to plan for them. One person commented that there may be different expectations from those with different cultural backgrounds and that, as constituent demographics and culture change, libraries must be attuned to this change and respond. There was general agreement that people want instantaneous access, one-stop shopping, flexibility, quality, and the expectation of free service. One person said that the constituencies may expect the library to change faster than libraries are able or prepared to and that libraries need to engage these constituencies. Another participant asked “What happens when we have libraries in our pockets (phones) and then our heads (nanos)? Is there a threat or concern for libraries? How does this impact the mission of libraries?”

Other comments on Garreau’s presentation centered on his use of the word “prevail” in the sense of librarians continuing to exist. Some felt that libraries need to do more than prevail; they should flourish and play a significant role in helping constituents, organizations, and institutions to flourish as well. One emphasis was on a traditional library role of libraries – preserving local culture – expanding in the digital age to “capture today for tomorrow, to preserve and curate.”

As in response to other speakers the values ensconced in library service were discussed – particularly the trust that people have in libraries. One participant said that “people trust libraries and libraries
need to trust the people”; another noted that libraries are a “safe space face-to-face and increasingly becoming a safe space online, too.”

The final question at the table asked what opportunities libraries could provide for their constituents. This provoked a wide range of suggestions for different programs and services. One suggested that libraries provide “content and service that would not exist otherwise.” Another said that libraries should provide “rich learning experiences that excite the imagination and are learning driven and creative.”

Personal Reflections

Garreau inspired many reflections. Several concepts resonated in the personal reflections: the role of libraries in the community; the idea of trust; and the role of libraries in both human and social evolution. There was also an emphasis on face-to-face interactions (one participant said that all participants probably came to this conclusion) but at least one expressed the point of view that “virtual connections are still an important part of the fabric. By this I mean the ability to meet community needs which could be a virtual convening.” Several comments stood out in looking at the role of libraries:

*From his talk it seems that libraries are critical to the development of communities that can support positive evolution as a species. Key to that is for libraries to be a trusting safe space where people from different backgrounds can come together and contemplate/discuss/problem-solve – libraries must play a role in building trust among community members who may not initially see themselves as equals/partners.*

*“Trust location” was resonant to me. Also the concept of scenarios is very helpful in resolving the central question of culture, value, and society – we reflect these things clearly but how do we envision services, staff training, space accommodation and materials to be reflective of that community.*

Education in the Future – Anywhere, Anytime – Dr. Renu Khator

Khator’s presentation outlined a very different educational environment of the near future with dramatic changes that impact all aspects of education. Higher education institutions are facing issues of mission creep, changing technology, and an expanding market for talented professionals (they are being recruited by other countries). In her picture of the future, she included visions of educational globalization, competition among programs for quality content and graduates, and businesses driving needs for employee learning and thus curriculum. A concept that resonated particularly with the Summit participants was the issue of decoupling – development of content decoupled from development of delivery; learning decoupled from credentialing. She also called for integration of services supporting teaching and learning – such as libraries – with emphasis on the changes brought about by online education.
Khator presented a vision of rapid change in education including increased “vocational” education (beyond a two-year institutional model) because content in higher educational environment must lead to employment/ jobs. This could result in competition for resource support among different types of institutions. She called for a full rethinking of education saying, “We cannot serve today’s learners with yesterday’s methods and expect to be in business tomorrow,” advice which could be applied to all aspects of library service. She suggested that in the future place-based higher education might continue to be appropriate for younger people, but that middle age and older adults seeking formal education might want more a more customized approach. Khator said that universities and libraries must figure out the future together: libraries must look outward; libraries are about experience, not books; libraries are about place; libraries are about communities of learning; libraries are about focus. Above all, universities and libraries must be open, flexible, and innovative.

Table Discussions

Summit participants saw education as a growth area for public library service and an opportunity for school and academic libraries to expand and innovate their services – and a challenge for all libraries to be ahead of the curve as education curriculum and practices change, for example the Common Core in public education and MOOCs in higher education.

Public libraries, traditionally called the People’s University, can be expected to expand this role since they have the “space, access, and infrastructure” and because both formal continuing education and informal learning are expanding. Baby boomers, healthy and often with available time, are eager to engage in formal courses. Maker spaces, more prominent in public than other types of libraries, offer individual experiential learning opportunities with the library serving as site and the librarian as facilitator and navigator. Immigrants and entrepreneurs were singled out for particular attention.

While Khator did not discuss early childhood education, participants quickly saw the role that public libraries currently play and the expanded role public and some school libraries could play in developing reading readiness skills in pre-school children.

Summit participants were intrigued by Khator’s suggestion that education be “decoupled” from learning that leads to credentials and the possibility that libraries could participate in this process – helping users engage in the learning, certifying their achievement, and tracking their progress over time. This related to a reexamination of the mission or role of the library. Are public libraries ready to play a larger, more than just supportive, role in formal education? How can school libraries help decrease the high drop-out rate through both formal and informal learning opportunities? How will academic libraries support thousands of students enrolled internationally in a MOOC?

Personal Reflections

The fascination with decoupling, credentialing, and disruption in higher education was carried over into the personal reflections. Some representative comments were:
Schools won’t be the only place where learning counts. Anything could happen. We are in such dire straits that a promising alternative could easily and quickly change the institution. Credibility is the biggest [goal] to crave. Once credibility is decoupled from the institution, changes will cascade.

Publishing market and academic libraries are not set up to support “a la carte” education. Will this fall to public libraries? Will the line between public and academic blur? What about public & K-12? Can we expand our mission and still keep community — focus on high-touch?

We will need to be prepared to be in the “thick” of these new models. People will come to us expecting us to understand — and support their involvement in- dramatically different educational experiences.

From an Internet of Things to a Library of Things -- Thomas Frey

Frey had done more writing about libraries than any of the other speakers. He said that the future is constantly unfolding, relentless, and happening whether we want it to or not. It will happen whether or not librarians agree to participate. He related what actions we take brings about our vision of the future and if we change that vision, we will change the actions we take to bring it about. Frey asked a series of questions about the future to challenge the thinking of the participants: What does the future want? What systems do we employ today that are the dead-end equivalent of Roman numerals? How does the future get created? What are the big things that still need to be accomplished? How do libraries determine what is relevant? When will we reach peak demand for library service? Ideas are the new form of information — should libraries be archiving ideas? Frey described disruptive technologies of the past (electricity, automobiles, airplanes, photographs) and predicted some for the future (distance education and medicine, 3D printing “will be bigger than the Internet,” and tools on smart phones and iPads replacing physical tools which employed thousands of people in the production supply line).

Frey identified seven trends for libraries:

1. Libraries will continue to evolve.
   While other speakers emphasized the library as place, Frey focused on the explosive expansion of “smart” everything in our society (smart pet door that only lets your dog in and out) and the explosion of electronic data and information available.

2. Libraries were the original sharing economy. Their role in the future sharing economy is up to you.
   New industries are set up to share cars (zip car), rides (umber), homes (Airbnb), chores (Task Rabbit), and even ideas (TED talks). What new things will libraries share/loan?

3. Libraries are transitioning from a place to consume things to a place to produce things.
   “People are no longer satisfied with just receiving information; they want to help create it.” Examples are library as publisher, maker-spaces, support for entrepreneurship, and 3D printing of everything from pottery to bicycles to cars to houses to clothing.

4. Education is about to be redefined.
The changing nature of careers means more education; “micro” colleges will teach everything from making beer to grooming dogs to drone piloting to aquaponics and many, many other careers. Will/can/should libraries provide support for credentialing from these “micro” colleges or the attainment of the competencies for these careers?

5. The Quantified Self is driving the hyper individualized talent marketplace. We count everything and have electronic gadgets that allow us to do this. What support can libraries provide to assist people to meet personal goals related to their own self and their personal understandings.

6. Libraries are becoming a laboratory for freelance jobs. Early retirement frees people to create their own jobs; the poor economy and layoffs provide the same incentive. The new jobs will be project work rather than permanent employee positions.

7. Funding mechanisms for libraries will continue to evolve, with many offering premium services. Libraries will obtain new sources of income by charging for “premium” services that require more librarian work or feed user convenience.

Table Discussions

Summit participants’ responses to Frey’s seven trends varied. Some felt that libraries were already working on some of the trends (“libraries have always been about technology, this isn’t anything new”) and many objected to Frey’s last principle as violating traditional library values. There was some concern with considering a new mission of libraries. One participant said, “libraries have problems with shiny objects... we need to think what the purpose of the tech (3D) printer is.”

The discussion followed a similar path as the discussions after the previous speakers: that libraries need to evolve to meet constituent needs; the need for rebranding (“misperception of what school libraries do”), the need for data and stories; the need to experiment.

Personal Reflections

By the time Frey spoke, participants began to reference issues from all speakers in their reflections. Some specific comments included:

The future of the library will depend upon specialization. It may also be important to act even more as an equalizer than it does now. What does that mean for those in the lowest socio-economic echelons? They currently aren’t well connected to the Internet, they can’t afford hot mobile, and they don’t have the resources to engage in the “specialized, sensor-laden” future. Libraries can help to ease this growing inequity.

The emphasis needs to be on opening the possibilities for people to create, invent, determine their own learning, and pursue individual possibilities. I think that libraries need to figure out how to support that rapidly changing learning environment without letting the “institution” of the library be a barrier.
Need to accelerate library innovation and rethinking. Time for dropping long-established activities – but which ones and how to get community buy in is the challenge.

I feel a sense of urgency to be better prepared for the future. Everything we know today is about to change in unknown ways and we need to be ready to help assist/guide people through change. This will require the ability to be nimble and quick in order to adapt to whatever changes may come.

Pulling It All Together, How the Declaration for the Right to Libraries Interacts with our Perceptions of the Future

The final discussion session was designed to bring all of the discussions together by shifting the focus from conversations based on the speakers’ presentations to how these presentations impacted library service in specific areas: promoting literacy in children and youth; building communities; protecting and empowering access to information; advancing research and scholarship; preserving and/or creating cultural heritage; and supporting economic development and good government. Summit participants could decide which of the topics they wished to discuss so the number of people at each table varied.

Promoting literacy, particularly in children and youth

These participants acknowledged that public libraries have a lot of “traction” in early learning; that this is an area where libraries can show their value in informal learning that can help lead to success in formal education. However, one participant raised the issue of how to measure the impact of the library in informal education (beyond just that for children) when the actual success of the learner can depend on multiple factors not just the action of the library. Another participant commented that early literacy can be impacted by intergenerational activities, empowering teens and others, such as seniors, to teach others. Another participant singled out the need for libraries to look and expand literacy for people wanting to learn English, regardless of their age. And again, participants recognized that trust in the library and building partnerships contribute to success.

Building communities the library serves

This was a theme that came up in all of the discussions throughout the two days; that the role of libraries is to build the community in which the library operates. For some this meant working with individuals and for others it meant the community as a whole.

One participant put it this way: “people are the collection”; the library is about people and community development. Another raised the issue of defining who the library serves, a need for “mapping the territory and making sure constituents are part of the mapping.” Participants discussed the concept of the “lifecycle of grouping”; that people come together in “short bursts” and then disperse. How does the library maintain enthusiasm and continuity of service in this context? Along the same lines was the question of bringing diverse groups together for common activities or goals to build a better understanding of the community overall.
The table discussed the role of the library in empowering a community overall. Throughout the Summit, participants discussed planning future library services and the importance of planning in relation to the community’s overall goals and the library’s contributions to those goals. During this session, one person suggested shifting the “mindset of serving communities to working with communities.” This was described as contributing to the overall health of the community in terms of creating content from community issues and projects and making resources available to sustain the community and support it with information. The library was seen as a “connector” of people and issues and organizations in the community.

A similar discussion returned to the concept of the library as physical and virtual space – a place for people to meet face-to-face and a place for people to discover the community virtually. One person saw this as contributing to library funding; if the funders see the contributions of the library to community growth and health, then they may be more likely to invest in the library.

**Protecting and empowering access to information**

Fewer people chose this table and one person said this was not a surprise since “we take access for granted.” Another commented that “our constituents take it for granted as well.” The concept of access was broadly defined. One person said access should be not just to technology and information but also to skills, raising the role of libraries in education and credentials again. Another person said that there is an assumption that access to technology is ubiquitous but that as technology expands, skill in using new technologies is a constantly moving target, and sufficient bandwidth is a constant problem, because access to technology may not be as ubiquitous as assumed.

The group also discussed equity of access in terms of actual access (inner city, people with disabilities) and knowledge of how to access (many senior citizens). Libraries need to consider various needs in relation to access and be prepared to address multiple needs.

**Advancing research and scholarship at all levels**

This group was made up primarily of academic librarians and two school librarians. The discussion revolved around the various roles of collecting and making available scholarship and research; organizing raw data so that it is understandable and useable; and teaching research skills to those who do not have these skills. One participant described this as “here’s what’s out there… and here’s how to get to it.” Two people said libraries need to teach information literacy skills “early, early, early” using as an example “teaching an 8-year-old about metadata by using the example of organizing a comic book collection.”

**Preserving and/or creating cultural heritage**

The discussion at this table revolved around what to collect and how to collect.
What - One participant said an issue was how to define cultural heritage. Should a library be selective in what is preserved or “let robots preserve it all?” What part of a community’s history should be preserved and what ignored? One person commented that “winners write the history” and that “some things disappear for political reasons.” The group recognized the lack of a systematic process for curating and preserving web resources – “here today, gone tomorrow” – and that public policy doesn’t always support preservation. One person suggested that libraries need a “clear picture of what’s out there, the priorities” and raised an “interesting curation question”: which is more important, “one sampler from a 7-year-old 150 years ago vs. 1000 art projects from 2014 3rd graders.”

How - One participant raised the perennial issue of whether it was the content or the format that should be preserved: “destroy the collection in order to preserve it.” Special skills are needed to acquire oral histories -- “to discern what’s fact and what’s wishful thinking.” One participant noted the difference and difficulty of preserving “Grandpa’s shoebox – we know what to do with this – vs Grandpa’s thumb drive – we won’t be able to open this.”

Supporting economic development and good government

This group discussed primarily the role of public libraries in supporting economic development and good government. Participants suggested a number of ways that libraries provide these services, some outside the traditional scope of a library such as bringing commercial businesses (such as a flower shop, convenience stores, or a dry cleaner) into the library or sponsoring a regular farmer’s market. The group also suggested libraries might team up with big box stores to open a branch library.

What Happened at the Summit – Joan Frye Williams

During the Summit, Williams observed various table discussions and reviewed the flip chart transcriptions as they were made available to her. Her closing remarks summarized the major points raised throughout the Summit.

She began by saying that the Summit was not a design process for the Center for the Future of Libraries but rather an opportunity to “frame – and reframe – some of the important issues and questions that can inform how we extend/rebalance/enhance/redesign libraries and library services moving forward. From now on: What value will libraries add? What difference will libraries make? What business will libraries be in?”

The role of libraries will be “active, collaborative, and developmental.” Libraries will focus on progress over time and cultivate ongoing relationships with the individuals and communities libraries serve. Library success will be measured by constituent success. And that ongoing relationship will be based on trust.

Williams says that libraries will be “challenged to accommodate a shift away from an environment of unpredictable relationships and stable processes, and towards an environment of stable relationships and unpredictable processes. Creativity and comfort don’t always go together.”
Williams was particularly intrigued by one of the concepts expressed by Dr. Khator that processes we have considered inseparable in the past may be decoupled or deconstructed in the future. “We need to talk about what might happen in libraries if we were to rethink the following processes as separable: knowledge creation, management, curation, and distribution; service design and delivery; and library support and use.”

She went on to say that based on what she heard at the Summit, libraries “need to do a better job of distinguishing between principles, outcomes, and techniques. Too often, we ask ‘civilians’ which techniques we should use, when their real area of expertise is the outcomes they’d like us to help them achieve. Too often, we elevate comfortable techniques to the status of principles. Protecting patron confidentiality is a principle. Declining to analyze any patron behavioral data, even in the aggregate, is a common technique for ensuring confidentiality. “

Williams concluded by saying, “As a profession that prizes mastery, we may well find it challenging to embrace the risks, conflicts, and uncertainties that lead to growth. I can only say that, based on what I’ve heard here, I am hopeful that we can move forward successfully. It’s work worth doing.”

Two Words

Prior to their arrival at the Summit, participants were asked to think of two words that reflected their initial opinion on the future of libraries. Almost all of the participants took this challenge and wrote their two words on a white ribbon that was attached to the name badge. Throughout the Summit, participants had an opportunity to add new words and attach them below the previous ribbons. A total of 130 ribbons were used by the 80 participant, some adding multiple words and some sticking with their original words. Eighteen different words or a close variant were used the most: community (16), transform (7), collaboration (6), experiential (6), learn (5), connector (5), innovate (5), change, including proceeded by social or societal (5), local (4), action (4), converge/convene (3), evolving (3), essential (3), adapt (3), place (2), optimistic (2), and culture (2). A few others were repeated but were first introduced by a speaker. The original thought was that there would be a change in perspective by participants, for example, for “no future” to a hopeful one. Rather, most people began with a positive view of the future of libraries. Perhaps the few people who did not see a positive future chose not to write on a ribbon at all.

Two Final Issues

Two additional themes should be mentioned that were woven throughout the discussion: barriers to accomplishing all that was discussed and the role of staff education and skills in designing the future of libraries.

Barriers facing libraries in the future

While, overall, the discussion about the future of libraries was very positive, some participants expressed serious concerns about barriers that might prevent libraries from moving forward as they wanted. One mentioned that libraries would be unable to convince boards and administrators of the value of the library to the community and the value of cooperating with the library on community
issues. Thus funds would not be available to plan and implement the exciting ideas discussed. Tied to
this was the reluctance or inability of libraries to collect and analyze data on which to make decisions
and base stories.

A second barrier was possibly opposition from commercial enterprises if libraries, in redefining their
mission, chose to provide free access to services currently available only at a cost. The opposition and
limitation of eBooks by major publishers is an example of this.

A third obstacle was the possibility that the public will move or, at least, want to move faster than the
library can, for whatever reason, or that the library wants to, if it is locked in a traditional approach to
collections and services. There was also concern whether, even if the library did change, it would not
be able to keep up with its “success” and thus the additional demand.

A fourth obstacle was a “mission creep” or, as one participant phrased it, “maybe we should stop trying
to be everything to everyone” and set priorities; and the difficulty of making sure the priorities chosen
don’t seriously leave the library behind in other areas that should have been priorities.

The final obstacle mentioned was stated as “how much do we give up when we partner? What new
limits are brought [with partnerships]?”

Staff

Two main issues were raised in relation to library staff: the education and training of library staff and
the identification of the skillset that librarians will need in the future.

Education and training of library staff

One group suggested that library staff purposefully go to non-library conferences in order to talk to
people not primarily involved in libraries about possible cooperation. This would also give library staff
members the opportunity to learn outside their normal scope of activity. Another issue related to
library education. If libraries are to move into the future, library schools that train future library leaders
need to be part of national planning about the future of libraries. This might mean reexamining the
graduate school accreditation goals and requirements and looking at alternative methods of certifying
library staff. Continuing education should also be required for all staff to keep skills fresh and attitudes
open.

Determining the proper skill set and characteristics for future libraries

One group suggested that libraries cannot depend solely on MLS degreed librarians to staff libraries.
Para-librarians and people from other fields can contribute to the planning and implementation of the
library’s future. This could also mean reforming what MLS-librarians do in libraries and how para-
librarians might be trained to do what MLS-librarians have done in the past. If serving a diverse
community is a goal and priority in the future (if not now), then libraries should find, hire, and train a
diverse staff. If libraries will play a different role in education in the future, then librarians may need a
higher skill level in facilitation, teaching, coaching, and entrepreneurship. The ability to identify the real
reference question and find the right answer may be a skill of limited value in the future. If expanding
technology is a priority, then all staff members, rather than just the IT staff, need to understand, not just the technology embedded in the library, but the technology that library users bring to the library. One group also identified higher-level skills as necessary, such as interpersonal and communication skills, change management, project management, partnering and collaboration, and special expertise in areas such as youth or business services. Library staff members need to understand and accept their new role.

**Planning the Summit**

The Summit was designed for a limited invitational audience composed of librarians, thought leaders outside the library community, and representatives of organizations whose mission corresponds to libraries or who with whom libraries should partner. Library participants were chosen as representatives from different types of libraries, expertise, and time in the profession. Ethnic diversity and representation of people with disabilities was also a factor. From the beginning plans were developed to include communication with and input from those not attending the Summit. To this end, an ALAConnect site was established where Summit documents were placed. There will be many more opportunities for future input from people throughout the library profession and any individuals or groups interested in libraries. The Summit was co-chaired by Pat Smith and Julie Todaro and coordinated by Nancy Bolt. The venue for the Summit was generously donated by the Library of Congress and Summit participants were privileged to hear from the Librarian of Congress, Dr. James Billington. The Summit was also supported by a grant from the Institute of Museum and Library Services.

*This report was prepared by Nancy Bolt using transcriptions of the flip charts provided by Julie Todaro and Shaula O’Connor, summaries of the presentations made by Julie Todaro, some Twitter comments, and notes provided by Stephen Dubner, Thomas Frey, and Joan Frye Williams.*
Melvil Dewey was a one-man Silicon Valley born a century before Steve Jobs. He was the quintessential Industrial Age entrepreneur, but unlike the Carnegies and Rockefellers, with their industries of heavy materiality and heavy labor, Dewey sold ideas. His ambition revealed itself early: in 1876, shortly after graduating from Amherst College, he copyrighted his library classification scheme. That same year, he helped found the American Library Association, served as founding editor of *Library Journal*, and launched the American Metric Bureau, which campaigned for adoption of the metric system. He was 24 years old. He had already established the Library Bureau, a company that sold (and helped standardize) library supplies, furniture, media display and storage devices, and equipment for managing the circulation of collection materials. Its catalog (which would later include another Dewey invention, the hanging vertical file) represented the library as a “machine” of uplift and enlightenment that enabled proto-Taylorist approaches to public education and the provision of social services. As chief librarian at Columbia College, Dewey established the first library school — called, notably, the School of Library Economy — whose first class was 85% female; then he brought the school to Albany, where he directed the New York State Library. In his spare time, he founded the Lake Placid Club and helped win the bid for the 1932 Winter Olympics.

Dewey was thus simultaneously in the furniture business, the office-supply business, the consulting business, the publishing business, the education business, the human resources business, and what we might today call the “knowledge solutions” business. Not only did he recognize the potential for monetizing and cross-promoting his work across these fields; he also saw that each field would be the better for it. His career (which was not without its significant controversies) embodied a belief that classification systems and labeling standards and furniture designs and people work best when they work towards the same end — in other words, that intellectual and material systems and labor practices are mutually constructed and mutually reinforcing.
Today’s libraries, Apple-era versions of the Dewey/Carnegie institution, continue to materialize, at multiple scales, their underlying bureaucratic and epistemic structures — from the design of their web interfaces to the architecture of their buildings to the networking of their technical infrastructures. This has been true of knowledge institutions throughout history, and it will be true of our future institutions, too. I propose that thinking about the library as a network of integrated, mutually reinforcing, evolving infrastructures — in particular, architectural, technological, social, epistemological and ethical infrastructures — can help us better identify what roles we want our libraries to serve, and what we can reasonably expect of them. What ideas, values and social responsibilities can we scaffold within the library’s material systems — its walls and wires, shelves and servers?

Dictionary stands from the Library Bureau’s 1890 catalog.

Library as Platform
For millennia libraries have acquired resources, organized them, preserved them and made them accessible (or not) to patrons. But the forms of those resources have changed — from scrolls and codices; to LPs and LaserDiscs; to e-books, electronic databases and open data sets. Libraries have had at least to comprehend, if not become a key node within, evolving systems of media production and distribution. Consider the medieval scriptoria where manuscripts were produced; the evolution of the publishing industry and book trade after Gutenberg; the rise of information technology and its webs of wires, protocols and regulations.1 At every stage, the contexts — spatial, political, economic, cultural — in which libraries function have shifted; so they are continuously reinventing themselves and the means by which they provide those vital information services.

Libraries have also assumed a host of ever-changing social and symbolic functions. They have been expected to symbolize the eminence of a ruler or state, to integrally link “knowledge” and “power” — and, more recently, to serve as “community centers,”
“public squares” or “think tanks.” Even those seemingly modern metaphors have deep histories. The ancient Library of Alexandria was a prototypical think tank, and the early Carnegie buildings of the 1880s were community centers with swimming pools and public baths, bowling alleys, billiard rooms, even rifle ranges, as well as book stacks. As the Carnegie funding program expanded internationally — to more than 2,500 libraries worldwide — secretary James Bertram standardized the design in his 1911 pamphlet “Notes on the Erection of Library Buildings,” which offered grantees a choice of six models, believed to be the work of architect Edward Tilton. Notably, they all included a lecture room.

In short, the library has always been a place where informational and social infrastructures intersect within a physical infrastructure that (ideally) supports that program.

Now we are seeing the rise of a new metaphor: the library as “platform” — a buzzy word that refers to a base upon which developers create new applications, technologies and processes. In an influential 2012 article in Library Journal, David Weinberger proposed that we think of libraries as “open platforms” — not only for the creation of software, but also for the development of knowledge and community. Weinberger argued that libraries should open up their entire collections, all their metadata, and any technologies they've created, and allow anyone to build new products and services on top of that foundation. The platform model, he wrote, “focuses our attention away from the provisioning of resources to the foment” — the “messy, rich networks of people and ideas” — that “those resources engender.” Thus the ancient Library of Alexandria, part of a larger museum with botanical gardens, laboratories, living quarters and dining halls, was a platform not only for the translation and copying of myriad texts and the compilation of a magnificent collection, but also for the launch of works by Euclid, Archimedes, Eratosthenes and their peers.

Yet the platform metaphor has limitations. For one thing, it smacks of Silicon Valley entrepreneurial epistemology, which prioritizes “monetizable” “knowledge solutions.” Further, its association with new media tends to bracket out the similarly generative capacities of low-tech, and even non-technical, library resources. One key misperception of those who proclaim the library’s obsolescence is that its function as a knowledge institution can be reduced to its technical services and information offerings. Knowledge is never solely a product of technology and the information it delivers.
Another problem with the platform model is the image it evokes: a flat, two-dimensional stage on which resources are laid out for users to do stuff with. The platform doesn’t have any implied depth, so we’re not inclined to look underneath or behind it, or to question its structure. Weinberger encourages us to “think of the library not as a portal we go through on occasion but as infrastructure that is as ubiquitous and persistent as the streets and sidewalks of a town.” It’s like a “canopy,” he says — or like a “cloud.” But these metaphors are more poetic than critical; they obfuscate all the wires, pulleys, lights and scaffolding that you inevitably find underneath and above that stage — and the casting, staging and direction that determine what happens on the stage, and that allow it to function as a stage. Libraries are infrastructures not only because they are ubiquitous and persistent, but also, and primarily, because they are made of interconnected networks that undergird all that foment, that create what Pierre Bourdieu would call “structuring structures” that support Weinberger’s “messy, rich networks of people and ideas.”

It can be instructive for our libraries’ publics — and critical for our libraries’ leaders — to assess those structuring structures. In this age of e-books, smartphones, firewalls, proprietary media platforms and digital rights management; of atrophying mega-bookstores and resurgent independent bookshops and a metastasizing Amazon; of Google Books and Google Search and Google Glass; of economic disparity and the continuing privatization of public space and services — which is simultaneously an age of democratized media production and vibrant DIY and activist cultures — libraries play a critical role as mediators, at the hub of all the hubbub. Thus we need to understand how our libraries function as, and as part of, infrastructural ecologies — as sites where spatial, technological, intellectual and social infrastructures shape and inform one another. And we must consider how those infrastructures can embody the epistemological, political, economic and cultural values that we want to define our communities.5

Hammond, Beeby and Babka, Harold Washington Library Center, Chicago Public Library. [Photo by Robert Dawson, from Public Library: An American Commons]
Library as Social Infrastructure

Public libraries are often seen as “opportunity institutions,” opening doors to, and for, the disenfranchised. People turn to libraries to access the internet, take a GED class, get help with a résumé or job search, and seek referrals to other community resources. A recent report by the Center for an Urban Future highlighted the benefits to immigrants, seniors, individuals searching for work, public school students and aspiring entrepreneurs: “No other institution, public or private, does a better job of reaching people who have been left behind in today’s economy, have failed to reach their potential in the city’s public school system or who simply need help navigating an increasingly complex world.”

The new Department of Outreach Services at the Brooklyn Public Library, for instance, partners with other organizations to bring library resources to seniors, school children and prison populations. The Queens Public Library employs case managers who help patrons identify public benefits for which they’re eligible. “These are all things that someone could dub as social services,” said Queens Library president Thomas Galante, “but they’re not. … A public library today has information to improve people’s lives. We are an enabler; we are a connector.”

Partly because of their skill in reaching populations that others miss, libraries have recently reported record circulation and visitation, despite severe budget cuts, decreased hours and the threatened closure or sale of “underperforming” branches. Meanwhile the Pew Research Center has released a series of studies about the materials and services Americans want their libraries to provide. Among the findings: 90 percent of respondents say the closure of their local public library would have an impact on their community, and 63 percent describe that impact as “major.”

Toyo Ito, Sendai Mediatheque. [Photo by Forgemind Archimedia]

Libraries also bring communities together in times of calamity or disaster. Toyo Ito, architect of the acclaimed Sendai Mediatheque, recalled that after the 2011 earthquake in Japan, local officials reopened the library quickly even though it had sustained minor damage, “because it functions as a kind of cultural refuge in the city.” He continued, “Most people who use the
building are not going there just to read a book or watch a film; many of them probably do not have any definite purpose at all. They go just to be part of the community in the building.”

We need to attend more closely to such “social infrastructures,” the “facilities and conditions that allow connection between people,” says sociologist Eric Klinenberg. In a recent interview, he argued that urban resilience can be measured not only by the condition of transit systems and basic utilities and communication networks, but also by the condition of parks, libraries and community organizations: “open, accessible, and welcoming public places where residents can congregate and provide social support during times of need but also every day.” In his book *Heat Wave*, Klinenberg noted that a vital public culture in Chicago neighborhoods drew people out of sweltering apartments during the 1995 heat wave, and into cooler public spaces, thus saving lives.

The need for physical spaces that promote a vibrant social infrastructure presents many design opportunities, and some libraries are devising innovative solutions. Brooklyn and other cultural institutions have partnered with the Uni, a modular, portable library that I wrote about earlier in this journal. And modular solutions — kits of parts — are under consideration in a design study sponsored by the Center for an Urban Future and the Architectural League of New York, which aims to reimagine New York City’s library branches so that they can more efficiently and effectively serve their communities. CUF also plans to publish, at the end of June, an audit of, and a proposal for, New York’s three library systems.12 *New York Times* architecture critic Michael Kimmelman, reflecting on the roles played by New York libraries during recent hurricanes, goes so far as to suggest that the city’s branch libraries, which have “become our de facto community centers,” “could be designed in the future with electrical systems out of harm’s way and set up with backup generators and solar panels, even kitchens and wireless mesh networks.”

But is it too much to expect our libraries to serve as soup kitchens and recovery centers when they have so many other responsibilities? The library’s broad mandate means that it often picks up the slack when other institutions fall short. “It never ceases to amaze me just what libraries are looked upon to provide,” says Ruth Faklis, director of the Prairie Trail Public Library District in suburban Chicago:

This includes, but is not limited to, [serving as] keepers of the homeless … while simultaneously offering latch-key children a safe and activity-filled haven. We have been asked to be voter-registration sites, warming stations, notaries, technology-terrorism watchdogs, senior social-gathering centers, election sites, substitute sitters during teacher strikes, and the latest — postmasters. These requests of society are ever evolving. Funding is not generally attached to these magnanimous suggestions, and when it is, it does not cover actual costs of the additional
burden, thus stretching the library’s budget even further. I know of no other government entity that is asked to take on additional responsibilities not necessarily aligned with its mission.  

In a Metafilter discussion about funding cuts in California, one librarian offered this poignant lament:

Every day at my job I helped people just barely survive. ... Forget trying to be the “people’s university” and create a body of well informed citizens. Instead I helped people navigate through the degrading hoops of modern online society, fighting for scraps from the plate, and then kicking back afterwards by pretending to have a farm on Facebook.

Read the whole story. It’s quite a punch to the stomach. Given the effort librarians expend in promoting basic literacies, how much more can this social infrastructure support? Should we welcome the “design challenge” to engineer technical and architectural infrastructures to accommodate an ever-diversifying program — or should we consider that we might have stretched this program to its limit, and that no physical infrastructure can effectively scaffold such a motley collection of social services?

Again, we need to look to the infrastructural ecology — the larger network of public services and knowledge institutions of which each library is a part. How might towns, cities and regions assess what their various public (and private) institutions are uniquely qualified and sufficiently resourced to do, and then deploy those resources most effectively? Should we regard the library as the territory of the civic mind and ask other social services to attend to the civic body? The assignment of social responsibility isn’t so black and white — nor are the boundaries between mind and body, cognition and affect — but libraries do need to collaborate with other institutions to determine how they leverage the resources of the infrastructural ecology to serve their publics, with each institution and organization contributing what it’s best equipped to contribute — and each operating with a clear sense of its mission and obligation.

Libraries have a natural affinity with cultural institutions. Just this spring, New York Mayor Bill de Blasio appointed Tom Finkelpearl as the city’s new Commissioner of Cultural Affairs. A former president of the Queens Museum, Finkelpearl oversaw the first phase of a renovation by Grimshaw Architects, which, in its next phase, will incorporate a Queens Public Library branch — an effective pairing, given the commitment of both institutions to education and local culture. Similarly, Lincoln Center houses the New York Public Library for the Performing Arts. As commissioner, Finkelpearl could broaden support for mixed-use development that strengthens infrastructural ecologies. The CUF/Architectural League project is also considering how collaborative partnerships can inform library program and design.

Bohlin Cywinski Jackson, Ballard Library and Neighborhood Service Center, Seattle. [Photo by Jules Antonio]
I've recently returned from Seattle, where I revisited OMA's Central Library on its 10th anniversary and toured several new branch libraries. Under the 1998 bond measure “Libraries for All,” citizens voted to tax themselves to support construction of the Central Library and four new branches, and to upgrade every branch in the system. The vibrant, sweeping Ballard branch (2005), by Bohlin Cywinski Jackson, includes a separate entrance for the Ballard Neighborhood Service Center, a “little city hall” where residents can find information about public services, get pet licenses, pay utility bills, and apply for passports and city jobs. While the librarians undoubtedly field questions about such services, they’re also able to refer patrons next door, where city employees are better equipped to meet their needs — thus affording the library staff more time to answer reference questions and host writing groups and children’s story hours.

Seattle’s City Librarian, Marcellus Turner, is big on partnerships — with cultural institutions, like local theaters, as well as commercial collaborators, like the Seahawks football team. After taking the helm in 2011, he identified five service priorities — youth and early learning, technology and access, community engagement, Seattle culture and history, and re-imagined spaces — and tasked working groups with developing proposals for how the library can better address those needs. Each group must consider marketing, funding, staff deployment and partnership opportunities that “leverage what we have with what [the partners] have.” For instance, “Libraries that focus on early-childhood education might employ educators, academicians, or teachers to help us with research into early-childhood learning and teaching.”

The “design challenge” is to consider what physical infrastructures would be needed to accommodate such partnerships. Many libraries have continued along a path laid by library innovators from Ptolemy to Carnegie, renovating their buildings to incorporate public gathering, multi-use, and even commercial spaces. In Seattle’s Ballard branch, a large meeting room hosts regular author readings and a vibrant writing group that typically attracts 30 or more participants. In Salt Lake City, the library plaza features an artist co-op, a radio station, a community writing center, the Library Store, and a few cafes — all private businesses whose ethos is consistent with the library’s. The New York Public Library has recently announced that some of its branches will serve as “learning hubs” for Coursera, the provider of “massive open online courses.” And many libraries have classrooms and labs where they offer regular technical training courses.

Moshe Safdie, Salt Lake City Public Library. [Photo by Pedro Szekely]
These entrepreneurial models reflect what seems to be an increasingly widespread sentiment: that while libraries continue to serve a vital role as “opportunity institutions” for the disenfranchised, this cannot be their primary self-justification. They cannot duplicate the responsibilities of our community centers and social service agencies. “Their narrative” — or what I’d call an “epistemic framing,” by which I mean the way the library packages its program as a knowledge institution, and the infrastructures that support it — “must include everyone,” says the University of Michigan’s Kristin Fontichiaro. What programs and services are consistent with an institution dedicated to lifelong learning? Should libraries be reconceived as hubs for civic engagement, where communities can discuss local issues, create media, and archive community history? Should they incorporate media production studios, maker-spaces and hacker labs, repositioning themselves in an evolving ecology of information and educational infrastructures?

These new social functions — which may require new physical infrastructures to support them — broaden the library’s narrative to include everyone, not only the “have-nots.” This is not to say that the library should abandon the needy and focus on an elite patron group; rather, the library should incorporate the “enfranchised” as a key public, both so that the institution can reinforce its mission as a social infrastructure for an inclusive public, and so that privileged, educated users can bring their knowledge and talents to the library and offer them up as social-infrastructural resources.

Many among this well-resourced population — those who have jobs and home internet access and can navigate the government bureaucracy with relative ease — already see themselves as part of the library’s public. They regard the library as a space of openness, egalitarianism and freedom (in multiple senses of the term), within a proprietary, commercial, segregated and surveilled landscape. They understand that no matter how well-connected they are, they actually don’t have the world at their fingertips — that “material protected by stringent copyright and held in proprietary databases is often inaccessible outside libraries” and that, “as digital rights management becomes ever more complicated, we … rely even more on our libraries to help us navigate an increasingly fractured and litigious digital terrain.” And they recognize that they cannot depend on Google to organize the world’s information. As the librarian noted in that discussion on Metafilter:

> The [American Library Association] has a proven history of commitment to intellectual freedom. The public service that we’ve been replaced with has a spotty history of “not being evil.” When we’re gone, you middle class, you wealthy, you tech-savvy, who will fight for that with no profit motivation? Even if you never step foot in our doors, and all of your media comes to a brightly lit screen, we’re still working for you.

The library’s social infrastructure thus benefits even those who don’t have an immediate need for its space or its services.

David Adjaye, Francis Gregory Neighborhood Library, Washington, D.C. [Photo by Edmund Sumner]
Finally, we must acknowledge the library’s role as a civic landmark — a symbol of what a community values highly enough to place on a prominent site, to materialize in dignified architecture that communicates its openness to everyone, and to support with sufficient public funding despite the fact that it’ll never make a profit. A well-designed library — a contextually-designed library — can reflect a community’s character back to itself, clarifying who it is, in all its multiplicity, and what it stands for. 22

David Adjaye’s Bellevue and Francis Gregory branch libraries, in historically underserved neighborhoods of Washington D.C., have been lauded for performing precisely this function. As Sarah Williams Goldhagen writes:

Adjaye is so attuned to the nuances of urban context that one might be hard pressed to identify them as the work of one designer. Francis Gregory is steel and glass, Bellevue is concrete and wood. Francis Gregory presents a single monolithic volume, Bellevue an irregular accretion of concrete pavilions. Context drives the aesthetic.

His designs “make of this humble municipal building an arena for social interaction, …a distinctive civic icon that helps build a sense of common identity.” This kind of social infrastructure serves a vital need for an entire community.
Library as Technological-Intellectual Infrastructure

Of course, we must not forget the library collection itself. The old-fashioned bookstack was at the center of the recent debate over the proposed renovation of the New York Public Library’s Schwartzman Building on 42nd Street, which was cancelled last month after more than a year of lawsuits and protests. This storage infrastructure, and the delivery system it accommodates, have tremendous significance even in a digital age. For scholars, the stacks represent near-instant access to any materials within the extensive collection. Architectural historians defended the historical significance of the stacks, and engineers argued that they are critical to the structural integrity of the building.

The way a library’s collection is stored and made accessible shapes the intellectual infrastructure of the institution. The Seattle Public Library uses translucent acrylic bookcases made by Spacesaver — and even here this seemingly mundane, utilitarian consideration cultivates a character, an ambience, that reflects the library’s identity and its intellectual values. It might sound corny, but the luminescent glow permeating the stacks acts as a beacon, a welcoming gesture. There are still many contemporary libraries that privilege — perhaps even fetishize — the book and the bookstack: take MVRDV’s Book Mountain (2012), for a town in the Netherlands; or TAX arquitectura’s Biblioteca Jose Vasconcelos (2006) in Mexico City.

Stacks occupy a different, though also fetishized, space in Helmut Jahn’s Mansueto Library (2011) at the University of Chicago, which mixes diverse infrastructures to accommodate media of varying materialities: a grand reading room, a conservation department, a digitization department, and a subterranean warehouse of books retrieved by robot. (It’s worth noting that Boston and other libraries contained book railways and conveyer belt retrieval systems — proto-robots — a century ago.) Snøhetta’s James B. Hunt Jr. Library (2013) at North Carolina State University also incorporates a robotic storage and retrieval system, so that the library can store more books on site, as well as meet its goal of providing seating for 20 percent of the student population.23 Here the patrons come before the collection.
Helmut Jahn, Mansueto Library, University of Chicago, reading room above underground stacks. [Photo by Eric Allix Rogers]

Mansueto Library stacks. [Photo by Corey Seeman]
Back in the early aughts, when I spent a summer touring libraries, the institutions on the leading edge were integrating media production facilities, recognizing that media “consumption” and “creation” lie on a gradient of knowledge production. Today there’s a lot of talk about — and action around — integrating hacker labs and maker-spaces. As Anne Balsamo explains, these sites offer opportunities — embodied, often inter-generational learning experiences that are integral to the development of a “technological imagination” — that are rarely offered in formal learning institutions.

The Hunt Library has a maker-space, a GameLab, various other production labs and studios, an immersion theater, and, rather eyebrow-raisingly, an Apple Technology Showcase (named after library donors whose surname is Apple, with an intentional pun on the electronics company). One might think major funding is needed for those kinds of programs, but the trend actually began in 2011 in tiny Fayetteville, New York (pop. 4,373), thought to be the first public library to have incorporated a maker-space. The following year, the Carnegie Libraries of Pittsburgh — which for years has hosted film competitions, gaming tournaments, and media-making projects for youth — launched, with Google and Heinz Foundation support, The Labs: weekly workshops at three locations where teenagers can access equipment, software and mentors. Around the same time, Chattanooga — a city blessed with a super-high-speed municipal fiber network — opened its lauded 4th Floor, a 12,000-square foot “public laboratory and educational facility” that “supports the production, connection, and sharing of knowledge by offering access to tools and instruction.” Those tools include 3D printers, laser cutters and vinyl cutters, and the instruction includes everything from tech classes, to incubator projects for female tech entrepreneurs, to business pitch competitions.

Last year, the Brooklyn Public Library, just a couple blocks from where I live, opened its Levy Info Commons, which includes space for laptop users and lots of desktop machines featuring creative software suites; seven reserveable teleconference-ready meeting rooms, including one that doubles as a recording studio; and a training lab, which offers an array of digital media workshops led by a local arts and design organization and also invites patrons to lead their own courses. A typical month on their robust event calendar includes resume editing workshops, a Creative Business Tech prototyping workshop, individual meetings with business counselors, Teen Tech tutorials, computer classes for seniors, workshops on podcasting and oral history and “adaptive gaming” for people with disabilities, and even an audio-recording and editing workshop targeted to poets, to help them disseminate their work in new formats. Also last year, the Martin Luther King, Jr., Memorial Library in Washington, D.C., opened its Digital Commons, where patrons can use a print-on-demand bookmaking machine, a 3D printer, and a co-working space known as the “Dream Lab,” or try out a variety of e-book readers. The Chicago Public Library partnered with the Museum of Science and Industry to open a pop-up maker lab featuring open-source design software, laser cutters, a milling machine, and (of course) 3D printers — not one, but three.
Some have proposed that libraries — following in the tradition of Alexandria’s “think tank,” and compelled by a desire to “democratize entrepreneurship” — make for ideal co-working or incubator spaces, where patrons with diverse skill sets can organize themselves into start-ups-for-the-people. Others recommend that librarians entrepreneurialize themselves, rebranding themselves as professional consultants in a complex information economy. Librarians, in this view, are uniquely qualified digital literacy tutors; experts in “copyright compliance, licensing, privacy, information use, and ethics”; gurus of “aligning … programs
with collections, space, and resources”; skilled creators of “custom ontologies, vocabularies, taxonomies” and structured data; adept practitioners of data mining. Others recommend that libraries get into the content production business. In the face of increasing pressure to rent and license proprietary digital content with stringent use policies, why don’t libraries do more to promote the creation of independent media or develop their own free, open-source technologies? Not many libraries have the time and resources to undertake such endeavors, but NYPL Labs and Harvard’s Library Test Kitchen, have demonstrated what’s possible when even back-of-house library spaces become sites of technological praxis. Unfortunately, those innovative projects are typically hidden behind the interface (as with so much library labor). Why not bring those operations to the front of the building, as part of the public program?

Of course, with all these new activities come new spatial requirements. Library buildings must incorporate a wide variety of furniture arrangements, lighting designs, acoustical conditions, etc., to accommodate multiple sensory registers, modes of working, postures and more. Librarians and designers are now acknowledging — and designing for, rather than designing out — activities that make noise and can occasionally be a bit messy. I did a study several years ago on the evolution of library sounds and found widespread recognition that knowledge-making doesn’t readily happen when “shhh!” is the prevailing rule.

These new physical infrastructures create space for an epistemology embracing the integration of knowledge consumption and production, of thinking and making. Yet sometimes I have to wonder, given all the hoopla over “making”: are tools of computational fabrication really the holy grail of the knowledge economy? What knowledge is produced when I churn out, say, a keychain on a MakerBot? I worry that the boosterism surrounding such projects — and the much-deserved acclaim they’ve received for “rebranding” the library — glosses over the neoliberal values that these technologies sometimes embody.

Neoliberalism channels the pursuit of individual freedom through property rights and free markets — and what better way to express yourself than by 3D-printing a bust of your own head at the library, or using the library’s CNC router to launch your customizable cutting board business on Etsy? While librarians have long been advocates of free and democratic access to information, I trust — I hope — that they’re helping their patrons to cultivate a critical perspective regarding the politics of “technological innovation” — and the potential instrumentalism of makerhood. Sure, Dewey was part of this instrumentalist tradition, too. But our contemporary pursuit of “innovation” promotes the idea that “making new stuff” = “producing knowledge,” which can be a dangerous falsehood.

Library staff might want to take up the critique of “innovation,” too. Each new Google product release, new mobile technology development, new e-reader launch brings new opportunities for the library to innovate in response. And while “keeping current” is a crucial goal, it’s important to place that pursuit in a larger cultural, political-economic and institutional context. Striving to stay technologically relevant can backfire when it means merely responding to the profit-driven innovations of commercial media; we see these mistakes — innovation for innovation’s sake — in the ed-tech arena quite often.

George Peabody Library, The John Hopkins University. [Photo by Thomas Guignard]
Reading across the Infrastructural Ecology

Libraries need to stay focused on their long-term cultural goals — which should hold true regardless of what Google decides to do tomorrow — and on their place within the larger infrastructural ecology. They also need to consider how their various infrastructural identities map onto each other, or don’t. Can an institution whose technical and physical infrastructure is governed by the pursuit of innovation also fulfill its obligations as a social infrastructure serving the disenfranchised? What ethics are embodied in the single-minded pursuit of “the latest” technologies, or the equation of learning with entrepreneurialism?

As Zadie Smith argued beautifully in the New York Review of Books, we risk losing the library’s role as a “different kind of social reality (of the three dimensional kind), which by its very existence teaches a system of values beyond the fiscal.”31 Barbara Fister, a librarian at Gustavus Adolphus College, offered an equally eloquent plea for the library as a space of exception:

Libraries are not, or at least should not be, engines of productivity. If anything, they should slow people down and seduce them with the unexpected, the irrelevant, the odd and the unexplainable. Productivity is a destructive way to justify the individual’s value in a system that is naturally communal, not an individualistic or entrepreneurial zero-sum game to be won by the most industrious.32

Libraries, she argued, “will always be at a disadvantage” to Google and Amazon because they value privacy; they refuse to exploit users’ private data to improve the search experience. Yet libraries’ failure to compete in efficiency is what affords them the opportunity to offer a “different kind of social reality.” I’d venture that there is room for entrepreneurial learning in the library, but there also has to be room for that alternate reality where knowledge needn’t have monetary value, where learning isn’t driven by a profit motive. We can accommodate both spaces for entrepreneurship and spaces of exception, provided the institution has a strong epistemic framing that encompasses both. This means that the library needs to know how to read itself as a social-technical-intellectual infrastructure.

It’s particularly important to cultivate these critical capacities — the ability to “read” our libraries’ multiple infrastructures and the politics and ethics they embody — when the concrete infrastructures look like San Antonio’s BiblioTech, a “bookless” library featuring 10,000 e-books, downloadable via the 3M Cloud App; 600 circulating “stripped down” 3M e-readers; 200 “enhanced” tablets for kids; and, for use on-site, 48 computers, plus laptops and iPads. The library, which opened last fall, also offers computer classes and meeting space, but it’s all locked within a proprietary platformed world.

Bexar County BiblioTech, San Antonio, Texas. [Photo by Bexar BiblioTech]
In libraries like BiblioTech — and the Digital Public Library of America — the collection itself is off-site. Do patrons wonder where, exactly, all those books and periodicals and cloud-based materials live? What’s under, or floating above, the “platform”? Do they think about the algorithms that lead them to particular library materials, and the conduits and protocols through which they access them? Do they consider what it means to supplant bookstacks with server stacks — whose metal racks we can’t kick, lights we can’t adjust, knobs we can’t fiddle with? Do they think about the librarians negotiating access licenses and adding metadata to “digital assets,” or the engineers maintaining the servers? With the increasing recession of these technical infrastructures — and the human labor that supports them — further off-site, behind the interface, deeper inside the black box, how can we understand the ways in which those structures structure our intellect and sociality?

We need to develop — both among library patrons and librarians themselves — new critical capacities to understand the distributed physical, technical and social architectures that scaffold our institutions of knowledge and program our values. And we must consider where those infrastructures intersect — where they should be, and perhaps aren’t, mutually reinforcing one another. When do our social obligations compromise our intellectual aspirations, or vice versa? And when do those social or intellectual aspirations for the library exceed — or fail to fully exploit — the capacities of our architectural and technological
infrastructures? Ultimately, we need to ensure that we have a strong epistemological framework — a narrative that explains how the library promotes learning and stewards knowledge — so that everything hangs together, so there’s some institutional coherence. We need to sync the library’s intersecting infrastructures so that they work together to support our shared intellectual and ethical goals.

Author’s Note
I’d like to thank the students in my “Archives, Libraries and Databases” seminar and my “Digital Archives” studio at The New School, who’ve given me much food for thought over the years. Thanks, too, to my colleagues at the Architectural League of New York and the Center for an Urban Future. I owe a debt of gratitude also to Gabrielle Dean, her students, and her colleagues at Johns Hopkins, who gave me an opportunity to share a preliminary draft of this work. They, along with my colleagues Julie Foulkes and Aleksandra Wagner, offered feedback for which I’m very grateful.

Notes
2. Casson explains that when Alexandria was a brand new city in the third century B.C., its founders enticed intellectuals to the city — in an attempt to establish it as a cultural center — with the famous Museum, “a figurative temple for the muses, a place for cultivating the arts they symbolized. It was an ancient version of a think-tank: the members, consisting of noted writers, poets, scientists, and scholars, were appointed by the Ptolemies for life and enjoyed a handsome salary, tax exemption … free lodging, and food. … It was for them that the Ptolemies founded the library of Alexandria” [33-34].
12. I’m a member of the organizing team for this project, and I hope to write more about its outcomes in a future article for this journal.


15. The Seattle Central Library was a focus of my first book, on public library design. See *The New Downtown Library: Designing With Communities* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2007).


21. The quotations are from my earlier article for Places, “Marginalia: Little Libraries in the Urban Margins.” Within mass-digitization projects like Google Books, as Elisabeth Jones explains, “works that are still in copyright but out of print and works of indeterminate copyright status and/or ownership” will fall between the cracks (in *Library 2020*: 17).

22. I dedicate a chapter in *The New Downtown Library* to what makes a library “contextual” — and I address just how slippery that term can be.

23. This sentence was amended after publication to note the multiple motives of implementing the bookBot storage and retrieval system; its compact storage allowed the library to reintegrate some collections that were formerly stored off-site. The library has also developed a Virtual Browse catalog system, which aims to promote virtual discovery that isn’t possible in the physical stacks.

24. According to a late 2013 web-based survey of libraries, 41 percent of respondents provide maker-spaces or maker activities in their libraries, and 36 percent plan to create such spaces in the near future. Most maker-spaces, 51 percent, are in public libraries; 36 percent are in academic libraries; and 9 percent are in school libraries. And among the most popular technologies or technological processes supported in those spaces are computer workstations (67 percent), 3D printers (46 percent), photo editing (45 percent), video editing (43 percent), computer programming/software (39 percent). 33 percent accommodated digital music recording; 31 percent accommodated 3D modeling, and 30 percent featured work with Arduino and Raspberry Pi circuit boards (Gary Price, “Results From ‘Makerspaces in Libraries’ Study Released,” *Library Journal* (December 16, 2013). See also James Mitchell, “Beyond the Maker Space,” *Library Journal* (May 27, 2014).


26. This sentence was amended after publication to note that the Apple Technology Showcase was named after former NCSU faculty member Dr. J. Lawrence Apple and his wife, Ella Apple; in an email to the author, library director Carolyn Argentati wrote that the corporate pun was intentional.


Cite
<https://placesjournal.org/article/library-as-infrastructure/>
Memorandum

To: Mike Davis
From: Patrick Fuchs; Pamela Westby
Date: 8/6/2009
Re: Library Facilities Needs Assessment

Library Facilities Needs Assessment

- The anticipated levels of population growth in the City of Middleton and the surrounding library service area are expected to create a need to expand the existing facilities in order to continue offering an Excellent level of library service
- This public facilities needs assessment:
  - Evaluates the existing public library facilities in the City of Middleton
  - Estimates the additional amount of space, volumes, and staff that will be needed to serve the service area population through 2030
  - Estimates the capital costs that will be incurred to provide additional facility space
  - Determines the proportionate share of additional facility space needed to serve new development
  - Computes a recommended library impact fee and fee schedule

Inventory of Existing Facilities

- The City of Middleton is currently served by the Middleton Public Library, an approximately 32,000 square foot facility, located in downtown Middleton at 7425 Hubbard Avenue
- The currently library houses approximately 111,549 books, 257 periodical titles, 6,824 audio recordings, 9,530 video recordings, 113 reader seats, and 42 public access computer workstations
- Table 5 summarizes the amounts and types of facility space currently provided by the Middleton Public Library

Identification of Existing Deficiencies and Future Needs

- The DPI has developed four standards—Basic, Moderate, Enhanced, and Excellent—to assess the adequacy of staff size, collection size, and facility space for a library to serve its current and future service area
- Middleton Public Library seeks to maintain an Excellent service level standard in all facility and collection benchmarks through 2030
- As shown in Table 6, 52% of Middleton Public Library users were from communities other than Middleton, thus the facilities assessment should take into account the library’s entire service area population (rather than the municipal population alone)
The expansion of services to users outside municipal boundaries was not accounted for in projected future population growth rates.

- **Table 7** shows the collection size, number of reader seats, and number of public access computer workstations currently offered by the library, and the standards currently met by the library.
- **Table 8** shows the projected number of volumes, reader seats, and computer workstations needed to maintain Excellent service levels through 2030.
- **Table 9** shows the current staffing levels, the current service level offered, and the projected minimum staffing level needed in 2030 to maintain an Excellent service level through 2030.
- **Table 10** shows the types of space needed for library materials and programs, and the recommended square feet of space for each category.
  - The analysis was prepared with the assumption that the library facility would provide the minimum recommended amount of space for each of the library activities.
- **Table 11** shows the projected space needed for library materials and programs, and the recommended square feet of space for each category.
  - **Table 11** shows that, based on the recommended additional amount of library space to meet the DPI’s Excellent benchmarks is approximately 11,684 square feet, depending on design.

**Recommended Library Expansion Impact Fee**

- The projected expansion, or the addition of a satellite branch, to the Middleton Public Library will be needed both to remedy a modest existing deficiency in library facilities and to provide for increases in the demand for library services that will result from future population growth.
- **Table 12** shows that the total cost of the projected facility expansion is approximately $2,890,800, based on a typical cost of $200.00 per square foot for library construction.
- **Table 13** shows the total amount of library capital costs that may be collected through the imposition of a library impact fee, and the amount per capita is also calculated.
  - Only the growth share attributable to the new municipal population is used to calculate the per capita cost of the recommended library expansion.
- **Table 14** shows that it is recommended that the City of Middleton impose a library impact fee in the amount of $1,310.85 per single-family residence to pay for the cost of library facilities attributable to the need to serve future residential development.
  - Since the need for library space is directly and primarily related to increases in the resident population of the City, the library impact fee should only be imposed on residential development.
Table 5  
Library Facilities Needs Assessment  
Existing Facility Space: 2008

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Units</th>
<th>Facility Space (SF) (3)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Collection Space</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Books (10 volumes per sq. ft.)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Periodicals (display - 1 sq. ft. per title)</td>
<td>111,549</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Periodicals (back issues-5 sq. ft. per title x 3 yrs)</td>
<td>257</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Audio &amp; Visual Items (10 items per sq. ft.) (2)</td>
<td>86</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subtotal Collection Space (1)</td>
<td></td>
<td>7,888</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>General /Meeting Room Space</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Use Computer Workstations (50 sf per unit) (2)</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>932</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reader Seating (30 sf per seat) (2)</td>
<td>113</td>
<td>3,054</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff Work Space (1)</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>2,880</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meeting Room Space (Conference) (1)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>224</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meeting Room Space (Computer Lab)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>364</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meeting Room Space (Large Meeting Room) (1)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1,536</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meeting Room Space (Children's Programs/Storage) (1)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>576</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Study Rooms (1)</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>456</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subtotal General Space &amp; Collection Space</td>
<td></td>
<td>17,910</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special Use (16.7% of collection &amp; general area) (2)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2,991</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Book Sale/Storage Space</td>
<td></td>
<td>1,320</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nonassignable Space (22.5% of total assignable area) (3)</td>
<td></td>
<td>9,779</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Gross Area</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>32,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1) Approximate space per function in existing library, as provided by the Library Director.  
2) Space needs based on guidelines in Public Library Space Needs: A Planning Outline, Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, 2008.  
3) Includes corridors, vestibules, restrooms, janitor closets, storage rooms, and other spaces necessary for operation but not used directly for library service.
Table 6  
Library Facilities Needs Assessment  
Service Area Population and Circulation 2008

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>City of Middleton</td>
<td>366,471</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>16,960</td>
<td>22,308</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Service Area</td>
<td>389,256</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>10,247</td>
<td>10,247</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Service Area</td>
<td>755,727</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>27,207</td>
<td>32,555</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1) Source: 2008 Middleton Public Library Annual Report  
2) Total service area population computed according to the formula provided by the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, which accounts for usage by residents of surrounding municipalities  
3) Projected population provided by David Egan-Robertson, Wisconsin Demographic Services Center, May 2008.

Table 7  
Library Facilities Needs Assessment  
Service Standards and Recommended Holdings: 2008

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Holding</th>
<th>Actual 2008 Total Holdings</th>
<th>Actual 2008 Holding Standards</th>
<th>Basic</th>
<th>Moderate</th>
<th>Enhanced</th>
<th>Excellent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Volumes</td>
<td>95,746</td>
<td>3.50</td>
<td>2.70</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>3.50</td>
<td>4.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Periodical Titles (per 1,000 population)</td>
<td>249</td>
<td>9.20</td>
<td>5.40</td>
<td>6.80</td>
<td>8.20</td>
<td>9.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Audio Recordings (per capita)</td>
<td>6,824</td>
<td>0.25</td>
<td>0.07</td>
<td>0.20</td>
<td>0.21</td>
<td>0.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Video Recordings (per capita)</td>
<td>9,530</td>
<td>0.35</td>
<td>0.16</td>
<td>0.20</td>
<td>0.25</td>
<td>0.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reader Seats (per 1,000 population)</td>
<td>113</td>
<td>4.15</td>
<td>4.25</td>
<td>4.25</td>
<td>4.25</td>
<td>4.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Access Computer Terminals (needed to accommodate with a minimum)</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>1.56</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1) From the Public Library Space Needs: A Planning Outline, 2008. These standards are based on public library annual report data gathered from libraries serving communities of similar size. Standards shown are for a library service area population of 25,000 to 49,999.  
2) Existing service standards applied to all holdings.  
3) According to the Public Library Standards, Wisconsin Department of Instruction, 2008.
### Table 8
Library Facilities Needs Assessment
Service Standards Recommended Holdings: 2030

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Holding</th>
<th>Holdings Standards (Units per 1,000 Service Area Population)</th>
<th>Recommended 2030 Holdings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Basic</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Volumes (per capita)</td>
<td>2.70</td>
<td>3.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Periodical Titles</td>
<td>5.40</td>
<td>6.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Audio Recordings (per capita)</td>
<td>0.07</td>
<td>0.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Video Recordings (per capita)</td>
<td>0.16</td>
<td>0.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reader Seats (per 1,000 population)</td>
<td>4.25</td>
<td>4.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Access Terminals (per average visits per day)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1) From the *Public Library Space Needs: A Planning Outline*, 2008. These standards are based on public library annual report data gathered from libraries serving communities of similar size. Standards shown are for a library service area population of 25,000 to 49,999.

2) Existing service standards applied to all holdings.

### Table 9
Library Facilities Needs Assessment
Service Standards and Recommended Staffing: 2008 and 2030

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Actual 2008 Staffing Level (FTE)</th>
<th>Actual Service Level</th>
<th>Basic</th>
<th>Moderate</th>
<th>Enhanced</th>
<th>Excellent</th>
<th>Recommended Staffing Level (FTE)</th>
<th>Recommended Additional FTE Staff</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>20.75</td>
<td>0.76</td>
<td>0.40</td>
<td>0.50</td>
<td>0.60</td>
<td>0.70</td>
<td>19.04</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2030</td>
<td>20.75</td>
<td>0.63</td>
<td>0.40</td>
<td>0.50</td>
<td>0.60</td>
<td>0.70</td>
<td>22.78</td>
<td>2.03</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1) From the *Public Library Space Needs: A Planning Outline*, 2008. These standards are based on public library annual report data gathered from libraries serving communities of similar size. Standards shown are for a library service area population of 25,000 to 49,999.
### Table 10
Library Facilities Needs Assessment
Recommended Facility Space to Serve Service Area Population: 2008

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Recommended Units</th>
<th>Recommended Space (SF)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Collection Space</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Books (10 volumes per sq. ft.) (2)</td>
<td>111,549</td>
<td>11,154</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Periodicals (display - 1 sq. ft. per title)</td>
<td>257</td>
<td>257</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Periodicals (back issues-5 sq. ft. per title x 3 yrs)</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>129</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Audio &amp; Visual Items (10 items per sq. ft.) (2)</td>
<td>16,052</td>
<td>1,605</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Subtotal Collection Space</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>13,145</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>General /Meeting Room Space</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Use Computer Workstations (50 sf per unit) (2)</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>750</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reader Seating (30 sf per seat) (2)</td>
<td>113</td>
<td>3,390</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff Work Space (125 sf per workstation) (2)</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>2,750</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meeting Room Space (Conference Meeting)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>224</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Room Space (computer lab) Meeting Room</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>364</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Space (Large Meeting Room)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1,536</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meeting Room Space (Children’s Programs/Storage)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>576</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Study Rooms</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>456</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Subtotal General Space &amp; Collection Space</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>23,191</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Special Use (16.7% of collection &amp; general area) (2)</strong></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3,873</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Book Sale/Storage Space</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>1,320</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Nonassignable Space (22.5% of total assignable area) (2) (3)</strong></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6,386</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Gross Area Recommended</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>34,770</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4) Total units represents the higher of either the actual units reported in the 2008 Middleton Public Library Annual Report, or the recommended units shown in Table 7.

5) Space needs based on guidelines in *Public Library Space Needs: A Planning Outline*, Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, 2008.

6) Includes corridors, vestibules, restrooms, janitor closets, storage rooms, and other spaces necessary for operation but not used directly for library service.
Table 11
Library Facilities Needs Assessment
Recommended Facility Space to Serve Service Area Population: 2030

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Recommended Units (1)</th>
<th>Recommended Space (SF) (2)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Collection Space</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Books (10 volumes per sq. ft.) (2)</td>
<td>133,476</td>
<td>13,348</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Periodicals (display - 1 sq. ft. per title) (2)</td>
<td>304</td>
<td>304</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Periodicals (back issues-5 sq. ft. per title x 3 yrs) (2)</td>
<td>304</td>
<td>252</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Audio &amp; Visual Items (10 items per sq. ft.) (2)</td>
<td>19,207</td>
<td>1,921</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Subtotal Collection Space</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>15,825</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General /Meeting Room Space</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Use Computer Workstations (50 sf per unit) (2)</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>2,700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reader Seating (30 sf per seat) (2)</td>
<td>153</td>
<td>4,590</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff Work Space (125 sf per workstation) (2)</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>3,125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meeting Room Space (Conference)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Room Space (computer lab)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1,536</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meeting Room Space (Large Meeting Room)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1,050</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meeting Room Space (Children’s Programs/Storage)</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Study Rooms</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Subtotal General Space &amp; Collection Space</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>29,426</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special Use (16.7% of collection &amp; general area) (2)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4,914.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Book Sale/Storage Space</td>
<td></td>
<td>1,320.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nonassignable Space (22.5% of total assignable area) (2) (3)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8,023.53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Gross Area Recommended</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>43,684</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Less Existing Space</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>32,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Recommended Additional Facility Space</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>11,684</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1) Total units represents the higher of units from Table 8.
2) Space needs based on guidelines in *Public Library Space Needs: A Planning Outline*, Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, 2008.
3) Includes corridors, vestibules, restrooms, janitor closets, storage rooms, and other spaces necessary for operation but not used directly for library service.

Table 12
Library Facilities Needs Assessment
Recommended Library Facility Expansion and Estimated Cost

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Future Facility Addition</th>
<th>Facility Space</th>
<th>Estimated Cost per SF</th>
<th>Total Estimated Cost</th>
<th>Percent of Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Additional Facility Space Recommended for Current Population</td>
<td>2,770</td>
<td>$200.00</td>
<td>$554,000</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Additional Facility Space Recommended to Serve Future Population</td>
<td>11,684</td>
<td>$200.00</td>
<td>$2,336,800</td>
<td>81%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Additional Facility Space Recommended</td>
<td>14,454</td>
<td>$200.00</td>
<td>$2,890,800</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 13
Library Facilities Needs Assessment
Impact Fee Computation

| Growth Share of Total Cost (1) | $2,336,800 |
| City Population Growth, 2008-2030 | 5,348 |
| Per Capita Cost | $436.95 |

1) Growth share of total cost is the additional facility space needed to serve the 2020 population multiplied by the estimated cost per square foot.

Table 14
Library Facilities Needs Assessment
Recommended Schedule of Library Impact Fees

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Growth Share of Total Cost</th>
<th>Fee per Unit</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Studio and one-bedroom apartment (1)</td>
<td>$655.43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two-bedroom unit (2)</td>
<td>$983.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Three-bedroom unit or single family home (3)</td>
<td>$1,310.85</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1) Assumes 1.50 persons per household.
2) Assumes 2.25 persons per household.
3) Assumes 3.00 persons per household.
The Library of the Future Series: Part 1 – The Time Capsule Room by Futurist Thomas Frey

August 6, 2015


**The Community Archive**

What was your community like in 1950, or for that matter in 1850 or even 1650? What role did your community play during the Civil War? How active was it during the Presidential elections of 1960? What was its reaction to the bombing of Pearl Harbor?

We have access to plenty of history books that give us the “official story” of all the major events throughout history. But understanding the intersection of our city, our village, or our community with these earth-changing events has, for the most part, never been captured or preserved.

Is this good or bad? As an information junkie, my desire is to always err on the side of too much information. However, we shouldn’t be placing labels of good or bad, or right or wrong on the situation. It is simply our current state of affairs.

So how important is it that we preserve this information? If we spent millions trying to capture this information, will anyone ever care?

**The Essence of Community**

One of the most valuable things we can pass on to our children and grandchildren is the gift of perspective. Their ability to put themselves into our shoes 30-50 years ago, even for a moment, gives them a vastly different understanding of the world around us today. We are all influenced by policies and trends, pressures of money and family, cultural norms, and a variety of other factors too tangential to list.

Communities have been built around the intersection of people and ideas, people and money, people and systems, and other forms of human connectedness. There are indeed eight forms of human connectedness that are shaping our communities, and the evolution of these connections in the coming years will have a profound impact.

**Community Archive**

Libraries have always had a mandate to archive the records of a local community, but it has rarely been pursued with more than passing enthusiasm. Archives of city council meetings and local history books made the cut, but few considered the library to be a good photo or video archive.

Over time, many of the newspapers, radio, and television stations will begin to disappear. As these businesses lose their viability, their storerooms of historical broadcast tapes and documents will need to be
preserved. More specifically, every radio broadcast, newspaper, and television broadcast will need to be digitized and archived.

In many situations, enterprising businesses will digitize the information and build revenue streams from the online content. But not always. In these situations, libraries might consider hosting the original collections, and installing the equipment to digitize the information.

Other Forms of Sensory Information

It’s easy to fall into the trap of only thinking about information only as text-based information. But information takes a variety of different forms. Audio, video, and images are the most obvious alternative forms, but many more exist. Here are a few examples as they relate to a community archive:

- What did the pies taste like at the pie competition in 1974?
- How did teenagers have fun in 1964?
- What did it smell like to walk into the famous bakery on Elm Street in 1948?
- What did it sound like to “drag main” in 1956?
- How strict were the schools in 1938?
- What did it feel like to ride in a stagecoach?
- How important was agriculture to the economy in 1924?

All of these questions require a variety of different sensory queues in order to understand what the situation was really like. Over time innovators will develop new technologies that will capable of capturing smells, tastes, texture, vibrations, frequencies, pressures, and a variety of other situational attributes.

The Time Capsule Room

Perhaps the most engaging way to create a good community archive is through the development of a “Time Capsule Room” in the library.

Most libraries will find that the Time Capsule Room takes on a personality of its own, as local people begin to participate in populating the spaces. Ideas about what constitutes a Time Capsule Room will vary from city to city, but it is the ability to differentiate, uniqueness of operation, and variety of perspectives that will give a dimension of personality to the library.

While it may hold actual time capsules, hard boxes or containers that say “open on a specific date”, it can also be built around historic milestones, the history of specific families or entities, or community changing events. In some cases the content will only be in digital form, while others may decide to accept historical items and museum-type pieces.

Potentially, this can be a fully volunteer-run operation. The contents will be donated, so the cost of operation will be kept very low.

A few ideas on how to engage the community:

- Businesses, service organizations, clubs, church groups, schools, and community associations should all be asked to participate.
- Each can contribute the history of their organization, accomplishments for the year, goals for the coming years, and “news items that made a difference”.
- Schools can hold annual events around producing “time capsules” for the library.
- Items can be sent electronically. Images, videos, documents, and audio recording can be submitted online.

Archiving the information will be relatively easy, but making it usable and easy for people to access is a bit more difficult.

Reading areas and computer terminals are straightforward enough, but some other options may include viewing rooms for videos, listening rooms for old radio broadcasts or audio recordings, or interactive screens that allow people to view changes to the city over time. Photo archives may need to be equipped with face and location recognition software, location-stamped photos, and archival scanners that can date the photos.

It’s easy to see how the Time Capsule Room will add a new dimension to most libraries. Its content will have historical significance, be engaging to the community, and add a unique identity to the library operation. It may even be possible to create a branch library that is specifically a Time Capsule Library, a place reserved for archival activity.

As with other papers in this series, these ideas are intended to spark your imagination and add a new dimension to the list of possibilities.
As a child, it was embarrassing to ask for help. I didn't want people to think I was the “dumb student”, and I especially didn’t want to be the one asking dumb questions in a library around people I didn't know. My assumption was that if I had to ask, I was obviously missing something. Perhaps I should wait until I was older and come back at a time when I was smart enough to understand the library.

My impression was that librarians were incredibly smart, and in an entirely different intellectual league than I was. I felt as if I hadn’t yet earned the right to be there.

While it may sound like I was slightly paranoid, and especially today, knowing that librarians are the world's most uniquely helpful breed of people, I'm pretty sure this perception still exists among some of us today.

As a way to improve services, the interface between librarians and their patrons needs to be under a constant state of scrutiny, and constantly improving, especially with all of the new technologies changing the information landscape.

People who come to libraries are searching for information. Sometimes it's an exploratory mission with only vague notions about what they are looking for, at other times patrons have a laser-like precision in their search for specific data points.

**Subscription Databases**

One thing that is not commonly understood is that libraries have access to resources that most home-based computer researchers do not, including extensive database collections free to their patrons. For the most part, these consist of expensive pay-to-subscribe databases that few individuals can afford.

As an example, indexes of articles from both general publications and academic journals that can be found on the Internet often take users to an abstract summary of an article. The abstract includes publication info, but not the full text. The majority of library databases offer full text access to these articles, so when you find what you are looking for, you can immediately have access to the complete document.

Certainly the number of databases that libraries subscribe to varies tremendously, but many that I’ve looked at recently had a list of well over 100 subscription databases including such information rich services as Factiva, FedStats, General Science Abstracts, Lexis Nexis Academic, PsycArticles, Rand California, ScienceDirect, Roper Center for Public Opinion Research, Physical Education Index, NIST Chemistry WebBook, RILM Abstracts of Music Literature, IEEE Xplore, Institute of Physics E-Journals, Hoover's Company Records, and ASME Mechanical Engineering.
An even bigger secret is that many libraries allow access to these databases from a remote computer with nothing more than a library card ID number. But only the gifted few are aware these resources exist.

The bottom line is that people can't use what they don't know about.

So how do we go about bridging the gap between this treasure trove of resources and an uninformed public? Answer: The search command center.

**Search Command Center**
In many ways the Search Command Center will replace the tradition card catalog as the first stop in finding information in a library.

The search command center will serve three critical functions:

1. Draw attention to databases, specialized search engines and other available resources
2. Provide expert, hands-on assistance in finding and using the databases
3. Teach patrons how to access this information remotely.

From a facility layout perspective, think in terms of a circular bank of computers with a special “search librarian” stationed in the middle. These can be arranged in various ways. If computers face away from the center, it is easy for the librarian to see what the person may be struggling with and offer assistance. If the computers face the librarian, people will be less intimidated and will more readily ask questions.

Whatever the shape or layout, the Search Command Center needs to look distinctive, be clearly labeled, and offer an intuitive sense of purpose and usefulness.

**Creating Awareness**
The first step in offering a new service is simply creating awareness. Local media will be quick to pick up on this new featured offering at the library. Even though most libraries already offer this kind of assistance, the Search Command Center is a different way of packaging these services, creating a different face to the public.

After a few months in operation, it will be easy to draw attention to stories about local people who have accomplished great things by using the Search Command Center. Often times these will be remarkable people under extraordinary circumstances and the assistance offered at the library becomes a significant turning point in the lives of everyone around them. These stories can quickly serve as the foundational underpinning of the library’s relationship with the community.

**Expert Assistance**
Since there are a variety of ways that people will want to learn about these services, some of the options to consider should include:

- Training Classes: Short one-hour courses in both accessing specialized databases and how to use expert search engines to find information.
Panel of Experts: Once a month pull together a question and answer session with 3-4 experts in the front of the room. Invite the public to ask questions and watch the learning unfold.

Video Tutorials: Some videos on this topic may already exist, but videos are getting cheaper and easier to make. So a few short videos describing the various databases and other unique library collections will become tremendously valuable.

Quick Reference Cards: A listing of each of the databases and other unique library collections as well as the search technologies available.

Keep in mind that with each person trained on using the Search Command Center, it is a process of training the “influential few”. The numbers may be small to start, but each skilled searcher will become a power user creating ripple effects throughout the community.

Advancing Search Technology
Search engine technology is destined to get far more complicated. Working primarily with information in textual formats, today’s search engines work very well in finding text-based answers for text-based searches.

Future generations of search technology will enable people to search on many other information attributes such as taste, smell, harmonic vibration, texture, reflectivity, specific gravity, as well as various cycles and patterns.

Japanese inventor Yasuo Kuniyoshi recently unveiled his invention, Smart Goggles, a pair of glasses designed to capture and record everything a person sees during a day. Adding a layer of object recognition software to the images being captured creates an interesting base of information, usable on many levels. So, a person who loses their keys can simply have a computer scan through files until it finds where they left their keys.

More impressive than searching for items on an individual level is the notion that Yasuo Kuniyoshi’s device can effectively index the world around us, in a process similar to spidering the web, giving rise to search engines for the physical world. A few hundred thousand people wearing Smart Goggles will be able to create a comprehensive database of information about the physical world unlike anything in existence today.

Establishing Libraries as a Center of Gravity for Search
Search technology is destined to become the heart and soul of future libraries. As the format and structure of information evolves, librarians will need to position themselves as cutting edge information finders, and the Search Command Center is one tool for transitioning to the next level.

The idea of a Search Command Center is one of many new ideas for revitalizing a library. As with other papers in this series, these ideas are intended to spark your imagination and add a new dimension to your list of possibilities.

By Futurist Thomas Frey
January 2009

As a public entity, libraries have been evolving. No longer are they the book-centric institutions of the mid-1900s. But the changes we’ve seen to date are only a tiny fraction of the changes we will see in the coming decades.

There are no roadmaps that give us a clear picture of where we are headed, only fuzzy ideas. For this reason we will begin to see more and more experimentation in the area of digital libraries, and in this discussion, a version of the digital library I’ve termed the Electronic Outpost.

Traditional books require the bulk of library staff time, with sorting and organizing often coupled with repairs and replacement. As we move to an era of inexpensive book readers (under $20) with improved user interfaces, we will begin to see libraries loaning out book readers instead of the paper books.

An Electronic Outpost is a satellite branch of a central library designed to be an efficiently run community gathering place. Size, shape, and purpose will vary. Some may fit well in shopping centers while others may be better suited to function as stand-alone buildings. Some may be very small, others quite large. Many may be planned with a homey, living room-like feel to them while others go with a more industrial design suited for a business audience.

My hope is that communities will begin to experiment, and that the Electronic Outpost will evolve to serve a different role than that of a traditional branch library.

As cities consider the Electronic Outpost options, we can expect to see a number of unique features mixed and matched to create a library environment closely aligned with the community it serves. Here are a few possible options:

1. **Search Command Center**: People who come to libraries are searching for information. Sometimes it’s an exploratory mission with only vague notions about what they are looking for, at other times patrons have a laser-like precision in their search for specific data points. But invariable they will need help, and the Search Command Center is intended to be a central feature for a visitor’s first-contact.

2. **Periodical Section – Reading Room**: Magazines and newspapers continue to be the spontaneous information sources for many library visitors. Comfortable overstuffed chairs and a fireplace or two will make this a very attractive place to kick back and recharge your intellectual batteries.
3. Book Download Center: The downloading of books onto a book reader can happen either remotely or at the library itself. The purpose of a Book Download Center is to draw attention to this offering with some people needing help to do their first download and others asking for recommendations on book readers. Over the next five years, the price of book readers will plummet to under $20, and libraries will need to consider loaning out book readers as well as the downloadable version of the books. Future book readers will come in both audio and visual formats, and will actually be easier to read than traditional books.

4. Cyber Café: Since many of the visitors will be largely focused on finding an open terminal and getting onto the Internet, it may make sense to design the Electronic Outpost around the look and feel of a casual, yet artsy, cyber-café. With this design, people will be looking for the perfect balance between privacy and inclusion, efficiency and randomness, and purpose and spontaneity. Coffee kiosks and food services, either operating as in-house library services or as adjacent businesses annexed to the library, can serve to complement the casual atmosphere.

5. Gamer Stations: With games quickly becoming the cultural norm, standard issue in most households, gamer stations can be arranged for individual and group competitions as well as a variety of non-competitive activities. With the changing nature of games, its best to plan this area with flexible spaces that will change often.

6. Daycare Facilities: Libraries tend to have a unique symbiotic relationship with daycare centers. Because of the strict rules governing daycare operations, pay-for-service daycares are best housed in adjoining facilities with separate staff and management. However, by leveraging library resources and aligning them with the needs of the community, a daycare facility can provide a win-win service to fit the needs of many library users.

7. Studio Section: Much the same way that books were the dividing point between the haves and have-nots of generations past, today’s primary dividing point is the equipment needed to access, create, and manipulate information. These can range from audio-capture, audio-editing studios; to video-capture, video-editing studios; to virtual world studios; to tele-presence rooms, and more.

8. Mini-Theater: With the huge amount of effort being directed towards video today, and kids as young as 5-years old as well as great-great grandparents learning how to shoot and edit videos, the missing piece is often a room large enough for a small group to view the final production. Mini-theaters will quickly become a social gathering center with demand growing to fill the available time slots.

As you read through this list of options, many will be seen a bit radical or simply inappropriate for the community that you live in, and that’s okay. The intent here was to stretch your thinking about everything possible in an Electronic Outpost.

Libraries are going through a transition period, and the shape and form of libraries 20 years from now will look radically different than what we see today.

I encourage library leadership teams to experiment with the form, purpose, and substance that make up our friendly neighborhood libraries. As you consider the possibilities, I encourage you to challenge yourself with the question, “How does this improve the library experience?”

After all, libraries are not only about information, they are about ideas. What kind of experience will it take for you to have your next great idea?

By Thomas Frey
Library services in the digital age

Patrons embrace new technologies – and would welcome more. But many still want printed books to hold their central place

Kathryn Zickuhr
Research Analyst, Pew Internet Project

Lee Rainie
Director, Pew Internet Project

Kristen Purcell
Associate Director, Research, Pew Internet Project

http://libraries.pewinternet.org/2013/01/22/Library-services/
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Summary of findings

The internet has already had a major impact on how people find and access information, and now the rising popularity of e-books is helping transform Americans’ reading habits. In this changing landscape, public libraries are trying to adjust their services to these new realities while still serving the needs of patrons who rely on more traditional resources. In a new survey of Americans’ attitudes and expectations for public libraries, the Pew Research Center’s Internet & American Life Project finds that many library patrons are eager to see libraries’ digital services expand, yet also feel that print books remain important in the digital age.

The availability of free computers and internet access now rivals book lending and reference expertise as a vital service of libraries. In a national survey of Americans ages 16 and older:

- 80% of Americans say borrowing books is a “very important” service libraries provide.
- 80% say reference librarians are a “very important” service of libraries.
- 77% say free access to computers and the internet is a “very important” service of libraries.

Moreover, a notable share of Americans say they would embrace even wider uses of technology at libraries such as:

- Online research services allowing patrons to pose questions and get answers from librarians: 37% of Americans ages 16 and older would “very likely” use an “ask a librarian” type of service, and another 36% say they would be “somewhat likely” to do so.
- Apps-based access to library materials and programs: 35% of Americans ages 16 and older would “very likely” use that service and another 28% say they would be “somewhat likely” to do so.
- Access to technology “petting zoos” to try out new devices: 35% of Americans ages 16 and older would “very likely” use that service and another 34% say they would be “somewhat likely” to do so.
- GPS-navigation apps to help patrons locate material inside library buildings: 34% of Americans ages 16 and older would “very likely” use that service and another 28% say they would be “somewhat likely” to do so.
- “Redbox”-style lending machines or kiosks located throughout the community where people can check out books, movies or music without having to go to the library itself: 33% of Americans ages 16 and older would “very likely” use that service and another 30% say they would be “somewhat likely” to do so.
- “Amazon”-style customized book/audio/video recommendation schemes that are based on patrons’ prior library behavior: 29% of Americans ages 16 and older would “very likely” use that service and another 35% say they would be “somewhat likely” to do so.

When Pew Internet asked the library staff members in an online panel about these services, the three that were most popular were classes on e-borrowing, classes on how to use handheld reading devices, and online “ask a librarian” research services. Many librarians said that their libraries were already offering these resources in various forms, due to demand from their communities.
These are some of the key findings from a new national survey of 2,252 Americans ages 16 and older by the Pew Research Center’s Internet & American Life Project and underwritten by a grant from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. The interviews were conducted on October 15-November 10, 2012 and done on cell phone and landlines and in English and Spanish.

**Public priorities for libraries**

Asked for their thoughts on which services libraries should offer to the public, majorities of Americans are strongly in favor of:

- **Coordinating more closely with local schools**: 85% of Americans ages 16 and older say libraries should “definitely” do this.
- **Offering free literacy programs to help young children**: 82% of Americans ages 16 and older say libraries should “definitely do” this.
- **Having more comfortable spaces for reading, working, and relaxing**: 59% of Americans ages 16 and older say libraries should “definitely do” this.
- **Offering a broader selection of e-books**: 53% of Americans ages 16 and older say libraries should “definitely do” this.

These services were also most popular with the library staff members in our online panel, many of whom said that their library had either already implemented them or should “definitely” implement them in the future.

At the same time, people have different views about whether libraries should move some printed books and stacks out of public locations to free up space for tech centers, reading rooms, meeting rooms, and cultural events: 20% of Americans ages 16 and older said libraries should “definitely” make those changes; 39% said libraries “maybe” should do that; and 36% said libraries should “definitely not” change by moving books out of public spaces.

**Americans say libraries are important to their families and their communities, but often do not know all the services libraries offer**

Fully 91% of Americans ages 16 and older say public libraries are important to their communities; and 76% say libraries are important to them and their families. And libraries are touchpoints in their communities for the vast majority of Americans: 84% of Americans ages 16 and older have been to a library or bookmobile at some point in their lives and 77% say they remember someone else in their family using public libraries as they were growing up.

Still, just 22% say that they know all or most of the services their libraries offer now. Another 46% say they know some of what their libraries offer and 31% said they know not much or nothing at all of what their libraries offer.

**Changes in library use in recent years**

In the past 12 months, 53% of Americans ages 16 and older visited a library or bookmobile; 25% visited a library website; and 13% used a handheld device such as a smartphone or tablet computer to access a
library website. All told, 59% of Americans ages 16 and older had at least one of those kinds of interactions with their public library in the past 12 months. Throughout this report we call them “recent library users” and some of our analysis is based on what they do at libraries and library websites.

Overall, 52% of recent library users say their use of the library in the past five years has not changed to any great extent. At the same time, 26% of recent library users say their library use has increased and 22% say their use has decreased. The table below highlights their answers about why their library use changed:

**Main reasons patrons cite why their use increased**
26% of recent library users ages 16+ say their use of libraries has gone up in the past 5 years. N=351

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Enjoy taking their children, grandchildren</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do research and use reference materials</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Borrow books more</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use library computers and internet</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have more time to read, retired</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To save money</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good selection and variety</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E-books, audio books, media are available</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Convenient</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading more now</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library events and activities</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good library and helpful staff</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quiet, relaxing time, social locale</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use for my job</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Main reasons patrons cite why their use decreased**
22% of recent library users ages 16+ say their use of libraries has gone down in the past 5 years. N=292

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Can get books, do research online and the internet is more convenient</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library is not as useful because my children have grown, I'm retired, I'm no longer a student</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Too busy, no time</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can't get to library, moved, don't know where library is</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prefer e-books</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prefer to buy books or get books from friends</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not interested</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health issues</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don't read much these days</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don't like local library or staff</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children are too young</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
How people use libraries

Of the 53% of Americans who visited a library or bookmobile in person in the past 12 months, here are the activities they say they do at the library:

- 73% of library patrons in the past 12 months say they visit to browse the shelves for books or media.
- 73% say they visit to borrow print books.
- 54% say they visit to research topics that interest them.
- 50% say they visit to get help from a librarian. Asked how often they get help from library staff in such things as answering research questions, 31% of library patrons in the past 12 months say they frequently get help, 39% say they sometimes get help, 23% say they hardly ever get help, and 7% say they never get help.
- 49% say they visit to sit, read, and study, or watch or listen to media.
- 46% say they visit to use a research database.
- 41% say they visit to attend or bring a younger person to a class, program, or event designed for children or teens.
- 40% say they visit to borrow a DVD or videotape of a movie or TV show.
- 31% say they visit to read or check out printed magazines or newspapers.
- 23% say they visit to attend a meeting of a group to which they belong.
- 21% say they visit to attend a class, program, or lecture for adults.
- 17% say they visit to borrow or download an audio book.
- 16% say they visit to borrow a music CD.

Internet use at libraries

Some 26% of Americans ages 16 and older say they used the computers there or the WiFi connection to go online. Here’s what they did on that free internet access:

- 66% of those who used the internet at a library in the past 12 months did research for school or work.
- 63% say they browsed the internet for fun or to pass the time.
- 54% say they used email.
- 47% say they got health information.
- 41% say they visited government websites or got information about government services.
• 36% say they looked for jobs or applied for jobs online.
• 35% say they visited social networking sites.
• 26% say they downloaded or watched online video.
• 16% say they bought a product online.
• 16% say they paid bills or did online banking.
• 16% say they took an online class or completed an online certification program.

Additionally, some 36% of those who had ever visited a library say the library staff had helped them use a computer or the internet at a library.

**African-Americans and Hispanics are especially tied to their libraries and eager to see new services**

Compared to whites, African-Americans and Hispanics are more likely to say libraries are important to them and their families, to say libraries are important to their communities, to access the internet at the library (and feel internet access is a very important service libraries provide), to use library internet access to hunt/apply for jobs, and to visit libraries just to sit and read or study.

For almost all of the library resources we asked about, African-Americans and Hispanics are significantly more likely than whites to consider them “very important” to the community. That includes: reference librarians, free access to computers/internet, quiet study spaces, research resources, jobs and careers resources, free events, and free meeting spaces.

When it comes to future services, African-Americans and Hispanics are more likely than whites to support segregating library spaces for different services, having more comfortable spaces for reading, working and relaxing, offering more learning experiences similar to museum exhibits, helping users digitize material such as family photos or historical documents.

Also, minorities are more likely than whites to say they would use these new services specified in the charts below.

Statistical analysis that controls for a variety of demographic factors such as income, educational attainment, and age shows that race and ethnicity are significant independent predictors of people’s attitudes about the role of libraries in communities, about current library services, and about their likely use of the future library services we queried.
Blacks and Hispanics more likely to say they would be likely to use new library services

Among all Americans ages 16+, the percentage who say they would be “very likely” to use these services at their local public library

Source: Pew Research Center Internet & American Life Project Library Services Survey. October 15-November 10, 2012. N=2,252 Americans ages 16 and older. Split sample for these activities. N for whites= 790 in Form A and 782 in Form B. N for blacks=126 in Form A and 117 in Form B. N for Hispanics=138 in Form A and 139 in Form B. Interviews were conducted in English and Spanish and on landline and cell phones.

In addition, African-Americans are more likely than whites to say they have “very positive” experiences at libraries, to visit libraries to get help from a librarian, to bring children or grandchildren to library programs.
About this research

This report explores the changing world of library services by exploring the activities at libraries that are already in transition and the kinds of services citizens would like to see if they could redesign libraries themselves. It is part of a larger research effort by the Pew Research Center’s Internet & American Life Project that is exploring the role libraries play in people’s lives and in their communities. The research is underwritten by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.

This report contains findings from a survey of 2,252 Americans ages 16 and above between October 15 and November 10, 2012. The surveys were administered on half on landline phones and half on cellphones and were conducted in English and Spanish. The margin of error for the full survey is plus or minus 2.3 percentage points.

There were several long lists of activities and services in the phone survey. In many cases, we asked half the respondents about one set of activities and the other half of the respondents were asked about a different set of activities. These findings are representative of the population ages 16 and above, but it is important to note that the margin of error rises when only a portion of respondents is asked a question.

There are also findings in this report that come from an online panel canvassing of librarians who have volunteered to participate in Pew Internet surveys. Some 2,067 library staff members participated in the online canvassing that took place between December 17 and December 27, 2012. No statistical results from that canvassing are reported here because it was an opt-in opportunity meant to draw out comments from patrons and librarians, and the findings are not part of a representative, probability sample. Instead, we highlight librarians’ written answers to open-ended questions that illustrate how they are thinking about and implementing new library services.

In addition, we quote librarians and library patrons who participated in focus groups in-person and online that were devoted to discussions about library services and the future of libraries. One batch of in-person focus groups was conducted in Chicago on September 19-20. Other focus groups were conducted in Denver on October 3-4 and in Charlotte, N.C. on December 11-12. Some 2,067 library staff members participated in the online panel.
Acknowledgements

About Pew Internet

The Pew Research Center’s Internet & American Life Project is an initiative of the Pew Research Center, a nonprofit “fact tank” that provides information on the issues, attitudes, and trends shaping America and the world. The Pew Internet Project explores the impact of the internet on children, families, communities, the work place, schools, health care and civic/political life. The Project is nonpartisan and takes no position on policy issues. Support for the Project is provided by The Pew Charitable Trusts. More information is available at pewinternet.org.

Advisors for this research

A number of experts have helped Pew Internet in this research effort:

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Allison Davis, Senior Vice President, GMMB
Catherine De Rosa, Vice President, OCLC
LaToya Devezin, American Library Association Spectrum Scholar and librarian, Louisiana
Amy Eshelman, Program Leader for Education, Urban Libraries Council
Sarah Houghton, Director, San Rafael Public Library, California
Mimi Ito, Research Director of Digital Media and Learning Hub, University of California Humanities Research Institute
Patrick Losinski, Chief Executive Officer, Columbus Library, Ohio
Jo McGill, Director, Northern Territory Library, Australia
Dwight McInvaill, Director, Georgetown County Library, South Carolina
Bobbi Newman, Blogger, Librarian By Day
Carlos Manjarrez, Director, Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation, Institute of Museum and Library Services
Johana Orellana-Cabrera, American Library Association Spectrum Scholar and librarian in TX.
Mayur Patel, Vice President for Strategy and Assessment, John S. and James L. Knight Foundation
Karen Archer Perry, Senior Program Officer, Global Libraries, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation
Sharman Smith, Executive Director, Mississippi Library Commission
Michael Kelley, Editor-in-Chief, Library Journal
Disclaimer from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation

This report is based on research funded in part by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. The findings and conclusions contained within are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect positions or policies of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.
Part 1: The role of libraries in people’s lives and communities

The starting point of this research was to understand how people currently use their libraries. In the past 12 months, 53% of Americans ages 16 and older visited a library or bookmobile; 25% visited a library website; and 13% used a handheld device such as a smartphone or tablet computer to access a library website. All told, 59% of Americans ages 16 and older had at least one of those kinds of interactions with their public library in the past 12 months.

In our survey, we asked people about their general library patronage—if they had experiences with libraries in childhood, how often they visit libraries or library websites, and what sort of experiences they have had in these visits. We also asked people how important libraries are, not only to them and their family, but also to their community as a whole.

Family members’ library use from childhood

Most Americans have longstanding connections to local libraries, but a fifth have no memory of family members using the library. Some 77% say they remember someone else in their family using public libraries as they were growing up; one in five (20%) say that no one in their family used the library.

Women are more likely than men to say they remember a family member using the library when they were growing up, and respondents with higher levels of education and living in households with higher income levels are significantly more likely to say this as well. Hispanics are significantly less likely than whites or blacks to say that a family member used the library, and adults ages 65 and older are somewhat less likely than younger Americans to say this. Additionally, people living in urban or suburban areas are more likely to report that a family member used the library when they were growing up than those living in rural areas.
**Did anyone else in your family use public libraries while you were growing up?**

*Among all Americans ages 16+, the percentage who recall family members using the library as they were growing up*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>% who recall family members using the library</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>All Americans ages 16+</strong></td>
<td>77%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a Men (n=1,059)</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b Women (n=1,193)</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Race/ethnicity</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a White, Non-Hispanic (n=1,572)</td>
<td>80a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b Black, Non-Hispanic (n=243)</td>
<td>80b</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c Hispanic (n=277)</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Age</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a 16-17 (n=101)</td>
<td>79   a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b 18-29 (n=369)</td>
<td>81   a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c 30-49 (n=586)</td>
<td>80   a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d 50-64 (n=628)</td>
<td>76   a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e 65+ (n=531)</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Household income</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a Less than $30,000/yr (n=629)</td>
<td>67   a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b $30,000-$49,999 (n=363)</td>
<td>79   a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c $50,000-$74,999 (n=314)</td>
<td>82   a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d $75,000+ (n=567)</td>
<td>88   abbc</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Education attainment</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a No high school diploma (n=254)</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b High school grad (n=610)</td>
<td>74   a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c Some College (n=562)</td>
<td>83   ab</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d College+ (n=812)</td>
<td>88   abbc</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Parent of minor</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a Parent (n=584)</td>
<td>80   a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b Non-parent (n=1,667)</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Urbanity</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a Urban (n=721)</td>
<td>79   a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b Suburban (n=1,090)</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c Rural (n=440)</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Source:** Pew Research Center’s Internet & American Life Library Services Survey of 2,252 people age 16 and older conducted October 15-November 10, 2012. The survey was conducted in English and Spanish and on landline and cell phones.

**Note:** Columns marked with a superscript letter (’a’) or another letter indicate a statistically significant difference between that row and the row designated by that superscript letter. Statistical significance is determined inside the specific section covering each demographic trait.
Americans’ library use

Overall, 84% of Americans ages 16 and older have visited a library or bookmobile in person. Women are more likely than men to have done so (86% vs. 81%), and whites (86%) are more likely than blacks (80%) or Hispanics (71%). Those with at least some college experience are more likely to have visited a library or bookmobile than those with lower levels of education. Younger age groups (especially those under 50) and those with higher levels of household income are generally more likely to have done so as well.

Have you ever visited a library or bookmobile in person?
Among all Americans ages 16+, the percentage who say they have ever visited a library or bookmobile in person

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>% who have EVER visited a library or bookmobile in person</th>
<th>All Americans ages 16+</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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</tr>
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<td>c 30-49 (n=586)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>c $50,000-$74,999 (n=314)</td>
<td>91%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d $75,000+ (n=567)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education attainment</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a No high school diploma (n=254)</td>
<td>71%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b High school grad (n=610)</td>
<td>81%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c Some College (n=562)</td>
<td>89%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d College + (n=812)</td>
<td>90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parent of minor</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a Parent (n=584)</td>
<td>85%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b Non-parent (n=1,667)</td>
<td>84%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urbanity</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a Urban (n=721)</td>
<td>85%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b Suburban (n=1,090)</td>
<td>83%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c Rural (n=440)</td>
<td>84%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
About 64% of those who had ever visited a public library say they had visited a public library or bookmobile in person in the past twelve months. This means that 53% of all Americans ages 16 and older visited a public library or bookmobile in person in the past year.

Women are more likely than men to have visited a library or bookmobile in the past year (59% vs. 48%), and those under the age of 65 are more likely than older adults to have done so as well. Americans who have at least some college experience are also significantly more likely than those who have not attended college to have visited a library in the past year.

Finally, those who remember a family member using the library while they were growing up are not only significantly more likely than those with no family experiences to have ever visited a library in person (90% vs. 64%), but are also more likely to have visited a library in the past year (59% vs. 34%).
## Visited the library in-person in the past year

*Among all Americans ages 16+, the percentage who have visited a library or bookmobile in person in the past 12 months within each demographic group*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Demographic Trait</th>
<th>% who have visited a library or bookmobile in person in the past year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All Americans ages 16+</td>
<td>53%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a  Men (n=1,059)</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b  Women (n=1,193)</td>
<td>59^2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Race/ethnicity</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a  White, Non-Hispanic</td>
<td>53^c</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b  Black, Non-Hispanic</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c  Hispanic (n=277)</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a  16-17 (n=101)</td>
<td>62^de</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b  18-29 (n=369)</td>
<td>57^e</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c  30-49 (n=586)</td>
<td>59^de</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d  50-64 (n=628)</td>
<td>51^e</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e  65+ (n=531)</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Household income</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a  Less than $30,000/yr</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b  $30,000-$49,999</td>
<td>58^a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c  $50,000-$74,999</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d  $75,000+</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education attainment</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a  No high school diploma</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b  High school grad</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c  Some College</td>
<td>58^ab</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d  College +</td>
<td>63^ab</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parent of minor</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a  Parent (n=584)</td>
<td>64^b</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b  Non-parent (n=1,667)</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urbanity</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a  Urban (n=721)</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b  Suburban (n=1,090)</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c  Rural (n=440)</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Source:** Pew Research Center’s Internet & American Life Library Services Survey of 2,252 people age 16 and older conducted October 15-November 10, 2012. The survey was conducted in English and Spanish and on landline and cell phones.

**Note:** Columns marked with a superscript letter (^) or another letter indicate a statistically significant difference between that row and the row designated by that superscript letter. Statistical significance is determined inside the specific section covering each demographic trait.
### A snapshot of Americans’ library use habits

Among all Americans ages 16+, the percentage who have visited a library or bookmobile in the past year with the following frequency

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>All ages 16+</th>
<th>Men (n=1,059)</th>
<th>Women (n=1,193)</th>
<th>White, Non-Hispanic (n=1,572)</th>
<th>Black, Non-Hispanic (n=243)</th>
<th>Hispanic (n=277)</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Education attainment</th>
<th>Household income</th>
<th>Urbanity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>At least weekly</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>16-17</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>Urban</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At least monthly, but not weekly</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>18-29</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>Suburban</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than monthly, but within past year</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>30-49</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>Rural</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not within the past year</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>65+</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Household income:

- Less than $30,000/yr (n=629) 11% 24% 16% 49%
- $30,000-$49,999 (n=363) 10% 28% 20% 42%
- $50,000-$74,999 (n=314) 7% 30% 19% 45%
- $75,000+ (n=567) 5% 25% 27% 43%

Education attainment:

- No high school diploma (n=254) 8% 18% 17% 57%
- High school grad (n=610) 6% 22% 18% 54%
- Some College (n=562) 10% 26% 23% 42%
- College + (n=812) 9% 32% 22% 37%

Parent of minor:

- Parent (n=584) 7% 26% 19% 47%
- Non-parent (n=1,667) 9% 25% 21% 45%

Urbanity:

- Urban (n=721) 8% 23% 20% 48%
- Suburban (n=1,090) 11% 33% 21% 36%
- Rural (n=440) 7% 22% 20% 51%

Source: Pew Research Center’s Internet & American Life Library Services Survey of 2,252 people age 16 and older conducted October 15-November 10, 2012. The survey was conducted in English and Spanish and on landline and cell phones.
Among those who have visited a public library in person in the past year:

- 3% say they go every day or almost every day
- 12% say they go at least once a week
- 19% go several times a month
- 28% go about once a month
- 38% go less often than that

Although many activities at libraries do not always require a library card, many others—such as borrowing books—do. Currently, 63% of Americans ages 16 and older have a library card, up from 58% in December 2011.

Experiences at libraries are positive

Among those who had ever used a public library, almost all respondents say that their experiences using public libraries are either very positive (57%) or mostly positive (41%); only about 1% say their experiences had been mostly negative.

Women, blacks, and adults ages 30 and older are significantly more likely than other groups to report “very positive” experiences at public libraries, as are Americans with at least a high school education. Respondents ages 16-17 are the least likely to report “very positive” experiences, with a majority (62%) reporting “mostly positive” experiences.

How important libraries are to individuals and their communities

In our December 2011 survey, we asked people how important libraries are to them and their families. For this survey, we asked respondents two questions: How important libraries are to them and their families, and also how important libraries are to their communities as a whole.

How important are libraries to you and your family?

Overall, a majority of Americans (76% of all respondents) say that libraries are important to them and their families, and 46% say that libraries are “very important”—up from 38% saying libraries are “very important” in December 2011.¹ Women (51%) are more likely than men (40%) to say that libraries are “very important” to them and their families, and blacks (60%) and Hispanics (55%) are more likely to say this than whites (41%).

In addition, adults ages 30 and older (50%) are also more likely than adults ages 18-29 (38%) to say that libraries are “very important” to them and their families. Just 18% of 16-17 year-olds say this, though they are among the heaviest users of libraries. Those ages 16-17 are more likely to say that libraries are “somewhat important” (47%) or “not too important” (21%) to them and their families. Additionally, 52% of those in households making less than $30,000 per year say that libraries are “very important” to them.

¹ In February 2012, question was a standalone question.
and their families, with 82% saying that libraries are important overall—making those in this income bracket significantly more likely to say so than those in households making more than $50,000 per year.

Perhaps unsurprisingly, those who have used the library in the past twelve months are more likely to say libraries are important than those who have not. At least half (55%) of those who had used a library in the past year say that the library is “very important” to them and their families, compared with about a third (33%) of those who had not used a library in that time.

Similarly, those who are more familiar with the resources and programs at their local public library are more likely to say that libraries are important. Some 86% of those who say they know about “all or most” of the services their library offers say that libraries are important to them and their family overall, including the 60% who say libraries are “very important.” Among those who say they know “not much” or “none at all” of the services their libraries offers, 61% say the library is important to them and their families, and just 32% say it is “very important.”

How important are libraries?
Among all Americans ages 16+, the percentage who say that libraries are “very important,” “important,” “not too important,” or “not important at all” to them and their families, and to their community as a whole

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>To you and your family</th>
<th>To your community as a whole</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very important</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>63%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somewhat important</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not too important</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not important at all</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Pew Research Center’s Internet & American Life Library Services Survey of 2,252 people age 16 and older conducted October 15-November 10, 2012. The survey was conducted in English and Spanish and on landline and cell phones.

Libraries’ importance to the community as a whole

When asked about the importance of public libraries to their community, at least nine in ten respondents (91%) say they considered the library either “very important” (63%) or “somewhat important” (28%) to their community as a whole.

While a strong majority of all groups considered libraries important to their communities, some demographic groups stand out in their assessments. Once again, women (69%) are more likely than men (57%) to say that the library was “very important” to their community, and blacks (74%) and Hispanics (67%) are more likely than whites (60%) to say this as well. Adults ages 30 and older are also more likely to consider the library “very important” to their community than younger respondents, and those living in households in the lowest income bracket are more likely to consider libraries “very important” to their community than those in households making at least $75,000 per year.
Even among those who had not used the library in the past year, at least half (53%) say they consider public libraries “very important” to their community as a whole, with 85% considering libraries important to their community overall. By comparison, 70% of those who had used the library in the past year consider libraries “very important” to their community, and 94% consider them important to their community overall.

Meanwhile, about three-quarters (74%) of those who are very familiar with their library’s services consider libraries “very important” to their community, compared with 49% of those who are generally unfamiliar with their library’s services; 94% of those very familiar with their library’s services say libraries are important to their community overall, as do 84% of those who know little to nothing about their library’s offerings.

### How important are libraries?

*Among all Americans ages 16+, the total percentage who say that libraries are “important” or “very important” to them and their families, and to their community as a whole*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>To you and your family</th>
<th>To your community as a whole</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>All Americans ages 16+</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a Men (n=1,059)</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b Women (n=1,193)</td>
<td>80&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>92&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Race/ethnicity</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a White, Non-Hispanic (n=1,572)</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b Black, Non-Hispanic (n=243)</td>
<td>86&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c Hispanic (n=277)</td>
<td>80&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Age</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a 16-17 (n=101)</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b 18-29 (n=369)</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c 30-49 (n=586)</td>
<td>80&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>93&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d 50-64 (n=628)</td>
<td>76&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>91&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e 65+ (n=531)</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Household income</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a Less than $30,000/yr (n=629)</td>
<td>82&lt;sup&gt;de&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b $30,000-$49,999 (n=363)</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c $50,000-$74,999 (n=314)</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d $75,000+ (n=567)</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Education attainment</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a No high school diploma (n=254)</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b High school grad (n=610)</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c Some College (n=562)</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>92&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d College + (n=812)</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>92&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Parent of minor</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a Parent (n=584)</td>
<td>84&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b Non-parent (n=1,667)</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urbanity</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>----</td>
<td>----</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a Urban (n=721)</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b Suburban (n=1,090)</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c Rural (n=440)</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>89</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Pew Research Center’s Internet & American Life Library Services Survey of 2,252 people age 16 and older conducted October 15-November 10, 2012. The survey was conducted in English and Spanish and on landline and cell phones.

Note: Columns marked with a superscript letter (‘a’) or another letter indicate a statistically significant difference between that row and the row designated by that superscript letter. Statistical significance is determined inside the specific section covering each demographic trait.

In our focus groups, most participants said that they valued having libraries in their communities and would miss them if they were gone, especially as many were still dealing with the effects of the recession. One participant said, “I think our community would [miss our public library] because our library is extremely well used. The online system came into its own right about the time the economy changed. Our library is extremely heavily used by people who five or six years ago might have been buying books,” but now can’t afford to.

Even the focus group participants who didn’t use their local libraries much said that they would miss them if they were gone. One said that she wanted to live in the sort of community that had a library, even though she personally had not used it yet. Another said that while the loss of her local library would probably not affect her personally, “I look at myself as a member of a community and so it would deeply affect my community”—and therefore have an impact on her as well. Another said: “I prefer to have libraries open to communities where people could not afford what I can afford.”
Part 2: What people do at libraries and library websites

In addition to asking people about their general feelings about libraries and their patterns of patronage, Pew Internet’s survey explored in depth what people do at libraries – both at the physical facilities and on library websites. These responses reported below were asked of the 53% of Americans who say they visited a library or bookmobile in the past 12 months.

Activities at libraries

Here is a rundown of the things people do at libraries among those who have visited a library or bookmobile in the past 12 months:

What people do at libraries

*Among those who have visited a library or bookmobile in the past 12 months, the % who have done the following activities*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Borrow print books</td>
<td>73%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Browse the shelves for books or media.</td>
<td>73%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research topics of interest</td>
<td>54%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Get help from a librarian</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sit, read, and study, or watch or listen to...</td>
<td>49%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use a research database</td>
<td>46%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attend a class, program, or lecture for adults</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attend or bring a younger person to a class,...</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Borrow a DVD or videotape of a movie or TV...</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Read or check out printed magazines or...</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attend a meeting of a group</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attend a class, program, or lecture for adults</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Borrow or download an audio book</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Pew Research Center's Internet & American Life Library Services Survey of 2,252 people age 16 and older conducted October 15-November 10, 2012. The survey was conducted in English and Spanish and on landline and cell phones.
Browse the shelves for books or media

Almost three-quarters (73%) of library patrons in the past 12 months say they visit to browse the shelves for books or media. Women patrons are more likely than men to say they do this, as are parents of minor children, and people with at least some college experience.

Many of our focus group members mentioned how they enjoyed browsing the shelves at their local public library. One liked the process of discovery—“The cover can draw you in.” Even when they had reserved materials online, several liked to browse for books, movies, or music.

Borrow print books

Almost two-thirds (73%) of library patrons in the past 12 months also say they visit to borrow print books. Women are more likely than men to do this, as are parents of minor children and those with at least some college experience.

Our focus group members mentioned borrowing books more than any other activity. Several said they had recently started to borrow books more recently due to changes in economic circumstances, or when they retired. Others said that they began to borrow books more as their tastes in books changed, or when they simply ran out of space:

“As I got older, I bought more books and we moved a lot. As an adult, I moved a lot with our profession and I carted probably a roomful of books . . . Finally, I said ‘enough’ and we started going back to the library because we’re like this is—I don’t need to own all this anymore. So, now it’s more of ‘Let’s see if they have it at the library first before we buy it’ [mentality].”

Research topics that interest them

Some 54% of those who visited a library in the past 12 months say they visit to research topics that interest them.

Get help from a librarian

About half (50%) of those who have visited the library in the past year say they visit to get help from a librarian. African-Americans are more likely than whites to say they visit to get help from a librarian, as are those ages 50 and older and those who live in households earning less than $50,000. In addition, some non-technology users are more likely to say they get help from librarians: That is true of those who do not own tablet computers, those who do not own e-book readers, and those who do not own smartphones.

Sit, read, and study, or watch or listen to media

Some 49% of those who visited a library in the past 12 months say they visit just to sit, read, and study, or watch or listen to media. African-American and Latino patrons are more likely to say they do this than whites. Those ages 18-29 are especially likely to cite this as a reason for their library visit in the past 12 months, as are urban residents and those living in households earning less than $50,000.

Use a research database

About 46% of those who visited a library in the past 12 months say they visit to use a research database.
Attend or bring a younger person to a class, program, or event designed for children or teens

Some 41% of library patrons in the past 12 months say they visit to attend or bring a younger person to a class, program, or event designed for children or teens. Parents of minors are especially likely to cite this as a reason, as are women, African-Americans, those ages 30-49, and people with at least some college experience.

Borrow a DVD or videotape of a movie or TV show

About 40% of those who visited a library in the past 12 months say they visit to borrow a DVD or videotape of a movie or TV show. Parents of minors and those ages 30-64 are more likely than others to report this use of libraries. This service was mentioned by many of our focus group participants:

“We don’t have Netflix. A lot of people have Netflix subscriptions or whatever where they can see things right away, and with all the movie places like Blockbuster and Hollywood, those are gone . . . So I like the library because we can go get movies that we may want to watch, but we don’t want to own.”

Read or check out printed magazines or newspapers

About three in ten (31%) of library patrons in the past 12 months say they visit to read or check out printed magazines or newspapers. A focus group member said they stop by the library about once a week to read magazines: “It’s a wonderful way to spend some time if I’ve got it.”

Attend a meeting of a group

Some 23% of library patrons in the past 12 months say they visit to attend a meeting of a group to which they belong. Several focus group members who were involved in local groups said they appreciated this service, and some said their experiences using meeting spaces made the library seem more welcoming. Librarians in our online focus group also emphasized the library’s role as a community meeting space, especially in smaller communities that lacked other areas for groups to meet.

Attend a class, program, or lecture for adults

About one in five (21%) of those who visited a library in the past 12 months say they visit to attend a class, program, or lecture for adults. Women are more likely than men to report using the library for this purpose.

Borrow or download an audio book

About 17% of those who visited a library in the past 12 months say they visit to borrow or download an audio book.

Borrow a music CD

Some 16% of those who visited a library in the past 12 months say they visit to borrow a music CD. Urban and suburban residents are more likely to cite this as a reason for their library visits than are rural residents.
How frequently people receive assistance from library staff

Asked how often they get help from library staff in such things as answering research questions, 31% of library patrons in the past 12 months say they frequently get help, 39% say they sometimes get help, 23% say they hardly ever get help, and 7% say they never get help. There are variances in those answers by race and by class, as the charts below show. Minorities are more likely than whites to say they frequently or sometimes get help, and members of poorer households are more likely than members of richer households to say they get help.

How often people get help from library staff

*Among Americans ages 16+ who visited a library in the past 12 months, the percentage who say they receive help from library staff with the following frequencies*

**By race/ethnicity**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race/Ethnicity</th>
<th>Frequently</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Hardly ever</th>
<th>Never</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Whites</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blacks</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanics</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**By household income**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Household</th>
<th>Frequently</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Hardly ever</th>
<th>Never</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&lt;$30K</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt;$75K</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source:* Pew Research Center Internet & American Life Project Library Services Survey. October 15-November 10, 2012. N for those ages 16+ who visited library in past 12 months=1,238. N for whites=861. N for blacks=134. N for Hispanics=138. N for those in households earning less than $30,000 per year=323. N for those in households earning more than $75,000 per year = 185. Interviews were conducted in English and Spanish and on landline and cell phones.

Finally, those who own e-book readers and smartphones are more likely than others to say they hardly ever or never get help from librarians.

Asked how helpful library staffers are in general, 81% of those who had visited a library in the past 12 months say librarians are “very helpful,” 17% say “somewhat helpful,” 1% say “not too helpful” and another 1% say “not at all helpful.” There are no notable demographic differences in respondents’ answers to this question.
In our focus groups, many people reported having only positive impressions of libraries and librarians, especially if they had positive experiences growing up. One focus group member said:

“When I was younger, there was one librarian in particular, she remembered my name and every time I would come in with my mom I would take out stacks and stacks of books . . . I started getting really into reading more because of her and she would [compliment] me about how much I was reading, and it was like a challenge to me. How much can I read? How much can I read in this week so I can come back the next week and get more books. So for me, it was a very positive environment as a child.”

However, some participants, including some who mentioned that their libraries have experienced cutbacks recently, said that library staff were very busy, and weren’t able to give them the individual attention they remembered and valued from their childhood. One participant said that it seemed like there were so many programs going on, the librarians could seem too busy to just help people find books. At the same time, impressions and library experiences often varied in different areas even within the same city.

A few focus group members said that they often feel intimidated when visiting some library branches. These focus groups members said they weren’t very familiar with the Dewey Decimal system, which made it hard to find what they were looking for even if they were told the call number or pointed in the general direction; some said that library staff members they interacted with would become “frustrated” with them for not understanding such a basic concept:

“I live by our library, close by, walking distance. I got intimated by trying to find the books. It was like they say ‘it’s number-number-number and letter,’ like 100-EB or whatever it is. I’d be like, ‘What?’ [Laughter] . . . Now I have more fun [reserving books] online and waiting for it to show up and enjoying that. But when I went by myself . . . it was too [complicated].”

Use of library websites

In all, the Pew Internet Project survey finds that 39% of Americans ages 16 and older have gone to a library website at one time or another and, of them, 64% visited a library site in the previous 12 months. That translates into 25% of all Americans ages 16+ who visited a library website in the past year.

Those who are most likely to have visited library websites are parents of minors, women, those with college educations, those under age 50, and people living in households earning $75,000 or more.
**Library website users**

*Among all Americans ages 16+, the percentage who have ever visited a library website*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>% who have ever visited a library website</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>All Americans ages 16+</strong></td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a Men (n=1,059)</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b Women (n=1,193)</td>
<td>44[3]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Race/ethnicity</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a White, Non-Hispanic (n=1,572)</td>
<td>39[^c]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b Black, Non-Hispanic (n=243)</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c Hispanic (n=277)</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Age</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a 16-17 (n=101)</td>
<td>47[^dec]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b 18-29 (n=369)</td>
<td>48[^de]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c 30-49 (n=586)</td>
<td>47[^dec]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d 50-64 (n=628)</td>
<td>32[^e]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e 65+ (n=531)</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Household income</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a Less than $30,000/yr (n=629)</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b $30,000-$49,999 (n=363)</td>
<td>37[^a]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c $50,000-$74,999 (n=314)</td>
<td>44[^a]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d $75,000+ (n=567)</td>
<td>52[^abc]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Education attainment</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a No high school diploma (n=254)</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b High school grad (n=610)</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c Some College (n=562)</td>
<td>44[^ab]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d College + (n=812)</td>
<td>60[^abc]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Parent of minor</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a Parent (n=584)</td>
<td>46[^d]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b Non-parent (n=1,667)</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Urbanity</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a Urban (n=721)</td>
<td>41[^c]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b Suburban (n=1,090)</td>
<td>41[^c]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c Rural (n=440)</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Source:** Pew Research Center’s Internet & American Life Library Services Survey of 2,252 people age 16 and older conducted October 15–November 10, 2012. The survey was conducted in English and Spanish and on landline and cell phones.

**Note:** Columns marked with a superscript letter (”) or another letter indicate a statistically significant difference between that row and the row designated by that superscript letter. Statistical significance is determined inside the specific section covering each demographic trait.
The 25% of Americans ages 16 and older who went to a library website in the past 12 months tended to do so with modest frequency:

- 3% of them went every day or almost every day
- 9% went at least once a week
- 15% went several times a month
- 27% went at least once a month
- 46% went less often than that

When they were on the sites, users sampled a wide variety of library services and there tended to be little variance by different demographic categories. Of those 25% of Americans who went to a library website in the past 12 months:

- 82% of them searched the library catalog for books (including audiobooks and e-books), CDs, and DVDs.
- 72% got basic library information such as the hours of operation, location of branches, or directions.
- 62% reserved books (including audiobooks and e-books), CDs, and DVDs.
- 51% renewed a book, DVD, or CD. Those ages 30-49 and parents of minor children are especially likely to have done this.
- 51% used an online database. Those ages 18-29 are particularly likely to have done this.
- 48% looked for information about library programs or events. Those ages 50-64 are especially likely to do this.
- 44% got research or homework help.
- 30% read book reviews or got book recommendations.
- 30% checked whether they owed fines or paid the fines online. Those ages 30-49 are particularly likely to have done this.
- 27% signed up for library programs and events.
- 22% borrowed or downloaded an e-book.
- 6% reserved a meeting room.

Several focus group members said that they wished their libraries promoted their website more. One said, “Even when I receive the emails, they never reference the website. I didn’t even know they had a website . . . If you want people to use it, you have to know about it.”

In general, focus group members said that their libraries’ websites are useful for finding basic information (hours, location), but a bit of a hassle to navigate for more complicated purposes. Some said that even finding and reserving books could be overly complicated, and others said that the interfaces seemed outdated. There wasn’t much sense that participants wanted their libraries’ websites to be a “community portal” in their own right—if they were using email or Facebook, they wanted their libraries to be using those methods of communication, but few seemed to think of their library’s website as a place to go for more general information in the first place. One focus participant said:
“I look up like free kids’ events and there’s this website ... that sometimes has like free admission for kids—or if it’s seasonal I’ll literally type in ‘free pumpkin patches for kids’ [in a search engine] so I can take them to a pumpkin patch or something like that. But I wouldn’t have even thought to [search for] ‘library free event for kids’. I wouldn’t have even thought that the library would be a resource at all.”

**Changes in library use in recent years**

The rise of the internet – especially broadband connections – and the spread of mobile connectivity could potentially affect people’s use of their libraries. The Pew Internet survey asked recent library users about their use of libraries over the last five years. Recent library users are those who those who visited a public library in person in the past 12 months, or those who have gone on a public library website in the past 12 months, or those who have used a cell phone, e-reader or tablet to visit a public library website or access public library resources in the past 12 months. They amount to 59% of those who are ages 16 and older in the general population.

The results showed there is fluidity in library patronage patterns:

- 26% of recent library users say their own use of local libraries has increased in the past five years.
- 22% say their use has decreased.
- 52% say their use has stayed the same during that time period.

There are some demographic patterns to patronage changes: When it comes to those who have increased their use of libraries parents of minors are more likely than non-parents to say their library use has increased (30% vs. 23%), those with at least some college experience are more likely than those with high school diplomas to say their use has gone up (29% vs. 19%), and suburban residents (28%) are more likely than rural residents (20%) to report increased library use.

Those who say their library use has declined in the past five years are more likely to be non-parents (25%) than parents (17%) and those who are in the 18-29 age bracket (32%), compared to others who are younger or older. Rural residents (61%) and those ages 65 and older (60%) are particularly likely to say their library use has not changed in the past five years.

The following table shows the reasons people gave when we asked why their library use had increased or decreased:
The main reasons patrons’ library use has changed in the past five years

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Main reasons patrons cite why their use increased</th>
<th>N=351</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Enjoy taking their children, grandchildren</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do research and use reference materials</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Borrow books more</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use library computers and internet</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have more time to read now, retired</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To save money</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good selection and variety</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E-books, audio books, media are available</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Convenient</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading more now</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library events and activities</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good library and helpful staff</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quiet, relaxing time, social locale</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use for my job</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Main reasons patrons cite why their use decreased</th>
<th>N=292</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Can get books, do research online and the internet is more convenient</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library is not as useful because my children have grown, I’m retired, I’m no longer a student</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Too busy, no time</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can’t get to library, moved, don’t know where library is</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prefer e-books</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prefer to buy books or get books from friends</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not interested</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health issues</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t read much these days</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t like local library or staff</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children are too young</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Pew Research Center Internet & American Life Project Library Services Survey. October 15-November 10, 2012. N for recent library users ages 16+=1,361. Interviews were conducted in English and Spanish and on landline and cell phones.
Many of these reasons were echoed by both the members of our in-person focus groups, many of whom mentioned some common patterns they've noticed in their own library use. Many patrons discussed how they had used the library frequently as children, but then visited public libraries less often in middle and high school. Their library use would pick up again for academic reasons in college, but not for pleasure reading. Many people said they “rediscovered” the library when they became parents, and again when they retired. They also cited changing habits as individual circumstances changed, such as the loss of a job or income (job searches, learning new skills).

A few focus group also said that discovering a new library service, such as e-book borrowing, would rekindle their interest in the library—and lead to an increase in use of other services. Some simply wished for more programs for single adults. One said that it seemed like all the programs at their library were “either for the senior citizens or for the really young children, like puppet shows [and] magic shows. There’s no really in between for those teenagers, young adults, adults.”

Another thread in our focus group discussions was library hours. Several said that budget cutbacks had led their local libraries to scale back their hours, to the point that it was difficult to find time to stop by—especially when libraries didn’t have hours in the evenings or on weekends. “It’s not open much at all,” one said. “I mean a few hours a day and you can’t do a whole lot in that small amount of time.” Others said that their library’s schedule changed so often that they had trouble remembering when it would be open—and eventually stopped going at all.

**Technology users and library use**

As we noted earlier in this report, technology owners are somewhat more attached to their libraries than non-users. Internet users, tablet users, and smartphone users are more likely to have ever gone to libraries and more likely to have library cards. However, they are no more likely than non-owners to have visited a library or bookmobile in the past 12 months.

Asked to assess their library use over the past five years, recent library users who are home internet users, tablet users and smartphone owners are somewhat more likely than non-users to say their use has declined. And they are especially likely to say that the reason for their diminished use stems from the fact they can do research online.
Tech owners more likely than non-tech owners to say they use the library less than they used to

*Among each group of Americans ages 16+, the percentage who say their use of libraries has decreased in the past 5 years*

![Bar chart showing percentage of library use decrease by technology ownership status.]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Technology Ownership</th>
<th>Percentage of Decrease</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Home internet users</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internet users</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tablet users</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-users</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Smartphone users</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-users</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Source:** Pew Research Center Internet & American Life Project Library Services survey. October 15-November 10, 2012. N=1,920 of Americans ages 16 and older who have ever visited a library. N for recent library users who are home internet users=1,160 and for non-home internet users=91. N for recent library users who are tablet users=384 and for non-tablet users=977. N for recent library users who are smartphone users=655 and for non-smartphone users =706. Interviews were conducted in English and Spanish and on landline and cell phones.
Part 3: Technology use at libraries

Some 73% of Americans ages 16 and over say there are places in their community where they can access the internet or use a computer for free. And 35% say they have used those free access points.

Those who have used free internet and computers in their communities

Among all Americans ages 16+, the percentage who have accessed the internet and computers at a free location outside their home, work, or school

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>% who have accessed the internet and computers at a free location</th>
<th>All Americans ages 16+</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a</td>
<td>Men (n=1,059)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b</td>
<td>Women (n=1,193)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Race/ethnicity</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a</td>
<td>White, Non-Hispanic (n=1,572)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b</td>
<td>Black, Non-Hispanic (n=243)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c</td>
<td>Hispanic (n=277)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a</td>
<td>16-17 (n=101)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b</td>
<td>18-29 (n=369)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c</td>
<td>30-49 (n=586)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d</td>
<td>50-64 (n=628)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e</td>
<td>65+ (n=531)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Household income</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a</td>
<td>Less than $30,000/yr (n=629)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b</td>
<td>$30,000-$49,999 (n=363)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c</td>
<td>$50,000-$74,999 (n=314)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d</td>
<td>$75,000+ (n=567)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education attainment</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a</td>
<td>No high school diploma (n=254)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b</td>
<td>High school grad (n=610)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c</td>
<td>Some College (n=562)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d</td>
<td>College + (n=812)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parent of minor</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a</td>
<td>Parent (n=584)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b</td>
<td>Non-parent (n=1,667)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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2 The American Library Association reports that 62% of libraries report they are the only source of free public access to computers and the Internet in their communities. Study available at: [http://www.ala.org/research/sites/ala.org.research/files/content/initiatives/plftas/2011_2012/2012%20PLFTAS%20Key%20Findings.pdf](http://www.ala.org/research/sites/ala.org.research/files/content/initiatives/plftas/2011_2012/2012%20PLFTAS%20Key%20Findings.pdf)
### Urbanity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Urban (n=721)</th>
<th>Suburban (n=1,090)</th>
<th>Rural (n=440)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Source:** Pew Research Center’s Internet & American Life Library Services Survey of 2,252 people age 16 and older conducted October 15-November 10, 2012. The survey was conducted in English and Spanish and on landline and cell phones.

**Note:** Columns marked with a superscript letter (') or another letter indicate a statistically significant difference between that row and the row designated by that superscript letter. Statistical significance is determined inside the specific section covering each demographic trait.

Younger Americans, particularly 16-17 year-olds, are significantly more likely to have used free internet and computers in their communities than older adults. Americans living in households in the highest income bracket are more likely than those living in the lowest income bracket to have used free internet and computers. Americans with higher levels of education, especially college graduates, are also more likely than those with lower levels of education to have done this.

### Use of computers and the internet at libraries

We asked those who had visited libraries in the past 12 months if they used the computers and the internet at the library. Our question was designed to include people who used the wired computers at the library and people who had used the library WiFi connection, too. Some 26% of those ages 16 and older had connected to the internet at the library.

- There are some notable demographic differences in the answers to this question. 66% of those who used the internet at a library in the past 12 months did research for school or work. Hispanics, rural residents, and people ages 16-49 are especially likely to say they did this activity.
- 63% say they browsed the internet for fun or to pass the time. African-Americans and Hispanics are more likely than whites to report this internet use, as are those ages 18-29.
- 54% say they used email. Women are more likely than men to say this, as are those ages 18-49.
- 47% say they got health information.
- 41% say they visited government websites or got information about government services. People living in households earning less than $30,000 are especially likely to report this use.
- 36% say they looked for jobs or applied for jobs online. African-Americans are the most likely to report this activity. In addition, those ages 18-49, those who live in cities, high school graduates, and those in households earning less than $50,000 are also more likely than others to use library computers this way.
- 35% say they visited social networking sites. Those ages 16-29 are especially likely to report this use.
- 26% say they downloaded or watched online video. Suburban residents are more likely than others to report this.
- 16% say they bought a product online.
- 16% say they paid bills or did online banking.
- 16% say they took an online class or completed an online certification program.

Some 36% of those who had ever visited a library say the library staff had helped them use a computer or the internet at a library. African-Americans and Hispanics are more likely than whites to access the internet at their local library, as are parents of minor children, those under age 50, those living in households earning less than $30,000, and those with at least some college experience.

**Internet use at libraries**
Among all Americans ages 16+, the percentage who have accessed the internet at the library on the computers there or via the library's WiFi connection in the past 12 months

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>% who have accessed the internet at the library in the past 12 months</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>All Americans ages 16+</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a  Men (n=1,059) 25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b  Women (n=1,193) 27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Race/ethnicity</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a  White, Non-Hispanic (n=1,572) 24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b  Black, Non-Hispanic (n=243) 31a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c  Hispanic (n=277) 27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Age</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a  16-17 (n=101) 39de</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b  18-29 (n=369) 38cde</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c  30-49 (n=586) 31de</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d  50-64 (n=628) 19e</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e  65+ (n=531) 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Household income</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a  Less than $30,000/yr (n=629) 28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b  $30,000-$49,999 (n=363) 29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c  $50,000-$74,999 (n=314) 24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d  $75,000+ (n=567) 28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Education attainment</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a  No high school diploma (n=254) 22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b  High school grad (n=610) 21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c  Some College (n=562) 30ab</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d  College + (n=812) 31ab</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Parent of minor</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a  Parent (n=584) 34b</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b  Non-parent (n=1,667) 23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Urbanity</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a  Urban (n=721) 29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b  Suburban (n=1,090) 25</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
How important is free computer and internet access at libraries?

We did not ask a question about whether library internet users depend on that connection as their primary internet connection. But we asked respondents to this survey how important they think it is to have free access to computers and the internet at the library in their community.

Some 77% of all those ages 16 and older say it was “very important” for libraries to offer free access to computers and the internet to the community and another 18% say it was “somewhat important.” Just 2% say it was not too important and another 2% say it was not important at all.

Again, there are some noteworthy demographic differences in the answers: African-Americans and Hispanics are more likely than whites to feel free access was very important. Women and those with some college experience are also especially likely to feel this way. This topic is discussed further in Part 4 of this report.

| How important is free library access to computers and the internet to the community? |
|---|---|
| Among all Americans ages 16+, the percentage who say it is “very important” to provide free access |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>All Americans ages 16+</th>
<th>77%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a Men (n=1,059)</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b Women (n=1,193)</td>
<td>81a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Race/ethnicity</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>a White, Non-Hispanic (n=1,572)</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b Black, Non-Hispanic (n=243)</td>
<td>92a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c Hispanic (n=277)</td>
<td>86a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a 16-17 (n=101)</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b 18-29 (n=369)</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c 30-49 (n=586)</td>
<td>81e</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d 50-64 (n=628)</td>
<td>81e</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e 65+ (n=531)</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
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</table>
### Household income

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<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a</td>
<td>Less than $30,000/yr (n=629)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b</td>
<td>$30,000-$49,999 (n=363)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c</td>
<td>$50,000-$74,999 (n=314)</td>
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<tr>
<td>d</td>
<td>$75,000+ (n=567)</td>
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</table>

### Education attainment

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a</td>
<td>No high school diploma (n=254)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b</td>
<td>High school grad (n=610)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c</td>
<td>Some College (n=562)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d</td>
<td>College + (n=812)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Parent of minor

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a</td>
<td>Parent (n=584)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b</td>
<td>Non-parent (n=1,667)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Urbanity

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a</td>
<td>Urban (n=721)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b</td>
<td>Suburban (n=1,090)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c</td>
<td>Rural (n=440)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Source:** Pew Research Center’s Internet & American Life Library Services Survey of 2,252 people age 16 and older conducted October 15-November 10, 2012. The survey was conducted in English and Spanish and on landline and cell phones.

**Note:** Columns marked with a superscript letter (°) or another letter indicate a statistically significant difference between that row and the row designated by that superscript letter. Statistical significance is determined inside the specific section covering each demographic trait.
Part 4: What people want from their libraries

In addition to asking people how they use their local public libraries, we also asked them about how much they felt they know about the different services and programs their library offers. We also examined how important Americans feel various library services are to their communities, and explored what sort of activities and resources people might be interested in using at libraries in the future.

How much people know about what their library offers

In general, Americans feel somewhat well-informed about the various services offered by their local libraries. While about one in five (22%) feel they are aware of “all or most” of the services and programs their public library offers, a plurality (46%) feel they just know of “some” of what their library offers. Another 20% say they know “not much” about services offered by their library, and 11% say they know “nothing at all” about what is available at their library.

Whites (23%) are more likely than Hispanics (16%) to say they know “all or some” of what their library offers, while Hispanics are more likely to say that they know “nothing at all”—21% say this, more than twice the rate among whites (9%) or blacks (11%). Women are also more likely to consider themselves well-informed of library services than men, and those with higher levels of education are more likely to say they’re aware of at least some services than those with less education. Respondents under the age of 30 are also less likely to say they know much about library services than older adults, particularly those ages 30-64.

One aspect mentioned very often, both in focus groups and in qualitative work from previous research, is that people wish they were more aware of the full range of services offered by their libraries. One focus group member loved her local library and rated it highly in all areas—except communication; “there’s so much good stuff going on but no one tells anybody.” Another said, “they do so many fabulous things, [but] they have horrible marketing.”

However, focus group members say that having resources and events listed on their library’s website wasn’t enough—as several participants pointed out, they probably weren’t going to go to the website to look for events (or even to sign up for email newsletters) unless they already knew that the library had those events. Instead, they said they usually stumbled across listings either at their library in-person, when trying to do something else online, or by seeing signage outside the library as they were driving past. One parent loved their library and described it as “unbelievable,” but said that she only heard about events when they were already in the library with their children, on their way to participate in another activity or event. This parent said that they often weren’t even aware of events until she heard the announcement that the event was about to start, when it was too late for her family to change plans.

Many of the librarians in our in-person focus groups agreed that it was difficult to reach patrons and tell them about all the services the library offered. Several said that almost every day, they will be speaking with a patron who had come in for a specific service, and would mention other services or resources and hear the patron reply, “I didn’t know that was available.”
How much do you feel like you know about the different services and programs your public library offers?

How much Americans ages 16+ feel they know about the services offered by their public library

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>All or most</th>
<th>Some</th>
<th>Not much</th>
<th>Nothing at all</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All adults 16+</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sex</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Men</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Race/ethnicity</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White, Non-Hispanic</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black, Non-Hispanic</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic*</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16-17</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18-29</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30-49</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50-64</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65+</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Household income</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than $30,000/yr</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$30,000-$49,999</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$50,000-$74,999</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$75,000+</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational attainment</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No high school diploma</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High school grad</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some College</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College +</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geographic location</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suburban</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parent</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not a parent</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Pew Research Center’s Internet & American Life Library Services Survey of 2,252 people age 16 and older conducted October 15-November 10, 2012. The survey was conducted in English and Spanish and on landline and cell phones.
What is important for libraries to offer

We asked survey respondents about a variety of services that public libraries often provide to the public, and asked them how important, if at all, they think it is for public libraries to provide each to the community. All but one of the services are considered to be “very important” by a majority of respondents.

It was particularly striking to note now is that provision of technology ranks just as high as helpful librarians and books as central to libraries’ missions.

What people think is important for libraries to offer

Among all Americans ages 16+, the percentage who say that these services and programs are “very important” or “important” for libraries to offer

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Very important</th>
<th>Somewhat important</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Librarians to help people find info</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Borrowing books</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Free access to computers and the internet</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quiet study spaces for adults and children</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Programs and classes for children and teens</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research resources such as free databases</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job/career resources</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Free events/activities</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Free public meeting spaces</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Pew Research Center Internet & American Life Project Library Services survey. October 15-November 10, 2012. N=2,252 Americans ages 16 and older. Interviews were conducted in English and Spanish and on landline and cell phones. Margin of error is +/- 2.3 percentage points for the total sample.

Programs for children and teens and research resources such as free databases are also ranked highly, as are job, employment and career resources and free activities such as classes and cultural events. Just about half (49%) of Americans think it is “very important” for libraries to provide free public meeting spaces, making it the lowest-ranked service that we asked about, although 85% of respondents say this service is “somewhat” or “very” important overall.
Blacks and Hispanics are more likely to see various library services as “very important”

Among all Americans ages 16+, the percentage who say it is “very important” for libraries to offer these services

For almost all of the resources we asked about, blacks and Hispanics are significantly more likely than whites to consider them “very important” to the community, as shown in the chart above. Women are also generally more likely than men to say these resources are “very important” (see following chart).
Women are more likely than men to see various library services as “very important”

Among all Americans ages 16+, the percentage of women and men who say it is “very important” for libraries to offer these services

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Women (%)</th>
<th>Men (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Librarians to help people</td>
<td>84%</td>
<td>77%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Borrowing books</td>
<td>84%</td>
<td>76%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Free access to computers/ internet</td>
<td>81%</td>
<td>73%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quiet study spaces</td>
<td>81%</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Programs/classes for kids</td>
<td>79%</td>
<td>68%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research resources</td>
<td>78%</td>
<td>78%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jobs/career resources</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>77%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Free events/activities</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td>71%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Free meeting spaces</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


A more detailed examination of all these services follows below.

Librarians to help people find information they need

Overall, 80% of Americans say that it is “very important” to the community for libraries to have librarians available to help people find information they need. Some 16% consider having librarians at libraries “somewhat important,” while 2% say this is “not too important” and 1% say it is “not at all important.”

Blacks (89%) are significantly more likely than whites (78%) to consider librarians “very important,” and women (84%) are more likely to say this than men (77%). Those living in households making less than $30,000 per year are also more likely to consider librarians very important compared to those living in households earning more than $75,000. Looking at responses based on device ownership, we find that
those who own technological devices such as tablets, e-readers, and smartphones are just as likely as non-users to consider librarians “very important” to the community.

Our focus groups considered librarians to be very important to libraries in general, and many had very positive memories of interactions with librarians from their childhoods. Even when they suggested automating certain services for the sake of convenience, our focus groups overwhelmingly saw a future with librarians as an integral part of libraries.

Several library staff members who participated in our online panel said that they felt patrons were not always aware of the research assistance librarians can offer. One wrote, “Often a patron will troll through the internet for hours trying to find a form or information source that I could provide them in a matter of moments.” Another librarian said that most people, including students, didn’t know about the research resources offered by the library other than books: “Most students have no idea what a database is and therefore get their information from Google, while the tremendous resources available online from our library go unknown and unused.”

Borrowing books

Overall, 80% of Americans say that it is “very important” for libraries to provide books to the community for borrowing. Another 15% consider book borrowing “somewhat important,” while 2% say this is “not too important” and 2% say it is “not at all important.”

Women (84%) are significantly more likely than men (76%) to consider book borrowing to be “very important” to the community. Adults ages 30-64 are more likely than other age groups to say this, as are those who had at least some college experience compared with those who had not attended college.

Tablet users (84%) and e-reader users (83%) are significantly more likely than Americans who do not own these devices to consider book borrowing at libraries “very important.”

Most focus group members felt that books are essential to libraries, although a few vocal opponents disagreed.

Free access to computers and the internet

As noted in Part 3 of this report, three-quarters (77%) of Americans think it is “very important” for public libraries to provide free access to computers and the internet to the community. Another 18% consider free computer and internet access “somewhat important,” while 2% say this is “not too important” and 2% say it is “not at all important.”

The vast majority of blacks (92%) and Hispanics (86%) consider the free access to computer and the internet that libraries provide “very important” to the community, making them significantly more than whites (72%) to say this. Additionally, women (81%) are more likely than men (73%) to consider this access “very important,” as are adults ages 30-64 (81%) compared with other age groups.

Smartphone users (82%) are significantly more likely than Americans who do not own these devices (72%) to consider free access to computers and the internet “very important.”

The librarian in our online panel overwhelmingly said that providing access to computers and the internet was an important service for libraries. “Our most popular area is the public access computers,” one library staff member wrote. “They are constantly full.” A rural librarian told us:
“As a public library in a poverty stricken rural community we provide the only link to the outside world through our computers. Our citizens do not have internet service or computers at home. Many do not have transportation and there is no public transportation which leaves many adults and children isolated. We, at the library, are working to develop a way to provide internet access and computers to everyone in our county.”

Many librarians emphasized that they see the role of a library as a place to enable access to information, regardless of the format. Several said that this focus on access is even more important in the digital age than before. “I believe public libraries should move away from being ‘houses of knowledge’ and move more towards being ‘houses of access.’” One wrote. “This is what the public is asking for and we are here to serve them.” Another librarian said:

“I believe libraries need to provide computers and Internet access for patrons who cannot afford these items or cannot purchase high speed Internet access in their home area. Many job applications, etc. are online now which widens the digital divide unless libraries provide this service.”

**Quiet study spaces for adults and children**

Some 76% of Americans think it is “very important” to the community for public libraries to provide quiet study spaces for adults and children. Another 19% consider quiet study spaces “somewhat important,” while 2% say they are “not too important” and 2% say they are “not at all important.”

Almost nine in ten blacks (89%) and Hispanics (86%) consider libraries’ quiet study spaces to be “very important” to the community, making them significantly more than whites (71%) to say this. Additionally, women (81%) are more likely than men (70%) to consider this resource “very important,” as are Americans who have not graduated from college (78%) compared with college graduates (69%). Adults ages 50-64 are also somewhat more likely than other age groups to consider quiet study spaces “very important,” although Americans under the age of 50 are most likely to consider these areas important overall.

Those living in urban areas (81%) are also significantly more likely than those living in suburban (73%) or rural (73%) communities to say quiet study spaces are “very important.”

Some members of the focus groups were adamant about needing areas they can use that are absolutely quiet. Others also suggested separate small conference/study rooms where you can close the door to work or have meetings. One said, “I wish there a way in which you could lock off spaces because I work remotely from home and I’d love to be able to go someplace else to work to change it up.”

**Programs and classes for children and teens**

Almost three-quarters (74%) of Americans think it is “very important” for public libraries to provide programs and classes for children and teens. Another 21% consider these programs “somewhat important,” while 2% say they are “not too important” and 2% say they are “not at all important.”

Some 92% of Hispanics and 86% of blacks consider these classes to be “very important” to the community, making them significantly more than whites (68%) to say this. Additionally, women (79%) are more likely than men (68%) to consider this resource “very important,” as are Americans in households making less than $75,000 per year (79%) compared with those in households earning more (65%).
Parents in our focus groups almost uniformly appreciated children’s programming at their local libraries. Some parents said that they would appreciate extended hours at libraries so their children could spend time there in a monitored environment; others wished there were more activities on weekends, instead of during the work day.

Many librarians in the online canvassing wrote about their experiences creating “hangout” spaces and activities for teens, citing importance of keeping teens engaged with the library as they grow older. “Interacting with children and young adults at their schools is an important aspect of encouraging these groups to use the library at a young age,” one wrote. “These groups may be more likely to use the library as adults if they are comfortable there as children.”

Finally, keeping these spaces apart from the main reading room areas of the library seemed to be an important point for many of our focus group members, as many of them complained about increased noise levels during our sessions.

**Research resources such as free databases**

Some 73% of Americans say it is “very important” for public libraries to provide research resources such as free databases to the community. One in five (20%) consider these resources “somewhat important,” while 2% say they are “not too important” and 2% say they are “not at all important.”

Blacks (84%) and Hispanics (85%) are significantly more likely than whites (69%) to say that these research resources are “very important” to the community, and women (78%) are more likely than men (68%) to say this. Those under the age of 65 are more likely than older adults to think these resources are important to the community. Americans living in urban areas (79%) are also significantly more likely than those living in suburban areas (69%) to say research resources are “very important.”

Computer users and smartphone users are just as likely as people who do not own these devices to think it is “very important” for libraries to provide research resources; however, tablet users (67%) are significantly less likely than non-users (75%) to consider these research resources “very important.”

“My experience is that we are busy, people want us more hours, but they are largely unaware of our online resources,” one library staff member in our online panel wrote. “When you share the information with them (eBooks, databases, online classes) they are excited, but unless we tell them in person they (mostly) do not know about them.”

The level of patron interest in databases seemed to vary based on the interests and needs of its patrons. Another library staff member wrote that while e-books and other digital resources were very popular with patrons, “on-line databases such as Mango and ancestry.com have not elicited much of a response at all.”

**Job, employment and career resources**

Some 67% of Americans think it is “very important” to the community for public libraries to provide job, employment and career resources. Another 22% consider these resources “somewhat important,” while 5% say they are “not too important” and 2% say they are “not at all important.”

About eight in ten blacks (83%) and Hispanics (81%) consider libraries’ career resources to be “very important” to the community, compared with about six in ten whites (61%), and women (73%) are more likely than men (60%) to say this. Those who had not completed college and those living in lower-
income households are also generally more likely to say these resources are “very important.” Additionally, Americans under the age of 65 are most likely to consider these resources important overall compared with those ages 65 and older.

Those living in urban areas (71%) are also significantly more likely than those living in suburban areas (64%) to say employment-related resources are “very important.” Finally, people who have computers, tablets, or smartphones are less likely than those who do not own these devices to consider job resources at libraries to be “very important.”

In our focus groups, awareness and use of career-related resources seems to vary widely by library, as well as by city. A few focus group members said that they relied heavily on these services in their job searches; other focus group members weren’t aware of these services at all.

Library staff members in our online panel often emphasized the importance of employment-related resources, especially for patrons who are less comfortable with technology or lack resources at home. “There are large parts of this community that have less than 20% of the population with computers at home. We have job seekers that leave the library phone as their contact,” one librarian wrote. Another said: “Many of our town residents/patrons have no internet access and, some who do, are still using a dial-up network. Offering internet access for e-mail, job searching, and personal research are a vital component to the services we provide.”

Many librarians said they felt that offering computers and other resources for job-seekers was increasingly important as technology became more vital to the job search process. “Libraries need to be able to meet the needs of the patron,” one librarian wrote, and “[in] this day and age the patron needs have become more focused on technology. This means that they may not have the ability to acquire the knowledge needed to apply for a job, write a résumé, use a computer, use applications on a computer or just use a device that they might need to help them in different areas of their life.”

**Free events and activities, such as classes and cultural events, for people of all ages**

Over six in ten Americans (63%) say it is “very important” for public libraries to provide free events and activities, such as classes and cultural events, for people of all ages. Three in ten (30%) consider these activities “somewhat important,” while 4% say they are “not too important” and 2% say they are “not at all important.”

Some 84% of blacks and 79% of Hispanics consider these events to be “very important” to the community, compared with 57% of whites. Women (71%) are also more likely than men (56%) to say this, as are those who had not completed college (67%) compared with college graduates (53%). Those living in lower-income households are also somewhat more likely to consider these activities important compared with those in higher-income households. Americans living in urban areas (71%) are also significantly more likely than those living in suburban areas (59%) to say research resources are “very important.”

Members of our focus groups appreciated the free activities offered by their local libraries—when they were aware of them. One participant valued these activities as “something that will bring you out of your house and meet your neighbors and say, ‘Hi.’” The main issue many of them cited was simply finding out about these activities in the first place. Many focus group members mentioned stumbling across a list of activities as their library only by accident, when they were on the website for another purpose.
The librarians in our online panel often said that they considered free community activities very important to the library's core mission. “The library's role in the community is shifting to that of a storage facility to a community center,” one wrote. Many said that they enjoyed partnering with other local institutions and organizations to expand the types of activities they could offer.

Many library staff members said that activities for young children and families were a core offering of their libraries. “We consistently bring in nice sized crowds for all of our storytimes, and our other afterschool programs and holiday activities also are well received,” one wrote. “We have also brought in local artists to display their works and the exhibits are always widely liked by the staff and our patrons.”

Free public meeting spaces

About half (49%) of Americans say it is “very important” to the community for public libraries to provide free public meeting spaces. Another 36% consider this “somewhat important,” while 9% say this is “not too important” and 4% say it is “not at all important.”

Blacks (61%) and Hispanics (58%) are more likely than whites (46%) to consider free public meeting spaces at libraries to be “very important” to the community, and women (55%) are more likely than men (44%) to say this. Americans who have not graduated from college (53%) are also more likely to consider this “very important” compared with college graduates (41%).

Focus group members who were involved with local organizations or more casual groups often mentioned the importance of libraries for public meeting spaces. Many librarians in our online panel whose libraries offered these meeting spaces also mentioned their popularity. “Our community loves the meeting rooms. We are booked for months in advance with the larger rooms and our ‘as available’ small study rooms are always full,” one library staff member wrote. “We just wish we had more of them!”

Public priorities for libraries

We also asked our national survey respondents, as well as our focus groups, about some different ways public libraries could change the way they serve the public, and whether or not they thought public libraries should implement these changes (if they do not offer these services already). In a separate, qualitative questionnaire aimed at public library staff members, we also asked librarians and other library workers their thoughts on these services.

In general, Americans are most adamant that libraries should devote resources to services for children; over eight in ten Americans say that libraries should “definitely” coordinate more closely with local schools in providing resources to kids (85%), and a similar number (82%) strongly support libraries offering free early literacy programs to help young children prepare for school. The services about which our national survey respondents are more ambivalent involved moving library services online and automating services (such as installing self-checkout stations). The least popular idea was moving some print books out of public locations to free up more space for things such as tech centers, reading rooms, meetings rooms, and cultural events; just one-fifth of respondents say libraries should “definitely” do this, while almost four in ten (39%) say libraries should “maybe” do this and almost as many (36%) say libraries should “definitely not” do this.

Younger Americans were more often in favor of these ideas than older adults, including having more comfortable spaces for reading, working, and relaxing, offering more interactive learning exhibits,
offering free early literacy programs, coordinating more with local schools, and moving most services online. Blacks and Hispanics were more likely than whites to support having more comfortable spaces and having separate areas for different activities, as well as moving print stacks out of public areas, offering interactive learning experiences and helping digitize patrons’ materials. Finally, those living in lower-income households were more likely than those in higher-income households to support moving print stacks out of public areas, offering interactive learning experiences, and helping digitize patrons’ materials.

What services and programs libraries should (and should not) implement

Among all Americans ages 16+, the percentage who say their library should implement the following programs:

- Coordinate more with local schools
- Free literacy programs
- Separate spaces for different services
- Have more comfortable spaces
- Offer more e-books
- Offer more interactive learning experiences
- Help users digitize material
- Move most library services online
- Make most services automated
- Move some books/stacks out of public locations

Source: Pew Research Center Internet & American Life Project Library Services survey. October 15-November 10, 2012. N=2,252 Americans ages 16 and older. Interviews were conducted in English and Spanish and on landline and cell phones.

When we asked the library staff members in our online panel for their thoughts on these services and programs, many said that their library had either already implemented or should definitely implement many of them in the future. The programs that were most popular with these librarians were: having separate locations for different activities, offering free early literacy programs, coordinating with local schools, and having comfortable spaces for reading, working, or relaxing at the library. Many also said that they were eager to offer a broader selection of e-books for check-out.

Some of the resources garnered more lukewarm support; most librarians said they do not currently offer interactive learning experiences or resources for digitizing patrons’ own materials, but many said only that their libraries should “maybe” offer them in the future. Our library staff respondents were also ambivalent about moving most library services online and making most services automated. The least popular idea overall was moving print books out of public locations to free up space for other activities.
The following subsections explore librarians’ responses in further detail, but many described the various factors they take into account when thinking about what services they should offer, such as the specific needs of the communities they serve, budgets and staff time, and staff members’ experience with new technologies. While each response was unique, the following quote from a library staff member touches on many of the issues that librarians said they consider:

“We attempt to meet the needs of our community. Due to the fact that the needs of the community are very diverse, our services are also diverse. We have made room for many activities at the library such as tutoring, meetings, family gatherings such as wedding showers, study space or just a space to hang out. We have also become mindful of different learning styles and now offer hands-on learners interactive exhibits and developmentally disabled individuals a special needs storytime. We offer equipment to help with digitizing materials but do not have enough staff to help everyone with their project, although when time allows we do often get pulled into the process and help to get people started. ... Print books are still very popular with older patrons and those who are financially challenged. Electronic materials are certainly a great addition to our collection but, because not everyone has internet access at home or can afford to buy an e-reader or tablet computer, we cannot abandon the print materials. Again, we serve a diverse community.”

Here is a more detailed analysis of the different services different groups would like to see implemented at libraries.

Coordinate more closely with local schools in providing resources to kids

Overall, 85% of respondents say that libraries should “definitely” coordinate more closely with local schools in providing resources to kids. Some 11% say libraries should “maybe” do this, and 2% say libraries should “definitely not” do this.

Americans ages 16-64 are significantly more likely than older adults to express strong support for this idea, as are those who live in urban or suburban areas compared with those living in rural areas.

Focus group members were very much in support of this idea. Many said that they would love to see libraries offer resources such as homework help and tutoring, as well as afterschool study programs. Some participants said that they wished their library had enough copies of the books assigned to their children as readings in class, especially when the school library only has a few copies that are quickly checked out.

Most of the librarians in our online panel either said that their library was already doing this, or should definitely do this in the future. “I think libraries should work very closely with area schools in an effort to enable kids to successfully complete their homework and research projects,” a library staff member wrote. “I am aware that some libraries already have collaborative relationships established with their school districts. I would very much like to do that with my local school district.”

However, many said that doing so was often complicated, as one librarian pointed out: “Coordinating with schools is a two-way street that takes time and persistence to build.” Another wrote:

“Although we should definitely work more closely with our public schools, it’s virtually impossible as their jammed schedules leave almost no time for outside agencies to work in the schools. I think our niche is the early literacy market from birth to Kindergarten—whether it’s working with individual families, daycares, or preschools. One branch [in our system] has been
most successful by taking storytimes to daycares and working with the youngest populations. The result has been that the older children now come to storytime at the library as they can walk to and from the event.”

**Offer free early literacy programs to help young children prepare for school**

Another popular service was free early literacy programs to help young children prepare for school, which 82% of respondents say that libraries should “definitely” offer. Another 14% say libraries should “maybe” do this, and 3% say libraries should “definitely not” do this.

Adults ages 65 and older are significantly less likely than younger Americans to say that libraries should “definitely” do this, with 69% of this oldest age group expressing strong support (compared with more than eight in ten younger respondents). Those who had not completed high school are also generally more likely to express strong support for this idea. Finally, those who live in urban areas are significantly more likely to say that libraries should “definitely” do this than those in suburban or rural areas.

Many librarians in our online panel said that their libraries already offer early literacy programs and considered them a core part of their library’s mission. “Libraries have been, and always been, important to childhood literacy/education,” one wrote, adding that “they need to expand traditional storytimes to incorporate interactive learning experiences, virtual experiences for kids and teens.”

However, the librarians whose libraries who do not currently offer early literacy programs were sometimes unsure as to whether this was a service they should clearly offer. “Although I think libraries should work with schools and early literacy programs, I think there should be specially trained individuals in those roles,” another library staff member wrote.

**Have completely separate locations or spaces for different services**

A majority (61%) of Americans say that libraries should “definitely” have completely separate locations or spaces for different services, such as children’s services, computer labs, reading spaces, and meeting rooms. Some 27% say libraries should “maybe” do this, and 9% say libraries should “definitely not” do this.

There are few differences between different demographic groups in support for this idea, although blacks and Hispanics are more likely to express strong support for this idea than whites.

A common sentiment in the focus groups was the need to keep children’s areas, teen hangout spaces, and computer-centric areas separate from the main reading or lounge areas, to keep noise levels and other distractions down to a minimum. Many librarians in our online panel agreed, “When possible I think that it works well to keep the computer, group meeting, and children’s area noise away from the quieter reading areas,” one said. “Staff and [patrons] both seem to appreciate this.”

Others have seen drastic changes: “We moved our teen library away from our adult patrons and it has made a world of difference. The teens behavior has gotten so much better we no longer need a security guard at the library.”

Many of the library staff members in our online panel said that their libraries already have separate locations for different services, although those who do not currently offer it were split on whether their library should definitely do this or should only “maybe” do this. Those who said their library was less likely to do this often cited issues of space, or funding; one pointed out that “in small libraries, often
operated by a single staff member, separate spaces cannot be for reasons of security or even customer service.”

Have more comfortable spaces for reading, working, and relaxing at the library

More than half (59%) of Americans say that libraries should “definitely” create more comfortable spaces for reading, working, and relaxing at the library. Some 28% say libraries should “maybe” do this, and 9% say libraries should “definitely not” do this.

Women are significantly more likely than men to express strong support for this idea, and blacks and Hispanics are more likely to express strong support than whites. This idea was also more popular with those under age 50 than with older adults.

In our focus groups, we asked participants to think about what their ideal library would look like. Many participants said that while they wanted a quiet space in the library, they wanted one that’s not too quiet. They described having a comfortable place where they could focus and get work done, but also feel like a part of their community; where “even if you’re by yourself, you don’t feel like you’re by yourself,” as one participant put it. Many described a sort of “coffeeshop” feel or “living room atmosphere,” but without feeling like they need to buy anything or leave in a certain amount of time—“a safe and affordable hangout location,” where they could mingle with other people if they wanted to, but can do their own thing if not. (One focus group member said a library should be “like home room for your community.”)

This idea was very popular with the librarians in our online panel, with most saying either that their library should definitely do this in the future, or that it was already doing this:

“Sometimes people just need a place to go to escape from their hectic lives. What if we could melt together Starbucks, Barnes & Noble, Amazon, Redbox, and the gym together? A place where the majority of the population could say they use on a weekly, if not daily, basis.”

“I also think libraries should be less institutional and more inviting and comfortable,” one wrote. “Introducing a variety of reading and studying seating options acknowledges that one style doesn’t suit everyone,” another added.

Offer a broader selection of e-books

About half of Americans (53%) say that libraries should “definitely” offer a broader selection of e-books. Some 30% say libraries should “maybe” do this, and 5% say libraries should “definitely not” do this.

Recent reports by Pew Internet have examined some of the issues involved in e-book adoption at libraries, and have found that most Americans (57%) are unaware if their library lends out e-books or not; among recent library users, 5% borrow e-books.3

In the past year, the percentage of Americans who read e-books increased from 16% of all those ages 16 and older to 23% as of November 2012. Among these e-book borrowers, the most common complaints

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as of December 2011 are a lack of titles (56% of e-book borrowers say they have encountered this) and long waiting lists (52%).

This idea was significantly more popular with adults ages 18-64 compared with those 65 and older, and those with at least some college experience are generally more likely to express strong support for this idea than those who had not attended college.

Technology users in general are more likely than those who do not own various devices to say that libraries should “definitely” expand their e-book selections. Some 68% of e-reader owners expressed strong support for this idea, compared with 50% of non-owners; tablet owners (63%), smartphone users (62%), and those who own a desktop or laptop computer (55%) are also more likely to say libraries should do this.

Many librarians in our online panel said that their library should definitely offer a broader selection of e-books. They often cited a lack of funds and restrictions from publishers as their main impediments, and the balance of trying to provide e-books for their tech-savvy patrons while still providing print and audiobooks for those who prefer print.

**Offer more interactive learning experiences similar to museum exhibits**

Overall, 47% of Americans say that libraries should “definitely” offer more interactive learning experiences similar to museum exhibits. Some 38% say libraries should “maybe” do this, and 12% say libraries should “definitely not” do this.

This idea was significantly more popular with blacks (66%) and Hispanics (62%) than with whites (40%), and those under age 50 are more likely to express strong support than older adults. Interactive learning experiences are significantly more popular with those who had not completed college compared with college graduates, as well as those in lower-income households compared with those at higher income levels. Finally, those who live in urban areas are significantly more likely to express strong support for this idea than those in suburban or rural areas.

Few of the librarians in our online panel said that their library already offered interactive learning experiences, and the rest were lukewarm on whether they should in the future. Many were intrigued by the idea, but said that a lack of space and resources were the main reasons they don’t currently offer interactive exhibits. “We don’t have the space or time to produce interactive learning experiences in our library, though in the future they may be a way to draw people into the building,” one wrote.

Ultimately, there was no clear consensus from our online panel. Some felt that expanding the offerings of the library was a vital innovation for the future. “Interactive experiences are key for libraries moving forward,” one librarian wrote. “We need to provide opportunities for the community to gather and interact. We also need to meet patrons where they are – online or in the community. Embedding with community groups is crucial to sharing information about library resources and to collaborate on programs that benefit the community.”

Others felt that interactive exhibits were the province of museums, not libraries—although some felt that a partnership might be worthwhile: “I think rather than always offering the interactive learning

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experiences and programs, libraries could do a better job partnering with groups offering services in the communities. Be a presence outside of the library.

However, some library staff weren’t convinced that interactives had a place at the library. “I was torn about the interactive experiences,” another library staff member said. “In some ways that sounds nice, but I’m not really sure how that would work out in reality. I think it is important that libraries be an oasis for quiet thought.” Another librarian was more blunt: “Interactive exhibits would be counter-productive to the quiet atmosphere for which we strive.”

Help users digitize material such as family photos or historical documents

Some 43% of Americans think that libraries should “definitely” help patrons digitize material such as family photos or historical documents. Some 39% say libraries should “maybe” do this, and 14% say libraries should “definitely not” do this.

This idea was also more popular with blacks (56%) and Hispanics (62%) compared with whites (39%). Adults ages 30-64 are also more likely to express strong support for this idea than adults over the age of 65. Finally, this idea was significantly more popular with those who had not completed college compared with college graduates, as well as with those in lower-income households compared with those at higher income levels.

Many library staff members in our online panel said that their library should “maybe” do this, but had no strong feelings. Along with offering more museum-like interactive learning experiences, this potential service had the fewest number of librarians saying that their library already offers this. One of the main concerns was that library staff would have to spend a significant portion of their time helping patrons use the hardware—at a time when many librarians already say that they are spending much of their time helping patrons with other “tech support”-type questions. One librarian wrote, “While I think that helping patrons digitize materials might be an interesting idea, I think that it would eat up valuable time for librarians and other staff. I think a class TEACHING these skills might work out better than just providing scanners and assuming patrons know how to use them, or helping patrons use them individually. If we added scanners, I am pretty sure that most of my day would be helping patrons with that one thing.”

Move most library services online so users can access them without having to visit the library

About four in ten Americans (42%) say that libraries should “definitely” move most library services online so users can access them without having to visit the library. Another 34% say libraries should “maybe” do this, and almost one in five (19%) say libraries should “definitely not” do this.

Looking at respondents by community type, we find that those living in urban areas (52%) are most likely to say that libraries should “definitely” do this, significantly more likely than those living in suburban areas (40%), while those living in rural areas (31%) are the least likely to say this. Additionally, Hispanics (58%) are significantly more likely than whites (38%) to express a strong preference for this idea.

Focus group members had mixed thoughts on this idea. On the one hand, many said that they would like to be able to do more online, or have more self-service options in the library. On the other hand, many participants also said that they really missed the personal connection they had with librarians when they are children, and wished they had that sort of relationship with their library now—that their librarians
knew them well enough to recommend books, library services, or other resources to them, based on their interests and family needs. One focus group member said that she “always” asks her librarians for book recommendations:

[My daughter’s] really into pirates right now or whatever … I don’t have time to look around. I got two screaming kids. [Laughter] [I say] “Help me find something quick” and they can always think of something.

Another focus groups member said that she found it easier to reserve books online because she has difficulty finding them in the library otherwise: “I just go online and I reserve [the book] and then I just pick it up. If I have to go inside and do the Dewey Decimal System or whatever, the card numbers—it’s so frustrating.”

Overall, some focus group participants saw the library as a destination (a place to take the family for an afternoon, for instance), and others see it as a resource (a place to get books and other items). Others said that their library used changed throughout the year, or at different points in their lives—they might like to spend hours there in the summer, when the kids are out of school, but may be busier during the school year and only able to stop by to pick up and drop off books.

These thoughts were echoed by members of our librarian panel, who were generally ambivalent about the prospect of moving most library services online. “I do not think it is critical to move everything online,” one said. “Most people come to the library because they want to be in the physical location. They may access some things online. But many of our patrons enjoy the experience of coming to the library for programs and social interaction.”

Another librarian pointed out that “moving most services online would not serve people who 1) do not have easy access to a computer or the Internet, 2) need assistance using particular services, 3) like to interact with library staff on a regular basis. We are not just service centers, we are also community centers.”

**Make most services automated**

About four in ten Americans (41%) say that libraries should “definitely” make most services automated, so people can find what they need and check out material on their own without help from staff. Some 36% say libraries should “maybe” do this, and one in five (20%) say libraries should “definitely not” do this. Those with no family/childhood library experience are significantly more likely to say that libraries should definitely do this (51% vs. 37%).

Again, many of the members of our online librarian panel did not generally view automating most services as a useful path. One library staff member wrote:

“We have discussed automated check out with our patrons, and they have a fierce dislike of the idea. Not because they fear technology—they are very literate and up to date on all things electronic—but because they cherish the interaction with a real live person at the desk and they love being greeted by name. One patron said ‘I am so tired of being anonymous everywhere else… here I feel welcome and wanted every time I come in the door.’ We don’t want to lose that personal connection with our patrons!”

“Automated services means worse services,” another librarian wrote, and echoed the issues cited by members of our in-person patron focus groups: “If we are not there to chat as books get checked in or
out, we miss an opportunity to give patrons information they might not know, to recommend books (etc.) based on what they are reading, to answer questions as they naturally arise during conversation.”

Yet while few (if any) of the librarians felt that most services should be automated, some staff members whose libraries had already implemented some automated services found that they served as a useful option for busier patrons. One noted that families with small children in particular appreciated of the self-checkout option: “The children feel a sense of accomplishment when they do their own books through the scanner. Older patrons, however, like the personal service provided at the circulation desk by our clerks.”

Some librarians noted that for patrons, it was often a matter of preference. “It's important to have both [self check-out and staff assistance], providing people service at the level they choose,” one wrote. Another librarian felt that more resistance had some from the staff than patrons:

“We offer self-checkout and an automated payment center. People (like me) who prefer to pump their own gas love the self-service kiosks. Even though I explained to staff that self-checkout is primarily a privacy option for users, and that no staff cuts are planned, some are reluctant to encourage use of the kiosks, even when people are lined up waiting for service.”

Others found that while self-service options can be helpful, automated systems can bring their own headaches:

“Our library has self checkout machines at each location and the staff and public have a love-hate relationship with them for a variety of reasons (e.g. they break down, problems with patron's cards send them to the circulation desk, etc.). We encourage their use and there are still lines at the checkout desks.”

Ultimately, this issue seems to depend heavily on the wants and needs of the library’s community, as another librarian discussed:

“Our community is heavily weighted toward retirees who are struggling with the new technologies. Over 50% of our children in our schools qualify for free and reduced lunch, so assuming that they have access to the Internet at home is not a good idea. We would be doing a great disservice to our library users if we fully automated or provided most of our materials online. As our digital natives age then it would make sense to provide services in formats that are usable by them.”

The main goal that many librarians in our online panel expressed is simply to balance the needs of busy patrons with the personal connection they want from their library:

“We have added self-check stations, and the patrons love them. We offer remote access to some materials, and both staff and patrons love the convenience. We are in the process of launching a major e-books collection, and the patrons are clamoring for it. That said, we find that patrons continue to see our library as destination, and they seek out our staff because of the service we offer and deliver. They tell us that themselves, and the traffic in our library confirms it.”
Move some print books and stacks out of public locations to free up more space

Just one in five Americans (20%) say that libraries should “definitely” move some print books and stacks out of public locations to free up more space for things such as tech centers, reading rooms, meeting rooms, and cultural events. Meanwhile, almost four in ten (39%) say libraries should “maybe” do this, and almost as many (36%) say libraries should “definitely not” do this.

People who do not own a desktop or laptop computer are significantly more likely than those who do not own a home computer to say that this is something libraries should “definitely” do (27% vs. 19%), while computer owners are more likely to say that this is something libraries should “definitely not” do (38% vs. 26%).

The librarians in our online panel expressed the least amount of support for this idea overall, and many said that their library was very unlikely to do this. Others whose libraries had tried to move books out the main areas had encountered mixed results. One librarian wrote:

“We’ve gotten rid of a large part of our print collection to make room for a middle school teen area which has caused consternation among both staff (who are now babysitters) and adult patrons (many of whom are avoiding us because of the noise and constant interaction between teens and police). We installed a coffee machine which (after many spills on both the carpeting and keyboards) was finally removed. We purchased video games and within one month, 80% were stolen. In sum, staff is stressed and patrons complain about the lack of print materials and quiet study space.”

Others encountered strong pushback from their patrons:

“The community was in an uproar about moving stacks out of public locations because they were not consulted, and it was not communicated to them that the technology that would allow them to continue to ‘browse’ the shelves electronically and quickly and easily request retrieval of materials.”

But other library staff members said their libraries were very successful in freeing up space for other services. “We have removed an area of stacks to make a place for a teen lounge,” one librarian wrote. “Everyone thinks it is a great idea.” Another said:

“We have removed most of our print reference collections to make room for seating and display space without receiving a single complaint from the public. I think some of the staff were originally skeptical but are on board now. We don’t have space to waste on things people don’t use. It’s not about us—it’s about the community.”
The new services people say they would (or would not) use

In addition to asking people for their preferences on some new library services, we also asked respondents whether they would themselves use a variety of possible new activities and features at libraries. Our list was weighted towards services that are rooted in technology and allow more tech-related interactions with libraries and at them.

How likely Americans say they would be to use various library services

_Among all Americans ages 16+, the percentage who say they are likely – or not – to use the following library services and activities_

- An online research service ("ask a librarian")
- Cell app to use/view library services
- Program to try out new tech devices/apps
- Cell GPS app that helps locate material inside library
- Library kiosks in community to check out books, movies
- Personalized accounts that give book recommendations
- Classes on how to download library e-books
- E-book readers loaded books you want to read
- Digital media lab to create/upload new content like movies or e-books
- Instruction on how to use e-book reading devices

Source: Pew Research Center Internet & American Life Project Library Services Survey. October 15-November 10, 2012. N=2,252 Americans ages 16 and older. Interviews were conducted in English and Spanish and on landline and cell phones. Margin of error is +/- 2.3 percentage points for the total sample.

The results were mixed in several senses. There was no overwhelming public clamor for any of the activities. Still, there was fairly consistent interest in them and there was a notable segment of population – a quarter or more of respondents – who said they would definitely use each of the activities we queried and most times more than half the public said it was at least somewhat likely to take advantage of these new services. Many of those who responded to this battery of questions picked different types of services that they would prefer – in other words, there was only modest share of respondents who said they would “very likely” use each and every one of the news services that we queried.
Overall, blacks and Hispanics are significantly more likely than whites to be interested in all of the services we asked about. Older adults, especially those ages 65 and older, are the least likely age group to express an interest in any of these services. Respondents with the lowest levels of education and living in households making less than $30,000 per year are also often more likely to express a strong interest in these services than more educated respondents or those living in higher-income households. Looking at differences in responses by community type, we find that urban residents expressed more interest in many services, such as library kiosks, digital media labs and library-related cell phone apps, than suburban and rural residents.

Blacks and Hispanics are more likely to say they would use the following library services

*Among all Americans ages 16+, the percentage who say they would be “very likely” to use these services at their library*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service Description</th>
<th>Whites</th>
<th>Blacks</th>
<th>Hispanics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cell app that allows you to use library services</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>57%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>An online research service where you could ask questions of librarians</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program that allowed people to try out new tech devices/apps</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classes on how to download library e-books</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>49%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kiosks/“redboxes” throughout community to check out books/movies</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Media lab to create/upload new digital content like movies, your e-books</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E-book readers loaded books you want to read</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cell GPS app that helps you locate material inside library</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instruction on how to use e-book reading devices</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Customized online recommendations based on your past library activity</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source:* Pew Research Center Internet & American Life Project Library Services Survey. October 15-November 10, 2012. N=2,252 Americans ages 16 and older. Split sample for these activities. N for whites= 790 in Form A and 782 in Form B. N for blacks=126 in Form A and 117 in Form B. N for Hispanics=138 in Form A and 139 in Form B. Interviews were conducted in English and Spanish and on landline and cell phones.

Additionally, those who say they know the least about the services at their local library were as likely as those who say they know the most to say they would be “very likely” to use many of these resources,
including classes on e-borrowing, digital media labs, an online research service, and the device try-out program.

When we asked the library staff members in our online panel about these services, and the three that were most popular were classes on e-borrowing, classes on how to use handheld reading devices, and online “ask a librarian” research services. In fact, many librarians said that their libraries were already offering these resources in various forms, due to demand from their communities. However, our librarian panel had mixed views on cell phone apps that would allow patrons to access library resources, a gadget “petting zoo” that would allow patrons to try out new devices, and pre-loaded e-readers that would be available for check-out. The main issue with all three of these potential services was having the cost and resources required to not only launch these initiatives, but keep them sufficiently up-to-date. There were also worries that pre-loaded e-readers available for check-out could be broken or stolen. The librarians also had mixed thoughts about offering personalized online accounts that could generate reading recommendations based on a patrons’ previous activity, generally due to the privacy issues that such a service could raise.

Our librarian panel was most ambivalent about offering a cell phone app with GPS and library kiosks located around the community, with both seen as expensive and irrelevant for all but the largest libraries or communities. Digital media labs were the least popular potential service that we asked about; few already had these at their libraries, and while many librarians said they might be interested in offering these labs, they also foresaw issues such as the high costs of technological resources, a lack of staff time or expertise, and a lack of interest in their communities.

Ultimately, as one library staff member wrote in our online panel, “every library is different and what works some places doesn’t work others.”

An online research service where you could pose questions and get responses from librarians

Almost three-quarters (73%) of respondents say they would be interested in an “Ask a Librarian” online research service, where they could pose questions and get responses from librarians; some 37% say they would be “very likely” to use this type of resource.

Some 87% of blacks and 88% of Hispanics expressed an interest in this resource, compared with 67% of whites, and over half of blacks and Hispanics say they would be “very likely” to use an online research service. At least three-quarters of Americans under age 65 expressed an interest in this resource, compared with 55% of those ages 65 and older.

Additionally, smartphone owners are more likely than non-owners to express an interest in this service overall; some 79% of smartphone users say they would be “likely” or “very likely” to use this service, compared with 68% of non-owners.

It seemed as though the libraries in our online panel either already offered this service (about half of the librarians said this), or were unlikely to do so in the future. The response from those who have already implemented this type of service was generally positive:

“People love our Ask a Librarian service and our one on one appointments. We only have a few minutes to spend with people in the call center or on the service floor, so when they need help
with e-books or research, we set them up with a librarian with good skills in that area for up to an hour. They really get their questions answered that way. “

However, others had more mixed experiences. “We used to participate in an 24/7 [online research] program,” one librarian wrote. “At first it was at no charge to us, then we were charged a relatively high fee, and then we dropped out. Very few of our patrons were taking advantage of it—not a good use of our scarce funds.” Another librarian also had less-than-positive experiences with the service: “It seemed to be used more by pranksters, than patrons, mundane questions such as library hours, late fees, information readily available on our webpage. It's been discontinued.”

For other libraries, it was simply a matter of staff time: “The online research with live librarians seems unlikely for our system because I don't think we have the staff and availability to guarantee that a librarian would always be available at a station to immediately respond to online live queries.”

A program that allowed people to try out the newest tech devices or applications

Overall, 69% of respondents say they would be interested in a “technology petting zoo” program that allowed people to try out the newest tech devices or applications; some 35% say they would be “very likely” to use such a service.

Over half of blacks (51%) and Hispanics (58%) expressed a strong interest in this resource, compared with 28% of whites. Urban residents (39%) are more likely than rural (29%) residents to express a strong interest in this service. Americans under age 65 are also more likely than those 65 and older to say they would be likely to use such a resource.

Perhaps unsurprisingly, Americans who already own gadgets such as tablets and smartphones are significantly more likely than those who do not own these devices to indicate a strong interest in this service. Some 41% of tablet owners say they would be “very likely” to use this service (vs. 33% of non-owners), as did 39% of smartphone owners (vs. 32% of non-owners).

Many of the librarians in our online panel said that their libraries already offered opportunities for patrons to try out new devices, and that the try-out programs had been well-received overall. “We have held "petting zoos" for new technology, particularly for e-readers and tablets,” one wrote. “They are well-attended but it is a struggle to keep up with the absolute latest offerings.” Another said:

“Staff and patrons were grateful for ‘petting zoo’ programs with e-readers and tablets. It helped patrons decide which device, if any, they wanted to purchase. Both patrons and staff were grateful to handle the devices our patrons use, so we can be more helpful when patrons ask about them.”

Another librarian said that the program was popular, but the devices would soon be out-of-date: “It's expensive to stay up with all of the new gadgets, so I see us transitioning this program—perhaps to more of a crowdsourced technology petting zoo where community members are invited to bring in their devices and share with each other.”

Many of the librarians who said their libraries did not offer this service were not sure that they would be able to offer it in the near future. “It would be great to offer a ‘petting zoo’ for new devices or apps, but small rural branch libraries do not have the staffing to make it work,” one librarian said. Another library staff member said that a tech try-out program would not be a prudent use of the library’s funds: “A
A program that allowed patrons to try out the newest tech devices or applications is unlikely, for budgetary reasons, and because not all tech is library related.

**Personalized online accounts that give you customized recommendations for books and services based on your past library activity**

Overall, 64% of respondents say they would be interested in personalized online accounts that provide customized recommendations for books and services based on their past library activity, similar to the recommendations offered by commercial sites like Amazon; some 29% say they would be “very likely” to use a service with customized book recommendations.

In general, blacks (73%) and Hispanics (77%) are both significantly more likely than whites (58%) to express interest in this service, and Americans under age 65 are also more likely than those 65 and over to be interested. Women (68%) are significantly more likely than men (59%) to express interest in this service. Urban residents (30%) and suburban residents (31%) are also significantly more likely than rural residents (20%) to say they would be “very likely” to use this resource.

Americans who use technological devices (including cell phones or computers) are more likely than those who do not own these devices to express a strong interest in this resource, including 37% of e-reader owners, 35% of tablet owners, and 34% of smartphone owners.

Many focus group members were very enthusiastic about the idea of personalized book recommendations, and idea that had also been frequently mentioned by e-book borrowers from a previous online panel. However, many of the librarians who answered our online questionnaire expressed hesitation due to privacy issues. “Personalized accounts sound great but the idea of tracking patrons use and having that data on file seems like an invasion of privacy in many ways,” one library staff member wrote. Another agreed: “We are never going to offer customized recommendations based on past library activity because we don't keep that information. It's a major breach of privacy.”

One way that some libraries have tried in order offer this service is with a voluntary, opt-in system. Some librarians reported success with these services, while others were considering trying them:

> “Customized recommendations also mean retaining records of what patrons have checked out in the past, which we do not currently do because of privacy issues. We are heading towards a system where patrons can ‘opt in’ to have their borrowing record available, but the default will still be to not retain.”

Some libraries also use more general lists of recommendations that they send out to patrons via email or post on their websites. One wrote, “We have ‘personalized accounts’ and would like to expand to specific reading suggestions. For now we use the web page to try to get the word out on good new reads.”

Yet for many of the librarians in our online panel, the best solution for now is to use external sites and third-party book communities that are not connected to patrons’ library records. Library staff members mentioned directing patrons to sites such as Goodreads, BookPsychic, or NoveList Plus. “Our patrons can use Destiny Quest to make recommendations to each other and receive recommendations based on their check-out history,” one librarian wrote, but noted that “very few patrons make use of this service. Most don't know it is available.”
A cell phone app that allows you to access and use library services from your phone and see what programs the library offers

Overall, 63% of respondents say they would be likely to use a library app that would allow them to access and use library services from their phone; some 35% say they would be “very likely” to use such an app, including 45% of smartphone owners and 41% of tablet owners.

Some 57% of blacks say they would be “very likely” to use a library app, significantly more than Hispanics (43%) or whites (29%); overall, about three-quarters of blacks and Hispanics are interested in using a library app, compared with 58% of whites. Urban residents (42%) are significantly more likely than suburban residents (34%) to say they would be “very likely” to use this service, while rural residents (25%) are the least likely to say this. Respondents under age 50 are also more likely than older adults to be interested in an app.

While some of the librarian in our online panel said that their libraries already offered an app for patrons, others said they were unsure as to whether their library would have the resources to create one.

For the libraries that already have an app, many of the responses from patrons were extremely positive. One librarian wrote, “Our library app has been out for two months and it's received rave reviews from the public.” Another said, “The implementation of a cell phone app has generated a great positive response. Those who already rely on cell phones for everything love it.”

Other librarians said that their libraries’ apps were not always so well-received by patrons, especially those who were not entirely comfortable with newer technologies:

“Our ILS recently upgraded and has an app so patrons can browse the catalog on their mobile devices, but the app is a bit cumbersome and I don't see many people using it until the bugs are gone. Moreover, this community is more apt to remember glitches than successes so are resistant to technology.”

As with many other library services, some librarians found that the difficult part was simply getting the word out to the public that the app existed. “A patron asked that we develop the app for her cell phone to access our system,” one wrote. “I was delighted to tell her that it was already available, and then gave her the information on downloading it. However, most of our patrons do not know that this app is available.”

Library kiosks located throughout the community where people can check out books, movies or music without having to go to the library itself

Overall, 63% of respondents say they would be likely to use library kiosks located throughout the community where people can check out books, movies or music, similar to Redbox’s DVD rental service; some 33% say they would be “very likely” to use such kiosks.

Blacks (46%) and Hispanics (43%) are significantly more likely than whites (29%) to say that they would be “very likely” to use remote kiosks. Urban residents (43%) are significantly more than suburban residents (29%) and rural residents (25%) to say they would be “very likely” to use library kiosks. Respondents under age 50 are also significantly more likely than older adults to express strong interest. There are no clear patterns by household income or level of education.
Few of the library staff members in our online panel said that their library currently offered this, and most said they were not particularly likely to offer this resource in the future. Many said that kiosks were not relevant to their community. “Our library is least likely to have kiosks throughout our community,” one wrote. “This is because the smaller size of our city and our county does not necessarily need this based on the locations of already existing libraries and branches.” Another wrote:

“Library kiosks are expensive, and they require a time commitment to maintain them. We don't have the budget or the personnel to implement them. Also, I don't know where we would put them—the only place I can think of that's a common enough destination is the supermarket, and I don't think they have the space there. Add all that to the fact that I've never heard of any patron interest in such a program, and I highly doubt it’s something we’ll ever start.”

Some librarians said their libraries had tried kiosks, with some positive results. “We have several library kiosks with computers only,” one said. “This allows people to put holds on books to be delivered by bookmobile or to be mailed. It also gives the people access to our databases and to the internet.” However, another said that their library's kiosk “has been plagued with problems, both software bugs and physical malfunctions, to the point where it is unusable to much of the public.”

Finally, other librarians expressed interest in kiosks, especially for their busier patrons. “Self check-out kiosks are something we are very interested in trying, as many patrons have indicated that they don't need or want staff interaction, or who may be in a hurry,” one librarian told us. Ultimately, however, many said that they simply lacked the funds:

“While I like the idea of library kiosks, it's really a matter of resources and priorities. If I could get a well-funded multi-year grant to fund such a thing, I'd do it, but I don't see that happening. I feel like I'll have more long-term success investing in the building at this point.”

**A cell phone app that helps you locate material within the library by guiding you with GPS**

Overall, 62% of respondents say they would be interested in a GPS-driven cell phone app that helps patrons easily locate material within the library; some 34% say they would be “very likely” to take this type of class, including 45% of smartphone owners and 41% of tablet owners.

Blacks (43%) and Hispanics (55%) are more likely to express strong interest in a location-drive app than whites (28%), and respondents under the age of 50 are more likely than older adults to express a strong interest as well. Urban residents (40%) and suburban residents (33%) are also significantly more than rural residents (24%) to say they would be “very likely” to use this service.

Many members of our focus groups said they often had trouble finding their way around, and wished they had a way to avoid getting lost in their libraries. However, the librarians in our online panel said that a GPS-based library app was unlikely to be a solution. “The library is too small, and there is trouble getting both wireless and cell signals throughout the entire building,” one explained. “Trying to use GPS would just be more confusing then helpful for many people.” Many of the librarians felt that their library was simply too small for a GPS app to be useful; “we simply don’t have a large enough facility for that to be a concern, and even in a new, larger building, I don’t see it being an issue,” another said.

One librarian was in favor of general wandering: “Sometimes, I think we are looking at technology as panacea for everything...is a GPS in the actual library necessary? Can't there be value in wondering around or even in being lost in a library?”
E-book readers already loaded with the book you want to read

Overall, 58% of respondents say they would be likely to check out pre-loaded e-readers if their library offered them; some 26% say they would be “very likely” to take advantage of this service.

About four in ten blacks and Hispanics say they would be “very” likely to check out pre-loaded e-readers, compared with one in five whites. Americans who had not completed high school and those living in households making less than $30,000 per year are also more likely than other groups to express a strong interest in this service. Respondents ages 65 and older are the least likely to be interested in service—just about four in ten say they would be likely to use pre-loaded e-readers, overall; meanwhile, previous research has shown that Americans ages 16-17 who don’t already borrow e-books are significantly more likely than older non-borrowers to be interested in this service, although the sample size was too small in this survey to report those numbers for the general population.

Interestingly, people who already own e-readers (29%) are just as likely as non-owners (25%) to express a strong interest in this service, and smartphone owners (29%) are more likely than non-owners (23%) to say they would be “very likely” to use this service.

The librarians in our online panel had mixed reactions to the idea of lending out pre-loaded e-readers. Some said that their libraries already offer this service, with a very positive patron response. Others who are considering offering pre-loaded e-readers are worried about theft or damage, as well as potential copyright issues.

One librarian’s library has e-readers loaded with titles from particular genres, and has found that “the staff and public love them.” Another’s library uses a different method: “Our service allows the patron to select the books they want from our collection. We load the titles onto a device we provide. Loan period is three weeks. Patrons love it!” Other libraries use e-readers to deal with high-demand books, such as bestsellers and book club selections:

“We have preloaded Nooks available for the patrons, and they have become very popular. We started with a few and have had to purchase more Nooks because the demand for them is so high. We put the newest titles on the Nooks. When all copies of a particular hot title are out, we refer people to the Nooks, that way they can read a book that they would have had to wait for, and at the same time they are using an e-reader for the first time.”

However, many of the librarians whose libraries don’t currently lend e-readers are skeptical. One described it as “a copyright nightmare.” Another wrote, “I don’t support the concept of preloaded e-readers since the policies are murky at best as far as public lending goes. The library board also chooses not to lend higher priced equipment in order to avoid potential liability and loss.”

Another library staff member wrote that their library is focusing on other e-book avenues for now: “We have explored the idea of circulating pre-loaded e-readers but rejected it in favor of adding more e-content for our budget dollars since ours is an affluent and electronically sophisticated community.”

A digital media lab where you could create and upload new digital content like movies or your own e-books

Overall, 58% of respondents say they would be interested in a digital media lab where patrons could create and upload new digital content; some 26% say they would be “very likely” to use such a resource.
Though just 18% of whites expressed a strong interest in a digital media lab, 45% of blacks and 44% of Hispanics say they would be “very likely” to use one. Additionally, about a third (32%) of adults 65 and older say they would be likely to use such a lab overall, compared with over half of younger respondents. Finally, urban residents (65%) are more likely than suburban (57%) and rural (48%) residents to express an interest in this service overall.

Both Americans who do not have a computer and Americans who do own a tablet expressed particularly strong interest in this resource. Almost a third (32%) of people who do not own a desktop or laptop computer say they would be “very likely” to use a digital media lab, compared with 24% of those who do own a computer, and 33% of tablet users say they would be very likely to use it, compared with 24% of non-tablet owners.

The librarians in our online panel expressed some interest in this idea, but not a strong interest; few said that their libraries already offer this. Some mentioned staff time, technology resources, budget concerns, and space as primary factors. Others mentioned liability issues related to user-created content. One library staff member wrote:

“Regarding the digital media lab, this is another great idea, but I see a number of barriers to us implementing such a thing at this point. Space is a huge one, but staff knowledge and money are also significant. We are exploring being part of a grant program on creating e-books, so that’s something we may offer some classes on, at least.”

Classes on how to download library e-books to handheld devices

Overall, 57% of respondents say they would be interested in classes on how to download library e-books to handheld devices; some 28% say they would be “very likely” to take this type of class, including 34% of e-reader owners. Overall, 63% of e-reader owners and 58% of tablet owners say they would be likely to use this resource.

Blacks (50%) and Hispanics (49%) are significantly more likely than whites (19%) to say they would be “very likely” to take classes on e-book borrowing. Looking at respondents by age group, Americans under the age of 65 are the most likely to express an interest in these classes, with adults ages 30-64 expressing the strongest interest. Urban residents (64%) are more likely than suburban (54%) and rural (54%) residents to express an interest in this service overall. Those living in households making less than $30,000 per year are also more likely than the highest income levels to be interested in this resource.

Classes on e-borrowing were among the most popular services among our panel of librarian, with many saying that they already offer these and the rest indicating at least some interest in offering these classes in the future. “People love our eBook download classes,” one librarian wrote. “They are some of the highest attended classes.”

While some librarians said that patrons ultimately prefer one-on-one attention, especially due to the wide variety of e-readers available, others said that classes were a useful way to keep patrons’ technology-related questions from occupying too much of staff members’ time:

“The downloadable book classes and device classes [at our library] were necessary to free up reference staff for actual reference questions. Our reference staff are very busy and stopping to teach every other patron how to use the download service was a poor use of resources. The older patrons appreciate the hands on classes where they get the librarian's undivided
attention. The classes were very full to start with but now are very small. We expect the attendance to jump right after Christmas.”

**Classes or instruction on how to use handheld reading devices like e-book readers and tablet computers**

About half (51%) of respondents say they would be interested in classes on how to download library e-books to handheld devices, including 23% who say they would be “very likely” to take these classes.

Groups who are most likely to say that they would be “very likely” to take classes on how to use handheld reading devices like e-book readers and tablet computers include blacks (38%) and Hispanics (37%); overall, seven in ten blacks and Hispanics say they would be interested in these classes, compared to 43% of whites. Respondents in households making less than $75,000 per year are also more likely than those in higher-income households to be interested in these classes, just as those who have not graduated college are more likely than those with less education. Adults ages 50-64 are also somewhat more likely than other age groups to be interested in this type of instruction, with 56% of adults in that age group saying they would be interested in these classes (compared with 44% of 18-29 year-olds and 45% of those 65 and older).

Americans who do not already own devices such as tablets, smartphones, or desktop or laptop computers are significantly more likely than those who do own these devices to express an interest in these types of classes. About half (53%) of people who do not own tablets say they would be likely to take classes on how to use handheld reading devices, as did 54% of non-smartphone owners and 57% of those who do not own a desktop or laptop computer.

Over half of the librarians in our online panel said that their libraries already offer this service, and many others indicated interest in doing so in the future. One library staff member wrote that their library had seen “great” turnout for e-reader instruction classes, “but only for the 55+ crowd. Either the younger patrons figure it out on their own or they aren’t using the digital items.”

Interest in these classes also depend on the interests of the library’s community. One librarian wrote:

“Classes are not well-attended, except for Microsoft Office courses that we offer in a continuous loop each month. Many of the people who would like the classes are seniors, and they don’t come out at night. Also, we have a blue-collar community that has two working parents, and they won't come out to any extra programs. We also have a separate Senior Center that has loads of programming, and we don’t try to compete with them.”

Another library found that patrons required more individualized instruction:

“Our e-reader/tablet classes have been popular but most patrons like one-on-one instruction because, in the class, the instructor and assistants are having to deal with multiple devices, all of which look and act different from each other. Even splitting it up into device-specific classes isn't a guarantee when you have someone bring in a Kindle Fire and the person next to them still has a first-gen model.”
Part 5: The present and future of libraries

Libraries’ strengths

In addition to asking our online panel of library staff members about various services that libraries do offer or might offer in the future, we also asked about what they considered to be libraries’ strengths. One common theme was libraries’ role as a community center, and their connection to patrons and other local institutions:

“I think our strength is in our ties to the community, and the relationships we build with our customers. That should be our focus, and should drive how we develop our programs and services in the future.”

“Libraries are community centers. We are very aware of what is happening locally and have research services and books to meet that demand.”

“Public libraries are very good at partnering with nonprofits, schools, and businesses, which raises the awareness of the importance of literacy in the community. It expands our reach. Libraries should focus on literacy (all kinds), partnerships, 21st Century skills, community needs (health, etc.), and providing welcoming spaces where people can gather.”

“Public libraries continue to be the place where community members can come together to learn, socialize, meet, do business, and educate their children. We do this very well and should continue to focus on this strength.”

“A warm, welcoming and friendly space is hard to find these days, and the public library has the remarkable opportunity to become a community gathering place in communities where such a space is sorely missing.”

“My public library’s strength is in providing entertainment. Most patrons are looking for fiction books, audio books, DVDs. We are a community center for local information and camaraderie, like a general store. People are often isolated from one another, and the library provides a place to exchange ideas of all sorts.”

“Public libraries excel at providing a social hub for any community: free wi-fi, free cards, access to interlibrary loan services, or simply a warm, well-lit place to get out of the weather and feel safe.”

Providing access to books was often cited, but the broader theme was one of providing access to information, in every form:

“A public library is a community buying coop. Very few people can afford access to so many resources on their own, so we pool our taxes together to create the collection and services.”

“[Our strength is] connecting the community with technology and knowledge.”

“The library is the meeting point of knowledge and information; it is a place where creativity can be nurtured. Patrons are not judged or graded, but come in and are free to access all the library has to offer. Libraries should continue to offer all means of giving access to knowledge that they
currently offer (books, CDs, DVDs, computers, ebooks) and stay on top of new ways to access knowledge (iPads, cloud computing, software tools, etc.)”

In addition to simply providing access to information, many librarians said that libraries’ strengths lie in literacy efforts that help people find and use that information on their own; this included not only early childhood literacy efforts and reading programs for children and teens, but also helping patrons learn how to use computers, e-readers, and other devices:

“One of our biggest services and strengths is helping those who do not have a computer at home and/or are unfamiliar with computers and need assistance. Libraries have become the community ‘tech help’ center. We also help patrons find government documents on the web. Often this is the only place these documents are available. We also help patron search for jobs and fill out online job applications.”

“We should be THE destination for parents with young children, both for entertainment and education.”

“[Our strengths are] providing early literacy for kids, providing help for students of all ages, providing information and pleasure reading and viewing for adults and seniors. Keeping up with technology for our patrons. Providing a sense of community: we work very closely with many agencies in our community that serve kids, teens, adults and seniors. We try to coordinate services not complete.”

“[Libraries] are the poor man's university. We provide literacy, and outreach, and research, and job and career assistance, and assistance to small businesses, and so many other essential services to the community and society.”

What should be libraries’ “guiding principle”?

We also asked library staff what they thought was the main mission of public libraries—what libraries’ “guiding principle” should be as they faced new circumstances and considered various changes:

“To offer knowledge and information to the community through books, online resources, programs and to encourage a life-long love of reading whether for education, enlightenment or entertainment.”

“Public libraries should be about educating the public to survive in today's world. That involves not only the basic literacy that comes with books, but also a digital literacy to interact with the government and economy as it becomes increasingly paperless.”

“Libraries should be the social hub of the community and to do that the customers have to be able to use cell phones in the library, congregate around computers, sit and visit, laugh out loud and be noisy. The main part of the library should be devoted to this and quiet spaces should not be in any open areas, but should be in smaller cubicles.”

“To help their communities become the best they can be, by addressing community deficiencies. It's much more than focusing on ‘reading’ literacy.”

“[Libraries should be] unbiased information facilitators.”
“The public library should be the disseminator of reference materials, reading materials and the provider of computer access to the general public. The guiding principle should be to keep abreast of all ways to get info to the public and to provide it free of charge. The library should always provide programs to introduce young readers to the world of literacy and research.”

“To meet the communities’ needs for information, acculturation, literacy and personal contact.”

“I think our guiding principle should be ‘access.’ We provide access to the world of information and entertainment.”

“We are free to all, and free for all: all are welcome.”

“Libraries should be a community gathering place.”

“In my opinion, the idea of connection is what is most important. We are here to help people find their place in the community, provide access to information and services, and help people connect through the stories they love.”

Things to change

We also asked library staff about what things libraries should change going forward. Many spoke of a need to be more flexible, to adapt to new technologies and open the library to more activities. Others felt that some libraries were chasing new technology trends and programming at the expense of their core competencies.

“[We need to stop] holding on to collections trying to have the breadth and depth that we had in the ’80s. What people want now is different, and how they access it is different. We have to give up on being the ‘archival public library’ and move toward instant services.”

“We are at a crossroads in our area where we are dealing with an older generation who doesn’t mind change as long as they can still check out the books they want and the new generation who wants and needs updates which we cannot afford.”

“As our population ages, focus of special services to seniors—hearing devices, viewing devices, help services like carrying books to their cars, grabbers to get books off shelves, computer classes directed to seniors, programming specific to seniors, have walkers and wheelchairs available.”

“It seems that many libraries are struggling with an identity crisis, the next and newest thing to offer patrons around the corner. Our staff sometimes feels pushed and prodded to offer so many services with limited staff, space and time.”

“I am concerned about the constant demand to ‘keep up with technology’ when information is where I place my emphasis. There will always be another device, another way to access the information, and I am now in a position where I am like a salesman, not a librarian.”

“Stop trying to be all things to all people. Find out what communities want from us and provide that service.”
Another thread was making libraries more accessible and welcoming to more members of the community:

“We need to change the concept of the library as a restricted, quiet space—we bustle, we rock, we engage, but so many people in the community do not know this.”

“Library workers should look for more ways to seek patrons out. Everyone needs help but no one wants to ask, myself included. I have been impressed by the reference training I have seen at my library in order to better help people access information. More of this would be great.”

“Engage the digital natives. Promote online services more. Promote [libraries’] place as a neutral space. Promote the added value of professional.”

Many librarians also said that public libraries should partner more with other organizations and go out into the community to engage with new audiences:

“Some libraries believe that customers should come to the library—we can't [wait] for folks to come in to our buildings. We have to be extremely proactive and get out into our communities to show all the services we offer to support our communities.”

“Public librarians should reach out to school librarians, academic librarians, special librarians in the community as all libraries and library personnel in many ways have a common goals of providing unbiased information, promoting reading, promoting learning, promoting community, etc. We can do all of this better together rather than trying to do it separately.”

“Libraries need to be more in the face of the public. There are thousands of people out there who have never been encouraged to use the library, who think it is just for scholars and computer users.”

“Libraries are not good at marketing their resources and services. People don't know what the library offers. The library is not on many people's radar. That is one of the biggest problems at my library.”

Along the same lines, several library staff members said that they felt the current layout of most libraries was an impediment to patrons, who are often confused by the Dewey Decimal system and may have difficulty finding or browsing for books:

“Libraries should explore other ways to organize our materials (Deweyless? bookstore model?). Our goal is to make our resources easy to find. Libraries need to look at modern ways to do that. Libraries should look at what barriers (rules) we have that impede the use of our resources.”

“We are losing the concept of browsing and the new bookstore model adopted by some libraries is not the answer. I have worked in a library with it and when it was new patrons thought it was a good thing. The more they had to use it the less they liked it and it was eventually changed back.”

“Allow for straying from the Dewey Decimal system and even [alphabetize] by author. I know a lot of libraries have done this but ours hasn't. As a librarian, I love [the Dewey Decimal system] because I can find most any particular item right where it is supposed to be! But as a patron and a mom I find it cumbersome.”
“We need to be more focused on user experience. Users don't care about Dewey numbers, they want to be able to find things themselves easily and our online catalogs, building layouts and database vendors need to help patrons easily. We as library professionals need to focus on user experience as well.”

Library innovations

When we asked library staff about the innovations and new services that they were most excited about, we received a range of responses. Having more digital materials available was high on the list, with many librarians said that they would love to have more e-books available, and also to offer more tablets and e-readers for checkout:

“I would love to have a bunch of tablet readers of one kind or another to have "the classics" on, or philosophy or other more "endangered" literary species that often get weeded because people don't read them that often. I want a library where there is SO much to be found that it is a wonderful path of things to read and learn about! Money is the issue.”

“The top thing that our library would like to see happen is for ILS providers to figure out a way for patrons to have a single sign on authentication for discovery of all catalog and database content. Patrons hate the time it takes to authenticate for each database they want to explore. . . Netbooks, tablets and readers for checkout. And preloading them with hot books is a great idea.”

“Local collection of e-books instead of the countywide/statewide model. A method to provide e-books to the local community first before they are available throughout the whole county. A better method for local stats regarding e-book usage.”

“We recently began circulating Rokus with HuluPlus, Netflix and Amazon Prime loaded onto them. As far as I know we are the first library in the world to do this. This type of out-of-the-box technologies are making a huge difference to the demographics we are reaching. I would like to further those types of technological innovations and push the envelope on the public’s perception of what libraries offer. These types of initiatives do cost money and staff time to develop the program—but if it is important enough, the money can be found.”

“I would love to have a really accessible web site complete with mobile apps, etc. I really, really want to be able to afford e-books.”

“I want to be able to incorporate iPads into my story time and school-age programming, and I want to be able to include ‘appvisory’ services for caregivers so that they can utilize technology with their children in informed, intentional ways.”

Others wanted radio-frequency identification (RFID) tracking systems for books, as well as self-service options that would allow patrons to check out and renew materials.

“I'd love to see more materials handling automation that the public can see. Sorters are expensive, but they provide a great deal of staff time savings and patrons love watching them.”

“RFID. I keep hearing from other libraries how great it is for tracking materials and such, but the higher ups are not yet sure if it will be worth implementing in my library (cost, mainly).”
Many librarians said they were intrigued by the idea of makerspaces, or workshops where patrons can work on hands-on projects and collaborations. Similarly, several library staff members said they wished their library could offer digitization resources for local history materials, professional-grade office services such as videoconferencing, as well as renovated spaces that would encourage collaboration and allow the library to offer more types of services:

“Maker/hacker spaces! We need places for people to work collaboratively on all sorts of projects, digital or otherwise. Our educational system is doing a great job giving people factual and technical knowledge, but creativity is lacking, which is a huge problem for innovation. Libraries can be the place where you put what you've learned at school to work.”

“The creation of makerspaces in the library. Places where people can create and complete personal projects. This could be a robotics project or a recording studio, or a publishing kiosk.”

“Maker spaces—if I had the space and the staff/funding, we'd be soldering in here RIGHT NOW.”

“I'm most excited by the shift away from collection to creation, and to the assumption of services not historically affiliated with the library (e.g., digital curation, publishing).”

“Moving patrons from concept of using library to absorb information to patrons who can use the library for creative expression.”

“We would like to try the Espresso book printing machine, maker spaces (3D printers, etc.), integrated web/catalog services like BiblioCommons, and of course, learning labs like YouMedia.”

“It would be a thrill to double or triple our public computers, and to add printing services that would allow for patrons to print in color, print larger-formatted items, print photos, etc. It would be really cool if we could loan/rent/sell USB thumb drives for patrons to use to transfer files.”

Several librarians also said that their goal for future innovations would be to reach patrons in the community, to bring library services to them. This included book drops around the community, kiosks, transportation to and from the library, and expanded mobile services:

“I would like to get library kiosks into the community. I'd also love to add a ‘drive-through’ pickup window to make getting library materials as easy as getting fast food. I'd happily remove any barriers to use that still exist. We are currently trying to work out the logistics of rotating loaning collections of large print books to nursing homes in our district. We recently extended our homebound delivery program to include weekly group delivery to a local retirement center where many of the residents no longer drive.”

“I am very excited about the mobile options we offer our patrons. First, it attracts younger 20-something patrons who might drift away from libraries between school and parenthood. Second, it offers our more distant patrons an option of accessing information.”

“Teen programs (as opposed to recruiting individuals to volunteer and/or work as pages at this library). We have funding issues, but the bigger problem is geographic and transport related. We cannot bring together a critical mass of young people at one time and one place to do whatever.”
“I’m excited about the technological advances that make the library available 24/7/365 worldwide. I like to say that if you have a valid library card and access to the Internet, you can use your home library for research on a business trip in China at midnight. Or check out a novel to read on safari while at the Nairobi airport. That’s exciting.”

Finally, many librarians said that they were excited about ways to connect with more members of their library’s community and provide services that are truly relevant to their needs:

“We sometimes have communication gaps with patrons that speak limited English; perhaps we could model a volunteer program that recruits bilingual teens and seniors as translation volunteers. It could serve to enrich the lives of our seniors, and show teens the value of being bilingual while having the potential to help everyone communicate better without a huge impact on our budget. Another idea would be to bring bilingual teens together with elders to help them write down and translate life stories leaving a legacy that can be treasured by their families and community.”

“We offer a program each year aimed at helping patrons navigate through the maze of Medicare Part D enrollment. We have seven weeks of workshops where we work one-on-one with seniors and provide them with printouts of the three top drug programs that best suit their current prescription needs. This program makes us all feel very good about what we do and our patrons continue to express their thanks long after the programs are over. This will continue since there is little to no cost involved.”

“The main thing our customers wanted was more hours so we gave it them—we expanded Friday night hours and started closing at 9:00 PM (instead of 6:00 P.M.) Public response has been overwhelmingly positive.”

“We did a great outreach to in-home day card providers utilizing college student volunteers, adult volunteers and staff. Unfortunately staff was cut so drastically that we had to drop the program despite the use of volunteers for the majority of the program. We have started using community volunteers to coordinate adult programming, again due to staffing cuts. It has forced us to really focus on identifying the type of programming of most interest—which turns out not to be author visits, but science, opera and family game days.”

Roadblocks and concerns

In discussing some of the issues they have faced that so far have prevented them from implementing their ideal library services, countless library staff members cited restrictions on budgets and staff time—and in some cases staff or administrative interest:

“We need more staff to do anything at all. Innovations are exciting, but few and far between in terms of having the staff or budget to implement any. We love the self-service and automation options, but can't implement them at our price point.”

“The largest obstacle to . . . innovation in my library is a general reluctance to take the first step forward—the administration is overly hesitant to make any changes to services, even small ones, for fear of what repercussions could be for other branches in the library district and for other programs. I do not see these repercussions as risks, however, but as positive moving forward.”
“We have over 150 people on a waiting list for our computer classes to be offered next month. The demand is high but there are just not enough staff and they will not pay for anymore staff.”

“Everyone struggles to keep up with the changing technology, but that has been part of librarianship for a long time.”

Other librarians had concerns about some of the potential innovations and changes that they’ve encountered:

“I am not personally excited about the mobile technology—it doesn’t apply to me or most of my staff. We are considered dinosaurs, but we have our reservations based upon our own experiences about the need for privacy, possibility of identity theft, social media problems. We understand that the younger generation will live like this probably forever, not especially concerned about negative issues at all. On that note, I would enjoy learning and watching more real-life examples of various apps for mobile devices. With time, some of us old-timers will probably relate to some of it, just like we have adjusted to computers.”

“I am pretty negative about the ‘maker’ movement in libraries. If I had wanted to teach people how to make stuff I would have been a teacher. I think libraries are more about helping people learn for themselves. We set them on the path of learning, but do not hold their hands walking down the road. I don’t want to see libraries become publishers or creators.”

“I really don’t like what I see at the library I where I work. We’re pushing out the patrons who really need us. We’re placing too much emphasis on being a place to ‘hang out’ rather than meeting the needs of our patrons. Our administration turns a deaf ear to our pleas for the materials and education our patrons ask us for (more books, classes, etc.) and instead are fixated on e-books and coffee machines.”

“We need to train ourselves to be more knowledgeable about the new formats of digital materials we are offering. At my branch, we often refer user problems with e-readers and other devices to those staffers who own such devices personally or have experience with them. We all need to know how to address such queries.”

“I think I am a bit old-fashioned. I am in no way against automation or e-materials, [but] I do not think it is our job to push them on the communities. I want them available. I want people to be comfortable with them and be able to utilize them through our offerings. I do not want to empty the library of hands-on material because automated materials are available unless I know/believe automation is the best option. Look at the LPs coming back. How can we say hands-on materials are a thing of the past?”
Methodology

Library Services Survey

Prepared by Princeton Survey Research Associates International for the Pew Research Center’s Internet & American Life Project

November 2012

SUMMARY

The Library Services Survey obtained telephone interviews with a nationally representative sample of 2,252 people ages 16 and older living in the United States. Interviews were conducted via landline ($n_L=1,127$) and cell phone ($n_C=1,125$, including 543 without a landline phone). The survey was conducted by Princeton Survey Research Associates International. The interviews were administered in English and Spanish by Princeton Data Source from October 15 to November 10, 2012. Statistical results are weighted to correct known demographic discrepancies. The margin of sampling error for results based on the complete set of weighted data is ±2.3 percentage points. Results based on the 1,945 internet users have a margin of sampling error of ±2.5 percentage points.

Details on the design, execution and analysis of the survey are discussed below.

Design and Data Collection Procedures

Sample Design

A combination of landline and cellular random digit dial (RDD) samples was used to represent all adults in the United States who have access to either a landline or cellular telephone. Both samples were provided by Survey Sampling International, LLC (SSI) according to PSRAI specifications.

Numbers for the landline sample were drawn with probabilities in proportion to their share of listed telephone households from active blocks (area code + exchange + two-digit block number) that contained three or more residential directory listings. The cellular sample was not list-assisted, but was drawn through a systematic sampling from dedicated wireless 100-blocks and shared service 100-blocks with no directory-listed landline numbers.

Contact Procedures

Interviews were conducted from October 15 to November 10, 2012. As many as 7 attempts were made to contact every sampled telephone number. Sample was released for interviewing in replicates, which are representative subsamples of the larger sample. Using replicates to control the release of sample ensures that complete call procedures are followed for the entire sample. Calls were staggered over times of day and days of the week to maximize the chance of making contact with potential respondents. Interviewing was spread as evenly as possible across the days in field. Each telephone number was called at least one time during the day in an attempt to complete an interview.

5 Internet user is defined based on those accessing the internet occasionally, sending or receiving email, and/or accessing the internet on a cell phone, tablet, or other mobile handheld device.
For the landline sample, interviewers asked to speak with the youngest male or female ages 16 or older currently at home based on a random rotation. If no male/female was available, interviewers asked to speak with the youngest person age 16 or older of the other gender. This systematic respondent selection technique has been shown to produce samples that closely mirror the population in terms of age and gender when combined with cell interviewing.

For the cellular sample, interviews were conducted with the person who answered the phone. Interviewers verified that the person was age 16 or older and in a safe place before administering the survey. Cellular respondents were offered a post-paid cash reimbursement for their participation.

**Weighting and analysis**

The first stage of weighting corrected for different probabilities of selection associated with the number of adults in each household and each respondent’s telephone usage patterns. This weighting also adjusts for the overlapping landline and cell sample frames and the relative sizes of each frame and each sample.

This first-stage weight for the \( i \)th case can be expressed as:

\[
WT_i = \begin{cases} 
\frac{1}{S_{LL} \times AD_i} & \text{if respondent has no cell phone} \\
\frac{1}{S_{LL} \times AD_i} + R & \text{if respondent has both kinds of phones} \\
\frac{1}{R} & \text{if respondent has no land line phone}
\end{cases}
\]

Where \( S_{LL} = \) size of the landline sample

\( S_{CP} = \) size of the cell phone sample

\( AD_i = \) Number of adults in the household

\( R = \) Estimated ratio of the land line sample frame to the cell phone sample frame

The equations can be simplified by plugging in the values for \( S_{LL} = 1,127 \) and \( S_{CP} = 1,125 \). Additionally, we will estimate of the ratio of the size of landline sample frame to the cell phone sample frame \( R = 0.60 \).

The final stage of weighting balances sample demographics to population parameters. The sample is balanced by form to match national population parameters for sex, age, education, race, Hispanic origin, region (U.S. Census definitions), population density, and telephone usage. The Hispanic origin was split out based on nativity; U.S born and non-U.S. born. The White, non-Hispanic subgroup is also balanced on age, education and region. The basic weighting parameters came from a special analysis of the Census Bureau’s 2011 Annual Social and Economic Supplement (ASEC) that included all households in

\[6\] i.e., whether respondents have only a landline telephone, only a cell phone, or both kinds of telephone.
the United States. The population density parameter was derived from Census data. The cell phone usage parameter came from an analysis of the July-December 2011 National Health Interview Survey. Weighting was accomplished using Sample Balancing, a special iterative sample weighting program that simultaneously balances the distributions of all variables using a statistical technique called the Deming Algorithm. Weights were trimmed to prevent individual interviews from having too much influence on the final results. The use of these weights in statistical analysis ensures that the demographic characteristics of the sample closely approximate the demographic characteristics of the national population. Table 1 compares weighted and unweighted sample distributions to population parameters.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 1: Sample Demographics</th>
<th>Parameter (16+)</th>
<th>Unweighted</th>
<th>Weight</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>48.7%</td>
<td>47.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>51.3%</td>
<td>53.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>16-24</td>
<td>16.0%</td>
<td>14.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>25-34</td>
<td>17.3%</td>
<td>13.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>35-44</td>
<td>16.6%</td>
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<td>55-64</td>
<td>15.4%</td>
<td>18.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>65+</td>
<td>16.3%</td>
<td>23.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>Less than HS Graduate</td>
<td>16.4%</td>
<td>11.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>HS Graduate</td>
<td>29.4%</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Some College/Assoc Degree</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>College Graduate</td>
<td>26.8%</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Race/Ethnicity</td>
<td>White/not Hispanic</td>
<td>67.4%</td>
<td>69.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Black/not Hispanic</td>
<td>11.6%</td>
<td>10.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hisp - US born</td>
<td>7.0%</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hisp - born outside</td>
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<td>5.2%</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Other/not Hispanic</td>
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<td>5.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Region</td>
<td>Northeast</td>
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<td>16.6%</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>Midwest</td>
<td>21.7%</td>
<td>22.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>South</td>
<td>36.8%</td>
<td>36.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>West</td>
<td>23.2%</td>
<td>24.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


\[8\text{The phone use parameter used for this 16+ sample is the same as the parameter we use for all 18+ surveys. In other words, no adjustment was made to account for the fact that the target population for this survey is slightly different than a standard 18+ general population survey.} \]
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County Pop. Density</th>
<th>1 - Lowest</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5 - Highest</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>19.9%</td>
<td>23.2%</td>
<td>20.2%</td>
<td>20.1%</td>
<td>19.8%</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Household Phone Use</th>
<th>LLO</th>
<th>Dual - few, some cell</th>
<th>Dual - most cell</th>
<th>CPO</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>7.0%</td>
<td>39.0%</td>
<td>18.8%</td>
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<td></td>
<td>6.8%</td>
<td>39.5%</td>
<td>18.9%</td>
<td>34.6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Effects of Sample Design on Statistical Inference**

Post-data collection statistical adjustments require analysis procedures that reflect departures from simple random sampling. PSRAI calculates the effects of these design features so that an appropriate adjustment can be incorporated into tests of statistical significance when using these data. The so-called "design effect" or $deff$ represents the loss in statistical efficiency that results from systematic non-response. The total sample design effect for this survey is 1.24.

PSRAI calculates the composite design effect for a sample of size $n$, with each case having a weight, $w_i$, as:

$$deff = \frac{n \sum_{i=1}^{n} w_i^2}{\left( \sum_{i=1}^{n} w_i \right)^2}$$  \hspace{1cm} \text{formula 1}

In a wide range of situations, the adjusted standard error of a statistic should be calculated by multiplying the usual formula by the square root of the design effect ($\sqrt{deff}$). Thus, the formula for computing the 95% confidence interval around a percentage is:

$$\hat{p} \pm \left( \sqrt{deff} \times 1.96 \sqrt{\frac{\hat{p}(1-\hat{p})}{n}} \right)$$  \hspace{1cm} \text{formula 2}

where $\hat{p}$ is the sample estimate and $n$ is the unweighted number of sample cases in the group being considered.

The survey’s margin of error is the largest 95% confidence interval for any estimated proportion based on the total sample—the one around 50%. For example, the margin of error for the entire sample is $\pm 2.3$ percentage points. This means that in 95 out every 100 samples drawn using the same
methodology, estimated proportions based on the entire sample will be no more than 2.3 percentage points away from their true values in the population. The margin of error for estimates based on form 1 or form 2 respondents is ±3.3 percentage points. It is important to remember that sampling fluctuations are only one possible source of error in a survey estimate. Other sources, such as respondent selection bias, questionnaire wording and reporting inaccuracy, may contribute additional error of greater or lesser magnitude.

Response Rate

Table 2 reports the disposition of all sampled telephone numbers ever dialed from the original telephone number samples. The response rate estimates the fraction of all eligible respondents in the sample that were ultimately interviewed. At PSRAI it is calculated by taking the product of three component rates:

- Contact rate – the proportion of working numbers where a request for interview was made
- Cooperation rate – the proportion of contacted numbers where a consent for interview was at least initially obtained, versus those refused
- Completion rate – the proportion of initially cooperating and eligible interviews that were completed

Thus the response rate for the landline sample was 11.4 percent. The response rate for the cellular sample was 11 percent.

---

9 PSRAI’s disposition codes and reporting are consistent with the American Association for Public Opinion Research standards.

10 PSRAI assumes that 75 percent of cases that result in a constant disposition of “No answer” or “Busy” are actually not working numbers.
Table 2: Sample Disposition

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Landline</th>
<th>Cell</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Numbers Dialed</td>
<td>27,813</td>
<td>23,844</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-residential</td>
<td>1,100</td>
<td>404</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computer/Fax</td>
<td>1,120</td>
<td>45</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cell phone</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>----</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other not working</td>
<td>13,815</td>
<td>9,183</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Additional projected not working</td>
<td>1,577</td>
<td>321</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working numbers</td>
<td>10,193</td>
<td>13,891</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working Rate</td>
<td>36.6%</td>
<td>58.3%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Answer / Busy</td>
<td>526</td>
<td>107</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voice Mail</td>
<td>3,296</td>
<td>4,073</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Non-Contact</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>11</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contacted numbers</td>
<td>6,344</td>
<td>9,700</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contact Rate</td>
<td>62.2%</td>
<td>69.8%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Callback</td>
<td>373</td>
<td>1,504</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Refusal</td>
<td>4,749</td>
<td>6,630</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cooperating numbers</td>
<td>1,222</td>
<td>1,566</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cooperation Rate</td>
<td>19.3%</td>
<td>16.1%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language Barrier</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>Screen out / Child's cell phone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eligible numbers</td>
<td>1,182</td>
<td>1,149</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eligibility Rate</td>
<td>96.7%</td>
<td>73.4%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Break-off</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>24</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Completes</td>
<td>1,127</td>
<td>1,125</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Completion Rate</td>
<td>95.3%</td>
<td>97.9%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Response Rate</td>
<td>11.4%</td>
<td>11.0%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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</table>
“Maker Movement,” American Library Association, September 15, 2014

Do-it-yourselfers, tinkerers, hackers, entrepreneurs, and interested learners are finding opportunities to make what they want and determine their own creative paths. Makers take advantage of the availability of new technology and traditional craft tools, improved communication between community members, and new pathways to the marketplace (sharing economies, e-commerce, crowdsourcing).

**How It’s Developing**

Easier access to tools (3D printers, laser cutters, design software) and components (circuit boards, sensors) provide individuals with opportunities to invent and create in ways that might previously have been limited to manufacturers or businesses. [1] This access, coupled with easier forms of communication (online spaces that allow individuals to come together around shared passions, expertise, or questions) and distribution (e-commerce sites), have created communities of makers. The community of makers, and the ability to tap into different skill sets and knowledge levels, has become as valuable as the tools and components themselves. [2]

Makerspaces or hackerspaces provide places in the community where individuals can gather, use shared equipment, and learn. Make: magazine provides an annual list of the most interesting makerspaces around the country, including both for-profit and non-profit operations and spaces affiliated with universities, libraries, and schools. [3] The Makerspace web site (http://makerspace.com/) has begun compiling a worldwide directory of makerspaces to help encourage the maker movement in communities around the world.

Maker advocates see opportunities to develop important new skills, including design, programming, media creation, website development, and entrepreneurship. [4] One particular opportunity for growth is the promotion of the maker movement to children and students with kits and toys that develop early building and programming skills. [5]

**Why It Matters**

Libraries, traditionally collecting institutions that provide access to materials created by others, may now adopt new functions, providing communities with opportunities to create or co-create content for an individual’s own use, for use by the community, or for inclusion in the library collection. [6]

Local governments may capitalize on the maker movement as an opportunity to revitalize manufacturing, build small businesses, attract investment, or even revive neighborhoods or centers. [7]

Makerspaces may provide libraries, which have long been available to community and small businesses, with new opportunities to further technological innovation and entrepreneurship in the community. [8]

There could be a distinct difference in the development of libraries, between those focused on the collection, and the library as a place to come to assimilate information, acquire knowledge, enjoy art, and be entertained, and those focused on creation, where the library becomes a place where media is created by the availability of equipment and facilities to help creators create. [9]

Schools, colleges and universities may adopt maker practices that provide hands-on learning activities for students. [10] In higher education, making may already play a role in specific disciplines like engineering or art, but it may also become a more important part of journalism, health and medicine, and business. [11]

**Notes and Resources**


Making Cities Stronger:
PUBLIC LIBRARY CONTRIBUTIONS TO LOCAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
The rules of engagement in economic development are changing. More and more, economic development success strategies involve people, technology, and growing an infrastructure for economic activity built on ideas, knowledge, experience, and quality of life.

The Urban Libraries Council commissioned this study to look at how public libraries contribute to the human dimension of economic development. In the process, researchers also uncovered more evidence of the important contributions public libraries make to strengthening places and community quality of life.

This report indicates that public libraries today are deeply involved with people, technology, and quality of life. Public libraries have tremendous reach geographically and virtually. Within the U.S. there are over 9,000 public libraries providing services in over 16,000 branch facilities and through the Web. Nearly every one of these locally-funded organizations offers collections and programs that support early literacy, workforce readiness and small businesses. As such, they are an important and dynamic part of the community’s learning infrastructure which supports local economic development.

This study finds that the return on investment in public libraries not only benefits individuals, but also strengthens community capacity to address urgent issues related to economic development. Public libraries are increasingly finding their “fit” in the formal and informal network of agencies, corporations, nonprofits, and community organizations working together to elevate levels of education and economic potential, making cities stronger.

We deeply appreciate the public library members of our Urban Libraries Council who provided input for the research of this report. We also appreciate the insights of our Advisory Committee that guided this work, the Urban Institute for helping us to learn more about the businesses we are in, and the support and funding from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation.

We hope you will use this information as a tool to re-frame discussions regarding the public library role in local economic development. Our hope is to stimulate a dialogue among developers, planning professionals, elected officials, business and public library leaders to think differently about the value of public libraries as unique and versatile partners in these human resource and community-building arenas. We urge public libraries to extend and expand their resources and strategies that can profoundly impact local economic development conditions.

Martin Gómez, President
Urban Libraries Council

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Underwriting: The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and the Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation
# Making Cities Stronger:
PUBLIC LIBRARY CONTRIBUTIONS TO LOCAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

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LOCAL ECONOMIES TODAY are in rapid transition, moving from bases of manufacturing and service industries to information and idea industries. Accompanying this transformation are a number of radical changes in preferred work skills, business and service models, local-to-global networks, and definitions of what make places “attractive.” Given these changes, communities are reassessing their assets and development strategies in light of what is needed to succeed in the new and next economies.

Strategies for building a strong economic base are being realigned. Human resource strategies are coming to the fore, as jobs created in the new economy require highly educated and technologically-skilled workers. Strategies to keep a vibrant base of small business, traditionally a major source of local job creation, intact and competitive in a very mobile and global entrepreneurial environment are also emerging. Increasingly, physical development strategies are moving away from enticing outside firms with tax abatements and other incentives, to building on local strengths, mixing-up residential, commercial and cultural activities to create vibrant, high quality-of-life cities.

Public libraries are logical partners for local economic development initiatives that focus on people and quality of life. Libraries are widely available, highly regarded public institutions that provide a broad range of information services and support for diverse constituencies. In this era of economic transformation, the business of public libraries is being recast. Public access to digital information and technology is a draw for libraries. Their open structure, combined with the power of new digital collections, technology, and training, position them to help communities make the transition from manufacturing and service economies to high tech and information economies.

Public libraries build a community’s capacity for economic activity and resiliency. Many families and caregivers rely on the library to provide important pre-school reading and learning. Many people entering the workforce rely on libraries to get them online. Local businesses are increasingly tapping into the library’s online databases to keep themselves competitive and to find synergistic new business opportunities. Library facilities often anchor downtown and commercial developments, and are attractive neighborhood amenities.

These are the essential findings uncovered by researchers from the Urban Institute, as they teamed up with the Urban Libraries Council, an association of large metropolitan public libraries, to investigate the impact of public libraries on local economic conditions. Making Cities Stronger: Public Library Contributions to Local Economic Development adds to a growing body of research that notes a shift in the role of public libraries – from passive, recreational reading and research institutions to active economic development agents. The study was commissioned by the Urban Libraries Council (ULC) and funded by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation.
This report highlights the specific ways local governments, agencies, and libraries are working together to achieve benefits for individuals, agencies and the community at large in four areas:

**Early Literacy services are contributing to long-term economic success.** As the strong correlation between investments in early literacy and long-term economic success is documented, public libraries are expanding beyond their traditional story time services, engaging in high-impact strategies with community partners. Many libraries across the country are leading public awareness campaigns, reaching new mothers with materials and resources that promote reading early and often. Extensive community-wide training on early literacy with home and professional child care givers is increasing the quality of child care, and levels of school readiness and success. From Providence (RI) to San Luis Obispo (CA), public libraries are reaching young children and families in diverse neighborhoods. These services are the first link in a chain of investments needed to build the educated workforce that ensures local competitiveness in the knowledge economy.

**Library employment and career resources are preparing workers with new technologies.** With an array of public computers, Internet access, and media products, public libraries are a first point of entry for many new technology users. A 2006 survey by Hart Research found that 70% of people on the computers in libraries only have access through that source. Now that job readiness, search and application information are all online, libraries are expanding training opportunities, often in collaboration with local workforce agencies, which focus on using and building technology skills. Ninety-two percent (92%) of public libraries surveyed for this report provide computer instruction on a monthly basis. Library workforce service models are also as mobile as the shifting economy, as illustrated in Memphis (TN), where the JobLINC mobile center that started as an initiative for a single high-need neighborhood has now expanded services to cover the entire county, with high levels of use not only by job-seekers but by employers as well. With an increasing number of local training partnerships, library resources and facilities are reducing the operation costs and broadening the outreach of other local workforce development agencies, contributing to a stronger community network for job readiness and worker “retooling.”

**Small business resources and programs are lowering barriers to market entry.** One of the biggest traditional barriers to small business has been access to current and comprehensive business product, supplier, and financing data. Libraries are the source for new online business databases that reach entrepreneurs around the clock. Researchers find that when libraries work with local and state agencies to provide business development data, workshops and research, market entry costs to prospective small businesses are reduced, existing businesses are strengthened, and new enterprises are created. Libraries are also in the vanguard, trying new strategies. The Columbus Public Library (OH) is working with a regional agency to provide business plan development seminars. In Brooklyn, the library hosts a business plan competition with a seed money prize. In Phoenix (AZ), the public library is part of a statewide network of business, economic development and library professionals who are seeking to expand and diversify the economic base by promoting more synergy among clusters of enterprises. Again, in this arena library resources and training facilities are reducing operations costs for other local agencies, and broadening those agencies’ access to more people needing small business assistance. Overall, the community has more resources to support a strong small business sector.

**Public library buildings are catalysts for physical development.** Libraries are frequented local destinations. Urban Institute researchers repeatedly found that public libraries are highly regarded, and are seen as contributing to stability, safety and quality of life in neighborhoods. They are bolstering downtown and suburban cultural and commercial activity. Among private sector developers of malls, commercial corridors, mixed-use developments and joint-use facilities, libraries are gaining recognition for other qualities – their ability to attract tremendous foot traffic, provide long-term tenancy, and complement neighboring retail and cultural destinations. Library buildings are versatile. They fit in a wide mix of public and private sector developments.

The study provides not only a snapshot of ways public libraries are successfully integrating resources and services with local economic development initiatives in cities coast-to-coast, it also provides some thought-starter ideas for broadening those strategies further, urging greater investment in data gathering, focused partnerships, and impact measures.

The study concludes that public libraries are positioned to fuel not only new, but next economies because of their roles in building technology skills, entrepreneurial activity, and vibrant, livable places. The combination of stronger roles in economic development strategies and their prevalence – 16,000 branches in more than 9,000 systems – make public libraries stable and powerful tools for cities seeking to build strong and resilient economies.
APPROACHES TO LOCAL economic development have traditionally focused on tax abatements and credits, preferential financing rates, provision of land and, often, facilities to attract business and boost employment in local markets. However, the new knowledge economy has altered the landscape for many business decisions. Recent studies of location decisions of “high performance firms” reveal that a number of these businesses prefer to locate in areas with higher wages, a labor force with plentiful high school graduates, responsive and efficient government, good schools, and a decent quality of life (Doeringer, Terkla, Klock 2002).

Responding to these shifting factors for economic success, local economic development strategies that once focused narrowly on highlighting assets of a given location or access to major transportation are giving way to strategies that promote quality-of-life environments and strong community capacity for economic growth. Business attraction strategies that once focused narrowly on landing large “outside” firms are now identifying ways to nurture local small businesses, and to build clusters of competitive industries, linked in regional networks, that create new growth and income. Employment-centered economic development strategies that once focused on job creation, even if many were at minimum wage, are now focusing on developing comprehensive skills to build workforce competitiveness and creating career paths to quality jobs and higher wages.

As local economic development practice broadens to include strategies for building human, social, institutional, and physical resources for stronger, self-sustaining local economic systems, there is an opportunity for a much wider range of community organizations to identify when and where their assets contribute to making cities stronger and building better local economies. This shift in strategies provides an opportunity for public libraries to identify specific ways in which library services contribute to broader local economic strategies. 

A TRUSTED PUBLIC PLACE

Few community services enjoy the type of public support that is generally given to public libraries. In a recent national survey conducted by Public Agenda, people were more likely to rate library service as excellent or good than the service they receive from their local police department, public schools or their local media (PA 2006). In a national public opinion survey conducted for the American Library Association, over 90% of the total respondents said they believe libraries are places of opportunity for education, self-help, and offer free access to all (KRS Research Associates 2002).

Many demands challenge public library leaders to continue to provide services in a manner that meets the high expectations of the public while operating in an environment of constrained state and local budgets. Despite high regard for public libraries as an institution, leaders in many public library systems are facing difficult choices because of a decline in public funding. Additionally, rising costs of new materials, such as online journals, databases, and operations has forced libraries nationwide to cut services, or to find more money by dipping into budgets for books, audiovisual materials and programs. Further, many library systems across the country
are in desperate need of capital support to upgrade or repair existing buildings or to build entirely new facilities to adequately service communities where the local population has swelled.

Amidst these competing demands, library leaders across the country have also felt increasing pressure to justify the investment in public libraries given the growing volume of content on the Internet, increased computer ownership in many American homes, and market competition from private book vendors.

MEASURING THE ECONOMIC IMPACTS OF PUBLIC LIBRARIES

An increasing number of economic research tools are now being used to measure the public value of libraries, including the cost-benefit impacts and return on investment that public libraries generate. These studies consistently identify positive economic impacts made by libraries at the national, state and local levels:

- At the national level, Liu (2004) examined the causal relationship between public libraries, literacy levels, and economic productivity measured by gross domestic product per capita using path analysis. This study found that public libraries contribute to long-term economic productivity primarily through literacy programs.

- Recent studies at the state level have found significant economic benefits as well, including significant returns on public investment and generation of gross regional product (Barron, et al. 2005, McClure, et al. 2000). There have been tremendous short-term local economic spin-off benefits from construction alone, as expenditures for state and local library construction doubled from $948 million dollars in 2000 to just over $2 billion dollars in 2005.

- Positive economic impacts are also evident at the city level. A recent study conducted by the Carnegie Mellon University’s Center for Economic Development (CMU) for the Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh found the library to be the most visited regional asset, attracting 500 thousand more visitors than the Carnegie Science Center and the Pittsburgh Steelers combined. CMU researchers estimate that the library generates a return of more than $91 million in combined economic output and sustains more than 700 jobs. Using a different methodology, the Seattle Public Library found substantial economic returns to the city and local business immediately following the development of the new downtown library. They found the net new contribution to the local economy to be approximately $16 million dollars during the first full year of operation alone (Berk & Associates 2004).

This study seeks to follow the links between libraries and economic development benefits. It looks at how layers of special program resources and activities in public libraries intersect with specific local economic development strategies already in motion. Return on Investment (ROI) studies alone do not identify the ways in which library services are benefiting students, job seekers, employers, small businesses and entrepreneurs. This study takes a closer look at the layers of targeted programmatic benefits, and investigates and articulates the ways in which public libraries are addressing the needs of individuals and agencies, within the context of broader formal and informal local economic development networks.

Special programs, which have always been a part of public library services, have increasingly taken on local community development challenges in the past decade. Public libraries are now working with local schools to create a more integrated set of services for children (Saunders 2001), coordinating with workforce development agencies for job and career information services (Durrance 1994), and collaborating with local chambers of commerce to improve business information services for micro and small businesses (Wilson and Train 2002). These special program services are broadening the impact of traditional library information resources by networking with the efforts of other groups in the community.

MODELING PUBLIC LIBRARY BENEFITS

Figure 1 provides a model that summarizes the multiple ways in which public library resources, programs and services impact local economic development conditions.

**Traditional Service Benefits.** Public libraries provide direct service benefits to individuals. These include the cost savings of public access resources over market costs of goods and services, as well as the self-identified benefits of getting information or access to technology, for example.

**Benefits of Business Operations.** Public libraries are large organizations, particularly in metropolitan settings, and thus, provide significant business-related spin-off benefits to the local economy that include employment and wage contributions, purchasing of supplies and materials, contracted services, library construction and even the effect on local business resulting from increased foot traffic. A recent study of the economic impact of South Carolina public libraries estimated that the libraries contributed close to $126 million dollars in spending on wages, supplies, books and related materials, construction, and other business related expenditures (Barron, et al. 2005).
Program Related Benefits. Public libraries contribute significant community-level benefits, particularly as they relate to program services. Library resources and programs contribute capacity to local strategies that seek to strengthen human capital, reduce service costs to complementary local agencies, and broaden the reach of local partner organizations.

Programming in public libraries is highly local, and touches on many community development agendas – from school success to financial literacy to public health. In this report, the focus is on three program areas that are core local economic development strategies:

- **early literacy** – initiatives that promote reading, prepare young children for school and raise levels of education.
- **workforce initiatives** – efforts that increase workforce skills, provide career training, and facilitate employment and career search.
- **small business support** – strengthening the small business sector through the provision of business information resources, workshops and training for both new and experienced business owners.

The case study research examines specific library program strategies that support current practice in the field of local economic development. It highlights the range of short-term and long-term economic outcomes that were either identified by program participants or could be identified and measured in future research. Finally, the report provides suggestions about ways public libraries can stretch resources and programs further, providing even greater impact.

Chapters 2 and 3 examine two key strategies for building the human capital of area residents, early literacy interventions for children and support services for job seekers. Chapter 4 identifies some of the new business supports available through local libraries.

Finally, in Chapter 5 the report highlights ways in which communities are using public library placement and construction as a way to create more vibrant public spaces and broaden the definition of mixed-use development in cities and small towns across the country. While the focus of these investigations was on program rather than physical impacts of libraries on communities, many examples of the impact of libraries as catalysts to redevelopment, anchors for existing developments, and amenities to downtowns, neighborhoods and commercial centers emerged in the course of the fieldwork. These examples are provided here to further underscore the variety of ways in which public libraries are making cities stronger.
LIBRARIES HAVE LONG BEEN recognized as one of the most important community institutions for adult and child literacy development. However, new research in the area of child development is now uncovering a strong connection between early literacy investments and the improved school outcomes of young children. Researchers are showing that children who begin kindergarten with greater literacy skills resources are more likely to test well in reading and basic mathematics at the end of kindergarten and the start of first grade (Denton and West 2002). Early literacy, along with early numeracy, and building social-emotional competence, is seen by many researchers as a key strategy for developing of school readiness in very young children (Brooks-Gunn and Markman 2005; Foorman, Anthony, Seals, Parlakian 2003; Mouzaki 2002; Whitehurst and Lonigan 1998).

In the past, little importance was placed on what children experienced in the first years of life. Reading instruction took place primarily in elementary school. Formal instruction and curriculums emphasized the teaching of reading and writing to children when they reached school age and not before. However, the current research-based understanding of early language and literacy development is providing new and early pathways for helping children learn to talk, read and write. Current literacy development theory emphasizes the more natural unfolding of skills through the enjoyment of books, the importance of positive interactions between young children and adults who read, and the critical role of literacy-rich experiences.

On another track, researchers in the field of economics are beginning to identify child development investments as the most cost effective strategies for long-term economic development. In a recent study, researchers from the Minneapolis Federal Reserve Bank identify investments in early education as yielding a financial return that far exceeds the return on most state funded economic development projects (Rolnick and Grunewald 2003).

Further, as demonstrated in Figure 2, researchers at the University of Chicago, identify early education investments as more efficient public investments because their benefits tend to compound, by creating a solid foundation for later human capital investments, such as education, youth development and job skills training (Cunha and Heckman 2003; Currie 2001; Karoly, et al. 1998). This work finds that the return on investment decreases as investments move from early literacy and child development, to youth programs, to adult education and job training programs.

“Learning and motivation are dynamic, cumulative processes; skill begets skill; learning begets learning. Early disadvantages lead to academic and social difficulties later. Early advantages accumulate; just as early disadvantages do.”

The Productivity Argument for Investing in Young Children, Working Paper 51

— Committee for Economic Development, October 2004

There is also evidence that the importance of early childhood investments is beginning to take hold among policy makers at the various levels of government. (Katz, Dylan, and de Kervor 2003). Since 2005, the National League of Cities' National Municipal Policy has had a major
initiative to highlight practices and catalyze investments in early learning to build stronger local economic capacity long-term. The National Governors Association has also adopted a policy position that calls for greater support of early literacy programming, and has established a small grant program designed to build more comprehensive early childhood development systems at the state level (NGA Education, Early Childhood and Workforce Committee ECW-04).

Children’s literacy services in public libraries are being recast to this end. In cities large and small, libraries are expanding traditional story-time activities, retooling children’s literacy programming to meet developmentally appropriate standards, and creating more comprehensive child literacy support services for parents and child care providers. Libraries are now making much deeper resource investments in early literacy training. Indeed, for many communities they are the lead agencies for early literacy services and training for young children. In the survey conducted among Urban Libraries Council members, over 90% of responding libraries identified their library as providing special programming in the area of early literacy. Of these, 92% had enhanced their collections with materials specifically related to early literacy promotion.

School readiness and child development activities included family and intergenerational reading development programs, parenting programs, and support services for child care professionals. Among the libraries providing early child development programming 70% provided early literacy workshops on a weekly or monthly basis, and just over 60% provided workshops for childcare workers and early education teachers.

As children’s programming has grown over the years so too has the need for specialized education and training on the part of library staff. Survey results highlighted a strong commitment on the part of public libraries to providing specialized services with appropriately trained personnel. More than half of the libraries surveyed identified someone on their children’s services staff as having an early childhood education certificate. At this point computers do not appear to play a major role in direct provision of early literacy services. Less than 13% of the libraries indicated that they used computers as an integral part of their early literacy activities. However, public libraries do appear to be using their websites as a way to collect information resources for parents and caregivers to learn about early learning. Over one-third of the libraries responding to the survey indicated that they had developed websites specifically for early literacy/early learning.

Based in part on the programs highlighted in that survey, a group of public libraries were identified for further investigations into how early literacy collections and

services were mobilized at the local level. Strategies observed in the field studies range from citywide information campaigns to the provision of tailored technical assistance to childcare agencies. The overall goals of these initiatives are consistent – improving child social and development outcomes through literacy and providing essential building blocks for school readiness. In many of the communities in this study, the public library was the only agency promoting early literacy programming.

The following descriptions of early literacy/school readiness strategies are followed by an examination of the impacts, and thoughts about how the public library could stretch resources and strategic investments further.

PUBLIC LIBRARY STRATEGIES FOR BUILDING EARLY LITERACY

- Public education campaigns
- Parental training workshops
- Tailored technical assistance for childcare and other children’s service agencies
- Implement model literacy programs

Public education campaigns for early literacy. Effective public education campaigns use media, messaging, and an organized set of communication activities to shape behavior toward desirable social outcomes (Weiss & Tschirhart 1994). They will often combine broadcast media campaign messaging with a wide range of marketing and program strategies meant to bolster the “marketing mix” (Balch & Sutton 1997). A common strategy for public education campaigns is to coordinate media efforts with a diverse mix of other communication channels, some interpersonal and some community-based, in order to extend the reach and frequency of the campaign’s messages and increase the probability that messages will successfully result in a change (Dungan-Seaver 1999). Public libraries have been engaged in literacy campaigns for years. However, some public libraries are drawing on this experience to build more targeted campaigns, which focus specifically on the promotion of early literacy. These strategies broaden the early literacy message to the widest possible audience. By delivering the messages in multiple languages and through a variety of media, public libraries are extending the reach of their programs to community residents who may not even know where to find their closest branch library. An example of an ambitious multi-lingual public information campaign, which combines media outreach with informational workshops for parents and caregivers, is Brooklyn Public Library’s campaign, Brooklyn Reads to Babies.

Brooklyn Public Library - Brooklyn Reads to Babies Campaign.

Brooklyn Public Library’s (BPL’s) citywide literacy campaign, which targets both parents and caregivers of babies and toddlers, includes informational brochures and materials, produced in six different languages, which are distributed through the library and community partners; a web resource with information about early literacy; library programming on early literacy for children from birth to age five; and direct outreach to a wide range of children and family service agencies throughout Brooklyn. The campaign has cast a wide net by connecting with area service providers to get the word out to the community. Flyers and posters are available at area beauty parlors, clinics, schools, hospitals and markets. BPL has also made informational brochures available for family court. Area health providers, such as Coney Island Hospital, assist by providing Brooklyn Reads to Babies program information and library card applications in new infant goody bags. Start up resources for the program, which were covered by an initial donation of $1 million dollars, included development and production of marketing pieces, board
books in the branches, child size furniture for creating child-friendly areas in local branches, and purchasing program learning tools for area libraries. While it may be too early to measure direct impacts of the program, the demand for workshops and materials speaks to the need for this type of children’s programming.

**Early Literacy Training for Parents.** Libraries across the country are augmenting children’s services to provide intergenerational programming workshops that promote early literacy to parents. Workshops in some libraries are run directly by children’s service librarians or in partnership with local child development agencies. Most workshops offer hands-on activities and supervised practice sessions that guide parents through a range of developmentally appropriate educational activities.

**The Providence Public Library – Ready to Learn Providence Partnership for Parents.**

The Providence Public Library, in partnership with Ready to Learn Providence, provides a wide range of early literacy support services for young children and their parents and caregivers. The Cradle to Crayons initiative, a free nine-week program available at most Providence Public Library branches, focuses on literacy development of children ages 1-3. The program, which is funded by Ready to Learn Providence and CVS/Pharmacy Charitable Trust, is designed to introduce young families to the library in a comfortable setting and to develop early literacy skills through songs, rhymes, storytelling and play. Library staff members offer tips that can be used at home to encourage an early interest in reading and learning.

The program also invites local child service agency professionals to attend some sessions to share information on child development, health and safety. Bilingual staff (English/Spanish) attend most sessions, and materials are available in both languages. Families also receive free books through Reading is Fundamental twice during the nine-week session. In addition to Cradle to Crayons, the partnership offers a three-hour program (in both Spanish and English) to teach adults how to share children’s books, rhymes and songs with infants and toddlers. A third component of the parenting education program is the Learning and Reading Kits (LARK Kits). Created jointly by Providence Public Library and Ready to Learn Providence, the LARK kits contain 10 books, music, visual aides such as puppets and flannel boards, and educational games. The activity folder in each kit offers a choice of activities, helping educators to teach thematic curriculum units in a developmentally appropriate way.

The kits for use with preschool-age children, which can be checked out at branch libraries, are in English only and bilingual (English/Spanish) versions. There are also kits especially designed for use with toddlers. There are now over 200 LARK kits available through the library.

**Technical Assistance/Staff Development for Child Care Facilities.** Sixty-percent (60%) of the libraries providing early literacy programs in the ULC member survey identified their institutions as providers of technical assistance to child care agencies in their area. These training workshops, which are free through local libraries, provide staff development training to agencies that, due to resource constraints, might not otherwise make this type of business investment. In some communities these trainings have been incorporated into the broader network of accredited agency support and educational services. In these communities, participation in library early literacy workshops provides a portion of the credits necessary for annual accreditation or recertification. The Memphis Public Library has a program that combines traditional story times with detailed instruction to childcare staff about age appropriate literacy programming.

**Memphis Public Library – Training Wheels Program.**

In the summer of 1999, the Memphis Public Library (MPL) held a series of focus groups with day care and other children’s service providers in the Shelby County area to help structure a new mobile children’s service. Though library staff had initially thought the focus groups would provide more detailed information about ways to deliver direct services to children, the greatest need identified by child care staff was for on-site, staff development programming. In response to this call, MPL developed the Training Wheels program, which provides on-site, customized training for those who care for young children (ages 0-6). The training is designed to improve caregivers’ skills in developmentally appropriate practice, especially as it relates to early literacy.

The Training Wheels bus, which is staffed by children’s librarians and early childhood specialists trained in adult education, visit a site and give "annotated" demonstration story times using the site’s own children. In so doing, the program operates on two levels. Children at the local centers receive the care and attention of a librarian through traditional story time activity. As the library staff person is working with the children on one end of the bus, a second staff person is providing “color commentary” to day care staff, identifying key elements of the instruction, highlighting developmentally appropriate activities. This is a particularly important staff development activity for agencies that generally cannot afford to pay for continuing education training for their staff. After the story time demonstration activity, library staff works with caregivers to identify additional learning materials and tailor staff development activities to their specific needs.
Materials used in the story time demonstration are available for fully-automated checkout from the vehicle. The free Training Wheels workshops, which are certified by Department of Human Services of the State of Tennessee and provide child care workers with accreditation credits needed for annual recertification, are delivered to over 200 day care centers a year across the Memphis/Shelby County area on a rolling basis at visits scheduled during the regular business hours of the day care center.

Implementing Model Literacy Programs Locally.
Public libraries provide a ready network for disseminating innovative program services. The adoption of early literacy services models such as Raising a Reader and Every Child Ready to Read @ Your Library provide excellent examples of the ways in which best practice models can spread in public libraries. The Raising a Reader program, which features bags filled with four multilingual and multicultural children’s books, a literacy instructional video for parents, and a teacher training curriculum, started in 1999. Since that time the program has grown to over 118 affiliates that have implemented the program in 32 states. The Every Child Ready to Read @ Your Library, an early literacy curriculum developed by the Public Library Association and the Association for Library Service to Children, is another early literacy program that has spread rapidly. The program, which was designed as a trainer program, provides the basic curriculum, training and evaluation tools necessary for children’s service librarians to incorporate early literacy training into their local regimen of children’s services. Over the past two years, the Every Child Ready to Read program has provided 82 trainings for librarians at public libraries across the country.

San Luis Obispo Public Library – Raising a Reader Program, Oceano Branch Library.

The Oceano Branch of the San Luis Obispo (SLO) City-County Public Library system is the first (SLO) branch library to implement the Raising a Reader Program. The newly opened branch, which is situated on a site next to the Oceano Elementary School and an adult learning center, is well positioned to provide services to both parents and their children. The program, which is partially supported by First 5 of San Luis Obispo and the San Luis Obispo County Office of Education, targets children and their families living in the predominantly Hispanic community surrounding Oceano Elementary School. The project is part of a broad initiative to provide educational support to parents, provide preschool and childcare, operate kindergarten transition programs, coordinate existing health and social services, and encourage schools to be ready for children, and vice versa. A preliminary review of the program results conducted by First 5 of San Luis Obispo indicate that the program is having a significant impact on the way parents approach learning in the household. Parents surveyed after three months of program participation reported statistically significant changes in the amount they read to their children (from 59% at baseline to 85%), their perceived importance of such reading (from 8.9% at baseline to 9.8%), and their increased use of the library system (from 38% at baseline to 69%) (First 5 SLO 2005).

OUTCOMES: WHY INVESTMENTS IN EARLY LITERACY PROGRAMMING MAKE SENSE

Early literacy programming in public libraries contributes to elevating young children’s levels of literacy and engagement in learning, thereby contributing to school readiness and school success.

Public library literacy programs reduce the cost of doing business for area agencies by providing free staff development opportunities and in some places, certification credits.

Public libraries are strengthening the community child care support network by expanding learning resources and improving the quality of child care through literacy training.

STRATEGIES FOR BROADENING THE IMPACT OF EARLY LITERACY INITIATIVES

Discussions with library staff, community partners and local development professionals revealed a set of strategies that could expand the capacity of programs to even broader participation by parents or area caregivers, bolster existing literacy partnerships, and strengthen community resources for child development.

Broaden support for outreach. Though a wide range of early literacy program models are now available, children’s services divisions will require significantly more financial support to expand outreach services to parents and area caregivers. Whether providing services via a library book mobile or at the branch level, community outreach requires significant staff investments.

Establish strong partnerships with area child service providers. Library staff should identify ways to connect early literacy activities to other education services in the area to broaden the impact of literacy programming. While
many libraries provide literacy programming through open workshops within the library, fewer libraries take the additional step of establishing formal partnerships with child care centers and Early Head Start programs to provide these services directly to caregivers on site. These formal partnerships represent a stronger commitment by both parties to program services, and provide library staff with a more detailed understanding of the needs of area service providers. Library staff also talked about the importance of making stronger connections between early literacy education staff and teachers at area schools. These connections provide area teachers with a better sense of the range of community educational services and can help librarians articulate programming to better prepare students for the reading strategies that are taught in area schools.

**Continually evaluate early literacy programming and collect information over time.** Relatively few libraries were found to be tracking individual literacy program participants to determine the impact of their services over time. However, demonstrating the value of these programs requires this type of detailed information about participants (young and old) over time. There are many tools librarians can use to determine whether or not the services they provide have a lasting effect. Most require the systematic collection of information about individual program participants. This type of information is especially important when libraries are incorporating a standardized service model in a new setting. Because model programs are developed in other communities, sometimes with very different service populations, there may be conditions in the new “host” community that could affect the outcome of the program. Furthermore, local assessments could reveal important changes that are needed to better target services and improve participation.

**CONCLUSION**

Public libraries across the country are responding as the evidence linking early literacy to long-term education and economic success continues to mount. Through public awareness campaigns, more targeted program services, and collaborative training with other child care providers, public libraries are introducing many more children to books and reading before they enter school, greatly improving their chances of academic success. Library early literacy resources and programs are benefiting individuals and the community-at-large.

Investments in these areas are not without challenges, however. Sustained investments are necessary to build comprehensive, consistent pre-school literacy experiences and services both in and outside the library. Despite the challenges, public libraries across the country are retraining staff and retooling services to be in line with effective practices being defined in the new research, and are working with broad and diverse kinds of child care providers.

As libraries make deeper investments in the area of early literacy and school readiness support, the one area that will need greater attention is measuring impacts. Demonstrating the impacts of public library programs is not without difficulties. Voluntary drop-in visits do not lend themselves to traditional evaluation methodologies. Library efforts are impacted by other context factors, such as family, economic, race, school and other social aspects. Nonetheless, demonstrating the comparatively small but effective return on early literacy investments has the potential to yield even greater investments and payback.
DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES have changed dramatically with changes in the workplace over the past ten years. The transition from manufacturing and service industry jobs to technology-based information industry jobs has been rapid. Employers in the growing high-skill sectors report continuing difficulty in finding and keeping a workforce.

New economy jobs call for higher-level skills and a willingness to pursue continuing training to stay competitive. Rapid shifts in the workplace mean that people must anticipate frequent career moves and take responsibility for their own career progression (Porter 2000). Higher wages are strongly linked to some form of post-secondary education and training. Economic self-sufficiency – the ability to support a family – requires education beyond high school.

If local communities are to succeed, they will need more workers with skill levels far beyond those seen in the average worker of the past. As new models of business, products and services continue to emerge, the worker today must continuously “retool” and adjust.

New strategies and networks for building sustained workforce participation are burgeoning, and workforce development agencies are collecting data to better understand the demand for these changing skill sets. They are experimenting with career information centers and sequenced services for job-seekers. They are finding new local partners, such as community colleges and local employers, for training and education efforts. They are looking at ways to make local resources and programs more apparent, coordinated, and oriented toward long-term, continuous workforce transitions.

For many communities, the federal Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (WIA) is providing the organizing framework for consolidating development programs and integrating services locally and statewide (NCEE 1997). A cornerstone of WIA is the provision of services through comprehensive One-Stop centers that offer a range of resources pertaining to employment training and education for workers, and recruitment and training assistance for employers. Eight years after the enactment of WIA, it appears that more decisions are being made at the state and local levels, local workforce development agencies have established more formalized partnership arrangements, and there are more collaborative workforce development arrangements with private sector partners (Barnow and King 2005). There is great variety and flexibility in current local workforce development programs (Eberts and Erickcek 2002).

In this context, public libraries have a host of new opportunities to become more actively engaged in local workforce development initiatives and networks. Indeed job information resources and specialized workforce programs in local libraries have the potential to reach a much wider group of job seekers than One-Stop centers because of their reputation as trusted, quality community information sources, their high volume of use, and their geographic distribution of facilities across the community. Public libraries cover a much broader area than WIA One-Stop centers could ever hope to service. As an example, in the six states with the highest seasonally adjusted unemployment rate in the country in July 2006, there are an average of 83 One-Stop comprehensive centers and affiliates per state compared to an average of 301 library outlets in the same group of states.
Public libraries across the country are answering the call to provide greater workforce support with enhanced job information resources, workplace literacy programs, improved technology access, and staff dedicated to employment services. Seventy-seven percent (77%) of ULC member libraries responding to the survey identified their libraries as having enhanced collections in the area of workforce development. Forty-three percent (43%) of the libraries were investing in digital resources specifically geared toward workforce support, and 31% of the libraries were creating web resources specifically designed for job seekers.

A significant amount of workforce development activity in local libraries centers on job search skills, basic computer instruction and workplace literacy. Ninety-two percent (92%) of the libraries provide basic computer instruction on a regular basis (at least monthly); 50% of the libraries provide workplace literacy instruction; and 42% provide workplace literacy instruction specifically to English language learners. Most of these literacy training and other specialized workshops are provided in library facilities, though often conducted in partnership with local agencies. The section below explores some of the ways libraries are adapting to meet the needs of people navigating today’s labor market.

**PUBLIC LIBRARY STRATEGIES FOR WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT**

- Creating Job Information Centers
- Expanding Access to Technology and Tech Training
- Providing Targeted Employment Outreach
- Adult Literacy Training and Community Support Centers

**Job Information Centers.** Many public libraries across the country are consolidating career resource materials from the shelves and online databases into user-friendly career information centers. These job centers offer resources for job searches, provide training and certification materials, and serve as information clearinghouses for job listings. Many of these centers have special staff available to provide one-on-one assistance and career development workshops. Libraries with dedicated job resource staff often provide assistance in crafting cover letters, résumés, and college and scholarship applications, as well as assessment of skills and interests for clients with little educational experience or for those holding advanced degrees. In some libraries the job information service makes referrals, suggests job listing sites, and works with counselors, community-based organizations, state employment agencies, the Department of Labor, and the Human Resources Administration to help clients realize their educational and professional goals.

**Fresno County Public Library – Career Center.**

The Career Center at the Fresno Public Library provides an excellent example of this type of consolidation effort. In 2003 the library established its Career Center in the Central Library. The new Center provides a wide range of job and career resources in a county that has long been plagued by some of the highest rates of unemployment in the state of California. The new Career Center provides dedicated computing services, a jobs board, enhanced print and digital collections, and a dedicated career specialist/jobs librarian who provides monthly workshops covering online job search basics, building an effective résumé and job interview preparation. In addition to servicing the main library the new career services librarian provides career workshops at area branches and coordinates acquisition and purchasing of career resources for the entire system.

**Expanding Access to Technology and Tech Training.**

Despite the rapid proliferation of home computers, public computers in libraries are still in high demand, serving as an important entry point for new technology users. A recent survey found that 70% of people using computers in libraries reported the library was their only way to get on a computer (Hart Research 2006). Another study reports that 95% of all public libraries provide some sort of public access to the Internet (Bertot and McClure 2002).

While there is increasing awareness and use of these resources in public libraries, there has been little attention given to how these resources are providing structural, often community-wide, workforce development training and support. Public libraries are providing individual users with access to technology and information resources, as well as structured technology training. From mobile labs to instructional training facilities, public libraries are providing targeted technology training, most often starting with computer basics.

Increasingly, public libraries are working with local workforce development partners, providing local residents with multiple access points for computer training. Libraries that lack staff resources to support formal trainers are entering into agreements with local workforce development agencies to provide instructors and curricula for training facilities located at the public library.

**Newark Public Library - Victoria Technology Center.**

The Victoria Technology Center, a representative example of library training centers, opened in 1999 as part of the community NEON (NEwark Online) initiative, and features eighteen computers for training and Internet access. When classes are not provided, the stations are open to library customers. Free computer classes, which are offered in both English and Spanish, provide detailed training that ranges from computer basics to more advanced word processing and spreadsheet software training.
Targeted Employment Outreach. Libraries with sufficient resources for outreach are providing services in areas of high unemployment and need, working with local employment service agencies that lack resources to provide a full range of employment resource materials and workplace training.

Memphis Public Library – JobLINC.
The JobLINC bus is a mobile jobs and career readiness center that helps job seekers locate employment opportunities by providing listings of available jobs and one-on-one assistance in conducting job searches and preparing for interviews. JobLINC provides local job listings and an employment hotline, on-site résumé preparation services, daily JOBFILE listings from the Tennessee Department of Labor and Workforce Development. The initiative began as a targeted outreach to a single neighborhood in Memphis and, due to demand, has expanded to cover the entire county. The JobLINC bus, a 35 foot bus with computers, internet access via satellite hook-up, and job reference material, stops at shopping centers, social service agencies, and branch libraries throughout Memphis. The service has been so successful at connecting with residents that employers have even ridden the bus to conduct on-the-spot interviews to hire prospective workers.

Adult Literacy Training and Community Support Centers for New Americans. Public libraries are an important entry point to community services for new Americans. Programs provided through public libraries can serve as a portal to a wide range of community resources that are vital to a family’s economic self-sufficiency. Services to new Americans often involve English language classes; intergenerational literacy, foreign language GED instruction, and other basic skills training. Public libraries often serve as informal referral centers as well, directing immigrants to area support services.

Hartford (CT) Public Library - The American Place.
The American Place is an adult literacy and development project serving Hartford’s diverse immigrant communities. The American Place program has become an important community service for immigrants in Hartford, a city where over one hundred ethnic cultures are represented and 32 languages are spoken in the public schools. The program provides staff and resources to help people achieve their goals for secure immigration, citizenship and literacy. The program focuses on citizenship preparation, classes for English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) and life-skills workshops. The program, which started as a basic computer-training course, expanded rapidly when staff realized that clients needed English language training in addition to basics computer skills. Programs are provided free of charge and include practical advice for living in the U.S.; classes for learning English; information on becoming a U.S. citizen; and instruction on how to use the library to find information on jobs, health, housing, education and other topics of interest.

OUTCOMES: WHY LIBRARY WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS MAKE SENSE

- Expanded individual, and hence, community workforce technology skills and competencies via access to technology and free computer instruction available in public libraries. These technology skills are essential to job seekers of all ages.
- Reduced barriers to employment with one-on-one services, helping job seekers research career options, identify employment opportunities, develop résumés and apply directly for jobs using new technologies.
Reduced costs to local workforce development agencies by providing a wide range of employment information resources, access to online employment and career certification tests, and training spaces complete with computers and other technology.

Reduced recruitment costs to employers via contributions to technology and literacy training, and facilitating connections between potential workers and employers.

STRATEGIES FOR BROADENING THE IMPACT OF LIBRARY WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES

Establish strong connections with area workforce development agencies. While public libraries are often aware of other workforce development agencies operating in their service area, workforce development agencies are often not aware of the range of programs and information resources available at the local library. Failure to establish connections between area workforce support services effectively limits the range of services available and could lead to costly and unnecessary duplication of resources. Establishing stronger partnerships with other training entities, referral sources, schools, employer associations, and the local One-Stop Career Centers will help people move more quickly from information gathering to action. Stronger institutional connections will raise awareness about the wide range of resources available at the local public library.

Build better employer connections. Creation of comprehensive employment support initiatives in public libraries requires relationships with area employers as well. While the public library will not likely serve as an employment intermediary, program and collections planning will benefit from increased focus on employer needs and standards, as well as a better understanding of the regional labor market.

Know your customers. To better understand how and why people use library career and employment resources, libraries should collect demographic and use information from customers. Data gathered from customer surveys on the needs and behaviors of people being trained or guided to information resources can then feed into decisions about program design, collection development, strategic planning, and partnerships with local agencies and employers.

Know the broader workforce outlook. Keep abreast of broader workforce trends. What are the hot employment sectors globally? Nationally? In the region? What is on the decline? Are there seasonal employment trends? If so, in what markets? Understanding these trends, as well as the broader informal and formal network of workforce support providers, helps provide information on how to make the library a more prominent partner, and will help shape services and refine the public library’s role in building local workforce strength.

CONCLUSION

With rapid changes in employment markets and skills, communities are scrambling to build workforce capacity. Public libraries are contributing many resources to workforce development strategies, in concert with other community agencies, education institutions, and private sector employers. The combination of public access technology, enhanced workforce collections and training, and outreach partnerships gives public libraries a unique position as resource to community-wide workforce development efforts.

Libraries are important access points for building technology skills and competencies in communities today. Public access technology, new online resources, and targeted training on computers, job searches, and career development are benefiting both individuals and other workforce development providers.

Libraries are strengthening links between education and employment, as well as building workforce skills and participation. They are contributing training facilities and tailored instruction to a broad base of local residents. There is great variety in the ways public libraries have developed partnerships and programs that connect job-seekers with employment training and opportunities. Targeted library services such as English language instruction, workplace literacy, and computer instruction are now routine.

Local communities are assessing their human resource base and looking for ways to continuously update workforce skills and assist career transitions. In this context, the attributes of public libraries are not going unnoticed. Public libraries, which enjoy high use rates nationwide, and are broadly distributed across metropolitan areas, are becoming increasingly engaged in local workforce support service networks. By consolidating resources in job information centers, broadening literacy training, expanding access to technology, and conducting targeted outreach to immigrant populations and technology “have nots,” public libraries are providing valuable support to building local workforce strength and resilience.
MORE THAN THREE-FOURTHS of new jobs are created in the small business sector. Small business support strategies are key components for local economic development strategies that seek to stimulate new job creation and diversify the local economic base. Over the past ten years, small business net job creation ranged between 60 and 80 percent. In the most recent year with national level data (2003), employer firms with fewer than 500 employees created 1,990,326 net new jobs, whereas large firms with 500 or more employees shed 994,667 net jobs.*

The impact of small business on employment in cities is even more dramatic. Between 1998 and 2003, the number of small businesses in the nation’s top 100 metro areas grew by 18.6%, in areas as diverse as the booming suburbs of Atlanta and Las Vegas, to the shrinking cities of Youngstown, Kansas City and St. Louis. A 2005 report for the Small Business Administration found that small businesses are the greatest net source of new employment in inner cities (ICIC 2005). Small businesses comprise more than 99 percent of inner city business establishments and generate 80 percent of the total employment in those areas. In all, America’s inner city small businesses employ about 9 million people, or 8 percent of the U.S. private workforce.

A good “climate” for small business involves a wide range of resources, but as the economy becomes more mobile and global, one of the key supports for small business is information. However, few small or new enterprises are in a position to meet all their information needs. They often lack the financial resources, skills, and the time needed to obtain, sift and analyze information about business planning, marketing, financing, human resources, taxes, etc. Starting and sustaining a small business enterprise is a knowledge-intensive endeavor. The problem of access to information in recent years has been exacerbated as the federally-supported Business Information Centers (BICs), through the Small Business Administration have been phased out, and as more information is available digitally, albeit for a significant cost (licensing fee).

Business information services have been a part of public library services for more than a century, but it is the advent of new online databases that is bringing library resources directly onto the desktops of small business establishments, chambers of commerce, and economic development departments across the country. Sixty-eight percent (68%) of the ULC surveyed libraries have enhanced existing collections with small business resource materials and many of these same libraries were investing heavily in digital resources as well. Over fifty percent (50%) of the responding libraries identified their library as having digital collections, databases, and web content specifically designed for small businesses.

Public awareness efforts and instructional training for small business owners is a rapidly growing area of library programming. A wide range of instruction is provided...

regularly through public libraries. Fifty-three percent (53%) of libraries answering the survey provide small business planning and development workshops on at least a quarterly basis; thirty-eight percent (38%) of the libraries provide workshops on business management and business finance; and close to two-thirds of the libraries (62%) provide training in the use of online business resources.

This next section highlights some of the innovative ways libraries are reaching the small business sector with current and comprehensive business information and services that simplify entry into the market, and support long-term business viability.

**PUBLIC LIBRARY STRATEGIES FOR SMALL BUSINESS SUPPORT**

- **On-Demand Business Information Through Online Business Resources**
- **Integrating Business Support Services**
- **Business Basics Workshops**
- **Program Partnerships with Local Business Support Agencies**

**Building On-Demand Business Resource Information.** Public libraries offer small business owners and entrepreneurs a wealth of information resources including industry data, statistics and trends, legal indices, local and state regulations and reports, government documents, industry-specific newspapers and journals, company reports, and company data. Historically, these materials have often been housed in central or special locations, since the cost and sheer volume of the information made it difficult to provide a wide range of resources at the branch level.

However, new technologies and continued investments in a wide range of online business information resources make it possible now to share resources at places of business or homes 24/7. Across the country public libraries are subscribing to online business databases that provide library card holders with a wealth of business information, including company profiles, company brand information, rankings, investment reports, company histories, business leads and marketing data. With the rapid increase in business-related information, librarians are adopting new roles as intermediaries between the business information consumer and an expanding myriad of information and data sources.

Easy access and up-to-date depth of the resources are attracting new business customers. A recent report by the Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh found that business resources are the most frequently accessed online databases (CMU 2006). In a recent survey of library users in the South Carolina, one-third of the business users said that the loss of business information sources would have a major negative impact on their business (Barron et al. 2005). Electronic business information resources make it much easier for public libraries to provide community-wide, up-to-the-minute business information to area residents.

*District of Columbia Public Library – Enhanced Business Information Center (e-BIC).*

The District of Columbia Public Library (DCPL) has entered into a partnership with the U.S. Small Business Administration to open the Enhanced Business Information Center (e-BIC). The e-BIC, which is located at the main branch of the DCPL system, provides business planning tools, free on-site resources, staff, training courses and workshops to help entrepreneurs start, grow and expand their business. It features a state-of-the-art video conferencing room, computer terminals, a business information resource library and reading room. The e-BIC, staffed by a full time librarian, is open during the scheduled hours of the library.

**Integrating Local Business Support Services.** Many public libraries are establishing direct relationships with local business organizations, either by joining associations or meeting with business people to detail library resources. Based on the ULC survey, more than sixty percent (60%) of libraries providing business services have established relationships with local Chambers of Commerce and Small Business Development Centers. Stronger connections with business and economic development professionals are spreading the use of powerful online small business resources to new constituents and agency partners.

*Pima Public Library: Local Arizona Economic Development Center.*

The Business Info Center at the Pima Public library in Tucson (AZ) is teamed up with twenty-seven (27) other public and community college libraries across the state to establish a network called the Arizona Economic Development Centers (EDIC). The network is working to build partnerships among libraries, businesses, and economic development professionals. The library’s objective is to expand access to current small business information resources, especially in smaller communities throughout Arizona, thereby expanding the role and visibility of libraries as part of the “support system” for local economic development. EDIC was initiated by the Economic Development Library Committee, which includes members from the business and economic development communities as well as information...
specialists from libraries throughout the state. It is a joint effort between the Arizona State Library, Archives and Public Records (ASLAPR) and the Arizona Strategic Planning for Economic Development (ASPED), a coalition formed to create quality jobs by attracting, retaining, and nourishing value-added clusters of enterprises. Business support networking takes place at both state and local levels. Locally, the business librarian is active on local economic development boards. The library has also teamed up with the Small Business Development Center at the Pima County Community College to host meetings and info-sessions on business research at the local library. Local for-profit business centers now see the library as a partner, and regularly invite business librarians to speak and give instruction on the use of business information sources and services at their workshops and meetings.

Direct Support for Business Planning/Start-up. Libraries with staff capacity and facilities are now providing small business support workshops. These workshops draw heavily on library information resources, help people build business plans, identify suppliers and competitors, track consumer demographics, find and use public records, and spot industry trends. One program, highlighted below, helps people create competitive business plans and, through a partnership with the community economic development fund of Citigroup, provides seed money for individuals who produce the strongest plans.


Brooklyn Public Library’s Business Library is one of the largest public business libraries and operates in one of the most dynamic small business markets in the country. As of 2000, 91% of the approximately 38,704 establishments in Brooklyn had fewer than 20 employees. Over 100,000 individuals there file Schedule C tax returns, indicating that they are the sole proprietors of their businesses (BEDC SBS Commercial Revitalization Project Application). Though the Business Library provides a wide range of business information services, its Power Up competition, sponsored by Citigroup Financial Services, also provides access to start-up capital. The competition is open to entrepreneurs and new Brooklyn-based businesses. Competitors receive instruction on writing a business plan, financing, marketing and building a business. The program targets Brooklyn residents, 18 years and older, who are either U.S. citizens or U.S. permanent residents. At the end of the competition, a panel of judges reviews the business plans and chooses a set of finalists. Each finalist is required to make a presentation of his or her business plan. The first place winner of the Business Library competition receives $15,000 with two runners-up each receiving $5,000. In addition, winners receive business assistance services valued at $5,000. In 2005, winners of the competition were able to leverage the prize money to secure a larger loan to open their Brooklyn-based bistro.

Program Partnerships with Local Business Support Agencies. Partnering locally to provide small business workshops in the library is a common strategy identified by public libraries seeking to broaden use of their small business services. Partnerships provide the library with greater expertise in business development instruction. Partnering agencies enjoy a broader audience of prospective entrepreneurs and training space.

Columbus Metropolitan Library: Base of a Successful Enterprise (B.A.S.E).

While the Columbus Metropolitan Library (CML) is involved in a number of small and large initiatives, the partnership between the Science, Business and News Division (Business Division) at the Main Branch of the CML and the Central Ohio Small Business Development Center (CO-SBDC) is generating some of the most important and largest library commitments. In 2002, the library and CO-SBDC developed a small business development workshop called Base of A Successful Enterprise (B.A.S.E.). The Center takes the lead in managing and staffing the workshop, while library staff provides detailed overviews of library resources available to workshop participants. The monthly workshop is offered free of charge and is open to anyone with a pre-venture, start-up or existing business. For the state agency, the B.A.S.E. workshop provides a first point of contact for services. After the workshop, clients interested in getting more intensive business support services can go directly to the CO-SBDC for further technical assistance. Entrepreneurs benefit from the B.A.S.E. program in the library because they get free and key information in particular, current online business, finance and product databases, which are at the heart of researching, starting up, and sustaining a successful small business.

OUTCOMES: WHY LIBRARY SMALL BUSINESS SUPPORT STRATEGIES MAKE SENSE

- Reduced market entry barriers and costs for prospective entrepreneurs through the provision of business planning workshops and access to current online, print, and media resources
- Reduced costs and improved business performance of existing entrepreneurs, via free access to a wide range of current business resources
- Reduced operation costs and more effective outreach for small business development agencies via access to library facilities, business information resources, and a larger pool of local potential and existing entrepreneurs
**STRATEGIES FOR BROADENING THE IMPACT OF SMALL BUSINESS INITIATIVES**

**Invest in targeted staff development and training.** Ensure that staff is familiar with and trained on the key online business resources most commonly sought by local entrepreneurs.

**Explore ways to build community-wide access to business information resources.** As partnerships with local businesses and agencies develop, investigate ways to get wide distribution and use of business online databases, some of the most expensive subscription services purchased by public libraries. Business centers in public libraries could also explore ways to share costs of subscription services with area small business support or area economic development agencies.

**Aggressively market business resources.** Many business people do not think of the public library as a source of business assistance. Interviews revealed a lack of public awareness about business resources available at the library and online. Business service librarians should investigate why certain businesses use public libraries while others do not, and collect more market information on the preferences and behaviors of business information consumers, using that data to further refine marketing efforts that promote local collections and support services.

**Understand and support small business clusters.** Economic development professionals are increasingly noticing that networks and clusters of businesses act as catalysts for innovation, strengthening and diversifying the local business base. These can be clusters of “secondary” suppliers to local large businesses, or networks of small businesses that share connections because of products, services, transportation, and communications. Industry or business clustering is proving particularly useful in negotiating today’s increasingly competitive and global market place. Networks and clusters are helping individual enterprises overcome scale and capability limits. They are facilitating the generation of new ideas, jobs, and commercial opportunities. Identifying local synergistic business operations and sharing information contributes to the growth of business clusters. Supporting cluster strategies means gathering and sharing data on local conditions, and building local product, customer, and supplier networks. Business services staff in libraries should be aware of the existing and potential local landscape of business clusters.

**Understand small business financing.** Capital is another critical resource needed at every stage of business development - start-up, stabilization, and expansion. A thorough understanding of small business finance resources can help librarians guide entrepreneurs to capital sources that can be used to translate business ideas into products and services, and to purchase fixed assets, such as buildings and equipment. Librarians specializing in business services should be familiar with the range of financial programs that support small business development, and that help make small businesses more attractive to private investors and lenders.

**Provide tailored support for micro-enterprises.** With access to public computers, public libraries already provide support to many home-based micro-enterprises. The importance of this informal enterprise sector of employment is just beginning to be recognized, particularly in terms of the support they provide for low-income families. Successful micro-enterprises often lead to the establishment of sound smaller businesses. Public libraries should identify and support the specific business information needs of area micro-enterprises, as well as developing partnerships with local technical assistance providers.

**CONCLUSION**

The availability of vast new online business information resources through public libraries is a vital resource for new entrepreneurs. Whether providing information on regulations associated with incorporating a new business, assisting with business plan development and registration, or helping small businesses access critical information on finance and product databases, local libraries are now providing more business resource information than ever before.

In larger communities, with multiple small business support agencies, public libraries are identifying and filling gaps in the formal and informal support networks and are offering specialized services to specific populations or sectors. In smaller communities, libraries are a principal source of information to area micro-, small, and mid-sized businesses. While major corporations will frequently have ready access to information from online sources, small business operators are learning to turn to the library.

The potential for public libraries to strengthen economic growth and resilience in the micro- and small business sectors is significant. Just as new research shows that students who do not have access to online research cannot compete with students who do, small businesses that do not have the ability to adapt and reposition their businesses with current and detailed online information are at a serious disadvantage in the competitive, global new economy.
ECONOMIC AND PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT often go 
hand in hand. A variety of place-based strategies 
have long been at the core of public-private 
economic development endeavors. Some strategies 
try to create destinations with constant activity by 
combining office complexes, restaurants, retail spaces, and 
housing. Other strategies feature cultural districts, which 
include performance venues, arts organizations, individual 
artists and arts-based businesses within a larger business or 
residential district. Still others focus less on buildings and 
more on integrating services and amenities, such as public 
markets and squares. Many strategies have used public 
facility investments to catalyze new development and 
stabilize existing residential neighborhoods and downtowns, 
increasing property values and commercial tax revenues.

While the case study research for this report was focused 
primarily on library contributions to human resource 
development strategies, many examples of how of public 
library facilities act as catalysts for place-based economic 
development surfaced, and will be highlighted in this 
chapter. While library facilities are widely recognized as 
adding safety or amenity value to neighborhoods, public 
libraries are playing a role in a wide variety of commercial and 
mixed-use developments as well.

PUBLIC LIBRARIES 
CONTRIBUTE TO PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

- Central libraries as downtown attractions
- Integrating branch libraries into commercial areas
- Building more economically vibrant urban spaces
- Libraries as players in mixed-use developments
- Creating library hybrids

Central libraries as downtown attractions. Center city 
library developments have received a tremendous amount 
of attention in recent years. Designed by some of the leading 
architects around the world, these multi-million dollar 
facilities have contributed considerable visual appeal to 
downtown business districts. These dramatic new buildings 
have added another, less talked about feature as well. They 
have created vibrant public spaces that attract a steady 
stream of visitors to areas that often lie dormant after 
business hours and during weekends. In city after city, new 
downtown libraries are followed by an immediate and 
sustained boost in circulation and library use. The Denver 
Public Library, which finished the expansion of its downtown 
library in 1995, saw the number of daily visits double from 
1,500 to 3,000. The Seattle Public Library, which opened in 
2004 draws 8,000 visitors a day, twice the circulation of the 
old central library facility. Although the Des Moines Public 
Library just opened the doors of its new Central Library in 
April 2006, increased demand is already apparent, and they 
have increased the hours of operation to provide greater 
accessibility for downtown library customers. While the 
specific economic impact of the new downtown libraries will 
certainly vary from city to city, one point is certainly clear: 
new central city libraries are now attracting visitors to 
downtown areas in a manner reminiscent of the heyday of 
the downtown department store.

Integrating branch libraries into commercial areas. 
Whether located in malls or inserted into corner shopping 
strips, public libraries are finding a complementary niche by 
providing a public service in commercial areas. Mall libraries, 
which in some locations may be open up to 80 hours per
week, make books, computers, and other resources accessible to those who may not consider going to a traditional library. For some library systems the mall locations do not function as full service branches but rather as portals into the library system, offering a fraction of the services and amenities that would be available at a branch library. However, some systems are inserting full service branches into malls and shopping strips that until recently were strictly commercial. One of the larger examples of a full service mall branch can be found in Indianapolis. Indianapolis-Marion County Public Library’s Glendale Branch features a full service branch library in the Glendale shopping mall. The 33,000 square foot Glendale Branch library, which opened in October 2000, commands the space of an anchor tenant, with its own dramatic outdoor mall entrance. The Glendale branch library features 37 public computers with Internet access, standard office software and printing services, free wireless Internet access, copy machines, public meeting rooms, and laptops for in-house use and self-checkout.

Building more economically vibrant urban spaces. Thoughtful placement of public library branches can catalyze urban areas in need of economic boost. The Memphis Public Library's South Branch, once located in a quiet residential neighborhood in the south side of Memphis bordering the State of Mississippi, moved to a larger facility located in a commercial shopping strip in an industrial section of town that had lost a considerable number of jobs in the past decade. Six of the eight storefronts were vacant when the library moved in. Now, four years later, the shopping strip is completely full. Though the South Branch library is not the only factor in the revitalization of the South Mall commercial strip, it is reasonable to conclude that local businesses reap a "spin-off" benefit from the 100,000 visitors that stop by the library each year.

Libraries as players in mixed-use developments. Library leaders and private developers across the country are beginning to notice distinct advantages to incorporating public libraries into mixed use, retail and residential areas. In the small town of Atascadero, at the foot of the rapidly growing wine country in San Luis Obispo County California, a unique partnership has emerged between the San Luis Obispo City-County Pubic Library and a private local developer. The library, which had sorely needed a new building, has agreed to secure a central area in the new Colony Square development for its new Atascadero branch library. For its part, the library will get a new facility in a more centralized and convenient part of town. The partnership provides the developer, who had tried unsuccessfully to attract two different national bookstore chains, with a steady, long-term tenant. Retailers that are moving into the Colony’s 140,000 square foot development are excited about the library partnership because the library functions as an anchor tenant by bringing a considerable amount of foot traffic to the area, without directly competing for commercial sales.

Another example of public libraries being integrated into mixed residential and commercial developments, at a slightly larger scale, can be seen approximately 20 miles north of Washington, D.C. Rockville Town Square is an ambitious $352 million dollar redevelopment effort in the old city center of Rockville, Maryland. The new Towne Square which will offer 644 condominiums, 180,000 square feet of retail and restaurant space, a cultural arts building and a football-field–size town square, will also be the home of the Rockville Regional Library, the largest library in the Montgomery County system. According to Ross Development and Investment, the developer of Rockville Town Square, the housing units are selling briskly, with the cost of some surpassing the $1 million mark. Key amenities identified by early buyers are the mix of shops, ease of access to public transportation and the new 100,000-square-feet state-of-the-art regional library.

Creating library hybrids. Joint-use facilities that combine public libraries with other community amenities are becoming more common in cities and towns across the country. In some cities public libraries are physically part of a local public elementary or middle school. In other communities, public libraries share space with community recreation centers or senior care facilities. Some joint ventures are borne out of economic necessity, as a way to leverage limited development resources or maximize the use of a publicly-owned property. In other communities, joint-use facilities are a product of a deliberate community planning process. The Cleveland Heights-University Heights Public Library - Main Library/Cultural Arts Campus is an example of the latter. After a lengthy community planning process the Cleveland Heights and University Heights Library decided to purchase an old youth services building across the street from its present location and embark on a rebuilding effort that would result in two new buildings connected by a second story walkway. The new library, which will consist of a program building on one side of the street– and a library service building on the other, will meet needs of area residents through expanded library services and targeted programming delivered in partnership with local agencies. The programming building of the new library will house after-school programs, an expanded children’s space with a computer area, separate space for teens with a homework center, additional computers and a seating which can be rearranged for specialized programming. The new facility will also feature space for theatrical productions, classes, and programs for children and adults in partnership with a local theater company and an art gallery and studio space for local artists.
OUTCOMES: HOW LIBRARIES CONTRIBUTE TO PLACE-BASED ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES

- Public library facilities are versatile, attractive components in a wide variety of developments – downtown, residential, mixed-use, commercial, and joint-use service sites.
- Public libraries in mixed-use and residential developments contribute to safety and quality of life.
- Long term tenancy of public libraries reduces some of the financial risk associated with building mixed-used developments.
- Public libraries attract foot traffic and can serve the anchor tenant function in commercial areas without directly competing with local businesses.

STRATEGIES FOR BROADENING THE IMPACT OF LIBRARIES IN PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENTS

Demonstrate that public and private services can work together in mutually supportive ways. When voters in local governments are asked to support referenda for libraries, the appeal is rarely supported by a discussion of the potential economic development contributions the library can provide. Integrating libraries into different types of developments keeps resources and services visible and accessible, and the amenity value of public libraries high.

Be proactive in identifying the ways in which public libraries can complement local development plans. Mixed-use developments are relatively new economic developments tools. Some economic development professionals may be unfamiliar with new development models that combine housing, retail and public services, including public libraries.

Provide data to change developer perceptions. Have library financial and use statistics ready to define the ways in which libraries may contribute to the financial success of prospective projects. Financiers tend to view mixed-use development as complex and difficult. Library financial information speaks to stability of rent and use statistics speak to the all important traffic that benefits adjacent retail businesses.

Understand some of the challenges inherent in shared buildings. Integrating public library facilities into private sector developments can present a number of challenges, because of the different approaches that local governments and private developers bring to the building process. For example, when the city or county wants to develop a civic project, architects plan for a 100-year life span, while private residential and mixed-use architects often plan at a different standard. One of the key elements in making this type of partnership work is to work through these different approaches in the early phase of the project. Even when building public joint-use facilities, such as schools and libraries, there are many issues best addressed in the design phase, such as access and security.

CONCLUSION

While this chapter only touches on the role of public libraries as catalysts for physical development, the past twenty years have witnessed an incredibly wide range of place-based development efforts in which public libraries play a supporting role. In major city centers like Seattle WA, Des Moines IA, Minneapolis MN, Salt Lake City UT, and Jacksonville FL multi-million dollar central libraries manage to make a considerable mark on the look and feel of downtown areas. In inner and outer suburbs, a plethora of new branch libraries and regional facilities are increasingly being integrated into commercial strips and malls, contributing the valued commodity of foot traffic to local businesses, anchoring redevelopment, and providing quality of life amenities to neighborhoods. More recently, developers of mixed-use projects have begun to incorporate public libraries into the initial design along side retail and residential spaces, adding significant public amenity value to burgeoning commercial, office, and residential corridors.

The fact that public libraries fit seamlessly into these vastly different environments is a testament to the versatility of the institution and the high degree of public value it enjoys. Whether located in a center city business district, suburban commercial corridor, mall, housing or retail development, demand for new public libraries, as measured by the circulation and library use statistics, consistently exceeds expectations. One would be hard pressed to identify another public or private development that could operate on such vastly different scales in so many different settings and attract such a diverse stream of visitors and consumers.
Conclusions ABOUT
PUBLIC LIBRARY CONTRIBUTIONS CHAPTER 6

WITH OVER 16,000 BRANCHES in over 9,000 systems across the country, public libraries are among the most widely distributed public services available to Americans. This report highlights some of the ways in which public library resources and services contribute to individual, family, and community economic vitality. The report shows that libraries are positioned to support the expansion of technology skills, continuous learning, critical research, and local-to-global networks of information that are the fuel of economies today.

Public libraries are logical partners for local economic development initiatives that focus on people and quality of life. They provide a broad range of information services to diverse constituencies. They are part of formal and informal community networks and initiatives that support education, jobs and careers, business and cultural activity, and civic pride. Library resources, services and facilities leverage and expand other local agencies’ capacity and expertise.

Public libraries are unique, open institutions, where people have access to information, technology and training on an as-needed basis. With digital information and greater outreach, libraries are transforming the way they interact with the public. They are becoming much more proactive and collaborative, contributing in a variety of ways to stronger local economic development conditions.

Early Literacy services are a key foundation for long-term economic success. Given strong and growing evidence that investments in early literacy yield a high return and compound over time, public libraries are expanding their traditional role in early literacy, engaging in high impact strategies with community partners. They are leading public awareness campaigns, reaching new mothers with materials and resources that promote reading early and often. Extensive early literacy training with home and professional child care givers is helping to raise levels of school readiness and success. Public libraries are reaching many young children and families in diverse neighborhoods across the country. These services are the first link in a chain of investments needed to build an educated, competitive workforce.

Library employment and career services are preparing workers with new technologies. With an array of public computers, Internet access, and training, public libraries are a first point of entry for many new technology users. Over ninety percent of public libraries regularly offer training to use and build technology skills. New library job and career service models are mobile and adaptable, providing value to both job seekers and employers. Increasingly, libraries are working with local partners to better understand local workforce trends and to have a greater community-wide impact on workforce readiness and “retooling” in an era of rapid and transformative change.

Small business resources and programs are lowering barriers to market entry. One of the biggest traditional barriers to small business has been access to current data on products, suppliers, financing sources, and competitors. Public libraries are the source for new online business databases that reach entrepreneurs around the clock. Additionally, libraries are offering an increasing variety of
## Figure 3: Public Library Strategies and Contributions to Local Economic Development

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PUBLIC LIBRARY STRATEGIES</th>
<th>ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CONTRIBUTIONS</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Early Literacy</strong></td>
<td>School readiness/academic success</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Campaigns</td>
<td>Elevate awareness of the need to read early and often</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baby Lap-Sit to PreK reading activities</td>
<td>Elevate levels of early literacy, expand learning resources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outreach to parents and caregivers</td>
<td>Elevate levels of early literacy, improve quality of child care</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child care training and certification</td>
<td>Strengthen community-wide child care provider network, improve child care worker qualifications</td>
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<tr>
<th><strong>Workforce Development</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Access to technology</td>
<td>Expand quantity and competencies of local workforce, long-term community economic capacity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access to internet</td>
<td>Expand employment aptitudes, competencies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access to technology training</td>
<td>Expand access to employment search and application opportunities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English language training, adult literacy resources &amp; services</td>
<td>Expand employment skills and opportunities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Career skills workshops (w/agencies)</td>
<td>Provide support for career pathways, expand audiences/reach of agencies</td>
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<tr>
<th><strong>Small Business Support</strong></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Access to databases and other resources</td>
<td>Reduce cost for research and planning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technical assistance for start-ups and micro-enterprises</td>
<td>Reduce costs and barriers to entering market, reduce failure rates, expand audience for other local agencies involved in small business support, expand small business sector</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technical assistance to existing businesses</td>
<td>Strengthen viable small business sector, expand reach and lower costs of other local agencies with shared facilities and resources, increase clustering of enterprises for competitive advantages</td>
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<tr>
<th><strong>Physical Development</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Downtown (often “central” or “main”)</td>
<td>Contribute to vibrant urban and suburban life</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mixed-use, residential</td>
<td>Anchor development, generate foot traffic, revitalize commercial and cultural activity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mall, commercial development</td>
<td>Provide amenity value, generate foot traffic, increase quality of life and safety</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joint-Use</td>
<td>Generate traffic, but not sales competition, strengthens developer financing pro forma</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Reduce development costs, generate synergy of consumers/service providers</td>
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business development workshops conducted with agencies and corporate partners. These resources and programs are reducing market entry costs for start-up businesses, and strengthening the important local sector of small and micro-enterprises. Libraries are in the vanguard, trying new business development strategies. In Brooklyn, seed money is awarded to promising new ventures. In Phoenix (AZ), the public library is part of a statewide network of business, economic development and library professionals who are seeking to expand and diversify the economic base by promoting synergy among clusters of enterprises.

**Public library buildings are catalysts for physical development.** Libraries are frequented local destinations. Researchers for this study repeatedly found that public libraries are highly regarded, and are seen as contributing to stability, safety and quality of life in neighborhoods. Among private sector developers of malls, commercial corridors, mixed-use developments and joint-use facilities, libraries are gaining recognition for other qualities – their ability to attract tremendous foot traffic, provide long-term tenancy, and complement neighboring retail and cultural destinations.

Making Cities Stronger adds to the body of research pointing to a shift in the role of public libraries - from passive places for recreational reading and research to active agents for local economic development. Libraries are helping to raise levels of literacy, digital dexterity, and entrepreneurial activity in communities, working collaboratively within local, regional and state networks. Rather than succumbing to obsolescence with the advent of new information technologies, the basic business of public libraries is being recast.

Figure 3 provides a quick reference summary to the strategies and contributions to economic development noted in this report. Figure 4 provides a summary of thought-starter ideas for considering how public libraries might strengthen and broaden the impact of their resources further which are found at the ends of Chapters 2-5.

Public libraries are positioned to fuel not only new, but next economies given the rise of new service and partnership models, and effective "niche" roles in building strong, resilient local economies and vibrant, livable places.

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**FIGURE 4: Ways Public Libraries Can Broaden their Impact on and Contributions to Local Economic Development Conditions**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Early Literacy/School Readiness</th>
<th>Small Business Support</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Broaden support for outreach</td>
<td>- Invest in targeted staff training on new databases</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Establish strong partnerships with area child care providers</td>
<td>- Build community-wide access to business information resources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Continually evaluate early literacy programs and collect data on</td>
<td>- Aggressively market library business resources</td>
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<tr>
<td>effectiveness over time</td>
<td>- Understand and support small business clusters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Understand small business financing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Provide tailored support for micro-enterprises</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Workforce Development</th>
<th>Physical Development</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Establish strong connections with area workforce development</td>
<td>- Demonstrate the symbiotic benefits of public and private development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>agencies</td>
<td>- Identify ways public libraries complement local development plans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Build better employer connections</td>
<td>- Provide data to change developer perceptions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Know your customers – what do they need?  how do they prefer to</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>get it?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Know the broader workforce outlook</td>
<td></td>
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</table>
APPENDIX

REFERENCES


Karoly, Lynn, et al. 1998. “Investing in our Children: What We Know and Don’t Know About the Cost and Benefit of Early Childhood Interventions.” Santa Monica CA: RAND.


SURVEY SITES

Alameda County Library
Albuquerque/Bernalillo County Library System
Allen County Public Library
Anchorage Municipal Libraries
Ann Arbor District Library
Atlanta-Fulton Public Library System
Baltimore County Public Library
Brooklyn Public Library
Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh
Carroll County Public Library
Chattahoochee Valley Regional Library System
Chesterfield County Public Library
Cleveland Public Library
Columbus Metropolitan Library
Dayton Metro Library
DeKalb County Public Library
District of Columbia Public Library
East Baton Rouge Parish Library
Fresno County Library
Grand Rapids Public Library
Hartford Public Library
Indianapolis Marion County Public Library
Jacksonville Public Library
Johnson County Library
Kansas City Public Library
Kern County Library
Lincoln City Libraries
Madison Public Library
Memphis Public Library
Metropolitan Library System
Milwaukee Public Library
Minneapolis Public Library
New York Public Library
Oshawa Public Library
Pierce County Library System
Pima County Public Library
Pioneer Library System
Providence Public Library
Public Libraries of Saginaw
Public Library of Charlotte and Mecklenburg County
Public Library of Cincinnati and Hamilton County
Public Library of Youngstown and Mahoning County
Queens Library
Redwood City Public Library
Saint Paul Public Library
Salt Lake City Public Library
San Francisco Public Library
San Luis Obispo City-County Library
Santa Clara County Library
Seattle Public Library
Sno-Isle Libraries
Spokane Public Library
Toledo-Lucas County Public Library
Worcester Public Library
CASE STUDY SITE INTERVIEWS

BROOKLYN, NY
Farid Ali
Co-Owner Bogata Latin Bistro
BPL, Business Library PowerUP Program Winner
Brooklyn, NY

Carrie Banks
Supervising Librarian
Child’s Place for Children with Special Needs
Brooklyn Public Library
Brooklyn, NY

Joan Bartholomeo
President
Brooklyn Economic Development Corporation
Brooklyn, NY

Jerome Bass
Cypress Hills Child Care Center
Brooklyn, NY

Shelly Drexler
William O’Connor School
Brooklyn, NY

Elisa Glenn
Community Outreach Specialist
Business Library
Brooklyn Public Library
Brooklyn, NY

Mary Graham
Director of Neighborhood Services
Brooklyn Public Library
Brooklyn, NY

Stuart Leffler
Mgr. Economic Development
Con Edison
Brooklyn, NY

Rachel Payne
Coordinator of Preschool Services
Brooklyn Public Library
Brooklyn, NY

Susan Phillips
Director, Business Library
Brooklyn Public Library
Brooklyn, NY

Letisha Wadsworth
Child Development Support Corporation
Brooklyn, NY

COLUMBUS, OH
Julie Arter
Business Information Specialist Science Business and News Division
Columbus Metropolitan Library
Columbus, OH

Pat Claey's
Early Childhood Specialist
Outreach Services Division
Columbus Metropolitan Library
Columbus, OH

LuAnn McCauley
Supervisor
Childcare Certification Unit
Franklin County Department of Job and Family Services
Columbus, OH

Nancy Stall
CBA, Special Program Coordinator
Ohio Small Business Development Centers at Columbus State Community College
Columbus, OH

Susan Studebaker
Associate Director of Public Services Public Services Administration
Columbus Metropolitan Library
Columbus, OH

Two early childhood program participants (childcare providers from the Family Childcare Storytime Program).

Three anonymous business program participants (attendees at the B.A.S.E. workshop).

FRESNO, CA
Rita Del Testa
Librarian, Kermin Branch Library
Fresno County Library
Kermin, CA

Monica Espinoza
Core Services Supervisor
Workforce Connection
Fresno, CA

Ralph Garcia
Director of Community Development
Economic Development Corporation
Fresno, CA

Gabriel Gonzalez
City Manager
City of Mendota, CA

Bernice Kao
Workforce Development Librarian
Fresno Public Library
Fresno, CA

Patricia Pondexter
Associate County Librarian
Fresno County Library
Fresno, CA

HARTFORD, CT
Mary Albro
Business Librarian
Hartford Public Library
Hartford, CT

Sadiyo Adell
Literacy Program Participant
Hartford Public Library
Hartford, CT

Louise Blalock
Library Director
Hartford Public Library
Hartford, CT

Debra Carrier Perry
Early Childhood Literacy
Hartford Public Library
Hartford, CT

Catherine D’Italia
Library Development Officer
Hartford Public Library
Hartford, CT
Willie Dowdell  
Small Business Program Participant  
Hartford Public Library  
Hartford, CT

Homa Naficy  
Librarian  
American Place  
Hartford Public Library  
Hartford, CT

MEMPHIS, TN

Pam Brooks  
South Branch Manager  
Memphis Public Library  
Memphis, TN

Judith Drescher  
Director  
Memphis Public Library  
Memphis, TN

Heather Lawson  
Adult Services Coordinator  
Memphis Public Library  
Memphis, TN

Audrey May  
JobLINC, 211  
Memphis Public Library  
Memphis, TN

Lakshmie Napagoda  
DeNeuville Learning Center  
Memphis, TN

Mary Seratt  
Children’s Service Coordinator  
Memphis Public Library  
Memphis, TN

Gary Rowe  
Memphis Minority Business Development Center  
Memphis, TN

Barb Shultz  
Senior Manager, Business and Sciences  
Memphis Public Library  
Memphis, TN

Inger Upchurch  
North Branch Manager  
Memphis Public Library  
Memphis, TN

Damone Virgilio  
Director of Staff Development  
Memphis Public Library  
Memphis, TN

NEWARK NJ

Wendy Giron  
One-Stop Career Center  
Newark, NJ

Wilma J. Grey  
Director  
Newark Public Library  
Newark, NJ

Matthew McDermott  
New Community Workforce Development Center  
Newark, NJ

Clement A. Price  
Board of Governors  
Distinguished Service Professor  
Rutgers University  
Newark, NJ

PROVIDENCE, RI

Kathyellen Bullard  
Staff Administrator, PPL  
Providence Public Library  
Providence, RI

Tonya Butler  
Daycare Provider  
YMCA Childcare Center: Love for All Childcare  
Providence, RI

Stacey Carter  
Center for Women & Enterprise  
Providence, RI

Evelyn Castillo  
Literacy Teacher  
The Family Literacy Program  
At the Providence Public Library  
Providence, RI

Dorey Conway  
Librarian  
Providence Public Library  
Providence, RI

Nazly Guzman-Singletary  
Assistant Director - AmeriCorps  
Ready to Learn Providence  
Providence, RI

Brian Kirby  
Daycare Provider  
YMCA Childcare Center: Love for All Childcare  
Providence, RI

Stan Kuziel  
Director of Project Operations  
Ready to Learn Providence  
Providence, RI

Julissa Lugo  
AmeriCorps Member - Knight Memorial Branch  
Ready To Learn Providence  
Providence, RI

Louise Moulton  
Literacy Coordinator  
Providence Public Library  
Providence, RI

Soran Pan  
Coordinator of Teen Power Program  
Providence Public Library  
Providence, RI

Ann Poulos  
Business Librarian  
Providence Public Library  
Providence, RI

Matt Proctor  
Daycare Provider  
Y Child Care  
Providence, RI

Shane Sher  
PPL Staff  
Providence Public Library  
Providence, RI

Maria Tacco  
Communications Officer  
Providence Public School Department  
Providence, RI

Karissa Tashjian  
Literacy Teacher  
The Family Literacy Program  
At the Providence Public Library  
Providence, RI

Dale Thompson  
Library Director  
Providence Public Library  
Providence, RI

Ana Vargas  
Bilingual Computer Trainer  
Providence Public Library  
Providence, RI

Erica Wilder  
Early Literacy Coordinator  
Providence Public Library  
Providence, RI
CONSULTATIONS WITH OTHER LIBRARY PROFESSIONALS

Nicole Edwards
Extension Services Librarian
Rodman Public Library
Alliance, OH

Patience K. Jackson
Library Building Consultant
Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners
Boston, MA

Matt Kane
Head of State Aid to Public Libraries
Office of Commonwealth Libraries
Pennsylvania Department of Education
Harrisburg, PA

Paul Richardson
Tally Vineyard
Arroyo Grande, CA

TUCSON, AZ

Debbie Elver
President
Clearview Business Solutions
Tucson, AZ

Fran Embrey Senechal
Programs Coordinator
Metropolitan Education Commission
Tucson, AZ

Tom Farmer
Small Business Librarian
Pima County Public Library
Tucson, AZ

Nancy Ledeboer
Library Director
Pima County Public Library
Tucson, AZ

Gina Macaluso
Coordinator of Youth Services
Pima County Public Library
Tucson, AZ

Alma Peralta
Computer Instructor at El Pueblo Branch
Pima County Public Library
Tucson, AZ

Mary Sanchez
Youth Services Librarian
Pima County Public Library
Tucson, AZ

Nancy Smith
Vice President, Strategic Services
Tucson Regional Economic Opportunities
Tucson, AZ

June Webb-Vignery
Director
Metropolitan Education Commission
Tucson, AZ

Bette-Lee Fox
Library Journal
New York, NY

Gerry Rowland
Consultant
State Library of Iowa
Des Moines, IA
The Middleton Library represents the best of the award’s criteria: sense of place in the community, municipal support, stellar staff, creative and popular programming, great holdings, and an exceptionally engaged community. Board President Patricia Bornhofen says, “Anyone who has worried that libraries might be becoming obsolete in the new electronic era should go to the Middleton Library to see how unfounded that concern is. We’ve had almost three years now of unprecedented records for circulation and attendance. The real concern may be parking.”

In fact, following a remodeling and expansion project that was completed in 2004, circulation is up substantially and program attendance has increased an amazing 300%. That’s not surprising, given the friendly and knowledgeable staff team, led by Director Paul Nelson, and their focus on tailoring service to their users. The engaged library board, active Friends group, and strong support from city officials also position this library to provide exemplary service.

City Administrator Mike Davis says, “Middleton Public Library serves as the hub of a dynamic Downtown Middleton, inviting visitors to explore our City both at the Library and beyond.”

The Middleton Public Library just might be one reason Money Magazine ranked the city number one on their 2007 list of “Best Places to Live.”

----as noted on Wisconsin Library Association’s award citation
Middleton Public Library “Tenth Anniversary” Focus Group Discussions

In 1997 the Middleton Public Library held a series of focus group discussions to gather your assessment of the Library and to find out what future directions you wanted us to take. Based on that input, we added Sunday hours, expanded our services to teens, and created a quiet space on the library’s lower level.

Having accomplished much of what was asked of us then, we again turned to you in 2007 to assess new challenges to be addressed. In March, we sponsored a series of six focus group discussions, which were conducted by Library Consultant Ethel Himmel, who provided the same services for us in 1997. The general responses were very positive and confirm the fact that we are indeed moving in the right direction. Unlike 1997, we uncovered no “big ticket” items; the most common responses pointed to the need for us to do more of what we already do.

Here’s a brief summary of questions & answers.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What do you like best?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Friendly and knowledgeable staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Absence of fines</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sunday hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Programs for adults, teens, and children</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What about the idea of a branch library?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Preference for a full-service facility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Additional financial support for more materials, programs, and staff for current facility</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Where would you like to see improvements</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>More programs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Larger browsing collections, particularly for audiovisual materials</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year-round Sunday hours and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>later Friday evening hours</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How do you like recent expansion &amp; remodeling?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Project gets rave reviews</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Absolutely beautiful” offered more than once</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lower level quiet area is a great asset.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Record Year for Program Attendance

In 2007, the library hosted a total of 513 programs attracting a total attendance of 12,210.
The Middleton Public Library’s “Growth Chart”

A tremendous amount of growth has taken place since the new library facility opened. At face value, this growth may look uneven, based on the percentages in the table below, but it truly represents the library staff’s best efforts to meet the changing and expanding needs of the people we serve.

What follows is a snapshot of the library’s growth in from three key years:

1990: A new library facility opens for business
2003: The library begins a 6-month remodeling and expansion project.
2007: Our best year yet!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Library Service Data</th>
<th>1990</th>
<th>2003</th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>1990-2007 % increase</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hardcover books</td>
<td>40,076</td>
<td>52,136</td>
<td>71,428</td>
<td>80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paperback books</td>
<td>3,340</td>
<td>13,500</td>
<td>16,150</td>
<td>385%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Audiovisual materials</td>
<td>2,687</td>
<td>13,918</td>
<td>16,357</td>
<td>510%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Magazines &amp; newspapers</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>284</td>
<td>295</td>
<td>48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annual circulation</td>
<td>255,011</td>
<td>523,796</td>
<td>716,348</td>
<td>180%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internet access computers</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>↑</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fulltime-equivalent staff</td>
<td>10.0</td>
<td>15.5</td>
<td>20.125</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annual hours of operation</td>
<td>3,016</td>
<td>3,528</td>
<td>3,528</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annual budget</td>
<td>$358,825</td>
<td>$987,280</td>
<td>$1,439,513</td>
<td>268%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City of Middleton share</td>
<td>$301,620 (84%)</td>
<td>$621,571 (63%)</td>
<td>$927,218 (64%)</td>
<td>205%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dane County share</td>
<td>$57,205 (16%)</td>
<td>$365,709 (37%)</td>
<td>$512,295 (36%)</td>
<td>800%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Inside the Numbers

- The Middleton Public Library’s collection has one of the highest turnover rates in the state. On average, each item circulates an average of 7 times, compared with a statewide average of 2.6.
- Of the 387 public libraries in Wisconsin, Middleton’s annual circulation ranks 18th.
- An average of 203 items per hour are checked out of the library, compared with 84 in 1990.
- The 31 Internet access computers were used a total of 87,500 hours during 2007.

Some of the titles chosen for our adult, teen, and parent/child book discussions in 2007
Professional Librarian Staff at the Middleton Public Library

Paul Nelson (Director)  
Pat Williams (Head of Information Technology)  
Liz Dannenbaum (Head of Adult Services)  
Elizabeth Bauer (Head of Circulation Services)  
Rebecca Van Dan (Head of Young Adult Services)  
Svetha Hetzler (Head of Children’s Services)  
Lori Bell (Youth Services Librarian)  
Sarah Hartman (Adult Services Librarian)

Library staff (Katie Adkins, Elizabeth Bauer, Paul Nelson, Jenny Carr, and Rebecca Van Dan show off their “Library of the Year” t-shirts.

Thanks for making 2007 the Middleton Public Library’s most successful year yet! And I sincerely thank the entire community of Middleton for the privilege of serving as Director for the past 22 years. I’m sure the Library will continue to be in very capable hands after my retirement.

Paul Nelson, Library Director
MISSION STATEMENT: TO MAKE A POSITIVE DIFFERENCE IN THE QUALITY OF LIFE IN OUR COMMUNITY BY:

- Offering a safe and welcoming environment in an aesthetically pleasing and conveniently organized facility.
- Defending Wisconsin’s 130-year tradition of free and open access to knowledge, information, and the diversity of ideas.
- Protecting the privacy of library patrons.
- Meeting the educational, informational, and recreational needs of the community through access to traditional and nontraditional library resources.
- Providing highly competent library staff who works with the board and city officials to develop and implement clearly focused and shared goals.
- Responding to current library and information access trends.

Activity Levels Reach an All-time High

Reaching record high numbers in 2009, Middleton Public Library circulated over 794,500 items, an increase of 5.1% over the previous year. The numbers have been on a steady upward trend since 1990 and continue to climb in 2010.

According to projected circulation numbers, by 2014 circulation will exceed 1 million items, which means an anticipated 25.5% increase over the next five years.

In addition, the number of items Middleton residents borrowed from LINK libraries surged upward from 63,500 in 1998 to over 222,000 in 2009, a 250% increase over a period of 11 years.

Likewise, Middleton Public Library loaned more than 226,000 in 2009, compared to 77,000 in 1998, or a 296% jump in 11 years.

Daily library visitor counts are another indicator of community popularity. In 2009, the library averaged over 27,000 people per month, for a total of more than 335,700 visitors.

From infants to seniors, the library offers programs that promote literacy, present new ideas and lifelong learning, and serve as a community resource.

In 2009, the library held 572 programs, 90 for adults and 482 for children and teens. Total attendance at these programs was 15,065 (or 1,179 adults and 13,895 children and teens).

All programming is made possible through the Friends of the Library.

GOING GREEN is a smart investment

In 2009, the Library implemented new Green initiatives to support local economic and environmental sustainability efforts by: offering portable energy meters for monitoring electricity usage; providing a Go Green! collection of books, magazines, videos and audio for learning about green lifestyle choices, creating access to online resources on Green topics from energy efficient computers; and providing library program experiences, such as an Earth Day nature walk, craft sessions using recycled materials and a presentation with environmental activist Sonya Newenhouse.
From the Director’s Desk:

2009 was a challenging year for many people, businesses and organizations. The Library was no exception. As an administrator, I confess, this was one of the most difficult years I’ve experienced in my 20-year career. Middleton Public Library faced drastic cuts to the materials budget. We lost $58,000 in our book budget and $10,000 in our audiobook and music budget. Library employees were required to contribute a greater portion of their income towards healthcare insurance, and all employee salaries were frozen.

Despite these obstacles, our dedicated library staff, insightful members of the board, hardworking Friends of the Library supporters, and faithful volunteers continue to search for new and creative ways to help deliver exceptional service, programming and community-building opportunities. We are actively exploring new technology and fresh ideas to increase efficiency and save dollars. It is no accident that Middleton is one of the busiest libraries in Dane County!

In 2010, you can expect to see a new online catalog with many new options, additional language learning tools, and great programs, classes and materials to improve your quality of life and promote a lifetime of learning. It has been an honor to serve you and I look forward to meeting you in the stacks!

Kind regards,

Pamela K. Westby
"There are many little ways to enlarge your child's world. Love of books is the best of all."
~ Jacqueline Kennedy ~

Hardcover books are still... the most commonly circulated item in the library!

Summer Reading Gives Boost
In 2009, more than 1,200 children participated in the Summer Library Program. Children who read during the summer vacation maintain their level of reading proficiency. By the end of elementary school, summer readers can be as much as two years ahead of their peers who don’t read during the summer!

Some of the NEW programs offered in 2009:
- Drop-in Needlework
- Easy Resumes and Cover Letters
- One-on-one Computer Learning Sessions
- Bilingual Storytime
- Mock Newbery Book Club
- 'Tween Knitting & eco-crafters
- Accessory and Hat Making Class
- Hootinanny for families
- PAWS to Read
- Pajamarama!
Economic Benefits, During Hard Economic Times

The library is part of the solution by strengthening individuals and contributing to the local economy.

At a remarkably low cost of $62 per citizen per year, residents in Middleton receive access to library resources that have an impact on the economy, including job searching, resume writing, starting and managing small businesses, and study tools for educational and career-development.

Library computers provided over 157,000 sessions for patrons who were completing online job applications, filing taxes, registering for college courses, setting up email accounts, locating consumer reports evaluations and accessing updated medical information.

In Middleton, wireless Internet access provides service to laptop users free of charge during library hours. In 2009, more than 5,100 people accessed our free Wi-Fi, or an average of 97 logins per week.

Our computer instruction programs teach people skills they need to be successful in school, at work, and in life.

While using the library, patrons often combine their visit with other stops in the community for services and shopping. In this way, the Library helps to strengthen individuals and positively impact the local economy.

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### Growth in the Numbers

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<th>2009</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Annual circulation</td>
<td>255,011</td>
<td>523,796</td>
<td>794,573</td>
<td>212%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internet access computers</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>112%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fulltime-equivalent staff</td>
<td>10.0</td>
<td>15.5</td>
<td>21.2</td>
<td>17%</td>
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<td>Annual hours of operation</td>
<td>3,016</td>
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<td>3,520</td>
<td>17%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Annual budget</td>
<td>$358,825</td>
<td>$987,280</td>
<td>$1,704,819</td>
<td>375%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Professional Library Staff at the Middleton Public Library

- Pamela K. Westby (Director)
- Patrick Williams (Head of Information Technology)
- Liz Dannenbaum (Head of Adult Services)
- Elizabeth Bauer (Head of Circulation Services)
- Rebecca Van Dan (Head of Young Adult Services)
- Svetha Hetzler (Head of Children’s Services)
- Amanda Struckmeyer (Youth Services Librarian)
- Sarah Hartman (Technical Services Librarian)
12 Reasons to Celebrate Middleton Public Library in 2010

1. The annual number of items checked out at Middleton Public Library climbed to an all time high of 803,433, making Middleton the third busiest public library in Dane County.
3. Middleton Public Library now offers the public 50 Internet-equipped computers, including: 8 laptops, 2 netbooks, a literacy station for children, teen and ‘tween game PCs, and WIFI service.
4. Over 250 people participated and folded more than 3,000 pieces of paper during a series of origami workshops for all ages (from 4 – 88 years). The models were used to create a huge public art piece (29 feet by 5 feet). The beautiful origami mural is on permanent display over the Circulation Desk at the Middleton Public Library; has models of all shapes, sizes, and textures; and features 13 different designs.
5. In 2010, Kindle reading devices were introduced and made available for checkout at the Middleton Public Library.
6. Staff at the Middleton Public Library answered over 27,100 reference questions during the past year.
7. Middleton Public Library established a second Endowment Fund, specifically for the expansion of the Large Print collection.
8. Middleton Public Library partnered with Wisconsin Chiba, Inc., to host an event featuring authentic performers from Chiba, Japan.
9. Library cardholders searched for information using Middleton Public Library’s online databases more than 4,400 times. In 2010, *A to Z Maps Database, Mango Language Learning* and *Consumer Reports* were added to the list of titles and are available in house or remotely.
10. Friends of the Library sponsored 558 programs for children, ‘tweens, teens and adults at the Middleton Public Library; and more than 16,700 people attended.
11. New outdoor reading cove near the front entrance was funded by a grant from the Middleton Library Endowment Fund.
12. Among the new furniture in the Middleton Public Library, the Youth Services area has a cozy reading nook for kids of all ages.
LOOKING AHEAD TO 2011
…at the Middleton Public Library

1. Library visitors to the Middleton Public Library will browse and check out the new Serendipity Collection featuring extra copies of the current year’s most popular titles. This is an added collection and users will “serendipitously” find bestsellers in stock.
2. The addition of the online version of Value Line offers Middleton Public Library cardholders remote online access to investment information.
3. Visitors to the Middleton Public Library may ask at the Reference Desk to test drive some of the latest electronic reading devices, such as the Nook, iPad and Kobo.
4. Added sound proofing panels in the Middleton Public Library study rooms provide patrons with added privacy for small group sessions and tutoring.
5. Collaborating with the Wisconsin Women’s Business Initiative Corporation, the Middleton Public Library will offer free educational courses relevant to today’s job market.
6. New technology classes at the Middleton Public Library will help users learn skills, such as blogging and how to download a free library OverDrive ebook to their electronic reading devices.
7. The Middleton Public Library’s Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) project will make checkout easier and quicker.
8. A gaming console will be available for checkout at the Middleton Public Library.

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- Responding to current library and information access trends.
Join The Fold
Community Origami Mural Project

The idea for the project came about after some of our Library Board members saw the big origami wall installation designed by origami artist Ruthanne Bessman for the opening of the Overture Center for the Arts.

The Board really liked the idea of having another hands-on event, along with a permanent installation that could be viewed by the public after the workshops were completed, only this time at the Middleton Public Library. When contacted with the idea, Ruthanne enthusiastically agreed to the proposal and enlisted her good friend and talented three-dimensional artist Shirwil Lukes.

The response from the public was impressive!

- 250 participants folded
- 3,451 pieces of paper in
- 13 different designs to make
- 2,577 models, for a total of
- 840 sq. feet of paper into
  - 45 frames
  - 29 feet wide
  - 5 feet high

Artists:
Ruthanne Bessman & Shirwil Lukes

Title:
Dimensions

This huge mural fills the space above the Library’s Circulation Desk on the Main Level.

Friends of the Library sponsored a float in this year’s Good Neighbor Festival Parade

2010 Summer Reading theme was... “Make a Splash, Read!”

Friends of the Middleton Public Library is a non-profit, tax-exempt membership organization open to all. It provides funding and volunteer support for needed programming, materials, equipment and services as a supplement to City and County appropriations. A Middleton Public Library staff member services, as a liaison to the Friends Board.

Members organize and sort book sales; apply for grants on behalf of the Library; and plan and host fundraising events in support of the Friends’ ability to provide monetary contributions for enhanced Library services.

The Friends annual meeting is held in May. Membership information is available at the Library.

For more information visit: www.midlibrary.org/library/friends/asp
## Compare the Numbers

<table>
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<tr>
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<td>78.4%</td>
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<tr>
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<td>13,500</td>
<td>17,314</td>
<td>518.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Audiovisual materials</td>
<td>2,687</td>
<td>13,918</td>
<td>21,863</td>
<td>814%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Magazines &amp; newspapers</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>284</td>
<td>245</td>
<td>12.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annual circulation</td>
<td>255,011</td>
<td>523,796</td>
<td>803,496</td>
<td>315%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internet access computers</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>50</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fulltime-equivalent staff</td>
<td>10.0</td>
<td>15.5</td>
<td>21.2</td>
<td>212%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annual hours of operation</td>
<td>3,016</td>
<td>3,528</td>
<td>3,528</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annual budget</td>
<td>$358,825</td>
<td>$987,280</td>
<td>$1,684,623</td>
<td>436.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City of Middleton share</td>
<td>$301,620 (84%)</td>
<td>$621,571 (63%)</td>
<td>$1,002,096 (60%)</td>
<td>332%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dane County share</td>
<td>$57,205 (16%)</td>
<td>$365,709 (37%)</td>
<td>$682,527 (40%)</td>
<td>1,193%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

“Middleton Public Library is my home library; and I love this place!” --- Mary Gordon

Middleton Public Library
7425 Hubbard Avenue
Middleton, WI 53562

www.midlibrary.org
Libraries build communities…

In 2011, staff members were pleased to reach out to the community through volunteer activities that benefited local non-profit organizations including: Wisconsin Public Television, United Way of Dane County, Big Brothers Big Sisters of Dane County and Middleton Outreach Ministry. Partnering with other community entities is one way the library accomplishes its mission.

…and communities build libraries.

The Middleton Public Library depends solely on Friends of the Middleton Public Library to provide 100% funding (over $30,000) for its robust programming!

Middleton Public Library also benefits from the work of the Friends of the Library volunteers and community volunteers through their donation of time to:

- Organize and sort books for book sales
- Apply for grants on behalf of the Library
- Plan and host fundraising events in support of the Library
- Shelve and help process books, magazines, audios and videos
- Assist with special events and programs

Friends of the Middleton Public Library is a non-profit, tax-exempt membership organization open to all. It provides funding and volunteer support for needed programming, materials, equipment and services as a supplement to City and County appropriations. Visit the Friends of the Library website at: http://www.midlibrary.org/friends

Support the Library with your membership or sign up to volunteer!
Library Offers A Window to Learning…

In 2011, the Middleton Public Library provided experiential learning opportunities through 565 programs for 19,240 total participants. The programs targeted families and individuals of all ages, on a wide spectrum of topics.

The statistical breakdown is as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Group</th>
<th>2011</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Children’s Programs</td>
<td>437 events / 15,520 attendees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Young Adult Programs</td>
<td>50 events / 2,106 attendees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adult Programs</td>
<td>78 events / 1,614 attendees</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Youth Services Summer Reading Program events are included in these figures. During the months of June, July and August, kids of all ages came together to read, explore, create and learn!

2011 Youth Services Summer Reading Program Statistics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ages 0-5 years</th>
<th>Ages 5 – 12 years</th>
<th>Ages 12 - 18</th>
<th>Total Participants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>277</td>
<td>1,544</td>
<td>296</td>
<td>3,903</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

…on a Mosaic of Topics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Knitting</th>
<th>Yoga</th>
<th>Super Heroes</th>
<th>Mock Caldecott</th>
<th>Live Music</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Small Business</td>
<td>Book Discussions</td>
<td>Harry Potter</td>
<td>Adventure Club</td>
<td>Gaming</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Girl</td>
<td>Chess Club</td>
<td>Bilingual Storytime</td>
<td>Author Visits</td>
<td>Science</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baby Hour</td>
<td>Readers’ Theatre</td>
<td>Computer Use</td>
<td>Creative Writing</td>
<td>Tiny Tots Storytime</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finances</td>
<td>Early Literacy</td>
<td>History</td>
<td>Arts &amp; Crafts</td>
<td>Nature &amp; Ecology</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

“I have always imagined that Paradise will be a kind of library.”
~Jorge Luis Borges~
Opening the Door to Technology…

**Technology Related Classes:** Last year, the Middleton Public Library offered classes for adults on the following topics: * Facebook * EBay * Twitter * eReader devices * Microsoft Excel * OverDrive * Navigating the new LINKcat * Blogging * Website design for small business * Skype * PC Maintenance * Picasa * PC Backup * NewsBank.

**RFID (Radio Frequency Identification):** In 2011, staff completed phase II of the conversion to RFID for checkout & checkin. One benefit to library users is that returned items are checked in more quickly, making books, movies and other library materials more readily available on library shelves!

**Electronic Databases:** Middleton Public Library added more databases, including remote access from anywhere and anytime to Value Line, Consumer Reports, and NewsBank.

**eBook Collection:** Wisconsin Public Libraries and Wisconsin Regional Library Systems agreed to pool together over $1 million to increase OverDrive book titles for 2012!

Cornerstone Library Services

Even with today’s digital and electronic resources, Middleton Public Library’s two cornerstone services remains the same as they were 10 years ago - books and a welcoming environment with comfortable furnishings for study, research and reading.

**…books**

In 2011 the library owned 91,797 books and serials in print. Still the most popular format, books accounted for approximately 58% of the library’s total circulation of 769,064.

Middleton Public Library’s 2011 annual operating budget was $1,739,366, which means the average circulation cost was only $2.26 per item.

**… and building**

The library facility was built in 1990 and was last remodeled in 2004. The 32,000 square foot two-story building features prairie-style architecture and includes two meeting rooms for public use. The four study rooms, quiet reading room and reading spaces are in high demand every day of the week. With an annual visitor count of 368,396, library traffic averaged 105 visitors per hour during 2011.
Mission Statement
Is to make a positive difference in the quality of life in our community by…

- offering a safe and welcoming environment in an aesthetically pleasing and conveniently organized facility;
- supplying free and open access to knowledge and information, and the diversity of ideas to all, while protecting the privacy of library patrons;
- meeting the informational, educational, and recreational needs of the community through information collections, resources, programming and outreach; and
- providing highly competent library staff members to assist, guide, and instruct the public in the use of library resources and information gathering.

Library Board of Trustees:
Rusty Shoemaker-Allen, President
Stephanie Hammes, Vice President
Chris Clay, Secretary
Joan Gillman
Jill Kubiak
Anne Irish
Steve Soetebier, School District Representative
Gurdip Brar, City Council Representative

Over 20 Years of Growth – A Vibrant Middleton Public Library

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Library Service Data</th>
<th>1990</th>
<th>2003</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>1990-2011 % increase</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Books owned: hardcover &amp; paperback</td>
<td>43,416</td>
<td>65,636</td>
<td>91,797</td>
<td>+111%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electronic Books &amp; Downloadables owned</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>18,564</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Audiovisual materials owned</td>
<td>2,687</td>
<td>13,918</td>
<td>24,275</td>
<td>+803%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Magazines subscriptions</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>284</td>
<td>292</td>
<td>+46%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annual circulation</td>
<td>255,011</td>
<td>523,796</td>
<td>769,064</td>
<td>+201%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internet access computers</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>50</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fulltime-equivalent staff</td>
<td>10.0</td>
<td>15.5</td>
<td>22.1</td>
<td>+121%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annual hours of operation</td>
<td>3,016</td>
<td>3,528</td>
<td>3,520</td>
<td>+16.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annual budget</td>
<td>$358,825</td>
<td>$987,280</td>
<td>$1,777,878</td>
<td>+395%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City of Middleton share of the budget</td>
<td>$301,620 (84% of the budget)</td>
<td>$621,571 (63% of the budget)</td>
<td>$1,043,814 (53% of the budget)</td>
<td>+246%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dane County share of the budget</td>
<td>$57,205 (16% of the budget)</td>
<td>$365,709 (37% of the budget)</td>
<td>$734,064 (41% of the budget)</td>
<td>+1,183%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Middleton Public Library

How We Rank:

- Middleton outranks all other libraries for the number of materials loaned and borrowed to other LINKcat libraries. (Over 200,000 annually)

- Middleton is the second busiest library in the South Central Library System consortium of 53 libraries.

- Middleton holds the 13th highest total circulation in the state of Wisconsin.

- Middleton’s books & media averaged 8.3 circulations per year, compared to the statewide average of 3.26 circulations per year.

- Middleton Public Library’s resident service population averaged 29.2 checkouts per year, while the statewide resident service population public averaged 18.2 checkouts per year.

- Middleton Public Library offered 565 events in 2011, compared to the statewide average of 213 programs in 2011.

- Middleton also did well in the program attendance category with an average of 34 attendees per event, compared to the statewide average of 24 attendees per event.

*Based on 2011 Figures from the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction’s website: http://dpi.state.wi.us.
The Middleton Public Library’s Mission Statement is to make a positive difference in the quality of life in our community by…

- offering a safe and welcoming environment in an aesthetically pleasing and conveniently organized facility;

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- meeting the informational, educational, and recreational needs of the community through information collections, resources, programming and outreach; and

- providing highly competent library staff members to assist, guide, and instruct the public in the use of library resources and information gathering.

2012 Middleton Public Library Highlights:

- Added a circulating Sony Reader collection
- Added new children’s collections: Trains and Princesses
- Added a children’s Playaway collection
- Added LCD Microscope for in-house circulation
- Began offering Bi-cultural and Bilingual Indian-English story times
- Designed & offered outreach afterschool program at YMCA locations
- Introduced circulating gaming consoles
- Added adult video games and software collection
- Created a Pop Culture collection
- Added two display units for Serendipity collection
- Installed end cap displays (slatwall panels) for Adult Fiction, YA fiction and Children’s fiction & nonfiction
- Offered year-round Techno Minutes
- Installed Automated Materials Handling System - RFID
- Renovated the circulation staff room
- Replaced floor tiles in the front entry and added a granite ledge in the front entry
- Updated the exhibit case with new backdrop
- Updated public PCs with new monitors
- Installed new phone system
- Updated our security gates
- Instituted a print vending system
- Participated in the first County-wide Library Trivia Event
- Met our goal for the Beyond the Page Campaign
- Extended the Friends donor opportunity through corporate sponsorship of programs
- Expanded shelving for ongoing Friends book sales
- Participated in the WI Statewide Media Buying Pool to expand Overdrive titles
- Replaced 3 failed air compressors (cooling system)

“...LIBRARIES ARE NOT FRILLS. THEY ARE NOT LUXURIES, BUT A SACRED COMPONENT OF AMERICAN EDUCATION AND AMERICAN DEMOCRACY.” DAVID NASAW
The Library Board of Trustees meets on the second Tuesday of the month at 6:30 PM in the Archer Rooms. Meetings are open to everyone.

Library Board of Trustees:

Stephanie Hammes, President
Joan Gillman, Vice President
Jill Kubiak, Secretary
Chris Clay
Lisa Helmuth
Anne Irish
Rusty Shoemaker-Allen
Steve Soeteber, School District Representative
Gurdip Brar, City Council Representative

Provide a Lasting Gift to the Library
The Middleton Public Library Endowment Fund was created to encourage private donations and bequests to further the excellence of the library’s service program. A contribution to the Endowment Fund is a unique opportunity for you to help insure that high-quality library service continues to be a Middleton hallmark.

Beyond the Page Endowment

For the first time in their history, Dane County libraries will share a growing pool of programming money to propose, plan and promote new projects. This unique endowment will enable and extend collaborative and innovative humanities projects in every library’s community.

Humanities enrich our understanding and appreciation of all things human, comprising a wide range of subjects and library collections including: Arts, Drama, Film History, History, Language, Law, Literature, Philosophy, Religious Studies and World Culture.

The Beyond the Page Campaign received a $350,000 challenge grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities, as a result of a joint effort with the Dane County Library Service and the Madison Community Foundation. Each community must raise $3.00 for every $1.00 from the NEH, or $1.4 million. An initial investment of $10,000 from each library is needed to meet the goal.

Our sincere thank you to everyone for their efforts in raising the $10,000 from the Middleton Public Library. A special kudos to Friends of the Middleton Public Library who contributed $8,000 and to those involved in the successful fundraising events, the Library Trivia Event and the American Girl Doll Raffle.

“You cannot have a functioning democracy if you do not have innovation. You cannot have a functioning democracy if you cannot have the citizenry able to inform itself.”

Anthony Marx
Middleton Public Library Professional Staff

Pamela K. Westby (Director)
Patrick Williams (Head of Information Technology)
Rebecca Van Dan (Head of Young Adult Services)
Sarah Hartman (Head of Technical Services)
Svetha Hetzler (Head of Children’s Services)
Amanda Struckmeyer (Head of Youth Services)
Jim Ramsey (Head of Adult Services)
Brendan Faherty (Head of Circulation Services)

Middleton Public Library’s Philosophy of Service:
“The library patron is the most important person in the library. Service to patrons is not an interruption of work, but rather the purpose of it.”

Middleton Public Library Professional Staff

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service Data: then and now….</th>
<th>1990</th>
<th>2003</th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2012</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Books owned: hardcover &amp; paperback</td>
<td>43,416</td>
<td>65,636</td>
<td>87,578</td>
<td>91,702</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>eBooks &amp; Downloadables owned</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>63,333</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Audiovisual materials owned</td>
<td>2,687</td>
<td>13,918</td>
<td>16,357</td>
<td>24,795</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Magazines subscriptions</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>284</td>
<td>295</td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annual circulation</td>
<td>255,011</td>
<td>523,796</td>
<td>716,348</td>
<td>776,132</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internet access computers</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fulltime-equivalent staff</td>
<td>10.0</td>
<td>15.5</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annual hours of operation</td>
<td>3,016</td>
<td>3,528</td>
<td>3,528</td>
<td>3,528</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annual budget</td>
<td>$358,825</td>
<td>$987,280</td>
<td>$1,439,513</td>
<td>$1,815,904</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City of Middleton share of the budget</td>
<td>$301,620</td>
<td>$621,571</td>
<td>$927,218</td>
<td>$1,018,315</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dane County share of the budget</td>
<td>$57,205</td>
<td>$365,709</td>
<td>$512,295</td>
<td>$766,589</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In 2013, the Library hosted 675 programs and events, with 20,348 attendees.

That’s a 28% increase in the number of events and a 30% increase in participation levels compared to the 2008 figures of 527 programs and 15,655 attendees.

Thanks to the generous support of Friends of the Library & the many corporate sponsorships!
The Library Board of Trustees meets on the second Tuesday of the month at 6:30 PM in the Archer Rooms. Meetings are open to everyone.

LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES:
Jill Kubiak, President
Anne Irish, Vice President
Chris Clay, Secretary
Angela West Blank
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Jeremiah Tucker
Steve Soeteber
School District Representative
Miriam Share, City Council Representative

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meeting the informational, educational, and recreational needs of the community through information collections, resources, programming and outreach;

and providing highly competent library staff members to assist, guide, and instruct the public in the use of library resources and information gathering.
DIGITAL RESOURCES...

MAGAZINES (ZINIO)

CONSUMER REPORTS

EBOOKS (OVERDRIVE) ON YOUR TABLET

AUDI BookerS (OVERDRIVE DOWNLOADS)

BUSINESS (AtoZ DATABASES)

CAREER (LEARNING EXPRESS LIBRARY)

LANGUAGE (MANGO LEARNING)

GENEALOGY (ANCESTRY & HERITAGEQUEST)

MORNINGSTAR

VALUE LINE AND MORE!
PROFESSIONAL STAFF

Patrick Williams (Head of Information Technology)
Rebecca Van Dan (Head of Young Adult Services)
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>M I D D L E T O N  P U B L I C  L I B R A R Y ’ S  G R O W T H</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of Programs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># of Program Attendees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Books owned:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>eBooks &amp; eAudios owned</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Audiovisual owned</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Magazines subscriptions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Circulation of physical items</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internet access computers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fulltime-equivalent staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annual hours of operation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annual budget</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City of Middleton share of the budget</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dane County share of the budget</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Library Receives Award in 2014
In November, the South Central Library System Foundation Board of Directors recognized Middleton Public Library at their Annual Cornerstone Event for significant achievements in community engagement & unique collaborations, as Super Awesome Library!

Dementia-Friendly Library- Alzheimer's & Dementia Alliance
In response to a growing need for understanding, awareness and compassion for those affected by memory loss, Middleton Public Library became a certified Dementia-Friendly organization.

Middleton-Cross Plains School District second-graders rode the trolley to visit the library, registered for library cards & checked out books using the self checkout computers! The event was sponsored by Katie’s Kids.

“You and the Library do so much to make our community what it is.”
- Phil -
BUILDING UNITY IN OUR COMMUNITY

Middleton Public Library hosted many unique and profound examples of community engagement projects in 2014:

- **Partnership** with the Public Lands Department to introduce youth and families to Middleton’s community garden;

- **Collaboration** with the Arts Board on a public art mosaic involving 123 individual artists; and

- **Cooperation** with neighboring libraries to host live performances by Forward Theater, Mixed Blood Theatre and Heartline Theatricals.
OverDrive Digital Content Use

Librarians have been eyeing the explosion of Middleton’s digital content use.

From magazines, databases, electronic journals to online tutoring services, patron use of electronic resources has soared.

For example, Middleton Public Library patrons checked out 1,789 eBooks, eAudios and eVideos in 2010; and in 2014, patrons checked out 37,000 eBooks, eAudios and eVideos.

Library Service Trend: Print versus Digital

The Middleton Public Library has a long history of supporting lifelong learning by providing access to a rich collection of materials, but now, more than ever before, library patrons need access to both print and digital materials. Whether patrons prefer to read a book in print, from a computer, on a personal electronic reading or listening device, we provide access to is a wide selection of titles, topics and genres on the library shelves and online.

In 2014, Middleton Public librarians answered 30,316 reference questions related to job searches, resume writing, small business start-up, medical care, nutrition, smart investments, parenting, consumer comparisons, bus stop routes, voting polls, renters rights, technology applications and more.

This past year, the total circulation of print items was over 718,800 items. The 2014 annual use of electronic licensed databases was 18,125 and OverDrive use of over 37,000, making Middleton Public Library the second busiest library among the 54 libraries in the South Central Library System.

"Libraries store the energy that fuels the imagination. They open up windows to the world and inspire us to explore and achieve, and contribute to improving our quality of life."

–Sidney Sheldon
Investment Performance Report

Middleton Public Library’s 2014 Investment Performance Report showed a Gain on Investment of over $30.5 million.

Return On Investment (ROI)
The Return on Investment (ROI) calculation demonstrated that for every $1 invested in the library, a $16 value was returned back to the community, emphasizing how public library services are a smart economic development investment for Middleton residents and businesses in the Middleton area.

... making a positive impact on the quality of life ...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LIBRARY SERVICE DATA</th>
<th>1990</th>
<th>2003</th>
<th>2014</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Books Owned</td>
<td>43,416</td>
<td>65,636</td>
<td>87,315</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Audiovisual Owned</td>
<td>3,506</td>
<td>13,892</td>
<td>26,603</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annual Circulation</td>
<td>255,011</td>
<td>523,796</td>
<td>718,840</td>
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<tr>
<td>Digital Items Owned</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6,069</td>
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<tr>
<td>Licensed Electronic Databases</td>
<td>0</td>
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<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internet Access Computers</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program Attendance</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>4,268</td>
<td>25,404</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fulltime-equivalent staff</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>15.5</td>
<td>22.5</td>
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<tr>
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<td>$57,205 (16%)</td>
<td>$365,709 (37%)</td>
<td>$783,629 (40%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Registered Cardholders</td>
<td>10,623</td>
<td>10,740</td>
<td>18,740</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Project: Middleton Public Library Space Needs Study PN 14068

Meeting Location: Middleton Public Library (MID)

Date of Meeting: 11.03.2014 at 2:00 pm

In Attendance: Pamela Westby, Deb Haeffner, Joan Gillman, Rebecca Light, Angela West Blank, Eileen Kelley (MID Building Committee); Tina Gordon, Ray White, Jim Gersich (Dimension IV Madison aka D4M)

These notes are the writer’s interpretation of what was discussed at the meeting. If you have any changes, clarifications or additions to the notes, please contact the writer. Thank you.

This meeting was a formal “kickoff” meeting for the Study. We followed a written agenda.

General:
1. We had a general conversation about meeting notes, participants-roles, a360 FTP site, as-built drawings, etc., and Pamela will forward meeting notes to all as needed.
2. We also discussed the notion of having the Library’s 8-person management team involved in a Question-based planning session facilitated by Derrick Van Mell, and then having a second, separate group look at the various prioritized items in terms of future trends. Distilling the “rich” questions would be the goal.
3. The foregoing would be in addition to input gathered at one or more Listening Sessions, and a way for non-Building Committee Library Board members to potentially be involved. We also discussed SurveyMonkey(s) and Pamela mentioned a possible “All Staff” brainstorming session during the Inservice on January 30, 2015
4. We briefly reviewed the input review process:
   a. The Building Committee would keep the Library Board informed, every agenda/meeting.
   b. Listening Session input, aggregated in written form, would be forwarded to Building Committee members for evaluation, e.g., inclusion, elimination, etc.
   c. Questions generated at the Question-based planning session facilitated by Derrick Van Mell will be written up, grouped, and returned in that format to the participants for identification of the “Top 15” (+/-) and then the priority items would be provided to a separate, Future Trends group for evaluation and consideration. Those results would come back to the Building Committee for consideration.
   d. We reviewed the typical elements of the Design Workshop (aka charrette) and all input will be recorded and brought back to the Building Committee.
   e. A special survey would be useful for families with young children.
   f. All the various input and direction leads to design concepts that are unique to MID and the community it serves.
   g. While all of Middleton’s municipal buildings seem to have a certain “look” it was noted, that was more coincidental than anything.
h. We will also schedule “1-on-1s” e.g., meeting with the staff focused on ‘departments’ like the Children’s Library.

5. Pamela mentioned that one of the input sessions could be coordinated with a speaker they will have at the building celebrating MLK Jr Day in January.

6. Tina reviewed details associated with Furniture, Fixtures and Equipment (FF&E) and the various forms of Low Voltage Systems including things like voice, data, door access control, security cameras, TV broadcasting and radio broadcasting.

7. The existing facility probably has “deferred maintenance” items that will be documented and addressed.

8. Tina will also ultimately gather all the data into a spreadsheet and room-by-room Program Statement that will be a key component of the final report. A detailed analysis of the collection will be a part of space needs projections.

9. City of Middleton has a Sustainability Committee and has promulgated guidelines, see City’s website.

10. Eileen will be doing a citywide Comprehensive Plan in the upcoming year or two, and some of the results of the MID report could assist that process.

11. We discussed the notion of having to avoid closing the MID during any construction, to the greatest degree possible i.e., certain portions might be ‘closed-off’ to the public for periods of time.

12. Suggestion was made to consider utilizing the City Hall site as a new MID site. This could be one “walk-away” scenario contemplated.

13. Suggestion also made to consider a combined Community Services-MID building, possibly also accompanied by structured parking.

14. Lack of transportation causes the numerous potential library users in the Allen Blvd/Century Blvd neighborhood to be unable to come here.

15. Middleton Hills has a City-owned vacant parcel that was set aside for public use, which could also be a branch site; Pamela had discussed this with Brian VandeWalle.

16. We briefly discussed the potential for a capital campaign, and the possibility of consulting with Jodi Sweeney to help get it properly organized. Branding in general, and branding the campaign, were briefly discussed. The use of social media and embedded video in MID’s project-specific website were mentioned. MID will arrange for the various Listening Session(s) etc to be video-recorded.

17. We also briefly discussed the capitalization of the project(s), e.g., Friends fund raising vs City funds.

18. There are also groups that could be considered as potential programming etc partners, intended for mutual success. Healthcare organizations were noted, for example.

19. Similarly, there exists the potential for social service offering or collaborations such as autism groups, Porchlight for the homeless, Latino organizations for ESL, social justice programming, homeschoolers, day care centers, etc. Very big agenda that takes on a life all it’s own.

Action items:

1. D4M established the a360 FTP site see http://a360.co/10jKKiM

2. Tours, suggested places and things to visit including what not to do:
   a. ED Locke McFarland, good example of a Children’s Library.
   b. Marshall Community Library, smaller and excellent interior artificial and natural lighting.
   c. Poynette Area Public Library, good separation yet visual connectedness between Adults/Circ and Children’s Library. Could also be a "sample" of what a branch library could look like.
   d. Memorial Public Library Brodhead, good example of substantial Community Room “across the hall” from the Library-proper.
   e. Mt Horeb Public Library, good example of a smallish Children’s Library with an integral storytime area…again, may apply to a branch.
f. Sequoia Branch, seems rather cold and institutional. What you see and how you feel when you walk in...welcoming, warm and inviting?
g. Fitchburg Public Library, underground parking....great for Moms with kids in tow.
h. Windowless Basement space examples? None come to mind at the moment...anyone?

3. D4M to scan the various as-built drawings loaned and return them intact.

Next Meeting:
1. 11/19 at 1 pm Question-based Planning Meeting with Management Team.
2. (not scheduled yet) Future Trends Meeting with hand-selected group of forward-thinkers.
3. (not scheduled yet) Next Building Committee meeting, hopefully just before or just after Thanksgiving.
4. (not scheduled yet) Listening Session #1.
5. January 19, 2015 Listening Session #1?

Copies: Pamela Westby, Derrick Van Mell, Tina Gordon, Ray White
These notes are the writer's interpretation of what was discussed at the meeting. If you have any changes, clarifications or additions to the notes, please contact the writer. Thank you.

This meeting was a Building Committee meeting to review the progress being made on the Feasibility Study. We followed a written agenda.

Overview of 7/14/2015 Library Board Presentation

1. We had a brief overview of the 7/14 presentation and discussion noting:
   a. Population and Collection Projections were reviewed.
   b. Stacking and Blocking Diagram Option B (Greenfield site) was reviewed.
   c. The Visual Listening Session's public input and reactions to Option B was mixed.
   d. Stacking and Blocking Diagram Option C (expansion into parking lot west of MID, 2-story underground parking beneath the addition, rooftop terrace) was reviewed.
   e. The Visual Listening Session's public input and reactions to Option C was mixed.
   f. Stacking and Blocking Diagram Option D (expansion into parking lot west of MID, 1-level indoor parking, community uses for the existing Upper Level) was reviewed.
   g. The Visual Listening Session's public input and reactions to Option D was mixed.
   h. Stacking and Blocking Diagram Option E (major expansion across the track, underground passageway) was reviewed.
   i. The Visual Listening Session's public input and reactions to Option E was mixed.
   j. Additional overall comments were reviewed, e.g., current location is very good, etc.
   k. Sustainability Goals secured from the public at the Visual Listening Session were reviewed.
   l. Visual Listening Session highlites (likes and dislikes) were reviewed.
   m. Options B, C, D, E and Branch total project cost estimates +/- 20% were reviewed.

2. The Library Board narrowed further efforts toward Options D & E. Pamela was asked to develop staffing costs per square foot. It was noted that a Branch Library would also increase operating cost. A Branch Library could remain a possibility say 5 years after a major expansion-renovation of the main library would occur.

Space Needs and Design Concepts

1. The Collection Analysis and the Space Needs square footage spreadsheets were reviewed.
2. Advanced Design Concepts related to Option D and E were reviewed.
Feasibility Study content review

1. We reviewed a series of slides describing the contents of the final deliverable Feasibility Study, noting the following comments:
   a. A statement of needs, e.g., the building is old, the population has doubled, etc., should be included in the Overview.
   b. Quotes and pictures should be scattered throughout.

2. Some portions of the FS are still in-progress and we will insert a slipsheet saying in effect “Insert XYZ here” for the 8/4 first draft.

Next Meeting:

1. Tuesday, August 11th 6:30 pm Library Board meeting.

Copies: Pamela Westby (for further distribution), Deb Haeffner, Tina Gordon, Ray White
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<tr>
<th>COLLECTION COMPONENT</th>
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<th>PREFERRED 2015 COLLECTION</th>
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<td>5,400</td>
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<td>Preferred</td>
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**9/10/2015 Page 1**
### Collection Analysis

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<td>30</td>
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<td>Paperback - Mystery A-Z</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paperback - Romance A-Z</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>30</td>
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<td>30</td>
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<td>Romance-Paperbacks</td>
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<td>13 LF</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>30</td>
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Customized Charts for Fiscal Year 2014
City of Middleton, including:
Middleton Public Library

What you can do with these charts:
- Print all of them at once, or create a PDF
- Copy and paste individual charts into a document or presentation (when pasting charts, use paste special/picture)
- Revise titles, change colors or other characteristics, change the y-axis values (especially helpful when differences appear exaggerated)

Source for this data:
- Preliminary 2014 Wisconsin Public Library Service Data

Warnings:
- These charts are only as valid as the data that was provided by each library
- Not all these charts will be meaningful for your library, especially if there is incomplete or inconsistent data

Library Use Charts
This is an outline of important questions Middleton Library’s managers have about the organization’s future. Though facility planning is on everyone’s minds, in this session we sorted the questions by their managerial implications, to avoid creating assumptions about building features, locations and costs. This will help ensure long-term thinking.

The questions have been edited for clarity and concision, so please report if the meaning of a question seems altered.

There are several basic types of questions—for information, discussion and decisions—and the next step will be to prioritize them. But for now the planning team should consider:

- What’s missing?
- Are the questions categorized right? (see www.iimtp.org for definitions and standards)
- What do the *patterns* of questions suggest?

**Planning team**

- Faherty, Brendan
- Hartman, Sarah
- Hetzler, Svetha
- Ramsey, Jim
- Perry, Amy
- Van Dan, Rebecca
- Westby, Pamela
- Williams, Patrick
- Jim Gersich, Jim (facilitator)
- Van Mell, Derrick (facilitator)

**Prioritizations**

The team identified individually what they feel are the 15 most important questions. Questions with 1 or 2 votes are **boldface**; those with 3 or 4 are **in yellow**; those with 5 or 6 are **in blue**. It can be interesting to see how many questions were selected by subsection (in parentheses after the heading).

**Next steps**

- Prioritize the questions and discuss the implications
- Ask the keystone question about important trends
MIDDLETON LIBRARY
Question-Based Planning: Question discovery outline
November 19, 2014 (rev. December 5, 2014)

BUSINESS STRUCTURE

Ethics and the law (2)
1. Are we transparent enough within the staff and to the public?
2. Do patrons feel we’re protecting their privacy?
3. What ADA laws do we need to follow?

Identity (15)
4. What feeling do we want people to have when they come to the library?
5. What are the community’s aspirations?
6. How do we stay unique?
7. How can we be a destination, like the Seattle library?
8. How would we change the ways people use our library?
9. What will the transformation of public libraries look like (i.e., trends)?
10. Can we do something like the Discovery Center education model?
11. What can we offer to set us apart in our community, from retailers and other libraries?
12. Who are our competitors for patrons’ attention and time?
13. What other options do patrons have for meeting, recreation, etc.?
14. How can we ensure we’re helpful to those with dementia?
15. Can we expect to be selling used books 10 or 20 years from now?
16. Are we a garden library?

Service mix (10)
17. What do we need room for that we don’t have now?
18. Are maker spaces a trend or an evolution?
19. What level of service should we provide for early literacy?
20. Are we duplicating any services (with other organizations)?
21. How big a group would we like to accommodate?
22. What’s the role of the image library? Of history information?
23. Should we have outdoor learning?
24. Should we continue or expand our role as a cooling shelter?
25. Should we have a café? Kitchen services?
26. How can we support distance learning and tutoring?
27. Is there enough demand for Reference services?
28. What programs could we offer in a performance space?
29. Would performance space compete with the high school or others?
30. Should the library take the lead in health and wellness?
31. Should we have a nurse?
32. Can we offer bike-lending?
33. What other objects would be popular to lend (e.g., tools, art)?

Planning (2)
34. How much stock do we put in library standards?
35. Can this feasibility process seed a strategic plan?
36. How can we support reading in general, including Little Libraries?
Partners (6)

37. Who are our partners?
38. How could we partner with small businesses? What would they want in return?
39. How could we partner with Hubbard Street Diner?
40. How should we partner with large employer?
41. How can we continue our relationship with the Arts Board?
42. How can we collaborate with other agencies to make a project more feasible?
43. How can we include the Historical Society in our plans?
44. What other agencies could we partner with in literacy efforts?

Facilities: Design features (15)

45. How do the building’s location, design and financing affect efficiency and morale?
46. What kind of spaces will we need for our collections in 20 years?
47. How could we have a lot more natural lighting?
48. How many study rooms is enough?
49. How can the director’s office be more visible?
50. How can we incorporate dedicated maker space?
51. We can incorporate book sales rooms?
52. Should we consider a drive-up book drop?
53. How can we separate noisy from quiet areas for staff (e.g., conveyor belt)?
54. How is signage and wayfinding in the library?
55. What building finishes will help with maintenance?
56. Will our building systems (e.g., HVAC) keep up with changes?
57. How can we avoid a leaky roof?

MARKETING & SALES

Market research (17)

58. Who are our patrons?
59. Is our patron base expanding?
60. Who aren’t we serving and why?
61. What are the demographics that matter to us?
62. Are we going to see an influx of professionals?
63. What’s the future mix of the under-represented?
64. Do people perceive us as we perceive ourselves?
65. What would our patrons say about our performance?
66. What does the community want from our building(s)?
67. How have patrons changed how they use the library over the past few years?
68. What is the variety of patrons’ needs?
69. Is there a homeless shelter in Middleton?
70. How many book clubs can the community support?
Question-Based Planning: Question discovery outline
November 19, 2014 (rev. December 5, 2014)

**Distribution of services (i.e., channels of distribution; 2)**
71. Where would branches be?
72. Would a branch affect traffic at the main library?
73. Would a branch be a miniature version of the main library?
74. Should we consider satellites?
75. Could a bookmobile or 3-wheel bike be an alternative to a branch?
76. How would bus routes affect hours and our location choices?

**Brand and marketing communications (9)**
77. How does our architecture affect how people think about us? (e.g., modern charm)
78. How can we be more of a landmark?
79. How can we increase circulation?
80. Should we do more circulation outreach?
81. How do we increase overall attendance?
82. How can we get more teens to attend?
83. How can we get adults to show up (e.g., to Techno-minutes)?
84. How can we increase Friends membership?
85. What incentives or perks would increase library use?
86. Would participation increase if we had a café?
87. How can we reach out to the homeless and low-income?
88. Where do people learn about library services?
89. How do patrons want to hear from the library?
90. How can we avoid putting donor or sponsor names on everything?
91. How can we get people to realize Middleton has many homeless and poor?

**Customer service (1)**
92. Does the public want us to greet them?
93. Are our patrons satisfied with our hours of operation?
94. How can we apply lessons from the Ambassador project?

**OPERATIONS**
**Quality (3)**
95. Does staff feel safe in this building?
96. How can we make sure our building is safe (inside, parking, etc.)?
97. How do we address continuous improvement?

**INFORMATION (6)**
98. Is our technology adequate for staff and patrons?
99. How can we support more digital and mobile needs, devices and printing?
100. What communication technology should we have?
101. Will downloads replace CDs for music and film?
MIDDLETON LIBRARY
Question-Based Planning: Question discovery outline
November 19, 2014 (rev. December 5, 2014)

Workflow (12)
102. How flexible can our space be?
103. How can we get staff grouped correctly?
104. Can we get adult collections on one floor?
105. How can we fix the floor plan?
106. Can there be more than one entry and exit?
107. What would we consider ideal staff work spaces?
108. How can we allow for new and different display formats?
109. Can we have 24-hour holds pick-up?
110. Should we consolidate the Help Desk?
111. How can we best create quiet areas?
112. How do we balance community and program use of meeting rooms?
113. If we stay, what can we eliminate?
114. If we stay, what could we reorganize?

HUMAN RESOURCES
Management (2)
115. Are our annual performance reviews enough?
116. Do we work as a team and support each other?

Organizational design (7)
117. Does the current level of staffing allow us to meet the desires of the community?
118. Does our organizational structure get the best from our staff?
119. Do we need an electronic media specialist?
120. How would a branch library be staffed?
121. Do we need a communications coordinator?
122. Do we need an outreach coordinator?
123. Do we need a volunteer coordinator?
124. Could we have a policy for tele-commuting and hoteling?

Employee and volunteer relations (2)
125. Is our work fulfilling to us?
126. Do we feel appreciated and challenged?
127. Is the library a desirable place to work?
128. How do we communicate among the staff?
129. How can we increase camaraderie?
130. How can we better use the talents and enthusiasm of volunteers?
131. How do we keep jobs at the library desirable?

Training & development (1)
132. Are we cross-trained?
133. What staff training needs to be provided and to whom?
FINANCE
Managerial accounting (5)
134. What’s all this going to cost?
135. How will our operating budget be affected by growth?
136. Does the staff have the information they want about operating and capital budgets?

Financing and fundraising (7)
137. What will happen to our share of taxpayer funding?
138. What will be the balance of taxpayer and private funding?
139. Will we need to have a referendum?
140. Do we need a grant/fundraiser/donor development person?
141. How should we deal with naming rights?
142. Could we abandon this building and build new?
143. Can we adequately manage a capital campaign?
144. Does the board know what to expect in a capital campaign?
145. What can we learn from other capital projects?

Cost management (3)
146. Can we continue to defer late fees?
147. What sustainability elements can we incorporate?
148. Is the building a good energy user?
149. Can we put solar panels on the roof?
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### Middleton Public Library
#### Space Needs Analysis

**09.14.2015**

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**Support Space Total**

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**Circulation Total**

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# Middleton Public Library
## Space Needs Analysis
09.14.2015

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<td><strong>33805</strong></td>
<td><strong>97000</strong></td>
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</table>
Middleton Public Library

Strategic Plan
2015-2018

Adopted July 14, 2015

7425 Hubbard Avenue
Middleton, WI 53562
www,midlibrary.org  608.831.5564
Mission Statement:

“The mission of the Middleton Public Library is to make a positive difference in the quality of life in our community.”

We will accomplish our mission by...

- Offering a safe and welcoming environment in an aesthetically pleasing and conveniently organized facility;

- Supplying free and open access to information and diverse ideas, while protecting the privacy of library patrons;

- Meeting the educational, informational, and recreational needs of the community through information collections, resources, programming and outreach; and

- Providing highly competent library staffs to assist, guide, and instruct the public in the use of library resources and information gathering.
Overview of 2015-2018
Goals & Objectives

Goal area 1: General Library Operations.

The library provides area residents with optimum access to its services and programs by anticipating and meeting the diverse library needs of the community and providing a highly qualified staff.

Objective 1: Continue improvements in customer service.
Objective 2: Create a greater sense of inclusion and sense of community spirit
Objective 3: Integrate food and beverage offerings
Objective 4: Retain our great staff
Objective 5: Be able to recruit and retain great future staff members
Objective 6: Provide effective training and development

2015 Middleton Public Library Staff
Goal area 2: Access to materials and information.

The library affords area residents of all ages ready access to a broad collection of materials in a variety of media that record our knowledge, ideas, and culture, offers guidance and encouragement in their use, and provides access to reliable and easily available sources of information and reference.

Objective 1: Continue improvements to programming and the collection
Objective 2: Enhance lifelong learning and literacy opportunities
Objective 3: Engage all of our citizens in diverse offerings
Goal area 3: Technology.

The library offers broad access and service through emerging electronic resources and provides formal and informal instruction in their use. The library uses technology to increase efficiencies and optimize the delivery of services to the public.

Objective 1: Integrate flexibility for rapidly changing technological advances

Objective 2: Provide for rapid digital and online expansion

Objective 3: Leverage technology for greater staff productivity

Objective 4: Increase technology offerings for patrons, including interactive displays

Objective 5: Expand data security, reliability and privacy

Objective 6: Provide enhanced technology training programs

Objective 7: Accommodate live feed broadcasting
Goal area 4: Facility Needs.

The library facility offers optimum use of space and furnishings to provide convenient location, a pleasant atmosphere, easy and safe access, adequate space and efficient quality services.

Objective 1: Convenient location and pleasant atmosphere
   a. Maintain "ideal" presence downtown
   b. Facilitate a welcoming, safe and inviting "feel"
   c. Integrate defined noise-level appropriate library facilities
   d. Fully integrate natural light with artificial illumination.

Objective 2: Provide enhanced accessibility: easy and safe access
   a. Enhance biking and walkability
   b. Provide adequate parking
   c. Improve patron flow and workflow throughout the facilities and outdoor spaces
   d. Integrate a drive-up bookdrop into the RFID sorting system
   e. Provide appropriate sightlines for the collection, computers, etc.
   f. Enhance facility-related staff productivity and efficiency

Objective 3: Efficient quality services
   a. Provide more flexible studio/creation spaces
   b. Maintain long-term expansion opportunities
   c. Facilitate more large group meeting and study rooms
   d. Facilitate more enhanced creative programming space
   e. Provide enhanced Friends' services and space needs
   f. Integrate local history services and space needs
   g. Integrate community kitchen facilities
   h. Provide enhanced spaces for children, tweens and teens
   i. Provide appropriate staff work space
Goal area 5: Programming and Community Relations.

The library offers programming for all ages on a broad spectrum of topics including cultural events and public instruction. The library develops partnerships with school libraries, businesses, civic groups, volunteers, and other organizations to meet the developmental needs (social, intellectual and recreational) of its users, to enhance its visibility and to strengthen its leadership role in providing information access and delivery to the community.

Objective 1: Define and integrate “community center” components
Objective 2: Offer learning opportunities that support a wide array of learning styles
Objective 3: Provide enhanced performance-type functions
Objective 4: Enhance wellness, nutrition, and educational offerings
Objective 5: Accommodate current and future service and program partnering
Objective 6: Enhance and fully integrate volunteerism
Goal area 6: Sustainability.

The library embraces and recognizes environmental management as an important component to the operations of the library. The library strive to encourage and promote sustainable development and environmental stewardship.

Objective 1: Establish sustainability goals and meet or exceed them
Objective 2: Reduce energy usage
Objective 3: Provide interactive energy-usage demonstration displays
Goal area 7: Finances.

The Middleton Public Library Board of Trustees believes the library plays an essential role in the quality of life of our citizens and is an important function; and that the library should be supported through public funding. Therefore, revenue should only be used to fund optional additional services or new, start-up services.

Objective 1: Increase fund raising via gifts and grants
Objective 2: Define and implement effective cost management
Objective 3: Increase revenue sources through space offerings.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Cost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Site Acquisition (not included)</td>
<td>$0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abatement (none assumed)</td>
<td>$0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Site Development &amp; Existing Parking Demolition</td>
<td>$0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building Construction (~35,000 GSF remod &amp; ~57,800 GSF addn)</td>
<td>$14,420,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Addition at ~$200/GSF</td>
<td>$11,560,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Remodeling at ~$50/GSF</td>
<td>$1,750,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Structured Parking 74 at ~$15,000/stall</td>
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<tr>
<td>Parking, Sidewalks, Utility Connections</td>
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<tr>
<td>Miscellaneous Sitework (Demolition-Removal, etc.)</td>
<td>$0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fixed Equipment (Casework, miscellaneous)</td>
<td>$0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electrical Utilities (3 Phase Service - existing)</td>
<td>$5,000</td>
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<td>Furnishings &amp; Movable Equipment (reuse existing; add new as required ~$6/SF)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Computers and Related (Phone, data, security, sound, PCs, misc. ~$6/SF)</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Physical Relocation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Miscellaneous Costs</td>
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<tr>
<td>Topographical Survey</td>
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<tr>
<td>Soil Testing</td>
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<tr>
<td>Plan Reproduction</td>
<td>$1,500</td>
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<tr>
<td>Agency Review</td>
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<td>TOTAL PROJECT COST</td>
<td>$18,414,000</td>
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Scope associated with this 7/14/2015 Estimate

1. The size of the initial building is based upon a service area population projected to Year 2035.
2. The size of the initial (expanded) building will be ~92,800 gross square feet (GSF) designed for future horizontal expansion. The building systems (e.g., electrical or HVAC) are not estimated for an expanded building, although the space for equipment such as boilers and electrical panels is included in the ~92,800 GSF. Space for air handling units will need to be added with the addition(s).
3. Additional on-site parking would also be required upon horizontal expansion.
4. The design assumes toilet fixtures as required by current code for a ~92,800 GSF facility.
5. The cost estimates presume costs of material and labor correlated to bidding in January, 2017, sales tax exempt.
6. The estimate excludes the cost of borrowed money related to interim or final financing.
7. Detailed technical specifications have been developed, and the following quality levels are reflected in the estimate:
   a. Masonry veneer (brick or stone) and cementitious siding exterior wall materials.
   b. Three-story slab-on-grade precast concrete and steel-framed floor framing construction with two passenger elevators. One level of underground parking.
   c. Partial mechanical mezzanine, precast concrete and steel-framed floor framing construction.
   d. Site work includes on-site parking, concrete sidewalks and landscaping (excluding irrigation.) Also includes sidewalk and sewer-water laterals.
   e. Steel roof framing on steel columns and beams, and metal stud-framed exterior walls.
   f. Asphalt shingle or standing seam metal roofing at pitched roof areas.
   g. Carpeting or ceramic tile floors throughout public areas.
   h. Varying ceiling heights with acoustical tile or painted drywall finishes.
   i. Painted drywall finishes typically throughout.
   j. Both storefront windows and clad wood windows with integral blinds.
   k. Natural gas-fired boiler HVAC system with partial underfloor radiant heating.
   l. Air conditioning and Building Automation System (controls.)
   m. Combination direct-indirect lighting throughout library shelving areas.
   n. Fire protection sprinkler system throughout, without firepump.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Cost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Site Acquisition (not included)</td>
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<td>Abatement (none assumed)</td>
<td>$0</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Included below</td>
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<tr>
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<td>$13,740,000</td>
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<td>Addition at ~$200/GSF</td>
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<td>Remodeling 20,000SF at ~$50/GSF</td>
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<td>Parking, Sidewalks, Utility Connections</td>
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   l. Air conditioning and Building Automation System (controls.)
   m. Combination direct-indirect lighting throughout library shelving areas.
   n. Fire protection sprinkler system throughout, without firepump.
Plan for Library Service

Note: Standards appear in Goal 4

Adopted by the Dane County Library Board
July 3, 2014

Further incorporating:
Resolution 185, 2011-2012
Adopted by the Dane County Board of Supervisors
December 15, 2011
And
Resolution 98, 2013-14
Adopted by the Dane County Board of Supervisors
October 3, 2013
Mission Statement

The Dane County Library Service is dedicated to bringing a full range of library services to each resident of Dane County’s towns, and the villages of Blue Mounds, Brooklyn, Cottage Grove, Dane, Maple Bluff, Rockdale, and Shorewood.

Introduction

The Dane County Library Board has been designated by the Dane County Board of Supervisors as the County Library Planning Committee under the provisions of Chapter 43.11(1) Wis. Statutes. Wisconsin Statutes assign certain responsibilities to this body (emphasis added):

43.11 (3) (a) The committee may prepare a new plan for the organization of a county or multicounty system, revise an existing plan or change the boundaries of a public library system. It shall conduct public hearings concerning these plans, revisions and changes to which representatives of all libraries in the county shall be invited.

(b) The committee’s final report, including a new plan, revisions to an existing plan, or changes to the boundaries of a public library system and copies of any written agreements necessary to implement the proposal, shall be filed with the county board and submitted to the division. Plans for multicounty systems shall include a method for allocating system board membership among the member counties.

(c) The plan of a library service for a county, whether for a single county or multicounty system, shall provide for library services to residents of those municipalities in the county not maintaining a public library under this chapter. The services shall include full access to public libraries participating in the public library system and the plan shall provide for reimbursement for that access. Services may include books-by-mail, bookmobile service, the establishment of additional libraries or other services deemed appropriate by the committee. Service may be provided by contracting with existing public libraries in the county or in adjacent counties or with the public library system or by creating a county library organization under this chapter. The plan of library service for a county may provide for improving public library service countywide and in municipalities that have libraries. The plan shall specify the method and level of funding to be provided by the county to implement the services described in the plan, including the reimbursement of public libraries for access by residents of those municipalities in the county not maintaining a public library.

(d) The plan of library services for a county may include minimum standards of operation for public libraries in the county. The county shall hold a public hearing on any standards proposed under this paragraph. The standards shall take effect if they are approved by the county and the public library boards of at least 50% of the participating municipalities in the county that contain, according to the most recent estimate prepared under s. 16.96, at least 80% of the population of participating municipalities in the county.
This document is intended to meet the planning needs of the County Library Service and its members as well as meet the requirements of the Statutes outlined above.

**Background of the Dane County Library Service**

In March of 1965, the first plan for library service in Dane County was published by a committee which had studied library services and needs for two years. As a result, the Dane County Library Service was created in 1966. In transmitting the report to the County Board, the Committee Chair, George Card, stated, “The County library service plan, herein presented, provides a wide variety of services and benefits to the residents of cities, villages, and towns in Dane County.” The plan itself laid out the primary goals:

1. To provide every county resident with access to library service at any public library in Dane County.
2. To assist and help improve local libraries in Dane County so that they are better able to provide good library service to non-resident and resident alike.
3. To provide direct library service to rural areas not adequately served by existing libraries.
4. To arrange for financing and administration of these programs and services in a fair and efficient manner.

These goals have guided the development of the Dane County Library Service and, to a large extent, the core principles remain valid today. However, in most cases, the means for attaining the goals have shifted as communities have grown and their libraries have developed. The formation, in 1976, of the South Central Library System also caused a close examination of the tasks and activities of the Library Service. In the years since 1976, the Library Service has been an active member of the South Central Library System and has worked hard to develop complementary programs of service. State law has also changed, creating new expectations both of counties and of municipal libraries. The plan that follows addresses these changing realities while remaining true to the original intent of Dane County in creating its Library Service.

**Development of this and future Plans**

As predicted in each previously-revised Plan for Service, the plan has continued to evolve through each annual budget process. Despite these annual adjustments, the commitment to fully funding library payment programs while achieving compliance with county standards continues, as does the struggle to develop core direct services. Also continuing is the Library Board’s commitment to seeking the best way to deliver library service to the residents of Dane County. Primarily motivated by the keenly-felt obligation to assure taxpayers that library service is being administered and delivered in the most cost-effective way possible, these efforts are also driven by a concern that the current model may not be sustainable in the long term given changes in library usage coupled with changes in the tax base that supports the County Library Service.

In the four years since this plan was formally revised, some of the predicted changes have occurred, while others remain in the uncertain future:
- **New Municipal Library in Cottage Grove:**
  
  *Current status:* After a failed referendum in 2008, the Village Board dissolved the Library Board. The Friends of the Cottage Grove Library remain an active non-profit organization and continue to hold title to the land purchased for the library.

  *Fiscal Impact:* The Village of Cottage Grove represents about 4% of the property value taxed by the county for library service.

  *Service Impact:* Currently, the Bookmobile offers 5 hours of service in Cottage Grove weekly. This would cease should the village exempt itself from the county tax.

- **New Municipal Library in Fitchburg:**
  
  *Current status:* The city of Fitchburg opened its new library in July, 2011.

  *Fiscal Impact:* The City of Fitchburg represented about 17% of the property value taxed by the county for library service in 2011, the year the city first exempted itself from the County Library Tax. This exemption did cause an increase in the county tax rate in subsequent years.

  *Service Impact:* The Bookmobile realigned its schedule and, since July, 2011, has established service in four additional communities.

- **Status of current staff and ongoing hiring freeze:**
  
  *Current status:* The budgeted FTE for the Library Service in 2014 is 7.05. The most recent reduction from 7.25 to 7.05 occurred in 2010. Prior to 2003, annual staffing was 9.25 FTEs. This downsizing caused a change in mission and a significant reduction in the services delivered both to residents of our service area and to libraries throughout the county. The Library Service currently has no vacancies; a hiring delay of 6 weeks continues to be the policy of the county.

  *Fiscal Impact:* Because monies once appropriated to the Library Service remain under the control of the Library Board, should a vacancy occur and the position not be filled, the funding for that position will lapse into the Library's General Fund.

  *Service Impact:* Vacancies occurring within a small staff always cause service interruptions. The Library Service strives to minimize any such service interruptions by keeping sufficient limited term employees on call.

- **Library Service Relocation:**
  
  *Current status:* The Library Service relocated to the Job Center in the fall of 2011. The 5,000 square feet allocated to the Library Service is adequate to hold the library collections and to provide sufficient work space for staff. The bookmobile and Readmobile are housed in a garage built for that purpose adjacent to the facility which provides direct access to the library collections. The location of the Job Center allows efficient access to highways, minimizing travel times to the various communities served by the Bookmobile and Readmobile. Being located in a shared facility always carries with it the possibility that the county's priorities for space utilization may shift, requiring that the library be relocated once again. The Library Board understands the need to plan with this possibility in mind.

  *Fiscal Impact:* Relocating a library requires a significant one-time outlay. At the current Job Center location, the Library Service pays the county's general fund both rent and a share of utilities and maintenance. Appropriate commercial space is, however, likely to be triple net and cost more on a square foot basis. The location
of any possible office/collection/garage space may be more or less convenient to remote service locations and therefore, could potentially result in higher operating costs.

Service Impact: The current location is convenient and efficient relative to existing service locations. Relocating would certainly negatively impact service delivery in the short term and may well impact service delivery longer term.

- Aging vehicles
  
  Current status: The direct services offered are dependent on two vehicles, a bookmobile and a readmobile. The current bookmobile was purchased in 2003 and is at the end of its functional life. The County’s capital plan calls for it to be replaced in 2015. The Readmobile, is older (2000), but less heavily used, and is scheduled to be replaced in 2019.
  
  Fiscal Impact: Significant repair costs have been incurred to keep the bookmobile on the road in recent years, requiring an increase in the relevant budget line item. Replacing the Bookmobile will require a capital budget of approximately $285,000; should a CNG fueled vehicle and generator be desired, that will likely raise the cost by at least $30,000. The Readmobile is a much less expensive vehicle and will not be a capital project.
  
  Service Impact: As service vehicles age, they spend a greater share of their time in the repair shop. This interrupts the service schedule, and ultimately affects usage.

Reviewing these many, multi-faceted issues clarifies the uncertain environment within which the Library Board must plan for the future of library service in Dane County. Such a planning environment is not so very different from the ones most public service agencies operate within. With the understanding that any plan is subject to revision and that such revision might well be requires should the operating environment change significantly, the Library Board proposes the following goals and strategies for the near future.

Goal 1: To provide direct library service to residents of areas taxed by the county for library service.

CONTEXT & FISCAL IMPACT:
The County Library Service has, since its inception, provided direct library service in areas taxed by the county for library service primarily through the Bookmobile. Bookmobile service has historically been limited by the capacity of a single vehicle to provide service. It operates six days a week and four evenings a week. The Library Service maintains and develops a well-rounded collection of adult and children’s materials in many formats for checkout on the vehicle; offers children’s programs in conjunction with bookmobile visits, especially in the summer, and provides reference and readers’ advisory services for bookmobile users. Since 2009, the Bookmobile has been staffed by the Library Director, 3.3 FTE library assistants, augmented by LTE
library clerks averaging another .5FTE annually. The staff is assisted by the Outreach Librarian who develops and delivers the summer reading program.

Bookmobile use patterns underwent a significant shift when the city of Fitchburg opened its first library in the summer of 2011. The bookmobile previously served four communities within that city with weekly bookmobile visits. Discontinuing service to Fitchburg created opportunities to establish service in smaller and sometimes more remote communities within Dane County. Use of the bookmobile in the new communities served has grown. Between 2012 and 2013, use of the bookmobile countywide increased over 9.5%.

As an adjunct to the bookmobile program, daycare delivery services are available to licensed or registered daycare providers located in areas taxed by the county for library service. Daycare providers can sign up to receive monthly deliveries of picture books, supplemented by a multimedia curriculum kit centered on a specific theme. This service has remained relatively constant over the last several years and is much appreciated by the participants. In 2014, monthly service was provided to fourteen centers caring for over 300 children.

The County Library Service also provides specialized services with the Readmobile to and through partner community agencies such as Headstart programs. The Readmobile is a vehicle used by library staff to transport programming materials and materials for loan to classrooms and other gatherings on a scheduled basis. The Readmobile program is managed by the Outreach Librarian.

Finally, the Library Service provides large print books and recorded books to qualified homebound users in our direct service territory as part of our Outreach program. See Goal 2 for details.

STRATEGIES

- To explore other delivery mechanisms for serving residents of the areas taxed by the county for library service, including any made feasible by new technology.
- To continue to enhance on line access to library resources for all residents.
  1. To continue to participate in the Wisconsin Public Library Consortium buying programs
  2. To continue to assist readers of all ages in accessing online resources.
  3. To secure budget increases needed to support access to online resources.
- To develop the book, magazine, and media collections to serve the needs of bookmobile patrons, current and future.
  1. To secure budget increases equal to inflation to allow the updating of the print collections for adults, children, and those needing large print.
- To secure budget increases needed to support the development of collections of emerging formats.
To continue to study usage patterns and demographic trends at current and potential bookmobile service locations; to use such data to maximize usage of the bookmobile.
   1. Gather and analyze visit and checkout data on a sampling basis.
   2. Seek information about potential service points in communities not currently served by the Bookmobile.
   3. Annually make adjustments to schedules as usage and resources dictate.
To explore ways to further extend bookmobile service in non-libraried areas.
   1. Seek the additional funds needed to accomplish this service expansion.
   2. Develop alternative delivery methods that will promote efficiency in the delivery of service.
To continue to use the media, electronic communication, and social media to inform users and potential users of the services of the bookmobile.
   1. Provide weekly newspapers in targeted areas with regular bookmobile service updates.
   2. Explore the efficacy of electronic mail to users in targeted areas as a means of increasing awareness and use of the bookmobile.
   3. Maintain the currency of the existing website (www.dcls.info) and facebook pages, including information about the bookmobile and other services offered.
   4. Enact a policy to guide the Library’s use of various social media.

To plan for the replacement of the Bookmobile in 2015.
   1. Develop and defend a 2015 Capital Budget Request.
   2. Develop bid specifications to insure that a vehicle suitable to the needs of the Service is obtained.
   3. Utilizing the services of the Purchasing Division, solicit bids for a new bookmobile in 2015.
   4. After the bid is awarded, work with the successful vendor to make sure the vehicle is delivered as specified and on time.

To develop and expand the Readmobile program.
   1. Maintain service to current partners.
   2. Seek new partners within our taxing jurisdiction.
   3. Continue to explore ways to use Readmobile visits to promote ongoing services to daycare facilities.
   4. Continue to seek outside funding for collection enhancement and program development.
Goal 2: To develop and deliver library services county-wide to individuals who experience barriers in accessing traditional library services.

CONTEXT AND FISCAL IMPACT: The Outreach program of the Dane County Library Service was established in 1972 and initially focused on services to elderly, especially those homebound or living in group residential facilities. These programs continue today, providing monthly deliveries of large print and other appropriate reading materials, programming materials for use by activity directors in group settings, access to the Regional Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped, and mail delivery of library materials to individuals unable to leave their own homes.

Outreach services have expanded to include outreach to various ethnic communities, programs and materials to those needing to improve literacy skills, library services to the incarcerated, and to youth at risk. The Outreach Program depends heavily on grant funding as well as partnerships with municipal libraries and with other community agencies in order to develop and implement these programs. Currently, the Outreach effort is staffed with one full time librarian, and clerical support.

STRATEGIES

• At a minimum, to maintain the current level of basic services to those unable to access traditional library services.

• To seek out and serve new residential and other facilities for the elderly with the Book and Program Resource Delivery Program.

• To explore new methods of bringing library services to residents of all types of group facilities in Dane County.

• To increase the number of participants in the Homebound Delivery Program and to build linkages with libraries offering volunteer-based delivery programs.

• To explore ways in which volunteer efforts might be useful in expanding or creating new programs in order to extend the reach of services without the need for add

• To seek partnerships and other collaborative working arrangements that serve to further our reach in providing library service to those not currently being served.

• To fully utilize the various social media to both deliver and publicize all available library services.
Goal 3: To maintain full access to library service within Dane County for every resident of Dane County.

CONTEXT & FISCAL IMPACT:
Contract-based reimbursement continues to consume the majority of the annual library levy. Contracts, and their resulting payments, are offered annually to each municipal library in Dane County. Funds generated by the county library tax are used to reimburse costs incurred by each public library in Dane County in serving residents of areas taxed by the county for library service. Currently, the county offers a standard contract that requires that libraries participate in shared delivery, outreach services, and cross-municipal reimbursement. State law requires that libraries be allowed to choose whether they participate in such shared programs. The alternative requires the county to pay a library 70% of their operating costs incurred in serving residents paying the county library tax, as defined by Chapter 43.12. This alternative does not currently have a fiscal impact on Dane County because no municipalities currently choose it. Any future fiscal impact for both the county and for other municipal libraries will depend on whether and which libraries may choose it.

In 1999, the County began funding a Facilities Reimbursement Program, in addition to its Operating Reimbursement Program. This program acknowledges that municipalities build and operate larger library buildings than would be needed if they limited service to local residents and provides funding for a share of the costs incurred because of these larger buildings. Full funding for the program was achieved in 2002, after a three year phase-in. This program is only available to libraries choosing the standard contract with Dane County.

A third reimbursement program was necessitated by a change in Wisconsin law, effective 2008. Under Wisconsin Statutes 43.12 (1), counties are required to pay public libraries in adjacent counties 70% of their actual costs for serving that county’s residents of areas taxed by the county for library service.

With the exception of a five year period (2004-2008), the Library Service has maintained full funding of all reimbursement programs throughout its history.

STRATEGIES

- To continue the policy that all towns and any villages with a population under 2,500 are better served by remaining under the umbrella of the County Library Service.
• To maintain full county funding for the Operating Reimbursement Program and the Facility Reimbursement Program without compromising direct service programs.

• To continue to evaluate and improve the methodology and measurements used for each reimbursement program.

• To offer, as required by statute, each public library in Dane County a reimbursement equal to 70% of the state defined operating cost for providing service to residents of areas taxed by the county for library service, in lieu of the standard package of non-exempt reimbursement and delivery, outreach, and facilitating cross-municipal compensation.

• To seek funding sufficient to reimburse libraries in adjacent counties as required by 43.12 Wisconsin Statutes.

**Goal 4: To insure compliance with the County Standards for Public Libraries as developed through the county planning process and adopted by the County Board.**

**Context and Fiscal Impact:** As required by Section 43.64(2m), these standards must be met prior to the granting of an exemption from the county library tax. It cannot be emphasized strongly enough that all standards are to be considered minimum standards for adequate library service, that is, the floor—not the ceiling. The quantitative standards are based on existing state standards, but set at a point consistent with the minimums currently attained by public libraries in Dane County. The goal of these standards is that libraries, by meeting all of these low minimums, retain the flexibility to exceed some or many in order to fulfill locally-determined needs for service or materials above the minimum level. The document, “Wisconsin Public Library Standards” presents many of these same quantitative measures, but defines them as “service targets” or guidelines for libraries setting goals to meet their locally-identified library needs. In addition to the basic level (50th percentile), the state provides other higher targets: moderate (65th percentile) and advanced (80th percentile). The level selected through this planning process for Dane County was consciously placed at the minimum with the intent that libraries would seek those higher targets when the community served demonstrates a need for a service above the minimally-adequate. At the same time, changes in the publishing industry are a constant and a given. Such developments, coupled with technology advancements, will, no doubt require a re-examination of these standards within the time frame of this plan.

These standards were established in accordance with Wisconsin Statutes 43.11(3)(d) by Resolution 185, 2011-12 of the Dane County Board of Supervisors, and subsequently amended by Resolution 98, 2013-14.
It is acknowledged that the value of library services to individuals and to communities is often described in terms of output measures. These standards are, by necessity, input measures. They do not require local library staff to measure anything not already measured to satisfy the Department of Public Instruction, and most require only data supplied by the automation system used by all the libraries. Because it was seen as highly desirable to keep data collection requirements to a minimum, no standard is being proposed for facility size. However, the size of a library is, to some degree, an outcome of and determined by, what that library contains in terms of volumes, workstations, and staff. Libraries wishing guidance as they design facilities are referred to the 2009 Department of Public Instruction publication, Public Library Space Needs; a planning outline, by Anders Dahlgren and its corresponding worksheet.

Finally, the population used to determine compliance with these standards is municipal population. It is recognized that most libraries serve a significantly larger population base from surrounding areas. However, it is the municipal tax base that is exempted from the county library tax if the standards are met or exceeded, and therefore, the municipal population that must be the basis for the standards. The Wisconsin Official Population Final Estimates issued by the Wisconsin Department of Administration for the most recent year the data is reported is used to determine the standard a specific library must meet in a given year. For example, a municipality requesting an exemption from the 2014 county library tax (used to fund the 2015 county library budget) in the fall of 2014 would use the data submitted on the 2013 annual report to the Department of Public Instruction (due to the Department by March 1, 2014) and the 2013 Wisconsin Official Population Estimates (normally issued in October of 2013) to verify its compliance with these standards. Alternately, at the discretion of the library, documents such as those produced by the Automated Circulation System or the local personnel system may be submitted to demonstrate that standards have been met prior to July 1 of the year for which the exemption is requested.

All public libraries must:

- have a delivery service connecting with all other Dane County public libraries, the Dane County Library Service, and the South Central Library System with service a minimum of five days per week.
- employ directors who are properly certified by the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction.
- offer delivery service to qualified homebound individuals either directly or through a service contract with another library agency.
- provide patron access to the Internet, governed by a locally determined policy.
- share an automated integrated library system.
- Annually compensate all other standards-compliant public libraries within Dane County, including those libraries which have been granted provisional exemptions based on accepted plans to achieve compliance, for the cost of services provided to residents of the library’s municipality. Service shall be measured by checkouts; the compensation model shall be that established by Dane County Library Board for
compensating municipal libraries for serving residents of areas taxed by the county for library service.

- meet or exceed the following minimum quantitative standards based on the Wisconsin Official Population Final Estimates issued by the Wisconsin Department of Administration for the most recent year:

**Minimum Hours open annually per capita**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Range</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Villages up to 2,500 population</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Villages/cities between 2,500 and 5,000</td>
<td>.75 1,000 to 1,875 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Villages/cities between 5,000 and 10,000</td>
<td>.45 2,250 to 2,500 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Villages/cities between 10,000 and 25,000</td>
<td>.25 2,500 to 3,000 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Villages/cities between 25,000 and 50,000</td>
<td>.12 3,000 to 3,250 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Villages/cities between 50,000 and 99,000</td>
<td>.065 3,250 to 3,500 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cities over 100,000</td>
<td>.05 3,500 to 12,500 hours</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Minimum FTE Paid Staff Per Capita**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Range</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Villages up to 2,500 population</td>
<td>.001 (1 FTE minimum total) 1.00 to 2.00 FTE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Villages/cities between 2,500 and 5,000</td>
<td>.0008 2.00 to 4.00 FTE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Villages/cities between 5,000 and 10,000</td>
<td>.0008 4.00 to 7.00 FTE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Villages/cities between 10,000 and 25,000</td>
<td>.0007 7.00 to 15 FTE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Villages/cities between 25,000 and 50,000</td>
<td>.0006 15 to 25.00 FTE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Villages/cities between 50,000 and 99,000</td>
<td>.0005 25 to 40.00 FTE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cities over 100,000</td>
<td>.0004 40 to 120.00 FTE</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Minimum Public Internet Access Workstations per capita

| Villages up to 2,500 population | 0.001 | 1 to 3 Workstations |
| Villages/cities between 2,500 and 5,000 | 0.001 | 3 to 5 Workstations |
| Villages/cities between 5,000 and 10,000 | 0.001 | 5 to 7 Workstations |
| Villages/cities between 10,000 and 25,000 | 0.0007 | 7 to 13 Workstations |
| Villages/cities between 25,000 and 50,000 | 0.0005 | 13 to 25 Workstations |
| Villages/cities between 50,000 and 99,000 | 0.0005 | 25 to 50 Workstations |
| Cities over 100,000 | 0.0005 | 50 to 125 Workstations |

### Minimum Annual Material Expenditures Per Capita

| Villages up to 2,500 population | $6.00 | $6,000 to $14,250 Total |
| Villages/cities between 2,500 and 5,000 | $5.70 | $14,250 to $28,500 Total |
| Villages/cities between 5,000 and 10,000 | $5.70 | $28,500 to $54,000 Total |
| Villages/cities between 10,000 and 25,000 | $5.40 | $54,000 to $127,500 Total |
| Villages/cities between 25,000 and 50,000 | $5.10 | $127,500 to $240,000 Total |
| Villages/cities between 50,000 and 99,000 | $4.80 | $240,000 to $340,000 Total |
| Cities over 100,000 | $3.40 | $340,000 to $850,000 Total |
### Minimum Total Items Held per capita

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Population Range</th>
<th>Minimum Total Items Held per capita</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Villages up to 2,500 population</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Villages/cities between 2,500 and 5,000</td>
<td>6.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Villages/cities between 5,000 and 10,000</td>
<td>5.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Villages/cities between 10,000 and 25,000</td>
<td>4.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Villages/cities between 25,000 and 50,000</td>
<td>3.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Villages/cities between 50,000 and 99,000</td>
<td>3.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cities over 100,000</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Minimum Annual Item Acquisitions as a Percent of Holdings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Population Range</th>
<th>Minimum Annual Item Acquisitions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Villages up to 2,500 population</td>
<td>5% of holdings –greater of minimum/actual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Villages/cities between 2,500 and 5,000</td>
<td>5% of holdings –greater of minimum/actual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Villages/cities between 5,000 and 10,000</td>
<td>5% of holdings –greater of minimum/actual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Villages/cities between 10,000 and 25,000</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Villages/cities between 50,000 and 99,000</td>
<td>5% of holdings –greater of minimum/actual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cities over 100,000</td>
<td>5% of holdings –greater of minimum/actual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Print and Electronic Periodical Subscriptions per capita</td>
<td>RANGE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Villages up to 2,500 population</strong></td>
<td>.024</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Villages between 2,500 and 5,000</strong></td>
<td>.018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Villages between 5,000 and 10,000</strong></td>
<td>.015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Villages/cities between 10,000 and 25,000</strong></td>
<td>.010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Villages/cities between 25,000 and 50,000</strong></td>
<td>.006</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Villages/cities between 50,000 and 99,000</strong></td>
<td>.004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cities over 100,000</strong></td>
<td>.003</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These library standards must be met by any municipality seeking an exemption from the county library tax. Any library not meeting one or more of the quantitative standards above may be granted a provisional exemption from the county library tax on an annual basis, not to exceed three provisional exemptions in any ten year period, by submitting for county library board approval a plan designed to bring the library into full compliance. The Library Board shall review and approve such plans as appropriate and shall authorize provisional exemptions.

No library will be granted an exemption while not in compliance for more than three years out of any ten year period. Municipal library boards may appeal any decision to the Dane County Library Board through the appeals process established within the Plan for Library Service.

Should a municipality establish for the first time a library under Wisconsin Statutes Chapter 43.52, that library may be granted provisional exemptions in the first three years of its existence. Exemptions shall be contingent on the annual acceptance by the County Library Board of a plan to bring the library into full compliance with all standards by year four of its operation.

Should the newly established library meet all county standards in year four of its existence, but fail to meet county standards relating to collection size in a future year, it may be granted one additional provisional exemption in the first ten year period of its existence. This additional provision is contingent on the submission of a plan to return the library to full compliance which is acceptable to the Dane County Library Board.
**Decision Timeline and Appeals Process**

Municipal libraries will supply the data demonstrating compliance by April 1 of the year in which an exemption is desired. Should such data demonstrate that one or more standards have not been met (as judged by the County Library Board and noticed to the affected library by May 15), the Library will submit by June 15, a plan designed to bring the library into full compliance within the allowed time period. By July 15, the County Library Board will determine for each library that minimum standards have been met or will decide whether a library’s submitted plan to meet all standards within the required time frame is sufficient. Any decision of the County Library Board may be appealed by any municipal library. Such an appeal must be filed within 15 days of the date of the original decision.

Appeals must be made in writing and delivered by the U.S. Mail or any other means to: Dane County Library Board, 1819 Aberg Av., Madison, WI 53704. The basis for an appeal shall include one of the following:
- natural disasters affecting the library’s ability to meet the standards.
- significant library building projects affecting the library’s ability to meet the standards.
- action of a governmental body whose authority exceeds that of the city, village, or county and which prevents compliance with these standards.

All appeals will be heard within 30 days of filing, at a regularly scheduled County Library Board meeting. Any such meeting will include a presentation by the appealing library and a public hearing. All libraries in Dane County will receive notice of the appeal and the hearing. The County Library Board will act on the appeal within 30 days of the hearing. The affected library will be notified. The decision of the County Library Board shall be final.

**Goal 5: To maximize the efficiency and effectiveness of library services for all residents of Dane County.**

**CONTEXT & FISCAL IMPACT:** For the last twenty years, Wisconsin law has required the county to levy a tax in any municipality without a legally-established public library sufficient to reimburse municipal libraries within the county and in adjacent counties for serving those residing in the municipalities taxed by the county. While this state law requires reimbursement at 70% of actual costs, Dane County has historically reimbursed costs at 100% for almost fifty years; its reimbursement programs also require municipal libraries to reimburse other municipal libraries in Dane County for serving their residents. This system works well provided that 1) there are municipal libraries able to deliver service to non-residents, and 2) sufficient non-librariaed municipalities exist to buffer existing municipalities with libraries in order to minimize cross-library non-resident use. Dane County has existed quite comfortably within this continuum for the last 45 years, although the addition of a library in the city of Fitchburg did cause a distinct shift. Previous to the creation of this library, the county taxed approximately 28% of the property in Dane County and counted 25% of the total county population as its primary patron base. In 2013, two years after the opening of the
Fitchburg Public Library, the county taxes 23% of the property in Dane County, and counts 18.5% of the population as its primary patron base. The potential for further shifts in population and tax base exist as annexation continues and as additional communities explore the option of establishing local libraries. Ultimately both factors result in a shrinking buffer between libraries. This increased ease of access to multiple libraries for much of the population, serves to increase the amount of non-resident use experienced by each municipal library, as well as the likelihood that residents of a municipality with a library will opt to use a library in another community. This has resulted in some libraries owing other libraries more money for serving their residents than the county owes the library for serving residents taxed by the county.

It is apparent to many that the structure, organizational, and financial, that has served Dane County residents well since 1966 cannot be trusted to deliver in the same fashion in the future. Significant resources in the last ten years have been devoted to studying the feasibility of alternative organizational structures. Several reports have been published and are available at www.dcls.info; however, the overwhelming conclusion was that political will does not exist to re-organize the delivery of library service in any way currently authorized by the statutes; that no alternative organizational method will produce measurable cost-savings; and that, in the absence of potential cost-savings, creating political will would be difficult, if not impossible. At the same time, the financial structure of the reimbursement programs is also called into question as library services encompass materials offered remotely as well as services and programs that do not involve the loaning of library material.

**STRATEGIES:**

To examine current reimbursement programs to determine the continued viability of the data elements used to represent library use, and to explore alternatives to determine if another model or models will more equitably compensate libraries for the service they provide to non-residents.

To seek input from all stakeholders, including library users from every taxing jurisdiction, as well as elected municipal and county officials, regarding future plans Dane County may develop for library service delivery.

To recommend and to advocate for changes in state law, county ordinance, and contractual agreements that will enable library services in Dane County to be delivered more equitably, effectively, and/or efficiently.

**Goal 6: To continue to be a partner in a dynamic public library system that provides needed services to all its members.**

**CONTEXT & FISCAL IMPACT:** The South Central Library System is one of seventeen state-funded public library systems in Wisconsin. Its members include the counties of Adams, Columbia, Dane, Green, Portage, Sauk, and Wood as well as the public
libraries located within those seven counties. The South Central Library System is governed by a board of trustees whose 20 members are appointed by the county board chairs or county executives of the member counties. Dane County has twelve members on the Board.

Advising the Board of Directors is the Public Library Advisory Committee. Its members are elected within each county by that county’s library directors and serve two year terms.

The governance and services of the Library System are largely defined by Chapter 43 of the Wisconsin Statutes and supported with state aid provided through the Universal Service Fund. In addition to these state-funded and mandated services, the South Central Library System offers a number of technology services to its members on a cost-recovery basis.

**STRATEGIES:**

To continue membership in the South Central Library System.

To require all participating Dane County libraries to be members of the South Central Library System.

To encourage the County Executive and the County Board to appoint individuals to the SCLS Board who are committed to fulfilling their responsibilities as representatives of Dane County, and to assist in their recruitment.

To establish ongoing relationships, at a board level, with members of the South Central Library System Board.

To maintain the established position that representation on the public library system board be proportional according to population.

To participate and encourage all Dane County libraries to participate in ongoing system planning in order to insure System services to libraries that meet their technical support, continuing education, and consulting needs.

To actively support full state funding for public library systems in Wisconsin.
Public library engagement in the United States

An overview of three years of research into Americans’ relationships with public libraries in the digital age

Pew Research Center’s Internet Project

@pewinternet  |  @pewresearch
About our libraries research

Three phases:

I. State of reading
II. Library services
III. Typology

Three-year grant from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation to study the changing role of public libraries in the digital age
About our libraries research

Nationally representative telephone surveys

Landlines and cell phones

English and Spanish

Americans ages 16 and older

libraries.pewinternet.org
Overview

• Relationships to libraries are part of Americans’ broader resource networks
• Once libraries are a part of their networks, services are especially important to low-income households
• Books, browsing, and librarians are still central to how people use libraries and what they expect from them.
• However, technology (computers, internet) is also a common use and a high priority.
• Public libraries are also used and viewed as important community spaces.
Americans’ reading habits


Americans’ reading habits

Print is still the anchor of Americans’ reading habits, but e-reading is growing more popular.

• 76% of adults read a book in some format over the previous year.
  • The typical American read five books in the last 12 months (median)

• 28% of Americans read an e-book in the previous year.
Most adults read a book in the past year. Print remains most popular, but e-reading is on the rise

Among American adults 18 and older, the % who read at least one book (in total, in print, or as an e-book) in the past year (Source). Total includes audiobooks (not shown).
Put another way: Almost half of readers under 30 read an e-book in the past year.

Among those in each age group who read at least one book in the past year, the % who read an e-book during that time (Source).
Half of American adults now own either a tablet or an e-reader

Among American adults 18 and older (Source).
As tablet ownership grows, more Americans use them for e-books

Among all e-book readers ages 18 and older, the % who read e-books on each device (Source).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Device</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2014</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>E-reader</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tablet</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computer</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cell phone</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Which is better for these purposes, a printed book or an e-book?

Among those 16+ who read both a print book & an e-book in the past year (2011)

- Reading with a child: 81% (Print), 9% (E-books)
- Sharing with others: 69% (Print), 25% (E-books)
- Reading in bed: 43% (Print), 45% (E-books)
- Having a wide selection: 35% (Print), 53% (E-books)
- Reading while traveling: 73% (Print), 19% (E-books)
- Get books quickly: 83% (Print), 13% (E-books)

Source: Pew Internet December 2011 survey. libraries.pewinternet.org
How Americans use public libraries

Report: [Library Services in the Digital Age](#) (2013)


Americans and public libraries

• 54% of Americans used a public library in the past year
  • 48% visited in person
  • 30% used a library website

• 72% of Americans live in a “library household”

• 91% of Americans say libraries are important to their community as a whole; 76% say libraries are important to them and their family

• Relationships to libraries are part of Americans’ broader resource networks
If your local public library closed, what impact would that have?

**Impact on you and your family**
- Major impact: 29
- Minor impact: 38
- No impact: 32

**Impact on your community**
- Major impact: 63
- Minor impact: 27
- No impact: 7

Among American adults 16 and older (Source).
Library services that are “very important”

Among Americans who have ever used a public library or had a household member use one

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Books and media</td>
<td>54%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Having a quiet, safe place</td>
<td>51%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research resources</td>
<td>47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Programs for youth</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Librarian assistance</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internet, computers, printers</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Help finding, applying for job</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Help applying for gov't services</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Programs for adults</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Adults living in lower-income households are more likely to say public library services are very important to them and their families.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Household income</th>
<th>Books and media</th>
<th>Quiet spaces</th>
<th>Research resources</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less than $30,000</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At least $75,000</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Youth programs</th>
<th>Librarian assistance</th>
<th>Internet/computers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less than $30,000</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At least $75,000</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Job search help</th>
<th>Gov’t services help</th>
<th>Programs for adults</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less than $30,000</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At least $75,000</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Among American adults 16 and older (Source).
Books & browsing still central

Among those who visited a library in-person in the past year, the % who did the following activities

- Borrow books: 73%
- Browse the stacks: 73%
- Research topics of interest: 54%
- Get help from a librarian: 50%
- Read magazines/newspapers: 31%

Source: Pew Internet November 2012 survey. Data is for library visitors ages 16+.
What Americans say it is important for public libraries to offer (source)

- Librarians to help people find info: Very important 80, Somewhat important 16
- Borrowing books: Very important 80, Somewhat important 15
- Free access to computers/internet: Very important 77, Somewhat important 18
- Quiet study spaces: Very important 76, Somewhat important 19
- Programs for children & teens: Very important 74, Somewhat important 21
- Research resources like databases: Very important 73, Somewhat important 20
- Job/career resources: Very important 67, Somewhat important 22
- Free events/activities: Very important 63, Somewhat important 30
- Free public meeting spaces: Very important 49, Somewhat important 36
“Our customers are still using the library but in different ways. They browse our catalog online, place reserves on the items they want, then pick them up at their location of choice... Fewer browse the collection in person.”

– Library staff member
Technology & media use at the library

Among those who visited a library in-person in the past year, the % who did the following activities

- Use a research database: 46%
- Borrow a DVD: 40%
- Use computer or internet: 26%
- Borrow an audio book: 17%
- Borrow a music CD: 16%

Source: Pew Internet November 2012 survey. Data is for library visitors ages 16+.
E-reading is on the rise
Borrowing is just getting started

28% of Americans read an e-book in the past year, up from 16% in 2011

5% of recent library users have borrowed an e-book in past year, as of late 2012
“We spend a significant part of our day explaining how to get library books onto e-book readers.”

– Library staff member
62% of Americans say they do not know if their library lends out e-books.

This includes 58% of library card holders.

Source: Pew Internet November 2012 survey.
**What Americans say it is important for public libraries to offer (source)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Very important</th>
<th>Somewhat important</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Librarians to help people find info</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Borrowing books</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Free access to computers/internet</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quiet study spaces</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Programs for children &amp; teens</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research resources like databases</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job/career resources</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Free events/activities</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Free public meeting spaces</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Libraries as community spaces

Among those who visited a library in-person in the past year, the % who did the following activities

- Sit, read, and study, etc: 49%
- Event for children/teens: 41%
- Attend a meeting of a group: 23%
- Attend a class/lecture for adults: 21%

Source: Pew Internet November 2012 survey. Data is for library visitors ages 16+.
What Americans say it is important for public libraries to offer (source)

- Librarians to help people find info: Very important 80, Somewhat important 16
- Borrowing books: Very important 80, Somewhat important 15
- Free access to computers/internet: Very important 77, Somewhat important 18
- Quiet study spaces: Very important 76, Somewhat important 19
- Programs for children & teens: Very important 74, Somewhat important 21
- Research resources like databases: Very important 73, Somewhat important 20
- Job/career resources: Very important 67, Somewhat important 22
- Free events/activities: Very important 63, Somewhat important 30
- Free public meeting spaces: Very important 49, Somewhat important 36
What Americans want from libraries

Report: Library Services in the Digital Age (2013)
### How likely would you be to use...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Very likely</th>
<th>Somewhat likely</th>
<th>Not too likely or not at all likely</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Ask a librarian&quot; online service</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library app</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tech try-out program</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cell GPS app</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library kiosks in community</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personalized accounts</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classes on borrowing e-books</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-loaded e-readers</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Digital media lab</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classes on e-readers</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Very likely | Somewhat likely | Not too likely or not at all likely
What public libraries should do

- Coordinate more with schools: Should definitely do (85), Should maybe do (11), Should definitely not do (2)
- Free literacy programs: Should definitely do (82), Should maybe do (14), Should definitely not do (3)
- Separate spaces for different services: Should definitely do (61), Should maybe do (27), Should definitely not do (9)
- Have more comfortable spaces: Should definitely do (59), Should maybe do (28), Should definitely not do (9)
- Offer more e-books: Should definitely do (53), Should maybe do (30), Should definitely not do (5)
- More interactive learning experiences: Should definitely do (47), Should maybe do (38), Should definitely not do (12)
- Help users digitize own materials: Should definitely do (43), Should maybe do (39), Should definitely not do (14)
- Move MOST library services online: Should definitely do (42), Should maybe do (34), Should definitely not do (19)
- Make MOST services automated: Should definitely do (41), Should maybe do (36), Should definitely not do (20)
- Move stacks out of public locations: Should definitely do (20), Should maybe do (39), Should definitely not do (36)
What do Americans want from libraries?

More activities, more separate spaces

...and print books, quiet

Convenience & tech (apps, e-books, kiosks)

... and closer relationships with librarians
The Library Engagement Typology

Report: “From Distant Admirers to Library Lovers—and beyond”

Quiz: “What kind of library users are you?”
Overview (Full report)

- Relationships to libraries are part of Americans’ broader resource networks.
- Once libraries are a part of their networks, services are especially important to low-income households.
- Books, browsing, and librarians are still central to how people use libraries and what they expect from them.
- However, technology (computers, internet) is also a common use and a high priority.
- Public libraries are also used and viewed as important community spaces.
Typology groups by level of library engagement

Among all Americans ages 16+ who have ever used a public library or had a household member use a public library

- Info Omnivores: 20%
- Solid Center: 30%
- Library Lovers: 10%
- Off the Grid: 4%
- Distant Admirers: 4%
- Rooted & Roadblocked: 7%
- Young & Restless: 7%
- Not for Me: 4%
- Print Traditionalists: 9%

Level of engagement with public libraries:

- High Engagement (30%)
- Medium Engagement (39%)
- Low Engagement (17%)
- No personal library use (14%)

Note: Percentages in the chart may not add up to the percentages in the legend due to rounding.
Urban typology groups by level of library engagement

Among Americans living in urban areas who have ever used a public library or had a household member use a public library

Level of engagement with public libraries:

- High Engagement (30%)
- Medium Engagement (39%)
- Low Engagement (17%)
- No personal library use (14%)

Note: Percentages in the chart may not add up to the percentages in the legend due to rounding.
**Suburban typology groups by level of library engagement**

Among Americans living in suburban areas who have ever used a public library or had a household member use a public library

- **Library Lovers** (10%)
- **Info Omnivores** (21%)
- **Solid Center** (32%)
- **Distant Admirers** (10%)
- **Off the Grid** (3%)
- **Rooted & Roadblocked** (7%)
- **Young & Restless** (6%)
- **Not for Me** (4%)
- **Print Traditionalists** (8%)

**Level of engagement with public libraries:**

- **High Engagement** (30%)
- **Medium Engagement** (39%)
- **Low Engagement** (17%)
- **No personal library use** (14%)

Note: Percentages in the chart may not add up to the percentages in the legend due to rounding.
Rural typology groups by level of library engagement

Among Americans living in rural areas who have ever used a public library or had a household member use a public library

Level of engagement with public libraries:

- High Engagement (30%)
- Medium Engagement (39%)
- Low Engagement (17%)
- No personal library use (14%)

Note: Percentages in the chart may not add up to the percentages in the legend due to rounding.
Public library engagement by community type

- Library Lovers
- Information Omnivores
- Solid Center
- Print Traditionalists
- Not for Me
- Young & Restless
- Rooted & Roadblocked
- Distant Admirers
- Off the Grid

Urban:
- Library Lovers: 11%
- Information Omnivores: 24%
- Solid Center: 30%
- Print Traditionalists: 4%
- Not for Me: 4%
- Young & Restless: 9%
- Rooted & Roadblocked: 5%
- Distant Admirers: 5%
- Off the Grid: 10%

Suburban:
- Library Lovers: 10%
- Information Omnivores: 21%
- Solid Center: 32%
- Print Traditionalists: 8%
- Not for Me: 5%
- Young & Restless: 4%
- Rooted & Roadblocked: 6%
- Distant Admirers: 7%
- Off the Grid: 10%

Rural:
- Library Lovers: 8%
- Information Omnivores: 12%
- Solid Center: 27%
- Print Traditionalists: 21%
- Not for Me: 5%
- Young & Restless: 4%
- Rooted & Roadblocked: 7%
- Distant Admirers: 12%
- Off the Grid: 6%
Public library engagement by community type

Level of engagement with public libraries:

- **High Engagement**
  - Urban: 4% (11%)
  - Suburban: 8% (10%)
  - Rural: 3% (8%)

- **Medium Engagement**
  - Urban: 4% (24%)
  - Suburban: 4% (21%)
  - Rural: 5% (27%)

- **Low Engagement**
  - Urban: 9% (30%)
  - Suburban: 6% (32%)
  - Rural: 7% (21%)

- **No personal library use**
  - Urban: 5% (5%)
  - Suburban: 4% (5%)
  - Rural: 7% (6%)

Urban, Suburban, Rural
What kind of library use are you?

Take the quiz
RISING TO THE CHALLENGE
Re-Envisioning Public Libraries

A report of the Aspen Institute Dialogue on Public Libraries

by

Amy K. Garmer
Director
Aspen Institute Dialogue on Public Libraries
The Aspen Institute Communications and Society Program

THE ASPEN INSTITUTE
October 2014
This report emanates from the Aspen Institute Communications and Society Program. Unless attributed to a particular person, none of the comments or ideas contained in this report should be taken as embodying the views or carrying the endorsement of any individual participant in the Dialogue on Public Libraries or its working group or the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.

The Aspen Institute Dialogue on Public Libraries invites you to view the digital version of this report at http://as.pn/libraries. Share your vision for the future of public libraries on Twitter with hashtag #libraryvision.

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Executive Summary, (bottom photo): courtesy of BiblioTech

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While the public library was conceived in an age of information scarcity, today’s networked world is one of information abundance and mobility. The spread of powerful digital information and communication technologies has touched every aspect of daily life, creating new opportunities. The Internet has become the critical gateway for accessing information, job opportunities, education, financial and government services, healthcare resources and civic participation. Moreover, these technologies present new opportunities for local and regional entrepreneurs and communities to compete, including at national and international levels—economies of small thriving alongside economies of scale.

But this new world of “information plenty” creates new, essential skills, such as the ability to gain value from information and produce new knowledge. Access to digital networks and digital literacy skills are essential for full participation in modern society. Economic, educational, civic and social opportunities are tied to a whole new set of knowledge and skills that barely existed a generation ago, and people without these skills or access to this information abundance are quickly left behind.

Public libraries can be at the center of these changes: a trusted community resource and an essential platform for learning, creativity and innovation in the community. Public libraries have the DNA needed to thrive in this new information-rich, knowledge-based society.

Providing access and connecting knowledge to the needs of individuals and the community have always been at the center of the mission and purpose of libraries.

In fact, public libraries are already at the forefront of tackling social inequalities by providing access to online information and supporting digital literacy. They provide supportive, creative learning spaces for young people after school. As a key strand in the social safety net, public libraries provide an important lifeline to jobs, educational opportunities, literacy, health resources and government and community services, especially for immigrants and disadvantaged populations. Public libraries are highly trusted institutions rooted in the neighborhoods that they serve. Yet some critics question their continuing relevance in an age when information can flow via digital devices to virtually anyone, anywhere, at any time.

Enabling all public libraries to fulfill their new roles will require community leaders, civic partners and librarians to share a new vision for what libraries can be. To meet the needs of individuals, the community and the nation in the knowledge society, public libraries must be re-invented for a networked world, in which the value of networks grows as more connections are made. Innovations built on the old distributed model of the lending library will not suffice. What is needed is a new level of interdependence that communities and libraries must embrace together.
ABOUT THIS REPORT

The Aspen Institute Communications and Society Program, in partnership with the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, created the Aspen Institute Dialogue on Public Libraries to help advance the work that public libraries are doing to address community challenges and to support the transformation of communities and their public libraries in the digital age. The Dialogue on Public Libraries is a multi-stakeholder forum that brings together library professionals, policymakers, technology experts, philanthropists, educators, and civic leaders to explore, develop, and champion new ways of thinking about public libraries.

The Dialogue’s work is informed by a select 35-member working group that met twice in the project’s first year to examine the evolving societal role of the public library, and to shape and advance a perspective that re-envision U.S. public libraries for the future. The Working Group’s discussions and individual contributions helped shape the perspective on public libraries in the digital age that is presented in this report. We are indebted to them for sharing their vision, knowledge, and experience with the Dialogue on Public Libraries.

The Dialogue’s vision is also informed by a series of engagements and focus groups with leaders from key public library associations, including the Public Library Association, the Association of Rural and Small Libraries, the Chief Officers of State Library Agencies and the American Library Association. We acknowledge and thank these library leaders for their insights and support of the Dialogue’s work.

We hope that this report will support the impactful work that libraries do for their communities and provide a resource for engaging government leaders, trustees, and community partners in dialogue to advance concrete actions for transforming public libraries.

The Dialogue and, ultimately, this report explore the essential role of public libraries in a networked world and begin to re-envision the 21st century library in a hyper-connected environment and dramatically changing world. The report is intended to raise the profile of public libraries to the center of the knowledge society, highlight the opportunities and possibilities, increase support for an expanded library role in a networked world and spark a national conversation and action to re-envision the 21st century library as a center of learning, innovation, and creativity. While the report’s focus is on public libraries, we acknowledge the importance of school and research libraries in the broader conversations around the future of libraries and communities.

We hope that readers will use this report as the basis for exploring how a bold new vision for public libraries, fully realized, can help to make communities stronger, more resilient, and the kind of communities where people thrive.

Deborah L. Jacobs, Director
Global Libraries Program
Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation

Charles M. Firestone, Executive Director
Communications and Society Program
The Aspen Institute
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Aspen Institute Dialogue on Public Libraries would not have been possible without the generous support and funding from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and the foundation’s Global Libraries Program, led by Deborah Jacobs, director, and Jessica Dorr, deputy director. These two leaders, whose commitment to strengthening public libraries is recognized in the United States and around the world, provided invaluable guidance and insight to the Dialogue throughout its activities to date.

This report is the first from the Dialogue on Public Libraries. Members of the Dialogue’s Working Group met twice to examine the evolving roles of public libraries in the United States in light of significant technological, economic and social trends. The first meeting took place at the Aspen Institute’s Aspen Meadows conference center in Aspen, Colorado, August 3–6, 2013. Salman Khan, Founder of Khan Academy, and Walter Isaacson, President and CEO of the Aspen Institute, joined the working group to discuss the public library role in the new education ecosystem. The second gathering took place at the Cosmos Club in Washington, D.C., November 5–6, 2013. The engagement and contributions of Working Group participants have helped illuminate ways that communities can leverage investments in libraries to build stronger civic ecologies and forge new partnerships for achieving local and national goals. The Appendix to this report identifies all the Working Group members who shared their valuable insights. We thank them all for their contributions.

Throughout the past year, the Dialogue on Public Libraries also convened roundtable focus group and preview sessions with board members and other thought leaders from the Public Library Association (PLA), Association for Rural and Small Libraries (ARSL), the Chief Officers of State Library Agencies (COSLA), the American Library Association (ALA) and the International City/County Management Association (ICMA). Participants in these gatherings provided illuminating insights into opportunities and challenges inherent in the vision. They also provided invaluable venues to test, develop and refine the themes and future vision for libraries. A list of the participants in these sessions and other informal advisors to the Dialogue appears in the Appendix, and we thank these associations, their leaders and participating members for their support and ongoing engagement.

While it is impossible to record the names of all whose ideas have been captured in this report, a list of our informal advisors appears in the Appendix. I would like to acknowledge in particular Karen Archer Perry, principal consultant for Clarion Collaborative, who collaborated on the initial idea of a library project at the Aspen Institute. Karen played a significant role in the creation of the Dialogue on Public Libraries while serving as senior program officer in the Gates Foundation’s Global Libraries Program.
The Dialogue has benefitted from the participation of others in the planning and completion of project activities and this report. These individuals include Allyson Boucher and Maura Zehr of Spitfire Strategies, and Aspen Institute colleagues David Devlin-Foltz, Susanna Dilliplate, Robert Medina and Angbeen Saleem of the Aspen Planning and Evaluation Program (APEP). The Aspen Institute Communications and Society Program staff managed all aspects of the project with utmost professionalism. Our C&S Program team includes Ian Smalley, who served as senior project manager for the Dialogue; Tricia Kelly, assistant director; Rachel Pohl, program associate; Ariana Abadian-Heifetz, program associate; and Sarah Eppehimer, senior project manager, and Jackie Orwick, consultant, who have brought the report to life online at our website.

This report is the culmination of a year-long effort and involved many hands. Craig LaMay, associate professor and interim associate journalism dean at Northwestern University’s Medill School, served as conference rapporteur for the two working group meetings and wrote an early draft. We are grateful for his work capturing the initial ideas for the vision; Craig’s analysis and writing are reflected in this final report.

As the year progressed, the Dialogue received additional writing and editing support from Bob Rothman and Christine Becker, as well as individual working group members. The final report is a synthesis of many contributions. Any omissions and errors contained in this report are the sole responsibility of the report’s final author, the director of the Dialogue.

Finally, I am deeply grateful to Maureen Sullivan, past president of the American Library Association, Susan Benton, president of the Urban Libraries Council and Susan Hildreth, director of the Institute of Museum and Library Services. Each has worn many hats in this project from its inception: participant, consultant, moderator, partner, mentor, advocate and friend. With their deep well of knowledge, keen intuition and vision for what it will take to raise every library to great new heights, Maureen, Susan and Susan have provided invaluable leadership and support, and I thank them.

Amy K. Garmer, Director
Aspen Institute Dialogue on Public Libraries

October 2014
Expanding access to education, learning opportunities and social connections for all is one of the great challenges of our time. It is a challenge made more urgent by the rapid transition from old industrial and service-based economic models to a new economy in which knowledge and creativity are the drivers of productivity and economic growth, and information, technology and learning are central to economic performance and prosperity.

It is not only the economy but all of society that is being reshaped by these trends. Amid these changes, there are divides in wealth, digital inclusion and participation that threaten to widen if we as a nation do not commit to new thinking and aggressive action to provide these opportunities for all.

This is a time of great opportunity for communities, institutions and individuals who are willing to champion new thinking and nurture new relationships. It is a time of particular opportunity for public libraries with their unique stature as trusted community hubs and repositories of knowledge and information.
THE PUBLIC LIBRARY IN THE DIGITAL AGE

Libraries are essential to success and progress in the digital age.

The process of re-envisioning public libraries to maximize their impact reflects:

- Principles that have always been at the center of the public library’s mission—equity, access, opportunity, openness and participation
- The library’s capacity to drive opportunity and success in today’s knowledge-based society
- An emerging model of networked libraries that promotes economies of scale and broadens the library’s resource reach while preserving its local presence
- The library’s fundamental people, place and platform assets

The Dialogue’s perspective on the 21st-century library builds on the public library’s proven track record in strengthening communities and calls for libraries to be centers of learning, creativity and innovation in the digital age. No longer a nice-to-have amenity, the public library is a key partner in sustaining the educational, economic and civic health of the community during a time of dramatic change. Public libraries inspire learning and empower people of all ages. They promote a better trained and educated workforce. They ensure equitable access and provide important civic space for advancing democracy and the common good. Public libraries are engines of development within their communities.

PUBLIC LIBRARIES AT THE CENTER OF THE DIGITAL AGE

Public libraries are poised to play a leading role in helping individuals and communities adapt to this changing world. Many libraries already are linking individuals to information and learning opportunities, driving development and innovation, and serving as community connectors. With nearly 9,000 public library systems and 17,000 library branches and outlets across the country, there is already a significant physical presence and infrastructure to leverage for long-term success.

Enabling all libraries to fulfill their new roles will require library leaders, policy makers and community stakeholders to re-envision the public library and take advantage of the opportunities it offers.
PEOPLE, PLACE AND PLATFORM

The emerging value proposition of the public library is built around three key assets—people, place and platform:

- **PEOPLE.** The public library is a hub of civic engagement, fostering new relationships and strengthening the human capital of the community. Librarians are actively engaged in the community. They connect individuals to a vast array of local and national resources and serve as neutral conveners to foster civic health. They facilitate learning and creation for children and adults alike.

- **PLACE.** The public library is a welcoming space for a wide range of purposes—reading, communicating, learning, playing, meeting and getting business done. Its design recognizes that people are not merely consumers of content but creators and citizens as well. Its physical presence provides an anchor for economic development and neighborhood revitalization, and helps to strengthen social bonds and community identity. The library is also a virtual space where individuals can gain access to information, resources and all the rich experiences the library offers. In the creative design of its physical and virtual spaces the public library defines what makes a great public space.

- **PLATFORM.** The public library is user-centered. It provides opportunities for individuals and the community to gain access to a variety of tools and resources with which to discover and create new knowledge. The platform enables the curation and sharing of the community’s knowledge and innovation. A great library platform is a “third place” —an interactive entity that can facilitate many people operating individually and in groups—and supports the learning and civic needs of the community.
STRATEGIES FOR SUCCESS

The Dialogue concludes that the long-term health of libraries is essential to the long-term health of the communities they serve and identified four strategic opportunities for action to guide the continuing transformation.

1. ALIGNING LIBRARY SERVICES IN SUPPORT OF COMMUNITY GOALS

Public libraries that align their people, place and platform assets and create services that prioritize and support local community goals will find the greatest opportunities for success in the years ahead. Managers of local governments report that it is often difficult to prioritize libraries over other community services such as museums or parks and recreation departments that also serve a distinctly public mission. What libraries need is to be more intentional in the ways that they deploy resources in the community, and more deeply embedded in addressing the critical challenges facing the community. This will require a level of flexibility and adaptability to change as community needs change. It will also require collaboration among libraries, policy makers and community partners to redefine the role of libraries as institutions that inspire learning, drive development, grow social capital and create opportunities.

2. PROVIDING ACCESS TO CONTENT IN ALL FORMATS

As the public library shifts from a repository for materials to a platform for learning and participation, its ability to provide access to vast amounts of content in all formats is vital. Libraries face two immediate major challenges in providing access to content in all forms:

- Being able to procure and share e-books and other digital content on the same basis as physical versions
- Having affordable, universal broadband technologies that deliver and help create content

Dealing with both challenges have been high priorities for public libraries throughout the country. The challenges have been particularly acute for small libraries, those in rural communities and in some urban areas where limited budgets make access to e-books and upgrades to high-speed broadband difficult despite high community need for and interest in both. Ensuring access to e-books, other e-content and more-than-adequate high-speed broadband is a big concern going forward because it impacts the public library’s ability to fulfill one of its core missions—to procure and share the leading ideas of the day and enable everyone to participate in the world’s conversations.
3. ENSURING THE LONG-TERM SUSTAINABILITY OF PUBLIC LIBRARIES

Perhaps the greatest challenge facing public libraries today is to transform their service model to meet the demands of the knowledge society while securing a sustainable funding base for the future. With limited and sometimes volatile funding, however, such transformations will be uneven and incomplete. In addition, the highly local nature of public library funding and governance structures may interfere with both rapid and broad-scale progress—the kind of scale needed to compete and thrive in a world of global networks. Challenges that shape the discussion about long-term public library sustainability given their vital role in the digital era include:

- Identifying reliable sources of revenue for daily operations as well as long-term planning and investment
- Exploring alternative governance structures and business models that maximize efficient and sustainable library operations and customer service
- Becoming more skilled at measuring outcomes rather than counting activities
- Balancing the local and national library value proposition to consider economies of scale in a networked world without compromising local control

4. CULTIVATING LEADERSHIP

Leadership is needed across the community—from elected officials, government leaders, business and civic leaders and libraries themselves—to build communities and public libraries that thrive and succeed together. Vision is a critical component of leadership. Every community needs a vision and a strategic plan for how to work with the public library to directly align the library and its work with the community’s educational, economic and other key goals. It must have input from all stakeholder groups in the community. Key steps in building community leadership to support the public library include improving communications with community leaders, developing community champions, strengthening intersections with diverse communities and communities of color, reaching out to and engaging with young-professional organizations and demonstrating the collective impact of partners working together.
RISING TO THE CHALLENGE

Re-Envisioning Public Libraries
Expanding access to education, learning opportunities and social connection for all is one of the great challenges of our time. It is a challenge made more urgent by the rapid transition from old industrial and service-based economic models to a new economy in which knowledge and creativity are the drivers of productivity and economic growth, and information, technology and learning are central to economic performance and prosperity. It is not only the economy but all of society that is being reshaped by these trends. Amid these changes, there are troubling divides in wealth, digital inclusion and participation that threaten to widen if we as a nation do not commit to new thinking and aggressive action to provide these opportunities for all.
The digital era has produced remarkable changes in everyday life—for the individual as well as for the community.

- Social media connect people across town and around the world, enabling new kinds of communities that transcend geographic barriers.
- Mobile technologies provide always-on connectivity to people and information, and they enable us to enjoy more highly personalized and immediate experiences with information, media, education and commerce.
- Advances in sensors and related technology are making individuals healthier and our communities even “smarter” while at the same time creating mountains of data to be filtered, analyzed and turned into new knowledge.
- Informed, engaged citizens demand a stronger voice and greater participation in shaping their communities and increased government transparency and accountability.
- Entire industries are upended by the sometimes disrupting impact of digital technologies; new markets, new businesses, and new relationships arise from the global to the hyperlocal levels, in some cases affording greater choice in where to live and work.

Among the transformative social changes brought on by digitization are new information and learning environments in which knowledge is no longer stable over many years and skills quickly become obsolete.

“We have experienced a huge ‘Gutenberg-scale’ inflection point in the last 10 years. The world has gone from connected to hyperconnected and from interconnected to interdependent.”

—THOMAS FRIEDMAN

These environments are shaped by a vast explosion of easily accessible information and new definitions of community, as well as a need for new resources and skills. The changes and their impacts are dramatic:

- **TECHNOLOGY** has made it possible for individuals to have instant access in their homes or on portable devices to the equivalent of the Library of Congress’s entire holdings.¹
- **COMMUNITIES**, once defined almost exclusively by geographic boundaries, are increasingly shaped by social media, often based on mutual interests rather than physical location. Networks, rather than neighborhoods, have become the dominant form of social organization.
- **EMPLOYMENT** is increasingly transient, with the average worker staying in a job 4.4 years rather than an entire career. Among workers born between 1979 and 1999, average tenure is 2.2 years or less.² Keeping up with a more mobile job marketplace requires access to information and resources and skills to navigate vast amounts of information.
The knowledge economy requires individuals to acquire a range of skills and to continuously adapt those skills to changing circumstances. Author and New York Times columnist Thomas Friedman has written about the impact that the evolution to a digitally driven economy, with its demand for continual renewal of skills, is having on individuals and communities. Friedman calls it “a 401(k) world—a world of defined contributions, not defined benefits.”

“We have experienced a huge ‘Gutenberg-scale’ inflection point in the last 10 years. The world has gone from connected to hyperconnected and from interconnected to interdependent. This has been such a shift in degree that it has become a shift in kind,” Friedman says in a 2014 interview. Driving this big shift is the emergence and rapid diffusion of four major technologies—personal computing, the Internet, collaborative workflow software and search capabilities (e.g., Google)—which Friedman observes has created “a platform on which more people from more places could compete, connect and collaborate—as individuals or companies—for less money with greater efficiency and greater ease than ever before.”

To a significant degree, the knowledge economy gives birth to the creation economy, a free-agent economy in which opportunities for lifelong learning must be abundant and people need skills as knowledge creators, not simply information consumers. Importantly, these learning opportunities must be present throughout the community and persistent throughout a lifetime. “Now the half-life of a skill is down to about five years, and genres have a lifetime of four or five years, so most learning in the future won’t go on in schools,” said John Seely Brown, co-director of the Deloitte Center for the Edge, at the first meeting of the Dialogue working group. “We’ve shifted from stable stocks of knowledge and an archived world to a world of information flows, participation and states of confusion. Now we create as fast as we learn. The game is more complicated.”

At the same time that the half-life of a skill is shrinking, information is becoming more abundant and the means of production are becoming more accessible. This opens up new channels for sharing and the distribution of knowledge. A state of information abundance places a premium on the ability to navigate, create and innovate in this new environment. The ability to exploit these means of production and knowledge sharing has become the new “literacy.” In this environment, success will belong to the “entrepreneurial learner,” the person capable of finding resources anywhere and using them to read the world and teach themselves.

The sweeping changes underway pose new and sustained challenges for communities, which are changing as well. Over the next three decades, the U.S. population is expected to grow to more than 400 million, with most of that growth coming from immigration.
By 2050, one in five Americans will be an immigrant, and 30 percent of the population is projected to be Hispanic. The United States is aging, too: By 2050, one in five Americans will be over the age of 65. Concurrent with these demographic changes are fundamental shifts in the economy that change how Americans will learn and earn a living.

In its 2009 report, the Knight Commission on the Information Needs of Communities in a Democracy described the digital era as a moment of technological opportunity “unleashing innovation in the creation and distribution of information” and requiring “new thinking and aggressive action.”

The Commission went on to say, “Every advance in communications technology expands the possibilities for American democracy, but every information system also creates potential winners and losers.”

How we seize this moment of opportunity, and the visions and actions that carry us forward into the future, will affect not only the health and prosperity of individuals and families, but the quality of the democratic communities that we nourish and sustain in the 21st century. Will they be thriving, prosperous and sustainable communities that attract new residents? Will they be places where we will want to live?

WHAT PEOPLE AND COMMUNITIES NEED TO FLOURISH IN THE KNOWLEDGE ECONOMY

LIFELONG ACCESS to an ever-increasing and ever-changing body of knowledge and tools to ensure that their skills remain relevant to the current economy as it continues to evolve

THE ABILITY TO USE, UNDERSTAND AND PROCESS INFORMATION IN MANY DIFFERENT FORMS including text, data, audio and video and to evaluate the quality of information from different sources and understand its relevance.

PLACES TO GATHER, collaborate and contribute to knowledge development

ACCESS TO CONVERSATIONS AMONG CREATIVE PEOPLE in their areas of interest so that they can innovate and develop or maintain a competitive advantage in the knowledge economy

People and communities need PUBLIC LIBRARIES.
Approaches to managing the opportunities and risks of this new era can differ widely from community to community, but there are approaches that are emerging as indicators of success. One of these is re-envisioning the role of the public library as a vital learning institution and engine for individual, community and civil society development.

The library, the most democratic of public institutions, is the essential civil society space where this new America will make its democratic character. The library is a core civil society institution, democracy’s “maker space.” In a healthy democracy, civil society is the piece that makes the rest of the democratic machinery possible and workable. Most simply, civil society consists of everything that falls under the rubric of voluntary association, from churches to neighborhood associations, softball leagues to garden clubs.

Civil society performs a number of critical functions: It provides a buffer between the individual and the power of the state and the market, it creates social capital, and it develops democratic values and habits. Civil society is where citizens become citizens. By design and tradition, the public library is the essential civil society institution. Through the provision of space, information and inspiration, it enables all the others.

The institution of the public library is uniquely positioned to provide access, skills, context and trusted platforms for adapting in this new society.
America’s public libraries have changed with the times with remarkable skill and agility over their long history. The nation’s nearly 9,000 public library systems remain highly trusted community anchors where resources are universally available and everyone is welcome. Libraries are stable, reliable, nimble and always there.
While remaining committed to their essential mission of providing access to knowledge and promoting literacy, 21st-century library roles extend far beyond book lending. For example, when Hurricane Sandy ravaged Queens, New York, in October 2012, the Queens Public Library joined the response effort by providing emergency supplies, comfort and referrals, and served as a steady and visible resource to a community in need. Within three days of the storm, the library opened a mobile site near the hardest hit areas of the borough to provide information, referrals and a safe place for storm-weary residents.12

Public libraries have continued to evolve both to respond to immediate challenges and to build their capacity to address long-term individual and community needs, opportunities and challenges. The breadth of their work in the communities they serve today is staggering, including lifelong learning opportunities, workforce development, civic engagement, disaster recovery, public health, environmental sustainability and more. Yet in the face of the new realities of the 401(k) world, even public libraries must define their contributions, not just their benefits.

Public libraries are poised for this transformation. “We lament when institutions dig in their heels and embrace the status quo,” says Julia Stasch, then-vice president of U.S. programs for the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, in an interview for a 2012 special edition of National Civic Review on Public Libraries and Civic Engagement. “In contrast, libraries on the whole are eager to embrace changes in society.”13

“Libraries can help you get from too much information to knowledge.” —NORMAN JACKNIS

Libraries’ eagerness to embrace changes in society, while retaining the foundations that have made them trusted, welcoming places for everyone, make them ideal partners in the digital age. In fact, libraries, more than any other institution, have the stature and capacity to make the promise of the knowledge society available to all Americans.

A report by International Data Corporation found that in 2010 the quantity of information transmitted globally exceeded one zettabyte for the first time and is doubling every two years.14 The International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA) further identified five trends as particularly important developments that communities and their libraries will have to watch and to which they will have to respond:

- **NEW TECHNOLOGIES** will both expand and limit who has access to information.
- **ONLINE EDUCATION** will democratize and disrupt global learning, but going global and mobile does not mean you have to lose tactile and local.
- **THE BOUNDARIES OF PRIVACY AND DATA PROTECTION** will be redefined.
- **HYPERCONNECTED SOCIETIES** will listen to and empower new voices and groups.
- **THE GLOBAL INFORMATION ECONOMY** will be transformed by new technologies.15
These are issues that library leaders, policymakers and the public will need to address as public library models and services evolve in the digital age. The Dialogue’s discussions and conclusions raised these same issues and concluded that a willingness to engage in new thinking around issues such as privacy and data protection, and to develop new approaches to preserving these in the digital age, are needed. Libraries will have to contend with these issues if they hope to be at the center of this transformation, helping individuals, communities and leaders navigate the big shift to a digital society.

While libraries have long played an important role in helping individuals navigate changes—such as offering services and resources to support new immigrants in the community—the digital transformation and its effect on all aspects of life is dramatic, comprehensive and permanent. The pace and complexity of change are likely to increase rather than ebb.

As public libraries acquire new roles as platforms for lifelong learning and economic and social development, they likely will need to consider new organizational, governance and business models in response to these pressures and trends.

“The grand theme is that ubiquitous education and learning rises with ubiquitous computing,” notes Lee Rainie, director of the Pew Research Center Internet Project. “Persistent education and learning are the reality as people march through their days with their smartphones and, soon, the Internet of Things embedded everywhere. The library as people, place and platform is the new knowledge institution that can serve all those needs.”

“Persistent education and learning are the reality... the library as **people**, **place** and **platform** is the new knowledge institution that can serve all those needs.”

— LEE RAINIE
PEOPLE, PLACE AND PLATFORM

The role of the 21st-century library in the digital era is built on its three key assets: people, place and platform.

THE LIBRARY AS PEOPLE

Take away my people, but leave my factories, and soon grass will grow on the factory floors. Take away my factories, but leave my people, and soon we will have a new and better factory.

—ANDREW CARNEGIE

The library as people reflects the shift away from building collections to building human capital, relationships and knowledge networks in the community. People are at the center of the library’s mission to inspire and cultivate learning, advance knowledge and nurture and strengthen communities. While there are thousands of stories in the public library, the ones that matter most come with the people who use the library.

The public library comes alive when it is teeming with people from all walks of life:

- **PARENTS** reading with their children in colorful, comfortable chairs
- **TEENS** learning how to write code for a new video game in a noisy learning lab
- **STUDENTS** meeting in a library classroom for group discussion as part of an online high school course
- **JOB SEEKERS** working on résumés in career centers, with guidance from a business librarian
- **ENTREPRENEURS** preparing presentations in coworking spaces, using the library-provided Wi-Fi and creating new products in maker spaces
- **IMMIGRANTS** learning English in classes and improving their job-seeking skills with the help of community mentors
- **RETIREES** using new online tools to create digital scrapbooks for their grandchildren
- **AUTHORS** publishing books on new library publishing platforms
In this people-driven environment, skilled librarians help people navigate new technology, manage vast amounts of data and meet their information needs. With the resources and know-how to deliver individualized learning and social experiences, the public library delivers a high-touch participatory experience to support personal goals. Library staffs anticipate individual and community needs and connect people to available resources, both locally and globally.

As the library’s roles change and expand, library staff have refined and broadened their skills to meet new needs and define the library’s continuing value to the community. They serve many roles, as coaches, mentors, facilitators and teachers more than as sources of information. Measuring outcomes is more important than measuring outputs. An intelligent community, not large circulation numbers, is the primary library goal.

LIBRARY AS PEOPLE:

GROW A READER
EARLY LITERACY APP

The Calgary Public Library’s Grow a Reader app takes the fun, interactive contents from popular early childhood literacy programs and delivers it to parents via their mobile devices.

Parents who aren’t able to attend programs with their toddlers can use the app to try out literacy skills and behaviors at home. Grow a Reader, which was designed by the library’s Virtual Services and Children, Teens and Families departments with involvement of a video production company and an app developer, features 35 videos starring 10 library children services staff. The app can be updated easily by library staff so that vendors aren’t needed on an ongoing basis. Calgary has a rapidly growing population and an ongoing “baby boom.” In less than two months, the Grow a Reader app was downloaded 1,200 times. It has also made some library staff popular stars among young readers. One toddler seemed mesmerized by his teacher during a parent-child Mother Goose session because, his mother said, he enjoys watching the videos on mom’s phone and recognized one of the library stars!
Andrew Sliwinski, co-founder and chief maker at DIY.org, addresses the need for new competencies and skills within libraries:

“Continuously extending the definition of the librarian is neither sustainable nor really in the long-term interest of the institution. Rather, specialization is needed with a focus on maximizing the ability for the human capital within the library, which is one of its largest resources, to engage with patrons. It is through this engagement that the values and the assets within each library can be most fully realized and leveraged by society.”

Domain expertise is one of the new scarcities in a world otherwise overflowing with information. How does a library achieve such specialization without just hiring new librarians? How does a library get more librarians engaging with more people? In part, by leveraging its infrastructure to allow for this domain expertise to be shared outward, widely, from urban to rural and to draw from the expertise in the community.

Beth Jefferson, president and CEO of Bibliocoms, says a common descriptor given to librarians in the new information marketplace is “guides.” But there is simply too much information for that to be a realistic goal, she says, and while collecting and mining data might be useful, “you need tons of data and the smarts to make sense of it.”

“The better response, she says, is to talk of librarians as “curators” for their communities, and communities themselves as curators. The skill set libraries need is domain expertise, and for that libraries need to draw on the people in their communities to help design what Jefferson calls “collaborative filters” designed with the public interest in mind. Commercial search engines are great, but “their algorithms are designed with a for-profit point of view. Libraries are in a different business. Curation in the public interest is distinctly missing.”

Building strong relationships with those who are providing content is an important goal of the people-focused public library. This includes not only publishers but also journalists, filmmakers, artists and information workers. Publishers and libraries have had a healthy relationship for a long time despite more recent controversies over e-book access and pricing. Digital technologies have disrupted the traditional publishing/library supply chain. Consequently, libraries need to be sensitive to and engaged with the ecosystem that produces the content that gets into libraries, whether user-generated or professionally created content. This includes a recognition that an increasing amount of content produced is in new forms, especially large amounts of visual content, including video, photographs, maps and other forms of digitized and visualized data.

“We are no longer gatekeepers; we are navigators.”

—SUSAN HILDRETH
THE LIBRARY AS PLACE

The library is first and foremost a place...a place that promotes development in society. It is the family room of a community. That’s the vision, that’s the future.

—AKHTAR BADSHAH

Today’s library is both a physical and virtual place, but it continues to be the physical presence of the library that anchors it most firmly in the community. Research and experience show that geography and place still matter.¹⁷ The Pew Research Center’s survey on library usage found that a large proportion of Americans, even those who seldom visit a library, consider libraries important institutions in their geographic communities and believe that their communities would suffer a loss if the library closed.¹⁸

In an increasingly virtual world, physical library places are community assets. They:

- **ESTABLISH PERSONAL CONNECTIONS** that help define community needs and interests
- **PROVIDE AN ANCHOR** for economic development and neighborhood revitalization
- **STRENGTHEN COMMUNITY IDENTITY** in ways that yield significant return on investment, including drawing people together for diverse purposes
- **PROVIDE A SAFE AND TRUSTED LOCATION** for community services such as health clinics, emergency response centers, small business incubators, workforce development centers and immigrant resource centers
- **CREATE CONNECTING PLACES** in new locations that draw people together—shopping malls, big box stores, airports and mobile buses

### PUBLIC LIBRARY USERS AND PROPONENTS ARE NOT A NICHE GROUP

69% of Americans 16 or older report high to medium levels of engagement with public libraries

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“Libraries have always been an economic driver of communities,” says Robert Harrison, city administrator of Issaquah, Washington. “Libraries are like Starbucks without the coffee: an important place to build social connections. Anyone can use it.”

The physical library will become less about citizens checking out books and more about citizens engaging in the business of making their personal and civic identities. As more information moves to digital formats, public libraries will hold less material locally in their physical collections. Library users will be able to access information digitally wherever it resides through library networks. While traditional computer work stations remain important and in demand, personal or shared mobile devices that provide easy connections to library Wi-Fi and high-speed broadband networks are becoming a dominant form of connection. The reduction in physical materials, greater customer mobility and the desire for more collaboration and creation are changing the nature of the public library’s physical space.20

The physical library must undergo a transition that embraces the openness and flexibility needed to thrive in a world of constant change. Central to this flexibility is creating spaces that can adapt to the changing operational models of libraries.

In an article for Library Journal, architect Peter Gisolfi contrasts “the ways we were” in the 20th century model—quiet, large areas of stacks and extensive collections of printed material, an imposing circulation desk, modest community room—with emerging trends that recognize varied and new uses. These trends range from greater transparency among spaces, larger spaces for children and teens, meeting and activity rooms of different sizes to accommodate public events and performances or coworking and collaboration and technology-centric spaces.

Gisolfi advises, “Whether you build a new library or transform an existing one, do not build the best library of the previous century. Create an environment that facilitates new patterns of interacting, learning and accessing information and is sufficiently flexible to accommodate changes that inevitably will come.”21

The public library remains a destination for many users, serving many purposes—personal quiet time for reading, research or homework; supervised afterschool activities until parents get home from work; public events and performances; innovation labs, hacker and maker spaces; and coworking and collaboration spaces.

The library’s virtual presence must be as engaging as its physical space and fully serve the library’s mission built around equitable access, learning and civic development.
Many libraries are creating spaces that are rich with tools and technologies that inspire and facilitate learning, discovery and creation and where experimentation is encouraged with trained library staff and community mentors. People and technology meet at the library. But as a learning place, the library becomes more than a destination, a term that suggests an end or arrival point. Instead, the library becomes a way station on the learning journey, a place that one passes through on the way to some other destination. This shift in role will impact the physical space of the library, the ways in which people interact with it and the types of services provided there.

In addition to being a physical space, the library in the digital age is a virtual space accessible from anywhere 24/7. Websites, online discussion groups, classes, book clubs and library-hosted Wi-Fi hotspots are examples of the growing community presence of the always-open virtual library. The library as it exists within virtual space must be considered as a wholly independent but highly integrated experience; that is, the library’s virtual presence must be as engaging as its physical space and fully serve the library’s mission built around equitable access, learning and civic development. Platforms must be conceived that address not only the operational and practical benefits of libraries but also benefits that are emotional and highly social.

LIBRARY AS PLACE:
NEW CONNECTIONS AND NEW PLACES

A theater in a library and a library in an airport are two examples of today’s library as place.

The Ron Robinson Theater, part of the Central Arkansas Library System’s main library campus, is a 315-seat multi-use venue with state of the art technology. At the theater, the library provides a range of programs, including films, music performances, plays, readings, lectures, speakers and children’s activities. The library sought and won a bond issue to fund the construction of the building in a public-private partnership. In addition to the library’s theater, the building includes retail stores, offices and a restaurant. The theater is also used by other groups such as the Little Rock Film Festival and the Clinton School of Public Service. It enriches and strengthens the cultural, economic and educational life of the community.

The Free Library in Philadelphia partnered with the Airport Authority to open a virtual library at the Philadelphia International Airport. While relaxing in comfortable lounge chairs in a virtual reading room, customers can log on to the airport’s free Wi-Fi to access the Free Library’s e-books, nearly 1,200 author podcasts, and other digital content.
This requires thinking beyond the transaction that characterizes many online library experiences today. The public library should define what makes a great online public space. Yet there are hurdles to developing the online library experience beyond simple transactions and information retrieval, including the expertise to do so, insufficient financial and technical resources and the lack of adequate broadband capacity and digital literacy skills in many areas.

Library Wi-Fi in disadvantaged neighborhoods may address an issue that is echoed in the Pew Research Center’s library user topology survey, From Distant Admirers to Library Lovers—and Beyond, which found higher rates of library use among the wealthier and better-educated members of the community and comparatively lower rates of library use in poorer and less-educated communities. Easily accessible Wi-Fi may provide the spark needed to encourage residents to come into the physical library and explore the programs, workshops and services it has to offer.

In a new twist on providing Wi-Fi, the New York Public Library and Chicago Public Library have launched programs that provide take-home Internet access (Wi-Fi “hotspots”) and digital training for residents in neighborhoods where digital access is low.

“From day one, we have worked to increase Internet connectivity and knowledge for our residents because today’s digital skills are 21st-century workforce skills,” said Mayor Rahm Emanuel at the time Chicago’s “Internet to Go” program was announced.

In keeping with the public library’s focus on people, Chicago Public Library Commissioner Brian Bannon said during a panel discussion on the future of libraries at the 2014 Aspen Ideas Festival that the program “is less about the technology, more about the support of the individual, the family and the community.”
A great library platform is a “third place”—an interactive entity that can facilitate people operating individually or in groups.

THE LIBRARY AS PLATFORM

Every book, every idea, every image, every archive, every piece of information should not only be available for free online anytime, anywhere, but also needs to be curated and linked so that anyone in the world can engage in the creative activity that we all rely on to build a better world.

—ANTHONY MARX

According to David Weinberger of Harvard University, the library platform can be thought of “as an infrastructure that is as ubiquitous and persistent as the streets and sidewalks of a town, or the classrooms and yards of a university. Think of the library as coextensive with the geographic area that it serves, like a canopy, or as we say these days, like a cloud.”

A great library platform is a “third place”—an interactive entity that can facilitate many people operating individually or in groups. The library platform supports the learning needs and goals of the community. To accomplish this, libraries embody the disposition of the entrepreneurial learner: seizing opportunities wherever they may exist, engaging others in the process. The library can then curate and archive the solutions created for sharing and future use. As a platform, the library promotes development in the community and society by identifying and filling gaps in community services including early-childhood education, lifelong learning, technology literacy and e-government. The library as platform makes the library a participatory enterprise.

The transformations of the digital age enable individuals and communities to create their own learning and knowledge. To that end, libraries become platforms—bases on which individuals and communities create services, data and tools that benefit the community. They allow for innovation that the platform creators cannot anticipate. Users may “customize” the platform and adapt its resources to their individual needs, whatever those needs may be. The library as community learning platform is the innovative proposition of the public library in the digital age.
One distinguishing feature of the library as platform is that it is trusted to be objective and operate in the interests of its users. This is in contrast to commercial platforms that blur the line between user and commercial interests. In addition, the library is uncompromisingly free of charge. It differentiates itself from other “free” services by selling no ads and honoring the privacy of its users. Users may “opt in” to features that involve data sharing with third parties, possibly receiving extra benefits when they enter that bargain.

At the same time, as a platform, the library exploits its assets—content, human capital and expertise. It draws on those assets for community engagement and allows people to contribute their knowledge and experiences to those assets. The library as platform creates community dialogue that makes way for new expertise and creates social knowledge.

The library as platform sees itself as LaaS—“library as a service.” Within the building itself, it starts with the biggest, fattest, most secure pipe that is possible, abundant Wi-Fi, devices for borrowing and a default embrace of new interface and display gadgets. Outside the physical library, it delivers these high-quality experiences on-demand to users wherever they may be and through whatever device they may use and for whatever purpose. Content may come from within the library’s own collections, from a national content platform or anywhere in the cloud.

The library as platform radically reshapes the library’s daily activities, shifting away from the old model of organizing and “lending” the world’s knowledge toward a new vision of the library as a central hub for learning and community connections. It shapes the fire hose of information from the community as content is digitized and as social media and other comment-surfacing technologies bring forth data and insight about users and the community. The library’s new activities include:

- Bringing analytical understanding to disorganized and abundant streams of information
- Connecting people seeking information to the resources, people or organizations that can provide it
- Synthesizing, analyzing, storing and curating information for those who want to consult material in the future
- Facilitating discovery and serendipitous encounters with information
- Helping people solve local problems
- Recruiting volunteers and specialists to participate in platform activities, especially by helping meet the needs of those querying the system
- Performing information concierge services and access to government services that are not at times delivered well by existing government agencies
Some libraries are leading public curation projects using crowdsourcing techniques to engage online communities. The library can curate or, in the case of these examples, provide the platform for curation to happen.

The New York Public Library’s Building Inspector project is creating digitized images of maps that show building footprints in the city at particular points in time and making the maps widely available online. NYPL Labs is training computers to recognize building shapes and other data so that it can be compared over time and engaging city residents—operating as “citizen cartographers”—to check the accuracy of the computers’ work. The process helps city residents see and tell the city’s own story over time.

Based at the DC Public Library in Washington, DC, the MapStory project is helping citizens to tell the stories of their neighborhoods and to see how they are evolving over time. With a grant from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the MapStory Foundation team is designing a nonprofit global data commons built on open source code for anyone to use. There are map stories on the spread of bike lanes in U.S. cities and the spread of Walmart stores across the country. With funding from IMLS, the project is helping DC Public Library to digitize and geo-reference its extensive map collection.

HTTP://BUILDINGINSPECTOR.NYPL.ORG/

HTTP://MAPSTORY.ORG/
Today, most public libraries see their catalog as the platform. That will have to change as they collect data and deploy existing resources in new ways, develop new relationships and partnerships in the community, and restructure their spaces. To be successful, the library platform will require:

- **A DIFFERENT KIND OF ACCESS INFRASTRUCTURE**, including a more robust identification system that protects individual privacy
- **A NEW DISTRIBUTION INFRASTRUCTURE** than currently used by most libraries in order to get physical and digital material to users
- **MORE SOPHISTICATED ANALYTICS** that will enable the library itself to become a “learning organization”
- **INTEROPERABILITY** to enable scaling of the platform and facilitate innovation and competition

Part of the challenge ahead lies in the traditionally decentralized model of U.S. public libraries. In that model, every community library goes it alone. That will not work for the library as platform, which for reasons of cost and quality needs to be created on a larger scale.

Ideally, a digital public library model would have a single interface—or at most a few—that allows existing online library catalogs to be fully integrated with new ones. It will provide a single point of access to all titles, taking the burden of both technology and archiving off individual libraries. And in an information marketplace that includes behemoths like Amazon and Google, libraries need a platform robust enough to win what Reed Hundt, principal of REH Advisors and former chairman of the Federal Communication Commission (FCC), calls “the competition of platforms.” “Right now Amazon offers a better online experience than a bookstore, and Netflix is better at streaming video, and that’s the competition for libraries,” says Hundt.

Unification—getting libraries to work together, to integrate their intellectual and capital resources—is a critical platform issue. Libraries have traditionally defined and designed the user experience. Platforms empower others to exercise their capabilities in creating services, data and tools. The library has to operate at scale and facilitate activities among users that the library alone cannot handle.
SCALING UP: ENVISIONING A NATIONAL DIGITAL PLATFORM

The public library in the digital age is a key networked knowledge institution. However, networks do not stop at town or city limits, or the county or state line. Moreover, the connections they provide and foster support individuals and the entire community in pursuit of educational, economic and other opportunities, whether those opportunities are present locally, regionally, nationally or globally.

A networked society envisions public libraries connecting with other curated knowledge resources via a scalable digital network, with access to open platforms that enable discovery, creation and sharing. It is important to think not only of how to foster connections at the local level but also how to scale-up in ways that open the public library to innovation, eliminate barriers traditionally imposed by geography and address the long-term issues of sustainability.

To do this, its local platform must be connected across a shared platform in which libraries can coalesce to work—a network of libraries and other knowledge institutions. Unlike national library models such as in the United Kingdom and Australia, this digital platform would be a network of federated public libraries and other knowledge-creating institutions, with central hubs for the purpose of connecting but local autonomy and control over the platform itself.

There are models of cooperation among libraries, including OCLC, the merging of independent libraries into larger regional systems, the work of the Metropolitan New York Library Council and state education and research networks that suggest how a library platform with regional or national scope may emerge.

The Digital Public Library of America (DPLA) provides one model for envisioning a national platform that brings together the riches of the country’s libraries, archives and museums and makes them freely available to the world. The DPLA is a new kind of institution—a network of state and regional libraries, archives and other knowledge institutions that makes their collections more broadly accessible and provides them with support to serve their communities more effectively.
The DPLA operates in three ways:

- **AS A PORTAL** that enables users to search through the libraries’ vast collections in a variety of ways, depending on their needs.
- **AS A PLATFORM** that enables users to create new tools and apps from the collections.
- **AS AN ADVOCATE FOR A STRONG PUBLIC OPTION** to ensure that materials remain accessible and open.

Housed at the Boston Public Library, DPLA operates with a series of local hubs that provide materials and services for its national network.

- **Content Hubs** provide materials to the DPLA and commit to maintaining their digital records: ARTstor, Biodiversity Heritage Library, California Digital Library, David Rumsey Map Collection, J. Paul Getty Trust, U.S. Government Printing Office, Harvard Library, HathiTrust Digital Library, Internet Archive, National Archive and Records Administration, New York Public Library, Smithsonian Institution, University of Florida, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, University of Southern California Libraries, University of Virginia.

- **Service Hubs** offer services such as professional development, digitization, and metadata creation and enhancement: Connecticut Digital Archives, Digital Commonwealth (MA), Digital Library of Georgia, Empire State Digital Network (NY), Indiana Memory, Kentucky Digital Library, Minnesota Digital Library, Montana Memory Project (via Mountain West Digital Library), Mountain West Digital Library, North Carolina Digital Heritage Center, the Portal to Texas History, South Carolina Digital Library.

Through the Federal Communications Commission’s E-rate reform proceeding, DPLA has proposed the creation of DPLA Local, which would provide digital services to local libraries to enable them to make their collections of community resources more accessible and usable. Funding is needed to initiate a pilot for DPLA Local.

Action is already underway to move the idea of a national digital platform forward. In April 2014, the Institute of Museum and Library Services held a public hearing in New York among library and archive leaders to explore various aspects of a national platform (infrastructure, content, use, the creation of tools, access at scale and skills) and its role in furthering national digital initiatives. Following the hearing, Maura Marx, deputy director of IMLS, commented on the momentum behind the idea of a national digital platform: “I heard several people express in different ways a central idea: that funders and practitioners should
recognize that we stand atop about 20 years of experimentation and innovation in digital library initiatives, and that it’s about time we decide which results are the most viable and promising and work in a focused way on improving and connecting those pieces.”

A national digital library platform could be:

- **AN INNOVATION PLATFORM** to facilitate the sharing of innovations that take place at the edges of the library field and bring them into the center

- **A WAY FOR LIBRARIANS TO SHARE** information and content to enhance their resources to meet similar needs

- **AN E-BOOK PLATFORM** to facilitate access to digital content or a book recommendation engine

“With a nationally networked platform, library and other leaders will also have more capacity to think about the work they can do at the national level that so many libraries have been so effective doing at the state and local levels,” says Maureen Sullivan, past president of the American Library Association. Some may see risks in being too bold, but the reality at a time of churn and innovation is that there are equal risks in not being bold enough.

There is a financial benefit to scale as well because it increases negotiating power. A common digital platform would help, giving libraries the ability to negotiate with content creators, such as negotiating with publishers for a single price for e-book lending.

Connecticut Governor Dannel P. Malloy took action to support such negotiating power in June 2014 when he signed legislation to create a statewide library e-book platform, run by the Connecticut State Library, to negotiate better prices in e-content purchasing and to make e-content broadly accessible at any public library across the state. Other states have pilot projects to explore statewide platforms for e-books and other applications as well.

Operating at scale also requires effective use of data. Public libraries are just beginning to shift their understanding of how to collect, analyze and use data more effectively to make them a much smarter and more efficient service. However, operating at scale in such a way is not part of the tradition of American libraries. “The idea of truly federating libraries is unbelievably powerful and unbelievably difficult,” says Linda Johnson, president and CEO of the Brooklyn Public Library.
"The library is a place to catalyze curiosity. Curiosity, serendipity and imagination are things libraries can do well."

— John Seely Brown

Creating Good Community Outcomes

If the library as people, place and platform is the new knowledge institution that can serve the need for persistent opportunities for learning and social connection, what does it look like for the public library to fulfill this role? And in what ways does the community benefit?

The answers lay in understanding how the public library draws on its deep credentials as educators and civic connectors to reposition the library as a key hub for learning, innovation and creativity in this environment. Today, we see how the public library can be especially effective in the areas of informal and nontraditional learning, jobs and workforce development, addressing new literacies, fostering civic participation and closing broadband and participation divides. And innovators in communities of all sizes are inventing the new ways in which libraries will benefit the community for years to come.

Coordinated, Informal and Nontraditional Learning

Public libraries provide a lifetime of learning opportunities for people in the communities they serve. They are especially effective at supporting informal learning, connecting diverse learning experiences, filling gaps between learning opportunities and offering new learning models that may not be feasible in schools, which face tighter boundaries and controls.
Building partnerships with local schools to support coordinated learning and reduce out-of-school learning loss

Expanding library roles in early childhood and prekindergarten learning for children from low-income families to close achievement gaps, reduce dropout rates and help all children compete in the 21st-century economy

Stepping up to “own” afterschool and summertime learning programs with well-designed curricula—such as engaging, participatory learning experiences created in partnership with schools, museums, recreation departments, and other community learning resources—that support and connect to school learning goals

Giving virtual learning experiences a physical presence in the community by offering events, meet-ups and multigenerational learning spaces and providing information/access to the best apps to support virtual learning

Engaging youth in dynamic learning labs that support interest-driven learning through use of digital media, mentors and networks of opportunity

Creating alternative pathways to learning, credentialing and certification, and offering digital credentials, called badges, that recognize and acknowledge learning outside schools and formal educational institutions
The Howard County Library System’s HiTech digital media lab is designed to open doors and opportunities to the region’s teens. HiTech delivers cutting-edge science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) education using hands-on technology projects, experiential learning and peer-to-peer communications. Envisioned as a launching point for the STEM career pipeline, HiTech focuses on producing the next generation of scientists, mathematicians and engineers to meet the needs of the region’s highly-skilled job market. The curriculum includes both self-paced and structured learning opportunities divided into four modules that emphasize interaction, improvisation, invention and instruction. The HiTech Academy component focuses on teens who are interested in pursuing higher education in science, technology, engineering or math by providing instruction, site visits to STEM work environments and attendance at college-sponsored STEM sites.

Since HiTech’s launch, more than 2,000 teens have participated in a wide range of classes, created a mobile game that was released in 2013 and has been downloaded 5,000 times around the world, and worked on the library’s Choose Civility e-book featuring their own stories and photos.
JOBS AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

A library that is attuned to the challenges facing the community also has a deep understanding of its economic structures and challenges and the businesses that provide the jobs that sustain the economic health of the community. Libraries can help to accelerate workforce development and learning opportunities by providing a connection between industry and education. With its education and learning credentials and its connections, the public library is in a good position to connect community residents to the training and career development resources that local employers need. They can do this by partnering with local businesses, chambers of commerce and community colleges to provide access to curricula and resources, to technology and certification programs and to job search resources to maintain a highly skilled yet highly flexible workforce.

Of particular importance in the digital era is the library’s ability to connect job seekers to the technology resources needed to find and compete for job opportunities, especially when 80 percent of Fortune 500 companies only accept online applications.33

While libraries increasingly are seen as part of the education infrastructure that serves children and schools, their role in the workforce infrastructure is newer and less well understood.

This is a time of enormous opportunity for public libraries to reach out to local and state governments, labor departments, economic development agencies and others to ask how the library can use its platform to create a 21st-century workforce that will keep current businesses in place and attract new ones to the community.

THE LIBRARY AS LITERACY CHAMPION

The 21st-century library is the champion of the literacies needed to navigate information abundance, create knowledge, bolster economic opportunity and make democracy dynamic. In the digital age, content is widely available in diverse formats outside traditional publications, requiring new skills to succeed in this information-rich environment. Building on its historic commitment to literacy, the library is uniquely positioned to provide access, skills, context and trusted platforms for sharing. Examples of new literacies include the ability to:

- **INTERACT WITH TECHNOLOGY DEVICES AND CONTENT** at very different levels than ever before
- **FILTER MASSIVE AMOUNTS OF INFORMATION** and translate it into knowledge in a highly complex environment
- **SELECT THE RIGHT TOOLS** for knowledge creation and management
In Omaha, Nebraska, the Omaha Public Library has initiated new partnerships with the business community that build on the library’s community engagement and learning work. The library is working with regional software companies and technology businesses looking for workers with software and design skills to establish workforce development initiatives that train area residents in these much-needed skills. The participating businesses are helping the library rethink its technology offerings to support workforce needs.

In Memphis, Tennessee, the Memphis Public Library’s JobLINC mobile career center helps job hunters find employment opportunities and helps employers find new employees. The 38-foot bus delivers job and career resources to job seekers at convenient locations out in the community. It comes equipped with computers, email access, information resources and staff to assist with job listings, job applications, resume writing, interviewing and improving other skills.

In New York City, the Department of Small Business Services established one of its Workforce 1 career centers at the Brooklyn Central Library. The center prepares and connects city residents to job opportunities in the city, with emphasis on both job skills needed by local employers and soft skills such as interviewing that are equally important to getting a job.

The public library can partner with the community to define the difference between highly literate and less literate—across a vast range of literacies, including civic, financial and health literacy—and then help close the gap. Most importantly, the public library can work with community partners to provide personalized and flexible digital learning experiences that individuals need to become comfortable and adept at participating in digital society. 34

JOBS AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT:
LIBRARIES SUPPORTING WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT
THE LIBRARY AS CIVIC RESOURCE

The public library is a place for the community to experiment and collaborate, to gather and engage, and to explore and confront important community issues such as homelessness, immigration, economic development, public health and environmental sustainability. With its deep knowledge and relationships in the community, its physical presence and its platform, the public library is playing an important role in sustaining the civic health of the community. Libraries are carrying out this important civic role in the 21st century by:

- **SUPPORTING GOVERNMENT SERVICE DELIVERY** including public health education, immigration and citizenship services, government jobs information, disaster response and recovery information

- **ENGAGING CITIZENS IN THE GOVERNING PROCESS**, both through face-to-face participation and use of the library platform to strengthen citizen-citizen and citizen-government partnerships

- **CREATING NEW OPPORTUNITIES** to bring people of different backgrounds together to solve problems and build stronger communities

Civic engagement in the digital age takes on new dimensions with exciting opportunities for virtual engagement.

ADDRESSING THE BROADBAND AND PARTICIPATION DIVIDES

At the first Dialogue working group meeting, Susana Vasquez, executive director of LISC in Chicago, displayed a map of broadband use in Chicago in which those neighborhoods with the least connectivity matched almost exactly with a map of neighborhoods with the highest unemployment, crime and violence; the most school closings; and poorest health services. For many kids in these neighborhoods, Vasquez said, the library is the only public institution that works, that is accessible, safe and welcoming. Others, like schools or the police, kids engage “not by choice.” “Libraries are not like that,” she said. “It’s a voluntary engagement. It’s a trusted institution.”

Public libraries are a critical institutional bulwark against the well-documented problem of growing income and educational inequality in the United States. One reason library use has risen in the last decade is that many Americans do not have home Internet access and face numerous obstacles to getting it. A 2013 Pew Research Center survey reported that only 70 percent of Americans have broadband access at home—in short, that the so-called “digital divide” remains persistent. Among U.S. households with annual income below $30,000, 46 percent have no high-speed home Internet access. The poor, in other words, cannot participate fully in the new learning and civic ecologies created by networked communications.
LIBRARIES AS A CIVIC RESOURCE:

HEALTHY L.I.F.E.

Healthy L.I.F.E. is the Houston Public Library’s (HPL) health-based literacy initiative designed to empower and equip families with information, resources and tools needed for healthy living.

With 66 percent of adults and 34 percent of youth in the Houston area overweight or obese and one in five Harris County adults lacking basic literacy skills, the library leveraged its status as a trusted learning resource to tackle a significant community health education challenge through a family-learning model. Healthy L.I.F.E. offers regularly-scheduled events to help parents and children learn together about healthy lifestyles, stress-free living, school success and healthy eating while also getting access to free community resources that support better health. The events are held at branches that serve low-income populations, have positive relationships with schools and community groups, and experience high-demand for and interest in family-centered programming.

Since its creation, more than 50 agencies have worked with the library to contribute information, resources, and services to more than 3,100 families including 50,000 pounds of fresh food distributed to needy families by the Houston Food Bank, along with 3,000 nutrition and fitness books and DVDs. Among participating families surveyed, 80 percent have committed to changing their lifestyles and improving their own healthy-living behaviors.

A 2010 study by the University of Washington, the first to look at computer use in libraries, found that the public library provides to millions of Americans the only computer and Internet access they have. Among the things they do with that access is apply for jobs; apply for admission to schools, colleges and training programs; renew car registrations; research health issues; find tax and other government forms; take online courses; do homework; and communicate with family, friends and employers.

“Competition is not providing enough for all communities,” says Carolyn Anthony, director of the Skokie Public Library. “In Skokie, 50% of people using internet in libraries don’t have connection at home.”

As Internet-based education increases, the poor have no way to acquire the digital literacy skills that are the foundation of knowledge creation and social participation in an information-based economy—not without public libraries.

“Libraries need to stand in when other institutions have failed. So many communities are poorly wired. Private companies wire cities, but smaller communities are often overlooked,” says Rod Gould, city manager of Santa Monica, California. “Connectivity is essential.”

“We can’t just be providing space... we are a learning institution, not just an access institution.”

—JOHN SZABO
Connecting people to the world in a different way is the challenge of the 21st century for public libraries in communities of all sizes. Libraries long ago established their place in the hearts of their communities. Sustaining and broadening that position requires new thinking about what a library is and how it drives opportunity and success in today’s world.
The Dialogue has identified four strategic opportunities for action to guide this continuing transformation:

- **ALIGNING LIBRARY SERVICES IN SUPPORT OF COMMUNITY GOALS**
- **PROVIDING ACCESS TO CONTENT IN ALL FORMATS**
- **ENSURING THE LONG-TERM SUSTAINABILITY OF PUBLIC LIBRARIES**
- **CULTIVATING LEADERSHIP**

Dealing with these challenges requires collaboration among library leaders, policy makers at all levels of government—particularly those closest to the library and people it serves—and public and private community partners and stakeholders. The range of partners and stakeholders can and should be broad, to include private sector businesses, local entrepreneurs, authors and publishers, technology experts, nonprofit organizations with shared priorities, journalists, educators, community foundations, library trustees, the public and more. The wider the reach in building partnerships, the greater the impact for libraries and the communities they serve.
Public libraries that align their people, place and platform assets and create services that prioritize and support local community goals will find the greatest opportunities for success in the years ahead. Managers of local governments report that it is often difficult to prioritize libraries over other community services because libraries are not perceived to be unique in their public purpose when compared to other departments, such as museums or parks and recreation, that also serve a distinctly public mission. What libraries need is to be more intentional in the ways that they deploy resources in the community, and more deeply embedded in addressing the critical challenges facing the community. This will require a level of flexibility and adaptability to change as community needs change.

How should libraries go about this work of aligning with community needs? First, by developing relationships with local government and community leaders. Libraries need to be less autonomous and adopt more collaborative approaches to engaging with and building partnerships across the community.

“Think about how libraries fit into the overall strategy of communities, and how libraries can position themselves within the community to thrive,” says Chris Coudriet, county manager in the County of New Hanover, North Carolina. This could include establishing libraries as creative hubs, or seeing the library as a one stop shop for community development.

“The public library has moved from being an institution that primarily services individuals to one that navigates community.”

—TESSIE GUILLERMO
David Swindell, director of the Center for Urban Innovation at Arizona State University, observes: “Libraries are going to become more of a one-stop shop for many purposes: a living room, an incubator, the public attic. There are many diverse uses that can benefit the community, but siloes must be bridged. We should think of the future. How do we create a physical and virtual space so that it is adaptable to changes in the future?”

While looking to the future and innovation, libraries must be cautious not to simply chase the next big thing. “It is important to keep the core values of contributing knowledge to the community,” says Robert Kiely, city manager of Lake Forest, Illinois. “The library is a place you don’t know you need but couldn’t live without.”

Created in 2009, at the behest of Nashville Mayor Karl Dean, Limitless Libraries began as a pilot project in three high schools and a ninth grade academy. Today, it serves all 128 schools with two full-time collection development librarians and a materials budget of more than $1 million. Library resources are delivered to students and educators at their schools boosting access to books, movies and music while integrating the library into students’ daily lives. In addition, Limitless Libraries supports digital literacy by furnishing schools with e-readers, netbooks and iPads.

Since its launch, circulation of school library resources has increased 79 percent; 28,000 middle and high school students are registered Limitless Libraries users; and bulk purchasing and negotiated discounts have achieved an estimated $271,000 in savings while vastly expanding resources.

As the public library expands from a house of books to a platform for learning and participation, its ability to provide access to vast amounts of content in all formats, from traditional print to the latest digital content, is vital. “The participatory organization,” writes Nina Simon in her book, The Participatory Museum, “is a place where visitors can create, share and connect with each other around content.” Libraries face two immediate major challenges in providing access to content in all forms:

- Being able to procure and share e-books and other digital content on the same basis as physical versions
- Having affordable, universal broadband technologies that deliver and help create content

Dealing with both challenges have been high priorities for public libraries throughout the country as they strengthen their leadership role in the digital era. The challenges have been particularly acute for small libraries, those in rural communities and those in some urban areas where limited budgets make access to e-books and high-speed broadband difficult despite high community demand for and interest in both.

Ensuring access to e-books, other e-content and broadband is a big concern going forward because it impacts the public library’s ability to fulfill one of its core missions—to procure and share the leading ideas of the day. Access to e-content is complicated by the lack of clarity in copyright law in the digital arena and the inapplicability of the first sale doctrine that governs the purchase and subsequent use of physical books. A national digital platform could help. “The emergence of DPLA and more focus on a national digital library platform can have significant and positive results to increase free public access to information in the Internet age. The way we address barriers to free use, copyright, e-book issues, etc., will have great impact on our capacity to support an ‘educated informed citizenry’ and shape library services of the future,” writes Mamie Bittner of the Institute of Museum and Library Services. Stakeholders must work together to find solutions that work for content creators, publishers and the public.

There are many ways in which libraries individually or collectively can partner with publishers large and small. One option is to consider a “buy-it-now” option, which exists on some integrated library systems (ILS) for managing content, where patrons could buy a book not currently available at the library and have the option to donate it back to the library when done so that others can get it.
This brings revenue, helps the mission and celebrates the book. Libraries split the revenue and it brings value to the publishers too. Such a proposal returns the public library back to the origins of the sharing library. Take that imperative and the library’s digital public space, and this sets a common set of values on which a platform can be built.

On the broadband front, efforts to reform the federal E-rate program, which provides funds to libraries and schools to support Internet connections, presents an opportunity for addressing this critical need. “E-rate’s structure should reflect the fact that libraries have become the number one source for public Internet access in the country, particularly for adults who do not have home computers or lack high-speed Internet connectivity,” says Reed Hundt, who oversaw the creation of the E-rate program as chairman of the FCC from 1993 to 1997.

Internally, many libraries need massive upgrades of Wi-Fi connectivity to meet the burgeoning demand of “bring-your-own-device” connectivity. City library systems have many more users per year than rural, town or suburban libraries, and thus have different costs to cover, but all libraries need the same outcomes: high speed broadband that meets the needs of every library user and is not dependent on one’s zip code.41 The clear need is for high capacity, easily scalable broadband in every public library. Specific target speeds are subject to ongoing debate, as the actual needs of individual communities may vary considerably. However, the nation’s major public library associations have called for one gigabit connectivity to schools and libraries, writing in support of “advancing President Obama’s goal of connecting our students and their communities to the one gigabit speeds we know are necessary for many libraries today and for the remaining libraries tomorrow.”42

High capacity connectivity will be necessary, especially in high-use public libraries, to support peak platform uses including new learning, creative and collaborative uses and higher bandwidth applications like video.

Collaboration among libraries, content creators, publishers, government officials/policy makers and community leaders is vital to overcoming these challenges. Together, they must address questions surrounding the library’s role in (a) nurturing and sustaining vibrant cultural ecosystems, (b) learning and reading in a radically changing environment and (c) an evolving content ecosystem.
From 2009 through 2011, Chattanooga’s municipally owned electric utility built out the first full gigabit network in the U.S. The city’s mayor, Ron Littlefield, Chamber of Commerce leaders and executives of local foundations took this as an opportunity to redefine the image of the city as GigCity – a post-industrial hot spot. Given his background as an urban planner and economic development director, Mayor Littlefield emphasized entrepreneurship and the knowledge economy, built on the foundation of the gigabit network.

As this was going on, the Mayor realized that the public library was not fulfilling the role it could in this new knowledge economy. He worked with the board of the library and especially one of its members, Tom Griscom, to make necessary changes. Griscom was the publisher and executive editor of the Chattanooga Times Free Press until 2010. He saw the dramatic changes that technology and the Internet had wrought on his industry and was determined that the public library would flourish in the face of the challenges the digital age posed to its role in the community.

Littlefield and Griscom had a series of library board meetings focused on the future of libraries and the city. One result of those discussions was the appointment of Corinne Hill as head of the library in 2012. Hill and her team began to convert this old institution into a GigLibrary.

What had been a poorly used space in the main library, its fourth floor, was converted into a location for entrepreneurs, innovators, techies and other creative members of the community to share ideas and build businesses. In 2013, the library hosted an event on 3D printing and other technologies that attracted more than 1,200 people. The fourth floor then became a “gig-powered” maker space. The city’s GigTank Demo day was also streamed live from the fourth floor and included the work of digital artists who used the library as their creative studio.

These efforts have made the library essential to the future movers and shakers of 21st century Chattanooga, who previously hadn’t thought of the library as an institution that was even relevant to them.

—NORMAN JACKNIS
ENSURING LONG-TERM SUSTAINABILITY FOR PUBLIC LIBRARIES

Perhaps the greatest challenge facing public libraries today is to transform their service model to meet the demands of the knowledge society while securing a sustainable funding base for the future. With limited and sometimes volatile funding, however, such transformations will be uneven and incomplete. In addition, the highly local nature of public library funding and governance structures may interfere with both rapid and broad scale progress—the kind of scale needed to compete and thrive in a world of global networks. Challenges that shape the discussion about long-term public library sustainability, given their vital role in the digital era, include:

- Identifying reliable sources of revenue for daily operations as well as long-term planning and investment
- Exploring alternative governance structures and business models that maximize efficient and sustainable library operations and customer service
- Becoming more skilled at measuring outcomes rather than counting activities
- Balancing the local and national library value proposition to consider economies of scale in a networked world without compromising local control

**FUNDING.** Public libraries have long relied on local funding sources. According to a recent IMLS public library survey, nearly 85 percent of all public library operating revenue comes from local sources, including general revenue funds, dedicated property taxes, voter-approved taxes and a portion of sales taxes. Nationally, libraries receive about 7.5 percent of their annual revenue from states and only one-half of one percent from the federal government. Other sources accounted for just over 7 percent. In some cases, notably in small cities and rural areas, libraries struggle to keep up because of extremely limited and unpredictable funding.

“A lot of elected officials who make decisions on funding haven’t been in a library in years. There is a need to get these officials in the [library] building to understand how libraries function now. Getting people invested will educate them and open their eyes to the importance of libraries,” says Amy Paul, corporate vice president of Management Partners, a consulting firm that works with local governments to improve their operations.
THE SPECIAL CASE OF RURAL AND SMALL COMMUNITIES

The challenge of sustainable funding is particularly acute in libraries serving small and rural communities. The needs are great, particularly for broadband access, and the financial and human resources in libraries are often limited. Service areas in rural communities are often widely dispersed, making the need for digital connections even more valuable to bring the library directly to people in their homes. Librarian skills and training can vary widely as well. Rural communities can look to their local libraries as partners for creating self-sustaining, long-term community and economic development, especially with the library’s focus on growing human and social capital.

Sustainable funding means more than an annual operating budget to carry out the library’s mission and deliver services annually. It also means providing a foundation for the long-term planning needed to continue to offer leading-edge learning opportunities, develop and maintain expertise, keep pace with changes in the knowledge and creative economies and invest in the future. Library funding should be commensurate with the essential nature of the services provided by the public library as a vitally important civic and educational institution.

Further complicating the library funding situation is the increase in government mandates that have affected expectations of public libraries in supporting e-government services. There has been a noticeable shift in what this requires of libraries—moving from simply providing government forms to providing computers and training to access and navigate. Very often, libraries must deliver services to meet these growing demands without any additional funding to cover the costs. Without additional funding to support the new requests for services, the library’s staff and resources will be stretched too thin.

Strategies to support and engage small and rural libraries include:

- **EXPLORING REGIONAL MODELS** to create economies of scale
- **MAXIMIZING GRANT OPPORTUNITIES** from foundations and funders to meet program and service needs that are specific to the rural and small library context
- **CREATING CONNECTIONS** among librarians to share models, lessons learned and resources
- **BECOMING PART OF LARGER LIBRARY PLATFORMS** that provide access to larger bodies of content
Moving toward financial sustainability requires a willingness to explore new avenues for funding, including opening up discussions about endowing public libraries in ways similar to other educational and cultural institutions. Libraries themselves must look at alternatives to traditional funding models, such as revenue or resource sharing, which require new or different skills that some libraries currently do not have.

**GOVERNANCE STRUCTURES.** Closely related to funding are library organization and governance structures. Library governance structures vary widely. For example, some libraries are part of a county or municipal government, others function as a special district or operate under joint powers authority agreements among participating jurisdictions. A few libraries are 501(c)3 nonprofit organizations. A comprehensive, up-to-date mapping of library governance and funding models is needed as a starting point for a national discussion about long-term public library sustainability. That conversation could examine what the most effective models are for long-term sustainability and advocate for those models. For example, Pam Sandlian-Smith, CEO of Anythink Libraries in Colorado, commented on the transition of her library system from county funding to a special taxing district model: “Special taxing districts are effective for longer-term planning and transformation. They provide certainty and are less open to political changes.”

**BUSINESS MODELS.** Even if public libraries had all the money in the world, they would still need to change the way they do business in the digital era. This includes developing new organizational and business models and considering new frameworks for funding. New business models should be based on the library’s intellectual, space and data assets—its people, place and platform assets. There are two sides to a business model: cost savings and new revenue sources, or profit centers. While government should continue to be the primary funder of public libraries, there is room for libraries to explore new revenue streams, new partnerships that can yield new revenues and a modern business plan. Suggestions for new thinking include outcome-based funding models and libraries formed around enterprises.

**MEASURING OUTCOMES.** For a long time, the impact of the public library has been measured by what the library could count—patrons who walked through the doors, books and other materials checked out, the number of people in seats at training classes or other programs. But the measurements that matter most—to government officials, foundations, donors, and community stakeholders—are outcomes that report how the library is helping to achieve community goals and objectives. This will require libraries to think differently about data and to assess, on a broad scale, the outcomes they achieve and the impact they make on the lives of individuals and the community.
BALANCING LOCAL, STATE AND NATIONAL INTERESTS. In a networked world, libraries must become more skilled at balancing local interests with a national value proposition based around the library as platform that, in some cases, could lead to consolidated operations. Finding the places where there is statewide, regional or national interest, scope and scale can increase library efficiency and impact.

For example, IMLS has developed a national value proposition around the areas that it has funded—including early learning, lifelong learning, citizenship, public health and jobs—that taps federal resources for use at the local level. At the state level, state funding can alleviate financial and other pressures that can allow the local library extra breathing room to focus on redesign and transformation. For local libraries the question is how do they differentiate locally, prioritize and align the library’s services with the needs of the community.

NEW YORK AND BROOKLYN PUBLIC LIBRARIES, NY:
BookOps: SHARED LIBRARY TECHNICAL SERVICES

To meet the challenges of a combined $57 million decrease in city funding between 2008 and 2013, and a 19 percent decrease in staffing, The New York Public Library and Brooklyn Public Library are consolidating their book buying and collection management activities into a shared central location.

When fully implemented, BookOps will combine acquisitions, cataloguing, processing, sorting and delivery of books and resources to the libraries in each system and will save the two library systems up to $3.5 million annually.

The collaborative effort provides a strong foundation for future citywide strategies to create new efficiencies including universal returns, universal requests, universal library cards and expansion of the MyLibraryNYC joint venture that includes the New York, Brooklyn and Queens Public Libraries and the New York City Department of Education.
“The library in the digital age is moving from the warehouse of materials to a participatory learning organization.”

—PAM SANDLIAN SMITH

PARTNERSHIPS AND COLLABORATION. Libraries and their communities increasingly need to work together to pioneer new models of collaboration and decision making. They must embrace a new level of interdependence and align goals. This includes collaboration among libraries and partnerships with other stakeholders in government, community service, foundations, the private sector and members of the public. As library collections shift to include more e-content drawn from different sources in the community or nationally, collaborations will make even more sense. This could have a considerable impact on funding and sustainability, especially if partnerships leverage content that is then not subject to duplicative purchases. Libraries can build on experience with prior collaborations and consortia.

CULTIVATING LEADERSHIP

Leadership is needed at the local, state and national levels—from elected officials, government administrative and political staff, business and civic leaders, and libraries themselves—to build communities and public libraries that thrive and succeed together. Vision is a critical component of leadership, and every community needs a vision and a strategic plan that includes a blueprint for how to work with the public library to directly align the library and its work with the community’s educational, economic and other key goals. It must have input from all stakeholder groups in the community.

Key steps in building community leadership to support the public library include improving communications with community leaders, developing community champions, strengthening intersections with diverse communities and communities of color, reaching out and engaging with young-professional organizations and demonstrating the collective impact of partners working together.

Librarians in many places are recognized as community leaders, but their experience has been in fielding problems as they walk in the door, not in going out into their communities trying to identify or solve community needs. That will not work anymore. “We can’t just be providing space,” says John Szabo, director of the Los Angeles Public Library. “We are a learning institution, not just an access institution.”
“If you want to reach out and help new Americans and citizenship in your city, there are lots of organizations who want to do the work, but libraries become the connector between the CBO and citizens.”

— MAYOR KARL DEAN

Librarians must go beyond the walls of the library and into the community, to engage different stakeholders groups and explore how to provide library services that are untethered from the library building itself. It is important to identify and cultivate champions in the private sector, especially those that can leverage philanthropic action to support the library and help to showcase the library as a community asset.

Communication is another key component of leadership. Despite the enormous public confidence libraries enjoy, they are often not included in strategic conversations with civic leaders. The problem, says Susan Benton, president of the Urban Libraries Council, “is that civic engagement is so organic to what librarians do that they don’t think to explain it.” The profound effect that libraries are having on individuals and communities throughout society is not a story that is being told. Communication as a means to drive patronage is not enough.

Library boards, trustees, foundations and friends groups can be called on to support the re-envisioned library and activate their constituents when library budgets are on the chopping block. Library champions are especially needed at the state and national levels. Having champions in the business, government and nonprofit communities can open new opportunities for libraries as they increase their community impact. Those who donate money, equipment, technical expertise and other resources to public libraries ought to take a more visible role in communicating the value of engagement with the library and the benefits that accrue to the entire community. And these stakeholders are vital for forming a culture of entrepreneurship and innovation that can thrive with the help of the public library.

The changing demographics in the United States show the rising clout of communities of color. In some locations, public libraries have not been as effective as they could be in engaging and reaching out to minority communities. To deal with this challenge, libraries increasingly are going out into the neighborhoods they serve to understand and address the unique needs and concerns of every constituency. Library staffs and boards need to reflect the communities that they serve. Empowering all members of the community is also a function of leadership.
Partnerships allow communities to leverage many of the resources in the community for greater impact and benefit. The library often plays a key role as a connector in forming relationships across the community. Systemic rather than ad-hoc partnerships are important for nurturing and growing relationships and for building network connections. Partnerships that start from the center of the library system and reach out to as many neighborhoods, communities, and branches as possible are also particularly desirable and productive.

For example, Nashville, Tennessee, is home to a diverse set of ethnic communities, including Kurdish, Somalian and Latino populations. When the city wanted to connect with these new populations to encourage local involvement and citizenship, public libraries became the connectors between the community-based organizations (CBOs) and these new residents. “If you want to reach out and help new Americans and citizenship in your city, there are lots of organizations who want to do the work, but libraries become the connectors between the CBO and citizens,” Nashville Mayor Karl Dean told the Dialogue.

As the breadth of the library’s role and impact in the community continues to evolve, leadership and professional development will be crucial to continued success in the digital era. Library leaders will need to design transformative change and become experts in their communities. They will also need to invest in developing their staff in ways that may be very different from what they learned in school or have done in the past. Libraries will need fewer staff to put books on shelves and a lot more staff to be educators. Library training and professional programs will have to change. People with new and diverse skills will be hired.
CULTIVATING LEADERSHIP:
COMMUNITY IMPACT THROUGH RENEWED ENGAGEMENT

The San Francisco Public Library initiated a comprehensive team-driven research process to renew and refresh community connections in five city neighborhoods.

The process combined the library’s award-winning GenPL emerging leaders program with its commitment to forging deep and sustained community impact. The emerging leaders, who come from all parts of the library system (pages, librarians, paraprofessionals, security staff, custodians), brought broad thinking and new perspectives to the effort. From walks in the neighborhoods, to ride-alongs with police, to interviews with community members, the teams spent three months gathering data and then presented their findings to community members and library staff in their assigned service area.

The recommendations, some of which are already in progress, ranged from branch-specific modifications to system-wide changes including:

- A new Community Programs and Partnerships division that combines youth service and community engagement
- A branding project to tie each branch to neighborhood identities
- Enhanced service promotion with community agencies such as GED and English as a Second Language providers and local farmers’ markets
- Multi-lingual library orientation programs and a multi-lingual, real-time reference service
- Expanded off-site services including a technology bookmobile, pop-up libraries and classes in community agencies

Key leadership challenges for the library profession in general and individual library directors include:

- **TAKING ADVANTAGE OF DIGITAL TOOLS** to share resources, create new channels for information about what works and diffuse innovation more rapidly and effectively

- **BUILDING THE CAPACITY OF THE LIBRARY FIELD** to develop new business models and experiment, which may include looking outside the United States to library innovators around the world

- **BUILDING CAPACITY** to meet the evolving demands and needs of new educational models and opportunities

- **GIVING GREATER THOUGHT AND ATTENTION TO SUCCESSION PLANNING** to develop bench strength and focus on the skills that will be needed for the library of the future

- **INCLUDING TRUSTEES AND FRIENDS GROUPS** in leadership development activities as part of a broader effort to engage and create library champions and advocates at every level

- **DEVELOPING PLANS AND STRATEGIES** for keeping pace with disruptive changes in the environment and establishing multiple channels for sharing information widely about changes, successes, opportunities and leadership needs
CONCLUSION AND A CALL TO ACTION

Visions are by nature aspirational, as are public libraries. Libraries reflect the community at its best—engaged, striving, participating, achieving, discovering, creating and innovating. The power to re-envision public libraries is the power to re-envision our communities for success in the digital era.

Re-envisioning the public library for every community will require a unity of purpose and action by stakeholders at all levels. Everyone has a stake in building healthy and engaged communities; every stakeholder is a library stakeholder.

Acting on the framework presented in this report starts with a shared recognition of the vital role public libraries are playing, will play and can play in the digital arena and a commitment to take advantage of the possibilities.

To get started, public libraries, library directors, library staff and their supporters must forge new partnerships and collaborations in the community and align their work with the community’s goals. But libraries and their supporters are only one part of the equation. Re-envisioning the public library is a broad effort that requires the community and its elected leaders to recognize their stewardship of this valuable public asset. Accordingly, government and other leaders are called upon to support the transformation of public libraries by heeding the call to action and advancing the actions steps recommended in this report.

Leadership at the local level is crucial, as public libraries are a quintessentially local institution of democratic society. However, if we are to realize the vision of a national digital platform and networks of knowledge, innovation and creativity spanning the country, then state and national leadership and investment will be essential to coordinating and sustaining such an enterprise.

Library, government and civic leaders will have to adopt new thinking about the public library if we are to achieve a nation of informed, engaged communities. This thinking rests on understanding what makes the library uniquely valuable to the communities beginning with its people, place and platform assets upon which the community can build a successful future together. It also rests on the uniquely public value proposition grounded in the principles of equity, access, opportunity, openness and participation. These are also values at the heart of American democracy. While the vision speaks to the role of the public library and its relationship to the public, it is essentially a vision for the quality of the democratic communities that we want to nourish and sustain in the 21st century.

Libraries are essential partners with government, business and nonprofit community partners in achieving our national aspirations. All stakeholders should ask themselves, what can I do to help connect the community to the 21st-century knowledge society?—and then go to the public library to learn the answer.
GETTING STARTED:

15 STEPS FOR LIBRARY LEADERS, POLICYMAKERS AND THE COMMUNITY

To advance progress toward the vision, and with these four strategic opportunities in mind, the Dialogue offers a series of action steps for getting started. There are 15 action steps addressed to each stakeholder group: library leaders, policymakers and the community. These are not intended to be comprehensive lists, and the steps are not organized in any sequential order. Rather, they are recommendations for actions that have surfaced throughout the Dialogue’s deliberations and consultations and offer a starting point for change. They are necessarily general, as the unique people, needs, resources, environments and character of each community will have to guide specific community goals and action plans. This report itself is offered as a beginning—not an end—to a broader national dialogue on the future of the public library.
1. Define the scope of the library’s programs, services and offerings around community priorities, recognizing that this process may lead to choices and trade-offs.

2. Collaborate with government agencies at the local, state and federal levels around shared objectives. This includes partnerships with schools to drive learning and educational opportunities throughout the community.

3. Partner with local businesses, chambers of commerce and community colleges to provide access to curricula and resources, to technology and certification programs and to job search resources to maintain a highly skilled yet highly flexible workforce.

4. Engage the community in planning and decision making, and seek a seat at tables where important policy issues are discussed and decisions made.

5. Connect resources from other agencies or libraries to the library platform rather than reinventing the wheel or always going solo.

6. Develop partnerships and collaborations with other libraries and knowledge networks that can contribute to efficiencies, using the opportunities provided by digital technologies.

7. Support the concept of a national digital platform to share collections nationally while continuing to maintain a local presence and focus; participate in content-sharing networks and platforms.

8. Deploy existing resources in new ways.

9. Collaborate in negotiations with publishers on reasonably priced and easily accessible access to e-content and develop win-win solutions like “buy-it-now” options.


11. Measure library outcomes and impacts to better demonstrate the library’s value to the community and communicate these outcomes to key partners and policy makers.

12. Communicate the library’s story of impact directly to the public, partners, stakeholders and policy makers. Include the new vision built on the library’s people, place and platform assets.

13. Develop a richer online library experience and stronger competencies in using digital and social media to demonstrate the library’s role in the digital transformation.

14. Change long-held rules and operating procedures that impede the development of the library’s spaces and platform.

15. Take proactive and sustained steps to brand the library as a platform for community learning and development.
15 Action Steps for POLICY MAKERS

1. Use the authority of office to bring together community stakeholders to create a comprehensive strategic plan for the library and other knowledge institutions in the community.

2. Define libraries as part of the community’s priority infrastructure along with other established infrastructure priorities such as schools, transportation and parks, and make sustainable, long-term funding that reflects the library’s value to the community a budget priority.

3. Develop strategic alliances and partnerships with local library leaders to advance educational, economic and social goals.

4. Leverage the economic development potential of the public library as a community platform.

5. Make access to government information a model for curating open data.

6. Integrate librarians and state library agencies into development planning and policy making in all departments and at all levels of government.

7. Reduce barriers to libraries’ ability to access some funding sources in authorizing and appropriations legislation.

8. Review state-level policies that affect the public library’s ability to transform itself for the future.

9. Support a study on funding and governance structures for public libraries to identify strengths, weaknesses and opportunities that will lead to the development of stronger, more efficient public libraries.

10. Support and accelerate deployment of broadband, including high-speed, scalable broadband, to all libraries.

11. Develop local, state and national plans to address digital readiness.

12. Promote the deployment of wireless hotspots in libraries and other public places, especially in economically disadvantaged and minority communities where there are fewer Wi-Fi hotspots, to access the library’s platform anytime, anywhere.

13. Support rural and small libraries to ensure that all residents have access to world-class resources regardless of where they live.

14. Promote and invest in the infrastructure for a national digital platform that is scalable, flexible and serves diverse needs and new uses.

15. Be an informed champion for the library and what it offers in the community.
15 Action Steps for **COMMUNITY**

*Private Sector, Community Partners, the Public*

1. Collaborate on the development of a comprehensive strategic plan for the community’s information and knowledge ecosystem, including the library and other knowledge institutions in the community.

2. Develop strategic partnerships and alliances with public libraries around content or specific organizational or community needs.

3. Bring diverse expertise to bear on helping libraries create and share technology tools.

4. Connect knowledge resources in the community to the library’s knowledge networks.

5. Participate in the library’s platform for curating local history and culture.

6. Leverage the economic development potential of the public library as a community platform.

7. Bring resources, including financial resources and technical expertise, to partner with libraries where objectives align well.

8. Volunteer organizational and technical expertise to mentor and support learning that takes place in library spaces and on its platform, including in innovation labs (especially those aimed at youth), maker and hacker spaces and resource-rich coworking spaces.

9. Structure grant opportunities in ways that small and rural libraries can take advantage of them; for example, not always emphasizing cutting-edge technology.

10. Leverage foundation or corporate donations to public libraries through the creation of a public-private trust for libraries.

11. Support the deployment of broadband, Wi-Fi and digital literacy skills throughout the community, especially to economically disadvantaged, underserved and other special needs populations.

12. Advocate on behalf of the long-term sustainability of public libraries.

13. Collaborate with libraries in areas of mutual interest.

14. Explore the library’s people, place and platform assets.

15. Support efforts to re-envision and rebrand the library as a vital community institution in the digital era.
Notes and References

1 In 1949, the computing pioneer Claude Shannon estimated that the largest store of information in the world, the collected holdings of the Library of Congress, contained 100 trillion bits of information. Today, as the physicist Freeman Dyson notes, individuals can fit that amount of information on a hard drive that weighs a few pounds and costs less than $1,000. And, he might have added, individuals can also gain access to this amount of information with a click of a mouse or the touch of a finger while surfing the Web. The digital revolution thus has made it possible to put the equivalent of all human knowledge into virtually every home.


5 Ibid.

6 S. Craig Watkins, a University of Texas researcher and expert on the use of digital media among young people, especially African American and Hispanic teens, has written about the participation gap in society and the limitations of the benefits of high-speed broadband in communities where populations of residents “located in the social, financial, geographical and educational margins” lack sufficient social capital and social connectivity. On his website, The Young and the Digital, Watkins writes: “Importantly, the vast majority of U.S. workers will never be employed in the high skill, high income jobs that are driving our creative and knowledge economy. According to Monretti, about 10 percent of all of the jobs in the U.S. belong to the innovation sector. He adds that even during its peak, the manufacturing sector in the U.S. never employed more than 30 percent of the U.S. labor force. And while innovation hubs are economic growth engines, it is what Monretti calls the ‘multiplier effect’ that makes them particularly interesting. For every high tech job that is created in an innovation hub another five service-oriented jobs are added. These jobs may range from skilled occupations (lawyers, teachers) to unskilled occupations (hairdressers, waiters).” S. Craig Watkins, “Poorly Educated and Poorly Connected: The Hidden Realities of Innovation Hubs,” The Young and the Digital, May 24, 2013, http://theyoungandthedigital.com/2013/05/24/poorly-educated-and-poorly-connected-the-hidden-realities-of-innovation-hubs/.

7 These competencies are commonly referred to as digital literacies.


One widely praised vision of the physical library of the future was published in a paper by Denmark’s Royal School of Library and Information Science. This Danish model has four distinct but overlapping “spaces”: an inspiration space, a learning space, a meeting space and a performing space. Each of these embraces a different ethos: aesthetic experiences; access to information and knowledge; face-to-face encounters with others, both accidental and purposeful; creation encouraged by access to and instruction in the use of technological tools; and the ability to publish or distribute creative work. These spaces are not necessarily physically discrete but should together “support the library’s objectives in the knowledge and experience society...by incorporating them in the library’s architecture, design, services, programs and choice of partnerships.” Henrik Jochumsen, Casper Hvenggaard Rasmussen and Dorte Skot-Hansen, A New Model for the Public Library in the Knowledge and Experience Society, Centre for Cultural Policy Studies, Royal School of Library and Information Science, http://www.kulturstyrelsen.dk/fileadmin/user_upload/dokumenter/bibliotek/indsatsomraader/Udvalg_om_Folkebibliotekernes_rolle_i_videnssamfundet/A_new_model_for_the_public_library.pdf.


27 The term *platform* can have many meanings and associations. Here, we build from Marc Andreessen’s definition of a platform in the technical realm: “A ‘platform’ is a system that can be programmed and therefore customized by outside developers—users—and in that way, adapted to countless needs and niches that the platform’s original developers could not have possibly contemplated, much less had time to accommodate.” (See http://pmarchive.com/three_kinds_of_platforms_you_meet_on_the_internet.html for an archived copy of Andreessen’s original blog post from September 16, 2007.) In the context of the community, the salient aspect of the public library as platform is the ability of library users to customize the use of library tools and resources in unforeseen ways and the flexibility of the library as platform to accommodate and even embrace such new uses and enable library users to become creators and contributors to the body of knowledge made available by the library and its networks.


29 One of the essential features of the public library’s character—its unique accessibility—is also one of its weaknesses: with limited resources, its communities pull it in multiple directions, but increasingly toward a “deficit model” in which its role is more social safety net than social change agent. The library of the future cannot think of itself primarily as a remedial institution that exists to fill social deficits—in education, in access to information in any form, in democracy, in literacy. Instead the public library must become a “sharing” institution that grows social capital by curating and sharing all the information to which it has access, including sources of information that lie in its own community. It is impossible to imagine the sharing library not also filling deficits, even if it does it in new ways. The Dialogue believes that among the library’s traditional core missions will always be to promote reading and literacy among both children and adults; to offer access to information at low cost, or to the user “free”; and to anchor communities. David Lankes, professor and Dean’s Scholar of the New Librarianship at Syracuse University, and one of the United States’ most visionary thinkers on the nature of libraries and their relationships with communities, names and addresses the “deficit model” debate very well on his blog. See, R. David Lankes, “Beyond the Bullet Points: Libraries Are Obsolete,” *Virtual Dave…Real Blog* (blog), April 12, 2012, http://quartz.syr.edu/blog/?p=1567.


34 Librarians report that one of the busiest times for technology and skills training is in the post-holiday period when people are opening new devices like e-readers and tablets for the first time and puzzling over how to use them. Because it is trusted and welcoming, the public library has become the go-to place for getting up to speed on the latest technologies for a wide range of people.


36 Ibid.


46 For an example of the diverse library ecology in one state, see California Public Library Organization, 2007, http://www.library.ca.gov/lds/docs/CAPubLibOrgRpt.pdf. This report, prepared by the California State Library, demonstrates the disparities in library funding based on governance and funding structures.

47 Impact assessment tools like the EDGE benchmarks (http://www.libraryedge.org) help public libraries plan the growth and development of their technology and public access computing resources and demonstrate the impact these are having in the community. Other resources available nationally for public libraries to improve their data collection and analytics include the University of Washington School of Information’s U.S. Impact Study, http://impact.ischool.washington.edu/; the Digital Inclusion Survey, a partnership among the American Library Association, the University of Maryland’s Information Policy & Access Center (iPAC) and the International City/County Management Association (ICMA) with funding from IMLS, http://digitalinclusion.umd.edu/; and WebbMedia’s Key Performance Toolkit for Libraries, http://webbmediagroup.com/blog/key-performance-indicator-toolkit-for-libraries.

48 The Pew Research Center’s Library Engagement Typology on public libraries suggests that disadvantaged communities, which are more likely to be communities of color, are less engaged than better-educated, more-affluent communities. Anecdotally, reports from library directors also bear witness to this challenge. See Kathryn Zickuhr, Kristen Purcell and Lee Rainie, From Distant Admirers to Library Lovers—and Beyond: A Typology of Public Library Engagement in America, Pew Research Internet Project, http://www.pewinternet.org/2014/03/13/library-engagement-typology/.


The Dialogue on Public Libraries Working Group Participants

The Dialogue brought together a select 35-member Working Group that met twice in the project’s first year to examine the evolving societal role of the public library, and to shape and advance a perspective that re-envisions U.S. public libraries for the future. This report is built upon the considerable knowledge, insights and experiences shared by these experts, practitioners and thought leaders. Affiliations are listed as of the date of the Working Group meetings.

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To assist in its study and deliberations, the Aspen Institute Dialogue conducted outreach and engagement discussions with key library leadership groups and with local government administrative leaders. The Dialogue is grateful to the following individuals who offered input on one or more occasions.

MARCH 13, 2014
Aspen Institute Dialogue on Public Libraries at PLA 2014 Conference
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- Jay Turner, Director, Continuing Education, Georgia Public Library Service
- Marcia Warner, Library Director, Grand Rapids Public Library (Michigan)
APRIL 22, 2014

Aspen Institute Dialogue on Public Libraries ARSL Discussion
Conference Call

- Tameca Beckett, Youth Services Librarian, Laurel Public Library (Delaware)
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- Kieran Hixon, Technology Consultant, Colorado State Library
- Jet Kofoot, Library Consultant, Iowa Library Services, North Central District
- Carla Lehn, Library Development Services, California State Library
- Carolyn Petersen, Assistant Program Manager, Library Development, Washington State Library
- Gail Sheldon, Director, Somerset County Library System (Maryland)
- Cal Shepard, State Librarian, State Library of North Carolina
- Mary Stenger, Director, Southern Area Library (West Virginia)

MAY 8, 2014

Aspen Institute Dialogue on Public Libraries
Meeting with Chief Officers of State Library Agencies (COSLA)
Washington, D.C.

- Stacey Aldrich, Deputy Secretary of Education and Commissioner for Libraries, Pennsylvania Department of Education
- Tim Cherubini, Executive Director, COSLA
- Sarah Chesemore, President, The Chesemore Group, Inc.
- Ann Joslin, State Librarian, Idaho Commission for Libraries
- Susan McVey, Director, Oklahoma Department of Libraries
- Wayne Onkst, State Librarian & Commissioner, Kentucky Department for Libraries & Archives
- Lamar Veatch, State Librarian, Georgia Public Library Service
- Kendall Wiggin, State Librarian, State of Connecticut
SEPTEMBER 14, 2014

Aspen Institute Dialogue on Public Libraries at ICMA Annual Conference
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• Victoria Yarbrough, Leisure and Library Services Director, City of Sierra Vista, Arizona
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- **Clarence Anthony**, Executive Director, National League of Cities
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- **Brian Bannon**, Commissioner, Chicago Public Library
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About the Aspen Institute Dialogue on Public Libraries

The Aspen Institute Dialogue on Public Libraries is a multi-stakeholder forum to explore and champion new thinking on U.S. public libraries, with the goal of fostering concrete actions to support and transform public libraries for a more diverse, mobile and connected society. It focuses on the impact of the digital revolution on access to information, knowledge and the conduct of daily life. Supported by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and managed by the Aspen Institute Communications and Society Program, the Dialogue seeks to shape and advance a renewed national vision for public libraries in the 21st century.

With the assistance of thought leaders from business, technology, education, government, the nonprofit sector and libraries, the Dialogue on Public Libraries considers the changing role of public libraries and seeks to articulate a renewed vision for the vital role they serve as community platforms to advance educational and other opportunities in a knowledge-based society. The Dialogue is a catalyst for identifying ways in which communities can leverage investments in these essential public institutions to develop richer information ecologies, build stronger communities and forge new partnerships for achieving local and national goals. Through its working group convenings, outreach and engagement with diverse stakeholders, commissioned papers, published report and other activities, the Aspen Institute Dialogue on Public Libraries seeks to ensure that public libraries remain as accessible and relevant to the needs of current and future generations as they have for previous generations of Americans.
The Communications and Society Program is an active venue for framing policies and developing recommendations in the information and communications fields. We provide a multi-disciplinary space where veteran and emerging decision-makers can develop new approaches and suggestions for communications policy. The Program enables global leaders and experts to explore new concepts, exchange insights, develop meaningful networks, and find personal growth, all for the betterment of society.

The Program’s projects range across many areas of information, communications and media policy. Our activities focus on a broad spectrum of ICT issues such as open and innovative governance, public diplomacy, institutional innovation, broadband and spectrum management, consumer cybersecurity, connected learning, issues of race and diversity, and the free flow of digital goods, services and ideas across borders.

Most conferences employ the signature Aspen Institute seminar format: approximately 25 leaders from diverse disciplines and perspectives engaged in roundtable dialogue, moderated with the goal of driving the agenda to specific conclusions and recommendations. The program distributes our conference reports and other materials to key policymakers, opinion leaders and the public in the United States and around the world. We also use the internet and social media to inform and ignite broader conversations that foster greater participation in the democratic process.

The Program’s Executive Director is Charles M. Firestone. He has served in this capacity since 1989 and is also a Vice President of the Aspen Institute. Prior to joining the Institute, Mr. Firestone was a communications attorney and law professor who has argued two cases before the United States Supreme Court and many in the courts of appeals. He is a former director of the UCLA Communications Law Program, first president of the Los Angeles Board of Telecommunications Commissioners, and an appellate attorney for the U.S. Federal Communications Commission.

Research Brief No. 1, December 2009

By Everett Henderson

Highlights

- Between 1997 and 2007, per capita visits to public libraries increased nationwide by 19 percent. During the same period, per capita circulation increased by 12 percent. This growth in demand for library services occurred even as people increasingly turned to the Internet to meet other information needs.

- The availability of Internet terminals in public libraries rose sharply between 2000 and 2007, increasing by 90 percent on a per capita basis. This dramatic increase is one example of the way U.S. public libraries are expanding their range of services to meet patron demand.

- The study identified very different trajectories between urban and rural communities for select service trends, highlighting the importance of local context for identifying needs and improving services.

Introduction

Libraries are operating in a fluid service environment in which people increasingly turn to the Internet to address everyday concerns. They also face competition from large booksellers that offer potential library patrons access to a virtually unlimited selection of books. These developments have understandably provoked questions and concerns about the future of libraries. Given this state of affairs, it is important to look beyond conjecture and assess the state of U.S. public libraries using actual visitation and circulation figures.

This report uses the past 11 years (FY 1997–FY 2007) of the annual Public Library Survey (PLS) data to analyze public library statistics on circulation, visitation, and information technology resources. In addition to reporting trends at the national level, we have disaggregated the data by urban/nonurban county status to examine whether library use patterns in rural areas differ from those in urban areas. This brief aims to provide a clearer, more complete picture of recent public library circulation and use trends than has previously been available.

Literature Review

The issue of how the Internet will affect people’s use of libraries has been in the public consciousness ever since use of the World Wide Web and e-mail first became widespread in the mid-1990s. Some research, both quantitative and qualitative, has been done to address this question.

George D’Elia has done the most comprehensive survey-driven research on the subject. In reporting the results of a 2000 survey of adults, D’Elia and colleagues concluded that use of public libraries and the Internet was complementary, but they also noted that the response patterns indicated this complementarity would not necessarily last long.1 In 2003, D’Elia and colleagues conducted a library-Internet use survey among 5th through 12th graders and concluded that public libraries and the Internet served complementary functions among youth as well, but they also noted that youth with Internet access at home visited the library less frequently than those who did not have Internet access.

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access at home.2

Studies of a more qualitative nature have focused on the prevalence of patrons using the public library’s online resources to engage in vital economic activities. The fact that the majority of America’s leading retailers now require potential hourly employees to submit applications electronically3 and that most public libraries report being the only source of free Internet access in their communities4 means that many job seekers who do not have Internet access at home turn to the library. A recent American Library Association (ALA) study found “greatly increased” use of libraries’ electronic resources in job-hunting.5 This study echoed what many news outlets have reported anecdotally in the wake of the current economic downturn. Another ALA study reported increased use of library computing resources to access e-government services, such as online applications for unemployment benefits. Library staff often assist patrons in these efforts.6

Methodology

The statistics presented in this report all (unless otherwise noted) come from the Public Library Survey (PLS), an annual survey of all public libraries in the United States. The data years used to construct the trend lines featured in the charts come from fiscal years 1997 through 2007; for the sake of simplicity, in the body of the report, a data year will simply be referred to by the numeric year (1997 or 1998, not FY 1997 or FY 1998). Because the data are being aggregated up to the national level for this study, the imputed version of all the datasets is used.

A library’s metro/nonmetro status was determined using the United States Office of Management and Budget’s (OMB) 2003 metropolitan/nonmetropolitan classification system. This system classifies all 3,141 of the nation’s counties, county equivalents, and independent cities and allows data users to quickly classify a county as metro or nonmetro. Every county in which an administrative entity could possibly be located has been assigned a metro/nonmetro status by OMB, so libraries (administrative entities) were simply assigned the status of the county in which they resided.7

IMLS recognizes that urbanization is a continuous process and that using one static snapshot of urbanicity to categorize 11 years of data may misclassify some counties, particularly at the beginning of the study period, but there is currently no annually updated county-level measure of rurality, so this was the most efficient approach given data availability and time constraints. In addition, this solution draws upon the extensive research of the OMB and is an often-used standard of rurality.8

Descriptive Statistics

Nationwide, per capita visitation increased every year during the study period, growing steadily from 4.13 in 1997 to 4.91 in 2007, an increase of 19 percent. Public libraries in metro and nonmetro counties reported similar


6 Davis, Bertot, and McClure, Libraries Connect Communities, 5 and 130.


8 Ibid.
increases; visitation in metro libraries increased by 18 percent and in nonmetro libraries by 20 percent. Even though public libraries in metro and nonmetro areas reported similar proportional increases in visitation, residents in metro areas visited libraries more often than their nonmetropolitan counterparts throughout the study period. In 1997, the average metro area resident visited a local public library 4.2 times, whereas the average nonmetro area resident visited a public library 3.7 times. Despite nonmetropolitan libraries registering a higher percentage growth rate during the study period, by 2007 the gap in per capita visits still stood at roughly 0.5.9

The number of circulations per 1,000 visits is a useful output metric that conveys changing patterns in library use. Many patrons are turning to public libraries for a wide variety of services, such as Internet access, electronic databases, job-seeking assistance, and other nontransactional library services. By monitoring trends in the number of circulations per visit, we can track the likelihood of a visitor actually checking out materials and get some idea of the extent to which patrons are opting to make use of some of the other services that libraries have to offer.

In 1997, there were nearly 1,600 circulation transactions for every 1,000 public library visits nationwide. This figure declined slightly during the late 1990s but has rebounded since then, reaching 7.42 in 2007. This equates to a nationwide increase of 12 percent over the study period. This increase was driven almost completely by circulation in metropolitan counties, where per capita circulation increased by 14 percent from 1997 to 2007. In contrast, the growth rate in nonmetro counties was 0.5 percent. The difference in growth rates between urban and nonurban counties was driven primarily by circulation trends between 2000 and 2007. Circulation in nonurban and urban counties declined similarly from 1997 to 2000, but metro counties’ per capita circulation increased by 16 percent between 2000 and 2007, whereas nonmetro counties’ increased by 5 percent.

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9 One caveat that applies to this and the rest of the per capita figures is that the calculation is based on the number of residents in the library service area, but anyone can visit a public library, so any count of per capita visitation inevitably includes visits from individuals who live outside the library service area.
and nonmetro areas had nearly identical figures in 1997: 1,601 circulations per 1,000 visits in metro areas and 1,583 circulations per 1,000 visits in nonmetro areas. Both geographic categories declined similarly between 1997 and 2000 and rebounded between 2000 and 2001. However, after 2001, metro libraries continued to rebound and more or less stabilized after 2002, whereas nonmetro libraries’ circulations per visit declined sharply after 2001. By 2007, metro areas reported 1,541 circulations per 1,000 visits, while nonmetro counties registered 1,330.

The availability of Internet terminals in public libraries rose sharply during the study period, from 1.9 Internet personal computers (PCs) per 5,000 residents in 2000 to 3.6 per 5,000 residents in 2007, an increase of 90 percent. This expansion was made possible through substantial public investments at the local, state and federal levels. Private initiatives, most notably the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation’s US Libraries Program, also played a role in increasing the availability of internet computers and related technologies in public libraries during the study period. This dramatic increase in such a short time is evidence of public libraries’ ability to adapt to the ever-evolving demands of their patrons. Another important observation from this figure is that libraries in nonurban areas had more internet PCs per person than their urban counterparts throughout the study period. Rural counties started off with a slight advantage (0.5) in this metric in 2000 and from 2002 to 2007 had at least one more Internet PC per 5,000 residents than libraries in urban counties. In 2007 (our last year of available data), rural libraries had 5.0 Internet PCs per 5,000 residents, while urban libraries had 3.3. Perhaps the higher per capita availability of Internet PCs is a symptom of higher relative demand for publically available computing resources in rural communities; a 2007 Current Population Survey supplement revealed that 39 percent of households in rural areas had broadband Internet connections, compared to 54 percent of households in urban communities. Rural libraries may be making more Internet-connected PCs available in response to the patron demand generated by this gap.


12 Broadband Internet connections are defined as those greater than 768 kbps (kilobytes per second).

13 From 1997 to 2002, electronic materials could be categorized as collection expenditures but also could be counted as “other operating expenditures.” This means that the figure for electronic materials as a percentage of all collection expenditures is likely higher than it otherwise would be during those years. Beginning in 2003, the definition of electronic materials was clarified. All spending on electronic materials was then counted toward collection expenditures, so calculating spending on electronic materials as a percentage of all collection expenditures became a more accurate measure of the relative importance of electronic materials.
Expenditures on electronic materials as a percentage of all collection expenditures increased by 81 percent from 1997 to 2007. Electronic material expenditures accounted for 5.9 percent of all collection expenditures in 1997 and had grown to 10.7 percent of all collection expenditures by 2007. This strong overall trend conceals important differences by geography. Electronic materials’ share of collection expenditures in metropolitan areas grew by 89 percent (from 6.0 percent to 11.4 percent) during the study period, while the corresponding figure in nonmetro areas was the same in 1997 and 2007 (5.4 percent in both years). Metro and nonmetro areas started out at similar levels in 1997; they both declined between 1997 and 1999, although the decline was sharper in nonmetro areas. Metro area libraries began to rebound after 1999 and exceeded their 1999 levels by 2002, whereas nonmetro areas continued to decline from 1999 to 2002. Both geographic types increased at similar rates between 2002 and 2007; proportional electronic expenditures increased by 86 percent in nonmetro areas and 85 percent in metro areas. Despite these similar growth rates, metro areas still spent twice as much (proportionally) as nonmetro areas on electronic materials by 2007; spending on electronic materials made up for 11.4 percent of collection expenditures in metro counties and 5.4 percent of such expenditures in nonmetro counties.

Discussion

One detail that stands out in all the graphs presented in this report is how closely the metropolitan library trend lines mirror the overall trend lines. This is because population is so heavily concentrated within metropolitan counties. Even though about half of all public library administrative entities are located in nonmetropolitan counties, metropolitan counties were still home to 84 percent of all individuals residing in library service areas in 2007. Libraries in metropolitan counties also accounted for 86 percent of all visits, 88 percent of all circulations, and 78 percent of all public Internet terminals in libraries in 2007. It is this level of geographic concentration that causes trends in metropolitan libraries to echo trends in all libraries. This observation, along with the fact that the nonmetropolitan library trend lines in this report often diverge greatly from those of their metropolitan counterparts, suggests that libraries in rural areas face unique challenges and that any successful national cultural policy will have to recognize and account for those challenges.

The visitation and circulation figures indicate that people are visiting public libraries more and checking out more materials than they were at the beginning of the study period. This is good news for the public library community, as it highlights the continued relevance of library services even as people increasingly turn to the Internet to meet other information needs. The 5 percent decline in circulations per visit means that even though libraries were being visited more often and patrons were checking out more materials in 2007, the average library patron was checking out fewer materials per visit than they did just ten years ago. In other words, patrons are changing their use patterns. Why has this happened? One theory is that improved library services, such as the increase in the availability of Internet-connected PCs, combined with the central role that the Internet has taken in everyday life, has led increasing numbers of patrons to spend more time online and less looking for books and other physical media. IMLS tested this explanation using an ordinary least squares regression, but were unable to find sufficient evidence to support that conclusion. A 2008 study of library use patterns using a Current Population Survey supplement from 2002 suggested that the relationships between key explanatory variables and the dependent variable (household-level library use) were nonlinear, so going forward, IMLS will use this information to adjust the model and test this theory again.

There are other possible explanations for this change. Use of Internet terminals is not the only noncirculation service offered at library sites. For example, many individuals visit libraries to receive free income tax preparation help from nonprofit organizations that choose public libraries as sites because of their value as public spaces. Libraries also conduct onsite programs that support English language learners. Elementary and secondary school students visit libraries to receive homework help from tutors onsite as

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well as online, where libraries often contract with homework help services so that their patrons do not have to pay fees to access such services. Additionally, libraries continue to support adult literacy, either by directly offering classes or referring patrons to such courses. While data on overall program attendance is not available for the entire study period, the available data suggest that patrons are more likely to participate in library programs when they visit. Program attendance per 1,000 visits increased from 50.9 in 2004 to 55 in 2007, an increase of 8 percent. Having more patrons come to the library to participate in programs increases visitation, but it does not necessarily increase circulation.

It is important to note that circulations per visit is only one metric; the fact that it has decreased slightly over the past 11 years of available data does not mean that people are finding libraries any less useful. Indeed, the fact that per capita visitation has steadily increased over the last decade shows that the public continues to derive value from these institutions and suggests that libraries are successfully adapting to changes in their patrons' preferences in the information age.

Conclusions
The nation’s public libraries continue to be valued community resources. National per person visitation and circulation have both increased solidly over the past decade, a trend that would not necessarily have been predicted given the rise of the Internet and the increased presence of large booksellers over the same period. The increased demand for library services may not have occurred if these institutions had not recognized and adapted to new patron demands by drastically increasing the availability of Internet workstations, allocating greater proportions of collection expenditures to electronic materials and providing a wider range of targeted programs. For all these successes, there is still work to be done. Circulation per capita has not increased in rural areas as much as it has in urban areas, and rural area libraries have not kept pace with metropolitan area libraries in proportional expenditures on electronic materials. These facts, as well as other instances where rural trends diverge considerably from urban trends, indicate that increased efforts should be made to get a greater understanding of the challenges that rural libraries face.

Future research by IMLS will examine library service trends in urban and rural areas in greater depth. To prepare for this analysis IMLS will include more detailed geographic identifiers in subsequent PLS releases. This additional information will provide greater flexibility in analyzing trends below the county level than the urban and nonurban categorizations used in this report. This type of detailed community level analysis can provide much more information about local area service trends and inform program planning and policy at the local, state and federal levels.

Everett Henderson is a statistical analyst in the Office of Policy, Planning, Research and Communications at the Institute of Museum and Library Services.

About the Institute of Museum and Library Services: The Institute of Museum and Library Services is the primary source of federal support for the nation’s 123,000 libraries and 17,500 museums. The Institute’s mission is to create strong libraries and museums that connect people to information and ideas. The Institute works at the national level and in coordination with state and local organizations to sustain heritage, culture, and knowledge; enhance learning and innovation; and support professional development. To learn more, please visit www.imls.gov.

Office of Policy, Planning, Research and Communications: Deputy Director, Mamie Bittner Associate Deputy Director, Carlos Manjarrez


Clarification: On page 5 of the original version of this research brief, we wrote “...people are visiting public libraries more and checking out more books than they were at the beginning of the study.” This updated version replaces “books” with “materials,” since we are unable to disaggregate circulation of books from overall circulation using the Public Libraries Survey. We apologize for this oversight.

The Public Libraries Survey (PLS) is a national census of public library systems. It is conducted annually by the Institute of Museum and Library Services in partnership with the U.S. Census Bureau, State Library Agencies, and the Library Statistics Working Group. Its data elements cover library service measures such as the number of uses of electronic resources, the number of Internet terminals available to the general public, reference transactions, interlibrary loans, circulation, library visits, children’s program attendance, and circulation of children’s materials. It also includes information on collection sizes, staffing, operating revenue and expenditures. Selected data elements are aggregated and summarized at the state level. The PLS is designed as a universe survey; its survey frame consists of 9,217 public libraries in the 50 states, the District of Columbia and selected US territories. It is administered via a web-based survey tool.


Unplugged

“Unplugged,” American Library Association, November 20, 2014

In a world where information and technology are everywhere and ever-present, opportunities to unplug may become more essential, benefiting both professional and personal experiences.

How It’s Developing

The availability of technology and the constant connectedness that it provides coupled with an immense amount of information (news, e-mail, social networks, etc.) places many individuals in danger of cognitive overload. Faced with this overload, individuals and organizations may struggle to achieve focus on what is important. [1]

In addition to requiring an unplugged space to focus on work, unplugged spaces may also be required for retreat and renewal. In spite of research connecting vacations to improved productivity and job performance, more than half of American workers stay plugged in, responding to work emails and communicating with the workplace, while on vacation. [2] While most hotels currently promote the availability of internet and work spaces, some “escape” destinations actively promote lack of internet and phone signals, seeking to lure travelers interested in disconnecting from workplace demands and connection. [3]

New products, including clothing, phone cases, and bags, are being developed with the express purpose of disabling technology and limiting incoming communication. [4] Pushes for “device-free zones,” digital detoxes, and unplugging challenges all demonstrate an awareness of the hyper-connectivity of life and a growing movement away from that level of connectivity. [5]

Why It Matters

Libraries may capitalize on users’ perceptions of libraries as quiet spaces, marketing at least some space in their buildings as places to unplug, concentrate, and focus. This may be a rebranding from "quiet reading spaces” to "unplug zones” or "digital escape spaces” that capitalize on the trend's language.

Programming and services that encourage quiet reflection or that limit the use of technology may become novel and popular as they contrast with the everyday connectivity that people normally encounter. [6]

The constant connectedness of society may change the ways that future generations concentrate and collect, synthesize, and analyze information. [7]

Library workers may increasingly seek opportunities to unplug, be reflective, or quietly focus on specific work activities – and this may be a challenge in a culture that does not provide opportunities for that type of work time.

Notes and Resources


http://www.ala.org/transforminglibraries/future/trends/unplugged
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Introduction

The 2010 edition of the Wisconsin Public Library Standards revises and updates the work of the many people who developed earlier editions of the Standards. We reviewed the previous edition of the Standards, noted the increased levels of library compliance with the earlier standards, and compiled information on changes in library statistical information in Wisconsin libraries since the last edition was produced.

The Wisconsin Public Library Standards document has evolved gradually over the years. Many of the standards in this document are unchanged from the earlier editions. However, since the public library environment has changed significantly, this edition updates quite a number of the technology-related standards.

The development of this document was guided by the belief that Wisconsin’s public libraries play a critical role in providing free access to knowledge, information, and diversity of ideas to all residents of the state. It is because of the critical importance of public libraries that these standards are established. All Wisconsin residents need and deserve at least a basic level of library service. These standards provide a way to measure a basic level of quality for public library service and also provide a pathway to excellence in library service.

Thanks to advances in technology and the cooperation of all types of libraries, and statewide access to resources such as BadgerLink, even the smallest library can offer access to an impressive array of digital and traditional information resources. But while this new environment presents great opportunities, it also presents significant challenges. Today’s library staff must master not only the skills and knowledge necessary to provide traditional library services, but also the new and constantly changing skills and knowledge required to utilize the latest in information technologies. Our library customers have come to expect rapid access to a broad range of services, from high-speed Internet to electronic books to comfortable settings and displays of inviting materials. Challenges also face the trustees and other government officials responsible for securing the funding and other resources necessary to provide library service that meets current needs and expectations.

This edition of the Standards reflects these changes and challenges. Some have been adjusted to reflect new and increased demands. Others reflect changes in public expectations for services.

Of course, planning must be done in context, considering current use, local and regional situations and projections, as well the availability and deployment of technology. Quality service to the entire community is a public library’s basic responsibility. Every community includes children, young adults, and adults; and each of these groups has needs that must be considered when developing local library service.
**Service to Children**

Public libraries promote the development of pre-reading and reading skills. Children who develop reading skills at an early age gain an essential tool for succeeding in school as well as for learning throughout life. Libraries must have staff, services, resources, and facilities that promote reading and learning for children. Libraries also need resources and services that support parents and other adults who work with children.

**Service to Young Adults**

Special efforts also are needed to serve young adults properly—those who are no longer children but not yet fully adult. Young adults have interests and abilities that require unique resources and services. Special resources, targeted services, and a welcoming atmosphere are required to serve this population adequately.

**Service to Adults**

Adults have a wide range of interests and needs, and the library’s resources and services must be varied to meet those needs adequately. Today’s rapidly changing society and economy make lifelong learning a necessity for most adults. Libraries must provide resources and services that support the needs of adults covering a wide range of issues—from the practical to the philosophical.

This *Standards* document attempts to cover the services, resources, and other requirements for basic library service that should be available to all residents of the state, including those who face physical, developmental, or other barriers to their use of public libraries. Wisconsin’s public library standards are entirely voluntary, but every library is encouraged to strive to offer all local residents the highest level of service possible. It is hoped that this document will assist in the continued development of high quality library service throughout Wisconsin.

As in previous editions of the *Wisconsin Public Library Standards*, the new edition establishes certain quantitative standards for public libraries based on both the municipal and the service population of the library. Service populations in this edition are more accurate because they have been calculated based on each library’s actual usage by county residents who do not live in a library municipality.

As in the last edition, quantitative standards are established at four levels of effort: basic, moderate, enhanced, and excellent. Local libraries can establish service targets by selecting the appropriate level of effort to apply to each standard, or use the levels to plan for progressive improvements over a period of time.
Imperatives for Planning

A business plan is essential for a successful enterprise. It allows a business to secure funding, target marketing, establish present and future activities, and gauge its success. The same is true for libraries. For the past generation or more, public libraries have been encouraged to plan for future service needs. The Public Library Association (PLA) and the American Library Association (ALA) have developed a succession of manuals and tools to help libraries assess the needs of their communities and chart a course for future development. Since the 1980s, Wisconsin’s public library standards have recommended services, resources, and settings that should be available at local libraries across the state. The recommendations in the standards are not meant to stand by themselves; however, they are meant to complement a local planning effort crafted to identify service goals that will allow the library to respond to the unique needs of its community.

Planning for libraries is a process of perceiving the future of both the community and the library and setting a direction for library movement toward that future vision. Planning helps the staff and board understand the situation of their community, set priorities, and establish methods for achieving those priorities. The planning document provides a record of the decisions made during that process. The document also becomes a guide for decision making and action by staff and the board.

An effective analogy for this planning process is the planning of a vacation trip. When planning a trip, travelers know where they are starting from and where they would like to go. The itinerary can be determined—what will be seen, how to travel, when each activity will occur. At the end of the vacation, the travelers can answer the question, “Where did you go?” because a clear destination was specified. Further, if the destination is not reached, they can look back and determine where they diverged from the original itinerary. While this analogy may be an oversimplification, the key elements of planning are present: to determine the library’s destination in the future, to decide what the library will do to get there, and to assess how well the library progressed toward that view of the future.

The PLA Model

The Public Library Association has produced several publications emphasizing the necessity of local planning for effective library service.

Planning and Role Setting introduced the notion of role selection for the public library, defining eight representative role profiles that could be used by planners to describe the essential priorities of the library and guide the allocation of budget, staffing, and energies.

Planning for Results, among other changes, introduced the idea of “visioning”—a concise expression of what is envisioned for the community or how the community will benefit from having a successful library. Previous planning models had been institution-centered, and this new step in the process seeks to create a stronger connection between the library and its community. Planning for Results also recast the eight role profiles from the previous planning model into thirteen representative service responses. This change incorporated libraries’ experience using the original roles and reflected the growing application of technology in the library environment.

In The New Planning for Results, Nelson presents a series of steps to prepare and implement the planning process. The process is shorter in the number of steps involved and in the time required to complete the process (approximately five months instead of nine). Her steps include approaches to prepare, imagine, design, build, communicate, and implement the plan, with guidelines for considering the various service approaches.

Strategic Planning for Results emphasizes a more resilient planning process, resulting in a plan of only four to five years but with specific final objectives, annual reviews, and a resumption of the planning process incorporated into year four or five.

Wisconsin’s standards emerge within this national context. The standards expressed in this document recommend a basic level of library service in many areas. However, Wisconsin libraries can benefit even further by applying the planning methods and strategies derived from the PLA models. A local plan for library service offers the best means for evaluating a library’s progress to date and setting targets for its future development. A written plan also provides benchmarks for evaluating the accomplishments of the library. Planning for library services at the local level has become a standard for excellence in public libraries.

The Planning Sequence

Planning requires an ongoing, critical look at the current status of library service compared to what it should be in the future. It is a cyclical process of assessment, forecasting, goal-setting, implementation, and evaluation, leading back into a new phase of assessment, and so on. It is also a pragmatic activity that can be undertaken in a thorough fashion or in a more simplified, compressed manner if limited resources or schedule impose constraints on the planning process. There are many approaches a library can take to planning; many strategies a library can apply. The main factor is the importance to create and follow a plan.

Planning, however, sometimes seems to be something more discussed than done. To many it remains an intensive, exhaustive, sometimes mysterious process, something foreign to the library’s day-to-day activities. But it need not be so intimidating—virtually every library plans at some level. Preparing each year’s budget involves some level of planning and forecasting. Presenting that
budget to the council is one way of expressing where the library expects to go and what it plans to accomplish over the next year. The activities involved in budget preparation can be incorporated into a larger planning process. A wider field of vision creates a deeper understanding of the community and the library, and that deeper understanding supports the efforts of board members, staff, and other library advocates as they seek to improve the quality of library service in the community.

Typically, any planning model asks four simple questions. PLA’s planning models offer variations on these key questions. Still other planning models can be found, produced by other agencies, associations, and experts, which offer still more variations on these same questions. Most planning methodologies ask:

- Where are we?
- Where do we want to go?
- How do we get there?
- Are we getting there?

Where are we?
This initial question involves assessment of the current condition of the library. This is the data-gathering phase of a planning methodology. PLA’s original planning process devoted a lot of time and energy to data gathering in an effort to create a clear and thorough understanding of the community and the library. In Planning and Role Setting, this step came to be called “looking around,” a much less imposing task that suggested a range of activities to assemble information about the library and its community.

In this initial phase of a planning process, planners establish benchmarks to use in designating and attaining planned goals. Information is gathered about the community—census data, economic reports from the community planner or chamber of commerce, forecasts from a regional planning office, or projections from the school district. Information is gathered about the library—annual report data, user or community surveys, circulation system usage reports, and corresponding data from neighboring or peer libraries. Planners may examine larger societal trends that might have an impact on the services the library needs to provide. Finally, public input in the form of surveys or focus groups can be included. Planning committees often include stakeholders from designated constituencies in the community.

Planners also may utilize a technique often used in strategic planning efforts—listing and discussing Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats in the library’s internal and external environment (sometimes referred to as a SWOT analysis). After this analysis, planners can identify the crucial strategic issues for the library. Planners need to address these crucial issues when they develop library goals and objectives.
These standards constitute one tool that planners may apply in this phase of a planning process. By examining these checklists, planners can produce a snapshot of the current condition of the library and possible areas of needed improvement.

Where do we want to go?
The second question involves forecasts and projections. The participants in the library’s planning process define a planning horizon—two years, three years, five—and express in broad terms how the library should develop over that period. This phase corresponds to the steps in the PLA planning model that formulate a community vision and mission statement, identify the most suitable roles or service responses, and set goals for the library. Working from the baseline information assembled during the data gathering phase and public input, planners set the overall desired course for the library.

Again, the standards can be used as one tool to chart a course for the library as part of its larger planning process. A review of this document may highlight areas where the library does not meet the recommended standard, and that may become an area to address in the library’s plan.

How do we get there?
In response to this third question, planners craft an action plan. After visioning, selecting roles or service responses, and writing the mission statement, a library planning group sets service priorities. These are translated into written goals and objectives that describe the ends or targets desired by the library and indicate a direction in which the library should move. The library’s objectives will be measurable or verifiable and are time-specific. They provide the basis for evaluating the library’s progress. To aid libraries in setting measurable targets, Output Measures for Public Libraries (Van House et al., 1987) presents key measures of library service. Measuring for Results: the Dimensions of Public Library Effectiveness (Joseph R. Matthews, 2004) emphasizes approaches in assessing the library’s outcomes—the economic and social impact or benefit that the library’s services provide to the community.

Implementing the plan developed by the library’s planning committee requires designing activities and detailing the strategies to carry them out. Writing the planning document is one visible result of the planning process. Dissemination of the library’s plan includes presentations to public officials and at promotional activities. The plan becomes useful information in the political process of garnering resources to carry out the library’s plan.

Are we getting there?
Reviewing and recycling complete the planning cycle. Once it is adopted, the plan becomes a benchmark, a means of assessing whether the library is on course. Planners routinely and continually evaluate the degree to which the plan’s activities have advanced the library’s priorities, as expressed in its written objectives. This evaluation effort occurs in two ways. The first is a monitoring process, which goes on throughout the year to assure that the library is not unintentionally straying from the established priorities. Second, a more formal evaluation occurs
at least annually to answer the question, “What progress was made by the library?” In each service and administrative area, the key question is, “What difference did the library make?” This evaluation step ultimately begins to answer the question, “Did community residents receive better service?”

Any evaluation also includes assessing the process used in developing the plan (including the costs), the impact of the planning process on service and staff, and the community’s response to the plan. Questions raised may include, “Was the plan useful?” and, “Were the resources chosen appropriate?” This step allows the library to think about how it all worked. Revising the plan and the process in order to improve services is the end result of this step.

**Local Choice and Planning**

There is no one, single, best way to plan. Differences in communities and libraries will—and should—be reflected in the process, the strategies, and the techniques used by different libraries, as well as in the final planning documents developed by different libraries. As the PLA planning model has evolved over the years, this flexibility of approach has become one of the hallmarks of the planning process.

In some communities it will be appropriate to undertake a thorough, rigorous process. The process may involve a large citizens’ committee. The committee may undertake several surveys to gather information about the community. The committee may also conduct numerous interviews with representatives of various groups within the community. As a result of assembling this information, the committee may recommend a major revision to the library’s mission statement and a long list of goals and objectives, all of which may be presented in a comprehensive report to the council and the community.

In other communities a more modest approach may be suitable. In such a community the library board and staff may determine there isn’t the time, budget, or staffing to support a more elaborate process, or perhaps the library’s previous plan emerged from a more exhaustive effort and the new plan is expected to be more of a course correction than a wholesale revision. In this instance, the planning committee might consist of board and staff only. Data gathering may be limited to existing data and reports readily at hand. The planning report may be a much simpler document.

An important key to planning for libraries is that an individual library can set its own pace for the process. The process incorporates this flexibility with the hope that all public libraries can plan for improved library services that are appropriate for the communities they serve. No library is too small to plan, because each community deserves the good service that results from effective planning.

Determining who should facilitate the process is another consideration. On the one hand, a local community leader garners respect and can encourage the involvement of other key members of the community. The downside is that such people may have set opinions about the community or library that can impinge on their effectiveness. They also may not have the necessary skills to coordinate and carry out the planning process. Professional facilitators or consultants have
advantages in that they have necessary training skills and experience to conduct the process, they generally are more neutral in their approach, and they can bring out important information from the group. On the other hand, they generally charge fees for their services and may not be aware of public library and community issues. Each library should consider the various factors to determine the appropriate person to facilitate the planning process.

The final written planning document is not the only product of the planning process. It is the process itself that also changes the library. Involving community residents and library staff in the planning effort helps to assure that the established goals are achievable and will be carried out. Lines of communication opened during the process can remain effective channels of communication for future community-based planning. Broad community participation in the library’s planning effort tends to foster broad support for the library’s goals and the continuing improvement of library service.
How to Use These Standards

A locally developed long-range plan for the library is the key to effective library service. A local planning effort can account for circumstances unique to the municipality or service area that cannot be anticipated from a statewide or a national perspective. The planning process described in the previous chapter and in other planning guides is a continuous process of assessment, review, and revision, “a series of approximations to a moving target.” (Robbins-Carter and Zweizig, 1985) These standards are meant to guide local libraries in Wisconsin to their own fruitful, locally focused planning efforts.

The standards offer a starting point that library boards and library directors can use to direct local long-range planning efforts. Specific standards are recommended in the areas of governance and administration (including planning, funding, and public relations); staffing; collections and resources; services; and access and facilities. By meeting these standards, a library establishes a baseline from which it can strive for excellence. A community considering the establishment of a new public library should assess its ability to meet these standards. If a library or a community cannot meet these standards, board and staff members should explore alternate means for delivering library service.

Levels of Use

At the most basic level, a library can focus its attention on the checklists provided in chapters 4 through 8, noting whether or not it meets the recommended minimums. Each standard is presented as a simple statement; either a library meets the recommendation or it does not. The checklists are formatted to encourage a library to copy and use them separately. It is expected that every library should strive to meet, at a minimum, these basic recommendations. Libraries that exceed the basic recommendations should develop service goals based on local needs.

At a higher level of effort, a library can apply the standards in the context of a broader, locally based planning process. This process is discussed in Chapter 2. By engaging in a planning process, local planners can produce a plan of service designed to meet specific local needs. One of the standards in Chapter 4, in fact, requires that a library undertake a planning effort to assess local service needs. When accepted planning methods are conscientiously employed to develop service goals and a plan of action, the resulting goals will more accurately reflect the needs of the community. This is not meant to suggest that libraries that adopt a planning process should abandon these standards. In the context of a broader planning process, a library can use the checklists to gather information about itself and the community during the information-gathering phase of a planning process. The topics and issues addressed by these standards could be used as an outline for a local plan of service.

**Quantitative Measures**

Like previous editions, this edition of the standards is a hybrid of sorts. On the one hand, this document gives support to contemporary thinking about the need to establish service goals for individual libraries at the local level. On the other hand, this document responds to an interest in offering specific, prescriptive recommendations regarding key library service parameters for those local libraries that want to use such measures.

Selected standards include a quantitative recommendation for library service. Because they tend to be the convenient yardsticks by which libraries are often defined and described (“How large is the collection at XYZ library?” or “How many full-time equivalents (FTEs) are on staff?” and so on), these measures tend to take on a larger import than other standards. For that reason it is necessary to discuss the origins of these quantitative standards and their use. The quantitative standards included in this edition and the chapters in which they appear are shown in the chart below.

**Quantitative Standards by Chapter** (with standard # in parentheses)

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Standard</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Director—hours per week (#17)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total operating budget (#34)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>FTE staff per 1,000 population (#7)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Staff continuing education hours per year (#8&amp;9)</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Volumes held per capita (print) (#16)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Periodicals titles per 1,000 population (print) (#17)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Audio recordings held per capita (#18)</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Video recordings held per capita (#19)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Materials expenditures per capita (#20)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total collection size per capita (#21)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Hours open (#8)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Public access computers per 1,000 population (#20)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Reader seating per capita (#38)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Appendix C</td>
<td>Quantitative standards regardless of community size</td>
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</table>

Generally, the service targets recommended in these quantitative standards are drawn from the data assembled from the latest public library annual reports submitted to the Division for Libraries, Technology, and Community Learning (DLTCL). The Public Library Standards Task Force used this information, standards established in other states, and their collective professional judgment to establish the quantitative standards used in this edition. Standards are established for seven different population levels at four levels of effort: *basic*, *moderate*, *enhanced*, and *excellent*. These correspond with the actual 2009 Wisconsin Public Library Service Data by population range at the 30th, 50th, 70th, and 90th percentiles, adjusted for anomalies and outliers.
Local libraries can establish service targets by selecting the appropriate level of effort to apply to each standard. Libraries may also choose to use the four different levels to set a target of progressive improvement over time. For example, a library may plan to achieve the moderate level for “hours open” within two years and achieve the enhanced level within five years.

In addition to establishing per capita standards, the Public Library Standards Task Force also established a number of quantitative standards that apply regardless of community size. These standards are based on the judgment of the Public Library Standards Task Force that residents of any community need and deserve at least a basic level of library service. In 2006, additional minimum legal standards for library system membership were added. These standards are listed in Appendix C.

As with any statistical comparison, it is important to note the possibility of inconsistent data-gathering efforts, which can lead to invalid statistical comparisons. To help avoid the possibility of invalid comparisons, it is essential that all Wisconsin libraries utilize the definitions that are provided with the state annual report form (and on the Internet at pld.dpi.wi.gov/pld_annrpt). Some of these definitions are also included in Appendix F.

Planners should also consider demographic and social factors that may affect the application of these quantitative standards in particular situations. For instance, the distribution of compact discs from the settlement of the music industry price fixing lawsuit in 2003 may have had a disproportionate affect on the standard for audio recordings per capita. At the same time, the growing trend to listen to music in MP3 or other digital formats may affect the demand for compact discs and instead increase demand for electronic resources. Similarly, the first part of the past decade saw a considerable increase in DVDs to meet demand, but more recent marketplace changes to video-on-demand or streaming media have softened the demand for DVDs. Librarians and planners should consider changes in the community and the library marketplace that may affect the quantitative standards published in this edition.

One additional note concerning quantitative standards: many factors that are very important in determining the quality of local library service are difficult to measure. The Public Library Standards Task Force urges library boards and staff to utilize the entire Standards document, not just the quantitative measures, when evaluating their library and planning for service improvements.

**Service Population and Per Capita Standards**

Each of the quantitative standards offers recommendations that vary according to a library’s service population. For these measures, a different service target is recommended for each of seven population categories.

**Nonresident Borrowers**

It is crucial, before applying the per capita standards for every library in the state, to develop a meaningful and accurate estimate of the population it serves. In Wisconsin, estimating a library’s service population is complicated by the fact that libraries provide service to many individuals who do not reside within the...
municipality that established the library. These “nonresident borrowers” include county residents who have access to the library as part of the county’s plan for library service, residents of other municipalities within the same system area, and, in many cases, residents of other system areas. In almost all cases, a library’s true service population is greater than its “official” municipal population.

**Methods for Estimating Service Population**

It is recommended that a library employ one of the following methods for estimating its service population. Any of these methods will produce an estimate of the library’s service population that is a truer reflection of its actual use patterns than the strict use of the municipal population. These methods will produce an estimate of the library’s service population that can be used to apply the quantitative standards that appear in this document. Methods that allocate nonresident populations on any basis other than observed use of library collections and resources are subject to greater error. The DLTCL encourages all libraries to make an estimate of their extended service population as a point of reference for use of these standards and for other library planning purposes.

*Use the Service Data population*

Starting in 2000, the service population reported in the annual [Wisconsin Public Library Service Data](#) is based on each library’s share of total circulation to county residents who do not live in a library community. For example, if the ABC Public Library accounts for 20 percent of the total circulation from libraries in the county to county residents who do not live in a library municipality, then 20 percent of the county nonresident population is allocated to the ABC Public Library. This number is then added to the library’s municipal population to derive an estimate of the library’s total service population. This estimate should, in most cases, be a more accurate estimate of service population than estimates used in previous Service Data editions. However, libraries with significant usage by residents of other library communities and/or residents of other counties may wish to use one of the alternative methods discussed below.

*Use systemwide nonresident usage data*

If nonresident use data is gathered on a systemwide basis in a multicounty system, an allocation of the system nonresident population can be made, based on the library’s share of the total system circulation to nonresidents. This variation has the advantage of rendering county boundaries within the system invisible.

*Base estimates on local circulation patterns*

A library also can examine resident borrowing as a proportion of total circulation and extrapolate a rough, circulation-based estimate of its overall service population. If residents and nonresidents can be assumed to borrow material at roughly the same rate per capita, and residents account for 85 percent of the library’s total circulation, then it can be said that residents also account for 85 percent of the total population. If the library’s municipal population is divided by the proportion of circulation transactions that go to residents, the result will be an estimate of
the library’s total service population. For example, a library with 85 percent resident circulation and a municipal population of 7,500 will have a service population of 8,824 (7,500 ÷ 0.85 = 8,824).

Add the population of surrounding unserved areas
If, through the observation of nonresident use, the staff of a municipal library is aware that a majority of residents of an adjacent town or towns use the library, it may simply add the population of the town or towns to its municipal population.

Municipal Population
In some cases, it may be more pragmatic to present the library’s service population in terms of its municipal population. Sometimes—when presenting the library’s budget to the municipality, for example—it may cloud the matter if the library claims a service population larger than its municipality. Common councils and village boards tend to focus their attention on the municipality, and many tend to classify themselves according to their municipal population. In this instance, the library may be able to press a clearer case for its needs if its arguments are based upon the municipal population. Therefore, as an extra point of reference and in addition to the service-population-based standards, this document provides an analysis of the quantitative measures based on the municipal populations of the state’s public libraries (Appendix A). Each edition of the Wisconsin Public Library Service Data includes the official Wisconsin Department of Administration’s annually updated population estimates for each library municipality.

Libraries are encouraged to produce plans for service based on their service population instead of their municipal population. Consistency is crucial, however. If a library evaluates its services by applying its extended service population to the calculation of one of the quantitative standards, it should apply its extended service population to the calculation of all of the quantitative standards.

Quantitative Measures and Local Planning
The notion of issuing quantitative standards may seem to run counter to the planning theme that service goals should be defined at the local level. Quantitative measures, however, are intended as a tool that libraries can use to help establish selected service goals. They are presented here with substantial flexibility in order to be configured by local planners to best reflect the local situation and local needs. As part of a local planning process, individual library boards and staff can establish service targets on the basic, moderate, enhanced, or excellent level of effort. Libraries also can establish a goal of moving from one level to a higher level over a period of time.

Libraries may wish to supplement use of the quantitative standards with peer comparisons to similarly-situated state and national libraries. Statewide statistics are available at pld.dpi.wi.gov/plx_stat. The Public Library Association’s annual Public Library Data Service: Statistical Report is one source for national data. Nationwide public library statistics are also available from the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) through the Public Library Service Data, compiled by DPI from public library annual reports, can be useful to compare your library’s services, resources, and funding to other libraries in Wisconsin. pld.dpi.wi.gov/ pld_dm-lib-stat
Library Survey (PLS) at http://harvester.census.gov/imls/publib.asp. The Public Library Peer Comparison Tool at http://harvester.census.gov/imls/compare/index.asp allows the user to get information on a particular library or to customize a peer group by selecting the key variables that are used to define it. The user can then view customized reports of the comparison between the library of interest and its peers on a variety of variables selected by the user.

The standards checklists and the quantitative measures are an outgrowth of the simplest level of application of these standards. The standards encourage libraries to go beyond that most basic level of application to engage in a more thorough planning process. As a result of that planning process, board and staff understanding of the community will be enhanced. The standards can then be applied in a more informed manner, and libraries will be able to improve services to the community beyond the basic level presented in the standards.

The standards are intended as an aid to local planning, not as a substitute for, or a constraint on, local planning.

Quantitative Measures and Large Libraries

Because there are relatively few large public libraries in the state (only four serve municipal populations of more than 100,000 and only twelve serve municipal populations of between 50,000 and 99,999), in-state comparisons of large institutions are limited. The standards provide analyses of quantitative measures for libraries of all sizes in the state. Results are reported for libraries in the population groups 50,000-99,999 and 100,000 and over, but because of the limited sample size in those categories, the results may not be as reliable as they are in other categories.

Larger libraries are strongly encouraged to supplement use of these standards with their own analyses of data drawn from peer institutions in other states in the Midwest and across the country. The Public Library Association’s annual Public Library Data Service: Statistical Report is one source for such data. Nationwide public library statistics are also available through the IMLS public library survey data (PLS). PLS data are available at http://harvester.census.gov/imls/publib.asp.

Services to Populations with Special Needs

Persons with special needs include individuals of all ages who often face barriers to their use of public library services, or need specific resources at the library or accommodations to make the most of their time at the library. The barriers can be physical, as the case of persons with physical disabilities who can’t leave their homes without assistance, who live in residential care facilities, or who are incarcerated. Transportation to the library can be a barrier for people living in poverty. Non-physical barriers exist as well. People who don’t understand how public libraries work, fear using libraries, assume there is a cost to get a library card, or fear incurring fines have barriers preventing them from using the library. These groups might include people who are adult new readers, who have developmental disabilities, and new immigrants with limited ability to speak English. People
who have some types of mental illness may experience psychological barriers. People who have lost their jobs may find embarrassment to be a barrier.

Because persons with special needs are often not traditional library patrons, often they are invisible members of the community. However, good planning will identify all the library’s potential constituencies, including individuals with special needs. The library can then develop specific strategies for reaching them and providing materials in formats they can utilize.

Two DPI publications, Youth with Special Needs: A Resource and Planning Guide for Wisconsin’s Public Libraries pld.dpi.wi.gov/pld_ysnpl and Adults with Special Needs: A Resource and Planning Guide for Wisconsin’s Public Libraries pld.dpi.wi.gov/pld_specialasn are invaluable tools in assisting librarians to plan for adults and children, and their usefulness is not limited to special needs populations. The plans themselves are models for strategic planning; including visions, goals, and strategies, and their bibliographies are pertinent for patrons of all ages.

**Services to Youth**

To ensure quality services for youth in Wisconsin, it is important that libraries of every size study the needs of children and young adults in their community and plan, fund, implement, and evaluate appropriate programs and services for them. These services should also include the parents, caregivers, and adults who work with youth.

Evaluation of services can be aided with statistics about the youth population in the library’s service area. For example, the total number of children and young adults within a service population can be compared to the number of them who are library card holders; the total number of young people can be compared to attendance at programs designed to attract various age groups. Such knowledge can impact strategic planning for on-site activities and outreach services.

Information on numbers of children below age 18 by county is available in periodic editions of *The WisKids Count Data Book* prepared by the Wisconsin Council on Children and Families, Inc., and The Institute for Research on Poverty, University of Wisconsin–Madison. Information on public school enrollment—by county, school district, school, ethnicity, and gender—is available annually from the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, Center for Education Statistics, which can also provide information on private school enrollment by county, school district, school, and gender.

**Branch Libraries**

Although the standards generally apply to an entire institution, they also are offered as one tool a board can use to evaluate individual branches in a multiple outlet service environment; however, certain functions are likely to be provided centrally, and standards relating to those functions will not apply to a branch. Application of the quantitative standards to branch libraries requires the development of service area population estimates for each branch library.
Governance and Administration

Public libraries in Wisconsin must be governed and operated according to Chapter 43 of the Wisconsin Statutes. In addition, all public libraries operate most effectively if they follow sound practices of administration, management, planning, funding, and public relations. These important issues are covered in this chapter.

Governance

Public library trustees are public officers and as such are legally responsible for the governance of the library and the conducting of its operations in accordance with local, state, and federal laws. Libraries should meet the following standards relating to governance:

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<th></th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Residents have free access to tax-supported public library services (<em>Wis. Stats. ss. 43.52(2) and 43.15(4)(c)</em>).</td>
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<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>The library is established, and operates, in accordance with Chapter 43 of the Wisconsin Statutes.</td>
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<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>The library is in compliance with other Wisconsin laws that affect library operations, such as laws relating to open meetings (<em>Wis. Stats. ss. 19.81 to 19.98</em>), ethics (<em>Wis. Stats. s. 19.59</em>), and public records (<em>Wis. Stats. ss.19.31 to 19.39</em>).</td>
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<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>The library is in compliance with federal laws that affect library operations, such as the Americans with Disabilities Act and the Fair Labor Standards Act.</td>
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<td>5.</td>
<td>A legally appointed and constituted library board governs the operation of the library (<em>Wis. Stats. s. 43.54 or s. 43.57</em>). All non-donated funds are held by the municipality and are disbursed upon approval by the library board.</td>
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<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>The library board has exclusive control of the expenditure of all monies collected, donated, or appropriated for the library fund (<em>Wis. Stats. s. 43.58(1)</em>).</td>
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<td>7.</td>
<td>The library board hires the library director (*Wis. Stats. s. 43.58(4)) and delegates active management of the library to the library director.</td>
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<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>The library board conducts annual performance evaluations of the library director.</td>
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Resources for library trustees can be found at [pld.dpi.wi.gov/pld_trustee](pld.dpi.wi.gov/pld_trustee), including Trustee Essentials, a handbook of information that should be reviewed by every Wisconsin public library trustee.
9. The library board determines the library staff table of organization and the rates of compensation for library staff positions (Wis. Stats. s. 43.58(4)).

10. The library board has written bylaws that outline its purpose and its operational procedures and address conflict-of-interest issues. The bylaws are reviewed at least every three years.

11. The library board adopts written policies for operating the library and reviews them on a regular cycle, ensuring that all policies are reviewed at least every three years. The policies are consistent with state and federal laws, and with applicable court decisions. Policies are updated to reflect changes in applicable laws. Policies address services provided to children as well as adults, and cover the following issues (among others): circulation, code of conduct, collection and resource development, confidentiality of patron records, handling of gifts, meeting room use, personnel, programming, public notice bulletin board, public records, and use of electronic resources by staff and patrons.

12. The library board meets monthly (with the library director in attendance) at a time and in a physically accessible location convenient for the board and the community and in accordance with the state law on open meetings and the Americans with Disabilities Act.

13. The library provides support for the continuing education of its trustees, which includes payment for workshop registrations and library association dues.

14. The library board is invited to participate in the diversity and ability awareness training provided to staff.

15. The library is a member of a public library system and actively participates in its program of service, including reciprocal borrowers’ privileges and interlibrary loan.

16. The library board enters into any necessary contractual agreements to participate in the public library system and in resource sharing with other types of libraries in its service area.
# Administration

Library administrators and staff use sound library administration and management practices to apply the policies and statutory obligations of the governing board to the daily operations of the library. Libraries should meet the following standards relating to administration:

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<th>Yes</th>
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<td>17.</td>
<td>The director is paid to perform library-board-designated duties for no fewer than 25 hours per week, which includes scheduled hours away from a public service desk, and is present in the library a minimum of 10 hours per week during library open hours.</td>
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<td>18.</td>
<td>The library director provides current library financial and statistical reports for review at each library board meeting.</td>
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<td>19.</td>
<td>The library director provides every new board member with a copy of the <em>Trustee Essentials</em> and participates in an orientation program for each new board member. (See Trustee Essential #27: Trustee Orientation and Continuing Education. (See pld.dpi.wi.gov/pld_te27 for more information.)</td>
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<td>20.</td>
<td>The library director informs the board of pending legislation on the local, state, and national levels that affects libraries and explains how the proposed legislation might affect local library service.</td>
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<td>21.</td>
<td>The library director is responsible for personnel administration, including hiring, supervising, evaluating, and dismissing library employees.</td>
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<td>22.</td>
<td>The library director is responsible for developing library operating procedures based on board policies.</td>
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<tr>
<td>23.</td>
<td>The library director monitors statutory changes and court decisions related to library operations, and recommends any policy changes needed to maintain legal library operations.</td>
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<td>24.</td>
<td>The library director is actively involved in community planning efforts.</td>
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<td>25.</td>
<td>The library director keeps the library board informed of library services and library programs and all important issues facing the library.</td>
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<tr>
<td>26.</td>
<td>The library collects the statistics and information required by the DLTCL and reports that information to the municipal governing body, the library system, and the DLTCL.</td>
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*The Wisconsin Library Association provides legislative information on library issues. [http://www.wla.lib.wi.us/legis](http://www.wla.lib.wi.us/legis)*
**Planning**

Library trustees and staff have a continuing obligation to assess the changing service needs of the community. Conscientious planning will help the library in its efforts to anticipate and respond to the community’s library needs. Libraries should meet the following standards relating to planning:

- Yes  No

27. With input from the community, the library board and staff develop and write a long-range plan that covers the next three to five years.

28. The long-range plan contains a mission statement that describes the purpose and priorities of the library in the community.

29. The long-range plan includes goals and specific, measurable objectives, with a timetable for implementation.

30. The long-range plan is reviewed and updated annually by the library board. An evaluation of the library’s progress toward meeting the plan’s goals, objectives, and timetable should be included in this review.

31. As part of the library’s long-range planning efforts, a systematic community study is conducted over a multi-year planning cycle.

32. The library director regularly attends public library system meetings and consults with system staff on issues of local concern.

33. The library participates in system-level planning and county-level planning for library services.

**Funding**

One key responsibility of the library board is to seek and secure sufficient funding (from public and private sources, as appropriate) to support the local service goals of the library. Libraries should meet the following standards relating to funding:

- Yes  No

34. The public library is adequately supported by municipal (or county) funds on an on-going basis; grants and donations supplement, but do not supplant, the basic funding structure of the library.

35. The library receives sufficient financial support from the community to provide a level of library service consistent with its long-range plan of service, statutory maintenance of effort requirements for library system membership, and the standards in this document. See Appendix C for further information regarding this standard, including minimum total operating budgets.
36. The library follows fiscal procedures consistent with state law, library policy, audit requirements, and local government requirements in preparing, presenting, and administering its budget.

37. The library director prepares and the library board reviews and adopts an annual budget proposal that accurately reflects the needs of the library and the community it serves.

38. The library director and staff maintain awareness of available grant and other outside funding sources.

39. The library board and the library director present the proposed budget to their municipality. Additional presentations are made to other governing bodies as appropriate.

40. The library board reviews and approves bills presented for payment at each library board meeting, in accordance with Wis. Stats. s. 43.58(2) and the Prompt Payment Law (Wis. Stats. s. 66.285). All payments from public funds are made by the appropriate municipal or county official.

Public Relations

Library public relations is a coordinated effort to communicate a positive image of the library and promote the availability of the library’s materials, services, and programs. Libraries should meet the following standards relating to public relations:

41. All library staff members exhibit a positive and helpful attitude.

42. The library’s annual plan includes activities designed specifically to enhance the library’s public relations.

43. The library’s annual budget allocates funds for public relations activities.

44. The library ensures the highest quality of all informational, directional, and promotional material, using in-house, system, or commercial printing capabilities.

45. Library policies are developed, reviewed, and revised with consideration given to their effect on the library’s public relations.

46. Annually, the library implements a number of generally accepted publicity techniques; the choice of which techniques to employ will be based on the characteristics of the community, including the needs of persons with disabilities, adult new readers, and those with limited English-speaking ability.
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<tr>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
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<tr>
<td>47. The library uses nonprint media (such as the Internet, cable TV, and radio) and accessible formats (such as large print, audio recordings, and translations into other languages) to promote its programs to persons with disabilities, adult new readers, and people using English as a second language.</td>
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<td>48. The library cooperates in systemwide and statewide efforts to promote library services.</td>
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<td>49. The library designates a staff member to coordinate public relations activities within the library and between the library and other local agencies.</td>
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<tr>
<td>50. The library ensures that staff maintain contact with schools, community organizations, businesses, and other agencies within the library’s service area.</td>
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<td>51. The library develops specific strategies to inform patrons with disabilities, non-English-speaking patrons, and adult new readers of its materials, programs, and services, including dissemination of publicity materials in alternate formats, in languages other than English, and using basic vocabulary.</td>
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</table>
Staffing for Public Libraries

Each public library must have a regular, paid, qualified staff of one or more persons, including a properly certified library director who is responsible to a library board. The public library staff should project an image of competence and friendliness to all members of the public. Public library staff members should understand the service goals of the library, should be aware of all library policies, and should be well trained in the practices and procedures required by their individual positions. Library staff members should be afforded the opportunity to continue to expand their knowledge of communication skills, library practice, library technology, and community demographics through participation in workshops, conferences, and other continuing education activities. Libraries should meet the following standards relating to staffing:

Yes  No

1. The library has regular, paid, and properly qualified staff, appropriately trained to fulfill their particular job responsibilities.

2. The library director is qualified for and maintains the appropriate level of certification under the provisions of the Wisconsin Administrative Code.

3. The library board has adopted a set of personnel policies outlining the conditions and requirements for employment of library staff, and these policies are consistent with state and federal regulations, including the Fair Labor Standards Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act, and relevant court decisions. The board reviews the policies on a regular schedule and after any significant change in employment law.

4. The library has a written personnel classification plan describing the job duties of each staff member, any educational and experience requirements, the physical requirements of the job, and salary range. The plan ensures that all qualified individuals have an equal opportunity for employment.

5. The library staff members have salaries, hours, and benefits determined by the library board and comparable with other community positions requiring similar educational preparation and job assignments.

6. The library establishes and meets a service target for staffing in full-time equivalents (FTEs) per 1,000 population not lower than the Basic Level for its population group. System resource libraries and libraries with specialized collections or extended open hours or services may require additional staff. Regardless of population served, total library staff is not less than 1 FTE. (See Appendixes A, B, and C.)

7. The library supports the library director’s continuing education for at least 20 contact hours per year. (The Wisconsin Administrative Code requires that library directors participate in 100 hours of continuing education, including at least 10 hours of technology training, over the five year period prior to recertification.)

8. The library provides opportunities for each key employee (other than the director) for participation in at least ten (10) hours of continuing education activities each year. The opportunity is prorated for part-time employees; that is, an employee working 30 hours per week should have the opportunity for at least 7.5 hours of continuing education activities each year.

9. The library supports the staff’s continuing education and professional activities, including paid work time for attendance, registration fees, and travel costs.

10. The library allocates a portion of its budget to reimburse the costs of continuing education activities and professional memberships.

11. The staff receives training in emergency procedures and protocols as recommended by the Department of Workforce Development and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration, especially regulations governing emergency evacuation, fire prevention plans, medical services and first aid, portable fire extinguishers, and alarm systems.

12. The library has local or system staff or outside assistance available to resolve technology problems in a timely manner so that there is minimal impact on library operations and services.

13. The library has staff trained to assist patrons with the effective use of technologies, including assistive devices and adaptive software, to access and use the Internet and other electronic and non-print resources.

14. All key library staff have email accounts and ready access to a workstation with a dedicated Internet connection.

15. The staff receives diversity and ability awareness training for communicating with library patrons and coworkers, including persons with physical and mental disabilities, those from diverse cultural backgrounds, adult new readers, and individuals with limited English-speaking ability.

16. All library staff, volunteers, and trustees are knowledgeable about the statutory protections of the confidentiality of patron use of library materials, electronic resources, and services.
Collection and Resources

The library should provide a wide range of materials and electronic resources in a variety of formats and in sufficient quantities to meet the needs of all members of its community. This chapter addresses acquisition and ownership of materials and the library’s ability to provide additional materials through interlibrary resource sharing. This chapter also covers the availability of electronic resources whether or not they are physically located in the library. Chapter 8 is a complementary chapter, addressing access to library resources and services, including the technological tools needed to maximize access.

In addition to the standards in this chapter, a number of other measurements can help a library establish goals for collections and resources. For example, a high turnover rate reflects a heavily used collection and might suggest a need for a larger collection. See Output Measures for Public Libraries (Van House et al., 1987) for information about a number of service measurement tools.

Libraries should meet the following standards relating to library collection and resources:

<table>
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<th>Yes</th>
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<tr>
<td>1. The library has a collection and resource development policy based on community needs and the diversity of American society that encompasses selection; requests for reconsideration of materials; collection specialties and purchase priorities; and evaluation, especially in weeding the collection.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. The library allocates funds for purchasing materials in a variety of formats and for access to electronic resources, based on its collection and resource development policy.</td>
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<td>3. The library budgets sufficient funds to maintain, upgrade, and replace needed library equipment and software on a regular schedule.</td>
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<td>4. The library has a multi-year technology plan or participates in a library system plan that addresses library needs and the funding to meet those needs. This plan is reviewed annually.</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. The library participates in the systemwide plan for technology and resource sharing.</td>
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<td>6. The library uses interlibrary loan to supplement, but not supplant, local collection development.</td>
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<td>7. The library cooperates in collection development with other local, area, and state-level libraries of all types, including the Wisconsin Talking Book and Braille Library, to provide a wide range of resources in a variety of formats to meet the needs of its community.</td>
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</table>
8. The library provides access to resources in a variety of formats to ensure equal access for persons of all ages with disabilities, in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act. Formats may include books in Braille, recorded books, downloadable or other electronic formats, and closed captioned, described, or signed video.

9. The library provides access to adult basic-skills and English-as-a-Second-Language materials with reading levels and formats appropriate to meet the needs of patrons who are adult new readers, or who have developmental disabilities or limited English speaking skills.

10. The library has, or provides access to, electronic information resources for its staff and its patrons. This may be accomplished through a variety of means, including:
   - online resources, including full-text databases
   - digitized materials
   - high-speed Internet access
   - e-books
   - audio books for download or in mp3 format
   - downloadable or streaming video output

11. The library provides web pages with organized web links pointing to useful and reliable local, regional, state, national, and international Internet resources. These web pages provide a prominent link to BadgerLink resources, clearly indicating that these resources are provided as a result of state funding of the BadgerLink program.

12. The library includes its bibliographic and holdings information (in the accepted MARC format) in the statewide database (WISCAT) and maintains the accuracy of that data.

13. The library provides adaptive technology to ensure access to electronic resources for persons with disabilities.

14. The library collects and reports statistics related to the availability and use of materials and electronic resources as required on the DLTCL Public Library Annual Report form, using standard definitions supplied by the Division.

15. The library establishes and meets a service target for print volumes held per capita not lower than the Basic Level for its population group. Regardless of population served, the minimum total volumes held is 8,000. (See Appendixes A, B, and C.)
16. The library establishes and meets a service target for periodical titles received per 1,000 population not lower than the Basic Level for its population group. Regardless of population served, the minimum number of periodical titles received is 30. (See Appendixes A, B, and C.)

17. The library establishes and meets a service target for audio and video recordings held per capita not lower than the Basic Level for its population group. Formats may include, among others, audiocassettes, compact disc recordings, and digital audio discs, players and services. (See Appendixes A, B, and C.)

18. The library establishes and meets a service target for public use Internet computers per 1,000 population not lower than the Basic Level for its population group. (See Appendixes A, B, and C.)

19. The library establishes and meets a service target for total expenditures for material (including electronic resources) per capita not lower than the Basic Level for its population group. Regardless of population served, total minimum expenditures for materials (including electronic resources) is $11,000. (See Appendixes A, B, and C.)

20. The library establishes and meets a service target for total collection size per capita (including print volumes and audio and video materials) not lower than the Basic Level for its population group. (See Appendixes A, B, and C.)

21. The library maintains a current collection of core reference materials, including online resources, resources selected from recommended lists, and additional sources selected to meet the information needs of the library’s patrons.

22. Every item in the library’s collection is evaluated for retention, replacement, or withdrawal at least every five years to determine its usefulness and accuracy according to the library’s collection development policy. Outdated, unnecessary, or damaged materials are removed from the collection. The library establishes and attains a measurable annual weeding plan based on local conditions and the library mission.

23. The library catalogs and arranges its collections for easy accessibility and according to currently accepted library cataloging and classification practices.
Services

Through public services, a library offers assistance to patrons in the use of its collections and resources. The library also provides patrons with resources beyond those owned by the library through interlibrary loan and other resource-sharing arrangements. Basic public services include reference, information services and programming. These services should be provided to all age groups: children, young adults, and adults.

Libraries should meet the following standards relating to the development of services:

Yes  No

1. The library maintains policies and/or procedures regarding the public services it provides, such as reference and information services, programming services, services to children and teens, and services to patrons with special needs.

2. The library cooperates with other types of libraries in the local area to plan for and provide services to all area residents.

3. The library works with local schools, community agencies and other organizations in the local area in planning and implementing services for all residents.

4. The library participates in system-level planning for services to special needs populations and youth.

5. The library ensures effective communication with persons with disabilities at all service points by providing staff with training, adaptive equipment and software, and by making materials available in alternative formats.

Reference and Information Services

The core of reference and information services is: provision of information, guidance in choosing materials appropriate to a user’s needs, and instruction in library use. Libraries should meet the following standards relating to reference and information services:

Yes  No

6. The library provides reference and readers’ advisory services to residents of all ages and levels of literacy in person, by telephone, and by text telephone (TTY) or relay service the entire time it is open. Other means of providing reference service are also offered, if appropriate (e.g., fax, email, or virtual reference such as AskAway).
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<tr>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
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<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>The library provides reference and readers’ advisory services to patrons with disabilities in formats they can utilize.</td>
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<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>The library provides staff trained in reference work, including reference work with children, during all hours the library is open.</td>
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<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>The library has staff trained to assist patrons (including people with disabilities) with the effective use of technologies necessary to access and use the Internet and other electronic and non-print resources.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>The library participates in system-coordinated backup reference, interlibrary loan service, and delivery service to provide accurate and timely public service.</td>
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<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>The library annually tracks reference transactions and reports the total on the public library annual report.</td>
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<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>The library makes available or has ready access to an accurate and up-to-date community information and resource file, including names of officers and contacts for community organizations and service agencies, providers of job and literacy training, and so forth. This file is made available on the Internet, if feasible.</td>
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<tr>
<td>13.</td>
<td>The library supports patron training in the use of technologies necessary to access electronic resources, including training for persons with disabilities in the use of adaptive equipment and software.</td>
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<tr>
<td>14.</td>
<td>The library prepares bibliographies and other access guides and user aids to inform patrons of the availability of resources on a specific topic or issue, and makes them available in alternate formats, as appropriate.</td>
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Programming

Educational, recreational, informational, and cultural programs sponsored by the library, or cosponsored with other community organizations, are offered to help attract new users to the library, to welcome people from all cultures and people with disabilities, to increase awareness and use of library resources and services, and to provide a neutral public forum for the debate of issues. Programming is commonly held in the library, but outreach efforts may direct that some programs be held off-site. Libraries should meet the following standards relating to programming:

Yes No

☐ ☐ 15. Public programs provided by the library are free of charge [as required by Wis. Stats. s. 43.52(2)] and in physically accessible locations for children, teens, and adults. The library provides the necessary accommodations to enable persons with disabilities to participate in a program and advertises the availability of the accommodations in the program announcement.

☐ ☐ 16. The library plans and evaluates programming for adults, young adults, and children, considering all of the following factors:
   • community demographics (age, ethnicity, education, and income levels)
   • availability of programming from other organizations in the community
   • local need and interest
Access and Facilities

Access refers to making the library’s services and resources as widely available as possible. It has many aspects: the library’s location, the number of hours it is open, the efforts made by the library staff to extend services into the broader community, bibliographic access to the library’s collections, and use of appropriate technologies to facilitate access to local and remote resources. The principle of equal access should be integral to the library’s long-range plan.

The physical library facility also has a direct effect on access. All public library buildings should be easily accessible and offer a compelling invitation to the community. Library buildings should be flexible enough to respond to changing use and new technologies. Buildings should be expandable to accommodate growing collections and new services. Buildings should be designed for user efficiency. Building designs also should support staff efficiency, because staff costs are the major expense in library operation.

Access to Information and Resources

Libraries should meet the following standards relating to access to information and resources:

Yes  No

☐  ☐  1. Library facilities are readily available to all residents of the service jurisdiction, within a 15-minute drive in metropolitan areas or a 30-minute drive in rural areas.

☐  ☐  2. The library provides signs on main community thoroughfares that indicate the direction to the library.

☐  ☐  3. The library takes action to reach all population groups in the community. Appropriate services may include: home delivery services; deposit collections for childcare facilities, institutions, and agencies; books-by-mail service; bookmobile service; programs held outside the library; and remote access to the library online catalog and other resources.

☐  ☐  4. The library ensures access to its resources and services for patrons with disabilities through the provision of assistive technology and alternative formats, in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act.

☐  ☐  5. As one measure of access, the library annually calculates its rate of registrations as a percentage of population as defined in Output Measures for Public Libraries (Van House et al., 1987).

☐  ☐  6. The full range of services is available all hours the library is open.
7. Library hours are fixed and posted and include morning, afternoon, evening, and weekend hours. Hours open are based on an assessment of users’ and potential users’ most convenient days and times to visit the library, rather than on staff convenience.

8. The library establishes and meets a service target for hours open not lower than the Basic Level for its population group. Regardless of population served, the library is open a minimum of 25 hours per week. (See Appendixes A, B, and C.)

9. The library participates in a library system wide area network for shared services; e.g., shared integrated library system, Internet access.

10. The library has a local area network (LAN) linking all workstations as appropriate. The library takes reasonable measures to insure the security of its LAN.

11. The library has an integrated library system (ILS), preferably part of a regional shared ILS, with a graphical user interface.

12. The library’s catalog is available via the Internet with the use of a web browser and is accessible 24 hours per day, seven days per week.

13. The library’s online catalog and other electronic resources are accessible to persons with disabilities through the use of adaptive and assistive technology.

14. The library has a dedicated high-speed connection to the Internet, which is available to multiple library workstations. Whenever possible the library provides public wireless Internet for access from private laptops and devices.

15. The library has a telephone system adequate to meet public and staff needs including at least one text telephone (TTY). A voice mail system or answering machine provides basic library information to callers during times the library is not open, with a choice for languages other than English, as appropriate.

16. The library authorizes and maintains (or jointly maintains) an up-to-date universally-accessible web page that includes library hours, phone numbers, services, and other basic information.

17. The library has multiple listings, as appropriate, in the local telephone directory.

18. To facilitate the delivery of information, the library has (or has convenient access to) a photocopier and a fax machine or scanner.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
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<tr>
<td>☐</td>
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<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

19. The library has appropriate equipment to support access to information in various non-print formats in its collection (CD players, DVD or other media players, microform machines, etc.).

20. The library meets a service target for public access computers per 1,000 population not lower than the Basic Level for its population group, and an appropriate number are ADA accessible. (See Appendices A, B, and C.)

21. When remote access to electronic information resources is offered, it is available 24 hours a day, seven days per week.

22. The library has converted its bibliographic and holdings information into machine-readable form using the MARC standard.

23. If the library elects to filter Internet content, it has a policy and procedure in place to allow patrons unfiltered access to legitimate information.

**The Physical Facility**

Libraries should meet the following standards relating to the physical facility:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
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<tr>
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<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

24. The library provides adequate space to implement the full range of library services that are consistent with the library’s long-range plan and the standards in this document.

25. The library has allocated space for child and family use, with all materials readily available, and provides furniture and equipment designed for children and persons with disabilities.

26. At least once every five years, and more frequently if needed, the board directs the preparation of an assessment of the library’s long-term space needs.

27. The library building and furnishings meet state and federal requirements for physical accessibility, including the *ADA Accessibility Guidelines for Buildings and Facilities* (ADAAG). (See [http://www.access-board.gov/adaag/html/adaag.htm](http://www.access-board.gov/adaag/html/adaag.htm))

28. In compliance with the ADAAG, the library provides directional signs and instructions for the use of the collection, the catalog, and other library services in print, Braille, and alternate formats, as appropriate.

29. The library’s accessible features, such as entrance doors and parking spaces, display the International Symbol of Accessibility.
30. The library building supports the implementation of current and future telecommunications and electronic information technologies.

31. Adequate, safe, well-lighted, and convenient parking is available to the library's patrons and staff on or adjacent to the library’s site. The minimum number of required parking spaces may be governed by local ordinance.

32. The exterior of the library is well lighted and identified with signs clearly visible from the street.

33. The entrance is clearly visible and is located on the side of the building that most users approach.

34. Emergency facilities are provided in accordance with appropriate codes; evacuation routes, emergency exits, and the locations of fire extinguishers are clearly marked; emergency first aid supplies are readily available; and the library has a designated tornado shelter.

35. Lighting levels comply with standards issued by the Illuminating Engineering Society of North America.

36. The library provides facilities for the return of library materials when the library is closed; after-hours material depositories are fireproof and are accessible to people with disabilities.

37. The library has accessible public meeting space available for its programming and for use by other community groups, if appropriate.

38. The library has sufficient readers seating space for its service population, not lower than 60% of the target based on the guidelines in Public Library Space Needs: A Planning Outline. (See pld.dpi.wi.gov/files/pld/pdf/plspace.pdf#page=19.)
Quantitative Standards by Municipal Population

“Municipal population” is the population of the city, town, village, or county establishing the library, or the total population of communities establishing a joint library.

**FTE Staff per 1,000 Population**
Regardless of population served, minimum total staff is 1.0 FTE.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Municipal Population</th>
<th>Less than 2,500</th>
<th>2,500 to 9,999</th>
<th>10,000 to 24,999</th>
<th>25,000 to 49,999</th>
<th>50,000 to 99,999</th>
<th>100,000 and over</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Basic</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>0.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enhanced</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>0.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excellent</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>0.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Volumes Held per Capita (Print)**
Regardless of population served, minimum total volumes held is 8,000 volumes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Municipal Population</th>
<th>Less than 2,500</th>
<th>2,500 to 9,999</th>
<th>10,000 to 24,999</th>
<th>25,000 to 49,999</th>
<th>50,000 to 99,999</th>
<th>100,000 and over</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Basic</td>
<td>10.0</td>
<td>7.0</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>3.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>12.2</td>
<td>8.1</td>
<td>6.6</td>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>3.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enhanced</td>
<td>16.2</td>
<td>9.9</td>
<td>7.2</td>
<td>5.9</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>4.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excellent</td>
<td>24.2</td>
<td>12.4</td>
<td>9.3</td>
<td>7.1</td>
<td>5.9</td>
<td>4.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Periodical Titles Received per 1,000 Population (Print)**
Regardless of population served, minimum periodical titles received is 30 titles.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Municipal Population</th>
<th>Less than 2,500</th>
<th>2,500 to 9,999</th>
<th>10,000 to 24,999</th>
<th>25,000 to 49,999</th>
<th>50,000 to 99,999</th>
<th>100,000 and over</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Basic</td>
<td>29.8</td>
<td>18.3</td>
<td>14.8</td>
<td>10.0</td>
<td>6.1</td>
<td>5.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>41.3</td>
<td>24.4</td>
<td>16.5</td>
<td>11.3</td>
<td>8.4</td>
<td>6.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enhanced</td>
<td>60.1</td>
<td>30.2</td>
<td>20.8</td>
<td>13.7</td>
<td>10.2</td>
<td>8.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excellent</td>
<td>87.1</td>
<td>37.6</td>
<td>25.7</td>
<td>16.6</td>
<td>13.2</td>
<td>9.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Audio Recordings Held per Capita**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Municipal Population</th>
<th>Less than 2,500</th>
<th>2,500 to 9,999</th>
<th>10,000 to 24,999</th>
<th>25,000 to 49,999</th>
<th>50,000 to 99,999</th>
<th>100,000 and over</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Basic</td>
<td>0.42</td>
<td>0.36</td>
<td>0.32</td>
<td>0.28</td>
<td>0.23</td>
<td>0.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>0.55</td>
<td>0.50</td>
<td>0.45</td>
<td>0.37</td>
<td>0.29</td>
<td>0.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enhanced</td>
<td>0.83</td>
<td>0.61</td>
<td>0.51</td>
<td>0.44</td>
<td>0.36</td>
<td>0.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excellent</td>
<td>1.41</td>
<td>0.87</td>
<td>0.74</td>
<td>0.60</td>
<td>0.44</td>
<td>0.44</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Video Recordings Held per Capita

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Municipal Population</th>
<th>Less than 2,500</th>
<th>2,500 to 4,999</th>
<th>5,000 to 9,999</th>
<th>10,000 to 24,999</th>
<th>25,000 to 49,999</th>
<th>50,000 to 99,999</th>
<th>100,000 and over</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Basic</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>0.63</td>
<td>0.42</td>
<td>0.29</td>
<td>0.23</td>
<td>0.23</td>
<td>0.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>1.34</td>
<td>0.79</td>
<td>0.51</td>
<td>0.38</td>
<td>0.29</td>
<td>0.28</td>
<td>0.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enhanced</td>
<td>1.89</td>
<td>0.99</td>
<td>0.69</td>
<td>0.52</td>
<td>0.36</td>
<td>0.35</td>
<td>0.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excellent</td>
<td>3.16</td>
<td>1.18</td>
<td>1.08</td>
<td>0.64</td>
<td>0.44</td>
<td>0.40</td>
<td>0.30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Public Use Internet Computers per 1,000 Population

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Municipal Population</th>
<th>Less than 2,500</th>
<th>2,500 to 4,999</th>
<th>5,000 to 9,999</th>
<th>10,000 to 24,999</th>
<th>25,000 to 49,999</th>
<th>50,000 to 99,999</th>
<th>100,000 and over</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Basic</td>
<td>3.20</td>
<td>1.69</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>0.80</td>
<td>0.53</td>
<td>0.64</td>
<td>0.61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>4.40</td>
<td>2.24</td>
<td>1.61</td>
<td>1.04</td>
<td>0.74</td>
<td>0.74</td>
<td>0.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enhanced</td>
<td>6.01</td>
<td>2.74</td>
<td>2.13</td>
<td>1.30</td>
<td>1.12</td>
<td>1.12</td>
<td>0.64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excellent</td>
<td>9.75</td>
<td>3.68</td>
<td>2.72</td>
<td>1.83</td>
<td>1.34</td>
<td>1.28</td>
<td>0.66</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Hours Open

Regardless of population served, minimum hours open is 25 hours per week.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Municipal Population</th>
<th>Less than 2,500</th>
<th>2,500 to 4,999</th>
<th>5,000 to 9,999</th>
<th>10,000 to 24,999</th>
<th>25,000 to 49,999</th>
<th>50,000 to 99,999</th>
<th>100,000 and over</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Basic</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enhanced</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excellent</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Materials Expenditures per Capita

Regardless of population served, minimum materials expenditures is $10,000.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Municipal Population</th>
<th>Less than 2,500</th>
<th>2,500 to 4,999</th>
<th>5,000 to 9,999</th>
<th>10,000 to 24,999</th>
<th>25,000 to 49,999</th>
<th>50,000 to 99,999</th>
<th>100,000 and over</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Basic</td>
<td>$8.80</td>
<td>$6.98</td>
<td>$6.39</td>
<td>$5.40</td>
<td>$5.40</td>
<td>$5.40</td>
<td>$3.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>$11.54</td>
<td>$8.96</td>
<td>$8.51</td>
<td>$6.51</td>
<td>$6.26</td>
<td>$6.26</td>
<td>$3.59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enhanced</td>
<td>$14.69</td>
<td>$11.85</td>
<td>$10.22</td>
<td>$7.94</td>
<td>$7.12</td>
<td>$7.12</td>
<td>$3.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excellent</td>
<td>$23.70</td>
<td>$15.04</td>
<td>$12.84</td>
<td>$10.21</td>
<td>$8.53</td>
<td>$8.53</td>
<td>$4.86</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Collection Size (Print, Audio & Video) per Capita

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Municipal Population</th>
<th>Less than 2,500</th>
<th>2,500 to 4,999</th>
<th>5,000 to 9,999</th>
<th>10,000 to 24,999</th>
<th>25,000 to 49,999</th>
<th>50,000 to 99,999</th>
<th>100,000 and over</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Basic</td>
<td>11.7</td>
<td>8.3</td>
<td>7.0</td>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>2.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>14.4</td>
<td>9.5</td>
<td>7.5</td>
<td>6.4</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>3.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enhanced</td>
<td>18.6</td>
<td>11.5</td>
<td>8.4</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>4.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excellent</td>
<td>29.1</td>
<td>14.3</td>
<td>10.3</td>
<td>8.2</td>
<td>6.6</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>4.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Quantitative Standards by Service Population

“Service Population” is the library's home community population plus an additional population determined from circulation statistics for county residents without a library.

FTE Staff per 1,000 Population
Regardless of population served, minimum total staff is 1.0 FTE.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service Population</th>
<th>Less than 2,500</th>
<th>2,500 to 4,999</th>
<th>5,000 to 9,999</th>
<th>10,000 to 24,999</th>
<th>25,000 to 49,999</th>
<th>50,000 to 99,999</th>
<th>100,000 and over</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Basic</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>0.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enhanced</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>0.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excellent</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>0.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Volumes Held per Capita (Print)
Regardless of population served, minimum total volumes held is 8,000 volumes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service Population</th>
<th>Less than 2,500</th>
<th>2,500 to 4,999</th>
<th>5,000 to 9,999</th>
<th>10,000 to 24,999</th>
<th>25,000 to 49,999</th>
<th>50,000 to 99,999</th>
<th>100,000 and over</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Basic</td>
<td>6.4</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>7.8</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>2.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enhanced</td>
<td>10.2</td>
<td>5.7</td>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>2.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excellent</td>
<td>15.0</td>
<td>8.2</td>
<td>6.6</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Periodical Titles Received per 1,000 Population (Print)
Regardless of population served, minimum periodical titles received is 30 titles.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service Population</th>
<th>Less than 2,500</th>
<th>2,500 to 4,999</th>
<th>5,000 to 9,999</th>
<th>10,000 to 24,999</th>
<th>25,000 to 49,999</th>
<th>50,000 to 99,999</th>
<th>100,000 and over</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Basic</td>
<td>15.3</td>
<td>13.6</td>
<td>9.7</td>
<td>7.3</td>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>4.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>23.0</td>
<td>17.1</td>
<td>11.9</td>
<td>8.5</td>
<td>6.2</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>4.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enhanced</td>
<td>34.7</td>
<td>20.9</td>
<td>13.5</td>
<td>9.9</td>
<td>8.0</td>
<td>6.6</td>
<td>5.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excellent</td>
<td>63.2</td>
<td>27.9</td>
<td>18.7</td>
<td>12.1</td>
<td>10.3</td>
<td>7.7</td>
<td>7.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Audio Recordings Held per Capita

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service Population</th>
<th>Less than 2,500</th>
<th>2,500 to 4,999</th>
<th>5,000 to 9,999</th>
<th>10,000 to 24,999</th>
<th>25,000 to 49,999</th>
<th>50,000 to 99,999</th>
<th>100,000 and over</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Basic</td>
<td>0.19</td>
<td>0.19</td>
<td>0.17</td>
<td>0.16</td>
<td>0.19</td>
<td>0.19</td>
<td>0.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>0.26</td>
<td>0.26</td>
<td>0.23</td>
<td>0.23</td>
<td>0.23</td>
<td>0.23</td>
<td>0.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enhanced</td>
<td>0.43</td>
<td>0.32</td>
<td>0.29</td>
<td>0.28</td>
<td>0.27</td>
<td>0.27</td>
<td>0.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excellent</td>
<td>0.78</td>
<td>0.53</td>
<td>0.46</td>
<td>0.39</td>
<td>0.35</td>
<td>0.34</td>
<td>0.25</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Video Recordings Held per Capita

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service Population</th>
<th>Less than 2,500</th>
<th>2,500 to 4,999</th>
<th>5,000 to 9,999</th>
<th>10,000 to 24,999</th>
<th>25,000 to 49,999</th>
<th>50,000 to 99,999</th>
<th>100,000 and over</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Basic</td>
<td>0.60</td>
<td>0.39</td>
<td>0.28</td>
<td>0.21</td>
<td>0.21</td>
<td>0.21</td>
<td>0.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>0.78</td>
<td>0.49</td>
<td>0.38</td>
<td>0.26</td>
<td>0.24</td>
<td>0.23</td>
<td>0.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enhanced</td>
<td>1.21</td>
<td>0.64</td>
<td>0.49</td>
<td>0.36</td>
<td>0.28</td>
<td>0.28</td>
<td>0.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excellent</td>
<td>1.68</td>
<td>0.93</td>
<td>0.68</td>
<td>0.51</td>
<td>0.43</td>
<td>0.33</td>
<td>0.27</td>
</tr>
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</table>

### Public Use Internet Computers per 1,000 Population

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service Population</th>
<th>Less than 2,500</th>
<th>2,500 to 4,999</th>
<th>5,000 to 9,999</th>
<th>10,000 to 24,999</th>
<th>25,000 to 49,999</th>
<th>50,000 to 99,999</th>
<th>100,000 and over</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Basic</td>
<td>2.19</td>
<td>1.25</td>
<td>0.73</td>
<td>0.60</td>
<td>0.53</td>
<td>0.53</td>
<td>0.53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>2.84</td>
<td>1.53</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>0.79</td>
<td>0.66</td>
<td>0.60</td>
<td>0.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enhanced</td>
<td>4.28</td>
<td>1.88</td>
<td>1.21</td>
<td>0.92</td>
<td>0.81</td>
<td>0.78</td>
<td>0.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excellent</td>
<td>6.48</td>
<td>2.58</td>
<td>1.75</td>
<td>1.35</td>
<td>1.37</td>
<td>0.93</td>
<td>0.73</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Hours Open

Regardless of population served, minimum hours open is 25 hours per week.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service Population</th>
<th>Less than 2,500</th>
<th>2,500 to 4,999</th>
<th>5,000 to 9,999</th>
<th>10,000 to 24,999</th>
<th>25,000 to 49,999</th>
<th>50,000 to 99,999</th>
<th>100,000 and over</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Basic</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enhanced</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excellent</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Materials Expenditures per Capita

Regardless of population served, minimum materials expenditures is $10,000.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service Population</th>
<th>Less than 2,500</th>
<th>2,500 to 4,999</th>
<th>5,000 to 9,999</th>
<th>10,000 to 24,999</th>
<th>25,000 to 49,999</th>
<th>50,000 to 99,999</th>
<th>100,000 and over</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Basic</td>
<td>$4.01</td>
<td>$3.93</td>
<td>$3.30</td>
<td>$3.30</td>
<td>$3.30</td>
<td>$3.30</td>
<td>$3.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>$5.83</td>
<td>$4.96</td>
<td>$3.94</td>
<td>$4.18</td>
<td>$4.12</td>
<td>$4.12</td>
<td>$3.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enhanced</td>
<td>$8.57</td>
<td>$6.58</td>
<td>$5.41</td>
<td>$5.41</td>
<td>$5.41</td>
<td>$5.02</td>
<td>$4.57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excellent</td>
<td>$12.28</td>
<td>$9.83</td>
<td>$7.51</td>
<td>$7.22</td>
<td>$7.22</td>
<td>$6.24</td>
<td>$4.71</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Collection Size (Print, Audio & Video) per Capita

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service Population</th>
<th>Less than 2,500</th>
<th>2,500 to 4,999</th>
<th>5,000 to 9,999</th>
<th>10,000 to 24,999</th>
<th>25,000 to 49,999</th>
<th>50,000 to 99,999</th>
<th>100,000 and over</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Basic</td>
<td>7.6</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>2.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>9.0</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enhanced</td>
<td>11.5</td>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>3.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excellent</td>
<td>17.2</td>
<td>9.4</td>
<td>7.6</td>
<td>6.1</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>3.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Quantitative Standards Regardless of Community Size

In addition to establishing per capita standards, the Public Library Standards Task Force also established a number of quantitative standards that apply regardless of community size. These standards are based on the judgment of the Public Library Standards Task Force that residents of any community need and deserve at least a basic level of library service.

The following standards apply regardless of community size:

- The library is open a minimum of 25 hours per week.
- A certified library director is paid to perform board-designated duties for no fewer than 25 hours per week.
- Minimum total library staff is 1 FTE.
- The library supports the library director’s continuing education for at least 20 contact hours per year.
- Minimum total book volumes held is 8,000.
- Minimum number of print periodical titles received is 30.
- Minimum total annual local expenditures on collection (including electronic resources) is $11,000.
- Minimum year 2011 total operating budget is $67,000 (see below for more information).
### Estimated Minimum Cost Components of Recommended Minimum Library Budget

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Budget Item</th>
<th>Minimum Cost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Director's salary</td>
<td>$20,300 (salary for a Grade 3 Certified Director at a minimum of 25 hours/week)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other staff wages</td>
<td>$8,500 (for a minimum of 15 hours/week)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social sec., benefits, etc.</td>
<td>$9,200 (32% of salary costs)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Materials</td>
<td>$11,000 (print, AV and electronic resources)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All other expenses</td>
<td>$18,000 (supplies, utilities, technology costs, continuing education, etc.)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total operating costs**  $67,000 (in 2011)

(capital costs including debt retirement are not included in this figure)

- **Est. minimum for 2012**: $68,000 (increase of 1.5%*)
- **Est. minimum for 2013**: $69,300 (increase of 2.0%*)
- **Est. minimum for 2014**: $71,000 (increase of 2.5%*)
- **Est. minimum for 2015**: $72,800 (increase of 2.5%*)
- **Est. minimum for 2016**: $74,600 (increase of 2.5%*)

*Estimated annual increases represent the approximate budget increases for Wisconsin libraries to cover inflationary increases, usage increases, and service improvements.*
Summary of Technology-Related Standards

- The library participates in a library system wide area network for shared services; e.g., shared integrated library system, Internet access.

- The library has a local area network (LAN) linking all workstations as appropriate. The library takes reasonable measures to insure the security of its LAN.

- The library has a dedicated high-speed connection to the Internet, which is available to multiple library workstations. Whenever possible, the library provides public wireless Internet for access from private laptops and devices.

- If the library elects to filter Internet content, it has a policy and procedure in place to allow patrons unfiltered access to legitimate information.

- The library has an integrated library system (ILS) or is part of a shared ILS with a graphical user interface.

- The library’s catalog is available via the Internet with the use of a web browser and is accessible 24 hours per day, seven days per week.

- The library establishes and meets a service target for public use Internet computers per 1,000 population not lower than the Basic Level for its population group.

- The library authorizes and maintains (or jointly maintains) an up-to-date, universally-accessible web page that includes library hours, phone numbers, services, and other basic information.

- The library provides web pages with organized web links pointing to useful and reliable local, regional, state, national, and international Internet resources. These web pages provide a prominent link to BadgerLink resources, clearly indicating that these resources are provided as a result of state funding of the BadgerLink program.

- When remote access to electronic information resources is offered, it is available 24 hours a day, seven days per week.
• All key library employees have email accounts and ready access to a workstation with a dedicated Internet connection.

• The library has staff trained to assist patrons with the effective use of technologies, including assistive devices and adaptive software, to access and use the Internet and other electronic and non-print resources.

• The library has local or system staff or outside assistance available to resolve technology problems in a timely manner so that there is minimal impact on library operations and services.

• The library has a multi-year technology plan or participates in a library system plan that addresses library needs and the funding to meet those needs. This plan is reviewed annually.

• The library budgets sufficient funds to maintain, upgrade, and replace needed library equipment and software on a regular schedule.
## Terms and Acronyms Used in the Standards

**Acquisition** The process of acquiring the library materials that make up the library’s collection.

**ALA** American Library Association, the national professional library organization.

**Automation** All aspects involved in using a computer system for such tasks as circulation, cataloging, acquisitions, and interlibrary loans.

**Cataloging** The process of describing an item in the collection and assigning a classification (call) number.

**Capital funds** Funds for acquisition of or additions to fixed assets, such as building sites, new buildings and building additions, new equipment (including major computer installations), initial book stock, furnishings for new or expanded buildings, and new vehicles. This excludes replacement and repair of existing furnishings and equipment, regular purchase of library materials, and investments for capital appreciation. Note: Municipal accounting practices shall determine whether a specific item is a capital expense or an operating expense, regardless of examples in the definitions. Expenditures for books, other than initial book stock, are not capital expenditures.

**CD-ROM** Compact Disc, Read-Only Memory; a medium for storing data and multimedia information electronically.

**CE** Continuing Education.

**Certified library director, librarian or library administrator** These terms refer to a librarian maintaining proper certification from the DPI as required by the Wisconsin Administrative Code and as required by Chapter 43 for library membership in a public library system.

**Chapter 43** The chapter of the *Wisconsin Statutes* governing the establishment and operation of public libraries and library systems.

**Circulation** The act of loaning material from the library’s collection for use outside the library. This activity includes checking out materials to users, either manually or electronically, and renewing, each of which is reported as a circulation transaction. Interlibrary loan items provided to the library and checked out by the library should be counted as a circulation. Interlibrary loan items sent to, or checked out to, another library do not count as a circulation.
COLAND  Council on Library and Network Development; an advisory council on library services to DPI appointed by the governor and including library professionals and lay people.

Collection  The total accumulation of all library materials and electronic resources provided by a library for its clientele.

Contact hour  As defined in the *Wisconsin Public Librarian Certification Manual*, a contact hour is 60 minutes of continuous participation in an eligible continuing education activity.

DLTCL  Division for Libraries, Technology, and Community Learning, part of DPI.

DPI  Department of Public Instruction, State of Wisconsin.

DVD  An optical disc storage medium for data and multimedia information that holds substantially more information than CD-ROMs.

FTE  A standard measurement of staff size, full-time equivalent is determined by summing the total hours worked per typical week by all library employees and dividing by 40.

Goals  Broad, long-term outcomes the community will receive as a desired result of specific services provided by the library to address identified strategic issues.

Hours open  For purposes of standards, the number of hours the main library building is open to the public during the winter.

**ILL or Interlibrary loan**

A transaction in which library material is loaned by one library to another outside its branch system for the use of an individual patron.

**ILS**  An Integrated Library System is a suite of library software for both public and library staff use consisting of modules to automate and coordinate common library operations such as circulation, catalog, serials, acquisitions, and ILL, with integrated Web content. In Wisconsin over 80% of the public libraries are part of a shared ILS often operated or coordinated by the library system.

**Key Staff**  Library employees whose position or duties require that the public or other libraries be able to contact them individually.

**LAN**  A Local Area Network is a computer network linking workstations, file servers, printers, and other devices within a local area, such as an office. LANs allow the sharing of resources and the exchange of both video and data.

**MARC**  Machine Readable Cataloging; the standard for bibliographic description encoded for computer processing.
**Municipal population**
The total number of persons who live inside the library’s legal service jurisdiction; that is, the governmental unit(s) establishing the public library.

**Nonresident**
Nonresidents are library users who live outside the library’s legal service jurisdiction; that is, the governmental unit(s) establishing the public library.

**Objectives**
In relation to planning, the means by which the library will measure its progress toward reaching a goal.

**Output measures**
Methods devised for measuring a library’s performance, as determined by use of the library’s resources and services.

**Periodical**
A publication with a distinctive title intended to appear in successive numbers or parts at stated or regular intervals and, as a rule, for an indefinite time; magazines and newspapers are periodicals.

**PLA**
The Public Library Association, a division of ALA (see above).

**Processing**
The carrying out of the various routines before material is ready for circulation, including cataloging and physical preparation.

**Public access workstation**
Any computer or terminal available exclusively for public use in the library.

**RL&LL**
Resources for Libraries & Lifelong Learning.

**Resident**
A person who lives inside the library’s legal service jurisdiction; that is, the governmental unit(s) establishing the public library.

**Selection**
The process of choosing the books and other materials to be bought by a library.

**Service population**
The municipal population (see above) plus an estimated value for an additional service area population.

**SLP**
Summer Library Program, an umbrella term for the children’s activities and programs that a public library carries out during the summer.

**Stakeholder**
An individual or group who has an interest in and influences library activities, programs and objectives.

**Subscriptions**
The arrangement by which, in return for a sum paid in advance, periodicals, newspapers, or other serials are provided for a specified number of issues. As used in the quantitative measures of the standards, these are print and microform subscriptions only, not electronic or digital subscriptions.
## SWOT Analysis
A strategic planning tool used to evaluate the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats involved in a project or service. Strengths and weaknesses are internal to an organization while opportunities and threats originate from outside. A SWOT analysis, generally conducted early in the planning process, helps libraries evaluate outside factors and internal situations.

## Title
A title is a publication that forms a separate bibliographic whole, whether issued in one or several volumes, reels, discs, slides, or parts. The term applies equally to printed materials, such as books and periodicals, and to audiovisual materials and microforms. Duplicate copies represent one title.

## Union catalog
A consolidated catalog of holdings from several libraries.

## Virtual Reference
The remote delivery of reference information and source materials to users who are unable to visit the library, or who access such services after hours, or from their home, school, or office. The transaction is conducted via electronic “chat” or email, and questions are often fielded libraries cooperating in regional or national consortia.

## Volumes
Volumes are the number of physical units or items in a collection. Items that are packaged together as a unit—e.g., two compact discs, two films, or two videocassettes—and are generally checked out as a unit, should be counted as one physical unit.

## WAN
A Wide Area Network uses high-speed, long-distance communications technology to connect computers over long distances.

## WAPL
Wisconsin Association of Public Libraries; a division of WLA.

## Weeding
The selection of library material from the collection to be discarded, sold, or transferred to storage because of poor physical condition, outdated content, or limited popularity.

## WISCAT
Wisconsin Catalog, the statewide database of holdings contributed by Wisconsin libraries of all types; currently available on the Web.

## Wisconsin Talking Book and Braille Library
A federally funded library located in Milwaukee, which provides books and periodicals on discs and audio cassettes and in Braille for people of all ages throughout Wisconsin who are or have physical disabilities.

## WLA
Wisconsin Library Association, the state professional library association.

## Workstation
As used in the standards, any computer or computer terminal.
YOUmedia CHICAGO

Reimagining Learning, Literacies, and Libraries: A Snapshot of Year 1

Authors: Kimberly Austin, Stacy B. Ehrlich, Cassidy Puckett, and Judi Singleton
Contributors: Susan E. Sporte, Penny Bender Sebring, Denise C. Nacu, and Eric Brown

CONSORTIUM ON CHICAGO SCHOOL RESEARCH
AT THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO
URBAN EDUCATION INSTITUTE

ccsr
Executive Summary: Year 1

YOUmedia, a Chicago-based digital learning initiative for teens, was designed to motivate youth to create, innovate, and become active learners.

Digital media has captured the attention of young people across the country. Often, the tools they use and the activities they engage in—computers, smartphones, video games, digital music, and the like—are viewed as entertainment. Yet educators in schools, libraries, and other institutions are beginning to realize the potential for using digital media to motivate youth to create, innovate, and become active learners.

To explore this potential more deliberately, the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, the Chicago Public Library, and the Digital Youth Network joined forces to launch YOUmedia, a digital learning initiative for high school-aged teens. YOUmedia is a physical space at the Harold Washington Library Center in downtown Chicago, as well as a virtual place—a website—dedicated to YOUmedia users. Both are designed to draw teens into progressive levels of participation in digital and traditional media.

According to a recent study of teens and technology, the first level of digital media participation, "hanging out," is primarily social and friendship-driven. Further along the continuum is "messing around," where teens' interest in digital media takes a more concrete form as skills develop from their own interests. Finally, "geeking out" is the advanced level where teens' interests are specialized, they develop expertise in digital skills, and they may join or create sub-cultures around these domains.

At the library, YOUmedia's physical space is designed to accommodate each of these stages. The space offers brightly colored lounging furniture, as well as computers for browsing and social use; gaming consoles, digital music equipment, and audio production computer software that can be used according to interest; and a serious work space that includes modular conference tables and a SMART board. These tools and structures afford teens the opportunity to socialize, to explore, or to master increasingly complex skills. Likewise, YOUmedia's online presence uses a closed social networking platform to offer teens 24-hour access to a site where they can use digital media across the gamut of engagement, from casual to intense participation.
This report is the first in a series that will document a three-year exploration of YOUmedia. In this installment—intended to introduce YOUmedia to a wider community of those interested in digital media and youth development, including researchers, funders, and educators—we describe Year 1 experiences and assess early lessons. We explore how teens discovered YOUmedia and the variety of ways in which they interacted with the space. We identify obstacles encountered during YOUmedia's initial implementation (from fall 2009 through summer 2010) and examine programmatic responses to those challenges. We also examine what worked, and, in doing so, identify aspects of the program that were not initially anticipated to be useful but were found to be necessary for ensuring effective use of digital media by teens as an instrument to learn critical skills.

In order to develop a clear understanding of how YOUmedia developed, we logged 130 hours over nine months in the physical space, observing activities and informally interviewing teens. At the end of the year, we conducted formal interviews with teens, adult mentors, librarians, and security guards who worked at YOUmedia’s library location. This decidedly qualitative look at YOUmedia’s Year 1 launch resulted in the following four major observations:

Relationships, particularly between youth and adult mentors, are crucial in engaging teens toward productive growth. The initial theory of action for YOUmedia assumed that interacting with digital media tools and participating in activities centered on teens’ interests would yield positive results around learning goals. During the first year, however, YOUmedia staff found that teens left on their own did not automatically connect with workshops and other structured activities that were designed to teach new skills and provide opportunities to explore interests more deeply. That changed when adults reached out to connect with youth socially, acting as guides and “cool” collaborators.

YOUmedia is cultivating a budding sense of community among teens who socialize and explore resources in the library. Peer relationships and an emerging sense of community served as a potent force that drove teens to engage with digital technology in new ways. YOUmedia encouraged teens to socialize, exchange ideas, and collaborate and share with their peers. Teens have come to view YOUmedia as a unique learning environment—one that does away with the formalities of high school so that they feel free to explore their interests and express themselves.

Year 1 implementation created a dynamic learning environment for teens who participated. Flexibility among staff and fluid processes around programming facilitated youth involvement at all participation levels. This flexibility was apparent when mentors shifted away from an adult-structured model of teaching and activity design towards a model that was more closely tied to what teens wanted to learn and how they wanted to learn it. Responsive formal learning opportunities—as well as informal, purposeful interactions—increased participation, expanded social networks, and deepened the teens’ understanding and use of digital and traditional media.

Several challenges were evident in Year 1. Like all new organizations, YOUmedia faced some challenges in its first year. Organizationally, it struggled with internal communication and role clarity, especially among part-time staff. Like other activities based on voluntary participation, it faced inconsistent attendance over time, making it difficult to sustain coherence. The online space, which was intended to motivate production and critique, was not well utilized. Resource availability and maintenance seem to be ongoing issues, from the choice of software utilization to the replacement and repair of equipment that is susceptible to breakage.

As YOUmedia moves into its second and third years, we expect to build on this introductory overview by continuing to track how the project evolves. We will explore ways in which engagement in YOUmedia may be linked to a variety of learning outcomes, and the extent to which similar activities may be occurring in schools—the traditional learning environment for youth.
Introduction

At a time when digital media and its technologies continue to inform the ways youth socialize, play, and learn, YOUmedia was designed as a digital media center of learning for teens.

The use of digital media can support an expanded and more contemporary view of the learning goals necessary for successful citizenship in the twenty-first century. Among these new goals are learning and innovation skills; information, media, and technology skills; life and career skills; and content around core subjects.

On the vanguard is YOUmedia, a digital learning initiative that aims to build on teens’ interest in and use of digital media to support these deeper learning goals. Sponsored by the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, YOUmedia is implementing ideas that grew out of research supported by the foundation’s Digital Media and Learning Initiative. In turn, the foundation is sponsoring the study of YOUmedia that is the subject of this report.

To understand the frequency with which youth interact with digital media (see sidebar “Definitions” on page 9 for explanations of digital media and other key terms), consider this: Students in the Chicago Public Schools (CPS) spend only 5.5 hours a day in school but, on average, eight to 18-year-olds in the United States spend seven hours and 38 minutes each day using all kinds of media. Within this time frame, the Kaiser Family Foundation reported that young people spend an average of 1.5 hours a day on a computer and a little over one hour per day on video games. Despite inequities around access to broadband at home, the vast majority of American youth have daily access to the Internet, with some minority populations gaining their access at libraries. Beyond popular images of youth obsessively updating social networking pages or engrossed in online gaming worlds is the reality that teens also use the technologies of digital media to create. A recent Pew survey reported that 57 percent of youth who use digital media produce blogs, websites, art, stories, videos, or remixes.

Researchers theorize that interacting with digital media can provide significant motivation for youth to participate, create, and become active learners. By allowing youth to directly create, share, revise, and publish their own work, digital media
can influence learning in ways that textbooks, lectures, and older generations of technology cannot. Digital media shifts the dominant form of content broadcast from a few collective entities to a single audience—think traditional television and radio—towards multiple individuals and collectivities sending content to multiple audiences. Thus, with digital media, the relationships between producer, broadcaster, and audience are multi-directional. The modality of these interactions and the ease with which people can now publish their own work and comment on the work of others creates opportunities for teens to be active producers of media, rather than confining their role to being passive consumers of media.

The freedom to publicly broadcast original and shared content simultaneously to many people also allows producers to receive timely feedback and critique at various stages of their work's creation. Theory suggests that engaging in such feedback loops may support active learning as youth undertake an iterative process of revising their work. By capitalizing on the ways in which youth are already using digital media, educators have the chance to support them in learning to critically think through obstacles that may arise as they produce and publish original work. This iterative process of incorporating feedback and critique into their products and improving on their work also provides an opportunity for youth to develop self-expression and self-efficacy as they learn how to set and achieve their own goals.

Currently, the learning that takes place around the use of digital media appears to be largely organic, arising serendipitously online and through collaborations with friends. However, with the ample learning opportunities presented by the use of digital media, it is also apparent that there exists a need to teach youth how to be literate consumers of media products, as well as how to effectively use digital media tools. Developing these digital literacies in high school is becoming more essential in preparing students for a future that promises to be increasingly complex—dominated by multi-dimensional layers of digital technologies and formats. Recognizing this need, the National Assessment of Educational Progress will in 2012 begin administering an assessment of technological literacy to fourth-, eighth-, and twelfth-graders. This nationwide push to accelerate digital literacy is one aspect of a larger mission to equip young people with twenty-first century skills. Furthermore, in recent speeches, President Barack Obama has called particular attention to opportunities to develop these lifelong skills in settings beyond classrooms.

In keeping with these trends, in 2009, the Chicago Public Library (CPL), with support from the MacArthur Foundation, launched YOUmedia, an experiment in providing useful and engaging learning experiences for teens in high school through access to new and traditional media.

YOUmedia is both a specially designed physical space located in the Harold Washington Library Center in downtown Chicago and an intentionally designed online space. In both YOUmedia environments, teens can pursue their own interests while developing digital and traditional media skills in ways that are substantively different from the experiences typically afforded to them by their schools or other public institutions. At the library and on its website, high school youth can hang out with friends, and discover and pursue their interests through such collaborative and solitary activities as blogging, writing and sharing poetry, playing and building electronic games, producing music and videos, and participating in book clubs. Adult staff provide guidance, instruction, support, and connections to resources. Projects promote cooperation and community awareness. Special events open the door for youth to collaborate with and learn from established artists, authors, and experts. Youth can also perform and share their work in other ways. As one observer said, "YOUmedia is loud, sociable, and hip—but it's still all about the public mission of the library to serve as a point of access to culture, information, and media of the day."

YOUmedia is the subject of a three-year research study, by the Consortium on Chicago School Research (CCSR) at the University of Chicago Urban Education Institute, that is funded by the MacArthur Foundation. This first report is a snapshot of this evolving program. Rather than a presentation of Year 1 findings, this first look at YOUmedia introduces the project to a wider audience of educators,
researchers, and funders by capturing the experiences of teen and adult participants and assessing the early lessons of those experiences that are relevant to future implementation. Some early observations include:

- Shifts in the project’s initial theory of action to further emphasize the important role of relationships, both among youth and between youth and adult mentors, in engaging youth more effectively around learning goals when they use digital media.
- The role that flexibility and fluidity plays in providing youth with relevant experiences and supporting their learning in meaningful ways.
- The emergence of new communities of youth within YOUmedia who are organized around shared interests that hold promise for motivating youth to learn critical skills.
- Challenges around balancing a youth-driven approach with an adult agenda for learning.

This report on YOUmedia is part of a larger study of Chicago middle and high school students’ experiences with digital media and how these experiences may influence their development. The goals are to understand the conception and roll-out of YOUmedia, and then to begin to examine the relationships between students’ work with digital media and their attitudes, behaviors, habits, and learning. CCSR researchers will explore these questions through student responses to its biennial district-wide survey and students’ school records, and through observations and surveys of and interviews with YOUmedia participants. The ultimate purpose is to develop a better understanding of how digital media can be leveraged to meet traditional and new learning goals.

YOUmedia is the first of its kind, but more centers are on the way. President Obama recently announced that the Institute of Museum and Library Services and the MacArthur Foundation will fund the creation of 30 more YOUmedia centers across the country. Additionally, CPL will soon open three new YOUmedia centers in library branches across the city. Observations and implications noted in this study will be relevant to those wishing to understand teen learning outside of schools, as well as to diverse organizations that are considering or planning to roll-out YOUmedia sites in the future.

Definitions

DIGITAL MEDIA Those technologies that allow users to create new forms of interaction, expression, communication, and entertainment in a digital format. Such technologies include computers, digital cameras, smartphones, digital music production, and video games.

DIGITAL MEDIA LITERACY There are various definitions of technological and digital literacy, but we define digital media literacy based on the outcomes outlined by the 21st Century Partnership. Digital media literacy encompasses three aspects: information literacy; media literacy; and information, communications, and technology (ICT) literacy. Information literacy captures the ability to access, evaluate, and use information effectively for an issue or problem. Media literacy is the ability to both critically analyze media messages and understand and utilize appropriate media creation tools, taking into account a diverse, multi-cultural society. Lastly, ICT literacy is the ability to use technology as a tool to research, organize, evaluate, and communicate information. In addition, it encompasses using digital tools (e.g., computers, PDAs, media players, GPS), networking tools, and social networks appropriately to access, manage, integrate, evaluate, and create information to successfully function in a knowledge economy.

FACEBOOK A social networking service that allows people to message and chat with each other, tag others in their photos, comment on each others’ pictures and videos, and play multi-user games.

GARAGEBAND A software program that allows users to create music or podcasts.

MANGA A type of Japanese comic or print cartoon.

MPC (MUSIC PRODUCTION CENTER) PLAYER A production tool that allows users to create "beats" and songs by sequencing existing rhythm tracks and instrumental audio, and to import audio files.

PROTOOLS A software program, used by many professionals, that allows for digital music editing and production.

ROCK BAND A music video game that allows players to use instrument-like controllers to simulate playing popular songs. The "band" can be up to four participants, including a vocalist, lead guitarist, bass guitarist, and drummer.
What Is YOUmedia?

"YOUmedia is a gathering space for teens to come together."
"It provides teens with a space to get their creative side out and express themselves."
— Descriptions from youth participants

YOUmedia is a learning space for teens that combines the expertise and resources of the Chicago Public Library (CPL) and the Digital Youth Network (DYN), a digital media literacy program that provides in-school and out-of-school learning opportunities. YOUmedia's learning environment is comprised of a physical location and an online space for teens to interact with traditional and digital media. Months of planning and development by the MacArthur Foundation, CPL, DYN, and other strategic partners led to YOUmedia opening a physical location and an online space in summer 2009. (See sidebar "YOUmedia Partners" on page 12 for further information.)

Design of YOUmedia's Physical Space

YOUmedia's design team imagined a physical space that was accessible, attractive, and engaging to teens. Housed in CPL's main branch, the Harold Washington Library Center, YOUmedia occupies a 5,500-square-foot space on the ground floor of the library, making it visible to passersby. Located in Chicago's Loop, YOUmedia faces historic State Street, which features a mix of retail stores, restaurants, public institutions, and colleges and universities. YOUmedia is near several public transportation routes that make the space accessible from Chicago's neighborhoods.

This space, which is the first space ever in any CPL branch to be dedicated to teens, is an instantiation of three forms of digital media participation—"hanging out," "messing around," and "geeking out"—that were identified through research conducted by Mimi Ito et al. Their three-year ethnographic project observed youth face-to-face and online to investigate the dynamics between new media, culture, and learning among young adults and teens. Comprising 25 field sites that span homes and neighborhoods, learning institutions (e.g., after-school programs), online communities and other networked sites, and interest-based groups in the United States, the study found that cultural engagement and learning are propelled by youth "hanging out," "messing around," and "geeking out" with digital media. YOUmedia's design team sought to fashion a physical space that would reflect these distinct forms of participation and support learning.

"Hanging Out"

This category of participation represents those who engage in social participation with or around digital media. This form of participation is often friendship-driven. In the physical space, the hanging out section is defined by bright red, yellow, and green couches, cushioned rocking chairs, and plush bean bag chairs. This space offers a place for teens to check Facebook on laptops, play games like Rock Band, and even eat while on the green flooring. This section also houses the main part of the library's young adult book collection that students may browse while socializing with peers.

"Messing Around"

Teens who are "messing around" display a budding interest in digital media. This may be the result of an independent emergent interest or one driven by friendship ties. These youth tend to have particular skills around digital media that can apply to different domains. The YOUmedia messing around space is identified by red flooring, and also has a gaming console, plush seating, and books (mostly reference materials and Japanese comic books called manga). Unlike the hanging out section, this space has kiosks with PC and Mac desktops that contain production software. A studio also provides tools to produce music and other audio recordings, including a desktop computer with ProTools and GarageBand, an MPC player, a microphone and speakers, and other equipment for audio production.

"Geeking Out"

When teens are "geeking out" with digital media, their engagement stems from their interests in developing specialized forms of expertise. This might also include involvement with particular subcultures or interest-driven communities within specific domains. Designed as a more serious work space, the geeking out area at YOUmedia is located far from the chatter of the hanging out space. It features moveable conference tables, dry erase boards, and a SMART board. Here, as throughout the space, teens can use laptops, cameras, and other digital equipment to make digital media products.
YOUmedia Partners

JOHN D. AND CATHERINE T. MACARTHUR FOUNDATION
One of the nation's largest independent foundations, the MacArthur Foundation provides the funding for YOUmedia as part of its larger Digital Media and Learning (DML) Initiative. This $50-million initiative, launched in 2006, seeks to understand how digital technologies are changing the way youth learn and participate in civic life. This initiative aims to increase understanding of how to bridge the ways learning and teaching occur in schools and other social institutions with how youth are learning today. For more on the DML Initiative funded by MacArthur, visit http://digitallearning.macfound.org/site/c.enJLkQNPFG/b.2029319/k.4E7B/About_the_Initiative.htm.

CHICAGO PUBLIC LIBRARY (CPL)
The Chicago Public Library, established in 1872, aims to provide patrons with resources that support lifelong learning. More than providing books and other texts, CPL hosts a number of community events; offers targeted services for children, adults, and other groups; and supplies access to movies, music, and museums, along with other media and activities. For more on CPL, visit http://www.chipub.lib.org.

DIGITAL YOUTH NETWORK (DYN)
Dr. Nichole Pinkard developed this school-based digital media literacy program. In 2010, DYN expanded to include seven schools, as well as a production studio, on Chicago's South Side. The program, also funded by the MacArthur Foundation, creates learning opportunities related to digital media literacy that span the school day and after-school programs. DYN's model of digital media literacy emphasizes production, collaboration, critique, and civic engagement using digital media tools. For more on DYN, visit http://remix.org.

PEARSON FOUNDATION
This charitable arm of Pearson, a multi-national media conglomerate, works with non-profits and business organizations to influence learning and teaching. As a sponsor of YOUmedia, the Pearson Foundation has helped provide programming for the site. For more information on Pearson's support of YOUmedia, visit http://www.pearsonfoundation.org/youth-engagement/partnerships/you-media-chicago-public-library.html.

Partnership Development: Considerations for Implementation of New YOUmedia Centers

The MacArthur Foundation gauged the interest of the Chicago Public Library (CPL) regarding the possibility of creating a library space downtown around the use of various forms of media—digital and traditional media. Having previous notions for a "teen space" in the library, CPL responded enthusiastically. The result: a vision for an engaging digital media space for teens in the downtown location of CPL. Once CPL was on board, MacArthur took several strategic steps to guide the development of the remaining partnerships.

- **Flexibility in finding the "right" partners that builds upon prior research and applied work**
  1. The funding organization thought broadly about what each organization could bring to the partnership and to the vision of YOUmedia. Several partners were considered before finding the right fit.
  2. The YOUmedia partnership was one that was mutually beneficial, supporting the fact that each partner has a stake in the relationship.
  3. YOUmedia was fashioned after DYN's approach to teaching digital media literacy and after research by Mimi Ito et al.16, 17. This research helped to provide a framework that merged the approaches of CPL, which provides an informal setting, with DYN's more structured learning environment.

- **Building on prior relationships and developing confidence in a new, merged vision**
  1. YOUmedia brought together people and organizations that had prior experience working together.

Prior to the opening of YOUmedia, CPL and DYN engaged in a pilot period during which the organizations worked together to offer activities to a small group of teens in limited space. Seeing success under these minimal conditions developed a shared conviction that their larger venture would be successful.

**Commitment to innovation and redefining existing boundaries**
As the YOUmedia partnership merged the diverse expertise of each partner organization, all partners involved were willing to depart from existing organizational paradigms and redefine their boundaries. New partnerships require that each institution meld into the broader vision. In YOUmedia, examples include:

1. CPL reimagined a number of permissible activities. These included being able to eat and drink, the volume at which people were allowed to talk and listen to audio, what belongings had to be stored in lockers, and even how books and other printed text were placed throughout the new space.

2. DYN was also pushed to reframe their existing ideas of the role of adults in the space. In DYN's after-school model, students participated in a session or class where an adult worked with them around a set of objectives; however, participants who are voluntarily in a public space are free to simply hang out. DYN mentors were now charged with a different role.

(See Appendix A for further descriptions of these negotiations.)
YOUniverse as Initially Conceptualized and then Realized

Rather than the initial theory that learning would result from access to a set of tools and social conditions, a cycle of learning emerged that was generated by flexibility, relationships, and responsiveness.

Initial Theory and Intended Outcomes

The physical and online design reflects the broad consensus YOUniverse’s founding partners reached regarding their vision for this new organization. As they worked through the logistical details of building a new kind of organizational and programmatic entity, these partners identified mechanisms through which they thought YOUniverse would accomplish a set of generally agreed-upon goals. The research team captured much of this early vision through retrospective interviews with leaders of CPL, DYN, and the MacArthur Foundation. From these interviews, CCSR developed a representation of their theory of action. Figure 1 below depicts the main pieces of this initial theory: Youth having access to a space embedded in a social environment would provide opportunities for interest-driven interaction. Participation, performance, and production would then mediate how these interactions led to enhanced learning.

**FIGURE 1**
Theory of Action

Leadership envisioned that the impact of YOUniverse would begin with providing youth access to purposefully designed physical and online spaces. Relying on research suggesting that the majority of teens “hang out” with technology, the configuration of furniture, technology, and youth-centered resources into distinct participation spaces (hanging out, messing around, and geeking out) was intended...
to encourage young people to engage with digital media in formal and informal ways while moving those less seriously engaged towards more serious forms of participation with technology. The ultimate goal was for them to produce their own digital media products. In short, although it was not directly measured by the program, the desired outcome was to move a portion of interested youth towards seeking out with digital media, knowing that not all teens would be as committed to moving in that direction. The online space was meant to extend what occurred in the physical space and to provide other forms of motivation for students to collaborate on projects, present work publicly, and critique digital media. As a whole, YOUmedia was viewed as a new kind of social environment that would encourage youth to move from a point of casual exploration of interests towards more serious and sustained engagement in new forms of learning.

Designers thought that the motivation for youth to move towards deeper pursuits would be social in nature. Building from an understanding of teens as highly social and driven by friendships and interests, YOUmedia was intended to be a place where curiosity would be sparked simply by being there. This would occur on two levels. First, access to traditional and new media resources would enable youth to participate in activities that were meaningful and relevant to them. Second, given the social nature of the space, YOUmedia would provide a context for teens to observe and interact with more experienced peers; this would, in turn, motivate teens to try something new, including production and performance activities.

Ultimately, the designers of YOUmedia hoped that access to media within a social context would provide wide-ranging benefits to participants, not just how to use the media. However, it was difficult for leadership to define those outcomes as discrete goals. Overall, goals conveyed by all leadership members were broad, learning-based ideas. When asked to articulate their desired goals, leadership members offered the following:

"We can talk about [goals] kind of as intangibles to some extent, but [they] really are kind of still core skills, so, we can say that this kid is really investing time and really exploring, learning how to express himself in different ways, learning the tool[s]... being able to adapt to different ways to communicate, ways to explore, ways to research, ways to express yourself. These are very key skills when you now are in much more of a media-driven, and reliant, society."

—DYN Leadership

"[One] outcome that I hope comes out of it is this understanding that you learn for a lifetime. You don't stop learning when school ends. Life is made of second chances and third chances. Just because you have an interest and you don't see a path for yourself, there is a path somewhere. We're happy to help facilitate that."

—CPL Leadership

"[Among other things] it's about showing up, it's about being part of a community, it's about follow-through, it's about caring about something that isn't obligatory, it's about writing for peers... There's a whole set of cultural capital that the mentors [can help] the kids pick up."

—MacArthur Leadership

While these responses represent the broader learning goals leadership envisioned for teens participating in YOUmedia, other outcomes were mentioned as well. For example, one additional goal was to build teens' confidence and sense of self-efficacy through the mastery of new skills, exposure to creating their own work, and the ability to teach other teens about digital media. Another articulated goal was to increase traditional and digital literacy. Finally, ancillary goals included increasing the use of the library as a space for learning, fostering critical thinking skills and twenty-first century skills, and developing critical and educated consumers of media.

YOUmedia as Observed

Although it is important to understand the theory of action and goals underlying YOUmedia, CCSR was also charged with conducting independent research to develop a clear understanding of how YOUmedia actually developed over time. The research team visited YOUmedia several times a week over a nine-month period to observe activities and informally interview teens and staff, accumulating more than 130 hours of observation. Near the end of the school year, the team conducted formal interviews with 20 teens who visited the physical location and 15 interviews with all in-space staff members, including mentors and librarians, as well as several security personnel (see Appendix B for data collection methods); we also conducted a focus group of stakeholders in the late summer to comment on our emergent findings. Based on our analysis of these data, we developed a model to capture the first year's implementation and to explore any possible differences between this analytic model and the initial model as theorized by the founders.
Figure 2 shows the model based on our observations. The main elements of the initial theory are still included: youth have access to physical space in which to “hang out,” “mess around,” and “geek out,” which is supported by an online community; there are interest-driven interactions between adults and teens and among teens; and there is individual growth. The theorized mechanisms—a social environment where teens are encouraged to participate, perform, and produce—are also evident. However, our observed model notes additional layers of detail, complexity, and nuance. In particular, it highlights the interactive, responsive, and dynamic nature of the environment and the crucial role of both peer-to-peer and youth-staff relationships, all of which feed into a learning cycle rather than a linear process of learning. In the sections below, we describe the components outlined in Figure 2 more fully.

**FIGURE 2**
Observed Model of YOUMedia

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**Animating the Space: Youth and Staff at YOUMedia**

Staff relied on their varied expertise and experiences to connect with and support a youth population with a diverse set of interests.

The intentional design of YOUMedia structured the social context for learning, while the actions and interactions of teens and staff motivated learning and engagement. Yet, the question of exactly who would populate YOUMedia was left largely unstated. YOUMedia was simply open to teens of high school age. Less of an uncertainty was the desired skill sets and knowledge of staff who would guide YOUMedia’s learning environment. This section relies on evidence from the first year of YOUMedia to understand who visits YOUMedia and the role of staff—a mix of CPI, librarians and DYN mentors—in sustaining this participation.

**Youth: Discovering YOUMedia and Participating in the Program**

The mechanisms for attracting youth to the space were not articulated in the initial theory of action, and YOUMedia did not make any specific attempts to recruit youth from particular areas, schools, or backgrounds. Instead, chance sightings and word of mouth appeared to be the major ways in which youth discovered YOUMedia. In formal and informal interviews, teens described learning about YOUMedia through friends, parents, and teachers. Others were intentionally seeking out resources—either at the library or elsewhere in Chicago—in an effort to pursue a specific interest, and found that YOUMedia had tools or workshops that supported those interests. Another group simply stumbled upon YOUMedia as they walked around the downtown area.

“I told one of my friends who raps...He said that he was going downtown to this library but he was going upstairs to the second floor to get on the computer and do some research. I told him that he could come to this space, do his project, and then he could go in the recording studio...cause he raps with his brother.”

—Youth #2
"I heard about the library location through the website. I basically just kind of researched poetry [online] 'cause that's what I do. And so I wanted to see if there were any upcoming poetry events [at YOUmedia]...if they had anything like that for teens."

—Youth #17

Once people began discovering YOUmedia, youth from all over the city began to visit. Program designers imagined YOUmedia's downtown location as an advantage and, for many, YOUmedia was a central location that was easily accessible. However, some teens, particularly those from the far South and West Sides of Chicago, reported that the distance was a barrier to more frequent YOUmedia visits. These teens reported lacking fare for public transportation and other ways to get there, making it more difficult to travel to YOUmedia regularly.19

"It is a long ways to travel from my house. But if I have a bus card, then I'm up here as much as possible. It was a couple of weeks I came everyday 'cause I had a seven-day [bus pass]...if I could come every day, I would."

—Youth #10

Youth Participation
Despite YOUmedia's idiosyncratic approach to recruitment, evidence suggests that participation increased throughout the first year. While teens are free to simply enter the space and hang out, staff encouraged youth to complete registration forms. Youth were also required to complete a registration form in order to participate online. In Year 1, however, there was no official process for collecting walk-in data—even among those who had registered.20 Nonetheless, registration data reflect a constant increase in participation from YOUmedia's opening to the close of its first year (see Figure 3). Between October 2009 and August 2010, 1,593 teens registered for YOUmedia. Of those who reported demographic information, 47 percent were male and 53 percent were female. The majority of those who reported race were African American (64 percent). Comparatively, the overall CPS student population during the 2009–10 school year was 50 percent male and 45 percent African American.21 The graph below shows the progressive increase in total registration numbers from December 2009 through August 2010. From staff, we know that attendance patterns varied weekly and seasonally; students from a nearby school dominated the population during the week, while students from more distant locations visited more on weekends and during the summer.

FIGURE 3
YOUmedia Registration Numbers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Number of Teens</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dec 2009</td>
<td>1,583</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan 2010</td>
<td>1,200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feb 2010</td>
<td>1,250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 2010</td>
<td>1,300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 2010</td>
<td>1,350</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 2010</td>
<td>1,400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 2010</td>
<td>1,450</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 2010</td>
<td>1,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aug 2010</td>
<td>1,550</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Teens who regularly visited the space described YOUmedia as a "safe" space to hang out, where they had the opportunities to develop and learn through self-expression.

"It's a gathering space for teens to come together. Like, they can be just something educational and not just hang around in the streets. Read a book. Or just hang out together. And I think it's like a good safe environment for that."

—Youth #13

"[YOUmedia] help[s] kids get their creative side out. Keep people off the streets. You know, just a general place for people to hang where they don't have to worry about adults being all in their face or somebody being on some other stuff. It's just a chill spot where you can get stuff done."

—Youth #10
Though staff did not systematically track participation, interviews and observations did reveal particular patterns. Most pronounced is that at any given time the majority of teens chose to be in the hanging out space. Observations, for instance, note that the majority of teens were playing video games, talking with friends, or checking Facebook. As one of the ultimate goals of YOUmedia was to encourage youth to move towards advanced use of digital media, staff also reported that a substantial number of these “hanging out” teens also engaged in “geeking out” YOUmedia activities by attending workshops, messing around with tools, creating and posting digital media artifacts, and commenting in the online space. As we discuss later, for those who did not engage in geeking out with media, hanging out and messing around provided entry points for staff and peers to engage youth around interests in an effort to encourage development and learning.

Given the flexible nature of the use of the space, teens could also limit their participation to specific projects. For instance, teens who visited YOUmedia through school groups came to the space only a few times to participate in a specific project. Alternatively, there were teens who participated exclusively or primarily with YOUmedia through the online space. Staff explained that the teens who participated primarily online faced transportation issues or just wanted a space to broadcast their work.

Staff: Multi-dimensional Expertise Used to Manage a Youth-Driven Space

At its inception, leadership believed that having knowledgeable adults to guide youth participation was a critical piece of the YOUmedia structure. Staff, which included both librarians and DYN mentors, possessed specific expertise related to either libraries or digital media. In addition to these skills sets, staff had also spent time working in learning environments (e.g., libraries or schools) or in the professional media world. For instance, one staff member held a bachelor’s degree in film studies and a master’s degree in library science, with a concentration in educational gaming. Another staff member, who was a long-time poet and a professional photographer, had worked in numerous school settings. Complementing these formal credentials was an informal use of and interest in digital media. All staff reported personally utilizing technology in ways that were comparable to teen engagement—a practical knowledge base that was put to daily use in working with the teens.

Each staff member took on roles that were specific to his or her organization. One CPL staff member, for example, described responsibilities for duties specific to maintaining the library, such as scanning in or checking out books, providing new library cards, and helping with collection development. Meanwhile, DYN mentors described their work in developing YOUmedia programming within the space and supporting the use of digital media tools. These distinctions were less salient in observations and interviews, in part because much of this division dealt with behind-the-scenes work. All staff, however, explicitly identified working with teens and supporting their development as their primary responsibility. As one staff member said, “That’s what this whole job entails—working with teens.” Another noted how this shared purpose sometimes blurred the roles between mentors and librarians:

“Librarians do have kind of a mentorship role with the teens. And...I feel like the mentors also have kind of a librarian relationship with the teens, too, in terms of recommending books and helping them with the collection. I’m not sure the kids know the distinction between librarian and mentor.”

—Staff member

Establishing and Maintaining Boundaries in a Youth-Driven Space

Although the imagined social environment of YOUmedia was articulated as one where youth interests would motivate learning, staff worked to establish and enforce rules in order to make the space work productively. Thus, while staff were attentive to teen interests and ideas, there were limitations in how teens could interact in the space.
YOUmedia had formal policies posted in the library location and online, outlining how to access resources and how to conduct oneself appropriately when at YOUmedia. Staff also imposed ad-hoc rules and guidelines around profanity, derogatory or violent imagery, and other acts that threatened the safe conditions of the space. In talking about a teen who persisted in posting songs with derogatory lyrics, one staff member said:

"I had to keep telling him, 'Man, that's not the message you're trying to put out... Put something with a better, like, positive [spin]." I started noticing he started cleaning up his act a little bit."

—Staff member

There was little outright resistance to formal policies from teens during YOUmedia’s first year, but the enforcement of rules served as a filtering process for determining which teens remained in the space over time.

"[At one point] we [had] like, disruptions... That kind of phased out when certain policies were put in place—like you have to put things in a locker. They realized that this isn’t just like, a free-for-all. There are security [officers] here [that] are paying attention. You do have to lock your stuff up. You can’t cuss. You do have to take off your hat. You do have to put your coat away. And then, those people who really wanted to be here, and wanted to be a part of that creative and productive community, those are the students who stayed."

—Staff member

Yet, staff remained flexible about the rules, reevaluating them regularly in response to how teens used the space. For example, a set of rules emerged in response to the popularity of audio production equipment. Novice users lacked the necessary skills to properly use these tools, frequently damaging this equipment (e.g., turntable needles). So, staff developed a certification process for using this equipment to reduce damages. The flexibility and reflectivity around rules meant that staff could continue to maintain a safe and functional environment, even as the use of the space evolved.

Activities and Resources that Support Youth Creativity

Staff intentionally designed structured activities to provide opportunities for learning. These were coupled with unstructured opportunities and resources that supported exploration.

As staff maintained the safety of the space, they also structured the environment as one where youth felt comfortable learning and expressing themselves. Staff organized workshops, special events, and other planned or structured activities as well as provided unstructured time and space for teens to explore digital media. Both these structured and unstructured activities relied on the existence of resources.

Learning and Production through Structured and Unstructured Interest-Driven Activities

In its first year, staff organized more formal activities (e.g., workshops and competitions) that included performances, author visits, and projects. With students being out of school, program leaders and staff used summer vacation as an opportunity to introduce new structured activities. (See Appendix C for a full list of structured activities during the 2009–10 year.)

While structured activities provided a formal entry point to learning, the space also allowed for a number of unstructured activities, particularly for teens who were hanging out or messing around. Through these unstructured activities, teens produced videos, songs, and poems. Teens sometimes created these projects independently, but they also accessed staff to support the development and creation of these projects. The range of activities provided youth with choices and opportunities that, when identified, matched their personal interests.

Having the Right Resources to Support Creative Production

A key to motivating youth to take part in these structured and unstructured activities was the availability of resources. In its first year, YOUmedia provided youth with a range of tangible resources, such as books, computers, cameras, creation software, and a recording studio. In addition, teens could access the knowledge
and guidance provided by mentors, librarians, and peers. Lastly, the physical space of YOUmedia served as a resource. One teen describes feeling impressed by a first encounter with YOUmedia’s expansive space:

“The first time I came in, I was really surprised. It’s a really large space for a library...This is a large space for just teens. And then, looking around as someone who uses technology, I was [like] ‘Wow, this is some cool stuff here.’ It’s really vibrant in here...It just looked like a really cool place.”

—Youth #11

While access to traditional and digital media resources was an explicit component of YOUmedia and an attraction for some teens, there were limitations to the type of resources available to the space. For instance, program leaders made the decision to use web-based programs (e.g., Google Docs and the Aviary suite of production tools) over more popular licensed software. Such programs are often free or less expensive than software with exclusivity rights. These programs not only have reduced costs but also eliminate storage concerns since documents are stored online and do not require regular updates that installed software requires. However, limiting use to these software programs also meant that youth did not have access to key resources—software that was commonly used for particular types of creation and production.

Youth-Created Digital Media Products
Through engagement with a range of traditional and digital resources, interested teens learned how to use new technologies to create original digital media artifacts. This process of creation supported further development of digital-specific skills and problem-solving skills as individuals encountered and overcame production-related barriers—explicit intended outcomes for YOUmedia developers.22 Many products were the result of collaborative work, and improvements were made through iterative processes as teens received critiques from each other and revised their artifacts to reflect this feedback.

Like other artistic or communicative products, these artifacts provided an outlet for youth to express ideas, experiences, and viewpoints to entertain, inform, and persuade others. Examples of artifacts include podcasts of game reviews, poetry, original songs inspired by contemporary literature, how-to videos using sign language, and “webisodes” exploring a range of topics relevant to teens. (For examples of past products, visit YOUmedia’s Featured Media site at http://youmediachicago.org/featured_contents.) In the quotes below, students reflect on their creations, showing how YOUmedia gave them opportunities for collaboration and creativity:

[In a workshop focused on women and media]: “We wrote a story about an issue in society or in our lives personally. We turned that into a movie. But it’s not just like reporting. It’s more like taking pictures and putting them together in like, stop motion...It’s like a short film.”

—Youth #22

“A project I did with [another teen]. He’s a rapper...I co-engineered this particular project, and I also sang on it...It was an inspirational song. And he rapped on it and I sang the chorus. And it was just a wonderful experience. Like, just me having the flexibility and freedom to be able to write my verse and sing my chorus. It really meant something to me. And being able to engineer it and make it sound wonderful.”

—Youth #12
Unexpected Pieces: What Made YOUmedia Work?

Staff responsiveness to teen interests, along with youth-staff and peer-to-peer relationships, acted as the catalysts to deepen youth engagement.

The original theory of action (See Figure 1) highlighted the need for interest-driven interactions with mentors and peers that would lead to creative production. We found, however, that two aspects of YOUmedia were more nuanced than originally envisioned—relationships and responsiveness.

It was initially thought that just "being in the space" would prompt curiosity to motivate participation and seek out resources, including staff expertise, to learn and create. But, we found, and staff confirmed, that teens did not automatically link personal interests with the traditional and digital resources YOUmedia offered. Developing relationships, therefore, was a necessary component to understanding youth needs: It allowed staff to learn about teen interests and connect those interests with existing activities. Given the relationships that formed, staff were also able to be appropriately responsive to the interests and needs of the teens in the space. This responsiveness afforded staff with the ability to strategically create opportunities that aligned with the ways in which youth were interacting with YOUmedia.

The process of building relationships and an openness to being responsive enabled the staff to redesign learning opportunities around youth interests. This section describes the ways in which staff deliberately thought about developing relationships with participating teens and how flexible and responsive they were to ever-changing conditions, particularly as different youths entered into YOUmedia with different needs.

Building Relationships

As youth were participating in activities that were most often unstructured "hanging out" activities, staff intentionally developed relationships by taking an interest in teen hobbies. Staff also encouraged learning by making relevant suggestions about activities to teens. More experienced or interest-driven youth also did the same. These developing relationships seemed to further encourage participation, learning, creative thinking, and original digital production.

Youth-Staff Relationships

The initial vision of YOUmedia called for interactions between youth and mentors, but researchers observed a type of intentional relationship-building that moved beyond simple support. Staff worked to get to know each teen individually and to design learning opportunities that fit with his or her specific needs. These relationships also began to create a sense of a community at YOUmedia, even though different teens might appear during different days of the week. Beyond just teaching youth through structured and unstructured activities, staff carefully and successfully identified common interests that could be leveraged with teens to forge deeper personal relationships. Once staff found those connection points, teens perceived the adults as "cool" and appreciated the expertise each staff member had to offer. In the following quotes, teens illustrate from their perspectives how they viewed staff and the kinds of relationships that formed.

INTERVIEWER: What do you like best about YOUmedia?

YOUTH #4: The staff.

"We [a staff member and I] have this inside joke now that only me, him, and [another staff member] know. One day those kids were playing a game. They were in the middle of it, and they'd been going—doing this for like five minutes...They were like 'We're almost there. We're almost there.' He was like, 'Hey guys, there's five minutes left [until we close],' And he pressed the button and it went off...like doooossh! Now, every time we see each other, it's just like—we just go into it for no reason—just like, 'Hey guys there's five minutes left. You don't have to—doooossh.' It's hilarious."

—Youth #2

"I've seen the librarians actually sitting down with [teens]—and really helping the students....I've seen the mentors actually, you know, teaching—teaching as a teacher in an actual school building should do. So, it's a space for teens to really just get help or just get relief. Come in and get reprieve."

—Youth #12
Staff attention to teen interests and activities ultimately supported participation and production, including activities youth were involved in outside the space:

"There’s a young lady who came in with an outside event and was signed up to the social network and then I would see her posting different things—different drawings, photographs, whatever. And just after commenting for awhile, I was like, ‘Hey, you know, I teach this design workshop. You should come out and check it out.’ And she did."

—Staff member

"I’m amazed how much they follow-up on my recommendations. Especially games. I love dorky, weird adventure games that most mainstream gamers do not play. But they’ve actually gone home and played the games I recommend."

—Staff member

Peer-to-Peer Relationships

In addition to these developing relationships between youth and staff, there were two types of peer-to-peer relationships at YOUmedia: existing friendships that influenced awareness of and engagement with YOUmedia and new peer relationships forged through YOUmedia participation. Friends expanded the experiences of other teens by motivating exploration and production. At times, teens would encourage other friends to join a workshop they were attending or suggest YOUmedia as a space to further develop their already-existing interests.

"My friend pulled me in [to a workshop] and was all like, ‘You should be here... I was just there to check it out.’ I visited the tech portion of it [the workshop]—not really the gaming but researching. And, you know, that’s when I started playing a little bit more games."

—Youth #22

Alternatively, sometimes teens chose to not reveal YOUmedia to others in their peer networks. Several teens described how they restricted conversations about YOUmedia to reduce disruption in the space.

"[I have purposely not told] the people in my neighborhood that are gang-affiliated [about YOUmedia]. Because I know that the mentors here—they don’t want to have any stir. The security officers—they don’t want to have trouble here...I don’t wanna be the cause of the trouble for them being here and stirring up trouble."

—Youth #20

Teens also forged new relationships, which expanded their social networks and motivated further exploration and learning. Observations and interviews contain instances of collaboration and critique in which new peer relationships supported production knowledge and skills, moving youth from being consumers of digital media to being creators with digital media. One teen describes how an interaction with a teen he did not know led to the creation of a new song:

"Yesterday I came in. I wasn’t really feeling a song coming out of my heart. I wasn’t feeling a beat coming out of my hands...I went out and I started looking around. And it just so happened that there was a young lady sitting at the piano outside the studio, playing. And it seemed that she was singing along. I approached her and I asked her if she wanted to come into the studio. And she said yes. And so I asked her what does she do? She said she sings and she just got to know her.... She told me that she had a song that she really wanted to get out. And so, what I did with her is, we engineered a beat from scratch. We made her song go from nothingness—just in her head—into a full-fledged production. She recorded that song and took it home and played it for her friends."

—Youth #12

Responsive Design and Teaching

Because of the initial relationships that they developed with teens in the first few months, mentors and librarians quickly realized the need to be even more responsive to YOUmedia participants. With the ever-changing dynamic of who visited the space, the librarians and mentors were well-aware that the environment would never be static. Their answer was to respond to those changes flexibly, while continuing to maintain a safe and productive culture of learning and expression.

One example of this flexibility concerned the structured workshops, which were intended to provide an ongoing opportunity for teens to explore their interests while also building skills and knowledge. However, about three months after YOUmedia's inception, staff noticed that teens were reluctant to attend workshops.
"[We would] go out and kind of try to recruit an audience for that [the workshop] by just walking around making the announcement. 'Hey, this workshop is about to start. And this workshop is about to start.' They [the teens] didn't care."

—Staff member

Because youth saw them as "cool" collaborators, mentors were able to approach teens and inquire about the kinds of activities that would interest them the most. In response to teens' replies, staff began to intentionally build workshops and other structured activities around teen interests. Staff also reflected on their experiences with the group, realizing that they would need to move away from an adult-structured model of teaching to one that was more interactive and amenable to teen interests. One staff member described her change in workshop design after contemplating what would benefit the teens the most:

"They didn't want to write the [game] review because it felt like homework. So, I thought: how do I make this easier? Because the whole idea behind the workshop was that if they think critically about what they're playing, then we kind of take the game playing experience to another level. They start to understand games, think critically about them, break them down, and they'll be better game players. And it will help them if they move into game design, because they'll know the elements of the game. So in January I decided to just throw out the blog part of it and switch to podcast. They're really comfortable talking about games, not necessarily writing at this point, so I decided to do the podcast as a way to make it easier for them to have that conversation and think critically about games."

—Staff member

Instead of running workshops that provided direct skill instruction that resulted in projects, staff began to offer workshops in which teens could create, design, build, and invent through projects. Much like other forms of project-based learning, staff observed teens throughout the creative process to find moments when they could teach new skills and production processes. Teens typically asked questions during the production process and staff capitalized on these opportunities to demonstrate techniques, which created a context of collaborative learning rather than more formal demonstrations.

With the large number of teens spending time hanging out and messing around, there were also ample opportunities for informal learning to take place. Because of the relationships that staff developed with teens and the flexible way they approached teaching and learning, they began to actively identify unplanned opportunities for development and support. In this way, staff seized upon learning moments that arose as teens were messing around with various digital media or hanging out with friends. Below is an example of a staff member taking advantage of a non-structured activity to encourage further participation:

"The first day I came here I was kinda just like pressing the [piano] keys and stuff—just playing around. But then like, [a staff member] showed me this song. It was called "Requiem for a Dream..." I played the guitar and the way I play is by looking at other people play. And so I play by ear, too, so just hearing and seeing. It's just how I learn. So I went on the Internet and watched someone while they played it. And that's really how I picked up on that."

—Youth #2
Outcome: Dynamic Learning Environment

Building from its original theory of action, YOUMedia evolved into a space that placed youth in a cycle of learning that was motivated by access to staff, other teens, and digital media.

The combination of relationship-building and staff responsiveness motivated and sustained involvement and production at YOUMedia, creating a dynamic learning environment for participating teens. We have shown that staff were intentional about building relationships with and among teens with a focus on their interests. We also outlined the ways in which staff used teen interests and preferences to design and re-design YOUMedia’s learning opportunities. This flexible and responsive stance that staff assumed, observable not only in the structured activities but also in unstructured activities and rules, encouraged and provided youth with the opportunity to take ownership of their digital media products. We find evidence that this kind of engagement encouraged further participation. Concretely, we found that youth were encouraged to participate in new activities, collaborate with others, mess around and geek out with more advanced production software, and expand their social networks. We argue that the growth that occurred at YOUMedia was the result of teen embeddedness in a cyclical process of learning that was motivated by access to staff, other teens, and digital media and its tools. It is important to note that not all teens experienced YOUMedia in the same way. Many teens we observed and interviewed were content with hanging out, either with the media or with their friends. One of the limitations of this Year 1 study is that data on individual student development over time were not collected. Yet, observations and interviews with program members, including teens, provide evidence of the growth and development of teens who engaged in the previously described cycle of learning.

For teens who collaborated with others, this engagement spurred the development of additional interests and learning. Such learning-through-collaboration was consistent with some of the diffuse learning goals articulated by project leaders. The process of collaboration helped teens learn how to be part of a community, while it simultaneously supported individual growth as teens become educated consumers of each other’s work.

"The fact that they're willing to engage in projects here that engage them in their own community is a success. The fact that they're willing to collaborate with others on everything as simple as playing a chess game to creating a very, very interesting and complicated video with music...that to me is a success."

—CPL Leadership

Another articulated goal was to move teens from hanging out with digital media and/or their friends to a more engaged form of activity. By moving teens along a trajectory towards messing around or geeking out with digital media, staff and leadership hoped that teens would become creators and producers. Indeed, staff did see this movement from hanging out to messing around.

"We got the kids who were only hanging out to participate in workshops. And they became our top group of participating students. We learned how to take what was the biggest distraction, which were video games, and turn it into our biggest avenue for students participating in other stuff."

—Staff member

As staff worked to engage teens in collaboration and more serious uses of digital media, they also aimed to teach interested teens digital media production skills. These skills would then allow for further engagement as teens translated these skills into independent production through which teens could creatively express their own feelings about, experiences with, and perceptions of the world. One youth describes how, through participation in YOUMedia, his production skills improved—thus enabling growth of his own self-expression.
“First, I’ve learned how to work GarageBand in and out. And then I learned some...tricks and techniques of recording, like, some of the more intricate steps that you need to really get a good sound out of it and get good professional sound out of it...I’ve recorded enough to make a CD really...You can actually tell the difference between the first music [I created]. I’ve developed myself—not only my skills with the technology—but I’ve developed my vocal skills also [by] being in here so much and recording so much.”

—Informal interview with teen, 2-27-10

Furthermore, YOUmedia leadership and staff observed teens experimenting and expanding their interests and expertise as they participated in YOUmedia activities. YOUmedia leaders, staff, and teens started to connect this new set of skills with more traditional academic outcomes and trajectories.

“This kid likes to blog and [a staff member] said, ‘Well why don’t you start blogging about some of these games that we have?’...He moved from Rock Band to blogging, and then [the staff member] was really critiquing his blogs and helping him with his writing skills. We’ve seen his writing skills really increase.”

—CPL Leadership

“Last week...I was really busy working with getting ready for college. I wouldn’t have been getting ready for this college opportunity if it had not been for YOUmedia really...I’m going to the Art Institute for audio production. And I was not thinking about audio production eight months ago.”

—Youth #12

As depicted in the observed model (see Figure 2), adults in the space built and supported the development of relationships, which in turn enabled adults to be more responsive to teen interests. These efforts created a dynamic learning environment. Within this environment, participating youth learned skills, how to work with others, and how to develop their own sense of self-expression.

Challenges in Year 1

As in all new organizations, YOUmedia faced challenges in its first year including defining staff roles, encouraging in-space and online participation, and supporting youth development with the “right” resources.

No new venture is absent of challenges. While many struggles at YOUmedia were difficult to observe outright, staff and teens reflected on aspects of YOUmedia that could be improved or were difficult to overcome. These challenges included internal organizational communication about staff roles, how to support a large audience of teens with sustained engagement over time, how to support more integrated use of the online space, and the availability and maintenance of resources.

Ever-Changing Roles of Staff

The responsive model that developed over time proved to be a challenge for part-time staff to execute. Although building relationships was a key component of YOUmedia’s success with teens, part-time staff expressed feeling challenged in translating their interests, skills, and knowledge into a format that overlapped with those of teens. Since these staff members were in the space less often than full-time staff—one to three days a week—they had fewer opportunities to observe and meet with teens to identify interests and create more responsive approaches. One staff member expressed this mismatch below:

“I guess I was doing a lot of things that people weren’t interested in, to be honest. Or at least it didn’t make sense...I never was able to really convey [my vision].”

—Staff member

Another important factor in YOUmedia’s success was the importance of having staff members who could be flexible. In fact, for one staff member, the uncertainty of ever-changing roles was closely connected to YOUmedia’s organic nature:

“I think there are some things that will become routine. There are some...elements of the program that will always be new because we’re gonna get a new group of students every year. And having new kids each year is gonna present its own, fresh set of challenges and opportunities to do cool stuff.”

—Staff member
However, as YOUmedia became more of a dynamic teaching and learning space, part-time staff expressed confusion about changing roles and responsibilities that led to difficulties in planning and supporting teens:

"Somehow, the expectations [for my role] have changed, but it’s not clear what they are. At least that’s how I feel. I don’t know what that means."

—Staff member

Supporting Sustained Use of YOUmedia

Staff overcame the initial workshop attendance problems with a more responsive learning design to recruit teens. However, as the year progressed, a related problem—consistent attendance—emerged. The lack of steady attendance within a workshop or project further inhibited learning and production.

"Attendance is a big one [challenge]—from just getting them to show up to [retention]—not retention in the sense that they leave, but retention in the sense that there was a kid who was really involved and then he got a girlfriend. And then...the only day (he) can hang out with [his] girlfriend is the same day as the workshop, so (he) hangs out with [his] girlfriend."

—Staff member

As a voluntary program, YOUmedia must compete with other responsibilities and interests that compete for a teen’s time and attention.

INTERVIEWER: Is there anything that keeps you from visiting YOUmedia more often?
YOUTH #6: School and tiredness. And I just finished my ACT, so I was working up towards that. And then after—I was just so burnt out. Like, oh my God, like, going home and going to sleep.

Staff found themselves balancing their roles as collaborators with that of managers to help more active teens juggle other commitments and involvement with YOUmedia. This included awareness of youth who were visiting YOUmedia when they should have been in school and monitoring students to ensure they completed homework.

“The other challenge is making sure that the students who do start participating are still balancing their school work. We will see dips in attendance around times the grades come out... And then for some we do have to remind them to have homework time before they start playing a video game, before they go to the workshop... We just do that check-in with them.”

—Staff member

Encouraging Use of the Online Space

YOUmedia created its online social space to extend opportunities for teens to interact with peers and staff beyond the confines of the library’s physical location and operating schedule. According to program designers, the YOUmedia social networking site was intended to motivate and improve production with its incentive and feedback system.

Given the number of YOUmedia registrants (see Figure 3), our informal observations of the online space revealed that there was relatively low use of the site. While some teens were motivated to post their work to earn Remix dollars—an incentive that was intended to motivate learning through improvements made in response to others’ comments—only a small number of teens reported actually commenting on the work of their peers. Other teens avoided the website altogether, sometimes admitting that they prefer to post their work on Facebook. Staff also acknowledged their own limited use of the online space, even though it was their responsibility to encourage use of the site.
INTERVIEWER: And have you visited the website?
YOUTH #8: No... Usually when I’m on the computer, I usually only go on to do research, Yahoo, and Facebook. And then when I come [to the physical space], I just come here.

“They’re [the teens] not using the [YOUmedia] website. Getting them to use the website has been difficult....I’m finding out a lot of them don’t wanna use it. They don’t wanna navigate through it.”
—Staff member

“In fact, not all staff used the iRemix site as intended. One person focused more on encouraging participation when in the physical library location of YOUmedia than through the online site:

“I’m more hands-off on the social network. They post their work, I give comments. It’s not me. I don’t find myself telling them, ‘Hey you should post this next.’ It’s sort of more side-to-side conversation on the social network, where we’re just talking about interests or whatever, and I’m just sort of looking at what they post, you know. I’m sure that’ll evolve to me suggesting other things. But in the library branch, it do a little more encouraging.”
—Staff member

Resource Availability and Maintenance
As discussed earlier in the report, decisions were made around which resources to provide in the space that affected how teens interacted with the space. For example, choosing free, web-based programs over more expensive (and perhaps more preferred) licensed software led to teen frustration regarding the limited software options. In response to this dissatisfaction, staff recognized how particular operational decisions might impact their ability to attract and retain youth of particular skill levels and interests.

“I’ve seen kids leave. Like a group of girls this week [said], ‘They don’t have [Microsoft] Word; we need to go.'”
—Staff member

“I bring it [Microsoft Office] up every once in a while [with leadership] to try to push it. And, I think we actually have a better argument now because of [the new literary magazine workshop] and having more writing happening in the space.”
—Staff member

“It’s hard to teach higher-level practices [with our resources]. We want things that are open source, that are available [but] the open source tools aren’t designed for advancement. They’re designed for entry-level projects. So, if you have students who are interested it’s hard to hook them, because we don’t have anything that we can teach them that they don’t already know how to do.”
—Staff member

Staff also encountered challenges in teaching the basics of production because broken equipment hindered this process. While gaming console equipment and cameras were susceptible to damage, audio production equipment was most often in need of repair. In January, YOUmedia staff began to require teens to complete a certification process before they could use the music production equipment without the guidance of a staff member, in the hopes this would stem the tide of damage. But, this too had limitations since even certified teens were still learning and messing around with equipment. Items such as needles and microphones were broken and needed either repair or replacement.

“We’re going to allow kids to mess around with stuff that costs $2,500 or needles that cost $65 each. And, there’s only so much I can do in the certification process...but things happen. I mean, professionals break their needles.”
—Staff member

Purchasing new software and repairing hardware required financial resources. As one staff member explained, the issue of purchases and repairs was complicated by the fact that “we [YOUmedia] don’t qualify for any kind of discount because libraries aren’t educational institutions.”
Conclusion

Through participation, production, and performance, YOUmedia presents opportunities for youth to engage in a cycle of learning. Future work will study the links between these forms of engagement and youth development.

In this snapshot of YOUmedia's first year, we present key elements of the program and describe its early successes and challenges. We highlight its design as a space that accommodates the dominant forms of youth participation with digital media—hanging out, messing around, and seeking out—and the ways in which program leaders envisioned a public, social space to intentionally support various learning pathways for teens. Lastly, program designers imagined the YOUmedia staff, with the combined expertise of CPL staff and DYN mentors, as a critical source of knowledge and other resources that would spark curiosity, build interest, and motivate creation.

Our report also addresses the observed learning processes, which help to clarify the mechanisms operating in the original theory of action. In particular, we draw attention to the role of relationships in motivating youth engagement and how staff responded to teen interests and learning preferences to design activities. In the initial theory of action, structured activities, like workshops, provided standing opportunities for youth to increase skills and knowledge as they tinkered with digital tools and built digital media products using YOUmedia resources. Yet, as one staff member noted, "They [the teens] didn't care." Mentors and librarians created a more intentional model for youth engagement by connecting with the youth both socially and by using their expert knowledge around media. Gaining a new perspective through these relationships, effective staff members adapted the design of the space, the resources that were made available, and their teaching methods to meet the needs of the teens.

In examining the enacted model, the evidence suggests that a new sense of community is taking shape at YOUmedia. YOUmedia is distinct in the way it attracts and engages teens and attempts to "meet youth where they are" in terms of interests and skills. It embraces the need teens have to socialize and express themselves. Physical and online spaces, offerings of traditional and new media resources, mentor-led workshops and unstructured activities, and staff roles have all been designed around the motivations and interests of today's increasingly tech-savvy and social-networked teens. Youth are coming to know the space as one that is not like school, yet has personally meaningful ways of learning new skills and gaining new experiences (i.e., through participation, production, and performance activities).

In its implementation, YOUmedia did face challenges balancing a youth-driven approach with an adult agenda for learning. We discuss how YOUmedia staff had to continuously develop ways to organize activities and assemble resources in order to help youth along a path of learning. Staff also had to create and maintain an exciting, youth-centered community in the physical space and online. As other YOUmedia sites emerge across the country, they too will need to grapple with similar challenges. This report foretells some of the decisions that leadership will need to make as these new locations open their doors.

This report and the work conducted by CCSR during YOUmedia's first year of implementation provide an introductory overview for our upcoming research. As we continue to study YOUmedia, we expect to learn more about how this community evolves and whether youth involvement in YOUmedia has impacts on teens' learning and development, both inside and outside of YOUmedia. To understand this, we will focus on understanding the larger Chicago context around teen digital media usage. In what ways are teens across the city of Chicago using digital media? Are there opportunities for expression through digital media in schools? Do schools see the use of technology and digital media as important for student learning and development? In the upcoming years, we will use the data we collect—both inside and outside of YOUmedia, obtained through a variety of methods such as observations, surveys, and case studies—to shed light on the pathways through which engagement in YOUmedia may be linked to a variety of learning outcomes, and the extent to which similar activities may be occurring in youth's traditional learning environments: schools.
The cross-institutional partnership that made YOUmedia possible reflects a commitment to harness the affordance of digital media technologies and formats to better support the way youth socialize, learn, and participate in society. Far more than just an effort to provide youth with access to technology, this endeavor is significant in its attempt to construct a way towards deep and sustained learning that is grounded in informal social interaction with peers and adult mentors. As YOUmedia takes shape beyond its first year, we expect to gain a better understanding about how youth learn and develop in this new kind of space. As digital media technologies become increasingly interwoven into the fabric of the daily lives of youth, the need to understand learning in an environment like YOUmedia becomes increasingly essential.

Appendix A:
Creation of Partnerships

YOUmedia is part of the Digital Media and Learning Initiative, which was launched by the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation. Designed to provide out-of-school opportunities for learning and growth, the creation of YOUmedia involved three elements:

- **STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS** Partners who worked together to develop the idea into a vision and a design.
- **TRUSTED PARTNERS** The collaborative design and financing of the YOUmedia space entailed partnerships between organizations that trusted each other.
- **COMMITMENT TO INNOVATION** The design process challenged the prevailing ideas of the participating organizations as they endeavored to establish something new.

With funding from the MacArthur Foundation Digital Media and Learning (DML) Initiative, YOUmedia intentionally combines the resources of the Chicago Public Library (CPL), which is a public institution committed to lifelong learning, and the Digital Youth Network (DYN), which is a digital media literacy program. Through a complex blend of each organization's knowledge and practices, YOUmedia provides a range of learning opportunities for youth.

Before a full vision existed, the MacArthur Foundation gauged the interest of the Chicago Public Library regarding the possibility of creating a library space downtown around the use of various forms of media—digital and traditional. Having had previous desires for a "teen space" in the library, CPL responded enthusiastically. Thus began the vision for an engaging digital media space for teens in the downtown location of CPL. Once CPL was on board, MacArthur took several strategic steps to guide the development of the remaining partnerships.

The MacArthur Foundation was flexible around identifying the right partners for a new vision, resulting in partnerships that were mutually beneficial as they built on existing research as a framework.
YOUmedia Foundation

The MacArthur Foundation sifted through potential partners for CPL. After deciding not to pursue other partners, the foundation invited DYN to join this project because it focused on youth engagement and digital media literacy. At the same time, members of DYN leadership were becoming increasingly interested in other applications of their DYN model, and the YOUmedia concept would allow them to reach a wider audience. The result of these combined interests, along with a serendipitous availability of physical space at the Harold Washington Library Center, was the formation of a partnership that was beneficial to all stakeholders.

Mutually Beneficial Partnership

While libraries possess a vast number of resources to support lifelong learning, digital media learning constitutes a foray into new terrain for CPL. DYN, however, offered a set of solutions for working with youth and digital media that broadened CPL’s vision of what a library could be:

"From the library’s perspective we had not been engaging teens in a real youth centered way....I don’t think we’re necessarily reaching kids where they live, which is online, you know. So, what we were doing was really quality work, but I think we just weren’t reaching our potential in being relevant to teens. And that’s I think what Digital Youth Network has given us. They’ve also given us a window and access to technology that we just didn’t have before. Sort of bringing the institution...in a different direction that’s informing our work in other ways. What we want to make available to people is what their library experience could become. [It] could be much more about making and doing and participatory and interest-driven learning, and not just necessarily a place where people come and consume information."

—CPL Leadership

The partnership also offered opportunities for DYN. A principal attraction to YOUmedia was that it provided an opportunity for DYN members to work through a more robust version of their existing model in a space not directly linked to schools.

"It also gave us a challenge to try to continue on and try to innovate on [our] model....Can we take a similar approach, similar curriculum, similar activities, similar model and say not just do it in after-school space within a school? That goes back to the original charge of trying to create a framework that can be applicable by others in different contexts to do this type of work."

—DYN Leadership

Research-Based Framework

In addition to DYN’s research-based approach to teaching digital media literacy, research by Mimi Ito et al. was also integral to the design of YOUmedia. This research provided a framework to meld the approaches of CPL, which provides an informal setting, with DYN’s more structured learning environment.

"...I know that a lot of other library spaces have teen spaces. One of my concerns was (that) I just didn’t want it to be a place where there was gaming in the form of Wii that would bring teens in for a while, but wouldn’t sustain [participation and engagement]...But MacArthur also brought to us the wonderful research [Ito et al.]. When we heard that and read about it, we thought that this really fit perfectly with our mission, as well as our idea of what we thought the teen space should be."

—CPL Leadership

Building on Prior Relationships

In the creation of the YOUmedia partnership, prior relationships provided a foundation of trust that supported this new endeavor. The belief in their joint vision grew as they saw evidence of that vision taking shape.

MacArthur senior leadership personnel noted that as they established partnerships, they drew on their existing relationships to move forward with the design and implementation of YOUmedia. For example, a senior leadership member of the MacArthur Foundation and a CPL leadership member had worked together in city government.

"They have a long working relationship, and a trusting relationship and I think whenever you start partnering or ask the commissioner of libraries of a large urban district to rethink the future of the library, you do that out of a trusting relationship, you don’t do that out of the blue."

—MacArthur Leadership
Prior to the opening of YOUmedia, CPL and DYN engaged in a pilot period during which the organizations worked together on one of CPL’s existing programs, “One Book, One Chicago.” The success of this venture bolstered faith that the partnership would be productive for the organizations as well as for teens. The CPL Commissioner explained that even without the dedicated physical space of YOUmedia, the partners saw teens interacting with books in new ways, which increased their trust of DYN and in the YOUmedia model:

“And so [teens] created, and this was without the physical space that you saw. They created spoken word pieces. They created digital pieces. They created movies. They created a beautiful mural. So, we knew that this was a winner—to combine our world with the world of DYN—because we were able to prove it worked even without the physical space, which of course encourages even more collaboration.”

—CPL Leadership

Commitment to Innovation

While MacArthur, CPL, and DYN anchored the collaborative effort around YOUmedia, several other individuals and organizations were critical to its development. The result was a strategic partnership that combined knowledges of public spaces, teen engagement, and design to create an innovative space.

As this innovative vision began to take shape, all partners involved were willing to depart from existing organizational paradigms and redefine their prior boundaries.

Members of CPL leadership had to examine several previously unquestioned policies about how patrons use the library. One such policy, regarding the consumption of food in the library, illustrates the careful act of persuasion that took place between CPL and designers. New rules ultimately permitted teens to eat in specified sections of YOUmedia.

“...[A CPL staff member] would say, ‘Well there’s no food in the library’...One of the designers from Carnegie Mellon would say, ‘Really, there’s no food in the library?’ Okay, so let’s just imagine this...Kids have been in school all day, and they’re going to come straight here. They’re not going home, right?...And then what are they going to do? Do you think they’re going to be hungry?’ And she’d [the member of CPL]...say, ‘Well...yeah, they’re going to be hungry...and, well, they’re going to leave. Yeah, they’re going to leave!’ And [then] she’d say, ‘Well, then do you think, if they leave the first time, they’ll ever come back?’ And she’d say, ‘Well, probably not, unless the space is amazing.’ And then she’d pull out her BlackBerry and she’d email [her supervisor]. And she’d say, ‘The kids really need to eat in the space.’”

—MacArthur Leadership

In addition to eating and drinking in the library, partners also reimagined a number of other permissible activities. These included the volume at which people were allowed to talk and listen to audio, what belongings had to be stored in lockers, and even how to place books and other printed text throughout the space in ways that would maintain an atmosphere that would be inviting to teens.

These negotiations also pushed DYN to reframe their traditional ideas of a digital media space and the role of adults in the space. In DYN’s after-school model, students were not allowed to just hang out in the space; they were there to participate in a session or class in which an adult worked with them around a set of objectives. In libraries, however, patrons were free to simply hang out.

Accustomed to these more formal expectations of learning and the practices necessary to support those expectations, DYN mentors, along with CPL staff, were now charged with a different role:

“The mentor’s role now is to get to know kids and understand who they are and to try to connect them and link them to opportunities....They spend less time teaching formal workshops than they do [working] one-on-one and connecting students to programming that’s done by others.”

—DYN Leadership
Appendix B: Research Methods

The project goals for this Year 1 implementation study were distinctly qualitative. The creation of YOUmedia involved a partnership among previously independent organizations with different approaches to youth engagement, and a physical design that simultaneously supported leisure and work-oriented activities in the same open-air space. While the development of YOUmedia was based on research, the program leaders’ theory of action had yet to be articulated and tested. Program leaders had multiple ideas about the potential effect YOUmedia would have on teens, but these goals had not yet coalesced into a shared set of expected outcomes. One goal of this implementation study is to understand in what ways, if any, YOUmedia supports learning—this is the question that drove our data collection in Year 1.

Observations
Data collection during this first year of studying YOUmedia included observations and interviews collected between January 2010 and August 2010. Following initial observations in the fall of 2009, a research team conducted two-hour observations of YOUmedia for four to five days a week between 3 pm and 8 pm. Although YOUmedia opens at 1 pm Monday through Friday, we learned through our early observations and conversations with staff that teens typically did not arrive until after the end of school. Teens started to leave around 7 pm, even though YOUmedia closes at 9 pm. Also thanks to these initial observations and interviews, we learned that teen attendance was typically lowest on Fridays and Sundays, so we did not observe on these days.

These observations were conducted by one of three trained and experienced qualitative researchers who have backgrounds in sociology and anthropology. These individuals completed the Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI) course for research involving human subjects. They met once a month with other members of the research team to discuss findings and adjust data collection processes.

Researchers observed formal and informal production activities and conducted informal interviews with staff and teens. During workshops and other structured activities, researchers were non-participant observers who documented events as they unfolded. This documentation involved active note taking and audio recordings. Researchers became participant observers for unstructured activities. On these occasions, researchers interacted with teens to discover what teens were doing, their motivations, and any successes or challenges they experienced with producing or consuming media. Informal interviews provided information about events we did not observe. These informal interviews also helped inform the formal interviews that we conducted. Over the course of these eight months, we collected more than 130 hours of observation on 65 occasions.

Interviews
Teens
We conducted anonymous interviews with 20 youth in the physical YOUmedia space. Interviews sought to collect information related to recruitment, the interest of teens in digital media and libraries, and their participation and production experiences in the space.

Staff
All YOUmedia mentors and librarians were interviewed during the first year, including those who no longer work at YOUmedia. We interviewed a total of 15 staff members, which includes members of the security personnel. The interviews asked staff about their background experience and training for working in the space, how they designed formal activities, their practice of working with teens, their anticipated and observed outcomes for working with teens, and the individual and organizational challenges from this first year.

Leadership
Leadership interviews were conducted towards the end of data collection in Year 1. They included leadership members of the MacArthur Foundation, the Chicago Public Library, and the Digital Youth Network. These interviews probed the history, development, and design of YOUmedia, along with their goals for participation and reflections on teen outcomes.
These interviews were conducted by the researchers who conducted the observations, along with CCSR senior research staff. All interviewers were trained and experienced.

Coding and Data Analysis
Coding was conducted on all observation field notes and transcribed interviews.

Field Notes Coding
Observers kept detailed field notes from each visit. After being transcribed, field notes were coded using Atlas TI. Coding schemes were initially created based on initial observation memos and on the goals articulated by leadership. Three individuals were assigned different coding categories. After each batch of 15 field notes was coded, they produced a summary report and drafted a memo. These memos were reviewed in monthly meetings to determine patterns and themes in how the codes were applied, which led to further refinement of the coding scheme.

Interview Coding
A similar process took place around coding the leadership, staff, and teen interviews, excluding the creation of periodic summary memos. Codes were established to reflect the questions that were asked in the interview protocol. As with field notes, coders ran reports and identified patterns and themes in the data.

Appendix C:
Structured Activities at YOUmedia

In its first year, YOUmedia hosted a number of weekly and monthly workshops that offered learning opportunities reflecting teen interests in a range of media. In many workshops, activities blended the use of traditional and digital media resources. Much of this programming extended or built on existing opportunities offered through the cornerstone organizations.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Change Society</td>
<td>The Change Society is about youth-created media, social networking, and connection (internal and external). By reaching out to the larger community, the Change Society seeks to have community residents, businesses, schools, and libraries working together to organize for improved conditions and opportunities for young people, the causes they wish to support, and the problems they seek to change in society. YOUmedia description of project groups website, <a href="http://youmediachicago.org/3-activities/pages/35-project-groups">http://youmediachicago.org/3-activities/pages/35-project-groups</a>, accessed Tuesday, December 21, 2010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Game Changers</td>
<td>Game Changers is a game design workshop and competition to create a level of Little Big Planet. YOUmedia online calendar of events, accessed Monday, April 12, 2010</td>
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<tr>
<td>Digital Symphony</td>
<td>Explore digital production through live collaboration with artist Sound Conductor: NathanB. Create digital music, build tools, and more to construct unique and amazing sound experiences in public spaces. All you need to do is bring your talent and your creativity. YOUmedia May 2010 Calendar of Events</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Girl-illa</td>
<td>Girl-illa media is an opportunity for young women to experience Media Arts and Digital Technology within an active project environment that supports their development as authentic, self-defined women and future leaders in the digital realm. Project focus includes Photography, Creative Writing, Gaming, Design, Film-Making, and Community Outreach. YOUmedia May 2010 Calendar of Events</td>
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<tr>
<td>Program</td>
<td>Description</td>
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<tr>
<td>iRemix Spoken Word</td>
<td>Learn how to host, promote your own podcasts, and be part of the iRemix Radio team @ YOUmedia. Writers, Speakers, Bloggers, Debaters, Musicians, Photographers are all welcome to join in this teen radio project. Get a chance to record live from YOUmedia and get access to record and train at Vocalo Radio Station's home at Navy Pier. YOUmedia May Calendar of Events Learn the art of reading, writing, critiquing, and performing poetry. Discover poetry as a performance art from the page to the stage. Learn how to use digital tools to produce your work online. Create your own CD, online publication, posters, and more. Updated October 2010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library of Games</td>
<td>Like video games? Join the Library of Games (L.O.G.) video game journalism group. L.O.G. records a podcast every Monday at 3 pm and maintains the L.O.G. blog at <a href="http://www.youmediagames.blogspot.com">www.youmediagames.blogspot.com</a>. Bring your love of video games to YOUmedia. YOUmedia May 2010 Calendar of Events Library of Games (LoG) is YOUmedia's very own video game podcast and blog group. If you are a gamer (hardcore or casual), come share your love of games with LoG. In the month of September, we will be accepting new blog and podcast contributors. On your first visit, be ready to talk about your favorite video games and about what games mean to you. For more information about LoG, visit <a href="http://www.youmediagames.blogspot.com">www.youmediagames.blogspot.com</a> (updated October 2010)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ReadMe</td>
<td>Meets to discuss different texts. For May the group is reading the One Book, One Chicago selection, Brooklyn. Previous books include: Hunger Games and Pride of Baghdad (researcher's description) YOUmedia online calendar of events, accessed Monday, April 12, 2010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sketch Book</td>
<td>Sketch Book is an open Project Pod that will meet every other Monday to explore illustration as a pathway to Graphic Design and Animation YOUmedia online calendar of events, accessed Monday, April 12, 2010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Space Craft</td>
<td>Space Craft is a workshop for students who are interested in design beyond the page. By exploring concepts of space and dimension, students will develop 3D design projects ranging from abstract themes to scenic design and modeling. YOUmedia online calendar of events, accessed Monday, April 12, 2010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Studio Masters</td>
<td>Learn ProTools, GarageBand, and studio fundamentals essential to artists and producers in the twenty-first century. Earn your way to YOUmedia Studio Certification. YOUmedia online calendar of events, accessed Monday, April 12, 2010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YOUmedia Records</td>
<td>YOUmedia Records all-day workshop. Learn how to effectively market yourself in the digital age. Also get some production tips from YOUmedia mentors and special invited guests. YOUmedia May Calendar of Events</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teen Volume Book Discussion Group @ YOUmedia</td>
<td>A book discussion group for teens that meets monthly at YOUmedia. In addition to reading teen and young adult fiction, discussions incorporate current media and participants create digital arts projects that reflect on themes in the books they read. Description of Teen Volume Book Discussion Group from Chicago Public Library's Event Calendar website, <a href="http://www.chipublib.org/events/details/id/55181">http://www.chipublib.org/events/details/id/55181</a>, accessed December 21, 2010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reader's Theater</td>
<td>Reader's Theater features dramatic readings that, through inflection and gesture, bring the pages of a book to life. Teen volunteers on the Reader's Theatre Troupe are mentored by professional actors of the Prometheus Theatre Ensemble working in partnership with Chicago Public Library staff. Troupe members build acting skills, gain exposure to great books, and earn community service-learning hours by participating in the project. YOUmedia description of Teen Volume programming website, <a href="http://youmedia/chicago.org/?activity/pages/36-teen-volume">http://youmedia/chicago.org/?activity/pages/36-teen-volume</a>, accessed December 21, 2010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PhotoGenic</td>
<td>Show off your camera skills or come learn a few. In PhotoGenic, we will not only take great photos but also will explore the world through a new pair of eyes and lenses. You will learn basic camera skills, a bit of manipulation, and work in Photoshop. We will also learn the art of capturing the moment, maybe even play around with fashion/artistic portrait photography. Be prepared to get a little dirty! We will create digital portfolios and theme-based projects. Everyone needs a photographer so we will also discuss how to turn your new photo addiction into a way to earn money as young entrepreneurs! We will meet every Tuesday from 3-4:30. (October 2010)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YouLit Magazine</td>
<td>YouLit Magazine is now YOUmedia's official online teen literary magazine. The magazine will be teen edited and teen contributed. That means all poetry, prose, creative non-fiction, photography, graphics, editing, and more will be completely by, from, and for teens. YouLit Magazine will be published quarterly online. This magazine is for anyone who writes, designs, reads, and enjoys all forms of literature, and being part of a production team. Staff member, 10-11-10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ones &amp; Twos Advanced</td>
<td>Ones &amp; Twos is a beat production Improv workshop that meets from 3:30 pm-5 pm. This workshop is open not just to producers and songwriters but also to lyricists (rappers, poets, and everyone in between). The first 45 minutes will be spent learning necessary skills on different hardware and software. The last 45 minutes will be used to create songs on the fly!</td>
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Our Mission

The Consortium on Chicago School Research (CCSR) at the University of Chicago conducts research of high technical quality that can inform and assess policy and practice in the Chicago Public Schools. We seek to expand communication among researchers, policy makers, and practitioners as we support the search for solutions to the problems of school reform. CCSR encourages the use of research in policy action and improvement of practice, but does not argue for particular policies or programs. Rather, we help to build capacity for school reform by identifying what matters for student success and school improvement, creating critical indicators to chart progress, and conducting theory-driven evaluation to identify how programs and policies are working.
Younger Americans and Public Libraries

How those under 30 engage with libraries and think about libraries’ role in their lives and communities
Summary of Findings

Younger Americans—those ages 16-29—especially fascinate researchers and organizations because of their advanced technology habits, their racial and ethnic diversity, their looser relationships to institutions such as political parties and organized religion, and the ways in which their social attitudes differ from their elders.

This report pulls together several years of research into the role of libraries in the lives of Americans and their communities with a special focus on Millennials, a key stakeholder group affecting the future of communities, libraries, book publishers and media makers of all kinds, as well as the tone of the broader culture.

Following are some of the noteworthy insights from this research.

There are actually three different “generations” of younger Americans with distinct book reading habits, library usage patterns, and attitudes about libraries. One “generation” is comprised of high schoolers (ages 16-17); another is college-aged (18-24), though many do not attend college; and a third generation is 25-29.

Millennials’ lives are full of technology, but they are more likely than their elders to say that important information is not available on the internet. Some 98% of those under 30 use the internet, and 90% of those internet users say they using social networking sites. Over three-quarters (77%) of younger Americans have a smartphone, and many also have a tablet (38%) or e-reader (24%). Despite their embrace of technology, 62% of Americans under age 30 agree there is “a lot of useful, important information that is not available on the internet,” compared with 53% of older Americans who believe that. At the same time, 79% of Millennials believe that people without internet access are at a real disadvantage.

Millennials are quite similar to their elders when it comes to the amount of book reading they do, but young adults are more likely to have read a book in the past 12 months. Some 43% report reading a book—in any format—on a daily basis, a rate similar to older adults. Overall, 88% of Americans under 30 read a book in the past year, compared with 79% of those age 30 and older. Young adults have caught up to those in their thirties and forties in e-reading, with 37% of adults ages 18-29 reporting that they have read an e-book in the past year.

The community and general media-use activities of younger adults are different from older adults. Those under age 30 are more likely to attend sporting events or concerts than older adults. They are also more likely to listen to music, the radio, or a podcast in some
format on a daily or near-daily basis, and socialize with friends or family daily. Older adults, in turn, are more likely to visit museums or galleries, watch television or movies, or read the news on a daily basis.

As a group, Millennials are as likely as older adults to have used a library in the past 12 months, and more likely to have used a library website. Among those ages 16-29, 50% reported having used a library or bookmobile in the course of the past year in a September 2013 survey. Some 47% of those 30 and older had done so. Some 36% of younger Americans used a library website in that time frame, compared with 28% of those 30 and older. Despite their relatively high use of libraries, younger Americans are among the least likely to say that libraries are important. Some 19% of those under 30 say their library’s closing would have a major impact on them and their family, compared with 32% of older adults, and 51% of younger Americans say it would have a major impact on their community, compared with 67% of those 30 and older.

As with the general population, most younger Americans know where their local library is, but many say they are unfamiliar with all the services it may offer: 36% of Millennials say they know little or nothing about the local library’s services, compared with 29% of those 30 and older. At the same time, most younger Americans feel they can easily navigate their local library, and the vast majority would describe libraries as warm, welcoming places, though younger patrons are less likely to rate libraries’ physical conditions highly.

While previous reports from Pew Research have focused on younger Americans’ e-reading habits and library usage, this report will explore in their attitudes towards public libraries in greater detail, as well as the extent to which they value libraries’ roles in their communities. To better understand the context of younger Americans’ engagement with libraries, this report will also explore their broader attitudes about technology and the role of libraries in the digital age.

It is important to note that age is not the only factor in Americans’ engagement with public libraries, nor the most important. Our library engagement typology found that Americans’ relationships with public libraries are part of their broader information and social landscapes, as people who have extensive economic, social, technological, and cultural resources are also more likely to use and value libraries as part of those networks. Deeper connections with public libraries are also often associated with key life moments such as having a child, seeking a job, being a student, and going through a situation in which research and data can help inform a decision. As a result, the picture of younger Americans’ engagement with public libraries is complex and sometimes contradictory, as we examine their habits and attitudes at different life stages.
**Even among those under 30, age groups differ in habits and attitudes**

Though there are often many differences between Americans under 30 and older adults, younger age groups often have many differences that tie to their age and stage of adulthood.

Our surveys have found that **older teens (ages 16-17)** are more likely to **read (particularly print books)**, more likely to **read for work or school**, and more likely to **use the library for books and research** than older age groups. They are the only age group more likely to borrow most of the books they read instead of purchasing them, and are also **more likely to get reading recommendations at the library**. Yet despite their closer relationship with public libraries, 16-17 year-olds are less likely to say they highly value public libraries, both as a personal and community resource. Older adults, by contrast, are more likely to place a high level of importance on libraries’ roles in their communities—even age groups that are less likely to use libraries overall, such as those ages 65 and older.

The members of the next oldest age group, **college-aged adults (ages 18-24)**, are less likely to use public libraries than many other age groups, and are significantly less likely to have visited a library recently than in our previous survey: Some 56% of 18-24 year-olds said they had visited a library in the past year in November 2012, while just 46% said this in September 2013. They are more likely to purchase most of the books they read than borrow them, and are more likely to read the news regularly than 16-17 year-olds. In addition, like the next oldest age group, 25-29 year-olds, most of those in the college-aged cohort have lived in their current neighborhood five years or less.

Finally, many of the library habits and views of **adults in their late twenties (ages 25-29)** are often more similar to members of older age groups than their younger counterparts. They are less likely than college-aged adults to have read a book in the past year, but are more likely to keep up with the news. In addition, a large proportion (42%) are parents, a group with **particularly high rates** of library usage. Additionally, library users in this group are less likely than younger patrons to say their library use has decreased, and they are much more likely to say that various library services are very important to them and their family.

**Younger Americans’ community activities, and media and technology landscapes**

As a group, the library usage of younger Americans ages 16-29 fits into the larger context of their social activities and community engagement, as well as their broader media and technological environment. Those under age 30 are more likely to attend sporting events or concerts than older adults. They are also more likely to listen to music, the radio, or a podcast in some format on a daily or near-daily basis, and socialize with friends or family daily. Older adults, in turn, are more likely to visit museums or galleries, watch television or movies, or read the news on a daily basis.
About four in ten younger Americans (43%) reported reading a book—in any format—on a daily basis, a rate similar to older adults. Overall, 88% of Americans under 30 read a book in the past year, making them more likely to do so than older adults. Among younger Americans who did read at least one book, the median or typical number read in the past year was 10.

Younger Americans typically have higher rates of technology adoption than older adults, with 98% of those under 30 using the internet, and 90% of those internet users saying they using social networking sites. Over three-quarters (77%) of younger Americans have a smartphone, and many also have a tablet (38%) or e-reader (24%).

Respondents of all age groups generally agree that the internet makes it much easier to find information today than in the past, and most Americans feel that it’s easy to separate the good information from bad online. However, Americans under age 30 are actually a little more likely than older adults to say that there is a lot of useful, important information that is not available on the internet. They are also somewhat more likely to agree that people without internet access are at a real disadvantage because of all the information they might be missing.

**Relationships with public libraries**

Younger Americans are significantly more likely than older adults to have used a library in the past year, including using a library website. Overall, the percentage of all Americans who visited a library in person in the previous year fell from our 2012 to 2013 surveys, but the percentage who used a library website increased; the same is true for younger Americans. Few library users made use of a library website without also visiting a library in person in that time, however, so overall library usage rates did not increase:

- Among those ages 16-29, the percentage who visited a public library in person in the previous year dropped from 58% in November 2012 to 50% in September 2013, with the largest drop occurring among 18-24 year-olds.
- 36% of younger Americans used a library website in the previous year, up from 28% in 2012, with the largest growth occurring among 16-17 year-olds (from 23% to 35%).

Despite their higher rates of library usage overall, younger Americans—particularly those under age 25—continue to be less likely than older adults to say that if their local public library closed it would have a major impact on either them and their family or on their community. Patrons ages 16-29 are also less likely than those ages 30 and older to say that several services are “very important” to them and their family, though those in their late twenties are more likely than younger age groups to strongly value most services.
As with the general population, most younger Americans know where their local library is, but many are unfamiliar with all the services they offer. However, most younger Americans feel they can easily navigate their local library, and the vast majority would describe libraries as warm, welcoming places, though younger patrons are less likely to rate libraries’ physical conditions highly.

**Views about technology in libraries**

Looking specifically at technology use at libraries, we found that as a group, patrons under age 30 are more likely than older patrons to use libraries’ computers and internet connections, but less likely to say these resources are very important to them and their families—particularly the youngest patrons, ages 16-17. Even though they are not as likely to say libraries are important, young adults do give libraries credit for embracing technology. Yet while younger age groups are often more ambivalent about the role an importance of libraries today than older adults, they do not necessarily believe that libraries have fallen behind in the technological sphere. Though respondents ages 16-29 were more likely than those ages 30 and older to agree that “public libraries have not done a good job keeping up with newer technologies” (43% vs. 31%), a majority of younger Americans (52%) disagreed with that statement overall.

**About these surveys**

This report covers the core findings from three major national surveys of Americans ages 16 and older. Many of the findings come from a survey of 6,224 Americans ages 16+ conducted in the fall of 2013. A full statement of the survey method and details can be found here: [http://www.pewinternet.org/2014/03/13/methods-27/](http://www.pewinternet.org/2014/03/13/methods-27/).

The details and methods of the two other surveys can be found at:

[http://libraries.pewinternet.org/2013/01/22/methodology-8/](http://libraries.pewinternet.org/2013/01/22/methodology-8/)

[http://libraries.pewinternet.org/2012/04/04/methodology-2/](http://libraries.pewinternet.org/2012/04/04/methodology-2/)

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Patrick Losinski, Chief Executive Officer, Columbus Library, Ohio
Jo McGill, Director, Northern Territory Library, Australia
Dwight McInvaill, Director, Georgetown County Library, South Carolina
Rebecca Miller, Editorial Director, Library Journal & School Library Journal
Bobbi Newman, Blogger, Librarian By Day
Annie Norman, State Librarian, Delaware
Carlos Manjarrez, Director, Office of Planning, Research & Evaluation, Institute of Museum & Library Services
Johana Orellana-Cabrera, American Library Association Spectrum Scholar & librarian, Texas
Mayur Patel, Vice President for Strategy & Assessment, John S. & James L. Knight Foundation
Gail Sheldon, Director, Oneonta Public Library, Alabama
Sharman Smith, Executive Director, Mississippi Library Commission

Global Libraries staff at the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation
A Demographic Portrait of Younger Americans

Our surveys have confirmed that the demographic composition of those ages 16-29 is different from older generations. Our major 2013 survey found that younger generations are much more racially and ethnically diverse. They differ in other ways as well, particularly in terms of where they live and their general life stage. And though we cannot explore younger Americans’ household income levels in great detail due to data limitations, our library engagement typology found that Americans’ relationships with public libraries are part of their broader information and social landscapes, as people who have extensive economic, social, technological, and cultural resources are also more likely to use and value libraries as part of those networks.

Our library typology also found that life stage and special circumstances are linked to increased library use and higher engagement with information, and the most highly engaged groups in our typology contained higher proportion of parents, students, and job seekers.

We have previously examined parents’ closer relationships with libraries. The 2013 survey also found that students and job seekers are more likely to have used a library in the past year overall. However, these groups (though potentially overlapping) differ in the value they place on various library services. For instance, students’ higher rates of library use are not necessarily paired with higher reported reliance on library services, while job seekers are

### Student status

**Among all Americans ages 16+**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Full time</th>
<th>Part time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a 16-17</td>
<td>97bc</td>
<td>89bc</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b 18-24</td>
<td>61c</td>
<td>47c</td>
<td>14a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c 25-29</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d All 16-29</td>
<td>53e</td>
<td>41d</td>
<td>12e</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e All 30+</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Pew Research Center’s Internet Project Omnibus Survey, January 2-5, 2014. N= 1005 American adults ages 18 and older. Interviews were conducted on landlines and cell phones, in English and Spanish.

Note: Rows marked with a superscript letter (a) or another letter indicate a statistically significant difference between that column and the column designated by that superscript letter. Statistical significance is determined inside the specific section covering each demographic trait.

### Employment

**Among all Americans ages 16+**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Employed</th>
<th>Currently looking for a job</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a 16-17</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>26e</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b 18-24</td>
<td>67a</td>
<td>36a</td>
<td>31e</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c 25-29</td>
<td>75ab</td>
<td>62ab</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d All 16-29</td>
<td>65e</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>25e</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e All 30+</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>46d</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Pew Research Center’s Internet Project Omnibus Survey, January 2-5, 2014. N= 1005 American adults ages 18 and older. Interviews were conducted on landlines and cell phones, in English and Spanish.

Note: Rows marked with a superscript letter (a) or another letter indicate a statistically significant difference between that column and the column designated by that superscript letter. Statistical significance is determined inside the specific section covering each demographic trait.
significantly more likely to place a high value on many of the resources we asked about—starting with job search assistance. Among those who are currently looking for a job, 47% say that getting help finding or applying for a job at the library is "very important" to them and their family. Furthermore, job seekers are more likely to rank as highly important every library service we asked about, with the exception of free access to books and media.

### Students’ education level

*Among students, the % who are a...*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>High school student</th>
<th>College student (undergraduate)</th>
<th>Graduate student</th>
<th>Student at a community college</th>
<th>Student at a technical, trade, or vocational school</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a 16-17</td>
<td>88b</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b 18-24</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>61a</td>
<td>8a</td>
<td>18a</td>
<td>6a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c 25-29</td>
<td>n/a (n&lt;100)</td>
<td>n/a (n&lt;100)</td>
<td>n/a (n&lt;100)</td>
<td>n/a (n&lt;100)</td>
<td>n/a (n&lt;100)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d All 16-29</td>
<td>28e</td>
<td>41e</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e All 30+</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>25d</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>9d</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Pew Research Center’s Internet Project Omnibus Survey, January 2-5, 2014. N= 1005 American adults ages 18 and older. Interviews were conducted on landlines and cell phones, in English and Spanish.

**Note:** Rows marked with a superscript letter (b) or another letter indicate a statistically significant difference between that column and the column designated by that superscript letter. Statistical significance is determined inside the specific section covering each demographic trait.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER
Younger Americans’ Reading Habits and Technology Use

Reading Habits

Our previous research on younger Americans’ reading habits has shown that the youngest age groups are significantly more likely than older adults to read books, including print books; reading and research required for schoolwork contributes to this, along with a decline in overall reading rates for adults ages 65 and older.

As a group, younger Americans under age 30 are more likely than those 30 and older to report reading a book (in any format) at least weekly (67% vs 58%). Adults ages 50-64 are least likely to report reading books on a weekly basis, followed by those ages 30-49 and those ages 65 and older.

How often do you read a book, including print, audiobooks, and e-books?

Among Americans ages 16+

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>a 16-17</th>
<th>b 18-24</th>
<th>c 25-29</th>
<th>d All 16-29</th>
<th>e All 30+</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Every day or almost every day</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At least once a week</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At least once a month</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less often</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Never (VOL)</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Pew Research Center’s Library Services Survey of 6,224 Americans ages 16 and older conducted July 18-September 30, 2013. The survey was conducted in English and Spanish and on landline and cell phones.

Note: Rows marked with a superscript letter (a) or another letter indicate a statistically significant difference between that column and the column designated by that superscript letter. Statistical significance is determined inside the specific section covering each demographic trait.

In response to a different question about the total number of books read in the past year, we found that younger Americans are also more likely than older adults to have read at least one book in that time (88% vs 79%). As in other surveys, adults ages 65 and older are the age group least likely to have read a book in the past year.

A separate survey from January 2014 found that while most adults among all age groups are reading print books, young adults have caught up to those in their thirties and forties in e-reading, with 37% of adults ages 18-29 reporting they have read an e-book in the past year.
Some 73% of 18-29 year-olds reported reading a book in print, and 15% said they listened to an audiobook.¹

**Reading habits among younger Americans**

*Among Americans ages 16+*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>a 16-17</th>
<th>b 18-24</th>
<th>c 25-29</th>
<th>d All 16-29</th>
<th>e All 30+</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total read at least one book in the past year</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>88³</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Median books read in the past year (including non-readers)</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Median books read in the past year among readers</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Pew Research Center’s Library Services Survey of 6,224 Americans ages 16 and older conducted July 18-September 30, 2013. The survey was conducted in English and Spanish and on landline and cell phones.

Note: Rows marked with a superscript letter (³) or another letter indicate a statistically significant difference between that column and the column designated by that superscript letter. Statistical significance is determined inside the specific section covering each demographic trait.

Among those who read at least one book in the past year, a majority said they tend to purchase most of their books. Some 52% of all readers under age 30 said they purchase most of their books, while 39% of those under 30 say they tend to borrow most of their books—similar to the overall responses of older readers.

**Most readers say they purchase most of the books they read**

*Among Americans ages 16+ who read a book in the past year*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>a 16-17</th>
<th>b 18-24</th>
<th>c 25-29</th>
<th>d All 16-29</th>
<th>e All 30+</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Purchase most books</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>56³</td>
<td>53³</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Borrow most books</td>
<td>54⁴</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>About half and half (VOL)</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>9⁴</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Pew Research Center’s Library Services Survey of 6,224 Americans ages 16 and older conducted July 18-September 30, 2013. The survey was conducted in English and Spanish and on landline and cell phones.

Note: Rows marked with a superscript letter (³) or another letter indicate a statistically significant difference between that column and the column designated by that superscript letter. Statistical significance is determined inside the specific section covering each demographic trait.

Those ages 16-17 who are book readers are most likely to borrow most of the books they read (54% say this). All older age groups, including those ages 18-24 and 25-29, are more likely to purchase their books than borrow them.

**Other activities and media consumption**

In the process of creating our library engagement typology, we examined a range of activities that might help us learn more about other community activities Americans are engaged in, as well as relevant media consumption and technology usage habits. These questions are not comprehensive, but do help provide some context for Americans' library use.

Looking at a range of community activities, we found that some 39% of younger Americans under age 30 attend sporting events regularly, and 36% attend concerts, plays, or dance performances. Some 32% visit bookstores regularly, and 26% visit museums, art galleries, or historical sites.

More than half (56%) of older teens ages 16-17 regularly attend sporting events, making them more likely to do this than any other age group; however, they are less likely to visit bookstores regularly than young adults in their late twenties (26% vs 35%). Young adults ages 25-29 are also more likely than younger age groups to visit museums, art galleries, or historical sites regularly. Meanwhile, the rates of regular bookstore attendance and museum visits of young adults in their late twenties are similar to those of adults in their thirties and forties.

### Community activities

*Among Americans ages 16+, the % who regularly do the following activities*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>a 16-17</th>
<th>b 18-24</th>
<th>c 25-29</th>
<th>d All 16-29</th>
<th>e All 30+</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attend sporting events</td>
<td>56&lt;sup&gt;abc&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>39&lt;sup&gt;e&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Go to concerts, plays, or dance performances</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>36&lt;sup&gt;e&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Go to a bookstore</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>35&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visit museums, art galleries, or historical sites</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>34&lt;sup&gt;ab&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>31&lt;sup&gt;d&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Pew Research Center’s Library Services Survey of 6,224 Americans ages 16 and older conducted July 18-September 30, 2013. The survey was conducted in English and Spanish and on landline and cell phones.

Note: Rows marked with a superscript letter (e) or another letter indicate a statistically significant difference between that column and the column designated by that superscript letter. Statistical significance is determined inside the specific section covering each demographic trait.
In terms of general entertainment and media consumption, we found that 93% of respondents under age 30 listen to music, the radio, or a podcast in some format on a daily or near-daily basis, compared with 78% of those 30 and older. Younger Americans are also more likely to socialize with friends or family daily (88% vs 75%), but are less likely to watch TV or movies (71% vs 80%) or read the news (55% vs 64%). About four in ten Americans reported reading a book—in any format—on a daily basis, with no statistically significant differences between those ages 16-29 (43%) and adults 30 and older (40%).

### Entertainment and media activities

*Among Americans ages 16+, the % who do the following activities every day or almost every day*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>16-17</th>
<th>18-24</th>
<th>25-29</th>
<th>All 16-29</th>
<th>All 30+</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Listen to music, talk radio, or a podcast, on any device</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>93^e</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Socialize with friends or family in person, by phone, or online</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>91^c</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>88^e</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Watch TV or movies, on any device</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>80^d</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Read the news or a newspaper, in print or on any device</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>54^a</td>
<td>61^ab</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>64^d</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Read a book, in any format</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Pew Research Center’s Library Services Survey of 6,224 Americans ages 16 and older conducted July 18-September 30, 2013. The survey was conducted in English and Spanish and on landline and cell phones.

Note: Rows marked with a superscript letter (^) or another letter indicate a statistically significant difference between that column and the column designated by that superscript letter. Statistical significance is determined inside the specific section covering each demographic trait.

### Technology Habits and Views

#### Technology use and gadget ownership

Younger Americans typically have higher rates of technology adoption than older adults, with 98% of those under 30 using the internet, and 90% of those internet users saying they using social networking sites. Twitter use among online 16-17 year-olds jumped to 50% in this survey; previous Pew Research data shows that teens have started to augment traditional social networking sites with smaller services such as Twitter, Instagram, and Snapchat, though the vast majority still maintain a presence on Facebook.

Most younger Americans have a smartphone, compared with about half of adults 30 and older (due largely to low adoption rates among those 65 and older). Many also have a tablet or e-
reader, though adoption rates among 16-17 year-olds in particular may reflect overall household usage rather than personal ownership.²

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**Technology use and gadget ownership**

*Among all Americans ages 16 +*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>a 16-17</th>
<th>b 18-24</th>
<th>c 25-29</th>
<th>d All 16-29</th>
<th>e All 30+</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cell phone (including smartphone)</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>96e</td>
<td>89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Smartphone</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>77e</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tablet</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>38e</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E-reader</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internet use</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>98e</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social networking site use (among internet users)</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>90e</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Twitter use (among internet users)</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>35e</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Pew Research Center’s Library Services Survey of 6,224 Americans ages 16 and older conducted July 18-September 30, 2013. The survey was conducted in English and Spanish and on landline and cell phones.

Note: Rows marked with a superscript letter (a) or another letter indicate a statistically significant difference between that column and the column designated by that superscript letter. Statistical significance is determined inside the specific section covering each demographic trait.

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**Views about the internet**

In order to dig deeper into the larger context surrounding Americans’ relationships with libraries in the digital age, we also presented respondents with a series of statements about the impact of the internet. Respondents of all age groups generally agree that the internet makes it much easier to find information today than in the past, and most Americans feel that it’s easy to separate good information from bad online. However, Americans under age 30 are actually more likely than older adults to say that there is a lot of useful, important information that is not available on the internet. They also believe that people without internet access are at a real disadvantage because of all the information they might be missing.

---

### Younger Americans’ views about the internet

*Among Americans ages 16+, the % who “agree” or “strongly agree” (combined)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>a</th>
<th>b</th>
<th>c</th>
<th>d</th>
<th>e</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The internet makes it much easier to find information today than it was in the past</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>98&lt;sup&gt;e&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There is a lot of useful, important information that is NOT available on the internet</td>
<td>66&lt;sup&gt;c&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>62&lt;sup&gt;e&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It’s easy to separate the good information from the bad information online</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People without internet access are at a real disadvantage because of all of the information they might be missing</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>79&lt;sup&gt;e&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Pew Research Center’s Library Services Survey of 6,224 Americans ages 16 and older conducted July 18-September 30, 2013. The survey was conducted in English and Spanish and on landline and cell phones.

Note: Rows marked with a superscript letter (<sup>a</sup>) or another letter indicate a statistically significant difference between that column and the column designated by that superscript letter. Statistical significance is determined inside the specific section covering each demographic trait.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER
Younger Americans’ Relationships with Public Libraries

Public library use

Some 61% of Americans under age 30 have a library card, similar to the rate for the general population. Younger Americans’ rates of library usage are generally similar to that of older adults, and in the aggregate they are slightly more likely to have used a library in some form in the past year (57% vs 53%). However, it is important to note that there is frequently much variation between older age groups, with adults ages 30-49 reporting significantly higher library usage rates than most other groups, and those 65 and older reporting the lowest rates of use.\(^3\)

Recent public library use

% of Americans ages 16+ who ...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>a 16-17</th>
<th>b 18-24</th>
<th>c 25-29</th>
<th>d All 16-29</th>
<th>e All 30+</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Have a library card</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visited library in past year</td>
<td>59(^b)</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Used library website in past year</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>36(^e)</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total used library in past year</td>
<td>65(^b)</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>57(^e)</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total have ever used a library</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>89(^e)</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total public library use

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>a 16-17</th>
<th>b 18-24</th>
<th>c 25-29</th>
<th>d All 16-29</th>
<th>e All 30+</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ever visited library</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ever used library website</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>59(^ac)</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>55(^e)</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total have ever used a library</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>89(^e)</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Pew Research Center’s Library Services Survey of 6,224 Americans ages 16 and older conducted July 18-September 30, 2013. The margin of error for the overall sample is plus or minus 1.4 percentage points. The survey was conducted in English and Spanish and on landline and cell phones.

Note: Rows marked with a superscript letter (\(^3\)) or another letter indicate a statistically significant difference between that column and the column designated by that superscript letter. Statistical significance is determined inside the specific section covering each demographic trait.

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\(^3\) Beyond age, our previous research has found that recent library visitors are more likely to be women, those under age 65, adults who have college degrees, and adults who live in households earning $100,000 or more. Groups more likely than others to have used library websites include women, whites and African-Americans, those under age 50, adults with higher educational attainment, adults living in households earning $75,000 or more, parents of minor children, and urban residents. More: http://libraries.pewinternet.org/2013/12/11/section-1-an-overview-of-americans-public-library-use/
Younger Americans used libraries and bookmobiles in the past 12 months at slightly higher rates than older Americans. They were significantly more likely than older adults to have used a library website. They are also more likely to have ever used a library in the past. Overall, the percentage of all Americans who visited a library in person in the previous year fell from our 2012 to 2013 surveys, but the percentage who used a library website increased. Few library users made use of a library website without also visiting a library in person in that time, however, so overall library usage rates did not increase.

Among younger Americans ages 16-29, the proportion who visited a public library in person in the previous year dropped from 58% in November 2012 to 50% in September 2013; among older adults, the percentage dropped from 52% to 47%. Among younger age groups, the largest drop was among college-aged adults, as the percentage of 18-24 year-olds who visited a library fell from 56% in 2012 to 46% in 2013.

The proportion of younger Americans who used a library website in the previous year grew from 28% in 2012 to 36% in 2013, with the largest growth occurring among 16-17 year-olds (from 23% to 35%). The proportion of older adults (ages 30 and older) who used a library website in the previous year also grew, from 24% to 28%.

Looking at differences among younger age groups, we find that older teens ages 16-17 are more likely than those ages 18-24 to have visited a library in the past year, though 18-24 year-olds are more likely than any other age group to have ever used a library website (though not within the past year). However, among those who have visited a library in the past year, there are few differences in frequency of visits by age.
**Frequency of library visits**

*Among Americans ages 16+ who visited a library in the past year*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency of Library Visits</th>
<th>16-17</th>
<th>18-24</th>
<th>25-29</th>
<th>All 16-29</th>
<th>All 30+</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total weekly</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total monthly</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total less often</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Pew Research Center’s Library Services Survey of 6,224 Americans ages 16 and older conducted July 18-September 30, 2013. The survey was conducted in English and Spanish and on landline and cell phones.

Finally, while younger Americans are more likely to have ever used a library website, or even to have used one within the past year, older library website users’ visits are somewhat more frequent: 11% of recent library users ages 30 and older say they use the website at least weekly, compared with 7% of those under 30.

Among those who have ever used a public library, most patrons across all age groups say their library use has stayed about the same over the past five years. Older patrons (particularly those ages 30-49) are more likely than other groups to say their library use has increased in that time, while younger patrons (particularly those ages 16-24) are more likely to say their library use has decreased.

**Frequency of library website usage**

*Among Americans ages 16+ who used a library website in the past year*

- **Total weekly**: 7 (All 16-29) vs. 11* (All 30+)
- **Total monthly**: 37 (All 16-29) vs. 38 (All 30+)
- **Total less often**: 56* (All 16-29) vs. 50 (All 30+)

* indicates statistically significant difference between age groups.

Source: Pew Research Center’s Library Services Survey of 6,224 Americans ages 16 and older conducted July 18-September 30, 2013. The survey was conducted in English and Spanish and on landline and cell phones.

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Frequency of library visits
Among Americans ages 16+ who have ever used a public library

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>a 16-17</th>
<th>b 18-24</th>
<th>c 25-29</th>
<th>d All 16-29</th>
<th>e All 30+</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Increased</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>17(^d)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>About the same</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>58(^d)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decreased</td>
<td>34(^a)</td>
<td>37(^a)</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>32(^c)</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Pew Research Center’s Library Services Survey of 6,224 Americans ages 16 and older conducted July 18-September 30, 2013. The survey was conducted in English and Spanish and on landline and cell phones.

Note: Rows marked with a superscript letter (\(^a\)) or another letter indicate a statistically significant difference between that column and the column designated by that superscript letter. Statistical significance is determined inside the specific section covering each demographic trait.

Experiences with libraries
As with the general population, most Millennials know where their local library is, but many are unfamiliar with all the services they offer. However, most younger Americans feel they can easily navigate their local library, and few say they would have difficulty visiting their library or using its website. The vast majority would describe libraries as warm, welcoming places, but younger patrons are less likely to rate libraries’ physical conditions highly: Though 70% of older patrons say they would describe their local library as a “nice, pleasant space to be,” only 59% of younger patrons say this. Some 11% of younger patrons say they have had a negative experience at a library.

How long have you lived in the neighborhood where you live now?
Among Americans ages 16+

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>a 16-17</th>
<th>b 18-24</th>
<th>c 25-29</th>
<th>d All 16-29</th>
<th>e All 30+</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less than 1 year</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>23(^a)</td>
<td>19(^a)</td>
<td>19(^c)</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-5 years</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>44(^ab)</td>
<td>36(^c)</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-10 years</td>
<td>22(^c)</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11-20 years</td>
<td>40(^bc)</td>
<td>20(^c)</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than 20 years</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>9(^a)</td>
<td>13(^a)</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>30(^d)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Do you know where the closest public library is to where you currently live?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>a 16-17</th>
<th>b 18-24</th>
<th>c 25-29</th>
<th>d All 16-29</th>
<th>E All 30+</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes, know where it is</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>92(^d)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not sure</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>15(^e)</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Pew Research Center’s Library Services Survey of 6,224 Americans ages 16 and older conducted July 18-September 30, 2013. The margin of error for the overall sample is plus or minus 1.4 percentage points. The survey was conducted in English and Spanish and on landline and cell phones.

Note: Rows marked with a superscript letter (\(^a\)) or another letter indicate a statistically significant difference between that column and the column designated by that superscript letter. Statistical significance is determined inside the specific section covering each demographic trait.
Knowledge of libraries

Overall, 85% of those under 30 know where the closest library is to where they live (compared with 92% of older adults), perhaps related to the fact that, as a group, younger Americans are more likely to be relative newcomers to their neighborhoods: Though most 16-17 year-olds have lived in their current neighborhood for at least six years (and 40% say they’ve lived there for most or all of their lives), a majority of the more transitory 18-29 year-olds have lived in their current neighborhood five years or less.4

As in previous studies, the very youngest and oldest age groups of patrons tend to know the least about services offered by their local library. Among patrons under age 30, some 19% say they know about “all or most” of the services offered by their local library, 45% say they know “some” of what is offered, and 24% know “not much.” An additional 12% say they know “nothing at all” about their local library’s offerings. These proportions are similar to what they were in 2012.

Younger Americans are less likely to know about “all or most” of the services and programs at their local public library

*Among those who have ever used a library, the % who know...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Know all or most of the services your library offers</th>
<th>16-17</th>
<th>18-24</th>
<th>25-29</th>
<th>All 16-29</th>
<th>All 30+</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Know all or most of the services your library offers</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>25d</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some of what it offers</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not much of what it offers</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>24e</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nothing at all</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>12e</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total all/most/some</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>72d</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total not much/nothing</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>36e</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Pew Research Center’s Library Services Survey conducted July 18-September 30, 2013. Based on ages 16+ who have ever used a public library (n=5,393).

Note: Rows marked with a superscript letter (a) or another letter indicate a statistically significant difference between that column and the column designated by that superscript letter. Statistical significance is determined inside the specific section covering each demographic trait.

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4 In our library engagement typology report, we found that there is a distinct low engagement group of relatively younger people (with a median age of 33) who have used a library in the past, but have not lived in their neighborhood very long and do not know where the nearest library is located (“Young and Restless”). In this they differed from the two other low engagement groups, who either didn’t like libraries (Not for Me) or valued them, but were older and don’t use them as much (Rooted and Roadblocked.)

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Perceptions of and experiences with their local library

In additional questions about the ease of finding and using their local library or its website, younger patrons were just as likely as older patrons to say they find it easy or very easy to visit a public library in person (94% vs. 93%), and are more likely to say it is easy or very easy to use the website of their library (90% vs. 79%).

Among those who have ever visited a library, 93% of patrons under 30 say it is easy to find what they’re looking for when they visit their local library, and 94% say that public libraries are welcoming, friendly places—rates almost identical to those of older patrons. However, though most younger library users say they would describe their local library as a “nice, pleasant space to be,” they are less likely to do so than older patrons (59% vs. 70%).

When those who have ever used a public library were asked specifically about negative experiences at libraries, patrons under age 30 were more likely to say they have ever had a negative experience at a library (11%) than older patrons (8%), though most said they had not.

Views on the evolving role of public libraries in their communities

As in previous years, younger Americans—particularly those under age 25—are less likely than older adults to say that if their local public library closed it would have a major impact on either them and their family or on their community, though they are generally as likely to say it would have an impact on their community overall. Some 19% of those under 30 say their library’s closing would have a major impact on them and their family, compared with 32% of older adults, and 51% of younger Americans say it would have a major impact on their community, compared with 67% of those 30 and older.

* indicates statistically significant difference between age groups.

Source: Pew Research Center’s Library Services Survey conducted July 18-September 30, 2013. Based on ages 16+ who have ever used a public library (n=5,393).
Younger age groups less likely to say their local public library’s closing would have a major impact on their family or community

Among all Americans ages 16+

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Impact on you &amp; your family</th>
<th>Impact on your community</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Major impact</td>
<td>Minor impact</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16-17</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18-24</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25-29</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16-29</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30+</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Pew Research Center’s Library Services Survey of 6,224 Americans ages 16 and older conducted July 18-September 30, 2013. The margin of error for the overall sample is plus or minus 1.4 percentage points. The survey was conducted in English and Spanish and on landline and cell phones.

Importance of library services

In our surveys, we asked younger Americans about how they use public libraries, both in-person and online, and which services they would like to see libraries offer if they do not already do so. In our library engagement survey in 2013, however, we focused on how Americans rated the importance of various library services to themselves and to their families.
**How important are these public library services to you and your family?**

% among Americans ages 16+ who have ever used a public library or had a household member use a public library, the percentage who say these services are “very important” to them and their family

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>All 16-29</th>
<th>All 30+</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Books and media</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>55*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Librarian assistance</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>47*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Having a quiet, safe place</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research resources</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Programs for youth</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>47*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internet, computers, printers</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>34*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Programs for adults</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>30*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Help applying for gov't services</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Help finding, applying for job</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* indicates statistically significant difference between age groups.

Source: Pew Research Center’s Library Services Survey of 6,224 Americans ages 16 and older conducted July 18-September 30, 2013. The survey was conducted in English and Spanish and on landline and cell phones.

Among those with library experience—that is, those who have ever used a public library, or who have a household member who uses a public library—patrons ages 16-29 are significantly less likely than those ages 30 and older to say that several services are “very important” to them and their family, including books and media (48% vs 55%), librarian assistance (34% vs 47%), programs for youth (38% vs 47%), internet and computers (30 vs 34%), and programs for adults (20% vs 30%).
At the same time, however, responses among older adults are not identical. It is important to note that adults in their 30s and 40s are most likely to value many library services, while the very youngest and oldest age groups are least likely to highly value these services. In fact, those 65 and older are most likely to say that none of these library services are very important to them, and rate most services as less important overall.

Even among younger patrons, we found statistically significant differences in response to almost all of the services we asked about, with the exception of library assistance in finding or applying for jobs. Young adults in their late twenties are more likely than younger age groups, particularly 16-17 year olds, to strongly value most of the services we asked about. Some of the biggest gaps among patrons under 30 were using the library for books and media (37% of those ages 16-17 ranked this as “very important,” compared with 57% of those ages 25-29), programs for youth (25% vs 49%), using the library’s internet, computers, or printers (18% vs 39%), programs for adults (13% vs 27%), and help applying for government services (22% vs 35%).

### How important are these public library services to you and your family?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>16-17</th>
<th>18-24</th>
<th>25-29</th>
<th>All 16-29</th>
<th>All 30+</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Books and media</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>57&lt;sup&gt;ab&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>55&lt;sup&gt;d&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Librarian assistance</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>41&lt;sup&gt;ab&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>47&lt;sup&gt;d&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Having a quiet, safe place</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>51&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>54&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research resources</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>53&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Programs for youth</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>34&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>49&lt;sup&gt;ab&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>47&lt;sup&gt;d&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internet, computers, printers</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>28&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>39&lt;sup&gt;ab&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>34&lt;sup&gt;d&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Programs for adults</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>27&lt;sup&gt;ab&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>30&lt;sup&gt;d&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Help applying for gov't services</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>35&lt;sup&gt;ab&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Help finding, applying for jobs</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Note: Rows marked with a superscript letter (a) or another letter indicate a statistically significant difference between that column and the column designated by that superscript letter. Statistical significance is determined inside the specific section covering each demographic trait.

Beyond age, our research has found that women, African-Americans and Hispanics, adults who live in lower-income households, and adults with lower levels of educational attainment are more likely than other groups to say these services are “very important.”
Broader views about libraries

Younger Americans as a rule have positive views about the role of libraries in communities, though they are somewhat less likely than older Americans to feel as strongly about the positive attributes of libraries. The chart below outlines the views of Millennials on some basic attitudinal questions we asked in our 2013 survey:

Younger Americans’ views on public libraries’ roles in their communities

Among Americans ages 16+, the percentage who agree or disagree with each statement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
<th>Somewhat agree</th>
<th>Somewhat Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Public libraries are important because they promote literacy and a love of reading.</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>21</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Because it provides free access to materials and resources, the public library plays an important...</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>32</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Having a public library improves the quality of life in a community.</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public libraries provide many services people would have a hard time finding elsewhere.</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People do NOT need public libraries as much as they used to because they can find most information on...</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public libraries have NOT done a good job keeping up with new technologies.</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Pew Research Center’s Library Services Survey of 6,224 Americans ages 16 and older conducted July 18-September 30, 2013. The margin of error for the overall sample is plus or minus 1.4 percentage points. The survey was conducted in English and Spanish and on landline and cell phones.
Younger Americans are significantly less likely to “strongly agree” with each of these statements than those ages 30 and older:

- Public libraries are important because they promote literacy and a love of reading (71% vs. 78%)
- Because it provides free access to materials and resources, the public library plays an important role in giving everyone a chance to succeed (68% vs. 73%)
- Having a public library improves the quality of life in a community (56% vs. 73%)
- Public libraries provide many services people would have a hard time finding elsewhere (37% vs. 51%)

### Views on public libraries’ roles in their communities

*Among Americans who have ever used a library or had a household member use a library, the % who “strongly agree” with each statement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role of Libraries</th>
<th>All 16-29</th>
<th>All 30+</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Libraries are important because they promote literacy, love of reading.</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>78*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Free materials plays an important role in giving all a chance to succeed.</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>73*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Having a public library improves the quality of life in a community</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>73*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Libraries provide many services it would be difficult to find elsewhere</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>51*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* indicates statistically significant difference between age groups

Source: Pew Research Center’s Library Services Survey conducted July 18-Sept. 30, 2013. The survey was conducted in English and Spanish and on landline & cell phones.

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Younger Americans are significantly less likely to disagree with each of these statements than those ages 30 and older overall (including “disagree” and “strongly disagree” responses):

- **People do not need public libraries as much as they used to because they can find most information on their own (42% vs. 47%).**
- **Public libraries have not done a good job keeping up with new technologies (52% vs. 56%).**

**“Public libraries are important because they promote literacy and a love of reading”**

% who “strongly agree”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>a 16-17</th>
<th>b 18-24</th>
<th>c 25-29</th>
<th>d All 16-29</th>
<th>e All 30+</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly agree</td>
<td>63</td>
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Source: Pew Research Center’s Library Services Survey of 6,224 Americans ages 16 and older conducted July 18-Sept. 30, 2013. The survey was conducted in English and Spanish and on landline and cell phones.

**Note:** Rows marked with a superscript letter (<sup>a</sup>) or another letter indicate a statistically significant difference between that column and the column designated by that superscript letter. Statistical significance is determined inside the specific section covering each demographic trait.

Overall, the youngest age groups are least likely to strongly value public libraries for literacy promotion efforts: Just 63% of older teens ages 16-17 say they “strongly agree” that libraries are important for this reason, as well as 70% of those ages 18-24, compared with 76% of adults in
Younger age groups were not more likely to disagree with this statement, however, and were as likely as other age groups to agree with it overall.

There are few differences among older age groups when it comes to this view, with 78% of adults ages 30 and older strongly agreeing that this is an important role for libraries.

“Because it provides free access to materials and resources, the public library plays an important role in giving everyone a chance to succeed”

Young adults in their late twenties (73%) are also more likely than 16-17 year-old (63%) and college-aged (67%) respondents to strongly agree that public libraries play an important role in giving everyone a chance to succeed by providing free access to materials and resources. Younger age groups were more likely to simply “agree” with this statement, though they were not more likely to disagree.

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Source: Pew Research Center’s Library Services Survey of 6,224 Americans ages 16 and older conducted July 18-Sept. 30, 2013. The survey was conducted in English and Spanish and on landline and cell phones.

Note: Rows marked with a superscript letter (<sup>a</sup>) or another letter indicate a statistically significant difference between that column and the column designated by that superscript letter. Statistical significance is determined inside the specific section covering each demographic trait.
“Having a public library improves the quality of life in a community”

### % who “strongly agree”

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<th>Age Group</th>
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Source: Pew Research Center’s Library Services Survey of 6,224 Americans ages 16 and older conducted July 18-Sept. 30, 2013. The survey was conducted in English and Spanish and on landline and cell phones.

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The belief that a community’s quality of life is improved by the presence of a public library correlates strongly with age: Adults ages 30 (73%) and older are more likely to strongly agree with this statement than those in their late twenties (65%), who are more likely to strongly agree than those ages 18-24 (56%); the youngest age group in our survey, those ages 16-17, were least likely to strongly agree with this statement (41%) than any other age group.

Young adults under age 30 are slightly more likely to disagree with this statement overall than older adults (7% vs 4%).

### “Public libraries provide many services people would have a hard time finding elsewhere”

Overall, 78% of Americans under age 30 agree that public libraries provide many services people would have a hard time finding elsewhere, including 37% who strongly agree. Adults ages 50 and older are actually most likely to strongly back this statement, with 54% of those 50-64 and 56% of those 65 and older strongly agreeing.
“Public libraries provide many services people would have a hard time finding elsewhere”

% who “strongly agree”

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“People do not need public libraries as much as they used to because they can find most information on their own”

Younger adults are somewhat more likely than older age groups to feel that public libraries are not as necessary as they used to be because people can now find most information on their own. Among the younger age groups, 16-17 year-olds are most likely to feel that libraries are not as necessary these days, while young adults in their late twenties are most likely to disagree. However, though this belief tracks with age to some extent, there are differences as well among older age groups: Adults ages 65 and older (25%) are actually more likely to strongly agree that people do not need libraries for information as much than those ages 30-64.
“People do not need public libraries as much as they used to because they can find most information on their own”

% who “strongly agree”

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Source: Pew Research Center’s Library Services Survey of 6,224 Americans ages 16 and older conducted July 18-Sept. 30, 2013. The survey was conducted in English and Spanish and on landline and cell phones.

Note: Rows marked with a superscript letter (<sup>a</sup>) or another letter indicate a statistically significant difference between that column and the column designated by that superscript letter. Statistical significance is determined inside the specific section covering each demographic trait.
“Public libraries have not done a good job keeping up with new technologies”

Yet while younger age groups are often more ambivalent about the importance of libraries, they do not necessarily believe that libraries have fallen behind in the technological sphere. Though respondents ages 16-29 were more likely than those ages 30 and older to agree that “public libraries have not done a good job keeping up with newer technologies” (43% vs. 31%), a majority of younger Americans (52%) disagreed with that statement overall. Adults ages 30 and older were also more likely to say they don’t know (12%, vs. 5% of those under 30.)

<table>
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<th>% who “strongly agree”</th>
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Source: Pew Research Center’s Library Services Survey of 6,224 Americans ages 16 and older conducted July 18-Sept. 30, 2013. The survey was conducted in English and Spanish and on landline and cell phones.

Note: Rows marked with a superscript letter (a) or another letter indicate a statistically significant difference between that column and the column designated by that superscript letter. Statistical significance is determined inside the specific section covering each demographic trait.
Younger Americans’ library habits and expectations

Americans ages 16-29 are heavy technology users, including in using computers and internet at libraries. At the same time, most still read and borrow printed books, and value a mix of traditional and technological library services.

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http://libraries.pewinternet.org/2013/06/25/younger-americans-library-services/

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202.419.4500
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Summary of findings

Younger Americans—those ages 16-29—exhibit a fascinating mix of habits and preferences when it comes to reading, libraries, and technology. Almost all Americans under age 30 are online, and they are more likely than older patrons to use libraries’ computer and internet connections; however, they are also still closely bound to print, as three-quarters (75%) of younger Americans say they have read at least one book in print in the past year, compared with 64% of adults ages 30 and older.

Similarly, younger Americans’ library usage reflect a blend of traditional and technological services. Americans under age 30 are just as likely as older adults to visit the library, and once there they borrow print books and browse the shelves at similar rates. Large majorities of those under age 30 say it is “very important” for libraries to have librarians as well as books for borrowing, and relatively few think that libraries should automate most library services, move most services online, or move print books out of public areas.

At the same time, younger library visitors are more likely than older patrons to access the library’s internet or computers or use the library’s research resources, such as databases. And younger patrons are also significantly more likely than those ages 30 and older to use the library as a study or “hang out” space: 60% of younger patrons say they go to the library to study, sit and read, or watch or listen to media, significantly more than the 45% of older patrons who do this. And a majority of Americans of all age groups say libraries should have more comfortable spaces for reading, working, and relaxing.

Younger Americans’ use of technology

Compared with older adults, Americans under age 30 are just as likely to have visited a library in the past year (67% of those ages 16-29 say this, compared with 62% of adults ages 30 and older), but they are significantly more likely to have either used technology at libraries or accessed library websites and services remotely:

- Some 38% of Americans ages 16-29 have used computers and the internet at libraries in the past year, compared with 22% of those ages 30 and older. Among those who use computers and internet at libraries, young patrons are more likely than older users to use the library’s computers or internet to do research for school or work, visit social networking sites, or download or watch online video.

- Almost half (48%) of Americans ages 16-29 have ever visited a library website, compared with 36% of those ages 30 and older (who are significantly less likely to have done so).1

- Almost one in five (18%) Americans ages 16-29 have used a mobile device to visit a public library’s website or access library resources in the past 12 months, compared with 12% of those ages 30 and older.

The higher rates of technology use at libraries by those under age 30 is likely related to their heavier adoption of technology elsewhere in their lives. In the late-2012 survey analyzed in this report, over nine

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1 Though the sample size was too small to report detailed findings within age groups, more information about how Americans used library websites is available at: http://libraries.pewinternet.org/2013/01/22/part-2-what-people-do-at-libraries-and-library-websites/
in ten younger Americans owned a cell phone, with the majority owning a smartphone; some 16% owned an e-reader, and 25% owned a tablet computer.

The high figures for technology adoption by young adults is also striking in more recent surveys by the Pew Research Center’s Internet & American Life Project (surveys that covered those 18 and older, cited here for reference):

- 98% of young adults ages 18-29 use the internet and 80% have broadband at home\(^2\)
- 97% of young adults ages 18-29 own a cell phone and 65% own a smartphone\(^3\)
- 34% of young adults ages 18-29 have a tablet computer\(^4\)
- 28% of young adults ages 18-29 own an e-reader\(^5\)

Focusing back on younger Americans ages 16-29 from our November 2012 survey, we find that their interest in technology is reflected in their views about library services: 97% of Americans under age 30 say it is important for libraries to provide free computer and internet access to the community, including 75% who say it is “very important.”

**E-book reading habits over time**

As with other age groups, younger Americans were significantly more likely to have read an e-book during 2012 than a year earlier. Among all those ages 16-29, 19% read an e-book during 2011, while 25% did so in 2012. At the same time, however, print reading among younger Americans has remained steady: When asked if they had read at least one print book in the past year, the same proportion (75%) of Americans under age 30 said they had both in 2011 and in 2012.

In fact, younger Americans under age 30 are now significantly more likely than older adults to have read a book in print in the past year (75% of all Americans ages 16-29 say this, compared with 64% of those ages 30 and older). And more than eight in ten (85%) older teens ages 16-17 read a print book in the past year, making them significantly more likely to have done so than any other age group.

**Library habits and priorities for libraries**

The under-30 age group remains anchored in the digital age, but retains a strong relationship with print media and an affinity for libraries. Moreover, younger Americans have a broad understanding of what a library is and can be—a place for accessing printed books as well as digital resources, that remains at its core a physical space.

Overall, most Americans under age 30 say it is “very important” for libraries to have librarians and books for borrowing; they are more ambivalent as to whether libraries should automate most library services or move most services online. Younger Americans under age 30 are just as likely as older adults to visit the library, and younger patrons borrow print books, browse the shelves, or use research databases at

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similar rates to older patrons; finally, younger library visitors are more likely to use the computer or internet at a library, and more likely to see assistance from librarians while doing so.

Additionally, younger patrons are significantly more likely than older library visitors to use the library as a space to sit and ready, study, or consume media—some 60% of younger library patrons have done that in the past 12 months, compared with 45% of those ages 30 and older. And most younger Americans say that libraries should have completely separate locations or spaces for different services, such as children’s services, computer labs, reading spaces, and meeting rooms: 57% agree that libraries should “definitely” do this.

Along those lines, patrons and librarians in our focus groups often identified teen hangout spaces as especially important to keep separate from the main reading or lounge areas, not only to reduce noise and interruptions for other patrons, but also to give younger patrons a sense of independence and ownership. A library staff member in our online panel wrote:

“Having a separate children's area or young adults area will cater solely to those groups and make them feel that the library is theirs. They do not have to deal with adults watching them or monitoring what book they pick or what they choose to do—it's all about them and what they want with no judgment. Children and teens love having their own space so why not give them that at the library?”

Younger Americans’ priorities for libraries reflect this mix of habits, including various types of brick-and-mortar services as well as digital technologies. Asked about what it is “very important” libraries should offer, for instance, librarians were at the top of the list:

- 80% of Americans under age 30 say it is “very important” for libraries to have librarians to help people find information they need
- 76% say it is “very important” for libraries to offer research resources such as free databases
- 75% say free access to computers and the internet is “very important” for libraries to have
- 75% say it is “very important” for libraries to offer books for people to borrow
- 72% say quiet study spaces are “very important”
- 72% say programs and classes for children and teens are “very important” for libraries to have
- 71% say it is “very important” for libraries to offer job or career resources

However, even as young patrons are enthusiastic users of libraries, they are not as likely to see it as a valuable asset in their lives. Even though 16-17 year-olds rival 30-49 year-olds as the age groups most likely to have used a library in the past year, those in this youngest age group are less likely to say that libraries are important to them and their families. Parents and adults in their thirties and forties, on the other hand, are more likely to say they value libraries, and are more likely than other Americans to use many library services.

**Attitudes toward current and future library services**

When it comes to questions about the kinds of services libraries should offer, the top priorities of younger adults are that libraries should coordinate more with schools and offer free literacy programs, the same as older adults.
What services and programs younger Americans say libraries should or should not implement

Among all Americans ages 16-29, the percentage who say public libraries should “definitely,” “maybe,” or “should definitely not” implement the following programs

![Bar chart showing the percentage of respondents for each service or program.]

- Coordinate more with local schools: 87% should definitely do, 12% should maybe do, 1% should definitely not do.
- Free literacy programs: 87% should definitely do, 12% should maybe do, 1% should definitely not do.
- Have more comfortable spaces: 64% should definitely do, 31% should maybe do, 4% should definitely not do.
- Separate spaces for different services: 57% should definitely do, 35% should maybe do, 8% should definitely not do.
- Offer a broader selection of e-books: 54% should definitely do, 37% should maybe do, 4% should definitely not do.
- Offer more interactive learning experiences: 53% should definitely do, 37% should maybe do, 8% should definitely not do.
- Move most library services online: 44% should definitely do, 36% should maybe do, 18% should definitely not do.
- Help users digitize material: 41% should definitely do, 47% should maybe do, 11% should definitely not do.
- Make most services automated: 41% should definitely do, 33% should maybe do, 25% should definitely not do.
- Move some books/stacks out of public locations: 23% should definitely do, 47% should maybe do, 29% should definitely not do.

**Source:** Pew Research Center’s Internet & American Life Library Services Survey of 2,252 people ages 16 and older conducted October 15-November 10, 2012. N=470 for Americans ages 16-29. Interviews were conducted in English and Spanish and on landline and cell phones.

Younger Americans’ priorities for libraries also mirror those of older adults in other measures. For instance, 80% of Americans under age 30 say that librarians are a “very important” resource for libraries to have (along with 81% of adults ages 30 and older). Other resources ranked “very important” by Americans under age 30 include:

- **Research resources such as free databases** (76%)
- **Free access to computers and the internet** (75%)
Finally, when given a series of questions about possible new services at libraries, Americans ages 16-29 expressed the strongest interest in **apps that would let them locate library materials within the library** or **access library services on their phone**, as well as **library kiosks that would make library materials available throughout the community**. In addition, younger respondents were somewhat more likely than older adults to say they would be likely to use **personalized online accounts**, **digital media labs**, and **pre-loaded e-readers**.

The following chart shows the differences between age groups that emerged when respondents were asked about the future of libraries.

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**Which library services Americans say they would be “very likely” to use**

*Among Americans ages 16+, the % who say they would be “very likely” to use the following library services and activities, by age group*

![Chart showing differences in library service preferences by age group.](chart)

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**Source:** Pew Research Center’s Internet & American Life Library Services Survey of 2,252 people ages 16 and older conducted October 15-November 10, 2012. N=470 for Americans ages 16-29. The survey was conducted in English and Spanish and on landline and cell phones.
A snapshot of younger Americans’ reading and library habits

Reading habits

Some 82% of Americans ages 16-29 read at least one book in any format in the previous 12 months. Over the past year, these younger readers consumed a mean (average) of 13 books—a median (midpoint) of 6 books.

- 75% of Americans ages 16-29 read at least one book in print in the past year
- 25% read at least one e-book
- 14% listened to at least one audiobook

Library use

As of November 2012:

- 65% of Americans ages 16-29 have a library card.
- 86% of those under age 30 have visited a library or bookmobile in person; over half (58%) have done so in the past year.
- 48% of those under age 30 have visited a library website; 28% have done so in the past year.
- 18% of those under age 30 have visited library websites or otherwise accessed library services by mobile device in the past 12 months.

Among recent library users under age thirty (that is, Americans ages 16-29 who have visited a library, library website, or library’s mobile services in the past year), 22% say their overall library use has increased over the past five years. Another 47% said it had stayed about the same, and 30% said it had decreased over that time period.

About this research

This report explores the changing world of library services by exploring the activities at libraries that are already in transition and the kinds of services citizens would like to see if they could redesign libraries themselves. It is part of a larger research effort by the Pew Research Center’s Internet & American Life Project that is exploring the role libraries play in people’s lives and in their communities. The research is underwritten by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.

This report contains findings from a survey of 2,252 Americans ages 16 and above between October 15 and November 10, 2012. The surveys were administered half on landline phones and half on cell phones and were conducted in English and Spanish. The margin of error for the full survey is plus or minus 2.3 percentage points. More information about the survey is available in the Methods section at the end of this report.
There were several long lists of activities and services in the phone survey. In many cases, we asked half the respondents about one set of activities and the other half of the respondents were asked about a different set of activities. These findings are representative of the population ages 16 and above, but it is important to note that the margin of error rises when only a portion of respondents is asked a question. The number of respondents in each group or subgroup is noted in the charts throughout the report.

In addition, we quote librarians and library patrons who participated in focus groups in person and online that were devoted to discussions about library services and the future of libraries. Our in-person focus groups were conducted in Chicago, Illinois; Denver, Colorado; Charlotte, North Carolina; and Baltimore, Maryland in late 2012 and early 2013.

Other quotes in this report come from an online panel canvassing of librarians who have volunteered to participate in Pew Internet research. Over 2,000 library staff members participated in the online canvassing that took place in late 2012. No statistical results from that canvassing are reported here because it was an opt-in opportunity meant to draw out comments from patrons and librarians, and the findings are not part of a representative, probability sample. Instead, we highlight librarians’ written answers to open-ended questions that illustrate how they are thinking about and implementing new library services.

Age group definitions

For the purposes of this report, we define younger Americans as those ages 16-29, although we will use several different frameworks for this analysis. At times we will compare all those ages 16-29 to all older adults (ages 30 and older). When more fine-grained analysis reveals important differences, we will divide younger readers into three distinct groups: high-schoolers (ages 16 and 17); college-aged adults (ages 18-24) who are starting their post-secondary life; and adults in their later twenties (ages 25-29) who are entering jobs and careers. For more information about these older age groups, please see our earlier report, *Library Services in the Digital Age*.

Acknowledgements

About the Pew Research Center’s Internet & American Life Project

The Pew Research Center’s Internet & American Life Project is an initiative of the Pew Research Center, a nonprofit “fact tank” that provides information on the issues, attitudes, and trends shaping America and the world. The Pew Internet Project explores the impact of the internet on children, families, communities, the work place, schools, health care and civic/political life. The Project is nonpartisan and takes no position on policy issues. Support for the Project is provided by The Pew Charitable Trusts. More information is available at pewinternet.org.

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6 In the full sample, n=101 for Americans ages 16-17, 218 for Americans ages 18-24, and 196 for Americans ages 25-29.
Advisors for this research

A number of experts have helped Pew Internet in this research effort:

Daphna Blatt, Office of Strategic Planning, The New York Public Library
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Larra Clark, American Library Association, Office for Information Technology Policy
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Catherine De Rosa, Vice President, OCLC
LaToya Devezin, American Library Association Spectrum Scholar and librarian, Louisiana
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Sarah Houghton, Director, San Rafael Public Library, California
Mimi Ito, Research Director of Digital Media and Learning Hub, University of California Humanities Research Institute
Michael Kelley, Editor-in-Chief, Library Journal
Patrick Losinski, Chief Executive Officer, Columbus Library, Ohio
Jo McGill, Director, Northern Territory Library, Australia
Dwight McInvaill, Director, Georgetown County Library, South Carolina
Bobbi Newman, Blogger, Librarian By Day
Carlos Manjarrez, Director, Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation, Institute of Museum and Library Services
Johana Orellana-Cabrera, American Library Association Spectrum Scholar and librarian in Texas.
Mayur Patel, Vice President for Strategy and Assessment, John S. and James L. Knight Foundation
Global Libraries staff at the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation
Gail Sheldon, Director, Oneonta Public Library (Alabama)
Sharman Smith, Executive Director, Mississippi Library Commission

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Part I: A portrait of younger Americans’ reading habits and technology use

Before analyzing younger Americans’ library use habits, we will first explore the broad contours of their technology use and reading habits, as the changing reading habits chronicled in our recent reports are intrinsically tied to the new formats and devices on which people read.

This section will just cover the findings from the survey conducted in November and December 2012. Unlike most other Pew Internet surveys, this one included a sizeable sample of younger respondents, including 101 respondents ages 16-17, in addition to adults ages 18 and older. We included this youngest age group so that we could develop a fuller portrait of younger library users.

The vast majority of Americans ages 16-29 go online, and most have a desktop or laptop computer to use at home. Over nine in ten younger Americans own a cell phone, with the majority owning a smartphone. They are significantly more likely than adults ages 50 and older to go online and have these devices.

However, these trends do not extend to all types of gadgets; in fact, adults in their thirties and forties are significantly more likely to own tablet computers and e-readers than other age groups. This might be why rates of e-reading are generally highest among readers ages 30-49, who are also less likely to have read a print book in the last year than younger readers. Meanwhile, Americans under age 30 were just as likely to have read a book in print in 2012 as they were in 2011.

Internet use and home internet use

Younger Americans ages 16-29 are significantly more likely to use the internet than older adults. More than nine out of ten Americans ages 16-29 (96%) say they use the internet or email, compared with 82% of adults over age 30—as shown in the chart below.

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7 In general, Pew Internet surveys of adults include Americans ages 18 and older, and surveys of teens include Americans ages 12-17.
The vast majority of teens and young adults go online, and most have internet access at home

Among all Americans ages 16+, the % in each age group who use the internet overall, and the % who have access at home

Source: Pew Research Center’s Internet & American Life Library Services Survey of 2,252 people ages 16 and older conducted October 15-November 10, 2012. The survey was conducted in English and Spanish and on landline and cell phones.

Device ownership

In our late 2012 national survey, we found that teens and young adults continue to have high levels of ownership of mobile devices like cell phones and laptops, especially compared with adults ages 65 and older.8

Device ownership by age group

Among all Americans ages 16+, the % in each age group who have the following gadgets

Source: Pew Research Center’s Internet & American Life Library Services Survey of 2,252 people ages 16 and older conducted October 15-November 10, 2012. The survey was conducted in English and Spanish and on landline and cell phones.

Note: Columns marked with a superscript letter (a) or another letter indicate a statistically significant difference between that row and the row designated by that superscript letter. Statistical significance is determined inside the specific section covering each demographic trait.

8 The most recent data available for adult ownership of all devices is available on our website and includes surveys conducted in 2013: http://pewinternet.org/Static-Pages/Trend-Data-%28Adults%29/Device-Ownership.aspx
Some 85% of all Americans ages 16 and older own a cell phone, including more than nine in ten of those under age 30, and almost half (47%) own smartphone (including over six in ten of those under age 30).

Looking at gadget ownership or access by age group:

- A majority of **older teens ages 16-17** own a cell phone (93%), including 63% who own a smartphone. Some 91% have a desktop or laptop computer at home. Looking at e-reading devices, we find that about one in five (21%) have an e-reader and about one in four (26%) say they have a tablet computer.

- Among **college-aged adults ages 18-24**, 94% own a cell phone (65% own a smartphone), and 82% own a computer. Some 14% own an e-reader, and 23% own a tablet.

- **Adults in their later twenties (ages 25-29)** are similar to younger age groups in that they are just as likely to own a cell phone (91%) or smartphone (82%), and 82% own a desktop or laptop computer. They are also just as likely to own an e-reader (17%) or tablet computer (26%).

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9 Of course, age is not the only factor at play. We also see strong correlations by education and household income. Our recent reports on smartphone and tablet ownership among Americans adults show some of these relationships.

10 While teens tend to "own" their cell phones/smartphones and sometimes their computers, e-reader and especially tablet numbers most likely reflect shared household use.
Cell phone and smartphone ownership by age group
Among all Americans ages 16+, the % in each age group who own a cell phone (total) or smartphone.

![Cell phone ownership by age group graph]

![Smartphone ownership by age group graph]

Home computer ownership by age group
Among all Americans ages 16+, the % in each age group who own a desktop or laptop

![Desktop/laptop ownership by age group graph]

Source: Pew Research Center’s Internet & American Life Library Services Survey of 2,252 people ages 16 and older conducted October 15-November 10, 2012. The survey was conducted in English and Spanish and on landline and cell phones.

But while younger Americans are more likely than those ages 30 and older to have smartphones or computers, adults in their thirties and forties are the most likely to own e-readers and tablets. In fact, adults ages 30-49 are significantly more likely to own either of these devices than any other age group, with the exception of 16-17 year-olds.
E-reader and tablet ownership by age group

Among all Americans ages 16+, the % in each age group who own an e-reader or tablet

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Group</th>
<th>E-reader Ownership</th>
<th>Tablet Ownership</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>16-17</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18-24</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25-29</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30-49</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50-64</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65+</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Pew Research Center’s Internet & American Life Library Services Survey of 2,252 people ages 16 and older conducted October 15-November 10, 2012. The survey was conducted in English and Spanish and on landline and cell phones.
Reading habits

Some 75% of all Americans ages 16 and older had read at least one book in any format in the previous 12 months, including 82% of Americans ages 16-29 (significantly more than older adults). High schoolers ages 16-17 are especially likely to have read a book in the past year (90%), while adults ages 65 and older are the least likely to have read a book in that time span (67%).

Our previous research found that younger respondents are more likely to read for work or school, or to research topics of interest to them, while older respondents are generally more likely to read for pleasure, or to keep up with current events.

### Over eight in ten Americans under the age of 30 read at least one book in the past year

Among all Americans ages 16+, the % in each age group who have read a book in whole or in part in any format in the past 12 months, over time

According to our November 2012 national survey:

- 67% of all Americans ages 16 and older read at least one book in the past year in print, including 75% of those under age 30—and 85% of those ages 16-17.
- 23% of all Americans read at least one e-book, including 25% of those under age 30.
- 13% listened to at least one audiobook, including 14% of those under age 30.11

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11 Overall, 75% of all Americans read at least one book in any of these format in the previous 12 months. Many readers consumed books in multiple formats, which is why these numbers add up to more than 75%. 
Books formats over the past year, by age group, among general population

Among all Americans ages 16+, the % in each age group who have read a book in whole or in part in the following formats in the past 12 months

Among Americans ages 16 and older who read a book in the year prior to the survey, the proportion who read a print book in that time decreased from 93% in 2011 to 89% in 2012. At the same time, e-book reading rose from 21% of readers ages 16 and older in 2011 to 30% in 2012. Audiobook listening also increased from 14% in 2011 to 17% in 2012.

As the following charts show, the proportion of younger readers who read a print book in the past year has remained relatively steady, while e-reading rose among all ages of readers—particularly those in their thirties and forties.
Among younger readers, e-books are on the rise

Among Americans who read at least one book in the past 12 months, the % in each age group who read a book in whole or in part in the following formats in that time period, in 2011 and 2012.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<th></th>
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<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ages 16-17</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>94%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ages 18-24</td>
<td>89%</td>
<td>93%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ages 25-29</td>
<td>91%</td>
<td>89%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ages 30-49</td>
<td>93%</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ages 50-64</td>
<td>92%</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ages 65+</td>
<td>94%</td>
<td>91%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Pew Research Center’s Internet & American Life Library Services Survey of 2,252 people ages 16 and older conducted October 15-November 10, 2012. The survey was conducted in English and Spanish and on landline and cell phones.
All told, book readers under age 30 consumed a mean (average) of 13 books in the previous 12 months and a median (midpoint) of 6 books — in other words, half of book readers in that age cohort had read fewer than six and half had read more than six.

How many books Americans read (among total)

*Among all Americans, the mean and median number of books each group read in the past 12 months, by age group (includes non-readers)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Group</th>
<th>Mean number of books read (average)</th>
<th>Median (midpoint)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>16-17 (n=101)</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18-24 (n=218)</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25-29 (n=151)</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 and older (n=1745)</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

How many books Americans read (among readers)

*Among readers (those who read a book in the past year), the mean and median number of books each group read in the past 12 months, by age group*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Group</th>
<th>Mean number of books read (average)</th>
<th>Median (midpoint)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>16-17 (n=101)</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18-24 (n=218)</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25-29 (n=151)</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 and older (n=1745)</td>
<td>16*</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* indicates a statistically significant difference compared with all other age groups

Source: Pew Research Center’s Internet & American Life Library Services Survey of 2,252 people ages 16 and older conducted October 15-November 10, 2012. The survey was conducted in English and Spanish and on landline and cell phones.
Part II: Libraries in younger Americans’ lives and communities

In the past 12 months, 53% of Americans ages 16 and older visited a library or bookmobile; 25% visited a library website; and 13% used a handheld device such as a smartphone or tablet computer to access a library website. All told, 59% of Americans ages 16 and older had at least one of those kinds of interactions with their public library in the past 12 months.

Family members’ library use from childhood

In our national survey, we asked respondents about their general library patronage—if they had experiences with libraries in childhood, how often they visit libraries or library websites, and what sort of experiences they have had in these visits. We also asked people how important libraries are, not only to them and their family, but also to their community as a whole.

One theme that emerged in our qualitative work was that library staff members frequently told us that they were eager to build connections with younger patrons, but often have difficulty maintaining these connections as they age. While we did not see many significant differences in younger Americans’ overall library usage, some aspects of our quantitative findings do parallel these impressions. We found, for instance, that among recent library users ages 18-24, 36% say their use has decreased within the past five years; almost a third (27%) of those in their later twenties say this as well. And even though 16-17 year-olds rival 30-49 year olds as the age groups most likely to have used a library in the past year, they are less likely to say that libraries are important to them and their families. Parents and adults in their thirties and forties, on the other hand, are more likely to say they value libraries, and are more likely than other Americans to use many library services.

Our survey showed that 77% of Americans ages 16 and older say they remember someone else in their family using public libraries as they were growing up, but a fifth (20%) say that no one in their family used the library.

Adults in their later twenties (ages 25-29) were significantly more likely than most other age groups to say that they recalled family members using the library when they were growing up (88%), as shown in the following chart; adults ages 65 and older were the least likely to say this (68%).
Did anyone else in your family use public libraries while you were growing up?

Among all Americans ages 16+, the % in each age group who recall family members using the library as they were growing up

Source: Pew Research Center’s Internet & American Life Library Services Survey of 2,252 people ages 16 and older conducted October 15-November 10, 2012. The survey was conducted in English and Spanish and on landline and cell phones.

Library cards

Although many activities at libraries do not always require a library card, many others—such as borrowing books—usually do. Currently, 63% of all Americans ages 16 and older say they have a library card, including 65% of those under age 30. Looking at teens and young adults, we find little variation between the younger age groups; 18-24 year-olds (63%) and 25-29 year-olds (65%) are as likely to own a library card as 16-17 year-olds (70%).

Younger Americans’ library use: In-person visits

When we asked about Americans’ own personal use of public libraries, we found that 84% of Americans ages 16 and older have ever visited a library or bookmobile in person, including 86% of those ages 16-29. Older Americans are less likely than those under age 50 to have visited a library, particularly those ages 65 and older.
Most younger Americans have visited a public library or bookmobile, and a majority have done so in the past year

Among all Americans ages 16+, the % in each age group who say they have ever visited a library or bookmobile in person & those who have done so in the past 12 months

About 64% of Americans who had ever visited a public library say they had visited a public library or bookmobile in person in the past twelve months (including 67% of those ages 16-29). This means that 53% of all Americans ages 16 and older, and 58% of those ages 16-29, visited a public library or bookmobile in person in the past year.

The following chart shows how frequently Americans in different age groups visit a library or bookmobile in person, from those who visit a library at least once a week to those who have not visited a library within the past 12 months.
A snapshot of younger Americans’ library visits

Among all Americans ages 16+, how often those in each age group visit the library in person

Source: Pew Research Center’s Internet & American Life Library Services Survey of 2,252 people ages 16 and older conducted October 15-November 10, 2012. The survey was conducted in English and Spanish and on landline and cell phones.

Interactions with library staff

Overall, 80% of Americans say that it is “very important” to the community for libraries to have librarians available to help people find information they need, including 80% of those under age 30.

About half (50%) of those who visited a library in the past 12 months say they visit to get help from a librarian. Some 40% of library users under age 30 say they have done this in the past year, making them significantly less likely than those ages 30 and older (53%) to say so.

However, asked how often they get help from library staff in such things as answering research questions, 31% of library patrons in the past 12 months say they frequently get help, 39% say they sometimes get help, 23% say they hardly ever get help, and 7% say they never get help. Older library visitors are significantly less likely than most younger patrons to say they receive assistance “frequently.”
How often younger library visitors receive assistance from library staff

How often Americans who visited a library in person in the past 12 months say they receive help from library staff

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How often</th>
<th>Ages 16-29 (n=279)</th>
<th>Ages 30-49 (n=353)</th>
<th>Ages 50-64 (n=343)</th>
<th>Ages 65+ (n=245)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Frequently</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hardly ever</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Never</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Pew Research Center Internet & American Life Project Library Services Survey. October 15-November 10, 2012. N for those ages 16+ who visited library in past 12 months=1,238. Interviews were conducted in English and Spanish and on landline and cell phones.

Asked how helpful library staffers are in general, 81% of those who had visited a library in the past 12 months say librarians are “very helpful,” 17% say “somewhat helpful,” 1% say “not too helpful” and another 1% say “not at all helpful.” Library visitors under age 30 are significantly less likely than older library visitors to say that library staff are “very helpful” (71% vs. 85%).

Most say library staff are “very helpful”

Among Americans who visited a library in the past 12 months, the % who say that library staff are...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How helpful</th>
<th>Ages 16-29 (n=279)</th>
<th>Ages 30+ (n=941)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very helpful</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td>85%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somewhat helpful</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not too helpful</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not at all helpful</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Pew Research Center Internet & American Life Project Library Services Survey. October 15-November 10, 2012. N for those ages 16+ who visited library in past 12 months=1,238. Interviews were conducted in English and Spanish and on landline and cell phones.
Younger Americans’ library use: Library websites

In all, we find that 39% of Americans ages 16 and older have gone to a library website at one time or another. Some 48% of those ages 16-29 have used library websites, compared with 36% of those ages 30 and older. Among those website users, 64% visited a library site in the previous 12 months. This means that 25% of all Americans ages 16 and older visited a library website in the past year, including 28% of those ages 16-29 and 24% of those ages 30 and older.

Among all Americans, those ages 18-49 are most likely to say they have used a library’s website in the past year, while those ages 65 and older are the least likely to say this.12

Almost half of younger Americans under age 30 have ever visited a library website

Among all Americans ages 16+, the % in each age group who have visited a library website, ever and in the past year

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Group</th>
<th>Total have ever visited website</th>
<th>Visited website in past year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ages 16-17 (n=101)</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18-24 (n=218)</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25-29 (n=151)</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30-49 (n=586)</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50-64 (n=628)</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65+ (n=531)</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Pew Research Center’s Internet & American Life Library Services Survey of 2,252 people ages 16 and older conducted October 15-November 10, 2012. The survey was conducted in English and Spanish and on landline and cell phones.

Additionally, 13% of those ages 16 and older have visited library websites or otherwise accessed library services by mobile device, including 18% of those under age 30.13 Americans ages 18-49 are significantly more likely than older adults to have access a library website or services by mobile device.

12 Though the sample size was too small to report detailed findings within age groups, more information about how Americans used library websites is available at http://libraries.pewinternet.org/2013/01/22/part-2-what-people-do-at-libraries-and-library-websites/

In the past 12 months, have you used a cell phone, e-reader, or tablet computer to visit a public library’s website or access public library resources?

Among all Americans ages 16+, the % in each age group who have visited library websites or otherwise accessed library services by mobile device in the past year

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Group</th>
<th>% Visited Library Website</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>16-17</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18-24</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25-29</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30-49</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50-64</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65+</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Pew Research Center’s Internet & American Life Library Services Survey of 2,252 people ages 16 and older conducted October 15-November 10, 2012. The survey was conducted in English and Spanish and on landline and cell phones.

Changes in library use in recent years

We also asked recent library users about their own use of libraries has changed, if at all, over the last five years. “Recent library users” here are those who those who either visited a public library in person in the past 12 months, have gone on a public library website in the past 12 months, or have used a cell phone, e-reader or tablet to visit a public library website or access public library resources in the past 12 months. They amount to 59% of those who are ages 16 and older in the general population.

The results of our national survey show a general fluidity in library patronage patterns:

- 26% of recent library users say their own use of local libraries has increased in the past five years, including 22% of those under age 30.
- 22% say their use has decreased. This includes 30% of those under age 30, making them significantly more likely to say this than adults ages 30 and older (19%).
- 52% say their use has stayed the same during that time period, including 47% of those under age 30.

When asked about their communities’ library use, many librarians said they felt they often “lost” younger patrons until the patrons were old enough to have children of their own—or later. “They go away [to college], and hopefully they come back to you . . . [when] they’re looking for jobs or they’re starting to get married, have a family, and have their kids,” one librarian said in a focus group. “We kind of figured that if we forged this really great relationship as they’re growing up and then they go off on
their own for a little while, . . . hopefully we’ll get them back when they need us again.” She added that while she thought her library did a good job of providing programming for younger teens, she felt that it had less of a draw for older teens and adults in their early twenties:

“I think there’s a chunk of time where we are maybe not going to be able to be at the top of their list because they have university libraries and they have activities and things. They’ve just got an awful lot going on and they have more disposable income at that age. . . . I don’t know if anybody has come up with a great answer for what they really need us for in that spot.”

Among recent library users, college-aged adults ages 18-24 are significantly more likely than older adults to say that their library use has decreased in the past five years; adults in their thirties and forties are generally most likely to say that their library use has increased in that time period.

**In the past five years, has your use of the public library (in person and online) increased, decreased, or stayed about the same?**

*Among recent library users ages 16-29, by age group*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Group</th>
<th>Increased</th>
<th>About the same</th>
<th>Decreased</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ages 16-17 (n=69)</td>
<td>n too small to report</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ages 18-24 (n=136)</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ages 25-29 (n=101)</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>49%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ages 30-49 (n=395)</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>51%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ages 50-64 (n=374)</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>53%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ages 65+ (n=263)</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source:* Pew Research Center’s Internet & American Life Library Services Survey of 2,252 people ages 16 and older conducted October 15–November 10, 2012. The survey was conducted in English and Spanish and on landline and cell phones.

We also asked those whose use has either increased or decreased why their library use has changed. The sample size was not large enough to break out reasons by age group, although some of the answers from younger users about increased use included the need to take children or other family members to the library, using the library for research, and becoming a student. Some of the answers about why younger patrons library use decreased included being too busy and finding online resources to be more convenient.
Experiences at libraries are mostly positive

Among all Americans ages 16 and older who had ever used a public library, almost all respondents say that their experiences using public libraries are either very positive (57%) or mostly positive (41%); only about 1% say their experiences had been mostly negative. While younger respondents also report overall positive experiences, the youngest respondents (those ages 16-17 and 18-24) are significantly less likely than older library users to report “very positive” experiences—although only 2% report mostly negative experiences overall.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Very positive</th>
<th>Mostly positive</th>
<th>TOTAL POSITIVE</th>
<th>Mostly negative</th>
<th>Very negative</th>
<th>TOTAL NEGATIVE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All Americans ages 16+ who have ever used a public library</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>98%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>*%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a 16-17 (n=95)</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b 18-24 (n=192)</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c 25-29 (n=138)</td>
<td>56&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d 30-49 (n=531)</td>
<td>59&lt;sup&gt;ab&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2&lt;sup&gt;e&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e 50-64 (n=549)</td>
<td>64&lt;sup&gt;ab&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f 65+ (n=444)</td>
<td>61&lt;sup&gt;ab&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1&lt;sup&gt;e&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Pew Research Center’s Internet & American Life Library Services Survey of 2,252 people ages 16 and older conducted October 15-November 10, 2012. The survey was conducted in English and Spanish and on landline and cell phones.

Note: Columns marked with a superscript letter (<sup>a</sup>) or another letter indicate a statistically significant difference between that row and the row designated by that superscript letter. Statistical significance is determined inside the specific section covering each demographic trait.

How important libraries are to individuals and their communities

One section of our survey asked respondents directly about the importance of public libraries. We found that while a majority of Americans say that libraries say libraries are important to them personally, the vast majority of respondents in every age group say that libraries are important to their communities as a whole.
A majority of Americans (76% of all respondents) say that libraries are important to them and their families, and 46% say that libraries are “very important”—up from 38% saying libraries are “very important” in December 2011.14

Just 18% of 16-17 year-olds say that libraries are “very important” to them and their families, though they are among the heaviest users of libraries. Instead, Americans ages 16-17 are more likely to say that libraries are “somewhat important” (47%) or “not too important” (21%) to them and their families.

How important are libraries to you and your family?
Among all Americans ages 16+, the % in each age group who say that libraries are important or not important to them and their families

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Group</th>
<th>Very important</th>
<th>Somewhat important</th>
<th>Not too important</th>
<th>Not important at all</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>16-17</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18-24</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25-29</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30-49</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50-64</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65+</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Pew Research Center’s Internet & American Life Library Services Survey of 2,252 people ages 16 and older conducted October 15-November 10, 2012. The survey was conducted in English and Spanish and on landline and cell phones.

And when asked about the importance of public libraries to their community, at least nine in ten Americans ages 16 and older (91%) say they considered the library either “very important” (63%) or “somewhat important” (28%) to their community as a whole.

While a strong majority of all groups considered libraries important to their communities, adults ages 25 and older are more likely to consider the library “very important” to their community than younger respondents ages 16-24.

14 In February 2012, question was a standalone question.
How important are libraries to your community as a whole?

Among all Americans ages 16+, the % in each age group who say that libraries are important or not important to their community as a whole

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Group</th>
<th>Very important</th>
<th>Somewhat important</th>
<th>&quot;Not too important&quot;</th>
<th>Not important at all</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>16-17</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18-24</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25-29</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30-49</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50-64</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65+</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Pew Research Center’s Internet & American Life Library Services Survey of 2,252 people ages 16 and older conducted October 15-November 10, 2012. The survey was conducted in English and Spanish and on landline and cell phones.

How much people know about what their library offers

In general, Americans feel somewhat well-informed about the various services and programs offered by their local libraries, although about a third say they know “not much” or “nothing at all.” In general, younger Americans are somewhat less aware of what is offered by their public library:

- About one in five Americans ages 16 and older (22%) feel they are aware of “all or most” of the services and programs their public library offers, including 23% of those under age 30.
- 46% of Americans feel they just know of “some” of what their library offers, including 40% of those under age 30.
- 20% of Americans say they know “not much” about services offered by their library, including 26% of those under age 30.
- 11% of Americans say they know “nothing at all” about what is available at their library, including 11% of those under age 30.

While there were few dramatic differences between age groups, younger respondents ages 16-17 (30%) and 18-24 (26%) were significantly more likely than most older age groups to say that they know “not much” about what different services and programs their public library offers. The chart below breaks down these findings further by age group.
How much do you feel like you know about the different services and programs your public library offers?

*How much Americans ages 16+ in each age group feel they know about the services offered by their public library*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Group</th>
<th>All or most</th>
<th>Some</th>
<th>Not much</th>
<th>Nothing at all</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>16-17 (n=101)</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18-24 (n=218)</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25-29 (n=151)</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30-49 (n=586)</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50-64 (n=628)</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65+ (n=531)</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source:* Pew Research Center’s Internet & American Life Library Services Survey of 2,252 people ages 16 and older conducted October 15-November 10, 2012. The survey was conducted in English and Spanish and on landline and cell phones.
Part III: Library patrons’ activities and expectations

Overview

In broad strokes, younger Americans’ library habits are very similar to those of older adults. They also value many of the same things in public libraries, and have generally similar views on what services and resources libraries should offer to their communities.

However, our research also finds some notable differences, especially related to technology at libraries. Americans under age 30 are significantly more likely than older adults to have used the computers or internet at a library, for instance, and 97% say that this is an important service for libraries to provide to their communities. Younger library patrons are also significantly more likely than those over age 30 to use the library as a space to just sit and read, study, or watch or listen to media.

The sections that follow will examine younger library patrons’ habits and expectations in three loose categories:

- Books and media at libraries;
- Technology and information resources, including research databases, job search and career resources, and automated library services; and
- Programs and spaces for younger patrons, and the role of the library as a community space.

An overview of patrons’ activities at libraries

In our national survey, we asked respondents who had visited a library or bookmobile in-person in the past 12 months about what they did at the library. We asked about 13 different activities, from browsing the shelves for books and media to attending classes and events (and explore them in detail beyond age group analysis in our recent report Libraries in the Digital Age.15) Below is an overview of how Americans use libraries; these activities will be discussed thematically in later sections.

Some 53% of Americans ages 16 and older visited a library or bookmobile in person in the past 12 months; the following chart breaks these activities down by general age group (ages 16-29 and ages 30 and older). Among recent library visitors, those ages 16-29 were significantly more likely to have visited the library just to study, sit and read, or watch or listen to media. Meanwhile, recent library visitors ages 30 and older were significantly more likely to have received help from a librarian in that time period, and to have brought a younger person to a class or event for children or teens. Older adults were also more likely to have borrowed a DVD or music CD.

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15 http://libraries.pewinternet.org/2013/01/22/library-services/
What younger Americans do at libraries

Among Americans ages 16+ who have visited a library or bookmobile in person in the past 12 months, the % in each age group who have done the following activities

Source: Pew Research Center's Internet & American Life Library Services Survey of 2,252 people ages 16 and older conducted October 15-November 10, 2012. The survey was conducted in English and Spanish and on landline and cell phones.
An overview of public priorities and expectations

In order to learn more about public priorities for libraries, we asked national survey respondents how important, if at all, they think it is for public libraries to provide various services to the community. All but one of the services are considered to be “very important” by a majority of respondents.

We also asked our national survey respondents, as well as our focus groups, about some different ways public libraries could change the way they serve the public, and whether or not they thought public libraries should implement these changes (if they do not offer these services already). In a separate, qualitative questionnaire aimed at public library staff members, we also asked librarians and other library workers their thoughts on these services.

Younger Americans were more often in favor of these ideas than older adults (specifically adults ages 50 and older), including having more comfortable spaces for reading, working, and relaxing, offering more interactive learning exhibits, and moving most services online.
What services and programs younger Americans say libraries should or should not implement

Among all Americans ages 16-29, the % who say public libraries should “definitely,” “maybe,” or “should definitely not” implement the following programs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Should definitely do</th>
<th>Should maybe do</th>
<th>Should definitely not do</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Coordinate more with local schools</td>
<td>87%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Free literacy programs</td>
<td>87%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have more comfortable spaces</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Separate spaces for different services</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Offer a broader selection of e-books</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Offer more interactive learning experiences</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Move most library services online</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Help users digitize material</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Make most services automated</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Move some books/stacks out of public locations</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Pew Research Center Internet & American Life Project Library Services survey. October 15-November 10, 2012. N=2,252 Americans ages 16 and older. Interviews were conducted in English and Spanish and on landline and cell phones.
I. Books and media

Books remain strongly associated with libraries in Americans’ minds. Overall, 80% of Americans say that it is “very important” for libraries to provide books to the community for borrowing. Americans ages 16-29 are significantly less likely to say books at libraries are “very important” than adults ages 30 and older (75% vs.82%), but just as likely to say that books are important overall (94% vs.96%).

A majority say books are “very important” for libraries

Among Americans ages 16+, the % in each age group who say it is “very important” for libraries to provide books to the community for borrowing

We see this reflected in what recent library visitors do at libraries:

- Almost three-quarters (73%) of Americans ages 16 and older who visited a library in the past 12 months also say they visit to borrow print books, including 72% of those under age 30.

- A similar number (73%) say they visit to browse the shelves for books or media, including 74% of those under age 30.

We also asked about periodicals, and found that about three in ten (31%) Americans ages 16 and older who visited a library in the past year visit to read or check out printed magazines or newspapers, including 34% of those under age 30.

Looking at other forms of media people visit the library for:

- About 40% of those who visited a library in the past 12 months say they visit to borrow a DVD or videotape of a movie or TV show, including 33% of those under age 30. Adults ages 30-49 (45%) and ages 50-64 (49%) are most likely say they come to the library for this reason.
• About 17% of those who visited a library in the past 12 months say they visit to borrow or download an audio book, including 14% of those under age 30.

• Some 16% of those who visited a library in the past 12 months say they visit to borrow a music CD, including 10% of those under age 30.

E-books at libraries

Among the 25% of Americans who visited a library website in the past 12 months, 22% borrowed an e-book. Some 57% of Americans do not know if their library lends out e-books, including 53% of those under age 30.

About half of Americans (53%) say that libraries should “definitely” offer a broader selection of e-books. Some 30% say libraries should “maybe” do this, and 5% say libraries should “definitely not” do this.

Among those under age 30, 54% say that libraries should “definitely” offer a broader selection of e-books, 37% say libraries should “maybe” do this, and 4% say libraries should “definitely not” do this.

16 The sample size was too small in this survey to report the breakdown by age group. For more on e-books at libraries, see “Libraries, patrons, and e-books” (2012) at http://libraries.pewinternet.org/2012/06/22/libraries-patrons-and-e-books/.
II. Technology and information resources

Some 73% of Americans ages 16 and older say there are places in their community where they can access the internet or use a computer for free, including 77% of those under age 30. And 35% of Americans say they have used those free access points, including 44% of those under age 30 (and 55% of those ages 16-17).

In the past 12 months, have you accessed the internet or used a computer for free someplace other than home, work or school?

Among all Americans ages 16+, the % in each age group who say they have used free computer or internet access points in their community.

![Bar chart showing the percentage of Americans who accessed the internet or used a computer for free in different age groups.](chart.jpg)

Source: Pew Research Center's Internet & American Life Library Services Survey of 2,252 people ages 16 and older conducted October 15-November 10, 2012. The survey was conducted in English and Spanish and on landline and cell phones.

Use of computers and the internet at libraries

We asked those who had visited libraries in the past 12 months if they used the internet or computers at the library in a question designed to include people who used the wired computers at the library as well as people who had used the library Wi-Fi connection. We found that about a quarter (26%) of Americans ages 16 and older had connected to the internet at the library in the past year, including 38% of those ages 16-29.

17 The American Library Association reports that 62% of libraries report they are the only source of free public access to computers and the Internet in their communities. Study available at: [http://www.ala.org/research/sites/ala.org.research/files/content/initiatives/plftas/2011_2012/2012%20PLFTAS%20Key%20Findings.pdf](http://www.ala.org/research/sites/ala.org.research/files/content/initiatives/plftas/2011_2012/2012%20PLFTAS%20Key%20Findings.pdf)

18 “In the past 12 months, have you used computers, the internet, or a public WI-FI network at a public library?”
Among all Americans ages 16+, the % in each age group who have accessed a public library computer, internet or WI-FI connection in the past 12 months

Source: Pew Research Center’s Internet & American Life Library Services Survey of 2,252 people ages 16 and older conducted October 15-November 10, 2012. The survey was conducted in English and Spanish and on landline and cell phones.

Additionally, some 36% of those who had ever visited a library in person say the library staff had helped them use a computer or the internet at a library. Those under age 30 are significantly more likely than older library visitors to say library staff has helped them use a computer or the internet at the library (43% vs.34%).

Among the 26% of Americans ages 16 and older who used the internet or computers at the library in the past year:

- 66% of Americans ages 16 and older who used the internet at a library in the past 12 months did research for school or work, including 77% of those under the age of 30.19
- 63% say they browsed the internet for fun or to pass the time, including 70% of those under the age of 30.
- 54% say they used email, including 60% of those under the age of 30. Those ages 18-49 are especially likely to say they did this activity.
- 47% say they got health information, including 42% of those under the age of 30.
- 41% say they visited government websites or got information about government services, including 40% of those under the age of 30.
- 36% say they looked for jobs or applied for jobs online, including 38% of those under the age of 30.
- 35% say they visited social networking sites, including 46% of those under the age of 30 (who are significantly more likely than older adults to report this use).
- 26% say they downloaded or watched online video, including 33% of those under the age of 30 (who are significantly more likely than older adults to report this use).
- 16% say they bought a product online, including 14% of those under the age of 30.

19 Note: For library computer/internet users under age 30, n=90 or 96 depending on form split.
• 16% say they **paid bills or did online banking**, including 18% of those under the age of 30.
• 16% say they **took an online class or completed an online certification program**, including 13% of those under the age of 30.

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**What younger Americans do on library internet connections**

Among Americans ages 16+ who used a public library computer, internet or WI-FI connection in the past 12 months, the % in each age group who did the following activities in that time period

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Ages 16-29 (n=90 or 96)</th>
<th>Ages 30+ (n=190 or 191)</th>
<th>Significance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Research for school or work**</td>
<td>77%</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Browse the internet for fun*</td>
<td>70% +</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Check or send email**</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visit social networking sites**</td>
<td>46% +</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Get health information**</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government websites/info**</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Look or apply for jobs*</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Download or watch online video*</td>
<td>33% +</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pay bills or do online banking*</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purchase a product*</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Take class/cert program online**</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

** n for ages 16-29 = 90 due to form split
* n for ages 16-29 = 96 due to form split
+ indicates statistical significance between age groups
Source: Pew Research Center’s Internet & American Life Library Services Survey of 2,252 people ages 16 and older conducted October 15-November 10, 2012. The survey was conducted in English and Spanish and on landline and cell phones.
While we did not ask a question about whether library internet users depend on the library as their primary internet connection, we did ask respondents how important they think it is to have free access to computers and the internet at the library in their community. According to the results of our national survey, three-quarters (77%) of Americans think it is “very important” for public libraries to provide free access to computers and the internet to the community, including 75% of Americans under age 30.

**How important is free library access to computers and the internet to the community?**

*Among all Americans ages 16+, the % in each age group who say it is “very important” for libraries to provide free access to computers and internet*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Group</th>
<th>Importance</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>16-29</td>
<td>77%</td>
<td>236</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30-49</td>
<td>81%</td>
<td>278</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50-64</td>
<td>81%</td>
<td>312</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65+</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>272</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Pew Research Center’s Internet & American Life Library Services Survey of 2,252 people ages 16 and older conducted October 15–November 10, 2012. The survey was conducted in English and Spanish and on landline and cell phones.

In response to the open-ended questions on our separate online questionnaire, several librarians agreed that providing both access to the internet and assistance with digital tasks were important roles for libraries in their communities. One wrote, “Not everyone has access to computers and internet on a regular basis. . . . Even children, teens, and young adults who do not have the resources to have internet/computer access 24 hours each day are not able to complete tasks online which others may find simple.”

**Research resources**

Several of the questions in our nationally representative phone survey touched on how Americans use public libraries for their research needs. In general, we found wide support for libraries providing research resources, including specialized resources that otherwise may not available for free to the general public—for instance, 96% of Americans under age 30 say it is important for libraries to provide research resources such as free databases.

In looking at how Americans use libraries for research, we find:

- Over half (54%) of those who visited a library in the past 12 months say they visit to research topics that interest them, including 60% of those under age 30.
• And as mentioned earlier, among those ages 16 and older who used the computers or internet at a library in the past 12 months, a majority (66%) used it to **do research for school or work**, including 77% of those under the age of 30.

In focus groups and in our online panel, librarians echoed these findings in describing how the library is used by older teens and young adults for studying and research. One library staff member especially emphasized the role of the library as a physical space for study, writing that librarians should “reach out more to young adults and offer a safe place for them to study, to ask questions and discover answers.”

In addition to space and basic resources such as computers and internet access, most libraries also offer access to specialized digital resources such as subscription databases—and Americans identify these services as key resources for the community. In fact, almost three-quarters (73%) of Americans ages 16 and older say it is “very important” for public libraries to **provide research resources such as free databases to the community**, including 76% of those under age 30.

Overall, about 46% of those who visited a library in the past 12 months say they visit to **use a research database**, including 51% of those under age 30. Library users ages 65 and older are the least likely age group to say they come to the library for this reason (33%).

In discussions about providing research databases for the public, many librarians in our focus groups said that patrons are not generally aware of the databases that are available or how these databases differ from the resources available through a public search engine such as Google. Several cited students’ lack of awareness in particular. One member of our online panel wrote: “We . . . need to encourage young adults to use the resources we provide for free—databases, e-books, programs, etc. rather than relying solely on Google and other search engines.”

One librarian said that while students weren’t always aware of databases, the library staff made an effort to teach them about research resources:

> “We’re big advocates of the databases, especially with the students when they come in, and they have to do a research paper and they’re looking for articles on certain things, so letting them know that you don’t necessarily have to have a physical journal . . . I can show you how you can access the journals from home.”

However, another issue identified by library staff members was potential confusion among both high school and college students as to whether using online databases would be considered an “online source” by their instructors.20 “They don’t understand or care about the difference between a database that they get to from the internet and the internet,” one librarian said in a focus group. As another librarian in an in-person focus group put it, “Their teachers say, ‘No internet resources. You can’t use the internet.’ It’s like you want to say, ‘But this isn’t really the internet. It’s not what your teacher meant.’”21

Several librarians cited their efforts to surface a variety of databases, beyond those used for research. One said, “There are a number of databases just for people who are seeking jobs, careers, skills, GED, testing sites that are buried that we want to bring out and highlight and make them more visible for the customer.”

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20 Students are often given requirements limiting the number of online sources they can cite, or requiring that their sources include a certain proportion of journal articles or books.
Many librarians did cite job search and career resources as a major service provided by their library, a view that is shared by the general public: Two-thirds (67%) of Americans ages 16 and older think it is “very important” to the community for public libraries to **provide job, employment and career resources**, including 71% of those under age 30. And over a third (36%) of Americans ages 16 and older who used the internet at a library in the past 12 months say they did so to **look for jobs or apply for jobs online**, including 38% of those under the age of 30.

**New digital resources and automation**

Library staff members in our focus groups and online panel discussed various ways libraries focus younger patrons after high school. Participants often said that younger adults in their libraries wanted digital services to be easy to use—“seamless,” in the words of one focus group member:

“It has to be easy. It has to be really easy for them or they’re not going to do it. So, making our services as seamless as possible can sometimes be a barrier because you have to work with the company that’s providing the service. You have to work with the publishers. It’s really hard to make it all come together in a seamless way.”

In our national survey of the general public, we asked whether libraries should make various major changes, such as automating most services or moving most services online:

- When we asked Americans whether libraries should **move most services online so users can access them without having to visit the library**, we found lukewarm support for this idea compared with others we asked about—some 42% of Americans say that libraries should “definitely” do this (including 44% of those under age 30), and another 34% say libraries should “maybe” do this (including 36% of those under age 30).

- We also asked about **making most library services automated so people can find what they need and check out material on their own without help from staff**. We found that a similar proportion of Americans (41%) say that libraries should “definitely” make most services automated, including 41% of Americans under age 30. Interestingly, these younger respondents were significantly more likely than older adults to be strongly opposed to this idea: 25% of those under age 30 said libraries should “definitely not do” make most library services automated, compared with 18% of those ages 30 and older.
III. Programs and spaces for younger patrons

Libraries as a community space

One strong theme that emerged from our survey findings and in qualitative discussions was the role of the library as a community space. “A warm, welcoming and friendly space is hard to find these days,” one librarian in our online panel wrote, “and the public library has the remarkable opportunity to become a community gathering place in communities where such a space is sorely missing.”

Through our national phone survey, we attempted to quantify Americans’ views on several different roles that libraries may play in their communities:

- About three-quarters (76%) of Americans think it is “very important” to the community for public libraries to provide quiet study spaces for adults and children, including 72% of those under age 30. Adults ages 50-64 are especially likely to say this (81%).

- Almost six in ten Americans (59%) say that libraries should “definitely” create more comfortable spaces for reading, working, and relaxing at the library, including 64% of those under age 30. Some 49% of those who visited a library in the past 12 months say they visit just to sit, read, and study, or watch or listen to media, including 60% of those under age 30.

- About half (49%) of Americans say it is “very important” to the community for public libraries to provide free public meeting spaces, including 48% of those under age 30. And almost a quarter (23%) of Americans who visited a library in the past 12 months say they visit to attend a meeting of a group to which they belong, including 23% of those under age 30.

- We also asked about whether libraries should help users digitize material such as family photos or historical documents, and found that 43% of Americans think that libraries should “definitely” help patrons digitize material such as family photos or historical documents, including 41% of those under age 30.

The different demands these various type of services might be why a majority (61%) of Americans say that libraries should “definitely” have completely separate locations or spaces for different services, such as children’s services, computer labs, reading spaces, and meeting rooms, including 57% of Americans under age 30.

However, when we asked about how libraries could make space for all these activities, we found that Americans overall are less than enthusiastic about the idea of removing print books from their central place. Just one in five Americans (20%), including 23% of those under age 30, say that libraries should “definitely” move some print books and stacks out of public locations to free up more space for things such as technology centers, reading rooms, meetings rooms, and cultural events. Yet while this idea lacked immediate support among all age groups, those under age 30 were somewhat more open to this idea in general, as they were significantly more likely than older adults to say that libraries should “maybe” do this (47% vs.36%).

Patrons in our focus group often identified children’s areas and teen hangout spaces as especially important to keep separate from the main reading or lounge areas, to keep noise levels and other

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22 More views about how quiet libraries should be: http://libraries.pewinternet.org/2013/02/06/should-libraries-shush/
distractions down to a minimum—and the librarians we spoke with agreed. Having a separate area is “very inviting for teens [because] they don’t have to worry about being very quiet,” one librarian said.

In addition to reducing noise and interruptions for other patrons, many librarians told us that having separate spaces was important to give children and young adults a sense of independence and ownership. One online respondent pointed out that “the public library’s role as ‘third place’ is particularly important for teens, since few noncommercial public spaces welcome and engage teens.”

A library staff member in our online panel wrote:

“Having a separate children's area or young adults area will cater solely to those groups and make them feel that the library is theirs. They do not have to deal with adults watching them or monitoring what book they pick or what they choose to do—it's all about them and what they want with no judgment. Children and teens love having their own space so why not give them that at the library?”

Many of the library staff members in our online panel said that their libraries already have separate locations for different services. Those who said their library was not very likely to do this in the future often cited issues of space, or funding; one pointed out that “in small libraries, often operated by a single staff member, separate spaces cannot be for reasons of security or even customer service.”

One potential solution that focus group members discussed was sound-proof teen sections with glass walls, allowing for both supervision and privacy. One librarian described a similar teen section at a nearby library:

“The teens really take ownership of it. From the information desk, a librarian can see in to make sure nothing is going on but it’s still private because it’s more or less sound-proof from the rest [of the library]. They can enjoy their time there. Patrons reading in the magazine room can have their own quiet area. It’s a really nice set-up.”

### Libraries and schools

Whether in focus groups or national survey results, one theme that stood out was the desire for libraries to coordinate more closely with local schools. Overall, 85% of respondents say that libraries should “definitely” coordinate more closely with local schools in providing resources to kids. This opinion was also frequently voiced by parents in our focus groups, as discussed in a recent report. (Another popular service was free early literacy programs to help young children prepare for school, which 82% of respondents say that libraries should “definitely” offer.)

While these findings do not apply directly to the younger Americans in this 16-29 year-old age group, many librarians told us that connecting with younger children early in their education was a valuable way to create connections that would continue as they grow older.

“Interacting with children and young adults at their schools is an important aspect of encouraging these groups to use the library at a young age,” one library staff member in our...

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23 [http://libraries.pewinternet.org/2013/05/01/parents-children-libraries-and-reading/](http://libraries.pewinternet.org/2013/05/01/parents-children-libraries-and-reading/)
online panel wrote. “These groups may be more likely to use the library as adults if they are comfortable there as children.” Another wrote that close coordination with local public schools “has increased program attendance and circulation in the children and teens area because the youth services librarian has made an effort to connect.”

Programs and classes for children and teens

When it comes to programs and resources for younger patrons:

- Almost three-quarters (74%) of Americans think it is “very important” for public libraries to provide programs and classes for children and teens, including 72% of Americans under age 30.
- Some 47% of Americans (and 53% of those under age 30) say that libraries should “definitely” offer more interactive learning experiences similar to museum exhibits.
- And 41% of those who visited a library in the past 12 months (including 35% of those under age 30) say they visit to attend or bring a younger person to a class, program, or event designed for children or teens.

In focus groups, librarians described their various experiences with teens at their libraries, and emphasized that the situation varies from town to town—and library to library:

“In some of the branches there’s a large teen population that’s going to hang out there anyway. So, it’s providing them with something to do while they’re in there. Some [libraries] are trying to pull [teens] into the branch and some . . . are just trying to deal with the [teens] that they have.”

Another librarian in the focus group had a similar experience:

“I spent most of my first year as a librarian in a very small . . . branch in the county, in a very low income community that desperately needs a library. The kids would come in. A lot of them haven’t stepped foot in the library before and they didn’t know how to behave, what to do, what they could do. There are three hours per day of computer time and then I’ve heard them say, ‘Oh, I’m logged off. There’s nothing else to do. Let’s go home.’ So, our goal in that specific branch was to give them something to do . . . They’re going to hang out there anyway, so, we wanted to keep them occupied, out of trouble, and not disruptive. So, when we started introducing LEGO programs for the tween demographic and board game programs for the older teens, it improved a lot. They would invite their friends. It was more structured and the issues went down significantly after that.”

Another librarians also cited crafts and other activities as ways to bring new teens into library programs, especially when they take place in visible public areas:

“Every quarter we do two or three crafts. Making origami craft, make a CD clock, bracelets . . . Sometimes we do them right on the public floor so that if we can’t get teens to come down into the meeting room because they’re shy or reluctant, we can maybe get their attention right there on the floor by wearing the bracelet [craft] around and going up to teens and getting them to come over to a table right on the floor.”
Librarians we spoke with mentioned several potential roadblocks in creating teen programs, such as lacking the funds, space, or available and trained staff. In an answer to our online questionnaire, one library staff member wrote that while funding issues existed, “the bigger problem is geographic and transport related. We cannot bring together a critical mass of young people at one time and one place,” although coordinating with the local school’s bus schedules might be a workaround in the future.

Digital media labs

One library innovation that we explored was digital media labs, where patrons can create and upload new digital content, such as music, movies, or their own e-books. Overall, 58% of respondents say they would be interested in a digital media lab where patrons could create and upload new digital content; some 26% say they would be “very likely” to use such a resource.

Among those under age 30, 27% said they would be “very likely” to use digital media labs, and 67% said they would be likely to use them overall (significantly more than older adults). Adults 65 and older were the least likely to say they would be likely to use such a lab—32% said they would be likely to use them overall, compared with over half of younger respondents, and just 15% said they would be “very likely” to use them.

One example of this type of space that has a particular focus on younger patrons is the YOUmedia teen learning spaces, which are funded by the MacArthur Foundation and the Institute of Museum and Library Services. The first YOUmedia space, YOUmedia Chicago, opened in 2009, and offers teens both access to digital technologies and resources as well as guidance and mentoring from adult library staff. A new report, “Teens, Digital Media, and the Chicago Public Library,” analyzes YOUmedia Chicago’s first three years.

Several of the librarians who answered our online questionnaire were enthusiastic about the idea of media labs. One wrote: “[We should have] more teen services and dedicated teen space for exploring technology and literacy—a multimedia lab and teen lounge! We have to reach this population and mentor them at a higher rate than we do today.”

However, few of the librarians wrote that their libraries already offer this. When asked why not, some mentioned staff time, technology resources, budget concerns, and space as primary factors. Others mentioned liability issues related to user-created content. One of the librarians in our online panel wrote, “I want to work more with the teens on content creation. We are good with the old fashioned programs such as writing groups and art, but when it comes to playing with new technology, money, training and equipment get in the way.”

Other activities

Another potential area of change that librarians identified in our qualitative work was the need for programming that would appeal to younger adults. Asked about what libraries need to change, one library staff member wrote: “[There’s] not enough programming for teens and actual young adults; it seems that in the library world the term ‘young adult’ refers to children aged ten to thirteen.” Another librarian agreed: “We should also focus on the ‘lost’ age group of older-than-teens-but-younger-than-baby-boomers for programs.”

Overall, over six in ten Americans (63%), including 64% of those under age 30, say it is “very important” for public libraries to provide free events and activities, such as classes and cultural events, for people of all ages. About one in five (21%) Americans who visited a library in the past 12 months say they visit to attend a class, program, or lecture for adults, including 20% of those under age 30.

However, several librarians and patrons in our focus groups noted that many programs and events for adults are often targeted toward parents with young children. “We need to find a way to get young adults into the library,” one librarian wrote. “I mean the ones who do not have children. There needs to be a reason that a 30 year old goes to the library that is not to drop off their kids to story time. We are missing entire generations until they reach retirement age.”
Part IV: New services and innovations

In addition to asking people for their preferences on some new library services, we also asked respondents whether they would themselves use a variety of possible new activities and features at libraries. Our list was weighted towards services that are rooted in technology and allow more tech-related interactions with libraries and at them.

How likely younger Americans say they would be to use various library services

Among younger Americans ages 16-29, the % who say they are likely – or not – to use the following library services and activities

Source: Pew Research Center’s Internet & American Life Library Services Survey of 2,252 people ages 16 and older conducted October 15-November 10, 2012. The survey was conducted in English and Spanish and on landline and cell phones.

These items are discussed further individually below.

An online research service where you could pose questions and get responses from librarians

Over three-quarters (77%) of Americans under the age of 30 say they would be interested in an “Ask a Librarian” type of online research service, where they could pose questions and get responses from
librarians; some 37% say they would be “very likely” to use this type of resource. Americans ages 65 and older were least likely to express a strong interest in this resource.

A program that allowed people to try out the newest tech devices or applications

Overall, 73% of respondents ages 16-29 say they would be interested in a “technology petting zoo” program that allowed people to try out the newest tech devices or applications; some 36% say they would be “very likely” to use such a service. About four in ten Americans under the age of 65 said they were “very likely” to use this type of program, significantly more than the 22% of those ages 65 and older who say this.

Personalized online accounts that give you customized recommendations for books and services based on your past library activity

Some three-quarters (75%) of respondents ages 16-29 say they would be interested in personalized online accounts that provide customized recommendations for books and services based on their past library activity, similar to the recommendations offered by commercial sites like Amazon—significantly more than older adults. Some 35% say they would be “very likely” to use a service with customized book recommendations.

A cell phone app that allows you to access and use library services from your phone and see what programs the library offers

Overall, 77% of respondents ages 16-29 say they would be likely to use library a cell phone app that would allow them to access and use library services from their phone; some 42% say they would be “very likely” to use such an app. As discussed earlier in the report, 13% of those ages 16 and older have visited library websites or otherwise accessed library services by mobile device in the past year, including 18% of those under age 30.25

Younger respondents, specifically those under the age of 50, were significantly more likely than older adults to express an interest in mobile library apps.

Library kiosks located throughout the community where people can check out books, movies or music without having to go to the library itself

Overall, 76% of respondents ages 16-29 say they would be likely to use library kiosks located throughout the community where people can check out books, movies or music, similar to Redbox’s DVD rental service; some 44% say they would be “very likely” to use such kiosks. Respondents under age 50 are significantly more likely than older adults to express strong interest in kiosks.

A cell phone app that helps you locate material within the library by guiding you with GPS

Overall, 75% of respondents ages 16-29 say they would be interested in a GPS-driven cell phone app that helps patrons easily locate material within the library, significantly more than older adults; some 45% say they would be “very likely” to use this type of app. Younger respondents, specifically those under the age of 50, were more likely than older adults to express a strong interest in location-driven apps.

E-book readers already loaded with the book you want to read

Overall, 68% of respondents under age 30 say they would be likely to check out pre-loaded e-readers if their library offered them, significantly more than older adults; some 32% say they would be “very likely” to take advantage of this service.

Respondents ages 65 and older are the least likely to be interested in this service—just about four in ten say they would be likely to use pre-loaded e-readers, overall; meanwhile, previous research has shown that Americans ages 16-17 who don’t already borrow e-books are significantly more likely than older non-borrowers to be interested in this service, although the sample size was too small in this survey to report those numbers.

A digital media lab where you could create and upload new digital content like movies or your own e-books

As was discussed earlier in the report, 67% of Americans ages 16-29 say they would be interested in a digital media lab where patrons could create and upload new digital content, significantly more than older adults; some 27% say they would be “very likely” to use such a resource.

Adults 65 and older were the least likely to say they would be likely to use such a lab—32% said they would be likely to use them overall, compared with over half of younger respondents, and just 15% said they would be “very likely” to use them.

Classes or instruction on how to use handheld reading devices like e-book readers and tablet computers

Almost half (47%) of respondents under the age of 30 say they would be interested in classes on how to use handheld reading devices like e-book readers and tablet computers, including 17% who say they would be “very likely” to take these classes. Adults ages 50-64 were significantly more likely than most other age groups to express a strong interest in this service, with 30% saying they would be “very likely” to take these classes.

Classes or instruction on how to download library e-books to handheld devices

Almost half (56%) of respondents under the age of 30 say they would be interested in classes on how to download library e-books to handheld devices, including 24% who say they would be “very likely” to take these classes. Adults ages 30-49 and 50-64 were particularly likely to express an interest in this service, with about one in three saying they would be “very likely” to take these classes.
Methods

Library Services Survey

Prepared by Princeton Survey Research Associates International for the Pew Research Center’s Internet & American Life Project

November 2012

SUMMARY

The Library Services Survey obtained telephone interviews with a nationally representative sample of 2,252 people ages 16 and older living in the United States. Interviews were conducted via landline \((n_{ll}=1,127)\) and cell phone \((n_c=1,125,\) including 543 without a landline phone). The survey was conducted by Princeton Survey Research Associates International. The interviews were administered in English and Spanish by Princeton Data Source from October 15 to November 10, 2012. Statistical results are weighted to correct known demographic discrepancies. The margin of sampling error for results based on the complete set of weighted data is \(\pm 2.3\) percentage points. Results based on the 1,945 internet users\(^{26}\) have a margin of sampling error of \(\pm 2.5\) percentage points.

Details on the design, execution and analysis of the survey are discussed below.

Design and Data Collection Procedures

Sample Design

A combination of landline and cellular random digit dial (RDD) samples was used to represent all adults in the United States who have access to either a landline or cellular telephone. Both samples were provided by Survey Sampling International, LLC (SSI) according to PSRAI specifications.

Numbers for the landline sample were drawn with probabilities in proportion to their share of listed telephone households from active blocks (area code + exchange + two-digit block number) that contained three or more residential directory listings. The cellular sample was not list-assisted, but was drawn through a systematic sampling from dedicated wireless 100-blocks and shared service 100-blocks with no directory-listed landline numbers.

Contact Procedures

Interviews were conducted from October 15 to November 10, 2012. As many as 7 attempts were made to contact every sampled telephone number. Sample was released for interviewing in replicates, which are representative subsamples of the larger sample. Using replicates to control the release of sample ensures that complete call procedures are followed for the entire sample. Calls were staggered over times of day and days of the week to maximize the chance of making contact with potential

\(^{26}\) Internet user is defined based on those accessing the internet occasionally, sending or receiving email, and/or accessing the internet on a cell phone, tablet, or other mobile handheld device.
respondents. Interviewing was spread as evenly as possible across the days in field. Each telephone number was called at least one time during the day in an attempt to complete an interview.

For the landline sample, interviewers asked to speak with the youngest male or female ages 16 or older currently at home based on a random rotation. If no male/female was available, interviewers asked to speak with the youngest person age 16 or older of the other gender. This systematic respondent selection technique has been shown to produce samples that closely mirror the population in terms of age and gender when combined with cell interviewing.

For the cellular sample, interviews were conducted with the person who answered the phone. Interviewers verified that the person was age 16 or older and in a safe place before administering the survey. Cellular respondents were offered a post-paid cash reimbursement for their participation.

### Weighting and analysis

The first stage of weighting corrected for different probabilities of selection associated with the number of adults in each household and each respondent’s telephone usage patterns. This weighting also adjusts for the overlapping landline and cell sample frames and the relative sizes of each frame and each sample.

This first-stage weight for the $i$th case can be expressed as:

$$WT_i = \frac{1}{\left(\frac{S_{LL}}{S_{CP}} \times \frac{1}{AD_i}\right)} \quad \text{if respondent has no cell phone}$$

$$WT_i = \frac{1}{\left(\frac{S_{LL}}{S_{CP}} \times \frac{1}{AD_i}\right) + R} \quad \text{if respondent has both kinds of phones}$$

$$WT_i = \frac{1}{R} \quad \text{if respondent has no land line phone}$$

Where $S_{LL} = $ size of the landline sample  
$S_{CP} = $ size of the cell phone sample  
$AD_i = $ Number of adults in the household  
$R = $ Estimated ratio of the land line sample frame to the cell phone sample frame

The equations can be simplified by plugging in the values for $S_{LL} = 1,127$ and $S_{CP} = 1,125$. Additionally, we will estimate of the ratio of the size of landline sample frame to the cell phone sample frame $R = 0.60$.

The final stage of weighting balances sample demographics to population parameters. The sample is balanced by form to match national population parameters for sex, age, education, race, Hispanic origin, region (U.S. Census definitions), population density, and telephone usage. The Hispanic origin was split out based on nativity; U.S born and non-U.S. born. The White, non-Hispanic subgroup is also balanced on age, education and region. The basic weighting parameters came from a special analysis of the

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27 i.e., whether respondents have only a landline telephone, only a cell phone, or both kinds of telephone.
Census Bureau’s 2011 Annual Social and Economic Supplement (ASEC) that included all households in the United States. The population density parameter was derived from Census data. The cell phone usage parameter came from an analysis of the July-December 2011 National Health Interview Survey.\textsuperscript{28,29}

Weighting was accomplished using Sample Balancing, a special iterative sample weighting program that simultaneously balances the distributions of all variables using a statistical technique called the \textit{Deming Algorithm}. Weights were trimmed to prevent individual interviews from having too much influence on the final results. The use of these weights in statistical analysis ensures that the demographic characteristics of the sample closely approximate the demographic characteristics of the national population. Table 1 compares weighted and unweighted sample distributions to population parameters.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parameter (16+)</th>
<th>Unweighted</th>
<th>Weight</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>48.7%</td>
<td>47.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>51.3%</td>
<td>53.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16-24</td>
<td>16.0%</td>
<td>14.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25-34</td>
<td>17.3%</td>
<td>13.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35-44</td>
<td>16.6%</td>
<td>12.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45-54</td>
<td>18.3%</td>
<td>16.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55-64</td>
<td>15.4%</td>
<td>18.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65+</td>
<td>16.3%</td>
<td>23.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than HS Graduate</td>
<td>16.4%</td>
<td>11.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HS Graduate</td>
<td>29.4%</td>
<td>27.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some College/Assoc Degree</td>
<td>27.5%</td>
<td>25.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College Graduate</td>
<td>26.8%</td>
<td>36.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Race/Ethnicity</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White/not Hispanic</td>
<td>67.4%</td>
<td>69.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black/not Hispanic</td>
<td>11.6%</td>
<td>10.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hisp - US born</td>
<td>7.0%</td>
<td>7.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hisp - born outside</td>
<td>7.3%</td>
<td>5.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other/not Hispanic</td>
<td>6.7%</td>
<td>5.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Region</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northeast</td>
<td>18.3%</td>
<td>16.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Midwest</td>
<td>21.7%</td>
<td>22.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South</td>
<td>36.8%</td>
<td>36.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West</td>
<td>23.2%</td>
<td>24.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


\textsuperscript{29} The phone use parameter used for this 16+ sample is the same as the parameter we use for all 18+ surveys. In other words, no adjustment was made to account for the fact that the target population for this survey is slightly different than a standard 18+ general population survey.
### County Pop. Density

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1 - Lowest</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5 - Highest</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Density</td>
<td>19.9%</td>
<td>23.2%</td>
<td>20.2%</td>
<td>20.0%</td>
<td>19.8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Household Phone Use

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>LLO</th>
<th>Dual - few, some cell</th>
<th>Dual - most cell</th>
<th>CPO</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Use rate (%)</td>
<td>7.0%</td>
<td>5.6%</td>
<td>6.8%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Effects of Sample Design on Statistical Inference

Post-data collection statistical adjustments require analysis procedures that reflect departures from simple random sampling. PSRAI calculates the effects of these design features so that an appropriate adjustment can be incorporated into tests of statistical significance when using these data. The so-called "design effect" or \( \text{deff} \) represents the loss in statistical efficiency that results from systematic non-response. The total sample design effect for this survey is 1.24.

PSRAI calculates the composite design effect for a sample of size \( n \), with each case having a weight, \( w_i \) as:

\[
deff = \frac{n \sum_{i=1}^{n} w_i^2}{\left( \sum_{i=1}^{n} w_i \right)^2}
\]

In a wide range of situations, the adjusted standard error of a statistic should be calculated by multiplying the usual formula by the square root of the design effect (\( \sqrt{\text{deff}} \)). Thus, the formula for computing the 95% confidence interval around a percentage is:

\[
\hat{p} \pm \left( \sqrt{\text{deff}} \times 1.96 \sqrt{\frac{\hat{p}(1-\hat{p})}{n}} \right)
\]

where \( \hat{p} \) is the sample estimate and \( n \) is the unweighted number of sample cases in the group being considered.

The survey’s margin of error is the largest 95% confidence interval for any estimated proportion based on the total sample — the one around 50%. For example, the margin of error for the entire sample is \( \pm 2.3 \) percentage points. This means that in 95 out every 100 samples drawn using the same
methodology, estimated proportions based on the entire sample will be no more than 2.3 percentage points away from their true values in the population. The margin of error for estimates based on form 1 or form 2 respondents is ±3.3 percentage points. It is important to remember that sampling fluctuations are only one possible source of error in a survey estimate. Other sources, such as respondent selection bias, questionnaire wording and reporting inaccuracy, may contribute additional error of greater or lesser magnitude.

Response Rate

Table 2 reports the disposition of all sampled telephone numbers ever dialed from the original telephone number samples. The response rate estimates the fraction of all eligible respondents in the sample that were ultimately interviewed. At PSRAI it is calculated by taking the product of three component rates:

- Contact rate – the proportion of working numbers where a request for interview was made
- Cooperation rate – the proportion of contacted numbers where a consent for interview was at least initially obtained, versus those refused
- Completion rate – the proportion of initially cooperating and eligible interviews that were completed

Thus the response rate for the landline sample was 11.4 percent. The response rate for the cellular sample was 11 percent.

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30 PSRAI’s disposition codes and reporting are consistent with the American Association for Public Opinion Research standards.
31 PSRAI assumes that 75 percent of cases that result in a constant disposition of “No answer” or “Busy” are actually not working numbers.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Landline</th>
<th>Cell</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Numbers Dailed</td>
<td>27,813</td>
<td>23,844</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-residential</td>
<td>1,100</td>
<td>404</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computer/Fax</td>
<td>1,120</td>
<td>45</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cell phone</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>----</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other not working</td>
<td>13,815</td>
<td>9,183</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Additional projected not working</td>
<td>1,577</td>
<td>321</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working numbers</td>
<td>10,193</td>
<td>13,891</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working Rate</td>
<td>36.6%</td>
<td>58.3%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Answer / Busy</td>
<td>526</td>
<td>107</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voice Mail</td>
<td>3,296</td>
<td>4,073</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Non-Contact</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>11</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contacted numbers</td>
<td>6,344</td>
<td>9,700</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contact Rate</td>
<td>62.2%</td>
<td>69.8%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Callback</td>
<td>373</td>
<td>1,504</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Refusal</td>
<td>4,749</td>
<td>6,630</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cooperating numbers</td>
<td>1,222</td>
<td>1,566</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cooperation Rate</td>
<td>19.3%</td>
<td>16.1%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language Barrier</td>
<td>----</td>
<td>42</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Screen out / Child's cell phone</td>
<td>----</td>
<td>375</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eligible numbers</td>
<td>1,182</td>
<td>1,149</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eligibility Rate</td>
<td>96.7%</td>
<td>73.4%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Break-off</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>24</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Completes</td>
<td>1,127</td>
<td>1,125</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Completion Rate</td>
<td>95.3%</td>
<td>97.9%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Response Rate</td>
<td>11.4%</td>
<td>11.0%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>