

The Wisconsin Library User (and Non-User): *Outcomes of a Statewide Survey*

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By

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Executive Summary

The following research studies the perceptions of the population of Wisconsin toward libraries and library use. A short scientific survey was developed for telephone administration. 611 individuals around the state agreed to complete the survey. This population included both library users and non-users. The following report includes details about many interesting points, including:

- ◆ Library users vote in higher percentages than non-library users.
- ◆ Library users buy more books than non-library users.

Additionally, a tremendous amount of goodwill towards public libraries (among both library users and non-users) was confirmed. This confirmation of goodwill, alone, bodes well for future initiatives to preserve library funding and expand library use.

In addition, a by-product of this study is the creation of a call center. To this end, a call center was created. It is hoped that this new call center can be used along with the procedures developed in this study to provide low cost research to more specific library regions around the state.

Acknowledgements

A project of this magnitude is only completed through the support and assistance of many people who have been directly and indirectly involved in this study. First, I would like to thank David Weinholt for being a leader and champion of this project for a year. David served as the coordinator and spearhead in WPLC that gave this project life.

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"Knowledge is Power---- Be Powerful!"

Table of Contents

Executive Summary	ii
Acknowledgements.....	iii
Section One: The need for a statewide library survey.....	1
Section Two: Procedure for data collection and Analysis	2
Section Three: Statistical Notation Crib sheet.....	4
Section Four: Assessing the sample.....	5
Section Five: <u>Who</u> is Using Public Libraries?.....	12
Section Six: Perspectives on Library Funding	18
Section Seven: <u>What</u> is the Perception of Public Libraries in Wisconsin?	21
Section Eight: <u>How</u> are individuals Using their Public Library?	26
Section Nine: Interest in New Initiatives.....	28
Section Ten: The Library Overall	35
Epilogue.....	36
Appendices:	
Table 3: County Breakdown of Respondents.....	37
Figure1: Detail of State Quadrants.....	40
Appendix1a: Library User Comments on Service Importance	41
Appendix1b: Non-Library User Comments on Service Importance.....	45
Appendix2a: Library User General Suggestions	48
Appendix2b: Non-Library User General Suggestions	54

The Wisconsin Library User (and Non-User): *The need for a Statewide Survey*

Public libraries are faced with the ongoing challenges of connecting citizens to information and services, reaching out to new library users, and advocating library use to build both community and state-level support. In order to meet these challenges, libraries rely on information to decide where to allocate various resources. In times of budget shortfalls, this information takes on heightened importance as libraries decide how to allocate fewer resources. However, current information that provides a comprehensive picture of state library utilization is virtually nonexistent. Research that predates the Internet is currently being used to formulate library plans and policy¹.

The current survey is the first step in a process that will provide Wisconsin libraries with information about library utilization at regular intervals with the hope of providing more accurate information on which to formulate policy, initiate new programs, and direct advocacy campaigns. Additionally, it is the hope that this statewide information will serve as a point of comparison for individual libraries and library systems throughout the state, and provide information to make these local data collections more efficient and informative.

¹ See Wisconsin Gallup Poll (1979).

Section Two: Procedure for Data Collection and Analyses

In addition to collecting statewide information on library use, this survey was also a test of a procedure for developing a call center that could be utilized by libraries, library systems and other non-profit groups for low-cost research. To this end, I will spend some time detailing the data collection procedures.

Call Center Location

After some initial investigations into a potential space from which to conduct a survey, the South Central Library System (SCLS) computer training room was chosen. This room proved to be a nearly ideal space for a small call center. The computers, ample parking, an adjacent training room, and the potential to add additional telephone lines make this a good location.

The survey was programmed into a database that was networked onto a single machine. This machine could be backed up nightly to secure the data. A call list of 2000 randomly selected names and phone numbers from across the state of Wisconsin was purchased from Reference USA. This list was split into 5 groups and placed at 5 separate computers that became calling stations.

The Interviewers

Five individuals were hired at \$10 / hour as independent contractors and trained to conduct the interviews. Each of these interviewers has some association with Wisconsin libraries (spouse, employee, or library student). One Interviewer was fluent in Spanish and conducted several interviews in Spanish. Interviews were conducted from 5:30pm – 8:30pm Monday-Friday, and 2:30pm – 6pm on Saturday. The entire process of data collection took approximately three weeks.

Callbacks were periodically made to individuals who completed the survey in order to check the interviewers work. It should be noted that all interviewers received positive comments from these callbacks and a number of individuals expressed gratitude to the library system for conducting such research, and soliciting opinions.

Sampling Children

In order to sample children as well as adults, once a survey was completed with an adult, interviewers asked respondents if there was a child in their household between the ages of 14 and 18 who would complete the survey. This allowed us to gain consent from an interview from a parent or guardian, and this is the necessary procedure for sampling anyone below the age of 18 years old. Methodological considerations about sampling children less than 14 years of age aside, we believed that individuals who were 14 years old were more likely to be

autonomous library users. In this way it is believed that sampling this truncated youth population will yield a more accurate picture of independent (rather than parentally enforced) library use.

Contact Rate

In order to reach the goal of 600 completions, a second list of 2000 names was purchased, after names on the initial list were called twice resulting in 400 contacts. The total number of where contact was attempted was 3,565. Of these attempts 611 individuals completed the survey. This resulted in a completion rate of 17.1%. This completion rate is somewhat lower than expected. This can be explained, at least in part, by two factors: (1) a call screening system that was prevalent in Milwaukee suburbs, and (2) concern over the “no-call” list².

The completion rate for this survey was 17.1%

Comments on Procedure:

Although the contact rate was slightly lower than expected, the procedure for conducting this research went better than I had anticipated. I think that this space and procedure are well suited for future data collections.

² Even though research is exempt from the no call list, many individuals reacted with suspicion that they were being contacted because they were on the ‘no call’ list.

Section Three: Statistical Notation Crib sheet

There are many ways of learning about the world around you. However, the method that I privilege, and the method that is demonstrated throughout this report, is a quantitative or statistical method. Therefore I want to briefly explain some of the notation you will be seeing in this report.

t : T-test. A t-test compares the significant difference between two groups

p : A measure of significance. Traditionally, if $p < .05$, we look at that finding as significant. If $p = .05$, there is a 95% probability that this finding did not occur by chance. If $p = .01$, there is a 99% probability that this finding did not occur by chance.

r : This signifies a correlation. Correlations range from -1 to $+1$, and we can test to see if this relationship between two variables is significant.

ANOVA: An ANOVA is a statistical test that is similar to a t-test, but rather than comparing differences between two groups, this test can compare differences among many groups.

n.s. This indicates not a significant finding

S.D. This indicates a standard deviation, and is a measure of variability (usually associated with means/ averages).

Section Four: Assessing the Sample

In every survey, results are only as good as the sample that is collected. Typically, sample assessments only examine sampling error. This measure provides only one piece of insight into problems that may be inherent in the sample. This section will compute sampling error and will also compare the survey demographics to US census information in order to examine any systematic nonsampling error that may have occurred.

Sampling Error

Sampling error (sometimes called margin of error) can be thought of as the difference between the total population of interest and the sample that was polled to make inferences about this population. Sampling error is principally influenced by sample size, and sampling error is minimized as sample size becomes larger. In short, the more people in a sample, the more accurately this sample will reflect a population. It is a generally held convention that a sampling error of 5% or less is desirable³. The formula for calculating standard error is as follows:

$$\text{S.E.} = \left(\frac{1}{N} \right) \times 100$$

With our current sample of N=611, the sampling error = 4.0. In other words, the overall survey has a margin of error of plus or minus 4 percentage points. This is well within acceptable sample parameters.

The margin of error for this survey is +/- 4.0 percentage points.

Power

Sampling error provides information on how a randomly selected sample reflects a true population. However, sampling error does not tell you what the ability is of the sample to detect an effect. The ability of a sample to detect an effect is measured by power. If power is too low, your sample will not be sensitive enough to see true differences that exist. In this way, a lack of power may lead you to incorrectly deduce that that is no effect when there is an effect. Power ranges from 0-1, and it is generally held that power to detect a desired effect should be no lower than .80 to .85⁴. Again, power is closely tied to sample size and, not surprisingly, the current survey has more than adequate power (.99).

³ See for examples Bourque & Fiedler (1995), Dillman (1978), and Fowler (1993).

⁴ See for examples Babbi (1992), and Keppel (1991).

Nonsampling/ Systematic Error

While sampling error and power are important elements for understanding the limitations of a sample, they do not take into account other systematic forms of error. For example, a telephone survey may disproportionately exclude low-income households, or may over sample older individuals. Additionally, there is recent evidence to suggest that many telephone polls may disproportionately sample households with conservative political tendencies over households with liberal political tendencies⁵. All of these errors exemplify what is called non-response bias. In order to examine the extent to which non-response bias effects the representativeness of the sample, demographic characteristics collected for the current state survey sample will be compared to state demographic characteristics collected by the U.S. Census Bureau in 2000.

1. Gender

Table 1: Gender

	% of WI State Population (2000 U.S. Census)	% of Survey Responses
Males	49.4%	43.0%
Females	50.6%	57.0%
TOTAL SAMPLE SIZE =	5,363,675	611

The first demographic characteristic is gender. We can see that the sample drawn for the current analysis slightly over sample females, but the difference between the 2000 census data and the survey sample is not large enough to raise a concern or to significantly bias responses.

2. Age

Table 2: Age

	WI State Population (2000 U.S. Census)	Survey Responses
Median Age (in years)	36.00	47.00
'Adjusted' Median	(Appox.) 41.50	-
TOTAL SAMPLE SIZE =	5,363,675	611

Age is the second demographic characteristic of interest. At first glance this finding would suggest that there is a large discrepancy between the 2000 U.S.

⁵ See Triplett (1998)

census data and the sample pulled for the current survey. However, the census age data needs to be qualified by the fact that the census bureau computes a median age by accounting for children younger than 14 years old. The current study was limited to children 14 years old or older. When you account for only individuals 14 or older, an approximation of the median age for the U.S. census data rises to approximately 41.50 years of age. While this is still younger than the sample collected for the current analysis, it is not believed that this median age difference is not significant enough to drastically influence the interpretation of the survey results.

Age Summary:

The mean age in the sample was 47.95 years (SD= 17.48 years). The ages sampled in this survey ranged from 14-90 years old.

3. Geographic Distribution

How responses are distributed around the state is the next demographic characteristic of interest. It is important that geographic areas of the state be represented in rough proportion to actual state distributions. This is necessary in order to make generalizations about the data to the state level. Table 3 (included at the appendices of this report), provides a county-by-county comparison of percentage representation of the state population and percentage representation in the sample.

----- See Table 3 -----

What this breakdown shows is that counties in the survey sample are generally represented in close approximations to census proportions. However, any systematic error in the sample could be better viewed by collapsing across specific counties to a more general categorization. To do this, counties were collapsed into U.S. census county categorizations of Metro-core, Metro, Urban Non-Metro, Rural (not adjacent to Metro), and Rural areas⁶.

⁶These county categorizations are roughly based on population density measures. A listing of counties included in each of these categorizations can be found in the appendices.

Table 4: U.S Census Region Categorizations

	% of WI State Population (2000 Census)	% of Survey Responses
Metro Core	25.7%	19.8%
Metro	42.1%	39.8%
Urban/ Non-Metro	10.8%	10.0%
Rural not adjacent to Metro	7.3%	11.1%
Rural	14.1%	19.3%
TOTAL SAMPLE SIZE =	5,363,675	611

An examination of these county classifications reveals that the sample slightly over sampled rural areas (and under sampled metro areas). This is likely the cause of a telephone-blocking service by Ameritech that was in use in Milwaukee and it's surrounding suburbs. While this overrepresentation of rural areas is important to realize in the interpretation of any findings, the differences are not sufficiently large to invalidate the data. In fact, a correlation between the data collected by the U.S. census and the data collected for the current survey reveals a .89 correlation between these data sets.

In addition to geographic breakdowns provided by the 2000 U.S census, I categorized into four quadrants for analysis. This categorization is closely based of WI Department of Tourism classifications. The breakdown of the sample is as follows: Northeast quadrant (20.5%), Southeast quadrant (41.9%), Southwest quadrant (23.2%), and Northeast quadrant (14.4%). The percentages closely match expectations, and this geographic categorization will be used in subsequent analyses⁷.

4. Household Income

Household Income is a variable that is often scrutinized as a source of error in telephone surveys. The way that household income information was collected for the 2000 US census data differed from the current survey methodology⁸. However, some equivalencies can be made. The 2000 U.S census data found a median household income for WI residents at \$43,791. The current survey found a median household income ranging from \$40,000 to \$59,000. This range encompasses the median found in the 2000 census. A complete distribution of reported annual income from the survey respondents is listed below⁹.

⁷ A detailed representation of the quadrants can be found in Figure 1 of the appendices.

⁸ The principle difference is that U.S. census data has access to specific household income numbers, while the current survey asked participants to select an income range.

⁹ It should be noted that the sample size drops from 611 to 579 because respondents less than 18 years of age were excluded from this analysis. This was done to avoid skewing reported income lower than it actually is and to avoid any misrepresentations children might make regarding their parents income.

Table 5: Income

	'N' of Survey Responses	% of Survey Responses
Less than \$11,000/ year	39	6.7%
\$11,000 – \$19,999	34	5.9%
\$20,000 - \$39,999	110	19.0%
\$40,000 - \$59,999	125	21.6%
\$60,000 - \$79,999	100	17.3%
\$80,000 - \$99,999	37	6.4%
\$100,000 - \$129,999	37	6.4%
More than \$130,000 / year	7	1.2%
-Refused-	90	15.5%

This distribution of income shows that the sample includes a wide variety of income levels. While there were a significant amount of refusals to provide an income level (15.5%), these refusals were across the state, and there is no reason to believe that households with higher income levels would refuse in greater proportion to households with lower incomes. Thus, this sample can fend off the common criticism that telephone surveys over represent households with higher incomes.

5. Political Party Affiliation

A criticism recently levied against telephone surveys is that telephone surveys disproportionately attract people with conservative political beliefs. While the logic underpinning this criticism is elusive, political party affiliation is something that all current telephone surveys should examine. The breakdown of political party affiliation is presented below¹⁰.

Table 6: Political Party Affiliation

	'N' of Surveyed Sample	% of Survey Responses
Democrats	129	22.3%
Republicans	106	18.3%
Greens	3	0.5%
Libertarians	2	0.3%
Independents	30	5.2%
Other	3	0.5%
Not affiliated with any political party	267	46.1%
Unsure	26	4.5%
-Refused-	13	2.2%

Most people did not identify themselves with any political party (46.1%). While the U.S. Census does not currently collect political party affiliation, the important

¹⁰ Again, individuals less than 18 years of age were excluded from this analysis because they are not eligible to vote.

element of this demographic characteristic is that there appears to be a variety of political viewpoints represented in the sample¹¹. In addition to political party, a question on voting behavior was also asked. 72.4% of the sample voted in the most recent gubernatorial election.

6. Ethnicity

For various reasons, a representative sample of ethnic populations is difficult to achieve in a random telephone survey. This issue was discussed in the planning stages of this survey, and it was agreed that targeted examinations of specific ethnicities in local surveys would yield more reliable results. A breakdown of ethnicity is provided below.

Table 7: Ethnicity

	% of WI State Population (2000 Census)	% of Survey Responses
Caucasian	87.3%	89.5%
African American	5.5%	2.9%
Hispanic	3.6%	1.8%
Asian	1.7%	0.5%
Native American (American Indian)	0.9%	0.5%
Other¹²	1.6%	1.8%
-Refused-	N/A	2.9%
TOTAL SAMPLE SIZE =	5,363,675	611

Not surprisingly, minority groups are underrepresented in the current survey. This is despite having a bilingual interviewer who conducted several Spanish interviews. If a library wants to make claims about a specific minority group, a targeted survey to examine this population is suggested. The current survey does not have enough non-white individuals to make any valid attributions to ethnicity.

7. Miscellaneous Sample Demographics

Finally, there are several additional demographic characteristics that do not play as central a role in uncovering sample bias, but are important for understanding the sample. The first is the number of surveyed individuals who work (or whose spouse works) at a library. Only 9 surveyed individuals (1.5%) work (or have a

¹¹ Additionally, anecdotal evidence from the last presidential election suggests that this breakdown may be representative of the Wisconsin electorate (Democrats slightly outnumbering Republicans and the vast majority unaligned with a political party).

¹² This category includes self-identified multi-racial individuals

spouse who works) at a library. Given this small percentage, this group will not be excluded from subsequent analyses.

Internet access will be examined with respect to various initiatives later in this report. However, it is important to know that 65.3% of the sampled population has some type of home Internet access. Specific Internet access types are given below

Table 8: Type (if any) Home Internet Access

	'N' of Surveyed Sample	% of Survey Responses
Dial up (phone modem)	290	47.5%
Cable modem	78	12.8%
DSL line	23	3.8%
Other access type	5	0.8%
ISDN	2	0.3%
T1 line	1	0.2%
None (no home assess)	212	34.7%
TOTAL SAMPLE SIZE =	611	100%

This illustrates that the most popular type of access is dial-up (phone modem). This finding is consistent with data collected by other national firms¹³. Interestingly, of these 399 individuals who have home Internet access, 55.9% say they use their home Internet access every day, and 12.8% say they use their home Internet access 5-7 days a week

Some Concluding Remarks on the Sample Assessment

What this consideration of the sample shows is that there is some minor sampling error to be aware of as the results are further presented in this report. However, none of these sources of error are dramatic enough to call into question the validity of the results. In short, while it is important to understand limitations of any sample, we can be confident in the sample validity for the current study.

¹³ Specifically see research by Gartner Corp. on Internet use and behavior.

Section Five: Who is Using Public Libraries?

Part of the motivation behind this project is to initially create a profile of who is (and is not) using public libraries. Therefore, this third section will detail who (and who isn't) using their public libraries.

Overall

Table 9: Overall Library Use

<i>Which of the following terms best describes how regularly <u>you</u> personally use your public library?</i>		
	'N' of Surveyed Sample	% of Survey Responses
'Very Regularly'	103	16.9%
'Somewhat Regularly'	191	31.3%
'Rarely'	192	31.4%
'Not at all'	125	20.5%
TOTAL SAMPLE SIZE =	611	100%

If we split the sample into "Library Users" (Those who answered 'very regularly' and 'somewhat regularly'), and "Non-Library Users" (Those who answered 'rarely' or 'not at all') we can make some interesting comparisons between these two groups.

1. Gender

Table 10: Gender as a predictor of Library Use

	Library User	Non-Library User
Males	110	153
Females	184	164
% of Total Sample (N=611)	48.1%	51.9%

A t-test shows that there is a significant difference between these two groups in terms of gender composition such that more females than males use their public library regularly $t(609) = 2.72, p < .01$ ¹⁴.

¹⁴ Additionally the effect size was modest, but significant (Eta=.11)

2. Age

Table 11: Age as a predictor of Library Use

	Library User	Non-Library User
Mean	47.74	48.13
Standard Deviation (SD)	(16.84)	(18.08)

The mean ages for library users (and non-users) is virtually identical, [$t(599) = 2.18, n.s.$] This suggests that age is not a good predictor of library use. However, it is important to note that the mean age for library users and non-users in this sample is significantly older than the U.S. census mean age.

3. Geographic Distribution

One concern that was raised in the initial planning process for this survey was whether different geographic regions use libraries in differing rates. To examine this possibility, the U.S. census region-type categorizations will be examined with respect to library use.

Table 12: U.S. Census Region Type as a Predictor of Library Use

	Library Users ($N=294$)		Non-Library Users ($N=317$)	
	<u>n</u>	%	<u>n</u>	%
Metro Core	61	20.7%	60	18.9%
Metro	112	38.1%	131	41.3%
Urban/ Non-Metro	27	9.2%	34	10.7%
Rural not adjacent to Metro	37	12.6%	31	9.8%
Rural	57	19.4%	61	19.2%

The above table shows that there are no significant differences between users and non-users of libraries in terms of U.S. census-type categorizations. To illustrate this point another way, the correlation between library user and non-user classifications and the above regional classifications is very small and not significant, $r = .03, n. s.$ [$t(609) = .06, \text{not a significant difference}$].

In addition to regional-type categorization, an examination of possible geographic differences across the state needs to be examined. To this end, the four geographic quadrants of the state (Northeast, Southeast, Southwest, Northwest) will be compared to see if there are differences in rates of library use across these quadrants.

Table 13: Region of WI as a predictor of Library Use

	Library Users (<i>N</i> =294)		Non-Library Users (<i>N</i> = 317)	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
North East	64	21.8%	61	19.3%
South East	130	44.2%	126	39.7%
South West	61	20.7%	81	25.5%
North West	39	13.3%	49	15.5%

The above table shows that there are no significant differences between users and non-users of libraries in terms of geographic regions of WI. To illustrate this point another way, the correlation between library user and non-user classifications and the above regional classifications is small and not significant, $r = .06$, n. s. While this correlation is slightly larger than the U.S. census categorizations, this correlation still does not reach statistically significant levels. [$t(609) = 1.52$, not a significant difference.]

What an examination of geography tells us is that where patrons are located in the state, and the types of categorical regions in the state do NOT predict library use. In other words, the findings from this survey should be able to be generalized to any geographic location and any type of county within the state.

4. Income

There was no difference between users and non-users in terms of income. Of those individuals who reported an income, the average for both library users and non-users fell in the state average range of \$40,000 –\$59,000. A t-test further illustrates the similarity between users and non-users in terms of income, $t(492) = 1.12^{15}$, n.s. (not a significant difference). Additionally, the correlation between income and library use is small and not statistically significant, $r = .01$, n. s.

¹⁵ On a statistical note, the degrees of freedom drop in this analysis because individuals who refused to name their income were excluded from this analysis. Basically the total pool of people that statistical analyses were conducted upon dropped here.

5. Political Affiliation

An important consideration for library advocacy campaigns is if political party affiliation predicts library use.

Table 14: Political Party Affiliation as a predictor of Library Use

	Library Users (N=294)		Non Library Users (N = 317)	
	<u>n</u>	%	<u>n</u>	%
Democrats	64	21.8%	66	20.8%
Republicans	58	19.7%	49	15.5%
Greens/Libertarians/ Independents/Other	20	6.8%	18	5.7%
Not affiliated with <u>any</u> political party	126	42.9%	146	46.1%
Unsure/Refused	26	8.8%	38	12.0%

On the face there appears to be no significant difference between users and non-users in terms of political party. However, a t-test detected a very small difference between these two groups, $t(609) = 4.22, p = .04$. However, the correlation between political party and library use is very low and not significant, $r = .03, n. s.$ This suggests that there is no association between political party and library use, and the marginally significant finding is explained by differences in sample size between library users and non-users.

Related to political affiliation, and perhaps more important for political action, is what percentage of library users vote. This question was asked in relation to the most recent gubernatorial election.

Table 15: Did you Vote in the most Recent WI Gubernatorial Election?¹⁶

	Library Users (N=280)		Non-Library Users (N = 299)	
	<u>n</u>	%	<u>n</u>	%
YES	224	80.0%	195	65.2%
NO	52	18.6%	95	31.8%
UNSURE	2	0.7%	1	0.3%
Refused	2	0.7%	8	2.7%

There is a significant difference between users and non-users in terms of voting behavior. A t-test detected a highly significant difference between these two groups, $t(577) = 13.04, p < .00$ ¹⁷. Additionally, the correlation between voting

¹⁶ This analysis excludes people who are less than 18 years of age. This explains the overall N dropping to 579 people (from N = 611).

¹⁷ The eta for this analysis = .18, suggesting that this is a moderate size effect.

behavior and library use is modest, but significant, $r = .08$, $p = .04$. This suggests that there is a true difference between library users and non-users in terms of voting behavior.

When you couple the notion of voting behavior with the broad spectrum of political parties represented by library users, the utility of political advocacy becomes obvious. Library users represent all political parties---and they vote in a higher percentage than non-library users.

6. Technology Use

While an examination of technology use may not be as interesting as a predictor of library use, it is important to consider given the fact that many critics maintain that the prevalence of home computers (and specifically, Internet access) increasingly makes libraries obsolete. Additionally, it is an important consideration for new web-based tools or initiatives that a library may be considering as a new service

Table 16: Type (if any) Home Internet Access

	Library Users (N=294)		Non Library Users (N = 317)	
	<u>n</u>	%	<u>n</u>	%
Dial up (phone modem)	155	52.7%	135	42.6%
Cable modem	35	11.9%	43	13.6%
DSL line	12	4.1%	11	3.5%
ISDN/ T1/ Other access type	5	1.7%	3	0.9%
None (no home assess)	88	29.6%	125	39.4%

There is a significant difference between users and non-users in terms of home Internet access. A t-test detected a significant difference between these two groups, $t(609) = 9.64$, $p < .01$. An examination of the percentages suggests that there is a true difference between library users and non-users in terms of Internet access such that a larger percentage of library users have home Internet access (70.4%) compared to non-library users (60.6%). This fact could be an important consideration for targeting new library users.

However, having home Internet access does not illustrate how often people use their home Internet connection. For library users with home Internet access, 51.2% of these individuals said that they, personally, access the Internet from home every day. For non-library users with home Internet access, 60.9% of these individuals said that they access the Internet from home every day. Therefore, non-library users may be relying on the Internet more heavily for information than library users.

Summary Remarks about Library Users

If we had to create a profile of the Wisconsin library users, using the demographic information that this research collected we could say that the nearly ½ of the state population utilizes their public library. There are no prevalent regional geographic differences that predict library use or non-use. The majority of these library users are slightly older than the state average and the majority are female. Most library users are politically active, with no allegiance to one political party, but vote in a higher proportion than the larger state population, and in a higher proportion than non-library users. Finally, a larger percentage of library users have home Internet access than non-library users, but non-library users with home Internet access are slightly more likely to use this Internet connection on a daily basis.

Section Six: Perspectives on Library Funding

Assessing citizens' perspectives toward library funding is important political information. The following section assesses views toward library funding by the citizens of Wisconsin. Because individuals who use a library may recognize a need for greater funding, this analysis will also examine perspectives on funding by library users and non-library users.

1. 'Should' be Spent vs 'Currently' being spent

In 2001 ALA undertook a nationwide survey of library patrons. In this survey a question about what individuals believed should be spent on libraries in their community was included. While this question provides some interesting information in terms of perception of library spending, it is difficult to assess whether or not this answer signifies an increase or decrease in spending without asking what individuals currently think is being spent. Modeling the question included in the ALA survey, we asked about current funding perspectives and ideal funding perspectives.

Table 17: What should be / What is currently being spent on public libraries?

	Library Users (<u>N</u> =294)		Non-Library Users (<u>N</u> = 317)	
	<u>% Should</u>	<u>% Currently</u>	<u>% Should</u>	<u>% Currently</u>
Zero- nothing	0.0%	1.0%	1.3%	0.6%
1-25 dollars/ per person	28.6%	21.4%	32.8%	15.5%
26-40 dollars/ per person	11.6%	4.1%	8.8%	2.8%
41-60 dollars/ per person	13.3%	4.4%	7.9%	1.3%
61-80 dollars/ per person	3.1%	0.3%	1.3%	0.0%
81-100 dollars/ per person	3.1%	0.3%	3.8%	0.0%
+100 dollars/ per person	4.4%	0.3%	1.3%	1.9%
'Don't Know'/ 'Refused'	36.1%	68.0%	42.9%	77.9%

Perhaps not surprisingly, the median amount that non-library users said should be spent was 1-25 dollars, and the median amount they thought was being spent is 1- 25 dollars

The median amount that library users said should be spent was 26-40 dollars, and the median amount they thought was being spent is 1- 25 dollars. Using a paired sample t-test, with 'don't know' and 'refuse' responses excluded, this increase is significant $t(87^{18}) = 6.37, p < .01$. In other words, library users on

¹⁸ The degrees of freedom decrease to 87 for this analysis because only 88 library users provided both a 'should' and 'current' response.

average think more should be spent on public libraries. Combining this with the high rate at which library users vote seems to send a potent political message. However, both of the previous analyses need to be taken with a degree of skepticism given the fact that a large majority of respondents did not provide a response (60.4%). A more direct question which asked respondents about library funding, provides some clearer information:

Table 18: “Which statement most closely represents your opinion regarding state funding of public libraries?”

	Library Users (<i>N</i> =294)		Non-Library Users (<i>N</i> = 317)	
	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
Public Libraries deserve <u>MORE</u> state financial support	134	45.6%	104	32.8%
Public Libraries deserve <u>LESS</u> state financial support	6	2.0%	7	2.2%
Public Libraries have an <u>ADEQUATE</u> amount of state financial support	89	30.3%	117	36.9%
-UNSURE-	61	20.7%	84	26.5%
-REFUSED-	4	1.4%	5	1.6%

Only 2% of the surveyed population stated that libraries should get LESS state financial support. 39% of the total population believed that libraries should get MORE state financial support. Interestingly, this includes a significant number of non-library users. All of this is a further indication of the goodwill that libraries have cultivated in the population of Wisconsin.

2. Private Company Donations to Libraries

Libraries have increasingly found themselves looking for alternative funding sources. One source of funding are donations from private companies and individuals. Oftentimes, donors want proof that they are getting a bang for their donation buck. Therefore, a question was asked about how individuals would feel toward a private company (or individual) that made a donation to a public library. For illustrative purposes, these results are presented in terms of library users and non-users.

Table 19: “I would feel positively toward a business (or individual) that made a donation to my public library?”

	Library Users (<u>N</u> =294)		Non-Library Users (<u>N</u> = 317)	
	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>
Strongly Agree	212	72.1%	151	47.6%
Somewhat Agree	68	23.1%	144	45.4%
Somewhat Disagree	5	1.7%	12	3.8%
Strongly Disagree	2	0.7%	1	0.3%
'No response'/ 'Refused'	7	2.4%	9	2.8%

In short, 59.4% of the entire sample surveyed would feel very positively toward a company or individual that makes a donation to a public library. Interestingly, while a larger percentage of library users 'strongly agree' with that statement, a significant percentage of non-library users also strongly agree. This suggests that a donation to a library will have an impact beyond the library community and library users. People, in general, view donations to the library favorably even if they do not use the library.

Summary Remarks about Perspectives on Library Funding

Not surprisingly, library users believe that libraries deserve more funding. Of perhaps greater interest is the fact that many non-library users share these sentiments, although not in quite as high a proportion. Additionally, private donations to libraries enjoy positive support from both library users and non-users.

Section Seven: What is the Perception of Public Libraries in Wisconsin?

Now that differences and similarities between library users and non-users has been established, it is important to examine what the overall perception is of public libraries. On an anecdotal basis, public libraries seem to enjoy a tremendous amount of good will. This perception will be examined in terms of library users and non-users in the state of Wisconsin. This analysis will start by examining overall perceptions, and then, examining specific factors that may (or may not) influence these perceptions.

Table 20: “I consider my public library an essential part of my community”

	Library Users (N=294)		Non-Library Users (N = 317)	
	<u>n</u>	%	<u>n</u>	%
Strongly Agree	237	80.6%	176	55.5%
Somewhat Agree	56	19.1%	122	38.5%
Somewhat Disagree	1	0.3%	11	3.5%
Strongly Disagree	-	0	4	1.3%
Refused/ ‘Not applicable’/ ‘Unsure’	-	0	4	1.3%

Table 17 shows that while the majority of library users strongly agree that their public library is an essential part of their community (80.6%), a surprisingly large percentage of non-library users also strongly agree that their library is an essential part of their community (55.5%). In short, 67.6% of all people surveyed believe their library to be an essential part of their community. However, this may not necessarily reflect an individuals’ personal feelings toward their local public library:

Table 21: “My Public Library is important to me”

	Library Users (N=294)		Non-Library Users (N = 317)	
	<u>n</u>	%	<u>n</u>	%
Strongly Agree	244	83.0%	105	33.1%
Somewhat Agree	49	16.7%	149	47.0%
Somewhat Disagree	-	0	46	14.5%
Strongly Disagree	1	0.3%	6	1.9%
Refused/ ‘Not applicable’/ ‘Unsure’	-	0	11	3.5%

This question supports the supposition that an overwhelming majority of library users strongly agree that their public library is personally important (83.0%). The percentage of non-library users who strongly agree that their public library is personally important decreases from community perceptions. However, even among non-library users, 80.1% strongly agree or somewhat agree that their library is personally important. This percentage is far larger than expected.

These findings further illustrate the tremendously positive impact people feel libraries have in their community, and the level of goodwill even non-users personally feel toward public libraries¹⁹.

At this point it becomes necessary to explore some reasons why individuals do not use their library more frequently. This is particularly puzzling given the higher than expected levels of goodwill that are apparent in Tables 20 and 21.

Therefore, a brief examination of some potential areas that may inhibit library use is in order.

1. Staff

An initial examination will be made of perceptions of library staff.

Table 22: “ The staff at my public library are friendly”

	Library Users (N=294)		Non-Library Users (N = 317)	
	<u>n</u>	%	<u>n</u>	%
Strongly Agree	244	83.0%	150	47.3%
Somewhat Agree	49	16.7%	76	24.0%
Somewhat Disagree	-	0	2	0.6%
Strongly Disagree	1	0.3%	7	2.2%
Refused/ ‘Not applicable’/ ‘Unsure’	-	0	82	25.9%

Perhaps not surprisingly nearly all library users found staff to be friendly. A significant portion of non-library users also found staff to be friendly. Very few individuals found the staff to be unfriendly²⁰.

¹⁹ Of particular interest is the group of individuals who are 33.1% of non-library users who view their public library as personally important. The 1 distinguishing characteristics of this group is that they had a slightly larger percentage of democrats (26.7%), and a significantly smaller percentage indicated that they access the Internet everyday (37.1%) compared to the general non-user population [20.8% and 60.9% respectively for non-library users]. These were the only demographic deviations of note for this subgroup.

²⁰ It is important to remember that for non-library users, this is measuring perceived friendliness.

Table 23: “ The staff at my public library are helpful”

	Library Users (N=294)		Non-Library Users (N = 317)	
	<u>n</u>	%	<u>n</u>	%
Strongly Agree	238	81.0%	145	45.7%
Somewhat Agree	51	17.3%	85	26.8%
Somewhat Disagree	2	0.7%	2	0.6%
Strongly Disagree	-	0	6	1.9%
Refused/ ‘Not applicable’/ ‘Unsure’	3	1.0%	79	24.9%

Table 23 provides similar trends- the majority of library users found staff to be helpful, but a significant portion of non-users found library staff helpful.²¹ While this finding is interesting in itself, staff perceptions do not seem to be a large factor in what determines library use. However, these perceptions are significantly correlated with perceptions of a library’s importance in the community [‘Helpfulness’ $r = .11$; ‘Friendliness’ $r = .16$], and with perceptions of the library as important to individuals [‘Helpfulness’ $r = .19$; ‘Friendliness’ $r = .22$]²². In other words, if I view library staff as helpful and friendly, this will have a greater impact on how I view the library in my community, rather than how I view the library as a personally valuable resource.

2. Library Hours

The next characteristic to be examined is library hours.

Table 24: “ My local public library is open sufficient hours”

	Library Users (N=294)		Non-Library Users (N = 317)	
	<u>n</u>	%	<u>n</u>	%
Strongly Agree	157	53.4%	85	26.8%
Somewhat Agree	110	37.4%	140	44.2%
Somewhat Disagree	21	7.1%	15	5.7%
Strongly Disagree	5	1.7%	1	0.3%
Refused/ ‘Not applicable’/ ‘Unsure’	1	0.3%	76	24.0%

90.8% of library users strongly or somewhat agree that their public library is open sufficient hours. 71.0% of non-library users also strongly or somewhat agree that their local public library is open sufficient hours. Therefore, hours of operation do not seem to be a large inhibiting factor for non-library users.

²¹ Again, it is important to note that for non-library users this helpfulness is perceived helpfulness.

²² Interestingly friendliness has a larger correlation with community and Individual perceptions than helpfulness, but it should be noted that both friendliness and helpfulness were highly correlated variables $r = .95$

3. Perceptions of the Library Collection

The next characteristic to be examined is the general perception of the library collection.

Table 25: “ My local public library has the books I want”

	Library Users (N=294)		Non-Library Users (N = 317)	
	<u>n</u>	%	<u>n</u>	%
Strongly Agree	149	50.7%	95	30.0%
Somewhat Agree	115	39.1%	107	33.8%
Somewhat Disagree	23	7.8%	20	6.3%
Strongly Disagree	6	2.0%	5	1.6%
Refused/ ‘Not applicable’/ ‘Unsure’	1	0.3%	90	28.4%

People’s positive perceptions of the book collection of their local public library decreases slightly, with marginal significance $p=.055$, from perceptions of staff and hours. However, the general trend is still favorable. 89.8% of library users ‘somewhat’ or ‘strongly agree’ that their library has the books they want. 63.8% of non-library users ‘somewhat’ or ‘strongly’ agree that their library has the books that they want. A library’s collection, while significantly correlated with library use ($r = .52$, $p<.01$), does not provide the whole picture. There is a significant percentage of the non-user population for which the collection is perceived as adequate, but yet they do not use the library. The last behavior to be examined is book-buying behavior.

Of additional importance is the fact that these structural elements (staff friendliness, staff helpfulness, library hours and library collection) are highly correlated. A confirmatory factor analysis indicates that these items all reduced to a scale with an alpha reliability = .91²³. In other words, each of these elements seem to be measuring the same underlying concept. For lack of a better conceptual term, I have labeled this underlying concept “impression of local public library.” Additionally, each of the items that went into the scale measuring a person’s impression of their local public library, are highly correlated. In other words, changing just one of these elements can positively (or negatively) influence an individual’s perception of their local public library. Stated differently, notions of staff helpfulness, staff friendliness, library hours and library collection have been treated as discreet elements of patron service. However, this finding suggests that patrons may not explicitly differentiate between these elements. Rather, all contribute to a more generalized perception of an individual’s local public library. Changing any one of these elements will change this broader perception.

²³ This indicates that we can 91% confidence in this scale. Traditionally, measurement scales are viewed as reliable if they are above .80.

4. Buying Books (rather than borrowing books)

Bookstores are often depicted as competition to libraries. In fact, many libraries have attempted to adopt a “bookstore” feel in an attempt to attract patrons. Indeed, the immediacy of purchasing a book is preferable to waiting for many individuals. What the final table of this section attempts to examine is if the purchasing of books is significantly correlated with library use or non-use.

Table 26: “During the past 4 months, please estimate how many times you have **PURCHASED a book from either a physical or online bookstore?”**

	Library Users (N=294)		Non-Library Users (N = 317)	
	<u>n</u>	%	<u>n</u>	%
1 to 5 times	125	42.5%	123	38.8%
6 to 10 times	47	16.0%	37	11.7%
More than 10 times	25	8.5%	25	7.9%
Have not purchased any books	97	33.0%	132	41.6%

There is a significant difference between library users and non-users in terms of the amount of books that these groups purchased, $t(609) = 5.12, p=.02$. This difference is explained in terms of the significant difference in the percentage of individuals who did not purchase books in the last 4 months. Interestingly, a larger percentage of non-library users purchased no books in the last 4 months. This suggests that non-library users may not be interested in reading, and this may explain why they do not use the library. However, this is speculation, but speculation that deserves consideration in marketing strategies designed to target new users.

Summary Remarks about the Perception of Libraries

The most evident conclusion that can be drawn from this subset of data is that libraries enjoy a generally positive perception from library users and non-library users alike. While this in itself is positive -and interesting- information, it does not help explain what keeps people from using the library. A more interesting indicator is the fact that library users actually purchased more books than non-library users. Not only does this bode well for the potential of libraries and bookstores working together, but it also suggests that non-library users may not use the library because they simply do not read as much as library users. However, the best news in this section may be that both users and non-users view public library staff, hours and collections favorably. Additionally, these items are highly correlated, and suggest that libraries can change any one element for a benefit in overall perception of their library. However, it is important to realize that any initiatives aimed at recruiting new library users are starting with a population where most individuals look on public libraries favorably.

Section Eight: How are Individuals Using Their Public Library

With an understanding of who is using their public libraries, and perceptions toward public libraries, it is important to examine how library users utilize their public library. The following analyses will examine how library users use their public library. Therefore, this analysis will restrict itself to the 294 individuals who identified themselves as library users.

1. How do Individuals make contact with a library?

Table 27: “During the past 4 months, please estimate how many times you have utilized service from your local public library?”

	... In Person	...By Telephone	...By Computer	...By Computer
			(Total)	(Home Computer Owners)
1 to 5 times	55.1%	35.7%	23.5%	27.5%
6 to 10 times	26.5%	1.0%	4.4%	2.9%
More than 10 times	14.6%	0.3%	3.4%	4.3%
Have not contacted	3.7%	62.2%	68.7%	65.2%
N= (sample size)	294	294	294	207

The overwhelmingly popular method for utilizing library service is in person, with 45.2% of library users indicating that this was their only means of utilizing service from their library in the last 4 months. With an idea of how library users utilize services from library, it is natural to examine what library services they use:

Table 28: “Please indicate how you have personally used your library in the past 6 months?”

<u>Service</u>	<u>Library Users (N= 294)</u>	
	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
Personal Enjoyment	274	93.2%
Children’s Reading Materials	171	58.2%
Ask Reference Question	154	52.4%
Schoolwork/ Business	145	49.3%
Internet Access/ Computers²⁴	77	26.2%
Used Meeting Space	55	18.7%
Children’s Story Hours	53	18.0%
Conducted Job Search	31	10.5%

²⁴ For households without computer access, this percentage rose to 29.9%

Table 28 shows a distribution where use for personal enjoyment far exceeds other services. Interestingly, however, when individuals were asked if they thought one specific library service was most important, the responses were varied. A complete listing of responses to this question has been categorized and can be found in APPENDIX 1a and 1b. There was remarkable consistency among library users and library non-users. A number of people cited the importance of children-related services, and collection development issues in both groups.

Summary Remarks about How Individuals use their Public Libraries

The majority of individuals who use a public library visit the library in person, and the most common reason for using a public library was personal enjoyment. Individuals cited collection issues in open-ended comments (i.e. the importance of interlibrary loan), and child-related services.

Section Nine: Interest in New Initiatives

WPLC has undertaken many new initiatives since its inception. The following analyses will examine the degree to which a few of these programs are being utilized, and the degree to which both users and non-users are interested in these new programs, and other possible new services.

1. netLibrary

NetLibrary is the initiative that led to the inception of WPLC. In fact, a more detailed assessment of this service was done in 2002. However, the previous assessment examined current and recently trained netLibrary users. There was not an analysis that could assess the degree to which netLibrary was truly being utilized by all library users.

Table 29: "Have you registered for a netLibrary account? (Library Users)

	<u>n</u>	%
YES	5	1.7%
NO	289	96.9%
UNSURE	4	1.4%
N= (sample size)	294	100%

Table 29 illustrates that among library users, netLibrary is not widely utilized. Based on my previous evaluation of the netLibrary service specifically, this stems largely from a lack of promotion of this service. However, in order to validate this assertion it is important to assess interest in the service that netLibrary provides:

Table 30: "How interested are you in being able to read full-text books from your home or work computer?" (Library Users and Non-Users)

	Library Users (N=294)		Non Library Users (N = 317)	
	<u>n</u>	%	<u>n</u>	%
Very Interested	38	12.9%	24	7.6%
Somewhat Interested	60	20.5%	81	25.6%
Not at all Interested	193	65.6%	205	64.7%
Refused/ 'Not applicable'/ 'Unsure'	3	1.0%	7	2.2%

Interest in netLibrary services is greater among both library users and non-users than actual usage suggests. This indicates that there may be an untapped and receptive audience for this service that have not yet been reached by

promotional efforts. Additionally, a significant percentage of non-library users expressed interest in this service. NetLibrary may be a way to engage non-library users. Finally, promotion of netLibrary becomes more important when we consider the demographic information of the 207 individuals who expressed an interest in the netlibrary service:

Table 31: “Demographic Comparison of interest in netLibrary to typical users²⁵”

<u>DEMOGRAPHICS:</u>	Age		% Daily Internet Use
	<u>mean</u>	Stnrd. Dev.	
Library Users (N=207)	47.7	16.8	37.4%
Interest in netLibrary²⁶ (N=203)	40.4	16.3	51.2%

<u>DEMOGRAPHICS:</u>	% in Metro-Core Areas	% Females	% Males
Library Users (N=207)	20.7%	62.6%	37.4%
Interest in netLibrary (N=203)	27.1%	52.2%	47.8%

Table 31 shows that there is interest in netLibrary in some key demographic areas of interest to libraries. The average age of individuals who are interested in netLibrary is significantly younger than the typical library user (40.4y/o and 47.7 y/o respectively). More than half of the individuals interested in netLibrary use their computer daily. A slightly larger percentage of individuals with interest in netLibrary are in metro core areas. Finally, it appears that netLibrary has potential appeal to males. It is important to consider these demographics in future library promotions.

In the initial assessment of netLibrary it was found that individuals with home PCs found netLibrary significantly more beneficial than individuals without home PCs. Therefore, table 32 will assess levels of interest among library users and non-users who have home Internet connections.

²⁵ All demographics that are presented are significantly different between individuals who are current library users and individuals interested in netLibrary at least the $p < .05$ level.

²⁶ It is important to note that the group of individuals interested in netLibrary is comprised of both library users and library non-users who expressed interest in the netLibrary service.

Table 32: “How interested are in being able to read full-text books from your home or work computer?”
(Library Users and Non-Users with home Internet access)

	Library Users (N=207)		Non Library Users (N = 192)	
	<u>n</u>	%	<u>n</u>	%
Very Interested	33	15.9%	16	8.3%
Somewhat Interested	49	23.7%	61	31.8%
Not at all Interested	124	59.9%	113	58.9%
Refused/ ‘Not applicable’/ ‘Unsure’	1	0.5%	2	1.0%

Perhaps not surprisingly, the percentage of people expressing an interest in netLibrary services increases among both users and non-users when we examine only individuals with home Internet access.

2. MP3 Players

Recently, WPLC set aside money for a test project that introduced MP3 players into several test libraries. The following analyses will assess a general interest in this initiative.

Table 33: “Have you ever checked out an MP3 player from your local public library that plays digital books and music? (Library Users)

	<u>n</u>	%
YES	8	2.7%
NO	286	97.3%
UNSURE	0	-
<u>N=</u> (sample size)	294	100%

Not surprisingly, a very small percentage of library users indicated that they had checked out an MP3 player from their local public library. This, in large part, can be explained in terms of the limited nature of the test project. Of greater significance is the level of interest in being able to check out such a device from a public library. The level of interest among library users and non-users is examined in table 34.

Table 34: “How interested are you in being able to check out an MP3 player from your local public library?” (Library Users and Non-Users)

	Library Users (N=294)		Non Library Users (N = 317)	
	<u>n</u>	%	<u>n</u>	%
Very Interested	29	9.9%	22	6.9%
Somewhat Interested	69	23.5%	63	19.9%
Not at all Interested	191	65.0%	221	69.7%
Refused/ ‘Not applicable’/ ‘Unsure’	5	1.7%	11	3.5%

There seems to be a significant amount of interest in such a device. However, it is important to note that a significant number of people who indicated “not at all interested” also indicated to the interviewer that they had never heard of MP3s before. The only two significant demographic characteristics of the 183 individuals interested in MP3s are age and Internet use. These differences are presented in Table 35:

Table 35: “Demographic Comparison of interest in MP3 to typical users²⁷”

<u>DEMOGRAPHICS:</u>	Age		% Daily Internet Use
	<u>mean</u>	Stnrd. Dev.	
Library Users (N=207)	47.7	16.8	37.4%
Interest in MP3s (N=183)	41.9	17.4	45.9%

Again, this technology seems to appeal to a demographic that is younger than the typical library user. Additionally, this group also uses the Internet daily in a larger percentage than the typical library user.

3. 24/7 Reference Service

Another new initiative is the development of a reference service where patrons could receive reference help from a librarian via a computer. Given that this program is not yet in wide release to patrons, we simply asked individuals what their level of interest was in such a service.

²⁷ All demographics that are presented are significantly different between individuals who are current library users and individuals interested in MP3 players at least the $p < .05$ level.

Table 36: “How interested are you in being able to contact a librarian to answer a question 24 hours a day / 7 days a week?”

	Library Users (N=294)		Non-Library Users (N = 317)	
	<u>n</u>	%	<u>n</u>	%
Very Interested	52	17.7%	36	11.4%
Somewhat Interested	104	35.4%	122	38.5%
Not at all Interested	135	45.9%	152	47.9%
Refused/ ‘Not applicable’/ ‘Unsure’	3	1.0%	7	2.2%

There is broad interest in a 24/7 reference service. 51.4% of the surveyed population expressed some degree of interest in this service. Additionally, the average age of people who expressed interest in such a service was 43.6 (SD= 16.5). This is slightly lower than the typical library user. However, this was the only significant difference between these groups that did not relate to Internet access. While Table 36 gives a general picture of interest in this service, we did not make the modality of contact explicit. Table 37 will examine interest in this service among library users and non-users with Internet access.

Table 37: “How interested are you in being able to contact a librarian to answer a question 24 hours a day / 7 days a week?”

(Individuals with Internet access)

	Library Users (N=207)		Non Library Users (N = 192)	
	<u>n</u>	%	<u>n</u>	%
Very Interested	40	19.3%	22	11.5%
Somewhat Interested	79	38.2%	78	40.6%
Not at all Interested	88	42.5%	89	46.4%
Refused/ ‘Not applicable’/ ‘Unsure’	0	-	3	1.6%

Among individuals with Internet access interest in 24/7 reference service increases slightly, 54.9% of individuals with home Internet access expressed an interest in a 24/7 reference service. While this percentage is significant, a large percentage of home Internet owners do not see a value in being able to contact a librarian anytime. Some individuals with Internet access may believe that they can find answers to their questions themselves. Promotional material will have to explain why a 24/7 reference service is better than a simple Internet search.

4. Home Delivery Service

Another new idea (while not a formal initiative) is the home delivery of library material. These analyses will identify who is interested in this service and who would be willing to pay for this service.

Table 38: “How interested are you in having library materials delivered to your home or place of work?”

	Library Users (N=207)		Non-Library Users (N = 317)	
	<u>n</u>	%	<u>n</u>	%
Very Interested	52	17.7%	36	11.4%
Somewhat Interested	82	27.9%	83	26.2%
Not at all Interested	158	53.7%	194	61.2%
Refused/ ‘Not applicable’/ ‘Unsure’	2	0.7%	4	1.3%

41.4% of the total surveyed population expressed interest in having library materials delivered to their home or place of work. Some interesting characteristics about this group of individuals interested in home delivery as compared to individuals not interested in home delivery are presented in Table 39:

Table 39: “Demographic Comparison of Delivery-Interested and Non-Interested”²⁸

<u>DEMOGRAPHICS:</u>	Age	
	<u>mean</u>	Stnrd. Dev.
Interested in home delivery (N=253)	43.0	16.5
Not Interest in home delivery (N=352)	51.4	17.4

	% in Metro Areas	% Females	% Males
Interested in home delivery (N=253)	43.9%	62.5%	37.5%
Not Interest in home delivery (N=352)	36.6%	52.6%	47.4%

²⁸ 6 individuals had no opinion on home delivery and have been excluded from this comparison. Additionally, demographic of these two groups differ in statistical significance of at least $p < .05$.

What an analysis of the demographics illustrates is that people who are younger, more people who live in metro areas, and more females prefer home delivery. Knowing who wants home delivery services is good, but knowing who would pay for this service is even better. Therefore, among those individuals who said they were interested in delivery service, what percentage said that they would pay a fee for this service?

Table 40: "Would you be willing to pay a fee for this delivery service?"²⁹
(Among interested delivery individuals)

	<u>n</u>	%
YES	187	73.9%
NO	60	23.7%
<i>UNSURE</i>	6	2.4%
<u>N=</u> (sample size)	253	100%

Of those individuals who were interested in home delivery, 73.9% of these individuals would be willing to pay a fee for this service. The amount of the fee is debatable, and was not asked in the current survey. However, this data provides a jumping off point for any future analyses.

Summary Remarks about New Library Initiatives

New technologies such as netLibrary and MP3 players seem to hold interest for a younger demographic of individuals than are currently being served by libraries. Additionally, these new technologies also offer a tremendous potential for serving individuals who are not currently served by libraries. A majority of the surveyed population were also interested in the idea of a 24/7 reference service, but issues regarding the potential publicity of this service to individuals with home Internet service were raised. Finally, home delivery service had a strong interest from the surveyed population, and of those interested the majority were willing to pay a fee. The exact amount of this fee could be the topic for a future survey. But, overall, these initiatives interest users and non-users alike and have the potential to expand the amount of people served by libraries.

²⁹ It is important to note that there were no significant demographic differences between individuals who would pay for delivery service and those who would not pay for delivery service. This includes a non-significant difference in household income

Section Ten: The Library Overall

In a report like this, I think it is important to end with a big picture. Therefore, the final analysis will examine the overall perspective of public libraries.

Table 41: “Overall how satisfied are you with your Public Library?”

	Library Users (N=294)		Non Library Users (N = 317)	
	<u>n</u>	%	<u>n</u>	%
Very Satisfied	204	69.4%	134	42.3%
Somewhat Satisfied	84	28.6%	130	41.0%
Somewhat Dissatisfied	5	1.7%	10	3.2%
Very Dissatisfied	0	0.0%	2	0.6%
‘Refused’/ ‘Not Applicable’	1	0.3%	41	12.9%

This table illustrates that there is a high level of satisfaction with public libraries among library users and non-users alike. Among library users who are very satisfied, it is important to understand if there are any differences among regions and county types in terms of satisfaction. An ANOVA was conducted using geographic region as the dependant variable and satisfaction level as the outcome variable, and no significant effect was found, $F(4, 289) = .88, p = n.s.$ An ANOVA was also conducted using county type as the dependant variable and satisfaction as the outcome variable. This analysis was also not significant, $F(3, 290) = .36, p = n.s.$ In other words, there are no statistical differences between counties or geographic regions in terms of library satisfaction.

Finally, individuals were asked what their library could do to increase their satisfaction with and use of their public library. These responses are categorized between library and non-library users in Appendix 2a and 2b. While I am hesitant to draw any definitive conclusions from these open-ended responses- there does seem to be some consistency across groups. Particularly, the issue of hours and collection were of concern to users and non-users alike. This may be an area where heavy promotion of e-books could address some of these concerns. E-books can dramatically increase a library’s collection (particularly true of small libraries), and patrons can access these materials any time of the day.

Summary Remarks about the library overall

Overall, there is great satisfaction with libraries, even among non-library users. There are no geographic or other demographic differences that explain this satisfaction. In short, people just like their library regardless of use habits.

Epilogue

The current study should provide useful and concrete information about library users and non-users. This information should be useful in the solicitation of donations, and targeting programs to serve current library users and introduce new users to library services. But, this study is only the first step. I would recommend replicating this study every few years to track any changes that may occur across time. In this way the present study is a baseline, for a longitudinal, programmatic evaluation of the library users in the state.

Additionally, I would classify the call center as a resounding success. The procedures developed in this study can serve libraries, and other organizations, that may be interested in conducting inexpensive research or evaluate community impact of a library program or campaign.

In closing, it is important to remember that the power of any knowledge is bound up in the application of that knowledge. It is hoped that the information in this report will help libraries become powerful.

Appendices**Table 3: County Breakdown of Respondents**

COUNTY	CENSUS N	CENSUS %	SURVEY N	SURVEY %
	5,363,675 pop.		611 sample	
Adams County	18643	0.35	4	0.65
Ashland County	16866	0.31	3	0.49
Barron County	44963	0.84	5	0.82
Bayfield County	15013	0.28	2	0.33
Brown County	226778	4.23	21	3.44
Buffalo County	13804	0.26	3	0.49
Burnett County	15674	0.29	1	0.16
Calumet County	40631	0.76	2	0.33
Chippewa County	55195	1.03	3	0.49
Clark County	33557	0.63	5	0.82
Columbia County	52468	0.98	7	1.15
Crawford County	17243	0.32	6	0.98
Dane County	426526	7.95	77	12.60
Dodge County	85897	1.60	12	1.96
Door County	27961	0.52	6	0.98
Douglas County	43287	0.81	4	0.65
Dunn County	39858	0.74	4	0.65
Eau Claire County	93142	1.74	10	1.64
Florence County	5088	0.09	n/a	n/a
Fond du Lac County	97296	1.81	6	0.98
Forest County	10024	0.19	n/a	n/a
Grant County	49597	0.92	9	1.47
Green County	33647	0.63	4	0.65
Green Lake County	19105	0.36	3	0.49
Iowa County	22780	0.42	1	0.16

Iron County	6861	0.13	n/a	n/a
Jackson County	19100	0.36	1	0.16
Jefferson County	74021	1.38	5	0.82
Juneau County	24316	0.45	8	1.31
Kenosha County	149577	2.79	12	1.96
Kewaunee County	20187	0.38	6	0.98
La Crosse County	107120	2.00	9	1.47
Lafayette County	16137	0.30	2	0.33
Langlade County	20740	0.39	7	1.15
Lincoln County	29641	0.55	6	0.98
Manitowoc County	82887	1.55	16	2.62
Marathon County	125834	2.35	14	2.29
Marinette County	43384	0.81	7	1.15
Marquette County	15832	0.30	6	0.98
Menominee County	4562	0.09	1	0.16
Milwaukee County	940164	17.53	68	11.13
Monroe County	40899	0.76	2	0.33
Oconto County	35634	0.66	4	0.65
Oneida County	36776	0.69	9	1.47
Outagamie County	160971	3.00	16	2.62
Ozaukee County	82317	1.53	13	2.13
Pepin County	7213	0.13	2	0.33
Pierce County	36804	0.69	10	1.64
Polk County	41319	0.77	3	0.49
Portage County	67182	1.25	7	1.15
Price County	15822	0.29	n/a	n/a
Racine County	188831	3.52	12	1.96
Richland County	17924	0.33	n/a	n/a
Rock County	152307	2.84	13	2.13
Rusk County	15347	0.29	3	0.49

St. Croix County	63155	1.18	6	0.98
Sauk County	55225	1.03	6	0.98
Sawyer County	16196	0.30	1	0.16
Shawano County	40664	0.76	7	1.15
Sheboygan County	112646	2.10	15	2.45
Taylor County	19680	0.37	6	0.98
Trempealeau County	27010	0.50	8	1.31
Vernon County	28056	0.52	7	1.15
Vilas County	21033	0.39	4	0.65
Walworth County	93759	1.75	10	1.64
Washburn County	16036	0.30	3	0.49
Washington County	117493	2.19	6	0.98
Waukesha County	360767	6.73	40	6.55
Waupaca County	51731	0.96	10	1.64
Waushara County	23154	0.43	4	0.65
Winnebago County	156763	2.92	13	2.13
Wood County	75555	1.41	5	0.82

Figure 1: Detail of State Quadrants³⁰



Counties Represented In Each Quadrant:

NORTHEAST (20.5%): Brown, Door, Florence, Forest, Kewaunee, Langdale, Lincoln, Marathon, Marinette, Menominee, Oconto, Oneida, Outagamie, Portage, Shawango, Vilas, Waupaca

SOUTHEAST (41.9%): Calumet, Dodge, Fond Du Lac, Green Lake, Jefferson, Kenosha, Manitowoc, Marquette, Milwaukee, Ozaukee, Racine, Rock, Sheboygan, Walworth, Washington, Waukesha, Winnebago

SOUTHWEST (23.2%): Adams, Crawford, Colombia, Dane, Grant, Green, Iowa, Juneau, La Crosse, Lafayette, Monroe, Richland, Sauk, Vernon

NORTHWEST (14.4%): Ashland, Barron, Bayfield, Buffalo, Burnett, Chippewa, Clark, Douglas, Dunn, Eau Claire, Iron, Jackson, Pepin, Pierce, Polk, Price, Rusk, Sawyer, St. Croix, Taylor, Trempealeau, Washburn, Wood

³⁰ It is important to note that the picture depicted in figure 1 gives an approximate orientation of the quadrants. Quadrants followed county borders, and were created in with approximate geographic equivalencies.

Appendix 1a:

Categorized open-ended responses from LIBRARY USERS regarding which library service they viewed as most important³¹.

REFERENCE

the librarians for reference
reference we are doing research they have good dept and really helped us.
reference
reference
reference service
reference and location services
the reference librarian is a big help
the reference desk, if you have a question, they are the most valuable
reference questions
help with reference questions
librarian help
reference section/ librarians
reference
availability of help for questions

COLLECTION

lending the books
this is only place where she can get the books she wants
online catalog
availability and material
providing books to people to read them
local library's collection
the availability of books and periodicals to the public
having books available
books on tape and newer selection
large print books
having access to books for personal enjoyment
having a good variety between research and enjoyment
great history books
videos, dvds
collection of periodicals
just checking out books
current news publications
books reference materials
getting books
wall street journal
they have a lot of movies that they rent and cds, dvds
community access to quality reading materials

³¹ 50% of library users (N= 147) indicated a service that they believed was most important.

the ability to get books on tape or cd, and the knowledge of the librarians
a very extensive periodical collection
videos
periodicals
I guess its getting the reference books
the amount of books they have is the most important for me
just library books
general access to reference books
source of reading pleasure
audio books
the books
good books, updated books
access to technical books
has books and magazines
research stuff
providing large print books
telephone/Madison directories
I suppose the books, entertainment reading, and videos
health and cooking
audio visual
variety of materials
free books
magazines and periodicals
local history and genealogy
videos
just books, it is essential like the water dept
wide varieties of types of material like videos and tapes and books and newspapers
free books
videos and dvds,
there are two equal one is enjoyment and the other is research
books
just go there to get books
research materials
having biographies and quality books
books on tape
wide variety of books

TECHNOLOGY

internet access
computers
the Internet
computers
computers
probably the internet access
computer access
the Internet
internet access

internet access
computer internet usage
internet catalog
internet access
internet
internet service
computer internet

CHILDREN'S

availability of books for children
children's programs
children's programs are great very important
story hour
story time
children's library very important
children's
kids books
things for kids are most important
summer youth reading program
youth outreach program
computer access for kids
children's literature and services
kids stuff
story time for children
story hour
kids services
children's services
story time for children
children's story hours
children's service
story time

OTHER/ SERVICES

community togetherness - gathering point
genealogy
just being open
taxes -- providing tax forms
lending library really helps since our library open 3 days a week
renewal by phone and phone services and the fact that they print a list off of books they have.
different programming
info on community events, and tax forms
book discussion group
offer photocopies have used that service
walking through library looking at the books
bookmobile
they help me find books, (Retired / Non-Native English Speaker)

helpful staff
book boxes put together for teachers
everyone is friendly
quiet reading area and latest material
they provide a one person room for studying with a door that shuts- that's what I liked
large size print books for my bad eyes,
the access, the fact that it is there in the community
I guess meeting space because we do different meetings
just being there!

INTER LIBRARY LOAN

being able to link to other libraries
winding rivers system gets books from other systems and universities uses a lot of professional books
order books from another library
the connection w/ other libraries to get books
inter-library loan
when they don't have a book they get it for me
Interlibrary loan
inter-library loan
being able to check out books from other libraries
really like the interlibrary loan, library will go out of their way to get it
inter loan program
inter library loan
inter library loan
locate books I need
inter-lib. loans
interlibrary loans
inter-library exchange
interlibrary loan
being able to get books from other libraries in the winding rivers system
interlibrary loan
interlibrary loan system
interlibrary loan

Appendix 1b:

Categorized open-ended responses from NON-LIBRARY USERS regarding which library service they viewed as most important³².

CHILDREN

books for kids

like story hour

children's programming

story time for children

when my children were at home the library had many good programs for kids that was 15 years ago

children's programs

childrens services

providing kids

videos for the kids

childrens services

childrens services

story hour

children's programming

story time

stuff for kids is good

childrens services

children's programs

the childrens materials

childrens

childrens stuff

childrens books

for the kids

stuff for the kids, videos, computer programs

kids books

story hours

children's services

children's books

younger people services

children's books

childrens programming

for school kids

children's books

helping kids when they need it

childrens programs

children's services

especially for the kids

summer programs

kids programs

³² 36.9% of non-library users (N=117) indicated a service that they believed was most important

Childrens readingn programs
children's books and services

TECHNOLOGY

internet

the computer

internet

internet time on pc

offering a computer

computer services

computer access

computers

computer access

I have nieces & agrandchildren who use the computer a lot but I don't

internet computer services, very helpful to poeople who do not have at home

the internet because my kids use it

computer access, free printing

having the commputers open to the public

computer access

website

internet aces

the computers

internet access for car info

computers

COLLECTION

like the videos and the dvds and the help they give you

I like the videos they have and sometimes I check periodicals like consumer reports

Large print books

being able to supply books to people who can't afford to buy them

books and cds

Good reference materials and non print collections

variety of books

use of journals

books I never used anything else, haven't been in the library since 9 years old

automotive info manuals

having the latest books

opportunity to explore books and find out information

for personal enjoyment and travel reference

I like the books the fact that they have all sorts of them

Helpful research subject matter

books on tape

Rent videos

business reference materials

books

videos

the books

variety of books
periodicals
there is a lot of books there where they can go
reference books
basics of lending books
providing books I guess
genealogy
the books
reference and daily newspapers
geneology and research materials
background search
circulation of books
ability to do research
videos to check out

OTHER SERVICES

fax machine,
a place for public notice for legal documentation
I could get books in mailbox in rural area, haven't used since kids grew up
help w taxes and forms
audio visual works with limited sight people
putting items on hold
friendliness of the staff
have opportunity to increase reading
tax forms
likes to look at displays -- artwork on walls
Archiving. Serving as local historians--preserving history.

REFERENCE

reference resources
help with reference questions
reference
reference for questions
reference
reference
staff to answer questions
looking up information
reference for anything
reference materials
reference materials
reference

Appendix 2a

Open-ended responses from LIBRARY USERS regarding if there was anything that could be done to increase your satisfaction with -and use of- the public library?³³

could be improved with more funding so kids would have more but I am satisfied

more current books

have more books and more comfortable seating remembered her old library where they threw out the comfortable chairs for hardbacks, need ottomans, there is no place to be comfortable to read

Little bit better selection

microfiche film machines need new ones esp. for genealogy, cant read on bad machines have to compete with someone with new machine. In regards to deliveries at the present time he would not be interested but after he was retired or if he was disabled he w

provide more current books and reference

make it bigger

open a little longer hours

more selection of books

more books available in stock unless that means more taxes, no I m happy with it

expand and build on to existing library

libraries location in town, too much traffic, Burlington, needs to be moved

more parking

they could use more boooks especially popular books for children, when her child is reading a series he has to wait for the next book because of a lack of sufficient copies

more computers

³³ 38.8% of library users offered feedback to this question.

expand their hours especially on the weekends

change librarians quite often, the library doesn't get enough best sellers, I use it a lot and I would like more best sellers

be open on Sundays

get more books movies.

yes, have noticed that others and myself cannot use the online catalog very easily, I liked the old card catalog

Greater access to computer classes.

could be more polite once in a while

print information only in English, money should not be used to print things in non English

I don't like the fact that it is mainly popular books, not a lot of the "classical type 100 best books"

Larger selection

wider variety of books

open more on Sundays

later hours

would like more reference material

nothing I can think of

open later, more

city needs more money to pay the librarians, "like to be able to see them open longer hours"

Books online, greater variety to download, willing to pay additional fee

open more than 3 days a week, more accessible hours don't coincide with working people and could be bigger and used more, more hours and more books

remain how they are

Increase size and selection, books on tape.

I realize their hours are not good but they are too small and the circulation is too small to be open, some of the new authors I don't respect they spoil a good book by being too dirty, new management got rid of old books

open a little bit longer, more parking, but our library recently expanded and has new computers which we like

Not ADA accessible, no rooms for seniors; More than one bathroom, maintenance.

no, more funding would make a difference though, because they would have a broader range and more library programs.

location is not easily accessible to senior citizens or disabled citizens or even small children (Racine Library), and it gets to cold for many citizens.

physical facilities updated

book delivery to schools

More up to date books

Better hours, both weekend and evening

more book groups

I would like longer hours specifically open on Sunday, location of building is not convenient,

finding materials for vision impaired (especially school and text)

more children's programming and family programs

more copies of popular books

good for my small town,

Open more weekend hours (Sussex library)

have coffee in library

have more genealogy information

they are remodeling so hopefully will improve quantity of books, more nonfiction, pretty good with fiction, more volumes nonfiction, summer hours a little restricted, do real well with magazines

extend hours

more books and more variety

longer hours and some Saturdays

more space

increase the size of the collection, books on discs, dvds doing a great job but could do more (spouse is a cataloger at local public library)

New books faster

expand their number of books

Newer materials and extended hours in summer time

more hours

people don't make their children be quiet any more, too noisy, librarians should make kids be more quiet, the library is not free day care. (note, said her mother was a librarian)

they don't seem to have the kinds of material I like to read, history and new books on various political subjects, and some technical things for computers and stuff

city and the library board are in a dilemma needs to be handicapped accessible, we don't live in the city and have no say, library is too crowded for what they have, once or twice I thought they could have given more help or info

more hours, greater variety of materials

more books in Spanish (this survey was conducted completely in Spanish)

longer hours, more cd's

no, get a better selection of books but you do with what you got

Tax forms, More current book

no not really, the selection of books considering the size is fairly decent, there is another library about 8-10 miles away, would like to see better selection in our community so they would not have to go somewhere else

more science fiction

handicapped exit is not very good, the windows let too much direct sunlight into the library and it is hard for me to read when I sit near the windows-there is too much glare, can they put shades or something on the windows

more books on tape (brown deer)

no the service is good

get rid of linkcat and reinstate the card catalog

Open earlier in the morning

better maps couldn't find anything on New Zealand

have more books

finer for overdue books are ludicrous, and should be more lenient

no overdue fines

have areas reserved for quiet work and study

I think they should have more teenage material

Bigger building, more reference (Wautoma library)

have more recent books.

extended hours

more text material

more new stained glass books

newer books

Broader selection on books

have more copies of popular books

get more books

wider range of books

more space

more books,

Get more nonfiction materials (Shawno County)

have better hours, nights and weekends for people who work

very small library, there are not enough books

more best sellers

more audio books

I like some of the things that you mentioned as maybe coming in the future

better selection of books, fiction.

always struggling with the hours, need to remain open more hours but need the money

longer weekend hours

my kid needed community service and they welcomed him, we just don't get books and newspapers, the library extended themselves a public service to our family

wish they had more audio books on cd

more periodicals

I would like to see more books, more up to date books, information is old not enough up to date, especially now when I am looking at books on real estate which has had lots of updates since the 80's

pretty modern, pretty much have everything or can get from another library

better hours would be nice

better selection of books, more children's books and reference books

Appendix 2b

Open-ended responses from NON-LIBRARY USERS regarding if there was anything that could be done to increase your satisfaction with -and use of- the public library?³⁴

large print books

expand variety of materials

a wider selection of books on cds instead of tapes, older movies on dvd have history involved with it not necessarily variety type movies,

help me when I needed it

expansion and more items

more hours

if they were open later

use local contractors for building

extended hours

I like fishing and golfing, maybe if they had speakers on topics

mailing books as alternative to delivery

more hours

Out of residence fee reduced

not really, I just go there for a specific book or to use the internet

Increase Weekend hours

we had a fantastic library director here, he would listen to patrons, believe we are now in an expansion mode, thinks libraries are a super good investment and he would support them anywhere,

more pcs

have more books that I want on the shelf, believes that one month in Madison is too long to hold 2 weeks are better, can circulate better by cutting time to two weeks

its so easy to get on the internet, since my kids are gone, don't have time, I want to sew do other tings I'm not a reader.

³⁴ 28.9% of non-library users offered feedback to this question.

disappointed with their service, when they are in the mood the service is okay, used to big metro libraries like Rockford and Madison, use to librarians more involved in southern Wisconsin, need more educated help for libraries "up north"

I'm too busy to go by library

make it easier to get book when you want it, let you keep books

I work so much am hardly ever home, delivery then would help

better music selection, and audio books.

have used them in the past right now I don't have a need for them, am wrapped up in my work, I'm very busy, take courses or classes when I need to know something, if offered at a library would consider it

staff should be more friendly, when I first moved the staff was horrible, now when I go I avoid the grumpy ones, enhanced customer service skills would help, use to go more when my children were younger, I am a reader but it takes me a long time to read

I don't think they have enough Christian literature too much non Christian information, my wife and kids usually have to do interlibrary to get books since local does not have, and even then cant find books they want,

I likes the delivery idea

get more books

parking is bad

get more computers

More Christian base materials

home delivery of books

better hours

people who know more about computers, have a computer expert

make it larger

Get rid of the witches (evil librarians who are overly strict)

Not locate them in a strip mall

I would like to see a universal system where you could use any public library

I think they need more pcs at our public library especially for the elderly

delivery would be nice.

have better hours

its there if I need it. I m not a big reader, I like books on tape though (told respondent that she could get them at the library, she did not seem to make the connection)

customer service and attitude of staff

better variety of books

need more time for computer can only stay 15 minutes and it is not long enough, library should be more involved with the schools, more info on political candidates during elections, they could do better on keeping up with technology (this person said she

more pc's for internet, limiter free printing; Better interlibrary loan.

transfer to a different building (Hudson,WI)

have more internet terminals

keep up with current technology periodicals

needs better location

better selection of books

make the kids section a little bit quieter or farther away

be open on Sunday afternoon

more options- internet, etc.

more access to genealogical research materials

open longer

build bigger library to have more books! More hours

don't have to pay for parking, Riff raff hang out.

more cds and tapes

sell cappuccino

add more books

have more materials

send out fliers to let everyone know what's going on

no, be a little bit bigger

make it easier to get a library card

needs a library closer to her home, now has to travel 50 miles, and there is no more bookmobile, has not been in over a year, likes to do genealogy.

have more readily staff

more children's programming

staff friendliness

I prefer to buy the book and not worry about returning it

have books delivered

More user friendly- more approachable librarians

computer classes, more computers

mail books to my house they use to do that when we lived in Alaska

be more helpful

get more computers

like to be able to order books by computer and deliver to the patron's homes

longer hours, bigger facilities