» "I discovered me in the library. I went to find me in the library"

–RAY BRADBURY

Strategic Library™

Boost Summer Reading Results with Gold Star Partners

» **A pilot project turns into a home run for the children in Elgin, Illinois.***

BY ANA DEVINE

Partnering with strategic community organizations can dramatically affect summer reading. Children may not be in school during the summer months, but they are likely to be enrolled in myriad activities throughout the community. Why not encourage them to read while they attend summer camp, park district activities, and daycare centers?

From that idea, a pilot project was launched several years ago at Gail Borden Public Library in Elgin, IL. The result? In 2013, the first year of the pilot, the number of children finishing the summer reading program nearly doubled.
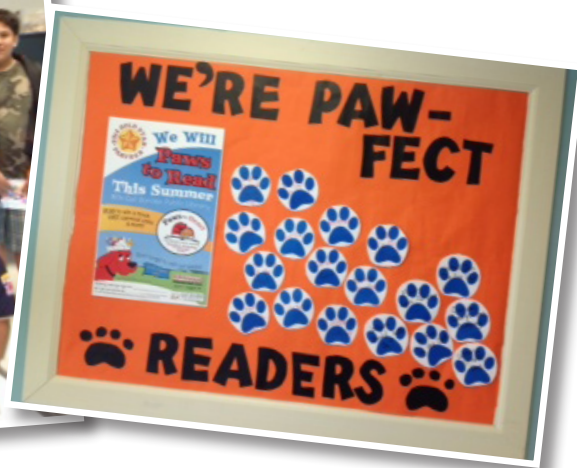

FINDING PARTNERS
The pilot project started by seeking out organizations in the district that offered summer programs for children. Twenty-five organizations were identified and invited to

Selecting the perfect book after completing the program at a daycare center.

Middle School youth at Boys and Girls Club receive their prizes.

A Gold Star Partner shows enthusiasm for summer reading with a creative bulletin board.

partner with the library by facilitating the reading program at their own locations. The library would provide the reading logs, the books, and the prizes; the organizations, in turn, would agree to make reading a regular part of their daily or weekly programs. Everyone knew the pilot was a home run when each organization enthusiastically responded, "Yes, we will participate in summer reading to ensure children are reading this summer."

That was the launch of Gold Star Partners (GSP), which is an off-site version of the summer reading program at the library. The reading logs, incentives, and goals are the same for children participating in the program with each GSP as they are for children participating traditionally at the library.

In 2013, more than 1,600 children finished the reading program at a GSP site. In 2014, over 2,300 children finished the Paws to Read Summer Reading Challenge at a partner site; that translates to 45 percent of the total finishers in the library district. While numbers do not tell the entire story, they do inform us that perhaps the traditional model of summer reading program offerings can get a boost from community partnerships.

WHO ARE THE PARTNERS?
Organizations with whom the library had existing relationships were the first ones invited to join the pilot project. But it wasn't long before community groups started calling and asking to become a Gold Star Partner.

Daycare centers, park districts, and summer camps are obvious potential partners. But we quickly learned that thousands of children in the district attend daily programs organized by the police department, school districts, the faith community, YMCA, YWCA, Head Start, and the local country club. Any organization that served children in a summer program, or later in the season for winter reading, was invited to become a Gold Star Partner. Partners proudly display a poster bearing the GSP logo indicating to the community they've partnered with the library.

In 2014 children completing the program received a free book of their choice along with a pass to the Elgin Carnival and Elgin pool. To thank the partners for the significant role they play in the success of summer reading, a celebration is held at the end of summer in their honor.

THE KEY TO SUCCESS
In line with many libraries, the Gail Borden Public Library has been running successful, fun-packed, and kid-friendly summer reading programs since time immemorial. Librarians around the country who have also run successful summer reading programs year after year and understand the goals and outcomes may think that investing so much time working with community partners may prove unproductive.

But we found that it is precisely this investment of time and resources that resulted in the growth of our summer reading program. Organization coupled with clear and regular communication with partners has been the key to success.

Many voices echoing the same message is powerful. Now, in addition to librarians, parents, and teachers beating the drum for reading in the summer, camp counselors, daycare workers, and police officers are encouraging kids to read also.

A WIN-WIN SITUATION
The GSP model is a win-win situation for the library, for the organizations involved, and—most importantly—for the children. We found that most organizations are eager to include summer reading in their promotional materials as it communicates to parents that they are interested in weaving literacy enrichment into their programs.

For many children, completing a summer reading program at the library may be challenging, especially if they are away at camp, in fulltime daycare, or have transportation barriers. Gold Star Partners helps to remove those barriers and brings the opportunity for success to where the children are spending most of their day.

In Elgin, if children are meeting regularly in an organized setting during the summer, chances are pretty high that they will be reading, too. That's good news for the library and great news for the kids. ∎

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Ana Devine is the Library on the Go manager at the Gail Borden Public Library District, Elgin, IL. She can be reached at adevine@gailborden.info.

Superhero Showdown

» Teens debate how various comic book heroes—and villains—would fare in one-on-one combat.

BY THOMAS MALUCK

When the Richland Library opened its Teen Center for 12- to 18-year-olds in the summer of 2013, the librarians envisioned a variety of programs, from arts and crafts to 3D printing, audio/visual production, book clubs, and videogames.

As the Teen Center staff got to know its regular audience, however, they realized the teens had a substantial interest in comic books. Comics fans would come in wanting to flap their arms in excitement over a new Deadpool story or discuss the changes in continuity between arcs of Wonder Woman. The anime club usually dealt with all things manga, and Free Comic Book Day was always a fun and natural opportunity to host graphic novel programming.

But, instead of focusing on where to begin in comics and catering to new readers (always a good idea, to be fair), what if a program rewarded experienced readers and longtime fans?

This was the logic behind the creation of Superhero Showdown, a pilot program for teens that applied debate-style tactics to the various cast members of DC and Marvel comics. The program was little more than a formalized "Who Would Win One-on-One?" argument with some assists from staff and reference sources.

The who-would-win scenario is nothing new to pop culture, with Epic Rap Battles of History videos regularly racking up tens of millions of views on YouTube, multiple crossover events in DC and Marvel's his-tories, and videogames like *Injustice: Gods Among Us and Marvel vs Capcom*. Even fan-made videos such as Alex Luthor's "Marvel vs DC Epic Trailer" earned a standing ovation from a teen audience. Summer 2015 will see massive crossovers from DC and Marvel in the form of Convergence and Secret Wars events, respectively.

Will upcoming super-rivalry films like *Captain America: Civil War and Batman vs Superman: Dawn of Justice* stoke fans' flames or lead to super-burnout? Only time will tell, but until then, why not have some fun?

LET THE GAMES BEGIN

The concept for the matchups used Comic Vine's "Battle of the Week" feature as a template, with its rules of engagement between fictional combatants (**see Figure 1**). The feature's emphasis on using arguments and data to back up votes was too tempting to not try out in a physical space.

I built the first bracket of 16 potential combatants with an eye toward balance and interesting matchups—Superman and Thor, for example, were left out, as were anyone with "God-level" abilities. Essentially, anyone who could tear the Earth apart was

FIGURE 1: MATCH RULES

- Combatants are in character. This means their usual set of morals apply.
- This is a random encounter (no prep for either side). Both sides have no immediate knowledge of their opponents, either.
- The fight starts in Times Square. Assume they begin roughly 100 feet apart and visible. Times Square isn't populated, but the rest of the city is. The entire city is on limits as well.
- Incapacitation, knockout, BFR (battlefield removal, a.k.a. knocking the enemy so far away that there's no way the fight could continue in the near future) or death all count as elimination. Making a tactical retreat counts as a loss, too. "What's a tactical retreat?" It's leaving the fight with the intention of not returning to the battle in the near future. Going to another spot in the environment to catch your breath for a moment or for a tactical advantage is not a tactical retreat.
- Hey, you know what would be really cool? Treating everyone else in the debate with respect. If you think someone's saying something that just isn't true, go ahead and stick to the facts to point out why. There's no need at all to drop insults just because you disagree with someone. Seriously, this is just talking about a fictional fight, there's no need for immaturity and mudslinging.

Trevon Richardson, 18, participated in the Superhero Showdown debates. He is also a member of the Richland Library's youth volunteer group.

exempted from the bracket. Characters could not all be marquee headliners, but they could not be too obscure, either.

The Teen Center's manager, Jennifer Naimzadeh, a comics fan in her own right, was consulted, and we compared breakdowns of how we would determine winners. The resulting disagreements and wiki searches to discredit each other's views were a *bona fide* success and proved that our concept had merit. Matt Gossett, a librarian formerly employed at a comics shop, was also consulted.

The early bracket was also shown to a few teenage comics enthusiasts to gauge their familiarity with the material. Character diversity and relevance were also factors in choosing our cast. (Another library's bracket

might end up looking different from ours.)

We tweaked the original bracket and rules, and came up with the following matchups:

First Round Superhero Matchups:
- Captain America vs Batman
- Green Arrow vs Hawkeye
- Deathstroke vs Deadpool
- Mr. Fantastic vs Iron Man
- Wolverine vs She-Hulk
- Raven vs Flash
- Storm vs Wonder Woman
- Hawkgirl vs Spider-Man

Each program took place in the Teen Center, where we had enough seats and space for up to 20 teens (we never hosted

more than a dozen each time). Each first matchup was chosen specifically to invite debate over two characters with similar backgrounds and power sets. For example, Captain America versus Batman set the tone for the rest of the Superhero Showdown very well, getting the audience used to the format before stranger combinations emerged.

To start the debate, Power Point slides were displayed on the Teen Center's 60-inch HDTV, listing the basic background and abilities of each character as well as showing a picture for basic reference, which I provided. These slides came in handy for reconciling multiple versions of characters and what they would bring to each match. For example, Flash's speed powers were tempered down and he

FIGURE 2: TEENS DEBATE HOW THEIR CHARACTERS MATCH UP

SUPERHEROES:
DEATHSTROKE (SLADE WILSON) VS DEADPOOL (WADE WILSON)

Two mercenaries for hire, both specially trained, equipped, and skilled with an array of guns and blades, and extensively experienced with fighting superpowered foes. Deadpool (Wade Wilson) defeated most of the Marvel universe in his own book, and Deathstroke (Slade Wilson) disabled the Justice League in another. Deathstroke has superior mental ability, and Deadpool is mentally unhinged. In addition, both opponents are the least like superheroes on this bracket, and are more like ruthless anti-heroes. This is a total draw, right? Except Deadpool has a healing factor where Deathstroke would eventually bleed out, and Deathstroke's repeated losses to the Teen Titans did not help his reputation with teens.

SUPERVILLAINS:
KINGPIN (WILSON FISK) VS RA'S AL GHUL ("THE DEMON'S HEAD")

As a couple of the biggest and most serious threats in their respective universes, Wilson and Ra's went back and forth in the debates. Each was allowed to bring an army of henchmen, but their henchmen's similar abilities were judged to nullify each other, leaving the fight still mano-a-mano. Kingpin was underestimated at first: "Kingpin's tough, he's beaten Spider-Man before" was met with "Anyone can beat Spider-Man!" (Ouch.) The Marvel Encyclopedia was con-

sulted, and Kingpin's 450 pounds of pure muscle gave him a strict advantage. The teens seemed decided that his New York background gave him a home field advantage, but "Ra's is worldwide. Don't matter what city he's in." The Hand and The League of Shadows were both determined to be international organizations. The vote was split 5-3 in Kingpin's favor, coming down to Ra's ninja agility versus the 450 pounds. "Ra's would lose by KO, he might be good with a sword, but he can't take a punch." A final cry in Ra's defense went unheeded: "Ra's is Batman but bad, people!"

COMBINED MATCH-UPS:
IRON MAN (TONY STARK) VS WONDER WOMAN (DIANA PRINCE) (SETTING: DEATH VALLEY) (FINAL ROUND)

We've got a number of opposites in this battle, haven't we? Science versus magic, man versus woman, Marvel versus DC, self-determined capitalist versus holy princess of an island tribe.

Death Valley was drawn again for this fight, meaning a low, open, hot, rocky environment. With each opponent aware of the other, they both know to end the fight as quickly as possible. For Iron Man, this means unleashing his full garrison of beams, bombs, and bullets to create as destructive a force as possible to knock out Wonder Woman. While she's near-invulnerable, she is not beyond injury, and her shield only provides so much cover from explosive fire. On the other hand, she could get the drop on

Iron Man from the word "go" with one quick lasso over his head or shoulders. Over the shoulders, she can easily restrain him and pull him close to rip open his armor with her bare hands. Over the head... well, that becomes a suit of armor without a helmet, to put it lightly.

Say Iron Man starts with his jets and flies up out of Wonder Woman's range, though. Would she super-jump at him? Throw her sword? Pull a Captain America and ricochet her shield around his field of view? She has beaten a fair number of DC powerhouses in her time, including Power Girl, Deathstroke, and universal bracket buster Batman. Meanwhile, Iron Man is not without countermeasures, having fought the likes of Thor, Hulk, and Spider-Man (err, except Wonder Woman once wielded Thor's hammer in a brief crossover).

Does this fight take place in the air or stay rooted to the earth? Who has the faster reflexes? Who can attack and block with greater strength, or out-think their opponent to find a clever advantage? These are the questions of every super-powered debate like this, and in the end, they are answered by our impressions of these characters. You had better believe I am preparing to cop out and declare this one a tie, because the only satisfying answer is going to take place in your imagination. Neither side gave ground on this fight, with an equal number of attendees firmly planted in both characters' camps.

---

was prohibited from time travel.

Teens were generally respectful of the debate format and welcomed challenges to their points of view, though Jennifer and I would sometimes have to remind the group to respond to specific arguments instead of simply denying them. "Describe 'how' in addition to 'what'" was a common piece of advice given to our would-be rhetoricians.

The graphic novel collection was nearby for participants to pull out stories and find examples, although some brought their favorite comics with them—at one point, we had to somewhat discredit *Deadpool Kills The Marvel Universe* as evidence that the character is utterly unstoppable. Some teens in the space were reluctant to

participate until the opening arguments started and they realized anyone could chime in or say something to support their favorite character.

No registration was required. During the final debate, after a few teens' parents showed up and took them out early, a group of sisters arrived and had no idea what was going on. I invited them to debate superheroes with us and their faces lit up. "That's exactly the sort of thing we've been waiting for!"

With healthy attendance and the fun of assembling the bracket behind us, the Teen Center scheduled another debate, this time a Supervillain Showdown. Two rules were changed for this version of the bracket: villains were allowed access to their henchmen,

and each villain was given a day's preparation before the match. (Heroes are required to respond to danger at a moment's notice, whereas villains are schemers.)

First Round Supervillain Matchups:
- Sandman vs Clayface
- Joker vs Green Goblin
- Sabertooth vs Venom
- Lex Luthor vs Doctor Doom
- Poison Ivy vs Namor
- Brainiac vs Master Mold
- Magneto vs Sinestro
- Kingpin vs Ra's al Ghul

How about the arguments themselves? Jennifer and I made sure to keep the respective DC and Marvel Encyclopedias

on hand for specific questions, which in these debates concerned height, weight, limits of characters' equipment and powers, and personal durability. Arguments were recorded on a notepad to share later via the Richland Library's blog. **Figure 2** includes some case studies in the (il)logic and methods used by teens in each debate, as recorded on the blog. These posts led to some amusing reactions from customers in the building. Teens who were unable to attend the events followed up on the results and would often re-enact certain moments in the debates.

For the final event, I used all of the characters who won their first rounds in previous brackets, thereby maintaining a 16-character bracket that teens would recognize and challenge. In addition, locations from around the world, both real and fictional, were drawn from a hat to add an element of random chance. The locations included the Florida Everglades; Columbia, South Carolina; an aircraft carrier; the Amazon rain forest; a New York City subway station; an active volcano; the Grand Canyon; Mt. Everest; a S.H.I.E.L.D. Helicarrier; the Sahara Desert; Death Valley; the African Savannah; an underground mine; and the International Space Station.

Superheroes & Villains First Round Combined Matchups

- Deadpool v Joker (Everglades)
- Lex Luthor v Iron Man (Columbia, SC)
- Spider-Man v Poison Ivy (Aircraft Carrier)
- Green Arrow v Kingpin (Amazon)
- Clayface v She-Hulk (Subway Station)
- Wonder Woman v Magneto (Volcano)
- Flash v Brainiac (Grand Canyon)
- Batman v Sabertooth (Mt. Everest)

Prizes at each debate were awarded on the basis of participation and persuasive arguments. Cookies were distributed to everyone who contributed an argument. At the Supervillain Showdown, a Joker statue was awarded to the most active and persuasive participant. At the Superheroes & Villains Showdown, a Batman Beyond snapback hat was the main prize.

NEW VIEWPOINTS

During Free Comic Book Day last year, comics creators hosted in the library were invited to give their input on the Superhero Showdown bracket, butting heads with teens in the room who felt differently. Among them, Severin Piehl, Cassandra Wedeking, Chris Sims, and Chad Bowers drew from a deeper well of comics history and author citation than the teens, representing a whole different angle on several characters.

For example, teens considered Deadpool an automatic win against Mr. Fantastic (Deadpool is wacky and uses guns; Mr. Fantastic is a super-stretchy scientist caught off guard and functions better as leader of the Fantastic Four than as a solo fighter). At that point in the bracket, Chris Sims provided his take: "I can sum up why Mr. Fantastic wins in one sentence: Mr. Fantastic was created by Jack Kirby, semicolon, Deadpool was created by Rob Liefeld." Teens called him out for simplifying the argument, but since this was a speculative extra take on the bracket, the rules were relaxed. This is one example of how the bracket's life was extended into the library's other programs and guest appearances.

NEXT VERSION

With these debates behind us, the Teen Center will focus on a more open-ended and less combative fictional competition in 2015 with a program tentatively titled Superhero 911. This follow-up program was designed in the wake of the brackets' clearest weaknesses, relying on franchise knowledge and violence.

The setup is simple: participants will write/draw characters on blank cards to be assembled into a shuffled deck. The characters can be well-known or completely original, as long as their abilities are clearly defined.

Another deck will be constructed from written/drawn scenarios of varying intensity, from "Cat stuck in tree" to "Imminent asteroid collision." Players draw five character cards each, then place five scenario cards face down on the playing area. Each scenario is revealed one at a time and players assign each one a character from their hands. The tension of the game comes from hoping each character is being assigned to the right emergency, with inevitable mismatches like "Batman will take care of this grease fire" or "Sailor Moon will stop the dam from bursting...somehow..."

If you are looking for an inexpensive, highly social program to capitalize on seasoned comics readers, I hope that you liked some of the ideas shared here and will implement (and improve!) them in your system. Your comics-reading customers (and staff) will have a blast. ∎

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Thomas Maluck is a teen services librarian at Richland Library in Columbia, South Carolina. He can be reached by e-mail at tmaluck@richlandlibrary.com

REFERENCES

Comic Vine's "Battle of the Week" ongoing feature – http://comicvine.com
Better Bracket Maker - http://betterbracketmaker.com/ (helps to keep track of who goes where)
Marvel vs DC Epic Trailer - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8KxIHVGch8I
Epic Rap Battles of History - http://www.epicrapbattlesofhistory.com/

» **During Free Comic Book Day last year, comics creators hosted in the library were invited to give their input on the Superhero Showdown bracket, butting heads with teens in the room who felt differently. Among them, Severin Piehl, Cassandra Wedeking, Chris Sims, and Chad Bowers drew from a deeper well of comics history and author citation than the teens, representing a whole different angle on several characters.**

The Development of Digital Literacy and Inclusion Skills of Public Librarians

» **An examination of the extent to which public librarians are successfully prepared to engage the community in digital literacy and inclusion**

BY KONSTANTINA MARTZOUKOU AND JOANNEKE ELLIOTT

Public libraries play an important role in creating inclusive, digitally-literate communities via the provision of online health, employment and education information as well as digital literacy training programs.[1,2,3,4] Digital literacy (DL) has been described as "a constellation of life skills that are necessary for full participation in our media-saturated, information-rich society,"[5] including "those capabilities that mean an individual is fit for living, learning and working in a digital society": the ability to locate, organize, understand, evaluate, analyze and present digital information, but also to appraise the impact of new technologies and manage digital identities.[6] Therefore, DL "looks beyond the development of functional IT skills to describe a richer set of digital behaviors, practices and identities" involving critical thinking, reflection and life-long learning, communication, collaboration, and social engagement.[7]

A necessary condition for enabling the development of DL and for empowering modern citizens to exploit new possibilities offered by technology is digital inclusion (DI). DI has been mainly linked to Internet connectivity, and in the past five years within the United States significant progress has been made to expand Internet broadband access to the community via two major federal initiatives: *the National Broadband Plan and the Broadband Technology Opportunities Program*.[8] However, DL and DI are interconnected issues, operating in a complementary fashion as "without access, people cannot develop digital literacy; without digital literacy, they cannot gain maximum benefit from online resources."[9] As the use of Internet activities (e.g. email, searching, online banking and shopping, social networking) is increasing and becoming more varied, the digital literacy skills gap is further widening between those who are online and those who are not.

DIGITAL LITERACY COMPETENCIES OF PUBLIC LIBRARIANS

In order to support DI and the development of DL for the communities they service, public librarians must stay up-to-date with fast-changing external technological environments as well as constantly evolving digital landscapes of their own working contexts. These requirements create greater demands on the depth and breadth of technical knowledge and skills required by public librarians.[10] The American Library Association Office for Information Technology Policy (2013) has recommended the development of DL competencies of staff as a priority for local libraries and as part of their wider mission. Currently, there is lack of understanding of what professional development and workplace learning is required of public librarians in order to engage communities in DL, and

research literature in this area is scarce. Standard professional development of librarians is the Masters' degree in Library & Information Science (MLIS); it is estimated that two-thirds of all public libraries have a librarian with an MLIS degree from an American Library Association-accredited institution.[11] After graduation, options for librarians to advance their knowledge and skills lie with their employer; continuing education can take place via professional associations, in-house training, or external online training providers. However, the diversity of public librarian roles in the increasingly complex technological environment calls for the provision of continuing education on a more systematic level. Staff development should be included in the mission statements and agendas for every public library, and library schools must ensure graduates arrive on the job with the required skillset.

Previous research indicates that there is a gap between the skills taught in many MLIS programs and the information technology skills expected by employers.[12,13,14] Fortney (2009),[15] for example, found that more "MLS programs should have a technology literacy component as part of their requirements and incorporate information technologies." Similarly, Singh & Mehra (2012)[16] concluded that there was dissatisfaction among library students caused by the gap between the courses offered and the skills they need in their jobs; limited research exists of information technology representations in MLIS curricula.

Public librarians should be equipped with not only information technology (IT) skills, but also transferable DL skills. As Farkas (2006)[17] suggested, emphasis should be placed on the need to teach students 'big picture' topics, such as "how to really be able to keep up with technology, make good decisions about its implementation, use it and sell it to others." The American Library Association Council (2009)[18] has identified 'Technological Knowledge and Skills' as one of ALA's Core Competencies of Librarianship, competencies which all MLIS graduates should possess. These competencies include not only the understanding and application of "information, communication, assistive, and related technologies," but also other transferable knowledge, techniques and skills: understanding of "professional ethics and prevailing service norms," "methods of assessing and evaluating the specifications, efficacy, and cost efficiency of technology-based products and services" as well as the

Table 1—Interviewers Details

Case study details	Date of Site Visits	Interviews Conducted
Case Study 1	December 18 and 20, 2013	Library Director (Interviewee 5) 1 Librarian (Interviewee 9)
Case Study 2	December 16, 2013 – January 14, 2013	Library Webmaster (Interviewee 1) 3 Librarians (Interviewees 2, 11 and 14)
Case Study 3	December 17, 2013 – January 13, 2013	Assistant Director (Interviewee 7) Library Systems Manager (Interviewee 4) 4 Librarians (Interviewees 3, 6, 8 and 13)
Case Study 4	January 7 and 9, 2014	Librarian (Interviewee 10) Digital Librarian (Interviewee 12)

principles and methods for implementing technology-based projects. In addition, public librarians should be prepared to develop in other areas, such teaching and instruction, leadership, collaborating, and building partnerships.[19] For example, managing projects effectively requires "a basic understanding of the public policy process, management and leadership, budget and finance, and program evaluation."[20] Promoting ideas/library services[21] means working effectively with local communities and the ability to lead change is necessary for advocating the value of continuing education and life-long learning. Some of these skills are particularly important as more public libraries participate in local and national initiatives and discussions on Internet policies, digital inclusion, broadband access and open data, acting as the link between underserved communities and the potential of the Internet.[22]

RESEARCH AIMS AND OBJECTIVE
The present study was conducted with the purpose of exploring the value public librarians assign to the development of IT and other transferable DL skills for fostering and supporting DI and DL in their communities. The research was conducted in four selected public libraries in North Carolina. The objectives of the study were: a) to understand the perspectives of public librarians about their roles in creating digital literate and inclusive communities; b) to examine the DL programs offered by selected public libraries, the IT and transferable skills required of librarians to run these programs, and the policies in place at those libraries for continuing professional development; and c) to examine a sample of the top MLIS programs in the United States in order to determine

whether they adequately prepare librarians for DL IT and transferable skills.

METHODOLOGY
A qualitative multiple case study approach was selected to undertake this research, answering 'how' and 'why' questions within a real-life context, along with data collection from multiple sources of evidence that, according to Yin (2003),[23] enable the triangulation of data. This approach included semi-structured interviews with 14 librarians and examinations of digital literacy professional development policies via documentation available within the participating libraries. All interviews were conducted on location at the libraries selected for this study between December 18, 2013 and January 14, 2014; each lasted an average of one hour. A total of nine public librarians and five library management staff were interviewed (**see Table 1**). The interviews were recorded with a digital voice recorder, transcribed using the InqScribe software application, and coded and analyzed using NVivo 10 qualitative data analysis tool. Template analysis was used to code the data and draw out themes, based on the development of a flexible coding template where themes were presented in a mind-map, following the methodology suggested by King (2012)[24] for starting with broader themes and successively creating narrower, more specific ones. The themes included the digital literacy needs of the public, most important IT skills, most important transferable skills, continuing education, obstacles to a digitally inclusive community, and gaps between library programs and the working environment. In addition to the case studies of the four selected public libraries described above, the authors examined the status of a sample

Table 2—IT Skills

- E-books
- Operating systems (Microsoft windows, Mac OS) and software applications (Word, Excel, PowerPoint)
- Web design
- Social media platforms and emerging technologies, Blogs and Wikis
- Basic PC trouble shooting
- Online research skills (i.e. information retrieval)
- Database design, management and concepts

Table 3—Transferable Skills

- Library/technology teaching instruction
- Communication
- Management
- Evaluate & assess programs and library services
- Public policy, community outreach & inclusion, engaging stakeholders
- Budget & finance
- Marketing

of the best MLIS programs.[25] This analysis was conducted in order to determine the extent to which recent MLIS graduates are prepared to effectively facilitate access to technology in their programming and help the public develop DL skills. The analysis included only general MLIS programs and excluded any specialized programs in information management, technology or architecture.

Through an extensive literature review and the interviews with the librarians, a list of seven IT skills (**see Table 2**) and a list of seven additional transferable skills were generated (**see Table 3**).

These skills were used as a basis for conducting an analysis of the titles and descriptions of specific course offerings within the selected MLIS that were relevant to the two broad areas of competencies (listed on the university websites). The courses were initially coded as 'IT' based, as long as they included at least one of the seven identified IT skills in the titles and descriptions. For example, a course titled Web Technologies Techniques was included in the analysis in relation to preparing students for web design; this was confirmed in the course description. No distinction was made between core and elective courses or the number of times the course was offered, and each course could be labeled for several skills.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

For the purposes of this study, general pseudonyms (e.g. Public Library 1) were used for the four participating libraries. The following discussion presents a synopsis of existing library DL programs and staff training policies in relation to digital literacy and inclusion. This is followed by an analysis of the MLIS programs.

CASE STUDY RESULTS

Public Library 1 had a partnership with a library school and provided a series of classes and workshops on using computers, the Internet, Microsoft Office, file organization, online job searching and résumé writing, online health information, E-books, and social networking. These were taught and designed by library students, while the library managed registration and promotion of the classes. There were also Open Lab sessions where patrons could come in with individual questions and get one-on-one assistance. The most current Library Information Technology Plan was from 2003 to 2007 which described the training of librarians as lacking and the number of staff as inadequate. There was emphasis on providing staff with appropriate technical skills to satisfactorily perform their jobs and to serve the public, yet no specific policies in regards to digital literacy and inclusion were identified.

Public Library 2 offered a variety of classes for the public (e.g. computer classes covering email, Web, Microsoft Word and Internet basics) and some of the classes were taught by students of the library school in the area. The library's DL and DI policies (covering 2007-2010) included providing its residents with information technology resources through ample access to computers and technology training, and the library kept up-to-date with emerging technologies and also had partnerships with high-tech organizations in the community. Staff training was therefore a high priority. Competencies in information and technology-related communications were emphasized for all staff positions and all staff members were expected to be competent with PC and Web-based applications.

Public Library 3 offered classes on Microsoft Office which were taught by students from the library school in the area as well as other classes that covered information resources on career, government, and health information. The library sought to carefully evaluate emerging technologies in order to meet the community's needs and it had a partnership with the County IT department to guarantee maximum public access to hardware and software. The library also worked toward creating a technology team to assess new technologies and devices for integration into the library. The strategic plan of the library from 2013-2016 identified two priorities centered on community connections and technology tools and training. The library sought to expand collaboration with local organizations and other county departments, and also raise awareness of library services in the community. Ongoing training opportunities for library staff were of high importance.

After contacting several administrators and searching the library's website, it was impossible to find the strategic plan of Public Library 4. There was no mention of any type of policies in regards to DL training of staff. The library offered a variety of classes ranging from PowerPoint and eBooks to help with job searching websites, online applications, and preparing resumes and cover letters. Computers were available and could be accessed to use the Internet, Microsoft Office, and electronic research resources.

INTERVIEWS WITH LIBRARIANS

The librarians who took part in the research considered teaching and instruction a very important aspect of their profession and they emphasized helping the public to become self-sufficient in terms of technology skills that are "key and important to their lives" (Interviewee 6). A wide range of DL training was offered but four categories were mentioned consistently: e-book training (i.e. accessing and downloading Overdrive eBooks), basic computer and office software skills (e.g. how to start the computer, use the mouse, use Microsoft Word and set up email), assistance with online forms (such as job applications, health care and government forms), and accessing and using electronic database resources. Much of this training was aimed at older people as "they're suddenly confronted" with "an advance of social expectations and work expectations…there might be a stigma to not being wired" (Interviewee 2). However, interviewees agreed that a lot of people with different demographics still need "general computers skills," especially help with filling in online job and government applications. They described this as "an immediate need" affecting people's well-being (Interviewees 3, 14). Participants

also mentioned the use of online social media: "Social media is huge, that is a need. People have a need to be social, how do they do that, how do they set up a profile, how to load pictures" (Interviewee 13).

The interviewees identified a number of obstacles in the way of a more digital inclusive community including library priorities, outreach problems, lack of resources (e.g. technological, financial) but also disagreement "regarding technology literacy as a role/goal of libraries" (Interviewee 12) and lack of systematic analysis of users' needs or a "deep plan...to go after specific groups that may be digitally excluded now" (Interviewee 5). The importance of well-coordinated communication efforts was highlighted as an essential component in the teaching of digital literacy and overall emphasis was placed on devising clear and well-developed marketing and communication strategies (Interviewee 7), the development of a unified strategic approach to connecting with different groups in the community, and investing "in that level of communication" (Interviewee 4). One of the participants felt that, although a good start had been made to draw national attention to the issues of digital inclusion, the presence of "the have and have not's...is going farther and farther apart" (Interviewee 3). For example, the government making a decision to go paperless may wrongly assume that the problem of digital connectivity has already been resolved: "part of it is just a mind-set, where the people making decisions assume that everyone in the community is operating at an equal level of digital access" (Interviewee 8).

The library managers interviewed had the expectation that especially new recruits had developed at least a basic level of IT skills that enabled them to adapt to different technologies and platforms rather than just focusing on knowing a specific type of software (Interviewee 3). However, the librarians expressed that MLIS programs were not successful in providing them with the digital literacy skills required for their job. The current MLIS programs were not teaching enough technology skills, and those being taught were often out-of-date. The technological skills they acquired (such as web programming, design and development, and general technical support) were mostly self-taught or had been learned on the job (Interviewees 1 & 6). One participant even questioned the need for librarians to have an MLIS and wondered if there is an equivalent experience or skill set that would provide the same outcome:

"I think that a long term conversation needs to be had about the return of the investment of a graduate level program for this type of work" (Interviewee 5). The librarians highlighted a range of different IT skills, from basic technical support and troubleshooting to searching/online research skills. They also required knowledge of mainstream operating systems and office software, social media platforms (including the interpretation of social media statistics for outreach), current technology news, and eBooks (Interviewee 12). Other skills deemed important included basic web and database design and concepts as well as advanced online researching. The librarians interviewed considered the acquisition of transferable skills equally important. These skills included the management of digital literacy programs (e.g. budget and finance aspects), the communication with external stakeholders for the purposes of outreach and collaboration, and an overall understanding of community needs and public policy issues. Another transferable skill the librarians highlighted was the ability to communicate with the public. They defined this as 'people skills' and the ability to make individuals feel at ease (for example during digital literacy sessions). The interviewees also highlighted the need to understand the community and know how to reach to particular segments of the community (e.g. the unemployed, older people) as a critical transferable skill. In addition the interviewees identified MLIS programs as the venues in which instruction skills and methods should be taught. Finally, knowing how to design and assess programs for the community was considered, by some, essential. One of the interviewees explained that MLIS programs lack sufficient practical experience and enough emphasis on users, "Really understanding who the patrons are who come in the door. It is one thing to theorize who they are and it is all very idealistic but there is a gap with really seeing a homeless person come in and ask some questions" (Interviewee 13).

Another interviewee placed importance on evaluating the effectiveness and impact of a digital literacy program. This would involve a number of transferable skills which could be taught at library school: "...working with data, setting performance measures, knowing how to create measurable outcomes and using those to translate into effective storytelling...we don't always have the language to evaluate what we have done to say whether or not it is worth

continuing investment" (Interviewee 4).

All participants agreed that continuing education is very important and that it should be a priority with library management. Nevertheless they expressed that in their libraries there was not enough formal training for all employees. Some participants managed to keep up with current developments on their own by following blogs, reading professional journals or attending free webinars. Others felt that priority was mostly given to employees who lacked basic digital literacy skills but insufficient attention was given to the development of librarians who are already perceived as technologically savvy: "...having been in the position for 15 years, I don't do much and you lose it, like a language" (Interviewee 9). Another interviewee felt that there was not sufficient formal training available in their library and when there was, it was highly dependent on the different supervisors and what they specifically required of their employees (Interviewee 11). Another participant felt that continuing education for librarians is not evolving fast enough. They thought most of their training should depend on specific job requirements and library priorities, but the training they received had not been about library skills, but rather about employment matters such as dealing with co-workers and sexual harassment (Interviewee 14). Despite that in one of the public libraries there were plans for developing and finalizing "core competencies for all staff" and "drill[ing] down a little bit more on what the idea of technological competency or digital literacy means" (Interviewee 5).

The perceptions of librarians around the development of DL IT and transferable skills provided a rich ground for the analysis of the MLIS programs. It was important to also examine more systematically the degree to which these programs prepared newly qualified librarians to enter the digitally complex environment of the public library. Therefore MLIS programs were analyzed in order to assemble an overall picture of the current DL education within these areas.

ANALYSIS OF MLIS PROGRAMS
By combining the findings of the structured librarian interviews with the results of an extensive literature review, the authors generated a list of IT skills (**see Table 2**) and transferable skills (**see Table 3**). A total of 118 courses offered across the 20 MLIS programs were based on at least one of the

Table 4—IT Competencies Taught in MLIS Programs

University	Number of IT courses	Overall Frequency of IT skills	Number of skills listed
University of Illinois	14	18	5
University of North Carolina	12	14	6
University of Michigan	11	14	5
Drexel University	10	13	5
Florida State University	7	8	5
University of Texas	7	8	4
Kent State University	6	10	5
Syracuse University	6	9	5
Rutgers University	5	5	4
University of Wisconsin Milwaukee	5	5	3
Indiana University	4	4	3
University of Alabama	4	7	4
University of Pittsburgh	4	6	4
University of South Carolina	4	8	5
University of Tennessee	4	6	3
University of Wisconsin Madison	4	7	4
Simmons College	3	5	5
University of California	3	4	3
University of Maryland	3	3	2
University of Washington	2	2	1

Table 5—Frequency of Specific IT Skills

IT skills	Number of incidences	Number of schools
E-books	0	0
Operating systems (Microsoft windows, Mac OS) and software applications (Word, Excel, PowerPoint)	36	18
Web design	33	16
Social media platforms and emerging technologies, Blogs and Wikis	19	10
Basic PC trouble shooting	4	3
Online research skills and resource evaluation	27	15
Database design, management & concepts	37	18

The highest number of IT skills taught was found at the University of North Carolina (6) while the lowest number was found at the University of Washington (1). Some schools only offered two or three out of the total number of the seven identified skills. Further analysis demonstrated the emphasis given to particular IT competencies in the programs, revealing clear gaps in specific areas. **Table 5** demonstrates that operating systems and software applications, web design, database design and online research skills and resource evaluation were the areas mostly taught in schools. Surprisingly, however, basic PC trouble shooting and e-books were the two areas that were taught the least. In addition, not as many schools offered evaluation and social media platforms and emerging technologies.
A total of 139 courses were coded as non-IT courses in the MLIS programs offered by the different universities containing the transferable skills identified in this research study. **Table 6** demonstrates that 213 incidences of skills were found across all the courses (as previously one course could focus on several competencies); it also shows the overall frequency of transferable skills identified in the MLIS programs of each university and how many out of the seven competencies were taught. The University of Illinois had the highest number of non-IT courses (26), followed by the University of Maryland (9) and the University of Pittsburgh (11). At the University of Illinois there were 37 occurrences of transferable

seven identified IT skills. **Table 4** presents the number of IT courses offered in the MLIS programs of each university, the frequency of all the competencies identified within the courses labeled as IT, and the total number of IT skills taught out of the seven identified competencies within each university. The courses which were labelled as 'IT courses' were assessed against the seven listed IT skills which resulted to 156 incidences of these skills found across all the courses (one course could focus on several skills). The number of IT courses is arranged from highest to lowest.

This analysis showed that the number IT skills varied substantially across the schools. The University of Illinois had the highest number of IT courses taught (14), followed by the University of North Carolina (12) and the University of Michigan (11). At the University of Illinois, IT skills appeared 18 times in course descriptions and five out of seven of the identified skills were addressed in the courses (for example e-books is not one of the competencies taught).

skills and all of the seven identified skills were present. This was also the case with the University of Wisconsin at Milwaukee and the University of Pittsburgh. The lowest number of transferable skills (2) was taught at the University of South Carolina. In addition, some schools only offered courses that focused on two or three skills only.

A further analysis of these specific competencies showed that management skills and skills covering public policy, community outreach, inclusion, and engaging stakeholders are covered in the schools. On the other hand, communication skills were only taught in 6 out of the 20 schools. In addition, less emphasis was given to technology instruction and marketing (**see Table 7**).

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

The findings from the interviews provided an insight into a set of DL skills that were considered important by librarians. The development of IT skills encompasses different communication media and tools such as e-Books, online databases and social media platforms. The provision of e-Books in particular has attracted a rising interest in the last few years with the majority of public libraries in the United States offering free access e-Books to library patrons. This has been one of the most remarkable changes in patrons' borrowing habits and the increasing popularity of e-Books means that library staff now spend more time on technology support and instruction (e.g. helping with devices, downloading e-Books). Patrons expect public librarians to be knowledgeable on all mobile

Table 6—Transferable Skills Taught in MLIS Programs

University	Number of non-IT courses	Overall frequency of transferable skills	Number of skills listed
University of Illinois	26	37	7
University of Maryland	9	13	6
University of Pittsburgh	9	14	7
University of Texas	9	16	6
University of Washington	9	15	6
Florida State University	8	9	5
Rutgers University	8	8	6
University of Alabama	7	10	5
University of North Carolina	6	9	5
Indiana University	5	8	4
Syracuse University	5	8	5
University of Michigan	5	6	4
University of Tennessee	5	10	6
University of Wisconsin Milwaukee	5	10	7
Drexel University	4	8	6
Kent State University	4	10	5
Simmons College	4	5	5
University of California	4	5	3
University of Wisconsin Madison	4	8	5
University of South Carolina	3	4	2

Table 7—Transferable Skills

Transferable skills	Number of incidences	Number of schools
Library/technology instruction	19	14
Communication	9	6
Management	46	20
Evaluate & assess programs and library services	33	16
Public policy, community outreach and inclusion, engaging stakeholders	59	19
Budget and finance	27	16
Marketing	20	14

devices, and eBook readers. This creates many challenges in terms of keeping up with an ever changing technology and it raises the need for developing more hands-on and systematic training programs for library staff.[26]

Basic IT skills, including knowledge of operating systems (Microsoft windows, Mac OS) and software applications (Word, Excel, PowerPoint) are also essential for assisting patrons with using public access computers; however this is a challenging area as IT "can include anything from keyboards and mice to troubleshooting a host of computer problems … vary in age and composition, come from a range of vendors, run different operating systems,

and often have different application software versions."[27]

The most important finding of this study, however, is that the ability to teach DL requires skills beyond knowledge of the technology, embracing additional transferable skills that should not be considered as secondary. For example, designing a website requires understanding of privacy policies and intellectual freedom. Teaching the functionality of operating systems and applications requires creating a comfortable atmosphere for learners who may be intimidated by the technology and embarrassed by their lack of knowledge.[28] Technology instruction implies knowledge of the latest technological trends but in order to convey this knowledge an understanding of pedagogical issues and teaching methodologies is essential.

Similarly, the development of technical online research skills (i.e. information retrieval) is important for effectively sourcing different types of healthcare, government and employment information, yet without critical evaluation skills, technical knowledge will not suffice. A technical understanding of social media functionality and awareness of the latest technologies and trends are paramount but, in order to maintain high visibility in information services, communication and marketing are essential transferable skills for outreach, e.g. engaging with patrons and other stakeholders as well as building partnerships with local organizations. In addition, an understanding of public policy at local, regional or national level is important for developing awareness of digital literacy community needs, for utilizing existing support resources, for discovering potential partners, and for sourcing and securing available funding for digital literacy programs. Finally, in order to evaluate the impact of digital literacy programs and developing comprehensive and useful digital literacy services for the community, public libraries require a systematic collection of user data. This requires data analysis skills but also communication skills for translating these data into useful information for the purposes of external funding. MLIS programs play a big role in providing public librarians with the skills they need to become knowledgeable in how to assist the public with their digital literacy needs. Through our analysis we found that the strongest areas of IT competencies in these programs include operating systems, software applications, web design,

and database design. Our research study demonstrated that extensive progress has been made towards preparing librarians in regards to overall IT competencies since the findings of earlier research (such as that of Fortney, 2009[29]), calling for MLIS programs to incorporate a stronger emphasis on technology literacy and information technologies. However, more work is required in specific areas such as e-Books and general PC troubleshooting as these are not given sufficient attention in current programs. It therefore appears that the most basic and practical competencies are missing from the MLIS curriculum.

In 2013, the American Library Association Office for Information Technology Policy (2013)[30] recommended that, in order to support library engagement in digital literacy efforts, "Programs should require classes in instructional design and educational pedagogy so that new librarians are best prepared to work with learners in formal education settings, as well as the public sphere." However, our research has shown that technology instruction skills are lacking among the transferable skills. More work is required in the development of interpersonal skills and particularly in helping MLIS students to develop stronger communication.

Public libraries and MLIS program coordinators need to work together to reevaluate current MLIS programs in terms of DL and transferable skills, in order to make these programs more comprehensive and responsive to current needs. Professional organizations that accredit the programs should continually evaluate the curriculum of the MLIS programs and steer them in a direction that will allow for public librarians to be better prepared to serve the public's digital literacy needs. This sentiment was also found in the earlier literature.[31,32] However, it is understood that not all skills can be acquired through an MLIS program, especially with evolving technologies, and therefore public libraries and public librarians should make continuing education a top priority. The library profession needs to make sure that new librarians are prepared for leading digital literacy programs and that those already employed should receive training in this role that will support their professional development. Thus, "as required by ALA standards for Accreditation, MLIS education programs should actively foster a culture of continuous learning and curiosity."[33]

Finally, it is important to continue evaluating MLIS programs and examine whether they actually provide these skills to new graduates. The training of new librarians can be challenging and should be re-evaluated and assessed frequently.

RECOMMENDATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

The findings of this study suggest several recommendations. In order for public libraries to continue to take the lead in developing digitally inclusive and literate communities they have to be able to show concrete policies and plans for the development of their staff addressing the DL IT and transferable skills explored in this study. Even though the awareness and importance of continuing education is present, systematic training appears to be lacking. Therefore it is recommended that all public libraries create a strategic plan with set policies in regards to staff digital literacy and inclusion training. MLIS programs should offer hands-on, practical technology classes and training on subjects that will provide the future public librarian with transferable skills that are essential for fostering partnerships with the community, such as, communication, outreach, and technology instruction. MLIS students could also complete an internship/placement before graduating so that they will be better prepared to face some of the issues that are characteristic of public libraries and digital literacy and inclusion.
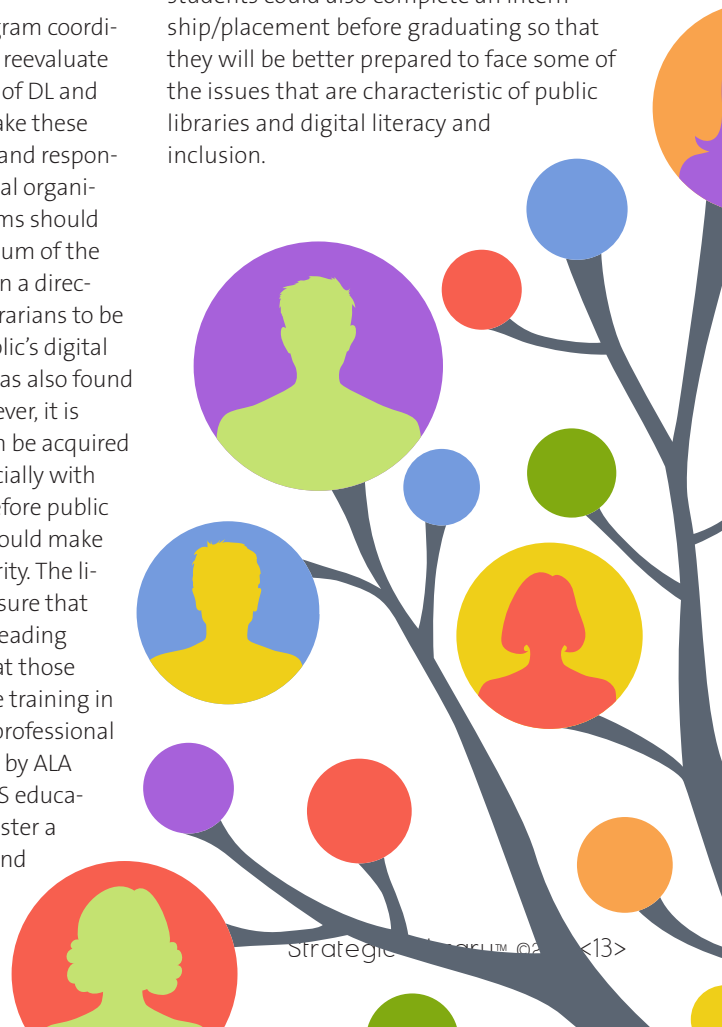
Several areas relating to the development of IT and transferable competencies of public librarians deserve further research investigation. For example, it would be valuable to examine, in more detail the impact of particular demographics (such as age, gender and graduation date). Furthermore, in several public libraries not all library staff who deal with the public and help them develop digital literacy are qualified/trained librarians. It would therefore be interesting to compare the competencies of different library staff working at different levels. In addition, it would be valuable to talk to MLIS program coordinators and directors to explore these skills in core versus elective requirements of the programs, examine the kinds of coursework available and how it address these skills, as well as investigate the work related experience requirements for entry to the programs (if any) and the pre-employment work experiences that are generally being offered by MLIS programs (e.g. internships and internship placement assistance). These could shed further light into how the identified skills in this research could be integrated effectively into the MLIS curriculum. ∎

ABOUT THE AUTHORS: Dr. Konstantina Martzoukou is a senior lecturer and program leader at The Robert Gordon University in Aberdeen, UK. Joanneke Elliott is employed at Davis Library at The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

FOOTNOTES:

[1] Information Policy & Access Center. (2013). *E-Government & Public Libraries.* University of Maryland, College Park. College of Information Studies. Retrieved from http://www.plinternetsurvey.org/analysis/public-libraries-and-e-government/

[2] Manjarrez, C. A. & Schoembs, K. (2011). Who's in the Queue? A Demographic Analysis of Public Access Computer Users and Uses in U.S. Public Libraries. Research Brief series, no. 4 (IMLS-2011-RB-04). Washington, DC: Institute of Museum and Library Services. Retrieved from http://www.imls.gov/assets/1/AssetManager/Brief2011_04.pdf

[3] American Library Association Office for Information Technology Policy (2013). *Digital literacy, libraries and public policy.* Report of the office for information technology policy's digital literacy task force. Retrieved from http://www.districtdispatch.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/01/2012_OITP_digilitreport_1_22_13.pdf

[4] Becker, S., Grandall, M.D., Fisher, K.E, Blakewood, R., Kinney, B. & Russell-Sauvé, C. (2011). *Opportunity for all. How library policies and practices impact public internet access.* Washington, D.C. : Institute of Museum and Library Services. Retrieved from http://www.imls.gov/assets/1/AssetManager/OppForAll2.pdf

[5] Hobbs, R. (2010). *Digital and media literacy: A plan of action: A white paper on the digital and media literacy recommendations of the Knight Commission on the information needs of communities in a democracy.* Washington, D.C. The Aspen Institute.

[6] BCS The Chartered Institute for IT. (2013). *What is digital literacy?* Retrieved from http://www.bcs.org/content/conWebDoc/51398

[7] JISC (2014). Developing Digital Literacies. Retrieved from http://www.jiscinfonet.ac.uk/infokits/digital-literacies/

[8] American Library Association Office for Information Technology Policy (2013).

[9] Information Policy & Access Center. (2013).

[10] Thompson, S.M. (2009). *Core technology competencies for librarians and library staff. A LITA Guide.* New York: Neal-Schuman Publishers, Inc.

[11] Institute of Museum and Library Services. (2015). Data File Documentation Public Libraries Survey Fiscal Year 2013. Retrieved from https://www.imls.gov/sites/default/files/fy2013_pls_data_file_documentation.pdf

[12] Bosque, D.D. & Lampert, C. (2009). A chance of storms: New librarians navigating technology tempests. *Technical Services Quarterly,* 26(4), 261-286.

[13] Gorman, M. (2004). Whither library education? *New Library World,* 105, 376-380.

[14] Singh, V. & Mehra, B. (2013). Strengths and weaknesses of the information technology curriculum in library and information science graduate programs. *Journal of Librarianship and Information Science,* 45(3), 219-231.

[15] Fortney, K. (2009). Comparisons of information technology education in MLIS programs. *Library Student Journal.* Retrieved from http://escholarship.org/uc/item/7sh449ds#page-1/

[16] Singh, V. & Mehra, B. (2013).

[17] Farkas, M. (2006, July 17). Skills for the 21st century librarian. [Web log post]. Retrieved from http://meredith.wolfwater.com/wordpress/2006/07/17/skills-for-the-21st-century-librarian/

[18] American Library Association Council. (2009). *ALA's core competencies of librarianship.* Policy approved by the ALA council, 27 January 2009. Chicago, IL: American Library Association. Retrieved from: http://www.ala.org/educationcareers/sites/ala.org.educationcareers/files/content/careers/corecomp/corecompetences/finalcorecompstat09.pdf

[19] American Library Association Office for Information Technology Policy (2013).

[20] Becker, S., Grandall, M.D., Fisher, K.E, Blakewood, R., Kinney, B. & Russell-Sauvé, C. (2011).

[21] Farkas, M. (2006, July 17).

[22] Beyond Access. (2012). *Providing internet access through public libraries: An investment in digital inclusion and twenty-first century skills.* Retrieved from http://www.ifla.org/files/assets/clm/WSIS/libraries_public_access.pdf

[23] Yin, R. (2003). *Case study research: Design and methods.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publishing

[24] King, N. (2012). What is Template Analysis? Huddersfield: School of Human & Health Sciences, University of Huddersfield. Retrieved from http://www.hud.ac.uk/hhs/research/template-analysis/what-is-template-analysis/

[25] US News & World Report. (2013). Library and Information Studies Ranked in 2013.

[26] Zickuhr, K. & Smith, A. (2012). Digital Differences. Pew Internet & American Life Project. Retrieved from http://pewinternet.org/Reports/2012/Digital-differences.aspx/

[27] Bertot, J. C. (2009). Public access technologies in public libraries: Effects and implications. *Information Technology and Libraries,* 28(2), 81–92.

[28] Thompson, S.M. (2009).

[29] Fortney, K. (2009).

[30] American Library Association Office for Information Technology Policy (2013).

[31] Farkas, M. (2006, July 17).

[32] Gorman, M. (2004).

[33] American Library Association Office for Information Technology Policy (2013).

Teen Zine: Engaging Teen Patrons with Publishing

» Pasadena Public Library strengthens their teen services program while giving teens publishing experience

BY JANE GOV

(Publisher's note: In our August issue, we featured an article by Stephanie Katz of the Manatee County Public Library System detailing their efforts publishing a literary magazine with contributions from adult writers and artist from all over the world. This is a different take on library publishing as the writers and artists -- as well as the designers -- are teens in the local community, volunteering and learning as a team.)

Pasadena (CA) Public Library's *Teen Zine* is a bi-annual publication that features writing, photos, artwork, book reviews, and articles by or about teens at the library. The 30-40 page mini magazine is designed almost entirely by teens including layout, editing, graphics, writing (fiction and non-fiction), photography, and art. It gives teens an opportunity to showcase their abilities and earn volunteer hours while strengthening the library's teen services program and advocating for teens in the community. Teens are often said to be the most difficult patrons to engage. There are a myriad of tips on how to engage teens, how to do target marketing, how to follow trends. The *Teen Zine* employs all of these tactics in the simplest of ways: awarding volunteer hours. Many libraries have teens who need to complete service hours or community service in the community. The *Teen Zine* was created in part because of the abundance of teens needing to volunteer and the library not having enough projects for them to do. The zine was also developed because our teen program needed a little revamping as the programs and services hadn't changed very much; it needed rebranding and a new image. Our teen blog was barely getting off the ground, and teens wouldn't see photographs unless they followed the library's

Facebook page or went directly to the blog--which had a very low readership at the time. We needed a new way of drawing attention to our revitalized teen program and *Teen Zine* was the perfect way to showcase all of these efforts.

The *Teen Zine* employs one of the most old-fashioned ways of showing off: in print. To *Teen Zine* readers, the zine appears to be a sort of yearbook of the library's teen programs and services. That is certainly a fair description, but to the teens who are featured, who have contributed, or who are working on its assembly, it represents so much more than an outline of events. The *Teen Zine* as a final product takes on a passive role in engaging teens--just like other teen magazines, however, the entire creation of the zine is the true engagement piece.

THE PROJECT

Zines are most commonly known to be photocopied, self-published work in many forms (drawings, comics, writing), and is often created by a single author.

The Pasadena Public Library *Teen Zine* does not exactly resemble "traditional" zines, but the beauty of zines is that it can be anything--whether it's an accordion style fold, leaflets, a tiny book, or a simple card. The content and textiles of zines can be just as varied. The *Teen Zine,* however, is essentially a mini magazine. It is an 8 ½ x 5 ½ full color, glossy page booklet ranging from 30-40 pages. It is a bi-annual publication that features writing, photographs, artwork, book lists, interviews, and articles by or about teens at the Pasadena Public Library, a system of ten library branches.

The pilot issue was printed in fall 2014 and primarily assembled by the Teen Advisory Board, the library's teen leadership team. In order to expedite the project, we had help with the cover design, which featured an original illustration by a local art college student. Since then, a *Teen Zine* team has been assembled made up of other teen volunteers. This team is responsible for photos, graphics, writing, assembling, and editing the upcoming issues of the zine. While the teens ultimately are the decision makers, the staff drives the project forward by soliciting teen writers to report on library events, review new and popular books, managing the editing and proofreading process, and teaching and critiquing teen graphic designers. The *Teen Zine* is currently in its third year with its 5th issue forthcoming.

BENEFITS FOR TEEN VOLUNTEERS

Teens interested in writing, graphic design, collages, mixed media art, or journalism are most suited to assist with the *Teen Zine*. Additionally, teen volunteers should live near or attend library events so that they accurately represent the library's community. Working on the zine encourages teens to be inspired and have a responsible role at the library; it empowers expression in writing, photography, art, creation, and design. It taps into specific talents and passions of the teen volunteers while providing a learning opportunity in publishing and journalism. The content, quality, and teens' skills are sure to improve upon subsequent publications.

In addition to developing the above skills, the team is also challenged to work within guidelines and standards set by our organization, make compromises, or otherwise, persuade the staff editors with their opinions. Writers can get more comfortable with the editing process, and graphic designers can gain more experience with critique and revisions. Working on the zine also engages teens outside of the usual group who attend programs. A volunteer attending a program as a "reporter" gives them a respectable job at the event--and sometimes, this is more of an incentive than the event itself. Since the zine also features book reviews, the teen book reviewers often have the added benefit of reviewing new or not-yet-released books (Advance Reader's Copy). For the rest of the teen writers, the *Teen Zine* adds another layer of presentation to their prose and poetry, and serves as a great piece for contributors to add to their college portfolios. Just as with anything else printed in a
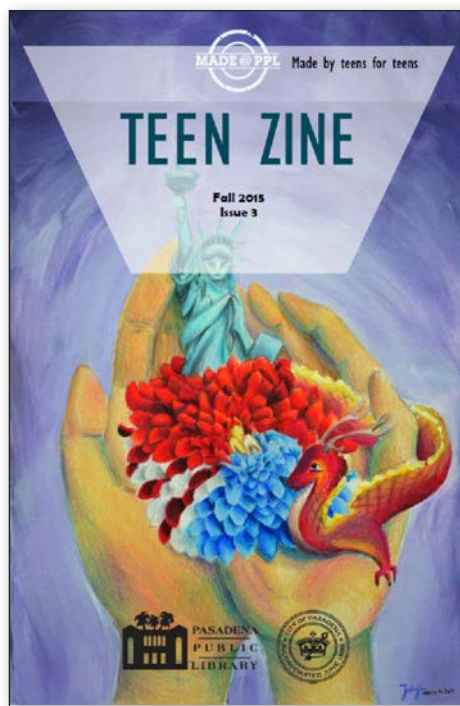
magazine, teens can more easily share their accomplishments with family and friends, and share their creativity with others.

BENEFITS FOR THE LIBRARY

More Publicity: Needless to say, the zine offers an additional platform for the library to share its work with the public. The *Teen Zine* acts as a great publicity piece for teen events, services, and the library.

More Program Attendance: With better publicity, library programs are more noticeable. Teens are encouraged to attend events, participate in contests, and contribute to the zine once it's evident other teens are enjoying themselves.

More Volunteers: The *Teen Zine* project increases meaningful volunteer opportunities and therefore, increases volunteer retention. Not only is the library able to retain volunteers for a longer period of time, but the same volunteers are more likely to be engaged with other volunteer projects beyond the *Teen Zine*. This project also gives the library a wider net of teen skills to utilize. More Advocacy: Not only does the *Teen Zine* show the community what the library offers and how the library engages teens, it illustrates how teens are empowered, flourishing, and succeeding with libraries.

More Partnerships: Because of its inherent ability to preserve some of the best teen work, the *Teen Zine* has given the library a greater opportunity to partner with local schools, writing groups, and artists. Additionally, the Pasadena Public Library has cataloged the *Teen Zine* as a

periodical and has added it to its archives; it's now a permanent piece of the library's and city's history.

TIME AND COST

Time: One of the most time consuming and most pertinent parts of the *Teen Zine* process is the mentorship between librarian and teen. Teen training requires an average of 2-4 hours per teen for graphic design. Critiquing writing and designs is an average of 15-30 minutes per page or article. Decision making about content and design, and final polishing and proofreading by staff is an average of 8-12 hours. It's estimated to take teen volunteers an average of an hour to write a 300 word article. Copy editing by a teen editor is approximately 15 minutes per article. The page layouts (graphic design) is estimated to take 1 ½ hours per page for a plain or semi-photographic page. Full photo layouts--such as pages with overlapping photographs and more complicated layers of text can take anywhere from 2-4 hours. However, depending on the skills of the teens, these processes can take up to four times longer for a beginner versus a veteran. Cost: While the Pasadena Public Library opted to spend more on high quality printing, there are inexpensive options so that even libraries with minimum resources can offer their teens similar experiences. The Pasadena Public Library's *Teen Zine* cost about $2-2.50 per printed issue. To cut costs, you could opt to:

- Produce shorter issues
- Print a limited supply
- Print the zine in-house and employ teen volunteers to assemble photocopies by hand
- Publish a web version only
- Select a 1-2 color option (instead of full color)
- Go with a budget print shop (like GotPrint.com)

STEP BY STEP

Through this project, a number of guidelines were developed to streamline future issues and incorporate other teen library projects to make for an overall efficient process. Other projects to take into account were the teen volunteer program, the library's Teens Blog, and collaborations with the school district and local organizations.

1. Collect content: The content for the *Teen Zine* can be gathered from contests (writing, art, and photography), event photos, articles by library staff or
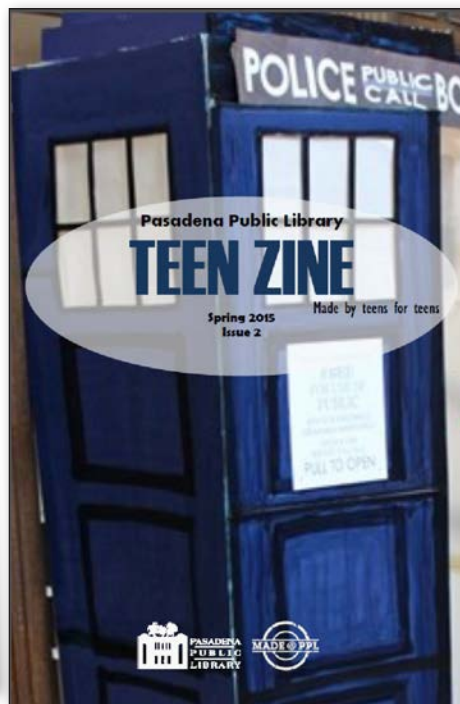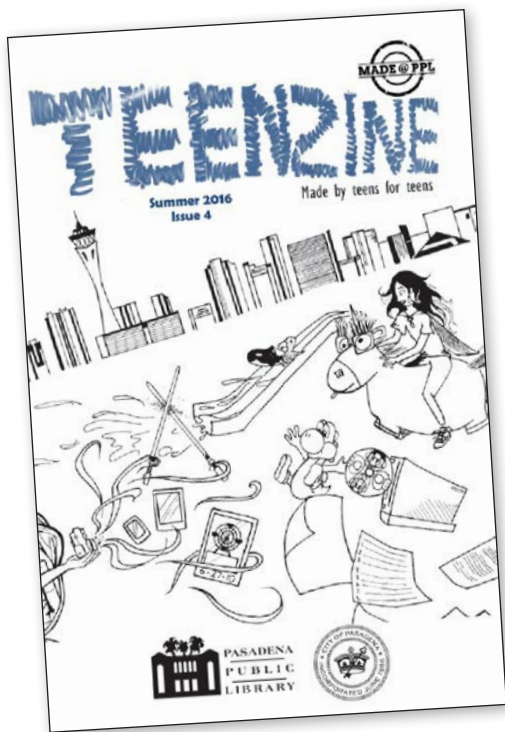
teen volunteers, and teen book reviews. Content can also be created specifically for the zine. Here are some examples of what you can use:

- Art contest winners
- Photographs of art created at a library program
- Photographs by teens (either contest winner or of the library, library teens, or at a library event)
- Scans of a comic drawn at a library program
- Writing contest winners
- Stories and poems written at a library writing workshop
- Book lists compiled by teen volunteers
- Book reviews by teen volunteers
- Interviews about notable people in the community conducted by the Teen Advisory Board
- Interviews of notable teens at the library such as a workshop leader, star volunteer, senior TAB member
- Library event recaps

2. Copy edit the content. This task can be completed by a trusted volunteer or a staff member. Copy editing can be done on Adobe using the annotation features, but perhaps the easiest method is to edit directly in Google Drive. Google Drive also saves a revision history, so staff can track all changes. If the library has a blog, this would be the point to post it on the blog or website

3. Designate layout designs and assign designers: There should be a good balance of layouts and color—but this is truly the decision of the zine designers. Teens can work with staff to decide on how best to approach the design. It's best to decide at the beginning (before starting on any layouts) which pages should be plain, semi-colorful, or full color layouts. This will also help to decide who should work on these layouts. Those with more graphic design skills would naturally be assigned to work on the semi-colorful or full color layouts. Those with less experience or just learning to use the software should start with the plain layouts, then progress to the semi-colorful ones. Here's an example of design ratios: 35% plain layouts (primarily text on single color background), 50% semi-colorful layouts, and 15% full photo layouts. To give teens an idea of the designs and styles, have them flip through a few popular magazines.

4. Page Layouts: Time for teen designers to get to work! Designate a style guide and show volunteers how to correctly set up pages before starting. Pages can be created digitally or hand drawn. Generally, most teens prefer to design pages digitally using MS Word or Publisher. Hand drawn pages can be scanned and added to the digital file. Be sure to give teens a few guidelines on types of backgrounds they can use

and where to get free images.

Our style guide

- Page size: 8.5" x 5.5", with a "bleed" of 0.25"
- Page live area: 8" x 5"
- Content text: Arial Narrow 10 pt.
- Captions for photos: Arial 9 pt. italicized
- Book titles: italicized; use original flyer font if possible
- Crediting: All photos and artwork must be credited with artist's name.
- To credit teens, use full names for contest participants and volunteers.
- For all other minors (whenever possible) use first name and last initial,
- and age (unless otherwise instructed).
- Paragraphs: Single space, 1 line breaks for paragraph breaks, no indentation

5. Layout critique and revise: This task is primarily performed by staff. Unless a teen is close to a professional graphic designer, teen volunteers generally feel more comfortable receiving critique by a staff member. The critique can include placements of text and photos, color and shape choices, fonts and style guidelines. This is also a good time to teach additional design skills. Critiques should be sent directly to the designers or conducted face-to-face, and repeat this process until the page(s) is close to publish ready. Staff may need to step in

and make final touches.

6. Proofread each completed page: Like copy editing, this can be completed by a trusted volunteer or a staff member, but be sure there are different editors. If you're short on volunteers, rotate the copy editors and proofreaders. Assign proofreaders to pages they did not copy edit and vice versa. This is the time to final check spacing, grammar, styling, and credits.

7. Layout the whole zine: Organize pages in order of how they should be printed. Keep in mind the variety of color, content, fluidity, and what will appear in the centerfold. This step may set designers back to step three; however, if you plan well, you will not have to do this often. This is done by printing out all the pages in color and physically arranging them.

8. Fill spaces with "ads" and photos: This is an opportunity to fill in areas that are too plain and show off photos that are great, but do not seem to fit into any articles. This is also an opportunity to advertise a great upcoming program, but this should be done sparsely. Pages that are perfect for ads and additional photos are the credits page, behind the Table of Contents, endpapers, and the back cover.

9. Number pages and create a Table of Contents and a Credits page: Once everything is in place, number all the pages, making sure that the page number color is readable on all pages. Next, create the Table the Contents. Finally, create the Teen Zine Credits page, making sure to credit all the editors and designers, and add in an introduction to the issue--like a note from the editor or librarian's message.

10. Cover image: Choose an image for the cover. This is an opportunity to feature a contest winner or a notable teen project or event.

11. Final color: Add taglines, title, issue number, date, and logos.

12. Proofread the whole zine: Check page numbers and do a final review of name spellings and spacing. This step should ideally be completed by a staff member—preferably the librarian in charge of the project.

13. Final proof by administrator (if necessary): If you library requires a project like this to be reviewed by the Library Director or a Communications Director,

this would be the time to do so. Final revisions can be made by staff.

14. Print the zine: The final proof is sent to the printers.

15. Share the zine: Once the zines are printed, announce it on social media, on the library's website, and share it electronically or deliver print issues to local schools, relevant organizations, and notify the Teen Zine contributors.

16. Plan for the next issue. Take a look at the teen events calendar, upcoming developments or projects, notable teens, and seasons. Write all of this down and make plans for the content in future issues. Schedule interviews with authors visiting your library, or teens teaching workshops to kids at your library. Solicit teen poets who will read at a library poetry reading. Ask teens who attend anime programs to write reviews. Ask for content early. It's a good idea to be proactive in gathering material for the next Teen Zine.

OUTCOMES

The Pasadena Public Library--specifically the Central library does not have a regular group of teens who go there after school. For a while, it was difficult to catch their attention, to find a way into their path. Teen writing contests once attracted a small handful of submissions, but now, four Teen Zine is-

sues later, the submissions more than quadrupled. As mentioned above in the benefits for libraries, program attendance increased, and now, many local organizations are well aware of what the library offers for teens. If you decide to try out this project--even on a much smaller or simpler scale, be sure to track increases in program attendance and contest entries. Also, it's good to ask volunteers questions on what kind of skills they seek to develop, what they've learned in assembling an issue, and how they can improve and learn more in the future. I'm a firm believer that any library with a strong teen volunteer base can create a strong teen program overall, and it looks like that theory proves to be true in this case. ∎

Copyright © 2016 by Jane Gov

ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

Jane Gov is a youth services librarian at Pasadena Public Library, CA. She purchases young adult materials for the library system and maintains the teen readers advisory lists, online resources, and webpages. She oversees teen programming including Summer Reading, Advisory Board, Teen Zine, book reviewers, and volunteers. Jane is a contributor to VOYA Magazine and an ex-officio member of the YALSA Board. She tweets as @missjanegov.

A Library's Role in Preserving History

» **Through two innovative projects, the Orange County Library System is creating an oral and written history of its community.**

BY DONNA BACHOWSKI

Libraries have long played a role in the preservation of local history. In many libraries, the local history collection holds a place of honor, and rightly so. The information contained in these collections is priceless and irreplaceable.

In today's world of rapidly disappearing or changing information, it is more important than ever that libraries preserve their community's history, and not just the traditional "old" history, but tomorrow's history—the things that are happening now.

The librarians at the Orange County Library System (OCLS) recognized that our community's history and culture was not being recorded and preserved. As a result, we have created two tools to aid in preserving this vital information: Orlando Memory and EPOCH (Electronically Preserving Obituaries as Cultural Heritage). These two resources mesh with OCLS' goals: creating and preserving information, inspiring innovation, and thinking of information in new ways.

RECAPTURING ORLANDO

Recognizing the importance of local historical information, the OCLS staff continually searched for ways to support the preservation of these incredibly valuable assets. The search cumulated in the launching of the Orlando Memory Web project (**www.orlandomemory.info**) in 2008.

In the ensuing years, OCLS librarians have worked with community members to record memories and oral histories of the greater Orlando area and to invite others to comment on and expand these memories. To date, several thousand items have been added to Orlando Memory, including oral histories of World War II servicemen and Holocaust survivors.

Orlando Memory is not a professionally curated history site; it is a site for everyone who lives in, has lived in, or has visited the greater Orlando area. At preservation events, we encourage all attendees to share their memories of Orlando, whether they have lived here for decades or just arrived in the last few months.

For example, during Black History Month, librarians collaborated with patrons at branches located in historically African-American neighborhoods such as the Eatonville Branch serving the community of Eatonville, one of the first incorporated black towns in the country. There are plans to participate in Hispanic Heritage Month by collecting histories from patrons at branches with strong Hispanic roots.

Our librarians have refocused on becoming more involved in capturing the area's history through these efforts. We have received training on collecting digital histories, which includes sections on oral history interviewing techniques, using audio and video editing software, and uploading the information to the Orlando Memory database.

When most people think of Orlando, they instantly think "theme parks." OCLS is using Orlando Memory to expand people's perspective. Yes, the theme parks have played a huge role in the development of the area, and will continue to do so. But with Orlando Memory, we are able to show people that a vibrant and fascinating Orlando really did exist before the 1970s.

To document this growth, librarians worked with the Lockheed Martin retirees group and gathered incredible histories of the engineering and military developments that occurred here. We have photos and stories of when a Navy training base was here. Through interviews with long-time residents, we have uncovered the history of why the Orlando International Airport has MCO as its code (it was originally home to McCoy Air Force Base, and when the base closed in 1975, the current airport was established). The collection of photos, documents, and oral histories weave together to give expansive, and often emotional, memories of Orlando, past and present.

By posting the history of the library itself to the site, we've essentially preserved ourselves. The archive includes a gem of a letter dated Feb. 5, 1931 from Melvil Dewey (inventor of the Dewey Decimal Classification System) to the Orlando head librarian, Olive Brumbaugh. In the note, written in his Simpler Spelling method, Dewey invited Brumbaugh to visit his family at their retreat in Lake Placid, Florida.

HISTORY OF THE FUTURE

One of the goals of Orlando Memory is to preserve all the fleeting moments that make Orlando such an amazingly diverse and fascinating place to be. Capturing and preserving tomorrow's history is essential to meeting this goal.

With the transitory nature of today's information, we want to make sure that memories are saved for future generations. As an example, when we talk with customers, we remind them about all the photos they have on their phones: have they been printed or are they backed up somewhere? What would happen to the pictures if their phone was lost or broken?

In response, customers state that many of the photos they have are not that important, just pictures of activities with friends. Our response is this: if what you were doing was important enough to take a picture of who you were with, then that is a memory that should be preserved.

We are also using Orlando Memory is as a place for different cultures to come together and learn about one another. With the upcoming launch of "Cooking with Mom," we will be focusing on how food transcends languages and cultures and provides a common ground. We will capture memories of favorite meals, family traditions, and treasured recipes. Partnering with our Cuisine Corner (a demonstration kitchen at our Main Library), we hope to interview

> **» We already knew that our community was looking to their library to be a repository for local heritage information, to be a place where the community's history will always be retained and available. EPOCH enables community members to preserve their family members' history and biographical information along with their contributions to the community.**

local chefs to find out what defining moment brought them to the culinary world. We will host daylong events along the lines of the StoryCorps model, where two people interview each other and share their food-related memories.

By reaching out to the culinary community in the area, we believe we will be able to not only preserve these tasty memories, but also demonstrate that no matter where you are from, we all treasure memories of celebrating with loved ones through cooking and sharing meals.

EXPANDING MEMORIES

As the library for the Florida State Society of the Daughters of the American Revolution, genealogy is a core component of OCLS' services. Local historical and genealogical information is critical to preserving a community's history. A vital part of this genealogical research is obituaries.

As Orlando Memory became more popular, patrons asked if they could post information on the site about family members who had passed away. These personal requests, combined with our genealogical experiences, led us to our next project, EPOCH: Electronically Preserving Obituaries as Cultural Heritage (www.epochlegacies.org).

Over the past several years, there has been a marked increase in the amount of research being conducted at OCLS by genealogists and local historians. By reviewing the usage statistics of the two genealogical databases, Ancestry.com and HeritageQuest, we have identified a significant upward trend. Most recently, there have been monthly double digit percentage increases in the use of these two resources.

With the advent of popular television entertainment programs such as "Who Do You Think You Are" and "Genealogy Roadshow," we are seeing even more interest from people undertaking deeply personal journeys of discovery to understand who they are and where they came from.

The use and value of obituaries in genealogical research is multifaceted and should not be underestimated. Most obviously, they provide a final public record for an individual. But they also contain biographical sketches of the deceased's life, which may be the only source of information for those doing specific research. When they contain a wealth of information, obituaries may be of even greater importance to researchers than other public records, providing a deeper perspective on an individual's contributions to the community.

Obituaries can help a genealogist form a timeline of events for a family they are researching. They provide and preserve biographical information about an individual and, many times, other family members as well (see **sidebar on page 4**). In the aggregate, obituaries create a mosaic of a community and its history through individual records. Of course, the more information included in an obituary, the more valuable it becomes to a researcher.

The tradition of publishing obituaries in local newspapers is rapidly declining. During the past seven years, the Orlando area has experienced a 63 percent reduction in the number of obituaries published in the newspaper. According to funeral professionals, the families of the deceased often cannot afford the increased cost of publishing obituaries. Some funeral homes offer an online tribute for up to six months in lieu of a published obituary. But after the six months, this information is lost to the community.

This decline in published obituaries is detrimental to both preserving local history and future genealogical research. These original source records are being lost, and will never be recovered.

We already knew that our community was looking to their library to be a repository for local heritage information, to be a place where the community's history will always be retained and available. EPOCH enables community members to preserve their

family members' history and biographical information along with their contributions to the community.

ACCESS TO ALL

OCLS applied for and received a three-year National Leadership Grant from the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS), which enabled us to develop and launch EPOCH. Because of the support from IMLS, we have been able to create a resource that can be shared beyond Orange County.

By developing this project with open source software that has a strong support system (Drupal), this project can be freely replicated in libraries throughout the United States. OCLS has worked with interested organizations to implement EPOCH in their communities by providing training, marketing guidance, and support materials. These tools allow groups to capture and contribute to vital local historical information and preserve the heritage of their communities.

With a user model that is free to customers, EPOCH ensures that no matter what the financial situation of a family may be, every loved one who dies can have a meaningful tribute to their life, a tribute that will be preserved for as long as libraries exist. Families don't have to worry about how many column inches they can afford in a newspaper, be concerned about whether someone will pay the hosting fees to keep an obituary posted on a commercial site, or even whether a commercial site will still be in business a few years from now. EPOCH gives them that piece of mind, and helps close a bit more of the digital divide.

Users merely create a free account by signing up with a self-chosen username, password, and email address. Once the information is verified and the account is activated, users can begin creating and posting tributes. Users are prompted to include basic information such as birth and death dates and the city and state of the person's last residence. They are then presented with a high-capacity text box in which to write

The following information about an individual who lived in the past, which may be of interest to genealogical researchers, is often found in obituaries:

- Name of the deceased, his or her age, and birth date
- Place of residence
- Spouse and children's names
- Details on other survivors, including siblings, aunts, uncles, grandchildren, nieces, and nephews
- Cause of death
- Occupation
- Religious membership and/or church affiliation
- Fraternal or social memberships
- Past social or government positions
- Migration information, including birth town, parents' names, and information on grandparents and ancestry
- Funeral arrangements
- Cemetery of burial
  Noteworthy life events, including military service

the tribute. They can also add up to fifteen media items such as photos, documents, and audio or video files. Users have the option to allow moderated comments to be added to the tribute.

Everything has been designed to make EPOCH easy to navigate so that users can focus on what they are doing without worrying about the technical aspects. The finished tribute can be shared through social media platforms, send via email, or saved as a PDF or .GEN file.

OCLS has committed to providing continued support and development of this project. We believe that EPOCH will become a key component of any genealogical collection. The trend already exists for genealogical groups to collaborate by posting this sort of information online. With its easy-to-use format, EPOCH provides an opportunity for everyone to contribute.

Throughout the United States, local genealogy groups are working to preserve and provide access to as many obituaries as possible. While there are multiple sites that local groups manage, there is not a consistent method for creating, indexing, and managing them. With the creation of EPOCH, libraries and local their genealogical groups can partner to develop their own valuable resource that is consistent and has a set of best practices for ensuring that quality information is retained.

EPOCH provides a resource that can be used by anyone who has lost a loved one, not just genealogists. With full search capabilities, community members can easily find deceased neighbors, coworkers, and friends. Local historians and students can find information about their community and its heritage.

Most importantly, the information will be available to the public for an unlimited time, providing a repository of valuable local genealogical and historical information that otherwise might very well be lost to the community. While there is great value for the community members who are using EPOCH now to post tributes, we feel that it will be of even greater value years from now, when the next generation of researchers is tracing their family or exploring the history of their community.

ADDRESSING CHALLENGES

EPOCH is a limited point-of-need resource. Fortunately, most people do not have to deal with the death of a loved one very frequently. So even if citizens may be aware of EPOCH and think it is a wonderful idea, when that tragic event occurs, they may not recall it.

Faced with that reality, OCLS has expanded outreach efforts. In the last three years, we have worked with libraries in Florida and other states, attended conferences for funeral directors and for hospice and palliative care workers, and shared information with and offered training sessions to churches. While EPOCH was well received, we were not getting the usage we wanted.

After talking with many people, we launched our latest and most successful marketing effort: "Forget Me Not" workshops. During the regularly scheduled workshops, OCLS staff helps patrons write and post a tribute to EPOCH. We make equipment available to digitize photos and other items for inclusion in the tribute.

Many people have never written an obituary, are often overwhelmed, and don't know where to begin. We created a user workbook to assist, which is a very popular resource. The workbook covers what EPOCH is, how to create a free account, how to post content, and how to write a tribute with examples. Blank pages are included for making notes or gathering information. We have discovered that after a customer successfully creates one or two tributes, they often don't return to the workshops, but continue posting on their own.

REACHING BACK

The initial focus for EPOCH was to gather contemporary and future obituaries, but we quickly realized the value in including older obituaries. An EPOCH tribute can almost serve as a scrapbook of sorts, gathering all the relevant information about not only the deceased person's life, but also about everything related to their death and burial.

Customers have been delighted to be able to post an obituary for a loved one who passed away a number of years ago, but the family couldn't afford a published obituary at the time. Or, a traditional obituary was published, but no photo was included. Now, they can post that obituary and include favorite photos such as a picture of the grave marker, a copy of the Mass card, or images of comments left in a condolence book.

Going back even farther in history, we have had inquiries from local members of the Daughters of the American Revolution, asking if they could post a tribute for their patriot. We are pursuing this idea, and are in the process of creating workshops to aid in accomplishing that task.

FUTURE PLANS

OCLS librarians are continually looking for ways to improve both Orlando Memory and EPOCH. As more people use EPOCH, we are able to gather valuable feedback about what we can do to make it even easier to use. We have ever-growing wish lists for both projects, including ideas for improved functionality, better ways of doing things, or new things to try.

As pleased as we are with both projects, the OCLS culture is very strong on innovation and improvement, and we will continue to fine-tune and add new resources with these projects. For example, we tie EPOCH and Orlando Memory together whenever we can. When someone who has an oral history posted in Orlando Memory passes away, we add a tribute in EPOCH and include a link to the relevant posts in Orlando Memory.

Preserving our community's history by gathering personal details is a vital role for our library, and OCLS, is honored to provide this service to the residents of Orange County. ∎

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Donna Bachowski is the reference central manager at the Orange County Library System, Orlando, FL. To learn how your library can participate in EPOCH, or to learn more about either of these projects, please contact her at bachowski. donna@ocls.info.

2017 Library Purchasing Survey

» The results of Strategic Library's annual purchasing survey

The *2017 Library Purchasing Survey* illustrates how libraries budget for and spend on automation, print and non-print media, professional services, furniture, equipment and supplies, and shelving for their facilities. Its charts and tables graphically present a broad range of data including, but not limited to:

- Who buys
- How much they budget
- What they buy
- Spending priorities.

SCOPE & METHODOLOGY

The *2017 Library Purchasing Survey* was created in response to a demand for data on library spending to help librarians make informed decisions about library products and services. To achieve this objective, Strategic Library conducted an online survey of approximately 6,000 library and information professionals. The online survey instrument elicited responses that provide unique information on the purchasing practices of the individuals polled, their involvement in purchasing and recommending products and services, and their satisfaction with industry suppliers.

The survey sample of 5,898 was selected using a computerized random generator, which built the sample from the Library-Works subscriber database of more than 80,000 library decision makers. These individuals represent all library types: public, K-12 school, academic, and special libraries. Survey participants were promised anonymity. Each person in the survey sample received an e-mail invitation to participate that included a link to the online survey questionnaire. The survey remained open for one week.

The survey questionnaire consisted of two parts:

I. Characteristics of Purchasing Decision Makers. This section elicited responses concerning the participant's title, primary role, and purchasing influence; and details about library type, size, location, and budget.

II. Purchasing Intentions. This portion of the survey instrument addressed budgeted or projected 2017 spending on automation, furniture, shelving, professional services, equipment and supplies, print and non-print media, and other key areas. 395 librarians completed the survey questionnaire, a response rate of 6.09%.

ORGANIZATION AND CLASSIFICATION OF SURVEY DATA

The charts and graphs present survey data based on nationwide results.

LIBRARY SETTING

Public: central/main library, branches, consortium/district/regional system

K-12: elementary (grades 1-5), middle (grades 6-8) and high school (grades 9-12)

Special: law, medicine, government, corporate, and institutional

Academic: 2- and 4-year institutions

SURVEY REGIONS

Northeast: CT, DE, MA, ME, NH, NH, NY, PA, RI, VT

South: AL, AR, DC, FL, GA, KY, LA, MD, MS, NC, OK, SC, TN, TX, VA, WV

Midwest: IL, IN, IA, KS, MI, MN, MO, NE, ND, OH, SD, WI

West: AK, AZ, CA, CO, HI, ID, MT, NV, NM, OR, WA, WY, UT

> » The 2017 Library Purchasing Survey was created in response to a demand for data on library spending to help librarians make informed decisions about library products and services.

ABOUT STRATEGIC LIBRARY AND LIBRARYWORKS

Published monthly, *Strategic Library* assists administrators and managers in all types of libraries as they deal with day-to-day and strategic challenges. In-depth articles, written by highly regarded professionals in the field, focus on leadership, management, evaluation, assessment, marketing, funding, and more to promote organizational success. Learn more at www. strategiclibrary.com.

Strategic Library is published by Library-Works, Inc. LibraryWorks also publishes *Books, Bytes and Beyond,* a roundup of new and featured print and non-print releases for libraries; *Library Product News,* a showcase of new and innovative products for libraries; *Library Bid & RFP Alert,* a bid information service; market research reports; and other resources to help libraries do more, better, with less. Visit our websites LibrariansYellowPages.com to find vendors/suppliers and LibraryWorks. com, a knowledgebase for library professionals. ■

Nationwide Survey Results

2017 Library Purchasing Survey

**Q1 Which of the following best describes
your TITLE?**

Library Director	50.14%
School Librarian /...	8.40%
Department Manager	9.80%
Assistant / Associate...	5.88%
Librarian / Information...	11.48%
City / County Librarian	1.12%
Dean / University...	0.28%
Branch Manager	4.48%
Other	8.40%

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%
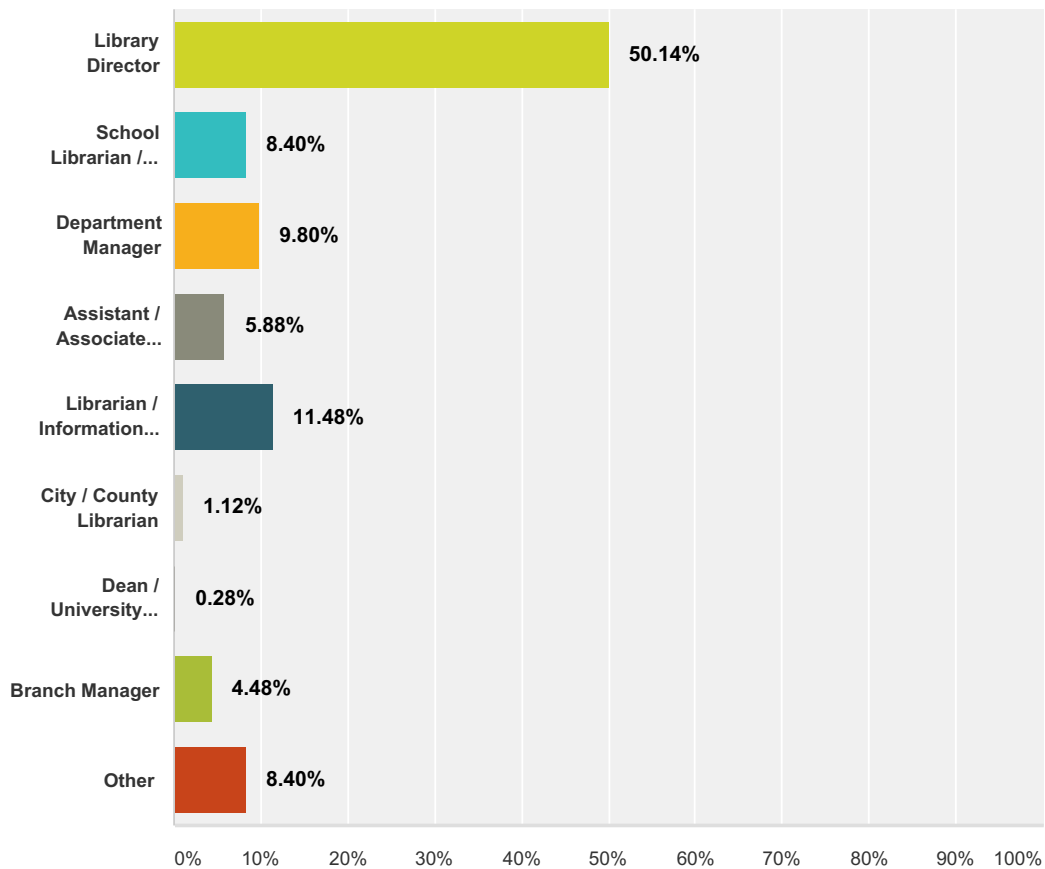
2017 Library Purchasing Survey

Q2 Which of the following best describes your AREA OF RESPONSIBILITY within the library? Please check all that apply.

Category	Percentage
Acquisitions	52.92%
Administration	69.36%
Adult Services	29.25%
Automation / Technology	35.65%
Children / Young Adult...	29.81%
Circulation	38.72%
Collection Development ...	55.99%
Electronic Resources	41.50%
Finance / Procurement	41.23%
Programming / Outreach	38.72%
Reference	39.00%
Technical Services	31.20%
Other	9.75%
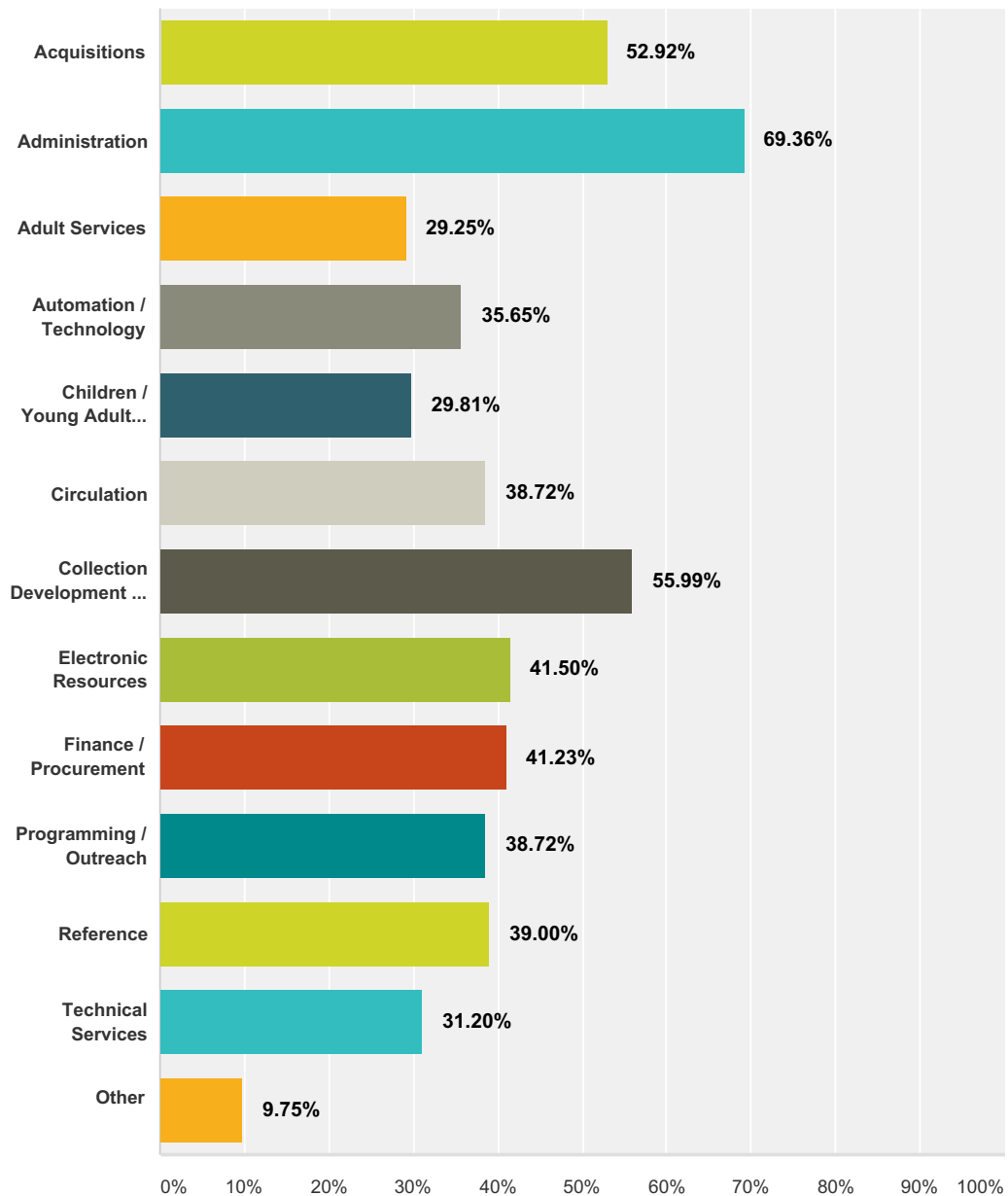
2017 Library Purchasing Survey

Q3 Which of the following best describes your involvement in PURCHASING for your library?

Approve / authorize	68.16%
Specify / recommend	24.30%
Not involved	7.54%
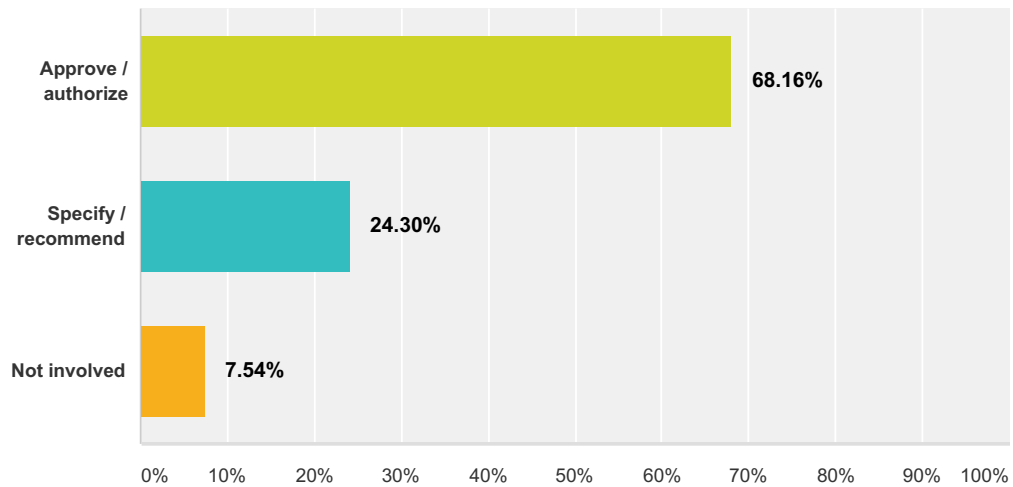
2017 Library Purchasing Survey

Q4 Which of the following best describes your TYPE OF LIBRARY?

Type	Percentage
Academic	17.32%
K-12 School	8.94%
Public	66.20%
Special	7.54%
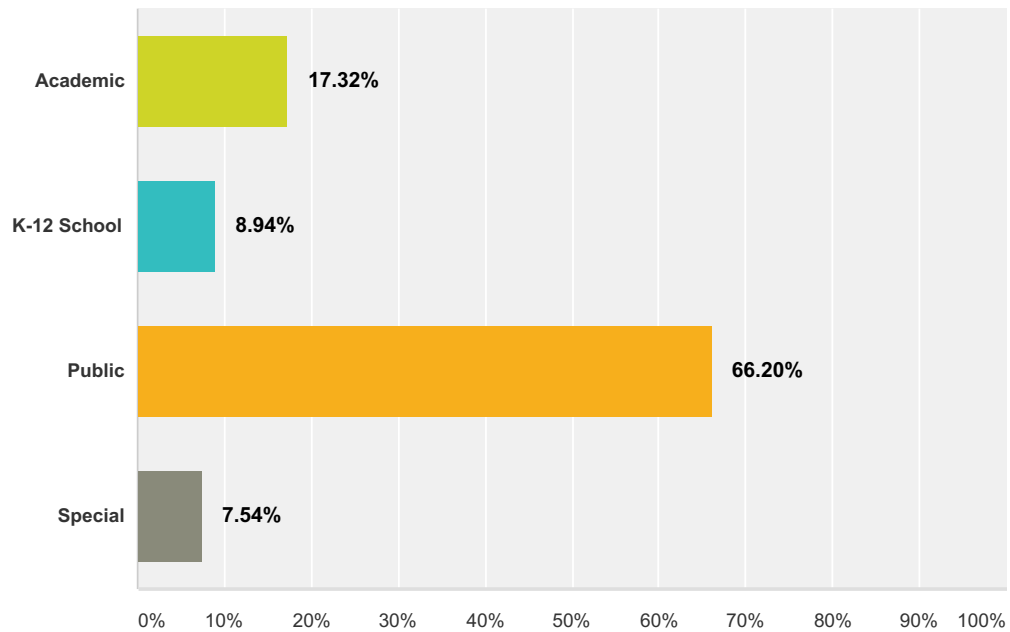
2017 Library Purchasing Survey

Q5 If yours is a PUBLIC library, which of the following best describes its SETTING?
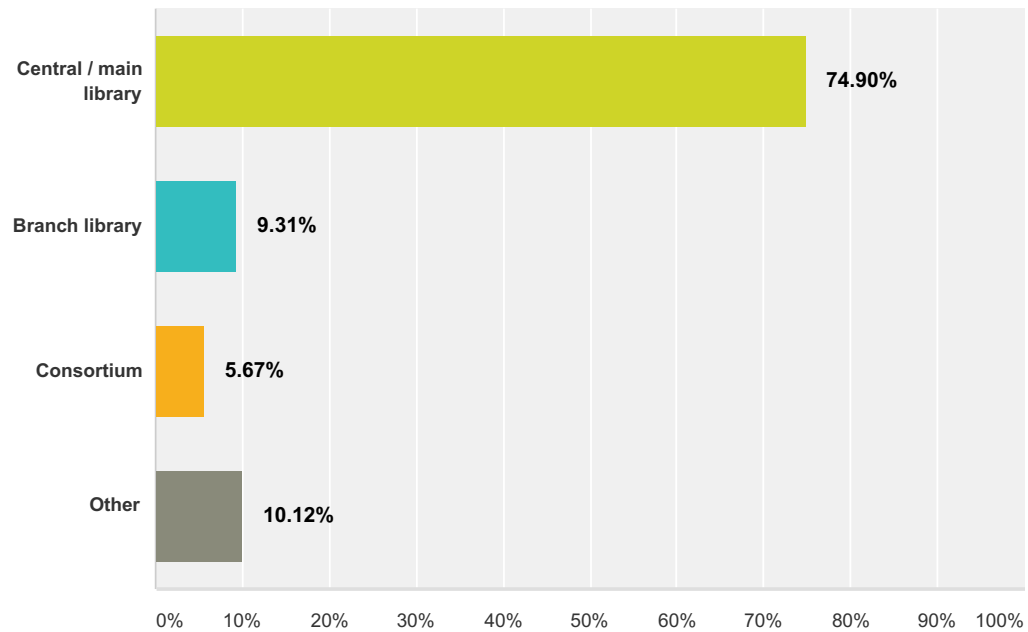
Q6 If yours is a PUBLIC library, which of the following best describes the population of its LIBRARY SERVICE AREA (LSA)?

Category	Percentage
Fewer than 10,000	38.93%
10,000 - 50,000	33.20%
50,000 - 100,000	9.02%
100,000 - 250,000	10.25%
250,000 - 500,000	4.92%
More than 500,000	3.69%
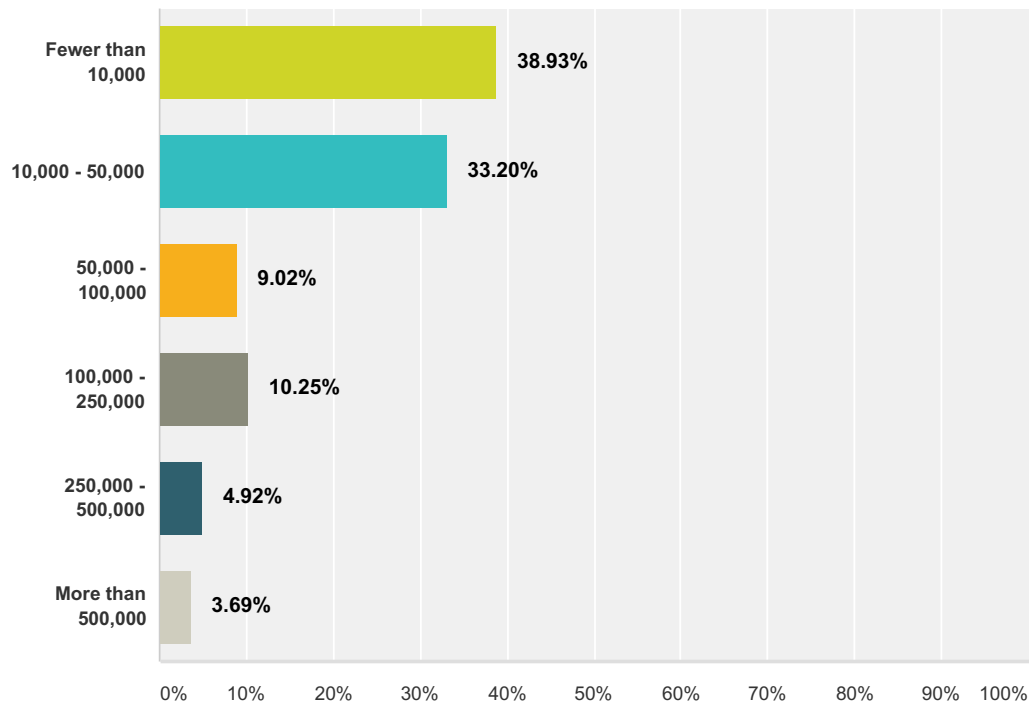
Q7 If yours is an ACADEMIC library, which of the following describes it?
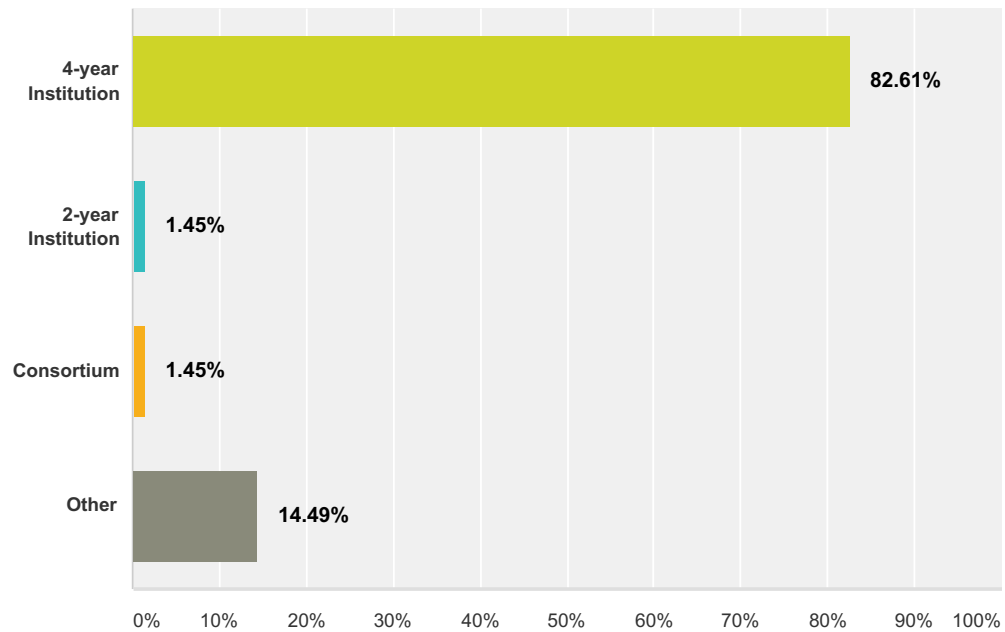
2017 Library Purchasing Survey

Q8 If yours is a SPECIAL library, which of the following best describes it?

Category	Percentage
Institutional (eg, nonprof...	16.22%
Law	24.32%
Medicine	24.32%
Corporate	5.41%
Government / military	2.70%
Other	27.03%
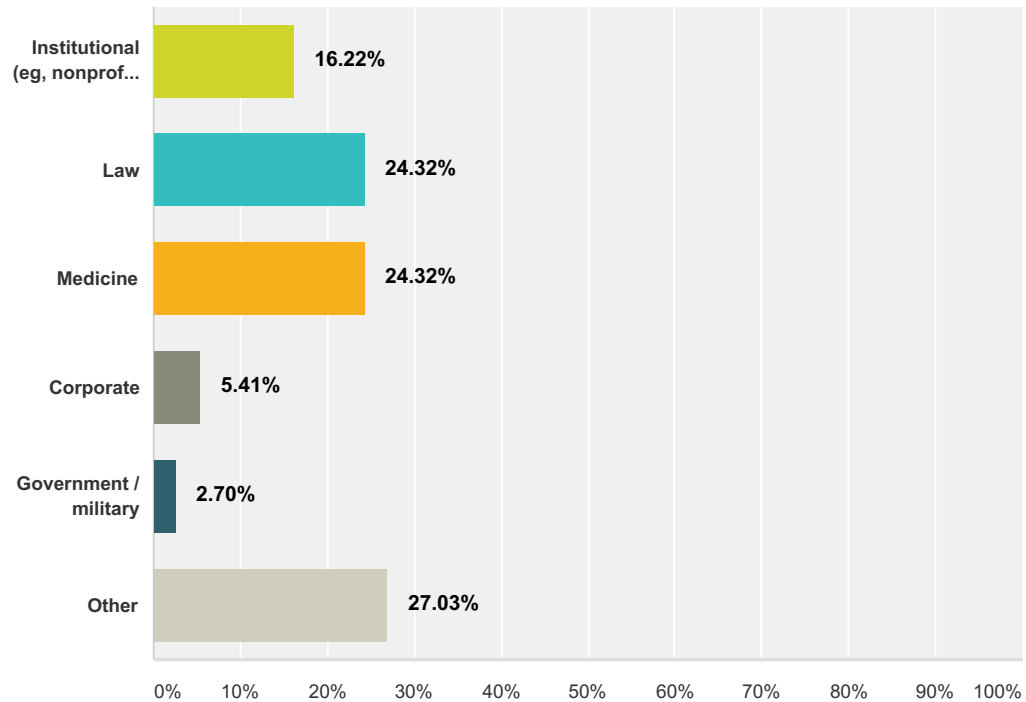
2017 Library Purchasing Survey

**Q9 If yours is a K-12 library, which of the
following best describes it?**
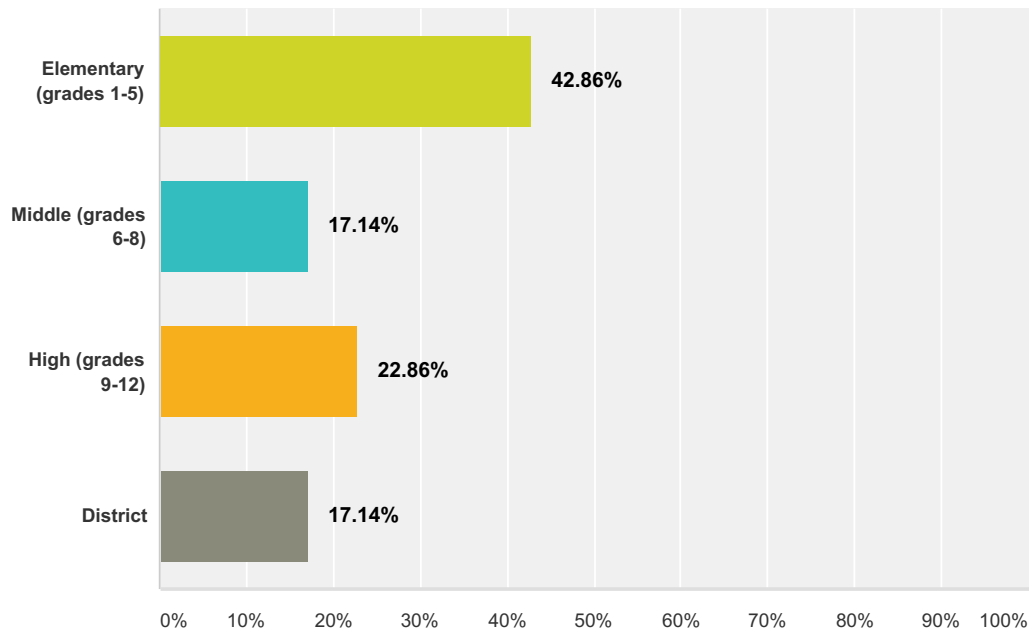
2017 Library Purchasing Survey

Q10 WHERE is your library?
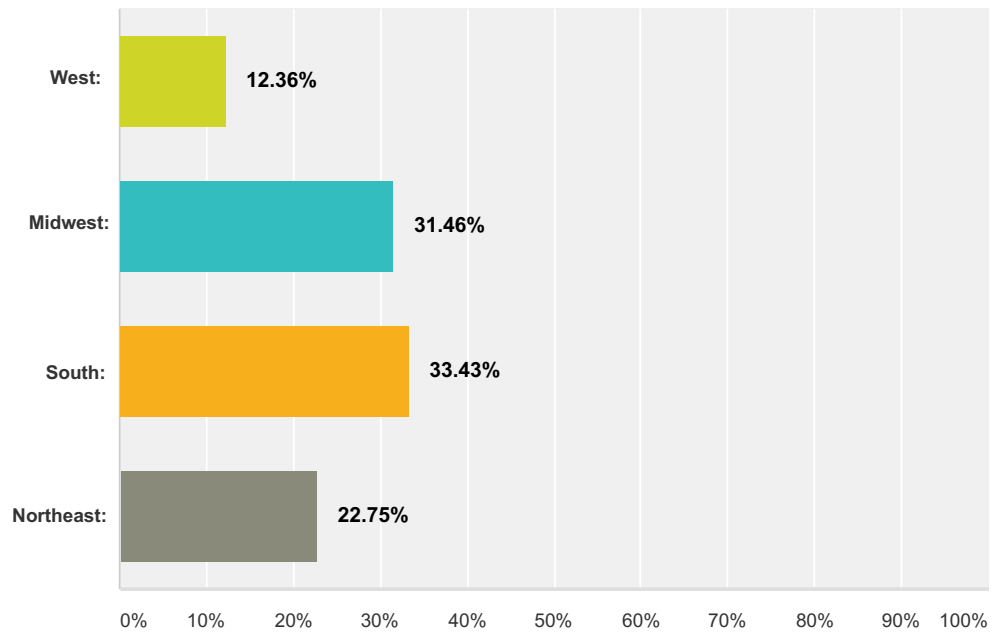
2017 Library Purchasing Survey

Q11 Which of the following best describes the SIZE OF YOUR LIBRARY'S COLLECTION?

Category	Percentage
Fewer than 100,000...	55.97%
100,000 - 250,000...	16.48%
250,000 - 500,000...	9.09%
500,000 - 1 million...	5.97%
More than 1 million...	12.50%
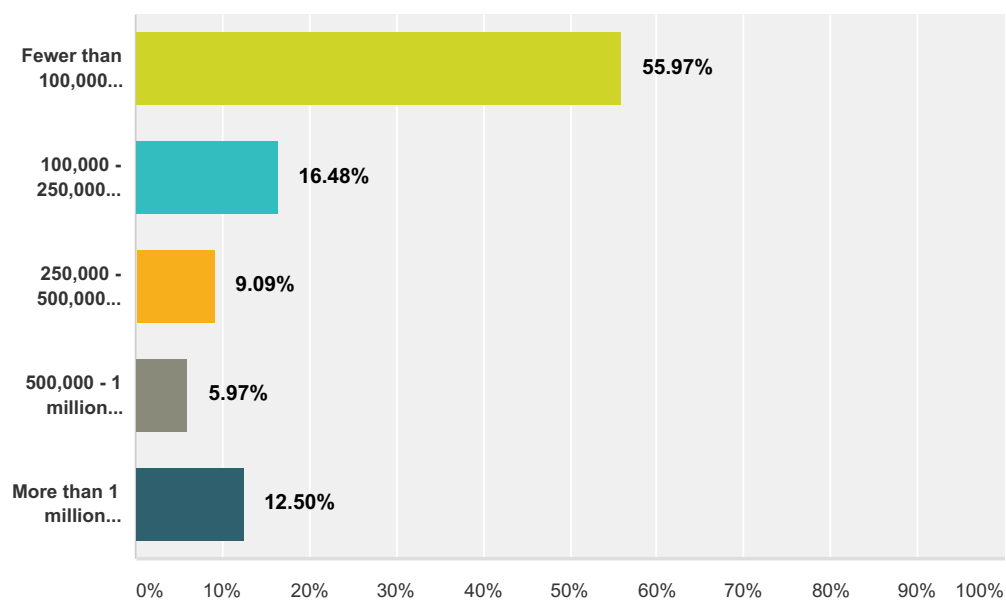
Q12 What is your library's total actual or projected 2017 OPERATING BUDGET

Category	Percentage
Less than $250,000	40.70%
$250,000 - 500,000	12.79%
$500,000 - 1 million	9.88%
$1 million - 2.5 million	13.37%
$2.5 million - 5 million	9.30%
More than $ 5 million	13.95%
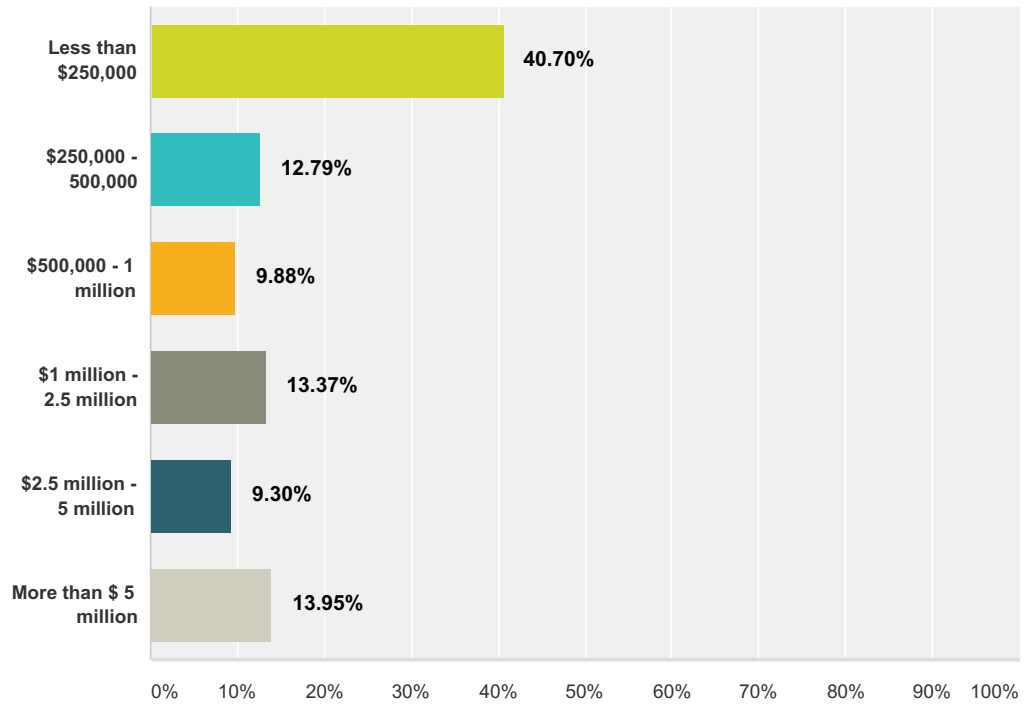
2017 Library Purchasing Survey

Q13 By what percentage did your 2017 budget INCREASE or DECREASE?

Budget INCREASE
- 43.88%
- 43.53%
- 9.71%
- 2.16%
- 0.72%

Budget DECREASE
- 46.21%
- 24.24%
- 16.67%
- 5.30%
- 7.58%

Legend: 0% (Flat) — Less than 5% — 5-10% — 10-20% — More than 20%
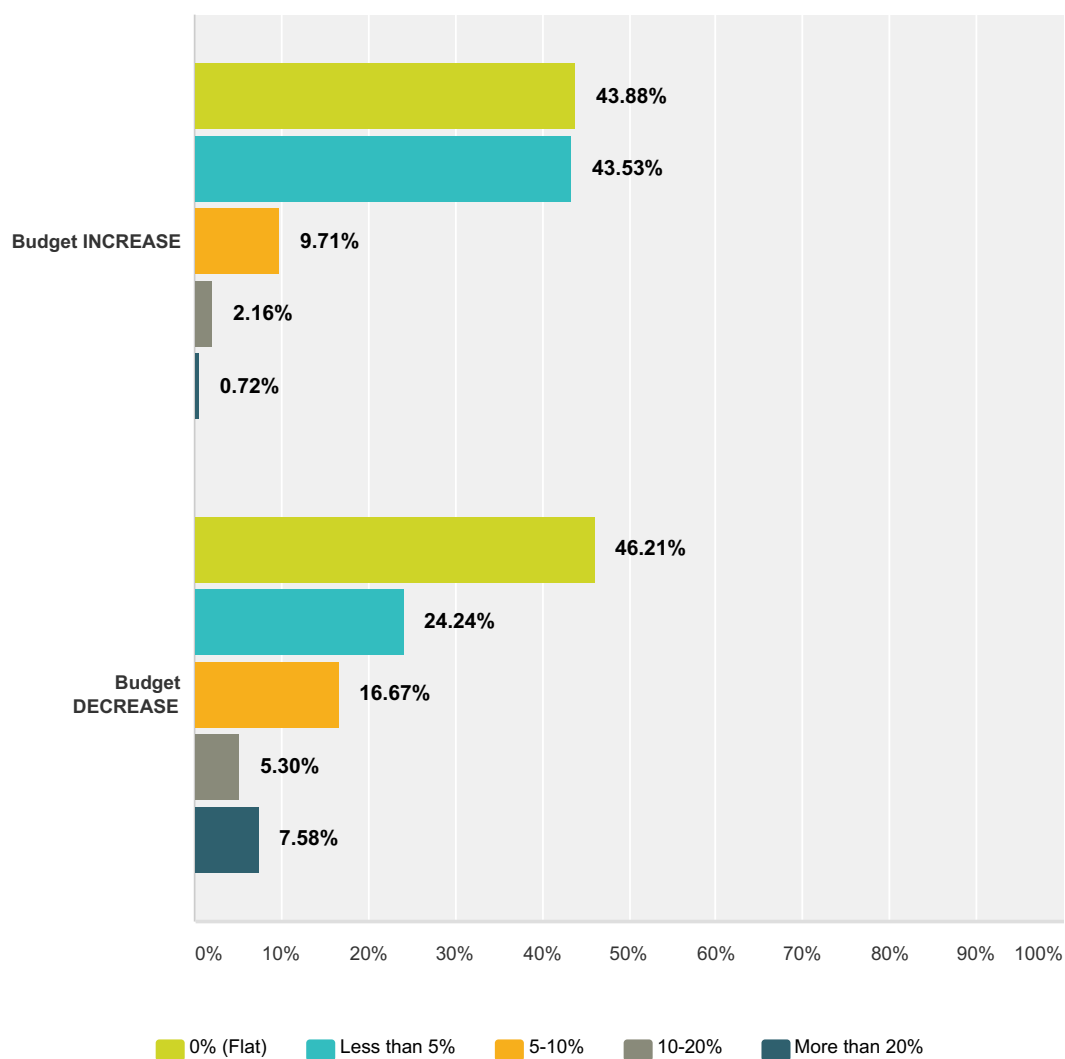
Q14 Which of the following INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY / AUTOMATION products and services do you plan to purchase in 2017?

Category	Percentage
Automated patron...	4.88%
Internet filtering...	10.73%
Mobile apps	9.76%
Public computer /...	20.00%
Scheduling / room...	10.73%
Public access computers	31.22%
Kiosks / dispensers /...	5.37%
3D printers	8.78%
Electronic resource /...	15.12%
Automated materials...	3.41%
Cataloging solutions	7.80%
Search / discovery...	11.22%
Self-check and inventory...	6.34%
Laptops / e-book reade...	32.20%
Cloud computing...	4.39%
Integrated library systems	11.71%
None	33.66%
Other	5.85%

2017 Library Purchasing Survey

Q15 Which of the following FURNITURE/FURNISHINGS products do you plan to purchase in 2017?

Category	Percentage
Carpeting / flooring	21.39%
Workstations / carrels	12.94%
Children's / youth furniture	11.94%
Seating	24.38%
Tables	15.42%
Desks	8.96%
Custom furniture	7.96%
None	58.71%
Other	6.47%
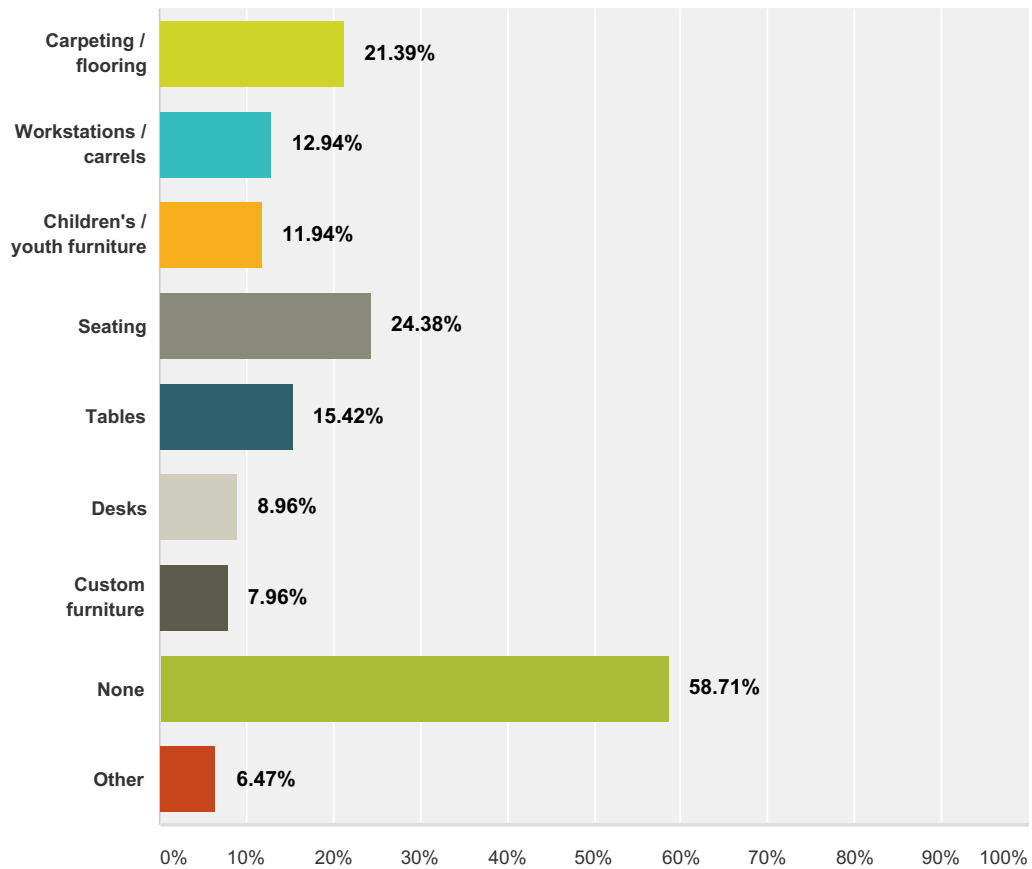
2017 Library Purchasing Survey

Q16 Which of the following NON-PRINT MEDIA do you plan to purchase in 2017?

Category	Percentage
Micrographics	2.90%
Music	27.05%
Audiobooks	58.45%
E-books	59.42%
Online database...	53.14%
Online journal subscriptions	28.50%
Online career / job search...	11.11%
Online learning...	14.49%
Electronic games	6.76%
DVD / film	66.67%
Streaming video	21.74%
None	12.08%
Other	4.35%
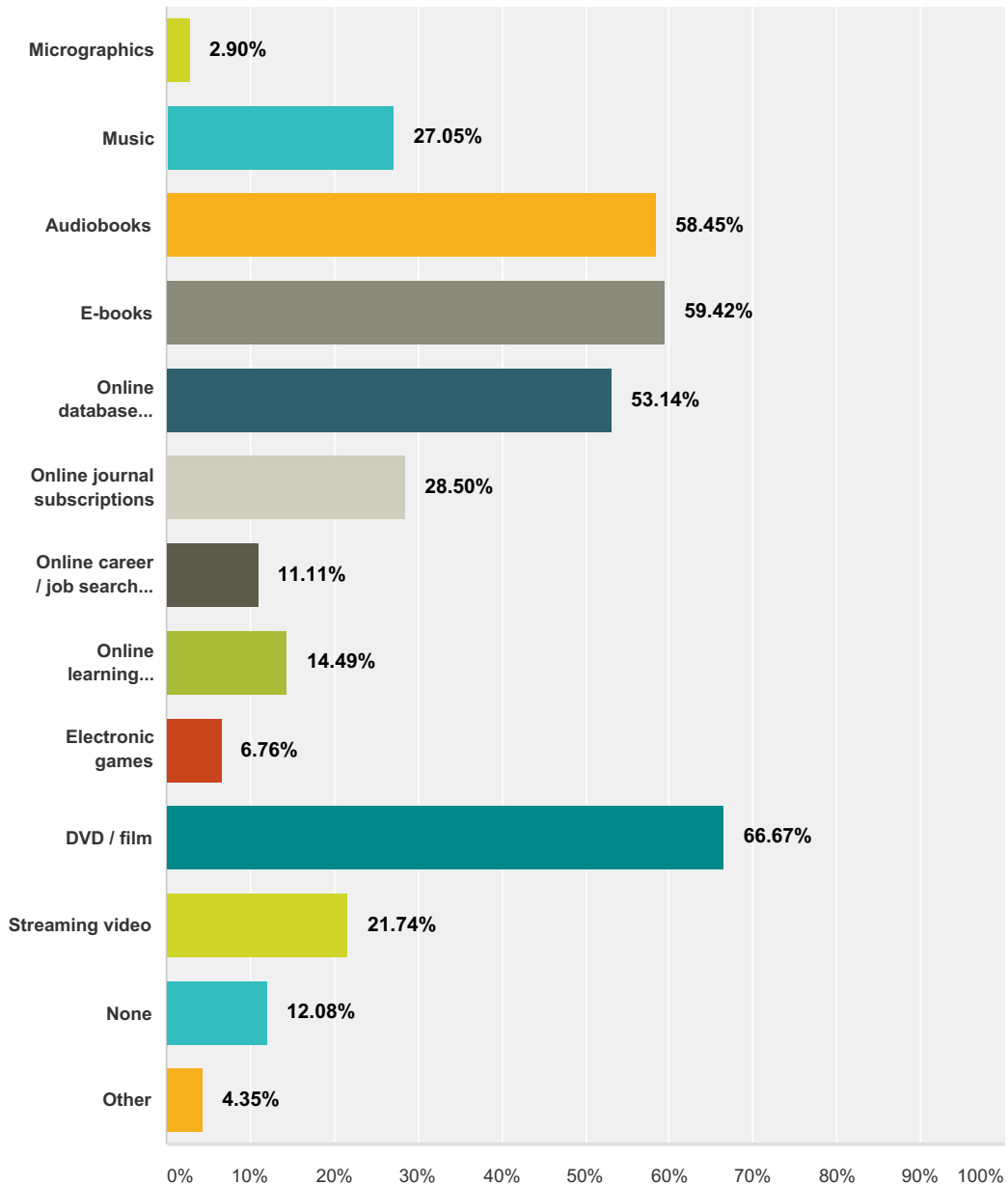
2017 Library Purchasing Survey

Q17 Which of the following PRINT MEDIA do you plan to purchase in 2017?

- Books: 93.36%
- Magazines: 72.99%
- Journals: 22.75%
- Monographs: 15.64%
- Newspapers: 61.14%
- None: 3.79%
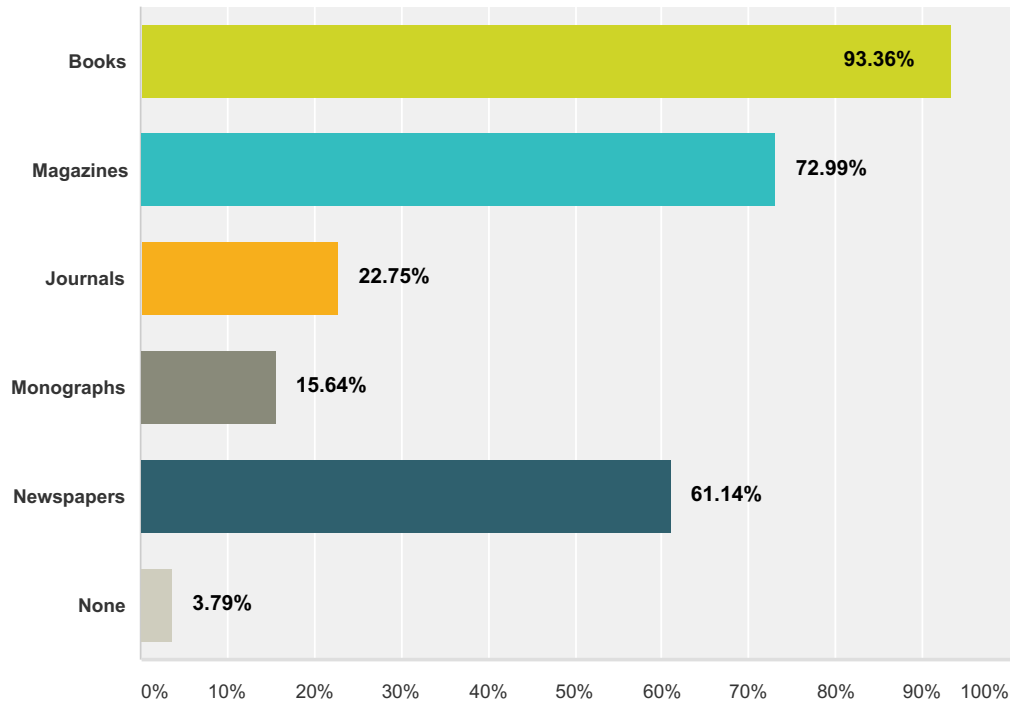
2017 Library Purchasing Survey

Q18 Which of the following SHELVING / STORAGE / DISPLAY products do you plan to purchase in 2017?

Category	Percentage
Shelving, children's /...	10.10%
Shelving, cantilever	1.01%
Shelving, slatwall /...	4.55%
Displayers / browsers	15.15%
Shelving, mobile / hig...	3.03%
Shelving, steel	7.07%
Shelving, wood	5.56%
None	70.71%
Other	5.56%
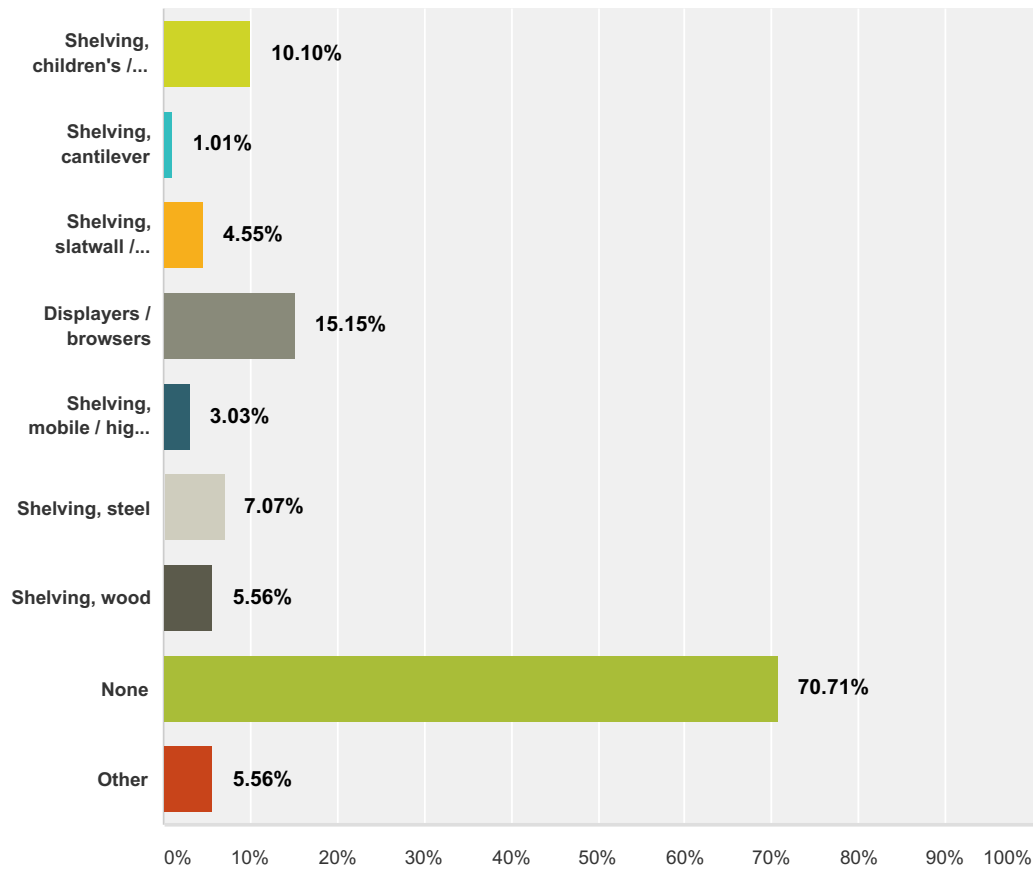
Q19 Which of the following PROFESSIONAL SERVICES do you plan to purchase in 2017?

Service	Percentage
Consulting	12.32%
Library programming	25.62%
Collection development ...	6.40%
Subscription services	30.05%
Digitization / scanning	13.30%
Cataloging	15.76%
Database / authority...	12.32%
Architecture / engineering	11.82%
Space planning / interior...	9.36%
Strategic planning	4.93%
Library relocation	2.46%
None	38.42%
Other	1.97%
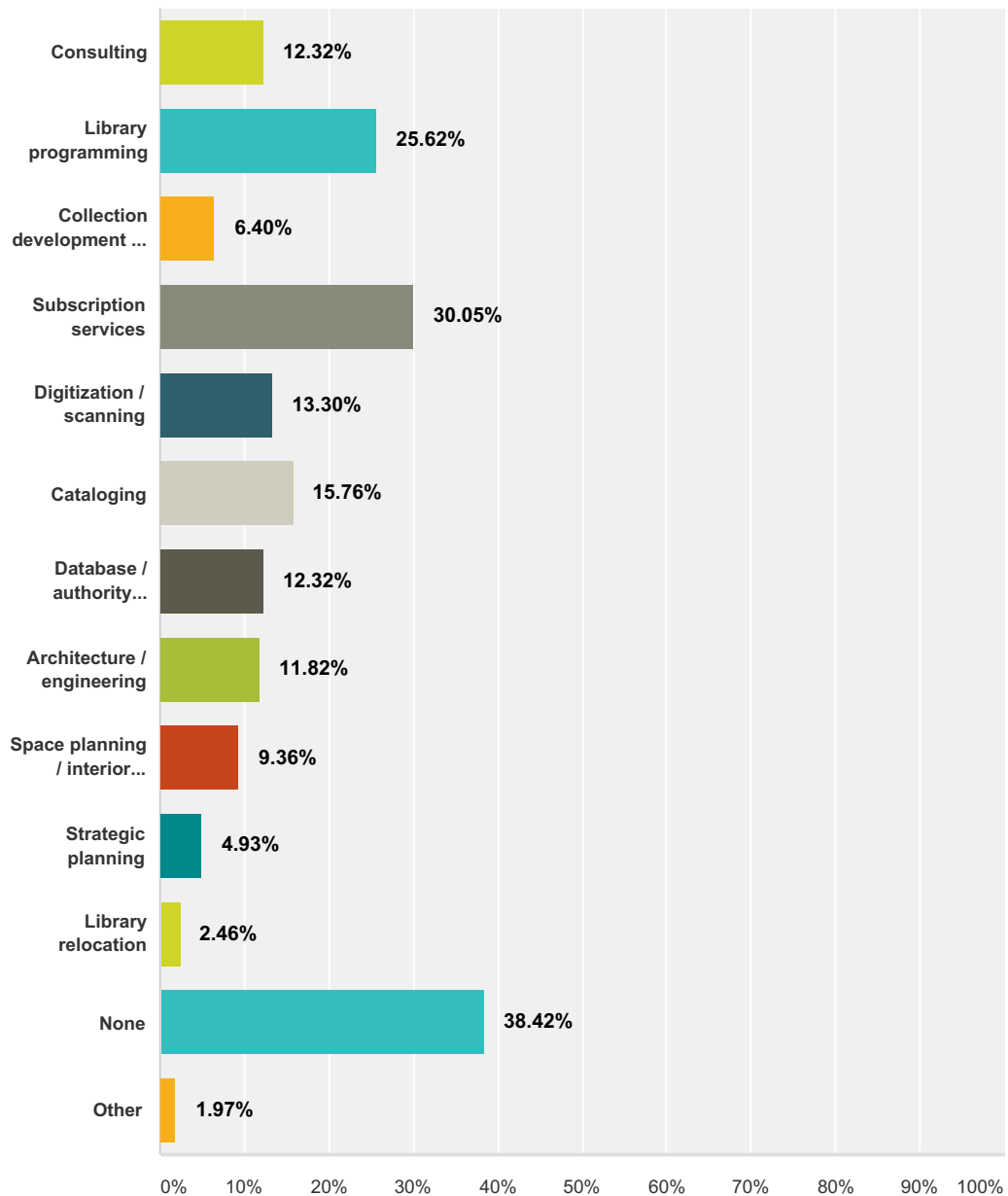
Q20 Which of the following EQUIPMENT / SUPPLIES do you plan to purchase in 2017?

Category	Percentage
Signage / wayfinding	31.73%
Micrographics equipment /...	2.88%
Book / media returns	11.06%
Binding / laminating...	35.10%
Bags / totes	20.19%
Audiovisual equipment /...	19.71%
Patron cards	25.96%
Circulation equipment /...	37.98%
Archival / preservation...	15.38%
Copy / fax / print vendin...	13.46%
Book copiers / scanners	8.17%
Bar coding equipment /...	25.96%
Book carts / trucks	14.42%
Maker space products /...	26.44%
None	19.23%
Other	3.85%

Strategic Library™

Strategic Library focuses on innovation, best practices, and emerging trends in the complex and rapidly evolving library landscape.

Published monthly, Strategic Library assists administrators and managers in all types of libraries as they deal with day-to-day and strategic challenges. In-depth articles, written by highly regarded professionals in the field, focus on leadership, management, evaluation, assessment, marketing, funding, and more to promote organizational success.

Strategic Library is delivered direct to your desktop, as a digital download.

Special Charter Subscriber Offer!

Yes! Please enter my subscription to Strategic Library at the special charter subscriber rate of $99 for one year (12 issues), a $60 savings, or $299 for a site license (save $200).

Pay Online
Subscription Options
Single Subscriber $99.00 USD

Pay by Mail
Please complete and mail this form to:
LibraryWorks, Inc.
7823 Stratford Rd, Bethesda, MD 20814

(Make check payable to LibraryWorks, Inc.)

FIRST NAME: _____   LAST NAME: _____

TITLE: _____   ORGANIZATION: _____

CITY: _____   STATE: _____   ZIP/POSTAL CODE: _____

PHONE: _____   E-MAIL ADDRESS: _____

Bill Me

FIRST NAME: _____   LAST NAME: _____

TITLE: _____   ORGANIZATION: _____

CITY: _____   STATE: _____   ZIP/POSTAL CODE: _____

PHONE: _____   E-MAIL ADDRESS: _____

PO # (IF APPLICABLE): _____

Thank you! Your subscription will begin upon receipt of your payment.

Strategic Library™

Jennifer Newman
PUBLISHER
jenny@libraryworks.com
240.354.1281

© 2017 LibraryWorks, Inc. All rights reserved. **www.LibraryWorks.com**
info@LibraryWorks.com 240.354.1281

LibraryWorks®