

# The IMPACT Survey Project

Helping U.S. public libraries evaluate the impact of public access  
technology services

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TASCHA Talk – November 17, 2011



# Introduction

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## Background: The U.S. IMPACT Study

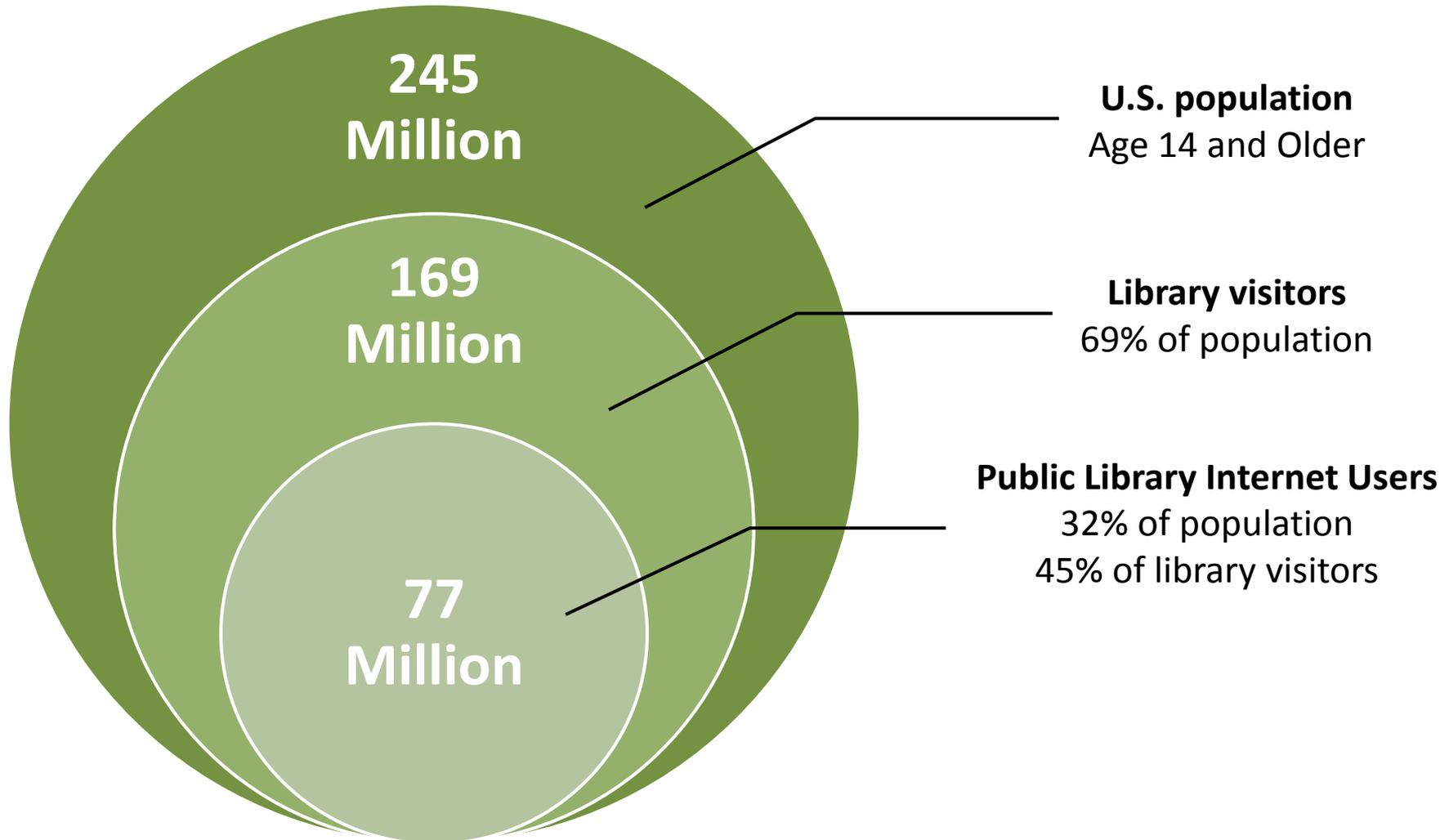
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- ▶ Conducted in 2009 with funding from IMLS and Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation (Becker, Crandall, Fischer), 1<sup>st</sup> large-scale investigation of the ways U.S. library patrons use computers and the Internet at public libraries, **why** they use it, and **how it affects their lives**.
  - ▶ **Case studies: 4 libraries, 280 interviews**
  - ▶ **Telephone survey: 2,045 users, 1,131 non-users**
  - ▶ **Web survey: 401 libraries & 44,881 completed surveys**



# U.S. IMPACT Study findings

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# U.S. IMPACT Study findings in context

## Annual Use of Public Libraries



= 169,268,956  
(unique visitors)



= 77,016,182  
(unique users)

## Annual Attendance at Professional Sports Events



= 73,402,524



= 21,549,238



= 21,475,223

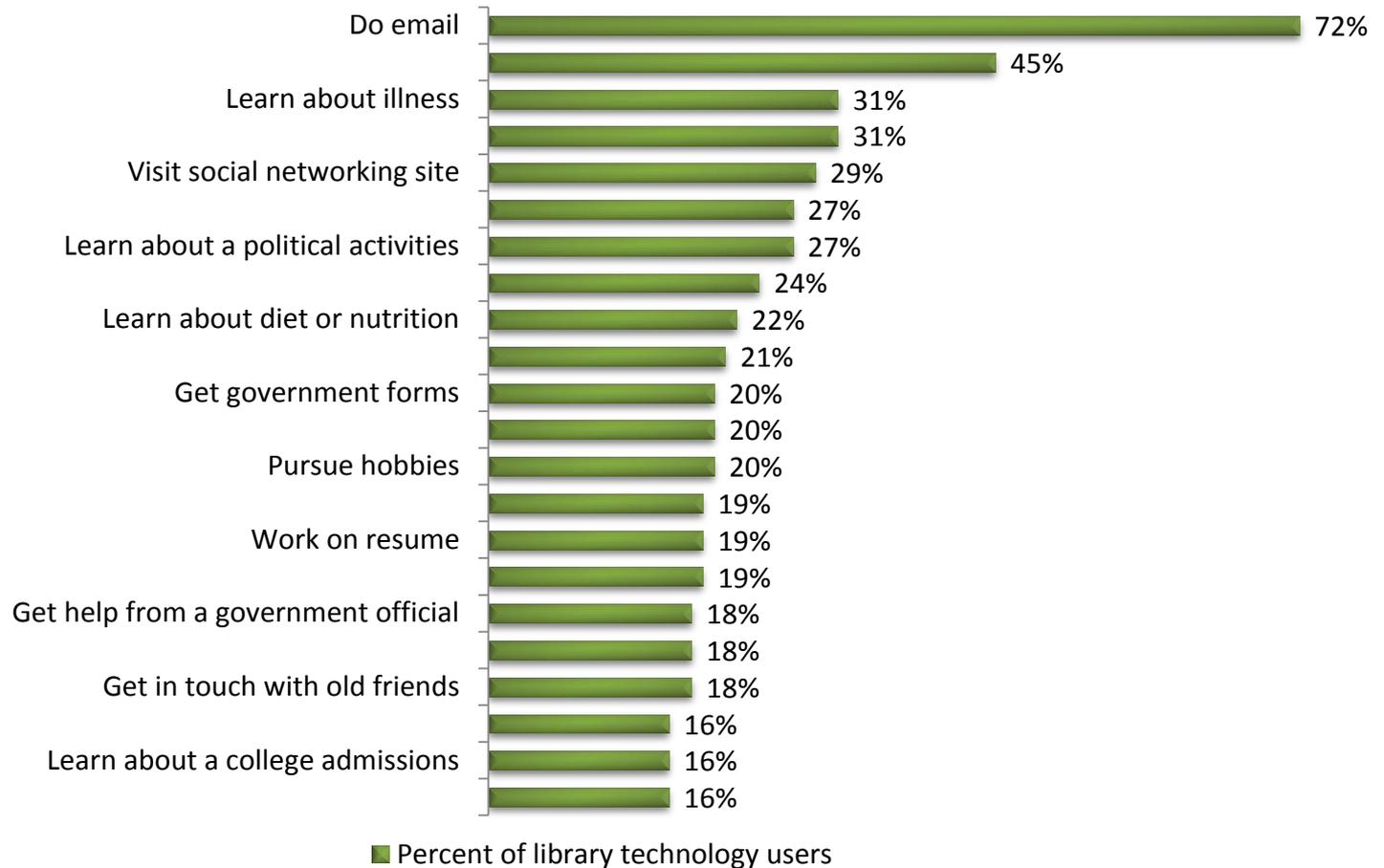


= 17,469,552

= **133,896,537 total combined attendance**  
(not individuals)

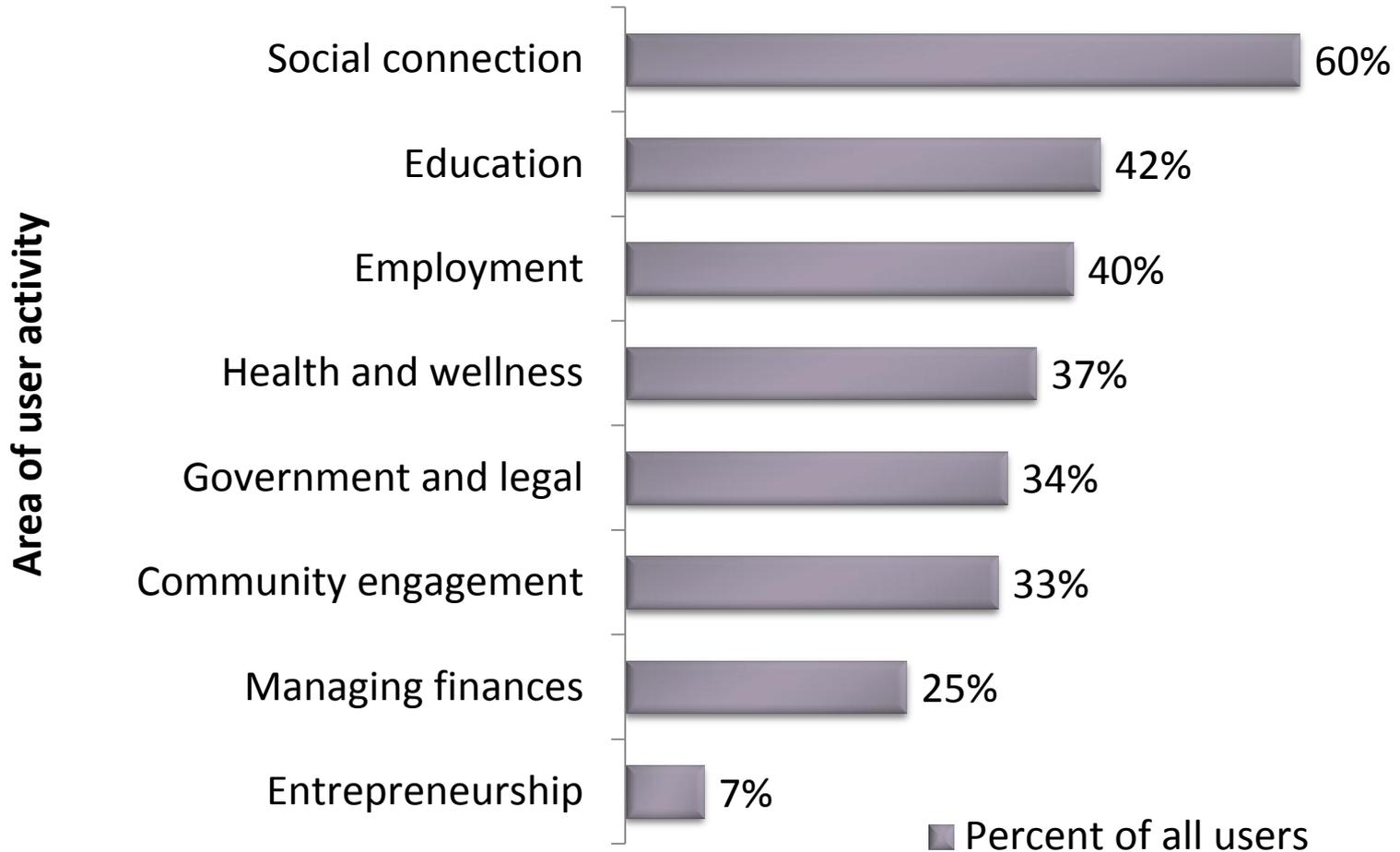


# Top uses of public access technology in libraries



Source: 2009 U.S. IMPACT Study telephone and web survey  
Asked of public library technology users

# Patrons are making it happen...



Source: 2009 U.S. IMPACT Study telephone and web survey  
Asked of public library technology users

# Outcomes

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## Employment

31% of PAC users looked for a job. Of these:

- 68% submitted an application online
- 33% were interviewed
- 16% were hired for a new job.

**In all, 4 million people found jobs using public library computers.**



## Education

Overall, 42% of users did educational activities. Of these:

- 37% learned about college programs
- 37% did homework
- 24% took an online class

**Over 64% of adult users were accepted into an educational program.**

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Source: 2009 U.S. IMPACT Study telephone and web survey  
Asked of public library technology users

# More outcomes!

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## Health

37% of PAC users did health-related activities. Of these:

- 60% learned about diet
- 48% learned about exercise

**Of the people who learned about diet or exercise, more than 80% made a change in their health practices.**



## Civic Engagement

Overall, 33% of users engaged in civic activities. Of these:

- 80% learned about a political activities, candidates, or causes

**Of users who learned about politics, 76% said they were able to make a decision to support a candidate or cause.**

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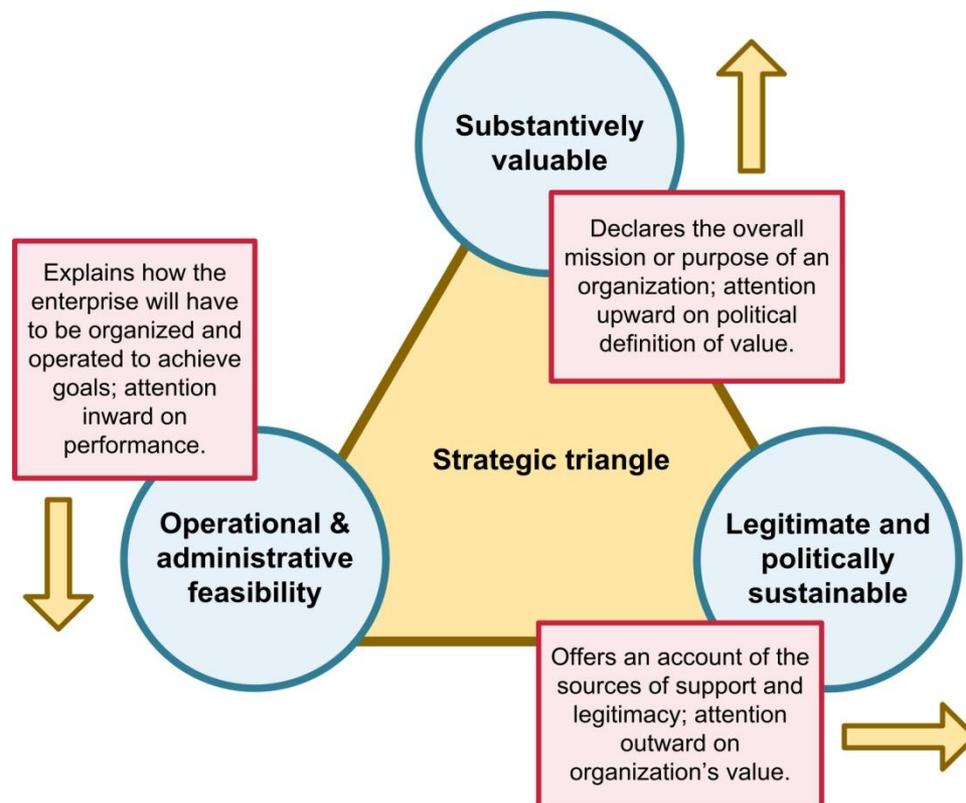
Source: 2009 U.S. IMPACT Study telephone and web survey  
Asked of public library technology users



# Taking a step back: theoretical frameworks

## Moore's Strategic Triangle

- Are we supporting or increasing the **substantive value** of public access?
- Are our services **operational and administrative feasible**?
- Will our decisions **earn political support and legitimacy** for library services?

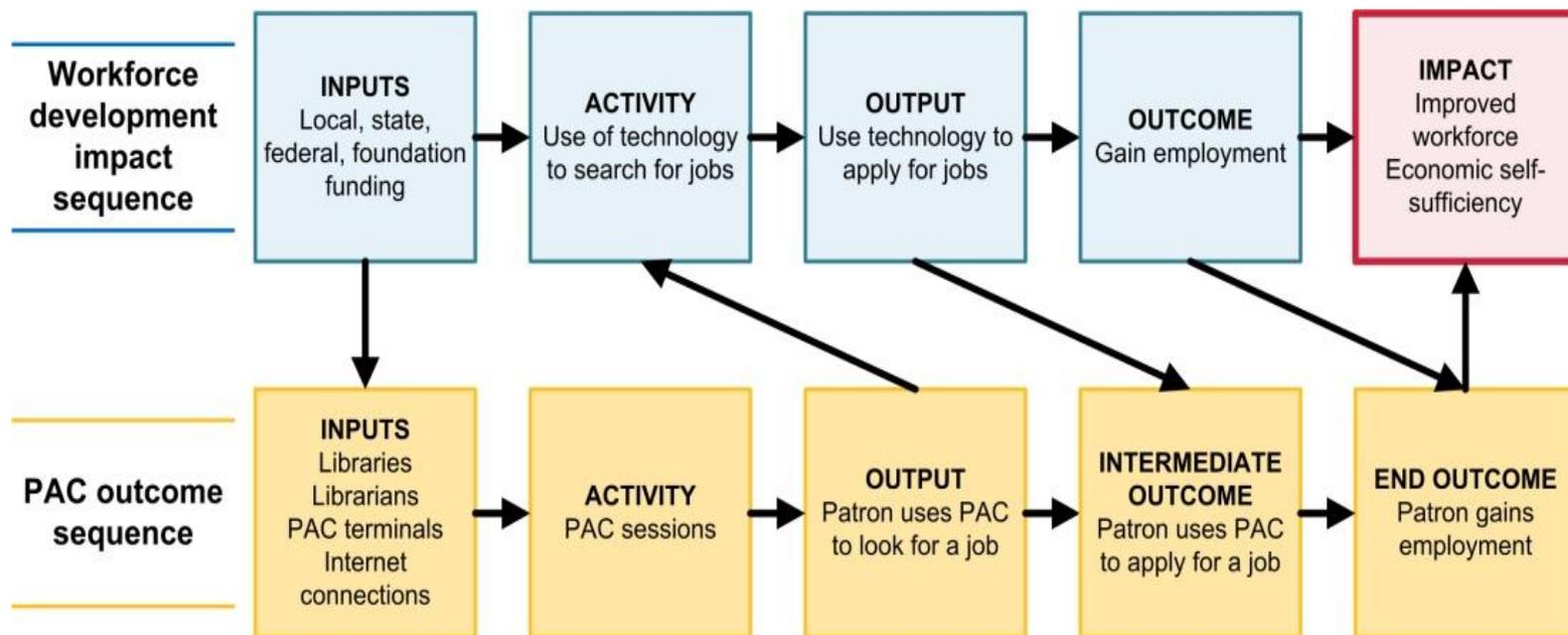


Creating Public Value (Moore, 1995)

# Theoretical frameworks

## Situated Logic Model

Where does the library's work contribute to a larger public policy objective?



(Naumer, 2009)

# The IMPACT Survey

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- ▶ Enable public libraries to collect **local** patron-level data about the impact of providing free access to public access technology services for purposes of **evaluation** and **advocacy**.
  - ▶ **How?**
    - ▶ Revise and refine the U.S. IMPACT Study web survey instrument
    - ▶ Create sustainable platform for taking libraries through the process of successfully running the survey ([impactsurvey.org](http://impactsurvey.org))
    - ▶ Provide communication and advocacy tools to help libraries generate participation and put their findings to use
    - ▶ Test!



# The IMPACT Survey instrument

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- ▶ Criteria used when refining U.S. IMPACT survey questions:
  - ▶ Outcome creates value
  - ▶ Outcome fits within the situated logic model framework
  - ▶ Librarians care about the outcome
  - ▶ Patrons demonstrate desire to share around this outcome
  - ▶ Anticipated response rate for this question reasonably strong
- ▶ Significantly reduced length of instrument (10-15 min)



# IMPACT Survey domains

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Civic Engagement



eGovernment



eBusiness



Employment



eCommerce



Health & Wellness



Education



Social Inclusion



# The web survey: logistics

**IMPACT SURVEY**

An initiative to evaluate the impact of computer and Internet access at y

Back Next

How did you access this survey?

- Through a public access computer in a public library
- Through a public library wireless Internet connection on my own computer
- Through my own computer at home
- Through a computer at school or work
- Some other way not listed here
- Don't know or don't want to answer

In the past 12 months, how often have you visited a public library or bookmobile?

- Every day or most days
- At least once a week
- About 1-3 times a month
- Less than once a month, but more than once a year
- About once a year or less often
- Never
- Don't know or don't want to answer

Back Next

Survey Progress:

- Worked with UW Social Development Research Group (SDRG)
- Each public library system has unique survey URL based on FSCS key
- Matrix to facilitate domain-level skip logic
- Available in Spanish
- Patrons connected via links on library website



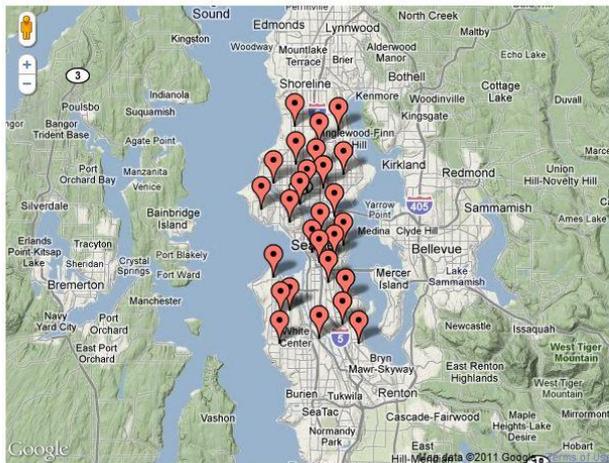
# Web Survey extras

## Branch location selector Paper survey + data entry option (thanks to the FCSC key)



Before you begin the survey, please select the library location you are currently at, or the one you visit most often. You can do this by clicking a spot on the map, or by clicking a library location name from the list on the right. If you usually access the library online (remotely) please click [I visit the library online](#). If you do not know which library location you are at or visit most often, or you do not want to answer this question, please click [don't know or don't want to answer](#).

Antes de empezar la encuesta, por favor seleccione la ubicación de la biblioteca en la que se encuentra en ese momento o la que usted visita con más frecuencia. Usted puede hacer esto haciendo clic de la ubicación en el mapa o seleccionando la ubicación de su biblioteca en la lista que tiene a su derecha. Si usted normalmente usa la biblioteca en línea (de manera remota) por favor seleccione la opción "Yo visito la biblioteca en línea." Si usted no sabe la ubicación de la biblioteca en la que se encuentra o la que visita con más frecuencia, o prefiere no responder a esta pregunta por favor elija la opción "No se o no deseo responder".



### ADMINISTRATIVE USE ONLY

FCSC ID: TE0001

Branch Location: \_\_\_\_\_

Data Entry Completed



### Thank you for taking this survey!

This library is evaluating its services. Your responses will help us evaluate and improve the library's technology services. This survey is supported with funding from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.

The survey will ask you some general questions about how you use the library, and how this may have helped you in your life. The survey will also ask specific questions related to the use of the library's computers and internet connection in the following areas: business, civic engagement, eCommerce, education, employment, eGovernment, health and wellness, and social inclusion.

This survey is confidential. You must provide your year of birth but all other questions are optional. We expect the survey will take 10-15 minutes to complete.

Please read each question carefully and mark your answer by putting an 'X' in the box next to your answer. To change your answer, completely fill in the box with the wrong answer and put an 'X' in the box next to your new answer.

#### 1. What year were you born?

WRITE IN ANSWER

\_\_\_\_\_|\_\_\_\_\_|\_\_\_\_\_|\_\_\_\_\_|\_\_\_\_\_|



You must be at least 14 years old to take this survey.

#### 2. In the past 12 months, how often have you visited a public library or bookmobile?

- Every day or most days
- At least once a week
- About 1-3 times a month
- Less than once a month, but more than once a year
- About once a year or less often
- Never
- Don't know or don't want to answer

Go to Question #6

#### 3. In the past 12 months, how often have you used a library computer to access library resources, such as looking up books, placing holds, accessing your library account or digital resources like digital articles or books?

- Every day or most days
- At least once a week
- About 1-3 times a month
- Less than once a month, but more than once a year
- About once a year or less often
- Never
- Don't know or don't want to answer

Go to Question #4

#### 3a. Which of these library resources have you accessed in the past 12 months using a library computer?

- The library's online catalog
- My library account (e.g., placed a hold, renewed materials)
- Subscription databases (e.g., Consumer Reports, ancestry.com)
- Downloadable eBooks and Audiobooks
- Other types of resources not listed here
- Don't know or don't want to answer



# The IMPACT Survey process

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## 10 step process:

1. Library creates a system-level user account at [impactsurvey.org](https://impactsurvey.org)
  2. Provide background information about your library (confirm IMLS data, complete Intake Form)
  3. Select your survey fielding start and stop dates
  4. Download buttons and banners to connect patrons to library's unique URL
  5. Use provided communication materials to inform staff of survey purpose, process
  6. Promote the survey!
  7. Install links to the survey on library website
  8. Remove survey links at the end of designated survey fielding period
  9. Download your library's customized report within 24 hours
  10. Use report & provided advocacy tools to communicate value of services
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The screenshot shows the homepage of the IMPACT Survey website. At the top left is the logo, which consists of a stylized antenna icon followed by the word "IMPACT" in large green letters and "SURVEY" in smaller green letters below it. To the right of the logo is the tagline "Your public access technology evaluation tool." Below the logo and tagline is a green navigation bar with white text for "Home", "Library Benefits", "How To", "Advocacy Tools", "FAQ", "About", and "Contact Us".

On the left side of the main content area, there is a "Library login" section with a white background. It contains two input fields for "Username or e-mail" and "Password", a link for "Request new password", and a "Log in" button.

The main content area has a "Home" heading. Below it is a paragraph explaining that the IMPACT Survey enables public libraries to collect patron-level data for evaluation and advocacy. This is followed by a five-step process flow in purple boxes: 1. "Host the survey at your library, with help from our team as needed", 2. "Your patrons take the survey", 3. "Receive a complete, ready-for-distribution report", 4. "Share your findings with policy-makers, funders & your community", and 5. "Repeat to monitor change".

Below the process flow is a paragraph stating that the survey collects outcome-focused data on general library and online resource use across various domains. These domains are represented by icons and labels: Civic Engagement (globe), eCommerce (shopping cart), eGovernment (government building), Health & Wellness (cross), eBusiness (briefcase), Education (house with flag), Employment (wrench), and Social Inclusion (group of people).

Two sections follow: "As a participating library, you can:" with a bulleted list of actions (sign up online, choose dates, run the survey), and "As a participating library, you will receive:" with a bulleted list of benefits (report, communication materials, advocacy materials, training videos, and administrative support).

A "Find out more!" section provides links to a PDF of survey questions, notes on completion time and language availability, and a link to the "How To" page.

The footer contains logos for the "U.S. IMPACT Study", the "Technology & Social Change Group" at the University of Washington, the "Information School" at the University of Washington, and the "Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation".

# Libraries self-manage their survey process

Welcome Test Library System | [Log out](#)  
Fielding Dates:  
09/17/11 - 09/30/11

**IMPACT SURVEY**  
*Your public access technology evaluation tool.*

Home | Library Benefits | How To | Advocacy Tools | FAQ | About | Contact Us

**Registered Libraries**

- My IMPACT
- IMLS Data
- Intake Form
- Survey Fielding
- Get Your Links
- Prepare for Launch!
- My Report

**My IMPACT**

**Test Library System**  
Username: cortneyleach  
Registered User: Cortney Awesome  
Position: Supreme Awesomeness Purveyor  
777-777-7777  
cjohnso@uw.edu  
[Edit](#)

**Completed Surveys: 3\***  
\*Updated every 24 hours at 1:35am PST.  
[Enter paper survey data](#)

**Next Step**

1. Confirm your library's IMLS Data
2. Complete the Intake Form
3. Select your survey fielding dates
4. Get your survey links
5. Your report is ready. View it [here](#)

**Report Cover Sample**

King County Library System  
Survey Results

September 2011

[Set Cover Images](#)

With support from:

How To page

FAQ

Downloadable  
Fielding Guide

Contact Us form

Help Desk

Goals:  
Scalable  
Sustainable



# Connecting Inputs to Outcomes

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## *What inputs influence user outcomes?*

- ▶ Step #1: Confirm IMLS data
  - ▶ # outlets (branches, bookmobiles)
  - ▶ # residents in legal service area
  - ▶ # patron visits during past year
  - ▶ Hours library open during past year
  - ▶ Total operational expenditures in past year
  - ▶ # FTE staff
  - ▶ # public access Internet terminals
  - ▶ # public access terminal uses in past year



# Connecting Inputs to Outcomes

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## *What inputs influence user outcomes?*

- ▶ Step #2: Additional Intake Form variables
  - ▶ Source of IT support
  - ▶ Source of IT connection
  - ▶ Maximum download speed (advertised)
  - ▶ Wireless?
  - ▶ Assistive technologies for people with impairments?
  - ▶ Session management software?
  - ▶ Staff training around PAT available during working hours? For volunteers?
  - ▶ Appointments for 1-on-1 technology training, help?
  - ▶ Classes on online safety?
  - ▶ PAT included in library strategic plan?
  - ▶ Engage community partners in delivery PAT services?
  - ▶ Way to track expenses related to PAT?
  - ▶ Hardware replacement plan?
  - ▶ Standard maximum daily time limit on public access terminals
  - ▶ Library staff able to extend session time?
  - ▶ Dedicated public access terminals for specific uses?



# Okay... go!

- ▶ Choose survey start and stop dates (2-4 weeks)
  - ▶ Option to extend fielding period length mid-course
- ▶ Download buttons, banners, pop-up
- ▶ Advertise to patrons, community

## Survey Fielding

Your survey is scheduled for:

Wed 08/03/11 - Sat 08/06/11

You have chosen to administer paper surveys

[Change Dates/Paper Survey](#)

Ensure that your library website is ready to display the survey links, and promotional activities are coordinated. Visit [Get your links](#) for more information about survey promotion.

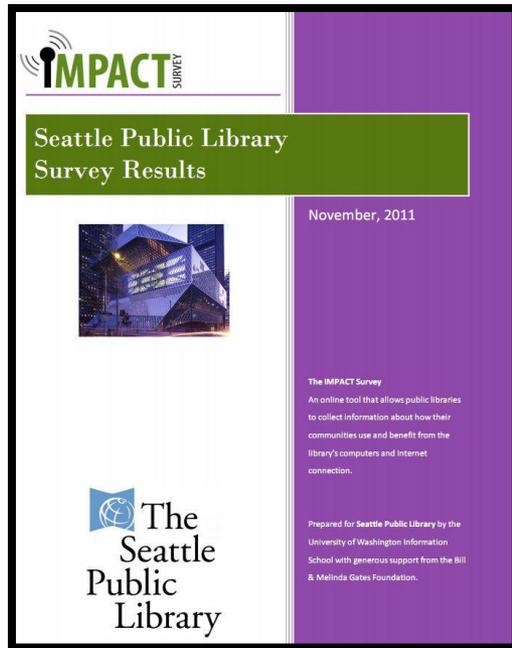
You will not be able to edit the IMLS Data and Intake forms once the survey fielding has begun.

You may extend the survey while it is running, but not after it has ended.

Please [contact us](#) if you have any questions.

# Report and Advocacy Tools

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## Advocacy toolbox:

- Talking points
- Presentations
- Training videos
- Letter to the editor template
- Op-Ed template
- Drop-in article template
- Patron comment cards



# Testing

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## ▶ 2-part Testing

### ▶ **Beta-test**

- ▶ 5 public library systems
  - 1 tested branch selector page
  - 1 tested paper surveys

- Original Intake Form too difficult
- Paper survey option of value
- Branch selector landing page worked

### ▶ **Pilot**

- ▶ 282 public library systems
- ▶ 2 state library agencies
- ▶ 30,680 respondents

- Completed November 7<sup>th</sup>
- Program evaluation being conducted by ORS



# Top takeaways

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- ▶ Libraries find this information **valuable**
- ▶ Designing an multi-step online tool to be used by all 9,000 U.S. library systems is challenging. Wide range of technology resources, skills, support. But majority of libraries could do this – it worked!
- ▶ Helps libraries to start thinking about the relationship between public access technology inputs and community outcomes



# What's next?

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- ▶ Project will serve as example in IFLA (International Federation of Library Assoc.) advocacy training
- ▶ Gates Foundation Public Access Technology Benchmarking Project
  - ▶ Working to link public access technology inputs with user outcomes
    - ▶ Linking U.S. IMPACT Study data with IMLS Public Library Survey & ALA/Bertot Public Libraries and the Internet Survey
    - ▶ Trying to identify input levels critical to outcomes
      - How many computers per capita?
      - Help or training?
    - ▶ Establish benchmark targets
  - ▶ IMPACT Survey tool key in linking inputs and outcomes
- ▶ Evaluation feedback coming – survey and interviews with participating libraries will help us identify priority changes
  - ▶ There's a lot we'd like to do!
    - ▶ Branch-level data, domain surveys, more sophisticated advocacy materials, state-level portal, survey translated in additional languages, 1 system/multiple accounts



# Thank you!

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Cortney Leach: [cjohnso@uw.edu](mailto:cjohnso@uw.edu)

<http://impactsurvey.org>

<http://tascha.uw.edu/research/usimpact/>

<http://youtu.be/yJvPsOFOVcU>

