

PUBLIC LIBRARIES...

...JUMPSTART EMPLOYMENT AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Nearly 100 percent of America's public libraries offer workforce development training programs, online job resources, and technology skills training. President Obama and Congress recently acknowledged these vital contributions through the Workforce Innovation and Opportunities Act by enabling public libraries to be considered One-Stop partners and eligible for federal funding to support job training and job search programs.

Libraries are equipping communities with the resources and skills needed to succeed in today's—and tomorrow's—global marketplace:

- 96% of libraries offer online job and employment resources
- 78% offer programs to help people apply for jobs
- 72% offer programs to help people use online job resources
- 59% offer programs to help people use business resources
- 53% provide work spaces for mobile workers
- 50% offer programs on small business development

...EMPOWER AND ENGAGE PEOPLE

Success in an increasingly digital context requires a comprehensive approach to ensure opportunity for all communities and individuals. Digital inclusion brings together high-speed internet access, computers, relevant online content, and the skills needed to effectively use technology. Researcher John Horrigan estimates that nearly 30% of Americans have low levels of “digital readiness,” and he recommends leveraging libraries to address this national challenge.

Public libraries are the leading provider of public technology access and training, including:

- An average of 20 computers per library (ranging from 40.5 in the city and 10.1 in rural libraries)
- Free public wi-fi in 98% of libraries (up from 89% in 2012 and 66% in 2008)
- Help completing online government forms in 98% of libraries
- Classes in using computer software in 90% of libraries
- Classes on developing safe and secure online practices in 62% of libraries
- Classes on using social media in 46% of libraries





...“COMPLETE” EDUCATION

Virtually all public libraries report offering education and learning programs—with summer reading programs topping the list (98% of all libraries). A recent report from the Pew Internet Project finds that 94% of parents say libraries are important for their children, largely because they help inculcate a love of reading and provide information and resources not available at home. Libraries support learning over a lifetime in a range of ways:

- 100% provide online research databases
- 97% provide online homework assistance
- 90% provide ebooks
- 55% provide online language learning programs
- 33% offer basic literacy programming
- 27% offer GED or equivalent education programs

...EXPAND MOBILE AND INNOVATIVE SERVICES, RESOURCES

The Digital Inclusion Survey provides the first national look at emerging trends, including:

- 53% help people test drive new devices
- 43% provide mobile applications (up from 7% in 2012)
- 33% provide wireless printing services
- 22% support free or subscribed video conferencing services
- 21% hosted creation or maker events
- 17% provide access to tablet computers
- 4% provide classes in developing websites and digital content
- 2% (or about 260 libraries) hosted hackathons or other coding or app development events
- 2% offer 3D printers

BUT MORE WORK REMAINS...

While many libraries marked progress from the last national library technology study in 2012, there is more work to be done to ensure libraries can meet diverse community needs:

- Only about half of libraries (55%) reported bandwidth upgrades in the past two years
- Two-thirds (66%) of libraries report they would like to increase their broadband capacity, and that cost is the leading barrier to doing so
- 36% of libraries report daily wait times for public access computers—this is true for 62% of urban libraries

METHODOLOGY: The Digital Inclusion Survey collected data from a nationally representative sample of public libraries at the branch/outlet level between September 3 and November 30, 2013. The survey was open to all public libraries to participate. However, the analysis conducted used only sampled libraries. The survey received 3,392 responses, for a 70.1 percent response rate. For more information, please visit [HTTP://WWW.ALA.ORG/RESEARCH/DIGITALINCLUSION](http://www.ala.org/research/digitalinclusion) and [HTTP://DIGITALINCLUSION.UMD.EDU/](http://digitalinclusion.umd.edu/). Past related reports on public library technology are available at [WWW.ALA.ORG/PLINTERNETFUNDING](http://www.ala.org/plinternetfunding).

