

Figure 20: Use of Electronic Resources in Public Library Outlets by Metropolitan Status

Use of electronic resources	Metropolitan Status			Overall
	Urban	Suburban	Rural	
Use of electronic resources increased since last fiscal year	64.0% (n=1,639)	59.3% (n=3,172)	30.8% (n=2,273)	49.8% (n=7,614)
Use of electronic resources decreased since last fiscal year	4.9% (n=125)	1.2% (n=64)	1.6% (n=118)	2.0% (n=307)
Use of electronic resources have stayed the same since last fiscal year	13.9% (n=355)	21.2% (n=1,134)	30.8% (n=2,273)	24.6% (n=3,762)
Don't Know	15.2% (n=389)	13.6% (n=726)	13.9% (n=1,027)	14.0% (n=2,142)
Not Applicable	2.0% (n=51)	4.7% (n=250)	15.6% (n=1,152)	9.5% (n=1,454)
Weighted missing values, n=875				

Nearly half – 49.8 percent – of public libraries report an increase in usage of their electronic resources (Figure 20). The most significant change from the 2009-2010 survey is visible among suburban library outlets, where the number of outlets reporting an increase in the use of electronic resources rose by 9.6 percent.

Public Library Internet Connectivity Type, Speed, & Sufficiency

Figure 21: Availability of Fiber Optic Public Access Internet Connection at Public Library Outlets, by Metropolitan Status

Fiber Optic Public Access Internet Connection	Metropolitan Status			Overall
	Urban	Suburban	Rural	
Yes, the connection is fiber optic	65.6% (n=1,608)	42.8% (n=2,241)	21.8% (n=1,612)	36.2% (n=5,461)
No, the connection is not fiber optic	32.1% (n=786)	49.4% (n=2,588)	61.5% (n=4,556)	52.6% (n=7,931)
Don't know	2.3% (n=57)	7.7% (n=406)	16.7% (n=1,235)	11.2% (n=1,697)
Weighted missing values, n=1,063				

Figure 21 shows the percentage of library outlets with fiber optic public access Internet connections. A majority (65.6 percent) of urban library outlets offer fiber optic connection, with 42.8 percent of suburban outlets and only 21.8 percent of rural outlets also offering fiber connections. Overall, the number of public library outlets offering fiber optic connections increased by 5.5 percent from the 2009-2010 survey, but the largest gains were seen in urban (+ 8.5 percent) and suburban (+7.1 percent) library outlets, while only 4.1 percent more rural library outlets report fiber optic connections.

Figure 22: Public Library Outlets Maximum Speed of Public Access Internet Services by Metropolitan Status				
Maximum Speed	Metropolitan Status			Overall
	Urban	Suburban	Rural	
Less than 256 kbps	*	*	2.3% (n=167)	1.4% (n=211)
257 kbps - 768 kbps	*	4.2% (n=215)	6.9% (n=501)	5.0% (n=733)
769 kbps - 1.4 Mbps	1.4% (n=328)	4.2% (n=215)	5.8% (n=418)	5.6% (n=824)
1.5 Mbps (T1)	9.8% (n=232)	21.1% (n=1,076)	28.0% (n=2,030)	22.7% (n=3,338)
1.6 Mbps-3.0 Mbps	11.1% (n=263)	9.9% (n=505)	13.7% (n=995)	12.0% (n=1,763)
3.1 Mbps-6.0 Mbps	12.2% (n=289)	10.7% (n=544)	11.5% (n=832)	11.3% (n=1,666)
6.1 Mbps-10 Mbps	16.3% (n=386)	14.6% (n=745)	9.0% (n=650)	12.1% (n=1,780)
10.0-20.0 Mbps	22.2% (n=525)	12.3% (n=625)	6.1% (n=440)	10.8% (n=1,590)
20.1-30.0 Mbps	2.7% (n=64)	2.4% (n=124)	1.4% (n=102)	2.0% (n=290)
30.1-40.0 Mbps	1.0% (n=23)	2.1% (n=106)	1.1% (n=80)	1.4% (n=209)
Greater than 40 Mbps	20.8% (n=491)	13.1% (n=666)	5.8% (n=418)	10.7% (n=1,576)
Don't Know	1.4% (n=32)	4.7% (n=242)	6.3% (n=459)	5.0% (n=734)
Weighted missing values, n=1,440				
Key: * Insufficient data to report				

Figure 22 shows the maximum speed of public Internet access offered by library outlets. The percentage of libraries offering speeds greater than 1.5Mbps (T1) has increased almost 10.0 percent from 2009-2010. In the current survey, 60.3 percent of libraries reported connection speeds greater than 1.5Mbps, compared to 51.8 percent in the last survey. There also is a reported drop in the percentage of libraries with connection speeds of less than 1.5Mbps (12.0 percent in 2010-2011 versus 14.8 percent last year). In addition, the percentage of libraries reporting greater than 10Mbps connection speeds is up to 24.9 percent over last year's report of 18.4 percent. The percentage of urban libraries reporting connection speeds greater than 40Mbps grew from 14.8 percent in 2009-2010 to 20.8 percent in the current survey, and suburban libraries increased from 9.5 percent to 13.1 percent. Only a small percentage – 5.8 percent – of rural libraries report connection speeds of greater than 40Mbps. The percentages of rural libraries reporting connection speeds greater than 1.5Mbps have grown 9.9 percent from 38.7 percent last year to 48.6 percent in 2010-2011. This growth is accompanied by a decrease in rural libraries reporting connection speeds below 1.5Mbps, declining from 20.4 to 15.0 percent.

Figure 23: Increase in Public Access Internet Connection at Public Library Outlets over the last year, by Metropolitan Status

Public Access Internet Connection Increase	Metropolitan Status			
	Urban	Suburban	Rural	Overall
Increased	27.0% (n=661)	22.1% (n=1,148)	20.2% (n=1,488)	22.0% (n=3,298)
Stayed the same	72.1% (n=1,765)	76.8% (n=3,985)	77.5% (n=5,701)	76.4% (n=11,451)
Don't know	*	1.1% (n=58)	2.2% (n=163)	1.6% (n=242)
Weighted missing values, n=1,163				
Key: * Insufficient data to report				

Though libraries continue to increase their speed of connectivity, most public libraries have not increased their connection speeds. A majority of libraries, 76.4 percent, reported that their speed stayed the same (Figure 23). This is consistent across metropolitan status categories, with the majority of rural (77.5 percent), suburban (76.8 percent), and urban (72.1 percent) libraries maintaining their connection speeds. The percentage of urban outlets reporting increased connection speeds dropped from 33.3 percent in 2009-2010 to 27.0 percent in 2010-2011. Urban outlets still reported the highest number of increases, with rural libraries reporting the smallest number of increases at 20.2 percent.

Figure 24: Adequacy of Public Library Outlets Public Access Internet Connection, by Metropolitan Status

Adequacy of Public Access Internet Connection	Metropolitan Status			
	Urban	Suburban	Rural	Overall
The connection speed is insufficient to meet patron needs	10.5% (n=261)	12.6% (n=650)	14.9% (n=1,097)	13.3% (n=2,008)
The connection speed is sufficient to meet patron needs at some times	34.1% (n=847)	30.3% (n=1,570)	31.6% (n=2,336)	31.6% (n=4,753)
The connection speed is sufficient to meet patron needs at all times	55.0% (n=1,366)	56.7% (n=2,934)	53.1% (n=3,918)	54.6% (n=8,218)
Don't know	*	*	*	*
Weighted missing values, n=1,112				
Key: * Insufficient data to report				

Figure 24 illustrates the adequacy of public access connection speeds to the Internet in library outlets. Although libraries reported increases in their connection speeds (Figures 21 and 22), 44.9 percent of libraries indicated those connection speeds are insufficient to meet patron needs some or all of the time. This is consistent with the 2009-2010 report. Adequate connection speeds were reported by 54.6 percent of public libraries, with urban libraries reporting the greatest increase, approximately 7 percent (up from 47.6 percent last year). However, suburban (56.7 percent) and rural (53.1 percent) libraries reported slight decreases in the adequacy of connection speeds (down from 57.9 percent and 54.3 percent, respectively).

Figure 25: Possibility of Increasing Adequacy of Public Library Outlets Public Access Internet Connection, by Metropolitan Status

Increasing Adequacy of Connections	Metropolitan Status			Overall
	Urban	Suburban	Rural	
No, the connection speed is already at the maximum level available	10.9% (n=265)	14.7% (n=753)	25.5% (n=1,861)	19.4% (n=2,879)
No, there is no interest in increasing the speed of public access Internet connection	9.0% (n=217)	11.1% (n=567)	10.4% (n=758)	10.4% (n=1,542)
Yes, there is interest in increasing the branch's bandwidth, but the library cannot currently afford to	26.5% (n=643)	29.8% (n=1,529)	30.1% (n=2,199)	29.4% (n=4,370)
Yes, and there are plans in place to increase the bandwidth within the next year	10.8% (n=505)	12.6% (n=646)	9.6% (n=699)	12.5% (n=1,849)
It is possible to increase the speed; however, there are no plans in place to increase the bandwidth within the next year	23.2% (n=563)	20.0% (n=1,022)	10.8% (n=785)	16.0% (n=2,371)
There is interest but the branch lacks the technical knowledge to increase the bandwidth in the library	*	*	1.6% (n=118)	1.0% (n=152)
Other	7.6% (n=183)	7.8% (n=397)	5.1% (n=371)	6.4% (n=952)
Don't Know	1.6% (n=38)	3.6% (n=186)	7.0% (n=512)	5.0% (n=736)
Weighted missing values, n=1,303				
Key: * Insufficient data to report				

The extent to which library outlets can increase their connection speeds to meet demand is presented in Figure 25. A decreasing percentage of urban libraries report plans to increase the bandwidth within the next year (10.8 percent, down from 16.4 percent last year), while an increasing percentage of suburban (12.8 percent, up from 8.9 percent) and rural (9.6 percent, up from 5.5 percent) libraries report the same plans. Libraries continue to report that even though higher bandwidth was available they could not afford it – 29.4 percent of libraries overall report this to be the case.

Figure 26: Public Access Wireless Internet Connectivity in Public Library Outlets by Metropolitan Status

Availability of Public Access Wireless Internet Services	Metropolitan Status			
	Urban	Suburban	Rural	Overall
Currently available for public use when the library is open and closed	69.8% (n=1,714)	65.0% (n=3,356)	64.7% (n=4,754)	65.7% (n=9,825)
Currently available for public use only when library is open	21.6% (n=531)	24.3% (n=1,254)	16.5% (n=1,213)	20.0% (n=2,998)
Not currently available, but there are plans to make it available within the next year	4.9% (n=121)	4.4% (n=230)	7.2% (n=532)	5.9% (n=883)
Not currently available and no plans to make it available within the next year	3.5% (n=87)	6.2% (n=319)	11.2% (n=822)	8.2% (n=1,228)
Weighted missing values, n=1,190				

Figure 26 shows the availability of public access wireless connections (Wi-fi) to the Internet in public libraries. Public libraries continue to increase wireless availability, as 85.7 percent of libraries offer wireless connection (up from 82.2 percent in 2009-2010). Urban and suburban libraries continue to provide wireless access at similar rates (91.8 percent and 89.1 percent respectively), although urban libraries experienced 4.3 percent growth from last year compared to 1.8 percent grown for suburban libraries. Wireless access in rural libraries has increased 5.0 percent to 81.5 percent. The percentage of libraries that do not provide wireless access and have no plans to make it available decreased from 10.6 percent last year to 8.2 percent in the current survey.

Figure 27: Public Library Outlets Shared Wireless-Workstation Bandwidth by Metropolitan Status

Shared Bandwidth connection	Metropolitan Status			
	Urban	Suburban	Rural	Overall
Yes, both the wireless connection and public access workstations share bandwidth/connection; no management techniques	35.8% (n=798)	48.8% (n=2,224)	68.9% (n=4,024)	55.8% (n=7,046)
Yes, both the wireless connection and public access workstations share bandwidth/connection; but have management techniques	36.2% (n=807)	28.1% (n=1,281)	15.9% (n=928)	23.9% (n=3,016)
No, the wireless connection is separate from the public access workstation bandwidth/connection	27.3% (n=609)	21.8% (n=993)	12.5% (n=730)	18.5% (n=2,332)
Don't know	*	1.3% (n=58)	2.9% (n=161)	1.9% (n=234)
Weighted missing values, n=194				
Key: * : Insufficient data to report				

Figure 27 outlines the level of sharing between wireless and public access workstation connections. Fewer urban libraries report sharing the wireless and public access workstations connections (down from 41.6 percent to 35.8 percent), with a correlated increase in separate connections (up from 24.4 percent to 27.3 percent) and shared connections with management techniques (up from 33.9 percent to 36.2 percent) in 2010-2011. Similarly to last year, the percentage of rural libraries that share the wireless and public access

workstation connection without management techniques to alleviate traffic congestion is the highest reported at 68.9 percent.

Internet-Enabled Services Provided by Public Libraries

This section of the report provides details regarding the range of Internet-enabled services such as databases, digital reference, technology training, and others that public libraries offer the communities they serve.

Importance of Public Internet Services

Figure 28: Extent to which Public Internet Services are Important to the Community

Services	Overall						Average
	Least Important	Unimportant	Neutral	Important	Most Important	Not Applicable	
The library provides services to job seekers	1.0% (n=151)	1.2% (n=173)	5.9% (n=872)	17.4% (n=2,587)	74.4% (n=11,089)	0.2% (n=28)	4.6 (n=14,873)
The library provides information for economic development (e.g., start a business, seek business opportunities)	3.0% (n=451)	8.4% (n=1,246)	26.5% (n=3,934)	28.2% (n=4,178)	33.4% (n=4,951)	0.4% (n=66)	3.8 (n=14,761)
The library provides access to government information and services, like unemployment benefits, tax, forms, Medicare information or paying traffic tickets	0.9% (n=127)	1.5% (n=228)	8.8% (n=1,307)	24.5% (n=3,650)	64.0% (n=9,525)	0.3% (n=37)	4.5 (n=14,838)
The library provides computer and Internet skills training	3.9% (n=576)	9.3% (n=1,383)	24.6% (n=3,661)	24.2% (n=3,590)	33.5% (n=4,983)	4.5% (n=667)	3.8 (n=14,193)
The library provides education resources and databases for K-12 students	2.1% (n=307)	5.5% (n=817)	18.5% (n=2,756)	29.0% (n=4,319)	44.2% (n=6,574)	0.7% (n=103)	4.1 (n=14,773)
The library provides education resources and databases for students in higher education	3.1% (n=454)	8.0% (n=1,179)	22.1% (n=3,277)	31.9% (n=4,726)	34.2% (n=5,076)	0.8% (n=118)	3.9 (n=14,702)
The library provides education resources and databases for home schooling	3.0% (n=447)	7.0% (n=1,033)	20.8% (n=3,080)	29.5% (n=4,374)	38.7% (n=5,738)	1.1% (n=166)	3.9 (n=14,672)
The library provides education resources and databases for adult/continuing education students	2.2% (n=325)	5.9% (n=882)	19.3% (n=2,864)	33.2% (n=4,922)	38.7% (n=5,747)	0.7% (n=107)	4.0 (n=14,740)
The library provides information for college applicants	2.6% (n=388)	9.1% (n=1,336)	26.8% (n=3,963)	28.6% (n=4,219)	32.2% (n=4,750)	0.7% (n=105)	3.8 (n=14,656)
The library provides information about the library's community	3.4% (n=504)	9.0% (n=1,323)	23.6% (n=3,493)	27.3% (n=4,026)	36.2% (n=5,348)	0.5% (n=79)	3.8 (n=14,694)
The library provides information about databases regarding investments	9.6% (n=1,427)	19.3% (n=2,858)	29.2% (n=4,334)	21.7% (n=3,217)	18.6% (n=2,753)	1.6% (n=233)	3.2 (n=14,589)
The library provides services to immigrant populations	12.8% (n=1,894)	15.9% (n=2,350)	22.9% (n=3,391)	20.1% (n=2,967)	24.3% (n=3,592)	4.0% (n=591)	3.3 (n=14,193)
Other	4.8% (n=66)	1.6% (n=22)	8.8% (n=119)	11.1% (n=150)	44.6% (n=603)	29.0% (n=392)	4.2 (n=959)

1=Least Important; 5=Most Important

Services for job seekers and access to government information and services remain among the most important public Internet services provided to the community, followed by government information services, and education resources and databases for K-12 students (Figure 28).

- 91.8 percent report that services to job-seekers are either important or most important.