PLA webinar
October 12, 2023
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PLA 2023 TECHNOLOGY SURVEY INFORMATION SESSION

PLA webinar
October 12, 2023
Presenters

David Lee King
Chair, PLA Technology Committee
Digital Services Director, Topeka & Shawnee County Public Library

Julie Walker
President, Chief Officers of State Library Agencies (COSLA)
State Librarian, Georgia

Katina Jones
Program Manager, Evaluation and Assessment
Public Library Association

Larra Clark
Deputy Director, Policy Public Library Association
Agenda

• About the 2023 Technology Survey
• Using Survey Data for Advocacy & Planning
  • National Perspective
  • State Perspective
  • Local Perspective
• Completing the Survey
• Q&A
PLA Annual Topical Surveys

Rotation of three surveys that complement other existing data collection efforts in the library field
2020 Public Library Technology Survey

Summary Report

2020 report available from: https://www.ala.org/pla/data/plasurveys
2023 Technology Survey

- Open through December 16th
- All U.S. public libraries (administrative entities) are invited to participate via librarybenchmark.org
NATIONAL PERSPECTIVE

Larra Clark
Almost one-third of public libraries offered **internet hotspots** for checkout in 2020.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Technology Lending</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>E-Readers</td>
<td>19.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tablets</td>
<td>15.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laptops</td>
<td>16.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internet hotspots</td>
<td>32.6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
How data aided advocacy & planning

• Pandemic relief and recovery funding
  • Congress
  • Emergency Connectivity Fund

• Federal Communications Commission (FCC) rulemakings

• National Telecommunications & Information Administration (NTIA) advocacy

• Overall, ALA advocacy with policymakers and the media regarding innovation by public libraries to close the digital divide
Why tech data is important for 2024

• Show impact of pandemic investments
• Learning without Limits proposal by FCC Chairwoman Rosenworcel
• Digital Equity Act funding from NTIA
• Overall, ALA advocacy with policymakers and the media regarding innovation by public libraries to close the digital divide
“Library professionals and educators know firsthand of the power and importance of hands-on **experiential learning** for learners of all ages to gain essential skills for college and career... From astronomy backpacks and virtual reality, to makerspaces and digital media labs, libraries help **bridge the access and skills gaps** that exist in our smallest towns to biggest cities. All youth should have access to these tools, regardless of what ZIP code they live in.”

- PLA President Sonia Alcántara-Antoine

STATE PERSPECTIVE
Julie Walker
Bandwidth

In 2020, less than half of public libraries (43.7%) had increased their bandwidth in the prior 2 years. Factors affecting libraries’ ability to increase broadband connectivity:

- Faster speed not available: 34.6%
- Cost: 34.0%
- Locked into current contract: 29.9%
- Other decision-makers: 29.5%
- Lack of technical knowledge: 15.3%
How data has aided advocacy & planning

• Benchmarking Georgia libraries (rural/town, suburban, and city) with national data

• Input to state broadband planning conversations

• Inform state library planning and professional development
Why tech data is important for 2024

• Show progress (or continued deficits) over time for libraries in Georgia relative to the nation

• Inform state leaders and funders where strategic investments are needed for libraries and our communities
LOCAL PERSPECTIVE

David Lee King
Over 88% of all public libraries offered some form of digital literacy programming or training in 2020.

- Coding & maker technology: 39.1%
- Computer hardware/software: 84.4%
- Internet use: 85.6%
- Web development & content: 52.2%
- Other: 44.3%
How data has aided advocacy & planning

• Benchmarking Topeka-Shawnee County Public Library with national data

• Makerspaces, hotspots, & strategic plans!
Why tech data is important for 2024

• Updating local stakeholders the key role public libraries play in addressing digital equity

• Staying up-to-date
Why participate?

• Library leaders need **up-to-date and accurate information** for planning and decision-making

• Contribute to **powerful and actionable results** that will inform elected officials, the media, and other stakeholders about the valuable services libraries provide

• Help the field understand **current and emerging trends**, and what has changed since 2020
COMPLETING THE SURVEY

Katina Jones
2023 Technology Survey

• Survey is **open through December 16**

• Find it on the “Surveys” page in your library’s Benchmark account at [librarybenchmark.org](http://librarybenchmark.org)

• Need help? Email [plabenchmark@ala.org](mailto:plabenchmark@ala.org)

Complete the survey and your library is entered in a drawing to **win a free group registration for a PLA webinar**! We’ll select 1 winning library per locale type (city, suburban, town, and rural).
2023 PLA Technology Survey

Deadline: 12/17/2023 00:00:00

Glossary - https://librarybenchmark.org/Resources/Download/174
Worksheet - https://librarybenchmark.org/Resources/Download/173

SURVEY INSTRUCTIONS: The questions in this survey ask that you respond at the library administrative entity level. This is the same level at which you report annual statistics to your state library agency. Many questions ask if a service is provided in “at least one location.” A location refers to your single main library or any of your library branches that are usually open to the public and provide services to the community (e.g., lends books, offers public access to the Internet and computers, etc.). Unless otherwise stated, your responses should reflect the current situation within your library at the point in time when you are completing this survey. Additional questions? Contact plabenchmark@ala.org.

Library Information:
(If any data is missing/inaccurate this can be updated in Manage Library)

Public Access Technology

Does your library offer the following technologies for on-site use by patrons in any location?

Onsite Color printer(s)

☐ Yes (at least 1 location)
☐ No
2023 Technology Survey

Main sections:

• Public Access Technology
• Digital Literacy and Training
• Infrastructure
• Staff Support and Budget for Technology
Public Access Technology

• On-site technologies

• Off-site (circulating) technologies

• Technology services and online resources
Digital Literacy and Training

- Digital literacy training topics
- Online programs and services
- Digital Navigators
- Digital equity planning
- New or emerging technologies and challenges
Infrastructure

• Wired and Wi-Fi connection speeds
• Factors affecting connectivity
• Recent technology additions, replacements, and upgrades
Internet speeds

Survey asks about:

- Contracted speeds
- Typical speeds (Wired and Wi-Fi)
Staff Support & Budget for Technology

• IT support staff
• Staff dedicated to technology-related activities
• Technology training for library staff
• Factors influencing digital content subscriptions
• How the library pays for technology needs
• E-rate
2023 Technology Survey

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Benchmark 101

FREE webinar on the additional features and benefits of Benchmark

Monday, November 13 at 1 PM Central Time
https://www.ala.org/pla/education/onlinelearning/webinars/benchmark101

Survey participants receive **10% off** Benchmark subscriptions!
THANK YOU!

Questions? Email plabenchmark@ala.org