

To Better Serve and Support Public Libraries

GPO's Analysis and Findings on Public Libraries Leaving the Federal Depository Library Program Between 2007 and 2015

DRAFT REPORT

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October 17, 2016

DLC Recommendation #2 – To Better Serve and Support Public Libraries – Spring 2015

Council recommends that GPO and Council work together to do the following:

- If possible, attempt to identify the reasons why these 47 public library depositories relinquished status.
- Survey or poll the library directors and depository staff of remaining public library depositories to identify what they perceive to be the most important challenges they face as depository libraries.
- Survey or poll the library directors and depository staff of remaining public library depositories to identify both the positive advantages they achieve by being depositories and what additional enhancements or benefits would help them to provide Government information service to their patrons.
- Compile this data into a report.
- Based on the report, attempt to identify possible changes to current FDLP policies and procedures, as well as any potential enhancements or benefits, that would encourage existing public library depositories to remain in the program, and that would provide an incentive for public libraries, not already in the FDLP, to apply for depository designation in Congressional districts that have vacancies.

Introduction

- Between 2007 and 2015, 112 libraries relinquished status in the FDLP.
- Of these, 48 were public libraries, or 43% of the total program drops.
- In the FDLP, the public library category is composed of city/county, municipal, city/county law, county/parish, multijurisdictional, school, and other libraries.
- 2009 Biennial Survey and Needs Assessment stated “public libraries often face challenges on a different scale from libraries serving a more targeted audience.”
- This report will attempt to more closely define those challenges, as they relate to the FDLP, in public libraries.



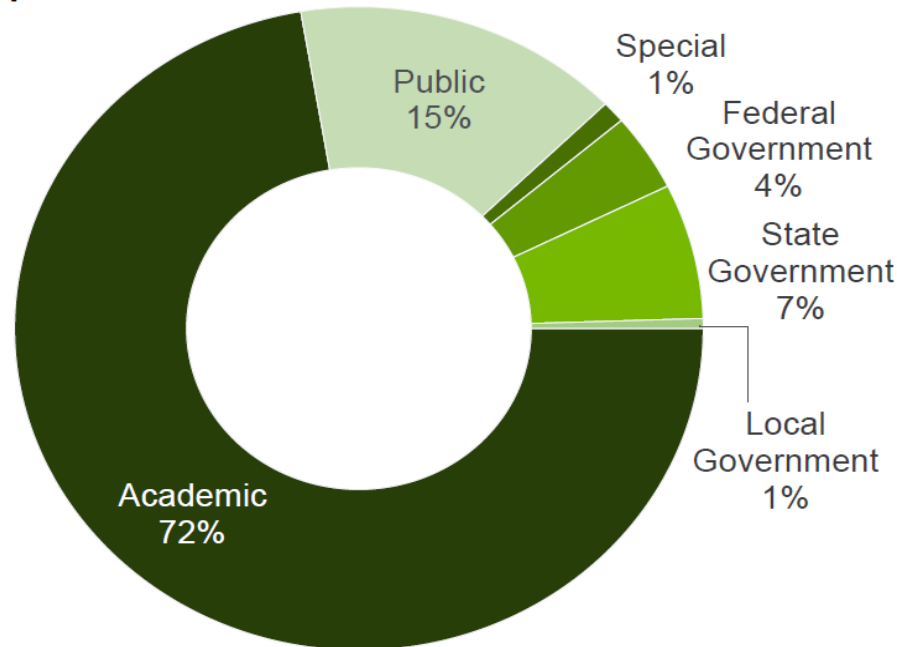
- The Public Library Report prepared by LSCM more closely examines:
 - The reasons public libraries left the FDLP as stated in their drop letters
 - Services and the common operational goals of the remaining public libraries
 - Current LSCM programs and initiatives that may serve as incentives for public libraries to stay in the FDLP
 - Proposed new programs that can assist public libraries, as well as other libraries within the FDLP

Data and Methodology

- Examination of industry trends in public libraries
- Articles and research papers from experts in the industry
- Internal LSCM data and materials including:
 - Analysis of official drop letters from 48 public libraries
 - 2009 and 2015 Biennial Survey and Needs Assessment
 - Documents and official correspondence and other related subject matter intelligence
 - Anecdotal information gleaned from interactions with public libraries and LSCM staff, including library visits and conference participation

The Federal Depository Library Program currently supports a network of 1,148 libraries composed of the following:

Library Types

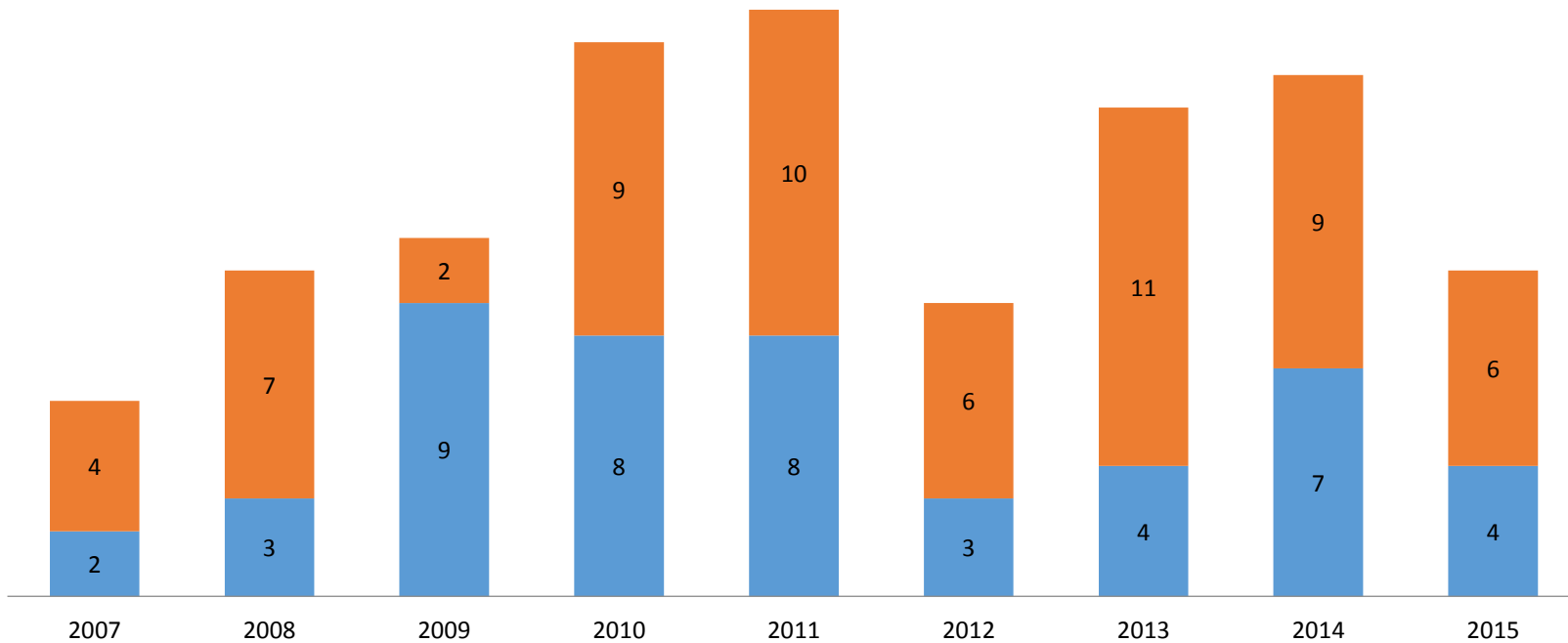


Source: Q1. Which of the following best describes your library type?
Base: 1,139

Note: Please use caution interpreting results for Special and Local Government libraries due to low base sizes.

Library Drops by Calendar Year

Public Library Drops All Other Library Type Drops



The Perfect Storm

During this time period, the following events took place:

1. The Great Recession including banking failures, sub-prime mortgage crisis, big industry failures including automotive
2. Sequestration and huge Federal Government funding cuts
3. State and local government funding cuts that resulted in permanent cuts in staffing and other resources



Digital Supplement, Summer 2012 article cited an important point on public library closures from a COSLA survey:

The number of libraries that had closed as a result of funding cuts.

- Fewer states (12 compared to 17 last year) reported public library closures in their states within the past 12 months.
- Most states report that fewer than five public library outlets have closed, although New Jersey reports closures of between 10 and 15 outlets, and Michigan reports more than 20 closed outlets.
- The majority of states (82%) report that public library hours have been cut in the past 12 months due to funding cuts, an increase of 4 percent from the previous year.

The State of Public Libraries

- In the “*Libraries Connect Communities: Public Library Funding & Technology Access Study 2011-2012*” report, the following challenges were noted as obstacles in providing public access technology services and resources at public libraries:
 - **Sufficiency**
 - **Staff**
 - **Reduced hours**
 - **Costs**
 - **Budgets**

In a February 4, 2015 article in Library Journal, “*Paying for People, Budgets and Funding*”, these spending highlights were noted:

- Fastest-growing spending priorities are technology and electronic materials
- If the library received extra funding top response was to add or restore staff
- Hours of operation have increased

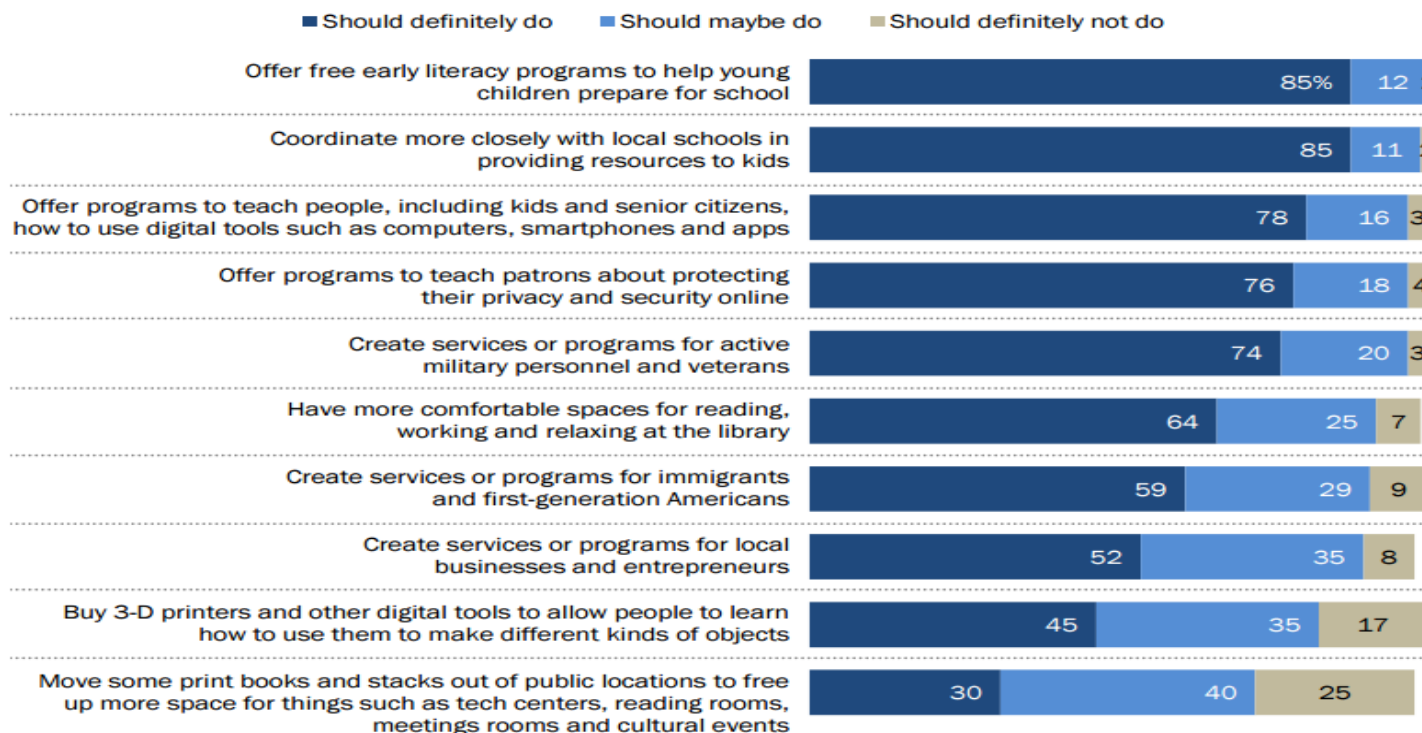
Sources of funding included:

- On a Federal level, the Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) funding was \$180.9 million, generally steady over previous year's funding.
- Public referenda primarily to fund operating budgets
 - In California's June 2014 elections, six library parcel tax measures passed for \$19.1 million in revenue.
- Appropriated money from town and county budgets increased overall by 2%. State funding brought a 3.6% increase.
- Rural and small-town libraries saw the most decreases.

A Focus on Service

Public Wants Libraries to Advance Education, Improve Digital Literacy and Serve Key Groups

% of those ages 16+ who say that libraries should definitely, maybe or definitely not do these things



Source: Pew Research Center survey March 17-April 12, 2015. N=2,004 Americans ages 16 and older



2014 Digital Inclusion Survey focused on the internet and public libraries. Key findings include:

- Virtually all libraries (98%) offer free public Wi-Fi access as compared to only 21% offering public internet in 1994.
- Close to 90% of libraries offer basic digital literacy training and a significant majority support training related to new technology devices (62%), safe online practices (57%), and social media use (56%).
- 76% percent of libraries assist patrons in using online Government programs and services.
- The vast majority of libraries provide programs that support people in applying for jobs (73%), accessing and using online job opportunity resources (68%), and using online business information resources (48%).
- More than 90% of public libraries offer eBooks, online homework assistance (95%), and online language learning (56%).

Services and Content Management Activities – by Library Type

	Total	Academic	Federal Gov't	State Gov't	Local Gov't	Public	Special
<i>Base</i>	1,139	823	44	78	6	175	13
Reference desk/Help desk (physical) - quick answers	98%	98%	96%	97%	83%	99%	100%
Providing electronic access to documents	96%	98%	98%	94%	67%	91%	100%
Managing physical library and print collections	95%	96%	100%	94%	100%	93%	85%
Providing training on searching and effective use of info	89%	92%	86%	85%	67%	79%	69%
Document delivery/ordering services	80%	86%	89%	77%	17%	54%	39%
Virtual reference assistance	79%	82%	43%	58%	83%	81%	69%
Content evaluation and/or purchasing	79%	83%	84%	72%	67%	64%	54%
Managing digital collections	78%	81%	77%	67%	50%	67%	92%
Collaborative workspace, in the library	78%	85%	66%	51%	50%	59%	39%
Workshops conducted at the library	68%	71%	61%	50%	67%	67%	39%
Conducting secondary research	67%	69%	80%	71%	33%	58%	54%
Conducting primary research	61%	62%	71%	71%	33%	47%	77%

Source: Q5. Please indicate which of the following services and content management activities your library provides to your patrons.

Public Library Tools, Methods, Applications

Top five commonly used among public libraries:

- Website postings
- Social networking
- Scan on demand (paper)
- Email alerts
- Mobile devices



2015 Biennial Survey noted these trends in public libraries:

Key subject categories of academic and public libraries:

- Health and safety
- Education
- People and culture
- Computers and internet

Tools for managing or delivering information:

- Website postings (84%)
- Social networking tools (79%)
- Email alerts (61%).
- Scanning on demand and use of fax machines (54%)
- Mobile Devices (47%)

The FDLP and Public Libraries

Point 1: Identify the reasons why public library depositories relinquished status

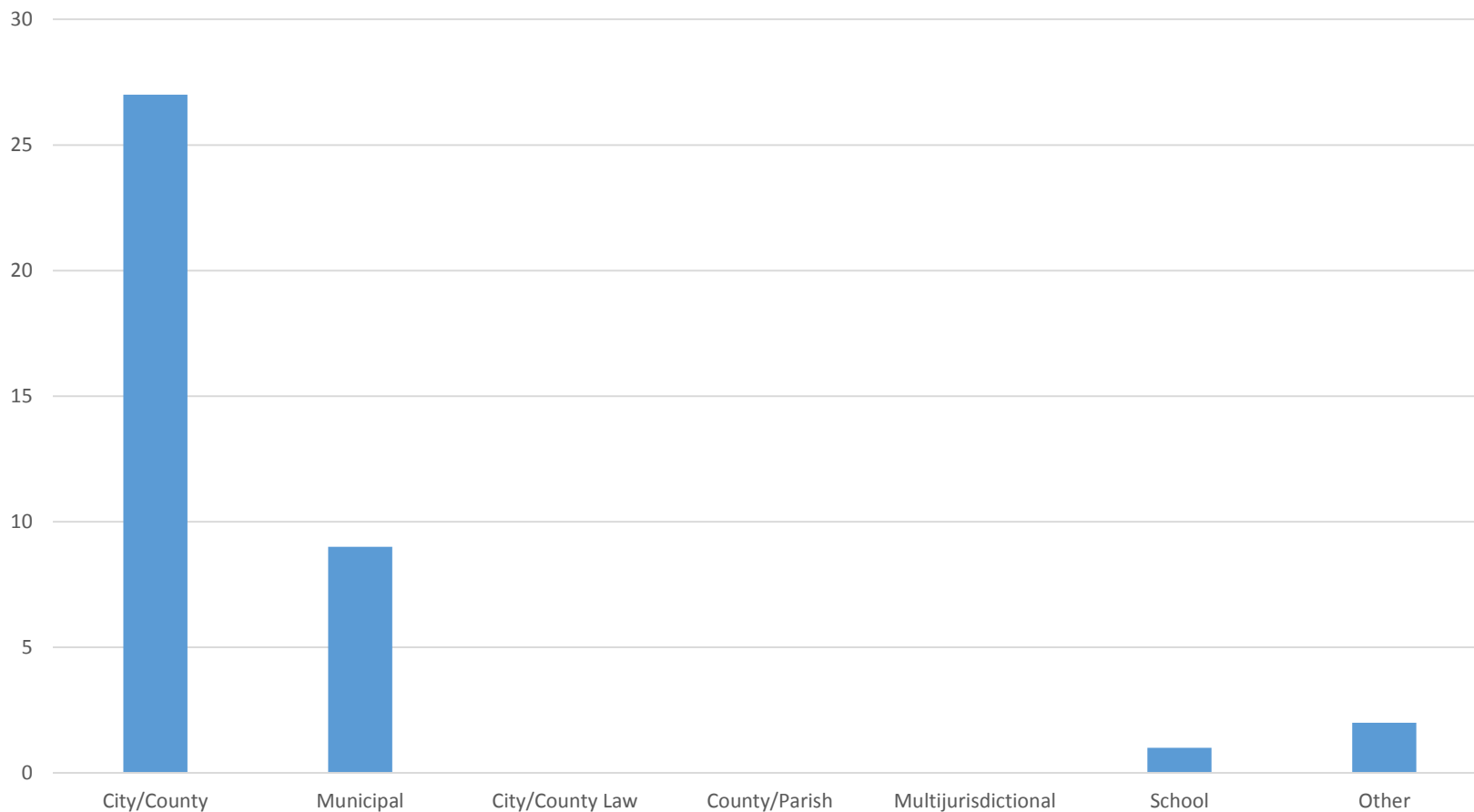


Reasons for leaving the FDLP

Top reasons included in drop letters:

- 52% cited the availability of online resource access as the number one reason
- 46% attributed reduced budgets or a demand to reduce budgets
- 27% staff shortages, not through staff cuts or losses but due to a reallocation of time to non-FDLP tasks
- 25% availability of nearby depositories
- 23% cited low use by patrons
- 21% cited space reallocation
- 17% noted a change in library direction/mission/role/priorities/services
- 17% branch consolidations
- Other reasons included space shortage, staff specialist lost and not replaced, change in patron needs

Libraries by sub-type, 2009-2015



■ Inactive Libraries sub-types 2009-2015

Important additional points on dropped libraries during the 2007-2015 time period

- 12 public libraries decided to stay in the program after their initial decision to leave the program
 - Reasons for reversal included
 - ◆ change in director
 - ◆ additional funding
 - ◆ switching to all digital
 - ◆ consultation with Outreach and Support Librarians on creating operating efficiencies
 - ◆ overcoming operational problems
 - ◆ enhanced Program applications after instructional direction from LSCM



Since October 2015, two libraries joined the FDLP while 12 relinquished status, four are public libraries:

- Columbus Metropolitan Library, Main library.
 - Reason: Customer usage, collecting scope, public accessibility, staff efficiency
 - Relinquished status February 2016
- Brooklyn Public Library, Central Library
 - Reason: Building being sold
 - Relinquished status May 2016
- Henderson District Public Libraries, Green Valley Library
 - Reason: Space and staff
 - Relinquished status May 2016
- Natrona Public, Casper, Wyoming
 - Reason: Collection rarely used, need the space, removing shelving where documents are housed
 - Relinquished status August 2016

The FDLP and Public Libraries

Point 2: Survey or poll current FDLP public library directors/depository staff on important challenges they face as depository libraries

The 2015 Biennial Survey, Question 4, asked

In general, to what extent do you consider the following factors to be problems or challenges to providing information and services?

175 public libraries gave the following responses

Problems and Challenges – by Library Type

% Major/Minor Problem	Total	Academic	Federal Gov't	State Gov't	Local Gov't	Public	Special
<i>Base</i>	1,139	823	44	78	6	175	13
Budget constraints	72%	72%	86%	78%	67%	67%	77%
Staff reduction/shortage	71%	71%	73%	67%	83%	71%	62%
Increased workload	66%	64%	71%	62%	83%	72%	77%
Marketing/promoting services-awareness	60%	58%	46%	67%	83%	69%	54%
Physical space and facilities issues	59%	59%	59%	55%	83%	64%	54%
Permanent public access to and stability of digital content	52%	51%	61%	62%	67%	50%	69%
Keeping up with technology	50%	44%	68%	56%	33%	69%	69%
Cost containment	48%	48%	73%	51%	67%	40%	46%
User training	48%	45%	46%	46%	67%	62%	62%
Time management	46%	44%	52%	41%	50%	54%	54%
Transition of print to electronic format	40%	36%	64%	44%	50%	55%	23%
Lack of training on how to search and use resources	39%	35%	32%	41%	50%	60%	39%
Lack of visualization or analytic tools	28%	27%	32%	32%	17%	29%	46%
Management/administration support	28%	27%	36%	24%	67%	29%	31%
Global access/serving more users	24%	22%	27%	32%	50%	27%	31%

Source: Q4. In general, to what extent do you consider the following factors to be problems or challenges to providing information and services?

The FDLP and Public Libraries

Point 3: Survey or poll the library directors and depository staff of remaining public library depositories to identify both the positive advantages they achieve by being depositories and what additional enhancements or benefits would help them to provide government information service to their patrons

Making It Happen Together: Demonstrating Results

October 17-19, 2016

The 2015 Biennial Survey asked “What are the most important services provided by the FDLP to your library?”

Most Important Services – by Library Type

	Total	Academic	Federal Gov't	State Gov't	Local Gov't	Public	Special
<i>Base</i>	1,139	823	44	78	6	175	13
Access to depository materials	78%	78%	75%	74%	83%	77%	92%
Persistent identifier (PURLs) capability in cataloging records to full text	57%	62%	41%	54%	-	42%	23%
User access tools	56%	58%	59%	58%	67%	47%	31%
FDLP.gov	54%	52%	34%	63%	17%	65%	69%
Cataloging to national standards	35%	39%	39%	26%	67%	20%	23%
Free access to Government fee-based databases	35%	36%	36%	27%	17%	35%	31%
Webinars/webcasts	33%	32%	23%	31%	33%	40%	39%
Collection development and management tools	31%	32%	25%	30%	17%	29%	15%
Authentication publications on GPO's FDSys	18%	18%	23%	28%	-	10%	8%
askGPO	16%	15%	5%	26%	17%	19%	15%
Training	15%	14%	9%	17%	-	21%	23%
Conferences	11%	12%	9%	5%	-	9%	8%
Legal Requirements & Program Regulations (LRPR)	10%	10%	9%	6%	-	10%	8%
Marketing/promotional materials	10%	9%	7%	10%	-	17%	23%
Other	1%	1%	2%	1%	33%	1%	-

Source: Q9. What are the most important services provided by the FDLP to your library?



“Participation in the depository library system connects our institution to the world outside our community. Both our staff and our users benefit from this connection to the ideas that come to us from statewide and national sources.” Former Director, Frederick J. Kirby, of the Benton Harbor Public Library.



Erin Guss, formerly at the St. Louis Public Library, shared these usage statistics at the DLC 2016 Spring Virtual Conference:

- “2015 averaged 23 requests/month for holds on SuDoc items”
- “Approximately 70% of reference questions in Business, Government, Law Department relate in some way to Government information”
- Guss goes on to point out “the dichotomy: Government documents are one unique aspect of the research and collections of SLPL and Government documents infiltrate all departments.”

Least Important Services – by Library Type

	Total	Academic	Federal Gov't	State Gov't	Local Gov't	Public	Special
<i>Base</i>	1,139	823	44	78	6	175	13
Marketing/promotional materials	39%	42%	50%	39%	17%	23%	23%
Conferences	38%	35%	25%	45%	50%	49%	46%
Authentication publications on GPO's FDsys	27%	25%	14%	22%	33%	38%	62%
Legal Requirements & Program Regulations (LRPR)	21%	19%	21%	22%	33%	25%	31%
askGPO	18%	19%	23%	17%	-	13%	39%
Collection development and management tools	11%	10%	18%	13%	17%	12%	15%
Webinars/webcasts	11%	11%	11%	5%	-	11%	15%
Cataloging to national standards	10%	8%	11%	14%	-	15%	31%
Free access to Government fee-based databases	10%	10%	7%	9%	-	12%	8%
Training	9%	10%	5%	4%	17%	5%	23%
Persistent identifier (PURLs) capability in cataloging records to full text	5%	4%	9%	6%	50%	5%	8%
FDLP.gov	2%	2%	9%	3%	17%	-	8%
User access tools	2%	2%	-	1%	-	3%	23%
Access to depository materials	1%	2%	-	-	-	1%	-
Other	8%	9%	7%	8%	-	5%	-

Source: Q9a. Please indicate the least important services provided by the FDLP to your library?

The 2015 Biennial Survey went on to ask what services and/or resources do you need from FDLP that are currently not being provided? Public libraries responded:

- More digitized historical collections of Government publications (53%), including historical coverage of titles in FDsys (38%) and item selection flexibility based on subject (37%)
- Item selection flexibility based on geography (37%) and on recommendations for size of library (32%)
- 34% of the public libraries would like to see Government publications classified using the Dewey Decimal System.

As part of the 2015 Biennial Survey, libraries were asked about their level of satisfaction with existing FDLP services and tools. A number of resources ranked high in satisfaction:

- FDLP.gov (86%)
- FDsys (76%)
- CGP (75%)
- Training and webinars (72%)
- Web tools for collection development and maintenance (71%)
- Free access to Government fee-based databases (70%)

Recommendations and Actions for Public Libraries within the FDLDP

Point 4. Compile this data into a report

- This draft report addresses the research and compilation of data requested in Point 4.
- The draft report is currently available on FDLDP.gov. Please send comments to skmiller@gpo.gov no later than close of business on November 18, 2016.
- This report is expected to be finalized by January 2017.



Recommendations and Actions for Public Libraries within the FDLP

Point 5. Based on the report, attempt to identify possible changes to current FDLP policies and procedures, as well as any potential enhancements or benefits, that would encourage existing public library depositories to remain in the Program, and that would provide an incentive for public libraries, not already in the FDLP, to apply for depository designation in Congressional districts that have vacancies.

LSCM actions/next steps

- Committing to investigating **key initiatives** addressing specific needs and common issues shared among library groups
- A critical component to the development of these initiatives is utilizing a **user-centric/service-centric** approach instead of a collection-centric operation.
- Number one challenge for LSCM is looking at products and services from **outside-in**
- Engaging the libraries
- Not only focus on new services and tools, but begin to review existing services and tools from the outside-in
- The challenge of Point 5 from Council is to develop services and user-centric strategies that incorporate the unique issues facing public libraries

The top five problems/challenges cited in the 2009 and 2015 Biennial Survey and Needs Assessment were:

2009 Problems/Challenges	2015 Problems/Challenges
Budget Constraints	Increased workload
Staffing reduction/shortage	Staff reduction/shortage
Increased workload	Marketing/promoting services awareness
Cost Containment	Budget constraints
Physical Space	Keeping up with technology



Over the next fiscal year, LSCM will **conduct an analysis on several of the existing services and tools** applying user-centric model to determine the value of the services and tools for all libraries in the FDLP. The ultimate goal is to address the workload issues through streamlining FDLP processes.

Continuing in the user-centric model the **FDLP Work Practice Study** worked directly with input from FDLs; the objective of this project is to provide a more holistic system of cataloging and indexing services.

Additional LSCM actions planned or in stages of implementation

1. Improvements to the Library Services Systems (LSS)

Utilizing work-practice approach, analyze the current technical systems and LSCM information tools being used by the FDLs in managing Government documents

- FDLP.gov
- Catalog of U.S. Government Publications (CGP)
- Depository Selection Information Management System (DSIMS)

2. Customer Relationship Management tool

Analyze and research replacement models for LSCM's current customer relationship management (CRM) tool, askGPO

- Develop a platform that increases outreach, productivity, and responsiveness, that can more easily assist in the operational activities of the FDLs
- Ultimately, the new CRM will increase the interaction between LSCM and FDLs and provide quicker response time

3. Target and solicit new public libraries into FDLP

Develop a program for expanding the number of public libraries in the FDLP.

- Outreach and Support unit has discovered
 - 314 congressional vacancies
 - 39 senatorial vacancies

Plan of action: LSCM Outreach and Support unit staff is formulating a plan to reach out to potential libraries to gauge interest in joining the FDLP, with an eye toward recruiting libraries in key states and regions lacking public depository libraries.

A planned upcoming trip to Texas libraries in late 2016 will be used as a pilot for library recruitment.



4. **Build stronger partnerships and enhance support with all libraries within the FDLP**

- LSCM is again visiting libraries in the FDLP
- Since the 'On the Go' initiative began, LSCM staff have visited approximately 250. Of these visits, 23 were to public libraries
- Dedicated outreach
 - ◆ Some of the operational issues that LSCM has demonstrated include:
 - Helping libraries convert their selection profile to more digital or online resources
 - Providing shortcuts to streamline the creation of weeding lists
 - Helping libraries sync their reference operation (collection development) with their cataloging operation
 - Educating library staff on the nature of digital depository collections and how this can be achieved in the library.

5. Engage with Public Library Community

- Attended the Public Library Association Annual Conference in April 2016 in Denver
- Outreach to other organizations, nationally, statewide and locally that include public libraries and address the interests of public libraries

6. Briefing and informational materials highlighting the values and benefits of the FDLP

This initiative will include the development of briefing materials, handouts, informational guides, and similar products to assist librarians in key areas.

- Benefits of participation in the Federal Depository Library Program
- Quick Guides – materials focusing on FDLP services that are designed for library staff wearing multiple hats
- All Electronic or mostly electronic depository libraries – materials designed to highlight the benefits of being an ‘all electronic’ or mostly electronic library, as well as assistance in delivering services for Government information in electronic format.



7. FDLP Academy training specifically for libraries in cataloging and managing collections - The 2015 Biennial Survey and Needs Assessment noted that the use of webinars/webcasts increased from 3% in 2009 to 33% in 2015. Some of the current offerings include:

- Your Public Library: First Stop for Government Information
- Four Starting Points for Finding Government Information
- Government Documents for the Masses: Collection Development for Public Libraries
- Promoting the Depository Collection While Supporting Research
- Creating Online Federal Depository Collections: Case Studies
- Planning your Federal Depository Celebration

8. Develop subject guides on general topics for use in public libraries on Government documents –

- Test program working with targeted libraries
 - Identify top 10 patron collection requests
 - Resources would be organized by subject or topic
 - Bibliographic information would be electronic and tangible titles and information discovered by LSCM staff
 - Guides would be available electronically
 - Highlight current GovDocs being published
 - Assist libraries that do not have staff with collection development work

9. Metadata and Classification Assistance –

LSCM is also investigating the feasibility of assigning Dewey numbers to all documents

- Step 1: including previously assigned Dewey numbers from cataloging into the CGP
- LSCM is investigating training for staff in Dewey and LC classification to expand ability to assign these numbers to materials in the FDLP and Cataloging & Indexing Program

10. Further Analysis

- LSCM will continue to further analyze both internal and external data sources as well as incorporate feedback from the DLC and FDLP community into the final version of this report.
- LSCM intends to continue to monitor trends in the public library community and work with those that are in the FDLP.



Making It Happen Together: Demonstrating Results

#GPODLC16

October 17-19, 2016





Is there a service or resource you need from GPO?



Are there any challenges at your library which have not been addressed today?



Public Library Depositories: Preliminary Results of the GPO's Study

Presenters:

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-

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