Depository Library Needs Assessment/Benchmark: Federal Libraries Segment Report

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Library Services and Content Management

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Background

- The Federal Depository Library Program, FDLP, consists of a diverse grouping of almost 1,300 institutions encompassing academic, federal, state, local, public, and special libraries. Each federal depository library must comply with legal responsibilities to "make government publications available for the free use of the general public." Individual libraries may determine how to meet this requirement.

- Through its Public Access Assessment (PAA) program, the GPO bears the responsibility of ensuring that the resources it distributes to Federal depository libraries are made accessible to the general public. Assessments are categorized (access, collections, service, and cooperative efforts), and touch almost every aspect of library operations and service including access to depository resources through bibliographic, physical building, tangible collection, Internet, and onsite computer access. The GPO's PAA program also has an educational and customer relations aspect, with the GPO looking to develop the library's knowledge-base about FDLP requirements and best practices, as well as tools and services to enable libraries to successfully serve as federal depository libraries. r

- Over the past year, Outsell has worked closely with the GPO to better understand that led to the identification of discrete segments within FDLP. With the revised FDLP library types segmentation completed, Outsell designed a needs assessment and benchmark instrument to survey the FDLP libraries as input to its client relations program.

- This report presents the findings from that survey, both on an overall basis and with detailed analysis by type of library.

Methodology

- **Data Collection**. Outsell designed, programmed, and fielded the needs assessment and benchmark study instrument with input from GPO. Specifically, Outsell:
  - Programmed the questionnaire into a secure web-based server and performed quality testing of the survey program;
  - Provided a draft invitation which FDLP adapted and used to invite FDLP member library personnel to the survey site.
  - Collected responses into a database and monitored response, providing updates to FDLP on a regular basis during fielding.

- **Data Processing & Tabulation**. Once data collection was completed, Outsell processed the survey data and tabulated the responses. Data processing included cleaning and quality-checking the data, coding up to three open-ended questions, and providing a set of data cross-tabulated by up to 20 segments such as library type. Outsell has previously provided a raw data file showing individual responses to the survey, including individual library metrics.

- **Analysis**. Drawing on a deep understanding of academic, government, and special libraries; segmentation analysis; research design; needs assessment and benchmark research methods, Outsell consultants analyzed the survey results to identify key findings and draw implications for FDLP's client relations program.

- **Presentation**. In addition to the written report, Outsell will attend an on-site meeting to present the project and facilitate a discussion with the goal of identifying the group's "center of gravity" on reactions and thoughts about the outcomes and strategy. During this meeting Outsell will debrief and discuss the key findings and recommendations in a combination of facilitated discussion, and brainstorming actions for inclusion in the customer relations plan.

Segment Results: Federal Libraries

- **Needs Assessment**
- **Biennial Survey**

Key Findings

- 38 Federal libraries responded, comprised primarily of agency libraries and then court libraries. Potential number of users (median): 5,500; actual users (median): 2,500.
- Approaching 50% of respondents identified 100-700 users of depository services. Across all respondents, median number of depository services users: 500.
- Respondents identified budget, workload, staffing, space/facilities management and cost-containment as leading (and clearly inter-related) concerns. More than half of respondents also identified Marketing/promoting services and Keeping up with technology as either a Major or Minor Problem. 50% of respondents identified "Other Major Problems" - with no greater information, GPO should probe this issue farther.
- Reference desk, Electronic access to documents, Managing a physical library/collection, Providing training on searching and use, and Content evaluation and/or purchasing were cited by 90+% respondents.
- Almost 35% respondents do not measure library performance with regard to depository services. Those that do primarily use quantitative and qualitative needs assessments.
- ~90% respondents identified access to depository materials as the most important FDLP services. Fewer than half identified any other services as "most important" with Cataloging to National Standards and FDLP Desktop leading the list.

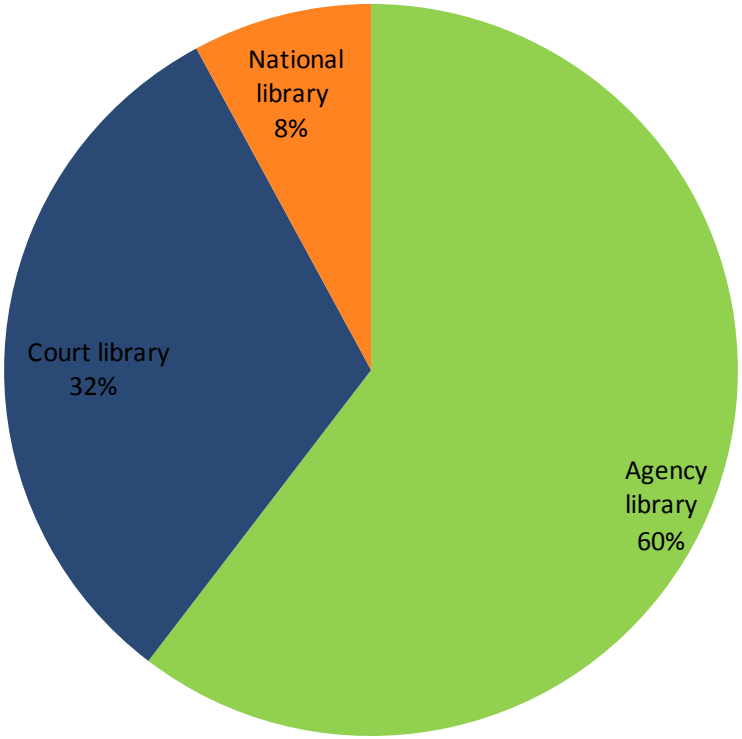
Key Findings cont.

- A digitized collection of FDLP historical materials led responses as the desired service/resource not currently available (66%). More than half of all respondents also identified the addition of online historical coverage of GPO/Fedsys titles as a needed service.
- 90+% respondents cited Knowledgeable library staff, Routine cataloging, and Display of the FDLP emblem as methods for making all formats of depository publications visible to the public.
- Only 24% respondents identified no barriers for access to depository materials. For those who did cite barriers, security guards and limited public access were the greatest factors.
- Respondents expressed the greatest levels of overall satisfaction with Cataloging, FDLP Desktop, and AskGPO with the latter two also receiving the most "Extremely Satisfied" scores.
- 50% respondents identified an interested in receiving digital files on deposit. While ~60% had discussed this interest with their Director, fewer than half felt they had Administrative Support.
- Only 8% respondents are considering whether to remain within FDLP.

Library Type

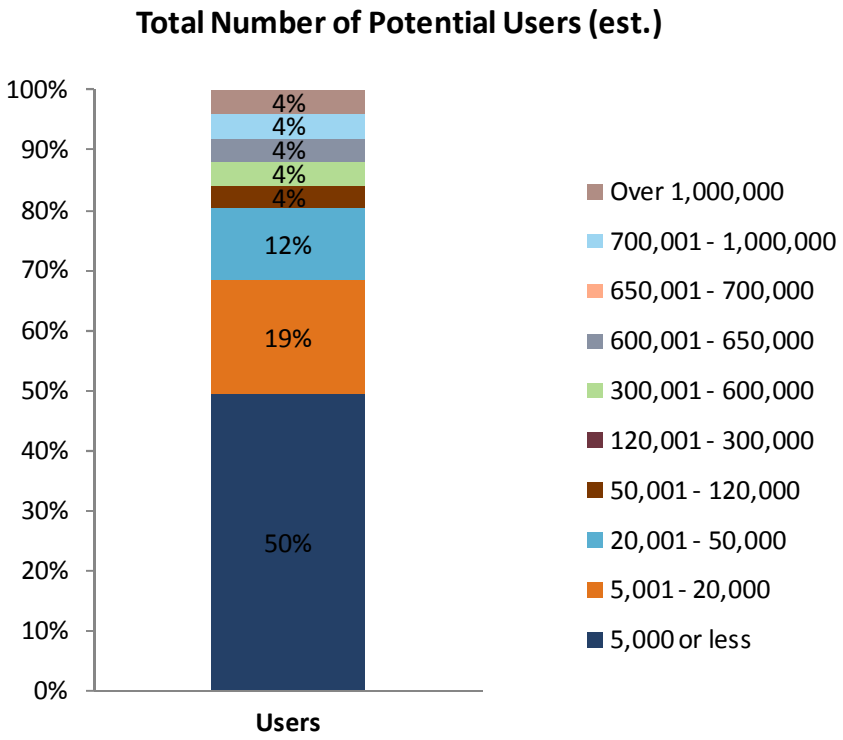
Of the 38 Federal library respondents:

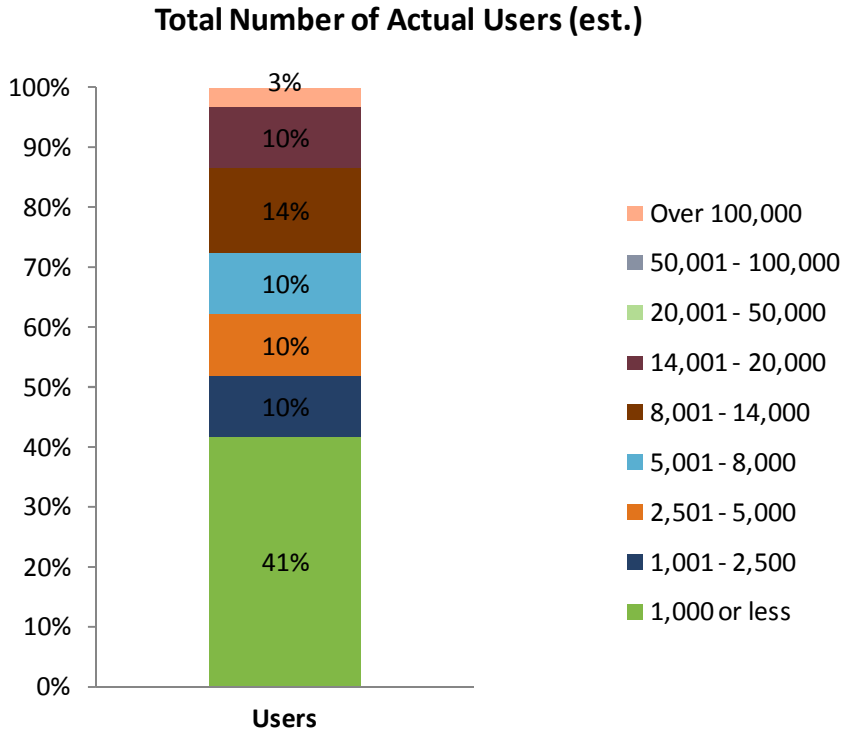
- Agency libraries accounted for the majority (61%)
- Respondents from Court libraries comprised the bulk of the remaining responses (32%)



Source: Q1. Which of the following best describes your library type?

Populations Served by Size: Potential and Actual



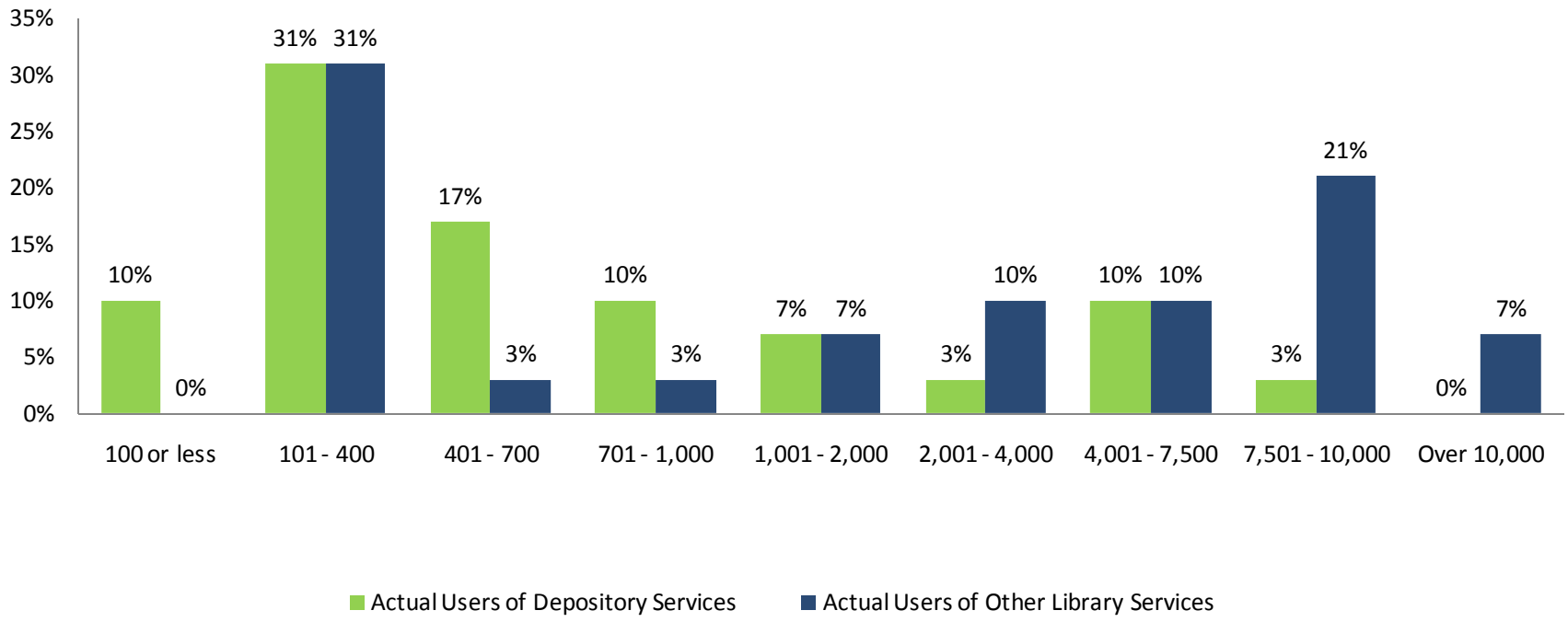


Half of all respondents fit squarely within the lower end of potential and actual user ranges, with 50% federal libraries reporting potential users of 5,000 or less and actual users of 2,500 or less.

Almost all respondents identified actual users of 20,000 or less, with 3% identifying actual users of 100,000 or more.

 Source: Q2. What is your best estimate of the approximate number of potential users (those in your area who would likely benefit from your services) and the approximate number of actual users that your library supports?

Populations Served: Use of Depository or Other Services



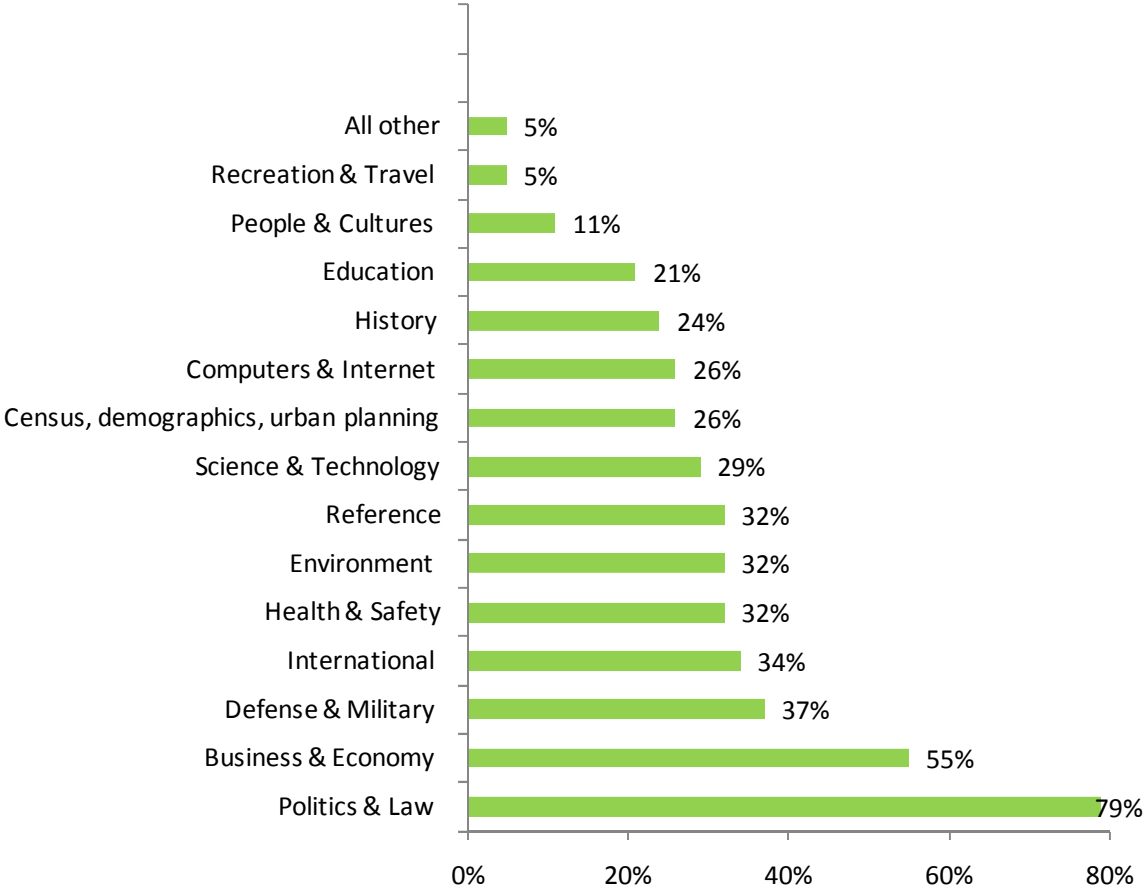
On average, respondents identified 500 users of depository services vs. 2,000 users of other library services.

Q2a. Of those [INSERT # OF ACTUAL USERS IN Q2] actual users, approximately how many of them represent your user base for depository services and how many represent your user base for other library services?

Populations Served: Subject Categories Used by Patrons

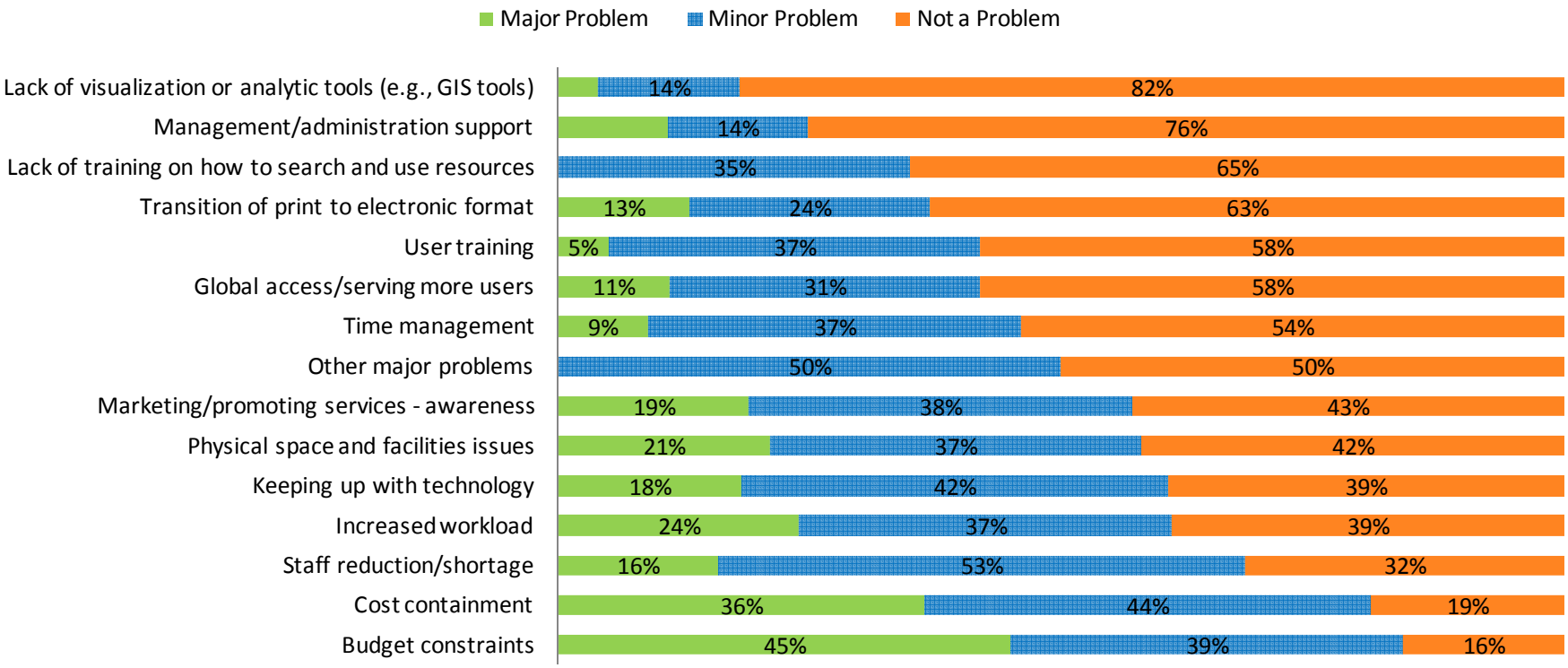
Politics & Law lead the subject categories used most often by library patrons, followed by Business & Economy. Approximately 1/3rd of respondents identified usage of Military &
Defense, International, Health & Safety, Environment and Reference materials.

The following categories were identified as 0% use:
-Agriculture
-Statistics and data
-Laws/legislation
-Literature
-Native American studies
-Forestry
-Social work/sociology
-Library Sciences



Q3. What are the key subject categories that your patrons use most regularly?

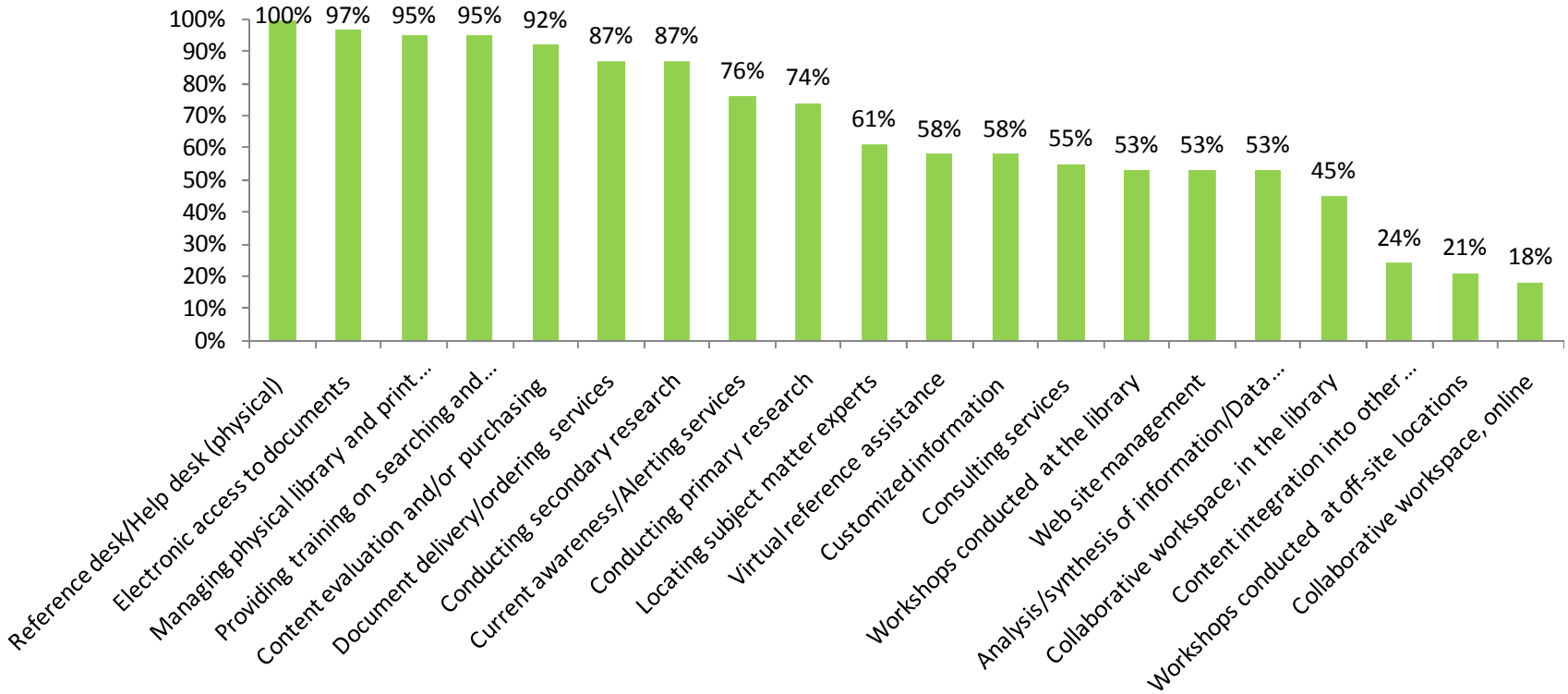
Problems and Challenges



Keeping up with Technology, Physical Space/Facilities, and Marketing/promoting services join "financial" concerns (costs/budgets, staff/workload), as a concern (major plus minor problem) of more than 50% respondents. A substantial 50% cite Other Major Problems – an area clearly worth further exploration.

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

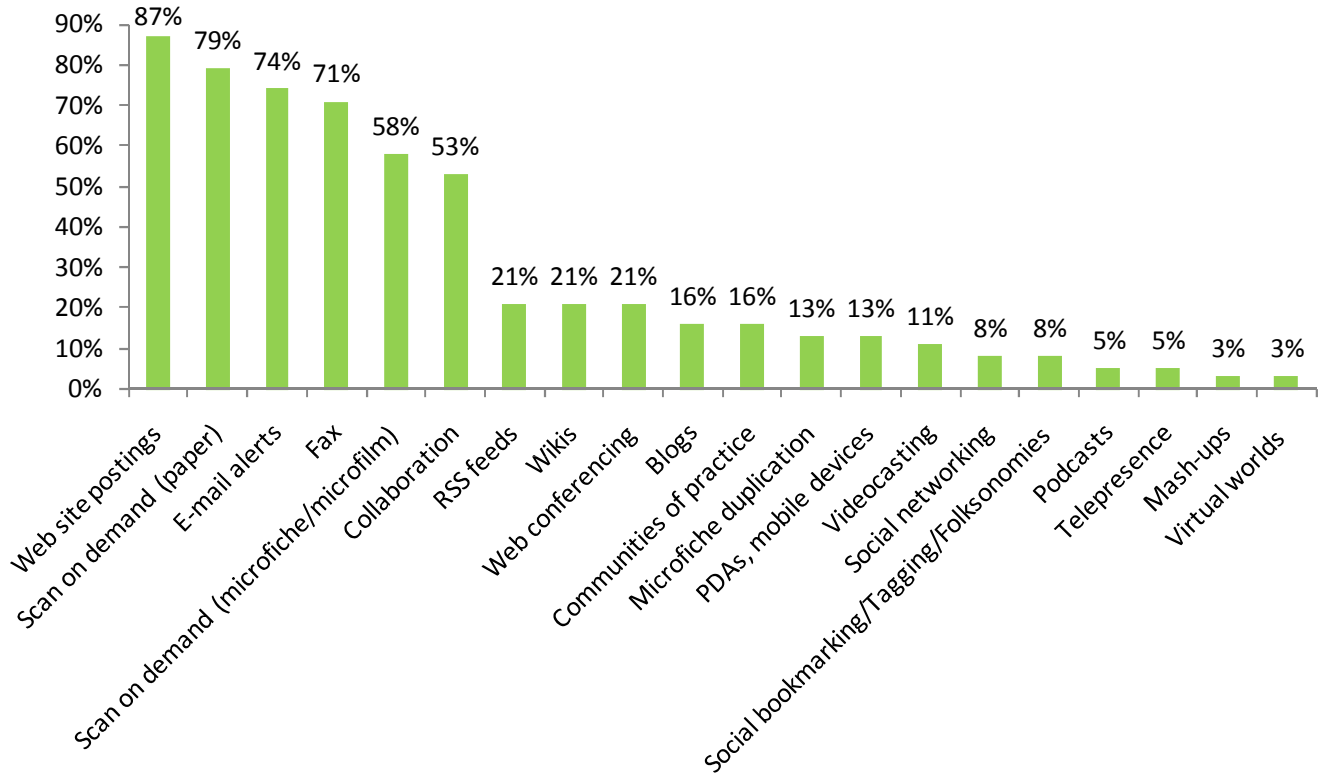
Services and Content Management Activities



Reference desk, Electronic access to documents, Managing a physical library/collection, Providing training on searching and use, and Content evaluation and/or purchasing were cited by 90+% respondents. The majority of activities were utilized by 50% or more of respondents – only Classroom instruction and Orientation/tours were not identified by respondents as current activities.

Q5. Please indicate which of the following services and content management activities that you provide to your patrons.

Tools, Methods, and Applications of Managing and Delivering Information



While Web site postings topped the list of tools, methods, and applications (87%), no other Web-based option was used by more than 1/4th of respondents. Fewer than 10% respondents identified use of Social Networking, Podcasts, Mash-ups or Virtual Worlds.

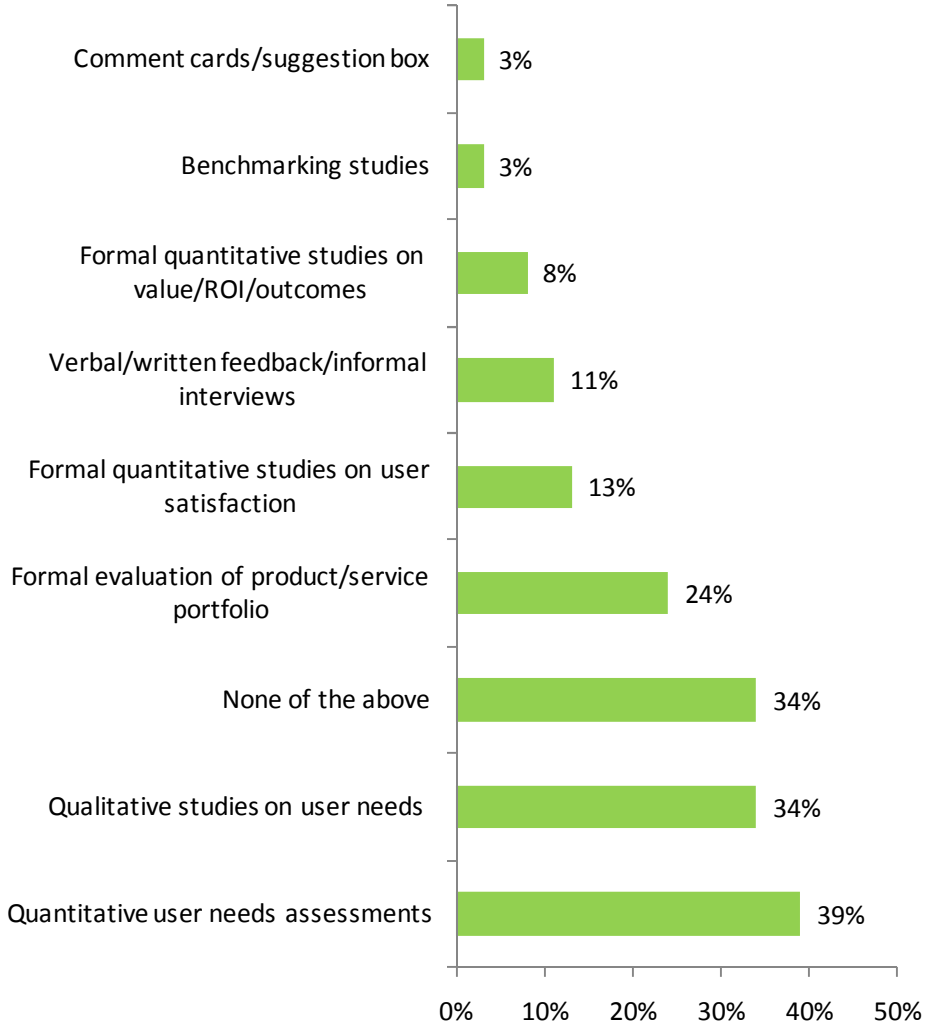
Q6. Which of the following tools, methods, or applications do you incorporate into managing or delivering information?

Measuring Library Performance | Depository Services

User needs assessments topped the list of methods used to measure library performance, with both quantitative and qualitative studies.

Approaching 25% of respondents did cite formal evaluations of products/services, with a smaller set citing formal user satisfaction and/or Value/ROI studies.

Fully a third of all respondents did not use <u>any</u> of the cited options, and no respondent indicated use of LibQual, User/usage statistics, circulation statistics, Number of hits/clicks to websites, counters or trackers.

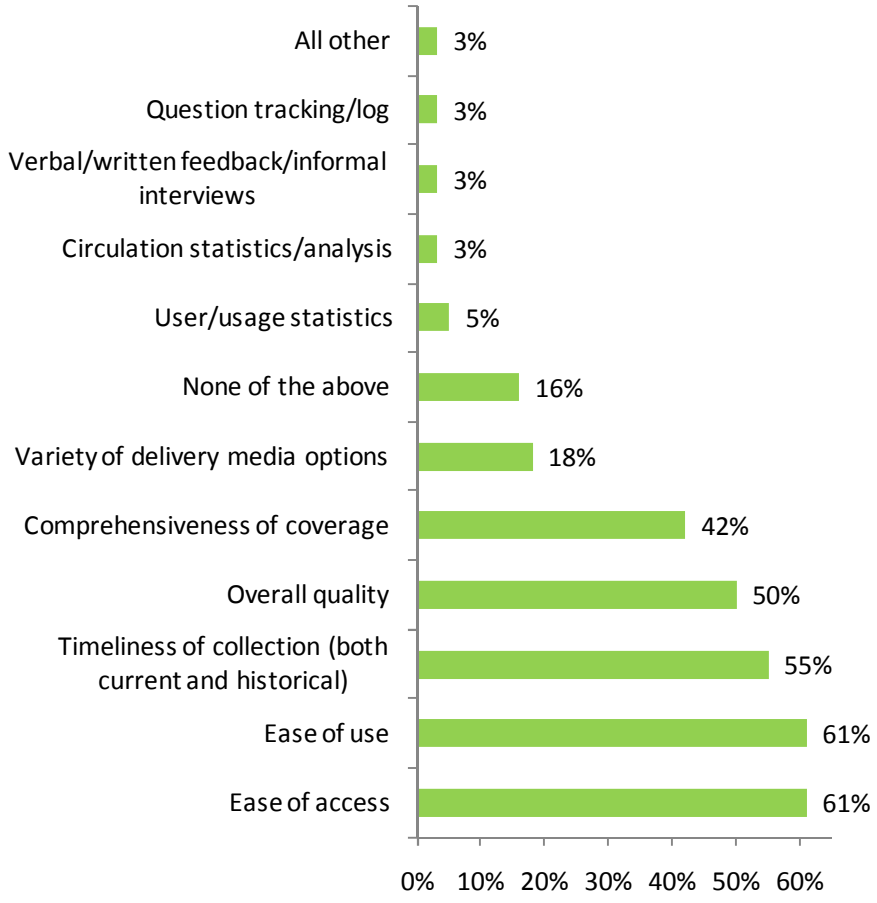


Q7. Which of the following types of studies, if any, do you utilize to measure your library's performance with regard to depository services and usage?

Performance Metrics| Usage of Content Collection

50% or more of respondents reported measuring Overall Quality, Timeliness of collection, Ease of use and Ease of Access.

0% respondents reported measuring:
-Curriculum needs/relevance to academic mission
- Check-out/take off counts
-Library wide assessment / service and collection assessment
- Number of hits/click tracking/web page counters

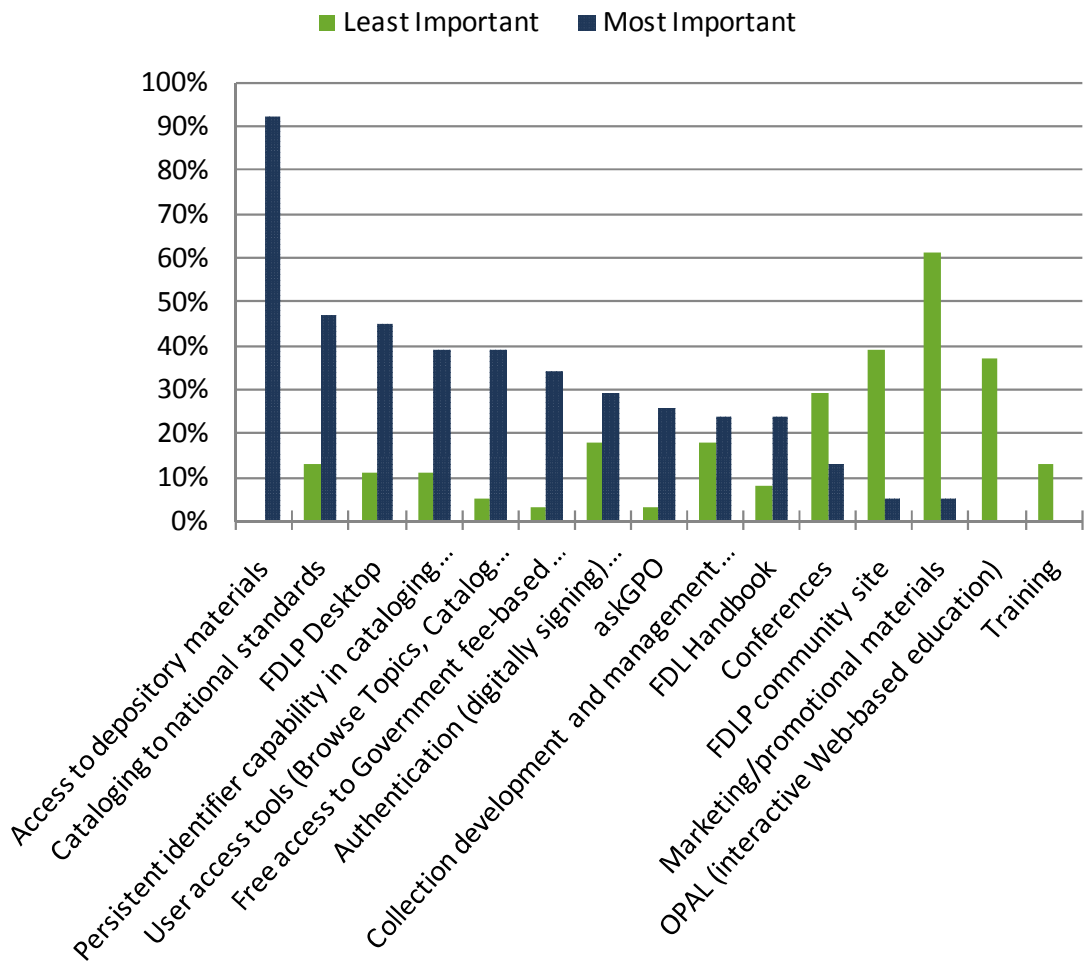


Q8. Which of the following performance metrics, if any, do you measure related to your library's content collection usage?

Importance of FDLP Services (Most Important / Least Important)

Access to depository materials was identified as a "Most Important" service by almost all respondents (90+%). In contrast, however, fewer than half of any respondents cited any other service.

Marketing services, OPAL, and FDLP community sites topped the list of least regarded services.



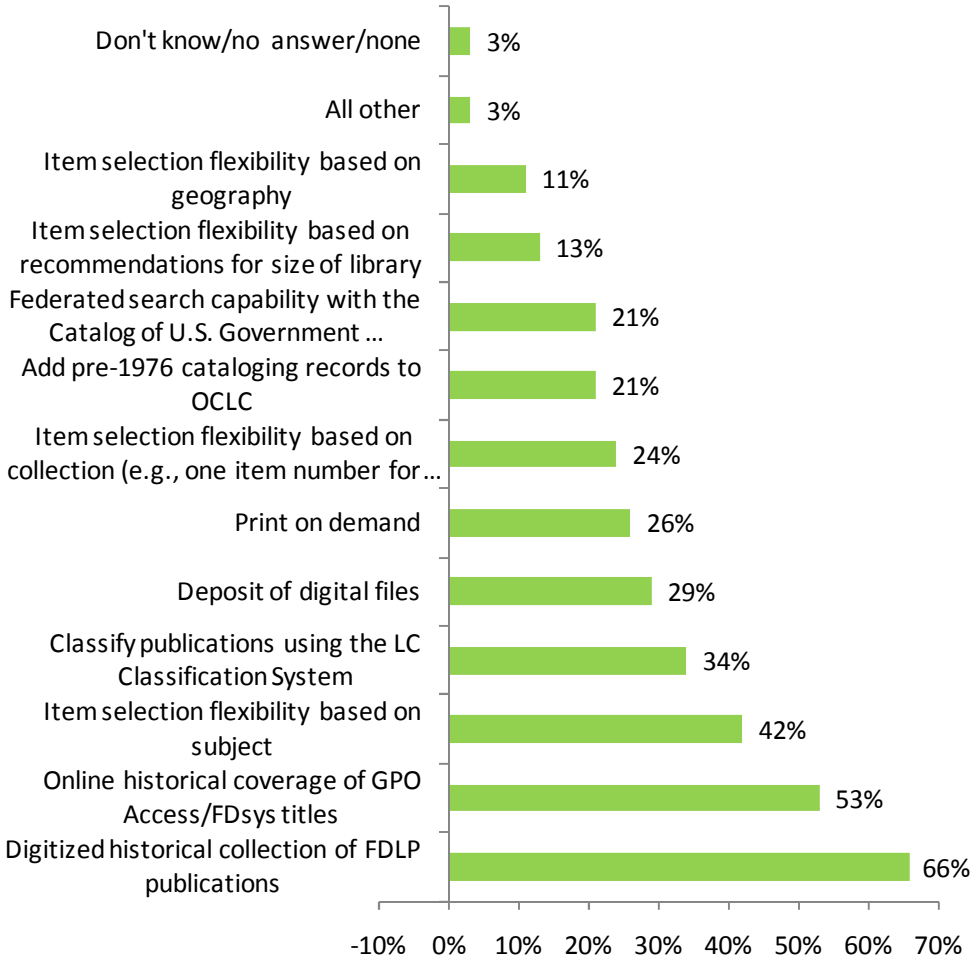
Q9. What are the most important services provided by the FDLP to your library?
Q9a. Now please indicate the least important services provided by the FDLP to your library

Services / Resources Needed but Not Currently Available from FDLP

The majority of respondents (66%) identified a digitized collection of FDLP historical materials as a desired service/resource not currently available. Online historical coverage of GPO/Fedsys titles was requested by slightly more than 50% of respondents.

Item selection flexibility, deposit of digital files, and print on demand were requested by 1/4th or more of respondents.

Fewer than 1/4th of respondents requested Federated Search capabilities within the catalog, or cited the addition of pre-1976 records to OCLC.

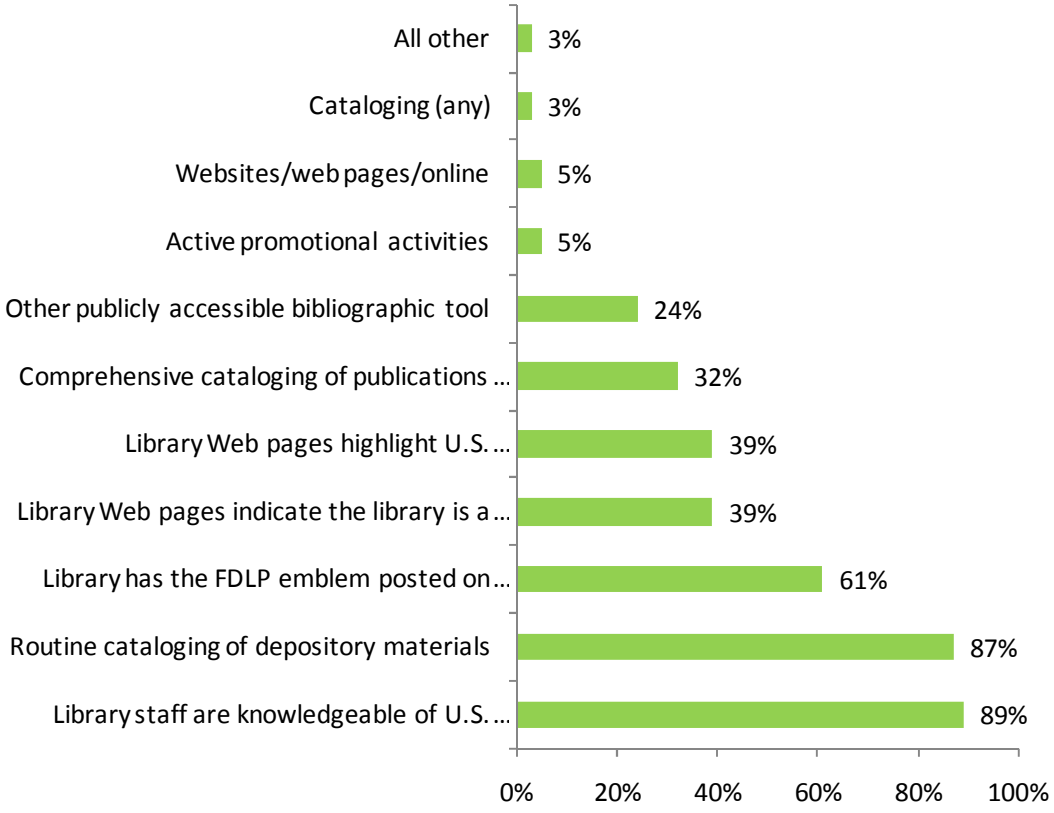


Q10. What services and/or resources do you need from the FDLP that you currently do not have?

Methods for Making Depository Publications (All Formats) Visible

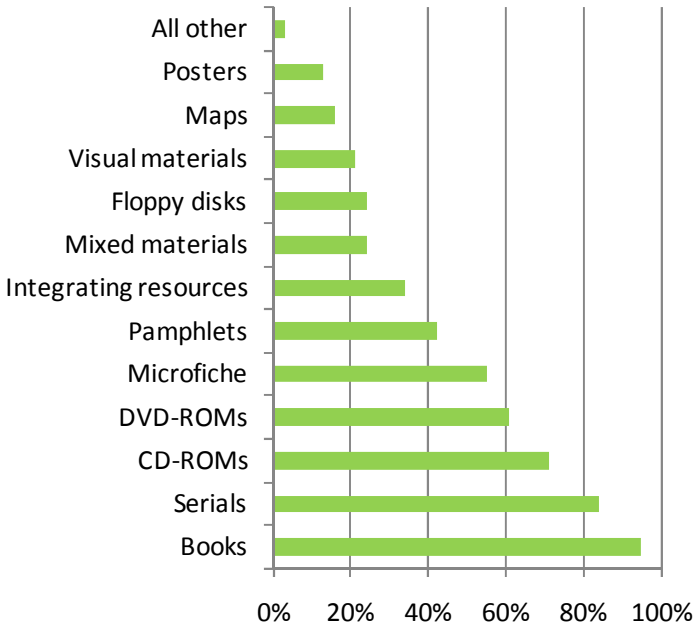
A knowledgeable library staff, Routine cataloging, and display of the FDLP emblem were most cited as methods for making all formats of depository publications visible to the public.

No respondent identified usage of Instruction, document or other displays, or promotion of the FDLP emblem in signage/website.



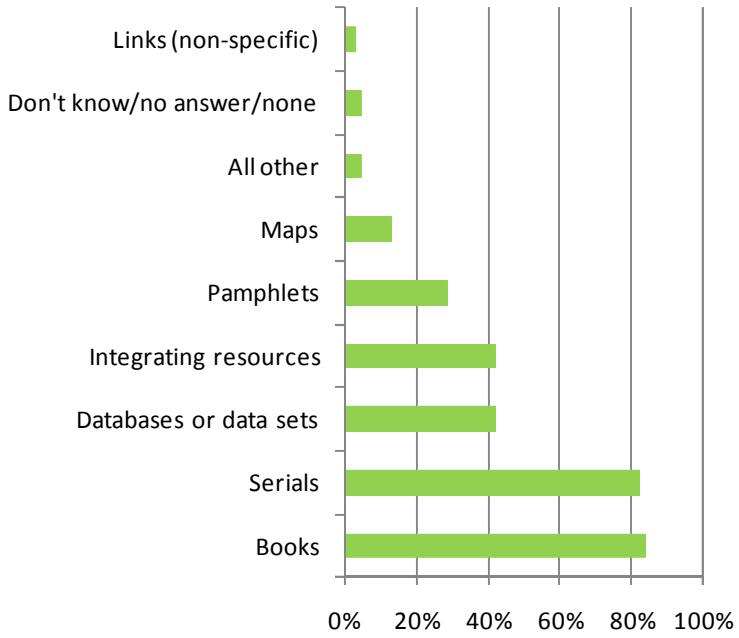
Q17. How does the library make the depository publications in all formats visible to the public?

Piece Level Records and Cataloging of Online Materials



Libraries identified educational kits/kits as the only materials to not have piece level records available.

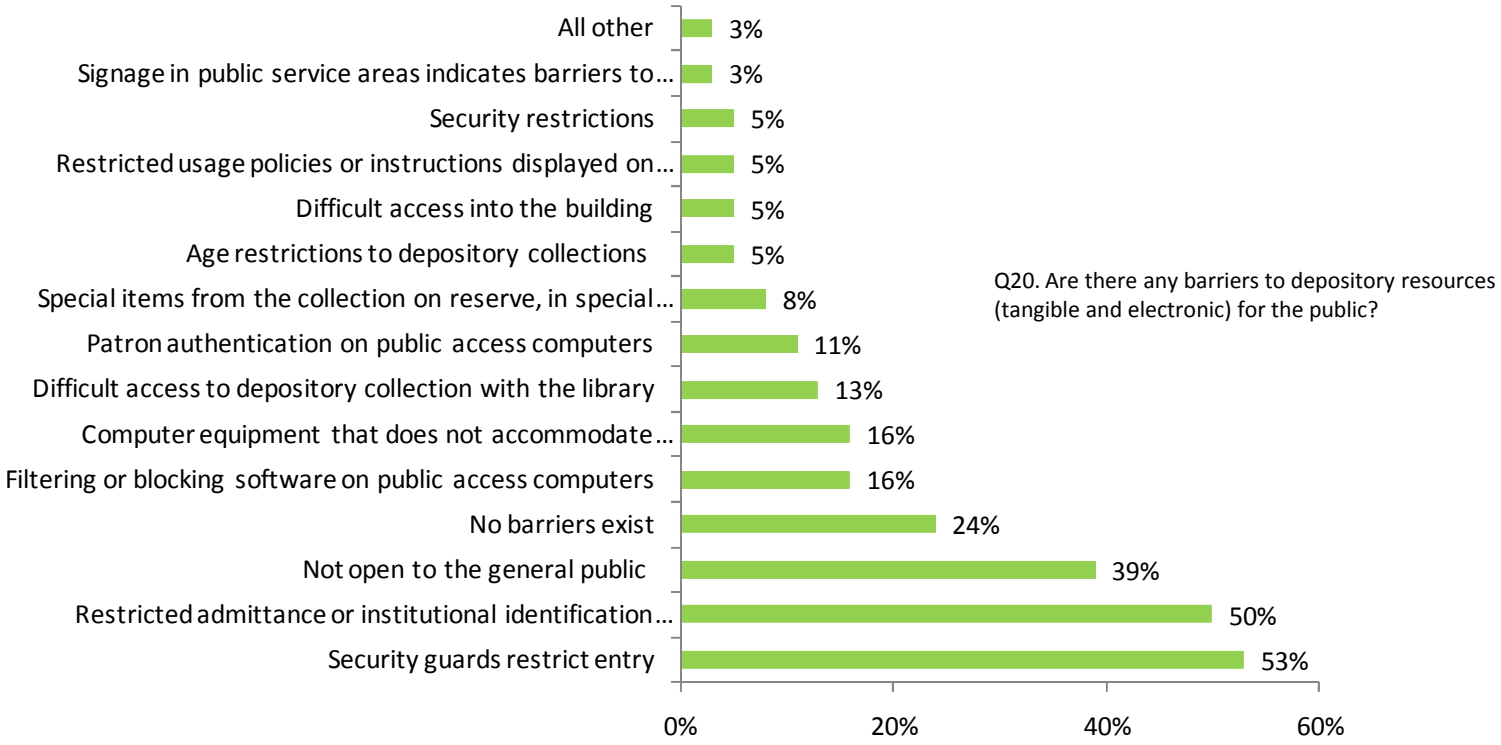
Q18. Please indicate if you provide piece level records for the following types of tangible materials received within the past five years.



Books and serials lead the online materials disseminated by FDLP which are included in library catalogs

Q18a. Do you include records in your catalog for the following types of online materials disseminated through the FDLP?

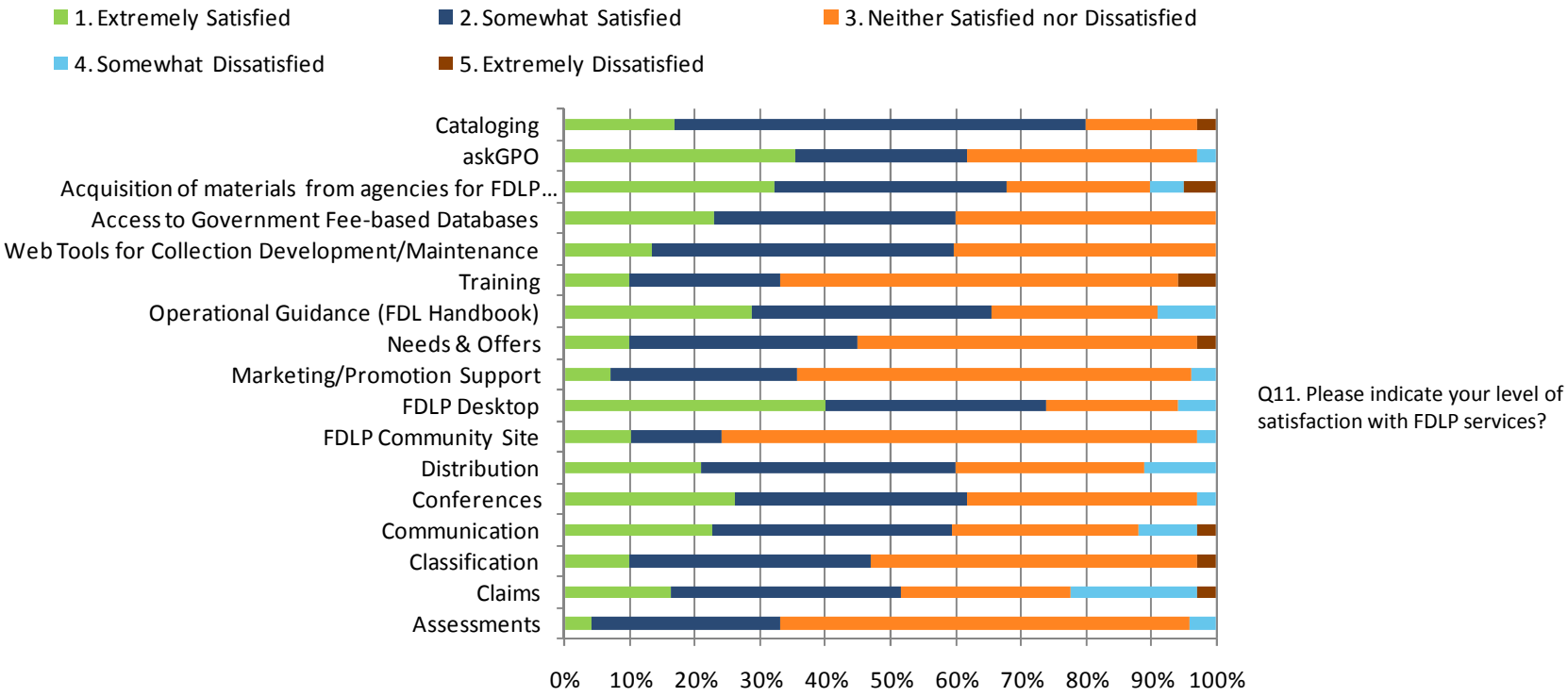
Barriers to Access



Not surprisingly for federal institutions, only 24% cited no barriers to access, with Restricted Admittance and Security guards cited by more than 50%. Approaching 40% of respondents were not open to the general public.

Few examples of work-arounds were provided, although the use of available resources/staff for support stands out.

Satisfaction with FDLP Services



- More respondents were extremely satisfied with FDLP Desktop and askGPO, then any other service.
-On an overall basis, Cataloging received the highest satisfaction (Extremely and Somewhat Satisfied)
- Dissatisfaction was most noted for Claims and Distribution.

Select Characteristics

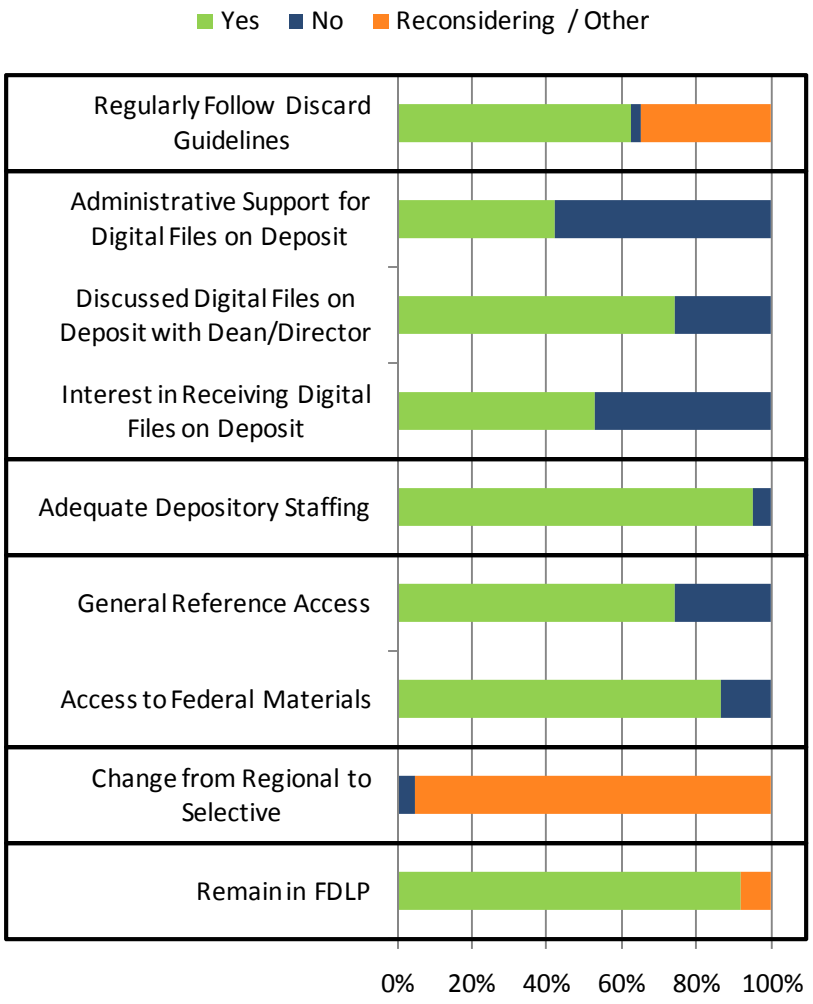
- **Discards**. ~60% of respondents regularly followed discard guidelines. A third reported no regular discard schedule , but did adhere to the

- **Digital Deposit**. Approaching 50% per cent respondents are interested in receiving digital files on deposit. More than 60% have discussed this interest with Dean/Director, but ~40% feel they have Administrative Support.

- **Adequate Staffing**. The vast majority of respondents believe staffing levels for depository services are adequate.

- More than 75% of respondents did provide **Access** to Federal materials and general reference services.

-**Remain in FDLP**. 8% respondents were considering whether to remain with FDLP.



See Survey source questions, following page.

Select Characteristics – Survey Questions

- **Discards**. Q19. Are depository discards regularly processed in conformance with GPO instructions found in the Federal Depository Library Handbook and regional guidelines or state plans, if applicable?

- **Digital Deposit**. Q18a. Please answer the following questions related to receiving deposit digital files of online publications

- **Adequate Staffing**. Q16. Do you find that depository staffing is adequate to fulfill basic depository responsibilities?

- **Access.** Q14. May any member of the general public access and use Federal government information resources in all formats at your library? Q15. Does the library provide reference service for the general public?
-
- **Regional / Selective**. Q12. Does your library plan to remain in the FDLP?

- **Remain in FDLP**. Q12. Does your library plan to remain in the FDLP?

 See questions, following page. Q12, 14, 15,, 18, 19

Q18a. Please answer the following questions related to receiving deposit digital files of online publications

Conclusion – Federal Libraries Segment Analysis

APPENDIX – SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE

(attached as WORD document)

About Outsell

The information, analysis, and opinions (the "Content") contained herein are based on the qualitative and quantitative research methods of Outsell, Inc. and its staff's extensive professional expertise in the industry. Outsell has used its best efforts and judgment in the compilation and presentation of the Content and to ensure to the best of its ability that the Content is accurate as of the date published. However, the industry information covered by this report is subject to rapid change. Outsell makes no representations or warranties, express or implied, concerning or relating to the accuracy of the Content in this report and Outsell assumes no liability related to claims concerning the Content of this report.

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