

## **Statistics and Metrics Working Group Discussion: Can the Numbers Tell the Story? - Chat Log**

from Charlie she-her Amiot, DLC to everyone: 1:08 PM  
Librarians: Always doing more with less.

from Becki White to everyone: 1:08 PM  
+1 Charlie

from Susanne Caro to everyone: 1:08 PM  
Can we ever get the option to do less with more?

from Charlie she-her Amiot, DLC to everyone: 1:09 PM  
Historically, labor movements have achieved that.

from Tim Lozier to everyone: 1:09 PM  
+1 Susanne

from Elisabeth Garner to everyone: 1:09 PM  
Our IT department at my library has been extremely helpful with pulling usage stats for us; both print and electronic.

from Daniel Cornwall to everyone: 1:10 PM  
One difficulty we have in Alaska is that PURL stats from our catalog are only available at the consortium level - not GPO's fault. If a consortia catalog has cracked this problem, let me know. :-)

from Daniel Cornwall to everyone: 1:11 PM  
Even the consortial number is helpful in showing that people are using govdocs. So thanks!

from Susanne Caro to everyone: 1:12 PM  
Someone shared a way to get excel to work with SuDocs, but I never had the time to get it to work. That was a while ago- is there an easier way?

from Ashley Dahlen to everyone: 1:13 PM  
Susanne, I think that was me? Sorting SuDoc Call Numbers in Excel :  
<https://www.fdlp.gov/training/sorting-sudoc-call-numbers-excel> Let me know if you have trouble with it, I would be happy to have a meeting to go over it! It took me ages to figure it out, I'm happy to share it with others.

from Daniel Cornwall to everyone: 1:14 PM  
+1 Ashley for excel skill sharing!

from Susanne Caro to everyone: 1:14 PM  
Ashley, you are an angel! I'll be in touch.

from Elisabeth Garner to everyone: 1:14 PM

When we had an open stack collection, we placed placards every so many feet on the shelves asking patrons to NOT reshelve items and place them on a cart, so I tracked usage that way. (That was one way I tracked usage of physical materials).

from Andie Craley to everyone: 1:16 PM

Polaris is our ILS (catalog) - and I remind the Circ and Ref stat to use the In House checkin when picking up materials left behind on tables, study rooms, reshelving carts. Even when we are using materials on displays - use the In House checkin feature - those are usage stats!

from Charlie she-her Amiot, DLC to everyone: 1:18 PM

Statistics and numbers are such a complicated issues in libraries. We need the numbers to continue to get funding. But the numbers don't tell a full story most times, and those requiring them rarely understand that.

from Andrea Stelljes, DLC to everyone: 1:18 PM

+1 Andie. We do something similar at Hennepin County with cataloged items. A large portion of our gov pubs aren't cataloged, unfortunately, so it's hard to track usage.

from Daniel Cornwall to everyone: 1:18 PM

We use In-House Use on SIRSI workflows.

from Mark Hamilton to everyone: 1:19 PM

Determine where not to weed

from Gwen Sinclair, DLC to everyone: 1:20 PM

Following up on Mark, also use to prioritize digitization

from Chris Brown to everyone: 1:20 PM

Usage helps inform us as to what library guides we need to create to assist users.

from Lisa Pritchard to everyone: 1:20 PM

A lot of our use happens when we are promoting the FDLP--folks read materials on display. We don't track that use, but we know that it is very valuable.

from Elisabeth Garner to everyone: 1:20 PM

You can use a location code in your library's ILS to help with determining if a gov doc item has been checked out...we used to do that when our collection was a circulating collection

from Mark Hamilton to everyone: 1:20 PM

Good point, Gwen

from Cassandra Wenzel to everyone: 1:20 PM

Some of our materials don't circulate, so all we have is in house circ to tell us how/when it is being used.

from Joshua Olsen to everyone: 1:20 PM

The usage stats might not give you a clear indication of absolute value, but it can give you an imperfect idea of relative value.

from Charlie she-her Amiot, DLC to everyone: 1:20 PM

Oooh, I like that Joshua.

from Susanne Caro to everyone: 1:21 PM

Numbers can be easier to understand- they are only part of the story but you can given to admin and they can share data that might be easier to understand (as long as they are in your favor!)

from Elisabeth Garner to everyone: 1:21 PM

@Joshua! Yes...representing UNC-Greensboro well today! :)

from Joshua Olsen to everyone: 1:21 PM

\*imperfect, thanks Charlie!

from Joshua Finnell, DLC to everyone: 1:22 PM

Whenever I show a class the physical collection, someone inevitably mentions the "feeling" of holding a bill or hearing in their hands.

from Joshua Finnell, DLC to everyone: 1:22 PM

It's powerful.

from Jenny McBurney to everyone: 1:23 PM

+1 Joshua

from Kris Aberly to everyone: 1:23 PM

+Joshua whenever we have tours people always mention the physical document

from Charlie she-her Amiot, DLC to everyone: 1:23 PM

I've always found the best books I've come across in a library have been the ones that are rarely used. I can't tell you how many books I've checked out, especially back when stamps were regularly used, that I was the first person in 40+ years. But I still remember those books.

from K Dominique Hallett to everyone: 1:24 PM

We need to learn how to do better storytelling with data

from Susanne Caro to everyone: 1:24 PM

We keep use and shelving stats which can help with usage. When you have people in the library in person you can point out how much is not online.

from Cassandra Wenzel to everyone: 1:24 PM

+1 Susanne, that is one of the most frequent questions we get. "Isn't this all online now?" It is not!

from Kris Aberly to everyone: 1:25 PM

That's what we need some stats for.....what's not online in Hathi or Internet Archive.

from Charlie she-her Amiot, DLC to everyone: 1:25 PM

@Dominique, look into books by Edward R. Tufte, like Visual Explanations: Images and Quantities, Evidence and Narrative.

from K Dominique Hallett to everyone: 1:26 PM  
+1 Charlie

from Gwen Sinclair, DLC to everyone: 1:26 PM  
I've found that as the percentage of our collection that is cataloged increases, usage has not increased correspondingly.

from Gwen Sinclair, DLC to everyone: 1:27 PM  
+1 Dominique

from Charlie she-her Amiot, DLC to everyone: 1:27 PM  
@Gwen I've wondered if this would be a common result. You don't hear people talk much about "failures" however, which I think holds us back. Share your failures, people!

from Becki White to everyone: 1:28 PM  
I found that putting a barcode on a small document made it less likely for someone to assume it was a handout that they could take without checking it out.

from Susanne Caro to everyone: 1:30 PM  
I'm wondering how much we need to promote materials- expecting if you catalog they will come is not enough. Also gov docs have some of the worst titles for searching.

from Gwen Sinclair, DLC to everyone: 1:30 PM  
+1 Susanne

from Kris Aberly to everyone: 1:30 PM  
+1 Susanne

from K Dominique Hallett to everyone: 1:30 PM  
+1 Susanne

from Kathy Piselli to everyone: 1:30 PM  
for many, you MUST add annotation to records for better retrieval

from Scott Briggs to everyone: 1:30 PM  
@ Susanne I agree. Some of these titles are VERY specific topic titles. Some in Latin.

from Charlie she-her Amiot, DLC to everyone: 1:31 PM  
Promotion is everything.

from Amanda Ros to everyone: 1:31 PM  
people are intimidated by SuDocs

from Susanne Caro to everyone: 1:31 PM  
Annual reports are the worst.

from Susanne Caro to everyone: 1:31 PM

Amanda+12

from Elisabeth Garner to everyone: 1:33 PM

Yes, and SuDocs actually make more sense when it comes to call numbers. Their letters correspond to their Department or agency, unlike LC, right! :)

from Charlie she-her Amiot, DLC to everyone: 1:33 PM

I suspect it's less that we're no longer middlemen, but more that we are seeing the effects of a loss of civics and research and critical thinking.

from Sinai Wood to everyone: 1:33 PM

Perhaps but that frees us up to do other forward thinking depository work.

from Cassandra Wenzel to everyone: 1:33 PM

+1 Charlie

from Andie Craley to everyone: 1:34 PM

For those who may integrate and shelve their print FDLP items in with regular collections by LC, we use those handy eagle stickers on a roll available from GPO promotions! It helps to add that "hey, this miss be a little special", and also helps during the weeding process, as our FDLP cataloging staff then pull those aside for N&O's.

from Andie Craley to everyone: 1:34 PM

mgih, not miss..

from Cassandra Wenzel to everyone: 1:34 PM

With regards to the title issue, in some cases that might be a place for the 246 field, where possible.

from Scott Matheson to everyone: 1:36 PM

Yes Andie - our library was interfiled like that and stickers/stamps are good for promotion and weeding. There was a good presentation on interfiled vs. separate several years ago - Cate Kellett and Kate Irwin-Smiler did it at a fall meeting.

from Kaitlyn Moody to everyone: 1:38 PM

In regards to promoting materials, we're in an academic library, so we try to have a presence in as many university events/programs as possible. For example, I'm a representative in our library's student engagement committee. I try to include gov docs in any major conversations, and I got our department (finally) included in the library's orientation tours - doing our best to make sure people know we exist. I get that a lack of personnel is definitely an issue, though

from Cassandra Wenzel to everyone: 1:38 PM

I would be concerned that any statistics reporting would not take into consideration the different types of depository libraries, from public, university, to law, and how we differ in our staffing, circ policies, etc. It could be good information, but if these differences are not taken into account, then it could be very bad.

from Gwen Sinclair, DLC to everyone: 1:38 PM

Our current library director does not seem concerned about the low usage of our collection, but who knows what the next director will say?

from Charlie she-her Amiot, DLC to everyone: 1:39 PM  
+1 to Kaitlyn for all of those efforts. That's amazing to read.

from Bruce Pencek to everyone: 1:39 PM  
I increasingly think that my library should put subject content above government provenance in reference/instruction, promotion, and champions in my library. OTOH, as a coordinator, I really wish my predecessors had never opted to catalog some serials in LC, with inconsistent inclusion of SuDoc in notes fields.

from Bernadine Abbott Hoduski to everyone: 1:39 PM  
important to educate professors about docs

from Susanne Caro to everyone: 1:40 PM  
I send out a weekly newsletter highlighting resources. The next one is on resources for Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander Heritage Month

from Cassandra Wenzel to everyone: 1:41 PM  
+1 Susanne, I love your newsletter!

from Elisabeth Garner to everyone: 1:41 PM  
@Bernadine, yes, our liaison librarians are pretty good about doing that. They ask me questions from time to time as well. One of our liaison librarians asked me to co-present with her on an upcoming ACRL-Lunch bytes in June on finding credible gov doc resources.

from Andie Craley to everyone: 1:42 PM  
+1 Katilyn. I'm all for collaboration with divisions and departments on campus for events :)

from Amy Fitch to everyone: 1:43 PM  
+1 Susanne - that's really interesting. Is it a hardcopy newsletter or digital?

from Susanne Caro to everyone: 1:43 PM  
It's digital and connects to a libguide. [https://libguides.nmstatelibrary.org/govdocs/Federal\\_Friday](https://libguides.nmstatelibrary.org/govdocs/Federal_Friday)

from Amy Fitch to everyone: 1:43 PM  
Awesome

from Andrea Stelljes, DLC to everyone: 1:44 PM  
Thanks for sharing this great information, Sarah!

from Chris Brown to everyone: 1:44 PM  
Great job, Sarah!

from Angie Bonnell, DLC to everyone: 1:44 PM  
Thank you, Sarah!!! :)

from Joshua Finnell, DLC to everyone: 1:44 PM  
Thanks, Sarah!

from Mark Hamilton to everyone: 1:44 PM  
Thank you, Sarah!

from Charlie she-her Amiot, DLC to everyone: 1:44 PM  
Thank you! And thanks for the conversation, all!

from Susanne Caro to everyone: 1:45 PM  
Pro-tip, I hide the older posts, then update them when needed. You only need to make new ones after the first year.

from Stephen Kharfen to everyone: 1:45 PM  
Thank you very much!

from Channa Cajero to everyone: 1:45 PM  
Thank you Sarah!

from Keven McGinn to everyone: 1:45 PM  
Sadly, small minds rule at my Library, and our entire Documents collection was destroyed. I tried to rescue what I could from the Dumpster of Doom.  
ALL Chat entries excellent, by the way.

from Andie Craley to everyone: 1:45 PM  
So much great information and successes here!

from Cassandra Wenzel to everyone: 1:45 PM  
Thank you!

from Susanne Caro to everyone: 1:45 PM  
Thank you to Sarah and the Committee!

from Cynthia Etkin to everyone: 1:45 PM  
A lot of good sharing of ideas and experiences in this chat! We will cull through this later.

from Amy Fitch to everyone: 1:45 PM  
Thank you

from Keven McGinn to everyone: 1:45 PM  
Thank you, Sarah!

from Susanne Caro to everyone: 1:46 PM  
Keven- NOOOOOO! I'm so sorry!

from Keven McGinn to everyone: 1:47 PM  
Thanks, @Susanna! It was awful.