

Here's this week's PLOnline Newsletter - the latest from the Public Library Association's online magazine - recent articles and more! Check it out!

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A Publication of the Public Library Association

# PUBLIC LIBRARIES ONLINE WEEKLY

Wednesday, July 22, 2015

Issue #11

## Trending...

### New on PLOnline This Week



Do girls read more than boys? Why do kids read and why do they stop reading? Find out in [Scholastic Publishes Fifth Edition of Kids & Family Reading Report](#). This library created a parody video to promote their summer reading club - read more about this fun idea in [Summer Reading Club Promotional Videos](#). The Knight

Foundation is looking for input for their library-focused News Challenge happening in 2016. See how you can add to this project in [Help Shape the 2016 Knight News Challenge – Focus is Library Innovation](#).

Do genre names translate across fiction for different age-groups? Learn more about the nuances of [Putting Your ENTIRE Fiction Collection into Genres](#). It won't be open till 2114, but authors are already submitting works to put into the Future Library. Read about this unique concept in [Opening in 100 Years: The Future Library](#).



Speaking of the future, robots might be coming soon to a library near you. In [Diversity and Inclusion: Robotic Librarians Help Autistic Patrons](#), we introduce Bibliobot, a robot that helps kids with autism spectrum disorder.

## A Choice Selection of Links for Your Perusal

- [How to Get Noticed in Your Field](#)
- ["EL Doctorow showed how a great literary imagination can illuminate the present through the prism of the past."](#)
- [Looking to Kickstart Creativity?](#)
- [Free! Volunteer Engagement Online Course](#)
- [Watch: Tips for Creating Amazing Smartphone Videos](#)
- [Get out there and make some connections with this Guide to Networking](#)
- [Survival Guide: Heading Back to Work after Summer Vacation](#)
- [Last interview with deceased James Salter on writing](#)
- [Feminist books for YA Readers](#)
- [Looking for a good audiobook?](#)
- [Origin of Dr Seuss's new book, 24 years after he died](#)

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## Snapshot

Last week we asked where you prefer to get your news. Our small and unscientific poll revealed that the majority choose to get news via news media websites. Next was Facebook, followed by television/radio, and finally Twitter. Nobody selected newspaper/magazine as their preferred news source. This week we want to know if you've joined the surge of cord-cutters leaving cable TV behind. So, please click on a choice below. Results will be revealed in next week's issue!

- [Never had cable or Direct TV](#)
- [Still have cable or Direct TV](#)
- [Still have cable or Direct TV and also use a streaming device \(like Roku\)](#)
- [Canceled cable or Direct TV service and now use a streaming device \(like Roku\) on my television](#)
- [Canceled cable or Direct TV service and do not use a streaming device \(like Roku\) on my television](#)
- [Do not own a television](#)

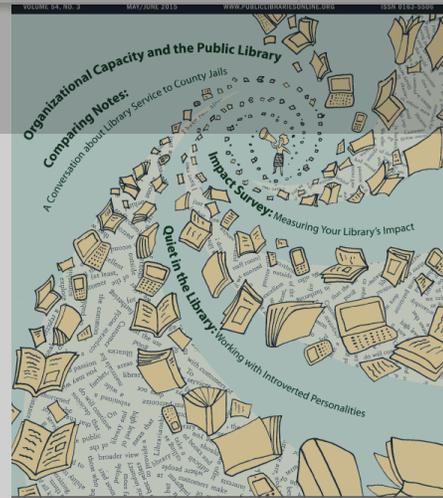
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**Feature Article -- From the May/June 2015 Issue**

### **Impact Survey: Measuring Your Library's Impact**

by **Samantha Becker**, Principal Research Scientist for the U.S. Impact Study at the Univ. of Washington iSchool

(iSchool), launched its third release, the culmination of six years of work creating and refining a survey tool that empowers public libraries to easily evaluate how patrons use their services and also track the positive impact the library has on patrons' lives. The 2014 release enables Impact Survey to go beyond public technology outcomes to begin offering surveys that question other areas of library services, such as children's programs. The 2014 release also featured upgrades that make the process of surveying patrons even more accessible for libraries of all types.



Prior to the creation of Impact Survey in 2009 and the publication of Opportunity for All in 2011, the first large-scale research study about the impact of public access technology in libraries, many librarians only had an output-focused understanding of how patrons use library technology services. This was typically determined through the number of computer sessions libraries hosted or how many one-on-one questions librarians answered. Libraries lacked a more comprehensive picture of how patrons not only use, but also benefit from the technology services in libraries. Without this information, librarians were left to make strategic service decisions based on outdated or incomplete statistics and anecdotes that weren't very helpful for planning or when advocating for greater support for technology services. Impact Survey was specifically designed to provide data, useful reports, and advocacy materials on outcomes achieved by patrons using the library's services.

Librarians, and many others who do evaluation as part of their jobs, are often confused about the difference between outputs and outcomes. In a library, outputs are the services, programs, and activities produced for patrons, such as storytime or public computer classes; outcomes are usually things you can easily count. Outcomes are what changes as a result of having access and using the outputs. Taking a count of the number of children and parents attending a story hour would be counting up an output (program attendance). Asking parents of young children if story hour helps them read to children more frequently than before they started attending story hour is counting a desired outcome: parents reading to their children more often is an important outcome on the road to literacy.

In the October 2014 release, the Impact Survey team incorporated many new features based on feedback received from libraries. These include the ability to run multiple surveys in a single calendar year and an improved dashboard that will make it easier for libraries to schedule surveys, keep track of survey progress, and increase survey responses from patrons. The new release also enables library groups, like regional associations or cooperatives, to run surveys together, allowing them to coordinate and

resources.

One of the most exciting features of the new release is that the public library surveys will now be available to Canadian libraries, with the intent that, as demand rises, other countries outside the U.S. will also be able to use Impact Survey in their libraries. Impact Survey now has the capability to host custom surveys and reports for public libraries and other nonprofit organizations that want to develop and deploy outcomes-focused user surveys across multiple locations.

In order to become self-sustaining, Impact Survey now asks libraries to purchase a yearly subscription fee for a minimal cost. All subscription fees go directly to maintaining and improving Impact Survey. State libraries, library consortia, and other groups of ten or more libraries can purchase subscriptions for their members at deeply discounted rates.

Impact Survey now has 856 registered libraries from 46 different states, ranging from large urban systems serving thousands of patrons to single-outlet libraries in rural communities. Since October 2013, 449 libraries have used Impact Survey, yielding more than 45,000 survey responses, giving those libraries valuable data on how patrons use public library services. The data are analyzed by Impact Survey so that libraries end up with ready-to-use reports and advocacy materials that have been customized with their patrons' responses immediately after they are done running the survey. It can't get any easier! [Read the entire article here.](#)

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## Ask Us Anything

We want this newsletter to be a dialogue. If you have questions about PLOnline, *Public Libraries*, PLA or anything else, send them in! Just hit reply and ask us anything. We'll try to answer every email and maybe even share our conversation in future newsletters.

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