Values of Public Libraries Research


How Americans Value Public Libraries in Their Communities

Americans strongly value the role of public libraries in their communities, both for providing access to materials and resources and for promoting literacy and improving the overall quality of life. Most Americans say they have only had positive experiences at public libraries, and value a range of library resources and services.


Community Centered: 23 Reasons Why Your Library Is the Most Important Place in Town

As librarians, we know the value of our community services, and our patrons appreciate their importance as well. But in an increasingly digital world, we see the role of libraries as community and cultural centers at times undervalued, and occasionally under fire. When shrinking municipal budgets combine with the nonstop technological revolution, public library services that focus on building community face-to-face, inspiring and educating patrons about art, literature, and music, and helping patrons engage in civil discourse can seem quaint. But it is precisely those shrinking budgets and the onslaught of technologically mediated life that make public libraries’ cultural and community offerings more important than ever.

IFLA: The Value of Public Libraries

One of the topics often discussed by this section is the Value of Public Libraries to their community – also referred to as ‘Return on Investment’ or ROI.

Over the past few years they have noted a few of these on our blog. This document provides a link through to those blog posts.

- [Value of Public Libraries 26 January 2013](http://libraries.pewinternet.org/2013/12/11/libraries-in-communities/)
  This detailed list provides details of a number of reports and studies from around the world with abstracts and links where available. This is a great place to start your research.
- [Library Value in the Developing World 22 February 2013](http://publiclibrariesonline.org/2013/04/community-centered-23-reasons-why-your-library-is-the-most-important-place-in-town/)
  Reports on a project by SAGE to to investigate library value in the developing world
• **So Much More: The Economic Impact of the Toronto Public Library System 10 January 2014**
  This was the first Canadian study to measure the library’s economic impact on Toronto.

• **Value of Library Visits 26 June 2014**
  The Archives, Library and Museum Alliance UK (ALMAUK) has put a value on public library visits following research on how users feel about them. This is complemented by a toolkit.

• **Creative Communities: the cultural benefits of Victoria's public libraries 11 September 2014**
  This report focuses on the cultural benefits that libraries deliver to their communities in the Australian state of Victoria.

Other projects which haven’t been reported on the blog:

• **A national report on the return on investment of Australian public libraries**