

Public access to the Internet improves the quality of life in our community

Public libraries are key providers of public access in our community

As using computers and the Internet has become a necessity across many facets of daily life, libraries serve as an important site for free access to computers and the Internet:

- According to Pew, 4 in 10 American adults do not have high-speed broadband at home.¹
- Library computer use is widespread: A third of Americans ages 14 and older (77 million people) use library computers and the Internet.²
- More than three-quarters of those who accessed the Internet at a public library had access elsewhere. These patrons used public access when they needed a faster connection, during gaps in access, while running errands or during lunch breaks, and to reduce isolation.²

Your library's public access at work

- At Emerald City Public Library, there are **225** public access terminals and 2 wireless hotspots within the library system.
- Of the respondents, **2,533 (55%)** used a computer in the library to access the Internet during the past 12 months, with frequencies as follows:
 - **1,022 (40%)** did so once a week or more frequently;
 - **505 (20%)** did so about 1-3 times a month;
 - **1,006 (40%)** did so less than once a month.
- 47% (2,148) of respondents say that public access to computers and the Internet is important or very important to them, personally. 41% (1,895) say it is important or very important to have these resources available for others in our community.
- The beneficiaries of library Internet access often extend beyond the individual users; 34% (1,106) of users found information or performed tasks for other people using the library's computers or Internet connection.

Librarians Make A Difference

Of survey respondents who use the library's public access technology, 99% got help from a librarian, library staff, or volunteer to use the library's computers and Internet.

Who uses Emerald City Public Library's public access?

- 44% (1,435) of Emerald City Public Library's public access technology users have alternative Internet access somewhere other than the library. Of those, 99% received help when they visited the library.
- Of the 1,435 respondents with alternative access who received help, 42% were 65 years and older.
- 23% of Emerald City Public Library's public access technology users are low income (below 200% of the poverty line).
- Of public technology users with no alternative access, 21% are low income.

Major uses for library computers in our community

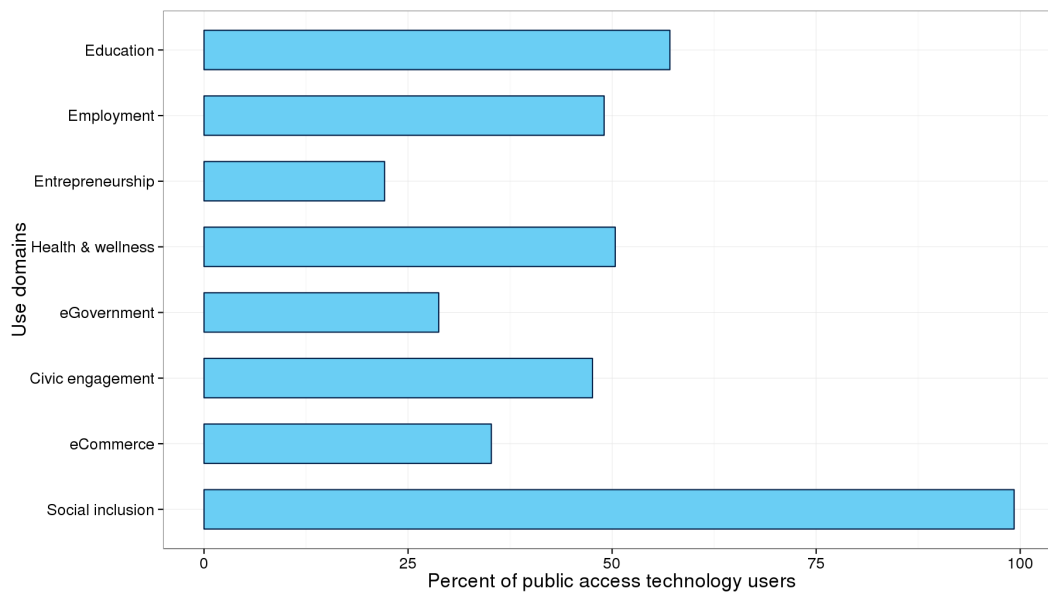
Employment

- **49% of public technology users** at Emerald City Public Library used the library's public computers or wireless connection for employment purposes.
- **17%** of users used the library's technology resources to apply for a job. **12%** were granted an interview, and **12%** were hired for a new position.

Education

- Of public technology respondents, **57%** used library technology for educational purposes.
- Of those that used public technology for educational purposes, **79%** took an online class, did research or did homework for a class.

How Do Patrons Use Public Technology?



This report features results on how Emerald City Public Library patrons use public access technology. The survey ran from April 01, 2013 to October 27, 2013 and 4616 patrons completed the survey.

¹ Zickuhr, Kathryn, Lee Rainie, Kristen Purcell. (2013). Library services in the digital age. Pew Research Center's Internet & American Life Project. Washington, D.C. <http://libraries.pewinternet.org/2013/01/22/Library-services/>

² Becker, Samantha, Michael D. Crandall, Karen E. Fisher, Bo Kinney, Carol Landry, and Anita Rocha. (2010). Opportunity for All: How the American Public Benefits from Internet Access at U.S. Libraries. (IMLS-2010-RES-01). Institute of Museum and Library Services. Washington, D.C. <http://impact.ischool.washington.edu/us-public-library-study.html>