

**Canadians, Public Libraries and the
Information Highway**

Final Report

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



Introduction

This study was commissioned by the Canadian Library Association (CLA) on behalf of an informal consortium made up of the Provincial and Territorial libraries, the National Library of Canada, Industry Canada, Association pour l'avancement des sciences et techniques de la documentation (ASTED) and CLA to support two distinct, but complimentary objectives. First, the study was designed to fill an information gap, and provide information on how public libraries are being used across the country. Second, the study was designed to assist governments as part of their broader goal of connecting all public libraries to the information highway by 1999 and to examine the means by which to make "connectivity" sustainable.

On first examination, the connection between public libraries and the information highway may not be apparent. But like many other types of institutions, public libraries are being influenced directly and indirectly by the ubiquitous information highway. From the perspective of public libraries, the impact of the information highway is important to understand as it is altering much of the landscape around which they have provided services to Canadians. At the same time, public libraries already represent an important point of access to the information highway for many Canadians.



Key Findings

The results in this study were drawn together on the basis of a mail-back survey that built on the first wave of the *Information Highway and Canadian Communications Household* study. The final results are based on 1,271 completed surveys received between February and April, 1998.

The survey findings suggest that public libraries continue to be used by a large number of Canadians across the country, although usage, as might be expected, varies considerably across various segments of the population. As with most surveys, however, the findings which involve reporting activities over a given time period should be interpreted with a degree of caution. This, in part, reflects that

respondents often recall undertaking activities more recently than is actually the case. For example, a respondent may recall having been to a public library in the past year when in fact it had actually been 18 months. In that context, results from the questions relating to timeframes should be interpreted as broad indicators of usage rather than the absolute number of visits.

At an overall level, the majority of respondents report having had some interaction with a public library. In general, usage is higher among females, younger Canadians many of whom are also students, and respondents in British Columbia and Ontario. The key findings in terms of Canadians' usage of public libraries include:

- ❑ nearly two in three survey respondents (63 per cent) reported having a public library card;
- ❑ two in three respondents (66 per cent) reported having visited a public library in the past twelve months, with one in five (21 per cent) reporting having been at least 12 times (i.e., the equivalent of once a month);
- ❑ respondents visited public libraries an average of 7.7 times in the past year, up slightly from the 1991 Reading in Canada study (6.4 times); and
- ❑ close to four in ten (39 per cent) reported visiting a library in the last week (although this figure is the most likely to be overstated).

The survey findings suggest that public libraries are being used for a wide range of activities. In general, the most common activities involve borrowing books, browsing through books, magazines, and newspapers, and using reference materials. Many other activities are also being undertaken, including research and consulting with library staff, and to a lesser extent, borrowing other materials and using photocopiers. Newer services such as the Internet and on-line data bases have been used by one in ten respondents, although they are used more frequently by younger respondents and students.

By contrast, some Canadians reported that they do not use public libraries. When asked about the reasons for not using them, the two most commonly cited reasons involved lack of interest or the fact that they buy their own books. Other reasons centred around inconveniences, access elsewhere, and children no longer going to libraries.

There is considerable agreement over the roles of public libraries, including activities such as providing key information (e.g., reference material), promoting recreational reading and literacy for all citizens, and serving as community information centres. Few respondents, if any, see any of the broad roles examined as not being appropriate for public libraries. As might be expected, however, certain roles are seen as being more important than other roles. For the most part, respondents who use certain activities frequently are more likely to attach greater importance to public libraries providing those services.

As mentioned earlier, public libraries represent an increasingly important component of the network of public access sites across the country which provide access to the information highway for many Canadians. While most respondents do not believe there is one unique model of a public access site, they are most likely to rate public libraries at the top in terms of appropriate locations, along with schools. Few respondents believe that public libraries are not an appropriate location.

Consistent with the findings about public access sites, respondents see most of the emerging roles in the area of the information highway as appropriate for public libraries. The one notable exception in the activities examined relates to providing access to electronic mail which was seen by a sizeable number of respondents as not being appropriate.

While it is not directly related to the mandate of public libraries, the survey also examined the different types of information Canadians are using the Internet to find. Already, many Canadians with Internet at home indicate that they are relying on it as a primary source for finding information on various topics. The survey also found that respondents had obtained information on a range of topics over the past week.

Given the ongoing funding-related pressures felt by many public libraries, the survey probed attitudes towards different ways to address any funding shortfalls. As is often the case when examining funding-related issues, there is a coexistence of support for different approaches. Public libraries are seen as a suitable target for increased government funding, but most respondents are not willing to see taxes raised to this end. Most respondents also believe that public libraries themselves must assume a greater role through introducing greater cost recovery measures (e.g., increased fines and fees, fundraising activities). There is, however, little support for funding newer services by reducing other services.

CHAPTER**1**

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

- ❑ Like many other types of institutions, public libraries are being influenced directly and indirectly by the ubiquitous information highway — both in terms of their mandates and activities as well as the broader environment in which they are operating. While its impact is not well understood, it is clear that the information highway is fundamentally changing the lives of both citizens and our institutions with increasingly inter-dependant social and economic consequences.
- ❑ From the perspective of public libraries, the impact of the information highway is important to understand as it is altering much of the landscape around which they provide services to Canadians. At a broad level, the impacts could range from changing what activities Canadians are participating in to redefining our traditional notions of access to services and programs.
- ❑ Before trying to better understand what impact these changes will have, it is important to know how often Canadians are using public libraries today, what they are using them for, and which activities they consider to be more important than others. Already, for example, public libraries represent an important point of access for Canadians to access new technologies and services such as the Internet, or to get training on how to use them. Likewise, against a backdrop of

reduced public funds, public libraries are increasingly having to compete against other services or find alternative revenue sources. With this knowledge, public libraries across Canada will be in a better position to look towards the future.

1.2 Study Objectives

- In its design, this study was commissioned by the Canadian Library Association (CLA) on behalf of an informal consortium made up of Provincial and Territorial libraries, the National Library of Canada, Industry Canada, Association pour l'avancement des sciences et techniques de la documentation (ASTED) and CLA to support two distinct, but complimentary objectives.
 - ! First, it was designed to fill an information gap, and provide information on how Canadians are using public libraries across the country.
 - ! Second, the study was designed to assist federal and provincial governments as part of their broader goal of connecting all public libraries in Canada to the information highway by 1999 and to examine the means by which to make "connectivity" sustainable over the longer-term.

- It is within this context that Ekos Research's *Information Highway and Canadian Communications Household* project proved to be an appropriate research vehicle to achieve these goals. Launched in 1997, the *Information Highway and Canadian Communications Household* project was developed as a partnership between the public and private sectors, and was designed to provide information on diverse activities and uses of the information highway.

- The specific objectives of this study are as follows:
 - ! to determine through a national statistical survey the frequency with which the Canadian public uses public library services;
 - ! to understand what purposes public libraries are being used for;
 - ! to understand attitudes of Canadians towards the traditional roles of public libraries, and emerging roles in different areas;
 - ! to determine how different services provided by public libraries are perceived by Canadians in terms of importance;

- ! to examine attitudes of Canadians towards the funding of public libraries; and
- ! to situate issues facing public libraries within the broader context of the information highway.

1.3 Methodology

- ❑ The results in this study were drawn together on the basis of a mail-back survey that was designed to build on the results from the first wave of the *Information Highway and Canadian Communications Household* study. The rationale for a mail-back format was to enable asking "diary" type questions about recent activities which are typically more difficult to answer during a telephone survey.
- ❑ The survey instrument was designed by Ekos Research in close consultation with the Federal-Provincial/Territorial Library Steering Committee as well as its Technical Advisors. Some questions in the survey were also designed to build on earlier related research that Ekos Research had undertaken in relation to the *Reading in Canada 1991* study.
- ❑ Prior to its full implementation, the mail-back instrument was pre-tested in December 1997 with a limited number of individuals to ensure that the survey would achieve its objectives effectively.
- ❑ Revisions to the instrument were made following the pre-test in order to improve the flow and understandability of certain questions, as well as the ease in completing the questionnaire. The final versions of the English and French questions contained in the mail-back instruments are presented in Appendices A and B. The actual survey instrument was sent to respondents in a booklet form.
- ❑ The mail-back instrument was distributed to a sub-sample of the original 3,522 Canadians who had participated in the first wave of the study — a telephone survey undertaken in September 1997 — and agreed to a follow-up interview. The original sampling frame from the first telephone survey was based on a stratified random sample of Canadians 18 and over.

- ❑ In total, 2,649 participants from the original sample were sent a copy of the mail-back instrument in February, 1998. Participants were sent a reminder card shortly after the initial mailing, followed by a full second mail out in March.
- ❑ The final results are based on 1,271 completed surveys received between February and April, 1998. This represents an overall response rate of 48 per cent of the sample of potential respondents. Another two per cent were returned due to a change of address.

1.4 Notes on Interpreting the Results

- ❑ When reviewing the findings, a few things should be kept in mind:
 - ! As with most surveys, questions which involve reporting activities over a given time period should be interpreted with a degree of caution. This is necessary given that respondents often recall undertaking activities more recently than is actually the case. This can occur, for example, when a respondent may recall having been to a public library in the past year when in fact it was actually 18 months earlier.
 - ! Similarly, there are surveys that were returned with different questions unanswered. In a number of these cases, it was clear that a blank response was intended to mean that the respondent had not participated in a particular activity. In other cases, it is clear that the respondent had skipped a question in its entirety. For the purposes of this study, the findings for any particular question excluded respondents who did not complete the question.
 - ! Throughout the report, breakdowns by sub-groups have typically been reported only if the differences among responses are statistically significant at the five percent level or above (i.e., $\alpha \leq 0.05$).
 - ! The margin of error for the overall results is ± 2.7 per cent, indicating the level of precision of the responses nineteen times out of twenty. Larger margins of error are associated with subgroups of the sample.
- ❑ The findings in the survey were weighted along age, gender, and regional lines to ensure that the sample is representative of the general public. As well, the findings were also weighted according to Internet usage to ensure that the sample was similar to the original sample in terms of its composition of Internet "users" and "non-users".

- A breakdown of the final weighted sample is summarized in Table 1.1.

TABLE 1.1
Sample Characteristics
(n=1271)

Group	Per Cent
Gender	
Male	49%
Female	51%
Age	
Less than 25	13%
25 to 44	44%
45 to 64	26%
65 and over	17%
Region	
Atlantic Canada	8%
Quebec	24%
Ontario	39%
Prairies	16%
British Columbia	12%

1.5 Report Organization

- The rest of this report is organized in four additional chapters.
 - ! Canadians' use of public libraries is examined in Chapter Two.
 - ! In Chapter Three, the public's attitudes towards the role of public libraries is presented.
 - ! Funding related issues are examined in Chapter Four.

- Data tables are attached in Appendix C.

CHAPTER**2**

CANADIANS' USE OF PUBLIC LIBRARIES

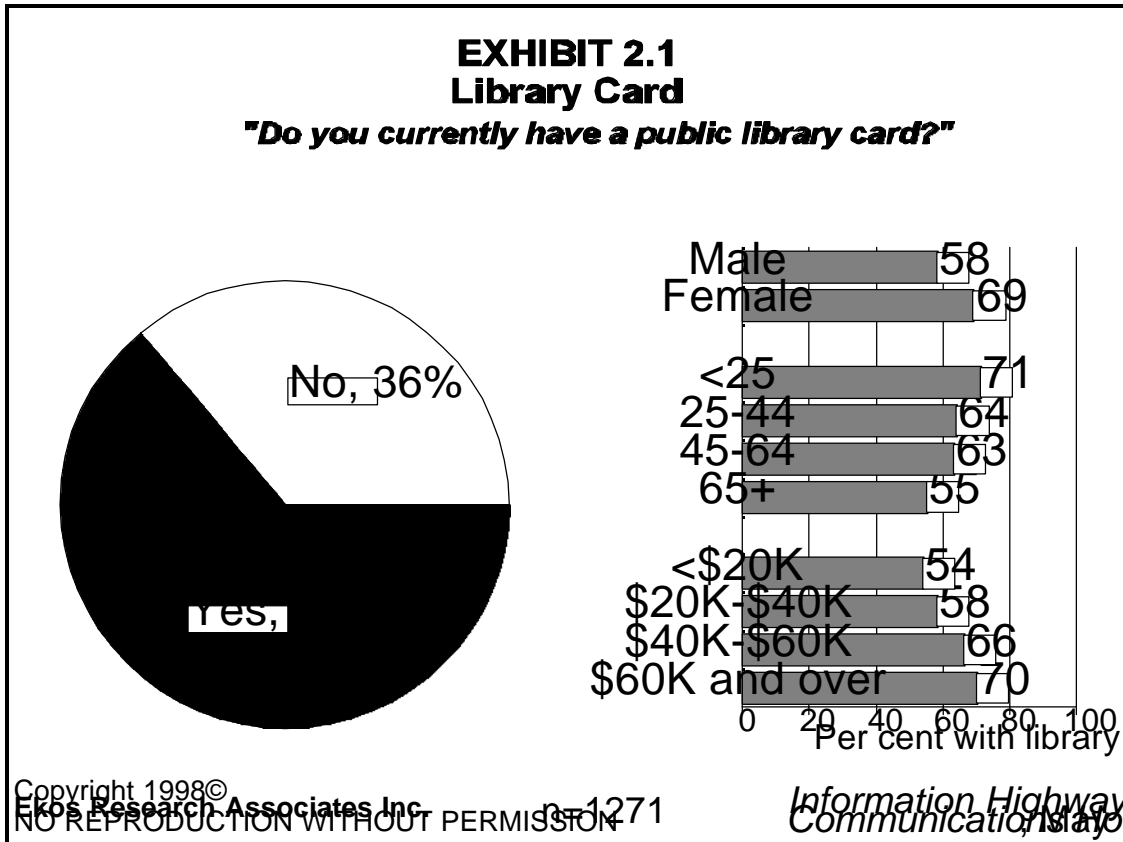
- ❑ As a starting point, the survey explored Canadians' usage of public libraries across a number of different indicators, including whether or not respondents had used a public library in the last week and how many visits they made in the past year, as well as the different activities they had participated in while visiting a library.
- ❑ While there is no one unique definition of a "user", it has for the purposes of this study been broadly defined to include any respondents who reported visiting a public library in the past twelve months. It is important to note that the distinction should not be interpreted as a precise measure of the "user" and "non-user" populations, although it will serve to illustrate key differences in attitudes and usage patterns.

2.1 A Profile of Library Use

- ❑ Generally speaking, the survey findings suggest that public libraries continue to be used by a large number of Canadians across the country, although usage, as might be expected, varies considerably across segments of the population.

(a) Public Library Card

- ❑ On a basic level, nearly two in three respondents (63 per cent) reported having a public library card.
- ❑ As shown in Exhibit 2.1, there are significant differences along gender, age, and income lines.
 - ! Females are more likely to report having a public library card than males.
 - ! The proportion of respondents with library cards falls sharply with age.
 - ! Similar sharp differences are noted along income lines, with lower income groups being the least likely to report having a card.



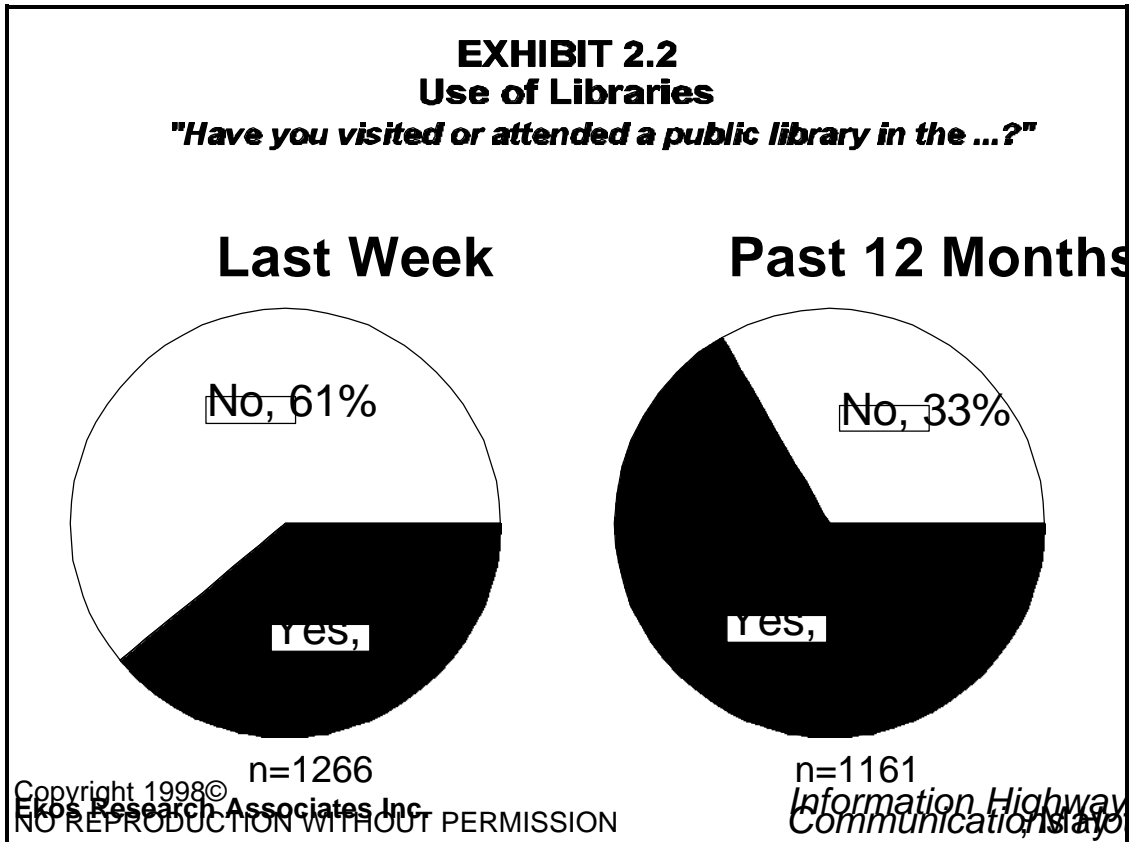
- ❑ There are a few other differences:
 - ! On a regional basis, reported possession of a public library card is higher in British Columbia (74 per cent) and Ontario (68 per cent), and slightly lower in Quebec (53 per cent).
 - ! Couples with children are more likely to report having a card than couples without (70 per cent vs. 60 per cent). The same is true with single parents over their counterparts without children (65 per cent vs. 54 per cent).
 - ! Respondents living in communities with less than 10,000 inhabitants also reported lower levels (53-55 per cent).

- ❑ On another note, it would appear that having a library card is not necessarily indicative of using public libraries. While it is only a small minority, 16 per cent of respondents with a library card reported that they had not used a public library in the past year.

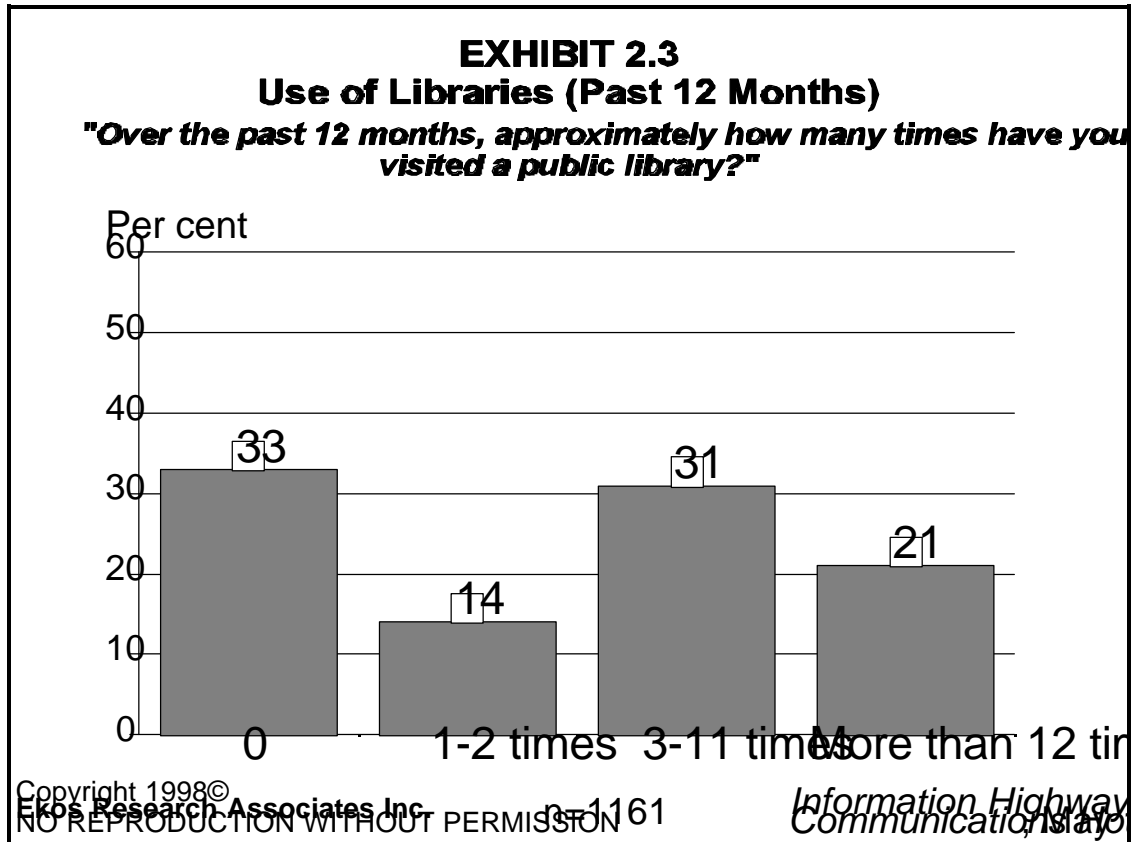
(b) Patterns and Frequency of Use

- ❑ Respondents were asked whether they had visited or attended a public library in the last week as well as how many times in the past 12 months.

- ❑ As shown in Exhibit 2.2, 39 per cent of respondents indicated that they had visited or attended a public library in the last week. Two in three respondents (66 per cent) also said that they had done the same in the past twelve months for an overall average of 7.7 visits across all groups.



- While it is likely that both figures overstate the actual number of visits, they still both suggest that a significant number of Canadians' usage of public libraries. It is also worth noting that the results from this study are similar to those reported in the 1991 *Reading in Canada* study which had used a similar methodology. In both studies, there was a similar pattern of Canadians using public libraries as compared to other activities. A comparison of the results also suggests that the number of visits to public libraries has increased. In the 1991 survey, 32 per cent reported they had visited or attended a public library in the last week, and an average of 6.4 visits in the past 12 months.
- There is a fair degree of variation in reported use in the past 12 months (Exhibit 2.3). While one in three respondents indicated that they have not visited a public library over the last year, another one in five (21 per cent) reported that they had been more than 12 times a year (i.e., the equivalent of once a month). Another 14 per cent reported visiting a public library one or two times in the past year, and 31 per cent reported that it was between three and 11 visits.



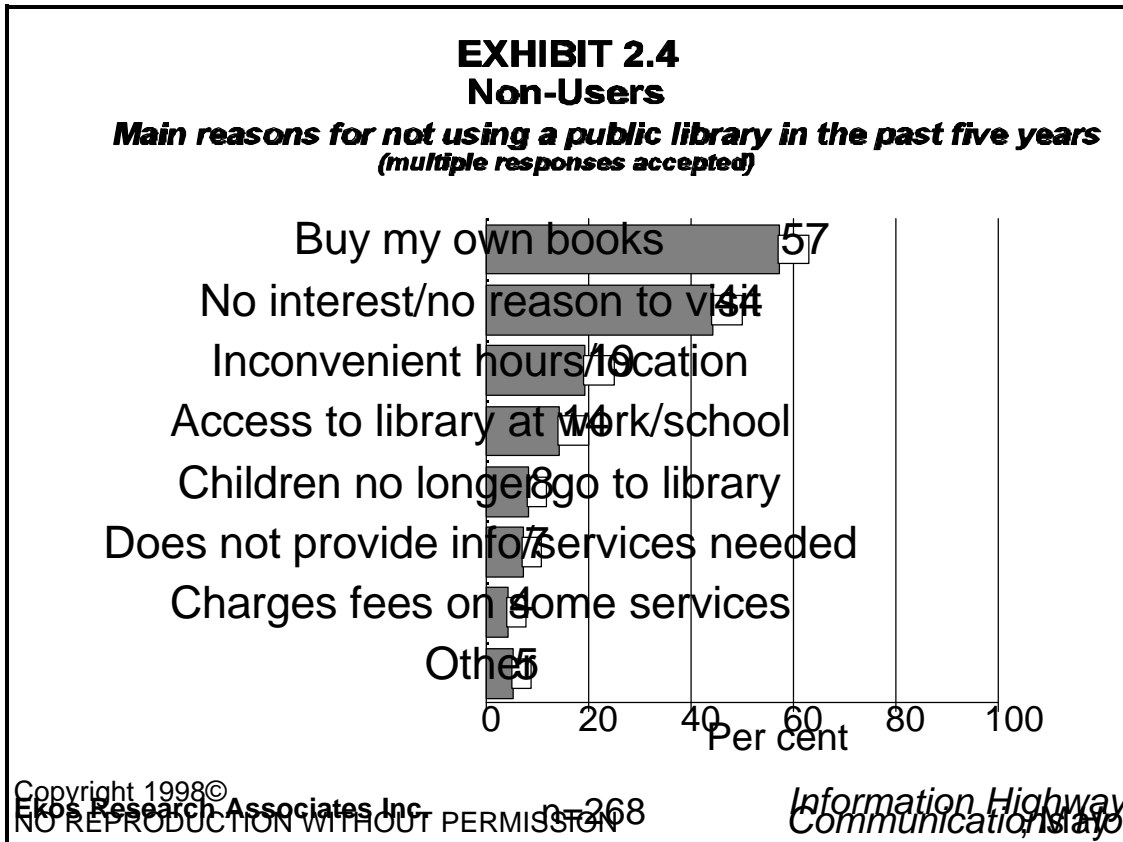
- There are a number of differences across subgroups. Females, younger respondents, middle and upper income groups, and those living in Ontario and British Columbia are more likely to be frequent visitors of public library in the past year. By corollary, males, older respondents, lower income groups, and those living in Atlantic Canada, Quebec, and the Prairies are less likely to have visited public libraries as often in the past year. The average number of visits across different subgroups is summarized in Table 2.1.

TABLE 2.1
Average Number of Visits to a Public Library In the Past Twelve Months
(n=1161)

Group	Average Number of Visits
All Survey Respondents	7.7
Gender	
Male	6.8
Female	8.6

Group	Average Number of Visits
Age	
Less than 25	10.0
25 to 44	7.8
45 to 64	7.5
65 and over	5.5
Region	
Atlantic Canada	5.8
Quebec	6.4
Ontario	8.1
Prairies	6.7
British Columbia	11.8
Household Income	
Less than \$20,000	6.8
\$20,000 to \$39,999	6.6
\$40,000 to \$59,999	8.8
\$60,000 and over	7.5

- Respondents who had not been to a public library in the past year were also asked the main reasons for not doing so (Exhibit 2.4). For the most part, the two most important reasons centred around the fact that these respondents reported buying their own books or have no interest or reason to visit a public library. Other reasons centred around inconveniences, access elsewhere, children no longer going to libraries.

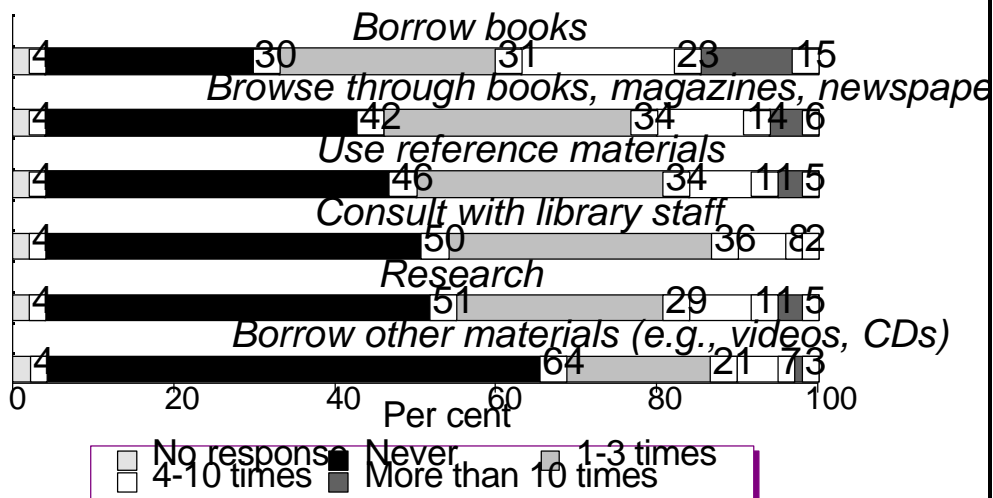


2.2 How Public Libraries are Being Used

- Survey respondents were also asked how often they had done a range of different activities when visiting a public library in the past three months. The frequency of activities are analyzed only for "users" given that "non-users", by definition, would not have done any of them.
- The survey findings suggest that public libraries are being used for a wide range of activities, although certain activities are much more frequently done than others (Exhibits 2.5a and 2.5b).
- ! The most common activities reported by a majority of "users" involve borrowing books (i.e., 66 per cent reported borrowing books at least 1-3 times in the past three months), browsing through books, magazines, and newspapers (54 per cent), and using reference materials (50 per cent).

- ! Many "users" are also using public libraries for research (45 per cent) as well as consulting with library staff (46 per cent).
 - ! Despite being in the minority, a significant number of "users" report borrowing other materials such as videos and CDs (31 per cent) and using photocopiers in public libraries (28 per cent).
 - ! Taking children to events or attending a library program were reported by 16 per cent and seven per cent of "users" respectively.
 - ! One in ten "users" also reported having accessed either on-line data bases (12 per cent) or Internet services (ten per cent).
 - ! Facilities such as meeting rooms were used by ten per cent of "users".
- Somewhat surprisingly, there are relatively few statistically differences across different subgroups of "users". The main differences include:
- ! Females and students were the most likely groups to report having borrowed books (74 per cent and 87 per cent respectively).
 - ! Reference materials were most likely to have been used by students (73 per cent), younger respondents (68 per cent), and those living in larger urban centres (62 per cent).
 - ! Browsing was most often reported amongst respondents living in larger urban centres (66 per cent), single respondents without any children (62 per cent), and those with a university degree (61 per cent).
 - ! Public library staff were consulted most often by students (66 per cent), university educated respondents (53 per cent), and females (49 per cent).
 - ! Closely related, the groups most likely to have undertaken research include students (78 per cent), younger respondents (64 per cent), and lower income respondents (58 per cent).
 - ! Accessing Internet services is highest amongst students (31 per cent) and younger respondents (23 per cent).

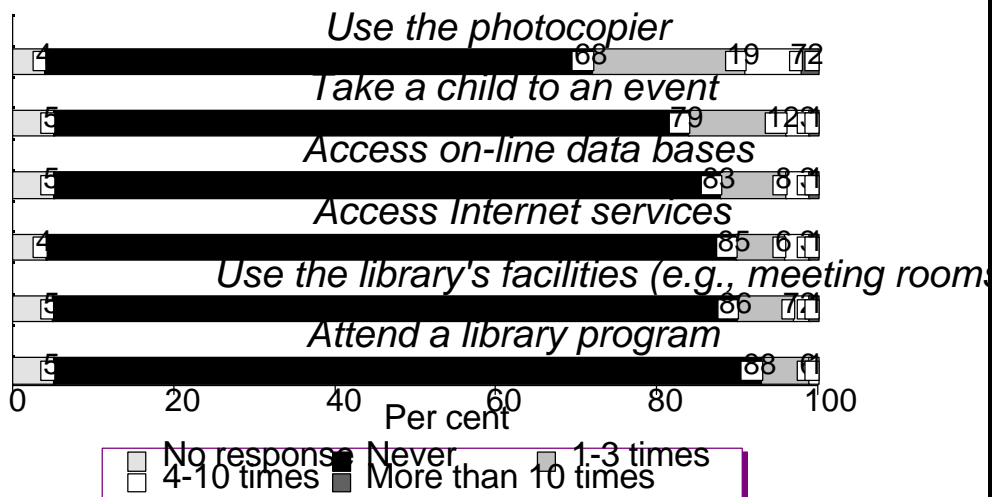
EXHIBIT 2.5a
"In the past three months, how often have you done any of the following when visiting a public library"
(Subsample of respondents who are public library users)



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EXHIBIT 2.5b
"In the past three months, how often have you done any of the following when visiting a public library"
(Subsample of respondents who are public library users)



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- ! Like Internet services, on-line data bases were used most often by younger respondents (24 per cent) and students (25 per cent). Higher usage was also reported in larger urban centres (20 per cent).

- ! Students, younger respondents, and those living in lower-income households were the most likely to report having used photocopiers (63 per cent, 51 per cent, and 42 per cent respectively).

CHAPTER

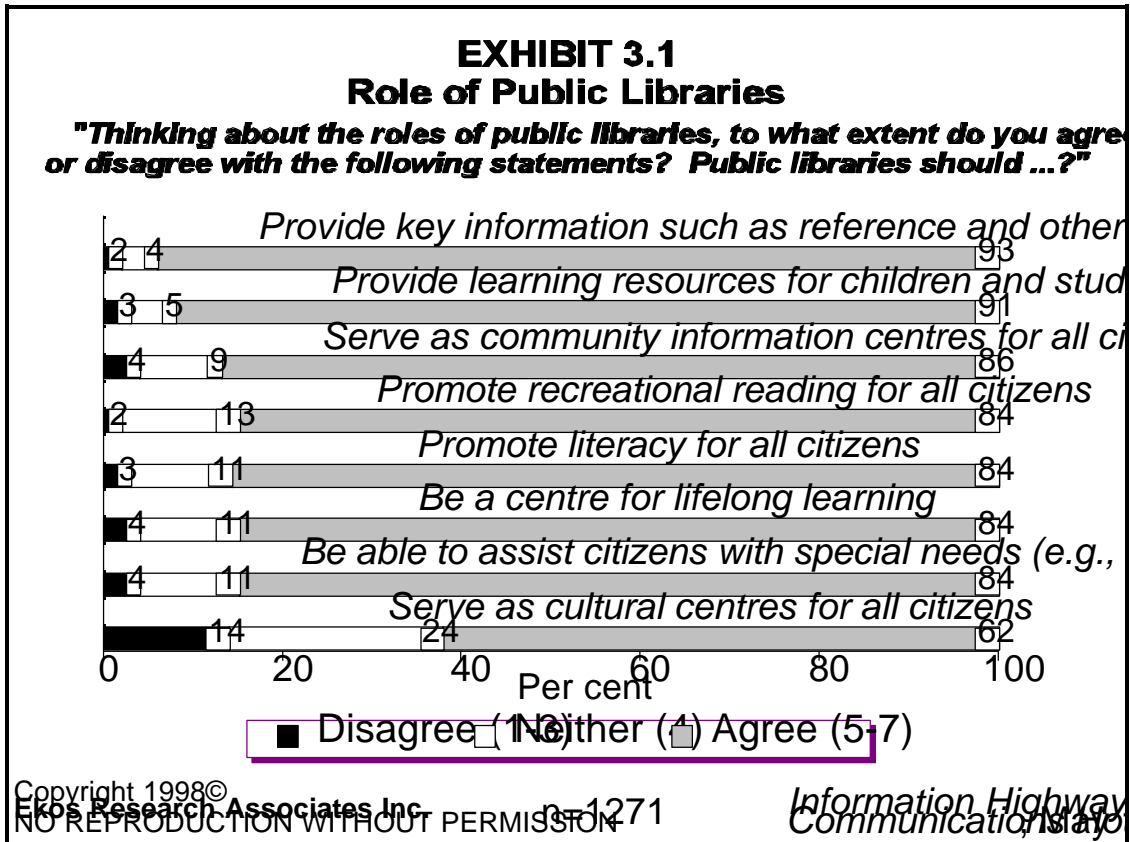
3

ROLES OF PUBLIC LIBRARIES

- ❑ The survey probed general attitudes in relation to the different roles of public libraries. While public libraries serve many roles in each community, the survey focused on three particular areas: broad roles of public libraries, the perceived importance of various activities, and the appropriateness of new roles in the area of the information highway. In relation to some of these newer roles, the survey also probed what information Canadians are using the Internet to find.

3.1 Roles of Public Libraries

- ❑ Generally speaking, there is considerable agreement over the range of roles examined in this study. Moreover, few respondents see any of the roles as not being appropriate activities for public libraries.
- ❑ As shown in Exhibit 3.1, the overwhelming majority of respondents agree that public libraries should be involved in areas with broad public policy objectives such as promoting literacy and recreational reading, providing information to citizens, and helping Canadians to learn. Closely related, the notion of equitable access is also a strong belief held by the majority of respondents. Respondents were least likely to believe that public libraries should serve as cultural centres, although it was still supported by a majority of respondents.



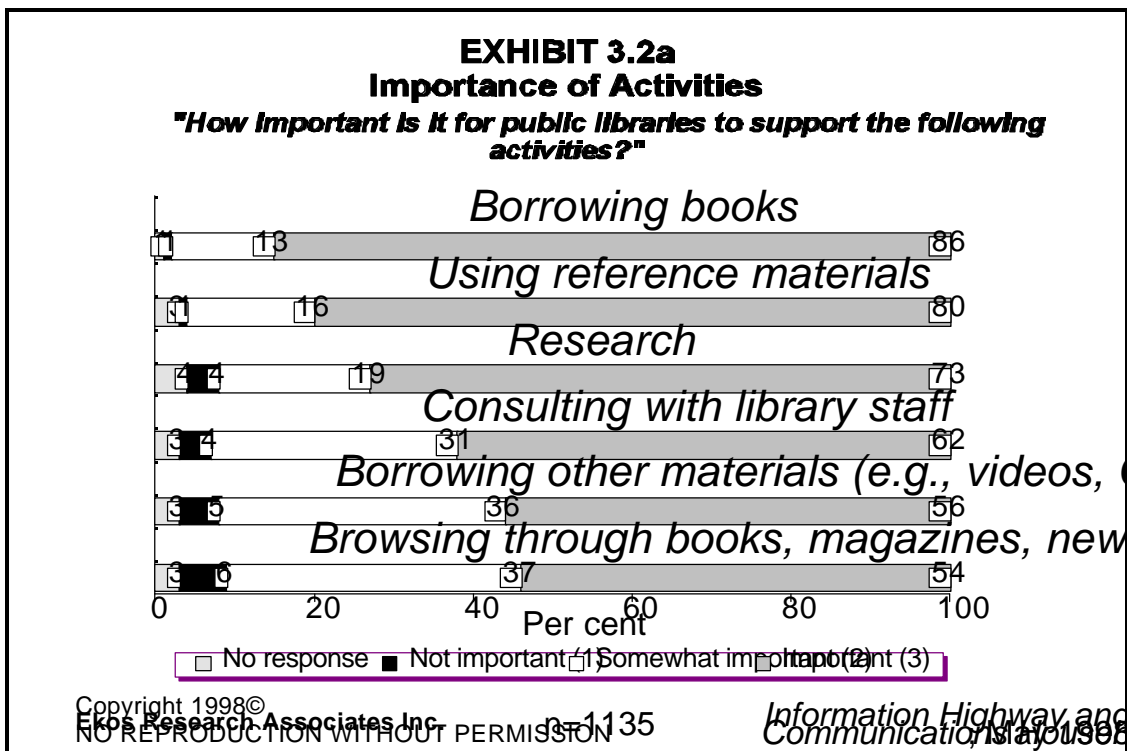
- High levels of agreement on different roles cut across all subgroups. It is, however, interesting to note that "users" are more likely to agree with the different roles than "non-users" except in the area relating to public libraries serving as cultural centres where there are no differences in attitudes.

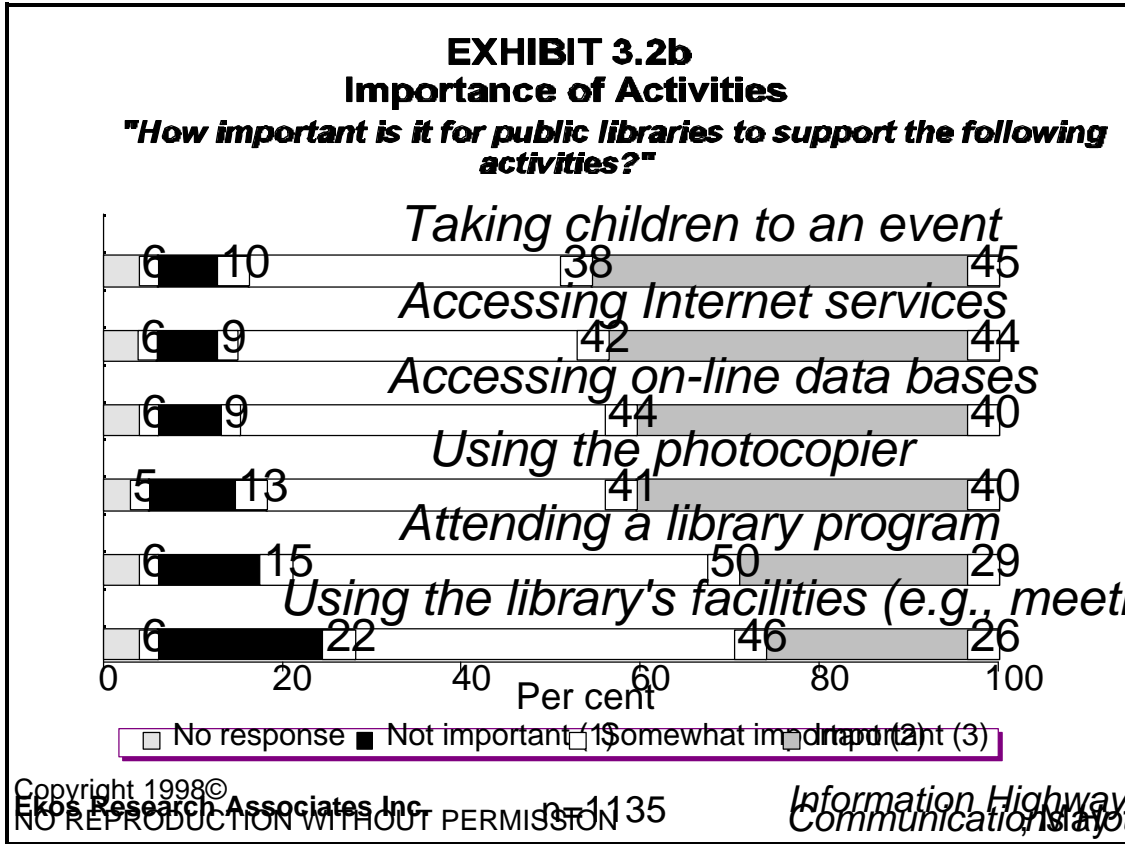
3.2 Perceived Importance of Activities

- Respondents were asked to rate the different activities that they may have done in the past three months in terms of their perceived importance for public libraries to continue supporting the range of activities.
- While few activities are seen as not being important, there are considerable differences in which activities are seen as important and which ones are seen as only somewhat important

(Exhibit 3.2a and 3.2b). For the most part, activities that are more frequently done tended to be rated as relatively more important than activities done less often.

- ! Borrowing books, using reference materials, and research are at the top of the list of activities that public libraries should continue to support.
- ! A majority of respondents believe that being able to consult library staff, borrow other material such as videos and CDs, and browsing are also important.
- ! Respondents tended to be more divided over the importance of events for children, access to Internet or on-line data bases, and photocopiers. Similar numbers rated each as somewhat important as those who rated them as important.
- ! Library programs and facilities such as meeting rooms are seen by far more respondents as being somewhat important over important.





3.3 Emerging Roles

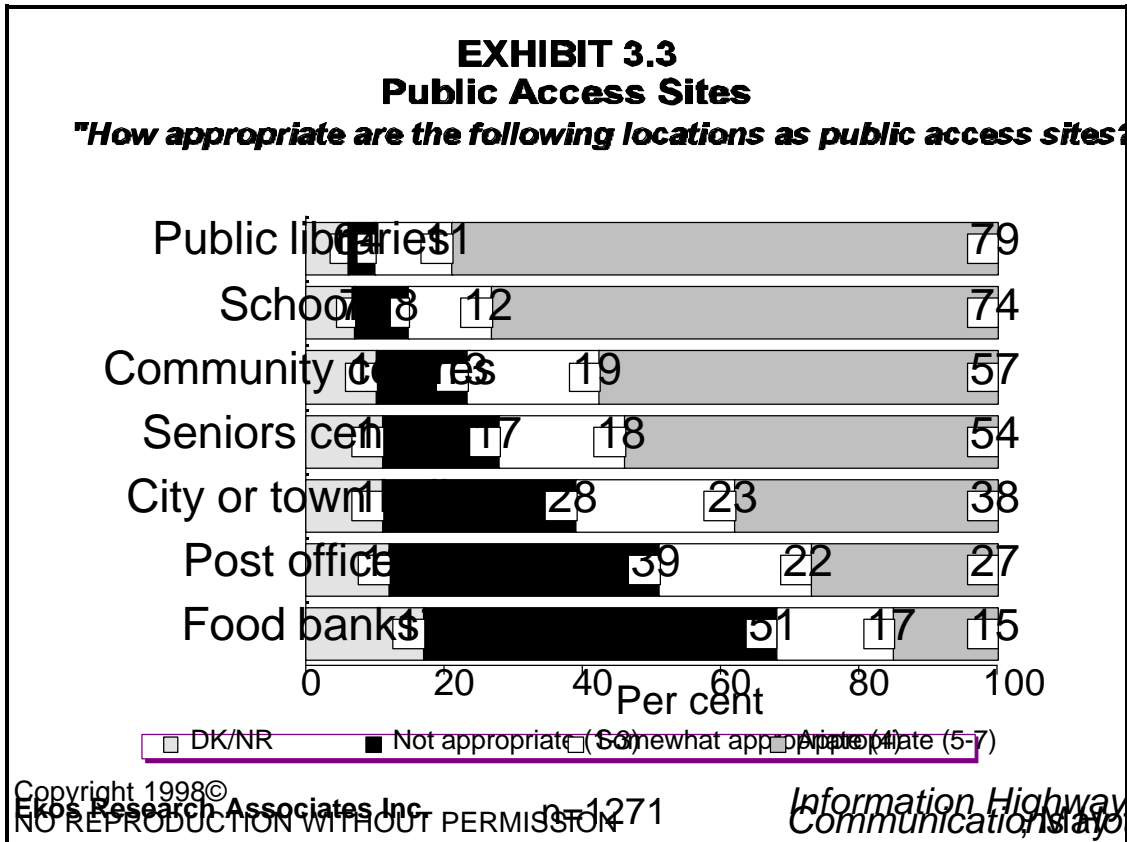
(a) Public Access Sites

- Despite the fact that Canadians in increasing numbers have access to the information highway and the Internet, there are many others who currently do not have the same access. While some individuals choose not to have access given a lack of interest, there are others for whom cost and lack of familiarity are limiting factors. In that regard, public access sites represent an increasingly important location for many Canadians to access to the information highway.

- ❑ In order to explore attitudes towards different models of public access sites, the survey asked respondents to rate the appropriateness of a range of institutions and places where they could be located.

- ❑ The findings from the survey suggest that respondents do not see one unique type of institution or place where public access sites should be located nor do they see all possible locations in the same light. Certain locations are seen as highly appropriate by most respondents, and others as being far less appropriate.

- ❑ Exhibit 3.3 displays the ratings given to each of the possible locations examined. At the top of the list are public libraries and schools. Both are seen by the overwhelming majority of respondents as being an appropriate location for public access sites. Moreover, few see either as not being an appropriate location. At the same time, a majority believe community centres and senior centres as an appropriate location, although another one in ten believe that this is not the case. Respondents were divided over locating public access sites in city or town halls with a slight lean towards being seen as an appropriate location. By contrast, post offices and foods banks are the most likely to be seen as not being an appropriate location.



- Generally speaking, there are important differences in perceived appropriateness of public libraries across subgroups.
 - ! The highest level of support for public libraries serving as public access sites is among younger and middle-aged respondents (88 per cent), students (93 per cent), university educated respondents (88 per cent), upper income groups (87 per cent) and library "users" themselves (82 per cent).
 - ! By corollary, lower levels of support are observed amongst older respondents (52 per cent), lower income groups (66 per cent), "non-users" (73 per cent), respondents without any post-secondary education (71 per cent), and those living in the smallest communities (70 per cent).
- For the most part, these differences in attitudes are correlated to usage of the information highway. In other words, support for public libraries as an access site is highest among younger Canadians and higher socioeconomic status groups who are also more likely to use the information highway than others.

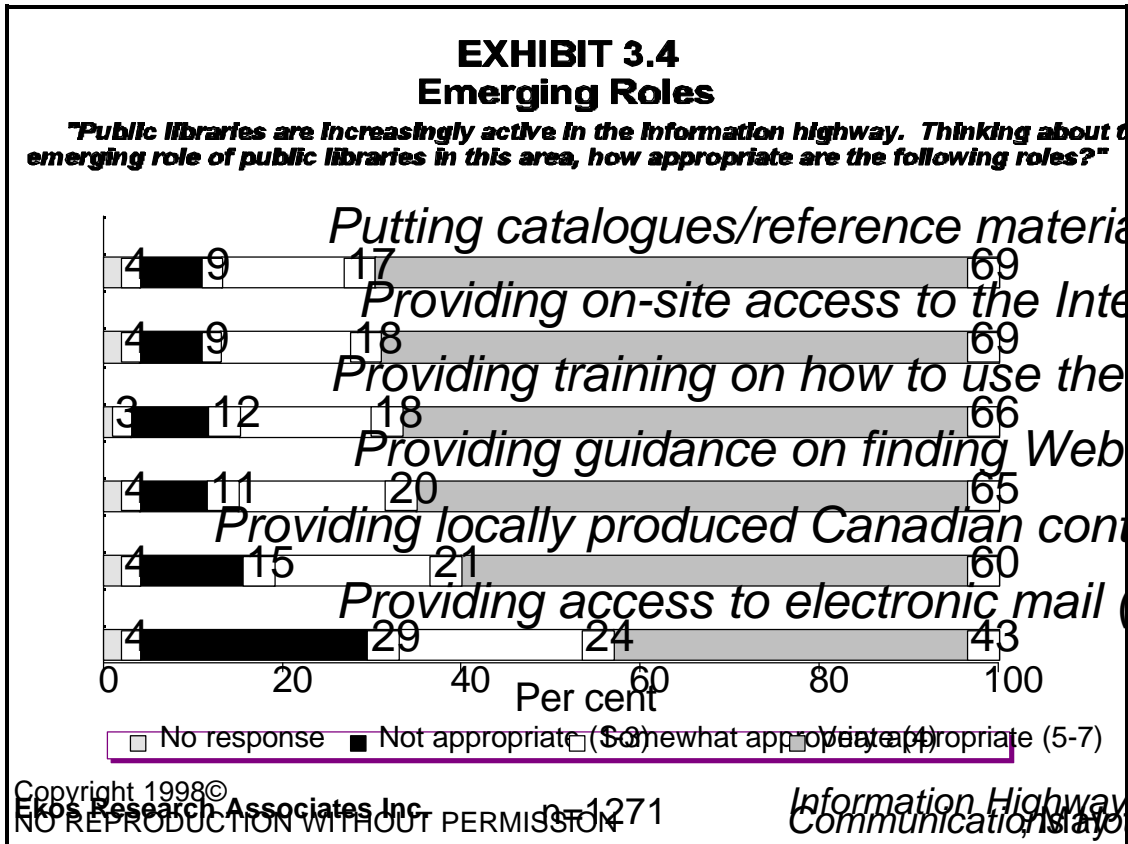
- It is also important to recognize that public libraries are rated at or near the top as an appropriate location across all subgroups. Put another way, this means that groups such as older Canadians are more likely to rate public libraries as being appropriate than any other location even though they rate them as less appropriate than their younger counterparts.

(b) Specific Roles

- While some public libraries have been active in the information highway for some time, it represents an emerging role for many other public libraries across the country. In that context, the survey probed the appropriateness of different roles of public libraries in this area.

- Consistent with attitudes towards public access sites, most of the emerging roles in relation to the information highway are seen as highly appropriate activities for public libraries. The one notable exception relates to public libraries providing access to e-mail. While this role is seen as being at least somewhat appropriate by a majority of respondents, nearly three in ten believed that it was an inappropriate activity.

- These findings are summarized in Exhibit 3.4.
 - ! Seven in ten respondents (69 per cent) believe that providing on-site access to the Internet is an appropriate role for public libraries. Only nine per cent believe that it is not appropriate.
 - ! A similar share indicated that it was appropriate that public libraries provide training on how to use the Internet (66 per cent) and guidance on finding Web sites (65 per cent). About one in ten said that either is not appropriate.
 - ! Consistent with the trend towards more information being available electronically, 69 per cent of respondents that putting catalogues/reference material on-line is an appropriate role for public libraries. Only nine per cent believe that it is not appropriate.
 - ! A majority of respondents (60 per cent) indicated that it is appropriate that public libraries provide locally produced Canadian content on their Web sites. Fifteen per cent believe that it is not appropriate.
 - ! Respondents were most divided in terms of the appropriateness of public libraries providing access to e-mail. A minority of respondents (43 per cent) believe that it is an appropriate role, although another 24 per cent said it was somewhat appropriate. By contrast, respondents were nearly twice as likely to believe providing e-mail is an inappropriate role than any of the other roles examined (29 per cent).



- As expected, these newer roles are most likely to be seen as appropriate by those respondents who tend to use the information highway more often (i.e., younger and upper income and educational groups).

(c) The Internet

- As part of the broader information highway study, the survey also examined the different types of information Canadians are using the Internet to find. While it is not directly related to the mandate of public libraries, these findings can help public libraries to better understand the broader environment in which they are providing services to Canadians (e.g., are there areas where Canadians are relying on the Internet to find information rather than finding the information in books).

- As is shown in Table 3.1, the findings suggest that there are a significant number of Canadians with access to the Internet at home who are now relying on it as a primary source to find information on various topics.
- ! While respondents were most likely to say they rely on the Internet as a primary source to find computer-related information, many are also using it to find information on hobbies, government programs and services, newspapers and magazines, schools and tourism/travel.
 - ! Close to one in five also said that they use the Internet as a primary source for conducting literature/library searches.
 - ! Only a small number say that they rely on public library Web sites as a primary source of information.

TABLE 3.1
Internet as a Source of Information¹
"Is the Internet your primary source for finding this type of information?"

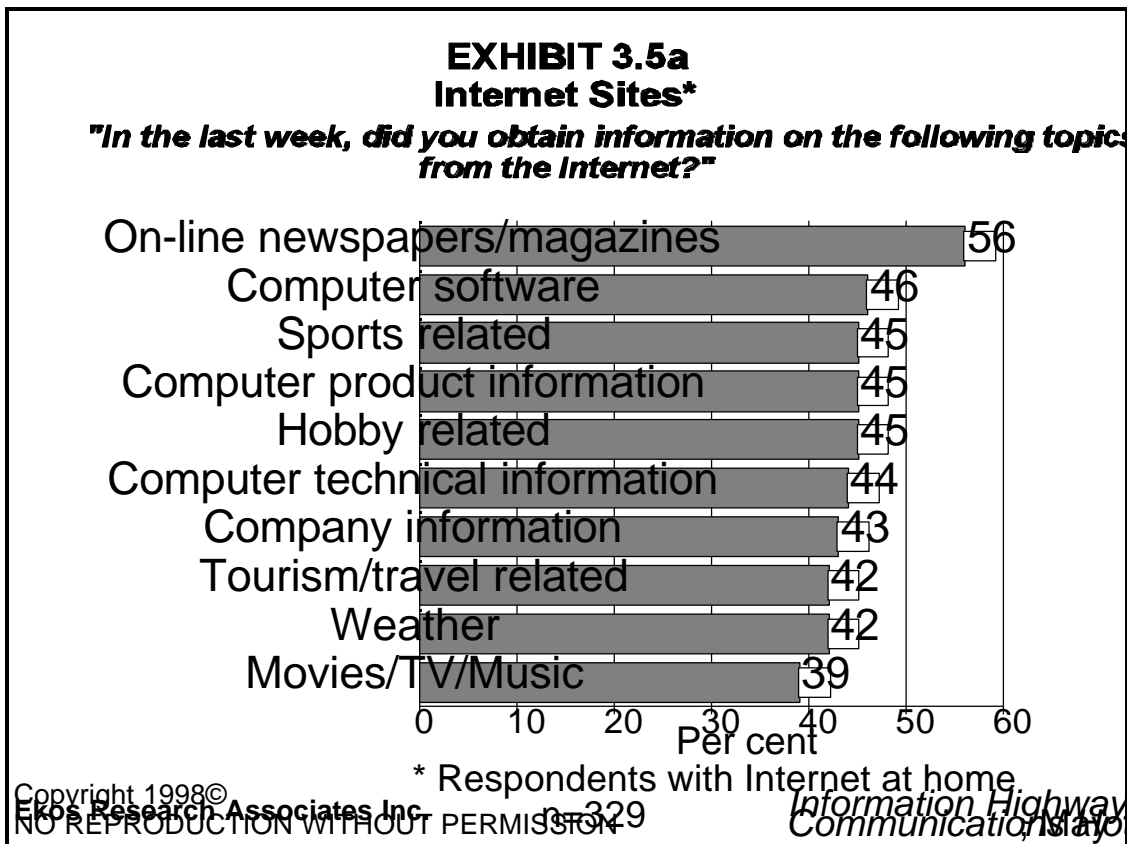
(per cent indicating yes)

1. Computer technical information	32%	12. Literature/library searches	17%
2. Computer software	30%	13. Weather	16%
3. Computer product information	30%	14. Jobs/employment information	15%
4. Company information	23%	15. Movies/TV/music	14%
5. Hobby related	22%	16. Health related	12%
6. General gov't Web sites	22%	17. Museums/archives	8%
7. On-line newspapers/magazines	21%	18. Community information	7%
8. Gov't programs/services	19%	19. National parks/historic sites	7%
9. Schools/universities	19%	20. Other education related	7%
10. Tourism/travel related	19%	21. Art galleries/museums	7%
11. Sports related	17%	22. Public library Web site	6%

- The study also explored what information respondents with access to the Internet at home had obtained from the Internet in the past week. As shown in Exhibits 3.5a and 3.5b, respondents were most likely to have obtained on-line newspapers and magazines, and information relating to computers, sports, hobbies, tourism and weather.

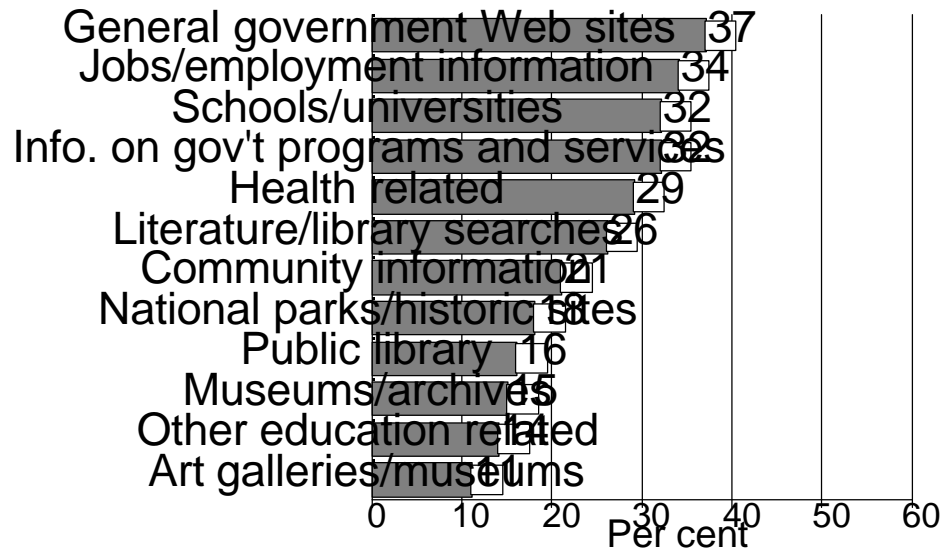
1. The findings are based only on respondents who have access to the Internet from home.

- ! Still, many others reported that they had found information relating to government programs and services, employment opportunities, schools/universities, and health-related.
- ! One in four respondents with Internet access at home said that they had obtained information from a literature/library search on-line.
- ! 16 per cent said that they had obtained information from a public library on the Internet.



**EXHIBIT 3.5b
Internet Sites***

"In the last week, did you obtain information on the following topics from the Internet?"



* Respondents with Internet at home

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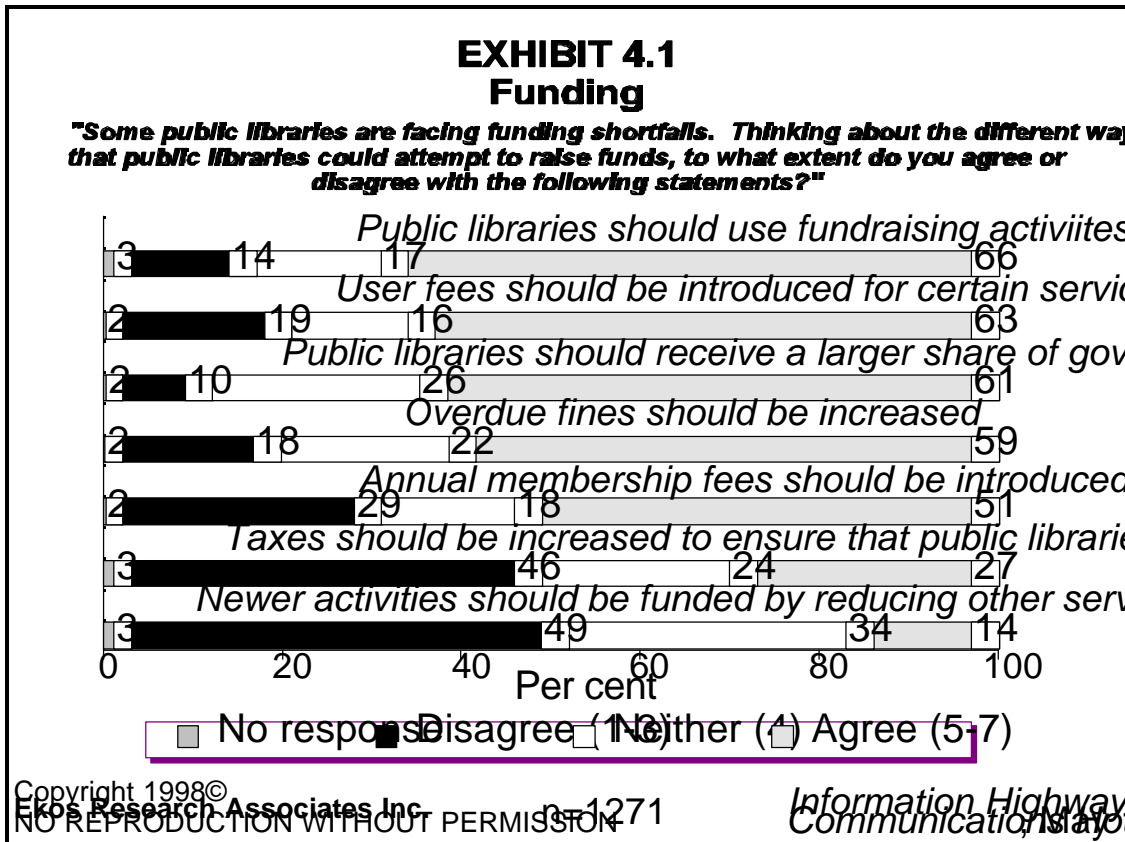
Information Highway
Communications Inc.

CHAPTER**4**

FUNDING-RELATED ISSUES

- ❑ In the last several years, many public libraries across the country have had to deal with reductions in funding as all levels of government have reduced spending. While some have been able to secure adequate funding, others are facing funding shortfalls. In an era of continued fiscal restraint and one in which the public is reluctant to see taxes raised, many public libraries are increasingly having to find alternative means to ensure sufficient funding.
- ❑ The issue of funding is particularly relevant for public libraries if, on the one hand, there are limited public funds, and on the other, they are undertaking newer roles such as those relating to the information highway.
- ❑ The survey probed attitudes towards different ways that public libraries could raise funds to address shortfalls. As is often the case when examining funding-related issues, there is a coexistence of support for different approaches.
- ❑ While there is a strong belief that public libraries are a suitable target for increased government funding, most respondents are not willing to see taxes raised to this end. At the same time, respondents also believe that public libraries themselves must take a greater role in securing adequate levels of funding. On the other hand, they do not support the broad approach where newer services are provided by reducing other services elsewhere.

- These findings are summarized in Exhibit 4.1.
 - ! A majority of respondents (61 per cent) agree that public libraries should receive a larger share of government funds. Only 10 per cent disagree.
 - ! On the other hand, close to one in two respondents (46 per cent) believe that public libraries should not be funded through tax increases. Still, it is noteworthy that 27 per cent agree that taxes should be raised, although much of this support is more moderate than strong.
 - ! Respondents also believe that public libraries should share in some of the responsibility for addressing funding shortfalls through different means, including user fees (63 per cent), increasing overdue fines (59 per cent), and introducing annual membership fees (51 per cent). Two in three respondents (66 per cent) also believe that public libraries should use fund raising activities.
 - ! In contrast, respondents were far more likely to disagree that newer services should be funded by reducing other services, programs or collections (49 per cent vs. only 14 per cent who agree).



APPENDIX A
English Questionnaire

Get "infohwy\wave2\diary\dqnocol.e61" in WP6.1

APPENDIX B
French Questionnaire

Get "infohwy\wave2\diary\dnocol.f61" in WP6.1

