Office of Management and Budget

Section 213 of the E-Government Act Report to Congress:

Organizations Complementing Federal Agency Information Dissemination Programs

April 15, 2005

INTRODUCTION

This is the Office of Management and Budget's (OMB) report on organizations complementing Federal agency information dissemination programs as required by Section 213 of the Electronic Government Act of 2002 (Public Law 107-347). This section of the Act requires OMB to submit a report on a study of best practices of community technology centers (CTCs) receiving Federal funds. The section also states its purpose is to "promote the awareness of the availability of on-line government information and services to users of community technology centers, public libraries, and other public facilities providing access to computer technology and Internet access to the public."

This report discusses Government Printing Office's (GPO) Federal Depository Libraries (FDLs), Federally funded CTCs, public libraries, and National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) research rooms. The report describes on-line government information and services available to users of these programs, identifies promising practices at each, and, where applicable, refers to completed performance evaluations assessing the effectiveness of the program. Representatives from GPO, the Department of Education, the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS), NARA, and the General Services Administration aided in developing this report.

BACKGROUND

The Federal government is the largest single producer, collector, consumer, and disseminator of information in the United States, and, as a result, Federal government information is a valuable national resource. This resource provides the public with information about the government, society, economy, and many other subjects. It is a means to ensure the accountability of government, to manage the government's operations, to maintain the healthy performance of the economy, and is itself a commodity in the marketplace.[1]

Agencies are maintaining and implementing information resources management systems for all government information, government publications, and information dissemination products.[2] These information resource management systems ensure the proper performance of agency functions, and are critical to effective delivery of agency services and programs. A key aspect of any agency information resources management system is to ensure information and services are of high quality and the public is able to access the information dissemination products.

To meet these objectives, agencies are managing innovative information dissemination programs for their own agency information and services. While agencies remain ultimately responsible for disseminating their own information, agencies are working collaboratively to provide access to the public and are taking advantage of a variety of dissemination channels. Consequently, Federal information is disseminated by Federal agencies as well as diverse nonfederal parties, including State and local government agencies, for-profit organizations, and educational and other not-for-

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[1] OMB Circular A-130: "Management of Federal Information Resources"

[2] The term "information dissemination product" means any book, paper, map, machine-readable material, audiovisual production, or other documentary material, regardless of physical form or characteristic, disseminated by an agency to the public. (OMB Circular A-130, section 6(k))

profit organizations such as libraries and community centers. These dissemination channels also aid the public in accessing Federal information and services by providing the skills, knowledge, and training for citizens to access various information resources.

This report describes the roles and functions of FDLs, CTCs, and public libraries, and identifies promising practices to deliver government information and services to the public. In addition, NARA provides online access to historical Federal records and information about these records. The distinguishing feature of all four programs described in this report is their ability to complement information dissemination programs of all Federal agencies, rather than one, or a select few. They complement agency information dissemination programs because they aid agency implementation of important Federal information policy principles described in OMB Circular A-130 "Management of Federal Information Resources" (see: http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/circulars/a130/a130trans4.pdf).

Federal information policy principles, when implemented in concert with one another, ensure the efficient and effective delivery of information and services to obtain results. Taken together, agency information dissemination programs allow access to electronic information in ways citizens never would have been able to in a paper-based environment. Agencies should continue to take advantage of complementary organizations to efficiently deliver information and services to citizens. The promising practices presented after the description of each program support the following Federal information policy principles:

- Communicate with the public and evaluate information dissemination programs to ensure implementation meets user needs;
- Provide ready access to quality information and services, including to the disabled, by cataloging and providing aids for the public to easily locate Federal information;
- Maintain records for the adequate and proper documentation of Federal activities;
- Train staff to aid citizens in obtaining Federal information resources and services; and
- Establish collaborative relationships with other organizations to share and disseminate information resources.

FDLs, CTCs, public libraries, and NARA research rooms are located throughout the country to serve people in rural and urban areas (a distribution table of FDLs and public library systems can be found in Appendix I). While the existence of many sites provides citizens with more opportunities to obtain government information and services, Federal agencies remain responsible for implementing their own information dissemination programs, and are not solely dependent on these four programs to meet the strategic goals of their agency and information resource programs.

THE FEDERAL DEPOSITORY LIBRARY PROGRAM

Origins of the FDL program. The Federal Depository Library Program is an information dissemination program of the GPO, and administered under the authority of Title 44, Chapter 19 of the *United States Code*. FDLs trace their roots to 1813 when Congress first authorized legislation ensuring one copy of the House and Senate Journals and other Congressional documents were disseminated to certain universities, historical societies, and state libraries. Over time laws have

expanded the types of libraries eligible to participate in the program and the scope of materials provided to depository libraries (for more information see: http://www.gpoaccess.gov/fdlp.html).

Depository libraries are major partners with the Federal government in the dissemination of information and contribute significantly to the diversity of information resources available to the public. They provide a mechanism for wide distribution of government information to help guarantee basic availability to the public. Executive branch agencies support the depository library program, and work in concert with the GPO, as a means of informing the public about the government.

The five founding principles of the FDL program are:

1. A well informed citizenry, cognizant of the policies and activities of its representative Government, is essential for the proper functioning of democracy.
2. Information provided by government documents is a primary means for citizens to keep informed.
3. The public has a right to information contained in government documents, which have been published at public expense.
4. The Government has an obligation to ensure availability of and access to these documents at no cost.
5. These documents are a permanent source of Federal information.

Title 44, Section 1911 of the United States Code requires FDLs to make Federal government publications available for the free use of the general public. There are 1,270 FDLs delivering services and free local access to publications and information, in a variety of formats, from all three branches of the Federal government. FDLs are located in every State, the District of Columbia, and the territories of the United States (to locate a FDL, see: http://www.gpoaccess.gov/libraries.html). On average, FDLs are open 83 hours per week and make available 64 hours of professional librarian assistance. Appendix I tabulates the number of FDLs in each State.

Obtaining FDL Designation. There are two ways a library obtains designation as a FDL. The first and most frequent is designation by an elected official. Eligibility for designation of these libraries resides in Title 44, Section 1909, United States Code:

> *"Only a library able to provide custody and service for depository materials and located in an area where it can best serve the public need, and within an area not already adequately served by existing depository libraries may be designated … as a depository of Government publications."*

Therefore, qualifications for designation include a library's capacity to safeguard and deliver government information and services. The physical proximity of the FDLs in relation to an area's population, as well as the nearest FDL, is also important. By early nineteenth century design, Federal depository libraries are geographically located to maximize citizen access and as a result are widely distributed across each State and United States territories. Provided vacancies exist, Senators may designate two libraries in their State and Representatives may designate two libraries in their congressional district.

Alternatively, FDLs can obtain designation through specific provisions of Title 44, Chapter 19, allowing certain types of libraries to qualify as FDLs. Federal agency, service academy, land grant college, State, and highest appellate State court libraries, as well as accredited law schools, are all eligible for depository designation in this manner (to learn more about how to become a FDL see: http://www.access.gpo.gov/su_docs/fdlp/pubs/desig.html).

The two methods for obtaining FDL designation create a diverse program consisting of various library types. Public libraries and academic libraries in colleges and universities are the most common and largest contingents. Since each library tailors its collection and services to its clientele, different libraries offer additional services and activities. Although, FDLs may serve a primary clientele, they remain obligated to provide free access to FDL collections and services to anyone.

In 1996, GPO published a report titled: "*Study to Identify Measures Necessary for a Successful Transition to a More Electronic Federal Depository Library Program*". Since then, the FDL program has gradually become a primarily electronic program. At the time of the report, approximately 5% of the titles GPO distributed to libraries were electronic and mostly on floppy diskettes or CD-ROMs. In FY 2004, 11,932 online titles and 9,141 links to agency titles were added to *GPO Access,* for a total of 21,073 new online titles. During the same period, GPO distributed to FDLs 11,275 tangible (or hard-copy) titles. These consisted of paper titles, microfiche titles, CD-ROM/DVDs, and U.S. Geological Survey maps. Of the total number of titles added to the program, 65% were made available online. Numerous titles distributed by GPO are offered to FDLs in multiple formats such as paper, microfiche, and CD-ROM. Many of these same titles are online and accessible via *GPO Access.* Few distributed titles (14%) are distributed without an online equivalent, meaning in FY 2004, 86% of all materials distributed thru the FDL program were available online.

GPO Services Accompanying the FDL Program. With changing Federal agency publications patterns and their increasing reliance on the Internet to disseminate publications, FDLs provide computer equipment for users to access online and other electronic government information and services. In addition to computers, FDLs make available the following GPO services to help users find Federal information and services:

- Catalog of U.S. Government Periodicals (http://www.gpoaccess.gov/cgp). The catalog is a search and retrieval service providing authoritative bibliographic records of U.S. Government information products. Through these records, one may link to Federal agency online resources or identify materials distributed to FDLs. Coverage begins with January 1994 (soon to be expanded to July 1976) and new records are added daily. The print counterpart is the *Monthly Catalog of United States Government Publications* and its predecessors, which GPO has produced since 1895.
- FDL Program Electronic Collection (http://www.access.gpo.gov/su_docs/fdlp/ec). The FDL program electronic collection is a comprehensive digital library of online resources from all branches of Government. The program, through its partnerships and its network of depository libraries, is identifying, pointing to, acquiring, creating metadata for, and in many cases archiving electronic publications from all agencies, and will provide ongoing free public access to the resources in the FDL program's electronic collection. Access to the

FDL program electronic collection is provided through the catalog of U.S. Government periodicals and other locator tools and services available from GPO Access.

- *GPO Access* (http://www.gpoaccess.gov). *GPO Access* is one of the leading online sources of free and official Government information. Its publicly available resources, covering all three branches of the Federal government, are available through more than 80 applications, including the popular Congressional Record, Federal Register, and Code of Federal Regulations. Finding aids available through *GPO Access* link to government electronic products in the FDL program electronic collection and at other Federal agency web sites.
- Ben's Guide to U.S. Government for Kids (http://bensguide.gpo.gov). Ben's Guide serves as the educational component of GPO Access and provides learning tools for K-12 students, parents, and teachers. These resources teach how the Federal government works, how to use primary source materials available at GPO Access, and how one can use GPO Access to carry out civic responsibilities. Ben's Guide also provides a locator service to Federal government web sites developed for kids.
- U.S. Government Online Bookstore (http://bookstore.gpo.gov). The online bookstore is the official source for Federal government publications sold by GPO. It provides web users with easy, one-stop access to publications from all branches of Federal government.

Promising Practices in FDLs

1. A component of GPO's administrative oversight of FDLs includes conducting a biennial survey, required to be completed by all FDLs. GPO uses the survey to determine the condition of libraries and what services GPO could provide to better support FDLs to meet their mission and make Federal information products accessible to all. The most recent biennial survey of 2003 revealed FDLs are conducting user satisfaction and needs assessments. These evaluations help FDLs communicate with the public and ascertain the quality and adequacy of the collections they maintain as well as the effectiveness of the services they deliver. As a result, FDLs ensure citizens receive what they want and FDLs remain valuable partners to improving the overall well-being of the community.

2. The same survey asked about the availability of electronic catalogs and other electronic aids to help access library resources. When asked about the type of library catalog (e.g., card, COM, Web-based online), 96% of the FDLs indicated they had Web-based catalogs, compared to older CD-ROM catalogs or card catalogs. A web-based online catalog is an effective way to inventory and categorize the information products available at each FDL. Categorizing and creating an inventory makes it easier for users to search and obtain the products. Furthermore, the majority of FDL catalogs include Internet resources and links to those resources, and provide Internet-accessible electronic Federal information products.

3. The survey also examined how FDLs are providing equitable access to persons with disabilities, and the majority of FDLs are taking steps to eliminate and reduce any barriers to the information and services provided within the FDLs. For example, most FDLs own computer equipment operating with assistive technology software and hardware. Seventy-two percent of all FDLs have an access policy in place ensuring the general public has easy access to the FDLs resources.

4. GPO provides FDLs statistical data on the number of visits to *GPO Access* from their online catalog. An awareness of the number of visits and frequency of use is important when making decisions about what resources to make available. In FY 2004, *GPO Access* was visited an average of 17,016 times per month by the 219 FDLs volunteering to receive data. FDLs are making government CD-ROMs and DVDs accessible from beyond the library. CDs are available from the Internet and local or wide area networks at 27% of the libraries, and 68% of FDLs circulate CDs so users may use them from home or work. DVDs are available from the Internet and local or wide area networks at 10% of FDLs, and 54% of FDLs circulate DVDs for use outside the library.

5. Many depository libraries operate under "State Plans" to coordinate inter-library cooperation for collection development, resource delivery, training, promotion, and other services. State plans are created and maintained by FDLs in each State. Within the FDL community there are many cooperative efforts extending beyond the borders of State plans. *Government Information Online* is a cooperative virtual reference and information service specializing in answering questions using government information. Thirty-two FDLs participate in this project sponsored by the Illinois State Library, the University of Illinois at Chicago, and the Online Computer Library Center, Inc (OCLC). The service provides e-mail and live online chat services for users seeking government information and services (see: http://www.cyberdriveillinois.com/departments/library/what_we_have/questionpoint/gioquestionform.html).

Many library-related professional organizations at the international, national, regional, State, and local levels have government information special interest groups or round tables. FDL personnel are active in professional associations at all these levels. Participation and the cooperation has lead to the creation of such web sites as the "Government Information Clearinghouse & Handout Exchange" (see: http://sunsite.berkeley.edu/GODORT/education/clearinghouse/), where one can find tutorials for training library users and staff, handouts used in workshops and classes, instructions for using Government CD-ROM products, user guides, and bibliographies or online resources.

There are also examples of inter-association cooperation as well. The "Gov Docs Online Tutorial" (see: http://www.aallnet.org/sis/gd/tutorial/), is a project of the Government Documents Special Interest Section of the American Association of Law Librarians and the Government Documents Round Table of the American Library Association. The tutorial is designed to help library personnel understand and implement basic procedures for processing Federal publications and resources.

Depository libraries are also connected to other libraries through national, regional, and State computer networks, consortia, or bibliographic utilities. These relationships are important for resource sharing, inter-library lending, and document delivery services. Biennial survey results show 41% of FDLs have a catalog networked with other libraries.

Most FDLs are members of the Online Computer Library Center (OCLC), a computer library service organization with more than 50,500 members throughout the world. WorldCat, OCLC's union catalog, was designed specifically for members to share cataloging and resources. GPO is a major contributor of bibliographic records to the database, adding 20,000 – 30,000 records annually.

Beginning in February 2005, GPO began adding the holdings symbols of 31 regional depository libraries to GPO-produced records contributed to WorldCat. Holding symbols are used to identify who cataloged information products and records in the system and to identify other libraries "holding" this item in their collection. In one month GPO produced over 1,100 records to which holding symbols for 31 libraries were added, thereby creating over 34,500 new access points to Federal information products. Applying holding symbols:

- Improves public and library community awareness of resources available in FDL collections;
- Increases bibliographic access points to FDL collections; and
- Facilitates interlibrary loans of tangible Federal publications in FDL collections.

6. Another promising practice throughout the FDL program is implementation of a collection management process to track information product circulation. The process defines a library's user community, establishes guidelines for adding materials pertinent to the needs of their users, and codifies procedures for managing and maintaining the collection. The process helps FDLs to replace underutilized products with ones in higher demand, and annually revise selections received from the GPO. This helps to ensure users can obtain copies of the products they seek so sites maintain collections to sufficiently meet user needs. The collection management process includes government information resources in any format (paper, microfiche, video, CD-ROM, DVD, and online).

In addition to the collections they make available, FDLs provide a number of other services to help patrons locate and use government information products, such as:

- Government information librarians who provide expert reference assistance;
- Computers with Internet access used to obtain online government information;
- Reference catalogs, guides, and web pages; and
- Referral or interlibrary loan services for materials not in the local collection.

7. Finally, a majority of FDLs have developed service policies to ensure library users have free access to online Federal information. These policies reemphasize the program's obligation to provide access to online Federal information products. The policies are based upon "Depository Library Public Service Guidelines for Government Information in Electronic Formats" (see: http://www.access.gpo.gov/su_docs/fdlp/mgt/pseguide.html), and are the result of discussions and analysis on the part of the Depository Library Council, the Public Printer's advisory body, and depository librarians. The guidelines address how FDLs can provide public access to the increasing amount of Federal government information available in electronic formats. FDL librarians are also active in bibliographic instruction and in conducting workshops on computer and Internet usage. The guidelines help FDLs offer training for the public in using tangible electronic government information products and Internet resources.

The above promising practices support important Federal information policy principles. For example, the biennial survey ensures communication with the public and evaluates information dissemination to ensure program implementation meets user needs. FDLs are taking steps to reduce barriers to citizens seeking access, including to the disabled, and are cataloging and providing aids

for the public to easily locate Federal information. FDLs are also maintaining collaborative relationships with other organizations to share and disseminate information resources.

COMMUNITY TECHNOLOGY CENTERS

CTCs provide computer and Internet access at the community level. There are over 30,000 such access centers if informal arrangements are included. Most are non-profit community based organizations. CTCs may be independent organizations dedicated to this service, but the majority of organizations providing this access have broader missions. For example, educational organizations such as community colleges and public libraries, social service organizations such as Boys and Girls Clubs or Urban Leagues, and other private and public service organizations are providing computer and Internet access along with other types of services. Other services include:

- In-school as well as before and after-school programming;
- Training to improve test-taking skills (e.g. GED);
- Instruction for academic enrichment;
- One-on-one tutoring and homework assistance;
- Preparation for college and job counseling;
- Access to the Internet to deliver citizenship (e.g. immigration) services;
- Instruction in introductory and advanced computer courses;
- Providing assistive technology for people with disabilities;
- Resources for business development; and
- Resources and technical skills for web design, video, and photo editing.

Several networks of CTCs exist in the United States. The largest among these is the Community Technology Centers' Network (CTCNet) originating from a handful of centers in the northeast in 1990 to more than 1,000 independent member CTCs today. Although there are CTCNet members in every State, most are located in urban areas and on the east and west coasts.

Very few CTCs receive Federal funding. The U.S. Department of Education administers a grant program awarding one-year discretionary grants to support some CTC activities. In FY 2004, the Department awarded 25 grants totaling over $9 million to entities in 16 States to create or expand CTCs. Grants ranged in size from $250,000 to $500,000. A database to search for CTCs funded by the U.S. Department of Education by State is available at: http://www.americaconnects.net/ctc/. Congress appropriated $4.9 million for the program for FY 2005.

CTCs have their origins in Harlem, New York. In 1992, a local community computer center was awarded a three-year grant from the National Science Foundation (NSF) to help create a network of neighborhood technology access providers. Through technical assistance efforts, the grant helped spur development of 50 centers, representing a broad range of community organizations. In November, 1995, the Education Development Center began a NSF funded effort aimed at the national expansion and institutionalization of this original network now known as CTCNet (see: www.ctcnet.org). While other CTC networks exist in the United States, CTCNet is the largest, serving over 1,000 CTCs from every State and providing technical assistance and other services, including research and evaluation. CTCs have also received funding support from the Department of Housing and Urban Development and the Department of Commerce.

In general, people who visit CTCs do not own computers, and many do not have access at work or school. CTCs make available computers, the Internet, and various software packages, as well as other education-related services. CTCs include delivery of Federal information and services as one of their more important services. Information about immigration services, job searching, and job counseling are primary government information and services delivered at CTCs.

Department of Education Community Technology Centers program. In 1999, Congress established the Community Technology Centers (CTC) program administered by the Department of Education (Title V, Part D, Subpart 11, Sections 5511-13 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended by the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001).

The purpose of the Department of Education's CTC program is to assist eligible applicants to create and expand CTCs providing residents of economically distressed urban and rural communities with access to information technology and related training. The CTC program focuses on providing effective supplemental instruction in the core academic subjects of reading, language arts, and mathematics to low-achieving students in grades 9 through 12 in high-poverty, low-performing secondary schools. The program also serves other members of the community.

Eligible applicants for the Department of Education's CTC program can include foundations, museums, libraries, for-profit businesses, public or private nonprofit organizations or community-based organizations (including faith-based organizations), institutions of higher education, state educational agencies, local educational agencies (including charter schools), private schools or a collaborative consortium of such entities, or agencies.

In the last several years, applications have been accepted in novice and non-novice categories. A novice applicant is any applicant for a grant from the Department of Education who has never received a grant or sub-grant under the CTC program, has never been a member of a group application receiving a grant under the CTC program, and has not had an active discretionary grant from the Federal government in the five years before the deadline date for applications under the program. A non-novice applicant, on the other hand, has received previous Federal funding.

In FY 2003 and 2004, non-novice applicants were required to meet priorities established by the Secretary of Education described below:

- Priority #1. This priority supported projects by eligible applicants who included a partnership with a community-based organization, and a local educational agency (e.g. a charter school) or a public school or a private school. To meet this priority, an applicant must have clearly identified the partnering organizations and included a detailed plan of their working relationship, including a project budget reflecting fund disbursements to the various partnering agencies. The Secretary of Education gave priority to projects in which the delivery of instructional services included a community-based organization (which may have included a faith-based organization) and a local educational agency (including a charter school), or a public or private school.

- <u>Priority #2</u>. This priority supported applicants who proposed a local or State project. A local project included one or more CTCs, and a State project must have included two or more CTCs. In addition, the project must be coordinated with one or more local educational agencies, or a public school or a private school providing supplementary instruction in the core academic subjects of reading or language arts, or mathematics, to low-achieving high school students. Projects must have been designed to serve students who were entering or enrolled in grades 9 through 12 and who had academic skills significantly below grade level, or had not attained proficiency on State academic assessments.
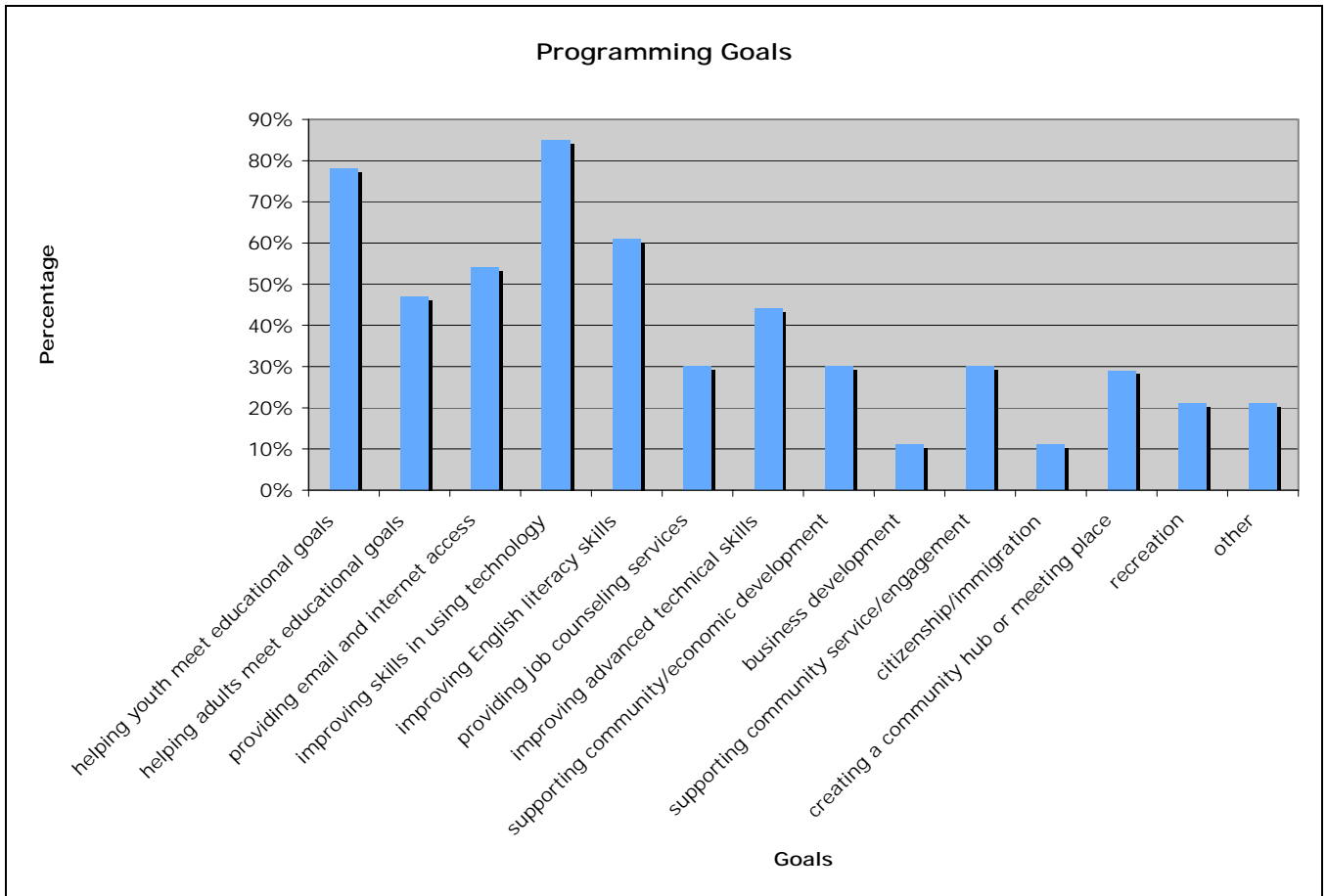
Applicants could deliver supplementary instruction before or after school or at other times when school is not in session. Instruction could also be provided while school was in session, provided it increased the amount of time students received instruction in core academic subjects and did not require removal from class. The instructional strategies were based on practices proven effective for improving the academic performance of low-achieving students. If these services were not provided directly by a local educational agency or school, they could be provided in coordination with one. Applicants were also asked to demonstrate how their project's proposed academic approach was aligned with the curricula of the school or schools in which the students to be served by the grant were entering or enrolled.

Further, to receive funding under the Department of Education's CTC program, qualified applicants were required to obtain a dollar-for-dollar match of the amount requested from the Federal government from non-Federal funds. Matching from non-Federal sources ensured CTC programs partnered with other organizations to disseminate information and deliver services. Finally, 90 days after the project ended grantees were required to submit to the Secretary a final performance report:

- Summarizing project progress with respect to the specific, measurable goals, objectives, and outcomes proposed in the management plan;
- Summarizing project impact with respect to the achievement of participants;
- Identifying barriers to progress as well as solutions; and
- Providing information about the project's success in identifying funding to sustain its operations after the cessation of the grant.

Following the award of grants, the Department of Education's practice is to provide grantees with information and resources pertinent to the CTC program as well as individualized technical assistance. Past grantees were also able to participate and attend a national meeting of CTC Project Directors and regional meetings for the purpose of information sharing, exchange of successful and promising practices, and networking.

This report focuses primarily on recipients of FY 2003 one-year grants, the most recent year for which performance reports and other data are available for projects. The graph below identifies some of the programming goals of FY 2003 grantees.

Programming Goals

A bar chart titled "Programming Goals" with the y-axis labeled "Percentage" ranging from 0% to 90%, and the x-axis labeled "Goals". The goals and approximate percentages are:
- helping youth meet educational goals: ~78%
- helping adults meet educational goals: ~47%
- providing email and internet access: ~54%
- improving skills in using technology: ~85%
- improving English literacy skills: ~61%
- providing job counseling services: ~30%
- improving advanced technical skills: ~44%
- supporting community/economic development: ~30%
- business development: ~11%
- supporting community service/engagement: ~30%
- citizenship/immigration: ~11%
- creating a community hub or meeting place: ~29%
- recreation: ~21%
- other: ~21%

Distribution and Types of CTCs. In FY 2003, 78 awards totaling $29,274,960 were made to create or enhance 282 CTC sites. Awards were made in the 29 States found in the table below, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands. A database to search for CTCs funded by the U.S. Department of Education by State is available at: http://www.americaconnects.net/ctc/, and a list of FY 2003 grantees can be accessed at: http://www.ed.gov/programs/comtechcenters/2003ctc.doc. Grants ranged from $300,000 to $500,000 and were used to manage hardware, software, and networking costs; professional development services so staff can better serve users; and funding for improved services to users. In FY 2004, the Department awarded 25 grants totaling over $9 million to entities in 16 States to create or expand CTCs. Grants ranged in size from $250,000 to $500,000.

Funded CTC sites were predominately located in population dense areas, as illustrated in the pie graph below. A total of 47,941 unduplicated participants visited CTCs during FY 2003 to obtain services. The sites also serve diverse people. Thirty percent of the students served were between the ages of 16-18, 27% of students were between 13-15 years of age, and 27% of students were between 25-59 years of age. The FY 2003 CTC programs served more Hispanic/Latino students than any other ethnic group, as 44% of the students were reported as belonging to this category. Similar demographic breakdowns were found based on a review of FY 2002 grantees.

Location of CTCs

- rural (<10,000) 19%
- large urban (>250,000) 39%
- town (10-50,000) 13%
- small urban (50,001-250,000) 29%
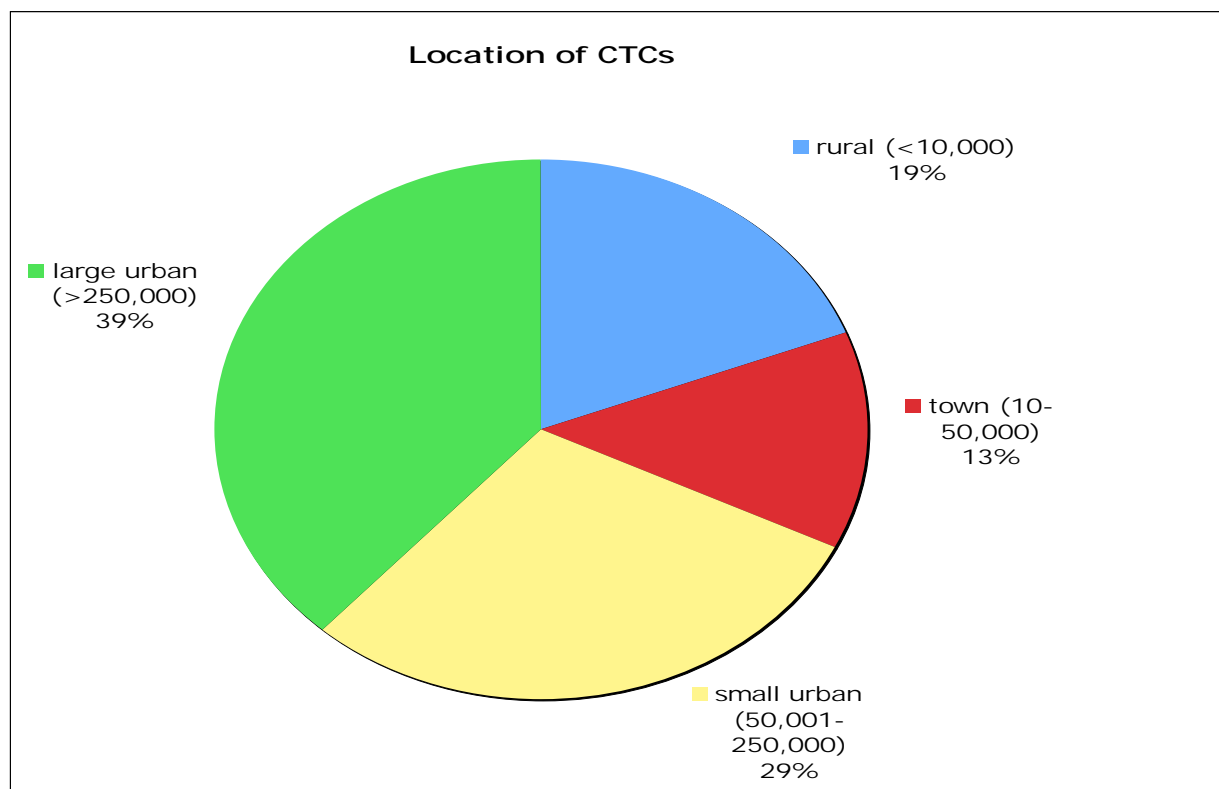
The Department of Education funded overviews of FY 2002 grantees as well as FY 1999 and FY 2000 grantee site locations.[3] Similar geographic breakdowns were found in both overviews. In FY 2002, 72% of the grantees created or expanded centers in urban areas, 22% in rural areas, and 6% in suburban areas.[4] In the Department of Education's review of twenty-eight 1999 annual performance reports, they found 18 (64%) respondents had opened or expanded one or more new centers in an urban area, 8 (29%) in rural areas, and 2 (7%) in suburban areas.[5] In their review of 114 grantees from 1999 and 2000, 44% were opened in urban areas, 15% in rural areas, 14% in suburban areas, and 8% in multiple location types.[6]

In terms of the number of participants, grantees reported a total of 47,941 participants visited CTCs during FY 2003 to obtain services. The sites serve a diversity of citizens as well. Thirty percent of the students served were between the ages of 16-18, 27% between 13-15 years of age, and 27% between 25-59 years of age. The FY 2003 CTC programs served more Hispanic/Latino students than any other ethnic group, as 44% of the students were reported as belonging to this category.

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[3] The America Connects Consortium reviewed FY 2002 grantees, and SRI International reviewed FY 1999 and FY 2000 grantees.

[4] America Connects Consortium. (2003, November). Community Technology Centers Program Effectiveness Report: FY2002 Grantees.

[5] Penuel, B., Korbak, C., Daniels, M., Kim, D.Y., Yarnall, L., Hakins, J., & Pacpaco, R. (2000, December). Community Technology Centers Program Findings Summary: A review of FY99 grantees' annual performance reports. Menlo Park, CA: SRI International.

[6] Korbak, C., Penuel, B., Kim, D., Cole, K., Daniels, M., Gillespie, M., Huang, J., Lewis, A., Whaley, A., Yarnall, L. (2002, January). Community Technology Centers Program Outcome Evaluation: Summary of Findings from Annual Performance Reports of FY99 and FY00 Grantees. Menlo Park, CA: SRI International.

Different types of organizations received funding under the 2003 grant program, including community-based organizations (36%), local education agencies (18%), institutions of higher education (16%), community technology centers (10%), faith-based organizations (5%), public agencies (4%), and multi-service organizations (3%).

Types of Grantee
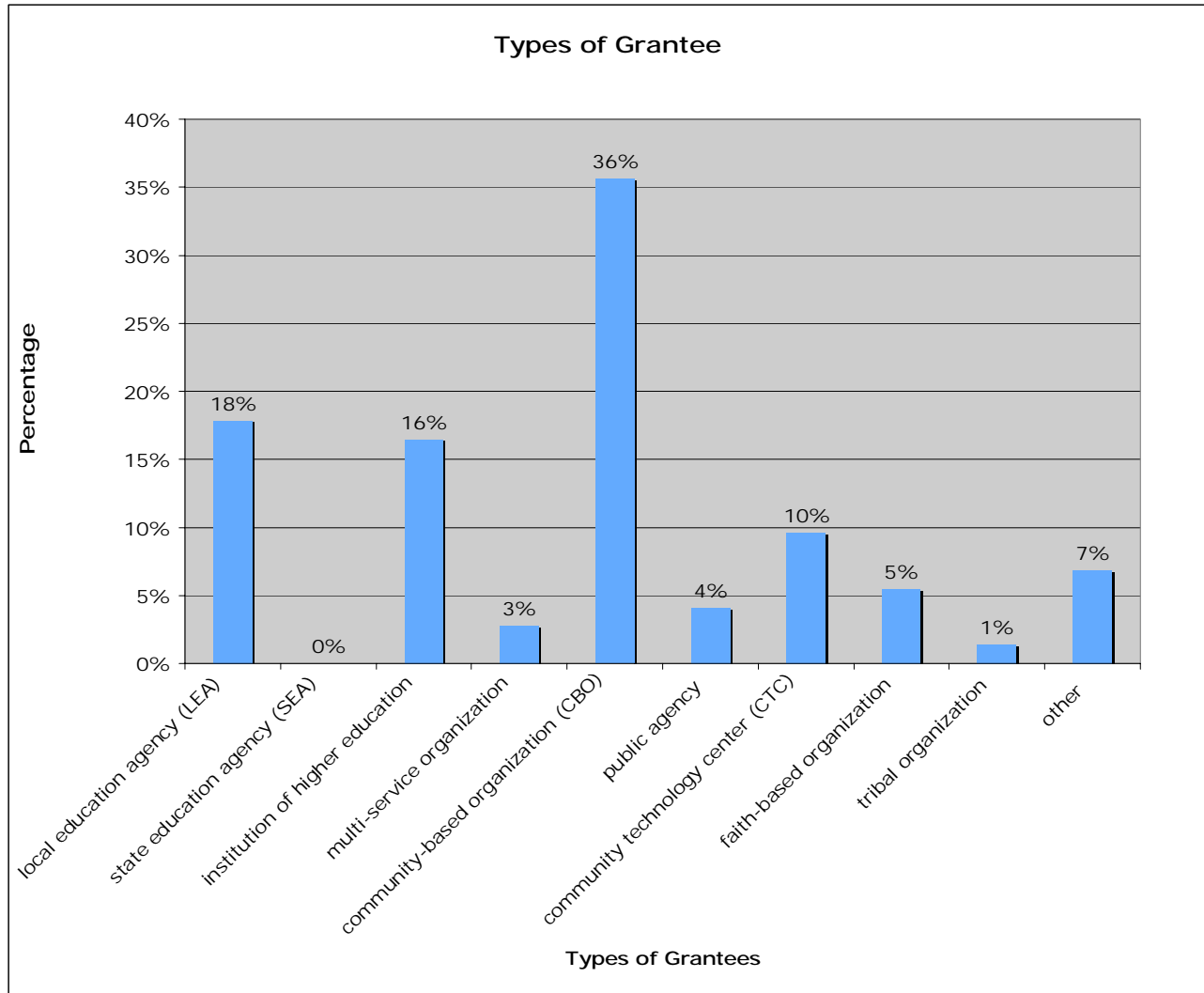
On average, users visit CTCs two to three times a week to obtain services provided by the site. Later this year, CTC grantees will provide a report on the overall delivery of CTC programs including information on usage information and reasons for visits, as well as information relating to the procuring of government publications and/or services.

Promising Practices at CTCs

1. Each Department of Education funded CTC produces a performance report providing information about whether the CTC met its goals and strategies, and to determine the effect of activities implemented. Furthermore, the Department of Education has funded several performance evaluations of CTCs. The reports can be found at: http://ctl.sri.com/projects/displayProject.jsp?Nick=ctc. Most recently, the America Connects

Consortium, a web site hosted by the Education Development Center, published two summary reports with some evaluation data for FY 2002 and 2003 grantees, which can be accessed at: http://www.americaconnects.net/research/default.asp?subid=35. The reports describe successes and innovative practices of the CTC programs. While the America Connects reports identified limitations in the data available for analysis, they also note the CTC program exceeded the number of sites they planned to open and expand this year, served a great number of participants through their centers, and reported some positive student outcomes (e.g. high school degrees obtained and student retention of and/or advancement in employment).[7]

2. One promising practice adopted by some CTC sites is the implementation of a program providing comprehensive technology training and mentoring for high school students. Students receive intensive technology training in state-of–the-art learning labs. Students work in small teams to design, research, and complete multimedia projects. The project not only requires students to use recently acquired technology skills, but activities also build students' critical thinking, research, and written and oral expression skills. Additionally, the project provides mentoring by program staff in continuing education and career opportunities. Completed projects are presented to the community at high schools and community events.

3. Some grantees have web-based catalogs with unlimited remote access to information about materials and services. These catalogs are critical to aiding students who are searching for a specific information or service from a variety of sources. From the web page the user also can access several subscription databases, links to community resources, reference assistance, live homework help, library classes, and other related programs. New library materials are purchased on a continuous basis and are regularly entered, indexed, and searchable through the web-based catalog. Formats include print (including large print), microform, CD-ROM, videocassette, DVD, audiocassette, and musical CD's. Where available, grantees host and maintain web sites of city and selected community organizations. All web-based services are supported and maintained by staff employed at the sites.

4. Where available, grantees provide equipment to assure accessibility for the disabled. The newest personal computers have state-of-the-art software for the visually impaired. Assistive devices for the visually impaired are also readily available. In one location where this practice has been implemented, the information and reference service center maintains a TDD line for the hearing impaired.

5. Another promising practice occurring at several sites is the development of partnerships with external organizations. For example, a CTC site in Connecticut is an organizational member of the American Library Association, the Urban Libraries Council, the New England Library Association, the Connecticut Library Association, and the New England Library Network. All of these networks provide complementary services and share common resources; each network user has full access to resources provided on all of the participating organizations' web sites. Additionally, CTC users at this site have full access to the Connecticut Digital Library maintained by the Connecticut State Library and can benefit from their multiple partnerships with State, local and Federal associations.

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[7] http://www.americaconnects.net/research/CTC_Program_Effectiveness_FY2002.pdf

6. Additionally, the Connecticut site has a ratio of 1 CTC staff to 9 students for its after-school program, and 1 staff to 3 students for its intensive summer program. The CTC program provides one computer to one student during technology training sessions and homework assistance time. Other services include instruction on how to use the library and its resources, computer and language literacy training, adult learning programs, and other resources made available to participants of the CTC program or visitors to the site.

7. Similarly, a partnership in the Seattle public schools' CTC program helps provide technology tools so students can access computers at home or on travel. As a result, students who need extra help are not limited by the hours their teachers are on the job. Families can receive guidance about which projects will help most as their students work to meet a particular learning standard. Some schools are keeping their building doors open longer by allowing other organizations to operate community learning centers in schools during evenings and vacations. Students, families, and neighbors can use computers and other learning tools after classes have ended. This access is especially important for families without home computers (to learn more about this program, see: http://www.seattleschools.org/area/ocl/comtech.xml).

8. Another promising practice at one CTC site is the implementation of a school attendance and academic performance evaluation component to assess the delivery of CTC services. At this site, the independent evaluator has responsibility for developing instruments, administering tests, collecting any necessary records, reviewing and analyzing the information collected, and making detailed reports as agreed upon by the grantee. The evaluator will further assess academic and cognitive skill progress from the start to the end of program; assess factors assumed important to help students continue to succeed after the program; and assess participant expectations of and attitudes toward technology used in the program. To assist the grantee in its evaluation process, the center has instituted *Managing for Results* for all public service programs. Senior managers of the center meet monthly to evaluate programs and service results based on approved criteria and standards. Currently, the center does not track job retention after users participate in training through the CTC program. However, center staff interview students twice a year by phone in their tenth, eleventh, and twelfth grades, as well as once the next year, to determine how many maintained their aspirations, continued using the library and technology, made improvements in grades and standardized test scores, achieved graduate status, and continued to another level of education.

The above examples of promising practices found at CTCs support important Federal information policy principles. Well designed CTC evaluations can help ensure programs meet user needs and provide ready access to quality information and services. CTCs also manage web-based catalogs to aid the public in locating Federal information, and grantees are providing equipment to assure accessibility to the disabled. Similar to FDLs, CTCs maintain dynamic relationships with State, local, and other organizations to share and disseminate information resources.

PUBLIC LIBRARIES

Along with FDLs and CTCs, public libraries have a continuing and evolving role to collect, manage, and share information with the nation's public. Libraries house materials of a variety of media, including paper, film, tape, audio, and electronic format materials, and make these resources

available for community activities delivering government information and services to the public. Beyond the familiar circulation services public libraries provide, libraries also collect, manage, and make available non-circulating materials, such as reference and special collections.

The total number of public libraries and the wide range of information and services they provide make library collections important disseminators of Federal information and services. The number and distribution of public libraries extends to a wide audience (see Appendix I). There are 9,129 public library systems, with 17,300 service points (including branches) in the United States. To find a public library near you, see: http://nces.ed.gov/globallocator/. Public libraries serve 97% of the total population in the United States. Public libraries make available enormous resources; they hold 767.1 million books and bound periodicals, 34.3 million audio materials, 25.2 million video materials, and 2.3 million materials in electronic format. In 2001, visits to public libraries totaled 1.2 billion, or 4.3 library visits per capita (i.e. for each person in the U.S.).[8] Public libraries expend significant effort to regularly expand and update their collection holdings. Between 2000 and 2001, public libraries reported in increase of 6.6 million books and serial volumes, 2.4 million in audio materials, 3.1 million video materials, and .7 million materials in electronic format.[9]

Promising Practices at Public Libraries

1. Public libraries continue to increase their delivery of electronic materials, both within the library and via the Internet. These include electronic subscription services, as well as helping the public find, navigate, and evaluate information publicly available electronically through subscription services and on the Internet. Ninety percent of public libraries provide access to electronic services (including both full-text serial subscriptions and electronic databases),[10] and remote database access increased to 44% in public libraries by 2002.[11] Online subscription services are frequently funded and coordinated at the State level to promote broad access to a State's residents.

Almost all public libraries (96%) provide Internet access and almost the entire U.S. population (97%) is served by public libraries. As a result, almost every resident (99%) served by public libraries can obtain Internet service at a public library. According to 2001 data, a total of 229,017 Internet terminals were available to the public, with an average of about 11 workstations per library.[12]

2. Connection speeds for public Internet access is increasing. Nearly half of all public libraries have high-speed Internet access (of at least 1.5 megabits per second) or faster speed connectivity for public access services. Nearly half of rural outlets (49%) have greater than 56 kilobits per second. Moreover, 33% of rural library outlets and 47% of all libraries provide high-speed Internet access in areas with a poverty rate of 40% and higher.[13]

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[8] *Public Libraries in the United States: Fiscal Year 2001*, NCES, U.S. Department of Education, June 2003

[9] *Public Libraries in the United States: Fiscal Year 2001*, NCES, U.S. Department of Education, June 2003, and *Public Libraries in the United States: Fiscal Year 2000*, NCES, U.S. Department of Education, July 2002

[10] NCES June 2003

[11] Bertot and McClure, *Public Libraries and the Internet 2002: Internet Connectivity and Networked Services*, School of Information Studies, Florida State University Information Institute, December 2002

[12] NCES June 2003

[13] Bertot and McClure, 2002

3. As public libraries expand their role in providing Internet access, public libraries are providing formal Internet training for the public. As of a 2002 study, 42% of public libraries were providing formal Internet training. Libraries target training to specific audiences; in particular, seniors (49%), children and youth (33%), and non-senior adults (31%) are most frequent recipients of training. Training is also delivered to local businesses and local governments.

4. An equally important practice for delivering electronic information to the public is ensuring public library staff is skilled and knowledgeable. Formal staff training is offered at 44% of all public libraries. Training is made available on how to use online web searching and Internet, general computer software, online databases, and how to locate government information on the web.[14]

5. Public libraries also provide a vast array of other services such as youth and adult literacy programs, summer reading and book clubs, homework help centers and support, workforce readiness training and information, inter-library loans, and services for people with disabilities. As a result, these services not only deliver Federal information and services in a cost-effective manner, they help improve their communities.

6. Recent reports provided by State Library Administrative Agencies (for Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) State Library Program grants awarded by the Institute of Museum and Library Services during FY 1998 – FY 2002) indicate there was much activity related to the formation of inter-library partnerships. Activities promoting information sharing among libraries and the expansion of library networks in different areas were common goals in most reports. All reports identified the promotion of information sharing among libraries as a key goal for implementation during this performance period.[15]

Information exchange and development of inter-library partnerships continues to dominate the State Libraries' use of these funds, with $85.8 million (of $142.3 million) of FY 2003 grant funds expended for library technology, connectivity, and services.[16] State libraries, for example, typically provide State-wide licenses for electronic database and subscription services available to the public though public, academic, and school libraries. Where these resources are provided at the State level, the savings in subscription fees at the local level are substantial. States investing in electronic database licensing agreements noted such licensing would have been difficult or impossible for States to afford without LSTA funding. The program impact was magnified by block purchasing of database licenses using LSTA funds, creating discounts worth millions of dollars. For example, New Mexico saved roughly $3.5 million, while Washington saved over $8 million.[17]

7. Annual reporting to share ideas for delivering services and managing library programs is an important practice at public libraries. In nearly all States, public libraries are required by statute or regulation to conduct and report annually on programmatic and fiscal activity.[18] Forty-two States administer State aid directly or by contract to public libraries. In return, public libraries report their

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[14] Bertot and McClure, 2002

[15] Institute of Museum and Library Services, *National Profile*, The Rendon Group, June 2003

[16] FY 2003 Final Performance Reports to the Institute of Museum and Library Services

[17] The Rendon Group, 2003

[18] Conversation with Denise Davis, Director, ALA Office of Research and Statistics, December 7, 2004

performance and financial data to the State, and the State reports this information to the National Center for Educational Statistics (NCES) at the Department of Education (see: http://nces.ed.gov/) where they are available for other libraries, researchers, and organizations. The NCES report is the only universal study of public libraries in the United States. The data is used to rank states on public library services and expenditures, and to educate the public and students on how libraries operate. The data also aids managers and policy-makers at local, State, and national levels to form the basis for additional research and analysis.

Public libraries are helping Federal agencies implement important Federal information policy principles. For example, public libraries are providing easy access to information and services via online subscription services and are training staff and citizens to help them obtain Federal information resources. Public libraries are also establishing inter-library partnerships to more efficiently share and disseminate information resources. Finally, nearly all public libraries annually report on their programs to help ensure program implementation meets user needs.

RESEARCH ROOMS OF THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES AND RECORDS ADMINISTRATION

A component of NARA's mission is to provide access to essential records of the Federal government, and NARA helps accomplish this objective by providing computer and Internet access to the public in archival, records center, and Presidential library research rooms. Records include books, papers, maps, photographs, machine-readable materials (such as data files and websites), regardless of physical form or characteristics, made or received by a Federal agency under Federal law or in connection with the transaction of public business. The records are preserved as evidence of the organization, functions, policies, decisions, procedures, operations, and other activities.

Systematic attention to the management of Federal records by Federal agencies and NARA is an essential component of sound public resources management and ensures public accountability. Agencies ensure records management programs provide adequate and proper documentation of agency activities, and ensure the records can be accessed regardless of form or medium.[19] Records with continuing value after agency needs for them have ended are transferred to NARA for preservation as archival records. NARA also provides researchers access to Presidential records, donated Presidential materials, and donated collections from individuals whose life work contributed to the history of the nation.

Promising Practices at Research Rooms

1. To facilitate access to archival records, NARA has installed a total of 114 public access computers with Internet access in NARA research rooms across the country.[20] The number of workstations varies per location; 26 sites have at least two computers each, while four sites have one computer each. The number of publicly accessible computers depends on the number of researchers using the facility and space available in the research room. NARA provides these

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[19] OMB Circular A-130 8(a)(4)
[20] A listing of all NARA research facilities is available at http://www.archives.gov/facilities/research_centers.html. The Research Room and Presidential Libraries sections of www.archives.gov also provide information on resources available at individual sites.

computers for research purposes on a first-come-first-served basis, and imposes time limits on the use of the equipment if users are waiting.

2. Reference room staff and microfilm research room volunteers manage the supervision of the public computers. Users can obtain assistance from NARA staff, and staff provide training to help users understand what resources are available on the computer and elsewhere throughout NARA, as well as how to access them. NARA provides written instructions near each computer to help users effectively use the resources, and technical assistance is also available. NARA's Chief Information Officer responds to the assistive technology requests from the sites to ensure research rooms remain accessible for those with special needs. In 2001, NARA partnered with the Computer Assistive Technology Program (CAP) of the Department of Defense to provide on demand high caliber assistive technology to improve the research experience of visitors and the work experience of staff

3. NARA computers are primarily used to consult NARA's online Archival Research Catalog (ARC), other Internet-based resources, and other electronic finding aids.[21] The ARC is the online catalog of NARA's nationwide holdings in the Washington, DC area, Regional Archives and Presidential Libraries. Roughly 40% of NARA's traditional holdings are contained in the ARC. The ARC also contains 40% of NARA's artifacts holdings (i.e. three-dimensional objects such as State Gifts to Presidents), and almost 25% of NARA's electronic records holdings.

4. In addition, a selection of archival materials has been digitized and made available through ARC (see: http://www.archives.gov/research_room/arc/). NARA's Research Room section of their public web site also provides easy access to other Internet-based resources, including *Access to Archival Databases*, the *NARA Microfilm Publication Catalog*, and the *Guide to Federal Records*. Additional materials specific to a Presidential Library are also accessible from the NARA public web site in the Presidential Libraries section.

5. NARA establishes and maintains communications with members of the public and local organizations to ensure information dissemination products meet their respective needs. All sites provide customer comment forms in every research room and the form also is available online (see: http://www.archives.gov/global_pages/contact_us.html).

6. Finally, NARA has established *Affiliated Archives* relationships with state archives and historical societies, Federal agencies, and other organizations to preserve, manage, and provide access to NARA-owned records on NARA's behalf when the organization can provide the public with enhanced access to the records (see http://www.archives.gov/facilities/research_centers.html). NARA *Affiliated Archives* include such organizations as the U.S. Naval and Military Academies, the Library of Congress, and state archives in Pennsylvania and New Mexico, plus the Oklahoma Historical Society, the Government Printing Office, and the National Park Service's Yellowstone National Park and the Historic American Building Survey and Historic American Engineering Record. In addition, several Presidential libraries and regional archives have partnered with universities and others to digitize selected holdings.

NARA research rooms support Federal agency implementation of important Federal information policy principles. In particular, NARA's research rooms facilitate access to archival records and

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[21] NARA's online resources are available to the public from any computer connected to the Internet.

help maintain records for the adequate and proper documentation of Federal activities. The research rooms provide easy access to evidence, information, and services, including to the disabled, by cataloging and providing electronic finding aids for the public to easily locate Federal information. Customer comment forms are available so NARA can maintain communications and evaluate whether program implementation meets user needs. NARA also maintains relationships with libraries, universities, and other regional and local organizations to share and disseminate information resources.

CONCLUSION

Implementation by Federal agencies of effective information dissemination programs is critical to meeting their statutory goals and strategic missions. Effective dissemination programs ensure Federal information and services deliver results citizen's demand, in a timely and accurate manner. Agencies are taking advantage of many dissemination channels, including State and local governments, libraries, and private sector entities, in discharging agency information dissemination responsibilities.

The FDL, CTC, public library, and NARA research room programs described in this report enable greater citizen access to Federal information and services. The programs are geographically disbursed throughout the country, and share an innovative character to meet evolving information dissemination needs. Each program enhances existing information dissemination programs at Federal agencies, and the promising practices identified in this report support important Federal information policy principles implemented by Federal agencies.

Citizens benefit from the collaboration between Federal agencies and these programs. Agencies should continue to work with organizations performing similar practices consistent when managing their information dissemination programs. This collaboration will allow Federal agencies to more effectively meet their information resource management program goals and consequently, their agency strategic goals.

APPENDIX I – FDLs and Public Library Systems by State

Geographic Area	Population	FDLs	Public Library Systems*	Population per FDLs and Public Library Systems
Total	**281,421,906**	**1,270**	**9,129**	**27,062**
Alabama	4,447,100	22	207	19,420
Alaska	626,932	7	86	6,741
Arizona	5,130,632	14	35	104,707
Arkansas	2,673,400	14	43	46,902
California	33,871,648	92	179	124,988
Colorado	4,301,261	23	116	30,944
Connecticut	3,405,565	19	194	15,989
Delaware	783,600	5	37	18,657
District of Columbia	572,059	37	1	15,054
Florida	15,982,378	39	72	143,985
Georgia	8,186,453	24	57	101,067
Hawaii	1,211,537	9	1	121,154
Idaho	1,293,953	10	106	11,155
Illinois	12,419,293	53	629	18,210
Indiana	6,080,485	33	239	22,355
Iowa	2,926,324	16	537	5,292
Kansas	2,688,418	18	321	7,930
Kentucky	4,041,769	21	116	29,502
Louisiana	4,468,976	28	65	48,054
Maine	1,274,923	11	273	4,489
Maryland	5,296,486	23	24	112,691
Massachusetts	6,349,097	31	371	15,794
Michigan	9,938,444	44	381	23,385
Minnesota	4,919,479	25	140	29,815
Mississippi	2,844,658	11	49	47,411
Missouri	5,595,211	30	150	31,085
Montana	902,195	8	79	10,370
Nebraska	1,711,263	14	272	5,983
Nevada	1,998,257	11	23	58,772
New Hampshire	1,235,786	9	229	5,192
New Jersey	8,414,350	29	309	24,895
New Mexico	1,819,046	11	80	19,990
New York	18,976,457	84	750	22,754
North Carolina	8,049,313	32	76	74,531
North Dakota	642,200	8	82	7,136
Ohio	11,353,140	57	250	36,981
Oklahoma	3,450,654	19	115	25,751
Oregon	3,421,399	20	125	23,596
Pennsylvania	12,281,054	55	459	23,893
Rhode Island	1,048,319	12	48	17,472

South Carolina	4,012,012	20	41	65,771
South Dakota	754,844	9	126	5,591
Tennessee	5,689,283	24	184	27,352
Texas	20,851,820	60	540	34,753
Utah	2,233,169	9	70	28,268
Vermont	608,827	7	188	3,122
Virginia	7,078,515	34	90	57,085
Washington	5,894,121	21	65	68,536
West Virginia	1,808,344	14	97	16,291
Wisconsin	5,363,675	23	379	13,342
Wyoming	493,782	10	23	14,963
Puerto Rico	3,808,610	5		761,722
American Samoa	57,291	1		57,291
Federated States of Micronesia	108,155	1		108,155
Guam	154,805	2	1	51,602
Virgin Islands	108,612	2	1	36,204

* Public library systems contain numerous library outlets or branches. Library systems generally comprise a county or region, and individual libraries are parts of a larger system.

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau. Census 2000 Summary; Federal Depository Library Directory, 2004. Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, (http://www.gpoaccess.gov/libraries.html); U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics. Public Libraries in the United States: Fiscal Year 2001, NCES 2003–399, by Adrienne Chute, Elaine Kroe, Patricia O'Shea, Maria Polcari, and Cynthia Jo Ramsey. Washington, DC: 2003, (http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2003/2003399.pdf).