New York State

Library Services and Technology Act

Five-Year Evaluation Report

October 1, 2002–September 30, 2007

NEW YORK STATE LIBRARY

The University of the State of New York
The State Education Department
The New York State Library
Cultural Education Center
Albany, New York 12230
2007

THE UNIVERSITY OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK

Regents of the University

The New York State Library used federal Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) funds to carry out the goals and objectives of the LSTA Five-Year Plan for the period October 1, 2002, to September 30, 2007. This report contains an overall evaluation of the impact of LSTA-funded programs and services conducted by New York State Library staff, results of an in-depth evaluation performed by an outside consultant, progress made through the State Library's initiative in outcome-based evaluation training, and lessons learned through the evaluation processes.

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I. Importance and Impact of LSTA Funding in New York State

The Federal Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) program is essential to libraries and library services throughout New York State. The funds provided both support statewide services and make possible grants programs administered by the New York State Library, thereby encouraging the blending of local, state, and federal resources to build and enhance library services for all New Yorkers.

Through statewide services and competitive grants, the LSTA program helps to provide the following services to New York's library users in their communities:

- Access from home, school, or office to high-quality online resources
- Projects that provide equitable access to technology through cooperative efforts among New York's 7,000 libraries, 73 library systems, and the New York State Library
- Projects that promote better access to information for all residents, such as adult and family literacy programs and programs to help at-risk preschoolers develop literacy skills
- Training for entrepreneurs in the skills needed to research and develop their business plans; marketing, demographic, and other information resources crucial to small and mid-sized businesses

Although federal LSTA funds represent less than one percent of library expenditures in New York State, their impact is great. The following statistics show how LSTA grants have leveraged state and local matching funds in recent years.

LSTA Funds Awarded Through Grants Programs—2003 to Present	
Total amount awarded:	$12,132,543
In-kind funds generated:	$8,633,238
Total to carry out projects:	$20,765,781
In-kind contributions from library systems:	41.6% of project costs

LSTA funding has been crucial in helping the New York State Library and its partners implement the visionary recommendations of the New York State Board of Regents Commission on Library Services. In 2000, this Commission issued its final report (available at http://www.nysl.nysed.gov:80/rcols/finalrpt.htm) and 10 recommendations "to deliver 21st-century library services to all New Yorkers." Those recommendations, constituting a bold policy to transform New York's libraries, have provided the foundation for library initiatives in New York State, including legislative initiatives that have achieved increased state support for libraries and the activities described in New York's LSTA Five-Year Plans.

LSTA funding has made possible progress toward six of the 10 recommendations of the Regents Commission. Most notably, it has enabled the implementation of NOVEL, envisioned in the Commission's recommendation number one: "Create NOVEL, the New York Online Virtual Electronic Library, to deliver high-quality, reliable digital information to all New Yorkers."

Today, NOVEL helps to bridge the digital divide for residents and supports New York's educational and business communities. NOVEL provides an online collection of electronic full-text magazines, newspapers, books, encyclopedias, and other collections licensed on a statewide basis for free access through public, academic, and school libraries; through special libraries in not-for profit organizations; and remotely from homes and offices by means of a New York State driver license or non-driver ID number. Electronic resources purchased on a statewide basis provide great economies of scale, offering access to $30 in resources for every $1 of LSTA funding used.

Use of NOVEL resources is soaring. The annual number of searches increased to 31 million in 2006 from 2 million in 2001. The number of visits to NOVEL through driver-license access jumped 350 percent after announcement in the media of the NOVEL Driver License Access Project.

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LSTA funding has also significantly supported training for library staff and library users in the use of NOVEL resources and network technology. The State Library allocated LSTA funds for an invitational grant program that has helped build awareness and use of NOVEL resources through increased training opportunities for library system and member library staff, students, faculty, businesspeople, media, and the public. In addition, regional training sessions are held periodically for librarians through their library systems.

Grants from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and federal E-Rate funds, used in combination with LSTA funds, have helped enhance technology training for public library staff and upgrade public access to NOVEL and the Internet in public libraries. However, the resources available through NOVEL have been funded solely through the LSTA program.

In addition, LSTA funding has significantly aided the New York State Library's Statewide Summer Reading Program, which helps children develop a love for reading and maintain the reading skills they learn during the school year. This program supports the Regents Commission's recommendation number 7: "Strengthen the ability of New York's libraries to help library users acquire basic English literacy, information literacy, and computer literacy skills in their communities."

The highly successful Summer Reading Program has grown from 172,000 participants in 1999 to well over one million children in 2006, and has been enhanced by the availability of LSTA-funded Statewide Summer Reading Program Minigrants to promote the program locally. LSTA funding for the statewide Growing a Reader Program has enabled training of 1,250 youth librarians over two years to teach parents and caregivers critical early literacy skills, also in support of implementing recommendation number seven.

Other Regents Commission recommendations that have been partially implemented through the availability of LSTA funding include the following:

Recommendation	Supported Through LSTA Funding
2. Ensure that all New York's students are information literate by providing strong school library media programs that include appropriately certified professional staff, adequate resources, and technology.	Automation of some school library collections through the Database Development Incentive Program.
3. Promote the availability of local public library service to all New Yorkers and improve local support for public libraries through the formation of Public Library Districts.	• Creation of a how-to guide and a Public Library District website. • Training and expert consultation services provided to library directors and trustees on creating public library districts.
4. Promote equitable library services for all New Yorkers through a need-based formula to reduce disparities in public library funding, and create NY EXCELS to promote service excellence in all types of libraries and library systems through enabling and incentive aid.	• Establishment of Service Improvement competitive grants to fund library system projects targeted at improving quality. • Development by the State Library of an "outcome-based evaluation website," a train-the-trainer curriculum, and statewide "outcome-based evaluation training" for State Library and library system staff.
8. Enhance access to the specialized resources held by New York's academic, special, and research libraries to improve educational achievement, economic development, and health care for all New Yorkers.	• Regional digitization plans developed by reference and research library resources systems. • LIBQUAL+ project to help 77 academic and research libraries identify user needs, align resources with user expectations, and improve services.
9. Support and enhance a highly skilled library workforce to meet the information needs of New Yorkers.	• Online teleconferences provided by the State Library by means of a statewide license. • Online trustee training modules under development.

II. Overall Report of Results in Achieving Goals and Objectives Based on Five-Year Plan

Goal 1: All New Yorkers will have reliable and equitable statewide electronic access to information resources through the creation of NOVEL and through enhancement and expansion of libraries' technology capabilities to meet users' informational needs.

Progress toward goal:

☐ Surpassed the goal
☐ Met this goal
☒ Made progress toward this goal
☐ Did not work toward this goal

Objective/Target No. 1: Carry out the August 2001 NOVEL Implementation Plan.

NOVEL (New York Online Virtual Electronic Library) is New York's first statewide online library, which provides a collection of core electronic resources for all New Yorkers. In late 2006, during the development of a statewide education and communication plan for NOVEL (see Objective/Target No. 2), the name was changed to NOVELNY. The NOVEL Steering Committee, the primary advisory group for the program, and the State Library have worked steadily towards implementing the recommendations of the August 2001 NOVEL Implementation Plan (http://www.nysl.nysed.gov/library/novel/finalpln.htm). Great progress has been made on two priority initiatives: (1) offering an online library of core electronic resources to all New Yorkers through their local library, and (2) creating a NOVEL portal. The NOVEL Steering Committee and the State Library agreed to set aside work on the other initiatives in the plan to focus limited resources on these two critical activities. The NOVEL Steering Committee revisited the NOVEL Implementation Plan in 2006 and reaffirmed that its recommendations are still relevant. The NOVEL Steering Committee plans to begin work on a third initiative, digitization, in 2007.

Access to NOVEL for library staff and library users across New York State has vastly improved since 2002. More than 5,000 local libraries are now participating in NOVEL, and the number of annual NOVEL searches continues to climb exponentially. In addition, NOVEL is now available to New Yorkers remotely from home, office, or school by using a New York driver license or non-driver ID number. For more detailed information on outputs and outcomes, as well as the impact on library services statewide, please see the NOVEL Evaluation Report attached as Appendix 1.

Objective/Target No. 2: Develop a communications plan that will provide broad and deep awareness of the NOVEL program among New Yorkers.

Usage statistics indicate more than 32 million searches of the NOVEL databases during the year ending July 2006, an almost 400-percent increase since 2002. More than 5,337 libraries out of some 6,300 eligible ones had registered to participate in NOVEL by December 2006. However, some preliminary results from the NOVEL evaluation indicate that the majority of people in New York State are still not aware of the program or the benefits it could offer. In 2004, the NOVEL Steering Committee recommended implementation of a comprehensive communication plan to publicize NOVEL. In March 2006, the State Library awarded a contract to the Ivy Group for a Statewide Education and Information Program. The consultants' plan includes a timeline for promotional activities starting in 2007. Recommendations in the plan include a revision of the NOVEL logo and a complete revision of the current NOVEL website www.novelnewyork.org.

The outputs for this initiative include a communication plan, a revised NOVELNY logo, a revision of the www.novelnewyork.org website, and revised toolkit materials with sample bookmarks, brochures and mailers that libraries can use to communicate the value of the NOVEL database program to their communities and other target groups. A sampling of New York residents' awareness of NOVEL will be a part of the Education and Information Program to be carried out by the Ivy Group in 2008. In focus groups of librarians held in the summer of 2006 as part of the NOVEL evaluation (see Appendix I), participants indicated a need for more training in NOVEL, although the specific question on confidence in the promotion of NOVEL databases was not asked.

Because this objective is still in its development stage, benefits for the library community are not yet apparent; however activities for 2007 and beyond will help to make all New Yorkers aware of the benefits of NOVEL resources.

Objective/Target No. 3: Continue to implement the Electronic Doorway Library recognition program as libraries meet the criteria for Basic, Advanced, or Leader level.

The Electronic Doorway Library (EDL) recognition program, which began in 1993, was refreshed in 1998 to update the criteria for Basic, Advanced, and Leader levels. The program became the NOVEL-Ready EDL program in 2003. Because of staffing constraints, the State Library no longer takes the lead in recognizing the progress of libraries in this program. However, in 2005, the State Library provided a website that will allow libraries and library systems to continue the recognition program on their own. Included on the website is a registration toolkit that provides member libraries with application forms to submit to their library systems as well as certificates for the systems to print out and award to their member libraries. This website is at http://www.nysl.nysed.gov/libdev/nvlready/index.html.

All the public libraries in New York have reached at least the Basic level. Of the 4,077 public school libraries in New York State, 3,409 (approximately 84 percent) have reported at least the Basic level, which is above the key output target for this objective. Over 90 percent of the 272 academic libraries have reached the Basic level.

Library users benefit from this statewide initiative because libraries have recognized and increasingly met higher technology standards.

Objective/Target No. 4: Expand partnerships with other units within state government, private industry, and the nonprofit sector that will result in increased information access through technology and increased knowledge of emerging technologies.
- Coordinate with the Gates Library Foundation the implementation of the Gates Initiative Training Program Grant to provide further technology training for New York's public libraries.
- Partner with the Governor's Office for Technology to provide libraries with access to information about new trends in emerging technologies and opportunities for libraries' participation in statewide plans.
- Coordinate with government agencies that can help libraries with cooperative telecommunications efforts locally and regionally, specifically to create statewide broadband telecommunications access.

Since 2002, several opportunities have enabled the State Library to secure funding from the private sector and to partner with other areas of state government to enhance information access and benefit the library community.

In 2002, the State Library received a Library Training grant of $257,700 from the Gates Foundation. These funds, awarded to the state's 23 public library systems (which represent 1,066 member libraries and branches and 13,000 public library staff), enabled the systems to develop and implement a technology training program for their librarians and library staff. All participants agreed on a plan that developed teams of skilled trainers who would train library staff at different levels on a variety of library technology-related topics, including NOVEL. This grant resulted in the training of 4,199 library staff members by the end of the grant period in December 2004.

In 2003, the State Library was awarded $222,640 by the Gates Foundation in Phase One of the Staying Connected Grant Program. The state's 23 public library systems received $137,440 of the total to support technology training (including NOVEL training) for public library staff. The remaining $85,200 funded replacement or upgrading of public-access computers in three urban library systems determined by the Gates Foundation: Brooklyn Public Library, Buffalo & Erie County Public Library, and The New York Public Library. This grant project also trained 3,414 library staff members.

The NOVEL Steering Committee's Telecommunications subgroup began making initial contacts with other state and regional government agencies in 2002 and 2003 to discuss the telecommunications needs of New York's 7,000 libraries. Informal discussions about broadband access occurred with school networks (Board of Cooperative Educational Services/Regional Information Centers), the State University of New York/City University of New York systems, and the Governor's Office for Technology. The NOVEL Steering Committee and the Southern Tier Library System partnered to offer a well-attended free seminar "Integrating Wireless Telecommunications into a Wide Area Network: Opportunities and Challenges for Libraries" at the Albany Public Library on June 26, 2003. Content delivered at the seminar was drawn from an LSTA demonstration grant project. In 2003, after careful deliberation, the NOVEL Steering Committee formally suspended the work of their Telecommunications and Digitization subgroups to refocus limited voluntary NOVEL Steering Committee resources and State Library staff efforts on implementing the two top NOVEL priorities: (1) offering an online library of core electronic resources to all New Yorkers through their local library, and (2) creating a NOVEL portal.

In 2005, the State Library began working with the University of the State of New York (USNY) Technology Policy and Practices Council and a consultant, the Metiri Group, to include libraries in a statewide plan to collect data about the technology and telecommunications capacities and needs of all educational institutions in New York State. This survey work is still under way and will be completed in 2007. The data collected through the Metiri survey, coupled with data from the Florida State University/Gates/American Library Association public library technology surveys, will help provide a better picture of statewide library telecommunications needs.

The ongoing sponsorship by the Gates Foundation of a variety of technology-related training and equipment enhancement programs has benefited the users of public libraries enormously. Small libraries previously with few or no computers have been able to provide their users with access to rich resources such as NOVEL; large libraries have been able to upgrade and expand their equipment. The new Governor, Eliot Spitzer, recently announced a $50 million initiative to bring broadband access to all corners of the state in his 2007–2008 budget proposal, and he has

committed to creating "Internet libraries" for New Yorkers. If this funding is passed, libraries and library users across New York will benefit greatly.

Objective/Target No. 5: Support libraries' and library systems' efforts to secure E-Rate telecommunications discounts.

- Assist libraries in taking advantage of all possible telecommunications discounts.
- Provide access for libraries to the E-Rate Central Help Desk.
- Ensure that libraries' and library systems' technology plans are approved by established deadlines.

The E-Rate program helps New York's libraries improve the reliability and strength of their technological infrastructure. Through the New York State Library, libraries in New York have access not only to assistance from their library systems and a designated program coordinator at the New York State Library, but also to the nationally recognized expert help available from E-Rate Central. E-Rate Central, under contract with the State Education Department, provides a weekly newsletter, annual training sessions across the state, and a rich variety of tips and information on its website, in addition to help desk support via telephone and e-mail. The New York State Library, with technical assistance from E-Rate Central, approved three-year technology plans for public library systems and reference and research library systems. These systems, in turn, certified technology plans for many of their member libraries for the same period. The State Library is currently receiving plans for the 2007–2010 period.

For each program year within the period covered by this evaluation, including what has been received so far in 2006–07, an average total of 331 libraries and library systems received an average total of $10.5 million. Problems within the E-Rate program in 2005 may have contributed to a reduction in applications in that year, but 2006 shows better progress toward the key output target goals.

Supporting libraries and library systems in their efforts to secure E-Rate funding has a positive impact on the services delivered to library users. New York's libraries have had consistent success in their applications for E-Rate discounts. The latest FCC Universal Service Monitoring Report shows that in the years from 2003 to 2005, New York's libraries were awarded approximately twice as much in discount dollars as the next largest state. Those dollars help libraries institute and sustain the digital delivery integral to library customer outreach and services.

Objective/Target No. 6: Expand access to electronic information provided by the State Library both onsite and through the library's website.

- Redesign the State Library's website to provide clear avenues of access.
- Enrich the online catalog, Excelsior, with bibliographic records that link directly to electronic resources.

Since 2002, the State Library has expanded access to electronic resources by adding more databases, enhancing traditional electronic access tools, introducing new electronic access tools, and adding new communication methods for patrons to request information. Criteria such as remote access and use of electronic resources for interlibrary loan are priorities when negotiating with vendors. Sets of bibliographic records are purchased with the database when available. A federated search tool has been added in addition to an Open URL resolver. The State Library's home page and some secondary pages were redesigned in spring 2004 and again in August 2005 to

accommodate the federated search tool. A new electronic media management system was implemented to enhance public access to the library's collection of electronic New York State Documents. In 2005, free wireless Internet access became available on the public floor of the library, and remote access to the NOVEL databases was expanded to include access via a New York State driver license number or non-license ID number. Library users can ask reference questions and request materials through e-mail, by using online forms available on the library's website, by submitting a request via the Integrated Library System (ILS), or through the library's online After Hours Reference Service.

The library has not conducted a general survey to determine if website users could find the information they needed, but library staff did conduct a usability study with users in 2004–05 to determine how well they could navigate through the library's website. Based on these usability tests, and on several preliminary tests that usability expert Steve Krug suggested, the library made several changes to various web pages. These changes focused on improved placement of links to other pages and more action-oriented phrasing for those links. The library kept a count of reference questions received electronically through the reference e-mail account for a random three-month period. During that time, 70 to 81 percent of the reference questions were answered the same day or the next day, and 91 to 97 percent were answered within three days. Although the NOVEL website indicates that the NOVEL Help Desk telephone is staffed by the State Library Monday through Friday, 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., Help Desk staff usually start taking calls before 9:00 a.m. and continue until 5:00 p.m., thereby exceeding 40 hours a week. An answering machine takes calls after hours or when a Help Desk staff member is not available.

Users now have several methods of access to electronic information through the website, by email, and onsite. More electronic resources, better methods of communication, and enhanced electronic tools for navigating these resources have helped provide information faster and have allowed staff to serve users better.

Objective/Target No. 7: Enhance access to full-text electronic federal and New York State documents.

The New York State Library is a regional depository in the U.S. Government Printing Office's Federal Depository Library Program. The library subscribes to MARCIVE's GPO Ongoing Database Service (MARC catalog records) and Shipping List Service (Smart Barcode Labels, SuDoc Labels) to make current materials more quickly accessible in the online catalog. Bibliographic records with links to online federal publications are added to the ILS each month.

The Library is the official New York State Document Depository of publications of the legislative, executive, and judicial branches, commissions, public authorities, and other agencies of state government. Each month "born digital" New York State publications from these agencies are manually downloaded from the Internet and uploaded to the electronic media management system part of the ILS. The monthly average is 92 new items added to the collection, more than 1,100 annually. Because it is not uncommon for items to be deleted later from the other state websites, the State Library's efforts preserve perpetual access in one searchable file with a uniform display across agencies.

Use of the MARCIVE service has helped the library provide quicker and better access to the federal document collection. Harvesting "born digital" state documents manually is labor intensive and limited. Plans are being formulated to set up an automated process to help increase the number of "born digital" items added to the electronic collection.

Objective/Target No. 8: Participate in consortia to expand State Library holdings of electronic resources such as e-books and databases.

The library worked with Nylink, WALDO (Westchester Academic Library Directors Organization) and NYSHEI (New York State Higher Education Initiative) to expand access while saving money.

The library saved 15 percent on all of its electronic resources by collaborating with these organizations. The library would not have gained access to the Freedom Collection of ScienceDirect without its membership in NYSHEI, because this collection was available only to academic libraries.

Being part of consortia has been beneficial to the library's patrons, especially the State Museum research scientists.

Objective/Target No. 9: Negotiate with publishers and vendors to include provisions for interlibrary loan of electronic resources from the State Library to a wider population.

The State Library negotiates with vendors and publishers to include provisions for interlibrary loan of electronic resources, allowing articles from licensed electronic holdings to be printed and then mailed or faxed to the requesting library. For copyright reasons, electronic transmission is not allowed.

Because no statistics are kept by format for interlibrary loan, no count of requests for items in subscription electronic resources is available. However, staff comments indicate that this is a valuable criterion to include in the agreement, especially for titles that are not available in print.

Goal 2: All New Yorkers will have access to library resources and services that advance and enhance their lives as workers, students, family members, and lifelong learners.

Progress toward goal:

☐ Surpassed the goal
☐ Met this goal
☒ Made progress toward this goal
☐ Did not work toward this goal

Objective/Target No. 10: Increase the visibility of and participation in New York's Statewide Summer Reading Program.

- Expand partnerships among library systems, public libraries, schools, corporations, the Legislature, and others to improve publicity, promotion, and usage of New York's Statewide Summer Reading Program.

New York's Statewide Summer Reading Program is an annual, state-sponsored public library initiative. Its goal is to encourage children and teens across the state to read and participate in traditional and targeted public library activities during the summer. More than 1,100 libraries and branch libraries in New York's cities, small towns, and rural areas offer the program to children from pre-school through grade 12, with most participants in grades two through six. The statewide program has a theme and promotional materials that are provided to libraries by the New York State Library. In 2005 the theme was "Tune in @ Your Library!" which offered multiple connections with books and literacy activities such as storytelling, drama, writing, and sharing/reporting by children, and featured children's love of music to help them develop creative expression through music. Each year public libraries and their branches receive a program manual with ready-to-use promotional materials. The manual is also distributed to New York's 42 (now 41) school library systems so that teachers and school librarians can promote the program to students before school ends in June. The program's theme is expanded through artistic and colorful posters, reading certificates, and bookmarks, and further publicized through public-service announcements and news stories in all media. To help increase participation at the teen/young adult levels, separate graphics and web pages have been developed. Web page activities such as polls, blogging, and photo and music sharing were tested for teens in 2006.

The State Library promoted the Statewide Summer Reading Program through active public-relations campaigns. The State Education Department's Commissioner visited libraries for special PR events and a celebrity spokesperson (magician David Blaine in 2006) supported the program through numerous appearances. Special contests, publisher book giveaways, and events to appeal to families helped to increase participation in the program. The Statewide "Love Your Library" License Plate program (http://www.nysl.nysed.gov/libdev/lylplate/index.html), developed in cooperation with the New York State Department of Motor Vehicles, immediately improved the visibility of libraries and is helping to build future funding for the Statewide Summer Reading Program.

From 2003 through 2006, participation in the program grew by 112 percent. The goal of one million participants by 2005 was exceeded by 133,155 or 13.3 percent. In 2006, 1,225,114 youngsters participated in the program through their local public library. A new goal for 2010 has been set at 1.5 million participants. The State Library did not conduct a telephone survey to measure public awareness of the Statewide Summer Reading Program.

Program promotion was achieved through partnerships, promotional events and spokespersons, press coverage, and website outreach. The State Library developed fact sheets for parents, teachers, policy makers, and partner agencies. The website for the Statewide Summer Reading Program recorded 25,775 hits during the summer of 2004, indicating that web information on the program follows the trend for all other information aimed at young people—the Internet is the place to be.

The State Library maintains several websites for this program, including the State Library's Summer Reading web pages for libraries, library systems, and educators (http://www.nysl.nysed.gov/libdev/summer/index.html) and the official Summer Reading Program website for youngsters and families (http://www.summerreadingnys.org/). The use of each has increased significantly over the evaluation report period. Usage of the site for libraries increased from 6,809 page hits (or views) in 2002 to 32,574 in 2006. Usage of the site for youngsters and families increased from 22,983 page hits in 2003 to 51,033 in 2006. New to the suite of Statewide Summer Reading Program services provided by the State Library, as well as a successful resource for New York's library community since 2004, is a database of Performers and Programs for Youth created through an LSTA grant (http://performersandprograms.com/index.html). The website for this database reflects a similar growth in page visits from 36,346 in 2004 to 114,083 in 2006.

The Statewide Summer Reading Program brings children and families into the library for reading materials and for enjoyable reading-centered events. Use of the public library in the summer months encourages families to use public libraries all year and to use additional library resources and services. Exposure to books and reading at public library programs gives families an incentive to continue learning through reading and literacy activities at home; it creates a positive connection for youngsters when they return to school in the fall by giving them reading and learning experiences to report on, share, and enhance their classroom learning. At the same time, summer reading helps to prevent the loss of reading skills experienced by students who do not read during the summer.

Objective/Target No. 11: Strengthen the State Library's partnership with the State Education Department's Office of Elementary, Middle, Secondary and Continuing Education (EMSC), school library systems, and others to improve and enhance New York's school library media programs.
- Develop and implement a new School Library Support Aid program that will provide funds to high-need school districts to increase the number of certified staff and strengthen school library media programs.

As part of the implementation of the recommendations of the Regents Commission on Library Services, the State Library obtained Board of Regents commitment to include a budget request for $15 million in new state funding for school library support aid in their priority legislative proposals from 2001 through 2006. The funding program was not approved by the Governor or Legislature. In 2006, under the leadership of State Librarian Janet M. Welch, the State Library changed strategy and focused on collaborating with the School Aid Workgroup within the State Education Department. This collaboration led to the development of a rationale and a justification for increasing an existing School Library Materials Aid program from $6 to $10 per pupil. The funding for School Library Materials Aid, a component of state aid to school districts, had not been increased since 1998. A team composed of State Library and other State Education Department staff developed a new conceptual proposal linking research data from 60 state and national studies on the impact of strong school libraries on student achievement with Education Department data on highly performing school districts.

The Board of Regents accepted the conceptual proposal in the fall of 2006 and the proposed increase for School Library Materials Aid to $10 per pupil was included in the Regents 2007–08 State Aid for Schools request. The Governor has proposed an increase from $6 to $6.25 per pupil. Work continues on developing a program to address the lack of certified school librarians in school libraries across the State.

- Provide expert assistance to school library systems in their efforts to strengthen local school library media centers.

State Library staff provided assistance to school library systems whose main objective is to provide a range of services to local school library media centers. Staff advisors promoted the importance and value of certified school library media specialists with school administrators, school boards, the Board of Regents, and deans of New York's seven library schools. Despite their efforts, the number of certified school library media specialists declined slightly from 3,267 in 2002 to 3,226 in 2006.

State Library staff attended nearly 100 school library system meetings in the period 2002–2006. They disseminated numerous listserv messages to school library system directors; maintained liaison with the School Library System Association representing the school library system directors; and participated in meetings of the New York Library Association's School Library Media Section as a non-voting liaison from the New York State Library. LSTA retrospective conversion grants to school library systems enabled their member libraries to develop automated systems and their regions to expand their resource sharing.

The State Library's technical assistance and expert advice to the school library systems enabled those systems, in turn, to assist their member libraries in improving school library services and programs.

Objective/Target No. 12: Partner with EMSC (Elementary, Middle, Secondary and Continuing Education), the Department of Labor, and others to increase the visibility of library programs and services that contribute to workforce development and economic revitalization.

The State Library works with the New York State Agency Training Council to disseminate information about the library's programs and services to state employees. The State Library also contacts agency librarians with information about new booklists and online databases to forward to their agency employees and visits state agency sites to conduct customized training for agency employees in using the library's online databases. The library works with the regional Chamber of Commerce to educate them about library resources and to elicit suggestions on best practices to reach the business community. The library also revised its website's online business pages to target workers and employers, highlighting business collections (marketing, accounting, trademarks) and specialized services (document delivery, reference e-mail, customized classes).

From 2002 through 2006, the State Library trained more than 3,800 state agency staff in use of the library's resources that would contribute to their productivity in the workplace. Library staff participated in the Chamber's 2006 Capital District Business XPO, providing a manned exhibit booth from which they disseminated information about State Library print and electronic resources related to business. Several hundred information sheets and library card applications were distributed to area businessmen and women. Two business organizations signed up for customized training in business resources provided by the library.

State agency staff members and the business community benefit from having a greater knowledge of State Library resources that can assist in workforce development and economic revitalization.

Objective/Target No. 13: Encourage full participation of libraries and library systems in the Alliance for Family Literacy publicity campaign and training programs and in family literacy grants.

The Alliance for Family Literacy is a consortium of state agencies, early-childhood and adult education programs, family literacy providers, libraries, higher education, and other organizations that are involved in literacy education. Public libraries are both providers of literacy services and partners in ensuring access to literacy services and programs in New York. The Alliance developed a public-relations campaign and offered ten regional grants throughout New York State. The grants helped form partnerships among literacy providers to ensure that families know about and can access literacy opportunities. Key goals of the publicity and partnerships included (1) interactive literacy between parents and children—helping parents to support their children's literacy development through activities such as connecting stories to children's experience; engaging children in discussion; and using everyday activities to connect sounds, oral language, and print and (2) parenting education—enhancing relationships between parents and their children to help parents understand their children's academic, physical, and emotional development. These activities also support family-school partnerships and foster learning in the home.

As a result of the State Library's participation in the development of the Alliance, librarians who work with young children and families have a new set of resources easily available through the following web pages: http://www.nysl.nysed.gov/libdev/youthsvs/links.htm and http://www.ccf.state.ny.us/resources/literacy.htm.

Librarians are working with community agencies that provide literacy training, offering library-based supports to parents, children, and adult learners through the new literacy resources. One example is the Yonkers Family Literacy Alliance, a partnership of the Yonkers Public Library and local Literacy Volunteers Affiliates that include a hospital, the Cornell Cooperative Extension, public schools, the Jewish Council, and Head Start among others, all working together to provide family literacy resources, referrals, and programs. A database of literacy resources is available on the library's web page: www.ypl.org/YFLA.htm.

Objective/Target No. 14: Partner with EMSC to implement the Reading Excellence Act grant program in New York State and to encourage full participation of libraries and library systems as partners with eligible school districts.

State Library staff worked collaboratively with State Education Department Elementary, Middle, Secondary and Continuing Education staff on a Reading Excellence Act advisory committee. Despite best efforts to include school and public libraries as integral components of New York's statewide Reading Excellence Act program, subsequent changes in policies related to the Reading First program, part of No Child Left Behind, restricted the use of federal funds to direct reading instruction in the classroom. Some Reading First federal funds were used to support the reading curriculum in school libraries; however, most of the federal funds were used for classroom collections or classroom libraries and computerized reading programs.

Objective/Target No. 15: Increase the visibility of and participation in the Great New York ReadAloud Program.

- Convene a representative advisory group to make suggestions for increasing visibility and program participation.
- Coordinate the implementation of the advisory group's recommendations.

For 15 years, through spring 2004, the State Library encouraged libraries and schools throughout New York State to sponsor "ReadAlouds" during National Library Week and School Library Media Month. The Great New York ReadAloud was at one time one of the largest one-day reading events in the nation. The ReadAloud programs focused on the joy of reading out loud and promoted the love of reading and the lifelong learning associated with reading. The program enjoyed much support with many organizational partners, including statewide library and education groups, the library committees in the State Legislature, and multiple corporate sponsors. ProQuest Company, the 2004 ReadAloud corporate sponsor, provided 18,000 posters in three languages (Chinese, English, and Spanish) for 6,000 libraries and schools.

Successful statewide Great New York ReadAloud celebrations were held in spring 2003 and 2004, reaching an estimated 175,000 people each year. The planned new external advisory group and other actions listed under this objective were never initiated because of staffing constraints at the State Library. In addition, the State Library no longer had the staff resources to provide technical assistance in planning and implementing reading celebrations for hundreds of individual libraries.

In fall 2004, the State Library reprioritized statewide programs in light of limited resources and Regents policy priorities, and consciously chose to suspend the ReadAloud program for 2005. The limited resources formerly targeted for the ReadAloud were refocused towards expanding and enhancing the highly successful annual Statewide Summer Reading Program, described elsewhere in this report.

Objective/Target No. 16: Partner with school and public library systems to increase awareness of New York State's two regional and two sub-regional Libraries for the Blind and Physically Handicapped to increase significantly the number of New Yorkers with print-related disabilities receiving library services.

Three libraries currently make up the statewide network of libraries serving people who are blind or physically disabled in New York State. These libraries are part of the national network that makes up the Library of Congress National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped. The New York State Talking Book and Braille Library (TBBL) is the regional library for New York's 55 upstate counties. The New York Public Library's Andrew Heiskell Braille and Talking Book Library is the regional library serving residents of New York City and Long Island. The two former sub-regional libraries that served Long Island combined resources and locations and became the Long Island Talking Book Library, which provides Nassau and Suffolk counties with the recorded book portion of this program's service.

The State Library, through the combined efforts of the Talking Book and Braille Library, the Research Library, and the Division of Library Development, promote the specialized services provided by the three libraries in New York State. Information about these services is shared widely through school and public library systems by e-mail, mail, local site visits, and statewide meetings. Statewide meetings were held every other year for public library system outreach coordinators between 2002 and 2006. In addition, library system outreach staff and others were informed and encouraged to share information and experience through several statewide and national listservs. Statewide promotion, such as that done at the Conference of Teaching and Learning in New York

City in 2006, and activities conducted by the State Library's Division of Library Development offering statewide information-sharing, make up another part of this effort. Information on the regional and sub-regional libraries that serve New York State was distributed at many events, including the New York State Education Department's Office of Cultural Education booth during the 2006 Conference on Teaching and Learning in New York City, National Library Week, and PTA conventions. This promotional activity will be repeated in spring 2007. The reporting period for this report saw an increase in outreach and promotion to nursing homes and their residents who need this service, especially at the Andrew Heiskell Library.

Library services to New Yorkers who have a disability that prevents their use of print books and materials have been maintained despite resource and staffing challenges. A focus on marketing to elderly persons and students mean that more local libraries, schools, and adult care facilities are able to assist students, residents, and clients in obtaining these services.

Objective/Target No. 17: Participate in the development of the 2-1-1 New York Collaborative Program, sponsored by United Way affiliates and the New York State Association of Information and Referral Services.

The 2-1-1 New York initiative has already established call centers in some regions of the state and is working to establish call centers in all regions to help residents locate health and human services information tailored to their needs. By dialing 2-1-1 from anywhere in the state, 24 hours a day, a caller will be connected to a regional certified information and referral specialist who will interview the caller, maintain confidentiality, and provide detailed assistance in accessing appropriate agencies and services. Services will be provided in multiple languages and through appropriate technology for the hearing-impaired on an as-needed basis. The New York State Library has endorsed and participated in the development of this initiative from the beginning.

During the period 2003 to 2006, the State Library liaison to the 2-1-1 New York Collaborative participated in planning meetings for the initiative and shared information on initiative development with public libraries and library systems through e-mail updates, meeting presentations, and a New York Library Association poster session. The State Library developed a web page on 2-1-1 with federal, state, and regional updates and contact persons (http://www.nysl.nysed.gov/libdev/outreach/211nys.htm). During 2005, the State Library liaison recruited and recommended a library liaison who continues to serve on the 2-1-1 New York Policy Board, providing libraries and library systems with current information and sharing the public library perspective with the board, whose mission is closely linked to library service.

New York's public library community is aware of and involved in local 2-1-1 programs and initiatives. In some cases, databases are developed cooperatively with public library systems. In addition, information on 2-1-1 and its development and implementation in New York State is available through public libraries and on the State Library website. This information will be expanded as the service becomes operational in more locations.

Objective/Target No. 18: Partner with reference and research library resources systems to promote and enhance the services of their special client populations.

The predominant strategy for partnering with library systems to promote services to their special client populations is through grants. One of the best examples of a reference and research library resources system's enhancement of services to a special client population began with an LSTA grant awarded by the State Library to the Rochester Regional Library Council in 2003. The initial

grant established "CLIC-on-Health" (at http://www.cliconhealth.org), a partnership between libraries and community health organizations. The grant resulted in the creation of a website and several training sessions.

This grant demonstrates the best that LSTA funds can accomplish. The program has continued with grant funds from other sources, including state money from legislative member items, and money from the National Library of Medicine. The current project continues both training people to use health information on the Internet and providing a web portal with information specific to Rochester healthcare—a "one-stop shopping" site for health information.

Objective/Target No. 19: Increase the visibility of Research Library programs and services available to all New Yorkers to promote economic development and lifelong learning.

The Research Library developed specific activities focused on each targeted customer group identified in the library's 2005–2008 marketing and communication plan. For teachers, the library developed a web page (http://www.nysl.nysed.gov/teachers.htm), which became operational in October 2006, and gave several presentations to education groups. For the business community, the library developed several strategies to let that community know how the rich resources of the library might contribute to economic development. For the general public, the Research Library presented programs; established the New York State Resident Borrowers program, which affords onsite State Library borrowing privileges to all New Yorkers 18 years and older; and developed educational information to make the public more aware of the resources in the library.

Research Library staff made a presentation about the library's resources to the board of the Capital Region Teacher Center and provided materials to be distributed in each school. They also demonstrated the library's electronic resources to 100 educators at the March 2006 Celebration of Teaching and Learning.

In 2006, library staff had two meetings with local Chamber of Commerce staff to collect feedback on services, collections, and programs that might be of particular interest to the business community. Web pages developed in 2006 focusing on services to the business community will be available on the library's website at the end of March 2007. In October 2006, the Research Library participated in the Albany-Colonie Chamber of Commerce Business XPO 2006, staffing a booth to promote library programs and services and to network with the local business community. More than 200 handouts were distributed.

Between October 1, 2002, and December 31, 2006, the Research Library held an average of 36 public programs each year on topics such as "Doing Business with New York State," "Using Online Newspapers," and "Finding Consumer Health Information"; provided tours and presentations about library collections and services to a number of groups; and added ten finding aids to the library's website. In 2006, the Research Library developed a 12-minute video on library resources and services that plays continuously in the main lobby of the Cultural Education Center. The video is also available online from the State Library website and available for presentations. Twenty-five newspaper articles on Research Library collections and collaborative exhibits were featured in New York State newspapers in 2006. A History Channel segment on the library's George Washington collection was filmed and broadcast on national television in December 2006.

In 2004, the New York State Resident Borrowers program was publicized throughout the state through newspaper articles, listservs, fliers, and e-mail messages, and at various meetings and conferences. As of January 2007, the library had 2,540 Resident Borrowers cardholders, up from

990 at the beginning of 2005. Currently, approximately 50 percent of Resident Borrowers are from the Capital District, with other cardholders distributed across the state.

Through the Resident Borrowers program, the State Library has increased the use of Research Library materials by state residents from localities geographically distant from the institution. Attendance at public programs has risen steadily, reflecting increased interest in program topics and library materials. Outreach activities, such as the booth at the Business XPO, have resulted in three additional requests from the business community in the last six months for customized training classes in using State Library resources.

Objective/Target No. 20: Expand use of Research Library resources by providing timely access to collections and information.

Since 2002, the Research Library has added new services and procedures to expand access rights, as well as provide for timely access to collections and information. One of the most significant actions was a major change in access policy in June 2004. Prior to that date, a very limited group of individuals were eligible for direct borrowing; most individuals could borrow State Library materials only through Interlibrary Loan. The new policy expanded access by allowing all New York State residents 18 years and older to borrow items directly from the library's circulating collection. The library received many positive comments about this change in policy.

The Research Library also used technology, e.g., e-mail and the Internet, to increase ease of access and provide more timely access to collections. Before 2002, Research Library staff accepted requests for materials located in closed stacks from customers onsite, over the telephone, via fax, and through the online catalog; in 2002, staff began accepting e-mail requests for materials. An online Interlibrary Loan form for (non-protocol) requests from other libraries was made available on the State Library's website in 2003. The online form provides faster access to State Library collections for libraries that had been mailing a paper request form. In response to customer requests, the Research Library began providing a monthly list of new books available from the State Library on the library's website. The library's Document Delivery unit was able to reduce the time needed to get requested copies to direct customers and libraries by scanning the requested materials and sending them by e-mail rather than using UPS or U.S. mail. This service received very positive feedback from customers and libraries; in fact, many customers and libraries now prefer to receive copies by e-mail. The number of pages sent by e-mail doubled from 66,537 pages in 2002 to 124,595 pages in 2006. Library staff began receiving an increasing number of requests from users to digitize older, historical materials in the library's collection and make the digitized versions available 24/7 on the library's website. In 2005–06, the Research Library conducted a project to digitize a selected number of high-use historical and primary source materials from the library's collection, scanning a total of 32,057 pages. These digitized documents are now available to all users on the website and through the online catalog.

Also to enhance timely access to information, the Research Library instituted a "rush" policy to order and process "rush requests" from State Government customers who indicate that they have an immediate work-related need for an item not owned by the library. Approximately 98 percent of State Government customers who requested that we rush-order a new title received the item within 24 hours from the date that the Research Library received the new title.

The Research Library has used a combination of strategies to respond to customer requests for more and faster access to library collections and information. New technologies have given library staff the ability to expand timely access to collections and information and increase customer satisfaction

with no increase in staffing. To meet the research and information needs of today's customers, the Research Library will continue to develop and implement strategies to increase access to the Research Library's collection.

Goal 3: Libraries, library systems, and the New York State Library will deliver programs that meet and anticipate constantly changing needs for library services.

Progress toward goal:

☐ Surpassed the goal
☐ Met this goal
☒ Made progress toward this goal
☐ Did not work toward this goal

Objective/Target No. 21: Partner with library systems and others to develop and fully implement the New York's Excellent Library Service Program (NY EXCELS) to promote service excellence in all types of libraries and library systems.

State Library staff analyzed a variety of strategies for implementing recommendation 4 of the Regents Commission on Library Services, particularly in relation to developing a new state funding program to spur excellence in library service for all New Yorkers. A proposal to create and fund such a program was put forward as part of the Regents comprehensive legislative proposals in 2003, 2004, 2005, and 2006.

In 2002, the State Library began to test some of the strategies for implementing recommendation 4 by using LSTA funds. State Library staff developed a new category of LSTA grants called "Service Improvement." Service Improvement grant programs and guidelines provided the library systems and central libraries with a broad menu of choices for improving system and local library services and moving library services towards excellence. In addition, systems were required to link their grant projects directly to the achievement of specific goals within the systems' five-year plans of service. Funded "service improvement" projects will continue through March 31, 2008. This evaluation report does not include information about the 62 Service Improvement grant applications received in January 2007 and still under review.

In the period covered by this report, the State Library awarded 55 Service Improvement grants. Twenty-six of these are duplicates, because they represent the second year of a two-year project; therefore, the program has supported 29 unique projects. The State Library will also approve an additional 62 Service Improvement grants for all types of library systems for 2007–2008. The total LSTA funds invested in these 117 projects is $3.84 million.

Analysis of the 29 unique Service Improvement projects revealed that 24 fell into the three major groupings described below. These addressed issues involved in improving library services and appeared to move library systems and many of their member libraries further along the continuum towards excellence:
- Building public awareness of the importance of library services—This group included six projects, five implemented by public library systems or a central library, and one implemented by a reference and research library resources system. Some of these projects included the work that several public library systems are doing to help member libraries change their governance structure to ensure more accountability for public funds and more reliable and sustained financial support. Others involved use of marketing and PR experts to help libraries understand how to build public awareness of their services.
- Community needs assessment—This group had six projects, including both public library systems and reference and research library resources systems. The purpose of these projects

was to help member libraries learn how to assess community needs (whether the general public or the academic community) and plan to change and improve services based on what the assessment showed.

- Leadership and professional development—Twelve projects were implemented by all three types of library systems. These projects included training programs for library staff to improve customer service; professional development programs to build leadership and management skills in staff at various levels; and improved and more expansive training programs for public library trustees.

Objective/Target No. 22: Introduce service improvement and evaluation processes to all types of libraries and library systems to help them use performance (outputs) and results (outcomes) in measuring their progress towards excellence.

- Provide State Library and library system staff with "train-the-trainer" instruction in service improvement and evaluation methods.
- Provide library systems with a range of advisory services to support instruction for member library staff in service improvement and evaluation methods.
- Partner with library systems in providing user-friendly, timely, and accurate data for evaluation of library services and programs via the World Wide Web.
- Create opportunities for statewide communication of best practices of exemplary library programs.

Since the approval by IMLS of the State Library's Outcome-Based Evaluation (OBE) Training Plan in 2003, a plan to train library system and member library staff in the basics of OBE and to deliver OBE training to relevant library staff, the State Library has been moving forward in delivering OBE training across the state. In 2003 to 2005, eight OBE basic training regional workshops were held in different areas of New York State, and three more were held in 2006. In the fall of 2005, an advanced training session was held in the Albany area, culminating in the certification of 10 OBE trainers. These trainers are certified by the State Library and have completed a minimum of six days of OBE training at the basic, train-the-trainer, and advanced levels.

In January 2006, the State Library launched an OBE website (www.nysl.nysed.gov/libdev/obe/index.htm) containing a timeline of State Library-related OBE activities, all training manuals developed under the plan, a list of certified trainers, and other information links relevant to OBE, including IMLS information. The State Library also incorporated OBE training into the state's Gates/WebJunction 2005–2006 Rural Sustainability Program for rural and small libraries serving fewer than 25,000. Eleven regional workshops were held across the state, with a total of almost 500 participants. Counting the Gates Foundation Grant Program and the OBE workshops directly sponsored by the State Library, 749 library staff members have been trained since 2003, 10 of them certified OBE trainers.

The goal, i.e., to have State Library and system staff demonstrate skill in using OBE evaluation methods, was met. This is indicated in data supplied by the workshop trainers in separate evaluation reports and the State Library certification of 10 OBE trainers. A complete description of the workshops and their evaluations are included in the attached Outcome-Based Evaluation Report (see Appendix II).

Objective/Target No. 23: Improve the range and depth of expert advisory services available to libraries and library systems to help them respond to changing technologies, demographics, and user needs in support of improved access to information for all New Yorkers.

- Provide State Library and library system staff with training opportunities to improve skills in the areas of leadership, facilitation, communication, project management, conflict negotiation, and others as needed.

The State Library has partnered with Libraries for the Future (LFF), the New York Library Association, and the Public Library System Directors Organization to offer the New York EqualAccess Libraries Institute in 2006, 2007, and 2008. EqualAccess provides public librarians and staff with comprehensive training in how to meet their communities' needs effectively through assessment, outreach, and collaboration. Specifically, participants receive training in how to reach and serve health consumers, baby boomers, older adults, or 'tweens and teens in their communities; however, the EqualAccess approach can be applied to any target population.

In early 2006, 35 librarians and staff from four public library systems and 15 public libraries from the Capital Region and surrounding areas participated in the first New York EqualAccess Libraries Institute. In a post-institute survey, 90 percent of respondents rated the program as excellent or good, and they indicated significantly increased confidence in their ability to implement specific skills (assessment, outreach, collaboration, etc.). A follow-up implementation survey will be sent to all participants in 2007.

The State Library has already gained evidence of the institute's positive impact on librarians, libraries, and communities through follow-up correspondence with participants. For example, the Albany Public Library (APL), which sent three librarians to the Institute, has done the following: partnered with the Albany County Department for the Aging to offer Medicare Information Classes for seniors; added two new successful components to their 2006 Summer Reading Program (one for teens and one for adults) in collaboration with local businesses who donated prizes; partnered with the local Women's Bar Association to offer free monthly Legal Clinics at the library.

Unfortunately, during the time period of this evaluation, which began one year after September 11, 2001, New York State government imposed severe restrictions on travel and workshop/conference attendance for State Library staff. These restrictions greatly hampered the State Library's ability to use external, traditional library-based professional development opportunities to build content knowledge and expertise among current and new staff. While very few State Library staff were able to attend critical external workshops or library or technology conferences, the State Library was still able to provide some training opportunities for staff and for the library systems and libraries as follows: (1) providing access to an ongoing suite of training offerings offered by the State Education Department to all employees; (2) purchasing statewide access for all libraries in New York State to the College of DuPage teleconferences; (3) supporting technology, special services, and service improvement training programs delivered through LSTA subgrants managed by the library systems; (4) purchasing expert consultant services to develop and/or deliver targeted training and professional development as well as materials on key topic areas related to implementation of the LSTA Five-Year Plan and the Regents Commission recommendations; and (6) partnering with a host of other organizations to deliver training to library staff and trustees (e.g., "Training on the Go," launched by the State Library and the New York Library Association to provide hundreds of free online courses in a wide variety of topics from WebJunction and Element-K to 700 public library staff over the next two years.

Some 18,995 library staff and library trustees received training in more than 1,900 training sessions from 2003 through 2006. Through such training sessions and expert advisory services delivered and

supported by the State Library, the library systems, and partner organizations, thousands of library and library system staff and trustees in New York State are better able to anticipate and meet changing customer needs and better able to measure their progress towards achieving service excellence.

Objective/Target No. 24: Partner with public library systems and other organizations to help libraries and communities create and strengthen Public Library Districts so that every New Yorker will have a local library and every library will have a reliable, adequate source of local funding.

State Library staff worked with public library systems, the New York State Association of Library Boards, and the New York Library Association (NYLA) to develop a web-based Public Library District How-To Kit and Guide to help public libraries work with their communities to achieve sustained and reliable local funding. NYLA created a Library Districts Advisory Task Force to provide expert assistance and information to public libraries interested in forming public library districts. The State Library also provided the services of an expert consultant to interested libraries and library systems statewide. The expert consultant and State Library staff provided numerous workshops and consultations, e.g., seven workshops and 74 consultations for 342 people in 2006.

In addition, the State Library regularly updated GIS maps for each public library service area by county and by public library system and made the maps available to libraries and the public on the State Library's website at http://www.nysl.nysed.gov/libdev/libs/pldtools/index.html. The maps show the various types of chartered library service areas as well as unserved areas (areas not served by a local public library). Use of the State Library's Public Library District How-To Kit almost doubled over four years, from 2,148 hits in 2003 to 4,038 hits in 2006.

Since October 1, 2002, 14 new public library districts have been created. These 14 districts, in addition to other service area increases, have resulted in 123,911 formerly unserved New Yorkers having a local library in their community. As of 2006, 24 percent of the public libraries in New York State are either school district or special legislative district public libraries. Twenty percent of the 1.3 million unserved New Yorkers identified in 1999 now have a local library in their community. In addition, the statewide average local income for support of public libraries has increased to $45.52, over the target for the LSTA Plan.

Objective/Target No. 25: Partner with public library systems and other organizations to periodically assess public library needs for building construction, expansion, and renovation, and actively use the data to propose solutions to policymakers.

Recommendation 5 of the Regents Commission report recommends increased state support for public library construction, expansion, and renovation. Of the more than 1,110 public library buildings in New York State, more than half are at least 50 years old, and another 30 percent are more than two decades old and unable to accommodate new technologies or the needs of New Yorkers with disabilities.

Keeping accurate information on the current status of this number of public library facilities is a daunting task. In 2001, the State Library partnered with the public library systems and the New York Library Association to begin developing a process for documenting the construction needs of individual public library facilities. In addition to using some data elements collected annually from the public library annual reports, the library systems were asked to collect information from their member libraries about estimated costs to meet construction needs. The State Library also partnered

with the library systems and NYLA in developing and conducting an in-depth voluntary online construction and technology survey to which more than 400 libraries responded early in 2006. This valuable data about construction needs was compiled, analyzed, and shared with library leaders and decision makers in a variety of ways. A list of the individual libraries with identified construction needs is posted on the State Library's website at
http://www.nysl.nysed.gov/libdev/construc/needs.htm. As of fall 2006, the data reported by local libraries and the library systems documents a $1.7 billion need in New York State for public library construction and renovation.

In spring 2006, the New York State Assembly Committee on Libraries and Education Technology, the New York Library Association, and other groups used the public library facility construction needs data provided by the State Library to inform discussions during a statewide legislative hearing about public library construction needs. One tremendously successful result of this consistent, ongoing focused education, data collection, and reporting effort was the 2006–2007 one-time appropriation of $14 million in State capital funds for public library construction. Some 200 library facilities across the state will benefit from construction projects supported by this $14 million. While the permanent ongoing program of state funds for public library construction is still $800,000 a year, the Governor has proposed another $14 million in capital funds for library construction in his 2007–2008 Executive Budget. The Regents have proposed making the $14 million permanent for 2007–08 and providing $30 million annually thereafter.

Objective/Target No. 26: Strengthen the State Library's partnership with the State Education Department's Office of Elementary, Middle, Secondary and Continuing Education (EMSC), school library systems, and others to improve and enhance New York's school library media programs.

The New York State Education Department's Virtual Learning System (VLS) is designed to encourage the use of the Internet as a tool for teaching and learning and to assist classroom teachers and school library media specialists in locating Internet resources for instruction. State Library staff have served on the VLS steering committee and its subcommittees since its inception in 2002.

Currently, the VLS home page contains links to educational resources from the State Library via a hotlink entitled "cultural resources." This includes the NOVEL databases, as well as links to special collections and programs (such as the Statewide Summer Reading Program) sponsored by the State Library. All classroom teachers can now access the NOVEL databases through the VLS by using their driver license number or non-driver ID number. State Library resources contained on the VLS can be seen at http://www.oce.nysed.gov/ctl/index.htm

State Library staff are currently partnering with EMSC staff by participating in the E-Grants initiative. The purpose of the initiative is to develop a standardized electronic grant application form, thereby streamlining the process by which educators apply for EMSC-sponsored grants. The e-grants application form is still under development. Only the fiscal form has been streamlined and recommended for general use by all State Education Departments. The fiscal form was used in LSTA grants awarded in 2007.

Objective/Target No. 27: Strengthen the State Library's partnership with academic and research libraries and reference and research library systems, the State Education Department's Office of Higher Education, and others to improve and enhance New York's academic and research libraries.

The State Library maintains an ex-officio seat on the board of the New York Higher Education Initiative (NYSHEI), a collaborative, member-supported and member-governed organization of

New York's public and private institutions of higher education and their libraries. NYSHEI is in its fifth year of existence. The State Library also maintains membership in Nylink, the OCLC regional network with a majority of members from the academic library community in New York. A librarian from the State Library serves on the Nylink Council as a representative of the "Other" library category. The Director of the Research Library serves as an OCLC Members Council delegate from Nylink.

NYSHEI members make up over 80 percent of all accredited institutions of higher education in New York State, including all of the State University of New York and City University of New York, joined by a majority of the private (independent) institutions. It is the only statewide organization in New York focused exclusively on the information access issues of higher education. This collaboration has facilitated New York State Library partnerships with other academic and research libraries in developing strategies for statewide resource sharing, collection development, collaborative licensing, and scholarly communication. Nylink is one of nine regional networks nationwide for OCLC member libraries. The New York State Library participates in joint licensing and other network services with other academic libraries for discounts, training, and technical support.

These memberships and seats on the governing bodies have permitted the State Library to play an active role in statewide planning and enhancement of academic library contributions to the overall library infrastructure of the state.

Objective/Target No. 28: Improve library system programs and services by aligning system plans of service to other key activities such as annual reports, grant applications, and program evaluations.

Building on the success of the online public library annual report for 750+ libraries, the strategy involved designing new, streamlined, more meaningful products for the three types of library systems to use with the State Library: budget applications, annual report forms, and a long-range plan of service. From 2002 to 2004, an internal team worked to design the content of forms based on Education Department policy, customers' needs/input, and regulatory requirements for various state-aided programs. An external review team of 10 library system directors suggested improvements on various drafts of the forms and documents and met with the facilitator and the internal team to finalize the product design and content. Detailed instructions for the online products were written by the internal team.

Staff in the Division of Library Development and from all 73 library systems have been trained to use the software for the annual reports, plans of service, and budget applications. Ten regional sessions were conducted for clients by two State Library staff members and a vendor representative. Suggested improvements are part of each product and the State Library works with the vendor annually to implement some of the product changes recommended by the library system clients.

The 73 library systems are submitting online annual budget applications, annual reports, and five-year plans of service to the State Library. Links to the approved five-year plans of service for each system are available on the State Library's website at (www.nysl.nysed.gov/libdev/pos/pos-url.htm). Use of the online forms has resulted in more streamlined processes with fewer staff at the State Library being involved with dissemination and handling of paper forms.

Goal 4: New York State libraries, library systems, library organizations, and the New York State Library will strengthen public policy support for upgrading library services for every New Yorker through statewide communication and advocacy efforts.

Progress toward goal:

☐ Surpassed the goal
☐ Met this goal
☒ Made progress toward this goal
☐ Did not work toward this goal

Objective/Target No. 29: Enhance the State Library's marketing and public-relations efforts to establish a supportive attitude from the public, the library community, key partners in the education and business communities, and policymakers.

- Develop a statewide advocacy plan in partnership with representatives from the library community, and communicate this plan to the library community and other stakeholders.
- Form partnerships with policymakers, stakeholders, and the business community that strengthen public awareness and library-advocacy efforts throughout New York State.
- Develop advocacy tools with the help of the library community that will explain the need for all types of library services.
- Assist in creating advocacy task forces within various library and education groups to further statewide library initiatives.

The State Library has far exceeded expectations in its implementation of planned activities identified under this objective during the period included in this evaluation. The library's Library Advocacy Team (LAT) has met regularly, usually monthly, since it was first formed in 2001. The group's steering committee meets more frequently, often weekly. The LAT has developed and implemented multiple short-term and long-term advocacy plans; developed and implemented dozens of specific strategies related to achieving the goals of the Regents Commission; collected data and conducted research; and prepared advocacy and informational materials in print and electronic form that are pertinent to all of the Commission recommendations, including websites and online tool kits for use by local libraries and others. LAT has also developed and delivered dozens of education and information programs and presentations across the state with the goal of building partnerships specifically in support of implementing the Commission recommendations and generally in support of improving and advancing library services for all New Yorkers.

Ongoing partnerships have been formed with a wide variety of library groups, education groups, higher education groups, cultural groups, the professions, businesses, unions, and local government organizations.

One visible outcome of this education effort and partnership development is the heightened awareness among the public and policymakers of the importance of public libraries as community knowledge spaces in the 21st century and the great need for public library building construction and renovation in New York State. This awareness is evidenced by the fact that in 2006, the state provided $14 million in one-time capital funds for public library construction and renovation and at the same time, many local communities passed local bond issues.

Objective/Target No. 30: Improve mechanisms to share information concerning the impact of LSTA federal funds with the library community, policymakers, and the general public.
- Develop, publish, and distribute brochures that show the relevance and importance of the LSTA program.
- Expand the New York State Library website to promote reporting of LSTA-supported activities.

Each year, the State Library develops a brochure describing the importance and relevance of the LSTA Program in New York State. The brochure is developed in the spring and distributed widely. Exemplary LSTA grant programs are highlighted in the brochure. The latest version is posted on the State Library's website at http://www.nysl.nysed.gov/libdev/lsta/fundlsta.htm.

Since 2002, the State Library has improved its dissemination of information on the impact of LSTA funds by increasing the number of LSTA-related messages posted on the statewide library listserv (NYLINE), by posting the annual LSTA brochure online, and by expanding the LSTA website to include both current and past grant programs.

Library staff around the state have benefited from the increased communication by receiving information in a timely manner and by having additional LSTA resources available online. Library services benefit by the increased library visibility to decision makers.

Objective/Target No. 31: Expand awareness of Research Library services within New York's library community.

The Research Library has expanded awareness of library services and resources by exhibiting at several library conferences, and by providing information through exhibit handouts, poster sessions, and library conference programs.
- In 2004, the Research Library provided a web-based tutorial available to all libraries in the state on State Library interlibrary loan services and procedures, enabling libraries to receive materials more quickly and economically.
- In 2005, the Research Library participated in a poster session at an ENY/ARCL conference focusing on the Resident Borrowers program and NOVEL, the Statewide Electronic Library. More than 100 handouts on digitized library collections and 30 Resident Borrowers Card applications were distributed.
- In April 2006, library staff presented a talk about the State Library to 22 Library Assistants at the Capital District Library Assistants program, sponsored by the Capital District Library Council. Thirty Resident Borrowers Card applications were filled out and returned, and 50 more applications were taken by library assistants back to their home libraries. Attendees took 100 informational handouts with links to online State Library resources to distribute and post in their institutions.
- In November 2006, State Library staff had an exhibit at the New York Library Association Annual Conference and distributed more than 500 handouts on the Resident Borrowers Card program, scanned historical documents, and library website "virtual visits." Research Library staff presented a conference program to 80 librarians on the State Library Federated Search pilot program.
- During 2006, the Research Library issued 19 NYLINE messages regarding recently acquired library collections or enhanced access to research library materials, often through online finding aids.

III. Results of In-Depth Evaluations

The New York State Library contracted with Himmel & Wilson Library Consultants to carry out an in-depth evaluation of the New York Online Virtual Electronic Library (NOVEL). The NOVEL program specifically addresses the first goal of New York State's LSTA Plan:

"All New Yorkers will have reliable and equitable statewide electronic access to information resources through the creation of NOVEL and through enhancement and expansion of libraries' technology capabilities to meet users' informational needs."

NOVEL is the State Library's most significant statewide service provided in the last five years, and the consultants' report attests to its importance to libraries and users. The following is a quotation from their conclusion:

"New Yorkers are very fortunate to have the resources that are offered to them through the New York Online Virtual Electronic Library (NOVEL). While the program can be improved, and while public awareness of the database program still needs to be increased, NOVEL nevertheless manages to address all of the high level goals set for the program.… Usage has increased dramatically and the program is known and appreciated by a vast majority of the library community."

The report is attached as Appendix 1 of this overall report.

IV. Progress in Showing Results of Library Initiatives or Services

The New York State Library has taken a leadership role in working with the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) since 2003 to deliver Outcome-Based Evaluation (OBE) training to New York State's library systems and their member libraries.

With assistance from IMLS, the State Library developed a 10-stage OBE training plan for New York, beginning with a two-day workshop for State Library staff led by IMLS consultants. The library then contracted with an evaluator/trainer to develop a training manual, to deliver OBE training to library system staff, and to provide an evaluation of the training effort as part of the LSTA evaluation. The evaluator/trainer's concludes with this summary:

"OBE practice has made its way into several LSTA grant program applications, data gathering, and reports. It has been used for some plans of service and for rural library action plans. It has been used by some systems to seek funds from other than LSTA sources and by some for general management activities. It clearly has become part of the consciousness of librarians in New York State."

A copy of the evaluation report on OBE training, prepared by Dr. Eleanor Carter, is attached as Appendix 2 of this overall report.

V. Lessons Learned

The most notable lesson learned from the initiatives supported by the LSTA program concern the two major initiatives: NOVEL and the State Library's Statewide Summer Reading Program. Other states may benefit from New York's experience and recognition that public awareness is vitally important to the success of a statewide project.

Despite the substantial increases in the use of NOVEL resources described in Part I of this report, the evaluation of the NOVEL initiative by Himmel & Wilson, Library Consultants, in 2006–07 found that the general public was largely unaware of NOVEL and its resources. Even librarians revealed confusion about some aspects of NOVEL (including its name), and most did not distinguish the resources made available through NOVEL from other online resources.

When asked specifically about publicity and awareness of NOVEL, 44 percent of NOVEL users surveyed online said they learned about the NOVEL resources through a librarian or a school library media specialist. In focus groups, librarians said that widespread marketing and promotion are needed to make potential users aware of the information available through NOVEL resources. Users in focus groups believed that librarians are missing a "great PR opportunity" with NOVEL and that a PR campaign should go beyond the library to bring in new users.

In 2006, the New York State Library began a Statewide Education and Information Program for NOVEL. The program is intended to educate and inform the public about NOVEL through a statewide communications plan that will bring about an increased awareness of NOVEL among all New Yorkers and promote its use through local libraries. The program will include communications focused on media relations and outlets such as newspapers, radio, and television, as well as top-notch professional products to be used by libraries to inform their local communities about the information resources available through their libraries. An evaluation component of the program will measure its effectiveness through techniques such as telephone surveys to determine public awareness of NOVEL, use of NOVEL, and levels of local library participation and promotion.

The State Library's experience with the Statewide Summer Reading Program provides a marked contrast to its experience with NOVEL. Although participation in the Summer Reading Program had been growing, it skyrocketed when a public-relations firm was hired to promote it in 2003.

Expectations are that public awareness and use of NOVEL will increase significantly with the rollout of the Statewide Education and Information Program. However, had the initiative included an education/PR campaign similar to that for the Summer Reading Program earlier on, it would have been more widely used, understood, and appreciated throughout New York State.

VI. Brief Description of the Evaluation Process

Who Was Involved

The State Library began its evaluation process in the summer of 2005 with brainstorming sessions by an internal evaluation team. The results of those sessions formed the basis of recommendations to the Regents Advisory Council on Libraries and its LSTA Committee. With agreement that the in-depth evaluation would focus on the New York Online Virtual Electronic Library (NOVEL), the State Library internal evaluation team next discussed various issues concerning that evaluation with the NOVEL Steering Committee, which advises the State Library on matters relating to NOVEL.

In December 2005, the internal evaluation team prepared and issued a Request for Proposal for a consultant to carry out the NOVEL evaluation. Himmel & Wilson Library Consultants were selected and the contract approved on March 28, 2006. A key question to be addressed by the consultants was: "How has NOVEL helped the user, both librarians and their end-users? The library wanted to be sure that the consultants gathered information from all types of NOVEL users.

While the in-depth evaluation was in progress, an internal evaluation work group began gathering information about the State Library's work over the last five years on other programs and services under the LSTA Plan. This work group included staff from both the Research Library and the Division of Library Development. The library's management group, including the State Librarian, provided advice and support. In addition, the library hired Dr. Eleanor Carter to evaluate the progress made with the State Library's OBE Training Plan.

How the Evaluation Was Conducted

For the evaluation of NOVEL, the major statewide initiative, Himmel & Wilson began their work with meetings and interviews with State Library staff. They next conducted a web survey and focus groups that included both librarians and users. They also carried out personal interviews with librarians and a few users. Their work began on April 1, 2006, and concluded on March 31, 2007.

Dr. Carter began collecting data from the OBE training workshops in 2003 and carried out the data analysis in 2006.

Cost of the Evaluation

The major expenditures for the LSTA evaluation were for outside consultants and State Library staff time:

Himmel & Wilson—evaluation of the NOVEL program: $42,200
Dr. Eleanor Carter—evaluation of the OBE training plan: $5,000
Estimated value of State Library staff time (August 2005 through March 2007): $145,000.

Evaluation of the New York Online Virtual Electronic Library (NOVEL)

Prepared for
The New York State Education Department
Albany, New York

by

Milton, Wisconsin
March 12, 2007

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The New York Online Virtual Electronic Library (NOVEL) offers residents of New York State access to a wide variety of authoritative online information resources at no direct cost to the end-user at the point of access. People can enter the digital databases from computers located in libraries and schools as well as from their home or their workplace. The resources available range from basic information intended for young school children (e.g., Searchasaurus) to business resources (e.g., Business & Company Resource Center) of interest to specific segments of the adult population.

The NOVEL program is coordinated and managed by the New York State Library (NYSL), which is part of the Office of Cultural Education, within the New York State Education Department. However, funding for NOVEL is solely dependent on temporary Federal funding made available to the New York State Library through the Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA).

In 2006, the New York State Education Department issued a Request for Proposal (RFP) to conduct an independent evaluation of the NOVEL program. There were several purposes for conducting the assessment. First, the evaluation of NOVEL is part of an ongoing effort to be highly accountable for the expenditure of public dollars. Second, the assessment was designed to evaluate the program's performance carried out under the State's 2003 - 2007 Five-Year LSTA Plan and to inform decision-making regarding improvement of the program as the next LSTA Five-Year Plan is developed.

Himmel & Wilson, Library Consultants, a firm with extensive experience working with state library agencies throughout the United States and considerable familiarity with LSTA, was selected to conduct the evaluation of the NOVEL program. The consultants were asked to address seven questions. Short responses to these seven questions follow in this executive summary and these answers are expanded upon in the body of the report.

In an effort to ascertain the answers to these questions, the consultants carried out a wide variety of data-gathering activities. Focus groups with librarians and end-users of the NOVEL databases were held in nine locations throughout the State. A web survey that attracted more than 1,200 responses from librarians and end-users was conducted. More than thirty librarians who were very familiar with the program were interviewed as were a number of end-users.

The consultants also reviewed background documentation regarding the NOVEL program and analyzed both usage data and information regarding the more than five thousand schools and libraries that are officially registered for the program. The consultants also reviewed efforts that have been made to raise public awareness of the NOVEL program and to train librarians and library staff, educators, and the general public to use the databases effectively. Following

then, is an overview of the evaluation structured around the seven questions originally raised in the RFP.

How has NOVEL helped the user, both librarians and their end-users?

- NOVEL equalizes access to authoritative information
  - NOVEL is available 24X7
  - NOVEL is not limited by geography
- NOVEL expands both the breadth and the depth of the information resources that are available
- NOVEL is cost-effective

Are users getting what they need?

- NOVEL has resources that are relevant to a broad cross-section of the population
- Most needs that are not being met are either at the "low end' (very basic resources) or at the "high end" (technical, scholarly resources)
- Other libraries, library systems, and library consortia fill some, but not all, of the low and high end needs

Is the State Library communicating well with users about NOVEL?

- The State Library has been highly effective in communicating information about NOVEL to the library community
- Communications efforts have reached many sophisticated library users
- Communications efforts have failed to reach a large percentage of the general public in spite of considerable effort
- The NOVEL Statewide Education and Information Program that is in its early stages has great promise for improving communications with the general public

Did the State Library expand resources to all users including both large and small libraries?

- Users of small and large libraries have better access to authoritative information resources because of the NOVEL program
  - Small libraries gain basic resources
  - Large libraries redirect funds they would have spent on basic electronic resources to purchase/license other valuable resources
- Some libraries benefit by "building" on the NOVEL base (licensing more in-depth electronic resources from the same vendors)

How has the NOVEL program benefited libraries (and their users) through cost savings?

- There are both direct and indirect cost savings to libraries
    - Library users have access to expanded resources at a lower cost
    - Libraries indirectly benefit because they do not need to purchase, process, store and maintain certain kinds of resources (they need to own fewer journals/periodicals)

What do non-participating libraries and borderline participants need to be able to participate?

- Ongoing training and public awareness efforts will be needed
- Mass market advertising that would raise public awareness and drive user expectations will be needed

What next steps in regard to NOVEL should be considered for the new 5-year plan?

- Increase public awareness of the NOVEL program (The NOVEL Statewide Education and Information Program is an important step in this direction)
- Work even more closely with other consortia that license databases (such as Westchester Academic Library Director's Organization [WALDO], the SUNY and CUNY libraries, and the New York State Higher Education Initiative [NYSHEI] to coordinate licensing efforts to ensure maximum benefit to all New Yorkers (both from a cost standpoint and depth/breadth of resources)
- Exert greater effort in an attempt to build a coordinated continuum of resources (create users in primary grades and provide a path that continues database use through adult years)
- Continue to work with partners (libraries/library systems) on training and staff development related to NOVEL databases
- Encourage State investment to expand/extend resources now licensed using LSTA funds
- Work collaboratively to reduce the number of interfaces used to access the NOVEL databases
- Expand access to federated searching while continuing to offer "expert" systems

New York State Library staff members have been, and continue to be, active in their efforts to improve the NOVEL program. Examples include pilot projects featuring federated and simplified searching and the improvement of marketing efforts through the NOVEL Statewide Education and Information Program.

As was indicated earlier, the NOVEL program is entirely supported with Federal Library Services and Technology Act funds. NOVEL addresses four of the six

purposes for the LSTA program that are outlined in the Act's authorizing legislation. These purposes are paraphrased below.

The LSTA purposes addressed by the NOVEL program are:

- Expanding services for learning and access to information and education resources in a variety of formats, in all types of libraries, for individuals of all ages
- Developing library services that provide all users access to information through local, State, regional, national, and international networks
- Providing electronic and other linkages among and between all types of libraries
- Developing public and private partnerships with other agencies and community-based organizations

Measured against these high level goals and purposes, NOVEL is clearly an outstanding success given the size and complexity of New York State, the thousands of libraries involved and the severely limited resources available to the State Library for implementing NOVEL. The consultants found many specific examples that serve to illustrate increased educational opportunity, expanded access to authoritative information, increased usage of networked information resources, exemplary cooperation between and among various types of libraries, library systems and the state library agency, and some new partnerships between libraries and community organizations.

Between 2003 and 2005, the total number of NOVEL online sessions (Gale and EBSCO combined) increased from 5,190,171 to 10,236,541, an increase of over ninety-seven percent (97.22%). Between 2003 and 2006, the number of NOVEL searches conducted increased by an even greater percentage (214.53%) from 9,894,816 to 31,122,781. This translates into approximately 1.61 searches per capita!

Furthermore, data gathered from focus groups, interviews, and surveys serves to underscore the importance of the NOVEL program in the lives of individuals. The consultants found ample evidence to support the conclusion that NOVEL is an exceptional resource that supports learning from childhood through adulthood and that the information gleaned from database searches contributes to both the quality of life and the educational, occupational, and personal success of countless New Yorkers.

THE EVALUATION

INTRODUCTION

The New York Online Virtual Electronic Library (NOVEL) offers residents of New York State access to a wide variety of authoritative online information resources at no direct cost to the end-user at the point of access. People are able to find and retrieve information on a wide variety of topics ranging from health and business information to full-text versions of journal and newspaper articles. Access to these resources is provided over the Internet through computers located in schools and libraries as well as those in the homes of New Yorkers from Buffalo to Montauk and from Plattsburgh to Jamestown.

New York is among a large number of states that offer their residents some access to a set of high-quality online databases. From Alabama's "Alabama Virtual Library" (http://www.avl.lib.al.us) to Wyoming's GoWYLD (http://gowyld.net), most states have recognized the importance of electronic resources to the educational, intellectual, and economic vitality of their populace. While a majority of states in 2007 are providing some sort of state database licensing program, all do not. Furthermore, the depth of the resources and the breadth of access to the resources vary tremendously from state to state. The mechanism used to fund the licensing of digital resources also varies tremendously.

The common thread among the programs is a tried and true principle followed by libraries for centuries. By aggregating demand for intellectual property and by developing a mechanism for shared access to that intellectual property, the state can offer a greater number of people the benefit of the content of information resources.

At different times in history and as information has been stored in different formats, the "aggregation and access" models that have been used have varied. Libraries have served as central repositories where original manuscripts were copied and distributed to a wider audience. Libraries have established monumental buildings where people could go to view books that have been acquired from commercial sources. In the late 20th and early 21st centuries, libraries have added the licensing of digital information resources to their content acquisition and delivery arsenal.

In the age of Google™, it is fair to ask why the licensing of costly databases is necessary. Many people believe that nearly everything in the way of information is just a simple Google ™ search away. There is no question that the advent of Internet search engines has radically changed the way people seek and retrieve information resources. At the same time, it is fair to characterize search engines such as Google™ and Yahoo™ as "good enough" information resources. People *can* find a great deal of useful information using these tools. However,

we also know that these tools find and deliver whatever is placed on the World Wide Web regardless of its quality and/or veracity.

A few sobering facts demonstrate the need for information resources that are reliable. If you conduct a Google search on "Britney Spears," you will find twice as many references as you will for a similar search on "Albert Einstein." A Google search on the phrase "miserable failure," displays a result that lists the official White House biography of President George W. Bush as the top entry in terms of relevance. This is due to the fact that Google results have been manipulated by the public through a practice known as "Googlebombing." A variety of factors, including advertising expenditures, can influence the placement of hits on popular search engines. The information available through Google and other search engines is not necessarily factual or unbiased.

You may ask, "what about resources like Wikipedia?" Again, these resources have a place; however, a recent study revealed that Wikipedia had 31 % more errors than the Encyclopedia Britannica. Encyclopedic information, whether in print or online, is only as good as the experts who contribute content.

"Good enough" resources may be acceptable to satisfy our curiosity or to find an address or phone number of a retail outlet. However, these "free" resources are often not "good enough" for serious research purposes, for providing information regarding critical health or legal issues or for making fundamental decisions regarding investments. More and more frequently, Internet users searching for highly reliable information are faced with the words, "please enter your credit card number."

The New York State Education Department - New York State Library offers the NOVEL databases for a variety of important reasons related to the information provided above. First, high quality research and decision making can only be achieved when researchers and those who make important decisions have access to authoritative information resources. Second, in a free society, high quality information must be available to all without a means test. When access is denied to information, access to education and success is also severely restricted.

Furthermore, if New York hopes to remain competitive in a global economy, it must provide its residents with the tools they need to contend. The labor force needs good information and the next generation needs to develop superior information literacy skills including the ability to discriminate between authoritative and questionable sources. "Good enough" may suffice when searching for information regarding a pop star but it is not adequate to prevail in the international marketplace.

There is simply no question that New Yorkers need online access to quality information resources. It is not an understatement to say that the educational

and economic vitality of the State's residents is at stake if such resources are not provided. The question then is not whether or not a program such as NOVEL should be offered. The question is more whether the program is as efficient and effective as it can be in achieving its goal of connecting people with up-to-date, authoritative information resources. The following evaluation explores this question in depth. The evaluation is not based on the consultants' opinions. Rather, it is based on an analysis of data and on contact with hundreds of librarians, school library media specialists, teachers, and citizens who use the NOVEL databases on an ongoing basis.

THE EVALUATION PROCESS

In February 2006, Himmel & Wilson, Library Consultants responded to a Request for Proposals issued by the New York State Education Department – New York State Library seeking a consultant to conduct an independent evaluation of the New York Online Virtual Electronic Library (NOVEL). Himmel & Wilson was subsequently awarded a contract to conduct the evaluation and work began in earnest on the project in May 2006.

The evaluation involved multiple approaches to determining the effectiveness of the NOVEL program. The consultants:

- met with New York State Library officials and staff involved in the program,
- reviewed and analyzed statistical data regarding the program,
- held a series of focus groups with librarians and school library media specialists using the NOVEL databases,
- held a series of focus groups with end-users of the NOVEL databases,
- conducted a series of web-based surveys with librarians using the NOVEL databases and with end-users of the databases, and,
- conducted personal interviews with librarians and with end-users of the NOVEL program.

While no single aspect of the evaluation provides a comprehensive picture of the successes and failures of the program, together, they offer an accurate picture of an extremely valuable program that, nevertheless has some weakness that should be addressed.

In all, the consultants had some contact with approximately 1,500 residents of New York State regarding their experiences with the NOVEL databases. This contact, achieved through the focus groups, interviews, and web surveys provides a look at the impact of NOVEL on the lives of real people. The locations of the focus groups provide one glimpse at the range of opinions that were sought. At least one session was held in each of the nine Reference and Research Library Resources Systems (3Rs) areas of the State of New York.

Sessions were held in:

- Batavia
- Canastota
- Farmingdale
- Fredonia
- Highland
- Ithaca
- New York City
- Saratoga Springs
- Watertown

The map below (Map 1) shows the distribution of the focus group sites. Focus group sites are represented by a red dot.

Map 1 - Focus Group Sites

The web surveys also managed to gather perspectives from across the entire Empire State. Librarians and school library media specialists were encouraged to participate in the survey through messages shared on listservs and e-mail lists used by the State Library to communicate with the library community. Some contacts were also made with librarians who had been involved in "invitational grants" that trained teachers and end-users in how to get the most out of the

databases. These individuals played a key role in encouraging end-users to participate in the survey. Similar surveys were aimed at librarians and school library media specialists, teachers, business users of the databases, personal users of the databases, and other users who did not fit nicely into one of the aforementioned categories. In all, approximately 1,200 individuals participated in the initial set of web surveys. A separate web survey was aimed at NOVEL users who access the databases through the State Library's portal to the NOVEL databases. Map 2 that appears below, shows the distribution of survey respondents by postal zip codes. As you can see, the web surveys also achieved a wide distribution of responses. Zip codes represented by survey respondents are shown in purple.
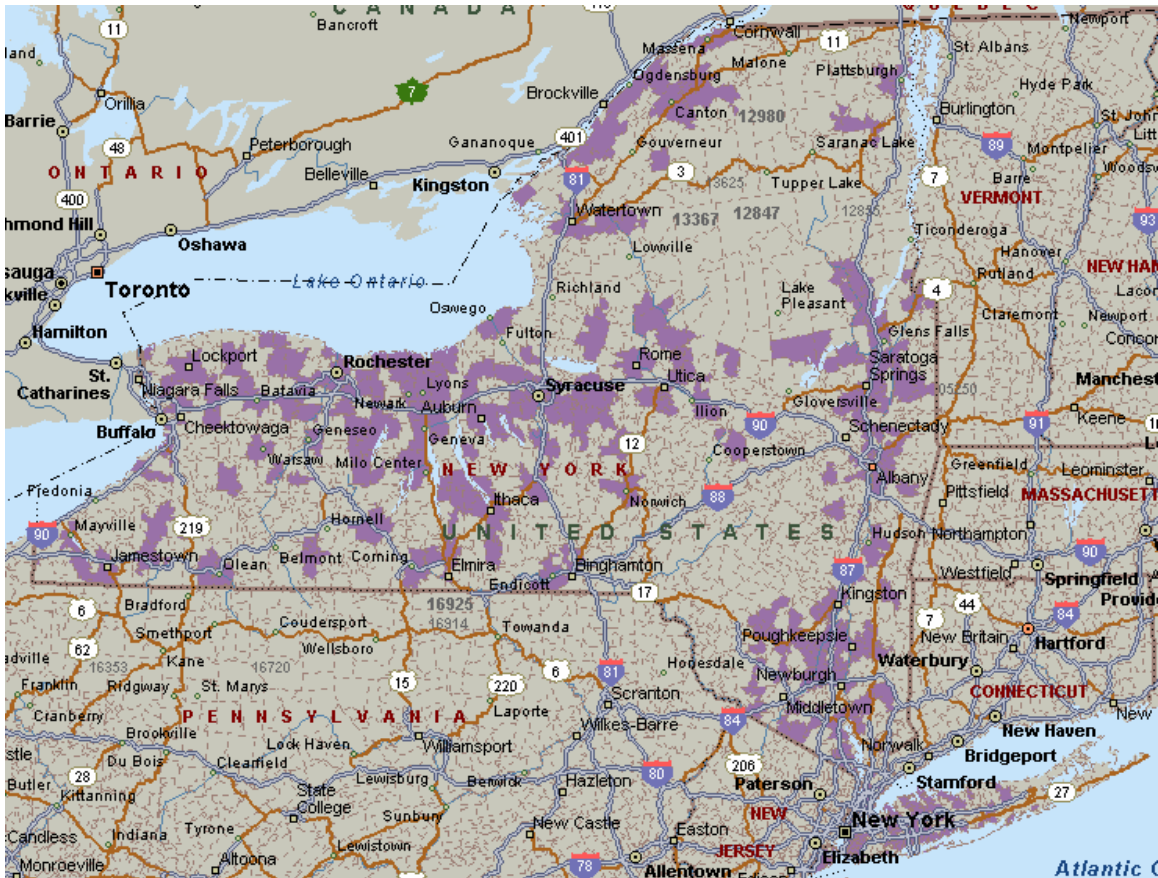
Map 2 – Web Survey Respondents

Individual interviews were held with librarians and with end-users both in person and by telephone. The analysis of statistical data involved an examination of the databases used to track institutions that participate in the Novel program and reports on usage provided by the database vendors for 2003, 2004, and 2005.

SUMMARY OF FOCUS GROUPS –
Librarian and End-User Sessions

Between July 10th and July 18th 2006, Himmel & Wilson, Library Consultants conducted a series of focus groups in the nine Reference and Research Library Resources System areas of the State of New York, generally an end-users' group and a librarians' group in each region. One end-user session was cancelled because there were no participants. Total attendance at the seventeen focus group sessions was 119 participants. The nine librarians' sessions had a total attendance of ninety; the eight end-users' sessions had a total attendance of twenty-nine. Four of the end-user sessions had only one participant each. Unfortunately, the project schedule resulted in the need to schedule focus groups during a period of time when many individuals schedule vacations. The schedule also limited the opportunity for the participation of school personnel and students. Because of these realities, attempts were made to gather information from these important constituencies using other methods such as web surveys and interviews.

More extensive summaries of the focus group sessions are provided in APPENDIX A (Librarians) and APPENDIX B (NOVEL End-Users).

Key findings from the sessions with librarians:
The NOVEL databases are a major resource, essential in some libraries and complementary or supplementary in others.
- Public librarians reported that reference questions were increasingly being answered with electronic resources and that fewer paper reference materials were being purchased.
- A medical librarian pointed out that printed information might already be two years old and added that she had no room to house back issues of periodicals in paper.
- School library media specialists and librarians from some small school library media centers and small public libraries said they had no databases other than those available through NOVEL.
- Even librarians and school library media specialists who said the databases were supplementary went on to say that the currency of the databases made them an important supplement to the print collections.
- An academic librarian explained that the databases were complementary; their focus is on the graduate school level, but the library also serves faculty and students on the personal level as well.
- Having NOVEL databases, "augment what we can afford to pay for."
- Several participants from various types of libraries emphasized that consistency across all types of libraries was important to students as they moved from elementary to high school to college to using public or special libraries. "We can help students become knowledge information literate; the NOVEL databases raise the bar."

Database use is frequently "self-taught" although the grants that have been offered for training have been extremely helpful.

- Training needs to be ongoing because staff members change, the databases change, and even those with training forget how if they use the databases infrequently.
- Training needs to be provided at the teachable moment or in relation to a specific subject of interest to the user. One-on-one training seems to be highly effective in training new users.

Participants find people/potential users do not understand the difference between databases and the Internet. Users often "Google" to get information instead of turning to more authoritative sources such as NOVEL.

If the NOVEL databases disappeared tomorrow, many libraries and their users would suffer.

- Many small school library/media centers and public libraries would have very limited (or no) electronic resources. "It would decimate our resources."
- "It would increase the gap between haves and have-nots."
- Because the databases have been available, librarians have stopped purchasing print materials in some areas; consequently, collections would have limited materials in some areas. "It would create a serious gap in our informational resources; I'd have to cut something else."
- "We wouldn't find a lot of answers for many of our customers." (Reference service would suffer.)
- Participants thought the users would miss the health resources and the newspaper databases most.
- "It's very useful in academic libraries, but academics wouldn't be impacted as much; the academics buy (license) a lot of things on their own or through consortiums."
- The image of libraries and librarians would suffer. "NOVEL makes me look good to my staff and students. You'd look bad to the public if you didn't have those electronic resources."

Participants gave several reasons they believe some people choose not to use the databases.

- Potential users don't know what the databases are. "It's an awareness issue."
- Some find searching difficult. (the majority of librarians and end-users expressed a high level of satisfaction in regard to ease of use; however there is a small percentage of users who find searching at least some of the NOVEL databases difficult.)
- Driver's license access is helpful to some, but a deterrent to students without a New York State driver's license, either because they are too young to have a driver's license or, in the case of some college students, may be from out of state.

Many suggestions were offered for electronic resources to be added to the NOVEL databases; however, the suggestions seemed to vary by the clientele served.

- School library media specialists often said "any good encyclopedia" or named a specific encyclopedia. However, some librarians from other types of libraries did not think encyclopedias were heavily used by their clients even though they had tried different ones.
- School library media specialists also suggested that databases coded for reading levels would be very helpful.
- Public librarians suggested genealogical resources and test preparation databases along with newspapers and various other topical databases.
- Academic and medical librarians wanted more technical and/or "higher level" databases.

Suggestions for marketing the databases to the general public included

- Market NOVEL as being a *safe* source of information
- Get out where the users are to inform them of what is available
- Conduct a statewide public awareness campaign (although some participants disliked the idea of spending money on marketing; they preferred that funds be spent on content.)
- Strengthen the "brand recognition" of NOVEL (although some felt that starting over with a new, more descriptive name made sense)

Other issues arose and were discussed during the focus group sessions as well. Among the issues raised were:

- Getting usage statistics for the databases is difficult at some levels.
- Databases are complex to use: protocols are not standardized; spelling is a challenge for some people and search strategies are difficult for some people to develop.
- Terms such as databases and NOVEL confuse potential users.
- There is disagreement over the usefulness of federated searching at this point.

Key findings from the sessions with end-users:
Gathering end-users for the focus groups was a difficult task for the libraries and systems. This may have been in part a matter of scheduling; the sessions were held during the day when many people might be expected to be at work. Some librarians also suggested it would have helped if there had been some incentive (mileage, for example) available to people to travel, sometimes long distances, to attend the sessions. Nevertheless, those who attended the sessions had useful information to share. Writers and library trustees made up a good number of those who came to the sessions. In Manhattan, the participants were people who were interested in signing up for computer classes to learn about various programs; their exposure to the databases was somewhat limited. However, this group's interest in the databases was extremely high.

The end-users made many comments and suggestions that supported or echoed what the librarians had said in their sessions.

- EBSCO, Gale, NOVEL, and "databases," are all labels that "don't mean much."
- People are looking for a seamless way to get into the databases; they want to search quality resources more "like Google."
- Participants described their difficulties in searching. Difficulties seemed to be related to differences in the screens from different access points and different searching strategies required by the various products. End-users did not like having to key in their ID number each time they moved to a different database (as is necessary when entering the databases through some access points).
- Databases that end-users would like to have available include HeritageQuest, a good basic encyclopedia, specific periodicals, and test preparation materials.
- End-users often said they got their training in using databases and software at the library; however, like many of the librarian participants, many end-users seemed to be largely self-taught; they just keep trying different things, trial and error, until they find what they're looking for.
- What's great about the databases is that they are "free!"
- The focus group participants (who were probably more sophisticated searchers than many potential end-users) *did* know that databases were different from the Internet. One participant said "…databases are juried or carefully selected and therefore they are more trustworthy." This person went on to say that the NOVEL databases are "better quality" than much of what is found on the Internet.
- Their recommendations were to make searching more user friendly; do training by topic/subject; and make the databases more accessible to people with disabilities.
- They think librarians are missing a great PR opportunity with the databases. A PR campaign needs to go beyond the libraries to bring new users in. One lady said, "Publicity about it (NOVEL) is severely lacking!"

SUMMARY OF INTERVIEWS WITH LIBRARY PROFESSIONALS

The NYSL provided the consultants with a list of the names of 33 library leaders in New York who had been involved in various aspects of the development and implementation of the NOVEL program. Over the course of several weeks the consultants were able to interview all but three of the individuals named. A list of those interviewed as well as a more extensive coverage of the content of the interviews can be found in APPENDIX C.).

Many of the people interviewed had been involved with the development of the NOVEL program and their comments were very helpful to the consultants'

understanding of how the NOVEL program has developed. The consultants asked each of the people interviewed about their involvement with the NOVEL program, what they saw as the successes, what has not happened as they had anticipated or wanted, what or which of the five initiatives outlined at the onset of the NOVEL program should be the next priority, and what they believed the impact of NOVEL has been.

The initiatives envisioned for NOVEL at its inception included 5 areas. Because of limited funding, NYSL has only been able to pursue the first and fifth initiatives. The original initiatives were:
> (1) increasing access to electronic resources on a statewide basis;
> (2) expanding resource sharing to improve electronic and traditional access to library resources for all users;
> (3) developing a coordinated program for the digitization of information resources in NY libraries and other repositories;
> (4) enhancing the availability of high-speed telecommunications for NY libraries across all regions of the state; and
> (5) developing a NOVEL user interface or portal that integrates the services and resources brought together under NOVEL.

There was both a wide variety in the responses and some general agreement.

Successes (and impact of the NOVEL program):
- The widespread geographic access to the databases
- Equitable access, i.e., a "level playing field"
- Cost savings
- Leveraging existing budgets
- For some libraries the NOVEL program makes databases available where they would not otherwise be.

What has not happened as anticipated or wanted:
- Driver's license access complicated things, especially for students and schools (however, many thought it was a good approach to widening the public's awareness of the program)
- The selection of databases is too general, "low-end" for academic institutions and not low enough for elementary schools.
- Usage data is inadequate or unclear.
- Access points differ too much from library to library.
- Some librarians are hesitant to train end-users to use the databases.
- Some find NOVEL hard to use; the interfaces are complicated and the state library website is "way too complex."
- Potential users are unaware of what the databases contain and of how to use them.

Priorities for the future among the 5 initiatives in the NOVEL program:
- Many of those interviewed still place a high priority on the database program—refining it, extending it, etc.
- Most of those interviewed questioned the meaning and intent of the second initiative, expanding resource sharing.
- Digitization is not a high priority for those interviewed; coordination of digitization does have some support.
- While several people recognized that the lack of high-speed telecommunications was a problem for libraries in rural areas of the state, most interviewees did not think NYSL should have a major role in addressing this problem.
- Federated searching as a concept was widely supported; however, this initiative seems to be in its infancy in New York and people had a wait and see mindset about it as a statewide initiative. Some thought that the technology would have moved beyond the outcome being sought by the time federated searching was widely possible in New York libraries.

SUMMARY OF INTERVIEWS WITH END-USERS

NOVEL end-users interviewed via telephone included educators, students, researchers, senior citizens, and a number of people who characterized themselves as "personal" users who used the databases to answer questions that arose in their lives. Some had been introduced to the databases through presentations made by librarians, but others were self-taught. It appears that some school library media specialists have worked successfully to integrate the databases into the work that teachers do.

Some suggestions for improvements were
- People generally would prefer to get full text rather than citations or abstracts.
- Sometimes changes happen in the databases that the end-users do not know about until they discover them online during another search. One person said she "couldn't always find what I'd found the last time I searched."
- End-users seemed hesitant to be critical when they were asked how the NOVEL program might be improved because some at least thought the "fault" lay with them and their searching skills rather than with the databases or the way access was structured.
- One gentleman was very specific in his call for improvements. He did not like that "…you have to keep putting in your login and pin number. Once you log in, that should be enough. Why do you have to use the pin in addition to the library card number? Why do we need the extra step?"

The comments that follow are excerpts from some of the interviews.

A high school teacher who has had NOVEL training said she uses the databases as a student, a Mom, and a teacher. The school library media specialist at the school where she teaches also helps her with the research she is doing as a graduate student. Her son goes to a different school. "We used the databases this weekend from home. They're an EXTREMELY VALUABLE tool. I have a sheet listing the EBSCO databases on my computer and the school library media specialist gave all of us (teachers) a list of what's in each database. The best way to learn is hands on, but the librarian comes in whenever I ask. She tells us what we need when we need it. She has created a package for each project my students do that says which database is best for each topic."

A health care worker said she had not used databases much, but she "keeps the information handy. The health databases seem user friendly."

A woman whose job has her working at a computer all day said she had taken courses at Mid-York Library System on the databases. Her job leads her to use the Business Resource Center for the 800 numbers. She likes EBSCO databases; her son also uses them in his driver's education class. She uses the Health Reference Center for personal use; she likes the full text. She has also used the custom and New York State newspapers.

Many people do not make a distinction between databases available through NOVEL and other online resources offered by their local library, library system, or educational institution. The consultants found that this kind of confusion was widespread. It was encountered in focus groups, in personal interviews, and in the web surveys. While librarians had a much clearer picture of what was and wasn't part of the NOVEL suite of databases, even a few librarians mistakenly associated particular databases with NOVEL.

A school library aide who used to be a teacher's aide for special education staff said that the library media specialist gave her training and now she teaches people how to use the databases. The databases are "incredible!" She characterized her students as "needy." "Searchasaurus is so right for them—6th, 7th, and 8th graders. They can understand it and use it for science, history, etc." Now she's teaching MasterFILE™ Select to 6th-12th graders. She uses the databases several times a day. She thinks the databases are really easy to get into, understand, and maneuver around in. She's not afraid, although she sees others who seem to be; she also promotes use of databases. "They have to be aware that Google is not the answer."

A retired academic librarian said she used the databases to prepare a 20 minute paper on Korea for a club she belongs to; the librarian had told her about the databases. She also uses the newspapers database, especially the New York Times.

Another woman reported using NOVEL databases "for job information and entertainment." She learned by "playing around" with the databases. She wishes there were more weekly newspapers along with their backfiles (especially local papers) because she does genealogy and local history searching for her mother. Again, this end-user moved freely between talking about NOVEL resources and other databases and resources available on the web.

A retiree who is also involved with a computer users' group said he uses Google "quite a bit." He has favorite sites, is interested in podcasts, blogs, online magazines and newspapers. He stays up late, but doesn't watch TV; has been a library user since he was a child. He accesses everything from home; gets medical stuff through the NYSL web page and through the Mid-York System. He has been using databases, including NOVEL offerings for two years. He said that he is "…curious about what's out there." He added, "We appreciate the links."

A director of special education said she learned about using the NOVEL databases through the school library media specialist who sponsored a series of workshops for the faculty and provided them all with passwords. The special education director uses the databases professionally, e.g., when there is a new student with "issues" who's taking medications, she researches the medications and the issue the student is dealing with. She also researches early literacy topics. She likes that "the databases provide access to a wealth of information, especially professional information, at our fingertips." They allow her to do research and get more information on topics, "anything I need to help our kids." While she does not see any negatives, sometimes she gets just an abstract when she would like full text. She could get the full text through the librarians, but there's a lag time involved in doing that. "This is a poor rural community. We'd have to drive 20-30 minutes to get to this information otherwise. The databases are wonderful for the kids and teachers. We're fortunate to have the level and scope of the databases available within our school."

The special education director went on to say that "the school media person also does twice a month lunch time workshops with the IT person to get teachers involved, 'technology Fridays,' — a 45 minute session where you can eat your lunch and get training at the same time. All you have to do is give the librarian and IT person a topic you're interested in."

A man who described himself as "a parent" and who did software testing and web development from home said he had never had any training in the use of the databases, but he had lived in another state and used ProQuest there. His use of the NOVEL databases is mostly "personal interest," reprints of New York Times articles, consumer reports, etc. He especially likes that it is "real time, especially for newspapers." He described using the databases as "intimidating. I'm confused sometimes; the web page has several services and different search engines. Each one is different; you have to use a sequence query. I wouldn't

know how to explain how to find things to somebody else. I just do searches for people rather than trying to explain."

Another library media specialist who had also worked in a public library said she is "self-taught on the databases" but has given training to others. She has made bookmarks, promoted databases, and used the health and business databases. She thought the learning curve with business resources was steep because she didn't know about them or what was there although navigation wise they were no more difficult than other products. She wished people knew about the NOVEL databases and used them; she "personally uses and loves them." She also teaches 7th grade information literacy and uses databases for that.

The editor of a weekly newspaper indicated that she uses New York Times articles about once a week; she generally searches by using a couple of keywords. She would like the pictures to be there as well; she does not look for specific articles, just uses the subject approach and has no particular difficulties. She is "quite happy with it; it's nice to be able to ask for either an abstract or full article although I use the full article most of the time." The oldest things she sees are from the late 1990s and it would be great if the file went further back. She used JSTOR in college; "it would be nice to have access to that, although it probably was expensive." "The databases help me all the time!"

SUMMARY OF WEB SURVEY RESULTS

Overview
Over 1,200 librarians/school library media specialists, students, teacher/educators, business users, personal users, and other users responded to a web survey about the NOVEL databases between May 21st and October 31st, 2006. They lived in 454 different zip code areas. Seventy-seven percent (77.08%) of the respondents were women and fifty-one percent (51.34%) were between the ages of 35 and 54 years. Thirty-three (33.16%) percent completed the survey from home. (A compilation of the survey responses follows in APPENDIX D.)

Some key points include

Accessed NOVEL databases several times each week	28.42%
Accessed newspaper databases	47.59%
Success in meeting information needs with databases	3.92 on 5-pt scale
Had no difficulty in finding information sought	86.74%
Learned about databases from librarian or school library media specialist	44.07%

Respondents also said what they liked best about the NOVEL databases are accessibility, ease of use, and the fact that they are "free." They also liked that at

least some of the databases are full-text and that they cover a wide variety of topics.

Background and Methodology
As a part of the evaluation of the NOVEL program, the New York State Library Division of Library Development (DLD) promoted participation in a web survey about the program to various groups of people who were expected to have some familiarity with NOVEL databases. The groups invited to participate were librarians/school library media specialists, students, teacher/educators, and general users of the NOVEL databases who had the option of identifying themselves as users of the databases in relation to their job or business or users pursuing a personal interest.

Who participated in the survey?
During the time the survey was available, 1,244 people completed it.

Category of users	Total # of Respondents	% of Total
Librarians/School Library Media Specialists	642	51.61%
Students	182	14.63%
Teachers/Educators	92	7.40%
Business Users	98	7.88%
Personal Users	188	15.11%
Other Users	42	3.38%

Not surprisingly, librarians and school library media specialists represented the highest percentage of respondents.

Respondents were asked to give their home zip code. While some individuals did not offer this information, 1,145 respondents identified 454 different zip codes. The breakdown of home zip codes by category of users was:

Category of users	Total # of Respondents	# Unique Zip Codes
Librarians/School Library Media Specialists	623	387
Students	156	51
Teachers/Educators	80	64
Business Users	89	53
Personal Users	163	112
Other Users	34	31

The zip codes with the largest number of respondents were typically the most diverse in terms of types of respondents as well. For example, the 37 responses from zip code 11215 in Brooklyn included 9 librarians/school library media

specialists, 9 business users, 9 students, 7 personal users, 2 teacher/educators, and 1 "other" user.

Two hundred and seventy-six, or fifty-seven percent (57.14%) of the zip codes had only one respondent living in that code area. There were only seventeen zip codes which were given by both teacher/educators and students. The consultants surmise that this number is low because the ages of the students (see below) tended to indicate college aged students rather than high school students. The teacher/educators were likely to be at the high school level. Also giving a home zip code rather than the school or work zip code may have separated individuals as well.

Seventy-seven percent (77.08%) of the respondents were female. The breakdown by category was:

Category of users	Female	Male
Librarians/School Library Media Specialists	86.22%	13.78%
Students	71.15%	28.85%
Teachers/Educators	75.61%	24.39%
Business Users	59.57%	40.43%
Personal Users	61.85%	38.15%
Other Users	66.67%	33.33%

While one might expect the librarians/school library media specialists and teacher/educator categories to have a higher percent of female respondents based on the general proportions of women in those professions, the high percents of female respondents for the other categories is somewhat surprising.

Fifty-one percent (51.34%) of the respondents overall were aged 35 to 54 years. This age group was the largest for all of the categories of users except the students. The largest age category for the students was 35 or older, which included 23.90% of the student respondents, followed closely by 22.01% who were aged 25 to 34 and another 20.75% who were aged 18-20 years.

Thirty-three percent (33.16%) of the respondents accessed the survey from home and another thirty percent (29.76%) accessed the survey from work.

How often do they access one of the NOVEL databases?
Overall, the highest number (266 respondents), which represented 28 percent (28.42%) of the respondents overall said they typically accessed one of the NOVEL databases "several times each week." The categories most frequently mentioned were:

How often	%
Several times/week	28.42%
Several times/month	17.63%
Daily	14.64%

These numbers are highly impacted by the large number of librarians/school library media specialists completing the survey relative to the other groups. Forty percent (40.00%) of the librarians/school library media specialists said "several times each week." The most frequent response among students and teachers/educators was "several times each month." The most frequent response among business users was "several times each week." The highest percent of the personal users, twenty-two percent (22.07%) said "have never used before."

Which NOVEL database subject areas did they access most recently?
Overall the relative rankings were:

Subject/type of database	% identifying this subject	User category(ies) for which this is the most used resource
Newspapers	47.59%	Librarians/School Library Media Specialists
Health	40.51%	
General Reference	36.74%	Students; Teachers/Educators; Personal Users; Other Users
Literary criticism or authors	27.33%	
Current Events	26.69%	
History	26.13%	
Business	25.48%	Business Users
Science	24.68%	
Social, political or economic issues	20.58%	

Overall newspaper databases were cited by the highest percent as being the database that they used the last time they accessed the NOVEL databases. Sixty-one percent (61.41%) of the librarians/school library media specialists gave this

response. However, the highest percents for students, teachers/educators, personal users, and other users said they had accessed general reference databases the last time. The highest percent of business users cited business databases as the database they had last accessed.

To what degree was their information need met during their last use of NOVEL databases?
Respondents were asked to rate how well their need was met by using a five point scale with 1 indicating that the need "was not met" and 5 indicating that the need "was completely met." Overall the mean score was a 3.92, indicating a fairly high level of success. A 3.0 would be an "average" or midpoint on the scale, neither poor nor good. Not surprisingly, librarians gave a mean score of 4.10 and teachers/educators gave a mean score of 4.00. Both of these groups might be expected to have received training in the use of the databases and to be fairly knowledgeable in searching the databases. Personal users gave a mean score of 3.83; students gave a mean score of 3.62, business users gave 3.60. Only the "other users" group gave a mean score below the 3.0 midpoint; their mean score was 2.72.

Did they encounter any difficulty finding the information they were seeking?
The respondents overall seemed highly successful in using the databases. In general, the databases appear easy to use.

Category of users	*% indicating no difficulties in using NOVEL*
Overall	86.74%
Librarians/school library media specialists	88.69%
Students	84.11%
Teachers/Educators	86.59%
Business Users	79.07%
Personal Users	89.09%
Other Users	66.67%

Overall eighty-seven percent (86.74%) said they had no difficulty. Among the categories of users this percent varied from a high of successful librarians/school library media specialists (88.69%) to a low for other users (66.67%). The small number of other users makes it difficult to identify what their challenges might have been. Twenty-one percent (20.93%) of the business users indicated difficulties in using the databases. It may be that the difficulties are related to the specific database(s) that business users in particular need to access. On the other hand, their perceived difficulty may be due to their experience using other resources that have less complicated searching mechanisms.

Some representative comments on the difficulties of using the databases include, "It would be helpful to have one search hit all the databases." (an educator) "Often find

abstracts when I want the full article." (a librarian) "As usual, searches are only as good as the user's ability to construct good searches: selecting keywords, subjects, using the thesaurus. Not all the databases work as well as the others. The federated search feature at BPL is not very useful." (a librarian) "Hard to know which database to use for newspaper articles." (a librarian) "I teach in a K-4 school and the database for this level are few and not very kid friendly." (a librarian) "Not enough high end research information—this is what is needed for work in sciences." (a librarian) "The EBSCO databases I needed were not part of the databases provided by NOVEL." (a librarian) "It's too hard and takes too long to get started." (an other user) "I couldn't work our system." (a personal user) "Unable to find good health information." (a personal user) "Get good results all of the time." (a student) "Difficulty finding full-text articles." (a student) "Too much information that was useless and hard to obtain." (a student)

What did they like best about the NOVEL databases?
Users in all categories cited accessibility, ease of use, and the fact that the databases are free to the end user as what they liked best about the NOVEL databases. They also cited full-text resources and the variety, scope, and wealth of resources as positives.

How did they find out about the NOVEL databases?
Overall forty-four percent (44.07%) learned about the databases through a librarian or school library media specialist. The librarian/school library media specialist was named by the highest percent of respondents in each category of user. Among the student users another nineteen percent (19.31%) indicated they had learned about the NOVEL databases through a teacher.   Nineteen percent (19.08%) of the personal users and fifteen percent (15.48%) of the business users said they had learned about the NOVEL databases through the State Library website.

Other comments?
Respondents were also able to add other comments at the end of the survey. The reader is referred to the comments in APPENDIX D. While a few of the comments are simply "no," meaning they had no comments to add, many of the comments are very positive, saying things like "Keep it up!" "Thank you for this important resource." "A terrific use of tax dollars!" It is also interesting to note that most of the users, and many of the librarians, who talked about the NOVEL program as a good investment of tax dollars assumed that it was funded by the State of New York rather than by LSTA funds. The text report also includes many suggestions for additions to the set of databases offered and for improvements in how the databases are accessed.

FINDINGS

The New York Online Virtual Electronic Library is supported entirely with temporary Federal funds allocated to New York State through the Library

Services and Technology Act (LSTA) program administered by the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS). NOVEL builds on EmpireLink, an LSTA funded pilot project, started in 1999, that offered a limited set of online resources. The more robust NOVEL project greatly expanded both the scope of resources provided and the mechanisms available for accessing the resources.

The NOVEL program specifically addresses one of the goals of New York State's Library Services and Technology Act Plan. That goal is:

> ***All New Yorkers will have reliable and equitable statewide electronic access to information resources through the creation of NOVEL and through enhancement and expansion of libraries' technology capabilities to meet users' informational needs.***

The goal supports 5 initiatives established by the New York State Board of Regents. They are:

- Create NOVEL, the New York Online Virtual Electronic Library, to deliver high-quality, reliable digital information to all New Yorkers.
- Ensure that all New York's students are information literate by providing strong school library media programs that include appropriately certified professional staff, adequate resources, and technology.
- Strengthen the ability of New York's libraries to help library users acquire basic English literacy, information literacy, and computer literacy skills in their communities.
- Enhance access to the specialized resources held by New York's academic, special, and research libraries to improve educational achievement, economic development, and health care for all New Yorkers.
- Support and enhance a skilled library workforce to meet the information needs of New Yorkers.

NOVEL also addresses four of the six purposes for the LSTA program that are outlined in the original authorizing legislation. These LSTA purposes are paraphrased below:

- Expanding services for learning and access to information and education resources in a variety of formats, in all types of libraries, for individuals of all ages.
- Developing library services that provide all users access to information through local, State, regional, national, and international networks.

- Providing electronic and other linkages among and between all types of libraries.
- Developing public and private partnerships with other agencies and community-based organizations.

Measured by all of these high level goals and purposes, NOVEL is clearly an outstanding success. The consultants found many specific examples that serve to illustrate increased educational opportunity, expanded access to authoritative information, increased usage of networked information resources, exemplary cooperation between and among various types of libraries, library systems and the state library agency, and some new partnerships between libraries and community organizations.

Between 2003 and 2005, the total number of NOVEL online sessions (Gale and EBSCO combined) increased from 5,190,171 to 10,236,541, an increase of 97.22%. Between 2003 and 2006, the number of NOVEL searches conducted increased by an even greater percentage (214.53%) from 9,894,816 to 31,122,781. This translates into approximately 1.61 searches per capita!

Furthermore, data gathered from focus groups, interviews, and surveys serves to underscore the importance of the NOVEL program in the lives of individuals. The consultants found ample evidence to support the conclusion that NOVEL is an exceptional resource that supports learning from childhood through adulthood and that the information gleaned from database searches contributes to both the quality of life and the educational, occupational, and personal success of countless New Yorkers.

However, the NOVEL program does not fare nearly as well in achieving some of the key outcome targets established in the State's LSTA five-year plan (October 1, 2002 – September 30, 2007). In particular, it would appear that the targets that state that 30% of New York adult residents will indicate that they have heard of NOVEL, that 15% of New York residents will have used NOVEL and that 5% will say that they have benefited from access to the core collection were much too ambitious.

The NOVEL program is not the first statewide database to suffer from a lack of public awareness. In fact very few, if any, states have been successful in "branding" their database program in a way that has made it a household name. Efforts to create widespread awareness of such programs have generally been significantly underfunded largely due to a general aversion on the part of the public and law-makers to spending taxpayer dollars on any kind of publicity. This is indeed unfortunate because many excellent programs are underutilized because too few people are aware that they exist.

An article entitled Making "E" Visible that appeared in the June 15, 2006 issue of Library Journal[1] offers several suggestions for increasing the visibility of electronic resources. Perhaps the most relevant to the New York State Library is a suggestion that appears in a supplemental section entitled "The Vendor Connection." It advocates the position that vendors need to take a more active role in advertising directly to end-users. The consultants believe that New York, and every other state with database licensing programs such as NOVEL, should be demanding that vendors commit to conducting a robust advertising campaign as a condition of securing a licensing contract. At least one of New York's vendors, EBSCO, has recently been reaching out to some end-users through sponsorships on National Public Radio programming. This is a start in the right direction; however, it barely scratches the surface of what needs to be done.

Public Awareness of the NOVEL Program

The consultants found that the "branding" of the NOVEL name has been largely unsuccessful among the general public. In fact, many of the users of the NOVEL databases (who were identified by librarians) were unfamiliar with the NOVEL name. Many simply knew that they were using online databases that can be accessed through their local library's website. Furthermore, the NOVEL name was frequently confused with "NOVELIST," a "readers' advisory" service that is *not* part of the NOVEL suite of resources. As was mentioned earlier, the consultants found that this kind of confusion was widespread. It was encountered in focus groups, in personal interviews, and in the web surveys. Librarians had a much clearer picture of what was, and was not, part of the NOVEL suite of databases; however, even a few librarians occasionally mistakenly associated particular databases with NOVEL.

While the NOVEL name *was* widely known by librarians, many felt that the NOVEL name itself was confusing to end-users. In fact, the librarians cited terminology as creating difficulties in "selling" database use to the public in several different ways. Numerous focus group participants and interviewees made the same or similar points. They argued that on the one hand, "database" sounds intimidating and leaves the impression that the contents are technical in nature. On the other hand, many said that the "NOVEL" name leads the casual observer to conclude that the program is about fiction and, in some cases, that the content is trivial.

When asked directly whether the NOVEL name should be changed, most felt that it should and that marketing efforts to date have had only a minimal effect on encouraging use by the general public. Comments from end-users seemed to bear out this opinion.

Of the NOVEL users participating in the web surveys, over forty-four percent (44.07%) said that they found out about NOVEL through a librarian. Among

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[1] Lesley Williams, "Making 'E' Visible," *Library Journal*. 131, No. 11 (June 15, 2006): 40 – 43.

students, over two-thirds (67.55%) said that they learned about the NOVEL databases from a librarian or a teacher. Almost thirteen percent (12.97%) discovered the NOVEL program through the New York State Library website and another seven percent (6.81%) found NOVEL through other (presumably library) websites.

Less than 3% of users said that they discovered NOVEL through an ad, flyer, or through the media. Most of those who did not credit a librarian or teacher with introducing them to the databases indicated that they had learned about NOVEL from a library website, a professional organization (such as a school library system, public library system, or one of the 3Rs), or by word of mouth from a friend or relative.

It should be noted that the State Library has recently embarked on a new effort called the "NOVEL Statewide Education and Information Program." A contract has been awarded to the Ivy Group, a marketing firm with considerable experience with libraries, to work on this effort. One of the components of this project will be a new communication plan for the NOVEL program. The State Library is likely to have a much better sense of what needs to be done to increase public awareness of the NOVEL program as well as specific strategies to reach the general public as a result of the Statewide Education and Information Program.

Participation of Institutions/Organizations

While efforts to inform the general public about the databases have been only marginally successful, efforts to engage libraries in the program have been exceptional. Because of its population base and the great diversity of the State of New York, simply identifying all of the institutions that are potential participants in the program is a challenge.

Given the enormity of the task at hand, the New York State Library has, in collaboration with the various types of library systems, done a truly remarkable job. As of the end of 2005, the vast majority of school library media centers and public libraries were registered for the NOVEL program (most at the individual building level). Over 300 academic libraries were registered for the program and approximately 200 special (mostly hospitals) and non-profit organizations had been profiled. It is estimated that there are more than 7,000 libraries of various types in New York State. Of these, some 6,300 are eligible for participation in the NOVEL program. At the time of this writing, 5,322 libraries were registered. This translates into nearly eighty-five percent (84.48%) of the eligible libraries.

Building on this outstanding registration effort, more and more institutions have become active participants in the program each year. Following is an accounting of the number of institutions/organizations that showed activity (as reported by the major database vendors) in each of the last three years.

EBSCO	Year	Active Institutions
	2003	2,071
	2004	2,532
	2005	2,672

Gale	Year	Active Institutions
	2003	1,775
	2004	2,050
	2005	2,247

Activity by Institutions/Organizations

While some of these institutions/organizations showed minimal activity in 2005, 1,922 institutions/organizations showed 10 or more searches of Gale databases and 2,265 institutions/organizations showed 10 or more searches of EBSCO databases. A total of 790 organizations/institutions logged more than 1,000 searches on EBSCO databases and 322 institutions/organizations generated more than 5,000 searches.

Tracking exact usage between and among organizations in a comparable way is difficult because of the variety of authentication methods that are in place. In some instances authentication of users happens at the building level while in other cases, verification of eligibility to access the databases is handled at one site for many branches, buildings, or individual schools. In spite of this, there is no question that NOVEL database usage is expanding significantly.

Between 2003 and 2005, the total number of sessions (Gale and EBSCO combined) increased from 5,190,171 to 10,236,541, an increase of 97.22%. Between 2003 and 2006, the number of searches conducted increased by an even greater percentage (214.53%) from 9,894,816 to 31,122,781.

When one considers that New York ranks fifth in the nation in the number of public library reference transactions per capita (1.48 per capita in FY 2004[2]), it is remarkable to note that New York residents conducted 31,122,781 database searches. This translates into approximately 1.61 searches per capita!

Furthermore, data gathered from focus groups, interviews, and surveys serves to underscore the importance of the NOVEL program to individuals. The consultants found ample evidence to support the conclusion that NOVEL is an

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[2] **Public Libraries in the United States: Fiscal Year 2004**. National Center for Education Statistics. August 2006.

exceptional resource that supports learning from childhood through adulthood and that the information gleaned from database searches contributes to both the quality of life and the success of countless New Yorkers.

Distribution of Users

While NOVEL users come from throughout the State, it is clear that regional organizations in some areas have been more effective in spreading the "gospel" of NOVEL than others. The following series of maps (Maps 3 - 12) provide a look at the distribution of database use by zip code. The maps are based on 2005 usage statistics provided by the vendors. The vendor data indicates the number of searches associated with specific institutions. The consultants matched this data with the New York State Library's database of registered libraries and assigned zip codes to each library or school represented.

Areas shown in white on the map had a relatively low level of NOVEL database use. Increasing activity is displayed by deepening shades of green. The darkest shade of green represents very heavy usage in a given zip code area. The scale on each map indicates the number of NOVEL searches that were associated with libraries located in a particular zip code.

It should be noted that some zip codes that show no use (displayed in grey) may, in fact, generate some database use. This is because statistics for quite a number of institutions are tracked by a regional organization or by the main or central library of a larger system of libraries. The usage represented on the map shows activity based on the zip code of the library through which users gained access to NOVEL, not the zip code in which the users reside.

The maps give some indication of how users are distributed throughout the state; however, they understate use in some areas and, to a lesser degree, overstate use in others. Note that areas shown in grey, white or in lighter shades of green should not be considered areas in which usage is necessarily poor. A zip code may be displayed in grey because the postal code area may not include a single library or school that is an access point. An area shown in white or light green may have fairly high per capita use if the area is sparsely populated.

Map 3 – NOVEL Usage (Searches) by Zip Code – Entire State (2005)

Legend and Overview ▾

NOVEL Searches by ZIP Code
- 36,700 to 1,663,601
- 11,000 to 36,699
- 5,100 to 10,999
- 2,350 to 5,099
- 1,220 to 2,349
- 470 to 1,219
- 87 to 469
- 1 to 86

North America   United States   New York

Map 4 – NOVEL Usage (Searches) by Zip Code – Western New York (2005)
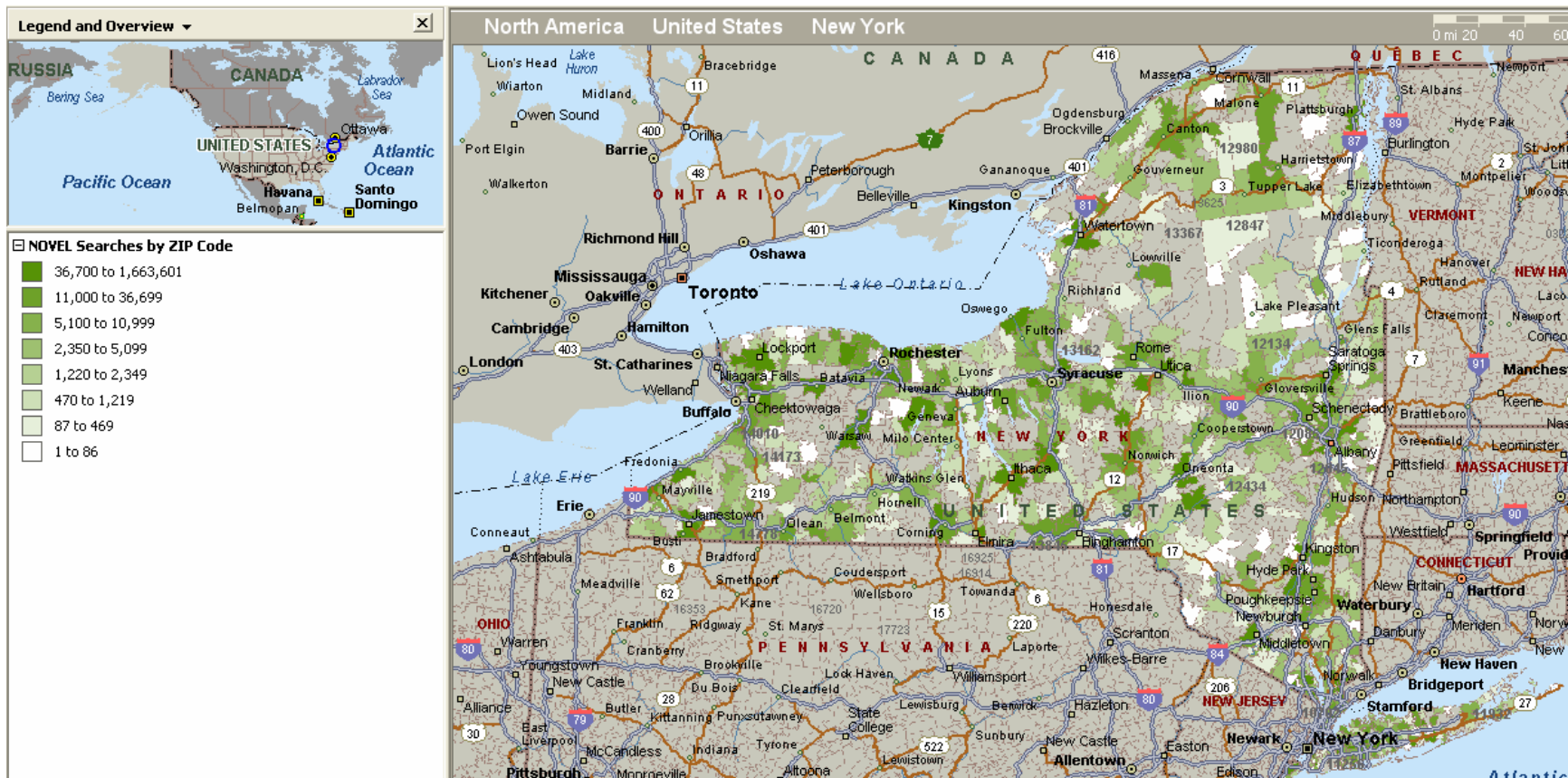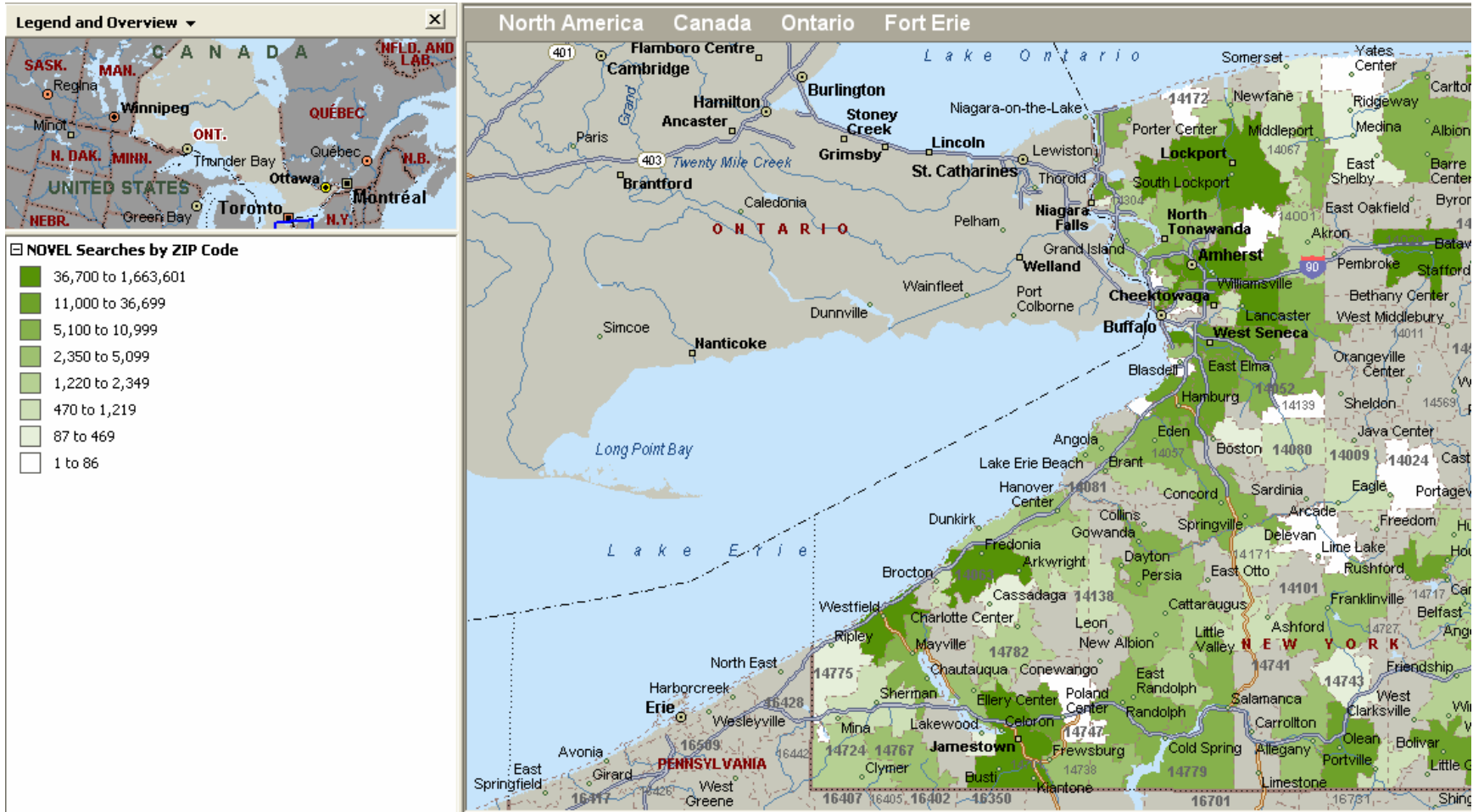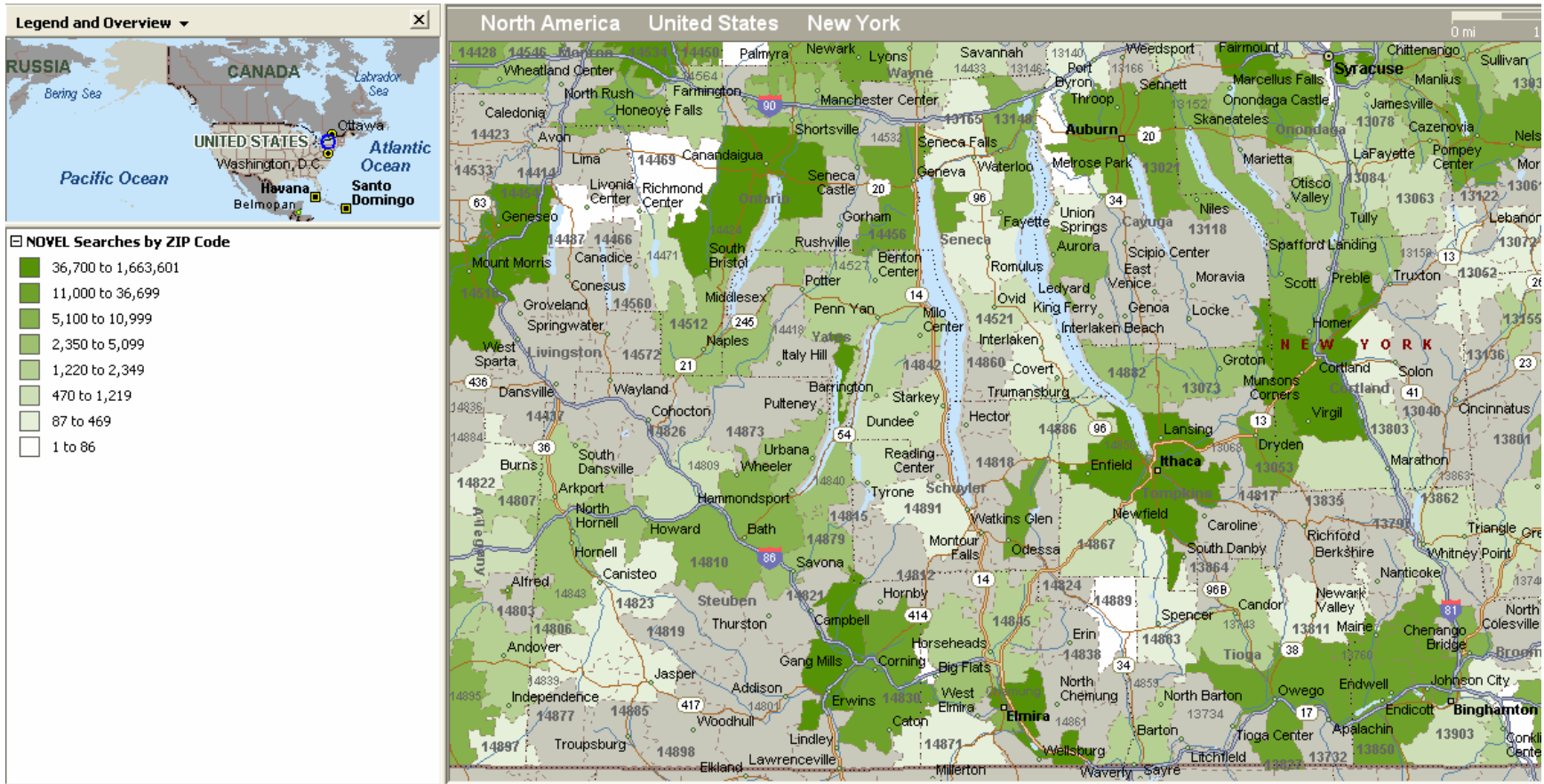
Map 5 – NOVEL Usage (Searches) by Zip Code – Finger Lakes Region (2005)

Legend and Overview ▾

NOVEL Searches by ZIP Code

- 36,700 to 1,663,601
- 11,000 to 36,699
- 5,100 to 10,999
- 2,350 to 5,099
- 1,220 to 2,349
- 470 to 1,219
- 87 to 469
- 1 to 86

North America   United States   New York   Cities ▾
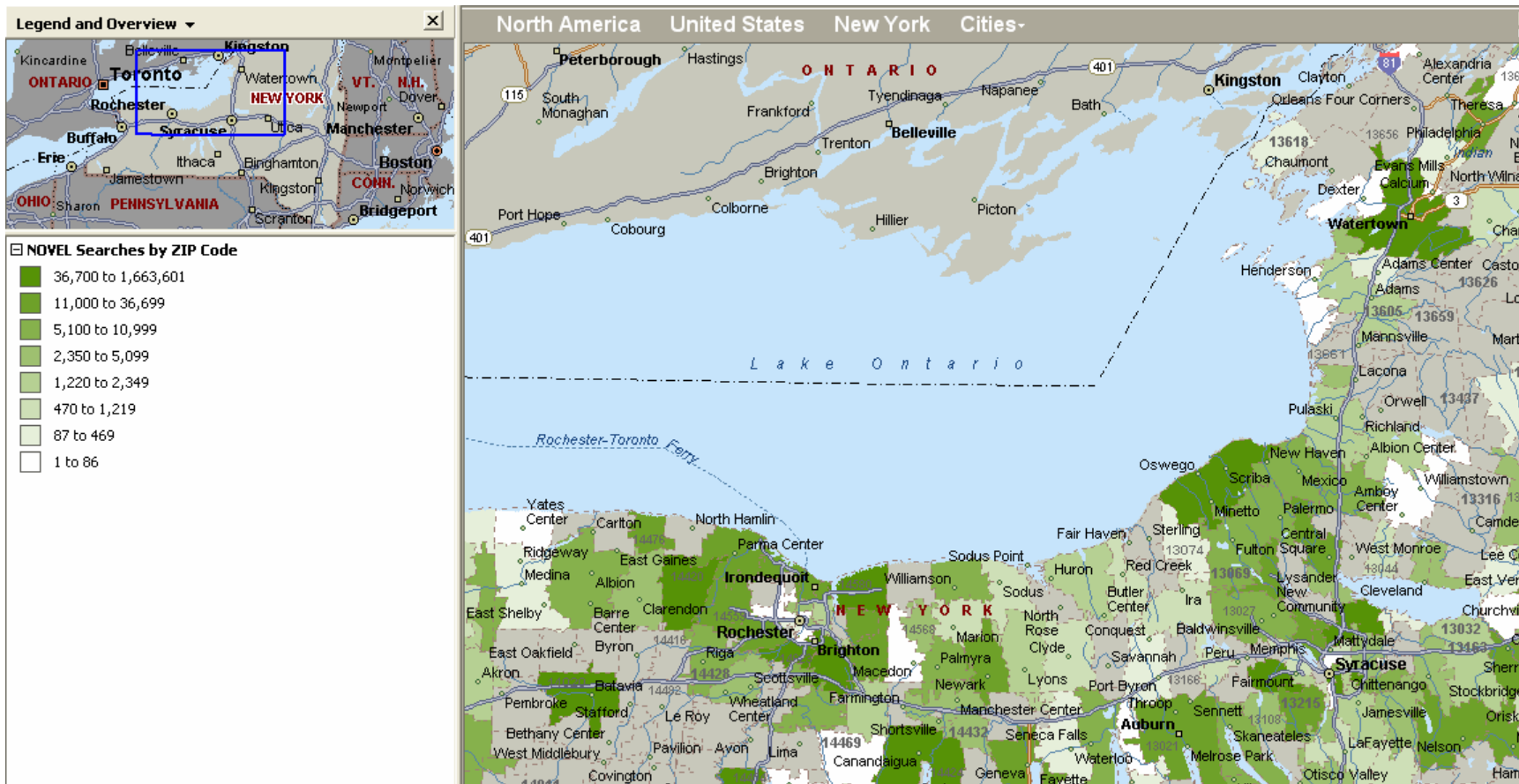
Map 6 – NOVEL Usage (Searches) by Zip Code – Rochester, Syracuse, Watertown Area (2005)
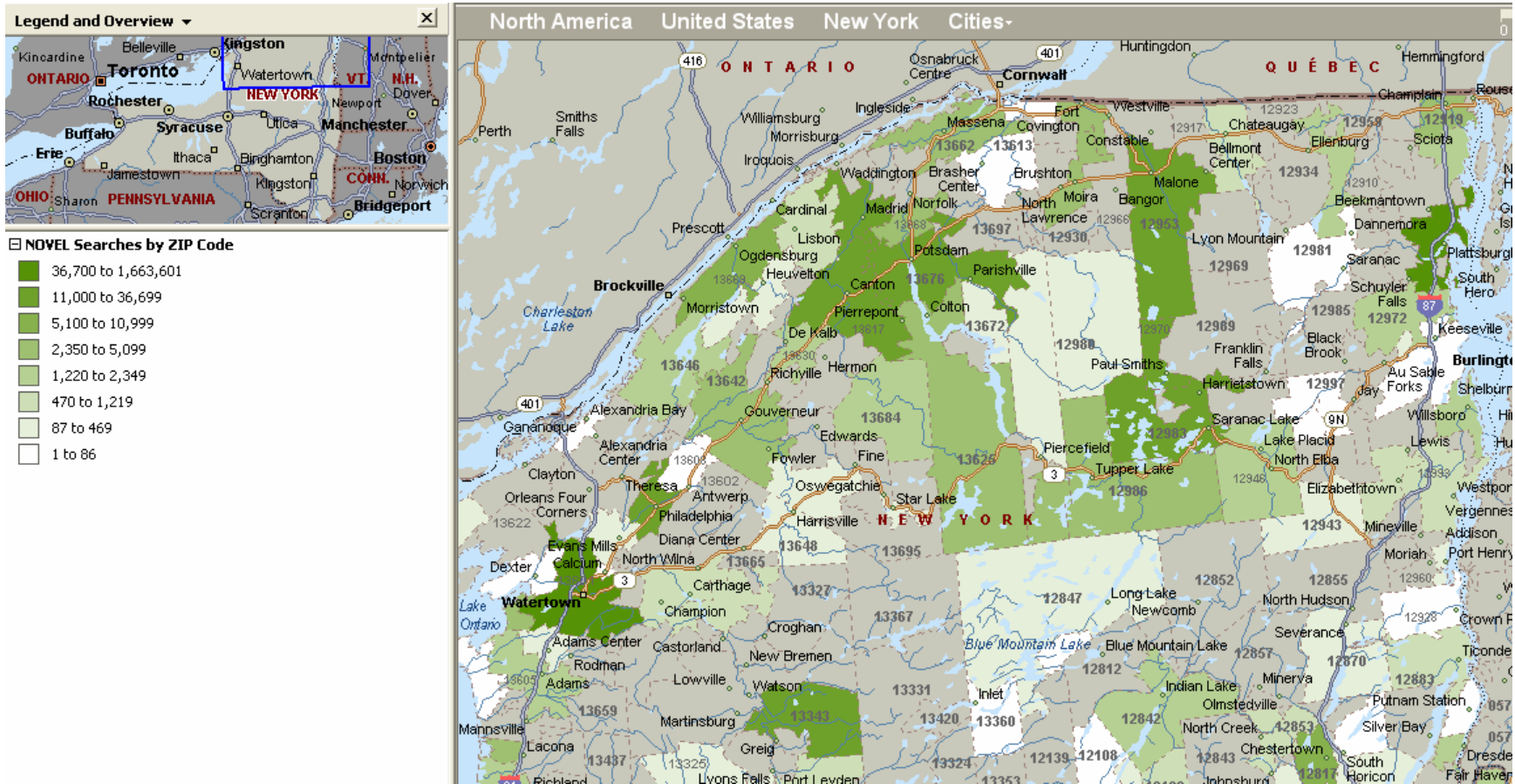
Map 7 – NOVEL Usage (Searches) by Zip Code – Adirondack Region (2005)

Map 8 – NOVEL Usage (Searches) by Zip Code – Capital Region (2005)

Map 9 – NOVEL Usage (Searches) by Zip Code – Catskill Region (2005)
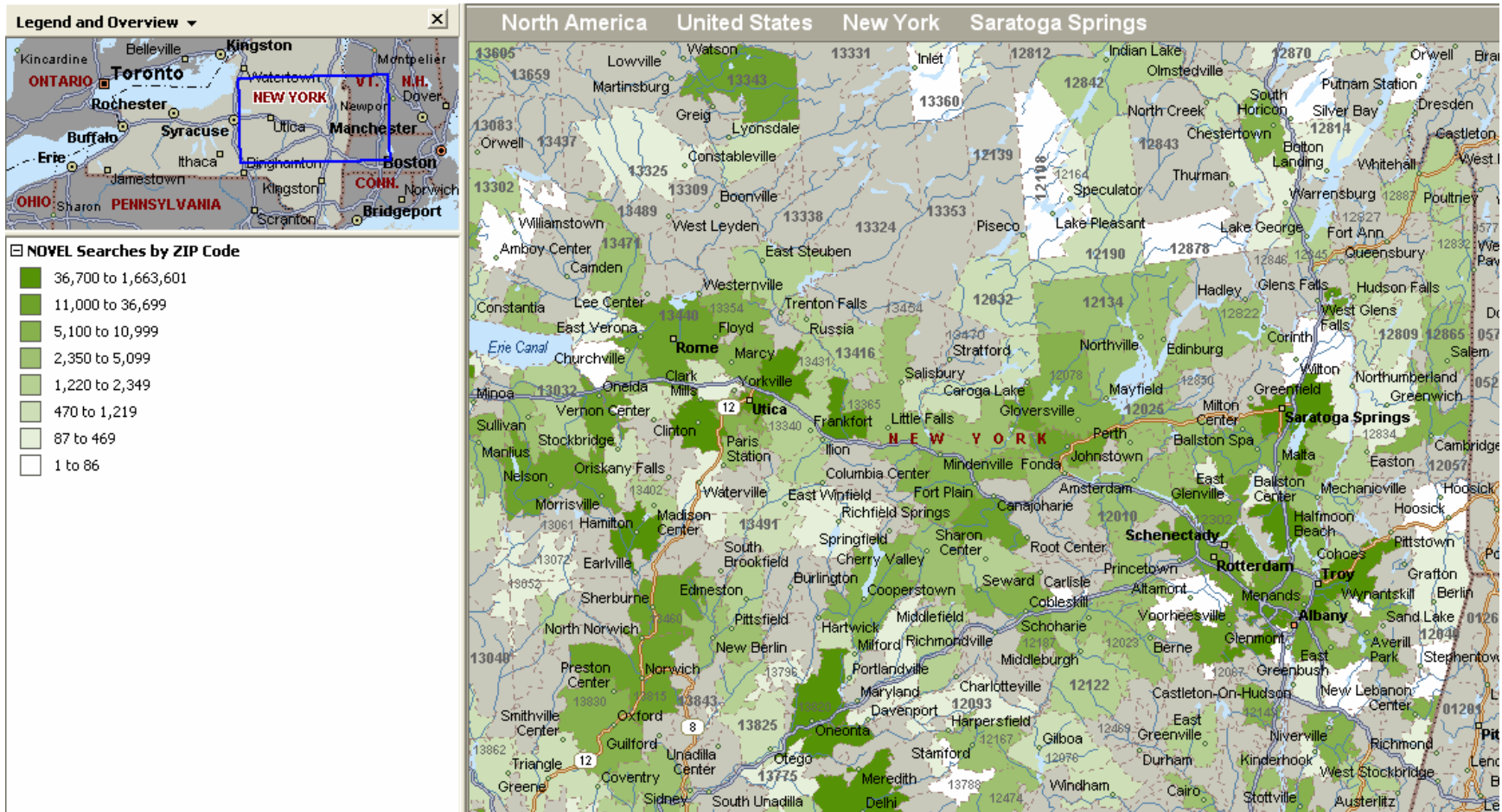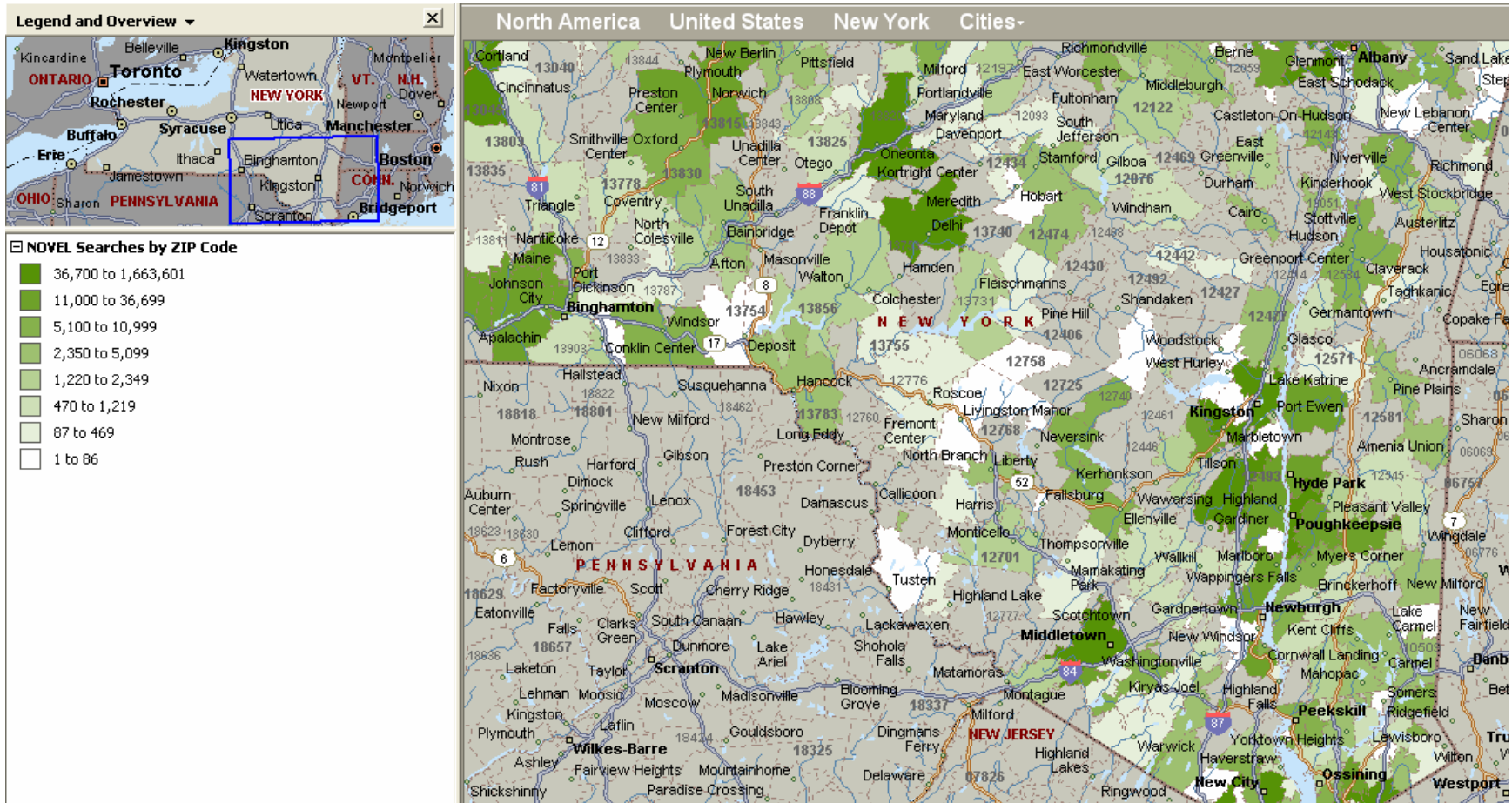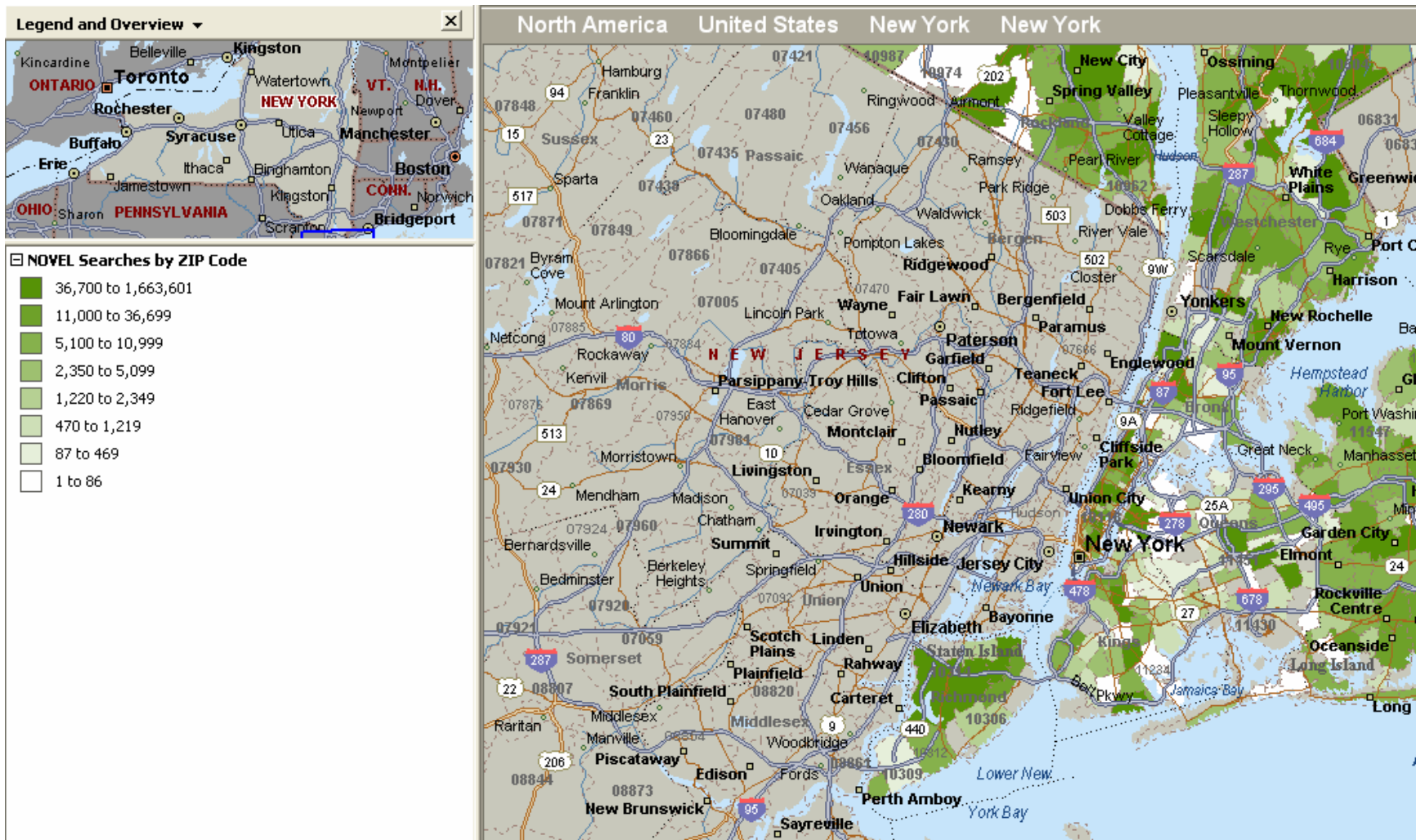
Map 10 – NOVEL Usage (Searches) by Zip Code – Greater New York City Area (2005)
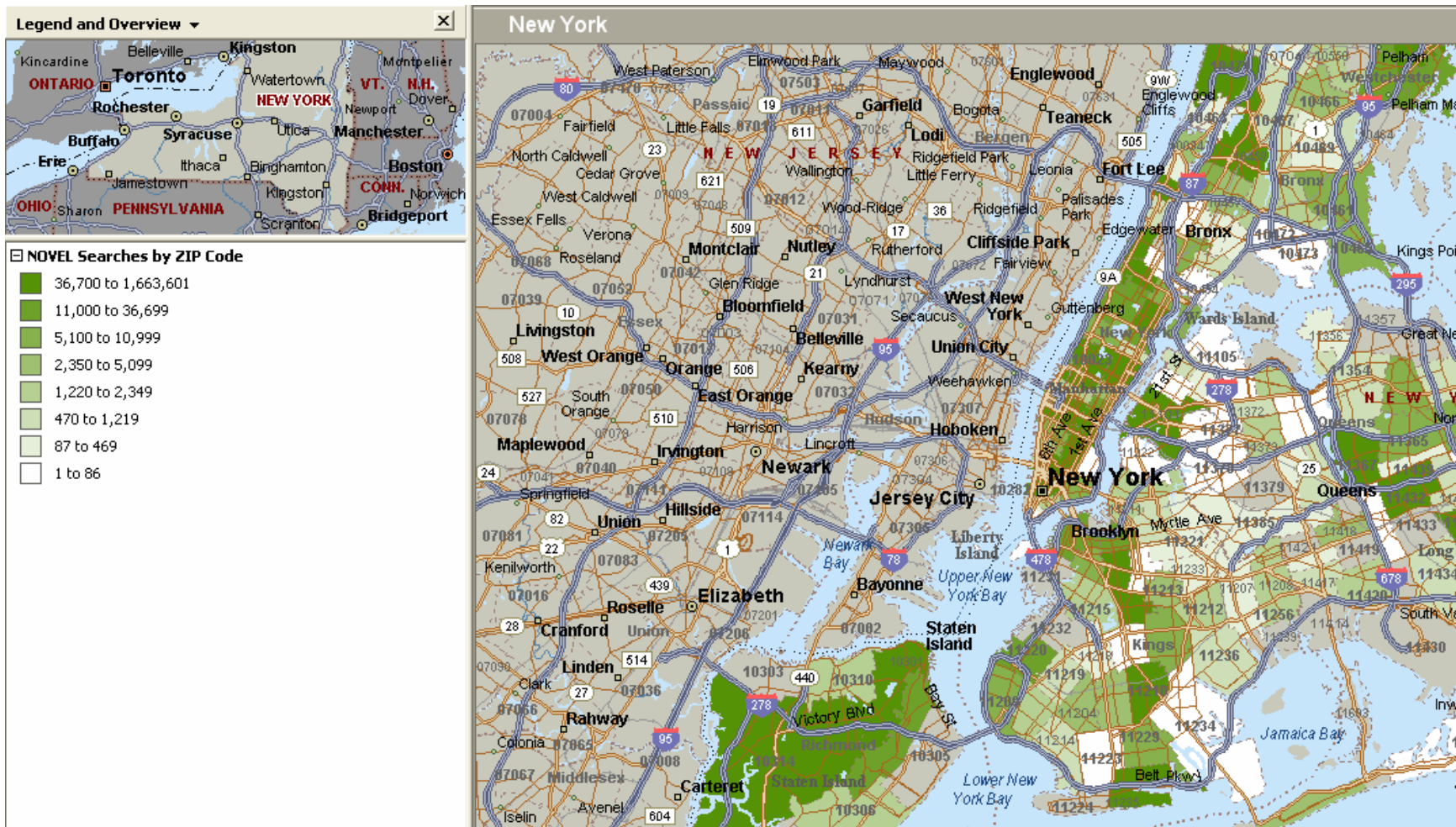
Map 11 – NOVEL Usage (Searches) by Zip Code – New York City (2005)

Map 12 – NOVEL Usage (Searches) by Zip Code – Long Island (2005)

Training

The consultants believe that much of the recent success in increasing the use of the NOVEL databases has been due to the training efforts that have been undertaken by the State Library and by organizations that received NOVEL "Invitational Grants." The web surveys, focus groups and interviews all gave evidence that the training sessions (both for library staff and for the public) achieved results. However, it was repeatedly stressed that training needs to be ongoing. Changes in staff and changes in the methods used to search specific databases often leave libraries without the expertise they need to assist and train the public.

Tracking the impact of the training is somewhat difficult because most of the training was done by library systems while the actual usage is typically ascribed to individual institutions. A better method for aligning training offered and subsequent usage through the institutions involved in the training is needed.

One of the outcome targets established in the LSTA five-year plan was that 90% of library and library system staff who have attended a NOVEL training session will indicate in a focus group that they feel confident in promoting and facilitating use of NOVEL 24/7 core collection resources with their customers. The consultants found ample evidence that many librarians and school library media specialists had participated in training and that they valued the instruction that they received; however, it would be overstating the case to say that 90% of the librarian participants who had received training felt confident in promoting and facilitating NOVEL use.

Nevertheless, it is clear that more librarians are using the NOVEL databases to assist their customers and, in some cases, to train customers to use the resources independently. The following comments from the end-user focus group in Batavia are somewhat typical:

> "Classes at the Richmond Library fill the gap for the beginner."
> "The reference librarian showed me."
> "I found the classes on the Monroe County Library System site."
> "I took the classes."

Comments from focus groups participants and survey respondents make it clear that training offered through the invitational grants offered through NYSL in 2004 made a difference. The consultants believe that ongoing training and staff development efforts will be necessary if the NOVEL program is going to continue to mature.

The Breadth and Depth of Resources Issue

The consultants were fortunate to have representatives from a full range of types of libraries in the focus groups. Participants represented public libraries, school library/media centers, school and public library systems and 3Rs, special libraries, 2 year-associate degree academic libraries, private colleges and universities and public colleges and universities. The question of the breadth and depth of resources that are available through NOVEL was a topic of discussion at nearly every session.

School library media specialists usually expressed their desire to have a quality "basic" encyclopedia (Grolier's and World Book were frequently mentioned) as part of the NOVEL suite of databases. A number of individuals representing schools also expressed a desire for more resources on social issues (SIRS was specifically mentioned several times).

At the other end of the educational spectrum, representatives of large colleges and universities (as well as some representatives of large public libraries) pointed out that the NOVEL databases, while appreciated, represented only a small percentage of the electronic tools that their institutions provide for their students. Products like MasterFILE™ Select were often seen as too basic to support the research needs of their students. They expressed a desire for more in-depth resources such as MasterFILE™ Premier and JSTOR.

Public participants in focus groups also had lists of resources they would like added to the NOVEL package. In some cases, an assumption was made that all or most electronic resources that are offered by their local libraries are provided through the NOVEL program. The two offerings that seem to fall into this category most frequently are "Novelist" and "HeritageQuest." In instances in which it was noted that these products are not part of the NOVEL package, participants thought that they should be included. Other individuals specifically mentioned auto repair manuals as being a desirable addition to the NOVEL suite of resources.

The consultants believe that the school library media specialists and academic librarians as well as current NOVEL end-users make valid points in urging the State Library to consider expanding resources at both ends of the spectrum. It would certainly be less confusing to end-users if they were not confronted by several different "levels" of similar products (such as MasterFILE™ Select and MasterFILE™ Premier). However, we also recognize that the cost of providing resources for a large audience that seldom uses certain resources is likely to be prohibitive.

In some states in which the higher level resources are provided, one argument that is offered is that doing so provides a "continuum" of electronic information resources. Students learn to use a resource during their K-12 years, continue to

use the same resource in college, and on into adulthood. Balancing cost and depth of resources is obviously a difficult task. The consultants recognize that the NOVEL program, like EmpireLink before it, is solely dependent on temporary Federal LSTA funds. New York is not unique in respect to funding databases with Federal dollars; however, a good number of states have managed to make the transition to funding their programs with State dollars, thereby freeing up Federal dollars for more innovative purposes rather than ongoing operational expenses.

The New York library community needs to continue to work to convince State lawmakers that online resources are not an add-on. They are part and parcel of basic library service in the 21st Century. They ensure that children have more equitable access to a quality education, they stimulate economic growth and they enrich the lives of citizens. In spite of the fact that the NOVEL program has some shortcomings, New York State without such a program is unthinkable. A very good case can be made that in a world without NOVEL, Alabama, with its Alabama Virtual Library, would have a clear competitive advantage over New York. The same could be said of Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Ohio, Indiana, and so forth.

New York residents *DO* need access to more rather than less in the way of online resources. A statewide program that offers greater breath and depth of resources makes sense. It was clear from interaction with focus group participants that several different buying consortia are already in place in New York. The Westchester Academic Library Director's Organization (WALDO), the SUNY and CUNY libraries, the New York State Higher Education Initiative (NYSHEI), and other groups share some similar goals. While cooperation does exist between and among the State Library/State Education Department and these other organizations, even greater collaboration could lead to the availability of deeper and wider resources for all New Yorkers. This is certainly a worthy goal.

Several states have taken different approaches to addressing problems that are similar to those confronting New York. It would be worthwhile for New York to examine different models that exist in Ohio and Maryland in an effort to find an appropriate solution for New York State.

Interface Issues

Many of the frustrations expressed by NOVEL users relate to the large variety of different ways that the public accesses the same databases. It is clear that the public cares little about whether a specific database is "branded" as being a NOVEL database or an information resource offered by their local public or academic library or by their school library media center. The people simply want seamless access. Many of the different mechanisms used to access the

databases result in the frustrating process of re-entering authentication codes repeatedly as the user moves from one database to another.

Given the complexity of the situation in New York State (the number, size, and diversity of organizations involved), it is much to the credit of the New York State Library that the system works at all! The task at hand is truly monumental. It is also remarkable that the NOVEL Help Desk manages as well as it does. Again, given the complexity of the situation, it is miraculous that the limited staff available for this purpose manages as well as it does.

It has already been noted that efforts to "brand" the NOVEL program have been relatively unsuccessful. While part of this is probably due to the program's less than descriptive name, the interface issue is also a very important one. Imagine the reaction that a public relations firm would have to a potential client that brought a product to the firm that was going to be packaged in a different array of boxes, cans and cartons of all different shapes, sizes, and colors. This is essentially the situation that exists with NOVEL. It means different things to different people and acts differently for different people depending on their point of access.

Some states have implemented a single interface or portal for their database programs and force all users to access the resources in this way. Given the large number of other databases available to New York residents from other sources (library systems, individual academic institutions, consortia, etc.), this approach would probably result in less, rather than more, use of the databases. Nevertheless, simplification of access is essential. Again, an approach that involves all of the "major" players who are involved in database licensing is recommended.

The Federated Searching Issue

The library community is clearly split on the issue of federated searching. While many end-users and some librarians want database searching to be "more Google like," others, primarily librarians and other expert users (researchers) fear that federated searching, at least federated searching using most of the products that are now available, will prove more confusing and less reliable than using the vendor supplied native search engines.

The consultants believe that the solution to this question must be the provision of parallel search systems; a federated system for first time users and novices and an expert system for librarians and experienced researchers. The experimentation with federated searching that has been taking place has been extremely useful. A refined version of the federated searching that has been piloted should eventually be made available to all libraries. The consultants believe that many small school library/media centers and public libraries would choose to offer the federated model as the "front-end" of choice.

If this standardized front end was adopted by a majority of small public and school library/media centers, this discrete and identical implementation of NOVEL could be marketed more effectively on a statewide basis. The consultants recognize that many libraries, particularly large ones that license a significant number of databases beyond those available in NOVEL, will continue to want to offer their own front end and the searching systems that are native to the individual products. The State Library should continue to facilitate this practice; however, the State Library should also encourage libraries to include a link to the State's federated search front end as an alternative mechanism for querying the databases.

RESPONSES TO SPECIFIC QUESTIONS RAISED IN THE REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL FOR THE NOVEL EVALUATION

How has NOVEL helped the user, both librarians and their end-users?

NOVEL is a great equalizer. NOVEL provides New Yorkers with access to authoritative information regardless of where they reside in the state or the depth of library and information resources that are available locally. NOVEL ensures that New York residents of all ages have access to knowledge that furthers their education and access to facts that help them make more informed life decisions.

The 24 X 7 availability of the service and the fact that access is not bound to a physical location are also seen as great benefits. One end-user of the databases said "Home access is wonderful and allows me to do research when the library is closed."

Teachers and school library media specialists cited the importance of NOVEL to their efforts to develop high-level information literacy skills. Librarians cited both the cost savings that derive from centralized licensing of the databases and the extent to which NOVEL provides local access to resources that have not been available in the past. Libraries of all sizes have cost-effective access to a wide variety of authoritative resources, which in turn, provide a great benefit to end-users.

Some end-users mentioned the importance of the NOVEL databases to their work. Examples include journalists and health care professionals. One person said "For …small businesses, it's a tremendous resource." Other end-users cited the significance of the databases to their personal lifelong learning objectives. One individual called the NOVEL databases a "…reliable source of … information from established, authenticated sources" that is "more reliable and quicker than aimlessly wandering around web sites."

Are users getting what they need?

Although there were many requests for making additional digital resources available through the NOVEL program, the considerable value of current offerings was clear. One person said "I can't begin to subscribe to all of the periodicals that are part of NOVEL." A librarian added "They (the NOVEL databases) have subject content that our patrons need and want."

Although NOVEL meets many user needs, information gathered through the focus groups and web survey also reveals that NOVEL does not meet *all* of the information needs of users. Both end-users and librarians/school library media specialists identified some additional databases that they thought should be included in NOVEL.

These requests for other resources tended to be at both ends of a "complexity continuum." On the one hand, school library media specialists often advocated for the addition of a basic encyclopedia. Academic librarians and end-users of resources in fields such as the health sciences wanted NOVEL to offer more scholarly and in-depth content. In fact, the consultants found that public libraries and school library media centers frequently were able to offer the very basic tools through licenses secured through library systems. Nearly all of the academic institutions and most of the special libraries the consultants encountered were paying for access to some digital resources beyond what was available through NOVEL. The consultants conclude that NOVEL has successfully targeted the middle ground and that it does a good job of meeting many of the information needs of a sizeable proportion of the population.

Is the State Library communicating well with users about NOVEL?

The New York State Library has done a very effective job of communicating information about the NOVEL program to librarians. However, in spite of considerable effort, it has not been able to make significant inroads into making the general public aware of the rich resources that are available to them.

The task of making the library community in New York aware of a program such as NOVEL is enormous. Whereas, the number of libraries of various types in many states is fairly small, the number and variety of libraries in New York is great. The New York State Library estimates that there are approximately 7,000 libraries in the Empire State of which about 6,300 are eligible for participation in the NOVEL program. This includes public libraries, school library media centers, academic libraries and special libraries such as hospital, non-profit agency, governmental, and business/commercial libraries. As of the date of this writing, 5,322 libraries or approximately eighty-four percent (84.48%) of those eligible were registered with NYSL for NOVEL use. Registration involves much more than simply contacting libraries. Contact information, IP addresses for authenticating use, and a host of other data must be collected from each entity.

The consultants cannot overstate the enormity of the challenge this represents nor can they compliment the NYSL staff adequately for its accomplishment in this regard.

That said, a major weakness of the NOVEL program has been the degree to which the program has penetrated the potential market for the digital resources that NOVEL provides. New Yorkers who know about NOVEL tend to be relatively sophisticated library users or those who are fortunate enough to be users of libraries in which librarians and library staff have made the promotion of the databases a high priority.

A good number of individual libraries and library systems have been very effective partners with the State Library in spreading the word regarding NOVEL. An analysis of NOVEL usage data (logons and searches) shows heavy use in areas in which libraries and library systems have actively promoted the availability of the databases. More people are using the NOVEL databases in areas that have integrated the use of the resources into their ongoing program of service than in those that have failed to do so. This finding is underscored by the fact that so many web survey respondents (44.07 %) indicated that they had found out about NOVEL from a librarian or media specialist.

The New York State Library has made and is continuing to make a concerted effort to raise public awareness of the NOVEL program. "Invitational grants" offered to library systems willing to provide training and to conduct initiatives designed to increase awareness of the NOVEL program have had some positive impact. The endeavor to provide access to the databases using a New York State driver's license as an authentication tool is innovative and has the potential for being highly effective. Nevertheless, short of a campaign that includes mass-market advertising techniques, the user base of the NOVEL program is likely to remain a relatively small subset of the general population that could derive a significant benefit from using the resources.

It should be noted that the State Library has recently embarked on a new effort called the "NOVEL Statewide Education and Information Program." A contract has been awarded to the Ivy Group, a marketing firm with considerable experience with libraries, to work on this effort. One of the components of this project will be a new communication plan for the NOVEL program.

Did the State Library expand resources to all users including both large and small libraries?

The consultants found that the NOVEL program has enabled the State Library to expand resources to the users of both large and small libraries. However, the manner in which resources have been expanded typically differs depending on the size of the library. End-users of very small libraries (particularly small public libraries and small school library media centers), benefit by virtue of the fact that

they can access information that had not been immediately available previously. Where in the past their libraries had little or nothing on a topic or had a limited number of periodical titles, now far more extensive resources are available through the NOVEL program.

Users of larger libraries have typically benefited more indirectly. Many of these libraries either already had licenses to the databases included in the NOVEL suite or, if NOVEL was not available, would be subscribing to services such as MasterFile Select. The fact that the NOVEL program provides public access to these resources at no cost to the local library typically results in the library's purchasing additional resources (print and media) or in the local library (or library system) licensing more in-depth electronic resources or resources not included under the NOVEL umbrella.

One library system reported that "We went from MasterFile Select to MasterFile Premier. The library system saved $160,000 in one year because of the LSTA funding for NOVEL. If individual libraries had done that it would be 4-5 times that amount."

In the case of both small and large libraries, end-users have access to expanded resources because of NOVEL.

How has the NOVEL program benefited libraries (and their users) through cost savings?

As was indicated above, the availability of the NOVEL databases at no direct cost to the local library has freed up funding to be used for the purchase of additional resources. In fact, the NOVEL program saves libraries and end-users in multiple ways. First, the unit cost for access drops significantly when licensing is done at the statewide level. The library system quoted in the previous section estimated that it would have cost individual libraries four to five times as much to license the same databases individually.   As was also noted above, libraries and their users benefit from the availability of expanded resources.

However, there are even more subtle ways in which libraries realize cost savings through the statewide licensing of the NOVEL databases. For example, one of the librarians interviewed who worked for a library system said "…many (libraries) have based their periodical subscriptions on what's available in NOVEL." In other words, a good number of libraries have been able to discontinue subscriptions to periodicals and journals because they are now available through NOVEL. This action not only saves the cost of the subscription, but also the costs associated with processing the materials as they are received, claiming missing items, housing back issues, re-shelving, and so forth.

Another way in which libraries have derived a cost benefit is savings related to "upgrading" from "basic" databases to "premium" databases. One librarian said "If you have MasterFile Select, the basic version, you can buy the next level (MasterFile Premier). Many libraries do that. They can build on the State's product by paying an additional amount."

What do non-participating libraries and borderline participants need to be able to participate?

Some of what needs to be done to enable non-participating and borderline participants in the NOVEL program to become more active represents a continuation of what has been done in the past. Training librarians, library staff, and end-users has resulted in greater use in some areas of the State. This aspect of the NOVEL program cannot be seen as a one-time effort. Mechanisms must be found to offer ongoing training as staff turnover takes place in libraries across the State. It is also essential that school library media specialists be given the support and tools they need to be effective in training teachers and students to use the NOVEL resources.

Some of the training described will probably need to be supported through grant programs similar to the invitational grants that have already been offered. The State Library should also look at other ways that libraries and schools can be urged to offer training at the local level. Examples might include the creation of a closer linkage between the NOVEL program and other information literacy efforts in the State.

Another aspect of what must be done to encourage non-participating and borderline libraries to participate involves public awareness. Greater public awareness of the availability of the NOVEL resources will lead to greater demand. Higher expectations on the part of the public are likely to drive some tentative libraries to greater activity.

The consultants believe that one of the mechanisms that might make this happen would be mass market advertising by the vendors of the databases that suggests that electronic resources are available at the library. This approach might be characterized as the "pharmaceutical" model. We are all familiar with ads that urge us to "ask your doctor about (name of the drug)." There is no reason that "ask your librarian about (name of database)" wouldn't work as well. EBSCO has taken some steps in this direction, particularly on public radio. The State Library needs to leverage its buying power to require that the vendors provide a certain amount of advertising as part of its licensing agreement.

***What next steps in regard to NOVEL should be considered for the new
5-year plan?***

- The New York State Library (NYSL) must Increase public awareness of
  the NOVEL program (The NOVEL Statewide Education and Information
  Program is an important step in this direction)
- NYSL needs to develop strategies to market the NOVEL program through
  interest groups (historians, business organizations, environmental groups,
  health professionals, etc.) This is an attempt to create point of need
  training opportunities and "teachable moments."
- NYSL needs to work even more closely with other consortia that license
  databases (such as Westchester Academic Library Director's Organization
  [WALDO], the SUNY and CUNY libraries, and the New York State Higher
  Education Initiative [NYSHEI] to coordinate licensing efforts to ensure
  maximum benefit to all New Yorkers (both from a cost standpoint and
  depth/breadth of resources)
- NYSL needs to exert greater effort in an attempt to build a coordinated
  continuum of resources (create users in primary grades and provide a
  path that continues database use through adult years)
- NYSL needs to continue to work with partners (libraries/library systems)
  on training and staff development related to NOVEL databases
- NYSL, in partnership with libraries of all types throughout the State, needs
  to encourage State investment to expand/extend resources now licensed
  using LSTA funds
- NYSL needs to work collaboratively to develop a limited number of
  effective interfaces that can be adopted by libraries throughout the State
  as the primary ways to access the NOVEL databases
- NYSL needs to expand access to federated searching while continuing to
  offer "expert" systems
- NYSL needs to work to leverage its buying power to encourage/require
  vendors to include mass-market advertising as a condition of contracting
  with the State (NYSL should also work with the other licensing consortia
  to adopt this approach)

New York State Library staff members have been and continue to be active in
their efforts to improve the NOVEL program. Examples include pilot projects
featuring federated searching and simplified searching and improving marketing
efforts through the NOVEL Statewide Education and Information Program.

CONCLUSION

New Yorkers are very fortunate to have the resources that are offered to them
through the New York Online Virtual Electronic Library (NOVEL). While the
program can be improved, and while public awareness of the database program
still needs to be increased, NOVEL nevertheless manages to address all of the

high level goals set for the program. While NOVEL has failed to reach all of the targets set for the program in the 2003 – 2007 Five-Year LSTA plan, the NOVEL program is much stronger and better in 2007 than it was at the inception of the five-year planning cycle. Usage has increased dramatically and the program is known and appreciated by a vast majority of the library community.

It is disappointing, yet understandable, that NOVEL is still almost totally dependent on LSTA funding. Shifting some, or all, of the program to State funding should be considered a high priority.

Much work remains to be done to address issues related to public awareness, and on streamlining public access to the databases (federated searching and front-end issues). At the same time, ongoing effort must be made to ensure that librarians and other library staff are familiar with NOVEL resources.

APPENDIX A
NOVEL Evaluation - Focus Group Report - Librarian Sessions

Nine focus group sessions with librarians were scheduled between July 10 and July 18th. A total of ninety people took part in the sessions, which were held in Batavia, Canastota, Farmingdale, Fredonia, Highland, Ithaca, New York City, Saratoga Springs and Watertown. The participants came from public libraries, private and public schools, community colleges, public and private colleges and universities, library systems, and special libraries.

Summary:
The NOVEL databases are a major resource, essential in some libraries and complementary or supplementary in others.

- Public librarians reported that reference questions were increasingly being answered with electronic resources and that fewer paper reference materials were being purchased.
- A medical librarian pointed out that printed information might already be two years old and that she had no room to house the last two years of periodicals in paper.
- Librarians and school library media specialists representing small public libraries and school library media centers frequently said they had no other databases.
- Even librarians who said the databases were supplementary went on to say that the currency of the databases made them an important supplement to the print collections.
- An academic librarian explained that the databases were complementary; their focus is on the graduate school level, but the library also serves faculty and students on the personal level as well.
- Having NOVEL databases, "augment what we can afford to pay for."
- Several participants from various types of libraries emphasized that consistency across all types of libraries was important to students as they moved from elementary to high school to college to using public or special libraries. "We can help students become knowledge information literate; the NOVEL databases raise the bar."

Among the most heavily used databases, including others in addition to NOVEL, were the health and wellness databases, Business & Company Resources Center, the various levels of MasterFILE, and newspaper databases.

Database use is often "self taught" although there were grants earlier for training.

- Training needs to be ongoing because staff members change, the databases change, and even those with training forget how if they use the databases infrequently.

- Training needs to be provided at the teachable moment or in relation to a specific subject of interest to the user. One-on-one training seems to be highly effective in training new users.

Participants find people/potential users do not understand the difference between databases and the Internet. Users "Google" to get information instead.

If the NOVEL databases disappeared tomorrow, many libraries and their users would suffer.
- Many small school library media centers and public libraries would have very limited (or no) electronic resources. "It would decimate our resources."
- "It would increase the gap between haves and have-nots."
- Because the databases have been available, librarians have stopped purchasing print materials in some areas; consequently, collections would have limited materials in some areas. "It would create a serious gap in our informational resources; I'd have to cut something else."
- "We wouldn't find a lot of answers for many of our customers." (Reference service would suffer.)
- Participants thought the users would miss the health resources and the newspaper databases most.
- "It's very useful in academic libraries, but academics wouldn't be impacted as much; the academics buy a lot of other things."
- The image of libraries and librarians would suffer. "NOVEL makes me look good to my staff and students. You'd look bad to the public if you didn't have those electronic resources."

Participants gave several reasons they believe some people choose not to use the databases.
- Potential users don't know what the databases are. "It's an awareness issue."
- Some find searching difficult.
- Driver's license access is helpful to some, but a deterrent to students without a New York State driver's license, either because they are too young to have a driver's license or from out of state.

Many suggestions were offered for electronic resources to be added to the NOVEL databases; however, the suggestions seemed to vary by the clientele served.
- School library media specialists often said "any good encyclopedia" or named a specific encyclopedia. However, librarians from other types of libraries didn't think encyclopedias were used by their clients even though they had tried different ones.
- School library media specialists also suggested that databases coded for reading levels would be very helpful.

- Public librarians suggested genealogical resources and test preparation databases along with newspapers and various other topical databases.
- Academic and medical librarians wanted "higher level" databases.

Suggestions for marketing the databases to the general public included
- As SAFE sources of information
- Getting out where the users are
- A statewide campaign done by the state (although some participants disliked the idea of spending money on marketing; they preferred that funds be spent on content.) and
- Branding (that everybody knows about).

Other issues arose and were discussed during the focus group sessions as well.
- Getting usage statistics for the databases is difficult at some levels.
- Databases are complex to use: protocols are not standardized; spelling is a challenge for some people and search strategies are difficult for some people to develop.
- Terms such as databases and NOVEL confuse potential users.
- There is disagreement over the usefulness of federated searching at this point.

A sampling of comments from the focus group sessions follow organized by questions or topics.

How do the NOVEL databases fit into your arsenal of tools to serve your library's users? How have you integrated them into your services?
At the public library reference desk most of our questions are being answered online. I also focus less on purchasing reference. We are getting our answers electronically – it's unusual when we go into the paper reference materials.
Our stats show we're using print reference resources less and less and electronic ones more and more.

For the public libraries NOVEL is major. Many don't subscribe to other databases.
If we didn't have NOVEL, we wouldn't have access to much.
In my public library the databases are supplemental information. We have lots of print materials, but the databases are current and supplement the print well.
For us it's the main portion of what we offer, it's not supplemental. And, they've made an impact.

The databases are extremely important; if the Internet is down, I have no resources to teach.
In my high school only 10 or 15% of the students think to use the books that surround them.
We are trying to get the students away from Googling and to use the databases.

In the school sector it changes a lot of what we can do. We use newspapers and magazines.

For many of the school districts this is all that they have. It's a matter of economics. We're trying to bridge the gap between the haves and the have-nots. In the schools, NOVEL databases have helped a lot in getting us to launch into databases; they were a good stepping stone.

When you're talking online vs. the collection with the medical databases, the printed information may already be two years old, and there's no way we could house the last two years of periodicals in paper.

Students tend to use the more technical structured resources, but they don't link well through content URL. We wouldn't put many of our kids into many of the NOVEL databases because Gale doesn't support standard open URL. They can work at article level but not at the journal level. With ILL we check to see if the resources are in the NOVEL databases.

In our academic library it's a supplement, but it pays for some things so that we can buy other things.

The NOVEL databases supplement what we receive from SUNY.

For us they're not scholarly, but they are a great supplement. The business and company and health databases are being used.

At our community college the health and business ones are heavily used; students are very busy; being able to access the databases from home is really important. Students are also taking online courses and the good basic databases are helpful.

They extend our hours of service; we supplement the health databases with some of our own.

We get databases in three ways. The NOVEL EBSCO databases are the backbone. We also supplement with others. People are using them. The library also has other things. In our annual survey the first question this year is "do you have a computer at home?"

It's nice that it's consistent across all types of libraries—high school, public, and academic—kids have learned how to use them in high school. It's also good that it's the same across the year. (Consistency in the specific databases that are provided) When there is a change or a deletion people (users) are upset.

The University at Albany uses the NOVEL databases, but we're part of a consortium, SUNY Connect. However, those databases change a lot. Students want right here, right now.

Our college is occupational, so NOVEL is supplemental for us because we get other specific ones, i.e., LexisNexis. It's important that our students can turn to NOVEL after they leave us. NOVEL is a step in keeping them involved. Most of the companies that they go to work at won't have the databases.

At the system NOVEL is our backbone. We have three layers. NOVEL is basic; the system purchases a few more; and larger libraries in the system buy more on top of that. NOVEL's the base; all else is icing.
They're easy to fit in; we do 9th grader orientation, also have other databases; also do orientation when the students have research papers.

Very big—used to subscribe to health and business ones, we save lots of money with NOVEL
They're all valuable, lets you have money to purchase others.
SUNY buys together; but we use the business database a lot and the newspapers; not health for us
Integral part of the databases we provide.
They augment what we can afford to pay for.
For us they are complementary; our focus is on the graduate level, but we do offer information on the personal level to faculty and students.
They are essential but complementary; they provide a connection to the business community. They are invaluable for the company profiles.
They're just part of our constellation of 40,000 electronic resources.
We use them and they are appreciated, Twayne's and MasterFILE Select in particular, but our institution has a budget for electronic resources of $ 500,000.

The NOVEL databases have been essential to build our relationships with our state legislators. We train the legislative aides. They want to know the business information, the newspapers…especially the ones that let you set up alerts.

It's important that we provide access to everybody and NOVEL has done that. Students who get these skills in high school bring more sophisticated skills to the college level; access and using the databases are essential at the ground level. At the school library media center level we're combating "good is good enough." We can help students become knowledge information literate; the NOVEL databases raise the bar.

Which databases get the most use at your library?
(Note a number in parenthesis indicates the number of times the specific answer was given. Note also that participants were not asked to limit their answers to NOVEL databases in response to this question.)

Health & Wellness databases (11)
Business & Company Resources Center (7)
EBSCO (7)
MasterFILE Select (4)
Literature (3)
MasterFILE Premiere (2)
MasterFILE (2)

Custom newspapers (2)
Newspapers, especially the NY Times
NY state newspapers—fill gaps in the NY Times (historical)
National Newspaper Index doesn't get used because it's just an index.

InfoTrac Kids
Our students are using Opposing Viewpoints; students love it
SIRS
Science resource

Grolier's Encyclopedia; SUNY Connect
World Book is also a huge one.
We like Grolier's better than World Book.
If there was an encyclopedia, Grolier or World Book, it would be used.
Almost every school purchases an encyclopedia.

Country Watch
Biography Resource Center
We have several of the Gale resource center databases; Gale's stuff is very usable.
Gale Reference Center
We're moving to Power Search
We have Web-Feet at B&ECPL

One of heavily used ones is the phone reference.
Sometimes the NOVEL databases don't get used because people are already used to using something else. Many faculty assume that information literacy is using Lexis/Nexus.
The college libraries belong to WALDO and we have PROQUEST
We teach classes using the Novel databases: medical, newspapers and magazines.
Index to NPR

Searchasaurus by the younger school kids
We have Learn Test.
Genealogy is big; we have Heritage Quest
Turnitin.com

Has your training been useful/meaningful? Adequate? What about the training you provide users?
University library--we didn't get any, but we have lots of experience with databases.
(Academic) we haven't had specific training, but our staff knows how to search databases.

We have three libraries on campus: medical, architectural, and general. So mastering some of the databases is distributed; we're not organized in terms of updating or refreshing ourselves, just stumbling across 100 databases is difficult.

For our institution it was "here you go." The 3 Rs Council does review things each year; this year it was very helpful. There are some times where the business resources would be helpful in the hospital setting.
Most has been just on the job.
EBSCO did come and do some training at the outset. It wasn't spectacular, but it was something.
It's generally a train the trainer framework. We get trained at the system/3Rs.

WNYLRC did training for us; their training has been important to us.
SALS does training for us; we have experience too, but new staff need training.
SALS provided training in our area, but our library is small and we can't always get people to it. SALS has had to come to us multiple times to get everybody trained.
Even librarians who have been to training need refreshers.

We made database instruction a requirement for all the reference librarians, full time and part time.
I've been to a number of sessions that were very helpful, but it has been a while; it would be nice if there was money for the system to do it again; we get new staff; you kind of forget. The vendors don't do as good a job. The databases change too.

The databases are pretty intuitive and easy for librarians to figure out; the big problem is remembering what's there. We subscribe to a lot of databases and it's hard to keep all the staff on top of all them.
You get a question…Custom Newspapers database has NY Times articles (free) daily. But you have to use it daily to know those little details.

We provide training, but people in large libraries tend to know how already; reaching small libraries is a challenge.
We got a NOVEL grant for training and we were able to customize the training with lesson plans and units.
We do constant training for staff on the NOVEL databases; we get grants that involve NOVEL databases.
With the LSTA grant for training we did 16 workshops targeting teachers by subject area.

In the schools we've offered training once a year.
The BOCES provides training after conferences and school hours, but it's up to the media persons in libraries to come.
We took a subject area and married that with the databases, brought health teachers together and looked at the health databases.

Coming in new as a school director, I found there really was nothing in the way of training.

I have had some trouble in training with my older staff; the whole concept doesn't seem to fly with the older staff. The same is true with the public.
As a staff you really learn as you start to help your patrons. You tend to learn the databases as you begin to use them.
I'm in a small library and the problem is that if the staff doesn't use the databases often, they lose the skill/information they received in training. Maybe there could be a guide on four basic things about using each database so that they couldn't forget, maybe things with screen shots and small guides or an online guide for consumers.

Unless you give people something that they want, the training is useless. The training has to be related to a specific purpose in mind.
What gets the users trained is the content, not the process. The content isn't apparent to the public.

We need to have more online tutorials and interactive tutorials.
Virtual is good, but having the person in the room is still better.
Distance is a problem as well. If you're in Jamestown or Olean, you're on the road for a long time. The training needs to be spread out geographically.

Faculty training is the hardest. They sometimes give wrong information to the students. The NOVEL databases are among the most simplistic of the databases that we have, but the faculty doesn't understand. They need to be trained as users, but there isn't a venue for doing so.
A similar thing happens in the public library. Students are given assignments and the teachers do not recognize what some of these things are.

We do a lot of one on one at the reference desk. We listen and say "the best bet is…"
Generally I sit down with users and show them how. I do a lot of one on one.
At my library we were doing a lot of one on one so I just starting developing bookmarks and items with passwords.
My favorite part of the job is showing people how to do it.
I've had my elementary teachers say that there's nothing, but then you show them Searchasaurus and they're amazed.

I need a tool that shows whether there is access to a particular journal.
Our system provides a one page document for all of the district librarians and then a brochure to be distributed for each of the school districts.
In the school setting they put an icon on the computers that go directly to the databases.

The homeschool parents are coming in a lot more.

In the model schools programs the teachers are getting more training at a district site.
We do most of the searching in the health area for the users.

One of the hardest things in training is figuring out the right keyword to use.
People get intimidated going to Help. There should be more examples.
Patrons don't want much instruction: "Just tell me how to do this, don't confuse me with more."
Narrowing search terms is hard; that's why Google is good enough for some.
Some of the databases do a better job than others; they have terms to narrow searches on the side.

The training we provide (academic) depends on where the kids went to high school; some got great training and others got little or nothing.
Kids that have an I-pod, a cell phone and their own laptop still can't grasp that I have three different kinds of computers and each accesses the Internet a little differently.

For staff and public training, we have two wonderful labs, but no one to do the training.
We've been relying on the vendors for the training of staff.
I would like to see the State have training for the professional staff.
If there was a regularly scheduled time and place, that would be helpful.

I also go to school and ask whether they use the databases…"You use these, right?" I just use every captive audience I find; I say, "Did you know you can get full text New York Times free?"

Talk about user behaviors. Is it difficult/easy to introduce databases to new users?
A lot of people don't know how to distinguish a database from an online resource; they don't understand searching and how the resources are different.
People don't understand how things are structured on the Internet.
In schools neither the staff nor the students comprehend that there is any distinction. They don't understand…"can't I just Google it?"
Most think about Googling it first. It depends on how aggressive the librarian is in marketing the databases.

I find that people are easily frustrated, especially the middle aged older adults.
Some just really don't get it.
It's an ongoing battle. Some of our patrons never will use it.
There are lots who are receptive; they may go in and do their search, but they miss all the bells and whistles. They miss out; some put in too much information.
The teens are more receptive.

My experience in instruction is that you need to address a specific topic. When the need is well defined, i.e., a professor defines X number of peer reviewed articles, or my dracaena is dying, then it's much easier to teach.

We've tried classes, but we don't get attendance. What works is "point of need." Frequency of use is an issue; we use a database every day, but a user might use it only once every 2-3 months and it's hard to remember how to do it. They get confused where they found something. You have to show them over and over again.
A recent MLS grad doesn't know either; they're trained on specific databases
In an academic library we face the problem that the periodicals were on CD-ROMs before. Students lose what's what online versus on databases. We tell them online things need to be evaluated.

When we answer reference questions, we'll make the point of turning the screen so the user can see.
We drill it into them in the schools. In the school, you try to get to the teachers. Winning the teachers over is essential; then they'll require the students to use it. We introduce NOVEL to administrators.

I do a series of lessons with the students. We created a research handbook. We go in using the same topic and they go through the features of the databases.
We did a few parent workshops, but they were not really successful.
Faculty can be interesting. They can be real allies.

We have all of our databases listed on a separate page; there is no distinction between or among the resources.

If the NOVEL databases disappeared tomorrow, what impact would that have on your library users?
Many school districts would have nothing.
Every dollar matters because of the increasing costs. The financial implications would be horrendous.
BOCES would see a big jump in what schools have to buy. For many schools NOVEL and the encyclopedia are the only online resources that they have.

It would decimate our resources.
Most of the school districts would have only Grolier's or very little else.
We have had the same budget for 17 years. Unless the State pays for the databases, I don't have anything.
There are print resources that I haven't had to buy because of the databases.

It would have a high impact on our budget. I would have to buy some of those things.

The number of books (I buy) in the social sciences is decreasing because of what I can get on databases.

It would create a serious gap in our informational resources; I'd have to cut something else.

In our library the databases affect what I purchase in print.

I would miss EBSCOHost because I don't buy a lot of those magazines and newspapers in print.

We couldn't afford a business database. We don't buy that because we get that from NOVEL.

We wouldn't have the business or the health databases.

Databases are important to us; we couldn't store the back issues of periodicals.

The other thing that would increase is that we'd do a lot more interlibrary loaning for periodical articles.

We wouldn't find a lot of answers for many of our customers. A lot of questions would go unanswered.

We used to rely on NIOGA for some things we couldn't afford, but now I have access from the databases. It used to be "we'll get back to you," but now I can get it myself.

It would increase the gap between haves and have-nots.

Equity of access goes down. NOVEL has achieved some equity.

We just couldn't support buying the health resources that are in the databases.

There would be a screech about the health databases (being eliminated).

Having Health Reference Center is important.

Our libraries would be devastated, BUT I will say that one of my arguments is that Health Reference Center is based on books and some of the books aren't brand new.

We would really miss the health resources.

I would definitely miss the access to the periodicals.

The newspaper databases would be missed. We'd be shortchanged on the newspapers.

In the college setting we wouldn't miss it too much because we have some alternatives at Brockport.

It wouldn't impact us much, but it would some academic libraries. Smaller places use it as a base and build on that.

I'm in the opposite situation. I've cut back and I need the NOVEL databases desperately. I wouldn't have anything if that wasn't available.

We worry about this in the long run.

Even tweaking the databases scares people.

I think that we're going to see more demand for it as new users who are computer literate are growing up.

It would hurt a lot if the NOVEL databases were dropped because we'd lose access to the New York Times.

It's very useful in academic libraries, but academics wouldn't be impacted as much; the academics buy a lot of other things.

The academics would probably be hurt less.

NYU buys just about everything. We wouldn't miss it much.

For the schools it's a critical resource.

NOVEL makes me look good to my staff and students. You'd look bad to the public if you didn't have those electronic resources.

There's an assumption of access… it's a basic resource. Information literacy, the ability to make decisions is key. People need the information freely available.

We're trying to get the county and state legislators to use the databases.

That isn't a one stop shop (training elected officials). Albany should be training the legislators.

Some people think we don't need librarians anymore.   We're doing more reference (in the academic setting) than ever before.

Big financial impact in public libraries

I'd be fine with fewer databases but better quality databases. Most are too simple, especially Searchasaurus. It's kind of insulting to the searcher. Kids are more sophisticated than that.

We had a long discussion about those types of databases. EBSCO has an image database.   That's not our constituency.

If you could get Academic Elite and ProQuest Newspapers, you could get rid of everything else.

The content is actually very rich for the elementary level.   I don't think that it's as thin at the K-12 level, but it is at the college level.

For us they're not the main databases; they're not as important as some others.

The competitors are better, but what NOVEL has is helpful.

Why do you think some people might choose not to use the databases?

It's an awareness issue; people don't know what they are. In order to get the public in general to be aware, what we're really looking at is that the databases have to be a universal online library.

Lack of marketing

They don't know that it's there. There isn't enough information

They don't know they're there, but most of us have promoted and promoted and promoted!

Difficulties in searching

Teachers feel students are bypassing the concept of indexing when they use databases; that's very hard (like not letting kids use calculators before a certain point). Kids don't know how to search; they don't know alternate terms—some

databases., Google, and Amazon are good with alternate terms. I think teachers have to do more to educate students to use synonyms, etc.
When I was teaching basic reference in library school, the hardest thing was teaching controlled vocabulary. Majority of people don't seem to get it easily.

For some the articles may be too difficult; some graded health resources would help. It would be helpful if it gave you some idea of the reading levels required to use and understand the articles there.

There's an intimidation factor.
You have to choose where you want to go.

We have a lot of families who don't go to the library ever. There are people who don't value libraries.
People don't realize that they can ask questions at the reference desk.

Most schools have libraries in them, but librarians in schools need to make the kids learn about public libraries too.
I have school children who aren't taught how to look for information.
In the public libraries, people aren't forthcoming. They don't want to ask.

You have to have an incentive to use it.
In academic libraries it's more the terror of a poor grade that drives the interest!
English departments help us, but in the science departments there's no help!
Motivations are important; so when they're looking for something specific, that's the best teaching time you're going to get. We have a monitor facing out so they can watch me do the search. You show them how you're doing it.

The school library media centers and public libraries are more successful than they were because people can find what they're looking for. What needs to happen is that we need to find a way to get the Senate and Assembly to support the program.
This is 24/7 access and that's a very important piece. It's especially important up here in this area of New York; this is a big territory and resources are not deep.

When the State Library promoted using driver's license, via a small newspaper article, some people did come in to use just that database.
For colleges anything with a driver's license is a no go. 60% of the students are from out of state.
The problem with the driver's license access is that students don't have a driver's license and staff don't like to have to look for theirs (for the number) when they want to access the databases from home. They could use their public library card, if they have one, but many kids don't have.

In terms of marketing, we have subscriptions to other databases as well. On our system you really don't know whether you're using the NOVEL databases or ours.

Process is just too cumbersome. Driver's license number is too cumbersome.

There needs to be a marketing campaign. Getting to the public is difficult. If you're going to market it, market it in just one way. Right now people get to it in lots of different ways. Getting there is difficult.

If there's any way to make access easier, that would bring people in. Not having to input the 14 digit bar codes! Eyes just glaze over and they're thinking they could do it faster via the Internet.

If would be nice if home users could have a single log in if you hop from database to database. Why can't it be the same page?

We have the databases proxied and the kids go directly to them just with their user name and password.

Remote access is the problem for my students.

Many college students don't have public library cards. There's a large area nearby that doesn't have a public library; it's an unserved area.

The community college has a web page connection, but students can only use their driver's license to get in; it doesn't use our college ID. So, I've done the orientation, but they still can't get in.

We (public library) have no problems getting in; we do have problems with people not knowing the databases exist, or they're too uneducated to get it. You have to do the PR every day; it's one on one getting people to use the databases. People have to have a need before they're interested.

What other resources should be available in this way, electronically?
(Note a number in parenthesis indicates the number of times the specific answer was given.)
Any good encyclopedia (6)
More genealogical resources, Heritage Quest (5), Ancestory.com (2)
Learn a test (GED ACT, etc.) (4)
Literature/Literary analysis (3)
Legal databases (3)
Opposing Viewpoints (3)
Auto repair (2)
Biographies (2)

College and career information
Learning Express
Should include some full-text national newspapers, big national ones.
Small business resources would be really nice.

AP photo archive
 "School Island"
Tutor.com

PROQUEST Professional
If we can't get ProQuest, Master File Premiere would be better; more primary documents, more journals
What's missing are some more college level materials, more on social issues,
Higher level research collections
A new SUNY Connect arrangement
NY Times backfiles
More New York newspapers; it doesn't have a lot of the smaller newspapers.
All the historical newspapers

A New York state history database would be helpful.
Social sciences
Reference USA
Something for history and science

NOVEL is really weak on academic and research resources. You can look for the ten biggest medical journals and they're not there.
It's strongest at general things.
I would like to suggest some of the OVID publications. (Electronic journal collections)
There needs to be more segments represented: youth population as a target.
"Lands and Peoples" books
Searchasaurus is very limited.
We get people coming in looking for JOURNALS. They don't really know what a journal is, but they know that it's more academic (wanting peer reviewed).

I wouldn't mind something you could download to the i-Pod. Podcasting would lead people to the other resources.
Things for younger students, but not baby stuff.
Should be able to limit by reading level (LEXIL)
Novelist (K-8) would be good.
Gale's Science Resource Center is very expensive, but it's coded for reading level. I'd like to be able to sort by reading level.

I'd like the graphs in for students of all ages.
WorldCat from OCLC
Legal forms
The State should do a survey of libraries asking what they're paying for and then the State should buy the one(s) most libraries buy; that would free up the most money.

About encyclopedias: we don't get any usage on any of them, we change every two years. We've tried several, but no one uses them!

(It appeared that children's departments in many public libraries didn't have access to NOVEL databases. Children in those libraries have to go to the reference desk to access databases; some of the libraries do have some databases in the children's room for kids, provided through an invitational grant. One person said, "Children's librarians haven't really gotten into the databases; they're still into their books. Our young adult librarian seems more open to electronic resources.")

How would you market the databases to the general public?
As SAFE sources of information!
I came to this meeting to talk about publicity! There's no coordinated promotion.
Using print media to publicize is the least effective in promoting the databases; should use podcasting, etc.
We have to market this to legislative staffs; they're young and it'll register with them.

It would be good if the state did a statewide campaign, "Did you know that this great stuff is available?"
If the state pursues the marketing of it, that would take away from the amount of money available for content.
It's a shame to think of the state using the money for advertising. How do we get credit to those who fund our other resources?
Who are we marketing to? I had a bunch of guys in; none of them knew the name of a single database. They don't care who sold it; they care only if it has what they want.
The typical patron comes in with a particular question; it's the answer to the question that's important.

Everybody knows what Nike is about! You have to do that kind of branding.
PA has Access PA; all the school librarians and all the public librarians know the words ACCESS PA. They have branded that.
Do whatever Google did to make it a household word.

In a small library I'm aware that I should be doing more promotion, but I don't have the time.
I sometimes feel that I need more signs, but people don't read signs. We're going to try to write something that will introduce them in a catchy way.
I had the best luck ever when I said, "Do you want to get anything from Consumer Reports?"
The best example that I saw was in Pennsylvania. The James V. Brown Library had an ad for an auto repair database on a placemat in a bar. You want to put yourself where they are when they're looking for information. Take the car salesman approach.

Getting out where the users are: you've got to sell your importance. Librarians insisted on getting a kiosk in the middle of the newsroom; made themselves indispensable. Take it to them rather than waiting for them to come to us.

I also think that we're in a generational cycle. I used a rotary phone and a typewriter. We're getting more savvy library users today.
One other topic that hits everybody is health. The Health Reference Center is terrific to show to everyone and everyone has some health problem.

Other issues?
Statistics:
The stats for EBSCO were being counted in the system stats; we don't have good stats on how the databases are being used at my library. It's a real hot button for the system. I wanted to check on our use of EBSCO Premier, but you can't! There's no normalization of data. It's awful.
It has nothing to do with the state library or NOVEL; it's the vendors!
It screws up our accountability; tracking the stats as a process keeps changing.
(BOCES) the Gale stats are hard to get; I have to go in for each of the 100 schools…

SFX is the product academics use, but it is very labor intensive.
We need an accurate way to count usage; we also need to be able to say how many different people used the databases.
Also should know whether there were multiple searches or it was the right one, a hit on the first one.
Each of us is trying to figure this out.

I'd suggest that a recommendation of this study be that NOVEL require database providers to be counter-compliant (meet an industry standard).
I'd dream that we could get a monthly report via email from the state library saying what's being used and how much.

Opposing Viewpoints (not on NOVEL) gives me wonderful statistics.
The Gale NOVEL databases provide monthly reports, but only the administrator can get them.
Stats are important in public libraries; almost like circulation statistics.

It is an issue but we solved it by keeping link management software. We track "click throughs." It's not as accurate, but it gives us a click count of how many times people go to the databases.
At NJIT we had figures on all of the databases.
We are gathering statistics for the first time this year, getting them through the vendors. That's the reason that we bought Serials Solutions.
We're in the same boat. We're in the middle of implementing counter statistics rather than just click-throughs.

Difficulty/Complexity of Use:
Things have to be seamless to the user. The fact that the protocols for the databases are not standardized makes it difficult.
Odd passwords are difficult for students.
Look more carefully at the interfaces; some are hard for students to use.
Keep the interfaces at a low to moderate literacy level.
I'd emphasize the discrepancy in the web pages from different access points; there's no public library in my area and kids don't have driver's licenses. I'd like uniformity of appearance of the web pages and a single log in for hopping from database to database.
Google fixes your misspellings; the databases should too. Usability is still an issue with the databases; people use Google because they can get some results easily
That's important in public libraries too. Spelling is a problem for people for whom English is a second language too.
Search strategies are HARD.
When the health database first came out, you could easily choose the level of materials. Now it's harder than it was. Indications of reading levels or complexity levels are good; there used to be some up front links, but that's all gone.

I'd like an online way to show how to search each database. That would make people more comfortable in using them.
From an instruction point of view, I'm tired of teaching 100 different searching strategies.
One thing I do like is that the state library's website access is simpler; it's well organized for people who don't use it often.
Don't completely dumb things down, because there are also sophisticated users out there.

Terminology:
One of our issues is the word 'database.' People just blank. I change it to "we have magazines on the computer."
Database is a technical concept. The word database has the connotation of numbers, of data.
The students know the word database, but the general public doesn't.

The schools use "online information resources" or "online learning resource."
We call them "electronic resources" and subdivide into books, articles, reference resources, web resources, and class resources.
We say "find articles in newspapers and magazines."
I just call them electronic gateways. I describe what they do rather than what they are.

We've been rethinking the term; we feature a "RESOURCE" of the month.
We call them "Multi-search"

I just say, "This is the deep Web"
This fall we created a sheet that explains what an online database is.

We call ours the virtual reference connection.
We decided to put them all in an alphabetical list, but also have listed by subject that includes some free sites (41 subjects, with some databases in more than one subject)
We have an alphabetic list and subject list; subject comes first, alpha list has description; also have recommended list.
KNOWLEDGEBASE would be a better term.

Same with NOVEL; people think it must be a list of novels.
NOVEL sounds like fiction and it confuses people.
That's not a problem for us because nobody calls it NOVEL anyway.
Some people say NOVELL.
Gets mixed up the Novell, also Novelist.
We just say the New York Electronic Library

I don't use the term NOVEL with the public; it's meaningless to the public.
The good thing is that the name has been out there for awhile.
It makes library advocacy hard when things aren't given credit.

I don't use the word NOVEL.   We've gone round and round on our website about what words to use. The result has been that we keep changing the word.
Empire Link was understandable; the acronym NOVEL doesn't say what it is.
PA has PowerLibrary; that defines what it is.

The name could go away. It's important that there's a name, but I'm not sure it's important to push that to the users. It's not important that they know that. They just come to the reference desk and want information…

Only reason (for the name) is for marketing, but there's no marketing that I see.
"Your tax dollars working for you! Databases are important and the money comes from you!"
Branding is important from a taxpayer standpoint. We need to get people to value libraries.

Federated searching:
There are some very different user populations (types of libraries) in the State and very different approaches to searching.
The teachers that have seen Gale federated searching love it, but it will cloud some things for kids as to where they get information.
A lot of our students don't have any idea of what they're getting when they search; the concept gets lost.   Part of the charge of the schools is to teach information literacy.
Some of the assignments that we see require peer reviewed journals.

In a public library, if there are too any results and if people don't see something in the first page, they lose interest.

Federated searching is a double edged sword. People want one-stop shopping, but often federated searching gets you something other than the best results; the indexes are different.

That's true, but most end users don't care. The public will take the fastest, good-enough thing that they can get.

If they promote federated searching, it has to integrate with our other databases. You can't have people going multiple places.

Allowing different databases to be integrated (or disintegrated) from federated searches is important. Let us pick the ones that we want included in our federated searching.

Buy more content instead. Federated searching seems to be a poor way to spend our limited resources.

Instead of the federated searching, just have more full text content. We want the full text.

There are whole states that are using Encompass to search across multiple catalogs. You get a more seamless look at the information. But that can be overwhelming.

I would like the federated searching through the library as an option.

The technology's not there yet. It excludes a significant number of resources. You lose a lot of the ability of the native products.

The nursing CINAHL users would lose a lot.

If one of our students wants something, but they're not exactly sure, I send them to a general MasterFILE search. Our compromise is the open URL link. I would rather see NOVEL go in the direction of open URL rather than get bogged down in federated searching. Open URL is going to get easier; it's probably a money thing.

Final say? Anything else you'd like to add or share?
To me the biggest stumbling block is the easy access. People should find them as easy to use as Google.

Ease of use is important; simplify the help screens. Simplify the spelling: "did you mean?" Like Google.

Have one password.

Remote access is definitely an issue.

It has been very satisfying to provide information to people who wouldn't get the information otherwise. We have college students who can get it locally rather than going hundreds of miles to their school.

We need to keep in mind that in the five largest cities we have a lot of challenged learners. We need to keep in mind that in marketing to these people we'd need to make sure they can connect.

We're missing the adolescents. When you look at the databases, what's missing is the stuff that they're interested in.

There are definitely two tiers: ready reference and then the deeper stuff. We need to train and market them differently.

The accent should be on content. We need a list of the journals. Which database is it in?

I don't want all of our comments to be translated into the idea that we don't want these resources.

My basic plea is an Oliver Twist "more please."

Education and outreach are most important. Begin at the government level; get more money and then the libraries need to go out and promote the tools.

Even my schools that have a lot of resources are cutting more and more. Having the resources for all is very important for equity.

Equity of access issue is huge.

Literacy is a huge concern, online resources for all of the literacy needs.

I'd like an easier walk through, more intuitive structure for searching.

It's just a treasure for small libraries, the most fantastic gift. It was wonderful to know the databases make us a bigger library.

Specifically I find that the school and the public library aren't on the same page; they need to work together and look more alike.

Having this available to all libraries of all types reinforces the use if schools, publics, college have the same thing. There are greater overall educational purposes that are served.

I love the NOVEL help desk people. They're wonderful. They've been very good even to my staff.

The State should take credit for this. Let everybody know their tax dollars are paying for this.

I would like to see NOVEL implement some sort of system for individual libraries to upgrade a particular piece… Pay the difference. Vendors are increasingly wiling to take your money if they can limit access.

I believe that it all depends on the general public. They have to understand how important the resources are. It has to come from the general public if the legislature is going to fund it.

I think that it is cost effective to work together; many of us purchase the same things. We can't do that anymore; we're just lining the pockets of the database vendors.

We need better balanced resources.   While we may use what's there, there should be balance in what's provided. There are lots of gaps; I'd like to see more for K-12. Having it available from the State makes it far more equitable.

Provide digital streaming statewide
We get a lot of requests for full text articles. An abstract or an index doesn't cut it.

 The State Library has to consider the needs of schools and children in general. Seniors at my public library use electronic resources primarily for email and investment information.
NOVEL databases are wonderful, but we need to stress getting library staff to use them and to keep up; it's amazing how much more the databases get used when you don't have the reference books.

Definitely need to market: I like idea of vendor marketing too like for drugs.
We're teachers; we work with the people we can. Need PR on what we can do.
Vendor asked me if I'd gone to college—I was shocked! We all go to specialists! (We should market our expertise!)

Most of our patrons want to be served; they don't want to look for themselves. The most receptive people are high school students and people with a specific need.
New York is far behind other states in cooperative purchasing, behind even poorer states. State funds have to be put into the databases. We have WALDO (buying consortium), but we need state contracts for the databases.

I find the NOVEL information on the State Library website very confusing and repetitive. It's a matter of too much information. It's not very clear if they're talking to consumers or to librarians.
And people don't want a banner that takes up the entire screen.

I think that there's a lot of merit in the program. I think that they will get money for the databases from the State legislature eventually. It's another way for the State to subsidize libraries. It's a sexy issue. It's an easier sell than libraries themselves.
NOVEL databases shouldn't be on federal dollars.

If you're looking at developing technologies, you have to look at the ways in which those technologies are deployed.   Silos within silos… (don't divide the databases into groups for schools, publics, and academics)

I have a story to share: we got a grant that gave us a laptop lab. The basis of the grant was every student in 6th grade would do a research paper. A couple days later a teacher called and said we're down here doing social studies. Can't we just go to the databases? The information is so much better.

APPENDIX B
NOVEL Evaluation - Focus Group Report - End-User Sessions

Nine focus group sessions with users were scheduled for July 10 to July 18th. A total of 29 people took part in the sessions, which were held in Batavia, Canastota, Farmingdale, Fredonia, Highland, Ithaca, New York City, Saratoga Springs and Watertown.

Participants included homemakers, retirees, library trustees, writers, library volunteers, a church pastor, an independent living advocate, college students, foreign-born immigrants to the U.S., a psychologist, and people who said they were making career changes and were using the electronic resources to upgrade their information and skills.

Participants in each of the sessions discussed the same general questions although the discussions varied a great deal depending upon their interests and experiences. Generally they discussed which databases they used or what information they sought during their last use of databases, what was good about databases, what training they had had in using databases, what sorts of difficulties they had, and how the NOVEL databases could be marketed to increase use. They were also asked why some people might choose not to use the databases and what other/additional subjects or databases should be included in the program. Several also shared personal stories about using the information from databases in their personal lives.

Summary:
- EBSCO, Gale, NOVEL, and "databases," are all terms that don't have much meaning to people using the resources.
- People are looking for a seamless way to get into the databases; they want to search quality resources more "like Google."
- Participants described their difficulties in searching. Difficulties seemed to be related to differences in the screens from different access points and different searching strategies required. They don't like having to key in their ID number each time they move to a different database.
- Databases they'd like to have available include Heritage Quest, a good basic encyclopedia, specific periodicals, and test preparation materials.
- Users often said they got their training in using databases and software at the library; however, many seemed to be largely self taught as well; they "just keep trying different things, trial and error, until they find what they're looking for."
- What's great about the databases is that they're "free!"
- The participants (who probably do not reflect all users) did know that databases were different from the Internet; databases are "juried" or selected and therefore more trustworthy. They're "better quality" than the Internet.

- Their recommendations were to make searching more user friendly; do training by topic/subject; and make the databases more accessible to people with disabilities.
- They think librarians are missing a great PR opportunity with the databases. A PR campaign needs to go beyond the libraries to bring new users in. One lady said, "Publicity about it (NOVEL) is severely lacking!"

Compilations of the responses follow.

Which databases did you use the last time you searched a database? What subjects/topics were you looking for? (Note a number in parenthesis indicates the number of times the specific answer was given.)
MasterFILE Select (3)
Newspaper databases (2)
Health databases (2)
New York Times
Periodicals that I don't have time to read at the library.

Magazines and health articles
ProQuest and EBSCO
My kids use Searchasaurus, primarily for schoolwork
Literature and arts, mostly school related
HeritageQuest and the newspaper indexes more for personal interests

I wanted to see what journals would be there in Psychology, my college major. There were some in the medical databases and in MasterFILE.
I use MasterFILE Premier most of the time. It has thousands of periodicals like New Yorker, Better Homes, and Gardens, etc.
Letter writing, children's books for South America
Article on high school drop out rates
Consumer Reports

Steamship on the Hudson, the Mary Powell
Glacial advance in the Mid-Hudson area
Long Island Sound
Ethnic diversity
Literacy data

What's good about the databases?
It's kind of like subscribing to all these newspapers and magazines, but they're free.
For business, small businesses, it's a tremendous resource.
I like the images that my kids can get. There's nothing wrong with Google, but NOVEL has great historic images.

One of the other things is that all of the information you find is only as good as the publisher. We don't have to doubt what's on the database.
The databases are pretty neat compared to the Internet.

I've been wanting to share how useful and great the databases are; they should be promoted with workshops and hands on things.
A lot of the Internet is just people's opinions. Databases don't have as much of the opinion stuff. Sometimes you put in your credit card number when you could have found the same thing for free.
They've opened me to the existence of many periodicals I didn't know about; I've discovered environmental publications I hadn't known about, things on climate change, for example. I used to know about the books of a particular writer, but now I can also keep track of how he's developing his ideas and thoughts via periodicals.
I find them easy to navigate; the interface is very user friendly. Remote access is relatively easy as well. They should be promoted as "things you can do in your jammies…" I've found almost everything I've been looking for. My husband is a journalist and he uses them as well.

I had been looking for a specific article and had only some names from a magazine cover; librarians pointed me in the right direction; I'd looked on Internet, card catalog, microfilm, and then they pointed me to the databases. They had a printed copy of it within 3 minutes—full text of the article!
There's too much information available; people get lost, so the databases are good because they structure what's available and help you get information.
Health is one of hardest (electronic information sources) to choose. It's important that the selections are made by some reputable organization.

What training have you had in learning how to use the databases?
Classes at the library (4)
Librarian showed me (4)
Self-taught (2)
They do have some written things as well.
I often end up at the desk asking questions.

I just keep testing and trying, looking for the right words and the most effective search strategies.
We all do it ourselves; trustees do get a tour of libraries as a part of their orientation and that includes exposure to databases. I couldn't believe I could get the New York Times free!
I got a little training, but the use of Boolean logic makes it tedious; Google's easier.
But none of the Google things brings me last week's Times' article!

Did you encounter any difficulties in using the databases?
EBSCO doesn't mean anything to anybody. People learn, but you have to decide which one you want to use, Gale or EBSCO. Maybe someone in the advertising world could help.
People have to have some working knowledge before they use databases.
People say being able to use a search engine that looks at multiple databases would be very helpful; but the transition from being a newbie to experienced is difficult.
They should have software that provides some choices and alternatives to guide people.
The first time I used it, it said that my driver's license was invalid although my license is OK. I got in the second time, but I had to enter it a third time to get what I wanted.

Occasionally I try to go back to something that I've been to before and I can't go back.
When I'm calling up magazines and journals at home, if I click on the one on the left it wants a user name and password on the right.
I like to read science journals. It would be nice to be able to find the whole issue.
I think people are looking for a more seamless way to get into it. The databases look different and feel different. But people don't understand that.
I shared the site with a consumer who is blind; it would be good if it was friendlier for JAWS. They can't read as well because of the graphics.

When I took a class, it seemed that there were a lot of other things that you could do that were hidden when I tried to use the database on my own.
Make them more user friendly, more intuitive. Even if they gave you a sample search to show you how you should go about doing it; that would be helpful.
I like going to specific databases, but at the library students like being able to do federated searches.
I think you could sell the meta engine too because it would <u>increase</u> the use of databases.

The problem in going from one database to another is that the vendors own them. Their concerns are economic. There's the issue too of who gets credit for using a database. Right here there are multiple turfs conflicting. So there's a lack of motivation for creating the tool to get into things more easily.

How would you recommend NOVEL be marketed to increase use?
If people could search it more like Google, with one place where you typed in what you were looking for, that would be great. And probably more people would use it.
Make it more user-friendly. There are still lots of steps to take. Make it more Google like in the first place.

Along the same lines, you get to it lots of different ways. It's different getting into NOVEL in different places.   If you're trying to tell somebody how to use it, it might be better if getting in was the same everywhere.
Do lots of publicity in lots of different ways.
Should do lots of hands-on workshops for people, teachers especially
If a tutorial was set up, people could take it on their own. Do TV ads and online tutorials.
Tell the students that it will help them with their term papers.

Make it clear what NOVEL is versus other things that are available in libraries.
There's confusion about why you wouldn't get everything in the library in NOVEL.
NOVEL has a lot going for it in terms of having lots of topics. You could do a lot of topical training. Car repair, vehicle repair – that would be a good one.
Chilton's manuals…
The libraries in general are missing a great PR opportunity.
I wish that more public knew more about it.
I want to go back to the user friendly idea, user friendly and marketing. Those are the big points that need to be made.

Libraries should partner more on the training aspect.   Do training by topic.
The idea of publicizing is important. It's one-stop shopping. An adult can use it; a child can use it. There's a variety of resources in the databases.
Any marketing efforts need to extend beyond libraries if we want to bring in new users.   People who use their libraries may be introduced to the databases, but lots of others are being missed.
The first question that I had was what's NOVEL? Publicity about it is severely lacking.
I work with lots of people who can't get to the library physically and this could be their access to information.
I'd list the magazines and stress the popular aspects of them.

Call NOVEL something else.
The name thing for sure needs attention. I love the database NOVELIST, but it's confusing.
I sent out a memo to my Friends' group about NOVEL. Several of them thought it was a database of novels. If people really understood what it was, they'd use it more.
Some people have confused NOVEL with NOVELL.
Or Novelist
I hadn't even recognized NOVEL meant something.
Have an advertising agency to come up with something that identifies it more with the databases.

Initially the word database is no help, unless you know it stands for something.
I think it leads people in the wrong direction.
Needs to be called something else; that's too cumbersome.

People aren't as used to databases as to magazines; they think databases means groups of numbers, etc.
Name is just one issue; the complexity of them is also an issue. In your mind and thinking, any search at the beginning is pretty diverse.
NOVEL isn't a useful label either.

Please distribute information through the Independent Learning Centers. Libraries should target students, especially when they need peer-reviewed journal articles. From what I was searching, I would like to see more specific sub-categories, especially if you were able to align (subjects) with college majors. Tie into more community groups. The schools are a captive audience. The general public is harder to reach. Could there be grants or money that could go around to the public libraries for marketing?
Do mailings.

You need professionally produced commercials.
You do have to saturate the market. It can't be a one time event or ad. Has to be a campaign.
People want to know about the newest technologies. Promote the databases at conferences and conventions.
Emphasize marketing and publicizing the databases. I think that there are a lot of people out there who would benefit if we could just get them trained. Reach them through businesses and community groups.
I think that they need to market to specific targets. Did the school libraries say the kids are using the databases?
Maybe webcasts would be more effective.

I wonder if down the road NOVEL could be expanded into a New York State Google, a one-stop shopping site? Not only would it be useful, but it would lead people to the databases.
Right now NOVEL could pay to be a sponsored link
Publicize…and put a button on the NOVEL webpage soliciting feedback.
Everybody talks about PR; libraries should do workshops.
You have to promote the databases in a way that people can hear. Too often it doesn't register.

Why do you think some people might choose not to use the databases?
The fact that the screen looks different – first thing the librarian says is "the screen is going to look different for you at home." There should be a similar front end wherever you are.
Possibly the name "database" may turn off some people.
How do you make me aware of it when I think that I don't have time?
You have to know what you're looking for.
I would reiterate the ease of use thought. I would think that if you want to bring in more people, you'd want to make it easier to use.

Maybe if searching the databases was more like Google or Yahoo…. Some type of broader search would help people feel more confident about searching? People are familiar with using Google or Yahoo.

They might think it's too hard; they haven't been taught how to search or how to put together the best search strategy. They might think it's too technical.

We don't do a good job in schools in teaching people how to find information; people don't know the logic of searching.

Databases need to be searchable like Google; there's another level with databases and it's very frustrating.

It's easier to use Google. People don't understand that they can get higher quality information through databases.

They should have everything on one page, just one place to get in and not have to go back to the top to enter your card number every time. You should be able to put in your number and then click on the icon and go to what you want. It should be straightforward instead of having to put in your number again.

That page isn't the same all over the state.

Sometimes some jargon comes up that I don't get. Who's the target user with all this?

Unless you're a regular user, you don't know; how much promotion has been done? They haven't done publicity that speaks to the average person.

Schools aren't as excited about using Google as they once were; they've learned that it's not reliable. If it's in a database, an editor has reviewed it, "juried" it.

Too many people are satisfied with Google; they don't understand you get what you pay for! They need education!

People don't use databases because they already have too much information.

It has to be as easy as Google, but more reliable information than Google.

To maximize the use of library resources, you have to push (educate on their value) and pull (make access easier)

I'd like to see the average person using them, so you have to eliminate the jargon.

People don't use the databases because they lack publicity; labels like database and NOVEL aren't helpful; you have to sign in (as opposed to Google); searching is different—you have to start broad with databases, but with Google it's specific, so people have to think differently.

Maybe there is too much available; maybe simplify until people get used to using the basic databases.

I don't like our own library's web page; it's not current enough. A lot of library web pages are pretty obscure to get into. Many of them use a lot of obscure icons.

What other resources/topics should be available in this way?
Old newspapers
Test preparation - old Regents exams
Local history collections are big things in many libraries. People are always searching for local history.

I would like to use be able to use Heritage Quest from home.
I don't subscribe to Christian Century; I would like to have that.

College degrees – careers as topics
Testing software
You have to look at your target audience(s)   Are they trying to attract the general public? If you're trying to cover everyone, that's hard.
Downloadable
A front end that had more general offerings would be helpful, audio and video offerings.
There are a lot of resources that are public domain. Could those be available to the public? Could they integrate that kind of thing?

More critical analysis rather than plot summaries
More of the newspapers and the ability to get more articles
Scholarly American History; archaeology journals; biology; you could just go through the disciplines!

I wish they had more publications about writing and books. Things like Bookmarks (book reviews), Pages (for the average reader), Poets and Writers, Writer's Digest.
MasterFILE Premium is general information; I'd like access to more scholarly and scientific things. Wish we could have Academic Search Premier here.
Many people have access to scholarly things through their academic institutions, but independent writers and researchers don't have those institutions.
I'd like to see more databases in foreign languages…Chinese, French, etc.
A few more databases that are more academic would be good; NOVEL still lacks those.

Other comments?
Many people aren't aware of the databases. When you explain they're impressed and excited.
The general public doesn't understand what a database is; they just Google. The example I use with second graders: use World Book and say to people "this encyclopedia was put into the computer and you know it's a good source."
Sixteen year olds are very savvy about electronic resources; more so than the 20 year olds.
Marketing should be more general (include more) than NOVEL. The school nurse went bonkers when she found out about the health resources available.

Perhaps public libraries could partner with the schools to use their labs for training.
We need an explanation of what a database is composed of on the webpage; also, if there's a change, do some kind of transition for 'old' users to the new database or approach.
Each library tends to have its own way to present information.

NOVEL is a federally funded program, but most people don't know the NOVEL name.

There's so much information in databases, but maybe the State should allocate some money to help people learn to navigate –and how to do it. How would I know about the different databases? How many people are like me and are enthusiastic about it?

Stories about how participants used the information they found in the NOVEL databases:
 I was having a problem with an over the counter product, calcium citrate. I switched products based on information I found in the database and it worked.

I recently wrote an article on playing poker and I didn't have enough knowledge of magazines to submit the article. I looked at list of databases, sent an email to a librarian online and within a few days they gave me a link to Ulrich's. It didn't hit me immediately; I don't quite understand how to use a database. You have to calm yourself down and remind yourself that you're new.

For last four years I've tried to help my family in Poland and Russia who are writing—I can find out information and names of family—incredible that my family can't get that information where they are. There's a federal program in US— work travel program—brings students to US to work; they work for three months and travel a month. I was able to contact a lot of people who were coming and told them they can do the research they need to do their school papers, masters' theses.

APPENDIX C
NOVEL Evaluation - Interviews with Library Professionals

The NYSL provided the consultants with a list of the names of 33 library leaders in New York who had been involved in various aspects of the development and implementation of the NOVEL program. Over the course of several weeks the consultants were able to interview all but three of the individuals named. A list of those interviewed follows at the end of this report.

Many of the people interviewed had been involved with the development of the NOVEL program and their comments were very helpful to the consultants' understanding of how the NOVEL program has developed. The consultants asked each of the people interviewed about their involvement with the NOVEL program, what they saw as the successes, what has not happened as they had anticipated or wanted, what or which of the five initiatives in the NOVEL program should be the next priority, and what the impact of NOVEL has been.

Summary:
While there was a wide variety in the responses, there was also some general agreement.

Successes (and impact of the NOVEL program):
- The widespread geographic access to the databases
- Equitable access, i.e., a "level playing field"
- Cost savings
- Leveraging existing budgets
- For some libraries the NOVEL program makes databases available where they would not otherwise be.

Disappointments/Shortcomings:
- Drivers' license access complicated things, especially for students and schools
- The selection of databases is too general, "low-end" for academic institutions and not low enough for elementary schools.
- Usage data is lacking or unclear.
- Access points are unclear or differ from library to library.
- Some librarians are hesitant to train users to use the databases.
- Some find NOVEL hard to use; the interfaces are complicated and the state library website is way too complex.
- Potential users are unaware of what the databases contain and of how to use them.

Priorities for the future among the 5 initiatives in the NOVEL program:
- Many of those interviewed still place a high priority on the database program—refining it, extending it, etc.

- Most of those interviewed questioned the meaning and intent of the second initiative, expanding resource sharing.
- Digitization is not a high priority for those interviewed; coordination of digitization does have some support.
- While several people recognized that the lack of high-speed telecommunications was a problem for libraries in rural areas of the state, most interviewees did not think NYSL had a role in addressing this problem.
- Federated searching as a concept was widely supported; however, this initiative seems to be in its infancy in New York and people had a wait and see mindset about it as a statewide initiative. Some thought that the technology would have moved beyond the outcome being sought by the time federated searching was widely possible in New York libraries.

The comments that follow are arranged by the question areas to give the reader a sense of both the variety of responses to the questions and the similarities in many of the responses.

Successes of the NOVEL Program
When I worked in a college library, we were impressed with the health database and that it was FREE! Saved us a lot of money. Then I worked in a library at a liberal arts college and they cared not at all about the health database. Now the big thing is, "can we save money?" They'll go to whatever organization they can to save money.

It's a diverse collection of databases that are not too hard to use.

The ubiquity of the databases is a mark of their success. My students access databases from anywhere. The State Library has done a careful job in getting comprehensive information for our students. Many people have never thought about the databases and they're amazed at what's there.

Greatest success is the equitable access; students have access to high quality information; the databases are things we couldn't afford across all the schools in the City.

The databases brought an awareness of online resources to our students and teachers; it has also been an opportunity for us to show what our media people can do and the technology we have.

The databases level the playing field; provide equitable access for students. Many schools can't buy beyond NOVEL. NOVEL provides authoritative, authentic resources.

They're broad-based and can impact every library user; they're available through libraries, so there's a library connection.

For public libraries and small libraries, the NOVEL databases have been effective because of the low end databases, but to progress, it has to reach out across types of libraries.

The equity of access part is good and the ability to get access through the driver's license speaks to the equity issue.

When NOVEL began Queens reduced costs by reducing some of the databases we bought. NOVEL represents about a $ 200,000 annual savings for us. The databases were done (selected) well in the general sense of creating a common denominator for the public and high school level students, New York Times, for example. We've also done a lot of training with both the public and the staff.

NOVEL is very important in our libraries; many have based their periodical subscriptions on what's available in NOVEL.

The success is the fact that they're reaching goals in terms of the number of searches and the number of libraries participating.

Leveraging:
If you have Masterfile Select, the basic version, you can buy the next level. Many libraries do that. They can build on the state's product by paying an additional amount.

Went from MasterFile Select to Premier and from Primary Search to Middle Search. MasterFile Premier is most heavily used. The library system saved $160,000 in one year because of the LSTA funding for NOVEL. If individual libraries had done that it would be 4-5 times that amount.

About half of the districts in our BOCES purchase additional resources; if other resources were available through NOVEL, they'd be able to purchase more.

Leveraging tax dollars; if we took half of the money all the libraries spend on databases and let the state use that money to buy collectively we could buy a lot more.

The NOVEL program has been essential in getting good prices.

NOVEL has been doing good about continuing things for at least a couple of years to allow the public to learn about them

My libraries are small and rural; they have more confidence now that they can help users (as a result of the databases and training), but they don't use them that much. They're just not a part of the mindset. I'm afraid even librarians prefer to use Google, but I think they're not being asked challenging questions.

Librarians liked getting training on the databases from other librarians; also liked hands on training.

The successes of NOVEL to date have been getting the databases out there statewide and the initiative on the portal. We've gained a lot of experience.

The successes of NOVEL are that it actually got done! The databases are available. It was clear at the invitational grant session a couple of years ago that many libraries haven't incorporated the databases into their lives.

The databases are wonderful; we couldn't afford them on our own. Lots of libraries just wouldn't have these things.

The fact that there are online resources available to all NY residents is a success. It took a long time for schools to get to use them. Hard for many schools to access the databases. They didn't have phone lines to some school libraries; some have only recently gotten phone lines. This is an extremely rural area.

That's important; it gives me a change to purchase additional stuff that fits the curriculum in my school, e.g., PRO Quest Platinum level.

They've added Archival New York Times; that's great for the high school, because I couldn't afford it otherwise.

Shortcomings of the NOVEL Program or
What has not happened as you anticipated
NOVEL databases are a tiny part of what's available. There are so many choices. Schools/colleges are overloaded. It takes time to set any database up. If a database doesn't meet curriculum needs, they won't bother.

The databases are the generic, low-end databases.

We don't have good quantitative data on usage.

They told us originally that NOVEL databases would be available only through libraries, but then they included driver's license access. Our students don't have licenses. So our school system signed up all our libraries so that kids can get remote access from their homes. If we hadn't done that and parents didn't know, the kids wouldn't have had access. It was confusing and didn't help students when the state started with the driver's license access.

I think the way that the databases are arranged is a problem. Nobody thinks to look at the GALE this or that. People don't want to take the time. People don't care which it is.

In every system, the way you approach the databases is different. There was no standard approach.

I didn't anticipate that some of the databases would not be full text. For kids it's a turnoff to have to go to another source.

There isn't a true database for the K-6 community.

There aren't enough things available for lower elementary students. They need an online encyclopedia.

I do a lot of training; the access points are confusing; we need a more icon driven list of databases; also they're not in alphabetic order. Some things just don't make sense; we aren't merchandising them well.

Last year there were training grants through METRO, but this year we're scrambling to make training happen. We'd like funding for ongoing training.

We do an annual survey of our school libraries and one question concerns training on integrating the databases into the curriculum. 100% of our people agreed it should be done, but 11% didn't think it was applicable. What's that about? We also asked if NOVEL training assisted in their ability to integrate the databases into the curriculum; 90% agreed, but 10% disagreed. Maybe it's the non public schools without librarians and with people who are there only part time. There are people who are not promoting the databases. It takes three years to know a database well.

Many librarians are too hesitant to try new things; my reference staff would rather do things for people than let them do it themselves. Job security may be an underlying issue.

Some of our public libraries have trouble with the drivers' license access because its limited to the NOVEL databases and libraries want the uses to use the libraries' databases too.

I'm skeptical about the federated searching with just the NOVEL databases because there aren't enough of them to make it effective.

Librarians here feel over worked and many are not comfortable in presenting the NOVEL training to the public. Too many are hesitant.

Lack of federated searching is a big problem. (multiple people said this)

Users have no clue which database will get what he wants.

People don't understand what they can get through NOVEL. They have to be reminded; we have to market constantly.

Our academic libraries are using the databases more than I thought they would, although they aren't aware of where they're coming from. More PR is needed. Most of the public library websites are terrible.

I find NOVEL hard to use; the interfaces are complicated and the state library website is way too complex. People shouldn't have to think! (She lives in an unserved area.)

To be successful things need to be patron initiated and across systems and types of libraries.

If we're going to do databases, we should do it right! The State Library always has to make everybody happy. We should have spent money on quality databases, e.g., Masterfile Select, not the basic one. Some important newspapers should have been included. Point is the State didn't do what it should have done. The content wasn't/isn't deep enough.

The problem is that people don't know about NOVEL; the program has not be advertised; it's just acknowledged on the webpage of local libraries.

I'd like to see more K-12 databases because school library funding is not level across the state.

We need more publicity. The State Library has done a yeoman's job; there aren't many school districts that aren't subscribed, but that took time. We need to toot our horn more.

The last year as a pilot on the portal was a waste! I teach ninth graders; they don't have driver's licenses and it included only NOVEL databases.

Next Steps, Priorities for the Future
The question as posed to those being interviewed was stated as follows.
> The NOVEL Initiatives included 5 areas although to date NYSL has pursued only the first and fifth initiatives. Are other parts of the original vision worth pursuing? What should the priorities be for the next five years? (1) increasing access to electronic resources on a statewide basis; (2) expanding resource sharing to improve electronic and traditional access to library resources for all users; (3) developing a coordinated program for the digitization of information resources in NY libraries and other repositories; (4) enhancing the

availability of high-speed telecommunications for NY libraries across all regions of the state; and (5) developing a NOVEL user interface or portal that integrates the services and resources brought together under NOVEL.

It's hard to choose; they're all important.
Expanding telecommunications for school use is a good idea, but it doesn't trickle down to us in rural schools.

Databases:
The databases are highest in priority in an ongoing basis because of the impact they have; there's tremendous cost savings to those libraries that had the databases and also a savings for those that didn't have them before.

Databases need to be evaluated more; there are lots of websites that cover the databases' content and the websites are free…health and business. As websites become more reliable, we have to look at that. What's not on the web are historical sites so databases selected need to address that aspect.

The databases are wonderful; this initiative needs to be refined; negotiate a bigger deal. We need to go deep rather than wide, or coordinate statewide prices (need professionals to do that!)

Database access needs to continue as a focus.

Clean up the databases; we still don't have a good collection; print collections are organized, but you don't see that in NOVEL. There needs to be a K-6 and 7-12 collection. Grolier's lets you search by reading levels; others are starting to do that as well. We need to do a thing well before we move on. (top priority)

Every union catalog needs specific listing for titles in NOVEL; then people would be able to find things…click on Consumer Reports and that would link to the database.

Years ago none of my libraries would have bought databases. There's still some leverage savings, but not as much. (His point was that the databases should not be the priority in the future.) Maybe the state could buy more databases for staff to use rather than the public.

Libraries have to create the web presence for all the resources; we're creating web pages that link to the specific resources, creating "customized" webpages. We're creating a web page for each hospital (NOVEL databases are included, but not all are linked, only the useful ones are linked).   This is how the system is adding value to the databases. You have to put the NOVEL experience in this larger context. Some medical vendors are bypassing libraries and selling directly to doctors.

Academics and big public libraries are the biggest users of the databases; we have to get the public library systems involved more. Need more support for systems to help local libraries.

It's an artifact of politics that the private academics have disproportionate political influence in the state. SUNY was trying to get money from the privates for databases, so they're screaming. It's hard to make an objective professional argument for the high end databases. The target audience for the program should be school kids.

NOVEL should include e-media collections that library users could download.

For the Steering Committee the database issue is under control, even with minor changes in the direction; the databases will always be with us, but they needn't take all our time.

Databases continue to need work in the next five years.

We're wealthier than other libraries in the area and we've had budget cut backs; many libraries don't have extensive collections. So additional databases should be top priority.
High end databases that we can't get through our normal channels should be top priority.

Most important (highest priority) for schools is expanding the range and depth of databases and getting the state legislature to pay for it. Students need to rely on authentic and accurate information. NYSL has to get its priorities straight here; what is the goal? They need a series of good basic stuff and then to target some specific populations.

Priority should be working with databases; content is king.

We need more elementary resources; K-2s don't get much. More databases for K-2 or K-6 is my second priority.

Academics need databases, but I'd support high end databases only if there's state money available for them. Inner city schools need a good encyclopedia. The problem is that the high end databases are very expensive; maybe they could be subsidized (not totally paid for with LSTA or state funds). There is consensus that we need more databases at both ends, low and high. I don't think the legislators understand; they think it's all free on the Internet. There's a real challenge in getting them to understand the value of databases at all. Even corporations don't get it; 80% of our corporate libraries have closed in the last decade. Online encyclopedias for inner city kids is an easier sell.

The route to getting legislative approval is being able to offer workforce development assistance.

Development of individualized portals would improve NOVEL – a K-9 portal for example; and the ability to include locally purchased/developed databases as part of the portal.

There's academic interest in remote access for students, but schools are more interested in controlling what students can access. Public libraries and systems generally offer remote access of some sort.

Expanded resource sharing:
The union catalog and ILL were big at first; he's not a proponent of a single union catalog, but yes to Z39.50.

This is a nice "puff piece," but I don't know what it means.

Maybe this means a statewide catalog rather than a statewide card. If people could search and get materials (delivery), that would be great, but I'm not sure it's on the map.

SUNY libraries have one catalog statewide; that seems the logical next step for public libraries. Why do we need all that duplication?

Statewide card is an interesting idea; maybe it's more feasible as a regionwide card. Of course delivery is the other issue with a statewide card. Having access without a delivery mechanism doesn't help.

Resource sharing and the database licensing correlate. We need to figure out ways to save money by working on these together.

NYSHEI has talked some about resource sharing, but advocacy for purchase of high end databases for academic research institutions is their top priority right now.

In five years all will be digital content. So, if the state wants to be with the curve, they should be moving in that direction. It needs to be ready for more and more electronic content. People are using i-pods, so the NYSL should be looking at delivering more things electronically. Get ahead of the curve and figure out how more libraries will get access beyond databases.

We always say we're enhancing resource sharing, but I'm not sure how to do that in a practical way; we haven't really addressed it. I don't think there's a great deal of interest in it.

My second highest priority, after expanding databases, is building the interfaces for searching and delivery, resource sharing. The state is resource rich, but the resources aren't shared.

The universal library card will be bogged down for years.

I don't personally see how you could do a statewide catalog. It would be wonderful, but then there would be ILL and you'd need delivery and school libraries aren't set up for that. It costs $28 to move a book and get it back. Most of our schools aren't automated. Many librarians and superintendents would really like to do retro conversion.

Digitization:
Digitization should be local; forget it.

Digitization has nothing to do with school libraries.
The state has to do something on digitization; it may already be too late. Leadership will probably have to come from the 3Rs working together. We've asked and asked the state, but nothing has happened. The 3Rs don't ever all agree, but some are moving ahead with digitization on their own. Digitization is the next top priority.

I'd like a portal for digitization (catalog of digital projects that have been done). There are too many groups going in different directions and it's hard to find information right now.

This is the future. "Coordination" is the key piece here. Money is a big issue, but there are action steps that don't require lots of money; that's what the NYSL should do.

Digitization is another area where NYLINK and NYSLA could work together.

Digitization for academic libraries would be a high priority if we could bring resources/materials together from disparate sources.

Digitization is lower on the priority list.

This is not a crucial issue.

There's a need for coordinating digitization. We've done some things on our own using state money, but there's no central coordination. We should be sharing standards and providing guidance on how to do various things related to digitization, how to contract for it for example. It's my first choice for priority in the coming years.

Coordinating digitization is my #2 priority, right behind refining the database selection process.

We have experience with tools, standards, etc., but the notion of content and the political framework with so many library organizations (3Rs, public library systems, NYLINK, NYSHEI) needs to be coordinated. There's lots going on; we're wasting a lot of energy working separately.

New York State needs to get its digitization act together; state hasn't done anything; we need coordination. Systems have just struggled on their own with it.

Sharing digital resources is invaluable, but it costs money! I would love to see more digitization. Google Scholar is wonderful, but you have to pay for them.

There are special collections in many libraries in NY, but it's a huge job for individual libraries to do; it would be incredible if more of that was available.

There's a worry that changing technology will make things obsolete. (Digitization not a high priority.)

Digitization is not a priority for K-12.

Digitization would be of great interest in this area; there's an immense wealth of resources that are deteriorating.

High-speed telecommunications across all regions of the state:
We all need the high speed telecommunications; that could help us tap into the BOCES network.

Telecommunications is a huge problem due to geography. Libraries in our county all have T-1 lines, but the rest of the state isn't so fortunate.

For the areas without telecommunications this is the issue, but I'm not sure what the NYSL can do.

There's nothing libraries can do about that.

I can't see how we'd impact that.

There's no practical way for NYSL to do that. It sounds good, but…

We don't have trouble with high-speed telecommunications in Queens, but I can't see the state getting into that issue. It's important on a statewide basis, but that's not a NOVEL priority. The market will take care of that eventually.

It's hard to argue with it, but I don't know much about it, or how we'd go about that.

I couldn't figure out why high speed telecommunications is on the list. I don't see how NYSL could do anything about it.

High speed telecommunications might be second most important for schools; we still have people on dial up in this area.

That's important; there are lots of haves and have nots; small rural areas can't keep up.

That's not a statewide issue; it's a local one.

Federated searching:
Instant gratification! I like it. You find what you need and you don't have to go to it, back out, go in again. Most colleges have this mechanism too so I can tell my students this is what college will be like.

It's great! (a Portal Project Phase 1 library). We had a setback in that some people aren't comfortable putting their license number online. We also have summer visitors from out of state, who don't have NY licenses. And, there are many people who don't have a license. There needs to be another way for those without a license. But, we like being able to search all the databases at once.

Searching needs to be Google-like; there should be a general search in every portal (K-12; academic, public, etc.) Use a Google like search within that portal as well as being able to search individual databases. The Google like search can't be at the entry or lowest level—would be too many useless hits.

Federated searching is crucial because it's like Google.

Federated searching is appealing, but school libraries are automated and that allows federated searching, so it isn't as high a priority for us.

There's no need for that; libraries should just buy the products that let you do federated searching; a meta search tool that would include the library catalog, websites, and all the databases. It should include more than just NOVEL

Federated searching is the lowest priority; improving the technological infrastructure is very high priority, but nothing has been done. The way the state is structured into LATAs causes more difficulties. Utilities commission could set discounted tariff rates for libraries, but the federal e-rate probably derailed that idea.

It's a high priority.

The portal will be with us for some time (as a priority) as we learn from the pilot, but it isn't the overwhelming issue for the Steering Committee. The current portal is a low base fee, which the state pays, but libraries will have to pay on top of that. It's not clear that it's easily scalable. That's an issue they didn't think through.

My staff thought the initial screens were awkward, but that should be easy to fix.

Federated searching doesn't work as well as I'd like; needs more customization; still get tons of stuff. It's something people DO need.

Federated searching has to include the library catalog. Our most successful database is the regional catalog. The database access should be through the catalog.

The next step is more work on federated searches; users want to see a more Google-like front-end. The public is so accustomed to that; it would help so much in promoting the databases. There are so many choices up front; people don't know which one to use first; they just want the answer quickly. Federated searching via Web Feet isn't a long term solution; it will be outdated by natural progression of the Internet environment; hard to see that as a good way to go. On a statewide level it's a money pit, not sustainable like Z39.50 is on statewide level.

I've heard very little about it; didn't even know it was happening until very recently.

Federated searching isn't something we can take on; it's too expensive to get for all our members.

I would like them to finish the federated searching initiative and to promote it. We need experience with that. How can we make it more Google-like? They have to get information out on what they're learning with the pilots.

We'd love to buy a federated search tool we could use; we've looked at Web Feet, but it's very expensive.

Federated searching isn't less important to schools. Many students are impatient. A targeted search in a specific database will get a better results, but federated searching is sometimes all they have time for.

I'm not sure the technology is quite right yet.

It was a bomb! The interface wasn't geared to us (schools). My kids don't have drivers' licenses.

My (school) librarians are aching for federating searching. Now students can do only two searches in 45 minutes because they have to go into each database separately. Federated searching for users is my first priority.

Maybe federated searching should be the top of the priorities for the coming five year plan.

Federated searching will be wonderful if it plays out.

Federated searching would be a boon to users.

Impact of NOVEL to Date

NOVEL databases have provided the opportunity at a lot of libraries to reallocate resources toward other things. Libraries don't have to spend money on databases and the databases are being incorporated into the lives of libraries.

We've been able to shift money to other expenses because of the availability of databases; the databases make us competitive with the Internet and bookstores. In the next five years people will be expecting more and more. We'll need downloadable DVDs, etc.

Overall it's equitable access; people of all languages and capabilities have guided resources available to them. It's amazing how many people don't know about the databases. Marketing is crucial and you <u>have</u> to show them to people. And, it has to be ongoing, my (school) librarians ask every year, "is this going to continue?"

The NOVEL Steering Committee attempt to provide federated searching (Web Feet—project 6-8 months ago) was a pilot. The State Library did more damage and created more ill will with the pilot for Web Feet than was necessary. We all thought the pilots would be able to get federated searching for <u>all</u> the databases, not just the NOVEL databases.

In general, overall the databases are basic stuff; it's valuable for New Yorkers to have access, but they don't think about it.   It's all in how a library sets it up; people don't care where it comes from.

We hear from a lot of writers. They seem to be big users.

The impact has been tremendous because many libraries had no access nor any hope of getting the broad array of resources that are available through NOVEL.

Librarians just aren't good at marketing. It's a quiet thing; people do have access to these resources. We lose sight of where we were.

Most of the academic libraries could care less about the databases; most of them have databases that go well beyond what NOVEL provides; however they do provide them along with their other databases.

Not really effective with the academics, more for the K-12 and the general public

<u>Any</u> additional databases that NOVEL might include wouldn't be much for academics because they already have those databases, although it might save them money.
Public libraries and schools were behind technologically; for some NOVEL provided the first databases they got.

For the general research community these NOVEL databases are peripheral. NOVEL databases are a small piece for academics, but it provides a base upon which to build. The databases give every academic institution a core of resources. Accreditation has information literacy requirements and every academic institution in the state has NOVEL because it's free!

NOVEL makes it impossible to say we can't afford it.

Hospitals work hard to link to the databases within NOVEL that are useful to their users.

Statistics and the vendors is generally an unresolved issue. (Several people commented on the issues related to gathering statistics.)

NOVEL has been a great savings for libraries; frees up funds that can be used elsewhere; the only databases small libraries may have are NOVEL ones.

I'd like to see NOVEL rolled into a statewide focus on information skills; in five years aim to have an information literate population. Just providing the databases isn't enough. There are lots of reports on what people need. We need to pay attention to those reports; people need to get guidance/instruction. Goal is that kids are safe; people are getting jobs, etc. My dream resides in how people use information to make their lives better.

The impact has been very uneven. Potential has been greater than what has happened; the number of ordinary people who know about it is low. A marketing project is a good idea; it needs more money and promotion.

Training seems to have the biggest impact on whether the databases are used, but even that has some problems. Some databases are too academic or high

end for schools. There needs to be a general encyclopedia; that would be useful to the general population.

The databases have been successful, but not as successful as we had hoped. There are still many people who are technologically behind. These things take 3-5 years to be accepted and used. Wheels move slowly. Every initiative takes time. But, the databases are a great resource!

Anything Else? Other Comments?
In five years I hope we can pull together the five initiatives. We'll be into digitization even though it's low on my list. Federated searching will be pervasive and we'll be able to market better, that will make things easier.

They're not paying for lasting solutions like digitization. The databases are just subscriptions and they can go away.

There should be a link between NYSL and NYLINK so we could leverage the money from the same providers.

Selling the databases to the legislature puzzles me. This is shameful! Mississippi has state funding for databases.

The high end databases have gotten mixed reactions from the 3R directors. The academic community would like funds for high end databases (like Elsiever). My 3R colleagues don't think the legislature will buy into that idea. If they say "the research community in New York," it'll fly, but then, the schools and publics won't support it.

Upgrading the databases used by academics was successful in New Jersey, so we'll try that approach.

The high end database initiative will include all the databases, so it's a move toward moving the databases to state funding. Point is to build upon access for schools and public libraries and to expand toward academics. The initiative causes some tension because the schools and publics worry that they'll be left out.

Most libraries could use some of what's in Science Direct (one of the high end databases), but Elsevier is hard to work with.

High end databases would be helpful in our high school advanced placement courses; we have AP Bio and Environmental Science. We do need to make it easier for academics; it's a fairness thing.

NOVEL needs to get off federal funding.

It will be a hard sell to get the legislature to go along with the high end databases. The legislative staffs get it; the state library has done a good job of promoting the databases with the legislative staffs.

There's a focus problem; getting more high end databases for the academics will lose public librarians. NOVEL should focus on what public <u>users</u> would want.

If there was no LSTA funding, we'd be more selective on the databases we provide.

We were really talking about resource sharing and a universal library card when we started with the databases. The point was to provide statewide electronic resource sharing. We always need to keep in mind who the audience for the databases is.

Process of selecting databases should be open with a reasonable number of representatives. State library has been too concerned about keeping nominal control.
State library gets mixed up with being the state library and being statewide.

Library Development is very controlling!

DLD holds the purse strings and they could make things happen, but there's too much a culture of agreement and consensus; it's slow moving. DLD is too focused on details. They need to be more risk taking and push more.

I think that slow connections at home are an issue. DSL is available but we don't subscribe. There are a lot of people who don't have high-speed access.

Even if there is more publicity, there are going to be a limited number of people who will use databases.

We did a lot of training.. we did it through our members,. We've been doing database training at the teachable moment. People need to know how to fit it into their daily routine.

Using LSTA dollars for advocacy for libraries (their electronic resources) would make sense. The general public doesn't understand that these are things that you have to pay for. A saturation campaign might bring it into people's conscience, but the time you have to do it is at the teachable moment… the moment of need.

The conversation between the State Library, NYLA and the state legislature…
That conversation is important and the legislature doesn't care about it because the feds are paying for it.

The state legislature has an attitude that says if the feds will pay for it , we won't. The marketing has to be to the state legislature to get them to pay for the resources. There has been no sustained increase for libraries since 1998.

The demonstrations do let the legislators and staff see we're really high tech. We just need to get that message across consistently.

I'd like to see a portal (Serial Solutions) more available for librarians; it's more available for the public than librarians right now.

We have to be careful in how we craft the message to legislators. If we say all New Yorkers need a range of information, we can make the argument that business start ups need information through their libraries, for example. Reaching the most people for the buck…lowest common denominator and every legislator has schools in his district. The message has to be inclusive. Have to say there's a need for up to date information on line for New Yorkers to help them in their business, personal lives, etc. When librarians divide among themselves the legislators don't have to do anything.

The branding component is tricky. Libraries that haven't done a lot in that area probably won't mind, but others that have done a lot of branding won't want to give their brands up. Branding takes space and time.

There has to be some branding, if people just get it, they don't know where it comes from. Our webpage uses an icon on the list showing which ones are NOVEL.

The names are a huge problem.

We need better terminology.

Queens is working on our information portal where anybody in the world can access us; there'll be a daily, weekly, or monthly charge for accessing us for the rest of the world.

We should go back to the electronic library; the State take the leadership for creating the State electronic library, which would include a statewide catalog, and electronic information

A statewide license for downloadable audio books would be great. The state catalog would demand statewide delivery.

The state had the vision, but they just got stuck with the databases and there's no money left for anything else.

We need to explore other models for the coming five years. If the new proposal passes, we can expand access to a broader range of people. There should be a new model for funding the high end databases. With the basic databases the state pays for the whole thing or for a base level (Masterfile, e.g.), that's the current model. There may be another model: if a library has a database, the state might pay for the upgrade. Add on a level. Or, are there ways to leverage what academics are paying and have the state pay on top of that to extend access. Just need "new ways of operating."

ConnectNY is a consortium of academic libraries; have 14 independent academic institutions as members. We use a patron driven ILL system; have two day delivery and 35,000 to 36,000 transactions last year. We focus on resource sharing; plan to expand to journal articles. Hope eventually to reach out to SUNY and to connect with them. New York is very fragmented and academic libraries are not well serviced by other systems. There are lots of competing entities. If NOVEL is to be effective, it will have to be more proactive across types of libraries.

If the State wants to be a player, it has to provide money to help us connect the SUNY system and other special libraries like NY Public and state resource libraries. The separate/disparate systems in NY need to be connected.

NOVEL works for community colleges.

I'm pleased New York is providing the databases; equity of access to quality, adjudicated resources is important, but many states are far ahead of us in doing this. It's important that the general population can use the databases; we'll be ignored if we don't address the general education needs of the population. It's not just students; not all New Yorkers are high school grads.

We need a better marketing plan; the K-12 community is driven from the top down, from the Commissioner down. When the Commissioner says it's a priority, it happens! It's a continuum, you can't stop. You have to do training by subject area and you have to get to the superintendent and to parents.

We've talked about whether the NYSL and libraries in general would be better served if NYSL was in some department other than education; the library community is on the fence about it. What's important is getting consistent funding.

Suggested Additions to NOVEL
During the course of the interviews several interviewees mentioned specific databases they would like to have added:

Car repair
Gale Encyclopedia of Medicine needs updating
Heritage Quest
Learning Express (has test books, civil service exams, resumes, etc.; also includes e-books)
NOVELIST
A general encyclopedia, general reference database for elementary and middle school libraries (multiple school media interviewees said this)
SIRS resources (multiple school media interviewees said this)
Gale—more special databases on US history, authors, etc. (schools need these, but they would benefit adult learners and ESL folks as well)
"not high end databases, but good basic stuff"

Interviewees

- Thomas Alrutz, Associate Director, Central Library Services, NYPL

- Sue Bartle, School Library System Director, Erie 2-Chautauqua-Cattaraugus BOCES, Fredonia

- Diane Berry, Mid-York Library System, Utica

- Jeffry Cannell, Director, Albany Public Library

- Josh Cohen, Director, Mid-Hudson Library System, Poughkeepsie

- William Crumlish, Director, Hobart Library, Hobart and William Smith Colleges, Geneva

- Judith Dzikowski, School Library System Director, Onondaga-Courtland-Madison BOCES, Syracuse

- Randy Ericson, Couper Librarian, Hamilton College Library, Clinton

- Chris Filstrup, Dean of Libraries & Director of Library Services, Stony Brook

- Gina Fredericks, Director, Liverpool Public Library, Liverpool

- Thomas Galante, Director, Queens Borough Public Library, Jamaica

- Peter Genovese, Director of Libraries, Monroe Community College, Rochester

- Bart Harloe, University Librarian, Saint Lawrence University, Canton

- Carey Hatch, Assistant Provost, Library & Information Services, SUNY Systems Administration, Albany

- Dottie Hiebing, Director, METRO, New York City

- Sara Kelly Johns, Library Media Specialist, Lake Placid Middle/Sr. High School, Lake Placid

- Tessa Killian, Southeastern NY Library Res. Council, Highland

- Robyn Klose, Manager of Electronic Resources & Services, Nassau Library System, Uniondale

- Jerry Kuntz, Electronic Resources Consultant, Ramapo-Catskill Library System, Middletown

- Mary-Alice Lynch, Executive Director, NYLINK, Albany

- Pamela McLaughlin, Director Digital Library Development, Syracuse University, Syracuse

- Kathy Miller, Director, Rochester Regional Library Council, Fairport

- Jennifer Morris, Director, Pioneer Library System, Canandaigua; current NYLA President; former chair of the NYLA Legislative Committee

- Jerry Nichols, Director, Palmer Institute for Public Library Organization and Management, Long Island University, Brookville

- JoAnn Rockefeller, School Library System Director, Frank W. Cyr Center, Stamford

- Ellen Rubin, Library Media Specialist, Wallkill High School, Wallkill

- John Shaloiko, Director, Southeastern NY Library Res. Council, Highland

- Jean Sheviak, Director, Capital District Library Council, Albany

- Barbara Stripling, Director, NY City School Library System, NY City

- Catherine Way, Director, Chautauqua-Cattaraugus Library System, Jamestown

- Allison Wheeler, School Library System Director, St. Lawrence-Lewis BOCES, Norwood

APPENDIX D – NOVEL Evaluation - Web Survey Report

Over 1,200 librarians/school library media specialists, students, teacher/educators, business users, personal users, and other users responded to a web survey about the NOVEL databases between May 21st and October 31st, 2006. They lived in 483 different zip code areas. Seventy-seven percent (77.08%) of the respondents were women and fifty-one percent (51.34%) were between the ages of 35 and 54 years. Thirty-three (33.16%) percent completed the survey from home. (A compilation of the survey responses follows. Note also that the percents given in the report are percents of those responding, i.e., the numbers used to calculate the percents do not include non responses to the question being asked.)

Summary:
- Twenty-six (28.42%) percent accessed one of the NOVEL databases several times each week.
- Respondents reported newspaper databases are accessed most frequently, followed by health databases.
- Survey respondents have a fairly high level of success (3.92 on a 5 point scale) in meeting their information needs with the databases.
- Eighty-seven (86.74%) percent said they had no difficulty in finding the information they sought.
- Twenty-one (20.93%) percent of the business users indicated they had difficulties in using the databases.
- Respondents are mixed in their desire for federated searching; some want the ease of a single search; others complain of too many useless hits.
- What users like best about the NOVEL databases are accessibility, ease of use, and the fact that they are "free." They also cite the fact that some of the databases are full-text and that they cover a wide variety of topics as positive factors about the NOVEL program.
- Overall forty-four percent (44.07%) said they learned about the databases through a librarian or a school library media specialist.

Background and Methodology:
As a part of the evaluation of the NOVEL program, the New York State Library Division of Library Development (DLD) promoted participation in a web survey about the program to various groups of people who were expected to have some familiarity with NOVEL databases. The consultants and representatives of the DLD LSTA evaluation team developed the survey, which was mounted on the consultants' website. DLD then notified the greater New York library community of the web address of the survey and invited participation. The groups invited to participate were librarians/school library media specialists, students, teacher/educators, and general users of the NOVEL databases who had the option of identifying themselves as users of the databases in relation to their job or business or users pursuing a personal interest. Alternatively, respondents

could choose "other" as a category. The survey was accessible for participation from May 21 through October 31, 2006.

Individuals choosing to participate could click on a link in the invitation, which took them directly to the survey. When they completed the survey, they were directed to click on "done" and the survey responses were sent electronically to the consultants for compilation and analysis. The first page of the survey contained a screening question that sent the respondent to the appropriate survey. (The surveys were very similar, but did vary in a few respects.)

Who participated in the survey?
During the time the survey was available, 1,244 people completed it. That number included 642 librarians/school library media specialists (51.61% of the total respondents), 182 students (14.63%), 92 teachers/educators (7.40%), 98 business users (7.88%), 188 who identified their use as personal interest (15.11%), and 42 who identified their use as "other" (3.38%).

Respondents were asked to give their home zip code. While some individuals did not offer this information, 1,145 respondents identified 454 different zip codes. The breakdown by category of users was:

Category of users	Total # of Respondents	# Unique Zip Codes
Librarians/School Lib. Media Spec.	623	387
Students	156	51
Teachers/Educators	80	64
Business Users	89	53
Personal Users	163	112
Other Users	34	31

Not surprisingly, the zip codes with the largest number of respondents were typically the most diverse in terms of types of respondents as well. For example, the 37 responses from zip code 11215 in Brooklyn included 9 librarians/school library media specialists, 9 business users, 9 students, 7 personal users, 2 teacher/educators, and 1 "other" user.

Two hundred and seventy-six, or fifty-seven percent (57.14%) of the zip codes had only one respondent living in that code area. There were only seventeen zip codes which were given by both teacher/educators and students. The consultants surmise that this number is low because the ages of the students (see below) tended to indicate college aged students rather than high school students. The teacher/educators were likely to be at the high school level. Also giving a home zip code rather than the school or work zip code may have separated individuals as well.

Seventy-seven percent (77.08%) of the respondents were female. The breakdown by type of participant or interest was:

Category of users	Female	Male
Librarians/School Lib. Media Spec.	86.22%	13.78%
Students	71.15%	28.85%
Teachers/Educators	75.61%	24.39%
Business Users	59.57%	40.43%
Personal Users	61.85%	38.15%
Other Users	66.67%	33.33%

While one might expect the librarians/school library media specialists and teacher/educator categories to have a higher percent of female respondents based on the general proportions of women in those professions, the high percents of female respondents for the other categories is somewhat surprising.

Fifty-one percent (51.34%) of the respondents overall were aged 35 to 54 years. This age group was the largest for all of the categories of users except the students. The largest age category for the students was 35 or older, which included 23.90% of the student respondents, followed closely by 22.01% who were aged 25 to 34 and another 20.75% who were aged 18-20 years.

Thirty-three percent (33.16%), the highest percent, accessed the survey from home, but another thirty percent (29.76%) accessed the survey from work. The chart below shows the top two places from which the respondents accessed the survey.

Category of users	Highest %	2nd highest %
Librarians/School Library Media Specialists	Work (34.55%)	Library (22.66%)
Students	Home (66.46%)	Work (10.76%)
Teachers/Educators	Home (48.19%)	Work (21.69%)
Business Users	Work (46.32%)	Home (40.00%)
Personal Users	Home (54.29%)	Work (24.57%)
Other Users	Home (35.29%)	Work (29.41%)

Twenty-one respondents checked the 'other' choice for location; most of these either worked in a library (and wanted to check multiple alternatives, which the survey did not allow in response to this question) or were accessing the survey from a library system office.

How often do they access one of the NOVEL databases?
Overall, the highest number (266 respondents), which represented 28 percent (28.42%) of the respondents said they typically accessed one of the NOVEL databases "several times each week." The second highest number (165) said "several times each month," and the third highest number (137) said "daily."

These numbers are highly impacted by the large number of librarians completing the survey relative to the other groups. Among the 46 respondents who identified their use as "other," twenty-one or sixty-four percent (63.64%) said they "have never used" the NOVEL databases. The relative rankings of each category were:

Category of users	Most frequent response	Second most frequent response
Librarians/School Library Media Specialists	Several times/week (40.00%)	Daily (24.27%)
Students	Several times/month (23.42%)	Have never used (17.09%)
Teachers/Educators	Several times/month (25.00%)	Several times/week (22.22%)
Business Users	Several times/week (27.71%)	Several times/month (22.89%)
Personal Users	Have never used (22.07%)	Several times/week (20.00%)
Other Users	Have never used (63.64%)	(No Response—9 people)

Which NOVEL database subject areas did they access most recently?
Overall the relative rankings were:

Subject/Type of database	% identifying this subject
Newspapers	47.59%
Health	40.51%
General Reference	36.74%
Literary criticism or authors	27.33%
Current Events	26.69%
History	26.13%
Business	25.48%
Science	24.68%
Social, political or economic issues	20.58%

One hundred fourteen respondents checked "other" databases/subjects. The most frequent "other" response from librarians/school library media specialists was EBSCO journals/magazines (4 have this response). Among students, eight said education; among teachers/educators, five said education; among personal users, four said genealogy; and among the other users, four said they had not used the databases. Three business users each gave a different answer.

(Note: readers of this report should also refer to the text responses to the questions; those responses follow can be found later in this appendix.)

Among the various categories of users the highest percent was for the following subject areas:

Category of users	Subject	%
Librarians/School Lib. Media Spec.	Newspapers	61.41%
Students	General Reference	37.91%
Teachers/Educators	General Reference	68.67%
Business Users	Business	58.24%
Personal Users	General Reference	44.25%
Other Users	General Reference	22.22%

(Actually the highest percent of responses given by the "Other" category of users was "other." Of these three said they didn't use NOVEL and another three said never or none, or not applicable.)

To what degree was their information need met during their last use of NOVEL databases?
Respondents were asked to rate how well their need was met by using a five point scale with 1 indicating that the need "was not met" and 5 indicating that the need "was completely met." Overall the mean score was a 3.92, indicating a fairly high level of success. Remember that a 3.0 would be an "average" or midpoint on the scale, neither poor nor good. Not surprisingly, librarians gave a mean score of 4.10 and teachers/educators gave a mean score of 4.00. Both of these groups might be expected to have received training in the use of the databases and to be fairly knowledgeable in searching the databases. Personal users gave a mean score of 3.83; students gave a mean score of 3.62, business users gave 3.60. Only the "other users" group gave a mean score below the 3.0 midpoint; their mean score was 2.72.

Did they encounter any difficulty finding the information they were seeking?
The respondents overall seemed highly successful in using the databases. Overall eighty-seven percent (86.74%) said they had no difficulty. Among the categories of users this percent varied from a high of successful librarians/school library media specialists (88.69%) to a low for other users (66.67%).

Category of users	% indicating no difficulties in using NOVEL
Librarians/School Lib. Media Spec.	88.69%
Students	84.11%
Teachers/Educators	86.59%
Business Users	79.07%
Personal Users	89.09%
Other Users	66.67%

Twenty-one percent (20.93%) of the business users indicated difficulties in using the databases. Their comments ranged from "a lot (of difficulties)" to "could not find information on a few companies I was researching," to things related to passwords

and navigating the databases. One said, "I wish I didn't have to enter my library patron number each time. Can't a cookie remember this?"

Some representative comments on the difficulties of using the databases include, "It would be helpful to have one search hit all the databases." (an educator) "Often find abstracts when I want the full article." (a librarian) "As usual, searches are only as good as the user's ability to construct good searches: selecting keywords, subjects, using the thesaurus. Not all the database work as well as the others. The federated search feature at BPL is not very useful." (a librarian) "Hard to know which database to use for newspaper articles." (a librarian) "I teach in a K-4 school and the database for this level are few and not very kid friendly." (a librarian) "Not enough high end research information—this is what is needed for work in sciences." (a librarian) "The EBSCO databases I needed were not part of the databases provided by NOVEL." (a librarian) "It's too hard and takes too long to get started." (an other user) "I couldn't work our system." (a personal user) "Unable to find good health information." (a personal user) "Get good results all of the time." (a student) "Difficulty finding full-text articles." (a student) "Too much information that was useless and hard to obtain." (a student)

What did they like best about the NOVEL databases?

Seven hundred twenty-six respondents gave an answer; some gave multiple answers. Users in all categories cited accessibility, ease of use, and the fact that the databases are free to the end user as what they liked best about the NOVEL databases. They also cited full-text resources and the variety, scope, and wealth of resources as positives.

The top three responses from librarians/school library media specialists were (1) ease of use/user friendly, which was an answer 94 times; (2) comprehensiveness/variety of collection (56 times); and (3) free access to all NY State residents (54 times). The top three from students were (1) ease of use (12 times); (2) ability to access materials externally, from home, without going to library (9 times); and (3) offers a wide variety of sources (6). The top three from teachers/educators were (1) access to a variety of resources/wealth of information (19 times); (2) ease of use (6 times); and (3) free (5 times). The top three from business users were (1) ease of use (8 times) and (2) comprehensive, depth of information, scope of information (7 times). For the business users third place tied with 5 responses each for ability to quickly access the information I need,…at the library, at home, or at work and it's free. Personal users said (1) ease of use (20 times); (2) free (9 times); and (3) ease of access/accessibility from anywhere (8 times). Other users said don't know (2 times); helpful (2 times) and not applicable (2 times).

How did they find out about the NOVEL databases?

Overall forty-four percent (44.07%) learned about the databases through a librarian or school library media specialist. The librarian/school library media specialist was named by the highest percent of respondents in each category of user. Among the

student users another nineteen percent (19.31%) indicated they had learned about the NOVEL databases through a teacher. Nineteen percent (19.08%) of the personal users and fifteen percent (15.48%) of the business users said they had learned about the NOVEL databases through the State Library website.

Two hundred ninety-seven respondents checked the 'other' response. Among the librarians/school library media specialists the top three responses here were (1) library system, which was the answer 48 times); (2) BOCES (27 times); and (3) through work, through my job (25 times). Among the students three said a friend, and two said the Brooklyn Public Library website. Teachers/educators checking the 'other' box said BOCES (2 times), from library website (2 times) and school library system (2 times). Business users said library web site (3 times); Brooklyn Public Library's website (2 times); friend (2 times); and NYSED/DLD (2 times). Personal users said BPL website (4 times); I am a librarian (3 times); family member (2 times) and through the library website (2 times). Other users said library workshop (2 times).

Other comments?
Respondents were also able to add other comments at the end of the survey. Four hundred one respondents chose to do so. Individual answers were sometimes lengthy and covered several topics. The reader is referred to the Text Responses in APPENDIX D where the comments are grouped by category of respondent and then by recurring responses and themes.

While a few of the comments are simply "no," meaning they had no comments to add, many of the comments are very positive, saying things like "Keep it up!" "Thank you for this important resource." "A terrific use of tax dollars!" It is also interesting to note that most of the users, and many of the librarians, who talked about the NOVEL program as a good investment of tax dollars assumed that it was funded by the State of New York rather than by LSTA funds.

Librarians/school library media specialists were the most prolific in their responses. Twenty-nine gave comments along the lines of: keep it coming!!! keep up the good work, etc. Another eighteen said simply, thank you. Twelve responded great! Many of the respondents commented on the wonderful resource that the NOVEL databases are: "A fine service. Something NY can be proud of," and "These are excellent resources—comprehensive, diverse, and easy-to-use." Another cluster of responses talked about how grateful the respondents and their clients were for the access to resources they would not otherwise be able to afford. "For a rural school district, our access to NOVEL databases could never be possible if our district had to buy it. We rely on this set of databases for much of the research students do in our school," and "Wonderful free resources, continuous availability providing equal access to residents throughout the state. Especially useful for schools with limited budgets. Provides an opportunity for all students to have access to quality information from home or school."

Librarians/school library media specialists also provided many suggestions for additional subjects or databases to be added to NOVEL. While there were some requests for a genealogy database, presumably from librarians in public libraries, many of the school library media specialists requested databases appropriate for younger students—elementary and middle school students as well as high school students. There were also a few requests for more scholarly resources.

Librarians/school library media specialists commented on improvements that were needed as well. "Having to authenticate via library card or license number is still a barrier compared to Internet search engines (Google, Yahoo, etc.)." "From PR standpoint name NOVEL is easily confused with Ebsco's Novelist; public still does not understand difference between articles indexed by NOVEL and information on the web." Several respondents wanted the number of databases increased: "I hope they keep adding to available resources and maintain the ones already in play." Others wanted full text. Several wanted "more publicity and outreach."

Other general comments made by the librarians/school library media specialists included: "The concept is great. It's one of the best things in "state aid" to libraries. Ease of use is primary need. The state driver's license access is an interesting beginning but needs a bit of refining as we go on with it." "The money spent by NYS on these resources is money well spent. These databases give librarians and the community access to valuable information." One lengthy response was: "There's a wealth of information in the databases, but when I do outreach presentations to seniors, students, etc., they are not aware that NOVEL is available to them so we are not doing enough to market this information. Seniors and students also find the database titles to be confusing and are never sure what to use for their info needs. We need to do better integration of these resources into our local ILS, better marketing and links or buttons that are more intuitive such as E Resources or E Library instead of online databases. Patrons see the word database and think Access or Excel, not magazines or full text articles."

Student comments ranged from "Keep it up! Thanks!" to "It is great for grad school research," to "Needs to be branded and promoted statewide. Many people do not know of it even though the local libraries have tried to promote it in house. Could use some really cool examples of what it could do for you."

Teachers/educators also said "Great resource/keep it coming!" Nine people gave this response. Three of them asked in various ways about adding a general encyclopedia, especially for students.

Six business users simply responded "no" that they did not have additional comments, but their additional comments also ranged widely. "An incredible public resource…for people who cannot afford a personal subscription to these databases, it is indispensable." "I love you! Thanks for providing the service!" "Logging in is difficult due to needing to enter license # more than once." "Please keep the access available."

Personal users also gave high praise. Ten people responded with comments like great, wonderful resource, keep up the good work, love it, and thanks for asking. Two personal users said "Need more publicity for this valuable database to the general public." Others commented: "An easier interface, similar to factiva, would be great." "Full text of the Wall Street Journal would be nice." "Wish federated searching were available."

Among the thirteen comments made by the Others, at least five respondents seemed to have limited knowledge of the NOVEL database program. One suggested providing more professional development using NOVEL databases and another said, "use a better name."

How often would you say you typically access one of the NOVEL databases?	All Responses	All Responses – Percentages	Librarians/School Library Media Specialists	Librarians/School Library Media Specialists - Percentages	Students	Students – Percentages	Teachers/Educators	Teachers/Educators – Percentages	Business Users	Business Users - Percentages	Personal Users	Personal Users - Percentages	Others	Others - Percentages
Daily	137	14.64%	108	24.27%	11	6.96%	9	12.50%	3	3.61%	6	4.14%	0	0.00%
Several times each week	266	28.42%	178	40.00%	17	10.76%	16	22.22%	23	27.71%	29	20.00%	3	9.09%
Once a week	79	8.44%	36	8.09%	12	7.59%	8	11.11%	8	9.64%	15	10.34%	0	0.00%
Several times each month	165	17.63%	66	14.83%	37	23.42%	18	25.00%	19	22.89%	22	15.17%	3	9.09%
Once a month	65	6.94%	20	4.49%	15	9.49%	3	4.17%	7	8.43%	19	13.10%	1	3.03%
Once every few months	79	8.44%	18	4.04%	22	13.92%	6	8.33%	13	15.66%	18	12.41%	2	6.06%
A few times each year	45	4.81%	14	3.15%	17	10.76%	4	5.56%	3	3.61%	4	2.76%	3	9.09%
Have never used before	100	10.68%	5	1.12%	27	17.09%	8	11.11%	7	8.43%	32	22.07%	21	63.64%
No Response	308		197		24		20		15		43		9	

Please indicate the subject area(s) of the databases you used the last time you accessed the NOVEL databases. (Multiple responses allowed)	All Responses	All Responses – Percentages	Librarians/School Library Media Specialists	Librarians/School Library Media Specialists - Percentages	Students	Students - Percentages	Teachers/ Educators	Teachers/ Educators – Percentages	Business Users	Business Users - Percentages	Personal Users	Personal Users - Percentages	Others	Others - Percentages
Business	317	25.48%	183	29.42%	27	14.84%	8	9.64%	53	58.24%	41	23.56%	5	11.11%
General Reference	457	36.74%	207	33.28%	69	37.91%	57	68.67%	37	40.66%	77	44.25%	10	22.22%
Health	504	40.51%	335	53.86%	46	25.27%	32	38.55%	33	36.26%	53	30.46%	5	11.11%
History	325	26.13%	187	30.06%	51	28.02%	36	43.37%	13	14.29%	37	21.26%	1	2.22%
Newspapers	592	47.59%	382	61.41%	58	31.87%	42	50.60%	38	41.76%	65	37.36%	7	15.56%
Science	307	24.68%	184	29.58%	47	25.82%	35	42.17%	14	15.38%	23	13.22%	4	8.89%
Spanish language materials	40	3.22%	29	4.66%	0	0.00%	4	4.82%	3	3.30%	4	2.30%	0	0.00%
Multicultural issues	96	7.72%	72	11.58%	0	0.00%	24	28.92%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
Social, political, or economic issues	256	20.58%	222	35.69%	0	0.00%	34	40.96%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
Current events	332	26.69%	253	40.68%	23	12.64%	0	0.00%	20	21.98%	36	20.69%	0	0.00%
Literary criticism or authors	340	27.33%	275	44.21%	32	17.58%	33	39.76%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
Magazines	38	3.05%	0	0.00%	38	20.88%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
Other	114	9.16%	35	5.63%	26	14.29%	10	12.05%	3	3.30%	27	15.52%	13	28.89%

	All Responses	All Responses – Percentages	Librarians/School Library Media Specialists	Librarians/School Library Media Specialists - Percentages	Students	Students - Percentages	Teachers/Educators	Teachers/Educators - Percentages	Business Users	Business Users - Percentages	Personal Users	Personal Users - Percentages	Others	Others - Percentages
Degree to which information need was met (last use of Novel databases)														
No Response	**100**		11		25		10		10		27		17	
1 - Did not meet my information need	**38**	**3.32%**	10	**1.58%**	11	**7.01%**	1	**1.22%**	2	**2.27%**	7	**4.35%**	7	**28.00%**
2	**41**	**3.58%**	18	**2.85%**	4	**2.55%**	3	**3.66%**	9	**10.23%**	4	**2.48%**	3	**12.00%**
3	**223**	**19.49%**	81	**12.84%**	56	**35.67%**	14	**17.07%**	21	**23.86%**	42	**26.09%**	9	**36.00%**
4	**518**	**45.28%**	315	**49.92%**	49	**31.21%**	41	**50.00%**	46	**52.27%**	65	**40.37%**	2	**8.00%**
5 - Completely met my information need	**324**	**28.32%**	207	**32.81%**	37	**23.57%**	23	**28.05%**	10	**11.36%**	43	**26.71%**	4	**16.00%**
Mean	**3.92**		**4.10**		**3.62**		**4.00**		**3.60**		**3.83**		**2.72**	
Did you encounter any difficulty finding the information you were seeking the last time you accessed the NOVEL databases?														
No Response	**105**		14		31		10		12		23		15	
Yes	**151**	**13.26%**	71	**11.31%**	24	**15.89%**	11	**13.41%**	18	**20.93%**	18	**10.91%**	9	**33.33%**
No	**988**	**86.74%**	557	**88.69%**	127	**84.11%**	71	**86.59%**	68	**79.07%**	147	**89.09%**	18	**66.67%**
If yes, please specify (see text responses)														

	All Responses	All Responses - Percentages	Librarians/School Library Media Specialists	Librarians/School Library Media Specialists - Percentages	Students	Students - Percentages	Teachers/ Educators	Teachers/ Educators - Percentages	Business Users	Business Users - Percentages	Personal Users	Personal Users - Percentages	Others	Others - Percentages
What do you like best about the NOVEL databases?														
(see text responses)														
From what location are you accessing this survey?														
No Response	67		11		23		9		3		13		8	
Home	390	33.16%	100	15.85%	105	66.46%	40	48.19%	38	40.00%	95	54.29%	12	35.29%
Work	350	29.76%	218	34.55%	17	10.76%	18	21.69%	44	46.32%	43	24.57%	10	29.41%
School	44	3.74%	23	3.65%	9	5.70%	10	12.05%	1	1.05%	0	0.00%	1	2.94%
School or Academic Library	178	15.14%	143	22.66%	10	6.33%	11	13.25%	4	4.21%	9	5.14%	1	2.94%
Public Library	180	15.31%	124	19.65%	14	8.86%	4	4.82%	5	5.26%	24	13.71%	9	26.47%
Special Library	13	1.11%	12	1.90%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	1	0.57%	0	0.00%
Other	21	1.79%	11	1.74%	3	1.90%	0	0.00%	3	3.16%	3	1.71%	1	2.94%

How did you find out about the NOVEL databases?	All Responses	All Responses - Percentages	Librarians/School Library Media Specialists	Librarians/School Library Media Specialists - Percentages	Students	Students - Percentages	Teachers/ Educators	Teachers/ Educators - Percentages	Business Users	Business Users - Percentages	Personal Users	Personal Users - Percentages	Others	Others - Percentages
No Response	157		61		37		17		14		15		13	
Through a teacher	43	3.96%	4	0.69%	28	19.31%	4	5.33%	2	2.38%	2	1.16%	3	10.34%
Through a librarian/school library media specialist	479	44.07%	255	43.89%	69	47.59%	36	48.00%	38	45.24%	73	42.20%	8	27.59%
Through a flyer or other printed ad	19	1.75%	10	1.72%	3	2.07%	1	1.33%	2	2.38%	3	1.73%	0	0.00%
Through the media (newspaper, radio, TV)	4	0.37%	0	0.00%	2	1.38%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	1	0.58%	1	3.45%
Through Google or another search engine	30	2.76%	3	0.52%	5	3.45%	1	1.33%	5	5.95%	14	8.09%	2	6.90%
Through the State Library website	141	12.97%	63	10.84%	17	11.72%	10	13.33%	13	15.48%	33	19.08%	5	17.24%
Through a link on another website	74	6.81%	27	4.65%	8	5.52%	6	8.00%	6	7.14%	24	13.87%	3	10.34%
Other	297	27.32%	219	37.69%	13	8.97%	17	22.67%	18	21.43%	23	13.29%	7	24.14%

	All Responses	All Responses - Percentages	Librarians/School Library Media Specialists	Librarians/School Library Media Specialists - Percentages	Students	Students - Percentages	Teachers/ Educators	Teachers/ Educators - Percentages	Business Users	Business Users - Percentages	Personal Users	Personal Users - Percentages	Others	Others - Percentages
Age														
No Response	49		13		0		10		7		14		5	
14 years or younger	2	0.20%	1	0.16%	0	NA	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	1	2.70%
15 - 19 years	14	1.38%	10	1.59%	0	NA	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	2	1.15%	2	5.41%
20 - 34 years	142	14.05%	69	10.97%	0	NA	13	16.25%	19	20.88%	35	20.11%	6	16.22%
35 - 54 years	519	51.34%	320	50.87%	0	NA	50	62.50%	53	58.24%	77	44.25%	19	51.35%
55 - 64 years	287	28.39%	205	32.59%	0	NA	15	18.75%	15	16.48%	47	27.01%	5	13.51%
65 - 74 years	41	4.06%	21	3.34%	0	NA	2	2.50%	4	4.40%	11	6.32%	3	8.11%
75 - 84 years	6	0.59%	3	0.48%	0	NA	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	2	1.15%	1	2.70%
85 or older	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	NA	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
Age - Students														
No Response	92			NA	23			NA		NA		NA		NA
Under 5 years (students)	0	0.00%	0	NA	0		0	NA	0	NA	0	NA	0	NA
5 – 9 years (students)	2	1.26%	0	NA	2	1.26%	0	NA	0	NA	0	NA	0	NA
10 - 14 years (students)	7	4.40%	0	NA	7	4.40%	0	NA	0	NA	0	NA	0	NA
15 - 17 years (students)	25	15.72%	0	NA	25	15.72%	0	NA	0	NA	0	NA	0	NA
18 - 20 years (students)	33	20.75%	0	NA	33	20.75%	0	NA	0	NA	0	NA	0	NA
21 - 24 years (students)	19	11.95%	0	NA	19	11.95%	0	NA	0	NA	0	NA	0	NA
25 - 34 years (students)	35	22.01%	0	NA	35	22.01%	0	NA	0	NA	0	NA	0	NA
35 or older (students)	38	23.90%	0	NA	38	23.90%	0	NA	0	NA	0	NA	0	NA

	All Responses	All Responses - Percentages	Librarians/School Library Media Specialists	Librarians/School Library Media Specialists - Percentages	Students	Students - Percentages	Teachers/ Educators	Teachers/ Educators - Percentages	Business Users	Business Users - Percentages	Personal Users	Personal Users - Percentages	Others	Others - Percentages
Gender														
No Response	**79**		18		26		10		4		15		6	
Female	**898**	**77.08%**	538	**86.22%**	111	**71.15%**	62	**75.61%**	56	**59.57%**	107	**61.85%**	24	**66.67%**
Male	**267**	**22.92%**	86	**13.78%**	45	**28.85%**	20	**24.39%**	38	**40.43%**	66	**38.15%**	12	**33.33%**
Home zip code of Respondents	**1145**		623		156		80		89		163		34	
Other comments														
(See text responses)														

APPENDIX D
Web Survey Report - Text Responses

DATABASES USED – OTHER [114 respondents gave an answer.
Note (#) after a response indicates the number of times that response was given;
no (#) means that response was given once.]

LIBRARIANS/MEDIA SPECIALISTS
EBSCO journals/magazines (4)
Consumer Reports (3)
General periodicals (3)
Searchasaurus (2)
Variety of subjects for elementary students (2)
Alternate Health database
At a training session for Novel
Book reviews
Children's databases
Children's reference materials (Kidsearch)
Education
Educational and library professional materials; consumer information
Elementary student research
Epnet/ magazines
General reference for K-8 students
General research for articles
Health Reference Center
Homework help for students
Information on children
Information on children's lit
Legal
Lesson plans, book reviews
Librarianship
Library related issues
Library Technology
Looked, decided not to use
Novelist
OCLC WorldCat
Research for papers - lots of topics - images and maps
Student research - music, biography

STUDENTS
Education (8)
English (2)
Psychology (2)
Scholarly articles (2)
Social science (2)
A school assignment
Academic search premier
Books
Economics, Special Education
G.E.D.
Harriet Tubman
Hobbies
Journals

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Library Sciences/social sciences
Literacy
Literary criticism
Management and creativity
NEVER… FIRST TIME USER
Research for reports
SAT

TEACHERS/EDUCATORS
Education (5)
Children's literature (4)
E-books
Free articles on struggling readers
Images
Law, Housing Issues

BUSINESS USERS
Company research
Mental health and development
Technology

PERSONAL USERS
Genealogy (4)
Literature (3)
Consumer interest (3)
First time user (2)
Fiction (2)
Art
Astronomy
Auto repair
Film studies
GED
Health, science
Hobbies
Investing
Language
Cat care
Madonna, borderline personality disorder, dialectical behavior therapy
NoveList
Popular magazines for general reading
Repair
Spy thrillers
The information I need to make decisions about voting in public elections.

OTHERS
Have not used before/never used (4)
Anything I am researching
AR workshops
Curriculum/management/special needs journals research
Education, psychology

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Web Survey Report - Text Responses

English
I don't use NOVEL regularly
Interior design
Library Trustee
Magazines
Not applicable
Obituary archive
Social Work, Social Services

DID YOU ENCOUNTER ANY DIFFICULTY FINDING THE INFORMATION YOU WERE SEEKING? (138 respondents gave an answer. Note (#) after a response indicates the number of times that response was given; no (#) means that response was given once.)

LIBRARIANS/MEDIA SPECIALISTS
Some articles were not available in full text. (11)
I had difficulty posting the site to our school portaportal for easy access for students (2)
Sometimes older library computers did not have most recent version of adobe, etc. to print online articles.   (2)
4th graders needed specific information on New York State history and people: Dutch, 1600s, Iroquois, immigrants in NYS, Rochester history.
Database is very good; however, it needs to be expanded to encompass the academic needs of students and staff. We need full text articles in the New York Times beyond three years.
I do not find the EBSCO databases very helpful for middle and high school information searches.
I teach in a k-4 school and the databases for this level are few and not very kid friendly
My students have had difficulty finding literary criticism on NOVEL. I would like to see this area of the database expanded.
I work with elementary students and need to find information that they can use at their reading/learning levels.
It is often challenging to find age-appropriate material (elementary) on a given topic. But this is more likely a reflection of the reading levels of the publications indexed, not the index itself.
Some information too technical for younger users. We have age-appropriate issues.
We are a K-5 school. The NOVEL databases are more geared to older students. There are better resources available for the younger children.
We have a k-8 school. Our 5-8 graders do a science project. They can never find information in the NOVEL databases. Also, the information is not applicable to K-8 curriculum at their level.
The info I found was not on the level of elementary school students. The children's portion was useless. I abandoned use of NOVEL.
Articles were slow to load and in some cases the page could not load.
Even with federated searching, NOVEL is still clunky. I was unable to pull up medical information for a college student I was assisting at the reference desk.
Full text coverage for this particular periodical started six months after the date needed. In general, I find that most of the periodicals indexed in the NOVEL databases are not the periodicals that cover topics in depth.
The National Newspaper index is of limited use due to the lack of full text.
Had to have too specific a search term -- general questions not enough
Had to tweak my search words.
Hard to know which database to use for newspaper articles.
I could not access specific newspaper articles. I had some difficulty navigating the site as a whole.

APPENDIX D
Web Survey Report - Text Responses

Kids do not like the multi-window choose database "continue" etc. to get to a search screen. There is a definite need to streamline that part and printing a web clean page needs to be simpler.

I put all the search query information and it kept giving no results. I couldn't figure out why because I had the date of the Washington Post article but it didn't like the search query and the date information in the same query set. So I just went with the date and two words from the article title and finally got it to come up. When I had been using the author's name as part of the query it didn't like that.

I started with New York State Newspapers for an article I knew appeared in the NYTimes about 3 weeks ago. I couldn't find it, although I found editorials responding to it. Happily, I did find it in Custom newspapers, but I don't know why it wasn't in the first one.

Because we don't have the requests for its use, I find it difficult to navigate. If I used it more I am sure it would be easier.

I tried the newspapers but did not find relevant information (on deadbeat dads and child support), but then I used EBSCO and got several excellent articles. (Helping a student with her term paper) There were also some good articles which did not have full text.

I wanted specific information about blood thinners. What to avoid, what not to eat and the information was very, very general

I was looking for a specific article in the New York Daily News from two months ago in the Gale New York newspapers. That issue was full-text in the database, but the specific article was not. But usually I can find what I want.

I was looking for a very specific newspaper article. It was not in the scope of the database Clearly accessible descriptions of each database including holdings info (i.e., NY Times 1986-present) needs to be made available from INSIDE each database. People need to specifically just what they are searching!!

It depends on the topic - why does it always seem like you can't find an article for that one thing a patron wants? :)

Articles were more than 10 years old. Very few articles were less than 5 years old.

It is very difficult to pinpoint which database would be appropriate for the info needed. Found that the business plans had older copyrights and did not seem to have examples of typical businesses folks are launching. When training patrons on NOVEL -- I have found that EBSCO Masterfile means nothing to them -- renaming to something more intuitive such as Magazines etc. might be more user friendly and understandable for the public

Magazine articles were not information rich - good for report writing.

Couldn't find good maps

Needs better annotations

No difficulties - using databases in my profession as a School Library Media Specialist. The gateway on the NY State Library website makes it very user friendly.

Not enough high end research information -- this is what is needed for work in sciences.

PLEASE make the databases more full text and easier to understand how to do research. This is a WONDERFUL tool, but the general public needs to access it without having a librarian at their elbow.

Searching newspapers can be a bit inexact.

Sometimes ProQuest goes down and that can be a problem.

The business file did not contain enough specialized industry publications.

Customer I was helping expected the literary criticism to be of the depth and caliber of MLA which it is not.

The databases don't always match the questions. For instance, I was looking for the distribution of the brown recluse spider. I couldn't find it easily--although I found information on the spider itself--so I ended up with Google.

The EBCSO databases I needed were not part of the databases provided by NOVEL.

The individual resources were difficult to find, i.e. Kids Search was found on a "Services List" on the Novelist database. It was hidden and hard to find.

The NOVEL databases are lacking in terms of history based articles.

APPENDIX D
Web Survey Report - Text Responses

The Twayne's Author Series database would not bring up any results when an author's name was searched for in the search bar. The only way to find a particular author was to select their nationality and the time period in which they wrote.

Specific author was not listed in Twayne's Authors Series.

Twayne author series is wonderful for the authors represented but lacks some very important authors such as Maya Angelou.

We used the "find" function (under edit) since there is not index in the Twayne series.

There is a weakness in the Literary area. It is difficult to find literary criticisms on the authors and their works that our students are studying. Provision for a good encyclopedia would also be very helpful.

I sometimes wish there were more in the history area. And I wish Twayne's Authors was searchable.

There needs to be a reduction in the number of links you have to click on to access information in the Business & Company Resource Center Database. For example, if you want to search for information on a company, there are only two tabs accessible on your initial search i.e., Company Profile, and News/Magazines. Once you click on Company Profile, the other tabs are active. From an end-user perspective, the other tabs should be accessible with the initial search.

Too limited in detail.

Was looking for Dallas Morning News but could not locate it in any of the periodical databases.

When locating newspaper articles, I could only access those that had originally appeared in the newspaper I was searching. No AP articles.

Would prefer TRUE PDF versions of full text articles rather than those which NOVEL databases sometimes provide. Also, these articles sometime omit tables or make them difficult to read.

STUDENTS

Difficulty finding full-text articles. (4)

The search had so much irrelevant junk that it was almost not worth the effort to sift through. (2)

I was having difficulty finding what I was looking for. (2)

Get good results all of the time.

I don't like the initial interface--too confusing. also would love to have full text articles from ERIC

I find it hard to find the stuff I need - maps and more interesting articles for my reports.

I couldn't find the specific information I was looking for, and sometimes there's not much variety of information available on the topic I am researching.

I was looking for very recent peer-reviewed journal articles on a particular topic that my professor said had to be since 2003 and had difficulty finding good articles within that time frame.

I was often unable to access pdf of the documents found in the electronic database.

I'm not sure how to access Lexis Nexis from home - It would be great to have a quick note or indicator that explains what's happening. Is it only accessible from within the library or do you have to do something special?

Old screens are better

Overlapping of same news articles

Selecting the correct database for the info I needed

Some subject matter was not available

Sometimes the pdf files do not download properly and the information presented in the abstract is not as accurate as it should be

Sometimes, unrelated subject areas are included in the keyword search.

When I looked up literary criticism on The Great Gatsby, nothing came up that was useful.

APPENDIX D
Web Survey Report - Text Responses

TEACHERS/EDUCATORS
I was looking for an article by David Brooks that had appeared in the NY Times with the word "marshmallow" in the title and I was unable to find it. (I ended up Googling and I got it that way)
It would be helpful to have one search hit all the databases.
Not many available titles
Since the access screens were changed, it is much harder to find what I need.
Sometimes directions aren't clear
The amount of time to find the information
The current system does not allow for in depth research, consequently I often have to physically visit the central library in Manhattan. I think there should be some way for people engaged in extensive research to have access to historical archives.
The information is not in a format for young students so it usually does not meet my k-6 grade level needs.
The literary criticism area is weak.
Too difficult to navigate

BUSINESS USERS
Not able to find information I was looking for (3)
A lot (2)
Had a hard time filtering too many results and feeling confident that I wasn't missing something.
Hard to navigate and find correct database
I don't like the way the "federated search" works for Business & Company Resource Center. Those underlying database are good, but the interface on top of it is lousy.
I find it very difficult and counterintuitive, and often have to run multiple searches to find what I need. I also hate that I can run a search of the New York Times or another paper, and get incomplete results.
I need to find online lists of business and contacts. Hard to navigate… don't know where to find it!!!!!
I was looking for a specific editorial piece from the Philadelphia Inquirer and I searched all the newspaper databases but I could not locate it. I found it later online. This is not the fault of NOVEL per se; it just seems that those databases don't have ALL the articles published on a given day in a newspaper.
I wish I didn't have to enter my library patron number each time. Can't a cookie remember this?
Selecting which database to use
Some passwords did not work
Sometimes, the citations are not available for free. There is a charge for them. One-time access can be as high as $39.00. That is a bit steep for me.
There have been some changes to the database that make it a little more difficult to navigate
Trying to access

PERSONAL USERS
Could not find/couldn't work your system   (2)
I wish there was more available in the collection regarding both film and more recent philosophic works
Didn't have the kind of in-depth information I wanted about a company.
Difficult to find the right articles with the keywords I was using... the items that came up were either too general, or I got no search results.
Federated searching didn't work
I don't use it that much because I am a member of the Friends of New York State Library, and have remote access through that website to many databases. Because I usually need to access scholarly articles in various fields (but do not work for a university and thus don't have

access that way), the NOVEL databases do not meet my work needs. However, I just noticed how many trade magazines are included in Masterfile Select that I would read for personal reasons (i.e., Atlantic Monthly, National Geographic, etc), so I expect I'll be using this in the future.

I was looking for a specific article from a back issue of Smithsonian; it proved tough to track down.

I was unable to access some of the Gale files because of a problem on their end. Their message was rather cryptic and did not give a clear answer as to why. It took a phone call from a librarian to find out what the problem was. It was corrected.

It's often hard to find out what titles are included in the databases. This is particularly frustrating in the newspaper databases.

No guidance on the site about what the databases contain.

Some images in search results wouldn't load

Sometimes there appears to be unexplainable time lags with loading news information.

Quality of business information is spotty and not that current.

Sometime I can't get the InfoUSA data base. Or the system sends me directly to INFOUSA when I log on at home. When I called the library, they had no one to help me change my browser settings.

The database acted erratically.

Unable to find good health information

OTHERS
Confused

I couldn't find any reference to the topic I was searching for. I believe part of the problem was that I couldn't find the newspapers I was looking for.

I found it very difficult to use in my school. When I went to workshops, they did not explain how to register etc. for Novel or EBSCO. When I went to homeworkNYC.org, I found that it was very limiting. The children went to Google and found what they wanted much easier

I had difficulty finding the information, because I need more professional development using databases.

I need to research educational journals on curriculum, management, and special needs students.

It's too hard and takes too long to get started

Not applicable

WHAT DO YOU LIKE BEST ABOUT THE NOVEL DATABASES?
(726 respondents gave an answer; some gave multiple answers. Note (#) after a response indicates the number of times that response was given; no (#) means that response was given once.)

LIBRARIANS/MEDIA SPECIALISTS
Ease of use (user friendly) (94)
Comprehensiveness/variety of collection   (56)
Free access to all NY State residents   (54)
Breadth of information and topics covered (42)
Full text articles (39)
Ability to find "vetted" information/authoritative/reliable information   (28)
Ease of access (20)
Appropriate reading levels & student skill levels (18)
Easy access from anywhere, not just the library.   (Virtual access) (17)
Scope, quality, and timeliness of information available. (17)

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Web Survey Report - Text Responses

Free access to information for my students (16)
Currency (14)
Good coverage of current issues and health topics. (11)
They save our library money (or provide access we couldn't afford) (10)
Enables everyone to receive information regardless of the size or wealth of their library. (equity of access) (8)
Access to newspapers and magazine articles. (7)
A wide range of valid resources (6)
Availability of New York Times   (6)
Convenience   (6)
Allows patrons to access library materials 24/7.   (5)
Ebsco databases, periodical articles (5)
Access to a variety of subject databases (5)
All the choices available. (5)
Good mix of information for the general public and professionals   (5)
Enhanced search capabilities (5)
Fast (5)
Easy to explain/teach/learn   (4)
Simply that they are available. (4)
Accessibility   (4)
Access to current publications of information value to all students and faculty I work with. (3)
Opportunity to teach users there is more than Google. (3)
Diverse sources of information and data. (3)
Being able to obtain multiple resource types with one search/federated searching (3)
E-Mail alerts on new articles. (2)
Everything (2)
Informative   (2)
No advertisements (2)
Access to business info resources & articles (2)
Keyword searching   (2)
Availability of one access point to all the databases   (2)
Children's databases. Inclusion of lexile reading level. (2)
The Gale products in particular are top notch. (2)
The tremendous variety of articles on all different levels of complexity; informe'-very important. The visuals are very good. There's the ability to print in different formats. There is visual appeal for students when they're using Infotrac or Ebsco, etc. It conserves the space for materials. If it's in the databases if you don't have to have the material on your shelves and/or the students are seeking print copies of their subject studies and images for their papers. Also - the Ebsco photo archive is great.
Health Reference Center
The Alternative Health Resource in the Health and Wellness Resource Center, the variety of newspapers and articles in the EBSCO and Gale databases and Topic Search in EBSCO.
The vast coverage of Ebsco, and the health info.
Additional resources to offer our students and faculty. Having NOVEL means I can spend my limited budget on resources specifically tailored to our curriculum, while the NOVEL resources cover broader, more general interests and topics. It's an excellent complement to our collection.
As a children's librarian I use InfoTrac Junior and Searchasaurus daily. I teach a course on the databases to children grades 3-6 that we call "To Google or Not To Google" to show the kids that facts for reports and school work should come from vetted sources and that they will save time and energy if they know how to use the databases.

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Web Survey Report - Text Responses

Available in Spanish

Broad coverage but need more k-12 databases

Business Source Premier is just astonishing all around. All different types of patron use this database....students, business people..

Choice of full, abstract or pdf text.

Ability to save searches and have the system contact me when new results occur.

Obituaries

Ease/reliability of access to a basic core collection that supplements our own library's databases in a few areas.

Great tech support, excellent databases and huge breadth of information, well indexed.

They provide intellectual and full-text literature access to business, consumer health and newspaper resources I otherwise would not be providing to my Medical Center Library patrons.

Electronics is "new age" and is good for older people to experience.

Familiar interface

Finding book reviews, help with student projects for patrons.

Peer reviewed articles and access to archived newspapers

Great content for our patrons; these databases really make a fantastic supplement to our electronic resources collection. In particular, I think, they give us something for our education students (who will be teaching K-12) which we couldn't/wouldn't purchase without NOVEL.

Has the information that I am looking for

Author information

Helps me help the school library patrons!

I am sorry I have not had time to review novel. I am a one person library. I feel it would be great if I could just have time to check it out. I was impressed when I took the training course. My high school can not afford to purchase OPACs -- NOVEL provides full text for us allowing me to help students in different topics areas. I would be stuck without it!

I am thrilled to be able to send children to databases that are kid friendly (Searchasaurus and KidSearch), thereby steering them away from the many frustrations of using Google.

They show me and our students that New York State is supporting our efforts. Many of our students do not have access to this information from other sources.

I like being able to locate a journal article that the library does not own.

I like how they are separated into the different categories. Having separate databases for newspapers, business, literature, etc. makes it much easier to find things, and helps my students know where to begin searching.

I like the ability for students to get information from a variety of reliable resources (which school libraries could not afford otherwise)in an interesting way (via computer) for research projects instead of relying solely on the internet.

I like the precise and accessible information.

I like the supplements to the databases my library already has access to.

It is great especially when so many children are not allowed to go to the library. Novel allows them the opportunity to access material.

It was OK. Nothing great.

Categorizing the searching results.

Love EBSCO's Topic Search feature

MasterFile Premier and Custom Newspaper database have the most practical application in my job.

I love the author "readalikes."

My favorite database is Novelist.

Information for all age groups available

Not sure - need more resources

Nothing

Novel databases provide the students in our school access to materials needed for school

assignments.

NOVEL provides access to journals to which our library does not subscribe. It is also a valuable tool for students when they are doing research papers. It is often easier to find the electronic form a journal article uses the databases rather than thumbing through print journals looking for an article on a particular subject.

Pre-sorting

Access to newspaper articles typically for fee elsewhere.

Local newspaper database

Regional newspapers are extremely helpful

The access to newspapers

The newspaper indices.

The NY Newspaper database covers the NY Times full text for time period that is not covered by Proquest Historical NY Times and is easier to search than the National Newspaper Index (which is not full text)

The broad selection of databases--newspaper indexes, which cover a wide geographical area, health information, and also information suitable for students at all levels. We are delighted to have these databases available.

New York State Newspapers

Custom Newspapers gives our patrons access to the New York Times articles on the day they are published.

Use as extension of library collection for curricular needs of students & teachers; use as a mechanism to teach information literacy skills.

Specific subject areas are easy to locate.

Students can get images, information, maps in one place.

That there are 2 health databases. One is meant for patrons and it really does present the information in a more patron friendly style

These databases help me to access current and reliable information in the health care area in an easy to use format

The health information and Consumer Reports full text. I have found in training though that it is not easy for patrons to locate or know that this type of info is available

The access to all the databases for me as an educator and as student getting my MLS degree. To help my students at school and home that they are able to access all the information they need.

They are an in depth complement to the databases I can afford for my high school library, such as the business, health, literature and newspaper databases.

The diversity of resources that are accessible through NOVEL, they are great for all areas of the curriculum in my district. So I can recommend them for most, if not all, class visits.

The formats for kids are important e.g., Searchasaurus and EBSCO Kids. Also, the image database provides good pictures for school projects and includes source information.

The information is available to the kids easily and they have learned how to use them independently.

The majority of the time, I can find relevant information for myself or for my patrons. The information is more authoritative than much of what one finds surfing the internet.

The NOVEL Databases are very important to libraries. Often patrons come in looking for a specific title but I am able to offer them another resource if we don't have the book on site. When patrons call from home I am able to email articles to them and save our resources, i.e. printing, paper. Basically, NOVEL allows me to serve my patrons.

The NOVEL databases provide in-depth information on all subject areas. NOVEL is an essential research tool for everyone!

The selection is very good, particularly for a high school.

The Twayne Authors Series - Twayne World, English, and US Authors

Twayne's Author Series is thorough and easy to use. Business and Company Resource Center has come in handy, but Hoover's would be more useful.

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Twayne's Author Series is very easy to search. I can teach a patron to search Twayne's in person and over the telephone.

They are excellent resources and very cost effective for school districts.

They are not crowded with information on the screens & are therefore much easier to use than some databases. Search boxes are distinct & set up in the correct places.

They are relatively constant - don't completely change from year to year, which is useful for me as a personal user and as a librarian working with patrons.

They complement the databases purchased by the library to form a good selection of basic and specialized databases.

They contain a lot of good, basic information that students need on a regular basis.

Our patrons have access to reference sources in the GVRL when the library is closed.

They have not been very useful for us.

They have subject content that our patrons need and want.

Topics available...Twayne, ebooks, health & wellness to mention a few

Topic search

Up-to-date information with articles that are not extreme in length to be used by Special Ed Students.

Versatility

Very clear and concise

Multimedia programs.

When working with the teachers and students in our Middle School, I can safely steer classes to the NOVEL databases. I have used it in planning units with these classes: Social Studies; Science; Health; ELA. The units have included current gov't persons & institutions; how to relieve stress in your everyday life; animal research; current science news; 20th century projects; author studies; etc.

Saves time when patrons are lined up for information needs. We look good because the NOVEL information is generally very current.

STUDENTS

Ease of use (12)

Ability to access materials externally, from home, without going to library (9)

Offers a wide variety of sources. (6)

I can find information (4)

Never used before (4)

Full text articles (3)

Everything (3)

it is good (3)

Its wide variety of resources   (3)

Access (2)

Free (2)

Being able to search all of the available databases at once, and limiting searches to full-text sources. (2)

Has a lot of info (2)

Convenience

Easy to find citations that I can then search through other databases to find full text articles.

Efficient

Great for helping me out with my papers.

I like the fact that I have free access to the latest newspaper op/ed pieces not freely offered online.

I was not in school this past semester, so I do not recollect that much about my experience

It is readily available and reliable.

IT'S COMPETENT AND DIRECT.

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Mom was able to help me get great articles for my homework.
Real nice
Search results are specific and on point
The results are also presented very clearly. And - major plus - through BPL, I can access Encyclopedia Britannica full articles and other resources for free, which require payment if I were to log on to them on my own.
The fact that it was available and with patience the answers I needed could be found
The selection of databases
The valid information
I learned how to use it in middle school and today as a Junior in college I turn to it whenever I need to find something and web searches are too broad or not helpful.
The ProQuest newspaper access

TEACHERS/EDUCATORS
Access to a variety of resources/wealth of information (19)
Ease of use (6)
FREE (5)
Reliable, current information at my fingertips (5)
Easy access (3)
Convenient
Everything!
Full text articles
I like the way it narrows the search.
I teach Library Science. These data bases provide information that librarians can use to aid the public that they serve - be it public or academic. During the academic year, I use them to demonstrate, to answer questions in class and to encourage research on the part of my students.
New York Times in full text and the images
Not as overwhelming as doing a straight search on the Internet
Searchasaurus
Simple interface. Good variety of resources within each database. Appropriate for high school audience.
That I have databases for the children to use for research since it is not budgeted for the elementary level.
The international newspapers
The students find the site easy to navigate through and they seem to always find information that is relevant to their studies.
They are an authoritative source of information. They also give students the correct bibliographic format for their Works Cited pages.
They give my students access to databases at no cost to my school. We are fortunate to buy additional databases, but I know that the money might not always be available and I'm relieved to know that my students can have access and learn these necessary and important skills as long as I have Internet access.

BUSINESS USERS
Ease of use (8)
Comprehensive, depth of information, scope of information (7)
Ability to quickly access the information I need, no matter if I am at the library, at home, or at work. (5)
It's free (5)
Easy access (4)

Full text (3)
It is convenient, detailed, extensive (3)
Access to newspapers archives (2)
Accessibility; ability to access a variety of research needs in one place (2)
Accuracy of information and ranking of sources
Handy tool all round.
I don't know.
I like that there are so many newspapers.
It's quick, efficient and available 24/7.
Nothing so far
That they exist
The availability options that make NOVEL available to all NYS residents.
The fact that it's reliable information - not as overwhelming as the web.

PERSONAL USERS
Ease of use (20)
"Free" (9)
Ease of access/accessibility from anywhere (8)
Access from my home computer. (6)
It's comprehensive (4)
The fact that they are on-line. (4)
Authoritative/valid   (4)
I think the variety of different databases is quite a plus. (3)
Up to date information on various resources (3)
Accessibility (3)
Convenience (3)
Many full text articles (3)
Everything (3)
Availability. Newspaper coverage - full text. (3)
In depth information (2)
Access to newspaper articles in a timely fashion
Available 24/7
Available to everyone.
Availability through my library which adds additional resources
Excellent quality.
Clarity
Cross database circulation
Dunno
Ability to access high-quality information that I wouldn't have access to otherwise
EBSCO magazine articles and the newspaper articles
Ebsco, and its breadth of coverage
Ebsco's MASTERFILE and Gale's Health - both have a wealth of information.
General content
Helpful in finding information
I am introduced to new authors
I don't feel like I have to worry about quality of information when using these databases. Also, I can't begin to subscribe to all of the periodicals that are part of the NOVEL set and so it is a great way to access thousands of quality sources for "free". Yes I know our taxes go to support these services.

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I like the fact that NY state is making these resources accessible to people statewide.
I love to use the databases to pursue personal information needs and interests.
Information prints out neatly on standard 8X11 paper.
Links provided so much useful and interesting material about all kinds of books and literature.
NY Times availability
Reliable source of basic information from established, authenticated sources. More reliable and quicker than aimlessly wandering around web sites.
The Brooklyn Eagle!
The Health and Wellness Resource Center (though some of the reference books included are too old) 2001 is too old for health information.
The number of places it pulls info from.
Wealth of searchable information.

OTHERS
Don't know (2)
Helpful   (2)
N/A (2)
Don't use it.
Easy to use
Home Access is wonderful and allows me to do research when the library is closed.
I like that Novel databases take you directly to the source.
Its comprehensive nature and full text articles
Response Time

FROM WHAT LOCATION ARE YOU ACCESSING THIS SURVEY? – OTHER
(26 respondents gave an answer. Note (#) after a response indicates the number of times that response was given; no (#) means that response was given once.)

LIBRARIANS/MEDIA SPECIALISTS
Library System (3)
I work at the Public Library (2)
School library/work (2)
Home, work and school.
Friends' house
Public library
School library system office
United States
Work - which is an academic library

STUDENTS
Vacation
Where Mom works

TEACHERS/EDUCATORS (One person checked 'other', but gave no answer)

BUSINESS USERS
Church library
Home office   (2)

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PERSONAL USERS
Make radio buttons accept multiple answers. I use the database at home AND at work.
Psychosocial clubhouse
United States
When I am traveling for business or pleasure

OTHERS
I'm at work, which happens to be a public library.

HOW DID YOU FIND OUT ABOUT THE NOVEL DATABASES – OTHER
(302 respondents gave an answer. Note (#) after a response indicates the number of times that response was given; no (#) means that response was given once.)

LIBRARIANS/MEDIA SPECIALISTS
Library System (48)
BOCES (27)
Through work, through my job   (25)
School library system (24)
New York City School Library Services (16)
Workshop/training/orientation (13)
I learned about NOVEL from the State Library when it was introduced. (12)
Email/listserv (11)
Colleagues (9)
It's on our home page/web site (7)
3Rs council/newsletter   (7)
As a member of the library community; I am a librarian   (6)
NYLA   (6)
Library/school media specialist meetings   (4)
SCRLC (4)
I help administer/manage databases for my library. (4)
NYLINE   (4)
College professor, information science program (4)
Professional development/staff development workshop   (4)
Through Library Connections (4)
Library consortia (2)
Speaker at a conference (2)
System meetings (2)
From my library director (2)
Have used since its inception
I teach it
I was involved in setting up NOVEL
Installed at work on our pacs (public access catalog)
Just know public libraries subscribe to databases
NYPL Office of Reference and Information Services
Professional communication
As a library consortium, we've known about them forever!
Provided via public library
College
SENYLRC

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Strange, I don't even remember it's been so long
They were already in use when I started my position as an elementary LMS
Through CLRC
Tutorial by Birsell associates
Visit to Brooklyn Business Library

STUDENTS
Friend   (3)
Brooklyn public library website   (2)
Exploration of the library website
Aunt
My mom is a librarian
New York Public Libraries
Public library
Through Mid-Hudson Library System
Through working for the NYPL

TEACHERS/EDUCATORS
From library website (2)
School Library System   (2)
BOCES (2)
DLD
From an informational notice when it first came out.
A friend
Library Connections Mentor
Library home page
New York City Board of Education
New York City School Library System
Office of School Library Services in NYC
Professional development for school librarians
School library meetings
Through a class taken at Library School (grad)
Through the librarian at my local library branch
Through a listserv.
Work as librarian.

BUSINESS USERS
Library web site   (3)
NYSED/DLD (2)
Brooklyn Public Library's website (2)
Friend (2)
At the library
BEDC
Brooklyn Public Library
Don't remember
Familiarity with the library's website
Found out from a librarian.
Library board member
Library councils

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Through my job - information from State Ed

PERSONAL USERS
BPL website (4)
I am a librarian   (3)
Family Member   (2)
Through the library website   (2)
I used to work for a library and learned how to find resources
Library Day in Albany, NY state govt. building
Local library
New York City School Library Services, NYCDoE
NYLA
Public library
School library system director
STLS
Through a handout in the library.
At work (work for a library)

OTHERS
Library Workshop (2)
First time visiting site
From colleagues
I was brought to this page
Relative
This evaluation
Through this survey I am not even sure exactly what database Novel is
Use of library card
Work-related email message

OTHER COMMENTS? (401 respondents gave an answer. Some answers were extensive. Note (#) after a response indicates the number of times that response was given; no (#) means that response was given once. Some respondents in each group simply answered 'no' to this question, meaning they had no other comments.)

LIBRARIANS/MEDIA SPECIALISTS (Because there were 285 responses from this group and few close matches, many of the entries below are loosely grouped by categories.)
Keep it coming!!!! (keep it going…; keep up the good work…)   (29)
Thank you   (18)
Great! (12)
Add more (unspecified) databases   (11)
Continue funding/supporting it   (9)
A general encyclopedia would be a good addition. (9)
I/We love it! (6)
No   (3)
A terrific use of tax dollars! (3)

Wonderful resource:
A fine service. Something NY can be proud of.
A truly wonderful service which allows small libraries to do real reference work. It is a vital

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asset.

A wonderful resource for our high school staff and students

They have great value.

NOVEL is a fantastic research tool appropriate for everyone!

An excellent resource to help libraries of all types in NY stretch their database budgets.

As a librarian, I think that the NOVEL databases are an excellent use of NYS services available to their residents.

Excellent service for librarian professionals keep up the good work and the funding.

Extremely useful for a wide variety of information needs

Extremely valuable service.

Find the databases to be helpful and I am thankful to NYS Education Dept. Div of Library Development for providing this service to all residents of NYS

Excited about the new access thru usage of driver's license. Invaluable for personal as well as student research on variety of topics.

Good to have newspapers, journals and health information available.

I adore it. And the fact that we are able to access NOVEL for the school library at no cost to the school, frees up funds for other databases that we purchase outside of NOVEL.

I am completely satisfied with your product

I am very happy with this resource. I have used it to do graduate level research and been successful

I am very pleased with the resources that are provided in the NOVEL databases. Our students and teachers find them very helpful in their work.

I feel these databases are extremely helpful in performing my duties as a reference librarian serving patrons.

I have a friend who is a LMS in training in the Carolinas...she uses NOVEL to do research because NY is so far ahead of other states in this type of offering. Bravo!

I'm completing this survey as a representative of my job, school library media specialist. It is a perfect fit for students and teachers at school. I also find it a valuable resource for home use; most recently finding information for a sick parent. Thank you.

This is a wonderful resource for all New Yorkers. My friends and colleagues in other states are envious.

This is a wonderful source of information and it fills many needs since our book budget is so small. We could never have enough books to cover the topics.

This is an excellent resource for research!

This is an extremely valuable resource for the schools of the state of NEW YORK...especially those schools with limited resources. Having these databases available provides access to important research sources for ALL students in our state regardless of socio-economic level. We use them all day at our school and would sorely miss them if funding were to be cut.

This is one of the best things the State of New York has done for libraries and those that use them.

It is an excellent service. It truly makes information accessible to any citizen of the state.

It is very useful and valuable for our high school students

It is wonderful that these databases are available to me and my library patrons!

My students and own children have enjoyed learning about this great resource! Thank you!!!!

Novel is a wonderful resource for rural communities.

The databases are an outstanding resource to have available to my patrons and to search on their behalf.

These are excellent resources--comprehensive, diverse, and easy-to-use.

These are wonderful resources for library patrons in NYS; they bring some level of academic content to anyone, not just those associated with a college or university and as such are critical for democratic, egalitarian access to information to the digital have-nots.

These databases are an important part of the research process at my school.

A really valuable resource

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This is a very valuable tool for small libraries
What a great resource.

Grateful for access/could not otherwise afford:
As a School Library Media Specialist in a rural area that can not afford vital databses necessary for students we could utilize the New York Times Historical, Gale Literary Database and other databases that would assist educators to meet the required NY state curriculum standards.
For a rural school district, our access to NOVEL databases could never be possible if our district had to buy it. We rely on this set of databases for much of the research students do in our school.
I am very grateful that NOVEL exists. As director of a small library, I could never afford to offer so many databases on such a variety of topics.
I appreciate their availability.
I appreciate that we have access to these databases; I know I will continue to use them, even more as I make others in our institution aware of them.
I appreciate the access we have, I hope it continues, or even expands.
I appreciate the fact that NY State is willing to fund NOVEL databases. Access to information is vital, and a great service to every New Yorker.
I hope NYS continues to fund NOVEL because many individual libraries could not afford to pick up the costs given their budget limitations.
Our school would never be able to afford it so we thank you for providing the link for us.
I am very grateful for the access we do have. Thank you.
I really appreciate having them, and I especially also like the training materials online
It makes so much information available to us "smaller" libraries. NOVEL truly has expanded our ability to better serve our public. We could never afford these databases.
NOVEL databases are an extremely important resource for my students. As a school librarian, I would never be able to afford subscriptions to all of the databases that NOVEL provides. I hope to see NOVEL continued and expanded in the future.
Invaluable in this small, rural public school library.
It gives us a greater variety of options for our students - thanks!
The value of the information available to a district that cannot afford databases for the school libraries is incalculable. The information my students and faculty can get fulfills curriculum and education standards. It's my hope that use of the NOVEL databases will interest students in the use beyond high school as they become adult learners.
These databases provide a valuable resource to our students and we are grateful that they are provided for us because we could not even begin to purchase them on our own.
Thanks for providing this access for all libraries in the state. It makes a difference - especially for students who don't have computer access at home (the have-nots) and districts who find it difficult to pay for on-line databases in their budgets.
They are fantastic and vital to a successful Middle and High School Library program. We don't have budgets to access these great sources and need them to continue.
Through this project we are able to provide our patrons with online databases. This is something we would not be able to do independently. We are grateful for the NOVEL databases.
We are thankful for the databases that NOVEL purchases on our behalf, particularly Business and Company Resource Center and New York State Newspapers.
Wonderful free resources, continuous availability providing equal access to residents throughout the state. Especially useful for schools with limited budgets. Provides an opportunity for all students to have access to quality information from home or school.

Suggestions for additional subjects/databases:
Ancestry is a big topic for searching today.
A genealogy database would be a popular addition to the suite of databases.

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I recommend adding a genealogy database to NOVEL, such as Proquest's Ancestry database. Our patrons are asking for access to a genealogy database such as Ancestry.com or Heritage Quest, and an investment database such as Morningstar or Valueline. Our library and library system cannot afford to subscribe to these databases. We believe such databases would be valuable, well-used additions to the NOVEL databases.

Expand the Middle School/High School databases i.e., Opposing Viewpoints, CQ Researcher.

Expand to include more resources appropriate for middle and high school students.

Hope that more databases and/or e-books can be added to it.

Could some basic reference tools such as a dictionary for children and one for adults as well as a good encyclopedia for both be included? Also, perhaps an almanac and more of the Gale databases.

I wish they provided more databases for elementary school students. So far, my students can only use the InfoTrac. Everything else is designed for high school students. I believe my students would use NOVEL more if there were more databases for them.

I wish we could have access to a more scholarly science database.

I wish we had EBSCOHost Academic Search Premier but I understand that cost is a factor.

Thank You for continuing to provide needed information to the people of NY!

I wish you had a "Gale" type of Biography Resource Center. The level would be jh-hs levels.

It would be wonderful to be able to access Facts on File, Worldbook Online, and similar materials.

I would like to see more databases that are specifically relevant to students, such as SIRS Researcher or SIRS Discoverer or Gale-Thompson's Student Resource Center.

I'd like more in the way of literary criticism

I'd love to see genealogy and investment databases.

Include the West Encyclopedia of Law, if possible (our library added a separate subscription) to the VRL.

You need to add more databases. For example, Literature Resource Center by Gale would be a very useful database to have. I find I really only use Health Reference Center when I access NOVEL. The other databases I have no use for.

It would be helpful if the state would fund additional databases for the school libraries, GALE Student Resource Center, gold; Proquest for the NYTimes.

Consider making available the Health Business database from EBSCO.

More resources for lower elementary students would be wonderful! More encyclopedia type databases.

More scholarly resources would be nice.

More school age resources are needed because they represent a huge group of NOVEL users. Please add an encyclopedia, and perhaps a college level database with journal articles like JSTOR

Please add other databases like Wiley or Science Direct. Thanks.

Please include some databases for younger learners.

I would like to have Gale's Science Resource Center added to the offerings. Would also appreciate access to some of the ProQuest products, too.

The only deficiency I find among the NOVEL offerings is when looking for historical information. I usually don't find what I'm looking for in this subject area.

They are an amazing resources for reference work. I would also like to see some very specific resources that might be more appealing to the general public such as Ancestry and Heritage Quest, Gale's Historic Newspapers, EBSCO's Automotive Repair Center and some type of Test Preparation Utility such as Learning Express. I think these would be heavily, heavily used by the public and would be worth the extra expense.

We really need more primary leveled databases. Our K-8 school would benefit from more basic data.

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Improvements wanted:

As a LMS, please offer workshops that are geared to K-5 students.

As a professional, would like to see expansion of the program so individual libraries do not need to struggle with the high cost of purchasing these resources individually. Also would like to have NYS provide promo materials, bookmarks (for free or minimal cost) and pre-written press releases that can used in local newspapers/newsletters.

Better marketing of such a valuable resource, and in-house training to professionals (librarians, information assistants, teachers, teacher aides) on how to maximize usage and access so that they can further publicize the databases to the general public users.

Could EBSCO be a little easier (user friendly) for the patron?

Could you make the information for New York State Social Studies curriculum in elementary schools user-friendly and more abundant?

It would be great if there could be more "How to cite this article" links that our students could use for their bibliographies.

From PR standpoint name Novel is easily confused with Ebsco's Novelist; public still does not understand difference between articles indexed by Novel and information on Web.

Having to authenticate via library card or license no. is still a barrier compared to Internet search engines(Google, Yahoo, etc)

Should have a different name--Novel makes people think the databases are just about fiction titles. Need publicity in newspapers and local magazines--MANY people are not aware these exist.

Has nothing for my elementary and middle school students. Not much more for my high school students. Why is it so heavy with college level material when most colleges pay and maintain their own databases? NYPL websites are also free to all NYS residents and have many more choices. Why can't NOVEL be like NYPL?

I would like to see it expanded to further meet the student curriculum.

I would like to see more databases added to the Novel list for schools

I have a patron who wanted to sign up for NOVEL. He had to go to our county offices to get signed up. This will never work if it is that inconvenient.

I look forward to expansion of these data bases. I look forward to pages that guide the user to the overall use of the data bases.

I primarily use Health Reference Center Academic and while I like having PDFs, the quality of those files is not always the best and when printed they are difficult to read. The last time I looked at the Health & Wellness Resource Center I could locate full-text files, but not PDFs and most of my patrons want their articles in the originally published format.

Higher quality PDFs and in both databases would be a great improvement for this user's needs.

I hope they keep adding to available resources and maintain the ones already in play.

I really like using the EBSCO databases because they are easier than Gale's. I would like to see better statistics generated from both companies. I have been trying to figure out why some stats come to me monthly and others not at all. Some come in email messages and others as attachments. Some come in two separate messages. I don't understand how I can get them all to be the same format and the admin website is difficult to me. Why can't they just show my libraries when I log in. Why do I have to search through miles of usernames?

I sometimes find the graphic interface to be too busy

I think the newspaper databases are the clunkiest to use. Consider another vendor?

I wish we could bookmark the page without having to log in with user ID and password each time.

I would like to see all newspaper articles include photographs, charts, graphs, maps, etc, so that they are more complete. I would also like to see Newsday full text added to the list of Newspapers it indexes.

I would like to see an even more comprehensive array of available databases. I supplement NOVEL with the NYC public library website.

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I would like to see more of the articles in full text instead of just abstracts. Looking for information can be cumbersome - students still prefer the ease of Google.

I would like to see the NOVEL collection expanded to serve the needs of the business community, in particular. Also, all types of libraries and residents of NYS would benefit from more depth in a multi-discipline database, e.g., Ebsco's Academic Search Premier instead of MasterFile.

Expand to include World Book Encyclopedia, NY Times newspapers beyond three past year publications and academic databases plus more. State could purchase the databases at a lower cost than individual libraries and educational institutions.

Would prefer to be able to change my password to something I can remember instead of using drivers' license number each time.

Just to reiterate the need for complete descriptions of the contents of each database.

I'd like more training on how to use all the databases we have available to us.

Make accessing the databases easier... have one web page which lists all the databases and with links which take you DIRECTLY to the databases' search boxes

Promote NOVEL as a virtual library for all New Yorkers which is available 24/7, not just as NOV

Make it easier to access through our library's web site. The unique NOVEL site takes too many clicks!

More full text...Wider range of information to access.

More publicity would be great - not enough patrons know about them, or understand the difference between the quality of information to be found there vs. general Internet searching.

Need more for the younger child

Our students need more reliable services. The Spanish database INFORME provided does not work and articles are often difficult to read.

Please find a way to advertise yourself without the large area of information a patron must go through before getting to the databases!

More publicity and outreach is needed.

The business databases are very poor in quality. They are generally out of date and rely on many foreign publications to increase the number of titles indexed.

The concept of NOVEL -- making these databases available to library users, through public libraries -- is wonderful. But the databases themselves are either not the sort of thing that our users seem to want (e.g., literary criticism), or contain information that's easily available on the Internet directly (e.g., business and medical information). Please, please consider adding a car repair database. This is a perfect example of something that our customers would use and appreciate, and whose content is not easily available outside of a subscription product.

The version of EBSCOhost MasterFile Select is insufficient as a general reference periodical index for public libraries. NYS should seriously consider upgrading to MasterFile Premier at the very least or preferably Proquest's products.

We would like federated searching of the NOVEL databases for patrons who use their library cards much like your method of using a driver's license. Also, we are not receiving any statistics if people access with their driver's licenses and it essentially cuts libraries out of the mix. We look forward to a solution.

When I attempted to do a federated search (search all NOVEL databases) I had no idea how; I couldn't find any directions anywhere; I still don't know how.

Where are the maps and images I need for reports and research?

Where are the resources for our kids - they need the right materials to do better in school.

Wish money was spent on advertising NOVEL database availability through public libraries instead of availability through the DMV.

Wish there was more for elementary children

We like to see more variety to the Gale Virtual Reference Library.

Would like an encyclopedia for K-12 students with graphics, not just text.

Would like to see audiobooks included on the NetLibrary collection

Would like to see more full text articles

I was never able to solve a problem with my ability to log on. I'm not sure if the problem was at my end--the note from your tech people said the inability to access the databases had to do with cookies, and I was supposed to disable them. Unfortunately, the computer folks in my building weren't exactly sure what to do about that and we never did get on. I hope to remedy the situation next year.

Don't use:
Actually, I very rarely use the NOVEL databases because their content is either rarely called for in our library, or is something that I can find more easily on the Internet generally. If the NOVEL offerings included car repair and genealogy I'd use them a great deal.
Have not had any need to use the databases.
I am sure that larger libraries get more out of NOVEL. Not needing to use it regularly in this small library, I forget how to use it on the rare occasions I need it.
I don't use them often because I am a k-1 librarian.
I plan on using them more in the next school year. Sometimes, I forget my password and that is what holds me back from using it more frequently.
I'm unfamiliar with them. If they were introduced through my school building, I did not realize it.
Time is always a concern--or not enough of it. If I knew more and found it to be useful, I would probably include it in my websites most often visited. I am a math teacher and often use the NCTM site, as a member.

Other comments:
Accessing the websites via a public library card benefits both the State Library and local libraries as long as there is no charge associated with acquiring a public library card. Requiring the public library card number increases the awareness of local community library services.
As a librarian, I always like to promote getting information not only through the Internet but also through databases, which contain information with some authority. I liked letting my patrons know about databases that they can access, even if they currently did not have a library card.

As a reference library in a public library setting having access to NOVEL offers me the opportunity to expand my holdings. Lets me help people find information that would otherwise be unavailable.
Before I held my current position, I worked as a librarian in the Westchester Library System. Before NOVEL, the WLS subscribed to many of the databases in Novel, BUT to a more involved extent. For instance, the information we received from EBSCO was much more complete and extensive. One would think that NYS could do as well.
Ebsco is OK, but my library subscribes to Proquest, which has proven far superior. People who live outside our library system frequently call me to get fulltext articles from Proquest for them. Do very much like health dbs.
Having attended the presentation of NOVEL at the NYLA Conferences, I got a chance to hear and to meet the people behind this labor of (information) love. They were excited, dedicated, and determined to implement this and more than willing to answer questions and to trouble shoot with us, the users. The help desk is exceptional, too. At each NYLA Conference, Janet Welch and her staff update us and inservice us about NOVEL. This is a wonderful help to all of us.
I cannot access the NOVEL databases through my home computer, perhaps because I have a static IP. The Public Librarian and I cannot figure out exactly why. I can and do access it from my husband's older PC, which is in the same room!
I don't know how, but we need to continue to fight to get the public more aware of this terrific resource, and to get library staff to use and promote it more.
I enjoy using the Novel databases tremendously and have greatly increased my own store of knowledge in many subjects as a result of my daily scanning and searches of appropriate articles and extracts for students and teachers.
I hope that public schools throughout the state will continue to have free access to these databases - they have become a central part of the library skills unit I teach my students.

APPENDIX D
Web Survey Report - Text Responses

I like the driver license access.

I use novel databases to get the most current information for patrons.

I use NoveList, Contemporary Authors, and Health Reference Center the most for answering reference questions. (My students mostly major in education and nursing)

I use the Novel databases with my high school students and we find it invaluable.

I would like to know that more of my faculty and students are aware of and using these valuable databases

I would miss having it!

I'm glad to know it is there when I need it.

Important service which supplements what local libraries and library systems can provide. gives all citizens of New York state access to various topics of reliable information regardless of what their local public library can provide be it a small town library or under funded large library!

In this time of scarce library budgets, we need a resource as powerful as the NOVEL databases.

It would be worthwhile to increase the number of databases, so that NYS is not allowing the vendors to double (triple?) dip into the taxpayer's pocket. School, academic, public

It's great to have these available from home, but cumbersome to have to dig out the driver's license to log in - i usually don't bother. Since we have IP recognition here at our office, it just logs in.

Keep access for all. Publicize more. Improve connections and speed. Thank you for recognizing the importance of quality information parity for ALL New Yorkers.

Keep this valuable resource; it is a credit to NYS that libraries and the public can access this information for their needs

My faculty, students, and I have appreciated the improvements added to the Ebsco database for younger elementary level students. This had been a serious lack.

Easy access/great information source

My Library System's access to databases is very poorly designed. At my library we have had to create our own database page. Still, to get to Novel dbs, our patrons have to go through the very confusing Westchester Library System page. You should require a minimum of accessibility and usability or allow libraries access individually.

My students could not do their research without the NOVEL databases and my teachers use them for curriculum development.

My students have been successful at accessing information from the ebooks found on the Gale Virtual Reference Library. This is a great addition!

Novel Databases are an important part of the research process. Students need to be aware of databases and these services are very important for students to be able to access. It is my hope that through library lessons students will use Novel databases with more frequency and become less reliant on Googling.

NOVEL is a great service to New York residents. Patrons are astounded at the breadth of information accessible through NOVEL.

Novel is a valuable tool for students and I hope to make students familiar and efficient at using the data base. It is my plan to use it with more frequency in my teachings.

NOVEL is moderately helpful where I work, mostly for medical topics. My primary use is to download full text articles, pointing from Serials Solutions.

Sometimes I just don't think to use it as a reference. I enjoyed receiving the NOVEL Infobits. I'm not sure that locally, we've done a great job at selling it to our patrons.

Students were so impressed with the Business & Company Resources Center and thought that it wasn't well publicized enough that they took flyers to their department to promote. Our students do not have access to such information other than through NOVEL.

Some of the e-mail alerts ProQuest sends are for articles that were published earlier. I wish they were more timely to the actual date of publication.

Thank you for the addition of the eBook collection. It has greatly expanded the way my patrons can find "book" information on varied topics of interest to them. NOVEL is one of the best things that I can say NY Libraries have to offer to ALL patrons state-wide. It always saddens me when

APPENDIX D
Web Survey Report - Text Responses

I hear of a librarian who doesn't know what it is nor subscribes to it for his or her location.

Thank you so very much for making the Health databases available. As a hospital librarian working in an environment of steadily decreasing funding I can't tell you how much we appreciate the state providing this valuable resource to us free of charge.

The concept is great. It's one of the best things in "state aid" to libraries. Ease of use is primary need.   The state driver's license access is an interesting beginning but needs a bit of refining as we go on with it.

The money spent by NYS on these resources is money well spent. These databases give librarians and the community access to valuable information.

The newspaper databases are very useful and important to our patrons for a variety of reasons.

The NOVEL databases are very popular with our users, who use them frequently.

The NYS Driver's License access is great, except for middle and high school students -- They don't have driver's licenses yet.

Students are very busy these days meeting the Regents requirements. They don't have many study halls when they can use the school library, so they need access to the NOVEL databases from home.

The workshop made me very eager to use NOVEL but in reality it did not meet my expectations.

There's a wealth of info in the databases, but when I do outreach presentations to seniors, students etc. they are not aware that NOVEL is available to them so we are not doing enough to market this info. Seniors and students also find the database titles to be confusing and are never sure what to use for their info needs. We need to do better integration of these resources into our local ILS, better marketing and links or buttons that are more intuitive such as E Resources or E Library instead of online databases. Patrons see the word database and think Access or Excel not magazines or full text articles.

They are a good resource for librarians and their patrons up to date information

These sources of information give students a reliable source of information that is an alternative to general internet or web articles. These are academic valuable and students learn the difference between a web article posted by "anyone" and a reliable, accurate, current article located through a NOVEL database.

They are essential to providing good customer service in our workplace

They are essential to the students here. NOVEL is a critical part of our collection.

They are essential, a benefit to all residents of NY

They are very helpful to my students; and I have also used them for myself & family.

They have greatly improved the quality of service we are able to provide our library patrons.

They really are wonderful. They cover a nice range of materials.

This is a fabulous resource. I especially like to use the Journal Alert feature in EbscoHost to view articles from selected periodicals.

This is a necessary service for the public.

This is a resource I use daily. Always very helpful.

Use of Databases is so important a tool to the searching public, these should be supplied free of charge as a library service, and to all population regardless of library affiliation.

We really appreciate the state's efforts to increase the database offerings that are available to everyone statewide. It allows colleges and universities to focus on the specialized resources that support their unique curricular needs.

Publicity is good.... but still students and teachers have not heard of it.... I would like single bookmarks for my library patrons with home access information. I have made school bookmarks for individual topics with the school access information.

The databases really fill the gap for libraries that cannot afford to pay for this service individually.

Wonderful support to Public Libraries

Wow, do you really expect the average patron to remember if the databases he's used are from Novel or are one of the many other databases we have on our site, without providing a list?

APPENDIX D
Web Survey Report - Text Responses

This survey has serious validity issues.

STUDENTS
Keep it up! Thanks!   (2)
Great service. Hope you can keep up the funding!
I love the availability of this wonderful site
I enjoy it; I hope they continue to offer this.
It is great for grad school research.
This is a very useful tool, especially for students and researchers.
I had trouble accessing the databases at work in Manhattan - was this just a fluke or is this what is supposed to happen? Also, as I mentioned above I had trouble accessing Lexis Nexis from home - are certain databases only accessible from the library - or do you have to do something special that I don't know? Otherwise, this is a great resources, thank you
I want to see more things available - Wikipedia has many more things
I observed in a NOVEL workshop I conducted for classmates in library school that some people are a bit confused with the federated searching in NOVEL. This aspect could be explained more clearly and prominently in the interface.
A professor said that when NOVEL is underused it is sometimes because libraries already have the databases offered and people tend to use the same way to access a database that they have always used. In other words, they might be using the databases offered by NOVEL but just not THROUGH NOVEL.
It is a good decision that you are gathering information on the use of the database.
It would be nice if the NOVEL database can broaden its research sources available, and that the research includes sources from various time periods, from a range of olden times to modern times.
It would be nice if there was a log in id and password instead of entering your library card number. At times I usually don't have the card right with me when I want to use the site
Needs to be branded and promoted statewide, many people do not know of it even though the local libraries have tried to promote it in house. Could use some really cool examples of what it could do for you.

TEACHERS/EDUCATORS
Great resource/keep it coming!   (9)
No   (4)
Great, please keep the access open for free. (3)
Please keep this available for all our NYC educators and students   (2)
There is a need for general encyclopedia information for elementary users, ESL and special needs   (2)
Add a good encyclopedia. Look at more of Gale's e-books that are not time sensitive and add them to the Gale Virtual Reference Library.
I would love to see World Book Online as the online encyclopedia.
Highly worthwhile resource especially for small libraries that would not have the financial resources to offer such a selection of databases.
I know that the data bases have more extensive information available on them. Is there any chance that NYS will add to the coverage?
I would like a schedule next year that would allow me to have the time to access NOVEL more frequently to help students with their research projects.
FAQs and quickie info sheets for each database
It is a great convenience for me, professionally & personally!!!
Please develop resources for young children and students who do not speak/read English well.
Please keep offering this service to the people of New York. It is a real benefit.
Please make it more user friendly for younger students
The Newspaper Index is basically useless as I do not have access to the newspapers. If I could

have the full text of the articles, then it would be wonderful!

Good resources for people who can't afford pricey alternatives. Nice to promote them more at the elementary level, send home flyers instructing parents how to access and promote more use.

BUSINESS USERS

No   (6)

An incredible public resource. One of the major benefits of the library system, at both the state and city level. Having these resources is one of the only ways that a citizen can certain kinds of research using modern database and search technology -- without belonging to an academic or business organization that independently subscribes to similar databases. For people who cannot afford a personal subscription to these databases, it is indispensable.

Extremely pleased to have "discovered" NOVEL - I was unaware of it until only a few weeks ago.

Genealogical constituents express discontent about not being able to access a number of databases through NOVEL that are accessible at the State Library. With terrible hours for access and worse parking, it is problematic to only have access at the Library itself.

I LOVE YOU! THANKS FOR PROVIDING THE SERVICE!

I think it is a good foundation to continue building on. The speed at which the system uploads information could be improved. Also, if research reports for companies could be provided that would be fantastic.

I think there are many places where NOVEL is underused because people get used to using databases they are familiar with and accessing them from sites they are familiar with. Many Universities and libraries that provide NOVEL already have a number of databases available on site or from their websites, so many times people just don't go out of their way to access the same or different databases through unfamiliar websites.

I wish they were marketed better to end-users. I wish the feature to use your driver license to use them did NOT pop you into a federated search feature.

I'd like for it to be more comprehensive, and easier to use. LexisNexis or even Factiva are much more user friendly.

Keep adding more – what a wonderful resource for schools and libraries and their patrons.

Logging in is difficult due to needing to enter license # more than once

Once I've gotten results from my search, I sometimes have a problem identifying what is useful/relevant info.

Please keep the access available.

The databases are invaluable to our schools.

There needs to be a wider awareness of the availability and breadth of the resources of NOVEL

There really needs to continue to be a focus on the GENERAL NYS user; many users have expressed interest in a general encyclopedia (such as Grolier and its related resources). We DON'T NEED highly specialized databases that are good for only one type of user; the money needs to be more equitably spent to reflect the needs of all users.

This is a great service! Thanks so much for making it available! Please keep adding more materials.

Would like to see a link from NOVEL - especially NOVELIST to the Mid York library.

- Logging out on EBSCO - not sure this is clear other than closing window.

PERSONAL USERS

Great!/wonderful resource/keep up the good work/love it… /thanks for asking (10)

No   (4)

Need more publicity for this valuable database to the general public. (2)

An easier interface, similar to factiva, would be great

I think the interface could be much cleaner and much more appealing to the general public. I am a librarian without easy access to a "real" library, so I use these databases when I have

questions. It's often hard to find out what materials (titles) are included in the databases.

Appreciate the State Ed dept is supplying this useful tool to all in NYS

Hope you can add more databases in the future

I am happy to see NYS spending money on something so useful as these databases. They really level the playing field for children.

I hope NYS is able to continue funding NOVEL - many public libraries, especially the smaller ones, do not have the budget funds to support services of this type. State funding gives everyone a level playing field and access to basic information.

I teach a children's literature course, and also do a lot of personal research on local authors. I use Contemporary Authors and NoveList a lot. I also do personal research on health issues, for which I often consult Health Reference Center. I use EBSCOHost to access Consumer Reports whenever I want to buy something.

I use a rural public library where there is no training for the general public on the use of these databases. The local librarian isn't familiar with them or able to train / promote them to the public. I wish there was money for small, rural libraries to have professional librarians come in once a month and provide basic search strategies on the various databases.

I would like to see a more complete set of the Gale Literature databases included in NOVEL. The Twayne Author series is very nice, but the other sources would be very much appreciated. Also, full text of the Wall Street Journal would be nice. Thank you for asking

I would like to see some of the resources put into a genealogical database

I'm very glad that my library subscribes to NoveList in particular!

It would be terrific, if there was a help desk that can answer any browser settings questions that inhibit using the InFo/USA site. Sometimes it works thru Brooklyn Public Library. Other times when I log in at home, the site send me to the Info/USA site where I need a subscription

More health info please. Is it possible to get some health info in Spanish?

Please keep offering databases to NY residents. Many small town libraries can't afford subscriptions on their own. This is a great way to begin research at home.

The weak point is that too many articles are abstracts only and getting to the entire article is then difficult.

They need to be promoted better on the Brooklyn Public Library site.

We could use an encyclopedia like Groliers.

Wish federated searching were available.

Would like to see higher end, "research" databases.

OTHERS

No   (3)

Even though I am a librarian, I have not used it.

I'm curious to know what the NOVEL database is.

It's a shame that I work in a library and have very little knowledge about the NOVEL database. It was pointed out as a resource that's available to our patrons, but we weren't given any training on how to best use it. As a result, it's been pretty much forgotten about. When I do try to use it, I get frustrated and turn to Google instead.

More awareness about databases, i.e., to obtain more support for funding

Needs publicity and training for public, especially students.

Plan to learn more in new role as Library Manager

Please keep the info current

Please provide more professional development using Novel databases.

Use a better name.

While I have not had any personal need to access it, I feel that NOVEL is important to have. I am president of our local library board of trustees and know that many of our patrons use it daily.

<div align="center">

Five-Year Evaluation of New York's
Statewide Outcome-Based Evaluation Training Program
2002-2005

Submitted by: Eleanor M. Carter
Carter Consulting Services, January 2007

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New York State Library Plans for Outcome-Based Evaluation (OBE)

The New York State Library has taken a leadership role in working with the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) since 2003 to bring Outcome-Based Evaluation training to its library systems and their member libraries, so that the results of activities each year can be reported to meet the requirements of the Government Performance and Results Act of 1993 (GPRA).

Outcome-Based Evaluation (OBE) is defined by IMLS as a systemic way of assessing the extent to which a program has achieved its intended result. It answers questions such as "What difference did the program make?" and "How did the participant benefit from the program?" OBE is useful both as a planning tool and as an evaluation tool. Outcomes are beneficial changes for program participants that include changes in skills, knowledge, behavior, attitude, status, or life condition.

Although Outcome-Based Evaluation cannot be used for every project, the benefits of using OBE evaluation techniques are many. It can be used as a planning tool, as well as an advocacy tool, and can help communicate the value and success of a program. It can also help libraries focus their limited resources on their most effective programs that address the highest priorities. The State Library, in its LSTA Five Year Plan 2002-2007 made a commitment to OBE training and application to all appropriate LSTA projects.

In New York State's LSTA Five-Year Plan for 2002-2007 the following was proposed:

> "**EVALUATION PLAN:** The process of developing a Request for Proposal for evaluation of New York's first LSTA Five-Year Plan, intensive work with the evaluation firm that received the contract, and the State Library's work with a planning consultant on developing a new LSTA Five-Year Plan have all helped the State Library to identify a need to institutionalize evaluation methods as part of ongoing operations.
>
> Over the five years of the next LSTA Five-Year Plan, the State Library intends to develop a training program for State Library and library system staff to assist them in using both performance (outputs) and results (outcomes) measures in their progress towards excellence…
>
> As the State Library moves forward with its plan of incorporating outcome-based evaluation within its operation and with the projects supported by LSTA, grant applicants will be expected to frame their applications to reflect this type of evaluation for categories in which it may be required. They will identify the anticipated outputs and outcomes in their applications and report the results at the end of the project."

The Five-Year Plan also identified key targets for training State Library librarians and system librarians and for training trainers to provide local level training. At the time the plan was written, the State Library was not positioned to identify appropriate and accurate key targets. As the librarians from the State Library underwent IMLS OBE training, worked with an OBE consultant continuously since 2004, and with the library community to carry out its OBE initiative, the key targets evolved into two documents:

1) A ten-stage *OBE Training Plan for New York* and 2) An *OBE Logic Model for Statewide OBE Training*. This report will identify results of OBE training matched to those two documents. Both documents are contained in full in Appendices A and B of this report.

OBE Training Results (Matched to *OBE Training Plan for New York*)

The ten-stage *OBE Training Plan for New York* was approved by IMLS in 2003 and was implemented without delay.

2003

Stage 1 of the Plan: Training of New York State Library Staff was completed in June 2003. IMLS trained twenty-five participants including New York State Library staff, an evaluation consultant, and selected systems staff to use the OBE model and apply it to their individual areas of responsibility. In that training, participants achieved the desired outcomes of "understanding the components of OBE and practicing building a logic model." They were each able to "write outcomes and indicators that were acceptable to the trainers for at least one of the programs they administer."

2004

Stages 2 through 6 of the Plan: Develop Comprehensive Training Materials, Test Materials, Review and Revise Training Material in Preparation for a Statewide OBE Training Program were completed in 2004.

The Division of Library Development OBE Project team working with a consultant developed a prototype of a comprehensive training package that included a Power Point slide program, a training manual for participants, training activities, useful handouts, and a framework for an evaluation plan. A journal template was also developed as a means of capturing feedback on the training package.

The prototype was tested in a two-day pilot-training workshop for fifteen library systems trainers. The presenter and three members of the OBE team served as observers who kept records of issues for revision. Each of the participants completed a post-workshop survey and turned in a journal record of his/her two-day experience. The journals detailed content problem areas, made suggestions for scheduling of activities, identified instructional gaps, called for more library-specific examples of each of the activities, and suggested an alternative to turning in completed logic models for review. The OBE team met to discuss each of the recommendations for change and to brainstorm the best way to evaluate the learning outcomes of OBE training.

Over forty revisions were made to the training package to provide clarification of topics, to include tips for completing the more difficult activities, to include more library-specific examples of outcomes and indicators, and to add an independent end-of-workshop exercise that could be used to evaluate individual learning. The latter was an important addition because the training was designed for teams of three to four professionals to collaborate on a team project. Often the teams were composed of individuals who had very different job situations or responsibilities. While they practiced writing outcomes and indicators and a logic model for a team project, the OBE project team wanted to know if individuals could write outcomes for their own projects. The final independent exercise answered that question.

While the pilot training workshop aimed at refining the comprehensive training package, the OBE project team was concerned that the participants were not short-changed in their learning of OBE concepts.

Therefore, the team assessed the participants' OBE skills, their pre and post workshop confidence levels, and their satisfaction with the presentation with the following results:

Pilot Participants' OBE Skills assessed by review of individual evaluation plans (logic models).

Fifteen participants (100%) completed the program and turned in completed and acceptable program logic models demonstrating ability to write outcomes, indicators, data sources, data intervals, targets, and target achievements and include them in a complete plan for evaluation.

Pilot Participants' Confidence Levels

Thirteen participants turned in post-workshop surveys. The surveys indicated that prior knowledge of OBE was very limited and prior use of OBE was non-existent. The respondents completed a 6-point scale with 1 indicating low confidence and 6 indicating high confidence. The following chart shows the confidence levels at the two lowest levels at the beginning of the workshop and the confidence levels at the two highest levels at the end of the workshop. The responses were gratifying considering that so many needed revisions to the prototype were identified. It should be noted that several of the pilot participants took a revised basic OBE workshop at a later date and went on to advanced training.

Skill/Knowledge	Low Confidence At Start 1-2	High Confidence at End 5-6	% Change Low to High
Use OBE as a management tool to measure your program outcomes	9	8	88.8%
Assist staff in implementing OBE	10	9	90%
Identify the basic elements of an OBE Plan	9	9	100%
Distinguish outputs from outcomes	9	9	100%
Provide at least one reason why measuring program outcomes would benefit the work that you do	6	6	100%
Identify the three elements of a program purpose statement	7	7	100%
Write outcomes and indicators for a program you wish to measure	7	7	100%
Use outcome data to report on program results	6	6	100%
Apply OBE to other programs or services you offer	9	9	100%

Satisfaction of Pilot Participants

The following chart records participants' responses on a 6-point scale showing the percentage of responses at the two top levels. It should be noted that the chief concern was ability to provide examples to major points, which became a major thrust of the revised package.

	5 points out of 6	6 points out of 6	Combined 5-6
Satisfied with knowledge of presenter	2 (15.4%)	10 (76.9%	12 (92.3%)
Presenter ability to respond to your questions	3 (23.1%	7 (53.8%)	10 (76.9%)
Ability to provide examples to major points	2 (15.4%)	7 (53.8%)	9 (69.2%)
Ability to explain difficult concepts	4 (30.7%)	6 (46.2%)	10 (76.9%)

2004-2006

Stage 7: Implementation of OBE throughout New York State Library and library systems is an ongoing process. The objective was to apply OBE wherever possible for plans, applications, and reports. Plans and reports were expected to reflect training provided to library system staff and yield a rich resource for planning, decision-making, and advocacy. Indeed, that has occurred if not as pervasively as

expected. LSTA grant applications and reports do reflect OBE training. The plan for this to occur was built into the aforementioned document, *OBE Logic Model for Statewide OBE Training*. Analyses of those results are included in the section heading **Stage 8: Train Trainers** on page 6 of this report.

In a basic training workshop in 2005 as part of an exercise, Division of Library Development staff responsible for Plans of Service developed a logic model for using OBE to review and revise plans of service to achieve a pre-identified standard. In subsequent workshops also as a training exercise, two systems librarians who received OBE basic and advanced training developed surveys for their member librarians to complete as part of their systems' development of plans of service. The surveys described a commitment to OBE to the members and sought information that would enable the systems to develop plans of service with an OBE focus. While these preliminary training exercises could serve as models for incorporating OBE into the process of developing and evaluating plans of service, using OBE for Plans of Service has not yet been "required" so it remains voluntary and sporadic.

In 2006, a training team including a Division of Library Development staff member responsible for the Statewide Summer Reading program developed as a training exercise in a NYSL-sponsored basic OBE workshop three items that have potential for use in evaluating summer reading programs. It is recognized that IMLS is working on methodology for evaluation of summer reading programs; Division of Library Development took no official action in support of these three items. They are referenced here as examples of the brainstorming about summer reading evaluation that occurred during OBE training. The three items are: 1) A list of behaviors that indicate impact of summer reading programs on children and parents, 2) a chart of skills that may be outcomes of summer reading and two levels at which the skills might be applied and 3) a sample parent/older child survey that could be used by local libraries to examine the impact of summer reading programs.

In addition, as training exercises, several systems librarians and local public librarians worked on summer reading outcomes in state-sponsored basic OBE workshops. They practiced writing qualitative outcomes that would do more than count participants or collect numerical data about program activities. Such outcomes included conducting follow-up activities/events that would enable children and/or parents to demonstrate visible results of summer reading such as:

- Programs where children can tell stories, act out stories, recite poems, songs, etc. that reflect their summer reading with parents, grandparents, and other caregivers in attendance;
- Challenges for children to turn in records of reading accomplishments with evidence that children can articulate something about what they read and/or that they read with understanding;
- Opportunities to share reading journals in person or online to demonstrate levels at which children can communicate about their reading;
- Follow-up surveys given to parents and older children that collect qualitative information about the benefit of summer reading programs to users.)
- Follow-up surveys of peer reading groups, year-round book buddy programs, and teen volunteers who read to children.
- Incentives for parents and children to respond to surveys, turn in reading records, etc.
- Follow-up with parents and children on suggested family activities produced by the local library to match summer reading themes;
- Review of controlled online chat sessions for summer reading participants to share discussions about books and their summer reading.

In 2005, New York State Library partnered with12 Library systems, 6 graduate schools of library and information science, and the New York Library Association on a proposal for a statewide recruitment

project titled *Making It REAL! Recruitment, Education, And Learning: Creating a New Generation of Librarians to Serve All New Yorkers.* The project included outcomes and indicators from the beginning and was funded ($995,660) by the Federal Institute of Museum and Library Services.

In 2006, the project reported that: "All partners, under the guidance of the grant evaluator, have completed their individual outcome-based evaluation logic models. During the next 6 months of the grant period, the grant evaluator will be following up with all grant partners as to their progress in achieving their outcomes and goals. The outcomes identified in the logic model developed at the outcome-based evaluation workshop in Washington, D.C. in December 2004 are mostly long-term outcomes, so they have not yet been achieved. However, Outcome #1, which states "Scholarship students graduate with MLS/MLIS degrees within grant period" has begun to have results. Since the last report, two students have completed their studies and received library degrees. One student is now a certified school media specialist and the other student will go into law librarianship.

It is clear from the activities reported under stage 7 that OBE has made its way into many areas of State Library, Division of Library Development everyday activities as planned including plans of service, statewide programs, and partnership activities. Added ways that the stage 7 goals have been met are found in the stage 8 sections on training results that follow.

Stage 8: Train Trainers for Member Libraries' Training has been the major thrust and underpinning for the entire NYSL OBE project. As part of the development of a comprehensive training package reported in Stages 2-6 of this report, a logic model was developed to specify intended outcomes and indicators as well as targets and target achievements for the OBE training. This section of the report will address results related to the *OBE Logic Model for Statewide OBE Training* (Appendix B).

Item 1 in OBE Logic Model

Training Outcome 1: *Immediate Outcome*: Training participants plan OBE measures of intended program outcomes.

Indicator(s)	Data Source	Target Audience (To Whom Indicator is Applied)	Data Intervals	Target Achievement Level (Goal)
# and % of training participants who write at least three clearly defined, measurable outcomes in an OBE plan (logic model) as assessed by a trained reviewer during the workshop and by a final independent exercise.	Trained reviewer rating of all required elements of measurable outcomes.	All who complete the training. N=75	End of workshop	90% N=68

The following chart of OBE basic training results shows that the first intended outcome for OBE training was met and exceeded. Thirteen workshops were held for participants from 60 systems from all areas of New York State. 155 participants completed a two-day workshop and were tested on a final independent exercise that demonstrated ability to write intended outcomes, indicators, data sources, data intervals, targets, and target achievements. 154 completed the exercise successfully. One participant wrote outputs, not outcomes. The overall success rate was 99.4 %. Outcome 1 predicted that 75 systems trainers would be trained in the use of OBE, that 68 (90%) would be successful in writing acceptable OBE plans. The predicted training cohort number of 75 was exceeded by 106.6% and the 90% success prediction was exceeded by 9.4%.

Date	Type of Training	Location	Attendance	Passed Test	Percent
Summer 2004	Basic	Brooklyn	17	17	100%
Fall 2004	Basic	Manhattan	19	18	92.3%
	Basic	Painted Post	12	12	100%
	Basic	Poughkeepsie	12	12	100%
	Basic	Utica	15	15	100%
Spring 2005	Basic	Long Island	6	6	100%
	Basic	Batavia	11	11	100%
	Basic	Saratoga	18	18	100%
Spring 2006	Basic	Dunkirk	11	11	100%
	Basic	Utica	17	17	100%
	Basic	Potsdam	5	5	100%
Fall 2006	Basic	Highland	6	6	100%
	Basic	Painted Post	6	6	100%

Item 2 in OBE Logic Model

Training Outcome 2: *Intermediate Outcome*: Training participants use OBE in their grant applications.

Indicator(s)	Data Source	Target Audience (To Whom Indicator is Applied)	Data Intervals	Target Achievement Level (Goal)
# and % of training participants submit a grant application during a subsequent grant cycle who achieve a normalized score of 90	Grant reviewer rating including inter-rater check to achieve normalized score.	All who complete the training who also submit a grant during a subsequent cycle.	End of grant application review	50% N=37

To evaluate Outcome 2, the plan was to look at the reviewer rating scores on grant applications of individuals who participated in OBE training and who subsequently submitted an acceptable grant application. That did not prove to be a measure of whether or not OBE was part of the approved application because not all applications that scored acceptable for funding were appropriate for OBE. As an alternative all grant LSTA and Gates grant applications for 2005 and 2006 were reviewed for the presence of OBE elements. 2004 applications were examined but they were received before any of the applicants were trained. The review was valuable, however, because it showed that none of those proposals were using OBE elements.

The data presented here are drawn from 65 applications reviewed. The only applications reviewed for the presence of outcomes elements were those received with a stamped date following the training date of the applicant and those that could and should be evaluated using OBE. In that category there were 26 applications. All 26 (100%) contained multiple elements of outcome-based evaluation. Four of them contained outcomes that reached the patron level. It is important to note that in initial training, participants came primarily from systems. Many of them stressed that their mission is to serve member libraries. In the workshops, they were required to write outcomes that reached the patron level. For example, if the system trained librarians to use databases, they would assess the learning that took place and they would follow-up to see if librarians used what they learned. In the workshops they were urged to plan how to ascertain how patrons benefited when the newly trained librarians gave them assistance and/or taught them to use databases independently. Many of the systems librarians felt they had no way to get information about patrons. Four of the 26 applications did advance outcomes to the patron level. As OBE makes its way into the consciousness of the member libraries and as systems' successes in obtaining patron outcomes is observed by the library community, it is expected that more systems will ultimately seek patron outcomes.

When writing indicators that would assess whether participants continued to write OBE plans after the workshops, the focus was on use for LSTA and Gates grant applications and in grant reports. Another indicator should have been written that surveyed participants to find out what other ways they applied their new learning. The training consultant urged participants to share future work. Voluntarily 12 additional evaluation plans (logic models) that were used by participants for applications to other agencies for funding or simply for program management were shared with the consultant.

Item 3 in OBE Logic Model

Training Outcome 3: *Long term Outcome*: Training participants use OBE in their grant reports to show measurable results of technology training programs.

Indicator(s)	Data Source	Target Audience (To Whom Indicator is Applied)	Data Intervals	Target Achievement Level (Goal)
# and % of training participants who received a grant during a subsequent grant cycle who report results of intended outcomes as assessed by a trained reviewer.	Trained reviewer rating	All who complete the training who also received a grant during a subsequent cycle.	End of grant report review	90% N=33

There were 26 of the participants who received grants and reported during the grant cycle under review. To meet the target achievement level of 90%, 23 would have to report outcomes. Outcomes were reported in 17 grant reports (65.4%) Several others referred to outcomes but evaluation data was not available at the time of the report. There continues to be some mixing of the concepts of outputs and outcomes. The language of the grant report form does not lend itself to easy reporting of outcomes. There is no question about predictions or outcomes and indicators.

Of the reports with outcomes, many of the outcomes had to be extracted from a narrative addressing the qualitative results of the project. Five of the reports, however specified outcome statements, indicators, and results and could be considered model reports.

Item 4 in OBE Logic Model

Outcome 4: *Long term Outcome*: Training participants report that follow-up mentoring helped them apply OBE principles better.

Indicator(s)	Data Source	Target Audience (To Whom Indicator is Applied)	Data Intervals	Target Achievement Level (Goal)
# and % of training participants who use follow-up mentoring who score 80 or better on a 100-point evaluation scale	Satisfaction surveys	All training participants who request follow-up mentoring	After 6 months of mentoring service, then annually	90% of training participants who use the service

A formal mentoring service has not yet been established. The training consultant offered at each training session a promise to review any completed evaluation plans (logic models) created after the workshops. Ten evaluation plans were sent electronically to the consultant and feedback was provided. Two other participants sent the consultant Plans of Service to review. Three sent outcomes sections of grant proposals and two sent data instruments. In every case notes of thanks were received and several sent revisions to show that comments had, indeed, been useful. Since there was no official mentoring, those who received informal mentoring were not surveyed.

Unintended Outcome: Advanced Training Added

Several participants expressed the need for advanced training. Many wrote outcome statements and indicators during the basic workshop that called for data instruments that they did not know how to develop. Many had no idea how to report outcomes or how to merge output and outcome data in a report. Instead of individual mentoring two advanced training sessions were offered to those who had successfully completed basic training. The results of advanced training can be reported as unintended but significant outcomes.

Even though the advanced workshops were not originally planned, the trainer wrote outcome statements and indicators before the workshops to provide a prediction for evaluation purposes. The participants came with projects they had developed since initial training. A course requirement was to bring a project that had a completed logic model and required some form of advanced work. We predicted that participants would work on development of data instruments, evaluation timelines, development of reports, or analysis of data. Each participant was expected to end the workshop with one usable product. Results are as follows.

Outcome: Participants apply OBE techniques to individualized projects meeting standards for collecting outcomes.
Indicator 1: # and % participants who complete at least one acceptable OBE product as assessed by trained observers during the workshop and by participant self-assessment at the end of the workshop.
Indicator 2: # and % participants who complete at least one acceptable OBE product as assessed by participant self-report at the end of the workshop.
Target: 21 participants already OBE trained.   **Target Achievement**: 21 (100%)

Results:
Indicator 1:Trained Observers (2) report that 21 participants (100%) achieved the predicted outcome. Most developed multiple products.
Indicator 2: All 21 report satisfactory development of at least one advanced OBE product. Most reported several products developed. The participants were asked to complete open-ended questions to see if they could articulate the value of the training. Specific patterns of response are as follows:

Skills developed during workshop	Number of participants	Percent of participants
Rubric development	15	71.4%
Survey development	15	71.4%
Open-ended question design	15	71.4%
Interpreting survey data using rubric	6	28.6%
Progression of outcomes to checklists to rubrics to survey to analysis	4	19.0%
Distinguishing intended and unintended outcomes and reporting both	10	47.6%
Writing disclaimers to guarantee privacy	15	71.4%
Creating data collection plans	7	33.3%
Refining Outcomes (e.g. recasting in patron terms, distinguishing managerial outcomes from patron impact)	6	28.6%
Developing checklists	14	66.6%
Distinguishing outputs and outcomes and reporting both.	5	23.8%

Products Developed	Most helpful	Least Helpful	Still Want to Learn
Rubrics (15) Surveys (15) Checklists (14) Self-assessment tools (3) Revised outcomes/indicators (6)	One-on-one help from presenters (10) Outcomes refinement (4) Survey development (7) Rubric development (8) Open-ended question design (4) Report writing (5) OBE review (3) Sharing and feedback (9) Application of OBE model to my own work (7)	Group sharing (1) Down time while others were being helped (5) Report writing (2)	Combining outcomes and outputs into comprehensive report (6) Data analysis (6) Data collection (3) More practice developing products (3)

Summary of Advanced OBE Workshops: 21 participants who had received basic training attended two-day advanced training workshops. Each participant (100%) successfully completed at least one product. Most completed several. The products included such things as development of instruments (rubrics, checklists, surveys), OBE reports; data interpretation, data collection plans.						
Date	**Sponsor**	**Type of Training**	**Location**	**Attendance**	**Produced Advanced Products**	**Percent**
Fall 2005	Gates Foundation	Advanced	East Greenbush	10	10	100%
Fall 2006	Gates Foundation	Advanced	East Greenbush	11	11	100%

Stages 9 and 10: Library Systems develop training plans for OBE implementation and System staff train member libraries' staff.

The original plan was that systems trainers would attend the training provided by the State Library and would in turn train member libraries' staff in these two stages. Several variables led to some different action and to a mix of solutions. In some cases the systems did not send their trainers to the initial training. While those individuals may have applied OBE to their areas of responsibility and many of them did, they were not positioned to train member library staff. Others did not feel that the initial two-day training equipped them to train others. Many felt they were still novices, not experts.

Five approaches were taken that attempted to respond to the above reality.
1) Train the Trainer manuals were designed and produced. The manuals provided trainers with commentary to accompany each of the slides in the basic training program. Information was provided to help respond to common issues, problems, misunderstandings, and objections that commonly occur in workshops. Exercises were developed for future trainers to practice how to help trainees improve the elements of and OBE plan as they are working in a workshop setting. Sample evaluation instruments were included. An independent exercise was developed for trainers to test their abilities to identify trainee mistakes and correct them in a positive manner. Ten participants who had attended basic training attended a Train the Trainer workshop in October 2005. Each of these participants also attended an additional advanced training workshop. After 6 days of OBE training in the three types of workshops, these 10 individuals were certified by the State Library as OBE Trainers and listed on the OBE website for systems to contact for member library training.

Summary of Train the Trainer Workshop: Ten participants who had completed basic OBE training attended a two-day Train the Trainer workshop. At the end of the workshop each completed a final independent exercise. The exercise included samples of typical errors made by OBE learners. The participants demonstrated their ability to identify the problems and propose solutions in a manner similar to what would be required of an OBE trainer. All ten (100%) completed the exercise successfully and were certified by the New York State Library, Division of Library Development as OBE Trainers.						
Date	**Sponsor**	**Type of Training**	**Location**	**Attendance**	**Passed Test & Certified**	**Percent**
Fall 2005	Gates Foundation	Train the Trainer	East Greenbush	10	10	100%

2) The Division of Library Development chose to continue to offer basic training workshops, now open directly to member libraries. More are planned for 2007.

3) Individual Certified Trainers have organized and offered workshops in their areas for all types of librarians including academic and medical librarians. Two such workshops served 31 participants. Those reported learner success with OBE applications and an average satisfaction rating of 4.1 on a 5 pt. Scale. The next step is to follow up with all the certified trainers and the systems to determine how further training will occur.

4) OBE Website: The New York State Library Website has an OBE section accessed on the Division of Library Development homepage. The website contains the OBE basic training program, the Train the Trainer manuals, a report on OBE activities including workshops, the list of certified OBE trainers, the State Library's Ten Stage Training Plan, and links to other OBE information. Individuals who wish to work independently to learn OBE can use the manuals on the website.

5) Gates/WebJunction 2005-2006 Rural Sustainability Program for rural and small libraries serving fewer than 25,000 people: The State Library incorporated OBE awareness training in this program for rural libraries. In a series of 11 regional workshops given by a State Library Certified Trainer who participated in the Train the Trainer workshop, 497 participants were required to develop an action plan with an evaluation component and were introduced to the concepts of OBE.

Overall Report Summary

The State Library, Division of Library Development OBE accomplishments have surpassed what was originally included in the LSTA Five-Year Plan. When the plan was written, there was a commitment to incorporate OBE evaluation methodology into the operations of New York's libraries, but no specified means to achieve that goal. The subsequent Ten Stage Plan to roll out OBE and the OBE Logic Model made OBE goals concrete. The Division of Library Development set out systematically to achieve all aspects of the Training Plan and the Logic Model with a high degree of success. The process has remained fluid, with revisions and changes continually being made to respond to the needs of New York's libraries.

OBE Training has included all 73 systems across New York State as follows:

Type of Training	Number of Participants
IMLS training of State Library staff	25
Pilot training of systems' staff	15
OBE 2-day Basic Training	155 from 60 systems
Train the Trainer 2-day workshops	10 (of original 155 trainees)
Advanced Training 2-day workshops	21 (of original 155 trainees)
Gates Regional Workshops	497
Totals	723 (minus 31 overlapping = 692)

 OBE practice has made its way into several LSTA grant program applications, data gathering, and reports. It has been used for some plans of service and for rural library action plans. It has been used by some systems to seek funds from other than LSTA sources and by some for general management activities. It clearly has become part of the consciousness of librarians in New York State.

Recommendations for New Five-Year Plan:

It is recommended that the State Library:

1. Continue to provide direct training to library system and member library staff.
2. Follow-up with certified trainers to identify future needs and report results of their training efforts.

3. Follow closely and participate in federal-level efforts to identify outcomes for major categories of library activity such as Summer Reading. Communicate with the library community as available so that member libraries need not "reinvent the wheel."
4. Communicate best practices, e.g. well-written outcomes reports to library community.
5. Survey the systems regarding best future approaches for OBE training.
6. Revise grant forms (applications and reports) to reflect OBE terminology.
7. Integrate OBE methodology with Plans of Service requirements.

Note the last two recommendations grow out of comments made by many workshop participants that OBE is difficult, a lot of work, and not really "required."

Appendix A
Outcome-Based Evaluation Training Plan

Rationale

The New York State Library (NYSL) proposes to develop a training package to help the staff of the State Library and library systems to build their capacity for using results-oriented evaluation in their State and Federal programs. Over the long term, the NYSL expects the training to spread to the systems' member libraries as well, and this plan includes a "train-the-trainer" component to assist the systems with that long-term goal.

During the process of evaluating the first five years of the LSTA program, the NYSL learned through its evaluation consultant and evaluation facilitator that there is a great need for outcome-based evaluation throughout the library community. Current data being collected is insufficient for measurement of the impact of LSTA on the library services of the State as these data are focused more on the activities of those providing the services than on user outcomes. More and more the numerous funding agencies (State government, Federal government, local government, private corporations) are asking library service providers to show the impact of their services. At the same time, the library professionals are not trained in how to do this. Even people with educational backgrounds find the demands of results-oriented evaluation confusing and difficult.

New York State's libraries and library systems are facing some difficult times over the next two to three years, as are many libraries in other states. The NYSL believes that it is even more important in hard times than good ones for librarians to be able to show evidence that libraries have value for their users and that programs libraries offer them affect their lives. This evidence can be presented to funders in justifying budgets. It can also be presented to the users themselves to help organize users as advocates for libraries.

Finally, the NYSL, looking ahead to the next five-year evaluation of LSTA, believes that the process of training librarians in outcome-based evaluation will improve that next major evaluation. Linking the results viewpoint to advocacy will also help the NYSL in implementing its new advocacy plan.

As a result of identifying weaknesses in its evaluation of programs in the first five-year evaluation of LSTA, the NYSL affirmed its intent to develop a comprehensive results-based approach in its new Five-Year Plan. It expects to adopt OBE methodology broadly for its work, not just for LSTA programs. The NYSL proposes a multi-stage project to train key participants in OBE as described in the following pages. There are eight stages. The timeline for the whole plan depends on setting the date for the workshop in Stage 1. Once the training in Stage 1 is complete, the NYSL expects to implement Stages 2-6 within a year to eighteen months. The remaining stages will probably take another two to three years.

Training Plan

Stage 1

Overall goal: To increase NYSL staff capacity to use an Outcome Based Evaluation model to measure outcomes of all New York's library programs, State and Federal.

Target audience: NYSL staff who profess an interest in OBE and are willing to apply their OBE knowledge to the programs they administer. An evaluation consultant working with the NYSL on the training package will also be included in this stage.

Desired outcomes:

1. NYSL staff will understand the components of OBE and be able to build a logic model.
2. NYSL staff will be able to write good outcomes and indicators for at least one program they administer.

NYSL staff person: Sara McCain

Dates: Sometime in June, 2003 would be best as the rest of the summer will be taken up with New York's FY 2004 LSTA grant applications. Staff could be available from May 26 through June, except for June 2-4 when a number of staff will be attending a public library system conference.

The NYSL requests the following from the Federal Institute of Museum and Library Services:

1. Trainers to conduct a two-day introduction to OBE--in Albany--for selected staff from the Division of Library Development (LD) and the Research Library (RL) and the evaluation consultant. The three LD staff who have already attended training in Washington will also participate in this training because they will be part of the LD project team that will implement Stages 2-8.
2. Training materials with individual copies for each attendee.
3. Any prerequisite homework assignments (readings, exercises, etc.) that attendees would have to complete or read before the training.
4. Any follow-up activities that attendees would have to complete.
5. Follow-up by either email or telephone to review attendees' completed assignments and advise changes and revisions.

Stage 2

Objective: NYSL OBE project team will develop a comprehensive OBE training package.

The elements of this package include:

- Rationale for training including how OBE provides a stronger basis for advocacy and helps make tough decisions in hard times.
- Pre-requisite component that participants will be expected to arrive at training having completed (advance homework).
- Instructor/trainer manual.
- Learner toolkit (Project team will review available toolkits or materials available from other states before developing something new.)
- Participants in the training in Stage 1 will serve as reviewers of all prototype materials.
- NYSL will ask IMLS to review the prototype training materials.

Stage 3

Objective: Test training package

Use the comprehensive training package to train library system staff with a focus on technology projects, such as technology training. This type of project was the focus of the Outcomes Logic Model prepared by LD staff for their two IMLS training events. The trainers for this stage may include the evaluation consultant, some NYSL staff, and contract trainers. The project team will provide some follow-up assistance to the library system staff to help them complete any assignments from the training workshop. They will also help them as the system staff begin implementation of OBE.

Stage 4

Objective: Conduct review of training

During the training events and follow-up calls, etc., the project team will:

- Capture applications issues that arise during training.
- Analyze obstacles and barriers to implementation.
- Capture ideas for revising training materials.

Stage 5

Objective: Provide advanced training and technical assistance

The NYSL will request from IMLS a one-day workshop in Albany for hands-on problem-solving of issues identified during Stage 4 for a small number of selected system and LD staff who can represent the range of issues. The NYSL may also request some follow-up technical assistance after this workshop by IMLS by email or telephone.

Stage 6

Objective: Revise training package based on testing experience and hands-on assistance from Stage 5.

Use the results of the problem-solving workshop and feedback on initial training to revise trainer and learner materials. Publish comprehensive training package after this stage is concluded.

Stage 7

Objective: Implement OBE throughout NYSL and library systems.

NYSL staff will use OBE for all guidelines for plans, applications and reports. Plans and reports will reflect the training provided to library system staff and will yield a rich resource for planning, decision-making, and advocacy.

Stage 8

Objective: Train trainers for member libraries' training.

Conduct training workshops of one trainer for each system and give each trainer a training template for conducting training for member libraries. Systems would now have trainers and tested training materials for training member libraries and other system staff.

Stage 9

Objective: Library systems will develop training plans for implementing OBE in their member libraries.

The systems will submit a training plan to the NYSL that outlines how they will implement the OBE training in their system. Library Development staff will provide technical assistance in refining the plans.

Stage 10

Objective: System staff will train member libraries' staff.

Library Development staff will provide technical assistance to the systems in carrying out this responsibility. They will also assist the system staff in evaluating the effectiveness of their training.

Appendix B
OBE Logic Model for Statewide OBE Training

Training Outcome 1: *Immediate Outcome*: Training participants plan OBE measures of intended program outcomes.

Indicator(s)	Data Source	Target Audience (To Whom Indicator is Applied)	Data Intervals	Target Achievement Level (Goal)
# and % of training participants who write at least three clearly defined, measurable outcomes in an OBE plan (logic model) as assessed by a trained reviewer during the workshop and by a final independent exercise.	Trained reviewer rating of all required elements of measurable outcomes.	All who complete the training. N=75	End of workshop	90% N=68

Training Outcome 2: *Intermediate Outcome*: Training participants use OBE in their grant applications.

Indicator(s)	Data Source	Target Audience (To Whom Indicator is Applied)	Data Intervals	Target Achievement Level (Goal)
# and % of training participants submit a grant application during a subsequent grant cycle who achieve a normalized score of 90	Grant reviewer rating including inter-rater check to achieve normalized score.	All who complete the training who also submit a grant during a subsequent cycle.	End of grant application review	50% N=37

Training Outcome 3: *Long term Outcome*: Training participants use OBE in their grant reports to show measurable results of technology training programs.

Indicator(s)	Data Source	Target Audience (To Whom Indicator is Applied)	Data Intervals	Target Achievement Level (Goal)
# and % of training participants who received a grant during a subsequent grant cycle who report results of intended outcomes as assessed by a trained reviewer.	Trained reviewer rating	All who complete the training who also received a grant during a subsequent cycle.	End of grant report review	90% N=33

Outcome 4: *Long term Outcome*: Training participants report that follow-up mentoring helped them apply OBE principles better.

Indicator(s)	Data Source	Target Audience (To Whom Indicator is Applied)	Data Intervals	Target Achievement Level (Goal)
# and % of training participants who use follow-up mentoring who score 80 or better on a 100-point evaluation scale	Satisfaction surveys	All training participants who request follow-up mentoring	After 6 months of mentoring service, then annually	90% of training participants who use the service

The New York State Library
Division of Library Development
2004