

Wisconsin Public Library Consortium (WPLC) WATF Grant Evaluation Report

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April 30, 2002

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Executive Summary for Wisconsin Public Library Consortium (WPLC) NetLibrary User Evaluation

The evaluation of netLibrary use was conducted in two stages. The initial stage surveyed all WPLC registered users of netLibrary. The second stage involved training new users, and assessing their experiences after two-weeks. Both stages indicate that the overall perception of netLibrary among WPLC users is positive. People view netLibrary as a valuable resource. NetLibrary's potential seems to have generated goodwill with users regardless of age or computer expertise, but two concerns consistently emerged that influenced this goodwill: The usability of the website and the size of the collection. In addition, a lack of promotion for netLibrary was also a consistent, albeit less sizable, concern of users.

During this evaluation young adults were identified as an underserved library user population. However, this evaluation also gives strong support to the possibility of using netLibrary to serve this same population. The young adults in this evaluation enjoyed the convenience of the online interface and the general research-focus of netLibrary materials. One suggestion would be to promote netLibrary in schools and partner this promotion with organizations that also sponsor youth outreach and scholastic development for young adults such as the Boys and Girls Clubs. The young adults of today become the taxpayers of tomorrow who will shape the role of public libraries in the future. NetLibrary has the potential to foster relationships between young adults and their public library, and this potential should not be overlooked.

Wisconsin Public Library Consortium (WPLC) WATF Grant Evaluation

Introduction

Public libraries have an ongoing responsibility to provide citizens with the information they need. New technologies provide the potential for libraries to serve citizens with greater availability of material and greater convenience in accessing this material. This evaluation serves as a compliment to a previous grant evaluation conducted by Himmel and Wilson (2001) that examined perception and adoption of new technologies of WPLC librarians who provide service to the public. This evaluation focuses on the receiving end of this technology. Specifically, this evaluation will examine patrons' perceptions and use of the netLibrary service.

Evaluation Overview/ Goals

The first goal of this evaluation focuses on evaluating user perception of netLibrary. Outcomes from this evaluation component will identify barriers that inhibit use of netLibrary as well as positive aspects of netLibrary. The second component of this evaluation focuses on evaluating the cooperative project management component of the grant in an effort to determine which partnerships were successful and unsuccessful. Outcomes from this evaluation component will identify factors that enhanced or hampered partnership development in an effort to inform future partnership activities. In sum, this evaluation will provide detailed user information on netLibrary and detailed information on the WATF grant partnership activities to date. This information can subsequently be integrated to form a model that libraries can use to facilitate the successful adoption of netLibrary technology.

General Methodology

In order to achieve the larger goals outlined in the evaluation overview, this evaluation will take place in three distinct sections: 1) an Internet-based survey of currently registered netLibrary users; 2) a controlled evaluation where a cohort of new netLibrary users will be trained and examined across time, and 3) structured interviews with key players in libraries slated to develop community partnerships. Procedure and results from each section of the evaluation will be discussed in more detail in the subsequent pages.

Evaluation Section 1: Online Survey of Registered netLibrary Users

The goal of this section is to examine patrons who registered with netLibrary and either continued or discontinued use of netLibrary, and to take a current snapshot of netLibrary attitudes to try to assess different barriers that may be contributing to low netLibrary use and to discover netLibrary features that users like.

I. Sample Characteristics

A 27-item² web-based survey consisting of both close-ended items and open-ended items was developed. This survey was designed to assess various factors that could influence netLibrary use (perceptions of netLibrary's web interface and ease of use, perceptions about the netLibrary collection, and level of training) as well as basic demographic information (county of origin, technological comfort, age, and gender). The survey ended with open-ended questions for participants that directed them to focus on a favorite netLibrary feature, most disliked netLibrary feature, and an overall comment about netLibrary. All of the open-ended comments will be categorized and provided on request. However, only comments from the overall open-ended question are categorized and provided in the appendix at the end of this report.

The sample was self-selected through an e-mail solicitation that was sent to all registered netLibrary users affiliated with WPLC. This reduced to 5,646 unique e-mail addresses. Participants were offered no compensation for completing the short, anonymous survey. 736 individuals completed the online survey. This constitutes a survey response rate of 13.04%. This response rate is much better than expected, and it should be noted that this does not include 112 e-mails returned as invalid or undeliverable, 29 people who obviously thought that the survey was referring to their local library branch, and 3 individuals who wrote the evaluator directly to say that they were no longer residing in the state of Wisconsin. Of the survey respondents, 207 individuals were employed by libraries. In order to examine an unbiased user population, library personnel will be excluded from subsequent analysis.³

Participants were almost equally representative of both genders ($N = 529$; 252 females, 263 males, 14 provided no gender information). The mean age of the participants was 43.67 years ($SD = 13.93$)⁴. The participant ages ranged from 11 – 86 years. Additionally, the sample seems to be valid and proportionate from the various geographic regions of the state. Using the 1990 Wisconsin Census categorizations of counties (Metro Core, Metro, Urban-Non Metro, Rural adjacent to Metro and Rural) we can see that the sample is roughly proportionate to the census data. A percentage comparison of census data and the sample distribution from the current survey is provided in Table 1.

² The survey was intentionally kept short in order to increase participation rates which are typically low for online surveys.

³ While these individuals employed by libraries are being excluded from the main focus this initial analysis, data from this group will be provided to add depth to the previous examination of NetLibrary perceptions from library employees conducted by Himmel & Wilson (2001).

⁴ On the face this would seem to dispel the notion that NetLibrary is technology used by a younger demographic. In part this is true, but the mean age in this study may also reflect typical library users who heard about this product. In short, insufficient promotion may result in a demographic similar to a typical patron rather than the expected younger demographic.

Table1: Comparison of Survey Response Sample to 1990 Census Sample by County Type

	% of WI State Population (1990 Census)	% of netLibrary Survey Response
Metro Core	27.3%	11.50%
Metro	40.8	61.70
Urban/ Non-Metro	10.7	8.70
Rural adjacent to Metro	13.9	13.60
Rural	7.2	4.50
TOTAL SAMPLE SIZE=	4,891,769	529

It should be noted that the moderate overrepresentation of Metro regions and the moderate under representation of Metro Core regions could accurately reflect netLibrary users. Ownership of home computers is much lower in Metro core areas than Metro areas, and users routinely cited the convenience of home access as a primary asset of the netLibrary service. (For a breakdown of respondents by county, SEE APPENDIX 1)

Another important sample characteristic to consider is what type of Internet access an individual has at home. The type of access could play an important role in the perception and use of netLibrary. The vast majority of respondents use dial-up access. The breakdown of access type in the current sample is provided in Table 2⁵.

Table 2: Type of Home Internet Access

<u>Type of Internet Access</u>	<u>Frequency</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Dial-up Connection	348	65.8%
Cable Modem	115	21.7
A DSL line	47	8.9
No Home Access	4	0.8
Other	5	0.9
No access type reported	10	1.9
TOTAL	529	100.0

II. Sample Characteristics and netLibrary use

After identifying characteristics of the sample, it is important to examine how these characteristics influence netLibrary use. With dial-up connections being the most prevalent type of access, individuals were asked if they would be more likely to use netLibrary if they had faster Internet access. Table 3 contains the response results.

⁵ It should be pointed out that in metro, urban –non metro, and metro core counties the percentage of respondents with high-speed internet access (Cable and DSL) was 30% In rural and rural counties adjacent to metro counties this percentage dropped to 9%.

Table 3: Impact of access type on netLibrary use

“If I had a faster Internet connection, I would use netLibrary more...?”		
<u>Response Category</u>	<u>Response Frequency</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
Strongly Agree	46	8.7%
Somewhat Agree	77	14.6
Somewhat Disagree	103	19.5
Strongly Disagree	166	31.4
<i>No response indicated</i>	137	25.9
TOTAL	529	100.0

Table 3 indicates that the speed of their Internet connection did not influence their use of NetLibrary. Therefore, other factors must influence netLibrary use. It was believed that the type of training that individuals received would influence their netLibrary use. Of the 529 individuals who responded to the survey only 102 (19.3%) reported that they had received any type of training. The exact type of training is detailed in Table 4

Table 4: Type of Training Received

“What type of NetLibrary training did you receive...?”		
<u>Response Category</u>	<u>Response Frequency</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
A hands-on class	14	13.7%
A lecture	3	2.9
Individualized instruction	54	52.9
Online tutorial	21	20.6
<i>Other</i>	10	9.8
TOTAL	102	100.0

The vast majority of participants received training via individualized instruction with a librarian. Participants were also asked if the type of training that they received (or did not receive) influenced their netLibrary use. Results from this question are in Table 5⁶.

Table 5: Training and netLibrary Use

“I would use netLibrary more if I had had better training...?”		
<u>Response Category</u>	<u>Response Frequency</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
Strongly agree	71	13.4%
Somewhat Agree	99	18.7
Somewhat Disagree	116	21.9
Strongly Disagree	175	33.1
<i>No Response Indicated</i>	68	12.9
TOTAL	529	100.0

⁶ It should be noted that this table includes individuals who received training and those who did not receive training. But even of the 54 individuals who received individualized training, 12 individuals (22.3%) strongly or somewhat agreed with the statement “I would use NetLibrary more if I had received better training”

While over half of the respondents disagree that better training would have influenced their netLibrary use, a sizable percentage (32.1%) indicated that better training would cause them to use netLibrary more. One of the final sample characteristics of interest to examine is how individuals are using netLibrary. For example, only 6.6% of surveyed individuals print pages to read offline, while the remainder read pages on their computer screens. Additionally, 55% of individuals typically connect directly to netLibrary.com to conduct searches and do not enter through their library page. However, the most useful information may come from an examination of how individuals are using netLibrary itself. Participants were asked if they use netLibrary to search for specific items. Results from this question are reported in Table 6.⁷

Table 6:netLibrary Use

“When I use netLibrary I search for specific items....?”		
<u>Response Category</u>	<u>Response Frequency</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
Strongly agree	233	44.0%
Somewhat Agree	172	32.5
Somewhat Disagree	39	7.4
Strongly Disagree	18	3.4
<i>No Response Indicated</i>	67	12.7
TOTAL	529	100.0

From this response we see that the vast majority of individuals search for specific items rather than browsing through the collection. This could bolster the notion that netLibrary’s value lies in its ability to serve as a source online for patron reference from home.

III. User Perception of netLibrary

At this point we understand some characteristics of the sample and we understand how these characteristics influence netLibrary use and even the way netLibrary is used. What this analysis does not address is how users feel about netLibrary and whether they view this as a valuable resource. Specifically this could address the issue of why 40.4 % of those who completed the survey used netLibrary two times or less after registering for an account. In order to do this we must first understand which factors influence the perceptions of netLibrary and to what degree. The factors that will be examined with respect to netLibrary perceptions are: (a) perceptions of the netLibrary web interface and (b) perceptions of the collection.

Scale Development

A maximum likelihood confirmatory factor analysis was conducted on survey items in order to develop two scales: a scale to measure perceptions of the netLibrary website interface and a scale to measure perceptions of the netLibrary collection. The confirmatory factor analysis was conducted with the goal of producing unidimensional scales. Items that did not fit the model were deleted based on modification indices and factor loadings. Overall alpha reliability coefficients for these scales were quite good .85 (perceptions of netLibrary website), and .83 (perceptions of netLibrary collection).⁸

⁷ It should be noted that if results from the focus group can be applied to this finding we can say that people were interested in browsing the collection, but constraints of the interface limited this ability.

⁸ Generally, what these reliabilities tell us is that we can have 85% confidence in the validity of the website scale and 83% confidence in the collection perception scale.

Results

Aside from examinations that considered the nature and relevance of the sample (previously sections I & II.), this analysis was interested in controlling these sample characteristics and examining what unique contribution perceptions of the web page interface and perceptions of the netLibrary collection make toward overall attitudes of netLibrary's usefulness. In order to examine the unique impact of the scale variables, partial correlations (r) were examined with respect to a dependant variable (DV). For this analysis the DV is an item that asked participants rate on a scale how much they agree or disagreed with the following statement: "Overall, NetLibrary is a useful resource." Results of this item can be seen in Table 7.

Table7: Frequency Breakdown of Dependant Variable

"Overall, netLibrary is a useful resource...?"		
<u>Response Category</u>	<u>Response Frequency</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
Strongly Agree	189	35.7%
Somewhat Agree	206	38.9
Somewhat Disagree	67	12.7
Strongly Disagree	20	3.8
<i>No response indicated</i>	47	8.9
TOTAL	529	100.0

The following analyses seek to examine the unique contribution that each of the scale variables lends to response items on this item. The first analysis examines the unique contribution of perceptions of website usability. In this first examination, age, county type, type of training and type of access were all controlled. The partial correlation between the perceptions of website usability scale and the DV is large and significant, $r = .715$, $p < .01$. In other words, even when we control for the sample demographic characteristics, the correlation between perceptions of website usability accounts for more than 71% of the variance associated with ratings of netLibrary as a useful resource. In other words, people's perception of the netLibrary website drastically influences their perception of netLibrary as a valuable resource. This correlation drops only slightly when we also control for an individual's self-report ratings of their skill with-- and comfort using-- computers, $r = .685$, $p < .00$. Perceptions of website usability still accounts for over 68% of the variance in the DV regardless of computer experience. Therefore, perceptions of the website, regardless of demographic and computer-use characteristics, significantly influences perceptions of netLibrary as a valuable resource. This speaks to the fact that netLibrary needs to be concerned with usability and design issues. The nature of individuals perceptions of the website is more specifically articulated in participants' open-ended comments about the interface and the netLibrary reader specifically (SEE ATTACHED APPENDICES). It is also important to note that even individuals who felt that netLibrary was a valuable resource, and who found the website easy to use, still offered open-ended comments relating to interface and collection improvement.⁹

⁹ The mean score on the usability scale was 2.42 (SD=1.02). While slightly favorable, this is very average for a 4-point scale. Almost exactly half of the participants thought the interface was sufficient or better, the other half thought the NetLibrary interface was insufficient or worse. NOTE: For this scale, a rating of 1 indicates the most dissatisfaction with the interface and a rating of 4 would indicate most satisfaction with the interface.

In order to get a more concrete sense of perceptions that users had of the netLibrary interface, Table 8 provides a breakdown of an item that asked individuals to rate the usability of the website. We see that most people found the netLibrary web page easy to navigate. But the fact that 32.3% of individuals did not find the web pages easy to navigate, underscores a potential for improvement with the netLibrary web interface.

Table 8: perceptions of netLibrary interface

“The netLibrary web pages are difficult to navigate...?”		
<u>Response Category</u>	<u>Response Frequency</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
Strongly Agree	62	8.4%
Somewhat Agree	176	23.9
Somewhat Disagree	241	32.7
Strongly Disagree	180	24.5
<i>No response indicated</i>	77	10.5
TOTAL	529	100.0

The second analysis examines the unique contribution that perceptions of the netLibrary collection have on overall ratings of netLibrary’s value¹⁰. In this first examination, age, county type, type of training, type of access, website usability scale and computer use characteristics were all controlled. The partial correlation the perceptions of selection and ratings of netLibrary usefulness is significant, $r = .097$, $p < .05$. In other words, even when we control for the sample demographic characteristics, the correlation between perceptions of netLibrary’s collection accounts for more than 9% of the variance associated with ratings of netLibrary as a useful resource. The degree to which individuals felt the netLibrary collection was small is seen in the results of a close-ended question that asked individuals to respond to the statement, “The selection of books available on netLibrary is too small.” Results can be seen in Table 9.

Table 9: netLibrary Collection

“The selection of books available on netLibrary is too small...”		
<u>Response Category</u>	<u>Response Frequency</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
Strongly Agree	184	25.0%
Somewhat Agree	245	33.3
Somewhat Disagree	142	19.3
Strongly Disagree	74	10.1
<i>No response indicated</i>	91	12.4
TOTAL	529	100.0

This is perhaps the most dramatic finding of the study. This question illustrates that the vast majority of individuals believe that the netLibrary collection is too small. The large percentage of patrons that still view netLibrary as a valuable resource speaks to the fact that people view netLibrary in a maturing process.

¹⁰ The mean score on the netLibrary collection scale was 2.13 (SD=1.02). This is actually slightly unfavorable for a 4-point scale. NOTE: For this scale, a rating of 1 indicates the most dissatisfaction with the collection and a rating of 4 would indicate most satisfaction with the collection.

However, if the collection remains underdeveloped it is quite possible that this good will would deteriorate and perceptions of the collection would more seriously contribute to overall ratings of netLibrary's worth.

Comments regarding the collection were by far the most frequent comment that was provided in open-ended comments for improvement. The exact nature of comments can be seen in detail in Appendix 3. This analysis highlights the importance that the patron interface of netLibrary and the available collection on netLibrary play in perceptions of overall usefulness. Taken together these factors can account for over 78% of the variance in ratings of the overall value ratings of netLibrary.

IV. Do Librarian Views of netLibrary Differ from Patron Views?

One very interesting aspect of this survey is that we also have information from 207 individuals employed by libraries across the state. When we compare views of librarians and patrons there are some significant differences on several questions. Results of the significant t-tests conducted between patrons and library employees is provided in Table 10

Table 10: User and Library Employee Comparison

<u>Question</u>	<u>User Mean Score (SD)</u>	<u>Employee Mean Score (SD)</u>	<u>2-tailed Significance (T-test results)</u>
1) The selection of books available on netLibrary is small	1.82 (1.15)	2.08 (1.14)	p = .006
2) The netLibrary webpage is difficult to navigate	2.46 (1.25)	2.69 (1.19)	p = .026
3) I would use netLibrary more if I had had better training	2.49 (1.40)	2.78 (1.31)	p = .011
4) The selection of materials on netLibrary is not current	2.03 (1.36)	2.52 (1.29)	p = .000

Table Note: These t-tests are based on a scale where 1=strongly agree; 2 = somewhat agree; 3= somewhat disagree and 4= strongly disagree. Therefore, higher numbers register stronger disagreement. These analyses also assume equal variances.

What Table 10 tells us is that for these four questions there is a statistically significant difference between library patrons and library employees such that, on average, library employees are more positive than the patrons about netLibrary use. However, it is important to point out that on all of the other survey questions, there was no significant difference between library employees and netLibrary users who were not employed by libraries.

V. Conclusions

What this component of the evaluation shows is that there is currently a large sentiment that netLibrary is a valuable resource by library patrons. But this feeling of goodwill is qualified by two major concerns. First, there is a concern by patrons regarding the usability of the website. NetLibrary should be taking steps to simplify its interface and increase usability testing of its site. The second concern is the collection. A vast majority of individuals view the collection as too small and out of date. A primary recommendation is to expand the collection and even utilize a simple patron selection process to build the collection. Finally, promotion was voiced as a major concern from current users (SEE APPENDIX 3). A comprehensive promotion plan should be enacted in conjunction with netLibrary.

Evaluation Section 2: Controlled Cohort Examination

The goal of this section is to examine patrons using netLibrary in real time by training a zero history group and following up 2 weeks after their training. This cohort design provides a nice compliment to the online survey by providing data for comparison to the Section1 survey results by allowing a more detailed examination of key demographic variables of interest, and by providing a format that allows for a more detailed follow-up to pinpoint individuals' likes and dislikes of netLibrary.

I. Sample Characteristics

Thirty-two participants were recruited and paid \$40 for their participation (\$20 at initial training and \$20 at follow up meeting/focus group). In order to be selected, participants completed a short screener survey to select on the demographic characteristics of interest and some key extraneous factors (i.e. do they have access to/use a computer in their home?). Groups were solicited and created in both a metro community and a rural community. Groups were created on an age variable ("Adult"; >40 years and "Youth", <20 years) in order to: a) better understand if age plays a role in the adoption of this technology and b) examine the younger group as a currently under-served population of the public library and future client base. The rural and metro communities each had one "adult" and one "youth" group. Finally, individuals were either assigned to receive individualized instruction in netLibrary (the most common type of training individuals received in the online survey sample) or individuals were trained in a group of six individuals. This was done to assess training strategies that may affect adoption of the netLibrary technology. The same trainer conducted all of the individual and group trainings.

Adult participants were recruited in the libraries and community through advertisements in community bulletins and advertisements in the libraries themselves¹¹. Younger participants were solicited from local high schools in the same city/town as the test library. Table 11 provides a breakdown of average cohort age by location.

Table 11: Average Age Comparison (N=32)

<u>Age Grouping</u>	<u>Rural</u> (Spring Green Public Library)	<u>Metro</u> (Sun Prairie Public Library)	<i>MEAN</i>
ADULT	54.63 (SD= 8.43)	44.42 (SD= 6.61)	49.52 (SD= 9.02)
YOUTH	17.44 (SD= .56)	18.53 (SD= 1.90)	17.98 (SD= 1.47)
<i>MEAN</i>	36.04 (SD= 20.05)	31.47 (SD= 14.17)	

Table Note: Each cell mean is composed of 8 individuals. In other words, the overall N= 32, and each specific age group n= 16.

This table shows that the rural population was slightly older than the urban population. It is highly likely that the mean adult ages reflect the typical users for each library, but without additional evidence this is largely speculative. In any event, the groups are similar enough for our comparison purposes.

¹¹ A special thanks should be given to Mary Jo Warnke for her help in recruitment for Spring Green, and to Bev Kennedy for her recruitment help in Sun Prairie and for conducting all of the netLibrary trainings for this study. Without their efforts this component of the evaluation would have been impossible.

Additionally, this analysis was interested in examining the adoption of netLibrary technology for underserved populations, or populations who rarely utilize their public library. The majority of adults in the sample reported themselves as regular library users, but the majority of youths in the sample reported that they do not regularly use the library. In fact, many of the youths in the sample admitted that this survey was the first time they had been inside their public library. Table 12 illustrates this by providing a mean comparison on two questions that relate to an individual's interest in their community library.

Table 12: Interest in Library by Age Grouping

Question	Adult Mean Score (SD)	Youth Mean Score (SD)	2-tailed Significance (T-test results)
1) I believe my library is an essential part of my community	1.19 (.40)	1.63 (.72)	p = .042
2) I am a regular user of my public library	1.50 (.89)	2.50 (.97)	p = .005
3) The public library is a vital resource for me.	1.63 (.96)	2.13 (.96)	p = .150 ¹²

Table Note: These t-tests are based on a scale where 1=strongly agree; 2 = somewhat agree; 3= somewhat disagree and 4= strongly disagree. Therefore, higher numbers register stronger disagreement. These analyses also assume equal variances. Overall N= 32, group n= 16.

From this table we see that the youth population is not a frequent user of the library and do not even see the library as a vital resource. These results may codify a notion that libraries are not serving young people. Young adults will be referred to as an underserved population for the remainder of this analysis.

In this study, participants had to meet selection criteria. Individuals were selected only if they had access to a home PC with Internet capabilities. While the initial online survey found that type of connection had very little impact on perceptions of netLibrary's overall worth (see Section I, Table 3), this examination wanted to control availability of access as a potential mediating factor in the analyses. This experimental population mirrored the larger sample with the vast majority of individuals in the sample having dial-up access (71.87%). The remainder used cable modems¹³

II. Specific Group Differences

The purpose of this experimental examination is to examine differences in the three experimental groups. The groups that will be compared will be: metro residents/rural residents; adults/youths; and individualized netLibrary training/group netLibrary training. Each of these groups will be compared, with particular attention being paid to issues of the collection, the interface and overall perception of netLibrary.¹⁴

The first analysis examined differences between metro residents and rural residents. When age and computer comfort level were controlled, only one item remained significant. The remaining significant

¹² While this item does not represent traditional significance level of $p < .05$, it approaches significance with this small sample and the relevance of the question merits its inclusion in this report.

¹³ Interestingly, but perhaps not surprisingly, the ratio of cable modems was double in the metro sample ($n=6$) compared to the rural sample ($n=3$).

¹⁴ Interface, collection and overall perception will be the key factors for comparison given the fact that these factors proved to be essential elements in the initial online survey.

question related to the size of the collection and was significant only across adults in the sample. This result is summarized in Table 13.

Table 13: Collection Difference by Geographic Region

<u>Question</u>	<u>Metro Mean Score (SD)</u>	<u>Rural Mean Score (SD)</u>	<u>2-tailed Significance (T-test results)</u>
1) The selection of materials on netLibrary is too small.	2.25 (1.04)	3.29 (.76)	p = .048

Table Note: These t-tests are based on a scale where 1=strongly agree; 2 = somewhat agree; 3= somewhat disagree and 4= strongly disagree. Therefore, higher numbers register stronger disagreement. This difference was found only with adults. Given the small sample size, the fact that significance remained robust indicates a likely true effect in the population. These analyses also assume equal variances.

What Table 13 suggests is that metro adults were more likely to view the collection as small. This could be because metro adults were conducting more detailed searches, it could be that metro library users are used to having more resources available, or this could be an anomaly of this sample. The current examination offers no definitive explanation of this finding. Future examinations of netLibrary should consider this phenomenon.

When controlling for geographic region, training type and computer comfort, an examination of age groupings yielded some significant differences with relation to the collection and netLibrary interface. These results are summarized in Table 14.

Table 14: netLibrary differentiated by age grouping

<u>Question</u>	<u>Adult Mean Score (SD)</u>	<u>Youth Mean Score (SD)</u>	<u>2-tailed Significance (T-test results)</u>
1) The selection of materials on netLibrary is too small	1.69 (.79)	2.73 (1.03)	p = .004
2) I always find what I want on netLibrary.	3.06 (.25)	2.47 (.99)	p = .071 ¹⁵
3) NetLibrary pages are difficult to navigate	3.06 (1.00)	3.63 (.62)	p = .065 ¹³

Table Note: These t-tests are based on a scale where 1=strongly agree; 2 = somewhat agree; 3= somewhat disagree and 4= strongly disagree. Therefore, higher numbers register stronger disagreement. These analyses also assume equal variances. Overall N= 32, group n= 16.

What this table illustrates is that the youth population (the underserved population), does not perceive the selection to be as small as adults do. Youths also find what they want more than adults and find the netLibrary web page easier to navigate. In short, the younger population seems more receptive to adopting this technology when compared to their adult counterparts. This suggests that netLibrary could serve as a vehicle for serving this traditionally underserved population.

¹⁵ While these items approach significance, they do not meet the strict criteria of $p < .05$. However, given the small sample size ($N=32$), it is likely that a larger sample would yield traditionally significant results for both of these items.

Finally, no significant differences were found between individuals who were trained in a group or those who received individualized instruction. Therefore, as the initial survey suggested, individualized training offers no obvious benefits in terms of receptivity to netLibrary.

III. Overall Perceptions of netLibrary

This group examination allowed for more indicators of overall perception of netLibrary than the initial online survey. However, across all of the groups (geographic region, age, and training type) there were no differences in measures of overall perception of netLibrary. Therefore, frequency tables of these individual perception measures will be aggregated across groups and presented in tables 15, 16, & 17.

Table 15: Overall netLibrary funding

“My public library should continue to fund this netLibrary service”		
<u>Response Category</u>	<u>Response Frequency</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
Strongly Agree	22	68.8%
Somewhat Agree	6	18.8
Somewhat Disagree	1	3.1
Strongly Disagree	3	9.4
<i>No response indicated</i>	n/a	0
TOTAL	32	100.0

Table 16: Overall netLibrary recommendation

“I would recommend this netLibrary service to my friends”		
<u>Response Category</u>	<u>Response Frequency</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
Strongly Agree	22	68.8%
Somewhat Agree	6	18.8
Somewhat Disagree	2	6.3
Strongly Disagree	2	6.3
<i>No response indicated</i>	n/a	0
TOTAL	32	100.0

Table 17: Overall netLibrary as a resource

“Overall, netLibrary is a valuable resource”		
<u>Response Category</u>	<u>Response Frequency</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
Strongly Agree	21	65.6%
Somewhat Agree	7	21.9
Somewhat Disagree	2	6.3
Strongly Disagree	2	6.3
<i>No response indicated</i>	n/a	0
TOTAL	32	100.0

These overall results are very favorable toward netLibrary. A key reason why no differences could be found across experimental groups was that most people liked the netLibrary service. Also of interest, it appears that people who liked the service, liked the service very much and those who disliked the service, likewise, did not modify their dislike across questions. In other words, the opinions of netLibrary were formed in a relatively short amount of time (two weeks) and seem to be strong and enduring. Therefore, ensuring that patrons' initial experiences with this technology are positive should be a top priority.

IV. Possible Modifications for netLibrary

Along with overall user perceptions, this examination was interested in any technical changes to netLibrary that would increase or decrease netLibrary use. Specifically, we wanted to ask individuals if the ability to download a book to their hard drive (rather than read online) would influence their netLibrary use. This question was prompted by the revocation of the netLibrary offline reader and was a significant comment in the online survey. Therefore, we wanted the perception of individuals who had never used the offline reader. Results from this question are presented in Table 18.

Table 18: netLibrary offline reader/ download capability

“I would use netLibrary more if I could download books to my hard drive”		
<u>Response Category</u>	<u>Response Frequency</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
Strongly Agree	4	12.5%
Somewhat Agree	10	31.3
Somewhat Disagree	6	18.8
Strongly Disagree	12	37.5
<i>No response indicated</i>	n/a	0
TOTAL	32	100.0

From this we can see that respondents were fairly evenly split. At the very least, netLibrary should be made aware that a significant portion of library patrons would use and benefit from the reinstatement of a reader that would allow offline reading.

Another aspect of interest was to measure how receptive patrons may be if this technology was made available on a portable electronic device (PDA, ebook, etc.). Results from this question are presented in Table 19

Table 19: netLibrary and portable devices

“I would use netLibrary more if I could use it with a portable device such as an ebook or PDA”		
<u>Response Category</u>	<u>Response Frequency</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
Strongly Agree	4	12.5%
Somewhat Agree	9	28.1
Somewhat Disagree	7	21.9
Strongly Disagree	11	34.4
<i>No response indicated</i>	1	3.1
TOTAL	32	100.0

Interestingly, more than half of the individuals in the sample would not view the ability to download netLibrary to a portable device as a benefit. However, this may be due in part to a lack of experience and exposure to portable devices. Nobody in the sample owned a PDA and only one person had ever tried an ebook. In the focus group conversations many people acknowledged that this could be a benefit in the future as these devices become more popular.

V. Summarized Reactions from Focus Groups

Comments regarding limited selection and awkward user interface dominated the discussion in the focus groups. Some of the key suggestions were to have a “less cluttered interface” in order to ease navigation, to have a “new arrivals section” for people to browse, and to allow variable checkout times ranging from 1 hour to 1 week. Additionally, if a book is checked out was suggested that a countdown clock be provided so that patrons can know when the book will be checked in. Patrons also indicated a desire to specify either nonfiction or fiction resources. These interface issues aside, most of the focus was on building the collection. People of all ages could not find books that were useful to their needs, and the books they could find were often checked out.

Promotion was routinely raised as an area of concern. Individuals in the youth sample expressed particular frustration that a resource such as netLibrary was available and their school librarian had not told them. Indeed, even regular library patrons expressed surprise at not knowing about this resource and stressed a need for promotion. Again, this supports the responses that the larger population gave in the section 1 investigation.

Additionally, these focus groups raised an important issue that netLibrary needs to consider: “How is this service different from a larger Internet search?” “How can netLibrary differentiate itself from the myriad of online resources available to individuals right now?” This becomes an important issue not only for the direction that netLibrary pursues in the future, but also for the promotion of this service. I have no good information to directly address this issue, but each of the focus groups identified easy, reliable reference as a key benefit of the netLibrary service.

A final issue that relates as much to the perception of netLibrary as it does to netLibrary’s promotion is that when focus group participants were asked if they had to choose to purchase a paper book for the library or purchase a netLibrary book for the library, nearly 90% of individuals said they would buy the paper book.

Individuals cited the fact that it would likely get more use from “other people” in their decision. Therefore, even given the positive attitudes toward the service promotion needs to stress the inclusiveness of this service and the larger benefits it provides.

VI. Conclusions

Overall, results were favorable. However, just as in the initial online survey, individuals offered suggestions in many areas to improve netLibrary. Specifically, concerns about, and suggestions for, collection development again emerged. A key benefit of this analysis is that it gives strong support to the fact that netLibrary has the potential to serve a currently underserved user population of young adults. One suggestion would be to promote netLibrary in schools and partner this promotion with organizations that promote youth outreach and scholastic development such as the Boys and Girls Clubs.

Evaluation Section 3: Community Partnership Interviews

The goal of this section is to provide information on the community partnership component of the grant relating to factors that led to effective partnerships, as well as barriers to partnership development.

I. Survey and Sample

A 10-item survey consisting of close-ended and open-ended items was designed to assess the triumphs and barriers of the partnering efforts. Participants who were contacted to complete this survey were key representatives from each of the six libraries slated to develop partnerships.

II. Results

Four out of six libraries indicated that they had at least initiated their partnership. However, the self-reported success of these three libraries that had initiated these partnerships was low (2.63, on a 0-10-point rating scale)¹⁶.

The barriers that were identified were numerous and varied. One reoccurring theme was staff issues: Either staff turnover caused delays with retraining and long periods of vacancy or current staff members had no time to devote to the partnership activities in addition to current duties. Others reported a lack of dedication and support for the partnership process from their library or system or the partners themselves.

Many participants also commented on their views of the partnership process. Interestingly, comments on how they viewed the partnership activities referred to this process with such terms as “jumping through hoops” or “meeting grant criteria.” An exception was the partnership that was arguably the most successful. The purpose of this partnership was described as experimenting with “giving [an underserved] population a technological service that could be convenient for them.” This difference in the perception of the community partnerships is striking and is likely a significant factor in determining a partnership’s success or failure.

III. Conclusions

Even in this very minimal examination, the general lack of interest in, and commitment to, the partnership activity was apparent. Future partnership activities should make the motivating goals of this partnership explicit. Additionally, adequate staffing should be secured and multiple players should be involved in the partnering process so that a staffing change will not result in a “brain drain.” Additionally, I would suggest a centralized steering group for the partnerships to offer support and guidance to libraries attempting to develop these partners. This partnership steering group could also direct partnerships to meet larger goals. Finally, I would suggest partnering with clearly defined groups. Some individuals reported that they were not clear who exactly their partner should be. All of the partnerships that were initiated were done so with preexisting and clearly defined groups. A partnership steering committee could assist in locating and defining these community partners.

¹⁶ Admittedly, one of the successful partnerships reported that the low rating of success was due more to modesty than actual perceptions of partnership success or failure.

Section 4: Directions for Future Research

After completing this research for WATF I have come to realize that there is research that could greatly enhance your information of current activities and provide an informed direction for future activities. I am proposing three general studies that would compliment the current evaluation. These studies would also inform future evaluations and library development initiatives. I will briefly describe the nature and intent of each study.

I. STUDY 1: “Who are your patrons?”¹⁷

Currently, Wisconsin libraries have no scientific knowledge about their typical patron. This knowledge is essential in planning library advocacy campaigns, identifying underserved populations, and tracking user expansion initiatives over time. In the current evaluation, having this information would have provided a basis for selecting individuals into cohort groups.

For this study I propose a large-scale evaluation to identify the prototypical library user in various library systems and communities. This research could identify the prototypical non-library user as a basis for focusing library advocacy and building community library support. This research could be conducted every 4-5 years in order to track changes in the prototype that may reflect either a diminishing or broadening library user base. Additionally, this research could be used politically for libraries by identifying specific groups that support libraries to lawmakers. In short, it is difficult for me to stress the value this information would have in many aspects of library program development, and I strongly urge you to consider this project.

II STUDY 2: “What’s going on?”

This study is designed to assess any areas of work duplication among member libraries. Many libraries responded in the partnership evaluation and in the initial online survey of not having time to implement new products. Perhaps there are ways minimize work duplication so that libraries would have time for partnerships, member outreach and training for these new technologies. This study would essentially be a large-scale “work audit” with a goal of identifying services that are being duplicated in order to focus on partnership and other library development activities. A similar process was successfully conducted on a smaller scale in the Madison Metropolitan School District (MMSD).

III. STUDY 3: “He’s not heavy- He’s my partner”

In the current evaluation interest in partnership activities was negligible. However, partnerships could be used to identify the best way or reaching an underserved population. This evaluation identified young adults as a potential group who is currently underserved by public libraries, but who seemed very receptive to this new technology. I would propose a partnership initiative where all involved libraries focus on building a partnership with organizations and programs that serve young adults. This similar goal among

¹⁷ As of July1, 2002, WPLC has contracted to conduct this research. The expected completion date is January 2003.

all partners could provide a support system for partnership development. Additionally, by studying which partners were successful you may be able to identify a model for partnership opportunities with young adults, and, ultimately, incorporate young adults (and future taxpayers) into your public library user base. In short, use the partnership opportunities as a marketing tool to identify how to build your base of support. This is a very common marketing strategy. You are identifying your audience segments and identifying the best way to attract and retain those segments.

This last study speaks to a larger issue that became a theme in this evaluation: publicity. Many people in the online survey and in the focus group stated that the library needed to publicize their services more. In a time where private businesses are trying to adopt the aspects of library service for their gain (see for example, Google's latest fee-based reference service), perhaps it is time libraries employ some research and promotional tactics of businesses for their gain.

APPENDIX 1:
BREAKDOWN OF RESPONDANTS BY COUNTY

<u>COUNTY</u>	<u>Frequency</u>	<u>Percent of Total</u>
Adams	2	.3%
Ashland	2	.3
Bayfield	4	.5
Brown	51	6.9
Buffalo	1	.1
Burnett	3	.4
Calumet	2	.3
Chippewa	5	.7
Clark	1	.1
Crawford	2	.3
Columbia	16	2.2
Dane	99	13.5
Dodge	7	1.0
Door	10	1.4
Douglas	4	.5
Dunn	3	.4
Eau Claire	31	4.2
Fond Du Lac	15	2.0
Forest	1	.1
Green	3	.4
Green Lake	5	.7
Iowa	1	.1
Jackson	1	.1
Jefferson	6	.8
Juneau	1	.1
Kenosha	39	5.3
Kewaunee	4	.5
La Crosse	15	2.0
Langdale	2	.3
Lincoln	2	.3
Manitowoc	1	.1
Marathon	38	5.2
Marinette	3	.4
Marquette	3	.4
Milwaukee	39	5.3
Oconto	8	1.1
Oneida	3	.4
Outagamie	39	5.3
Ozaukee	12	1.6

APPENDIX 1 (Cont.):
BREAKDOWN OF RESPONDANTS BY COUNTY

<u>COUNTY</u>	<u>Frequency</u>	<u>Percent of Total</u>
Pierce	1	.1%
Portage	15	2.0
Racine	30	4.1
Rusk	4	.5
Sauk	10	1.4
Shawango	7	1.0
Sheboygan	32	4.3
St. Croix	16	2.2
Taylor	1	.1
Trempealeau	3	.4
Vernon	2	.3
Vilas	2	.3
Walworth	9	1.2
Washington	7	1.0
Waukesha	33	4.5
Waupaca	15	2.0
Waushara	7	1.0
Winnebago	40	5.4
Wood	10	1.4
No County Indicated	8	1.1
Total	736	100.0%

APPENDIX 2¹⁸:
“DO YOU HAVE ANY OVERALL COMMENTS ABOUT netLIBRARY?...”

NOTE: Comments have been categorized but left in their entirety. This means that any grammar, spelling, punctuation and format are exactly as they were written on the open-ended response.

Negative:

Personally, I rather have a book in front of me. I sit in front of a computer all day.

I'm not of the paperless generation. I enjoy highlighting a book or article that I am studying. Since the downloaded ebook is available offline such a short period, I have tried cutting and pasting text to read (and highlight) at my leisure - very awkward

net library probably isn't for me because I do not enjoy reading long passs or articles on a computer screen and if I have to print them out I might as well get the book!

I don't really enjoy reading on a computer and I have all sorts of problems keeping things on the screen or moving around. That really has nothing to do with your service, but is one reason I haven't used it. I also don't have lots of time to spend on my computer

The main reason I don't use netlibrary more often is that I don't have time to use it. It's easier for me to find a print source than to find an available computer.

I probably will not be using netLibrary. It ties me to the computer too much. I cannot take the "text" with me, to sit on a couch, read in bed, read in the park.

I feel it is a waste of money. My library needs other things more.

I don't like reading a book on my desktop computer. I like to be able to read the books where I can curl up on the couch or in the few minutes of waiting for an appointment, or while commuting as a passenger in a vehicle.

I had high hopes for netlibrary, but am finding it difficult to use, impossible to promote.

I have become very dissapointed with the product. But I would love to see something replace it that we could read off line.

As a public librarian I think netlibrary is not meeting our needs and don't much care for it.

Positive:

I like NetLibrary very much and think it is a great resource.

I think this is just wonderful. I don't think I would care to read very much directly from the computer screen but it certainly is great for searching out answers.

¹⁸ Other appendices were included in the full report. These appendices included all open-ended comments. These additional appendices increase the document length tremendously and were omitted from the generally distributed report.

**APPENDIX 2 (Cont.):
“DO YOU HAVE ANY OVERALL COMMENTS ABOUT netLIBRARY?...”**

NOTE: Comments have been categorized but left in their entirety. This means that any grammar, spelling, punctuation and format are exactly as they were written on the open-ended response.

I think it is very helpful - I hope that the list of titles available continues to grow. I hope that more and more people start using it and get excited about it.

I feel for the handicapped it is a great tool! I also think I would use it if I could once learn some good techniques.

I am glad that this option exists. I think that it is a useful tool to use. I am happy with my experiences using the site.

I very much like the Find feature which permits me to scan an entire book for a particular keyword. This is a great time-saver.

I love it. I would like to see books in more of a p format like you see in Microsoft Work or a PDF file for easy viewing.

I think it is an excellent resource, and more people should be made aware of its existance and how to use it.

I love this service! My only suggestions are to increase the selection and offer longer check-out periods. Thanks for such an awesome service!

I like the service, but was a bit disconcerted when I discovered that it was using material from Project Gutenberg (not that I have anything against PG -- I'm for it -- it was just a surprise). Otherwise, I think this is a fine service

I think it is a worthwhile service. Since I do not like to read that much, I like the ability to select portions or a book to scan for specific information. I will have to try checking a book out from netLibrary to see how that works.

Keep it up. I have recommended this resource to many of my friends.

I am glad that someone told me that this was accessible. I am not sure if I would have necessarily found out about this service at the library itself.

netLibrary is a wonderful resource. I very much appreciate your work. I would never replace reading printed books with eBooks entirely, but as a reference source, as an efficient way to get information and literature to people, eBooks are great.

APPENDIX 2 (Cont.):
“DO YOU HAVE ANY OVERALL COMMENTS ABOUT netLIBRARY?...”

NOTE: Comments have been categorized but left in their entirety. This means that any grammar, spelling, punctuation and format are exactly as they were written on the open-ended response.

Positive (Cont.):

NetLibrary is a great resource! Please keep improving it.

Thank you for a wonderful service!

Netlibrary is a wonderful service that is very convenient!

Had I more time to spend on my computer and more need to research things I think I would find it more useful. When my kids become older and need library information for reports I expect it to be more helpful, however, I still want them to know how to use it

Interface/Usability:

I work in the technology field so I'm extremely comfortable using these types of systems but netLibrary could be laid out better.

having a browsable page of new titles would be nice

The one time I used it was to access a book I otherwise had no access to. It was very difficult to login and navigate; I work with computers and I had to get both my branch librarian and the MPL IS department to help me login. Once I logged in, I couldn't easily find what I needed.

please email me when it is not so confusing or easier to use with webtv.

if you're looking to make it more user friendly and less confusing, let me know. cause if thats the case I'll give it another try.

You may have this already, and I am unaware of its existence, but think about a way to customize the p for each user. Like Yahoo's "my yahoo." Make a "my netlibrary."

More detailed help for advanced or logical searching

Try to make the page viewing area larger. It would also be easier to read netLibrary books on a monitor if one could see opposing pages and be able to "turn" them like pages in a real book.

It doesn't seem to find anything.

I had trouble getting into net library. I had to go to the library for help, but they too, had problems. I finally did connect and used the information I found. Thank You.

APPENDIX 2 (Cont.):
“DO YOU HAVE ANY OVERALL COMMENTS ABOUT netLIBRARY?...”

NOTE: Comments have been categorized but left in their entirety. This means that any grammar, spelling, punctuation and format are exactly as they were written on the open-ended response.

Interface/Usability (Cont.):

let me know if you decide to start offering books in a better format, then I will use it more.

The netLibrary concept is wonderful, but I find the interface almost impossible to use, the web site dreadfully slow, the files way to large for a reasonable download at home, the proprietary file format that ONLY WORKS WITH WINDOWS is not helpful as it should be for me.

Netlibrary is not user-friendly.

I've experienced many problems checking out books and downloading for use. Sometimes the download doesn't finish. Other times, the book appears in my ebook reader, but when I try to open it, I receive a message saying that it isn't checked out

I use my computer and the internet constantly. But I have to tell you that the instructions on checking in and checking out is still as confusing as it was the first time I read it. "Once you check out an e-Book you must check it into your bookshelf. To c

...make it easier to print.

. I would use it more ... if it wasn't so slow on my computer.

I've only looked up a couple books, but each time, the text was exactly the same as at project gutenber (promo.net/pg), so I just got the text file from there. It's far easier (for me anyway) to look through a simple text file than it is to go through your site

The lack of many successful searches is a big down side for this service. As I mentioned above, even if netLibrary doesn't carry a certain title, it would be helpful to have more successful searches. Also, the search capability seems to be quite limited

The online reader is also clunky.

It took too long to load on dial-up connection. The faster connections at work are the only way to use netlibrary.

Using it from home on a dial-up was hopeless. On a T-1 line at work is a possibility but I probably won't bother again from home mainly because of the loading time.

Is there a reason it is necessary to go into the library to register as opposed to doing it on line?

APPENDIX 2 (Cont.):
“DO YOU HAVE ANY OVERALL COMMENTS ABOUT netLIBRARY?...”

NOTE: Comments have been categorized but left in their entirety. This means that any grammar, spelling, punctuation and format are exactly as they were written on the open-ended response.

Offline Reader(s):

I HAVE NOT USED NETLIBRARY SINCE YOU CHANGED THE FORMAT. FROM WHAT I REMEMBER, SINCE IT HAS BEEN A FEW MONTHS SINCE I LAST TRIED USING NETLIBRARY, I COULDN'T EVEN FIND THE READER. IF THERE IS NOT A EASY WAY TO FIND THAT, NETLIBRARY IS USELESS.

When I started with netlibrary I could download to my pc and read the books off line. Now I can't so I really don't use it as much now. Because I can't stay online for 2 or 3 hours at a time just to read book.

I've been using the internet for >5 years and am a web developer, so I don't think that my difficulties in using netLibrary are due to technophobia or Internet illiteracy. What I find the most confusing is that I thought that one could download a book and you no longer can do that.

I would like to be able to check books out and reference them offline. I have never been able to look at a book other than online and then only for 24 hours before I have to search for it again. Not a great resource, does have great potential though.

Resume the download capability for reading off line...

Since the change to a new owner, netlibrary is really not useful to me. I wanted to use the service to read books offline and now the ereader is not available to use offline so I will not be using netlibrary at all. Nice concept, but not useful now.

The addition of a Macintosh reader is extremely important to me.

I love the technology and appreciate the opportunity, but I would like an Apple Macintosh reader option.

Please reinstate the download/check out functionality. Consider developing a reader application for PDA Palm devices so readers can carry the book selections in their Palms as well as the desktop. Set it up so that desktop based reader application can be

Please consider reinstating the ability to download books to read offline. Since this feature has been removed, I find it more difficult to use NetLibrary, due to the fact that I have to be connected to the internet in order to view a book.

Please find a way to make available ebooks for those who use PDAs or other ebook hardware that would allow them to carry an ebook(s) around as you would a printed book. Thank you

Electronic access to print materials is going to continue to grow. Use of "reading devices" will change people's habits, even though they may not be using them much now. It's certainly much easier to carry a Palm through airport security than a laptop.

**APPENDIX 2 (Cont.):
“DO YOU HAVE ANY OVERALL COMMENTS ABOUT netLIBRARY?...”**

NOTE: Comments have been categorized but left in their entirety. This means that any grammar, spelling, punctuation and format are exactly as they were written on the open-ended response.

Selection:

Need a wider selection of material. Haven't visited the site in many months.

I like the idea of netLibrary very much, but as long as its inventory is mostly business books, I doubt that I will actually use it.

I found the collection to be weak in the area of graphic design instruction

I am often frustrated by the lack of available materials. Otherwise I think it is a useful service.

Make more books available...

You need to get some more publishers hooked up--Chilton, Mitchell, Krause, come to mind.

This is a great service and I hope it expands. I would use it more if there were more books, magazines, etc...

This is a great resource, the only thing that would make it better is adding more material.

This is a great idea and I applaud the forward and progressive vision for our state's library collection access. However, it currently suffers from a lack of good titles and limited viewing options. I'd urge you to consider investigating this.

I have not visited Net Library for a while and the service my library currently had used a very small selection.

The last time I tried, I was looking for auto repair references for a collector car. Couldn't find anything.

I would like to be able to read fiction books on the computer for personal enjoyment. Also, magazine articles would be of interest.

Needs more copies of the books to borrow. Several times I have seen books I would like to checkout but there were no copies available

This is a great resource and the interface is well- designed, but until there are more books available it's going to have a hard time getting off the ground.

Keep up the good work - I look forward to an expanded selection!

Need to have more publishers making the most recent editions available.

It will have a great future as more titles come on line.

APPENDIX 2 (Cont.):
“DO YOU HAVE ANY OVERALL COMMENTS ABOUT netLIBRARY?...”

NOTE: Comments have been categorized but left in their entirety. This means that any grammar, spelling, punctuation and format are exactly as they were written on the open-ended response.

Selection (Cont.):

Current career books would be nice. Also literature biographies.

I enjoy using netLibrary. It would be more helpful if I could find a larger selection of books to browse when I am looking for something. I would probably use netLibrary more, if I weren't in school full-time right now.

I looked for 2 favorite titles in particular, just to test what the holdings were: the Color Purple (Walker), and To Kill a Mockingbird. I believe I found them both, but they ended up being Cliff Notes. It was a bit misleading and disappointing.

...I would try and include a few more subjects and other things of interest.

I am Wiccan. There are few, if any, books about Wicca/Witchcraft/Occultism/Etc. in the netLibrary database that I have found. The subjects available should range widely, in case there are other people like myself

I was disappointed to find that WPLC's collection only included books on Macromedia Dreamweaver 1.2 (the current software version is 4) and no books on Macromedia Fireworks software (version 3 or 4).

Need more books to entice readers to use this resource.

...have more current books available.

Check out time:

I would access netlibrary fiction more often if the check-out time were longer.

Checkout times are sometimes short for books that I want to use for occasional reference, and logging on to read them is cumbersome.

...I would also allow books to be checked out a little longer

...as I am unlikely to print out an entire book at home, I hope you will consider extending the check-out periods

...make the "checkout times" the same as if you actually had the book.

I downloaded one book and had 24 hours to use it. I didn't stay up all night just to read the book.

...It would be nice to have a longer check-out time as well.

APPENDIX 2 (Cont.):
“DO YOU HAVE ANY OVERALL COMMENTS ABOUT netLIBRARY?...”

NOTE: Comments have been categorized but left in their entirety. This means that any grammar, spelling, punctuation and format are exactly as they were written on the open-ended response.

Training:

As I'm hopefully nearing retirement; I expect to be able to use it more often. Some sort of training in its use would be very nice. I'm not intimidated by computers but not terribly facile w/ them either. Most of my knowledge of them has been self-taught

Probably if I had 'training' to use the net library, I would use it more often. Possibly I simply do not understand all the available features but believe there would be some features that would enhance my life

Marketing:

Please market your usefulness for distance education students. I want to purchase netlibrary for our library but need to justify it.