

Institute of Museum and Library Services

University of Washington Information School

The Impact of Free Access to Computers and the Internet in Public Libraries

Interview Guide for Public Library Users

“Hello! My name is [name]. I’m working with a research project being conducted by the University of Washington’s Information School and sponsored by the US government’s Institute for Museum and Library Services. We’re interested in finding out how you and your family use your public library. In particular, we want to know about how you use the library’s computers, website, electronic databases, Internet connections and related services, and how they may have helped you in your life. Your responses will help us evaluate and improve library computer services in libraries all over the country. Information about you is confidential except as provided by law. The interview will take approximately 30 minutes. You can learn more about this project at <http://www.depts.washington.edu/imlspac>.

As a small token of our appreciation, we will give you \$20 when we are finished. We very much appreciate you taking the time to help us with this important study.”

User Aliases:

Date:

Time:

Day:

Length of Interview:

Library Code:

Place of Interview:

Interviewer Name:

Notes:

Questions:

1. How did you learn about the library’s computers, websites and training? I’m going to refer to this broadly free access to computers and the Internet for the rest of our interview if that’s okay.
2. What do you use the computers and the Internet for? Why? When did you start using? How often? How does it fit with your routine? (itemize each form of use) [Domain areas: civic engagement, education, eGovernment, eCommerce, employment, health, social inclusion]
3. Do you have access to a computer or the Internet anywhere else besides the library? Where?
4. If, yes, why do you still come to the library?
5. Which computer and Internet activities/courses have you taken or tried at the public library?
6. What else do you do when you come here to use computers and the Internet? (e.g., meet up with others, check out materials, story time, etc)

7. Did you learn/gain anything because of the free computer and Internet services? (ask for each activity s/he participated in; want a specific story or incident) [Domain area: civic engagement, education, eGovernment, eCommerce, employment, health, social inclusion]
8. Are there any things you can do now or have accomplished that you could not have done before using the library computers?
9. Is free computer and Internet access an important resource for you? How so/how not?
10. Have you used the Library's computers and the Internet to look up information on behalf of others? Why? (Lay information mediary behavior—LIMB)
11. Have other people used the Library's computers and the Internet to look up information for you? Why? (LIMB—lay information mediary behavior)
12. Has your family benefited because of free access to computers and the Internet? How? [Domain area: civic engagement, education, eGovernment, eCommerce, employment, health, social inclusion]
13. Has your community benefitted because of free access to computers and the Internet? How? [Domain area: civic engagement, education, eGovernment, eCommerce, employment, health, social inclusion]
14. Does anything make it difficult or prevent you from using the free computers and the Internet? (e.g MySpace, YouTube, time limits, number of Internet computers, library policies, etc.)
15. Is there anything you wanted to do via computers and the Internet that you couldn't do? Find information, learn a skill, etc.?
16. What role have library staff played in how you use/benefit from free access to computers and the Internet?
17. Does the physical setting/the library itself make a difference to how you experience or use the computers and the Internet?
18. Are the other the people you meet at the library computers helpful for you? [Good Samaritans]
19. How could the library's free computers and the Internet services be made better?
20. For how much longer will you use the free computers and the Internet? Why?
21. Have you recommended the free computers and the Internet to other people? If so, to whom (not asking for personal names here, just relationship types, e.g., friends, family)
22. Have you used the computers and the Internet on behalf of other people without necessarily being asked first?—LIMB (lay mediary information behavior) If so, for whom (not asking for personal names here, just relationship types, e.g., friends, family). What kinds of information?

23. Has anyone used the free computers and the Internet for you on your behalf without necessarily being asked first?—LIMB (lay mediary information behavior) If so, by whom (not asking for personal names here, just relationship types, e.g., friends, family) What kinds of information?
24. If free access to computers and the Internet were not available at your library, how would it affect you?
25. Is there any other way you might use the free computers and the Internet or the library website that we have not asked about?
26. Does today's visit differ from your typical visits to the library?

Demographic Questions

27. What is your zip code?
28. What year were you born? _____
29. How many family members are living or staying in your home? Include married spouses, children by birth or adoption, and blood relatives.
30. Do you speak a language other than English at home? [If yes] What languages do you speak at home?
31. What type of home do you live in?
 - a. Mobile home
 - b. One-family house detached from any other house
 - c. One-family house attached to one or more houses
 - d. Building with 2 or more apartments
 - e. Boat, RV, van, etc.
 - f. Currently homeless
32. Thinking about all the different sources of income your family received in 2008, what was the combined total income from all sources before taxes and other deductions? Your best estimate is fine. \$_____
33. In the last 2 weeks, did you work for pay at a job or business?
 - a. [If yes] Are you working full-time or part-time? (Check one)
 - b. [If no] Are you looking for work? (Check one)
34. What is the highest level of education you've completed?
 - a. Grade school
 - b. Some high school

- c. High school or GED
 - d. Some college
 - e. 2 year degree or vocational school
 - f. 4 year degree
 - g. Post graduate study
35. Are you of Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin?
36. What race do you most identify with? You can choose more than one.
- a. American Indian or Alaska Native
 - b. Asian
 - c. Black or African American
 - d. Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander
 - e. White
37. What is your gender?