



# Benchmarking Illinois Libraries

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FALL 2015



Lauterbach & Amen, LLP

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CERTIFIED PUBLIC ACCOUNTANTS

# Introduction

Benchmarking is an important tool that helps organizations move forward, compare themselves to peers, and reflect. The information can be used to gain critical insight and initiate change.

In the fall of 2015, Lauterbach & Amen, LLP conducted a benchmarking study of a sample of Illinois libraries in counties including: DuPage, Kane, Lake, McHenry, Will, and Cook. This study compares key data of 24 libraries located within these counties. The data was compiled from

responses to a 20-question online survey. Data found in the Demographic, Budget, Information Technology, Services, and Future sections was provided by the survey participants.

Also included in this study is a “Finances” section that examines data from a wider sample of 63 local libraries. All financial data is from 2014, and was pulled from public records located on the Illinois Comptroller website, as well as published audit reports.

This 2015 Illinois Library Benchmarking Report is provided by certified public accounting firm Lauterbach & Amen, LLP, a mid-sized firm founded in 1997 and located in Warrenville, IL. Lauterbach & Amen’s services include Actuarial, Audit, Consulting, Pension, and Tax.

# Table of Contents

## Demographics

Respondents’ demographics .....4-5

## Finances

Debt .....6

Expenditures per capita .....7

## Budget

Capital expenditure budgets  
& upgrades .....8

Increased spending or support .....9

## Information Technology (IT)

Tools & platforms used .....10

Accounting software .....10

## Services

Products & services requested .....11

Online platforms .....12

Web-based services .....12

## Future

Top 10 challenges .....13

Strategic plan .....14

Outsourced services .....14

Most valuable offerings .....15

# Libraries included in the survey:

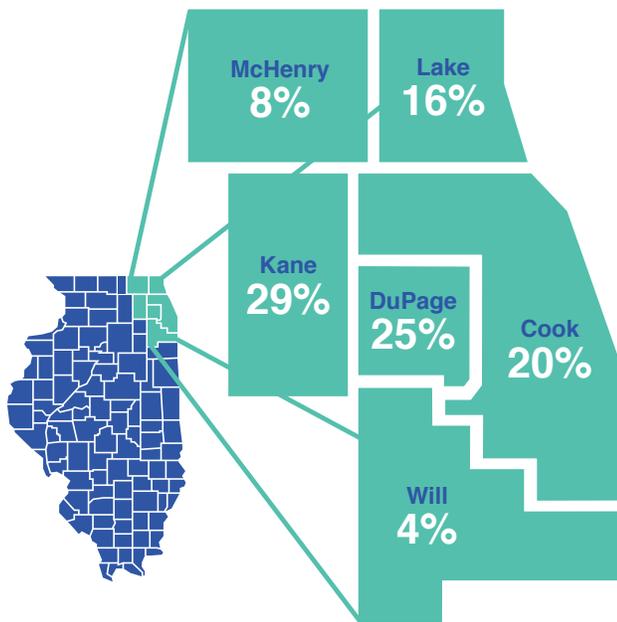
- Addison Public Library
- Algonquin Area Public Library
- Antioch Public Library District
- Aurora Public Library
- Barrington Area Library
- Bartlett Public Library District
- Batavia Public Library
- Bensenville Community Public Library
- Bloomingdale Public Library
- Brookfield Public Library
- Carol Stream Public Library
- Cary Area Public Library District
- Cook Memorial Public Library District
- Des Plaines Public Library
- Downers Grove Public Library
- Eisenhower Public Library District
- Ela Area Public Library District
- Elk Grove Public Library
- Ella Johnson Memorial Public Library District
- Elmhurst Public Library
- Forest Park Public Library
- Fountaindale Public Library District
- Fox Lake Public Library District
- Fox River Grove Public Library
- Fox River Valley Public Library District
- Fremont Public Library District
- Gail Borden Public Library District
- Geneva Public Library District
- Glen Ellyn Public Library
- Glenside Public Library District
- Grayslake Area Public Library District
- Helen M. Plum Memorial Public Library District
- Huntley Area Public Library
- Indian Prairie Public Library
- Indian Trails Public Library District
- Itasca Community Library
- Kaneville Public Library
- Lake Villa Public Library District
- Lincolnwood Public Library District
- Lisle Public Library District
- Messenger Public Library of North Aurora
- Naperville Public Library
- Oak Brook Public Library
- Oswego Public Library District
- Poplar Creek Public Library District
- Riverside Public Library
- Roselle Public Library District
- Round Lake Area Public Library District
- St. Charles Public Library District
- Sugar Grove Public Library
- Town and Country Public Library District
- Vernon Area Public Library District
- Villa Park Public Library
- Warren-Newport Public Library District
- Warrenville Public Library District
- Wauconda Area Public Library District
- Westmont Public Library
- Wheaton Public Library
- Winfield Public Library
- Winnetka-Northfield Public Library District
- Wood Dale Public Library
- Woodridge Public Library
- Zion-Benton Public Library District

**Lauterbach & Amen would like to thank all the participating libraries for being involved in this project!**

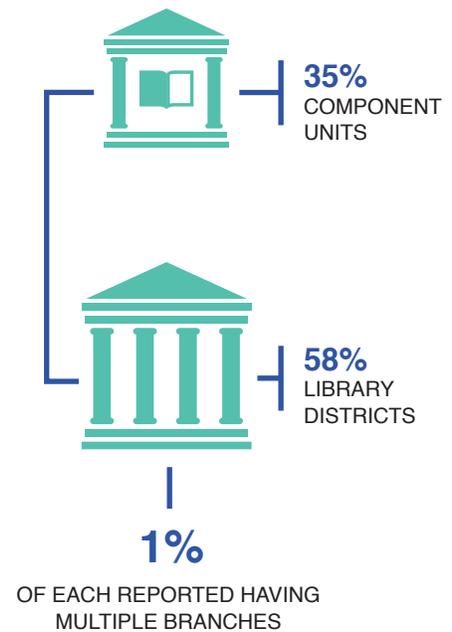
# DEMOGRAPHICS

A look at the survey respondents' demographics:

## Counties



## Type

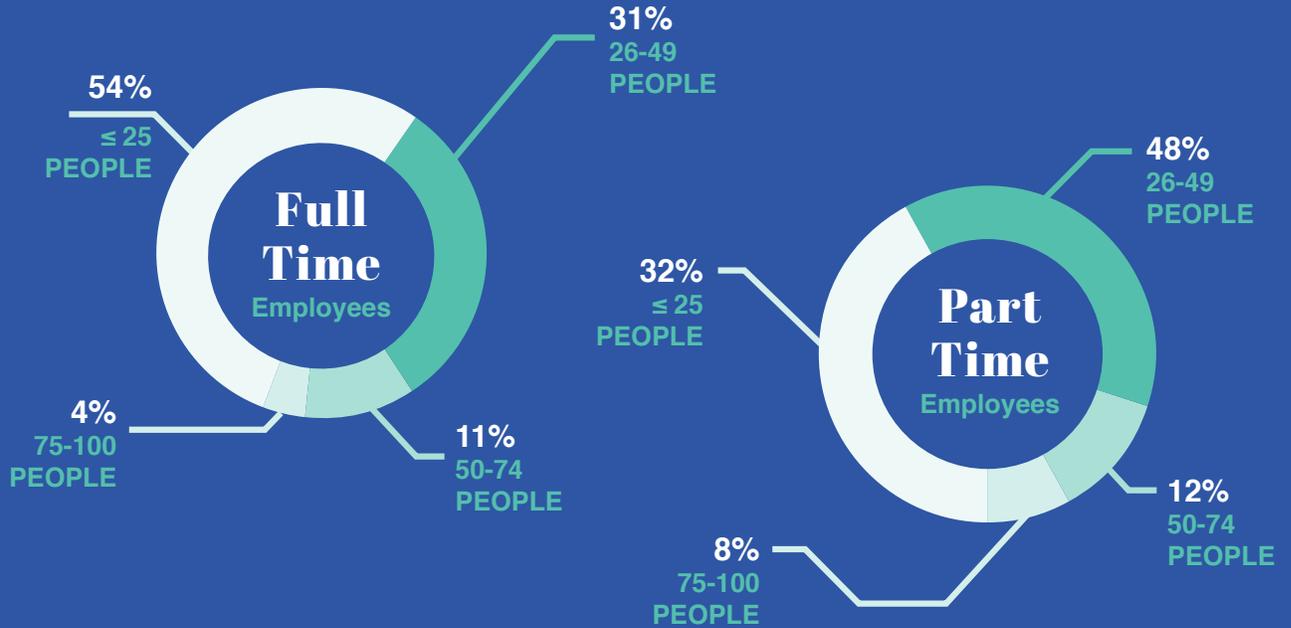


## Titles



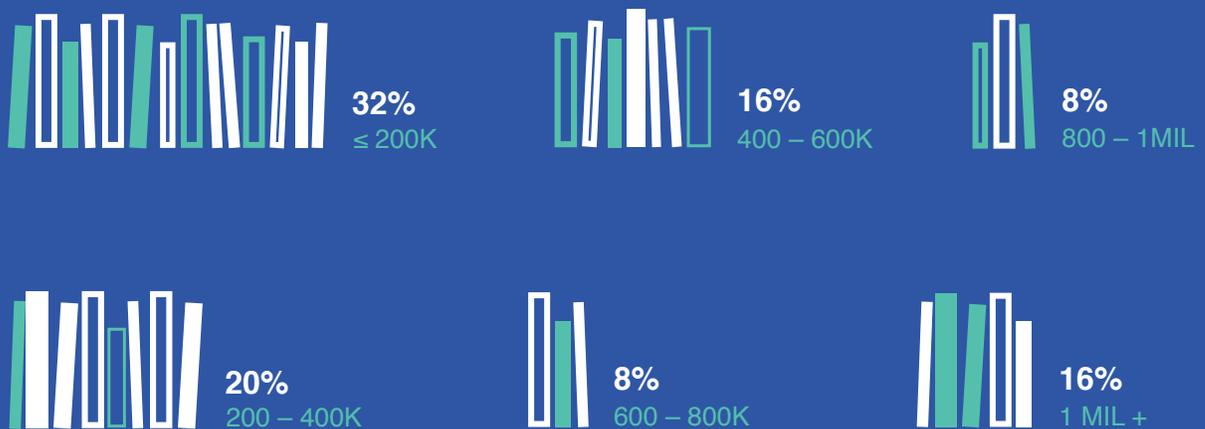
# DEMOGRAPHICS

## Staff



## Circulation

(estimated annual)

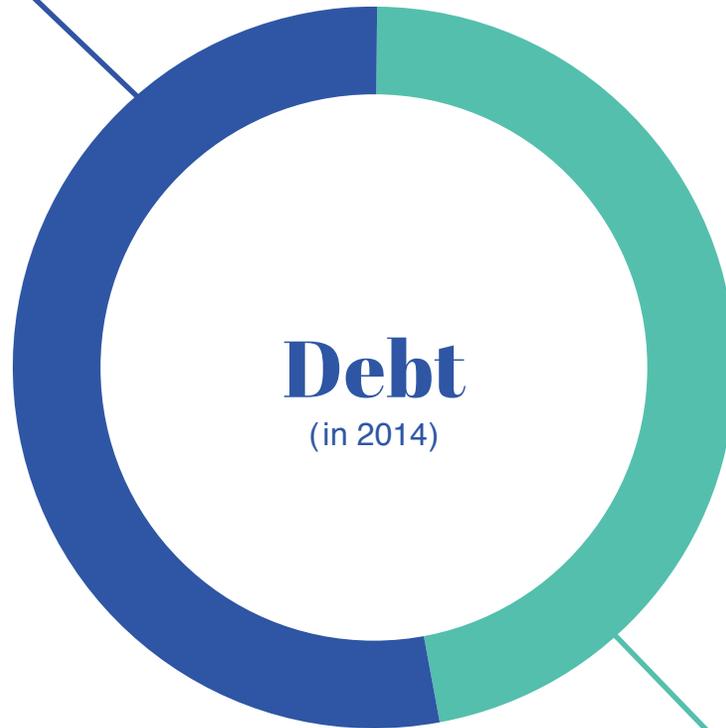


## FINANCES

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**53.2%**

of libraries  
had **no debt!**



**Debt**  
(in 2014)

**46.8%**

of libraries  
had debt

Average debt for the libraries that  
reported money owed:

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**\$4,859,497**

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### **Note:**

All "Finances" information in this section is from 2014. This data was pulled from 63 libraries' public records, located on the Illinois Comptroller website and published audit reports.

## FINANCES

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**Average 2014  
library expenditure  
per capita was:**



**By county, those numbers were:**

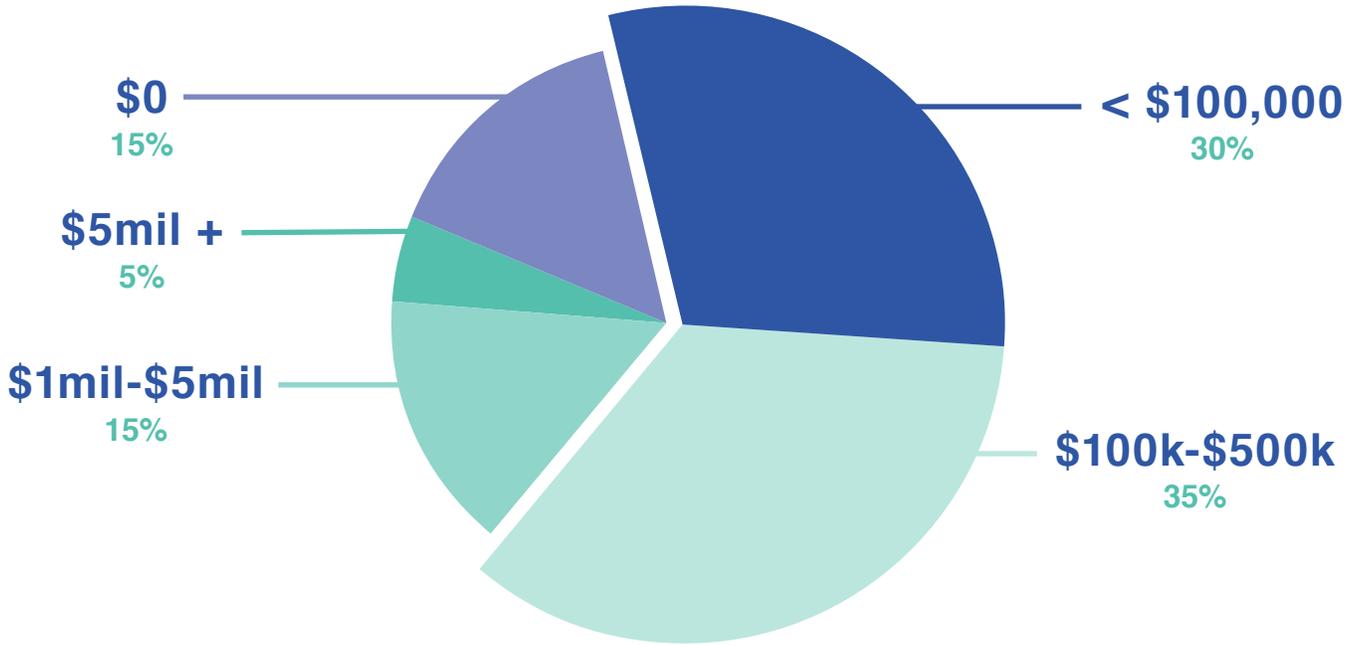


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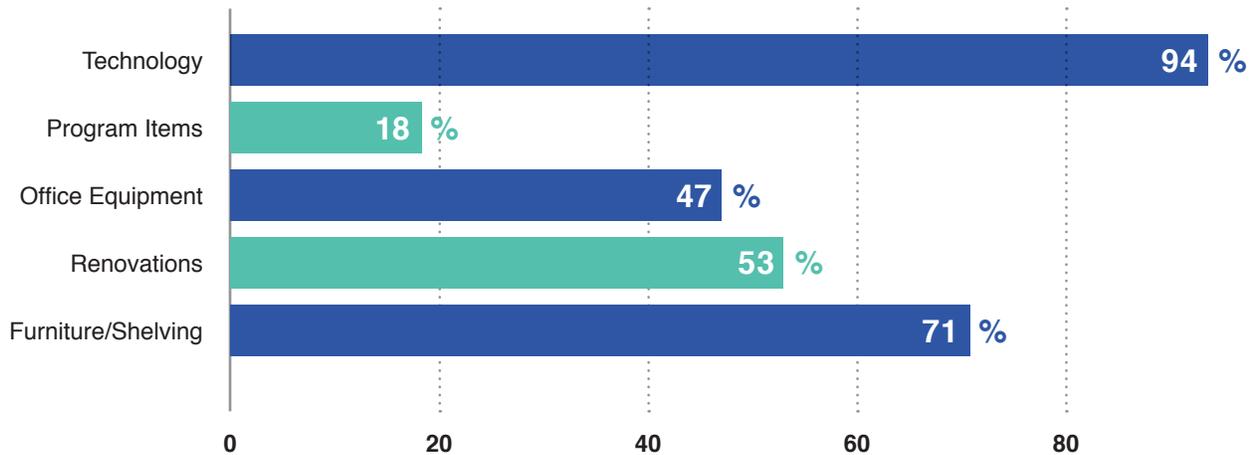
**Property Taxes** accounted for **91.1%** of total library revenue

# BUDGET

## 2014 Capital expenditure budget:



## Upgrades included in 2014 capital budgets:



Other: Roof, Boiler, Architectural Professional Services

## BUDGET

# Areas that are seeing increased spending or support:



### Heavy

Facility upgrades/maintenance is the #1 area that libraries are dedicating the most spending and support.

1. Personnel
2. Digital content collections and services
3. Library technology equipment and software
4. Operations



### Moderate

1. Online subscription acquisitions
2. Book acquisitions
3. Multimedia/streaming media
4. Periodicals/serials acquisitions
5. Cloud-based solutions
6. Library hours/availability
7. Print subscriptions/acquisitions
8. Special career or business development assistance programs
9. 3D printing facilities

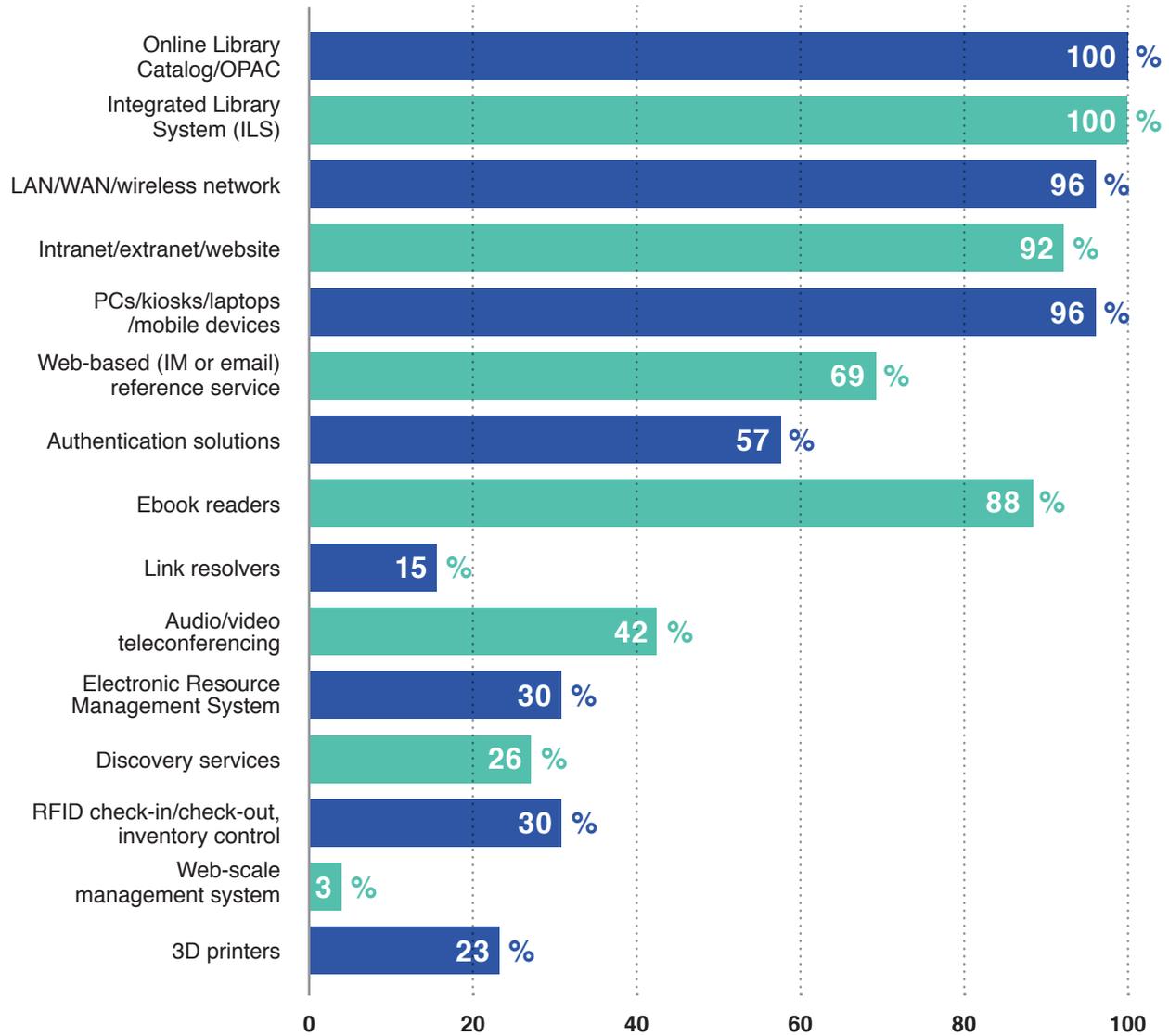


### Minimal

Note: Items listed above are ranked in order of most responses (top) to least.

# INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (IT)

## Current IT tools and platforms used:

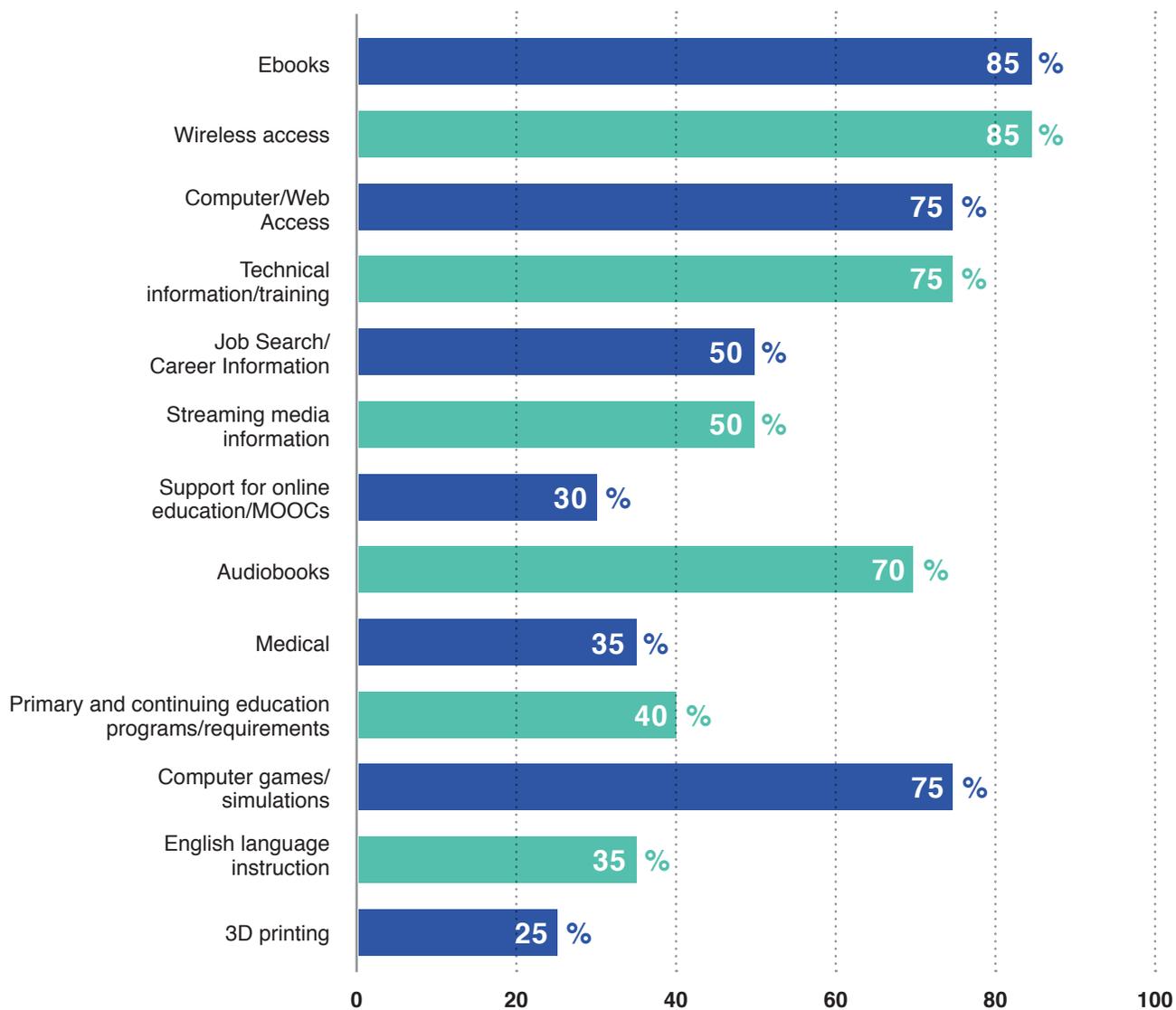


## Which accounting software do you use?



## SERVICES

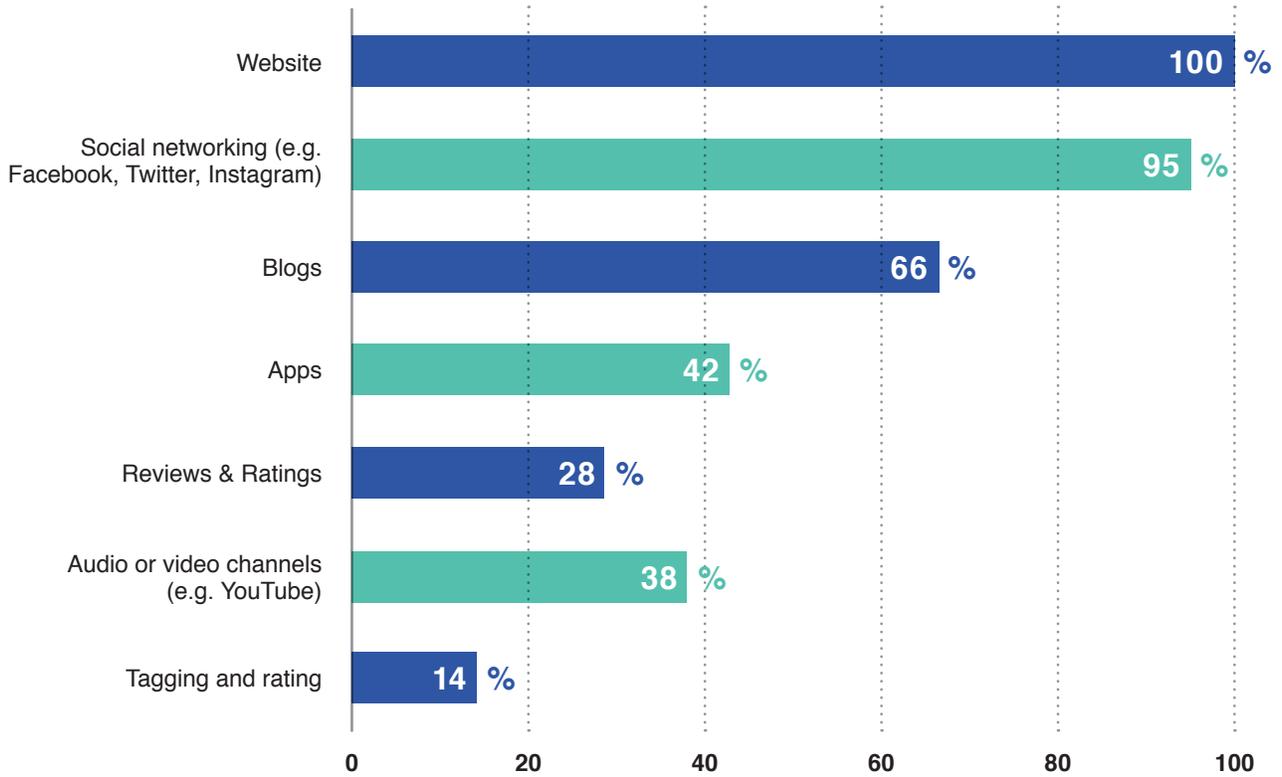
### Products and services requested (beyond books):



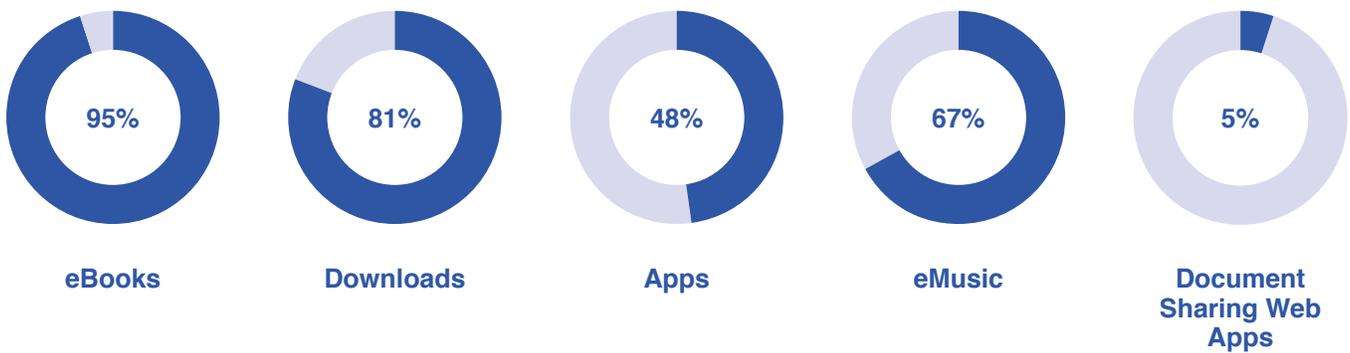
The digital revolution has markedly changed the way people access information. Libraries are rising to the challenge, and are responding to the changing times by providing the types of products and services this new age requires.

# SERVICES

## How many online platforms does your library utilize?



## Web-based services provided:



# FUTURE

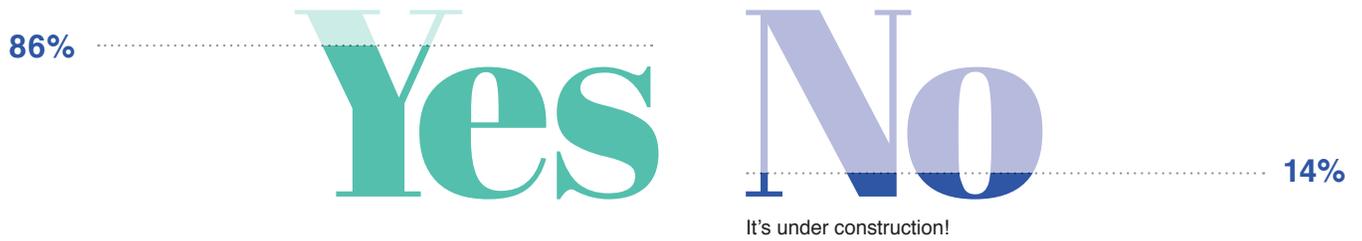
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## Top 10 challenges libraries are facing in the next five years:

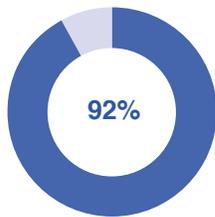
- 1 Finding and retaining knowledgeable staff
- 2 Keeping up with changes in information technology
- 3 Maintaining services with tight budgets
- 4 Competing with public online services and offerings
- 5 Keeping facilities open and at preferred operational levels
- 6 Identifying new sources of funding
- 7 Migrating print content to digital formats
- 8 Legal compliance
- 9 Maintaining an aging facility and planning for a modern facility
- 10 Justifying programming expenses for community needs

# FUTURE

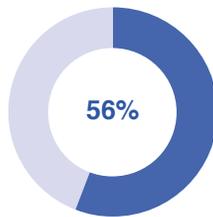
## Does your library have a strategic plan?



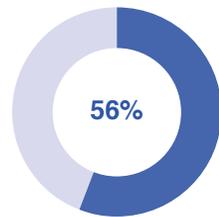
## Outsourced Services:



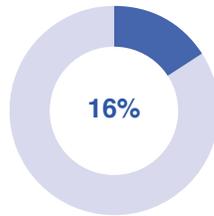
Legal



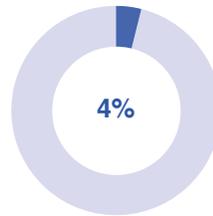
Accounting



IT



HR



Marketing/  
PR

## FUTURE

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**There are 5 offerings that all libraries felt were the most valuable to the community they serve:**

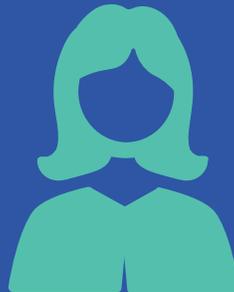
Access to computers that provide internet (plus wifi)

Friendly, knowledgeable staff

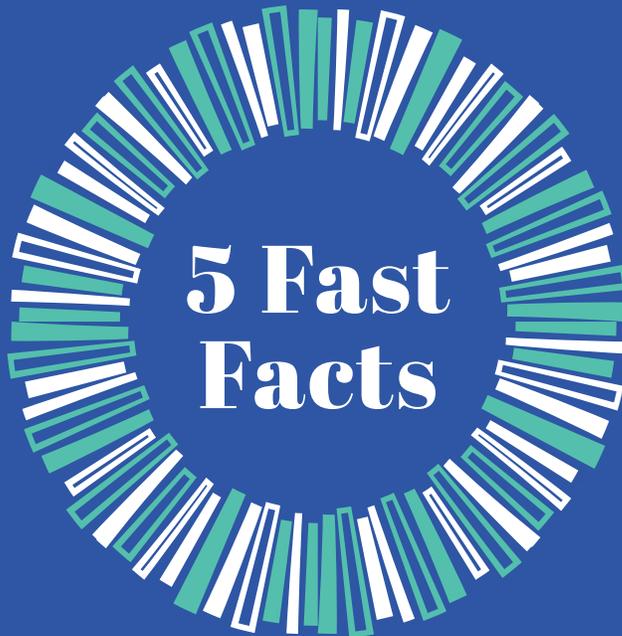
Diverse materials collections

Programs and services for all ages and interests (including technology training, job skills, homework help)

Community space for the public to use individually or for meetings



...and it's all provided at no cost!



## 5 Fast Facts

**1.**

**86% of libraries have a strategic plan**

**2.**

**#1 challenge is finding and retaining knowledgeable staff**

**3.**

**Property taxes account for 91.1% of total library revenue**

**4.**

**Heavy spending on facility upgrades or maintenance in 2014**

**5.**

**The average Finance Department cost is 2% of revenue**

### About Lauterbach & Amen

Lauterbach & Amen, LLP (L&A) is a mid-sized public accounting firm founded in 1997 by two partners, Sherry Lauterbach and Ron Amen. The firm has a longstanding reputation for an unrivaled commitment to quality service; clients appreciate its small-firm values and large-firm capabilities.

L&A's foundation is in the governmental sector, including: pension funds, municipalities, park districts, libraries, fire districts, and other units of government. Over the years, the firm has extended client relationships to other entities outside of government. L&A provides those entities with the

same core values of client service and quality – simultaneously continuing its commitment to being the proven leader in the governmental accounting and benefits industry.



**Lauterbach & Amen, LLP**

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