The Power of Performance: The PLA Performance Measurement Initiative

April 7, 2016
Today’s Speakers

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Public Library Association

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Sacramento Public Library

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Director, Skokie Public Library
Agenda

- Moving Toward Outcome Measurement
- Project Outcome: Overview
- Project Outcome: Rolling out in your library
- Q&A
Moving Toward Outcome Measurement
Why Measure Outcomes?

Times have changed, so have libraries

- Increased need for services & programs
- Community hub
- Traditional measures capture outputs
- Outcome measurement captures expanded community-facing role
Why Measure Outcomes?

Among Americans who visited a library in 2012, 1 in 5 library users attended a class, lecture or program for adults.

Why Measure Outcomes?

Most people in the U.S. consider libraries an important part of the education ecosystem.

- 85% say libraries should provide free early literacy programs to help prepare children to attend school
- 78% think libraries in their communities effectively promote reading

Why Measure Outcomes?

As builders of digitally inclusive communities, public libraries are essential community links to the Internet, technology and information.

- 98.7% of public libraries offer free access to WiFi
- 89.9% offer training in Internet-enabled services and resources

Why Measure Outcomes?

But these numbers are no longer enough. How do we capture our impact?
What is an Outcome?

An outcome is a **specific benefit** that results from a library program or service designed to help patrons change their knowledge, behavior, skills, application, or awareness.

Outcomes are **NOT** outputs.
## Outcomes vs. Outputs

| Outcomes                        | Outputs
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Resume Writing Skills</td>
<td>Circulation Stats</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open a Small Business</td>
<td>Program Attendance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support Child’s Learning</td>
<td>Computer Use</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Creating Outcome Measures for the Field

2013 PLA Presidential Initiative

- Work with the field to create meaningful, standardized outcome measures to help libraries capture the impact of their programs & services
- Move field toward outcome measurement as common practice
Performance Measurement Task Force

- **July 2013**: Task Force initiated
  - Members include librarians and researchers
- **Late 2014**: Libraries pilot-tested surveys
- Survey design
  - Simple & short
  - Easy to administer
- Task Force members continue to develop new, advanced measures
Project Outcome Timeline

- **June 2015:** Project Outcome launched
  - Funded by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation
  - PLA builds resources & support around Task Force’s work
- **Summer 2016:** Task Force to release advanced measures
- **Post-Grant (2018):** PLA management of Project Outcome continues
Project Outcome Background

- **Project Goal**: Help public libraries understand and share the true impact of essential library services and programs.
  - FREE for all U.S. & Canadian public libraries
  - Easy-to-use process & tools
  - Don’t have to recreate the wheel
  - Aggregate outcome data nation-wide
Meeting Field-wide Demand

- 1,200 registered Project Outcome users
- 9,200+ patrons surveyed
- Most common survey topic measured: 

  *Education & Lifelong Learning*
  
  o Teen education programs
  o Adult skills programs
  o ESL classes
Meeting Field-wide Demand

Trends: 8 months of Project Outcome

- Project Outcome Users
- Patron Responses
Project Outcome:
Overview
Project Outcome

Providing **FREE** simple tools for libraries to:

- Measure service-based outcomes
- Understand and aggregate findings
- Access tools and resources to help libraries take action
Want to improve the effectiveness of library programs in your community?

How We’re Helping

Project Outcome is dedicated to helping public libraries understand and share the true impact of essential library services and programs with simple survey instruments and an easy-to-use process for measuring and analyzing outcomes. Developed by library leaders, researchers, and data analysts, Project Outcome surveys, resources, training, and supportive online community provide public libraries with everything they need to apply their results and confidently advocate for their library’s future. Joining Project Outcome is free of charge and only takes a few simple steps to begin.

Early Childhood Literacy

Services to improve early literacy and learning skills to prepare children ages 0-5 for school. Examples include: Storytime.
Project Outcome

WHAT DOES OUR COMMUNITY NEED

HOW MUCH DID WE DO

WHAT GOOD DID WE DO

WHAT SHOULD WE DO BETTER

Project Outcome
Project Outcome Process

Outcome Measurement Process

1. Identify Measurement Needs & Goals
2. Survey a Program
3. Understand and Analyze Results
4. Communicate Findings and/or Make Changes
Project Outcome: 7 Survey Areas

- Civic/Community Engagement
- Early Childhood Literacy
- Education/Lifelong Learning
- Economic Development
- Summer Reading
- Digital Inclusion
- Job Skills
Project Outcome: Surveys

Likert-scale questions measure:

- Learned something new
- Increased confidence
- Anticipated change in behavior
- Increased awareness
Project Outcome: Surveys

Open-ended questions measure:

- General patron feedback
- Suggestions for improvement
**Project Outcome: Survey Example**

Please take a few minutes for this brief survey and let us know if, as a result of participating in the EARLY CHILDHOOD LITERACY program . . .

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Neither Agree nor Disagree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>N/A</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>You learned something that you can share with your children</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You feel more confident to help your children learn</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>You will spend more time interacting with your children (e.g.,</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>reading, talking, singing, writing, playing)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You are more aware of applicable resources and services provided by the</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>library</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

What did you like most about the program?

What could the library do to improve your children’s enjoyment of reading?
Want to improve the effectiveness of library programs in your community?

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Early Childhood
Literacy

Services to improve early literacy and learning skills to prepare children ages 0-5 for school. Examples include: Storytime.
Getting Started

Survey Portal
Visit the Survey Portal to access surveys, input your data, and generate reports of your results.

Data Dashboard
Visit the Data Dashboard to view, interact with, and share your survey results.

Successfully Implementing
When you are ready to start Project Outcome, review these resources for planning and administering the surveys and understanding and using the results.

Categories
- FAQ
- Taking Action
- Administration
- Planning
- Advocacy
- Data Dashboards
- Survey Portal
- Help
- Case Studies
- Survey Design

Introducing Impact Survey
- Introduction
- Planning
- Administration
- Advocacy
- Taking Action

How to Maximize Your Results
- Interactive
- Text

Good Practices for Communicating Data
- Text

State Level Data Access
- Video

Summer Reading Case Study
- Text
Getting Started

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Implications for Community Impact

Education and lifelong learning are powerful drivers of community development. As Americans live longer and spend more years in the workforce, it is especially important for adults to have continued ongoing learning and training opportunities to remain competitive. Research shows that people from every walk of life use public libraries to enhance their education and pursue new knowledge and skills, and that education and lifelong learning provide lasting benefits for individuals and communities.

- Most people in the United States (86%) have used a public library at some point in their lives, and about half have used a public library in the past year. Nearly all Americans (95%) agree that the materials and resources available at public libraries play an important role in giving everyone a chance to succeed.¹
- Many learning pursuits are enhanced by Internet access. A 2009 study by the Institute of Museum and Library Services found that those who used a library computer to apply to a college, job, or government program and more than half (51%) of those who used library computers for education received funding.²
- Adults who have not graduated from high school were to close it would have a major impact on the workforce, the economy, and ethnic minorities and those living in poverty are able to educate more education through online classes or assignments.
- Support and training provided by public library standards is available in public libraries. Among Americans who used library systems, 70% said they received help from a librarian for things like answering research questions. If you attended a class, lecture, or program for adults,³

### Results
The results of the Education and Lifelong Learning surveys are shown in the chart below.

#### Outcomes from the Education and Lifelong Learning Program

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outcome</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Neither Agree nor Disagree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Not Applicable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Learned something helpful</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Felt more confident</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intended to apply what was learned</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More aware of applicable library resources</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

The percentage of patrons surveyed who agreed or strongly agreed that the program was beneficial includes:

- Learned something that was helpful: 66%
- Felt more confident about what they learned: 66%
- Intended to apply what they learned: 62%
- Were more aware of applicable resources and services provided by the library: 69%
Getting Started

Survey Portal
Visit the Survey Portal to access surveys, input your data, and generate reports of your results.

Data Dashboard
Visit the Data Dashboard to view, interact with, and share your survey results.

Successfully Implementing
When you are ready to start Project Outcome, review these resources for planning and administering the surveys and understanding and using the results.
Marion County Public Library System has implemented the surveys listed below.

**Service or Program Type:**
- **3.5 Civic Engagement**
- **3.7 Early Childhood Literacy**
- **3.6 Knowledge**
- **3.8 Economic Development**
- **2.7 Education / Lifelong Learning**
- **3.5 Digital Inclusion**
- **4.6 Summer Reading**

**Outcome:**
- **3.8 Confidence**
- **3.8 Awareness of Resources**
- **3.6 New Skills / Application**

Average Score is calculated by assigning a 1-5 value to each Likert Scale answer (Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree). Aggregated responses are then averaged by weighting to these categories to come up with an aggregate score for each question, which can also be aggregated further to larger groups of libraries.

The number of responses in each Likert category are displayed below for each specific survey question. Use the controls below to filter, order and group responses by available options. Click questions to see the open response answers corresponding with the corresponding surveys.

Responses by Service or Program Type and Domain.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Library Average Score</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**What did you like most about the program?**
- Make a selection above for response details.

**What could the library do to improve?**
- Make a selection above for response details.
www.projectoutcome.org

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Project Outcome: Results

User Feedback

- “Feedback collected from patrons help us get beyond ‘WE LOVE THE LIBRARY’”

- “We included our Project Outcome results in our Library Advisory Board reports and were able to change the conversation from numbers being down to what is happening in the lives of our patrons.”

- “Feedback gathered from adult programming told us we needed to add more high-level computer programs and we wouldn’t have had the information if we didn’t conduct the surveys. The survey feedback helped spark staff conversations where we asked ourselves, ‘Are we offering what we need to?’”
Project Outcome:
Rolling out in your library
Rollout: Sacramento Public Library
Outcome Measurement Training

- Talking about outcomes, webinars, articles and other resources
- Link outcomes to services and programs that resonate with staff and community
- Keep it uncomplicated – identify one or two programs, not 10-12
- Aligned outcomes with Strategic Plan assessment
  - Customer satisfaction survey (Counting Opinions)
  - Project Outcome
  - Market segmentation (Gale Analytics on Demand)
## Outcome Measurement Training

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Output</th>
<th>Outcome</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Library use</td>
<td>A parent reads to their child more often because of skills learned in</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>parent/child interaction at the library</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program visits/attendance</td>
<td>A patron is able to write a resume after attending a library-sponsored</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>workshop</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computer Use (reservations)</td>
<td>A patron is more confident in searching and applying for jobs due to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>skills gained through a computer use training offered by/at the library</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Onboarding Staff

- Started with customer satisfaction survey and coding comments (2013-14)
- Engaged branch staff in pilot testing the Level 1 Project Outcome surveys (2014)
- Staff Day 2015 outcomes training session kick-off
- Spring 2016 introduce staff to using the Project Outcome portal
- Encourage using the resources in the Project Outcome portal
Administration Planning

- Administration login + 28 branches + departments = lots of moving parts
- Encourage jumping in with the Project Outcome resources
- Considering a training schedule to align with Strategic Planning assessment benchmark dates
- Identifying “best practice” among staff and sharing
Results Planning

- So what do we do with all this data?
- Consider the timeframe for surveying and acting on results
- Provide training on how to interpret results
- Administration monthly data “check-in” - deeper review quarterly
- Report to Board twice per year, possibly more
Announcements
Next Program Session!

The Power of Performance 2: Project Outcome
Enrollment Primer

Today @ 2:00 – 3:00 PM
Room #505-507

See you there!
Get Involved!

- Sign up on the Project Outcome website
  [www.projectoutcome.org](http://www.projectoutcome.org)
- View training resources
- Schedule a survey in the Survey Portal
- View results in Data Dashboards
- Join the Facebook group & follow us on Twitter

[www.projectoutcome.org](http://www.projectoutcome.org)  
[info@projectoutcome.org](mailto:info@projectoutcome.org)  
[www.facebook.com/groups/projectoutcome](http://www.facebook.com/groups/projectoutcome)  
[twitter.com/ProjectOutcome](http://twitter.com/ProjectOutcome)
Get Involved! Ongoing Support Webinars

May 4, 2016

Wednesday, 1:00-2:00 PM Central Time

Measuring Outcomes: A Toolkit for Public Libraries
[Sponsored by Tech Soup for Libraries]

Additional 2016 Webinar Topics:
Introducing Advanced Measures
Survey Results: Maximizing Their Meaning
Where to Look...

www.projectoutcome.org

News & Events

### Recent News

- **How To Reduce Scrap Learning In Training: Take It From Librarians, We Know Scrap When We See It**
  - March 01, 2016

- **Project Outcome - Looking Back, Looking Forward**
  - January 20, 2016

- **Updated Summary Reports Now Available within Survey Portal**
  - December 18, 2015

- **Project Outcome Now Featured on Global Libraries Public Library Advocacy**
  - December 18, 2015

- **200 Public Libraries are Measuring Their True Impact through PLA’s Project Outcome**
  - December 04, 2015

- **ALA Launches "Libraries Transform" Campaign**
  - November 08, 2015
2016 Planning

- Spring: Task Force creates & pilot tests advanced measures
- June: Launch advanced measures at ALA Annual
- Year-round: Free monthly webinars
- Year-round: Conference presentations
- Year-round: Peer share opportunities
Questions?

Emily Plagman
Project Manager
Public Library Association