



Information Use Management and Policy Institute
College of Information, Florida State University



Public Libraries and the Internet 2006: Study Results and Findings

John Carlo Bertot, Ph. D.
Associate Director and Professor

Charles R. McClure, Ph. D.
Director and Francis Eppes Professor

Paul T. Jaeger, Ph.D. and J. D.
Assistant Professor

Joe Ryan
Senior Research Associate

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APPENDIX 4: INTRODUCTION TO SNPL CHECKLIST, CATALOG, & SUMMARY

Introduction

The origin of the *2006 Successfully Networked Public Library (SNPL) Checklist, Summary* and *Catalog* is the need to better define and describe successfully networked public libraries.⁵³ These documents may be useful for at least the following reasons:

- No state or national standards or norms could be referenced because they did not exist. The documents reported here only begin the process necessary to create a norm. The sample size for the case studies is too small, *Survey* data may be more generalizable in the areas covered. These documents are not standards. There has not been nearly enough peer review by appropriate standard making bodies. But the documents might foster standards development in this area in the future.
- Library managers want some general benchmarks, norms or standards to tell them how well they were doing and what they needed to do next to be come more successfully networked. The *Checklist* and *Catalog* aid in this effort.
- Library managers want to compare themselves to other libraries for the above reason and as potential evidence in budget presentations. A next step here might be a web based system that allows public libraries to report their *Checklist* and *Summary* results
- Library CIOs need a better way to present an overview of the organizations technology, resources and services to vendors and others – see the *Summary*.
- Library managers need a document like the *Checklist* to begin a library network services review and discussion with Library Board and local funders.
- State Library development trainers want a training aid to help library managers to think systematically about their networked resources and services. The *Checklist* and *Catalog* aid in this effort.
- State and national library leaders, vendors and funders need a more precise sense of the range of activities, resources and services involved in becoming a successfully networked public library so as to better support public libraries or to better create useful products and services.

As historical documents, the *Checklist, Summary* and *Catalog* along with the *Survey* may provide a useful “digital” snapshot of public library networked services circa 2006.

⁵³ These documents are part of the *2006 On Becoming Successfully Networked Public Libraries* case studies. The case studies visited 19 public libraries in five states. The case studies intent was to provide a narrative underpinning to the quantitative data being presented in the sister publication: *2006 National Survey of Public Library Internet Connectivity* a biennial survey conducted by a team led by John Bertot and Charles R. McClure. The researchers from both studies are all from the Information Use Management and Policy Institute (<http://www.ii.fsu.edu/>) in the College of Information at Florida State University. The work was supported by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and the American Library Association.

Work Products

Appendix 4 contains the following documents for use by public library managers and others in their effort to become successfully networked.

Appendix 4-A: 2006 SNPL Checklist

This document provides public library managers with a set of characteristics of successfully networked public library. These characteristics need to be considered as a public library becomes successfully networked. These characteristics are clustered into six areas: connection information technology (IT) infrastructure, IT and collections accessed within the library, public workstations and training offered. Each of the elements covered are treated in more detail in the accompanying *Catalog*.

Appendix 4-B: 2006 Successfully Networked Public Libraries Catalog

The *Catalog* covers the areas of interest to library managers seeking to become more successfully networked in more detail than the *Checklist*. In addition, examples and references are offered for each successfully networked element where known.

Appendix 4-C: 2006 Summary of Public Library IT & Network Services

The *Summary* sheet is designed to quickly summarize the public library's information technology and network services. This may be useful to communicate with other library information technology managers, library funders and library vendors. The *Summary* is organized roughly similar to the *Checklist* and *Catalog*. A reader might find further *Summary* data element detail in the *Catalog* entries and examples.