FLORIDA ELECTRONIC LIBRARY EVALUATION ACTIVITIES, 2011-2012: ASSESS THE GALE DATABASE PORTFOLIO, AND MARKET THE FLORIDA ELECTRONIC LIBRARY:

INTERIM REPORT

November 30, 2011
Revised February 28, 2012

Nicole D. Alemanne <nalemanne@fsu.edu>
Research Associate

Laura I. Spears <lib03@my.fsu.edu>
Research Associate

Lauren H. Mandel <lmandel@fsu.edu>
Research Coordinator

Charles R. McClure, PhD <cmcclure@lis.fsu.edu>
Francis Eppes Professor and Director

For

Judith Ring
Director
Florida Division of Library and Information Services

_____

TABLE OF CONTENTS

_____

LIST OF FIGURES

_____

LIST OF TABLES

_____

_____

FLORIDA ELECTRONIC LIBRARY EVALUATION ACTIVITIES, 2011-2012:
ASSESS THE GALE DATABASE PORTFOLIO, AND MARKET THE FLORIDA
ELECTRONIC LIBRARY:
INTERIM REPORT

Introduction

Since 2002, the Information Use Management and Policy Institute (Information Institute)[1] of the Florida State University has engaged in multiple evaluations of the Florida Electronic Library.[2] During this time frame, the Information Institute has assisted in the clarification of its status and goals,[3] developed criteria and measures to assess it,[4] and developed evaluation plans and strategies for it. In addition, the Information Institute has developed and conducted evaluations of the website and individual components of the Florida Electronic Library.

Prior evaluations have included usability, functionality, and accessibility testing of various components for the Florida Division of Library and Information Services (Division). [5] [6] In addition, the Information Institute has completed marketing studies[7] and developed an evaluation database of key statistical indicators to describe Florida Electronic Library activities.[8] As an ongoing evaluation effort, evaluation of the Florida Electronic Library builds upon initial evaluations of this product as reported in *Evaluation of Selected Components of the Florida Electronic Library* (2004) and *2005-2006 Florida Electronic Library Evaluation Activities: Usability, Functionality, and Accessibility* (2006).[9] In 2007, the Information Institute completed a summary evaluation of selected aspects of the Florida Electronic Library for Library Services

_____

[1] http://ii.fsu.edu

[2] For additional information about FEL see: http://www.flelibrary.org/

[3] Information Use Management and Policy Institute. (2003). *Review and evaluation of selected Florida State Library projects*. Tallahassee, FL: Florida State University, Information Institute.

[4] Information Use Management and Policy Institute. (2003). *Measures and statistics to assess the Florida Electronic Library (FEL)*. Tallahassee, FL: Florida State University, Information Institute.

[5] http://dlis.dos.state.fl.us

[6] Information Use Management and Policy Institute. (2003). *Florida Electronic Library: Pilot project functionality assessment*. Tallahassee, FL: Florida State University, Information Institute; and *Functionality assessment of the Ex Libris application* (2004).

[7] Information Use Management and Policy Institute. (2005). *Marketing the Florida Electronic Library: A survey of selected local library manager views*. Tallahassee, FL: Florida State University, Information Institute (draft); Information Use Management and Policy Institute. (2006). *2005-2006 Florida Electronic Library evaluation activities: Usability, functionality, and accessibility*. Tallahassee, FL: Florida State University, Information Institute.

[8] Information Use Management and Policy Institute. (2005). *Evaluation activities for the Florida Electronic Library: Data collection strategies and statistics - Interim report*. Tallahassee, FL: Florida State University, Information Institute (draft).

[9] Information Use Management and Policy Institute. (2004). *Evaluation of selected components of the Florida Electronic Library*. Tallahassee, FL: Florida State University, Information Institute (draft); & Information Use Management and Policy Institute. (2006). *2005-2006 Florida Electronic Library evaluation activities: Usability, functionality, and accessibility*. Tallahassee, FL: Florida State University, Information Institute.

_____

_____

and Technology Act (LSTA) reporting,[10] an assessment of Ask a Librarian (AAL) chat reference questions,[11] an updated Florida Electronic Library five-year plan, an assessment of public library and school needs to better provide consumer health information via the Florida Electronic Library, a continuation of assessment of the AAL component of the Florida Electronic Library, and provision of support to the Division regarding the maintenance, use, and analysis of Florida Electronic Library statistics. [12] [13] [14] Most recently, the Information Institute conducted an evaluation of Gale's marketing plan, the usage of Gale resources, and the effects of training on library staff's ability to be self-sufficient users of Florida Electronic Library/Gale resources and to train others on the use of Florida Electronic Library products.[15]

To assess the Gale database portfolio and to engage in targeted marketing of the Florida Electronic Library, the Information Institute originally was contracted to conduct a two-part study for 2011-2012. The first part is a review of the extant Florida Electronic Library and its Gale databases, including a web-based survey and focus groups with Florida librarians and library staff (hereinafter, librarians and library staff are referred to collectively as library staff) to obtain input on the Florida Electronic Library and Gale databases, analysis of current usage of the Florida Electronic Library on a database-by-database basis, and usability assessment of the Florida Electronic Library website; the second part is a combined user and marketing study to determine users' utilization of and satisfaction with the Florida Electronic Library. The second part of the study was cancelled January 20, 2012. The first part resulted in three reports: the *Preliminary Survey and Interview Findings Report* submitted in October 2011,[16] the *Database Usage and Usability Report* submitted in November 2011,[17] and this *Interim Report*. This report includes findings on a statewide survey and interviews with library staff regarding their use of the Gale databases within the Florida Electronic Library, analysis of usage statistics for the Gale databases within the Florida Electronic Library, and an assessment of the usability of the Florida Electronic Library website.

---

[10] Information Use Management and Policy Institute. (2007). *Florida Electronic Library five-year evaluation 2003-2007*. Tallahassee, FL: Florida State University, Information Institute.

[11] Information Use Management and Policy Institute. (2007). *Who's asking? Geography & demographics of Florida's Ask a Librarian service*. Tallahassee, FL: Florida State University, Information Institute.

[12] Information Use Management and Policy Institute. (2008). *2007-2008 evaluation activities for the Florida Electronic Library*. Tallahassee, FL: Florida State University, Information Institute.

[13] Information Use Management and Policy Institute. (2008). *2007-2008 evaluation activities for the Florida Electronic Library: Ask a Librarian service*. Tallahassee, FL: Florida State University, Information Institute.

[14] Information Use Management and Policy Institute. (2008). *2007-2008 evaluation activities for the Florida Electronic Library: Public libraries and consumer health information resources and services*. Tallahassee, FL: Florida State University, Information Institute.

[15]Mandel, L. H., McClure, C. R., & Doster, K. C. (2010). *Gale training evaluation, 2009-2010: Final report.* Tallahassee, FL: Florida State University, Information Institute. Available at http://ii.fsu.edu/content/download/36507/229600

[16] Alemanne, N. D., Spears, L. I., Mandel, L. H., & McClure, C. R. (2011). *Florida Electronic Library evaluation activities 2011-2012: Assess the Gale-Cengage database portfolio and market the Florida Electronic Library: Preliminary survey and interview findings*. Tallahassee, FL: Florida State University, Information Institute.

[17] Alemanne, N. D., Spears, L. I., Mandel, L. H., & McClure, C. R. (2011). *Florida Electronic Library evaluation activities 2011-2012: Assess the Gale-Cengage database portfolio and market the Florida Electronic Library: Database usage and usability report*. Tallahassee, FL: Florida State University, Information Institute.

_____

Project Purpose and Goals

The overall purpose of this part of the study is to assist the Division in renegotiating the contract with Gale in its provision of statewide database services. The Information Institute is reviewing the Florida Electronic Library as it exists now, with special emphasis on the Gale databases within it.

Survey

The goal of the survey was to ascertain the degree to which library staff (and their users) utilize the Gale databases within the Florida Electronic Library, which (if any) Gale databases they are not using, other databases to which their libraries subscribe, and other feedback on their use and satisfaction with the Florida Electronic Library and its Gale databases.

Method

The goal of the survey recruitment process was to include a wide range of Florida library staff in public, K-12, academic, and other libraries across the state. The project team, in consultation with Division staff, determined that the best way to achieve this outcome was to employ a purposive email recruiting strategy that reached out to organizations and groups representing Florida libraries and library staff. This method was necessary because a sample frame that includes all library staff of all types of Florida libraries was not available. Because such a frame was not available, the total number of potential respondents reached through the email lists is unknown. Therefore, it is not possible to calculate a traditional response rate.

The Information Institute and Division staff conducted survey recruitment during September 2011 through emails to the Fl-lib (State of Florida) and FLA-lib (Florida Library Association) electronic mailing lists; the Northeast Florida Library Information Network (NEFLIN) and the Southeast Florida Library Information Network (SEFLIN); municipal and county library systems, consortia, and cooperatives including the Florida Library Information Network (FLIN); universities, colleges, community colleges, and the Independent Colleges and Universities of Florida (ICUF); and the Florida Department of Education. The project team, in consultation with Division staff, determined that the most cost- and time-efficient method of conducting the survey would be to launch a web-based survey using the Survey Monkey platform. The recruitment emails included a link to the survey.

In total, library staff completed 288 online surveys, although responses varied per individual question. These responses represent library staff from all four types of libraries (public, K-12, academic, and other libraries). Information Institute staff calculated survey descriptive statistics using Microsoft Excel. Both Division and Information Institute staff conducted an internal review of the survey questions. The complete list of survey questions is available upon request.

Findings

Survey Respondents

        Survey respondents represent four types of libraries. The greatest number of responses comes from public library staff (59.4%). Academic and K-12 library staff represent 34.3% (19.4% and 14.9%, respectively), and library staff of other types libraries (including special libraries) comprise 6.2% of the surveys (Figure 1).

Response rates differed for each question on the survey; the response rate for this question was n=288.
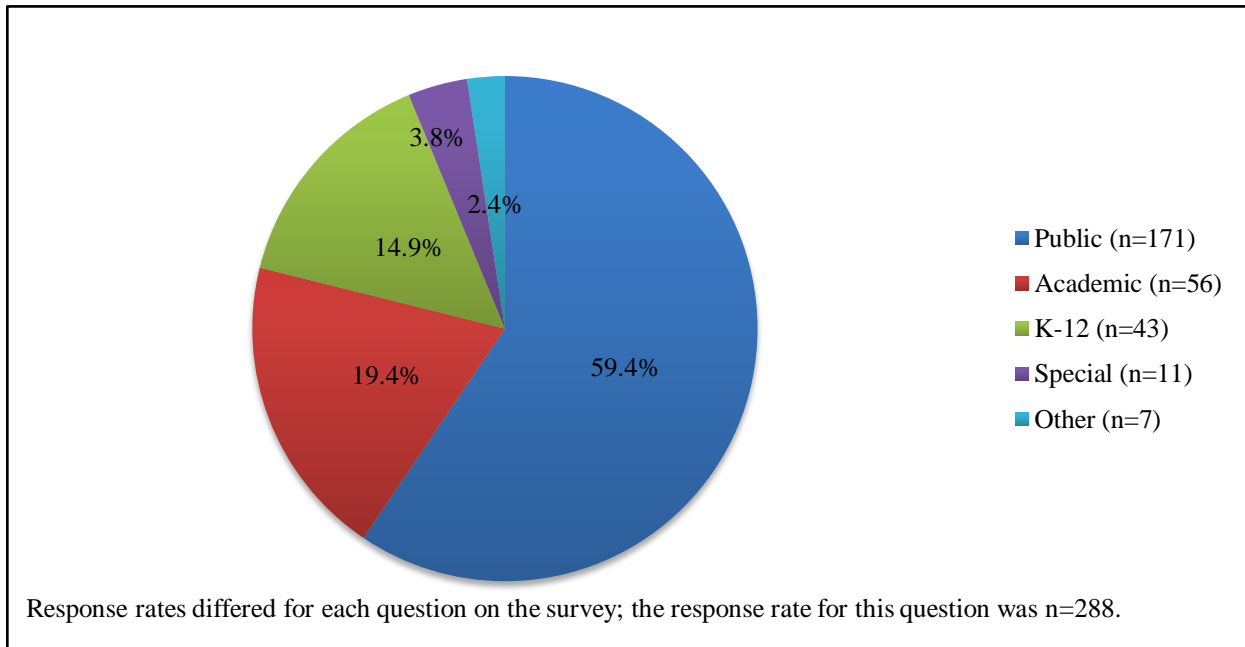
Figure 1. Distribution of Respondents by Library Type

        The respondents represent a full range of job types, including managers, librarians, and library staff. Because job titles are not uniform across libraries, the Information Institute categorized the reported titles for clarity (Table 1). The greatest numbers of respondents are librarians—in total, 47.6% of respondents are librarians, including public librarians (32.6%), school librarians (11.1%), and youth librarians (3.8%). Managerial staff represent 35.8% of respondents, including managers and supervisors (19.4%), directors (12.5%), and assistant directors (3.8%). Library staff represent 12.5% of respondents. District media supervisors (1.0%), technical services (0.7%), circulation (0.3%), collection development (0.3%), and others (1.7%) comprise the balance of respondents.

Table 1: Job Title Categories

Title Category*	n	%
Librarians	137	47.6%
Librarian	94	32.6%
School librarian	32	11.1%
Youth librarian	11	3.8%
Managerial	103	35.8%
Manager/supervisor	56	19.4%
Director	36	12.5%
Assistant director	11	3.8%
Library staff	36	12.5%
Other	5	1.7%
District media supervisor	3	1.0%
Technical services	2	0.7%
Circulation	1	0.3%
Collection development/acquisitions	1	0.3%

Response rates differed for each question on the survey; the response rate for this question was n=288.
*Actual titles were categorized for clarity.

Most respondents (86.1%) report that their libraries participate in the Florida Electronic Library, with 97.1% of public library respondents agreeing with this statement (Table 2). Libraries other than public libraries (Academic, K-12, and Special/Other) participate at a slightly lower level (70.1%) than public libraries, and a small group of respondents from these types of libraries are not sure about their libraries' participation (16.2%).

Table 2: Participation in the Florida Electronic Library

Library Type	Yes	No	Not Sure
Public libraries (n=171)	97.1% (n=166)	0.0% (n=0)	2.9% (n=5)
Other libraries (n=117)	70.1% (n=82)	13.7% (n=16)	16.2% (n=19)
All libraries (n=288)	86.1% (n=248)	5.6% (n=16)	8.3% (n=24)

Response rates differed for each question on the survey; the overall response rate for this question was n=288.

Use of the Gale Databases Within the Florida Electronic Library

Use of the Florida Electronic Library for Work as Library Staff

The survey asked respondents how often they use the Florida Electronic Library for work as library staff (as opposed to for personal reasons, discussed below). The majority of respondents in all types of libraries use it on a weekly basis (32.1% of public libraries, 50.4% of

other libraries, and 39.6% of all libraries), with the next largest group using it less than monthly (Figure 2). However, a number of respondents report daily use (19.0% of public libraries, 16.2% of other libraries, and 17.9% of all libraries).
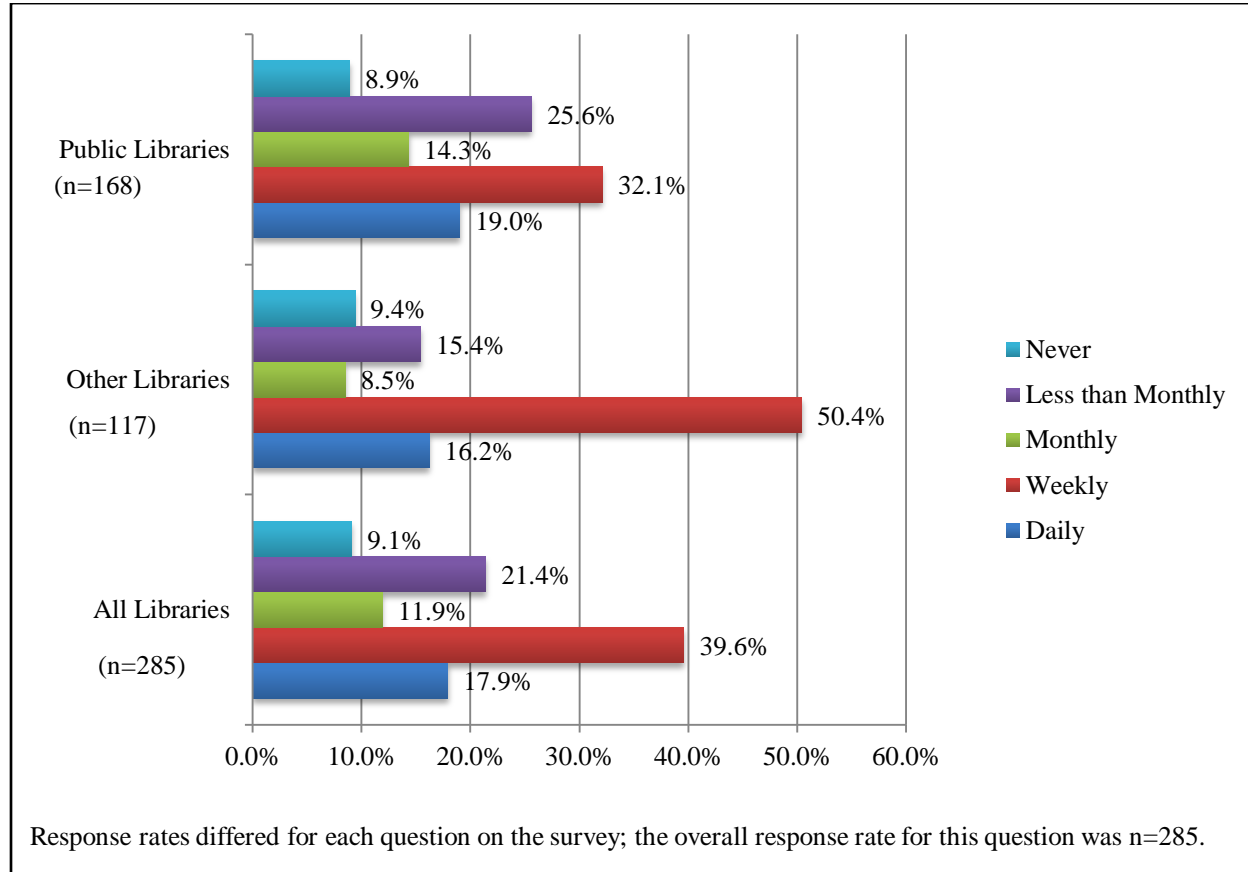
Figure 2. Frequency of Florida Electronic Library Use as Library Staff

        The survey asked respondents two questions about the databases that they use most often in their work as library staff. This question was asked two ways: first, respondents picked all the databases that they regularly, and then they were asked to pick only three databases used most often (referred to as "Pick 3" in the tables). Responses from public library staff to both questions (Tables 3 and 4) yield essentially the same list of databases. Although the order of databases is slightly different, *General OneFile*, *Health and Wellness Resource Center*, *Books and Authors*, *Academic OneFile*, and *Gale Virtual Reference Library* are the top databases for both lists. The full lists of databases can be found in the Preliminary Survey and Interview Findings Report (Appendices B and C).

Table 3: Gale Databases Used Regularly in Work as Public Library Staff (Top 10 Databases)

Public Libraries	n	%
General OneFile	72	53.7%
Health and Wellness Resource Center	56	41.8%
Books and Authors	54	40.3%
Academic OneFile	46	34.3%
Gale Virtual Reference Library	44	32.8%
LitFinder	44	32.8%
General Reference Center Gold	36	26.9%
Florida Database	28	20.9%
Demographics Now	27	20.1%
Kids InfoBits	27	20.1%

Response rates differed for each question on the survey; the overall response rate for this question was n=218 and the response rate for public library staff was n=134. Institutions reported in multiple categories.

Table 4: Gale Databases Used Most Often in Work as Public Library Staff: Pick 3 (Top 10 Databases)

Public Libraries	n	%
General OneFile	59	44.0%
Academic OneFile	31	23.1%
Books and Authors	29	21.6%
Health and Wellness Resource Center	28	20.9%
Gale Virtual Reference Library	24	17.9%
General Reference Center Gold	18	13.4%
LitFinder	15	11.2%
Kids InfoBits	14	10.4%
Demographics Now	13	9.7%
Florida Database	11	8.2%
Gale Encyclopedia of Medicine	11	8.2%
Kids Edition	11	8.2%

Response rates differed for each question on the survey; the overall response rate for this question was n=218 and the response rate for public library staff was n=134. Institutions reported in multiple categories.

Responses from library staff in other types of libraries to both questions (Tables 5 and 6) yield almost the same lists of most used databases. The top five databases are the same between public and other library staff, but where *General OneFile* is the top database for public library staff, *Academic OneFile* is the most cited database for other types of libraries. *Demographics Now* is a top ten database for public library staff, but not for other library staff.

Table 5: Gale Databases Used Regularly in Work as Other Library Staff (Top 10 Databases)

Other Libraries	n	%
Academic OneFile	39	46.4%
General OneFile	38	45.2%
Gale Virtual Reference Library	36	42.9%
Health and Wellness Resource Center	31	36.9%
Books and Authors	21	25.0%
General Reference Center Gold	21	25.0%
LitFinder	20	23.8%
Expanded Academic ASAP	19	22.6%
Florida Database	19	22.6%
Health Reference Center Academic	17	20.2%
Kids InfoBits	17	20.2%

Response rates differed for each question on the survey; the overall response rate for this question was n=218 and the response rate for other library staff was n=84. Institutions reported in multiple categories.

Table 6: Gale Databases Used Most Often in Work as Other Library Staff: Pick 3 (Top 10 Databases)

Other Libraries	n	%
Academic OneFile	30	35.7%
General OneFile	23	27.4%
Gale Virtual Reference Library	19	22.6%
General Reference Center Gold	11	13.1%
Health and Wellness Resource Center	10	11.9%
LitFinder	9	10.7%
Expanded Academic ASAP	8	9.5%
Florida Database	8	9.5%
Kids InfoBits	8	9.5%
Books and Authors	7	8.3%

Response rates differed for each question on the survey; the overall response rate for this question was n=218 and the response rate for other library staff was n=84. Institutions reported in multiple categories.

Use of the Florida Electronic Library for Personal Reasons

The majority of respondents in all types of libraries use the Florida Electronic Library for personal reasons on a monthly basis (26.0% for public libraries, 25.8% for other libraries, and 25.9% for all libraries) or less than monthly basis (43.2% for public libraries, 29.9% for other libraries, and 37.9% for all libraries) (Figure 3). This represents less frequent use of the Florida Electronic Library for personal reasons than in the course of one's job as a library staff person.

_____
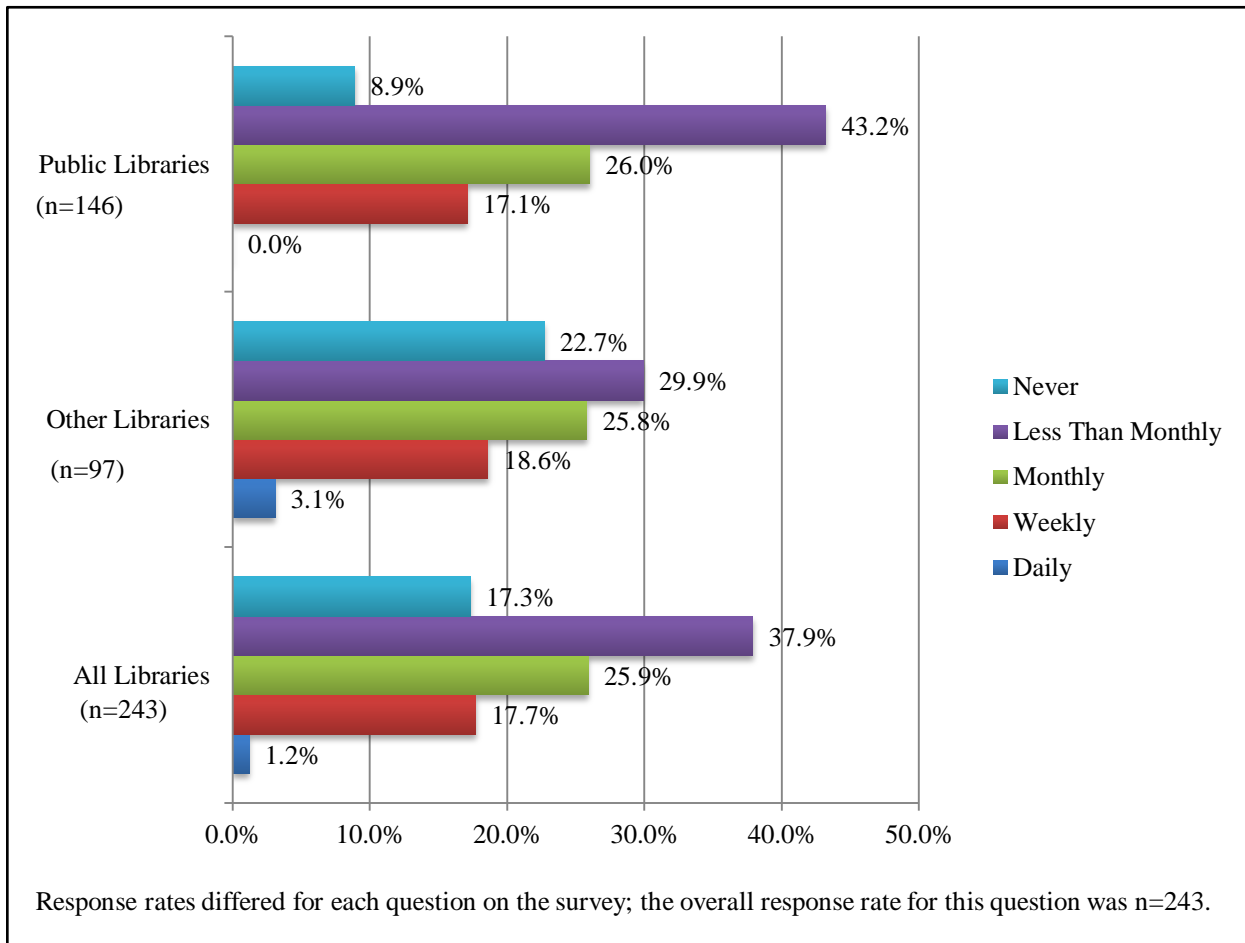
Figure 3. Frequency of Florida Electronic Library Use for Personal Reasons

      Survey respondents answered two questions about the databases that they use regularly for personal reasons (all of the databases they use regularly, and then only the three databases they use most often—referred to as "Pick 3" in the tables). For this question, the survey included a list of all Gale databases in the Florida Electronic Library. The top 10 responses from public library staff to both questions (Tables 7 and 8) yield almost the same list of most used databases, with *General OneFile*, *Health and Wellness Resource Center*, *Books and Authors*, *Popular Magazines*, and *Academic OneFile* ranking as the top databases for both lists. For all responses to these questions, see Appendices D and E in the *Preliminary Survey and Interview Findings Report*.

_____

Table 7: Gale Databases Used Regularly For Personal Reasons—Public Library Staff (Top 10 Databases)

Public Libraries	n	%
General OneFile	46	38.0%
Health and Wellness Resource Center	39	32.2%
Books and Authors	33	27.3%
Popular Magazines	19	15.7%
Academic OneFile	17	14.0%
Gale Encyclopedia of Medicine	17	14.0%
Florida Database	14	11.6%
Gale Virtual Reference Library	12	9.9%
General Reference Center Gold	12	9.9%
Home Improvement Collection	9	7.4%
LitFinder	9	7.4%

Response rates differed for each question on the survey; the overall response rate for this question was n=196 and the response rate for public library staff was n=121. Institutions reported in multiple categories.

Table 8: Gale Databases Used Most Often For Personal Reasons—Public Library Staff: Pick 3 (Top 10 Databases)

Public Libraries	n	%
General OneFile	47	38.8%
Health and Wellness Resource Center	38	31.4%
Books and Authors	27	22.3%
Popular Magazines	20	16.5%
Academic OneFile	18	14.9%
General Reference Center Gold	12	9.9%
Gale Virtual Reference Library	11	9.1%
Florida Database	10	8.3%
Gale Encyclopedia of Medicine	10	8.3%
Expanded Academic ASAP	7	5.8%

Response rates differed for each question on the survey; the overall response rate for this question was n=196 and the response rate for public library staff was n=121. Institutions reported in multiple categories.

Responses from library staff in other types of libraries to both questions (Tables 9 and 10) yield similar lists of most used databases.

Table 9: Gale Databases Used Regularly For Personal Reasons—Other Library Staff (Top 10 Databases)

Other Libraries	n	%
Health and Wellness Resource Center	24	32.0%
Academic OneFile	23	30.7%
Books and Authors	15	20.0%
General OneFile	15	20.0%
Gale Encyclopedia of Medicine	14	18.7%
Gale Virtual Reference Library	14	18.7%
Popular Magazines	13	17.3%
Educator's Reference Complete	12	16.0%
Florida Database	12	16.0%
Health Reference Center Academic	8	10.7%

Response rates differed for each question on the survey; the overall response rate for this question was n=196 and the response rate for other library staff was n=75. Institutions reported in multiple categories.

Table 10: Gale Databases Used Most Often For Personal Reasons—Other Library Staff: Pick 3 (Top 10 Databases)

Other Libraries	n	%
Academic OneFile	18	24.0%
Health and Wellness Resource Center	17	22.7%
General OneFile	14	18.7%
Books and Authors	12	16.0%
Gale Virtual Reference Library	10	13.3%
Popular Magazines	10	13.3%
Educator's Reference Complete	7	9.3%
Florida Database	6	8.0%
General Reference Center Gold	6	8.0%
Gale Encyclopedia of Medicine	5	6.7%
Kids InfoBits	5	6.7%

Response rates differed for each question on the survey; the overall response rate for this question was n=196 and the response rate for other library staff was n=75. Institutions reported in multiple categories.

Databases Not Used Regularly

When respondents reported on the databases they use regularly, there were a number of databases they did not choose. This does not mean they are never used, only that they are not used regularly (Table 11).

Table 11: Databases Not Chosen as Regularly Used (All Libraries)

Not Used Frequently as Library Staff	Not Used Frequently for Personal Reasons
Agriculture Collection	*Agriculture Collection*
American Buyers, Demographics of Shopping	*American Buyers, Demographics of Shopping*
Beacham's Guide to the Endangered Species ...	*American Revolution Reference Library*
Bowling, Beatniks, and Bell Bottoms, Pop...	*Business Index ASAP*
Business, Economic and Theory Collection	*Career Opportunities in Casinos ...*
Career Opportunities in Casinos ...	*Career Opportunities in Checks ...*
Career Opportunities in Checks ...	*Career Opportunities in Conservation ...*
Career Opportunities in Conservation ...	*Career Opportunities in Journalism*
Career Opportunities in Journalism	*Career Opportunities in Radio ...*
Career Opportunities in Radio	*Career Opportunities in the Retail ...*
Career Opportunities in Real Estate	*Communication & Mass Media eCollection*
Career Opportunities in the Retail ...	*Computer Database*
Career Opportunities in Science	*Crime and Punishment in America ...*
Communication & Mass Media eCollection	*Criminal Justice eCollection*
Crime and Punishment in America Reference Library	*Encyclopedia of Children and Childhood in ...*
Criminal Justice eCollection	*Encyclopedia of Small Business*
Culinary Arts Collection	*Environmental Issues and Policy eCollection*
Encyclopedia of African American Culture and History	*Informe*
Environmental Issues and Policy eCollection	*Junior Edition PowerSearch Interface*
Fine Arts and Music Collection	*Nursing and Allied Health Collection*
Gale Encyclopedia of Genetic Disorders	*Supreme Court Drama, Cases that Changed ...*
Gale Encyclopedia of Multicultural America	*Winning New Business*
Growing Business Handbook, Inspiration ...	*World of Earth Science*
How to Understand Business Finance	*World War I Reference Library*
St. James Encyclopedia of Popular Culture	
Supreme Court Drama, Cases that Changed America	
Tourism, Hospitality, and Leisure eCollection	
Ultimate Interview, Make a Great ...	
Winning New Business	
World of Earth Science	
World War II Reference Library	

Response rates differed for each question on the survey; the response rates for these questions were n=218 for work as library staff and n=196 for use for personal reasons. Databases are listed in alphabetical, not rank, order.

Importance of Florida Electronic Library Gale Databases to Libraries and Communities

When respondents were asked to evaluate the importance of the Gale databases to their libraries and communities, the list of those deemed Very Important by public library staff (Table 12) was very similar to the list of databases used most often by the staff. However, two databases deemed Very Important to the library and community but not mentioned as highly used databases by staff are *Ready Made Job Search* and *Small Business Resource Center*. This indicates that public library staff find that their users are interested in researching jobs and business topics. Similarly, *A to Z of Careers and Jobs* is deemed Very Important for the communities of other types of libraries (Table 13). The full lists of databases can be found in the *Preliminary Survey and Interview Findings Report* (Appendix F).

_____

_____

Table 12: Importance of Gale Databases to the Library and Community, Public Libraries (Top 10 by Very Important)

Public Libraries	Very Important	Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important	Not Sure
General OneFile	48.5%	25.2%	13.6%	1.0%	11.7%
Florida Database	44.7%	33.0%	10.7%	3.9%	7.8%
Health and Wellness	43.7%	32.0%	10.7%	2.9%	10.7%
Books and Authors	38.8%	32.0%	15.5%	4.9%	8.7%
A to Z of Careers and Jobs	37.9%	28.2%	16.5%	4.9%	12.6%
Academic OneFile	36.9%	27.2%	17.5%	6.8%	11.7%
Ready Made Job Search	35.0%	30.1%	12.6%	5.8%	16.5%
Small Business Resource ...	34.0%	31.1%	15.5%	5.8%	13.6%
Gale Virtual Reference...	32.0%	36.9%	12.6%	6.8%	11.7%
General Business File ASAP	32.0%	32.0%	15.5%	7.8%	12.6%
Ultimate Job Search	32.0%	32.0%	15.5%	7.8%	12.6%

Response rates differed for each question on the survey; the overall response rate for this question was n=167 and the response rate for public library staff was n=103.

Table 13: Importance of Gale Databases to the Library and Community, Other Libraries (Top 10 by Very Important)

Other Libraries	Very Important	Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important	Not Sure
Academic OneFile	54.7%	14.1%	10.9%	7.8%	12.5%
Health and Wellness	46.9%	12.5%	17.2%	10.9%	12.5%
Gale Virtual Reference ...	45.3%	23.4%	9.4%	7.8%	14.1%
Health Reference Center	39.1%	12.5%	17.2%	15.6%	15.6%
A to Z of Careers and Jobs	37.5%	12.5%	14.1%	15.6%	20.3%
LitFinder	35.9%	21.9%	12.5%	10.9%	18.8%
Educator's Reference	34.4%	18.8%	15.6%	10.9%	20.3%
Expanded Academic ASAP	34.4%	26.6%	12.5%	7.8%	18.8%
General OneFile	32.8%	31.3%	9.4%	10.9%	15.6%
General Reference Center...	32.8%	23.4%	14.1%	10.9%	18.8%

Response rates differed for each question on the survey; the overall response rate for this question was n=167 and the response rate for other library staff was n=64.

Additional Databases Purchased by Libraries

About two thirds of libraries report purchasing databases outside the Florida Electronic Library (Figure 4). This is true for both public libraries (67.3%) and other types of libraries (65.8%). Appendix A contains a list of additional databases purchased by libraries.

_____

_____
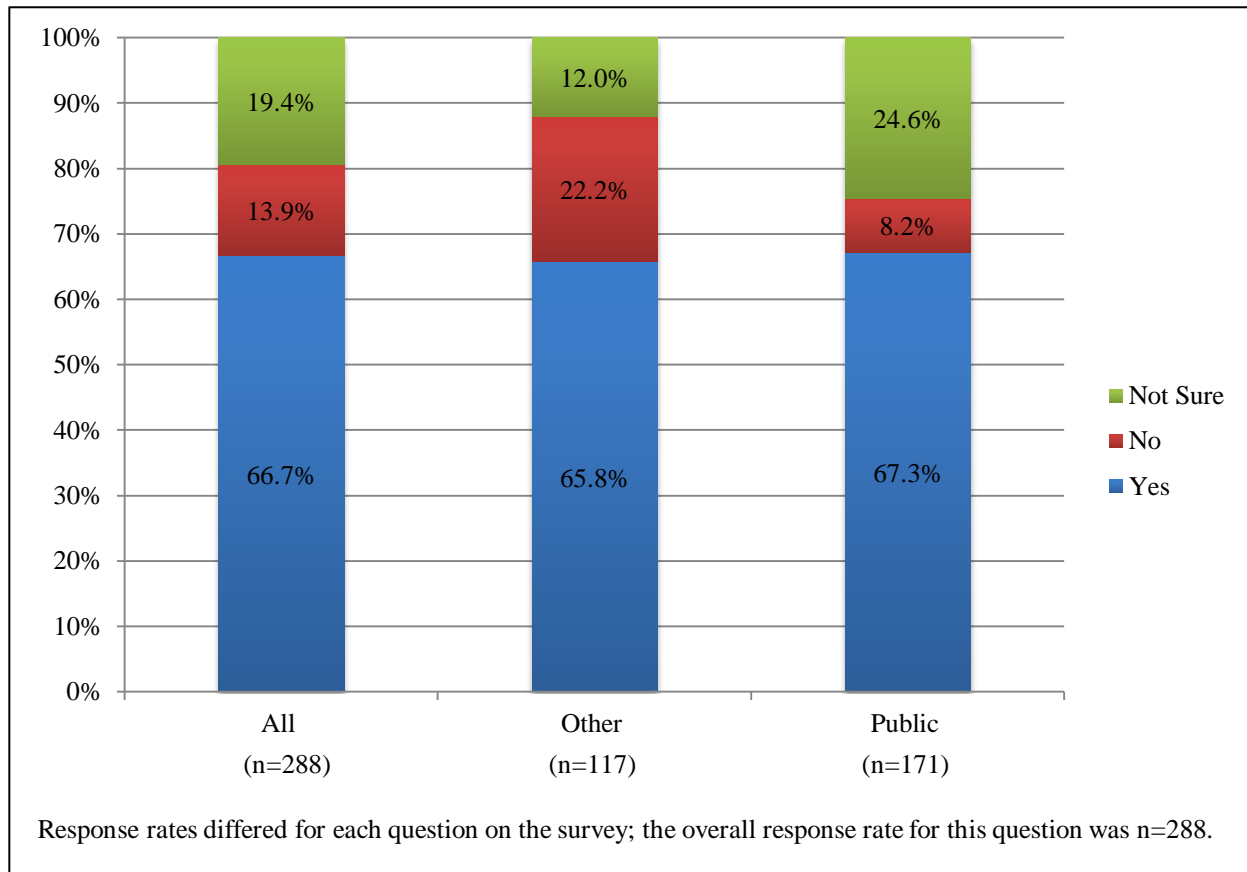
Figure 4. Subscription to Additional Databases (Percent of Respondents in Each Category)

Feedback from Survey Respondents

Success in Finding Needed Materials

Respondents answered a question asking them to think back to the last time they used the Florida Electronic Library for any reason and to rate their success in finding materials (Table 14). Only 35.0% of all library staff report finding everything they needed with no difficulty. However, 27.0% report finding some things they needed but having to look elsewhere for additional materials, and, overall, 65.0% of respondents indicate varying degrees of difficulty in using the databases to satisfy their needs. Few of the respondents report finding what they needed with considerable difficulty (2.1%) or not finding what they needed (2.5%).

_____

Table 14: Success Finding Materials the Last Time Respondents Used the Florida Electronic Library

Success Finding Materials	Public Libraries (n=144)	Other Libraries (n=93)	All Libraries (n=237)
Found everything I needed with no difficulty	33.3% (n=48)	37.6% (n=35)	35.0% (n=83)
Found everything I needed with some difficulty	23.6% (n=34)	34.4% (n=32)	27.8% (n=66)
Found everything I needed with considerable difficulty	0.7% (n=1)	4.3% (n=4)	2.1% (n=5)
Found some things I needed but had to look elsewhere for additional materials	31.9% (n=46)	19.4% (n=18)	27.0% (n=64)
Could not find anything I needed	3.5% (n=5)	1.1% (n=1)	2.5% (n=6)
Have never used the Florida Electronic Library	6.9% (n=10)	3.2% (n=3)	5.5% (n=13)

Response rates differed for each question on the survey; the overall response rate for this question was n=237.

Factors That Would Encourage More Use of the Florida Electronic Library

Respondents answered a question asking them to choose factors that would encourage them to use the Florida Electronic Library more (Table 15). The top factor cited by public and other library staff is training on how to search the databases (38.3% and 33.8%, respectively). This is followed closely by the inclusion of more relevant databases (33.6% and 31.1%, respectively), and then by a wider selection of databases (24.3% and 21.6%, respectively).

Table 15: Factors that Would Encourage Library Staff to Use the Florida Electronic Library More

Encouragement	Public Libraries (n=107)	Other Libraries (n=74)	All Libraries (n=181)
More relevant databases	33.6% (n=36)	31.1% (n=23)	32.6% (n=59)
Wider selection of databases	24.3% (n=26)	21.6% (n=16)	23.2% (n=42)
Training on how to search the databases	38.3% (n=41)	33.8% (n=25)	36.5% (n=66)
Colleague's recommendation	24.3% (n=26)	17.6% (n=13)	21.5% (n=39)
Friend's recommendation	6.5% (n=7)	6.8% (n=5)	6.6% (n=12)
Other	27.1% (n=29)	31.1% (n=23)	28.7% (n=52)

Response rates differed for each question on the survey; the overall response rate for this question was n=181. Does not add to 100% because institutions reported in multiple categories.

_____

In a related topic, respondents rated the importance of subject and topic areas to their libraries and communities. The top five subject areas (based on percentage of respondents indicating a topic as Very Important) cited by public library staff are full text, Florida, books, health, and business (Table 16). The five top areas for other library staff are full text, education, research, reference, and books (Table 17). Top ten areas that public library staff cite, but other types of library staff do not are business, children, and magazines. Research, science, and journals are top ten areas for other types of library staff but not for public library staff. The full lists of topics can be found in Appendix G of the *Preliminary Survey and Interview Findings Report*.

Table 16: Importance of Subject/Topic Areas to Public Libraries and Communities (Top 10)

Public Libraries	Very Important	Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important	Not Sure
Full text	65.7%	15.2%	3.8%	4.8%	10.5%
Florida	57.1%	26.7%	6.7%	2.9%	6.7%
Books	56.2%	26.7%	6.7%	1.9%	8.6%
Health	56.2%	31.4%	6.7%	2.9%	2.9%
Business	50.5%	30.5%	10.5%	3.8%	4.8%
Reference	50.5%	29.5%	13.3%	1.0%	5.7%
Children	46.7%	38.1%	7.6%	1.9%	5.7%
Magazines	46.7%	26.7%	15.2%	4.8%	6.7%
Education	44.8%	34.3%	15.2%	1.9%	3.8%
Literature	42.9%	35.2%	9.5%	6.7%	5.7%

Response rates differed for each question on the survey; the overall response rate for this question was n=177 and the response rate for public library staff was n=105. The table is ranked by Very Important.

Table 17: Importance of Subject/Topic Areas to Other Types of Libraries and Communities (Top 10)

Other Libraries	Very Important	Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important	Not Sure
Full text	72.2%	13.9%	1.4%	0.0%	12.5%
Education	56.9%	25.0%	6.9%	2.8%	8.3%
Research	55.6%	26.4%	5.6%	1.4%	11.1%
Reference	54.2%	25.0%	9.7%	0.0%	11.1%
Books	52.8%	27.8%	8.3%	2.8%	8.3%
Literature	51.4%	23.6%	5.6%	9.7%	9.7%
Science	48.6%	31.9%	4.2%	2.8%	12.5%
Florida	47.2%	27.8%	11.1%	2.8%	11.1%
Health	47.2%	34.7%	5.6%	4.2%	8.3%
Journals	45.8%	26.4%	12.5%	2.8%	12.5%

Response rates differed for each question on the survey; the overall response rate for this question was n=177 and the response rate for other library staff was n=72. The table is ranked by Very Important.

_____

Suggestions for Improvement and Other Feedback

In an open-ended question, respondents made suggestions for improvement to the Florida Electronic Library. Over one-quarter of respondents (n=76; 26.4%) answered this question. Responses cover content, usability, and support issues (for clarity, the lists below includes categorized responses, not by the frequency with which respondents mentioned them):

- Content:
  - Better aligned with school curriculum,
  - Use Ebsco rather than Gale databases for better selection and ease of use,
  - Problems with Gale databases such as lag time in adding full text and times when content descriptions of databases are inaccurate,
  - More databases covering the needs of Florida citizens including job help, ePrep for high school students and civil service test takers, language courses including English as a Second Language (ESL), small business mentoring, legal forms, and credit/family budgets, and
  - Links to homework help for high school students;
- Usability:
  - A more scholarly interface,
  - Divide content into school levels as students are overwhelmed with materials,
  - Small libraries need 100% or nearly 100% full text,
  - Duplication of databases offered to college students is unnecessary,
  - More children's magazines and literature resources for high school students,
  - More availability of Library and Information Science research for staff, and
  - Interface suggestions include "Google like" search results, a more integrated search, making it more intuitive for students on their first visit, and a cleaner interface; and
- Support:
  - More training and marketing support for both staff and patrons, such as an online tutorial and "on-demand" training,
  - Develop a marketing plan to help teachers use it more effectively and develop online literacy, and
  - Authentication issues, including a suggestion to make it accessible with a Florida driver's license or ID number and a note that Florida residency authentication by IP does not work consistently in rural areas.

Several respondents say that there are no improvements necessary or that the service is valuable and must be continued. One respondent notes the Florida Electronic Library's success in "leveling the playing field in terms of resources for Florida children" and says that the state's funding of the resources "brings database resources to counties that might not otherwise be able to fund such a purchase." A school librarian writes, "as our budgets are cut more and more, access to free resources are [*sic*] even more important." Finally, several respondents note that the survey itself has helped increase their awareness and knowledge of the Florida Electronic Library, and one respondent thanks the Division for asking these "important questions" and reviewing feedback.

_____

_____

Interviews

The goal of the interviews was to obtain additional detail beyond that obtained from the survey regarding the degree to which library staff (and their users) utilize the Gale databases within the Florida Electronic Library, which (if any) Gale databases they are not using, other databases to which their libraries subscribe, and other feedback on their use and satisfaction with the Florida Electronic Library and its Gale databases.

Method

For interview recruitment, Information Institute staff sent email recruitment messages to library staff from all types of libraries, encouraging their participation in the telephone interview. Email messages were sent out via list-servs such as Fl-lib (State of Florida) and FLA-lib (Florida Library Association), as well as to members of library organizations such as the five multi-type library cooperatives, the Florida Library Information Network (FLIN) and the Ask a Librarian (AAL) virtual reference desk. Also, the study team accessed and used individual email addresses from the Division's database of libraries. Additional requests for interviews were sent to the school media regional directors for the state of Florida via the Florida Department of Education and to individual school library staff persons from a past president of the American Association of School Librarians (AASL).

Information Institute and Division staff reviewed the interview questions prior to beginning data collection. The full interview script is available upon request. The study team conducted 15 interviews. The breakdown by library type includes: 5 public; 5 academic; 3 school; and 2 special. The interviews were conducted over a five week period, from October 5, 2011 through November 14, 2011.

Upon response from an interested library staff person, the study team offered a variety of times and dates for the interview and sent the person a consent form to read and sign. After receiving the signed consent form and settling on a date and time for the interview, a study team member conducted each interview via telephone, with the exception of one that was conducted face-to-face. The average duration of the interview was approximately 10 minutes. The study team member reminded participants of the voluntary nature of the interview and all were comfortable with answering the questions.

While it was important to be guided by the interview questions with each participant, the question asking for any general comments about the Florida Electronic Library was successful in soliciting a fair amount of extra information, and library staff gave most of their recommendations and complaints about the website in this section. Table 18 lists the responses by library type for survey responses and interviews.

_____

Table 18: Survey and Interview Respondents by Library Type

Library Type	Survey		Interview	
	n	%	n	%
Public	171	59.4	5	33.3
Academic	56	19.4	5	33.3
K-12	43	14.9	3	20.0
Special	11	3.8	2	13.3
Other	7	2.4		

Response rates differed for each question on the survey; the response rate for the survey question was n=288; the response rate for interviews was n=15.

Findings

The interviews generated a range of comments and responses. The following section summarizes findings from the interviews.

Florida Electronic Library Purpose

Most of the respondents identify that the purpose of the Florida Electronic Library is to provide *free* electronic resources to all citizens of the state of Florida. Several mention that it is a democratic function of the state. For one school media specialist who works at a district administrative level, the Florida Electronic Library represents the key resource for teachers, parents, and students. Its provision of free resources to all Florida citizens with access to a Florida-based computer ensures "Equal access to all residents, through computers, which can be accessed at public libraries or at the school. Every citizen has access to quality information." Also two academic librarians mention that the State University System (SUS) benefits from the Gale license agreement in negotiating school access to these resources. Overall, there is not a clear consensus about the purpose of the Florida Electronic Library among interviewees.

Accessing and Using the Florida Electronic Library

Public and school library staff interviewees report that they use the service daily. One school librarian says that she accesses the Florida Electronic Library through the district portal called Learning Village and does so on a daily basis, which is more frequently than she uses the other databases that her district provides. Although not daily users, the AAL library staff use it for every shift, since they rarely have access to the user's own library's resources. In contrast to the frequency with which public, school, and AAL library staff use the Florida Electronic Library, academic library staff rarely use it when they are helping their own students, unless the topic is Florida-related.

Popular databases depend on the type of library that the library staff represent. The databases public library staff mention most often are: *Health and Wellness Resource Center*, *Demographics Now*, *Small Business Resource Center*, *LitFinder*, *Books and Authors*, and the *Online Computer Library Center* (*OCLC*) for lists of books for patrons (note that *OCLC* is *not* a

_____

Gale database, but it is what interviewees mention using frequently). In contrast, academic library staff mention the following databases as the ones they use most often: *Academic OneFile* and *Gale Virtual Reference Library*. School library staff are using *Kids Info Bits* and *Florida Memory Project* most often (note that *Florida Memory Project* is *not* a Gale database, but it is what interviewees mention using frequently). Also, special library staff are relying heavily on *Fashion, Costume and Culture* and the *Education Resources Information Center* (*ERIC*; note that *ERIC* is *not* a Gale database, but it is what interviewees mention using frequently).

Florida Electronic Library Resources

Regarding the resources available in the Florida Electronic Library, all library staff interviewees have a good understanding of the resources available and can name the top five databases that they use immediately. Almost every interviewee mentions *Academic OneFile* and *Health and Wellness Resource Center* as being among their top five most frequently used databases. Everyone also mentions that the Florida Electronic Library is their source of Florida history resources for anyone, at any age.

When asked what resources should be added to the Florida Electronic Library, responses varied by library type. For public library staff, helpful additional resources would be employment resources such as *Career Transitions* and *Testing and Education Resource Center* (*TERC*). Academic library staff would like to see *Reference USA* added (one public library staff person also mentions this) and the *Biography Resource Center*. School library staff feel that academic resources are not comprehensive enough (i.e., need more depth) and that there are many resources that cover the same topic.

One school librarian says that the district in which she works also purchases *Opposing Viewpoints* and *Gale Literature*, and the teachers really find these valuable. This district also purchases the extended book content for *Student Resource Center Gold*, which is a Florida Electronic Library purchased database, but they may not be able to do so again next year.

Experiences Using the Florida Electronic Library to Search for Information

This is the most challenging question for the library staff to answer accurately as most cannot recall specific situations. Instead, they are able to quickly name the databases they use all the time and many respond in that context. One library staff person was helping a patron who called the library looking for material in *Consumer Reports*, but the latest issues have embargos (90 days) so it was not available in the Florida Electronic Library and the patron had to come into the library to make copies of the print edition that the library owns. For this particular magazine, the embargo is too long, as people always want information from the latest issue.

Another library staff person recalls using *Demographics Now* to help a patron compare three counties that he was researching. The library staff person points out how much easier this database is than using the Census.gov website. A school librarian recounts a time when he helped a student find information about birds by using *Kids InfoBits*, which was disappointing

_____

_____

because the student was looking for information specifically about sandpipers, and there was nothing in the database to help him.

Assisting Patrons with Accessing and Navigating the Florida Electronic Library

Public library staff use the Florida Electronic Library daily. Many of the public libraries have the database links embedded in their own websites, so the users are not always aware they are using Florida Electronic Library resources. However, anecdotally, a director of one large county system states that it is the core of their reference resources. The public libraries would not be able to provide electronic resources for reference work without this resource. One librarian from a small, municipal library is emphatic that she shows patrons how to use the resources, especially *Books and Authors*. She tried to incorporate this resource into her catalog, and has been mostly successful (there are still some technical issues but she is working with her integrated library system (ILS) provider on this). She shows patrons how to use this resource as a reader's advisory tool.

Interviewees indicate there are a few challenges in helping patrons to access and navigate the Florida Electronic Library. The authentication requirements often confuse users, especially since the Florida Electronic Library previously had the entry field for library card numbers on the home page (this is not on the website currently). One public librarian mentions that the list of Gale databases is overwhelming for the average library patron. He feels that it has too many databases that double-cover topics and that the lists should be arranged topically, with alphabetical subsets. Confusion remains over the type of authentication required (e.g., IP address, local library card number, etc.) as, occasionally, the user is required to provide the card number even with the automatic authentication for state of Florida users.

General Comments About the Florida Electronic Library

General comments fall into five categories: access, usability, coverage, awareness, and training. Each is discussed below.

Access

Not all library staff using the Florida Electronic Library understand how the authentication process works. Many of the library staff think that the patron still has to sign in to use the service. Those library staff who do understand the correct authentication procedure for the Florida Electronic Library state that the website is confusing because it asks for the library card number on the home page. This response indicates a misconception about the current website as it did display a field for card number submission prior to IP authentication, but this is not a part of the current website. However, one academic librarian states that the service occasionally requires library card authentication; this happens to students sometimes when they are in the university library trying to access the service via a university computer.

Some interviewees note that the AAL console that interfaces with the Florida Electronic Library is awkward and clumsy. An academic librarian says that, at times, she just accesses the

_____

_____

Florida Electronic Library directly and finds the answer, then tells the student what to access, rather than sending a link or showing him via the application sharing process. On the other hand, another AAL librarian who uses the Florida Electronic Library three times a week states that the resource is easy to use when it has the material, but can lead to a lot of fruitless searching when it does not.

One academic librarian notes that she likes that her school provides links to the service from the consolidated online catalogs and then provides link resolvers to provide seamless service. The campus population does not think of the Florida Electronic Library readily, but they do use it because of the link resolvers and the co-branding that her school provides. She says her school should market this more.

Similar to the academic library where the Florida Electronic Library is accessed through an outside source, a school librarian accesses the Florida Electronic Library through the district portal called Learning Village, which automatically includes the Florida Electronic Library. She uses Learning Village daily and the district statistical tracking shows that people access the Florida Electronic Library on a daily basis more often than the other databases that the district provides.

Public library staff overwhelmingly are the only library staff who consistently show their users how to use the Florida Electronic Library for use at home. Academic library staff show users via the AAL service, but only if they cannot gain access to a user's home library catalog. Also, one librarian who has used the service as both a public and academic librarian mentions that he likes the use of icons for the collection and he likes the way the search box is set up.

Usability

Several library staff persons mention that the sheer number of databases listed overwhelms library users. One public librarian, in particular, mentions that the list of Gale databases on the Florida Electronic Library website is overwhelming for the average library patron. He feels that it has too many databases that double-cover topics and that the website should list the databases topically, with alphabetical subsets (Figure 5). This is because people may know what subject interests them, but they have no idea what the database name is, so subject should precede alphabetical order in organizational priority. A special librarian who works in a mixed-use setting notes that she uses the resource when public patrons visit the library. From this experience, she notes that there are just too many choices and that the interface is overwhelming. She suggests that the choices be limited, like the simple Google interface. Even savvy library users do not want to look at so many selections.

Additional comments regarding usability vary. A public librarian mentions that using Power Search brings up too many irrelevant results so this librarian does not use this feature a lot. Another comment is that e-books should be separate since, currently, they look like just another database. Also, several library staff persons note that the link to "View all resources" is not well placed on the page and is not distinctive. If they are trying to help someone over the phone, they have difficulty getting the user to "see it."

_____
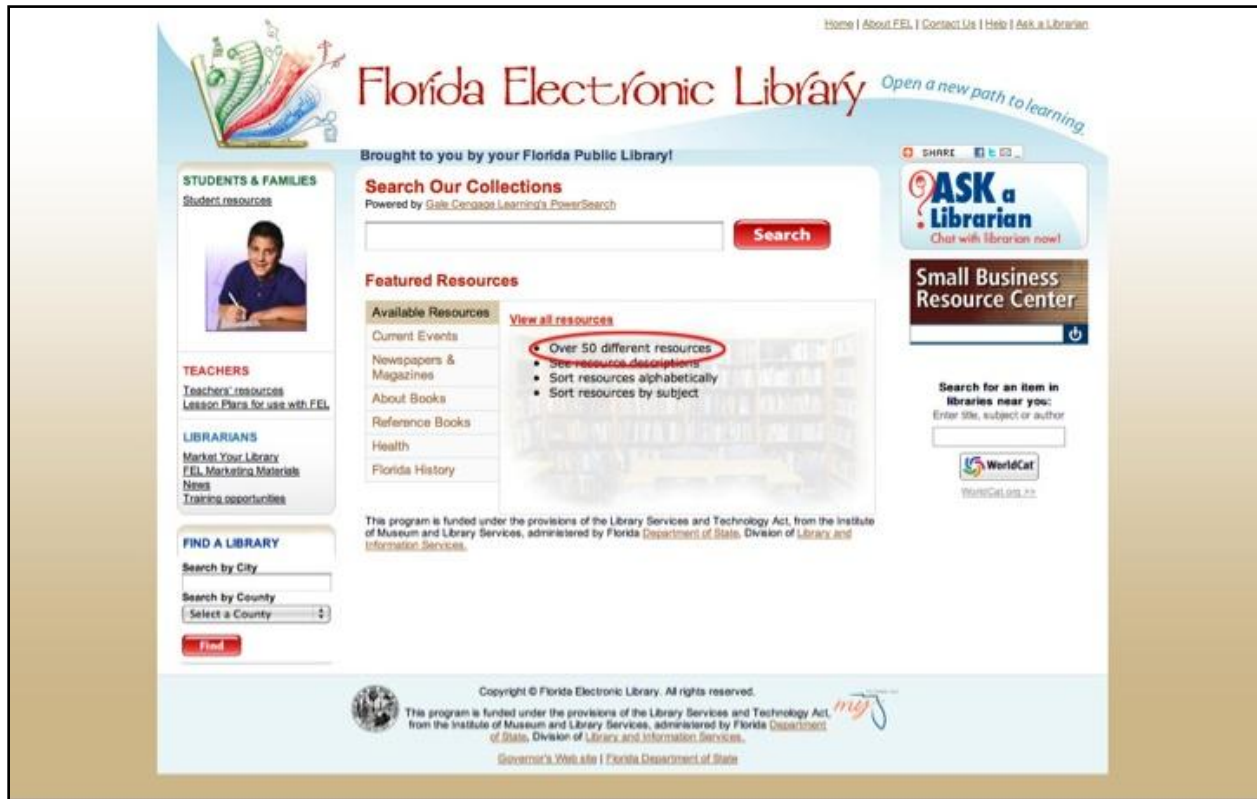
Figure 5. Florida Electronic Library Resources

Coverage

Opinions on coverage quality vary, but most interviewees say that the depth of coverage is not strong enough in the reference sections. Also, the Florida Electronic Library does not provide academically-oriented resources sufficiently for all academic levels (K-12 and collegiate). One school librarian suggests that with a limited number of resources for kids, there should be more depth in the databases that the Florida Electronic Library provides. For instance, *Kids InfoBits* functions as a very general encyclopedia, but it does not provide great detail or diversity in any subject area. Also, if students do not find material with their first search, they often think it does not exist or they go to Google to find it.

Public library staff are strong advocates for improving practical employment resources such as *Testing Education and Reference Center* (with assessments) and the *Career Transitions* databases, as well as something providing legal forms. A public librarian in South Florida mentions that she uses the Spanish language features for her users whenever the database provides them and she would like to see more languages represented. Also, one library staff person mentions that she thinks the database *Demographics Now* will be more important in the near future since the Census.gov site has changed and is more complex to navigate.

_____

Awareness

Many library staff persons mention that the Florida Electronic Library is a well-kept secret and that the Division should do more marketing for the service. They say that most people do not know it exists, even most students, and that it is a resource that deserves more promotion. One public librarian mentions that the site is so much a part of their local library website that most people, including most library staff, have no idea that the Florida Electronic Library is a separate entity or that the Gale databases are part of it. This librarian likes this arrangement, although the sheer number of resources is a bit daunting for most users. Although the academic library staff do not use the Florida Electronic Library daily for their own students, they use it if covering an AAL shift and think it is an incredible resource that needs more and better marketing.

Some of the library staff still operate with the understanding that the user must have a library card to use the service. Also, even though many library staff understand that the authentication works by referencing the user's IP address, they say that occasionally, a user will encounter a screen requesting his/her library card number.

One library staff person mentions that this resource will become more critical for K-12 as the State of Florida moves to online assessments for all educational departments. The Florida Electronic Library is a resource that supports the teachers' efforts to prepare students for these tests and it is one resource they can access from home 24/7, should they have personal digital capability. One school librarian reminds teachers to push the use of the Florida Electronic Library to parents and students so that they use this resource in lieu of more popular but less reliable web-based resources.

Training

These library staff interviewees offer a few negative comments and one very positive comment about training. Two library staff persons mention that the schedule for training is not good for them and that the recorded sessions are hard to find on the Division's website. An academic librarian mentions that the training pages on the Division's website are not user friendly and often do not lead anywhere. She notes that there are not a lot of "training on demand" classes available, which is important to her since she would like to refresh her knowledge on the site's navigation just before an AAL session. A public librarian also wants the frequency of classes increased and for there to be more focus on troubleshooting interface issues.

Only one interviewee had something positive to say about training. An academic librarian is positive about the training, feeling like it keeps her in touch with the resources since she does not work her reference desk as much as she would like.

Summary of Interview Findings

Overall, library staff interviewees indicate fairly regular use of the Florida Electronic Library, with 86.1% of libraries participating in the Florida Electronic Library and only 9.1% of

_____

interview respondents saying they never use the Florida Electronic Library. Also, the majority (69.4%) use the Florida Electronic Library at least monthly (although only using the databases once a month may be an issue), and among interviewees, all public, school, and AAL library staff use the Florida Electronic Library very frequently. Only academic library staff indicate limited use of the Florida Electronic Library (except when serving on the AAL virtual reference desk).

Library staff interviewees indicate that they tend to use certain databases more often than others, notably:

- *General OneFile*,
- *Academic OneFile*,
- *Health and Wellness Resource Center*,
- *Books and Authors*, and
- *Gale Virtual Reference Library*.

There is need for more than these few databases as many others are used, including Gale databases in the Florida Electronic Library and other databases that the libraries subscribe to on their own or through consortia. The five most important topics seem to be art, magazines, environment, culinary, and research, although these do not align with the most frequently used databases.

Every interviewee expresses appreciation of the state's provision of the Florida Electronic Library and its resources. Many say that they would not have any electronic resources without this and that having the State supply this resource allows them to purchase other materials that are of particular interest and need to their user community. In fact, many libraries seem to supplement the Florida Electronic Library, with 66.7% of interview respondents saying their library subscribes to additional databases. This figure is not just academic libraries, as 67.3% of public and 65.8% of other libraries subscribe to additional databases.

Several interviewees note that the databases appear to duplicate content, and they feel like removing duplicate databases might be a way to add some of the databases that are not present, such as *Reference USA* and career-oriented databases. There is no recognition, however, that *Reference USA* is not a Gale database and that inclusion in the Florida Electronic Library would require a separate contract outside of the Gale contract.

Interviewees note a few problems with accessing and using the Florida Electronic Library. First, there appear to be problems with the IP authentication as interviewees indicate that not everyone is authenticated automatically all of the time and some users still have to enter their library card numbers. Also, interviewees suggest that the alphabetical organization of the databases is not helpful to most users and that a subject-based categorization scheme might be more useful. Finally, interviewees note that training is not offered at convenient times, but they would like to participate in online, on-demand training.

Database Usage Assessment

As part of this two-part study to assess the Gale database portfolio within the Florida Electronic Library, the Information Institute assessed one year's worth of database usage. This task's purposes are to determine current usage of individual databases, present the most heavily used and least used databases, and determine any relationships between this use and areas of content overlap.

Method

To accomplish this task, the Division provided the Information Institute with 12 months (August 2010 – July 2011) of usage data for 45 databases within the Florida Electronic Library in the form of Microsoft Excel spreadsheets based on data supplied to the Division from Gale with follow-up conversations between the Information Institute and Gale that clarified aspects of the data. The individual reports from Gale have multiple spreadsheets for the six library types: Florida public libraries, The Florida Center for Library Automation (FCLA), College Center for Library Automation (CCLA), Tampa Bay Library Consortium (TBLC) including the AAL service,[18] and K-12 schools. Each sheet reported usage by database title, although not all titles were included on each sheet because not all titles were used by users of each library type (for example, of the 45 total titles included in the reporting, in August 2010, Florida publics showed usage of 44 titles, FCLA showed usage of 23 titles, CCLA showed usage of 38 titles, TBLC showed usage of 41 titles, and K-12 schools showed usage of 32 titles).

First, the project team collated all the individual monthly reports into one Excel workbook in order to assess annual usage. This required manual aggregation of the data on a title-by-title basis for each of the 45 titles. Then, the team used formula functions in Excel to tabulate total usage for sessions, searches, and retrievals *by title* and *by library type* for each of the six library types for each of the 12 months. Then, the team used formula functions in Excel to rank the titles by total sessions, searches, and retrievals for the full year of data. Finally, the team used all the totals to generate tables for the reports (*Database Usage and Usability Report* and this *Interim Report*).

Findings

Findings are discussed below according to four categories: (1) summaries of total database usage by sessions, searches, and retrievals; (2) totals for the top 10 (based on usage) databases for sessions, searches, and retrievals; (3) least used databases by sessions; and (4) usage by comparison between indicators.

_____

[18] Note that as of the December 2010 report, TBLC reporting was aggregated into the Florida public libraries category.

_____

Summaries of Total Database Usage

The monthly usage summary report provided to the Information Institute includes several data points: total sessions,[19] total connect time (in minues),[20] average connect time (in minutes),[21] total fulltext,[22] total retrievals,[23] total searches,[24] and total turnaways.[25] This analysis focuses on only three of those datapoints: total sessions, total retrievals, and total searches. These totals are in Table 19.

Table 19: Totals for All Organizations – Sessions, Retrievals, and Searches

Total all organizations	Annual Total	Monthly Average
Sessions	10,209,371	850,780.9
Retrievals	28,974,171	2,414,514.3
Searches	19,806,220	1,650,518.3

The data in Tables 19 and 20 come from all Florida public libraries, The Florida Center for Library Automation (FCLA), College Center for Library Automation (CCLA), Tampa Bay Library Consortium (TBLC) including the Ask a Librarian service, and K-12 schools. Usage patterns may relate to the academic cycle in K-12 education, in which the curriculum is heaviest in October, November, January, February, and March, lighter in September, December, April, and May, and lightest in June, July, and August (See Table 20 for monthly usage).

November 2010 saw the highest usage in the evaluation period, according to total sessions (1,414,608), total retrievals (4,509,614), and total searches (2,563,491). November 2010 sessions represent 13.9% of the total sessions for the year (in comparison, an even distribution would show 8.33% usage for each month). July is the lowest usage month by sessions and searches, as would be expected given the academic calendar, with total sessions of 320,993 and total searches of 697,390. However, it is not the month of lowest retrievals; August is, with total retrievals of 668,242.

---

[19] A COUNTER-defined session is "a successful request of an online service." See http://www.projectcounter.org/r4/APPA.pdf for more information.

[20] Total connect time per session, from start time—"the time a user's session begins (first login or IP authentication), to the nearest second, using UTC (Co-ordinated Universal Time, formerly GMT)" to end time—"the time a user's session ends of timeouts, to the nearest second, using UTC (Co-ordinated Universal Time, formerly GMT)." See http://www.projectcounter.org/r4/APPA.pdf for more information.

[21] The average connect time per user for a given time period and locID (or group of locIDs).

[22] Sum of all accesses of full-text articles ("the complete test, including all references, figures and tables, or an article, plus links to any supplementary material published with it"). See http://www.projectcounter.org/r4/APPA.pdf for more information.

[23] The term "retrieval" is not defined by COUNTER, but it refers to an access of a database record and total retrievals is the sum of all such accesses.

[24] Sum of all COUNTER-defined searches (a search is "a specific intellectual query, typically equated to submitting the search form of the online service to the server"). See http://www.projectcounter.org/r4/APPA.pdf for more information.

[25] Sum of all turnaways, or rejected sessions, with a turnaway "defined as an unsuccessful log-in to an electronic service due to exceeding the simultaneous user limit allowed by the licence" (as defined in COUNTER Code of Practice Release 3, Appendix A: Glossary of Terms, January 29, 2010).

Table 20: Monthly Totals for All Organizations – Sessions, Retrievals, and Searches

Total All Organizations	Total Sessions	Total Retrievals	Total Searches
Aug 10	453,499	668,242	762,863
Sept 10	1,016,208	2,889,255	1,843,981
Oct 10	1,269,430	3,786,933	2,325,231
Nov 10	1,414,608	4,509,614	2,563,491
Dec 10	650,973	1,582,593	1,141,852
Jan 11	749,757	1,577,667	1,441,507
Feb 11	1,079,191	2,882,222	2,064,883
Mar 11	1,086,242	3,401,858	2,255,709
Apr 11	1,057,840	4,131,503	2,290,537
May 11	703,113	1,190,800	1,647,257
Jun 11	407,517	1,211,792	771,519
Jul 11	320,993	1,141,692	697,390
Totals	**10,209,371**	**28,974,171**	**19,806,220**

When looking at usage by library type (Tables 21-23; categories are public libraries, Tampa public libraries, K-12 schools, Tampa K-12 schools, FCLA, and CCLA), the largest percentage of *sessions* comes from all public libraries (Florida publics + Tampa publics in Table 21; 34.7%), the largest percentage of all *searches* comes from all K-12 schools (Florida K-12 + Tampa K-12 in Table 22; 38.1%), and the largest percentage of all *retrievals* comes from all academic libraries (FCLA + CCLA in Table 23; 91.2%). These data show that public libraries and K-12 schools represent the largest percentage of sessions and searches, but the smallest percentage of retrievals. This may indicate that academic library users are more effective searchers or that material in the Florida Electronic Library is more relevant for academic library users than for public or K-12 school users.

Table 21: Monthly Totals by Type of Organization – Sessions

Sessions	Florida Publics	Tampa Publics	Florida K-12	Tampa K-12	FCLA	CCLA	Totals
Aug 10	167,544	120,016	80,029	2,560	41,636	41,714	453,499
Sept 10	235,695	151,299	287,610	28,527	132,491	180,586	1,016,208
Oct 10	274,004	166,273	355,007	35,978	156,828	281,340	1,269,430
Nov 10	283,603	166,497	415,046	32,004	165,057	352,401	1,414,608
Dec 10	276,393	0	171,066	25,521	59,415	118,578	650, 973
Jan 11	288,719	0	257,671	20,015	81,949	101,403	749,757
Feb 11	304,568	0	380,924	37,865	137,439	218,395	1,079,191
Mar 11	301,303	0	308,816	39,002	158,321	278,800	1,086,242
Apr 11	250,877	0	285,406	22,561	171,273	327,723	1,057,840
May 11	207,994	0	298,289	29,510	82,904	84,416	703,113
Jun 11	204,677	0	21,617	7,190	67,209	106,824	407,517
Jul 11	147,896	0	14,040	2,763	63,669	92,625	320,993
Totals	**2,943,273**	**604,085**	**2,875,521**	**283,496**	**1,318,191**	**2,184,805**	**10,209,371**

Some data were reported as zeros in the monthly usage report; these represent a category that was merged in Dec 2010 with Florida Publics, per Mark Flynn.

Table 22: Monthly Totals by Type of Organization – Searches

Searches	Florida Publics	Tampa Publics	Florida K-12	Tampa K-12	FCLA	CCLA	Totals
Aug 10	274,253	178,950	184,711	6,003	55,297	63,649	762,863
Sept 10	440,787	224,496	623,488	70,248	189,427	295,535	1,843,981
Oct 10	512,879	258,866	768,467	93,570	221,995	469,454	2,325,231
Nov 10	528,946	268,053	868,162	84,535	240,119	573,676	2,563,491
Dec 10	458,811	0	356,887	65,179	82,183	178,792	1,141,852
Jan 11	549,233	0	580,422	36,309	113,214	162,329	1,441,507
Feb 11	562,059	0	849,458	83,132	181,241	388,993	2,064,883
Mar 11	633,657	0	814,237	111,425	199,087	497,303	2,255,709
Apr 11	564,503	0	826,224	78,659	213,746	607,405	2,290,537
May 11	458,135	0	858,787	94,415	70,422	165,498	1,647,257
Jun 11	368,289	0	54,882	15,104	101,575	231,669	771,519
Jul 11	302,731	0	23,772	7,749	114,922	248,216	697,390
Totals	**5,654,283**	**930,365**	**6,809,497**	**746,328**	**1,783,228**	**3,882,519**	**19,806,220**

Some data were reported as zeros in the monthly usage report; these represent a category that was merged in Dec 2010 with Florida Publics, per Mark Flynn.

Table 23: Monthly Totals by Type of Organization – Retrievals

Retrievals	Florida Publics	Tampa Publics	Florida K-12	Tampa K-12	FCLA	CCLA	Totals
Aug 10	78,247	5,745	28,581	1,788	244,892	308,989	668,242
Sept 10	98,273	8,278	113,639	8,420	948,892	1,711,753	2,889,255
Oct 10	118,463	9,720	145,540	11,408	1,097,708	2,404,094	3,786,933
Nov 10	136,208	10,475	136,782	10,008	1,090,501	3,125,640	4,509,614
Dec 10	86,516	0	73,974	8,885	349,655	1,063,563	1,582,593
Jan 11	104,537	0	113,021	8,148	474,675	877,286	1,577,667
Feb 11	130,609	0	154,120	14,325	792,985	1,790,183	2,882,222
Mar 11	108,677	0	113,270	12,878	750,230	2,416,803	3,401,858
Apr 11	111,286	0	121,469	8,788	959,110	2,930,850	4,131,503
May 11	89,420	0	164,300	13,428	304,042	619,610	1,190,800
Jun 11	91,770	0	12,706	4,182	493,045	610,089	1,211,792
Jul 11	79,216	0	6,192	1,745	485,901	568,638	1,141,692
Totals	**1,233,222**	**34,218**	**1,183,594**	**104,003**	**7,991,636**	**18,427,498**	**28,974,171**

Some data were reported as zeros in the monthly usage report; these represent a category that was merged in Dec 2010 with Florida Publics, per Mark Flynn.

Top 10 Databases (Based on Usage by Indicator)

Sessions

Table 24 presents the top 10 databases by number of sessions. These databases represent the major, comprehensive general interest and scholarly resources in the collection. Additionally, use by the public generally focuses on the areas of research for public school

students, health, business, and computers. *General OneFile* is the most heavily used database in the Florida Electronic Library, with an average of about 130,000 sessions per month. This is based on combined session reporting from all organizations including public libraries, academic libraries, school libraries, and the statewide chat reference service. *Academic OneFile* follows closely, with about 120,000 sessions per month.

Table 24: Annual Sessions Totals and Monthly Sessions Averages for Top 10 Databases

Database Name	Annual Total Sessions	Monthly Average Sessions
General OneFile	1,558,574	129,881.2
Academic OneFile	1,443,191	120,265.9
Gale Virtual Reference Library	703,507	58,625.6
Expanded Academic ASAP	603,631	50,302.6
General Reference Center Gold	491,219	40,934.9
Health Reference Center Academic	467,827	38,985.6
Informe	416,163	34,680.3
Educator's Reference Complete	391,950	32,662.5
Computer Database	378,836	31,569.7
Kids InfoBits	326,108	27,175.7

Searches

The same 10 databases are most heavily used based on sessions and searches, except that *Computer Database* is a top 10 databases for sessions but 11th for searches, and *Junior Reference Collection* is a top 10 database for searches but 11th for sessions (Table 25). As with sessions, the top two most heavily used databases based on searches are *Academic OneFile* (2,423,628 searches annually) and *General OneFile* (2,190,536 searches annually), in that order. The next three databases also maintain the same order of degree of usage (*Gale Virtual Reference Library*, *Expanded Academic ASAP*, and *General Reference Center Gold*). The next four of the top 10 most used databases, however, appear in a different order for searches, with *Informe* showing more searches than *Kids InfoBits*, *Health Reference Center Academic*, and *Educator's Reference Complete*.

Table 25: Total Searches in the Top 10 Databases

Database Name	# of Searches
Academic OneFile	2,423,628
General OneFile	2,190,536
Gale Virtual Reference Library	1,970,754
Expanded Academic ASAP	913,931
General Reference Center Gold	891,224
Informe	865,193
Kids InfoBits	837,687
Health Reference Center Academic	835,098
Educator's Reference Complete	830,686
Junior Reference Collection	742,286

_____

Retrievals

When looking at the 10 databases with the highest number of retrievals, again _General OneFile_ and _Academic OneFile_ are the most heavily used, with 12,851,178 and 6,674,452 retrievals annually, respectively (Table 26). The rest of the picture varies from the findings about sessions and searches, with _Educator's Reference Complete_ replaced by _Student Edition_ in the top 10. Also, beyond _General OneFile_ and _Academic OneFile_, the order of degree of use by retrievals varies widely from the order of degree of use by sessions and searches with _Gale Virtual Reference Library_ falling from third to eighth most heavily used.

Table 26: Total Retrievals of the Top 10 Databases

Database Name	# of Retrievals
General OneFile	12,851,178
Academic OneFile	6,674,452
Expanded Academic ASAP	2,099,405
General Reference Center Gold	1,945,246
Health Reference Center Academic	1,834,837
Health and Wellness Resource Center	1,635,585
Kids InfoBits	650,262
Gale Virtual Reference Library	410,593
Computer Database	223,317
Student Edition	117,024

Least Used Databases

Figure 6 depicts the 10 least used databases by total number of sessions annually. These 10 have annual total sessions ranging from 50 to 5,201 and all are highly specialized, such as _InfoTrac Garden, Landscaping, and Horticulture_ and _InfoTrac Environmental Issues and Policy_.
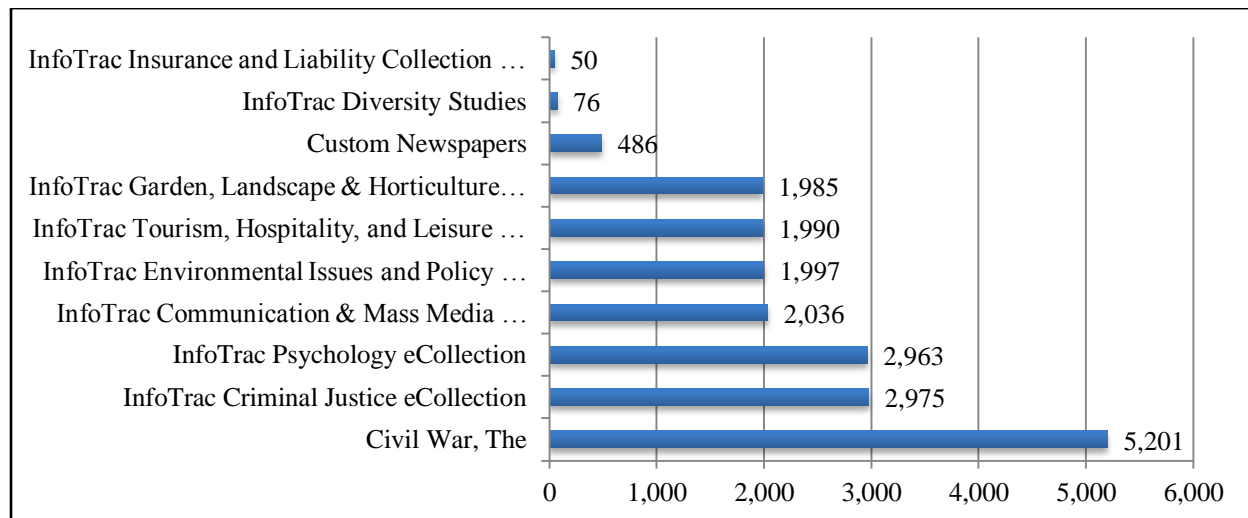

Figure 6. Least Used Databases by Session

_____

_____

Many of the InfoTrac databases experienced very low or zero retrievals in multiple months. Table 27 below displays the 10 databases with the lowest number of retrievals for the year, with multiple months of zero retrieval for nine of the 10 databases: *Custom Newspapers*, *InfoTrac Criminal Justice eCollection; InfoTrac Psychology eCollection*; *InfoTrac Gardening, Landscape, and Horticulture*; *InfoTrac Communication and Mass Media eCollection*; *InfoTrac Tourism, Hospitality, and Leisure*; *InfoTrac Diversity Studies*; *InfoTrac Environmental Issues and Policy*; and *InfoTrac Insurance and Liability Collection*. These are all full-text capable resources that show very little use by retrievals; the same nine databases that show multiple zero reports are also in the group of lowest searched databases as well.

Table 27: Least Used Databases by Retrieval

Database	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Total
*World History**	14	18	5	34	18	22	173	78	20	81	7	26	**496**
Custom Newspapers	19	14	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	**33**
*Criminal Justice**	0	7	1	0	0	2	2	10	0	1	0	0	**23**
*Psychology**	0	0	0	0	17	0	6	0	0	0	0	0	**23**
*Garden, Landscp. & Hort.**	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	**3**
*Comm. & Mass Media**	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	**2**
*Tourism, Hosp., & Leisure**	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	**1**
*Diversity Studies**	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	**0**
*Environmental Issues and Policy**	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	**0**
*Insurance and Liability**	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	**0**

InfoTrac database

Usage by Comparison

Another perspective with which to evaluate the databases is the productivity of the databases, comparing retrievals to both sessions initiated and searches employed. This view would suggest some databases that are strong performers in terms of how often they are used. Retrievals indicate that users consider a database to be relevant and that the search returns results that the user judges to be of further use. Table 28 compares the sessions initiated to the number of retrievals for a sample of 10 databases.

_____

Table 28: Rate of Retrievals per Session – Top 10 Databases

Database Name	Sessions	Retrievals	Retrievals per Session
General OneFile	1,558,574	12,851,178	8.25
Health and Wellness Resource Center	276,005	1,635,585	5.93
Academic OneFile	1,443,191	6,674,452	4.62
General Reference Center Gold	491,219	1,945,246	3.96
Health Reference Center Academic	467,827	1,834,837	3.92
Expanded Academic ASAP	603,631	2,099,405	3.48
Civil War, The	5,201	16,329	3.14
Kid's Edition	15,620	43,933	2.81
Kids InfoBits	326,108	650,262	1.99
What Do I Read Next?	14,692	19,121	1.30

Retrievals per session is a productivity indicator that shows that, in spite of a database showing a lower number of total sessions than other databases, the users may find that database more useful in terms of content to retrieve than another database with a larger number of total sessions. Thus, while *The Civil War* database may exhibit fewer total sessions than the top 10 most used databases by total sessions, its usefulness in terms of retrievals indicates that users find the content in this database relevant and worth retrieving. Also, note that activity in the health and children's databases increases by this measure, suggesting that users interested in these topics are finding relevant materials in the databases, even with fewer sessions.

Another productivity indicator is the rate of retrievals per search (Table 29). As would be expected, six of the top ten databases by search are also the databases providing the highest retrieval by search rates. It is worth looking at databases with a low number of retrievals to see if that correlates to a low number of searches. Table 30 shows this not to be the case; databases with very few retrievals demonstrate very low retrievals per search rates (all 0.00 retrievals per search). This is indicated further by the extremely low retrieval rate (0.00) on *Florida Database* in spite of the high number of searches (448,876).

Table 29: Rate of Retrievals per Search for Databases with High Retrievals

Database Name	Searches	Retrievals	Retrievals per Search
General OneFile	2,190,536	12,851,178	5.87
Academic OneFile	2,423,628	6,674,452	2.75
Kid's Edition	16,226	43,933	2.71
Health and Wellness Resource Center	677,267	1,635,585	2.41
Expanded Academic ASAP	913,931	2,099,405	2.30
Health Reference Center Academic	835,098	1,834,837	2.20
General Reference Center Gold	891,224	1,945,246	2.18
What Do I Read Next?	22,074	19,121	0.87
Civil War, The	20,343	16,329	0.80
Kids InfoBits	837,687	650,262	0.78

_____

Table 30: Rate of Retrievals per Search for Databases with Few Retrievals

Database Name	Searches	Retrievals	Retrievals per Search
InfoTrac World History eCollection	165,998	496	0.00
InfoTrac Criminal Justice eCollection	9,216	23	0.00
InfoTrac Psychology eCollection	9,218	23	0.00
Florida Database	448,876	1,020	0.00
InfoTrac Garden, Landscape & Hort. ...	6,953	3	0.00
InfoTrac Communication & Mass ...	7,008	2	0.00
InfoTrac Tourism, Hospitality, and ...	6,919	1	0.00
InfoTrac Diversity Studies	125	0	0.00
InfoTrac Environmental Issues and ...	6,956	0	0.00
InfoTrac Insurance and Liability ...	86	0	0.00

Summary of Usage Assessment Findings

In reviewing the usage reports, the trend shows higher usage and productivity among the general reference databases that provide the widest scope of information. Usage appears to be strong in general information-seeking needs, research areas that support scholarly needs of K-12 students, and the health and wellness concerns of general users. In contrast, the usage data indicate there may be a contingent of InfoTrac databases that are not heavily used, nor found useful when searched.

Also, use varies over the year and by library type. November is the busiest month and July and August are the least busy months, which likely corresponds to the K-12 and collegiate academic calendars. The largest percentage of *sessions* comes from all public libraries, the largest percentage of all *searches* comes from all K-12 schools, and the largest percentage of all *retrievals* comes from all academic libraries. Overall, public and K-12 school libraries represent the largest percentage of sessions and searches, but the smallest percentage of retrievals, which may indicate one of two issues (1) academic library users may be more effective searchers of the Florida Electronic Library, and/or (2) material in the Florida Electronic Library is more relevant for academic library users than for public or K-12 school users.

Usability Assessment

One of the activities in the first part of the study was an expert usability analysis of selected portions of the Florida Electronic Library website, which was completed in November 2011. The expert review methodology entailed members of the study team assessing the Florida Electronic Library website using three methods, as follows:

- Usability Inspection: assess the effectiveness and efficiency of content access throughout the Florida Electronic Library, use of the Florida Electronic Library, and usefulness of Florida Electronic Library content;
- Functionality Testing: assess the degree to which all aspects of the Florida Electronic Library are functional and operate properly; and

_____

_____

- Accessibility Testing: assess the level at which the Florida Electronic Library can be used by individuals with disabilities.

This section of the report provides the findings resulting from this analysis.

Method

An expert usability review is an inspection of a website or system for usability problems and issues. The strengths of this method are the expert's knowledge, the ability to complete the review quickly, and the low cost relative to a user test. The common methods used for expert reviews are heuristic evaluations and cognitive walkthroughs. In heuristic evaluation, the expert evaluates components of the website using a set of standards (or heuristics) that are accepted by experts in the field. Cognitive walkthroughs involve the expert completing real world tasks to evaluate issues such as ease of use and functionality (whether the components do what they are supposed to do).[26]

A study team member employed both testing methods for the usability inspection and the functionality testing, with heuristic evaluation functioning as the main method, and walkthroughs utilized where appropriate. The accessibility testing was conducted using an automated validation tool, Cynthia Says,[27] which checks pages of the website for issues that hinder access by persons with disabilities. The automatic checks include whether applications, scripts, and plug-ins override user-set accessibility functions and whether visual elements such as pictures and maps have text equivalents.

A team member who has practical experience and formal training in information architecture, website design, and usability analysis as part of previous work she has completed and graduate training she has received at the Florida State University School of Library and Information Studies conducted the usability review. The three methods (usability inspection, functionality testing, and accessibility testing) were conducted independently. For each method, a list of elements was tested and scored using a set of heuristics (for additional detail on the method used, see Appendices B, C, and D in the *Database Usage and Usability Report*).

Usability Inspection and Functionality Testing

The purpose of usability inspection is to assess the effectiveness and efficiency of the site design—for example, whether or not persons unfamiliar with a site can navigate it easily and whether or not the web pages have a logical arrangement of content. The purpose of functionality testing is to assess the degree to which elements of the Florida Electronic Library website are functional and operate as intended—for example, whether or not links are labeled clearly and work and whether or not the website supports multiple browsers.

_____

[26] George, C. A. (2008). *User-centred library websites: Usability evaluation methods.* Oxford, UK: Chandos.
[27] http://www.contentquality.com/

_____

_____

The study team member assessed usability and functionality using a scale derived from Nielsen's severity rating scale:[28]

0 = No usability problem(s)
1 = Cosmetic problem(s) only
2 = Minor usability problem(s): fixing this (these) should be given a low priority
3 = Major usability problem(s): important to fix so should be given a high priority
4 = Usability emergency: it is imperative to fix this immediately

The assessment worksheets for these methods are in the *Database Usage and Usability Report*, Appendices B and C.

Accessibility Testing

The purpose of this assessment is to evaluate the degree to which the Florida Electronic Library website supports the needs of the disabled. The heuristics for this assessment are the standards set by Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act (29 U.S.C. 794d), as amended by the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (P.L. 105-220) that require Federal agencies to make their electronic and information technology accessible to people with disabilities,[29] and Florida state government websites are required to comply with these guidelines.[30] The expert used a free, automated Section 508 validator, Cynthia Says,[31] and assessed elements for whether they passed automated verification:

Yes = Passed Automated Verification
No = Failed Automated Verification
N/A = No related elements were found in document

The assessment worksheet for this method is in the *Database Usage and Usability Report* as Appendix D.

Findings

The overall result from this evaluation is that the Florida Electronic Library has very good usability, functionality, and accessibility and provides quick access to a large number of resources. Once the user is familiar with the site's organization and operation, it is easy to use. New users, however, may not understand the site's design immediately. This section discusses these and other issues.

_____

[28] George, C. A. (2008). *User-centred library websites: Usability evaluation methods.* Oxford, UK: Chandos.
[29] http://www.section508.gov/
[30] http://www.myflorida.com/myflorida/accessibility.html
[31] http://www.contentquality.com/

_____

_____

Usability

The usability assessment findings are organized into nine topics: navigation, site access and identity, page content, language and site content, system and user feedback, error prevention and correction, architectural and visual clarity, online help and user guides, and policies and compliance. Each topic includes positive attributes and issues with the website.

Navigation

Positives:

- Menus are nested with clear, concise language;
- Although there are no breadcrumbs,[32] the page titles are the same as those in the navigation menus, so users know where they are while they are inside the site;
- Active links are underlined, making them findable;
- Inside the Florida Electronic Library site, links to the site's main page are clearly identified, as the logo links back to the home page;
- Major areas of the site are available from the home page;
- Navigation is consistent across pages; and
- The website offers search capability.

Issues:

- **Multiple navigation menus**: There are three navigation menus on the home page (on the top right, along the left side, and a resource navigation menu in the middle). Even though each menu is well designed, this reduces navigational clarity. In addition, although the top right and left side navigation menus are consistent across pages in the site, the only access to the resource navigation menu is from the home page.
- **Multiple search areas**: The multiple search areas may be confusing for users. For example, on the home page, there are three such areas: the Gale Cengage Power Search, the *Small Business Resource Center*, and the *World Cat* search. These search areas are customized for different pages (for example, in the Teacher Resources page the *Small Business Resource Center* is replaced with a *School Library Journal* search box). The customization may be helpful for specific user groups, but the overall multiplicity of search boxes could confuse users (Figure 7).
- **Finding the home page**: Although there is an identifiable way to return to the home page while users are in the site, the Gale pages link to the user's local library site, which is reasonable, but may make it unclear how to return to the Florida Electronic Library itself.
- **No site map**: Adding a site map might be helpful as the site has a number of different areas focusing on different audiences.

Addressing these issues may improve the overall impact and use of the website.

_____

[32] Breadcrumbs are navigational aids used on websites and other electronic user interfaces to help users keep track of where they are within the website (interface).
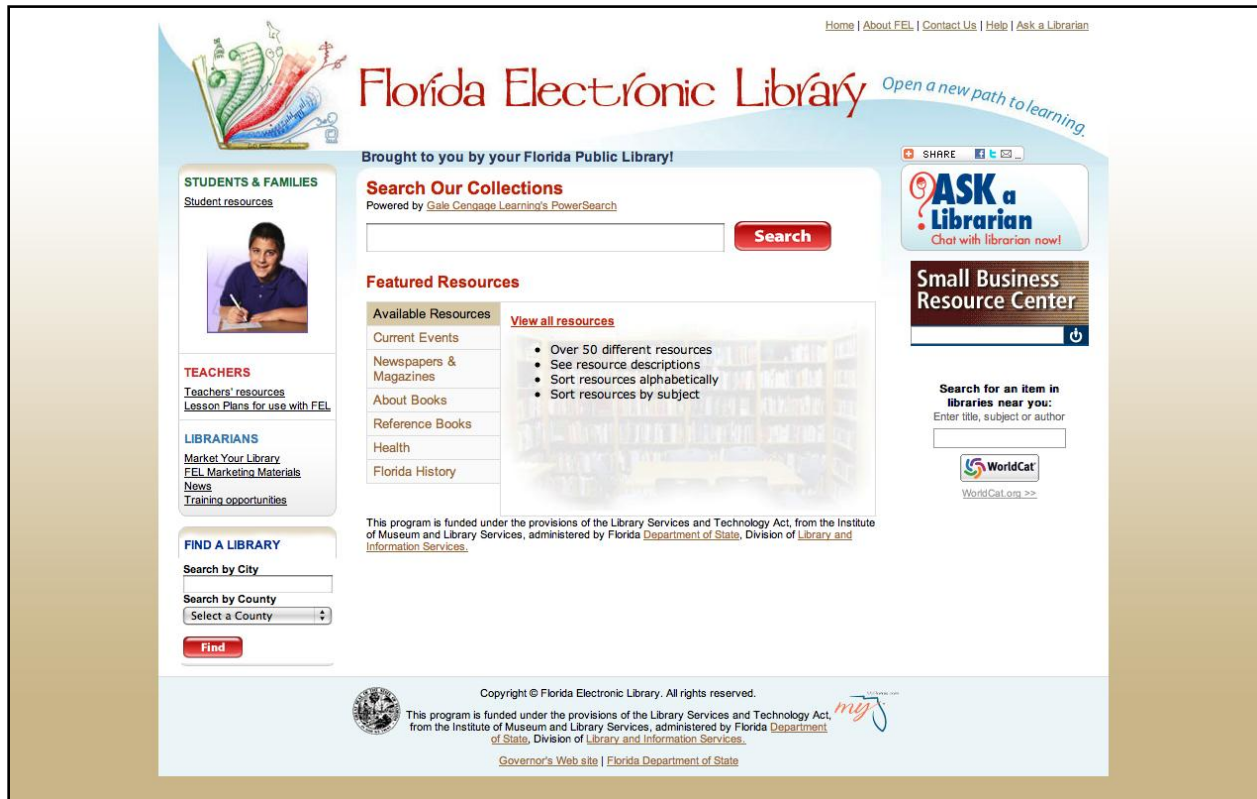
_____

Figure 7. Florida Electronic Library Home Page

Site Access and Identity

Positives:

- There is adequate contrast between text and background colors;
- Font size and spacing make text easy to read;
- Inside the site, there is a corporate logo;
- The site ID is a link to the home page;
- "About FEL" in the upper right navigation menu provides information about the site;
- The purpose of the site is displayed prominently; and
- There is a clear path to point of contact information.

Issues:

- **Pages are cluttered**: There are a number of different areas on the home page that must be processed to understand how to navigate the site, including the multiple search boxes and the Ask a Librarian link.
- **Copious home page content**: Home page content is not easily digestible in 5-10 seconds.

- **No site identification in the Gale pages**: Once the user has moved to the Gale databases, there is no Florida Electronic Library identification (just the local library link) so it may be difficult for the user to return to the Florida Electronic Library.

Addressing these issues may improve the overall impact and use of the website.

Page Content

Positives:

- Major headings are used and they are clear and descriptive;
- Critical content is on the top of the page area;
- Scrolling is lessened in the Resource section by the ability to jump to letters of the alphabet;
- Page style and layout are consistent across pages inside the site;
- All caps is not used and bold emphasis is used sparingly; and
- Most text narratives are concise and clear, but explanatory.

Issues:

- **Scrolling**: In the Teacher and Student areas, the user must scroll to see what kind of content is contained in the section.
- **News**: The News section of the Librarians area has only one item that is dated October 2009. In addition, the entire news item is displayed on the page so the user must scroll to see that there are no new items.

Addressing these issues may improve the overall impact and use of the website.

Language and Site Content

Positives:

- Page names clearly indicate the page content;
- In general, related information and tasks are grouped in the same area within a page;
- Language is simple, without jargon;
- In general, paragraphs are brief; and
- Hyperlinked text describes the link and it is clear where each link will lead.

Issues:

- **Important information should be given prominence**: The resource area in the middle is the most prominent area of the home page, with the left side navigation area appearing less prominent. If the design plan was to give prominence to the center section, this is not a problem.

- **Multiple search areas**: The search areas are spread around the page, so while related information is grouped, related tasks are not always so, and the user may not understand the design concept.

Addressing these issues may improve the overall impact and use of the website.

System and User Feedback

Positives:

- It is usually clear what is happening on the site;
- Users can send and receive email feedback; and
- Users are informed when a resource requires a subscription for access.

Issues:

- **No notice about leaving the site**: There is no notice given that users will be leaving the site to go to the Gale databases, which may cause confusion as well as difficulty returning to the Florida Electronic Library website.
- **No "last update" dates and content does not always contain a date of publication**: Updates dates are not placed on the bottom of pages, and most content pages (except the news item) do not have a publication date.
- **Feedback is not encouraged**: Although contacts are given for feedback, there is no positive message welcoming feedback and a feedback fill-in form is not provided.

Addressing these issues may improve the overall impact and use of the website.

Error Prevention and Correction

Positives:

- Users can rely on recognition, not memory, for successful use of the site; and
- Few error messages.

Issues:

- **Concise instruction for user actions**: There is no prominent instruction of how to use the site (e.g., Student and Teacher resources versus the main resource area in the center).
- **Markup errors**: Two errors were found. In the resource section, Current Events/Libya has an address beginning with 'hhttp.' In addition, users are allowed to click into http://flelibrary.org/students.php from http://www.flelibrary.org/training and this leads to a bad link: http://www.flelibrary.org/training/students.php.

Addressing these issues may improve the overall impact and use of the website.

_____

Architectural and Visual Clarity

Positives:

- White space is sufficient;
- Unnecessary animation is avoided; and
- Bold and italic text are used sparingly.

Issue:

- **Site organization**: The site is not easily scanable for organization and meaning; there is a lot of information on the page, including multiple navigation and search areas that are not grouped together.

Addressing this issue may improve the overall impact and use of the website.

Online Help and User Guides

Positive:

- The site has About and Contact pages.

Issue:

- **Help and instructions**: There are no instructions. This may be because the site was designed with the idea of users needing minimal help and instructions. However, because there is so much home page content, this may not be the case for all users, especially new users.

Addressing this issue may improve the overall impact and use of the website.

Policies and Compliance

Positives:

- Ownership of the site is noted;
- Copyright is noted;
- There is an email address to contact the webmaster for problem reporting; and
- There is a notice that email addresses are public.

Issues:

- **Accessibility statement**: There is no statement. See the State of Florida Accessibility statement at: http://www.myflorida.com/myflorida/accessibility.html.

_____

- **Privacy statement**: There is no statement. See http://www.dos.state.fl.us/privacy-policy.cfm for the Florida Department of State privacy statement.

Addressing these issues may improve the website's compliance with Florida requirements and general usability guidelines.

Functionality Testing

There were almost no problems found in the functionality testing. Positive aspects found include:

- The navigational menus work;
- Most active links work;
- Search capabilities work;
- Link to the home page works;
- Major sections are available from the home page;
- Site load time is reasonable;
- The site accommodates novice to expert users;
- Functions are labeled clearly;
- There is a clear exit point on every page;
- Pages load quickly and display smoothly; and
- All appropriate browsers are supported.

Issue:

- Bad links: There are two bad links due to markup errors. In the resource section, Current Events/Libya has an address beginning with 'hhttp.' In addition, users are allowed to click into http://flelibrary.org/students.php from http://www.flelibrary.org/training and this leads to a bad link: http://www.flelibrary.org/training/students.php.

These links should be corrected.

Accessibility Testing

The site passed most of the accessibility tests. However, a warning was given regarding alternative text being greater than seven and less than 81 characters. The tester believes that this may be coming from line 100, column 11 and line 130, column 58 on the home page. In addition, the test for a text equivalent for every non-text element failed. Text equivalents are appended to image elements to make them accessible to users who cannot see images, who have text-based browsers that do not support images, or who have such support turned off. To be truly functional, the text equivalent should serve the same purpose as the image—if the image conveys information, the text equivalent must provide that information, but if the image is purely decorative, then the text can just describe the subject of the image.[33]

_____
[33] http://www.w3.org/TR/WCAG10/

_____

_____

Summary of Usability Assessment and Recommendations

The Florida Electronic Library is, in general, well designed, and it passed all functionality tests and most accessibility tests. The provision of this many resources is not easy, and the site makes access relatively easy for users. The following recommendations are made in the spirit of helping a very good site become even better:

- Consider arranging the home page more from the user perspective, so that it is easily and quickly scanable;
- Consider adding more detail to "About FEL" about how to use the site;
- Add links back to the Florida Electronic Library on the outside resource pages to allow easy return to the site (and to continue the site branding);
- Add notices that users are leaving the site when they go to the Gale databases;
- Add accessibility and privacy statements;
- Lessen scrolling by creating the ability to jump to sections in all areas;
- Keep adding new content to the "Librarians/News" section, or reconsider the name of the section; and
- Check for bad and broken links regularly.

In addition, regular usability, functionality, and accessibility testing should be continued on an ongoing basis.

Integrating Survey, Interview, Usage, and Usability Findings

Public library staff provide the majority of survey responses (59.4%), with academic libraries and K-12 libraries comprising 19.4% and 14.9% of survey responses, respectively (Table 31). In comparison, the interview respondents distribute fairly evenly among library types, with a greater percentage of academic library staff participating in interviews than on the survey. Special and other library types also are represented well.

Table 31: Survey and Interview Respondents by Library Type

Library Type	Survey		Interview	
	n	**%**	**n**	**%**
Public	171	59.4	5	33.3
Academic	56	19.4	5	33.3
K-12	43	14.9	3	20.0
Special	11	3.8	2	13.3
Other	7	2.4		

Response rates differed for each question on the survey; the response rate for the survey question was n=288; the response rate for interviews was n=15.

Public and K-12 library staff are using the Florida Electronic Library in conjunction with their daily reference work, while academic library staff are more likely to use it for the Ask a Librarian service (Table 32). This is the resource to which many of the library staff and users

_____

have simultaneous access. The frequency of academic use is based primarily upon the frequency of the Ask a Librarian shift, which is usually weekly.

Table 32: Frequency of Use for Work as Library Staff, All Library Types

Frequency	Survey	Interviews
Daily	17.9%	46.7%
Weekly	39.6%	20.0%
Monthly	11.9%	13.3%
Less than monthly	21.4%	13.3%
Never	9.1%	6.7%

High-Use Databases

In comparing the high-use databases as provided by survey responses with the actual usage based on the Gale database reporting, six of the top ten databases based on the survey rank were also in the top ten list based on usage rank as measured by total sessions (Table 33). These include *General OneFile*, which is the top database on both lists. *Academic OneFile* and *Gale Virtual Reference Library* are also both in the top five on both lists. Databases such as *Health and Wellness Resource Center*, *LitFinder*, *Florida Database*, and *Kids InfoBits* are ranked higher on the survey responses versus their ranking on the actual usage.

Table 33: Top 10 Databases Used Based on Survey Responses vs. Actual Usage Rank (Sessions)

Database	Survey Rank	Usage Rank
General OneFile	1	1
Health and Wellness Resource Center	2	14
Academic OneFile	3	2
Gale Virtual Reference Library	4	3
Books and Authors	5	N/A
LitFinder	6	18
General Reference Center Gold	7	5
Florida Database	8	16
Kids InfoBits	9	10
Expanded Academic ASAP	10	4

Survey question included a list of databases from which to choose (based on databases used for work as library staff). Usage ranking is based on total sessions per database out of the 45 databases for which such data was provided.

The top 10 most important database comparison based on survey responses versus actual use puts *General OneFile* near the top spot on both lists (Table 34). However, *Health and Wellness Resource Center* is perceived as most important though it shows the 14th highest usage by total sessions. This question underscores the perceived value of databases by library staff based on their specific users' needs. Topics that appear to be the most important are general health and wellness, reference, business and careers, and reader's advisory. On the survey, the *Gale Virtual Reference Library* is listed as the individual components that make up that database.

_____

Thus, there are multiple reports on the survey for the *Gale Virtual Reference Library* database components, but no individual usage rank associated with the individual titles, as the Gale usage reports aggregated this rank all under the *Gale Virtual Reference Library* title (*A to Z of Careers & Jobs* and *Ready Made Job Search Letters…* are two databases that are part of the *Gale Virtual Reference Library*).

Florida Database, *Health and Wellness Resource Center*, and *LitFinder* all appear on the survey top ten but are not indicated as top ten databases by sessions. It is clear that, based on the library staff responses, importance may not necessarily equate to usage but instead may indicate other issues, such as the lack of other resources in those subject areas and library staff's personal experiences with users who find those resources valuable.

Table 34: Top 10 Most Important Databases Based on Survey Responses vs. Actual Usage Rank (Sessions)

Database	Survey Rank	Usage Rank
Health and Wellness Resource Center	1	14
Academic OneFile	2	2
General OneFile	3	1
*A to Z of Careers and Jobs**	4	*
Florida Database	5	16
Gale Virtual Reference Library	6	3
Books and Authors	7	N/A
Health Reference Center Academic	8	6
General Reference Center Gold	9	5
LitFinder	10	18

Survey question included a list of databases from which to choose (based on databases used for work as library staff). Usage ranking is based on total sessions per database out of the 45 databases for which such data was provided.
* This database is part of the Gale Virtual Reference Library

The high use of the databases may be due, in part, to the usability of the Florida Electronic Library website. The usability analysis found that the site's usability, functionality, and accessibility are all very good. Additionally, high use can be attributed to the increased access to the Florida Electronic Library by using IP address authentication. However, there remain some misunderstandings about this ease of use among library staff. Another factor that may be influencing increased use of the Florida Electronic Library is the statewide experience with decreased acquisition funding. The interviewees indicate that several libraries either have dropped or intend to drop some of their individual database subscriptions where there is a suitable replacement in the Florida Electronic Library.

Low-Use Databases

Databases not chosen as used most often on the survey are supported by the usage reports (Table 35). This table includes only titles that are not part of the *Gale Virtual Reference Library*.

_____

_____

Table 35: Databases Not Chosen as Used Most Often on Survey vs. Actual Usage Rank
(Sessions)

Database	Usage Rank
Environmental Issues and Policy eCollection	40
Tourism, Hospitality, and Leisure eCollection	41
Criminal Justice eCollection	37
Communication & Mass Media eCollection	39

*Survey question included a list of databases from which to choose (based on databases used for work as
library staff). Usage ranking is based on total sessions per database out of the 45 databases for which
such data was provided.*

The following databases were not chosen as used most often on the survey, but they are
part of the *Gale Virtual Reference Library*, which survey respondents do indicate as an important
database and which ranks fourth highest on usage:

- *Agriculture Collection*;
- *American Buyers, Demographics of Shopping*;
- *Beacham's Guide to the Endangered Species of North America*;
- *Bowling, Beatniks, and Bell Bottoms, Pop Culture of 20th Century America*;
- *Business, Economic and Theory Collection*;
- *Career Opportunities in Casinos and Casino Hotels*;
- *Career Opportunities in Checks and Balances, the Three Branches of the American Government*
- *Career Opportunities in Conservation and the Environment*;
- *Career Opportunities in Journalism*;
- *Career Opportunities in Radio*;
- *Career Opportunities in Real Estate*;
- *Career Opportunities in Science*;
- *Career Opportunities in the Retail and Wholesale Industry*;
- *Crime and Punishment in America Reference Library*;
- *Culinary Arts Collection*;
- *Encyclopedia of African American Culture and History*;
- *Fine Arts and Music Collection*;
- *Gale Encyclopedia of Genetic Disorders*;
- *Gale Encyclopedia of Multicultural America*;
- *Growing Business Handbook, Inspiration and Advice from Successful Entrepreneurs*;
- *How to Understand Business Finance*;
- *St. James Encyclopedia of Popular Culture*;
- *Supreme Court Drama, Cases that Changed America*;
- *Ultimate Interview, Make a Great Impression and Get that Job*;
- *Winning New Business*;
- *World of Earth Science*; and
- *World War II Reference Library*.

_____

_____

None of these titles are listed in Table 27 (lowest retrievals) because they are not being broken out by name in the usage report from Gale. Therefore, this list of databases not chosen as used most often on the survey seems to add to the list of titles with low usage.

The following list includes databases that also are included in the *Gale Virtual Reference Library* and were listed on the survey as used most often, but they are not broken out by title in the usage report:

- *A to Z of Careers and Jobs*;
- *American Revolution Reference Library*;
- *Aptitude Test Workbook, Discover Your Potential and Improve Your Career Options with Practice Psychometric Tests*;
- *Arts & Humanities Through the Eras*;
- *Biology*;
- *Encyclopedia of Children & Childhood in History and Society*;
- *Encyclopedia of Small Business*;
- *Gale Encyclopedia of Alternative Medicine*;
- *Gale Encyclopedia of Cancer*;
- *Gale Encyclopedia of Medicine*;
- *IQ and Aptitude Tests*;
- *Ready Made Job Search Letters, Winning Letters and E-Mails to Help You Get Your Dream Job*;
- *Successful Interviewing & Recruitment*;
- *Ultimate Job Search*; and
- *World War I Reference Library*.

It is possible that these titles account for the overall high usage of *Gale Virtual Reference Library*, despite the seemingly low usage of the titles in the previous list.

Usability

While the survey results indicate that more than half of all library staff find everything they need with either no difficulty (35.0%) or with some difficulty (27.8%), 27.0% of respondents report that they have had to look elsewhere for additional materials (see Table 14). Interviewees indicate that in these cases, a school librarian was unable to find the depth of material sought and the academic library staff required more scholarly resources. For public library interviewees, specific 'favorite' resources (ex: *Novelist*) were not available through the Florida Electronic Library, but were available through other sources.

In spite of the overall positive results of the usability testing, the discrepancy between public and school library retrievals versus searches and that of academic library users could indicate that users who do not use electronic databases with search tools on a daily basis may find the site more challenging (Tables 22 and 23). As indicated in the usability study, the fact that the home page offers three options on basic searching may confuse less accomplished users

_____

_____

(public library users, for instance) and searches may be initiated that do not reflect the users' true needs.

Survey responses and interview comments strongly suggest a change in the homepage search options to a more 'Google-like' approach, citing both simplicity and growing user familiarity with that search engine. One library staff interviewee comments that she wants just "one portal" to all the resources, eliminating the multiple search options *and* the long list of database choices.

Summary and Recommendations

This report presents findings from the first part of an originally contracted two-part project—a review of the extant Florida Electronic Library and its Gale databases. Information Institute staff completed the report using a web-based survey and focus groups with Florida library staff to obtain input on the Florida Electronic Library and Gale databases, analysis of current usage of the Florida Electronic Library on a database-by-database basis, as well as overall, and usability assessment of the Florida Electronic Library website.

Key Findings

There is a segment of library staff who are not using the Florida Electronic Library*.* Overall, about 10% of survey respondents indicate they never use the Florida Electronic Library and another 30% use it monthly or less than monthly indicating that there is a fairly considerable segment of the library staff population that is not using the Florida Electronic Library regularly (or at all). Possible ways to increase usage include training on how to search the databases, inclusion of more relevant databases, and a wider selection of databases.

Usage varies by type of libraries*.* School libraries tend to rely more heavily on youth-targeted sources such as *Kids InfoBits* and *Junior Edition* and academic libraries rely most heavily on *Academic OneFile*, as opposed to public libraries that rely most heavily on *General OneFile*. Also, public and school library staffs are more likely to use the Florida Electronic Library daily, whereas academic library staff are more likely to use it infrequently and only when staffing the Ask a Librarian reference desk.

A few databases comprise a large portion of all usage of Gale databases*.* In particular, library staff indicate that they use *General OneFile*, *Academic OneFile*, and *Gale Virtual Reference Library* most often, and these databases also exhibit the highest number of total sessions and *General OneFile* and *Academic OneFile* also exhibit the highest number of total retrievals. These are all comprehensive, general use databases, and most of the top 10 most used databases by session are general use databases (others include *General Reference Center Gold*, *Informe*, and *Kids InfoBits*).

There are databases that show very little or no usage*.* Lesser used databases tend to be more specific databases than the comprehensive, general databases that exhibit the highest usage and it might be expected that such specialized databases would exhibit less usage. Also, many

_____

InfoTrac databases experience very low or zero retrievals in multiple months. Of databases never mentioned as used most often on the survey, about half are components of the *Gale Virtual Reference Library*. The *Gale Virtual Reference Library* does exhibit a large portion of usage, but that usage seems to be based on usage of fewer than half of the titles in the *Gale Virtual Reference Library*.

Even if databases may not exhibit heavy usage, they still may be considered very important to the library and community. In particular, *Florida Database* ranks as second most important to the library and community (behind *General OneFile*), but it is not in the top 5 databases used most often or the top 10 databases by sessions, searches, or retrievals. Additionally, *A to Z of Careers and Jobs*, *Florida Database*, *Books and Authors* and *LitFinder* are in the top 10 list of most important databases according to all survey respondents, but they are not in the top 10 databases by total sessions, searches, or retrievals.

Breadth of coverage may not be as critical as depth for some resources. Both academic and school library staffs indicate that they have had trouble serving patrons through the Florida Electronic Library because the resources lacked sufficient depth to cover homework assignments and other research. In particular, the children's resources are reported to provide cursory coverage of a wide range of topics and that depth of coverage is needed.

Despite the plethora of training offered by Gale and wide range of databases supported in the Florida Electronic Library, many library staff are not finding what they need. About one-third of survey respondents either have had to look elsewhere (outside the Florida Electronic Library) for materials or could not find anything they needed within the Florida Electronic Library. Also, public and school library usage data show many more searches and many fewer retrievals than academic library usage data. This may be a symptom of at least two potential problems: poor searching skills or lack of relevant content. In fact, about one-third of respondents indicate that more relevant databases or training on how to use the databases would encourage greater use of the Florida Electronic Library.

Although the Florida Electronic Library exhibits a high degree of usability, there are some usability issues. Survey and interview respondents indicate several areas of concern with usability, notably overwhelming lists of databases, confusion regarding search options, and need for a more intuitive interface for novice users. These issues also were noted in the usability test. Also, there remains confusion about the IP authentication process with some library staff saying that the portal still requires library card numbers for some patrons.

There are a number of concerns about access to and use of the Florida Electronic Library. Almost 10% of survey respondents do not use the Florida Electronic Library at all. Almost 60% of survey respondents report that the last time they used the Florida Electronic Library they could not find what they needed, found some of what they needed but had to look elsewhere, or found everything they needed with some or considerable difficulty. About two-thirds of survey respondents indicate that their libraries purchase databases on their own to supplement the Gale databases. Also, a persistent comment is that access to the databases is

confounded by too many titles being listed and lack of adequate descriptive information about the databases available.

Regardless of any concerns or issues with the Florida Electronic Library, Florida library staff do value the resource. The fact that survey and interview participants provided feedback on ways to improve access to and use of the Florida Electronic Library indicates that they want to use it, whether they do currently or not. Also, all of the interviewees expressed appreciation of the state's provision of the Florida Electronic Library and its resources. Many would not have any electronic resources without this and having the Division supply this resource allows them to purchase other materials that are of particular interest and need to their user communities.

Recommendations

One of the tasks of this project was to address whether or not the "appropriate" databases are or are not included in the extant Florida Electronic Library. The Information Institute has no knowledge of the nature of the contract between the Division and Gale. Therefore, the extent to which these recommendations are relevant to negotiating the new contract is unknown as it is possible that the following recommendations may or may not be feasible given the contract. Only Division staff are in a position to consider the data in this report and judge the degree to which the databases in the Florida Electronic Library should be modified. The following recommendations are offered with the hope that they may impact the contracting process or otherwise be of use to the Division. Recommendations fall into five categories: database selection, awareness, training, usability, and user-provided recommendations.

Database Selection

Inclusion of comprehensive, general databases such as *General OneFile* and *Academic OneFile* is critical to the success of the Florida Electronic Library as usage of these databases comprises the majority of all usage. However, inclusion of specialized databases should be reviewed as many of these exhibit little to no usage. Any such review also must consider that some specialized databases are considered to be extremely important to the library and community, regardless of lower usage levels, such as *Florida Database*. Databases such as this that are specialized and have low usage but are considered very important to the community should be maintained.

If it is possible to obtain databases geared to children and youth that offer more depth of coverage, this also should be considered. Specifically, Florida public schools are facing a 2015 deadline for 100% e-textbooks, and the increasing shift toward electronic resources and electronic testing in the public schools is likely to impact the Florida Electronic Library. As schools move more online, it is likely that students and teachers will show greater use of the Florida Electronic Library, as long as there is sufficient breadth and depth of content to meet their needs.

_____

Survey and interview comments included requests for databases from other vendors. However, only Division staff are in the position to evaluate the data in this report and come to conclusions about database selection within the Florida Electronic Library.

Awareness

Library staff are aware of the Gale databases, but they are not all aware that those resources are components of the Florida Electronic Library. Many libraries provide seamless interfaces that do not indicate that databases are part of the Florida Electronic Library, so library staff (and likely users) are not aware of the role the Division plays in providing access to these databases, particularly since once a user is in the databases, he no longer sees any link to the Florida Electronic Library or the Division.

The Division could increase its own branding within the Florida Electronic Library to increase awareness of the vital role the Division plays in providing access to these databases statewide. This could be a way for the Division to continue to justify its funding in the face of state budget cuts. In addition, the Division could enlist libraries and schools to market the Florida Electronic Library directly to their users. One way to do this is to encourage more library staff to train users on how to access and use the Florida Electronic Library on their own, either on their personal computer or mobile device.

Training

The Information Institute is aware of the recent Gale training program, but the degree to which this has been effective requires additional evaluation, such as unobtrusive testing of library staff assisting users with the Florida Electronic Library. In addition to conducting the surveys, interviews, usage assessment, and usability assessment, a member of the study team attended two Gale training sessions: What You Don't Know About FEL Business Resources and Gale Databases – Behind the Scenes Webinar. The first session included a very thorough description of the Florida Electronic Library home page, along with specific demonstrations in *Demographics Now* and *Small Business Resource Center*. It also included brief tours of *Business, Economics & Theory Collection* and *General OneFile*.

However, these webinars had very low attendance, and, given the potential factors impacting inability of library staff to find relevant resources within the databases, as well as the findings in the *Gale Training Evaluation, 2009-2010: Final Report*,[34] it may be necessary to revise the methods and modes of training to facilitate searching within the databases. With budgets tight, it may be that libraries are discouraging (or at least not encouraging) staff to attend training sessions, and these libraries may require incentives to encourage (or require) staff participation in training on how to use the databases more effectively. Also, training on how the authentication process works might increase awareness and reduce confusion about authenticating into the databases.

_____

[34] Mandel, McClure, & Doster. (2010).

_____

_____

Usability

Two key recommendations are to organize the list of available databases in a more user-friendly and effective manner (possibly by topic instead of alphabetically) and to provide more specific descriptive information for the content of these databases. Other recommendations are the following:

- Consider arranging the home page more from the user perspective, so that it is easily and quickly scanable;
- Consider adding more detail to "About FEL" about how to use the site;
- Add links back to the Florida Electronic Library on the outside resource pages to allow easy return to the site (and to continue the site branding);
- Add notices that users are leaving the site when they go to the Gale databases;
- Add accessibility and privacy statements;
- Lessen scrolling by creating the ability to jump to sections in all areas;
- Keep adding new content to the "Librarians/News" section, or reconsider the name of the section; and
- Check for bad and broken links regularly.

However, these recommendations are limited by the fact that this usability assessment focused primarily on the home page and relied on expert testing. The most recent comprehensive usability assessment of the Florida Electronic Library is five years old,[35] and since the usability assessment here focused on the home page and a few other key pages within the website, it would be useful to conduct a new, comprehensive usability assessment that goes deeper than the homepage. Such a test might include field tests with users—both library staff and patrons—and should address usability within the Gale databases, as well as on the Florida Electronic Library website.

User-based Suggestions to Improve the Florida Electronic Library

Library staff provided a wealth of comments and suggestions with regard to improving the Florida Electronic Library. These are broken into three categories: content, usability, and support/awareness.

Content. A primary recommendation is to ensure relevant and sufficient depth of coverage that aligns with the K-12 curriculum, as well as the needs of secondary education users. Specifically, library staff request stronger depth of coverage in reference topics and children's and young adults' resources. In addition to greater depth of coverage for research and homework support, library staff recommend additional support for non-English speakers, including support for speakers of a wider array of languages (not just English and Spanish) and addition of language courses including English as a Second Language (ESL). Other recommended changes to content relate to expanding coverage on the following topics: job help, ePrep for high school students and civil service test takers, small business support, legal forms, and credit/budgeting.

_____

[35] Information Use Management and Policy Institute. (2006).

_____

Usability. Usability-related recommendations vary but break into issues related to full-text materials and the database interface. Some library staff note lag times in making full-text content available in the databases. Also, small libraries (and likely public and school libraries) really need 100% full-text access as their users are unlikely to have full-text access elsewhere. Most of the interface comments relate to making the interface more intuitive, and user-friendly. One recommendation is for "Google like" search results, but more specific recommendations include dividing content into school levels (K-12 and collegiate), minimizing irrelevant results in the Power Search, and more central and distinctive placement of the link to "View all resources."

Support/awareness. The number one recommendation here is for more training and marketing support for both library staff and users, such as an online tutorial and greater availability of "on-demand" training as the schedule for training is limiting for many library staff. Also, issues with authentication need to be addressed. In particular, library staff note that Florida residency authentication by IP does not work consistently in rural areas. Overall, library staff say that the Florida Electronic Library is a well-kept secret and that the Division should do more marketing for the service. Some suggestions here are to enlist libraries to market directly to their users and to develop a marketing plan to help teachers use the Florida Electronic Library more effectively and develop online literacy.

Acknowledgements

_____

_____

APPENDIX: ADDITIONAL DATABASES PURCHASED BY FLORIDA LIBRARIES

Database	Database
A - Z Learning Express	Arts and Humanities Citation Index
A to Z Databases	ARTstor
A to Z Maps	ASFA
A-Z eJournal List	Asia Studies Full-Text
ABC-CLIO American History	Asia Studies Full-Text Humanities
ABC-CLIO Daily Life Through History	ATLA
ABC-CLIO Issues: Understanding Controversy ...	ATLA Religion Database with ATLA Serials
ABC-CLIO World at War: Understanding ...	Automobile Repair Reference Center
ABI/Inform	Background Notes
ABI/Inform Complete	Bay County Obituary Index
Abstracts in Anthropology	Ben's Guide to U.S. Government for Kids
Academic Search Complete	Bibliography of Asian Studies
Academic Search Premier	Biography and Genealogy Master Index
Acceda Noticias	Biography in Context
Accelerated Reader	Biography Reference Bank
Access Newspaper Archive	Biography Reference Center
Access Pharmacy	BioOne
ACM Digital Library	BizMiner
Adult Learning Center by Brainfuse	Black Thought & Culture
Advanced World Book Online	BookLetters
African American Experience	Books & Authors
AllData	Books 24 x 7
Amazing Animals of the World	Brainfuse
America the Beautiful	BrainPOP
America: History and Life	Britannica
America's Historical Newspapers	Britannica Elementary, Middle & High School ...
America's Newspapers	Britannica Online
America's Obituaries & Death Notices	Britannica's Student NewsNet
American Ancestors	British History Online
American Chemical Society Web Editions	Broward County Board of County Commissioners
American Government	Broward County Library Digital Collections
American History	Broward County Public Schools
American Indian Experience	Business & Company Resource Center
American Obituaries & Death Notices	Business Economics and Theory
American Society for Microbiology	Business Full Text
Ancestry Library Edition	Business Plans Online
Ancestry Plus	Business Resource Center, Small
Ancestry.com	Business Source Complete
AncestryPlus Library Edition	Byki
Animal Life	Cambridge University Press
Annual Reviews Online	CAMIO-Catalog of Art Museum Images Online
AnthroSource	Career Center at Tutor.com
Antique Pricing	Career Cruising
Archive Grid	Career Overview

_____

_____

Database	Database
Career Transitions	*Dictionary of Literary Biography Complete …*
Catholic Periodical Index	*Digital Collections from ABC-CLIO*
Children's Literature Comprehensive Database	*Digital Sanborn Maps*
Chilton Library	*Directory of Publications and Broadcast Media*
Choice Reviews Online	*Discovery Education*
Christian Periodical Index	*Discovery Education Streaming*
Christian Science Monitor	*Diversity Studies eCollection*
Chronicle of Higher Education	*DOAJ: Directory of Open Access Journals*
Ciao	*DSM-IV-TR*
CINAHL	*DybaMed*
Clase Periodica (FirstSearch)	*E-Journal Portal*
Classical Library Recordings	*Early English Books Online*
Classical Library Scores	*Early World of Learning-For Preschoolers and …*
Classical Music Library	*EBM Reviews*
Clinical Pharmacology	*eBooks (formerly Netlibrary)*
Cochrane Library	*Ebrary*
CollegeSource Online	*Ebrary Academic Complete*
Columbia International Affairs Online	*EBSCO - Automotive Repair Center*
ComAbstracts (CIOS)	*EBSCO Audiobooks*
Communication and Mass Media Complete	*EBSCOHost*
Compustat Research Insight	*EBSCOHost: Academic Search Complete*
Conference Board's Research Collection	*EducationAtlas.com*
Congressional (LexisNexis Congressional)	*El Sentinel*
Consumer Reports	*Electronic Collections Online: Full Text …*
Contemporary Authors	*eLibrary*
CountryWatch	*eLibrary Curriculum Edition*
CountryWatch-Youth	*eLibrary Science*
CQ Library	*Elsevier Journals*
Credo Reference	*Email Book Preview*
Credo Reference: Music	*Enciclopedia Estudiantil Hallazgos*
Credo Reference: Psychology	*Encyclopaedia Britannica Online*
Credo Reference: Science	*Encyclopedia Americana*
Criticism Online, Gale Literature	*Encyclopedia Judaica*
CSA	*Encyclopedia of Associations: National Org …*
CultureGrams	*Encyclopedia of Careers*
Current Biography Illustrated	*Environmental Studies and Policy Collection*
Current Biography Online (1940-present)	*ePrep*
Cypress Resume	*ERIC*
D&B Million Dollar Database	*Essay Finder*
Daily Life Through History	*Ethnographic Video Online*
Dance in Video	*Euromonitor Passport Reference*
Datasets (LexisNexis)	*Evidence Based Medicine Reviews*
Dear Reader	*Facts and Comparisons*
Decades-The 30's to the 90's	*Facts on File*
Dentistry and Oral Sciences Source	*Famous First Facts*
Diccionario de la Lengua Española	*Fashion Snoops*

_____

_____

Database	Database
Federal Grants & Loans	*Great Websites for Kids*
Fedforms	*GreenFile*
Fedstats	*Grolier Encyclopedia*
Ferguson's Career Guidance Center	*Grolier for Kids*
Financial Ratings Service	*Grolier Online*
Findlaw	*Grove Art Online*
First Research	*Grove Music Online*
FirstSearch	*H1N1 (Swine Flu)*
Florida Choices Planner	*H1N1 Influenza Pandemic*
Florida Legal Forms	*HAPI*
Florida Navigator	*Health Business Elite*
Florida Statutes	*HelpNow from BrainFuse*
FMG Films on Demand	*HeritageQuest Online*
Fold3	*Hispanic American Periodicals Index*
Foundation Center Databases	*Historical Abstracts*
Foundation Directory Online	*History of the Holocaust*
Foundation Directory Online Professional	*History Resource Center: U.S.*
Foundation Grants to Individuals Online	*Hobbies & Crafts*
Freegal Music	*Homework Help Now by BrainFuse*
Freegal Musica Gratix	*Hoovers*
Gale Chilton's	*Hospitality, Tourism, and Leisure eCollection*
Gale Cengage Learning	*Humanities Full Text*
Gale eBooks	*IBISWorld*
Gale Grizimek's Animal Life	*Image Quest*
Gale Group	*Information Science & Library Issues eCollection*
Gale Literary Index	*InformaWorld*
Gale Literature	*International Dance FT*
Gale Literature Resource Center	*International Directory of Company Histories*
Gale NoodleTools	*International Pharmaceutical Abstracts*
Gale Opposing Viewpoints	*Investor's Edge - Mergent*
Gale Resources in Context	*iPreach*
Gale Science Literature	*Issues & Controversies*
Gale U.S. History in Context	*Issues Researcher*
Gale's Ready Reference Shelf	*Issues: Understanding Controversy and Society*
Games for Libraries	*JAMAEvidence*
Genealogy	*Job & Career Accelerator*
General OneFile	*JobNow from Brainfuse*
General Science eCollection	*Journal Citation Reports*
General Science Full Text	*Journals@OVID*
Global Issues in Context	*JSTOR*
Global Road Warrior (World Trade Press)	*JSTOR Plant Science*
GobierinoUSA.gov	*Junior Reference Collection*
Grant Station	*Kroll Bond Ratings*
Great Events from History-Ancient World to ...	*L'Année Philologique*
Great Lives from History-From the Middle ...	*Lands and Peoples*
Great Lives from History-Inventors and ...	*Language Learning Library*

_____

Database	Database
Lat-Am Studies Full Text Online	New Book of Knowledge
Latino American Experience	New Book of Popular Science
Law Depot	New England Historic Genealogical Society
Laws of Florida	New York Times
Learn-a-Test	New York Times Historical
LearningExpress	NewsBank
Legal Database - LexisNexis Academic	NewsNow
LegalForms	Newspaper Archive
LegalTrac	Newspaperarchive.com
LexiComp	NoveList
LexisNexis	NoveList Plus
LexisNexis Academic	Nursing Consult
LexisNexis Congressional	OfficeEssential eBook Collection
Library Literature/Wilson	Olin Online Catalog
Library Music Source	OneClick Digital
Library, Information Science & Tech. Abstracts	Online Book Clubs
LINCCweb	Online local newspaper
LIRN	Opera in Video
Literary Reference Center - EBSCO	Opposing Viewpoints
Literature Criticism Online	Opposing Viewpoints in Context
Literature Resource Center	Orlando Sentinel (NewsBank)
Live Homework Help/Tutor.com	OSTMED.DR
Local Law	OverDrive
LoisLaw	Ovid Nursing Journals
LRC	Oxford African
Mango Languages	Oxford African-American Studies Center
MANTIS	Oxford Art Online
Maps of the World	Oxford English Dictionary
Marquis Biographies	Oxford Music Online
Marquis Biographies Online	Oxford Reference Online
MD Consult	Oxford University Press
Mergent InvestorEdge	PapersFirst
Mergent Online	PBA Journals
Miami Herald	Pensacola News Journal-Proquest
Micromedex	Periodicals A to Z
Military & Intelligence Database	Philosopher's Index
Morningstar Investment Research Center	Playfinder
Mosby Nursing Index	PoemFinder
Music Index	Pop Culture eCollection
Music Online	Popular Culture Universe: Icons/Idols/Ideas
My Florida	Powerspeak Languages
National Law Library- Florida	Praeger Security International (PSI)
National Newspapers Core	Price It!
Natural Medicines	Proceedings
Natural Standard	Professional Collection
Naxos Music Library	Project Muse
NetAdvantage Standard & Poor's Online	Prokaryotes

_____

Database	Database
ProQuest African American Heritage	*Salem Health*
ProQuest Ancestry Library Edition	*Salem History*
ProQuest Biology & Science	*Salem Literature*
ProQuest Business Resources	*Science Citation Index Expanded*
ProQuest Central	*Science in Context*
ProQuest Computing & Telecommunications	*Science Online*
ProQuest Digital Microfilm-Wall Street Journal	*Science Resource Center*
ProQuest Direct	*ScienceDirect*
ProQuest eLibrary	*ScienceDirect College Ed.: Health & Life Sci ...*
ProQuest Heritage Quest	*ScienceDirect College Edition: Social & ...*
ProQuest News	*SciFinder*
ProQuest Nursing & Health	*Scopus*
ProQuest Obituaries	*Scribner Writer's Series (Gale)*
ProQuest Psychology	*Short Story Index*
ProQuest Religion	*SimplyMap*
ProQuest Sanborn Maps Florida	*SIRS Discoverer*
ProQuest SIRS	*SIRS Government Reporter*
ProQuest SIRS Discovery	*SIRS Researcher*
ProQuest SIRS Researcher	*Small Business eCollection*
ProQuest Social Sciences	*Small Engine Repair*
ProQuest Social Science Dissertations UK & ...	*Social Sciences Citation Index*
PsycARTICLES	*Something About the Author*
Psychology Collection	*Sources in U.S. History Online: The Civil War*
PsycINFO	*Sources in U.S. History: The American Rev.*
Questia	*Sources in U.S. HistoryOnline: Slavery in Am.*
Rand McNally	*South East Regional Newspapers*
Read the Books	*South Florida Sun Sentinel*
Readers Guide 1890-Present	*Southern Baptist Periodical Index*
Recorded Books Universal Class	*SpeechFinder*
Ref USA	*Springer*
Reference Center	*Springer eBooks*
Reference USA	*SpringerLink E-Books: Biomedical & Life ...*
Reference USA-InfoUSA	*SpringerLink E-Books: Chemistry & Materials ...*
Reference USA-U.S. Business and U.S. Res.	*SpringerLink E-Books: Earth & Environmental ...*
Rehabilitation Reference Center	*SpringerLink E-Books: Physics & Astronomy*
Religion & Philosophy Database	*SRDS*
Religion and Philosophy eCollection	*Standard & Poor's*
Religions of the World	*StatRef*
Religious & Theological Abstracts	*StoryFinder*
Resource Center	*Student Resource Center-Gold*
Resources for College Libraries	*Student Resource Center-Health Module*
RILM Abstracts of Music Literature	*Student Resource Center-Junior*
Rocket Languages	*Student Resources in Context*
Rocket Languages-Library Ideas	*Sylvan Dell eBooks*
Safari Business & Technical Books	*Teacher Reference Center (TRC)*
Safari Tech	*Teaching Books*

Database	Database
Testing & Education Reference Center (TERC)	*What Do I Read Next?*
Testing & Education Resource Center	*Wiley Interscience*
Theime Ebook collection	*Wiley Online Library*
TheStreet / Weiss Financial Ratings Service	*Wilson*
Thomson Reuters Databases	*Wilson Omnifle*
Times of London Digital Archive	*WiredMD*
Transparent Language Online	*World Almanac*
TumbleBooks	*World at War: Understanding Conflict and Soc.*
TumbleBooks en Espanol	*World Book*
TumbleReadables	*World Book Discover*
Tutor.com	*World Book for Kids*
Twaynes' Authors Series (Gale)	*World Book Info Finder*
Ulrich's	*World Book Online*
United States Geography	*World Book Spanish Student Discovery*
Universal Class	*World Book Web*
UpToDate	*World Christian Database*
Value Line	*World Folklore and Folklife*
Value Line Historical Reports	*World Geography*
Value Line Research Center	*World History eCollection*
War and Terrorism eCollection	*World History in Context*
Washington Post	*World History: Ancient and Medieval Eras*
Well-Being eBook Collection	*World History: The Modern Era*
Westlaw	