Guiding Ohio Online

Getting to Know Your Library: the Community

1. **Demographics**

    First, let's take a look at your community's demographics. Demographics are a statistical snapshot of the age, race, gender and other factors of the residents of a particular place. We'll begin by taking a look at Census data.

    A. Go to American Fact Finder (http://factfinder2.census.gov/)
    B. Under "Community Facts," type in the name of your library's town or the county that it serves.
    C. Under "2010 Census," click on the link that reads "General Population and Housing Characteristics "
    D. Fill out the form below:

Age Category	Percent of Population
15-19 years	
20-24 years	
25-29 years	
30-34 years	
35-39 years	
40-44 years	
45-49 years	
50-54 years	
55-59 years	
60-64 years	

65-69 years	
70-74 years	
75-79 years	
80-84 years	
85 years and older	

E. Now compare that data to this table about what these age groups typically do in the library online:

Top Substantive Uses of Public Access Computers by Age Category, 2009[1]

Age Category	Top Three Substantive Areas	Highest Ranking Activity for Top Substantive Area
14-18 years		do homework for a class (64%)
	Education (64%)	learn about college degree or certificate programs (28%)
	Civic Engagement (34%)	do an online assignment or take an online class (27%)
	Employment (28%)	
19-24 years		learn about college degree or certificate programs (51%)
	Education (54%)	to do homework for a class (48%)
	Civic Engagement (54%)	to apply for financial aid (21%)
	Employment (35%)	
25-34 years		search for a job opening or career opportunity (84%)
	Employment (56%)	work-related research (64%)
	Education (42%)	work on a resume (55%)
	Health (35%)	
35-44 years		search for a job opening or career opportunity (80%)
	Employment (45%)	work-related research (67%)
	Education (41%)	work on a resume (54%)
	Health (37%)	
45-54 years		search for a job opening or career opportunity (80%)
	Employment (49%)	work-related research (65%)
	Health (44%)	work on a resume (51%)
	Education (44%)	
55-64 years		learn about a disease, illness, or medical condition (88%)
	Health (46%)	learn about diet or nutrition (65%)
	Employment (43%)	learn about a medical procedure (58%)
	E-government (42%)	
65-74 years		learn about a disease, illness, or medical condition (87%)
	Health (39%)	learn about a medical procedure (62%)
	E-government (39%)	learn about diet or nutrition (62%)

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[1] From "Who's in the Queue? A Demographic Analysis of Public Access Computer Users and Uses in U.S. Public Libraries"
http://www.imls.gov/assets/1/AssetManager/Brief2011_04.pdf

	Civic Engagement (33%)	
75+ years		learn about a disease, illness, or medical condition (96%)
	Health (37%)	learn about a medical procedure (67%)
	E-government (33%)	learn about diet or nutrition (57%)
	Civic Engagement (26%)	

What does that data tell you?

Was there anything about this data that surprised you?

Based on this data, what topics do you expect to be asked about most often at the library?

What activities will you need to be prepared to assist patrons with?

F. Additionally, consider these demographics when scheduling. Finding out the best time to have a computer class that meets the needs of your target audience is key to your program's success. Important factors include:

- Working people will most likely need classes before or after work hours, or on the weekends. The lunch hour can also be a convenient time for those who are employed, provided class length is brief and the training and employment locations are near to each other.
    - At your Host Library, walk around the library at least 2 blocks in every direction, or the whole town if reasonable . Are there businesses nearby with employees who are able to stop by during lunch or after work?
    - Consider, could I partner with a business to provide training?

- Older adults generally prefer daytime classes. Often mornings are more popular than afternoons. Older adults may also prefer shorter class sessions and appreciate more frequent breaks during class time.
    - What percentage of the population of my community is over 65 years old?

- Parents who are at home with their children may not be able to attend daytime classes unless childcare or other accommodations for children are made at the training site. This is especially true for lower income sectors in which single parenting is more common and money for childcare not available.
    - Consider: can I do a quick class during an existing story time? Can I partner with the children's department to do a program together?

- Individuals who are unemployed or seeking re-careering tools may have good daytime availability. Go to the Department of Labor Statistics http://data.bls.gov/map
    - What is the unemployment rate in my county?

- Transportation can be an ongoing issue for seniors and low income adults.
    - Check the Ohio Department of Transportation http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/Planning/Transit/Pages/OhioTransitAgencies.aspx Is there public transportation available in my community? Is there a stop near the library? What hours is it available?

2. **Access to High Speed Networks.**
   Rural communities typically have less access to high speed broadband and cell phone networks than urban areas. Lack of access to high speed connections is often cited as a reason that people don't use the internet. Thus, the more limited the high speed connections in the community you serve, the less people are going to have knowledge of the internet or popular internet tools.

   In Ohio, all the public libraries have access to broadband through the Ohio Public Library Information Network (OPLIN). So while you're at your Host Library Site, the connection should be fast. However, this may not be the case when you're doing outreach or working with community partners.

   Let's start by investigating the broadband speeds in your community.

   A. Go to broadbandmap.gov
   B. In the search box, type the address of your library.
   C. Answer the following questions:

What is the fastest speed displayed?	
What is the slowest speed displayed?	
What is the most common speed?	

Here's a list of how long it takes different speeds of internet to download a 1MB sized eBook[2]

   Less than or equal to 200 kbps: 40 seconds
   Greater than 200 kbps and less than 768 kbps: 10.4 seconds.
   Greater than or equal to 768 kbps and less than 1.5 Mbps: 5.3 seconds
   Greater than or equal to 1.5 Mbps and less than 3 Mbps: 2.7 seconds
   Greater than or equal to 3 Mbps and less than 6 Mbps: 1.3 seconds
   Greater than or equal to 6 Mbps and less than 10 Mbps: 0.8 seconds
   Greater than or equal to 10 Mbps and less than 25 Mbps: 0.3 seconds
   Greater than or equal to 25 Mbps and less than 50 Mbps: 0.2 seconds
   Greater than or equal to 50 Mbps and less than 100 Mbps: 0.1 seconds

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[2] From http://www.broadbandmap.gov/classroom

Greater than or equal to 100 Mbps and less than 1 Gbps: 0.1 seconds

The eBook *Explosive Eighteen* by Janet Evanovich is 2.5 MG in size. How long does it take to download this eBook:

On the fastest speed displayed?	
On the slowest speed displayed?	
On the most common speed?	

D. Next go to 2 of these popular cellular carriers' websites:

        Verizon Wireless

        Sprint

        AT&T

        T Mobile

E. Is my community covered by this network? Are all services available?

Are the residents of my library's community covered by high speed networks?

How might this affect my community's digital literacy needs?

Was this information surprising to you? Why or why not?

To be answered at your Host Library

Ask at least 2 staff members at the library:

1. What kinds of computer questions do patrons ask you?

2. Are there particular questions or issues that are reoccurring?

3. Are there particular segments of the population in the community that need computer help the most? *Examples: Seniors, low income adults*

   Where's a good place to reach out to these groups? *Example: Senior center, food bank*

4. Are there other organizations that are already providing this training? *Example: community colleges, career centers, senior centers.*

5. Who in the community, such as government officials, members of the business community, school staff or administration and media should I speak to about computer training?

6. Do you know of a business or the chamber of commerce who would be interested in partnering with us to provide computer classes?

7. Has the library previously conducted a needs assessment or user survey? If so, can I see those results?

Afterwards, ask yourself:

1. How will your trainings differ from those already being given?

2. How will other factors limit digital literacy in your community and how might they impact your trainings?

3. What is the most important goal for your trainings and how will you achieve that goal?

4. What advantages and gains will these trainings bring to your community?

5. Who in the community can help you achieve these goals?