

Rural Library Sustainability

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| | | Awareness Stage | Early Stage | Preparing Stage | Developing Stage | Advanced Stage | Performing Stage |
| Library Connections | Discovering ways to stay connected to others | The library has not focused on this area. | Library feels isolated and alone much of the time. | Library knows that there are places to turn to for support/assistance/ ideas (i.e.-State Library, other libraries, Listservs, WebJunction, web sites, etc.), and they occasionally reach out to at least one of these. | Library regularly reaches out to several places for support/assistance/ ideas (i.e.-State Library, other libraries, Listservs, WebJunction, websites, etc.), and feels well-supported by this approach. | Library actively reaches out to several places for support/assistance/ ideas, and they occasionally share their ideas and experiences to help another library. | Library actively reaches out to several places for support/assistance/ ideas, and they regularly share their ideas and experiences with a broad audience to help other libraries. |
| | In-house Technical Support | The library has not focused on this area. | The library gets technical support for technology from staff members and patrons on an ad hoc basis. | The library has some local community contacts that provide technical support for the library's computers when the staff cannot solve the problem. | The library has regular technical support from staff, volunteers, and/or local consultants. Staff participate in library/technology listserv(s); have visited WebJunction. | The library has strong technical support from staff, volunteers, and local consultants and belongs to regional and state organizations that offer support and educational opportunities. | The library has strong technical support, belongs to regional and state organizations that offer support and educational opportunities, and provides technology support for other organizations in the community and the region. |

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| Technology Connections | Outside Technical Support | The library has not focused on this area. | The library staff does not know whom to call beyond local connections when there is a question relating to technology. | The library staff communicates occasionally with regional library system or state library consultants via phone, reads email, and searches the web to find answers to technology questions. | The library staff communicates regularly with regional library system, state library consultants, and/or other librarians via phone, e-mail, listserv, and Internet, including WebJunction, to find answers to technology questions and research possibilities. | The library staff communicate frequently with regional library system, state library consultants, and/or other librarians via phone, e-mail, listserv, and Internet, and post questions/responses on WebJunction or other listservs or discussion forums. | The library staff communicate frequently using a variety of channels and are known as technology leaders who regularly contribute answers and suggestions to listservs and on WebJunction discussion forums and encourage others. | | |
| | | | The library has not focused on this area. | Library staff are unsure what software and hardware is on the computer. | The library informally inventories computer hardware and software. | The library uses TechAtlas and/or some other instrument to maintain annual inventories of computer hardware and software. | The library updates its inventories of computer hardware and software every time it performs a software update or purchases new equipment. | The library updates its inventories every time it performs a software update or purchases new equipment and uses the inventories to identify gaps and opportunities for improvement. | |
| | | | | The library has not focused on this area. | The library is unsure what regular software/hardware maintenance needs to be done. | The library occasionally performs basic computer software and hardware maintenance tasks and occasionally pays a local consultant to fix technology. | The library conducts regularly scheduled hardware/software maintenance and regularly hires a consultant for tasks beyond staff capabilities. | The library conducts regularly scheduled hardware/software maintenance and contracts with a consultant for some regular tasks and occasional special needs. | The library conducts regularly scheduled hardware/software maintenance, contracts with a consultant for occasional special needs, and anticipates future maintenance needs. |
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| Hardware/Software Upgrade | | | | | | | | | |
| Hardware/Software Maintenance | | | | | | | | | |
| Upgrade and Maintenance | Hardware/Software e Inventory | | | | | | | | |

| Staff and Patron Training | | | | | | | |
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| | Staff Training | The library has not focused on this area. | Some staff learn computer skills on their own or have come to the library with skills already in place. | Some staff have computer skills gained through self-initiated learning. Staff occasionally participate in workshops or complete online courses. | Most staff are comfortable with basic technology in the library. Staff regularly participate in in-person or online learning. Learning about technology is supported and built into staff schedules. | All staff are competent technology users. The library has a staff training plan in place that ensures that all staff have opportunities to learn built into their schedules. | All staff are competent technology users; some act as coaches within the library and are asked to teach in other organizational contexts, locally and at the regional and state level. |
| | Staff Training Resources | The library has not focused on this area. | Staff use Gates Publications and other print resources to get answers as needed. | Staff occasionally use print resources, as well as online tutorials for self-paced learning. | Staff regularly learn via print publications, workshops, courses, and online courses/tutorials as needed. Staff has access to and time to attend training if they desire. | All staff are learning using print and online resources, attending and presenting workshops. They have coaching and/or time to practice in the library to support their learning. | All staff are learning using a variety of resources, with coaching and/or time to practice. Staff share their expertise with other libraries by contributing to development of online and in-person courses. |
| | Patron Training | The library has not focused on this area. | A few staff help individual patrons when they have technology questions, usually by directing them to the appropriate resource(s). | Some staff help patrons when they have technology questions and are comfortable in a one-on-one setting. The library occasionally offers basic computer classes. | Most staff are comfortable offering one-on-one computer instruction with patrons. The library offers regular computer classes for patrons. | All staff respond to patron questions about using technology. The library is a leader in providing computer training for patrons. | The library is recognized by the community as a leader in providing computer training for patrons and shares its expertise with other organizations in the community and with other libraries. |

| Funding | Sources of Funding for PA Computing | The library has not focused on this area. | The library relies entirely on external funding to support computing. | The library budget includes a small amount for technology repair and maintenance. Upgrade of hardware and software is largely reliant on external funding. | The library budget includes adequate funding for technology repair and maintenance. The library is beginning to plan for regular replacement and upgrade of hardware and software. | The library budget includes adequate funding for technology repair, maintenance, and staff. The library is planning to include regular replacement and upgrade of hardware and software in its capital projects fund. | The library's annual operating fund covers repair, maintenance, and staff. Hardware and software replacement and upgrade are included in the capital projects fund. |
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| | Gifts/Donations | The library has not focused on this area. | The library has received some unexpected gifts in the past. | The library occasionally seeks and receives donations from the community to support technology. | The library regularly seeks and receives donations of services, volunteers, and other resources from individuals and businesses to support technology. | The library actively seeks donations, has a wish list of needs connected to its technology plan, and communicates these needs to the community. | The library's wish list is widely publicized, and there is synergy toward its fulfillment. Individuals and organizations in the community offer new funding opportunities to the library because they understand its contribution to providing public access computing. |
| | Grants | The library has not focused on this area. | The library's limited staff keeps it from applying for technology grants. | The library occasionally applies for and receives grants to support technology when they are alerted to do so. | On average, the library applies for and receives at least 2 grants per year to support technology from several sources. | The library actively pursues grants and consistently garners support from a variety of sources (grants, partnerships, donations of funds/services/supplies from local community and businesses), as well as state resources. | The library is valued as a partner by other organizations who are seeking grants from local, state, and national sources. The library is able to find funding and shares potential funding sources with other libraries. |
| | Fund Raising | The library has not focused on this area. | The library's Friends group does not contribute to technology funding (or there is no Friends group). | The library's Friends group raises funds to support technology through book sales and an occasional event. | The library's Friends group raises funds for technology through regular book sales and fundraising events. | The library has an active Friends group that works to raise money through special campaigns that target the library's "technology wish list." | The library has an active Friends group, special annual campaigns, and opportunities to contribute to its technology endowment. |
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| Outreach: Communicating and working with those who benefit from your services | Needs Assessment | The library has not focused on this area. | The library assesses needs by communicating informally with patrons. | The library occasionally assesses general patron needs to meet local or state requirements. | The library regularly assesses community needs through general surveys, focus groups or another formal planning method. | The library regularly assesses the needs of particular target audiences in the community using a variety of market research techniques. | The library regularly assesses the needs of various target audiences and actively identifies emerging trends and new audiences and opportunities to expand public access computing. |
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| | Awareness/Promotion | The library has not focused on this area. | Regular library patrons are aware of library location and hours, as well as general offerings via information posted in the library and/or on its website. | Some library patrons are aware of the library's public access computing services. The library promotes its services and activities inside the library, on its website, and occasionally outside of the library via print and media channels. | Most current library patrons are aware of the library's public access computing services. The library regularly promotes its programs and services inside the library, on its website, and through community-wide print and media channels. | The library uses a mix of formal and word-of-mouth strategies to target its promotion of public access computing programs and services to a variety of specific, targeted audiences. | The library is recognized as a leader in reaching a variety of audiences for its public access computing programs and services and it is continually attempting to reach new audiences. |
| | Community Partners | The library has not focused on this area. | The library works with other community groups on a one-time basis to address specific public access computing needs. | The library occasionally cooperates with other community groups to meet public access computing needs. | The library regularly cooperates with other community groups to meet public access computing needs. | The library takes the lead in forming partnerships with community groups to meet public access computing needs. | The library is a valued partner in the community and is often invited to participate in partnerships to address public access computing needs. |

| Advocacy: Convincing decision makers of your value | | | | | | | |
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| Community Leader Advocates | | Data on Impact | | Communication with Community Leaders | | | |
| The library has not focused on this area. | | The library has not focused on this area. | | The library director rarely communicates about public access computing individually with community leaders. | | All representatives of the library—board, director, staff, volunteers—communicate key messages about public access computing regularly with community leaders and decision makers and incorporate leaders' responses in their planning. | |
| The library has not focused on this area. | | The library tracks traditional statistics like circulation and program attendance.. | | The library director occasionally communicates about public access computing—often informally—with community leaders. | | The library director and staff work closely with the board (if available) to communicate about public access computing—formally and informally—with community leaders and decision makers, using carefully developed, key messages, including detailed data about the library's impact. | |
| The library has not focused on this area. | | Library tracks traditional statistics and reports them to the board and State Library, as well as any output statistics for technology-related services it provides (web hits, technology training attendance, etc.) | | The library tracks traditional and technology-related output statistics and collects anecdotal evidence of impact and reports them to the board, the State Library, and community leaders and decision makers. | | The library tracks output statistics and evidence of impact; reports them to the board, State Library, and community leaders; and uses them to make improvements in the library's services, including public access computing. | |
| Community leaders and decision makers are unaware of the library's needs and the challenges of supporting public access computing. | | A few community leaders are aware of the library's public access computing services and the challenges the library faces in carrying out this emerging role. | | The library director regularly communicate about public access computing—formally and informally—with community leaders and decision makers. This sometimes includes anecdotal data that demonstrates the library's impact. | | The library is known in the community as a leader in demonstrating the value and impact of its services. It uses abundant, detailed data to make regular improvements in its own services and to identify opportunities for improvement beyond the library. | |
| Community leaders are aware of the library's important role in supporting public access computing and its challenges and generally support this role. | | Many community leaders are aware of the library's public access computing role and they offer additional resources to expand its programs and services. | | The library director and staff work closely with the board (if available) to communicate about public access computing—formally and informally—with community leaders and decision makers, using carefully developed, key messages, including detailed data about the library's impact. | | The library is known in the community as a leader in demonstrating the value and impact of its services. It uses abundant, detailed data to make regular improvements in its own services and to identify opportunities for improvement beyond the library. | |
| Most community leaders are aware that the library's public access computing services are critically important and they actively support the library's requests for resources. | | Community leaders and decision makers are advocates for the library's public access computing role and they offer additional resources to expand its programs and services. | | The library director and staff work closely with the board (if available) to communicate about public access computing—formally and informally—with community leaders and decision makers, using carefully developed, key messages, including detailed data about the library's impact. | | The library is known in the community as a leader in demonstrating the value and impact of its services. It uses abundant, detailed data to make regular improvements in its own services and to identify opportunities for improvement beyond the library. | |