The 2015 Public Library Data Service
Characteristics and Trends

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The 2015 PLDS: Characteristics and Trends

The 2015 Public Library Data Service: Characteristics and Trends

The Public Library Data Service (PLDS) annual survey is conducted by Counting Opinions (SQUIRE) Ltd. (CO) on behalf of the Public Library Association (PLA). This survey of public libraries from the United States and Canada collected in 2015 for the fiscal year 2014 (FY2014) data on finances, resources, service usage and technology. Each year PLDS includes a special section. This year the supplemental questions focused on strategic planning.

CO provides an online service for capturing data and for the online access to results. The PLAmetrics subscription service offers access to the longitudinal PLDS data sets from FY2002. Also included is the Public Library Survey annual data (from FY2000) as provided by the Institute of Museums and Library Services (IMLS). PLAmetrics provides subscribers with real-time access to meaningful and relevant public library data for peer benchmarking and trend analysis using a custom reporting service that includes customizable report templates.

This report presents an analysis of selected measures from the FY2014 PLDS and previous results, conducted by CO using the PLAmetrics reporting service.

Research Method and Context

Participation in the PLDS is voluntary and participants have the option to provide responses to any and/or all questions that comprise the survey. Similar to previous years, public libraries in the United States and Canada are invited to participate in the survey.

CO sent 3,372 emails to launch the survey (January 2015). Public Libraries and state agencies were notified of the survey via email, social media and web page posts. Postcards promoting participation were handed out ALA Mid-Winter (2105). Follow-up letters and emails were sent throughout February and March. The original deadline for submission (March 31st, 2015) was extended to April 30th, 2015.

State data coordinators from the U.S. and Provincial/Association coordinators in Canada were contacted about promoting the survey to their libraries. Their involvement led to increased participation including. 2,454 of U.S. and Canadian public libraries partially or fully responding to the request for data, a response rate of 26 percent (a 23 percent increase over 2014). Due to the voluntary nature of this survey, ultimately only 1,894 libraries are included in the final data analysis. This represents an increase from the FY2013 participation (1,800).

Copies of the survey including definitions are available online via the PLDS Survey site, http://pla.countingopinions.com
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Summary

The following summary of key findings is primarily based on analysis of results for the continuously reporting libraries:

- Population (based on Legal service area) is growing (although slowly) for libraries serving 500,000 or more, and has been stable for libraries serving smaller populations. In our analysis we’ve used per capita analysis to control for any changes in results.
- Mean Income per capita increased 3.0% in FY2014, the most significant increase in the past 6 years, and yet the mean budget surplus (gap between per capita Income and Expenditures) continued to narrow to $2.12 per capita.
- Mean Expenditures per capita on staff and "other" rose past pre-recession levels yet mean materials expenditure has yet to recover to those previous levels.
- Libraries continue to add more "Librarians" (more non-MLS than MLS librarians) to their staff compliment versus other staff.
- Mean Circulation per capita continues to decline; the result of continuing declines in print and cd/dvd mean circulation per capita, and while there is some growth in circulation of electronic materials (mean) this growth does not fully offset these declines.
- Steady increases in both the number of Programs and overall per capita Attendance shows a shift in Library service usage.
- Declining physical library and virtual website visits indicates that users are changing their demand for library services.
- Libraries offering lending of tablet devices continues to increase.

Operating Finances

Cuts to Library budgets can be seen between 2009 and 2013. Most likely this was precipitated by the global financial crisis, during that period when state and local governments saw declining tax revenues.

Between 2009 and 2013 Mean Income per capita for the continuous reporting libraries was mostly stagnant. The 5YR average annual growth during this time was -0.18%, while Mean Expenditures began to increase between FY2011-13 (Figure 1). The narrowing of margins between income and expenditure continued ($2.67 per capita surplus in FY2013, $2.12 per capita surplus in FY2014).

In FY2014 Mean Income per capita increased 3.0% but Mean Expenditures per capita increased by 4.2% compared to FY2013. The increase in income enabled Libraries to further increase operating spending, including spending on materials, staff and other expenditures (e.g., capital maintenance and improvements).

The FY2014 (3.0%) increase in income is the largest increment since the recession when an increase of 3.58% was reported between FY2007-08 for the continuous reporting libraries.
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Operating Expenditures

Figure 2 shows the percentage change in mean Operating Expenditures per capita and mean Income per capita relative to 2004 spending and income levels.

Since 2011, mean Staff Expenditures per capita and mean Other Expenditures per capita increased an average of 1.5% per year while mean Materials expenditure grew by only 1.2% per year. Since FY2008 the change in mean Materials Expenditure is, in fact, down vs Staff and Other expenditures and does appear to be a trend. This downward trend in relative Expenditures on Materials may help to explain the downward trend in other measures of library service usage.

Staff

Figure 3 compares means for Population Legal Service Area (LSA) (tens of thousands), Staff Expenditure per capita and Staff per 1000 capita for the continuous reporting libraries. The mean increase between FY2010-14 in both Pop LSA (0.45%) and Staff Expenditures per capita (1.18%) suggests increasing salary/wages as a result of more hours and/or more employees and/or a change in the mix of professional to regular staff (MLS, non-MLS, and other staff).

Mean Total Number of Staff (FTE) for the continuous reporting libraries increased (4.7%) between FY2011-FY2014 and the median has increased 9.0%. Mean Staff per 1000 capita decreased 0.37% between FY2005-14, the result of slower growth in staff count relative to population.

Figure 4 shows changes in the composition of staff over time amongst the continuously reporting libraries (N=203) The percentage of FTEs with Librarian in their job title has increased on average 1.72% per year between FY2005 and FY2014 while the mean percentage of FTEs with Other Qualifications has decreased on average 0.75% per year.
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While the mean number of staff per 1000 capita has decreased (-0.37%, FY2005-14; -1.27% FY2009-14 because growth in numbers of staff is slower than population growth), the proportion of staff with Librarian in their title (30.65% in FY2014) has increased steadily year-over-year relative to those with other qualifications. Since FY2005, the percentage of staff with other qualifications has decreased (-0.70%) every year while the percentage of Staff with Librarian Titles (primarily non-MLS Librarians) has increased annually (1.72%).

Figure 5 shows that between FY2009-14 the mean percentage of Librarians (with and without an MLS degree) have increased for the continuous reporting libraries (N=199).

The mean percentage of MLS Librarians (FTE) employed by the continuous reporting libraries has increased 2.39% and the mean percentage of non-MLS Librarians (FTE) employed by the continuous reporting libraries has increased 3.49% since FY2009. In the last 6 years, the mean percentage non-MLS Librarians (FTE) was lowest in FY2012 (8.02%) and increased 4% in the last 2 years to 12.02%, the highest in the past 6 years.

These changes in the mix of staff FTE (MLS, Non-MLS and Other), likely impact changes in overall salaries, wages and benefits that likely account for a large part of the mean increase in Expenditures on Staff.

FY2014 was the second year that the PLDS collected Staff Hours versus head counts. This change to the way this data was reported seems to have had no adverse impact on results (Table 1.)

Table 1: Summary of Staff Hours FY2014 – Continuous reporting libraries

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Median</th>
<th>Max</th>
<th>Min</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of MLS librarian hours</td>
<td>202</td>
<td>18,655,751.71</td>
<td>92,355.21</td>
<td>49,920.00</td>
<td>736,262.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of non-MLS librarian hours</td>
<td>180</td>
<td>2,671,073.68</td>
<td>14,839.30</td>
<td>1,456.00</td>
<td>580,840.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total number of librarian hours</td>
<td>205</td>
<td>22,335,258.01</td>
<td>110,415.89</td>
<td>62,400.00</td>
<td>801,320.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All other paid staff hours</td>
<td>206</td>
<td>55,950,524.24</td>
<td>271,604.49</td>
<td>152,556.80</td>
<td>2,185,765.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total paid staff hours</td>
<td>206</td>
<td>78,585,782.25</td>
<td>361,484.38</td>
<td>228,072.00</td>
<td>2,922,028.20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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Responding libraries reported fewer issues and asked fewer questions about reporting their Staff Hours. These Annual hours worked are used to determine the number of FTE staff (based on each libraries definition for FTE.)

Service Levels

The mean number of Registered Borrowers per capita increased (0.5%) in FY2014 to 62.5 for the continuous reporting libraries (N=216) (Figure 6.) This increase led to results comparable to those reported in FY2011 but is lower than the 63.3% achieved in FY2012. Despite the decrease in FY2013, Registered Borrowers per capita did recover somewhat and overall has been somewhat stable over the past 5 years.

![Figure 6: Percentage change in Mean Service Levels per capita, FY2004 - FY2014 – Continuous reporting libraries (N=216)](image)

Registered borrowers are one of the main drivers of demand for library services but despite the increase in FY2014, there was a decrease in Circulation, Visits and in-library use. Only reference transaction per capita (mean) increased in FY2014. Mean Reference Transactions per capita steadily declined 2.81% since FY2008, but increased by 0.85% in FY2014. This is the first increase following 5 years of declines.

Figure 6 also shows Mean visits per declining year-over-year starting in FY2009. Mean Visits per capita declined to 5.92 in FY2014 versus 6.05 in FY2004.

Similarly, Mean Circulation per capita has continued to decline to 11.67 in FY2014 from 12.45 in FY2009 ... but still represents usage higher than pre-recession levels (10.67 in FY2007.)

Mean In-Library Uses per capita has continued to decline at an average of 7.2% per year. In FY2014, 1.3 mean In-Library Uses per capita was less than half the value reported in FY2004 (2.7).

Despite increases in income, expenditures (Figure 2) and registered borrowers (Figure 6) in FY2014, visits per capita, circulation per capita and in-Library use per capita have continued to decline suggesting further decreases in usage in the future. Perhaps increased spending and resulting improvements in service levels, and/or the range of services offered by the library will result in increased usage in future years (assuming increased spending has an effect on service usage).
The growth in Registered Borrowers (Figure 7) is greatest for smaller Libraries (up to 99,999 Pop served, N=67) and larger Libraries (500,000 or more Pop served, N=57), who realized 1.9% and 2.8% growth in FY2014 versus an average of 0.2% and 0.8% growth per year between FY2009-14 (note: mean Population of Legal Service Area increased an average of 0.35% and 0.51% per year for these Libraries the same period Figure 17).

Registered borrowers for medium sized libraries (Pop served 100,000-499,999, N=92), however, decreased by 0.7% per year between FY2009 and FY2014 Figure 7 (note: mean Population of Legal Service Area also decreased an average of 0.33% per year for this group of Libraries over the same period Figure 17).

Steady increases (4.0% and 5.2%/yr on average) in the number of programs delivered (mean Programs/1000 capita) and program attendance growth (mean Attendance/1000 capita) since FY2010 (Figure 8) suggests that libraries are shifting their service delivery priorities.

In the last 3 years the average number of programs offered by the continuous reporting libraries has increased at an average rate of 5.9% per year while average program attendance grew more slowly (4.4% per year).

In FY 2014 both Programs and Attendance per capita increased faster than any previous year (Programs, +7.3% and Attendance, +6.3%).
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Materials Expenditures and Usage

Overall mean Expenditures on Materials per capita increased in FY2014 (Figure 1). The allocation of spending amongst electronic, print and cd/dvd materials, is shown in Figure 9 for the continuous reporting libraries (N=178).

Note:
- mean Electronic Materials Expenditures per capita rose $0.13 (13 cents) per capita;
- mean Print Materials Expenditures per capita rose by $0.03 (3 cents) per capita;
- mean CD/DVD Materials Expenditures per capita rose by $0.02 (2 cents) per capita.
- mean Other Materials Expenditures per capita were reduced by $0.11 (11 cents) per capita.

There is an inverse relationship (Figure 10) between mean Materials Expenditures and mean Circulation per capita; as materials expenditure per capita increases, circulation per capita declines.

As Figure 10 shows, while mean materials expenditures per capita varied, there was an overall average increase over the past five years (+0.8%/year) for the continuous reporting libraries, the mean circulation per capita has been steadily declining (~2.0%/year) and is declining at a faster rate (~3.05%/year) in the past 3 years (FY2012-14).
There appears to be a relationship between decreased mean Expenditures on Print Materials and mean Print Circulation per capita. As depicted in Figure 11, print materials expenditures and print circulation continue to show a close relationship as depicted by the linear trend lines. Although mean Print Materials Expenditure increased in FY2014 (0.8%), print circulation continued to decline and more this past year (-3.99% FY2013; -4.85% FY2014).

In contrast, Figure 12 shows mean Expenditures Electronic Materials per capita rising an average of 13.7% per year since FY2011. These expenditures grew by 8.0% last year (FY2014) compared to over 16% in each of the previous two years (FY2012-13). Meanwhile, e-book circulation has been climbing an average of 55.5% per year (since FY2011) but growth slowed to 34.3% between FY2013-14.

Mean Electronic Circulation per capita (0.94) has begun replacing decreases in mean Print Circulation (0.75) since FY2011, but not sufficient to replace the decline in mean Print Circulation (1.25) and mean CD/DVD circulation per capita (0.55) since FY2010.

Table 2 shows the 5 year trend for mean Circulation per capita by population grouping for the continuous reporting libraries (N=211). Over the past 5 years (FY2010-14) decreases in mean Circulation per capita have been 4 times greater for the smaller (<100,000 PopN served) and larger library systems (>500,000 PopN served) compared to the medium sized Libraries (100,000 to 499,000). In FY2014, the medium libraries showed small growth (0.1%) in circulation per capita.

Table: Trend (5 Year) Mean Circulation Per Capita by population grouping – Continuous reporting libraries (N=211)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mean Circulation Per Capita</th>
<th>FY2010</th>
<th>% Difference</th>
<th>FY2011</th>
<th>% Difference</th>
<th>FY2012</th>
<th>% Difference</th>
<th>FY2013</th>
<th>% Difference</th>
<th>FY2014</th>
<th>5 Year Growth Rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&lt; 100,000</td>
<td>16.01</td>
<td>-1.0%</td>
<td>15.85</td>
<td>-2.2%</td>
<td>15.51</td>
<td>-3.1%</td>
<td>15.03</td>
<td>-4.1%</td>
<td>14.42</td>
<td>-2.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100,000 - 499,999</td>
<td>11.18</td>
<td>-0.8%</td>
<td>11.11</td>
<td>-1.0%</td>
<td>10.99</td>
<td>-0.9%</td>
<td>10.89</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
<td>10.9</td>
<td>-0.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>500,000 or more</td>
<td>10.62</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>10.62</td>
<td>-0.5%</td>
<td>10.57</td>
<td>-4.6%</td>
<td>10.08</td>
<td>-4.8%</td>
<td>9.6</td>
<td>-2.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All Libraries</td>
<td>12.53</td>
<td>-0.7%</td>
<td>12.45</td>
<td>-1.4%</td>
<td>12.28</td>
<td>-2.6%</td>
<td>11.96</td>
<td>-2.4%</td>
<td>11.67</td>
<td>-1.8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Population growth has been stable overall in the past 5 years with Larger libraries experiencing the most growth at 0.53% per year (Figure 17.)
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Table 3 shows the mean Holdings per capita by population grouping for the continuous reporting libraries.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Population Grouping</th>
<th>Mean Holdings Per Capita</th>
<th>% Difference</th>
<th>FY2011</th>
<th>% Difference</th>
<th>FY2012</th>
<th>% Difference</th>
<th>FY2013</th>
<th>% Difference</th>
<th>FY2014</th>
<th>5YR Growth Rate</th>
<th>N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&lt;100,000</td>
<td>5.17</td>
<td>1.0%</td>
<td>5.22</td>
<td>3.6%</td>
<td>5.41</td>
<td>3.7%</td>
<td>5.61</td>
<td>5.3%</td>
<td>5.91</td>
<td>3.4%</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100,000 - 499,999</td>
<td>3.23</td>
<td>0.2%</td>
<td>3.24</td>
<td>-1.4%</td>
<td>3.19</td>
<td>-0.1%</td>
<td>3.19</td>
<td>-0.6%</td>
<td>3.17</td>
<td>-0.5%</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>500,000 or more</td>
<td>2.71</td>
<td>3.0%</td>
<td>2.79</td>
<td>0.2%</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>-3.0%</td>
<td>2.71</td>
<td>-1.3%</td>
<td>2.68</td>
<td>-0.3%</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All Libraries</td>
<td>3.71</td>
<td>0.7%</td>
<td>3.73</td>
<td>3.2%</td>
<td>3.85</td>
<td>1.8%</td>
<td>3.92</td>
<td>-0.6%</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>1.3%</td>
<td>214</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Small libraries (<100,000 served) increased their holdings per capita by 5.3% in the past year, a continuing trend, which translates to an average annual growth of 3.4%. Population growth has been relatively stable with a small annual increase in the past 5 years (0.16%) Figure 17.

Larger libraries (>500,000 served) have decreased holdings per capita over the past 5 years (FY2010-14) at a rate of 0.3% per year. Since FY2011 growth of holdings slowed and began to contract slowly in subsequent years, the result of higher population growth for the Libraries versus the increase of holdings (Figure 17).

Medium libraries (100,000-499,999 served) have reduced holdings per capita in the past 4 years (FY2011-14) versus a 0.2% increase between FY2010-11. Since 2011, holdings per capita are slowly declining during a period stable average populations for these libraries (Figure 17).

Collection Turnover per capita by population grouping for the continuous reporting libraries (Figure 13) show an overall downward trend; declining collection turnover per capita for all continuous reporting libraries.

Virtual Access

As libraries have diversified their service offerings to include online services and materials readily available for download and use, anywhere, anytime, this has not translated in increases in website visits ... in fact, accesses/capita to the website are declining. Figure 14 shows the declining trend for Website Visits per capita for the continuous reporting libraries. [Note: Data for 2010 website visits was not captured]
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Since 2009 Website visits per capita have fallen 19.1 percent per year and between FY2013-14 the rate of decline was almost twice that (-36.6%).

These declining website visit counts may be due to patrons using other points of entry to library e-materials, such as using native apps. Native apps do not require the user to use the library website to access the information and services of the Library. The PLDS annual survey does not capture usage information regarding native apps nor direct access to eServices such as Hoopla, Boopsie, Overdrive, etc.

Pew Research (Table 4) shows that the use of the library website or app has generally declined for most purposes other than “Read book reviews or get book recommendations” (+3% Change 2012-15) and “Borrow or download an e-book” (+5% Change 2012-15).

Similar to declining visits per capita to the library, declining website visits per capita show users are changing their demand for library services and the manner they access these services physically and virtually.

Table 4: Pew Research, People use Library Websites for a Variety of Purposes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>People use Library Websites for a Variety of Purposes</th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>2015</th>
<th>Change 2012-15</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Search the library catalog for print books, audiobooks, ebooks, CDs or DVDs</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>-16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reserve or place holds on print books, audiobooks, ebooks, CDs or DVDs</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>-7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Renew a book, DVD or CD</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>-4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conduct research or get homework help</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>-2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use an online database</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>-12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Read book reviews or get book recommendations</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>+3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Borrow or download an e-book</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>+5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Check for or pay overdue fines</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>-4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Pew Research Center survey March 17-April 12, 2015. N=454 Americans ages 16 and older
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Technology

Fewer continuous reporting libraries (N≤203, FY2014) responded to the PLDS technology questions in FY2014. This decrease in number of respondents may have strengthened the percentage of affirmations compared to previous years (fewer respondents, with a greater portion of “yes” responses).

The most significant change (Figure 15) is the number of Libraries (N=60) affirming that they circulate tablets compared to last year (N=40); 50% more chose “yes” in FY2014.

The number of Libraries confirming they circulate e-book readers (N=63), Figure 15, was four fewer than the previous year, but compared to those that responded “No”, the percentage of “Yes” responses was higher in FY2014 (+1% versus FY2013).

Figure 15: 3YR Trend Affirmative Response Rate, “Does your library circulate any of the following electronic equipment as part of the library collections?” – Continuous reporting libraries (N≤203)

Among the continuous reporting libraries (N≤203) There were no significant changes notable in Figure 16 in response to the question “Which of the following content does your library web site provide?”. Differences in percentages are the results of changes in number of respondents for each question part. For example, Virtual reference services and Community links had fewer responses, but the proportion of “Yes” responses increased in FY2014.
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Population
In the analysis, the population of legal service area is an important component to understanding changes on a per capita basis. Among the continuous reporting libraries (N=216), the larger libraries (N=57) serving population of 500,000 or greater have experienced growth in mean population of legal service area (0.82%) in FY2014 and account for most of the overall population growth (0.86%) among all continuous reporting libraries (N=216). Small Libraries serving populations less than 100,000 have experienced 0.18% increase in mean PopLSA in FY2014. Medium sized libraries serving population of 100,000 to 499,999 have experienced a -0.28% decrease in mean PopLSA in FY2014.
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PLDS Survey Summary FY2014

Overall fewer libraries reported all of the measures listed in Table 5, other than population served.

For the following measures, each produced higher totals in FY2014 despite fewer reporting libraries and as a result averages were higher for each of: Registrations, Holdings, Electronic circulation, Other circulation, Reference transactions, Library Visits, Program attendance, Number of programs, Interlibrary loan to and from.

The following measures produced lower overall totals in FY2014, although the averages were higher for those that reported their results for: Circulation (print and cd/dvd), Renewals, and In-library use of materials.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure</th>
<th>Number of Reporting Libraries</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Minimum</th>
<th>Maximum</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Median</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Population of legal service area</td>
<td>1,884</td>
<td>192,441,984</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>3,904,657</td>
<td>102,145</td>
<td>18,462</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Registrations</td>
<td>1,653</td>
<td>98,635,223</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>2,949,870</td>
<td>59,670</td>
<td>11,577</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holdings</td>
<td>1,467</td>
<td>500,917,316</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>15,890,923</td>
<td>341,923</td>
<td>112,783</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total annual circulation</td>
<td>1,688</td>
<td>1,510,603,991</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>32,034,795</td>
<td>894,908</td>
<td>161,420</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Print circulation</td>
<td>1,259</td>
<td>828,095,401</td>
<td>264</td>
<td>17,143,912</td>
<td>658,263</td>
<td>137,096</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CD/DVD circulation</td>
<td>888</td>
<td>388,862,481</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>10,649,441</td>
<td>438,402</td>
<td>86,539</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other circulation</td>
<td>906</td>
<td>109,151,784</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7,096,325</td>
<td>120,610</td>
<td>11,650</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electronic circulation</td>
<td>1,288</td>
<td>122,991,700</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7,207,689</td>
<td>95,565</td>
<td>9,735</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annual renewals</td>
<td>489</td>
<td>289,393,753</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>9,512,091</td>
<td>597,921</td>
<td>140,369</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In-library use of materials</td>
<td>369</td>
<td>90,820,897</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6,631,255</td>
<td>250,886</td>
<td>31,938</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reference transactions</td>
<td>1,604</td>
<td>179,692,900</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>8,461,970</td>
<td>112,098</td>
<td>14,213</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library visits</td>
<td>1,661</td>
<td>844,832,555</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>18,335,910</td>
<td>508,629</td>
<td>116,972</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Programs attendance</td>
<td>1,653</td>
<td>57,874,994</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1,209,148</td>
<td>35,033</td>
<td>9,053</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of programs</td>
<td>1,641</td>
<td>2,426,852</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>65,842</td>
<td>1,479</td>
<td>438</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interlibrary loan to other libraries</td>
<td>1,536</td>
<td>26,453,641</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>935,317</td>
<td>17,222</td>
<td>3,675</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interlibrary loan from other libraries</td>
<td>1,630</td>
<td>26,707,093</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>963,278</td>
<td>16,385</td>
<td>3,050</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The 2015 PLDS: Characteristics and Trends

Appendix

Declines in mean print circulation per capita (Figure 11) interestingly follow a similar pattern as the Unit Sales of Print Books in the US market which declined approximately 7.49%/year since 2009. See Figure 18 (red circle added for emphasis).

Over the past 4 years (2010-13) the rate of decline in Unit Sales of Print Books has slowed to approximately 7.09%/year while for the continuous reporting libraries mean print book circulation per capita declined 4.0%/year. Publisher’s Weekly in January 2015 reported that Total Unit Sales of Print Books grew by 2.4% in 2014. Unit Sales of Print Books (in thousands), 2013–2014:\(^1\): (2013 620,044 vs. 2014 635,093). Meanwhile in FY2014 the continuous reporting libraries increased expenditures on Print Materials by 0.8% (Figure 11). Coincidentally, there have been several reports in 2015 suggesting that Print Books sales are experiencing further increases as more consumers choose to purchase Print books over the electronic books as a result of publishers increasing the price of their electronic materials, eroding the price differential for the print version, suggesting possibly that consumers prefer the share-ability of print books versus their electronic counterparts.

Figure 18. US Print Book Market: Long Term Trends (source: Nielson BooksScan 2004-2013)
