

Assessment: Sharon Public Library (MA)

Learning and Understanding Users and Context

16 July 2020

Betty Deemer

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Website Redesign — Sharon Public Library

11 North Main Street | Sharon, MA 02067

Project Stakeholders:	Director, Sharon Public Library
Moderator:	Betty Deemer
Interview Dates:	7–9 July 2020 via telephone / email <i>(Recorded Librarian Interviews)</i>
Phase 2 Dates:	2–15 July 2020 <i>(Draft and Final Deliverable Phase 2 Research)</i>

Background | Introduction

Sharon Public Library (SPL) has tasked our firm to:

- **Redesign their website** from the ground up with
- Emphasis on **easy access to information**, i.e., to organize the site better.
- SPL staff needs to be able to update, and work with current vendor—Piper Mountain.ⁱ

Goals:

Primary: The goal of this site redesign and the reorganization of information is to allow patrons **to quickly and easily find the exact information / items for which they are searching.**

Secondary: The SPL site is template-driven with the goal of **easy updatability by library staff**—and having the content of the site easily maintained by library staff.

Constraints:

- SPL will continue to use librarywebsites.com as their host provider, and
- Modifications to the site will be orchestrated with developers at librarywebsites.com as necessary.

Phase 2: Order of Activitiesⁱⁱ

Weeks 2 – 3: (2–15 July 2020)

During Phase 2, we completed the following activities:

- Field Research—interviewed several librarians for their opinions on patron usage of their websites.
- Literature Research—what / how other libraries have constructed their sites to serve library patrons.
- Draft Research Deliverables—draft of above research which includes: findings; developed persona(s), i.e., what a “typical” user-type is for various patrons; tasks the site should support.
- Final Research Deliverable—this document.

Client Approval:

- Upon your review and approval of this document, we will proceed to Phase 3.

ⁱ Piper Mountain Webs, <http://www.librarywebsites.com/learnmore>, (2020)

ⁱⁱ See “Project Plan: Schedule (Order) of Activities” on page 15.

Phase 2 — Field Research and Assessment

Methods | Protocols | Findings | Recommendations

During Phase 2, we completed:

- Research Protocol
- Field Research
- Literature Research

Methods: Scope and Key Resources

The following outlines our methods for conducting research:

- **Libraries and Persons interviewedⁱ** were chosen based on their:
 - ~ Similarity to SPL in size and missionⁱⁱ, and an
 - ~ Opportunity to learn best practices from larger librariesⁱⁱⁱ.
- **Archival Literature Resources** were chosen based on their:
 - ~ Veracity, reputation, and design insights.

After our initial assessment of the SPL site, we performed the following:

- **Field Research** by:
 - ~ Developing a Research Protocol, i.e., Moderator's Guide (*interview questions*)^{iv}
 - ~ Interviewed several Librarians from different types of libraries:
 - **Cuyahoga County Public Library: Parma Branch** (*research librarian*)—1
 - **Columbia University Libraries** (*head of developer group*)—2
 - **Library of Congress** (*research librarian*)—3
 - **Akron / Summit County: Portage Lakes Branch** (*librarian*)—4
 - **Mentor Public Library: Main Branch** (*research librarian, responsible for their website*)—5
- Conducted a **Literature Research** by:
 - ~ Reviewing archival resources^v that added to our data analysis and helped us to construct "**Personas**" (typical users-types of patrons) which:
 - Define what different patrons want to accomplish when they visit a library's site.
 - Capture what library staff need to accomplish as they use the site on a daily basis.
 - Researched demographics to assist in task analysis and persona development.

ⁱ Our original proposal included two librarians; however, we are pleased to report that more responded to our requests for interviews and those findings are included in our research.

ⁱⁱ Libraries 1, 4, 5: Parma, Portage Lakes, Mentor.

ⁱⁱⁱ Libraries 2, 3: Columbia, LoC.

^{iv} See "Moderator's Guide for Librarian Interviews" on page 3.

^v See "Literature Research (Sites and Notes)" on page 30.

Research and Assessment: Sharon Public Library (MA)**16 July 2020****Research Protocol**

The following Moderator's Guide was developed as a script for phone interviews and was also converted to a Word doc for time consideration of one interview. The questions garnered thoughtful responses and insights. For complete script of the interviews see: "Librarian Questions and Transcripts" on page 18.

Moderator's Guide for Librarian Interviews	
Intro Informed Consent Agreement	2–5 minutes 0:00 – 0:05 Notes
Introductory Text Used for Interviews: <i>(Introduce myself and explain what the project is about...)</i>	
<p>Hello, my name is Betty Deemer.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> I am a Masters student at Kent State University (Kent, Ohio) in the User Experience Design program. I am looking to interview a research librarian for one of my studies. Specifically, I'm looking to speak with research librarians to obtain their opinions and insights regarding patron usage of a library's website—because of your direct contact with the public. Do you have 10 minutes to help me in my research? 	
VERBAL INFORMED CONSENT TEXT	
Do you mind if I record your comments, just to help me take accurate notes?..... <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	
PRESS RECORD NOW	
Background Questions:	3–5 minutes 0:05 – 0:10
1) May I have your name?	1)
2) What is your position? (Title?)	2)
3) How long have you been with the library?	3)
4) How long have you been in your field?	4)
5) What is your role regarding the website? i.e., do you give input or feedback regarding patron usage?	5)
Library Website Usage by Patrons:	5–10 minutes 0:10 – 0:20
6) What do you think is the main purpose of the website?	6)
7) What would you say is the library's mission?	7)
8) How does the library's website support the function of the physical library?	8)
9) Why do you think library patrons USE the website?	9)
10) And why do they NOT USE the website?	10)
11) What do you think are the top 3 uses of the website by library patrons?	11)

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12) Is there a function that the library's website does not currently have that you would like to add? Or think it should have?	12)
13) Of current library patrons, who do you think uses the library website the most—however you want to break down that question into categories...	13)
14) Of current library patrons who have a card and frequently use the library, who do you think uses the website the least?	14)
Wrap-up and thanks	3–5 minutes 0:25 – 0:30
15) Do you have any questions / thoughts on what we've talked about? Or recommendations for further research?	15)
Thank you so much for sharing your time! It is much appreciated!	

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The following demographic and budget research helped us to define the patrons of SPL and develop their user personas.

Demographics: As of 2020ⁱⁱ, Sharon, MA has:

Population:	5,658 (4,042 adults; 1,616 children)
Average Household Income:	\$162,214
Median House Value:	\$462,800
Average Rental Costs:	\$1,375 per month
Median Age:	41 (female) 39.9 (male)
Racial Composition:	87% White (4,935) 9% Asian (510) 1.31% Two or more races (74) 1.24% Hispanic or Latino (70) 1% Black/African American (58) .14% Native American (8).
Home Ownership:	89.6% own their homes ; 97.9% of which are married
Education Attained:	72.95% have either a Bachelors (31.60%) or a Graduate (41.35%) Degree Some college (10.63%) HS Graduate (7.96%) 9th – 12th (.47%)
Languages:	71.1% English 20.% Indo-European 6.6.% Asian/Pacific Island 2.3% Spanish/Other
Poverty:	Race most likely to be in poverty is White with 2.4% below poverty level
Place of Birth Citizens:	80.35% U.S. (47.75 in MA) 19.65% are immigrants from Europe (61.5%); Asia (30.4%); Africa, Oceania, and Latin America combined (8.1%)
Non Citizens:	5.23% (44.6% Asia; 36.5% Europe; 16.9% North America)
SPL Operating Income:	\$802,322 ⁱⁱⁱ — (74,076 books; 4,417 audio materials; 3,586 video materials; 4 local licensed databases; 34 state licensed databases; 1 other licensed databases; 172 print serial subscriptions)
Library Classification:	Sharon Public Library is classified as a “Small Library ^{iv} ” with the sub- classification of “2.5k – 10K” population served.
Median Revenue:	\$511,204 for Small Libraries
Colleges ^v within 10 miles:	FINE Mortuary College LLC (Norwood); Stonehill College (Easton); Boston College (Boston); Curry College (Milton)—all private institutions

ⁱ See “Literature Research (Sites and Notes)” on page 30.

ⁱⁱ World Population Review, <https://worldpopulationreview.com/us-cities/sharon-ma-population>, 2020

ⁱⁱⁱ City-Data.com, <http://www.city-data.com/city/Sharon-Massachusetts.html>, 2020

^{iv} Institute of Museum and Library Services, https://www.ims.gov/assets/1/AssetManager/Brief2013_05.pdf, (Sept. 2013)

^v CollegesSimply (College Search Engine), <https://www.collegesimply.com/colleges-near/massachusetts/sharon/>, (2020)

Research and Assessment: Sharon Public Library (MA)**16 July 2020****Literature Sources**

The following sites* were accessed for research used in this project:

- **Pew Research**—*What do people do at libraries and library websites?*
Sept 15, 2015: <https://www.pewresearch.org/internet/2015/09/15/libraries-at-the-crossroads/>
- **School Library Journal**—*Take Charge To Maximize Your Library's Online Presence*
2016 — <https://www.slj.com/?detailStory=take-charge-to-maximize-your-librarys-online-presence>
- **Piola**—*The 25 Best Library Websites for 2019*
<https://meetpiola.com/the-25-best-library-websites-for-2019/>
- **InfoSpace**—*The Official Blog of the Syracuse University iSchool—What Makes a Good Library Website?*
2019—<https://ischool.syr.edu/infospace/2019/05/20/what-makes-a-good-library-website/>
- **EBSCOpost**—*7 Best Practices for Creating a User Friendly Library Website*
2015— <https://www.ebsco.com/blog/article/7-best-practices-for-creating-a-user-friendly-library-website>
- **IvyGroup**—*What Should You Require From Your Library's Website?*
2014— <https://ivygroup.com/blog/what-should-you-require-from-your-librarys-website/>
- **Public Libraries Online**—*Customers or Patrons? How You Look at Your Library's Users Affects Customer Service*
<http://publiclibrariesonline.org/2015/03/customers-or-patrons-how-you-look-at-your-librarys-users-affects-customer-service/>
- **Information Research**—*Public library Websites as electronic branches: a multi-country quantitative evaluation*
<http://informationr.net/ir/23-1/paper786.html>
- **IMIS.Gov**—(Institute of Museum and Library Services)—*Opportunity for All: How the American Public Benefits from Internet Access at U.S. Libraries* <https://www.ims.gov/assets/1/AssetManager/OpportunityForAll.pdf>
- **IMIS.Gov**—(Institute of Museum and Library Services)—*The State of Small and Rural Libraries in the United States* https://www.ims.gov/assets/1/AssetManager/Brief2013_05.pdf
- **CollegesSimply**—*A College Search Engine*
<https://www.collegesimply.com/colleges-near/massachusetts/sharon/>
- **City-Data.com**—*A City Database*
<http://www.city-data.com/city/Sharon-Massachusetts.html>
- **World Population Review**—*A City Database*
<https://worldpopulationreview.com/us-cities/sharon-ma-population>
- **Libraries Are Essential**—*There Are Many Reasons Why Libraries Are Essential*
<https://www.librariesareessential.com/why-are-libraries-essential/>

***Site notes** can be found in “Addendum — Original Documents and Research” on page 16.
(Site notes start on page 30.)

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What We Learned

Typical Users:


After interviewing librarians and doing our literature research, we found that users had common tasks, goals and assumptions that patrons wanted to accomplish when visiting the site:

- Find hours, locations, and times open quickly.
- Be able to easily browse the catalog and put items on hold or download them quickly.
- Look for ways to engage in the community through programs held through the library.
- Engage in lifelong learning.

Personas (Typical Users of Sharon Public Library)

Based on our research, we developed several "Primary" and "Secondary" typical users, or "Personas". For example, Susan (below) is a "Working Mom" who has a job, children, a husband, and juggles a lot of priorities. She also enjoys the local "Crafternoon", which is a staple at the library once a month and offers the opportunity to read a book and discuss the book while creating a craft. This is a relaxing time for Susan and allows her to meet new people, relax on her lunch hour, and be with adults in a friendly environment without her kids

This persona exemplifies many of the women who visit Sharon Public Library and so we have made "Susan" a "Primary" persona patron. The remaining Primary and Secondary personas immediately follow below.



Susan

primary

*"There doesn't seem to be enough time in the day!
I'm grateful for all the programs our library offers our family."*

Age **49**

Job **OFFICE MANAGER**

Status **MARRIED**
2 CHILDREN

Motivation

My family is the most important thing in my life. Career and work are a distant second.

Bio

Susan is working as an office manager while she finishes her second college degree. She and her husband are juggling jobs, family, and social life. She looks to the library as an extension of her social circle and to help with her children. They visit on a weekly basis. She loves the weekly "Crafternoon" maker meetings where she can connect with women of all ages from town.

Tasks

- Help with homework and programs for children
- Connect with other women in town with similar interests
- Civic involvement

Frustrations

- Not finding information efficiently

Working Mom

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Henry

primary

"I'm not sure I'm doing this right... but I'm doing my best!"

Age **54**
 Job **SENIOR EXECUTIVE**
 Status **DIVORCED**
1 CHILD

Motivation

Getting the family thing right and making sure I help launch my son into adulthood.

Bio

Henry is a divorced dad who is now trying to raise his son alone. He is grateful that the library offers after school programs so that his son can socially engage with people his own age and with the same interests. He also finds the time at the library where he can find a quiet moment to himself while his son is engaged with his robotics club.

Tasks

- Making sure homework is done on time and correctly
- Easy to use cookbooks
- Robotics club for son

Frustrations

- Just "one more thing" I have to do!

Working Dad



Lisa

primary

*"All our kids are bundles of energy!
 We're having a crazy good time watching everyone grow!"*

Age **32**
 Job **FULLTIME MOM**
 Status **MARRIED**
3 CHILDREN

Motivation

Juggling all the responsibilities of our family and home, and helping the raise my beautiful kids.

Bio

Lisa is a computer technician who has decided to stay home and raise her children fulltime until they are well into high school, or maybe longer. She loves their crazy schedules and has a bundle of energy, which is good, because so do they! She enjoys reading and wants to instill her love of reading into her kids. The whole family loves to make a trip to the library.

Tasks

- Keeping current with technology
- Knowing what books the kids are reading; what's popular or not

Frustrations

- It shouldn't be "hard" to find information... she believes in form following function.

Stay-at-Home Mom

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Cindy

primary

*"It's an exciting time to be working at our library!
All of the new technology that is now available to us!"*

Age **47**
Job **HEAD LIBRARIAN**
Status **MARRIED**
2 CHILDREN

Motivation

Making sure her library is the still the best and that they keep current with other libraries in the state.

Bio

Cindy came to the library fresh out of college. She worked her for 12 years before being promoted and it is now her responsibility to manage the library and its website! It's a big job, but she's more than capable of handling it with the right tools and design partners.

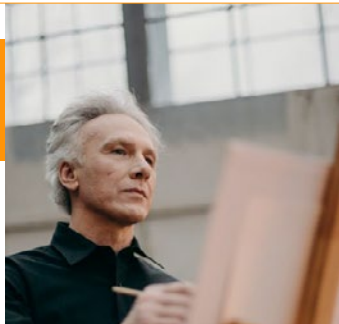
Tasks

- Keep the website up-to-date with current information
- Continually make improvements to the site
- Manage the library

Frustrations

- Tools that don't work or are hard to use and frustrate library patrons

Staff Librarian



Frank

secondary

*"It's time to relax and enjoy!
Make new friends... Try new things... Take a breath!"*

Age **68**
Job **FORMER CEO**
Status **MARRIED**
4 GRANDKIDS

Motivation

To enjoy retirement and their new town. Become involved in the town life and try new things.

Bio

Frank just retired from a very hard driving, time consuming position with a large company in nearby Boston. He's ready to just relax in the small town of Sharon, MA where he and his wife have moved upon retirement. The local library offers a place to read and connect with people. It's a way to get involved in the town.

Tasks

- Relax and try new things
- Read the books he never had time for while working
- Meet new people and socialize
- Become involved civically

Frustrations

- It's hard to relax after having a self-driven career for many years in a high-performance job. And, it's hard to not point out how things could be made "better".

Retired



Georgia

secondary

"I need to get a job! I'm running through my savings and I am too young to retire!"

Age **58**
Job **UNEMPLOYED**
Status **SINGLE**
NO CHILDREN

Motivation

To find a job before unemployment and savings run out and things get financially desperate.

Bio

After working 28 years in the Marketing Department for a local manufacturing company, Georgia now finds herself unemployed after a company restructure which released several middle managers like herself. So, she now finds herself on unemployment and scrambling for another position. She enjoys meeting women at the library for the weekly "Crafternoons" where she can relax a little with new and old friends.

Tasks

- Look for jobs
- Update computer skills

Frustrations

- Keeping focused and upbeat while looking and securing a position at my age is not something I ever dreamed I would be doing. I thought I would retire from that company!

Looking for a Job



Michelle

secondary

*"I am so excited to be in this country!
When I applied for my dream job, I didn't think it would come to me!"*

Age **31**
Job **PROGRAMMER**
Status **SINGLE**
NO CHILDREN

Motivation

To learn English better. There are little things in the language that I think I should understand, but they puzzle me. I need to speak it better.

Bio

Michelle applied for a programmer's position with a company in Boston who does a lot of work in the Eastern European country from which she comes. That she knows a great deal of English along with being a native of the country was a key element in the decision to hire her. She is making a lot of progress in her job, but there are little English phrases that puzzle her.

Tasks

- To learn English better
- And, to make new friends at the library in my English as a second language class

Frustrations

- Not getting the "joke" when other people are laughing. I want to make new American friends so that I understand this better.

New to Town

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Alex

secondary

"I've worked in manufacturing all my life... and the computers on the machines are getting more sophisticated!"

Age **48**
Job **LINE TECHNICIAN**
Status **MARRIED**
2 CHILDREN

Motivation

We didn't have a lot of computers when I was growing up...most of that technology came later... and I want to learn to keep up with my job and friends. And my kids.

Bio

Alex has worked in a manufacturing plant since graduating high school. He is one of a minority of people who does not have a degree because it was not needed in his field. He did go to trade school and apprenticed to his job. But, computers are getting more sophisticated...

Tasks

- To keep up with the new programming languages that run on the machines I am responsible for at my job.

Frustrations

- Every year, there's an upgrade to the programming. Sometimes it makes the machine run better, and sometimes it doesn't!

Computer Challenged



Jai

secondary

"I love Harry Potter and I love that we have the club after school!"

Age **12**
Job **STUDENT**
Status **CHILD**

Motivation

I like meeting my friends after school at the library. My mom is ok with me hanging out there because it's safe and she knows everybody.

Bio

Jai lives with her single mom who doesn't get off work until after 5:00 pm. Jai is enrolled in the after school care program at the library and loves the help she gets with her homework and also that she gets to be with her friends in several clubs.

Tasks

- Do my homework
- Get better at drawing in beginner art class
- Beat my friends at Potter Trivia!

Frustrations

- My mom works a lot! I'm glad I can be at the library until she picks me up. I hate it when she's late.

Middle School



Terri

secondary

"One year before I go to college seems like such a long and short time all at the same time!"

Age **17**
Job **STUDENT**
Status **TEENAGER**

Motivation

My parents have their opinions about which college I should go to, but I want to go to the "right" college for me!

Bio

Terri is on her way to college and she needs lots of help researching which one. College is a huge step and she's going to need some help paying for it, and making sure her grades are up to standards. She also needs to make sure she picks the right one. She's very grateful for the help she's getting from SPL researching colleges because it's a lot less stressful than her parents!

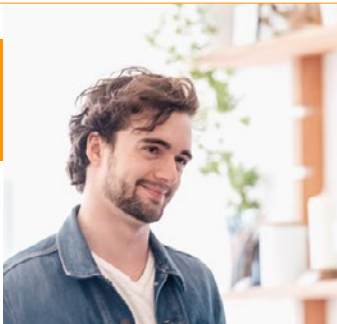
Tasks

- Keep my grades up
- Find the right college
- Look for scholarships

Frustrations

- My parents want to see every college brochure that comes into my hands and keep pressuring me about my choices!

High School



Ben

secondary

"Grad school is consuming my life right now... it's hard to focus on anything but!"

Age **27**
Job **GRAD STUDENT**
Status **SINGLE**

Motivation

I'm almost finished with grad school and working on my research seems to be 24/7!

Bio

Ben is going to a local private college with ties to several major corporations in nearby Boston. He sees a lot of his professors in town and the pressure is always "on" for him to make good grades. He's become best friends with the research librarians and the library is his second home.

Tasks

- Keep projects up-to-date and on time
- Make sure research is the best that it can be
- Enjoy COMIX at the library!

Frustrations

- Lack of time and perfectionistic tendencies!

College

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Task Priority by Persona for SPL's Website:

		PRIMARY				SECONDARY						
Tasks:	Personas:	Susan	Henry	Lisa	Cindy	Frank	Georgia	Michelle	Alex	Jai	Terri	Ben
		Working Mom	Working Dad	Stay-at-Home Mom	Staff Librarian	Retired Executive	Unemployed	English as 2nd Lang	Computer Challenged	Middle School	High School Student	College Student
High Priority												
• Library Hours / Phone #		●	●	●		●	●	●	●	●	●	●
• Find Information		●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
• How Do I...? (<i>Help Page</i>)		●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●		●	●
• Search Catalog		●	●	●		●	●	●	●	●		
• Put Items on Hold		●	●	●		●		●	●	●		
• Access Databases								●			●	●
• Key Digital Collections												●
• Homework Help												
Medium Priority												
• Ask a Librarian (<i>Chat</i>)		●	●	●				●		●	●	●
• Learn to Use Computers						●	●			●	●	
• Life-Long Learning				●		●	●		●			
• Register for Program(s)		●	●	●		●				●		
• Connect with people		●	●	●		●	●	●		●	●	
• Download / Use e-Books			●			●			●	●		
• Digital Publications		●						●			●	●
• Summer Reading				●		●	●					
Lower Priority												
• Reserve Study Space									●		●	●
• Reserve a Room		●			●							

The chart above details which tasks are important to each persona. Tasks were then prioritized based on how many personas valued that task.

Status — Project Plan and Schedule of Activities

Each stage requires client approval before next work commences.

Conclusion | Next Steps

During Phase 2, we conducted and completed our research and created “Personas” for our typical patrons.

In Phase 3, will be perform the following steps:

- Content Analysis—what current site content can be used “as is”; what will need to be “reworked” or “repurposed”; and what needs to be “created”.
- Choose Primary Classification Scheme—how the site will be organized.
- Client Approval of Primary Classification Scheme
- Develop Site Map—how the website will be constructed, i.e., what links to what; category naming; menus.
- Client Approval of the Site Map

Project Plan | Schedule of Activities

The approved “Project Plan: Schedule (Order) of Activities” is on the next page with dates and more specific details of our next stages in your website development.

The section thereafter, “Addendum”, has copies of all the original research and notes.

Approval Needed

Please review this document as soon as possible and indicate your approval by return email so that we can proceed to Phase 3.

Thank you.

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Project Plan: Schedule (Order) of Activities

The following chart is our agreed schedule of activities*. **Shaded boxes are complete.**

Activity:	Week:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Phase 1 (Module 1)								1 July 2020
Proposal Submission and Acceptance		X						
Phase 2 (Module 2)								15 July 2020
Field Research: Interview Librarians (2) re: • Online Patrons and their Usage of the Library Site, (What they want to do and Why)			X					
Literature Research: • Archival Resources of Patron Usage			X					
Internal Draft Research Deliverable that includes: • Scope and Key Resources of Research • Copy of Research Protocol (Questions Asked) • Findings/Conclusions of Research • Persona(s) Developed • List of Tasks Site Should Support (by Task Priority and Persona)			X					
Final Research Deliverable: • See above.				X				
Phase 3 (Module 3)								22 July 2020
Perform a Content Analysis: • Existing Content — What can be used “As Is” or Re-purposed • Existing Content — Needs to be “Reworked” • Missing Content — Needs to be “Created”					X			
Choose Primary Classification Scheme: • Provide a description of the Classification Scheme chosen and why.					X			
Develop the Site Map • Labeling • Taxonomy for Classification Scheme					X			
Phase 4 (Module 4)								29 July 2020
Assess Information Architecture: • Analysis by “Treejack” software which will “Determine Labeling and Taxonomy effectiveness” • Make changes as necessary						X		
Phase 5 (Module 5)								2 August 7 August 12 August 2020
Finalize Information Architecture design: • Wireframes (2 August) • Results of Participant Sessions (7 August)							X	
Finalize and Submit Report (12 August)								X

*Above is our current agreed on schedule and is subject to change based on timely feedback from Sharon Public Library regarding deliverables, i.e., any delay in feedback can impact the timeline resulting in a revised timeline.

Addendum — Original Documents and Research

Library Selections

We interviewed people from these five libraries:

- **Cuyahoga County Public Library: Parma Branch** (*research librarian*)—1
- **Columbia University Libraries** (*head of developer group*)—2
- **Library of Congress** (*research librarian*)—3
- **Akron / Summit County: Portage Lakes Branch** (*librarian*)—4
- **Mentor Public Library: Main Branch** (*research librarian, responsible for their website*)—5

Introductory Text Used for Interviews:

Hello, my name is Betty Deemer.

- I am a Masters student at Kent State University (Kent, Ohio) in the User Experience Design program.
- I am looking to interview a research librarian for one of my studies. Specifically, I'm looking to speak with research librarians to obtain their opinions and insights regarding patron usage of a library's website—because of your direct contact with the public.
- Do you have 10 minutes to help me in my research?

Librarian Interview Data

Participant #:		Gender : <input type="checkbox"/> M <input type="checkbox"/> F	Age: Not collected
Participant Name:			
Date:		Recorded? <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> AUDIO <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER
Library URL:			
About:			

Moderator Template

Library:	
Intro Informed Consent Agreement	2–5 minutes 0:00 – 0:05 Notes
Introductory Text Used for Interviews: (<i>Introduce myself and explain what the project is about...</i>)	
VERBAL INFORMED CONSENT TEXT	
Do you mind if I record your comments, just to help me take accurate notes?..... <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	
PRESS RECORD NOW	

Research and Assessment: Sharon Public Library (MA)**16 July 2020**

Background Questions:	3–5 minutes 0:05 – 0:10
16) May I have your name?	1)
17) What is your position? (Title?)	2)
18) How long have you been with the library?	3)
19) How long have you been in your field?	4)
20) What is your role regarding the website? i.e., do you give input or feedback regarding patron usage?	5)
Library Website Usage by Patrons:	5–10 minutes 0:10 – 0:20
21) What do you think is the main purpose of the website?	6)
22) What would you say is the library's mission?	7)
23) How does the library's website support the function of the physical library?	8)
24) Why do you think library patrons USE the website?	9)
25) And why do they NOT USE the website?	10)
26) What do you think are the top 3 uses of the website by library patrons?	11)
27) Is there a function that the library's website does not currently have that you would like to add? Or think it should have?	12)
28) Of current library patrons, who do you think uses the library website the most—however you want to break down that question into categories...	13)
29) Of current library patrons who have a card and frequently use the library, who do you think uses the website the least?	14)
Wrap-up and thanks	3–5 minutes 0:25 – 0:30
30) Do you have any questions/thoughts on what we've talked about? Or recommendations for further research?	15)
Thank you so much for sharing your time! It is much appreciated!	

*Following are transcripts of the interviews conducted for this research and which were instrumental in developing the user Personas discussed earlier in this document.

Research Protocol: Sharon Public Library (MA)**16 July 2020****Librarian Questions and Transcripts****Library #1: Cuyahoga County Public Library – Parma Branch**

Participant #:	#1	Gender : <input type="checkbox"/> M <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> F	Age: Not collected
Participant Name:	Jen		
Date:	8 Jul 2020	Recorded? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> AUDIO <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER
Library URL:	www.cuyahogalibrary.org		
About:	...We are committed to our mission of being at the center of community life by creating an environment where reading, lifelong learning and civic engagement thrive.		

Intro Informed Consent Agreement	2–5 minutes 0:00 – 0:05 Notes
Introductory Text Used for Interviews: <i>(Introduce myself and explain what the project is about...)</i>	
VERBAL INFORMED CONSENT TEXT	
Do you mind if I record your comments, just to help me take accurate notes?..... <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	
PRESS RECORD NOW	
Background Questions:	3–5 minutes 0:05 – 0:10
1) May I have your name?	1) Jen
2) What is your position? (Title?)	2) Branch Services Librarian 2, which means I supervise the Adult Services in the Department.
3) How long have you been with the library?	3) 6 years. Had whole different career before.
4) How long have you been in your field?	4) 7 years.
5) What is your role regarding the website? i.e., do you give input or feedback regarding patron usage?	5) We direct customers to it. [I] have nothing to do with creating the website.
[Moderator Follow-Up Question: Do you give input into, or insights as to how it is used by patrons; or do patrons tell you about the website?]	Yes. And, I do pass feedback along. Being a big library system, we have a Marketing and Communications Team, but they are open to feedback.
Library Website Usage by Patrons:	5–10 minutes 0:10 – 0:20
6) What do you think is the main purpose of the website?	6) To connect and to educate about what the library has to offer. Kind of expands it's four walls.
7) What would you say is the library's mission?	7) Our mission is 3-fold: It is to reconnect with reading; the second mission is to encourage
	life-long learning; and the third mission is to encourage civic engagement.
8) How does the library's website support the function of the physical library?	8)

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9) Why do you think library patrons USE the website?	9) They use it because they have a need to find some information and I can only talk to them for so long, about all the things we have to offer. So, it's typically need-based. They need to know if there's Summer reading, so they'll look on the website. Or they need to know what the hours are. Or, they need to know what databases they can access from home. So, kind of a broad answer.
10) And why do they NOT USE the website?	10) I think it's twofold: Some people prefer in-person contact, whether it's over the phone, or in-person at the library; and sometimes I think it's the digital divide which is very real, and not everyone is comfortable navigating to find what they need. Sometimes, it's just easier to ask a live person.
11) What do you think are the top 3 uses of the website by library patrons?	11) Without looking at stats, which I don't have access to, a lot of it is putting items on hold either books or movies; a lot of people use it to find out what particular programs are happening and register—obviously we suspended because of Covid—but a lot of people register for computer classes or camps for their kids, or maker programs, cooking programs via the website, and then the 3rd... One of the things we do at the reference desk is to recommend databases to people to help them navigate whatever it is they're looking for... whether it's Consumer Reports Online if they're looking for a new fridge. One of my colleagues is a genealogy guru and she helps them with Ancestry. Sometimes it's kids that need help with homework, so biography and context. So, a lot of it is help with learning.
12) Is there a function that the library's website does not currently have that you would like to add? Or think it should have?	12) At this point, I don't think so... I think when, and I'm sure you've looked at our website, there are tiles on front page that scroll, that kind of highlight things that are new, and really easy to connect to the collection. I don't think I would add anything. At this point, I mean sort of like laundry and grocery shopping, no.
13) Of current library patrons, who do you think uses the library website the most—however you want to break down that question into categories...	13) In my opinion, I think parents use it the most; and if there's like a close second, I would say older... like seniors, because they put a lot of books on hold to be picked up and register for classes during the day when other people might be at work and not be able to get to register.
14) Of current library patrons who have a card and frequently use the library, who do you think uses the website the least?	14) I would think those people who have... who need help with information in digital literacy. The ones who are taking our computer classes, the ones who we help on the public computers. You know that the internet is something new, even though it's been around awhile, they're not quite comfortable. And, it's all ages. I mean sometimes it's older people who have had to retire, and sometimes it's young people who didn't have a computer growing up.
Wrap-up and thanks	3–5 minutes 0:25 – 0:30
15) Do you have any questions/thoughts on what we've talked about? Or recommendations for further research?	15) No... I don't think so. I think the questions were very thoughtful. I also teach graduate school for San Jose State, for their iSchool, and I teach a Web 2.0 and Social Media class. One of the things about our website that bothers me is that you have to scroll down to connect to the Social Media. So, if you think about the old-fashion newspaper—above the fold/below the fold analogy—if you want people to connect with you, you make it easy for them to do, and easy for them to see, and if you scroll down on our website, it says "Connect With Us". Lot's of great ways. Obviously Facebook, Twitter, that stuff. I wish it were further up on the website so people could see how easy it is to connect.
Thank you so much for sharing your time! It is much appreciated!	

Research Protocol: Sharon Public Library (MA)**16 July 2020****Library #2: Columbia University Libraries – Butler Library**

Participant #:	2	Gender : <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> M <input type="checkbox"/> F	Age: Not collected
Participant Name:	Benjamin Armintor		
Date:	Email Rec: 8 Jul 2020	Recorded? <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> AUDIO <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OTHER
Library URL:	https://library.columbia.edu/about/staff.html		
About:	The largest of Columbia University's Libraries, Butler houses the University's collections in the humanities, with particular strengths in history, literature, philosophy and religion.		

Intro Informed Consent Agreement	2–5 minutes 0:00 – 0:05 Notes
Introductory Text Used for Interviews: <i>(Introduce myself and explain what the project is about...)</i>	
VERBAL INFORMED CONSENT TEXT	
<i>[Moderator Note: This form was returned via email in a Word doc and contents copied/pasted into this report.]</i>	
PRESS RECORD NOW	
Background Questions:	3–5 minutes 0:05 – 0:10
1) May I have your name?	1) Benjamin Armintor
2) What is your position? (Title?)	2) Head of a developer group in Columbia Libraries
3) How long have you been with the library?	3) Approximately 14 years
4) How long have you been in your field?	4) Approximately 21 years
5) What is your role regarding the website? i.e., do you give input or feedback regarding patron usage?	5) Digital Collections site: Yes, though stats are usually handled in another group.
Archival Description/Discovery/Site: Sometimes Catalog: Only as a reader/patron. Library Website: Sometimes	
Library Website Usage by Patrons:	5–10 minutes 0:10 – 0:20
6) What do you think is the main purpose of the website?	6) Digital Collections: Publication, citations, and discovery of collections available digitally outside the physical facilities
Archival Description/Discovery: Publication and reader search of archival description and finding aids Catalog: Catalog, but also a catalog metadata repository for some researchers Library Website: Coordinate reader/researcher resources to facilitate use of the collections on and off-line	
7) What would you say is the library's mission?	7) We try to evaluate our efforts and their effects according to six strategic directions: Commit to Inclusion, Advance Knowledge, Inspire Inquiry, Catalyze Discovery, Shape Discourse, and Empower Staff. These efforts are undertaken to support the core university

Research Protocol: Sharon Public Library (MA)

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mission to advance knowledge and learning at the highest level and to convey the products of its efforts to the world.	
8) How does the library's website support the function of the physical library?	8) It conveys the scheduling, location, topical, and policy information necessary to visit
facilities as a reader / researcher; describes and links the available digital resources to support remote research; relates the policies guiding our operations and their relationship to the university; and coordinates commentary from researchers in the Libraries community on our collections in support of further research.	
9) Why do you think library patrons USE the website?	9) It varies largely on the patron roles in question: students are interested in study space and
online resources; faculty are interested in research facilities, acquisition requests and research indexes; visiting researchers in scheduling and location; remote researchers in reproduction requests and online resources; staff in policies; etc.	
10) And why do they NOT USE the website?	10) Typically I think because an external index or link directs them to a particular page (or
harvests relevant information from that page to present elsewhere, in the case of schedules).	
11) What do you think are the top 3 uses of the website by library patrons?	11) This varies widely by which of the core websites we are discussing. From usage
statistics across the properties I would expect the overall top uses to be facilities hours, the catalog, and a few key digital collections.	
12) Is there a function that the library's website does not currently have that you would like to add? Or think it should have?	12) We experiment with new features all the time, and this is done in concert with a faculty advisory group and a student advisory board.
My particular area is staff-facing tools to publish digital collections, so my wish list revolves around dis-intermediation of digital collection publication.	
13) Of current library patrons, who do you think uses the library website the most—however you want to break down that question into categories...	13) Web crawlers!
14) Of current library patrons who have a card and frequently use the library, who do you think uses the website the least?	14) I'm not sure, and I'm typically surprised when I talk to individual researchers about our websites.
Wrap-up and thanks	3–5 minutes 0:25 – 0:30
15) Do you have any questions / thoughts on what we've talked about? Or recommendations for further research? <i>[Researcher note: This is an astute comment. I should have asked him in the email for "his" personal opinions, and not give them on behalf of his position within the library itself. But valuable insights were still gained.]</i>	15) We have several key web platforms and the survey as written requires me to reiterate their distinction in a way that makes me worry it will be elided in the results! My professional experience leads me to be suspicious of patrons as a category – I have more confidence in use cases and representative personae for those uses.
Thank you so much for sharing your time! It is much appreciated!	

Research Protocol: Sharon Public Library (MA)**16 July 2020****Library #3: Library of Congress**

Participant #:	3	Gender : <input type="checkbox"/> M <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> F	Age: Not collected
Participant Name:	Elizabeth Brown		
Date:	9 July 2020	Recorded? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> AUDIO <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER
Library URL:	https://www.loc.gov		
About:	[The LoC] ...is the largest library in the world, with millions of books, recordings, photographs, newspapers, maps and manuscripts in its collections. The Library is the main research arm of the U.S. Congress and the home of the U.S. Copyright Office.		

Intro Informed Consent Agreement	2–5 minutes 0:00 – 0:05 Notes
Introductory Text Used for Interviews: <i>(Introduce myself and explain what the project is about...)</i>	
VERBAL INFORMED CONSENT TEXT	
Do you mind if I record your comments, just to help me take accurate notes?..... <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	
PRESS RECORD NOW	
Background Questions:	3–5 minutes 0:05 – 0:10
1) May I have your name?	1) Elizabeth Brown
2) What is your position? (Title?)	2) Reference Librarian
3) How long have you been with the library?	3) 24-1/2 years
4) How long have you been in your field?	4) Off/on since 1979. 1st job work study at library.
5) What is your role regarding the website? i.e., do you give input or feedback regarding patron usage? (17:58)	5) Feedback; some input; mostly I answer people's questions about using the site; using the library; finding information in general;
whether it's at the library or not. I also work the occasional shift in a Reading Room.	
Library Website Usage by Patrons:	5–10 minutes 0:10 – 0:20
6) What do you think is the main purpose of the website?	6) To share the library's resources.
7) What would you say is the library's mission? [Moderator: But, what do you think it is?]	7) Their mission is "to serve Congress and the American People with information". That's pretty much it. We drop what we're doing if
Congress has a request for us. Even though there's the Congressional Research Service, if they come to us, we still drop what we're doing. Or, if the Congressional Research Service comes to us, we drop what we're doing and serve Congress first.	
8) How does the library's website support the function of the physical library?	8) It has quite a bit of information about the physical library. It has web pages for all the

Research Protocol: Sharon Public Library (MA)

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Reading Rooms so you can learn what's there before you go; you can search the catalog before you go; request books online before you get there. It has things like hours and phone numbers and such on the web page as well.	
9) Why do you think library patrons USE the website?	9) Convenience. I think convenience is the number one reason. And, for the Library of
Congress website, there's so many things, primary sources on the library website that they'd have to come to Washington to see, and they can use them at home. So, it's convenience, and for some, it's no other option.	
10) And why do they NOT USE the website?	10) There are some who just want the physical
experience of being in the great buildings, but they can't use the catalog without using the website. There are a few... we get elderly genealogists who come in and, they're not necessarily comfortable using the website but they use the website to get to things like "Ancestry", so they figure it out. Websites are bit and scary and complicated for some people and those are the people who would not use the website.	
11) What do you think are the top 3 uses of the website by library patrons?	11) Some people go there just to look at book talks and lectures and things; some people go
there to do research with these things like "presidential papers"; and some people go there to learn about... to prepare for their physical visit.	
12) Is there a function that the library's website does not currently have that you would like to add? Or think it should have?	12) Um...early on in the website's development, it was really hard to put big files on the site, so a lot of things like books were scanned and
made available page-by-page... and that's frustrating for me, and for users, that those things aren't available as "download" files now that big files are ok. And, they're working on it, but I find it frustrating that it's not there now.	
And, I don't know, the site is so big and complex that I think we need (and we're working on this too) more tutorials for using the site. But, then again, the UX people say if you need to explain to people how to use the site, then the site is not easy enough to use. So, it's a real tricky thing because it's big and huge, and kind of hard to make easy, and if you'd make it easy, you'd miss stuff in the nooks and crannies. I mean, if you don't know how to do a "subject search", you're not going to find stuff that's been indexed by subject.	
Maybe a synonym tool would be handy? And, we don't have one of those. <i>"Did you mean this?" "Or you should also try that..."</i> They do have the Authorities Database, and you can look those up, but most people wouldn't think to do that.	
Do you know the Authorities Database? [Mod: I don't.] That's this wonderful tool that if you're looking for "Samuel Clemens", it will say, "Search for Mark Twain". If you're looking for "gas station" and it's before 1950, you should search for "filling station". With our online databases, we're able to, this is especially important on, like, card catalogs, because no-one went back and changed all the cards to say "gas station"; I don't even think gas station was a term yet. But, you get the idea. So, our Teacher's Page tells people to think about synonyms and the words at the times things were created; because, if you're looking for photos by caption and you're looking for "gas stations from the 30's", "gas station" isn't going to find it. But, if we had some way of doing, of getting that information in the Authorities into the search: "Try this instead...", that would be wonderful. But, I don't know if... that's a ways off for the library, I think for the library.	
[Mod: It's amazing how much information is on there.] Yeah, it has... (if you click the magnifying glass on the library's home page, it does a search of everything...) the latest count: 2,688,348 things. Web pages, digitized items, and those are online. And, then there are like 18 more million things that you can identify through the website, that are not available online. And, then there's a whole bunch of stuff that we wouldn't be able to identify through the website because they're buried in a manuscript collection and all you'll find online is a catalog record for the collection. Because that's how manuscripts are processed and maybe the "finding aid"	

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is online, and the finding aid will help you quite a bit, but it still says there's "a folder full of correspondence on this topic" — which is helpful because you can go and flip through, but that's the way manuscripts are. They're getting them online as fast as they can.

[Mod: You must have a very huge IT department...]

It is big. I don't even know how many people are down there.

13) Of current library patrons, who do you think uses the library website the most—however you want to break down that question into categories...

13) **Librarians** use it for the purposes of getting catalog information, and for finding ideas for building their own tools.

Teachers use it... Our Teacher's Page has a whole lot of lesson plans created by teachers and sets of primary sources that some have pulled together: so, if you're studying "The Great Depression", here's some stuff... Teachers really like the site.

We get a lot of **Independent Researchers** who aren't affiliated with universities, who use the site. And, we get a lot of **Scholarly Researchers**. I've had a number of people who... a couple of years ago, I had a rash of people who wanted... we had this collection called "A Century of Lawmaking", it's the documents from the first hundred years of Congress, but it's one of those "page at a time" things, and I must have gotten four requests a couple of years ago from different groups that wanted "everything" so that they could do data mining or studying the Constitution or, whatever they were doing; so, we get people who are doing that, but we don't get as many of those yet. We're working on outreach to them... the people who want to data mine and do digital humanities kind of things. Or work with 10,000 images to make art. That's kind of a growing thing and it's kind of cool.

Students use the website, but the younger ones just do it guided by their teachers. We get college students and graduate students who are using the primary sources for their research.

We get **Documentarians**. There's all kinds of people. Documentarians use it to grab manuscript images, photographs, and snippets of film.

They are just all over the map.

At one point, we played the Usability Game where we had to come up with users and imagine how the users would approach the site: I think we ended up with 5 or 6 different categories. We had the Law Student, the Undergraduate, the Student, the Teacher, the Journalist, the Movie Makers... and we had to imagine how they would go at the site... and I'm not doing the UX work anymore as that's when the site was small, but there is someone who just does that, and they keep track of what people are clicking on and where they are coming from when they're clicking it... there'll be a discussion in Reddit and there'll be a whole lot of hits on what the Reddit discussion is about... something from Congress, because we also manage Congress.gov site, which has everything from Congress, all the Bills and Laws from the past... since the '90's. 20–25 years actually.

I can remember it when it was a baby! Congress said we need this thing and a whole bunch of people gave up their Christmas holidays and got it to them before the session opened in January. The first Congress.gov. They had the data, it just wasn't in a publicly-accessible web way. Then several years ago, they re-imagined it as Congress.gov... it's a great tool. I feel like an evangelist... but it's great. 8 collections when I got there. Actually, I was a beta tester of the pilot when I was in Library School. It was a Mac with CD-roms and the index was on the CD-rom and it pointed to files on a laser disk, analog-readable files that displayed on a TV. So, you find something on a CD, and it would point you to frame something on the laser disk, and it would display on the TV. What they learned with that pilot was scholars [thought] they could go to the library and use that; but schools were like "Wow! This is great stuff!"

And while they were trying to figure out how they were going to get it built, the schools were asking, "How much is it going to cost? How hard is it to put this on a series of CD-roms? And, what would it cost for schools to put CD towers in their libraries? And, the answer to that in 1995 was a lot..."

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And, then the web happened. [Mod. And the world opened up...] Yeah, we would go to School Libraries Association conferences and we had people who would walk by our booth because they knew they couldn't afford this product... and we had to say, "No, no. Come back. It's free! You have to have an internet connection, but there are things you can do... [explanation of dial up from home and transfer for students; and also discussing workshop to show teachers how to use the technology they had such as tape cassettes and boomboxes (33:14 in recording)]...

14) Of current library patrons who have a card and frequently use the library, who do you think uses the website the least? [Mod: Do you use cards at the Library of Congress?]

14) We do, and the card gets you access to the physical spaces. The subscription databases that are only available in the physical spaces. And, the people who can do that... the scholars who live

nearby or take a month and just come and be at the Library of Congress... they're not using the Library's website a whole lot. They're not using it as much, except for the things that aren't on the website.

You're not going to be able to look at George Washington's papers. You're not going to want to look at them on microfilm because it's easier to look at them on the website. And, they're not going to let you look at them on the paper form unless you're like a head of state. Well, a member of Congress can have a tour and management people lay it on a table and they can lean over and look at it; but they're not going to be able to touch it. So, yeah, it those scholars who can come and be there in person who don't use the website as much as the people who can't [come to Washington], or the people who can't... if what you're studying is presidential papers, you're going to go the National Archives, and you're going to go to the Library's website and then for those few president's that aren't online, (I'm mean, we have 26 presidents and 18 of them are online now...I don't know the number), but for those you're going to have to come in and look at papers. But, if you're studying Thomas Jefferson, and John Adams, and George Washington's papers... you don't have to come to the library in person, you can look at it online.

But, if you're studying these people, you'll probably need manuscript collections that aren't online as well. I mean, if you're really studying these people. [Discusses author David Baldacci's visit to Library...]

Wrap-up and thanks

3-5 minutes | 0:25 – 0:30

15) Do you have any questions/thoughts on what we've talked about?

Or recommendations for further research?

15) There's a cool conference—The Joint Conference on Digital Libraries. It's a geek-fest. They do a lot of research and cool user stuff. I'd get into the

communities of whatever it is you want to do, find their communities. And as you know, at conferences, you learn as much in the halls and bars as you do in the conferences. So, JCDL is an interesting conference if you're thinking of the intersection of technology and UI in libraries. [Additional conversation re other conferences, and wrap-up of interview.]

Thank you so much for sharing your time! It is much appreciated!

Research Protocol: Sharon Public Library (MA)**16 July 2020****Library #4: Akron / Summit County – Portage Lakes Branch**

Participant #:	4	Gender : <input type="checkbox"/> M <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> F	Age: Not collected
Participant Name:	Emmalee		
Date:	8 July 2020	Recorded? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> AUDIO <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER
Library URL:	https://www.akronlibrary.org/locations/portage-lakes		
About:	The Akron-Summit... [is] comprised of the Main Library... 18 branch locations..., two book-mobiles, and a van that provides cart-based service to lobbies of residential buildings. ... access to nearly 2 million items in its collection... to more than 75 million items in the collections of member public libraries and Ohio's college and university libraries.		

Intro Informed Consent Agreement	2–5 minutes 0:00 – 0:05 Notes
Introductory Text Used for Interviews: <i>(Introduce myself and explain what the project is about...)</i>	
VERBAL INFORMED CONSENT TEXT	
Do you mind if I record your comments, just to help me take accurate notes? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	
PRESS RECORD NOW	
Background Questions:	3–5 minutes 0:05 – 0:10
1) May I have your name?	1) Emmalee
2) What is your position? (Title?)	2) Intermediate / Team Librarian
3) How long have you been with the library?	3) 18 years
4) How long have you been in your field?	4) 11 years
5) What is your role regarding the website? i.e., do you give input or feedback regarding patron usage? [Do you give insight... re what patrons want?]	5) Not really... [as far as content]. Main library page is handled by Social Media person. I would say he's open to suggestions and if patrons say anything about the website I would absolutely think that he would take that into account, and we would pass it along to him. The questions I get are, "How do I look up items online?", or "How do I put items on hold?" and "How do I pick them up?" That kind of thing. Most of people think it's pretty easy to use. "A lot people ask about e-content."
Library Website Usage by Patrons:	5–10 minutes 0:10 – 0:20
6) What do you think is the main purpose of the website?	6) Information about our library system and how to look up items and how to use our e-content books and how to download those. Information about the Covid, the hours, is the building open? Reading Club is online because of Covid. Just general information is the biggest focus of the website and the library system, books, and items. How to pick up or see what we have.
7) What would you say is the library's mission?	7) ...just getting information to people, and it's

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going to be very different, with everything online, I thought the library recently has been a gathering place for people to come and meet with each other. A lot of our books and e-content, you can get online.

Obviously, a lot of the library's mission is to inform people. Again, it's one of the last places you can go for free... just be in the building, you don't have to buy anything. Now that the building has been closed to the public, ...it's going to be interesting to see the library navigate that. I think most information is going to be out online now. We've done a lot of virtual story times, virtual programs; we're informing people about things that the library has to offer online... so, that's probably going to be even more important. and, our mission is how an we reach people when they're not going to be in the building.

8) How does the library's website support the function of the physical library?	8) Supporting, give your people information about programs we have to offer, what information they can find at our library; what information they can find as a community; people can download books, magazines, even movies, and music; so, I think the website is definitely there to support getting information to the people in general.
9) Why do you think library patrons USE the website?	9) Mostly to look up items... I would say, in general, when people are going to the website, it is to use the catalog. Again, find out information about our branches, our hours that we're open, where we're located, what programs we have going on right now...
10) And why do they NOT USE the website?	10) Mostly, because I think they are not comfortable with the internet, or computers, or technology. We do have a lot of people, customers that aren't really comfortable using technology, so they'll either call, or come into the library. We tell them that they can look up this up on the website... or if you want more information, you can look this up on the website, but the biggest barrier is people just not being comfortable using the computer or using the internet.
11) What do you think are the top 3 uses of the website by library patrons?	11) <i>[Question accidentally skipped in interview]</i>
12) Is there a function that the library's website does not currently have that you would like to add? Or think it should have?	12) Honestly? No... I can't really can't think of any kind of function that the website has that I would like the library to have. It was redefined not too long ago and I think it's pretty user friendly and I can't think of anything on there that I would add or that it would need.
13) Of current library patrons, who do you think uses the library website the most—however you want to break down that question into categories...	13) Probably, young adults to middle age (18 to 50); maybe some younger patrons may use it; some older people who are not comfortable using computers would be the least likely. And, those would probably be mostly our older patrons.
14) Of current library patrons who have a card and frequently use the library, who do you think uses the website the least?	14) The least, older patrons, or any patron that is not comfortable with the internet, and the computer, which most patrons in that category would most likely be over 55.
Wrap-up and thanks	3–5 minutes 0:25 – 0:30
15) Do you have any questions / thoughts on what we've talked about? Or recommendations for further research?	15) I would say you probably want to talk to IT, Social Media. They would be able to give you statistics and what kind of traffic we get on our website. With library being closed, I would assume that we had much more traffic.
Thank you so much for sharing your time! It is much appreciated!	

Research Protocol: Sharon Public Library (MA)**16 July 2020****Library #5: Mentor Public Library – Main Branch**

Participant #:	5	Gender : <input type="checkbox"/> M <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> F	Age: Not collected
Participant Name:	Mary		
Date:	8 July 2020	Recorded? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> AUDIO <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER
Library URL:	https://www.mentorpl.org		
About:	Mentor Public Library is your community library. We foster lifelong enrichment by providing materials, services, and programs for literacy, learning, and pleasure in an environment of intellectual freedom and confidentiality.		

Intro Informed Consent Agreement	2–5 minutes 0:00 – 0:05 Notes
Introductory Text Used for Interviews: <i>(Introduce myself and explain what the project is about...)</i>	
VERBAL INFORMED CONSENT TEXT	
Do you mind if I record your comments, just to help me take accurate notes?..... <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	
PRESS RECORD NOW	
Background Questions:	3–5 minutes 0:05 – 0:10
1) May I have your name?	1) Mary
2) What is your position? (Title?)	2) Librarian II
3) How long have you been with the library?	3) 8 years
4) How long have you been in your field?	4) 13 years
5) What is your role regarding the website? i.e., do you give input or feedback regarding patron usage?	5) Webmaster. I get all the statistics of website use as well as put in the different databases we have access to.
Library Website Usage by Patrons:	5–10 minutes 0:10 – 0:20
6) What do you think is the main purpose of the website?	6) It is to provide access to patrons in a multitude of different ways.
7) What would you say is the library's mission?	7) It is to bring information to the public.
8) How does the library's website support the function of the physical library?	8) It has a lot of different databases the public can use. It allows access to the catalog so that patrons can put items on hold and do research it also allows access to all our digital services that aren't research-based including our online books, our online videos; so, it is basically the portal for anything a patron does when they are not in the library.
9) Why do you think library patrons USE the website?	9) It was especially important during the last couple of months when we were closed...

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because, with being closed, people still needed information, still needed access to our services. And, so, the website actually provided a lot of that access. In general, it's just a general resource that allows people to know that the library isn't just a physical space... it is also a digital space. The library is useful in a multitude of different ways that involve not actually being in the library.	
10) And why do they NOT USE the website?	10) A lot of patrons don't know... first of all, that
the library has an expanded service. They may not know that we have digital books; they may not know that we have access to academic information or databases. So, one of the biggest problems with the library is that, just the library in general, not the website, is that patrons don't realize that we are no longer "just books". We are movies and a community resource, as well as a way to find information in a trusted manner.	
11) What do you think are the top 3 uses of the website by library patrons?	11) The first one is access to the catalog. The second one is access to our digital services. The
third one is finding information.	
12) Is there a function that the library's website does not currently have that you would like to add? Or think it should have?	12) We have an announcement page to announce all our programming, but I really wish we had an announcement section for "immediate
announcements". Like, just a way to put a line on that says "We are closed! Emergency closed!" Instead of having to put together putting a slider or a slide together to put that information on. More of an immediate bulletin board or an announcement board vs. having to do a lot of graphic stuff.	
13) Of current library patrons, who do you think uses the library website the most—however you want to break down that question into categories...	13) I think that people in their 40, 50, 60s. Solely because, they're the people who use the library the most. And, from there, I think the next age level would be people in their 20s.
14) Of current library patrons who have a card and frequently use the library, who do you think uses the website the least?	14) Teenagers. I think that teenagers are, "I need it right now!", and also the place where libraries lose... that's the age where libraries lose those
patrons. We have them when they're little, because we have story time. We have them in the 30s because that's when they start having kids. Teenagers and early 20s is where libraries lose patrons...until they come back to us. And, my library is not anywhere near a high school, so, they're not something we think about on a daily basis.	
Wrap-up and thanks	3–5 minutes 0:25 – 0:30
15) Do you have any questions / thoughts on what we've talked about? Or recommendations for further research?	15) ...It might be interesting to look at a number of different, various websites, and just from your perspective, look at them and see how
usable they are. What you like about different libraries, what you don't like about different libraries sites, because I know that a lot of information on library websites is buried. It's important, but patron's don't see it right away unless they're told it exists. And, the only way they're told it exists, is if they talk to somebody. There isn't necessarily a way of finding it. So, if there was a way to "put out there" somehow all the things that are on the website to the public, make it more... give it more exposure, that would definitely benefit libraries. But there are some websites that are super usable; and there are some library websites that are horribly not usable. Seeing the various, what makes a website usable vs. what you think does not make it usable.	
Thank you so much for sharing your time! It is much appreciated!	

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Literature Research (Sites and Notes)

The following sites* were accessed for research used in this project:

- **Pew Research**—*What do people do at libraries and library websites?*
Sept 15, 2015: <https://www.pewresearch.org/internet/2015/09/15/libraries-at-the-crossroads/>
- **School Library Journal**—*Take Charge To Maximize Your Library's Online Presence*
2016 — <https://www.slj.com/?detailStory=take-charge-to-maximize-your-librarys-online-presence>
- **Piola**—*The 25 Best Library Websites for 2019*
<https://meetpiola.com/the-25-best-library-websites-for-2019/>
- **InfoSpace**—*The Official Blog of the Syracuse University iSchool—What Makes a Good Library Website?*
2019—<https://ischool.syr.edu/infospace/2019/05/20/what-makes-a-good-library-website/>
- **EBSCOpost**—*7 Best Practices for Creating a User Friendly Library Website*
2015— <https://www.ebsco.com/blog/article/7-best-practices-for-creating-a-user-friendly-library-website>
- **IvyGroup**—*What Should You Require From Your Library's Website?*
2014— <https://ivygroup.com/blog/what-should-you-require-from-your-librarys-website/>
- **Public Libraries Online**—*Customers or Patrons? How You Look at Your Library's Users Affects Customer Service*
<http://publiclibrariesonline.org/2015/03/customers-or-patrons-how-you-look-at-your-librarys-users-affects-customer-service/>
- **Information Research**—*Public library Websites as electronic branches: a multi-country quantitative evaluation*
<http://informationr.net/ir/23-1/paper786.html>
- **IMIS.Gov**—(Institute of Museum and Library Services)—*Opportunity for All: How the American Public Benefits from Internet Access at U.S. Libraries* <https://www.ims.gov/assets/1/AssetManager/OpportunityForAll.pdf>
- **IMIS.Gov**—(Institute of Museum and Library Services)—*The State of Small and Rural Libraries in the United States* https://www.ims.gov/assets/1/AssetManager/Brief2013_05.pdf
- **CollegesSimply**—*A College Search Engine*
<https://www.collegesimply.com/colleges-near/massachusetts/sharon/>
- **City-Data.com**—*A City Database*
<http://www.city-data.com/city/Sharon-Massachusetts.html>
- **World Population Review**—*A City Database*
<https://worldpopulationreview.com/us-cities/sharon-ma-population>
- **Libraries Are Essential**—*There Are Many Reasons Why Libraries Are Essential*
<https://www.librariesareessential.com/why-are-libraries-essential/>

*Notes from sites that were used are below.

Pew Research—Libraries at the Crossroads

Sept 15, 2015: <https://www.pewresearch.org/internet/2015/09/15/libraries-at-the-crossroads/>

New Pew Research Survey (2015)

- Libraries are important community institutions and citizens want range new programs
- Americans visiting libraries is down in last 3 years (too soon to know if trend)
- Many Americans say they want libraries to:
 - ~ Support local education

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- ~ Serve special constituents such as veterans, active-duty military, immigrants
- ~ Help local business, job seekers, those in need of upgrading work skills
- ~ Embrace new technologies such as 3-D printers, and help people use them
- 2/3 Americans (65%) 16 or older, say that closing library would have major impact on community
 - ~ Low-income Americans, Hispanics, and African Americans more likely to say this

Although trend in physical access has gone down, web access has gone up:

- Use of website was 50% in 2015, as compared to 39% in 2012 of those who use the sites.

Physical Building / Books:

Big question this study asked in 2015, was “What should happen to the books, the buildings?”

- Patrons do not want their physical books to be reduced
- They also do not want the physical space to be reduced
- They do want bigger rooms that are more comfortable for reading, working, relaxing—which suggests that libraries still occupy a prominent spot in people’s minds as a place to go
- They do not want their libraries closed—it would have a detrimental effect on the community

Other key findings:

- Large majorities of Americans see libraries as part of educational ecosystem
- And as resources for promoting digital and information literacy
 - ~ 78% of 16 and older say libraries should definitely offer programs to teach people how to use digital tools such as computers, smartphones, and apps.
 - ~ 75% say libraries have been effective at helping people learn these technologies

Many believe that libraries should be **pathways to economic opportunity**:

- Providing resources for business development
- Job search
- Enhancing workforce skills

This reflects an “expanded mission” for public libraries to contribute to the economic advancement of people and communities.

- In 2015, 23% of patrons who visited a library to use a computer were looking for a job (down from 36% in 2012 in The Great Recession years)
- 14% logged onto computers to acquire job-related skills or increase their income (this is 3% of the full population of those ages 16 and older)

Civic Activism:

- 23% worked with others to address a problem in their community
- 11% have actively worked with others to influence government policy (meeting at library)
- 74% Americans say libraries should definitely have programs to help active duty military, veterans
- Another 20% said “maybe” library should do this—**so essentially 94% of Americans are in favor of this.**

Library Usage:

- Women and those with higher levels of education are more likely to have visited the library within past year

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- 56% visit at least once a month; 14% on a weekly basis
- Overall trend in usage is down (from 6 to 11 % change from 2012 to 2015, according to Pew chart)
- African Americans and rural Americans declined as well as parents
- Most frequent visitors are Hispanics—21% go to library at least once a week compared with 14% of all respondents

Who uses Library websites:

- 22% of those aged 16 and older visited a library website or mobile app in previous 12 months (Pew says they changed the wording of their question and that may have had an affect on the percentage)
- Younger and higher educated people are more likely to use libraries virtually via a website or an app

Overall usage of Libraries in 2015:

- Between websites, in-person visits to libraries or bookmobiles, half (49%) of all Americans ages 16 and older have been library users of some sort within past 12 months.
- Additionally, 4 out of 5 Americans 83% say that they have used the library at some point in past 12+ months.

Additional points researchers made:

- Use e-books growing
- People use library to:
 - ~ Borrow print books
 - ~ Sit and read, study, watch or listen to media
 - ~ Get help from a librarian
 - ~ Attend a class, program, or lecture
 - ~ Attend a meeting of a group you belong to
- Computer usage very important by:
 - ~ African Americans, Hispanics, those with household incomes <\$30,000
- Libraries are seen as community anchors

School Library Journal— Take Charge To Maximize Your Library's Online Presence

2016 — <https://www.slj.com/?detailStory=take-charge-to-maximize-your-librarys-online-presence>

What do you users need?

- Students
- Staff
- Parents
- Community

Basic Goals:

- Purpose of library website
 - ~ Operating hours; phone number, catalog; databases; maybe links to educational websites

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- Functionality—need to work as most other websites do
- Clarity—simplify wording to help visitors feel welcome; avoid negative phrases. Focus on what visitors “can” do, not what they cannot, or is not available
 - ~ Don’t use jargon, ex: instead of “database” use “Find Articles”, “Find Pictures”, etc.
- Intuitive Navigation—clunky navigation most common complaint about websites
 - ~ Don’t put everything on 1st page
- Fresh and Fun—keep website content current and fresh

Things to consider:

- Leverage site to serve teachers and larger community
 - ~ Use site to offer library’s workspaces for grade level, department, or team meetings
 - ~ Consider using open calendars where staff can book meetings
- Link databases to site
- Establish library’s brand
- Think ahead

Piola—The 25 Best Library Websites for 2019

<https://meetpiola.com/the-25-best-library-websites-for-2019/>

Blog from design firm. Of note:

- Events calendar (extensive)
- Staff picks book section
- Quick Links
- Short home page shows less crowded, more inviting home page with good navigation
- Search function is prominent and easy to use
- Think sliders through before using
- Clean design, easy to use
- Mobile more like app than website
- Fully responsive; boxed content makes easy to scroll on mobile
- Brand consistency (colors, etc.)
- Drop down nav clean and simple, making information easy to find
- Use of colors to differentiate between main nav and secondary
- Location drop down: quickly navigate to branch or view all locations; ability to select a specific day
- Mobile app has its own page with download instructions
- Use of images to break up menu navigation
- Location search: open now, tonight, weekends
- Detailed footer: allows users to navigate site extensively
- Clear labels for easier navigation

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- “Mega” menus
- Sidebars for tutorials

“Your library website isn’t just a website, it’s your digital library branch.” —Piola

InfoSpace: The Official Blog of the Syracuse University iSchool— What Makes a Good Library Website?

2019— <https://ischool.syr.edu/infospace/2019/05/20/what-makes-a-good-library-website/>

How Websites and Libraries Should Co-Exist:

- Should be seen as an extension
- Iterative project that requires maintenance and care

Needs Improvement:

- Outdated design often equate to inaccessibility for disabled persons
- Websites should take into consideration:
 - ~ Security
 - ~ Accessibility
 - ~ Design
 - ~ Contact information
 - ~ Making website “stand out” to patrons

Security:

- Use of HTTPS encryption
 - ~ Lack of HTTPS impacts search engine optimization, i.e., if you do not have it, Google suppresses website in search results making it more difficult for patrons to find.

Modern Website Design:

- Design of site is first thing patrons see. — Users make assumptions about the library based on design (consciously or unconsciously). Modern design signals legitimacy. Assumptions are made that it is more actively maintained, and therefore, the information is more trustworthy.
- Outdated features indicate inactivity. — If design is outdated, users may assume content is also.
 - ~ Modern sites more likely to use responsive design (designed to look good on any screen including tablets and smartphones).
 - ~ Check out Indiana State Library; Georgia State Library; California State Library.

Minimalism and Simplicity:

- Helps with user-friendliness as it doesn’t overwhelm users
- Other elements that help include:
 - ~ Large images
 - ~ Limited color palette
 - ~ Typography that is easy to read

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~ Navigation that doesn't get in the way of the site's content

*Many of these also make website more accessible, helping to ensure ease of use by everyone.

Older websites may have one or more of these features:

- Many competing, bright colors
- Text that is too small
- Text in a font that is difficult to read
- Clutter flow with several elements competing for user's attention (like rotating series of banner images next to an event calendar)

Poor design can make navigation difficult, and legitimacy on page may appear suspect

- Modern design does not guarantee accuracy, but does lend credibility at outset
- Sets expectations for patrons: users more likely to think secure and legit

Contrasting Colors:

- Good design / contrast: text is clear, readable, and distinct.
- Stands out from background

Keyboard access

- Access should be granted by tabbing through every element on page

Meaningful Text Links

- Links should state or otherwise indicate where link goes to
- Very important for people with screen readers Ex: Get a library card?
- Use Alt-text when using an image

Can Patrons Reach You?

- Ask a Librarian Service
- Contact Page
- Library Staff Directory

Consider Unique Features:

- Voter registry and voter information
- Ask for Feedback
- Social Media Links
- Library Statistics: conveys how actively library used and what services are in demand—helps communicate library value and importance to community

Updating is iterative process

- Yes, it is.

EBSCOpost—7 Best Practices for Creating a User Friendly Library Website

2015— <https://www.ebsco.com/blog/article/7-best-practices-for-creating-a-user-friendly-library-website>

EBSCO is a leading provider of databases.

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- Have a Vision—defines library's goals; guides and inspires decisions about site
- Easy Access to Search—primary action user takes on library website
 - ~ Make it prominent on home page
 - ~ Have one search box on page
 - ~ Provide description or example within search box / area to set user's expectations
 - ~ For multi-tabbed search box, label tabs in plain language and default to discover service
- Keep navigation simple:
 - ~ Display 5-6 main navigation items at most... do not overwhelm users
 - ~ Top-level nav represent high-level categories of content
 - ~ Common top nav items: Search, Services, Research, About Us, Help, My Account
 - ~ Validate navigation using paper card sort, or use: OptimalSort & Treejack
- Home page is a Gateway:
 - ~ This is most visited page and where users begin their search
 - ~ Give users just enough detail to make the decision to explore "3 click rule" is not always the best practice
 - ~ Items to display on home page:
 - Search
 - Book a study room
 - Location and hours
 - Library news & events
 - Contact Us / Ask a Librarian*

**[Not sure I agree with the above...]*

- Eliminate jargon—terms not understood by students:
 - ~ Boolean
 - ~ Catalog
 - ~ HTML Full Text
 - ~ EPUB
 - ~ e-Book Full Text
 - ~ Database
 - ~ Trade Publication

Recommendations:

- Weed your content
- Write in plain language
- Eliminate jargon when branding your link resolver / discovery service
- Provide explanatory text when needed
- Do not rely on a glossary
- Ask a non-librarian to validate your content

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- Conduct surveys / usability testing

IvyGroup—What Should You Require From Your Library's Website?

2014— <https://ivygroup.com/blog/what-should-you-require-from-your-librarys-website/>

Usable:

- Attractive, well-balanced design
- Understandable navigation
- Quick access to most used features
- Clear indications of how site's components function
- Carefully-written content
- URL persistence (each page should have a unique URL so users can bookmark pages or get permalinks)
- Mobile responsive design
- Accessibility based on W3C Standards

Content users can use / care about:

- Ways to contact: information; form; find library
- Ways to get help from librarian: phone; email; chat... make sure users know options
- FAQs
- Branch locations and hours
- Blog
- RSS Feed
- Social Links
- Calendar of events
- Site search
- Directory of library staff w/ areas of responsibility
- Gateways to electronic resources
- Online catalog

Public Libraries Online— Customers or Patrons? How You Look at Your Library's Users Affects Customer Service

<http://publiclibrariesonline.org/2015/03/customers-or-patrons-how-you-look-at-your-librarys-users-affects-customer-service/>

Makes case for using "patron" instead of "customers" when thinking and addressing people who use the library and its websites.

Information Research— Public library Websites as electronic branches: a multi-country quantitative evaluation

<http://informationr.net/ir/23-1/paper786.html>

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Large data research for multiple countries that was found to be interesting but not pertinent to this project at this time; however, it could prove useful in the future.

IMIS.Gov (*Institute of Museum and Library Services*)— **Opportunity for All: How the American Public Benefits from Internet Access at U.S. Libraries**

<https://www.ims.gov/assets/1/AssetManager/OpportunityForAll.pdf> quote from page 10 of PDF

"Conclusions

The **wiring of public libraries has transformed one of the nation's most established community resources into a critical digital hub, where patrons can compete more effectively for jobs, improve their health, find key government services, and manage their finances.** Computer and Internet access allow librarians to go beyond library stacks to connect patrons to all of the resources, services, and tools available online. In a world increasingly defined by technology, the public library is one of the widest bridges to the Internet and computers, not only for those who cannot afford their own connection, but for those who find the library is an easier, faster, friendlier, or more effective way to use these tools."

IMLS.gov was used to obtain form some of the persona valuation data.

IMIS.Gov (*Institute of Museum and Library Services*)— **The State of Small and Rural Libraries in the United States**

https://www.ims.gov/assets/1/AssetManager/Brief2013_05.pdf quote from page 9 of PDF

"Conclusion

One of the surprising findings in this review is the sheer number of public libraries that can be classified as either small or rural. **Their broad distribution across the country speaks volumes about the value local communities place on library services.** Despite fiscal challenges and rapid technological changes, services in small and rural public libraries **continue to evolve to serve the unique needs of their communities.** The fact that service utilization continues to increase at these libraries at a time when other libraries are experiencing declines on a per capita basis is a further testament to their resilience and continued relevance to rural life."

IMLS.gov was used to obtain some of the demographic information for Sharon, MA.

CollegesSimply—(*A College Search Engine*)

<https://www.collegesimply.com/colleges-near/massachusetts/sharon/>

Used to obtain demographic information for colleges near Sharon, MA.

Research phrase: "Colleges near Sharon, MA."

City-Data.com—(*A City Database*)

<http://www.city-data.com/city/Sharon-Massachusetts.html>

City-Data.com is a database owned by Advameg and has over 2 million registered users. Advameg says about the site (from their website: <https://www.advameg.com>) that:

"Quantcast.com ranks our largest site, City-Data.com, in the top 150 sites in the United States (December 2016). The forum on City-Data.com has over 2 million registered users."

City-Data.com was used to obtain some of the demographic information for Sharon, MA.

Research Protocol: Sharon Public Library (MA)**16 July 2020****World Population Review—(A City Database)**<https://worldpopulationreview.com/us-cities/sharon-ma-population>

From the About Page:

"Most demographic data is hidden in spreadsheets, behind complex APIs, or inside cumbersome tools. World Population Review's goal is to make this data more accessible through graphs, charts, analysis and visualizations. We also strive to present the most recent information available, and develop our own projections based on recent growth. World Population Review is an independent organization without political affiliations."

WorldPopulationReview.com was used to obtain most of the demographic information for Sharon, MA.

Libraries Are Essential—There Are Many Reasons Why Libraries Are Essential)<https://www.librariesareessential.com/why-are-libraries-essential/>

Essential because:

- Portals to world's knowledge
- Help people start businesses
- Librarians are trained to do high-level research
- Offer basic computer classes
- Economically efficient
- After hours homework
- Information is free through library
- Bridging social gaps for people who do not have access to technology
- Increases property values
- Lifelong learning