

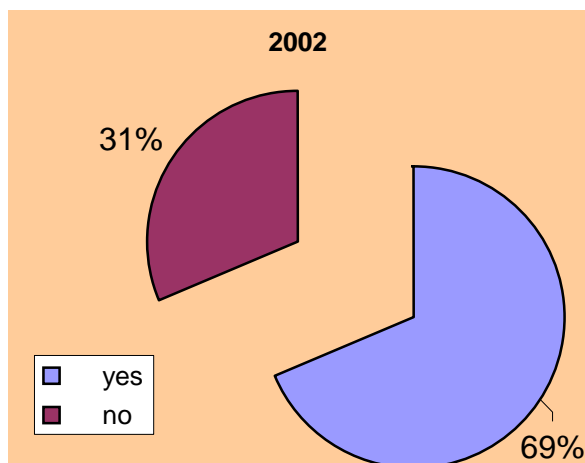
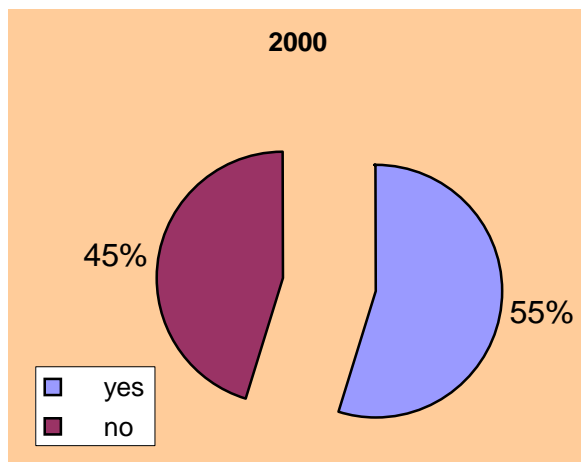
Montana State Library Library & Information Services Department

Survey of State Employees 2000 - 2002 Results compared

The 2002 survey was a great success; we had 774 responses in a one-month period, compared to 553 in 2000. The 2002 responses do not include test responses or any from Montana State Library employees; not all respondents answered all questions. In all, employees from 24 agencies replied. Both surveys offered the incentive of becoming eligible to win a book by filling it out.

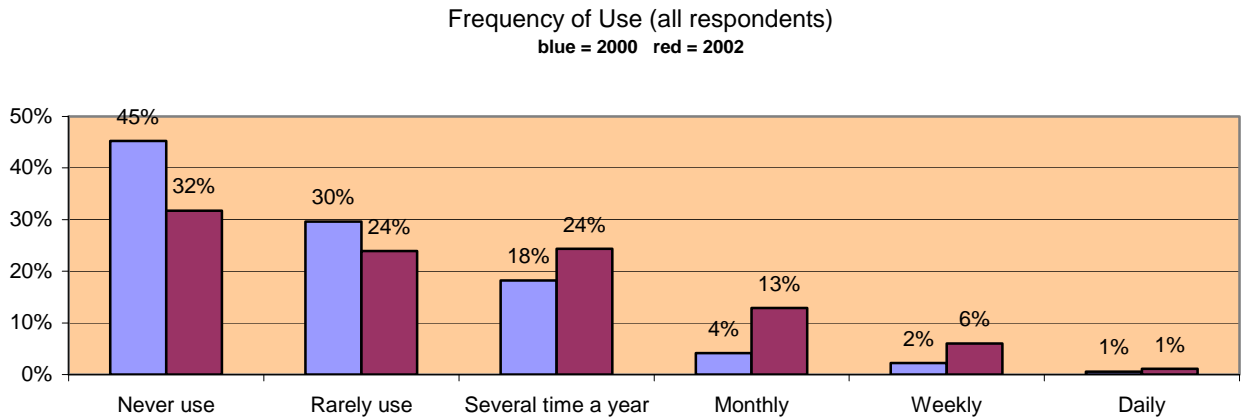
1. *Have you ever called or visited the State Library?*

We have successfully increased the proportion of respondents that have contacted us. Finding effective ways to make employees aware of us is an ongoing challenge.

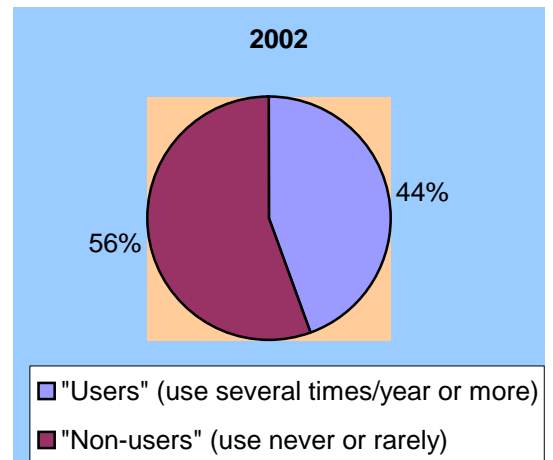
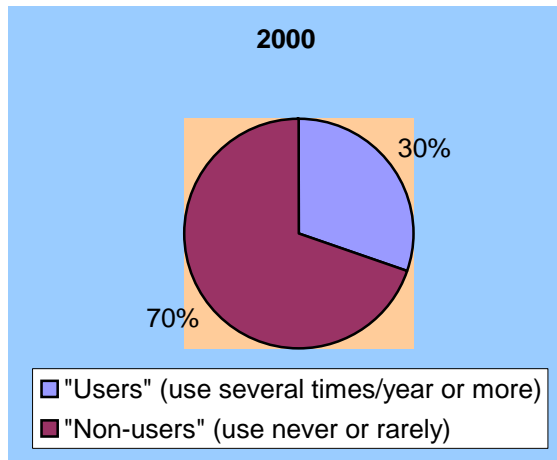


2. How often do you use the Montana State Library?

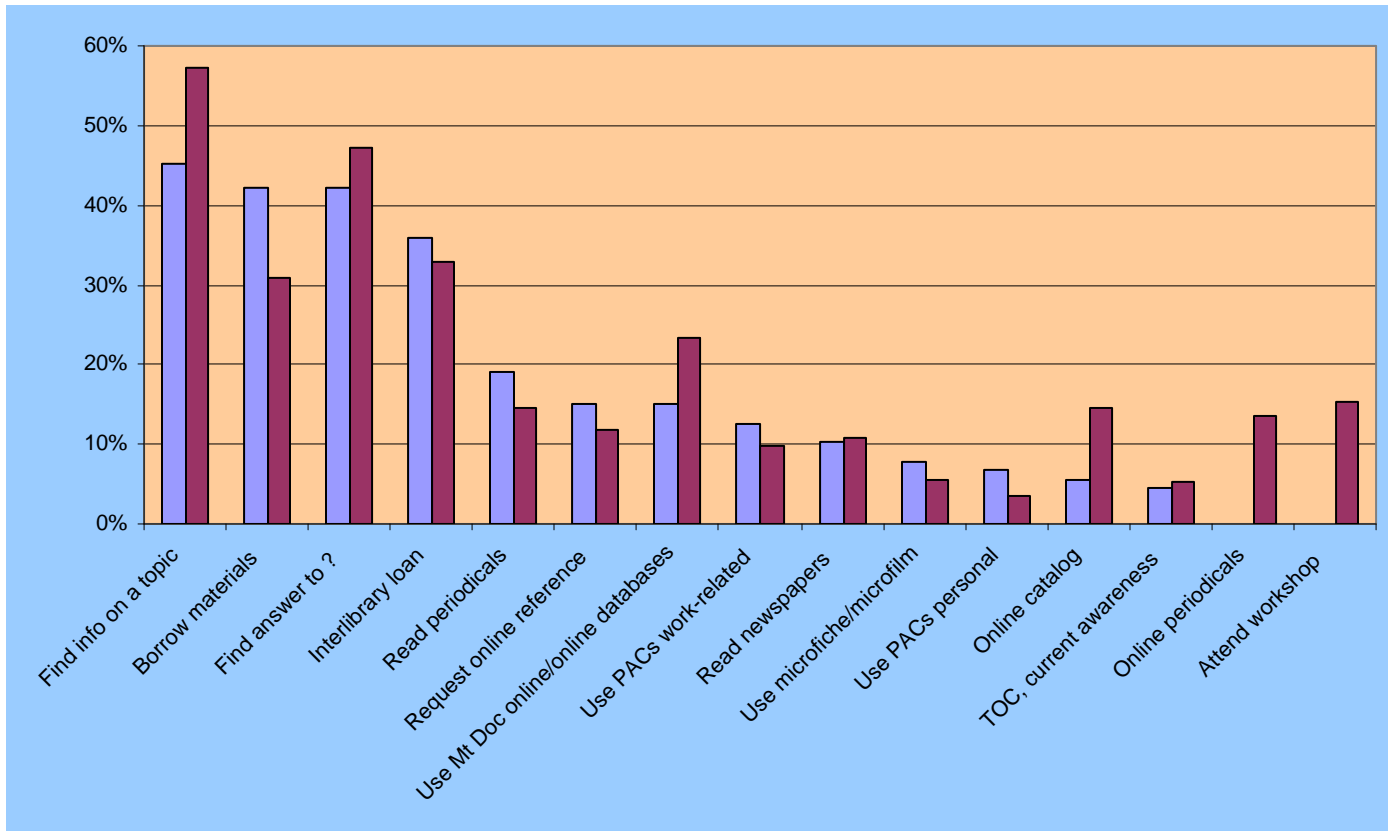
The proportion of respondents who never or rarely use the library was reduced; we were especially happy to see the increase in frequency with which they are using us. More state employees, from virtually every agency, are using us and they are using us more frequently.



The proportion of "Users" (at least several times a year) to "Non-Users" (rarely or never) has improved.



3. How do you use the Montana State Library? (Check all that apply)



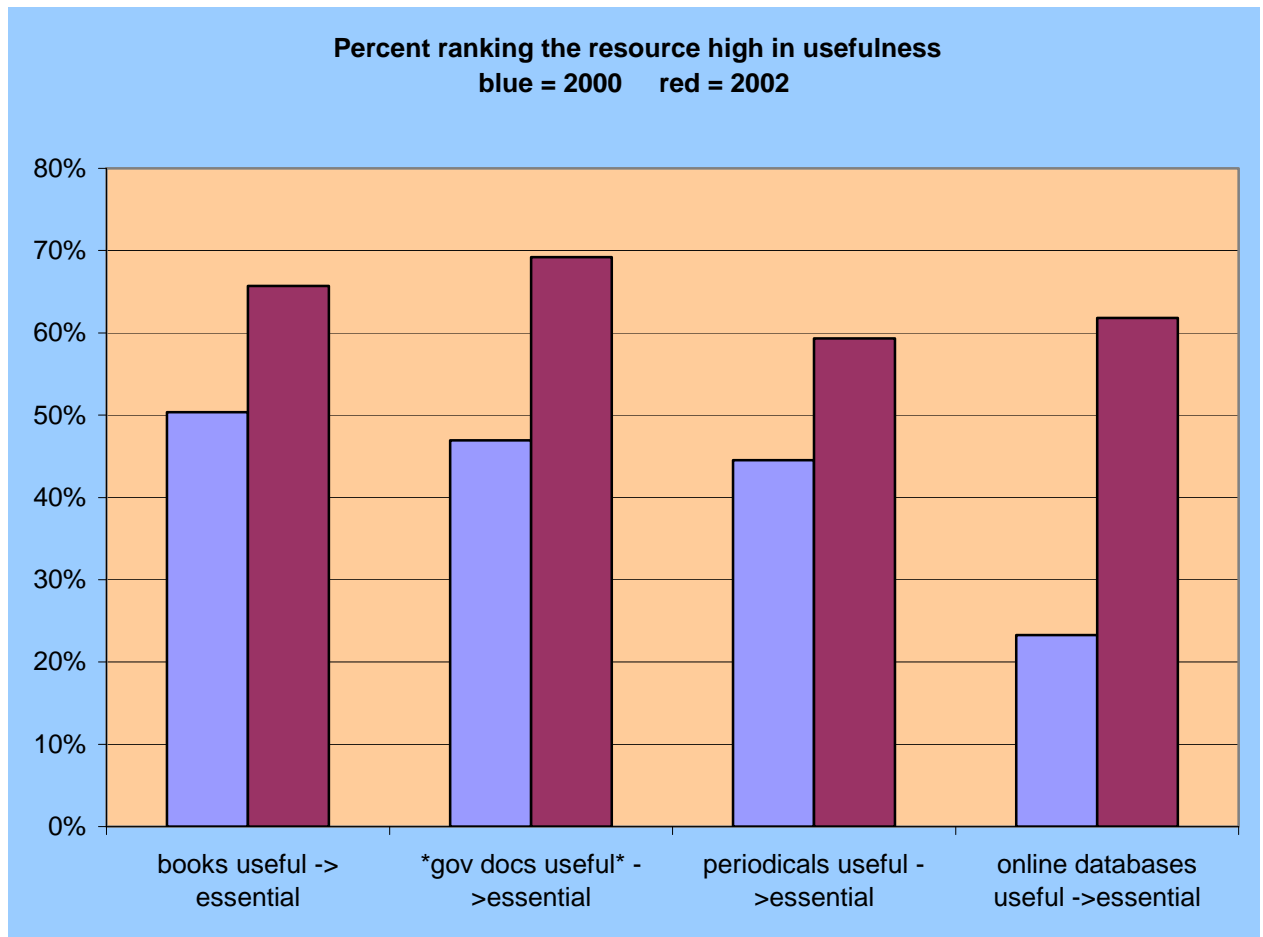
How respondents use the library is changing. Our successful efforts to improve the collection and provide services at the desktop are reflected in this chart. This was a key component of the "Preferred Future."

Increasingly they are using us to find information on a topic and to find answers to questions. Somewhat fewer are borrowing materials, using interlibrary loan, reading periodicals or requesting online reference services.

As customers are more easily able to meet their own needs with our tools and resources, we have noted that the requests that do come to us are more complex or involved. For instance, John recently spent more than an hour on the phone with a state employee in Dillon, coaching him on using the InfoTrac, Firstsearch and Worldcat databases.

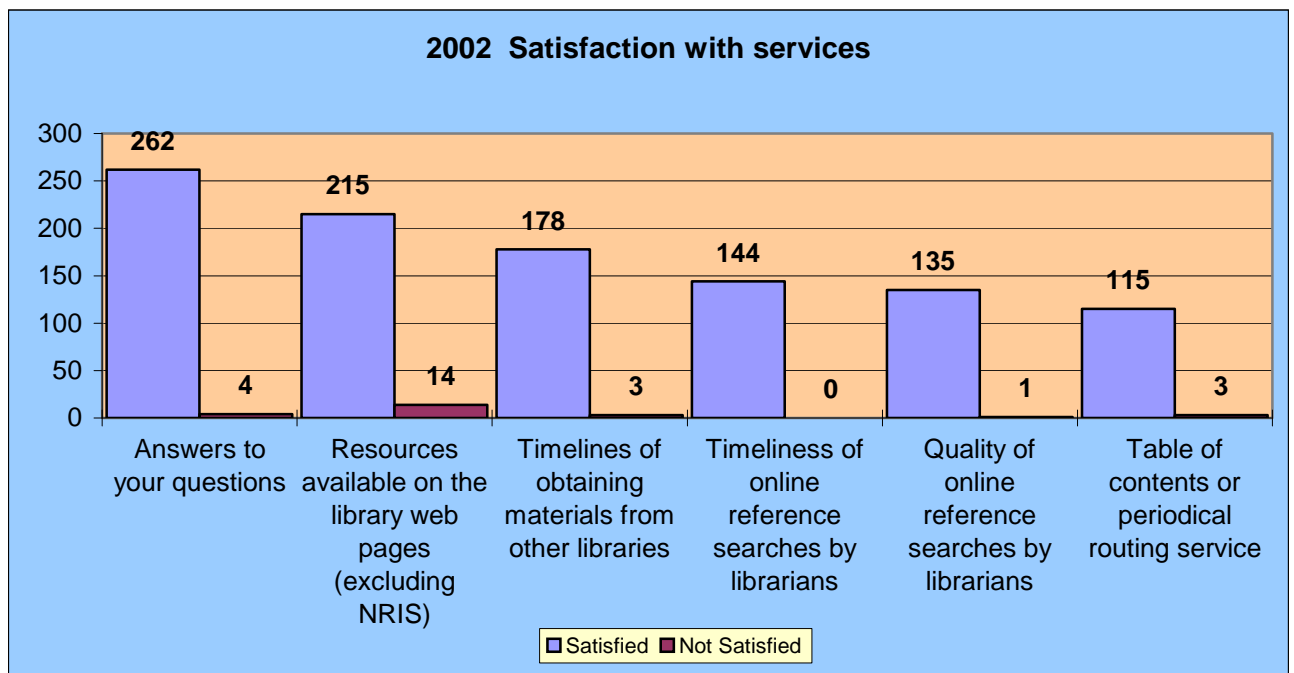
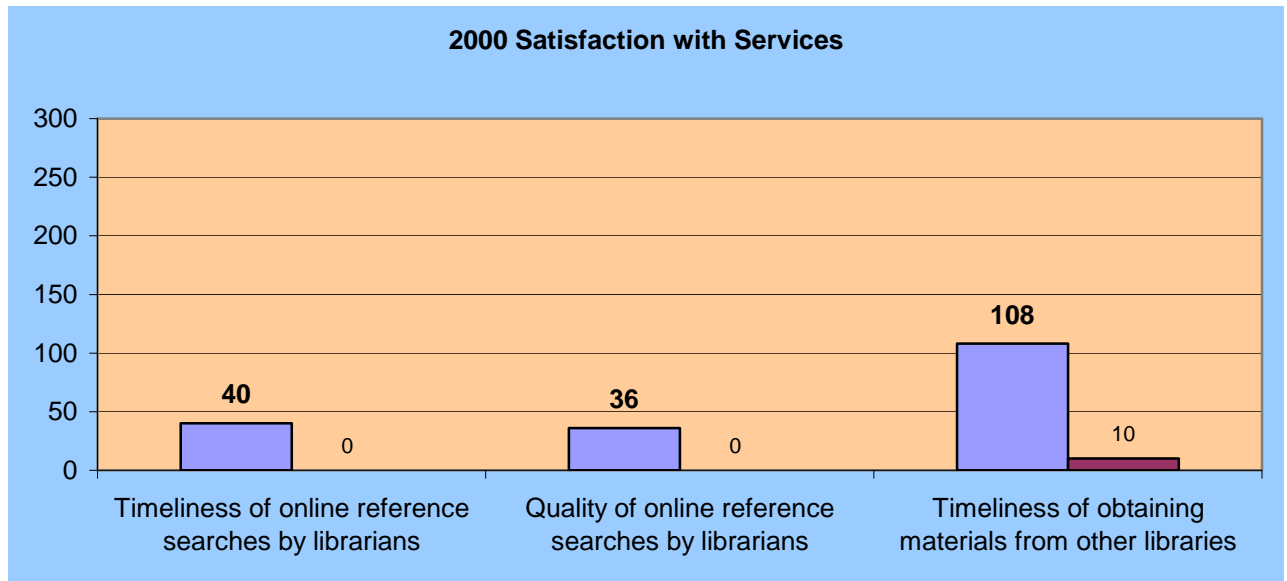
Large increases are seen in the use of the online databases and catalog. Online periodicals have become important to users. Nearly 300 attendees representing 23 agencies have participated in training workshops since January 2002. We expect interest in, and reliance on, these electronic resources to increase significantly in the future.

4. How useful to you are the following MSL resources?



Not surprisingly, MSL online databases have increased the most in usefulness to state employees, but good gains are seen in every area of the collection. Those selecting the somewhat neutral "somewhat useful" in the 2002 survey are not included in this data.

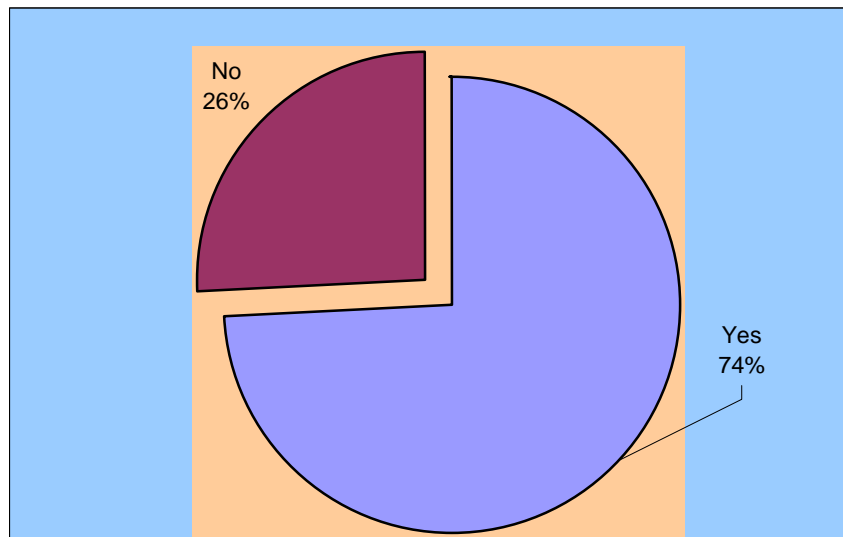
5. How satisfied are you with the following services?



There were fewer services measured in 2000; additionally, this question received little response then. The 2002 results are reassuring that our services are satisfying our customers who use them. There is still too large a proportion that responds with "don't know/don't use", again highlighting the need for persistent outreach and marketing.

6. *Do you gather information for others in your agency?*

This was a new question in 2002 so we have no comparison figure.



A significant proportion of "Users" gather information for others in their agency. This indicates that the impact of our services on state government reaches far beyond the patron at the desk or on the phone.

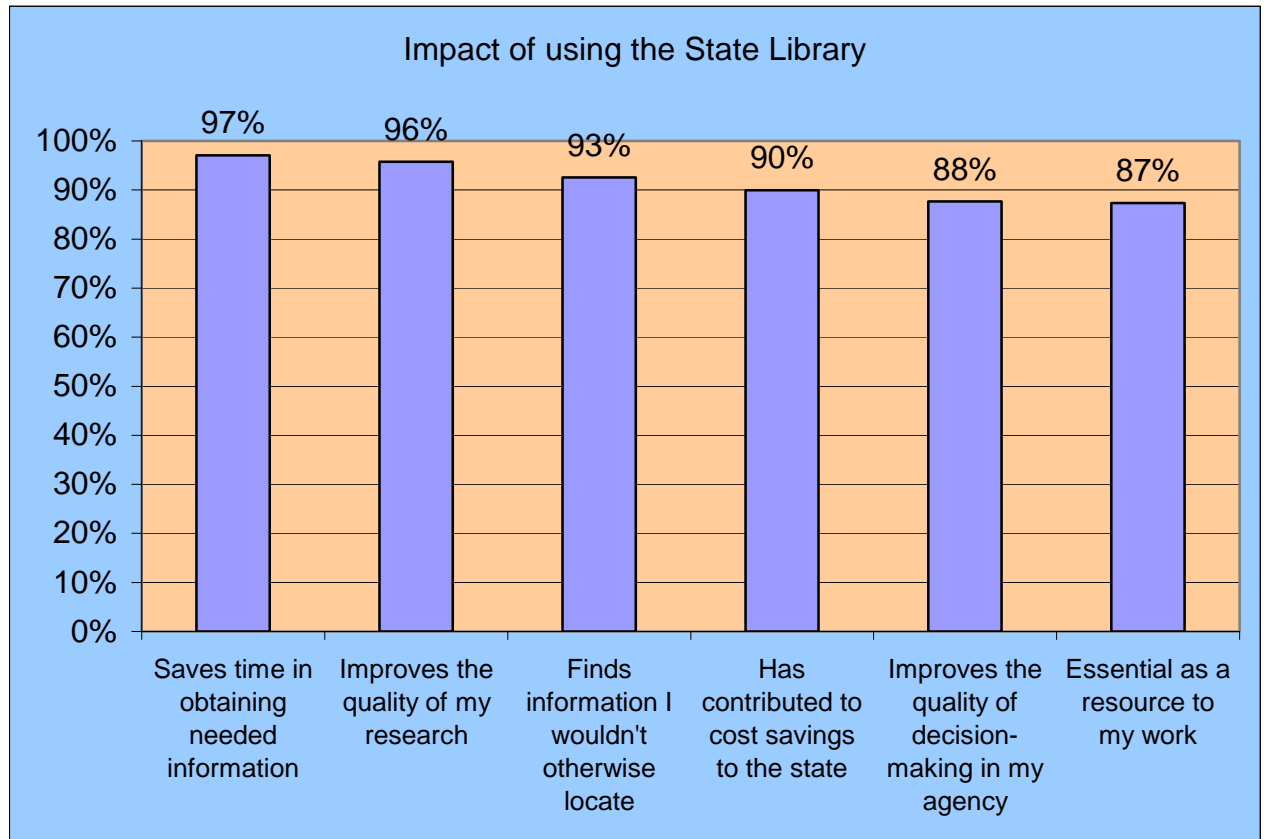
Executives and managers typically rely on researchers and key subordinates to gather, digest and synthesize the information they need to make decisions or take action.

As a special library to state government, we serve users that differ from the user communities of public, school and academic libraries. Our state employees are pursuing information not so much to meet individual interests as to meet the needs of the agency or its subdivision.

The information is used to determine policy, plan services, solve problems, develop regulations, and otherwise perform the mission of the agency. Our focus in the past several years has been to meet those work-related needs and promote a well-informed government workforce.

We measured the impact of our services in the 2002 survey with another new question and received a very gratifying response from library users who use us at least several times a year.

7. Results of the survey the Library did in November 2000 have guided the growth of services and resources to support your work. How well have we done? Do you agree with these statements about using the State Library?



The graph speaks for itself. However, I will say that the indication that using the library has contributed to cost savings to the state was the most unexpected, and intriguing, result. The response also raises concern about the impact on state government without access to library services tailored to its needs.

We are encouraged by the fact that over 900 state employees have asked to receive our monthly update with news regarding resources, workshops and services. This figure has grown steadily since first implemented a year ago with 374 names.

Two essay questions were presented to users and non-users alike. As time permits we are making personal responses to individuals posing questions or specific suggestions.

8. Please describe other information services that could be of use to you.

There were 118 responses, many with very specific and concrete suggestions for the collection. The collection development committee will consider these.

9. Please provide any other comments or suggestions about library service.

There were 142 responses, most expressing congratulatory and appreciative comments regarding the library, its staff and its services. A selection of those was prepared for use at the budget hearing for MSL and is included here.

"Your customer focus is great. I see the state library as someone there to help me do my job. I like it when you take the initiative to study available resources, and propose to ME things I can use to improve my work. Time is always limited, and it is getting worse with the budget cuts. The more you can help, the better."

"I am truly thrilled at the number of resources that there has been developed on line."

"I like finding documents that address very specific topics relating to my interests and research. I most appreciate when I find very specific research publications that address a topic I have had poor progress finding material on."

"I have been extremely pleased with the services obtained from the State Library. The librarians are very responsive to requests and information is delivered very quickly, often with additional helpful suggestions. I've attended several of the training workshops which have been excellent and will save me much time in the future and also produce better quality results in getting necessary data"

"It (*state agency publications collection*) seems to be complete - I've never left the library without finding what I needed. It is accessible and library personnel are willing to help me if I ask."

"The library services are absolutely essential given the extremely limited resources of the DEQ. I rely heavily on both technical materials in the collection and interlibrary loan of key documents. NRIS is essential for my work. The state library budget should be expanded to allow adequate support of this valuable resource. The staff are extremely helpful!"

"I am intrigued by the workshops that you offer on search engines and databases, catalogs, etc. and hope to work some of them into my schedule in 2003. Thank you for your continued commitment to providing top-level services to state employees. The library is an invaluable resource to me. I would be nearly lost without it!"

"The workshops are fantastic! Thank you and keep up the good work. You perform a valuable service."

"Having access to the most current publications, particularly for the technical areas is important. However, it is also important to have access to earlier publications to be able to see directly how information cited in the newer publications was originally presented. Once information and the context is available, interpretations can be checked and hypotheses could be confirmed or new ones developed. I appreciate being able to have both older and current State and Federal technical documents, scientific texts, and MT historical volumes, etc. available for checkout both for work and for continued learning about topics of interest."

"I wish that your library services could be part of people's orientation so that it is known especially to those of us who are always searching the Internet for information."

"MSL is a GREAT resource, but so few people really know about it, how easy it is to use, how many ways it can be accessed, or even that exists for "us". . . . An "Awareness Campaign" could really help, I think. I know I could use it more, but I don't remember to use it."

"Staff are always pleasant and willing to help! This is really appreciated."

"Keep up the good work. I appreciate your emails about upcoming workshops."

"With the current budget constraints for the state, I am in hopes that this service is not negatively affected or a victim of cost reductions. Please keep this service available to all. Thank You.

*Submitted by Suzy Holt, Client Services Supervisor
February 2003*