
4.0 IMPACT AND LESSONS LEARNED

4.1 Impact Summary

Three years into a five-year plan for utilizing federal LSTA funds to benefit the libraries of Florida, the Division has demonstrated many successes and shown a large impact on Florida's citizens.

The first year of grant fund availability was dedicated primarily to establishing the FloriNet grants that increased public library infrastructure to the extent that, combined with e-rate and grants from the Gates Foundation, the public had free access to the Internet. This allowed public school students to continue their research and computer skills development after school in the same environment they had at school. In many cases, this free access was extremely beneficial, as many families could not afford to buy the equipment or pay the monthly ISP fees. This was truly lessening the "digital divide" as well as leveraging the LSTA funds into bigger and better results than could be achieved without the e-rate and other grants.

Immigrants and foreign visitors sought out public libraries to use free Internet access as their means—and in many cases, their only means—of communicating with loved ones around the globe. An interesting anecdote occurred during one of the library visits to a small, rural outlet. Two gentlemen from England, who were in America to bicycle from Boca Raton to Seattle, routinely stopped at the public library in the towns or cities they traveled through simply to use the free access for e-mail. They were at the computer when we were visiting. They coordinated their trip with relatives across the United States and kept in contact with their families back in England.

Professionals used the free access to improve their resumes and search for better employment around the world at little or no cost. Employers benefited as they could find employees who matched their requirements at a fraction of the cost because of the job

seekers Internet access. Businesses conducted research into how to survive in the digital world, and information-based companies flourished throughout the State, particularly in Southeast Florida.

Investors completed corporate research and followed business trends as well as stayed abreast of the tremendous amount of information available through the Internet. While the average stock market investor usually has the resources to conduct this type of research from the office or home, the free access leveled the playing field for those who needed to use every option at their disposal while limiting their cash outflow. Timely information is very useful, if not critical, in this environment.

The public conducted research into health issues. In many instances, a patient can do quality research into a given specialty and gather information that may even bring new treatment information to their attending physician.

LSTA funds were also used to train librarians in how to use their recently acquired equipment and access the Internet. This training was passed on to the customers and patrons. Many stated that this hands-on training was the only training they had received for computers and technology. The library was instrumental in removing the first-time user's fear of the technological complexities. Personal technical skills improved as people became knowledgeable of library technology.

LSTA funds were used as "seed" money for many local program experiments. This is arguably the best use of LSTA funds. In many cases, well-designed programs that fill communities' specific needs were initiated with LSTA funds and then picked up at the local level because of the benefits demonstrated to the community

Funds provided by LSTA grants were used to provide literacy and other programs where there were no other sources of funding in less fortunate communities. These programs, while benefiting those directly involved, also became a source of pride in

many communities. The public library has become known as a safe place for all ages to “hang out,” transforming libraries into community learning centers.

Access to information made available through the Internet means that each public library can offer their patrons and customers similar access regardless of the institution’s size. Economic growth was fostered because citizens could relocate to the smallest rural towns and still receive quality access to information resources.

LSTA funds were used to develop an electronic method of resource sharing. This concept immediately enlarges every collection without the tremendous investment usually associated with collection development.

Funding from LSTA grants also contributed to the conversion of collections and individual instruments into digitized editions that can be viewed and researched from anywhere access to the Internet exists. This provides significant cultural enhancement for all citizens.

Programs dealing with literacy, including the Born to Read program, have had a tremendous impact on participating patrons. Literacy is the key to better employment, individual productivity, and the development of self-worth. The entire community is benefited when all of its members are literate. Higher literacy rates are associated with lower crime rates, higher standards of living, cultural diversity, and greater levels of productivity. Florida’s literacy programs begin with customers not yet born and continue for citizens of all ages. LSTA grants have been used to launch family and adult literacy programs at libraries across the state. Many of these programs have been funded locally since their inception with LSTA money. The long-term impact of these programs will not be known for some time, but given the relationship between literacy and life success, these programs should have long-lasting benefits.

At this juncture, three years into the first cycle of LSTA funds, it is difficult to realize all of the benefits that have transpired and what they will evolve into as time progresses. Equally difficult is imagining where the public would be today had not the libraries shown the foresight of seizing the available opportunities over the past three years and creating programs that truly benefited individuals, groups, communities, and the state.

4.2 Impact of LSTA Funding on Libraries and Patrons

4.2.1 Librarians and Project Directors

This section describes the results of an electronic survey and questionnaire conducted via the Internet of librarians and project directors that took place between April 4, 2001, and April 26, 2001. Both instruments were designed to solicit information on the impact LSTA funding has made on individual libraries and the communities they serve.

Key library personnel in 67 counties, 6 multitype library cooperatives, and 5 academic and special libraries for a total of 78 units were notified of the survey on April 2, 2001, via mail and e-mail and asked to respond. Thirty-six (36) units responded, producing a response rate of 46 percent.

The survey and questionnaire were used as information-gathering tools to provide assessments of the LSTA grant programs from those librarians and project directors who are most involved with these programs. Some of the questions were closed-ended, but the majority were open-ended. This approach was deemed preferable because the majority of the information to be gathered was opinion-centered, and open-ended responses provide a richer explanation of the nuances and subtext of the answers provided.

To assess the extent to which the respondents were involved with the LSTA grant program, MGT asked them to indicate in which of the six LSTA grant components they were actively involved. A summary of their responses is provided below in Exhibit 4-1.

**EXHIBIT 4-1
LIBRARIANS AND PROJECT DIRECTORS
TOTAL NUMBER OF PROGRAMS**

| Program | Number Involved | Percentage Involved |
|--------------------|------------------------|----------------------------|
| Born to Read | 9 | 25% |
| Adult Literacy | 4 | 11% |
| Family Literacy | 8 | 22% |
| Technology Access | 30 | 83% |
| Computer Training | 13 | 36% |
| Electronic Content | 5 | 14% |

As seen in the exhibit above, Technology Access was the most frequently listed LSTA grant component utilized. Eighty-three (83) percent of respondents indicated that they were involved with Technology Access through the LSTA grant process. By contrast, a small percentage was involved with Adult Literacy (11%) and Electronic Content (14%). The other program components (Computer Training: 36%; Born to Read: 25%; Family Literacy: 22%) were used with low to moderate frequency.

Another usage indicator is the total number of grant component parts in which respondents were involved. Exhibit 4-2 shows the number of program components in which survey respondents were involved.

**EXHIBIT 4-2
LIBRARIANS AND PROJECT DIRECTORS
TOTAL NUMBER OF PROGRAMS**

| Number of Programs | Number of Respondents | Percentage of Respondents |
|---------------------------|------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 0 | 2 | 6% |
| 1 | 11 | 31% |
| 2 | 13 | 36% |
| 3 | 8 | 22% |
| 4 | 2 | 6% |
| 5 | 0 | 0% |
| 6 | 0 | 0% |

As seen in Exhibit 4-2, the vast majority of respondents were involved with between one and four programs. The modal (most frequently occurring) category was two. Significantly, only two indicated they were not involved with any programs.

In summary, most survey respondents were involved with between one and four grant components, with technology access the most prevalent program in which they were engaged. The next section addresses the overall attitude survey respondents had toward the LSTA grant program.

4.2.1.1 Overall Assessment of LSTA Grant Program

Two survey items addressed respondent attitudes toward the LSTA grant program's overall effectiveness. Librarians and project directors were asked to name the top three reasons to continue the LSTA grant programs with which they were involved, and what they would tell their representative in Congress if they were asked why to continue program funding. The former item is addressed in Exhibit 4-3; the latter is addressed in Exhibit 4-4.

Exhibit 4-3 reveals that access to information was the most frequently given reason to continue LSTA grant funding. Eleven (11) respondents mentioned this as a major reason to continue LSTA funding. Five (5) librarians and project directors indicated that LSTA grants were allowing patrons to access information that they would not otherwise be able to access in printed form. In addition, LSTA grants allowed libraries to fund new projects that they would not be able to fund using traditional resources. Other items frequently cited were general patron service, parent and children's programs, general literacy programs, and technology access (four respondents each). Twelve (12) other responses were provided that defied general classification.

**EXHIBIT 4-3
LIBRARIANS AND PROJECT DIRECTORS
REASONS FOR CONTINUING LSTA GRANTS**

| <i>Program</i> | <i>Frequency</i> |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Patron Needs | 4 |
| General patron needs | 3 |
| Community education and training | 1 |
| Access to Information | 11 |
| Access to poor and minorities | 3 |
| Access to information not printed | 5 |
| Internet access | 1 |
| Library loans | 1 |
| Government information | 1 |
| Funding for New Projects | 5 |
| Parent and Children's Programs | 4 |
| Parent reading programs | 2 |
| Children's programs | 1 |
| Family literacy programs | 1 |
| Technology Access | 4 |
| Technology training | 1 |
| Public technology access | 3 |
| Improving Literacy | 4 |
| Other | 12 |

In Exhibit 4-4, respondents provided their rationales for continuing LSTA grants. Rather than categorizing these responses, they are provided in their entirety. Some basic themes emerged in the responses. Far and away the most prevalent theme expressed was the need for LSTA funding to continue to provide access to information to people who have no other way to acquire it. Other commonly expressed themes were the need to provide additional technology training, the need for an educated and literate populace, expanding library borders, and the need for new programs that would not be funded through other means.

**EXHIBIT 4-4
LIBRARIANS AND PROJECT DIRECTORS
CONGRESSIONAL JUSTIFICATION**

| Comments |
|---|
| LSTA is a program worth continuing because, due to the grant structure which allows each library to address the individual needs of its own community, all citizens can share in the benefits just by visiting a local library and if the program were to be discontinued, citizens without personal resources such as computers would be left behind in the quest for personal knowledge and learning. |
| LSTA is an efficient program because it requires local libraries to provide matching funds; it is a partnership with a library, not a random handout of funds. It is worth preserving because it allows local communities to decide what will best serve the needs of that community and to apply for funds to help reach the goal; it does not attempt a "one idea fits all" approach that believes every library (and every community) is the same. |
| Without LSTA grant funding, people in these rural communities cannot enhance or improve their educational skills. This is because the counties are large but sparsely populated. The lifestyles of the people targeted by these grants impact not only them, but their families, as well. When the education of one family member is improved it provides a motivation for the others to become educated. They receive better jobs and better pay. |
| All U.S. citizens, regardless of their economic situation, where they live, or whom they know, need to have access to information. LSTA makes this happen! |
| Most people cannot afford a computer much less Internet access and it is only through the efforts of public libraries are the general populace getting access to the Internet and computer technology. Seniors are using the computers at the library to keep in touch with family and friends through e-mail. Teens are talking to other teens around the county and the world in chat rooms. This would not be possible for many of our customers without the funding to jump-start these programs from LSTA. |
| LSTA funds have allowed us to provide residents with information beyond the library walls. |
| LSTA Grant funds enable public libraries to provide your constituents with lifelong learning opportunities, information resources and a bridge over the digital divide. |
| We need to make a commitment as a truly united nationwide community to give our community members the resources that will ensure their social, educational, and economic success. |
| Born to Read program reaches people that would not necessarily be reached by schools, encouraging them to increase their own educational skills and interact and be the best, first teacher and advocate for their child's education. |
| It is in the best interest of the United States to provide a literate, educated public to deal with the strengths and weaknesses of a growing multicultural society which must play the role on international leadership. |
| Educational and training opportunities from around the country are accessed by our community and staff which would have been impossible in the past. |
| The LSTA funding provides a catalyst for new projects that answer customer needs that would not be possible without this funding. It stimulates further funding by local sources. |
| LSTA is an essential part of the development of new services for library patrons; it allows libraries to reach beyond local funding to experiment and try to develop new programs which will then be funded locally. |
| The library we're so proud of is the result of LSTA funding innovative services. |
| These programs impact their constituents in a cost-effective manner. |
| The program allows local libraries to initiate new services for targeted citizens who might otherwise not be aware of library resources to assist them in their daily lives. |

**EXHIBIT 4-4 (Continued)
LIBRARIANS AND PROJECT DIRECTORS
CONGRESSIONAL JUSTIFICATION**

| Comments |
|---|
| Reaching local needs of citizens is essential, and the grants enable libraries to reach more and better. |
| The library is THE lifelong and totally accessible learning institution in our region and it is energetically fulfilling a need for literacy activities. |
| LSTA makes services and resources directly available for citizens at their local public libraries and this small investment makes a large return in the enhanced quality of their lives. |
| These are needed programs in our area. These funds enabled me to start needed programs. |
| Funding has enabled the Regional Federal Depository Library to provide government information to every citizen in the State of Florida at no cost via the Internet. |
| These grant funds have allowed the Sumter County Public Library System to go beyond "basic" library services and offer quality collections and electronic resources free of charge to all Sumter County residents that would not be available through local budgets alone. |
| This program is essential to the continued provision of quality information services to all citizens. |
| LSTA grant funding is vital to meeting the growing needs of our library communities, and reaching out to those who would otherwise never have access to this kind of program. |
| The program is crucial to public library development in Florida. |
| Our patrons are benefiting from the LSTA "demonstration program" and subsequently providing documentation for local support. |
| The LSTA grant program has enabled the public libraries in the State of Florida to provide up-to-date technology to the general public and to have staff trained to teach the general public how to use this technology. LSTA makes the difference between "information have nots." |
| LSTA funding supports initiatives that broaden the accessibility and visibility of the public library and its services to taxpayers. These programs support education and enrich the lives of citizens who might otherwise be unaware of lifelong learning opportunities at the public library. |
| LSTA provides funding for programs that otherwise would not exist. We are not supplemented through our public school system or other government agencies. There is a limited number of dollars for adult literacy providers. |
| The small amount of funds spent on LSTA programs yields powerful results. Reading stimulates brain development, and is especially important in the critical first two years of life; Born to Read communicates this importance to parents. |
| The training that the library staff has gained allows the libraries to receive the maximum return on their Technology dollars. Without a trained staff the money spent by private organizations and the government at all levels would lie dormant. |
| Libraries must provide continuous technology training to their staffs so that they may continue to provide the best customer service to all internal and external customers. |
| Rural and underpopulated areas are served through this service, which normally would not be accessible. |
| The LSTA program enables libraries to better serve the public. |
| Provides opportunities for innovative programs not otherwise funded. |

In combination, the answers provided from these two questions reveal that librarians and project directors place a high degree of importance on continuing LSTA funding and have utilized this funding for core library services. Technology purchased through LSTA funding has enabled libraries to expand access to information and provide new programs to further community literacy. Additionally, the use of technology has served as a bridge to technological literacy and allowed library employees and the community at large to improve their technology skills through technology training. Obviously, funding is key for these programs. The following section provides additional information related to grant funding.

4.2.1.2 Leveraging Grant Funding

This section provides some additional information related to the ability of libraries to continue receiving grant funding and their ability to use this money to leverage other resources.

Survey participants were asked whether or not the programs initially funded by LSTA grants had been continued after the funding had ended. As seen in Exhibit 4-5 below, 86 percent of respondents indicated that programs were maintained.

**EXHIBIT 4-5
LIBRARIANS AND PROJECT DIRECTORS
PROGRAMS MAINTAINED AFTER FUNDING ENDED**

| Program Maintained After Funding? | Number | Percentage |
|--|---------------|-------------------|
| Yes | 30 | 86% |
| No | 5 | 14% |

Two (2) of the respondents that indicated their funding had not been continued were in the first year of the grant program and were not sure if other funding sources would be made available to support their programs. For those who indicated that funding was continued, several mentioned that funding sustainability was checked

beforehand and included in the grant process. Others were able to demonstrate their programs' success and were able to find alternative funding streams. As one respondent put it, "The grant projects have been widely accepted and praised. Local funding is then an easy sell to funding bodies." Others purchased hardware and software that did not require a great deal of continued funding from other sources.

LSTA grant money sometimes attracts partners that are able to supplement the initial LSTA funds. As seen in Exhibit 4-6 below, more respondents than not were able to attract partners that provide supplementary funding.

**EXHIBIT 4-6
LIBRARIANS AND PROJECT DIRECTORS
ABILITY TO ATTRACT PARTNERS**

| Able to Attract Partners? | Number | Percentage |
|----------------------------------|---------------|-------------------|
| Yes | 21 | 60% |
| No | 14 | 40% |

Although the ability to attract partners was not universal, 60 percent of respondents indicated they had been able to attract partners that provide additional program funds. These results indicate that most libraries were able to leverage LSTA funds to acquire additional resources. To further clarify this issue, survey participants were asked what other community or library programs they had been able to leverage using LSTA grants. The results, shown in Exhibit 4-7 below, seem to indicate that alternative resources were developed from a broad spectrum.

**EXHIBIT 4-7
LIBRARIANS AND PROJECT DIRECTORS
SOURCES OF LEVERAGED FUNDING**

| Leveraged Funding Source | Number | Percentage |
|---------------------------------|---------------|-------------------|
| School systems | 3 | 9% |
| State and local government | 14 | 42% |
| Business | 5 | 15% |
| Individuals | 2 | 6% |
| Foundations | 2 | 6% |
| Unspecified Partners | 7 | 21% |
| Total | 33 | 100% |

Exhibit 4-7 shows that the plurality of partners was in state and local government (42%). Other sources included unspecified partners (21%), business (15%), school systems (9%), individuals (6%) and foundations (6%). Another respondent indicated that programs provided with LSTA funds brought increased visibility to the library that resulted in potential future partnerships.

The partnership list shown in Exhibit 4-7 is probably not an exhaustive list, but it does reveal that LSTA grants attract partners from a wide range of organizations. Some examples of the ways that leveraging LSTA money by involving partners has helped libraries include:

- \$40,000 in educational software provided by a publishing company;
- family learning center provided by the local school system;
- collaborative selected purchase of a shared collection of e-books from NetLibrary;
- partnership with Florida Rural Legal Services to provide additional computers in housing projects;
- a contract with AT&T as a demonstration library to provide free two-way cable connection to all public and staff terminals.

The responses to this set of questions demonstrated that LSTA grant funds can serve as a bridge to additional resources. The most likely source of partnership activities were state and local government and school systems. Where mutual interests were served, businesses were also likely to become involved. Partnerships were able to supplement current resources in the areas of hardware, facilities, training, and additional grant success. As expected, partnerships were most likely to benefit library customers. The next section addresses the relationship between LSTA programs and library customers in greater detail.

4.2.1.3 Customer Impact

Library customers expect to receive a broad range of services, and LSTA grant funding was designed to help libraries provide some of these services. In Exhibit 4-8 below, survey results are provided showing the impact on a set of predetermined items.

**EXHIBIT 4-8
LIBRARIANS AND PROJECT DIRECTORS
LSTA GRANT FUND CUSTOMER IMPACT**

| Impact | Number | Percentage |
|---|---------------|-------------------|
| Enabled participants to attain personal goals set for the program | 21 | 58% |
| Enabled adults to get employment or improved employment | 11 | 31% |
| Enabled participants to get a GED | 7 | 19% |
| Provided access to computers and the Internet | 30 | 83% |
| Provided computer training | 23 | 64% |
| Provided access to information not otherwise available | 31 | 86% |
| Enabled participants to read with their children | 14 | 39% |
| Other | 11 | 31% |

As seen in Exhibit 4-8, survey responses correlate strongly with answers provided in earlier sections. The two areas where grant funding had the greatest impact were providing access to information not otherwise available (86%) and providing access to computers and the Internet (83%). The majority of respondents also indicated that LSTA funding helped provide computer training (64%) and enabled participants to attain

personal goals (58%). A smaller percentage indicated that grant funding enabled participants to read with their children (39%), enabled adults to get employment (31%), and enabled participants to receive a GED (19%). Thirty-one (31) percent said LSTA funding helped in other ways.

Since access to information was the leading customer impact provided with LSTA grant funding, it is useful to examine this issue in more detail. Survey participants were asked to list what types of information customers used as a result of LSTA grant funds that were not available before the grants. Their answers are provided in Exhibit 4-9 below.

**EXHIBIT 4-9
LIBRARIANS AND PROJECT DIRECTORS
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION PROVIDED BY LSTA GRANT FUNDING**

| Information Available | Number | Percentage |
|-----------------------------------|---------------|-------------------|
| Basic Internet information | 17 | 47% |
| Resources held by other libraries | 5 | 14% |
| On-line databases | 4 | 11% |
| Full text resources | 3 | 8% |
| On-line encyclopedias | 2 | 6% |
| County government information | 2 | 6% |
| Parenting information | 2 | 6% |
| Legal information | 2 | 6% |
| Medical information | 2 | 6% |
| Self help material | 1 | 3% |
| Special collections | 1 | 3% |
| Chat rooms | 1 | 3% |
| Class manuals for on-line courses | 1 | 3% |
| Spanish materials | 1 | 3% |
| NetLibrary | 1 | 3% |
| Talking books | 1 | 3% |
| Thematic maps | 1 | 3% |

As seen in Exhibit 4-9, the most frequently provided response was basic Internet information (47%). Due to the wide variety of information provided by the Internet, many respondents chose not to provide specific details about what types of information customers accessed. However, other types of information were referenced. For

example, 14 percent indicated that customers now had access to resources held by other libraries because of LSTA funds. Others cited access to on-line databases (11%), full text resources such as magazines and reference books (8%), on-line encyclopedias (6%) and a host of other available information. Topical information included legal and medical information, parenting instruction, self-help material, and materials printed in Spanish. Clearly, LSTA funding is helping library customers access a broad range of information they would not otherwise be able to access.

Given the array of information provided by LSTA grant funding, survey participants were asked to assess how well LSTA grant programs met their customers' needs. Their answers are provided in Exhibit 4-10.

**EXHIBIT 4-10
LIBRARIANS AND PROJECT DIRECTORS
CUSTOMER NEEDS ASSESSMENTS**

| Degree to Which LSTA Grant Programs Meet Customer Needs | Number | Percentage |
|--|---------------|-------------------|
| Not very well | 0 | 0% |
| Somewhat | 3 | 8% |
| Very well | 33 | 92% |
| Total | 36 | 100% |

The information presented in Exhibit 4-10 shows that librarians and project directors overwhelmingly believe that LSTA grant funding programs meet customer needs. Ninety-two (92) percent responded that LSTA programs meet customer needs “very well” and the remaining 8 percent indicated that programs “somewhat” match customer needs. Significantly, none of the respondents thought that LSTA grant programs did not match up well with customer needs. To demonstrate customer satisfaction, some librarians and projects managers provided comments. A sample of these comments are listed below.

- The literacy programming for children has been very well received; we are just beginning to establish programming for adults.
- Funding provided for this program allows the customer a real choice of the means by which technology training is delivered.
- Our evaluation surveys show that customers learn from "Born to Read" programs.
- Our customers' expectations of access to information are being raised with the growing public awareness of technology and its possibilities.
- Customers are very pleased with what we have to offer and request more.
- Our current grant is answering the expressed needs of small business owners and potential owners for the information they need.
- Both the FloriNet and Born to Read grants were successful in meeting their objectives.
- We have many students who come to the library with homework. CHARGE allows them to have the same electronic resources available to them at the public library that they had at school.
- Our libraries need technology training and bibliographic skills and products. Interlibrary loan support is critical. The LSTA programs seem to continue to support those needs.

These comments reveal that customers are impacted by LSTA grant funding in a positive way that they would not have been without the presence of grant funding. In fact, librarians and project directors indicated that LSTA grant programs are changing the very nature of their customer bases.

When asked how LSTA money was changing their customer base, respondents gave a far ranging number of answers. Only one respondent indicated that their customer base was not affected by the LSTA grant funding. However, even this respondent said that while the customer base had not changed, it was receiving improved services. The most common response was that because of LSTA programs, libraries were increasing the number of customers served. Nearly all respondents

indicated this was true to some extent. In addition to increasing customer traffic, respondents indicated the composition of their customer base was changing and becoming more diverse. Among the types of new patrons were:

- Teenagers
- Adults
- Children
- Hispanics
- Tourists
- Winter residents
- Students
- Senior citizens
- Homebound
- Adult caretakers with preschool children
- People who wouldn't use the library before but who use it now on-line.

In addition to increasing patron number and diversity, LSTA programs have changed the manner in which customers use the library. For example, one respondent said,

"Many of our students have never been active library customers (some haven't been in a library before), but by making presentations in the community, advertising, creating mutually beneficial partnerships, we are forming bonds. We are become an institution in this city; a haven for those with limited resources. Libraries are typically populated by the most literary people in our community. We are bringing those who might not normally view themselves as literary (but so badly want to be) into our world!"

Another respondent observed that customer computer use increased even when circulation decreased. The impact of technology is reflected in the following quote.

"We have patrons who come into our libraries solely to utilize the Internet workstations. Our statistics reflect computer use has skyrocketed, while circulation and ILL services have declined over the last four years."

Computer usage at libraries has improved user skills. One respondent described the customer base in the following manner: "They have become more computer literate and savvy information users." In addition to technology usage, other changes included wider review of low vision materials and increased use of resources by social service

agencies and early childhood education departments. One library agency reported that attendance increased 50 percent at their events because of LSTA grant funding.

As LSTA supported programs have been rolled out, customer expectations may have increased with the rise in service provision. Survey participants were asked if they had observed any change in customer expectation levels. Two participants chose not to answer this question, while four indicated that they had not observed an increase in customer expectation levels. However, 30 of the 36 respondents (83%) indicated that customer expectations had risen to some degree. The manner in which expectations changed is reflected in Exhibit 4-11 below.

**EXHIBIT 4-11
LIBRARIANS AND PROJECT DIRECTORS
CHANGE IN CUSTOMER EXPECTATIONS**

| Change in Customer Expectations | Number of References | Percentage of References |
|--|-----------------------------|---------------------------------|
| More and varied services | 6 | 18% |
| Computer access | 6 | 18% |
| Cutting edge new services | 5 | 15% |
| Providing fast, accurate answers | 4 | 12% |
| Youth programs and services | 4 | 12% |
| Computer training | 3 | 9% |
| Research capabilities | 2 | 6% |
| Outreach | 2 | 6% |
| Community resource center | 1 | 3% |
| Total | 33 | 100% |

Exhibit 4-11 shows that general expectations have risen in the area of increased and diversified service provision (18%). However, 33 percent of all references listed specifically mentioned either computer access (18%) or cutting edge technology services (15%). When computer training is added (9%), over 40 percent of all references made about increased expectations were related to the provision of technology and technology training.

Other references were more service oriented. For example, 12 percent of all responses concerned higher customer expectations for answering questions quickly and accurately. In other words, a significant number of library customers expect librarians to be able to produce quick, accurate information with the technology they now possess.

Other areas in which customers have higher expectations include youth programs and services (12%), outreach programs such as bookmobiles and visiting librarians (6%), research capabilities (6%) and expectations related to facilities (3%). One of the respondents may have summarized customer expectations best with the following quote:

"Our customers have come to expect technological advances as an intrinsic library service—they are coming to see the library as being in the forefront of progress, and they are grateful."

LSTA grant programs have, for the most part, raised customer expectations. However, to what extent have the grant programs changed or evolved to meet customer needs? When asked this question, most survey participants provided examples of how their individual programs had evolved. However, a substantial number of participants either provided no answer (19%) or could not make an evaluation because their program was in its first full year (8%). Of those who did provide a response, few themes emerged. Several respondents described how they had moved from hardware acquisition to training, while others focused on their ability to streamline their programs and eliminate duplication. Additionally, several respondents mentioned that the grant process itself had been changed by LSTA and that they had become more outcome focused in their approach. These comments reflect the shift by IMLS and the State Library of Florida toward an outcomes-based evaluation model which will be used with the LSTA application. In Florida, the LSTA grant awards for FFY 2001 and 2002 will be evaluated using the outcomes-based evaluation model developed by the Division. The

Division has conducted workshops to educate librarians and directors in the use of outcomes in the implementation and evaluation of the grants.

In summary, librarians and project directors believed that LSTA grant funded programs were meeting customer needs. They indicated that these programs had increased and diversified that customer base by bringing new and different types of people to libraries. Many of these new customers used library resources without ever entering the libraries themselves. With an increase in service came an increase in expectation levels, but the manner in which libraries have structured their approaches to meeting customer needs over time seems to be unique to each situation. The following section addresses some of the different administrative issues that librarians and project directors must contend with when working with LSTA grants.

4.2.1.4 Program Specifics

Provision of LSTA grant money has the potential of changing a library's organization. Respondents were asked if such change had occurred in their libraries. Eleven respondents (31%) either declined to respond or indicated that LSTA funding did not change their library's organization. The remaining 69 percent responded that they had changed their organizations. Listed below are the ways in which librarians and project directors responded that LSTA funds had changed their library's organizations.

- Added staff (11);
- Changed/split positions (3);
- Changed training (2);
- Increased the importance of the System Librarian (1);
- Eased communication (1);
- Added a new branch (1);
- Centralized technology services (1);
- Changed the physical layout (1);
- Led to partnerships that extended their services (1); and
- Changed cataloging and circulation practices (1).

Added staff was easily the most frequently provided response. Several respondents also noted changes in position descriptions and training. However, few specific operational changes were specified.

Although few specific operational changes were listed, most respondents did indicate that librarian position descriptions had changed. Fourteen (14) respondents indicated that position descriptions had been changed to include more technology skills. Three (3) other respondents noted that technology training was included in the position descriptions of some library personnel. Other position description changes included outreach functions, partnership coordination, social service requirements, family literacy, and grant writing coordination.

The inclusion of LSTA grant funding has led some libraries to collect performance measurement information that they had not previously collected. The types of measurements collected, and not reported to the division, are displayed in Exhibit 4-12.

As seen in Exhibit 4-12, a relatively small number of libraries collected information that was not reported to the division. The information that was collected covered a relatively broad range. Most of the measurements concerned user counts and evaluations.

**EXHIBIT 4-12
LIBRARIANS AND PROJECT DIRECTORS
PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENTS COLLECTED
FOR LSTA GRANT PROGRAMS**

| Measurement | Number of References | Percentage of References |
|---------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Surveys and interviews | 2 | 15% |
| User comments | 2 | 15% |
| Web site hits | 1 | 8% |
| Customer evaluations | 1 | 8% |
| Circulation figures | 1 | 8% |
| Number of students served | 1 | 8% |
| Literacy gains | 1 | 8% |
| Duration in program | 1 | 8% |
| Attendance logs | 1 | 8% |
| Home literacy activities | 1 | 8% |
| Evaluations | 1 | 8% |
| Total | 13 | 100% |

One use of the collection of performance information might be to analyze program functions. This analysis may lead to revisions in program provision. Survey participants were asked to provide reasons for revising the specific LSTA grant projects in which they were involved. Their responses are listed in Exhibit 4-13.

**EXHIBIT 4-13
LIBRARIANS AND PROJECT DIRECTORS
REASONS FOR REVISING LSTA PROGRAMS**

| Reason for Project Revisions | Number of References | Percentage of References |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Change in funding | 7 | 27% |
| Change in technology | 4 | 15% |
| Change in scope | 4 | 15% |
| Change in personnel | 4 | 15% |
| Change in scheduling | 3 | 11% |
| Change in objectives | 2 | 7% |
| Change in evaluation | 1 | 4% |
| Change in vendor | 1 | 4% |
| Change in publicity needs | 1 | 4% |
| Total | 27 | 100% |

Exhibit 4-13 shows that the majority of changes took place in the areas of funding (27%), technology (15%), scope (15%), and personnel (15%). In some cases, local funding increased allowing for program expansion. In other cases, funding declined and programs had to be scaled back. One respondent reported that technology costs had declined significantly, allowing them to do more than what they had anticipated. Overall, the data in Exhibit 4-13 reflect that librarians and project directors are using information to assess their programs and make revisions as necessary.

As librarians and project directors prepare for the future, they are guided by past experiences. One area where this is particularly true is learning from the grant application process itself. Survey participants were asked if they had received an explanation for why they had been denied a grant. Those participants that had never been denied a grant were instructed to answer “does not apply.” The results are shown in Exhibit 4-14.

**EXHIBIT 4-14
LIBRARIANS AND PROJECT DIRECTORS
DENIAL EXPLANATION INFORMATION**

| Explanation for Denial | Number | Percentage |
|-------------------------------|---------------|-------------------|
| Yes | 19 | 54% |
| No | 2 | 6% |
| Does not apply | 14 | 40% |
| Total | 35 | 100% |

Forty (40) percent of all respondents were never denied an LSTA grant. However, of the remaining 21 respondents, 19 indicated that they had received an explanation. Thus, 90 percent of all relevant respondents received explanations for their grant rejections. When asked if the reasons provided were clear, 88 percent of respondents (15 out of 17) indicated that the explanation they received was clear.

4.2.2 Library Directors

In this section the survey responses of library directors will be presented and analyzed. Seventy-eight (78) library directors were provided a set of six open-ended questions regarding the LSTA grant program. Thirty-nine (39) directors provided responses; thus a 50 percent response rate was achieved. Due to the survey's brevity, the data are presented in a question and answer format. For the first five questions, response data are presented in tabular form and accompanied with analysis. The responses to the final question are presented in their entirety because the responses would lose their basic essence if presented in abridged form.

Q1. What impact has the LSTA grant funds had on your customers?

As seen in Exhibit 4-15, library directors provided a wide range of responses to this item. LSTA grant funds provided customers many essential services, but the most frequent response given was providing computer access to the public. Library directors also frequently cited the impact of LSTA money on basic service delivery, access to information, and technology training. With 42 percent of the responses related to technology, it is clear that library customers have come to expect libraries to provide basic computer access and the information that accompanies it. As one respondent put it, "LSTA funding has enabled library patrons to access the Internet and other on-line informational resources and to use these tools to improve their knowledge base and quality of life."

**EXHIBIT 4-15
LIBRARY DIRECTORS
LSTA GRANT FUND IMPACT**

| Customer Impact | Number of references | Percentage of references |
|---|-----------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Public computer access | 11 | 19% |
| More and improved services - general | 8 | 14% |
| Access to information | 8 | 14% |
| Technology training | 5 | 9% |
| Increased access for traditional nonusers | 4 | 7% |
| Enhanced literacy | 3 | 5% |
| New materials | 3 | 5% |
| Improved automation | 2 | 4% |
| Bilingual services | 2 | 4% |
| Family programs | 2 | 4% |
| Library utilization | 2 | 4% |
| Collections | 2 | 4% |
| New and unique programs | 2 | 4% |
| Outreach | 1 | 2% |
| Database | 1 | 2% |
| Facilities | 1 | 2% |
| Total | 57 | 100% |

Technology is not the only area in which LSTA grant funds impacted library customers. Library directors cited the impact that grant funds had on basic literacy, especially for traditional nonusers, families, and non-English speaking patrons. As one library director said, "LSTA funds have brought increased awareness of the approachability of the library in communities that were nonusers." To reach nonusers, libraries use LSTA funds to engage in outreach programs. To further respond to their patrons' needs, library directors targeted LSTA money to purchase new materials and special collections, and prepare facilities for accommodating technology. As a result, library directors reported that circulation increased.

Q2. How have your library services changed due to the LSTA grant funds?

Based on the responses to this survey item (Exhibit 4-16), LSTA funding has been responsible for a wide range of changes in library services. Many library directors did not cite specific changes, but indicated instead that LSTA funding was responsible for a

**EXHIBIT 4-16
LIBRARY DIRECTORS
CHANGES IN LIBRARY SERVICES**

| Changes to library services | Number of references | Percentage of references |
|------------------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Increased and improved services | 11 | 22% |
| Computer access | 6 | 12% |
| General access | 4 | 8% |
| Outreach | 4 | 8% |
| Training | 4 | 8% |
| On-line catalog | 4 | 8% |
| Staff awareness and interaction | 3 | 6% |
| Partnerships | 3 | 6% |
| Childrens | 3 | 6% |
| Facilities | 2 | 4% |
| Service automation | 2 | 4% |
| Other | 5 | 10% |
| Total | 51 | 100% |

general increase in service provision and overall quality enhancement. Twenty-two (22) percent of all references mentioned this general level of improvement to service quality and quantity. One example included the following comment:

"We have begun many innovative services that we have used LSTA funds for pilot projects. These are things that we may otherwise not have been able to accomplish if we had to rely solely on local funds."

An additional 32 percent of all references dealt with improved access to computers (12%), facilities (4%), information (8%), and general access (8%). The following quote is fairly typical:

"Since we have provided electronic access to the holdings and technical reports there has been an increased number of users in the library, and an increase in services provided via phone, mail and email."

LSTA grant funding also impacted library operations. Twenty-six (26) percent of all references pertained to library operations, including training (8%), staff awareness and patron interaction (6%), providing access to on-line catalogs (8%), and improved service automation (4%). The following comments illustrate the value of LSTA funding:

"Circulation is automated which enables us to track overdue materials and recover them more quickly. We provide an on-line catalog because of the conversion of our old card catalog to electronic records. This on-line catalog allows us to quickly locate materials for patrons and place reserves for material that is checked out currently. The library is now able to tell customers exactly how many books they have checked out and to supply a quick printout of the titles. Because interlibrary loans can be handled through the circulation system, customers now receive much faster service because we borrow more items directly from local partners."

"The demand upon staff participation and personal interaction with the patron has increased dramatically. The staff must be an active participant in the quest for information with or without a literate patron."

Library outreach (8%), provision of children's programming (6%), and forming more partnerships (6%) comprised an additional 20 percent of all references. This demonstrates that LSTA funding played a significant role in the attempt to expand the scope of library operations and heighten their appeal to the community. As one library director said:

"We have increased the amount of outreach we are doing by a huge amount. We are getting out into the community to see many new people who we haven't seen before. We are exposing new people to the realm of library services."

The remaining 10 percent of references defied simple classification. Most dealt with specific programs and materials purchased with LSTA funds.

Q3. *What benefits to your library have resulted from the LSTA grant funds?*

Exhibit 4-17 shows the ways in which library directors indicated that LSTA funding has benefited their libraries. While the range of benefits is impressive, it is doubtful if the information contained in Exhibit 4-17 is comprehensive. Some respondents indicated that LSTA funding had benefited their libraries in so many ways that listing them all would not be practical.

**EXHIBIT 4-17
LIBRARY DIRECTORS
LIBRARY BENEFITS PROVIDED BY LSTA FUNDS**

| Library Benefit | Number of References | Percentage of References |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------------|
| More computers/technology | 8 | 12% |
| Increased services/general | 7 | 10% |
| Community awareness of services | 6 | 9% |
| More books and materials | 6 | 9% |
| More patrons | 5 | 7% |
| Training | 5 | 7% |
| Increased services/specific | 5 | 7% |
| Access to electronic information | 4 | 6% |
| Internet access | 4 | 6% |
| Positive perception | 4 | 6% |
| Reaching underserved | 4 | 6% |
| Community center | 3 | 4% |
| Children/family literacy | 3 | 4% |
| Automation | 2 | 3% |
| More staff | 2 | 3% |
| Total | 68 | 100% |

The response that appeared with the greatest degree of frequency was an increase in the availability of computers and basic technology (12%). When Internet access (6%), automation (3%), and access to electronic information (69%) are added, the percentage of technology references rises to 27 percent. Library directors used the funding to replace old equipment and bring current technology to old systems. The following quotes are illustrative:

"The addition of three new computers made Internet utilization possible for our patrons. Many of our older computers are 'down' and will not be replaced. The new machines were very welcome. We now have a collection of CDROM materials as well as a bilingual collection of children's books. We will be adding electronic educational toys."

"The library's ability to provide access to on-line and electronic informational resources is due to LSTA grant funding. This is of immense benefit to library patrons, particularly those who are without the means to buy or maintain a computer at home or for other reasons do not have a home computer."

A surprising number of responses concerned the benefit of using LSTA funds in building library awareness (9%) and generating a more positive perception of library services (6%). Since 15 percent of all references concerned image building and promoting public awareness, it is evident that LSTA funding is helping libraries build a broader constituent base. The following comments demonstrate the importance of LSTA funds in this area.

"The image of libraries in our community has improved greatly. Prior to the [Public Library] Cooperative, 57% of our county residents did not have access to a public library. The availability of new technology has increased library usage. Citizens are proud of their libraries and interested in improving services."

"LSTA funds have led to increased awareness of library programs; more informed populations; and knowledge of the Library as a place to acquire all types of knowledge and information."

Seventeen (17) percent of all responses related to the provision of general (10%) and specific (7%) services. Certainly, the expansion of services is central to the LSTA grant program. One respondent cited the following example,

"The nicest benefit is that library materials are actually being used! The old card catalog had 2,400 items listed in it. The on-line catalog has over 6,000 records."

Other benefits that libraries have received include more books and materials (10%), increased training (7%) and access to electronic information (6%). Perhaps the clearest summary of LSTA benefits was provided by the respondents who said:

"LSTA grant funds benefit our library by allowing us to provide enhanced and expanded services, purchase necessary equipment for new services and help us gain new community partnerships."

Q4. If the LSTA grant funding ended, what impact would there be on your library and customers?

When asked what they would do if LSTA funds were discontinued, library directors were succinct in their responses (Exhibit 4-18).

**EXHIBIT 4-18
LIBRARY DIRECTORS
IMPACT OF LOSS OF FUNDS**

| Impact | Number of References | Percentage of references |
|----------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Unable to expand services | 14 | 27% |
| Program cuts/reductions | 12 | 23% |
| Hinder technology use | 9 | 17% |
| Staff cuts | 4 | 8% |
| Loss of information access | 4 | 8% |
| Economic loss in community | 4 | 8% |
| Training cuts | 3 | 6% |
| Loss of outreach | 2 | 4% |
| Total | 52 | 100% |

One-half (50%) of all references concerned either the inability to expand services (27%) or cutting/reducing programs that are already in place (23%). This indicates that LSTA funding has been a vital source of revenue for the start-up and maintenance of library programs in many areas of the state. The following comments are indicative of the attitudes expressed in the responses.

"It would severely limit expanding our services into new areas. We would not be able to try many new and innovative projects. We would not be able to spread the word in the community about libraries in the dramatic and effective ways that the grant funding allows us to."

"Our library would not have the opportunity to offer innovative and needed services as our patron's needs change, and our patrons would have needs that sadly went unfulfilled."

"An end of funding would very likely mean an end of expansion of services; our County funding would probably serve to continue basic maintenance of services, but no enrichment, no development, and no growth. The result would be, in effect, stagnation."

"For family literacy, the services would go to part-time or no-time staff people to implement the programs. Services would be drastically cut. There would be far fewer or no workshops, classes, or trips."

Another 25 percent of library director responses mentioned the hindrance of technology use (17%) and a loss of informational access, particularly electronic access

(8%). Access to information, and the means to access it, are two of the most highly demanded services that these libraries provide, and without the ability to fill these needs, library traffic is likely to decline noticeably. The following comments were typical:

"The impact would be distressing. State and local funding allows the libraries to provide basic services. It would be impossible to provide any new technology or services without LSTA."

"Without LSTA funds, our library would be unable to undertake innovative programs which use technology to facilitate access to information."

"Technological change would be slower and narrower in scope. Existing programs would be maintained, but would be narrower in scope."

In addition to technology and service cutbacks, library directors pointed out that local economies would suffer if libraries had to scale back services. As one respondent said:

"There would be a dramatic decline in economic impact to community. A strong library promotes and encourages a stronger sense of community. Without funding support (the only supplemental revenue source available to municipal libraries) the additional electronic expansion would be severely affected."

According to library directors, other areas where loss of grant funding would have an impact included loss of outreach (4%), training cuts (6%), and staff cuts (8%). Perhaps the best summary comment was provided by the respondent who said:

"We could no longer pilot new services or programs. We could not offer the number of training opportunities we give our users. We could not provide the level of Internet service we now offer."

Q5. How have the LSTA grant funds assisted in meeting your library's goals?

Fewer responses were provided for this item than for the others. The most frequently given response (Exhibit 4-19) was that LSTA grant funds helped libraries meet technology goals. Nineteen (19) percent of all responses mentioned the role of

**EXHIBIT 4-19
LIBRARY DIRECTORS
WAYS IN WHICH LSTA GRANT FUNDS HELP MEET LIBRARY GOALS**

| Meeting Goals | Number of References | Percentage of References |
|-------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Providing Technology | 5 | 19% |
| Outreach to underserved | 4 | 15% |
| Service goals | 4 | 15% |
| Special programs | 3 | 12% |
| Serving population | 2 | 8% |
| Access to information | 2 | 8% |
| Long range planning | 1 | 4% |
| Automation | 1 | 4% |
| Training | 1 | 4% |
| Community center | 1 | 4% |
| Literacy goals | 1 | 4% |
| Facilities | 1 | 4% |
| Total | 26 | 100% |

LSTA funds in meeting technology goals. One director put it quite succinctly by saying, "The grants have allowed us to meet our technology goals." The remaining comments were very diverse and somewhat specific to the libraries' individual goals. Some of the more pertinent comments are provided below.

"We are able to reach families and adults that otherwise would have missed out on the opportunity to improve their life and educational skills."

"All LSTA projects help us to achieve our mission "to maintain and improve library services reflecting the informational, educational, and recreational needs of our diverse community."

"We have had many goals in our five year plan which LSTA has enabled us to meet. For example, we have a goal to expand services to senior citizens and teens. Through two projects this year we were able to offer new services to these under served groups."

"LSTA grant funds have assisted us in our goals of resource sharing access to materials, and services to patrons who have difficulty using library services."

"LSTA grant funds have enabled us to fully meet our library automation goals. Without the funding, our conversion from manual to automated systems would still be in just the planning and hoping stage."

The comments above show a strong desire on the part of library directors to maintain, or possibly even expand, the LSTA grant program. Specific, as well as general, goals are fulfilled through the use of LSTA funding, and the withdrawal of such funding would have a serious impact on obtaining their stated objectives.

Q6. What one statement would you make to a member of Congress that would most strongly support the continued funding of the LSTA grant program?

Exhibit 4-20, following, contains the comments from library directors on their views of continuing support.

**EXHIBIT 4-20
LIBRARY DIRECTORS
JUSTIFICATIONS TO CONGRESS**

| COMMENTS |
|--|
| Please do not allow the disadvantaged of this nation to be forgotten or fall by the wayside. LSTA funding is critical to our nation's future. The public library is the only agency that provides education, lifelong learning, and information access free of charge to all ages, from infants to senior citizens. |
| Please help underfunded libraries help people to read, and provide up to date technology so all people may have a hand in the age of technology, regardless of income. |
| Our library has very limited funding which limits how we can grow, change and adapt to the new world of technology. LSTA funds play a crucial role in helping libraries stay up-to-date and current with technology in meeting the information needs of a free, democratic society. Libraries depend on diverse sources of funding to meet the many needs of a diverse community. LSTA is an important part of our funding because it enables us to try new things and meet new needs. |
| The training that the library staff has gained allows the libraries to receive the maximum return on their Technology dollars. Without a trained staff the money spent by private organizations and the government at all levels would lie dormant. |
| Florida's Gulf Coast is one of the fastest growing areas in the country. This growth impacts all aspects of the environment as well as the marine life that abounds in the surrounding waters. Through the LSTA grant funds we are able to disseminate to the general public, local government officials and environmental professionals the information and knowledge found in the studies, collected papers and technical reports produced by the Mote scientific staff. |
| Your continued support has made the difference between an unserved, welfare-dependent non-English speaking population and an eagerly learning, adaptive and promising one. |
| LSTA grants enable even libraries serving rural and disadvantaged communities to provide access to a world of knowledge. |
| LSTA grants substantially improved public use of technology to access libraries and other critical information. LSTA funds have established linkages among different types of libraries, built service partnerships between all types of libraries, and provided a wide range of technology training. |
| LSTA funds provide seed money for the innovations that are becoming possible in the corporate sector to occur in libraries of all types. LSTA funded projects in past years have built a strong foundation for library resource sharing. This benefits the public and students by enabling access to information and materials to rural populations, inner-city populations and all residents equally without regard to distance from a large and strong library. |
| The ability to use electronic resources to get information is critical to success in school and in the workplace. LSTA funding makes an impact on local communities by making resources and training available free at local public libraries. |
| Without LSTA funding, the Winter Park Public Library would still be in the 19th Century in terms of collections and services offered. LSTA has allowed us to purchase the necessary infrastructure to be on-line with our services and collections expanding accessibility to information well beyond the library's walls. |

**EXHIBIT 4-20 (Continued)
LIBRARY DIRECTORS
JUSTIFICATIONS TO CONGRESS**

| COMMENTS |
|---|
| The LSTA grant program is our key to growth and development, especially in the area of technology. Without this help, the digital divide would become an impossible chasm. |
| Without LSTA funds our customers would still be receiving basically the same services they did in 1941 when this library opened: a card catalog, stamped circulation cards; and access to reference and information resources limited to what was in the building. Because of LSTA funding they have access to 21st century services, including a modern circulation system, internet access to unlimited information resources, and an on-line catalog. |
| Without LSTA funding many public libraries would be unable to provide computers, Internet access, and training to their customers. The public library is the only means many of our customers have to access the Internet and computers. Public libraries have become the one location that closes the "digital divide" in America so that everyone has equal access to technology regardless of their economic level. Public libraries are not only providing free access but they are also providing free training that many of our customers could not otherwise afford. |
| LSTA Grant funds provide needed library services to all of your constituents, regardless of age, race or economic level. There is a tangible return on every LSTA dollar spent through your local public libraries. |
| Without LSTA funding, small libraries serving rural communities would not be able to provide relevant service to anyone. |
| These dollars are essential at the local level to provide critical services to ensure a literate-rich society. |
| LSTA grant funding provides money for projects that provide information to residents of our area. I feel that access to information is the key to an involved citizenry. |
| When you improve the life of one individual it impacts the lives of others. This improvement will help reduce the number of individuals receiving aid. |
| Small rural libraries need the support of LSTA funds so that their libraries are able to serve all their residents in a safe, healthy, accommodating facility which provides their life-long learning needs through up-to-date materials, historical research, and recreational reading--especially the reading needs of their youngsters. |
| This makes high quality government information equitably available to everyone in Florida. Before, most could get such information only if they could come to the library. |
| LSTA provides funds so residents have access to information. |
| LSTA grant funds have allowed our financially challenged, very rural county library system to go from the 19th to the 21st century in offering quality library collections and electronic resources without charge to all Sumter County residents. |
| LSTA provides a funding source that is unconditional; a library must apply and be accepted, however, like God's grace is not based upon good deeds or individual works. |

**EXHIBIT 4-20 (Continued)
LIBRARY DIRECTORS
JUSTIFICATIONS TO CONGRESS**

| COMMENTS |
|--|
| A few years ago we interviewed children and staff at a local community center. There was little awareness of the library or how the community could use the library. In one instance, an eight year old girl received a failing grade because her mother could not bring her to the library to complete an assignment. Today, the center has a link to the library, a small collection of books for homework and for reading, but most importantly, those children fill the downtown library everyday. By reaching out just a little, the library has opened the door and now we are filled to the brim with children bicycling and riding their scooters to one of their favorite places. |
| We are able to reach people via the funding that often would simply recede into the background of our communities. |
| Without LSTA funding the library system's services of which you and I are so proud would not exist. |
| Experimental and unique programs are established because of LSTA. These programs then become standard services which increases the range of services offered to the public. I have watched many programs which we began because of LSCA or LSTA become major components of our service, service which may never have been offered if it had not been for LSTA original funding. |
| Library services are limited only by the lack funds and the lack of imagination of those in charge. |
| LSTA grant funds have given us the tools to provide better, faster service. You gave us the ladder, we climbed it. |
| It is a benefit to all citizens. |
| The LSTA grant program is crucial for the development of public libraries in Florida. |
| Enables libraries to provide services they would not normally be able to provide. Also, introduces new services to library clients that might become part of the mainstream services. |
| LSTA GRANTS WORK. They are bringing federal dollars to individuals in some of the most needy areas of our country. Over 70 percent of the children in our counties are eligible for free or reduced school lunches. We have a large population of migrant children. With additional staff, technology and books provided by LSTA funding, we have enriched the lives of our families. Library circulation has grown by 25% since our literacy grant began. Please keep the funding in place to continue what we have just begun in our state. |
| Ability to initiate innovative programs not otherwise funded from tax moneys |
| If I made a list of the LSTA grants we have received in the past twenty years and then listed how far we have come in that time, you would see what a huge percentage of the library 's gains are directly attributable to LSCA. Families with low reading skills need to be reached as early as possible during their child's development program like Born To Read make a difference in children's lives with very little cost to the country and empower parents to be their children advocate and teacher. |

4.2.3 Summary

The purpose of this section was to document the attitudes of librarians, project directors, and library directors towards the LSTA grant program. While it is not surprising that key library personnel would view a program that provides library funds favorably, it is somewhat surprising to observe just how many different ways customers have been impacted and libraries have been able to use these funds to expand library services and improve library operations. LSTA funds were used to do the following:

- increase and improve library services;
- provide greater community access to computers, the Internet, and other technology;
- provide access to more materials to a greater number of people;
- expand library outreach programs to children and parents;
- allow greater outreach and subsequent access to nontraditional users;
- encourage the development of more partnerships between libraries and businesses, school districts, foundations, and other libraries;
- promote the use of libraries as community centers;
- allow libraries to automate processes to become more efficient;
- obtain additional resources through the leverage of LSTA money;
- purchase books and other needed materials;
- provide additional technology training for library staff and patrons;
- increase library traffic;
- improve staff awareness and patron interaction; and
- allow more access to remote locations.

From a functional standpoint, most libraries used LSTA funds to provide greater technology access. This resulted in the expansion of access to greater amounts of information, much of which was provided in electronic formats. The data show that 86

percent of libraries maintained their funding after LSTA grant funds ended and that 60 percent of libraries used LSTA money to attract additional partners. Libraries leveraged LSTA funds to obtain additional funding, much of which came from state and local government and community businesses.

From a customer perspective, programs funded with LSTA funds were highly successful. This is particularly true in the area of technology. Eighty-three (83) percent of libraries reported that LSTA funds helped provide access to the Internet, and 64 percent reported that customers received computer training. As a result, 86 percent of libraries indicated they were able to provide access to information that was otherwise not obtainable. Access to these resources and the ability to use technology are critical to functioning in today's information-based economy. Ninety-two (92) percent of libraries reported that LSTA programs met customer needs "very well" and that, as a result, customer expectations have increased.

To meet customer expectations, many libraries have added staff members and implemented additional information gathering techniques to receive customer feedback. As a result, libraries have revised LSTA programs to meet current expectations within their given budgetary conditions.

If LSTA funding ended, the impact would be dramatic. Many libraries would be unable to expand services or would need to cut back on current programs. Technology access would be reduced, and some libraries would be forced to cut staff and training. The following quote, provided by a library director, probably best summarizes the opinions of survey respondents about the programs funded by LSTA funding:

"LSTA grants substantially improved public use of technology to access libraries and other critical information. LSTA funds have established linkages among different types of libraries, built service partnerships between all types of libraries, and provided a wide range of technology training."

Librarians, project directors, and library directors all indicated that their environments would be significantly different had LSTA grant funds not been available for program initiatives, infrastructure, access, training, and support. Library functions have changed radically with the infusion of technology resources and access.

Outreach programs focused on literacy to different target populations have improved the lives of citizens that likely would not have been impacted in such a manner by any other societal institution. Communities have pulled together around the local library to the extent that the library in many communities is a central meeting place and fills a part of the patrons' lives on a routine basis.

Technology and information access have fueled the longest and greatest expansion of our national economy for two decades. The library migration to the position of providing free access to the latest technology has allowed all levels of our society to benefit from this information explosion. By taking the lead in providing this access to all citizens, the library has elevated itself to a premier status in the eyes of the communities. One could argue that libraries have not only survived but thrived due to their ability to foresee the need for change and develop a mechanism through a grant process to achieve desired changes.

4.3 Recommendations and Lessons Learned

Findings and Recommendations for Goal 1

Goal 1 - All of the people of Florida have equitable access to the world of information through libraries.

Strategic Direction I.1: Provide valuable networked information to libraries and the public and enhance the use of networks, advanced telecommunications, and the Internet.

Objective 1A: By 2003, Florida residents will have access to 20 percent (3,364,297) more holdings in all Florida libraries no matter where they live, increasing access from the 1996 figure of 16,821,484.

Recommendation: We commend the Division for attaining this objective. Since the objective has already been achieved, we recommend that the current approach be maintained. We also recommend that the multitype library cooperatives work more closely together to determine common public demand and act to meet these common demands.

Objective 1B: The public will have free electronic access to information resources from 90 percent of the 33 state agencies referenced in Florida Statutes via the Florida Government Information Locator Service (FGILS).

Recommendation: We commend the Division for attaining this objective. We recommend that the Division work with any remaining Agencies that are not working with FGILS. We also recommend that the Division work to expand county and local representation and actively promote the FGILS to the public.

Objective 1C: The Division will make available to all libraries cost-effective group access to electronic databases.

Recommendation: We recommend that the Division actively pursue the strategies outlined in the strategic plan and request that the Department of Management Services work with vendors to produce a single statewide price for database access. In addition, we recommend that the collection be included as part of a statewide virtual library that is made available to all state supported libraries via the World Wide Web.

Objective 1D: Ninety-five percent of public library outlets will have direct digital public access with full graphical interface to the Internet/World Wide Web by 1999.

Recommendation: We commend the Division for achieving this objective. We recommend the Division continue assisting libraries with providing access as technology evolves.

Objective 1E: Ninety-five percent of libraries will connect to telecommunications networks and participate in the Florida Library Network by 1999.

Recommendation: We commend the Division for obtaining this objective. We recommend the Division continue the current approach and work to identify libraries with restricted access and develop an action plan to expand access in areas with restricted access.

Strategic Direction 1.2: Facilitate distance learning in public libraries.

Objective 2A: By 2000, public libraries will have the necessary technology to facilitate distance learning in 75 percent of service outlets.

Recommendation: Although this objective was attained, the ability of libraries to facilitate distance learning effectively is somewhat questionable due to access restriction. Additionally, we did not find evidence of coordination between public libraries and local educational systems. We recommend that the Division work with the libraries to identify those libraries with restricted access and develop action plans to expand access. We recommend the Division explore methods of providing more personal

computers to alleviate long periods of waiting and allow longer periods of use that can facilitate distance learning. Understanding that space may be an issue in many libraries, the Division may want to explore the use of wireless technology.

Strategic Direction I.3: Increase the public's timely access to materials and information through reciprocal borrowing and interlibrary loan.

Objective 3A: Fifty percent of the population of Florida will be served by libraries that participate in a reciprocal borrowing program by 2002.

Recommendation: We commend the Division for obtaining this objective. However, due to the declining participation rate, we recommend that the Division designate an individual to monitor this objective and work with libraries that are not part of the reciprocal borrowing program to further enhance the effectiveness of this program.

Objective 3B: Ninety percent of libraries will digitally transmit interlibrary loan requests by 2001.

Recommendation: Since the Division is close to obtaining this objective, we recommend that the Division continue to implement current strategies. Renewed educational efforts in libraries where digital transmission is not practiced are essential. Also, the Division must identify any technological issues that may prevent libraries from submitting digital requests and work with the multitype library cooperatives to resolve these issues.

Strategic Direction I.4: Encourage development of public policy in support of free access to information.

Objective 4A: Policies supporting free access to information are established and maintained.

Recommendation: We recommend that the Division specify more clearly how this objective can be attained and provide a set of more clearly defined goals in this area. Additionally, we recommend that the Division ascertain how effectively current policies are implemented.

Findings and Recommendations for Goal 2

Goal 2 - Florida's libraries receive the guidance and leadership they need for ongoing development and excellence.

Strategic Direction II.1: Provide consulting services to public libraries to encourage best practices.

Objective IA: All 67 counties will have countywide public library service that qualifies for the State Aid to Libraries Program funding by October 1, 1998.

Recommendation: Continue monitoring this objective.

Objective 1B: Public libraries and multitype library cooperatives will receive two planned consulting visits each year, and all libraries will receive a response or referral to 80 percent of their information requests within three days.

Recommendation: We recommend that the Division explore means by which all libraries can receive consulting visits. Such means may include combining site visits and conducting sessions via teleconferencing, video conferencing, or other distance learning methods.

Strategic Direction II.2: Identify and address the critical issues in Florida's communities that Florida libraries can impact.

Objective 2A: By 2002, at least 10 critical issues that impact Florida's communities will have been addressed.

Recommendation: We commend the Division for attaining this objective. We recommend that the Division continue to actively monitor progress in these critical issue areas and provide the necessary resources to complete the specified action plans.

Findings and Recommendations for Goal 3

Goal 3 - People of Florida use their libraries and value them as essential to their communities.

Strategic Direction III.1: Obtain and support adequate funding for Florida libraries, multitype library cooperatives, and the Division.

Objective IA: Libraries and library supporters will have accurate, timely information and support that result in incremental and phased improvement.

Recommendation: We recommend that the Division clarify the causal link between the strategic direction and the objective. While we believe that a direct correlation between funding and phased improvement exists, the Division must rely on indirect measures to infer that adequate funding was made available.

Strategic Direction III.2: Demonstrate the value, effectiveness, and efficiency of libraries.

Objective 2A: Identify at least one key statewide library program annually to analyze in-depth and communicate results to customers and stakeholders.

Recommendation: While overall communication with the Division is viewed favorably, we recommend that the Division act more assertively to provide feedback to individual libraries and the multitype library cooperatives regarding specific program evaluations. We also recommend that the Division increase its efforts in making the results clear and meaningful to libraries throughout the state.

Objective 2B: Two percent increase annually in use of local public library services.

Recommendation: We recommend that the Division continue to implement the strategies associated with this objective and review the impact that electronic access might have on attaining this objective.

Strategic Direction III.3: Ensure that the public, key decision makers, and the library community are aware of library services and issues

Objective 3A: Public libraries and multitype library cooperatives are satisfied with communication with the Division.

Recommendation: Although the surveys indicate overall satisfaction with Division communications, anecdotal evidence suggests that some libraries do not believe that the Division is effectively communicating research results and overall direction. We recommend that the Division add a communication outreach component to their consulting visits.

Objective 3B: Two target audiences identified through a marketing plan will receive customized information that increases their awareness of Florida library services and those of the Division each year, starting in 1999.

Recommendation: We recommend that the Division identify new target audiences and implement the original strategies set forth in the strategic plan.

Overall Recommendations

The following recommendations are based on an overall review of the Division's implementation of LSTA grant funds as reflected in the Division's strategic plan.

Recommendation: We recommend that the Division shorten the current strategic plan by one year. Since the majority of Division objectives have been achieved, the current plan can be considered a success. The Division can build on this success by developing a new strategic plan that reflects the Division's current objectives and changes in the state's technological, social, demographic, and political landscape.

Recommendation: We recommend that the Division provide a closer alignment of strategies, objectives, strategic directions, and goals in its next strategic plan. We found that in many cases these components were not closely coordinated, thus making evaluation unnecessarily complicated.

Recommendation: We recommend that the Division make the development of a Virtual Library a priority in its next strategic plan. With many states already operating virtual libraries, library customers will increasingly come to expect the state to offer a centralized Web site that links together library resources across the state.

Recommendation: We recommend that the Division focus its marketing efforts to build greater support in local communities. Increased citizen support is the key to obtaining additional funding, whether it is at the local, state, or federal level.

Recommendation: We recommend that LSTA money continue to fund literacy projects. Besides being politically popular, literacy programs represent the best opportunity for return on investment dollars.

Recommendation: We recommend that the Division identify more clearly defined goals for the literacy program and collect more individual level data concerning the impact of the literacy program.

Recommendation: We recommend that the Division implement a longitudinal study of the Born to Read program. While we believe the program to be successful, a study that documents the program's long-term impacts will identify any potential problems and allow for more efficient resource allocations.

Recommendation: We recommend that LSTA funds be used to improve access to electronic resources. The FloriNet initiative has been very successful, but many libraries need additional terminals and wiring to maximize the return on previous investment.

Recommendation: We recommend that LSTA funds continue to be used as "seed money" for bold, innovative programs. Our assessment shows that the implementation of LSTA grants has been overwhelmingly successful. LSTA grant funds have been used to accomplish the following:

- Infrastructure development
- Public access to technology
- Initial and continued literacy programs
- Additional staff
- Staff and customer training
- Digitized content development
- Consultative services.

We believe that the Division has successfully achieved the goals that it specified in its last strategic plan. It has been a good steward of LSTA grant money and has accomplished many worthwhile tasks. However, the environment has changed dramatically in the past three years, and the Division would do well to survey the current environment and develop a new strategic plan that better reflects the challenges of today's environment. Many items in the existing strategic plan need to be updated and refined, and some issues that did not exist at the time must be addressed. Fortunately, the Division is in a strong position to begin the next strategic planning process, and should move to have a new plan in place while the existing plan is being completed.