

Why worry about technology skills?



Great Expectations



- How can we learn what others see as key technology skills?
- How can we assess our own skills?
- How can we grow our skills?
- How can we stay aware of technology trends?

Library Technology Skills Survey



- November/December 2008
- 9 questions; Web-based
- Marketed to 14 electronic discussion groups
- 1,800 responses
- All types of libraries – mainly academic (54%)
- 80% hold an MLS
- ≤ 10 years (36%), ≥ 21 years (35%)
- 27 technologies or skill areas

Primary area of responsibility



- Cataloging (16.4%)
- Library administration (16.3%)
- Reference (13.7%)
- Library IT/systems (10.2%)
- Instruction (8.1%)
- Circulation (4.6%)
- Eight other areas at 2.5% or less

- Other (19.2%)

What did the survey reveal?



Most common technologies and skills



1. E-mail (97.9%)
 2. Word processing (96.2%)
 3. Web searching (94.1%)
 4. Searching library databases (92.7%)
 5. Using an integrated library system (86.3%)
 6. Web navigation (80.7%)
 7. Teaching others to use technology (79.1%)
 8. Spreadsheets (78.3%)
 9. File management/operating system navigation (62.3%)
 10. Troubleshooting technology (61.9%)
- Next 3:
 - Presentation software (60.1%)
 - Scanners (57.8%)
 - Database software (54.1%)

Bottom five technologies and skills



- Computer programming (8.5%)
- Other (wikis, cataloging, course management) (9.8%)
- Network management (10.9%)
- Assistive/adaptive technology (18.1%)
- Graphic design (21.3%)

Somewhere in the middle



- Educational copyright knowledge (47.6%)
- Creating online instructional materials (43%)
- Making technology purchase decisions (40.2%)
- Installing software (38.7%)
- Web design (36.7%)
- Instant messaging (32.6%)
- Computer security knowledge (28.4%)
- Blogging (28.2%)
- Installing technology equipment (24.9%)

Other skills: a sampling



- “fixing printer problems-because IT takes an hour+ to come over and do anything about it”
- “E-games: Wii, etc.”
- “Music and Video editing”
- “Accounting software”
- “microfilm readers”
- “creating macros”
- “Adobe Photoshop”
- “Facebook, MySpace”
- “making posters, bulletin boards, etc.”
- “ripping audio”
- “use of digital cameras and the software for them”
- “Unofficial software testing-IS knows if we can’t break it, it’s probably OK for the rest of their customers.”

Jacks of all trades



Respondents chose, on average,
13.9 of the 27 technologies or skills



Top areas for self-improvement:



- Web design/HTML
- Various Web 2.0 applications (blogs, wikis, etc.)
- Creating databases/MS Access

I wish my library had:



- Blogging
- IM
- Podcasting
- SMART Boards
- New integrated library system
- Wireless (access, printing)
- Staff who know web design, web 2.0, programming, graphic design
- More people!
- “. . . more enthusiasm for new technologies”

What can we learn from these results?



Introspection



- Do survey results and learning desires match my situation?
- How would I answer the survey?
- What would I like to know more about?
- What do I wish could happen in my library?

Assess your learning needs



- What do I know? What should I learn in order to know X?
- Combination of standard expectations and locally-defined needs
- Explore established lists of competencies/tasks
- Make your own list



Do-it-yourself competencies



- Identify an area
- List what you can do
- List what you'd like to learn to do (ask others)
- Chart your progress
- Rinse; repeat



Pursue continuing education



- Libraries need to be committed to continuing education (1.5% rule)
- Internal options
- External options
- Broaden your knowledge!



Internal Options



- Time to explore – play!
- Technology petting zoos
- 23 Things: @ WebJunction search 23 things summit – also [Helene Blowers 23 things](#)
- Webinars – WebJunction, vendors, etc.
- Make training a regular activity in the library

External Options



- Conferences
- Workshops
- Participation in online discussions
- Participation in local technology interest groups
- Informal visits to other libraries

Share what you know



- Serve as a resource
- Gain confidence by assisting library patrons
- Assist colleagues
- Participate in teaching training sessions

Stay aware of technology trends



- Chapter 2 of my book
- [Cites & Insights](#) (Walt Crawford)
- [LITA Top Tech Trends](#)
- [Seven Things You Should Know About](#)
(EDUCAUSE)
- [Glengage](#) blog (Glen Horton)
- [Library Success](#) wiki
- [Web4Lib](#) electronic discussion group
- [TED Talks](#) (brief videos on technology, education, and design)

How do we put it all to work?



A personal strategy



- Have a list of what you'd like to learn
- Pursue professional development
- Build a network of people who know more
- Read a good book or some good blogs or tweets
- Teach others what you already know

Questions?



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