

Measuring Library Costs and Benefits Books and Resources

American Library Association. *Articles and Studies Related to Library Value (Return on Investment)*. [Online] Available www.ala.org/ala/ors/reports/roi.htm.

Comprehensive bibliography of books, articles, and downloadable reports, studies, and presentations on library valuation and return on investment. Updated periodically.

Americans for Libraries Council. *Worth Their Weight: An Assessment of the Evolving Field of Library Valuation*. [Online] Available americansforlibraries.org/LFF_Resources_P.html#wtw. May, 2007.

Part of the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation funded "Building Knowledge for Library Advocacy" initiative, this report provides an excellent introduction to the emerging field of library economic valuation. Summaries of seventeen valuation studies, of various kinds, are provided.

Elliott, Donald S., Glen E. Holt, Sterling W. Hayden, and Leslie Edmonds Holt. *Measuring Your Library's Value: How to Do a Cost-Benefit Analysis for Your Public Library*. American Library Association, 2007.

Based on more than a decade of development and testing, this book provides a methodology for conducting a cost-benefit analysis in large to medium-sized public libraries.

Friends of the San Francisco Public Library. *Providing for Knowledge, Growth, and Prosperity: A Benefit Study of the San Francisco Public Library*. 2007.

Excellent study conducted by Berk and Associates, Seattle, Washington. Explains both economic and social benefits of SFPL, provides explanation of methodologies used. Extremely well written and presented information. Available by request from anne.wintraub@friendssfpl.org.

Levin, Driscoll & Fleeter. *Value for Money: Southwestern Ohio's Return from Investment in Public Libraries*. [Online] Available 9libraries.info/.

Study conducted to identify the economic impact of nine public library systems in four counties in southwestern Ohio. Findings indicate nearly a four to one return on taxpayer investment, using conservative valuation techniques and a Household Expenditure multiplier. The website provides links to the full report, reports developed for each individual library, summaries and a PowerPoint presentation.

Library Research Service (www.lrs.org)

The Library Research Service, a unit of the Colorado State Library, generates research and statistics to inform decision-making in library and information management. The website contains a cornucopia of information and numerous links to other resources.

Return on Investment in public libraries is a topic covered, with links to an ROI calculator and to recent public library ROI studies conducted in Colorado and elsewhere.

Matthews, Joseph R. *Measuring for Results: The Dimensions of Public Library Effectiveness*. Libraries Unlimited, 2004.

Very readable overview of a number of approaches that can be taken to demonstrate effectiveness and value. Matthews analyzes input, process, and output measures and combines these with economic and social benefits measurements, explaining when and how to use each type of measurement.

OCLC. *Libraries: How They Stack Up*. [Online] Available www.oclc.org/reports/2003libdstackup.htm

Although a little dated now, this brief report provides a snapshot of the economic impact of libraries by making clear, colorful comparisons to other service providers in our society. This is good information to have and a wonderful resource for stimulating effective comparisons libraries could make to highlight the breadth and impact of what they do.

Olson, Christine A. "What's in It for Them? Communicating the Value of Information Services," *Information Outlook*, November 2002, 18-23.

Olsen, a librarian and marketing specialist, writes about value and identifying arget markets in order to develop "value profiles." She then discusses the importance of communication and branding value.

Project for Public Spaces. "Why Libraries Matter More Than Ever", *Making Places Newsletter*, April 2007. [Online] Available www.pps.org/info/newsletter/april2007/

The entire issue of this online newsletter is devoted to public libraries and how they are redefining themselves as community center for the 21st century. Numerous articles provide examples of what public libraries all over the country are doing to establish themselves as places that revitalized and anchor communities.

Public Agenda. *Long Overdue: A Fresh Look at Public and Leadership Attitudes about Libraries in the 21st Century*. [Online] Available www.publicagenda.org/research/research_reports_details.cfm?list=99.

This study found that while libraries are valued and seen as potential solutions to many community problems, funders are reluctant to consider libraries a funding priority and community residents, even those who value libraries highly, don't realize the stiff competition for funding libraries face. Consequently, there are important community gaps that libraries could fill and important messages that libraries must convey.

Rodger, Eleanor Jo. "What's a Library Worth? Putting together the structure of value," *American Libraries*, September 2007, 58-60.

Trenchant library thinker Rodger offers a framework for understanding the basic structures beneath libraries' assertions of value so that they can communicate more effectively with those on whom they depend for resources and those who depend on

libraries for services. Introduces the concept of libraries being part of larger host systems.

Smith, G. Stevenson. *Managerial Accounting for Libraries & Other Not-for-Profit Organizations*. Second edition. American Library Association, 2002.

Explains accounting methods that fit the library and not-for-profit worlds. Clearly written, with numerous examples and exercises to walk you through various sets of analyses, evaluation methods, and accounting processes.

Southern Ontario Library Service. *The Library's Contribution to Your Community: A Resource Manual*. Second edition. Southern Ontario Library Service dmA Planning and Management Services, 2007.

This manual was developed to assist public libraries in demonstrating their value to their communities in terms meaningful to funders. It guides readers through the development of a Contribution Strategy based on key community issues. Many good ideas about how to demonstrate the link between library service priorities and community issues, along with suggestions for information to collect to substantiate the link.

Urban Libraries Council. *The Engaged Library: Chicago Stories of Community Building*. [Online] Available www.urbanlibraries.org/publications/details.html

This report shows how libraries can be active, responsive parts of their communities and agents of change. The report looks closely at several branches of the Chicago Public Library and the roles they and the staff who work in them play in community building and community development, showing multiple layers of involvement.

Urban Libraries Council. *Making Cities Stronger: Public Library Contributions to Local Economic Development*. [Online] Available www.urbanlibraries.org/publications/details.html.

This study was commissioned to look at how public libraries contribute to the human dimension of economic development. In the process, researchers also uncovered more evidence of the important contributions public libraries make to strengthening places and community quality of life.