

Customer Satisfaction Survey 2008: Select Excerpts from Customer Responses

How have libraries made a difference in your life (or that of your child(ren))? Our customers responded with their personal stories:

“The library has been a huge factor in my life. I am 79 years old and was a foster child. I used to wish I could sleep on a cot between the stacks at night and the info from the books would flow into my mind. The books and building gave me a sense of security, a place to rest, a place of answers.”

“Having access to a library has provided me with great enrichment and a haven for reflection. I am from a third world country and I have learned new skills by reading available books on “do-it-yourself” jobs. I have improved my English skills through the ESL books, the TOEFL books, the bilingual (French/English) books. At the time I did not have a computer and I could check my email and retrieve precious information on the Internet.”

“When I came to this country from Ireland, the library was the Golden Door to the land of opportunity. When I found the Library, I knew that everything was going to be OK and that anything was possible, driver’s license, citizenship, undergrad and grad school. Now in retirement the library continues to be a lifeline.”

“In 1947, when I was to turn 7 yrs. old, the only gift I wanted for my birthday was my own library card. My wish was granted! I can still remember my favorite series of books –stories about twins who lived in European countries. I dreamed of seeing those places. I learned two foreign languages and found a job, which enabled me to be paid for visiting the lands of the twins and others for 38 years. My interest in the world began at age 7 in the children’s section of my local library.”

“I do not own a computer at my house. The library provides these resources such that I may compete with mainstream America’s job/employment sectors.”

“Access to the Internet is vital for me because I don’t own a computer and that is my mode of contact for my friends in other countries. Also with the economic crisis, it has become the communication vehicle of choice.”

“Since childhood, I have used public libraries extensively. Access to books turned me into a reader and ultimately I became a professor!”

“Books enabled me to learn about the world outside my small hometown. They let me travel to foreign lands before I could go there myself. They taught me many of the things that I never learned in collage or on the job. But most of all, books opened up a whole new world of my imagination and set me on the road to being a writer. “

"I enjoy reading and learning; public libraries allow me to do so at an affordable price! Also, several community service organizations that I belong to are better able to serve because of the free resources the library provides: safe central meeting space, programs that can be integrated into what we provide to the community, etc."

"I come to the library daily to get a start on homework and upcoming projects. On one occasion, I used a laptop with the library's Internet service to complete a research project. My baby sister loves coming to the library for 'story time' and to check out books and DVDs."

"I do not think there is another institution beside school that has provided me with more information and knowledge. The positive effect and influence in facilitating the attainment of knowledge is too great to write it on four lines."

"The public library opened doors on worlds I have never visited. It has always been the real "People's University." Something as indispensable as the telephone, electric utilities or running water. It nourishes life."

"I have always felt that libraries are one of the greatest assets in our country. I gain great personal pleasure from reading and listening to books on tape driving to work. I am a single parent of two children, one with a serious disability, and the library has helped me cope through inspiration, shared pleasure with my kids and information."

"I consider the library my home away from home. I enjoy the atmosphere and the feel and friendliness and the activity of the place. I have listened to two talking books a week for about 16 years, which has enriched my life. The library is my favorite taxpayer benefit and also a benefit to society. Those 1664 books I listened to were ALL library books, first in Brunswick, Maine and most recently in Olney. The library benefits a democracy. Keep it strong and staffed and full. Thank You."

"At a time when my children were young and my husband unemployed, I bought the kid's clothes at Goodwill and marked-down food at the grocery store. BUT when we went to the library, we were wealthy! We could be gluttons checking out books and tapes. We were affirmed as valuable members of the community. And we learned much and enjoyed our time together."

"My three children have been able to learn the joy of reading at an early age and it has made a huge difference in their academic success!"

"As a foreigner and newcomer to the area, it is a place I can go and feel comfortable and welcome without feeling out of place."

"I've had access to vital information to better my life, where if not for the library, I would not."

"English Conversation Classes help me to meet new friends who come from every country and improve my English."

"It is so refreshing to not have to pay for enrichment of the mind."

“Very positive influence. My children are voracious readers thanks to you folks! Also, I discovered books on tape/CD because of the library.”

“Libraries show my children in the digital age that research can still be done well with books. I love the history books on tape. I feel like I take college classes while I am in traffic.”

“The library was “the Oracle” when I grew up in New York. And continues with efficiency and a smile in Maryland.”

How are we doing in achieving the Library’s mission? Our Customers had some suggestions for us:

I believe that the Library is on top of its mission except some constraints such as the limited computer facilities.

I only suggest more programs for older children ages 9-11 and 13 and up!

Generally, I think MCPL is achieving the mission. Computer access or wi-fi access still seems limited.

More room is needed for people to plug in laptops. Add more computers for general use, especially on the weekends; more chairs needed – there is often no chair to sit on when I come to the library.

Please include materials that can be more relevant to other cultures, or perhaps increasing programs that can be “culturally diverse.”

I feel that the library’s mission is being achieved but there is room to improve the area of technology, access to outlets to plug in your computer outside in the open areas, more technology and more adult programs.

We’d like more teen programs, music, book groups, and programs during the day for homeschoolers.

I’d like more programs. The ones that are done are great.

I have totally been dependent on these libraries for use of computers, printers, Internet services for communication, job search, educational Web surfing and others. I also used library for reference materials and job search.

As far as resources go, more computers would be a great help....otherwise, excellent.

I would like to see a program with extended computer access – like the copy machine, a pay-per-hour computer made available.

The library is doing fine. Maybe more staff could be hired for assistance to the public – more seating would help.