



Impact of PCCs: A US Public Library Perspective

John Carlo Bertot

Director and Professor

Information Policy & Access Center

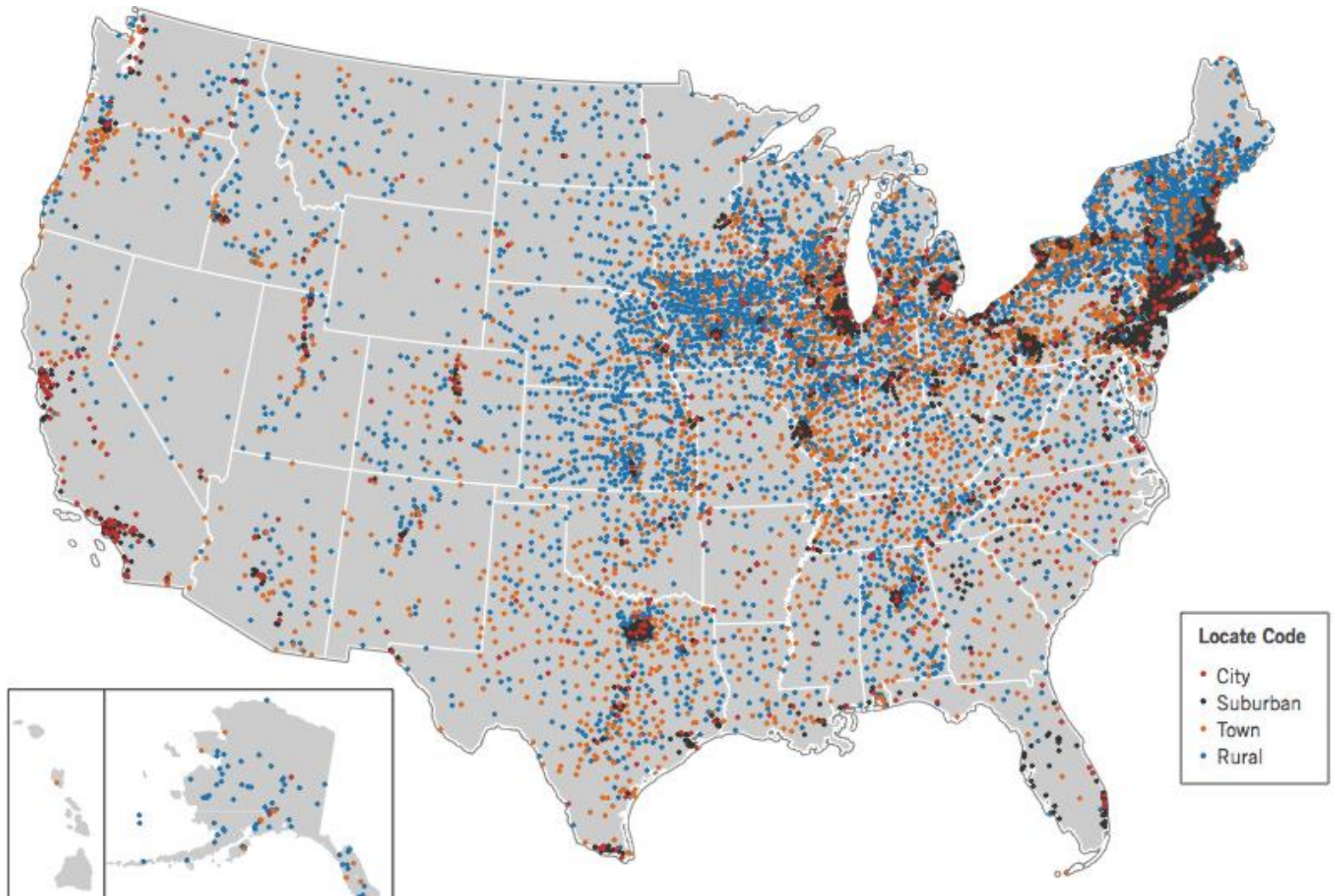
College of Information Studies

University of Maryland College Park

jbortot@umd.edu

www.plinternetsurvey.org

Public Libraries in the US



Public Libraries and the Internet

- Longitudinal data collection since 1994
- Provides snapshot of what libraries offer their communities:
 - Library public access technology infrastructure
 - Capacity
 - Internet-enabled services
 - Challenges and issues
 - Funding

Why the survey?

- Data about what libraries do in their communities in key areas of
 - Access to the Internet
 - Access to increasingly digital-only content and services
 - Digital literacy
 - Digital inclusion

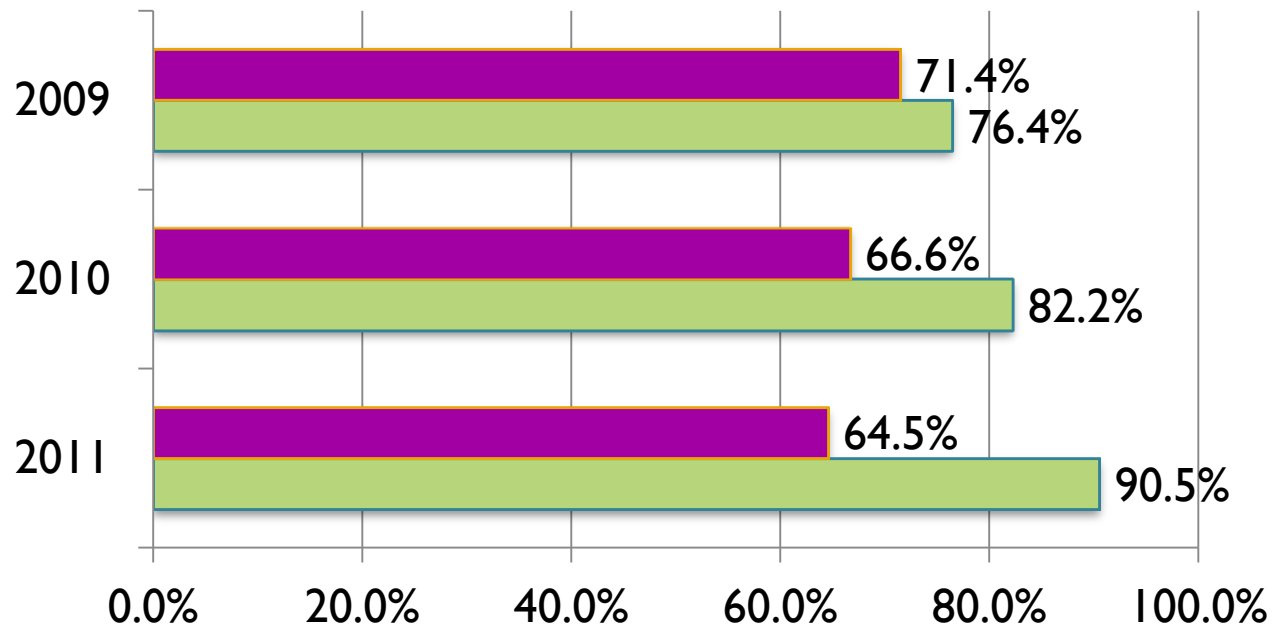
Methodology

- Data are collected at both the branch (outlet) and system (administrative entity) levels
- Typically receive response rates that range from 70.0% to 84.3% (numbers of responses range from 5,500 to over 8,400)
 - 7,260 responses (82.5%) in 2011-2012

Community Access Points

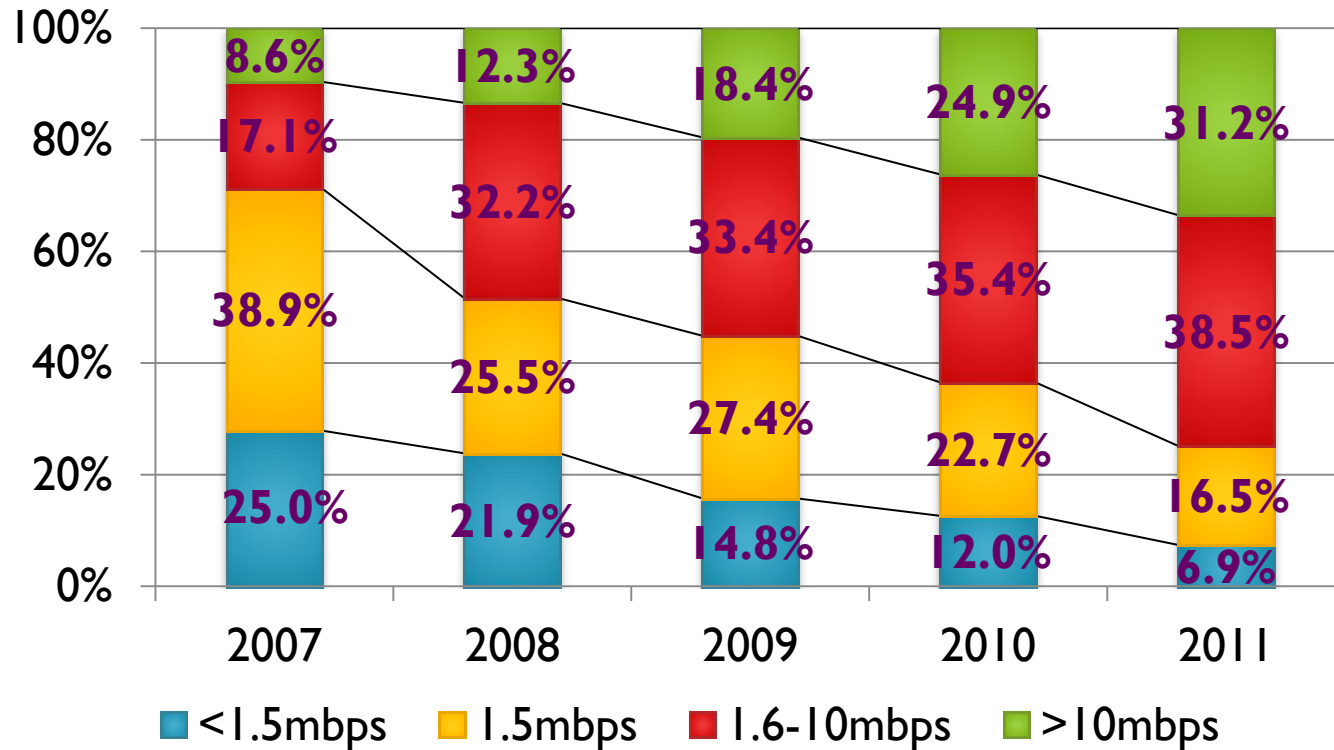
- 62.1% of library branches report that they are the only provider of free public computer and Internet access in their community
- 90.5% provide Wi-Fi

Wi-Fi and Free Access Provider



Community Access

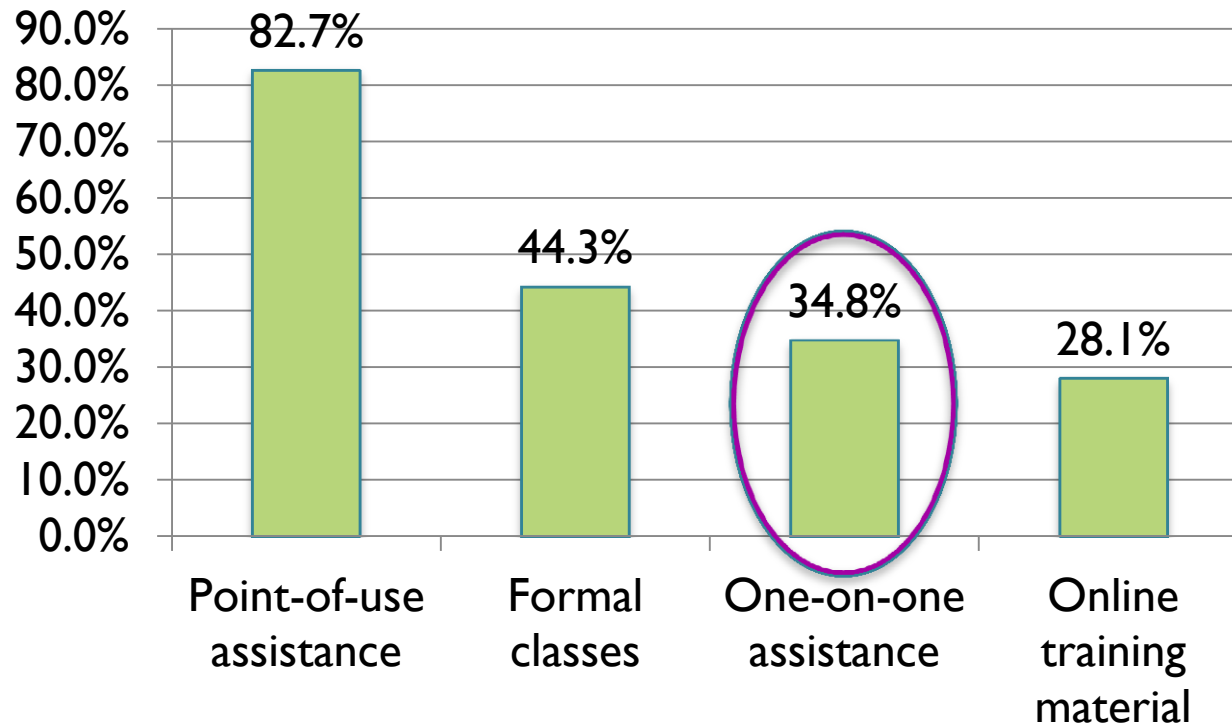
Broadband Connectivity



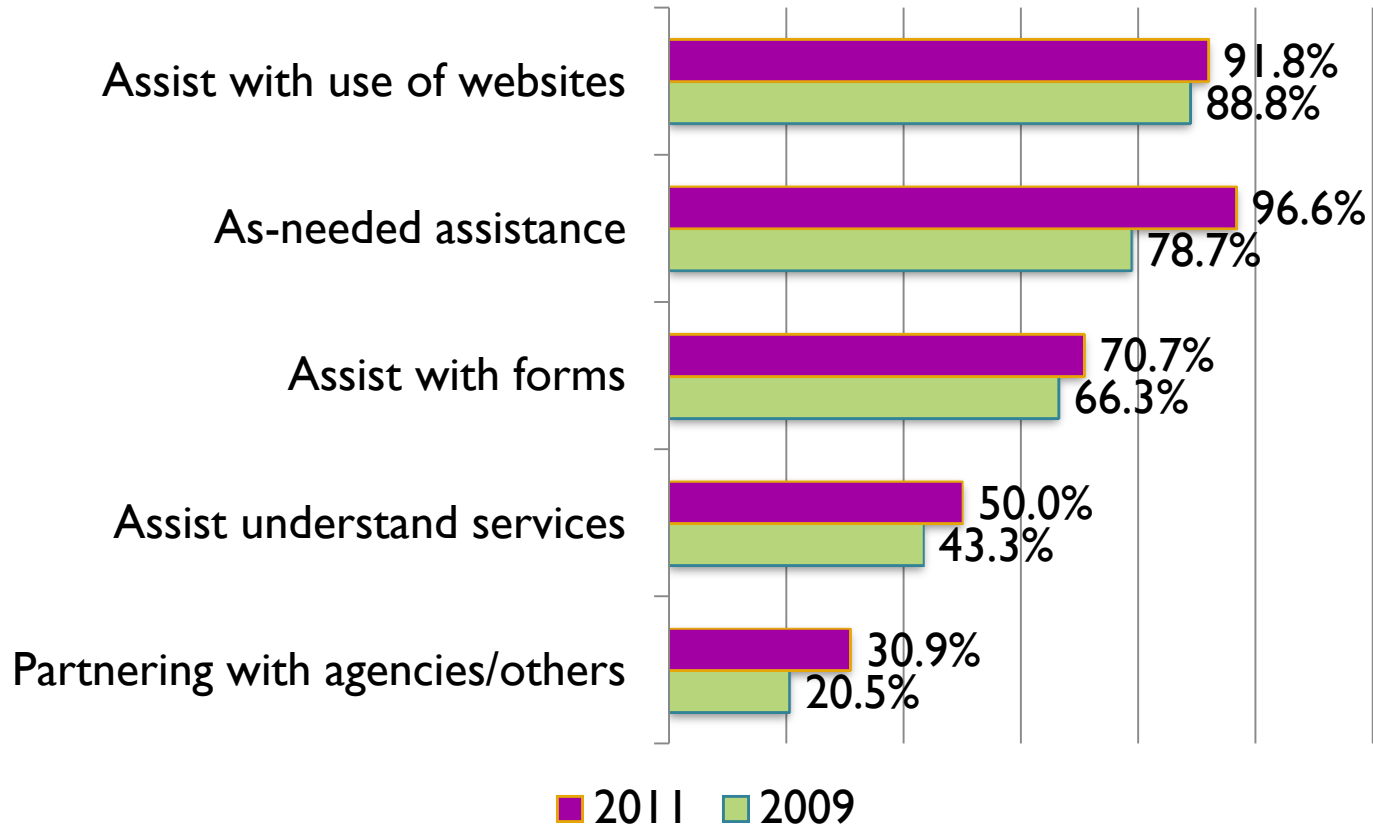
- 41.7% of reported that their connection speeds are insufficient some or all of the time

Digital Literacy

Training

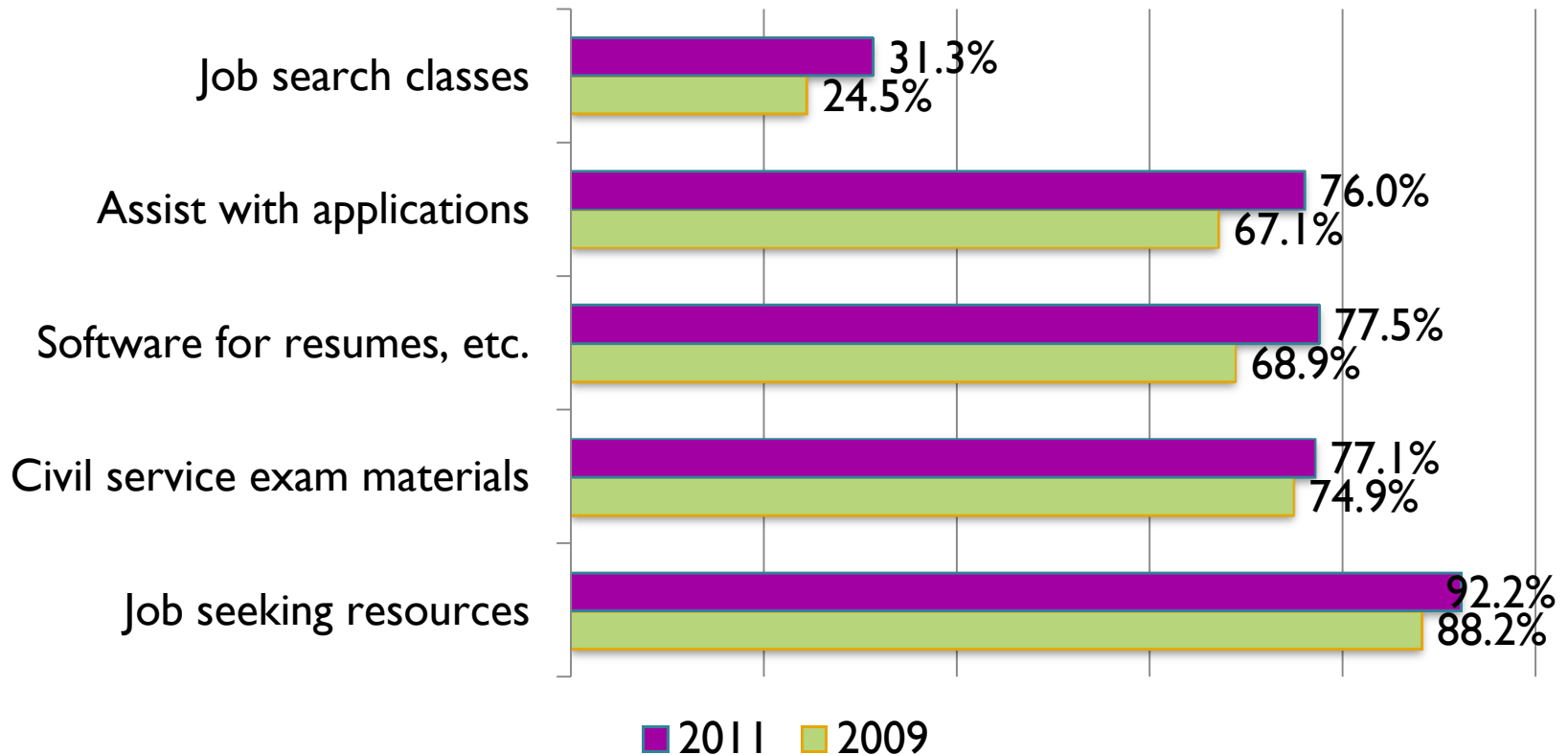


E-government



Employment

Employment Services



It's about

- **Trans-literacies**
 - **Digital**
 - Device and Content
 - **Information**
 - Finding, assessing, using, engaging
 - **Domain**
 - Civics, workforce, health
 - **Traditional**
 - **Cultural**

It's about

- Partnerships
 - Partnerships are comprised of both online and in-person components
 - Partnerships are supported by a range of local stakeholders, each of which offers knowledge, resources, and expertise that contributes to their success
 - Partnership goals align with community needs
 - Partners have clear understanding of roles and responsibilities
 - **Partners understand the each other's missions and limitations**

It's about

- Engagement
 - Hartford Public Library (CT)
 - The American Place
 - Austin Public Library (TX)
 - New Immigrants Project
 - Alachua County Public Library (FL)
 - The Library Place
 - Sacramento Public Library (CA)
 - I Street Press
 - Chicago Public Library (IL)
 - YouMedia
 - Enoch Pratt Free Library (MD)
 - Baltimarket
 - Cleveland Public Library (OH)
 - TechCentral (MakerBot)

It's about

- Community transformation in critical areas of need
 - Education
 - Economic and workforce development
 - Health and wellness
 - Community/civic engagement

Are there negative impacts of PCCs?

- Depends on your definitions and perspectives
 - Shifting the burden, or leveraging?
 - Creating social innovation in communities, or smaller government?
 - Effective and transformative, or efficient and economies of scale?
 - Some of both? Is it “and” and not “or”?

Public Libraries in the US

