

Statistics: is there an easier way?

Montana Library Association Conference

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What is *statistics*?

- ❖ If quality and productivity are to improve from current levels, changes must be made in the way things are presently being done.
- ❖ We should like to have good data to serve as a rational basis on which to make these changes.
- ❖ The twin question must then be addressed: what data should be collected, and, once collected, how should they be analyzed?
- ❖ Statistics is the science that addresses this twin question. - W.G. Hunter



and a Statistician....

A statistician is a person who stands in a bucket of ice water, sticks their head in an oven and says "on average, I feel fine!" - K. Dunnigan



Today's agenda

- Why do we collect statistics?
- What do we need to collect?
- How do we get the actual figures we need?
- What does the data mean?
- How do we present the data to best effect?



Why bother with all these numbers?



Montana Public Library Annual Report of Statistics

- ❏ Compare your library to others of your size
 - ❏ Income and expenditures (per capita—what does this purchase?)
 - ❏ Staffing
 - ❏ Circulation
 - ❏ Per capita comparisons



Staffing comparisons

Library	FTE	Total Staff hour per week	Hours Open per week	Staffing per hour open	number of Branches
Parmly Billings	27.63	1105.2	63	17.54	
Missoula	33.6	1344	96	14.00	3
Bozeman Public	19.66	786.4	58	13.56	
Great Falls Public	19.23	769.2	58	13.26	
Lewis & Clark	29.73	1189.2	135	8.81	4
Flathead County	28.5	1140	179	6.37	5

figures from: 2007 Montana Public Library Annual Report of Statistics



Return on Investment

Montana State Library Calculator

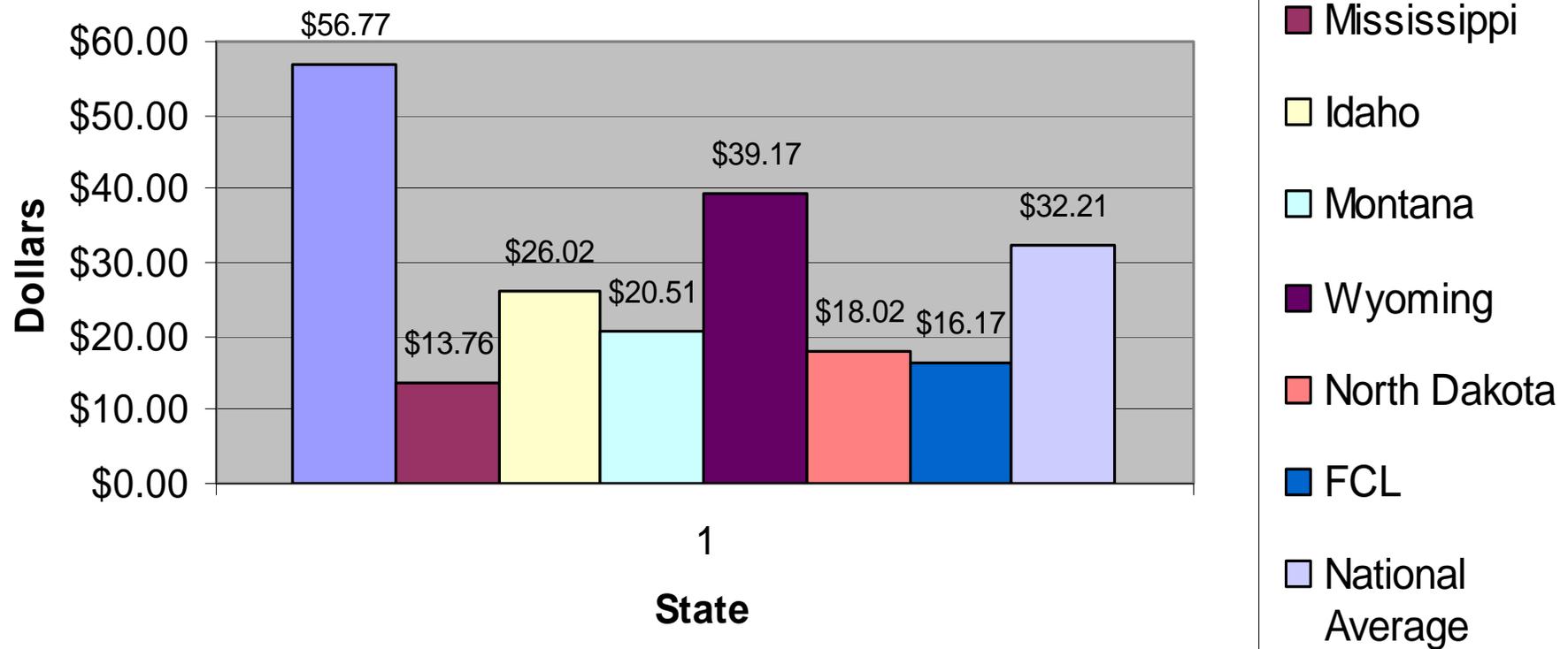
Based on FY 07 figures:

- If our users would have gone to the movies instead of attending a library program, they'd have spent \$97,374. (@ \$6.00 per film)
- If our users went to somewhere like Kinko's to rent a computer for an hour, they'd have spent \$1,859,520.
- Customers borrowed 469,367 items from our libraries last year. If people had to purchase those items instead of borrow them from the library they'd have spent \$9,387,340.



Operating Revenue per capita

Per capita operating Revenue



Evaluating Library Services

- Measure increase/decrease in usage

- Set goals

[http://test.msl.mt.gov/For Librarians/For Public Librarians/statistics center/reports/default.asp](http://test.msl.mt.gov/For_Librarians/For_Public_Librarians/statistics_center/reports/default.asp)



Analyze collection usage

Analyze collections

-  Turnover rates: the number of checkouts divided by the number of items in a particular collection
-  e.g. 200 DVDs checked out 600 times last month
-  $600 / 200 =$ turnover rate of 3



Staff analysis

- ❏ Use gate counts look at your busiest days
- ❏ If your automated system allows it, look at busy hours at the checkout desk
- ❏ Are you using your limited hours to best advantage?



How do we collect
all this
information?



Two types of library stats

System generated

-  Check-in and check-out
-  Collection size
-  Holds placed
-  Computer and database use

Manually collected

-  Program attendance
-  Gate counts (can be automated)
-  Informational questions answered



System generated numbers

- Structure data for ease of retrieval
- Use codes sparingly to get to collections like “Teen Nonfiction”
- Keep in mind your end product when structuring your database
- Call Kim or Tracy for help!



Manually generated numbers

- Consider purchasing a gate-counter
- Design an input sheet for manual statistics and have it due on a certain date each month
- Consider the end product when collecting stats (MSL Annual Report)



Presentation



Annual Reports and PR

- Statistics tell a story; they help you to tell your library story
- What stories can you tell with statistics?



Questions?

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