TexShare Usage Data Needs Assessment Survey
Survey Report and Analysis

About the Survey

The TexShare Usage Data Needs Assessment Survey was conducted as part of a joint project between the TexShare Databases Program and Kate Reagor: a capstone student at the University of Texas at Austin School of Information and an employee of the Texas State Library.

The survey was created with the intention of gathering feedback from staff at TexShare member libraries about their needs around usage data collection and display for their electronic resources: specifically, what their priorities would be if TexShare staff were to compile and supply usage data directly to libraries. The survey was open from July 13 to July 25, 2020. A full list of survey questions can be found at the end of the report.

Who Took the Survey

Staff from 396 libraries in the TexShare Databases Program were invited to take the survey. Because collecting usage data across 10+ vendor reporting platforms has traditionally been a particular challenge for libraries with limited staff and/or technical expertise, target libraries were limited to:
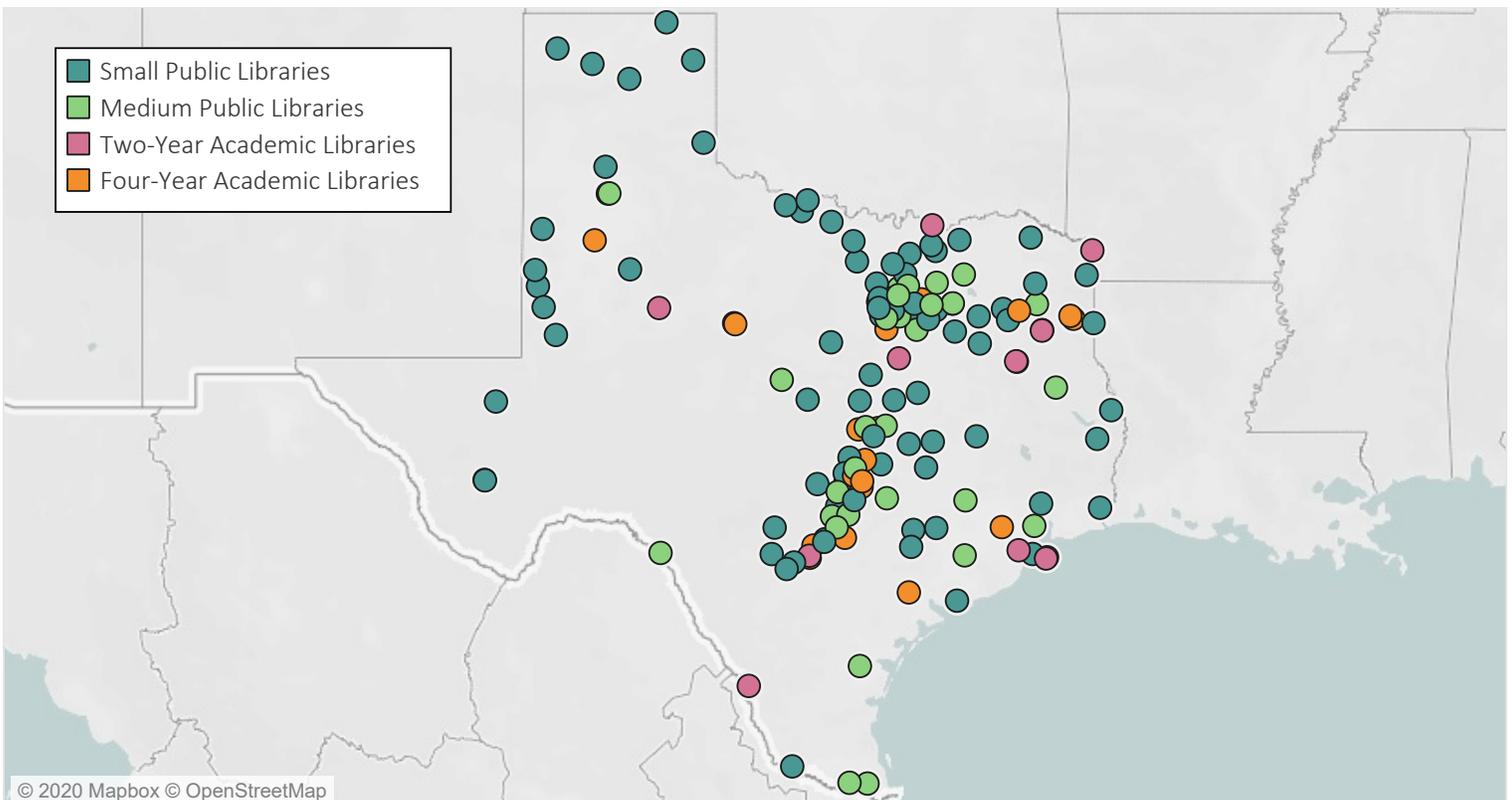
- Small Public Libraries (serving a population under 25,000)
- Medium Public Libraries (serving a population between 25,000 and 100,00)
- Two- and Four-Year Academic institutions with fewer than 5,000 undergraduate FTEs (Full-Time Equivalent)

Libraries were then further limited to those who showed some patron use of the TexShare resources in at least two of the four primary vendor reports included in the project (Credo, EBSCO, Gale In Context/OneFile, ProQuest SciTech) during State Fiscal Year 2019.

Out of 396 library staff invited to participate, 154 completed the survey. More than half of these were from small public libraries.

Responding libraries were distributed across the entire state of Texas, with the largest concentrations coming from central Texas and the Dallas Fort Worth area.

Small Public Libraries	85
Medium Public Libraries	33
Two-Year Academic Libraries	10
Four-Year Academic Libraries	26
Total Participants	154

Legend:
- Small Public Libraries
- Medium Public Libraries
- Two-Year Academic Libraries
- Four-Year Academic Libraries

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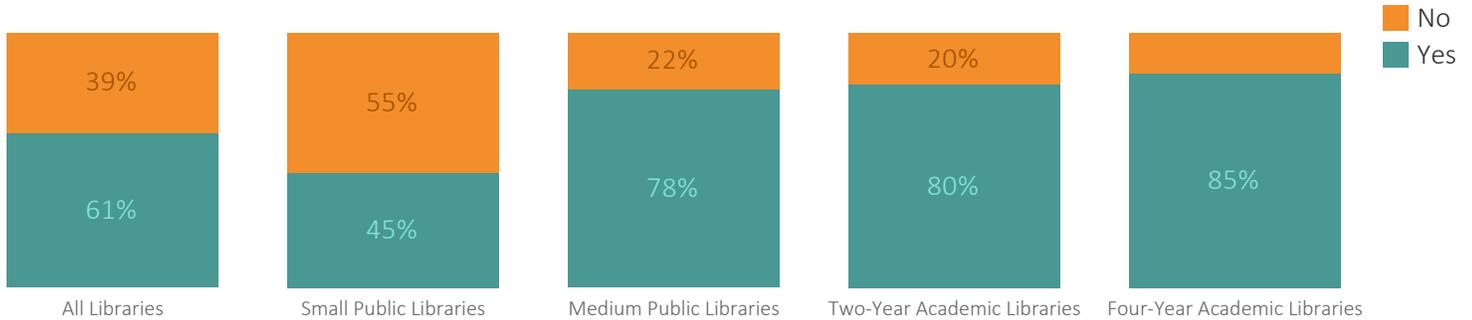# TexShare Usage Data Needs Assessment Survey
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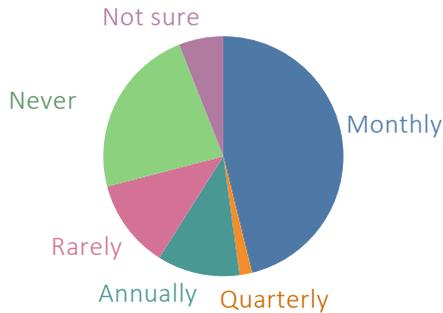## Overview of electronic resource usage data collection by libraries

Of the libraries who responded to the survey, 61% reported that they actively gather e-Resource usage data at this time.

When this is broken out by libarary type it becomes clear that most of those libraries not collecting usage data are small public libraries, with more than half reporting that they do not. Conversely, roughly 80% of the medium-sized publics and academic libraries reported active collection of usage data.

Percent of libraries actively collecting e-resource usage data

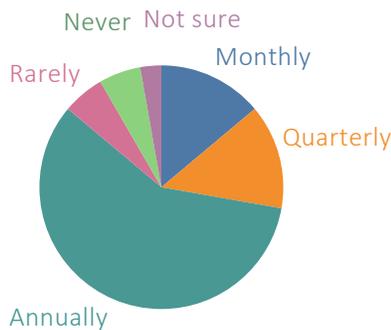|	All Libraries	Small Public Libraries	Medium Public Libraries	Two-Year Academic Libraries	Four-Year Academic Libraries
No	39%	55%	22%	20%	
Yes	61%	45%	78%	80%	85%

How often libraries typically collect e-resource usage data

Small & Medium Public Libraries

Nearly half the public libraries reported that they typically collect at least some usage data on a monthly basis.

Roughly a third of public libraries rarely or never collect usage data.

Small Two- and Four-Year Academic Libraries

58% of academic libraries reported that they only gather usage data once a year

Academic libraries gathering usage data monthly or quarterly both came in at 14%
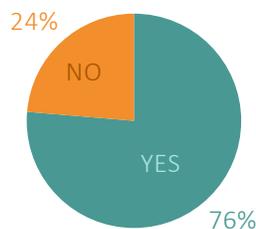
Only 11% of academic libraries reported rarely or never collecting usage data

Usage Responsibilities of Survey Takers
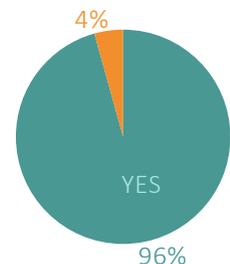
Of the library staff who reported that their library collects usage data, three-quarters reported being personally responsible for collecting usage data.

Nearly all reported being responsible for using that data to make administrative decisions at their library, either personally or as part of a team.

Responsible for Collecting Usage Data

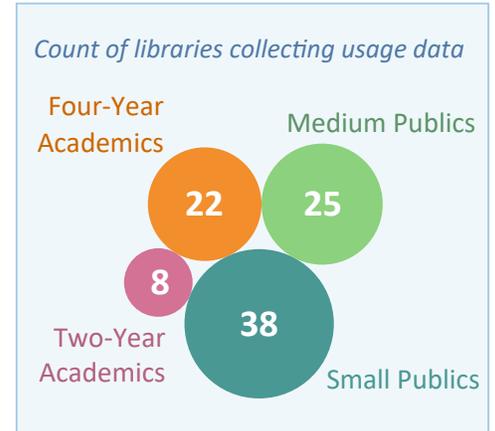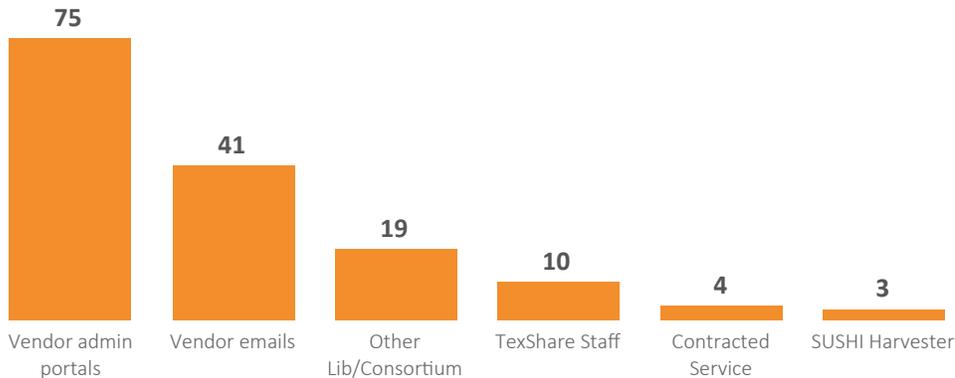

Makes Decisions with Usage Data

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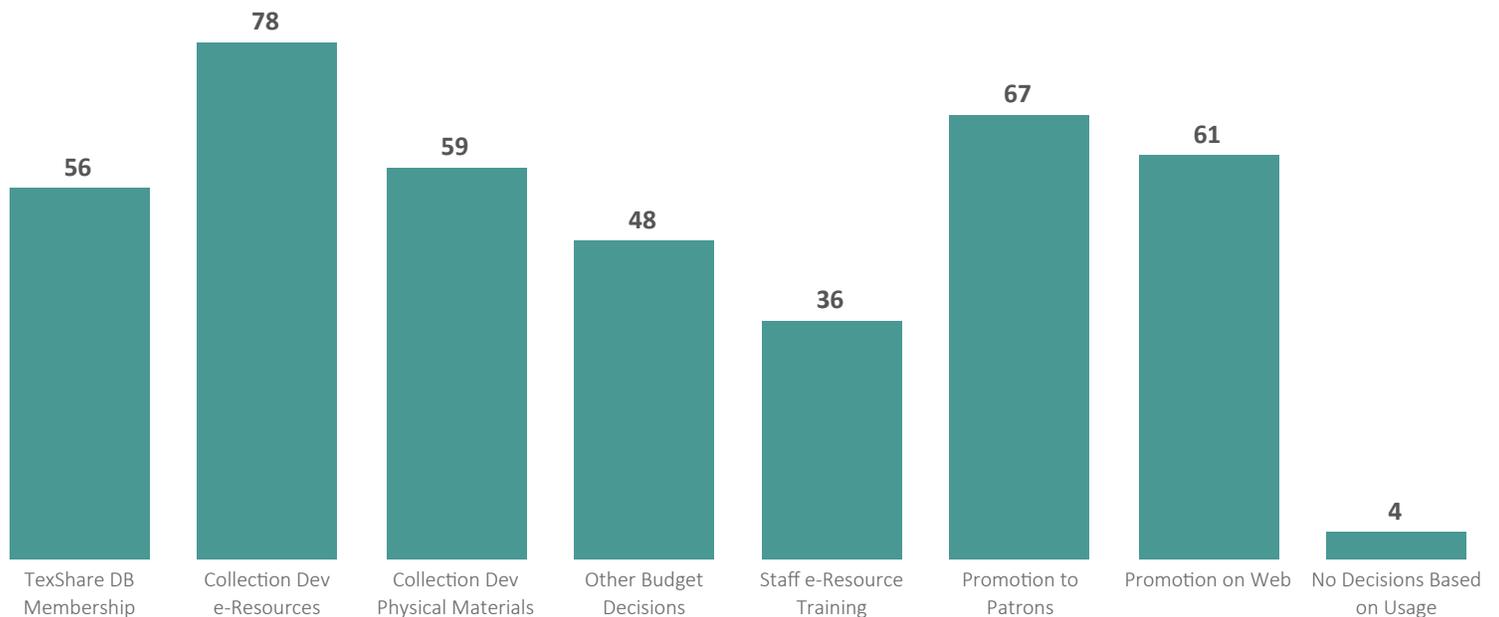## Survey responses from libraries that currently collect usage data

For the first section, survey takers saw slightly different questions based on whether or not they reported that their library actively collects e-resource usage data. The following information comes from library staff who reported that they do collect e-resource usage data at this time.

Where libraries access and collect usage data

Count of libraries collecting usage data

Four-Year Academics: 22
Medium Publics: 25
Two-Year Academics: 8
Small Publics: 38

Most libraries reported accessing usage data from vendor portals or scheduled emails from vendors. Other sources included help from other libraries or consortia, requests for usage data from TexShare staff, using a SUSHI Harvester and via contracted services such as EBSCO Usage Consolidation.

Administrative decisions libraries make using e-resource usage data

When asked what sorts of library administrative decisions were influenced by their e-resource usage data, most the of 93 libraries who collect usage data reported using this data when making decisions about licensing (or cancelling) additional electronic resources.

Two-thirds of the libraries said they use usage data to decide which resources to promote to their patrons, both in-library and online through their website or social media.

One academic library commented that they track how their various programs/departments use different resources. They report that information directly to those departments, who find the data extremely valuable.
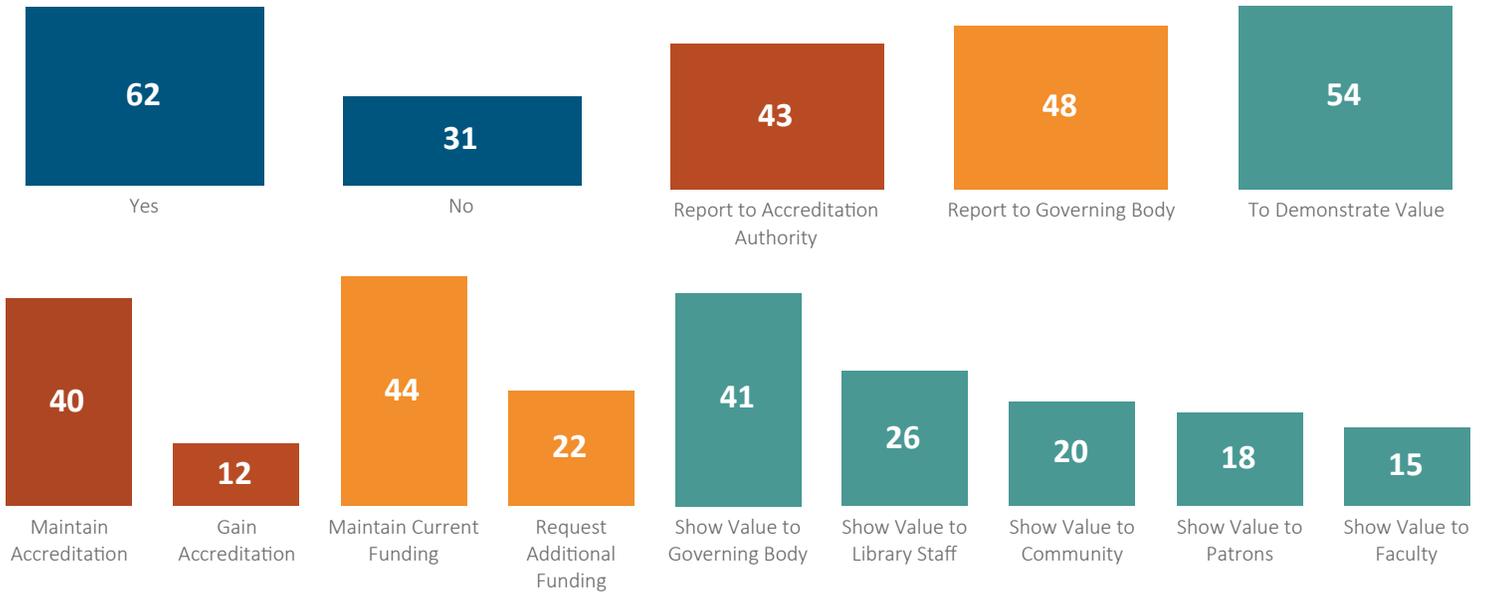
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How libraries report usage data to external library stakeholders

Survey takers were asked if their library currently reports their usage data to external entities. These might include accrediting authorities (e.g. TSLAC, SACS), or governing bodies/parent organizations that determine the library's budget (e.g. city government, library board, school administration). Libraries may also use their usage data to demonstrate the value of their e-resources to stakeholder groups within and without the library.

Survey takers additionally reported sharing usage data with library friend groups, academic department heads, and outside donors.
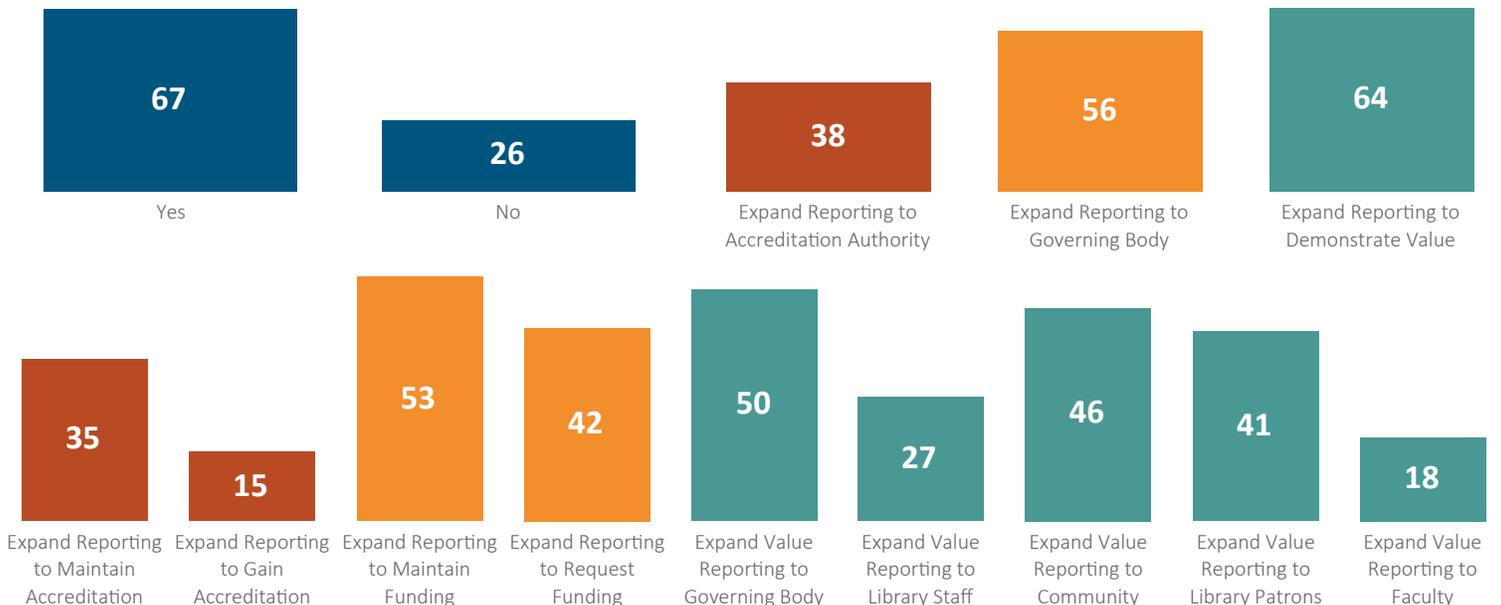
Does the library report usage to outside groups?

62	31
Yes	No

To whom/for what purpose does the library report usage?

43	48	54
Report to Accreditation Authority	Report to Governing Body	To Demonstrate Value

40	12	44	22
Maintain Accreditation	Gain Accreditation	Maintain Current Funding	Request Additional Funding

41	26	20	18	15
Show Value to Governing Body	Show Value to Library Staff	Show Value to Community	Show Value to Patrons	Show Value to Faculty

Expanding reporting if the TexShare Program supplied usage data

Survey takers were then asked if they might expand the groups with which they share their usage data if TexShare Program staff were to supply them with pre-generated usage reports. The most significant areas of interest for expansion appear to be demonstrating value of the resources to the library's patrons and community, and requesting additional funding from the library's governing body.

Would the library expand how they report usage?

67	26
Yes	No

To whom/for what purpose?

38	56	64
Expand Reporting to Accreditation Authority	Expand Reporting to Governing Body	Expand Reporting to Demonstrate Value

35	15	53	42
Expand Reporting to Maintain Accreditation	Expand Reporting to Gain Accreditation	Expand Reporting to Maintain Funding	Expand Reporting to Request Funding

50	27	46	41	18
Expand Value Reporting to Governing Body	Expand Value Reporting to Library Staff	Expand Value Reporting to Community	Expand Value Reporting to Library Patrons	Expand Value Reporting to Faculty

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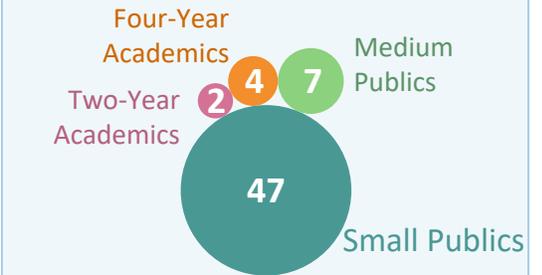## Survey responses from libraries that do NOT currently collect usage data

The following information comes from library staff who reported that they do **NOT** collect e-resource usage data at this time. They were asked if their library would benefit from having e-resource usage data for the TexShare Databases resources supplied to them by TexShare staff, and how they might make use of this data if they had it.

Three-quarters of libraries responded that usage reports supplied by TexShare staff would be of value to their library. Primary areas of value include promoting the resources to patrons, making decisions about staying in the TexShare Databases program, and reporting usage to their accrediting authority.
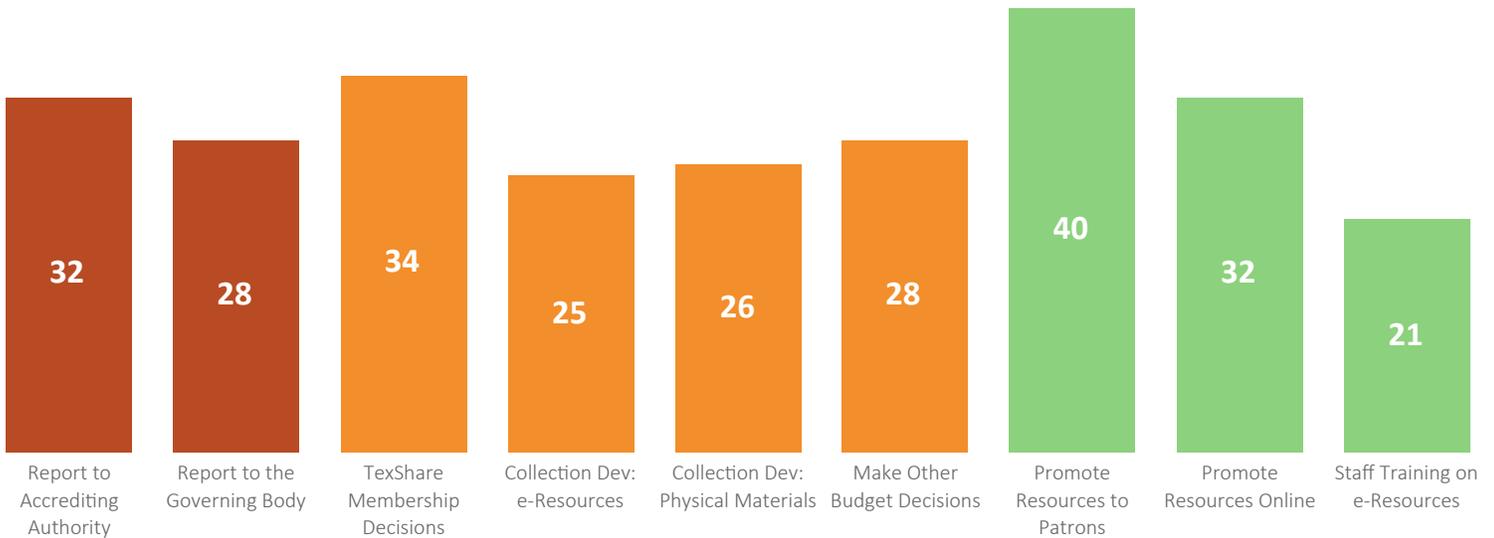
Would pre-generated TexShare usage reports be of value?
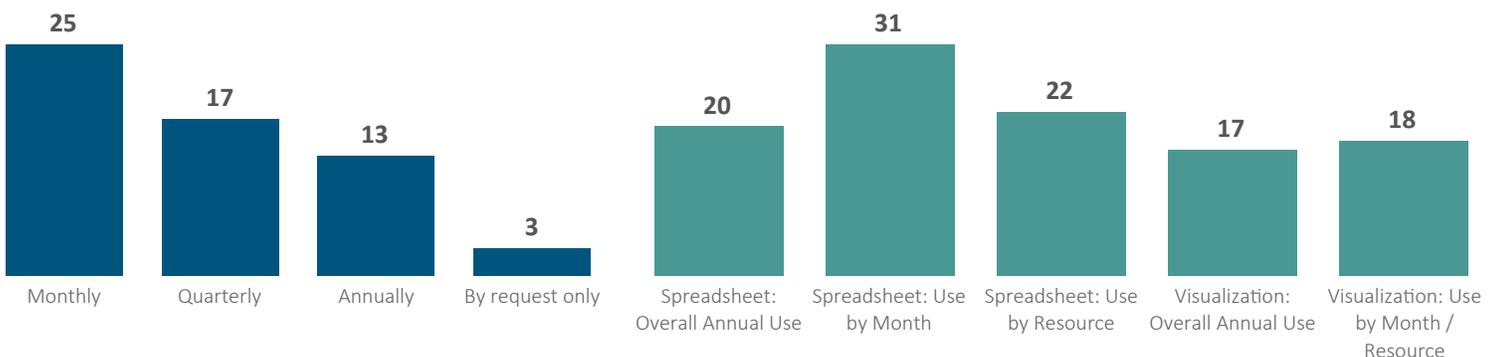
NO

NOT SURE

YES

Count of libraries NOT collecting usage data

Four-Year Academics

Two-Year Academics 2 4 7 Medium Publics

47 Small Publics

For what purpose(s) might the library use TexShare usage data?

Report to Accrediting Authority	Report to the Governing Body	TexShare Membership Decisions	Collection Dev: e-Resources	Collection Dev: Physical Materials	Make Other Budget Decisions	Promote Resources to Patrons	Promote Resources Online	Staff Training on e-Resources
32	28	34	25	26	28	40	32	21

How often would the library want usage reports?

Monthly	Quarterly	Annually	By request only
25	17	13	3

In what format(s) would the library want their usage data?

Spreadsheet: Overall Annual Use	Spreadsheet: Use by Month	Spreadsheet: Use by Resource	Visualization: Overall Annual Use	Visualization: Use by Month / Resource
20	31	22	17	18

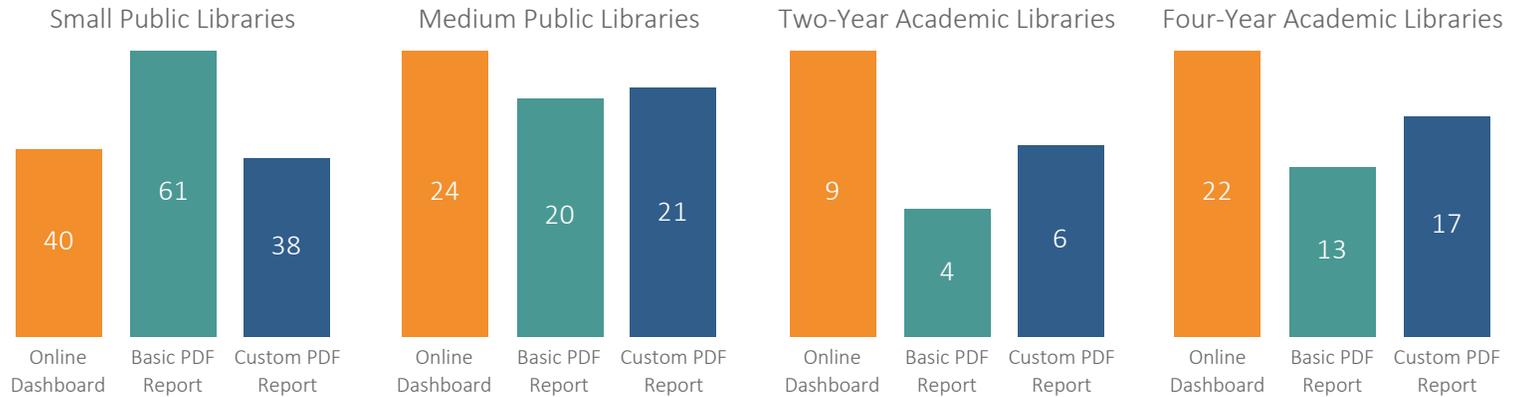# TexShare Usage Data Needs Assessment Survey
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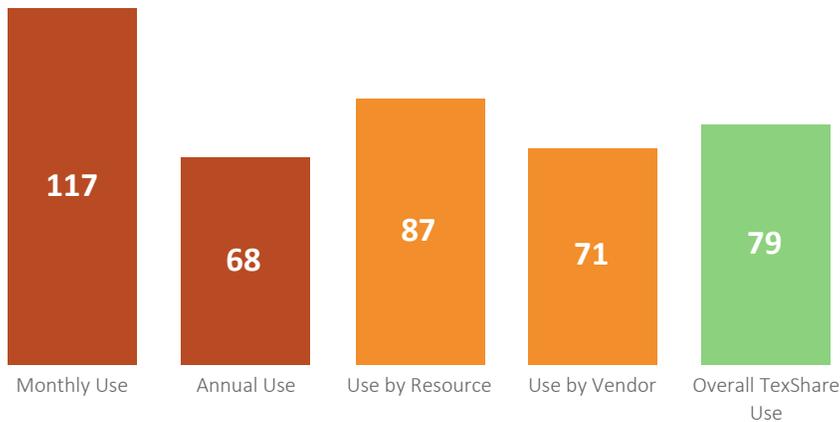## Data visualizations of library e-resource usage data

In the second section of the survey, library staff were asked to report what they would want from a visual report or dashboard created to display their e-resource usage data.

Small public libraries largely preferred being given a basic PDF report requiring no customization, while other library types - academics especially - favored customization options and access to their usage data through an online interactive dashboard.
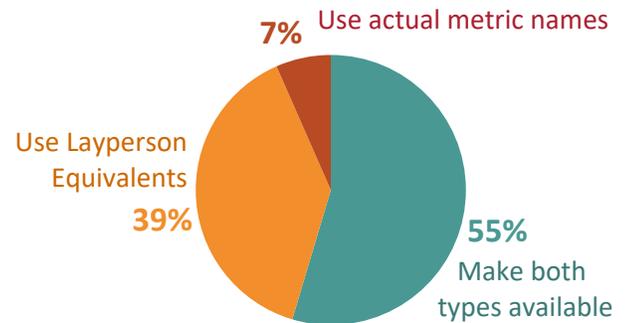
Would libraries prefer a printable PDF report (basic or customizable) or an interactive dashboard?
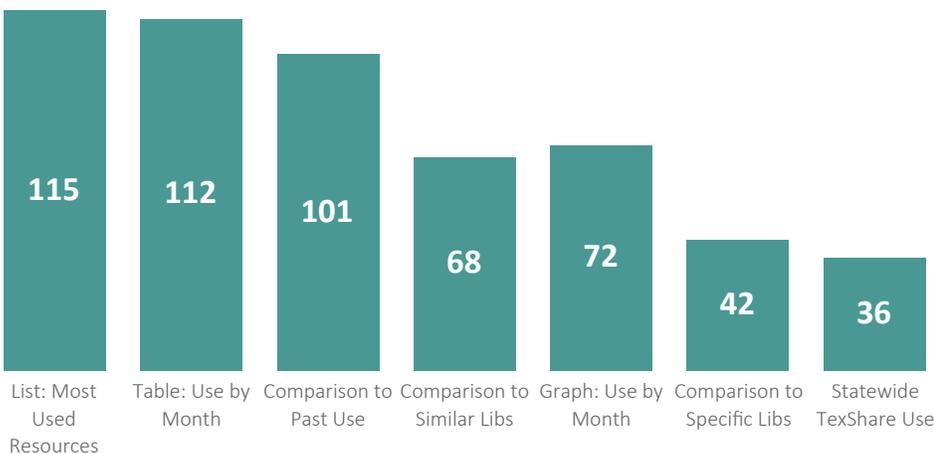
Small Public Libraries

Online Dashboard	Basic PDF Report	Custom PDF Report
40	61	38

Medium Public Libraries

Online Dashboard	Basic PDF Report	Custom PDF Report
24	20	21

Two-Year Academic Libraries

Online Dashboard	Basic PDF Report	Custom PDF Report
9	4	6

Four-Year Academic Libraries

Online Dashboard	Basic PDF Report	Custom PDF Report
22	13	17

How libraries would like their usage data broken out?

Monthly Use	Annual Use	Use by Resource	Use by Vendor	Overall TexShare Use
117	68	87	71	79

Should reports use technical metric names to describe use, or a layperson equivalent?

- 7% Use actual metric names
- 39% Use Layperson Equivalents
- 55% Make both types available

Displays/graphs/comparisons library would like to see on a report

List: Most Used Resources	Table: Use by Month	Comparison to Past Use	Comparison to Similar Libs	Graph: Use by Month	Comparison to Specific Libs	Statewide TexShare Use
115	112	101	68	72	42	36

Patron use types/metrics library would want to see displayed

Item Requests	Searches	Investigations
126	123	113

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Vendor Usage Data: Priority Rankings for Public Libraries

Combined Priority Ranking Across All Library Types:	EBSCO	LearningExpress	Gale Cengage	HeritageQuest	Credo Reference	ProQuest SciTech
	1	2	3	4	5	6

Survey takers were asked to rank the listed TexShare vendor reports by order of the value of their usage data to the library.
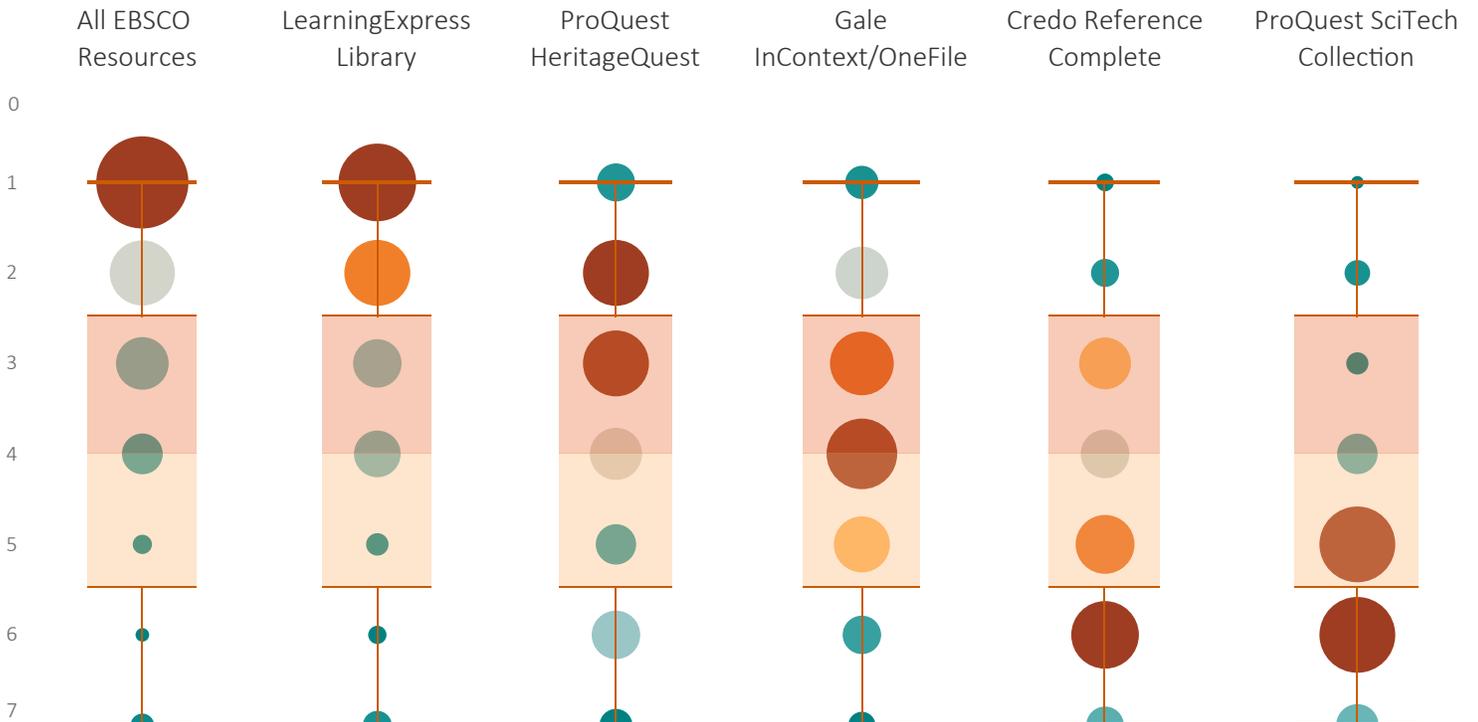
The adjacent table shows the Public Library priority rankings and calculated weighted score for each vendor, while the bar above shows how the vendors ranked overall with surveyed library staff from both public and academic libraries.

Listed reports were those marked for inclusion in the TexShare Usage Reporting Project: Credo Reference, EBSCO (all resources), Gale Cengage (In Context & OneFile resources), LearningExpress Library, HeritageQuest, and ProQuest SciTech Collection.

Public Library Rankings	Rank	Score
EBSCO	1	483
LearningExpress	2	449
HeritageQuest	3	340
Gale Cengage	4	322
Credo Reference	5	223
ProQuest SciTech	6	173

Vendor Usage Data: Rank Distribution

The following graph shows the range of priority rankings for each resource, from a rank of 1 (highest priority) to 6 (lowest priority). A rank of 7 indicates that the resource was not ranked by the survey taker (no score). The number of libraries who gave a given resource a particular rank is indicated by the size and color of the circles.

Public Library Preference: Some Takeaways

Most public library staff who took the survey ranked either EBSCO or LearningExpress as their number 1 priority.

HeritageQuest had few number 1 rankings, but not many libraries ranked it below a 3.

Credo Reference ranked surprisingly low for a resource geared as much towards public library use as academic. As a relatively new resource, it may indicate a need for targeted promotion.

ProQuest SciTech, a resource primarily used in academic libraries, ranked lowest by a wide margin.

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Vendor Usage Data: Priority Rankings for Academic Libraries

Combined Priority Ranking Across All Library Types:	EBSCO	LearningExpress	Gale Cengage	HeritageQuest	Credo Reference	ProQuest SciTech
	1	2	3	4	5	6

Survey takers were asked to rank the listed TexShare vendor reports by order of the value of their usage data to the library.
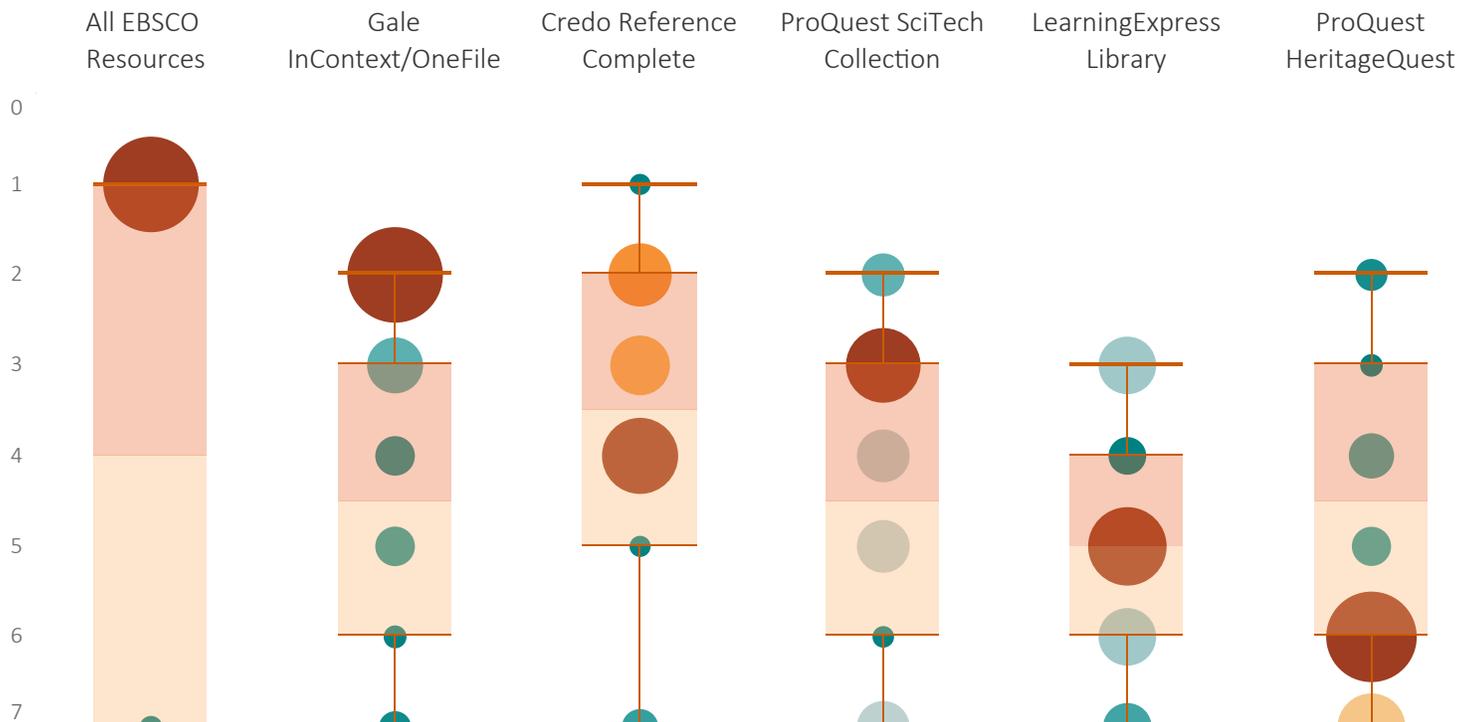
The adjacent table shows the Academic Library priority rankings and calculated weighted score for each vendor, while the bar above shows how the vendors ranked overall with surveyed library staff from both public and academic libraries.

Listed reports were those marked for inclusion in the TexShare Usage Reporting Project: Credo Reference, EBSCO (all resources), Gale Cengage (In Context & OneFile resources), LearningExpress Library, HeritageQuest, and ProQuest SciTech Collection.

Academic Library Rankings	Rank	Score
EBSCO	1	204
Gale Cengage	2	140
Credo Reference	3	124
ProQuest SciTech	4	99
LearningExpress	5	70
HeritageQuest	6	48

Vendor Usage Data: Rank Distribution

The following graph shows the range of priority rankings for each resource, from a rank of 1 (highest priority) to 6 (lowest priority). A rank of 7 indicates that the resource was not ranked by the survey taker (no score). The number of libraries who gave a given resource a particular rank is indicated by the size and color of the circles.

Academic Library Preference: Some Takeaways

Academic library staff almost universally ranked EBSCO resources as their number one priority.

Credo Reference barely lost to Gale for the #2 rank by total calculated score, and even has a higher median score, but more libraries ranked Gale as their overal #2.

Credo had fewer #3 rankings than ProQuest SciTech, but was ranked #2 by more libraries and was no library's last choice.

HeritageQuest was ranked last by nearly all academic libraries, except for two libraries that ranked it as their #2.

Additional Survey Comments and Feedback from Library Staff

Survey takers were given the option at various points in the survey to leave additional comments about their needs or thoughts on e-resource usage data and how the TexShare Program might be able to play a larger role in assisting them with accessing and displaying their library's usage data.

The survey takers' names and the libraries at which they are employed are not identified, but the library type is indicated in order to better place their comments within the context of different organizational needs and priorities.

Comments on Report Usefulness

(Small Public Library) Usage reports would help in requesting funds for other databases.

(Small Public Library) This is a great idea. Simplifying usage statistics would be very helpful for our reporting.

(Medium Public Library) If the information was easier to access, it would be more likely to make it into reports. We stopped running some of the TexShare reports because gathering the data was time consuming and it was not required for accreditation.

(Medium Public Library) The more data available, the better!

(Four-Year Academic) We mainly use statistics to decide about keeping databases that we pay for individually and not the TexShare databases.

(Four-Year Academic) While TexShare databases are essential - I really need a reliable report for all my e-resources usage. Singling out TexShare isn't really useful for us.

Comments on Reports & Data Visualization

(Medium Public Library) It would be great if the graphs and charts could be copied into other documents, so we could share the ones we thought were useful and not post ones we didn't.

(Small Public Library) What I could really use is access to user friendly marketing materials for all the Texshare resources. We need to do a better job of marketing what we have.

(Four-Year Academic) Only the comment that we use / need this sort of data for a variety of purposes, so the more flexibility provided, the greater the utility for us.

(Medium Public Library) Since most of the database reporting differs from one another having one standard might not necessarily work. We have 123 databases and that does not include a breakdown of EBSCO with the exception of Flipster. Even with the Gale databases the compilation of the stats is different with each of the databases (i.e. Chilton versus the general databases.)

Other Desired Vendor Usage Reports

Library staff were asked which usage reports not included in this project would also be of use to their library. Some responses included resources that are not part of the TexShare Databases licensed resources (e.g. OverDrive, JSTOR, Elsevier, Reference USA), which are outside of TexShare staff's power to supply. Of those resources that are a part of TexShare, the following were listed as priorities.

Public Libraries: Chilton Library, Gale Legal Forms, LearningExpress Job & Career Accelerator, all legal resources

Academic Libraries: 20th Century American & English Poetry, Texas Digital Sanborn Maps, Ebook Central/e-Libro Premium

Other requested reports for resources tangential to the TexShare Databases Core Resources included OCLC FirstSearch (available as part of the Statewide ILL contract) and American Chemical Society (an optional TexSelect resource).

Some also expressed interest in getting separate e-book reports. While these are not available for those licensed outside of TexShare, it might be possible to pull e-book COUNTER reports for TexShare's e-book content.

Other Ways TexShare Could Assist Libraries

Several survey takers expressed a desire for TexShare staff to be more involved in offering direct assistance to its member libraries on issues around usage data.

This desire extended beyond just supplying usage data - they also wished for more detailed explanations on how they might gather their own usage data, what sorts of reports they should request for each resource, what the different metrics mean and which are the most useful, and so on. Many indicated confusion as to how to manage reports that use different metrics or standards. One academic librarian even suggested they would be willing to pay for a consortial usage collection tool, were one to be made available.

Though staffing and time is certainly a factor, it is clear that e-resource usage data is a priority, and a need exists among TexShare Databases members for the program to be more active in assisting libraries with the collection and management of this data.

TEXSHARE USAGE DATA - NEEDS ASSESSMENT SURVEY

Traditionally, the Texas State Library and Archives Commission has been unable to supply libraries participating in the TexShare Databases program with comprehensive, up-to-date reports on how their patrons have been using the TexShare Databases electronic resources. Instead, libraries who need e-resource usage stats often have to gather them individually from a dozen different sources, platforms, or access portals. Though TexShare staff do receive consortium-level usage reports from each e-resource vendor, the time required to clean and process these reports to the point at which they can be made useful to individual libraries means that they are often severely out of date by the time they are available.

In the hopes of making TexShare usage data more widely and easily available, TexShare staff are working with a capstone student from the UT School of Information to develop a process that can speed up the processing of these consortial usage reports, and display that information at the library-level in a way that is meaningful and useful to TexShare members.

To this end, we are gathering information on how libraries currently acquire and use electronic resource usage data, as well as what value libraries might find in having this information supplied to them directly. We appreciate any information and insight you can give us into your library's needs and practices!

PART 1. TEXSHARE USAGE DATA: ACQUISITION AND USE

General Questions
The following questions were visible to all survey takers

At this time, does your library actively collect usage data for TexShare or other licensed electronic resources (excluding eBook platforms such as Overdrive)?
    ( ) Yes
    ( ) No

How frequently (if at all) does your library typically collect e-resource usage data?
    ( ) Monthly
    ( ) Quarterly
    ( ) Annually
    ( ) Rarely/Only at need
    ( ) Never to my knowledge
    ( ) Not sure

Questions for Libraries that Collect Usage Data

The following questions were visible only to survey takers who responded YES to the question asking if their library actively collects usage data at this time.

Are you personally responsible for gathering e-resource usage data for your library?
    ( ) Yes
    ( ) No

Through what method(s) does your library gather usage data? *Select all that apply*.
    [ ] Vendor administrative portals (eg EBSCOadmin, Gale Admin)
    [ ] Scheduled emails from vendors
    [ ] SUSHI harvester
    [ ] Gathered & supplied by another library or consortium
    [ ] Request detailed annual usage data from TexShare@tsl.texas.gov
    [ ] Using a vendor-supplied/contracted service (please explain)
    [ ] Other (please explain): _____
    [ ] Not sure

Are you personally involved in making decisions for your library based on e-resource usage data, either solely or as part of a team?
    ( ) Yes
    ( ) No

What kinds of decisions (if any) does your library make based on e-resource usage data? Select all that apply.
    [ ] TexShare Databases program membership continuation
    [ ] Collection development/e-resource licensing decisions
    [ ] Collection development/purchasing of physical materials
    [ ] Other budgetary decisions
    [ ] Staff training on electronic resource use
    [ ] Choosing e-resources to promote to patrons in-library
    [ ] Choosing e-resources to feature on library website or social media
    [ ] Other (please explain): _____
    [ ] Not sure
    [ ] My library doesn't currently make any decisions based on usage data

Does your library currently report or display e-resource usage data to anyone outside the library?
    ( ) Yes
    ( ) No

If so, with whom? And for what purpose? Select all that apply.

    To an accrediting authority (e.g. TSLAC, SACS)

        [ ] To gain accreditation

        [ ] To maintain accreditation

    To a governing body or parent organization

        [ ] To justify/maintain current funding

        [ ] To request additional funding

        [ ] Other (please explain): _____

    To demonstrate e-resource use or value to...

        [ ] Governing body or parent organization

        [ ] The library's local community

        [ ] Library patrons or students

        [ ] Library staff

        [ ] Faculty members

        [ ] Other (please explain): _____

    Other stakeholder group(s): _____

If all of your library's e-resource usage data were made available to you as a pre-generated visual report, might that expand the audience with whom you would share that information?

    ( ) Yes

    ( ) No

To which additional groups? Select all that apply.

    To an accrediting authority (e.g. TSLAC, SACS)

        [ ] To gain accreditation

        [ ] To maintain accreditation

    To a governing body or parent organization

        [ ] To justify/maintain current funding

        [ ] To request additional funding

        [ ] Other (please explain): _____

    To demonstrate e-resource use or value to...

        [ ] Governing body or parent organization

        [ ] The library's local community

        [ ] Library patrons or students

        [ ] Library staff

        [ ] Faculty members

        [ ] Other (please explain): _____

    Other stakeholder group(s): _____

Questions for Libraries that do NOT Collect Usage Data

The following questions were visible only to survey takers who responded NO to the question asking if their library actively collects usage data at this time.

If your library's TexShare usage data could be made available to you, would that be of value to your library?
    ( ) Yes
    ( ) No
    ( ) Not sure

How often might your library be interested in receiving updated TexShare usage information?
    ( ) Monthly
    ( ) Quarterly
    ( ) Annually
    ( ) By request/at need only
    ( ) Other (please explain): _____

In which format(s) might your library be interested in receiving TexShare usage data? Select all that apply.
    [ ] Overall annual TexShare use in spreadsheet format
    [ ] A detailed breakout of use by month in spreadsheet format
    [ ] A detailed breakout of use by vendor/resource in spreadsheet format
    [ ] Overall annual TexShare use shown as a visualization/report
    [ ] A detailed breakout of use by month or resource shown as a visualization/report
    [ ] Other (please explain): _____

If you did have access to your library's TexShare usage data, for what purposes might your library use it? Select all that apply.
    [ ] TexShare Databases program membership continuation
    [ ] Collection development/e-resource licensing decisions
    [ ] Collection development/purchasing of physical materials
    [ ] Other budgetary decisions
    [ ] Offer e-resource training to library staff
    [ ] Promote e-resources to library patrons or students
    [ ] Promote e-resources on library website or social media
    [ ] Report e-resource use to governing body or parent organization
    [ ] Report e-resource use to accrediting authority (e.g. TSLAC, SACS)
    [ ] Other (please explain): _____
    [ ] I'm not sure
    [ ] I do not see any use for TexShare usage data at this time

PART 2. TEXSHARE USAGE DATA: DASHBOARD OR DISPLAY OPTIONS

If TexShare staff were to develop a report or dashboard that displayed your library's TexShare usage data as graphs or other forms of visualizations, what would you want that to look like? What would be most useful to you? Please answer the following questions with this in mind.

Questions on this page are optional: if you are unsure, feel free to give your best guess or leave the answer blank

What sorts of visualization formats might be of interest to your library? (Select all that apply)
   [ ] A printable PDF report - fully complete and ready to go
   [ ] A printable PDF report - interactive, with customization options
   [ ] An interactive online dashboard with up to date usage information

If a TexShare usage report or dashboard were developed, but could only support data from a limited set of vendors/resources at first, which of the following would you most want to see included? Please rank from highest priority (top) to lowest priority (bottom).
   EBSCO Databases (all)
   Gale (Science in Context, Opposing Viewpoints in Context, OneFile: Health)
   Credo Reference
   ProQuest SciTech Premium Collection
   HeritageQuest Online
   LearningExpress Library

Is there a resource (or resources) not included in the list above for which usage data would be of particular value to your library? If so, please enter the name(s)

At what level would you be interested in seeing your library's usage data broken out and displayed? Select all that apply.
   [ ] Use by month
   [ ] Use by year
   [ ] Overall use for each vendor (e.g. EBSCO, Gale, ProQuest)
   [ ] Use for each individual resource (e.g. Academic Search Complete, Gale in Context: Science, HeritageQuest)
   [ ] Overall usage data across all TexShare resources

What sorts of displays or graphs of e-resource usage data would be of value to your library? Select all that apply.

[ ] Your library's monthly usage numbers displayed in table format

[ ] Your library's monthly e-resource use displayed as a graph

[ ] A ranked list of your library's most used TexShare resources

[ ] Overall statewide usage data from all Texas libraries

[ ] Chart(s) comparing your library's usage to usage from previous years

[ ] Chart(s) comparing your library's usage to the average usage of other libraries of comparable size/type

[ ] Chart(s) comparing your library's usage to that of specific libraries you select

[ ] Other (please explain): _____

A TexShare usage report or dashboard would, by necessity, have to prioritize resources that can supply usage reports in COUNTER 5 format (the most up-to-date reporting standard). These reports that TSLAC receives show usage broken out into three types:

- **Item Requests** - every time a user viewed or downloaded a full content item (full text article, book chapter, video)

- **Item Investigations** - every time a user interacted with a content item in any way (includes all Item Request actions, plus additional numbers from users viewing abstracts, article previews, cited references, etc)

- **Searches Regular** - every time a user conducted a search from within the resource

Of these usage types, which would you consider of interest to your library when reviewing or demonstrating how your patrons use the TexShare resources? Select all that apply.

[ ] Item Requests

[ ] Item Investigations

[ ] Searches Regular

[ ] All of the above

[ ] Not sure

Would you want a printable TexShare Usage Report to display data using the actual COUNTER 5 metric names (e.g. Total_Item_Requests, Regular_Searches)? Or would you prefer it use more general, less jargony, terms (e.g. Item Views, Searches) that might make more sense to a lay-person?

( ) Use the actual metric names

( ) Use roughly equivalent layperson terms

( ) Make both versions available as options

Is there anything not already mentioned that would be of particular use to you in a TexShare Usage Report?