

# Investment

## LIBRARIES' VALUE

Interesting comparison of libraries nationwide to other activities, professions and destinations.

**Library cardholders outnumber**

**Amazon customers by almost 5 to 1**

Amazon.com: 30 million  
U.S. libraries: 148 million

**In South Carolina, more than 50**

**percent of the population has**

**library cards**

60 percent of public library users are youths

**More than 13.8 million people visited**

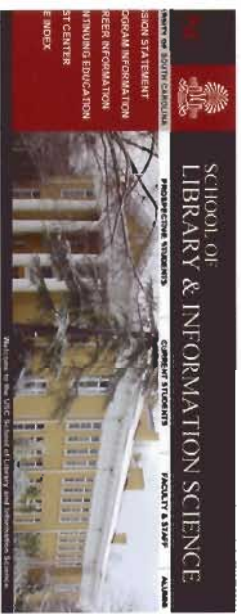
**S.C. public libraries last year**

Approximately 10 million more than those attending all USC and Clemson sports events

“ We bought our new house because

we could walk to the library.”

– Survey participant



**Additional survey results:** Complete results that include comments from public library users in each of the counties can be found at USC's School of Library and Information Science Web site: [www.libsci.sc.edu](http://www.libsci.sc.edu)

### Information

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“ Living on a fixed income and not having to buy books – helps our budget. The books fill our minds with helpful and intriguing info and enjoyment. Life without a library would be dull.”

– Survey participant

South Carolina libraries

are a sound investment

An investment that pays

ECONOMIC IMPACT OF S.C. PUBLIC LIBRARIES

USC School of Library and Information Science



# The study

Researchers from the USC School of Library and Information Science collaborated with the South Carolina Association of Public Library Administrators to complete a two-phase study of the economic impact of public libraries in South Carolina. The data reported here are from statewide surveys of public library users in the state and an economic analysis of S.C. public library statistics collected annually by the South Carolina State Library.

## Investment QUALITY OF LIFE



“ I would not live in a community without one (public library). ”

– Survey participant

- 92% said it improved overall quality of life
- 47% said it increased local property values
- 44% said it attracts patronage to local businesses
- 38% said it attracts new businesses

## Investment EDUCATION

- 47% said it helped them with life-long learning
- 28% said it introduced them to new technologies
- 18% said it helped them with education or work
- 12% said it helped them with home schooling

“ As a home schooling mom, I depend on the library for a wealth of educational materials and experiences that I would not be able to find or afford elsewhere. ”

– Survey participant

## Investment ECONOMIC ENGINE



53% said it contributed to the success of their business  
49% said it is where they obtain most of the business/research information to successfully run their business

- 49% said they saved \$500 - \$5,000 by using the information they received
- 76% said they used it for searching for a job

### ECONOMIC IMPACT OF S.C. PUBLIC LIBRARIES

University of South Carolina  
School of Library and Information Science

100%

59% said they need it to get information for investment decisions

76% said they saved \$500 or more for the information they received from the public library

## Investment VALUE TO S.C.

Funding: The state spends 82 cents per person while the Southeast average is \$1.85.

\$5 million in federal and private funds are generated by S.C. public libraries each year.

\$222 million is approximately the value of information services to users each year.

\$347 million is the total economic impact of S.C. public libraries, while the actual cost of these services is \$77.5 million.

\$77.5 million

\$347 million

Almost 350% return on the state's total investment in S.C. public libraries.

For every \$1 expended, the return is \$4.48

