

Benchmarking Roundtable Discussion Points

Lynn Van Houten, Discussion moderator

What is Benchmarking?

How does Benchmarking work?

What are the benefits of Benchmarking?

What is the process and do you need to know a lot about statistics??

Benchmarking Resources?

★ MLA Benchmarking Network

Go to "Members Only" Use Username and MLA Net password (first three characters are CAPS) on your MLA membership card.

Go to "Benchmarking Network".

AND

Web Resources

Benchmarking Basics for Librarians by Annette Grohlke

<http://www.sla.org/division/dmil/mlw97/gohlke/>

MLA Benchmarking Network

Benchmark FAQ

[Http://www.mlanet.org](http://www.mlanet.org) Go to Members Only section

Survey Participants Guide to Finding Benchmarking Partners

<http://www.mlanet.org> Go to Members Only Section

Benchmarking and Assessment Tools: NOTES Roundtable 7

Attendees

Lynn Van Houten, Moderator

Ralph Arcari

Judith Hayes

Deborah Klein

Andrea Lynch

Joan Wilson

Julie Kwan, Recorder

Points of Interest

- A group of libraries in northern California has used MLA benchmarking data quite successfully and received a significant increase in budget because of it. The benchmarking data was very valuable.

- Two table attendees are chapter benchmarking educators.
- One attendee mentioned that SLA does benchmarking for pharmaceutical libraries in corporate settings; these are not as useful for our smaller network members.
- Another attendee commented that the hospital administrators' environment includes lots of comparisons and benchmarking efforts, consequently they are receptive to library benchmarking. They typically have specific hospitals that they like to compare themselves to; you might ask the administrators for this list and talk informally with the librarians in these hospitals.
- Another commented that she used library FTE and salary expenditures and compared her library with other hospitals with the same number of residents, medical staff, and hospital-wide FTEs.
- You can use the MLA benchmarking data to find the specific numbers that will help you the most.
- An important part of benchmarking is identifying meaningful partners.
- The Association of Academic Health Sciences Library Directors (AAHSLD) has gathered statistics since about 1975, and this data is widely used by academic libraries.
- The Connecticut Medical Society adopted the MLA's "Minimum Standards for Health Sciences Libraries in Hospitals." (See: Gluck JC, Hassig RA. Raising the bar: the importance of hospital library standards in the continuing medical education accreditation process. *Bull. Med. Libr. Assoc.* 2001 Jul;89(3):272-6. PMID: 11465686)
- Attendees suggested taking the same issue to the Hospital Council of Northern and Central California and to the Hospital Council of Southern California.
- VHA uses lots of benchmarking data for purchasing but doesn't address hospital libraries. (see <http://www.vha.com> for more information on VHA)
- Benchmarking data can be very useful for increasing financial resources for the hospital library. Finance personnel are key.
- Benchmarking can be used for other purposes as well, for example, to find best practices and to rethink one's operations. It can help answer the question: "How can we provide more service with static budgets?"
- The library adds value to institutional IT investments. One attendee estimated that he improved institutional efficiency by 20% by bringing resources to the desktop.
- We need to collect data or testimonials. One attendee does a survey every year with questions from the Rochester Study. (See: Marshall JG. The impact of the hospital library on clinical decision making: the Rochester study. *Bull. Med. Libr. Assoc.* 1992 Apr;80(2):169-78. PMID: 1600426)
- Another attendee looks at the number of uses and the cost per use of various library services.

Resources

The following materials were distributed at this roundtable:

- MLA Benchmarking Network: Benchmark FAQ Part 1 (MLA Members Only) (<http://www.mlanet.org/members/benchmark/faq.html>)
- MLA Benchmarking Network: Survey Participant's Guide to Finding Benchmarking Partners (http://www.mlanet.org/members/pdf/bn_partner_guide.pdf)
- Benchmarking Basics for Librarians (Military Librarian's Workshop, 18 – 20 November 1997, Dayton Ohio (<http://www.sla.org/division/dmil/mlw97/gohlke>)

See also:

- MLA Benchmarking Network: Interactive Reporting and Publications (<http://www.mlanet.org/resources/benchmark/>)
- MLA Benchmarking Network: Changes for 2003-2004 Questionnaires (http://www.mlanet.org/members/pdf/bn_changes_factsheet_2003-04.pdf)