

Benefits of Being a Depository – Public Library Perspective

- We support a democratic, informed citizenry; FDLP mission is the same as for other depository libraries (I won't elaborate, you know what these are EXCEPT to say that public libraries are in the trenches each and every day with these issues – this is a primary mission of public libraries, FDLP or not)
- We have access to government information, publications and resources: the FDLP helps us to identify, obtain and index materials and resources in all formats. Government information impacts all phases and areas of a person's life. This information is complicated for many members of the public. I like to say that the average person doesn't read a social security handbook for the fun of it – government information is need-based. The FDLP is a partner in helping meet these needs (many times under stressful conditions for the person seeking this information).
- A big advantage is the EASE by which patrons can access government information. With the help of the FDLP, we can offer the public many access points for figuring out what they need and how to find it – online catalogs, web pages, seamless-indexing, etc.
- Public Libraries reach out to and serve a large PRIMARY constituency, and patrons can check out tangible products (unlike most academic and special libraries).
- There is the PERCEPTION with legislators and the public that public libraries serve everyone in a community (as opposed to the central mission of a university being to serve students, staff, etc.). In our legislative district, we serve every single person who walks through the door with the same level of service (depository and non-depository materials) regardless of who they are. The public naturally thinks to call a public library. In turn, public libraries make referrals to the larger, comprehensive and historical collections of the university libraries.
- Public libraries serve the homebound and special populations (such as immigrants, small businesses). We ACTIVELY seek out ways to serve these populations with all our services including depository materials. We are amazingly service-oriented (at least I am constantly amazed by our services).

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