

STATE OF ALABAMA,
DEPARTMENT OF INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS, LABOR MARKET INFORMATION DIVISION
WORKFORCE INFORMATION GRANT REPORT PY 2006-2007

The Alabama Department of Industrial Relations, Labor Market Information (LMI) Division strives to efficiently and effectively utilize the established methodologies provided by the U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics to collaboratively fulfill responsibilities as the State of Alabama's official Statistical data collection and analysis manager for the Alabama Workforce Investment System. Customers of Labor Market Information will have access to quality information, data and resources to help with better informed decision making at local, regional and state levels.

During PY 2006 the national WIRED Initiative began to have an impact on the information requests from the Alabama LMI Division. This initiative which began in February 2006 stresses regional economies which are not specific to city, county, or state boundaries. These regions are identified based on a specific economic and industrial infrastructure. These regional economies can benefit from further development using the combined efforts of key players in the region, such as education, economic development, workforce development, and regional employers. Labor market information has and will continue to be an important source for providing industry and occupational information for these regions.

Methodologies from ETA sponsored consortiums may be employed when there are no BLS directives. This commitment includes working with Workforce Investment Boards (WIB)'s to identify the needs of the workforce investment system in Alabama.

Federal grant funds have been used for the delivery of products and services as part of the state's workforce information system. Enhancement of products and services above and beyond those discussed in this plan has incorporated other partner funds.

Accomplishments

1) Populated the Workforce Information Database

A) Outcomes for this objective

The ALMIS database version 2.3 was used, Core ALMIS tables were populated according to Consortium guidelines and database content have been maintained and updated to reflect the most current AL publications and data releases. Also, crosswalks to associated database have been maintained as updates have been available in addition to participation in ALMIS training opportunities.

B) Extent to which activities conformed to schedule and variance

The ALMIS database was maintained and populated as planned with no variance from anticipated milestones.

C) Aggregated expenditures and variance

There was no significant variance from the original estimated aggregate expenditures.

2) Produced and disseminate industry and occupational projections

A) Outcomes for this objective

Short-term industry and occupational statewide and area projections for 2006-2008 were completed by June 30, 2007. Projections files were submitted to DOL/ETA for ACINet by June 30, 2007. This data has also been submitted for the ALMIS database for publication via internet. Projections were developed for the Alabama portion of the West Alabama-East Mississippi WIRED Initiative for the period 2004-2014 and published on the internet. In addition, the 2004-2014 occupational projections were broken down for community and technical colleges to include projections specifically for occupations requiring up to an associate degree. These reports were posted on the website for public access. Skills Projections for 2002-2012 were developed for Alabama's 10 Workforce Investment Advisory Areas and two Local Workforce Investment Regions. Reports were developed for each region and distributed to respective regional board members and economic developers across the state. Development of industry and

occupational clusters for inclusion in deliverables has been completed and included in informational products described later in this report.

B) *Extent to which activities conformed to schedule and variance*

Production of the skills projections for Alabama WIA regions were delayed due to extensive time taken to carefully analyze skills for each region using newly developed software provided by the Projections Managing Partnership. Industry and occupational clusters were analyzed and included in deliverables as required, but further analysis is necessary in the coming year to meet customer needs.

C) *Expenditures and variance*

There was no significant variance from the original estimated aggregate expenditures.

3) **Publish annual economic analysis report for Alabama Governor and SWIB**

A) *Outcomes for this objective*

A report was produced for the governor and SWIB that included industry, occupational, and skills analysis completed during PY 2006. In addition, the report consisted of studies on high technology in Alabama; automotive manufacturing; military base realignment affecting the state; effects of disasters in the state over the year, specifically a tornado affecting Coffee and Wilcox counties; labor supply in Alabama; and the Alabama portion of the West Alabama-East Mississippi WIRED Initiative.

B) *Extent to which activities conformed to schedule and variance*

The report was completed and delivered to the Alabama Department of Industrial Relations Director on June 30, 2007. She kept one report for herself and delivered a report to Governor Riley. Two reports were also delivered to members of the SWIB as requested by the chairman of the board. Improvements to this report are ongoing and will be published in the coming program year.

C) *Expenditures and variance*

There was no significant variance from the original estimated aggregate expenditures.

4) **Post products, information, and reports on the Internet**

A) *Outcomes for this objective*

An internet link to the ACINet homepage was maintained as part of Alabama's information delivery. Supplemental wage information was continuously published online as it was released. Staffing patterns for industries using Micromatrix software have been developed. These staffing patterns are not published, but are being used to answer data requests and for internal data analysis. Career videos continue to be available online and distributed on CD as requested by customers. Informational posters, flyers and other occupational and career information products have been developed/updated with current data and made available. Specifically, posters, flyers, and the Career Exploration Guide have been updated and published in electronic versions and hard copy where feasible. The Alabama LMI Tutorial was announced, publicized, and made available on the website in both English and Spanish. A report on Labor Supply in Alabama was presented to economic developers, educators, and researchers around the state. Subsequently, the report was made available for download on the LMI website. Further updates and research of supply in Alabama and its WIA regions have been ongoing. LED Quarterly Workforce Indicators and Mapping data continue to be updated in partnership with the US Census Bureau, and used in reports to respond to information requests.

B) *Extent to which activities conformed to schedule and variance*

The Career Exploration Guide was delayed due to training and other priorities. This was available in hard copy and on the LMI website in January, 2007. The Alabama LMI tutorial was delayed due to technical issues with the software developer because of the Spanish translation, but was available online in February 2007.

C) *Expenditures and variance*

There was no significant variance from the original estimated aggregate expenditures.

5) **Partner and consult with workforce investment boards**

The following tasks are the result of consultation and collaboration with workforce investment partners as well as WIB's. In PY 2006, LMI products, services and publications were further developed and enhanced based on feedback from the partners. An overview of these enhancements was provided to each of the 10 Workforce Investment Advisory Areas (WIAA) that comprise the Statewide Local Board including the Statewide Board and the Boards for Jefferson and Mobile Counties. These tasks/products support the Department of Labor (DOL), Employment and Training Administration (ETA) five-year plan and are a direct result of active and ongoing consultation and collaboration with workforce investment leaders in the state and local areas.

A) *Outcomes for this objective*

LMI products were marketed to WIB's and other interested parties through product demonstrations. For example, LED mapping has been of interest due to its ability to provide immediate meaningful information. As a result, it has been demonstrated at a variety of meetings to increase customers' awareness of strategic industry placement in their local area with respect to employment and place of residence. LMI products, services, and publications continue to be enhanced to accommodate requests for more localized information. Various reports were developed using LED and GIS capabilities which were of great interest to WIA Boards, such as high technology industries and occupations in Alabama, base realignment effects on Alabama, and labor supply in the state. In October and November of 2006, presentations were made to WIA Boards emphasizing top industries in respective regions employing a high percentage of workers over the age of 55 as well as industry projections, specifically focusing on the President's High Growth Job Training Initiative. Current program data is regularly analyzed using GIS, administrative records and other data mining sources to bring greater depth to LMI informational materials. Continuation of LED program (cooperative program with U.S. Census Bureau) and Quarterly updates to LED are ongoing. The LED Mapping application version 2.0 is operational and online, with the inclusion of 2004 Alabama data and various new features, such as adding WIRED regions to the select areas. LED reports also make information available on workers by age and stratification within industry. Industry and occupational analysis of workforce advisory areas and exploration continue as data becomes available.

B) *Extent to which activities conformed to schedule and variance*

Activities of this nature are based on the demand of the state WIA Board and local WIB's. To this extent data was provided within the scope of the schedule in which it was requested. Skills Projections, again, have been carefully analyzed to make certain that it is presented in a way which accurately presents the information so users will be able make well informed decisions. LED reports are being produced on a continuous basis to answer customer requests in a timely manner. The report on workers in Alabama over the age of 55 using LED data has been delayed due to US Census Bureau time schedules.

C) *Expenditures and variance*

There was no significant variance from the original estimated aggregate expenditures.

6) **Conduct special studies and economic analyses**

A) *Outcomes for this objective*

LMI continued to conduct special studies and develop reports based on demand of customers and WIA boards. Workforce Development in Alabama has expressed a great interest in labor supply in Alabama in recent years. As a result, LMI initiated a study on labor supply in the state and the WIA regions. The study explores categories that make up labor supply and explains job churn as an important factor in the supply chain. The report was presented to economic developers, educators, and researchers by its author James Vollman. It was also published on the LMI website for public use. Furthermore, in response to events which took place over the program year that may have an impact on Alabama's economy, LMI produced several smaller reports. A map was produced displaying the positive and negative effects of BRAC to the state. Additionally, industry and labor force maps were produced after tornadoes had a

disastrous effect on Coffee and Wilcox counties in the State of Alabama. LMI continues to focus on industries that have a great impact on Alabama's economy, such as the automotive industry. Furthermore, the President's High Growth Job Training Initiative industries continue to be an area of analysis. In PY 2006, Alabama gained a WIRED Grant which included counties in West Alabama and Eastern Mississippi. Alabama produced a special report for the Alabama portion of this WIRED grant, containing information such as labor force, education, population, industry and occupational information.

B) *Extent to which activities conformed to schedule and variance*

Alabama will continue to analyze WIRED regions that are announced in the State of Alabama. Generation two of the WIRED Grants specifies a region including North Alabama counties and South Tennessee counties. Alabama is currently working with Tennessee to provide a report encompassing the entire region.

C) *Expenditures and variance*

There was no significant variance from the original estimated aggregate expenditures.

B. Consultation and Customer Satisfaction Assessment

Customer consultation and satisfaction in Alabama will continue to be evaluated using employer groups, workforce investment partners, customer satisfaction surveys, requests for publications, training events, and anecdotal information received from customers. Focus group and workforce investment partner reviews are expected to occur as both planned events and as responses to feedback from presentations and training events.

As a result of Alabama's extensive training efforts in previous program years, there was an increased interest in information and training provided by the Labor Market Information Division. The Alabama division was asked by 22 customers to speak and/or conduct training at respective conferences or meetings. Furthermore, the requests for training covered a whole array of customer groups that request labor market information. Staff conducted training at high schools, employer meetings, veterans summit, economic developers, career technical education, and industry associations. Staff was even asked to discuss labor market information on a local television station. In the same respect, information requests increased by way of email. These requests also came from a large gamut of customers such as workforce development, researchers, economic developers, employers, secondary education, postsecondary education, etc. During PY 2006, LMI staff answered over 50 requests for information. This number does not include the large number of requests made by phone. Staff in Alabama will continue during the coming year to extend the public's knowledge of labor market information and its benefits to the workforce and economy of the state.

In PY 2006-2007 customer satisfaction assessments were revised based on PY 2005-2006 experiences and feedback. Evaluation forms were mailed with hard copy publications and provided at each training event. This information is captured through the use of Likert scales and evaluated numerically (scale of 1.0 – 5.0 with 1.0 representing Not Satisfied and 5.0 representing Very Satisfied). For the occasions where multiple products are requested, only one survey is included for products. That survey highlights the contents of the shipment and asks about general satisfaction with the products as a group rather than for individual products. This provides overall feedback of the LMI service without undo burden on the recipient. All surveys were accompanied with a postage paid return envelop for the customers convenience. LMI staff will continue to refine and update assessment templates to more accurately capture information on customer needs, usefulness and satisfaction. This is an ongoing process and one of the primary tools for evaluating product and service success and planning future initiatives. To see results of customer satisfaction surveys conducted during PY 2006, see *appendix a*, at the end of the report.

Both high customer satisfaction results and increased demand for products and training emphasize the efforts of the Alabama LMI Division to provide applicable labor market information to customers of all types and continue to educate customers in the importance of the data that is collected and analyzed.

B. Recommendations for Improvements or Changes to the Deliverables

The Alabama Labor Market Information Division will continue to expand the array of products available so data will be applicable to a broad spectrum of users. The annual report to the Governor will be revised to include more analysis, and fewer tables. The division will place a greater emphasis on making all products and reports available on the website, allowing customers easy access and printing capability. Local Employment Dynamics will be analyzed to a greater extent to use the vast amounts of data available through this program to educate users about the labor market.

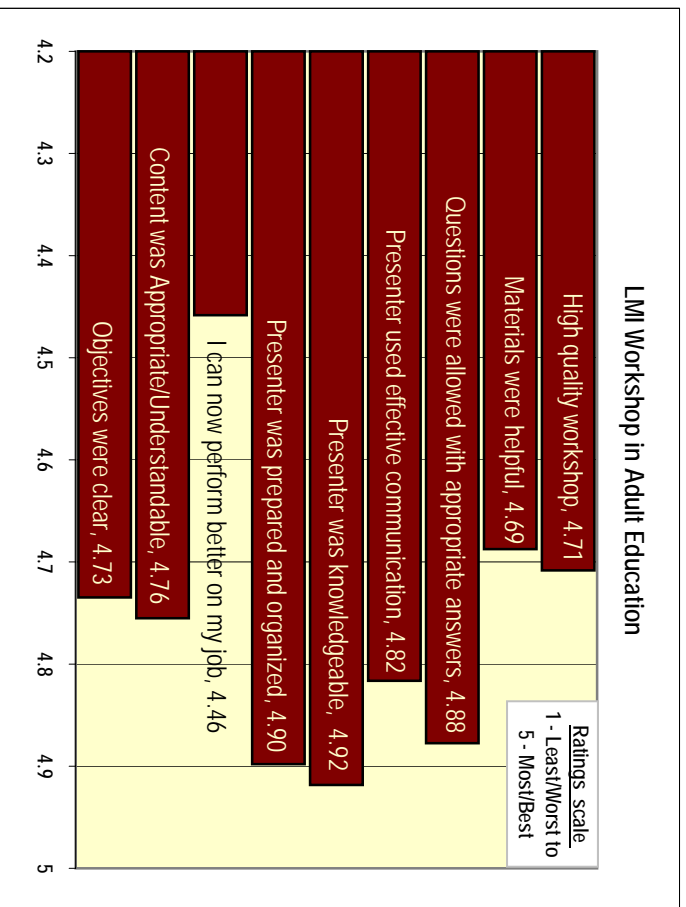
Through the continuation of customer satisfaction surveys, the division will alter presentation of data and develop data and training based on the comments of customers. In the same respect, the division will provide data to local WIB's for decision making in respective regions. Business Employment Dynamics will be analyzed further to look at industry job flow by establishment. Also the division will continue to take a look at sources for occupational supply, which is very important to Education and Workforce Development. The division will continue to develop visual representations of the data using GIS and various charts and graphs to allow customers to more easily see differences in various areas and major shifts in industries and occupations in the state and local areas.

As the nation continues in the direction of developing the labor market of regional economies, which aren't always restrained by county or state borders, the Alabama Labor Market Information Division will strive to provide as much information as confidentiality standards will allow in substate areas. Alabama will continue to work with LMI divisions in surrounding states to provide data in regions that cross state borders. In the same manner, the division will continue to pursue partnerships with various agencies to provide more data to the public.

Alabama will continue to train the public about labor market information in the state. The division will strive to show customers how to use labor market information to answer questions about the state and local economy, how to maneuver the LMI website to gather information, and how to seek information from new resources that may be beneficial. Furthermore, we will publicize and market new products and websites that will assist customers seeking data for the state and local areas.

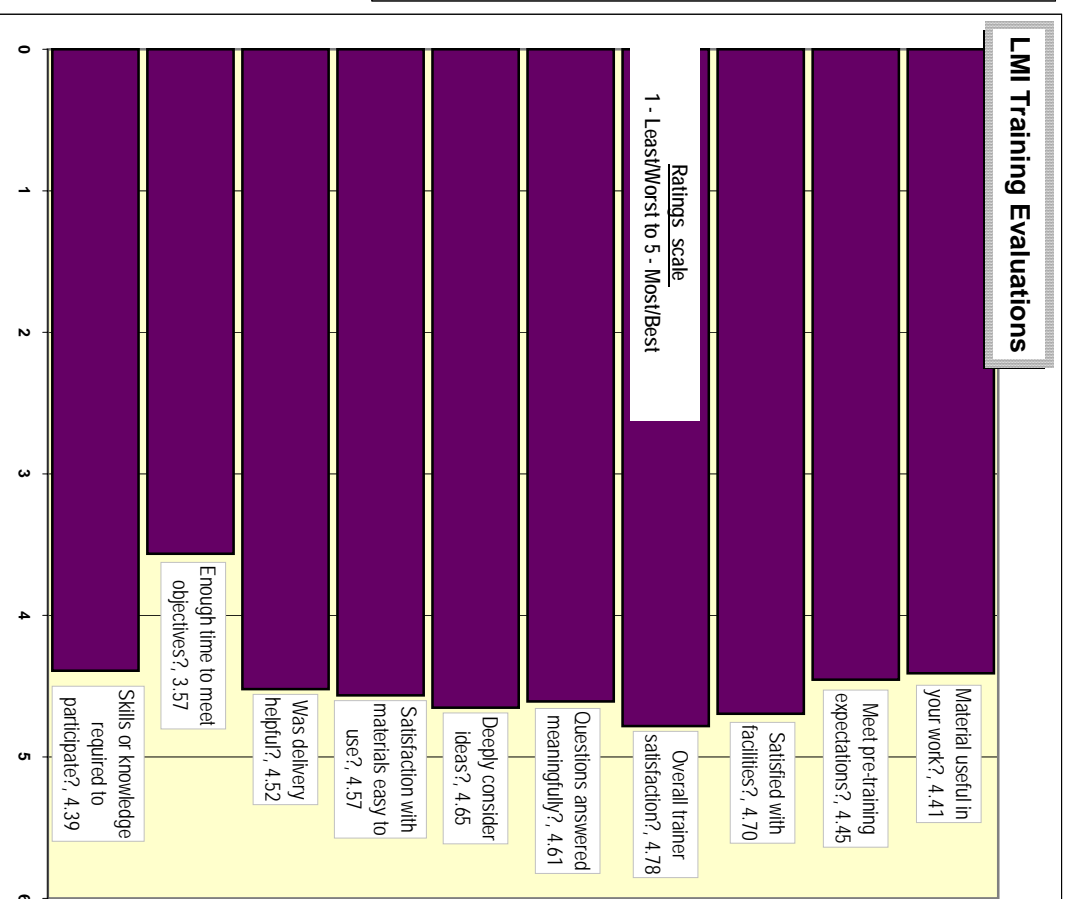
appendix a

Alabama Customer Satisfaction Survey Results

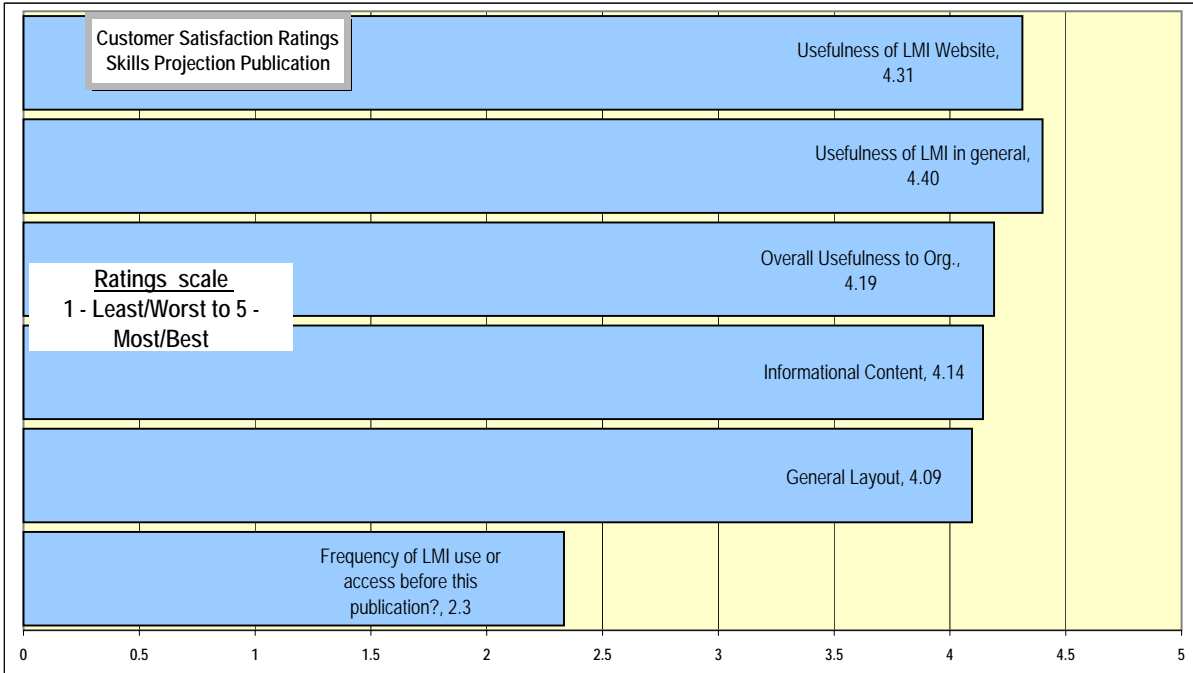


Comments from Adult Education training evaluations:

- Logging online was particularly useful. Excellent Seminar.
- How to obtain information from the presenter's web site?
- Move the projector back to have a more easily read projection (too small).
- Excellent info. on resources.
- Great workshop. Presenter was well-prepared, yet flexible to respond to questions.
- Excellent vocal delivery.
- Greta does a great job presenting learning sessions.
- This wasn't exactly what I expected from the title of the presentation, but it was helpful to my classroom.



Alabama
Customer Satisfaction Survey Results



Skills Projections Comments from Skills Projections evaluations:

Format Preference: Great publication - Thanks

Internet=14.3%

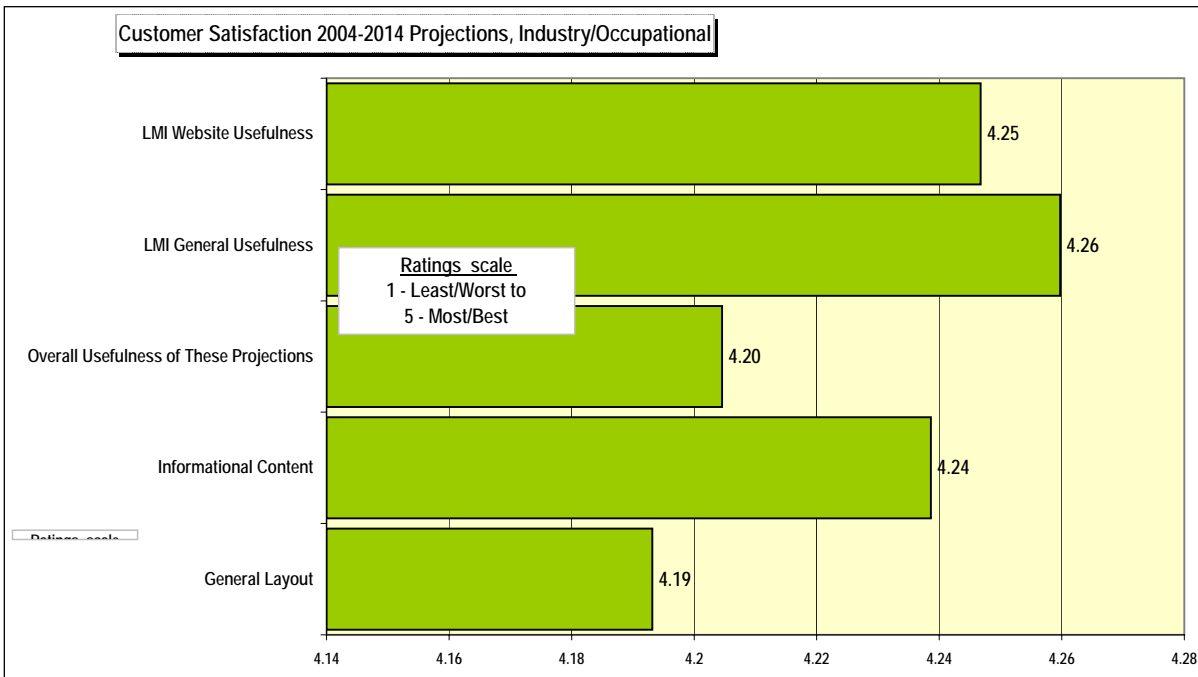
Email/PDF=38.1%

Hard Copy=47.6%

This is a useful tool in support of our local Workforce Development initiatives.

"This is useless"

Region 9, Table 2 results don't seem right; we are adding 18,590 jobs (from Industrial Projections 2014) but only 1802 require reading skills???



04-14 Projections Comments:

Thank you!

You may want to add index of County to Region

Valuable information to assist students in choosing a program of study.

Would very much like to see the info. for occupations: "declining, fast growing & high demand" up and running.

2 of the 3 have not been displayed for about 5 mos. Would love for the students to access.

Easy to read - good info. Website is good, Love Hot 40 for school kids!!

Thanks for including our school

Appears to gravely understate Baldwin growth

Data for B'ham/County Metro would be helpful. Keep up the good work!

04-14 Projections

Frequency of Use Before This Product:

Never = 20.7%

Occasional = 51.7%

Frequent = 27.6%

Format Preference:

Internet = 5.8%

Email = 11.6%

Hard Copy = 84.9%