

BTOP Narrative

The NCLS PCC has taught several classes on a variety of topics in 2011. Our efforts have been met with great success. Through participant surveys, confidence surveys, trainer observation and consistent interaction with our participants; we've been able to identify both positive and negative aspects of our instruction.

Interpretation of Findings

In response to these classes, it seems that most people confess a modest gain of knowledge. This is illustrated in our Confidence Surveys in which each class has 5 or 6 addressed topics; each topic with a scale of 1 to 5 for both "Before" and "After". Our goal is that a participant may move up at least 1 number on each topic. We find that to be consistently exceeded on any topic.

Progress

The NCLS PCC does the majority of our classes on a traveling basis. We reach out to work with and schedule classes at any of our 65 public libraries (*and other venues*) in the 4 counties that we service. Through this, we've been able to recognize that issues of digital literacy need to be met the most. Libraries are asking for classes on computer basics, email, social networking, and more as well asking us to create specific classes to meet specific needs.

Workforce development classes are not as popular. This could be because digital literacy is a prerequisite for preparing for and being active in our workplaces. For instance, a patron came to a Resume class in Massena. The class focuses on using a word processor for resume creation however the patron was completely unfamiliar with basic computer usage as well as word processing.

Overall, it seems that we have been building momentum since the summer. Many patrons now keep an eye out for these class opportunities which lend themselves to better attendance, as well as "maintaining" some patrons in our more popular areas and slowly build on their knowledge-base. This is obviously harder to do given our traveling situation, but we manage well despite this.

Observations

We've found that digital literacy is prominent need (*and a more popular one*) in our area. In both large and small towns, attendance and demand for classes that teach digital literacy are overwhelmingly greater than those for workforce development. In regards to workforce development, the entrepreneur class is moderately popular in which we expose individuals and businesses to tools for creating a website and promoting their business online. I think there is an extreme need for this class in our area to get our businesses represented online. I will be setting up classes in 2012 with other venues that better suit this "in-need" demographic.

Back on the focus of digital literacy, the need for these classes is extremely apparent. Some patrons in their 30's and 40's have had extreme difficulties setting up things that their peers would consider an easy task. Given their geographic or economic background, they may not have had the same opportunities to be exposed to technology as much as their peers.

However, with so many e-government services online and more making that transition, we would be leaving these people out in the cold without the classes we offer.

Best Practices

In our experiences, one of the practices that I have found most beneficial to patrons is to welcome and answer all questions. In topics of digital literacy, students may be experienced or familiar with one thing and not another, they may be able to afford newer technology or not, or may be able to obtain internet access or not. This results in a drastically uneven education level across our audience. To counter this, it is best to answer EVERY question as to not lose anyone and fill in gaps of knowledge.

Because we answer every question, have lots of open labs, and create opportunities for people to ask whatever they want on any device (computer or not), we've been successful in "demystifying" technology for several of our patrons. Through our progress, we've found that "demystifying" has made us extremely successful in the literacy of our patrons.

We consistently provide a deeper understanding of basics behind each asked question as well. Usually, by explaining the basics "behind" something, you've touched on something universal for other areas of digital literacy. For example, whether the class is Excel, e-mail, or digital photos; there are always questions of Cut, Copy, Paste. The deep explanation of this transcends the boundaries of the class materials and may help several patrons.

Lessons Learned

We've learned some lessons throughout our progress and have done our best to embrace them. One of them is to assume that the venue hosting a class of yours is going to advertise. We've countered this by trying to suggest a minimum of attendance for libraries that are asking for classes but have done poorly in the past. We also have to keep the regular relationship NCLS has with this library and to be "fair" to all our member libraries. This is usually not a huge issue. By February 2012, we will have an e-mail system set in place to optionally e-mail patrons of a specific library about classes being held. This will be a valuable asset to advertising classes in 2012.

Misc.

Although we feel that our program has been very successful, we battle the issues of NCLS not being a completely public facility. The scheduling of so many classes, travel time, and uncertainties that may appear at other venues does affect both our numbers and general availability to complete other needed tasks. Despite the affect on our statistics, we do feel this is a great service to the communities in both populated and remote areas and will continue to work hard to make this service available to these in need populations.

Summary of Outcomes (2011)

At the start of the BTOP program, the North Country Library System projected some targets for attendance and overall “success” of our classes. At the time we set these targets, we speculated them to be realistic and reflective of what our efforts would yield. It has been approximately a year, and with the data we’ve actually collected, we can compare and contrast both our projected and actual results.

There are 3 main categories that our classes fall under: Multimedia, Basic Internet and Computer Use, and Office Skills. These classes have been requested by both libraries and patrons from a list of classes we provide. This list continues to grow based on popular request for certain class topics or needs. We then measured the success of our instruction through 3 sources. First, a confidence survey which allows the student to subjectively quantify the acquisition of knowledge before and after the instruction. Second, trainer observation is used to monitor student’s progress through the instruction as well as make any adjustments to facilitate the class goals. Lastly, the third data source is the participant survey. This gives the student open ended questions to subjectively comment on the quality of the class and instruction received.

The Multimedia category was easily the most popular category of classes. Back when we started, we speculated that over the course of the grant (*approximately 2 years*) we would reach a target audience of 700 people. We’ve already had 577 of our 700 attendees; over 82%. Extremely popular classes such as Social Networking, Downloading eBooks, and Managing Your Digital Photos all contributed to this number. Confidence surveys show that 100% of all our multimedia attendees experienced an increase in knowledge. Again for all classes in this category, participant surveys recorded that 100% of students said they would refer the class to others.

The next category was Basic Internet & Computer Use. This category included classes such as Computers For Beginners, Windows 7 and You, and Google Earth/Maps. The confidence surveys for the classes in the category all reported that 100% of the participants reported an increase in knowledge. Also, participant surveys for each class reported 87% to 94% would refer others to take the class, 100% of all participants for each class reported satisfaction with the class, but only 27% to 54% reported they would be seeking additional classes. This may be inaccurate, as some students filled out one Participant Survey but showed up to multiple (*at most 4*) consecutive (*usually Computer Beginners classes*).

The last category was Office Skills; a rather small category of classes pertaining to the Microsoft Office software. This category included both Microsoft Word 2010 and Excel 2010. These classes are not usually requested and are less popular than most of our other offerings. As a result, we are far from our target numbers. Regardless, 100% of our students reported satisfaction with both classes and 100% would refer others to take the class. For Excel, 100% reported an increase in knowledge and 80% of our Word students reported an increase in knowledge. We may consider offering some more advanced content in our Word class, while

keeping basics to cover the needs of our beginner users as well as some extra information for our advanced users.

Overall, our data collection has shows that our students have been both educated and very satisfied with the PCC offerings. There is still room to grow and we will continue to make some changes to our classes.

Outcome/Class Offered	Target Audience	T. Audience Per Training	Data Source	Target Achievement Level	Actual Achievement Level
MULTIMEDIA	700	10			
<u>Social Networking</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participants report increased knowledge of networking sites and uses Participants participate in some form of Social Networking site in the class Participants report satisfaction with workshop content/trainer 	22	5	Confidence survey Trainer observation Participant survey	60% of participants 60% of participants 80% of participants	100% of participants reported an increase of knowledge (average of 2.0 level of increase based on scale of 1 (lowest) to 5 (highest) answered before and after class 100% of participants created accounts/logged into existing accounts 100% of participants reported satisfaction with the class 44% reported that they will be seeking additional classes 100% reported that they would refer others to take class
<u>Downloading eBooks and Audiobooks</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participants report increased knowledge of eBooks/audiobooks Participants report increased knowledge of compatible devices Participants report increased knowledge of OverDrive service/website, how to navigate and download titles 	538	7	Confidence survey Confidence survey Confidence survey	60% of participants 60% of participants 60% of participants	100% of participants reported an increase of knowledge (average of 2.0 level of increase based on scale of 1 (lowest) to 5 (highest) answered before and after class 100% of participants reported an increase of knowledge (average of 2.0 level of increase based on scale of 1 (lowest) to 5 (highest) answered before and after class 100% of participants reported an increase of knowledge (average of 2.0 level of increase based on scale of 1 (lowest) to 5 (highest) answered before and after class

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participants report satisfaction with workshop content/trainer 			Participant survey	80% of participants	95% of participants reported satisfaction with the class 100% reported that they would refer others to take class
Managing Your Digital Photos <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participants report increased knowledge of digital camera and photo basics (where pictures are stored, how to connect camera to computer, upload and transfer files, etc.) Participants participate in exercises involving uploading pictures/transferring and moving files Participants report satisfaction with workshop content/trainer 	17	5	Confidence survey	60% of participants	100% of participants reported an increase of knowledge (average of 2.0 level of increase based on scale of 1 (lowest) to 5 (highest) answered before and after class
			Trainer observation	60% of participants	100% of participants practiced opening/transferring files and editing digital photos
			Participant survey	80% of participants	100% of participants reported satisfaction with the class 94% reported that they would refer others to take class
BASIC INTERNET & COMPUTER USE	310	6			
Computers for Beginners <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participants demonstrate basic computer skills. Participants report increased knowledge of computer basics. 	109	4	Trainer observation	60% of participants	100% of participants completed in-class exercises during instruction
			Confidence survey	60% of participants	100% of participants reported an increase of knowledge (average of 1.5 level of increase based on scale of 1 (lowest) to 5 (highest)

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participants report satisfaction with workshop content/trainer. 			Participant survey	80% of participants	<p>answered before and after class</p> <p>100% of participants reported satisfaction with the class 28% reported that they will be seeking additional classes 94% reported that they would refer others to take this class</p>
<p><u>Windows 7 and You</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participants navigate and use Windows 7 in class during instruction Participants report increased knowledge of using and navigating the newest operating system from Microsoft Participants report satisfaction with workshop content/trainer 	12	6	<p>Trainer observation</p> <p>Confidence survey</p> <p>Participation survey</p>	<p>60% of participants</p> <p>60% of participants</p> <p>80% of participants</p>	<p>100% of participants completed in-class exercises during instruction</p> <p>None collected</p> <p>100% of participants reported satisfaction with the class 54% reported that they will be seeking additional classes 89% reported that they would refer others to take this class</p>
<p><u>Google Earth/Maps</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participants demonstrate basic computer skills using the Google Earth and Maps applications. Participants report increased knowledge of Google Earth and Maps basics, Participants report satisfaction with workshop content/trainer. 	25	3	<p>Trainer observation</p> <p>Confidence survey</p> <p>Participant survey</p>	<p>60% of participants</p> <p>60% of participants</p> <p>80% of participants</p>	<p>100% of participants successfully navigated the globe and found directions using Google applications during instruction</p> <p>100% of participants reported an increase of knowledge (average of 3 level of increase based on scale of 1 (lowest) to 5 (highest) answered before and after class</p> <p>100% of participants reported satisfaction with the class.</p>

					27% reported that they will be seeking additional classes. 87% reported that they would refer others to take class.
<u>Computer Diagnostics & Troubleshooting</u>					
<u>OFFICE SKILLS</u>	325	6			
<u>Microsoft Word 2010</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participants demonstrate basic word processing skills Participants report increased knowledge of word processing Participants report satisfaction with workshop/trainer 	28	6	Trainer observation Confidence/Participant survey Participant survey	60% of participants 60% of participants 80% of participants	100% of participants completed in-class exercises during instruction 80% of participants reported an increase in knowledge, stating that they learned and could perform at least one new function of MS Word 100% of participants reported satisfaction with the class. 50% reported that class solved a vocational need 40% reported learning a new job-readiness skill 100% reported that they would refer others to take class.
<u>Microsoft Excel 2010</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participants demonstrate basic Excel /numbers processing skills Participants report increased knowledge of Excel/numbers processing Participants report satisfaction with workshop/trainer 	23	4	Trainer observation Confidence/Participant survey Participant survey		100% of participants completed in-class exercises during instruction 100% of participants reported an increase in knowledge, stating that they learned and could perform at least one new function of MS Excel 100% of participants reported satisfaction with the class. 64% reported that class solved a vocational need 59% reported learning a new job-readiness skill 100% reported that they would refer others to