

*Make Connections
At the PCC!*

2 Park Street, Potsdam NY 315-265-7230



Goals:

The Potsdam Public Computer Center (PCC) set out to provide hands-on instruction in the use of digital equipment and navigating internet resources. The plan was to purchase 12 laptop computers, three desktop computers, furniture, and videoconference equipment. A newly renovated area in the library, the Cleveland Center, would provide a focal center for offering digital literacy and workforce development classes to the community. The Potsdam PCC had three target populations: the unemployed and underemployed, small business owners, and non-college bound youth. The plan was to play a part in installing an entrepreneurial spirit in the young adults by working with the Economic Development Agency. The business owners and unemployed were to be met with resources and support required to meet employment and business goals, with a focus on digital literacy (e.g. web page design).

Methods:

We purchased 12 laptop computers and three desktop computers along with charging cabinets for the laptops, furniture, projection equipment, a SMART podium, and LifeSize videoconference equipment. We talked with community members, organizations, and small business leaders to establish partnerships and gather ideas for classes needed. Bob Watkin wrote the curriculum for classes he would be teaching and we contracted with the One-Stop Career Center to provide an experienced employment counselor at the PCC two days a week. PCC staff worked together to determine operating hours and scheduling procedures. Surveys were developed.

Outputs:

We have been offering numerous classes and one-on-one training. Due to the varied expertise of available teachers, we have been able to offer a wide range of topics. During the period of June through December of 2011, the PCC and its partners instructed 2,202 individuals and achieved a total of 3,473 training hours. In every class offered, we were able to meet or exceed the target achievement level of skills and values gained. During the same period, access to computers was utilized by 8,202 patrons. The chart below shows the activities of the PCC broken down into three categories. It was necessary to create an "other" category because there was a substantial need of the PCC equipment by individuals and groups offering services to the community that could not be categorized as workforce development or digital literacy.

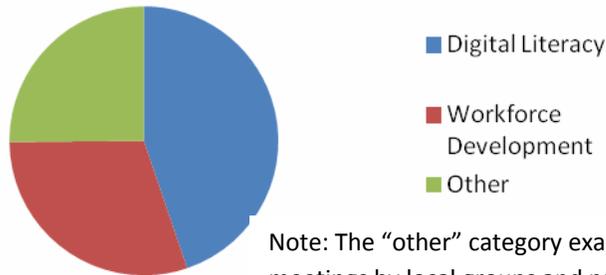
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Percentage according to Category

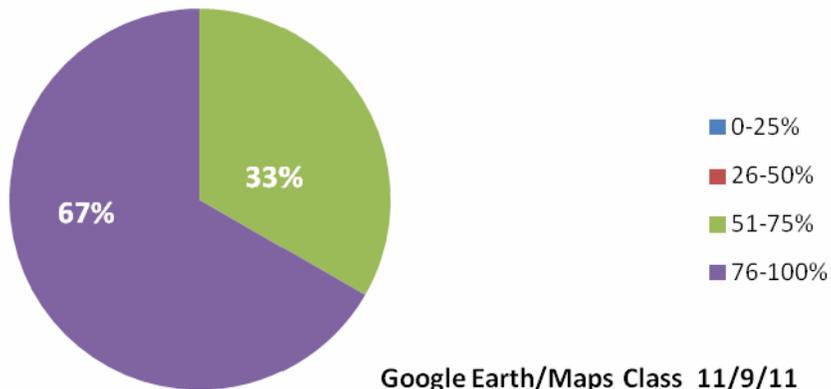


Note: The "other" category examples include meetings by local groups and partners such as the Watertown Vet Center.

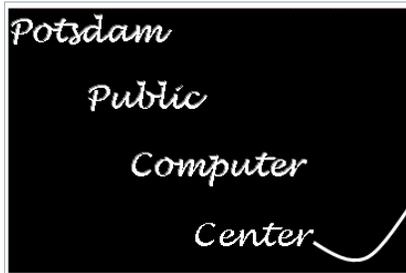
Outcomes:

The first of the project outcomes, increasing digital literacy skills, was documented primarily through two methods, observation and surveys. The observation portion required the instructor to complete a checklist at the completion of class. The checklist included skills and values gained from the class activities and material. Many classes included a survey question about the percentage of new information gained from the instruction. As the chart of the class below illustrates, the participants learned to utilize a software application, and most of it was completely new to them. This information demonstrates we are meeting our desired goal to offer relevant instruction to the community.

100% of Participants Responded That at Least Half of the Information was New to Them



Google Earth/Maps Class 11/9/11



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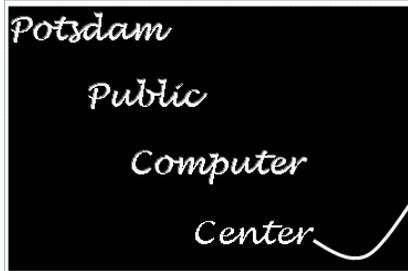
Another outcome, PCC users are better prepared for the workforce, proved to be more difficult than expected to meet. The Potsdam PCC contracted with the Saint Lawrence County One-Stop Career Center located in Canton, New York. It was thought that patrons living closer to Potsdam than Canton would be happy to visit the library, a closer facility to home, to obtain help with job skills and resume writing. However, it proved to be less successful than expected. The class attendance was low and the creation of a job club was not efficacious. Slowly, through word of mouth and referrals from other agencies (Penski, Literacy Volunteers), requests for help with workforce development related topics grew. Most instruction or assistance was provided one-on-one, and many patrons left with free printed copies of a new resume on resume paper.

The third outcome, PCC users are satisfied with services, was satisfied through every training opportunity offered and each session of open access by an individual or group. Patrons in the latter group were asked to fill out a short survey stating their level of satisfaction with the equipment, staff, and space. The overwhelming majority of respondents were very satisfied with all three.

The fourth outcome, community partners are aware of PCC/E-Mobile Unit services, was also a success. The PCC created or expanded existing partnerships with the Potsdam Chamber of Commerce, the Saint Lawrence County Chamber of Commerce, the Ogdensburg ATTAIN lab, the Potsdam Neighborhood Center, Career Opportunities, VESID (now ACCESS VR), Watertown Vet Center, Potsdam Museum, Fused Solutions, Department of Social Services, and Literacy Volunteers. The working relationship with these entities led to ideas for classes that were needed and subsequently offered by experienced instructors. There were failed attempts at other partnerships and one in particular hurt the mission of the PCC. The Potsdam Economic Development Office did not respond well to working with the PCC in efforts to reach the youth. The PCC made an attempt with Fused Solutions to reach the young adults, however attendance was low for the classes offered.

Observations:

Several observations regarding scheduling and instruction developed into learning opportunities by the PCC staff and resulted in transformations of many aspects of the PCC. Scheduling the hours the PCC was to be open in the beginning was difficult because no other program served as a guide. We used our contact with the One-Stop Career Center to get started. Their personnel work 8am-4pm and consulting with them led us to the conclusion that evening hours were not beneficial for job seekers; they found that most individuals looking for work preferred the morning hours. We decided to follow the 8am-4pm schedule and to reevaluate the schedule at a later date.



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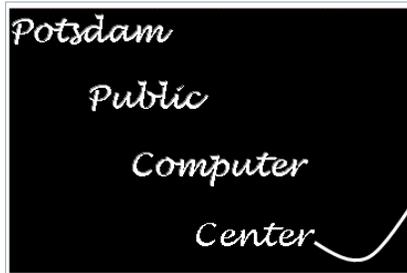
Several months later we held an evening event with the Potsdam Chamber of Commerce I.T. Committee, and it was such a success that we decided it was time to reevaluate the scheduled hours. We decided to expand the hours to include open time three evenings a week and eight hours on Saturday, and it was a success. There was one barrier to keeping this schedule going. The personnel were stretched too far and the schedule could not be maintained for more than a few months. This turn of events was another learning opportunity because we realized that we would need to build a corps of volunteers that would help us to reinstate the evening hours and help sustain this project into the future.

The observations concerning instruction concerned the workforce development classes. The PCC staff presumed job search and resume writing classes would be a success. However, these classes were not well attended, so the focus shifted heavily to the digital literacy classes. One-Stop Career Center personnel were here for the first 12 months and helped many individuals as well as training the PCC staff in techniques and tips for helping job seekers. Workforce development classes were all but dropped from the schedule and most work in this area was accomplished on an individual basis.

However, there was one observation concerning a question on the surveys which patrons completed after class. This observation led us to reevaluate the notion that we were not helping job seekers or improving workforce development. The survey question asked individuals how they planned to use the information that they gained from the class. It turned out that many individuals signed up for classes such as Microsoft Excel and QuickBooks with the intention of using the knowledge gained for work. We categorized these classes as digital literacy instruction rather than workforce development; however these classes fit the criteria for both.

Another observation regarding instruction concerns the one-on-one sessions. In the beginning we looked for as many resources as possible and created some of our own so that we could direct people to the instruction according to what we felt they needed. However, we found it is best to be flexible and not to start with fixed ideas about the instruction that will be offered. A discussion with the individual to determine digital literacy skill levels and attitude toward technology should take place first. It is best to let the student lead and use the resources as a guide rather than as a taskmaster.

We found that most patrons preferred to learn and practice digital literacy skills, for example mouse skills, by completing a task that prompted them to learn computer skills in the first place. For example, a patron in need of digital literacy skills desired to create an email account, so rather than going through "mouse exercises" - and there are some great websites that have mouse exercises - an informal lesson took place instead. It was a slow process, but her mouse skills improved as she progressed through the session and she was quite pleased at the end to have an email account. She now has another form of communication with her son and has been in many times since to check her email. She is quite pleased



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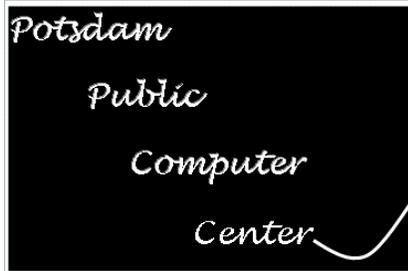


that she can receive pictures of her grandchildren that live in another part of the state. Since her first lesson, she has progressed to shopping online, and enjoys buying items for her grandchildren and ordering books.

Some best practices include keeping class sizes small, practicing excellent listening skills, exercising patience and taking time with individuals so that they do not feel rushed. Another best practice was slow in forming because we did not need it until we became a vibrant part of the library. We discovered it was essential to develop new policies when things became so hectic that we were running out of time to accomplish all necessary tasks. We were compelled to set aside a day for paperwork, and walk-ins were accommodated during that time; however we did not schedule one-on-one appointments or teaching that day. Another lesson we learned was that advertising makes a tremendous difference in the number of people that attend classes. Therefore, advertising became a best practice for the Potsdam PCC. Also, word of mouth advertising began quite slowly, but as it has grown it has been a great form of advertising because the people who talk about what we do at the PCC have wonderful things to say and are very generous in their praise.

Another best practice has been conducting outreach in the community by joining in events. This has been helpful in informing the public about the PCC and the many services offered. Several events were attended with not only the intention to inform, but also to meet potential instructors. We attended the Really Big Show at Clarkson University Cheel Arena and focused our attention on informing business owners about the Potsdam PCC materials and services. Other events, for example local and county Chamber of Commerce events and local community organization events, helped to inform the public of the resources available at the PCC.

Another best practice has been to take place in training opportunities. There have been opportunities provided by the BTOP/ARRA initiative and some that were sought out by the PCC director. The learning, training, and networking that have taken place through these opportunities have helped shape the PCC.



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Testimonials:

One-on-One Computer Instruction:

- "I feel exhilarated with joy and motivated to improve my computer knowledge and skills."
- "I have computer phobia. Bob worked with me so patiently and made me feel comfortable and capable to learn what I have not been able to learn in more than a decade."
- "I would recommend this to anyone that needed help!"
- "It was excellent – very patient instructor."
- "Without Rene and Bob's help I would not be able to use my computer. Their help has enabled me to be online and emailing. Thank you."
- If you would like to watch a three minute video testimonial, please visit our website at www.potsdampcc.org

Class Instruction:

- "Very happy I attended this class and I learned a lot."
- "Thorough, specific, yet not overwhelming. Bob was very kind and patient as a teacher."
- "So many new tools to play with. Thank you."
- "Very productive class. Well explained. Thank you."
- "Very good instructor- I learned so much. Thanks Mary." (QuickBooks class)
- "Mary is an excellent teacher – her notes are great. Seriously, I've been taught by a variety of people – I appreciate her calm and clarity. Thank you so much for offering this service to the public for free!"

Open Lab Access:

- "I think the computer center is a tremendous asset for this and the surrounding communities. Thanks for providing it."
- "Excellent all around."
- "Please keep this wonderful place going. I am spreading the word! Great staff!"
- "Easy to get on [the computer]. I love it! I don't feel crowded or rushed."

Partners:

- "This is a great resource for the Potsdam area job searchers. Bob and Rene are very helpful and always cordial. Thanks." Judy Olin, Career Opportunities Employment Specialist.

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<p>Social Networking</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participants Report Increased Knowledge about Privacy/Security on Social Networking Sites • Participants report increased knowledge about the different types of social media <p>Computer Classes taught by Fused Solutions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participants Report Increased Knowledge about the Topic Covered • Participants Report Satisfaction with Class Content and Trainer 		5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Post-class survey • Post-class survey 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • .8 or 80% per training • .9 or 90% per training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 100% • 100%
<p>Office Skill</p> <p>PCC offers the following training:</p> <p>Introduction to Microsoft Word</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participants produce a brief letter. • Participants produce a table. • Participants report satisfaction with class content/trainer. <p>Introduction to Microsoft Excel</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participants report they gained at least 2 new skills. • Participants create a basic spreadsheet. • Participants report satisfaction with class content/trainer. <p>Microsoft Word Series</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participants report at least 3 new skills. • Participants report increased confidence with using Microsoft Word. • Participants report satisfaction with class content/trainer. 	500	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Checklist by trainer • Checklist by trainer • Post-class survey 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 or 60% per training • 3 or 60% per training • 4.5 or 90% per training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 94% • 94% • 100%
		5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Post-class survey • Checklist by trainer • Post-class survey 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 or 60% per training • 3 or 60% per training • 4.5 or 90% per training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 87% • 87% • 93%
		10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Post-class survey • Post-class survey 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 7 or 70% per training • 7 or 70% per training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 94% • 100%
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Post-class survey 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 9 or 90% per training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 94%

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<p>Microsoft Excel Series</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participants report at least 3 new skills. • Participants report increased confidence with using Microsoft Excel. • Participants report satisfaction with class content/trainer. 		10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Post-class survey • Post-class survey • Post-class survey 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 7 or 70% per training • 8 or 80% per training • 9 or 90% per training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 92% • 92% • 92%
<p>One-on-one office help session</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participants report new/improved office application skills. • Participants report satisfaction with session. 		1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Post-session interview • Post-session interview 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • .7 or 70% per training • .9 or 90% per training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 100% • 100%
<p>QuickBooks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participants demonstrate ability to run a financial report. • Participants report increased knowledge of tracking business income and expenses using QuickBooks. • Participants report satisfaction with class content/trainer. 		5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Observation by trainer • Post-workshop survey • Post-workshop survey 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 or 60% per training • 4 or 80% per training • 4.5 or 90% per training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 97% • 97% • 97%
<p>Intro to Microsoft PowerPoint</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participants report increased knowledge about PowerPoint • Participants report increased confidence in integrating pictures and videos into a presentation • Participants report satisfaction with the class content/trainer 		5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Post-workshop Survey • Post-workshop Survey • Post-workshop Survey 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4 or 80% per training • 3 or 60% per training • 4.5 or 90% per training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 100% • 100% • 100%
<p>Excel 2010</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participants report increased knowledge about Microsoft Excel 2010 • Participants report satisfaction with the class content/trainer 		5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Post-class survey • Post-class survey 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4 or 80% per training • 4.5 or 90% per training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 90% • 100%

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<p>Windows 7</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participants report increased knowledge of Windows 7 • Participants report satisfaction with class content/trainer <p>Facebook</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participants report increased knowledge about creating a FaceBook profile • Participants report increased knowledge about Facebook privacy settings • Participants report satisfaction with class content/trainer <p>Intro to Email</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participants report increased confidence about selecting and formatting cells • Participants report increased confidence about using basic formulae • Participants report increased confidence about freezing columns and rows 		<p>5</p> <p>5</p> <p>5</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Post-class survey 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4 or 80% per training • 4.5 or 90% per training • 4 or 80% per training • 3 or 60% per training • 4.5 or 90% per training • 4 or 80% per training • 3 or 60% per training • 4.5 or 90% per training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 100% • 100% • 100% • 100% • 100% • 80% • 100% • 80%
<p>Multimedia</p> <p>PCC offers the following training:</p> <p>EBooks/audiobooks workshop</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participants record increased knowledge in identifying compatible devices • Participants gain knowledge of the steps required to download eBooks/audiobooks • Participants report satisfaction with the class content/trainer 	<p>300</p>	<p>10</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Observation by trainer • Post-workshop Survey • Post-workshop Survey 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 8 or 80% per training • 8 or 80% per training • 9 or 90% per training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 100% • 91% • 91%

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<p>Photo Editing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participants report more confidence in taking pictures from the digital camera • Participants edit one photo during class • Participants report satisfaction with class content/trainer <p>Basic videoconferencing satisfaction</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participants report satisfaction with content • Participants report satisfaction with venue 		5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Post-workshop survey • Post-workshop Survey • Post-workshop survey 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4 or 80% per training • 3 or 60% per training • 4.5 or 90% per training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 90% • 70% • 100%
		5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Post-workshop survey • Post-workshop survey 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 or 60% per training • 4 or 80% per training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 98% • 98%

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<p>Job Interview Skills Workshop</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participants demonstrate improvement in interview performance. • Participants report increased knowledge of common interview questions. • Participants report increased confidence in interviewing skills. • Participants report satisfaction with workshop content/trainer. <p>Marketing Your Small Business Through the Internet</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participants report increased knowledge about marketing a small business • Participants report they will use information for a business • Participants report satisfaction with class content/trainer 	<p>5</p> <p>5</p>	<p>5</p> <p>5</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Checklist by trainer • Post-workshop survey 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 or 60% per training • 4 or 80% per training • 4 or 80% per training • 4.5 or 90% per training • 4 or 80% per training • 4 or 80% per training • 4.5 or 90% per training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 80% • 100% • 80% • 100% • 83% • 83% • 83%
<p><u>College Prep</u></p> <p>PCC offers the following training:</p> <p>SAT Prep Workshop</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participants improve practice SAT scores. • Participants report feeling more prepared to take the SAT. • Participants report satisfaction with workshop content/trainer. 	<p>40</p>	<p>10</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre/post-class test • Post-class survey • Post-class survey 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 8 or 80% per training • 8 or 80% per training • 9 or 90% per training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 100% • 100% • 100%

Potsdam Public Computer Center

General Outcome #3: PCC users are satisfied with services.					Evaluation Time Period: June 1-December 1, 2011
Custom Outcome:	Target Audience:	Target Audience Per Training:	Data Source:	Target Achievement Level:	Actual Achievement Level:
<u>Open Lab Access</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Users rate service at good or excellent. • Users report they would recommend services to a friend. • Users report they plan to use services again. <p>See also custom satisfaction outcomes for training under outcomes #1 and #2.</p>	4800	NA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • User survey • User survey • User survey <p>(356 surveys based on target audience of 4800)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 303 or 85% of responses • 303 or 85% of responses • 303 or 85% of responses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 98% • 98% • 98%

Potsdam Public Computer Center

General Outcome #4: Community partners are aware of PCC/E-Mobile Unit services.					Evaluation Time Period: June 1-December 1, 2011
Custom Outcome:	Target Audience:	Target Audience Per Training:	Data Source:	Target Achievement Level:	Actual Achievement Level:
<u>Partners</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partners state two or more services provided by the PCC. Partners report they have referred clients/members to the PCC. Partners report they have developed client/member activities that incorporate PCC services. 	10	NA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interview with primary contact Interview with primary contact Interview with Primary contact 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 10 or 100% of partners 10 or 100% of partners 3 or 30% of partners 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 100% 100% 60%

Potsdam Public Computer Center

Evaluation Time Period: June 1 – December 1, 2011

Please indicate your level of agreement/disagreement with the following statements:

The PCC/E-Mobile Unit was successful in achieving outcome #1 (users gain digital literacy skills).

Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree

The PCC/E-Mobile Unit was successful in achieving outcome #2 (users are better prepared for the workforce).

Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree

The PCC/E-Mobile Unit was successful in achieving outcome #3 (users are satisfied with services).

Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree

The PCC/E-Mobile Unit was successful in achieving outcome #4 (partners are aware of services).

Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree

If you indicated disagree or strongly disagree for any of the above outcomes, please explain. List any changes being made to the program and/or evaluation plan to ensure these outcomes are achieved.

Please share any additional findings. Include a few specific quotes or accounts from users/partners that support outcomes.

Included with Narrative Report