

Library Technology and Digital Services Survey

Key Findings for Ramsey County Library

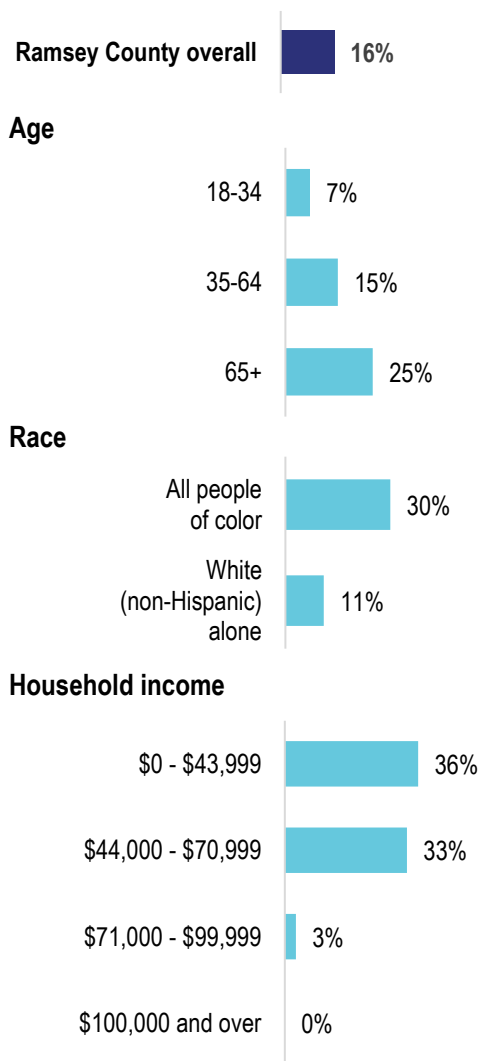
In spring 2022, the Metropolitan Library Service Agency (MELSA) contracted with Wilder Research to conduct a survey of adults in the 7-county Twin Cities metropolitan area to learn more about their technology and digital service needs and the use of these services at local public libraries. MELSA and eight Twin Cities metropolitan area library systems will use the survey findings to inform their technology and digital services. The survey was sent to a representative sample of 20,800 residents from the metropolitan area. A total of 3,230 residents completed the survey for a response rate of 16%. Of the 1,800 households sampled in Ramsey County (excluding the City of Saint Paul), 342 residents completed the survey for a response rate of 19%. Survey results are weighted by population demographics, making them statistically representative of the adult population. Below are the key findings from the survey. We highlighted items where there was a difference of 10 percentage points between demographic groups. Comparisons by key demographics could not be made for every survey question due to a small number of responses for particular groups in some cases.

Internet access

16% of respondents report slow, unreliable, or no internet access at home.

Respondents age 65+, respondents of color, and respondents with lower household incomes (less than \$71,000) were more likely to report a lack of adequate internet compared with younger, White (non-Hispanic), and higher income respondents.

1. Percentage of respondents with slow, unreliable, or no internet access at home by age, race, and household income



For respondents with slow, unreliable, or no internet access at home, 41% said they use the library to access the internet.

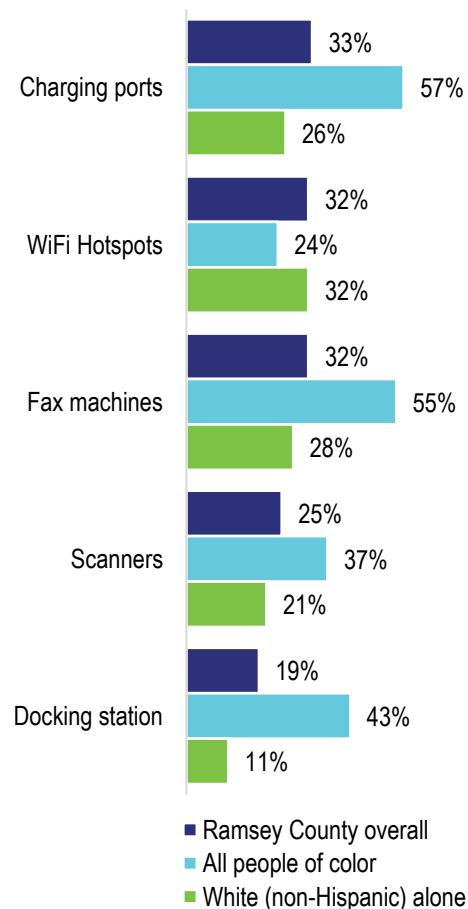
Existing services

Survey respondents are overwhelmingly satisfied with existing digital and technology services at the library.

Nearly all (95% or more) of Ramsey County respondents reported satisfaction with library digital and technology services, including computers, internet access (Wi-Fi), printers, eCollection, online research tools, and technology support from library staff.

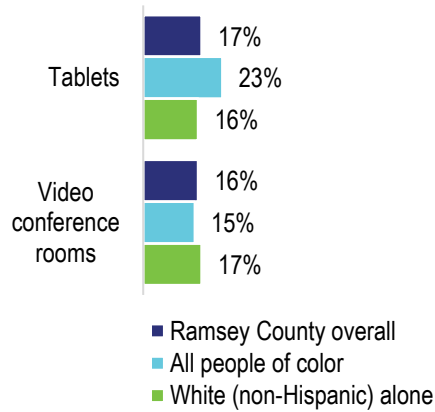
From a list of possible services at the library, the highest percentage of respondents said they would be interested in accessing charging ports (33%), WiFi Hotspots (32%), and fax machines (32%). A higher proportion of respondents of color reported they would use some of these services, if available, compared with White (non-Hispanic) respondents.

2. Interest in use of library resources (if available) by race



■ Ramsey County overall
 ■ All people of color
 ■ White (non-Hispanic) alone

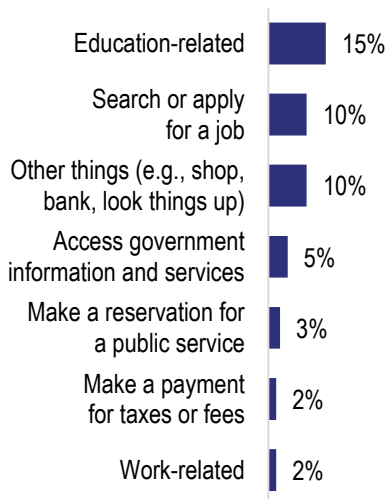
2. Use of library resources (if available) by race (cont.)



Online activities

From a list of seven possible online activities, the most common activities at the library in the past 12 months were education-related (e.g., doing homework, taking a class; 15%), searching or applying for a job (10%), or other things (e.g., shop, bank, look things up) (10%).

3. Common online activities at the library in the past 12 months



A higher proportion of young respondents (age 18-34) and respondents of color reported engaging in searching or applying for a job and education-related activities online at the library compared to older and White (non-Hispanic) respondents.

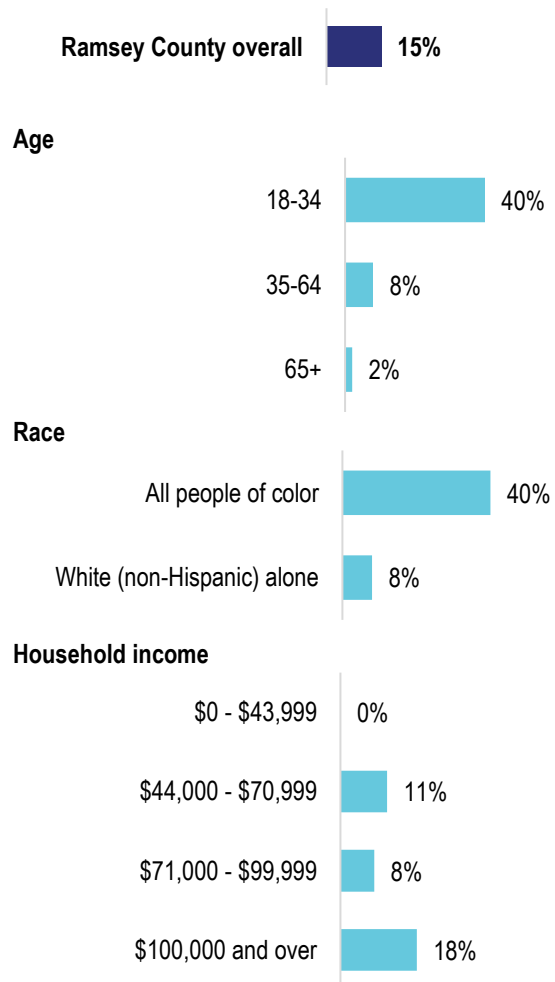
Remote work and distance learning

15% of respondents reported using the library for remote work or distance learning in the past six months.

All respondents who had used the library for remote work or distance learning in the past six months did so 1-3 times a month or less.

A higher proportion of respondents age 18-34 and respondents of color reported having used the library for this purpose in the past six months compared with older and White (non-Hispanic) respondents. Use of the library for remote work or distance learning varied by household income.

4. Use of library for remote work or distance learning in the past 6 months by age, race, and household income



When asked what would help them work remotely or participate in distance learning, the largest proportion of respondents reported:

17% Free or low-cost printing, faxing, and scanning

15% Private work space

15% High-speed internet connection

Support

The largest proportion of respondents overall want help with:

13% Using a computer, smartphone, or tablet

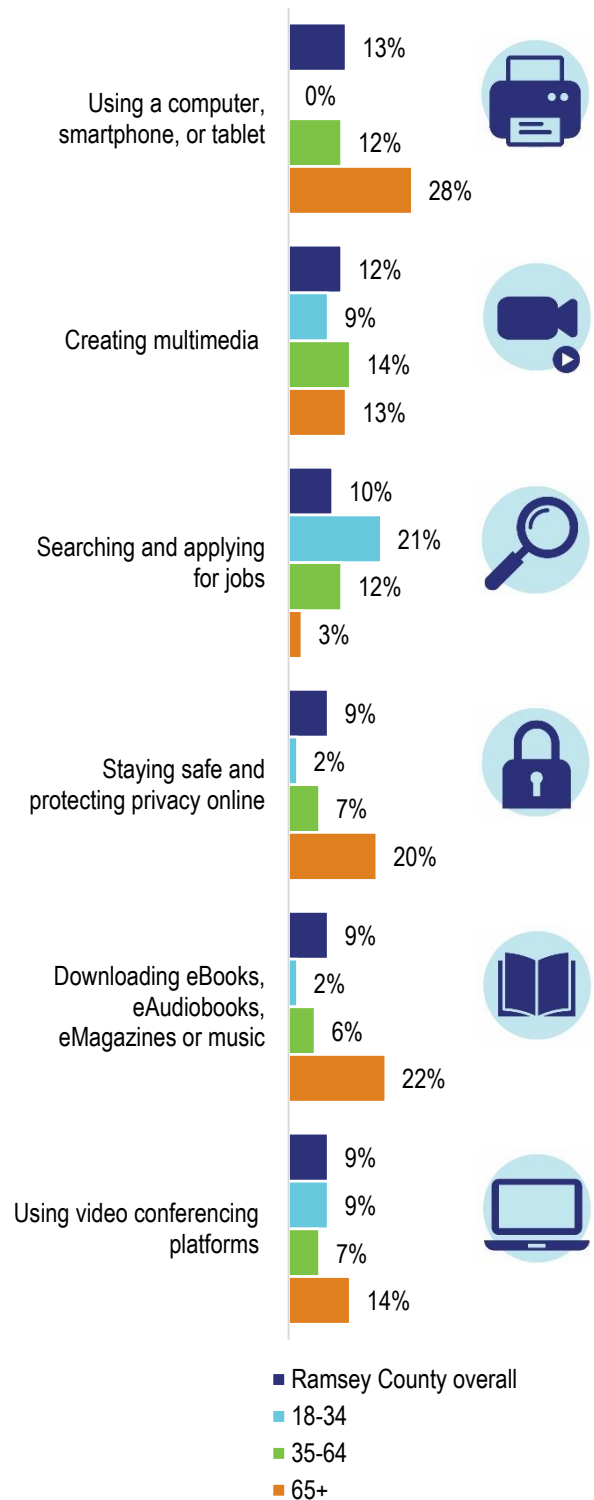
12% Creating multimedia

10% Searching and applying for jobs

A higher proportion of older respondents and respondents with lower household incomes reported a need for help with some key computer skills or activities compared with younger respondents and higher-income respondents, such as using technology, staying safe online, and downloading materials.



5. Desired support for computer skills or activities by age



For more information about the survey, contact Jeff Eide at Jeffrey.eide@co.ramsey.mn.us.

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