

# Data in Action Series



## Change in Hours of Operation

Making sure that your staff is deployed to cover all service points for the hours the library is open isn't always easy. Sometimes, you need more staff to cover all the hours; sometimes, you need to reduce your open hours so that your staff isn't stretched too thin. Either way, you can use data to analyze your situation and make the case for your management decision.

- 1. Always be sure that your library's long range plan and your programs and services are in alignment with your community's needs and goals.**
  - Study the town's comprehensive plan, if available, or other planning documents.
  - Always have a library presence at select board or town council meetings just to note what is being talked about.
  - Pay attention to the town bulletin board if there is one.
  - Offer to speak at local service group meetings and then stay to hear what they talk about.
- 2. Begin with public library annual report statistics.**
  - A. Open the report at:  
<http://www.countingopinions.com/pireports/report.php?dc62f7e5fa8cb71db708fd a2d8d8d58c>

### Data to Justify a Change in Open Hours

Collection: Maine Public Library Statistics    Period: **2016, (Start 2016-01)**    Months: **12**

Location (263)	1.8 Population of the Legal Service Area	2.3 Total Public Service Hours for All Service Outlets per Year
ABBOTT MEMORIAL LIBRARY	8,764	2,028
ABEL J. MORNEAULT MEMORIAL LIBRARY	2,387	1,724
ACTON PUBLIC LIBRARY	2,575	1,015
ALBERT CHURCH BROWN MEMORIAL LIBRARY	4,243	516
ALBERT F. TOTMAN LIBRARY	2,241	1,976
ALBION PUBLIC LIBRARY	2,048	832
ALICE L. PENDLETON LIBRARY	565	695
ANDOVER PUBLIC LIBRARY	811	832
ANNA FIELD FERNALD LIBRARY	830	1,840
ASHLAND COMMUNITY LIBRARY	2,021	1,404

1/27    10    Sort multiple columns by holding down the shift key and clicking another column header

Click on the Excel icon and download the spreadsheet to your computer.

# Data in Action Series



Click on Enable Editing.

PROTECTED VIEW Be careful—files from the Internet can contain viruses. Unless you need to edit, it's safer to stay in Protected View. **Enable Editing**

Location	1.8 Populati	3.3 Local Gd	4.1 Children	4.3 Young A	4.5 Adult Pr	4.21 Library	4.22 Referer	ILL Receive
ABBOTT MEMORIAL LIBRARY	8,764	\$99,841	12	0	36	9,015	0	387
ABEL J. MORNEAULT MEMORIAL LIBRAR	2,387	\$50,363	12	2	22	6,950	870	6
ACTON PUBLIC LIBRARY	2,575	\$18,840	15	8	10	2,266	372	51
ALBERT CHURCH BROWN MEMORIAL LIB	4,243	\$4,500	12	0	5	1,474	66	51
ALBERT F. TOTMAN LIBRARY	2,241	\$32,000	26	5	49	10,562	412	227
ALBION PUBLIC LIBRARY	2,048	\$6,500	32	0	5	1,304	46	42
ALICE L. PENDLETON LIBRARY	565	\$72,742	20	0	22	9,360	148	15
ANDOVER PUBLIC LIBRARY	811	\$28,000	1	0	1	2,998	-1	22
ANNA FIELD FERNALD LIBRARY	830	\$1,800	0	0	26	52	0	0
ASHLAND COMMUNITY LIBRARY	2,021	\$44,623	0	0	0	6,542	241	0

B. Follow these steps to set up a peer comparison group by sorting the data by population.

Click on the Data tab

File Home Insert Page Layout Formulas **Data** Review View Add-ins Acrobat

Cut Copy Paste Format Painter Clipboard Font Alignment

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ABEL J. MORNEAULT MEMORIAL LIBRAR	2,387	\$50,363	12	2	
ACTON PUBLIC LIBRARY	2,575	\$18,840	15	8	
ALBERT CHURCH BROWN MEMORIAL LIB	4,243	\$4,500	12	0	
ALBERT F. TOTMAN LIBRARY	2,241	\$32,000	26	5	
ALBION PUBLIC LIBRARY	2,048	\$6,500	32	0	

Choose Sort

File Home Insert Page Layout Formulas **Data** Review View Add-ins Acrobat

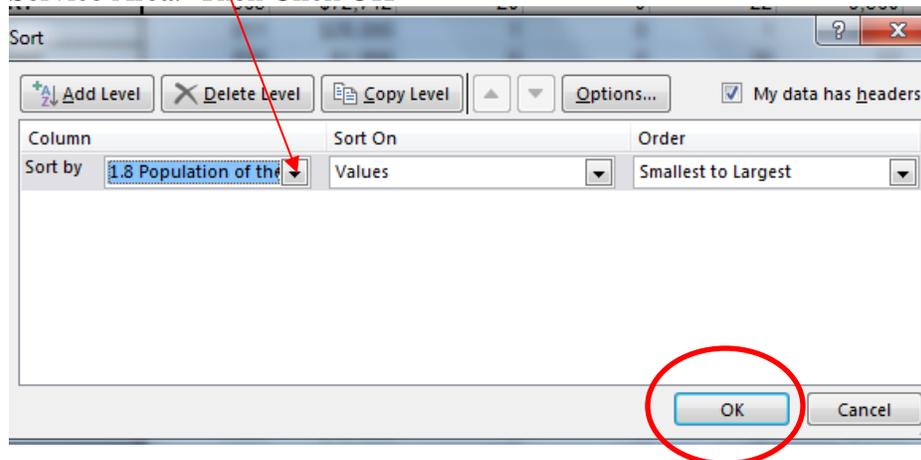
From Access From Web From Text Get External Data From Other Sources Existing Connections New Query Recent Sources Show Queries From Table Recent Sources Refresh All Connections Properties Edit Links Sort & Filter

Sort

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Click on the Arrow on the right side of the Sort By box and choose 1.8 Population of the Service Area. Then Click OK



Analyze the data for that group to determine if your operating hours are in line with your library peer group. (Note: Anywhere in the spreadsheet that you see “-1” means that the library did not report any data.)

- Locate your library in the sorted data and choose peers within 1,000-4,000 of your population. If that group is too large, narrow the population.
  - Compare your total FTE
  - Compare total open hours
  - Do you find that your library is out of alignment with the majority of your peers?

### 3. National Surveys

- Use Project Outcome ( <https://www.projectoutcome.org/> ) to gather data and stories about the impact your programs and services have on community members.

### 4. Other Data

- Note how many times patrons express a wish for more open hours.
- Ask patrons write to the select board or town council requesting more open hours.
- Compare the library’s open hours with other departments like Parks and Recreation (if applicable) and the school.
- If your community has a police department, work with their data on the numbers, times and types of calls to illustrate a need for the library to open as an alternative during certain hours.

Put all this information together to make a case to change the operating hours of your library. For tips to present this information to your stakeholders, watch the webinar ‘Data Visualization for the Rest of Us: A Beginner’s Guide’ at <https://my.nicheacademy.com/mslstaff/course/5470>