Abstract:
There are a variety of software solutions that libraries may offer users of public Internet browsing services that are often used in public libraries. In order to determine the rate of adoption and support for these technologies, an online survey was conducted to determine the rate of adoption and support for these technologies. The survey was conducted using an online survey tool specifically designed for libraries, and the results were analyzed using statistical software.

Introduction:
What security measures are used on library sites? Many best practices exist — including proactive measures, such as offering encryption and/or using web encryption. However, the issue remains relevant today.

Methods:
Participants:
176 libraries in North America were selected for this study. 45 from Canada and 131 from the United States. The criteria for inclusion was Institutional membership in either the Canadian Urban Libraries Council (CULC) or the Urban Libraries Council (ULC); these organizations count among their members the largest library systems serving urban and suburban communities within their respective countries.

Results:
Of the 176 libraries in the sample, 68 responded to the survey for a response rate of 39%. The survey was performed online and included questions regarding the types of privacy and security measures currently in place at each library. Among the topics covered were:

Discussion/Conclusion:
Limitations: The survey’s anonymity design precludes any follow-up or attempts to track individual institutional change longitudinally. It also limits correlating survey responses with the results of the HTTPS audits, thereby preventing any ranking of institutions on their privacy and security efforts. The invitation to self-report introduces the question of cognitive biases into social desirability, but this may be mitigated to some extent by the anonymity of the response platform.

Privacy and Anti-Advertising Software on Public Computers:
As libraries protect users’ privacy in their physical spaces, most also focus on the use of the library space and resources and on advertising software. For example, we would expect that libraries would not allow users to access advertising software that may capture personal information.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:
We would like to thank the following individuals for their assistance and advice on data collection: Galen Clanton, Equifax Software, Inc.; Katherine Bates, Urban Librarian Council; and the Library Freedom Project.

Are Library Pages Served HTTPS by Default?

Are OPAC Pages Served HTTPS by Default?

REFERENCES:

Are you interested in learning more about our research? Visit our website at http://www.libraryfoundation.org for more information.