



Part 1: Libraries and Information Sources—Use, Familiarity and Favorability

96%

have visited a public library.

Survey results indicate a high level of both use of and familiarity with a wide variety of information resources. Eighty-seven percent of college students have visited a college library in person, while almost all college student respondents have visited a public library in person. Sixty-one percent of college students surveyed have used a library Web site. Ninety percent of college student respondents hold a library card.

College student respondents' familiarity with electronic information resources varies. Like the total respondents, college students are very familiar with e-mail, search engines and online news.

61%

have used a library Web site.

While most electronic resources, from e-mail to online databases to audiobooks, are used by a portion of all survey respondents, frequency of use is clearly dominated by three resources: e-mail, search engines and instant messaging. Eighty-nine percent of college students typically begin their information search using a search engine.

Favorability of information sources is similar to the data related to familiarity, with search engines again dominating as the favored choice. Seventy-two percent of college student respondents said the search engine would be their first choice the next time they need a source for information.

Half of the college student respondents anticipate their library use will remain flat in the next three to five years. Forty-four percent of college student respondents say that their library use has increased in the past three to five years, while 38 percent anticipate their use will increase in the next three to five years.

90%

hold a library card.

1.1 Library Use

Survey results generally indicate a higher level of information resource use among college students than among total respondents.

Eighty-seven percent of college students have visited a college library in person, and more than half (57 percent) have visited an online college library (Web site). Ninety-six percent of both total respondents and college student respondents have visited a public library in person. Visits to the online public library were substantially lower, at 39 percent for college students and 27 percent for total respondents.

Ninety percent of college students hold a library card, while 72 percent of total respondents hold a library card. College students use both college and public libraries frequently. Sixty-five percent of college students use their college library at least monthly, while 40 percent use a public library at least monthly.

The survey asked respondents if their usage increased or decreased in the last three to five years. Forty-four percent of college students indicate that their library usage has increased, while 25 percent of total respondents report their library usage has increased. Sixteen percent of students say their library use has decreased in the past three to five years, while 31 percent of total respondents report their library use has decreased in the same time period.

Respondents also were asked to project the level of future library usage. Half of the college students anticipate their library use will remain the same. Thirty-eight percent of college students projected increased library usage, compared to 20 percent of total respondents.

Public and College Library Usage and Percent of Library Card Holders— by College Students and Total Respondents

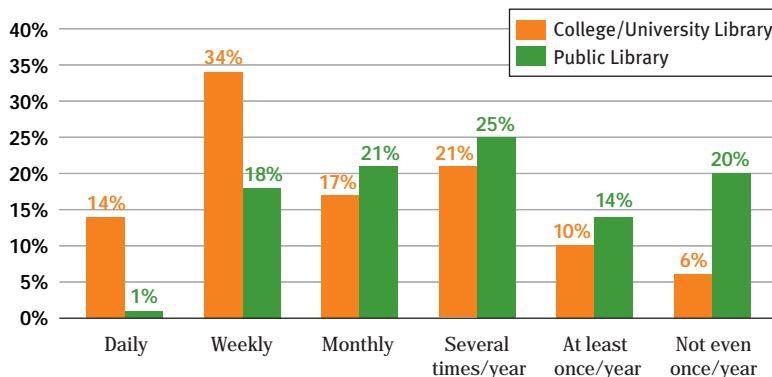
	College Students	Total Respondents
Percent of library card holders	90%	72%
Visited a public library in person	96%	96%
Visited an online public library (Web site)	39%	27%
Visited a college library in person	87%	57%
Visited an online college library (Web site)	57%	22%

Source: *Perceptions of Libraries and Information Resources*, OCLC, 2005, questions 805 and 815.

50%
anticipate that library use will remain flat in the future.

Frequency of Library Use—by College Students

How frequently do you go to each of the following libraries?
(Only college/university library and public library included below.)



Source: *Perceptions of Libraries and Information Resources*, OCLC, 2005, question 820.

Frequency of Library Use— by College Students and Total Respondents

How frequently do you go to each of the following libraries?
(Only college/university library and public library included below.)

	College/University Library		Public Library	
	College Students	Total Respondents	College Students	Total Respondents
Daily	14%	3%	1%	1%
Weekly	34%	7%	18%	13%
Monthly	17%	6%	21%	19%
Several times/year	21%	14%	25%	24%
At least once/year	10%	17%	14%	16%
Not even once/year	6%	53%	20%	27%

Source: *Perceptions of Libraries and Information Resources*, OCLC, 2005, question 820.

My schedule rarely fits their schedule.

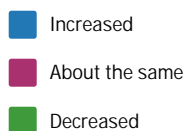
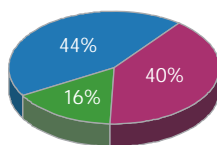
21-year-old undergraduate from the United States

Source: *Perceptions of Libraries and Information Resources*, OCLC, 2005, question 812b, "Please list two negative associations with the library."

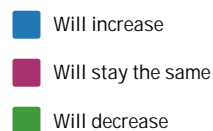
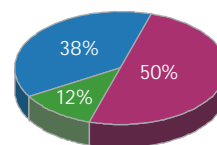
Past and Anticipated Library Use— by College Students

How much has your personal library use changed over the last three to five years?
How do you anticipate your personal usage of the library to change over the next three to five years?

Past Library Use



Anticipated Library Use



Source: *Perceptions of Libraries and Information Resources*, OCLC, 2005, questions 1220 and 1225.

Past Library Usage	College Students	Total Respondents	Anticipated Future Library Use	College Students	Total Respondents
Increased	44%	25%	Will increase	38%	20%
About the same	40%	44%	Will stay the same	50%	62%
Decreased	16%	31%	Will decrease	12%	18%

Source: *Perceptions of Libraries and Information Resources*, OCLC, 2005, questions 1220 and 1225.

1.2 Familiarity with and Usage of Multiple Information Sources

College students are very familiar with search engines. Fifty-eight percent are at least somewhat familiar with online libraries, significantly more than the 33 percent of total respondents.

The survey asked respondents to rate their familiarity with the following five information sources: search engines, libraries, bookstores, online libraries and online bookstores.

Seventy-two percent of college students are *extremely familiar*, *very familiar* or *somewhat familiar* with search engines. More than 60 percent of total respondents, regardless of geographic region, are *extremely familiar*, *very familiar* or *somewhat familiar* with search engines. Just 1 percent of total respondents surveyed have *never heard of* search engines, while all of the college students have heard of search engines.

In the 13 years that search engines have been in existence, they have achieved a familiarity rating that is slightly higher than that of physical libraries and considerably higher than that of online libraries.

Over a third of college students are *extremely familiar* with libraries and bookstores at 34 percent and 36 percent, respectively, compared to total respondents at 26 percent for both libraries and bookstores. College students also have a higher familiarity with online versions of libraries and bookstores than total respondents. Twenty percent of college students are *extremely familiar* with online libraries, and 25 percent of students are *extremely familiar* with online bookstores. Only 4 percent of college students *never heard of* online libraries, compared to 20 percent of total respondents.

Just remember that students are less informed about the resources of the library than ever before because they are competing heavily with the Internet.

20-year-old undergraduate from the United States

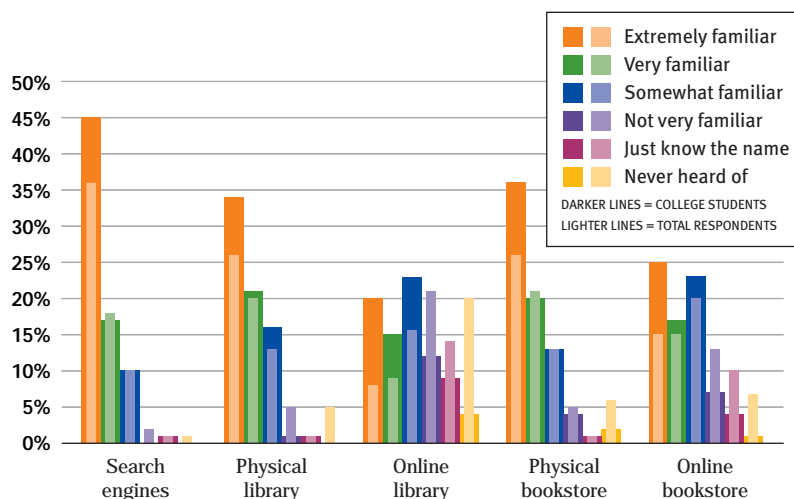
Source: *Perceptions of Libraries and Information Resources*, OCLC, 2005, question 1240, "If you could provide one piece of advice to your library, what would it be?"

45%
are extremely familiar with search engines.

34%
are extremely familiar with libraries.

Familiarity Ratings for Information Sources— by College Students and Total Respondents

Please rate how familiar you are with the following sources/places where you can obtain information.



Source: *Perceptions of Libraries and Information Resources*, OCLC, 2005, question 1305.

Awareness and Usage of Electronic Resources

The majority of college student respondents have used e-mail, search engines and instant messaging.

Respondents were asked to indicate their level of awareness and usage of 16 electronic resources.

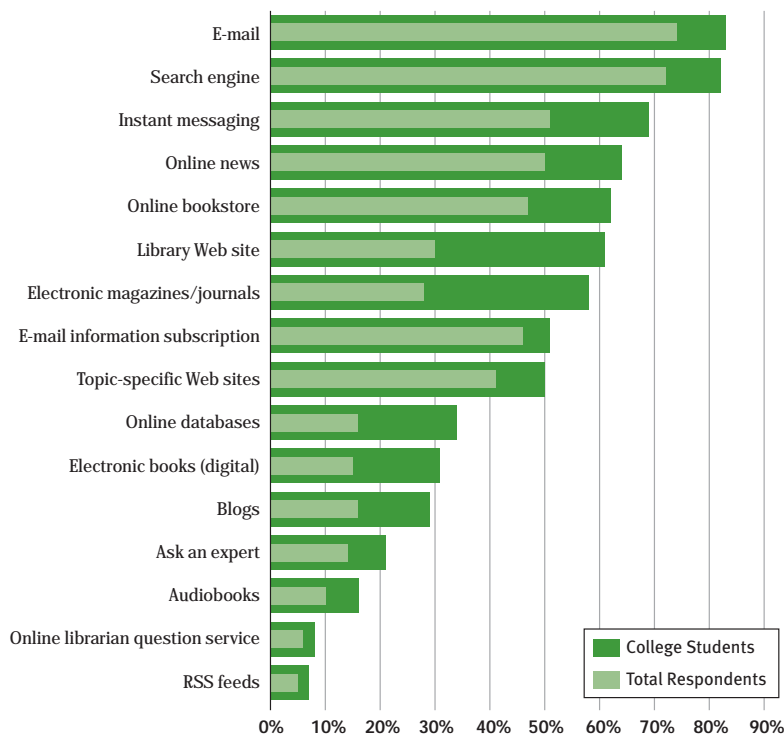
- Search engines
- Library Web sites
- Online bookstores
- Online news
- Electronic magazines/journals
- Audiobooks (downloadable/digital)
- Electronic books (digital)
- Online databases
- Topic-specific Web sites
- E-mail
- Instant messaging/online chat
- E-mail information subscriptions
- Ask an expert
- Online librarian question services
- RSS feeds
- Blogs

College student respondents show a wide familiarity with and usage of these electronic resources, including use of electronic magazines/journals, online databases and electronic books. Library Web site usage is high among college students, at 61 percent.

Total respondents also show a wide familiarity with and usage of most of these electronic resources. The use of e-mail and search engines is the highest among all resources across all segments surveyed, while all electronic resources are used by at least 5 percent of respondents.

Usage of Electronic Resources— by College Students and Total Respondents

Please indicate if you have used the following electronic information sources, even if you have used them only once.



61%
have used the
library Web site—
two times higher
than the percentage
of total respondents.

Source: *Perceptions of Libraries and Information Resources*, OCLC, 2005, question 505.

Starting an Information Search

College students use search engines to begin information searches at almost the same rate as total respondents.

The survey asked respondents to indicate, from a list of the same 16 electronic resources, the electronic resource they typically use to begin an information search. The survey findings indicate that 89 percent of college student information searches begin with a search engine, compared to 84 percent of total respondents' searches. Library Web sites were selected by just 2 percent of students as the source used to begin an information search. Very little variability in preference exists among total respondents and college students.

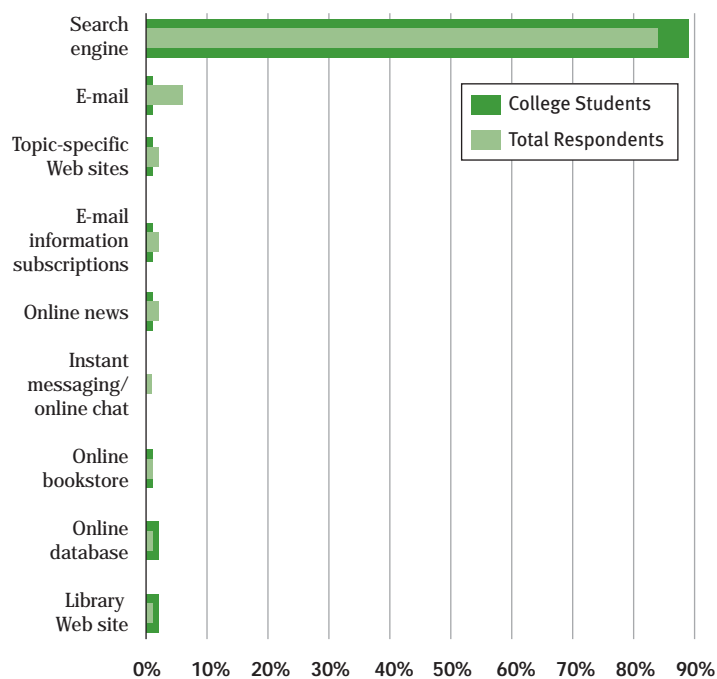
Improve search engines

48-year-old undergraduate from Canada

Source: *Perceptions of Libraries and Information Resources*, OCLC, 2005, question 1240, "If you could provide one piece of advice to your library, what would it be?"

Where Electronic Information Searches Begin— by College Students and Total Respondents

Where do you typically begin your search for information on a particular topic?



Source: *Perceptions of Libraries and Information Resources*, OCLC, 2005, question 520.
Note: Only electronic resources with usage rates of 1 percent or more are represented on this graph.

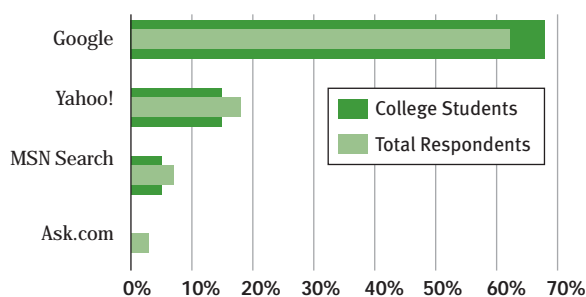
Search Engine Used Most Recently

Respondents who indicated that they use search engines were asked to identify the search engine used in their most recent search by selecting from a list of 21 brand-specific search engines. Sixty-eight percent of college students reported Google was the search engine they used most recently; Yahoo! was used by 15 percent and MSN Search was used by 5 percent. Google was used most frequently by 62 percent of total respondents. Yahoo! ranked second at 18 percent, followed by MSN Search at 7 percent and Ask.com (known as Ask Jeeves when the survey was administered) at 3 percent.

Search Engine Used Most Recently— by College Students and Total Respondents

Earlier you stated you typically begin your search for information using search engines. Which search engine did you use for your most recent search?

Base: Respondents who begin their search using a search engine, question 520.



Source: *Perceptions of Libraries and Information Resources*, OCLC, 2005, question 645.

Review the current search catalog system as it is hard to find material relevant to the topic you search for

18-year-old undergraduate from Australia

Source: *Perceptions of Libraries and Information Resources*, OCLC, 2005, question 1240, "If you could provide one piece of advice to your library, what would it be?"

1.3 How Respondents Learn about New Information Resources

Most college students learn about new electronic information resources from friends. Thirty-three percent of college students indicate they use librarians as a resource for new electronic information—four times higher than the total respondents.

When search engines are excluded as a referral tool, most college students indicate they learn about new electronic information sources from *friends*, *links from electronic information sources on Web sites* or *teachers*. Sixty-seven percent of

college students learn about electronic information sources from *friends*, followed closely by *links from electronic information sources or Web sites*, at 61 percent. The top four mentions include:

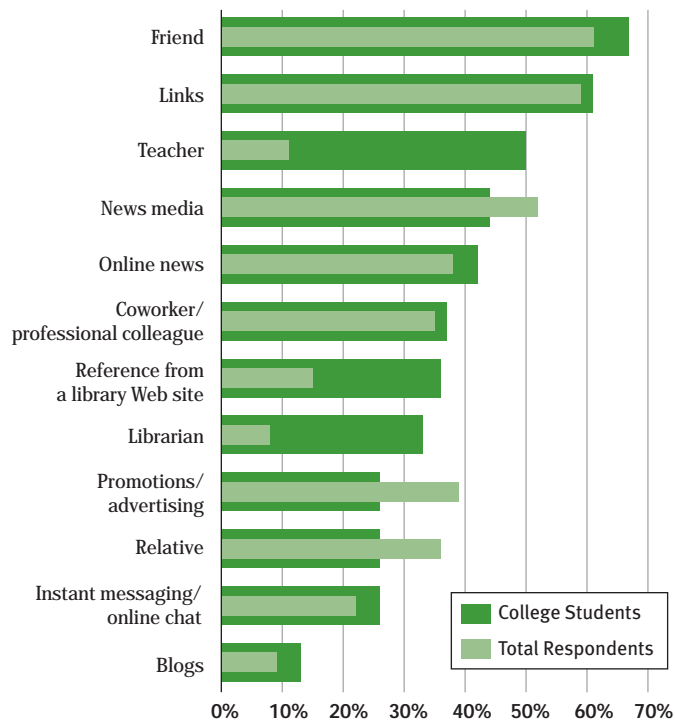
- Friend: 67 percent
- Links from electronic information sources or Web sites: 61 percent
- Teacher: 50 percent
- News media: 44 percent

At 33 percent, college students' usage of the *librarian* as a source of information about electronic resources was the highest among all segments surveyed. Total respondents ranked the librarian as the least used source to learn about electronic information, at 8 percent.

Learning about Electronic Information Sources— by College Students and Total Respondents

Other than search engines, how do you learn about electronic information sources? (Select all that apply.)

36%
learn about new
e-resources from a
library Web site—
more than twice the
percentage of total
respondents.



Source: *Perceptions of Libraries and Information Resources*, OCLC, 2005, question 605.

1.4 Impressions of Information Sources

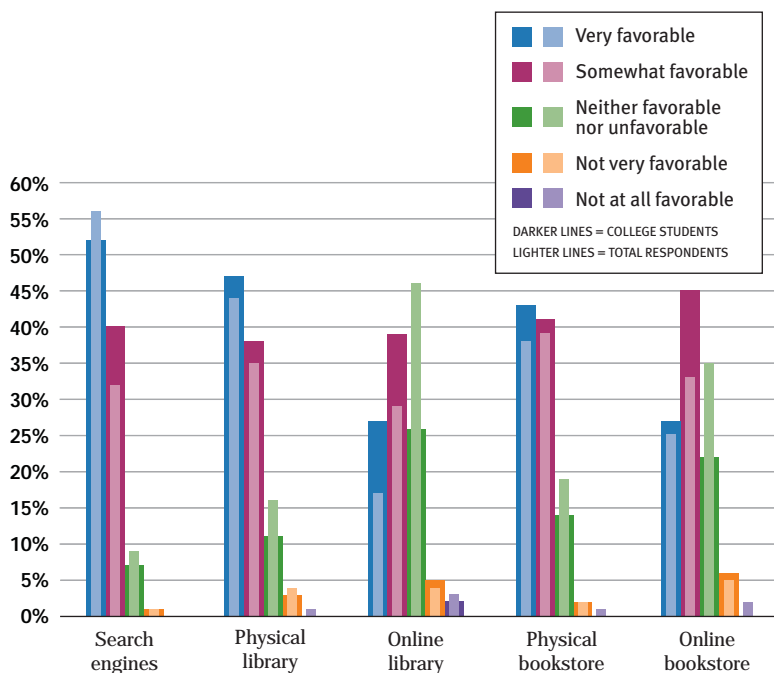
The majority of college students view search engines very favorably as a source for information. Libraries and bookstores are also viewed favorably.

Search engines have the highest favorability ratings of the five information sources evaluated. The search engine is viewed as *very favorable* or *favorable* by 92 percent of college students and 88 percent of total respondents. The library is viewed as *very favorable* or *favorable* by 85 percent of college students and 79 percent of total respondents.

College students have a more favorable view of the online library than total respondents. Sixty-six percent of the college students stated that they have at least a somewhat favorable view of the online library, compared to 46 percent of total respondents.

Favorable Ratings for Information Sources— by College Students and Total Respondents

Based on your overall impressions, please indicate how you would rate each source/place with respect to the information available. Even if you haven't used one or more of the sources/places, rate each one based on what you have seen, read or heard about it.



Source: *Perceptions of Libraries and Information Resources*, OCLC, 2005, question 1315.

Being at University allows you membership of a large and well respected library on campus. There are librarians and other staff who can help you if you need advice, whereas searching online you cant ask anyone for help.

18-year-old undergraduate from Australia

Source: *Perceptions of Libraries and Information Resources*, OCLC, 2005, question 812a, "Please list two positive associations with the library."

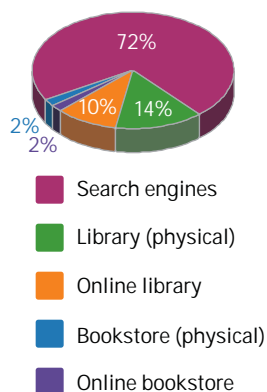
Information Sources Considered

Search engines are considered most often as an information source among college students. They are also the information source most likely to be used the next time these respondents need information.

Survey respondents were asked what information sources they will consider the next time they need information. Ninety percent of college students selected search engines as an information source they would consider, while 66 percent selected the bricks-and-mortar library and 50 percent selected the online library. Ninety-one percent of total respondents selected search engines as an information source they would consider, while 55 percent selected the bricks-and-mortar library and 42 percent selected the online library.

Search engines are ranked as the “first choice” for information by 72 percent of college students, compared to 80 percent of total respondents. College students rank the library a distant second with 14 percent and the online library third at 10 percent.

First Choice for Information Source—
by College Students



Source: *Perceptions of Libraries and Information Resources*, OCLC, 2005, question 1335.

Information Sources Considered and First Choice— by College Students and Total Respondents

Next time you need a source/place for information, which source or sources would you consider? Select all that apply. And, which source/place would be your first choice?

Sources Considered	College Students	Total Respondents	First Choice	College Students	Total Respondents
Search engines	90%	91%	Search engines	72%	80%
Library (physical)	66%	55%	Library (physical)	14%	11%
Online library	50%	42%	Online library	10%	6%
Bookstore (physical)	38%	37%	Bookstore (physical)	2%	2%
Online bookstore	34%	30%	Online bookstore	2%	2%

Source: *Perceptions of Libraries and Information Resources*, OCLC, 2005, questions 1325 and 1335.

Finding Worthwhile Information

Respondents were asked to rate the information from the following brands:

- About.com
- AllTheWeb.com
- AltaVista.com
- AOL Search
- Ask an expert (e.g., Homework Helper)
- Ask.com
- Clusty.com
- Dogpile.com
- Excite.com
- Gigablast.com
- Google.com
- HotBot.com
- iWOn.com
- Library Web sites
- LookSmart.com
- Lycos.com
- MSN Search
- Netscape Search
- Online librarian question services (Ask a librarian)
- Teoma.com
- Yahoo.com

Respondents who indicated any usage of the 21 brands were asked to rate the degree to which they agree or disagree that each brand they have used provides worthwhile information. College students who have used Google rate it the highest among the brands listed above; 61 percent *completely agree* Google provides worthwhile information. College students also gave the library Web site high ratings with respect to providing worthwhile information, with 45 percent who *completely agree*.

Total respondents who have used Google also rate it highest, with 55 percent indicating that they *completely agree* that Google provides worthwhile information. Yahoo! and the library Web site are closely rated by the total respondents who use those brands, at 34 percent and 33 percent respectively. MSN Search and Ask.com round out the top five brands total respondents report to provide worthwhile information.

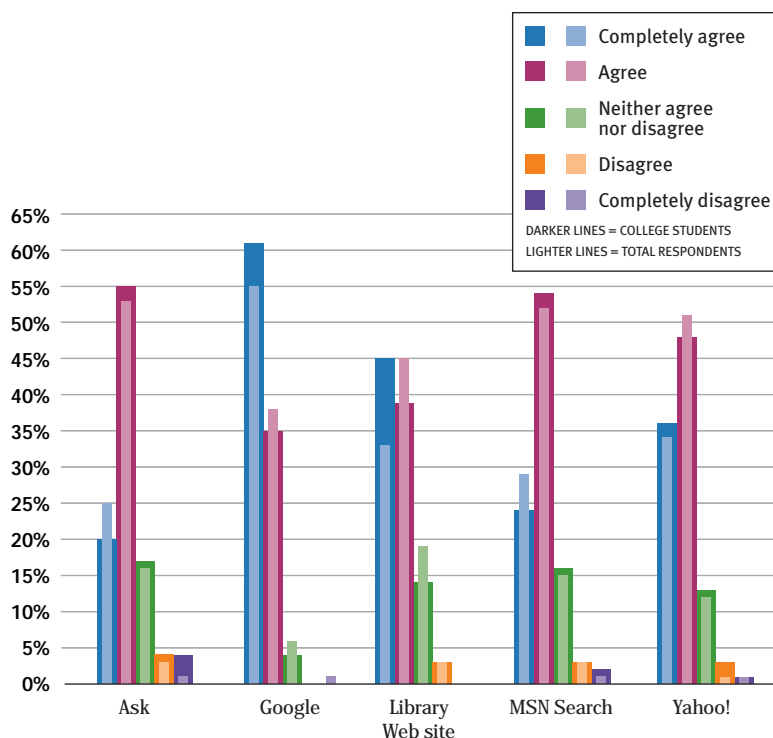
96%

at least agree Google provides worthwhile information.

Five Highest-Rated Information Brands with Worthwhile Information—by College Students and Total Respondents

Please rate the degree to which you agree or disagree that each electronic information source provides worthwhile information.

Base: Respondents who indicated usage of any of the list of 21 information brands.



Source: *Perceptions of Libraries and Information Resources*, OCLC, 2005, question 670.

84%

at least agree library Web sites provide worthwhile information.

84%

at least agree Yahoo! provides worthwhile information.

Library Electronic Resources

College student respondents who use the library agree that the library's electronic information resources are worthwhile.

Respondents who use the library's electronic information sources are in general consensus that the library sources provide worthwhile information. College students rate electronic magazines/journals, the online library catalog and reference materials highly as resources providing worthwhile information.

College students rated electronic magazines/journals highest with respect to providing worthwhile information; 85 percent *completely agree* or *agree*. The online library catalog follows closely, with 83 percent. Eighty-one percent of college students *completely agree* or *agree* that online reference materials provide worthwhile information, followed closely by the library Web site, with 79 percent who *completely agree* or *agree*.

Although usage of many of the library electronic resources is relatively low, respondents indicated that the information provided is worthwhile. While only 8 percent of college student respondents have used an online librarian question service, 64 percent of the college students who used this service *completely agree* or *agree* this service provides worthwhile information.