Digital Navigators of the Hudson Valley

March 28, 2022 - March 15, 2023

Data from client interactions from the intake, skills assessment & exit forms

Numbers at a glance:

82	Navigators Reporting
52	Organizations Participating
117	Zip Codes for clients served
620	Total clients
1,209	Total interactions
90%	of issues were resolved by the Navigators
448	Clients took a Skills Assessment
642	English Language clients
19	Spanish Language clients
52	Bilingual / Other (American Sign Language, Yiddish, French)

Geographic Region Served
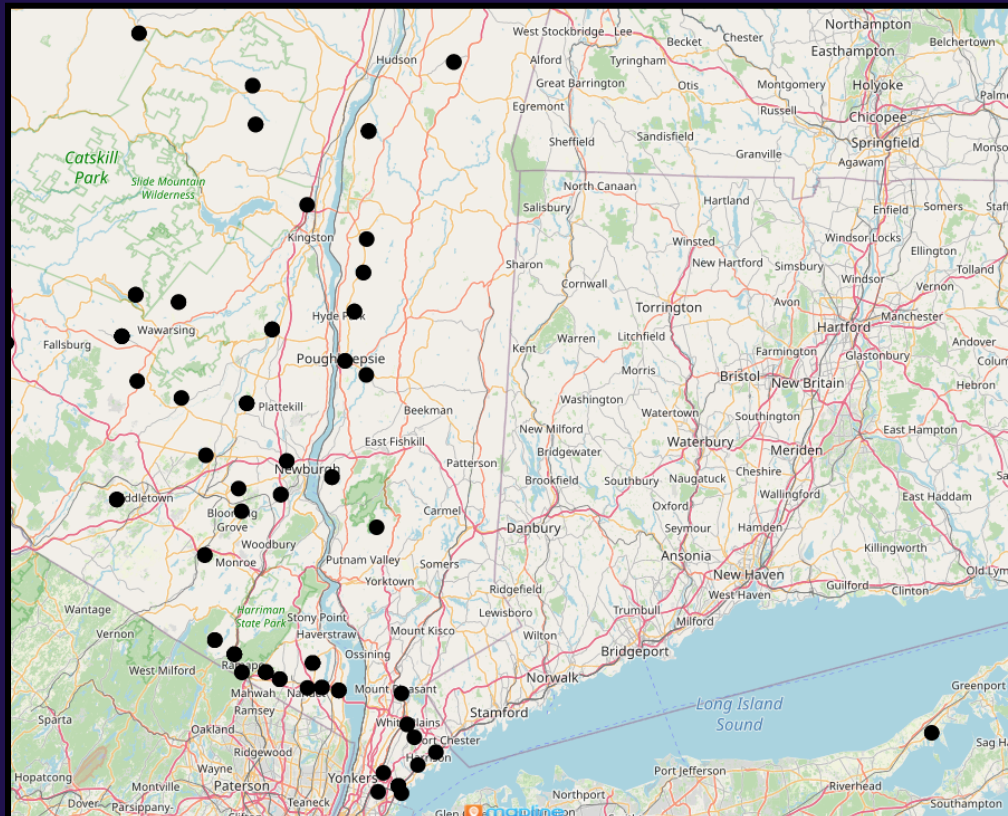
The dots are town centers of the Zip Codes where clients live, data as collected by the Navigators.

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This is a heat map of the density of the Zip Codes where clients reside.
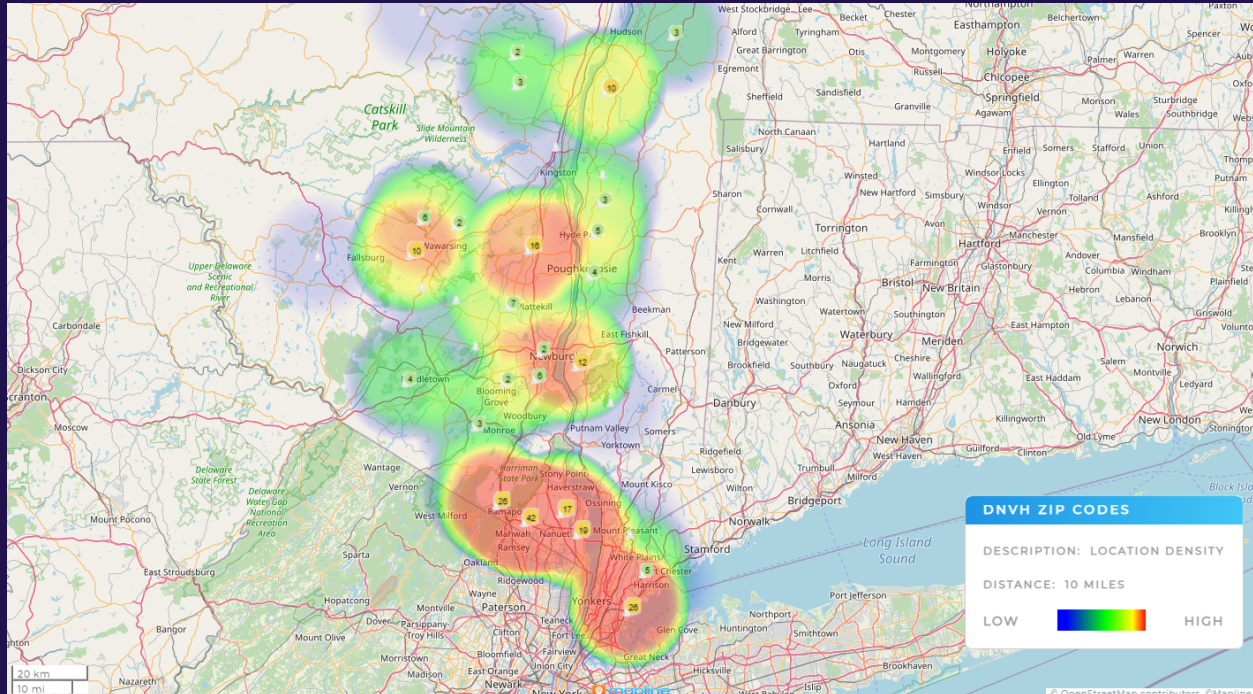
Directory of Digital Navigators with data represented here

Sue Ray, Beekman Library
Laura Grunwerg, Blauvelt Free Library
Tonie D'Angelo, Blauvelt Free Library
Jason Vitetta, Brewster Public Library
Jim DiMauro, Brewster Public Library
Jen McCreery, Chatham Public Library
Polly Engel, Chatham Public Library
Charles DeYoe, Chester Public Library
Crystal Middleton, Clinton Community Library
Kimberly Benjamin, D. R. Evarts Library
Joyce Sharpton, Ellenville Public Library & Museum
Nicole Sorbara, Ellenville Public Library & Museum
Carrie-Ann Wood, Ellenville Public Library and Museum
Deborah Engel-Di Mauro, Elting Memorial Library
**Kevin O'Leary,** Elting Memorial Library

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Bebhinn ("Bevin") Dungan, Elting Memorial Library, New Paltz

Norma Vizcarrondo, Esperanza Dutchess County Hispanic Organization

Liz O'Raffity, Esperanza Dutchess County Hispanic Organization.

Abigail Toral, Finkelstein Memorial Library

Chris Coleman, Finkelstein Memorial Library

Parveen Rahmet, Finkelstein Memorial Library

Annette Shaughnessy, Florida Public Library

Claudia Depkin, Haverstraw King's Daughters Public Library

Jennifer Grounds, HEERMANCE MEMORIAL LIBRARY

Gabrielle Esposito, Howland Public Library

Kristin Charles-Scaringi, Howland Public Library

Paul Costa, Hudson Area Association Library

Kristen Campbell, Hurley Library

Mike Sikula, Hyde Park Library

George Wyand, Julia L. Butterfield Memorial Library

Brian James, Kingston Library

Emily Wierzbowski, Mahopac Public Library

Anahy Chinas, Middletown Thrall Library

Elijah Jonas, Middletown Thrall Library

David Sadoff, Moffat Library of Washingtonville

Clarisa Rosario-DeGroate, Mount Saint Mary College

Jon Damrau, Mount Saint Mary College

Jacqueline Elmo-Emel, Mountain Top Library

Brian Jennings, New City Library

Karen Ostertag, New City Library

Matthew Aull, New City Library

Jeanne Tomlinson, New Lebanon Library

Denise Link, New Rochelle Public Library

Laura Garcia, Newburgh Free Library

Susan Scott, Newburgh Free Library

Theresa Zacek, Newburgh Free Library

Sharon Aperto, Nyack Library

Tracy Dunstan, Nyack Library

Michael Grella, Nyack Library / Pearl River Library

Wendy Fieser, Palatine Manor

Alicia Vonderhorst, Pearl River Public Library

Dennis Sullivan, Pearl River Public Library

Kristen McIvor, Pearl River Public Library

Laurie Wilson, Pearl River Public Library

Sarah Northshield, Pearl River Public Library

Susan DeFelice, Pearl River Public Library

Virginia Halprin, Pearl River Public Library

Tobi Farley, Philmont Public Library

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Donna Ebanks, Plattekill Public Library
Stacy Joergle-Gildea, Port Jervis Free Library
Isabelle Molle, Putnam Valley Free Library
Eileen Acosta, Ramapo Catskill Library System
Fran Colombo, Roeliff Jansen Community Library
Ingrid Kildiss, Roeliff Jansen Community Library
Annmarie McAnany, Sloatsburg Public Library
Michael Benedict, Sloatsburg Public Library
Sue Melnyk, Sloatsburg Public Library
Shaun McCavara, Staatsburg Library
Amy La Rocca, Suffern Free Library
Andrew Nico, Suffern Free Library
Shannon Powell, Town of Esopus Library
Graham Ebbecke, Town of Ulster Public Library
Joshua Skou, Town of Ulster Public Library
Marie Agneta, Tuxedo Park Library
Kimberly OSullivan, Wallkill Public Library
Kara Lustiber, West Hurley Public Library
Elizabeth Bussian, Westchester Independent Living Center
Krishna Brodigan, Westchester Library System
Linda Smith, Westchester Library System
Megan Brown, Westchester Library System

Breakdown of details from the forms

Average time
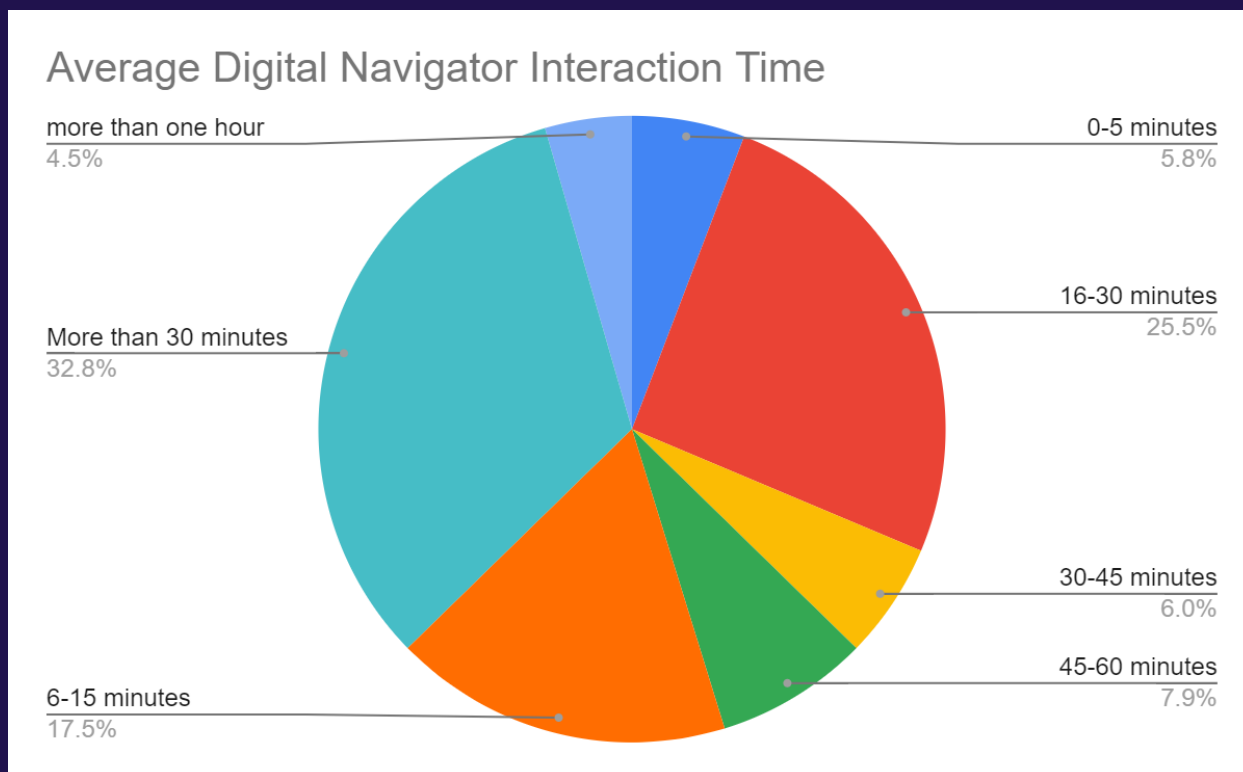
We changed this question over time.
Note: Seeing how many interactions are longer than 30 minutes, on 8/26/22 we changed the forms to include an option for 30-45 minutes, 45-60 minutes, and more than one hour.

Breakdown of Average Digital Navigator Interaction Time	
0-5 minutes	5.8%
6-15 minutes	17.5%
16-30 minutes	25.5%
30-45 minutes	6%
More than 30 minutes	32.8%
45-60 minutes	7.9%
More than 60 minutes	4.5%

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Kinds of devices

The kinds of devices clients used
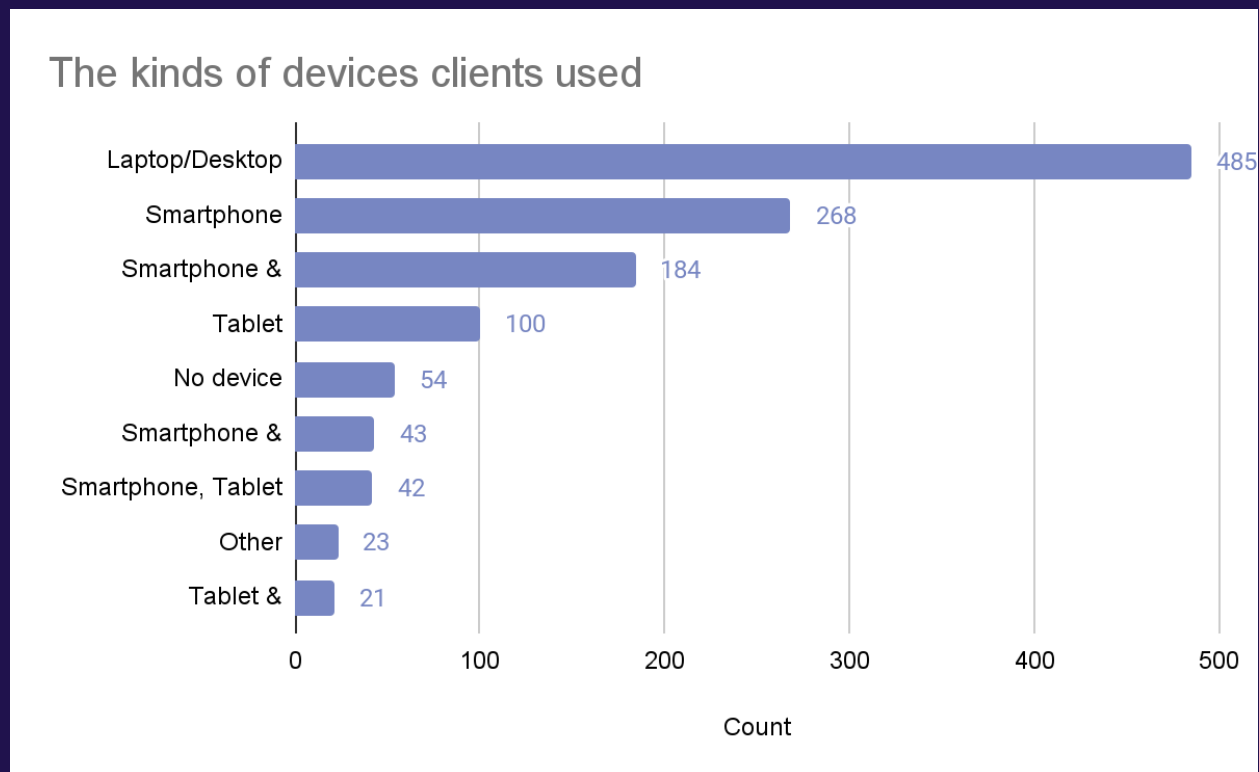
Breakdown of What kind of device are you using? (1221 Responses)		
Laptop/Desktop	485	39.8%
Smartphone	268	22%
Smartphone & Laptop/Desktop	184	15.1%
Tablet	100	8.2%
No device	54	4.4%
Smartphone & Tablet	43	3.5%
Smartphone, Tablet & Laptop/Desktop	42	3.4%
Other	23	1.9%
Tablet & Laptop/Desktop	21	1%

Categories of other: ebook readers, library computers, flip phones, smart TV, limited smartphones / flip phones / Jitterbug

Note: This question refers to the device they use, not the one they own. Some of the clients who cited "Laptop/Desktop" might be referring to devices that they borrow from the library or organization where they receive services.

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Types of Issues

Type of Issue

Type of Issue	Value
Digital Skills	748
Device Hardware & Digital Skills	120
Device Hardware	88
Home Connectivity	87
Device Hardware & Home Connectivity	28
Home Connectivity & Digital Skills	9
Device Hardware, Digital Skills &	7

Axis: 0, 200, 400, 600, 800
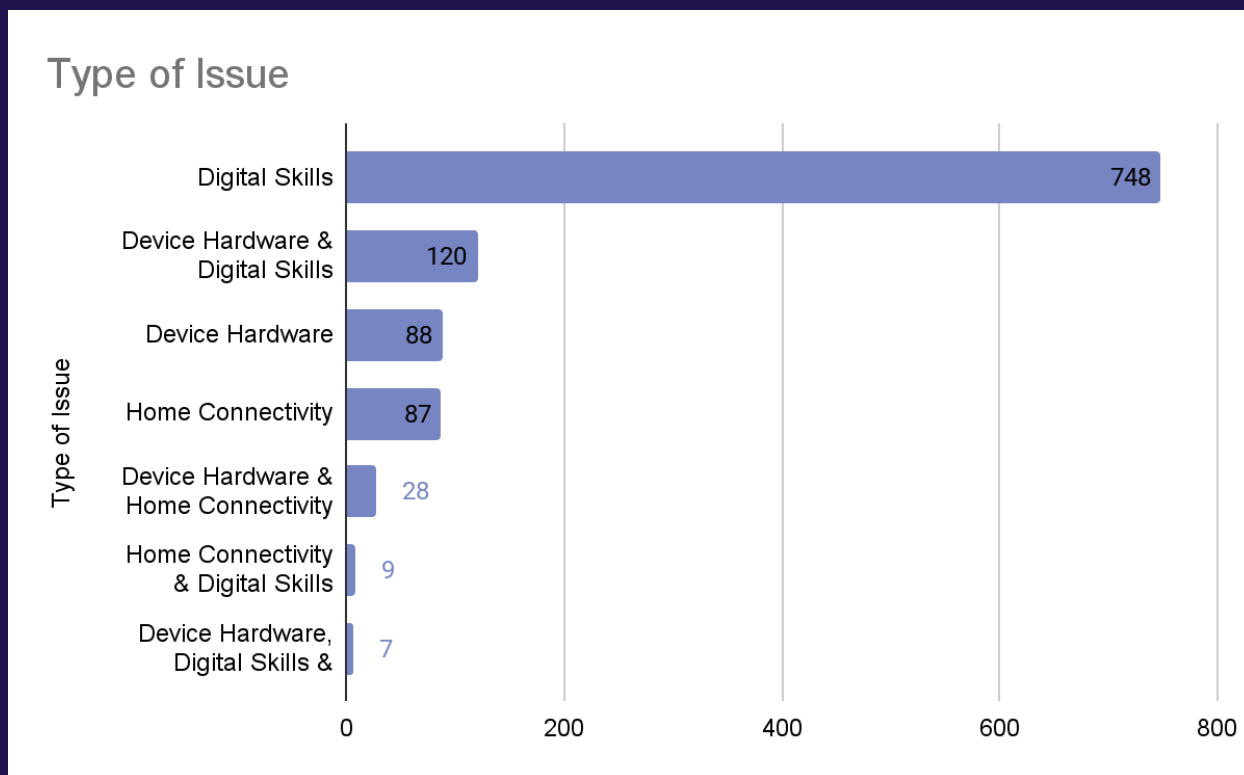
Type of Issue (1209 Responses - some forms were blank)		
Digital Skills	748	68.8%
Device Hardware & Digital Skills	120	11%
Device Hardware	88	8.1%
Home Connectivity	87	8%
Device Hardware & Home Connectivity	28	2.6%
Home Connectivity & Digital Skills	9	.8%
Device Hardware, Digital Skills, & Home Connectivity	7	.7%

| Breakdown of tech help requests	
Category	**Specific types of issues**
Affordable Devices (Device Hardware)	Where to find affordable smartphones, laptops, and how to fix them

Breakdown of tech help requests	
Category	**Specific types of issues**
Broadband (Home Connectivity)	Applying for ACP, setting up wifi, hotspots
Commerce (Digital Skills)	Selling and buying items online, purchase airline tickets, returning items, setting up banking
Communication (Digital Skills)	Unable to make phone calls, send texts, basic computer skills
Community (Digital Skills)	Connecting and using social media
Daily Tasks (Digital Skills)	Lost passwords, setting up Zoom accounts, fishing permits
Education (Digital Skills)	Finding online training courses, creating presentations, language software, student loan forgiveness
Device setup (Device Hardware)	Setting up new laptops, updating software, fixing broken machines, accessibility features
Food assistance (Digital Skills)	Made an appointment for SNAP benefits (of note: none of the forms have the words "food," "pantry" or "hunger.")
Healthcare needs (Digital Skills)	COVID-19 vaccine appointments, information about prescriptions
Housing needs (Digital Skills)	Applying for housing, printing documents, fighting eviction
Job searches (Digital Skills)	Online job applications, setting up email addresses and resume formats
Library-specific (Digital Skills)	Overdrive, Libby, Hoopla, library printers
Security & Privacy (Digital Skills)	Antivirus software, removing malware, turning off trackers, preventing identity theft
Social Services (Digital Skills)	Navigating DMV websites, signing up for NY.gov IDs, paying taxes online

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Repeat clients

We counted 620 unique patrons in the form data
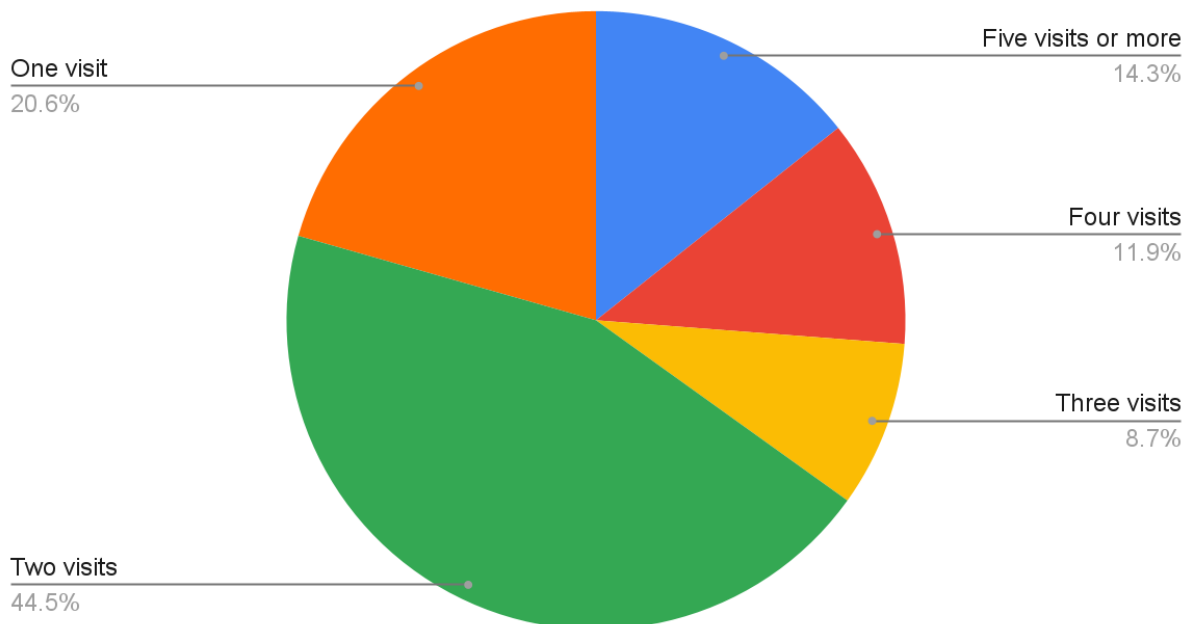
In this time period, did you have repeat visits from clients?		
Clients came back for help 5 or more times (up to 16 visits for one person!)	157	13%
Four visits	148	12.2%
Three visits	105	8.7%
Two visits	540	44.6%
One visit	261	21.6%
TOTAL	**1,209**	

Skills Assessment Forms, 448 responses

Count of How frequently do you check your email?

I can't remember
8.8%

I don't have an email…
5.9%

A couple times a week
20.8%

Once a day
23.8%

Several times a day
40.7%
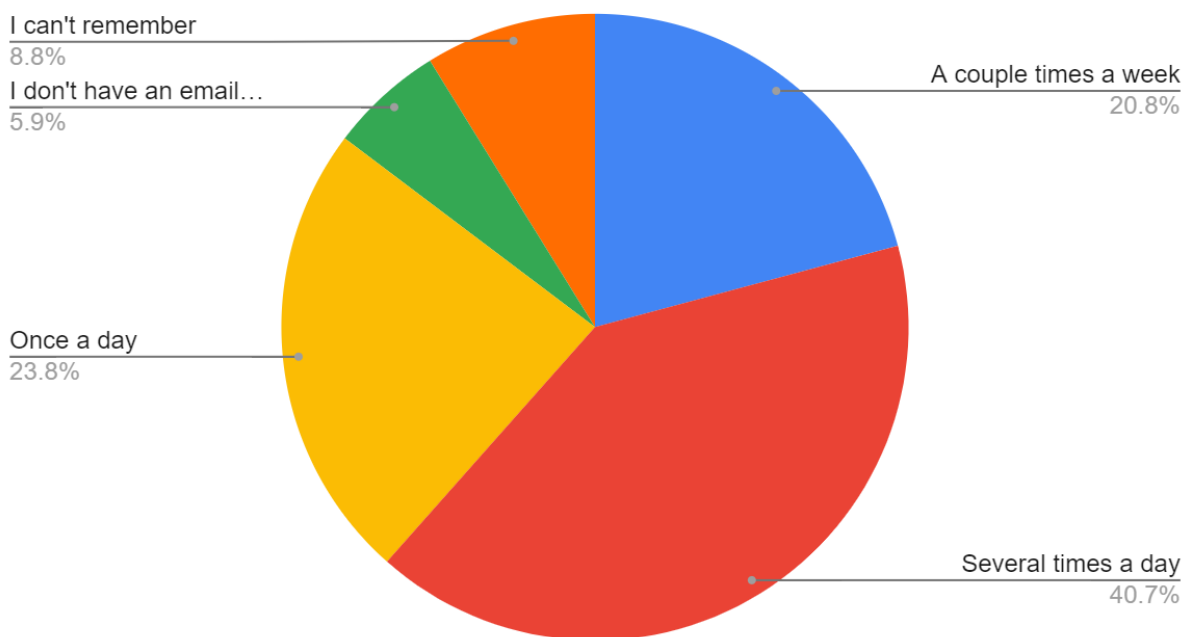
How frequently do you check your email?		
Several times a day	180	40.7%
Once a day	105	23.8%
A couple times a week	92	20.8%
I can't remember	39	8.8%
I don't have an email address	26	5.9%

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Count of How often do you use social media such as Facebook and Twitter?

I can't remember
6.1%

Once a day
11.8%

Several times a day
18.0%

A couple times a week
17.5%

I don't use social media
46.6%
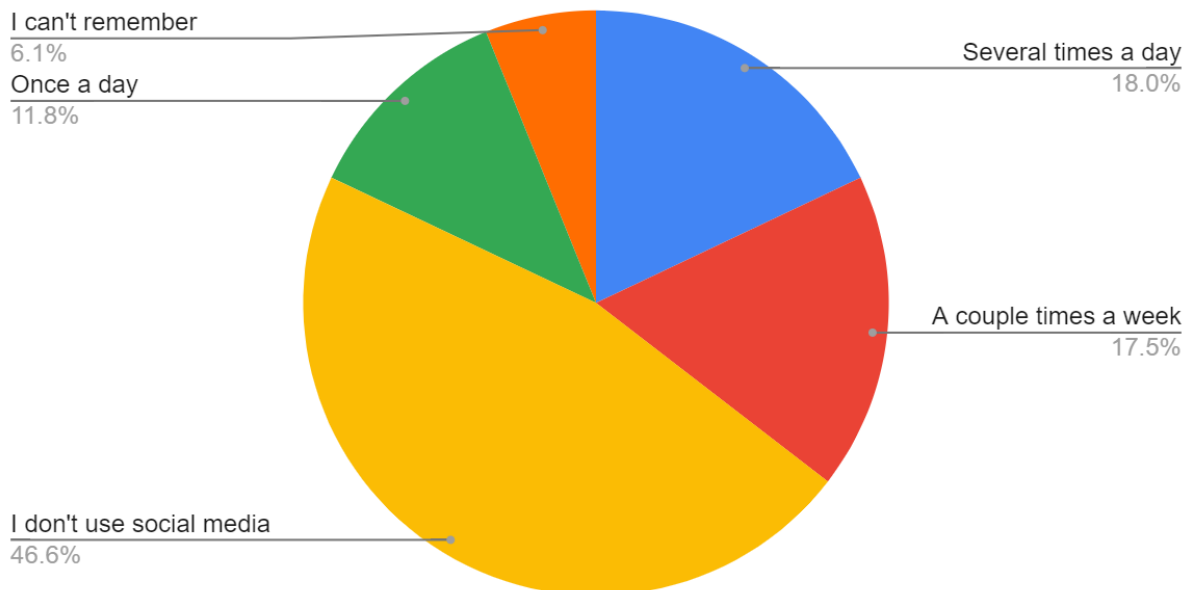
How often do you use social media such as Facebook & Twitter?		
Several times a day	79	18%
Once a day	52	11.8%
A couple times a week	77	17.5%
I can't remember	27	6.1%
I don't use social media	205	46.6%

What do you use the internet for?

- Job training
- Research
- Emails
- Maps
- Government benefits
- Advertising my business
- Local events

- Getting a GED
- Support groups
- Banking
- Reviews of films
- Taking online courses
- Playing games
- Online shopping
- Current events

- Medical Issues
- Excel & Word
- Online meetings
- Stock market
- Entertaining grandchildren
- Texting
- Cloud Storage
- English classes

Count of Would you like to learn more about any of the previously mentioned resources?

No
35.2%

Yes
64.8%
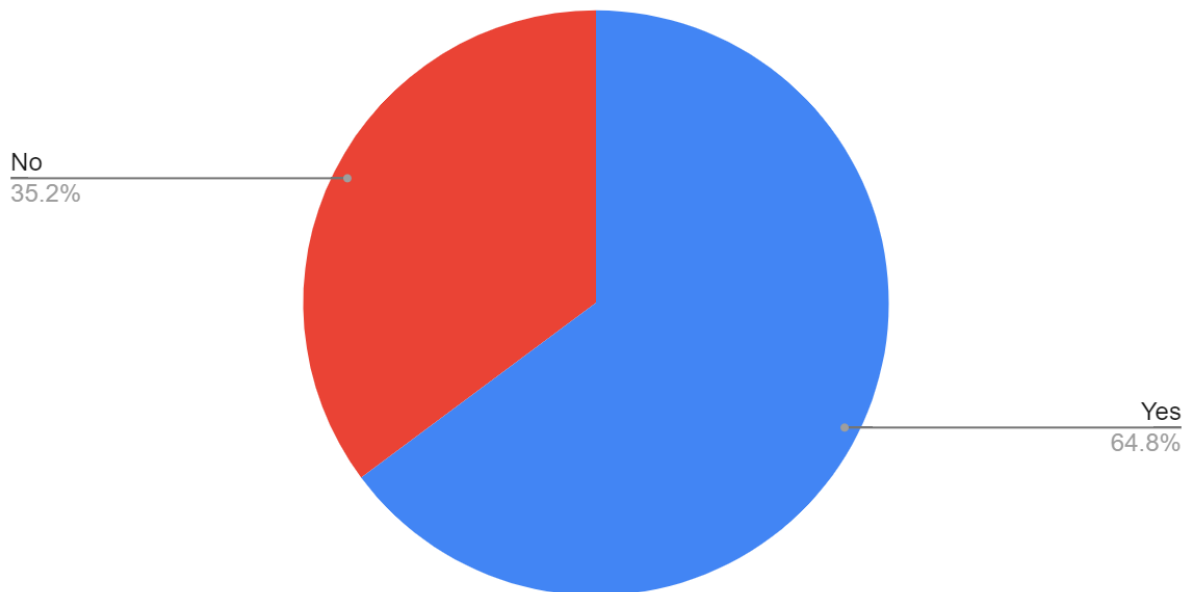
Would you like to learn more about any of the previously mentioned resources?		
Yes	267	64.8%
No	145	35.2%

What would you like to know more about?		
Privacy & Security	131	22.3%
Communication	126	21.4%
Research	101	17.2%
Entertainment	82	13.9%
Telehealth	57	9.7%
Job Searching	55	9.4%
Online Banking	36	6.1%

Quotes from the Exit Forms

Insights

- Many patrons prefer to use the library computers for myriad reasons: cost, ease of access, not wanting to carry around expensive items, they're not allowed to on parole conditions, etc.
- "The QLink Lifeline phone was the worst phone I have ever encountered. It was slow to move from page to page."
- Many people get help with library services: the Libby app, downloading library books, getting notifications about holds, accessing digitized historical content, connecting to the NYC Public Library, etc.
- Some clients are coming from far away because their home library does not have a Digital Navigator service.
- Some clients meet with the Navigators on a regular basis - weekly or bi-weekly.
- Many people are ineligible for discounts.
- Being upfront about how much time the interactions will take helps alleviate frustration on the part of the clients.
- There is a limited number of internet providers in the area with discounted service, especially if you aren't on any government assistance.
- It can take hours or days to get paperwork correct for ID.me and ACP.
- A lot of clients don't want to disclose financial information while at the library.
- After learning Zoom in the first session, one client used Zoom for a virtual follow-up.

Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP)

Of the 47 interactions where the Digital Navigator and the client confirmed the client was eligible for ACP, the forms indicate that there were only 11 instances of Navigators helping clients sign up during their visit. Many more people left with the information and stated they would apply later or had already applied.

Testimonials

- Top Marks!! The Navigator was outstanding, enthusiastic, and extremely knowledgeable. A terrific program/service that is most needed for library patrons
- Patron: "Wow! I learn something new each time we meet."
- The client said it was a very productive session.
- Patron was so very relieved and happy he didn't need to "go through this" again. Patron also commented on what a great community service we are offering with the Digital Navigator program!
- Patron was so happy to have all of her photos on her laptop. Her daughter lives in England and she wanted to be able to send her some photos of the baby birds that recently hatched in her yard (and also other photos). She felt better that they were on her computer, but she felt bad that I had spent so much time with her. I told her I was

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happy to help and she came in the next day with a bottle of champagne for me for all of my trouble! In her thank you card, she said, "I am so grateful for your help! You are the best!".

● Patron was grateful for the library's perseverance in finding solutions and workarounds to her issue.
● "Thank you for helping people like us answer some very basic questions, most of the time we have to pay people to do this for us."
● Patron rated the experience as five stars.
● "This patron is achieving improved competency with email on her own. We are working on understanding the meaning of some language that is used in emails; identifying SPAM; researching the internet for proper email addresses for businesses, doctors, etc. that she wants to communicate with. We're also working on shopping online; making medical appointments; and securing an ID.me account for unemployment benefits."

Outcomes:

Achievement or changes in skills:

● Devices
   ○ Knowing how to purchase the right device (iPhone vs. android, tablet vs. desktop)
   ○ Using an SD card
   ○ Lifeline sign-ups & connection with PCs for People
   ○ Knowing when a device is out of date
● Digital Literacy Skills
   ○ How to add an attachment
   ○ Operating Windows
   ○ Warding off scams
   ○ Keeping clear of viruses, cleaning out malware
   ○ Attending lectures, tours, and events via Zoom
   ○ Resizing photographs
   ○ Scanning documents and uploading photos
● Broadband
   ○ One client just missed the ACP eligibility, but called Consolidated Communication, and then gave a $30 discount just for asking! Note: Spectrum and Optimum would never…

Changes in life status:

● A client applied for Civil Service exams
● "They can now fill out applications on their own."
● A stroke survivor had to re-learn all the computer basics.
● "She is very satisfied that she is now a part of the digital community!"

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- This client lives in a shelter and is applying to college. He wanted me to share how vital having someone show him to upload, download, log in and send email has been for him. He is now enrolled in college and will start in the fall.
- "SO PROUD. Client had called to cancel his scheduled appt yesterday, and came in today to thank me. He said that, thanks to what he'd learned in our previous 2 sessions, he was able to handle the video call entirely on his own from home, and he's now verified! He was very grateful that this service existed because his job didn't involve computer use and he'd never really had other opportunities to learn. Not having the computer skills to navigate the ID.Me application was keeping him from money he needed to pay his rent and groceries, and he was incredibly anxious about messing it up. He said that having someone to explain the process to him clearly in jargon-free language and patiently walk him through it was like a miracle. He very much appreciated that I acknowledged how overly complicated the ID.Me process was, and that I "never made him feel stupid." It gave him the confidence to finish on his own."
- "She said that we were lifesavers for helping her land a job interview."

What the Navigators told us

Do you have any final thoughts regarding your experience in the Digital Navigators of the Hudson Valley program?

- The training was great. Most of my interactions entailed helping patrons with training so the meetings were most helpful when people shared their tips in that area.
- It did open my eyes to the issues incarcerated patrons (on work release) or newly released people face when re-entering society and, especially, the work force. I would really like to see something be developed that focuses on this population.
- Program was well organized, to the point and shared a thorough supply of information and resources.
- The support network is what I feel will enable me to continue - there is an issue to research for a patron about home internet access and w/o the support of our org from NDIA etc I don't necessarily feel equipped to solve certain issues.
- This is an excellent service, bridging the digital transformation gap for many. We have to go the the people too. I find myself making house calls for seniors.
- I would love to see the emphasis on teaching people digital skills be the focal point of the program. In the traning videos for NDIA, we learned a lot about ACP, and while it's a resource that I'm thankful for having learned, I've found that people were most interested in simply learning how to navigate their own devices.
- This program was a game changer for me. I loved the amount of support from other institutions both near and far.
- I thought the program was very rewarding, and the fact that we can continue to use the Digital Navigator network as well as what we learned is great.

- It was very helpful talking to others in the cohort about how things were working for them and sharing our experiences with them. Also, getting updates and helpful hints from NDIA was super helpful.
- I think this was a great program to help get community organizers and librarians the skills they need to help community members. I hope that something like this is done on a regular basis.

Room for growth

Do you have any final thoughts about the experience that can help improve the program?

- I believe what clients REALLY need is affordable internet.
- While the information provided about affordable connectivity services was helpful, a bit more focus on other areas… as all my appointments focused on skills help.
- I would offer a place for personal contact information on the printed flyers and bookmarks. It would take a tech-savvy patron to get onto the website and find our local library for help.
- I did encounter a similar situation with each person I helped: they were uncomfortable giving any personal information other than their first name. Each was intimidated by the "Digital Navigator" name; they said it sounded too official and didn't want their contact information shared.
- Being able to view the forms after submission and a better understanding of when to submit which of the 3 forms in the first/second/third...interaction with a patron.
- Having more Digital Navigators who speak languages other than English would be helpful.
- The connectivity aspect wasn't very helpful in my area, as most have access to the internet already.
- Great support from NDIA and SENYLRC! Felt like the timeline could be extended as we were just getting the word out as the program was wrapping up.
- Role-playing scenarios may help build confidence for new digital navigators quickly. While we're mostly frontline with patrons nearly daily, some people appreciate the time to practice explaining resources.
- Would like to see more collaboration among community organizations that help veterans, seniors, immigrants, literacy, and the visually impaired to share our services.

For citation information, please contact Carolyn Bennett Glauda at carolyn@senylrc.org.

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