

Smart Investing@your library® Builds Nebraska Communities

Final Evaluation July 2015

Introduction

In August 2013, The Northeast Library System (now Three Rivers Library System) received a 23-month grant from the *Smart Investing@your library*® program of the FINRA Investor Education Foundation and American Library Association for their proposed *Smart Investing@your library*® Builds Nebraska Communities project. The three major components of the project are training for community members and enhanced library collections to increase Nebraskans' knowledge of and confidence in basic financial management and investing practices, training for library staff to increase their financial literacy reference skills, and marketing and outreach to increase the visibility of the libraries as an unbiased resource for financial planning and problem solving.

Summary

The *Smart Investing@your library*® Builds Nebraska Communities project wrapped up June 30, 2015.

The July 2014 Interim Evaluation included a thorough evaluation of the library staff training, which was based on the *Smart Investing: Reference Strategies and Resources* course from the Santa Clara County (CA) Library. This "Final Evaluation" report does not include the evaluation of the librarian training. Those interested in that evaluation should refer to the "July 2014 Interim Evaluation" report.

This "Final Evaluation" report includes an evaluation of the remaining facets of the project: resource kits with books, DVDs and eBooks; marketing training and the subsequent marketing conducted by local teams; and the *Smart Investing@your library*® customer training activities that were held at the twenty-two participating libraries.

Financial books and DVDs were purchased and distributed to each of the twenty-two participating libraries from May to October 2014. Financial resource circulation at the participating libraries saw a substantial increase of 78 percent, comparing the 30-day period during the customer training to the same period one year earlier. The response to the materials met with excellent reviews by those who checked out the resources. Over 92 percent felt the materials were useful, indicating that they would likely apply what they learned from the resource, and would recommend the resource to family or friends. Financial materials were also purchased for statewide loan and circulated by individual titles and through bulk loan for libraries wanting to feature financial resources and programming. The

financial eBook and audio book purchases made with grant funds proved valuable to customers of 168 public libraries who participate in *OverDrive Digital Library Reserve*®. After the expansion of the *OverDrive*® electronic financial collection, the circulation of financial eBooks and audio books increased by an impressive 152.5 percent. There continues to be waiting lists on several of the more popular titles.

Marketing and outreach training activities took place in September 2014 and the actual marketing by local teams began in September (marketing and outreach proceeded the customer training windows which took place at different times for the twenty-two libraries). Evidence from library customer training participants and library staff indicate that a high percentage of libraries employed multiple communication strategies. Participating libraries employed an average of twelve marketing strategies. Overall, 90.9 percent of library staff judged their marketing efforts as “Somewhat effective” to “Very effective.”

The library customer training program to increase Nebraskans’ knowledge of and confidence in basic financial management and investing practices began in October 2014 and concluded in June 2015. The first training window began with the first Kick-off Event at the Neligh Public Library on October 6, 2014, and the last training window began with the final Kick-off Event at the Lyons Public Library on May 14, 2015. In total, 361 participants were enrolled in the program. Of the total enrolled, 106 (29.4 percent) participated in the *Gen X—Starting Out* curriculum, 152 (41.1 percent) participating in the *Pre-Retiree—Building Up* curriculum, and 103 (28.5 percent) selected the *Retiree—Making it Last* curriculum.

The review of the customer training pre and post-evaluations found that the majority of the participants demonstrated increased confidence in their ability to perform financial-related activities (86.1 percent of the 108 individuals whose pre-evaluation responses were compared to their post-evaluation responses were more confident in one or more of the six areas). Of this same group, 76.9 percent felt they were more knowledgeable in one or more area. Additionally 47.9 percent to 98.1 percent of the matched group answered the six knowledge-based questions correctly in the post-evaluation survey after answering the questions incorrectly (or indicating they did not know the answer) in the pre-evaluation.

As a result of the training the majority (between 83.1 and 89.0 percent) understood how time frames impact how to invest money, which investment strategies are consistent with their goals and risk tolerance, and how to monitor the performance of their investments. Also as a result of the training the majority (between 63.6 percent to 88.1 percent) have or will assess their savings for financial emergencies, develop an investment philosophy, make a ballpark estimate of retirement savings needs, access financial resources, and discuss investing with others.

Participants thought highly of the training components with the “educational content” and “overall program” garnering 98.3 and 97.3 percent favorable ratings, with the majority of the respondents selecting the “excellent” option.

The increase in confidence levels, the dramatic jump in scores for the knowledge-based questions related to the content presented in the training modules, and the “excellent” and positive ratings of the training, led to the conclusion that the Smart Investing training was successful in meeting objectives and in implementation.

Methodology

The “Final Evaluation” of the grant program is comprised of the following components:

- Baseline and follow-up surveys of participants in the Smart Investing customer training (pre- and post-evaluations). Questions were based on how participants perceived their knowledge in four content areas, confidence in their ability to perform six financial related tasks, and application of learning evidenced by their ability to improve their scores in answering six knowledge-based questions. Participants were asked in the post-evaluation if they learned more information in three distinct areas, and if they have or planned to take action in six financial areas as a result of the training. The post evaluations also provided the participants an avenue to rate seven aspects of the training, from the educational content presented to what they thought of the overall program. Similar to the pre- and post-evaluation used for the librarian training evaluated in the Interim Evaluation Report, many questions on the customer training pre- and post-evaluations were modeled on Montana State University’s Solid Finances project.
- Anecdotal evidence via e-mail correspondence, *Post-it* notes collected during the “*Post-It*” feedback activity conducted at the Wrap-up Celebrations, and additional comments provided in the post-evaluation.
- Follow-up surveys of the key library contact at each of the twenty-two participating public libraries.
- Comment Cards completed by library customers who checked out grant-funded books and DVDs.
- Circulation numbers collected from the twenty-two participating libraries, *OverDrive*® (eBooks), and the Nebraska Library Commission’s financial resources available on loan to libraries.
- *Smart Investing@your library*® *Builds Nebraska Communities* webpage (<http://nlc.nebraska.gov/grants/finra/index.aspx>) statistics.
- *NebraskaAccess: Money and Investing* webpage (nebraskaccess.ne.gov/moneyandinvesting.asp) statistics.

Findings

Programming: Customer Training & Resources

Goal 1. Increase Nebraskans' knowledge of and confidence in basic financial management and investing, implemented through educational activities using FINRA and Smart Investing@your library® resources and enhanced library materials provided through Nebraska libraries.

Objectives:

- a. Training participants will demonstrate greater knowledge of, confidence in, and ability to understand and make use of financial information by the end of the training.
 - Intended results: FINRA/ALA-based pre/post tests will show 80% of participants improved their knowledge.
- b. By the end of training, participants will report use of and satisfaction with library resources and materials, as well as action taken to change their behavior.
 - Intended results: Nebraskans will report increased use of and satisfaction with library resources and materials, based on tracking use of print, downloadable and Website/NebraskAccess resources, and feedback, with 50% more use compared to current use of similar materials, as well as specific action taken to change their behavior.

Customer Training Activities:

Pre- and post-evaluations (Attachments 1 and 2) were designed and used to evaluate the customer training. In order to encourage more participants to complete the surveys, two opportunities for participants to complete each of the two surveys were provided. Surveys were available online via SurveyMonkey®. The pre-evaluation survey preceded the first week's lessons and included a note in the online curriculum that asked participants to take a few minutes to complete the survey unless they already completed the survey at the Kick-off Event held at the library. The post-evaluation survey followed the final week's lessons. The other opportunities for completing the surveys were at the library events. Each participant who attended a Kick-off Event was asked to complete the pre-evaluation survey and all those who attended a Wrap-up Celebration were asked to complete a post-evaluation survey.

To encourage honest responses, respondents were ensured confidentiality. Towards the end of the survey, respondents were asked to supply a unique code in order for the evaluator to match pre- and post-evaluations. This unique code allowed the evaluator to eliminate duplicate surveys if it was determined that the same person completed the survey at both the library event and online.

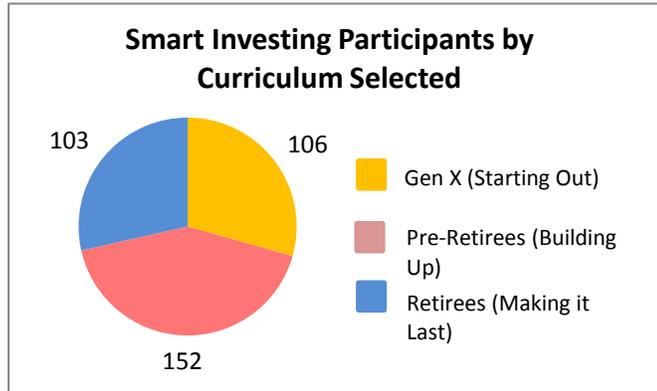
In Part 1 and 2 of the surveys, respondents were asked to report their level of knowledge in four financial topic areas, report their confidence level on six financial activities, and answer six knowledge-based questions to determine if the online training, coupled with the library events and activities, led to improved scores and confidence levels.

The post-evaluation survey also collected information on whether participants learned new information in three distinct areas, and if they have or plan to take action in six financial areas as a result of the training. These additional questions, unique to the post-evaluations, were found in Part 3 which asked participants to: 1) share if as a result of the training they learned information in three investment areas; 2) share if as a result of the training they took, or plan to take, action on five financial management and investment strategies; and 3) rate six training components as well as the overall program.

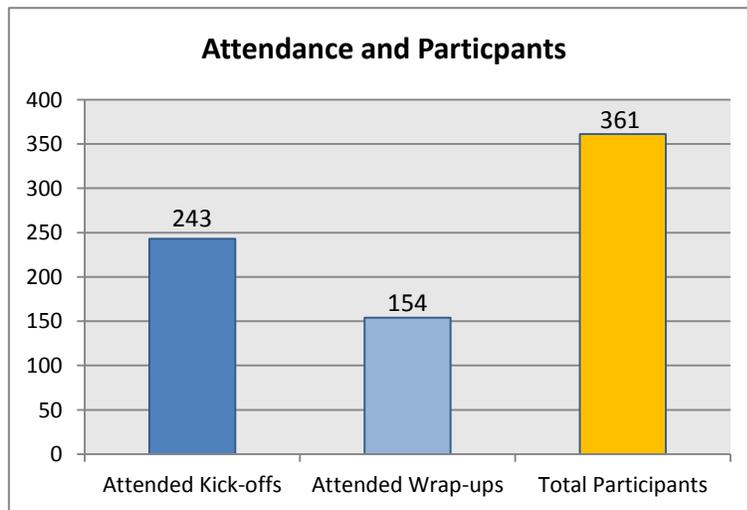
Because of the success of the Iowa Smart Investing@your library® program, it was expected that confidence and knowledge levels would increase from the pre-evaluation to the post-evaluation. It was also anticipated that individual test scores would improve from pre- to post-evaluations. It was predicted that those trained would indicate a level of learning and rate the training components positively, for the most part.

Customer Training Results:

Over the course of the Smart Investing customer training portion of the project, 361 total participants were enrolled. Each signed up for the curriculum that best fit their financial stage with 106 participants (29.4 percent) enrolled in the *Gen X—Starting Out* curriculum, 152 (42.1 percent) enrolled in the *Pre-Retiree—Building Up* curriculum, and 103 (28.5 percent) selecting the *Retiree—Making it Last* curriculum.



Each of the twenty-two participating libraries scheduled a Kick-off Event and a Wrap-up Celebration, usually scheduled six weeks after the Kick-off Event. Although participants could utilize the online curriculum without attending the scheduled library events, participants were encouraged to attend the events if they fit with their schedules. At each participating library, a drawing for an iPod Shuffle was added as an incentive for attending both the Kick-off and Wrap-up Events and logging into the online curriculum. In total, 243 attended the 22 Kick-off Events and 154 attended the Wrap-up Celebrations. The corresponding chart shows the attendance at those events compared to the total participants involved in the training.



Comparing Only the 108 Matched Pre- and Post-Evaluations

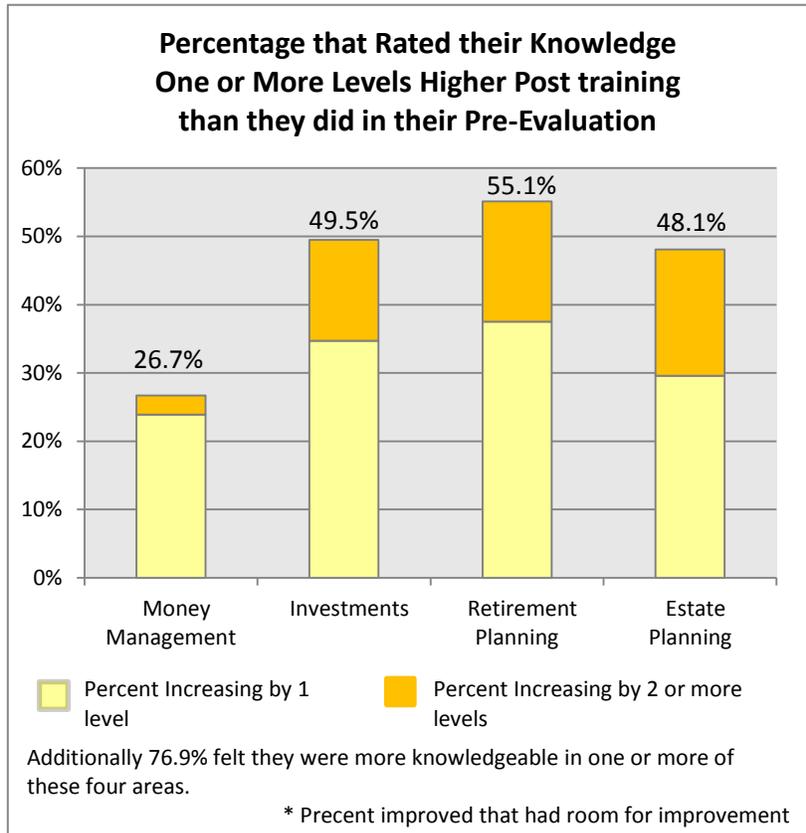
Of those that completed surveys, project staff were able to identify one hundred eight matched sets through the use of an identifier code used by participants. Although these identifier codes allowed the evaluator to compare the before and after responses made by individuals, we are only reporting the results of these matched sets as a group.

Knowledge Levels—Self-Rated

For the one hundred eight matched sets of pre- and post-evaluations, the first question in Part 1 was: *“How would you rate your knowledge on the following topics: Money Management, Investments, Retirement Planning, and Estate Planning.”* Respondents had five choices to select from, ranging from “not at all knowledgeable” to “very knowledgeable.”

In comparing pre- and post-evaluations, reports of knowledge levels showed a marked increase after both the online training and the activities at the library events took place. The chart below shows that 76.9 percent felt they were more knowledgeable in one of more of the four dimensions. Individually, 26.7 percent felt more knowledgeable in the area of money management; 49.5 percent felt more knowledgeable in the area of investments; 55.1 percent felt more knowledgeable in the area of retirement planning; and 48.1 percent felt more knowledgeable in the area of estate planning (all increasing by one or more knowledge levels). In the chart at the right, the yellow portion of the bars represents those who improved a single level and the orange portion represents those who improved two or more levels—for a significant level of improvement.

Note: A few respondents selected the highest level of knowledge “very knowledgeable” in the pre-evaluation. Those few sets where the highest level already existed were removed from the corresponding individual dimensions, since those individuals were unable to indicate any improvement using the same scale as in the pre-evaluation.

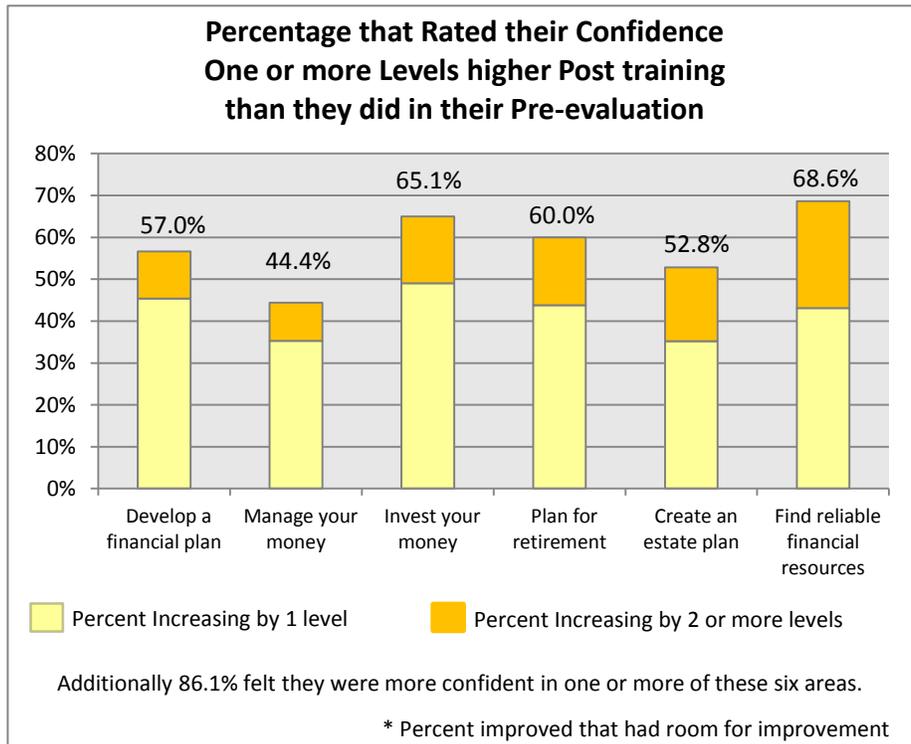


Confidence Levels—Self-Rated

In Part 1 the second question was, “How confident are you in your ability to: 1) Develop a financial plan; 2) Manage your money; 3) Invest your money; 4) Plan for retirement; 5) Create an estate plan; and 6) Find reliable resources (books, databases, websites) on personal finance and/or investing.” Respondents had five choices to select from, ranging from “not at all confident” to “very confident.”

In comparing pre- and post-evaluations, reports of confidence levels showed a substantial increase after the online training and library activities at the library. The corresponding chart demonstrates that 86.1 percent felt they were more knowledgeable in one of more of the six dimensions. Within the six activity areas, 57.0 percent felt more confident in their ability to develop a financial plan; 44.4 percent felt more confident in their ability to manage their money; 65.1 percent felt more confident in their ability to invest their money; 60.0 percent felt more confident in their ability to plan for retirement; 52.8 percent felt more confident in their ability to create an estate plan; and 68.6 percent felt more confident in their ability to find reliable financial resources.

Again, the yellow portion of the bars represents those who improved a single level and the orange portion represents participants who were more confident by two or more levels, which indicates a significant improvement. Note: There were a few respondents that selected the highest level of confidence of “very confident” in the pre-evaluation. Those few sets where this highest level already existed were removed from the corresponding individual dimensions, since those individuals were unable to indicate any improvements using the same scale as in the pre-evaluation.



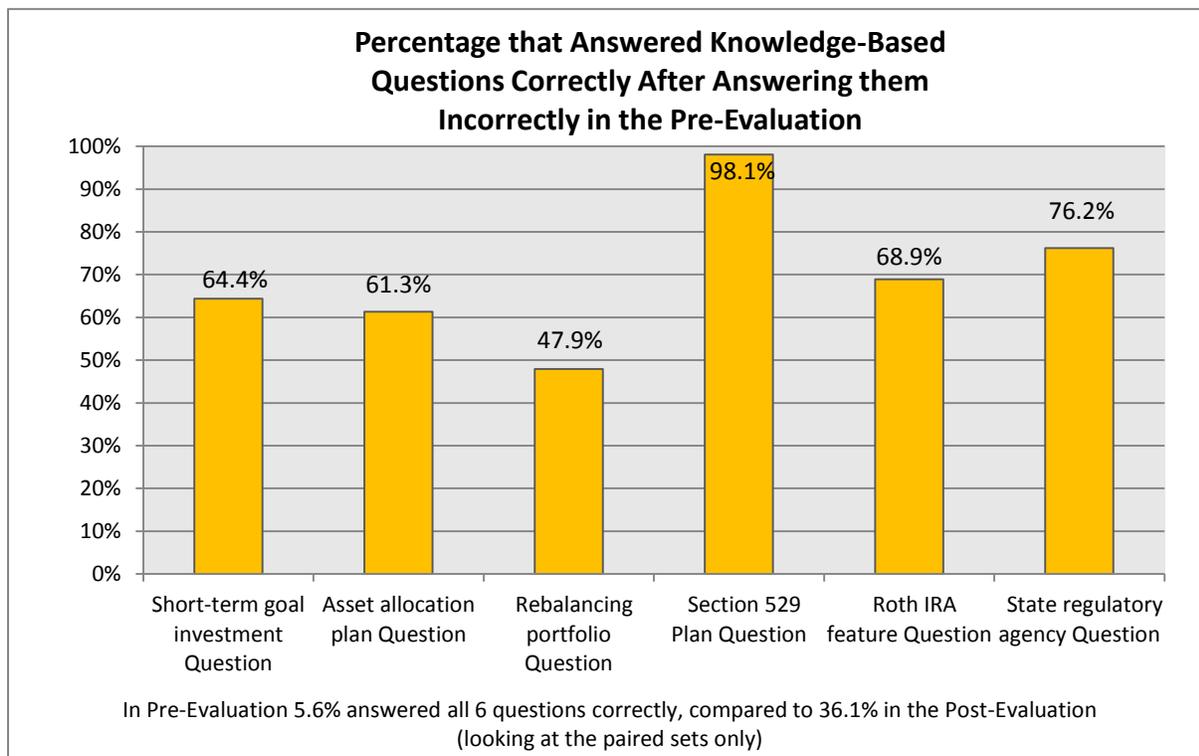
Knowledge-Based Quiz Questions

In Part 2 of the pre- and post-evaluation, six knowledge-based true/false and multiple choice questions were asked as follows:

1. *A growth mutual fund would be an excellent way to save for short-term goals. (False)*
2. *The goal of an asset allocation plan is to build an investment portfolio that includes investments that _____. (react differently to the same market forces)*
3. *Suppose your asset allocation plan is to have 50% in stocks, 30% in bonds, and 20% in cash. If stock prices drop dramatically, in order to rebalance your portfolio, you will _____. (buy stock)*
4. *A Section 529 Plan is a tax-advantaged way to save for _____. (college)*
5. *Which of the following is true about a Roth IRA? (You are not required to withdraw your money at any age)*
6. *If you have tried unsuccessfully to resolve a problem with a brokerage firm, you should contact the _____. (Nebraska Department of Banking and Finance)*

These six quiz or knowledge-based questions assessed the learning that took place in the Smart Investing online modules as well as learning that took place at the library events. The corresponding chart shows the percentage of participants (within the one hundred eight matched pre- and post-evaluation sets) that answered the questions correctly after answering them incorrectly the first time.

When looking at those that answered the question incorrectly in the pre-evaluation, the results of the responses in the post evaluation are as follows: 64.4 percent answered the “short-term goal investment” question correctly; 61.3 percent answered the “asset allocation plan” question correctly; 47.9 percent answered the “rebalancing portfolio” question correctly; nearly all (98.1 percent) answered the “Section 529 Plan” question correctly; 68.9 percent answered the “Roth IRA feature” question correctly; and 76.2 percent answered the “state regulatory agency” question correctly. Additionally, of the one hundred eight matched sets, only 5.6 percent answered all six questions correctly in the pre-evaluation, compared to 36.1 percent who answered all six questions correctly in the post-evaluation.



Comparing All Pre- and Post-Evaluations

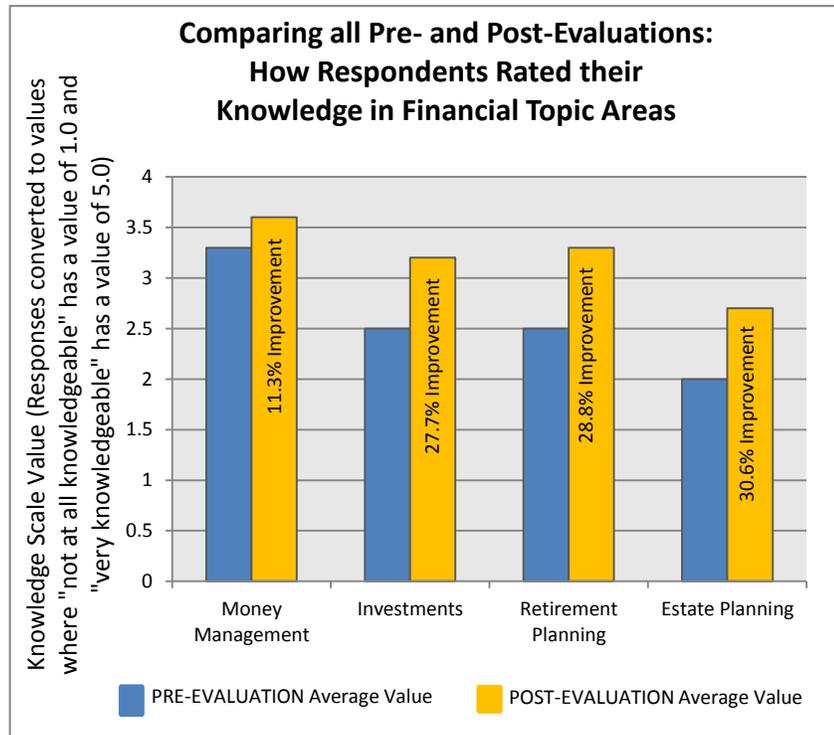
Two hundred twenty-four participants completed and submitted the pre-evaluation. One hundred eighteen participants completed and submitted the post-evaluation. The following group of charts represents all evaluations received rather than only the one hundred eight matched sets that were reviewed on the three previous pages.

Knowledge Levels—Self-Rated

Comparison of all 224 pre-evaluations and all 118 post-evaluations also shows improvement. The first question in Part 1 is, “How would you rate your knowledge on the following topics: Money Management, Investments, Retirement Planning, and Estate Planning.” Respondents had five choices to select from, ranging from “not at all knowledgeable” to “very knowledgeable.”

To evaluate improvements between pre and post responses with these unmatched sets of different sizes, the evaluator converted responses to numerical values. “Not at all knowledgeable” was provided a value of 1.0, “Not very knowledgeable” was provided a value of 2.0, “Somewhat knowledgeable” was provided a value of 3.0, “Knowledgeable” was provided a value of 4.0, and a value of 5.0 was provided for “Very knowledgeable” responses.

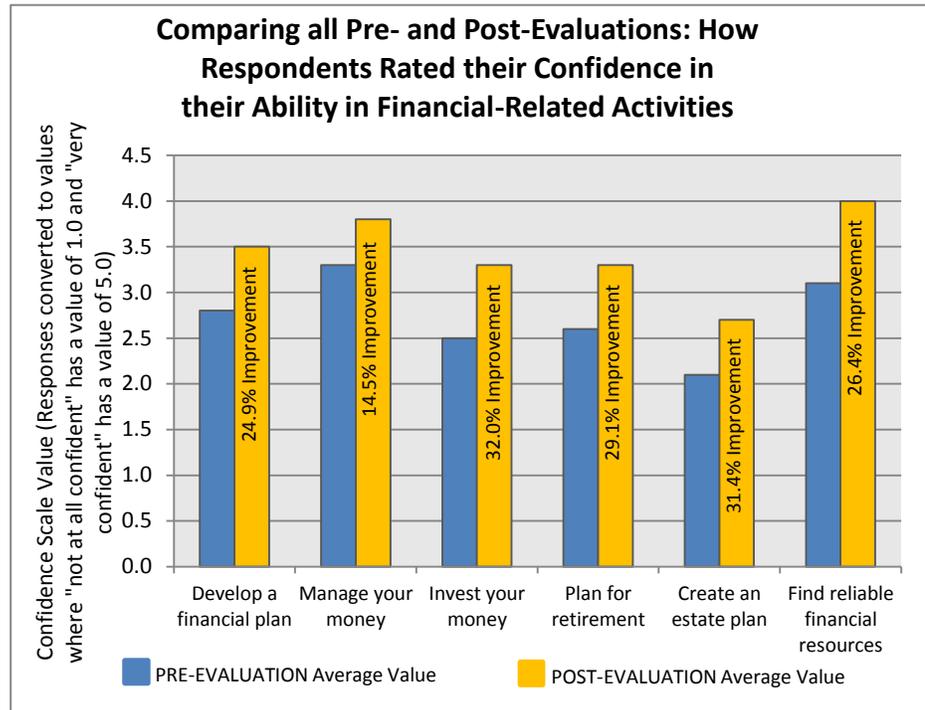
Improvements emerged in each of the four financial topic areas after the training window and the library events occurred. The post-evaluation responses showed an 11.3 percent improvement over the pre-evaluation responses in the money management topic area. There was a 27.7 percent improvement in the investments topic area and a 28.8 percent improvement in the retirement planning topic area. The most significant improvement was in the estate planning topic area, which improved by 30.6 percent. The average improvement was 24.6 percent.



Confidence Levels—Self-Rated

The second question in Part 1 also shows improvement when all evaluations received, were considered. As a reminder, the second question in Part 1 was, “How confident are you in your ability to: 1) Develop a financial plan; 2) Manage your money; 3) Invest your money; 4) Plan for retirement; 5) Create an estate plan; and 6) Find reliable resources (books, databases, websites) on personal finance and/or investing.” Respondents had five choices to select from ranging from, “not at all confident” to “very confident.”

To evaluate improvements between pre and post responses with these unmatched sets of different sizes, the evaluator again converted responses to numerical values. “Not at all confident” was provided a value of 1.0, “Not very confident” was provided a value of 2.0, “Somewhat confident” was provided a value of 3.0, “Confident” was provided a value of 4.0, and a value of 5.0 was provided for “Very confident” responses.



As represented by the corresponding chart,

the post-evaluation responses showed an 24.9 percent improvement in confidence over the pre-evaluation responses in their ability to develop a financial plan; there was a 14.5 percent improvement in confidence in their ability to manage their money; there was a 32.0 percent improvement in confidence in their ability to invest their money; there was a 29.1 percent improvement in confidence in their ability to plan for retirement; there was a 31.4 percent improvement in confidence in their ability to create an estate plan; and there was a 26.4 percent improvement in confidence in their ability to find reliable financial resources. The average improvement of the six dimensions was 24.6 percent.

Knowledge-Based Quiz Questions

Comparisons of the six quiz or knowledge-based questions made by looking at all 224 pre-evaluations and the 118 post-evaluations also showed improvements. There were six true/false and multiple choice questions asking about short-term goals, asset allocation plans, rebalancing portfolios, a Section 529 plan, features of a Roth IRA, and a question about the state’s regulatory agency.

To evaluate changes/improvements between pre and post responses with these unmatched sets of different sizes, the evaluator plotted the percent of correct answers for each question from the pre-evaluations collected and the percent of correct answers for each question from the post-evaluations collected. The percent increase (improvement) indicated in the left axis of the chart that follows, indicates the percent increase from the pre-evaluation average score (blue bar) to the post-evaluation average score (orange bar).

As the corresponding chart below indicates, the most significant improvement (or percent increase) was in the “Roth IRA feature” question with an impressive 197.7 percent improvement. A significant 77.8 percent answered that question correctly in the post-evaluation after only 26.1 percent answered that question correctly in the pre-evaluation. The results of the other questions were also significant. The “short-term goal investment” question shows an improvement of 52.0 percent (53.0 percent answered that question correctly in the pre-evaluation and 80.5 percent answered it correctly in the post-evaluation). The “asset allocation plan” question shows an improvement of 87.8 percent (38.4 percent answered that question correctly in the pre-evaluation and 72.0 percent answered it correctly in the post-evaluation). The “rebalancing portfolio” question shows an improvement of 98.5 percent (30.7 percent answered that question correctly in the pre-evaluation and 61.0 percent answered it correctly in the post-evaluation). The “Section 529 Plan” question shows an improvement of 104.9 percent (48.4 percent answered that question correctly in the pre-evaluation and almost all (99.2 percent) answered it correctly in the post-evaluation). The “state regulatory agency” question shows an improvement of 64.8 percent (54.5 percent answered that question correctly in the pre-evaluation and 89.8 percent answered it correctly in the post-evaluation).

Overall there was an impressive 91.7 improvement (percent increase) from the pre-evaluation to the post-evaluation scores when you look at all six quiz questions asked. We believe the results of these six quiz or knowledge-based questions shows a significant level of learning that took place through the combination of the Smart Investing online learning and the learning that took place at the library events. The chart that follows show the results of each of the six quiz questions comparing results from both the pre- and post-evaluation.

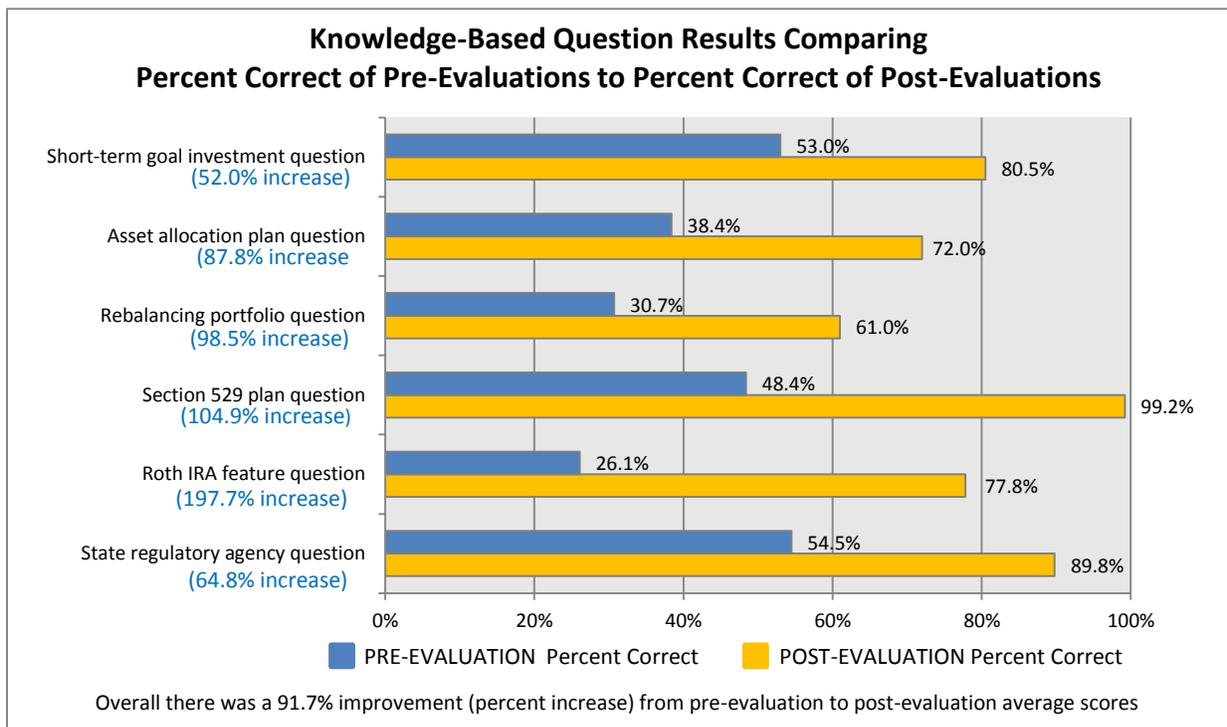


Chart Note: To evaluate changes/improvements between pre and post responses with these sets of different sizes, the evaluator plotted the percent of correct answers for each question from the pre-evaluations collected and the percent of correct answers for each question from the post-evaluations collected. The percent increase (improvement) indicated in blue ink at the left axis of the chart indicates the percent increase from the pre-evaluation average score (blue bar) to the post-evaluation average score (orange bar).

Post-Training Questions (Unique to Post-Evaluations)

Post Questions about Understanding

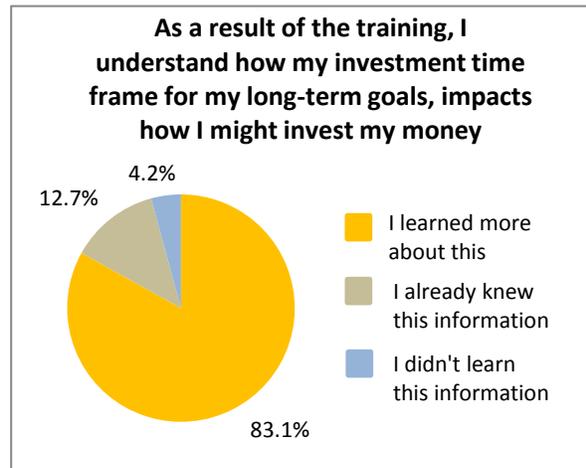
Additional questions were unique to the post-evaluation survey and included in Part 3 of the survey. In Part 3 the first question was a three-part question, as follows:

As a result of participating in the Smart Investing training:

- 1) *I understand how my investment time frame for my long-term goals impacts how I might invest my money.*
- 2) *I understand which investment categories would be consistent with my goals and risk tolerance.*
- 3) *I understand how to monitor the performance of my investments.*

Response choices were: I already know this information; I learned more information about this; or I didn't learn this information.

The results in each of the three dimensions were very positive. Responses to the understanding of the “investment time frame” question showed that 83.1 percent indicated they learned more about the subject, 12.7 percent already knew this information, and 4.2 percent didn’t learn this information.



For the “investment categories” question, 89.0 percent indicated they learned more about the subject, 5.9 percent already knew this information, and 5.1 percent didn’t learn this information.



For the “monitoring the performance of investments” question, 84.8 percent indicated they learned more about the subject, 7.6 percent already knew this information, and 7.6 percent didn’t learn this information.



The percentage that responded that they learned more on these subjects is a substantial indicator of information learned.

Post Questions about Behavior

An additional question unique to the post-evaluation was included in Part 3 of the survey. A five-part question revealed action taken or the plan to take action on the part of the recently trained participants. This five-part question follows:

As a result of participating in the Smart Investing training:

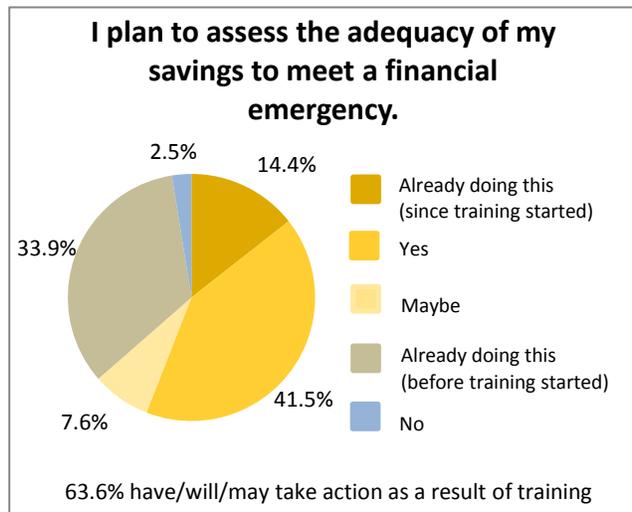
- 1) *I plan to assess the adequacy of my savings to meet a financial emergency.*
- 2) *I plan to develop an investment philosophy and assess my tolerance for taking risks.*
- 3) *I plan to do a “ballpark estimate” of retirement savings needs.*
- 4) *I will make a point to use finance and investing resources from the library and/or online.*
- 5) *I plan to discuss investing with other family members and/or financial professionals.*

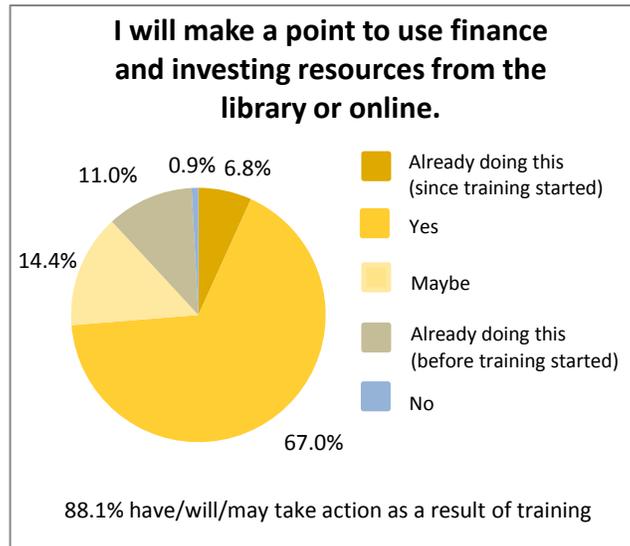
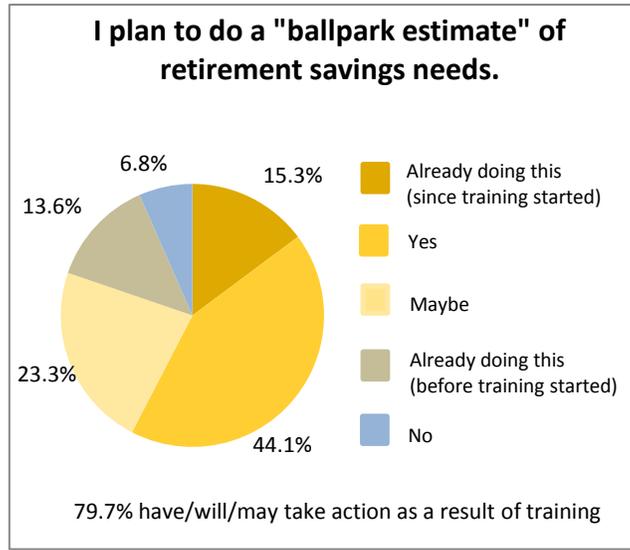
Response choices were: Yes; Maybe; No; Already doing this (since the training started); Already doing this (before the training started).

The five charts that follow summarize the responses provided by participants who completed post-evaluation surveys. Each chart shows that a significant number of participants already have taken or plan to take action in the five action items, as evidenced by the amount of gold to yellow-shaded segments on the charts representing the percentage of respondents that have already taken action or indicated that they will or may take action.

Percentages of participants that have, will, or may take action as a result of the training ranges from 63.6 percent to 88.1 percent. Specifically, 63.6 percent have/will/may take action to assess the adequacy of savings to meet financial emergencies; 73.5 percent have/will/may take action to develop an investment philosophy and assess their tolerance for taking risk; 79.7 percent have/will/may take action to do a ballpark estimate of retirement savings needs; 88.1 percent have/will/may take action to make a point to use finance and investing resources; and 78.8 percent have/will/may take action to discuss investing with other family members and/or financial professionals.

Since participants could also choose “already doing this before the training started” the group of participants that haven’t and are not planning to take action represents only a small percent of participants—ranging from only 0.9 percent to 6.8 percent. It appears that the 6.8 percent of respondents that has not or is not planning to do a “ballpark estimate” of retirement savings needs may be a portion of the participants that were already retired and may perceive no need to make such an estimate.



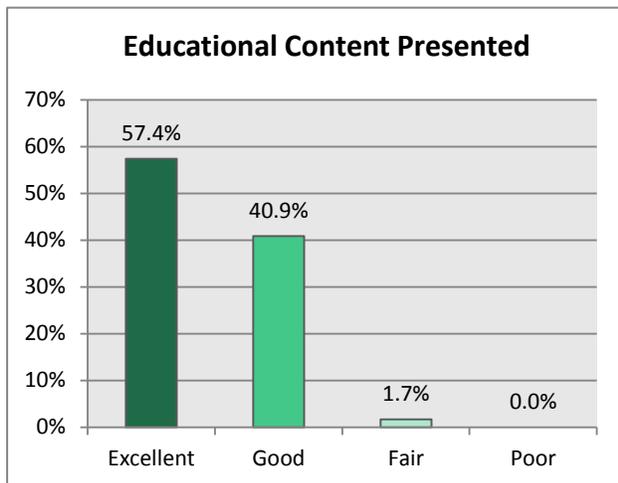
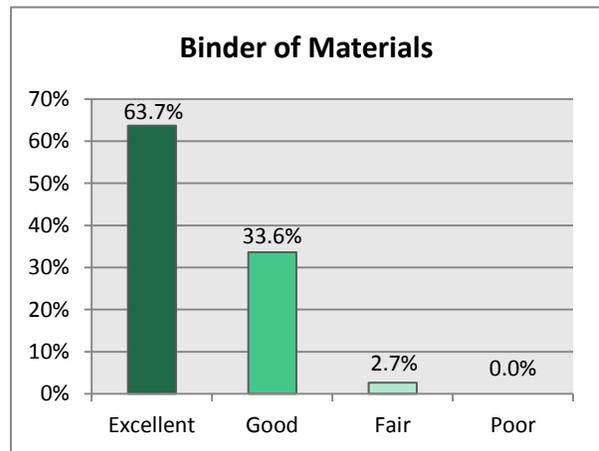


Post Questions about Training Satisfaction

On the post evaluation, the participants were asked to rate several components of the training including: 1) educational content presented; 2) online format of training modules; 3) length of time to complete training; 4) binder of materials prepared to accompany the online curriculum; 5) money and investing webpage on NebraskAccess (nebraskaccess.ne.gov/moneyandinvesting.asp); 6) communication/Emails from or with instructor; and 7) overall program.

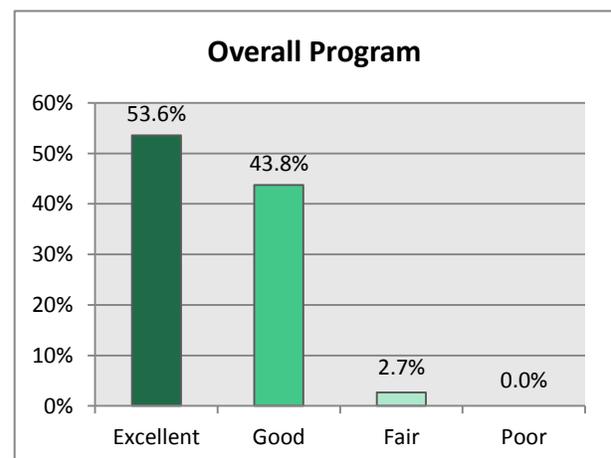
The results of the responses show very high satisfaction with most of the training components as evidenced by the charts below. Although the respondents were asked to rate the components in the order indicated in the paragraph above, the charts below are arranged with the items that received the highest satisfaction to the lowest satisfaction. The “binder of materials” was ranked highest, indicating that although an individual can utilize the online curriculum without any printed materials or instructions, the participants obviously appreciated having the binder to refer to, highlight, and possibly to use as a convenient location to jot down notes. The “educational content” ranked the second highest, followed closely by satisfaction with “the overall program.” Least favorably ranked, with more “fair” than “excellent” responses, was the “length of time to complete the training.” Many indicated that the 5-week training window was too short to complete all the readings and the activities. In the future, we would consider lengthening the training window, although doing so could have a negative effect in keeping participants engaged in the program. However, this could be countered with adding one to three interim library activity sessions.

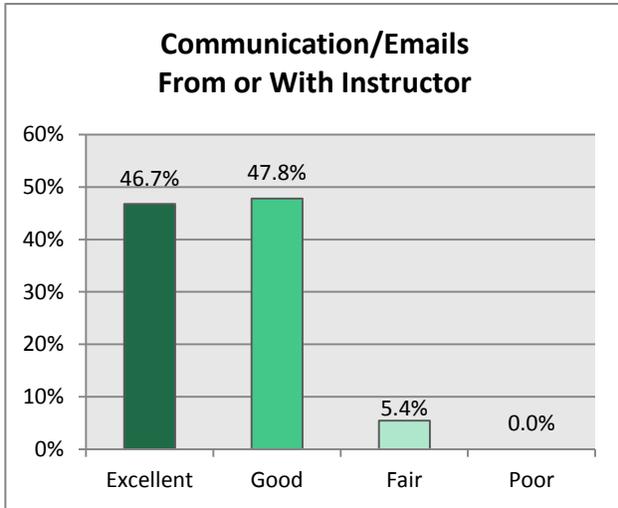
Of the one hundred eighteen respondents that provided a ranking, 97.3 percent gave the “binder of materials” a favorable rating (63.7 percent “excellent” and 33.6 percent “good”) while 2.7 percent rated it less favorably (“fair”). See chart to right.



The “educational content presented” ranked second highest, with 98.3 percent providing this component with a favorable rating (57.4 percent “excellent” and 40.9 percent “good”) while 1.7 percent rated it less favorably (“fair”). See chart to left.

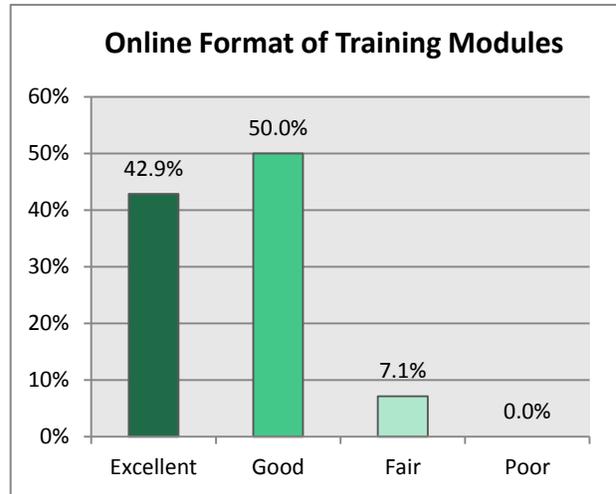
This was followed closely by “overall program” which had a 97.3 percent favorable rating (53.6 percent “excellent” and 43.8 percent “good”) while 2.7 percent rated it less favorably (“fair”). See chart to right.



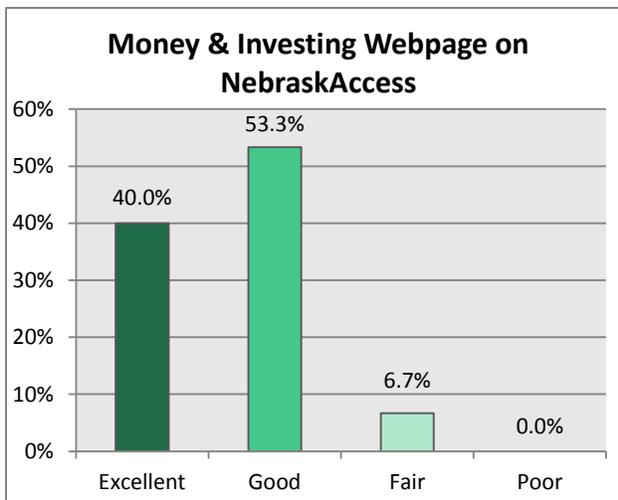


A solid 94.6 percent gave “communication/Emails from or with instructor” a favorable rating (46.7 percent “excellent” and 47.8 percent “good”) while 5.4 percent rated it less favorably (“fair”). See chart to left.

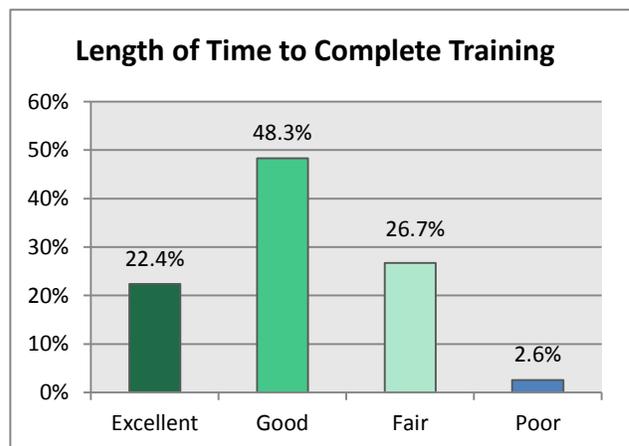
Still very positive was the 92.9 percent that gave the “online format of training modules” a favorable rating (42.9 percent “excellent” and 50.0 percent “good”) while 7.1 percent rated it less favorably (“fair”). The fact that nearly a third of the participants were older and some of the participants have slower Internet service could have led to this higher number of “fair” responses for the online format aspect. See chart to left.



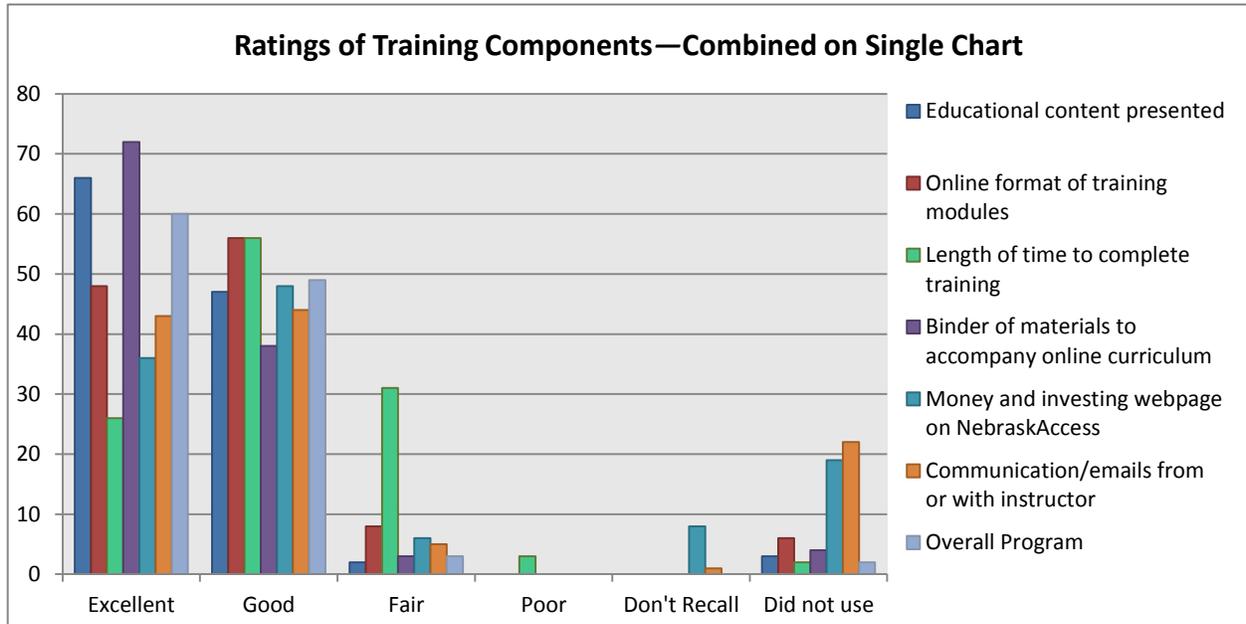
A respectable 93.3 percent gave the “money & investing webpage on NebraskAccess” a favorable rating (40.0 percent “excellent” and 53.3 percent “good”) while 6.7 percent rated it less favorably (“fair”). Since this webpage was most thoroughly described during the Wrap-up Celebrations, participants could have missed the value of this webpage during the training window—although this web address was printed on the binder cover and the bookmarks provided in the binder. See chart to right.



The only component that any respondent gave a “poor” rating was the “length of time to complete the training,” which saw only 70.7 percent giving this aspect a favorable rating (22.4 percent “excellent” and 48.3 percent “good”) while 29.3 percent rated it less favorably (26.7 percent “fair” and 2.6 percent “poor”). The comments did indicate that more time was needed to complete all four weeks of the online curriculum. See chart to left.



The following chart is a combined chart that shows all the ratings of the training components on a single chart. This provides a side-by-side comparison of the ratings of all the training components.



A text box followed the “rating of the training component” section in the post-evaluation survey. Participants were invited to provide additional comments about the training components. Some of the comments follow:

I feel that this is a great teaching/learning program for what to look for when investing, and when considering the risks. I will continue to go over and over my binder, handouts, and quizzes.

This was a great program. I learned a lot. I had never learned a lot of this stuff. While I still have a lot to learn, this has given me some ideas of how to start investing. I plan on taking action on what I learned in this course.

Absolutely 'Loved' this program.

I appreciate this program being offered in our library.

I like my binder of materials. I have something to look back at and refer to when my mind goes blank. It has a lot of good information. Good course.

Wished I would have taken this course in my late 20's early 30's.

Good course, I'm glad I enrolled.

I have the information and will use it to my advantage. I received what I need most at this time—information on 529 Education Plans.

Excellent program. I learned a lot of good information on how to invest my money and to work on a retirement plan.

I found the program to be informative and it helped me to understand investing and the benefits of working with a financial planner.

Excellent program. Thank you for bringing this to Nebraska.

The information is very good and I am trying to get other people interested in it. Thank you for making it available!

I thoroughly enjoyed this training—please offer more of any type. I like things I can do individually just because of time—I work full time and can do the modules at my convenience.

Videos were not the best use of my time. It was not the most effective presentation as it tended to drag.

Good definitions and explanations.

It was a lot of material in a short time and it was harder than some college classes I have taken. Excellent presentation and thought provoking.

I ran out of time to complete, but what I did get through is excellent. I need a bit more time plus it would be nice to physically meet w/professional OR connect via Skype or other method at library.

Material needs to be updated (questions and answers were from January 2013). A couple of quiz questions asked about Iowa and we were connected to Nebraska information.

Provide more examples where math is involved.

Great starter program for first timers.

I suggest a mid-point meeting and extending the program by 1 to 3 weeks.

Week Two had way too much information for a single unit.

The information was very thorough and sometimes repetitive, which was OK. I sometimes need to read about something a couple times to get it to stick.

A glossary of terms and abbreviations would have been useful to refer to as I read the assignments.

A four or five week period is not long enough to grasp it all. Contents are very informative.

Some of the reading exercises were too long and should be broken into two units.

I'd recommend weekly round table meetings (learn, socialize, and peer pressure). In retirement an "outing" about an interesting topic would be fun and helpful.

Recommend offering the class again.

Course is too much right now—not what I expected.

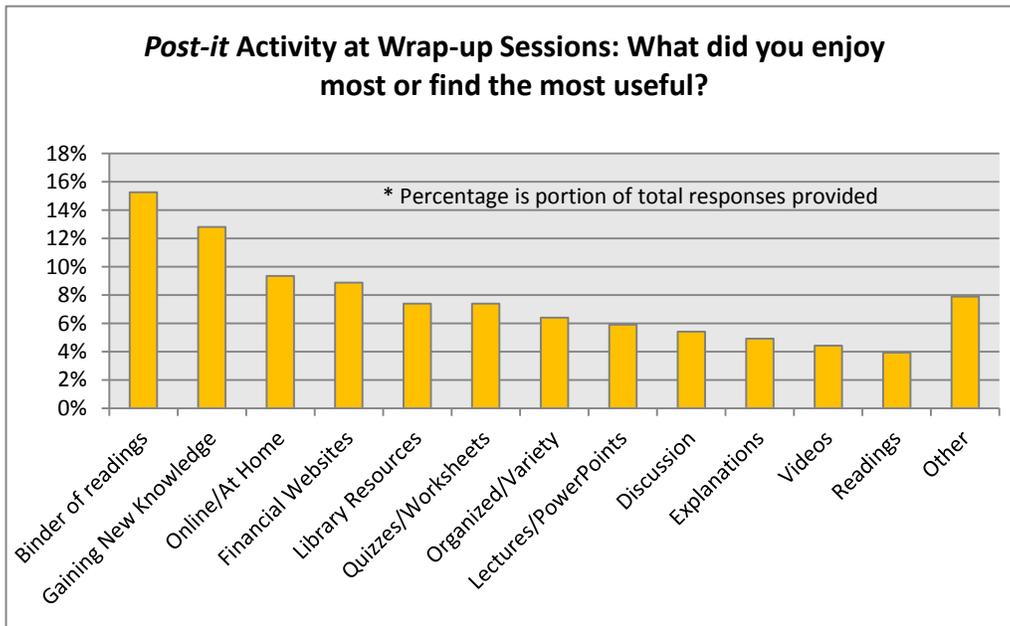
At my age (past 70) I am too old for many of the suggestions at least in regard to building up money for my old age—too old to start IRAs etc.

Thank you for this educational opportunity!

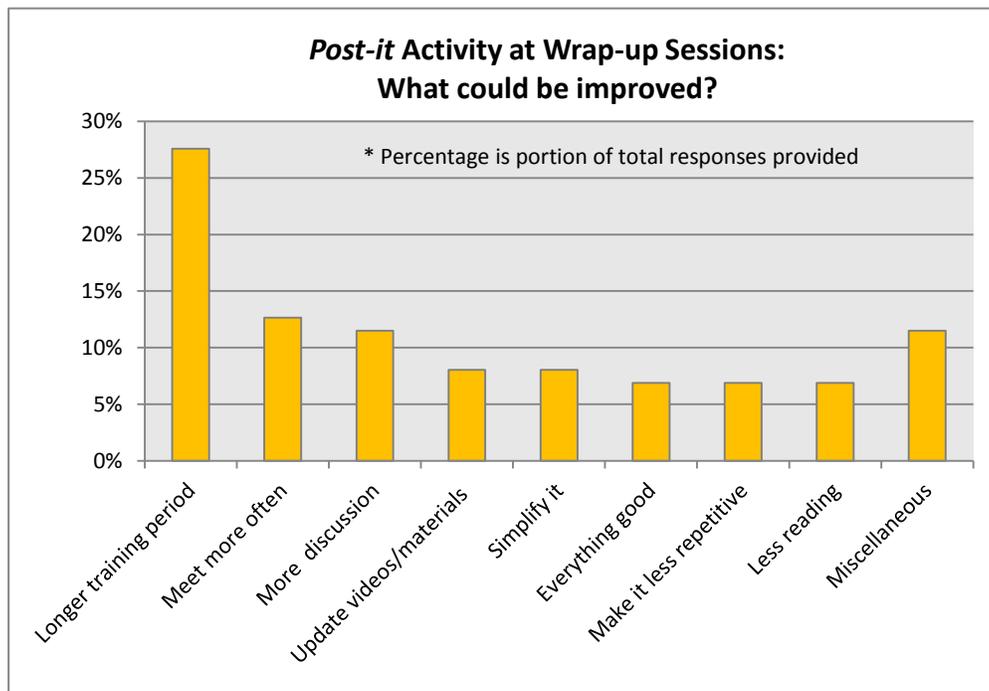
Post-it Feedback Activity

Another opportunity for participants to provide feedback about the customer training was through a "Post-It" activity facilitated at the Wrap-up Celebrations. Each participant was provided with pink, blue, green and yellow *Post-it* notes to use to provide feedback in four different, color-coded areas. They were asked to share: 1) what they enjoyed most or what they found the most useful about the program; 2) what could be improved; 3) what library resources they used or intend to use; and 4) who (generically rather than by name) and how many individuals they talked to about financial information since the Kick-off Event. After adding their feedback on their *Post-it* notes, they were asked to attach them on the corresponding poster and the trainer shared themes with the group.

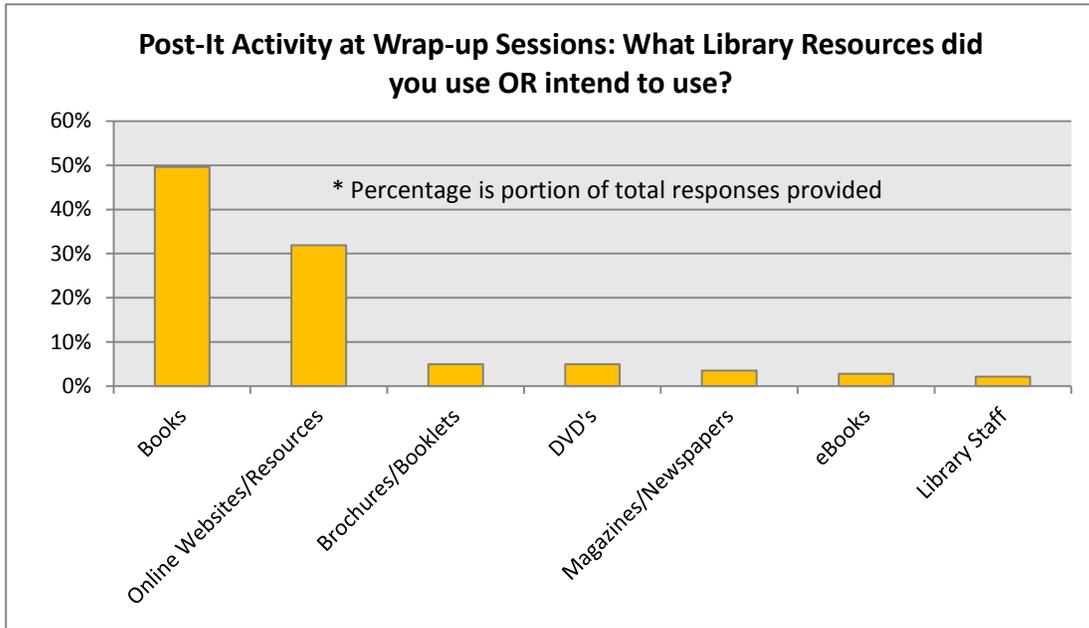
The following charts represent what was shared during the "Post-It" activities held at the twenty-two libraries. These responses support the rankings provided through the post-evaluation surveys. The binder was mentioned most often in the "Post-It" activities and received the highest favorable ranking in the post-evaluations. Gaining new knowledge ranked second in the "Post-It" activities (the educational content component received the second most positive ratings in the post-evaluations). Other aspects that were mentioned often as being useful or enjoyable were being able to work online at home, financial websites, library resources, quizzes and worksheets, variety/organization, lectures/PowerPoints, and discussions.



Again supporting the rankings provided by the post-evaluation surveys, a longer training period was the most frequent suggestion regarding “what could be improved.” Other suggested improvements included meet more often, time for more discussion, update the videos and materials, simplify it and make it less repetitive.

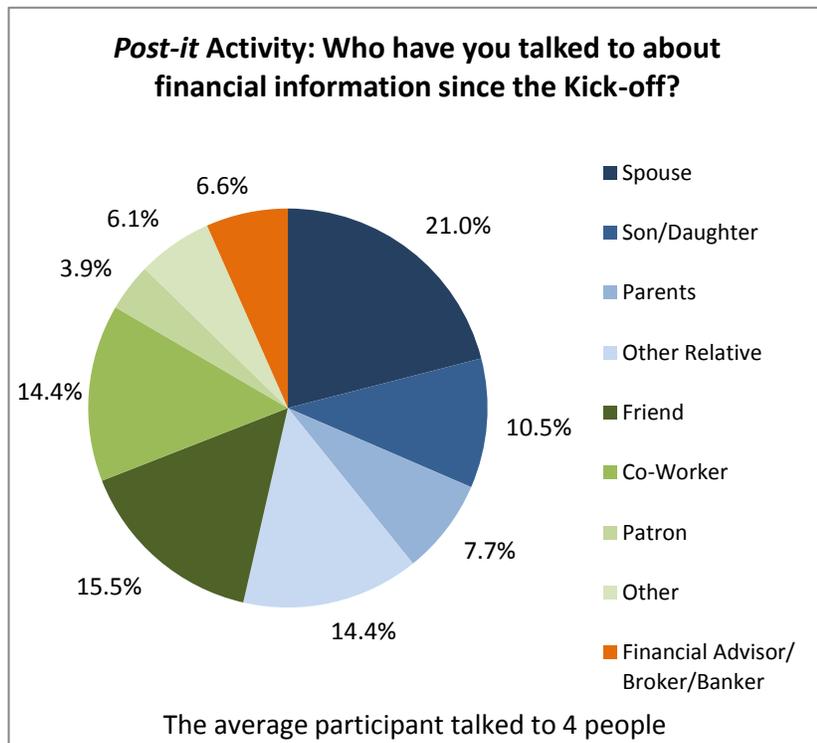


The following chart shows the responses to the question “what library resources did you use or intend to use.” Books were mentioned the most often, followed by online websites/resources, brochures and booklets, DVDs, magazines and newspapers, eBooks, and library staff.



When asked in the "Post-It" activity who respondents communicated with, more than half mentioned relatives (53.6 percent), followed by friends, co-workers and others (39.8 percent). Most interesting was the 6.6 percent of the responses that mentioned talking to financial advisors, brokers and/or bankers, which provides an indication that some of those enrolled in the training are beginning to take action related to financial management, investing, and/or financial planning.

Participants were also asked to include how many people they talked to about finances or the training since the Kick-off Event. The average number provided was four people.



Library Resource Activities and Results:

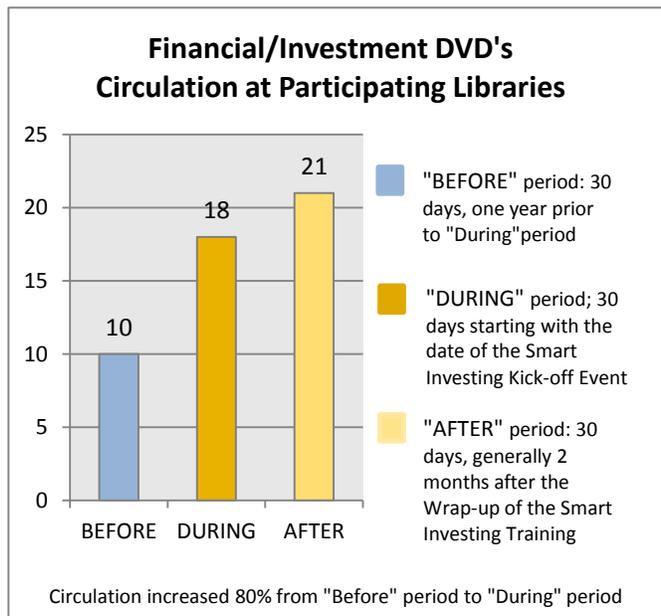
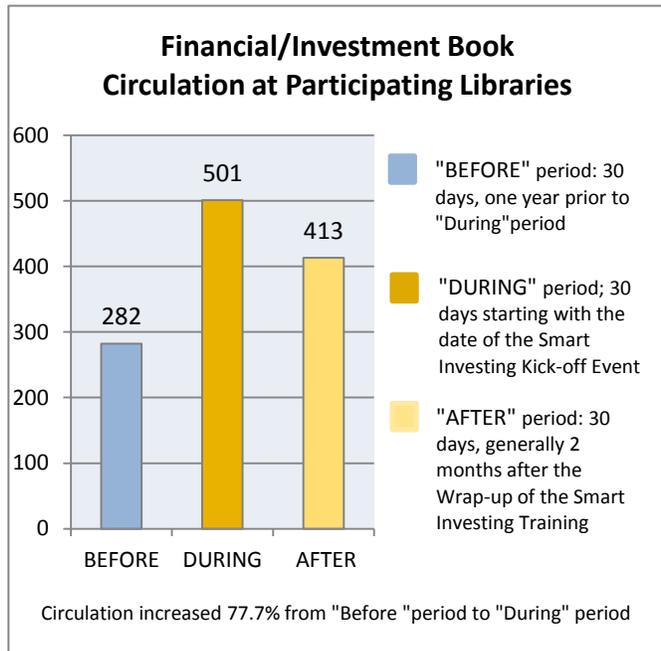
Local Library Financial Resources

Data on library circulation of personal finance and investing materials was collected from the twenty-two participating libraries to compare “before,” “during,” and “after” periods. Each period was thirty days in length, with the “during” period occurring within the training window, the “before” period one year earlier (which would have been before they received their grant-funded resource kits), and the “after” period typically started two months following the library’s Smart Investing Wrap-up Celebration. Circulation numbers include each library’s entire financial collection, not just the titles purchased with grant funding.

Since the resources purchased with grant funds and distributed to the twenty-two libraries included both books and DVDs, our evaluation concentrates on these two formats at the local level.

The book circulation chart shows a 77.7 percent increase from the “before” period to the “during” period, going from a 30-day circulation of 282 to a circulation of 501. This substantial increase could be linked to the increase in the collection size as well as the marketing surrounding the new resources provided to the libraries (which preceded the training by a few months) and the marketing of the *Smart Investing@your library® Builds Nebraska Communities* training. Circulation numbers did drop slightly from the “during” period to the “after” period going from a circulation of 501 to a circulation of 413. The higher circulation throughout the “during” period (when compared to the “after” period) may have been caused by the increased interest in financial materials generated by the Smart Investing training, driving customers to the library within the “during” period who obviously had an interest in the area of finance and investing.

The DVD circulation chart shows an 80 percent increase from the “before” period to the “during” period, going from a 30-day circulation of 10 to a circulation of 18. The “after” period increased slightly with a circulation of 21 DVDs.



To evaluate the new financial books and DVDs purchased with grant funds, comment cards (Attachment 3) were designed and inserted into clear pockets placed in the front cover of each book and DVD case. Library customers who checked out the materials were encouraged to complete and return the comment card along with the resource. Comment cards were collected by library staff from the twenty-two libraries and through the Nebraska Library Commission’s materials loaned to other libraries.

Resource comment cards collected through both the twenty-two libraries and the Nebraska Library Commission’s loan system were evaluated as a single group. Each comment card included the name of the book/DVD and included the following three questions:

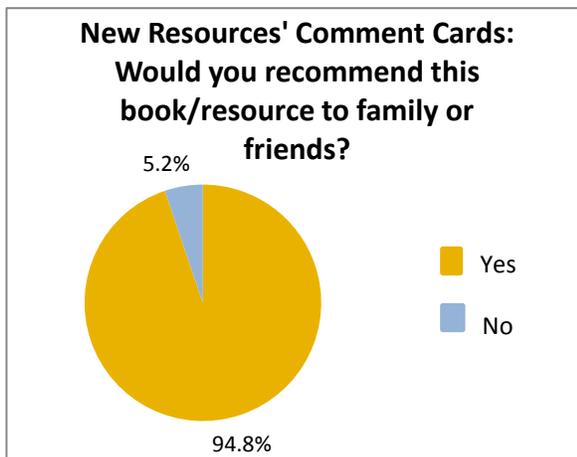
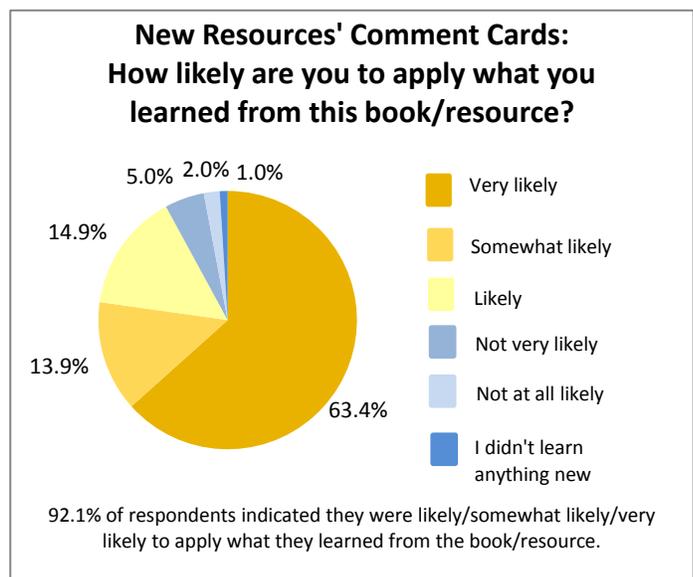
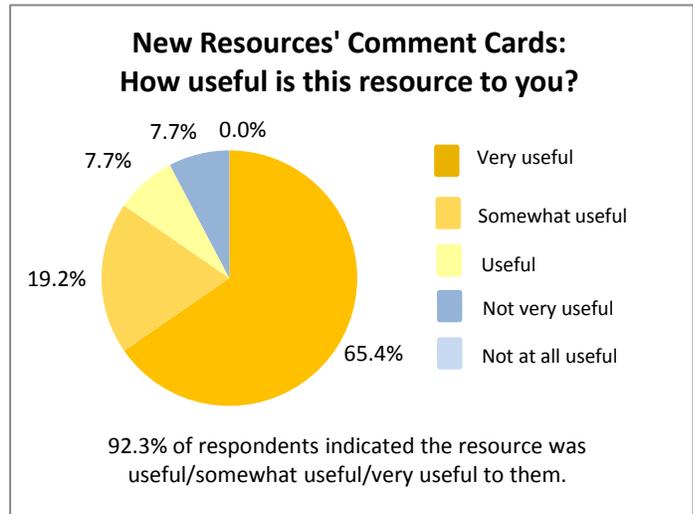
1. *How useful is this resource to you?* Respondents had five choices to select from ranging from “Very useful” to “Not at all useful.”
2. *How likely are you to apply what you learned from this book/resource?* Respondents had five choices to select from ranging from “Very likely” to “I didn’t learn anything new.”
3. *Would you recommend this book/resource to family or friends?* (Yes or No)

These three charts represent the responses to these three questions. Each shows a very positive response. As you can see, 92.3 percent indicated the resource was useful at some level (very useful 65.4 percent, somewhat useful 19.2 percent, and useful 7.7 percent).

A similar proportion of 92.1 percent indicated that were likely to apply what they learned (very likely 63.4 percent, somewhat likely 13.9 percent, and likely 14.9 percent).

Interestingly, an even higher percentage (94.8 percent) indicated that they would recommend the book/resource to family or friends, while 5.2 percent would not.

The evaluation supports the conclusion that the new resources purchased through the project were well-received by customers.



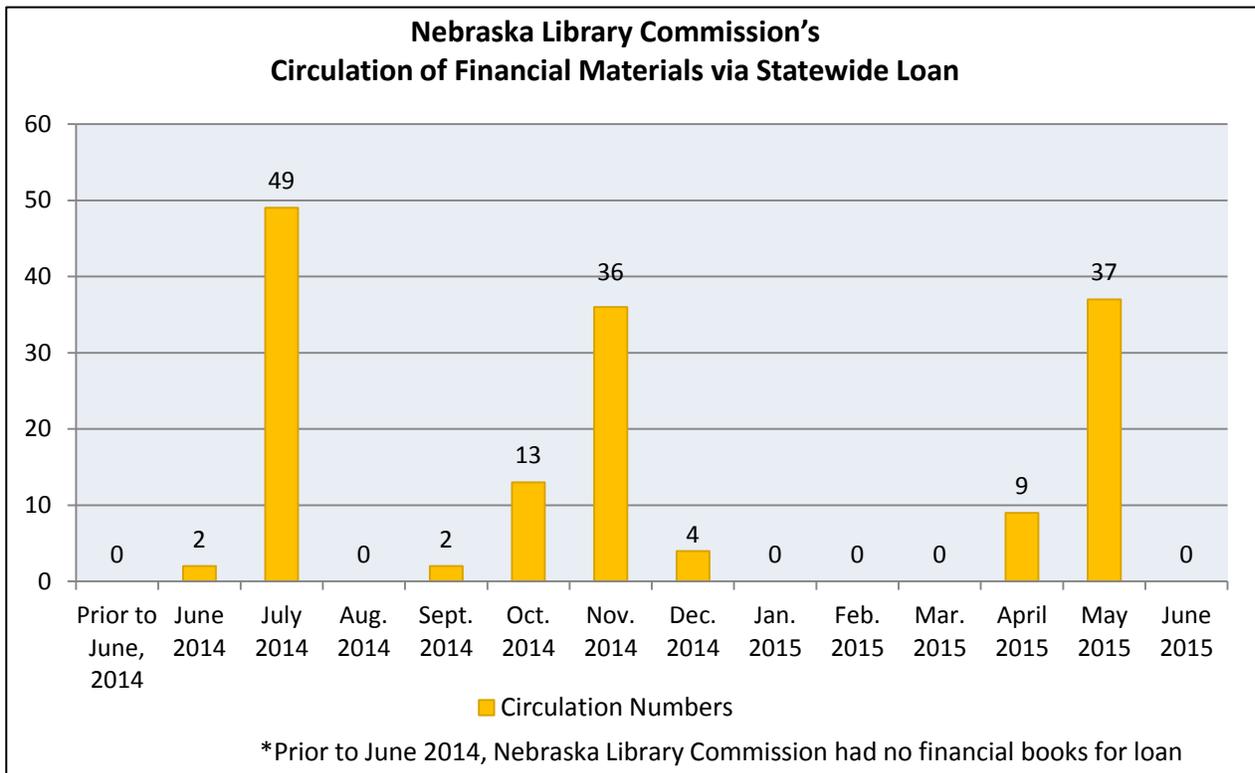
Reference Questions Related to Personal Finance and Investing

Local librarians were asked to submit reference questions related to personal finance and investing that they received from customers. Questions received were grouped in topic areas. Those topics, in order of the frequency reported are: tax related, questions about the Smart Investing training, collections, college planning, retirement, investments, estate planning, budgeting, buying a house or a car, teaching children about money, and debt.

Nebraska Library Commission Financial Loan Materials

Circulation statistics for the months of June 2014 through the June 2015 were also collected for the financial education materials added to the Nebraska Library Commission collection available for loan. , No comparison can be made since prior to this time the Nebraska Library Commission did not have any financial materials available for loan.

The following chart shows the circulation of the newly purchased financial loan materials. The chart illustrates three monthly circulation spikes with 36 to 49 resources loaned. These spikes coincide with bulk loans made to libraries so they could feature financial materials for a promotional period. Although single title checkouts have been modest, it does take time for libraries to recognize that titles in a new subject area are available for loan (even though an announcement concerning the new collection was issued). This loan collection will allow us to assist other libraries that wish to undertake a Smart Investing customer training program. Libraries will be encouraged to promote the online curricula, paired with a bulk loan checkout to supplement financial resources they might already have in their library collection.

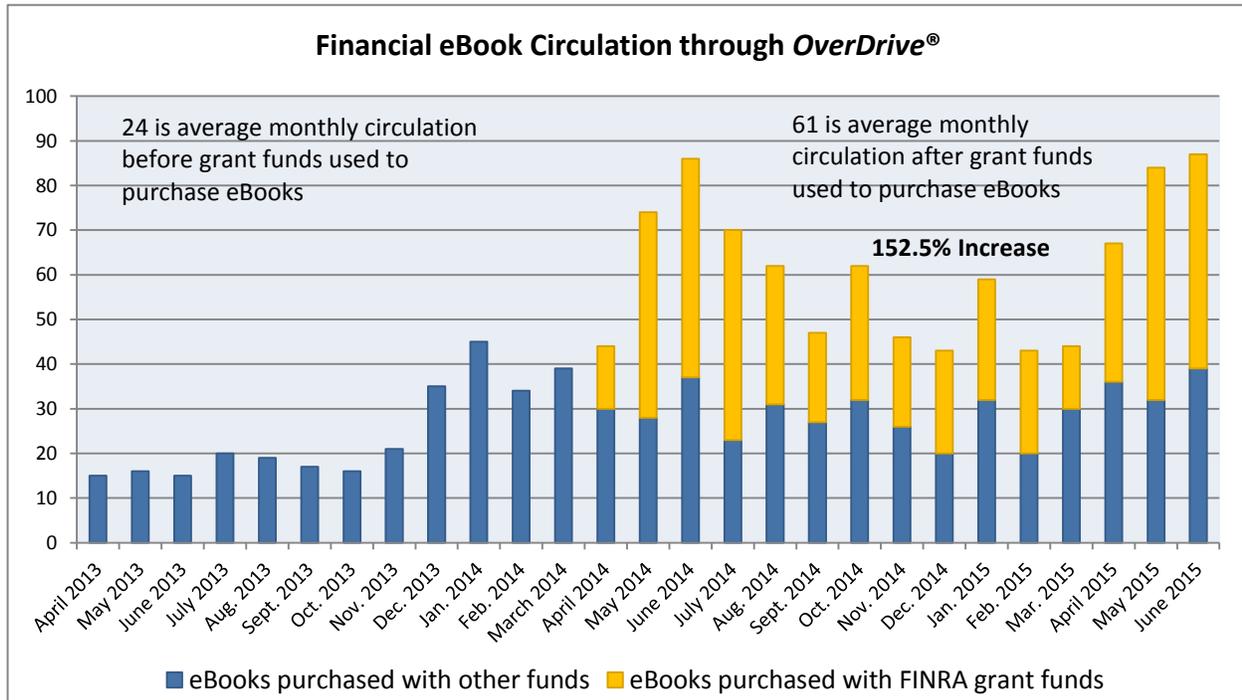


Financial eBooks/Audio Books via OverDrive®

Monthly circulation data was also collected for financial-related eBooks and audio books distributed through *OverDrive*®. Currently 168 public libraries (to include all twenty-two libraries participating in the Smart Investing project), belong to the Nebraska Library Commission’s *OverDrive*® consortium.

The following chart shows the circulation of financial-related eBooks and audio books distributed through *OverDrive*®. Note that the bars are either all blue or a combination of blue and orange. The blue portion of the bars indicates the circulation related to resources in the collection that were purchased with non-grant funded sources. The orange portion of the bars (which begin in April 2014), indicates the circulation related to resources in the collection that were purchased through grant funding provided by the FINRA Investor Education Foundation.

With the grant funding that allowed the Nebraska Library Commission to add to its financial eBook and audio book collection, the results are obvious and significant. The chart shows that the average monthly eBook circulation of financial materials through *OverDrive*® more than doubled after the expansion of the collection purchased with grant funding. The monthly circulation during the 12-month period prior to first grant purchase averaged 24 per month, while the monthly circulation in the most recent 15 months averaged 61 per month. This was an increase of 152.5 percent. This larger financial eBook/audio book collection will continue to have an impact on Nebraskans accessing electronic financial resources over the course of the next few years.

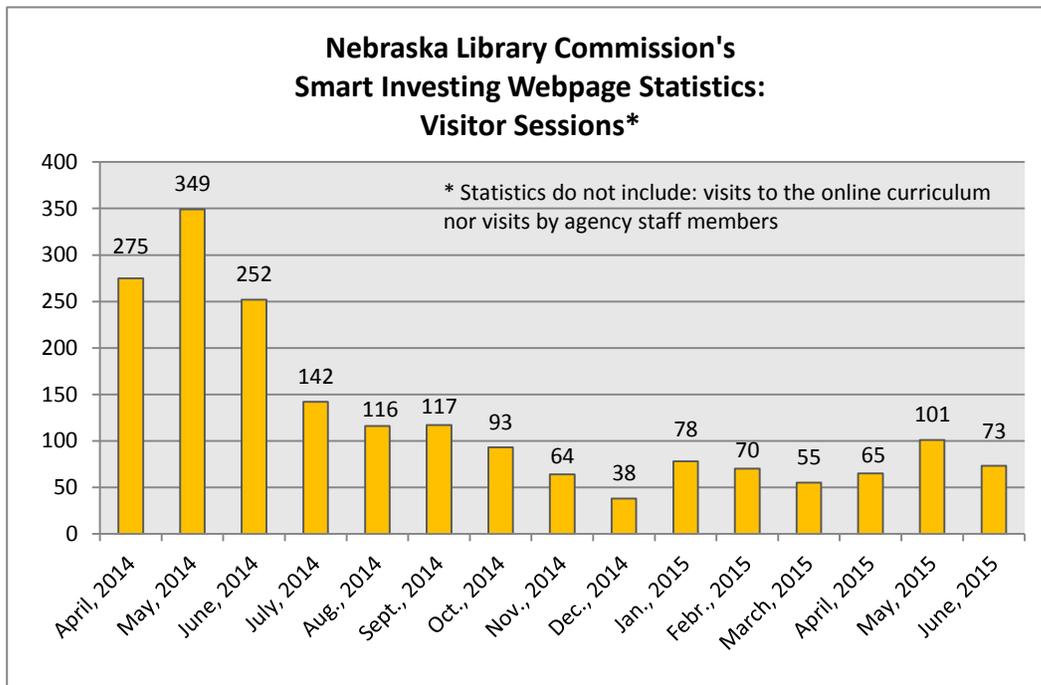


Project Webpage

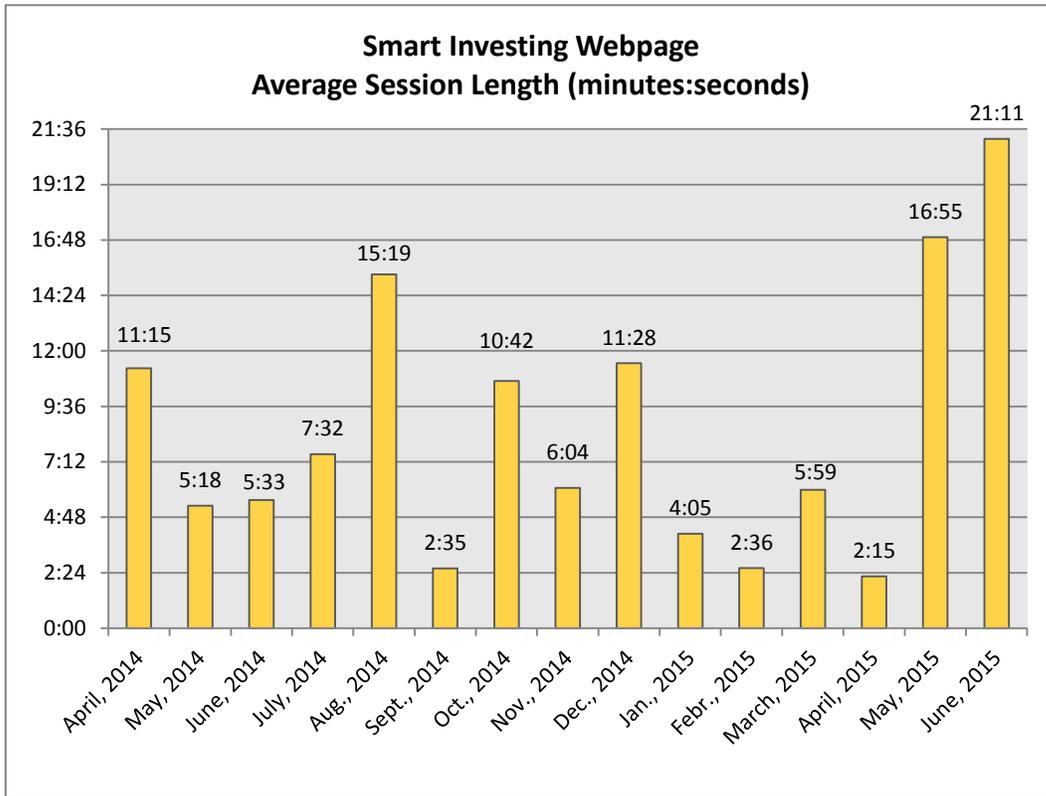
During the grant period, the Nebraska Library Commission established and maintained a *Smart Investing@your library® Builds Nebraska Communities* project page on the state library’s website. Statistics were tracked for this webpage in the areas of visitor sessions, average session length, and unique visitors. To reflect a more accurate record of visitors, visits by Nebraska Library Commission staff are not included in these statistics.

When reviewing the statistics, it is important to note that this webpage was not promoted to the customer training participants, nor was it a jumping-off point to get to the online curriculum. This webpage was intended as informational in nature about the project. During the librarian resource training, participating librarians were directed to the webpage to access webinar recordings and resources to help them with the librarian resource training held in May and June 2014. They were also directed to the webpage to view the marketing training webinar if they could not attend live or if they wanted to revisit that information at a later date while designing their marketing plans.

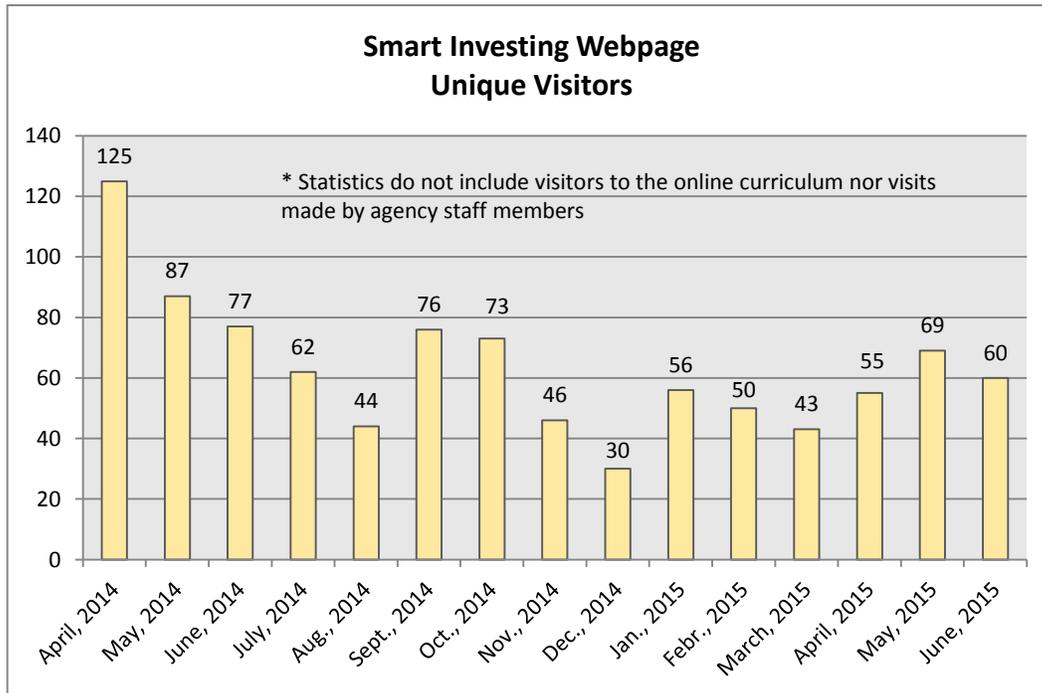
The three charts that follow, show statistics surrounding the *Smart Investing@your library® Builds Nebraska Communities* project page for the months of April 2014 to June 2015. The first chart shows the number of visitor sessions per month. Monthly visitor sessions ranged from a high of 349 sessions in May 2014 to a low of 38 visitor sessions in December 2014.



The chart that follows shows the average length of visitor sessions in minutes and seconds. The monthly visitor sessions ranged from a high of just over 21 minutes to a low of just over 2 minutes. It is important to note that if a visitor goes to the project page to view a recorded webinar, once they click on the recorded webinar they are no longer on the project webpage so their time viewing the webinar is not included within the “length of the session” statistics.



This third chart shows the number of unique visitors for a given month. Of particular importance is that these statistics do not include visits to the online curriculum, nor does it include visits to the page made by Nebraska Library Commission staff members that would have inflated the statistics. Unique visitors per month ranged from a high of 125 in April 2014 to a low of 30 unique visitors in December 2014.

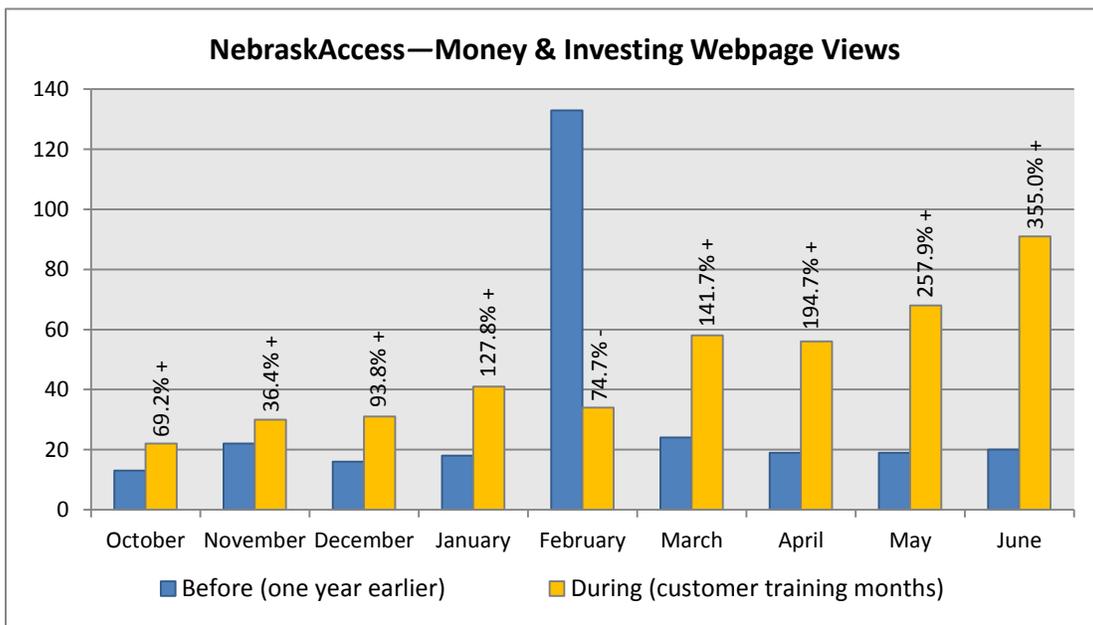


NebraskAccess Money and Investing Webpage

Another financial-related webpage hosted by the Nebraska Library Commission is the NebraskAccess: Money and Investing webpage. One aspect of NebraskAccess is that it offers free 24/7 access to websites selected by librarians. Although it is easy to use a search engine to conduct a web search for information, it is not as easy to identify reliable, unbiased information. For this reason, participants in the Smart Investing customer training were directed to NebraskAccess for searching for additional financial information beyond the links in the Smart Investing curriculum. We believe that sharing information about NebraskAccess, which is useful in finding reliable resources in many subject areas, will have ongoing value to participants. We also informed participants about the “Ask A Librarian” feature which allows them to connect to a Nebraska Library Commission librarian via email, phone, or chat during normal office hours.

Statistics were also captured for the NebraskAccess: Money and Investing webpage. Of note is that unless a searcher has the direct URL to this specific webpage (that was provided to Smart Investing participants), to get to the Money and Investing webpage from the NebraskAccess home page, the searcher is required to search for a financial topic on the NebraskAccess page or click on “business/consumer/economics” (one of 18 choices), then click on “Money and Investing” (one of 13 choices). Once the searcher arrives at the Money and Investing webpage, numerous links are offered including FINRA and FINRA Investor Education links.

The chart that follows shows statistics for views of the NebraskAccess: Money and Investing webpage. To evaluate whether the Smart Investing customer training drove any participants to the site, the months that encompassed the twenty-two training windows (orange bar—October 2014 to June 2015) were represented and paired with the same month one year earlier (blue bar). With the exception of February, which exhibited a decrease of 74.4 percent, every other pair of months shows an increase in the number of webpage views during the training window months compared to that same month one year earlier. Those increases ranged from an increase of 36.4 percent to an increase of 355.0 percent in June 2015. We believe that at least a portion of the increase is due to the promotion of the webpage through the Smart Investing program. Note: The NebraskAccess: Money and Investing webpage was one of the components reviewed by participants in the post-evaluation. Refer to Page 16 of this report to view that analysis and chart.



Staff training

Goal 2: Connect Nebraskans with information resources and activities that meet their financial literacy needs by improving skills of Nebraska library staff.

Objectives:

- a. Nebraska library staff will report learning about financial education resources and opportunities through activities and materials provided by NLC/NELS partners, including training based on *Smart Investing: Reference Strategies and Resources* course from the Santa Clara County Library District (FINRA/ALA grantee).
 - Intended results: 80% of trained staff of participating libraries will report new skills and confidence in assisting customers with financial information needs.
- b. NLC/NELS partners will provide sustainability assistance to enable Nebraska library staff and supporters to demonstrate plans for continuation of this project after June 2015.
 - Intended results: 80% of participating libraries will report networking with local resource providers and other activities to support sustainability.

Library Staff Resource Training Activities & Results:

Activities and results of the librarian resource training using the Santa Clara County (CA) Library District online curriculum was included in the July 2014 Interim Report and is not repeated in this evaluation report. For an analysis of the librarian resource training, please refer to the Interim Report.

Sustainability Activities & Results:

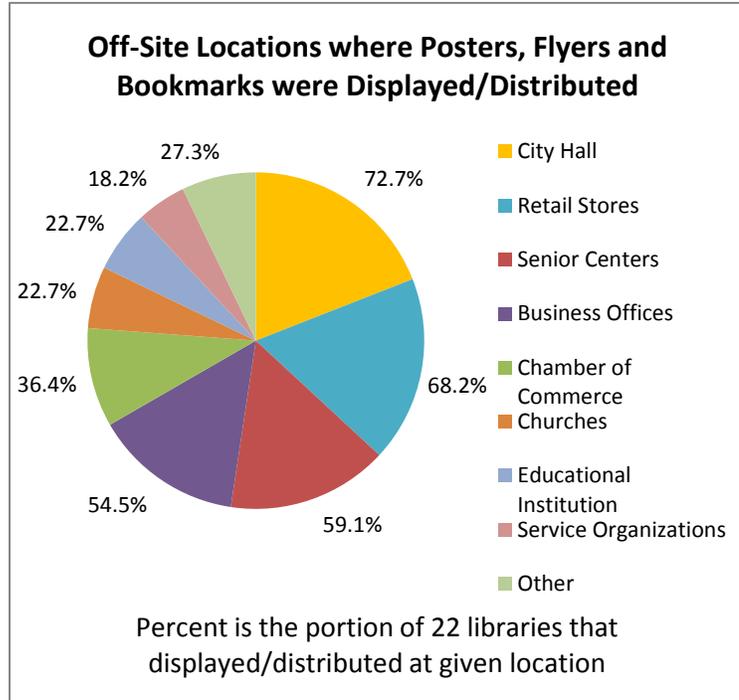
The *Smart Investing@your Library® Builds Nebraska Communities* project connected Nebraska Extension Educators to each of the twenty-two participating libraries. Although in the past, Nebraska Extension employed educators to work in the area of financial education, Nebraska Extension changed its focus to three broad areas, one of which is “building strong communities.” Soon after the Smart Investing grant was awarded, Nebraska Extension indicated that there was no longer an interest in providing trainers since financial education did not fit within their three broad areas of focus. However because of the grant, we contacted the staff leading the “building strong communities” focus team. After describing the project, Nebraska Extension recognized that the Smart Investing training was a good fit for their “building strong communities” area of focus and showed enthusiasm for building local partnerships with libraries.

We believe that the Smart Investing project opened the door to future financial programming between Nebraska Extension and public libraries and to other training that can be offered in the libraries by Extension Educators. The participating libraries provided excellent training facilities and the resourcefulness of the librarians and Extension Educators proved to be a benefit to both parties in providing programming locally.

Participants and partners were very impressed with the Smart Investing curriculum. Since a lot of time and effort was devoted to updating the curriculum and adding Nebraska links and information, it makes sense to continue to make this online educational tool available to Nebraska residents. In May, grant funds were used to advertise the Smart Investing online course through statewide classified newspaper ads through the Nebraska Press Association. Commission Staff members also communicated about the availability of the curriculum through the Commission website and through informational emails to library staff members across Nebraska. The Nebraska Library Commission is committed to promote the

curriculum to Nebraska residents and will continue to encourage all Nebraska libraries to promote it. Posters were recently distributed to libraries through the annual meetings of two Nebraska Regional Library Systems. Distribution at the annual meetings of the remaining two library systems and the statewide library association conference is scheduled for later this year.

The following section details responses to a survey of library staff from all twenty-two libraries, which assesses communication efforts and sheds light on partnerships and their role in sustainability. The chart at the right illustrates responses to the survey question on how the local teams used community connections to promote the Smart Investing training to local residents. When asked where posters, flyers, and bookmarks were displayed and distributed, the responses indicated a wide variety of off-site locations. This serves as a strong indicator of community networking, which should assist in local sustainability.



Four additional questions were also included in the marketing survey regarding recent and future opportunities in the area of financial education programming for customers.

One question asked: *What other financial education events or scheduled speakers did you host at your library within the past 12 months other than the Smart Investing Kick-off and Wrap-up Events?* The following list shows the “other financial events/activities” that were submitted by the twenty-two participating libraries:

- Elder Financial Abuse presented by Nebraska Attorney General’s Office
- Spotting and Avoiding Fraud presented by Nebraska Attorney General’s Office
- Tax Issues presented by AARP
- David Ramsey Financial Peace University presented in English
- David Ramsey Financial Peace University presented in Spanish
- Weekly Financial Game Nights and activities (two libraries—four additional nights each)
- Credit counseling session
- First time home buyers session
- Starting an Investment Club
- Basic Investment Strategies
- Identity Theft, a Greenpast Financial Workshop
- Financial Planning, a Greenpast Financial Workshop
- Dash for Stash presented by Nebraska Department of Banking (15 libraries)

We believe that it is unlikely that some of these connections would have been made and that many of these events would not have been offered in these libraries if they had not been participating in or exposed to the *Smart Investing@your Library® Builds Nebraska Communities* programming.

Additional questions inquired about continued interest in the following three areas:

I would like to continue participating in promoting the "online" training modules for customers.

I would like to have another opportunity to offer the Smart Investing training facilitated by a trainer at our library.

I would like to have the online/webinar training on financial resources offered again to our library staff.

Response choices were: "Yes" or "No"

The chart below represents the responses to the three questions. The vast majority of the participating libraries (72.7 percent) would like to continue to promote the Smart Investing online training. The Nebraska Library Commission will continue to work with these and other interested libraries by providing communication materials and templates to assist in local library partnership efforts.

The questions about additional on-site Smart Investing customer training and additional library staff training garnered a few more "no" responses than "yes" responses. Although a comment line was not provided with this survey, a few librarians did offer additional explanations in the space available at the end of the survey, including:

We believe we reached everyone in the community that was interested in the training at this time.

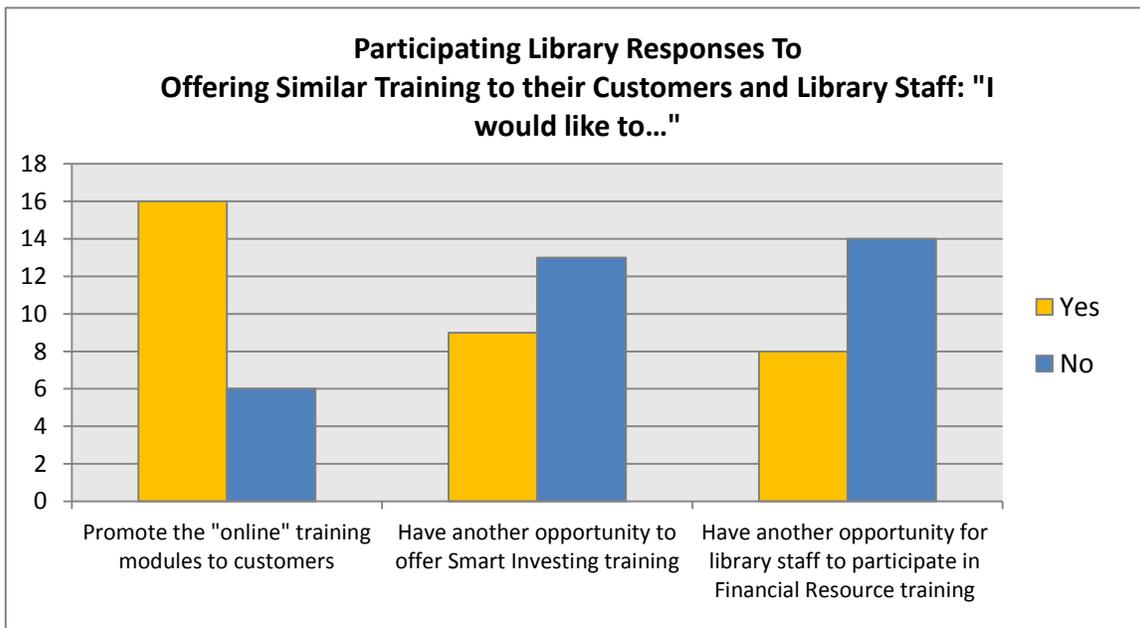
Because of the earlier training we feel we have a good handle on directing customers and we continue to use the great websites suggested by the librarian training curriculum.

All of our librarians were already trained last year.

Our two librarians already went through the Smart Investing training so we feel pretty trained.

We would like to promote the online-only training modules and check out the binders we have on hand.

Even in the two questions that resulted in more "no" than "yes" responses, 40.9 percent did want additional Smart Investing customer training at their libraries and a respectable 36.4 percent requested another opportunity for additional library training.



Marketing

Goal 3: Through marketing and outreach activities implemented by library staff and local partners, make Nebraskans aware that the library is a resource for unbiased financial planning and problem solving resources.

Objectives:

- a. NLC will provide marketing training sessions for Nebraska library staff.
 - Intended results: 90% of trained staff of participating libraries will demonstrate learning to plan and implement an effective marketing strategy, as evidenced in pre/post tests and/or surveys.
- b. NLC will develop a customizable marketing kit and distribute it to local libraries, along with marketing materials, to be used to implement local marketing efforts.
 - Intended results: 80% of participating libraries will use the planning template and NLC marketing materials to implement an effective marketing strategy disseminated through intermediaries, outreach, and word-of-mouth.
- c. Participating libraries will effectively use outreach and promotional resources (including events, print, websites, social networking tools and/or person-to-person outreach) to build and reinforce word-of-mouth marketing of the Smart Investing @ your library® Builds Nebraska Communities activities and resources.
 - Intended results: Staff of all 22 local libraries will report using social networking tools, local library websites, and/or person-to-person outreach, evidenced by social networking harvesting and library reporting.

Marketing Activities:

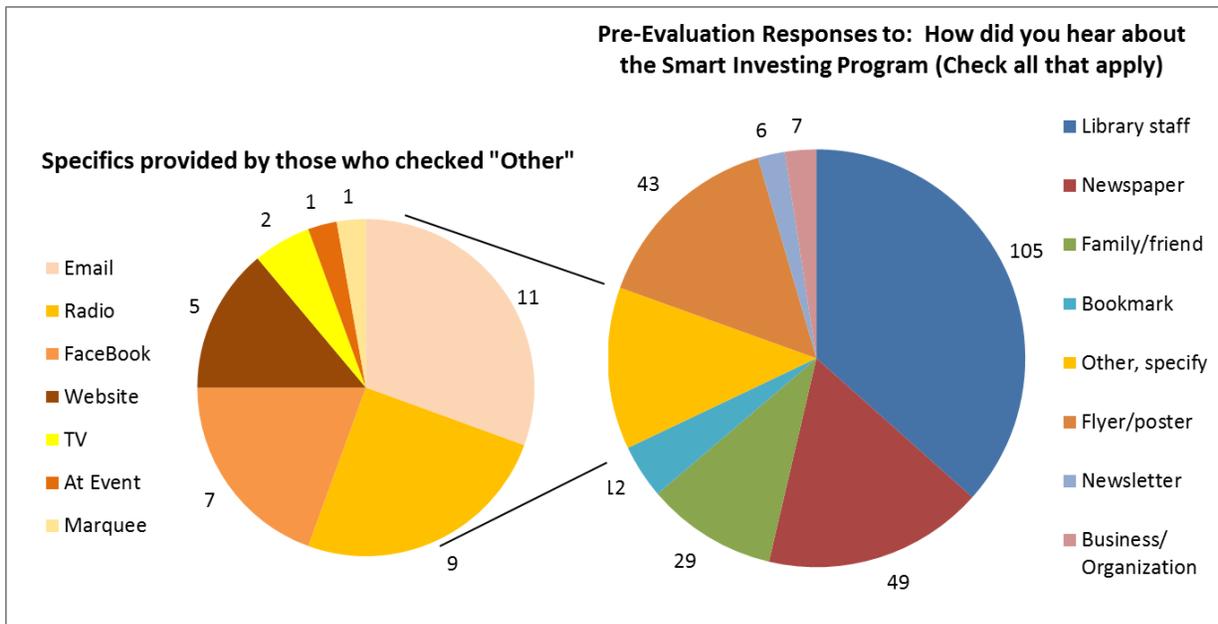
The pre-evaluation survey designed for the Smart Investing customer training (and completed by participants) included one question to assess how participants heard about the program. Seven different response options were offered, plus an “other” category. The answers revealed not only how the participants heard about the program, but also provided an indication of which communication strategies reached the participants.

Additionally, at the conclusion of the *Smart Investing@your library® Builds Nebraska Communities* project, library staff were surveyed to aid in evaluating the marketing training and the marketing kits and templates provided to the twenty-two participating libraries. The marketing training and the planning template offered numerous options for communication. Libraries were encouraged to use what might work best for their community and their target audience and asked to employ a variety of strategies. Several questions about communication strategies were grouped by category to help determine which categories and how many communication strategies were employed by the local libraries. The marketing survey also asked the library staff to rate the effectiveness of their communication efforts. (See Attachment 4: Marketing Survey.)

Marketing Results:

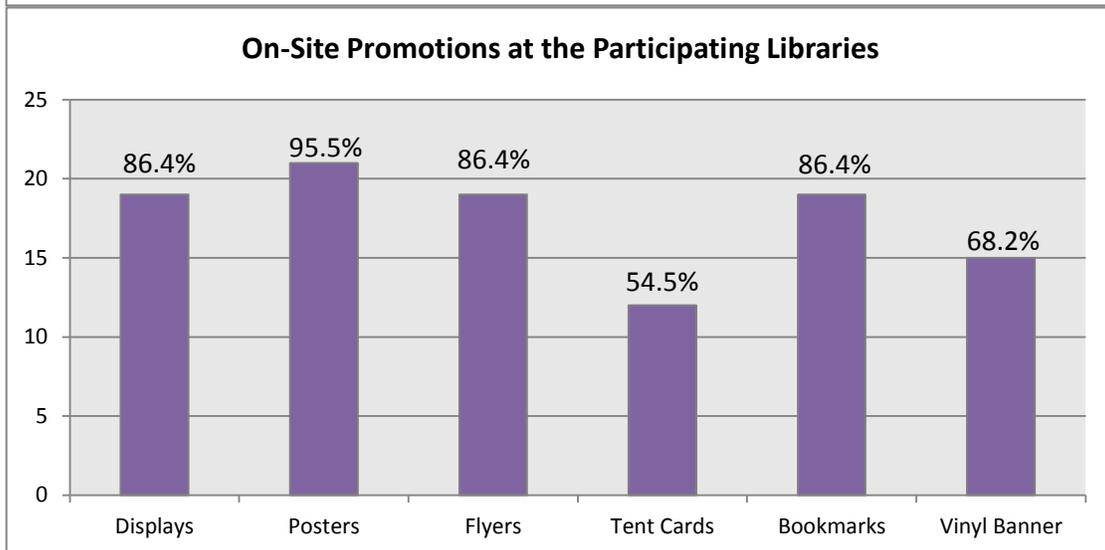
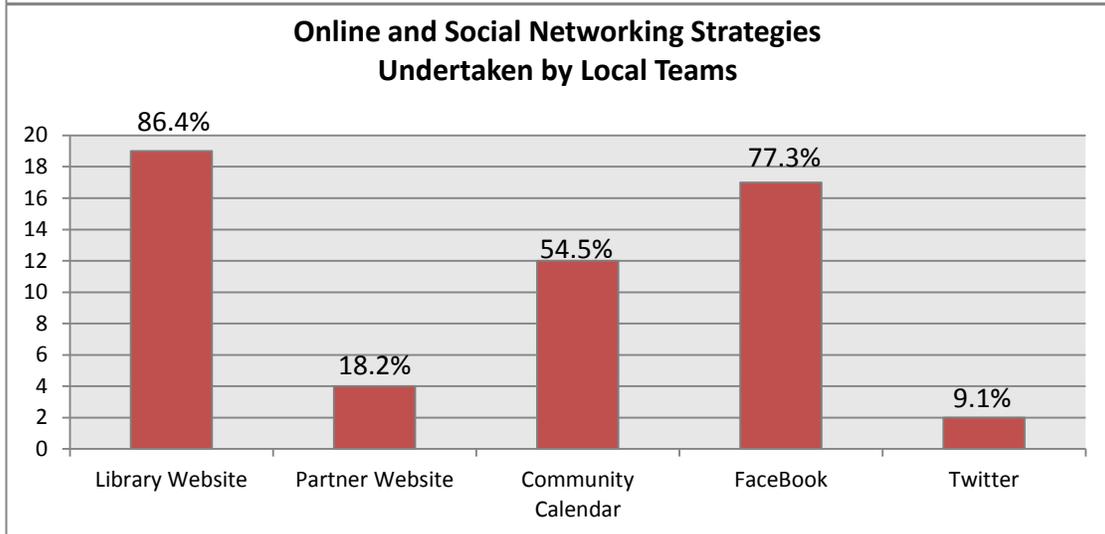
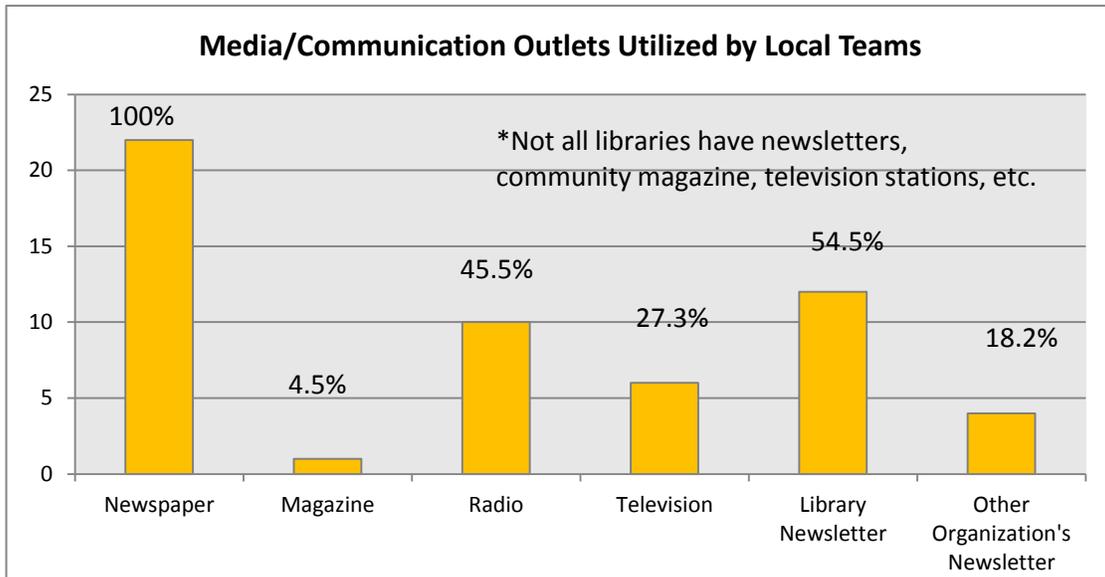
One indicator of the level of success of the marketing training and marketing kits was the response of participants in the library customer training to the first question in the pre-evaluation survey: *How did you hear about the Smart Investing program? (check all that apply)* They were asked to select from *Flyer/poster, newspaper article, brochure/bookmark, newsletter, library staff, local business or organization, friend/family, and other (please specify)* _____.

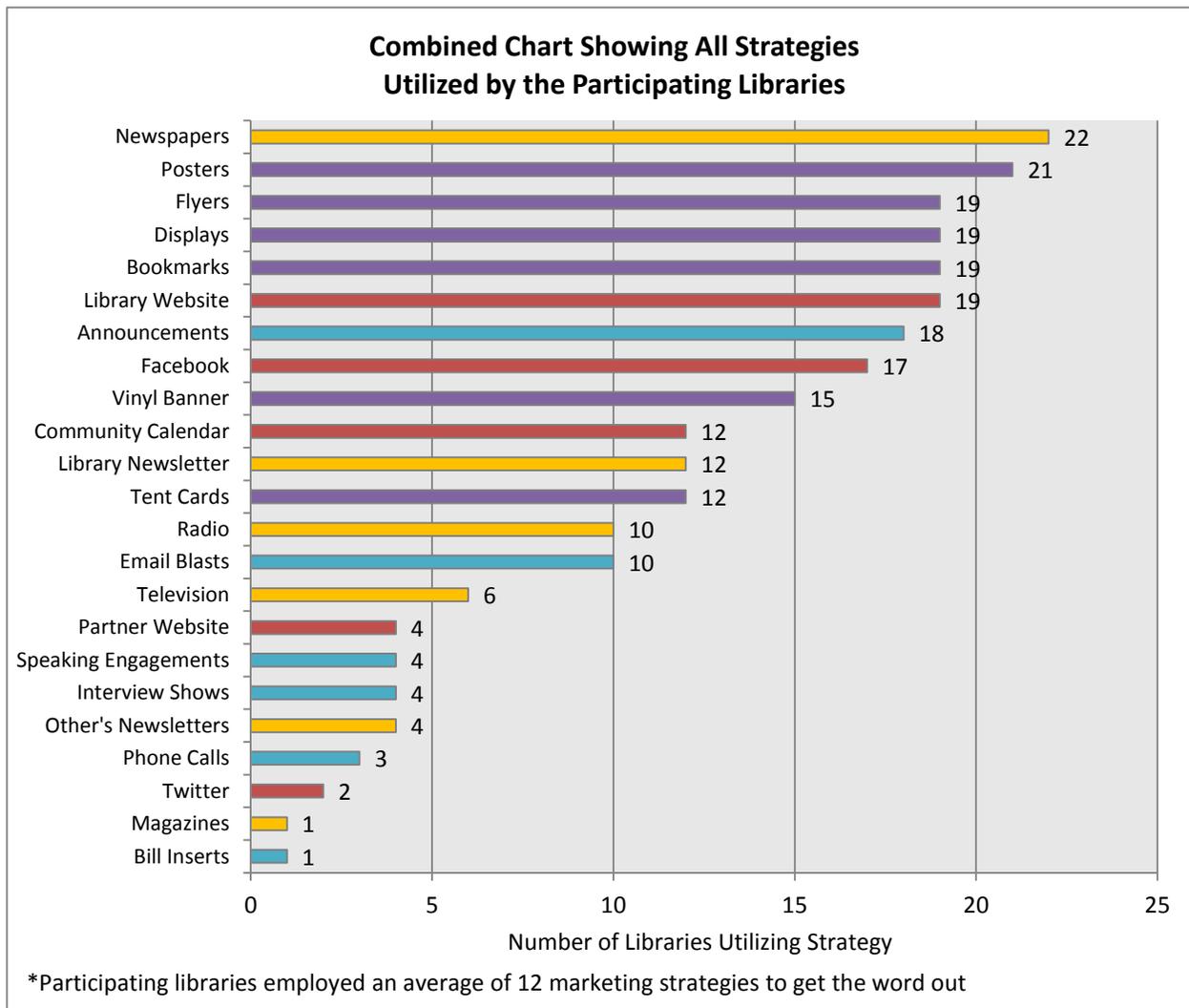
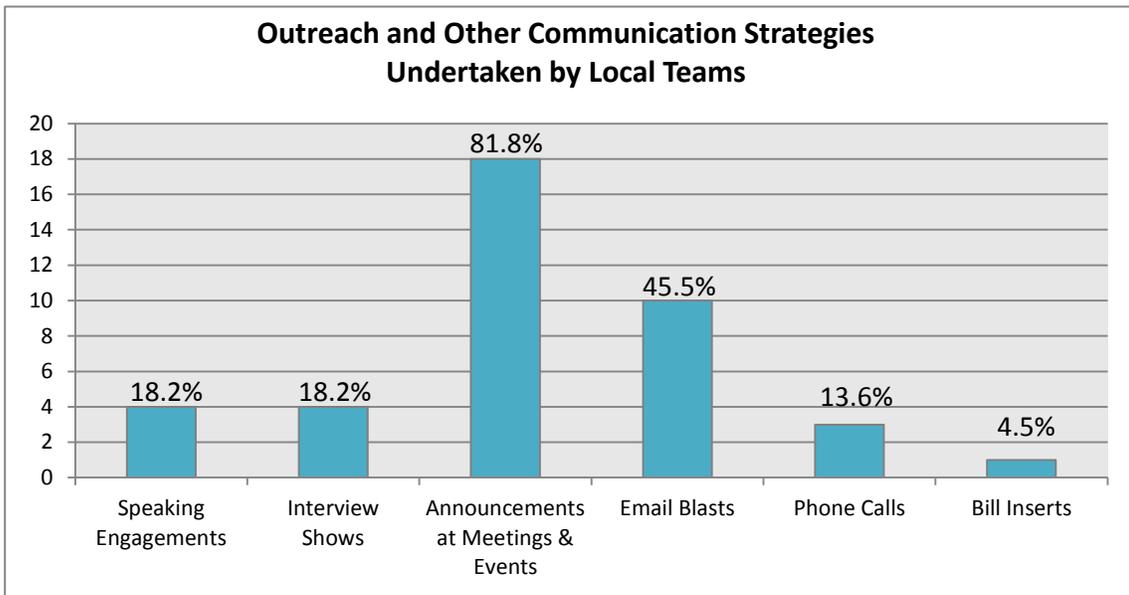
The double chart that follows represents the responses received from the 224 library customer training participants that completed the pre-evaluation. The thirty-six respondents that chose "Other" and provided specifics are represented in the smaller pie graphic on the left. The fact that fifteen unique marketing strategies were mentioned by respondents supports our conclusion that a variety of marketing strategies were implemented by the participating libraries and their local teams to reach their target markets.



The following charts illustrate the responses on the twenty-two completed marketing surveys administered to library staff at the conclusion of the customer training—one for each of the participating libraries. Each of the first four charts feature several related communication strategies, with sets represented by a single color. The fifth chart combines the first four charts so all twenty-three strategies (in the order of how many libraries employed those strategies) can be viewed in a single chart. This combined chart repeats the colors used in the previous charts.

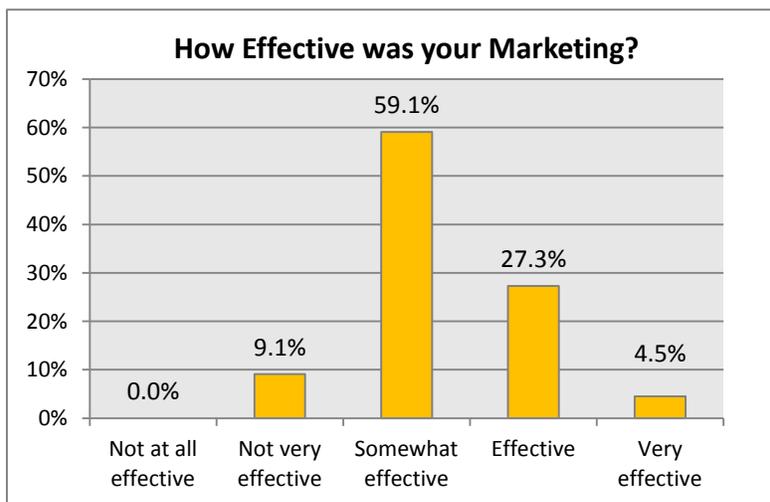
The twenty-three different strategies represented on the following charts indicate the relatively high percentage of libraries that employed multiple strategies, rather than communicating with potential customers via only a few strategies. This is a strong indicator that the combination of the marketing training, the distribution of the marketing kits and templates, and the marketing planning tool led the local teams to use a variety of strategies. Six of the strategies were used by 86.4 to 100 percent of the libraries, an additional six of the strategies were used by 54.5 to 81.8 percent of the libraries, three strategies were used by 27.3 to 45.5 percent of the libraries, and the final eight strategies were used by 4.5 to 18.2 percent of the libraries. On average, each library employed twelve distinct marketing strategies to get the word out about the training.





The marketing survey also asked the library staff to rate the effectiveness of their marketing by asking the question: *How effective was your marketing in getting the word out about your training?* Responses included five levels of effectiveness from “Not at all effective” to “Very effective.”

The chart at the right shows the distribution of the twenty-two responses. The majority of the libraries (59.1 percent) rated the effectiveness of their marketing as “somewhat effective,” with a total



of 90.9 percent of the libraries judging their marketing efforts as “Somewhat effective” to “Very effective.” There is anecdotal evidence that some local teams were somewhat disappointed with the numbers participating in the customer training. During a training webinar for participating libraries and statewide partners, Kathy Prochaska-Cue explained that getting attendance at financial education sessions can be difficult. In her many years of serving as the financial literacy leader for UNL Extension, she witnessed a reluctance to participate in training for a myriad of reasons. State-level *Smart Investing@your library® Builds Nebraska Communities* project staff perceive the overall turnout and local communication efforts as successful.

Conclusion

Smart Investing@your library® Builds Nebraska Communities fully implemented the project as planned and the results met, and in some cases exceeded, the goals and objectives of the grant.

Library customers that participated in training demonstrated greater knowledge of and confidence in their ability to understand and make use of financial information, reported satisfaction of the newly added library resources as well as the online training, and reported action taken as a result of the training received.

Circulation numbers show an increase in circulation of financial materials at the participating libraries and at the Nebraska Library Commission as well as an increase in the circulation of electronic financial materials through *OverDrive®*.

Library Staff reported learning about financial education resources and opportunities; demonstrated application of outreach and promotional resources and marketing strategies; demonstrated use of marketing materials and templates; exhibited interest in other financial-related activities; and indicated an interest in continuing to promote the *Smart Investing* online modules, offering future *Smart Investing* training, and accessing future staff financial resource training.

The evaluation results covered in this final report (and in the interim report submitted last year), led to our conclusion that the *Smart Investing@your library® Builds Nebraska Communities* project was successful in achieving project goals and objectives, and in implementation.