Academic Librarian Use of Google and its Apps & Features

Primary Research Group Staff

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This nearly 400 page report gives highly detailed data on the use by academic librarians of Google and its profuse apps and features. The study gives detailed data on use of Google Scholar, Google Books, Notifications, Forms, Gmail, Google Maps, Google Alerts, Google+ and dozens of other features. Google has made available – mostly absolutely free – one of the most advanced sets of information management tools ever devised, and this study helps its readers to pin down exactly how academic librarians are using these tools and how they are advancing the interests of their institutions through the use of these tools. Data is the report is broken out by eight categories, determining use by personal characteristics of the librarian such as job title, age and gender and even income level, as well as institutional characteristics such as college Carnegie class or type, enrollment and level of tuition. Just a few of the report's many findings are that: • Google Scholar was, by far, the most popular feature named. • 40.45% of librarians sampled often use Google Maps in connection with their work and another 27% use it very often. • Use of Google Analytics was especially pronounced by librarians in technical services and cataloging; 43% of librarians working in this area use Google Analytics either often or very often in connection with their work, a far higher rate than for other academic librarians. • Google Forms was particularly valued by librarians working in institutions that charged more than $26,000 annually for tuition, as 50% of librarians in the sample working at these institutions thought Google Forms was either very useful or essential to their work, a far higher percentage than at institutions charging less for tuition. • The librarians sampled spent a median of 1 hour in the past month using Google Images. • Librarians earning more than $100,000 per year were much more likely than others to use a search engine other than Google, which accounted for 74.7% of their searches, a far lower percentage than for librarians at lower salary levels, for whom Google accounted for about 89% of their searches. • Use of Google Calendar was greater by private than public college librarians; the former spent about 11 hours per month on Google Calendars; the latter, 8 hours.

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