# Give Us a Dollar and We'll Give You Back Four (2012-13)

## and the Oregon/Washington Version

# Why

- Informal analyses of a state's public libraries
- Public libraries doing more, struggle for funding
- Belief: libraries provide excellent value, better funding yields better results.
- Suspicion: Smaller libraries don't tell their stories as well as they could, may lack internal resources to compare themselves with similar libraries.

# How

- Reviewed studies of public library benefits
- Arrived at conservative values for output measures
- Downloaded 2009 IMLS public library database for preliminary run
- Arrived at $4 ratio as *very* conservative figure
- Prepared *Give Us a Dollar…* as an experiment
- Starting point—a tool to help tell a library's story.

# Intended Audience

- Librarians, especially in smaller libraries (6,000 with fewer than three librarians)

- Friends of the Library who help tell library story

- Library schools and consultants as detailed overview of library metrics

# Three Related Publications

- *Give Us a Dollar and We'll Give You Back Four (2012-13)*: paperback, PDF ebook, Kindle

- *Graphing Public Library Benefits*: PDF ebook only

- *Give Us a Dollar and We'll Give You Back Four: Oregon and Washington Library Benefits and Spending*: free PDF, also hardback—prepared for this conference.

# Give Us a Dollar and

# We'll Give You Back Four (2012-13)

Walt Crawford

# Graphing Public Library Benefits

## Library Benefits

Walt Crawford

# Circulation Per Capita

Circulation per capita correlates strongly (0.53) with spending per capita.
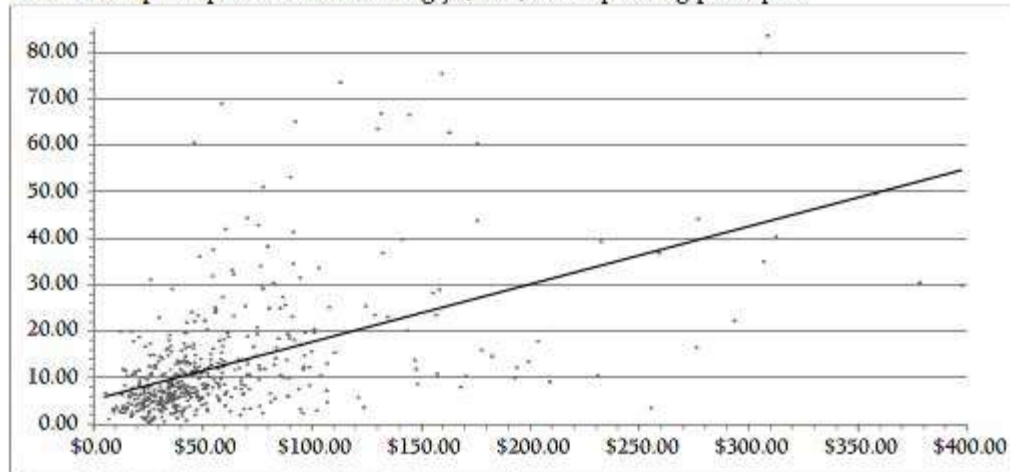


Figure 3.6  Circulation per capita plotted against spending per capita
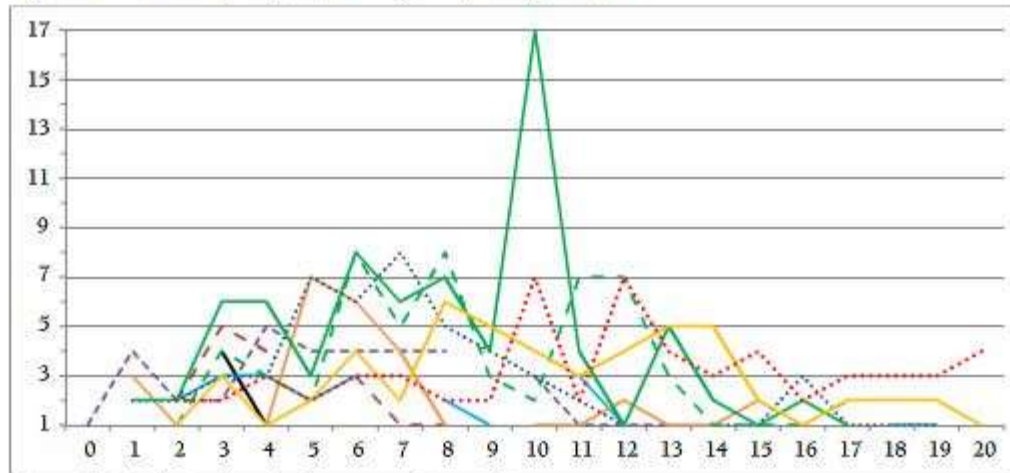


Figure 3.7 Circulation (rounded) occurrence by spending category, part 1

# Give Us a Dollar and We'll Give You Back Four:

## Oregon and Washington Library Benefits and Spending

# Stepping Through $4

- Size groups based on reality, not abstraction
- Small libraries treated same as large libraries
- Expenditure brackets and metric levels also based on reality for FY2010
- Examples: Chapter 15, libraries serving 18,500 to 24,999—2$^{nd}$ largest Or/Wa cluster

# Expenditures per Capita

| $/cap | Count | % | BenR |
|---|---|---|---|
| $73-$399 | 53 | 10.8% | 2.94 |
| $53-$72 | 60 | 12.2% | 3.45 |
| $43-$52 | 46 | 9.3% | 4.39 |
| $36-$42 | 46 | 9.3% | 4.65 |
| $31-$35 | 44 | 8.9% | 4.65 |
| $26-$30 | 53 | 10.8% | 4.79 |
| $21-$25 | 39 | 7.9% | 4.69 |
| $17-$20 | 38 | 7.7% | 6.04 |
| $12-$16 | 56 | 11.4% | 6.03 |
| $5-$11 | 57 | 11.6% | 6.53 |
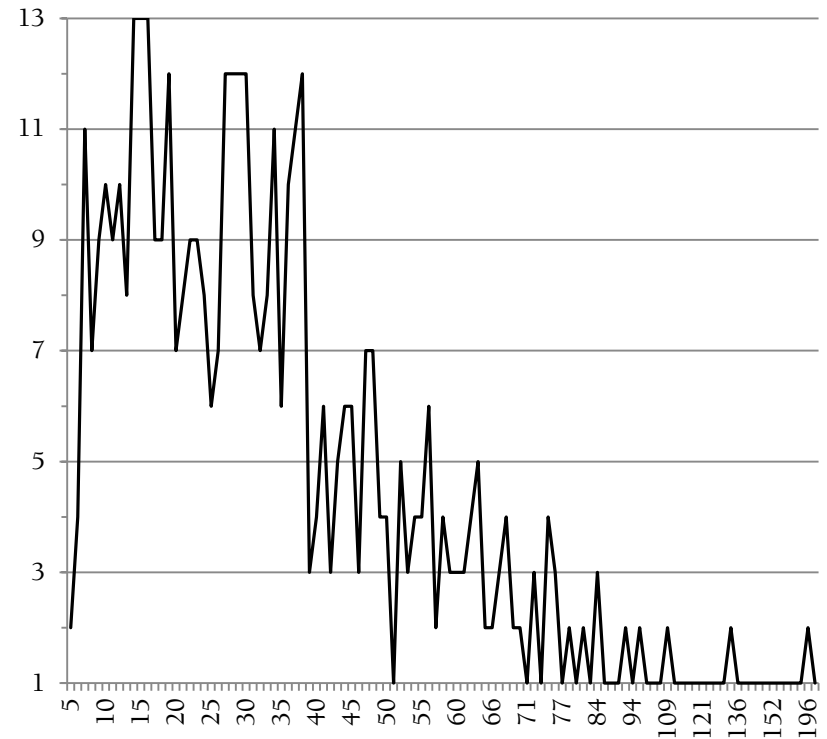
# Open Hours 1

| Hours | Count | % | Cum% | BenR | $/Cap |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 10,000+ | 1 | 0% | | 5.57 | $27.59 |
| 4,000-10,000 | 82 | 17% | 17% | 4.65 | $29.53 |
| 3,100-3,999 | 147 | 30% | 47% | 3.83 | $53.40 |
| 2,700-3,099 | 125 | 25% | 72% | 4.94 | $33.42 |
| 2,400-2,699 | 74 | 15% | 87% | 5.50 | $20.75 |
| 2,100-2,399 | 43 | 9% | 96% | 4.68 | $16.69 |
| 1,822-2,099 | 18 | 4% | 100% | 5.41 | $13.34 |
| 1,500-1,820 | 1 | 0% | 100% | 3.73 | $27.54 |
| 1,041-1,499 | 1 | 0% | 100% | 4.34 | $18.56 |
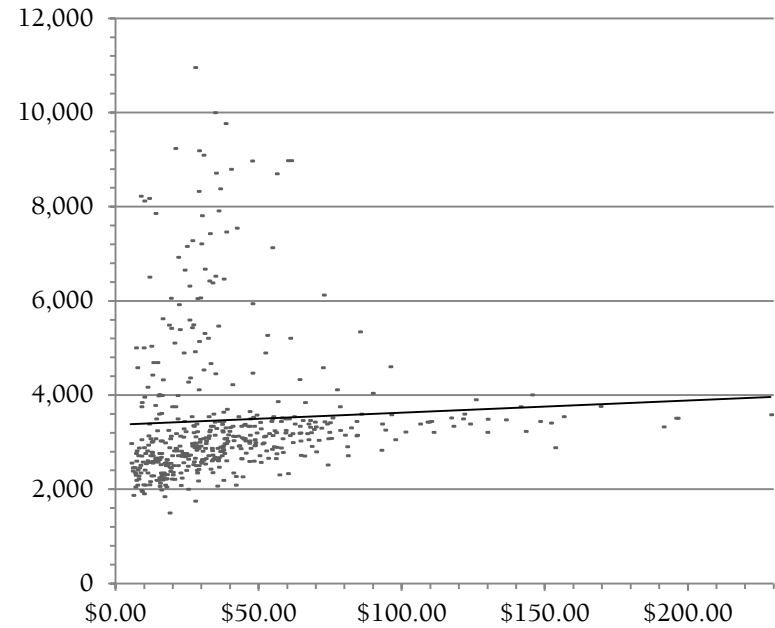
# Open Hours 2
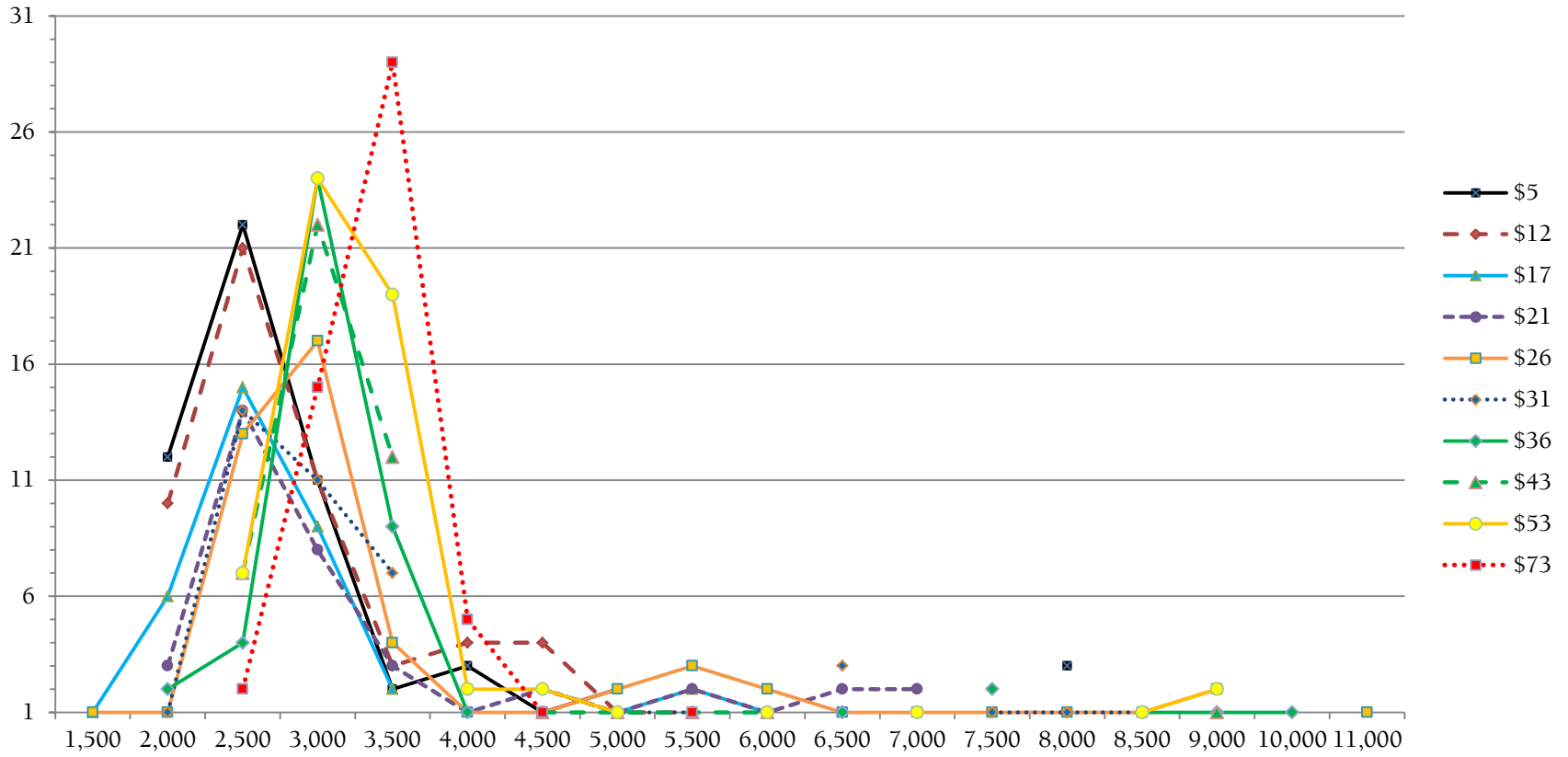
# PCs for Patron Use

| PCs | Count | % | Cum% | BenR | $/Cap |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 100+ | 1 | 0% | | 8.62 | $92.82 |
| 40-99 | 40 | 8% | 8% | 3.89 | $60.73 |
| 20-39 | 160 | 33% | 41% | 4.25 | $37.46 |
| 13-19 | 164 | 33% | 74% | 4.78 | $28.03 |
| 9-12 | 71 | 14% | 89% | 5.08 | $23.54 |
| 6-8 | 41 | 8% | 97% | 5.43 | $21.45 |
| 4-5 | 11 | 2% | 99% | 5.88 | $15.71 |
| 0-3 | 4 | 1% | 100% | 7.07 | $15.25 |

# PCs for Patron Use 2
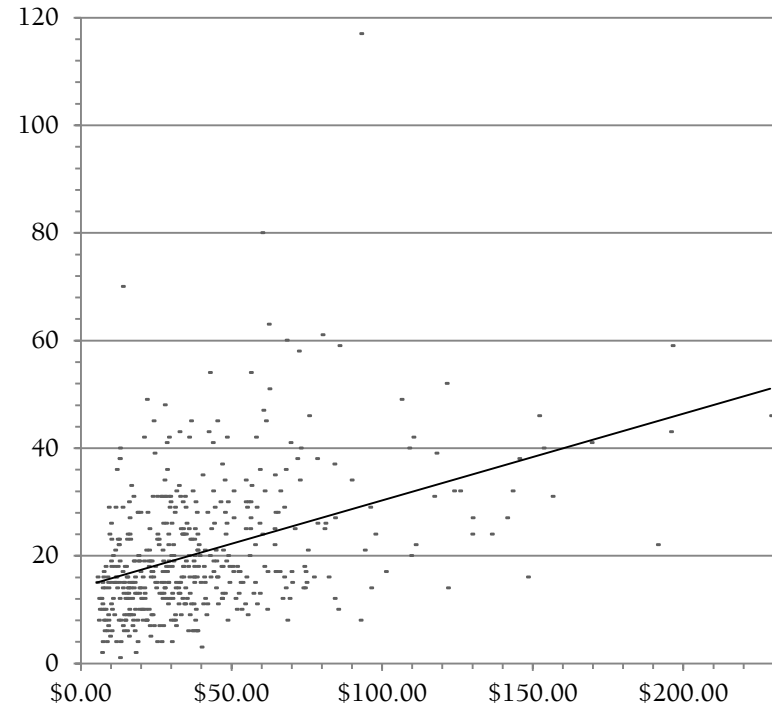
# Circulation per capita

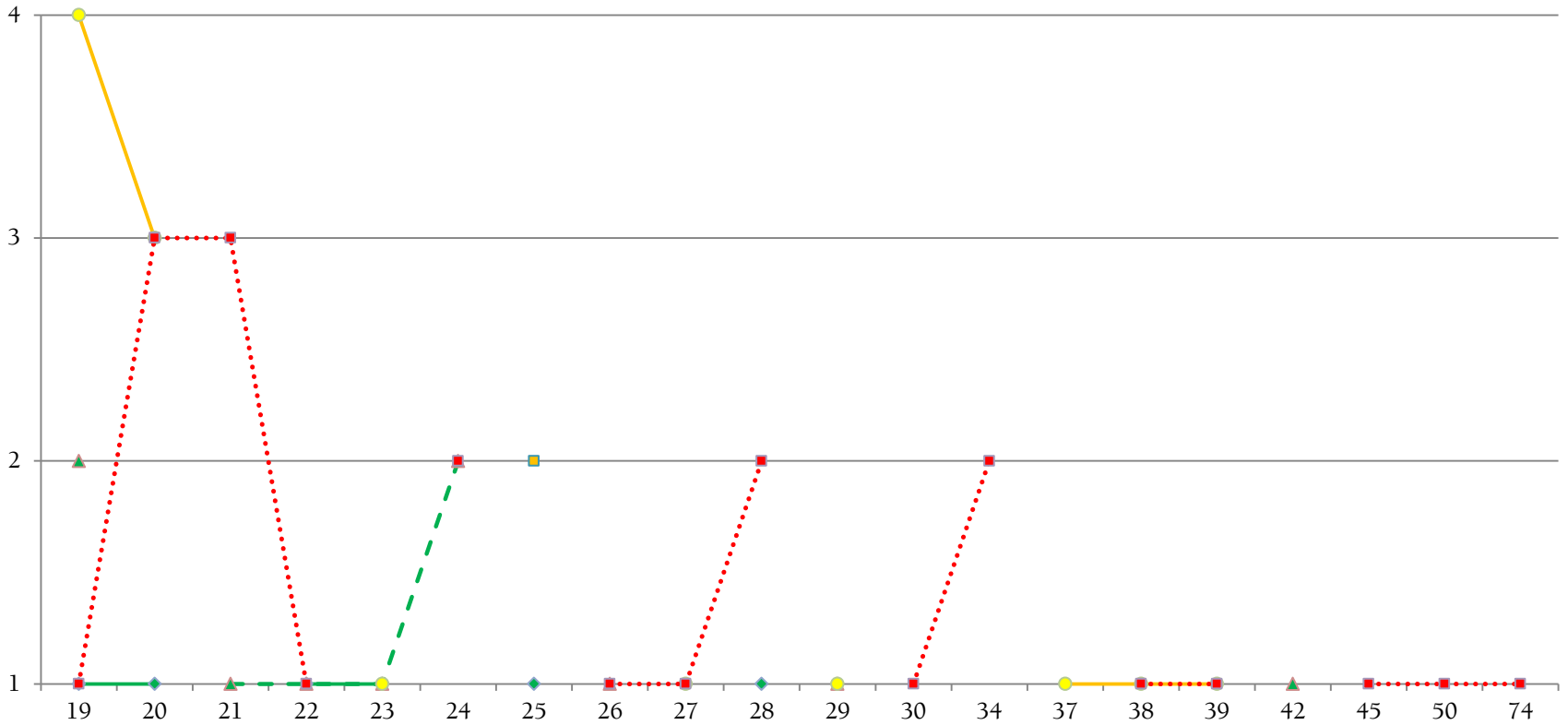| Circ/cap | Count | % | Cum% | BenR | $/Cap |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 24+ | 25 | 5% | | 6.89 | $74.37 |
| 17-23 | 47 | 10% | 15% | 4.79 | $62.33 |
| 13-16 | 45 | 9% | 24% | 4.51 | $47.55 |
| 10-12 | 75 | 15% | 39% | 4.78 | $37.37 |
| 8-9 | 59 | 12% | 51% | 4.79 | $32.91 |
| 6-7 | 73 | 15% | 66% | 4.28 | $29.21 |
| 4-5 | 67 | 14% | 79% | 4.26 | $22.39 |
| 2-3 | 71 | 14% | 94% | 4.81 | $15.01 |
| 0-1 | 30 | 6% | 100% | 4.35 | $10.39 |
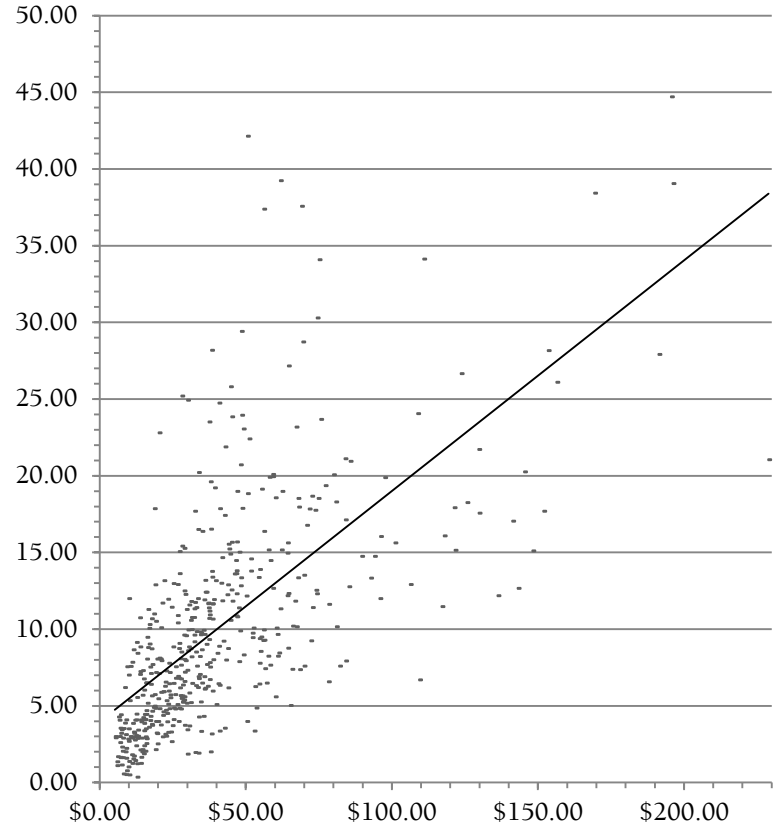
# Circulation per capita 2
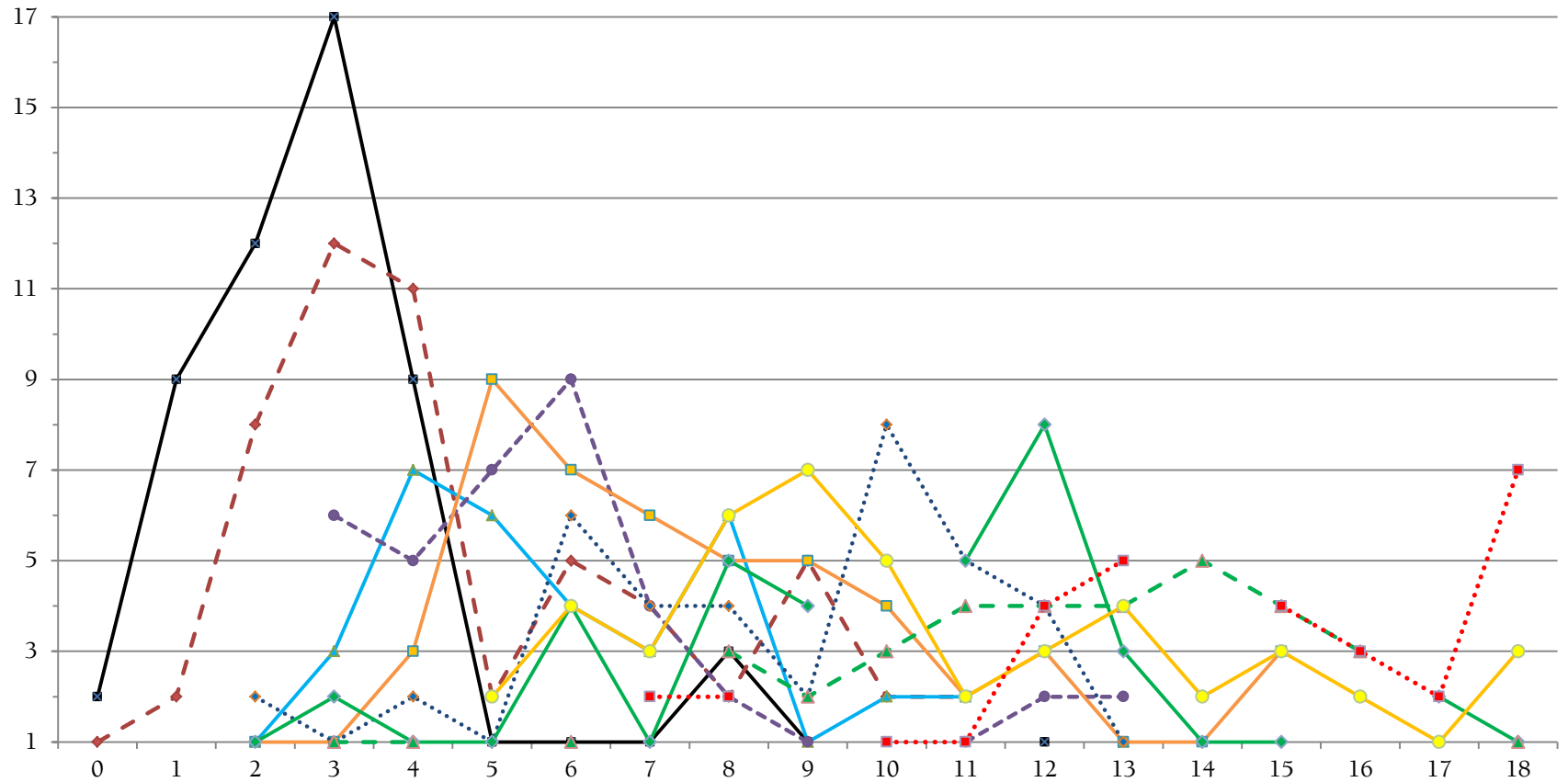
# Circulation per capita 3

# Circulation and Reference per cap

| $/cap | Circulation per cap | | | Reference per cap | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 25% | Med | 75% | 25% | Med | 75% |
| $73-$399 | 12.89 | 17.73 | 23.65 | 1.11 | 1.82 | 2.77 |
| $53-$72 | 8.50 | 11.98 | 17.85 | 0.45 | 0.76 | 1.13 |
| $43-$52 | 10.61 | 13.45 | 15.66 | 0.34 | 0.59 | 0.98 |
| $36-$42 | 7.71 | 11.27 | 13.31 | 0.29 | 0.54 | 0.89 |
| $31-$35 | 6.46 | 9.38 | 10.88 | 0.28 | 0.51 | 0.78 |
| $26-$30 | 5.47 | 7.29 | 9.93 | 0.18 | 0.30 | 0.76 |
| $21-$25 | 4.41 | 5.70 | 6.96 | 0.23 | 0.36 | 0.67 |
| $17-$20 | 4.09 | 5.78 | 8.03 | 0.21 | 0.44 | 0.82 |
| $12-$16 | 2.87 | 4.06 | 6.81 | 0.16 | 0.33 | 0.62 |
| $5-$11 | 1.61 | 2.88 | 3.84 | 0.10 | 0.26 | 0.39 |
| Overall | 4.66 | 8.07 | 12.82 | 0.24 | 0.47 | 0.97 |

# Reference per capita

| Ref/cap | Count | % | Cum% | BenR | $/Cap |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2+ | 45 | 9% | | 4.28 | $69.69 |
| 1.25-1.99 | 37 | 8% | 17% | 4.02 | $57.55 |
| 0.9-1.24 | 60 | 12% | 29% | 4.49 | $43.54 |
| 0.7-0.89 | 44 | 9% | 38% | 4.80 | $36.74 |
| 0.5-0.6 | 49 | 10% | 48% | 4.56 | $36.31 |
| 0.35-0.49 | 73 | 15% | 63% | 4.83 | $26.87 |
| 0.25-0.34 | 60 | 12% | 75% | 4.85 | $27.04 |
| 0.15-0.24 | 61 | 12% | 87% | 4.68 | $24.40 |
| 0.06-0.14 | 43 | 9% | 96% | 4.27 | $17.18 |
| 0-0.05 | 20 | 4% | 100% | 4.59 | $15.53 |
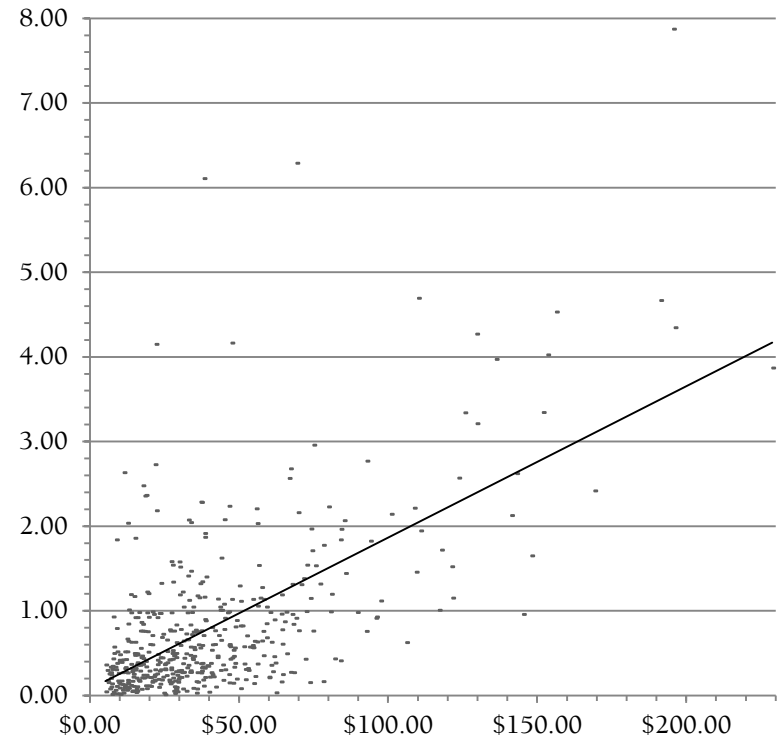
# Reference per capita 2
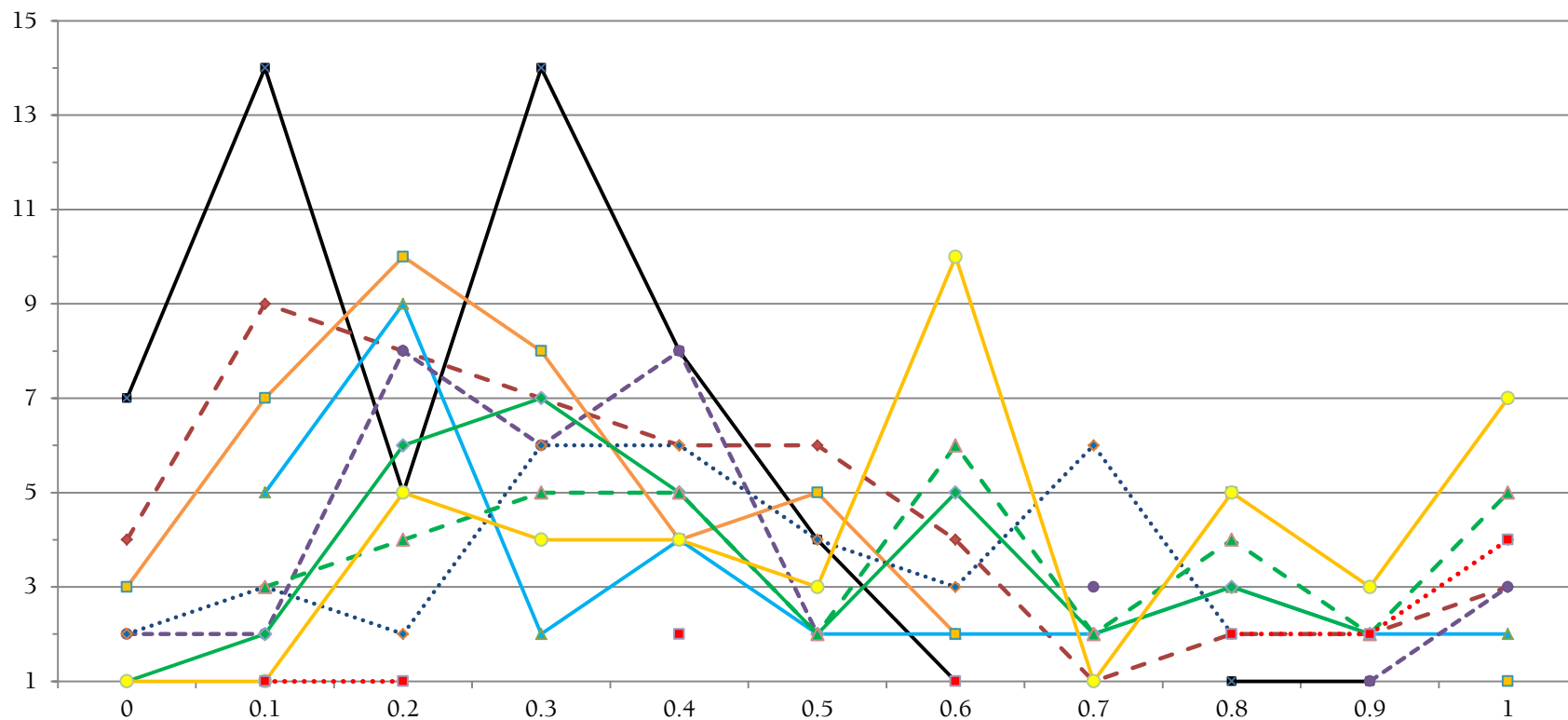
# Program Attendance per Capita

| Att/cap | Count | % | Cum% | BenR | $/Cap |
|---------|-------|-----|------|------|--------|
| 1.1+ | 24 | 5% | | 4.54 | $81.09 |
| 0.7-1.09 | 61 | 12% | 17% | 4.62 | $50.43 |
| 0.5-0.69 | 70 | 14% | 32% | 4.34 | $45.78 |
| 0.4-0.49 | 51 | 10% | 42% | 4.80 | $32.37 |
| 0.3-0.39 | 59 | 12% | 54% | 4.61 | $36.29 |
| 0.2-0.29 | 88 | 18% | 72% | 4.87 | $24.20 |
| 0.11-0.19 | 77 | 16% | 87% | 4.61 | $21.56 |
| 0-0.1 | 62 | 13% | 100% | 4.88 | $15.22 |
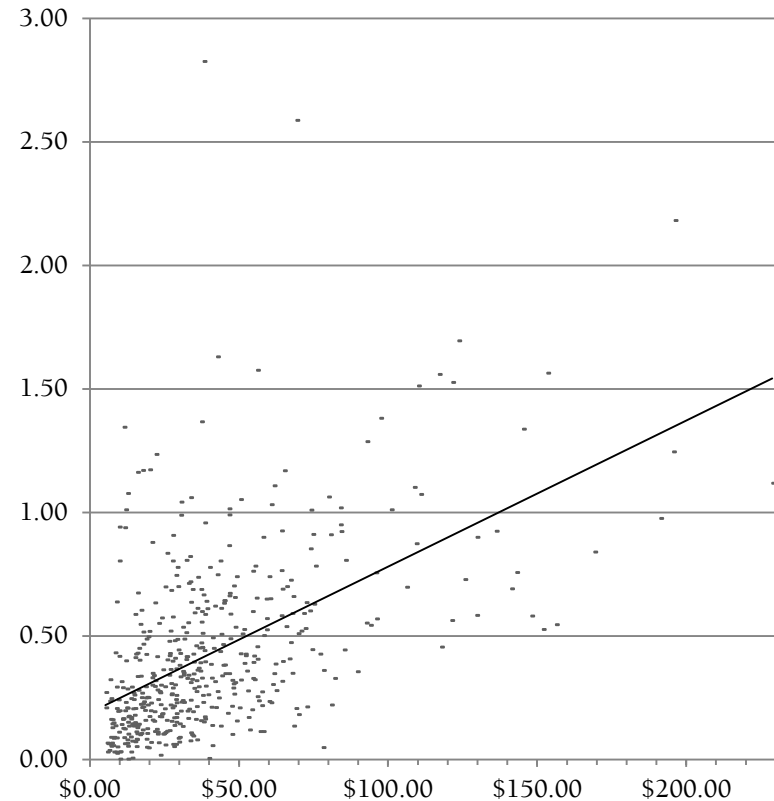
# Patron Visits per Capita

| Vis/cap | Count | % | Cum% | BenR | $/Cap |
|---------|-------|-----|------|------|---------|
| 13+ | 34 | 7% | | 3.75 | $97.47 |
| 9-12 | 48 | 10% | 17% | 4.33 | $65.83 |
| 7-8 | 87 | 18% | 34% | 4.86 | $39.13 |
| 6 | 59 | 12% | 46% | 4.61 | $37.37 |
| 5 | 46 | 9% | 56% | 5.11 | $31.01 |
| 4 | 48 | 10% | 65% | 4.17 | $27.42 |
| 3 | 70 | 14% | 80% | 4.75 | $18.91 |
| 2 | 49 | 10% | 90% | 4.36 | $15.77 |
| <2 | 51 | 10% | 100% | 4.53 | $11.43 |
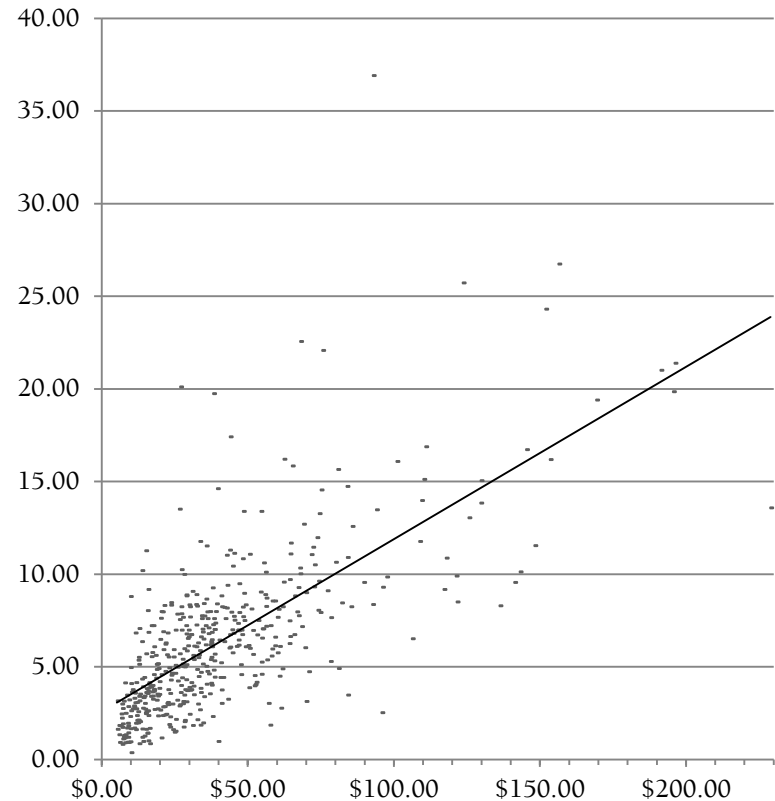
# Patron Visits per Capita 2
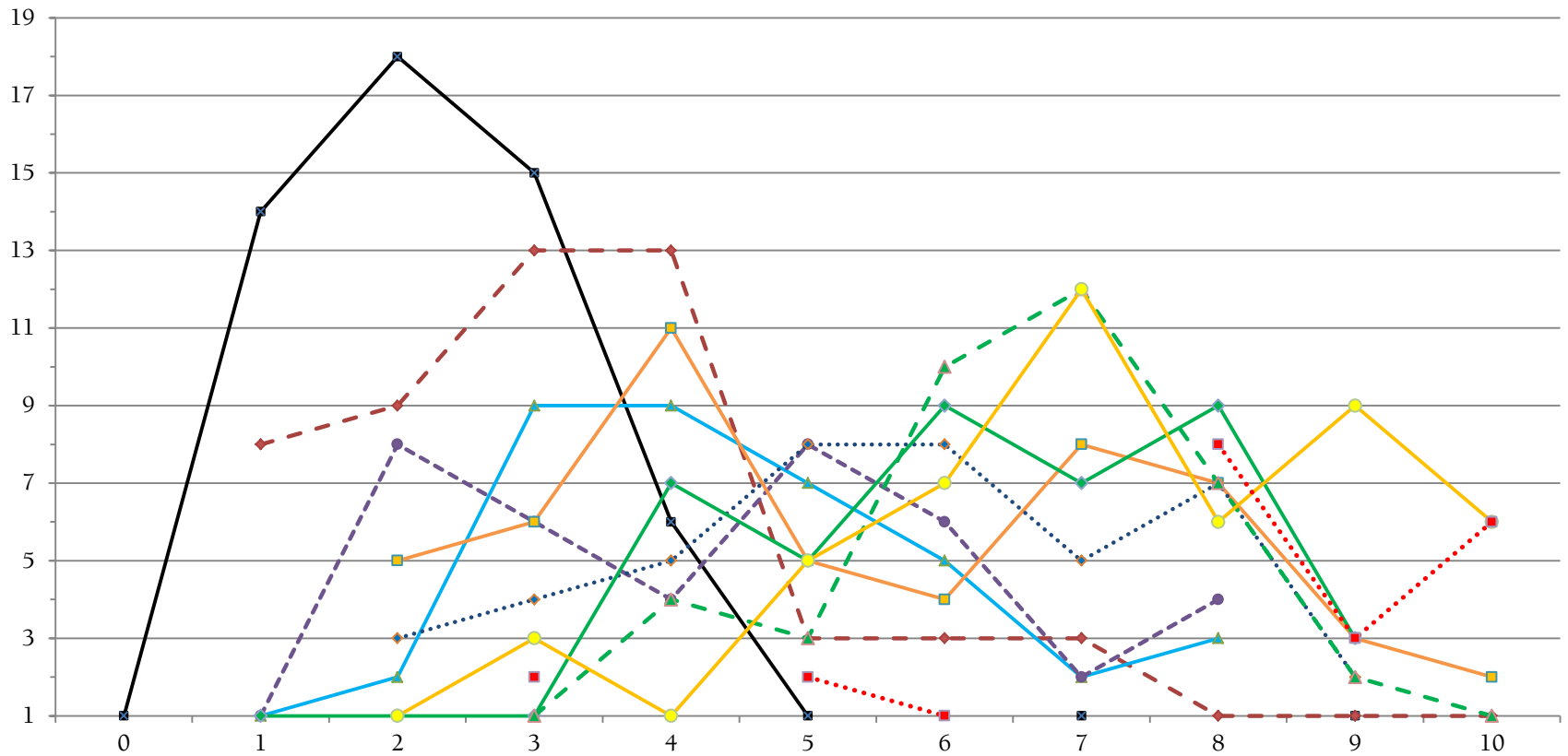
# Patron Visits per Capita 3
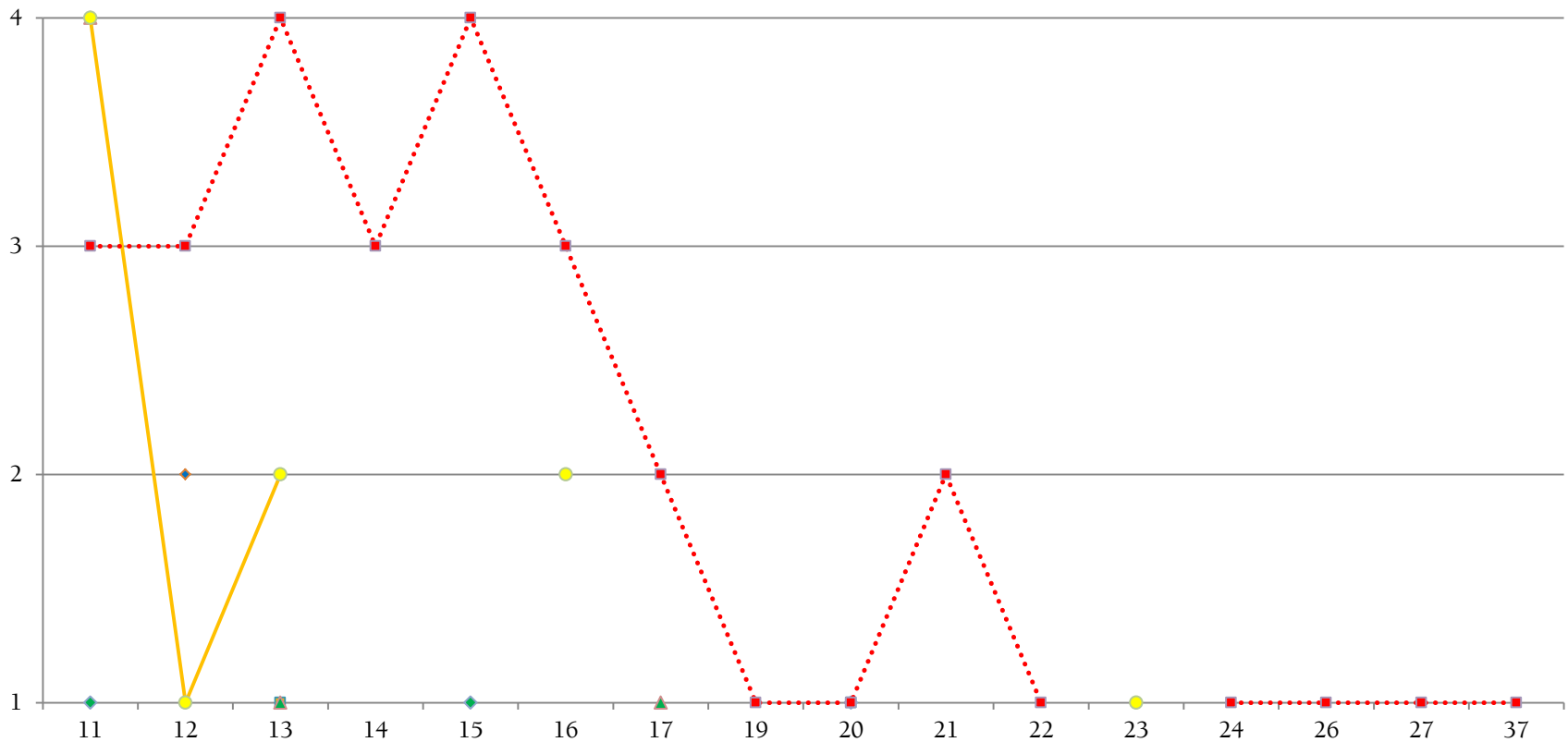
# PC use per capita

| PC use/cap | Count | % | Cum% | BenR | $/Cap |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 3.5+ | 22 | 4% | | 3.88 | $65.94 |
| 2.25-3.49 | 29 | 6% | 10% | 3.93 | $72.68 |
| 1.7-2.24 | 51 | 10% | 21% | 4.41 | $46.85 |
| 1.3-1.69 | 58 | 12% | 33% | 4.49 | $41.71 |
| 1-1.29 | 87 | 18% | 50% | 4.85 | $31.01 |
| 0.75-0.99 | 79 | 16% | 66% | 4.79 | $29.91 |
| 0.5-0.74 | 81 | 16% | 83% | 4.68 | $21.45 |
| <0.5 | 85 | 17% | 100% | 4.86 | $16.69 |
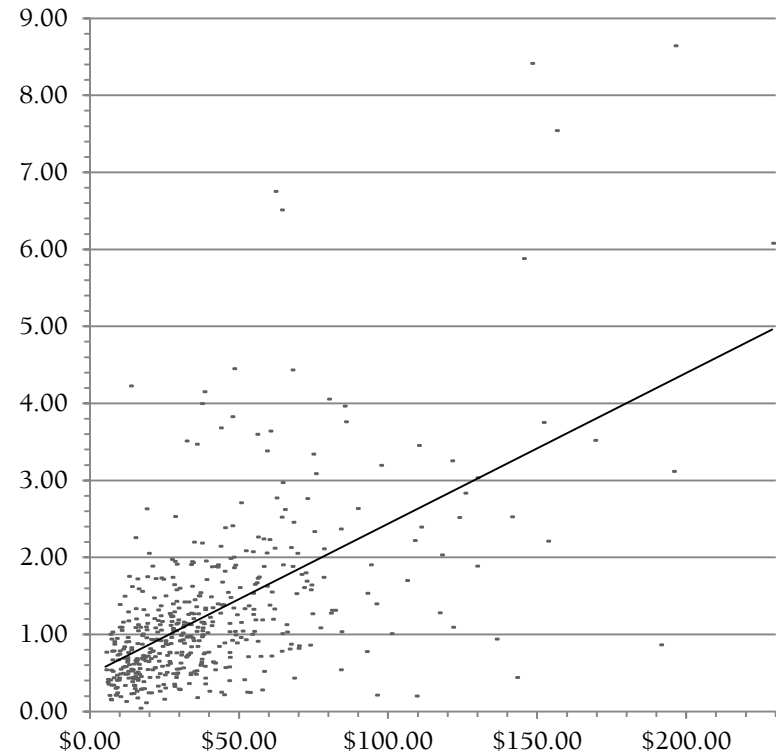
# If there's a 2014 version…

- Combine graphs & tables
- Use fewer size divisions (maybe 10?)
- Drop some measures for simplicity
- Add year-to-year changes and distribution graphs
- Do states as separate book (if at all)

# The problem with averages

|          | Overall | Average | Median | Diff  | Diff% | Q1      | Q3      |
|----------|---------|---------|--------|-------|-------|---------|---------|
| LSA      |         | 34,412  | 7,548  | 2,798 | 32%   | 2,389   | 22,867  |
| $/cap    | $36.00  | $39.29  | $30.93 | 1,342 | 15%   | $19.42  | $47.29  |
| Circ/cap | 8.67    | 7.77    | 10.09  | 1,168 | 13%   | 4.55    | 12.96   |

# Special Wa/Or Report

- If you don't have it, go get it—the PDF is free.
- Combines (some) tables and (some) graphs.
- Four LSA sizes
- Six levels for each metric
- Fewer metrics—omits PC count, circ per hour
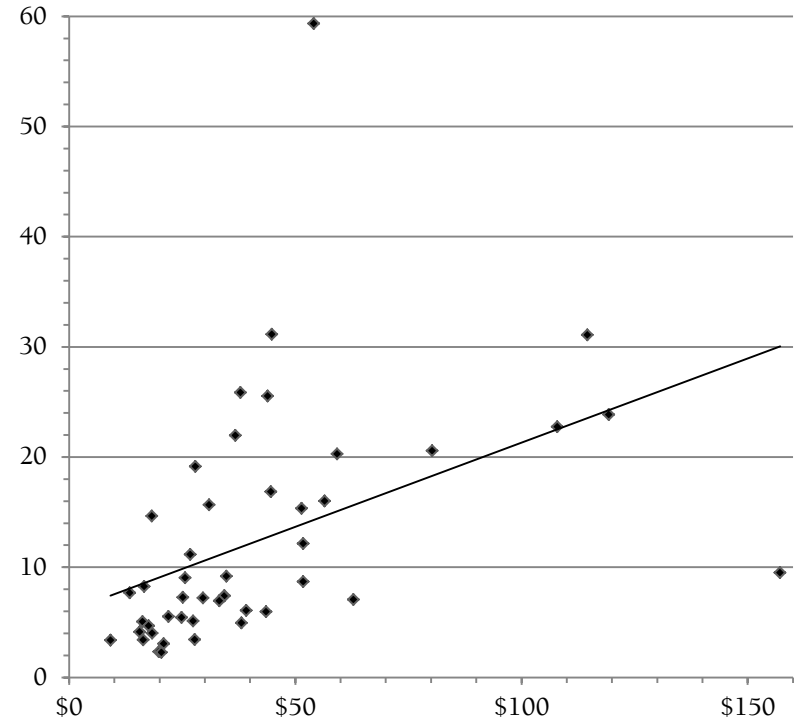- We'll look at a few items for libraries serving 3,000 to 11,999 patrons.

# Spending per capita

| $/cap | Count | % | BenR |
|---|---|---|---|
| $65-$328 | 5 | 10.9% | 3.96 |
| $47-$63 | 7 | 15.2% | 4.55 |
| $36-$46 | 8 | 17.4% | 7.06 |
| $27-$35 | 9 | 19.6% | 4.82 |
| $20-$26 | 7 | 15.2% | 4.91 |
| $7-$19 | 10 | 21.7% | 6.01 |

# Circulation per capita 1

| Circ/cap | Count | % | Cum% | BenR | $/Cap |
|----------|-------|-----|------|------|--------|
| 21-79 | 8 | 17% | | 8.48 | $49.46 |
| 15-20 | 7 | 15% | 33% | 5.92 | $51.41 |
| 10-14 | 3 | 7% | 39% | 6.88 | $26.80 |
| 7-9 | 11 | 24% | 63% | 4.82 | $34.27 |
| 5-6 | 7 | 15% | 78% | 4.02 | $27.43 |
| <5 | 10 | 22% | 100% | 4.60 | $19.10 |

# Circulation per capita 2
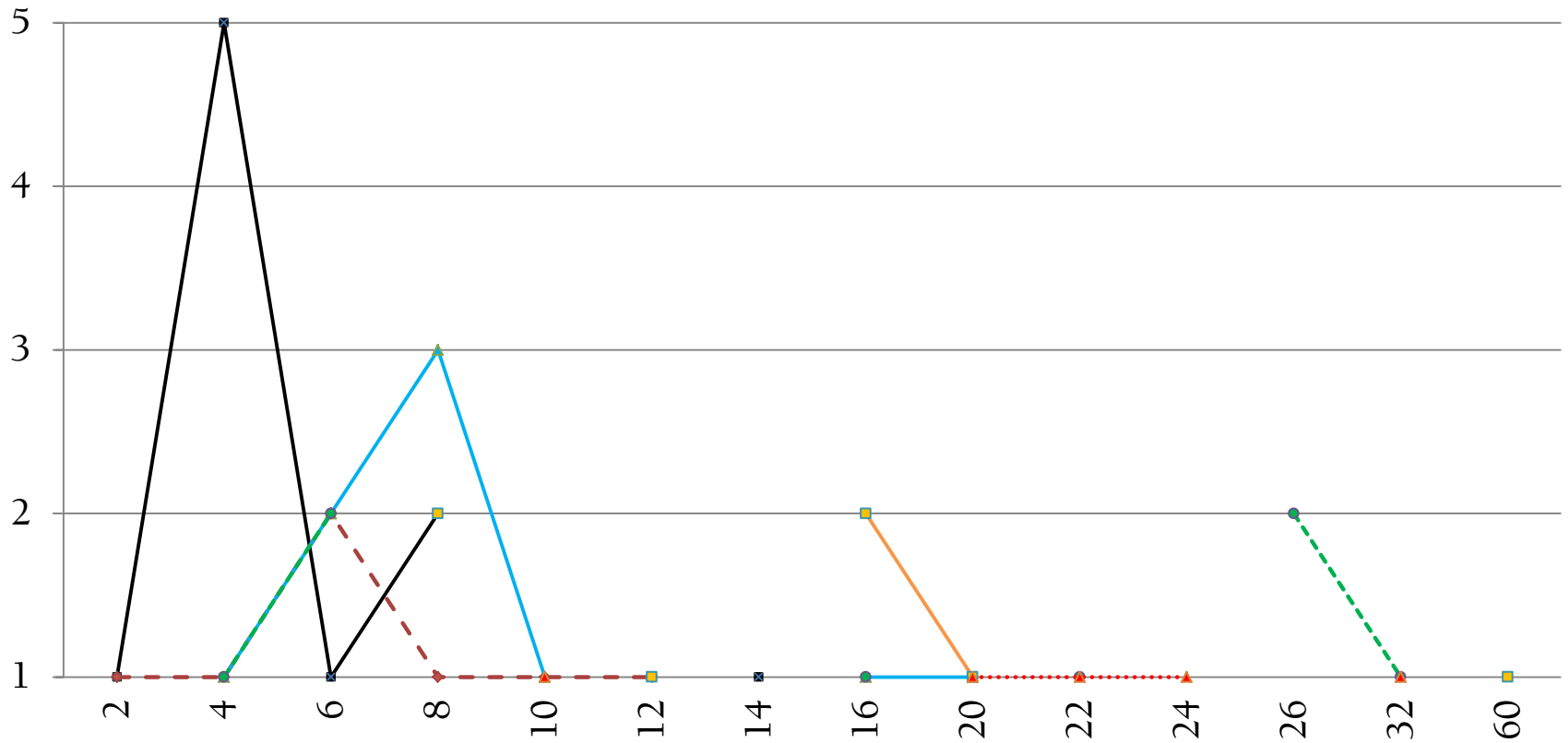
# Reference transactions

| Ref/cap | Count | % | Cum% | BenR | $/Cap |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1.2-4.2 | 6 | 13% | | 6.45 | $56.68 |
| 0.8-1.19 | 2 | 4% | 17% | 6.51 | $39.00 |
| 0.6-0.79 | 9 | 20% | 37% | 4.72 | $44.81 |
| 0.4-0.59 | 4 | 9% | 46% | 6.40 | $22.19 |
| 0.2-0.39 | 9 | 20% | 65% | 4.91 | $27.94 |
| <0.2 | 16 | 35% | 100% | 4.08 | $21.44 |

# Program attendance per capita

| Atten/cap | Count | % | Cum% | BenR | $/Cap |
|-----------|-------|------|------|------|---------|
| 0.8-9.4 | 7 | 15% | | 4.96 | $54.12 |
| 0.5-0.79 | 6 | 13% | 28% | 3.86 | $55.50 |
| 0.36-0.49 | 8 | 17% | 46% | 4.80 | $36.20 |
| 0.26-0.35 | 5 | 11% | 57% | 6.02 | $34.81 |
| 0.16-0.25 | 10 | 22% | 78% | 4.94 | $22.52 |
| <0.16 | 10 | 22% | 100% | 5.20 | $19.24 |
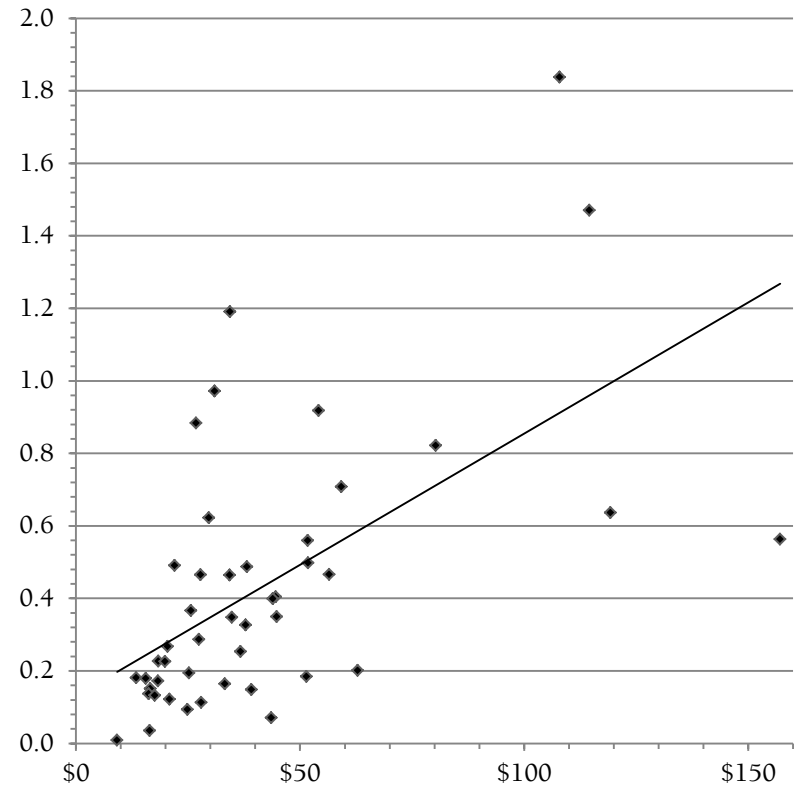
# Always room for improvement

- I hope some of you will find the free report useful.

- I'd love to get feedback on what works, what doesn't, what might work better.

- waltcrawford@gmail.com

# Telling **your** story

- Every library is different.

- Every community is different.

- Your story needs to relate your library to your community.

# Numbers matter, but…

- It's important to see how your library compares to similar libraries

- But that's just a starting point

- These tools should help create that starting point

# Fleshing out the story

- Not just reference count, but helping people in need

- Not just circulation, but how materials improve people's lives

- Not just programs, but impact of programs

- Not just PC use, but jobs found and services located

# The Mythical Average Library

- Considering a "basic numbers" book—*The Mythical Average Library: Coping with Numbers*
- Basic statistical tools, issues with averages
- Chartjunk, recognizing and avoiding
- Step-by-step: using tools you have to use national and other numbers
- Worthwhile?

# Thanks!

- Presentation:
- Books: lulu.com, then use title search
- Feedback: [waltcrawford@gmail.com](mailto:waltcrawford@gmail.com)
- Blog: Walt at Random, walt.lishost.com
- Ejournal: Cites & Insights, citesandinsights.info