

## CommunityConnect Case Study Pierce County Library System

### Pierce County Library System at a Glance

**Population** 558,341  
**Customers** 270,798 customers (49 percent market share)  
**Segments** 37  
**Service areas** 18

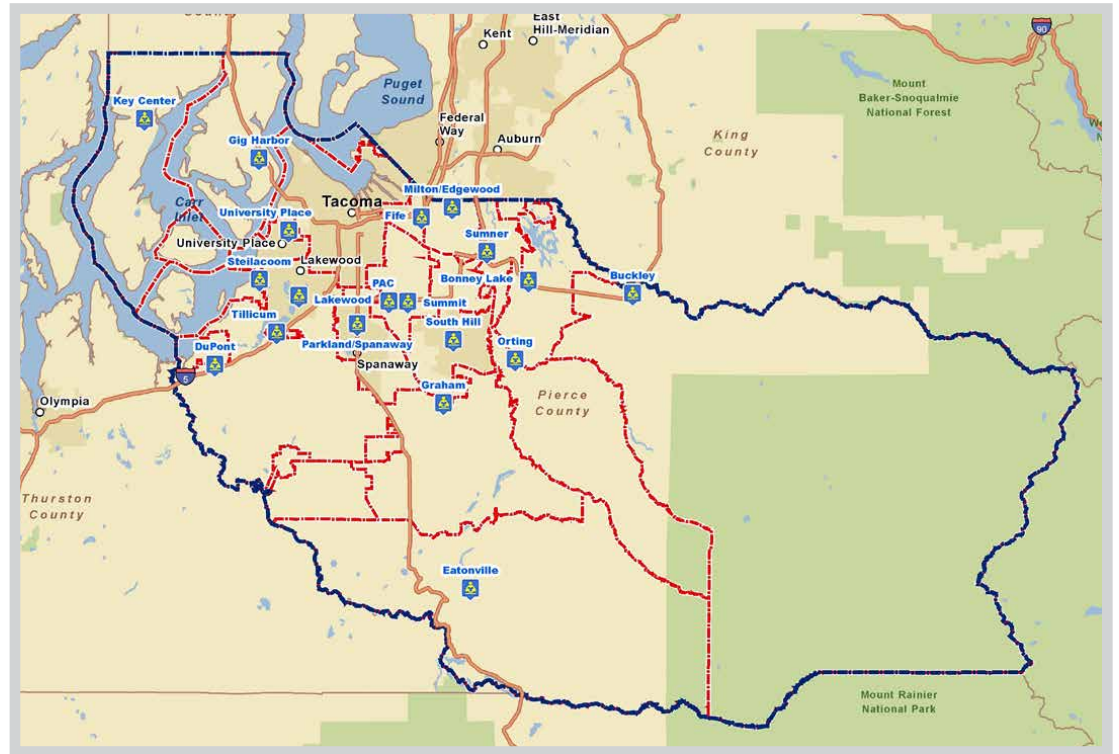
**Service area with the highest population**  
Parkland/Spanaway with 81,344 people

**Segment with the largest population**  
Up and Coming Families with 106,430 people

**Segment with most customers**  
Up and Coming Families with 53,168 people

**Segment with the highest customer potential**  
Up and Coming Families with 53,262 non-customers

Sally Porter Smith  
*Customer Experience Director*



**Pierce County Library System**  
(PCLS) was serious about integrating CommunityConnect into their strategic framework and using their data in a targeted way across their library system. As part of their strategic planning they identified four primary audiences to serve as their strategic framework:

**Youth**  
Desired outcome: Youth are prepared to succeed in reading, school and life.

**Digital Customers**  
Desired outcome: Digital customers are inspired, informed and productive.

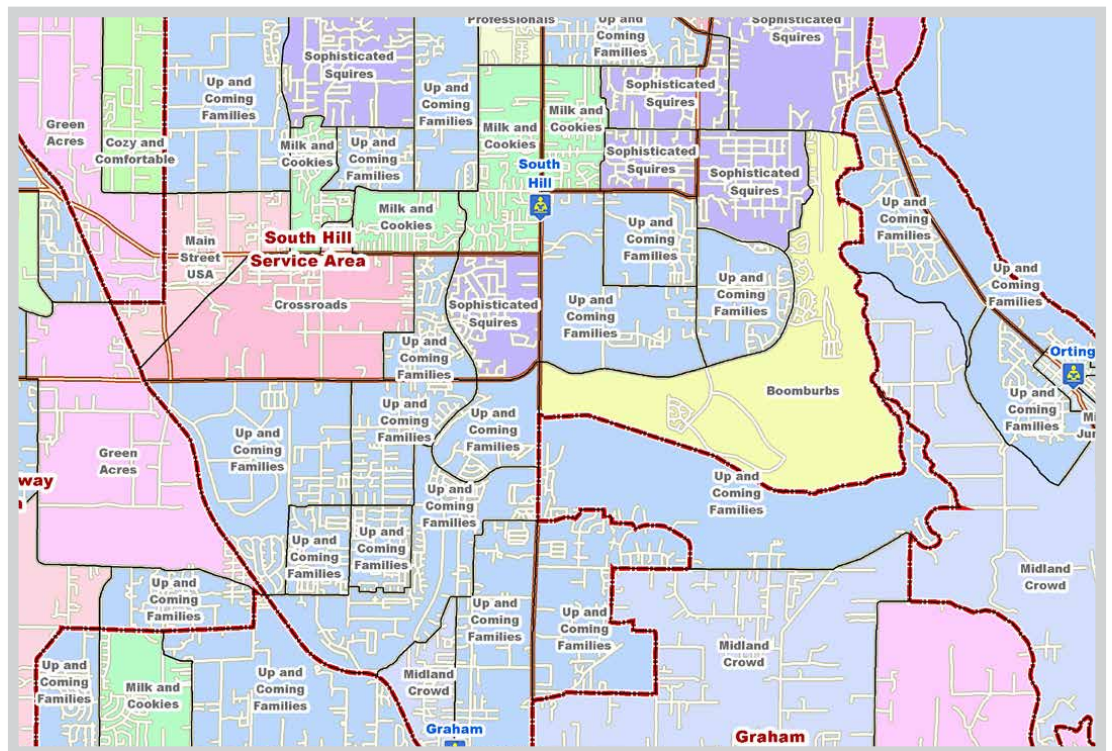
**Adult Learners**  
Desired outcome: Adults are successful achieving their individual goals in all areas of learning.

**Readers**  
Desired outcome: Readers discover, engage and are passionate about their reading.

Based on this strategic framework, each of the 18 branches was charged with developing a Branch Services Plan. In preparation for creating their plans, Customer Experience Director Sally Porter Smith says branch staff were enlisted to do Community Asset

mapping. To better understand their communities and accurately identify where their market segments were located, staff went out in teams and drove their branch territory. “Our goal was for staff to be familiar with their market segments and to better relate to their communities, not just look at the area around the library or see their community in a limited way,” says Smith. “We wanted them to observe the different areas in their communities and document what they observed. Seeing where market segments such as Inner City Tenants lived next to Connoisseurs helped them understand the information in the market segmentation descriptions and apply those descriptions in the field.”

PCLS serves a very large geographic area—over 1,770 square miles including 15 cities and towns plus county unincorporated areas. Smith says there can be twenty miles between different segments in a service area. Driving through their diverse area gave staff the opportunity to grasp their whole community. “The advantage of CommunityConnect is helping us round out our vision of who lives in our communities, their needs and their preferences. With this information we can create a welcoming environment in the library for all our diverse segments. Using CommunityConnect has changed the conversation for our staff and broadened our perspective of our constituents.”



Understand. Predict. Deliver.

*“One of Pierce County Library System’s branches had a pre-conceived idea about who was using the Easy Books collection. When the data showed that the primary borrowers are Prosperous Empty Nesters, a senior segment, staff had a fresh, new way of thinking about story time and about the role of grandparents at the branch.”*

## Applying the Data

Smith says that each branch focused on systematically applying the data. As an initial step, each branch created a tagline to describe its community. Branches were asked to do program assessment to determine which segments related to the program, the size of the segment being served and where the program fit into the overall branch goals.

According to Smith, the CommunityConnect process has helped staff to focus and direct their planning based on market segmentation, demographics and Community Asset mapping. “The data we have through CommunityConnect allows us to be so much better informed about who we’re serving and not serving and integrate a much higher level of evaluation,” she says. Of critical importance is that staff are doing the work and testing their

assumptions about who is using and not using their collections, facilities and services.

For example, she says, one of their branches had a pre-conceived idea about who was using the Easy Books collection. When the data showed that the primary borrowers are Prosperous Empty Nesters, a senior segment, staff had a fresh, new way of thinking about story time and about the role of grandparents at the branch. “This new reality led staff to have different discussions about service than were possible before we had CommunityConnect,” Smith says. “Now we were talking about aligning services with market segments and our strategic focus, and making informed choices of what to do—and not to do—so that we more effectively respond to people in the community.”

	Youth	Online Customers	Adult Learners	Readers	Customer Potential	Customer Potential Performance	Customer Potential Rank	Non Customers
(rank by high, medium, low as a correlation)								
<b>Family Portrait</b>								
Up and Coming Families	High	High	High	Med	104.3	high customer potential	1	58,220
Milk and Cookies	High	High	High	Med	19.2	high customer potential	10	10,707
<b>Upscale Avenues</b>								
1 Green Acres	High	Med	High	Med	61.7	high customer potential	2	34,474
2 In Style	Low	High	Med	Med	18.4	high customer potential	12	10,263
3 Pleasant-Ville	High	High	Low	Med	18.5	high customer potential	11	10,335
4 Cozy and Comfortable	Med	Low	Med	Low	8.6	high customer potential	17	4,818
5 Enterprising Professionals	Low	High	Med	Med	4.9	low customer potential	20	2,709
6 Urban Chic	Low	High	Med	High	1.0	low customer potential	34	544
<b>High Society</b>								
1 Sophisticated Squires	Med	High	High	Med	41.1	high customer potential	4	22,932
2 Exurbanites	Low	High	Med	Med	34.6	high customer potential	5	19,322
3 Boomburbs	High	High	Low	Med	3.3	low customer potential	24	1,840
4 Suburban Splendor	Low	High	High	High	2.1	low customer potential	29	1,166
5 Wealthy Seaboard Suburbs	Low	High	High	High	2.6	low customer potential	27	1,459
6 Connoisseurs	Low	High	High	High	1.4	low customer potential	31	794

Smith says that the level of engagement among branch staff has been remarkable. “They are thinking in different ways. The evaluations from our CommunityConnect training workshop were overwhelmingly positive, with 100% of respondents reporting that what they learned will help them in their work. The result is that we are having amazing discussions throughout the system, with staff testing assumptions and reaching out in new ways. We’re looking at where we are under-performing and over-performing, and evaluating who is underserved in our community. This is totally new for us and is very exciting.”

Once the Branch Services Plans are approved and implemented staff will begin to measure changes including changes in market share (i.e., the percent of the population that are patrons). Smith says this will be an annual process, looking at the outcomes over time.

In addition to the work being implemented at the branch level, CommunityConnect is also being used to support three system-wide initiatives to build the customer base.

**1. Targeted direct mail library card campaign to the Up and Coming Families and Sophisticated Squires market segments.** Early results indicate they have increased the

number of cardholders in this segment; the next stage of analysis is to determine if the increase came from the areas to which direct mail was sent.

- 2. Gaming platform for reading for adults.** CommunityConnect was used to identify the market segment Main Street, USA as a primary target audience for this initiative. Specific content and badges will target secondary segments.
- 3. Zinio digital magazine subscriptions.** CommunityConnect market segmentation is being used in selecting Zinio digital magazines the library should subscribe to in order to reach the segments likely to respond well to this format. Based on the data, Smith says they will target subscriptions to meet the interests of Exurbanites, Sophisticated Squires, Green Acres and Up and Coming Families. “CommunityConnect is helping us make more purposeful decisions and we will measure our results to ensure we are utilizing our resources wisely,” Smith says.

Understanding and engaging the community are critical elements in creating the annual service plans. Smith says they see a marriage between CommunityConnect and



*“Staff report they have learned much about their communities and that what they’ve learned translates into actionable activities. CommunityConnect is changing how we talk and think about services in our communities.”*

—Sally Porter Smith,  
Customer Experience  
Director

their strategic framework and have presented the two together to staff to encourage thinking about segments and the strategic focus to deliver the right services in the right areas. “We are consciously targeting what we’re doing in the communities to bring value. Staff report they have learned much about their communities and that what they’ve learned translates into actionable activities. CommunityConnect is changing how we talk and think about services in our communities. To see staff apply what they’ve learned and evaluate how it’s working will be another level of success.”

*“In these post-recession times it is more important than ever to ensure library resources are being utilized effectively and strategically. CommunityConnect helps libraries pinpoint precisely who to serve and how to serve them. This investment yields an immediate ROI in better attended programs, increased collection usage, more cardholders, and better use of library space.”*

—Marc Futterman,  
CIVICTechnologies  
President and CEO

## **About CommunityConnect**

CommunityConnect is a web-software solution that integrates data from your library with market segmentation, demographic, and other data so you can better understand your community, predict what people are interested in, and deliver relevant services to them.

Using CommunityConnect, our customers effectively execute cardholder development campaigns, make smarter collection development decisions, determine the need and find the best sites for new locations, plan programs and services, align staff to meet community needs, plan facility improvements, develop consumer technologies, and invest in effective marketing and communications campaigns.

## **About CIVICTechnologies**

CIVICTechnologies provides a full suite of web services, customized applications and consulting service to meet the complete market analytics and geographic information systems (GIS) needs of libraries and businesses—from small and medium sized enterprises to Fortune 500 companies—across a diverse range of industries. CIVICTechnologies enables its customers to visualize data in new and innovative ways in order to deliver more effective products and services, make better informed decisions, build consensus faster, allocate resources more wisely, and implement organization-wide solutions more effectively.

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