



# Consumer Reports Database Usage Analysis Three-Year Performance Review (2023-2025)

---

**Consumer Reports Annual Investment:** \$15,250 (funded by the OWWL Library System)  
**Contract Expiration:** October 31, 2025

---

## Summary

This analysis examines the usage patterns and cost-effectiveness of our Consumer Reports Database subscription over the past three years. The data reveals significant changes in utilization that warrant careful consideration as we approach contract renewal on October 31, 2025.

### Key Findings:

- Usage has declined substantially across the System
  - Per-use costs have increased significantly due to reduced utilization
  - A growing number of member libraries are not accessing the resource
  - Future contract pricing will increase costs further
- 

## Contract Information

### Current Terms

- **Annual Cost:** \$15,250
- **Contract Expires:** October 31, 2025
- **Contract Type:** Year-to-year agreement

### Future Pricing (3-Year Contract Beginning 11/1/25)

- **Year 1 (2026):** \$15,555 (2% increase)

- **Year 2 (2027):** \$15,710 (1% increase)
- **Year 3 (2028):** \$15,710 (increase waived)
- **3-Year Total:** \$46,975

---

## Usage Trends Analysis

### System-Wide Statistics

Year	Total Visits	Total Page Views	Libraries Participating	Cost per Visit
2023	564	6,980	36 of 42 (86%)	\$27.04
2024	684	9,107	32 of 42 (76%)	\$22.30
2025*	151	2,292	17 of 42 (40%)	\$100.99

*\*2025 figures are projected based on data through July*

### Participation Patterns

**2023 Baseline:** 36 of 42 member libraries utilized the database, representing strong System-wide engagement.

**2024 Performance:** While total usage increased, library participation declined to 32 libraries, with 10 libraries recording no usage.

**2025 Current Status:** Participation has decreased to 17 of 42 member libraries, with 25 libraries showing no usage through July.

---

## Cost-Effectiveness Analysis

### Industry Benchmarks for Database Services

*Industry benchmarks come from library literature on database cost-effectiveness, including studies by the American Library Association and library consortia performance metrics. These ranges reflect typical cost-per-use thresholds used by library systems to evaluate digital resource investments.*

- **Excellent Value:** \$1-5 per use
- **Good Value:** \$6-15 per use
- **Moderate Value:** \$16-25 per use
- **Requires Review:** \$26+ per use

### Our Performance Against Benchmarks

- **2023:** \$27.04 per visit - Above moderate value range
- **2024:** \$22.30 per visit - At upper end of moderate value
- **2025:** \$100.99 per visit - Significantly exceeds benchmark ranges

### **Per-Library Investment**

- **2023:** \$423.61 per participating library (36 of 42 libraries)
- **2024:** \$476.56 per participating library (32 of 42 libraries)
- **2025:** \$897.06 per participating library (17 of 42 libraries)

---

## **Usage Distribution**

### **Most Active Libraries by Year**

#### **2023 Top 5:**

1. Wood Library: 100 visits
2. Ontario Public Library: 64 visits
3. Victor Free Library: 47 visits
4. Livonia Public Library: 45 visits
5. Geneva Public Library: 31 visits

#### **2024 Top 5:**

1. Wood Library Association of Canandaigua: 117 visits
2. Victor Farmington Library: 82 visits
3. Honeoye Public Library: 59 visits
4. Ontario Public Library: 42 visits
5. Wadsworth Library (Geneseo): 34 visits

#### **2025 Top 5 (through July):**

1. Wood Library Association of Canandaigua: 24 visits
2. Wadsworth Library (Geneseo): 9 visits
3. Rose Free Library: 8 visits
4. Victor Farmington Library: 8 visits
5. Macedon Public Library: 7 visits

**Note:** The top 5 libraries account for 51% (2023), 49% (2024), and 64% (2025) of system-wide usage.

### **Libraries with Sustained Usage**

Several libraries have maintained consistent access to the database across all three years, suggesting the resource meets specific needs within those communities.

### **Libraries with Discontinued Usage**

Twenty-five libraries that previously accessed the database have not used it in 2025.

---

## **Financial Considerations**

### **Current Investment Efficiency**

- **Total Annual Cost:** \$15,250
- **Libraries Currently Using:** 17 (40% of membership)
- **Effective Cost per Active Library:** \$897
- **Estimated Allocation to Non-Users:** \$9,107 (60% of budget)

### **Three-Year Investment Summary**

- **Total Investment (2023-2025):** \$45,750
  - **Average Annual Visits:** 466
  - **Average Cost per Visit:** \$32.68
- 

## **Alternative Scenarios**

### **Scenario 1: Library Buy-In Options**

#### **Option A: Heavy User Cost-Sharing**

- Top 5 most active libraries share full cost
- Cost per library: \$3,050 annually
- System provides no subsidy

#### **Option B: Moderate User Group**

- Top 12 most active libraries participate
- Cost per library: \$1,271 annually
- System provides no subsidy

#### **Option C: Current User Cost-Sharing**

- All 17 currently active libraries participate
- Cost per library: \$897 annually
- System provides no subsidy

#### **Option D: Subsidized Buy-In**

- Interested libraries pay portion of cost
- System subsidizes remainder from general fund
- Participation fee: \$500-1,500 per library (sliding scale)

#### **Scenario 3: Service Discontinuation**

- Provide advance notice to member libraries
- Reallocate budget to System services with broader utilization
- **Annual Savings:** \$15,250 for other initiatives (determined and reviewed by OWWL Library System)

#### **Scenario 4: Negotiated Rate Reduction**

- Leverage usage data in contract discussions
- Seek pricing aligned with actual utilization levels
- **Target:** Reduce annual cost to \$6,000-8,000 range (EBSCO has not provided significant reductions in the past)

---

## **Considerations for Decision-Making**

### **Factors Supporting Continuation**

- Consistent usage by several member libraries
- Unique content not available through free alternatives
- Historical investment in staff training and patron education

### **Factors Supporting Reconsideration**

- Declining participation across the library system
  - Per-use costs significantly exceeding industry standards
  - Opportunity cost of current investment level
  - Evidence that 60% of libraries operate effectively without the resource
- 

## **Recommendations**

### **Option 1: Service Continuation with Enhanced Promotion**

- Implement System-wide marketing campaign
- Provide additional staff training opportunities
- Monitor usage quarterly to assess improvement
- **Investment Required:** Current budget plus promotional costs

### **Option 2: Renegotiated Contract Terms**

- Pursue significant cost reduction based on usage data
- Negotiate pricing structure reflecting actual participation
- **Target:** Reduce annual cost to \$6,000-8,000 range

### **Option 3: Library Buy-In Model**

- Allow interested libraries to opt-in with cost-sharing
- System facilitates group purchasing but provides no subsidy
- Libraries pay \$900-3,000 annually based on participation level

### **Option 4: Subsidized Participation Model**

- Interested libraries pay reduced fee (\$500-1,500)
- System subsidizes portion from general funds
- Reduces system cost while maintaining access for interested libraries

### **Option 5: Service Discontinuation**

- Document alternative resources for consumer information and end service
- **Annual Savings:** \$15,250 for other initiatives

---

## **Conclusion**

The Consumer Reports Database has served our System for several years, providing valuable consumer information to participating libraries. However, current usage patterns and cost-effectiveness metrics suggest this may be an appropriate time to reassess whether this investment aligns with our members' evolving needs and our system's strategic priorities.

The data indicates that while some libraries find significant value in this resource, 60% of our membership has found alternative ways to serve their patrons' consumer information needs. With contract renewal approaching and future cost increases planned, this presents an opportunity to consider whether our investment might be more effectively structured or directed.