



## SUBMISSION FORM

All submission forms must include the following information. Separate submission forms must be turned in for each eligible program. **Deadline: July 1, 2023.** Please include this submission form with the electronic entry. If you do not receive an email confirming receipt of your entry within 3 days of submission, please contact [Gage Harter](#).

### PROGRAM INFORMATION

County: Chesterfield County

Program Title: A New, High Quality Customer Survey Program

Program Category: Customer Service

### CONTACT INFORMATION

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### SIGNATURE OF COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR OR DEPUTY/ASSISTANT COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

Name: Joseph P. Casey, Ph.D.

Title: County Administrator

Signature: Joseph P. Casey, Ph.D.

Digitally signed by Joseph P. Casey, Ph.D.  
DN: cn=Joseph P. Casey, Ph.D., o=Chesterfield County, ou=County Administration,  
email=caseyjoe@chesterfield.gov, c=US  
Date: 2023.06.27 12:44:08 -04'00'



## **A New, High-Quality Customer Survey Program: Analyzing Community Sentiment and Responding VACo Application 2023**

### **Executive Summary**

Chesterfield County Public Library has created a modern, high-quality customer survey program, going beyond ad-hoc surveys and traditional measures to truly seek to understand the public's voice. Using NPS benchmarking, tagged themes and impressions based on open-ended question comments, a staggered delivery, library branch-specific calculations, and associated detailed reporting and dashboarding, this customer survey program has enabled multiple meaningful decisions at multiple levels of policy to better serve the community and administer library functions. As a result, customers have shared that they have even more confidence in recommending CCPL to their friends and family, and CCPL has seen a growing usage correspondent to that sentiment.

### **Problem**

Understanding the public's desires can be difficult, and in a customer-focused public administration, having a direct line to constituents and their opinions is vital. Many governments and associated public library systems have customer survey programs, but often, these programs can fall short in a variety of ways. Some systems make the mistake of surveying too infrequently, some by failing to collect open-ended feedback, or by struggling to quantify the results in useful ways. Chesterfield County Public

Library revolutionized their survey program, moving from ad-hoc, relatively ineffective surveys to a systematic and benchmarked survey program, utilizing both qualitative and quantitative analyses, and modern reporting and dashboarding, to understand public sentiment around every aspect of library services. This innovative and modern customer survey program enabled rapid iteration on new products and services, refinements to existing services, and a detailed examining of customer sentiment to guide future actions.

### **Program Description**

As part of efforts to update Chesterfield County Public Library's survey program, in-house assets began developing the plans for a modern customer survey program in early 2021. Using an in-house team of analytics and tech professionals, previous survey failings were analyzed and various options for improvement were assessed.

There were several primary goals. One was to move from surveys once a year or similar, to something that was year-round and therefore provided more immediate feedback on customer experiences. This would allow for rapid feedback on new products and services, in a way that yearly-only surveys did not. Another goal was to enable benchmarking, not just against other government departments or library systems in the country, but against all manner of industries both public and private. By having robust benchmarks on relative popularity, CCPL would be able to gauge customer reaction against other potentially competing offerings. A third major goal was to enable open-ended feedback that would be evaluated quantitatively – while collecting open-ended feedback is common, it's also challenging to incorporate into quantitative measures. The essence of this goal would be to allow various products, services, and

their priorities to be judged against each other along with relative cost and benefits at improving those products and services, guiding the system towards the most important needs to be addressed. A final goal was to be able to differentiate different library branches and compare their relative scores, in order to allow for more local decision-making, and to encourage competition and manage performance among particular branches and management teams.

One key improvement was the use of Net Promoter Score, a widely used marketing research metric where customers are asked to rate the likelihood that they were recommend a company, product, or service to a friend or family member on a scale from 0 to 10. Using these responses, promoters (those scoring 9 or 10) are weighed against passive customers (those scoring 7 or 8) and detractors (those scoring 6 or lower). These groups are then calculated against each other to determine a final NPS score. By incorporating a standard market research metric into surveys, CCPL was able to compare itself versus not just other library systems nationwide, but other government services, and other private-sector industries.

It's important to note that using Net Promoter Score, something that has become more common in modern public libraries, was not seen as sufficient. Open-ended questions were paired with this standard question, to understand what it was about our products and services that prompted that score – one asking directly what led to their score selection, and others asking about what customers might like to let us know about their desires for the library system. Analysts then tagged every comment by the comment's themes (for example, whether they were talking about storytimes, holds queues, material selection, fines, spaces in buildings, etc.) and whether the mention of that

theme was positive, mixed, or negative. This enabled a robust understanding of the popularity of particular aspects of the library experience, and further enabled specific targeting of services or products, both new and existing. Further, an optional second page of questions enabled library leaders to ask about topics of interest as they came up, while also combating survey fatigue (which is common in longer surveys).

Launching in April of 2021, the new customer survey program asks every cardholder in the system to tell us about their thoughts on the public library system yearly, but does so with 1/52<sup>nd</sup> of cardholders receiving emails once a week. This staggering allows for monthly and yearly summary of customer perception, incentivizing and motivating library staff to be checking in with customers regularly, and to value every interaction with the public. The survey asks which branches the respondent visits, enabling branch-specific reporting and dashboarding. And for open-ended questions, as part of the process, analyst tag every comment on theme and impression. Using this enriched dataset of customer scores, open-ended responses, and tagged themes and impressions, reporting and PowerBI dashboarding enables managers and leaders to slice and dice along many variables – branch, month and year, particular themes, particular keywords, customer scores, etc.

This analytics piece is part of what makes the survey program so unique and successful. As part of the monthly delivery to managers and staff, a detailed write-up of trends and notable suggestions is provided, along with detailed reporting about branch scores. Further, in response to manager suggestion, confidence intervals are calculated by branch and for the system, to enable managers to gauge whether a particular time period's score is representative of overall scores, based on survey

volume and score variability. Finally, the hand-tagged themes and impressions of comments are a key part of the dashboarding, allowing each aspect of library services to be examined independently. This allows for a cost-benefit analysis where how popular or unpopular a particular product or service is can be compared to the cost of improving that product or service.

## **Financing**

The program used only in-house resources, and as such cost nothing additional to the county. While CCPL had intentionally hired staff with strong technical, analytic, and statistical backgrounds, this type of survey program could be undertaken by other departments with limited resources, when given clear direction from organizational leadership. This innovative take on customer surveys could also become a model for other localities, and extend beyond public libraries into all manner of customer-focused departments and governments, to enable a broad and deep understanding of the public's desires and needs from their local governments.

## **Results / Success**

During the approximately two years the program has been running, over 8,000 customer surveys have been filled out, leading to almost 13,000 tags describing 27 unique products and services in detail. As of May 2023, the system's Net Promoter Score is the highest its ever been, at 85.3. This corresponds to an average score of 9.5 out of 10 as to whether a customer would recommend CCPL to a friend or family member, which is a truly fantastic score. (For reference, our first month's score was 74.4.)

To put this into perspective, consider that any NPS score above 0 is broadly speaking good, anything above 20 is great, above 50 is amazing, and anything above 75 is world-class (according to Bain and Company, who pioneered the NPS metric). As such, CCPL is incredibly popular, thanks in part to listening closely to our customers using this modern customer survey program. More importantly, we've improved our scores significantly from where we started, and plan to fight to improve every month.

This customer survey program has enabled changes large and small. It has underscored where we are currently successful (for instance, in our customer service, where 97.9% of comments referencing customer service were positive), and allowed us to take pride in our tradition of high-quality customer service while continuing to put the public first in our everyday interactions. It's shown us areas for improvement, for example in our fine and fee structure (where we see that a patron is over 13 times more likely to be a detractor if fines and fees are mentioned), and in our item selection and holds queues for hot titles. As a result, we're now engaged in a review of our fines and fees structure, and are examining where fines and fees are necessary and where they might be overbearing, especially on vulnerable populations who might struggle the most to pay them. And we've used the feedback on holds and wait times we've received to help articulate the need to the county at large, helping to reduce these queues for our customers.

It has shown us big trends, like in frustration with our website and praise for our welcoming spaces, how beloved the public library system is generally, and where we might we can be better. It's shown us both large and, importantly, small opportunities to improve, which might have otherwise been missed – for example, ensuring step-stools

are available in restrooms for small children to wash their hands more easily. Every report to managers from analysts include this type of micro-focus, in a section called “low hanging fruit” – and this stepstool example is a great example, in that it represents a needed improvement that one could easily overlook, but which could be a significant and costly barrier for some populations. It’s not hard to imagine a single mother with her children in the restroom, struggling to lift them to the sink, and how much better it could be for her and her family with this small (and inexpensive) fix.

By enabling us to receive all manner of suggestions by all manner of patrons, by scoring our current activities and helping us understand their relative values, and by confronting the constant reality of being a customer-focused library system and customer-focused county government generally, this customer survey program has made a big difference. It’s allowed citizens and the public to be heard and feel heard. A community institution like a public library system cannot serve its community until it understands that community, and this modern customer survey program ensures a constant finger on the pulse of public sentiment. Chesterfield County Public Library looks forward to year 3 of this program and trying to top our already excellent scores in the future.

Finally, we believe that this survey program has had significant impacts in our currently surging other metrics of success, with door count in 2023 up over 30% compared to prior year (and that’s despite one branch being closed for renovation) and physical check-outs up 10%. It is no surprise that a public organization that is hyper-focused on public needs and sentiments is seeing success in multiple areas.

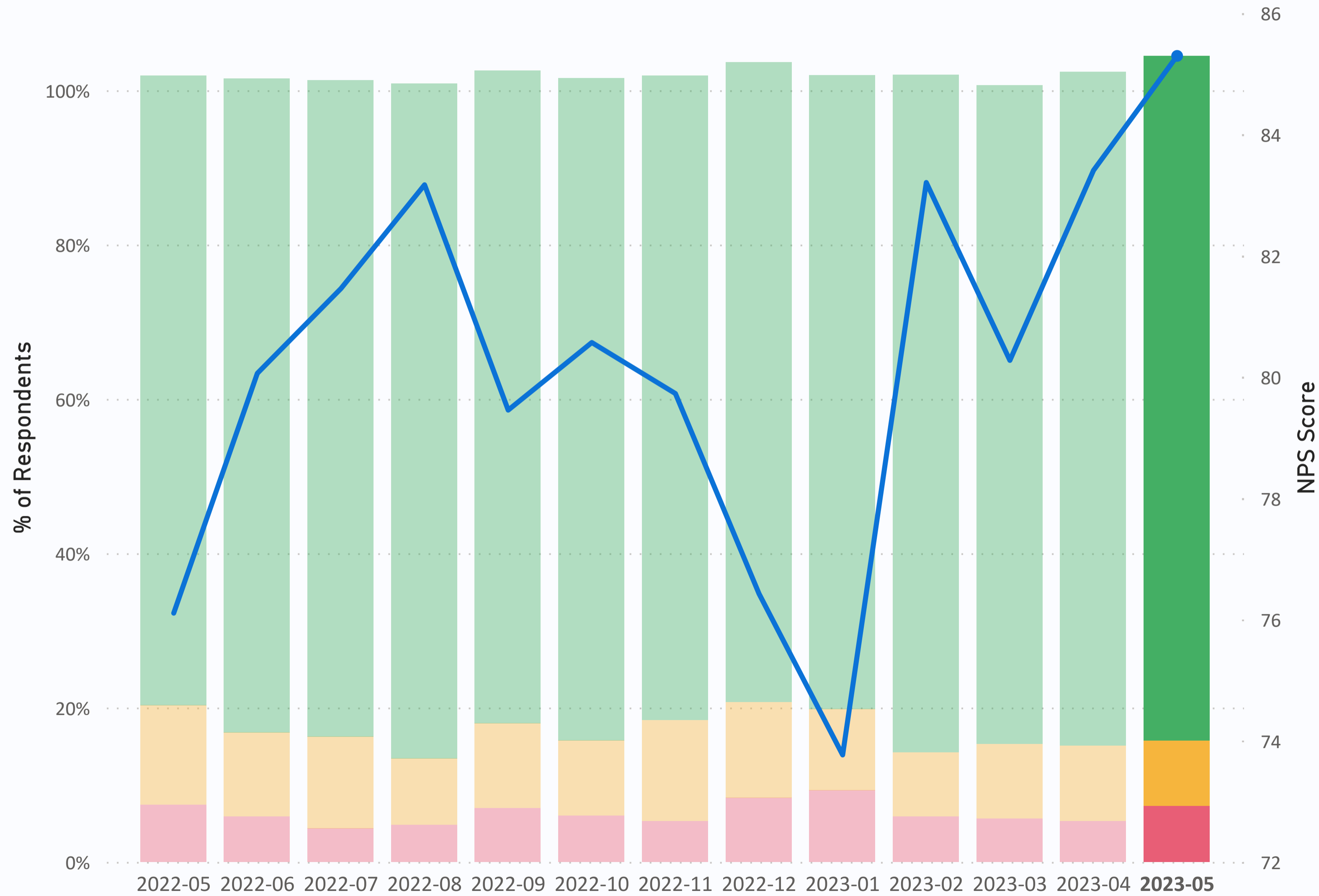


# Summary

## Branch Summary

● Detractor ● Passive ● Promoter — NPS Score

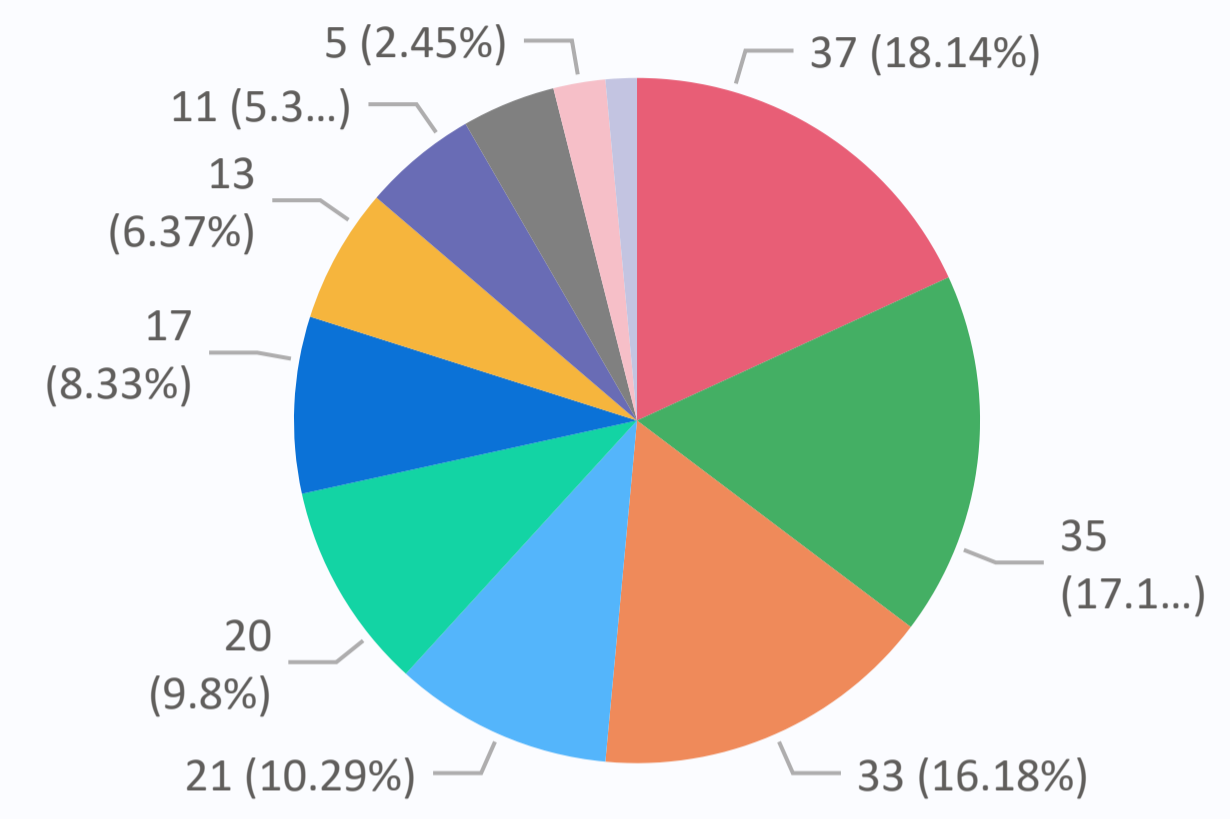
[View Branch Comparison](#)



## Count of Respondents by Library

Filter

- Clover Hill
- North Courthouse
- Bon Air
- Central
- Chester
- LaPrade
- Midlothian
- Meadowdale



**85.29**  
Overall NPS Score

**204**  
# of Complete Surveys

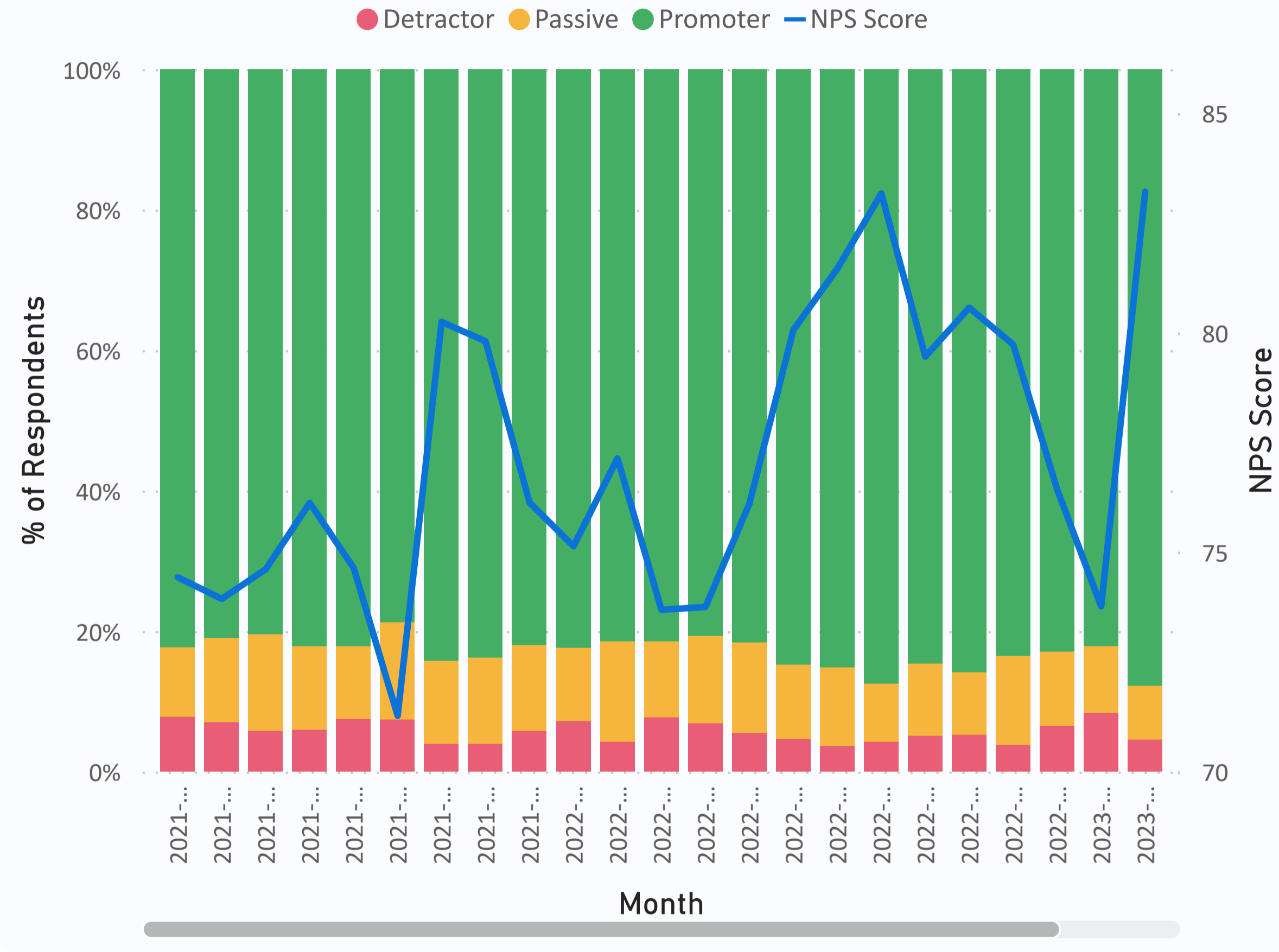
**88.73%**  
% Promoter

**7.84%**  
% Passive

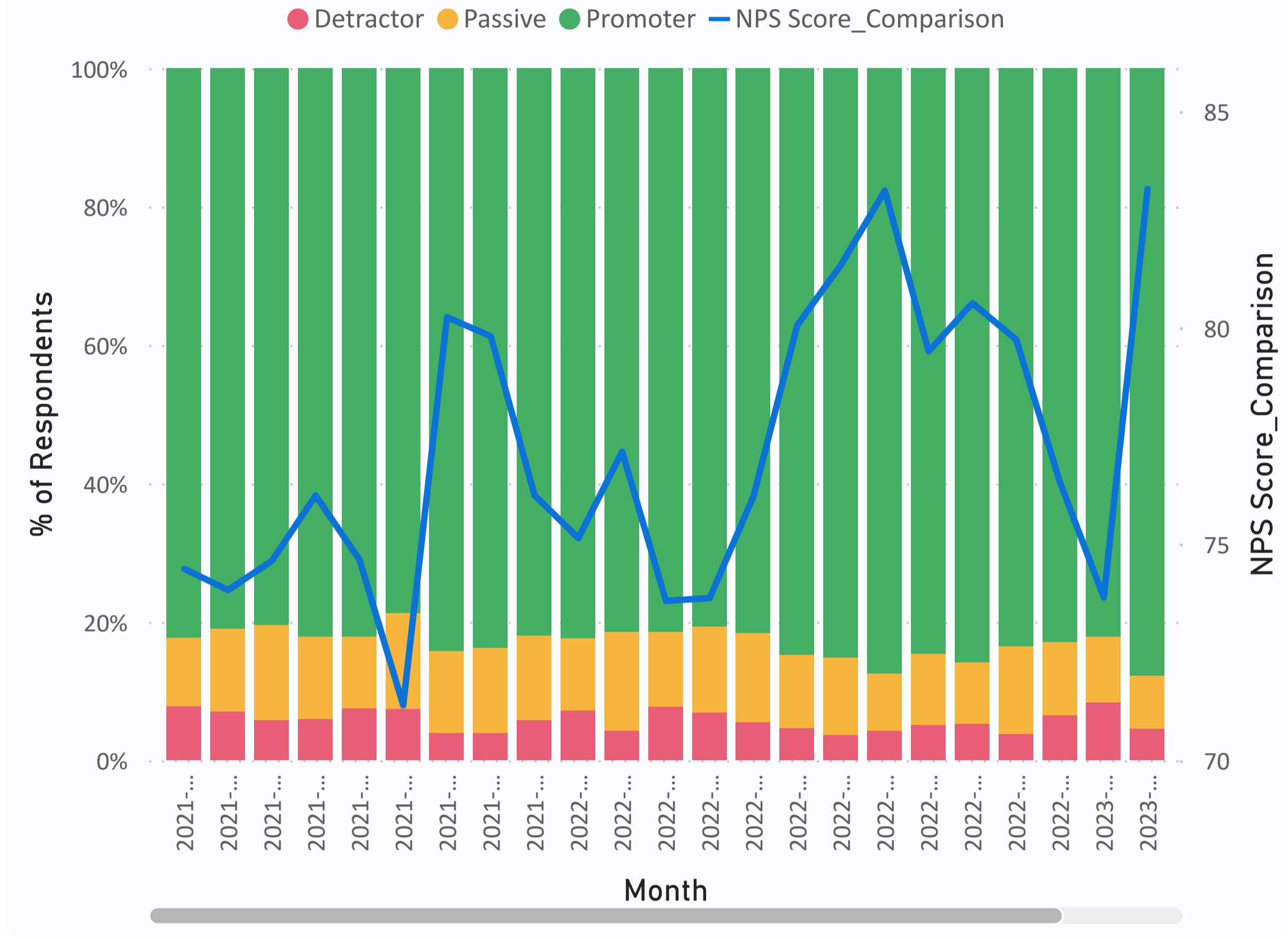
**3.43%**  
% Detractor

**9.50**  
Average of "On a scale of 0-10, how likely are you to recommend CCPL to a friend or family member?"

## NPS & Customer Category Breakdown



## NPS & Customer Category Breakdown



**77.35**

Overall NPS Score

**9.30**

Average Survey Score

8,266

# of Complete Surveys



**77.35**

Overall NPS Score

**9.30**

Average Survey Score

8266

# of Complete Surveys

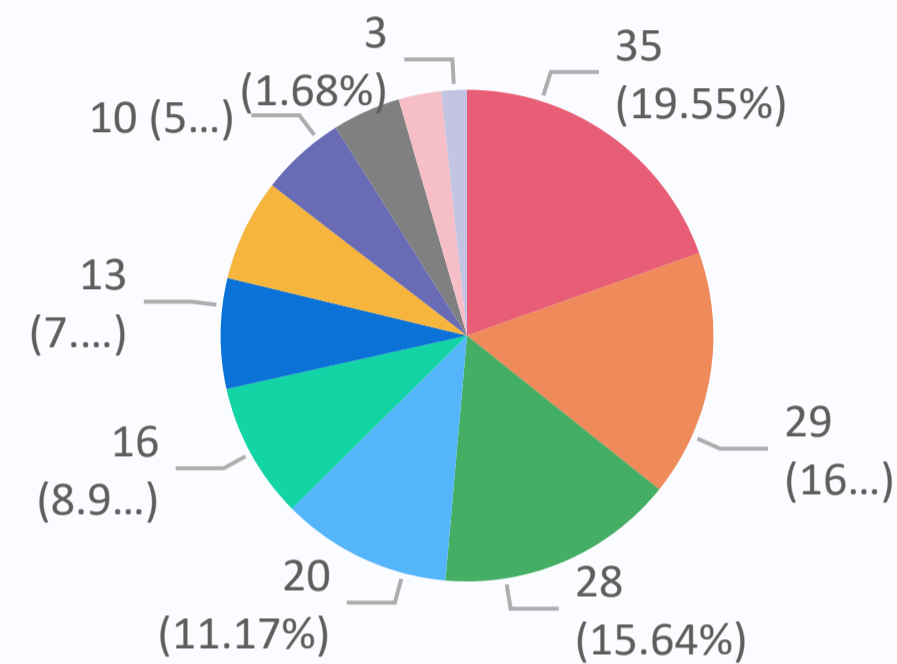


# What is the primary reason for your score?

## Distinct Response Count by Library

### Library

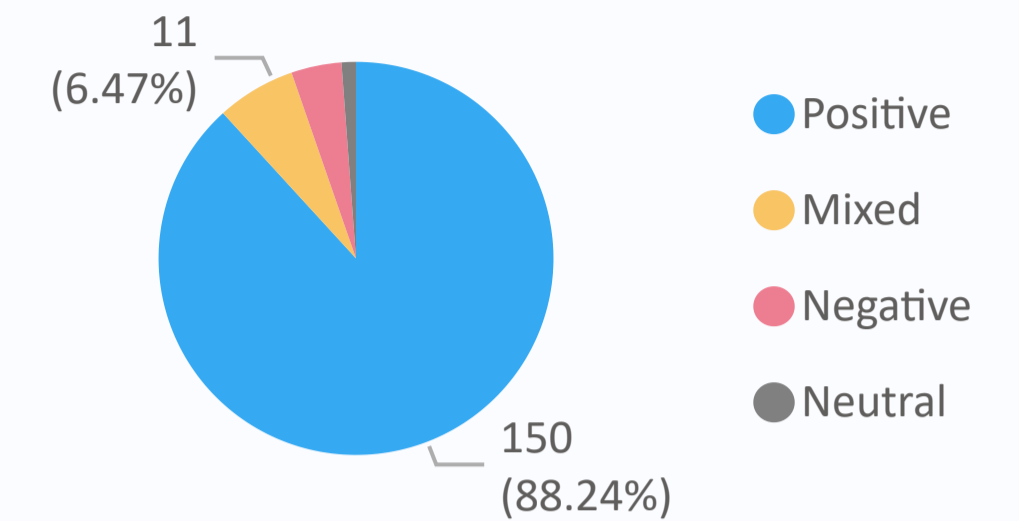
- Clover Hill
- Bon Air
- North Cour...
- Central
- Chester
- LaPrade
- Midlothian
- Meadowdale
- I only use o...
- Enon
- Ettrick



## What is the primary reason for your score? Score

Access to great reading materials at no additional cost (other than taxes to pay for the library and all associated expenses)	10
All my interactions with library staff has been very. Satisfactory. To me it CCPL IS JUST WHAT A LIBRARY SHOULD BE.	10
Always pleasantly greeted and able to check out in a timely manner	10
anyone who loves reading, like me, should take advantage of the wonderful service the library offers	10
Beautiful library, lots of space, helpful staff, great options for paper books and in-line.	10
CCPL is the only library in the county is one obvious answer.	10
I would add that the method for holding books and getting them from any library in the county works wonderfully well. I use it frequently, as do my granddaughters. When I picked up a book this morning I noticed there were three high quality movies waiting to be picked up by my oldest granddaughter.	
The staff is always friendly and helpful and interested in what I'm reading and what I have to say, while offering their own helpful comments about various books and videos	
Cleanliness, friendliness of the staff, great organization, kid-friendly facilities, a great variety of books offered at the library & online.	10
Convenience and depth of books available.	10
Convenient and professional	10
Convenient friendly staff	10
Ease of access, kind librarians, well maintained libraries, awesome parking, prompt hold delivery	10
Ease of use - between the website and the Libby app.	10
Ease of use and large selection.	10
Ease of use, friendliness of staff, variety of programs, and cleanliness of the building.	10
Ease of using overdrive and selection of books.	10
Easy access and plenty of books.	10
Easy to access and use. Friendly staff. Wealth of materials.	10
Easy to sign up for a card, I use online hold requests and pick up at location - easy to do.	10
Everyone is very helpful	10
Excellent book clubs and other meetings such as weeklv chess	10

## Impression

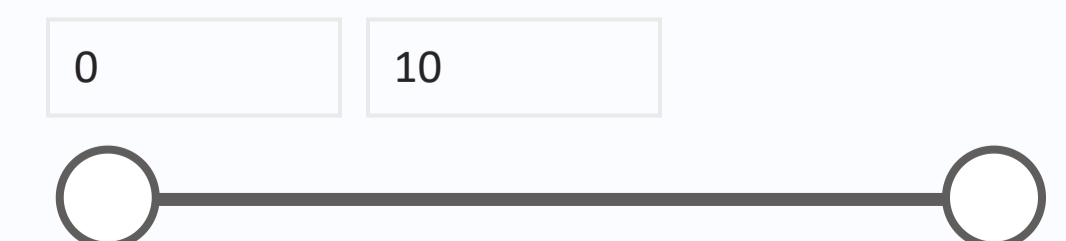


## Theme

- Checkout Process/Checkout Time
- Community Engagement
- Computer Use/WiFi
- Covid
- Curbside Pickup Service
- Electronic Resources
- Fines/Fees
- Friends of the Library/Booksales
- General
- Holds/Wait Times/Book Availability
- Hours
- Information Line

## Filter by Search Term

## Score on Scale of 0-10



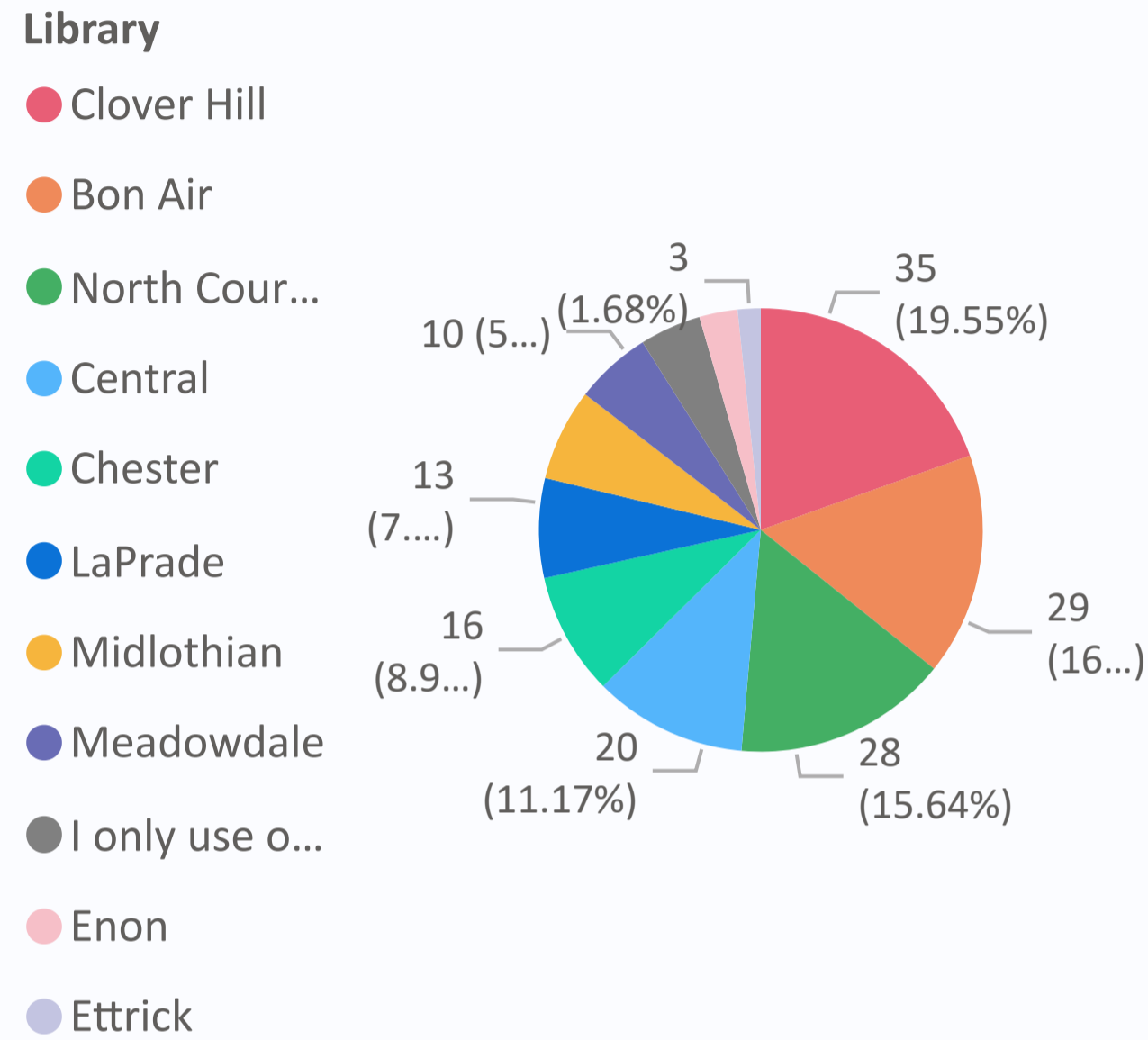
## Month

- 2021
- 2022
- 2023
  - January
  - February
  - March
  - April
  - May

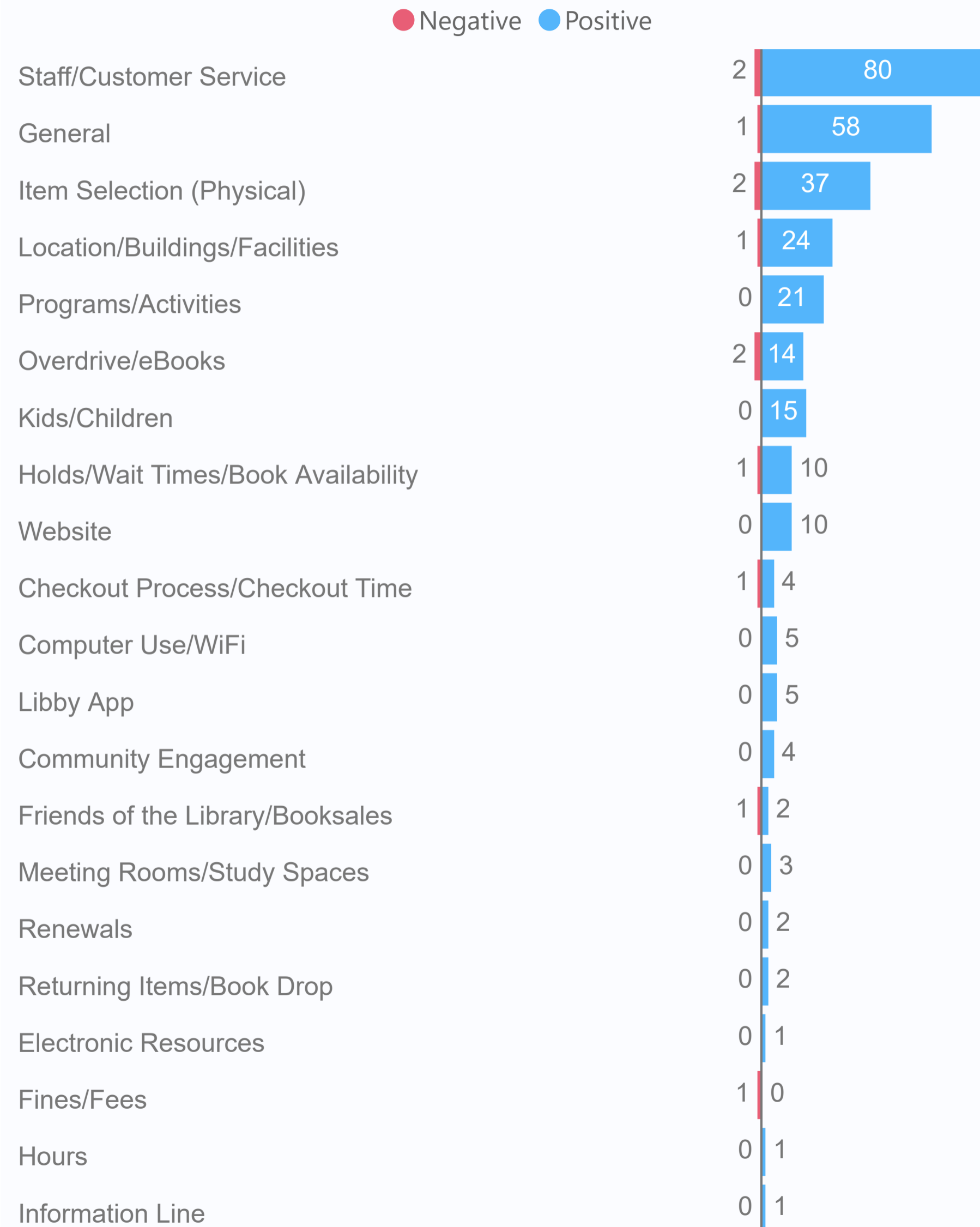
## Promoter / Passive / Detractor

# What is the primary reason for your score?

## Distinct Response Count by Library



## Responses by Theme and Impression



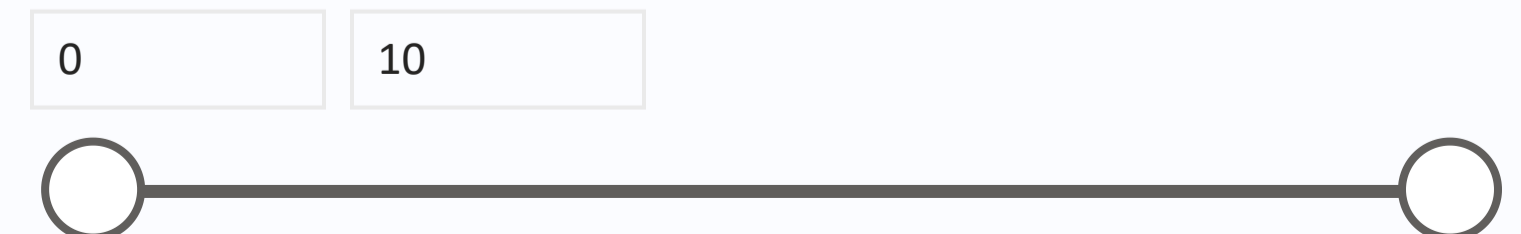
## Key influencers Top segments

What influences Customer Category to be Promoter ?



No influencers found. Try adding some more fields into 'Explain by'.

## Score on Scale of 0-10



## Month

- 2021
- 2022
- 2023
  - January
  - February
  - March
  - April
  - May

## Promoter / Passive / Detractor

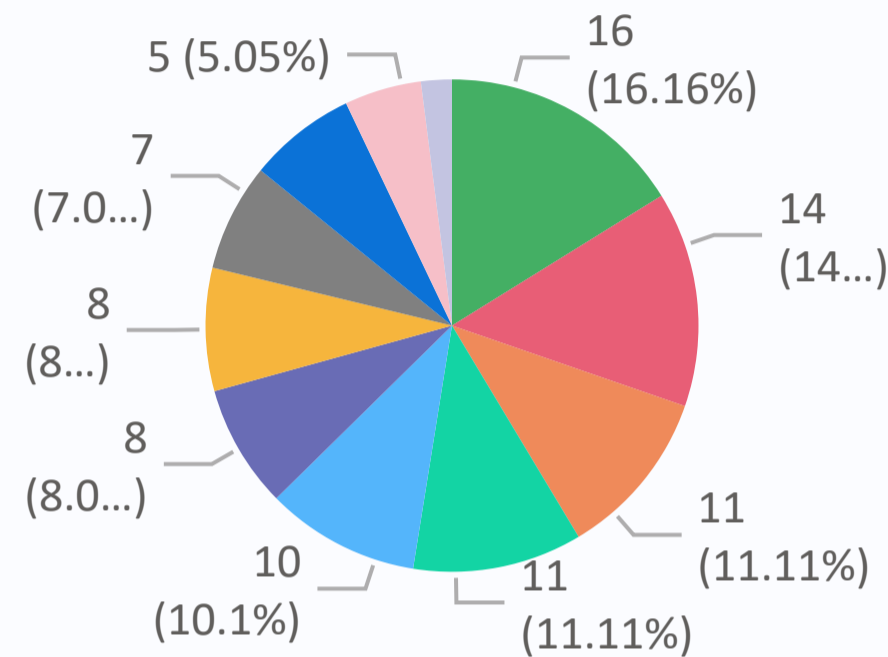
All

# What would you like to tell us, to better serve you?

## Distinct Response Count by Library

### Library

- North Cour...
- Clover Hill
- Bon Air
- Chester
- Central
- Meadowdale
- Midlothian
- I only use o...
- LaPrade
- Enon
- Ettrick



### Month

- 2021
- 2022
- 2023
  - January
  - February
  - March
  - April
  - May

### Promoter / Passive / Detractor

All

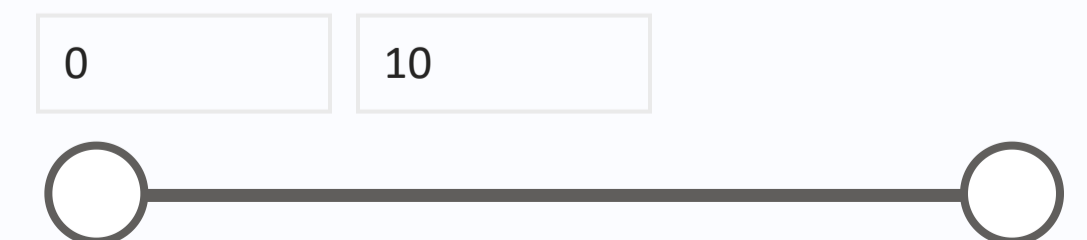
What would you like to tell us, to better serve you?	Score
All is well.	10
Always more books.	10
Appreciated the location for free Covid test kits, even though it must have been stressful for staff.	10
Broader range of online books.	10
Can't think of anything now.	10
Clean efficient welcoming	10
Continue the first \$1.50 free for copies.	10
Don't change a thing!!	10
Don't change anything.	10
I am very happy. If I could request one thing it would be to have a drive through book drop off. This is not a complaint but it would add convenience.	10
I can't imagine a single thing you could do to better serve me. I am a very happy library user!	10
I cant think of anything that would better this particular library. Im very pleased with it.	10
I do not have any suggestions since my needs are being met!	10
I do NOT like the online service LIBBY. I have great difficulty finding an ebook or other item or even searching to see what's available. Perhaps we need classes in how to use or make it more user-friendly	10
I have no advice.	10
I know there's a need to be fair to all parts of the county, but it's frustrating to repeatedly see the "too hot too hold" copies of books available in the same branches of the library. I'm not sure of the rational behind the "too hot to hold". However I am in favor of anything that cuts down on the hold time for newly released books.	10
I say keep on doing what you are doing as it is working.	10
I think that you are perfect in all your services.	10
I think you all are doing a fine job. No complaints.	10
I use the electronic feature Libby. I am very happy with it	10
I wish the children's books were organized by author instead of subject.	10
I would like an easier option for recommending books for the ebook and regular collections.	10
I would like to see this Chester library website have the ability to make requests.	10
I was reading a series of books by Ginny Dye that has about 20 books. There were some books missing from the series. I would like to be able to request the missing books. I know I could	10

## Filter by Key Word



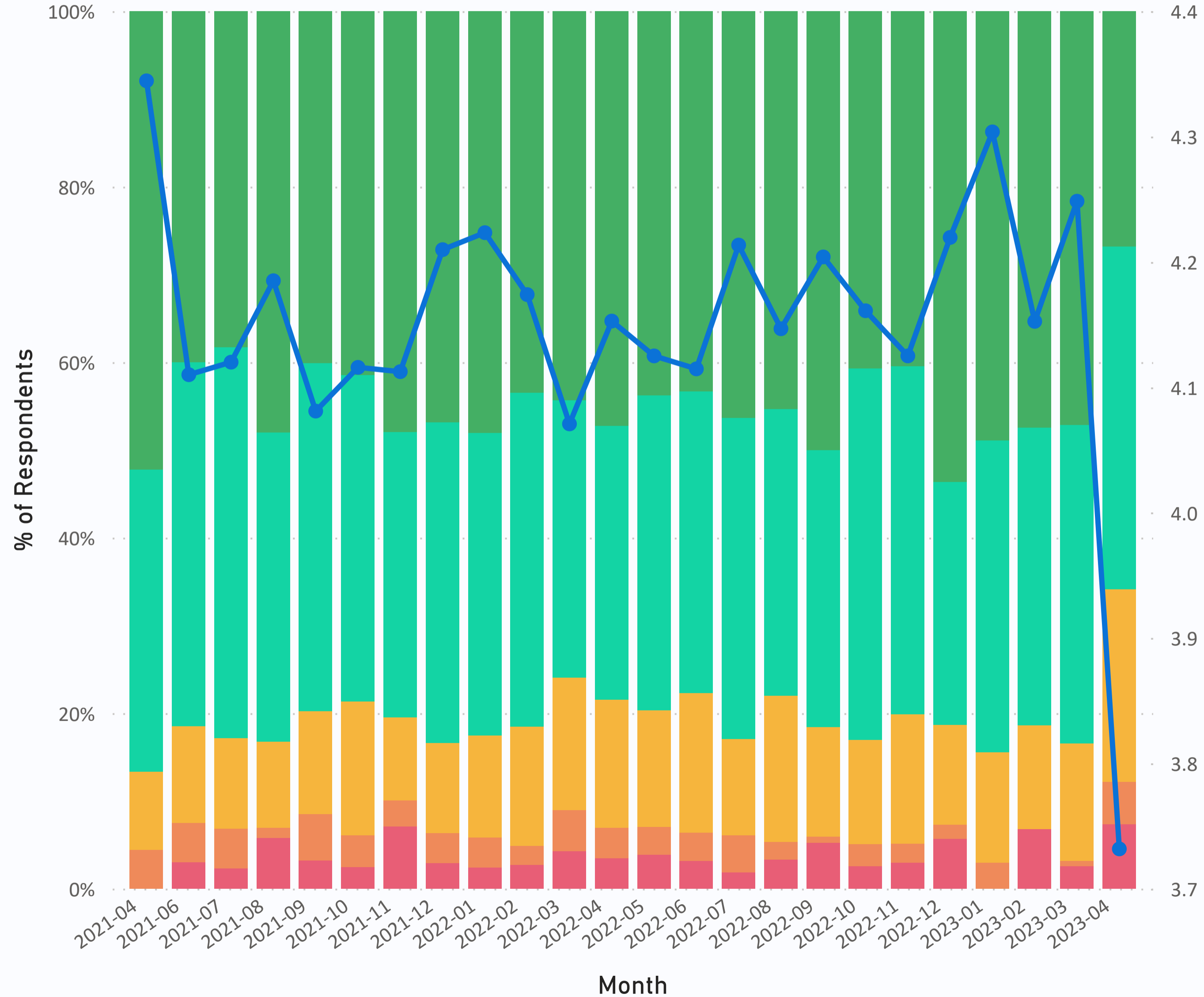
## Filter by Search Term

## Score on Scale of 0-10



Please rate your level of satisfaction for CCPL's website

Level of Satisfaction ● 1 ● 2 ● 3 ● 4 ● 5 ● Average



3748

# of Ratings

4.16

Average Satisfaction Rating

Please describe the reason for your answer. [Website]	Score
	5
99% of the time I have no trouble finding the book I want to reserve and seeing who has a copy that is not on hold.	5
a great deal of material is available sitting at home	5
A great user experience.	5
A new service I'd not previously used	5
A nice and varied collection - and great, knowledgeable staff.	5
Ability to borrow books online	5
Ability to make and maintain personal lists, never had any issues holding/renewing books.	5
able to find available books from my favorite authors quickly, and easy to request them from other branches	5
Able to find what I am looking for with ease	5
Able to reserve, research and look at books based on title or author (mostly my search criteria)	5
Accesibility - ease of use	5
Again great people and good service.	5
Again, I don't demand much or need a lot of help except when one of my favorite Authors releases a new book, the staff is ready to put me on a waiting list. What more could an avid reader ask?	5
Again, Libby system and phone support has been fabulous.	5
Again, this is how I get my books using either OverDrive or Libby.	5
All the employees have always been helpful and knowledgeable.	5
Already started	5
Although I gave a ten because MOST of the staff are just lovely, I did encounter one person at the Enon library who gave me a hard time. I was surprised because I	5