

Use of Finding Aids and the London Free Press (LFP) Collection: A Preliminary Examination

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Research Questions

- How do users search for archival holdings?
- Do users interact with finding aids?

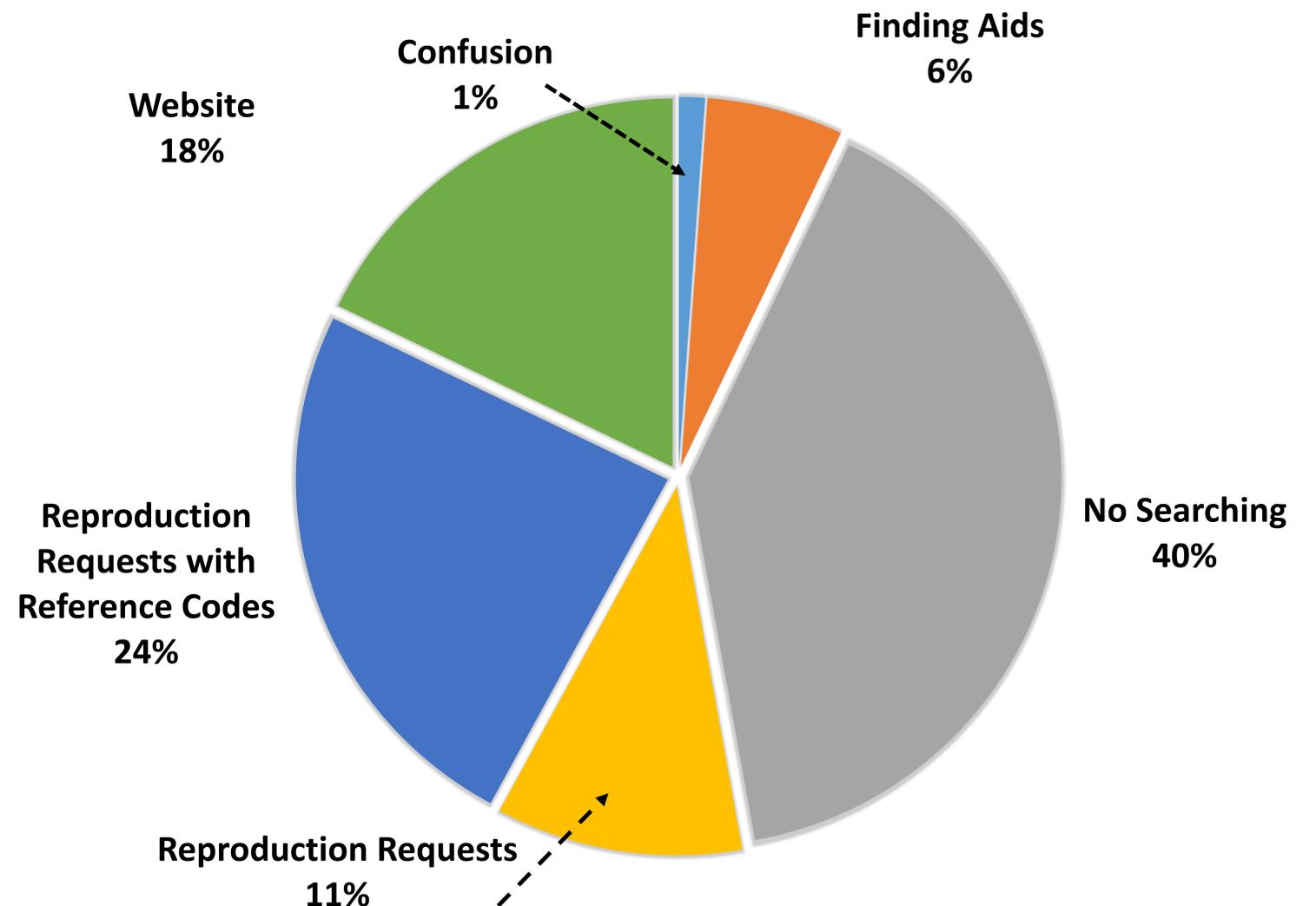
Methodology

The investigators exported all archival reference requests or tickets from 2018 to 2021 from LibAnswers (Springshare) and coded each reference request based on the nature of the inquiry

A Statistics Consultant performed the data analysis which revealed:

- 1777 tickets from 2018 to 2021
 - Of the 1777 tickets, 354 were tickets specific to LFP (20%)
 - From preliminary analysis:
 - 5.93% searched our finding aids/inventories
 - 24.2% searched our online database
 - 38.4% indicated that they did not do any searching or did not know how to start searching for this information

Sample of Results of LFP Analysis



Findings

Findings of this research project revealed that while some users do interact with online finding aids the majority of users do not search finding aids or online databases. Users traditionally begin their research by emailing the archives directly to ask for assistance.

Future Research

Expand data analysis through use of Google Analytics to do more in-depth analysis of user behaviour
More analysis of how users interact with finding aids