

**Information Technology in Northeast Florida's Nonprofits:  
A Comprehensive Study with Ten Major Findings and Policy Recommendations**

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## INTRODUCTION

This is a report about the information technology, or “IT,” capacity of nonprofit organizations in 19 Northeast Florida counties. We undertook this study for two principal reasons. First, despite exhortations and pressures from various quarters for nonprofits to move into the information age, there has been little systematic research about nonprofits’ actual computer capabilities, how they use what they have, and what they need that they don’t have. Studies that do exist have typically been skewed to report the best equipped and most proficient, primarily because those are the nonprofits most likely and most capable of responding to voluntary surveys. What have been generally missing are candid accounts about IT use by the many time- and resource-strapped nonprofits. Moreover, nonprofits in rural and lower socio-economic areas have been characteristically missing from the existing studies.

Second, current information about nonprofits in Northeast Florida, indeed, all of Florida, is conspicuously non-existent. This study helps to fill this void. It addresses the first need by intentionally sampling across agency size, geographic area, and a variety of agency missions. In addition, having distributed and collected our surveys by mail rather than online, we sought to increase participation and feedback from nonprofits with less sophisticated computer capabilities and with less IT savvy.

We began with several preconceptions about what we would find, but only some of these proved correct, and we discovered other unanticipated lessons from the study. Our working hypotheses were as follows:

- In general, nonprofits’ IT needs are extensive;
- Many agencies have limited information about potential IT resources;
- There will be substantial IT differences among nonprofits based on:

Size -- Large organizations generally fare much better;

Mission – Foundations and arts and culture organizations will be better off than nonprofits whose clients are generally poor and politically less influential;

Geography -- Rural nonprofits will be worse off than their urban counterparts;

Agency age – Mature organizations will be better off than younger agencies; and,

Agency Resources – Larger budget agencies will have better IT capabilities.

In this report we summarize how the study was conducted, discuss 10 major findings, and conclude with three policy recommendations.

## ABOUT THE STUDY

All the data were collected from nonprofit managers in 19 North Florida counties. These counties were selected to provide a variety of urban, suburban, and rural nonprofits. Duval County (Jacksonville) provided a largely urban setting, and three adjacent counties (Clay, Nassau, St. Johns) provided suburban contrast. Leon County (Tallahassee) provided a mix of nonprofits from a small city and surrounding suburban area. The remaining 14 counties (Calhoun, Dixie, Franklin, Gadsden, Gulf, Hamilton, Jackson, Jefferson, LaFayette, Liberty, Madison, Suwannee, Taylor, Wakulla) are rural counties near Tallahassee that are characteristic of poor Southern areas with mixed racial populations.

Our study involved a variety of methods. We began with five focus groups of nonprofit executives and IT managers: one each for Tallahassee and the rural nonprofits, and three others from Jacksonville and the surrounding counties that were grouped by the size of agency revenues. All groups were heterogeneous as to mission. They were conducted in December 2002 and January 2003. We asked participants about successes, problems, and other experiences with IT and used their ideas to help formulate a subsequent survey. The survey was sent to approximately 1,000 nonprofits from the 19-county area that had been identified from Business Master Files that we obtained from the Urban Institute's National Center for Charitable Statistics.<sup>1</sup> We structured the sample to obtain a cross-section of mission areas and geographic locations. The survey asked about hardware and software in use; personnel issues such as training and the hiring of "techie"; IT activities including virus protection, file backup, technology planning, and website and network design and maintenance; sources for procurement and IT ideas; and self-evaluations of the sophistication of IT usage. We conducted a follow-up mailing to those organizations that did not respond to our first request. Between the two mailings we attempted to contact slightly more than 1,000 agencies identified from the NCCS files, and 262 nonprofits returned surveys. We tested the representativeness of our sample using statistical techniques to determine whether those that responded were significantly different than non-respondents for important variables such as agency size, age, and location. Our analyses determined that our sample of respondents was representative of the intended larger sample of agencies.

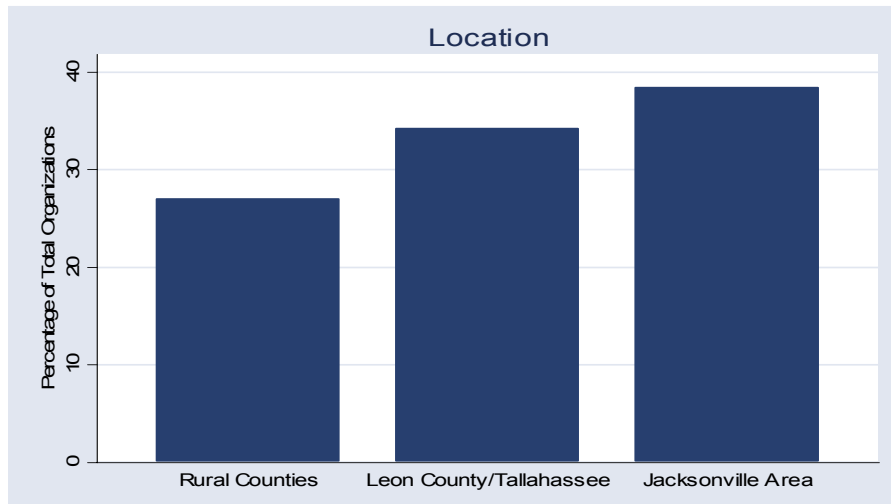
**Table 1: The Sample of Agencies by Mission**

Mission	Agencies	Percent
General Social Services	32	12.2
Foundations	15	5.7
Arts and Culture	42	16.0
Environment	8	3.1
Education	53	20.2
Housing and Shelter	16	6.1
Health, Rehabilitation, Medical	29	11.1
Religious	15	5.7
Youth-Focused	10	3.8
Miscellaneous	42	16.0
Total	262	100.0

<sup>1</sup> We chose to use the Business Master Files because we wanted our sample to include a cross-section of small nonprofits that would not have been contained in the Core Files. We suspect this diminished our response rate, since many of these smaller organizations are likely to be less business-like in attending to mail, and others of them are more likely to have ceased operation as compared to those represented in the Core Files. Core Files contain only those nonprofits that have recently filed annual tax returns.

The numbers of agencies within the sample for each of 10 mission areas are depicted in Table 1. Figure 1 depicts the distribution of agencies among the three general geographic regions. Seventy one (27.1%) were from the 14 rural counties, 90 (34.4%) were from Leon County, and 101 (38.5%) were from the Jacksonville area.

**Figure 1: Sample Composition by Geographic Location**



In the third stage of the study we reconvened focus groups and asked nonprofit managers to help interpret the findings and provide examples to illustrate both common and “outlier” situations depicted by the survey data. Three groups were convened in the fall of 2003, one each for Tallahassee, rural, and Jacksonville-area nonprofits.

### TOP TEN FINDINGS

We have summarized our findings under 10 headings:

1. Mission matters, but not quite as we predicted.
2. Donated computers are not widely sought or valued.
3. Location matters: As expected , rural nonprofits substantially lag their rural counterparts.
4. Web visibility in terms of nonprofit websites was much higher than expected, although major differences exist in the ways that nonprofits use their websites.
5. Surprising numbers of nonprofits are vulnerable to virus and backup protection.
6. Nonprofits in North Florida generally lack consistent IT training and support.
7. Contracting-out IT maintenance is relatively uncommon.

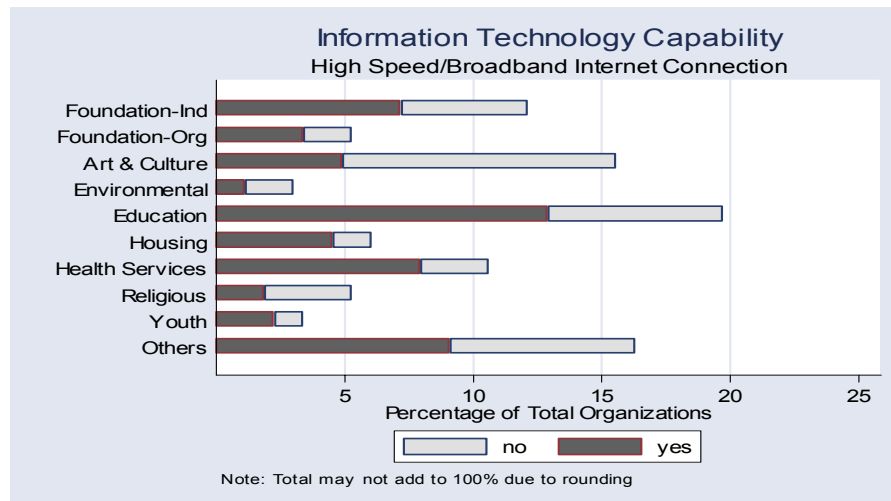
8. Money, available staff, IT knowledge, and failure to prioritize IT were the principal barriers to improvement; government requirements were generally not a major barrier. However, government often does not fund required IT hardware and software in its grants, which is a financial burden for nonprofits.
9. Most nonprofits are using IT in quite rudimentary or limited ways.
10. Agency size is not as important as entrepreneurial “reaching out” in explaining the sophistication of IT usage.

We now develop each of these points in greater detail and with illustrations.

### 1. Mission Matters

Our data suggested several indicators in which mission makes a difference in IT capability and usage, but we focus on two of the most obvious: high-speed internet access and presence of an agency website. The bar graph in Figure 1a illustrates differences in high-speed internet availability for various mission areas. A striking comparison is seen between Housing or Youth-focused agencies, for example, and Art and Culture organizations. Housing agencies represented approximately 6% of the overall sample, Youth organizations were slightly less than 4%, and Art and Culture organizations were nearly 16%.

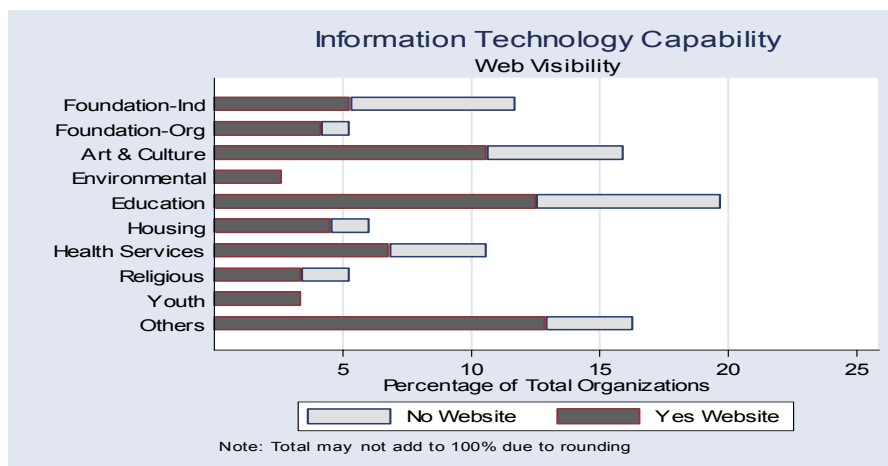
**Figure 1a: Differences in High-Speed Internet Capability for Agency Missions**



The dark portion of each bar represents the proportion of each agency type that possesses high-speed internet, and the light portion represents those agencies that lack high-speed connections. The bar graph illustrates that a significant majority of Housing and Youth organizations possess high-speed internet connections, whereas the majority of Art and Culture organizations do not. We had hypothesized that arts and culture agencies would be among the leading edge nonprofits in IT capacity, under the assumption that their support base typically includes well-to-do patrons. Our results suggest that either our assumptions about bases of support were incorrect or that arts and culture agencies have put less priority on IT than other types of agencies have.

Figure 1b shows that agency mission groups also have significant differences in web visibility, that is, whether or not agencies have operating websites. All of the Environmental and Youth-focused agencies that responded to our survey reported that they had operational websites. For several mission areas, however, such as Individual Foundations, Art and Culture, and Education, substantial numbers of nonprofits have no web visibility.

**Figure 1b: Differences in Web Visibility for Agency Missions**



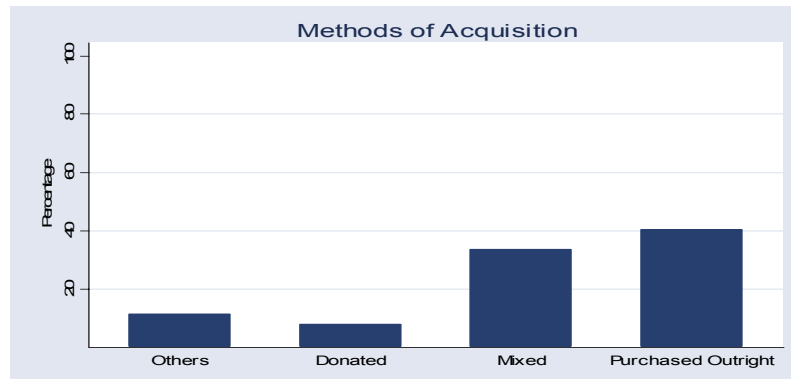
## 2. Sources of Acquisition: Donated Computers Neither Valued Nor Sought

In light of attention in the media to initiatives that solicit used computers to be refurbished and given to nonprofits, we were struck by focus group participants who related horror stories about donated equipment and had vowed never to accept such equipment. Various managers explained how donated computers and software typically were obsolete and incompatible with the systems and software their agencies already possessed. Although some acknowledged that agency resources sometimes led them to have to accept some of the newer donated equipment that comes their way, many had refused to accept donated equipment entirely and most of the rest wanted to. One executive acknowledged that:

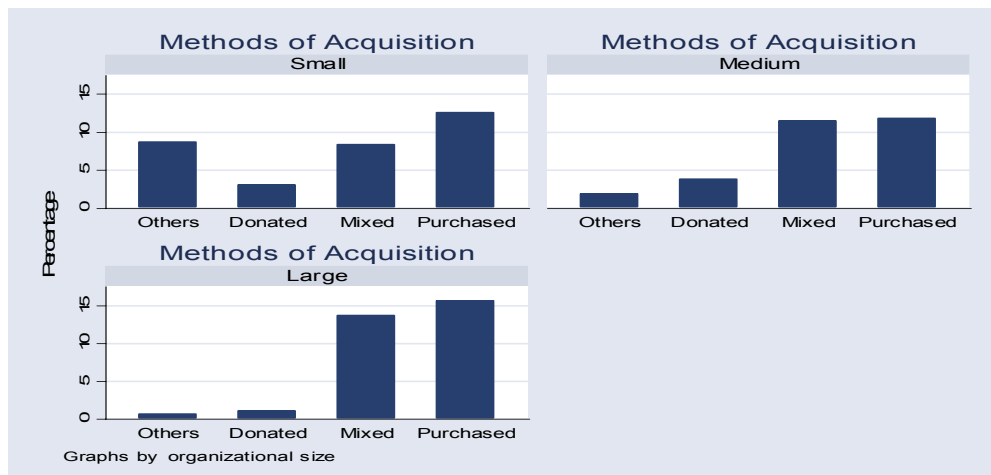
I have adopted a totally different approach to getting new computers and software, especially as we all know how difficult it is to get funds for computers through grants. I have been going to successful business people in town (Jacksonville). I say ‘this is my situation and I need \$5,000 for this to help us with information technology.’ Because they understand the situation, they are willing to help even though they know the money is not going to direct services.

Our survey responses confirmed this impression. As seen in Figure 2a, 40% of agencies report that they acquired their computers exclusively from purchasing, fewer than 10% use exclusively donated equipment, and approximately 35% have some mixture of purchased and donated equipment. Most agencies in the “other” category are very small agencies that do not own computers outright.

**Figure 2a: Agencies' Methods of Computer Acquisition**



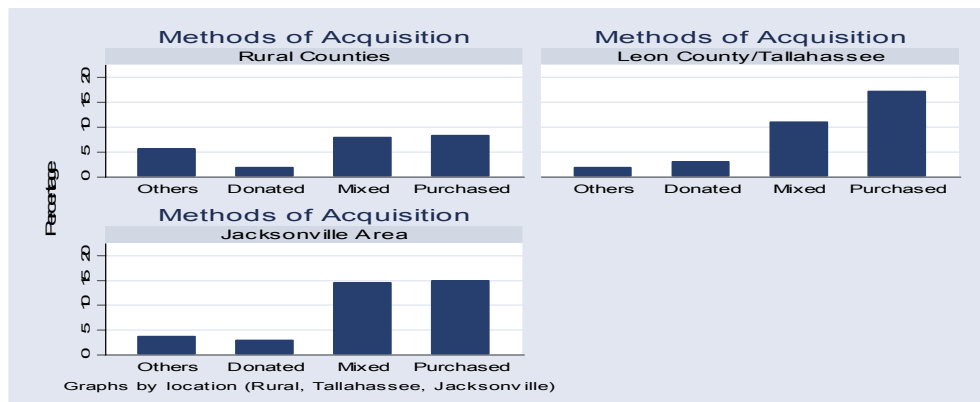
**Figure 2b: Methods of Computer Acquisition by Agency Size**



Figures 2b and 2c show comparisons of agency acquisition methods by agency size and geographic location. Please note that each bar depicts a percentage of agencies from the entire sample of 260 agencies; thus, all 12 bars in each figure will obtain the total of 100%. Figure 2b illustrates a surprising result in that medium sized organizations actually report a higher dependence on donated equipment than do small agencies. Large agencies, not surprisingly, are least likely to use donated computers. Since agency size was determined by annual revenues rather than number of employees, there may be some instances of agencies with large budgets but small numbers of staff and relatively unsophisticated IT usage. An executive director of a nonprofit fishing derby, for example, described his agency as large in terms of revenue, although the agency had few staff and minimal computer capabilities.

Figure 2c shows that Tallahassee-based nonprofits are more likely than their Jacksonville or rural counterparts to rely exclusively on outright purchases for computers. This may be related to the proportionately large numbers of nonprofit state headquarters in Tallahassee whose activities focus on information management and communications rather than direct client services. Surprisingly, rural nonprofits, although there are fewer of them in the sample, show a relatively similar profile as those from the Jacksonville area in terms of a comparatively equal dependence on purchasing directly and a mix of purchases and donations for computer acquisition.

**Figure 2c: Methods of Computer Acquisition by Agency Geographic Location**



### 3. Location Matters

Focus group participants who represented the three general regions – Jacksonville, Tallahassee, and rural counties – described substantial differences in their IT capabilities. Some Jacksonville nonprofit managers, for example, perhaps because of the size of the nonprofit community in general and its focus on providing services, regaled us with stories about collaborations and creative applications of IT for getting their missions accomplished. Some participants in our Tallahassee focus groups, on the other hand, represented state headquarters nonprofits that were comparatively well equipped with computers but a little less innovative than their Jacksonville counterparts. Managers from the rural nonprofits, however, consistently described the many difficulties they experience in their computer applications. Whereas urban nonprofits take high-speed internet for granted, rural nonprofits typically have only dial-up access, and even this access is often unreliable. They also described resource-strapped circumstances and a “make-do” approach to acquiring and using information technology. They attributed some of their problems, setting aside the question of available resources, to the difficulties they experience in convincing less technologically-aware board members that up-to-date computers are mission critical.

**Figure 3a: Web Visibility by Geographic Location**

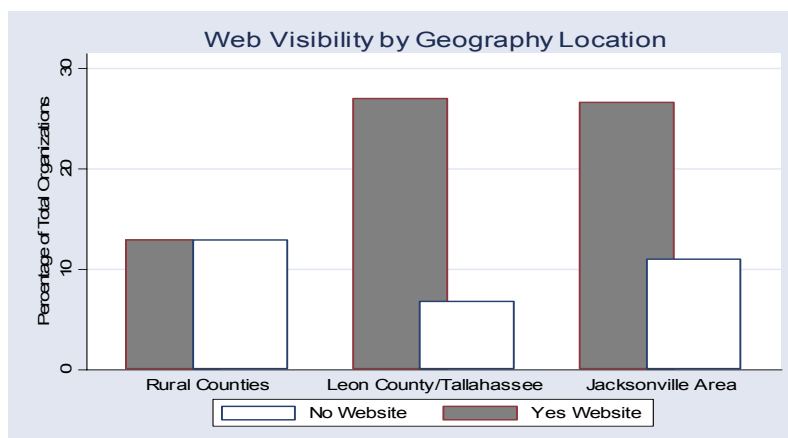
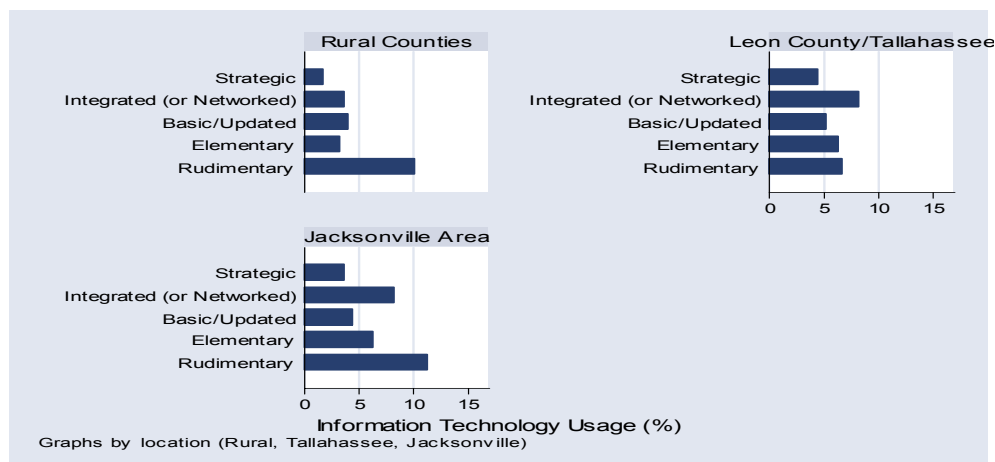


Figure 3a depicts distinctive geographic differences from our survey responses with regard to whether agencies maintain a website. Among rural nonprofits, although there are fewer of them, half report having no website. More than two-thirds of Jacksonville-area nonprofits report maintaining websites, and more than three-fourths of Tallahassee nonprofits maintain websites.

In Figure 3b we illustrate the nonprofits’ self-assessments of usage. As in other three-part graphs, please note that each bar depicts a percentage of nonprofits from the entire sample. The “rudimentary” level of usage includes nonprofits that do not use IT at all, in addition to others who use it only in rudimentary ways. “Basic/Updated” usage is distinguished from “elementary” usage in that managers of “basic” systems believe their IT actually facilitates agency operations and report that their systems are regularly upgraded and backed-up. Integrated systems are more developed than basic systems in that their various computers and offices are networked together. “Strategic” usage implies that the agency’s IT systems are regularly used in operational decision making and strategic planning. While all three regions possess fairly high numbers of nonprofits (7-12%) that evaluate themselves as rudimentary users, our 14 rural counties have comparatively few nonprofits that operate at the other more sophisticated levels. Clearly the survey data confirmed what the focus groups suggested: Rural nonprofits lag significantly behind their urban counterparts in terms of the technologies they possess and the ways they use them.

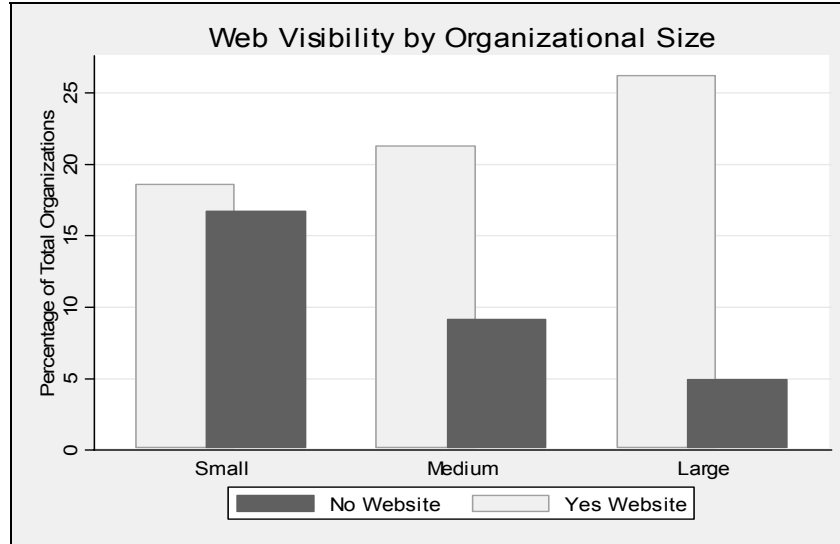
**Figure 3b: Sophistication of IT Usage by Geographic Location**



#### 4. Web Visibility Higher Than Expected but Varied in Sophistication

We were pleasantly surprised by the numbers of nonprofits that reported having agency websites. The cross-section of organizations with websites is suggested in Figure 3a, above. Figure 4, below, depicts the distribution of agency websites with regard to agency size. Surprisingly, more than half of the small agencies (annual revenues less than \$100,000) reported that they maintain websites. As expected, medium and large nonprofits are proportionately more likely to have and maintain websites. It is interesting that 5% of the nonprofits in our sample were large nonprofits (those with revenues of at least \$600,000 per year) that report not having websites. These appear to be agencies similar to the fishing derby nonprofit and a few low-profile foundations that happen to accumulate and distribute relatively larger revenues but did not feel the need, at least in 2003 when the survey was conducted, to maintain visibility on the internet.

**Figure 4: Web Visibility and Organization Size**



An important caveat must be noted about our responding agencies' websites: They vary considerably in the ways they are used and the interactive features they contain. Our focus group participants alerted us to the reality that many of their websites were, as one participant described it, "informational shells. They tell the public who we are and what we do, and that's all." Others reported using their websites for somewhat more elementary interactive purposes, but are far from fully exploiting their online capabilities. An executive director from one medium-sized agency described her website this way:

We use a web site to send information to people. There is a calendar where volunteers have the opportunity to find out the general information about us and sign up to volunteer for specific events.... But I do not think we are good at promoting the site to the public and we do not track how many people click on the site.

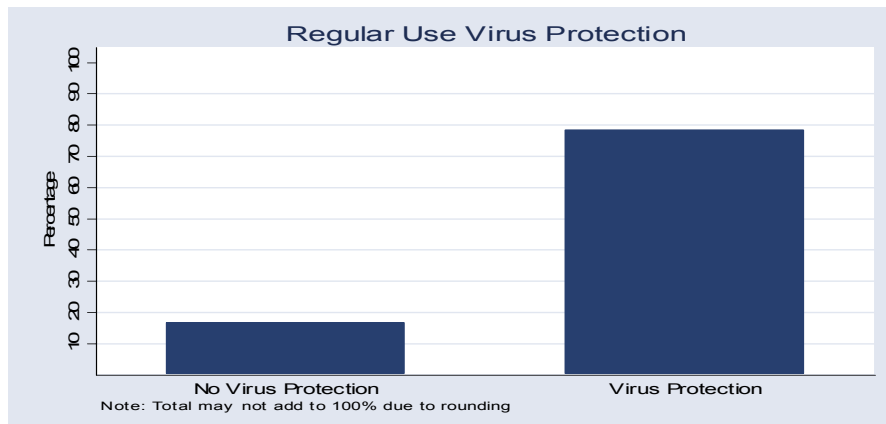
A few focus group participants and survey respondents reported much more interactive roles that their websites perform. A few take contributions online, others permit clients to report interactions online, and others interact with contracted business partners online. One executive reported that his agency's website was integral to the organization's mission and its broad visibility:

We use the website for marketing. We get 100,000 hits a month and many are from overseas. We have documents online about things we do and it allows us to decrease the workload of answering phone calls. We also put a meeting schedule and minutes online, and that has been incredibly helpful. We also have a discussion board online. People can get involved in the meeting without actually attending. So, we are all online everyday.

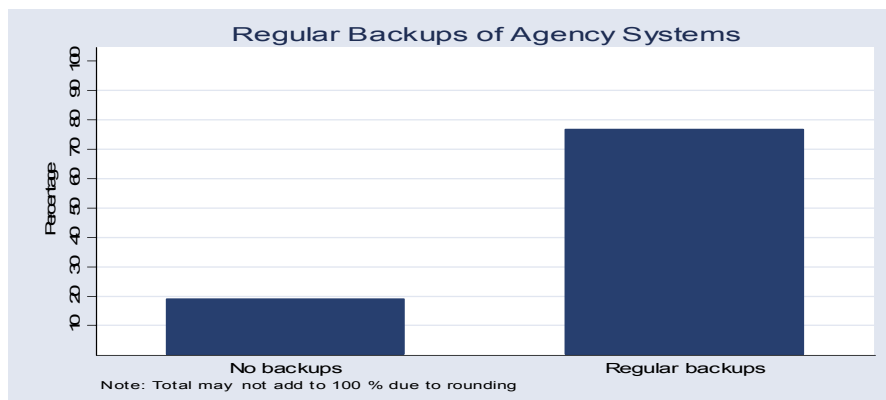
## **5. Vulnerability to Virus and Backup Failure**

Although the majority of nonprofit agencies that responded to our survey report that they regularly use virus protection for their computer systems, we were concerned that any nonprofits in 2003 would report that they were not protected against viruses. In fact, as shown in Figure 5A, more than 15% of our responding nonprofits reported that they do not regularly use virus protection.

**Figure 5a: Nonprofits' Vulnerability to Viruses**



**Figure 5b: Nonprofits' Vulnerability to Loss of System Files**



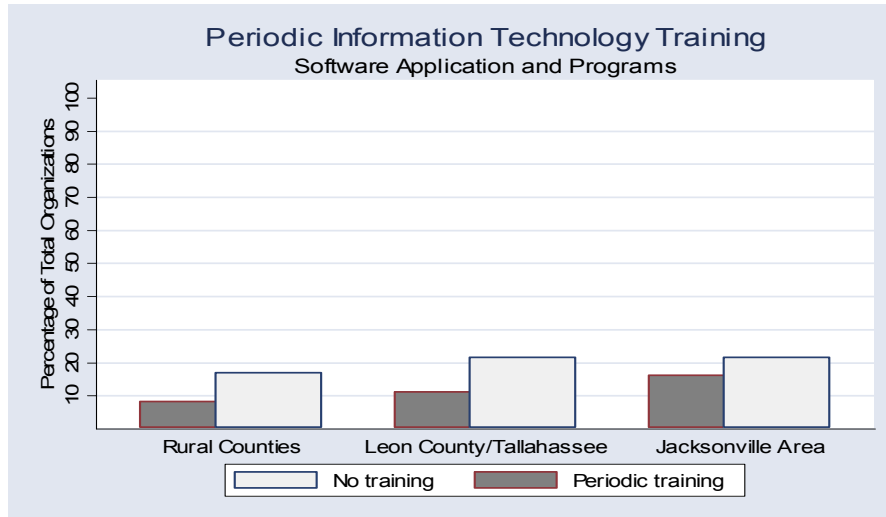
A similar pattern emerges for the problem of backing-up agency system files. Figure 5b shows the percentages of agencies that do and do not regularly back-up their computer systems' files. Nearly 20% of agencies report that they do not regularly back-up files. Although this and the profile from above about virus protection are disquieting they are not inconsistent with observations from some of our focus group participants who candidly admitted that they and their employees are simply unable to give adequate attention to maintaining their agencies' information technology. We believe this is an accurate picture. There are substantial differences in nonprofits' use of information technology. The issue is not merely about possessing technology; it is equally about using technology in ways that are considered customarily safe and effective.

## **6. Little Systematic Training and IT Support**

In general the nonprofits of Northeast Florida do not undertake systematic hardware and software training for their employees. Figure 6a shows that the majority of nonprofits in all three geographic

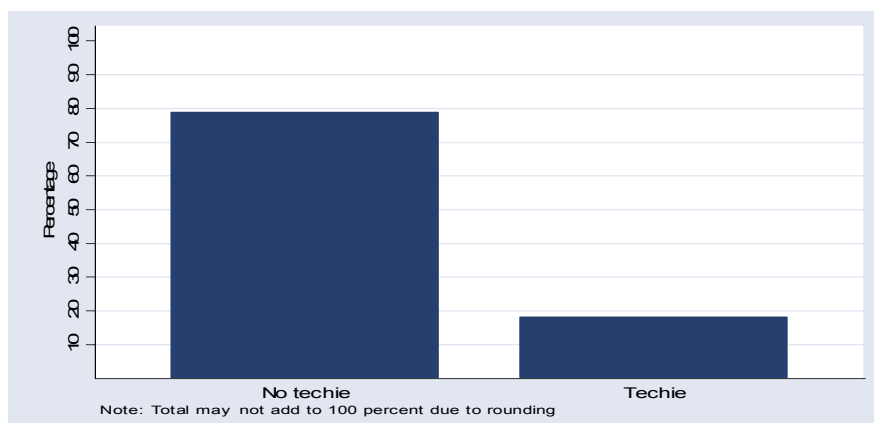
regions do not provide regular software training for employees. The graph suggests that the lack of regular training is more serious with Tallahassee and rural nonprofits than in the Jacksonville area.

**Figure 6a: Periodic Software Training by Geographic Location**



As another measure of support for their IT activities we asked agencies whether they have staff whose principal duty is to maintain their IT systems and support other employees’ IT needs. We refer colloquially to these staff members as “techies.” Figure 6b illustrates that fewer than 20% of our responding agencies have a full-time techie. Several of our focus group participants provided a clear picture of the “techie” role for their organizations, a portrait that may be fairly representative for the 80% of agencies that do not have full-time IT support staff. They are so mission and client-focused – and many of them are relatively small – that they are unable to justify paying for a full time IT staff. But because staff do encounter computer problems the individual who knows more about computers than others becomes the identified “computer person.” Other staff learn informally to turn to this individual to solve whatever computer problems arise. This role is entirely informal; it rarely becomes a part of the individual’s job description. When this individual leaves the nonprofit agency, a new or remaining employee who is next most knowledgeable becomes the informally designated computer person.

**Figure 6b: Nonprofits with Full-Time “Techies”**

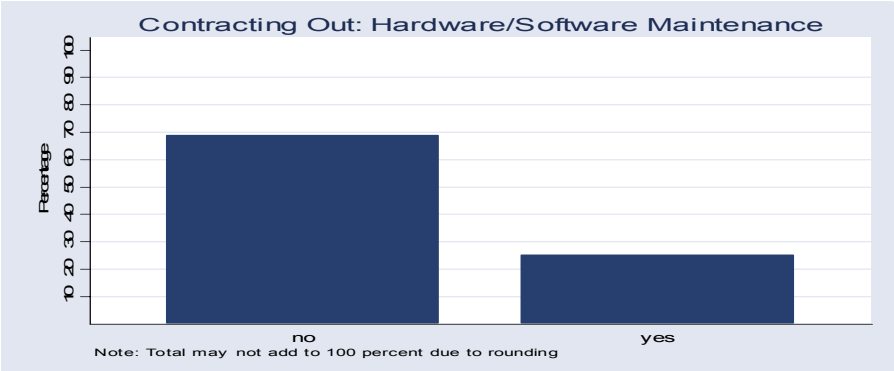


When problems occur that are beyond the expertise of the identified computer person the staff typically turn to an outside person for help – usually either a board member or a spouse of a board member. This sort of assistance typically occurs in a somewhat haphazard fashion: when the volunteer has time and to a degree dictated by the agency’s resources or resources that the volunteer can draw upon from his or her informal networks outside the organization. For the most fortunate organizations this volunteer’s regular employment and expertise is in the information technology field. For many other organizations the volunteer’s expertise and access to outside resources are more limited.

**7. Only a Small Minority of Nonprofits Contract-Out IT Support**

We asked our respondents whether their agencies contract out system maintenance and/or website maintenance. Figure 7a shows that only about 20% of these organizations contract out hardware or software maintenance. Although our focus groups contained a few outspoken advocates for outsourcing both system and website maintenance, the idea has still not caught on to a large degree. Other focus group participants reported that their reluctance to contract out has to do with their own lack of knowledge about trustworthy contractors. A few described bad experiences in which contractors had misrepresented their abilities and others in which their own limited knowledge of potential technologies had led to unfortunate mismatches between their needs and the specialties of contractors. In other words, there are two potential barriers to confident and effective outsourcing: lack of information about dependable contractors and lack of management knowledge about technological possibilities. Lack of funding, or the perception that it will cost a lot to contract out, remains as a third barrier.

**Figure 7a: Nonprofits’ Contracting Out System Maintenance**



**Figure 7b: Nonprofits’ Contracting-Out Web Development and Maintenance**

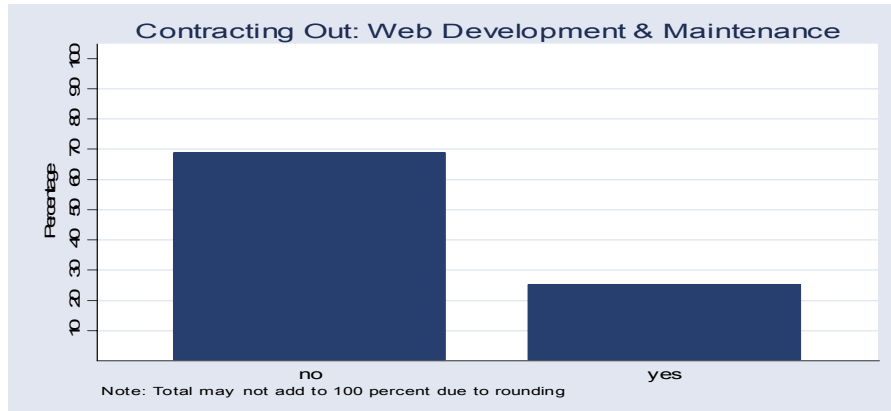
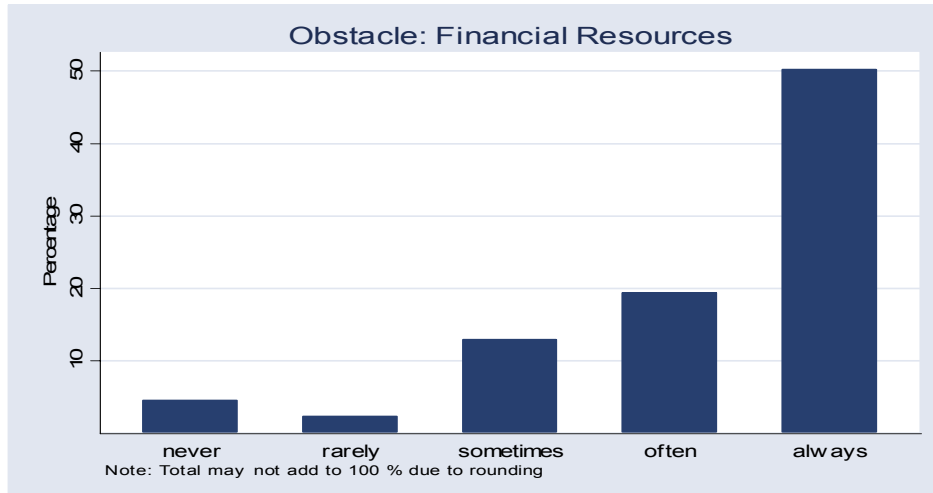


Figure 7b depicts a similar situation for contracting-out web development and maintenance. This is an area in which some nonprofits have found benefit in contracting out this work; but again, only about 25% of our responding agencies indicated they had contracted out their website activities.

### **8. Major Obstacles: Money, Staff, Knowledge, Failure to Prioritize IT, but Not Government**

In our focus groups managers described what they believed were the most prominent barriers to improving their agencies’ information technologies. They identified money, staff availability, knowledge about IT, the failure to identify IT as a priority, and government requirements as particularly troublesome. In our survey we sought to confirm the generalizability of these concerns by asking respondents how often their organizations experienced these particular problems as barriers. Figures 8a, 8b, 8c, 8d, and 8e illustrate the results. In Figure 8a we see that virtually all organizations regarded the lack of financial resources as a chronic or frequent barrier to improving their IT operations. Figures 8b and 8c show that staff availability and knowledge about IT are sometimes or often barriers, but they are comparatively less important barriers as compared to financial resources. Figure 8d shows the somewhat smaller numbers of managers who acknowledged that the failure to treat IT as a priority had become an obstacle to their agencies’ further progress with IT. Finally, several of our focus group participants had provided passionate illustrations about the ways their organizations’ information technologies had been “whip-lashed” by changing expectations or excessive reporting requirements from governments for whom they provided contract services. As shown in Figure 8e, government requirements were not borne out as generalizable barriers to our survey respondent nonprofits’ technology activities.

#### **Figure 8a: Lack of Financial Resources as Obstacle to Technology Improvement**



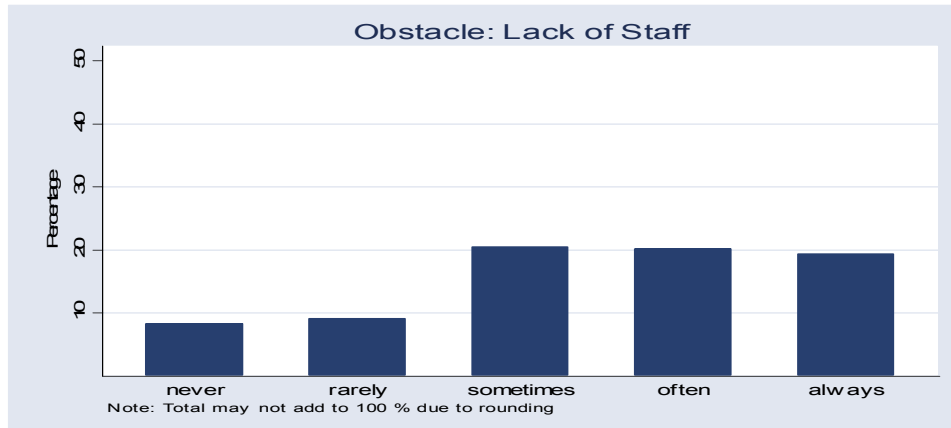
In our follow-up focus groups we heard other interpretations and suggestions about practical barriers to technology improvement. An oft-repeated observation is that nonprofits have difficulty convincing funders, both government agencies and foundations, that investments in technology must be regarded as mission-critical program costs. One participant observed that:

I think funders are bored with requests for technology related items ... I remember requesting a small grant and hearing feedback that 75% of people are asking for computers, and it was not “sexy” anymore to talk about IT to catch funders’ attention.

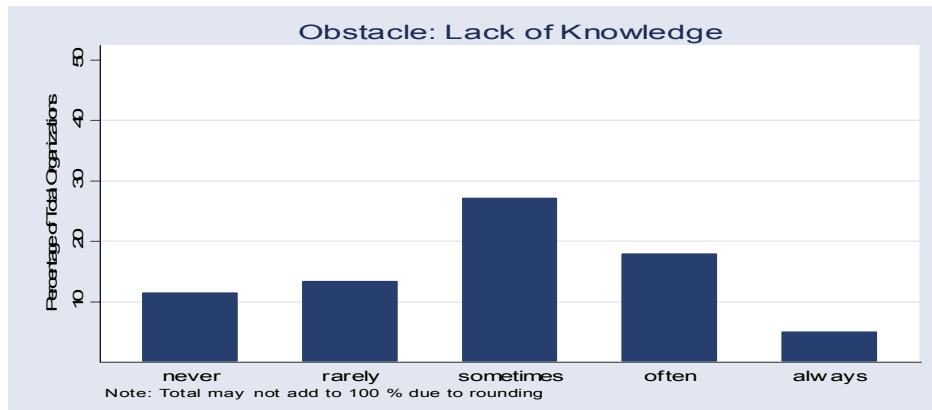
The theme we heard most often, however, is that access to informed and skillful people is critical to keeping nonprofit agencies on the technological leading edge. As we discussed above regarding volunteer technical support, some agencies are particularly successful in exploiting their external network connections, and others are not. But for both the successful and the unsuccessful, maintaining access and getting ongoing contributions of time and expertise from these individuals can become a major barrier for sustaining or improving the agency’s technologies. The ongoing tension for maintaining such a relationship was nicely summarized by one of our follow-up focus group participants:

Often times in organizations like ours you will have someone on your board or committee or a friend of that person, who is willing to do something at cost, or for free, or for some kind of a discount. It usually involves some sort of sacrifice in exchange for hardware or services that are available. It is not so much that it is a low bid but an opportunity ... they will give you their first generation software. But when you are looking at the differences, sometimes they are \$500 to \$2,000. That is a huge difference that might provide services for 10 kids. So it is hard to make a case to spend that much, whereas you can’t pass up the donated services, despite the waiting and inconvenience.

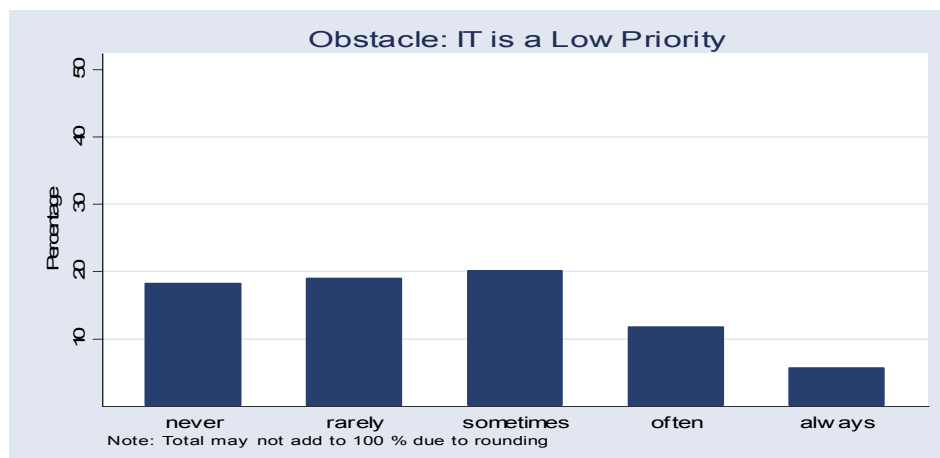
**Figure 8b: Lack of Staff as Obstacle to Technology Improvement**



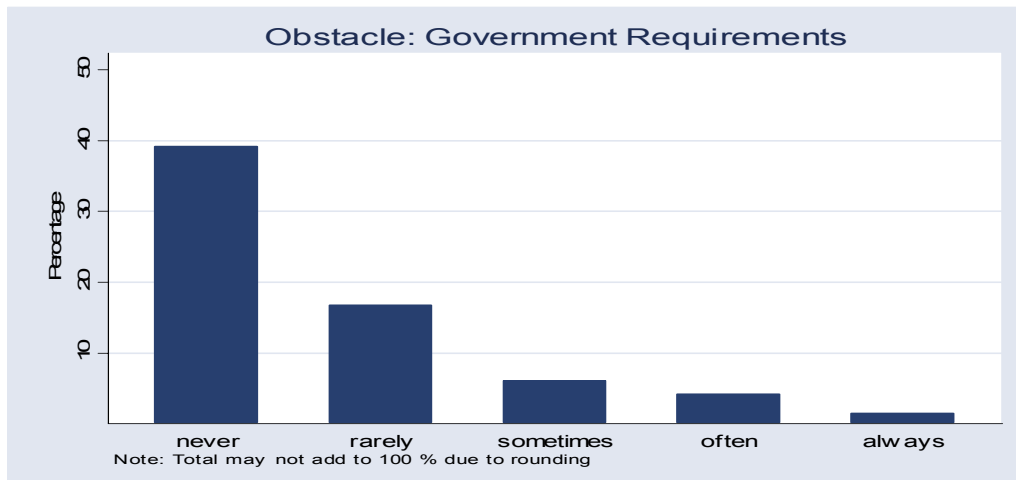
**Figure 8c: Lack of Knowledge as Obstacle to Technology Improvement**



**Figure 8d: Lack of Priority for IT as Obstacle to Technology Improvement**



**Figure 8e: Government Requirements as Obstacle to Technology Improvement**



### 9. Usage as Compared to Equipment: Low Sophistication

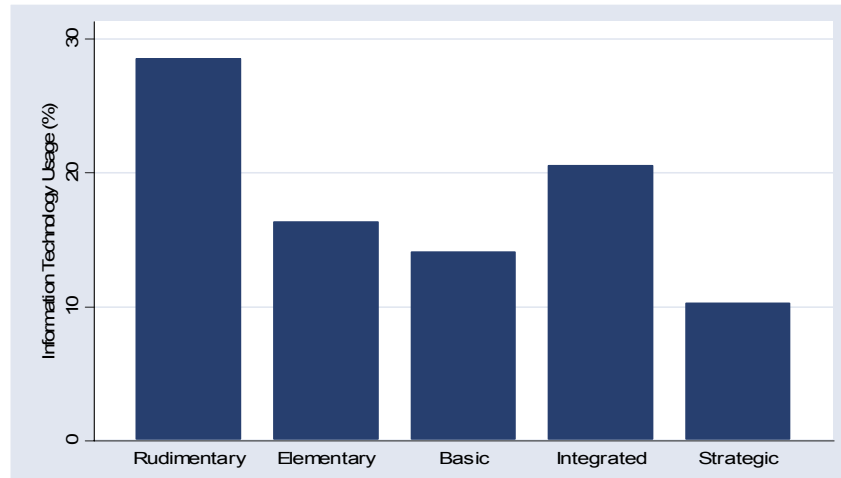
Some experts in the field of information technology assert the importance of separately analyzing how technologies are used in contrast to merely depicting what technologies the organization possesses. One approach, sometimes referred to as “knowledge management,” suggests that an organization’s focus should be on how technology systems are used to store and use existing knowledge and develop new knowledge, not on the mere collection and storage of information. Following this idea, we formulated a five-point scale for assessing how effectively our nonprofits are using their information technologies. From least to most sophisticated, the five points are:

- a. Using IT in the most rudimentary ways or not at all;
- b. Using IT in elementary ways that facilitate conducting the agency’s work;
- c. Using IT in ways that facilitate the agency’s work and performing frequent backups and product updates;
- d. Using IT and IT products in a networked fashion for maximum ease and efficiency; and,
- e. Using IT in a networked fashion and managers and executives using it to make strategic decisions about operations and overall direction.<sup>2</sup>

We asked each survey respondent to assess his or her agency against this scale. Their responses are shown in the distribution in Figure 9a. The five bars in the graph show the percentages of respondents who depicted their agencies at each of the five points on the scale.

**Figure 9a: Nonprofits’ Self-Evaluation of IT Usage**

<sup>2</sup> These questions were the basis for the scales in Figure 3b, above, as well.



We believe that the nearly 30% of agencies that depict themselves at the most rudimentary level of technology usage is a point of some concern. We note that approximately 45% of our responding agencies have rated their usage as either rudimentary or elementary. Recall that Figure 5b showed that approximately 75% of respondents reported their agencies doing regular data and systems backups. The present graph suggests that less than 50% of our organizations report doing frequent backups and keep software updated. Slightly more than 10% of respondents did not answer this question, but those who did respond are approximately evenly split as to doing regular backups and software updates. In our view this 50% split – with approximately half at rudimentary or elementary usage level and half that are proficient enough to do regular backups and upgrades -- is a reasonable and candid assessment of how typical North Florida nonprofits use information technology. Moreover, it is noteworthy that only about ten percent of agencies depict themselves as using IT for operational and strategic decision making. In summary, knowledge management among North Florida’s nonprofit organizations has a long way to go.

A few other descriptive observations are worth noting:

- 49.3% of small nonprofits, 26.8% of mid-sized nonprofits, and 13.3% of large nonprofits either do not use IT or use it in rudimentary ways;
- All foundations are in the top three levels; and,
- 60% of housing and shelter, 50% of religious, 44.4% of youth-focused, and 37.5% of environmental nonprofits do not use IT or use it in rudimentary ways.

## 10. Size Matters, But Networking Matters More

As we described earlier our focus group participants emphasized the critical tension that they must maintain in keeping open their connections to knowledgeable others who can help them with their technologies. To follow up on this notion we asked respondents to tell us where they get their ideas for appropriate new technologies and solutions to technology problems. We provided a list of typical resources and subsequently grouped the list into categories that could be characterized as a) the nearby “usual suspects” and b) those that are somewhat more distant, less-frequently contacted associates. Thus

board members and other employees, for example, are in the first category, whereas similar agencies in other communities and staff members of national accrediting bodies are in the latter group. This dichotomy is similar to the distinction Robert Putnam makes in his celebrated book, Bowling Alone, between bonding and bridging ties. Ties that bond are those that connect us to others with whom we share frequent interactions and with whom we have close mutual friends. It is with those to whom we are thus bonded that we discuss matters of the heart, but the close-knit nature of these types of relationships has been shown to inhibit innovation and the diffusion of new or alternative points of view.

Bridging ties, on the other hand, are those that connect individuals with whom we have less frequent interactions and groups that hold alternative or opposing points of view. These types of ties have been shown to facilitate the diffusion of new and opposing points of view. They are referred to as bridging ties because they bridge societal groups that might otherwise remain isolated from each other. Some scholars assert that these ties are extremely important for holding together the diverse fabric of a society like the United States. We were especially interested in examining how these two types of ties might be related to the levels of IT usage that nonprofits sustain. In particular, we suspected that nonprofits that tend to rely on the “usual suspects” for technology ideas and for solving technology problems would generally report lower levels of IT usage on our five-point scale than would those nonprofits that seek out network connections that are characterized by bridging ties.

We undertook a series of multivariate statistical analyses in order to test this proposition. Our analyses confirmed that a significant relationship exists in the direction that we predicted. We found that agencies that seek IT ideas and technology solutions predominantly across bridging ties rather than bonding ties demonstrate significantly more sophisticated levels of IT usage. In fact, we found that this factor is more important in accounting for the sophistication of IT usage than is agency size. Specifically, larger agencies do tend to use IT at higher levels on our usage index, but the agency’s networking activities – specifically to those types of associates that are outside the circle of closest friends – is more important in effective use of information technology than is the size of the agency’s revenues. We believe this has very important implications for the types of policies that foundations and public policy makers might pursue in order to assist nonprofits in improving their technology performance. We return to these implications in our concluding recommendations.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> We provide an outline of our multivariate analysis in the appendices of this report, but we do not include it in the main text because we believe it will appear inaccessible to the practitioner audience for whom this report is intended. Additional information about the analysis is available from the authors.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

### 1. Rural Nonprofits Need a Hand-Up

Various indicators from our survey and our focus groups point to the technology deficiencies that rural nonprofits experience. Some of the current barriers cannot be overcome overnight; high-speed internet capabilities, for example, will be added in many of our rural communities only after a concerted effort by business and community leaders and governments at local and state levels. Two other needs, however, resources and education, can be contributed from those in more urban areas. Unfortunately, most rural areas of Florida typically pass beneath the radar of grant makers in the government and foundation communities. Policy makers in these two communities can help change this situation.

### 2. A Concerted Initiative to Change the Conception of Technology as Overhead

Numerous participants in our focus groups, both before and after the survey, described the ongoing struggle they face in trying to include technology costs into grants and contracts. They report that various foundation and government entities that let contracts and grants with them continue to disallow such budget items because they are not considered to be directly mission-related. These managers provided various accounts, however, of the ways that their missions increasingly depend on electronic communications. Ironically, some entities that forbid computer costs in the contracts and grants they administer nonetheless require progress reports to be filed electronically. This conclusion and its implications must be an important focus: a serious effort is needed to attempt to educate grant and contract managers about this ironic and outdated attitude toward technology costs.

### 3. Promoting Nonprofit Technology Resource Centers

We believe that nonprofit technology centers are the cornerstone for improving information technology in North Florida's nonprofits, and we suspect that our study's findings related to this point are generalizable to nonprofits everywhere. An effective nonprofit technology center could take several different forms. In some instances a physical entity that houses technology staff members and hosts workshops or meetings may be the answer. In other instances the technology "center" might be a set of networked activities coordinated through a nonprofit Management Support Organization – that is, a "virtual" technology center. Various examples and designs of nonprofit technology centers exist in urban areas in the United States, including:

The IT Resource Center, a membership-based IT center serving Chicago nonprofits since 1984;<sup>4</sup>

Entech, an IT outreach project of the University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee;<sup>5</sup> and,

The Alliance for Community Technology, an information clearinghouse on IT applications for community-serving groups and a joint project of the University of Michigan and the Kellogg Foundation.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> <http://www.itresourcecenter.org>

<sup>5</sup> <http://epic.cuir.uwm.edu/entech/>

<sup>6</sup> <http://epic.cuir.uwm.edu/entech/>

A center following any of these designs could offer, at minimum, four types of services or activities:

a. Basic skills and know-how, such as:

Information about virus protection, system backups, network designs, and so on;

Assessments of nonprofits' technology capabilities and needs;

Systematic training in the form of workshops on hardware and software and their usage; and,

On-site, online, or telephonic technical assistance.

b. Information about potential contract services. We think it is inadvisable for a nonprofit technology center to endorse individual vendors, but they could maintain a clearinghouse list of potential vendors. They could also maintain records of nonprofits that have used particular providers. From this information nonprofits could seek each other's advice based on past experiences.

c. Linkages to for-profit partners. A nonprofit technology resource center could also serve to link nonprofits to individuals in the business community who could serve as IT resource persons for individual nonprofit agencies. Several examples of this type of connection between individual agencies and a local business were discussed in the focus groups. Those involved reported that these collaborations had enriched the confidence and technical capacity available to their nonprofit agencies.

d. Dialogue among nonprofit managers. In our view this is one of the most critical functions for a technology center. Recall our last finding, that the networking outreach activities of a nonprofit are more important than agency resources as a predictor of the agency's sophistication in IT usage. In other words, throwing money at individual agencies to solve their IT problems is likely to be less effective than encouraging them to collaborate and reach out to others outside their usual circle of everyday associates. The point is to create venues and opportunities for nonprofit managers to share experiences, promising practices, and visionary ideas. Nonprofit managers who engage each other in such conversations will find partners for collaborative, cost-effective IT initiatives, learn about potential solutions to problems that others have encountered and remedied, and occasionally create synergistic initiatives that help them collectively to break out of recurring, seemingly intractable dilemmas. This is not merely mystical thinking: Our analysis shows that those who seek ideas from "outside the box" actually end up using their technology resources in ways that take fuller advantage of their organizations' strategic potential. The dialogue that occurs as a natural by-product of a technology center's regular activities – or perhaps through events planned especially for such conversations – will provide benefits for nonprofit participants that are difficult to quantify or pinpoint, but that are, nonetheless, energizing for the individuals involved and the nonprofit community as a whole.

## APPENDIX A: MULTIVARIATE ANALYSIS USING MULTINOMIAL LOGIT

A multinomial logit model is used to test factors influencing a nonprofit’s IT status as opposed to an ordered logit model because the parallel regression assumption for the ordered logit model is violated. The parallel regression assumption was tested in the ordered logit model using the Brant Test, which yields a statistically significant Chi-square of 59.53 (df=27). This is a clear violation of the assumption. According to Long (1997), when the assumption is violated, alternative models should be considered that do not impose the constraints of parallel regression. We considered the multinomial logit model and tested whether the model has violated the Independent and Irrelevant Alternative (IIA) assumption.<sup>7</sup> This is because the multinomial logit model assumes that the ratio of the probability of a nonprofit’s IT status represented by a category to the probability of another category remains unchanged when a third or fourth category is introduced. Our initial model with five categories violated this assumption.

**TABLE 1:  
Summary Statistics**

Variable	Observation	Mean	Standard Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
Organization Size	246	2,415,554	9,922,598	0	1.22e+08
Governance Structure	246	0.8537	0.354	0	1
Location	246	0.6382	0.4815	0	1
Lack of Financial Resources	246	4.2053	1.1216	1	5
Lack of Staff	195	3.4358	1.2842	1	5
Not a priority	187	2.5508	1.2278	1	5
Government Requirements	170	1.6882	1.0212	1	5
Weak Ties	181	0.3529	0.1542	0.2	0.88
Strong Ties	178	0.4041	0.1671	0.2	1

To minimize the IIA assumption violation, we tested whether any pair of outcomes categories could be combined using the Wald Test. The null hypothesis here is that the entire set of independent variables fails to distinguish between two categories of the dependent variable. By accepting the null for any pair of comparisons, we could consider combining two outcomes on the dependent variable into a single category without changing the results. We accepted the null hypothesis for category 1 and category 2 (chi-square=16.57; df=9) and recoded that category as “Rudimentary IT Status”; we also accepted the null hypothesis for category 4 and category 5 (Chi-square=13.99; df=9) and recoded them into one category called “Integrated IT Status”. The multinomial logit model now consists of three categories: Rudimentary IT Status, Intermediate IT Status, and Integrated IT Status.

<sup>7</sup> The trade-off here is between bias versus efficiency. For example, ordered logit would give us more efficient estimates because it estimates fewer parameters. However, if the parallel regression assumption is violated, the model will give a biased estimator. Although multinomial logit is less efficient, it is not biased if the parallel regression assumption is violated.

**TABLE 2:  
Multinomial Logistic Regression, Information Technology Usage Status of Nonprofits**

<b>Independent Variable</b>	<b>Intermediate</b>	<b>Integrated</b>
<b>Organizational Characteristics:</b>		
Organization Size	1.33e-07 (1.13 e-07)	<b>1.84e-07*</b> <b>(1.05e-07)</b>
Governance Structure (Independent = 1, 0 otherwise)	<b>-1.855**</b> <b>(0.781)</b>	-0.009 (0.936)
Location (Urban = 1, 0 otherwise)	0.696 (0.606)	<b>1.771**</b> <b>(0.623)</b>
<b>Organizational Constraints:</b>		
Lack of Financial Resources (1 = never; 5 = always)	-0.097 (0.229)	0.197 (0.219)
Lack of Staff (1 = never; 5 = always)	0.290 (0.240)	0.042 (0.195)
Not a priority (1= never; 5 = always)	<b>-0.522*</b> <b>(0.269)</b>	<b>-0.563**</b> <b>(0.229)</b>
Government Requirements (1 = never; 5 = always)	<b>0.579*</b> <b>(0.298)</b>	-0.059 (0.302)
<b>Sources of IT Information:</b>		
Weak Ties (Index)	3.233 (2.615)	<b>5.366**</b> <b>(2.291)</b>
Strong Ties (Index)	0.548 (2.351)	1.986 (2.088)
No of Observations = 138 LR Chi2 (18) = 73.80 Prob > Chi2 = 0.0000 Log Likelihood = -105.86		

Notes: Reference category for the equation is Rudimentary Usage of IT.

Standard errors in parentheses

\*\* statistically significant at 0.05 level, \* statistically significant at 0.10 level

We then tested the model whether the new categories of dependent variable can be treated as if they were Independent and Irrelevant Alternatives using Small-Hsiao tests of IIA assumption. We find

evidence suggesting that we can accept the null of HIA. Table 1 provides the descriptive statistics and Table 2 presents the multinomial logit regression results.

## **Interpretation**

The overall Chi-square with 18 degrees of freedom is 73.80 and is statistically significant at the 0.05 level of confidence. This means that the chi-square value is large enough to reject the null hypothesis that the 18 logit coefficients are all zero; we therefore accept the alternative hypothesis that at least one of the 18 coefficients is nonzero.

First let us look at the logit coefficient values of the organization size variable. For a unit change in organization size, the odds of outcome of integrated IT status versus rudimentary IT status are expected to change by a factor of 1.8e-07, holding other variables constant. Equivalently, we could say that the organization size coefficient of 1.84e-07, which is statistically significant, means that among nonprofits in North Florida, for a unit increase in organizational size, the odds are they are more likely to have integrated IT status compared to rudimentary IT status, controlling for other factors. But, the odds of factor change are relatively small i.e., close to zero.

As for the governance structure variable, which is defined as whether the nonprofit is an independent nonprofit or not, the logit coefficient of -1.855 is statistically significant at a conventional 0.05 level of confidence for having intermediate IT status compared to rudimentary IT status. This means that nonprofits that are independent (as a form of governance structure) have expected odds 0.15 times smaller than nonprofits that are subordinate in having Intermediate IT Status compared to Rudimentary IT status, holding other variables constant. In terms of where nonprofits are located in North Florida, nonprofits in the urban areas have odds 487.4 percent greater than rural nonprofits of having integrated IT status compared to rudimentary IT status, holding other variables constant.

For the independent variable which measures organization constraint in terms of low priority, the logit coefficient is -0.563 and is statistically significant at a 0.05 percent level of confidence. This means as the priority for IT gets lower the odds are expected to change by a factor of 0.569 times smaller for having integrated IT status compared to the rudimentary IT status, holding all other variables constant. We can reach similar conclusions on a unit decrease in an organization's priority for IT if we compare nonprofits with intermediate IT status with nonprofits that have rudimentary IT status. Holding other variables constant, for each unit decrease in an organization's IT priority, the odds are expected to change by a factor of 0.593 smaller in nonprofits having intermediate IT status compared to rudimentary IT status. However, for every increase in government regulation, the odds of having intermediate IT status compared to rudimentary IT status are expected to change by a factor of 1.789, holding other variables constant.

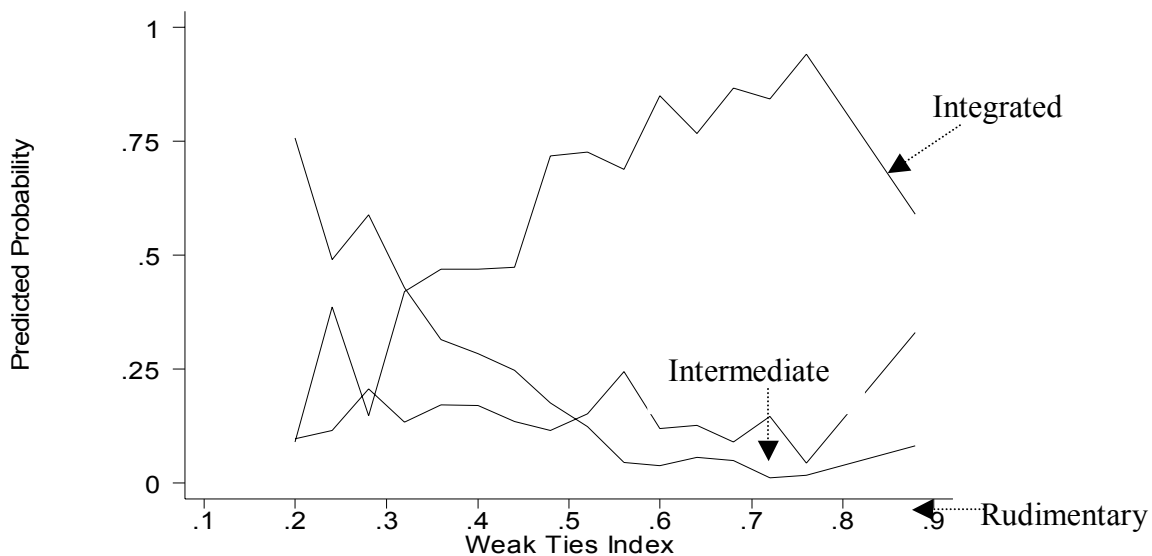
Where nonprofits get their information about IT products and services also matters in determining the status of their IT experience. For a unit increase in nonprofits' contact with those with whom they have weak ties, the odds are expected to change by a factor of 213.94 for nonprofits that have Integrated IT status compared to nonprofits that have rudimentary IT status. Clearly weak ties have a strong effect.

## Predicted Probability

Based on the multinomial logit regression, we are interested to find the probability that a resource-rich nonprofit would: experience rudimentary IT status, intermediate IT status, or integrated IT Status. A resource-rich nonprofit has been defined as being an independent small size organization, located in a rural area, constrained by government regulations and having a low priority in IT, but rich in social resources (above average weak ties index). Based on these factors, while holding the other independent variables constant at their means, the predicted probability that a resource-rich nonprofit would experience rudimentary IT status/usage is about 0.2788, intermediate IT usage about 0.5511, and integrated IT usage about 0.1701.

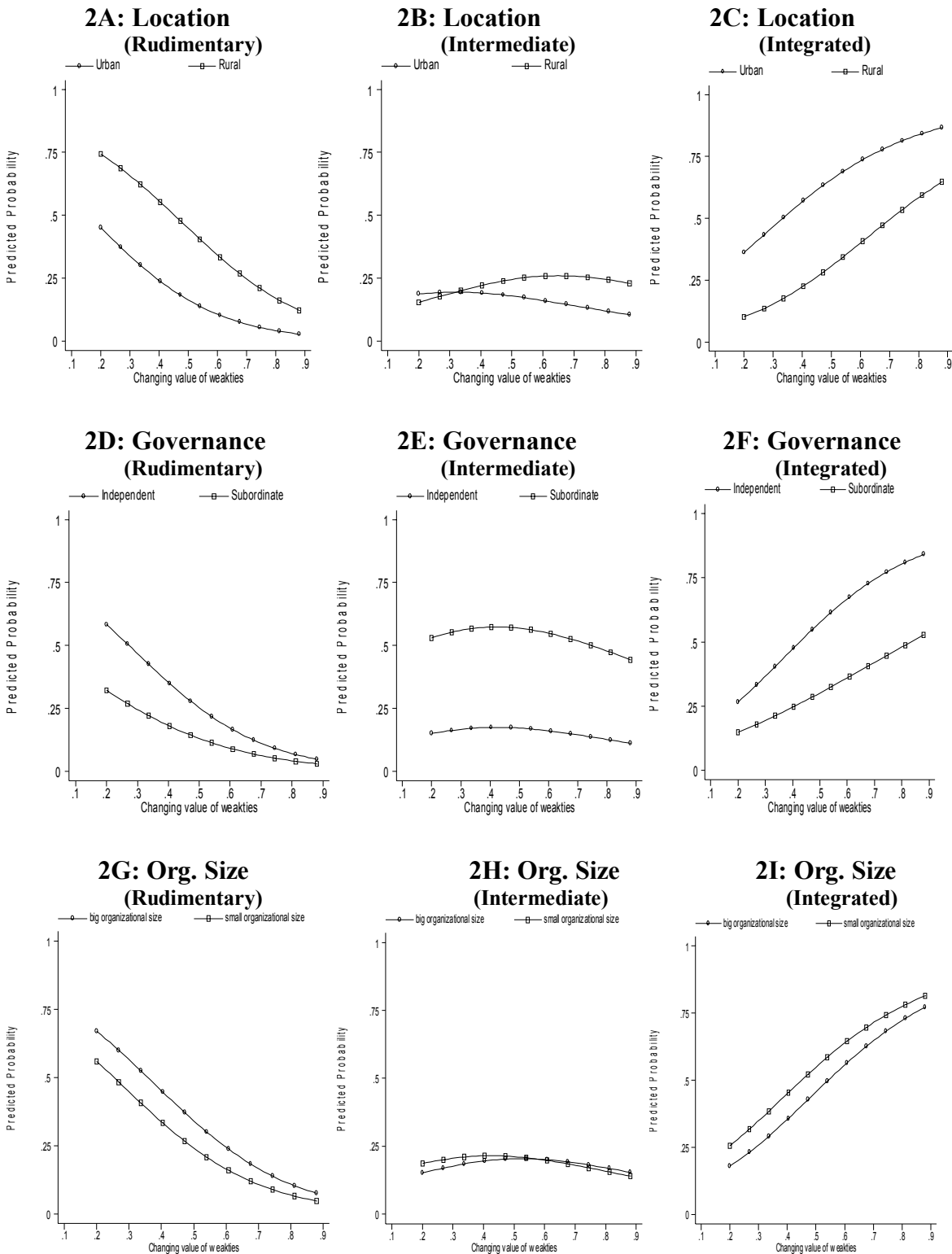
We are also interested in knowing the predicted probabilities of nonprofits experiencing rudimentary, intermediate, and integrated IT usage by the level of weak ties, while holding the other variables at their average. In Figure 1, we have connected the observation points by their median bands. For example, for each category of IT usage – rudimentary, intermediate, and integrate – we have taken the median of their weak ties index. When their medians crossed with the predicted probabilities, we connected the median bands using straight lines. This allows us to treat the actual observations as invisible and make assessments about their experience in IT usage using the median of the weak ties index against their predicted probabilities. In Figure 1, with a low weak ties index, the predicted probabilities among nonprofit organizations experiencing rudimentary IT is higher compared to organizations experiencing intermediate and integrated IT usages. In contrast, with a high weak ties index, the predicted probabilities for nonprofits experiencing integrated IT usage is high compared to those experiencing intermediate and rudimentary IT usages.

**FIGURE 1:**  
**Predicted Probability of IT Usage (All Categories),**  
**By Index of Weak Ties**



We are also interested to find urban and rural nonprofits experience in IT usages by their level of weak ties, while holding the other variables at their averages. In Figure 2A the predicted probability of experiencing rudimentary IT decreases for both rural and urban nonprofits as weak tie index increases.

**Figure 2: Predicted Probabilities of IT Usage, by Weak Ties Index**



On the other hand, the predicted probabilities for rural and urban nonprofits experiencing integrated IT usage increases as the level of weak ties increases (Figure 2C). Nonprofits in rural and urban areas don't differ much in their predicted probabilities in experiencing intermediate IT usage (Figure 2B). This explains the resource-rich nonprofits' higher predicted probability for intermediate IT usage compared with the rudimentary and integrated categories. The predicted probability of rural nonprofits to experience intermediate IT usage given the level of weak ties is most evident between 0.3 and 0.4 points on the weak ties index. The predicted probability of experiencing intermediate IT for rural nonprofits increases beyond this level of weak ties index compared to the predicted probability of the urban nonprofits.

In terms of governance structure, Figure 2E shows that subordinate nonprofits have a higher predicted probability than independent nonprofits in experiencing intermediate IT usage across the weak ties index. This result is consistent with Pollak and Lampkin's (2001) observation of the National Umbrella Associations, but the predicted probabilities of independent nonprofits in experiencing rudimentary and integrated information technology usages are higher across weak ties index when compared to subordinate nonprofits (Figure 2D and 2F).

Figures 2G, 2H, and 2I show that organizational size does not matter *within* the three categories of information technology usage. Within the three IT usage categories, Figure 2G shows that not all big nonprofits have integrated information technology, and that they generally have higher predicted probability for experiencing rudimentary information technology compared to a small nonprofit. This is not the case for integrated IT usage, however but similar conclusions can be reached. As they branch out to contact those outside their organizations for IT products and services, smaller nonprofits generally have higher predicted probabilities than larger nonprofit organizations. This is especially the case for nonprofits experiencing integrated information technology.

## **DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION**

A digital divide is evident among nonprofits when we compared two extreme categories of information technology usage: rudimentary and integrated. For example, in terms of organizational size, our results suggest that the odds are expected to be greater as organizational size increases by one unit for integrated IT usages and rudimentary IT usage while holding the other variables constant. We also found similar results whether nonprofits are located in the urban or rural areas. As for the difference between independent nonprofits and subordinate nonprofits, the results indicate that independent nonprofits in North Florida tend to have intermediate IT usage compared to rudimentary IT. The odds of using intermediate IT compared to rudimentary IT fall by a factor of 0.15 when the governance structure dummy variable goes from 0 to 1. In terms of organization constraints, the odds of experiencing intermediate usage compared to rudimentary IT usage decrease when nonprofits have a lower priority in IT. A similar conclusion is reached when we compared integrated IT against rudimentary IT usage. As for government regulations, the odds are expected to be higher for nonprofits experiencing intermediate IT than those experiencing rudimentary IT. When respondents' perceive government regulations as a major obstacle to bettering their IT, nonprofits experiencing intermediate IT are less likely to feel the "pinch" compared to those nonprofits that are experiencing rudimentary IT.

On the surface, there appears to be a digital divide in information technology usages among nonprofits with different organizational sizes, governance structure, and whether they are located in the rural or urban areas. We found that government regulations and lower organizational priority in information technology varies across different categories of IT usages. However, we argue that nonprofits are resourceful when faced with organizational constraints. A resource-rich nonprofit which goes out and spends its energy and time to learn about IT products and services has a relatively higher predicted probability of experiencing intermediate IT usage than rudimentary and integrated information technology. This is contrary to what would be expected by the traditional digital divide hypothesis.

Our results also show that large nonprofits have a higher predicted probability of experiencing rudimentary information technology than small nonprofits across the weak ties index. In other words, there are large nonprofits which still lagged behind in access to the information technology superhighway and that, when we compared them against small nonprofits within the same IT usage category, they generally do have higher predicted probability to experiencing rudimentary information technology. Similar conclusions can be reached on the integrated IT usage. Small nonprofits are more resourceful than large nonprofits when it comes to acquiring information technology products and services. Similarly, we also found the underdogs – independent nonprofits – generally have higher predicted probabilities for experiencing integrated information technology as they branch out to seek information about IT products and services compared to subordinate nonprofits. Nonprofits that are located in the rural areas are less lucky, however.

## **REFERENCE**

Pollak, T.H., and L.M. Lampkin (2001), How Technology is Changing The Role of Nonprofit Umbrella Associations, Paper presented at 2002 Independent Sector Spring Research Forum, Washington D.C. March 15-16, 2001. Available online at <http://www.independentsector.org/pdfs/srf01/pollak.pdf>

## APPENDIX B: Survey Questionnaire

[Insert Tracking Number]

[Insert Contact]

[Insert Organization]

[Insert c/o]

[Insert Address]

[Insert City], [State] [Zip]

September 5, 2003

Dear [Insert Contact],

My colleagues, Fran Berry, Simon Andrew and I invite you to participate in a survey of the computer needs and capabilities of North Florida's nonprofit organizations. Our research objectives are to promote a greater understanding of the needs of the nonprofit sector in North Florida and to engage policy makers and business leaders in ongoing actions to foster the viability and performance of Florida's nonprofits. We would greatly appreciate your organization's participation in this survey.

We are following up with you after our first mailing of this survey in July. Our records show we did not receive a response from you then. We know you are busy, but hope you can take the time now to tell us how you use information technology in your nonprofit agency.

It takes approximately 15 minutes to complete the survey and your answers will be strictly confidential. We ask you to return the survey in the stamped, self-addressed [envelope](#) we have provided as soon as possible.

If you have additional questions or comments about the survey, you can contact us at 644-3525. We look forward to receiving your returned survey, and can send you a summary of our survey's findings, if you check the box below

Sincerely,

**Ralph S. Brower, Ph.D.**

CCNL Director

yes, I want a copy of the survey findings.

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### SECTION A: INDIVIDUAL & ORGANIZATION BACKGROUND

1) Your Name (if different from above): \_\_\_\_\_

2) Your Position: \_\_\_\_\_

3) Number of Paid Staff: \_\_\_\_\_

**4) Is your organization an affiliate of a national organization?**

- a)  NO  
 b)  YES (please provide name of the organization below)

\_\_\_\_\_

**5) Is your organization a United Way agency?**

- a)  NO  
 b)  YES

**6) Approximately what percentage of your clients, customers, or patrons is from household below the federal poverty level? \_\_\_\_\_ Percent**

**SECTION B: GENERAL OFFICE TECHNOLOGY INFORMATION**

**7) Does your organization have the following technologies?** (Please Check all that apply)

- |   | NO                       | YES                      |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| a) Desktops                                   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b) Laptops                                    | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| c) Palm Pilots                                | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| d) Digital Scanners                           | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| e) Digital Camera                             | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| f) Fax Machine                                | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| g) Copier                                     | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| h) High Speed / Broadband Internet Connection | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

**8) If YES to those listed in question 8, how many unit(s) does your organization have?**

- a) Desktop: \_\_\_\_\_  
 b) Laptop: \_\_\_\_\_  
 c) Palm Pilots: \_\_\_\_\_  
 d) Digital Scanner: \_\_\_\_\_  
 e) Digital Camera: \_\_\_\_\_  
 f) Fax Machine: \_\_\_\_\_  
 g) Copier: \_\_\_\_\_

**SECTION C: COMPUTERS**

**9) How does your organization get computers?**

- |                           | NO                       | YES                      | % of computers obtained via this method |
|---------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|---|
| a) Donation               | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | _ _ _ _  %                              |
| b) Purchased outright     | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | _ _ _ _  %                              |
| c) Other (please explain) | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | _ _ _ _  %                              |

\_\_\_\_\_

**10. For each of the following statements which relate to the usage of personal computers for organizational work, please rate the extent of usage in your organization:** (Circle the appropriate difficulty level)

- |  | Always                   | Often                    | Sometimes                | Rarely                   | Never                    |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| a) <b>Our <u>staff</u> used their personal computers at home for organizational work</b>       | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b) <b>Our <u>volunteers</u> used their personal computers at home for organizational work.</b> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

11) Our organization does not own any computers except for home computers of staff and/or volunteers. a)  NO b)  YES

**SECTION D: E-MAIL CAPABILITIES**

12) On a weekly basis, how frequently does your organization use e-mail to communicate with those listed below? (Please check the appropriate rating)

	Always	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
a) Staff	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Board members	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Volunteers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Members	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e) Government agency	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f) Other funder(s)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**SECTION E: WEB CAPABILITIES**

- |  | YES                      | NO                       |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 13) Are <u>most</u> of your organization’s computers used for Internet access?   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 14) Is your organization capable of conducting <u>transactions online</u> (e.g., accepting donations, membership fees, registrations etc?) | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 15) Does your organization use <u>specialized software</u> that assists in tracking legislation? (such as Lexis-Nexis or Westlaw)          | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 16) Does your organization have a <u>website</u> ?   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 17) If your organization has a website, has it been <u>updated in the past 30 days</u> ?   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

**SECTION F: NETWORK AND SECURITY CAPABILITIES**

18) How many organizational sites does your agency have (headquarters offices, branch offices)? \_\_\_\_\_

19) Of the total organizational site, how many are networked to each other? \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_

- |  | YES                      | NO                       |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 20) Are your organization’s computers <u>networked</u> to each other?  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 21) Does the organization have <u>security systems</u> in place to stop unauthorized access to its computers from inside and outside the organization? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 22) Does your organization <u>regularly use virus protection software</u> ? (such as McAfee or Norton anti-virus)                                      | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 23) Does your organization perform <u>periodic backups</u> of agency systems, software and important documents?  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 24) How often are these <u>backups</u> performed? _____  |                          |                          |

## SECTION G: TECHNICAL SUPPORT CAPABILITIES

25) How many full time equivalent staff have computers assigned to them exclusively?  
\_\_\_\_\_

- |  | YES                      | NO                       |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 26) Does your organization have a staff person whose principal job is Information Technology? (at least 50% of his or her work time) | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 27) Does your organization have individuals with assigned responsibility for technological upkeep and updating?                      | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 28) If yes, are these individuals (Mark all that apply)  |                          |                          |
| a) Staff <input type="checkbox"/>  |                          |                          |
| b) Volunteers <input type="checkbox"/>   |                          |                          |
| c) Contracted Staff <input type="checkbox"/>   |                          |                          |

## SECTION H: TRAINING CAPABILITIES

- |   | YES                      | NO                       |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 29) Does your organization provide employee training on technology security issues?   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 30) Does your organization provide periodic training for software applications and programs? (e.g., word processing, spreadsheet, or database training) | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

## SECTION I: TECHNICAL ASSESSMENT

31) Does your organization conduct periodic Technological Assessments?

- a) NO   
b) YES

32) If YES, how often does your organization conduct the Assessment? \_\_\_\_\_

33) Which of the following Software Packages does your organization use regularly?

- a) Word Processing  
b) Spreadsheet/Budget & Finance  
c) Database/Membership Management  
d) Presentation  
e) Desktop Publishing  
f) Graphic Design  
g) E-mail/Web Browser

Check box if used	Name of Software Package
<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
<input type="checkbox"/>	_____

**34) Which of the following Technical Services does your organization use?**

Check box if used

- a) Web Development & Maintenance
- b) Proj. Mgt/Org Charting/Flowcharting.
- c) Database/Membership Management
- d) Statistical Analysis
- e) Member Services & benefits
- f) Data Backup & Storage
- g) Hardware & Software Maintenance
- h) IT Training
- i) Application & Systems Development
- j) Other (describe the kind of service)

\_\_\_\_\_

**35) Do you Contract Out the Technical Service?**

- |  | <b>YES</b>               | <b>NO</b>                |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|
|  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
|  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
|  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
|  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
|  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
|  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
|  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
|  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
|  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

**36) Does your organization receive funds from government agencies?**

- |            | <b>NO</b>                | <b>YES</b>               | <b>% of Fund Received</b> |
|------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------|
| a) Local   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | _____%                    |
| b) State   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | _____%                    |
| c) Federal | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | _____%                    |

**37) How do your government contracts support or hinder your use of Information Technology?**

**38) Do the reporting requirements lead to problems of incompatibility or redundancy of computers and software? If yes, describe briefly below.**

**39) How often does your organization use each of the following sources to learn about the IT products and services?**

- |                  | Always                   | Often                    | Sometimes                | Rarely                   | Never                    |
|------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| a) IT Tradeshows | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

- |                               |                          |                          |                          |                          |                          |
|-------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| b) IT Vendors/Contractors     | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| c) IT Magazines               | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| d) Online Sources             | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| e) Board Members              | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| f) Affiliated National Assoc. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| g) Sister Assoc. / Orgs       | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| h) Other Nonprofits           | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| i) Government Agencies        | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| j) Friends/Relatives          | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| k) Other (specify)            | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
-

**40) What are your primary obstacles to having better information technology in your agency?**

	Always	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
a) Money/Financial Resources	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Lack of Staff	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Low Priority	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Lack of Knowledge of best practices	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e) Government Requirements	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f) Other (specify)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

\_\_\_\_\_

**41) If you could have one wish granted in the area of information technology in your agency, what would it be?**

**42) Which phrase best describes your organization's experience with information technology?**

Check only ONE

- a) We either do not use any IT equipment or services or we use rudimentary IT services.
- b) We use IT and services in the conduct of our work
- c) We use IT and services and we perform such maintenance activities as frequent backups and product updates
- d) We use IT services in our work, and our IT products and services are networked and compatible with each other to maximize ease of use and efficiency
- e) We use IT services in our work and our managers and executives use our IT and services to make strategic decisions about the organization's operation and overall direction.

**THANK YOU**