



**PUBLIC LIBRARY  
GRAPHIC NOVELS SURVEY  
2018**

Sponsored by: **hoopla**

## PUBLIC LIBRARY GRAPHIC NOVELS SURVEY

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# PUBLIC LIBRARY GRAPHIC NOVELS SURVEY

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## Study Objectives:

*Library Journal's* graphic novels survey was developed to learn more about graphic novels collections in public libraries with an emphasis on adult graphic novels.

Objectives of the study included learning:

- ✿ The percentage of libraries with print and digital graphic novel collections.
- ✿ How print graphic novels are shelved within the library.
- ✿ Which genres/categories are most popular.
- ✿ Trends in graphic novel circulation.
- ✿ How libraries learn about graphic novels and market their collections to patrons.

## Methodology:

The graphic novels survey was emailed to approximately 10,500 librarians on September 28, 2018. The list was 60% drawn from a randomly selected group of LJ newsletters subscribers. The remaining 40% came from Hoopla/Midwest Tapes, the sponsor of the research. A drawing for a \$100 American Express gift card was offered as incentive to reply.

The survey closed on October 17, 2018 with 400 respondents from the U.S. and Canada. The respondent pool breaks down to 53% from LJ's independent list and 47% from Hoopla/Midwest Tapes' customer list. The survey was programmed, deployed and tabulated by *Library Journal* Research.

Where there are marked differences by library size, the report features data filtered by library size. The sizes are based on population served:

- Small libraries serve populations under 25,000.
- Medium sized libraries serve populations between 25,000 and 99,999.
- Large libraries serve populations between 100,000 and 499,999.
- Very large libraries serve 500,000 or more.

## RESULTS SUMMARY

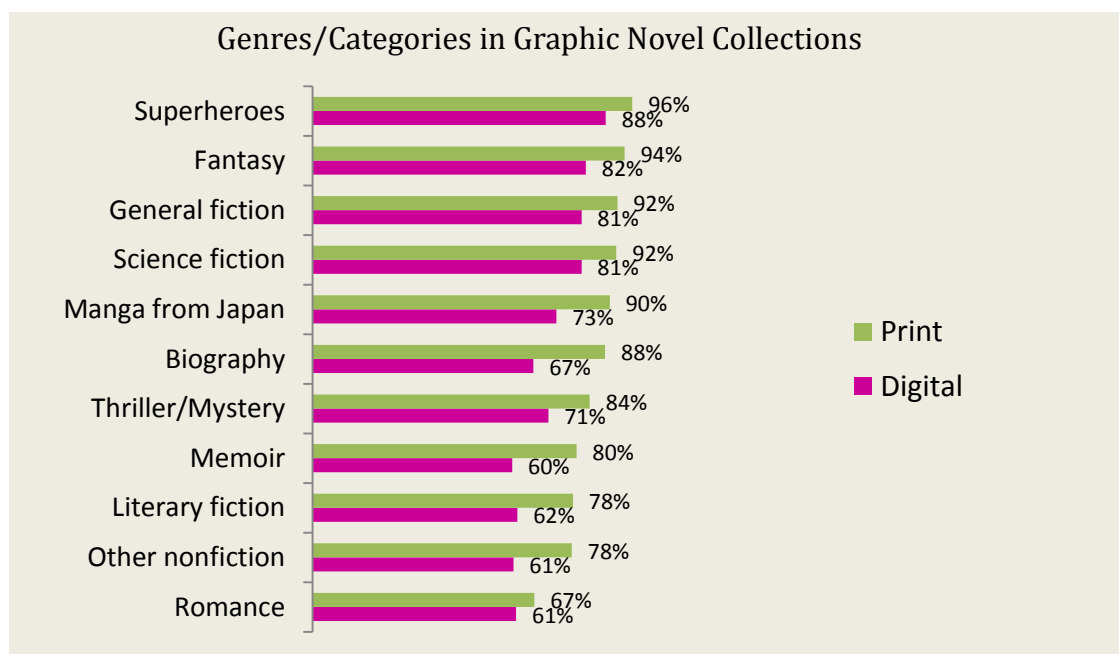
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One hundred percent of the 211 randomly selected public libraries in our sample responded that they currently carry graphic novels (GN) in print. Two-thirds (66%) have a digital graphic novel collection.

The majority of survey results that follow are based on the complete sample of 400 public libraries. Responses from Hoopla customers in addition to randomly selected libraries are represented.

Print graphic novel collections are geared slightly more toward teens (99%) and children (98%) than adults (94%). Digital collections focus on teens first (98%), followed by adults (95%), and then children (92%). Three percent of libraries have digital-only graphic novel collections for adults (no print).

Two-thirds of libraries (65%) report that they shelve adult print graphic novels in their own section. Seventeen percent combine adult and teen graphic novels into one section, and ten percent interfile adult graphic novels with their existing adult book collection. Separate graphic novel sections are often further segmented, by fiction vs. nonfiction (48%) or manga (30%), for example. However, a third of libraries intermix their graphic novel section without further segmenting.





## RESULTS SUMMARY *continued*

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Libraries' print GN collections tend to include a larger variety of genres/categories than digital GN collections do. Superheroes is the top category carried in both print and digital, followed by fantasy, general fiction, science fiction, and Manga.

In terms of popularity, the superheroes category far outpaces all others in both print and digital. General fiction trails as the second most popular GN category. Superheroes appear to be slightly more popular in digital format, which is interesting because a smaller percentage of libraries carry superheroes in digital format than in print.

Most Popular Genres		
	Print	Digital
<b>#1</b>	Superheroes (72%)	Superheroes (76%)
<b>#2</b>	General fiction (28%)	General fiction (25%)
<b>#3</b>	Manga (28%)	Fantasy (24%)

Nearly two-thirds of libraries say graphic novels have experienced an overall increase in circulation over the last year. In fact, 13% say print GN circulation increased *significantly* in the last year, while a slightly higher percentage (15%) indicate the same for digital GNs.

Displays (81%), in-library signage (77%), and word of mouth (64%) are the three primary methods libraries use to promote their graphic novel collections. The library website is also an important promotional tool, especially for those with digital collections.

Round the clock access is the key benefit of offering graphic novels digitally, according to 68% of libraries with digital collections. Sixteen percent preferred the fact that digital GN materials are always returned to the library as the key benefit. Durability of materials was only cited by 8%.

Nearly a quarter of libraries (24%) offer graphic novels in foreign languages, most commonly Spanish (80%), French (22%), Japanese (18%), and Chinese (10%).

In a question about borrowing habits, 16% of libraries generalize that their graphic novel readers are mostly exclusive readers of the one format. This would imply that making graphic novels available can result in library usage by community members who might otherwise not use the library.

## RESULTS SUMMARY *continued*

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Fifteen percent of libraries report that GN borrowers *often* request titles specifically by creator or publisher. Another 47% *sometimes* make these requests.

Two-thirds of libraries (66%) have hosted programs related to their graphic novel collections in the past two years. A third has hosted either a how-to comics workshop or a library comic-con (or both!). Programs presented by cartoonists were offered in 26% and graphic novel book clubs in 21% of libraries. Graphic novel-related programming is most common among urban libraries.

Most respondents, 93%, are involved in recommending or purchasing graphic novels for their libraries. The most common methods of learning about new GNs are professional reviews and patron requests (both over 80%). However, many other sources for information about upcoming graphic novels are used including word of mouth from colleagues, publishers' websites, blogs, comic-themed websites, and social media.

Almost all libraries (98%) obtain their print graphic novels from conventional library vendors such as Ingram or Baker & Taylor. Amazon and other online retailers are used by over half of libraries, especially smaller libraries. Only 8% use comic-specific vendors such as Diamond Comic Distributors or Comixology. Local comic book shops (13%), bookstores (9%) and comics creators/collectors themselves (19%) are also utilized.

OverDrive is the biggest source of digital graphic novels, used by 73% of libraries in the independent sample. Hoopla/Midwest Tapes runs a close second, with 66% of libraries obtaining graphic novels from them.

Half of respondents whose job entails selecting/recommending digital platforms considers the availability of graphic novels to be either very important or important to their digital platform decision.

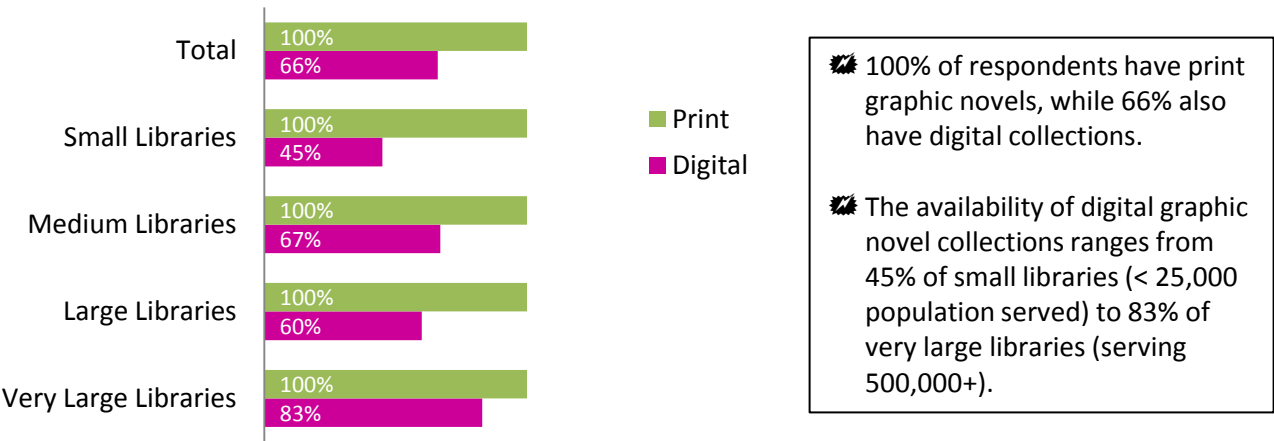
Libraries responded to an open-ended question asking what the appeal of graphic novels is to adults with a few common themes:

- ✿ The art/visual storytelling enhances the experience.
- ✿ Unique, engaging stories.
- ✿ Easy/quick reads. Very accessible.
- ✿ Nostalgia. They grew up reading them.
- ✿ Superheroes are very popular.

# Availability of Graphic Novels

Q. Does your library’s collection include any graphic novels (either print or digital)?

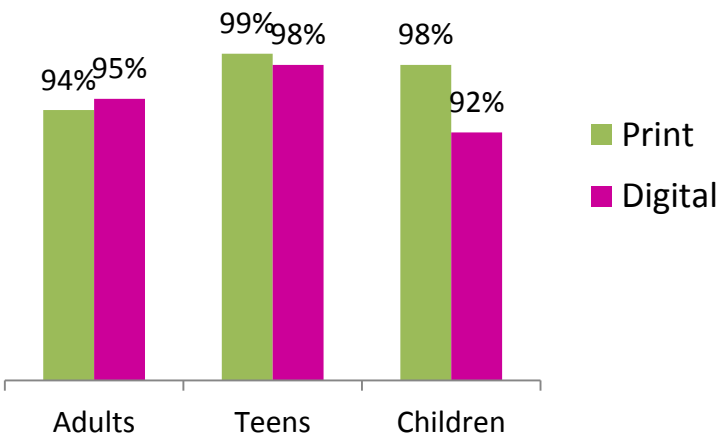
This question is based on respondents from *LJ*’s randomly selected list only.



# Graphic Novel Age Groups

Q. For what users do you offer graphic novels?

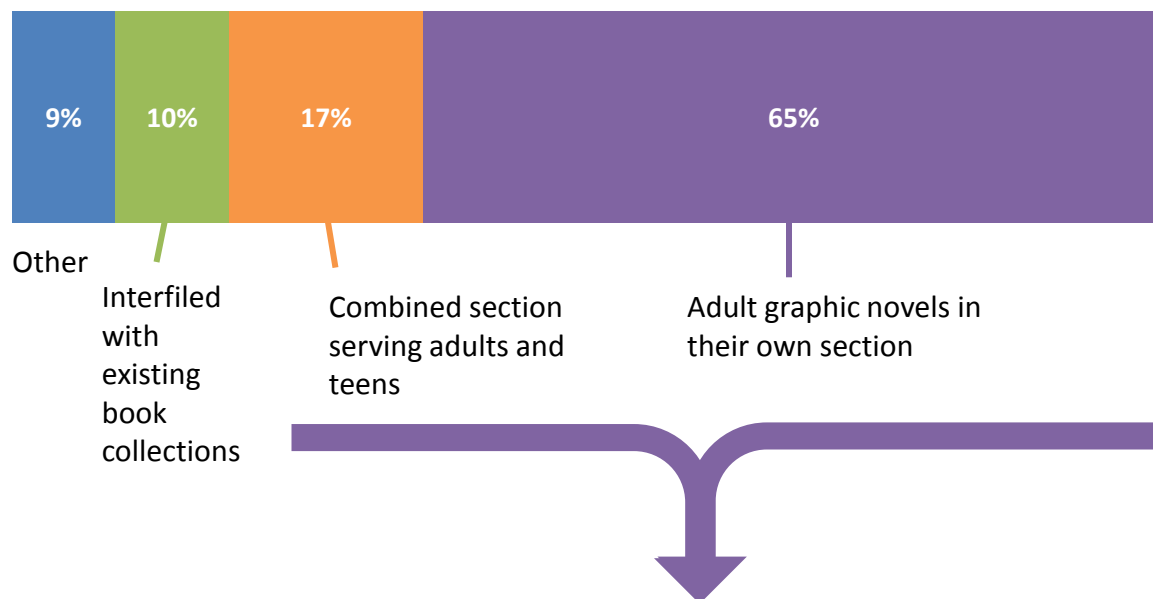
- In general, libraries’ print graphic novels collections are geared for teens (99%) and children (98%) slightly more than for adults (94%).
- Graphic novels in digital format are geared slightly more toward teens (98%) and adults (95%) than children (92%).



## Shelving of Print Graphic Novels

Q. How does your library shelve its print graphic novel collection?

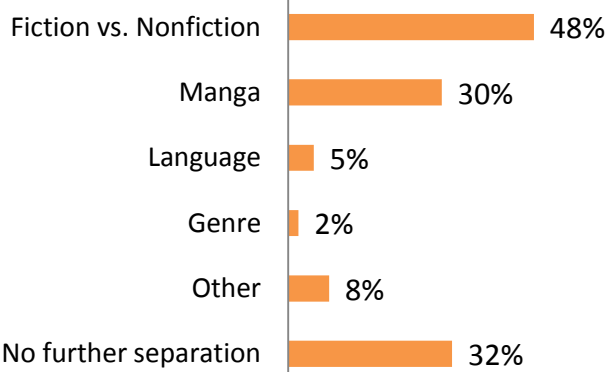
- Most libraries, 65%, shelve their adult graphic novels in their own section. Seventeen percent combine their adult and teen graphic novel collections.



Q. Is your print graphic novel section further separated by any of the following?

- In libraries with a print graphic novels section, nearly half (48%) further separate it by fiction versus nonfiction and 30% separate out manga titles.

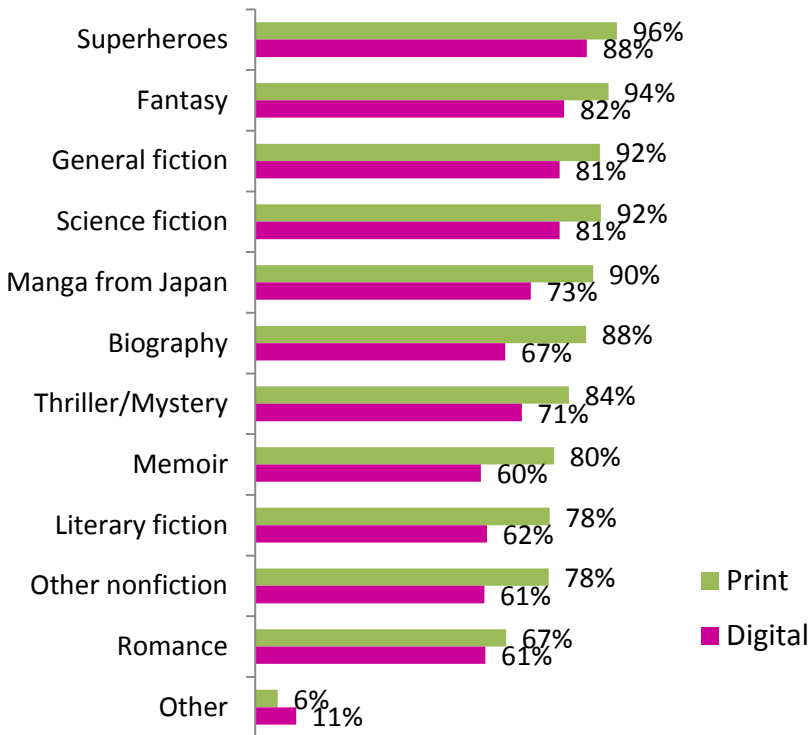
- One-third (32%) shelve all graphic novels together with no further separations.





## Genres/Categories in Graphic Novel Collections

Q. What genres/categories of graphic novels does your library collect in each format you carry?



Libraries' print graphic novel collections include a larger variety of genres/categories than digital graphic novel collections do.

The top five genres of graphic novels carried by libraries in both print and digital:

1. Superheroes
2. Fantasy
3. General fiction
4. Science fiction
5. Manga from Japan

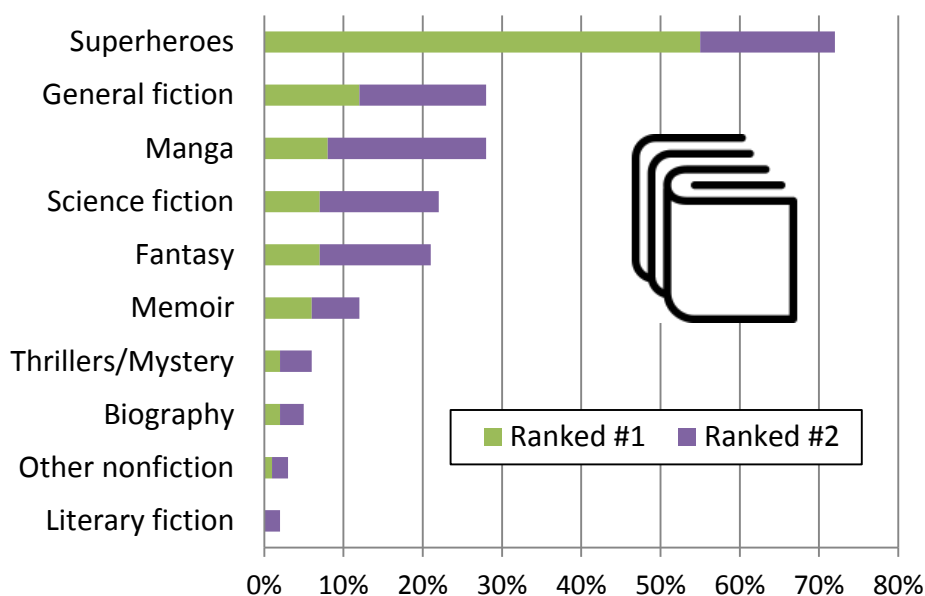
## Most Popular Genres/Categories

Q. Among the graphic novel genres you carry, which are the most popular? Please rank the top two.

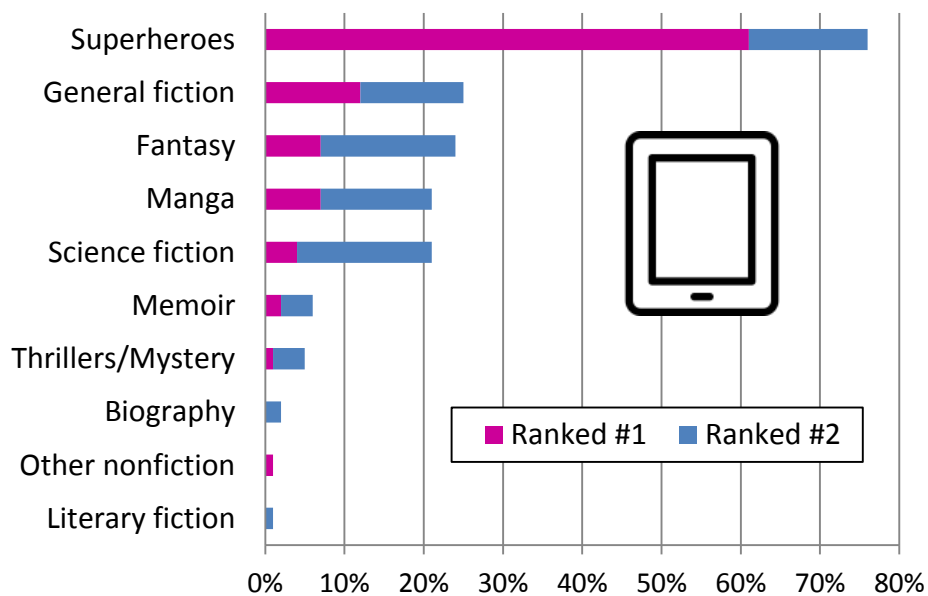
- In terms of popularity, the superheroes category far outpaces all others in both print and digital. General fiction trails as the second most popular category.
- Superheroes appear to be slightly more popular in digital format, which is interesting because a smaller percentage of libraries carry superheroes in digital format than in print.

	Print	Digital
<b>1st</b>	Superheroes (72%)	Superheroes (76%)
<b>2nd</b>	General fiction (28%)	General fiction (25%)
<b>3rd</b>	Manga (28%)	Fantasy (24%)

### Most Popular Genres of Graphic Novels: PRINT




### Most Popular Genres of Graphic Novels: DIGITAL

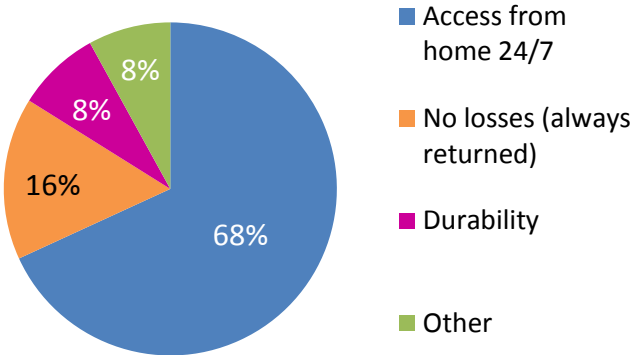


# Benefits of Digital Graphic Novels

Q. What is the key benefit of offering graphic novels *digitally*?



The ability of patrons to access graphic novel materials 24/7 from anywhere is the key benefit of offering digital graphic novels.



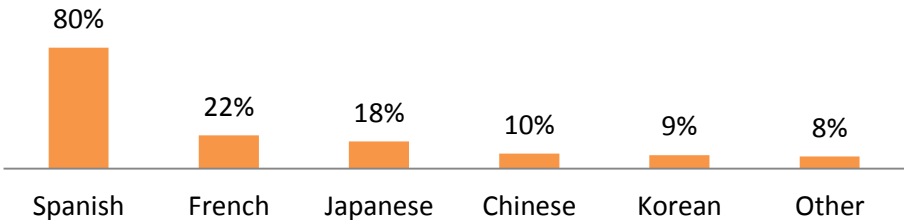
## Foreign Language Graphic Novels

Q. Does your library provide graphic novels in languages other than English?

- About a quarter of public libraries provide graphic novels in other languages. The percentage ranges from 17% of small libraries to 50% of very large libraries.
- Besides English, Spanish and French are the most commonly found graphic novel languages in libraries.

	Total	Library Size			
		Small	Medium	Large	Very Large
Yes	24%	17%	18%	36%	50%
No	76%	83%	82%	64%	50%

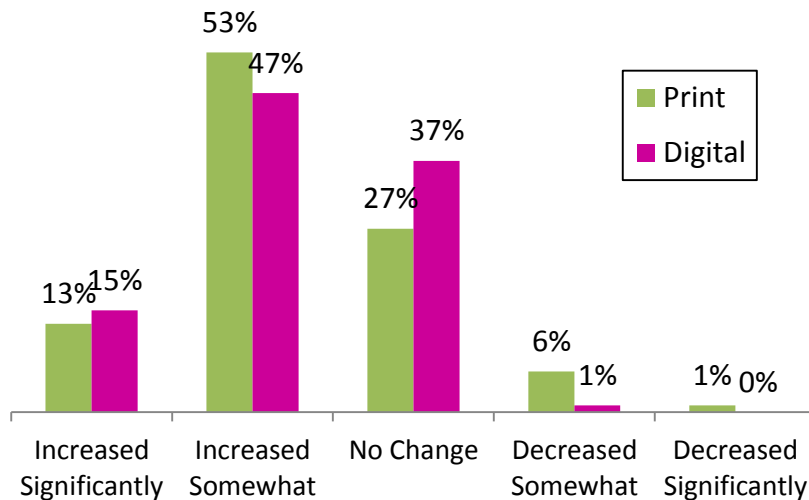
Q. If yes, which languages?



## Trend in Graphic Novel Circulation

Q. Have you noticed a change in circulation of PRINT/DIGITAL graphic novels in the last year?

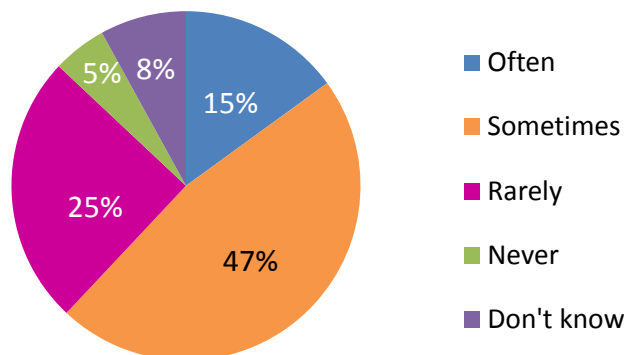
- 13% of libraries say print graphic novel circulation is up significantly over last year. The figure for digital graphic novels is slightly higher at 15%.
- Most (53% and 47% respectively) report that graphic novel circulation has increased only somewhat.
- 7% say print graphic novel circulation has decreased, compared to only 1% of libraries with digital graphic novel collections.



## Requests by Patrons

Q. How often do graphic novel borrowers request titles specifically by creator(s) or publisher(s)?

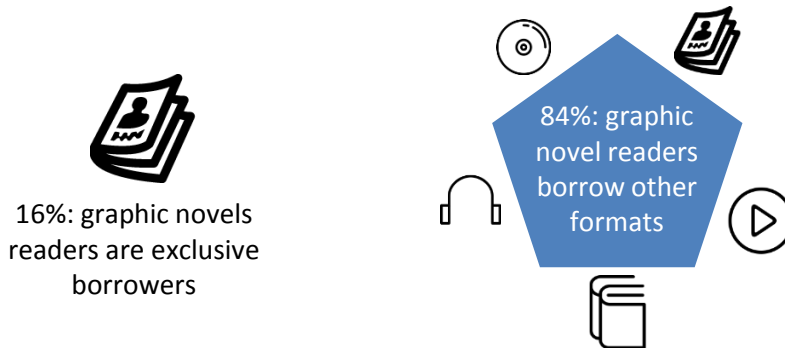
- 62% of libraries have patrons who 'often' or 'sometimes' request graphic novel titles by creator or publisher.
- The incidence rises with library size (from 55% of the smallest to 79% among the very largest libraries).



## Graphic Novel Readers and Other Formats

**Q. In general, are your library's graphic novel readers exclusive to that format, or do they borrow from the library's non-graphic book collections as well?**

- 16% of respondents generalize that graphic novel borrowers are exclusive borrowers of the one format.



## Graphic Novel Programming

**Q. Has your library hosted programs related to graphic novels in the past two years?**

- Two-thirds (66%) of responding libraries have hosted at least one graphic novel related program in the last two years. Graphic novel programs were held at 49% of the smallest to 87% of the largest libraries.
- How-to comics workshops and library-hosted comic-cons/anime-cons were offered most often—by nearly a quarter of the smallest libraries to well over half of the largest.

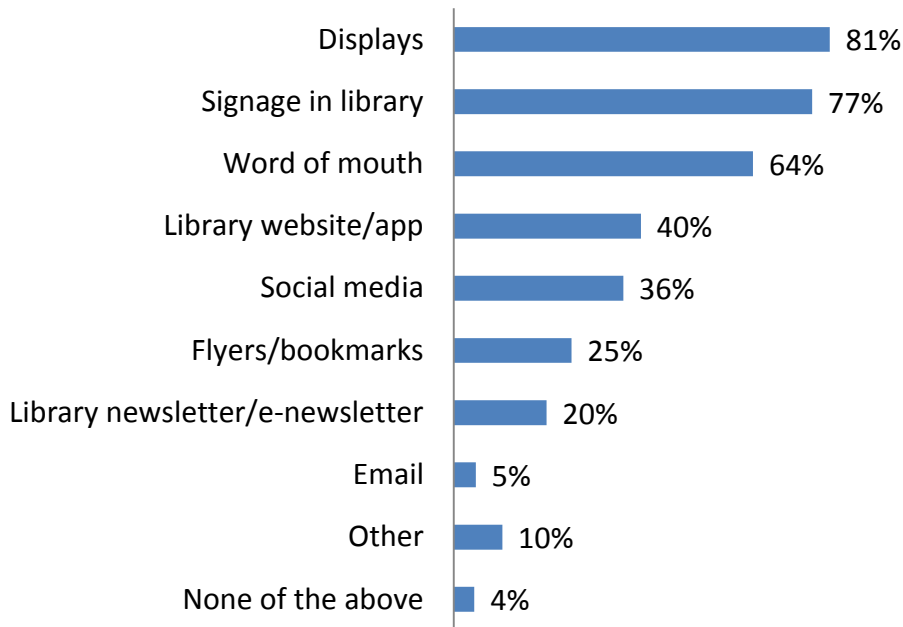
	Total	Library Size			
		Small	Medium	Large	Very large
How-to comics workshop	32%	23%	26%	36%	72%
Library comic-con or anime-con	32%	21%	26%	44%	59%
Presentations by cartoonists	26%	12%	24%	32%	53%
Book clubs	21%	17%	16%	28%	31%
Author talks	12%	1%	12%	14%	28%
Other	13%	7%	19%	11%	9%
None	34%	51%	35%	22%	13%

## Marketing of Graphic Novel Collections

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### Q. How does your library make patrons aware of its graphic novel collection?

🌟 Displays, signage, and word of mouth are the most common methods of making patrons aware of library graphic novel collections.

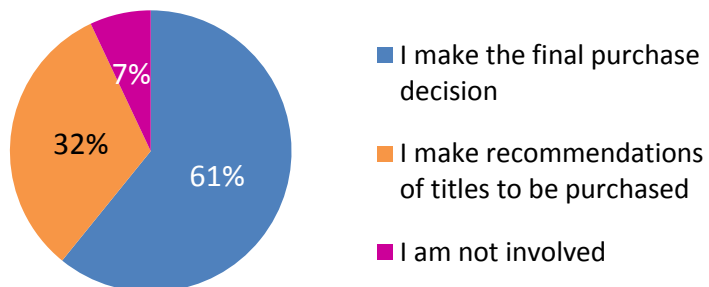


## Involvement in Graphic Novel Selection Process

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### Q. Are you involved in recommending or purchasing print or digital graphic novels for your library?

🌟 93% of respondents are involved in the recommendation or purchasing process of graphic novels for their library.





# Sources of Information about Graphic Novels

## Q. How do you learn about new graphic novels?

🌟 The most common methods of learning about new graphic novels are professional reviews and patron requests (both over 80%). However, many other sources for information about upcoming graphic novels are used, including word of mouth from colleagues, publishers' websites, blogs, comic-themed websites, and social media.

Based on respondents involved in graphic novel selection process.	Total	Library Size			
		Small	Medium	Large	Very Large
Professional reviews	86%	80%	85%	87%	100%
Patron requests	81%	75%	80%	87%	86%
Word of mouth from peers/colleagues	64%	58%	66%	69%	62%
Publisher websites/newsletters	61%	51%	58%	67%	79%
Blogs	54%	47%	53%	57%	66%
Comic themed websites (e.g., Comics Beat, Bleeding Cool)	51%	41%	54%	52%	59%
Social media	50%	46%	47%	54%	62%
Newsletters/e-newsletters	46%	41%	46%	42%	59%
Consumer reviews	45%	42%	39%	49%	62%
Vendors/Wholesalers	41%	29%	46%	43%	48%
Comic-Cons	30%	24%	38%	19%	45%
Creator websites/newsletters	27%	20%	28%	27%	38%
Other	10%	9%	11%	10%	3%

## Print Graphic Novel Sources

### Q. Where does your library obtain print graphic novels for its collection?

Conventional library vendors are used by nearly all libraries for graphic novels. Half of libraries also purchase graphic novels from online retailers such as Amazon.

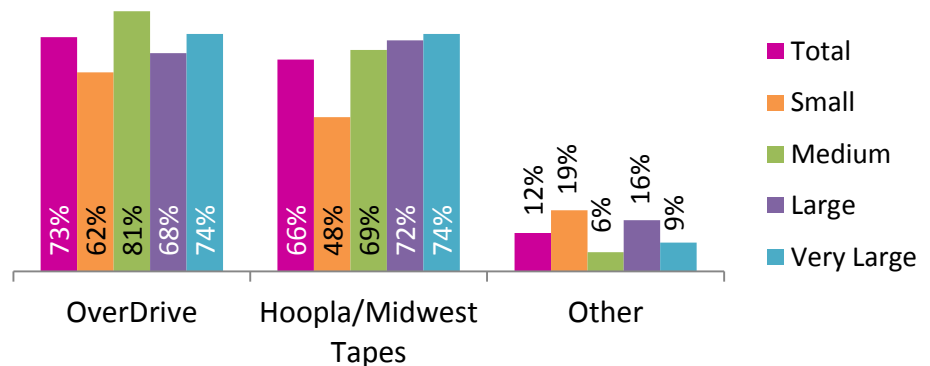
Based on respondents involved in graphic novel selection process.	Total	Library Size			
		Small	Medium	Large	Very Large
Conventional library vendors (e.g., Ingram, Baker & Taylor)	98%	93%	100%	99%	100%
Amazon and/or other online book retailers	52%	61%	54%	52%	21%
Donations from creators or collectors	19%	21%	24%	15%	7%
Comics shops	13%	12%	14%	13%	14%
Local bookstores	9%	8%	11%	6%	14%
Comic-specific vendors (e.g., Diamond Comic Distributors, Comixology)	8%	9%	4%	9%	25%
Creators at comics conventions	5%	8%	5%	-	4%
Creators local to library	4%	3%	4%	4%	7%
Self-publishing sources online	3%	-	4%	3%	14%

## Digital Graphic Novel Sources

### Q. Please identify your library's digital vendor(s) for e-comics.

This question is based on responses from LJ's randomly selected list only.

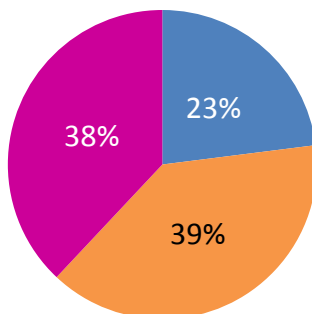
- Nearly three-quarters of libraries have access to digital graphic novels through OverDrive, and 66% have access through Hoopla.
- The largest libraries use both sources equally.



## Involvement in Digital Platform Selection Process

**Q. Are you involved in recommending or selecting digital platforms for your library?**

62% of respondents are involved in the recommendation or selection of digital platforms for their library.



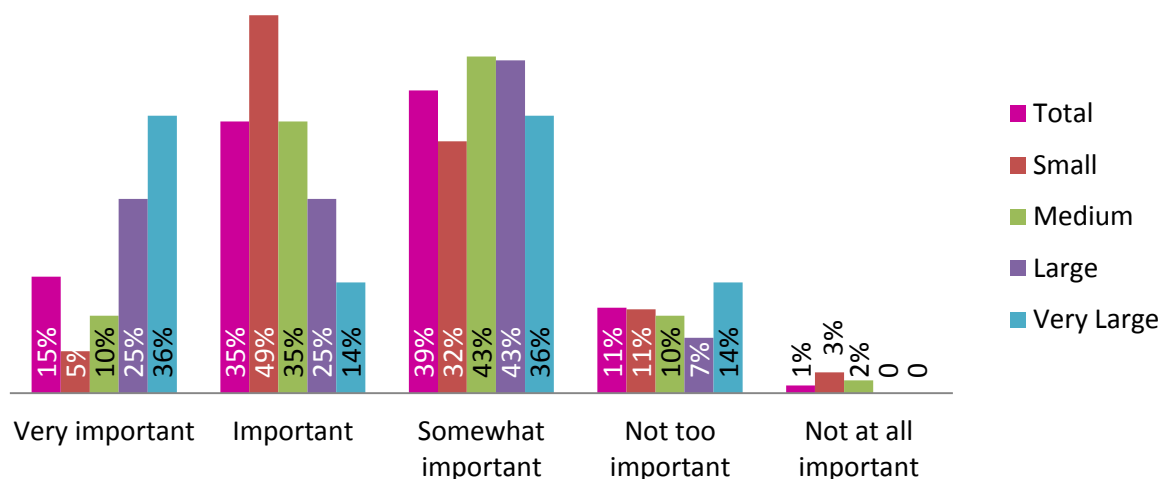
- I make the final purchase decision
- I make recommendations of platforms to be considered
- I am not involved

## Influence of Graphic Novel Availability on Digital Platform Selection

**Q. How important is the availability of graphic novels to the digital platform decision?**

This question is based on those who are involved in recommending/selecting digital platforms.

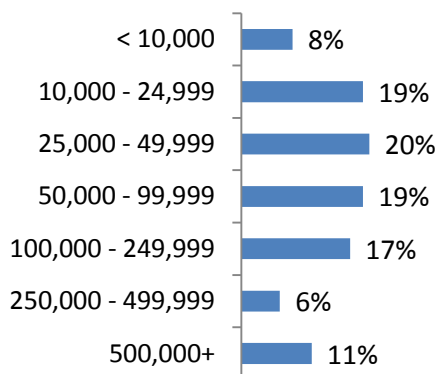
- 49% of those whose job entails selecting/recommending digital platforms consider the availability of graphic novels to be either very important or important to their decision.
- The availability of graphic novels has more influence in larger libraries.



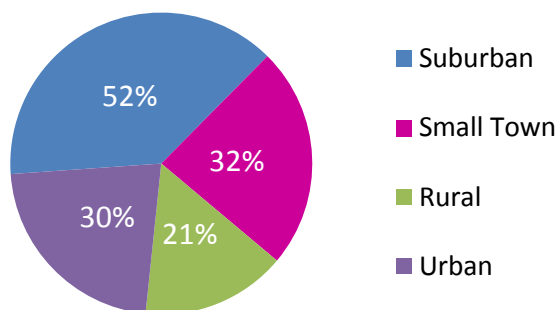
# Respondent demographics

## Q. What is the population served by your library?

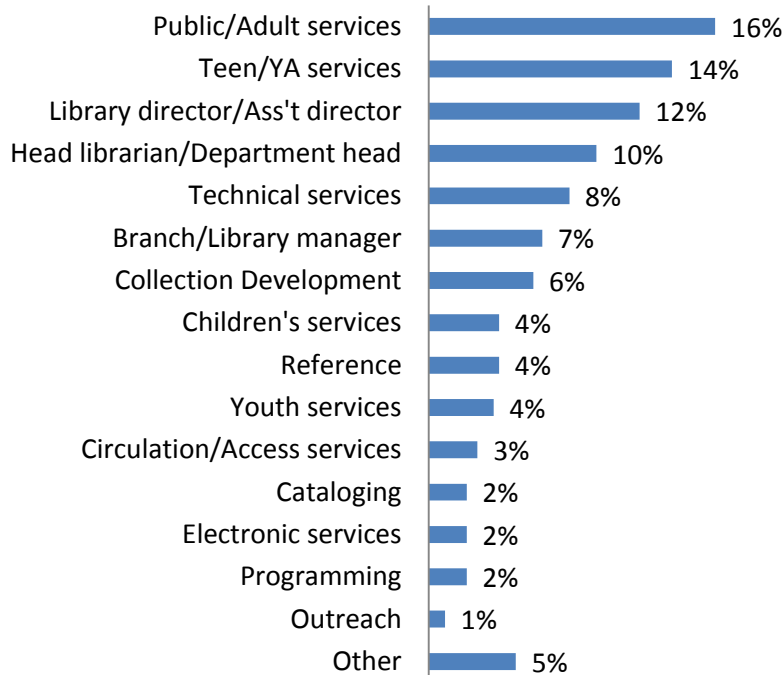
📊 Average population served = 161,500



## Q. Describe the location(s) your library serves:



## Q. Which of the following comes closest to describing your primary job function?



# APPENDIX

Briefly explain what you think the appeal of graphic novels is to adult readers.
1. They can be a quick read. You could get an entire story arc in about an hour. 2. Nostalgia. Some patrons enjoy rereading the stories from when they 1st got into comics/graphic novels. 3.The artwork. Many people appreciate the graphic aspect of graphic novels. 4. The stories. There are a lot of interesting series dealing with situations or people that they haven't come across or come across enough in regular novels.
1. Throwback to comic book readers 2. Enjoy artistic component 3. Shorter reads than novels.
A different experience than reading print. An alternative to print just like audio.
A good, action-y story; the art.
A quick read, the illustrations are appealing, fans of the format like to follow illustrators and writers, sometimes the medium is well adapted to non-fiction.
Adult readers enjoy reading graphic novels the same as they would enjoy reading great works of fiction. Graphic novels just add another genre of literature people can dive into and they are also a quick to read. People can quickly go through a series and still keep their busy lifestyles.
Adults are now used to reading comics (I did as a youth and a teen, and continue to as an adult) and want to continue to find great stories in this format. They are quick to read, with interesting ongoing narratives, and present complex, engaging ideas.
Adults can appreciate the visual aspects of the storytelling paired with strong narrative. The artwork can convey emotion vividly in a way that is experienced differently from text-only material.
Adults who still enjoy comic books tend to gravitate to graphic novels, mainly the 18-28 age set.
Adults with limited time can fit in reading with graphic novels. They have a broad appeal with a variety of art styles.
An older librarian once told me that the worst thing we ever did was punish children who learned to read by taking away the pictures. Graphic novels give the pictures back and help bring in more readers.
Another way to experience a story. Usually graphic novels are "easier" to read while the content is substantial and, at times, serious.
As a graphic novel reader myself, I like the art mixed in with the story and how the art progresses the story. I think a lot of our readers like them for the art aspect, and also because they're shorter than novels.
At its best, the medium is like a hybrid of the best elements of books and movies.
Because people like visual storytelling.
By having art and text, a graphic novel allows readers to enjoy a story from multiple angles. In this way, graphic novels are more immersive.
Children who read and liked comics grow up to be adults who still like comics and now there is more stimulating content to keep them hooked as they get older. They are also quick and relatively easy reads with dynamic images.
Cinematic and engaging storytelling.
Complex narrative, long-running story lines, and art styles are why graphic novels appeal to adult readers.

Current state of pop culture has created an encouraging atmosphere to graphic novels.
Ease of reading, compelling storylines, the mix of art with words, many things in pop culture are based off of graphic novels, and reminiscent of childhood.
Engaging format, artistic merit, enjoy the stories.
Enjoy visual format; may be visual learners. Carryover from loving comic books and graphic novels as teens. High quality of stories and artwork.
Escapism for long-time readers who love the genre.
Exciting stories, different way to read, character familiarity, serial storytelling.
Fast moving stories, visual images, quicker reads, good transition from reading easy books to more complex plots.
For fans / fandom, fans of art and storytelling alternative, as well as reluctant "print" readers.
For non-fiction, readers can get an understanding of a topic without having to spend the time on a large non-fiction book. For fiction, having an appealing visual to complement the storyline adds to the appeal.
For our patrons it is a niche audience. Most of the adults liked graphic novels when they were younger and rediscovered the genre in their later years.
Graphic novels actually aren't popular at all with the adult readers at my library. We have very few (less than 15 graphic novels) in the adult collections as they do not circulate in that collection.
Graphic novels appeal to adults for the same reasons that they appeal to teens. The appeal doesn't wane just because a person turns 21. Libraries need to put away the notion that graphic novels are for kids and teens. Once teens gain maturity, they still want to read graphic novels, but on an adult level. If anything, the genre opens up in terms of reader's advisory for readers and collection development for librarians because there are no restrictions on content, language, sexuality or violence.
Graphic novels appeal to adults that want to read the format of comics or manga, enjoy superheroes, want to tie in superhero movies with their comics, enjoy the book in print and want to read the graphic novel adaptation, and/or that enjoy popular manga/anime from Japan. I read all ages of graphic novels and order for the library as well, so I am able to stay current on what is popular. So we carry things like Attack on Titan, My Hero Academia, Tokyo Ghoul, One Punch Man, and many superhero comics from DC and Marvel. We also carry the Walking Dead compilation editions and the graphic novel adaptations for George R.R. Martin's Game of Thrones/Song of Fire and Ice series.
Graphic novels appeal to visual learners. There is artistic appeal as well as format appeal.
Graphic novels are a fantastic media, not unlike film and tv, which blends imagery with dialogue to convey story. Who doesn't enjoy that?
Graphic novels are an outlet for adult readers that love comic superpowers or adult manga. The library has free access to different genres and they are able to check them out instead of purchasing them.
Graphic novels are another medium of storytelling, the visual nature of it can provide adult readers with a very visceral experience. it also allows them to enjoy reading in an unconventional way, e.i. reading only counts if it's a "serious" book.
Graphic novels are quicker to read and thus more accessible to people with busy schedules. Adult readers also enjoy the novelty of a story being shown rather than told.
Graphic Novels may appeal to adult readers who may have literacy challenges or learning disabilities as they offer readers the opportunity to consume a story both visually and textually. Graphic novels and comics have always been of interest to adults due to their artistic appeal, as well.



Graphic novels offer an alternative method of consuming a story - the graphic component can make reading comprehension easier, and offer additional layers of complexity to a story.
Human beings engage critically and creatively in a variety of ways. Some people respond best to the written word--others respond well to images. "Graphic novel" is a format, not a genre, so people who learn/engage visually enjoy them for the same reasons people enjoy books, music, or films--namely, to connect with the ideas and minds of others, for entertainment, for education, etc. While some graphic novels are short and quick reads (like a short story or an EP) others are as long and complex as any Dostoevsky. Appeal varies based on the book and the individual in question.
I don't know how to answer this. Would you ask this question about mysteries, science fiction or general fiction? You are showing some bias against Graphic Novels just by asking this (and the reasons they appeal are as varied as the readers). Here's my attempt: the appeal is a combination of storytelling and art (same as movies, television...Graphic Novels combine visual art and written art).
I think a lot of adults who read graphic novels grew up with the genre. I also think more literary novels with arty illustration are getting mainstream attention, which catches the interest of those that didn't grow up with graphic novels.
I think depends on the age range of the adult. If an adult is older - I feel its almost generational. They were the characters adults grew up with. They also appeal to struggling readers. In this bracket its mostly white men. While younger adults seemed to enjoy the nuances of the art, the dynamic storytelling, and the form's ability to encompass diversity. This bracket sees a higher amount of diverse readers.
I think graphic novels are gaining popularity along with other non-traditional book formats, such as audio, as people begin to recognize that all of these count as "real" reading. Graphic novels also appeal to people who are more visual.
I think it brings out the youth in them.
I think it's just another literary format, and there's wonderful stories that can be told in a graphic novel that can't be told the same way in traditional prose.
I'm not sure what to say. Some of the reason is that they were kids who grew up with our large manga collection and are now adult readers. Others are those who enjoy superheroes and comics in general. Some are brought into it by the popular media and culture right now with so many superhero movies. Some are visual learners, some enjoy the speed it takes, and some just like the medium better.
It can be nostalgic for some, but for others, it is just a preferred method of reading. I think to try to generalize it would be to try to generalize magazine readers. They are appealing in writing and artistic styles, and they are great for non-traditional readers.

It is like a movie but in book form. It gives a sense of accomplishment in number of books read. Visuals can tell so much more than words sometimes.
It's great storytelling! And is interpreted in a myriad of art styles, so that something is bound to appeal to any reader (who isn't predisposed to being anti-graphic novel). They're also quicker reads than text-only stories (generally speaking).
Many adults (especially mid 20s to mid 30s) grew up with graphic novels, so they've just kept on reading them. There's also a greater variety of graphic novels than ever before, so there's more opportunity for wider appeal, not just for young male superhero fans. Comic book movies are also very popular, and so stir up interest in the source material.
Nostalgia, art, quick reads, unique stories.
Our GN section for adults is the most popular area in the library. Not only with checkouts, but with in house use as well. We get a lot of homeless people who read GNs and love them because it is less intimidating to read them than it is a regular book. Or sometimes they struggle with the text but they can still look at the art and get the full story anyway. Other patrons love the stories, and I personally love looking at the artwork. Combining art and text that way is a great way to tell a story.
Part of it is the visual appeal and the artwork, but also I think that graphic novels draw in adults who would consider themselves non-readers, but because of their accessibility, graphic novels are a less intimidating way for them to read. Also, with the increasing popularity of Marvel & DC movies, I feel like a lot more people are interested in those graphic novels.
Quick entertaining reads with strong visual appeal (like TV, but in book form). Some people seek them out for the art, some to stay abreast of what's happening with their favorite characters and understand what's going on in films/Netflix series and some seek out the different voices that aren't as represented in regular novels (queer lit, feminist lit, etc.)
Since superheroes dominate the movie industry, readers like to stay on top of story lines. A lot of novels are also getting graphic novel adaptations such as Kindred and The Lottery - they seem to appeal to readers and garner awards.
Some adults are more appreciative of visual art versus written art. Some think it's a quicker way to read.
Some adults have issues visualizing what they're reading. Graphic novels make it easy to both see and understand the depth of the story.
The artwork, storylines, entertainment value, love for the character.
The carryover from the joys of childhood plus the experience of certain kinds of story that are inaccessible anywhere else in any other way.
The combination of art and story is interesting. Quicker to read than a novel. Very quick to hook the reader into the story.
The combination of art and words. It's a movie in book format.
The graphic novel collection is less about our adult "readers" and more about the rest of the population that for whatever reason (lack of interest, no time, illiteracy, etc) likely won't be taking home a stack of books to read. Our intent is to serve our whole constituency. Interestingly, our collection has managed to get quite few of our regular adult readers into graphic novels. It's all stories, information and escape.
The graphics appeal to reluctant readers at it helps speed the story along and creates a vivid world by helping readers visualize the scene and setting

The stories that people are able to tell with the aid of images are incredibly inventive and boundary pushing. Plus, sometimes it's just more fun to see what the characters you're reading about look like.
They are amazing stories that permeate pop culture; the art is fantastic and many older adults, starting with the Boomer generation, grew up with comic books, so this is not an unusual format for them.
They want 'comics' and seem to settle for graphic novels.
Those who like / understand the format tend to find the stories accessible, visually (and sometimes intellectually) stimulating, and easy to read relatively quickly.
Um, comics aren't just for kids? Some of the best modern literature is being produced in sequential art format.
What is the appeal of ANY good story? I mean, how am I supposed to "explain briefly the appeal" of movies? Or Novels? Or Poetry?