

AWE COMPUTERS VS. IPADS RESULTS

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We also have both here at the Clinton-Macomb Public Library, though not at the same location (at least not implemented this way).

While the initial management of the iPads is a bit tricky, and keeping them up occasionally takes a bit more work (app updates, new apps, etc.), it seems to be worth it.

The AWE stations require far less involvement, but are also much more static and don't generate the buzz that the iPads do.

We are planning to replace our AWE stations (at least partially) next year with iPad Pros, which have a much larger screen, making them better alternatives (though certainly not as big as the AWEs).

Cost-wise, it's about a wash, if not far in the iPads' favor, because we have to buy the apps for the iPads, whereas they come with the AWE. However, since we get to pick the apps, the list is dynamic, where with AWE things are much more fixed.

I agree with the others on this; pick and choose, mix and match for your purposes.

--Clinton-Macomb Public Library

We have AWEs and kids are just addicted to them. They are rather durable (except for the keyboards), and if something breaks you can send the whole thing in for a replacement unit. Updates are far easier.

I like anything I let the public use to be super tough, so my vote was for the AWE.

Good luck.

--Caroline Kennedy Library, Dearborn Heights

We have both in our youth department and it would be difficult for me to choose which device is more popular. The AWE are wonderful for working with parents or caregivers because the screen is large. They are filled with educational games and often grandparents are more attracted to those computers. The iPads are certainly very popular as well but for different reasons. We tend to purchase award winning educational apps for the iPads. However, we also have popular apps like Minecraft on them (also educational). The kids enjoy what they find on the iPads, but sometimes I will hear parents say "We have that at home, why don't you play something else?" For the kids whose parents cannot afford an iPad it is nice for them to have a chance to play some of those games they hear their friends talking about. We also use the iPads to download electronic books like the short chapter books associated with the Wonder series, Julian's Chapter and Pluto: A Wonder Story. Until those stories were released in print format it gave those kids who don't have access to a device at home a chance to read these short stories.

I guess one thing that might help you decide is to consider how much you or your staff want to have to be involved in updating, downloading, trouble shooting, etc. The AWE are certainly easier in that sense and you don't need an IT department to keep them running. The iPads are not complicated but do require more time and energy from staff.

I think both the iPad and AWE are GREAT. You can't go wrong with either choice; start with one and purchase the other next time you have some extra funding. Good luck!

--Highland Township Public Library

We are a small class III library and have two of the AWE computers. I don't know as I can "recommend" one over the other, but I like the ease of use and low maintenance of the AWE computers. I don't have to worry about them "walking" away like the I pads and they are pretty much trouble free. The kids at our library love the AWE computers.

--St. Charles District Library

I've been using AWE's and they go over really well! I'm also finding older kids are bringing in their own iPads, etc., but it might be nice to have a couple available on a tech bar for older kids and stick to AWE's for the little ones. I do know AWE is doing an iPad style now, too.

--Traverse Area District Library

We currently have AWE computers at our library in the children's room. They were expensive, but totally worth purchasing. The kids at the library love them. The programs for kids are downloaded onto the computers. They cannot be deleted or changed. It is a huge improvement over the regular computers we use to have. Kids would delete the programs, change settings, flip the screens upside down, you name it we had to fix it. The AWE computers are also touch screen but can't be hauled off like an Ipad which I think is good with kids that may have short attention spans. We don't find our computers all over the library. Kids also understand that the computers stay at the library and they can't take them home. I don't feel like this would be the case with a tablet. Either way we love them, they are easy to run, easy to clean, and the kids can't get enough of them.

--Big Rapids Community Library

It depends what you're wanting to accomplish. For early literacy (up to age 5 or so), I think the AWE computers work best. We set ours up with a bench that accommodates 2 people to encourage parents/caregivers to work with the young children at those computers. Then we also have an iPad bar for our older children, geared more for ages 6-12, and those are very popular with that age group. We have preloaded them with many apps that the kids really enjoy.

So that might not help you, but we have both for different audiences of kids. This works well for our community.

--Orion Township Public Library

We have just purchased three iPads to replace our one (very old) AWE computer in our children's area -- we're using Bouncepad cases to protect and tether the iPads. We're moving to iPads because we like the flexibility that they offer in terms of our ability to change up apps and constantly update the iPads to keep them fresh and fun.

--Walled Lake City Library

Just noting, but AWE does provide "tablets" now. Also, there are many other options, but I'm sure kids are drawn more to tablets than desktop workstations.

--Northville Public Library