

BRAZORIA COUNTY LIBRARY SYSTEM INCREASE CIRCULATION WITH COLLECTIONHQ

Brazoria County Library System is made up of 11 branches and serves a population of over 300,000. Maintaining a high standard of collection in an efficient and cost-effective way across the system was to prove difficult and so collectionHQ was implemented at the library in October 2011.



Brazoria County Library System
more than books
bcls.lib.tx.us



THE CHALLENGE

Prior to the implementation of collectionHQ at Brazoria County Library System, staff were faced with two key challenges: implementing streamlined weeding, replacement and transfer processes across 11 libraries of different sizes and running detailed, user-friendly reports in a time-effective manner from their current ILS system.

In relation to streamlining processes, Tom West, Adult Program Co-ordinator at the library illustrates the difficulty of transferring items before collectionHQ "with 11 different branches sometimes one branch would get rid of something which was desperately needed at another branch but they didn't know that." West continues that the only way transferring processes could be carried out was to "painstakingly look up each title and check its performance at other branches."

This lack of visibility across the system was not improved by using ILS System, Polaris, as Sara Joiner Children's Program Co-ordinator revealed "the ability to run reports in Polaris can be time consuming and you can only look at one branch."

Both hurdles combined made collectionHQ extremely attractive to West and Joiner when they were introduced to the product at a PLA conference in Oregon. The opportunities to save time, compare libraries and run efficient and system wide reports encouraged the library to take on the software.

THE OUTCOME

FINANCIAL SAVINGS | Since using collectionHQ, the staff at Brazoria County Library System have been able to spend money more wisely and make financial savings.

One example of where collectionHQ has helped with budgeting has been in the planning of an opening day collection. Joiner reveals how they have been able to use collectionHQ with this project by looking at the performance of different collections at existing branches and using this information to figure out how much money they should spend on each category for the new library. She explains "We used the budgeting tool so we could narrow down what we definitely don't need. In addition, when the branch opens, we will use collectionHQ to maintain the collection there and fill gaps, so any titles we couldn't order we'll keep an eye out for when they become available at smaller branches."

It is this transferring of books between branches to better meet demand which has also helped to save money at the library. As West describes rather than purchasing popular titles to "fill gaps" at

KEY BENEFITS

The adoption of collectionHQ has enabled Brazoria County Library System to:

- Plan for an opening day collection.
- Save money by transferring items across the system.
- Streamline weeding processes.
- Put the power of reporting into the hands of the branches.
- Increase circulation.

COLLECTION PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT



certain branches, collectionHQ helps to locate where there is surplus of these items or where they are not circulating highly which can then be moved to where they are needed. He concludes "we certainly don't need to duplicate items which are sitting on a shelf somewhere. They just need a good home!"

STREAMLINED PROCESSES | Difficulties with implementing regular weeding and replacement schedules as well as labor intensive reporting processes at Brazoria County Library System have also been eliminated since the adoption of collectionHQ.

West describes that before using the software, the process of re-distributing dead items involved "having to look up each title, check circulation at each branch and then check which branch it had to go to." He goes on to highlight that sometimes branches had batches of weeded items to work through and so to carry out that process "one book at a time was too time consuming." collectionHQ has greatly improved this task through the production of grubby reports which branches can use to add to a list of what they need. All branches can then run reports to figure out where weeded items can be sent. "Branches love running grubby and dead item reports as you can see how your items sit against other branches."

In addition, the time taken to produce reports for carrying out processes like weeding and transferring has been substantially reduced since the implementation of collectionHQ. For example, beforehand all reports would be put together at one central location and then sent out to each individual branch, with collectionHQ each branch can run reports as and when they need to. This ability to put the power of reporting into the hands of the branches is thanks to collectionHQ's reporting parameters. Joiner explains "The other great thing about collectionHQ is that parameters are already set" therefore staff no longer need to run individual reports for different criteria. This ability to create customized reports also maintains a level of consistency across the system as West describes "you can set the same parameters across the system to keep everyone at the same stage."

Overall collectionHQ has helped to bring the branches at Brazoria County Library System closer together as Joiner and West explain that at selection committees for adult and children's, hosts are "getting the whole team together and comparing us to other systems in terms of what they are checking out lots that we don't have yet."

PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENTS | The use of collectionHQ in tasks at Brazoria County Library System is certainly paying off, not only in terms of time and financial savings but in the improved performance of the collection.

For example, regular and efficient transfer processes combined with weeding grubby items and replacing with more visually appealing copies has significantly increased circulation across the collection. West provides the example of increased circulation at the library's largest branch between January 2012 and September 2012. "One branch took in 125 copies (from transfers) which have since circulated 494 times. That was a big success story for us because that was 125 books which we didn't need to buy extra copies of because we just moved them around the system and they generated 3 times as many circs."

collectionHQ has not just improved the performance of the collection for staff but also for patrons. For example the popular author and popular title charts have revealed items that West describes as an "eye opener" for some branches where they were not aware that those items were so popular. He continues "People are seeing more of authors they like; those items are coming in quicker than before because we now recognize them quicker thanks to faster reports."

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