

# DUNEDIN PUBLIC LIBRARY IMPROVES COLLECTION PERFORMANCE WITH COLLECTIONHQ



Dunedin Public Library, New Zealand, is a 5 branch library system with 2 book mobiles, serving a population of over 128,000. collectionHQ was introduced at the library in 2011 to support evidence-based collection management and development decisions.

## THE CHALLENGE

Prior to the implementation of collectionHQ, Dunedin Public Library was faced with a few key challenges. One of those challenges was overstocked shelves. Despite a KPI of 80% shelf loading, and weeding being built into the library's collection policies, the library lacked a systematic plan for continual weeding. As a result, shelves were burgeoning and lending collections contained excess material which did not circulate (dead) or was in a poor physical condition (grubby). The clean up of these shelves was not a straightforward task with the lack of an evidence-based method to assess the collection and the catalogue.

In addition to better collection management, the library also faced the tasks of effective budgeting and implementation of centralised selection. Before collectionHQ, there was no evidence to suggest how budget should be allocated across the library branches. This lack of evidence to justify budget allocation caused set-backs when moving to centralised selection as Jackie Howell, Collection Development Librarian at the library explained "there was a tendency to treat the locations as "my branch, my collection"."

## THE SOLUTION

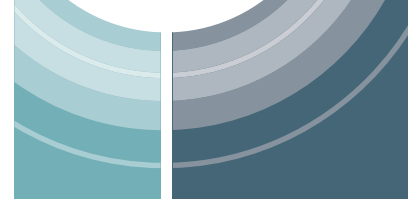
The team was first introduced to collectionHQ after Libraries Services Manager, Bernie Hawke, and Head of Collection Services, Linda Geddes, watched a presentation of the software at the New Zealand Libraries' annual conference. Both identified collectionHQ as a solution to Dunedin Public Library's challenges and subsequently made the decision to subscribe to the product.

## THE OUTCOME

**MORE INFORMED PURCHASING DECISIONS** | Since implementing collectionHQ, Dunedin Public Library has introduced evidence into purchasing decisions which has helped to select material in quantities more reflective of demand. One example is the "Playaway" collection in which collectionHQ action plans revealed the library was understocked. The team has now adjusted the number of copies available in this collection to better meet demand.

collectionHQ evidence has also assisted with selection of material for a new building. Jackie explains "I used collectionHQ heavily when choosing items for a branch (Blueskin Bay) which had undergone a complete re-build. I was able to see which collections had been most used prior to the temporary move out of the old building, and based the new collection on that evidence."

COLLECTION PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT



## KEY BENEFITS

The adoption of collectionHQ at Dunedin Public Library has helped to:

- Make evidence based purchasing decisions
- Manage staff time more effectively
- Improve collection performance
- Enhance promotional activities



As a result of using collectionHQ to plan the new building's collection in conjunction with the appeal of a newly opened branch, significant improvements were made to the proportion of dead and grubby stock. Jackie reports "pre-move there was 22.7% dead stock; post move, 12.5%. Adult Non-Fiction, pre-move there was 46.6% dead; post move, just 20.8%."

On a strategic level, Jackie explains that the staff look forward to using the collectionHQ budget tool which will help to ensure that spend on material in the new fiscal year is allocated to each collection and location based on evidence, thus ensuring that supply meets demand.

**BETTER USE OF STAFF TIME** | The introduction of evidence to collection management activities with collectionHQ has helped to make more effective use of staff time. Jackie explains "collection maintenance and management before collectionHQ was generally ad hoc. Now, I keep a spreadsheet to show which tools are to be run each month, and also give a few alternatives if staff finish their allotted tools before the next dataset is due. I believe that staff are now much more confident about de-selection (weeding), knowing there is a "master plan" behind their actions that is based on targets and parameters they helped set."

Overall, staff at Dunedin Public Library are enthusiastic about collectionHQ from noticing the improvement it has helped to make to the appearance of shelves across the branches. Jackie believes the team has also appreciated the opportunity to take part in setting the targets and parameters which determine collectionHQ action plans "this was also an excellent way of introducing collectionHQ and showing what it can do."

**IMPROVED COLLECTION PERFORMANCE** | The accessibility of collectionHQ action plans for staff at Dunedin Public Library resulting in more systematic collection management procedures has helped to make vast improvements to the quantity of dead items within the Fiction collection. For example, between January 2013 and December 2013, the number of dead items at all service points has dropped by an average of 46.5%. Three libraries have already achieved our target of no more than 10% dead stock, and two others are well on the way to achieving the goal.

The Adult Non-Fiction collection has seen a similar drop with branches showing percentage decreases of 88% and 55% in the most extreme cases.

In addition to using collectionHQ Weeding tools to broaden the appeal of the collection, the Transfer tools have also been used to move items branch to branch depending on demand. Jackie explains "(Transfers) is a tool which I believe can save us a lot of money, by transferring items that are under-used and sending them where they will be "new" – there can be no cheaper way of refreshing a collection." As a result of using the Transfer tools circulation at the library has increased. So far, 185 fiction items transferred with collectionHQ have received an additional 1220 circulations, and 923 nonfiction items an additional 1371 issues.

**ENHANCED MARKETING ACTIVITIES** | Enhancing promotional activities with collectionHQ has been another method of widening the collection appeal and increasing circulation. The "Top Charts" tool creates an eye-catching list of the library's most popular items which can be printed and displayed for the attention of patrons. Jackie elaborates "Much of our brand new stock disappears to holds before it is ever on display on our shelves. One of our Fiction advocates (they assist selectors) prints out a list of newly acquired fiction each month, and places it in specially made Perspex "envelopes" on the new items shelving. This is a great way of showing folk what is new in the library, especially if they miss a book's publication."



saveTIME



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