

COLLECTIONHQ SUPPORTS MANAGEMENT OF FLOATING COLLECTION AT MARIN COUNTY FREE LIBRARY



Marin County Free Library, California, is a 10 branch library system serving a population of over 140,000. When the library's collection moved to floating, the team required a solution to help manage movement of those items. collectionHQ was introduced as that solution in 2011.

THE CHALLENGE

Prior to the implementation of collectionHQ at Marin County Free Library, the team was faced with the challenge of improving collection management and weeding across all libraries. Donna Mettier, Technical Services Manager at Marin County Free Library reports "Historically we ran our county system like 10 boutique libraries then, 5 years ago, we switched to system-wide selection and floating. It then became apparent on starting to float that our weeding guidelines hadn't been consistently applied site-by-site."

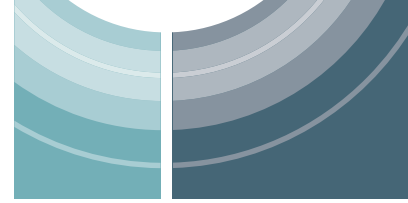
collectionHQ was brought on board to help coordinate collection management and weeding guidelines at a system level, ensuring standard procedures across all libraries.

THE SOLUTION

MORE REGULAR WEEDING | Since implementing collectionHQ at Marin County Free Library, weeding has become more systematic and time has been saved from the previous method of using the ILS (LMS) to create complex weeding lists centrally which were then distributed out across the branches. With collectionHQ, weeding is now carried out on a schedule where a different genre can be weeded each month to ensure regular maintenance of the entire collection.

What's more, collectionHQ puts the responsibility of weeding back into the hands of branch staff who can easily access the toolset's weeding "action plans" which direct them to those items that have not circulated in a long period of time (dead) or which have been overused and are in a poor physical condition (grubby). Staff can then remove those items from the shelves and are provided with the opportunity to make selection suggestions based on what items have been removed. Overall this process helps to keep the collection relevant and in a good condition as well as make best use of shelf space to improve browsability for patrons.

COLLECTION PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT



KEY BENEFITS

The adoption of collectionHQ at Marin County Free Library has helped to:

- Improve collection management
- Make more informed purchasing decisions
- Improve management of floating collection
- Provide better collection insight



BETTER MANAGEMENT OF FLOATING COLLECTION | Donna reports that the team at Marin County Free Library were excited about the release of the new “floating” functionality within collectionHQ which helps to maintain movement of floating collections and ensure those items are going to locations of demand. Donna shared “We have been using collectionHQ Floating tools to help smaller branches quickly identify items they can move to bigger libraries. collectionHQ has not only helped to clear up those overstocked areas in smaller branches but reveals items that will receive use elsewhere.”

As a result, Marin County Free Library has been able to create space quickly and easily, all while knowing those items that have floated will circulate at their new location.

In addition to Floating tools, collectionHQ Transfer tools have also supported movement of items. This functionality directs transfer of items with poor circulation to locations of higher demand which in turn increases circulation, avoids the need to purchase new copies and reduces waste.

EVIDENCE-BASED PURCHASING | collectionHQ Selection tools have supported the creation of performance based standing orders at Marin County Free Library by introducing “evidence” to purchasing decisions. Donna explains that the library provides book vendor “Baker & Taylor” with standing orders to ensure a regular supply of material throughout the year. Prior to collectionHQ, building standing orders was mainly based on “gut feeling” about the right quantities of particular genres or authors per location, a process that could take several months of collating recommendations from across that branches. With collectionHQ, that list can now be produced once a year straight from the toolset based on evidence of performance.

The selection tools have also been helpful when adjusting book budget between age groups. Donna explains that when moving to system-wide spending, it was noticed that most spending had unintentionally moved from juvenile to adult. She reports “Using collectionHQ selection tools centrally helped to re-balance that spending by providing direction on how to divide the money up across the libraries based on how our patrons are using the collection.”

ENHANCED INSIGHT | To promote the collection at Marin County Free Library, collectionHQ Marketing tools have proven extremely useful. Regularly, branches can produce “Top Charts” straight from collectionHQ to share recommendations with the public.

Donna explains that these charts are not only interesting for patrons but for staff at the library. For example, prior to the use of collectionHQ, anecdotal evidence from staff on what items were popular and what were not was often the basis for selection. However the Top Charts have often revealed a different picture and in certain cases have proven an “eye opener” for staff!

This developed knowledge of patron reading trends with evidence from collectionHQ has helped to improve the patron experience at Marin County Free Library and promote system wide decisions.

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