

HANCOCK COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY IMPROVES COLLECTION PERFORMANCE WITH COLLECTIONHQ

Serving a population of more than 58,000, Hancock County Public Library, IN, U.S.A., is made up of 1 main library, 1 branch library and a bookmobile.



THE CHALLENGE

Prior to the implementation of collectionHQ, staff at Hancock County Public Library faced two key challenges; implementing a streamlined weeding process and developing a patron driven collection.

The main issue with weeding was that librarians across all 3 locations did not have the ability to directly access reports from their Sirsi-Dynix ILS. As a result, lengthy ILS reports had to be run centrally by a Technical Services Librarian and distributed accordingly; a process which could take 2-3 days depending on the workload of that Technical Services Librarian. Barbara Roark, Assistant Director at the library, commented: "Staff may sometimes have found an hour which they could use to spend their time on weeding, but because they hadn't submitted their list they couldn't do it."

Not only did the process of getting the reports out to staff hinder the introduction of streamlined weeding, but the lack of direction offered by those reports caused the overall task to be incredibly time consuming.

Identifying areas of high and low demand at the library had relied mainly on guess work about what was popular and what was not. As a result, monitoring understocked and overstocked collection areas, and adjusting selection accordingly to satisfy patron demand were equally challenging.

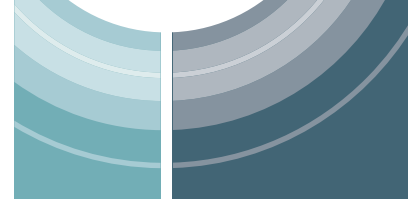
THE SOLUTION

To develop a collection that was reflective of patron demand and to improve the patron experience of browsing items in the shelves; the library's management team made the decision to adopt an evidence based approach to collection management. To support this methodology, the world's leading collection performance improvement solution, collectionHQ, was implemented in 2014.

TIME SAVINGS | Since the introduction of collectionHQ at Hancock County Public Library, weeding processes have been enhanced thanks to the ability of staff to access collectionHQ directly. Not only is collectionHQ intuitive and simple to use, but the weeding action plans provided by the tool help staff to clearly identify the items to be considered for weeding either due to poor circulation (dead), or bad physical condition (grubby).

Library Director, David Gray, commented: "collectionHQ provides our staff with better access to information, helping us to more efficiently and effectively manage the collection."

Prior to implementing regular weeding, librarians were able to really clean up their collection with the help of collectionHQ's 'Collection Check' tool. 'Collection Check' is a branch Action Plan of items that meet the "collection check" criteria to help identify missing items. Missing items can then be updated in the ILS in order to cleanse the catalog.



KEY BENEFITS

The adoption of collectionHQ at Hancock County Public Library has helped to:

- Streamline collection management tasks
- Reduce wasteful purchases
- Move items to new locations to increase circulation
- Enhance the patron experience



Thanks to the 'Collection Check' tool, after a year of using collectionHQ consistently, the quantity of the collection that is missing or still to be accounted for has reduced by more than half in Adult Fiction at all 3 locations.

Overall, staff are delighted with the time savings that collectionHQ has enabled. Stacey Terhune, Adult Services References Librarian at Hancock County shared: "I like being able to pull up the collectionHQ Action Plan and look at a very focused list of problem areas. It lets me deal with those areas quickly and move on to purchasing books that patrons will like."

MORE INFORMED PURCHASING DECISIONS | collectionHQ's powerful 'Selection' module has provided staff at Hancock County Public Library with evidence of what patrons want, thus enabling staff to build a detailed selection plan for all of the library's collections and, importantly, to purchase new material with confidence. For example, collectionHQ's 'Discovery' tool offers librarians visibility on not only what is circulating well at their library, but what items are popular on a local, regional and national level. This information has been used to improve the collection at Hancock County Public Library by identifying those popular areas that are underrepresented. Adult Services Reference Librarian, Kristine Gilbertson, shared: "collectionHQ Action Plans have shown me several areas that were popular but understocked, which has guided my purchasing. I've gotten more books for those areas and patrons are loving them!"

In addition to helping librarians with the selection of new material, collectionHQ also suggests items that might circulate better if moved to another branch or area of the library. This not only gives poorly circulating items another chance, but helps to ensure that valuable collection dollars are spent only where necessary.

Barbara Roark looks forward to discovering new ways of using the collectionHQ 'Selection' module and is especially enthusiastic about using the 'Spending Plan' tool to prepare budgets, build specifications and manage standing orders.

IMPROVED COLLECTION PERFORMANCE | Weeding and selection enhancements in general have helped to improve the overall collection performance at Hancock County Public Library.

For example, as a result of evidence based selection and the use of collectionHQ to monitor areas which are understocked and overstocked over the year, representation of Popular Authors within the Fiction collection has increased at all 3 locations. Much of this is down to the accessibility of collectionHQ Action Plans, as Jena Mattix, Youth Services Librarian comments: "collectionHQ has given me greater control over my collection, allowing me to more easily make changes to my collection to ensure that it reflects the needs of the community."

More regular weeding and collection checks have added to an enhanced patron experience by making shelves more attractive and improving browsability. Joy Summers, Adult Services Reference Librarian shared: "After cleaning out the books in the collection that never get used I've noticed a lot more people browsing the shelf and being able to find what they want."

To continue to reap the benefits of collectionHQ, department managers can use collectionHQ Performance Action Plans to identify any parts of the toolset where more training is required or which aren't being used as much as they should be. What's more, collectionHQ provides the team with a variety of charts and alerts which help them to monitor the collection's performance over any time period. Keeping track of performance and making adjustments where necessary will help the team at Hancock County Public Library continue to improve the collection and build an even more enhanced patron experience.



saveTIME



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COLLECTION PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT