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Insight



Plus:

Industry Insight -
The Modern Library

PAGE 8

Finding the
Right Balance for
Effective Selection
Planning

PAGE 10

Index

- 4** – **Welcome** - A Message from Aman Kochar
- 5** – **Library News**
- 7** – **Library Leader Interview** - Rebecca Raven, Brampton Library
- 8** – **Industry Insight** - The Modern Library
- 10** – **collectionHQ Investigates** - Finding the Right Balance for Effective Selection Planning
- 13** – **Library Success Story** - Lewisham Libraries
- 15** – **Top Charts from ESP**

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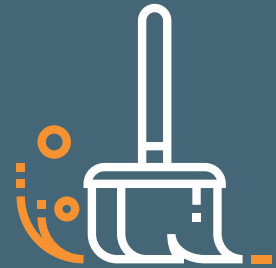
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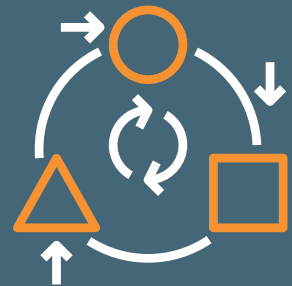
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Welcome

A MESSAGE FROM AMAN KOCHAR

Greetings,

Welcome to the latest edition of *Insight!*

I have been fortunate to meet with many of you lately at the ALA Midwinter Conference in Seattle and the London Book Fair. One theme that stood out to me from attending these events is the true innovation going on in our public libraries today to enhance the patron experience and empower the local community. At ALA Midwinter, I was proud to join my team in showcasing the latest Baker & Taylor initiatives that support these goals. The new Pop Up Library takes the library out of the building and into the hands of the local community, extending the library's reach to new patrons. You can find out more about Pop Up Library by watching [this video](#) featuring Kelvin Watson, Director of Libraries at Broward County Libraries Division. I am also delighted at the success of our recent partnership with Penn Foster to offer courses, degree and certificate programs to public library patrons across America through Baker & Taylor's Axis 360 platform.

In this edition of *Insight*, we further explore the theme of technology and innovation in libraries with an investigation into the Modern Library on [page 8](#), and the influence of data and predictive algorithms on collection development on [page 10](#). A fantastic example of the results that can be achieved by applying data to selection is the success story of the Atlanta-Fulton Public Library in Georgia. We were lucky to work with Executive Director, Dr Gabriel Morley, on a Library Journal webcast where attendees learned how his library increased turnover and reduced dead items with evidence. You can register to watch this webinar [here](#) and view Morley's video testimonial [here](#). At collectionHQ, we look forward to partnering with more customers like Atlanta-Fulton to enhance collection improvements through innovation.

I would like to thank Rebecca Raven from the Brampton Library in Ontario for sharing her views on tomorrow's public library ([page 7](#)) and congratulate the winner of collectionHQ's Biggest Improver Challenge 2018, Lewisham Library and Information Service in London—you can read the case study on [page 13](#).

And so, without further ado, enjoy reading the latest *Insight!*

Aman

Aman Kochar

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LIBRARY NEWS

Thunder Bay Public Library, ON

Thunder Bay Public Library in Ontario is taking action to decolonize and build relationships with its indigenous community through outreach, programs, collaboration with local First Nations and Metis organizations and the development of special collections in library branches.

Angela Meady, Director of Collections at the library, commented: “One of the first projects we undertook was to respond to a request from our Indigenous Advisory Council to develop Indigenous Knowledge Centres at each library branch. They consist of fiction, poetry, plays, films and music by Indigenous authors and artists, and information on topics of interest such as residential schools, self-government, law, biographies of notable individuals, art, reconciliation and other material of interest. We used collectionHQ’s software to create an experimental collection of all titles which allows us to view the circulation and other data for the unique collections easily. We can now contrast the former circulation for the materials to see if moving them into new collections has improved visibility and use. It’s a very useful tool for us in our new way of working.”



Robyn Medicine, the TBPL Indigenous Liaison at the launch of the Indigenous Knowledge Centres at the Library on October 30, 2018. In the background is a part of the collection and Sheila Karasiewicz, Elder and Knowledge Keeper from Fort William First Nation who blessed the space and brought greetings.

North Yorkshire County Council Libraries, United Kingdom

Blue Monday, the third Monday in January, is claimed to be one of the most difficult days of the year due to long winter nights and post-holiday blues. North Yorkshire County Council Libraries partnered with charity, The Samaritans, to offer an alternative ‘Brew Monday’ where the community was invited into the library for a cup of tea and a chat. The initiative aimed to raise awareness of loneliness and mental health self-care.

General Manager, Chrys Mellor, said: “In North Yorkshire we recognise the social role of our libraries within the community – and a firm belief in working with experts to provide the best possible access to a wide range of support and information – as well as any chance to ‘have a brew.’”

North Yorkshire County Council partnered with The Samaritans charity to host Brew Monday



LIBRARY NEWS

ALA Midwinter in Seattle

In January, librarians flocked to Seattle for the 2019 ALA Midwinter Conference. Roberto Rodriguez, Account Manager at collectionHQ attended the event and shared that: “turnout was great and the weather was spectacular for the time of year”.

Many librarians gathered at the Baker & Taylor booth to check out collectionHQ, ESP and the new Pop Up Library which generated a lot of buzz. The Baker & Taylor Children’s and Teen Services event, “An Evening with CATS” was a huge success with publisher presentations, great food and even some cats to pet!



Roberto Rodriguez and Jane Herb with Baker and Taylor



Open House at Erie County Public Library

Erie County Public Library, PA

The Erie County Public Library in PA introduced an “open house” initiative to engage the local community with the library service. Sheryl Thomas, Assistant Director, shared, “Our Executive Director, Erin Wincek, came up with the idea to offer open houses during February as part of Love Your Library month.” The library had recently hired managers for each of the four branch locations and so the open houses aimed to introduce the manager to the community while garnering input from community members as to what they would like to see at their library in the future. Sheryl said: “Each manager tailored invite lists to their community and worked with their staff to identify key community members, such as members of local government, historical societies, school district staff, and others. Additionally, each worked to spread the word in their individual communities by hand delivering invites and fliers to key locations, such as coffee shops, schools, and senior centers. As part of the lead up to each open house we also conducted a campaign to ask community members to submit their photographs of local landscapes and landmarks to decorate each branch’s community room.”

Each Saturday in February saw a different branch host the open house which provided activities and crafts for children, tours of each location, refreshments donated by community organizations, and held a community conversation.

Sheryl concluded: “While we don’t have exact numbers of attendance, we did see above average library usage at each location during that time period. Our new branch managers have also benefited from the introduction to key players in their areas of service and have become recognized faces to many of their patrons. They were lovely events and I hope we can repeat them with continued success!”



REBECCA RAVEN

BRAMPTON LIBRARY, ON

What first attracted you to a career in public libraries?

I was one of those kids who always had her nose stuck in a book, so my love of children's literature is deep and real. Our school librarian was a gifted puppeteer who introduced me to a broad variety of stories that opened up the world to me. I started my career as a children's librarian, sharing many of the stories that I had grown up with and loved with a new generation of readers. My training as a children's librarian has been remarkably beneficial throughout my career and the field remains a true passion of mine.

How have libraries changed since your career first started?

The entire service model has been completely turned on its head since I began in a very quiet neighbourhood library that still had a card catalogue. We spent a lot of time in those days selecting just the right books for our extensive reference collection, knowing that we could literally be asked anything by anyone at any time. With information at the ready, our customers need support in making sense of what they find online but I'm grateful that public libraries have done such a remarkable job of adapting to our new realities. I love the place our

spaces hold as interactive and social community hubs. Librarians are now acting as facilitators, working with our users in the creation of content, rather than sitting behind our desks and delivering content for those who were brave enough to ask. The changes have been sweeping but public libraries remain the integral connectors, bringing people and ideas together in a way that is more dynamic than ever.

What do you feel are the main challenges facing public libraries and what steps should be taken to overcome these?

I believe our biggest challenge is overcoming the outdated stereotype of what a library is and does. Many people tune out as soon as they hear the word "library" remembering the sometimes daunting institutions of years gone by. Our profession needs to work together to more successfully market and educate the public about the work we do. We need to learn from retail how to tailor our message and our services, to meet the specific needs of our communities seamlessly building user excitement.

What upcoming initiatives at Brampton Library are you most excited about?

With only 7 physical branches in a city of over 600,000 residents, I am excited about the recent launch of our "Brampton Library On-the-go" mobile van. The van is fully equipped with kits and gear to promote and teach 21st century digital literacies, and will enable us to literally take our message on the road and introduce underserved neighbourhoods to the vast offerings available in our branches. With our first van successfully launched and fully booked through the spring and summer, we are looking forward to expanding the fleet, while also exploring other more nimble, flexible service points that will allow us to grow our usership in a cost effective way.

Please tell us a little about how you envision the public library of the future.

The dynamism of the current climate in public libraries is very exciting and provides limitless possibilities for a bright future for our institutions. Every community has unique needs and aspirations for their local library and libraries are increasingly growing and morphing to meet those demands. Whether its access to retail style easy-to-browse collections, newcomer settlement services, recording studio space, tool or seed lending or emergent literacy programmes, the public library of the future will adapt proactively to meet those needs.



THE MODERN LIBRARY

Libraries have long held a position of importance in societies—as collectors of information, and more broadly as guardians of community stories and culture. Even before libraries existed as stand-alone institutions, evidence of the concept of a library can be found throughout history in the Greek temples discovered to have had archive repositories, and the Babylonian temples filled with clay tablets.

While the need and desire for a library has remained consistent throughout history, the look, feel and services provided by this public institution have certainly changed. And libraries continue to evolve, thanks in part to their increased access to technological advancements. The result is an exciting new world of possibilities as libraries and librarians become facilitators and experts on modern literacy. In this rapidly changing world, what does a modern library look like?

Buildings adapt to serve more needs

The amount and availability of information has grown exponentially in recent years, and as society deals with information overload, people need someone to guide them through it. Enter the modern library.

To start, libraries are being built to embrace their new roles and are becoming more inviting for a range of people and ages. Buildings are being constructed with better acoustics to enhance presentations and architects are incorporating more glass to take advantage of natural light.

Consider the Hot Springs Library renovation on the Appalachian Trail in North Carolina, named Library Journal's 2018 Best Small Library in America. In the new library, flexible, mobile furnishings add versatility, and children can learn from and play with a sensory wall in the children's area. The Calgary Public Library, meanwhile, has its own light rail stop, and the Halifax Central Library in Canada, which has an on-site coffee lounge, has become a tourist attraction in its own right.

Librarians are on the forefront

In the midst of the change, the core mission of libraries remains the same—to serve the public, promote literacy and offer equitable access to

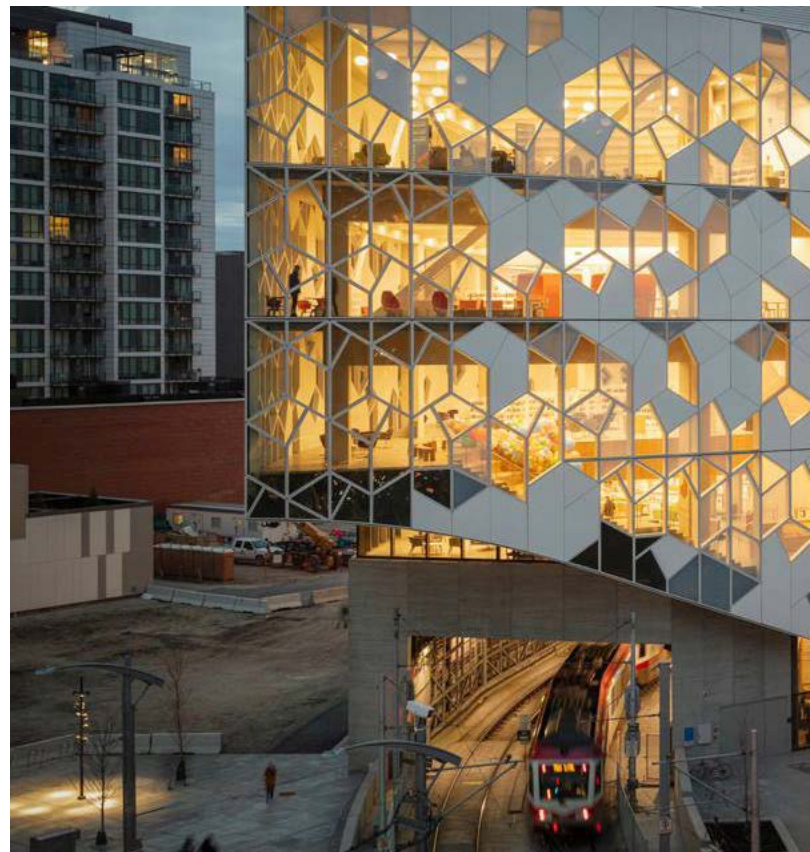
resources. But how libraries are serving their patrons is looking very different, and librarians are the pioneers of this new frontier.

Say goodbye to the stereotypical librarian, or the myth of staff sitting behind a desk, with huge reference guides to the side, waiting for patrons to approach and ask for help, maybe occasionally shushing noisy visitors.

Librarians now are facilitators of 21st century literacy, using technology to more efficiently help people find content and are thus able to reduce back office work and spend more time away from their desks, interacting with patrons.

Services such as Evidence-based Selection Planning, or ESP, by collectionHQ make it possible for librarians to spend less time researching to build collections and more time servicing patrons and exploring new programming. By using sophisticated algorithms and machine-learning, among other technology, ESP can expertly analyze the multitude of data that goes into building a collection, enabling librarians to more quickly choose content that best fits their changing communities.

“These modern professionals can guide people on the information superhighway and give advice on the pit stops to take,” explains Amandeep Kochar, Baker & Taylor's Executive Vice President of Software Products and Services. Kochar explained that in a complex world, it helps to have an expert whom you can trust to help you navigate and find what



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I think the future is very bright. Libraries are going to evolve, but they'll remain social spaces with a firm rooting toward literacy. I see the perception of the librarian evolving to where they are the cool person whom people go to when they need information, research or other resources, on any topic.”

you want. Kochar pictures librarians as becoming increasingly known as that expert for information of all kinds.

“I've got my car guy who takes care of my car. People need someone they can go to for information, whether it's how to create a resume or to learn about a new author. This is one place where you can get equal service and it doesn't matter which neighborhood you live in, whether you walked in or drove a Mercedes; you have the librarian greeting you with the same smile and trying their hardest to get you the information you desire,” he says.

Libraries also are not only collecting content, they are helping others create it. The Chinguacousy Branch of the Brampton Public Library, for example, has a recording studio.



As Rebecca Raven, the library system's CEO shared during a TEDX talk, the skilled library staff are assisting individuals in creating their own content or preserving history, making content including podcasts and music, or recording oral histories.

Libraries are emerging as ideal locations for MakerSpaces, according to the Urban Libraries Council. This means libraries can inspire next-generation STEM leaders by offering resources to learn about subjects including computer programming, video capture and editing, self-publishing, and laser cutting. The Brampton Library is already embracing technology, with librarians helping a patron to print a plastic replacement knob for a dryer using the library's 3D printing machine.

Taking the Library out of the Building

Looking farther ahead, expect to see the library expanding beyond its walls to provide resources that support community outcomes.

A prime example is the Pop Up Library, a small box the size of an Apple TV device that can be put most anywhere where people gather, ideally for 20 minutes or longer, such as a bus terminal, doctor's waiting room, hotel lobby, soup kitchen, or government offices. These boxes generate their own WiFi network and router, which people can connect to from a mobile device and use to access ebooks from the library's collection. The book can be downloaded into the browser and finished at a later time. The library benefits from increased brand recognition, more checkouts and more footprints, and the community wins when more people are reading.

“I think the future is very bright. Libraries are going to evolve, but they'll remain social spaces with a firm rooting toward literacy,” Kochar says. “I see the perception of the librarian evolving to where they are the cool person whom people go to when they need information, research or other resources, on any topic.”





FINDING THE RIGHT BALANCE FOR EFFECTIVE SELECTION PLANNING

It's easy to delight in the wide array of offerings found at one's local public library. From the beloved classics to the newest bestsellers, upcoming authors to the local interest titles sprinkled throughout the collection; there is something for every taste and interest. Creating a comprehensive, thoughtful collection may appear to be simple and seamless to the casual

reader browsing the shelves, but choosing the ideal mix of material is more complex than one may think. As the world has grown more diverse, so has the number of factors to be considered during selection. Far from simply forecasting trends or tracking popular titles, today's effective selection planning involves a deep understanding of who readers are, including literary preference and

socioeconomic status.

Data is a primary driver in selection planning, however the best collections are curated through a combination of choices made by the head and the heart. Thanks to advancing technology, there are a growing number of tools available that can assist librarians as they try to find the optimal mix for their ever-growing audience.

Digging Deeper

Public libraries serve a broad and diverse customer base, and a collection needs to take into account the differing interests and needs of these patrons. Libraries also have to consider their own system's mission and goals as well as format, cost and quantity.

Years ago, librarians relied heavily on gut instinct about their communities, combined with in-house circulation records showing what was popular and what wasn't, when deciding which titles to order. They would then combine this data with their knowledge of library patrons, literature and entertainment to make purchasing choices.

Now librarians must dig deeper to get at who they are serving and what they want.

Market segmentation. Granular data. Hyperlocal looks. This is the language of modern-day content selection, as described in the Library Journal article, *Core Customer Study Analyzes Library Demographics*.

In the article, the author shares an example of how a deeper analysis of data revealed that one library branch was essentially working with 21 different kinds of audience as the demographics changed significantly block by block, which was a surprise to the local staff.

Traditionally, libraries have relied on national benchmarks or opt-in customer research to gather

information which could be sorted by zip code, jurisdiction or school level. Now they can use software to see a far more detailed census block group. Libraries are also borrowing consumer marketing tactics and creating marketing personas, or composite sketches of key audiences, to better understand who they are serving.

So, libraries have access to more patron data than ever. But what should they do with it?

Putting it together

Given the large number of factors to be considered in purchasing decisions, the old approach of mixing in-house circulation with knowledge of the community is missing the mark.

"When there's a million different titles to pick from and 500 subcategories within that list, the human brain can't accurately understand where the demand is within all of the category areas, let alone recall that information to predict where things will be in the next three months," says Scott Crawford, collectionHQ Vice President and General Manager.

Add in content criteria and considerations for electronic information sources, and the decision-making can be overwhelming. It's a topic

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Thanks to advancing technology, there are a growing number of tools available that can assist librarians as they try to find the optimal mix for their ever-growing audience.”

that library professionals are working hard to understand, with trade groups and membership organizations, including the American Library Association, dedicating roundtables and discussion groups to the topic of effective selection planning. In its online guidance for selection criteria, for example, the American Library Association website lists 32 broad considerations librarians should take into account, including a work's clarity, objectivity, vitality, and authenticity of history or social setting.

Then there's the human factor, which adds a wrinkle. When making decisions, people can be subjective about the content they are acquiring, often without their realizing it. An active nature lover may see more of a need to purchase updated hiking guides for his or her system than a librarian who prefers studying fine art indoors.

"When the human mind and the human heart is making decisions about the content they are acquiring, their own personal thoughts and beliefs come into play, it's simply human nature," Crawford says.

Luckily, technology once available only to the wealthiest corporations has become more accessible for libraries to use in decision making.

One pioneer is Evidence-



based Selection Planning, or ESP, which is harnessing the latest machine learning technology to predict title performance.

Imagine the ease that consumers have when using Netflix and Amazon, which are able to recommend multiple titles or products, being made available in a library setting. That scenario is now possible, thanks to ESP.

Created by the team at collectionHQ along with Baker & Taylor, ESP is based on a proprietary algorithm that takes into account multiple data points about past performance and combines it with information about how future titles are being purchased to give titles a score suggesting their strength or weakness. ESP's ranking engine examines evidence of authors' past performances, BISAC performance, title reviews and demand to recommend titles that will perform well in a specific collection. ESP also can suggest the amount to buy and how to share the titles across library branches based on local circulation evidence.

Shortly after being appointed as Executive Director of Atlanta-Fulton Public Library System, Dr. Gabriel Morley was shocked to discover from collectionHQ that almost 53 percent of the collection was Dead on Arrival, which meant it rarely circulated. Dr. Morley made the decision to introduce ESP to support more informed selection decisions for his 34-branch system that serves more than 1 million patrons.

ESP provided information that the system acted on, and as a result the library experienced improved turnover, increased circulation and more effective discovery of new titles to better meet patron demand.

Keeping heart in selection planning

Will technology take over the world? It's a common theme in movies, books and other entertainment, where artificial



intelligence wipes out humanity and robots rule society.

While a healthy skepticism about something new is understandable, technology is being offered as a tool for libraries to use, not as a replacement for valuable staff.

Adapting to change can be time consuming and challenging for some people, especially when they are comfortable with past methods, which have worked fine up until now.

But as libraries adapt to their more digitally savvy audience, and as systems hire new employees who are more familiar with technology, the fear of technology is giving away to an understanding of all the help that such tools can offer.

When libraries are freed up from carrying out research for purchasing decisions, they can spend more time proactively engaging with library visitors. That's what happened in Atlanta.

"By making selections based on our historical circulation data, among other things, ESP frees up time for librarians to focus on marketing the collection, doing

reader's advisory, and working hands-on with the actual materials in order to make the collection more responsive to user needs and demands," Dr. Morley said.

Crawford with collectionHQ recommends an 80/20 split for effective selection planning, where 80 percent of the purchasing decisions are made through data-driven technology and 20 percent through a librarian's knowledge, experience, or intuition.

Technology is being offered to enhance the human instinct with selection planning, and is nothing to be afraid of. After all, library management systems were once new, too.

"We are providing tools so that our customers are more efficient and getting more bang for the buck, so the community they serve is more invested and feel they have a modern-day, well-run department," Crawford says.

Library Success Story



LEWISHAM LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SERVICE

GETTING STARTED

The Biggest Improver Challenge from collectionHQ aimed to help libraries to establish goals and introduce practices that encourage continuous improvements in collection performance. Katrina Blench, Librarian—Reader Services, and the team worked with their collectionHQ Account Manager to set realistic and measurable targets including: reduction of dead items, creation of more collectionHQ spending plans, increased transfers of items with poor circulation to locations where there is a higher demand and higher frequency of marketing experiments.



The Lewisham Library and Information Service is part of the London Libraries Consortium and serves communities in south and parts of inner London. Staff redundancies and an increase in community libraries across Lewisham resulted in sporadic, infrequent stock maintenance. Over time, stock accumulated and the libraries' shelves were packed with items, many of which were grubby or poorly circulating. Action had to be taken and so the staff took part in the collectionHQ Biggest Improver Challenge.

RESULTS

Reduced DOA

To address the number of non-circulating items, Katrina and the team invited up to two collectionHQ “champions” from each of the Lewisham Library and Information Service’s three hub libraries to get involved.

Katrina shared: “These staff members organised staff and volunteers to do a complete Collection Check of all stock in all libraries.”

Using collectionHQ to conduct this task and to replace worn or “grubby” items with existing material that is not circulating at its current location, helped the library to reduce the percentage of dead items in the collection from 25% to 17% over 12 months.

Increased number of Spending Plans

collectionHQ Spending Plans help to allocate budget to various collections according to evidence of circulation. Katrina identified collectionHQ spending plans as a helpful tool to decide how to allocate resources across the hub and community libraries.

From this experience, Katrina was then able to utilize Spending Plans for the new financial year and valued the flexibility of the tool which enabled her to change collectionHQ recommendations to allocate more spending to Junior Fiction.

This activity increased the number of Spending Plans used at the libraries in Lewisham to purchase new material from 2 to 6 by the end of the challenge.

Increased number of items transferred

collectionHQ’s transfer tool helps users to make better use of current resources and reduce wasteful purchases by advising on the relocation of non-

circulating items to branches where there is a higher demand for those titles.

By increasing use of various Transfer tools in the collectionHQ toolset, Katrina and the team increased the number of items transferred from 78 to 478 by the end of the challenge.

Increased volume of marketing experiments

collectionHQ’s marketing tools help librarians to create displays and to measure the impact of promotions on circulation. To increase the team’s marketing efforts, additional staff were trained on how to use collectionHQ’s “Promote” module. collectionHQ’s Top Charts tool was used by trained staff from each library who were responsible for producing posters to display Top Authors (Fiction) and Top Titles (Non-Fiction) for their own library, their community library and across the whole Lewisham Library and Information Service. The Experimental Placement tool was also used to measure the impact of stock placements and promotions including: City Read, Black History Month, Valentine’s Day, Mystery books and books by black writers.

Thanks to increasing staff involvement in marketing with collectionHQ, the Lewisham Library and Information Service completed the challenge with 34 active marketing experiments up from 0 when they first started.

CONCLUSION—OVERALL IMPACT

Taking part in the Biggest Improver Challenge helped to emphasise the importance of including collectionHQ into everyday workflows at the libraries in Lewisham. In particular, it helped the volunteers at community libraries to regard their material as part of a “shared” collection that doesn’t belong to one location.

By aligning the work of staff at the community and hub libraries through regular use of collectionHQ, Katrina has noticed that the shelves appear less cluttered with a significant reduction in damaged, “grubby” books which has improved the overall appearance of the libraries.

TOP CHARTS from ESP

As our readers in Europe and North America are enjoying the start of Spring, here's a selection of the top new and forthcoming Gardening titles from ESP



MARCH



Living Decor
Maria Colletti



Container Gardeners Handbook: Pots, Techniques, and Projects to Transform Any Space
Frances Tophill

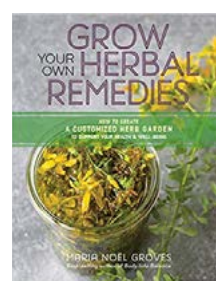


The New Plant Parent: Develop Your Green Thumb and Care for Your House-Plant Family
Darryl Cheng

APRIL



Vegetable Gardening Wisdom
Kelly Smith Trimble



Grow Your Own Herbal Remedies
Maria Noel Groves

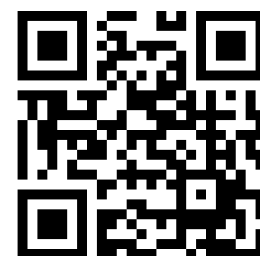


Growing Your Own Tea Garden: Plants and Plans for Growing and Harvesting Traditional and Herbal Teas
Jodi Helmer

JUNE



Plant Parenting
Leslie F. Halleck



Find out more about ESP at www.collectionhq.com/esp



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