



collectionHQ

data. insight. solutions.

# Insight



*Plus:*

Industry Insight -  
Curating an Inclusive &  
Diverse Collection

PAGE 8

Public Libraries  
Can Embrace Tech  
and Help Shape  
the Future

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## FOR MORE INFORMATION

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# Welcome

## A MESSAGE FROM AMAN KOCHAR

Welcome to the latest edition of Insight!

A recent survey sent to customers who attended the UK collectionHQ Forum found that 100% of respondents would recommend collectionHQ to a colleague. This support from loyal customers combined with our dedication to continuously improving our products with cutting edge technology, help us continue to grow, and I am delighted to announce that we have welcomed 23 new customers to collectionHQ and ESP since our last newsletter.

We encourage this kind of user feedback by regularly visiting libraries, attending industry events and hosting collectionHQ Forums. In September, I was delighted to attend the collectionHQ UK Forum at the historic St Pancras Renaissance hotel in London. Here, we announced the collectionHQ roadmap and introduced Baker & Taylor's Pop Up Library service to the UK market where we look forward to launching an Early Adopter Program in January 2020. Pop Up Library is growing rapidly and in early November, we were delighted to introduce the service to libraries in the United Arab Emirates. Pop Up Library offers a very promising solution for public libraries and schools to have an open, frictionless and equitable access to ebooks wherever people spend their time.

As the Pop Up Library continues to expand, we explore the growth of another type of technology in libraries, Artificial Intelligence. Read on [page 10](#) how libraries can benefit from and prepare their communities for the rise of AI. One tool which is driving the use of AI in libraries is ESP and we share ESP's predictions of top titles over the coming months on [page 13](#).

Finally, this edition of Insight explores the importance of developing an inclusive and diverse collection with examples of the steps some libraries are taking to ensure their collections are representative of various communities, backgrounds and cultures. Read this article on [page 8](#).

Happy Reading!

Aman



### **Aman Kochar**

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# LIBRARY NEWS

## GREAT FALLS LIBRARY HOSTS FINE FREE FUN RUN

In August, the Great Falls Library in Great Falls, Montana, invited staff, patrons and the local community to participate in a fun run. For every 1.3 miles, runners earned \$5 to put toward their own fines, or to donate to someone else's.

Susie McIntyre, Library Director, shared: "We believe that Libraries are for everyone. Our first Fine Free Fun Run allowed us to clear the fines of over 300 patrons. We are thrilled to welcome them back to the Library!"

[Source](#)



Staff, patrons and the local community participated in the fun run.

## KING COUNTY LIBRARY SYSTEM EXPLORES ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

If you've ever asked Alexa, Google or Siri a question, you've used a voice assistant. Using funds from a LYRASIS grant, the King County Library System (KCLS) in Washington state is exploring how artificial intelligence and voice-assisted technology can be used to better connect patrons to library resources.

Up to 50,000 patrons will participate in a pilot program using the LIBRO voice-assistant platform from Convergys.ai. KCLS is also conducting a series of focus groups to learn more about how King County residents use voice assistants, and how they might utilize them at KCLS libraries. They're also reaching out to libraries that are already using voice assistants, to help identify best practices and lessons learned.

**If you would like to share information about how your library uses voice assistants, please contact KCLS Online Library Services Librarian Angela Nolet at [anolet@kcls.org](mailto:anolet@kcls.org). And if you'd like to learn more about the pilot program, visit [kcls.org/voice](http://kcls.org/voice).**



(Names L-R) Marie Franklin, Kathie Graham, Liz Duffy, Shelli Volpp, Leah Schaefer, Donna Boecker, Rob Rodriguez, Mary Elliott, Randy Boecker, Josie Wrucke, Michele Journet, Ryan Gallagher, Leah Sealy, Christina Cotton, Marsha Yarborough, Samantha Chada and Amber Keipe

# BAKER & TAYLOR ANNOUNCE NEW CUSTOMER SUCCESS TEAM

Baker & Taylor is delighted to introduce its new Customer Success Team. The team will offer customers in the U.S.A. one point of contact for all Baker & Taylor products and services, including collectionHQ and ESP. We hope this new structure will provide you with an efficient customer experience and help you get the most from our range of innovative services.

# SUPER LIBRARIAN AWARD WINNERS

The collectionHQ team is proud to announce the recent Super Librarian Award winners. Congratulations to the teams at:

- Indianapolis Public Library, IN
- South Gloucestershire Libraries, United Kingdom
- Greenwood Public Library, IN
- Lexington Public Library, KY
- Portage District Library, MI

The winners were selected based on outstanding performance across various metrics including Dead on Arrival, Circulation, Turnover and collectionHQ usage to maintain a collection that meets the needs of patrons.



The team at Indianapolis Public Library, IN

# Library Success Story

## NEW ORLEANS PUBLIC LIBRARY REDUCES DOA AND IMPROVES TURNOVER WITH collectionHQ AND ESP



New Orleans is a diverse and vibrant city which attracts more than 17 million visitors each year<sup>1</sup>. The city's Public Library is a 15 branch system serving a population of around 390,000. In 2005, New Orleans was badly hit by Hurricane Katrina which severely impacted the library. Six library buildings were devastated by the disaster and there were no funds to purchase new material for the collections at remaining branches, leaving the library reliant on donations or existing material. Since 2006, the library staff has been working hard to rebuild the library and provide a service that meets the needs of its community. In 2018, the last of the 6 libraries extensively damaged by the hurricane was reopened.

<sup>1</sup><https://www.neworleans.com/things-to-do/history/people-and-culture-of-new-orleans/>

### THE CHALLENGE

Prior to implementing collectionHQ, the collection at New Orleans Public Library held a high percentage of items that did not meet the needs of patrons. In 2014, collectionHQ was introduced to help monitor collection performance and to locate items that were poorly circulating or in a poor physical condition. Use of collectionHQ helped the team to improve the appeal of the collection to patrons which led to increased turnover.

While collectionHQ was offering the team more insight into the collection and supporting improvements, Head of Acquisitions and Collection Development, Matthew Bowers, identified the requirement for a tool that would support the purchase of new titles. The percentage of the collection that was 'Dead on Arrival' or DOA (a metric which reports material added to a library collection over a 12 month period which subsequently does not achieve more than one circulation) was high. Matthew explained: "We were spending hundreds of thousands of dollars a year in a way that I could not justify to a taxpayer if asked."

### THE SOLUTION

ESP - Evidence-based Selection Planning was identified as the tool that would help to reduce DOA and support Matthew's two-person Collection Development team to make efficient, patron-driven selection decisions.

ESP harnesses the same Machine Learning methods that drive Apple's Siri, Google's Assistant, and the recommendation engines at Netflix and Amazon to predict how current and forthcoming titles will perform in the future. By analyzing key data points, ESP provides each title with a score. ESP then recommends how many titles to purchase and where to distribute these items based on the library's local circulation evidence.

## RESULTS

### Time Savings

Years of experience in selecting titles for the local community provided selection staff with a good understanding of the titles that would resonate with patrons, therefore introducing ESP to that workflow took some time for staff members to get used to. However, after witnessing the impact of decisions made with the help of ESP data, the staff members were soon convinced. Matthew added: “ESP lets you use your actual circulation data to make your purchasing decisions, but you still have the freedom to go with your gut if you need to.”

Introducing ESP has not only led to more informed selection decisions, but has freed up staff time from spending hours reading title reviews and researching new authors. ESP combines all of this data in its predictions which provides staff with the information required to make quick decisions and more time to focus on tasks that add value to the collection, such as weeding and marketing. Matthew described: “It frees up staff time for work that computers can’t do.”

### Reduced DOA and Improved Circulation

The combination of data-driven selection and improved promotion of the collection thanks to staff time savings, has resulted in a collection that better meets the needs of library patrons; a result which is illustrated by the library’s reduction in Dead and DOA material.

Overall, the percentage of Dead items in the collection at New Orleans Public Library has dropped more than 50% from when collectionHQ was first introduced in 2014, to 2019. This drop has been accelerated by the addition of ESP which contributed to a 5% fall in the library’s DOA percentage between November 2018 and November 2019.

While circulation of the collection has been on an upward trajectory since rebuilding began post-Katrina, Matthew has noted a significant rise in print material usage purchased by ESP. He explained: “In recent years, as electronic usage has increased and audio-visual material usage has decreased, we have seen circulation of print increase by about 9% each year, and it’s the print material purchases that we are using ESP to manage. So I doubt that’s just coincidence.”

### Cost Savings

Prior to implementing ESP, detecting the right titles in the right quantities was a challenge for selection staff, especially in the purchase of new or pre-published titles. Harnessing ESP’s predictive algorithm, however, has not only contributed to lower DOA, but has resulted in saving funds that were previously wasted on material that was not used.

Matthew summarized: “It pays for itself with what you save not buying books you don’t need.”





## CURATING AN INCLUSIVE AND DIVERSE COLLECTION

In 1986, the American Library Association Council adopted the Library Bill of Rights, solidifying the idea that all libraries are forums for information and ideas<sup>1</sup>.

Information and ideas are constantly evolving, but a keystone to a library's collection is ensuring the information and ideas it includes represent a diverse mix of voices and content. Thanks to a variety of tools and technology now available, it is easier than ever for librarians to ensure inclusion and diversity as they pursue their collection development.

The philosophy behind the ALA's Library Bill of Rights provides guidance for collection development. According to the ALA, books and other library resources should be provided for the use of all people of the community the library serves, and material should not be excluded because of the content creator's origin, background or views. Materials should present all points of view on both historical and current issues, and materials should not be removed because of partisan or doctrinal approval.

Developing a truly diverse collection requires action on many fronts and goes beyond simply adding books from authors of color, for example. A diverse collection should include: Content in multiple formats and content created by a variety of producers, including self-published and independent authors, and people in marginalized or underrepresented groups. Libraries must also remain vigilant about maintaining and updating the collection to ensure resources are catalogued, labeled and displayed in the best way. Library collections should include content in all the languages used in the community the library serves and provide material in formats that meet the needs of patrons with varying disabilities.

### The value of diversity in a collection

Literature allows children to see their own life and culture and get a view of the lives and cultures of others. Children's sense of self is shaped by their understanding of how the world perceives their lives or cultures. Materials that accurately portray diversity, and do so in multiple languages, can have a positive impact on a child's sense of self. Everyone wants to see images that reflect their lives, and a diverse collection can help young readers develop an appreciation for their culture and for the culture of others.

On the other hand, materials that portray inaccurate, stereotyped or other harmful descriptions of cultures and peoples can damage children's sense of self and self-esteem, as well as lead to misunderstanding about others. Children can internalize the negative information. A lack of information or images about one's culture can lead to a child feeling they and their community are not worthy or important of being represented in the library.

Diversity in library programming lets children and their caregivers develop cultural literacy, according to Diversity in Library Programs and Material Collections for Children, a whitepaper written for the Association for Library Service to Children by Jamie Campbell Naidoo<sup>2</sup>. Further, children's print and digital materials should represent all types of diversity, including race, ethnicity, gender expression, religious preference, family composition, ancestry, ability, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, language fluency, and citizenship status, the whitepaper says.

As Naidoo writes: "By including diversity in its programs and collections, the library has the potential for helping children make cross-cultural connections and develop the skills necessary to function in a culturally pluralistic society."

### Technology can help with curating diversity

Today, librarians have more tools than ever to assist them in curating a diverse collection. Whether a library is building a new collection or analyzing a current one

*Materials that accurately portray diversity, and do so in multiple languages, can have a positive impact on a child's sense of self."*



to see what changes should be made, technology solutions such as collectionHQ can provide insights and understanding to help librarians make strategic decisions.

For example, in Evanston, Illinois, the Evanston Public Library staff discovered that if books and other materials were displayed, patrons tended to read them more often. The library was able to pull from collectionHQ a Dead on Arrival (DOA) list of titles that had circulated less than two times since purchase to identify themes that could be used in a display, such as displaying DOA books written by authors with a marginalized background. With multiple displays regularly changing subjects at its branches, the library was able to bring awareness of and attention to books that previously were overlooked. Patrons were exposed to more diverse material and voices, and the library was able to more efficiently use its resources.

Another way collectionHQ can strengthen diversity efforts is by removing the personal bias that may exist, knowingly or unknowingly, among staffers. Selections are often based, at least in part, by the value of the selectors. By incorporating a tool such as collectionHQ that relies on analytics, librarians have the benefit of seeing another “perspective” that is based on data.

Sometimes a library may feel it has a strongly diverse collection only to discover it could be doing more. That’s what happened at the Harris County Public Library in Houston. Houston is consistently ranked as being one of the most diverse cities in the U.S.A. When the library asked for more money, officials agreed with the caveat that they wanted collections

to better reflect the communities the library served.

The library was a little surprised in that it thought it had already been curating a diverse collection. collectionHQ was able to help the library pinpoint strategic decisions it could make to improve upon its collection efforts. To start, the library added content in languages spoken in its communities and added additional languages. It conducted reverse audits where librarians compared recommended titles in diversity with what was in their collection. Providing deeper insight into what additional steps should be taken, collectionHQ gave suggestions on how to better map data to get statistics on how the language collections were circulating. Librarians were able to pull out language collections according to DOA lists, lists of overused or “Grubby” items, and Turnover rates, to name a few of the searches.

As Betsy Bird, Collection Development Manager with the Evanston Public Library, told the audience at the collectionHQ Forum at ALA 2019, her experience is that people want libraries to curate for them, to make recommendations and offer suggestions. Through their purchasing choices, librarians have the ability to make an important, lasting impact on society and its youngest readers. The ALA Library Bill of Rights provides the foundation for curating a diverse collection, and luckily there are tools that can help librarians as they tackle this important responsibility and help patrons become better citizens for the benefit of all.

<sup>1</sup><http://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/librarybill/interpretations/diversecollections>

<sup>2</sup>Jamie Campbell Naidoo, PhD, Association for Library Service to Children “The Importance of Diversity in Library Programs and Material Collections for Children” April 5, 2014



# PUBLIC LIBRARIES CAN EMBRACE TECHNOLOGY AND HELP SHAPE THE FUTURE

***“Hey Siri, what’s the future of the public library?”***

**Siri: “I don’t have that information in future of the public.”**

***“Huh?”***

Computer assistants, such as Apple’s Siri and Amazon’s Alexa, and other Artificial Intelligence (AI) programs are becoming commonplace. If you need directions, want to buy groceries, or are looking for suggestions for a new wardrobe, technological help is just a request away.

Judging by the nonsensical answer that Siri gave when asked about libraries, technology isn’t yet equipped to answer all of our questions. However, there is no doubt that computerized assistants and Artificial Intelligence are impacting every facet of society, including our economies, cultures and public institutions such as schools and libraries, and that this impact will only grow stronger.

**Already, thanks to Artificial Intelligence one can<sup>3</sup>:**

- Walk into clothing store Uniqlo, where an AI-powered kiosk

shows products and measures the customer’s response through neurotransmitters and then makes suggestions. Customers don’t even have to press a button to indicate likes and dislikes as the kiosk knows the answer based on how the consumer’s face reacts.

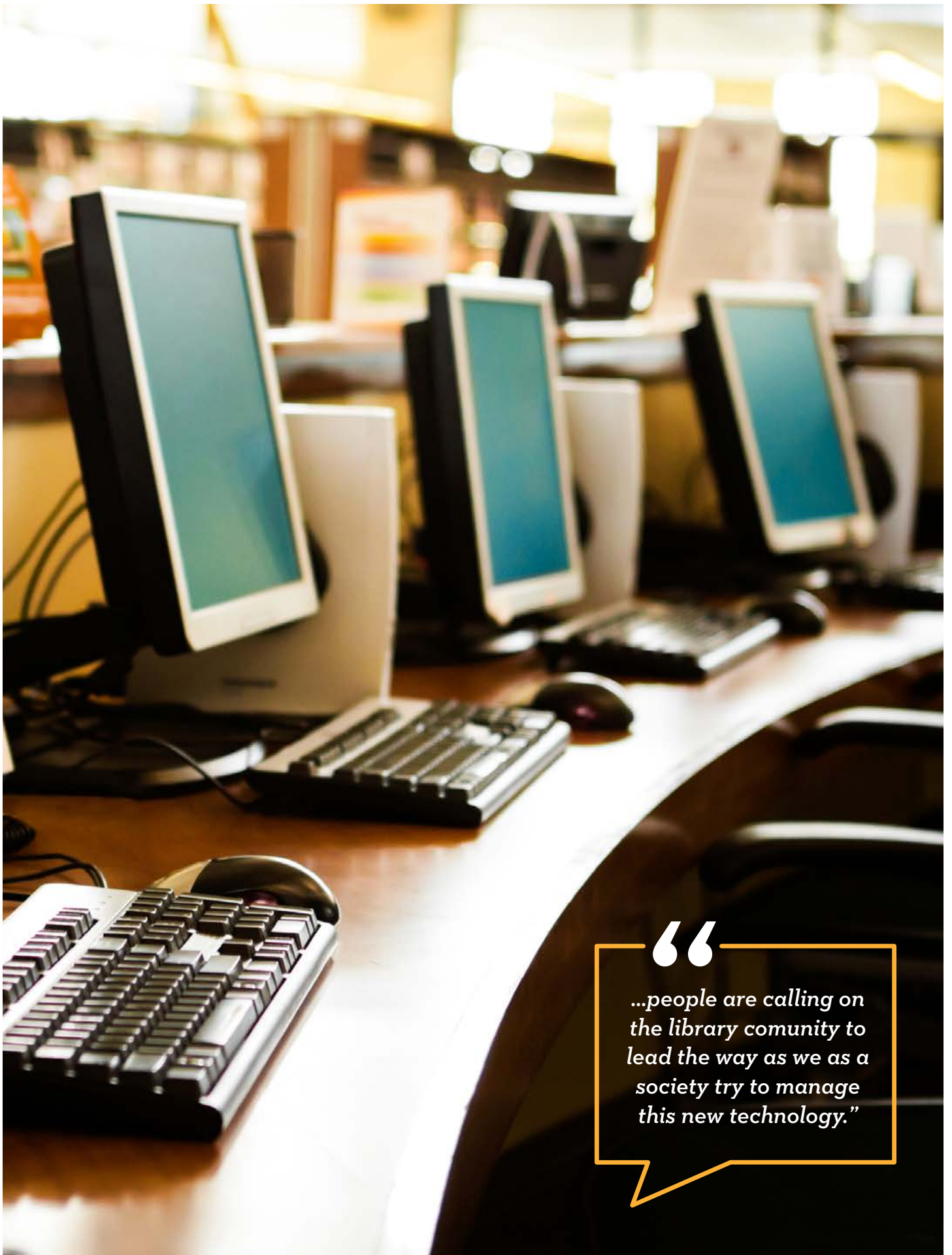
- Place an order with voice or text through the My Starbucks Barista app, and then drive to the nearby Starbucks to grab the drink.
- Visit an Amazon Go store, take items off the shelf and leave, all without stopping at a cashier. Sensors track the purchase and charge your Amazon account.
- Buy make-up that is most likely to complement one’s skin tone without trying it on at Sephora, where a program called Color IQ scans a customer’s face and provides personalized recommendations

for foundation and concealer shades. Lip IQ does the same for those looking for lipstick.

Such change can present exciting opportunity. Easier shopping and a more efficient use of time are possible outcomes. But does this same technological advancement mean some of society’s most valued institutions, such as libraries and librarians, are at risk of being outdated, even replaced?

The answer, many believe, is a strong no. In fact, people are calling on the library community to lead the way as we as a society try to manage this new technology.

One way AI and libraries already work well together is through collection development. Companies have been harnessing the power of machine learning to create technology that can help librarians understand what content people want



“

*...people are calling on the library community to lead the way as we as a society try to manage this new technology.”*

and how they want it. For example, ESP (Evidence-based Selection Planning) incorporates sophisticated machine learning to pioneer the use of behavioral analysis and data to help librarians make more informed decisions that increase efficiencies and reduce wasteful purchases. Librarians are still very much integral to the library's workflow, with AI tools simply designed to complement the librarians' experience and knowledge. After all, as stated in a 2018 blog from IFLA "a search is only as good as the search terms put in".<sup>4</sup>

Another way libraries can support new technologies is by providing a communal space for people to gather, work and play. Libraries can boost technological literacy by sponsoring informational seminars or holding technology-focused makerspaces that let people learn and experiment. This is especially important to support patrons who don't have internet access in their homes.

Technology also holds great promise to assist librarians by freeing them up from back-office duties. As machine-learning technology enables computers to do more sophisticated tasks that once required human thinking, librarians will have more time to work hand-in-hand with their communities, focusing on programming and other value-add activities. With ESP, librarians are able to make streamlined purchasing decisions more quickly and right-size their collections, which they can more efficiently manage. This all adds to more time to provide programming and interact with the community.

Librarians will also be needed to educate people about AI, helping them understand how to use it in order to enhance daily life and develop their career, while learning of potential pitfalls and how to protect personal data online.

"AI is happening faster than most people think, and the public is

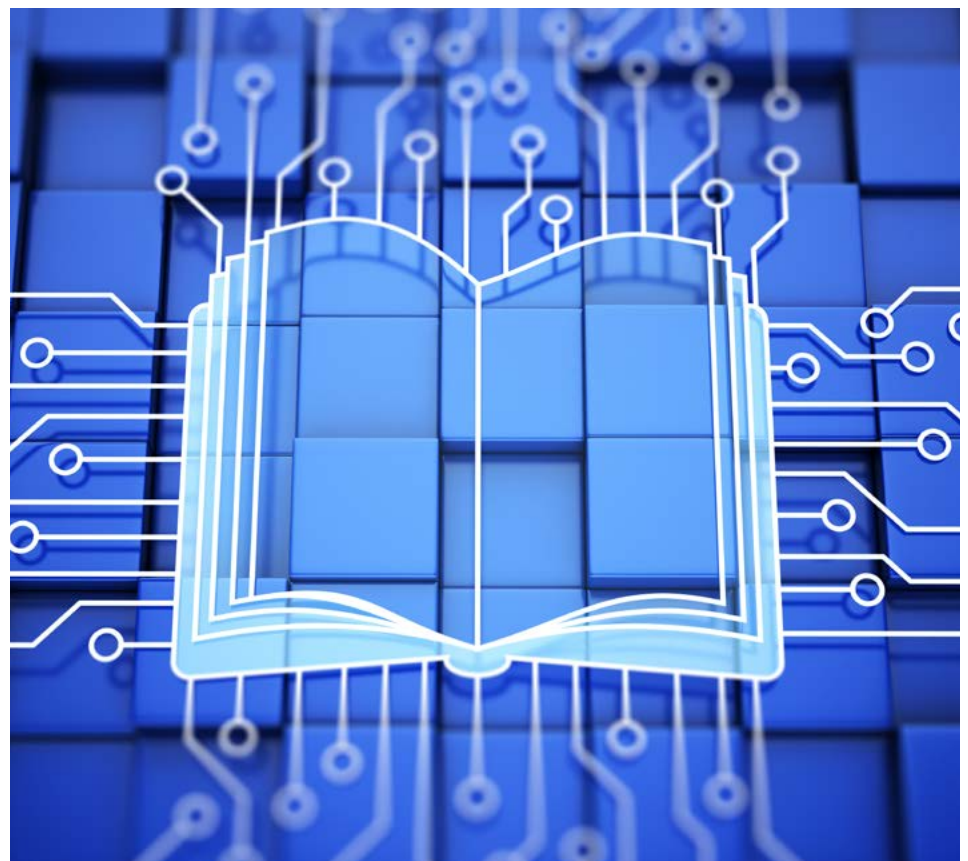
not adequately prepared for it," Palo Alto City Library Department Director Monique le Conge Zieshenne told the Urban Libraries Council.<sup>7</sup> "Everything we do will somehow be impacted by AI. The public library, in our teaching role, can play a very important part in preparing the public for what's ahead."

In September, the Urban Libraries Council published a new Leadership Brief on "Libraries Leading AI and Digital Citizenship." In a press release, the council said that with the quickly growing impact of AI on societies, libraries remain at the forefront of ensuring no one is left behind during this technological transformation.

"The impact of AI reaches far beyond technology—it is causing a foundational shift in how people learn, work, connect and grow," ULC President and CEO Susan Benton said in the press release.

*“Librarians are still very much integral to the library's workflow, with AI tools simply designed to complement the librarians' experience and knowledge.”*

It's certain, the spread of Artificial Intelligence technology brings with it a combination of exciting opportunity and change. However, with forethought and planning, libraries can ensure they are not only prepared for the changes AI will bring, but that they are positioned to shape and then lead the world that AI is helping to create.



<sup>3</sup><https://www.forbes.com/sites/blakemorgan/2019/03/04/the-20-best-examples-of-using-artificial-intelligence-for-retail-experiences/#58b8b974466>

<sup>4</sup><https://blogs.ifla.org/lpa/2018/07/24/the-robots-are-coming-libraries-and-artificial-intelligence/>

<sup>5</sup><https://www.urbanlibraries.org/newsroom/new-ulc-leadership-brief-calls-on-public-libraries-to-lead-on-ai>



# TOP CHARTS from ESP

Help your patrons try out healthy, plant based recipes with these top new and forthcoming Vegan Cooking titles from ESP.

## NOVEMBER



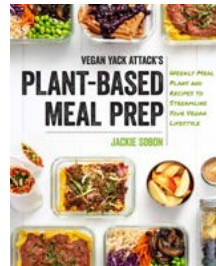
*Vegan Thai Kitchen*  
**Sarah Jansala**

## DECEMBER

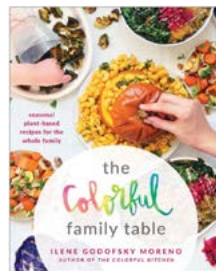


*Weeknight One-pot Vegan Cooking*  
**Nicole Malik**

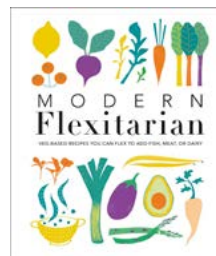
## JANUARY



*Vegan Yack Attack's Plant-based Meal Prep*  
**Jackie Sobon**



*The Colorful Family Table*  
**Ilene Godofsky Moreno**



*Modern Flexitarian*  
**Dorling Kindersley, Inc.**



*Bosh! Healthy Vegan*  
**Ian Theasby**



*Vegan in an Instant*  
**Marina Delio**



Find out more about ESP at [www.collectionhq.com/esp](http://www.collectionhq.com/esp)



## UK Forum

Libraries from across the United Kingdom gathered at the historic St Pancras Renaissance in London for the collectionHQ Forum. Matthew Wright from the London Borough of Havering Libraries was Chair of the event which featured interesting case study presentations from Kate Lister and Carol Neath, Leicestershire Libraries, and from Kimberley Harston, East Riding of Yorkshire Libraries. We were also delighted to welcome Kelvin Watson to the panel. Kelvin travelled all the way from Broward County Libraries in Florida to share his experience with collectionHQ and the Pop Up Library initiative which is coming soon to the UK market. The event also congratulated South Gloucestershire Libraries on receiving the UK's Super Librarian Award for outstanding collection performance. The award was proudly accepted by Robina Prince on behalf of the library.



UK Forum Panellists L-R Kelvin Watson, Kimberley Harston, Matthew Wright, Carol Neath, Kate Lister.

## North America Customer Forums

Our team has been travelling the U.S.A. and Canada to meet with customers at regional Forums. Thank you to the everyone at the libraries who kindly hosted these events in September and October: the Oshawa Public Libraries ,ON; Gloucester County Library, NJ; Cuyahoga County Public Library, OH; Hartford Public Library, CT; Indianapolis Public Library, IN; Lexington Public Library, KY; and Capital Area District Library, MI.



Thanks to the team at Indianapolis Public Library for hosting the IN Forum

## TLCU 2019

*Jan Anderson, Implementation Consultant at collectionHQ, attended the TLC User Conference in Salt Lake City, Utah in October. Jan shared his experience at the event.*

TLCU was very well-attended. It moves around to different locations each year and this year it was only 40 miles from my home.

I attended the Vendor Reception on Monday evening where it was fantastic to catch up with so many collectionHQ customers who are also customers of TLC to find out how they are progressing with collectionHQ and how we can help them to maximize use of the tool.

On Tuesday, I presented to attendees about how artificial intelligence technologies are helping libraries to be more efficient and provide patron-driven collections. This presentation raised a lot of questions about ESP (Evidence-based Selection Planning). ESP enables librarians to apply machine learning – like the tools used by Netflix and Amazon – to select the current and pre-published titles patrons will want to read, in the right quantities to reduce waste and increase turnover.



Jan Anderson presented about artificial intelligence at the TLCU Conference



AMBER KEIPE

CUSTOMER SUCCESS MANAGER



## What excites you most about working with collectionHQ?

The most exciting thing about collectionHQ is I have an opportunity to assist libraries in using this tool to alleviate some of their day-to-day tasks and guesswork involved in collection maintenance. That valuable ‘behind the desk’ time is now freed up to spend more time interacting with patrons and exploring new ways to promote their libraries and serve their communities.

## Describe a typical day for you as Customer Success Manager at Baker & Taylor.

During a typical day I facilitate any concerns or issues that arise from my accounts by working with internal teams to ensure needs are met and any problems resolved. In the course of the day I am in contact with customers via meetings, calls, and email.

## What was your dream job as a child?

I have always been interested in serving people in some way and was drawn most to Social Work and Law Enforcement.

## What was the last book you read?

*Can't Hurt Me*, David Goggins

## What's the most recent app that you downloaded, but are yet to use?

Forks Over Knives. I downloaded the app for recipes but continue to always make up my own when I cook.

## What do public libraries mean to you?

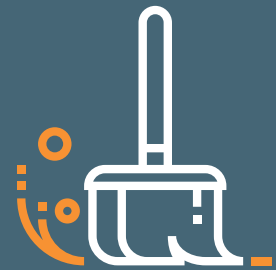
In short, I see public libraries as a way of bringing people together. With the addition of more outreach and programming, libraries are a now place to build community, provide information, and promote literacy. Whereas libraries used to be mostly about books, they are now evolving into community hubs. I am delighted to see the diversity of patrons taking advantage of various library resources each time I walk through a library.

# SUPER LIBRARIAN!

Follow one librarian's journey to collection performance improvement with



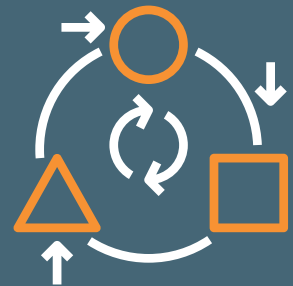
INCREASE  
CIRCULATION BY 11%



REMOVE  
GRUBBY ITEMS



SAVE 156 STAFF DAYS  
A YEAR



REDUCE DEAD  
ON ARRIVAL



FIND OUT MORE AT: [collectionhq.com/super-librarian](https://collectionhq.com/super-librarian)