

# WORTHINGTON LIBRARIES IMPROVE COLLECTION PERFORMANCE WITH COLLECTIONHQ

Worthington Libraries is a 3 branch library system serving a population of over 60,000. Maintaining a high standard of collection to meet the needs of patrons has always been a priority for staff and the library started subscribing to collectionHQ in 2012 to support this objective.



## THE CHALLENGE

Before subscribing to collectionHQ, weeding at Worthington Libraries was carried out using basic reports from the ILS system which limited the practice to the removal of items that were not circulating (dead stock). ILS reports were not able to provide comprehensive action plans for the removal of items in a poor physical condition (grubby stock) and so guaranteeing the aesthetics of the collection was a laborious task and prone to oversight.

The biggest challenge in terms of collection management was ensuring regularity of tasks like weeding without direct access to ILS reports. Staff relied on a larger partner library system for lists of non-circulating items, so it was not possible for staff to develop a regular schedule of weeding. Sarah Cofer, Materials Selector at the library describes "Weeding was not difficult to implement but the biggest problem was that we only received the zero circulation (dead) lists twice a year so when we received them, we would get a huge, intimidating and overwhelming box of papers that had all the books that had not circulated over the last year."

collectionHQ was implemented to overcome such obstacles and is already beginning to support improvements.

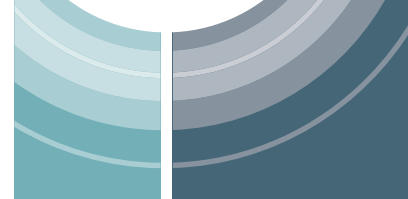
## THE OUTCOME

**STREAMLINED PROCESSES** | Following the implementation of collectionHQ, library staff embarked on a major collection clean-up thanks to direct access to detailed, evidence-based analysis and action plans. With this information, staff could view items according to the date they were added to the collection, relate to subsequent rate of circulation and, if necessary, remove them. Volunteers across the system were able to complete this project in just two weeks, which had not been possible before, and Cofer plans to introduce it as an annual project.

This level of detail provided by collectionHQ has also facilitated a regular schedule of weeding both dead and grubby stock. Cofer explains "Because we can put the list together every other month it gives librarians more consistency so they are weeding constantly rather than waiting for that biannual list – it puts weeding at the top of their To Do list." Furthermore, staff at the library have found collectionHQ weeding plans easy to manipulate and more efficient to action, eliminating the need for double checking items from the list as they did with ILS reports.

**PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENTS** | As a result of the collection check outlined, the team at Worthington Libraries have been able to remove items which had not checked out in 4 years, resulting in a

COLLECTION PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT



## KEY BENEFITS

The adoption of collectionHQ has enabled Worthington Public Library to:

- Implement a regular schedule of weeding
- Increase circulation
- Better manage shelf space
- Track the impact of promotional displays on circulation



streamlined collection more reflective of patron reading trends. Cofer explains “We have been working through the dead list every other month since September 2012 and our stock turnover in annual circulation is going up and non-circulating percentage is going down, which is our goal.”

In addition to improvements of the collection according to demand, collectionHQ has also supported the development of a more physically appealing collection. The toolset has allowed the team to source grubby items on the shelves and those on loan which could be reserved then removed on return to the library. As a result, 90% of those items have been removed. Cofer provides an example of how the shelves are already looking better as a result of collectionHQ’s grubby tools. “At our oldest location you can definitely see the shelves are cleaner. The goal had been not to put books on the bottom or top shelf as it is an older population and our patrons have told us it is not easy to see those shelves so we’ve been using the bottom and top shelves to add oversized materials that can lie flat. Now when you walk through the shelves in that library, you can see that we are moving towards getting lots of bottom and top shelves cleaned up – you can see the changes.”

The team have also found the grubby list useful in terms of seeing the highest circulating items which Cofer mentions “We never had access to that kind of data before.”

**ENHANCED MARKETING ACTIVITIES** | As well as regular maintenance of the collection to increase circulation, Worthington Libraries has been working heavily with collectionHQ’s marketing tools to achieve this goal.

Across 2 branches there are displays known as “Powerwalls” which merchandize materials of a certain genre, subject or theme and rotate every 3-6 months. Powerwalls have been in place at the library since 2008 however there has been no way to track how well the items within each were performing besides anecdotal evidence from branch staff. Cofer explains “We have committed a large amount of library shelf space to Powerwalls and they are the first thing you see when you enter the library so we want to make sure they are working.”

Since subscribing to collectionHQ, the team at Worthington has been able to use the Experimental Placement functionality within the Marketing module to explore the performance of Powerwalls and make changes accordingly. Cofer describes some trends the tool has pointed out which she has acted upon “At one library the display is further away from the door and has a higher circulation.” This proof helps with the positioning of the display. She continues on to how collectionHQ has helped to confirm trends based on demographics at certain branches “Our oldest library has a large older population so our parenting Powerwall doesn’t move but at the other location with more young families, the parenting Powerwall moves.” The variation of titles has also proven an influence over the performance of the Powerwalls. “Some Powerwalls had 200 titles added and some only 50 and we can see that those with more titles move more because selection is better than having the same 50 titles for 4 months.”

collectionHQ’s Experimental Placement tool has also helped to monitor performance of certain areas within the collection. Cofer describes “We have a foreign language collection that we are also trying to track circulation. Demographic statistics of the community reveals many people in the area have English as a second language. In response we added 5 new languages.” After discovering those new language formats were not circulating heavily, Cofer has been able to use experimental selection tools to monitor new material and gauge which language performs the best and at which branch. She continues, “We can next decide budget wise if we want to put more of the budget to foreign language at one library than the other.”

collectionHQ’s Marketing module supports forward planning of material selection and placement. Using the tools in conjunction with merchandizing is helping Worthington Libraries save money by optimizing their existing collection through more strategic placement.

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