

# ALLEGHENY COUNTY LIBRARY ASSOCIATION IMPLEMENTS EVIDENCE WITH COLLECTIONHQ

## OVERVIEW

**Allegheny County Library Association, PA, is a consortium library system made up of 45 independent libraries.** The consortium serves a total population of over 1,200,000 and circulates a collection of 1.5 million items.



## THE CHALLENGE

Prior to the implementation of collectionHQ at the Allegheny County Library Association, staff relied on ILS reports to carry out collection management activities which lacked evidence and were cumbersome to run. As a result, regular work to withdraw items which had poor circulation "dead" or were in a poor physical condition "grubby" was problematic to implement.

## THE SOLUTION

collectionHQ was identified as a solution which could facilitate collection management and collection development through the introduction of evidence based action plans. What's more, the ease of use associated with collectionHQ and the granular level of insight it would provide for each location would allow a more system-wide analysis of the collection.

## COLLECTIONHQ ROLL OUT

### YEAR ONE-TRAINING

Since collectionHQ is simple to use and can be accessed by multiple users across several branches of a library system, Tina LaMark, Assistant Director – Technical Services at the Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh, revealed that from year one, training sessions on how to use collectionHQ were carried out across the consortia. The aim of the training sessions was to reveal the potential of the tool to the staff and encourage each library to explore the variety of features within collectionHQ to improve their collection performance.

To evaluate the success of the first year and to identify any parts of the tool where libraries required further training, an advanced session was held at the end of year one.

### COLLECTION CLEAN UP

Following training, each library was encouraged to begin work with collectionHQ's "collection check" and "long overdue check" modules to improve the standard of items on the shelves and ensure the catalog was reflective of the available collection. At one of the consortia



## KEY BENEFITS

The adoption of collectionHQ has enabled Allegheny County Library Association to:

- Conduct a consortium wide collection check for long overdue items,
- Reduce quantities of dead and grubby items across the consortium, freeing up shelf space for popular items that are in a good physical condition,
- Enhance collection involvement for staff on all levels thanks to simple to use, comprehensive action plans.

libraries, the Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh, the entire Fiction and Non-Book collections were checked and dealt with accordingly, a process which would not have been imaginable without collectionHQ.

In that first year, some libraries at Allegheny also used collectionHQ to identify “dead” and “grubby” items. This process was made simple by collectionHQ’s action plans which actually direct staff to the “dead” and “grubby” items which need to be withdrawn from the collection or moved to another location of higher demand. Speaking of the clean-up, one staff member commented: “We had so many books that hadn’t checked out in years! In a small branch, our shelf space is so valuable that we can’t afford to have things that aren’t moving. This tool has been very helpful, I’ve been very pleased with it.”

## DISPLAYS & MARKETING

Within the first year of roll out, some libraries also got to work on using collectionHQ to promote their collection. With collectionHQ popular author and popular title action plans, each branch was able to identify what items were well liked by their patrons. Those items could then be added to displays and included in marketing campaigns to draw attention to them and maximize circulation.

Tina shared feedback from one librarian who is using collectionHQ to support marketing: “My favorite is to do a list of the 15 most popular fiction authors, and display the list and a book each. The books are getting attention and circulating.”

## YEAR TWO—THE PLAN

By the end of year one, 3199 action plans from collectionHQ had been run system-wide at Allegheny County Library Association. To encourage continued high use of the product at each location and reach the year two objective of achieving 100% participation in collectionHQ, library management will monitor usage of the product. collectionHQ makes this process simple by offering action plans that display usage per user. Utilizing this tool will allow the team to identify where basic training and support is required and those areas where more advanced training is necessary.

In year two, the staff also looks forward to maximizing the ability to analyze eresources. With collectionHQ’s eBook Module, the library will be able to monitor ebook performance and compare that performance side-by-side with print material performance. This granular level of insight into ebooks and how they compare with print material will help the library understand their digital collection better and will guide more informed selection decisions.

## CONCLUSION

Continued collectionHQ support from staff at Allegheny County Libraries has come from a well-planned roll-out and training process. By ensuring staff understand the tool and encouraging each branch to explore the product to the fullest, the consortium has increased efficiencies in daily workflow and is already seeing significant collection performance improvements.



saveTIME



saveMONEY



improve  
PERFORMANCE