case study

Evolving self-service solutions – the Fayetteville Public Library journey

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When the Blair building of the Fayetteville Public Library was built in Fayetteville, Arkansas in 2004, the 90,000-square foot facility was considered state-of-the-art, winning special mention for Library of the Year from Library Journal. Over the past 13 years, the library has continued to keep its finger on the pulse of emerging technology and innovative library solutions, in an effort to provide its patrons with the most engaging library experience.

Upgrades not just replacements

Fayetteville Public Library has offered self-service options for patrons since it re-opened in the Blair building in 2004. The library started with stations provided through their ILS vendor. Over time, as the units aged, Lynn Yandell, Director of Information Technology, went looking for a better solution, not a simple replacement.

In 2015, Fayetteville Public Library was excited to add to their existing self-service stations with two faster, easier to use selfCheck 400s that also allowed patrons to pay their fines and fees right from the kiosk. "Our previous self-service stations only had credit card swipes on them.

We had no solution for accepting cash for fees. We added two bibliotheca selfCheck kiosks with payment stations in our main lobby so patrons could easily pay for fines and fees using cash and coin," says Yandell.

Game changer: quickConnect replaces liber8

In 2016, after bibliotheca and 3M Library Systems merged, Yandell was introduced to the new selfCheck 1000s running quickConnect at the ALA Annual Conference. quickConnect is the software solution inherited by 3M Library Systems, which was new for all historical bibliotheca customers at the time.

"We were looking to add additional self-service points throughout the library. We'd been happy with the two selfCheck 400s we had running liber8 software, but quickConnect offered so many additional benefits for our users," says Yandell.

Excited by the combination of the new selfCheck 1000 and quickConnect software, in 2017, Fayetteville Public Library decided to upgrade all self-checkout kiosks and included the addition of integrated cash, coin, and credit card payments at each station.

Integration of digital and physical materials

The quickConnect interface does so much more than simply allow patrons to check out their own materials. When the stations are not in use, the screens act as digital billboards, promoting library programs and services. Each station can be customized to promote specific offerings. Fayetteville uses its selfChecks in the children's area to promote story times and child-specific activities, while other stations throughout the library advertise an array of upcoming events.

Additionally, quickConnect is fully integrated with bibliotheca's cloudLibrary digital solution, allowing libraries to promote their digital collections during check out. As patrons check out materials, they are offered recommendations for digital titles that may be of interest. They can then borrow these digital

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Interested in quickConnect? Learn more!

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"quickConnect offered so many additional benefits for our users."

Shown:
selfCheck™ 1000 + quickConnect™ with Fayetteville's custom library promotions on the top of the screen

materials without ever leaving the quickConnect interface or library catalog.

"I recently had a patron tell me that she was blown away when she realized she could download an e-book right from the selfCheck as she was checking out," says Yandell.

The receipt provides all the information needed to download the cloudLibrary app to an e-reader or electronic device, saving time and frustration for patrons and staff alike. Though Fayetteville Public Library uses both cloudLibrary and OverDrive, Yandell says there is a night and day difference between the two services.

"cloudLibrary is so much simpler, and the integration with our physical selfChecks just can't be beat," says Yandell.

Fully customizable

The quickConnect interface is beautiful and intuitive for patrons, but it also offers many back-end features designed to make it easy to use for library staff. While liber8 and other platforms required line coding of .ini files for specific customizations, the back-end of quickConnect is straightforward, intuitive, and fully customizable.

"The system manager user interface is very intuitive. You know exactly what you are doing; you aren't modifying some hexadecimal number. Our circulation staff are positioned near the selfChecks, to ensure customers have an optimal checkout experience and assist them if needed. Whether it's modifying the workflow to give customers a little extra time to enter their pin number or change the colors, backgrounds or fonts, it's so easy to go in and customize the software to display just the way we want. I haven't found a single thing that I wanted to configure that I couldn't," says Yandell.

Interested in cloudLibrary? Learn more!

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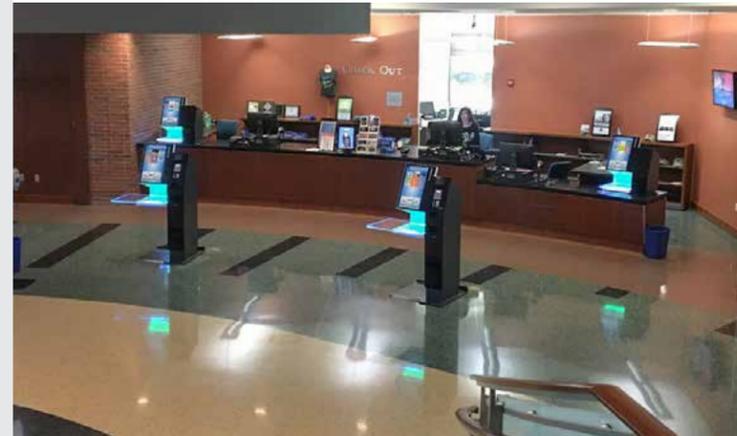
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Each feature of quickConnect is well thought out and designed to provide library patrons and staff with the smoothest, most efficient experience possible. Yandell says even the small things make a big difference. "When people are done with their check out, they don't have to log out. The session just ends as it should. Before we had quickConnect, if patrons didn't physically end their session, it was possible for new transactions to occur on the wrong patron's account, causing a lot of confusion for the library staff and patrons. Now

with quickConnect, the workflow is much better. The payment system, whether with credit card or cash, works much smoother. It's faster; it's more intuitive."

Blowing the doors off of library land

Big changes are ahead for Fayetteville Public Library. The city council has approved a plan for an expansion that will double the size of the library. The new campus will extend across an existing street and offer a large multi-purpose performance space as well as a large outdoor
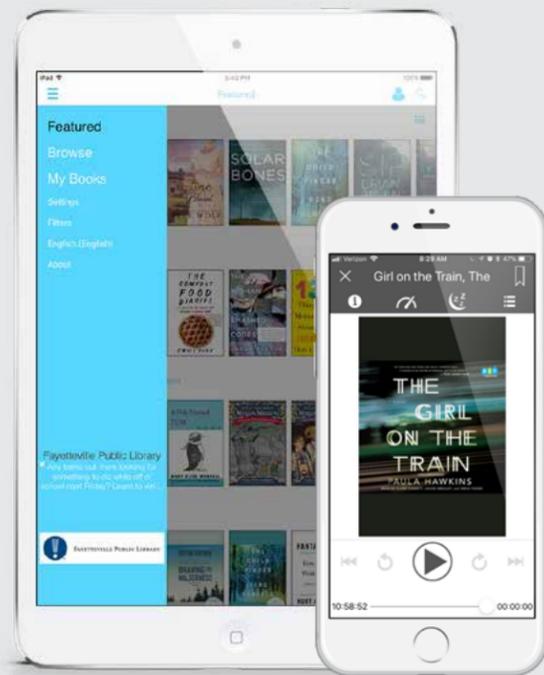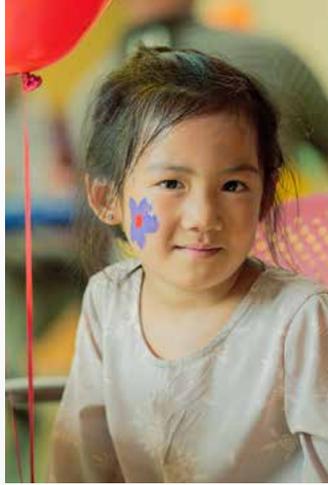
> "**With the ability to integrate and recommend digital cloudLibrary content, partnering with just one vendor allows for a better, holistic relationship for your technology needs.**"

programming and venue space ideal for Fayetteville's plethora of music festivals. "We have some amazing things planned. Our goal is to blow the doors off of Library Land," says Yandell.

The existing facility will remain open while the expansion is built. Once the new project is complete, the library will move into the expanded space and renovate the existing building.

As Fayetteville gears up for this huge undertaking, Yandell has some words of advice for libraries just starting out.

"If someone were building a brand-new library, I'd stress to them to go with one vendor for the whole

RFID infrastructure. When we built our library, we had multiple vendors involved. Since then, we've really wished that everything was bibliotheca. The sorter, gates, and selfChecks would've been much easier to deal with if we'd started with one integrated vendor. Especially now, with the ability to integrate and recommend digital cloudLibrary content, partnering with just one vendor allows for a better, holistic relationship for your technology needs."

Want to learn more about bibliotheca's integrated solutions? <u>Contact us</u>.

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