



INNOVATIVE CASE STUDY

Davenport Public Library: Exceeding Expectations beyond Library Walls with Polaris Leap

Davenport Public Library (DPL) in Iowa serves a population of over 100,000 and its librarians make every effort to reach community members both inside and outside the library. Their dynamic and numerous outreach events demonstrate the opportunity for fun and learning with the library and increase the size of their patron base. Outreach is an “all-ages show” at DPL, with visits everywhere: from senior centers to the local anime convention that draws a younger crowd.

Polaris Leap, part of the Polaris ILS suite of products, allows staff to conduct library workflows via a web browser on a tablet, laptop, or PC, and has been a companion to staff on these adventures. DPL was an early beta partner for Leap, arming staff members at outreach events with a PC or Chromebook tablet and barcode scanner to check out and check in materials, add new patrons, and more. With Polaris Leap, library staff members are realizing the potential of working more efficiently as they make contact with patrons (and future patrons!) at various locales.

“With Leap, we have a more immediate impact because we can do something for the community right then and there.”

*- Amy Groskopf,
Library Director*

An outreach effort at the local farmers’ market was one of the staff’s first experiences with Polaris Leap. Library Director Amy Groskopf says: “It got our staff excited and they saw it does what they need and is easy to use. Leap makes it more convenient for patrons as well. If they have a block on their account for some reason, we can resolve it immediately. With Leap, we have a more immediate impact because we can do something for them right then and there.”

Amber Carlson, Youth Services & Programming Librarian, attended the recent local anime convention. An energetic librarian, she finds time to run programs such as Gaming, Anime Club, Geek & Snack, Geek & Craft, a weekly preschool story time, and an adult technology program. Carlson says that bringing Leap along to events often exceeds the expectations of the community: “Our patrons are always very shocked to learn that they can actually check out the items they were browsing on the table; they often assume it was just a display of things we offer.” She uses Polaris Leap to check out items to patrons, update patron accounts, issue library cards to new patrons, and search the catalog.

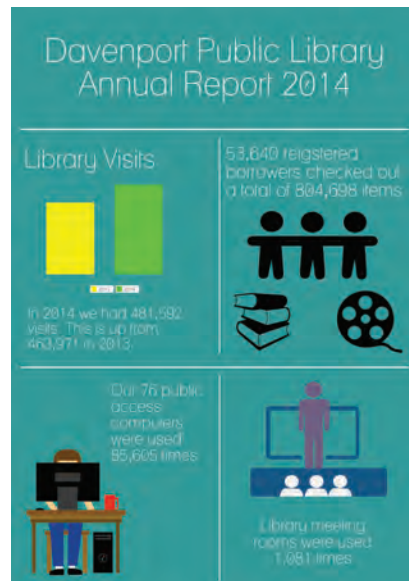
Because her department is in charge of the library's Public Relations and Marketing, Carlson creates posters, newsletters, videos, and social media posts to promote the library. Special events are an important way of promoting the library and gaining new patrons. "DPL belongs to a group of libraries in the Quad City area, and my experience has been that non-Davenport patrons are more likely to check out items when we are at a special event. They may not travel to Davenport to use our library, but they do come for anime conventions, farmers' markets, and so on. They are always surprised about what we have to offer and that their library card will work there."

For current patrons of the library, Carlson wants them to have the same library experience whether they walked in the front door of the library building or met staff off-site, and Polaris Leap enables library staff to do just that. Carlson says: "We hope to shatter a bit of the misperceptions non-library users have about libraries and what libraries offer to a community."

Groskopf is actively exploring new opportunities for outreach and Leap will be part of the picture. She says: "It is important to go where people are in the community who may not have thought about the library as a resource, and it gives us that much more visibility."

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Youth Services &
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ABOUT DAVENPORT PUBLIC LIBRARY



Davenport Public Library connects a diverse community to resources that inform, enrich, educate and entertain. Our vision is to be recognized as a premiere resource for educational support and literacy; provide invaluable tools for building community prosperity; and to be a cornerstone of family, cultural and civic life. On the Web: www.davenportlibrary.com

ABOUT POLARIS LEAP

The Polaris Leap responsive web client brings the power and functionality of the Polaris ILS public services workflows to library staff through a browser. Polaris Leap can be used on a desktop, a notebook, or a tablet, freeing staff to connect with patrons and complete tasks wherever it is most convenient – even outside the library walls.