MyLibrary! App Delivers Mobile Library Access for Students, Faculty, & Staff at Cairn University
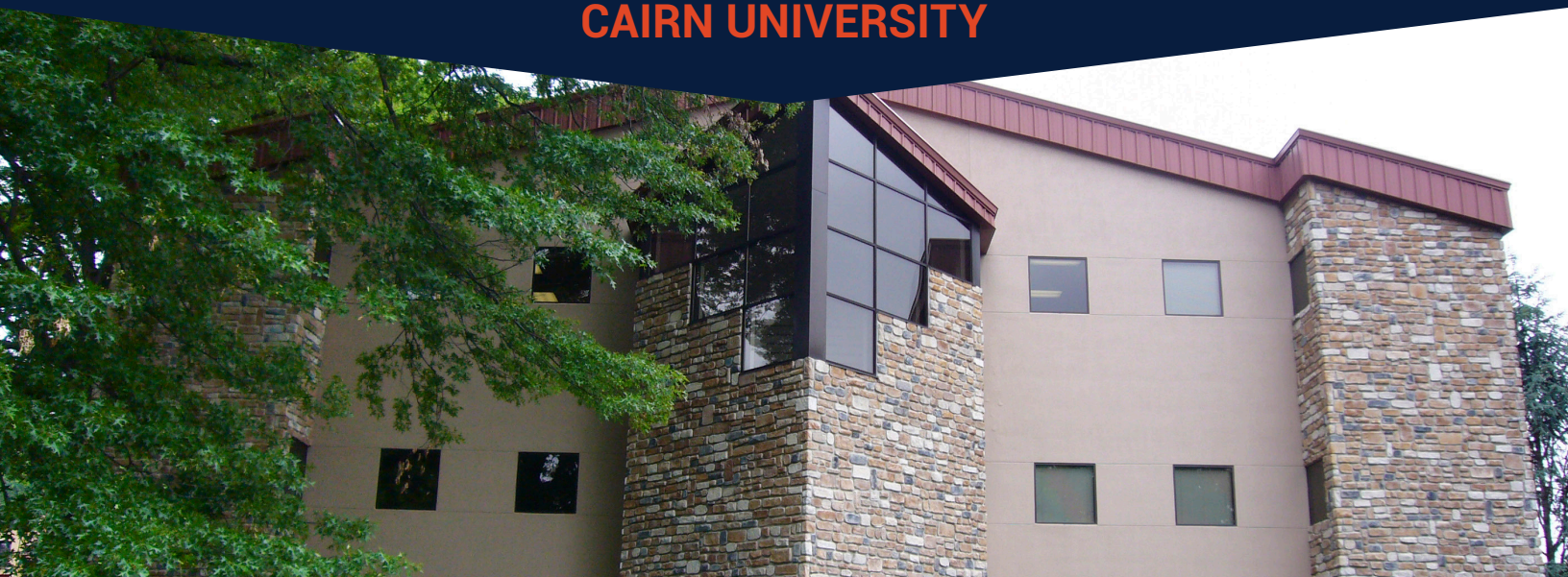
OVERVIEW

Located just 25 miles outside of Philadelphia in Langhorne, Pennsylvania, Cairn University offers more than 70 undergraduate and graduate degree programs in business, divinity, education, liberal arts, music, social work, and sciences. Masland Library supports the research needs of the university's 1,200+ students and faculty with a robust collection of resources and hands-on library staff. As an institution that prides themselves on a service-centered culture, they quickly identified a need to improve the library experience for mobile device users. The library implemented MyLibrary! mobile app to better serve the Cairn learning community.
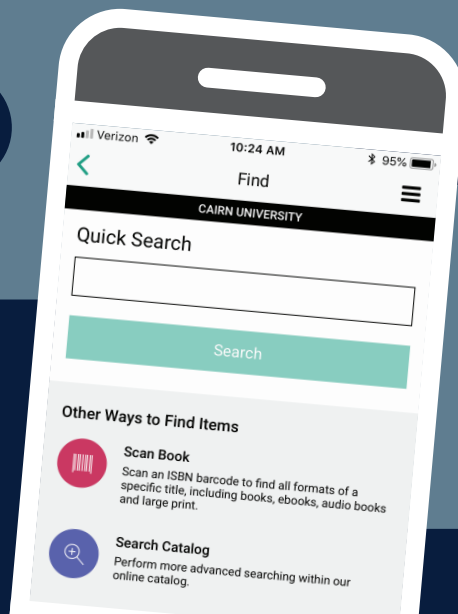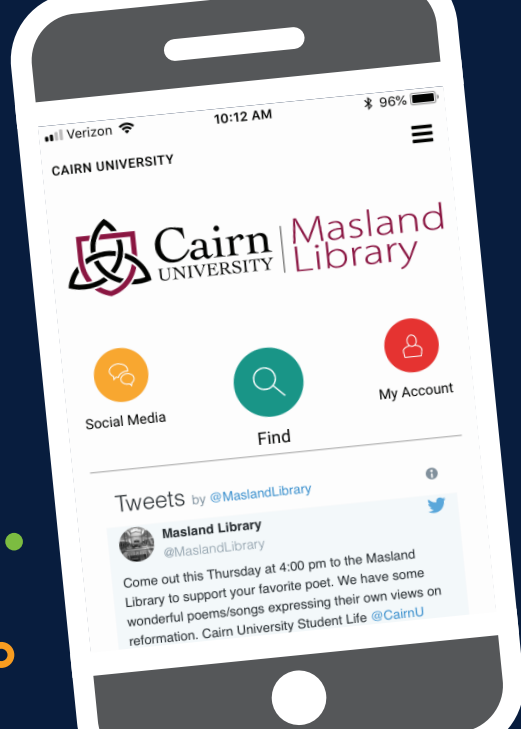
THE CHALLENGE

PROVIDE USERS WITH EASY-TO-USE LIBRARY ACCESS ON MOBILE DEVICES

Masland Library had a variety of resources to simplify online access for users, but no dedicated mobile solution. As library staff saw more and more students coming into the library and searching the collection using their phones, it became clear these users were struggling to find what they needed. Feedback they received helping remote students confirmed the library experience was clunky on a mobile device. And library staff helping students out in the stacks realized their own effectiveness was hampered by not having better mobile access.

Stephanie Kaceli, Library Director at Masland, was passionate about being able to "meet users where they are." Getting something in place for use on phones and tablets was critical. But with a small team and limited IT resources, she knew Masland didn't have the manpower to create their own mobile app. It was important to work with a vendor who really understood their Sierra ILS. When Innovative launched MyLibrary!, Kaceli became excited about the possibilities.

SOLUTION

HIGHLIGHT COLLECTIONS WITH DEPENDABLE, MODERN MOBILE APP

The team at Masland focused on three key criteria to consider as they assessed the mobile app:

How well does it highlight the library collection?

Having seen first-hand that students were using their phones to look up call numbers to locate books in the stacks, it was important for the library's local materials to be front and center in the app. With multiple formats, eBooks, and media in their catalog, exposing diverse material types via mobile was desirable. But they didn't want patrons to have to wade through hundreds of articles or reviews, and the solution needed to accurately showcase the information and data coming from Sierra.

Is it user-friendly and intuitive to learn?

They didn't want to spend a lot of time teaching people how to use an app, so the solution needed to be something everyone could easily download and use on their own. And they were expecting an attractive, modern interface.

Is it absolutely stable?

Downtime would not be acceptable, and neither would time-consuming trouble-shooting – the library needed a mobile solution they could count on to "just work." As a primary gateway to the library catalog, the app needed to be dependable – functioning as expected whenever users connected.

After evaluating MyLibrary!, Kaceli's instincts were validated – the clear path forward was a mobile app from the same company who developed and maintains Sierra, and not some third-party vendor. Kaceli explains, "Innovative knows how our system is built, knows how to represent it on an app, and understands how to make it work. Even before the product was released, we could tell from the interface and the roadmap that MyLibrary! was going to work for our needs. And now in production, it really delivers what we wanted."

> The product was so well done from the beginning – it's done what we needed it to do. And once you get the app going, it's really kind of cruise control. Even with new releases, we haven't had to go back and retrain anyone – there are no complaints or questions – users just open it up and use it. MyLibrary! is always doing its job."
>
> **STEPHANIE KACELI**
> *Library Director, Masland Library, Cairn University*

RESULTS AND BENEFITS

INCREASED ENGAGEMENT & IMPROVED WORKFLOWS

Since going live with MyLibrary!, the team at Masland is pleased to see students using their phones to find library materials more quickly. Remote users seem to be more satisfied with their experience, and the app has enabled staff to be much more efficient when assisting visitors in the stacks. Beyond achieving those core goals, they are also seeing some unanticipated benefits across campus.

In 2018, Masland Library staff engaged new freshmen class arrivals with the news that they can access the library right from an app on their phones. It has also become a good way for users to renew items – MyLibrary! lets students see quickly what they have checked out, and complete renewals right within the app.

Faculty are also using MyLibrary! to their advantage. Now, as faculty discover useful materials off campus, they simply scan the ISBN or UPC code to see if any edition of the title is already in the collection. It also streamlines acquisitions activities, saving time answering questions and receiving more detailed requests when faculty do need a specific item to be purchased.

The same functionality has resulted in another unexpected use for the app: As new or donated books come in, library staff use MyLibrary! to scan the UPC or ISBN to see what version of the title might already be in the collection.

Kaceli notes that unlike other solutions where connections between different systems can complicate the support process, having an app from Innovative means they always know who to call for a quick resolution. Between the robust functionality, stellar support, and attractive modern interface, the MyLibrary! mobile app has enabled the small team at Masland to ensure library users receive exceptional service – in person, and from any device.
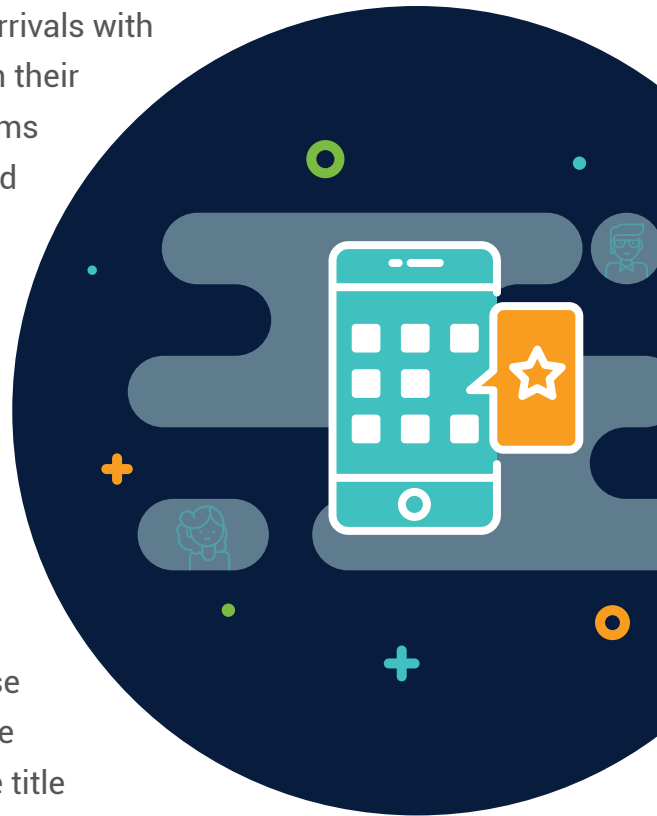
Discover more at **www.iii.com**. If you're interested in discussing MyLibrary! for your ILS, contact us at **sales@iii.com** or **(510) 655-6200**.

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