



4 Ways Vega Program Enhanced Event Management at Middle Country Public Library

Overview

Middle Country Public Library, serving Centereach and Selden, New York, offers more than 2,400 programs each year. Many of these events require or recommend advanced registration and some are open to participants outside of the Middle Country Public Library System. Registration for programs kicks off once each quarter for the following three months, and spots fill fast.

The Challenge

The Middle Country Library's previous way of managing events involved using disparate systems and depended on manual performance of many related administrative tasks. This was time-consuming for library staff and inconvenient for patrons who did not have a mobile-friendly option for registration.

Solution

When the library launched Vega Program, they were eager to implement a tool designed especially for libraries to simplify the registration experience for patrons and staff.

After using Vega Program for multiple event cycles, Middle Country Public Library Assistant Director Ryan Gessner shared with us the benefits of streamlining their event registration process.

Vega Program provided four solutions to their biggest challenges:

MOBILE-FRIENDLY DESIGN

Because Middle Country Library programs are in such high demand, patrons want to be able to conveniently claim their spots on the day registration opens. But under the old system, registration was done in person, over the phone, or required a computer.

With Vega Program, this is no longer necessary. “The mobile-friendly design lets patrons register for programs wherever they are,” Ryan explained. He added that many patrons prefer to use their phones to search and register for library events. Google analytics revealed that more than 50% of traffic through Vega Program has been through mobile devices.

But even for patrons who register through a desktop computer, Vega Program improved their user experience because they no longer have to navigate through multiple web pages, saving them time and effort. Library staff also save time because fewer patrons need to call or register in person.

SIMPLIFIED GUEST REGISTRATION

Some Middle Country Library programs are open to guests from other districts but managing these registrations previously presented challenges.

Patrons who weren't in the ILS needed to be manually entered into the system. And the most convenient way to do so was for the patron to register in person, meaning they would have to make multiple trips to the library: first to sign up, and again to attend the event.

With Vega Program, guest registration is managed digitally from a computer or mobile device. And sharing important program updates and reminders with guests and all registrants is simplified because email communications for each event are also customized and managed through Vega Program.

“This feature has saved time for patrons and staff and made it easy for people in neighboring districts to attend programs,” Ryan said.

EASIER PAYMENT PROCESSING

The online payment process for Middle Country Public Library events is handled through Stripe, which is integrated into Vega Program. Under the library's previous online payment process, using PayPal, less than 10% of patrons took advantage of online payments; that number has increased to more than 50% because it is conveniently managed right on the registration page.

As a result, library staff now spend less time processing cash payments on the day of programs, and on the backend, the business office is better able to reconcile payments because staff can easily review receipts.

Additionally, on the occasion a patron cancels their registration, refund processing is automated, based on a timeframe determined by the library.

CUSTOM QUESTIONS

“We didn't even know this would be a possibility when we switched to Vega Program,” Ryan explained, “but it's been super helpful.”

For some of the library's programs, additional information is needed from registered patrons. For example, a crafting event involved making a welcome sign featuring the family name which required the instructor to make stencils ahead of time. As part of the registration process, a field on the page allowed patrons to specify what they wanted their sign to say. In the past, this information had to be gathered via phone call to each of the program registrants.

This feature is also convenient when planning trips that include a lunch so patrons can indicate their preferences.

With the ability to ask custom questions as part of the registration process, the library can find out how patrons hear about the program through multiple choice or open responses. This data can be exported right into excel, so the information is easy to use and provides insight into patron preferences and behaviors.

Results / Summary

With Vega Program, Middle Country Public Library has been able to streamline event management and automate many of the administrative functions staff previously performed manually, resulting in a more efficient and less time-consuming process. This has also simplified registration for patrons by providing them with mobile-friendly options to learn about and sign up for programs. Feedback on this new system has been overwhelmingly positive on all sides.

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Director Ryan Gessner
Middle Country Public Library Assistant

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Get In Touch

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