FLOATING COLLECTIONS

One System – One Collection

Library Commission Meeting, June 24th

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What is a floating collection?

- Items move freely among all locations
- Items remain at the location where they are returned
- Materials movement is generated by our library customers
- One system with one collection, not 20 unique collections

Why do it?

- Get materials into the hands of our customers more quickly while reducing the handling and transportation of materials by library staff
- Reduce staff workload, errors, and physical demands
- Save money by reducing the amount of similar materials needed

The Fear Factor

- Different approach to collection makes folks nervous at first…

The Reality

- Positive impact on workflow, customer service, and selection
- Done successfully by every other large Texas public library
- Big change in how we look at our collection
- Shift staff work from processing materials to interacting with the collection.

Benefits of Floating

- Increases materials availability and provides continuously refreshed collections
- Allows customers to have a role in collection development
- Reduces the risk of smaller branches being "read out"
- Reinforces the APL's identity as one system

Benefits of Floating, cont.

- Reduces the amount of time for items in transit or on hold, reduces transportation costs of moving items between sites

- Reduces physical wear and tear on items

- Staff focus on collection, not processing materials in and out

Benefits of Floating, cont

- Less risk of costly/time-intensive circulation errors
- Reduces the need to duplicate titles, and extends budget
- Reduces ergonomic injuries

Where We're At Now

- 2 materials already float: Playaways and Early Readers
- Experience with floating Early Readers a driving factor
- 12-person Floating Collections Task Force
- Goal: Create workable plan for floating items to recommend to APL Management Team

Issues to Address

Keeping Collection Balanced

- Making sure that branches have what they need is a priority

- "Traffic Cop" approach – Collection Development and Branch Services

- Collection will periodically expand and contract

- Need to examine circulation software for usability

Issues to Address

Training

- New way of looking at collection
- Adjustments to standardized collection (new books, stickering, weeding standards, etc.)
- New workflow issues for staff
- Customer training (placing holds, system-wide view)
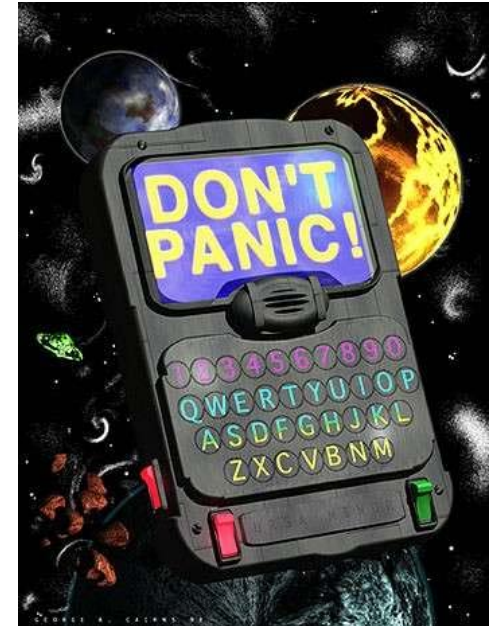- Collection knowledge

Issues to Address

Circulation Procedures

- How do we float materials with our current policies and procedures in circulating materials?
- How do we direct materials with our current software?
- Work in progress – may need to consider modifying some current procedures or policies.

Next Steps

- Look at circulation procedures and polices
- What to float next
- Gather hard data to help guide decisions
- Develop timeline
- Weed!
- Build in support for staff

Questions?