

Books By Mail Meeting 10/29/08 at Burlington County Library

Attending: Nancy Polhamus, Karen Shiles, Gwenn Laisie., Holly Coons, Lee Hoisington, Molly Connor, Sarah Thomson., Bob Wetherall, Karen Hyman, Pete Bromberg (Recording), Gail Sweet

1. Progress

a. What's happened since going live?

i. Bob W on GCLS Experience:

1. things are going well. We've fallen into a routine. The big day is Monday because we've had holds build up over the weekend. Would like to increase usage.
2. Most: sent 42 packages a day. Avg 22 packages /day in September (32 items)
3. Increased steadily. Plateaued in October. Want to look at how to keep growing.
4. 22% of holds are being sent (out of 40000/year). Would like to get it up to 50%
5. Actual cost is about \$1.73/item (cheapest package is \$2.12 which is library rate.)
6. Users are increasing
7. "Mailit" is a "location" in Symphony, not a "library" which makes getting stats harder. Given that, the only way to get stats on who is using the system is through the Endicia dazzle software. 395 people have used the system. There is plenty of room for growth
8. **Books make up the largest amount** (72% are books)
9. **Largest usage is from Mullica Hill** (Harrison Twp).
10. Why don't people do more with DVD? Bob thinks it might be because fewer people use holds system to place holds on DVDs.
11. Returns are overwhelming being dropped off instead of being mailed. (same for Burlco)
12. Bob: this is the first time I've developed something from a blank slate and asked "how can we do this" and developed a process—that seems to be working.
13. Nancy distributed copy of draft survey. (pete: follow up with Karen for copies of new survey and current one that they use if we don't already have copy of it)
 - a. Already sending short survey: Plan to mail it with return envelope to everyone that's used the service.
 - b. Molly suggests question: Were you a library user before? (or has service increased your use of the library?; Did you place holds before)
 - i. Comments have been very positive
 - ii. Sarah/Molly agree that people love it.
 - iii. "My children are reading more because of MailLit"
 - iv. "It's just like Christmas when I go to my mailbox and find a package from mailit"
 - v. "It's given me an opportunity to try new authors"
 - vi. "I still love coming into the library, but now I don't have to rearrange my day to pick up a hold."
 - vii. Burlco: "Great service for an old vet" "Maybe I'll cancel netflix" (pete: get these comments and comment form from Molly—electronically)

ii. Lee: on GCLS's experience,

1. Tuesday is the big day (because delivery from the branches come on Monday)
2. Average 28 packages a day (range 2x-47)
3. Lots of multiple users. Send out 15 books at one time to one patron.

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4. Have sent 35 pound packages.
5. Had to order giant envelopes and get creative with some odd-sized books.
6. 25% of usage is from one town; Marlton/Evesham
7. Gwenn: It's hard to identify the borrowers; who is using the service?
8. Molly: Burlco is not using the Endicia address book.

b. Mailing Packaging

- i. Bob: using Tyvec bags. Wrap dvd/cd/audiobooks with bubblewrap. Bags are used once. 21 cents in 9 x 12 bag.
- ii. Bob: Love Endicia. So much cheaper than a mailing machine.

2. Marketing Promotion:

- a. Burlco gives literature when new cards are processed
- b. GloCo is putting bookmark in every hold that is not picked up
- c. Gwenn: We need to get out to other events and reach people who aren't coming to the library.
- d. Sarah: Libraryinabag was popular with the attendees at business expo.
- e. **Question:** So what would get the message out?
 - i. Going out to community events
 - ii. Give out marketing materials at classes
 - iii. Doctors/Dentists offices
 - iv. Billboards (Gwenn spoke to Clear Channel who said they would offer billboards for cost.)
 - v. Domain names? Maillit.com is available and libraryinabag.com is not available, but other extensions (.org) are.

3. Surprises, challenges, questions

- a. Gail: A Commissioner asked if we could we put advertising on the mail bags? Post office says it's ok.
 - i. No objections from SJRLC.

4. Planning for Conference Program: Goal is that people will want to do this!

- a. NJLA: Gwenn has suggested Title: "In the bag": Karen asked Gwenn to send description to Karen.
- b. Karen or Pete will contact Admin Section to discuss sponsorship.
- c. We will develop "trading spaces" style website
- d. Handout: customer comments
- e. Who would like to speak?
 - i. Nancy. Holly is available.
 - ii. Lee is available. Molly is available.
- f. PLA : Nov 30 deadline: 75 minutes; Need 3 learning objectives and a catchy title.
 - i. Ask Fort Vancouver if they'd like to be on the program with us.
 - ii. Who is likely to go? Karen will put in one name from each library and put herself in as moderator.

5. Other Discussion

- a. Karen: Cosugi/Sirsi Conference in Dallas in april. Burlco and GloCo may go.
- b. Karen will look into doing joint presentation and email the list.

6. Next Steps

- a. Next meeting Feb 4 at Mullica Hill
- b. We will work on list of questions we think people would want answers to if they wanted to do this. We will pick 10 questions and make this the focus of the program. Possibly start work on the website.
- c. Report back on progress on items in 2E (Marketing)
- d. Reports due Feb 1st.