

# BROOKLYN PUBLIC LIBRARY

## ComputeIT™ Laptop Lending Solution Facilitates Repurpose of Space Allocation

# CASE STUDY



### THE LIBRARY

Brooklyn Public Library is among the borough's most democratic civic institutions, serving patrons in every neighborhood and from every walk of life. Established in 1896, BPL is the nation's fifth largest public library system and welcomed nearly 8 million visitors last year. The Library has a branch library within a half-mile of nearly all of Brooklyn's 2.6 million residents. In a borough of wide economic disparity, BPL offers cultural, literacy, after school programs and services, workforce development, and digital literacy.

The American Library Association's 2014 Public Library Data Service Statistical Report ranked BPL third in the nation for public programs and attendance. BPL was recognized as one of the 2015 InformationWeek Elite 100, a ranking of the top business technology innovators in the US. In 2016, BPL was awarded an IMLS National Medal for Museum and Library Service, the nation's highest honor for museum and libraries for its work in Outreach Services and its efforts to serve Brooklyn's most vulnerable populations.

### THE CHALLENGE

The Sunset Park branch of the Brooklyn Public Library closed for a major renovation. While the new building is under construction, a temporary library space was created to offer services. The goal was to make more efficient use of the space. The use of desktop computers would have required permanent space allocation for computer stations. The library decided to use laptops instead of desktops to make the temporary location a more agile environment for patron services, events and programs. The library increased the computing devices from 14 desktop computers to 36 laptops. The manner in which the distribution of these 36 laptops was unclear. However, with the smaller space and staff requirements at one of the busiest branches, the library did not want to allocate staff time distributing laptops instead of providing customer service assistance.

### THE SOLUTION

Since 2004, Brooklyn had already introduced several patron self-service devices at all of its branches. PC, print and copy management are already implemented, as well as self-service books and items check-out and return. After the CIO made the decision that a self-service laptop distribution system was needed, an exploratory committee consisting of IT Staff, Marketing, Librarians and Public Service Staff was formed. The team documented the existing "human laptop distribution" process in place at 18 branches and discussed and debated policies and procedures that needed to be enhanced or changed once a self-service process were introduced. The team created a matrix of all decisions and policy changes required. The matrix also served the purpose for guidelines to generate information documents for staff, as well as for training purposes. The library retained the services of D-Tech who worked with staff to customize its computeIT laptop lending kiosk to conform to the policies and procedures for managing patron account activity. Integrating the laptop lending kiosk with the library's existing PC and Print management system was a top priority.

### THE RESULTS

The Library has already received positive feedback from patrons on the ease of use of the system interface and from staff on their ability to focus their time on programs and patron services rather than on manual operations at the service desk.

### CUSTOMER COMMENTS



"Our customers are Brooklyn style – sophisticated, smart and demanding. To provide good customer service at our branches, we need to know when to ask patrons if they need assistance and when to leave them alone. Our customers have been using self-service technology for 14 years so introducing self-service laptop lending at one of our busiest branches wasn't a disruption. Our librarians and public service staff have an excellent understanding of our patrons' needs and by them bringing that knowledge

and understanding of our patron to the committee made IT's and D-Tech's job so much easier in determining the technical customization requirements to make the laptop lending process seamless for our patrons."

– Selvon Smith, Vice President of Information Technology and Chief Information Officer

