

CASE STUDY: South Tyneside Libraries

THE LIBRARY

South Tyneside Libraries operate across eight sites. It recognised some time ago that for libraries to survive, they had to evolve; so, a major regeneration project across the borough has seen three of these Libraries move into modern multi-use hubs. A fourth is scheduled to open soon. The latest to open, The Word, National Centre for the Written Word, opened in October 2016 and is a cultural community space that appeals to people of all ages. Offering an array of activities and facilities The Word has attracted over 400,000 visitors in its first year, has over 70,000 books, and has been the catalyst to unprecedented increases in library memberships and book-borrowing.



THE CHALLENGE

If you are future-proofing your library's service offering, it is essential that you ensure your software and equipment is able to cope with demand and technological developments. South Tyneside Libraries always prefers to operate a single supplier solution, where possible, as it simplifies support. This was not practicable, with the interface between its LMS (Capita Alto) and the RFID system, so it sought a provider with an established business relationship.

THE SOLUTION

D-Tech was already a Capita partner, so the choice was a relatively easy one. D-Tech has installed all South Tyneside Libraries' RFID equipment, including security gates, staff pads, and self-service units. It also provides all of the RFID labels. The D-Tech g-series self-service unit has an integrated chip and PIN station, which comes with contactless card compatibility.

THE RESULTS

IMPROVED SERVICES

Improved use of staff resources

IMPROVED ACCOUNTABILITY

Books are easily traced

IMPROVED CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE

Shorter queues

CUSTOMER COMMENTS

Russell Hall, South Tyneside Libraries' Senior Librarian, says; "We introduced RFID self-service to allow our staff to focus more on assisting our borrowers with enquiries, and thereby improve the overall quality of service we offer. Chip & PIN was introduced because we had become increasingly aware that the ability to pay by card, Chip & PIN, NFC and contactless technology was appearing in many places, and not just in retail. It was becoming the norm in leisure and cultural attractions too. As a Library service, we felt that we had to position ourselves to respond to any changes in the expectations of our market or die.

"As a result of the hard work involved in creating our new hub Libraries and making them open and accessible for all, usage is increasing across the board. Importantly for us, by making it easier to access our services by a combination of chip & PIN, Library Apps, and other digital initiatives, we have managed to attract many more users in groups we have previously found hard to reach. Our teenage and young adult usage has increased significantly.

"Working with D-Tech International is a pleasure. D-Tech engineers have a great relationship both with us and the Capita helpdesk, so the rare problems that occur are fixed quickly. The help desk staff are always open, friendly and efficient and the site engineers are brilliant. We have a great relationship with the company.

"As for the equipment supplied - the best recommendation a Library ICT service lead can offer - is to say that I quite often forget it's there. It just works, quietly and efficiently."

"Working with D-Tech International is a pleasure."

Russell Hall, Senior Librarian
South Tyneside Libraries

