

Fairfax County Public Library

LOB #97:

24/7 INFORMATION ACCESS

Purpose

FCPL offers a wide range of services, and residents are able to conduct library business 24 hours per day, seven days a week, and from any location. In order for this to be possible, the system's infrastructure must be constantly monitored and upgraded regularly. The way residents access and use information is changing and as a result demand on the Library's technological services is increasing. The Library provides access to print and electronic materials and databases which must be cataloged and processed accurately and quickly so that the information is readily and easily accessible in a timely fashion. Library cardholders can access the Library website, catalog, events database, and their accounts from any device at any time.

Description

This LOB is comprised of two discrete programs: Cataloging and Processing (C&P) and Library Information Technology (LIT). These programs are bundled because both rely heavily on technical resources and both programs are essential to provide customers with access to the library's information. LIT provides the framework used by both customers and staff. C&P makes it possible for customers and staff to locate information. Cataloging identifies all of the pertinent and searchable information for a specific title, enters the information into a readable form. This ensures an effective and accurate search when customers browse library holdings so customers can quickly and easily find the item they are looking for.

1. **Cataloging and Processing (C&P).** This program organizes purchased and donated library materials and resources so residents can access them. Cataloging Services physically prepares items for customer use and borrowing, performing a variety of tasks including identifying items with FCPL ownership branding, barcode, and special shelving labels on each individual item. Staff identify and route customer requests for holds on newly received, cataloged, and processed items to customers at the pick-up branches of their choice. The Cataloging Services group trains and educates staff and customers about cataloging issues and procedures as well as services such as interlibrary loan for requesting items not owned by the Fairfax County Public Library System. There were 183,084 items processed in FY 2015.

Cataloging and Processing are based in the Library's Technical Operations offices in the Chantilly Regional Library building. Cataloging services are performed using trained librarians. Receiving and processing are primarily performed hands-on through a series of specified manual tasks.

This program is performed by library staff and volunteers. This program has been operational since the Fairfax County Public Library was formally established in 1939.

2. **Library Information Technology.** This program maintains and supports the infrastructure systems that serves library customers such as the catalog, self-service payment kiosks, the meeting room scheduling and event registration tool, the FCPL website, 600 public PC's and online electronic subscriptions, such as Value Line financial services and Mango foreign language programs. LIT provides indirect service to the public by monitoring and administering the Library's highly integrated systems and creating new tools on enterprise platforms such as SharePoint. Information Technology supports the library branches all the hours they are open and to customers 24/7.

The Library Information Technology program is based at the Government Center and uses a variety of tools to monitor the systems mentioned above during all library operating hours. The majority of time is spent working with branch staff in direct support of customer needs and requests and monitoring and responding to issues.

This program is performed by library staff and has been operational since 1995.

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Benefits

Cataloging and Processing ensures an efficient and accurate browsing experience for customers and staff searching for desired material holdings owned by the Library as well as materials available to customers via interlibrary loan. Cataloging and Processing provides accountability for materials purchased with taxpayer funding. In receiving and processing new materials, customer demands are met quickly and accurately.

The Library Technology Program supports the Library IT systems both in branches and online. Customers and staff have high expectations for the performance of these systems. In close coordination with the Department of Information Technology (DIT), Library IT serves and supports FCPL staff, who in turn serve and support customers. Since members of this group have both library and technology skills, they are uniquely positioned to maintain current resources and identify and implement new resources. The Library Technology Program ensures that library services are available 24 hours per day, seven days per week.

Indirectly, the Library Technology Program provides a significant amount of value to the community by supporting a vast array of technological resources such as Wi-Fi, wired Internet access, the library catalog, printing and copying, self-service checkout, self-service payment options, mobile apps that provide access to library resources, email account reminders, online meeting room booking, online program registration, online library card registration, and telephone renewal.

The 24/7 Information Access LOB supports the following Vision Elements: Maintaining Safe and Caring Communities, Building Livable Spaces, Connecting People and Places, Maintaining Healthy Economies, Practicing Environmental Stewardship, and Creating a Culture of Engagement.

Mandates

This Line of Business is not mandated.

Trends and Challenges

Trends: Customers throughout the County expect more online and self-service options in both professional and personal environments. This expectation is driving an increased demand for FCPL's technical resources. Library metrics demonstrate the use of eBooks and Wi-Fi is increasing.

There is a drive toward hosted solutions. In many cases, moving the library's resources to the "cloud" has significant benefits for service provision in terms of flexibility and variety of offerings.

Challenges: The push for self-service options has increased interest in mobile technology. Customers want online, remote, and self-service access to as many collections and resources as possible. Not all of the collections and resources are available remotely for a variety of reasons. For many customers, a mobile device is their primary device, or in some cases, the only device they use to access library services.

The movement toward hosted solutions is costly to implement in a time of budget challenges.

Interoperability/interdependence are increasing. FCPL systems are highly interdependent, allowing information to flow from one location to another. This includes the integration of ILS (catalog) and the electronic fine and fee payment system. This brings challenges because when more services are added to the Library, new tools must integrate with existing functions, and sometimes limits purchasing opportunities.

The Library serves a wide range of customers, from those with many technical resources to those who have no technical resources at all, other than what FCPL provides. It is challenging to serve both ends of the spectrum, as well as those in the middle, in a technological marketplace that is increasingly complex and expensive.

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Resources

Category	FY 2014 Actual	FY 2015 Actual	FY 2016 Adopted
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FUNDING			
<u>Expenditures:</u>			
Compensation	\$1,299,715	\$1,385,839	\$1,518,582
Operating Expenses	1,773,280	1,649,777	1,463,927
Capital Equipment	529,830	40,205	0
Total Expenditures	\$3,602,825	\$3,075,821	\$2,982,509
General Fund Revenue	\$0	\$0	\$0
Net Cost/(Savings) to General Fund	\$3,602,825	\$3,075,821	\$2,982,509
POSITIONS			
Authorized Positions/Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs)			
<u>Positions:</u>			
Regular	25 / 25	25 / 25	25 / 25
Total Positions	25 / 25	25 / 25	25 / 25

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Metrics

Metric Indicator	FY 2013 Actual	FY 2014 Actual	FY 2015 Actual	FY 2016 Estimate	FY 2017 Estimate
Library Internet Website User Views	8,647,440	8,818,995	8,454,924	8,110,000	7,785,000
Materials Processed per Staff Hour	70	70	70	70	70
Holds Processed per FTE at Technical Operations	NA	NA	23,809	24,275	24,855
Percentage of Customer Self-Checkout of Materials	80%	81%	81%	82%	82%
WiFi Client Usage	1,819,043	2,174,371	2,580,551	2,658,000	2,738,000

The library's website is routinely one of the most used among all County government sites, as well as the Library's catalog. Customers are able to sign-up for library programs, reserve meeting room space, apply for a library card, and access online resources through the library's website. In FY 2015 the library reported approximately 8.5 million user views of its website. This is a slight decrease from FY 2014 as users began to bypass the site and go directly to the library's online catalog without navigating the website first. Also, website navigation has been improved, and the ease of use makes it increasingly easy to access information with fewer clicks. The volume of user views of the library's website is expected to decline over the next several years as the trend of navigating directly to the catalog continues.

Cataloging and Processing creates the access tools necessary for the Library's customers and staff to locate information. Cataloging identifies all of the pertinent and searchable information for a specific title, enters the information into a readable form ensuring an effective and accurate search when customers browse library holding ensuring customers can quickly and easily find the item they are looking for. Staff in this office processed more than 180,000 items in FY 2015, approximately 70 items per staff hour. It is expected that the number of items processed per staff hour will remain flat over the next several years as a constrained budget limits the number of new items that can be purchased for the collection.

The Library also utilizes a 'holds' system, where customers anywhere in the County can request materials (online or in person) and have them delivered to their local branch library. The Library's Technical Operations division also uses this process to balance the collection, moving items to branches where items are more accessible to the communities that are most likely to use them.

The library's Technical Operations division also uses this process to balance the collection, moving items to branches where they are more accessible to the communities that are most likely to use them. In FY 2015 nearly 24,000 holds were processed per FTE by Technical Operations staff. The volume of holds processed is expected to remain fairly stable over the next several years as a constrained budget limits the number of items available in the collection.

The library strives to make its services and resources as customer friendly as possible through a variety of self-service opportunities. One of the ways the library does this is through the use of express checkout. Of the more than 12 million items that were checked out of the library collection in FY 2015, 81 percent were done through express or 'self' checkout. Since customers enjoy the convenience of being able to check items out themselves, the library expects this percentage to increase over the next several years.

Since FY 2012, the library offers WiFi access in branch libraries, and in FY 2015 more than 2.5 million clients took advantage of the library's WiFi capability, an increase of 19 percent from FY 2014. Analysis of the data shows that the busiest day of the week in terms of the volume of use of the library's WiFi is Tuesday; in terms of per hour usage the busiest day of the week is Saturday. The busiest hour of the day is from 3-4 pm, accounting for 13 percent of all access. As handheld devices capable of accessing the Internet grow in number, it is expected that the volume of client use of the library's WiFi capability will continue to increase over the next couple of years.