

# **Streamlining ILL Work Flow in Public and Small Libraries**

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# Streamlining ILL Work Flow in Public and Small Libraries

- Are you spending too much time doing ILL? Does ILL cost too much? Is it too slow? Maybe your workflow is not as smooth as it ought to be, but what to change? Where to start? Get inspired by stories of success and have a chance to explore ideas for saving time and money with the panelists and participants in this interactive session.

# ILL is Under-managed

- Not enough time is spent thinking about the process
- Especially in small and medium sized libraries
- Often the person “in charge” is an overworked reference librarian that doesn’t know or care

# ILL

- How much time do you spend
  - Nobody cares if you save an hour a month
- Just don't
  - Get a credit card and buy it from Amazon or Powell's or wherever

# Streamlining

- No logs
- No insurance
- Don't create records for borrowed items in the circ system until items are overdue
- Keep a file of lender's bar codes
- No paper request forms
  - Create Web forms

# Streamlining

- Don't file anything you don't have to
  - Only keep current requests in order
    - On order, here, out to other libraries
    - File by title
  - All other files in chronological order
    - Shove the latest in the back

# Streamlining

- Don't keep elaborate statistics
  - Just say no
- Don't charge
  - Consider lying about your charges
- Use jiffy bags – don't wrap
- Form letter notifications and stamps

# Streamlining

- Get mailing labels for borrowing libraries
- Use an online form of the ALA request
  - Fill out the form on the computer
  - Send as email attachment or fax

# Streamlining

- People are expensive
- Computers are cheap
- Use FirstSearch
  - Idaho, Montana, Alaska it's free
    - Encourage Washington and Oregon to do the same
  - WorldCat is cheap through the NW Group
    - Public Libraries under 15,000 - \$500 per year
    - unlimited use for staff and public

# Streamlining

- Use FirstSearch
  - Turn on the patron ILL form
  - Use free FirstSearch email form
- Use OCLC ILL if you have enough requests
- Set up Custom Holdings
- Join LVIS
  - 2095 libraries
- Do defensive union listing

# Streamlining

- Use direct request
  - Don't check 100% to catch 10%
- The public is ready for unmediated ILL
- Are you?

# Lee-Anne

- - make the process as transparent as possible; clearly label the status at each stage
- - find ways to non-verbally communicate with helpers and colleagues who work on ILL; resist briefing each other on things that could be communicated visually
- - batch procedures; never work on one request start to finish unless it's a RUSH

# Lee-Anne

- - involve other staff in the process where possible; circ staff can pull requests while pulling holds, ref staff can search requests, etc.
- - split the workflow into streams where items require different treatments; for example, put all article requests together and all returnable requests together (physically or virtually)

# Lee-Anne

- - have separate stations for different tasks, but try to contain the physical processes to a fairly small footprint
- - have equipment at each station, especially office supplies like staplers, pens, etc.
- - don't make rules for the exception
- - make ILL like circ