The University of Huddersfield

Increasing user satisfaction with lightning-fast ILL turnaround time

University of HUDDERSFIELD
Inspiring global professionals

The University of Huddersfield is always on the lookout for ways to improve their services for users. As part of this mission, they recently integrated RapidILL into their suite of solutions. This cost-effective and resilient infrastructure automates ILL request processing, resulting in an average turnaround time of just 9 hours instead of the previous 2-5 days. As a result, the Library of Huddersfield University now provides lightning-fast delivery of resources that users have come to "just take for granted."

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"Our average turnaround time for articles was somewhere between 2-5 days, now they are coming in around 9 hours. That's absolutely brilliant from our point of view."

Chris Beevers, University of Huddersfield

From 2-5 days to 9 hours turnaround time

Positive ROI after only 6 months

Resource-sharing service available 24/7

About the University of Huddersfield:

The University of Huddersfield offers higher education programs to over 20,000 students. The campus has access to some of the best facilities in the country, and the University has won multiple awards for research and teaching excellence, including 20 National Teaching Fellowships and a Gold Teaching Excellence and Student Outcomes Framework award. The University also has a growing reputation for enterprise, with awards such as the Queen's Award for Enterprise: International Trade.

The Library at the University of Huddersfield is converged with Computing Services; it has 164 employees consisting of 90 computing staff and 74 library staff. The Library has one physical location on campus, with limited 24/7 opening hours during exam periods. The service also manages two computer rooms that remain open on a 24/7 basis throughout the year. The Library uses ALMA as its integrated library system, Summon as its resource discovery tool, Bibliotheca for its self-checkout units, and Advanova for its controlled access system. Resource-sharing requests are processed by six Library Assistants within the Customer Services Team, who also staff the Library Help Desk and support the library's circulation function.

Overcoming infrastructure barriers

The Library previously used a standalone resource-sharing system and most requests were directed to the British Library as the first source of supply.

Prior to joining RapidILL, the Library's holdings were not exposed in any collective catalogues, and as a result, not many people were aware of the University of Huddersfield Library's catalogue. However, just before the pandemic, the service joined Jisc Library Hub Discover, which exposed their holdings to the resource sharing community and led to a significant increase in requests from other libraries.

The Library faced a significant challenge when national negotiations with a major European content provider looked set to falter. At that point, the Library's system infrastructure and processes would have struggled to handle any increase in ILL requests, prompting them to search for an alternative solution. RapidILL was recommended to them as a highly beneficial option for enhancing the Library's ILL service to meet potential demand if that deal fell through.

Becoming more resilient to a growth in demand

After joining RapidILL, the interlibrary loan system by Ex Libris, part of Clarivate, the library workflows improved significantly. Alma Resource Sharing and RapidILL were configured so that the requests for articles and book chapters automatically get routed to RapidILL.

The integration of RapidILL with Alma has led to ILL forms being automatically propagated to the resource-sharing system. Users can request material not held by the Library directly from the discovery layer, without needing to manually complete an ILL

form. "Moving to RapidILL made the process more seamless than it was before. Now, we get Alma to prepopulate the form for us," says Chris, Customer Services Librarian at the University of Huddersfield. Also, RapidILL has turned out to be a potential automated mitigating service against the danger of losing the titles provided by major content providers.

Increasing user satisfaction to boost sustainable habits

The Library staff was initially skeptical that the service could increase demand for resource-sharing, but after reviewing the statistics, it is clear that the improved service has led to an increase in resource-sharing adoption. It is becoming more of an instinctive reaction for users to send a request for lending from other libraries.

Since the very first days of implementation, users have commented on the quick service and how they can now get articles and chapters within a matter of hours.

> "RapidILL has decreased our turnaround time from a matter of days to a matter of hours. Prior to this, our average turnaround time for articles was somewhere between 2-5 days, now according to our statistics reports, they are coming in around 9 hours. That's absolutely brilliant from our point of view."
>
> Chris Beevers, University of Huddersfield

Thanks to the 24/7 availability and shorter turnaround times of RapidILL's resource-sharing service, users can now submit requests at any time without the need for staff intervention. This has led to the formation of a new habit, where users turn to borrowing as their first port of call when they don't find an item in the Library. This new trend allows the service to save money on items that would otherwise need to be purchased. What's more, RapidILL's annual subscription model allows Library Services to offer the service to users without worrying about transaction fees associated with document delivery services. The shift in model enables Chris to predict positive ROI after 6 months of use only.

> "The greatly improved supply times and fulfillment rate afforded by RapidILL is well worth [the investment]."
>
> Chris Beevers, University of Huddersfield

The Library has improved the automation of its workflows so much that the staff would now, according to Chris, "get a tirade of complaints if [RapidILL] was withdrawn. [Users] just take it for granted."

Collaborating with international libraries

Because RapidILL is a global community, the University of Huddersfield has opened its collections to libraries around the world, fulfilling lending requests through the efficient resource-sharing workflows in Alma. Now they get to know, and interact with, people in other libraries across the globe:

> "We didn't have a lot of exposure to international libraries before. So it's been quite a kick to see what libraries we are dealing with."
>
> Chris Beevers, University of Huddersfield

Looking forward to personalizing the user borrowing journey

The University of Huddersfield Library has made processing requests effortless, thanks to its efficient and cost-effective resource-sharing system. With RapidILL, the Library is now better prepared for demand increases and has expanded its reach to international library networks, unlocking new opportunities for collaboration.

Looking forward, the Library is excited to take the user experience another step further. The University of Huddersfield is now exploring Rapido's potential to deliver an integrated and customized borrowing experience with a broader choice of formats including journal articles, book chapters and physical books while leveraging all RapidILL's features. Click here to discover how libraries get their users the luxury of personalized resource access within a few clicks only with Rapido.

About Ex Libris, Part of Clarivate

Ex Libris, part of Clarivate, is a leading global provider of cloud-based solutions that enable institutions and their users to create, manage, and share knowledge. In close collaboration with its customers and the broader community, Ex Libris develops solutions that increase library productivity, maximize the impact of research activities, enhance teaching and learning, and drive student mobile engagement. Ex Libris serves over 7,500 customers in 90 countries. For more information, see our website and join us on LinkedIn, YouTube, Facebook, and Twitter.