

Library News

RFID With A Twist

Sentry EM and RFID Technology Delivers At Hussey-Mayfield Memorial Library

Rick Deuschle, Director of Information and Facilities at Hussey-Mayfield isn't your average library tech manager. Along with his colleague Niles Ingalls, Rick developed a proprietary patron self-check system. So when Hussey-Mayfield went to market to purchase a new self-check and security program he was armed with first hand experience and a wealth of ideas that "should" be part of a state of the art system. The only problem was that the system Rick wanted didn't exist.

There are RFID solutions for library security and EM solutions for library security. Both offer distinctly different features. RFID is great at information management but lacking in security while EM is the ideal security solution for library materials but doesn't deliver on the data side. Rick challenged Sentry Technology to bridge the gap and offer a combined EM/RFID solution to solve some very specific requirements. One area of specific concern was the CD/DVD collection, not surprising since the unit cost is high, items are easily stolen and most libraries are experiencing a year over year growth in pre-recorded media circulation.



General system specifications:

- EM security tags embedded in books
- EM security systems at the door
- RFID and EM security tags on CD/DVD's
- Encryption of all RFID data using Self-Check systems to process both EM and RFID tags for Check-Out and Check-In of Books and CD/DVD's

"We really built a custom solution. Our Library processes 85% of the circulation of our collection through self check stations" said Rick Deuschle. "Sentry was able to configure a system that seamlessly integrates all of EVERGREEN™ open source software with our need to maintain an easy to use self service environment for our customers."

Most Hussey-Mayfield library managers participated in implementing the system. Marilyn Martin, Department Head of Teen and Adult Services was part of a team encoding RFID tags on CD/DVD's using one of the QuickCheck™ self-check systems. The library has approximately 31,000 AV items. The process to retag the DVD collections was:

- Add a new barcode to the outside of the case if required
- EM tag the disc and the case
- RFID tag all discs
- Encode RFID tags using Sentry TagMaster software
- Return item to shelf

"We did everything systematically so we could get economy of movement," said Marilyn Martin. "It's quick and that's what I like about it, especially since we're retagging the whole collection."

Security is a key component of the system. Using custom colored WAM (wide aisle management) Sentry EM theft detection systems, the library was able to get the look and feel that best suits the décor. When ever something new is introduced customers have questions and doubts. According to Shawn Parker, Head of Circulation, some customers asked why the gates where installed. Shawn's response – "We are being proactive and want to protect the public's investment." Good answer!

And of course after the customers borrow their own materials and exit through the security systems without incident, items must be returned to the library. The process must be fast and accurate. Return transactions at the circ desk are processed using the Sentry Staff Workstation. Dawn McKnight, Circulation Assistant says, "Check-in is easy, it's boom, boom, boom." Shh! It's a library. We think Dawn means fast, fast, fast.



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