Taking Stock Pays Dividends

A Painless Inventory will Promote the Library’s Image
The Albert M. Greenfield Library is the main library serving The University of the Arts with a collection dating back to the University’s founding in 1876.

Print Book Collection
FY 2010
Titles 81,508
Volumes 105,244

• “…users assumed that the computer was right…this irritated them, and they complained that the books were misshelved.”

• “…the first consequence of misshelving is that the users become frustrated at the shelf and soon develop a poor opinion of the library staff’s ability to organize the collection…[and] that the catalog does not accurately represent what the library owns.”

- Any academic library client needs to overcome four barriers successfully to locate an information resource:
  - an acquisition barrier
  - a circulation barrier
  - a library barrier
  - a client barrier

- “Nothing is more frustrating for library patrons than the inability to locate and retrieve a desired item that the catalog clearly states is available in the library.”

- “Providing patrons with weak explanations and disguised excuses not only frustrates the patron, but ultimately the library staff as well.”
“it used to be a problem that things being looked for were either defaced or missing…” ~ part-time liberal arts faculty

circulation staff often assist users in finding items on the shelves

noted issues
  - misshelved items
    - no follow-through on training student workers as shelvers
    - no oversight of shelf-reading procedures used by student workers
  - incorrect call number labels on spines
  - incorrect physical location of item
• improve stack maintenance
  • shelving and shelf-reading procedures
  • fix cataloging errors and spine label errors
  • follow-up on new vault location

• improve user experience
  • find items on shelf without circulation staff assistance
  • confidence in currency and accuracy of library catalog
  • trust circulation staff and value their service
A shelf list is needed to compare what the catalog indicates is on the shelf to what is actually on the shelf.
this will create a list of every item in that call number range and in that location

same fields needed when exporting scanned list
The University of the Arts
Albert M. Greenfield Library Inventory
June 2010 – November 2011

• entire inventory conducted during library’s open hours

• as few items as possible were removed from the stacks
  • used laptop and portable scanner to work in the stacks
  • wireless did not work in all areas of library so some items were scanned at circulation desk

• 3 to 4 people worked on the inventory
  • Access Services Librarian oversaw project and trained assistants
  • one full-time circulation staff member and 1-2 work study students scanned items
items were scanned and checked against shelf list by call number areas
- ~ 72-100 books scanned per hour
- scanning happened Monday-Friday for ~ 2-3 hours per day
- as an area was completed being scanned, it was immediately compared to its shelf list
- issues were immediately resolved or sent to Technical Services

Access Services Librarian solely responsible for comparing scanned items list to shelf list
- done in early morning, when library was quiet and less users requested assistance at the circulation desk
- ~ 5 hours per week dedicated to these lists
The University of the Arts
Albert M. Greenfield Library Inventory
June 2010 – November 2011

- shelf list totals 67,739
- scanned totals 67,719
- no record in catalog 432
- record/label call# error 623
- out of order 1,391
- physical location error 527
- placed on search 588 (496 set to missing)
no record in catalog

record/label call # error

• technical services student workers need better oversight
  • double-check items returning to circulation from technical services
  • item spine label, item location, item status, security strips
out of order & physical location error

- simple shelving errors by student workers
  - better training on shelving procedure with continued review of individual performance
  - put carts in call number order at circulation desk
  - shelving checks for each student


better signage

book carts relabeled to clearly identify area users can leave books they don’t want to borrow

implemented in-house use count in Millennium
physical location error

- needed better oversight during renovation and collections shifting
placed on search

- items on shelf list (records in Millennium) that were not on scanned list

- 588 initially placed on search and only 92 of those were found elsewhere in library during inventory

- items searched for in all library locations once a month for six months
  - then item status changed to missing
  - 496 items deemed missing after inventory

- missing items and lost & paid items can now be requested by users through the catalog

status
MISSING > Request Item
The University of the Arts
Albert M. Greenfield Library
statistics

• FY 2010 statistics
  • total circulation and in-house use 14,059
  • total shelf-reading errors (out of order) 3,517

• FY 2011 statistics
  • total circulation and in-house use 15,273
  • total shelf-reading errors (out of order) 2,748
  • total placed on search (potentially missing) 319
  • total catalog/spine label call # errors 462
  • items completed check during inventory 27,063
The University of the Arts
Albert M. Greenfield Library
statistics

- FY 2012 statistics
  - total circulation and in-house use 17,408
  - total shelf-reading errors (out of order) 3,060*
  - total placed on search (potentially missing) 383
  - total catalog/spine label call # errors 726

  - items completed check during inventory 43,883

* 1,758 items freeze dried after flood; most order errors from after re-shelving these items
Questions?