

Intuitive library solution for University College Dublin



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in our Richview Library.”

Background

For a library with a high volume of users, an upgrade of equipment has made it simpler for students to take out multiple books in one go, reduced queuing times and enabled library staff to access vital statistics on usage. It has also brought a sense of tranquillity back to the library, ensuring it remains an attractive venue for study.

Founded in 1854, University College Dublin (UCD) is ranked within the top 1% of higher education institutes worldwide. With over 30,000 students, the University's main Dublin campus consists of 133 hectares of parkland and offers students first-class facilities.

Challenge

In order to meet the needs of so many students, there are five libraries on site, and in this case one of the university's branch libraries, The Richview Library in the School of Architecture, Planning and Environmental Policy complex, needed to modernise their facility and replace their existing system which had become outdated.

Samantha Drennan, Head of Library IT Services at the UCD Library, explained, “Due to our old system becoming outdated, we needed to modernise the existing system in our Richview Library and were looking for a solution that would allow us to provide a more sophisticated experience for our students, statistics on patron traffic and reduce workload for staff.”

“After discussion with Telepen on the best solution, they recommended the installation of self-service kiosks, staff terminals and bi-directional RFID security gates”, said Samantha.

Solution

We worked closely with the University to integrate the new system with the existing network, which involved detailed discussions with the IT department to ensure the system would meet the university's requirements before installation in the summer of 2019.

“A better overall facility for our students.”

The self-service kiosks were supplied by our self-service partner, FE Technologies, a global leader in RFID technologies. With their intuitive software and unobtrusive design, the V5 self-service kiosks are ideal for academic libraries. Students can check out up to 15 items at one time, as well as renew and reserve items independently, providing a convenient way for students to self-manage their materials. Receipts for materials can be emailed rather than printed, and the student's account status can be viewed via a mobile app.



“Allowed us to enhance our library.”

The kiosks work with the bi-directional security gates at the exit to provide discreet but effective security. Although the gates are aesthetically subtle, designed to blend in with the library environment, they have a powerful range and can identify tags moving in any direction. Any items being removed with security still intact will trigger an audible and visual warning, alerting students and staff of any materials which have not been desensitised.

The gates were fitted with the ability to monitor the volume of traffic and provide information to the library on how the facility is being used. This can help the library management team determine which hours of the day are busiest, which areas are seeing the most usage, and even how changes to the library are being received.

The improvements we made at the Richview Library have meant that the students now have more flexibility when accessing the library, allowing them to check books and materials in and out without involving support from the library staff. The entirely self-service solution promotes a greater sense of involvement and encourages responsible use of the library, by giving students more autonomy. The new system has reduced the workload for library staff and improved the circulation of materials around the library.

“We are delighted with the result”

The kiosks also had the immediate effect of reducing the queues at peak periods, which in turn has made the library a more tranquil place to be. And, let's face it, nobody likes standing in a queue!

Commenting on some of the benefits the new system has had, Barney Yabbacome, Account Manager for Telepen (Midlands and North UK, NI and Eire), said “The machines themselves are reliable and resilient systems the students and library staff can depend on, requiring little maintenance and with the advantage of being able to be left on 24 hours a day. The kiosks also retain full functionality if there is a network outage, meaning there is no disruption to service”.

Overall, the project has been a huge success, Samantha confirms: “The solution Telepen provided has allowed us to enhance our library, provide a better overall facility for our students and improve our internal processes. We are delighted with the result”.

Commenced work: Jan 2019/ Implemented: May 2019

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