



case study

The power of cloudLink: How Southern California libraries are working together to expand access for all patrons




Last year, Stephanie Beverage, Director of Huntington Beach Public Library, knew she had a problem. Circulation, especially circulation of digital products, was dwindling. Patrons struggled to download digital materials and often gave up before they began.

A hundred miles away, Misty Jones, the Director and CEO of San Diego Public Library, was facing a similar issue. The library was using two vendors for its digital collection, a complicated and costly scenario, and still, patrons complained about how difficult it was to actually borrow a digital title.

When the libraries were introduced to bibliotheca's cloudLibrary™, they found not only a solution for their individual challenges but also the opportunity to partner together through cloudLink to vastly expand the collection of digital materials available to their patrons.

cloudLibrary Provides Digital Titles Patrons Can Actually Use

Downloading titles from other digital platforms such as OverDrive is often a frustrating and confusing experience. Patrons may be required to install additional apps, travel to secondary websites, create and remember log-in credentials for various platforms. It's aggravating for the most tech-savvy customers and often impenetrable for others.



Interested in learning more about cloudLibrary?
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"My husband is a computer network administrator," says Beverage. "Here's this guy who knows computers, he knows gadgets, he knows how to do this stuff, and he would regularly complain to me about how horrible our vendor's app was

"This allows us to be able to offer more. We don't have to spend more, but we get more. Patrons have access to thousands of additional titles within the app,"

and how difficult it was for him to get anything downloaded and be able to listen to it."

Jones seconds that, saying, "I knew we had a problem when my boss told me he tried to download an e-book and couldn't get it to work."

The cloudLibrary app addresses those issues. The platform is attractive, intuitive, and simple to use. Patrons download titles directly into the app, without having to leave the library's digital collection. It's a seamless process that protects patron's privacy while keeping them engaged in the library experience. When used with quickConnect™, bibliotheca's software solution, cloudLibrary allows libraries to integrate their physical and digital collections and promote them side by side.

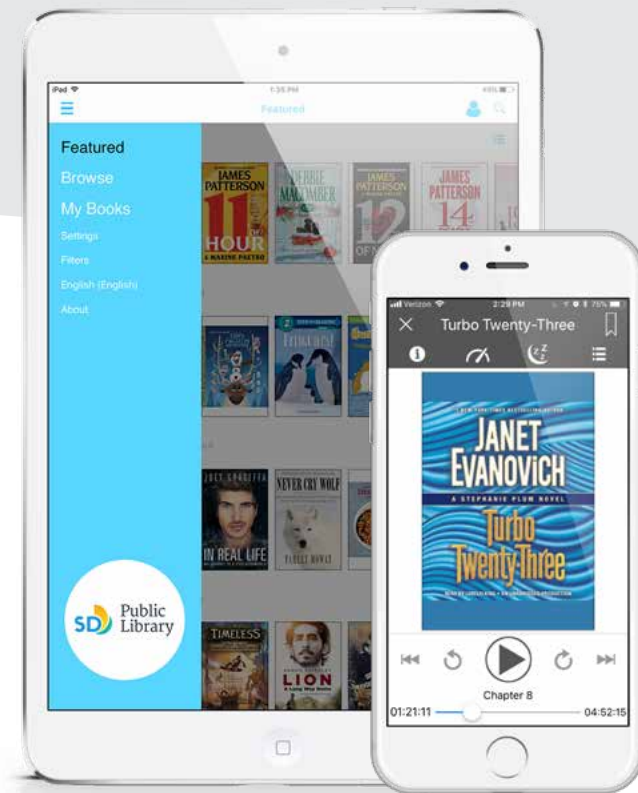
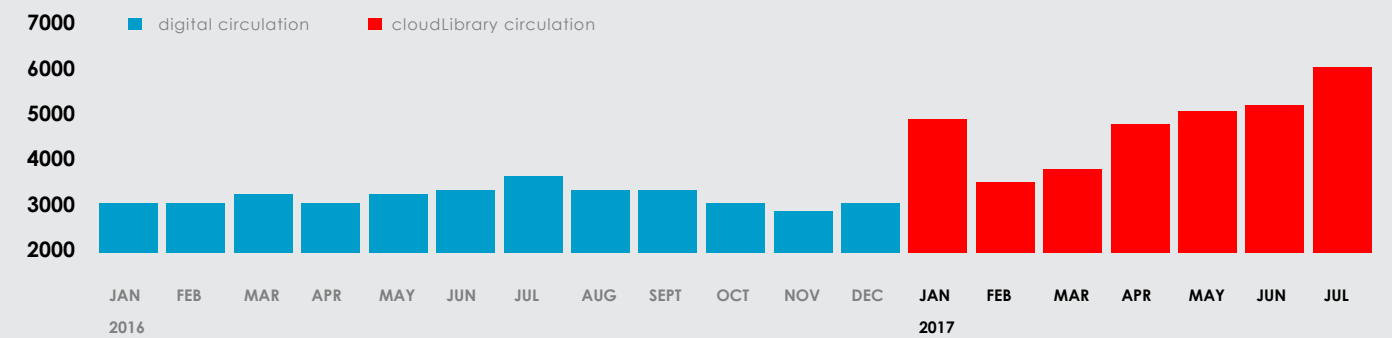
"We had to have one-on-one sessions with people just to show them how to do basic stuff with the previous vendor's app. Now with cloudLibrary, people pick it up and get it immediately. It works, and it's easy," says Beverage.


cloudLink, the Ultimate Digital Interlibrary Loan

In addition to making digital downloads simple, cloudLibrary also offers libraries the ability to


Huntington Beach Public Library

circulation comparison: before and after cloudLibrary



 **83% increase in circulation**

 **16 libraries cloudLinked**

 **77,000 shared titles**



share digital collections with other participating libraries. With cloudLink, libraries build and manage multiple private eBook and eAudiobook collections with ease and flexibility. This allows libraries to increase digital circulation, decrease hold times and also reduce the amount of patron eBook suggestions because they have access to more titles that interest them. cloudLink provides seamless access to all individual library titles in one app, allows complete control of restricted and shared titles, and enables libraries to prioritize their titles for their users and share unused titles easily.

California's libraries operate under a universal borrowing model - a resident's library card is honored at any library in the state. For Beverage and Jones, cloudLink seemed like an obvious extension of that policy. Once both libraries had converted their collections to cloudLibrary, they were eager to link up. Since January, thirteen Southern California libraries have joined their cloudLink group.

"We're trying to get as many people on board as possible. The more, the merrier. We are creating the ultimate digital library for Southern California. It's essentially like a really cool form of interlibrary loan," says Beverage.

Since transferring their titles to cloudLibrary and joining cloudLink, both Huntington Beach and San Diego have seen a spike in their digital circulation. In fact, Huntington Beach has experienced an 83% increase in total circulation.

Do More with Less

Like many communities, Southern California is still recovering from the effects of the Great Recession. Stephanie Beverage says her library is still operating on a significantly smaller budget than the one they had in 2007. To make up the difference, Huntington Beach's digital collection is heavily supported by Friends of the Library.

"We could tell our patrons that they were going to have more to choose from as soon as we transferred. It was key to let them know that they weren't going to lose anything, they were only gaining by this change."

"When I was able to tell them that their money was going to stretch further and allow us to link with other systems to leverage their donations that much more, it made them feel better about the investment they were making," says Beverage.

Misty Jones concurs. "That's the reason we decided to go with one vendor - cloudLibrary and cloudLink. We don't have a very healthy materials budget. This allows us to be able to offer more. We don't have to spend more, but we get more. Patrons have access to thousands of additional titles within the app," she says.

Making the Switch

Both Jones and Beverage say it was easy to get buy-in from their staff and patrons once they outlined the advantages of cloudLibrary and cloudLink.

"It was such a bonus to link to Huntington Beach immediately," says Jones. "We could tell our patrons that they were going to have more to choose from as soon as we transferred. It was key to let them know that they weren't going to lose anything, they were only gaining by this change."

bibliotheca provides sample letters, a list of frequently asked questions, and other marketing materials to help libraries looking to transition to cloudLibrary communicate the change to their patrons and staff.

"We used all of that material in our preparation for the transition," says Beverage. "bibliotheca did a great job pulling frequently asked questions

from other libraries about how it was going to work and how the transfer was going to take place. So we had all those answers available for everyone."

Even so, both Jones and Beverage agree that there is no such thing as too much information too soon.

"It's always a great idea to communicate early and often to ensure patrons are fully aware of how this could impact their account and library experience.," Beverage said.

What's Next?

San Diego Public Library just finished implementing RFID technology at all of its branches. Both libraries are utilizing bibliotheca's selfChecks™ running the quickConnect software, but with so many features available, they each have a few items remaining on the to-do list. Jones is in the

process of installing payment options on all of San Diego's selfCheck kiosks, while Beverage is looking at implementing the in-app patron registration available through cloudLibrary.

"I love that piece," says Jones. "Other vendors are looking at mobile registration, but it costs money. With bibliotheca, it's something you're able to offer within the app. It's easy and free. It's a no-brainer."

As Jones and Beverage continue to work within their own libraries to engage their communities, they are also eager to expand their e-resource sharing group.

"We talk about cloudLink all the time, to anyone who will listen," they say. "The more libraries we can share content with, the better."



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