



Connecting Globally to Streamline Resource Sharing

Nottingham Trent University

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About Nottingham Trent University's Library services

Nottingham Trent University's library services have locations at each of their four campuses and strive to innovate and continuously improve to provide the best possible service, helping to develop users' skills for independent, lifelong learning. Part of this is making resources available to suit the users' needs and creating environments that meet study demands.

The Nottingham Trent Library noticed a decline in borrowing requests and recognized the need to boost the visibility of their resource-sharing service. They also needed to replace cumbersome manual processes with something more automated. As it turned out, Rapido aligned perfectly with a strategic initiative for the university.

Challenge:

Manual processes making it difficult to fill requests

At Nottingham Trent University, Connecting Globally is part of the institution's strategic direction, and international collaboration is central to its mission to serve as a global university. For the library, resource sharing with other libraries around the world is a natural fit with the university's international strategy, but the library staff had noted a drop in sharing requests. "The data was starting to show a reduction in the number of requests received," recalls Stacey Brown, Resource Acquisition & Supply Team Leader. However, even with the drop in requests, the staff was having trouble keeping up due to the reliance on manual processes such as using email to communicate. "The incoming requests were becoming more difficult to resource," Brown states. "That highlighted the need for a change in our resource-sharing policy."

Solution:

Removing barriers to sharing resources with other libraries

To streamline the handling of resource-sharing requests, the library implemented Rapido from Ex Libris, part of Clarivate. With Rapido, the interface for requesting interlibrary loans is presented to library users directly in the discovery layer, making borrowing from another library as straightforward as accessing a title in the local holdings. Library staff enjoy numerous efficiencies on the back end, as well. "Staff have found the move to automated processes to be beneficial, plus a record is kept within the request which helps when troubleshooting any issues," Brown explains. Also, clearly stated and uniform policies among the Rapido Pod — a group of collaborating libraries — have proven extremely helpful.

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Resource Acquisition &
Supply Team Leader

Results:

Library users delighted with fast turnaround

The impact of using Rapido quickly became apparent, as evidenced by the reaction of library users. “We have received some feedback from researchers who are delighted with the speed of supply for articles and chapters,” Brown reports.

She shares a few: **‘That is fantastic – thank you for the speedy work!!’ ‘Thank you very much for obtaining the article for me so quickly.’** She goes on to share this anecdote: “We did have one academic who was concerned about automating library systems and losing a level of personal contact. That individual has since happily – and potentially unknowingly – had requests fulfilled by Rapido and has praised the service.”

In terms of borrowing volume, Brown shares, “We have seen an uplift of around 50% in the number of requests received. We believe that partly, that is due to the service being more visible. Also, before introducing Rapido we didn’t lend much at all, but now we have become more confident in our lending capabilities and are hoping to extend lending further.”

As Brown explains, the growing use of Rapido dovetails well with the university’s broader strategy: “The university has an overarching aim of Connecting Globally and Rapido helps us to achieve it, since we are able to source material from places more easily than we could before. On a personal level, as part of a Pod I find it useful to be able to connect with others using the service to talk about how things are going, or if there is a different way of doing things.”

Looking ahead:

New enhancements coming to Rapido

The team at Nottingham Trent University is keenly interested in some of the upcoming capabilities slated to be brought to Rapido. A few examples and their thoughts about expected impact: “We’re interested to see if the ‘partner holdings network’ will impact our acquisitions workflows. Full eBook lending is also on our radar. There is a question of whether we will move toward a more collaborative approach to collection management for print and electronic. As libraries reduce their print and electronic collections, how can we continue to be reciprocal borrowers and lenders if institutions are withdrawing stock and therefore limiting access to it? We’re also looking forward to the integration with Rialto and the new ‘communications’ capability. The more we process and store in Alma, the easier and quicker it should become to manage the service overall.”

The library staff also found Ex Libris’ support extremely valuable during and after the implementation. As Brown relates, “The success sessions from the Rapido team, as well as the support to our staff in using Rapido during implementation, improved our knowledge of the system on how best to serve patrons.”

Is Rapido the right fit for your library?

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