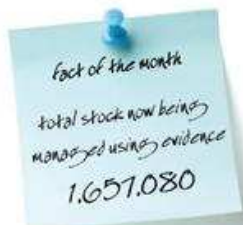


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Welcome to Issue 3 of "Evidence"

If you would like to make a suggestion for our Guest Column for upcoming issues, please feel free to get in touch.

Our smartSM Efficiency Calculator has proved extremely popular. For those of you who want to see exactly what EBSM and smartSM can do within your Library Service - you can find the SMARTSM EFFICIENCY CALCULATOR HERE >>

Please note the smartSM website is now at [WWW.SMARTSM.COM](http://WWW.SMARTSM.COM)



### customer news

On 27th August we hosted a joint seminar with Stirling Libraries, one of our existing customers, to explore the practical benefits of evidence in marketing, customer loyalty and supplier specification. We were joined by representatives both from existing customers

- Stirling
- East Dunbartonshire

and also from prospective customers including

- Argyll & Bute Libraries
- Dundee City Libraries
- Edinburgh City Libraries
- Perth & Kinross Libraries

Robert Ruthven from Stirling Libraries was our host for the day and presented the Stirling Libraries smartSM case study which has now been created and published.

This Case Study is now available on our website and can be downloaded from [HERE](#)

This month also saw the start of a Pilot Study we are carrying out with 3M - looking into the application of smartSM with their RFID stock management systems. The aim of the Pilot is first to technically integrate the smartSM EBSM Action Plans and the 3M Digital Library Assistant (DLA) and then to evaluate their combined effectiveness. Ian Downie, Bridgeall Libraries Commercial Manager commented "smartSM's EBSM Action Plans could become a really useful application for RFID Library Stock Management. We believe that smartSM will add tremendous value to the business case for RFID handheld readers in library stock management. The handheld RFID readers should make it even easier and quicker to locate and identify stock items flagged for action within smartSM and the smartSM scheduling tools will be able to automatically output the required file formats for the DLA. We will be monitoring the Pilot closely over the coming months to evaluate the solution and work closely with 3M to ensure their customers can benefit from these advances."

September brings a busy period of on-site smartSM customer demos and 2 CILIP events we are speaking / exhibiting at. These are the LMS Showcase in Manchester on 10th September where we will be showing off the latest release of smartSM (v1.8) for the first time and also the RFID Seminar in Glasgow on 17th September where we will be speaking about the role smartSM has to play in RFID library stock management.



### product news

We mentioned in last month's issue of Evidence that our plans were firming up for the

next major release of smartsm. Our current users will start to see the framework for this development in the next release of smartsm (version 1.8) which went LIVE on 1 September. The new look and feel hides much of the complexity that has been incorporated which puts the groundwork firmly in place for many of the exciting developments coming to the smartsm application around Christmas.

We also mentioned in last month's Evidence that we had started work on the reorganisation of the structure of the smartsm Toolset. This work is now complete, and our current customers will start to see the benefits of this in our 1.8 release. As anyone who is aware of smartsm will know, the application delivers a framework for adopting the EBSM methodology quickly and easily over the web. The EBSM methodology describes a set of Tools that are geared towards 2 key outcomes – improving stock relevance and improving stock quality. These Tools are arranged into 5 broad easy to understand groupings – Stock Maintenance, Stock Demand, Stock Refresh, Stock Removal and Stock Purchase.

Keeping this as brief as possible!:

- the Stock Maintenance Tools are used to ensure that the library catalogue accurately reflects the actual position as closely as possible, enabling optimum EBSM results to be achieved.
- the Stock Demand Tools are used to ensure that popular demand areas (authors and subjects) are being met with a satisfactory level of stock on shelves at any time – preferably through transfer rather than additional costly purchase.
- the Stock Refresh Tools are used to help generate additional loans from existing stock – refreshing libraries with titles that users have not seen before through the use of Evidence Based intelligent swapping.
- the Stock Removal Tools are used to cleanse shelves of poor quality stock, to increase the customer's general perception of the overall quality of stock provision; and
- the Stock Purchase Tools create targeted, relevant purchase recommendations that will meet both local and system wide demand based on evidence from stock use data.

By aligning the smartsm Tools more closely with those advised by the EBSM methodology, we believe that our customers will now benefit from a more structured adoption of EBSM, and will more quickly realise the time and money saving benefits and stock performance improvements that EBSM brings.&p>

In next month's issue of Evidence, we will be able to tell you more about some of the really exciting research and development that we are doing as part of our SMART: Scotland award – to whet your appetite now, RFID and some really special Inter Authority Resource Sharing tools (which only smartsm has the capability to provide) will feature in this edition!!

### **Product Demonstrations**

We would be delighted to arrange a demonstration of smartsm for you and your colleagues.

The demo only takes around 90 minutes and can either be delivered face to face, on site in your library or over the internet. To request to see the latest version of smartsm in action, simply send an email to [demo@smartsm.com](mailto:demo@smartsm.com)



### **EBSM hints and tips**

#### **BREAKING NEWS ..... EBSM.com is now LIVE !!!**

VISIT [WWW.EBSM.COM](http://WWW.EBSM.COM) and be one of the first to discover the new site.

For the first time, the EBSM methodology has its own website where you can explore in depth the workings behind the methodology. It goes into great detail to explain the EBSM "approach" to stock performance excellence and covers the "phases" of EBSM, the various toolsets and the reasoning behind many of the KPIs recommended by the methodology.

Many years went into the creation of the methodology and now, for the first time ever, it has been published on the internet. We hope you find it useful and are sure it will provoke a great deal of conversation within the library world. We look forward to hearing your feedback.

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#### **Further benefits from the 'Community Catalogue' concept - by George Kerr**

I spoke last month about the concept of 'Virtual ownership' and how this worked particularly well with the local organisation which dealt with disability issues. Shared ownership of library resources in a 'community catalogue' brings joint benefits in partnership with many other local organisations.

The first 'private' resource that was made available to everyone via the community catalogue, was the primary school library project resource. This stock was added to the main public library catalogue in 1999 and then the new web catalogue was

demonstrated to senior education managers and the school curriculum development team in. This was to give them a clear awareness of it's potential with particular reference to the fact that every primary school class in West Lothian had internet access and therefore access to the web catalogue.

A decision was then taken that training on the effective use of the web catalogue would be built into the Internet training, which was currently being given to every primary school teacher in West Lothian. When they attend their course, they were given a Library Training Pack, which included a User's Guide to WebPAC, and a classroom library card.

All teachers were encouraged to reserve any materials which they found in the catalogue that would assist in class projects, or which would help illustrate the use of the web catalogue for children. While this new class reservation service was in its infancy, we organised a whole series of demonstrations in schools over a six months period to encourage its use, and immediately noted that use had started to rise spectacularly - by more than 600% during that 6 month period. Of course some schools embraced the concept more enthusiastically than others - this just meant that we knew which schools to concentrate on with the offer of further training, later on. Remember too that much of the material being accessed was not from the primary school collection but from public libraries across West Lothian. One issue this raised was concern from schools service staff and public library staff about potential over demand on their resources. Careful analysis demonstrated that, on the contrary, demand in both directions was well balanced, What we could now demonstrate though, was that stock overall was much more fully utilised and that is exactly what we intended.

Having demonstrated the successful sharing of material for primary schools, we then went ahead and presented the case for integrating local high schools into the community catalogue too. Happily again, senior education managers were prepared to fund this access by paying a total of £30K for all the high school libraries to join the local LMS, and integrate their stock into the community catalogue, because we were able to demonstrate the potential value gained by everyone from complete sharing of resources (far less duplication in stock purchase for example).

Despite some initial reservations, the whole concept was adopted seamlessly and requesting between schools and public service points (via on-line reservation) just took off. If you take the trouble to look at West Lothian's catalogue you will see clearly how the 90,000 extra resources added as high schools, local college, etc joined the community catalogue, do not overlap significantly but in fact stretch and enrich the overall resources available to the whole community.

Of course the project was simpler to implement in West Lothian because a single organisation is responsible for libraries and schools. I appreciate the barriers that operate where organisations are funded by different organisations, but there was still a significant amount of persuasion required in West Lothian too. High school collections had all been funded from school budgets, and there was a natural suspicion, on behalf of those schools which had funded their libraries generously, that they would be net losers. In addition the high schools (and the local college who joined the community catalogue about the same time) were worried that public library users would 'devour' their stock leaving nothing on shelves for their own users.

I had to reassure all parties that that public library service would monitor all inter library requests and if there were any significant imbalances, the public service would purchase stock to meet any excessive demand from the public side. In fact that sort of purchase never became necessary. Inter requesting was popular on 'both' sides (and it was good to see previously low used stock becoming well used again), but the level was never a problem and no one library showed any significant sign of over demand against their stock.

I believe that the community catalogue is the perfect example of what a library is all about. All of the various resources are funded by the community at large so it makes sense that the whole community should benefit from these expensively assembled collections, so long as the concept is managed and monitored. All it takes is political will!

Other collections that would be ripe for sharing are :

- Collections of stock held internally by Local Authority Departments e.g.
- Community Education Service
- Teachers' resource collections
- Architects and Building Departments
- Personnel/Human Resources etc etc
- All of these hold specialised material but it is material which is also likely to be valuable to many individual members of the community at large.

The public purse paid for it all and unless the material is in daily use (in which case it does not belong in a library collection), the whole community can gain real 'Best Value' from making it available.





## guest column

by **Frances Hendrix**

Recently the air waves (well email lists) have been alive with the ring of money dropping into fine boxes in public libraries around the country. A question raised by an innocent regarding Elf for under dues, resulted in a string of passionate, interesting, sheer daft and quite serious comment on what is, in my view, a rather outmoded and pernicious activity of public libraries, i.e. the collection of fines. But a lot of heat and a lot of comment going back dozens of years showed the public libraries desperate ability to cling onto a non professional non customer friendly activity that has seemed to have grown to become a legitimate part of funding a library.

Occasionally there are debates about the more professional aspects of librarianship and may I say, the more legitimate reasons many of us went into the profession, one of which is book selection. There have been some discussion on this topic over the years, especially the debate about handing this over to the supplier, and for many this is the end of the road for the professional librarian as this is (or was), a key element of the skills and professionalism of the role, choosing stock to meet the needs and demands of the users. Of course we did make a mountain out of it in many ways, never quite getting to the stage where we all used the same processing standard and requirement (and just think harping back to recent debate on fines, if we didn't expect books back on a specific date as we didn't charge fines, then we wouldn't need a date label. By the way how did we ever arrive at the date by which a non heavy reserved book should be on loan, scientifically of arbitrarily?)

I wonder about this area of stock selection now. I can see that if a deal can be made with a supplier to provide books within a set framework we can cut out a lot of staff time and drive down the price of the material we buy. We presumably do some work and research and hand over a schema of what we think we want to purchase, based on what, I am not sure. We then hope, pray or maybe even expect that what we get, all packaged and presented ready for the shelf, meets our users needs. Is this the case? What evidence is used on any aspect of this work and this abdication of responsibility?

What is it that suppliers know or have that front line trained and professional librarians don't have? Well I suppose one obvious thing is a business acumen and business ethic. Now so many public librarians balk at the word business, and many an email list argument has taken place on this very topic. public libraries are not businesses. My thesis has always been we need to work in business-like ways! BUT are book suppliers armed with the knowledge and information about our communities and our users to enable them to supply what we and the user need, or rather are they supplying what we have ordered or previously bought?

We do all jump on the band wagon of the latest thing we must have, usually too late and with too little real knowledge and pay over the top. Rarely have we bought systems and services designed by ourselves or our colleagues and built around not what is available by 3rd parties to provide us with (many LMS's for instance), or what has been used effectively in other situations that suddenly we get a bee in our bonnets about, and must have., e.g. RFID. (Used fairly successfully in warehousing for instance).

However it does seem to me at the moment (and I have looked at it), that smartsm's Supplier Selection module may be doing all we want and need, to develop a very detailed local spec of what the library requires, but based upon actual use evidence, with built in monitoring that what is provided is in line with the contract and with a built in alerting system if the supplier is falling behind in any of the detailed requirements, and further monitors the performance of the material once it hits the shelf. The concept was initially designed by a public librarian, so it actually puts the ball firmly in the librarian's court, by providing what local users want and need.

This to me seems to meet my requirement of librarians using professional skills to run smart libraries. Drop these non user friendly attitudes, put books and information centre stage and make the book the heart of the library, make this our niche market, the wide supply of books for all types of users, books for all ages, for all tastes, reflecting the needs of our local communities, ready for use, in good clean friendly and safe environments.

Give them the tools for the job and they can do the job!

### About Frances

Frances has worked in every sort of library, including of course the public library sector but also universities, industrial, college and private and charitable sectors.

Until her retirement from fulltime work she was Director of Laser (The London and South Eastern Library region and its successor the Laser foundation, which was a grant making foundation). Laser was a national Interlending service using the latest technology. Laser also had a high profile in research and development winning many awards for ICT

innovation.



## events

### **Upcoming events**

We have a busy schedule of events coming up throughout the UK. Come and meet the team at any of the following events:-

#### **August 2008**

- 27th Evidence Based Marketing seminar, Stirling Council Libraries, Stirling

#### **September 2008**

- 10th CILIP LMS Showcase, Britannia Hotel, Manchester
- 17th CILIPS RFID Seminar, Lighthouse, Glasgow

#### **October 2008**

- 8 -10th PLA Annual Conference 2008, Crown Plaza Hotel, Liverpool
- 15th Evidence Based Marketing seminar, Poole Council Libraries, Poole

#### **November 2008**

- 5 - 7th INFOR Library User Group, Cardiff
- 7th CILIP LMS Showcase, CILIP, London
- 12th Evidence Based Marketing seminar, Talis, Birmingham
- 13th CILIP RFID Seminar, QEII Centre, London

If you are interested in attending any of these events please click on the relevant link for more information on how to register

For more information on  
smartsm please visit

[www.smartsm.com](http://www.smartsm.com)

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