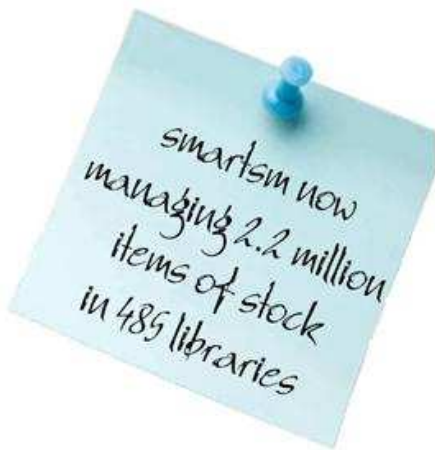


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### Welcome to Issue 7 of "Evidence"

Happy New Year to you all from the smartsm™ team. We're looking forward to another exciting year ahead and will continue to use Evidence as a means of keeping you up to date with our progress.

For those of you who haven't seen it already, our [2008 End of Year Summary](#) is still available to download for a limited time. Get your copy now from >> [HERE](#)

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](#)

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### customer news

#### Latest customer

**Cornwall County Libraries** are now LIVE with smartsm. **Pam Martindale**, Area Strategic Manager commented:-

"We have subscribed to smartsm because with fewer staff there is less time available to manage stock and particularly to go through the shelves weeding on a regular basis. With RFID the staff are less likely to be able to intercept tatty books as they are no longer being handled across the counter and we no longer have date stamps to give us information about the number of loans a book has had. We believe smartsm will help us quickly identify stock which needs rebinding, relocation or withdrawal and will give reports on a library's stock against specific targets. It will enable us to do some tailored stock exchanges in order to even up the balance of stock without spending a lot of money on new books. In time we hope it may be possible to abandon the current system of random stock rotation in favour of something more scientific. The end result should be a better quality stock, which meets customer demands and hopefully increases issues."



#### Pass it on

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#### Add us!

To make sure you receive future emails, please add [evidence@smartsm.com](mailto:evidence@smartsm.com) to your address book.



In December, we were delighted to welcome on board **8 (yes 8)** new Public Library Services !

Over the coming weeks and months, we will be working closely with the following 8 authorities to roll smartsm out across their Library Services.

- Sandwell
- Middlesbrough
- South Dublin
- North Yorkshire
- Southend
- Thurrock
- Durham
- Wokingham

**Linda Saunders, Chief Librarian at Sandwell MBC** commented "Using smartsm will help us to meet our twin goals of providing the right choice of stock for Sandwell citizens whilst making the investment in stock as productive as possible. It will help us build on our focus during the Year of Reading to improve our selection and promotion of stock which has already led to increasing issues by making sure that we maximise the use each book or DVD gets."

**Alyson Hogarth, Stock Manager at Middlesbrough Libraries** added "Middlesbrough Libraries are looking forward to implementing smartsm. Like a lot of authorities, we have been using regular rotation of stock with a certain amount of success, but it does have its drawbacks. We do find ourselves keeping titles that have gone round all our branches

without ever issuing, because we can't easily tell. We look forward to being able to weed such moribund stock earlier and make room for the things people really want to read.

We plan to start using smartsm to look in depth at our audio-visual collections. We have a number of collections that aren't issuing as well as they might, so being able to tailor what goes where should help us improve that situation – and make some much needed income!"

**Ian Downie, Commercial Manager, Bridgeall Libraries** said "This is yet another record month for smartsm. To gain 8 new Public Authority clients in a month is fantastic progress for any library supplier. It is further testament to the power of smartsm and the extremely positive reception it gets when demonstrated to customers. We have an unprecedented number of enquiries at present and 2009 is looking like it will be a very interesting year for everyone on the smartsm team."

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#### Latest smartsm Case Study available

We have recently released a case study on the work that John Lane and his team down in **Poole Libraries** have been undertaking using smartsm.

*This case study, which makes interesting reading, is available on our website and can be downloaded from >> [HERE](#)*



## product news

Having had a very welcome break over the festive period, the development team are now powering ahead getting the final stages of version 1.10 of smartsm ready for release.

In v1.10, all of our customers will now be able to create "RFID enabled" Action Plans for the entire smartsm toolset. smartsm has been upgraded to manage the file formats required for the following RFID vendors handheld, stock management solutions:- 3M, Intellident, D-Tech and 2CQR - and customers will be able to select any of these options as the default for their Library Service.

In version 1.10, we will also be introducing a new Marketing module, which will enable our customers to benefit from a host of new features. Our current Experimental Purchase module has been moved into the Marketing module, and is joined by a new Experimental Placement module and a new Charts module.

Experimental Placement gives our customers the ability to record individual stock promotion campaigns (i.e. where stock is moved to a new location for promotion) and monitor the effectiveness of the exercise over any time period. This could be used by a library service for example where it wishes to experiment with highlighting stock in special displays, moving books to more prominent positions in the library, or even giving stock more face-on display opportunities. The supporting performance monitoring reports will clearly highlight to users whether their promotional experiments are proving effective or not.

The Charts module gives our customers the opportunity to view and print poster style charts of most issued titles and authors over the last month – ideal for pinning on the walls next to individual collections to inform customers of high performing material from authors they might not know about. With options for specifying individual collections or grouping multiple collections together, selecting service wide or specific library charts, and choosing how large the chart should be (for example Top 100 or Top 25) the new Charts module will greatly enhance the marketing tools that are currently available within the library service.

smartsm v1.10 is scheduled for release around the end of January, and as always will be part of the smartsm service at no extra cost.



## guest column

### **2009 – The Year RFID comes of age? by Mick Fortune**

The growth of RFID deployment in libraries continues at breakneck speed with one recent report suggesting that 80% of London's public libraries intend to invest in the technology within the next 18 months. This enthusiasm clearly extends well beyond the capital.



Most libraries invest in RFID to provide self-service circulation facilities for their clientele. Indeed many librarians appear to believe that RFID and self-service are one and the same. That RFID self-service delivers real benefit is incontestable. Many case studies have been published bearing testimony to its successful implementation - particularly in public libraries. Apart from one or two painful lessons learned by some of the early adopters - both here and in the USA - there seem to be few reasons not to move to RFID - for self-service at least. But what then?

The answer to that question, I believe, lies in that word "technology". The way in which "RFID" is used as shorthand for the self-service "application" has tended to delay and obscure the need for a debate about standards. Although most of the tenders I saw during my year with 2CQR contained demands for a solution that adhered to ISO standards relating to communication and encoding, almost none asked about interoperability of data. This puzzled me so much that I decided to leave my very comfortable position at 2CQR to find out why.

So what was this "interoperability" issue that concerned me so much? Put simply, it relates to two fundamental questions about RFID data management - what data should be put on the tags, and where should it be stored?

In the absence of any national or international agreement, every RFID supplier in the UK market currently answers those two questions differently. Each uses their own "data model" to determine both what data is stored and how it is "mapped" to the tag. Some use a data model based on that used by Danish libraries but most appear to have developed - and continue to develop - their own proprietary format.

The most obvious consequence of this approach so far is the remarkable lack of diversity in self-service solutions in UK libraries. Whereas most European libraries - who mostly decided on a national data standard at the outset - have been free to use different hardware from different suppliers, their UK counterparts have not. Recently one or two libraries have managed to circumvent this difficulty by persuading a second RFID supplier to re-write their software to read the incumbent's data model but this is not a solution that I believe really offers much promise for the future.

My reason for taking what might appear to be a rather negative view lies in the fact that an RFID tag is NOT simply an electronic barcode. Tags can - and do - hold significant amounts of data. Libraries increasingly request that specific data be stored on the tags and RFID companies are only too eager to meet these requests. Some RFID suppliers have used tag data storage to deliver enhanced functionality. Consequently both the number of data models, and the amount of data stored within them, continue to grow. With increased complexity comes increased risk.

It may surprise UK librarians to learn that they are at the "bleeding edge" of RFID development but by allowing the market to decide how best to use the technology we have, perhaps inadvertently, created a somewhat fragmented library service.

A colleague from Holland recently told me that the UK's approach to RFID puzzled Dutch librarians, and an American colleague - who also advises NISO on library RFID issues - wrote to me just before Christmas to remind me that "...because RFID hasn't been around long enough for migrations to start, the RFID vendors are continuing to feed on new business. So the migration of tags to another RFID vendor's system is not being taken seriously in the market (yet)."

So we in the UK are in a unique position. Should we continue to allow market forces to dictate progress or try and introduce some element of control by adopting a common data standard?

The publication of ISO 28560 during 2009 will deliver an international data model for libraries. Although not in my opinion, ideal, it nonetheless represents a solid foundation for the future development of library RFID.

So what would be the benefits of adopting a common standard? Probably too many to recount here but for starters libraries will be able to use different equipment from different suppliers, not just for self-service but for all aspects of stock management, without reprogramming tags or rewriting software. RFID companies will be able to supply their equipment to a larger market and may even choose to specialise on key areas of the library market - like smart shelves.

Library Management Systems (LMS) suppliers, working with a single standard, will be able to exploit the tag's ability to store dynamic data to develop new functionality - particularly perhaps for offline self-service operations. Servicing companies will no longer have to build a new solution for each new library and new application providers may find the library market a more attractive proposition than they do at present.

For companies prepared to work closely with all library stakeholders the potential that RFID offers to increase the value and reach of products like Bridgeall's smartsm™ is obvious.

So is this just a New Year's dream fuelled by excesses of Christmas spirit and heady optimism? Well hopefully not. On January 19th 2009 all the UK's leading LMS and RFID suppliers, together with some of the longest established library users of RFID will meet to discuss the possible adoption of ISO 28560. Numbers have had to be limited due to demand, a sign perhaps that there is now recognition of the need for change? Let's hope



15th An Introduction to EBSM  
16th-17th EBSM Masterclass

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