

M E M O



Date: January 31, 2011

To: Chair J.J. McCament and members of the Board of Trustees

From: Sally Porter Smith, Branch Experiences Dir.

Subject: Managing DVD Access

Current DVD dispensing technology may provide PCLS with an affordable solution for providing customers a secure browsing collection of high demand DVDs. In January and February, 2011 five libraries began a pilot project using two distinct DVD dispensing systems. Each has strengths and weaknesses. Both require changes in how we facilitate browsing and check out of these materials. Both work with our Integrated Library System Polaris.

The systems being tested are Media Bank and ITG. The first system is being piloted at Lakewood and Bonney Lake libraries. The second system, ITG (Movie Tower) is being piloted at Parkland, Summit, and University Place libraries. With the release of Polaris 4.0, existing self check out stations in our libraries can be turned into DVD dispensing machines with the addition of software and DVD towers. In April, 2011, Tillicum Library will pilot this option.

PCLS will evaluate the success of these pilots by considering the following criteria:

1. Customer satisfaction with selection of DVDs available in libraries as well as satisfaction with the process of checking out DVDs in dispensing machines;
2. Reduction of theft by 80% for browsing collections in pilot libraries (note, not all DVDs will be dispensed through machines in pilot libraries);
3. Impact on staff workload; and
4. Reliability of technology and quality of vendor support for resolving issues.

Currently, the ITG system requires a queuing step that increases staff involvement with the check out of DVDs in the unit. After the release of Polaris 4.0 in March this queuing step should be eliminated and we will be better able to evaluate impact on staff workload.

Anecdotally, staff is reporting that customers have been extremely positive about both systems. Customers seem to understand the need to manage theft and are telling us that the selection of titles available for checkout in the library is worth the process of checking the DVDs out from the machines.

Both systems provide outstanding control of theft for the items loaded into the machines. Given the size of DVD collections in libraries, not all items will be loaded into machines and staff is working on strategies to minimize loss of these items, too.

By the end of April, 2011, we will have a clearer picture of how these systems are working for our customers and the impact on staff workload.