

West Palm Beach Public Library to Install 3M RFID Systems To Boost Productivity When It Moves to New City Center

With Circulation Expected to Double in Larger Facility, Library Goes High-Tech to Automate More Functions

The West Palm Beach Public Library will apply a radio frequency identification (RFID) system from 3M Library Systems to upgrade and broaden its automated customer service, materials handling and security functions when it moves to larger quarters and expands its services at the new City Center complex early next year.

The library will occupy 80,000 square feet on four floors at City Center, more than twice its current space, when it relocates in the spring of 2009.

"We expect the annual number of items checked out to double, to about 1.2 million, in our new space, with only a small increase in staff with which to accommodate the expanded services," says Library Director Christopher Murray. "Our goal, therefore, is to achieve maximum accuracy and efficiency in automation, using RFID technology."

West Palm Beach, the seat of Palm Beach County and the oldest incorporated municipality in South Florida, is a city of approximately 103,000 residents, with an area population of more than a quarter-million. Its public library dates back to 1895, and has been in its current location since 1962.

The library will begin applying RFID tags to some 160,000 circulation items this fall. When the new space is occupied, 3M will install five RFID SelfCheck systems enabling customers to check out circulation items unassisted; an external kiosk for self-return, ten RFID staff workstations, a seven-destination RFID sorting system, and a four-aisle RFID security system, as well as two rented RFID conversion stations. The library currently uses barcode SelfCheck systems.

Murray says the library, in addition to expanded self-checkout and self-return service, will establish a "technology floor" with a 24-seat computer lab and 38 public access PCs, as well as dedicated "Teen Space" and a meeting area with new-media capability, digital audio/video labs, studios and a digital photo lab. A children's library will be housed on the third floor, while the top floor is devoted to the adult collection, with more public access computers and a 270-foot-long barrel-domed Grand Reading Room.

The library director says 3M Library Systems was chosen "because of the quality of their response to our Request for Proposal and the excellent references given by their current library installations."

According to Rory Yanchek, 3M Track and Trace Solutions general manager, the scenario facing the West Palm Beach Public Library is increasingly common throughout the country. "Public libraries are being asked to provide more services without a commensurate increase in funding, and they are turning to 3M RFID systems to help meet the challenge," says Yanchek.

Libraries using RFID technology are especially focused on the durability and reliability of the tags, according to Jacob Haas, marketing manager for 3M Library Systems. "3M RFID tags are designed to satisfy today's demanding library applications, and we warranty that they will last as long as the items to which they are affixed," says Haas.

A global leader in library innovation for more than 35 years, 3M Library Systems provides security, productivity

and information management solutions that harness technology to enable a more human library, freeing librarians to spend more time doing what they do best – helping people. 3M also partners with libraries to support their technological advancement and ensure their success through numerous industry sponsorships and programs. For more information about 3M Library Systems, visit <http://www.3M.com/library>.

About 3M

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