



Brooklyn Public Library

Patron Access Management helps library staff work more efficiently and improve the patron experience.

“If I had to describe in one word what this new system means to me, I would say it’s the ‘freedom’ to be what I enjoy being: a librarian.”

Maxine Cooper,
Librarian,
Brooklyn Public Library

The logo for Brooklyn Public Library, featuring the text "Brooklyn Public Library" in white, stacked vertically, on a green square background.

Brooklyn
Public
Library

Beginning a new chapter

The Brooklyn Public Library partners with Xerox Global Services to increase revenue, improve productivity, and provide patrons with faster, easier access to information.



Client Profile

Brooklyn Public Library (BPL) is the nation's fifth-largest public library system, servicing approximately 2.5 million borough residents through 60 neighborhood branches. Geographically, each resident is only one-half mile from a Public Library branch. The Library offers thousands of programs, millions of books, and the use of more than 850 free Internet-accessible computers.

The Challenge

The Library wanted to recover print costs, while at the same time making more effective use of librarians' time, and providing patrons with improved programs and fair access to services.

Printing policies

Before the advent of the new solution, Library patrons were able to print virtually any number of Web pages and other electronic documents at no charge.

“We were spending about \$2 million a year on supplies, making millions and millions of prints per quarter, and it was all free,” said John Vitali, chief financial officer of the Brooklyn Public Library. “We were spending money on paper, on toner, and we were spending a lot of money on labor.”

Administrators knew a print-for-pay system would help stop the unnecessary spending. But with the help of Xerox Global Services, they uncovered another issue that also needed attention.

Access issues

The Library staff found that managing access to 850 public computers and a large fleet of printers was taking valuable time from their traditional duties. Librarians were preoccupied with scheduling, monitoring, and policing patrons' Web access.

“The old system didn't give us time to think,” said Maxine Cooper, a librarian at BPL.

Everyone at BPL knew that a solution had to be found. Administrators wanted the librarians to be able to do the work they were trained to do. The drain on resources had to be stopped. And at the heart of it all, the Library's patrons deserved improved access to services and a learning environment that made it faster and easier to access information.

The Solution

The solution turned out to be a comprehensive Patron Access Management system that effectively merged people, processes, and technology. The most visible symbol of the system is a simple plastic Access Brooklyn Card (ABC) that provides patrons with better service and the Library staff with more time.

The power of Xerox Lean Six Sigma

The Brooklyn Public Library's administrators wanted to find a company with world-class process and technical expertise that would comprehend the full scope of the Library's issues and help the staff work through them to find a viable solution. The Library found an ideal partner in Xerox Global Services.

After a top-level assessment, the Xerox Global Services team quickly realized that the best way to develop a total solution would be to apply Lean Six Sigma principles. With this disciplined approach, the Library's administrators were able to operate from a totally fact-based perspective and make informed decisions.

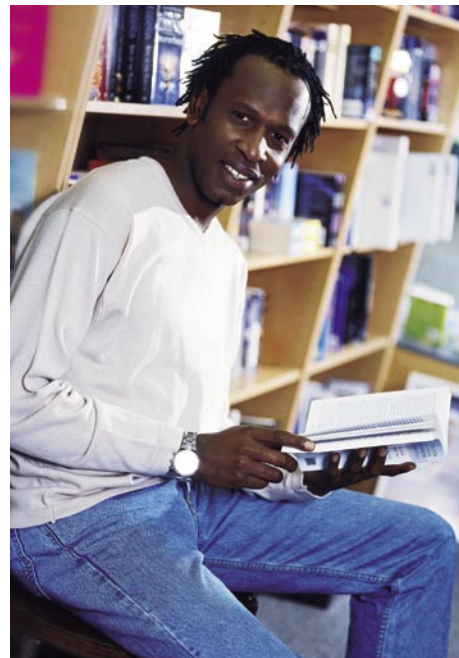
"We sought out core processes and made them lean and controllable," said Charles Tippet, business development manager of Xerox Global Services. "Then we could automate those processes, from computer access to print copy management, inventory, and IT management. It's complex, but our experience in this sector helps us know where to look."

As easy as ABC

The Access Brooklyn Card (ABC) makes it possible for patrons to quickly and easily:

- Reserve a public access computer (up to two days in advance)
- Add value to their library account
- Pay for prints and copies (and, starting next year, faxes and scans)
- Check out books and other library materials
- Pay library fines

The ABC uses software and hardware from Xerox, Pharos, and Dell. Library patrons swipe their cards in any of the BPL's 68 ABC Services Kiosks and enter a PIN. They can then reserve a computer or place themselves in a waiting queue. At the end of a computer session, a user swipes the card again and is told how much it will cost to print their chosen pages. As the prints are output, the cost is deducted from the user's account.



"Our relationship with Xerox Global Services is the definition of a partnership in every way. They have helped us to see benefits that we might not have found on our own."

*Ginnie Cooper,
Executive Director,
Brooklyn Public Library*

The ABC system automatically polices computer seat time. The Xerox solution frees librarians and other staff personnel from time-consuming patron access and computer management chores and gives them more time to do the jobs they were trained to do.

The system also enables the library to capture data that helps them better manage their system infrastructure. And patrons enjoy better access and services.

The Results

Xerox Global Services developed an easy-to-use, integrated, automated solution. Piloted at six branches, it has proven so successful—and so popular with patrons—that it has been rolled out to all 60 Brooklyn Public Library facilities.

More than just numbers

The ABC solution has reduced the number of wasted prints significantly and increased revenue in the process.

In the future, Library costs may be further defrayed through sponsorship for services, such as printing children's homework. In addition, the ABC Services Kiosks may incorporate advertising from Library partners, a potential new revenue stream for the Library.

Another benefit is productivity. The Library was losing approximately 135,000 librarian hours each year to managing

computer access. That labor is being reallocated where it will do the most good. Librarians are spending more time helping patrons. "It's self serve now," said Tippet. "Lines are almost nonexistent. The patron has more control and more options. The library is a friendlier place."

A catalyst for change

The new Xerox Global Services-developed system does away with most of the Library's challenging patron access issues. And it brings all the parts and pieces together into a single, smoothly functioning, integrated total solution. BPL administrators are very pleased with the way it's working out.

But they are also impressed with something that Xerox brought to the table that, in the long run, may prove even more valuable. "The Library is more nimble, better able to identify problems and to implement solutions," said Ginnie Cooper. "We think more creatively as a result of this partnership with Xerox Global Services."

CASE STUDY SNAPSHOT

The Challenges:

- *Eliminate unrestricted, cost-free access to printing resources*
- *Minimize valuable time spent by librarians monitoring and policing computer access*
- *Improve the patron experience and staff job satisfaction*

The Solution:

- *An easy-to-use, integrated patron access and pay-for-print system that oversees computer access and charges patrons for prints and copies*

The Results:

- *An automated reservation system for 850 computers*
- *Staff freed up to carry out the BPL's primary mission*
- *Patrons enjoy more efficient services*
- *Print-for-pay generating revenue and eliminating waste*
- *Potential new revenue streams via marketing partnerships*
- *A positive and enthusiastic attitude at BPL toward improving services and tackling complex issues*