

# Making room for inflation with user-centric ILL services

East Tennessee State University

George L. Nichols

## Challenge:

“The library has had the same collections budget for many years and we were looking at making cuts to collections to make room for inflation. But first, we evaluated our library systems for software that would allow us to decrease spending without downgrading the user experience.”

## Outcome:

40%


cost reduction for resource sharing software expenses

99%

of borrowing requests for digital items filled via Rapido partners

## Solutions:

Alma | Primo | Rapido



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**We have heard from students and faculty that the request process is easier.”**

Jennifer Young, Acquisitions & Access Services Coordinator

## East Tennessee State University

**Institution:** East Tennessee State University

**Established:** 1911

**Students:** 13,500

**Specialties:** Health sciences and Appalachian studies

**Location:** Tennessee

### Adapting to the library-user needs

The Sherrod Library at East Tennessee State University had used ILLiad for interlibrary loans for more than 20 years. However, they felt ready to migrate to a new system if that also meant improving services to users. According to Jennifer Young, Acquisitions & Access Services Coordinator:

“We regularly evaluate our services to incorporate feedback and adapt to user needs. Users had Primo library accounts but needed separate ILLiad accounts to manage borrowed items. They would utilize a services link in the Primo record to be redirected to submit the request on the ILLiad system. We felt the two-system process was confusing to the end user and did very little to educate or promote the importance of Interlibrary Loan for their research needs.”

In addition to uplifting the ILL experience for users, there was also a desire to enable more ways of working remotely as a result of the COVID pandemic. There was a financial incentive as well, shares Young:

“The library has had the same collections budget for many years and we were looking at making cuts to collections to make room for inflation. However, we first evaluated our library systems to find software that would allow us to decrease spending without downgrading the user experience. “

### A successful two-month transition

The library’s attention was drawn to Rapido. Rapido would allow the library to offer access to resources shared by other libraries while allowing users to submit borrowing requests from within the Primo discovery layer. That makes the process as seamless as accessing items in the library’s own collection. As Young recalls, the library transitioned to

Rapido as their primary interlibrary loan system the same day they sunsetted their previous ILL system:

“We had our share of transition pains, of course, but the migration was successful overall. We were able to transition to using Rapido with only a two-month overlap with our WorldShare ILL subscription and no overlap with our ILLiad access. We went live with Rapido the day our ILLiad subscription ended.”

### Positive feedback from users

Young reports, “Library users at East Tennessee have enjoyed the integration within Primo that Rapido provides. We have heard from students and faculty that the request process is easier. They also enjoy the quick turnaround times provided by the RapidILL network; our turnaround time for filling digital requests has stayed consistent at 10 hours on average. We receive a lot of compliments regarding the speed of article requests. Users enjoy having their library requests managed in the Primo library card and being able to see when a book has shipped. All the feedback we have received has been verbal or through word of mouth from our circulation staff or reference librarians. However, we plan to conduct a user survey in 2025 to gather more direct feedback.”

### Integrated systems and custom insights for staff

While the library has seen increases in borrowing requests for all material types, Young relates that the ability to see and manage the different types of requests in one place helped staff handle the requests with ease:

“On the lending side, staff have enjoyed the integration in Alma. The transition to Rapido has allowed our staff member who handles physical lending to easily manage those requests in the same system, using similar workflows. On the borrowing side, the biggest improvement is the ease of creating custom sets for specific types of requests that need to be handled separately. We have also enjoyed the label functionality. We requested a list of textbook ISBNs from our bookstore and created a mediation rule in Rapido to label textbook requests. We then run reports to find out how many students request them and the disciplines where this is more prevalent. Our Digital Scholarship Librarian plans to use the data to identify courses to reach out to regarding open-access textbooks.”



**“Our turnaround time for filling digital requests has stayed consistent at a 10-hour average. We receive a lot of compliments regarding the speed of article requests.”**

Jennifer Young, Acquisitions & Access Services Coordinator

# User-centric service goal achieved

Summarizes Young: “Our primary goal is to offer a service that is both user-centered and cost-effective. We’ve streamlined our requesting, processing, and delivery of materials to ensure timely access with a seamless and user-friendly experience.”

## Before Rapido:

ARTICLE  
**Self-Service Interlibrary Loan: A Primer for Reference Staff**  
 Burk, Roberta  
 The Reference librarian, 2006, Vol.45 (93), p.73-82  
 Technology is rapidly moving libraries toward a self-service interlibrary loan model...  
 PEER REVIEWED  
 No Online Access >

## After implementing Rapido:

BOOK  
**Full-Stack JavaScript Strategies**  
 McGregor, Milecia; 2025  
 Request via Interlibrary Loan >

## Before Rapido:

How to get it

ETSU Sherrod ILL.  
 Delivery in 3-5 business days. Average cost: Free

## After implementing Rapido:

BOOK  
**Out of the blue: life on the road with Muddy Waters**  
 Blain, Brian; 2014  
 Out of the Blue: Life on the Road with Muddy Waters begins with a moment lifted from a young musician's dreams...  
 Request via Interlibrary Loan >

Send to

HOW TO GET IT

REQUEST VIA SH...

LINKS

DETAILS

How to get it

Please sign in to check if there are additional request options. Sign in

Request via Sherrod Interlibrary Loan

For more accurate results please sign in. Sign in

Get a physical copy  
 Typically Delivered in 4 days  
 Keep for 112 days  
 GET IT

OR

Need a chapter?  
 Typically delivered within 24 Hours  
 by email  
 GET IT

Links

ETSU Medical ILL >  
 College of Medicine and Pharmacy - request papers listed in PubMed using "Send To Order"  
 Report Problems >  
 Report a problem with this resource to Sherrod Library Technology & Content Services. Average response time: 1 business day

4 A dual approach to assessing collection development and acquisitions for academic libraries / Library collections, acquisitions, & technical services  
 Danielson, Robert  
 Article (Digital)  
 Publication date: 2012  
 Volume: 36  
 Pages: 84 - 96

ILL. Sent  
 Request id: 22610256  
 The maximum number of views of the resource is: 30  
 Current number of views: 1  
 Download expiry: 06/21/2024

Requested 05/21/2024 → In process by lender 05/21/2024 → Sent 05/21/2024

3 Management basics for information professionals  
 Evans, G. Edward ; Greenwell, Stacey  
 Book (Physical)

ILL. Shipped  
 Estimated pick up: 05/28/2024  
 Pick up: ETSU Sherrod Library  
 Request id: 01ETSU0020206  
 Estimated due date: 05/17/2024

Requested 05/21/2024 → In process by lender 05/21/2024 → Shipped 05/21/2024 → Received

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