Programming for eBooks: Classes, clinics, petting zoos and other tools to help your patrons succeed in the world of digital media

Presenter Information and Resources

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Our programming right now consists of a workshop occasionally included (two of the past three terms) in our regular, robust series of Grad Student and Faculty workshops. We have an eBook search page online (<http://ica.library.oregonstate.edu/subject-guide/1471-OSU-Libraries-Ebooks>) and an eReader guide online (<http://ica.library.oregonstate.edu/subject-guide/1351-Ebooks-for-eReaders>). These guides provide general information about finding eBooks at OSU Libraries and provide more specific information for four eReaders (Kobo, Nook, Sony, Kindle). Reference is also made to getting content on iPhones and iPads, and we link out to our public library's extensive eBook/eReader guide.

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Here at Multnomah County Library offer three different types of e-book classes to the public.

Choosing an e-reader: Lecture-style class on what to look for. Includes a petting zoo at the end of class.

E-books 101: A formal class in a lab setting. Starts with an overview of ebooks and digital audio books at the library, followed by a hands on helping folks get set up with their devices. Overview includes Library2Go, eBrary, and EBL.

Is this thing on? Get help with Library2Go: A drop on clinic for one-on-one help for folks who are running into trouble.

At many of our branches we also offer Book-a-Librarian appointments for one-on-one help with e-books and devices.

<http://multcolib.org/events/ebook.html>

We have made large strides over the past year in beefing up staff comfort levels with e-books through both self-directed lessons and formal classes. We have an internal ‘Ebooks at MCL’ site to gather these lessons that includes documentation and troubleshooting tips.

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Jessi Stinson

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I design and teach the Library2Go classes at the Eugene Public Library.  Over the past two years I haven’t taught a class exactly the same way twice.  I’m constantly responding to changes in technology, changing my lesson content, and improving my teaching skills.  I am fascinated by the process of learning – especially the process of teaching new skills to beginners.

I am definitely an early adopter of new technology and gadgets.  I own an iPad 2, Kindle, and an Elliptigo (look it up!).

I am also involved in designing and assisting with our drop-in Library2Go clinic and our eBook LibGuide. I respond to tech questions from patrons in person, chat, text, phone and email.

Please contact me if you have any questions about programming, LibGuides, the best apps, or how to delete an eBook from your Kindle.

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Our main ebook/ereader education efforts at the moment are:

1) "Open house" ebook/ereader days: Patrons are encouraged to bring their questions/devices, listen to a short presentation about finding materials on Library2Go, then getting one-on-one or small-group assistance on transferring/deleting/returning ebooks on various devices. We have had two such events to date, each drawing around 100 people.

2) One-on-one patron assistance. We also provide one-on-one assistance for patrons. We have mostly been providing this service at the Reference Desk. We sometimes end up spending a significant amount of time with folks (sometimes 30+ minutes), and frequently have to call out a backup person to provide the instruction or assist with other patrons.

Recently, we have been experimenting with having dedicated, scheduled drop-in times where patrons can sit with an ereader specialist. We offer two 2-hour blocks per week, and assign a specific staff member to be on-call during those times. We are still providing basic assistance at the Reference Desk, but we encourage patrons needing more in-depth help to attend one of the drop-in sessions. We plan to evaluate this program’s success in the next few weeks.

3) Traditional lecture-based classes: In the past, we have offered 60-minute classes on using Library2Go. These have been less well-attended than our other programs, and we have not offered them recently.

4) Tutorials and handouts: We actively create and update tutorials on various aspects of using Library2Go (although keeping them up to date is a never-ending challenge!). We make the materials available in the library and on our website.

5) Staff training: We believe that staff training is just as important as patron education. Our goal is for every staff member who works a public desk to be able to answer basic ereader and Library2Go questions. This is, of course, a work in progress!

Additionally, selected staff are constantly maintaining/developing more advanced skills (firmware upgrades, device configuration, available reading apps/platforms, etc...) and device expertise so that we can provide advanced assistance when necessary.