BOOPsie HELPs DC PUblic LIBRARY CONNECT WITH ITS DIVERSE COMMUNITY

ABOUT DC PUBLIC LIBRARY
The District of Columbia Public Library is a vibrant center of activity for residents and visitors in the nation's capital. The Library provides environments that invite reading, learning and community discussion and equips people to embrace lifelong learning, to support diversity and to build a thriving city.

Programming at the DC Public Library is designed to engage the community in informational, cultural and educational forums and opportunities that transform perspectives and empower lifelong learning. It is a platform for cultural and civic engagement, and one way that the Library fulfills its role as a shared civic space. Programming activates the Library’s collection, be it books, databases or 3-D printers, and creates conversation and community reflection around the issues of the day.

ABOUT BOOPsie
Boopsie, Inc. is the industry-leading mobile platform-as-a-service (PaaS) provider for over 4,000 library locations worldwide. Boopsie’s apps have been downloaded over 3.5 million times and are used by over 500,000 unique app users per month. Boopsie’s library-branded mobile apps are affordable, easy to deploy and maintain, and enable libraries of all types and sizes, including academic, corporate, public and special, to quickly acquire new users and increase circulation.

Boopsie’s mobile apps are fully hosted and maintained by Boopsie’s U.S. based customer service organization and are designed for Android, iOS, Kindle Fire and even Blackberry platforms. Boopsie enables 24/7 remote library access via the user’s device of choice. In 2015 Boopsie was acquired by an affiliate of Demco, who has 110 years of library experience and offers a full range of supplies, equipment, furniture and software, as well as comprehensive interior design services for libraries and schools nationwide.

THE GOAL: A CUSTOMIZED EXPERIENCE
Smartphone usage across the U.S. continues to grow, increasing over 30% in the last five years alone. With 68% of adults in urban environments owning smartphones, DC Public Library realized that a mobile app was key to connecting with its patrons.1

What the Library needed was not just any app but one that would bring the resources and services offered in its 26 physical branches across the District to its on-the-go patrons no matter where they were.

“We started out with an in-house app that performed basic ILS functions and provided general information about branches,” said Web and Social Media Specialist Esti Brennan. “This, paired with our online collections through OverDrive, helped us to start our transition into the mobile space, but we knew we needed something more to provide the mobile experience that our patrons seek.”

Upon coming to this realization, the Library set out to offer a more comprehensive online experience for DC residents, providing them with a 24/7 connection to the Library’s wealth of resources via the medium that they prefer to use.

THE RESULT: COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

A customized experience for patrons of all ages

“The nation’s capital is diverse. As its library, we serve a wide audience of information seekers, from young professionals in their 20s and 30s to parents with young families. The simplicity of our Boopsie app makes it very easy for all of our patrons to confidently use it — even those who aren’t particularly familiar with mobile technology,” said Brennan. “As accessibility is very important to the Library, our main goal was to offer an app that bridges the digital divide. With Boopsie’s help, we were able to do just that.”

Boopsie’s partnerships with dozens of content providers paired with their innovative technology that evolves with libraries’ needs helps its customers to offer a seamless user experience, connecting patrons with the highest quality resources on a user-friendly, native mobile interface. Boopsie’s apps seamlessly connect users to OverDrive, ProQuest, EBSCO, LexisNexis, Comics Plus: Library Edition and Recorded Books, among other products and services from library industry leaders.

A deeper connection to the Library’s community

Since its launch in June 2015, the Library’s customized app has been downloaded over 10,000 times with an average of over 1,000 unique users each month. Feedback provided to librarians indicates that DC Public’s patrons have a preference for leveraging the user-friendly mobile app to connect with their Library.

“Specifically, we hear a lot of feedback about the app making it easy to place holds and renew materials, something that our patrons appreciate since they tend to do their non-work online tasks via smartphone rather than computer. The app really has opened up access to Library materials for users who don’t frequent the Library’s website or didn’t even know the Library had a website before learning about the app.”

CONCLUSION

DC Public is excited to continue to leverage Boopsie’s user analytics data — and helpful support staff — to continue to serve its diverse community.

“We’ll continue to use our customized Boopsie app as a one-stop resource for library account management, providing patrons with access to basic info like locations and hours as well as more interactive services as well. The data that the app provides will help us to continue to learn what our patrons need and the company’s technology will help us continue to evolve to meet these needs,” said Brennan.