Get A Card
About Hamilton Public Library

- 22 branches and 2 bookmobiles serve a population of over 570,000
- 167,441 active borrowers
- Over 5.3 million physical circulation (2019)
- Over 1.8 million digital circulation (2019)
- ILS is Polaris 6.0
- Went live with Online Registration in April 2019
Why Online Registration?

• Offer all customers the opportunity to connect and use library resources

• Meet the customer where they are at any time, day or night

• Immediate access to online resources
Options Explored

1. Polaris PAC self-registration form - too restrictive

2. Create a web form in-house using Polaris API – too resource intensive for us at the time

3. Third-party vendor – Quipu Group was best fit for HPL
Considerations

Who should be able to apply?
- Adults only or include children
- Restrict to HPL service area or include those who work/attend school in Hamilton

What should online registrants have access to?
- All online resources or limited resources
- Check-out of physical material
- Holds on physical material
How it works

General validation
- Block on invalid email addresses/unverified domains
- Block on IP addresses outside of Canada and USA
- Required fields and syntax rules
- Valid address
- Duplicate records (ILS checks)

Different Validation rules apply
- HPL service area – City Address Database
- Name verification for residents of Hamilton
- For applicants who work/attend school in Hamilton, checks list of cities within commuting distance
- A third service area was defined for applicants who live in Six Nations (added mid November 2019)
If validation is passed…

- Record automatically created in Polaris
- Barcode within provided range assigned
- Patron code assigned based on birth date, type of registration, and name verification
- Confirmation screen including the soft barcode is displayed
- Confirmation email sent to customer with attached soft barcode that can be stored and used in place of a physical card
On-screen and email confirmations encourage customers to complete registration by creating an account in our discovery layer.
Benefits of Online Registration

- Data entered in online registration form is standardized
- Minimal staff intervention
- Restrict notification options to email, our preferred method of notification
- Easier to update customer records for physical borrowing
Statistics

• Over 4,400 online library card registrations

• 25% of online registrants have visited a library to upgrade their card for physical borrowing

• Circulation of physical materials by online registrants is over 15,000

• Over 40% pass name verification

• Almost 200 customers rejected as duplicates have started using an existing card again
Lessons Learned

• Monitoring of rejections is important

• Labels on registration form were ambiguous and caused confusion

• Purge inactive customer records before and ongoing (to decrease number of customers who are identified as already having a card)
Challenges

- Would like some more information in online reports
- Would like to be able to resend confirmation email
- Address validation
Looking Ahead

- Ability to enter a list of address exceptions
- Restrict number of attempts by same IP address
- Online update of contact information (1st half 2020)
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URL for HPL Online Registration: https://www.hpl.ca/online-registration