

**VTLS**



**Upper Arlington  
Public Library**



**Years**

## A Little Bit About UAPL

December 2007 marks the 27th anniversary of Upper Arlington Public Library's use of VTLS library automation software. UAPL has been with VTLS almost since the company's inception, seeing such changes as the incorporation of VTLS, growth of the company, and transition from VTLS Classic to Virtua. VTLS has seen changes at UAPL as well—increases in size, staff and circulation; the complete redesign of the library's website; and most recently, the expansion and remodeling of the Miller Park branch.

Located in a suburb of Columbus, Ohio, the three-branch Upper Arlington

Public Library serves approximately 34,000 residents in a community of only 9.6 square miles. It serves patrons from other communities as well. UAPL is located near the Ohio State University, so students and faculty also find the library to be an important resource. In all, there are about 55,000 UAPL library cardholders, and in 2006 the library boasted over 1 million visitors to all three of its locations. UAPL is known not only for its neighborhood feel, but also for the breadth of its collections. Many patrons say that things can be found there that can't be found even at the Ohio State University library.

UAPL consists of three locations: the main library on Tremont Road, the Lane Road branch, and the newly renovated Miller Park branch. With the help of the Virtua ILS, 135 staff members keep things running smoothly. In 2006, circulation staff oversaw the circulation of 1.6 million items from a collection of 472,000 item records and 298,000 bibliographic records. For the past three years UAPL has been ranked in the top five (for libraries in its population size) in the Hennen rankings.



## UAPL and VTLS

UAPL's relationship with VTLS has been a success from the beginning. VTLS Classic was implemented in 1980, and the library used that ILS until they switched to Virtua in February 2002. The library uses Circulation, Cataloging, Serials, and OPAC. Assistant Library Director Kate Porter said, "The switch from Classic to Virtua—in effect, the switch to a different method of computing and to new technology—was a bit of a challenge, but because of VTLS' constant support and effort, it was a success. Since then our upgrades have only gotten easier."

UAPL has put VTLS software through its paces. Because the library is closed only 10 days a year and is open more hours than any other public library in the area, the software is in near-constant use. Porter admits that

there is one downside to that: "It can be challenging to pick a time to do a software upgrade because there is not a lot of downtime; but because upgrades have gotten shorter and easier over time, it's not a problem, and the impact on public services has been minimal."

So what is it about VTLS that UAPL appreciates so much? What is it that has kept them using VTLS' ILS for so many years? According to Porter, these are the main reasons:

- **The ILS is very stable.** There's very little downtime for patrons and staff members. And the company itself is also very stable...no changing hands or unpredictably changing products.

- **VTLS puts a lot of research into their product.** VTLS investigates trends in the industry, adheres to technology standards, and offers a quality product that is thoroughly researched and developed.

- **Virtua is compatible with other products on the market.** For example, UAPL likes the fact that Virtua can be used for authentication to access online digital resources so patrons can use the library 24/7.

- **The stability of VTLS as a company.** There is a great deal of consolidation going on in the library industry right now, which can cause uncertainty. But VTLS' stability is one of the reasons that UAPL has been with VTLS all of these years.

## Consistent Customer Service

The fact that VTLS is located in Blacksburg, Virginia, and UAPL in Ohio has been a positive factor for the relationship—the two institutions are only a five hours' drive apart. It's easy for VTLS to visit the library and for UAPL to send staff for training to VTLS headquarters. If help is required, however, UAPL finds that it's easiest to call the Customer Service Hotline. There's an immediate response from VTLS staff, and problems are solved quickly.

### UAPL Staff and VTLS

While UAPL has been loyal to VTLS, many UAPL employees have been loyal to the library and have worked there and used Virtua for years. Some UAPL employees who are intimately familiar with Virtua include employees such as:

Jen Christensen, Technical Services Manager and long-time staff member: "I like the editing capabilities in Virtua. The MARC Editor is easy to use and is a huge improvement over the way records were edited in Classic. I'm also a big fan of batch record editing."

Marcia Baum, a cataloguer, has used VTLS since 1987 and works with serials: "I've seen how other systems handle serials, and I think that Virtua is much better because I can easily modify issues and track individual issues within a subscription."



**Vita Marinello**

Vita Marinello, Circulation Manager and new Virtua user: "I like being able to program keys so that consistent messages can be added to patron records. I am also excited about a change to billed items that is part of release 48."

Lenore Mastracci works in Adult Services and has been with the library the whole time it has been a VTLS customer: "It has been so easy to train new staff in using the system."



**Jen Christensen**

Ann Moore, Library Director, has been with the Library since it first became a VTLS customer: "I like that we can have frank conversations with VTLS about issues and can work together to solve them."

Marcus Hensley is Systems Manager and is the one who works closely with Virtua on the technical end: "I'm very comfortable working with the system and have been working with it for the last eleven years."

When it comes to training, UAPL staff all agree that it's easy to train new employees themselves, but supplemental training by VTLS staff at UAPL, at the VTLS Users' Group meetings, and at VTLS headquarters is always available.



**Ann Moore**



**Kate Porter**

## The VTLS Users' Group

UAPL is an active member of the VTLS Users' Group (VUG) and has consistently sent staff to the meetings and training sessions the Users' Group offers. The library staff love getting to know VTLS staff as well as fellow colleagues from other libraries with whom they can share ideas. Being at the meetings and talking with staff is a great way to get input about the product. "One-on-one sharing of ideas is so important," says Porter.

VTLS staff has a good relationship with the library, and meeting staff at the VUG meetings is a personal touch that gives VTLS added value. Furthermore, says Porter, "UAPL staff appreciates that VTLS President and CEO Vinod Chachra is accessible and more than happy to talk to anyone at the meetings—unlike the usual perception of senior corporate management at larger companies. It's a rare thing. Dr. Chachra is 'front and center,' and the library can talk directly to him or give input on the products."

UAPL would love to see more VTLS customers involved in the Users' Group in the future.

## A Bright Future...

UAPL and VTLS look forward to many more years of collaboration to serve the needs of the Library. While Virtua continues to set a new standard of excellence for the library world with cutting-edge features like FRBR (Functional Requirements for Bibliographic Records), Update Notifications through SDI, User Reviews & Ratings, and a Smart Device interface to the catalog, UAPL has proven to be a visionary library by their continued use of Virtua and embrace of VTLS' leading library technology.

To access the latest presentations with more information on VTLS products, visit our website at [www.vtls.com](http://www.vtls.com)



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