Sydney•Enterprise

CASE DETAILS

Masonic Library Challenges, SydneyEnterprise Solutions

- Purpose-built for special libraries

- Public facing catalog for members and academic researchers

- Easy to use, intuitive

- Cost effective; vendor hosting eliminates dependence on the IT department

"We value Lucidea's long history serving special libraries, with solutions specifically designed to support library workflow and requirements. As their ILS has developed, it's gone from good, to better, to best!"

Glenys A. Waldman,
Librarian,
—and—
Cathy Giaimo,
Assistant Librarian,
The Masonic Library and Museum of Pennsylvania

ADVANCING KNOWLEDGE, UNDERSTANDING, AND MEANING

The Masonic Temple in Philadelphia was constructed in 1873 and has been called one of the great wonders of the Masonic world. Located within the Temple is the Masonic Library and Museum of Pennsylvania, which houses thousands of texts and artifacts relating to the history of the Fraternity in the Commonwealth and the founding of the United States of America.

The Library, founded in 1817, is considered to have one of the finest collections for the study of Freemasonry. The importance of collecting and cataloging seminal works in the history of Freemasonry has remained a focus of the institution since its inception. Housed within the stacks are over 75,000 print volumes as well as various multimedia resources. The Library remains a resource for members and academics alike, providing research and lending services in an effort to advance knowledge and understanding of the Fraternity, its meanings, and its place in history.

Wonderful Things

The Library lends only a tiny fraction of its collection to members. It functions as a research library, so users come in to request assistance and to enjoy the many interesting, rare and unique resources at the disposal of the 150,000 members in Pennsylvania, as well as being accessible to researchers, mostly from universities outside the state.

One of the Library's prize possessions is an incunabulum (a book printed before 1501), this one produced in Basel, Switzerland in 1489. It is really two books bound together, one by St. Augustine on the Trinity, and the other by Robert Holkot on the Apocryphal Book, *The Wisdom of Solomon*. In addition, they have a profusely illustrated Kupfer-Bibel printed in 1731. The Museum collection houses many objects of note, including Benjamin Franklin's sash, one of his printing blocks, and his calling card. They also have several of George Washington's letters, and one of his Masonic aprons. Interesting, as well, are their materials related to the science of cosmography, including early 17th century engravings of maps covering various cities in Europe.

Continuous Improvement

The Masonic Library has been using an Integrated Library System (ILS) since 1999 when they realized it was time to put their card catalog online for use by members. Several years later, they began to feel that the original ILS was inflexible, in part because they wanted to catalog objects and artifacts in the Museum, not just the Library's collection. Interestingly, a couple of local law libraries recommended the Sydney system, which the Masonic Library then implemented, and recently they migrated to SydneyEnterprise.

Making the Right Choice

Ms. Waldman and Ms. Giaimo were comfortable with moving to SydneyEnterprise given its longevity in the sector and its many long-term clients, and they have high praise for Lucidea's client services and technical support teams, who are "easy to reach, easy to talk to, never make you feel foolish for asking a question, and don't use a lot of technical jargon." Per Ms. Waldman and Ms. Giaimo, their migration to SydneyEnterprise went very smoothly, with regularly scheduled meetings, good communication, and the magic of overnight updating. The decision to leverage Lucidea's software-as-a-service (SaaS) solution was an easy one; it is more cost effective than self-hosting, and they no longer need to depend on the IT department, which is centralized at the Masonic Village halfway across the state.

Efficient, Effective, Enhanced

SydneyEnterprise offers real time savings. Academics are much happier because they can go to the online catalog and quickly figure out if it's worth their time to come in to the Library. In the past, Library staff members would photocopy relevant catalog cards, fold up the paper and put it in an envelope to be mailed out to inquiring researchers, or they would spend a long time on the phone describing what was available on specific topics.

Staff workflow is much improved with SydneyEnterprise, especially because the system is easy to use, easy to read onscreen, and when mistakes are found, they are "very easy to fix, without retyping a catalog card." With just two Library staff, operating efficiency is critical.

The Temple's members enjoy many of the features embedded in the new SydneyEnterprise OPAC, including the hovers and the pop-ups, and the OPAC makes it much easier for them to request materials. With the enhanced access enabled by SydneyEnterprise (such as being able to look at scanned images in the OPAC), researchers and members are discovering things they never knew were in the collection—raising the Library's visibility, and giving Ms. Waldman and Ms. Giaimo the incentive to keep going with cataloging additional resources.

"An Investment in Knowledge Pays the Best Interest" *
Benjamin Franklin

Per Ms. Waldman, now that the Library's holdings are cataloged, they are in the process of cataloging the manuscript collection, and hope to get even more of the Museum's objects and artifacts into SydneyEnterprise over time. She says that their "big dream" is to type in "Ben Franklin," for example, and retrieve everything related to his life and work that is housed in the combined Library and Museum collections. With SydneyEnterprise, that dream will soon become a reality.

ABOUT LUCIDEA

Lucidea is the premier knowledge management software company, helping people navigate the ever expanding universe of information, turning it into actionable knowledge. We achieve this by providing tools that accelerate access to knowledge resources, while simplifying their management.

To learn more about SydneyEnterprise and how it can help solve your library management and automation challenges, visit www.lucidea.com/sydneyenterprise.

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