



*The floating collection and centralised selection
of library materials -
Experiences in Oulu City Library 2013–2017*



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OULU

| Kaupunginkirjasto





Oulu City Library

CITY OF OULU



Oulu is situated by the Gulf of Bothnia, at the mouth of the River Oulu

City of Oulu is home to 200,000 people

Oulu is the fifth largest city in Finland

City of young people, average age 38,2 years

Oulu City Library – part of The Educational and Cultural Services



**Library events
are free of
charge and open
for all**

**You can read,
play, use
computers, play
instruments,
sew and digitize**

Regional work for children and families

**NORTHERN
DISTRICT**

**EASTERN
DISTRICT**

**CENTRAL
DISTRICT**

**SOUTHERN
DISTRICT**



**Greater well-
being**

**Close
cooperation
between various
operators**

**Staff and
facilities in
efficient use**

Oulu City Library - numbers

One year in Oulu City Library

- 27 libraries and mobile libraries
 - over 200 mobile library stops
- 5539 employees in Educational and Cultural Services
- 140 employees in Library Services
- 3.6 million loans
- 75.000 borrowers
- 2 million library visits
- One million items in Library collection
- Over 1.000 groups visit libraries
- Over 1.100 events open for all

**Library is a
meeting place,
place for
learning and
developing your
skills**

**Ask anything,
Library is for
you!**

Oulu City Library - challenges

All libraries will remain open

Library staff cannot be increased

Customers want longer opening hours

Library services and the use of libraries are changing

The budget will decrease

The infographic is titled "OUTI-kirjastot" and "KOHA-kirjastojärjestelmä". It features a map of Finland with Oulu highlighted in blue. The text includes:

- OUTI-kirjastot**
- 1.1.2016 alkaen:** Helsinki, Tampere, Jyväskylä, Lappeenranta, Rovaniemi, Oulu, Seinäjoki, Vaasa, Turku, Tampere, Lappeenranta.
- Vuoden 2016 aikana:** Kuopio, Rovaniemi, Vaasa, Tampere.
- Käytössä kaikkien** OUTI-kirjastojen kokoelmat
- Lainaus** OUTI-kirjastokortilla
- Palauttaminen** mihin tahansa OUTI-kirjastoon
- Maksuttomat** varaukset
- Yhteinen** varausjono
- Sähköiset** kuitit ja ilmoitukset
- KOHA-kirjastojärjestelmä**
- Avoimen lähdekoodin** kirjastojärjestelmä
- Kirjastot** vastaavat yhdessä ylläpidosta ja kehittämisestä
- Kehittäminen** aloitettu Uudessa-Seelannissa vuonna 2000
- Käytössä** tuhansissa kirjastoissa ympäri maailmaa, Suomessa kymmenessä kirjastoissa

Logos for OULU City Library and KOKO OPEN SOURCE INTEGRATED LIBRARY SYSTEM are present. A small graphic shows a library card with the text "OUTI-kirjastot" and "www.outikirjastot.fi".



***The Floating
Collection***

Floating collection

- This presentation focuses on a concept related to the collection management in libraries, the floating collection, as well as its introduction at the Oulu City Library and the experiences gained
- A floating collection means that library materials are no longer transported to its “home branch” after a customer returns them to a library, and the material remains as part of the collection at the receiving branch library
- A floating collection reduces logistics
- The cuts in library budgets have necessitated a reorganisation of library services

**Library materials
are no longer
transported to
its “home
branch”**

**A floating
collection
reduces logistics**

Floating collection

- The floating collection is a new concept in Finland
- The effects of floating on the collection have been studied very little
- There is very little data on customer satisfaction
- A few cities in Finland have adopted the floating collection
- The Oulu City Library started planning for the introduction of floating in early 2012
- The pilot project was run from November 2013 until the end of 2014
- The floating collection was introduced in all branch libraries of Oulu in early 2015
- The Oulu City Library uses an open source library system called Koha
- In Koha, floating can be configured by branch or by material

**Very little data
on customer
satisfaction**

**The floating
collection in all
branch libraries
of Oulu in 2015**

Floating collection

- Customer satisfaction surveys are being planned
- Floating has reduced the need for logistics
- The possibility to reserve materials free of charge, as required by the new library legislation, has increased the need for logistics
- The increasing number of reservations in the system also changes the dynamics of the collection
- How to change priorities in the collection?
- Will materials accumulate at certain branches? Are materials always in the wrong place?
- Does floating increase the number of reservations?
- Floating reduces the number of items in the depository; e.g., during the renovation of a branch, the materials can be floating and located in other branches during the works

Floating has reduced the need for logistics

Are materials always in the wrong place?

Floating collection - targets

- Reduce direct transport costs
 - shorter drive times
 - vehicles can carry other items
 - 1 driver is enough
- Investigate the effects on the collection, specialisation
 - → Floating collection working group
- Investigate the effects on the number of loans, + - 0
 - The share of the Main Library of all loans will decrease

**Reduce direct
transport costs**

**The effects on
the collection,
specialisation**

Floating collection - anticipated effects

- The collection statistics will become redundant
 - Library-specific collection statistics have been discontinued
 - Various identifiers on items harmonised and standardised labelling introduced on acquisitions no individual identifies by library units
- "Surprises"
 - Balancing the collection, change in thinking takes time and customer's reactions

**Library-specific
collection
statistics have
been
discontinued**

**Customer's
reactions**

Floating collection - 10 Great Reasons to Float (Bartlett, 2014)

1. *Floating saves a lot of money X*
2. *Floating pleases patrons and increases circulation X*
3. *Floating saves a lot of time X*
4. *Floating forces improved collection management X*
5. *Floating saves wear and tear on staff and on items X*
6. *Floating saves paging/shelving time, providing faster customer service X*
7. *Floating saves a lot of money in collection budgets ?*
8. *Floating saves time in processing materials X*
9. *Buying is based on patron behaviour, not staff opinion ?*
10. *Floating enriches the entire collection and helps the invisible customer become visible X*

Floating pleases customers and increases circulation

Floating saves paging/shelving time, providing faster customer service



*Centralised selection
of library materials*

Centralised selection

- The Oulu City Library introduced centralised selection of materials in 2015
- Floating is linked with centralised selection of materials
- In centralised selection, items are acquired (selected) for the Oulu City Library as a whole only, not for individual units
- Significantly fewer selectors are needed in this model than when selections are made at each unit separately

Floating is linked with centralised selection of materials

Items are selected for the Oulu City Library as a whole only

Centralised selection

- The staff looks at the collection as a whole, not as a collection for a single library unit
- It needs to be accepted that the customer will “decide” where the material is located
- Collection(s) will be mixed and reshaped depending on customer behaviour
- The acquisitions budget can be allocated more easily on different categories
- Floating and centralised selection brings savings in the number of working hours and in spending

The customer will “decide” where the material is located

Floating and centralised selection brings savings in the number of working hours

Centralised selection - targets

- Aiming at improved collection quality over time
- Introducing variety into the limited collections of small branches
- Focus on the quality
- Focus on the needs of the entire city/ region (OUTI-libraries)
- “Getting the most out of one item (book, CD, DVD etc.)”
- Rationalising the selection and acquisitions stage

Focus on the quality

Rationalising the selection and acquisitions stage

Centralised selection - selectors

- Downsizing from dozens of selectors into 18
- Departments:
 - Periodicals**
 - Adults**
 - Finnish fiction, Celia, acquisition suggestions
 - Comics and e-publications:
 - Foreign-language literature and audio books
 - Blu-ray and DVDs
 - Children and teens**
 - Finnish literature, audio books, comics, e-materials, acquisition suggestions
 - foreign-language literature
 - Blu-ray and DVD
 - Children's music, board games
 - Music**
 - Classical music, music literature, acquisition suggestions:
 - Popular music, console games, films, e-materials, acquisition suggestions:
 - jazz, ethno music, sheet music

**Downsizing
from dozens of
selectors into 18**

Centralised selection - Budget

- Downsizing from dozens of budgets to monitor into five
 - Digital materials
 - Oulu adults
 - Oulu children and teens
 - Oulu audio-visual items
 - Oulu periodicals

**Downsizing
from dozens of
budgets to
monitor into
five**



Experiences

Changes in the selection work

- Staff members could sign up as selectors, not very popular selections were seldom discussed or commented
- Shared collections and patrons, no more optimisation by individual branches
- Does not offset the budget cuts, the reduced number of new acquisitions will be noticed
- The remaining selectors will manage, savings in working hours achieved
- Some are missing the selection work – work task rotation has been planned

**Shared
collections and
patrons**

**The remaining
selectors will
manage, savings
in working
hours achieved**

floating and the new method of selection

Prevents problems:

- Consultation with everyone beforehand and afterwards
- New, meaningful job descriptions
- Addressing problems, remembering the positives
- Collection development based on data
- €

**Meaningful job
descriptions**

**Collection
development
based on data**



***Floating collection
working group***

Floating working group

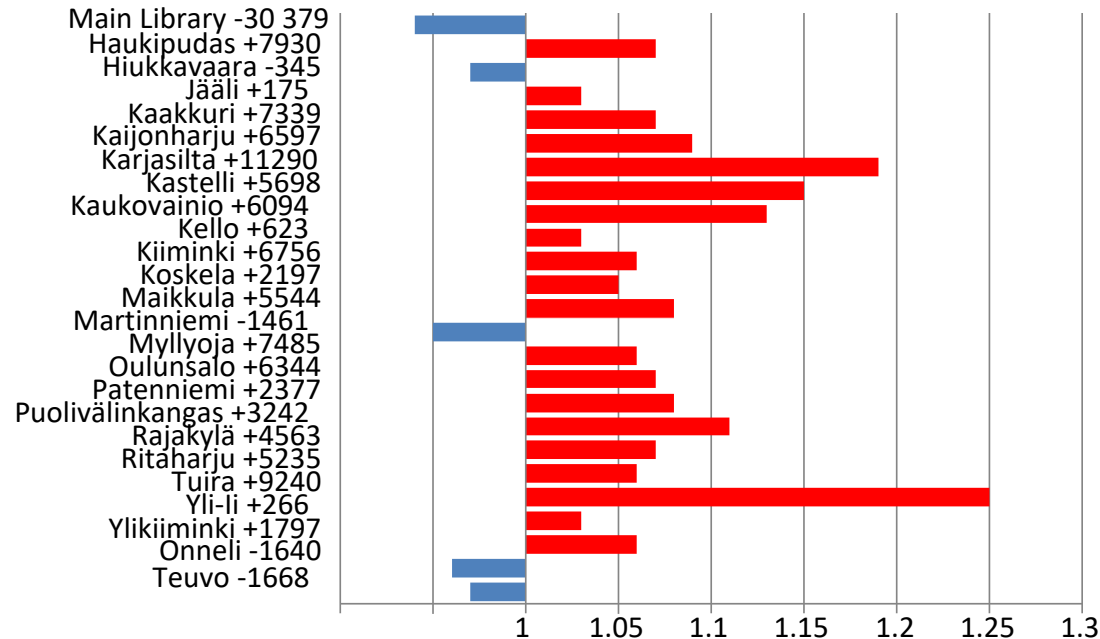
- **Staff questionnaire about floating**
 - Has floating caused any problems or is everything ok?
 - Is collection balancing being done at the moment? Is there a need for guidelines for collection balancing? Pros and cons
- **Appointing a floating working group**
 - Monitoring the progress of floating, issuing instructions for the balancing of the collection, sharing information on floating and collection balancing, gathering feedback and suggestions from users, considering the ratio between disposals and collection balancing, joint disposal decisions , some branches are running dry while others are flooding (problem?)
- **Monitoring the effects of floating through Koha statistics**
 - e.g., have the collection size or the circulation rate changed with floating, how has floating affected the number of loans and reservations

Has floating caused any problems or is everything ok?

Some branches are running dry while others are flooding

Return/ first loans in 2017 (Jan–Nov) Value 1=
returns and loans in balance

Less than 1= more loans that returns (library running dry) More
than 1= more returns than loans (library flooding)



What next?

What we have?

- Floating collection and centralised selection of library materials
- Shared reservation list with Outi-Libraries (15 municipalities)
- Joint use for e-Library (same e-materials for users, 31 municipalities)
-> Next year joint use for 38 municipalities

What if?

- Joint use for e-Library (all municipalities in Finland, same e-materials)
- Regional floating collection and centralised selection of library materials
- Regionally shared reservation list for library materials
- Shared customers and equal use of libraries and library collections

Joint use of e-Library and Library collections?

Shared customers and equal use of libraries and library collections?



#oulunkaupunginkirjasto
***Thank you! Welcome to
Oulu City Library***

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OULU | *Kaupunginkirjasto*

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