



 CASE STUDY

Providing an intuitive and efficient self-service solution for Rotherham College

In September 2021, Advanova began work with Rotherham College to upgrade the technology used in their student library, moving the college away from using barcodes to an RFID-based system.

Rotherham College is part of the RNN Group, a group of education and training organisations which also includes North Notts College, Dearne Valley College and University Centre Rotherham.

The college provides courses for school leavers and adults including Higher Education (HE) and skills. While the library collection is relatively small, it is heavily used by HE learners and also plays a key role in supporting students with more complex queries on areas such as referencing, academic writing and research.

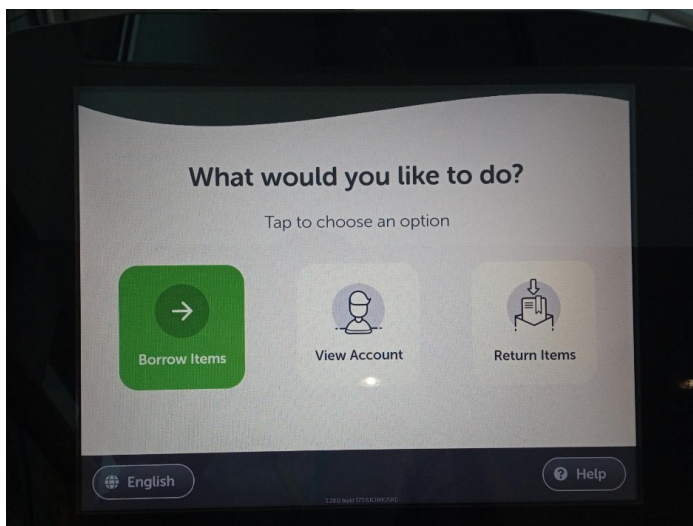
The college found that staff were spending a lot of time issuing and returning items, meaning they were not always free to help students with more complex queries around academic skills. During peak times of the week, queues would build up, meaning learners would have to wait before being able to borrow or return library items.

They were looking for a new technology solution that would not only have benefits for library users, but one that would allow them to achieve cost and efficiency savings too.

Ray Harper, Head of Library Services at the RNN Group said: "We needed to modernise the services at the University Centre Rotherham (UCR) library, so that we could better support our learners and offer more flexibility with our opening times. It was not always possible to staff the library late into the evening and we needed much more capability to enable access out of normal hours."

Barney Yabbacome, Account Manager for Advanova (Midlands and North UK, NI and Eire), said: "We were pleased to help Rotherham College with the upgrade of their library systems, and our proposed solution was to install our D1, free standing, self-service kiosks and RFID book security gates across all four sites operated by the college."

The kiosk can be used to check out, and return books, through a simple scanning system that can read up to 15 books at once. Users can also renew items at the kiosk, as well as choosing to print or email their receipt, reserve items, and check their account status. The kiosk utilises RFID technology, and in addition to user efficiency benefits, it also removes the need for the library to manage separate security tags and barcodes.



The self-service kiosk also retains functionality in the event of a network failure, and in such an event would continue to work in an offline mode, all with minimal staff intervention.

Ray continues: "Introducing self-service at UCR has been one of the first steps in a major transformation of our service. During the Covid-19 pandemic, the libraries offered more services and resources online, and we found there was huge appetite for delivering services digitally. We migrated to a new web-based library management system (Koha) in February 2021, and we wanted to continue this momentum. By introducing self-service kiosks, we could continue to transform the libraries into flexible modern spaces which improved the overall learner experience.

Ongoing Covid restrictions did make access to the site tricky, but Advanova worked alongside the college's internal IT team and the supplier of the college's library management system to ensure that the various connections between systems worked as required and that the installation went smoothly.



Advanova's D1 self-service machine has been excellent. The kiosk has proved very easy and intuitive for staff and learners to use and even learners who are not normally confident with technology or who have visual impairments have found it straightforward to use. The screen is user-friendly, and the menu options are clear and colourful, making them easy to navigate plus learners can even select their preferred language when they log in.

Ray Harper, Head of Library Services, RNN Group

Ray concludes: "Feedback on the self-service kiosks has suggested that our learners have found them quick and easy to use. Plus, the administration console gives our library staff the ability to change the wording and workflows on the kiosk when required but Advanova supplied a manual to explain what all the different options meant which was very beneficial to get us up to speed!

"Overall, we have found Advanova to be extremely knowledgeable, professional and friendly. As part of the install preparation, they did some diagnostic tests on our RFID tags, and were then able to set up the kiosk with appropriate customisations to take into account our RFID encoding structure.

"On the rare occasion that we have encountered any technical issues with the kiosks, Advanova have been quick to send engineers out and diagnose and then fix any faults."

To talk to us about the solutions we would recommend for your specific requirements, please get in touch by calling +44 (0)1582 769991 or emailing sales@advanova.co.uk