

Cybrarian™ Public Access Automation

Cybrarian™ public shared access computer software for libraries combines simple setup system with a wide range of customizable options.

What is a Shared Public Access Computer?



Public access computers serve multiple independent users in places such as libraries, schools, hotels, and Internet cafés.

People who share computers typically need a consistent computing environment. Applications should perform reliably. It can also be important to provide an unchanging interface at every logon. For novice users, changes in screen appearance can be confusing and make learning difficult.

Shared computer users may also be concerned about personal privacy. People usually want to know that their personal information, from financial data to browsing habits, won't be available to the next person who uses the machine.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: What is Cybrarian(tm) public computer management?

A: Cybrarian(tm) public computer management is a comprehensive public PC shared access authentication, Reservation, Internet browser access, and Print Cost management software system that manages all public-use technologies for libraries.

Q: Why should I implement Cybrarian(tm) public computer management at my library?

A: Cybrarian(tm) public computer management enables a library to equitably share limited public computers among many patrons, to control or recover the costs of printing and other pay-for-services and to free staff from constant involvement with the public access PCs through self-service options.

Q: What are the primary benefits of a comprehensive public computer management?

A: Empowers patrons and visitors, enhances the level of staff productivity, improves customer service and recovers costs.

Q: Why has public computer management become so critical to libraries today?

A: The growing number of public-use computers in libraries has had a profound impact on the type of service they provide. Unfortunately, librarians have felt the brunt of this increase because PCs can demand continuous babysitting. Many libraries continue use manual sign-up sheets and to collect print payments via the honor system. However, as libraries add more PCs, it is essential that staff be relieved of the responsibility of

controlling time, reserving computers and excepting payments for all printed documents.

Q: Why is the discovery and selection process for the right public computer management so important?

A: Public-use PCs are arguably the most visible technology investment to libraries. Properly managed, public PCs increase community reliance upon the library improperly managed; they undermine quality service, reduce staff productivity, and squeeze operating funds.

Q: Does Cybrarian(tm) public computer management require a separate card (i.e. vend or smart card) or will it work with the library's current library card?

A: No, Cybrarian(tm) public computer management has been designed to work with the library's current card.

Q: How does Cybrarian(tm) public computer management go about authenticating users?

A: Cybrarian(tm) public computer management provides different options for authenticating users. The library can either have Cybrarian(tm) public computer management interface directly with the Integrated Library System (ILS) in real-time via SIP, Patron API or ODBC protocols or a student management system. The library may also elect to do a one-time patron import into the Cybrarian(tm) public computer management database, eliminating the need to purchase the protocol licensing from their ILS vendor.

Q: What about the on-going maintenance of patron records?

A: Cybrarian(tm) public computer management can link in real-time with your Integrated Library System (ILS) so that when you add, edit, or deactivate a patron record it is automatically reflected in Cybrarian(tm) public computer management. At the Cybrarian(tm) public computer management time, this allows Cybrarian(tm) public computer management to check various sets of patron data (i.e. lost, expired, delinquent, fees & fines, etc.) and deny access based on library policy.

Q: Does Cybrarian(tm) public computer management require a server?

A: No.

Q: What are the differences between server (web server) and non-server based (distributed architecture) solutions?

A: Centralized Server-based (web) systems take advantage of the power of the Internet to provide anywhere-anytime administration and real-time reporting of all program components for one or many remote locations. Older legacy-based (distributed architecture) solutions are a collection of disjointed, unrelated components that carry a much higher Total Cost.

Q: What is the impact on bandwidth and network traffic for server vs. non-server based solutions?

A: The small communication packets (HTTP) used by a centralized web-based system do not impact the network traffic within a LAN or WAN environment. Cybrarian(tm) public computer management clients communicate only small activity and transactional data with the server; print spool files travel directly from client to server. Older non-server based systems however can drastically increase the level of traffic due to their reliance on the library's existing LAN and the fact that each and every PC needs to continually communicate with one another.

Q: What happens if the Internet connection goes down, the server is offline or the ILS link is broken?

A: Cybrarian(tm) public computer management has been designed with fail-over and safe mode default mechanisms to seamlessly handle communication disruptions. This allows patrons to have continued access to the computers, yet at the Cybrarian(tm) public computer management time the library can enforce their library policies.

Q: How is the Cybrarian(tm) public computer management system updated once it is installed?

A: Cybrarian(tm) public computer management has been designed with a powerful Updater that is included as part of its server software package. This enables a library to easily update client computers remotely from single site libraries up to large multi-site county systems without needing to revisit each workstation.

Q: Does the library and/or the patron have to worry about privacy?

A: No. Cybrarian(tm) public computer management will automatically protect the privacy of the patrons; it will not keep track of their work and will clean out their bookmarks, favorites, cookies cache and Internet temp files at end of session.

Q: With on-going privacy concerns, how does the library handle the patron activity information within the Cybrarian (tm) public computer management database?

A: The Cybrarian(tm) public computer management Personal Privacy Protection Manager enables a library to specify what user-identifiable information is retained in the Cybrarian(tm) public computer management database. It renders unusable the specified elements of activity and transaction data while maintaining the integrity of retained detail and statistical data.

Q: Can Cybrarian(tm) public computer management recognize a user as an individual, adult vs. child?

A: Yes, Cybrarian(tm) public computer management can recognize each user as an individual so when used to manage Internet content it arms libraries with a powerful tool to resolve the conflict between unrestricted access to information, community standards, and state or federal

regulations (CIPA).

Q: How does Cybrarian(tm) public computer management recognize a patron?

A: Cybrarian(tm) public computer management starts by displaying a login box. A patron enters their library card number and PIN (optional) to begin a computer session. Based upon the information Cybrarian(tm) public computer management receives from the ILS (i.e. DOB, patron type, etc.) and the library's Computer Use Policy, Cybrarian(tm) public computer management directs the appropriate access to user the user.

Q: Does a user have to be a member of a library to use a Cybrarian(tm) public computer management?

A: No.

Q: How does Cybrarian(tm) public computer management handle visitors to the library?

A: Cybrarian(tm) public computer management provides the library with many flexible options for handling visitor access. This includes everything from re-usable visitor cards, to randomly generated one-day visitor access passes to a complete self-service option whereby the Cybrarian(tm) public computer management Account Payment Machine (APM) can dispense and activate visitor cards.

Q: What type of options does Cybrarian(tm) public computer management provide for Print Cost Recovery?

A: Cybrarian(tm) public computer management provides unparalleled flexibility in controlling and recovering costs from printers, copiers and microfilm reader/printers to meet the diverse requirements of various locations. It allows each library to choose among print methods that best serve its customers and current policies. You can select from client-based release strategies with Cybrarian(tm) public computer management Print Express and My Queue to dedicated print release station configurations.

Q: Can you use different print control configurations at different locations (i.e. print release stations at Central, and the client-release (no dedicated print release stations) at smaller branches)?

A: Yes.

Q: What type of payment options does Cybrarian(tm) public computer management offer for Print Cost Recovery?

A: Cybrarian(tm) public computer management provides many flexible configuration options to meet the needs of every library. You can have Cybrarian(tm) public computer management simply notify the user of what they are printing and limit total prints; implement self-service coin/bill acceptors directly to print release stations; allow staff to record patron payments; or use Account Payment Machines (APM) which allow

patrons or visitors to deposit money into their Cybrarian(tm) public computer management account without staff involvement with or without dedicated print release stations.

Q: Why is the Account-Based System so much more powerful versus the older method of paying cash as you release print jobs using coin/bill towers (COD)?

A: The Cybrarian(tm) public computer management account-based system supports the library's existing library cards (debit and smart cards are not necessary) and its payment functionality is flexible enough to extend beyond print to your copiers / microfilm readers as well as allowing a patron to pay for fees and fines while reducing coin-op dependence at the library.

Q: Can Cybrarian(tm) public computer management automate the process of manual sign-up sheets that staff members currently use to assign patrons PCs?

A: Yes, Cybrarian(tm) public computer management provides both a true First Available Sign-Up option as well as a web-based reservation system.

Q: Is Cybrarian(tm) public computer management an Internet filter?

A: No, Cybrarian(tm) public computer management is not an Internet filter. However, it can integrate with most industry leading server-based filters and enables the library with state-of-the-art manipulation of the filter product to address Internet issues at the public service, administrative and technical levels.

Q: Why are ordinary filters not designed for libraries?

A: Unlike Cybrarian(tm) public computer management, ordinary filter technology is directed to the computer or network account, not the individual. It is designed for schools or businesses in which most users are denied the freedom of choice to manage their personal access to the Internet. While most filters provide an override for those times when unfiltered access is appropriate, this function is staff intensive, requires close supervision, and compromises the objectivity of your Internet Policy.

Q: Why do ordinary filters make CIPA compliance nearly impossible for libraries?

A:

- a) Adults have to request unfiltered access at staff desk,
- b) Staff has to verify age and manually override the filter,
- c) Hopefully staff will be available and remember to restore the filter at the end of that adult's session.

Q: How does Cybrarian(tm) public computer management provide the freedom of choice missing in Internet filters?

A: Automatically differentiates children from adults,
Lets adults select Internet access levels in real-time,

Works with leading filter products,
Requires NO staff involvement,
Uses the library's existing library cards,
Fully automates CIPA compliance.

Public Computer Management

Cybrarian™ technologies are deployed in more libraries than any other brand and are currently used by institutions in more than 36 countries worldwide.

One Thought. One Solution. One Provider.™

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