

# Go Fine-Free and Still Get Your Stuff Back

- Matt Womack, Executive Director, ELA Area Public Library
- Stephen Territo, Head of Circulation, Vernon Area Public Library
- Gary Christopherson, Access Services Admin, Algonquin Area Public Library

# ADVOCACY



- Eliminating barriers
- Future of digital materials
- Financial impact
- Customer service
- A new incentive



# Ela Area Public Library - Lake Zurich, Illinois

## Policy and Procedures

- Removed all old fines before rollout
- Stopped collecting new fines
- Mailed postcards to invite people back
- Revised overdue notice schedule
- No new checkouts if 14+ days overdue

## Results

- 1st time checkouts increased 3%
- Renewals dropped about 3%
- Hold wait times remained steady
- Revenue eliminated
- Happiness skyrocketed

## Recommendations

- Plan well in advance
- Communicate with stakeholders
- Seek replacement revenue
- Watch item availability closely

# PLANNING



- Gather and analyze information
- Create procedures and draft policy recommendation
- Create marketing plan and implement policy

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# Vernon Area Public Library - Lincolnshire, Illinois

## Policy and Procedures

- Waived fines retroactively
- Changed hold to purchase ratio
- Soft launch of new late fees policy
- Changed renewal limits
- Shortened overdue notice schedule

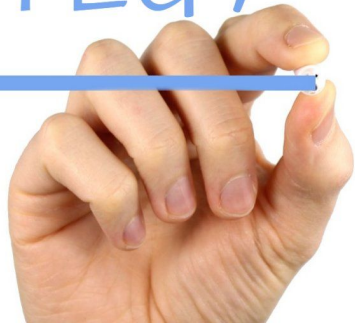
## Results

- 3% increase in first time checkouts
- 8% increase in new resident cards issued
- Materials returned on average 8 days earlier
- Decrease in revenue
- Significant increase in the number of items overdue the first week

## Recommendations

- Research and plan
- Review and adjust loan periods and renewal limits
- Keep staff informed and remain positive
- Expect a significant decrease in revenue

# MARKETING STRATEGY



## Working with Neighbors

- Local patrons versus all patrons
- Consortium

## Educating Patrons

- No such thing as too much information
- Don't forget about word of mouth
- Don't stop telling patrons
- Get outside media involved

# Algonquin Area Public Library - Algonquin, Illinois

## Policy and Procedures

- Worked with nearby libraries/consortium
- Still charge RBs
- Adjusted notice schedule (more!)
- Bill at two weeks
- Created “new” and “hot” categories for videogames

## Results

- Fantastic PR opportunities
- Created buzz
- Fun exchanges with patrons!
- Overdues doubled.
- No fines = Two week grace period.
- Hold turnover OK

## Recommendations

- Work to get all staff on board
- General amnesty to remove existing fines
- Communicate with your public - and don't stop!

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