open+ access solution

The Bibliotheca open+ access model represents a different way of working for public libraries. open+ access is a fully integrated solution designed to allow libraries to maintain and extend their opening hours offering convenience to their patrons and increasing their relevance. Staying open for longer and being able to offer a range of facilities during extended hours will ensure that the library remains an integral part of the local community.

Open+ access is designed to be used a complementary and integral part of the overall service delivery. The skills, passion and wealth of knowledge provided by library staff cannot be replaced by technology, but technology can facilitate innovation and help transform the library service.

open+ access uses technology and processes to enable a library to open with or without staff needing to be present. This technology enables libraries to make further choices about how services are delivered at a time when austerity is forcing Local Authorities to reduce opening hours or even close libraries.

By implementing a range of hardware and software components, libraries can automate not only the self-service transactions but also library access and the library environment. The entire open+ access solution is easy to manage and monitor. Library staff can create and edit bespoke opening hours and schedules, view event details and review live and recorded CCTV footage using administration software.

Bibliotheca's extensive experience sets us apart from other vendors in this market sector and demonstrates our resource and capability to deliver effective and scaled 'open library' solutions. We have successfully installed our solution into an excess of 850 libraries globally and in the United Kingdom, we have deployed open+ access in more than 260 libraries across 63 local authorities.

Library user benefits includes shift workers being able to visit the library before or after work as well as more independence for library clubs and charities to use the library for meetings in unstaffed hours, strengthening the position of libraries as successful centres of community life.

Extending library hours provides support for vulnerable and lonely people as many libraries are the lifeline for those who live alone. Extending the length of time that a library is open can allow patrons to create friendship groups with other regular users which helps the vulnerable with their isolation issues. One Bibliotheca customer, who extended its opening hours, told us

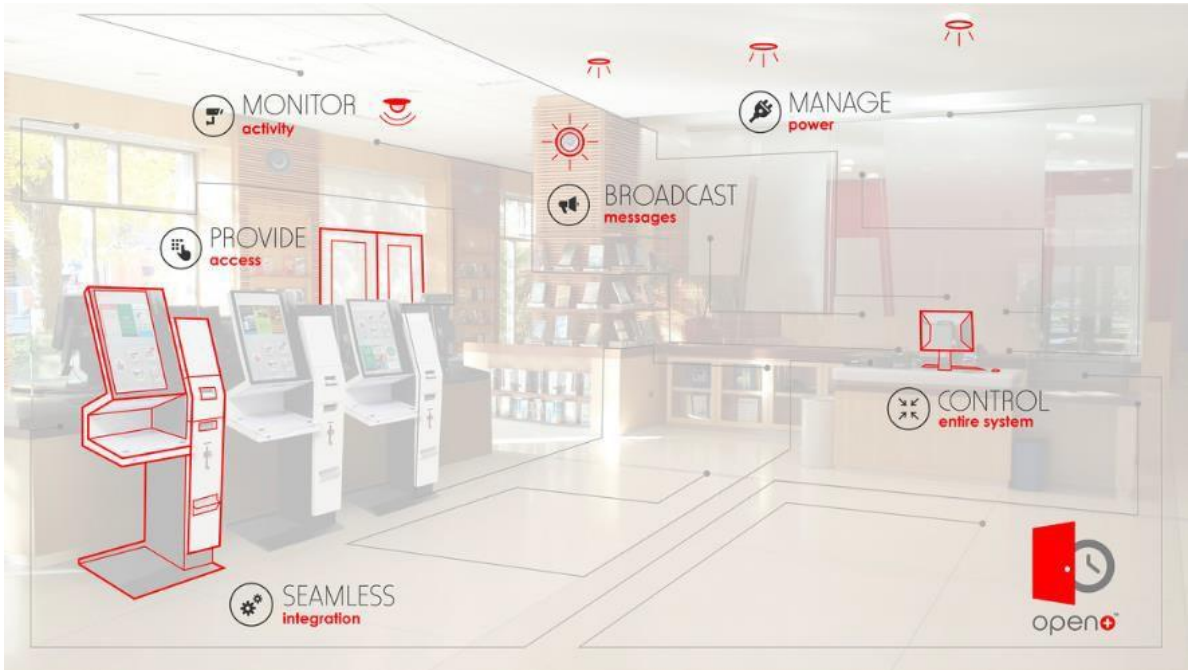
"One of our customers has a son who is sensitive to noise. It was difficult for him to use the library because of all the people and the stimulation. He told his mother that our library is now his dream library because he can come in after hours when its quieter. She was so appreciative that he now has an opportunity to use the library and feel safe and comfortable"

open+ access controls

During open+ access hours, safe access to the library building is granted via a door entry panel which requires the patron to scan their library card (and optionally enter a PIN number). Patron validation is obtained via a SIP2 connection to the Library Management System (LMS). Only validated patrons are granted access during unstaffed open+ hours.

Bibliotheca recommends that all patrons who sign up for open+ membership are introduced to the features of open+ via an induction from the Library Service. This should include what facilities are available and how to use them, evacuation procedures, essential building information and how to report any problems.

open+ access integrates with the existing library infrastructure, including door access, LMS, main lights, self-service kiosks, RFID security gates, cameras and intruder alarms.



Once inside the library, patrons can use the self-service kiosk facilities to issue, return and renew items or pay fees and fines, just as they can during staffed hours, as well as using the library public access PC facilities or using other library facilities made available. Audio speakers can be installed to alert patrons to when the library is changing from staffed to unstaffed open+ access mode as well as when the open+ library is set to close.

For a complete solution, motion activated, or continuous recording CCTV security cameras can be installed throughout the library to monitor and record activity, providing safety and peace of mind for patrons. Authorised library staff can view live footage from each camera or review stored recordings.

open+ access is managed through a user-friendly, open+ Administration program. This application allows authorised staff to, for example, access and edit library opening hours, review CCTV videos, see event logs and monitor the current state of the open+ system and access statistical reports. To access the administration program, staff must be connected to the internet and to view the surveillance video, staff must also be connected to the library network.

open+ count solution

open+ count is part of the Bibliotheca library technology ecosystem and is fully and uniquely interoperable with the open+ access solution. A highly accurate people counter (99% accuracy) counts individuals, groups, children and wheelchair users.

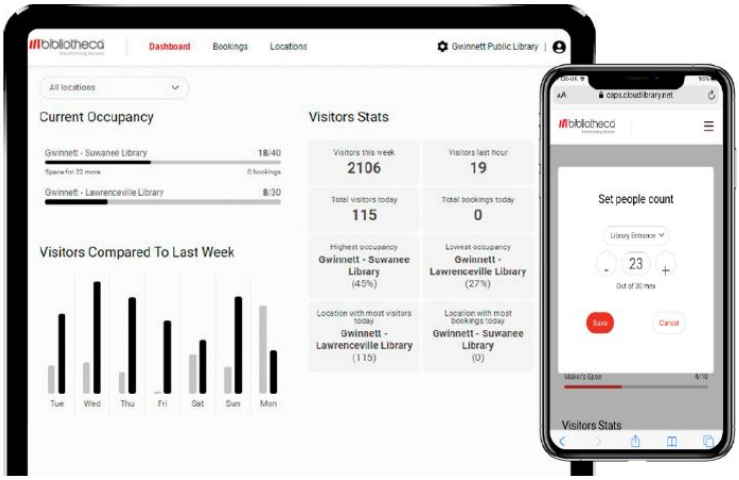
Unstaffed hours

open+ count controls the number of patrons allowed access into the library during unstaffed hours, based on the building's capacity (usually based on the square footage of the library space). After a patron is authenticated at the open+ access door entry panel, before the door is unlocked, the system checks the library capacity before allowing the patron to enter. open+ access registers an event if the door remains locked due to maximum occupancy reached.

Staffed hours

Although designed to work in conjunction with open+ access, open+ count can also provide an occupancy live stream, via internal and external facing display screens.

- Simple traffic light colour coding
- Configurable messaging indicates current occupancy levels
- In conjunction with Bibliotheca uniFi+ digital signage software (for enhanced visual communications) library occupancy information can also be displayed on selfCheck™ kiosk screensavers

Staff side

- Web hosted software is accessible remotely, by authorised staff
- Multiple library and camera locations identifiable and accessed from one dashboard
- Staff set the building occupancy levels
- Staff check the dashboard to assess the current level of occupancy
- End of day automated reset