

# **100% Self Loans**

At the City of Wanneroo Public Libraries

Friday, 13 July 2018



**FE TECHNOLOGIES**



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## About Wanneroo Libraries

The City of Wanneroo is one of the fastest growing regions in Australia with 8000 new residents settling in the area every year. The libraries form an important hub for community engagement and activity, and is an important part of Council infrastructure in this fast-growing region. The libraries comprise 5 branches plus a small "pop-up" library at Alkimos.

The library has a medium-sized collection of over 150,000 items. The Library serves a large geographical area and is well-used by the public with 220,000 visitors up until September 2017.

The library provides the community with a range of services including an extensive range of children's services including early childhood activities, reading sessions, literacy activities, play groups and a toy library. The library also offers other services such as tools for job seekers, online learning tools, family history research and a business eStudio along with photocopying and printing, laminating, room hire and books sales.



## Busy, Valuable Staff

With such a broad range of services comes the need for staff to be fully utilised to the best of their training and abilities. Staff at Wanneroo are engaged with the library patrons, offering research assistance, computer use assistance, and they conduct many of the children's activities on a daily basis. Staff are also expected to handle the daily



circulation of the library including processing loans and returns and reshelving items. In a busy library environment it's important that staff time is diverted away from menial repetitive tasks into more high value customer service tasks that give patrons a better experience within the library and use the skills and knowledge of staff to maximum effect, which also improves staff satisfaction.



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Before the introduction of an RFID system, patrons would borrow items at the Circulation Desk at each branch. The process was a completely manual, one at a time, repetitive exercise for staff. Patrons would complain about the queues and staff just didn't have the time to perform other functions relating to their role.

When the library converted to an RFID system some years ago, it was important to realise the benefits this new technology could provide to library efficiency, staff productivity and patron experience.

## FE Technologies the ideal choice for self-checkout at all branches

The City of Wanneroo first installed the FE Technologies Library RFID equipment in 2015.

FE Technologies is an Australian based library RFID company that supplies a complete suite of library RFID products, including returns chutes and sorting software, circulation software for staff workstations, security gates, stocktake devices, and the flagship product the V5 Self Loan Station. The City recently awarded a new contract to FE Technologies for more Self Loan Stations. This decision was based not only the durability of the RFID equipment, still performing as it was designed to from day 1, but also due to the success of the Self Loan Stations in creating huge efficiencies for the libraries. FE Technologies supplies Self Loan Stations that give the libraries complete self-checkout for patrons, in some cases as high as 100% self checkout.



The Self Loan Stations are fun and easy to use for patrons and free up staff from manual check out at the service desk. Queues are drastically reduced, improving patron experience in the library and keeping circulation rates high. FE Technologies has its own inhouse research and development facility and are dedicated to developing RFID products and services that suit the ever-changing needs of Australian Libraries. One of these developments is the hugely popular V5 Self Loan Station.

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## A Self Loan Station in a class of its own

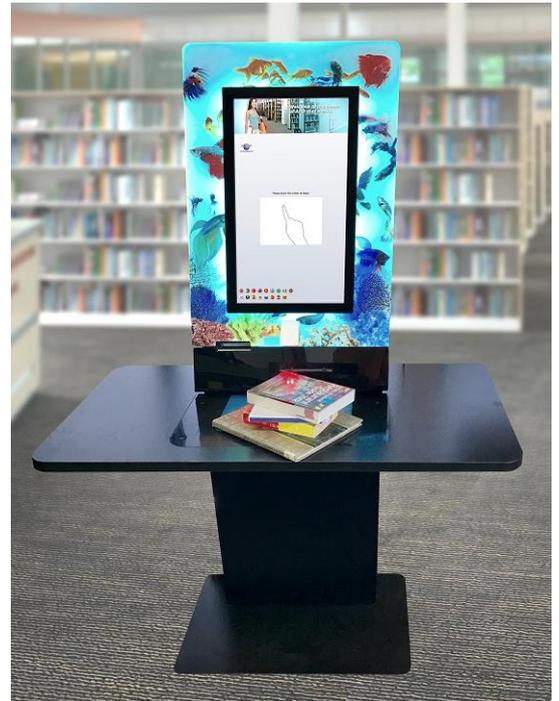
The City of Wanneroo chose the innovative V5 Self Loan Station. The hardware of the Self Loan Station is highly customisable which allowed the library to fit the stations into their own décor and themes. The V5 Self Loan Station is a state-of-the-art loan station designed to look amazing in any library environment.

- With a portrait-oriented 23" touchscreen it allows the display of multiple items without the requirement to scroll up or down.
- It lets Wanneroo's patron's check out up to 15 items at a time, which is especially important for the library's "power users" who borrow to their limit each time
- The V5 Self Loan Station features an LED halo that can be lit in your corporate colour. You can even light each loan station in a different colour to match it to different areas of the library.

Alternatively, the halo surrounding the touchscreen can have an industrial-grade vinyl "skin" designed in the library's logos and colours. The City of

Wanneroo Libraries makes use of the LED feature by frequently changing the colour of the stations to add interest to the library. It can be related to a theme, or just a random colour chosen on the day.

- The V5 can be installed back to back, mounted on a wall, or the leg removed so it can be simply placed on a benchtop. There is a choice of glass or laminate benchtops. There is also a height-adjustable version available that allows you to set the height of the Self Loan Station via a telescopic pedestal built into the leg of the unit.



*"The FE Technologies Self Loan Stations are reliable and rarely have any issues, so we're really happy."*



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## Customisable Software

The Self Loan Station's software is completely customisable, which was important to the City of Wanneroo in order to fully customise the Self Loan Station to maximise patron experience in the libraries, and to give patrons the ability to completely self-serve.

Customisation is performed in a range of ways:

### Header, advertising, screensavers

All customisations are performed via the Management Console which is the software used to monitor, configure and report on all RFID equipment in the network. You do not need a very high level of IT expertise or a familiarity with code to perform most of the interface configuration changes via the Management Console. FE Technologies can setup the configuration you want, or library staff can perform the changes themselves. This is great for sites like Wanneroo where staff have the confidence to setup the Self Loan Stations in exactly the way they want, for each branch.

The Self Loan Station proposed by FE Technologies has several options that allow the customisation of the screen or GUI.

#### Display banner

The Library can control the banner image on the top of the self-loan station screen as either an image, animated GIF or running a video advertisement. This can also be controlled at a branch level.

#### Display advertising

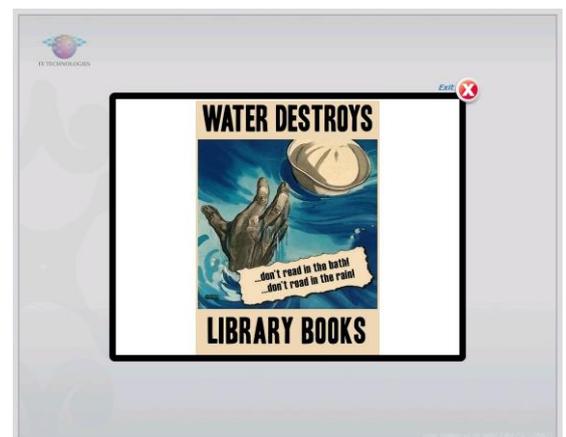
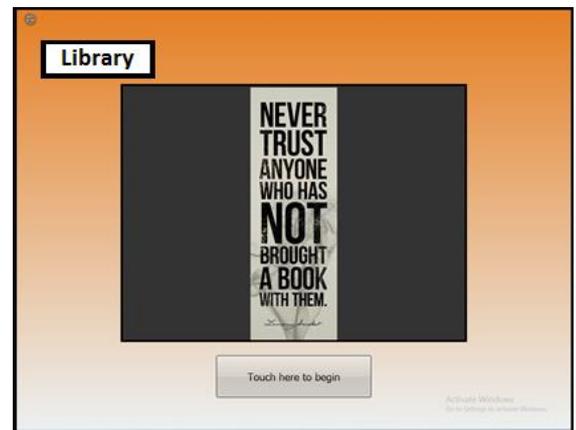
The library has the opportunity to advertise at a branch level allowing each branch to communicate with their unique community directly with on screen adverts. Adverts can be used to advertise vents to increase foot traffic or advertise specific issues at that location.

#### Display welcome messages

The library has the option to display a welcome message on either the menu page or every page. Furthermore the library has the option of customising the welcome message with a message that is appropriate for the library.

#### Display end of session message

The library has the option to display an end of session message on the last page or every transaction. This is to remind patrons not to forget their library cards.





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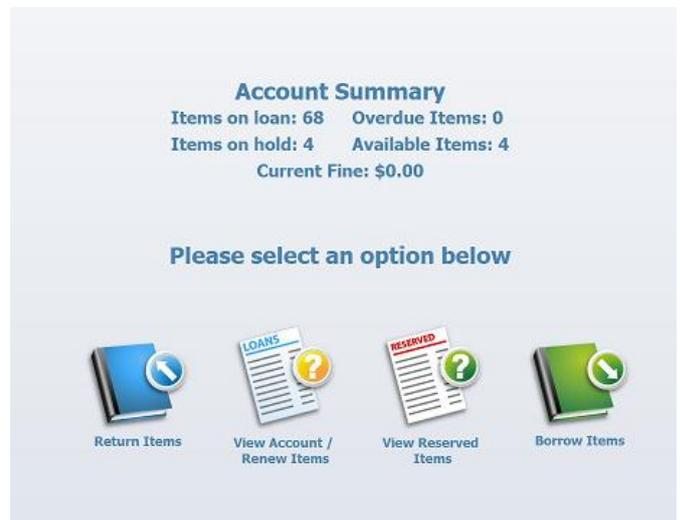
## Workflows

The Self Loan Station has literally hundreds of different workflows (the steps that a patron takes to perform a transaction) available. These can be designed to match the business rules of your library and can be on a branch level basis. You can design how and in what order patrons perform a borrowing transaction, you can choose from 35 available languages to be displayed or you can even setup the functionality of the Self Loan Station to Returns. This is what the City of Wanneroo has chosen for the Self Loan Stations at the Alkimos branch. This site is virtually unattended, so there is one Self Loan Station for self check out and one Self Loan Station for returns. This is ideal for a completely self serve environment. The Returns options on the Self Loan Station can be configured to allow patrons to return items, or even conduct a basic sort of items where they are directed to place items into a chopice of two bins placed either side of the unit. The Returns function can even be configured to allow patron to perform multiple returns at a time, which reduced the queues in this busy little branch.



## Genuine self loans for all patrons

Wanneroo Libraries has achieved its goal of reducing the time staff spend on the menial job of checking out items, giving them the time to conduct more high value roles within the library. The libraries now enjoy a self loan rate of approximately 80%. Patrons benefit from having a better user experience in the library, with staff available to assist with computers, printing, research, and children’s activities. Plus the queues relating to check-out have disappeared. The Self Loan Station lets patrons check out up to 15 items at a time in a simple 3-step process. An intuitive touchscreen display with icons and





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animations mean that each transaction is completed in mere seconds.

At branches where there are limited staff in attendance, such as the Alkimos branch the Self Loan Stations are earning their keep by allowing 100% patron self checkout and 100% patron self returns.

*"The Self Loan Stations has really empowered staff...they're freed up to do other tasks and they're no longer tied to the circulation desk."*

## Conclusion

Patrons of all ages enjoys using the FE Technologies Self Loan Stations at the City of Wanneroo Libraries. The units have given the libraries nearly 100% self checkout at all their branches giving patrons a better user experience in the library with reduced queues and speedier transaction times. The installation of the Self Loan Stations frees up staff time from repetitive manual check in and check out tasks to perform more valuable tasks around the libraries. What's more, the ability to customize the Self Loan Station's LED halo and the workflows give the libraries a truly flexible loans solution that can be tailored to the library's exact requirements, even down to a branch level.

*"We often change the colour and in Alkimos we have a kiosk specifically for self -returns and another for check – out, both of the flows are different...we recommend the FE Technologies Self Loan Stations to other libraries all the time."*

The FE Technologies Self Loan Station is the perfect solution for busy libraries needing to achieve a high percentage of self checkout.

