SUCCESS STORY: Cuyahoga County Public Library

Non-English materials fly off library’s shelf

Language Sets offers a quick way to acquire more titles

Situation

Historically, the greater Cleveland area has drawn many immigrants. Today, 4.5 percent of its residents report having been born in another country with 43,000 being of Russian descent. Immigrants had traditionally settled in the city itself, but more recently they’ve settled in the surrounding Cuyahoga County suburbs, such as Mayfield, South Euclid and Solon.

Louise Sevold, Technical Services Director, and her staff at Cuyahoga County Public Library tried serving these various ethnic groups by offering non-English materials that they borrowed from the Cleveland Public Library on a long-loan basis. They placed Russianlanguage materials at their South Euclid Library branch and Hindi materials at another branch.

However, Louise said circulation wasn’t great, and, of course, they couldn’t add the records to their catalog so that didn’t help either.

Solution

Louise remembered having heard about OCLC Language Sets several years ago at a meeting of the Collections and Technical Services Advisory Committee, which is an OCLC membership committee. She decided to try OCLC Language Sets since she and her staff wouldn’t have to find or catalog the materials themselves—they don’t have a foreign-language cataloger. “Plus,” Louise said, “with Language Sets everything is just ready to go.”

For their Mayfield Regional Library branch, they ordered four adult-fiction Russian sets, a total of 150 titles, to be delivered bimonthly over eight months. When they received the titles, they placed them in a special location.

OCLC’s Russian-language materials selector, Andy Kier, explained that when choosing Russian fiction titles for a given library, he looks for a good, balanced mix of genres and Russian and foreign authors. He said, “I have a good idea of what typical readers want because both my wife and mother-in-law are Russian and love to read. We talk about various titles and authors that our family enjoys.”

When the Mayfield Regional branch received its second set of materials in July, the manager went to place them next to the set received in May. However, she found only three books out of the 50 on the shelf. Ninety-four percent of the titles were checked out.

“I’m very pleased with the fact that Language Sets are so easy. We receive the materials and just have to add the bibliographic records to our catalog, and we’re ready to go,” Louise added.
**Results**

After doing some research, they learned that 19 different patrons of Russian descent had checked out the new materials. The library’s circulation rate for Russian-language materials had risen 202 percent. Over a five-month period, the 150 titles had circulated 581 times with one title circulating ten times.

Louise said, “As a result of our success with this, we’re ordering more materials from OCLC Language Sets.” She’s expanding their non-English collection by placing a $25,000 order for a Spanish set for the Brooklyn branch; a Hindi set for the Strongsville branch and two more Russian sets for their Mayfield Regional and Solon Library branches.

“I’m very pleased with the fact that Language Sets are so easy. We receive the materials and just have to add the bibliographic records to our catalog, and we’re ready to go,” Louise added.

For more information about OCLC Language Sets, visit [www.oclc.org/languagesets/](http://www.oclc.org/languagesets/), call 1-800-848-5878, ext. 5096 or send e-mail to langsets@oclc.org.