

FEBRUARY 2023 HOLD SLIPS

Purpose of Study: To evaluate whether hold slips are a feasible option in place of hold labels. Initially, four libraries tested in December for two weeks. Based on feedback, we decided to expand the trial to all libraries and Collections Processing.

This report provides background addition to summarizes key findings, followed by sections with detailed supporting data entered by libraries [Hold Slip Tracking 2023-02.xlsx](#). It concludes with possible considerations for the future.

BACKGROUND

With the price of hold labels increasing, ongoing supply chain issues and the level of stickiness of the labels, we are going to test using hold slips instead of hold labels.

Here is the cost breakdown:

- We had roughly 800,000 holds placed in the last 12 months.
- Sticky labels cost \$30 per 1000 labels (\$.03 each). The cost per roll may be about to double though. Based on the \$30 per roll, we spend around \$24,000 on labels per year. That could increase to \$48,000 if the price does double.
- Receipt paper costs \$65.43 per box of paper (24 rolls) or \$2.72 per roll. There is 324' on each roll. If each hold receipt were 5.5", we could have 707 hold slips per roll or \$.003 per slip. If they are 6", we could have 648 hold slips per roll or \$.004 per slip. In that case, we would spend \$2,400 to \$3,200 on hold slips per year.
- Additionally, the cost of receipt printers is approximately \$500 while hold label printers are double that amount. IT has a few extra receipt printers if locations found that they needed one in their back room.

All libraries completed a baseline study to track fill list/daily holds, expired holds, and delivery in November and December 2022. A two week testing study followed the one week baseline study with Belle Isle, Edmond, Village, and Warr Acres using hold slips instead of hold labels.

KEY FINDINGS: TIME DATA

The data below are averages libraries submitted from the baseline study and testing period. The baseline period is from November 28 through December 4, 2022 using hold labels. The testing period is from February 13 through February 19, 2023 using hold slips.

Pulling Holds / Fill List

- For the baseline period:
 - All libraries spent an average of **43 minute and 35 seconds** pulling holds
 - All libraries spent **1 minute and 4 seconds** per item pulling and putting the label on
- For the testing period:
 - All libraries spent an average of **36 minute and 21 seconds** pulling holds
 - All libraries spent **54 seconds** per item pulling and putting the slip in

*For pulling holds, an average of **10 seconds** per item is saved using hold slips over hold labels per item.*

Expired Holds

- For the baseline period:
 - All libraries spent an average of **26 minutes and 16 seconds** processing the holds expired list
 - A breakdown of **1 minute and 13 seconds** per item
- For the testing period:
 - All libraries spent **19 minutes and 4 seconds** processing the holds expired list
 - A breakdown of **1 minute and 12 seconds** per item

*For processing expired holds, an average of **1 second** per item is saved using hold slips over hold labels per item.*

Delivery

- For the baseline period:
 - All libraries spent **55 minutes and 52 seconds** shelving holds
 - A breakdown of **29 seconds** per item
- For the testing period:
 - All libraries spent **37 minutes and 48 seconds** shelving holds
 - A breakdown of **21 seconds** per item

*For shelving delivery, an average of **8 seconds** per item is saved using hold slips over hold labels per item.*

GUEST FEEDBACK

Marketing and Communications created a Microsoft Form and created a number of social media posts, listed the Microsoft Form in the February newsletter to guests, and create posters for libraries to hang that included a QR code to the Microsoft Form for guests to submit feedback.

Guests were asked to rank on a scale from 1 to 10 with 10 being “great”, 5 being “neutral” and 1 being “not great”.

- We received 248 number of responses with an average rating of 7.89.
 - 184 were 7+ rating and higher with 137 being a score of 10
- Positive Feedback Included:
 - Complains of the hold label stickiness and ease of hold slips to remove
 - Using the slip as their bookmark
 - Happy the hold slips won’t damage material
 - Hold slips are easier to remove than hold labels
- Negative Feedback Included:
 - Slips are messy, shelves look tacky
 - Difficult to find on the hold shelf
 - Laying material on the side causes them to fall over when pulling out holds

Additionally, Marketing and Communications compiled all comments left by guests on our social media posts. Of the 67 responses, 10 preferred hold labels. The remaining 57 responses were in support of hold slips. Comments aligned with feedback on the Microsoft Form.

PIONEER LIBRARY HOLD LABELS

A number of staff and a select few guests asked about Metro switching to the hold labels the Pioneer Library System uses. Tricia Andrews, Galen Boydston, and Matthew Cotter visited a Pioneer Library System branch in Norman to see their hold label process. Overall, the labels seemed to work well and did not have the level of stickiness Metro is currently experiencing.

However, labels must be printed one at a time as they are printed without backing. Regular cleaning of the hold printer must be done to remove sticky build up from the printer. Hold labels were slower to print, and based on our hold volume compared to Pioneer it would greatly impact staff processing time. Slower staff processing time would increase guest wait time to receive their hold.

Additionally, Pioneer uses Envisionware products to print. We are unsure of how the hold printers would integrate with CARL to ensure we have correct formatting and dark text to allow the label to be easily read by guests and staff.

CONSIDERATIONS FOR THE FUTURE

If we decide to continue using hold slips, here are various considerations:

Hold Labels

- OUT and ILL will continue to use hold labels for Kiosk and ILL material.
 - Potentially relocate CL and WR small hold label printers and/or a large hold label printer to use larger stock of hold labels and provide more printers at staff workstations.
 - We will need to determine what hold labels to use once we run out of our current supply of white labels to see what to use that aren't overwhelmingly sticky.

Technology / Supplies

- Receipt Paper
 - Potentially switch receipt paper to be thicker, therefore, less flimsy
 - We need ensure we use BPA-free thermal paper as guests and staff had concerns.
- Receipt Printers
 - Potentially switch to a different type to handle larger volume of use
 - Have the save type/version of printer to ensure margins are the same

Staff Support

- Create a document to provide images to support staff on how to place hold slips. Document could be used for new employees as well as serve as a reference for existing staff when needed.

Opportunities for Library Innovation

- Library staff should consider our Core Values of Innovation and People first to find ways to assist guests to adjust to hold slips by troubleshooting consistent negative feedback surrounding:
 - Shelves look messy and tacky
 - Perhaps library staff do more rounds in the hold shelves to straighten and edge
 - And other ideas determined by staff
 - Items are difficult to find
 - Place bookends around family items or large number of items to help them not fall over

- Create letter signage in the hold shelves to mark to guests where the alphabet is broken up
- Spread out holds to be more easily discovered by guests by utilizing all hold shelving
- And other ideas determined by staff