

Whitepaper: My Personal Library

The Problem – Books in Personal Libraries Require Tracking

With the high cost of physical books, owning a personal library (even one of just a bookshelf or two) is an expense. These bookshelves often become a public library to one's friendship circle, borrowing books with the promise of returning. Things can happen during this lending process, however: Friends lose touch, books get lost, one or both parties forget about the exchange, etc. For people who loan books to friends often, it is easy to forget who borrowed which book. These things can all lead to further costs to replace the missing book.

Tracking personal books can prevent one from forgetting about the exchange/the parties involved in the exchanges. Unfortunately, the tracking can be difficult. Compiling a list of every book in a personal library can be time consuming. Some people taking to Word or Excel to create and inventory but important information can be left behind in the process: for example, book edition, signed copies, hardcover or paperback, number of copies owned, etc.

Most softwares that include inventory functionality focus more on archiving books a user has read or wishes to read, as opposed to collecting the books a user owns, are not available as a web application, or lack detailed lending information – resulting in a user knowing someone has borrowed a book, but not who. How can a user quickly compile a list of books they own, including edition and number and retain information regarding who is currently in possession of books?

The Solution – An Inventory System

My Personal Library is the solution to creating a lending library inventory. It is a tool that is specifically focused on quickly creating an inventory and tracking lending, while not putting the primary focus on reviews and ratings. Rather reviews are there for the library owner's reference. My Personal Library contains information on book edition, number of copies, is easy to maintain and update, is available on the internet for easy access, and is browsable by other users, allowing friends to virtually request to borrow a book.

Features and Functions

My Personal Library has three primary activities: creating an inventory, borrowing and tracking books, and reviewing with the following break down of functions.

Creating an Inventory:

- ⤴ *Document owned books*: creating a personal list of all books s/he owns.
 1. *Track number of copies*: if more than one book is owned, the multiple copies are noted.
 2. *Edition Information*: information about the edition – hardcover, paperback, first edition – is included.
- ⤴ *Creating Collections*: depending on the books in an inventory, a user can create collections of similar books.
- ⤴ *Web Application*: inventory can be updated from any location as long as they have access to the internet.

Borrowing and Tracking Lending

- ⤴ *User-Based*: users may be connected to a borrowed book and may browse through libraries of other users
- ⤴ *Connecting Users*: users are able to connect with each other and browse the libraries of their friends.
- ⤴ *Lending*: users have the ability to mark books as borrowed – this include information about *who* is borrowing the book.
- ⤴ *Request to Borrow*: users are able to request to borrow books from other users in their network connected users may request to borrow books from friends, allowing for digital documentation of the exchange.
- ⤴ *User Recommendations*: allows users to recommend books from his/her inventory to friends.

Reviewing

- ⤴ *Rating System*: users have the ability to rate the books on their shelves for personal reference, allowing other users to establish similar taste and book quality.

Future Development

- ⤴ A review system allowing users to review books on their shelves and those they have borrowed
- ⤴ Price Comparisons - users who borrow an enjoyable book and wish to own it users who unfortunately need to replace a book are able to find it at the cheapest price possible.

What My Personal Library *isn't*

While My Personal Library may integrate a review system for users to remember and share opinions about a book, My Personal Library is primarily an inventory website to allow users to easily manage and track their books. Therefore functions such as similar books and social media will not be incorporated.