

Inventory Using Voyager System Features Pick and Scan & Item Statistical Categories

Background:

Conducting an inventory project with Voyager system software usually requires third-party software to sort and analyze the data, and it often introduces extemporaneous factors such as shelf-list order as bearing on the inventory processes outcomes. In seeking a new way to use the existing Voyager database structure to conduct an inventory project, the idea was struck that the existing table entity "Statistical Item Categories" could be used to quickly and easily generate an inventory list of missing items. In thinking about how inventories were done in the past and then finding a way to imitate that process electronically it was determined to find a process that would imitate taking a shelving list and checking off each item found on the shelf. Electronically the shelf list resides in the voyager database and by scanning an item's barcode is the same as checking the item off the electronic shelving list. The flexibility of such a procedure allows libraries to ignore superfluous data such as near-perfect shelf-list order and actively scan barcode information as the easiest means to track an item's inventory status. As far as checking call number and title information or correcting shelving order during the inventory process that is left to each library to decide whether they what to perform these processes during inventory or not. By removing these processes from the inventory procedure will allows you to complete the scanning process on a small collection of about 70,000 volumes in 3 to 4 days. If shelf reading and checking accession information is make a part of the library's daily procedures throughout the year there is not need to make these processes a part of the inventory procedure.

Process:

The only requirement to make this new process work is the ability to use the pick-and-scan feature to scan item barcodes direct or upload a flat file of item barcodes. Both Voyager Circulation and Voyager Cataloging provide the pick-and-scan feature. Prior to initial project implementation, two new statistical categories "Inventory Missing" and "Inventory Present" are created and then the "Inventory Missing" is assigned to all item record being included in the inventory. For the direct scanning method of the inventory, the "Inventory Present" statistical category is to add to each item scanned into pick-and-scan. While conducting the off-line version of inventory scanning, the "Inventory Present" statistical category is added to all inventoried items through the pick-and-scan function by uploading a flat file of items scanned. This flat file of scanned items is created by scanning barcodes into an Access database loaded on a laptop. The inventory period can be as long or as short as needed. Items checked out or returned during the inventory period are simply scanned as "Inventory Present" before processing. After the statistical category "Inventory Present" is applied to all items in the collection that have been scanned a follow-up Access query report is run to create a list of items which only have the "Inventory Missing" statistical category applied to them. From this list of items that have been identified as missing library staff can then determine the status of each item.

Equipment Used:

- Laptop with Voyager Scanner attached by 10ft ext. cable
- Flat AV chart with bottom shelf
- Laminated Marker Team Sheet (Marks where you stop scanning)
 - Doc "Team Signs.doc" included on this CD
- Sticky Notes (To give direction of scan, note problems, etc.)