

Kansas City Public Library

Authorized Staff Accounts in the Web Catalog: Guidelines & Best Practices

These are the official guidelines for use of authorized web catalog staff accounts by employees of the Kansas City Public Library. These guidelines apply to all Library employees who are active in the Library's online public access catalog. Such activity includes: creating an account profile, posting comments on items, creating lists, and annotating items in the catalog.

Any employee using an official Library staff account in the web catalog should understand and follow these guidelines.

Guidelines

The Kansas City Public Library recognizes the powerful potential of new technologies to improve communication, enhance customer experience, and further our outreach initiatives in the digital realm. We encourage employees to harness these technologies to communicate with customers and to provide digital access to the Library.

The Library's "Voice"—As you will be perceived as representing the Library whenever you create and post content in the catalog, please remember our mission statement:

The Kansas City Public Library is a doorway to knowledge for all people in our community.

Our attitude should always be that of a knowledgeable friend and helper. We are representatives of, for, and to the entire community, but especially the underserved, and we will always take the extra step to show respect to every individual and his or her position and views. Online environments are rife for misunderstandings of tone and intent—this makes communication even harder on the internet than in person and therefore means you must lift your game to that responsibility.

Best Practices

DO NOT post content that contains any of the following:

- Obscene or racist content
- Personal attacks, harassment, or threatening language
- Potentially libelous statements
- Copyrighted material without permission
- Private, personal information published without consent
- Commercial promotions or spam

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- Unapproved organized political activities
- Religious activity, endorsements, or proselytizing
- Confidential workplace information
- Spoilers

DO follow these guiding principles:

- Uphold patron privacy guidelines as defined in the Circulation Manual.
- Always keep your supervisor informed and updated about your activity in the catalog.
- Stick to your area of expertise and provide unique, individual perspectives in the content you create.
- Always pause and think before posting. If it continues to give you pause, don't post it.
- Remember that the web catalog is meant to serve the customers – don't be overbearing by posting too often or trying too hard to assert your individual personality.
- These are the Library's accounts, not yours—a supervisor may ask you to delete content if it is in the Library's best interest to do so.
- Do not say anything in the catalog that you wouldn't say to a customer at the service desk. Remember that your comments are public and can be part of the permanent record.
- And finally: **Our goal is to build stronger relationships with our customers and community. Don't be afraid to get out there and join the conversation!**

Other Ways to Lift Your Game

Fill out the information on your account profile. Patrons want to know about you, your interests and areas of expertise, so they can decide whether to follow you.

Don't link to personal Twitter accounts or blogs in your staff account profile. Remember, you represent the Library with your staff account. (You can always create a personal account with your regular Library card.)

Lists should be limited to a maximum of 25 items. If you include more than 25 items on a list, it will automatically roll over onto a second page, which means most patrons won't click through to see the rest.

Describe your lists. The best list descriptions are short and pithy, informative, and pique patrons' interest.

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Comments on items should be short and sweet. Shoot for four or five sentences, or less. Focus on appeal factors and quality. There's no need to summarize the plot or content when each item record already has that information.