The Untapped Power of Rapid

RapidILL is designed to do three things and to do them well:

1) Reduce the amount of staff time needed to process requests;
2) Reduce the amount of time it takes to fulfill requests;
3) Dramatically reduce the cost of resource sharing.

This Rapid Rocks is the first in a series of three in which we will discuss the untapped power of Rapid and how you can use the system to your best advantage.

For those of you who have been Rapid participants for a long time and who have built Rapid into your processing routine, and for those of you who are new to Rapid and just learning the ropes, this series of Rapid Rocks is designed to ensure that you know about and are using all the tools and efficiencies available to you. We know that some of you are not achieving the best results that are possible.

This series has three authors: myself (Jane Smith), Tom Delaney and Mike Richins and we’ll begin by talking about borrowing. The second issue will address your holdings in the Rapid database and, finally, we will examine how Rapid lending is designed to distribute requests equitably and how to streamline your lending process.

The motto of this series is:
“Let Rapid do the work for you!”

Borrowing:
When the Rapid team examines the system’s statistics every month we see dramatic differences in the number of requests libraries send into Rapid. From these statistics it is easy to see that while many institutions are taking full advantage of Rapid borrowing, there is some room for improvement.

In late September, I used the Rapid lists to ask you “Out of all the article requests you receive, how many of them are filled in Rapid?”

I was pleased to receive over 50 responses in 4 days.
The percentage of all the article requests received by an institution and filled via Rapid varied widely. The responses ranged from 20%-96%. Below is a graphic representation of the responses.

The Rapid team believes that every Rapid institution should have, at minimum, 75% of their article requests filled via Rapid. Take a look at your last FY resource-sharing statistics...what percentage of all of your articles were filled via Rapid? If that number is below the red line above (75%), please review the information in this document carefully. Remember that Rapid does not charge transaction fees, network fees or any other ancillary fees...the more you use the system, the more money you will save and the less amount of staff time you will use.

For those of you above the red line—kudos to you! The goal now is to see how close we can get you to 90%!

To those SUPERSTARS above 90% (the green line) - you are our heroes! We would love to hear how you use Rapid Borrowing...

How can you increase the number of requests going into Rapid? Start with these 4 steps:

1) **TRUST the system!**
Borrowers should not be checking the Rapid database before sending requests into Rapid. When you do this, you are doing what the system does automatically. Remember, Rapid will check your borrowing requests against your own holding in the Rapid database and if you own the material you are requesting, the system will notify you. **Let Rapid do the work for you!**

2) **Query ALL of your unit’s article (and, when applicable, book and book chapter) requests against Rapid before any other system.**
Since Rapid libraries commit to a 24-hour turnaround time, and our routing process targets the libraries that can fill your requests with a high level of accuracy and efficiency, you benefit from using Rapid as your system of first-resort, and you should see a 90% or better fill rate as a Rapid user.
Many Rapid libraries use automated processes to get their requests into the system, but whether you are taking advantage of automated processes or you are manually handling your patron’s requests, there are times when you will receive requests that are missing information that Rapid needs in order to match the request in the Rapid database.

The most common missing field is the standard number. Rapid uses the ISSN, ISBN and/or OCLC standard numbers for matching requests to lenders. If your patron’s request is missing the standard number, you need to add it to the request so Rapid can match it. Most borrowing requests use the ISSN number.

The process of adding a standard number to an existing request, and then routing to Rapid, may already be integrated into your borrowing workflow, and if so, that’s great! However, if your current workflow is to route requests that are missing the standard number to other resource sharing systems, we suggest you re-evaluate this practice and adopt the approach described below.

It is easy to add the standard number to the borrowing request and send it to Rapid before sending it to other resource sharing systems. Below we will look at this simple workflow in both ILLiad and WorldShare, but the concept applies to any process that you use to send requests to Rapid.

**ILLIAD: Adding a Standard Number**

One of the nice things about ILLiad is how flexible and customizable the workflows are. Most Rapid libraries that use ILLiad customize their Rapid workflows using routing rules and custom queues to make their processing more efficient. For example, adding routing rules to move your CCL incoming borrowing requests to the “Awaiting Rapid Request Sending” queue and having those requests move automatically into Rapid is a great way to minimize staff time spent handling requests, and gets the material to your patrons more quickly. But this only works if your patron supplies you with all the necessary fields needed to send the request to Rapid.

The example below is of a request we submitted to Rapid, but that was returned to the Awaiting Request Processing queue because required information was missing. Notice that Rapid has added a comment to let us know that the attempt to Rapid was unsuccessful.

(It says: “Error creating RAPID request: Unable to format ISSN AND/OR OCLC number” “Error: missing required standard number”)

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The example below is of a request we submitted to Rapid, but that was returned to the Awaiting Request Processing queue because required information was missing. Notice that Rapid has added a comment to let us know that the attempt to Rapid was unsuccessful.
Here are the steps to adding a Standard Number quickly and easily for ILLiad users.

1. Click the OCLC tab in ILLiad

![OCLC interface screenshot]

2. Click the “Scan Title” icon (the little magnifying glass) and the results are returned.

![Screen capture of OCLC interface with scan title function highlighted]
3. Look for a matching bibliographic record, select it and then

4. click Copy Info.

When you click the “Copy Info” button, bibliographic information, including the standard numbers in the OCLC record are automatically transferred into your Rapid record.
5. Finally, click the “Route” arrow, choose “Awaiting RAPID Request Sending” and let Rapid take over.

If prompted to save your changes, be sure to do that.
Now, let’s quickly review the steps:

**ILLIAD: Adding a Standard Number**

- Click the OCLC tab
- Click the Scan Title magnifying glass
- Choose the correct record and click it
- Click the Copy Info tab
- Click the Route tab and select Awaiting RAPID Request Sending

You can watch a short video of these steps [here](#)

These five simple steps can save you a lot of time. If you are logging into OCLC, copying a standard number, going back into Rapid to paste the number, you are performing many unnecessary steps. Are you doing that?? If so, please adopt the method outlined above and...

**Let Rapid do the work for you!**

We would be interested in hearing about your experience after you adopt the above process.
Of course, not everyone uses ILLiad, so let’s talk about WorldShare. (If you are an ILLiad user, you have my permission to skip to the last page of this Rapid Rocks.) For WorldShare users finding and adding a standard number to your Rapid request, is easily done. There are four steps.

**WorldShare: Adding a Standard Number**
The example below is of a request automatically submitted to Rapid via WorldShare which was returned because required information was missing. Notice that Rapid has added a comment to let us know that the attempt to submit to Rapid was unsuccessful. Now, let’s find a standard number...

1. Click the ID number to look at the request’s details.

2. In the Request Details box, search OCLC by clicking the search icon (the little magnifying glass) next to the Title/Journal field.
3. After selecting the record that matches your request, click the journal title link to see more about this item.

4. Click the “Apply data”
Bibliographic data, including the standard numbers, has been added to your WorldShare request and the request has been automatically saved.

That’s it! Rapid will see the saved changes the next time the Rapid-WorldShare process runs (it runs on a 10 minute interval), and will attempt to insert the request. Success!

Now, let’s quickly review the steps:

**WorldShare: Adding a Standard Number**

- Click “Request Details”
- Select the appropriate record
- Click the journal title link
- Click the “Apply data to request” tab

You can watch a short video of these steps at [here](#).

These four simple steps can save you a lot of time. If you are logging into OCLC, copying a standard number, going back into Rapid to paste the number, you are performing many unnecessary steps. Are you doing that?? If so, please adopt the method outlined above and …

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We would be interested in hearing about your experience after you adopt the above process.
The second of the three steps you can take to be sure your institution is using Rapid borrowing to its best advantage:

2. Have the Rapid staff review your ILL activity.

Let’s be honest, in many cases, team leaders or heads of department are often not immersed in day-to-day resource sharing activity and don’t know if Rapid is being fully utilized. You are paying for this great service and because we want you to get the best benefit from the system, we offer the following free analysis.

The Rapid team will examine all of your borrowing requests. All we need is the: title, standard number and year/volume, from an OCLC report, for example. We will check those requests against the holdings of the libraries in the Rapid pods in which you participate and return to you the percentage of requests that might have been filled by Rapid had they gone into the Rapid system first.

This free analysis is a great way to easily verify that your resource sharing requests are indeed being sent through Rapid first which, of course, saves you both time and money.

3. Request a refresher training or training for new ILL staff and students.

Staff members retire, student employees come and go, and sometimes workflow processing steps are skipped, missed or not fully communicated. We know this happens because it happens here at Colorado State University libraries, too.

Did you know that you can request a free borrowing training webinar or phone call? Borrowing training can be done in as little as 45-60 minutes and doing so insures that your resource sharing staff are up to date on all of Rapid’s borrowing features. Do you use the “Move” feature? Know the best way to handle a bad citation? Understand how to request a resend of a bad transmission? Rapid is continually improving and we want to be sure you have a good knowledge of all of the tools available to you.

If your institution falls below the 75% of all article requests being filled in Rapid, you are a prime candidate for a Rapid intervention. To schedule a review of your borrowing requests or to schedule a new or refresher Rapid borrowing training session, please send a message to the Rapid team at: rapidstaff@rapidill.org.

Finally...perhaps some of you Stars (above 80%) and SuperStars (above 90%) would be willing to share your processing steps? If so, send them to the Rapid staff and I’ll compile a list of suggestions to share with everyone.

We hope you’ve found this Rapid Rocks interesting and informative. As mentioned earlier, this is one of three in a series. Because your holdings in Rapid are such an integral part of Rapid success, we will discuss them next.

If you have any questions or concerns, please ask! We are here to help you get the most out of your Rapid experience.