10 THINGS TO CONSIDER WHEN
Managing Your Instructional Materials

Textbooks aren't going away any time soon, and with the rise in digital materials, you're tasked with managing more and more instructional materials.

It's crucial that you have a solid strategy for inventory management so that you avoid:

- ✓ Interruptions in teaching and learning due to a lack of proper instructional materials;
- ✓ Budgetary challenges due to poor inventory planning and lost or missing assets;
- ✓ A lack of awareness of surplus, but usable, inventory;
- ✓ And a reactive approach to inventory control that wastes time and money.

At any given moment, you should know what you own, where it is, and if it can be utilized. Whether or not you're using an inventory management system like TIPWeb-IM, establishing strong inventory control processes will empower you to make data-driven decisions that are fiscally responsible and drive student success. Consider these ten things when managing your instructional materials.

1 Use Enrollment Data to Make Decisions

Your enrollment data is a gold-mine of information that gives you insights into the textbook needs of each student, teacher and campus. Analyzing this data helps you to forecast budget and inventory needs and ensures that your students and staff have the materials they need to succeed. Managing enrollment data in multiple systems and spreadsheets can be time consuming, inefficient and error prone. Integrating your enrollment and inventory data into a single, centralized system like TIPWeb-IM increases your efficiency and accuracy, saving you time and money.

2 Hold Campuses, Staff, & Students Accountable

It's human nature that we are more likely to follow rules when we know we'll be held accountable. Create policies and procedures that hold your campuses, staff and students accountable for their inventory losses and damages – and then enforce those rules with the support of your inventory management data. You'll be better able to account for damaged and lost items and will create a culture of responsibility. An inventory management system like TIPWeb-IM allows you to manage the collection of fees/fines and easily generate teacher receipts and student lost book letters.

3 Conduct Audits to Verify Inventory Location

Performing an audit of your inventory is the surest way to confirm quantities and locations. Define the expectations of who will perform audits, what will be counted and when. If your inventory management system lets you count titles instead of scanning each book, performing a physical inventory is a much simpler and faster process. While it may seem like a burden to conduct regular audits, accurate inventory data will allow you to make informed purchasing and budgeting decisions, saving you money and time in the long run.

4 Manage Campus Requests of Materials

Campus requests for materials arrive at your district in many ways – phone calls, emails, post-it notes – and you are contacted often about the request's status. Implement an electronic submission system so that all requests arrive in the same format and are easier for you to keep track of. TIPWeb-IM allows campuses to send requests directly to the district and view their status, while districts can approve and fulfill the request or deny it.

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5 Transfer Surplus Textbooks

Many campuses have unused textbooks sitting in the book room, while others are in need of that same title. Districts can save money by transferring surplus textbooks between campuses, rather than purchasing new ones. Having an accurate inventory system that displays available titles at campuses throughout the district allows you to more quickly get campuses the materials they need. TIPWeb-IM does just that and allows you to transfer inventory between campuses with a few clicks and without having to scan each unit.

6 Respond to Natural Disasters

In the event of a disaster that results in the destruction of property, your district will be at a disadvantage if you don't have accurate inventory reports showing item locations and value. Insurance adjusters will require a list of property that was destroyed in order to calculate your reimbursement. These reports are generated quickly and easily with an inventory management system, meaning you'll be able to purchase replacements faster and get students back on track.

7 Manage Materials Without Unique Barcodes

Some items in your inventory, like resource kits, consumables and digital resources, don't need to be individually tracked with a unique barcode. TIPWeb-IM gives you the option to track items by quantity, without a unique barcode. Rather than scanning each item individually, you can simply scan the title barcode and enter in the quantity. This method speeds up your inventory audits without compromising your ability to understand a title's distribution and use.

8 Manage Digital Materials

As more instructional materials are delivered digitally, your district must be well-equipped to track their licenses, terms of use and contract lengths. Furthermore, you must be able to share that information with your campuses. TIPWeb-IM allows you to do both quickly and easily.

9 Manage Campus-Owned Inventory

Individual campuses have a vested interest in tracking a variety of inventory that the district may not require them to track. By tracking the location, value, and usage of assets like calculators, low-cost technology, furniture, and athletic equipment, campuses can better understand their overall inventory needs and more accurately budget and plan for their replacement.

10 Develop a Policies and Procedures Manual

Creating a written manual of your inventory management policies and procedures insulates you against staff turnover at both the campus and district level. When an employee moves on, their knowledge leaves with them so it is crucial to have a clear, concise manual of who does what and when. This also increases accountability in your employees, ensuring that inventory-related tasks are performed accurately and on time. Hayes's consulting services team can work with you to develop clear policies and procedures customized to your district.

Learn more about how Hayes's products and services can optimize your district's inventory control processes at **Hayessoft.com.**

Or contact us at 800-749-5086 or sales@hayessoft.com to talk with our K-12 inventory experts.

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