

## **Baker & Taylor's Innovative Axis 360 Brings Enhanced Digital Services to King County Library System**

– Nation's 'busiest and best' library system ideal spot for new digital media library –

**CHARLOTTE, N.C. – December 22, 2011** – Baker & Taylor, Inc., the world's largest distributor of physical and digital books and entertainment products, today announced its first Axis 360 installation at the award-winning King County Library System, the busiest library system in the U.S.

"We are proud to announce King County Library System as the first installation of our Axis 360 digital media library. It is an honor to have been selected by KCLS – rated the busiest library system in the U.S., and *Library Journal's* Library of the Year for 2011," said George Coe, Baker & Taylor's President of Library & Education. "We look forward to helping King County Library System serve and delight their patrons with our cutting-edge service, and providing KCLS with comprehensive collection development programs and an integrated workflow for both print and digital materials."

Axis 360 is a revolutionary digital media platform, providing libraries and their patrons with a state-of-the-art system for circulating enhanced digital content and Blio, the ground-breaking ereading software.

Libraries using the Axis 360 service benefit from the latest Web technologies and cloud-based delivery to mobile devices. Patrons at KCLS will enjoy the dynamic presentation of titles on the Axis 360 Magic Wall, the ease of locating books of interest via Browse by Subject pages, as well as book reviews and recommendations for further reading. Axis 360 also improves the user experience for borrowing digital content from the library. Cloud-based delivery greatly simplifies the process of downloading what patrons want to read onto the devices they prefer to use, including iOS, Android and Windows tablets and smartphones. And, ease of use for patrons means less demand on library staff resources.

Yet the value of Axis 360 to libraries goes beyond even that. While market-leading ebook technology improves patron experience, it is Baker & Taylor's unrivaled expertise in collection development programs and services that brings tremendous benefits to librarians. Leveraging its flagship Title Source 3 selection and acquisition work tools, and a rich database of more than 7 million cataloged titles, Baker & Taylor maintains a unique position as the only supplier with the resources and expertise to provide libraries with comprehensive, evidence-based collection development services that effectively combine print *and* digital materials selection and fulfillment into a single, streamlined workflow.

"Axis 360 has been long anticipated by our library system," said Bill Ptacek, KCLS Director. "We look forward to this content filling the gap in our move to provide comprehensive digital resources to our patrons. Our patrons are clamoring for more and more in ebooks, delivered in a simple and convenient manner. Axis 360 is a big step in that direction."

"We're particularly impressed with the interactive content and color reproduction Blio provides, such as in children's picture books and nonfiction for all ages, which is unavailable in the EPUB format," said Alene Moroni, KCLS's Selection and Order manager. "We considered other available and upcoming platforms, and were impressed with the Axis 360 platform and its device neutrality. Technology changes too quickly for any individual or institution to keep up step by step. We needed a source that will manage the changes and maintain accessibility. With

Baker & Taylor's strong presence in the market, Axis 360 is an attractive and viable option for aggressive growth now and in future. We look forward to expanding our collection in all areas as more content becomes available."

The Washington state-based KCLS combines extensive services for a large population with excellent quality and care.

In 2010, a record-breaking 22.4 million items were checked out from KCLS, and the system received more than 10 million visits from patrons. KCLS, which serves a population of 1.2 million, has seen its demands grow during the economic downturn. Many patrons are coming into the library for the first time, eager to learn about new technology and the latest library offerings.

The partnership launches December 22, 2011 and will be accessible at:  
<http://kcls.axis360.baker-taylor.com>

#### **About Baker & Taylor**

Baker & Taylor, Inc. ([www.baker-taylor.com](http://www.baker-taylor.com)) is the world's largest distributor of books, digital content and entertainment products. The company leverages its unsurpassed worldwide distribution network to deliver rich content in multiple formats, anytime and anywhere. Baker & Taylor offers cutting-edge digital media services and innovative technology platforms to thousands of publishers, libraries and retailers worldwide. Baker & Taylor also offers industry-leading customized library services and retail merchandising solutions. Baker & Taylor is proud to power Blio ([blioreader.com](http://blioreader.com)), the world's most flexible, engaging and revolutionary ereading application. Charlotte, N.C.-based Baker & Taylor is majority owned by Castle Harlan Partners IV, L.P., an institutional private equity fund managed by Castle Harlan, Inc., a leading private equity investment firm.

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#### **About King County Library System**

KCLS ([www.kcls.org](http://www.kcls.org)) is a large system: 46 libraries serving more than 1.3 million residents and 18 school districts over a 2,131 square mile area of cities, towns, farms, and forests. Administrative efficiencies have a broad impact, and patrons expect their libraries to provide quality service, comfortable and welcoming facilities, responsible environmental practices, and responsible stewardship of public assets. In 2010, KCLS libraries were busier than ever. Patrons checked out nearly 22.4 million items, a 5% increase over the 2009 record. Staff issued more than 100,000 new library cards. Web traffic reached 31 million visits; program attendance hit 77,000, and 10.2 million visitors came through the libraries' doors.

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