



## The Design and Development of the Digital Bookmobile

### Expanding library outreach

Since 2003, OverDrive has partnered with more than 7,500 public libraries to develop 'Virtual Branch' download websites. As library partnerships grew, so did the need for an outreach program to complement the libraries' promotional efforts: The story of digital audiobook, eBook, music, and video downloads from public libraries needed to be told on a larger scale.

OverDrive CEO Steve Potash, inspired by the exceptional growth of OverDrive's public library partners, had an idea: Develop a mobile space where library patrons in North America could discover and interact with a library's download website. It would be part patron education vehicle, part training center, and part family fun area. The result would be the Digital Bookmobile, an immersive download experience for readers of all ages.

### Developing the vision

With Steve's vision as a guide, OverDrive COO Lori Soukup was charged with developing a plan to build, operate, and equip this high-tech update of the traditional bookmobile. Lori investigated and purchased an expandable semi-trailer used for other high-profile, high-tech traveling exhibits. Working with OverDrive engineers and Michael Swendrowski at Specialty Vehicle Services (Muskego, WI), Lori also determined which technology was needed to create a self-sufficient vehicle.

As Lori was busy finding a vehicle to house the Digital Bookmobile download experience, OverDrive Director of Marketing David Burleigh took on the challenge of bringing the Digital Bookmobile to life. How would the Digital Bookmobile connect with library patrons of all ages and tech skills? What would it look like? What would the experience feel like? With those questions in mind, David worked with OverDrive's Partner Services Team, as well as experience-based attraction developer Thinkwell Design & Production (Burbank, CA) and video production house Glazen Creative Studios (Cleveland, OH), to develop an engaging, inspiring visual experience.

### Building for success

Work on the Digital Bookmobile tractor-trailer began in February 2008. Vibrant exhibits featuring interactive computer stations and high-definition video were installed inside the trailer and the expandable room. Fun and engaging graphics lined the walls; facts and trivia wrap around the entire interior just above the graphics. The exterior welcome station was built on a retractable stage, providing a preview of what visitors will see inside the vehicle. A custom exterior design enveloped the semi-trailer, creating a can't-miss sight on the highway, in community parks, in library parking lots, and just about anywhere the Digital Bookmobile goes.

In July of 2008, the efforts paid off. The Digital Bookmobile hosted a private preview for the nation's librarians at Digipalooza '08, where the vehicle received rave reviews. The comprehensive exhibits and interactive computer stations highlight all aspects of a library's digital download experience: The Digital Catalog, Audiobook Alley, eBook Experience, Video Lounge, and Gadget Gallery. With the Digital Bookmobile, there is now a unique and compelling way to illustrate 24/7 access to digital books and more from public library download websites.