Laptop Vending Machine Offers Safety for Students

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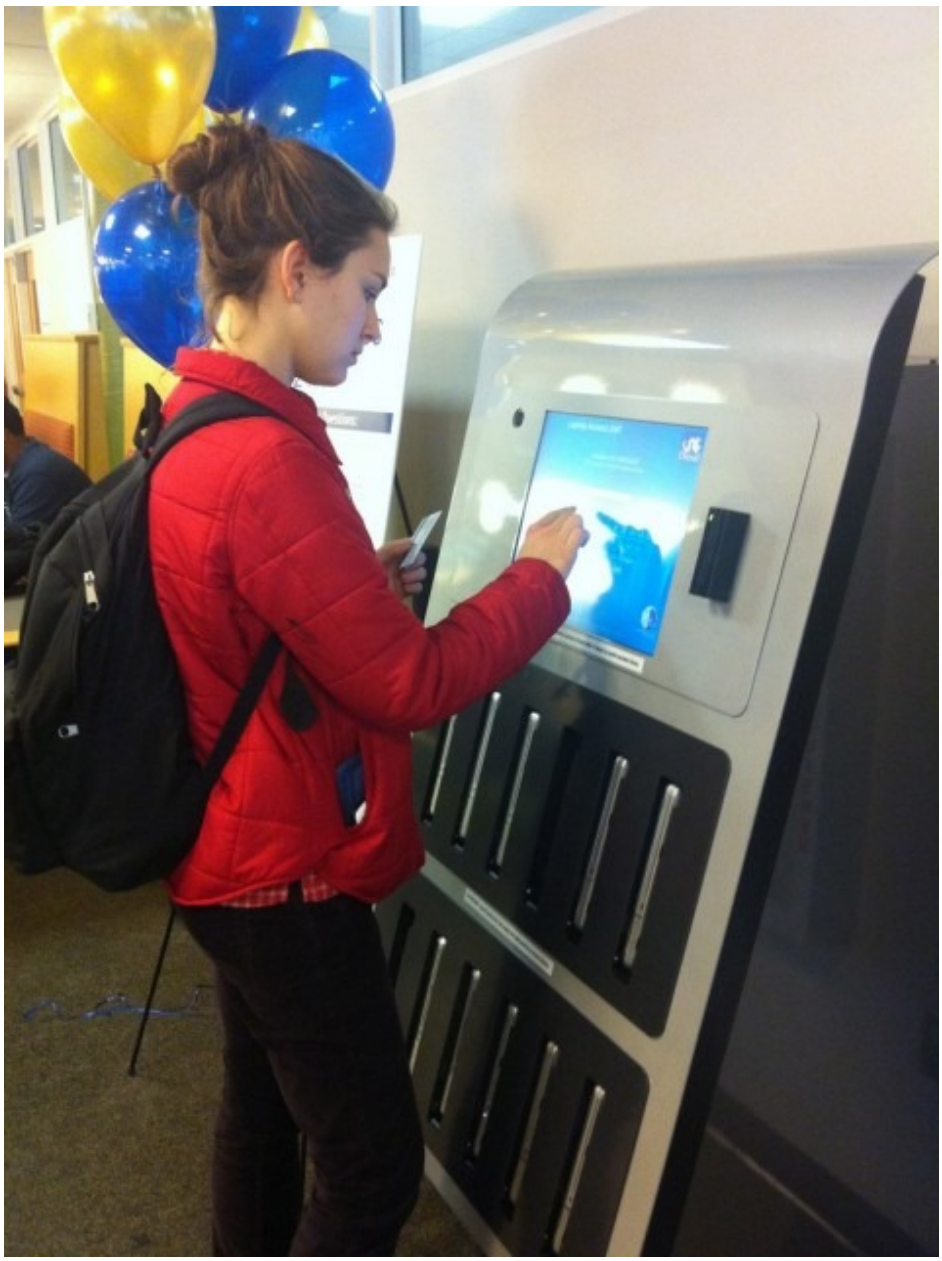
A laptop bag [1] might protect your computer [2] from the elements but it could also act as a bullseye for muggers [3].

For students on late-night studying binges, schlepping their tech around campus might not be ideal. Drexel University [4] in Philadelphia has an interesting solution to that problem. The university installed a MacBook vending machine in the library, reports VentureBeat *[5]*. The machine dispenses out laptops on loan 24 hours a day. This way, students can access technology easily, and not worry about staying too late at the library and then having to carrying their laptops home.



[6]

To access the vending machine [7], students will need to use their university ID cards. Students can borrow the laptops for five hours at a time, and a late fee of $5 will be incurred if the student doesn't bring it back in time. The vending machine itself holds 12 MacBooks. While the laptops rest inside the machine, they are charged and their hard drives [8] wiped clean.

Drexel University released a statement [9] about the new machine on Wednesday.

“Libraries are not only meant to house books,” Dean of Drexel University Libraries Dr. Danuta A. Nitecki, said in a statement.

"This was a great opportunity to match a specific student need with library staff's ongoing exploration of cutting edge technologies. We expect the resulting initiative to improve the Drexel student’s academic experience," Nitecki said

We've seen MacBook and iPad vending machines before. Some offer gadgets and

computers on loan while others sell them. Macys sells Apple products [10] through a vending machine in select stores across the country.

While many university libraries offer laptop rentals, they usually are handled by staff. One benefit of using the vending machine is that no one needs to be working to loan a student a laptop.

Do you think vending machines that loan out tablets and computers should be in libraries across America?

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[1] http://mashable.com/2011/08/29/laptop-bags/
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[10] http://consumerist.com/2011/09/21/ipad-vending-machine-at-macys/