

Information literacy in Tasmania TAFE libraries

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Information technology applications in Tasmanian TAFE libraries began in 1978 with implementation of CIRSYS, a computer-based circulation system at the then Devonport Technical College. This was a pilot project and showed considerable promise. However, it was later decided that a higher priority for Tasmanian TAFE libraries was a shared cataloguing system and on-line catalogue.

The creation of this database was a collaborative venture with senior secondary college libraries, and the new system was commissioned in 1984. It allowed the down-loading and editing of ABN records, the creation of new MARC records and the viewing of TAFE and senior secondary college library holdings state-wide. This system was superseded by the Libacc/Starlite integrated library management system in 1991 and then by the current Dynix-based Talis system in 1994.

Talis (Tasmanian Automated Library Information System) is unique in Australia. It is a networked system shared by TAFE, college, school and public libraries, by two government agency libraries and by the State Reference Library. Cataloguing is shared, as is the state-wide catalogue. Any site can adjust its public catalogue view to include any or all of the other sites, and adjust its circulation settings so that library cards from selected other sites can be used at that site. For example, a TAFE library card from the North-West Institute can be used to borrow from the Hobart Institute.

As might be expected from such a network there is considerable inter-library loan traffic between Talis libraries, particularly as all are connected by e-mail.

The TAFE library system also utilises various CD-ROM configurations, accessing a range of products, from periodical indexes to on-line training modules. The CD-ROM systems are complimented by PC networks which provide customers with access to laser and colour printers and to application software for word-processing and desktop publishing.

Internet access is also provided for customers, as is instruction in searching the Web. The Internet has also allowed TAFE libraries to develop web pages, and in two instances to develop whole-of-Institute sites.

Library web pages have been designed to allow remote patrons to access the catalogue, locate and request resources which will then be forwarded. These facilities support flexible/remote access and promote access and equity. You can view the library page at <http://www.nwit.dvet.tas.gov.au>.

TAFE libraries have also housed computer managed learning projects (from mainframe to Internet access), again in support of flexible/remote access. Finally TAFE library services provide a range of on-line reference services, from UnCover to DIALOG. ■

Miracles take a little longer!

Maureen Allman and Deb Hamblin

The Rockingham Campus of TAFE in Western Australia has offered a joint library service to the campus and the local community since 1982. Both parties would agree that there have been benefits to clients. With the best will in the world, however, there are many very difficult issues to be resolved in the operation of a joint facility.

A new partnership between TAFE and Murdoch University has been established. As part of the decision to establish a new campus at Rockingham, the chief executive officers of the academic institutions and the city determined to build a new joint library facility on the university campus. This library is to service the needs of the TAFE and university students and the local community.

Hence, there is now a new, two-

storey building under construction on the university site just 600 metres from the TAFE campus. The new tripartite library will initially serve about 2500 TAFE students, 300 university students, staff and the local community of about 30 000 people. The library will have purpose-built areas designed to cater for TAFE courses such as Child care and also a large audio visual area to service the teaching and learning needs of a training environment.

Tripartite discussions are underway to resolve the many issues of both management and daily operation of the facility. There is agreement that the library will offer a seamless service to meet the varied needs of its clients. This indicates a need to ensure that the library staff are managed as one team, with one award and conditions and reporting to one authority.

From the TAFE point of view, there will be major advantages. The association with the university library will offer staff and students an exceptional gateway to information and knowledge. The collections and electronic sources will be superior to what can be provided by a TAFE library alone. There will also be the opportunity to improve instructional programs in information access. It is planned to move the existing library services to the new building early in 1998 and there is still much to be done to ensure a smooth transition to the new site. A new management structure needs to be in place; library automated systems issues and budgetary considerations also need to be addressed. For further information please contact either Maureen Allman on (08) 9239 8250 or Deb Hamblin on (08) 9239 8650, South Metropolitan College of TAFE. ■