

UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES

face-to-face training and exploring Melbourne Campus were over all too quickly, I left knowing that the precious library I had been creating remotely was well on its way to becoming an invaluable and accessible resource to students and staff alike.

My time at Whitehouse has involved an incredibly steep and swift learning curve, which has also been very interesting and rewarding. I particularly enjoy the contact with students and staff and the feeling of involvement in their work. If I rewound to 2007 again, this is definitely the path I would take.

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Client-focused innovations at Deakin University Library

From the introduction of next-generation learning spaces to the creation of a library catalogue specifically for mobile phones, Deakin University Library is constantly developing new and improved ways to support students and staff in their teaching, learning, and research activities, across a continuum of physical and virtual facilities, with information delivered in a variety of formats.

Next-generation learning spaces

Deakin University Library has recently completed two major building projects.

Architecturally designed next-generation learning spaces have been introduced in the \$1.3 million first phase of development at the Melbourne Campus at Burwood, including media lounges; presentation spaces with plasma screens and interactive whiteboards; 'nooks in books': comfortable seating among the bookshelves; individual study spaces with desktop computers, power-points, and a wireless network; quiet areas; and vibrant lounge areas for texting, twittering, reading, or meeting up with friends.



The new gallery space, which is currently displaying indigenous artwork from the private collection of Lauraine Diggins, is already popular as a function space. The lounge area can also double as an event space.

The second building project is the Alfred Deakin Prime Ministerial Library (ADPML), located in the last of three refurbished historic wool stores at the Geelong Waterfront Campus. This purpose-built specialist library, established in March, houses an extensive and valuable collection of print items, including the Alfred Deakin research collection, and provides access to many of Deakin University Library's special collections. An important element of the ADPML is the exhibition space, which will host exhibitions from cultural institutions and displays from the Deakin Art Gallery.

Preparations are well under way for the major \$8 million refurbishment project at the Geelong Campus at Waurin Ponds. Building work will begin this month, with the project due for completion in 2010.

Library commercials

The library is currently trialling three television commercials produced by Deakin postgraduate students as part of their coursework, with the library acting as client and the students carrying out the brief. The commercials, which can be viewed at <http://www.deakin.edu.au/library/media/video/commercials.php> were shot on location at the Melbourne Campus at Burwood Library.

Library catalogue for web-enabled mobile devices

The library has successfully beta-tested a version of the library catalogue specifically designed for web-enabled mobile devices, which is scheduled for live release this month. The international beta test was carried out in partnership with Innovative Interfaces Inc., the suppliers of the library's Millennium library management system.

Social networking software

Is social networking the new operating system for business? The library has been investigating an array of channels to engage with clients, and to extend our library resources and services. In 2008, the library web developer created a Deakin University Library Facebook profile, which was populated with the most highly used library website content, as measured through ClickTracks data. Shortly after, a library catalogue search was submitted and certified as an approved Facebook application. Library News is now disseminated via Facebook and Twitter, keeping clients and interested parties up-to-date. To accommodate the preferences of a wider range of clients, the library also offers a Google gadget that can be accessed from a personalised iGoogle page.

Learning 2.0

In December 2007, library staff completed a staff development program entitled *Learning 2.0: 23 things to do on the web*, a direct outcome of a skills audit conducted to identify key competencies. Deakin University Library partnered with Swinburne University Library to undertake this program, with library staff required to study 23 new applications of web 2.0 social networking functionality. Now, with the development of the *23 things+* program, where a new application is added for staff to investigate every few months—staff continue to be informed about new technologies and web applications.

Enhanced support for researchers

As a response to Deakin University's aspirational goals for research, the library has introduced two client-focused initiatives designed to enhance support to researchers.

A new *Librarian in residence* program currently operates in the Faculty of Business and Law at the Melbourne Campus at Burwood. A subject-specialist librarian is 'embedded' in the faculty at scheduled and advertised hours to provide a broad range of teaching, learning, and research-related services direct to researchers.

Two specialist Research Librarians will work across all faculties and research communities, providing individual and group support to staff and student researchers through direct assistance, and instructional programs such as research skills development, DRO submission, bibliographic management tools, and bibliometrics.

New roles in the library

A Library Communications Specialist was appointed to strengthen communication within the library and, ultimately, to library



clients. A new communications strategy has subsequently been implemented, with specific coaching and advice provided to staff on an ongoing basis.

The library has also appointed three cadets on a new three-year program. The cadets gain wide expertise across all elements of library activity and bring skills and knowledge of their recent education to augment library perspectives.

Regional initiatives

In keeping with Deakin's commitment to rural and regional engagement, in September 2008 the library investigated the feasibility of regional collaboration in the provision of training and development opportunities for library staff—and facilitate the development of a collaborative program across the major libraries in the region.

The pilot was developed, with a range of service providers used and activities included. CAVAL supported the pilot with a generous discount on the cost of their courses for inclusion in the program. The library will formally evaluate the pilot—and the collaborative processes to make it happen—at the end of July.

As these initiatives suggest, flexibility and choice are paramount in the library's vision to connect people, technology, and information. For more information, visit Deakin University Library online at <http://www.deakin.edu.au/library> or feel free to drop us a line on Facebook, Twitter, or at libinfo@deakin.edu.au

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Learning from the students at Swinburne

For many new students, the best way to make it difficult for them to actually find a book, is to give them the book's call number and send them on their way. If you were told that a book was on the shelves at "658.403 MAR", would you know what that actually means? Is the book on the sixth floor because the call number starts with a '6' or is it in the marketing section as the call number ends with 'MAR'? Or does the '403' mean that it is the four hundred and third book in the 658 section, so would logically be shelved after 658.49. All are very reasonable assumptions for a person who has never previously encountered the Dewey Decimal Classification (Dewey).

We can't assume that the student learned Dewey at school – many students went to a school where there was no library or if they did have access to a library, then that library used a completely different system for shelving. As one international student said to me recently, "In my school all of the marketing books were on one shelf and the books on accounting were on another".

Even if the student does have an understanding of Dewey, then we add further complications by not making it clear how we order the shelves. Have you ever been asked by a student to help them find a book at 658.403 because it appears that the numbers go from 658.402 to 658.404? Chances are the student is used to a shelving approach where you go from the bottom row of books on one book shelf to the top row of books on the next.

Another common roadblock we place in the student's way is deciding that, because something happens to be large, it gets shelved somewhere else. And if that is not confusing enough, we then don't call it something logical like a 'large book', but something really obscure like a 'quarto' or a 'folio'.

This is not suggesting that we abandon Dewey; at the other end of the spectrum we have PhD students who rely on a categorisation system that enables them to pinpoint the exact book in our collections that will be the pivotal piece in their research. But if we listen to the students' questions, we can develop strategies to make finding the right book easier.

At Swinburne we have recently put a lot of effort into doing just this. In preparation for second semester this, year we have completely integrated our folio collection into our general collection. I have already had a student ask me if we had just increased our collection because there were a lot of books in his subject area that he had never seen before.

We are also working on our signage, starting with clear signs showing where the collection continues; for example, if it continues on the floor above. Lastly we are working on signage that will not just tell someone which Dewey range of books are in a particular bay of shelves, but what are the key topics in that bay. The key point of all of this is that if first year students feel more comfortable and more able to use the library, then they are more likely to continue using the library throughout the rest of their course. The test of whether or not our strategies have worked will be seen over the second semester, but already the feedback has been very good.

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Partnerships at Swinburne

You all know about the services academic libraries provide to their most visible user groups: students and academics. However, the role academic libraries perform for the corporate side of their institutions is usually much less public. This is starting to change.

Swinburne Library is one of many Australian academic libraries managing an institutional repository – a digital collection of the university's research publications designed to maximise their potential to be discovered online. Institutional repositories can achieve many admirable goals for librarians – they preserve digital assets into the future, address the problem of skyrocketing journal prices, facilitate open access to scholarly research, and provide a single point of entry to an institution's entire body of research. For universities, though, the benefit of institutional repositories is more concrete. Information about a university's research achievements made available online helps to attract student enrolments and funding for more research.

Support for research is certainly not a new role for academic libraries. Traditionally we offer assistance in the early stages of the research process by providing access to scholarly content and helping construct comprehensive literature searches. While some libraries give advice to researchers about where to publish, the focus has always been on building the capability to produce quality research, rather than making the most of its end product.

Swinburne Research Bank (<http://researchbank.swinburne.edu.au>) is designed to promote and showcase the research of Swinburne academics. We have records for over 12000 publications including journal articles, conference papers, and books, and full text is freely available for over 2000 of these. Through our experience running Swinburne Research Bank, we've built up a comprehensive and reliable source of data about Swinburne research publications. While this information existed previously, it tended to be gathered only for a single purpose, such as individual reporting exercises or personal CV management. Our data is well maintained and quality controlled, and as we're discovering this can be of great use to a number of different areas in the university.