



# BUYITNOW

## SOUTH AUSTRALIAN PILOT PROJECT

**A**t the COSUGI (Customers of SirsiDynix Users Group, Inc.) Conference in 2014, library software vendor SirsiDynix promoted its Buy It Now functionality to US customers, highlighting the ease with which participating libraries could facilitate a retail option for library users. **JO FREEMAN** gives us an update.

A new concept that sees libraries partnering with online retailers, Buy It Now enables library users to find titles on the library catalogue and link through to a retailer to purchase them. As the only Australian attending COSUGI in 2014, I turned my mind to how the Buy It Now concept might work in the Australia-Pacific region, given the cultural differences and the likely resistance to libraries venturing into the commercial space. Before leaving the conference I caught up with Justin Swain, SirsiDynix's End User Services Manager, about the potential to introduce a version of Buy It Now in our region. While I was interested in the idea that libraries could add value to their services by providing an avenue for customers to purchase books, I knew that, if this were to be successful, we needed retail options beyond Amazon.

On my return, I began looking for retailers who met two key criteria – sufficient online technology to integrate with the South Australian public library catalogue (of more than 4 million titles) and an established affiliate program to manage the financial aspects of a partnership. My search led me to Australia's largest online bookseller, Booktopia, located in Sydney's western suburbs, and a small innovative Adelaide-based retailer, Boomerang Books. Both companies indicated their willingness to participate in a trial in 2015.

SirsiDynix began working with both retailers in early 2015 to develop the required software integration to link the library catalogue to the retail websites. Progress has been slow, mostly due to the challenge in matching multiple ISBNs in the library catalogue to a single ISBN in the retail environment. But recent testing indicates that this problem has now been resolved and we are ready to start a formal trial with three South Australian library services – Adelaide City, Prospect and Tea Tree Gully.

The Buy It Now trial will run for about six months and will inform any future decisions around the use of this product in other South Australian libraries.

While the focus of our trial is to gain a better understanding of the technology and its usefulness to library customers, it may also provide participating libraries with a small income stream, which can either be used to buy more items for the collection or fund a specific program or service. SirsiDynix reported at its 2015 user conference that more than \$50,000 had been donated to US libraries through the Buy It Now affiliate program.

More information on the product can be found on the SirsiDynix website at [sirsi.com/products/buy-it-now](http://sirsi.com/products/buy-it-now). 

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