

Re-imagining Libraries

Summary Report

January 2010

Re-imagining Libraries is the 5-year strategic plan endorsed by National & State Libraries Australasia. This program of work is accelerating the transformation of our libraries by tackling challenges collaboratively. We are taking a system-wide view of the impact of the changing networked and online environment, unbundling our activities and exploring new services and approaches.



NATIONAL & STATE LIBRARIES
AUSTRALASIA

Vision

In collaboration, the National, State and Territory Libraries of Australia and New Zealand will become leaders in empowering people to create, discover, use and transform our collections, content and global information resources.

What will the new picture of our services look like for people using our Libraries?

- More of our collections available online and easily able to be found, used, adapted and transformed;
- More enriching of our collections with expertise, contributions and comments from the community;
- More online tools freely available to take and use;
- More widgets linking to our services, from external web pages, social networking sites and within other services;
- Our research expertise and deep collection knowledge available when it is needed;
- Easier access to quick reference answers through mobile devices and other platforms;
- Easier and central discoverability of information and collections, backed up by faster digital delivery and home delivery;
- Less registration and authentication; and
- Similar services and a common experience across our libraries.

For NSLA Libraries, *Re-imagining Libraries* is:

- Leveraging the expertise in all our libraries, to achieve more than each library can on its own;
- Creating an increased trust and shared commitment between our libraries;
- Shifting a larger proportion of our work to benefit the group of libraries and less solely for our own organisation;
- Building a more agile, risk-taking and innovative culture; and
- Increasing the profile for our libraries in the networked environment.

One Library: levels of engagement

The projects underway in *Re-imagining Libraries* are beginning their second year, moving from research and scoping into delivering outcomes, measuring and demonstrating the value of collaboration, mapping and tracking dependencies, and increasing resourcing and momentum. Achievements to date are listed on Page 2.

In late 2009, NSLA assessed the project paths in terms of how far they are adopting collaborative "One Library" solutions. This level of engagement was defined in four ways:

- 1) all Libraries acting as One Library;
- 2) all Libraries presenting as One Library;
- 3) all Libraries providing similar services; and
- 4) all Libraries sharing knowledge and lessons learned.

The agreed aspiration for most projects is at either Level 1 or Level 2, creating an ambitious agenda for the project teams.

Accessible digital content

A key driver for *Re-imagining Libraries* is ensuring our content is easily discoverable online. The infrastructure behind discovering and connecting to our content is an area where many gains can be made by an integrated collaborative approach.

TROVE, launched by the National Library of Australia in November 2009, and the National Library of New Zealand's FIND service provide the platform for connecting users to improved digital access to our collections and services. An important example now available through TROVE is the Australian Historic Newspapers service.

Resourcing and Communication

Re-imagining Libraries is funded through a combination of levies contributed by member libraries to a central NSLA budget, plus provision of staff and other resourcing within organisational budgets. Talented and experienced senior staff have taken up roles as Project Managers and Project Team Members within their current workplans, and a small number of specific roles have been created to fast-track key projects. We also plan to engage more closely with public libraries as the program proceeds.

Collaboration requires more time and communication effort than a single-institution approach. The advantages are that the scale of the aspirations is greatly increased as the libraries move forward as a block, using the expertise in all our organisations.

In 2009:

- 109 staff participated in project groups;
- More than 50 teleconferences, web-conferences and face-to-face project meetings were held;
- 20 conference and seminar papers were presented;
- 2,000 information brochures about *Re-imagining Libraries* were distributed to Australian and New Zealand public library staff;
- 10 project wikis were established; and
- an expanded program website was developed.

Program Management

The Re-imagining Libraries Program Manager is Ms Wendy Quihampton, reporting to the CEOs of NSLA Libraries as the Program Governance Committee. Success of the program is a shared responsibility.

More information

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Achievements to January 2010

