Your voice

Picture this...

I was fascinated by the front cover of the August 2003 of *inCite*. Is this an existing artwork, or an image composed especially for the magazine? It is really effective — congratulations.

Anne Rorke, Silverwater NSW

Ed: The cover of the August issue has proved to be very popular, and this is not the only letter we received about how it was produced. The cover was crafted specifically for the magazine, using a base photo that I took some years ago, and using a tool to overlay images that are a mosaic of the underlay, then assembled with a 'puzzle' template.

Usability and accessibility

Ivan Trundle's regular *inCite* piece 'Is your website a usable tool, or a designer's dalliance?' was very timely this month!

It has saved me quite a bit of work in preparing for a meeting to discuss the issues confronting the Commonwealth Bureau of Meteorology website (http://www.bom.gov.au).

In the article, Ivan mentioned under the heading 'Usability and accessibility':

> 'A recent survey of the home pages of nearly 700 federal government websites has shown that none had valid HTML, and only thirty-six were able to pass any form of accessibility test...'

Would you be able to point me to where I might get a copy of this survey, and its details?

Trevor Wakely, Vic

Ed: The 'survey' was a verb, not noun: but you can do the same thing right now, and validate the results in real time, and be more up-to-date.

Members of the Link Institute (an Australian e-list discussing internet-related issues) were discussing website accessibility and went on to view the 'portal' at http://www.fed.gov.au which lists 699 federal agencies.

Of the 699 listed, they ran the validity checker from W3C (http://validator.w3.org/) and then Bobby (http://bobby.watchfire.com/) over these home pages (only the home pages: it would have been worse to do entire sites) and came up with the results mentioned.

Check http://www.stillhq.com/bobby/20030623.html for the consolidated results.

The Link thread is at http://mailman.anu.edu.au/pipermail/link/2003-June/thread.html#50743 (roughly).

Your letters on any issue of relevance to the library and information sector are welcomed.

*All letters should be addressed to the inCite editor and may be e-mailed to **incite@alia.org.au**, or faxed to 02 6282 2249, or posted to: Your voice, ALIA, PO Box E441, Kingston 2604. Please include your name and postal address with your letter or e-mail.*

Letters will be accepted for publication until the 18th of the month.