

From Tuesday to Friday we had lunchtime sessions with two guest speakers each day and light lunch provided. The speakers included TAFE staff, students, and volunteer tutors from TAFE's Alanvale and City Campuses.

Each of our guest speakers gave a well-prepared, well thought-out presentation. All were diverse and entertaining. They included presentations of online teaching resources, the making of children's books designed and written by students, and the making of learning manuals produced and designed collaboratively by several teams, including design and multimedia and children's services. The Friday sessions from one of our students and a volunteer tutor featured ideas for writing fiction and the perils of self-publishing. We were overwhelmed with the number of attendees at each presentation and were thrilled that everyone walked away with knowledge of their colleagues' writing, and with new ideas and enthusiasm for what we do each day.

As well as a promotional activity for the library, TAFE Tasmania Living Writers' Week was an opportunity for staff and students to share their writing. We might work in the room next door to our colleagues, we might say hello to a staff member or student in the cafeteria, but truly how much of what they teach and learn at TAFE do we actually know? The week proved that we had a great deal to learn from each other.

We put a lot of time and effort into marketing this event, seeking the help of the TAFE publicity department and producing professional looking programs, posters, and brochures to advertise the week. Our efforts were well rewarded as we gained the interest of our regular users and those from other campuses who had not visited our library in the past.

We had wonderful feedback from our speakers, from our attendees, and from many staff who heard of our event but could not attend. The experience was invaluable not just for our presenters and audience, but for library staff, who worked together as a team to organise the event, and as a marketing tool for the library. We have been asked to run more events of this kind and we are enthusiastically searching for new ideas and programs.

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## NSW @ your library<sup>®</sup>

At the end of 2009, after five fabulous years the NSW @ your library<sup>®</sup> campaign will come to an end. As the co-ordinator of this caravan of riches, I have mixed feelings. It's a bit like realising a particularly loved piece of clothing needs to move out of your wardrobe. So it is with our @ your library<sup>®</sup> campaign: it needs a makeover or, at least, to make room for something else! We're currently working through an evaluation process that has included surveys and focus groups, but from a naval gazing position, it's a good opportunity to look back on where we've come since we launched in December 2004.

@ your library<sup>®</sup> was developed by the American Library & Information Association (ALA) in 2001\*. South Australia was the first Australian state to adopt the campaign under licence from the ALA, with Victoria and Western Australia subsequently purchasing the South Australian version.

While the South Australian campaign had been designed to be cross-sectoral, in NSW we decided to repurpose it specifically for the public library market. To meet the varied needs and resources of our 97 library services we also made the choice to keep our themes generic so that our libraries could 'buy in' more easily and build on what they were already doing. It really was very much a case of 'one size fits all'.

The focus of @ your library<sup>®</sup> is a series of 'mini' campaigns which highlight a specific library area or service. Since we started in 2005, there have been 20 themes. Some, like 'Connect', have made repeat appearances while others have been a one-off. 'Holiday Fun' has been delivered so many times that we've moved through 3 incarnations of the poster – the original kid must be in high school by now!

"The campaign encouraged us to target groups we'd never thought of before", is typical of the comments we received in the evaluation survey.

Whenever possible we've linked the timing of the campaigns with related events, such as Library and Information Week. Library Lovers Day was one such initiative when we saw the hype we could harness with everyone who didn't get flowers on Valentine's Day! We've also sought partnerships with other agencies to increase our exposure: one of our favourites 'reduce, reuse and recycle' was offered in conjunction with the enthusiastic support of waste authorities across the state; we focused on 'food' (the way to a librarian's heart!) with the NSW Food Authority, while 'statistics' was a joint venture with ABS.

For each campaign we distributed posters, bookmarks, and/or postcards free to every public library. The feedback we've received has been varied. While the designs have been almost universally endorsed, there is always comment about the extent of product we send. These range from "No more! Our cupboards are groaning", to "Can we have some extras?" It's one of the pitfalls of a universal campaign: you can't please everyone. So while some libraries are squirreling merchandise away for a rainy day, others have been spreading the joy (and the exposure) to bookshops, schools, cafes, etc.

# MARKETING YOUR LIBRARY

We also developed a range of collateral material to complement some of the campaigns. These have included mouse mats, USB wrist bands, book journals, banners, and library bags – in fact members of the project team could be seen at any conference trawling the trade area, inspecting the give-aways to see if there was a possible @ your library<sup>®</sup> merchandising product waiting to be discovered.

All the campaigns were supported by the campaign web site <http://www.atyourlibrary.sl.nsw.gov.au> where the blog, media releases, promotional strategies, evaluation forms, and other materials were located. It also included a campaign 'shell' that could be downloaded and used for local purposes.

The original \$200 000 in funding to develop the project came from a Library Council of NSW Development Grant, submitted by Orange City Council on behalf of the NSW Public Library Network in 2003/2004. Since then we have received additional funds which have allowed the project to be continued through until the end of 2009 but 'frugal' would best describe our resources!

@ your library<sup>®</sup> was managed by a project team representing the major stakeholders and was delivered at a grassroots level by a network of 'champions' (one for each library) who were the go-betweens. Each year we've had a Champion's Workshop to bring everyone up to speed and re-ignite the passion.

The tender for the 'look and feel' of @ your library, from posters through to web pages, was won by Sauce Design, a young and funky company based in Orange NSW. Sauce works with two highly regarded international photographers – Alf Mancialgi and Vince Lovecchio – who have managed to make the 'talent' look pretty fabulous ... which is just as well as in keeping with our small budget, library staff, family, friends, and pets have often been roped in to be models.

In early 2009 the @ your library<sup>®</sup> champions will meet to discuss the future of state-wide marketing initiatives. While there are some obvious negatives in this type of approach, and buy-in varies from library to library, most of our members concur with these sentiments: "It makes it easy with ideas and high quality marketing materials being provided. This facilitated all staff being engaged."

\*Further details are available on the ALA website <http://www.ala.org/ala/pio/campaign/campaignamericas.htm>. This is quite a good site to bookmark and keep your eye on. It's also where you'll find the @ your library<sup>®</sup> trademark in multiple languages.

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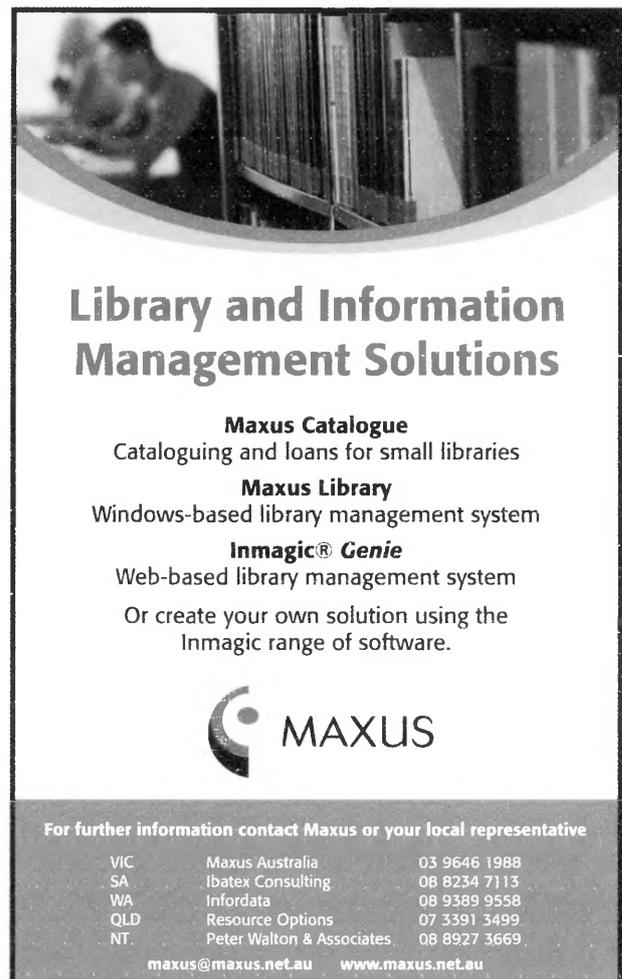
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