

# TECHNICALLY SPEAKING

When we decided to explore technology for August's issue of INCITE, I expected a number of good news stories about systems and programs that LIS professionals have instituted in their workplace that made their lives – and those of their clients – easier. And there is an element of that in this month's feature section. But what surprised me most is not that these technologies made the working lives of the contributors easier – but that they made *communication* easier. The fundamental theme of this issue shifted – no longer are we talking about technology, we're talking communication, and we're talking passionately about it. This shouldn't have been a surprise – after all this industry is built on making and keeping connections, on reaching out and bringing lost patrons into the fold, on creating a safe space where information-sharing, learning, and connecting can occur. Technology can threaten those concerns – but as you'll read in the following pages, LIS colleagues have eschewed the negative and turned the technology to their own use, making it a tool to continue that communication and connection that is so fundamental to our profession.



## Using WordPress and Vimeo to create a library video help site

LibraryTV, at [sculibrarytv.info](http://sculibrarytv.info) is a website that hosts videos created by Southern Cross University library staff to help our patrons use library resources.

The site grew from a successful pitch for new ideas at the library's annual planning day as described in Karen Jordan's INCITE article *Catch a New Idea* (Sept 2011, page 6). The aim was to have a video website similar to a YouTube channel, but with more options to customise the interface. In August of 2010, the LibraryTV project team visited 39 library sites to establish how many Australian universities were providing their own video-help site, either within their site or on a YouTube channel. Only nine universities provided their own site; seventeen used a YouTube channel, a more popular option. At the time, only the University of New England appeared to have a library-specific site, although several university libraries provided lists of video links.

Knowing that we were working with a limited budget, the project team evaluated hosting options and software tools, before deciding to use the free blogging software WordPress as our platform, a professional subscription to Vimeo for video storage, a professional subscription to Jing for video capture, and inexpensive external hosting to easily allow installation of the WordPress software and plugins. The total annual storage, subscription and domain costs are only \$320.

Initially, the use of the LibraryTV website was by liaison librarians who were able to refer students

to the site via email, blackboard posts, and at the information desk for easy reference on performing common library tasks such as searching a database or requesting a book. The videos have also been useful as demonstration material when conducting information literacy classes. In addition, the storage platform Vimeo has simplified the embedding of high quality screen capture videos into the university's first year students' assignment help website – *Assignment Navigator* ([www.scu.edu.au/assignment-navigator](http://www.scu.edu.au/assignment-navigator)), and into subject LibGuides.

This year, we have been pleased to find an increased direct usage from patrons with the launch of the new library website ([www.scu.edu.au/library](http://www.scu.edu.au/library)), as it includes a new icon link to LibraryTV on the front page. For example, in March 2011, there had only been 102 visits; in March 2012, with the new library website, visits had doubled to 223.

Future plans for LibraryTV include information sessions for library staff, so that staff other than liaison librarians can create videos, and the use of QR codes to promote traffic to the site. The project team acknowledges that LibraryTV in its current form may be superseded by any future investment the library may make in commercial products such as ClickView. However, the low establishment cost of the service and the practical and ongoing skills development for library staff will serve well for any future delivery mechanisms.

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