

LOUNGE AND LOAF IN THE LIBRARY

When I think about what makes good interior design, I reminisce about my days in retailing. I was involved in shop-fitting numerous bookshops, each one with a new cutting-edge design (although how cutting edge the 80s and 90s were is debatable). The last store I fitted out was a huge, supermarket-size bookshop. This was at a time when bookshops were introducing cafés, lounges and an overall comfortable homey feel rather than being just a shop. Customers were invited to sit around, look at the books, have a coffee and cake and enjoy the atmosphere. For a bookshop and its staff, this makes for a challenging work environment. When a customer is drinking a coffee while browsing an expensive coffee table book, your first reaction is to rip the book from their hands and return it to the safety of its designated shelf. I've seen staff grip the counter in order to stop themselves from going to retrieve books from customers who were lying on lounges and reading for hours. After all, this was stock we had to sell in mint condition. But, in hindsight, if someone is reading and revelling in the space you have created just for that purpose, then it was surely a success.

Libraries have gone through a similar change in their design and function. In this issue you'll read about how a corporate legal library was relocated to be near the

in-house café. Libraries provide a service and it's about making people who use those services want to be in that space more often, to feel comfortable in it, and for it to be not only user-friendly, but also fully utilised. The more I read about your experiences, the more I can see how clever changes to spaces, and what those spaces are used for, can break down the walls of communication between libraries and users. It's like opening up the doors to let in fresh air. It can be quite a revelation to see how a cleverly designed space can facilitate positive changes to the way things are done.

This month's theme made me think about our office – even my home – and how spaces can be better used. I hope you take inspiration from this issue. I would very much welcome hearing about any changes you have made to your space that have had a positive impact. Write to me at editor@incite.org.au.

I look forward to hearing from you.

ROWENA MORCOM
Editor
incite@alia.org.au

CONTRIBUTORS

Alex Byrne	12	Faye Lawrence & Karyn Green	30
Brendan Fitzgerald	31	Robyn McKenzie	21
Jo Freeman	33	Shaun O'Dwyer	24
Faye Jamieson	25	Fiona Salisbury	20
Alison Jones & Geraldine McDonagh	22	Barbara Waha & Karen Randall	9
Elizabeth Khater	28	Aileen Weir	15