

HAVE NO FEAR ...



This issue features 'everything digital'. As I write that, I have a hunch that all of this digital stuff may be a bit overwhelming. There seems to be a constant impetus to keep up with the digital age.

The speed at which this age has come upon us all has been so swift. Fifteen

years ago we didn't have social media. There were no ebooks. Google was only two years old. There was no Wikipedia. The fax was still a regularly used item of office equipment. And nobody was walking around with a 10 gigabyte USB in their pocket!

Difficulty with funding, finding time for training, understanding which resources to buy and then having to become an expert in them – all this means it's not easy for those in the LIS sector to keep up. But you *have* kept up. Libraries have been rebuilt with digital features at the forefront of the design. Library websites are morphing into hubs for critical information that can be accessed from anywhere. And, interestingly, libraries continue to be places where people meet, spend time and socialise – all of which is not so digital.

Those in high school now are already digitally proficient. They use social media on a regular basis, can whip off a text on their phone while the rest of us are still trying to still spell the first words (with punctuation, of course!) and they have no fear of any new or existing technology. And it's that last thing – fear – that is stopping the rest of from keeping up with 'everything digital'.

I'm sure, as librarians and information professionals, you have seen this fear on the faces of your members as they struggle to learn how to use complicated new technologies.

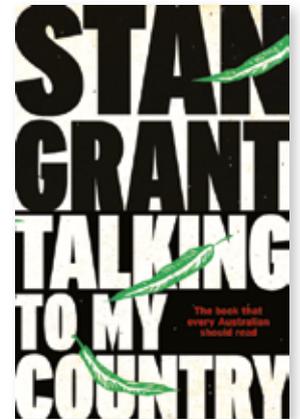
There have been many times when I've given up trying to understand how something works and have just accepted that it does. Do I need to know? Isn't it enough to know I can make it work to help me do what I do, but better?

Everything digital in the LIS profession can be challenging to grasp. And this is where education and peer support is essential as you become the go-to people.

Library users rely on you to help them bridge their digital knowledge gap. That could be using your digital resources to help someone learn to browse the internet, assist a student to find specific information or using particular software to facilitate a community project.

Those born today will look at our digital world and probably call it vintage. After all, with digital, there is no going back. We can only move forward, probably at an ever faster rate. No one knows where this era will take us in the end, and that can be an unsettling thought. But at the same time, as Malcolm Turnbull says, 'There has never been a more exciting time to be alive.' And I would add: especially if you're a librarian.

By the way, I'm reading Stan Grant's *Talking to My Country*. It's a must-read. 🇺🇸



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