

LIBRARY

ANNUAL REPORT

2008

Improving ...

Student spaces
 Services
 Resources
 Opening hours
 Staff

RMIT University Library strives for the right balance of electronic and print resources, computer and software access, technologically enhanced group study spaces, individual desks for quiet study, ambience and opening hours to help maximise our students' potential.

In 2008 we spent AUD \$6 million on new information resources. Sixty per cent of this was on e-resources (electronic books and journals). A major new acquisition was Scopus.

The 2008 Student Experience Survey showed students' satisfaction with e-resources had improved by 7 percentage points on 2007.

Library sites are also heavily used. On-going renovations are appreciated as is indicated by a 3 per cent higher doorcount than in 2007.

The Library was the most frequently used student facility in the university in 2008:

- serving more than 2.2 million users in person
- hosting more than 5.6 million website visits
- lending more than 459 000 items.

Student spaces

We continued to improve student spaces.

At Swanston Library we completed new group study rooms and refurbished staff offices.

At Bundoora Library we added an extra student seminar room.

We began refurbishment works at Carlton Library including:

- 2 new student discussion rooms
- a new casual reading area and furniture
- relocation of the entrance, returns chutes and book display area
- new furniture for relocated computers
- relocation of existing large tables
- specifically designed area for adaptive technology equipment
- refurbished photocopy space.

Works at Brunswick Library began and include:

- a new entrance to improve access
- a new casual reading area
- a single service desk for student queries.



Browsing the print collection

Services

We introduced new services and enhanced existing ones.

In a 'mobile service' at Swanston Library, staff offered assistance with self-check machines, photocopiers and printers. This meant students with a simple enquiry did not have to queue behind those with a longer one.

We tried a new approach to Library orientation that was shorter and more interactive. We added walk-up training sessions and continued 15 minute power sessions: Finding Journal Articles and Searching the Catalogue. EndNote and GoogleSmart continued to be our most popular sessions. We also encouraged students to Book-a-Librarian for assistance.

ITS successfully trialed a helpdesk in the Library, which received positive feedback from students.

We evaluated photocopying and printing tender responses in collaboration with ITS and Strategic Procurement and a new system is being implemented in 2009.

We added to our podcasts and the first vodcast was made available:

www.rmit.edu.au/library/libcast

We investigated providing research support for students undertaking work-integrated learning and industry placement.

We evaluated instant messaging software with a view to implementation in 2009.

A physical stocktake and weeding of older, unused material occurred, freeing up space for seating.

We contributed to the Australian Technology Network (ATN) Infoscholar project — a joint project between the ATN libraries that supports the e-Grad School.

In conjunction with other ATN universities, we participated in a shared project to teach information skills to students of ATN universities in Singapore.

Resources

As well as extending our print and AV collection, we acquired numerous new e-resources including electronic copies of many journals held in print, allowing us to move older print journals into storage and freeing space for student use. We developed depth and breadth in the collection to better support research. When acquiring new e-resources we give preference to licences that allow off-shore access. We also acquired:

- PsycARTICLES
- Informit TVNews and Engineering Collection
- Emerald Backfiles and Complete Collection
- Royal Society of Chemistry e-journals
- SAGE Premier Collection
- Century of Science Archive
- Oxford Journal Archive
- IBISWorld (additional reports)
- Wiley Backfiles (psychology and food science)
- The Source (children's literature)
- NBER Working Papers

We added substantially to our e-books with several new collections including those from:

- SpringerLink
- ScienceDirect
- SIAM (maths)
- CRCnetBASE (additional collections)
- Praeger Security International Online
- Referex (engineering)
- Royal Society of Chemistry
- IGI (science and technology)
- Lippincott (nursing and medical)

Improving access to resources

We continued to work towards making it easier for students to find the information they need.

We redesigned research and subject guides and recreated them as 'LibGuides', which involved much more than transferring existing content into a new format. Most guides were totally reworked, adding greater visual content and incorporating social networking features so that the subject guides are no longer simple lists of key resources but effectively mini research guides. By year's end 87 guides had been published as LibGuides:

www.rmit.edu.au/library/infoguides

We implemented Verde, a centralised repository through which all e-resource workflows—acquisitions, trials, usage, cost, access, and administrative data—are efficiently managed.

We reconfigured the cross-database, link resolver software, Search It and Find It, with a new version to be available early in 2009.

Liaison Librarians gained access to relevant online courses in Blackboard. Achieving greater Library input into the online courses is a valuable starting point for assessing where we can add resources and information literacy components and having informed conversations with our academics.

Liaison Librarians acquired immediate access to information used in planning for the following year (e.g. about program or discipline accreditations) and we gained a broader perspective on issues facing schools.

The Learning Content Management System pilot was taken to the production stage. This will save teaching staff time and effort, and protect the University's investment in electronic teaching resources.

A research repository was brought to the production stage, for release early in 2009. This will enhance access to RMIT University's research output, and reputation, and increase citation rates.

We began a conversion project of RMIT theses currently in print to digital format, for the Australian Digital Theses (ADT) database and the research repository.

We began an extensive project to transfer licensed off-air videorecordings to the more convenient DVD format.

We improved turnaround time for delivery of materials for print disabled students by implementing offshore processing.

Opening hours

We extended the number of weeks we stay open until midnight at Swanston Library. Usage shows students see this as a necessary part of their access to the Library. In 2009 additional hours on weekends will be provided.

Bundoora Library was opened for additional days when students from all over Australia were on campus for intensive weekend classes.

Staff

We developed an online interactive study program for staff of Web 2.0 technologies, entitled 21 Lunges, (based on a program by a US public library). This has been a great way to investigate technologies students are using and look at how they might be used to deliver our business.

