

Some ALIA stars shine extra bright!

After the recent presentation of the ALIA SA Library Achiever of the Year Award 2007 in August, the committee considered what to do with a big bunch of bright balloons, used to decorate the venue. Benita Anderson — awarded her silver pin on the night — was ahead of the pack with an idea. At her suggestion, I had the fun of delivering the balloons to the Women's and Children's Hospital to be used in the children's wards. A brilliant idea, awarded by brilliant smiles on delivery. Such a simple thing, and so much better than pricking the balloons so we could bin them. Shine on, Benita!

Lee Welch
ALIA SA

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contribute to your member magazine

Contributions on issues relating to library and information science are welcome. Tell us about your work; share the issues discussed in your ALIA group; report on an activity or event. Or, consider a feature article under 1000 words — themes and deadlines for the remainder of 2007 are:

- **October** — *philanthropy; retirement*, copy due 7 September
- **November** — *library buildings*, copy due 1 October
- **December** — *copyright; Web 2.0*, copy due 1 November

Please note: These are **editorial** themes; **advertising** themes are on page 26.

Send contributions to <incite@alia.org.au>, high resolution images are welcome too! For more details, see <<http://alia.org.au/publishing/incite/>>.

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Customer Service

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WHY NOT ASK 'WHY NOT?' AT CQU LIBRARY?

While Central Queensland University (CQU) Library has implemented several customer service related initiatives over the years, it's been the philosophical change driving them that's been most beneficial.

Quite some time ago we realised that the traditional user of our library resources, services and facilities had gone on hiatus, to be replaced by time-poor, overworked, 'overGoogled' students that relied on the Library to deliver, deliver, and deliver!

Not only did we have to come to grips with the fact that over 50% of our students were studying from a distance, but we also had to cope with the blossoming 'net generation' and the consumer-focused service industries who promised everything from 'it's fast or it's free' to 'we will beat competitors' prices'.

Realising that new client groups were rapidly developing and new benchmarks for service quality were required, a philosophy was adopted that, in essence, promoted the 'slaughtering' of sacred cows. Instead of answering 'no' to student requests that fell outside of library policy, we started asking ourselves 'why not?'

A case in point is that of borrowing limits. Prior to 2000, borrowing limits were restrictive, despite dwindling use of physical resources. So, borrowing limits were increased for staff and students. More recently, the limits were increased again in response to feedback from student focus groups. We are now trialling unlimited borrowing from our general collections and 14-day loans of print journals — a truly heretical practice only five years ago!

Changing to a more client-focused philosophy has led to a multitude of customer service initiatives that have been appreciated by clients, as demonstrated by the 2005 Rodski survey results, in which 79% of respondents claimed to be 'satisfied' or 'extremely satisfied'.

The establishment of a centralised enquiry centre for all student queries, regardless of location, is another example of the 'why not?' approach. Students now use only one phone number or one email address to communicate with the Library. Requests for photocopies of articles or book chapters are emailed within hours and books are circulated between the campus libraries, depending on demand.

Streamlined communications with our clients has also proven very successful in meeting our clients' needs. We have recently moved to an email notification system for all library communications with our clients and are currently investigating the use of SMS and online chat services to further satisfy our net-gen and 'on-the-move' clients.

CQU Library staff have continued to ask 'why not?' and revise policies and services based on client feedback. Some of these improvements have required little in the way of funding, technology or staffing, but have made a significant difference to the support we provide to our clients during their academic careers.

Check out the Library's website for more information on our services at <<http://www.library.cqu.edu.au/>>.

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