

## Catering for the computer in their pockets

With 65% of the general population and 85% of 18-24 year old university students using their smart phones to fill their everyday needs, the vast majority of clients are now walking into libraries with computers in their pockets.

Given that one of the guiding principles of libraries is the free flow of information and ideas, Curtin Library aims to provide as many of our services on as many mobile devices as possible. In August we released a new version of our iPhone app with features such as a new books display and barcode scanner. We also recently updated our mobile website and library catalogue mobile interface to provide a better experience across a wide range of mobile devices from iPhone and Android to Windows Phone and Blackberry.

While there are benefits to device-specific applications, our experience in developing these

two mobile solutions has highlighted the benefits of a mobile website over a mobile app, including:

- reaching a wider range of clients,
- reduced development costs,
- faster content updates, and
- easier access for users.

The web is expanding past the desktop interface it started on and becoming multifaceted, with access across a multiplicity of devices. Other industries have adapted their websites and services to mobile device formats in the last five years, which contrasts to the majority of Australian libraries. If libraries expand their web offerings to accommodate access from any device, any location, at any time, they will help themselves remain relevant to a new generation of users.

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