

iNet: Information & Collaboration on the Web

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Abstract:

The iNet project has been a collaborative project by the South Australian Public Library Network in partnership with the Council of Library Administrators of South Australia (CLASA) and PLAIN Central Services (PCS). iNet is a customisable information Web site which consists of a core element of generic links to quality information resources available on the World Wide Web. Maintaining, updating and adding links to the site is performed by a variety of Subject Administrator Libraries across the State. Maintenance is facilitated via a password protected content management tool which enables administrators to make changes to their subject content without requiring HTML or other Web programming knowledge or skills.

Introduction

If every Library Service in Australia had unlimited budgets and resources would we work collaboratively? Probably not. Librarians, like everyone else, are competitive by nature and if unfettered by budgets and resource restrictions would not only have the best library buildings and provide the best collections and services that they could, they would also actively strive to stay a step ahead of their neighbouring libraries and be a little jealous when another library service implemented something innovative before them. Collaboration tends to come out of necessity and while there is a fair deal of competition that goes on between library services in South Australia, Australia and the world, there is a good deal more cooperation and collaboration. If there is one element that characterises every library in the world then it is probably shrinking or, at best, stable budgets. There has never been a time where this has proven to be more problematic than as we enter the 21st Century and as we try to maintain the relevance of our services by investing in technology and by trying to compete with commercial online information providers.

Background

The South Australian Public Library Network consists of 131 libraries representing 78 Local Government authorities, with many of South Australia's rural library services being in communities with populations of less than 3,000 people. In order to provide appropriate services to these communities, the South Australian Libraries Board and the Local Government Authority have joined with the Department of Education, Training and Employment to operate very successful School Community Libraries.

Much has been done over the years to develop the network and where possible to coordinate the activities of public libraries, centralise common activities or involve the network in consortium purchasing agreements.

The key strategic body in the South Australian library & information field is the Council of Library Administrators of South Australia (CLASA). CLASA represents and supports the network on major issues including:

- Policy and planning;
- Funding;
- Strategic alliances and partnerships;
- Advocacy;
- Management of network issues;
- Information gathering and dissemination; and
- Facilitating professional training and development.

The other core body in South Australia is PLAIN (Public Libraries Automated Information Network) Central Services which, since the late eighties, has been responsible for managing the centralised selection, acquisition, cataloguing and distribution of materials including database subscriptions.

It was in this environment of an already established collaborative network that the idea of iNet was born and bred.

Aim & Philosophy

While South Australian public libraries have operated within a cooperative network for many years, there is still a good deal of independent activity which expresses the individual requirements of each Local Government area. For example, although materials procurement is centralised through PLAIN, selection and collection development activities continue to be managed at the local library level based on the needs of the particular community.

Another area that had been left to individual libraries has been the development of library Web sites and Web resources. Most libraries, if they have a Web presence at all, have either had their Web pages developed as part of an overall Council strategy or, at best, developed their own site in conjunction with the development of their Council's site while retaining the often lacklustre corporate image and standards of its parent body. There are, of course, good reasons for Library Web sites to have been established on an individual basis, such as expression of local interests and the difficulty in coordinating the ongoing collection of the diverse amounts of information about each library service, including: opening hours, membership policies, etc.

Since those libraries that have created links pages on their Web site have done so independently, a good deal of duplication of effort has, consequently, occurred. In preparing the Business Case for the iNet project it was estimated that a links page with 150 - 250 links would typically take an individual library around 100 hours to establish and 10 to 20 hours per month to maintain if all links are checked regularly, new items are added and old items changed or deleted. At an average staff cost of \$20 per hour, such a page would cost an individual library service \$2000 to establish and \$2400 per year to maintain.

Taken across all library services in South Australia the total cost to establish an individual links page for each library service would be around \$250,000 and around \$300,000 a year to maintain.

The intent of iNet, therefore, was to create a single information resource containing generic links to Web resources which would enable Librarians from many, if not all public libraries in South Australia, to contribute a comparatively small amount of time and effort to its development and maintenance rather than having many links pages with duplicate entries on library Web sites throughout the state.

The philosophy behind iNet was that more could be achieved by libraries working together than could be achieved by everyone working independently. With this in mind the following aims for the project were developed:

iNet as a collaborative project between libraries making up the South Australian Public Library Network will:

Establish an online resource that is easy to use and accessible to Public Library staff and the general public at home, in the workplace and in libraries;

Create savings to individual Library Services by eliminating repetition of effort;

Provide a Web site which can act as a homepage to libraries that do not already have one;

Provide Internet reference services to libraries with limited funding, time and staff resources; and

Strengthen the South Australian Public Library Network.

Business Case

iNet developed from an idea proposed at a CLASA Electronic Information Committee meeting in 1999, to develop a database which would enable individual libraries to add links, resources and information to an already established core component much in the same way that South Australian libraries already contribute to the Statewide Community Information resource.

The first phase of the journey was to survey the South Australian Public Library Network to ascertain whether or not there was a real need in South Australian public libraries for such a resource, and secondly to determine the likely participation levels, particularly with regard to libraries becoming involved in maintaining subject areas included on the site. Overall the results of the survey endorsed the idea but there were still some concerns about the level of participation that the Electronic Information Committee thought that they could expect from the field.

The complete survey results are attached as Appendix I. In summary, the majority of libraries, 96%, indicated that they would use an Internet Reference site, with 88% believing that the site would be of use to both staff and library customers. Most libraries preferred that a wide range of subject areas be included with only a few libraries suggesting that only South Australian material be included.

A surprising outcome of the survey was that 61% of libraries still did not have a Web site and 40% of all libraries surveyed indicated that they would use the proposed Internet Reference site as their homepage.

When asked if libraries were prepared to be subject administrators, the majority of libraries, 58%, answered No, 32% answered Yes and 10% of libraries were unsure or required further information regarding the amount of time that was expected to be committed.

While the Electronic Information Committee had some concerns about the level of participation that could be sought for the project, it was believed that there was sufficient interest from the field to proceed to a Business Case stage and that work on increasing the level of participation could be done at a later stage.

The second phase of the journey was to prepare a Business Case and secure funding for the project. Approximately 75% of the gross expenditure on public libraries in South Australia comes from Local Government contributions, with the remaining 25% coming from the State Government. Approximately 40% of the State Government contribution goes towards operating costs and 60% towards materials. Unlike some other States, the South Australian State Government does not offer any separate grants to Public Libraries for the development of innovative technologies or services at either a local government or state-wide level. Therefore, in order for iNet to be established, the Electronic Information Committee had to secure funding, either by approaching individual libraries, or by tapping into the levy system

whereby CLASA allocates a percentage of funds from the annual State Government materials contribution to special collections, such as LOTE and databases, and to special projects.

As CLASA represented the library industry in South Australia, as well as being the parent group of the Electronic Information Committee, it was logical that they be approached to fund the project out of the technology levy that in past years had been used to upgrade the PLAIN procurement system.

A Business Case was put to the CLASA Executive in late 2000, highlighting the information sharing and collaborative nature of the project and setting a development budget of \$21,500 and an ongoing operational budget of \$7,200. The figure for the annual operational cost was, however, essentially an opportunity cost figure based on a calculation of the commitment that libraries across the state would need to make in order to maintain and administer the site. It was always anticipated and expected that work in researching, preparing and maintaining iNet would be on a voluntary basis with an acknowledgement across the industry that a certain amount of staff time would need to be committed by each library service involved in the project. Given the varying sizes of libraries in South Australia, however, it was always understood that a larger proportion of the workload, particularly in establishing the site, would be undertaken by the larger metropolitan libraries, which had a greater ability to absorb the workload.

Upon considering the Business Plan, the CLASA Executive wholeheartedly supported the concept with the project later being endorsed by CLASA and funds being committed to the development of iNet from the Technology levy during the 2001-2002 financial year.

Project Plan

Once funding was secured it was time to develop a comprehensive Project Plan and to formally select a Project Team by seeking expressions of interest from the field. Up to now, the groundwork, including: surveying the field, researching costs, preparing the Business Case and establishing the criteria for the site, was done by a small sub group from the Electronic Information Committee. As the project progressed, however, it became evident that the interests of country and remote school community libraries were not necessarily being represented by the entirely metropolitan Electronic Information Committee.

In order to ensure that all interests were represented a project structure was proposed which included:

The *CLASA Executive* who were responsible for addressing issues relating to resources, budgets and policies that were unable to be resolved at the Electronic Information Committee level;

The *Electronic Information Committee* which was responsible for overseeing significant aspects of the project and had the responsibility for monitoring the progress of the project, resolve issues within their brief and assure that the needs of metropolitan, country and joint use libraries were being adequately addressed.

A *Project Coordinator* who was responsible for the administration and coordination of the project as well as reporting on the stages of the project to the Electronic Information Committee, CLASA Executive and CLASA as a whole;

The *Project Team* which had the responsibility for the completion of all phases of the project and, therefore, was ultimately responsible for the project's successful completion and implementation.

Work Groups which would be established as needed, to perform specific tasks within the implementation plan.

Once the project structure was agreed to and confirmed by the CLASA Executive, expressions of interest were sought from the field for membership on the project team. The project team ended up with eighteen members representing 11 metropolitan, 2 country and 2 school community libraries as well as including a CLASA Executive and a PLAIN Central Services (PCS) representative.

In any language this was a large project team but the advantage of having such a large team was that a number of work groups could be easily established with different participants working simultaneously on various parts of the overall project. A comprehensive project plan was developed (see Appendix II) and three workgroups were established to complete the initial stages of the project. The initial three work groups were a:

Delivery Models Work Group: responsible for researching web technologies, potential delivery models and developing specifications for the final product.

Developers Work Group: responsible for researching potential developers, preparing a Request for Proposal document, shortlisting potential developers responding to the Request for Proposal and selecting a developer to create the Internet Reference Site.

Subject Work Group: responsible for deciding the final subject areas to be included on iNet, preparing selection criteria, soliciting interest from the field for libraries to become Subject Administrators and preparing a Service Level Agreement for Subject Administrator Libraries.

Shortly after the project began it became clear that it was becoming increasingly difficult to meaningfully include members from remote communities in the project team. Because of distance and limitations in staff, it was not possible for all members to attend regular meetings or to actively involve themselves in the project tasks. Videoconferencing was one method considered to involve remote Librarians in meetings and while PCS and most of the regional libraries had access to videoconferencing facilities, there were strict limitations in the way that PCS were able to use the facilities and there was no budget allocated to the project for telecommunication costs.

A solution was found in the establishment of a project Reference Group. The Reference Group consisted of regional librarians who could not easily get to meetings conducted in the metropolitan area and representatives from smaller metropolitan libraries who found it difficult to allocate staff resources to meetings and completion of tasks. The job of the Reference Group was to review any work and documentation completed by the various work groups and to make comments and suggestions with particular emphasis on the interests of their community or library sector.

Architecture, Features & Functionality

As indicated earlier, iNet was designed to be a scalable information resource consisting of a core element containing generic links to quality information available on the World Wide Web. Resources to be included on the core site were to be obtained from library staff and customers throughout the state with the final selections being made by nominated Subject Administrator libraries. The core site would also include links to databases and core South Australian sites such as EBSCOhost, PLAIN, SA Central, etc.

In addition to the core site, individual libraries were to be able to add their own local content either as additional links to Web sites of local interest or by adding pointers to their own local material hosted elsewhere, such as Local Studies resources, Council Business Papers, local reports, etc.

Maintaining, updating and adding links to both core subject areas and local content was to be facilitated using a method whereby Subject Administrators and individual libraries could simply access a password protected area and make changes to their subject or customised local area, without requiring HTML or other Web programming knowledge or skills.

The first task of the *Delivery Models* Work Group was to develop precise specifications for the site followed by an investigation of existing models which might fulfil the requirements.

Initially, the specifications developed by the *Delivery Models* Work Group were quite specific and included detail such as: developers are required to create a *database* . . ., updating of data is to be facilitated via a simple *form* based method . . ., etc. It soon became evident that the specifications were becoming too prescriptive and that by describing how something should be facilitated rather than specifying what was to be achieved, there was a possibility that a developer that could best satisfy our needs might be excluded because their methodologies did not fit our very specific requirements. To ensure that developers were not excluded because of poor specifications, the draft requirements were rewritten, as far as necessary, in a fashion that enabled each specification to be measurable and specified what iNet was intended to achieve rather than how it was to be achieved (see Appendix III).

Once the specifications were completed the *Delivery Models* Work Group undertook an investigation into existing models which were similar to what was intended with iNet and made a preliminary search for an off the shelf software package that could be easily configured to produce the desired results without the need for developing a completely new product. A number of sites were discovered that operated in a similar fashion to how iNet was intended to function, and where these were developed by a South Australian Web development company, that company was added to our list of organisations to be considered to develop iNet. Only one software package, however, was seriously considered as an option for use in developing the iNet Web site.

The software in question was the MyLibrary freeware developed by Eric Lease Morgan and distributed by the North Carolina State University Libraries. On the surface, MyLibrary provided a fairly easy to use solution that not only enabled individual libraries to customise their own MyLibrary portals based on the core elements, but provided facilities for users to also customise their own access to the site to include only those subject areas that they were interested in. MyLibrary was ultimately rejected on the basis that it required substantial Unix skills to set up and configure. While this expertise could have been brought in using the funds

allocated to the project, and consequently saved by using a freeware solution, the Project Team was uncomfortable going down a path which:

Required some ongoing Unix skills and knowledge of the configuration of the MyLibrary software;

Used an essentially experimental and unsupported software solution; and

Did not noticeably facilitate the incorporation of future iNet developments.

At about the same time that MyLibrary was being investigated, an agreement was made between the iNet Project Coordinator and the CLASA Marketing Group to combine two similar projects. These were, the iNet project and the Marketing Group project to develop a State wide Web site which would promote the Public Library Network by providing access to information on individual libraries including:

A map showing the location of the nearest libraries;

Address, contact details and UBD map references;

Opening hours;

Links to email addresses, Library Web sites and online catalogues; and

Events occurring in the nearest libraries.

The logic and benefits of combining the two projects are perhaps obvious, but nonetheless include:

The ability to maximise efficiencies and make savings by eliminating duplication in development of common areas as well as having a single site to host and maintain;

The ability to incorporate the same look and feel into both sites; and

The ability to combine the workloads of both project teams in the preparation of a *Request for Proposal* document and in the process to select a suitable developer.

The development company that was finally selected to develop the South Australian Public Library Network Web site was able to seamlessly incorporate the two project ideas using both a database to store and retrieve data and a form based method for publishing information to the site. Another factor that assisted in their selection was that their project methodologies fit into the plans and schedule of the iNet project by providing assistance in establishing testing models, as well as preparing and delivering training to appropriate staff in the use of the browser based content management and site administration tools and in the use of the incorporated statistical package.

Subject Administration

A significant aspect of the iNet project was, obviously, the selection and administration of the subject areas included on the site. Consequently, critical to the success of the project was the work of the Subject Work Group. This Group was given the task of not only selecting the initial subject areas that would be included on the site in the face of competing interests, but also to solicit libraries from all public library sectors to be involved in the project at the Subject Administration level, and also to determine a Service Level Agreement that would ensure that quality in the site is maintained.

The first task of the group was to establish some selection criteria. This would enable the work group to fairly comfortably develop a list of subject areas that took into account the interests of various library sectors without being shackled by them. The core criteria that was established by the group were that subject areas to be included on the site were to:

Be of wide interest to South Australian Library Users (localised information needs could be incorporated into customised local areas); and

Cover a broad range but with a targeted emphasis on the information needs of primary and secondary students as a significant group of library users and seekers of information;

Once determined, the subject selection criteria would guide the group to developing the subject areas and a range of sub categories that was to be used on the first version of iNet. iNet was always intended to be a fluid project, and as time progresses, it is expected that the subject areas will change depending on the changing needs of the communities.

With iNet under development and the core subject areas decided, it was now time to begin adding content to the project site. As a result of the market survey mentioned previously, we knew that there were about twenty library services that could immediately be involved in setting up the iNet content. There were also a significant number of libraries that already had established links pages, and it would be from them that we would pull our initial material.

Not wanting to stop at the twenty libraries that had already expressed an interest, the Subject Work Group began a campaign of attempting to attract further libraries into the project. As mentioned earlier, many smaller libraries, particularly in regional areas, were initially reluctant to be involved in the project, mainly on the basis of severe staff and time limitations. The Subject Work Group estimated that it would take about 1 – 4 hours per month for a library service to maintain a single subject, depending on the number of sub categories that a subject might contain. For example, a relatively basic subject area such as Family History might only require a commitment of one hour per month whereas a multilevel subject such as Animals or Environment could take considerably longer. The Hot Topics section was anticipated to take even longer than the other, more static areas, and may require weekly or daily maintenance and so it was decided that this area would be maintained, on a rotational basis, by members of the Electronic Information Committee.

As the project developed and libraries were kept informed about the project at quarterly CLASA meetings, interest in the project grew. A sufficient number of library services were finally selected and subject areas allocated on a resource capacity basis that enabled libraries to commit to the project with a workload that did not exceed the time estimates made by the project team.

Once administrator libraries had been selected and subject areas allocated, it was necessary for the project team to establish a Service Level Agreement that both large and small administrator libraries would sign off on. The Service Level Agreement that was finally agreed to addressed issues of timeliness and accuracy and was not intended to create a burden on libraries. It simply aimed to provide guidelines as to what was expected to be completed on a weekly and monthly basis by each library and what should be done if a library was unable to meet its obligation in the short and long term.

Evaluation Methodologies

In order for the iNet project to be continuously successful, it is necessary for the Electronic Information Committee to evaluate the resource in a number of key areas:

- Levels of use by both library staff and customers
- Levels of use of specific subject areas
- Quality of maintenance by Subject Administrator Libraries
- Customer satisfaction

Levels of use by library staff and customers

That iNet is used is, obviously, critical to its ongoing success and development. By aligning the project with the CLASA Marketing committee's efforts there should be little need for the Electronic Information Committee to undertake additional marketing in order to bring the site to the attention of customers. It is also expected that through ongoing training, support and promotion at quarterly CLASA meetings, the site and its applications are constantly known and appreciated by Library Administrators and their staff.

An essential requirement in the development of the iNet site was the inclusion of statistical software. The statistical software package that was selected to monitor and analyse the site was *Web Trends Professional Suite*. Web Trends enables the Electronic Information Committee to monitor the traffic accessing any part of the site as well as allowing subject and site administrators to have the ability to easily check and analyse link integrity.

Level of use of specific subject areas

Again, Web Trends will be used to monitor access to specific subject areas in order to ascertain the appropriateness of a particular subject area and, consequently, to justify the continued inclusion of the subject or sub category. To a degree, some of the subject areas and linked resources have been included on iNet on a *just in case* rather than a *just in time* basis. This is justified on the basis that included references are from free Web based resources and though there is, obviously, some staff resource cost in maintaining *just in case* areas, there is no materials cost which would necessitate a more *just in time* approach. Nonetheless, it is important that what is included on the site is of relevance to users, and if particular subject areas are consistently low performers and there appears to be no likely or foreseeable demand for the subject category then it will necessarily disappear from the site.

In addition, again to keep the site as relevant as possible, iNet includes easy to access customer feedback and suggestion facilities which can be used by both library staff and customers to suggest subject categories that are not included on the site or references to quality sites that are also not included.

Quality of maintenance by Subject Administrator Libraries

A critical part of ensuring that iNet remains relevant and useful is the ability of Subject Administrator Libraries to maintain their subject areas including ensuring that:

- links remain active
- abstracts are accurate
- included sites remain relevant or are removed if they become irrelevant
- sites that are no longer substantially free are removed; and
- any new sites of importance are added in the appropriate subject area.

Tools used in monitoring the work of Subject Administrators include Web Trends, which can determine how frequently the Content Management mode is accessed for each subject and sub category, and the Service Level Agreements signed by each Administrator Library. While the purpose of the Service Level Agreement is substantially to provide guidelines as to what is required in order to maintain a quality site, it is expected that it should also be able to be used as a way for the Electronic Information Committee to address any problem areas and to help provide solutions that will enable any library struggling to meet its obligations to get back on track.

Customer satisfaction

While statistical software can determine the use of iNet and therefore assumptions about quality and usefulness can be made, it cannot give actual data about the quality of the site and of its usefulness. One way that this data can be gathered is via the feedback and suggestions forms, and it will be important that some money is secured each year to ensure the development of iNet and the ability to include any worthwhile suggestions from customers and the field. However, this in itself is an insufficient measure of customer satisfaction. To ensure that the Electronic Information Committee is continuously appraised of customer satisfaction, periodic customer surveys will be made available to users of iNet. How this will actually be achieved is still to be determined but the most likely approach will be to encourage users, possibly through the use of a pop-up screen, to complete a user survey after they have completed their iNet session.

Future Directions

The success of iNet is yet to be fully determined but early indicators suggest that with proper promotion at all levels of the library field and with efforts to maintain relevance in the site, iNet will become a popular resource for library staff and customers to locate essential resources to help satisfy their information needs.

What then of the future? The existing architecture of iNet allows for both scalability and addition. If successful, it is likely that the existing elements of iNet will grow over time, with the most likely area for growth being the localised content as both libraries and Councils discover the benefits of the resource, not only for finding relevant information on a wide variety of web resources, including access to a range of subscription databases, but also in its ability to point to documents and publications produced at the local level. This growth will depend on the local libraries and authorities and, while this hasn't been considered at this

stage, it is likely that content guidelines and Service Level Agreements will, at some time, need to be established to ensure that the integrity and quality of all aspects of the resource are maintained.

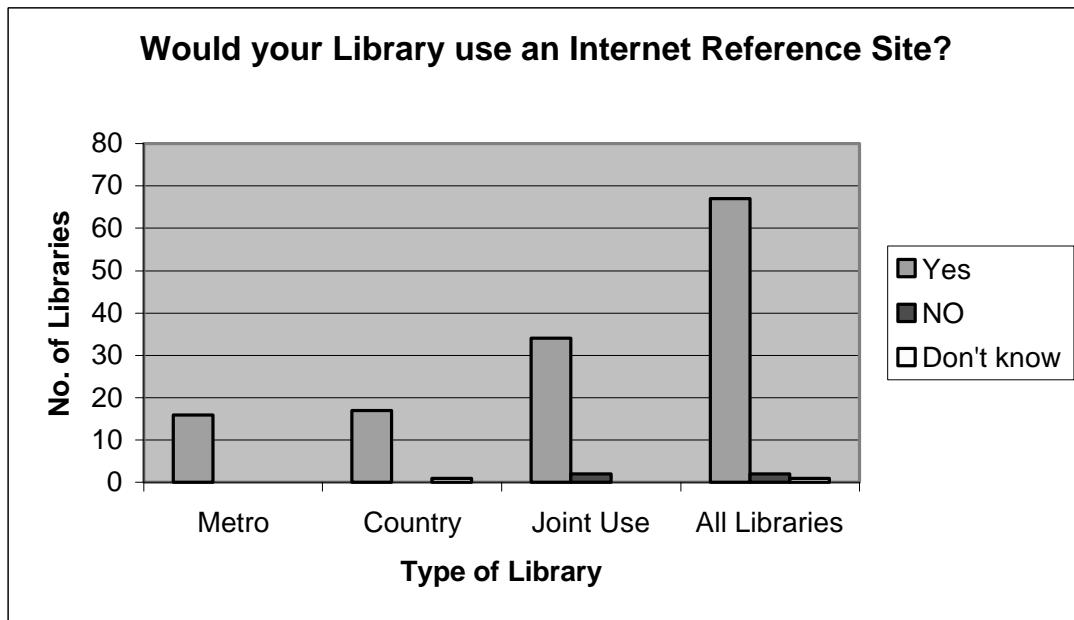
Preliminary ideas for phase II of iNet are around developing the site into a more functional and interactive information resource. A likely offshoot benefit of phase I of iNet is that a certain degree of Web resource knowledge is attained by Librarians across the state particularly by those involved in subject administration. In addition, the development of Phase I of iNet begins to establish a knowledge base of Web resources that will, in the short term be used to answer information enquiries by people entering a library building and approaching a Reference Librarian and, in the longer term, enable Reference or Subject Librarians to respond, in real time, to enquiries received over the Internet.

A Business Case is currently being produced for iNet Phase II which adds to the site functionality by enabling customers to interact with librarians on line and in real time to receive a more personalised *just in time* service.

Appendix I: Internet Reference Site Survey

Question One: Would your library use an Internet Reference Site?

Yes	96%
No	3%
Don't Know	1%



There were only two Libraries who answered "No" to this question and they cited the following reasons:

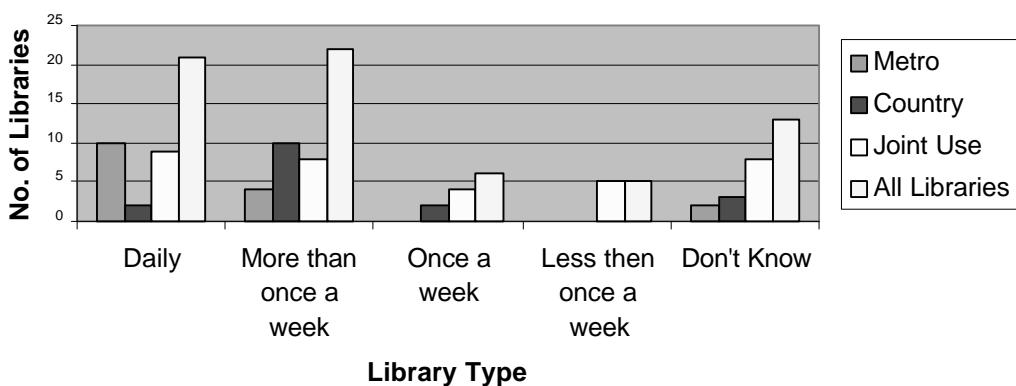
- *Tools we are using are getting good results for staff. Patrons enjoy surfing.*
- *Most people want something to take home and read at leisure. There is not any demand for this that we have been made aware of.*

Question 2: If Yes, how often would you use this resource?

Libraries were asked to estimate the usage of an Internet Reference Site in their Library

Daily	31%
More than once a week	33%
Once week	9%
Less than once a week	8%
Don't Know	19%

How often would Your Library Use an Internet Reference Site?

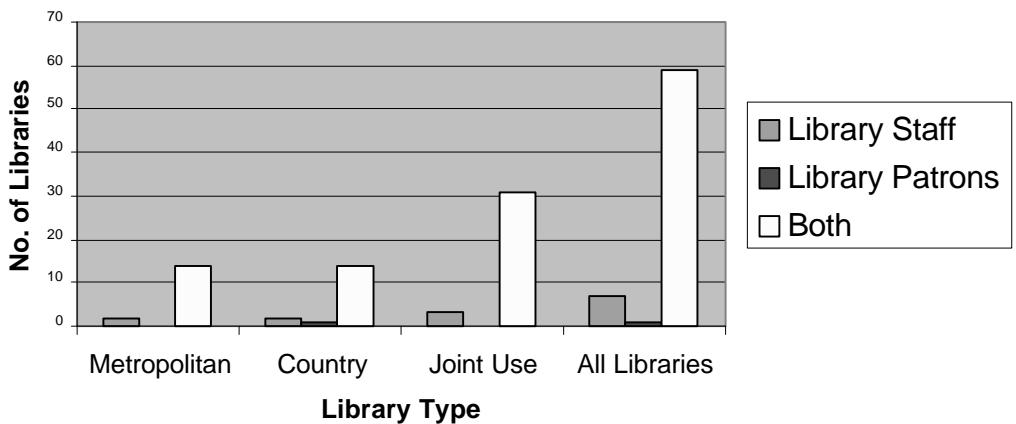


The above data suggest that an Internet Reference Site would be well used with 73% of Libraries surveyed estimating usage to be equal to, or greater than, once a week.

Question 3: Who would use an Internet Reference Site at your Library?

Staff	10%
Library Patrons	
Both	88%
Don't Know	2%

Who would Use an Internet Site?



The majority of libraries stated they expected both Library patrons and staff to use an Internet Reference site. The response to this question suggests Libraries view an Internet Reference Site as both a reference tool for staff and an information resource for the public.

Question 4: What Topics would you like to see included on the page?

Libraries were given a broad range of subject areas and were asked to indicate what topics they would like to see included in the site.

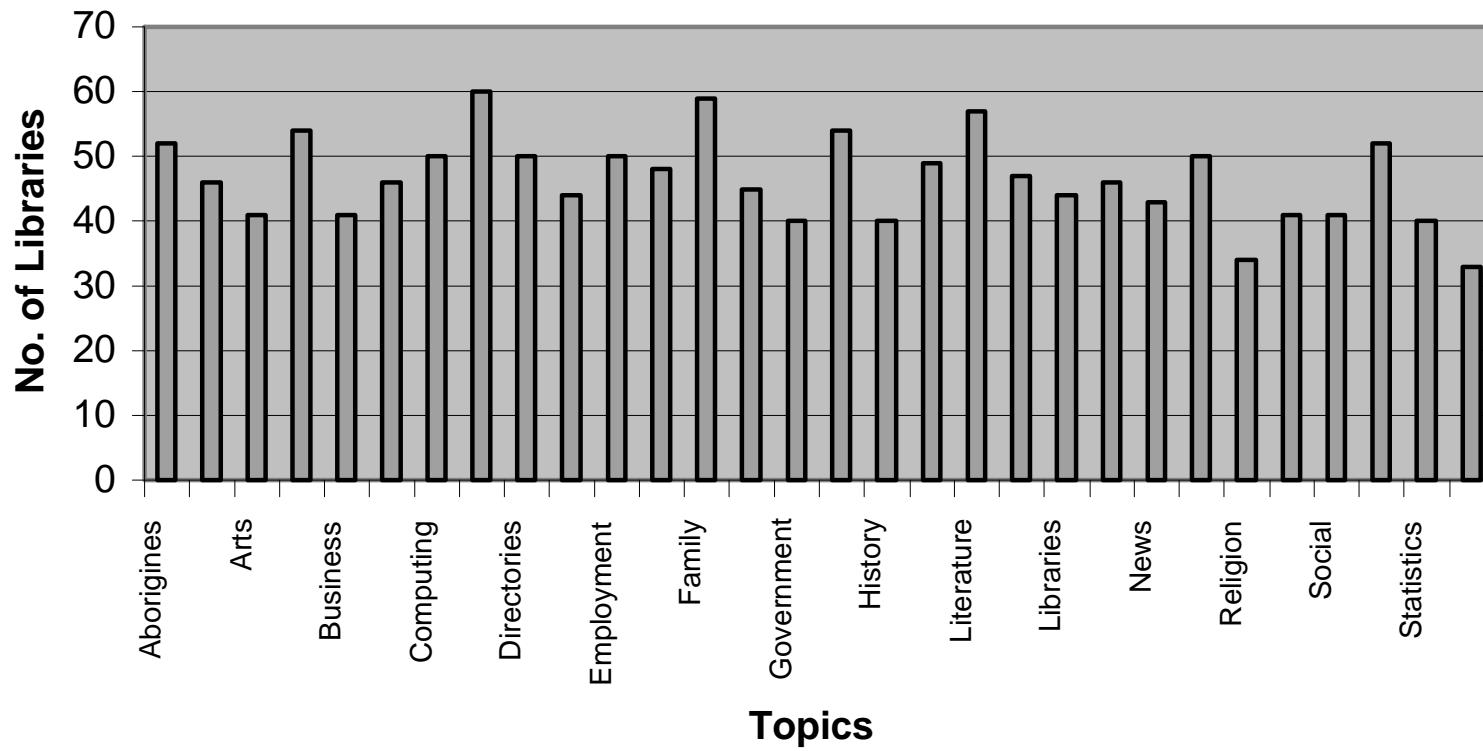
The topics listed in the survey aimed to cover a broad range of subject areas.

The chart below shows the range of topics listed in the survey were well supported by the majority of libraries, with very few topics being selected by less than 40 libraries.

Some libraries suggested additional topics. (Please note the number in brackets indicates if the topic was suggested by more than one library)

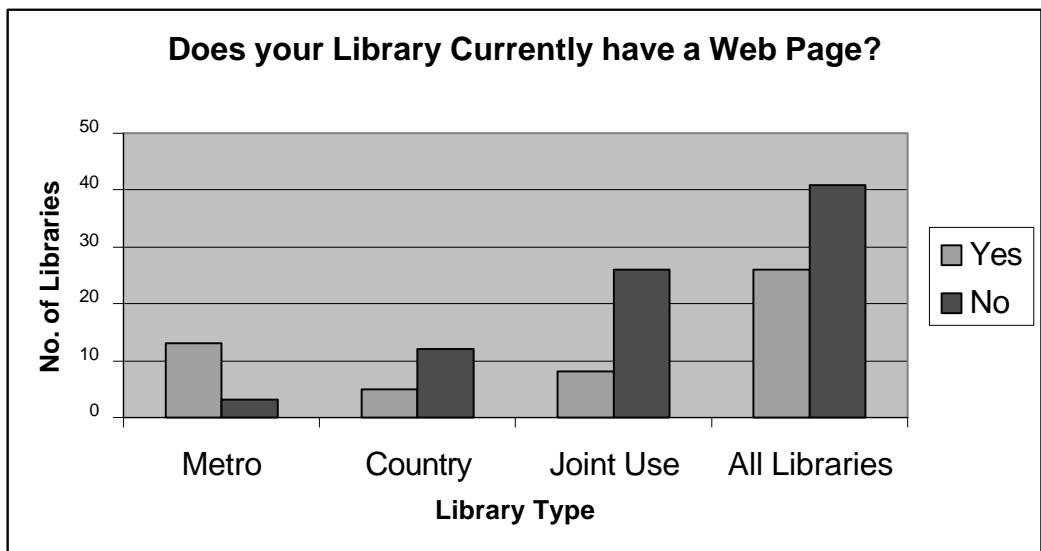
- Local Government
- Australiana
- South Australiana
- Local History (2)
- Wine/Viticulture
- Agriculture
- Family Services
- Finance
- IT
- National parks
- Opals
- Outback of SA
- Children's Youth sites
- Movies/television
- Countries and culture
- Government services
- Australian Fauna
- Conservation
- Australian Travel
- Local businesses

Topics to Be Included



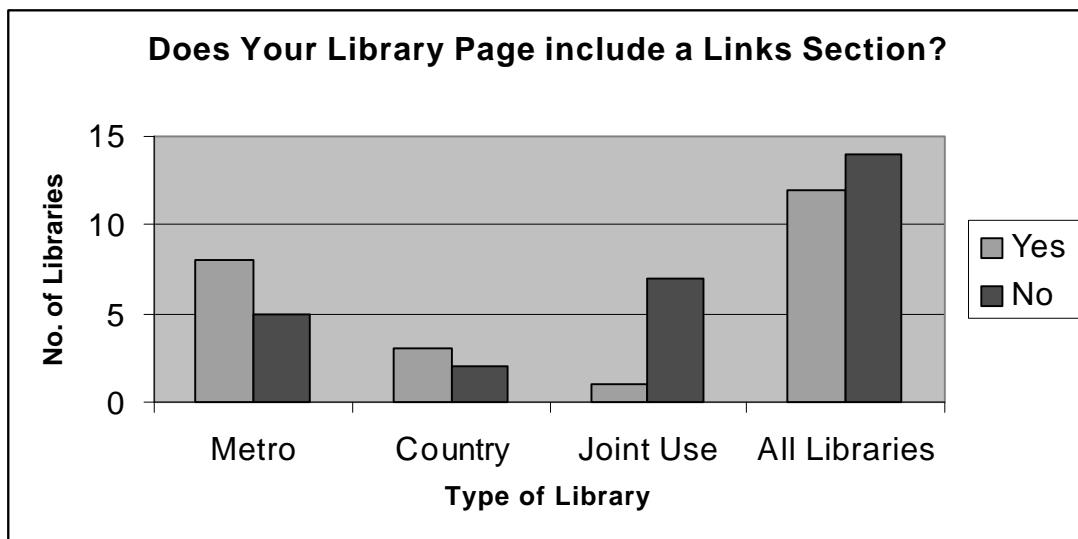
Question 5: Does your Library currently have a web page?

Yes	39%
No	61%



Question 5a: If Yes, does this page include a links page?

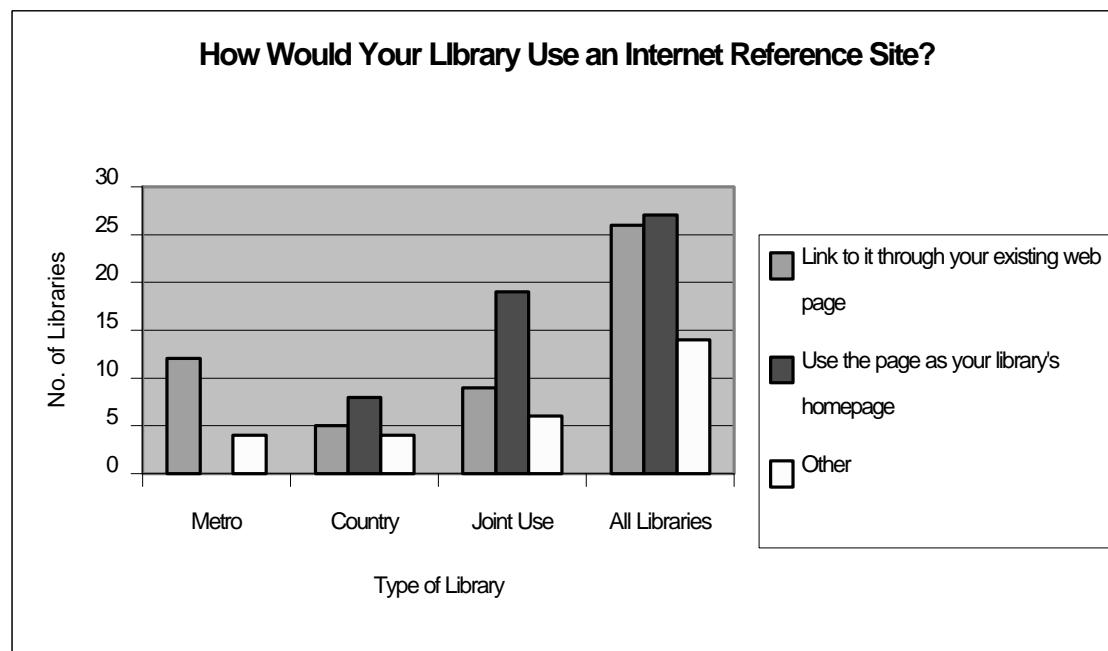
Yes	46%
No	54%



Question 6: How would your library use an Internet Reference site?

Libraries were also asked to indicate how they would use the site. The Project group is interested to find out whether Libraries would consider using the Internet Reference Site as their homepage, or if they had a web site would they still link into an Internet Reference site.

Link it through your existing page	39%
Use it as your Library's web page	40%
Other	21%



Some of the uses described under the “Other” option included:

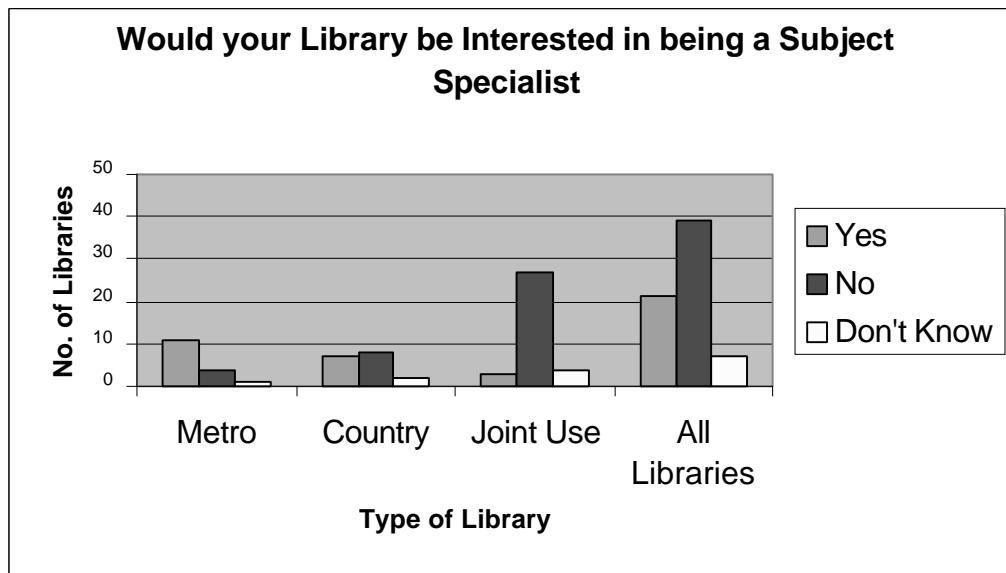
- Use as Staff Internet Reference Page
- Depends on Quality of Site
- Add a link through the Public Net Computers
- Unsure

Question 7: Would your library be interested in being a subject specialist?

Libraries were asked to indicate whether the Library was prepared to be a subject specialist Library. In the covering letter, which accompanied all surveys, libraries were informed that no HTML knowledge was required and it would be expected Libraries would need to spend 1-2 hours per month updating their subject area.

The following responses were given to this question.

Yes	32%
No	58%
Don't Know	10%



Only 32 % of Libraries who indicated they would use an Internet reference Site indicated they would be prepared to be a subject specialist and the majority of these libraries, 52%, were metropolitan.

Libraries sited the reason for responding ‘‘No’’ to this question being due to limited time and staffing resources.

All the Libraries who indicated they were unsure indicated they would need to know how much time would be required as a subject specialist.

Appendix II: iNet Project Tasks

Task
Preparation Phase
Work Groups decided
Work areas project planned
Delivery models researched
Subject areas finalised
iNet specifications finalised
Tender Phase
Research potential developers
Request for Proposal document prepared
Request for Proposal document sent to shortlisted developers
Request for Proposal deadline
Developer selected
Developer commissioned
Development Phase
Preparation meetings with Developer
Work to date meetings with Developer
Prepare Service Level Agreements for Subject Administrator Libraries
Seek formal expressions of interest for becoming a Subject Administrator Library
Subject Administrator Libraries selected and commissioned
Fully functional site ready for testing
Testing Phase
Testing scenarios developed
Site tested by Project Team and Subject Administrators
Selected field testing completed
Change recommendations received by the Project Team
Recommendations reviewed
Final change recommendations received by the Developer
Alterations made by Developer
Project Team sign off
Developer sign off
Implementation Phase
Host specifications prepared
Host Service Level Agreement prepared
Host selected
Domain Name registered
Site implemented
Training Plans developed
Training implemented
Site launch prepared
Site Launched
Project Complete

Appendix III: iNet Specifications

Design

The South Australian Public Library Network Web site shall:

- Prominently incorporate the South Australian Public Library Network colours and logo;
- Enable future development, in terms of improving functionality, adding services and redesigning the look and layout of the site, without compromising the integrity of existing data;
- Provide a text version of the site for lower browser versions and disability devices such as screen reading software and to enable individual libraries to incorporate parts of the site into their own web sites.

Standards

The South Australian Public Library Network Web site shall:

- Conform to W3C standards (level 2) in relation to accessibility and interoperability;
- Conform to South Australian State Government metadata standards.

Functionality

The South Australian Public Library Network Web site shall:

- Facilitate automatic refreshing of all pages to avoid out of date data from being retrieved from the cache;
- Provide for each non cached page to be fully loaded into a browser within 5 seconds using a 28.8Kbps modem speed Internet connection;
- Operate in standard versions of Netscape 4 or better & Internet Explorer 5 or better without the need for plugins or additional software;
- Be able to be used on a touchscreen PC;
- Provide user feedback and suggestion facilities.

Administration

The South Australian Public Library Network Web site shall:

- Enable Librarians with no HTML skills to add, modify, copy and delete item details pertaining to each individual Library;

- Enable individual libraries and overall administrators to access statistical information relating to:
 - Hits per link by day, month and year,
 - Page views,
 - User sessions;
- Provide password security to the overall administration of the site.

Features

The South Australian Public Library Network Web site shall:

- Enable users to choose from a selection of approximately 40 - 50 subject areas with up to 5 subcategories for each subject;
- Reveal links to Web sites from each subject or subcategory with the capacity to display:
 - The name of the site which is hypertext linked to the site,
 - URL of the site which is hypertext linked to the site,
 - Description of the site up to 250 words;
- Allow users to browse the contents of specific subject areas or search across all subjects;
- Provide user feedback and suggestion facilities;
- Provide users with the option of opening external pages in a new window or the same window;
- Enable subject areas to have entries added, modified, copied or deleted in real time via browser software without the need for plugins or additional software;
- Enable individual Libraries to add additional subject areas and links which can be accessed at a local level but not necessarily by other sites where the subject is of no interest;
- Provide password security to the overall administration of the Reference Information and to each primary subject area;
- Enable individual subject administrator libraries and overall site administrators to access link checking software for all, or specified sections, of the Reference Information.

Appendix IV: Subject Administrator Service Level Agreement

Activity	Standard
1. Site Selection	
Sites to be selected per each Subject Heading or Sub Category	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As per Selection Criteria • Maximum 5 sites per subject or sub category
2. Link Checking	
Links of included sites to be checked to ensure that they are still live.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performed weekly using incorporated link checking software
Identify new address and replace link (ie URL has changed but site is still active)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimum - at time of checking • Maximum - within 24 hours of checking
Removal of permanently inactive links (ie site has closed down and there is no replacement URL)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remove at time of checking
Each linked site to be fully visited to check that it is still complies with selection criteria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimum - monthly • Redundant links to be removed at time of checking
3. Abstracts	
Brief description of site provided	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maximum 100 words • Dot points in preference to long sentences
Provide examples of the types of questions that the site might answer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maximum 3 examples

NOTE: If the allocated Subject Administrator is unable to meet the Service Level Agreement for short periods (leave, illness, etc) then:

- Another staff member from the Subject Administrator library should be nominated to perform the activities for the required time; or if this is unable to be done

- Contact the Chairperson of the Electronic Information Committee to organise a short-term replacement.

If the allocated Subject Administrator library is unable to meet the Service Level Agreement for long periods contact the Chairperson of the Electronic Information Committee to negotiate an alternative arrangement.