

Australian Bureau of Statistics Technical Award

Winner: Willoughby City Library



(Left to right) Angelina Yeung, Manager Outreach Service Willoughby City Library, Michele Burton Manager Library and community Learning Service is congratulated by Paul Williams, NSW Regional Director Australian Bureau of Statistics.

The Willoughby Municipal Library has been so effective in recongising the cultural make-up of its client-base and working intelligently to meet the needs of everyone, that it can now handle inquiries at any time of the day, or any day of the week, via the internet and in Chinese.

To achieve this they installed the Intelligent Book Information Management System (iBIMSTM) - a Chinese-English bilingual web-based library catalogue allowing Library users to search the Library's Chinese collection of more than 12,000 items in 3 different ways: English, Pinyin and Chinese characters.

Readers can even use their iphone or ipad to search for Chinese material on their way to the Library. During its first month of operation, the iBIMSTM received 7,613 'hits'.

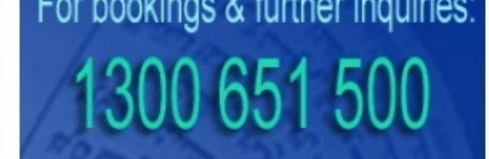
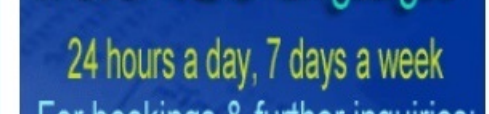
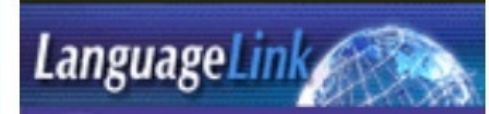
This is only a start. Willoughby's iBIMSTM Library catalogue will be expanded to include the Korean and Japanese language collections. Future development will also mean that iBIMSTM will be able to offer users the option of simply using a finger to write in their own language script on a touch screen computer.

The Library utilised the Chinese language and cultural skills of various staff members.

This included interviews on Chinese radio and television, articles in major Chinese newspapers, the provision of cultural insights on expectations, values, habits and needs within the local Chinese population. Meanwhile staff members who are fluent in English, Cantonese and Mandarin were able to address community groups in person and via SBS radio and television. The bilingual content of the site enables all staff to locate items, or assist topic searches and display search results in Chinese scripts as well as English.

Congratulating the Library, the Chair of the Commission, Stepan Kerkyasharian, said: "One of the reasons we launched these awards two decades ago was to encourage public servants to realise that they were serving a culturally diverse community and that new approaches were necessary to guarantee equality of service to all.

Services



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