



Australian
Library and
Information
Association

ALIA SPECIAL LIBRARIES SURVEY
SNAPSHOT OF THE SURVEY FINDINGS

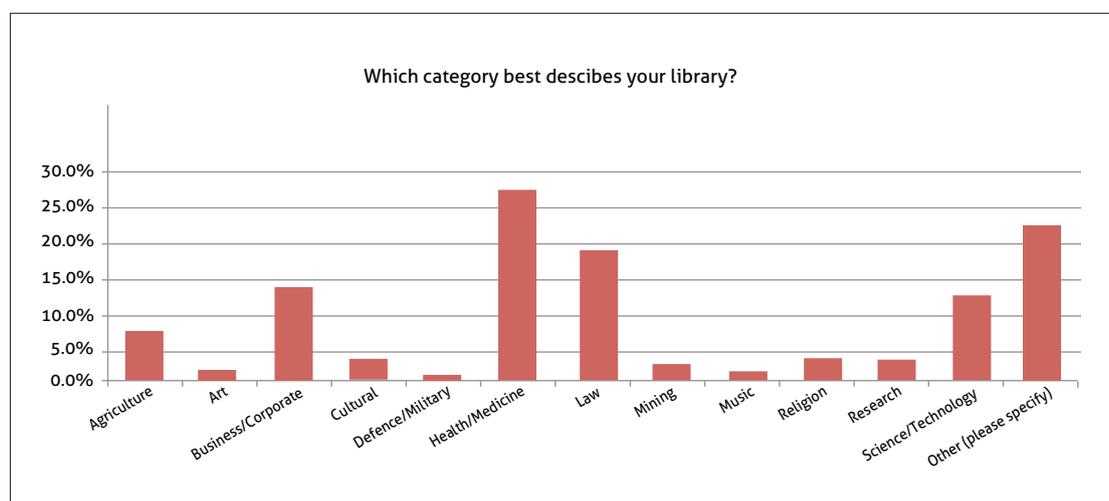
AUSTRALIAN SPECIAL LIBRARIES SNAPSHOT OF THE SURVEY FINDINGS

The purpose of the ALIA Special Libraries Study was to gain a better understanding of special libraries in Australia and was a major project for the ALIA Special Libraries Advisory Committee.

In total 380 responses were received with some respondents choosing not to answer all questions.

The Sector

- 74% (265) of responses came from libraries based in capital cities.
- Over 50% (187) of responses were from government funded special libraries.
- The types of libraries covered in the survey is diverse the largest response rate 28% (101 responses) was from the health/medicine sector.



- 70% of respondents worked in libraries which employ 1-3 staff with only 12 respondents working in libraries with more than 10 staff.
- 19% (49) of respondents have volunteers working in their library service.
- 76% (192) of respondent's libraries are corporate members of ALIA.

Clients

The most frequently identified client bases of Special Libraries are:

- 97% Internal users
- 57% Other libraries
- 52% Researchers
- 45% External organisations
- 43% Students

(258 answered question)

Services

A diverse range of services are provided by Special Libraries. The most frequently identified services provided by special libraries are:

- 90% Cataloguing
 - 90% Document supply
 - 87% Reference inquiries
 - 86% Research
 - 84% Current awareness services
- (256 answered question)

Business Services

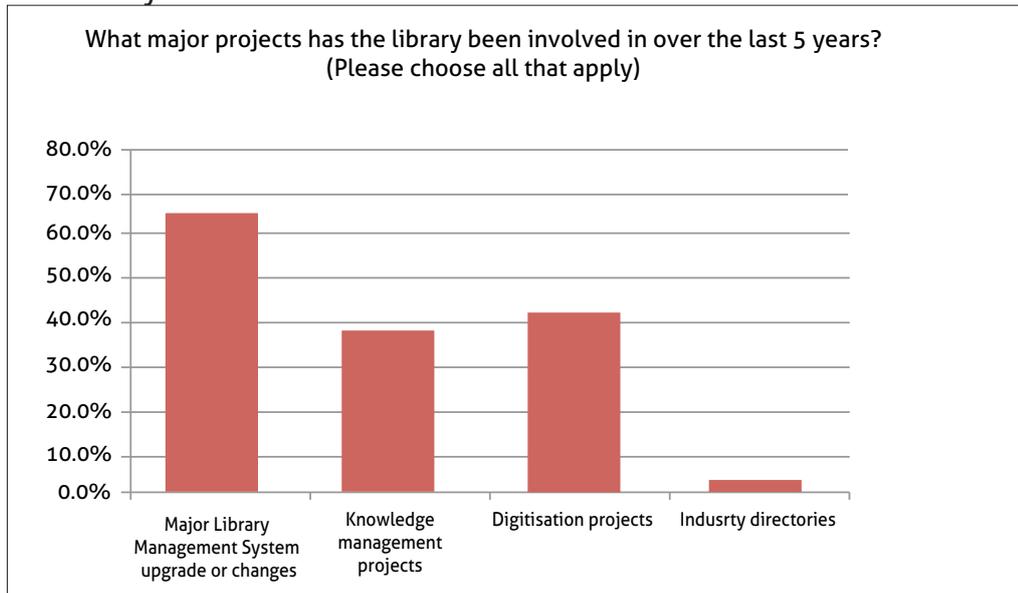
A range of business services are provided by Special Libraries. These include:

- 35% (90) of respondent libraries manage their organisation's publications
- 32% (82) manage the organisations' archive.
- 23% (58) provide knowledge management services.
- 19% (51) provide the photographic repository for their organisation.

Organisational Projects

A number of Special Libraries have been involved in major organisational projects including:

- Library Management System upgrades or changes
- Knowledge management projects
- Digitalisation projects
- Industry directories



(187 answered question)

Collections

Collection sizes range from less than 5,000 items to over 100,000 items.

- 140 of 148 respondents have special collections.
- 71% (160) of respondent libraries participate in networks and resource sharing.
- 71% (164) of respondents are members of Libraries Australia.

Results from the survey provided the following data on current subscriptions:

- 224 respondents collections include contain hard copy journals
 - 216 respondent's collections include electronic journals
 - 205 respondent's collections include electronic databases
- (233 answered question)*

Budgets

Library budgets varied significantly.

- 54% reported a budget of less than \$300,000
 - 14% reported a budget of less than \$50,000
 - 8% of respondents had a library budget of \$1 million plus
- (250 answered question)*

Performance Indicators

- 34% (74) of respondents have KPIs for their library service
- 87% (191) of respondents identified informal feedback at the time of service delivery as the most common method of gathering feedback
- 64% (141) of respondents indicated their library service did not cost its services
- 66% (141) of respondents are unable to demonstrate the value of their library to the organisation

Policies

The following documents are produced by Special Libraries

- 58% Collection Development Policy
 - 54% Procedures manual
 - 34% Business/operational plan
 - 25% Strategic plan
 - 22% Annual report
 - 19% Service level agreement
 - 12% Customer service charter
 - 11% Marketing plan
 - 10% Risk Management Plan
- (225 answered question)*

[Data source ALIA Special Libraries Survey Report December 2010]