



Hi, my name is Sarah Petchell and I'm the e-Discovery Librarian for the Australian Drug Foundation.

The ADF works to develop healthier attitudes to alcohol and drugs in the home, the workplace and in sport.

And we do this through evidence-based programs such as Good Sports, workplace interventions, and in the home through our information service. Broadly speaking, we provide information, programs, advice and advocacy on the harms of alcohol and other drugs (which you will probably hear me refer to as AOD during this presentation).



So why do we do this?

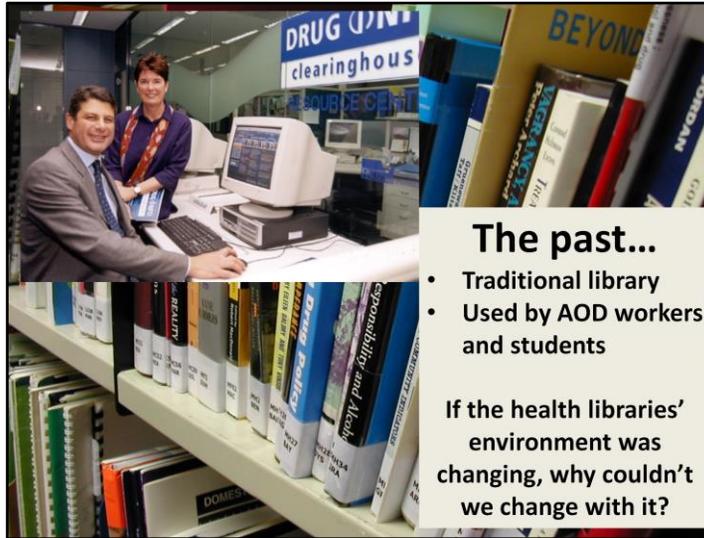
86% of Australians over 14 years have drunk alcohol at some stage in their life (AIHW, 2014)

Alcohol hospitalises 157,000 every year (FARE, 2014)

Alcohol kills 15 Australians every day (FARE, 2014)

While the ADF also does cover illicit drugs, alcohol has the bigger potential for harm, not just to the individual but the community at large, and a lot of these harms are preventable.

As for this presentation, it explores the future of health libraries as the Australian Drug Foundation imagined it, and how the ADF brought that future into the present.

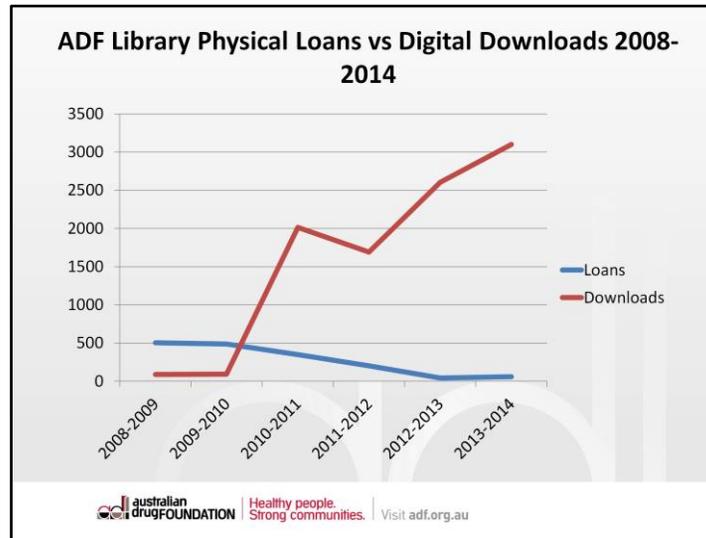


So I work in the Information and Research unit which creates, curates, interprets and publishes information. This is what we used to look like.

The ADF has always had the function of developing, delivering and promoting information, both internally and externally. The library was a part of this function. It specifically provided a specialist alcohol and drug library. It not only serviced staff, but also people working or studying in the AOD field. It was what would have been traditionally accepted as a library: a room with books and computers.

We knew the service was used and appreciated, but we also knew that most health libraries were either static, having budgets decreased, and, worst-case scenario, closing. We knew something had to be done to prevent our library from following the same path.

So we reviewed and evaluated the service. We found that the organisation could not see the value in the service, when all they saw was a dark room. You're probably wondering why were they seeing a dark room. The answer is that since people weren't visiting the library, we decided to keep the lights off to save power.



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So from this chart you can see from the blue line that our physical loans had dropped off.

But what we found during the review was that actual usage hadn't dropped.

[CLICK]

The visitors had not stopped "visiting" the library. They had just become invisible.

They may not be coming into the library to borrow physical items, but they were increasingly using our digital resources – including online journals - remotely.

The only solution was to make the organisation understand what we already knew: libraries are changing. The roles of librarians are changing. And the expectations of the clients as to how they get information is changing.



Not only the library, but the Information Services unit as a whole required a rethink and a restructure. It was less about what the library is, or what the unit is, and more about **IMAGINING WHAT IT COULD BE!**

If the existing, traditional library model was not going to work, then what would the new model look like? It was necessary to think beyond the scope of what a library **should** be, and look forward not only to what a library of the future was going to look like, but to imagine the potential of what it **could** look like.

The question became, how would the ADF Information Service provide information into the future?

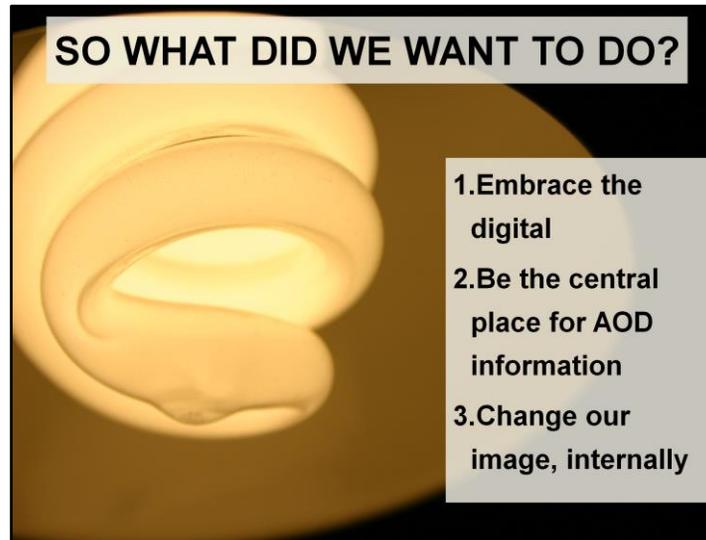


The vision we came up with was that we would be a team, dedicated full-time to scout, spot, uncover and bring back our users the best information. Most importantly, we wouldn't just verify and check these sources but curate them. We would name them, comment on them, add additional information and group them with other relevant news stories.

It's all well and good to have a theory about how things are going to change, and to then have an organisational strategy to bring about these changes. Many libraries have developed similar strategies. However, implementing them is an entirely different matter altogether.



According to this new strategy, the ADF Library would no longer exist on its own. It was now part of a broader Information Service, which would provide information through a number of different channels. These included some of the activities that would have traditionally been part of the library's mandate, but now would have input from elsewhere in the unit. This would encourage collaboration, and skill and knowledge sharing across the unit.



What exactly were the changes the staff wanted to make?

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Firstly, we knew that we needed to embrace the digital, and that we needed to improve our discovery and access. How were we going to do that?

**[CLICK]**

Second, we needed to be **the** central place for AOD information, by sharing our resources and skills both internally and externally. We needed to build our own credibility and knowledge

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Lastly, we knew that we had to change our image internally. We had to raise our profile internally and externally. We had to walk the talk.



So how did we embrace the digital?

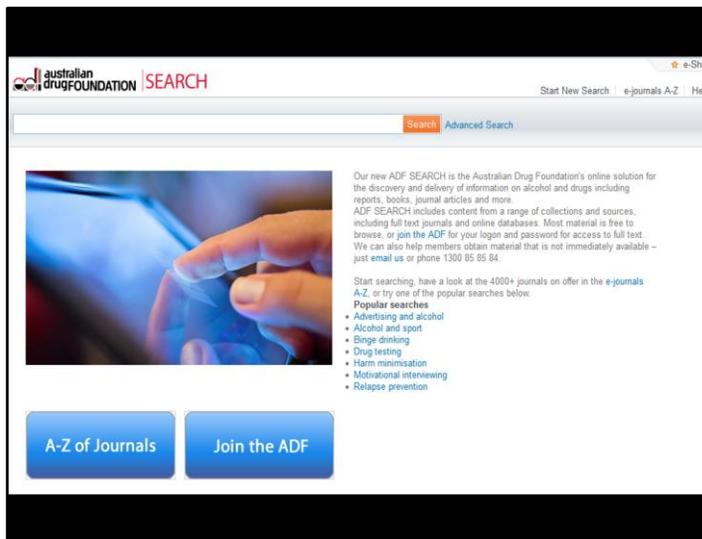
In evaluating the library service, we recognised the information seeking behaviours of our members had changed with the changing information landscape. Users are more independent information seekers. They expect innovative ways to access information. Like smartphones and tablets. They want to be able to do what they want when they want no matter where they are.

Rather than be intimidated by these changes, we wanted to leverage them.

We knew that use of the physical collection was declining, while digital resources were growing in demand. One response was the reduction of the physical library by more than half. ... Yep, we threw out more than half of our physical collection. We stopped collecting archival material and stopped proactive physical acquisitions. Collection development became less about what we as librarians **thought** our users needed, and considered what those users **actually** wanted and needed.

Then, to counter the physical reduction, we invested in developing our digital collection: by replacing hard copy material with their free online versions, purchasing databases with content that fit into our collection development policy, replacing our physical journal subscriptions with electronic access only and investing in an eBooks collection. This allowed us to expand our

collection from over 5000 resources to a million.



Digital material needs a good solution to make access easy for members. Especially when those members have varying abilities with using computers.

It was clear our existing, multiple platform solution was not going to cut it.

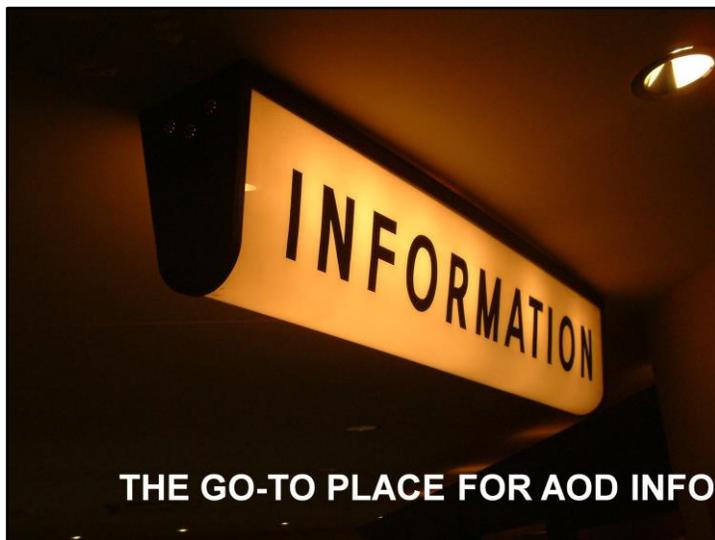
The result was ADF SEARCH – a federated search approach that used two Ex Libris products ... (SFX and Primo Central). It allowed us to bring our collection, licensed content and other free materials together into one discovery interface. And of course, it is optimised for mobile.

By activating digital content, it has reduced the amount of time we spend manually indexing items into the collection. The system's search engine will trawl through all the active content, and returns more results for the user.

For example, the old system would have returned only 139 items on “alcohol and sport”. The new system retrieves over 1400 peer-reviewed articles. ... That’s almost ten times the results!

It’s also a turn around in process. We originally would have had to spend a large amount of effort, with manual indexing, to

provide small results. Now, with a lot less effort, we're delivering much larger results.



Have we become **the** go-to place for AOD information? The library was originally set up mostly to service the Victorian AOD sector – both workers and students. However, we were noticing that the types of people using the service were becoming more diverse. People who use drugs; their parents, friends, and partners; and the general community were contacting us looking for different types of information that needed to be delivered in different formats.

Once we understood that the audiences for our information was changing, we started creating targeted products for them. Staff occupy a number of roles (often at the same time) requiring diverse skillsets and, broadly speaking, these roles fit into four categories: creators, curators, interpreters and publishers.

We used these skillsets to recognise and respond to the needs of these different audiences. The two main projects were the development and implementation of a SMS-based information service and the content creation and development of a parents information website.



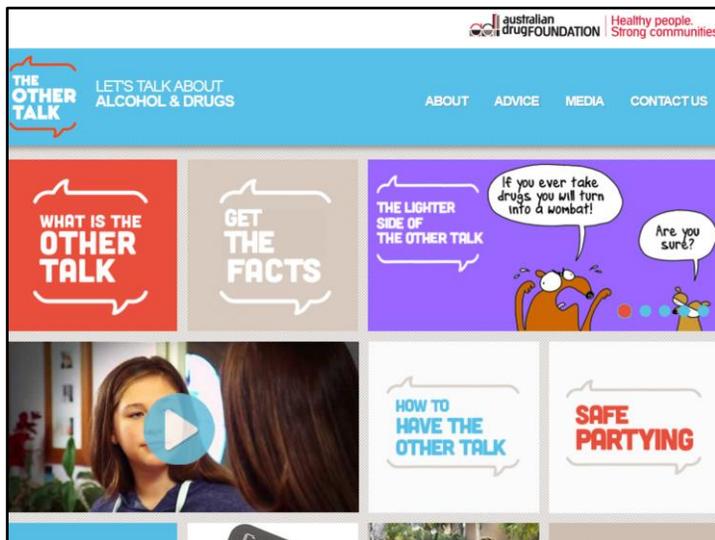
So time for a little bit of audience participation!

It's a presentation where you can pull out your mobile phone and text the name of any illicit drug to the number on the screen. **[CLICK]** Try any one of these if you want. **[PAUSE – COUNT TO 8]**

That is the SMS service and it was developed to provide brief information via text on the effects and harms of an illicit drug.

This service was adapted from a successful, existing model from New Zealand. So the content needed to be adapted to suit an Australian audience. The set up of the service used skills from all parts of the team in checking the accuracy of the information, and making sure the language used was correct for the audience (specifically young Australians). We covered all possible drug names, variations and slang terms, as well as typos!

It is also a service that requires constant revision and updating as we come across new terms all the time, and also constant monitoring as we have discovered that it provides a good “heads up” for drug types and names we may not have come across before. In fact, paramedics love it.

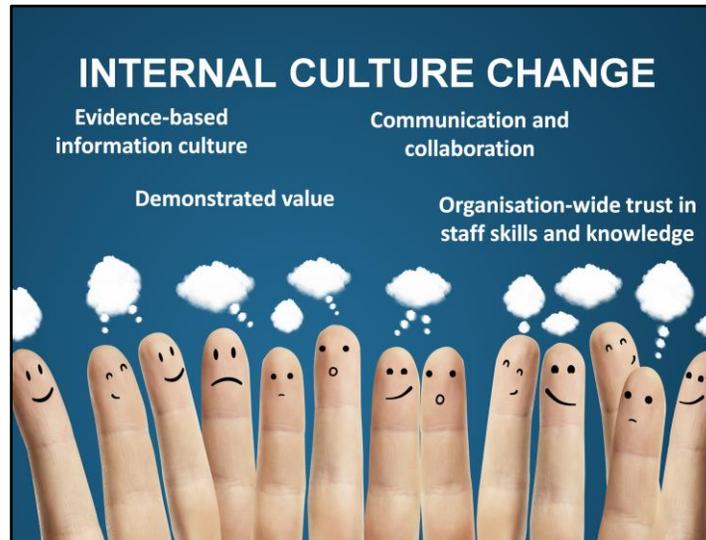


We also looked at alternative ways to deliver AOD information to different audiences while building *The Other Talk* website. This website came from consultations with parents. They told us they didn't really know how to talk to their kids about AOD issues. They also weren't aware that they are, in fact, one of the biggest influences on their kids!

This website was the first time the information service had attempted to repackage information as a product on as large a scale as an entire website.

Working with a creative agency and our marketing department, the unit pooled resources and skillsets to create the content. We researched, filtered the information we got from the research, adapted it to suit the particular audience, fact-checked, edited and finally evaluated the finished product before it went live.

It also leverages the increasing popularity of information presented in more visual formats by using infographics to convey key messages – including a comic by famous cartoonist First Dog On The Moon, which features drunk wombats.



It was great to develop these programs for an external audience. But we already knew they needed the information and used the service. The trickiest task was making sure that the ADF understood the value the service could bring to almost every activity the organisation undertook. To do this, we had to change the service's internal image.

We wanted to firstly promote and embed the value of the service to the organisation. And secondly, to ensure that other units within the organisation would contact us to make sure that evidence-based information formed the backbone of every project.

We had to develop an organisation-wide trust in our skills and knowledge. This would help ensure we would be consulted to check facts and statistics before reports and submissions were published. This approach was endorsed at the top level of the organisation, which flowed down and reinforced our value to the other units, through greater communication and collaboration.

For example, we meet three times a week with our communications team to discuss AOD related news stories, current research, upcoming publications and events. But it's also an open invitation meeting, that we hold in the middle of the office while standing (or leaning). Another example is that we have worked with marketing to produce an infographic that uses

statistics to chart the impact alcohol and drugs has on us throughout our life – we provided the content, marketing provided the images.



Considering just how large the changes were, there were surprisingly few challenges. There were a couple of reasons for this. The first was that we already had a customer base that was using our services. So getting the organisation to see this hidden customer base was step one.

The other was that the new model of service wasn't forcing library staff to develop radically new skills. The skills that were required from us, we already had. The library staff weren't just librarians, but also had skills in writing, information architecture, and information technology, among others.

For library staff, the roadblocks were mental barriers around what a library should be. We knew that the traditional model was no longer for us. But we still had to come to terms with breaking down our ideas about our traditional roles and functions.

This was especially so when it came to throwing away over half the collection. It goes against all librarian intuition to throw away a book. But it was made easier by having proper processes in place and knowing the end result would be a much better collection.

The most complicated step was in the development of ADF SEARCH. Typically this kind of system is applied to much larger libraries, with large teams and IT support. We had two staff to liaise between all the vendors, conduct and develop testing, and project manage a huge IT implementation. Plus manage the customer support of the public roll out.



- Increased membership
- Substantial uptake of new programs
- Increased involvement in ADF activities
- Considered an authority on AOD info

So was it all worth it? Did we achieve what we set out to do? At this point, yes, but these initiatives are relatively new so they haven't been formally evaluated. We have seen strong usage statistics, which have ensured they will continue to be included in future business plans.

We have seen an almost 300% increase in membership to the library service between 2012 and 2013, following the official launch of ADF SEARCH in September 2013.

There has been a substantial uptake in the SMS service and *The Other Talk* website, which has provided great exposure to the ADF brand. The SMS service was launched in November 2012, with over 3500 messages sent out on the first day. *The Other Talk* was launched in June 2013 with a media campaign that had more than 3 million people see media that related to the site and 3800 unique visitors in the first month. It's a step forward in making us AOD authorities to the community. The site also sees a 24% return visitor rate, which is one of the highest of all our sites.

By embedding an information culture across the entirety of the organisation, the team has placed itself in a position where we are now involved in the majority of activities the ADF undertakes. It had the added benefit of ensuring not only that the role of Info Services is valued, but most importantly that it is understood. The rest of the ADF sees us as being the authorities

on AOD information because we don't just find the information, but we also understand, analyse and communicate it.



So what do we plan to do next? We will continue to expand our reach through the number of subscribers to online mailing lists and continue to increase membership to ADF SEARCH.

We will continue to expand our products and services, as we have with *The Other Talk*. The success of the site has also led to other products being created to spread the message, including presentations and talks, and the development of a physical booklet.

We will continue to invest in and leverage new technologies to enhance our existing products, as with have with improvements to ADF SEARCH and through the continued investment in digital collections, like our eBook collection.

And we will continue to proactively contribute to the AOD issues and programs that the ADF engages in, continue to reinforce the importance of using evidence-based research and information to support those positions.

While this is everything we've achieved for now, it's only a step in the right direction. We haven't come close to achieving the vision that we have for the Information Service. The broader picture is that we become the ABC of AOD information – a one stop shop with content in a variety of formats: text, video, audio, image that are targeted at multiple audiences. With the kind of authority in our field that the ABC carries in theirs as well.

It is a continued process of change that continues to challenge our expectations of how information should and could be delivered. But what we've discovered is that change is not to be feared. It should be embraced and it should be leveraged. So see us on a digital TV near you, sometime in the future!

We advocate for change.  
Change that promotes  
healthy people, strong  
communities.

Find information on drugs and  
alcohol at [druginfo.adf.org.au](http://druginfo.adf.org.au) or call  
1300 85 85 84.

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Healthy people.  
Strong communities.

