'When it's not the code that's locked up'

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Koha deployed on *Cybersource PrisonPC*
Alexander Maconochie Centre Library
Canberra (ACT) Australia

At June 2009 there were **29,317** prisoners (sentenced and unsentenced) in Australian prisons

Nationally, there are more than 3x as many male offenders (77%) than female offenders (23%), and this distribution is similar across the States and Territories

kohacon¹⁰

At 30 June 2009 ...
Predominant principal offences:

- acts intended to cause injury   (19%)
- sexual assault   (12%)
- illicit drug offences   (11%)
- unlawful entry with intent   (11%)
- robbery and extortion   (10%)
- homicide   (9%)

Australian Bureau of Statistics
http://bit.ly/9M6Nf8

In March 2009
The AMC commenced taking prisoners, and by June 2009 had minimum, medium and maximum security prisoners.

AMC's Facilities and Programs emphasise

Rehabilitation

Incapacitation

Punishment

so that they can return to a normal life after their sentence is over.

The Alexander Machonochie Centre

"Centre of excellence"

watched from outside; watched from in...

No profession is immune from incarceration

unemployed

lawyer

banker

judge

locksmith

accountant

truck driver

council worker

nurse

electrician

shopkeeper

plumber

truck driver

policeman

laboure

student

electrician

priest

accountant

locksmith

real estate agent

teacher

nurse

shopkeeper

It's AMC's rehabilitation process that is forward-thinking

kohacon¹⁰

Without freedom, what would you miss most?

After 1 Year?

After 5 Years?

After 20 Years?

The inmates said ....

What Inmates are Saying about the library...

'We can't go out and buy the next of a series - you need to buy complete sets'

'The library has opened a hole in my head....I need to find out more on everything'

'Never read much before - now I can't put the book down'

'We share books and ideas now [amongst prisoners]'

Why Is a Modern ILS Essential?

- The sole librarian needs a simple to use and modern ILS for rapid and efficient data entering and retrieval
- This tool facilitates participation in ongoing education, which is one of AMC's priorities
- An OPAC enables accurate and efficient retrieval of information for prisoners
- Attractive and easy to use
- Simulating modern libraries...

Koha ticks all boxes!

What Does Koha Offer?

Compared to other prison libraries, deploying Koha was a "feather in AMC's cap"!

AMC views Koha as state of the art software offering many functionalities and an attractive user interface.

Because there are no licence fees involved Koha was also very attractive and easily deployed in the PrisonPC environment.

AMC and KOHA

There are a number of features that KOHA offers that AMC is not taking advantage of... yet. Those features include

- Multilingual OPAC interface
- Adding tags
- Adding comments and reviews
- Making purchasing suggestions
- Statistics and reporting functionalities

Librarian Sue and Koha : Positive outcomes

- Detailed and in depth knowledge of her ILS
- Raised technology skills generally
- Empowered to work things out by herself
- Increased confidence with other applications
- Increased awareness that free can be excellent
- Part of a new community (Koha) with access to free support
- Mentoring from other Koha users
- Support from two Koha service companies

Timeline

2008
AMC under construction
Library approved

2009
Sue hired
Library set up
Prisoners arrive
Koha implemenation begins

Koha Support

Cybersource and AMC engages CALYX for:

- Overall Koha training in situ over 2 days
- Indepth Koha cataloguing and circulation
- Fine tuning Koha configurations
- General library consulting
- Ongoing phone support
- Koha system liaison with Cybersource and the Koha community

A centrally managed and distributed desktop environment ....

Cybersource Prison PC purpose-designed and hardened transparent desktops for security and efficiency ....

Some Outside trainer's observations:

- The *PrisonPC* network
- The security
- The library patrons
- The "sole librarian" library
- The library space
- The mobile library
- The library collection
- The lack of writing abound prison libraries in professional & international library journal

Frustrations

- Everything has to be viewed through security eyes
- Any change causes distress to the prisoners
- No easy Koha upgrades
- Library users can't contribute to the Koha project
- Library users can't communicate with the Koha community
- No laptop (yet) for remote circulation activities
- Feeling caged - limited online work opportunities due to network restrictions

Successes

The AMC now offers a library, a professional librarian, a well resourced collection and a user friendly environment. Using KOHA has brought many positive outcomes.

The library is seen as a place of linkages.

The clients give a very positive response when their needs for collection access are met creatively.

Tomorrow

To list a few wishes:
- OPAC access from cells for everyone
- Creating lists for users
- Offering multilanguage views of the OPAC
- Enable patron purchasing suggestion facility
- Enable moderated tags and reviews
- Adding multilingual resources to the collection
- Links to prisoner created poetry or artwork and other information on the network

Koha and Prisoner Rehabilitation

- Koha's modern features offers modern technology practices
- Helps break down the digital divide
- Helps literacy
- Mimics public library catalogues

Koha ..... It's a gift that keeps on giving

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"Thank you" .... Any questions........