



Singing in Harmony: Statistical Benchmarking for Academic Libraries

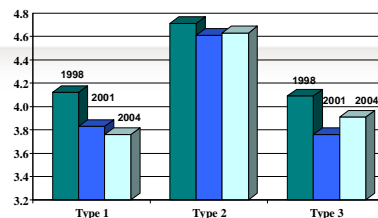
Cathie Jilovsky





Online Statistical Benchmarking

- reliable & accessible data
- enabling libraries to measure & assess
- online statistical benchmarking service developed by CAVAL
- collect, store, analyse & provide access to data
- data about users, operations, personnel, services, collections & user populations

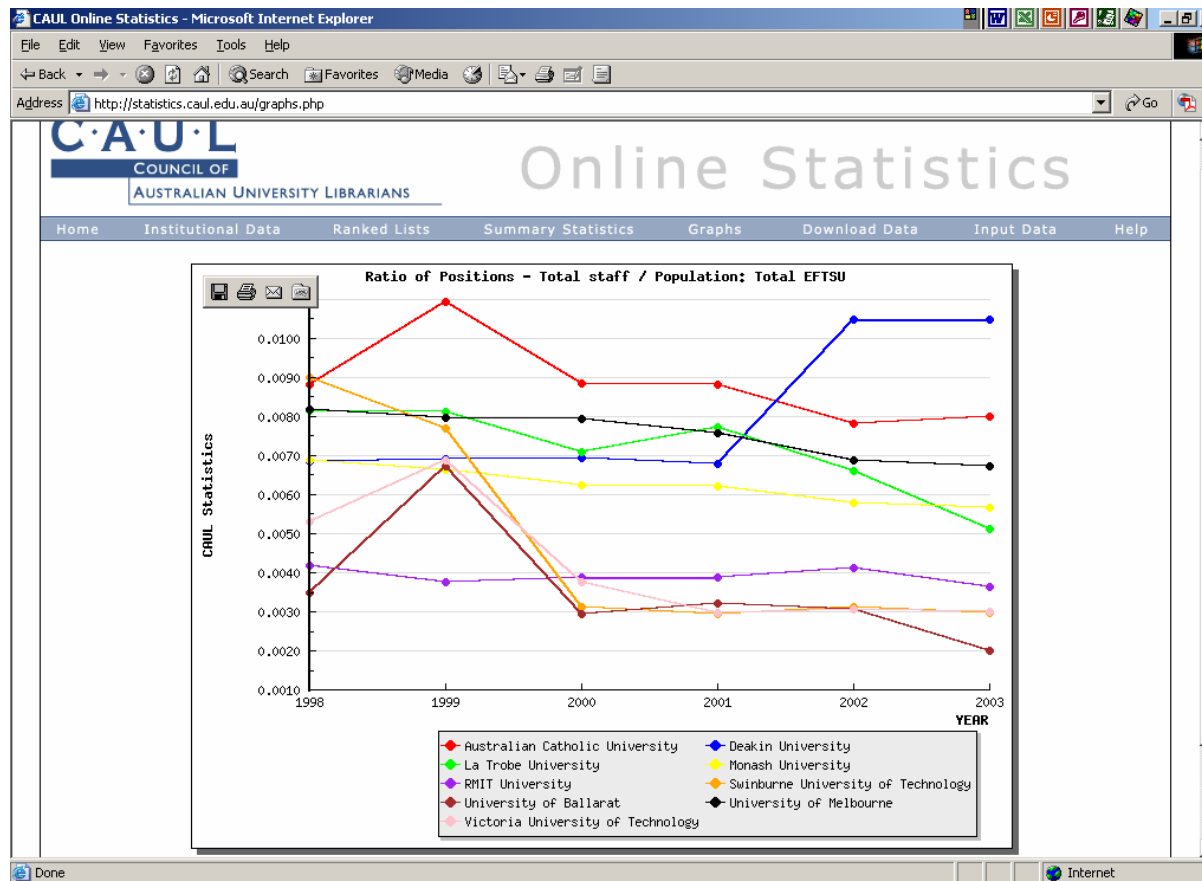


International Library Statistics

- ARL Statistics – USA & Canada - research libraries
- CAUL Statistics – Australia & New Zealand
- CARL Statistics - Canada
- SCONUL – United Kingdom
- IFLA – Statistics & Evaluation Section



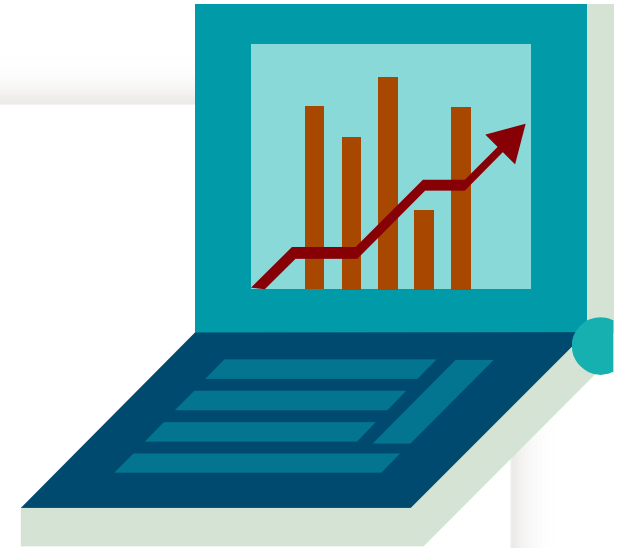
CAUL Online Statistics



<http://statistics.caul.edu.au>

Asian Online Statistics

- sponsored by the iGroup (Asia)
- pilot project objectives
 - development & provision of an online statistical website
 - implementation of sophisticated functionality
 - improvements to the collection processes for the individual libraries
 - provision of a sustainable online statistical service for the iGroup & Asian member libraries



Participating Libraries

- Hong Kong – 8 libraries
- Malaysia – 4 libraries
- Singapore – 2 libraries
- Thailand – 8 libraries




Pilot timeline



2006 Introductory workshops Initial site development Pilot data entry	2008 Hong Kong & Singapore join Phase 2 commences
2007 Further workshops Phase 1 data entry Malaysia & Thailand begin	2009 Phase 2 completed Evaluation

Asian Online Statistics site



The screenshot shows a Microsoft Internet Explorer browser window displaying the Asian Online Statistics website. The address bar shows the URL <http://statsasia.caval.edu.au/>. The website header features the logo "ASIAN LIBRARIES Pilot" and the title "Online Statistics". A navigation menu includes links for Home, Institutional Data, Ranked Lists, Summary Statistics, Graphs, Download Data, Input Data, and Help. The main content area provides an overview of the site's purpose and lists several key features:

- review the library data collected
- generate rankings of institutions by selected criteria
- create graphs from the data
- generate summary statistics for all libraries
- download the data by year in spreadsheet format

About the Asian Academic Libraries Online Statistics: Pilot Project

This project will enable the development, setup and maintenance of an online website for the collection, presentation and benchmarking of library statistics for Asian Academic libraries. During Phase 1, the first stage of the pilot, 2 years worth of data from upto 16 libraries will be collected, loaded and made available for benchmarking from the online website. The pilot site will have the capacity for storing 35 elements of data.

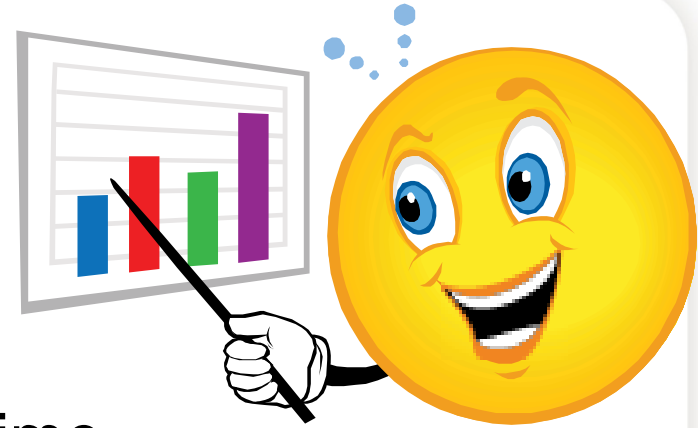
Phase 2 will allow for the collection of an additional years data from the libraries participating in the pilot project. At the completion of this process there will then be 3 years of data on the site. The online website, the data collection process and possible future services will then be evaluated by the participating libraries, the iGroup and CAVAL.

Objectives

- development and provision of an online statistical website for Asian academic libraries
- implementation of sophisticated functionality for online benchmarking
- improvements to the collection processes for the individual libraries
- provision of a sustainable online statistical service for Asian academic libraries

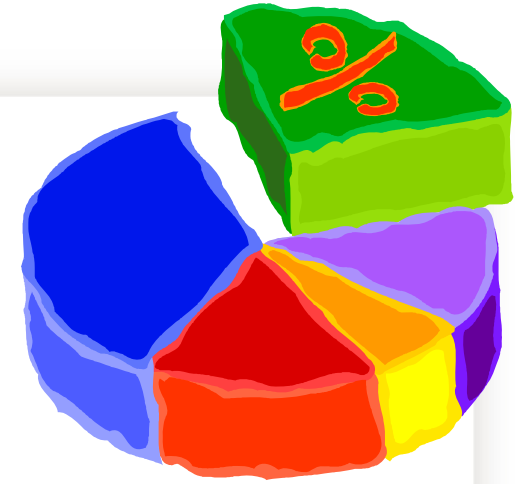
For more information on the data made available here or for assistance in interpreting the current data contact Cathie Hensley (cah1@causal.edu.au) at CAVAL.

Pilot benefits (1)



- local benefits
 - tracking each library over time
 - developing staff expertise
- institutional benefits
 - showing the contributions of the library
- national benefits
 - comparing with other institutions
 - gaining national overview of library services

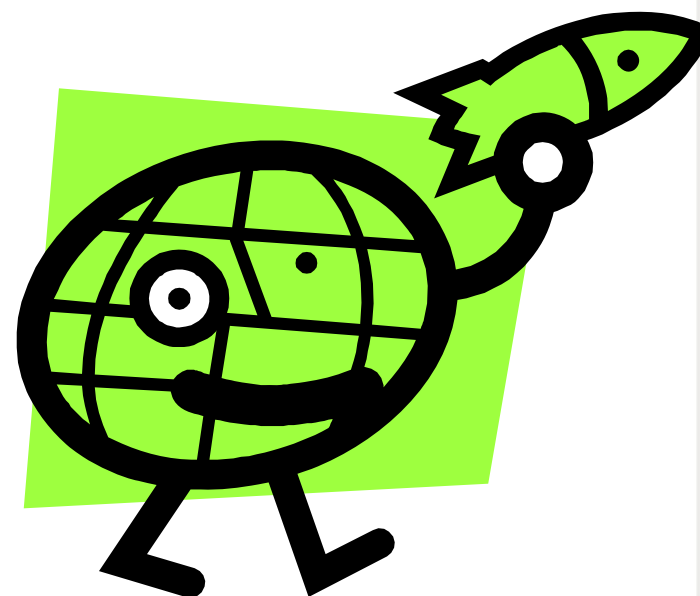
Pilot benefits (2)



- regional benefits
 - comparing with similar libraries in other countries
 - learning from the differences
- global benefits
 - greater understanding of the role of libraries
- an opportunity to be involved & contribute to this regional development

Functionality

- compare institutional data
- calculate ratios
- display summary statistics
- produce graphs
- download data
- input data module



Data elements

- Library Organisation
- Library Staff
- Library Services
- Information Resources
- Library Expenditure
- Institutional Population



Evaluation survey #1



Good Statistics - what do you want in them?

- agreed that 'Good Statistics' are 'clear, valid and useful in practical ways'
- recognised that data that is 'easily collected and/or already collected for another purpose' is a positive contribution

Evaluation survey #2



Use of Statistics - how do you use them? who uses them?

- 'reporting to senior management' & 'analyzing and understanding activity'
- additional comments – need data completeness & appropriate peer libraries
- used by 'the University Librarian or equivalent', then 'University Managers' & 'other library managers'
- noted that Singapore & Hong Kong also use LIBQUAL

Evaluation survey #3



Pilot Project functionality - how user-friendly was the website? did the functionality meet your needs?

- 50% rated the pilot website to be 'user friendly, responsive & fast'
- additional JULAC data was 'distracting' for some
- modifications to existing workflows required
- differences in data definitions were significant
- incomplete coverage of data was an impediment
- no conversion of currency data to a common rate

Evaluation survey #4



Pilot Project Data Elements - was useful data collected??

- 'Library Organisation', 'Library Staff', 'Library Services' & 'Institutional Population' data categories useful
- 'Information Resources' & 'Library Expenditure' categories less useful
- useful additional statistics - ILL, document delivery & e-resources traffic

Evaluation survey #5

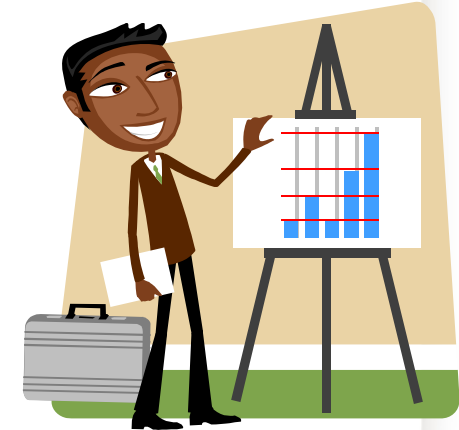


General Comments - what were the strengths and weaknesses of the project?

- ✗ insufficient or unclear definition of some data
- ✗ reluctance to make some data public
- ✗ lack of a critical mass of data
- ✗ not benchmarking against developed countries
- ✗ reluctance to pay for future services
- ✓ international experience
- ✓ statistics software, particularly the graphs

Asian Statistics pilot - challenges

- cultural & language differences
- physically located across a wide geographic area
- practical issues
 - different currencies
 - different financial & academic years
 - varying technical backgrounds
 - varying local infrastructure support
 - little tradition of sharing data
 - lack of familiarity with practicalities



What next?

- CAVAL will maintain site into the future
- some libraries keen to continue
- more useful with more data
- further funding ?





CAVAL

Linking Leading Libraries

Cathie Jilovsky

Email: cathie.jilovsky@caval.edu.au

Web: <http://www.caval.edu.au>

Online Statistics

<http://statistics.caul.edu.au>

<http://statsasia.caval.edu.au>

