

Women's Health Victoria

Inmagic *Genie* in Action: web-based health advocacy and information for women



Women's Health Victoria (WHV) is an independent women's health promotion organisation run by women for women across the state of Victoria. Using a social model of health from a feminist perspective, Women's Health Victoria works to raise awareness of gender issues in health and to promote the development of gendered health policy at government level.

Women's Health Information Clearinghouse

The core of the organisation's work is the Women's Health Information Clearinghouse, a diverse collection of information and resources, including books, electronic resources, submissions, catalogued articles and information packages.

Women's Health Victoria's "community of interest" includes individuals and organisations who work in areas that influence health outcomes, such as health service and health information providers, policy and opinion leaders, researchers and educators.

Inmagic *Genie* was the obvious choice for Elaine Cope, WHV's Information Services Manager, when she chose a web-based solution for the Clearinghouse. *Genie* enabled Elaine and her colleagues to maintain their longstanding commitment to user-friendly, flexible Inmagic software. It offered them the cataloguing and lending functionality they were looking for, along with the ability to manage multiple copies across multiple collections.

What's more, "*Genie* gives us beautiful, customised screens with a professional, friendly look", says Elaine.

Inmagic *Genie*: delivering immediate results!

Elaine and her colleague Suellen Gosstray have been more than pleased with the immediate results of moving to *Genie*.

"*Genie* gives us beautiful, customised screens with a professional, friendly look"
Elaine Cope
Information Services Manager

Borrowing of items from the Clearinghouse's resource collection has quadrupled since *Genie* and its built-in InfoCart facility made it easy to find and request items online.

Even internal procedures have been streamlined as a result of the move to *Genie*. Serials are now managed online rather than using the old, manual methods; a new classification system has been instituted and hard-copy items are housed in a way that makes it easy to locate them; and multiple copies of items are handled seamlessly. "Now we can manage our collection much better!" says Suellen.

Abstracts are progressively being added to *Genie* catalogue records, providing vastly enhanced search capabilities. The next stage will be the addition of full-text documents and links to electronic information resources (mostly PDF files), providing instant access to up-to-the-minute, highly relevant content.

Breast cancer resources

Breacan is a service of Women's Health Victoria that provides free and confidential information, support and referral to women (and men) with breast cancer, their partners, family and friends outside the medical setting.

Breacan's Resource Centre is unique. Located separately from Women's Health Victoria, Breacan provides a safe and welcoming place where people can browse and borrow information from a library of books, articles, CDs, and pamphlets; seek support; attend information sessions; share personal experiences; or simply have a cuppa and a chat.

The Resource Centre is staffed by trained volunteers who have either personally experienced breast cancer, or cared for someone who has. Supported by Women's Health Victoria's Clearinghouse, the Resource

Centre offers comprehensive access to the latest and most reliable consumer-focused information resources about breast cancer. Soon BreaCan will be extending its collection and services to offer information and support to those affected by gynaecological cancers as well.

The BreaCan information resource collection has been included in the Clearinghouse's *Genie* catalogue. Because *Genie's* screens lend themselves so readily to customisation, Elaine has designed them so that BreaCan users can choose to retrieve resources that are located only at the BreaCan Resource Centre.

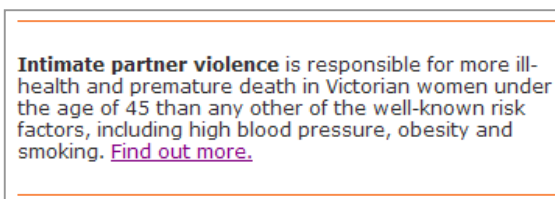
The beauty of *Genie* is that Women's Health Victoria has been able to provide two quite disparate user communities with relevant information under the one *Genie* umbrella!

"Canned searches" for hot topics

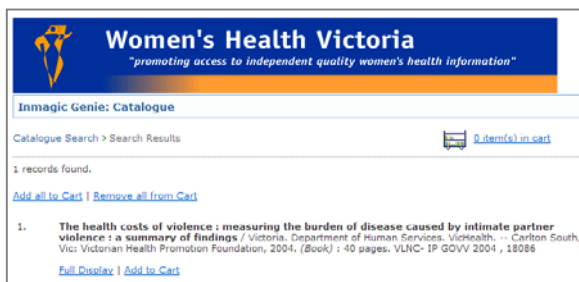
Elaine and her colleagues are starting to implement *WebPublisher PRO* "canned searches" to make it easy for users of the Clearinghouse to find the very latest content relating to crucial health issues such as:

- Abortion
- Breast cancer
- Mental health
- Violence against women

Some of these canned searches will appear on the Clearinghouse web screens, enabling users to see resources on specific topics with a single click. Other canned searches will appear in the "Clearinghouse Connector", a great new email bulletin of health information resources. Each edition of Connector is devoted to a specific topic and contains, amongst other things, hot links to *Genie* canned searches that allow readers to view very specific content.



Sample record from Clearinghouse Connector



Genie screen that opens when a Collector reader clicks the canned search link

A second *Genie*, used for health advocacy

In addition to the more "traditional" use of *Genie* as a library management system for the Clearinghouse, *Genie Express* is being implemented to manage the Advocacy Information Service (AIS) of the Victorian Women with Disabilities Network.

Genie Express has the same professional-looking web screens as *Genie* without some of *Genie's* library management functionality such as lending or serials management. It is an excellent vehicle for publishing a database to the web. However, where a "traditional" *Genie* contains records for books or journals or electronic documents, the AIS database also contains records pertaining to women's health advocacy. The records are being categorised according to descriptions such as activity notes, submissions, advocacy tools and opportunities for representation, as well as electronic links to resources that describe the issue.

This second *Genie*, used for the AIS, is therefore a really innovative use of Inmagic's technology. It provides women with the tools and contacts they need to advocate on particular issues. It also enables them to use a knowledge management tool to share their accumulated learning and experience.

Making a difference

Inmagic *Genie* is making a difference to the management of resources in a specific yet very diverse collection at Women's Health Victoria. While previous Inmagic products have offered the combination of flexibility and functionality that ensure their usefulness, *Genie* has expanded the information management capacity of the Inmagic suite and Clearinghouse staff are starting to exploit the possibilities for collection management.

For Women's Health Victoria's Clearinghouse, *Genie* has enabled the staff to work wonders. "Applying *Genie's* brand of database magic to everyday management of resources has opened up opportunities for storing, classifying, sorting and retrieving information that were previously more complex and difficult. The *Genie* is out of the bottle and we will be using it to its full potential," says Elaine.

About Maxus

Maxus Australia provides information management software and consulting services to a wide range of organisations across Australia, in the SE Asian region and elsewhere. Maxus is the sole distributor of *Genie* and *Genie Express* in Australia.