Books in the Sky

Audio Read - The Victor Harbor Experience

Victor Harbor Public Library

What is Audio Read?

- MP3 Player customised for easy use by people with a sight impairment
- Can hold 40+ hrs of audio books
- Central 'library' of several thousand titles
- Customers visit and load at their convenience

Audio Read @ Victor Harbor

- Started as a pilot site in 2006
- In conjunction with the Royal Society for the Blind
- Take up was slow initially, but now nearly 30 customers use the facility.
- Several regular users who visit + a couple of housebound patrons
- Useful for students with learning difficulties (many titles are used in English classes)
- Interest in forming a book club in the area

Big Upsides

- Getting access to thousands of titles for a fraction of audio book purchase cost
- Greater selection for vision impaired users
- Catalogue updated regularly
- Size – 40+ hrs on 1 reader rather than a bag full of bulky items
- Future dev – downloading content online, daily newspapers, other languages

Small Downsides

- Cost – once past 30+ readers, annual subscription costs become excessive for smaller libraries if service popular

- Staff time – Customers require assistance to load navigators

Cost Structure

- Site Licence – 995$ pa
- Single Navigators (library model) - $450
- Software License - $100 per navigator per annum

Summary

- Future of reading for vision impaired
- Cost structures need some reviewing
- $$$$ goes further