



Service Seeker

Community directories

Connecting people with services

Across Australia, there are many different types of community services available to people in need.

But how do you know where to find them?

Andrew Mahar, now Executive Director of **Infoxchange Australia**, experienced this challenge first-hand while working with homeless people on the streets of Melbourne. The inefficient and time-consuming process of finding housing for disadvantaged people was incredibly frustrating for everyone involved.

At the time, no centralised directory of community services existed, and it quickly became apparent that people looking for housing were also in need of other support services. An up-to-date directory of community and social support services electronically accessible to workers was required. Workers could then receive timely information on accommodation vacancies and assist clients with access to other services.

The result was the Infoxchange Service Seeker directory – a database so successful that the idea was extended to include other services such as health, employment, counselling and mediation, education, and drug and alcohol services.

Service Seeker

In 1996, the original Service Seeker directory became an internet database. Today, Service Seeker is Australia's most extensive community services directory, with over 215,000 records.

'Service Seeker has encouraged communication amongst doctors and increased access to services for patients.'

Service Seeker is simple to use, with records efficiently returned through a number of intuitive search-method options. Rigorous quality-control processes ensure that all records are entered consistently, making it easy to find exactly what you're looking for. Service Seeker is available in a range of formats, including online, on CD-ROM and as customised printed directories.

Service Seeker directories can be tailored to meet the specific needs of organisations, networks and local governments. As part of our commitment to using technology for social justice, Infoxchange Australia also partners with government and community agencies to help these organisations develop their own directories. Infoxchange Australia provides a managed content service to ensure the records remain current.

'More and more, people rely on IT-driven solutions and online community service information when they need help. I know that as a result of our work with Infoxchange Australia, the service that we provide through the City of Melbourne website plays an important role in the local community.'

John So
Former Melbourne Lord Mayor

Australia's most extensive community services directory

A wide range of service types

At **Infoxchange Australia**, we like to keep things simple.

That's why Service Seeker has been created to include a wide range of community service types – all within the one directory. With everything from aged and youth services to legal services and counselling, you can access all the information you need in the one place.

Service Seeker holds a total of over 215,000 records from across Australia, with over 120,000 from Victoria, over 45,000 from New South Wales, and over 25,000 from Queensland, in addition to records from all other states and territories.

Service focus	Approximate number of services
Family	30,000
Youth	14,900
Aged	13,050
Ethnic	11,300
Disability	18,200
Housing	7,650
Health	46,950
Drug and alcohol	3,300
Education and training	17,900
Employment	4,650
Financial	5,800
Counselling	4,600
Law	5,350
Recreation	10,350

Accurate and easy-to-search information

Service Seeker has a variety of flexible, intuitive search-method options. Content can be searched by keyword, geographic region or specific suburb location, practitioner name, service name or service focus to bring users targeted information with minimal effort

Records are continually updated according to rigorous quality-control processes to ensure that all search results are accurate and reliable.

Available in a variety of formats

Service Seeker is available on the web, in print and on CD-ROM. Organisations can choose the format that best suits them.

Customised directories to meet different needs

We know that the needs of every organisation are different.

» That's why Infoxchange Australia can tailor Service Seeker's interface and content to suit the requirements of individual organisations. Local government and community services can quickly and easily have a fully maintained service directory, complete with their own branding, at a fraction of the cost of setting up and maintaining their own systems.

Local governments and community-service organisations can utilise Service Seeker's data for social planning and service-mapping purposes.

A commitment to advancing social justice

One of the key goals of Infoxchange Australia is to use technology for social justice. This mindset has been the foundation for encouraging organisations not to duplicate work that has already been done by others, and to link together wherever possible to use community and government resources more effectively.

'I estimate that using Service Seeker saves the Whitehorse Division of General Practice approximately \$10,000 per year.'

Marianne Shearer, Executive Manager
Whitehorse Division of General Practice

We partner with community and government agencies to help them develop their own electronic and hard-copy directories. A number of the agencies we have helped so far were dependent on Infoxchange Australia's expertise and information communication technology (ICT) resources in getting their own systems up and running.

In addition, our highly flexible and adaptable data directories have been integrated into numerous service websites. Infoxchange Australia currently provides data for over 30 government and community websites and portals across Australia.

Service-to-Service (S2S)

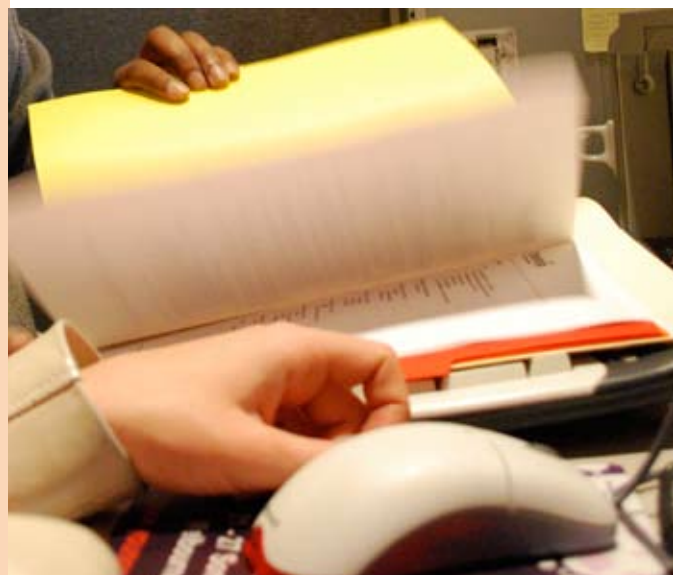
S2S is a suite of software applications that improve service coordination, resource management, networking and information sharing amongst agencies and community services.

S2S software incorporates a substantial amount of data from Service Seeker. The S2S suite includes:

- » S2S Accommodation Seeker – accommodation services provide 'real-time' information about the availability of emergency, medium- to long-term, supported, aged, respite and transitional accommodation.
- » S2S eReferral – a secure, easy-to-use tool for electronic referral and transmission of client information. The software abides by privacy and health-records legislation, as well as agency protocols.
- » S2S Client and Care Coordination – a fully secure, web-based application that enables health and welfare agencies to manage sensitive client records and referrals, both internally and across diverse departments or geographic locations.
- » S2S Wait List – a centralised online database that prioritises requests for services and notifies organisations according to categories of need.
- » S2S Vehicle Seeker – an online system that manages availability, requests and bookings for community transport availability.
- » S2S People Seeker – a web-based tool that enables organisations to easily manage their contacts.

'S2S eReferral has a handy knack of identifying and pushing forward changes and improvements in the health and community-services sectors.'

Shaun O'Neill, Clinical Nurse Consultant,
Eastern Health Palliative Care Service



www.infochange.net.au

Empowerment
Integrity
Innovation
Excellence

Infochange Australia is a leading not-for-profit enterprise

Vision

Our vision is 'technology for social justice'.

Infochange Australia works towards a society where all those who wish to use new technologies have access to them.

We believe that informed people make change.

Mission

To create social equality and opportunity by empowering people through access to information communication technology and enabling the exchange of information and ideas.

Values

We value empowerment, integrity, innovation and excellence.

Infochange Australia

- » Works to bring the benefits of information communication technology to all, to address society's 'digital divide'
- » Utilises information communication technology to empower individuals and strengthen communities
- » Encourages cooperative partnerships and information sharing within and across government, community and private sectors

Infochange Australia initiatives and enterprises



More information

To find out more about Service Seeker, contact Infochange Australia on (03) 9418 7400 or email serviceseeker@infochange.net.au, or visit www.serviceseeker.com.au



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