



The ALife Project: Promoting the Australian Seafood Industry as a Career Path for Generation X and Y

Emily Mantilla and Roy Palmer

Project No. 2008/732



**AUSTRALIAN
SEAFOOD
COOPERATIVE
RESEARCH CENTRE**



ISBN: 978-1-925982-16-9

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Non-Technical Summary

2008/732 – The ALife Project: Promoting the Australian Seafood Industry as a Career Path for Generation X and Y

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OBJECTIVES:

1. To stimulate interest from school leavers to enter a career within the Australian seafood industry using media and technology that excites and communicates to generation X and Y.
2. To target school leavers and the younger generation, particularly in remote and rural areas to pursue a career within the Australian seafood industry.
3. To build the Seafood CRC brand, promote the interests of our industry participants and pinpoint potential job candidates all over Australia.

NON TECHNICAL SUMMARY:

OUTCOMES ACHIEVED TO DATE

- Every Secondary School in Australia (3500) was sent copies of the ALife disc and brochure explaining what ALife is and instructions on how to use and load it onto the school server.
- An additional 55,000 discs were distributed to ALife's target audience via ALife's partners to their members and via education bodies with many schools giving a copy of ALife to every year 10 student.
- Every Secondary School in Australia now has free access to ALife.net.au as have TAFE's, Universities and Careers Educators all over the country
- In South Australia and the Northern Territory, ALife has been incorporated into the Year 10 Personal Learning Program Curriculum materials.
- ALife developed free Lesson Plans available from the www.alife.net.au The lesson plans show the Careers Advisers how to most effectively use ALife with their students.
- There have been 600,000 video views on www.alife.net.au from 10th November 2008 to the 30th March 2009 with the Seafood CRC's profile in the top 5 profiles.

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- ALife seminars held each capital city with the target audience being career advisors, teachers and parents resulted in an attendance rate of over 350 people.
- Of the 48 video profiles, Tom Kennedy (profile#33) was overall # 16 highest download on ALife in November and December and had 412 unique page views and 2060 video views.
- ALife successfully promoted on A Current Affair, TTN, NBN News, Sydney Morning Herald, The Age, News Limited Papers, Career One, and ABC Local Radio
- The most downloaded resource of ALife has been the seafood related TAFE course fact sheet.
- Students surveyed requested further seafood related profiles relating to Research Scientist, Fishing Operations Manager, Aquaculture Production Assistant, Transport, Logistics, Distribution and Import/Export

KEYWORDS: ALife, seafood career development, curriculum



*LifeWorks Media CEO, Mr Tom Hastwell at one of the national ALife launch road shows.
Photo: Troy Jones*



Acknowledgements

The authors would like to gratefully acknowledge the support of the Australian Oyster Consortium, in particular Tom Kennedy and his staff from Tasmanian Wilderness Oysters Pty Ltd for allowing the ALife film crew to be part of a “Day in the Life” of an Australian Oyster farmer.



Tom is the Managing Director of Tasmanian Wilderness Oysters Pty Ltd - an oyster farm in North West Tasmania. Tom is currently Manager of Shipwreck at Pittwater, a director on the Board of Seafood Training Tasmania, a member of the Tasmanian Shellfish Executive Council and the Tasmanian Oyster Research Council.

Tom has a Bachelor of Aquaculture from the University of Tasmania and is passionate about securing a future for rural communities. If it was not for young, passionate people like Tom, projects such as ALife could not occur for the benefit of the next generation and the Australian seafood industry in general.



1. Introduction

1.1 What is ALife?

The Australian Seafood CRC was approached by LifeWorks Media to be one of the 100 hand-picked organisations to be involved in the national ALife project that was to be launched in to schools, TAFEs and universities on the 10th November 2008.

The ALife project aims to replace the Careers Guide - a heavy, cumbersome printed book that is given to all school leavers in Australia to assist them in choosing a potential career path and deciding whether further study is required after high school to pursue a chosen career path.

Knowing there was a better way, Lifeworks Media developed A-Life™, a cutting-edge, interactive multimedia vehicle using film and contemporary graphic imagery, similar in nature to FaceBook and YouTube.

One of the appealing features of ALife is how it is specifically designed to engage Generation X and Y and allow them to make more informed career path choices. Examples of how this project relates directly to the target audience includes all ALife technology is able to be downloaded on to mobile phones and iPods and the project is promoted and endorsed by Rove McManus (Australian TV celebrity), Ada Nicademou (actress on Home and Away and other Australian television shows) and Jason Hodges (Better Homes and Gardens).

100 different and diverse career options were presented in the ALife project ranging from accountancy to clock making to engineering with a special focus on a the diversity of careers in “white collar to blue collar” employment.

1.2 Using ALife to Address the Skills Shortage in the Australian Seafood Industry

The Seafood CRC invested in one career profile which featured Tom Kennedy, an Oyster farmer from Tasmania as a pilot to determine the success of the ALife project to penetrate schools and encourage the next generation to enter careers in the Australian seafood industry.

1.3 Need

The Seafood CRC, through it's business case, has indicated that during its seven year life span, 2800 new jobs will be created through outcomes of its research and development. The ALife project will address the skills shortage currently being experienced in the Australian seafood industry, particularly in remote and rural areas. The project will also encourage more young people to get involved with the industry.

1.4 Objectives

1. To stimulate interest from school leavers to enter a career within the Australian seafood industry using media and technology that excites and communicates to generation X and Y.
2. To target school leavers to the younger generation, particularly in remote and rural areas to pursue a career within the Australian seafood industry.
3. To build the Seafood CRC brand, promote the interests of our industry participants and pinpoint potential job candidates all over Australia.



Screen shot from the Oyster farmer ALife career profile with Tom Kennedy (right) and his farm hand out on the water.



2. Methods

Every Secondary School in Australia (3500) was sent copies of the ALife disc and brochure explaining what ALife is and instructions on how to use the disc and load it onto school servers.

These discs were delivered to the Career Coordinator, directed by ALife's extensive database developed in conjunction with several officers in Careers Advice Australia and other diverse sources. Beyond this distribution method, the discs were also distributed with special instructions via the Queensland Government Department of Education Training and the Arts and via the services of "Careers Advice Australia". Careers Advice Australia are the number 1 federally funded careers body who help young people aged 13 to 19 connect with their future and to provide relevant information regarding career development to all career advisors throughout Australia.

Internally, ALife has conducted a broad ranging and extensive outbound call campaign, contacting every secondary school in the Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane and Adelaide Metropolitan areas to confirm that the disc was received and offering invites to a limited number to the Career Coordinator to the ALife launch.

Call Centre staff were trained to handle ALife II calls in the following areas: -

- 1) Technical support for use of ALife applications, downloads and functionality
- 2) Correct collection of data from ALife callers
- 3) Correct handling of callers requiring additional information on ALife clients.

Call Centre staff were ready to handle calls, via a toll free 1800 number, from the launch of ALife in November 2008. The 1800 number was operational between 8am to 6pm EST, Monday to Friday for the duration of 12 months.

Seminars about ALife and its use were also held in Sydney, Melbourne, Adelaide, Perth, Brisbane, Canberra, Perth and Darwin. Over 350 people attended which included representatives from the Education, Government, Corporate, Not for Profit, Parents Association, Press and ALife Partner sectors. The seminars were held as an opportunity for ALife to utilise the "down period" of schools, universities and TAFEs moving towards Christmas holidays as a time to gain traction with careers advisors.

The development of free Lesson Plans to accompany each profile was developed to show the Careers Advisers how to most effectively use ALife with their students.

ALife was also advertised on websites ranging from:

- careerone.com.au
- edsuite.decs.sa.edu.au
- science.usyd.edu.au
- careersonline.unsw.edu.au
- career advisor blogs such as AustralianWomenOnline.com
- oconnorcareerspage.wikidot.com/video-snapshots-ofcareers
- moodle.greenwood.wa.edu.au
- terrace.qld.edu.au

ALife.net.au is rapidly becoming the advisor's first choice for career information. This is planned to broadly grow with the ongoing promotion and subsequent release of ALife II in November 2009, hosting an additional 50 careers and video information on 10 universities, TAFEs and Registered Training Organisations.

The CEO of LifeWorks Media also prioritised speaking at career advisor events nationally – ranging from student based diocese-wide career days to state-wide career advisor professional development days. This process is aimed at increasing awareness of and involvement with the growing ALife material by careers advisors nationally.

In addition to the various methods of distribution, partner network, seminars and word of mouth, ALife had a successful start to its publicity and PR campaign. Following appearances on A Current Affair, TTN, NBN News, Sydney Morning Herald, The Age, News Limited Papers, Career One, and ABC Local Radio to get its message across to the broader public. PR commenced again in the national mainstream media from February 2009 to coincide with students returning to school, TAFE and university.

In preparation to provide information on the numerous higher education and VET course available in the seafood industry, the Seafood CRC developed fact sheets that collated all the course information categorised in to specific seafood topics (e.g. aquaculture, wild catch fishing, compliance, retail and processing) and posted these on an ALife web page on the CRC site.

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November 16, 2008

MY SMALL BUSINESS with Sandra



Several to success... Ben Rowland, with students from Alameda College, explains his program designed to give them an insight into workplace realities.

Students shown how to get aLife

An entrepreneur's simple idea is helping young people get motivated about their future careers, writes Kristie Lau.

TOM'S TIPS ON HOW TO LAUNCH A BIG IDEA

■ If you put it on the table for negotiation and have contacts. ■ Don't listen to what a lot of people say. ■ Everyone will tell you it can't be done, because it's not.

■ The person who starts your business - they will inspire others around you. ■ Don't be too far from the money. ■ Don't be too far from the money. ■ Don't be too far from the money.

■ He says he discovered the most important thing about becoming an entrepreneur is to be able to sell. ■ You've got to have faith in what you're doing and then have to be convincing. The only person who's going to believe in your business is you. ■ It's your job to sell this belief to anyone who becomes involved.

SPONSORED CONTENT

Your question

THE BUSINESS A small business, but very few feel overwhelmed. The field is new to them, but can help?

Over the past few years, there's been a lot of talk about the stress that is caused by the way we live. And now, with the additional economic pressures across the country, everyone is looking for faster, more cost-effective ways of doing business. Communicating instantly with customers and suppliers when you experience a problem or need demand is one of the most important business skills.

If you're not good enough to put things off to deal with the issue in a few hours or the next day, your competitors are waiting for any opportunity to get a slice of your business. If you don't respond quickly, a customer is likely to go elsewhere. It's a hard lesson to learn, but it's a hard lesson to learn.

Start by looking at your current customer base. The primary communications tool after the phone. Now you can send emails, confirmations and invoices in a few seconds. And with smartphones, like the BlackBerry Bold, you don't have to be stuck in your office to send an email. Think: Whether you're at your supplier, with a client, or on the road, you can check your email and respond to it, right when it's needed.

The smart phone's mobile broadband can't be too far from the 7 Series Smart Card, provides you with powerful connection across 60 per cent of Australia. So, take the road off, reduce the pressure and take a smart phone for a more organized, less stressed and better managed business process.

This tip is endorsed by Telstra. For information on how you can use technology to improve your work/life balance contact Telstra Business Systems or your nearest Telstra Dealer on 1300 237 463.



3. Results

3.1 Results from the ALife Project (10th November 2008 – 30th March 2009)

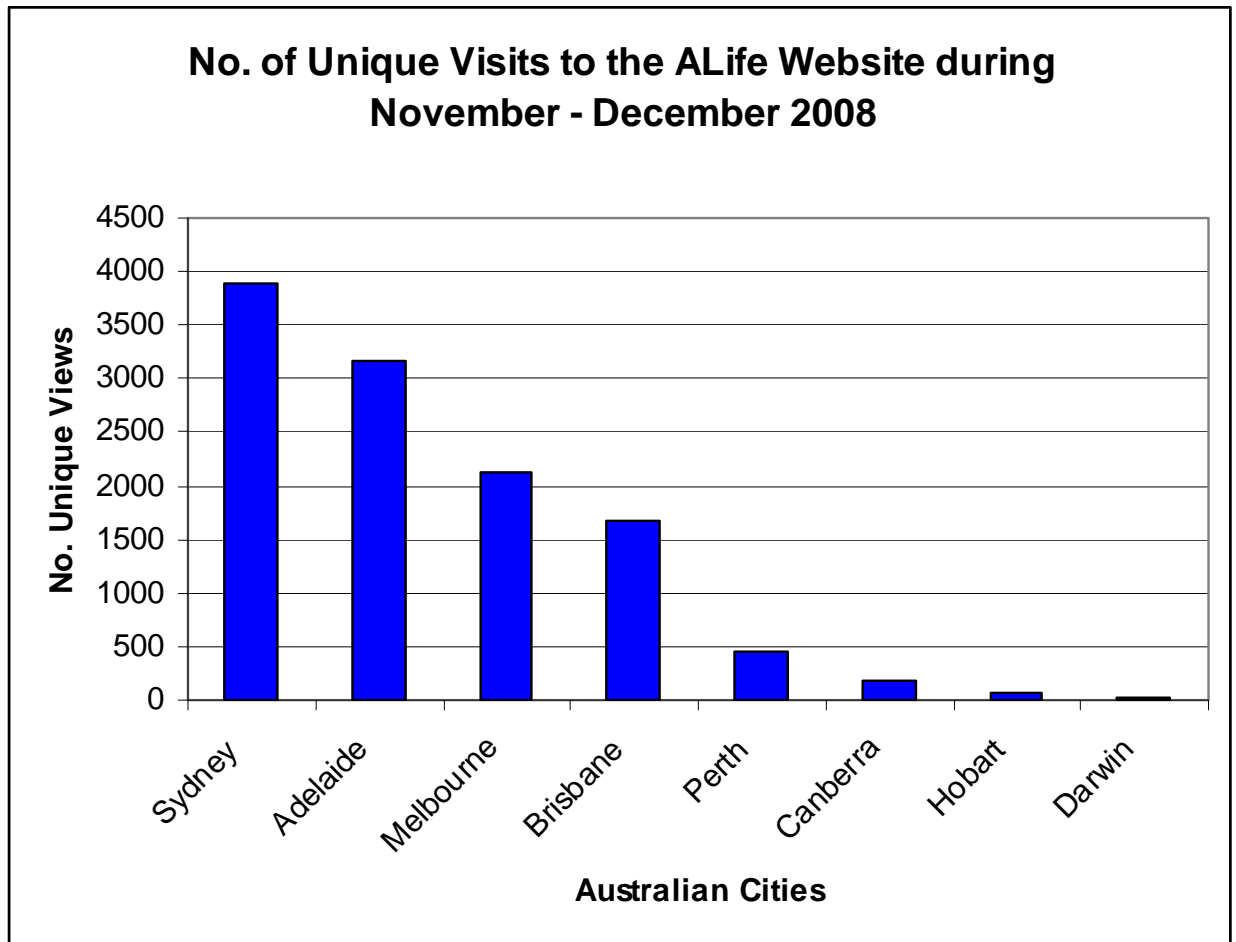
Results in addition to the initial distribution methods, another 20,000 discs have been distributed by ALife's partners to their members. Over 30,000 additional disks have been requested by education bodies, many schools giving a copy of ALife to every year 10 student. A significant and identifiable reaction to the national seminar series was that an additional 15,000 discs were ordered and delivered to secondary schools by people that attended the seminar.

According to the ALife initial survey, 70% received the ALife program through the core ALife distribution. 24% of the respondents received their ALife discs via our alternate channels, including Careers Advice Australia methods, word of mouth and direct request via promotion.

There have been 600,000 video views on www.alife.net.au. since the launch with some of the most popular careers viewed being, Theatre Designer, Recruitment Consultant, Glazier, Mechanical Engineer and the Seafood CRC profile on Oyster farming.

Statistics in regards to the www.alife.net.au website have revealed 57,942 overall page reviews in November 2008 and 36,216 in December 2008. In addition, there were 289,710 video views in November 2008 and 181,080 video views in December 2008.

Excluding DVDs, geographically, unique visits to the ALife website were registered all around Australia (and some from the USA and the UK). The unique visitors drilled down by capital cities are as follows:



Rural and regional towns registering ALife website visitors in double digits included Cairns, Townsville, Rockhampton, Gladstone, Buderim, Toowoomba, Caloundra, Nerang, Gold Coast, Armidale, Tamworth, Taree Newcastle, Central Coast, Bathurst, Richmond, Wollongong, Nowra, Wagga Wagga, Mildura, Bendigo, Ballarat, Melton, Pakenham, Morwell, Geelong, Warnambool, Launceston, Murray Bridge, Gawler, Victor Harbor and Port Pirie.

Further to the distribution, call campaign and seminars, ALife sent an initial survey to all registered users (over 500 people, vastly predominately from the Education sector). Some statistics of note include:

- 47% of respondents exclusively use the ALife website, whereas 53% use the DVD, or the DVD in combination with the web for links and viral sharing (Facebook, Youtube, Twitter).
- 100% intended to use ALife with their students in 2009.
- 94% believed ALife presented information that was not available elsewhere.
- 92% believed ALife to be unbiased and accurate.
- 92% believed ALife to be one of the leading career resources in the country.
- 96% look forward to additional jobs being uploaded onto ALife in the future.



3.2 Results of the Seafood CRC Career Profile (10th November 2008 – 30th March 2009)

Of the 48 video profiles in the ALife project on www.alife.net.au, the Seafood CRC's profile (Tom Kennedy, Oyster Farmer – profile #33) was overall the 16th highest download during November and December 2008 and had 412 unique page views and 2060 video views.

It was shown that the average time spent viewing the Seafood CRC's profile by the audience was 4 min 22 secs.

The Seafood CRC also conducted an audit of the ALife page on www.seafoodcrc.com and results indicate that from November 2008 until March 2009 the ALife link and associated ALife information on the site has consistently been in the Top 20 page hits of the entire site. Results also show a significant spike in hits which occurred during January and February 2009 which is consistent with ALife marketing efforts during this.

A total of 663 hits and with a page visit of 5 minutes + have been recorded on the CRC's ALife link. The most downloaded resource off the ALife seafoodcrc.com site was the seafood related TAFE course fact sheet.

Also, through the ALife surveys, Careers Advisors responded very favourably to potential additional careers within the seafood industry. Based on the survey results of 504 careers advisors and registered users, the top relatively requested seafood related results were:

- Transport, Logistics and Distribution = 46.4%
- Fishmonger = 46.4%
- Research Scientist = 40.6%
- Aquaculture Production Assistant = 33.3%
- Fishing Operations Manager = 33.3%
- Importing/Exporting = 30.4%
- Food Quality Control = 30.4%
- Food Quality Control Tester = 30.4%
- Seafood Trainer = 30.4%
- Wholesale Auctioneer = 18.8%
- Sea Vessel Operator = 18.8%
- Post Harvest Manager = 17.4%

In response to this survey, the Seafood CRC requested that ALife also survey the students to find out what profiles would be of most interest to them. ALife then surveyed 100 registered students where they were asked to “select which of the following profiles they would like to see (if any). 68 students responded and the results were:



- Research Scientist = 42
- Fishing Operations Manager = 27
- Fishing Operations Manager = 27
- Aquaculture Production Assistant = 26
- Transport, Logistics and Distribution = 24
- Importing Exporting = 24
- Wholesale Auctioneer = 22
- Post Harvest Manager = 16
- Post Harvest Manager = 16
- Fishmonger = 14
- Food Quality Control Tester = 13
- Sea Vessel Operator = 12
- Seafood Trainer = 8

So according to the students – the top 5 are:

- # 1 - Research Scientist
- # 2 - Fishing Operations Manager
- # 3 - Aquaculture Production Assistant
- # 4 - Transport, Logistics, Distribution
- # 5 - Import/Export

And according to the career teachers:

- # 1 - Transport, Logistics, Distribution
- # 2 - Fishmonger
- # 3 - Research Scientist
- # 4 - Aquaculture Production Assistant
- # 5 – Fishing Operations Manager





4. Discussion

Every Secondary School in Australia now has free access to ALife.net.au as have TAFE's, Universities and Careers Educators all over the country. This is a significant achievement in spreading the word about career opportunities in the Australian seafood industry.

Another pleasing outcome is that in South Australia and Northern Territory these states are now using ALife as part of the curriculum material for the compulsory Year 10 subject, Personal Learning Program. In Victoria, ALife is receiving excellent traction in schools after extraordinary access support from the CEAV, Victoria's peak career advice association.

In regards to the ALife website statistics it is important to note that the website currently does not capture individual video views. For example, if a user watches 6 videos, only 1 page view is recorded. Based on anecdotal evidence, testing with sample schools and interactive experience, ALife suggest that 5 videos is average for the number of videos viewed per visit – namely, the Day in the Life video, the celebrity summary, the CEO talk and 2 Interactive questions.

Another issue to note is that statistics regarding the distribution of discs and their use is difficult to capture and quantify. This is because many teachers and careers advisors loaded the information on to school servers and therefore, potentially, ALife is being viewed hundreds of times a day over a large period of time. ALife promoters therefore believe that it is appropriate to double these figures to get a better indication of the use and to compensate for use of the tens of thousands of discs in circulation.

As also pointed out, an enormous video view count and overall page view was captured and ALife feels very confident that the initial view statistics were largely careers advisors exploring and developing a knowledge of the program to share with their students from Term 1, 2009.

Another significant point to raise is that the Seafood CRC also requested ALife provide audited statistics to the company regarding the performance of ALife. In response to this request, ALife consulted with Deloitte and it was discovered that there would be an issue with obtaining audited statistics which was two fold: One is the tens of thousands of discs that are circulated being used on school and personal servers is untrackable (e.g. an entire school uses the disc and not the site) and the cost quoted was not achievable, especially that accurate statistics were not going to be produced.



5. Benefits and Adoption

A number of benefits have arisen as part of the Seafood CRC's involvement with the ALife project. These include:

Short term benefits: Video footage, ALife website, ALife DVD.

Medium term benefits: Increased skills of industry personnel in media and television work, seafood career fact sheets.

Long term benefits: More school leavers and the younger generation pursuing careers in the Australian seafood industry

As per the statistics outlined in this report, it is clear that adoption of the ALife project with high schools in particular has occurred and further highlighted by the development of curriculum material and lesson plans linking with the ALife project.

6. Further Development

ALife can be further developed in line with feedback received from students, teachers and career advisors. Further developments that will be made for the launch of ALife II include:

- Building extra footage for the seafood industry overview video and a splash page to direct interest to university options and to possibly help connect interest with ambitions of PhDs and working with the marketing arm of the seafood industry. The idea is to link universities into the process and highlight on the website what courses are available (e.g. providing a complete educational pathway)
- Several schools have requested more appropriate material on the Seafood CRC website following the links. Suggestions have ranged from blogs written by Tom Kennedy to video of alternate jobs in the industry to be hosted on site.
- Production of an ALife TV panel to focus on the Australian seafood industry.
- ALife has the possibility of linking to other school science programs such as the Primary Industry Association for Science Education (PICSE).



7. Planned Outcomes

Public Benefit Outcomes

- Greater interest by the younger generation in pursuing careers within the Australian seafood industry.
- The Australian Seafood industry seen as providing interesting, diverse and fulfilling career options.
- Consideration of a career in the seafood industry, when it may never have been considered at all by school leavers or the younger generation.

Private Benefit Outcomes

- One solution to the skills shortage crisis.
- Promotion of Australian seafood industry participants.
- Promotion of the Seafood CRC brand and the CRC initiative.

Linkages with CRC Milestone Outcomes

This project fits within strategy 4 of the A,B, Sea theme business plan and is specific to the following milestones:

- Students gain PhDs and selected students embark on career pathways in seafood (Milestones 4.1.3, 4.6.2 and 4.10.2)
- Case studies on engagement in CRC activities of young people at two rural high schools documented and reviewed and expansion of activity evaluated (Milestone 4.5.1)

These outcomes relate to getting the next generation through in to careers in the seafood industry.

8. Conclusion

In conclusion, the ALife project is just one way to get the targeted message out to the younger generation that careers in the Australian seafood industry are diverse, interesting and fulfilling. ALife meets this need by providing information in a format that "speaks" to the target audience through relevant technology providing inspiring stories about current employees in the Australian seafood industry to a large and captive young audience.

The continued success of ALife and consequently ALife II will only occur through further marketing and promotion and the inclusion of new career profiles on a regular basis to ensure traction remains within schools in to the future.

