

Marketing for Public Libraries: report of a research project under the Public Library

Research Programme

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-:-

South Dublin County Council

Mayo County Council

Wexford County Council

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## **1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

### **1.1 Introduction**

The Marketing for Public Libraries Project was a research project which aimed to investigate how marketing techniques can be applied by public libraries to the services they offer. The project was funded under the Public Library Research Programme. The Project partners were Mayo County Library, South Dublin County Libraries, Wexford County Library, and An Chomhairle Leabharlanna. The Project commenced in April 2004 and the final report was submitted to the Public Library Research Programme Committee in December 2005.

### **1.2 Objectives**

The objectives of the project were:

- To identify and report on policies, best practice models, and operational and developmental issues relating to marketing for public library services at international level.
- To identify and report on policies, best practice models, operational and developmental issues relating to marketing for public (and other) library services at national level.
- To audit existing services and facilities of the libraries and the communities within which they are operating.
- To identify and report on best practice for surveys and focus groups in relation to library users and non-users.
- To examine the process of community profiling and how it can be applied in the public library context.
- To carry out and analyse community profiles in each of the three participating library authorities' areas.
- To reach conclusions and recommend approaches to marketing which can be replicated on a national basis.

### **1.3 RECOMMENDATIONS**

The project carried out research into the international practice of marketing in public libraries, and looked at how marketing is implemented in public libraries in Ireland. The project identified a model which could be followed in Ireland, and tested the implementation of the model in the three participating library authorities.

The research and testing of the methodology gave rise to a number of recommendations for policy development, action at national and library authority level, and relating to the implementation of the marketing methodology. The recommended methodology and those recommendations relating to policy, and action at national and library authority level, are set out in this Executive Summary. The recommendations relating to the implementation of the methodology are set out in chapter eight of the report.

### **1.3.1 Recommended Methodology**

Research revealed a multiplicity of definitions and models of marketing, with an agreement across all the definitions that marketing is a strategic process and an integral part of the management of an organisation.

The Project Team identified an approach, adapted from that suggested by the Ohio Library Council<sup>1</sup>, as suitable for use in Irish public libraries.

The recommended model steps, adapted from the Ohio model, are:

1. Begin the marketing process by examining your library's mission or purpose.
2. Assess library capabilities with an internal audit (i.e. an internal assessment).
3. Produce a community profile of the target community.
4. Find out what products (services) your users want, and how they perceive the library, through market research.
5. Develop goals and objectives based on your mission and the results of your internal audit and external research into what customers want.
6. To meet goals, select strategies to promote your products that will work best, be affordable, and reach your customers.
7. Create a plan of action that describes all the steps needed to carry out the strategies for meeting goals.
8. Implement the plan.
9. Evaluate how well you have done.

### **1.3.2 Recommendations for Policy Development**

The following recommendations are concerned with policy development at national and local level.

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<sup>1</sup> 'Marketing Planning', <<http://www.olc.org/marketing/2intro.htm>>.



1. There is a need for the development of marketing policy at national level to inform policy development and practice at organisational level. The policy should be broad enough to incorporate national issues, capacity for international co-operation, as well as organisational-level development. The Branching Out Steering Committee, in co-operation with An Chomhairle Leabharlanna and library authorities, should draft such a policy and seek to have it adopted at national level, and at local level by library authorities.
2. Marketing should be adopted as a key strand under the second phase of *Branching Out*.
3. In setting policy for future research, the Public Library Research Programme Committee should consider examining the implementation and evaluation of marketing plans (steps 8 & 9 of the methodology) by way of one or more follow-up projects.

#### **1.3.3 Recommendations for action at national level**

1. The application of marketing policy to public library practice should be the subject of on-going review by An Chomhairle Leabharlanna, with results being fed into the *Branching Out* process.
2. A current awareness action detailing the range, nature and impacts of various marketing models and applications should be initiated out by An Chomhairle Leabharlanna.
3. An Chomhairle should examine, for examples of transferable good practice, how other sectors, in particular the heritage and cultural sectors, conduct marketing.
4. Marketing needs specific address within elementary and continuing education for the library profession. This should be considered by the Standing Committee on Public Library Staff Training and Development, the School of Information and Library Studies (UCD), and the Library Association of Ireland.

#### **1.3.4 Recommendations for action by library authorities**

1. Each library authority should develop its own marketing plan, reviewed at regular intervals.
2. Public library services should use the recommended marketing model as a basis for their own plans and actions.
3. In developing their marketing plans, library authorities should take account of the national policy and of the service priorities identified under *Branching Out*.

4. Each library authority should establish a marketing team to take responsibility for marketing.
5. Responsibility for the development and implementation of the plan should be assigned at Senior Executive Librarian.

### **1.3.5 Recommendations for the implementation of the marketing methodology**

The report makes a number of recommendations relating to the implementation of the recommended marketing methodology. These are detailed in chapter 8 of the report.

## **1.4 Conclusion**

This report sets out the results of research carried out into international and national practice in marketing in public libraries. The Project Team identified, from the research, a marketing methodology which it recommends for use in Ireland to library authorities.

The Project tested the methodology, applying it in three library authorities, to both specific geographical areas and a specific user group. The various steps involved in the methodology are set out in detail, and recommendations made in relation to each. A number of recommendations as to the development of policy, and desirable actions, at national level are also made.

The Project Team believes that the research and testing of the marketing methodology makes a convincing case for the adoption of marketing policies at national and local level, and for the implementation of the marketing methodology described.

The report acknowledges the costs involved, in both finance and staff resources, but shows that by following the methodology described, library authorities can implement marketing strategies that can generate both increases in usage of library services and improvements in those services.

## 2. CONTEXT

### 2.1 Policy Background

Market research was recognised as an important tool for local authorities in the *Better Local Government* report, published in 1996:

More structured and systematic approaches to consulting customers would have obvious benefits for local authorities. There is a variety of techniques available, including customer panels/advisory groups, market research and comment cards. Such techniques allow local authorities to find out what customers really think about matters such as opening hours in public offices, the speed of service, the standard of office accommodation, the level of courtesy shown and the overall level of service. They also enable customers to suggest improvements.<sup>2</sup>

The underlying policy for the Marketing for Public Libraries Project, as with the other projects funded by the PLRP, may be found in the *Branching Out* report. The topic emerged from the *Branching Out* Project's public consultation process as one of the ten issues for the 'future of the public library service'.<sup>3</sup> In addressing the issue, the project team stated its belief that '... it is important that the service is marketed locally. This means that the library service must get to know the needs of the membership and more importantly, the needs of the potential membership. This must be done in a structured fashion. "Gut-feel" must be replaced by research'.<sup>4</sup>

The team went on to recommend that 'In order to market library services effectively, the project team recommends that each library authority carry out a programme of research into what their users and the public in their area want from the library'.<sup>5</sup>

In conclusion, the project team identified market research as a suitable topic for the Public Library Research Programme recommended in the *Branching Out* report.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Department of the Environment. *Better Local Government: a programme for change* (Dublin, 1996), 38.

<sup>3</sup> Department of the Environment and Local Government, *Branching Out: a new public library service* (Dublin, 1998), 42.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. 80.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid. 81.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid. 102.

In its first call for proposals, the Public Library Research Programme included marketing for public libraries as a suggested topic. Three proposals on the subject were received, and following consideration by the PLRP it was agreed that the three should be combined into one project.

## **2.2 Definitions**

The importance accorded to marketing in the *Branching Out* report is not surprising, as the need for public libraries to market their services has long been identified as a key issue for the profession. Marketing is seen as a mechanism that libraries can use to effectively bring their services to the attention of all potential customer groups. However it quickly comes apparent from research that marketing can be diverse, it is an art not a science and there are many marketing definitions that can be used in different contexts.

### **2.2.1 Product Marketing**

Marketing developed in the business sector as a process to help the organisation sell its products. Known as product, or transactional marketing, it was the process through which the goods were brought to the attention of the customer. This is defined by the Chartered Institute of Marketing as ‘... the management process that identifies, anticipates and satisfies customer requirements profitably’.<sup>7</sup> Product marketing uses the marketing mix theory, known as the ‘4Ps’: product, price, place and promotion.<sup>8</sup> Marketing is usually the responsibility of a dedicated marketing department. In a public library this model could be used to market a specific service.

### **2.2.2 Service Marketing**

Service marketing is an extension of product marketing, developed to meet the specific needs of the service sector, in which the public library operates. In service marketing the whole organisation, backroom and frontline staff, has specific marketing responsibilities to provide the service the customer needs and desires.<sup>9</sup> In service marketing the 4Ps of product, price, place and promotion, become the 7Ps with people, physical evidence and process being added to the marketing mix. The Drucker definition of marketing reflects this ethos of service marketing: ‘marketing is

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<sup>7</sup> Eileen Elliott de Saez, *Marketing Concepts for libraries and information services* (2nd edn., London, 2002), 1.

<sup>8</sup> Christie Koontz, ‘The marketing mix: The 4-P recipe for customer satisfaction’, *Marketing Library Services*, 18/1 (Feb 2004) <<http://www.infotoday.com/MLS/jan04/koontz.shtml>>.

<sup>9</sup> Judith Broady-Preston & Lucy Steel, ‘Internal marketing strategies in LIS: a strategic management perspective’, *Library Management*, 23/6-7 (2002), 294-301.

not only much broader than selling; it is not a specialised activity at all. It encompasses the entire business...seen from the point of view of the final result, that is the customer's point of view. Concern and responsibility for marketing must therefore permeate all areas of enterprise'.<sup>10</sup>

### **2.2.3 Relationship Marketing**

Relationship marketing grew from service marketing and evolved initially in Scandinavia. It advocates that, as it is easier to keep existing customers than to recruit new customers, a strategic approach should be applied to assist the organisation to keep its customers and serve them better. Christian Gronroos, one of the theorists for relationship marketing, writes: 'marketing is to establish, maintain and enhance relationships with customers and other partners, at a profit, so that the objectives of the parties involved are met. This is achieved by a mutual exchange and fulfilment of promises'.<sup>11</sup>

This is also reflected in the Palmer definition which states that: 'marketing is essentially about marshalling the resources of an organisation so that they meet the changing needs of the customer on whom the organisation depends'.<sup>12</sup>

Professor Malcolm Mc Donald of Cranfield University offers the following practical definition of marketing: 'Marketing is a dialogue over time with specific groups of customers, whose needs you understand in depth and for whom you develop an offer with a differential advantage over the offer of competitors'.<sup>13</sup>

### **2.2.4 Strategic Marketing**

Strategic marketing, or marketing management, recognises marketing as a management discipline. It is part of organisational and management philosophy, and is reflected in attitudes and approaches across the whole organisation. The starting point lies in recognising that 'marketing deals with identifying and meeting human and social needs'.<sup>14</sup> The Kotler definition describes marketing as:

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<sup>10</sup> 'What is marketing?',  
<[http://www.marketingteacher.com/Lessons/lesson\\_what\\_is\\_marketing.htm](http://www.marketingteacher.com/Lessons/lesson_what_is_marketing.htm)>.

<sup>11</sup> Rajesh Singh, 'Developing relationship marketing with customers: a Scandinavian perspective', *Library Management*, 24/1-2 (2003), 34-43.

<sup>12</sup> 'What is marketing?'.

<sup>13</sup> Professor Malcolm McDonald. Cranfield University.

<sup>14</sup> P. Kotler, *Marketing Management: the millennium edition* (10th edn., NJ, 2000), 2.

The analysis, planning, implementation, and control of carefully formulated programs designed to bring about voluntary exchanges of values with target markets for the purpose of achieving organisational objectives. It relies heavily on designing the organisation's offering in terms of the target market's needs and desires and on using effective pricing, communication and distribution to inform, motivate and service the markets.<sup>15</sup>

This is also reflected in the marketing definition for non-profit organisations:

Marketing is the wide range of activities involved in making sure that you're continuing to meet the needs of your customers and getting value in return. These activities include market research to find out, for example, what groups of potential customers exist, what their needs are, which of those needs you can meet, how you should meet them, etc. Marketing also includes analysing the competition, positioning your new product or service (finding your market niche), pricing your products and services, and promoting them through continued advertising, promotions, public relations and sales.<sup>16</sup>

This concept is also reflected in the IFLA definition which describes marketing as: 'the process of planning and executing the conception, pricing, promotion, and distribution of ideas, goods, and services to create exchanges that satisfy individual and organisational goals'.<sup>17</sup>

### **2.2.5 Conclusions**

The various marketing models defined offer libraries the opportunity to select different strategies as required by specific service areas or for the benefit of the overall organisation. The theorists bring the process a step further by recommending that library organisations use marketing strategically in organisation management. Marketing then is multifaceted: once the concept is understood it can be adapted and used by library authorities for many different purposes.

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<sup>15</sup> Darlene Weingand, *Marketing/Planning library and information services* (2nd edn., Colorado, 1999), 4.

<sup>16</sup> 'Marketing Defined', <<http://www.olc.org/marketing/1definitions.htm>>.

<sup>17</sup> Christie Koontz, 'Glossary of Marketing Definitions', <<http://www.ifla.org/VII/s34/>>.

### 3. BACKGROUND RESEARCH

#### 3.1 Report on International Policy and Practice

Research on the use of marketing in public libraries internationally has revealed that it has evolved as a response to societal change, technological development and economic retrenchment. Libraries have seen that marketing has been successful in the commercial sector and that it is now being increasingly used in the services and non-profit sectors.

This chapter, based on a thorough analysis of the evidence available:

- identifies the policies that inform practice,
- lists some best practice models that emerge from the literature,
- details the operational and developmental issues that have arisen to date, and
- determines the things learned that are relevant to the public library sector in Ireland.

##### 3.1.1 Marketing Policies

The major international policy documents that inform marketing practice in public libraries today are the IFLA/UNESCO *Public Library Manifesto*<sup>18</sup> and the IFLA/UNESCO publication *The Public Library Service: Guidelines for Development*.<sup>19</sup> The UNESCO *Manifesto* proclaims belief in the public library as:

A living force for education, culture and information, and as an essential agent for the fostering of peace and spiritual welfare through the minds of men and women... All age groups must find material relevant to their needs.

While marketing is not specifically mentioned, it states that:

A clear policy must be formulated, defining objectives, priorities and services in relation to the local community needs. And that co-operation with relevant partners, for example user groups and other professionals at local, regional, national as well as international level, has to be ensured.

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<sup>18</sup> IFLA/UNESCO *Public Library Manifesto*, 1994  
<<http://www.ifla.org/VII/s8/unesco/eng.htm>>.

<sup>19</sup> *The Public Library Service: IFLA/UNESCO Guidelines for Development* (IFLA Publications, 97).

IFLA's *The Public Library Service: Guidelines for Development* endorsed the UNESCO *Manifesto* and set out guidelines and standards which librarians and policy makers should use in developing public library services. Chapter 6 of these guidelines is dedicated to the Management and Marketing of Public Libraries.<sup>20</sup>

The Guidelines state that libraries should:

- Have a marketing and promotion policy
- Have a marketing and promotions plan
- Work with the media
- Be proactive in the community
- Gain community support
- Practice advocacy
- Work with government bodies
- Participate in community life
- Evaluate

In these IFLA *Guidelines* marketing and promotion is one of eleven skill sets identified for management of a public library. IFLA is clearly placing marketing in the management bundle, recommending that:

library managers can use marketing techniques to enable them understand the needs of users and to plan effectively to meet those needs. The library should also promote its services to the public to ensure that they are kept aware of its ability to meet their library and information requirements.<sup>21</sup>

In the last ten years while a considerable body of literature on marketing theory and practice in libraries has been published, there is little evidence of policy. Research suggests that the IFLA/UNESCO *Guidelines for Development* is the only international policy document to inform marketing practice.

### **3.1.2 Examples of best practice**

#### **Introduction**

Much of the literature sourced in the search for marketing models of best practice in public libraries tends to focus on product promotion. This may be because many in

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<sup>20</sup> IFLA, *Guidelines*, 83-6.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid. 82.



the library sector do not have a complete understanding of the scope and depth of marketing. While there are many examples of marketing practice available, the research reveals that it is inaccurate to describe them as models of good practice, as the marketing plan required to inform marketing practice in most cases is unavailable. Some of the actions identified are outlined below. (The headings used are examples of those that should be used when drafting a marketing plan.)

### **Marketing Methodologies and Approaches**

One model of good practice which was identified is that developed by the Ohio Library Council, and published on its 'Marketing the Library' website.<sup>22</sup> The site offers a good introduction to the practice of marketing in public libraries, and covers all of the elements identified in the literature (see chapter two, and sections 3.1.2 to 3.1.6) as necessary for successful marketing. The approach involves a systematic series of steps to be followed:

- Define the mission
- Audit the organisation
- Survey customer needs
- Develop goals and objectives
- Select strategies
- Draft a marketing plan
- Evaluation

The Ohio approach will be discussed further towards the end of this chapter.

### **Products and Services**

There are many examples of campaigns to promote library products and services on virtually all library service web sites. Some examples of structured marketing campaigns are the Power Card Challenge at Houston Public Library<sup>23</sup>; 'Change your life at Gosport Library'<sup>24</sup>; 'Surf's up in Plymouth Library'<sup>25</sup>; West Lothian Council,

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<sup>22</sup> 'Marketing the library' <<http://www.olc.org/marketing/index.html>>.

<sup>23</sup> Christine Koontz, 'First IFLA/3M International Marketing Award' (Presented in Glasgow, 2002, <<http://www.infotoday.com/mls/ifla.shtml>>).

<sup>24</sup> 'Libraries lead the way in innovative and imaginative marketing and publicity', <<http://www.cilip.org.uk/aboutcilip/newsandpressreleases/archive2002/news021101b.htm>>.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid.

Library Services, 'Books @ Lunch Time'<sup>26</sup>, and in Spain, at Consorci de Biblioteques de Barcelona (CBB), 'The Marketing Campaign: Literary Pathways.'<sup>27</sup>

## Environmental Analysis

Calgary Public Libraries' 'Rediscover Your Calgary (Public) Library'<sup>28</sup> identified clear demographic gaps in its customer base. In the UK, Tower Hamlets' Idea Stores initiative arose from research,<sup>29</sup> and Stratford Library's research showed that 'the simple fact that the building is where it is, is its biggest promotional statement'.<sup>30</sup>

## Use of Market Research the Techniques

Public libraries in the Nordic countries of Denmark, Finland and Norway use marketing techniques to analyse the complex society around them and reposition their services.<sup>31</sup> These libraries are valued and well used: 80% of Finns are regular library users, for example, while Frederika Public Library in Denmark is open 79 hours each week, including Sundays in winter.<sup>32</sup>

In Birmingham (UK) to address the findings that use by 16-25 year olds was limited, the Image Campaign was designed to radically re-brand and reposition Birmingham Libraries. Market research was conducted to develop a detailed marketing and promotion strategy, which began with a month-long media campaign.<sup>33</sup> Many libraries including Peckham<sup>34</sup>, Oslo<sup>35</sup>, and Vaasa<sup>36</sup> have conducted market research with the community and other stakeholders to help them design their new library building.

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<sup>26</sup> 'Books@Lunch Time', CILIP/Emerald Public Relations and Publicity Awards, 2003 (<<http://www.cilip.org.uk/aboutcilip/medalsandawards/PublicRelationsandPublicity/winners2003/eprapa.htm>>).

<sup>27</sup> Christine Koontz, 'The 2nd Annual IFLA/3M International Marketing Award Winners Named', *Marketing Library Services*, 17/5 (2003), <<http://infotoday.com/mls/sep03/koontz.shtml>>, 1.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid.

<sup>29</sup> Jared Bryson, Bob Usherwood & Richard Proctor, *Libraries Must Also be Buildings? New Library Impact Study* (London, 2003) <<http://cplis.shef.ac.uk/New%20Library%20Impact%20Study.pdf>>, 64.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid. 57.

<sup>31</sup> Hilka Oravo, 'Marketing is an attitude of mind' (Presentation at the 63rd IFLA General Conference, 1997, <<http://www.ifla.org/IV/ifla63/63orah.htm>>).

<sup>32</sup> Helle Weise, 'The never ending story, librarians in new roles', *Scandinavian Public Library Quarterly*, 36/1 (2003) <[http://www.splq.info/issues/vol36\\_1/06.htm](http://www.splq.info/issues/vol36_1/06.htm)>.

<sup>33</sup> 'Libraries lead the way' (n. 40 above).

<sup>34</sup> Bryson *et al*, 55.

<sup>35</sup> 'Planning the new Library, Norway', <[http://nyhuus.deich.folkebibl.no/deichman/nye/nye\\_deichman/project.html](http://nyhuus.deich.folkebibl.no/deichman/nye/nye_deichman/project.html)>.

<sup>36</sup> Birgitta Aurén, 'Vaasa City Library', *Scandinavian Public Library Quarterly*, 35/3 (2002) <[http://www.splq.info/issues/vol35\\_3/08.htm](http://www.splq.info/issues/vol35_3/08.htm)>.

For this project both South Dublin and Mayo public libraries used market research to find out what library customers want from a new branch library. In Wexford a different strategy was tested and market research was conducted to establish what silver learners, those over 50 years of age, needed if they are to use the branch library network in the County. See chapters 7, 8 and 9.

## **Marketing Strategies**

The Head of Norfolk Library and Information Services explains:

What we have to do as a service is employ proper marketing techniques, and if we don't do that then we are never going to be effective. For, two-and-a-half years we have been using really serious marketing techniques. And they do give us the results that we need... what we're learning is that the "drip effect" works...we'll do something fairly high profile to start with, from then on it's just this constant drip, then the people who want it at that point will hear the message. It's long term.<sup>37</sup>

In Malaysia Shadar Banun Jaafar of the National Library of Malaysia presented a paper to the IFLA General Conference in 1998 illustrating how IT information products and services could be marketed through libraries, providing a model of practice for a marketing plan for library IT services.<sup>38</sup>

## **Marketing Campaigns**

New Jersey launched the Super Librarian campaign in September 2003 'to raise our visibility and do something creative and fun to draw our residents to their local libraries, and to show how libraries have changed'.<sup>39</sup> The American Library Association's '@ your library' campaign is a five-year national promotions programme for American State library services, that can be adapted for use by state, regional and local libraries. The library chooses the methodology that best suits their need at that time. This communications campaign has developed online toolkits; advice and publicity materials to enable them increase awareness and build local support for libraries.<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>37</sup> Bryson *et al*, 62.

<sup>38</sup> Shahr Banun Jaafar, 'Marketing information technology (IT) products and services through libraries: Malaysian Experiences', (Presentation at 64<sup>th</sup> IFLA General Conference, 1998, <<http://www.ifla.org/IV/ifla64/126-86e.htm>>).

<sup>39</sup> <<http://www.njlibraries.org/>>.

<sup>40</sup> 'ALA @ your Library', <<http://www.ala.org/ala/pio/campaign/campaignamericas.htm>>.

A similar model has been developed in the UK to promote the use of IT and networking through the people's network and the UK online centres campaign.<sup>41</sup>

## Evaluation

The Birmingham Libraries New Image Campaign developed a marketing evaluation brief that set down performance indicators and performance measures for each objective of the campaign. These were then evaluated at the end of the programme. The campaign succeeded in meeting most of its target objectives. A marketing project evaluation form was developed to measure media penetration, media relations, and analysis of media coverage, print media, outdoor media, advertising and web-site. This analysis gave them concrete data, which they could use to plan the next phase.<sup>42</sup>

### 3.1.3 Operation and development issues

The management and development issues identified from the research are:

#### *Management*

**Marketing strategy:** before embarking on marketing, each library must determine what level of commitment it can give, and structure its marketing activities accordingly. The marketing model selected should be appropriate to the goal of the exercise.

**Promotion:** there is still confusion in the public library world between marketing and promotion. Libraries worldwide are good at promoting events and they have established strong links with local media. The library service is well placed to build on this promotional expertise by adding market research to its portfolio.

**Target Community:** it is important that the library identifies the specific target communities it wants to work with and why. From this a marketing plan to achieve that objective can then be drawn up.

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<sup>41</sup> < <http://www.ukonlinecentres.com/>>.

<sup>42</sup> Brian Gambles and Heike Schuster, 'The changing image of Birmingham libraries: marketing strategy into action', *New Library World*, 104/9 (2003), 361-371.

**Information base:** when the library commits to marketing, the first steps are to conduct market research to identify what the customer really wants and needs and to audit the current service.

**A library marketing group:** marketing must be a full organisation responsibility. To achieve this, a library functional group with responsibility for marketing and public relations needs to be established.

**An annual marketing plan:** when an organisation has committed to marketing it needs to establish an annual planning cycle to achieve its objectives, these will be in line with both the library and the corporate plan objectives. These should then be evaluated and used to highlight topics needing further attention in the following year's plan.

**Finance:** a budget must be assigned.

**Image and Branding:** one of the first tasks in marketing is to examine the library logo or brand against the mission of the library. The logo can give a very strong visual message about the library. Does the logo reflect the message the library wants to have in the community? Branding can be used to position the library where you want it to be in the community, it can also be used to differentiate the library from its competitors.

**Product and Price:** in the marketing plan the library prioritises the services (products) it can deliver to a particular client group and then determines how it can deliver it with the resources available (price), where it can be accessed (place) and how they will let people know about it (promotion).

**Place and Promotion:** the library needs to examine critically how current programmes can be effectively marketed to optimise the benefit to the public library of investing in that activity. Promotion must be innovative, unique, energetic, creative, give a clear message and hit the recipient at an emotional level. Several methods can be used together e.g. press releases, bookmarks, information guides, posters, website.

**Staff Awareness:** all staff within the public library and in the wider local authority must be fully aware of the library's role and commit to its marketing strategy. Staff when performing all tasks, whether front line or not, must work to deliver what the customer wants and in the format that is most accessible. An on-going education programme and staff manual should be developed.

**Evaluation:** evaluation is critical and must be on going. The library may evaluate the performance of a specific service or the overall performance of the public library. Feedback evaluation forms should be distributed at every activity. Final evaluation at the end of each programme is essential to enable the library reset its objectives for the next phase.

#### *Development*

**Structure:** marketing needs to be developed with national, regional and local strands. To take on strategic marketing as part of library management the library service is making a commitment to undertake a major appraisal of its service. It accepts the need to invest in market research and introduce a new culture to the organisation. This is neither easy or something that can be achieved quickly. The need for national investment to support the development of marketing actions has already been accepted in America, the UK and Northern Ireland.

**Corporate vision:** the public library is part of the wider local authority range of services. Within the local authority it has four roles, to deliver a comprehensive library service to the local community; to communicate and distribute information on the services of the local authority to the wider community; to deliver information services to the internal organisation; and to contribute to corporate policy making. If the public library is to effectively deliver this full range of services both it and the corporate entity need to adopt marketing in management. It is by taking a strategic approach using marketing methodologies as actions in annual plans that optimum benefit can be achieved for the customer, the library and the local authority.

**Technology:** technological availability is changing how people want to use information. Libraries have a role in facilitating Information and Communication Technology (ICT) use by giving tuition and virtual and digital

access to their resources and to wider information sources. Libraries by using marketing strategies can now position themselves to respond to this societal change.

**Capacity Building/training:** marketing is a new concept for public libraries and librarians. If it is to be successfully used as a management strategy there needs to be sufficient knowledge in the workplace. Marketing does not work unless everyone believes in it, implements it and is an advocate on behalf of the library. In the UK at present this objective to build marketing capacity is being implemented at all levels with the lead coming from national to local level.

**Competition:** the information market has been deregulated. Public libraries could be considered to be in competition with bookshops and information consultants. By conducting market research the library can assess the validity of this claim. By putting in place a full marketing strategy it can identify its own strengths in the information field, identify potential customer needs and develop its own action plan. This may also benefit the library by identifying how they might work in collaboration with potential competitors.

### 3.1.4 Things Learned

The key things learned from the research are:

- Marketing is being widely used by public libraries worldwide.
- Public libraries use marketing methods to develop specific services.
- There is a need for the development of marketing policy at international, national and organisational level to inform practice.
- Library theorists recommend that libraries use marketing as a tool of organisation management.
- Marketing is strategic, it is a planned structured process; promotion is just one element of this.
- Marketing is the responsibility of all stakeholders in the organisation.
- Each library should have a marketing team that is responsible for managing the full annual marketing programme.
- The public is often not aware of the broad range of services outside book loans that are available from the public library. An image/branding, national to local,

marketing campaign involving all stakeholders is recommended to address this.

- Public libraries can and do engage marketing consultants to assist them conduct market research, design the marketing plan and co-ordinate the marketing campaign.
- Marketing can be costly both in financial and staff time costs, but the investment is effective.
- The model suggested by the Ohio Library Council is very useful and could be applied with confidence.

### **3.1.5 The Ohio approach**

As mentioned above, the Ohio Library Council's 'Marketing the Library' website offers an approach which can be usefully applied by any library authority. The approach is a systematic one, setting out a series of steps which encompass the entire marketing process. The website notes that although systematic, the marketing process is not always a linear one. 'The process starts with the mission, but sometimes knowing the customer better may lead you to reconsider the library's mission'.<sup>43</sup>

1. Begin the marketing process by examining your library's mission or purpose.
2. Assess library capabilities with a marketing audit, an internal assessment.
3. Find out what products (services) your users want and how they perceive the library through marketing research.
4. Develop goals and objectives based on your mission and the results of your internal audit and external research into what customers want.
5. To meet goals, select strategies to promote your products that will work best, be affordable, and reach your customers. Include the Internet in your plan. Look at what others are doing.
6. Create a plan of action that describes all the steps needed to carry out the strategies for meeting goals. Outline the specific tasks, timelines, and assignment of responsibilities. Consider budget restraints.
7. Evaluate how well you have done. Evaluation may indicate that some goals can't be reached or can't be measured, some methods of promotion don't work as expected, or what's really needed is an entirely new plan!

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<sup>43</sup> <<http://www.olc.org/marketing/1steps.htm>>.



The selection of the Ohio approach was influenced both by the Project's remit to identify a methodology that could be applied across the total public library community, and the fact of a wide-spread lack of marketing practice. The Ohio approach was identified as the most comprehensive available and as being adaptable for local purposes.

In assessing the Ohio approach as the only one identified as suitable as a model, the Project Team recognised two further steps which any model should include. The first is the carrying out of a community profile. This was one of the key issues which emerged from the research (see 3.1.3 above) and should be included as step 3 in the model. The second step to be added is the implementation of the plan of action. Although implicit in the Ohio approach, the step should be explicit in the model, as step 8, for the sake of clarity.

The approach recommended by the Project Team (see 1.3.1 and 8.1.2) includes the seven steps from the Ohio approach, plus the two additional steps identified by the Project Team.

### **3.1.6 Resources**

The carrying out of market research and the development of a marketing plan naturally requires resources, both in staff time and in current expenditure. In assessing the adapted Ohio approach as suitable for use in Ireland, the Project Team is conscious of the fact that the approach says nothing about the resources required to implement it.

The resources required will vary considerably, depending on what an individual library authority is trying to achieve. The development of a marketing plan for the entire library service, for example, will require more staff time than the development of a plan for one specific element of the service.

It will be a matter for individual library authorities to decide how much and what resources to allocate to their marketing activities. However, the survey of national activity (see 3.2.2 below) shows that library authorities are already allocating staff to marketing. In some cases therefore, library authorities may not need to allocate more staff to marketing, but rather may get a greater return on their investment by following the recommended approach.

As we shall see below (chapter 4), a significant part of marketing is market research. The case studies (chapters 5, 6, 7) demonstrate that the carrying out of an audit, the development of a community profile, and the carrying out of surveys, are staff-intensive activities. Library authorities may decide to outsource some or all of this work. However, in order to make the best use of the data collected it is important that library marketing team (small or large) understands the market research process and has a good grasp of the methods used, and the various data collected. At a minimum, therefore, library authorities must ensure that sufficient staff, at the appropriate levels, are familiar with the recommended approach, and with the market research methods.

Some actions, at least, which are identified as necessary are likely to cost money, advertising being an obvious example. Each library authority will have to decide how much money it can allocate to actions arising from the marketing process but it is important to note that the recommended approach is explicit in stating that selected strategies 'be affordable' (step 5) and that actions be decided upon in the light of budget constraints (step 6).

### **3.1.7 Conclusion**

It is clear from this study of international practice that marketing still means different things to different people. Within the library sector people have very different views and levels of understanding of what marketing is and how it should be used. Some see marketing purely as promotion and others see it as service development. There is some belief that a marketing strategy should be aligned to strategic management and should cut across all services and involve all staff. It can also be used to position the library in the wider corporate organisation. Others see it as a strand where a common methodology is developed by all library agencies active at national level who will then develop policy and a framework and toolkit for use at regional and local level. Underpinning all this there is one core principle, that marketing offers the public library a structured approach that can be used for any of these purposes.

The approach suggested by the Ohio Library Council was the most structured approach identified by the research, and is the only one to provide a systematic method that could usefully be followed by Irish public libraries.

## **3.2 Report on national situation & practice**

This element of the project set out to research the situation with regard to marketing in public libraries in Ireland by examining the policies, best practice models, and operational and development issues relating to marketing for public libraries and other library/information services at national level. This was done through a survey of county and city librarians; by making contact with other library/information services, and by developing case studies.

### **3.2.1 Activity at national level**

The focus of this element of the research was on marketing activity carried out at local level. However, it is important to note that some significant marketing has taken place at national level.

#### **Public Library User Survey and TNSmrbi Survey**

In 2002 An Chomhairle Leabharlanna co-ordinated the first national Public Library User Survey (PLUS). The survey was closely based on the annual PLUS carried out in the UK by the Institute of Public Finance (IPF). 22,000 questionnaires were distributed to branch libraries in twenty-eight of the thirty-two library authorities, and a return rate of at least 75% achieved in almost all cases. The results of the survey were produced at national level and on an individual library authority level. An Chomhairle published and circulated the results in 2003.<sup>44</sup>

In 2003 An Chomhairle Leabharlanna commissioned a survey from TNSmrbi, using an omnibus survey of a nationally representative sample of 1,000 adults aged 15+ years. The results of this survey were published and circulated by An Chomhairle in 2004.<sup>45</sup>

### **3.2.2 Survey of county and city librarians**

The main component of the research was the questionnaire circulated to each county and city librarian. The questionnaire was designed under headings roughly reflecting the various aspects of marketing as identified in the literature research and included a total of thirty-eight questions. The headings were:

- General marketing issues
- Marketing plans

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<sup>44</sup> An Chomhairle Leabharlanna, *Public Library User Survey 2002: A Summary Report* (Dublin, 2003).

<sup>45</sup> An Chomhairle Leabharlanna, *The use and non-use of Public Libraries* (Dublin, 2004).

- Market research
- Promotion/publicity
- Website (This was given a separate heading because of its increasing importance as a promotional vehicle)

### **General marketing issues**

Included under this heading were questions about definitions of marketing, about factors which might inhibit marketing of the public library service, and about the importance accorded to marketing by the organisation. This section aimed to get a picture of attitudes towards marketing generally. Responses in this section indicated a very positive attitude towards marketing with 100% (19) of respondents declaring that marketing was either important or very important.

### **Marketing plans**

This section was included because of the emphasis in the literature on the importance of organisations devising formal marketing plans and because the *Branching Out*<sup>46</sup> report recommended that each library authority should compile its own marketing plan. The questions included whether the authority had compiled a plan; the focus of the plan (i.e. is it aimed at the service as a whole or specific aspects of the service); when the plan was drawn up; if a budget was allocated and, if so, how much. In cases where authorities did not have a stand-alone marketing plan, questions were included to ascertain if library development plans contained a significant marketing/promotional element. In this area, similar questions relating to the focus of the plan(s), budget etc., were asked.

From the responses received (19), no public library had as yet prepared a marketing plan, although four respondents stated that a plan was either in preparation or would be included in the library development plan. 37% (7) of the respondents indicated that their development plan contained a significant marketing or promotion element.

### **Market research**

Market research is one of the main constituents of an overall marketing plan, and this section aimed to ascertain the extent of any market research activities engaged in by library authorities. These activities could have taken place outside the context of a formal marketing plan and could have related to the service as a whole or a specific

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<sup>46</sup> *Branching Out*, 81.

aspect of the service. Questions were also asked on the use of interviews, focus groups, suggestion boxes, feedback on website, statistical information derived from library computer system, etc.

Questions were included on any action taken based on the results of any market research activities, including action taken or planned based on the results of the PLUS (Public Library User Survey) survey, which was carried out in each authority in 2002. Finally, a question was asked on the use of outside expertise in market research activities.

74% (14) of respondents reported that some form of market research was undertaken in their authorities apart from the PLUS survey of 2002. The market research methods used are set out in the following table.

*Table 1: market research methods employed.*

<b>Market research methods used</b>	<b>No. of respondents</b>
<b><i>Surveys</i></b>	6
<b><i>Interviews</i></b>	4
<b><i>Focus groups</i></b>	6
<b><i>Suggestion boxes</i></b>	8
<b><i>Feedback/comment area on website</i></b>	4
<b><i>Statistics from library system</i></b>	13
<b><i>Other</i></b>	4

A further question revealed that 71% (10) of those who had carried out market research had taken action taken on the basis of the results.

The figure cited so far relate to market research other than the 2002 PLUS. All respondents took part in the PLUS and 68% (13) stated that they had either taken, or planned to take, action on foot of the PLUS results.

### **Promotion/publicity**

All public libraries engage in promotion/publicity. Questions in this area endeavoured to ascertain the channels of publicity used and most favoured by the various library authorities.

Another aspect of promotion/publicity addressed here was the question of staffing. Are specific staff assigned to promotion/publicity? If so, how many and what grades? What training has been given to selected or all staff in various areas of promotion/publicity?

Questions were also included in this section on whether any evaluation of marketing or promotional activities had been carried out in the authority and if so, what criteria were used and how satisfactory or otherwise were the results.

Responses in this area yielded quite a lot of information as libraries generally seem to be very active in the area of promoting specific services, programmes and events. The most popular channel of publicity by far was 'local press', used by all respondents, while all but one also used 'local radio' and posters and flyers. The breakdown of responses is given in the following table:

*Table 2: promotional channels used.*

Promotional channels used	No. Respondents
<b>Local press</b>	19
<b>Local radio</b>	18
<b>Posters/fliers</b>	18
<b>Local Authority website</b>	15
<b>Booklets/brochures</b>	14
<b>Library website</b>	12
<b>National press</b>	11
<b>Mail shots</b>	10
<b>National radio</b>	8
<b>Email</b>	8
<b>TV</b>	7
<b>Open days</b>	6
<b>Other</b>	6

63% (12) of respondents reported at least one member of staff was specifically assigned to promotional activities, while 89% (17) reported that at least one member of staff had received training in at least one aspect of promotional activities (customer relations; organising displays/exhibitions; media skills; and design of promotional materials).

21% (4) of respondents reported having carried out an evaluation of their promotional activities.

## Branding

Branding is an important part of marketing (see 3.1.3), and a logo can give a very strong visual message about the library. 47% (9) of the responding libraries have their own logo, and the uses to which the logo was put varied:

*Table 3: use of logo.*

Logo displayed on	No. Respondents
<b>Stationery</b>	9
<b>Posters</b>	7
<b>Publications</b>	7
<b>Website</b>	6
<b>Vehicles</b>	4
<b>Buildings</b>	3

which is displayed on library stationary, publicity material, publications and website. An open question inviting respondents to list interesting or unusual promotional activities engaged in over the past five years yielded numerous responses.

## Website

For libraries, as is the case with all kinds of organisations, the Internet has become an increasingly important vehicle for raising the organisation's profile, promoting its products and services, and providing another means of accessing these products or services. Because of the increasing importance of the Internet as a marketing tool, a fact which was specifically identified in the *Branching Out* report, a separate section was included in the questionnaire under the heading of "Website". Questions included: Does the library have its own domain name? Who designed and who maintains the website? How frequently is the website updated? , and to what extent is the URL used in promotional materials.

Responses to this section indicate that 74% (14) of responding libraries update and maintain their own websites, and 80% of these report updating their sites on a monthly, or more frequent, basis. The remaining 5 authorities have space on the local authority's website.

The prominence given to the website URL varied: only 2 authorities reported displaying the URL on library buildings, for example.

*Table 4: use of website URL.*

Website displayed on	No. Respondents
<i>Stationery?</i>	15
<i>Publicity material?</i>	15
<i>Publications?</i>	11
<i>Buildings?</i>	2
<i>Vehicles?</i>	5

## **Case Studies**

The questionnaire responses provided numerous examples of promotional activities undertaken by public libraries. A sample of the more interesting ones was selected and the relevant library authorities were contacted in order to acquire more details and these constituted the case studies. They include reading and storytelling programmes from Mayo County Library and Wexford, a community survey carried out in Kildare prior to the opening of a new library and a seminar on cartography in South Dublin County Libraries which was used to promote their map collection. Details of the case studies may be read in appendix 9.3.

### **3.2.3 Marketing in other library/information services**

Another objective of the research into the national situation with regard to marketing was to identify policies, best practice models, operational and development issues relating to marketing for other library/information services. For the purposes of this objective it was decided to concentrate on the academic library sector. The websites for the various academic libraries were searched for marketing related content that would be of relevance to public libraries. There is no obvious evidence of formal marketing planning in the academic library sector. The library strategic plans are published on the websites of two of the academic institutions searched. In these plans there is little explicit mention of marketing but there is frequent reference to meeting user needs, communicating with users, promoting library services, evaluation of performance and carrying out user surveys. In other words, the strategic plans contain many of the components of marketing plans without being actually called this.



From the websites it appears that the academic libraries are particularly strong in the area of communication with their users. A common feature is the emphasis on user education with detailed guides to general library use and accessing information in various subject areas. There are also good examples of library newsletters. This would seem to be the area where public libraries could learn most from academic libraries, though it must be acknowledged that the academic libraries have a much more clearly defined clientele and, therefore, communication with users is much easier than is the case in public libraries.

#### **3.2.4 Conclusion**

The main conclusion to be drawn from the research into the national situation is that public libraries engage in a lot of promotional and publicity activities. These activities are generally focuses on specific events or specific services. The main channels used for promotion and publicity are the local press and radio. Although respondents expressed clear preferences for these channels of communication, there seems to be little systematic evaluation of the activities.

Particular staff members tend to be assigned to publicity and promotions and all respondents have provided at least some relevant training for staff.

Although 74% of respondents reported undertaking some market research at local level, there is little evidence of any library authority taking a structured approach to marketing planning and implementation. As discussed earlier (see chapter two and section 3.1.2), marketing is a strategic, planned structured process, and promotion is just one element of this. There is no evidence that Irish public libraries have taken a strategic approach to marketing their services, and the research supports the view that the recommended method should be adopted.

## **4. THE MARKET RESEARCH PROCESS**

As discussed above, the Project Team identified the approach suggested by the Ohio Library Council<sup>47</sup> as a suitable basis for a model for use in Irish public libraries, with the addition of two further steps (see 3.1.5). The recommended approach is:

1. Begin the marketing process by examining your library's mission or purpose.
2. Assess library capabilities with an internal audit (i.e. an internal assessment).
3. Produce a community profile of the target community,
4. Find out what products (services) your target community wants, and how they perceive the library, through market research.
5. Develop goals and objectives based on your mission and the results of your internal audit and external research into what customers want.
6. To meet goals, select strategies to promote your products that will work best, be affordable, and reach your customers.
7. Create a plan of action that describes all the steps needed to carry out the strategies for meeting goals.
8. Implement the plan.
9. Evaluate how well you have done.

The marketing planning process, as outlined, is made up of a number of elements, but the basis for any marketing plan is the compilation of information on the environment in which an organisation operates. This information is obtained from three main sources: internal audit, market research and community profiling.

This chapter deals with these methodologies, which are set out here in the order in which the project team approached them. However, it is important to note that the order is not set in stone: libraries should apply the methodologies in the order that suits their own particular circumstances.

### **4.1 Internal Library Audits**

#### **4.1.1 Why Audit?**

An audit is a 'comprehensive, systematic, independent and periodic examination of an organisation's marketing environment, objectives, strategies, activities with a view

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<sup>47</sup> 'Marketing Planning', <<http://www.olc.org/marketing/2intro.htm>>.

of determining problem areas and opportunities and recommending a plan of action.’<sup>48</sup>

The objective of any audit is to find out what an organisation is doing, what are its strengths and weaknesses, what are the opportunities and threats. An audit will enable an organisation to identify areas that need to be targeted and will be used to determine marketing objectives.

A successful marketing audit should be analysed alongside a community profile and user/non-user surveys to ensure comprehensive data gathering. By looking both outward and inward the entire library environment is examined. It is recommended that a library service carrying out environmental analysis should begin with a community profile, followed by user/non-user surveys, and then complete the analysis by using an internal audit. An internal library audit examines library capabilities, products and services. A successful audit should analyse activities, resources, organisational climate, communication patterns and organisational structure.

#### **4.1.2 Developing and completing the audit template within the research project**

Literature searches carried out by the team returned many journal articles and websites on marketing in the library context. It became apparent from the research that successful marketing plans for libraries always includes an audit of the service as one of the steps in the marketing process. At this point it was decided that an audit was required to focus on issues such as services and facilities of libraries and the communities within which the libraries operate.

Information gathered from various articles proved very useful in structuring the audit templates. In particular information gathered from the Ohio Library Council website<sup>49</sup> and the Blue Skyways website<sup>50</sup>, a service of the Kansas State library, were used to develop an audit template. At all stages in the development of the audit template, consideration was given to the availability of the information being sought and the

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<sup>48</sup> Darlene Weingand, ‘Preparing for the New Millennium: the Case for using marketing Strategies’, *Library Trends*, 43/3 (1995), 295-317.

<sup>49</sup> <<http://www.olc.org/marketing/formaudit.htm>>.

<sup>50</sup> <<http://skyways.lib.ks.us/pathway/audit>>.

overall objective of the audit. The templates were designed to gather only that information which would be useful in defining objectives and developing a marketing plan.

SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats) analyses made up the bulk of the audits.

In the audit statistical information was sought about library membership and customer satisfaction. SWOT analysis on the distribution of the libraries, the conditions of each branch, and the stock, facilities and services were included. Information about communication methods used by the libraries was sought and a SWOT analysis of the relationship of the library authority with the parent local authority was also included.

Initially, both internal and external audits were developed and tested. However, following research on community profiling it became clear to the project team that the data collection aspect of an external audit could be incorporated into the community profile template.

#### **4.1.3 Audit Completion**

The final draft of the audit was sent to all three authorities to be completed. The information required to complete the audits was sourced from a number of locations. Statistical information was sourced from PLUS and each library authority's own statistics. Senior management carried out SWOT analyses on the distribution of the branches and mobile service. While completing SWOT analyses each authority was cognisant of statistical data contained in the community profile. The branch managers in every branch in each library authority completed the SWOT analyses on the building, stock, services and activities of each branch.

The librarians with responsibility for promotional methods in each authority were contacted regarding internal and external promotional methods used. Senior management in each of the library department provided information regarding the support given to libraries by the various departments in their local authority.

On completion the audits were returned to the project leader, South Dublin County Libraries, to be analysed and reported on.

Two important findings emerged from the auditing process:

- The audit templates developed proved to be very comprehensive. They are applicable to all public library authorities in the Republic of Ireland. Adaptation for micro or macro scale projects is possible.
- The audit methodology outlined below is recommended as useful marketing tool.

#### **4.1.4 Practical application of the research process**

Auditing a service or a service point is a detailed and time consuming process but by using the template provided in appendix 9.4 the process can be streamlined. The audit template may need to be adapted for local use depending on the service, area or scale of the project being audited. Training in the use of the census and in data mining should take place for all staff involved with statistical analysis within the audit. SWOT methodology training should also be included for staff involved in the auditing process.

#### **4.1.5 What should be included in an audit?**

An internal audit examines a library's capabilities, products and services and gathers this information under various headings including:<sup>51</sup>

- Library membership statistics
- Customer satisfaction rates
- Distribution and condition of library branches and mobile service
- SWOT analyses on branches stock, facilities and services
- Promotional methods
- Communication methods used by libraries
- Relationship between the library and the local authority and elected members

**Membership:** library membership statistics as a percentage of the total population served. This highlights the spread of the library customer base and gives a snapshot of the current success of the library service in its community.

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<sup>51</sup> See template in appendix.

**Customer Satisfaction:** customer satisfaction ratings based on the latest PLUS are examined in this section. Comparative analysis of data obtained from user surveys should also be considered to ensure comprehensive analysis here.

**Distribution of Libraries:** a SWOT analysis is applied to the location of service points and the distribution of the mobile library service (if one exists) are examined. The information gathered in this section is macro in scale, but in an internal audit for service planning it is important that the situation in geographical terms is laid out for all staff to see. This library distribution question helps authorities scan for future trends that may affect their service. The SWOT methodology in this section of the audit offers ideas on how to fill in the blanks in library infrastructure, how to be proactive in service delivery, how to use ICT to maximise service delivery to remote areas.

**Buildings:** a SWOT analysis for each branch library in the system using the following headings: opening hours, car parking facilities, lighting, space, temperature, ambiance, furniture, exhibition areas, quiet areas and accessibility. This section of an audit profits from being multi-layered, with one set of SWOT analyses being devoted to macro developments and one for micro opportunities which are feasible within a smaller time frame.

**Stock:** this part focuses on library stock under five headings: special collections, adult, junior, young adult and other. When analysing stock, characteristics such as quantity, quality, currency, appearance, range and number of issues are considered. This part of the audit is recognised as vital in terms of marketing planning and development. The collections highlighted as areas of strength and opportunity in the SWOT analysis are important from a marketing perspective as they present readymade 'product packages' for marketing development. Analysis of recent PLUS survey findings along with findings from user surveys should be used in conjunction with this SWOT analysis to ensure that areas of weaknesses (in particular) are identified.

**Services (ICT):** this section focuses on ICT and should be analysed in conjunction with information from the community profile and the user survey to provide a comprehensive picture of ICT needs and future service planning. Local external

factors such as access to broadband, level of home PC ownership and access to additional hardware will require investigation and assessment.

**Activities:** this section gives library staff an opportunity to evaluate core activities and show the real, as opposed to the perceived, situation in service delivery. Using a SWOT analysis of core activities (reader development, lectures, exhibitions etc.) will highlight activities which have been ongoing for some time but which now need reappraisal. This section is very useful as the SWOT analysis highlights very clearly issues that staff may not be fully aware in advance of the process.

**Promotional Methods:** in-house and external promotion methods used by libraries are investigated using SWOT analyses. This is a central element of the audit process as promotion is a core marketing activity. The lessons learnt in this section proved invaluable for making decisions on types of promotional methods to be used in a marketing plan. This analysis indicates areas for development and areas where new processes need to be considered.

**Internal Staff Communication:** SWOT methodology here helps identify strengths and weaknesses in internal communications between all strands of library staff. Effective communication channels and mechanisms must be in place when introducing marketing framework within organisations.

**Support (Local Authority):** this section outlines the relationship between the local authority and the library service. This section of the audit needs to be filled-in in some detail, with thought and attention given to each section in order to ensure its validity. A SWOT analysis is carried out of local authority funding, communication with the local authority department with which library service is linked, communication with the corporate department of the local authority, and the relationship and involvement of the library service with the local authority arts officer.

Three other sections which are featured in this section of the audit are: perception and relevance of the library service in the eyes of the local authority officers; perception and relevance of the library in the eyes of the elected members, and the relationship with and the perception and relevance of the library service in the eyes of the county development board. Each of these three sections should be filled in by

both library staff themselves and other staff within the council in order to ensure accurate reporting.

### **Guidelines for carrying out successful audits**

An internal audit must always be used in conjunction with a community profile and user/non-user surveys to ensure systematic and overlapping data collection. This allows conclusions and recommendations to emerge from data gathered rather than opinion alone.

Training in the use of the census and the sourcing of correct and current statistics is needed amongst library staff involved in carrying out the audit. Data mining training should take place for all staff involved in dealing with statistical information in the audit.

SWOT methodology training should be provided for all staff involved with the audit process. When using SWOT methodology broad sweeping statements should be avoided and an analytical approach encouraged.

The re-design of borrower registration forms should be considered for user information gathering purposes as data collected in this format would reduce the number of such questions in a user survey.

## **4.2 Community Profiling**

### **4.2.1 Introduction**

Described as ‘a thorough description of a group of people who think of themselves as a community undertaken with their co-operation’<sup>52</sup>, community profiling is the process in market research used to identify the community in which the library operates. Before a library can market effectively it needs to collect a vast array of information on both the library service through an audit of services and of the people who use the service. In community profiling all information available on that community, its lifestyles, individuals, groups, agencies and segments that give that area its distinctive characteristics must be collected.

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<sup>52</sup> Personal communication, Terry Kendrick, Marketing Consultant.



An analysis of the data collected can identify gaps and weaknesses in service provision. Library management can then use this to set goals and objectives and set marketing priorities in their annual plans.

#### **4.2.2 Why Community Profile?**

The purpose of a community profile is to identify who lives in the area of the library and what they want from the library service. It can be a large or a small a task, the extent being driven by the level of resources available to the library at that given time.

For the public library a community profile needs to make a record of all social, cultural and physical features of the local area that can affect peoples' use of the library. It seeks to draft a picture of the community from which it can determine how people use information and whether they value the resources and services available from the library enough to make the effort to use it. It should aim to map how people live and engage in the community and from this to build a profile of users, non-users and lapsed users.

It should also be sufficient in content to supply the building blocks that enables the library build a profile of the society segment in which people live and from this to anticipate their future information needs. The community profile will also enable the library identify competitors and the availability of alternative information, learning and leisure resources. Such a detailed and focused study is a long-term programme of work for any library, and over the years will build into a substantial resource for the entire service.

#### **4.2.3 Guidelines for carrying out a successful community profile**

There are five parts in the community profiling process, and each element must be incorporated into the community profiling task.

**1. The marketing team:** the marketing team, which should be a sub-group of the management team, will manage community profiling as part of its overall marketing responsibility. When carrying out a community profile it is advisable to add some stakeholders from the local community to the team. Its first task is to set the framework for the community profiling exercise and to monitor its implementation throughout the process, making necessary adjustments as they arise. The marketing team will analyze the returns from the research at every stage and assess them

against the objectives of the marketing task being researched. On completion the profiling team will be expected to deliver a community profile for inclusion in the marketing plan being constructed by the marketing team.

**2. Planning:** at the outset the parameters of the process must be decided. To achieve this it is necessary to:

- Determine the objective, or as it is now becoming known, define the ambition. Each community profile must have its purpose defined.
- Define the outcome desired.
- Set down the process to be followed to achieve this: desk research, a community audit, survey, interview etc. The purpose of the task will define the approach taken. A profile is usually conducted to research the characteristics of a specific geographic community area or a specific community of interest.
- Assign responsibility between team members and others such as staff, community leaders etc. who are assisting with the data collection. A team approach is advisable as it not only divides the workload but it also gets others to commit to the process which will help at the programme development stage.
- Identify the stakeholders for this profile. Name, describe and give contact numbers for community groups, agencies, schools, churches, businesses groups, parents groups, carers, employees, library users, library lapsed users, etc. A good start in any profiling task is to compile a stakeholder map together with statistical information.<sup>53</sup>

**3. Desk research:** it is recommended that a community profiling template be used for this task. The template outlines the full range of subject categories to be investigated. It supports delegation and can be used to monitor progress. A new template should be developed for each profiling task, tailored to suit the objective of that task. (This project has developed a master template for community profiling for the public library sector: see appendix 9.6.) Initially, research and statistical sources in each defined subject heading relevant should be checked. The purpose is to build a composite picture of the area and not to research each subject, which level of detail can follow. Theorists recommend that relevant published data be collected from

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<sup>53</sup> See <<http://skyways.lib.ks.us/kansas/pathway/stakehld.html>> for an example of a stakeholder map.

printed sources and from the library service's own records within a two-week timescale. This data will give sufficient background information to enable the library begin to draw assumptions. This project found that the data collection task took considerably longer. This may relate to the unpublished status of much useful material serving the Irish environment. Identification and retrieval can involve meetings with personnel from other agencies and assessment of their contributions when they are received.

There are many sources to check for relevant data. Official sources that can be checked for demographic and socio-economic data include EU, national and local government, and state agency reports.

Much Irish statistical data is available from the Central Statistics Office (CSO).<sup>54</sup> The census provides data at state, county, city/town and electoral division (ED) level. Only some of the data are freely available at the smaller levels such as city, town, and ED. The data available through the census come in a huge variety of formats. Statistics derived from official sources such as the census records and those derived from carrying out library surveys, etc., will not necessarily mirror each other exactly. Provision for this must be made at each stage, and particularly during analysis.

Although the CSO reports are particularly important, specific data for the area within which the library is situated are equally important. Local organisations that can provide this include:<sup>55</sup>

- Regional and national government departments
- The local authority, and in particular its community and enterprise section, planning, housing, corporate affairs and library management services
- The county / city development board
- Academic institutions /schools / students
- Religious groups
- Health authorities
- Garda Síochána
- Newspapers

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<sup>54</sup> See <<http://www.cso.ie>>. Baseline data reports for each county from the 2002 census, produced by GAMMA (<<http://www.gamma.ie>> were also found to be useful.

<sup>55</sup> List adapted from training manual on community profiling developed and used by Terry Kendrick.

- Political groups
- Regional offices of government sponsored initiatives. Local offices of organisations such as community development projects, youth services, the county childcare committee and the community based drugs initiatives are worth contacting as they often undertake local research to support their aims and objectives.
- Umbrella organisations that bring together public and private sector organisations or simply network public initiatives, such as the regional authorities, area Partnerships and enterprise boards.
- Local clubs and associations.

**4. Market Research:** following the desk research phase, the profiling team assesses the information that has been collected and from that develops strategies to fill the gaps. The library theorists studied for this project<sup>56</sup> recommend that when the library is conducting the market research stage of community profiling, they make provision to collect information on users; non-users; lapsed-users; customer profiling; groups; agencies and lifestyles.

This will involve conducting local research through a walkabout in the community, interviews, a survey or focus group, or a combination of these. The marketing team then analyses the information collected and designs a range of collection mechanisms to fill the gaps.<sup>57</sup>

Interviews, surveys, and focus groups are constructed and conducted to acquire specific information. The questions asked will always be specific to the objective of the profiling task. These questions can be constructed to identify how individuals, groups and agencies work or to discover the specific characteristics of a community of interest or a cluster group.

This project has developed a range of templates to assist the library conduct interviews, surveys, and focus groups. (See appendices.) As in all profiling tasks, the templates must be tailored to suit each specific library purpose, and the format chosen should be that most appropriate to the task.

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<sup>56</sup> The writings of Roger Greer, Martha Hale, Terry Kendrick, Deborah Lee and Darlene Weingand were consulted.

<sup>57</sup> For advice on how to implement this see  
<<http://skyways.lib.ks.us/kansas/pathway/instr1.html>>.

As the public library builds the profile of the community in which it is located it begins to segment the community by identifying lifestyles, communities of interest and groups. Darlene Weingand describes market segmentation as 'the process of dividing customers into groups with unique characteristics and needs'<sup>58</sup> and recognises that this segmentation is central to enabling the library accurately define the community for marketing purposes. This is a complex task which the public library does not have to incorporate immediately into its profiling strategy. However, if the library is seeking to build an accurate 'mirror' of how the community functions and match that with what the library delivers, it is a stage that should be completed in time. Segmentation of the community is vital if the library is to market its services accurately to defined communities of interest. It is recommended that this be built into the long-term marketing strategy for the library service with the aim to gradually create segmentation profiles of the community over a five to ten year period. It is possible that this segmentation of the community for public library purposes could be researched by a national project and it is recommended that this be investigated.

**5. Analysis:** the model for community profiling analysis pertinent to the public library service in Ireland has been developed as part of this project. Please see this for details of the model and templates recommended for use by library authorities in Ireland.

#### **4.2.4 A Community Profile Template**

From the research it became evident that there was no model for community profiling available suitable for public libraries. A template was developed by the Project, and this is set out in appendix 9.6.

The template provides a structured methodology to assist the library collect real facts and figures about the community. It facilitates the collection of both quantitative/statistical and qualitative/research, of hard and soft data that can be collected from EU, national, regional or local sources. The library must decide which of these sources it needs to use, though it is recommended that sufficient local data be collected to enable comparison against national and international norms.

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<sup>58</sup> Darlene Weingand, *Future Driven Marketing* (Chicago, 1998).

It is essential that the library match the data collected to the library mission: each and every community profiling task must constantly refer back to the library. It must continually ask what type of library the community needs, what functions need to be emphasised, which levels of service are appropriate?

#### **4.2.5 Lessons Learned**

- A community profile is 'a thorough description of a group of people who think of themselves as a community, undertaken with their co-operation'.<sup>59</sup> The process should be managed by the marketing team.
- A community profile is conducted to find out what people in the area want from the public library, and can be used to anticipate demand and to position the library as the local based specialist information, learning and leisure agency.
- At the outset of the community profiling task the team develops a profiling plan to determine the purpose of the profile. Each library can tailor the extent of any profile to match the time and resources they have available. This project has devised a template for community profiling suitable for doing a full community analysis.
- A community profile can just be a list or it can be extended to contain an in depth profile of the groups and agencies and an understanding of the lifestyles of people in the area.
- The library can use community profiling in the community to find out exactly what people think about the library and what they want from it. For example it can be used to identify who the library is serving, what opening hours it should have, what agencies it should work with, and what stock it should buy.
- The collection of statistical and research data, complemented by local research usually conducted through focus groups and surveys enables the library to paint a picture of the area. The complete process includes segmentation, to breakdown the population into communities of interest.

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<sup>59</sup> Definition from Terry Kendrick, personal communication.

#### **4.2.6 Recommendations**

- The term community profiling should be used by the public library sector to describe the full environmental analysis section of a marketing plan.
- The data collected from community profiling should be used with the returns from the audit to develop goals and objectives for a marketing plan.
- The data collected should be a mix of quantitative/statistical and qualitative/research, of hard and soft data that can be collected from EU, national, regional and local printed sources.
- In community profiling these sources must be augmented by local primary research collected through surveys, interviews, focus groups etc.
- The library should build on the connections made with the community through community profiling to integrate library services into the fabric of the local environment.
- Users, non-users, lapsed-users, groups and agencies in the community should be targeted to give their opinion on library services and to enable the library understand their lifestyle when conducting local research for community profiling.
- The next stage of this marketing project should contain an objective to research community typology as it pertains specifically to public library service.

#### **4.2.7 Conclusion**

Community profiling is a structured marketing process, which if implemented in full can provide the public library with a range of specific and comprehensive facts about the area they serve. This in time will build into a detailed resource which can be used for a wide variety of research, marketing and management purposes.

Commercial profiling identifies the community so that companies can target their products to get sales. In the services sector and in particularly the public library sector the purpose is to get a very clear understanding of the composition of the community to gain an understanding of how the various groups that live and work within the area cluster together for business, family and leisure purposes.

It is by profiling and analyzing what the public want from the library to support their way of life that library management can assemble the facts necessary to enable them restructure and deliver more effective and efficient services. From this the library can then plan a promotions campaign to bring these new services to public attention.

As discussed throughout this report, there is no one-size fits all approach to marketing. There is rather a set of tools, which can be applied in a structured way, to a particular library's particular marketing goals. Chapters 5-7 set out the marketing process that was applied in three different service areas, in three different library authorities.

### **4.3 Surveys: theory and practice**

#### **4.3.1 Theory**

This section deals with two approaches to gathering information about those who use, and do not use, libraries, namely surveys and focus groups.

There is no one best method of carrying out a survey. The method chosen will depend on a number of factors including survey objectives, topic(s) to be surveyed, nature and size of the population to be surveyed, resources available in terms of staff, time and finance, response rate required, etc. All methods have various advantages and disadvantages so it is at the discretion of the organisation to decide which method best fits a particular situation.

The most important step is the definition of survey objectives. Everything else follows from this: where the survey is going to be done, when it is going to be done, who is going to do it, who is to be surveyed, what questions are to be asked. Clear definition of objectives will help ensure that the process starts from the right place. In other words, the organisation identifies a problem or an information need and decides that this need, or at least part of it, will be met by carrying out a survey or surveys, rather than deciding to carry out a survey just for the sake of it. Clear definition of objectives will also help at the other end of the process where the information derived from the survey is used to inform subsequent action.

Formulation of questions in a survey questionnaire is also driven by survey objectives. The objectives form the basis of broad topics on which information is



required. These broad topics are further sub-divided as necessary until the most specific subject level is reached and at this level, questions are formulated.

Surveys provide quantitative information and are a useful means of detecting trends and gaining a general insight into peoples' attitudes and preferences. However, to acquire more detailed or specific information further investigation may be necessary. This could be accomplished by carrying out a survey on a more specific topic, or by conducting focus groups. A survey may indicate problems with a service in a particular area and focus groups can be used to investigate this in a more detailed way, thereby providing qualitative information at an individual level to complement the quantitative information already provided by the survey.

As with surveys, focus groups should be driven by the objectives defined at the outset. These objectives will decide what questions are to be asked and again, will help ensure that whatever information is gathered from the process will be used to inform future action. Within the focus group process, the role of the moderator is paramount. A skilled moderator will maximise the value of the information gathered by getting the most out of all the participants. The options for a library service undertaking focus groups are to employ an external consultant or use its own resources. If opting for the latter course, appropriate training for one or more staff members should be arranged. The initial cost of the training would be offset by the advantages of having this expertise within the organisation.

The sample questionnaires produced within this work package may be seen in appendix 9.7.

#### **4.3.2 Surveys in Practice**

As part of the project, Mayo County library and South Dublin County Libraries carried out user surveys in their own authorities, based on the templates produced, while Wexford County Library carried out a series of focus group sessions with active learners aged 50 and over. These surveys and focus groups represented the practical application of the theory provided very valuable experience to the library authorities involved. The main lessons learned from this experience are outlined below.

## **Surveys**

To correctly carry out a survey for community profiling purposes the survey should be carried out on a representative sample of the community (library users and non-users). This can be problematic in terms of financial cost and time. In order for library staff to carry out such a survey considerable time and money would have to be spent on staff training and on the surveying process. Employing an experienced surveying company would be a better option but the financial costs are prohibitive. As a result, given the time and cost constraints of this project, it was decided to carry out the surveys in Mayo and South Dublin on library users only. This group was easily accessible and would not have implications on staff time and financial costs. The statistics obtained for this group were then used as a representative sample for the community in question but it had to be considered that by limiting the survey to such a particular group, a true representation of the community was not attained. For example, people who have a disability which limits their use of the library may not have been represented, while foreign nationals, who tend to make extensive use of the library, may feature highly. The results obtained, while not a true representation of the community, could be used to help complete the community profiles.

Having reviewed survey methodologies it was decided to carry out the survey by handing out the survey forms and asking for immediate return. This worked well for both authorities. However, had non-users been included in the sample this may not have worked so well. Survey research indicates that one method does not stand out as better than another. What has to be considered is time and sample size. If a whole town is being studied then a phone survey would be the best to use, if a small ED (electoral division) was the subject of the study (e.g. just a few local streets) then phone numbers would be hard to identify and door-to-door surveys would be the best way to carry out the survey. Hence the two authorities concluded that the method of surveying should not be predetermined and is something that can only be decided once the survey is drafted and the sample size identified.

In order to analyze survey results some type of survey analysis software is an advantage. The two authorities in this project used SPSS software. This software had to be purchased from SPSS Ireland and a yearly license fee is also paid. Along with these costs, thorough knowledge of SPSS is needed to use this software and staff training was required, thus creating further costs.

The most important phase in the survey process is the preparation stage. Considerable time needs to be spent on drafting questions (training might be needed for this), the questions should then be tested on a random group of people. This will highlight any questions that may be formatted incorrectly, seem ambiguous to the survey candidate, etc. If using survey software to analyze the data, the completed survey data should be input, and again this will highlight further problems with the questions and the way they are formatted in the software. Once all the problematic issues have been addressed and rectified the surveying process can commence. It was through this process that both authorities were able to identify initial problems with their surveys and address them prior to commencing the real survey.

Another task in the surveying process is to identify the correct sample of people (numbers to be surveyed). This can involve some work: in the surveys carried out in this project the adults who used the library in a given week were counted. This figure was then used to work out the number of surveys which would be required to give accurate results. In this instance, identifying the sample size didn't cost financially but did involve staff time. If the surveys had been carried out on the community as a whole (library users and non-users) the sample size could have been determined quite simply by looking at the population of the area or existing household numbers. This would not be as time consuming initially but would result in a larger sample size and would raise issues at the survey distribution phase.

Data input is one of the most time consuming tasks. An outside company can be employed to carry out the task but this has obvious financial implications. Both Mayo County Library and South Dublin County Libraries decided to input the data themselves but found that the task took up considerable time and was limited to the number of SPSS licenses the authority had access to, one in the case of both. This meant that data could only be input on one computer and as each of the survey responses in this project took an average of ten minutes to input, the process was very time-consuming.

The response rate in both authorities was 90%, which is well above the average. While this is very good it was most likely as a result of the surveys being handed out in the library, with some intervention and encouragement from library staff, and forms returned on the spot. If the surveys had been carried out in the community, and with people who have little or no links to the library, a response rate closer to the average

would probably have been the result. What is very interesting is the fact that both authorities had the same response rate even though they were dealing with two very different communities.

Mayo County library also carried out an online survey, which general research suggests is a very successful surveying method. However, Mayo's experience does not totally support this. Below are a few of the issues they identified.

The online survey involves an initial extra cost, with staff time being required to help prepare the survey for displaying on the home page on the computers.

In this instance Mayo County Library decided to input the data for analysis themselves but the online survey method is a way to cut back on data input time. As a respondent inputs data into the online survey form, this data can be automatically inputted into the survey analysis software. However, this would require a server version of the software, and there are other technical implications in setting the system up to work correctly.

Mayo found that the biggest advantage of the online survey was the ease of distribution, with no staff involvement required to distribute the surveys. The most startling issue identified with the online survey was the response rate, which was a disappointing 16.6%. The response rate was worked out by calculating the number of available PC sessions in the given time, and taking this as the number of surveys distributed. However, it does not account for repeat users, and so the response percentage would be somewhat higher. One reason suggested for the poor response rate was the fact that as PC sessions are limited to a specific amount of time the user may not wish to spend 10 minutes of their allocated time filling out a survey. Perhaps some sort of incentive would be a way of tackling this issue. It was also obvious in some cases that the respondents answered one or two questions in a hurry and clicked on "Submit" just to get rid of the survey as quickly as possible.

The desired number of returned surveys might have been obtained if the length of time the survey was left on the computers were extended. This would be cost-free and as staff are not involved there would be no implications on staff time. The only issue would be the time constraints, as was the case with this project.

Overall the data collected from the surveys carried out by Mayo County Library and South Dublin County Libraries proved extremely useful and enabled the two authorities to fill the gaps in their community profiles. This information could not have been obtained by consulting existing sources of information: while surveys presents many challenges they are a very valuable source of information.

### **Focus Groups**

Wexford County Library decided to use focus groups as a method of collecting the data which they could not source from locally available statistics. Focus groups are often reported in literature as a very effective way of collecting data. The focus groups that were carried out by Wexford included library users and non-users, allowing for an accurate representation of the community being profiled.

The focus groups were easy to set up and run with library users who were interested in having their opinions heard and were happy to receive a cup of tea and a biscuit as a reward. This was not the case with the non-users, who were harder to entice to the focus groups. Wexford recommend that some sort of enticement has to be offered to those that attend a focus group. This would however depend on the budget available for the project in question. In this project there was not a budget and as a result little or no enticement was offered, which made the focus group process more difficult.

Setting up the focus groups was again different for the library users and non-users. Library mailing lists were used to gather library users, a personal letter was sent out and the response rate was in the region of 50%. Contacting the non-users was slightly more time consuming and difficult. Contact was made with other community groups and arrangements made to use the members of such groups. However this was not entirely satisfactory. It was felt that some of the people only attended the focus group to be entertained rather than to be of service and the team felt unsure of the reliability of the information collected. Had a totally random selection of people been chosen and written to, the process of gathering non-users would have been a lot more time consuming and would have had poorer return rates but with, hopefully, more accurate data collection. However, this would involve working out a method to identify library non-users, source addresses for them and encourage a response to the letters sent out, a very difficult and time consuming task.

For the non-user groups a brief introduction to the library services and facilities was needed to explain what libraries do and then to discuss the relevance of that service to them. The use of a power point presentation at the beginning of the session was very successful. The presentation also introduced the topics to be discussed, mirroring the questions of the focus group template. As a result the non-user groups required more planning and were more time consuming than the user focus groups.

An important part of successful focus groups is the role of the facilitator. This is a very specialised task and needs to be confidently managed and delivered. The facilitator needs to know when to prompt, to allow discussions to develop and not to impart their own opinion. Library staff may not possess these skills and may require training. This is particularly important in the non-user groups where the facilitator is presenting information about the library but must also be able to do this without imparting their opinion. Using an independent facilitator, from a marketing agency, would be the best way to conduct a focus group, a staff member could then be used to present the library information presentation but would not have any input into the actual collection of information from the group. A skilled facilitator will also get the best from the group and encourage everyone to talk and not let the same people do all the talking.

One of the major findings of the focus groups is that they fail to gather personal information about the individuals. Some questions involved people revealing how they and their family function and it was too personal in a focus group session. This had implications for gathering lifestyle information for the community profile.

While the focus group is a great way of getting a lot of information from the community there can be a tendency to spend too much time on certain questions and miss out on other valuable question areas. As a result it must be stressed that allocated time has to be strictly adhered to and all questions must be covered.

As a result of carrying out the focus groups it can be concluded that focus groups are a satisfactory method to extract data for a community profile but the data will be qualitative. However there are issues to be considered and time, staffing and budget constraints will all have an impact on the success of using this method. As experienced in this study certain topics may not be suitable for focus groups and a survey may be required to collect the data.

#### **4.3.3 Which survey methodology?**

From the experience gained in carrying out surveys and focus groups it is concluded that it is not possible to recommend any one method over another. A variety of circumstances including staff and budget constraints, information required, scope of the study etc. all have a role to play in making a decision on the method to be used. It may also be decided to use both methods, as focus groups can be used to get more detailed information on issues that emerge from the survey results.

What emerges most strongly is that ideally an outside surveying company should be employed to undertake market research if both users and non-users are to be surveyed. This company can also draft up the questions and use their experience to advise on question format. They will also analyse the results and all this will be completed in a relatively short time. As the work will be done by an outside company it will have no implications on library staff time and will not involve staff training. The type of data required and the sample size will determine the method the company chose to collect the required data. This may be done by a survey (e.g. mail, phone, face-to-face) or focus groups, and the company will advise on this.

However, as library marketing budgets may not allow for an outside company to completely carry out the surveys or focus groups as discussed above, a decision will have to be made as to the level of staff involvement. One way of cutting down the cost of employing an outside company is for library staff to draft up the survey or focus group questions, input the data and carry out the analysis themselves. An outside company could then be used to carry out the survey or focus group. This will cut costs but involves staff time, training in the use of statistical software, as well as the outside company costs.

The final option is what the three authorities in this study chose, to get library staff to carry out surveys and focus groups themselves. This is relatively cost free but very intensive in terms of staff training, time and technical requirements. From experience, both methods work well with library users but gathering data from non-users presents many challenges. In this project it was shown that while the two authorities who used surveys as their method of data collection chose to carry them out themselves, they opted to concentrate on library users only. The focus groups included both library users and non-users but they limited non-users to already established community groups and felt that while this made the process slightly easier it did not produce

reliable results. If non-user information had been key to the project both authorities would not have had the capacity to carry out the required task and would have strongly considered outside help.

There are advantages and disadvantages in each of the survey methods. For example, whereas focus groups are time consuming in certain areas (e.g. set up), surveys are time consuming in others (data input and analysis). Focus groups allow for detailed information collection but may fail to get the personal information obtained by surveys. However, the facilitator in a focus group can help explain any problems with questions and avoid misunderstandings. A survey if carried out by post or by leaving the survey candidate alone to fill out the questionnaire can result in invalid answers.

As a result of considering these points and from the experience of carrying out both methods it can be concluded that it is impossible to suggest one method above another. It depends on a large number of factors e.g. budget, time, capable staff, sample size and type (users/non-users), content (personal information). It is only after considering all these things that a decision, which may involve using a mixture of methods, can be made.



## **5. MARKETING PLAN CASE STUDY: BALLYROAN LIBRARY, SOUTH DUBLIN COUNTY LIBRARIES**

### **5.1 Introduction – case studies**

Having selected the adapted version of the Ohio approach as an appropriate model, the Project Team tested the approach, in so far as was feasible, in the three participating library authorities. The team viewed the model as applicable to library authorities of all kinds (urban/rural, large/small) and to different library services and specific areas of service. It was decided therefore to test the model in three different situations: a busy urban branch in a large Dublin authority (Ballyroan); a small rural branch in a mainly rural authority (Kiltimagh), and a specific service targeted at a specific user group ('silver learners' in Wexford).

Each authority drew upon the research into the market research process, set out in chapter 4, and sought to apply the research and survey methods learned to their own case study. Each case study therefore involved an internal audit, a community profile, and a user survey. Each of the studies also includes an analysis of the data collected by the market research, and a plan of action drawn up in the light of, and in response to, the analysis.

The three case studies follow the recommended model up to step 7:

1. Begin the marketing process by examining your library's mission or purpose.
2. Assess library capabilities with an internal audit (i.e. an internal assessment).
3. Produce a community profile of the target community.
4. Find out what products (services) your users want, and how they perceive the library, through market research.
5. Develop goals and objectives based on your mission and the results of your internal audit and external research into what customers want.
6. To meet goals, select strategies to promote your products that will work best, be affordable, and reach your customers.
7. Create a plan of action that describes all the steps needed to carry out the strategies for meeting goals.
8. Implement the plan.
9. Evaluate how well you have done.

Given the time-frame and available resources, the Project Team was unable to complete steps 8 and 9.

The team considers that the three case studies demonstrate that the recommended model is indeed applicable to all public library authorities, and to all library services. The structured approach ensured that staff in the three authorities undertook the market research in an organised manner, adapting the methods to local circumstances as required. Although there are commonalities in the reports of each case study (in the use of census data, for example), there are also differences arising from the disparities in size of authority. The internal audit of a small rural branch (Kiltimagh), for example, is not as detailed as that carried out of a library service as a whole (Wexford). There are also differences in how specific elements of the market research process were carried out, arising from differing interpretations, differing skills and competencies, and differing experiences amongst the three library authorities. Such differences are to be expected, given the disparities which exist across the public library sector in Ireland. The Project Team is confident that the recommended model can be followed notwithstanding such disparities.

## **5.2 Mission statement of South Dublin County Libraries**

South Dublin County Libraries preserves and promotes universal access to a broad range of human knowledge, experience, information and ideas in a welcoming and supportive environment. New technologies are facilitating the extension of access to global information beyond the library walls. South Dublin County Libraries provide free and equitable access to public library services which meet the changing needs of a growing community.

## **5.3 Why Redevelop?**

The branch library at Ballyroan in South Dublin is one of the busiest service points within the library authority. Since its opening in 1986 the original space and internal design has become too restrictive, allowing for no organic growth or development as levels of service increase and additional activities evolve. The original exhibition area had been adapted as an IT suite.

## **5.4 Informing the re-development process**

At the core of the re-development process is a strategic marketing plan based on the mission of the library service in South Dublin, detailed community profiling of the local

area, analysis of the library's capabilities and research into customer needs. The essence of this marketing plan is to create an organic branch library aware of the changing needs of its community over time and capable of both adapting and maintaining relevance for that community.

Market research and environmental analysis begun prior to the re-design and re-development helped to determine the goals and objectives for the new building, helped to ensure that the service point was streamlined and strategically proactive to user needs and the developing community. This environmental analysis consisted of three elements: a detailed community profile of the Ballyroan area; a user survey, and an internal library audit.

## **5.5 Marketing Research in Practise**

### **5.5.1 Step One: Research and Environmental Analysis**

The community profile consisted of three elements – analysis of the local environment, analysis of the demographics of the area and analysis of community lifestyles within the area profiled.

#### **Analysis of the local environment**

The majority of the users using Ballyroan library live within the Electoral Divisions (ED) of Ballyroan and Butterfield in the Rathfarnham area, in the administrative area of South Dublin County Council. The area being profiled lies to the east of the county and is bordered by parts of Dublin City Council. The two EDs cover 139 hectares. It is a suburban area, mainly residential. The area is well established and built up, with little space for new industry or housing development. Any new developments that do take place are small collections of new town houses and apartments, generally situated on the lands of larger, old, individual residential properties.

The EDs of Ballyroan and Butterfield have a combined population of 5,901 and 2,064 households (SAPs source). The community being studied has a significantly higher percentage of over sixties than the county average and the younger age groups are below the county average. It is a mainly middle class area with low unemployment and high education levels.

#### **Infrastructure**

Public transport is limited to bus services provided by Dublin Bus, as there are no train lines servicing the area. The bus service is of a high standard with routes to the city centre and northern, eastern and western parts of Dublin City passing through the area. The road network serving the area is of a high standard, and the area lies in close proximity to two junctions of the M50 motorway providing access to the rest of the country. 90% of households own at least one private car (SAPs source)

### **Economic and Business Climate**

There are no large industrial areas in the area. Business is mainly made up of small local businesses and retail establishments. With little space for development, there are few plans for business development.

### **Technological Climate**

62% of households in the area have home PCs. This is well above the county, city and country averages: Modern technological services such as Broadband, 3G etc. are available in the area and competition between service providers is strong.

### **Political Climate**

Fianna Fail and Labour both have two council representatives in the area. The Progressive Democrats, Fine Gael and the Green Party have one each. There is no Independent, Sinn Fein or Socialist Party representative.

### **Facilities and Services**

There are few arts, cultural and heritage establishments in the area, although there is access to such facilities close by in bordering areas. Library services in the area are provided by Ballyroan library and a housebound service. There is one community centre. Heritage facilities include Rathfarnham Castle and Museum. There are numerous community groups, many catering for the older community, including meals-on-wheels services, active retirement groups, bowling clubs, historical societies etc. The usual range of GAA clubs, sports clubs, scout clubs, youth clubs, dance, drama and music societies are all represented in the area. Support groups such as bereavement and retirement support groups are also in place.

Education is catered for by separate boys' and girls' primary and secondary schools and a mixed, non-denominational primary school. There are other education establishments nearby providing a range of education options (religion, private

education, co-ed. etc.). There is no third level establishment but this is catered for by proximity to the city universities, Institutes of Technology, and private colleges. Continuing education is catered for in the nearby Templeogue Education Centre.

Health services are facilitated by clinics and hospitals located in neighbouring areas. There are some small private retirement homes in the locality.

Recreational facilities include parks, playgrounds, the community centre, and gyms. Sports clubs, swimming pools and leisure facilities (such as cinemas, bowling etc.) are all within a few miles of the area.

## **Demographic analysis of the Ballyroan area**

### **Age Profile**

The EDs of Ballyroan and Butterfield have a combined population of 5,901. The population in the two EDs is decreasing with a drop of 5.3% occurring between 1996 and 2002. There are 2,064 households in the area. 48% of the population are male, 52% are female (SAPs source). In terms of the age profile of the area the 20-24 and 65-69 year olds are the largest groups. In the Ballyroan and Butterfield area the younger age groups are well below the county averages while the older age groups are above the county averages. The age groups from 60 upwards are significantly higher than the county averages.

### **Employment Profile**

Unemployment in the area is very low, at a rate of 1.8%: the average for the county is 6.9% (CSO and SAPs source).

### **Education Profile**

14.8% of the over 15s in the two EDs analysed are in fulltime education. Results from the Ballyroan Library User Survey indicate that 40% of the respondents have gone on to achieve some form of education after second level, which exceeds the county average of 29% (CSO source).

### **Household Composition**

The majority of residents in the EDs of Ballyroan and Butterfield live in owner-occupied houses, the majority having no remaining mortgage. 18.7% of the over 65

population live alone and 8.4% of the households are occupied by lone parents (SAPs source).

### **Disability**

8.2% of the population of Ballyroan and Butterfield are living with a disability of some sort, which is higher than the county average of 6.8% (CSO and SAPs source). Statistics for type of disability in each ED are not available from the 2002 census. However, the Ballyroan Library User Survey gives the following statistics which can be used to roughly represent the percentages and type of disability in the area. It should be borne in mind that the group surveyed were in the library. Those whose disability prevents them from leaving home are not represented in the statistics.

*Table I: disabilities (%) among library users*

Visually Impaired	Physical Disability	Hearing Disability	Other
1.9	1.9	2.4	0.4

### **Ethnicity/communities**

There are no members of the travelling community living in either ED (SAPs source). The 2002 Census only provided statistics on nationality for Dublin City and County combined – not per ED. The native language of the population was also not asked for in the 2002 census. The Ballyroan Library survey asked for both of these and the tables below display the results for the group surveyed. It must be borne in mind that these were the people using the library and may not be an accurate representation of the population of the area.

*Table II: nationality(%) of library users*

Irish	89.8
English	3.4
German	1.0
Northern Irish	1.0
American	0.7
Scottish	0.7
Chinese	0.3
Indian	0.3
Italian	0.3
Korean	0.3
Lithuanian	0.3

New Zealander	0.3
Nigerian	0.3
Polish	0.3
Slovakian	0.3
Trinidadian	0.3

*Table III: native languages (%) of library users*

English	Irish	German	*Other
92.5	4.1	1.0	2.4

\*Other = Chinese, Italian, Hindi, Korean, Lithuanian, Polish, Slovak

### **Income**

Data for income are not available in the 2002 census. Income statistics are available from the ESRI but only for a sample of a community and not in a way which correlates with the census. At present the best way of achieving an idea of average income of the families in the area is to look at the social class of the population being studied. Below are the statistics for the two EDs as classified by the 2002 census.

*Table IV: socio-economic status (%), 2002 Census of Population*

Employers and managers	Higher Professionals	Lower Professionals	Non-manual	Manual skilled	Semi Skilled
29.9	11.8	15.9	19.1	3.7	2.6

*Table IV cont.*

Unskilled	Own Account workers	Farmers	Agricultural workers	All others gainfully employed and unknown
1.0	4.7	0.2	0.1	11.2

### **Analysis of Community Lifestyles in the Ballyroan area**

Lifestyle data for local communities are not available from national statistics. Surveying the target community is the only accurate method to gather lifestyle data. It was agreed to survey an easily identifiable group of people and use these as a

sample of the population. The group chosen was the users of Ballyroan library as the majority of people using the library come from one of the two EDs being looked at and were easily accessible. While we are very aware that the people using the library may not be a true representation of the community it was the most appropriate way to gain some idea of the community in question, taking time and money constraints into questions.

### **Free time**

The most common days for free time, as cited by the group surveyed, were weekday evenings, Saturdays and Sundays.

### **Hobbies**

The table below shows the hobbies selected by respondents:

*Table V: hobbies of library users (%)*

Sport, participant	37.1
Sport, spectator	31.3
TV	48.3
Music	52.9
Cinema	35.9
DIY	18.8
Cookery	32.8
Gardening	40.2
Fishing	3.7
Photography	10.4
Arts and Crafts	27.7
*Other	17.0

\*The most popular hobbies listed under “other” were bridge, dancing, hill walking, health and fitness and travel. The most unusual hobbies listed were jigsaws and juggling.

### **Technology**

The 2002 census reports that 62.2% of residents in Ballyroan and Butterfield have a home PC. 85.8% of these have Internet access (SAPs source). From the survey carried out, 71.1% of the library users have a home PC but the statistics for those that have home access to the Internet was not asked for. 23.7% of the people



surveyed have access to Internet at work and use it. Levels of PC hardware is quite high with 61.4% of those surveyed having printers, 32.2% have a scanner, 33.7% have CD/DVD writer and 1.2% have other equipment such as a fax, photocopier or laptop computer.

## Transport

9.6% of households in the two EDs have no car. This figure is considerably less than the county average of 15.6% (CSO and SAPs source). The tables below show the 2002 Census results for means of transport, duration of travel and time of travel for the EDs of Ballyroan and Butterfield (SAPs source).

*Table VI: Means of Transport to Work, School or College (%), Census of Population 2002*

Foot	Bike	Bus	Train	Motorcycle	Own car	Passenger in car	Other	Not stated
11.2	7.6	15.1	0.2	1.7	45.2	13.8	4.7	0.4

*Table VII: Average Time Taken to travel to Work, School or College (%), Census of Population 2002*

<15 min	15-30 min	30-45 min	45-60 min	60-90 min	90 min +
24.7	27.8	23.1	12.9	10.1	1.3

*Table VIII: Average Time of Leaving the Home to go to Work, School or College (%), Census of Population 2002*

Before 7am	7.00-7.30	7.30-8.00	8.01-8.30	8.31-9.00	9.01-9.30	After 9.30
4.8	16.0	19.2	28.1	20.8	5.5	5.4

As the census doesn't ask what the average time people return home from work school or college is, this question was asked in the survey. The table below shows the results.

*Table IX: Library Users - Average Time of Returning to the Home (%)*

1pm-3pm	3pm-5pm	5pm-7pm	7pm-9pm	After 9pm
10.1	32	46.6	10.1	1.1

### Library specific analysis from the user study

When asked about the general perception of a library the following were the responses:

*Table X: general perception of the public library*

A bookstore	19.5%
A boring place where you are not allowed talk	1.5%
A place where you can get useful information	57.4%
A place where you can relax and no-one questions why you are there	41.9%
A place which can help you further your education	34.7%
A waste of public money	0%

### Levels of satisfaction/dissatisfaction

Survey respondents were given the opportunity to provide their own impression of a library. Levels of satisfaction were high in terms of children's services, range and quality of information services, excellence of staff and range of events. Levels of dissatisfaction were high in terms of the noise levels in the branch, lack of study facilities, age of computers for public use, number of PCs for public use, lack of tutorial packages on public PCs, size of shelving, difficulty locating material within the library, lack of guiding and poor search facilities on the OPACs.

In general the library has a very positive image in the community amongst those who were surveyed. However, the group surveyed were users of the library and would therefore be expected to see some good in the service.

### Library use

The tables below show the percentages for the use of services in the library.

*Table XI: services used in library*

Borrow Books	Borrow tapes/CDs	Borrow DVDs	Reference info	Business Info	Local History	Work Info
92.4	44.4	18.5	33.7	7.9	12.8	10

*Table XI cont.*

Health/welfare info	Computers	Lectures	Casual reading	Children's facilities	Photocopying
13.4	24.6	23.1	27.4	32.2	10

The survey respondents were also asked to note any other services they used and the most popular were book club, borrow pictures, chess for children, conversation classes, children's activities, computer training, view local council plans, writers groups.

### **Preferred time for library use**

The survey asked the respondents on what day and at what time of day they would most like to use the library. The results were very interesting. Monday from 6p.m.-8p.m. proved to be the most popular time with 23.8% of the respondents citing it. The second most popular time was Saturday from 2-4, followed by Tuesday 6-8 and then jointly by Wednesday and Thursday from 6-8.

The tables below show the results for each day and time. They are presented in a format so that the same time on each day can be easily compared.

*Table XIla: preferred day from 9a.m. -12 noon (%)*

Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat	Sun
17.2	11.6	12.3	10.9	9.6	17.1	4.5

*Table XIlb: preferred day from 12 noon-2p.m. (%)*

Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat	Sun
8	8.4	6.1	6.7	6.2	13.5	6.4

*Table XIlc: preferred day from 2-4 p.m. (%)*

Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat	Sun
14.5	15.2	18.1	14.1	13.6	21.5	7.7

*Table XIld: preferred day from 4-6 p.m. (%)*

Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat	Sun
19.6	15.8	17.3	17.6	15.7	12.6	4.2

*Table XIle: preferred day from 6-8 p.m. (%)*

Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat	Sun
23.8	20.3	19.9	19.9	11.6	5.8	3.8

*Table XIIe: preferred day from 8-10 p.m. (%)*

Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat	Sun
5.8	7.1	6.7	6.8	4.8	2.2	2.3

The preferred time for extended opening would be late on Friday with a startling 32.1% looking for opening after 4 p.m., the same opening hours on a Saturday evening were only ticked by 20.6% of the respondents. What is most surprising is that the percentages wishing to use the library on a Sunday are extremely low.

### **Library Internal Audit**

The audit of Ballyroan Library, completed by library staff, analysed the capabilities of the service point under many headings. Areas for consideration in the re-development process included:

#### **Stock**

Staff felt that the stock of Ballyroan Library was in excellent condition but suffered due to poor layout and lack of space in which to display material. Ready-made collections of books, the adult fiction collection, junior collections and local studies collections were areas of strength. Constraints caused by lack of shelving and space were identified as the greatest weakness. These issues were echoed in the user survey findings.

#### **Layout of Library**

The library layout makes the shelves very cluttered, with a need to provide shelving on wheels to maximise use of floor space. Signposting, and the lack of it both within the library and as shelf guides were raised as a weakness by library staff and confirmed by findings from the user survey. Low-level shelving was identified as a weakness, and was also noted in the user survey.

#### **ICT**

Staff identified the need for streamlined ergonomically designed computer desks for the public ICT facilities. The current arrangement is cramped and poorly laid out. Outdated hardware needs to be replaced and the need for an automated PC booking

system was stressed. The high demand for computer classes for senior citizens was noted in the audit. OPAC points within the branch remain under-utilised and this was confirmed by the user survey.

### **5.5.2 Step Two: Future proofing of Ballyroan Library: Development of goals from environmental analysis**

Environmental assessment and background research in the form of the community profile, the user survey and the library audit provided an exhaustive range of goals and objectives on a range of service provision matters for the re-development team. This process revealed a great deal of information on the library's capabilities and customer needs. User information on age, sex, interests, ethnic origin, and lifestyles helped to streamline services to segments within their communities. This environmental analysis helped library staff identify their customer base. Analysis of this data enabled the library service of South Dublin to identify and prioritise goals and objectives within a specific timeframe and budget. Within the overall goal of the re-design of Ballyroan Library, two core objectives have been selected for this marketing plan:

- To increase usage of ICT services by over 65 year olds by 20% within one year
- To enhance library user experiences at Ballyroan Library

#### **How the objectives were determined using the market research analysis**

##### **Objective: to increase usage of ICT services by over 65 year olds by 20% within one year**

Statistical data collected as part of the community profile revealed that 65–69 year olds form the largest age grouping in the two electoral divisions, significantly higher than in the rest of the county. The user survey indicated that 81% of the over 65 age group are not using the library's public ICT services. Further analysis showed that of this age group very few have PCs in the home. When asked about the importance of ICT services within the library, 86.6% of this group selected tutorial packages as being either important or very important.

The library audit indicated that an ergonomically designed ICT suite was needed in the library as the current services are accommodated in what was an exhibition area. Weaknesses identified in the ICT section of the audit included poorly designed desks, lack of tutorial classes for beginners and poor use of assistive technologies.

One of the most important strengths emerging from the audit was the high level of demand for computer classes from the over sixty-fives.

**Objective: to enhance library user experiences at Ballyroan Library**

The user survey showed that many library users have difficulty with the layout of the adult library, particularly in relation to the layout of shelving. Difficulty in finding books and poor signage were also highlighted, with the need for clear signage, followed by the need for book displays, scoring high in the survey. 84.7% of those surveyed were unaware of the existence of the library catalogue in the form of the in-house OPAC. Users' comments in the survey were that the library shelves are too low, readers would prefer books presented by genre, and would prefer face-out display of books. The need for clearer markings on shelves in the junior library was highlighted.

Library layout, guiding and signage emerged as areas of weakness from the audit. Staff felt that the adult library was cluttered and that users were not familiar with the OPAC facilities. The need for shelving on wheels, face-out displays of books and space for book promotions all emerged from the SWOT analysis.

**5.5.3 Step Three: Implementation of the Marketing Action Plan**

**Objective 1: to increase usage of ICT services by over 65 year olds by 20% within one year**

**Action Plan Implementation**

Develop services in conjunction with IT team and service point managers aimed at the over 65 segment identified in the environmental analysis, to include necessary tutorial software for keyboard and mouse skills along with ECDL and basic internet tutorials. Ensure that assistive technologies are in place on all PCs dedicated for use by this group. Train library staff or, if necessary, employ an ICT coach to facilitate classes for the over 65s.

**Action Plan Marketing**

At launch of new ICT suite ensure that all press releases, brochures and promotional material include information on services for this age group. Develop information material specific to the services. Promote the service in-house using simple/welcoming posters and brochures. Develop age-specific mailing lists and send each library user in the age group details of courses and services for their

group. Contact all local groups working with this age group and alert them to new facilities and services. Contact all local area lifelong learning agencies alerting them to service development in this area. Arrange mail drop to all houses identified in the community profile.

### **Action Plan Requirements**

Staff to work with this group in the ICT suite and/or external trainer to develop computer classes for this user group. Course outline, level and time frame to be decided. Software and hardware in place to facilitate learning requirements of the group.

### **Evaluation Method**

Ensure that all ICT transactions by this group are tracked using the criterion of age. Monitor registration levels by this age group, record numbers attending specially designed courses, monitor general PC use by this group based on PC reservation system data, observational use of assistive technologies, carry out in-house survey and compare with previous rate of use prior to marketing strategy.

### **Evaluation Requirements**

Library registration cards re-designed to measure age group. Automated PC booking system using library membership card to be put in place. Develop simple yet specific methodologies for recording all performance indicators gathered relating to ICT use by the over 65 age group. Provide funding and allocate staff time for user survey.

### **Time-frame**

May-June 2006:	Prior to library re-launch develop promotional material, brochures, mail-shots, contact details for local age-related groups, schedule computer classes and train library staff and/or external ICT trainer
July 2006:	Re-launch of newly designed library and ICT suite
July-Sept. 2006:	Dissemination of promotional material Staff initiate informal training using tutorial packages on public PCs Begin taking bookings for computer classes
Oct. 06-Feb. 2007:	Computer classes
Mar.-May 2007:	User Survey of over 65 age group to determine uptake of library ICT services
May-June 2007:	Survey results, analysis of performance indicators and production of report on usage levels and effectiveness of targeted campaign

## **Review**

If the objective of usage increase by 20% has not been achieved it must be determined whether or not to extend the time frame by a further period. If the projected 20% has been achieved staff will need to decide whether a new target group should be selected or to extend the timeframe of the plan to raise usage by this segment even more.

## **Budget items**

- Staffing costs
- Advertising and stationary (promotional material)
- Training (staff)
- Lecture fees (ICT trainer)
- Postage

## **Objective 2: to enhance library user experiences at Ballyroan Library**

### **Action Plan Implementation**

Information gathered from the user survey, community analysis and library audit indicated that library users in Ballyroan library were not happy with the type and layout of shelving and over 80% of those surveyed were unaware of the existence of the in-house library catalogue. This information will all be used during the re-design of Ballyroan library to create a library layout and stock presentation plan which is user friendly.

Recognising the importance of the core service of book lending will help during the re-design of the library to create a library shelving layout and stock presentation which makes for ease of use. A floor plan will be produced to aid customers to orientate themselves in the building. Books for loan will be presented in an attractive, face-out way through the use of display shelves throughout sections. Limited but effective directional signage will be put in place along with shelf guides throughout non-fiction, with author and genre guides in fiction. Library on-line catalogue stations will be placed prominently throughout the library, with signs indicating clearly their purpose and guidelines for their use.

### **Action Plan Marketing**

New promotions based on themes and genres will be launched at, and after, the re-launch on a phased basis. These new collections, designed for adult and junior



readers, will facilitate ease of browsing with face-out style presentation and will be themed to encourage new ways of reading and new styles of literature. Posters designed to suit the theme of these new collections will be produced for use on shelving bays. Postcards with the same design will be produced and used as mail shots to adult and junior mailing lists as determined by the collection type. All promotional material created for the library will emphasise the streamlined, easy to use new layout. Schools will be contacted with details of age-specific new collections for young readers. A leaflet drop to all houses in the two adjacent electoral divisions emphasising new ideas and ways of using the library will take place. In-house promotion of the library on-line catalogue will include clear, simple guidelines for use along with bold clear signs at each catalogue station indicating the purpose of the terminal.

### **Action Plan Requirements**

Collections will be selected by the reader service and acquisitions team, with shelving and guiding being selected by the project team. Information on lifestyles of library users along with demographic details from the community profile will help with the selection of appropriate themes and genres for the new collections. Promotional material, including posters and postcards, will be developed. Signs and guiding for on-line catalogue will be produced. Training, with particular emphasis on new ways of working and new approaches to service delivery, will be provided for staff. Library staff will liaise with the Council IT team to ensure that the library management system can generate valid statistics for issue and renewal transactions on all new collections, and can provide details of the number of hits on all OPAC terminals within the library.

### **Evaluation Methods**

Tracking of number of issues per title within the new collections, over six and twelve month periods. Tracking of the level of usage of OPAC terminals over six and twelve month periods. In-house user survey eight to ten months from re-launch of the library building. Observation by staff of how the readers are using the new environment and if different needs are being met by the new library layout. Tracking of number of visitors to the library per day, week and month.

### **Evaluation Requirements**

The library management system will need to be streamlined to provide issue and renewal statistics for entire collections as well as individual books within a collection,

thus ensuring maximum tracking of transactions on these new collections. Provision will have to be made to record the number of hits on each OPAC within the building over day/week/month period. A gate counter will have to be installed at the library doors to monitor visitor numbers. Staff will need to be trained in the development of reader-centred services, with emphasis on layout, display, stock selection and the use of ICT to support readers in book selection. Funding and staff time will have to be allocated for the user survey. A comment box at the library desk will invite responses from library users.

### **Time Frame**

Prior to library re-launch:	Selection of shelving, guiding and acquisition of new special collections and design and production of promotional material Staff training in reader centred service delivery
July 2006 :	Re-launch of Ballyroan library featuring first phase of special collections
July/Sept. 2006:	Dissemination of promotional material
Dec. 2006:	Six month evaluation of usage of new collections and in-house use of library catalogue
Jan. 2007:	Launch of second phase of new collections
Mar.-May 2007:	User survey to determine satisfaction ratings with new service delivery methods

### **Review**

The review will centre on the satisfaction rates of users as indicated in the user survey. This will be compared with ratings from the previous survey which were very low in terms of shelving, locating books and OPAC use. Issue statistics from the new collections over the period will be compared with those of stock organised by more traditional methods. As visibility of the new collections is higher than in more traditional display methods these issues should be significantly higher. Feedback from staff on levels of help required from users and general user satisfaction will be noted. Analysis of comments from the comment box supplied for the public should indicate levels of approval or otherwise.

These factors when considered in the overall review will indicate whether the new service delivery style has been successful and whether it warrants further development within the branch.

**Budget items**

- Shelving and guiding
- New book collections
- Promotional material
- User survey
- Postage

## **6. MARKETING PLAN CASE STUDY: KILTIMAGH LIBRARY, MAYO**

### **6.1 Introduction**

This marketing plan for Kiltimagh library is based on data collected by three information gathering processes: internal audit, community profile and surveys.

A common thread in definitions of marketing is the emphasis on responding to user needs. A prerequisite of this response is the identification of those needs and this requires analysis of the organisation's environment both internally (internal audit) and externally (community profile) supplemented by information derived from market research (in this case, User Survey).

Once the requisite information has been gathered, it informs the objectives to be addressed within the marketing plan. In a public library context marketing plans may be aimed at a service as a whole; at a particular aspect of the service; at a particular user group; at a geographical area, or at a specific service point. Thus a marketing plan may have a broad or narrow focus, depending on the requirements of the organisation. Indeed an organisation could have a number of plans consisting of any combination of the above. In this case the focus of the plan is a specific service point, Kiltimagh library, which is a small rural branch open 24 hours per week. This was chosen because concern was expressed at a falling-off of usage during 2004, based on figures derived from the library computer system. It was felt that the preparation and implementation of a marketing plan might help to reverse this trend.

Following on from the formulation of objectives, strategies and action plans must be devised to ensure that the objectives are met. Finally, evaluation mechanisms and consequent review must be built into the plan. Evaluation will help to ensure that objectives and strategies will be realistic and measurable.

In the following sections the information derived from each of the three sources, internal audit, community profile and survey, is analysed and the items relevant in the context of a marketing plan are highlighted. For each of these items recommendations for future action are proposed, and these recommendations form the basis of the strategies and actions in the marketing plan.

## **6.2 Information compiled**

The information on user needs upon which the plan is based is derived from three sources: an internal audit, a community profile, and a survey. From this information, certain areas are highlighted for attention. It is important to emphasise that not all areas within the service that we either know ourselves to be deficient and/or have been pointed out by users as being deficient, are the subject of remedial action in the plan. Any objectives listed in the plan must be realistic and achievable within the allotted time-scale.

There are overlaps between certain parts of the internal audit and the survey and likewise between the community profile and the survey, i.e. areas where the same aspect of the service are dealt with in both places. In these cases, the implications for the marketing plan are discussed in section the 'Survey' section (6.2.3).

### **6.2.1 Internal audit**

The internal audit analyses the strengths and weaknesses of the library under a number of headings, mainly under the broad categories of building and collections. The analysis is mainly that of the branch librarian who knows the local service better than anybody else.

Not all of the information contained in the internal audit can be transferred to the marketing plan in the form of recommendations for some kind of action. There are three main reasons for this.

Firstly, the audit may not identify any obvious deficiency in a particular aspect of the service. This is the case with the fiction collection, for instance, and the reference collection. There are no obvious gaps identified so there is no point in including them in the marketing plan.

Secondly, where deficiencies or problems have been identified during the internal audit, the particular aspect is not considered a priority for the service. For instance, there are no PC games provided in Kiltimagh library and there are no immediate plans to do so. It is not a priority anywhere in the service. Similarly there is no multi-lingual collection, but there is no current demand for this. There are a number of non-Irish users, but the majority, even African, are English speakers.

Thirdly, problems or deficiencies are identified but solutions are not readily achievable. Prime examples of these are lack of parking space and lack of dedicated exhibition space. Provision of the former is outside the control of the library authority and the latter could not be provided within the existing building without sacrificing something else, probably shelving space, which would have a detrimental effect on the collection. So, there is little point in including these aspects in a marketing plan when nothing can be done about them.

### **Opening hours**

Please see 'Survey' section (6.2.3) below.

### **Space in library**

The current premises are a big improvement on previous premises but there is no dedicated exhibition space. Space for any other activities is also limited but this could be improved by having the freestanding shelving fitted with castors to enable them to be moved to accommodate activities.

**Recommendation:** have freestanding shelves fitted with castors to enable space to be created for activities.

### **Collections**

The AV and local collections will be dealt with in the 'Surveys' section. One other area not highlighted in the survey as being in need of attention is the periodicals/newspaper collection. There have been requests from users to have a daily newspaper provided. Also the absence of non-fiction material in the AV collection has been pinpointed as a weakness in the collection. In the children's area, the talking books are all in cassette format and get broken very easily. CDs would be a better option.

### **Recommendations:**

1. Consider subscribing to one daily newspaper.
2. Acquire some non-fiction talking books titles.
3. Acquire talking books in CD format for children's section.

### **Other services**

The public access computers are dealt with in the 'Surveys' section. Other headings included in this section are scanning facilities, assistive learning technology and Wi-Fi Internet access. None of these are currently provided. There has been no demand as yet, but if Wi-Fi became a viable option it could be provided in order to enhance the service. There has been some demand for a fax service as this is not currently available anywhere else in the town, so this could be considered.

**Recommendation:** Investigate the viability of providing a fax service and provide if appropriate.

### **6.2.2 Community profile**

The community profile is an analysis of the external environment within which the library operates and is compiled under various headings such as 'geography'; 'infrastructure/transport'; 'economic and business climate'; 'technological climate'; 'political climate'; 'facilities and services', and 'demographics'. It is useful in identifying possible gaps in the existing service, for example, groups of potential users who use the service very little or not at all. Identification of these gaps can suggest introduction of new services or improvement and/or promotion of existing services.

Some of the information collected in a community profile may not prove to be very useful in informing future action, but this may not have been apparent at the collection stage. Various types of demographic information may not be immediately useful unless something unusual emerges; for example, a group or segment is identified that is not adequately served. This could be an ethnic group, age group or whatever. Demographic statistics may indicate that there is an unusually high percentage of a particular segment living in an area but this segment may not be catered for in the library collection. This is useful information in that it pinpoints an obvious gap in the service. However, until the information is compiled this gap may not be apparent. Similarly, when other categories of demographic information are compiled, nothing remarkable may emerge, so it may appear that the information is useless and the process of compiling it was a waste of time. However, unless this is known in advance, the information must still be collected.

### **Area Profiled**

The area being profiled is the catchment area of Kiltimagh library, which includes Kiltimagh District Electoral Division (D.E.D) and surrounding D.E.Ds. Defining the catchment area was problematic in some ways because parts of some D.E.Ds bordering that of Kiltimagh could be regarded as being in the catchment area of another library branch. Where this was the case, it was decided, when compiling demographic statistics, to halve the figures for that particular D.E.D. This approach is slightly arbitrary, but in defining a catchment area it is not always possible to be completely scientific. (Ten D.E.D.s were included, the figures of five of which were halved.)

### **Demographic analysis**

In recent times, particularly the 1980s, Kiltimagh and its surrounding area was synonymous with deprivation, emigration, high unemployment and neglect. In 1988 a survey of the population migration in Kiltimagh and its hinterland was carried out and it revealed that 75% of the 17-25 age group were forced to emigrate to find work. The figures for the population of Kiltimagh town from 1981-2002 are as follows:

*Table XIII: population of Kiltimagh town, Census of Population*

1981	1986	1991	1996	2002
1,145	982	952	917	1,000

The campaign to arrest the decline began with the formation of Kiltimagh Integrated Rural Development (I.R.D.) in the late 1980s. The first step was to tackle the problem of dereliction in the town and to enhance the streetscape generally. This was achieved to the extent that the Kiltimagh streetscape is now one of the most attractive in County Mayo.

Confidence in the future of the area is reflected in new housing activity. Several new housing estates were completed in the town within the past five years and there are plans for two new housing estates of seventy houses. In addition, thirty social housing units were completed as part of the I.R.D.'s regeneration work in the town.

### **Gender, Age and Disability**

The 2002 Census figures show that the 50.3% of the population are males, and 49.7% females.

The age breakdown is:



*Table XIV: Percentage population by age-group*

	0-14	15-24	25-44	45-64	>65
Kiltimagh Area	21.50%	12.40%	23.50%	23.50%	19.20%
Mayo	21.50%	14.20%	26.40%	23.20%	14.60%
National	21.1	16.4	30.1	21.2	11.2

*Table XV: Percentage of males and females aged 65 years and over as percentage of all over 65s*

	Male	Female
Kiltimagh area	12.7%	15.5%
Mayo	11.2%	16.7%
National	8.7%	17.4%

*Table XVI: Lone parent households as percentage of all households in area.*

Kiltimagh area	10.8%
Mayo	10.6%
National	11.9%

*Table XVII: Percentage of disabled persons resident in the area.*

Kiltimagh area	11.3%
Mayo	9.6%
National	8.3%

*Table XVIII: Non-Irish nationality as percentage of total population*

Kiltimagh area	9.2%
Mayo	7.2%
National	7.1%

## **Employment**

It was noted previously that the area suffered high rates of emigration during the 1980s and this may account for the slightly lower rate of unemployment as against the county and the country.

*Table XIX: Percentage age 15+ unemployed*

Kiltimagh area	4.2%
Mayo	5.0%
National	4.5%

*Table XX: Percentage of labour force classified by broad occupational group*

	Agric.	Build	Manuf	Comm.	Transp.	Pub. Admin	Prof. Ser.	Other
K/magh area	11.10%	15%	13%	21.6	3.5	4.9	17.8	13.1
Mayo	11.40%	12%	16.10%	20.5	4.2	5.1	16.8	13.9
National	5.90%	9.10%	16%	26.90%	5.90%	5.80%	15.40%	15.10%

*Table XXI: Percentage of labour force classified by social class*

	Prof	Manag & Tech	Non-manual	Skilled Man.	Semi-skilled	Unskilled	Others
Kmagh area	3.3%	22.9%	16.4%	19.5%	12.4%	8.3%	17.4%
Mayo	4.3%	22.4%	16%	19.4%	13.2%	7%	17.7
National	6.1%	25.5%	16.5%	17.2%	10.9%	5.6%	18.2

## Education

*Table XXII: Percentage of residents aged 15+ classified by attainment in education*

	Primary	Lower Secondary	Upper Secondary	3rd Level
Kiltimagh area	31.7%	21.3%	30%	17.2%
Mayo	29.6%	22.5%	28.7%	19.1%
National	22.2%	22.7%	29.1%	26%

## Household ownership

*Table XXIII: Percentage of households classified by nature of occupancy*

	Owner occupied with mortgage	Owner occupied : no mortgage	Being purchased from Local authority	Rented from Local Authority	Rented furnished from other	Rented unfurnished from other	Occupied rent free
K/Magh area	31.4%	52.0%	1.9%	3.6%	2.2%	5.2%	2.3%
Mayo	31.8%	47.8%	2.4%	4.6%	1.7%	7.4%	2.1%
National	37.9%	36.0%	3.5%	6.9%	2.0%	9.0%	1.7%

### **Infrastructure/transport**

It has been cited as a geographical disadvantage that Kiltimagh town is not located on a main primary route. The nearest national route is the N5 (Dublin-Westport road) which is 8km distant. Access to this has been improved considerably with work on the Kiltimagh-Bohola road. Kiltimagh is 9km from the N17 (Galway-Sligo road), and access to this is via the Kiltimagh-Knock road which is in not in good condition. If this road were improved it would complete a good road link from Kiltimagh to Knock Airport.

Public transport in the area is confined to buses, and the nearest railway station is Claremorris (16km). There is a rural transport initiative operating in the area, but is not well used. The possibility of improving this is being investigated by the I.R.D., especially from the point of view of transporting more people from outlying areas into Kiltimagh town, which is not being achieved at the moment. Bus Eireann runs a number of services daily to Galway, Westport, Ballina and Dublin.

Car ownership figures for the area (2002 Census), reveal that 80.9% of households have at least one car. This compares favourably with the figures for Mayo as a whole, 79.5%, and nationally, 78.3%. This would indicate that lack of transport should not be a major factor in discouraging use of the library by residents of outlying areas.

### **Economic and business climate**

The I.R.D. claims that as a result of its efforts, 350 jobs were created in the area, a significant number in an area of this size. The population of the town grew by 14% between 1996 and 2002, reversing the trend of decline since 1981. As mentioned previously the high level of house-building activity reflects some measure of confidence. Further evidence of this is a planned 45-bed hotel and conference centre, new small businesses and shops opening.

### **Technological climate**

The technological infrastructure was enhanced considerably in 2003 when the fibre-optic Metropolitan Area Network (MAN) was laid. Broadband went live in February 2004. However work remains to be done in completing the link from the local fibre-optic loop to the outside world. Also, there are significant connection and service cost issues. ADSL is not available in the Kiltimagh area.

The 2002 Census shows the percentage of households in the area with a PC as 35.4%, slightly ahead of the Mayo figure of 35.3%. However both are lower than the national figure of 43.5%. This national figure, according to CSO figures for June 2004 has now risen to 46%, so presumably the figures for the Kiltimagh area have also risen but the figures are not available at this level of geographic detail. However the overall percentage figure for the Border, Midland and Western region at 37.5% still compares unfavourably with 49.4% for the Southern and Eastern region.

The 2002 figures for Internet in the home follow a similar pattern with 27.3% in the Kiltimagh area, 26.9% in Mayo and 34.1% nationally. In 2004 the percentage for the Border, Midland and Western region was 30.3% and for the Southern and Eastern region it was 41.1%.

### **Political climate**

For the first time in over 40 years, Kiltimagh has a representative on Mayo County Council, Cllr. Eugene Lavin, F.G. The main political organisations in the area are Fianna Fáil and Fine Gael.

### **Facilities and Services**

The Town Halls Theatre and the Gloir Arts Centre are the main cultural facilities in Kiltimagh. Heritage facilities consist of the Railway Museum, and the Knock Folk Museum, and there is an environmental centre at the Wetlands Park.

There are several community groups, including two youth groups; a mother and toddler Group; a women's group; two support groups for asylum seekers; a historical society; a choral society, and an older persons' group. There are a number of community development groups (including tourism and Special Olympics) and a range of sports clubs.

### **Education**

There are four pre-schools including a Montessori school in the area, five primary schools and one secondary school. There is no permanent further education establishment, although the VEC does organise some evening classes. The nearest third level institution is the G.M.I.T. in Castlebar.

### **Health Services**

Kiltimagh has a health centre, but the nearest hospital is Castlebar (25km). There are three retirement homes, one day-care centre, and two Western Care houses.

## Community Lifestyles

### Free time

The survey of library users revealed that their free time was most commonly on Saturdays, Sundays and weekday evenings.

### Hobbies

*Table XXIV: hobbies selected by library users*

Hobby	Percent
Reading	83.5
Sport: Participant	16.5
Sport: Spectator	23.3
Television	42.7
Music	53.4
Cinema	26.2
D.I.Y.	15.5
Cookery	37.9
Gardening	41.7
Fishing	10.7
Photography	9.7
Arts/Crafts	27.2
Community/Voluntary work	22.3
Other	10.7

### Technology

*Table XXV: Percentage of households with a home PC*

Kiltimagh area	35.4%
Mayo	35.3%
National	43.5%

*Table XXVI: Percentage of households with Internet access*

Kiltimagh area	27.3%
Mayo	26.9%
National	34.1%

20.4% of library users reported having access to the Internet at work.

### Library Specific

*Table XVIII: when users would use the library (users could select as many times as they wished)*

	9 - 12	12 - 2	2 - 4	4 - 6	6 - 8	8 - 10
Mon	5	10	11	8	10	3
Tues	8	16	19	18	20	4
Weds	6	15	24	15	29	4
Thurs	6	11	16	12	15	4
Fri	13	19	25	18	13	2
Sat	15	24	33	16	6	1
Sun	3	6	7	6	5	2

*Table XIX: What do users use the library for?*

Service	Percent
books	84.2
tapes/CDs	19.8
DVDS/videos	10.9
reference info	36.6
business info	5
local history	11.9
work info	14.9
health/welfare info	15.8
computers	55.4
lectures etc.	9.9
casual reading/study	25.7
children's	17.8
photocopying	34.7
other	2

In the community profile of the Kiltimagh area the information that is most immediately useful for this marketing plan is outlined below. Some of the items of information were derived from the survey and these will be treated under the 'Surveys' heading.

### **Infrastructure/Transport**

Public transport is not well developed in the area. The rural transport initiative is not well used and the I.R.D. hopes to have it improved to encourage more people from outlying areas to come into town. If this happened it could have positive implications for the library, but the library would need to be promoted more in outlying areas. The survey revealed that 69% of library users live within three miles of the library so there is room for improvement in usage levels among those who live further away. In addition, the mobile service has been discontinued at the moment and if this is not reinstated, the library could be promoted in the areas formerly served by the mobile.

**Recommendation:** Promote library in outlying areas, particularly in areas formerly served by the mobile service.

### **Economic and business climate**

An improvement in the economic climate of the area in recent years has led to an increase in population and opening of new businesses. From the library point of view one of the most interesting developments is the new housing estates planned for the town. These new houses could be a source of new library users and should be targeted with promotional material when occupied. As many of the occupants may commute to work elsewhere, evening and Saturday opening hours should be emphasised.

**Recommendation:** Target new housing developments with promotional material.

### **Technological climate**

Fibre-optic cable has been laid in Kiltimagh, which means that there is considerable potential for broadband development. If a suitable broadband service becomes available, the public access computers could be connected to a broadband network, thereby providing faster and possibly more reliable, Internet access.

**Recommendation:** See below in section on survey.

### **Facilities and services**

This section deals with the various clubs and organisations in the area and as such provides a rich source of information on the community. From a library point of view this information should be used to create contacts and promote the library within relevant organisations.

**Recommendation:** Compile list of organisations with names of contact persons. Select most relevant organisations (those most likely to benefit from library service) and establish contact with view to ascertaining how library might meet needs.

### **6.2.3 Survey analysis**

A survey of users was carried out in Kiltimagh library to compile information on user opinions and patterns of use. Some data from the survey have already been given. The most useful findings with accompanying recommendations are detailed below.

#### **Opening hours**

It is likely that some respondents misinterpreted the question on which hours they would like to use the library by confining their responses to times they already use the library and/or times within which the library is already open. Given these reservations, an analysis of the responses reveals that of the days on which the library is not already open, Thursday would be the most popular choice, mainly between the hours of 12 am-8pm. Generally there was not much interest expressed in the 8-10 pm period on any day.

**Recommendation.** Investigate the feasibility of extending opening hours within staffing constraints. If opening hours are to be extended, prioritise Thursday. Perhaps, prior to extending, a small one-question survey could be carried out asking users to indicate their preferences outside of existing opening hours.

#### **AV collections**

Survey results indicate room for improvement in the AV collections. Currently there are no DVDs in the collection. Answers to the question on hobbies revealed 'Music' as the second most popular hobby. This can be reflected in the audio collection by including more music items.



**Recommendation:** Introduce DVDs into the collection and include more music items.

### **Local history**

Responses also indicated room for improvement in this area but at the moment there are limits to how this may be improved. A possible solution would be to make more items that are currently available only in the central library (e.g. local newspapers) more widely available through digitisation. This would be part of a county-wide programme, not directed specifically at Kiltimagh library.

**Recommendation:** Initiate programme of digitisation to make local history materials more widely available.

### **Public access computers**

Improvement in this area was pinpointed by more respondents than any other area as being very important, though it has a high satisfaction rating. Thus, it is difficult to interpret the findings. Do they indicate a need for improvement or are they an expression of the value to people of this service in that people may not particularly care about improvements in a service they don't use? Taking the findings at face value, the following are the recommendations.

#### **Recommendations:**

1. Investigate how public access computer service might be improved by asking users.
2. If a broadband service providing higher network speeds becomes available in the Kiltimagh area, evaluate the technical and financial feasibility of connecting the public access computers to such a service.

### **Gender imbalance**

The survey indicated a 2:1 female/male ratio in library usage. Consideration should be given to possible ways of encouraging greater participation among the male population.

**Recommendation:** Devise plans to target segments of the male population with promotional material. Included in plans should be ideas on developing areas of the collection that might be of more interest to male users.

## **Education levels**

The survey reveals a disproportionate higher level of use among the higher educated. This might be expected, but does suggest that plans to target the lower-educated should be included in the plan. The difficulty here would be identifying the lower educated and, of course, doing so in a discreet manner. A starting point here could be contact with the adult education services in the area.

**Recommendation:** Establish contact with adult education services in order to identify the lower-educated as a distinct segment (without naming it as such) and then ascertain ways in which the library might be of benefit. Devise plans to target this group.

## **Comments**

Some comments were submitted in the survey. Apart from opening hours, the most informative were one comment proposing the introduction of a story-time for younger children and another pointing out the absence of a sign for the toilets. The main barrier to a story time at the moment is staff availability. There is just one member of staff in the library so a story time could only be conducted outside of existing opening hours or alternatively, as suggested by the respondent, it could be conducted by volunteers.

## **Recommendations:**

1. Have toilet sign(s) erected.
2. Investigate the possibility of having a story time introduced, using volunteers.

## **6.3 Marketing plan**

What follows is a marketing plan based on the recommendations proposed in the preceding sections. Each recommendation forms the basis of a strategy and each of these has an action plan in terms of method of implementation and time scale. Also, an evaluation method for each strategy, where appropriate, is detailed .

### **6.3.1 Overall objective of plan**

The overall objective of the plan is to increase usage of Kiltimagh library. Over the past year there has been a decrease in usage and it is hoped that the plan will

reverse this trend. The life time of the plan is one year, starting in September 2005. Evaluation of the success of the plan will be based on usage figures for the period September 2005-September 2006. In order for the plan to have been deemed a success, these figures will have to be higher than those for the preceding year. The target increase is 5% in overall numbers of items issued.

### **6.3.2 Planning team**

- Richard Hickey - Executive Librarian (marketing project manager)
- Thomas Murtagh - Assistant Librarian with overall responsibility for Kiltimagh library
- Bridie Wimsey - Branch Librarian with responsibility of day-to-day running of Kiltimagh library.

### **6.3.3 Strategies**

The strategies are based on the recommendations outlined in previous sections. They are not in the same order but are grouped in a more logical manner. For instance, strategies based on improving the various collections are kept together.

#### **Install castors on freestanding shelves to facilitate creation of space for library activities**

Action: Arrange with shelving supplier

Complete by: October 1<sup>st</sup> 2005

Evaluation: Task completed by required date. Success of action to be judged on ease of moving shelves and amount of space thereby created for activities. This will become apparent during Children's Book Festival.

#### **Introduce DVDs and more music titles into the AV collection**

Complete by: November 1<sup>st</sup> 2005.

Action: Decide on number of titles, select titles and order from suppliers.

Promotion: Prominent display, alerting users, notices in local newspapers, highlighting on library website.

Evaluation: After 3 months, i.e. Feb 1<sup>st</sup> 2006, check on number of borrowings for each title. An acceptable average figure would be 3, 1 per month per title.

Review: If level of use is unsatisfactory, consider changing some titles and/or further promotion.

### **Acquire non-fiction talking book titles**

Complete by: November 1<sup>st</sup> 2005.

Action: Decide on number of titles, select titles and order from suppliers.

Promotion: Best achieved by prominent display within the library and alerting users.

Also highlight on library website.

Evaluation: After 3 months, i.e. Feb 1<sup>st</sup> 2006, check on number of borrowings for each title. An acceptable average figure would be 3, 1 per month per title.

Review: If level of use is unsatisfactory, consider changing some titles and/or further promotion.

### **Acquire talking books in CD format for children's library**

Complete by: November 1<sup>st</sup> 2005.

Action: Decide on number of titles, select titles and order from suppliers.

Promotion: Prominent display, alerting users and contact with schools.

Evaluation: After 3 months, i.e. Feb 1<sup>st</sup> 2006, check on number of borrowings for each title. An acceptable average figure would be 3, 1 per month per title.

Review: If level of use is unsatisfactory, consider changing some titles and/or further promotion.

### **Consider subscribing to one daily newspaper**

Complete by: October 1<sup>st</sup> .

Action: Decide if option is viable. Select title and arrange supply with local newsagent.

Evaluation: Monitor level of use of newspaper. This will be by observation so exact figures on daily usage will not be possible to supply.

### **Initiate programme of digitisation to make local history materials more widely available**

This will be a separate plan in itself, and will be a county-wide initiative. It will be dealt with in Mayo County library's Development Plan, so it is outside the scope of this marketing plan. Of course, there will be marketing implications once digitised material is ready for distribution.

### **Investigate how public access computer service might be improved by asking users**

Complete by January 1<sup>st</sup> 2006.

Action: Carry out small survey among users of computer system to ascertain what improvements they would like to see implemented. Survey could be online and/or handout. Follow up action will be recommendations based on survey and implementation of these recommendations.

Evaluation: Response rate to survey-should aim for 100 responses. Further evaluation would be on quality of information derived from survey.

Promotion: Not really relevant in this case, apart from notifying users that survey will be taking place and encouraging participation.

**If a broadband service providing higher network speeds becomes available in the Kiltimagh area evaluate the technical and financial feasibility of connecting the public access computers to such a service**

Because the availability of broadband is outside our control, no time-scale can be placed on this. We can only monitor developments in this area and investigate the viability of connecting the public access computers to a broadband service if something suitable becomes available.

**Investigate the possibility of having a story time session for children introduced, using volunteers**

Complete by November 1<sup>st</sup> 2005

Action: Contact playschools, parent groups or any other relevant organisations to see if there are any volunteers willing to conduct story time sessions in the library on days and at times to be agreed.

Evaluation: Numbers of attendees at sessions, if they go ahead. Ideally an average of 10 per session

Promotion: Contact with preschools, posters/flyers, local press and radio.

**Investigate the viability of providing a fax service and provide if appropriate**

Complete by: December 1<sup>st</sup> 2005 (i.e. have fax machine installed for public use by that date, if it is decided to provide it)

Action: Discuss viability of provision of service and if it is decided to go ahead, immediately arrange installation with telecommunications company. Also decide on charges for use of the service. Check charges in commercial outlets.

Promotion: Notice in local newspaper, fliers/posters distributed in local shops. This could be a way of attracting non-users to the library who might avail of other services.

Any previous non-users should be given promotional material when they first come to use the service.

Evaluation: Record number of uses of the service. With a new service it is difficult to decide on what would be an acceptable level of usage, but a few per week, average, should be expected.

### **Have toilet sign(s) erected**

Complete by October 1<sup>st</sup>.

Action. Decide on best location(s) for sign(s) and arrange with county council maintenance staff to have it (them) erected.

Evaluation: not applicable in this instance.

### **Devise plans to target segments of the male population with promotional material. Included in plans should be ideas on developing areas of the collection that might be of more interest to male users**

Complete by March 1<sup>st</sup> 2006.

Action: Specify areas of interest to male users. Also list institutions/organisations predominantly male-based. Examples would be agriculture and some sports clubs. Establish contacts with these organisations in order to promote existing services and to get feedback on their needs. Review library collections in terms of quality, quantity and format in relevant subject areas based on these needs and acquire material where necessary.

Promotion: Establishing contact with the organisations will be a form of promotion in itself. Organise group visits to the library to promote services. Also, further promotion among these organisations will be necessary when any additions are made to the collections.

Evaluation: Monitor any increase in usage or registration of new users as a result of the actions listed above. In particular, new memberships resulting from group visits, where it will be easier to establish that the new membership resulted directly from the promotional efforts. Again, it is difficult to quantify what number of new members would constitute success, but an increase of 10% in male membership by September 2006 should be the target. This translates into a figure of around 30.

Review: If target figure has not been reached, consider further promotion or different approaches.

**Establish contact with adult education services in order to identify the lower-educated as a distinct segment (without naming it as such) and then ascertain ways in which the library might be of benefit. Devise plans to target this group**

Complete by January 1<sup>st</sup> 2006.

Action: Contact adult education organisers to get details of further education classes in the area and ascertain how the library might assist. Acquire relevant books or other materials as appropriate. Possibly organise group visits to the library.

Evaluation: Monitor number of new members resulting from above action and usage of any materials acquired specially for this group.

**Promote library in outlying areas, particularly in areas formerly served by the mobile service**

Complete by March 2006.

Action: Compile list of rural centres more than 3 miles from Kiltimagh and within catchment area. Compile promotional material to send to shops, schools and other suitable establishments.

Evaluation: Very difficult to quantify the success or otherwise of this action apart from observation of librarian.

**Target new housing developments with promotional material**

It is not possible to specify a time-frame for this as houses are only at the planning stage. But as houses are built and occupied, promotion of the library should be targeted at this area.

Action: When houses are occupied do a mail drop of promotional material on the library service.

Evaluation: Again, observation on behalf of the librarian could establish the level of response to a promotional campaign.

**Compile list of organisations and services with names of contact persons. Select most relevant organisations (those most likely to benefit from library service) and establish contacts with a view to ascertaining how the library might meet their needs**

Complete by March 1<sup>st</sup> 2006.

Action: compile list of local clubs, organisations and services, with contact persons in each case. Make contact with organisations most likely to benefit from the library service. Promote relevant material and ascertain how the library might better meet

the organisation's needs. Based on feedback from this process acquire material as necessary. Inform organisations of availability of this material when it becomes available. Included in the list of organisations and services will be schools. Recommended action here would be contact with school principals to organise regular or once-off class visits to the library.

Evaluation: Librarian's observation of increased usage or membership resulting from contact with organisations. Figures for usage of any new materials acquired. Class visits organised.

**Investigate feasibility of extending opening hours. If feasible within staffing constraints, carry out small survey asking people to indicate preferences**

Complete survey by November 1<sup>st</sup> 2005, if decision is taken to extend opening hours. Implement extra opening hours as soon as possible afterwards.

Action: Meeting between relevant staff and county librarian to explore feasibility of opening extra hours. If decision is positive, compile one-question questionnaire asking people their preferences within limits decided, i.e. certain days and number of hours. As far as possible introduce extra opening hours in accordance with the most popular option indicated in the survey.

Promotion: Publicise new hours in local press, radio, church newsletters, library website and on flyers/posters.

Evaluation: This would take the form of comparison between usage levels for existing hours and for the new hours.

Review: If usage levels for the new hours is significantly below the others after 3 months, publicise the new hours again.

#### **6.3.4 Overall review**

The overall review of the plan will be carried out in September 2006, one year after the commencement of the plan. This review will mainly consider the success of the plan in reversing the downward trend in usage that became evident from the latter half of 2004. The main criterion will be a comparison of usage figures for the period September 2005-September 2006 versus the preceding year. If there is no improvement in the figures, the plan will have to be revisited and new strategies devised where necessary. The review will involve looking at each of the strategies in the original plan and assessing how successful or otherwise they were. Many of them will have been already reviewed mid-term; this will be an end-of-term review. Even if



the overall outcome of the plan is successful, it will be important to maintain the momentum and plan for the following year.

## **7. MARKETING PLAN CASE STUDY: SILVER LEARNERS, WEXFORD**

### **7.1 Summary**

Silver learners, i.e. adults of 50+ years of age, are an influential and demanding group of public library users. International research suggests that silver learners are one of three critical target groups for growth in public library business.<sup>60</sup> This Marketing Plan seeks to grow use of public library services by silver learners in County Wexford.

The purpose of this marketing plan is to convince silver learners that the library can be a relevant and useful part of their lifestyle. It will also encourage current users to visit the library to improve the quality of their lives and meet new people by participating in one of many learning programmes available at the library.

In time this marketing plan will enable Wexford County Library increase visitor numbers, widen participation, build book borrowing and establish the library as a valuable resource of the local community. This will be achieved by targeting two key age groups, the 'young olds', those aged 50-70 who are prepared to travel to the library, and the 'older olds', aged 70-85 years who need to be engaged within their community. The library will also work collaboratively with other service providers and engage them as advocates.

One of the difficulties encountered in the research phase was to source the statistical data needed to benchmark the current levels of library use by silver learners and to compare this against national norms. The collection of this data is a priority of the market research section of this plan.

This marketing plan is for the period 2006 to 2009. The results of the plan will be evaluated annually and at the end of the programme to check targets and budget

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<sup>60</sup> See MLA marketing project at <<http://www.mla.gov.uk/programmes/framework>>.

expenditure. It is envisaged that library membership by silver learners will have grown by 15% and use by 18% at the completion of this marketing plan in 2009.

## 7.2 Background

This marketing plan applies marketing practice to service delivery for silver learners. Following a service audit, SWOT analysis, data collection, and community profiling, this project tested the practices of market segmentation and focus group work for the public library environment. Over a six week period, fourteen focus group meetings were held among library users and non-users

## 7.3 Marketing Mission and Targets

Mission: More *silver learners* to use the full range of public library services well

Targets for the period 2006 – 2009:

- 15% increase in membership by this sector
- 18% increase in services usage by this sector

## 7.4 SWOT analysis of Wexford County Library

	Strength	Weakness	Opportunity	Threat
Infrastructure - Buildings	2 Mobile libraries 2 Branch libraries	Small library buildings. Poor facilities in north of County. Inadequate county library (Wexford town).	New County Library for Wexford Town. New libraries for Bunclody and Gorey.	Inadequate funding nationally and locally to service growth
Infrastructure-ICT	Modern library system well supported by WCC.	Aging PCs for public Internet use.	Many library contributions to deliver national policy supporting growth of <i>Knowledge Society</i>	public service / private enterprise tension – citizen rights V consumer purchases. Inadequate public funding to fuel development. International trends.
<b>Access –</b>		Poor in terms	Improvement	Failure to

opening hours  <b>Access - Electronic</b>	Modern library systems with IT supports in place. 24/7 public access and interactivity in place.	of duration and range  Low take up of IT in community and poor ICT literacy skills level.	possible with additional posts and revised work practices. Critical element of national policy.	negotiate more extensive service  Failure to maintain and improve market position globally and locally.
<b>Personnel</b>	Committed, qualified and energetic	Insufficient number. Gender imbalance	Service growth potential. Distance learning environment	Government embargo. Low service priority within W.C.C.
Product – Information Collections	Strong contemporary collection. Improving resources for children. Good print collection of local interest. Developing archive collection.	Poor audio visual collection. Poor collections development for 1950 – 2000 period. Inadequate specialist educational collections	Access to electronic resources Creation of electronic resources in-house Co-operative initiatives e.g. Intersearch	Technical obsolescence. Inadequate funding.

	Strength	Weakness	Opportunity	Threat
<b>Customer base</b>	Strong growth in membership, 2000 - 2004. Increasing number of visits annually. Investment in children and young people on-going.	Poor take up in north of County. poor tradition of public library usage. Low public expectations. Diverse and fragmented customer base- lack of scale & incomplete customer profile knowledge.	Population increase with influx of more demanding customers. Improving levels of educational attainments. Changing lifestyles and values. Usage and membership growth is possible.	Illiteracy  Changing life styles and values  Inadequate resources to maintain development.
Marketing	Commitment and growing expertise in marketing practice –	Lack of comprehensive methodology in place. Weak in needs	Contribution to continuing prioritisation at national level – <i>Branching</i>	Lack of resources to sustain involvement and

	skilled in product, and promotion within limited range	analysis and evaluation aspects.	<i>Out 2 or similar Plan</i>	development.
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	Strength	Weakness	Opportunity	Threat
<b>Services</b>	<p>Collaboration with primary and third levels and adult education and with community development agencies.</p> <p>Readership development programmes – short and long – informal and accredited.</p> <p>Need for library based I-literacy identified.</p> <p>Contribution to many national information campaigns.</p> <p>Expertise in Local Studies and growing other subject specialisations.</p>	<p>No formal liaison with secondary school sector.</p> <p>Library charges.</p> <p>Lack of scale for service development.</p> <p>Existing provision is ad hoc. Funding is insecure.</p> <p>User education/ research and library skills development – demand greater than capacity to deliver.</p> <p>Lack of priority outside national campaign period.</p> <p>Programming in core areas e.g. citizenship, sciences, absent. Little and inconsistent</p>	<p>Lifelong education philosophy.</p> <p>Improved interaction within W.C.C. with C+E, Environment and Housing Departments.</p> <p>Growing partnership culture.</p> <p>Rollout and maintenance of current I-literacy research.</p> <p>Emerging development foci within government policy.</p>	<p>High unit maintenance costs for sectoral specialisations.</p> <p>Duplication and/or lack of clarity in partnership roles.</p> <p>Inadequate resources for sustainability beyond pilot or set-up phases.</p>

		outreach provision.		
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This is a summary of a more detailed SWOT, undertaken as part of the audit, that contains essential data and lists of very specific issues within the broad range outlined here. See appendix 9.4.

## 7.5 Target market analysis

Employment for silver learners extends across the full range of opportunities available to the general population. The agriculture and industry sectors are in decline as employers, while service industries dominate. The tourism sector is growing.

Public transport links main towns but does not penetrate rural hinterlands. 82.6% of the population have access to at least one car. Access to PCs is improving: 39% of households have a PC and 29.7% have Internet access.

The concentration of retired people living in County Wexford is uneven geographically, with a greater concentration in the south and higher percentages in the Rosslare, Fethard and Templeton areas.<sup>61</sup> Other service providers for this sector, met through focus groups, recommend that the library service collaborate with them to provide information services.

In their free time mature adults engage in a diverse range of interests and pastimes. The home, family and group activities appeal to women. They cite gardening, painting, craftwork, shopping, watching TV and listening to the radio, travel, reading, visiting family and friends. One or a few dominant hobbies seem more likely to absorb significant time in the case of men: they list fishing, shooting, local history, racing, football among their interests.<sup>62</sup>

Personal contacts are important to this group, as are group-activities. Accessing information in face-to-face interaction with 'people that can be trusted' is preferred. Electronic access to services from home does not appeal. They want to be out and meeting people. Bills are paid at the relevant office or through the post office.

<sup>61</sup> O'Neill, Siobhan. *A Social and demographic profile of Co. Wexford*. Wexford County Council, 2004.

<sup>62</sup> Data sourced from focus groups, see report by Percival, Hazel. *A community profile of silver learners who live in Co. Wexford*. 2005

Electronic mediums are not trusted: tangible transactions are chosen. This is less prevalent higher up the social scale.<sup>63</sup>

Few visit the public library for local community information. From the focus groups we learned that older people are looking for a centrally located source of up-to-date information on 'what's on' in the community. Library users suggest that library events should be promoted more heavily through active retirement groups and other social and learning groups frequented by their peers.

The proportion of people in Wexford with higher levels of education is on the increase, according to the 2002 Census. Many educational institutions offer a range of education courses that are available to older people. Research from the focus groups revealed that while many older people have learning needs, for a variety of reasons they do not sufficient confidence in their ability to encourage them join a formal education course. Many older people who are now outside the education system and the workplace have e-literacy difficulties.<sup>64</sup> They require appropriate community based learning solutions.

Silver learners are a significant proportion of total library users in Wexford. The Public Library User Survey in 2002 for Wexford County Library Public Library recorded that 30.3% of respondents were over 55 years. They regularly attend library events. They want learning programmes to access information and reader development programmes. Yet, they impose conditions. Events and training needs to be convenient, they must be motivated to attend, the learning must be interesting and relevant. It must be appropriate to adult learners. The tutor must be sympathetic.

Library users tell us they feel comfortable learning in the library. They ask that the library continue to offer informal community based adult education programmes. These, they feel, are non threatening and build confidence. Library programmes grow courage to continue the learning into more formal education centres. Non-users seek capacity building programmes in their communities to engage them and to inspire confidence before they will use library services themselves.

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<sup>63</sup> Ibid.

<sup>64</sup> John Heuston, *ICT and older people in Ireland* (Dublin, 2002).

The 2002 census reveals that home ownership of a PC and internet-access is below the national average in County Wexford. Yet people do have access through the public library. However many silver learners, who are unfamiliar with these technologies, are reluctant to begin.<sup>65</sup> For non library users the capacity building requirement emerges again. ICT needs to be introduced slowly as a vehicle to achievement in other areas.

Many otherwise competent library users are low users of library e-information services: this extends to researchers and users of specialist services who say they want to master library ICT and to learn to surf. Training on how to locate and use information databases and 'do things on the web' recurred as a learning need throughout all focus group meetings.

Although silver learners are well represented in many library programmes, only 10% of respondents to the most recent library ICT survey (2004) were over 50 years of age. Their priority use of Internet access is for research, leisure resources and e-mail use. However library staff believe there are many more in this category who are interested in developing e-research skills. Older people require more assistance in using the e-services including guides to recommended web-sites. Most don't use the Online Public Access Catalogue. Those at the older end of this age group say that they will not use computerized resources under any circumstances: a personal interaction remains essential.

## **7.6 Results of focus group meetings**

Fourteen focus group meetings were held. In the case of existing library users, in general findings validated data analysis and audit results. The critical value of the exercise was in the information revealed about non-users.<sup>66</sup>

Users of Wexford County Library Public Libraries say they need

- libraries open 6 days each week. Active regular researchers use the library on Saturday when they often meet other colleagues. Those, particularly at older

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<sup>65</sup> Ibid.

<sup>66</sup> Hazel Percival, *A community profile of silver learners who live in Co. Wexford* (Wexford, 2005)

end of the age spectrum, who use the library for reading material and for social contact, want the library open on Mondays 'after the long weekend.'<sup>67</sup>

- to learn how to exploit the library catalogue more fully and to develop related ICT research skills.
- more popular and Irish fiction stock in the branches. New publications and faster response times for reserved material is required.
- opportunities to influence provision within readership development programmes which should be promoted well and advertised very early.
- Very good support for local studies materials and programming.

#### Non-users say

- they are not familiar with the range and nature of library services. For example they don't see the library as a meeting place, they don't know it has newspapers. They don't use the mobile library and are not aware when it is in their locality. They don't know they can use the library from home.
- Readers enjoy popular fiction, often sourced in second-hand bookshops, that they swap with their friends. They go to town regularly.
- Pastimes involve e-games, TV, reading, crafts, crosswords and word games. Some use mobile phones, fewer text. Some don't want a mobile phone under any circumstances.
- Generally they are reluctant to go out at night.

The younger silver learners are more likely to use the library, once its services are useful. They want good selections of popular and Irish fiction, biographies and foreign languages. These must be easy to find.

Some are interested in using the public library as a starting point to develop ICT skills and research skills.

Some community activists are aware of some library services. They could be encouraged into library use by programming (i) in the community and to the local library, (ii) that would use shared interests as a foundation stone on which library familiarisation events and research skills would be built.

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<sup>67</sup> Ibid.



Non- users who are socially excluded say furthermore that:

- They need public or community transport to bring them to the library.
- They want the library facilities brought out to them.
- Older people living in rural areas in particular tend to stay local and want accessible and locally based services. They want reading material rather than activities, socialisation or more structured learning.

## **7.7 Market research summary**

1. Silver learners want extensive and consistent opening hours.
2. Non users need inducements to use their local library. The nature and extent of the inducement depends upon circumstances. Inducements need to begin outside the library in familiar surroundings. For example, those living nearby need less than those who will be required to travel a distance. Those with a smaller range of other interests may need longer term interventions to establish the benefits of library use. Older, usually less mobile learners need more support to maintain library use.
3. Formal collaborations between the library and other agencies that work in community development with silver learners is necessary to grow exposure for the library service and additional learning opportunities.
4. Current library programming needs to be maintained and grown, including growth outside library buildings.
5. Library collections on view should reflect the interests of the sector. Library layout, signposting and user education needs review.
6. The identification of the mobile library as a community based service needs to be reinforced. Its capacity to serve older learners in particular needs to be investigated.
7. A PR campaign is required. It should target both library users and non users, in relation to the nature and full range of library services.
8. Additional research & further segmentation is desirable to refine requirements and library responses more accurately.

## **7.8 Target market**

The target market for this Plan is scoped to serve four distinct strands:

1. Learning programmes for silver learners/library users (increasing library usage)

2. Introduction and access programmes for silver learners, non users/urban (capacity building towards growing the membership base)
3. Introduction and access programmes for silver learners, non users/rural (capacity building towards growing the membership base)
4. Research to build Library staff capacity to develop and use marketing methodology.

## **7.9 Marketing Strategy, Objectives, Action plan and Evaluation.**

### **7.9.1 Strand 1: Supporting group learning**

#### **Goal**

Adult learners to achieve library and research skills competence through participation in a range of group learning opportunities that provide and reinforce those skills

#### **Objective**

To increase participation in library and research skills learning programmes by 18%

#### **Target group**

Non-library users attending adult education courses elsewhere

Existing library users

## **MARKETING ACTIVITY**

### **Product**

1. library courses generated by and delivered by library staff
  2. adult education courses delivered by other agencies, with a library component delivered by library staff
  3. reading circles and other informal learning co-operatives
  4. Once-off lectures, workshops, exhibitions, events
- 
1. Library courses generated by and delivered by library staff divide into two groups
    - a. library use and research skills
      - i. The FETAC Level 5 Library Research Skills Course is at the heart of this element. It can be delivered in total or in part

depending upon the learning need, interest and educational level of selected groups.

- ii. Workshops are available on (i) protecting family archives, (ii) Sources for Local History research.
  - b. readership–development subject driven courses
    - i. Introduction to Irish literature
    - ii. *Our Lives, Our Stories* : Introduction to Irish literature 2
    - iii. Fun steps to reading: children’s literature for adults
2. Adult education courses delivered by other agencies, with a library component
  - a. Modern Irish Literature (in association with Institute of Technology, Carlow – Wexford campus)
  - b. Introduction to computers, (in association with CWVEC, Adult and Community Education Services)
  - c. Storytelling (under development in association with the University of Glamorgan, and the Wexford Organisation for Rural Development)
  - d. Selected courses to be identified from the existing range delivered by education and development agencies
3. Reading circles and other informal learning co-operatives
  - a. Four reading circles meet in libraries monthly.
  - b. A senior citizens group meets in Wexford town, weekly.
4. Once-off lectures, workshops, exhibitions: Content and learning levels vary considerably. Current provision covers literature, the visual arts, music, local studies, the environment.

## **Place**

- In the public library building
- In schools, colleges or other formal education venues
- In community venues

**Price : €451,000 over 4 years**

## **Promotion**

- One-to-one contact and group meetings with educators and community activists
- One-to-one contact and group meetings with existing library learners

- Media campaign with local radio and press
- Promotional materials – posters, brochures, press releases as appropriate – disseminated

### Action Plan and Timescale

	2006	2007	2008	2009
Collaboration and negotiation with partners, define scope, responsibilities and strategy.				
Review and refine, bi-annually				
Development of learning programmes, -in library -in other venues Acquire accreditation Review and adapt	 	 		
Delivery of learning programmes in 3 libraries -Library research skills courses, -Reading circles, each month -Lectures, workshops, exhibitions, events				
Delivery of learning programmes in the community -Adult education/community learning				
Develop promotions campaign				
Implementation of promotions campaign, review and adapt, quarterly				

### Evaluation

Each element will be evaluated by

- data-collection, e.g. number and profile of participants, attendance figures throughout the provision

- measure pre-participation learning expectations and post-learning achievement by survey, focus group meeting or other methodology as suitable
- Documentation of library expectation and achievement

The strand will be evaluated annually and at the end of the Plan by

- Collation of individual elements and analysis of data
- analysis of achievement against targets

### **7.9.2 Strand 2 Capacity building : growing membership among urban non-users**

#### **Goal**

Use their local libraries by non-users who live locally

#### **Objective**

Increase membership by 10%

#### **Target**

Non-library users who live near a community library

### **MARKETING ACTIVITY**

#### **Product**

The product is the full range of library services currently available, focused on identified interests. Lifestyle research indicates that interests would start with reading popular fiction, and both reading materials & activities that support their involvement in childcare, voluntary work, crafts, languages, biography, ICT literacy. Since raising awareness is a critical issue for this sector, library promotional products must be provided initially in the community. Visibility for the local library in communities at a distance from the buildings needs to be sustained by programming there. Collaboration with community activists and harnessing resources, e.g. community buses, is important, particularly for socially excluded persons. Library time allocated to the sector must be scheduled.

**Price:** €281,000 over 4 years

€160,000 : library staff personnel

€30,000: Learning materials

€56,000 : programme implementation

€20,000 : promotion costs

€15,000 : marketing expertise

## Place

- Three public libraries in Wexford town, Enniscorthy and New Ross
- Community meeting places in Wexford town, Enniscorthy and New Ross

## Promotion

A targeted Public Relations campaign, with a clear message, to include

- library interaction with community activists, agencies, clubs and association committees that work with this sector,
- Publicity materials e.g. posters, both event and service fliers, in community venues and media coverage in local press and on local radio
- Library information in local publications including parish / residents association newsletters
- Programme of library activities in the community and in library that reinforce service benefits

## Action Plan and Timescale

		2006	2007	2008	2009
	Programme development:				
	Identify partners and engage				
	plan strategy				
	Review and refine, bi-annually				
	Purchase bookstock				
	Outreach to 3 urban communities in the vicinity of each library each year:-				
	-Build interest in library, visit community groups to identify needs				
	-Library promotional events in community				
	S Sustain groups in				

	community				
	Delivery of induction programmes in 3 libraries -Library tours -library access programmes -Designated book clubs for community groups -Lectures, workshops, exhibitions, events in library				
	Develop promotions campaign				
	Implementation of promotions campaign, review and adapt, quarterly				

### Evaluation

Evaluate annually and at the end of the plan, to:

- Measure achievement against target membership increase of 15%,
- Survey range and priority of use of services available
- Measure expectations against experience in select groups by focus group or other methodology.

### 7.9.3 Strand 3 Capacity building : growing membership among rural non-users

#### Goal

Rural non-library users exploiting mobile library services and/or community library services in their nearest town

#### Objective

5% increase in membership of rurally based silver learners

#### Target

Sixteen rural communities, Mobile library services will be directed at senior silver learners. Both the mobile library and the local public library will target younger silver learners.

## **MARKETING ACTIVITY**

### **Product**

- Outreach to communities to establish nature of potential benefits from library use
- Engagement built between mobile library and community groups to extend use of mobile library stops
- Existing relationship with rural day-care centres and community storytelling houses deepened
- Improved access to relevant parts of Library Collection
- House-bound service for senior silver learners harnessing community activists
- Programme of learning and library promotional events in community to build and sustain links
- Suitable in-library activity for groups visiting from rural communities

**Price** : € 210,000 over 4 years

€120,000 : library staff personnel

€30,000 : Learning materials

€ 25,000 : programme implementation

€ 20,000 : promotion costs

€ 15,000 : marketing expertise

### **Place**

- In communities, in community venues
- Mobile library locations : 16 over 4 years
- In public libraries






















### **Promotion**

- Interaction with rural development agencies, community activists, clubs and association committees,
- Publicity materials e.g. posters, both event and service fliers, in community venues and media coverage in local press and on local radio



- Library information in local publications including parish / residents association newsletters
- Programme of library activities

### Action Plan and Timescale

		2006	2007	2008	2009
	Programme development: Identify partners and engage plan strategy Review and refine, bi-annually Purchase bookstock	    	  	  	  
	Outreach to 4 rural communities adjacent to 3 libraries each year:- -Build interest in library, visit community groups to identify needs -Build relationship with mobile library and branch -Library promotional events in community S Sustain groups in community		  	  	  
	Delivery of induction programmes in 3 libraries -Library tours -library access programmes -Designated book clubs for community groups -Lectures, workshops, exhibitions, events in				

	library				
	Develop promotions campaign				
	Implementation of promotions campaign, review and adapt, quarterly				

## Evaluation

Evaluate annually and at the end of the plan, to:-

- Measure achievement against target membership increase of 15%
- Survey range and priority of use of services available
- Measure expectations against experience in select groups by focus group or other methodology
- Amend as required to optimise returns

### 7.9.4 Strand 4 Research

#### Goal

Build enhanced marketing expertise with library staff

#### Objective

- To up skill staff in marketing for public libraries focused on service delivery for silver learners by:-
- Assessing and analysing published research and statistical data
- Re-determination of management information needs and revision of existing management information system
- Creation of additional data capture products as necessary, e.g. library membership record
- Refinement of mailing lists

#### Target

Library service staff

## MARKETING ACTIVITY

#### Product

An effective marketing management information portfolio needs to incorporate published data broken down by DED and profile subsections, library statistics compared with DED/CSO data, benchmarking surveys, community profiles at group levels, profiles of library stakeholders.

#### Place

- Public library service points
- Library Management Services HQ

**Price :** €190,000 over 4 years

€160,000: library staff personnel

€5,000 : Learning materials

€ 10,000: programme implementation

€ -----: promotion costs

€ 15,000: marketing expertise

#### Promotion

- Dissemination of strand plan to all staff
- Information & review meetings for library and Council staff
- Silver learners page on Website
- At application and testing times, focus group meeting with community activists serving the sector

#### Action plan and timescale

		2006	2007	2008	2009
	Determine data required, develop strategy to collect:- -Research lifestyles nationally and in Co. Wexford -CSO statistical data - Library membership data - library use data				
	Survey silver learners to profile users and provide benchmark				
	Mailing list database, develop and maintain				
	Website silver learners page				
	Briefings to library staff, Council management and Councillors				

## Evaluation

Review of the application of the marketing strands and the results of programme achievement against the targets set will create the evaluation for this strand. The process will be assessed by the Project Manager, based on achievement and feedback from participants, and the experience will be documented.

### 7.10 Management of the Marketing Campaign

A Marketing Team will manage the campaign. It should comprise of

- Representatives from the sector with community and educational development interests
- One Councillor, Wexford County Council
- The County Librarian
- Executive Librarian with responsibility for learning programmes
- One or more Community Librarians
- Community & Enterprise Development Officer

#### 7.10.1 Budget Implications 2006 – 2009

Item	Strand 1	Strand 2	Strand 3	Strand 4	Total
Library Personnel	220,000	160,000	120,000	160,000	660,000
Learning Materials	40,000	30,000	30,000	5,000	105,000
Programme Implementation	136,000	56,000	25,000	10,000	227,000
Promotion Costs	40,000	20,000	20,000	-----	80,000
Marketing Expertise	15,000	15,000	15,000	15,000	60,000
Total Cost over 4 years	451,000	281,000	210,000	190,000	1,132,000
Total Cost per Annum, = €283,000					
Additional funding required per annum = €35,000					

## **7.11 Conclusion**

This marketing plan has been developed with two objectives,

- to fulfil a requirement of the PLRP Marketing Project to develop an example of a marketing plan that can be used by the public library sector in Ireland and while doing so
- to create a practical marketing plan that can be implemented in Wexford County Library Public Library Service.

Both objectives have been realized. However the process showed that while public libraries must engage in marketing and recognise its importance within responsibilities at a senior management level, collaboration with a marketing expert is equally essential. This collaboration will deliver cost-effective marketing.

The Librarian brings research skills, library practice, product expertise and some community knowledge to the collaboration. Community representatives deepen local knowledge. A marketing expert refines marketing theory and advises on marketing practice for application to the public library environment.

Marketing looks at service provision from the customers' point of view. Marketing plans, implemented, provide a methodology whereby public libraries deliver effective services, improve performance and grow their client base. The recommendation from this process is that the practice of marketing is indeed essential today to produce effective public libraries.

## 8. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This project carried out research into the international practice of marketing in public libraries, and looked at how marketing is implemented in public libraries in Ireland. The project identified a model which could be followed in Ireland, and tested the implementation of the model in the three participating library authorities.

The main findings of the international and national research are set out below, as are the key lessons learned from the implementation of the marketing model. A number of recommendations, based on the research, are made.

### 8.1 Definitions, Policy, and Planning

#### 8.1.1 What marketing is and how it is practiced

Marketing was identified as a key issue for local authorities in the *Better Local Government* report, published in 1996.<sup>68</sup> This was echoed, with specific reference to public libraries, by the *Branching Out* report in 1998, which considered it to be one of the ten issues for the 'future of the public library service'.<sup>69</sup>

Research revealed that marketing professionals use a range of definitions (and models) of marketing. These include 'product' marketing; 'service' marketing; 'relationship' marketing, and 'strategic' marketing.

Research into international practice of marketing in public libraries suggests that, although public librarians throughout the world engage in marketing, people within the sector have very different views and levels of understanding of what marketing actually is, and how it should be used. There is no single agreed marketing policy, which would inform library practice, at international level, nor has such a policy been adopted in any single country.

Within Ireland, a survey of county and city librarians suggests that there is a positive attitude towards marketing within the sector, with all respondents declaring that marketing was either important or very important. Despite this, no public library service had as yet prepared a marketing plan, while less than half of the respondents

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<sup>68</sup> *Better Local Government*, 38.

<sup>69</sup> *Branching Out*, 42.

indicated that their development plan contained a significant marketing or promotion element.

A majority of library services reported that some form of market research, in addition to the Public Library User Survey (PLUS), had been carried out in their authority. Indeed, this in-house market research was acted on to a far greater degree than was the PLUS survey.

Within public library practice, promotion and publicity is the most developed area of marketing, and all public libraries engage in promotion and publicity.

### **8.1.2 Recommended Approach**

Notwithstanding the multiplicity of definitions and models, there is agreement across all the definitions that marketing is a strategic process and an integral part of the management of an organisation. Accepting that marketing is a process, research and planning are key parts of the process:

Effective marketing requires quality research in order to assess what the library has to offer, what the users want, and how to match the two. The process includes several steps before publicity and promotion begin.<sup>70</sup>

The Project Team identified the approach developed by the Ohio Library Council as a suitable basis for a model for use in Irish public libraries.<sup>71</sup> The recommended steps, adapted from the Ohio model, are:

1. Begin the marketing process by examining your library's mission or purpose.
2. Assess library capabilities with an internal audit (i.e. an internal assessment).
3. Produce a community profile of the target community,
4. Find out what products (services) your users want, and how they perceive the library, through market research.
5. Develop goals and objectives based on your mission and the results of your internal audit and external research into what customers want.
6. To meet goals, select strategies to promote your products that will work best, be affordable, and reach your customers.
7. Create a plan of action that describes all the steps needed to carry out the strategies for meeting goals.

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<sup>70</sup> 'Marketing defined', <<http://www.olc.org/marketing/1definitions.htm>>.

<sup>71</sup> 'Marketing Planning', <<http://www.olc.org/marketing/2intro.htm>>.

8. Implement the plan.
9. Evaluate how well you have done.

A number of other key points emerged from the research:

- Marketing can be **costly** both in financial and staff time costs, but the investment is beneficial.
- Public libraries can and do engage **marketing consultants** to assist them conduct market research, design the marketing plan and co-ordinate the marketing campaign.
- **A Marketing strategy must be** appropriate to the aims and objectives of the marketing exercise.
- **Promotion** is not marketing; it is a part of marketing
- **The target community** must be identified.
- **Comprehensive information** about the organisation (via an audit) and the community it serves (via market research) must be gathered.
- **A marketing team group** within the library management structure must be established.
- **An annual marketing plan** should be produced, and an appropriate **budget** allocated.
- **The marketing plan** must set out what service(s) the library will deliver to particular client groups, what resources are available for this, how the services will be delivered, and how the service(s) will be promoted.
- **The image and branding** of the public library service must be considered as part of the marketing plan.
- **Staff Awareness** of the marketing plan is essential
- **Training and development** in marketing and the marketing plan must be provided for staff.
- **Evaluation** of the plan is crucial and must be continuous.

### 8.1.3 Recommendations for Policy Development

The following recommendations are concerned with policy development at national and local level.

1. There is a need for the development of marketing policy at national level to inform policy development and practice at organisational level. The policy should be broad enough to incorporate national issues, capacity for



international co-operation, as well as organisational-level development. The Branching Out Steering Committee, in co-operation with An Chomhairle Leabharlanna and library authorities, should draft such a policy and seek to have it adopted at national level, and at local level by library authorities.

2. Marketing should be adopted as a key strand under *Branching Out* phase two.
3. In setting policy for future research, the Public Library Research Programme Committee should consider examining the development, implementation and evaluation of marketing plans (steps 8 & 9 of the methodology) by way of one or more follow-up projects.

#### **8.1.4 Recommendations for action at national level**

1. The application of marketing policy to public library practice should be the subject of on-going review by An Chomhairle Leabharlanna, with results being fed into the *Branching Out* process.
2. A current awareness action detailing the range, nature and impacts of various marketing models and applications should be initiated out by An Chomhairle Leabharlanna.
3. An Chomhairle should examine, for examples of transferable good practice, how other sectors, in particular the heritage and cultural sectors, conduct marketing.
4. Marketing needs specific address within elementary and continuing education for the library profession. This should be considered by the Standing Committee on Public Library Staff Training and Development, the School of Information and Library Studies (UCD), and the Library Association of Ireland.

#### **8.1.5 Recommendations for action by library authorities**

1. Each library authority should develop its own marketing plan, reviewed at regular intervals.
2. Public library services should use the recommended marketing model as a basis for their own plans and actions.
3. In developing their marketing plans, library authorities should take account of the national policy and of the service priorities identified under *Branching Out*.
4. Each library authority should establish a marketing team to take responsibility for marketing.

5. Responsibility for the development and implementation of the plan should be assigned at Senior Executive Librarian.

## 8.2 Marketing Methodology

As described earlier in this report, the project identified a model, based on that of the Ohio Council Model. This model was tested in each library authority by applying it to a specific branch (in Mayo and South Dublin) and a specific user group ('silver learners' in Wexford). It is important to note that the timescale of the project did not allow for the testing of the entire model. In each case the testing resulted in the drafting of a marketing plan but the plan itself was not implemented.

A significant and prerequisite part of the marketing process is the gathering of information. Research suggests three main tools for the gathering information: an internal audit; community profiling, and market surveys. Each of these tools was tested by the participating library authorities.

An **audit** is a 'comprehensive, systematic, independent and periodic examination of an organisation's marketing environment, objectives, strategies, activities with a view of determining problem areas and opportunities and recommending a plan of action'.

<sup>72</sup> The project team produced an audit template for the use of public libraries. (See appendix 9.4.) The audit allows for the compilation of a range of data, including:

- Library membership profiles
- Customer satisfaction rates
- Distribution and condition of library branches and mobile service
- SWOT analyses on branches stock, facilities and services
- Promotional methods
- Communication methods used by libraries
- Relationships between the library and the local authority and elected members

It was clear from the testing of the internal audit template that library authorities could collect more information when registering users. Collecting data at this point would provide much valuable information which is needed for the marketing process.

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<sup>72</sup> Darlene Weingand, 'Preparing for the New Millennium: the Case for using marketing Strategies', *Library Trends*, 43/ (1995), 295-317.

**Community profiling** has been described as ‘a thorough description of a group of people who think of themselves as a community undertaken with their co-operation’<sup>73</sup>, and is a process in market research used to identify the community in which the library operates.

Research identifies five elements in the community profiling process:

1. The establishment of a marketing team with responsibility for carrying out the community profile.
2. A community profile plan, setting out objectives, outcomes, process, and stakeholders.
3. Desk research using a range of sources of statistical and qualitative data.
4. Market Research, following on from the desk research, to collect information on users; non-users; lapsed-users; lifestyles within the community, and groups within the community.
5. An analysis of the data collected, geared towards the aims and objectives of the marketing exercise.

Research into the theory of **market surveying** suggests that there is no one best method of carrying out a survey. The method selected will depend on a number of factors including the survey objectives; the topic(s) to be surveyed; the nature and size of the population to be surveyed; the resources available in terms of staff, time and finance, and the response rate required. The most important step is the definition of the survey objectives, from which everything else follows. The formulation of questions in a survey questionnaire should be also driven by the survey objectives.

Surveys are ideal for collecting quantitative information and are a useful means of detecting trends and gaining a general insight into peoples' attitudes and preferences. However, to acquire more detailed or specific information further investigation may be necessary. This could be accomplished by carrying out a survey on a more specific topic, or by conducting focus groups.

As part of the project, Mayo County Library and South Dublin County Libraries carried out user surveys of particular geographically defined communities in their own

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<sup>73</sup> Personal communication, Terry Kendrick, Marketing Consultant.

authorities, based on templates produced by the project (see appendix 9.7). Wexford County Library investigated a single sector (learners aged 50 and over) across its total geographical area, and also ran a focus group.

In each case, all work was undertaken in-house, which was staff intensive. An approach involving library management of the marketing process and a combination of outsourcing and internal operation could prove equally successful and more cost-effective.

General research suggests that the online surveys are successful, and Mayo County library carried out such a survey. Their experience identified the initial costs in staff time, and the technical requirements, as problematic. In addition, the response rate of 16.6% was unexpectedly low.

The most important phase in the survey process proved to be the preparation stage, including pilot testing of the survey instruments and accurate computation of sample sizes. The response rate (to the handout survey) in both authorities was 90%, which is well above the average in surveys generally. The Project Team concluded that the surveys yielded valuable information which augmented that collected in the community profile.

One of the major findings of the focus groups is that they fail to gather personal information about the individuals. Also, the role of facilitator was particularly important in all the focus groups: library authorities planning to conduct such sessions using their own staff will need to provide the necessary training.

### **8.2.1 Recommendation – market research**

It is recommended that, when developing a marketing plan, each library authority conduct an internal audit, in conjunction with a community profile and user/non-user surveys to ensure systematic and comprehensive data collection.

### **8.2.2 Recommendations – internal audits**

1. An Chomhairle Leabharlanna, in co-operation with the county and city librarians, should develop a standard data set to be collected by library authorities when registering library users.

2. The Standing Committee on Public Library Staff Training and Development should devise a training programme for public library staff to include training in SWOT methodology.
3. Public library authorities should, when carrying out an audit, consult the audit template prepared by this project (see appendix 9.4).

### **8.2.3 Recommendations – community profiling**

1. Public Library authorities should carry out a community profile as part of the marketing planning process.
2. The data collected from community profiling should be used with the returns from the audit to develop goals and objectives for a marketing plan.
3. The data collected should be a mix of quantitative/statistical and qualitative/research, of hard and soft data that can be collected from EU, national, regional and local printed sources.
4. Users, non-users, lapsed-users, agencies, and community groups should be targeted to give their opinions(s) on library services and to enable the library authority to understand their needs and requirements when conducting local research for community profiling.
5. Library authorities should build on the relationships developed with the communities through community profiling, to ensure that the library service plays its full part in the local environment.
6. The Standing Committee on Public Library Staff Training and Development should devise a training programme for public library staff to include training in the use of the census data and in the sourcing of relevant and current statistics.

### **8.2.4 Recommendations - surveys and focus groups**

1. Public library authorities should carry out user and non-user surveys and focus groups as part of the market research process.
2. The exact approaches and methodologies should be decided by the marketing team on the basis of the marketing objectives; the size and profile of the target population, and the staff and financial resources available.
3. Library authorities should consider engaging professional marketing services to assist in carrying out the surveys, particularly if conducting a focus group.
4. Training and support, relating to the implementation model chosen, must be provided for staff.

### **8.3 Marketing Plans**

Having applied the market research tools of internal audit, community profile, and surveys/focus groups, each library authority drafted a marketing plan based on an analysis of the data collected (as set out in chapters 5, 6 and 7). The enabled the authorities pinpoint areas that required action, giving rise to the marketing objectives. Having developed their objectives, each project participant drafted a plan of action to achieve these objectives. The actions plans set out the objectives, the specific actions required to meet those objectives, the financial resources required, and the timeframe required. An evaluation and review were included as final steps in the plan. The plans from each of the authorities, while having different objectives and being presented in different ways, all employed the methodology recommended in this report for use by all library authorities in Ireland.

### **8.4 Conclusion**

This report sets out the results of research carried out into international and national practice in marketing in public libraries. The Project Team identified, from the research, a marketing approach which it recommends for use in Ireland to library authorities.

The Project tested the approach, applying it in three library authorities, to both specific geographical areas and a specific user group. The various steps involved in the method are set out in detail, and recommendations made in relation to each. A number of recommendations as to the development of policy, and desirable actions, at national level are also made.

The Project Team believes that the research and testing of the marketing methodology makes a convincing case for the adoption of marketing policies at national and local level, and for the implementation of the marketing approach described.

The report acknowledges the costs involved, in both finance and staff resources, but shows that by following the methodology described, library authorities can implement marketing strategies that can generate both increases in usage of library services and improvements in those services.

## **9. APPENDICES**

### **9.1 The Public Library Research Programme**

The Public Library Research Programme assists local authorities in carrying out public library research. The Programme is co-funded by the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government and local authorities, and managed by An Chomhairle Leabharlanna.

#### **9.1.1 The Public Library Research Committee**

- Professor Michael Casey, Department of Library and Information Studies, University College, Dublin
- Domitilla Fagan, An Chomhairle Leabharlanna (Executive Secretary)
- Fionnuala Hanrahan, County Librarian, Wexford County Council, representing the Library Association of Ireland
- Annette Kelly, An Chomhairle Leabharlanna (Chair)
- Norma McDermott, Director, representing An Chomhairle Leabharlanna
- Betty Moriarty/Orlagh O'Sullivan, Assistant Principal, representing the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government

#### **9.1.2 Funding Bodies**

- The Marketing for Public Libraries Research Project was funded jointly by:
  - Local authorities
  - The Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government
  - Mayo County Council
  - South Dublin County Council
  - Wexford County Council
  - An Chomhairle Leabharlanna

#### **9.1.3 Project management team**

- Georgina Byrne, Senior Librarian, South Dublin County Council
- Edel Clancy, Librarian, South Dublin County Council
- Fionnuala Hanrahan, County Librarian, Wexford County Council
- Richard Hickey, Executive Librarian, Mayo County Librarian
- Hazel Percival, Executive Librarian, Wexford County Council

- Brendan Teeling, Assistant Director, An Chomhairle Leabharlanna
- Austin Vaughan, County Librarian, Mayo County Council
- Teresa Walsh, County Librarian, South Dublin County Council

## **9.2 Methodology and Research Process**

### **9.2.1 Project Objectives**

The Marketing for Public Libraries Project is a research project which aimed to investigate how marketing techniques can be applied by public libraries to the services they offer. The objectives of the project were:

- To identify and report on policies, best practice models, and operational and developmental issues relating to marketing for public library services at international level.
- To identify and report on policies, best practice models, operational and developmental issues relating to marketing for public (and other) library services at national level.
- To audit existing services and facilities of the libraries and the communities within which they are operating.
- To identify and report on best practice for surveys and focus groups in relation to library users and non-users.
- To examine the process of community profiling and how it can be applied in the public library context.
- To carry out and analyse community profiles in each of the three participating library authorities' areas.
- To reach conclusions and recommend services which can be replicated on a national basis.

### **9.2.2 Project team and structure**

Each project funded under the Public Library Research Programme (PLRP) operates under the overall aegis of the Public Library Research Programme Committee (see 9.1.1). The Marketing for Public Libraries Project team consisted of representatives of each participating library authority alongside one representative from An Chomhairle Leabharlanna (see 9.1.3). Each authority appointed project officers who were responsible for carrying out the research and writing the project reports, which were submitted to An Chomhairle on a monthly basis.



### **9.2.3 Work packages and Methodologies**

The parameters of the project were outlined and agreed at a meeting with a representative from the PLRP Committee, in early 2004. The project was designed for completion in thirteen months. Fifteen months were required and the additional time was negotiated with the PLRP Committee.

The project team met on ten occasions while on-going communications was by email and telephone. A formal presentation and mid-term review was made to the PLRP Committee after six months.

The project work plan comprised a number of work packages (WP), the leadership for which was allocated to the participating authorities. The WPs, their objectives and the leadership roles, were<sup>86</sup>:

- WP1: Research into international situation & practice – Wexford. Objectives: to identify policies, best practice models, operational and developmental issues relating to marketing for public library services at international level.
- WP2: Report on national situation & practice – Mayo. Objectives: to identify policies, best practice models, operational and developmental issues relating to marketing for public (and other) library services at national level.
- WP3: Report on internal & external library audits – South Dublin. Objectives: to Audit existing services and facilities of the libraries and the communities within which they are operating.
- WP4: Survey methodology – Mayo. Objectives: to identify best practice for surveys and focus groups in relation to library users and non-users
- WP5: Researching Community profiling – Wexford. Objectives: to examine the process of community profiling and how it can be applied in the public library context.
- WP6: Community profiles – South Dublin (co-ordinator), Mayo, and Wexford. Objectives: to apply the survey and community profile methodologies of WP4 and WP5 in the local context.

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<sup>86</sup> Work packages 4-7 were revised in the light of the mid-term review.

- WP7: Analysis of community profiles – South Dublin. Objectives: to carry out an analysis of the community profiles.
- WP8: Training – South Dublin. Objectives: to identify and organise training for the project team.
- WP9: Dissemination – South Dublin. Objectives: to promote the project and disseminate its findings, experience and future plans for marketing public library services to library communities and key stakeholders.
- WP10: Final report and recommendations – Wexford. Objectives: to reach conclusions and recommend services which can be replicated on a national basis.
- WP11: Project management – An Chomhairle. Objectives: to ensure that the project runs smoothly and that all deliverables are provided on time; to establish and verify proper quality assurance procedures and to identify any risks and potential delays, and mitigate against them.

Although each of the three participating library authorities took leadership responsibility for individual packages (as outlined above), in each case the other two authorities provided support. Three work packages were undertaken simultaneously.

Conventional literature-based research was undertaken, and in addition to An Chomhairle Leabharlanna's library, the Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals (CILIP) was helpful. The support, both formal and informal, of library marketing consultant Terry Kendrick, was useful.

The creation of data-collection tools, their testing and analysis of results as well as effectiveness of the models formed a significant workload.

Project officers attended training workshops in the application of SPSS software at an early stage. Training in the benefits of library-specific marketing techniques was provided midway through the project.

### **9.3 Case studies of promotional activities**

The following is an outline of some interesting examples of marketing or promotional activities undertaken by various libraries. These examples were picked from among

many listed on the questionnaires and were the subject of follow-up calls to the relevant authorities.

### **9.3.1 Leixlip Community Library Survey 2003**

This survey of Leixlip community was carried out by Kildare county Library and Arts service in 2003. In the context of public libraries in Ireland it was an unusual survey in that it was carried out in advance of the opening of a new library, so it sought to ascertain what respondents required from a library service rather than obtaining their views on existing services. As such, it is a good example of market research being employed at the outset to inform planning of services in accordance with stated user preferences. The survey was implemented in conjunction with N.U.I. Maynooth so it is also a good example of co-operation between the library and an academic institution.

The design of the survey was based on a categorisation of the information requirements under 7 headings:

- Late night opening – which nights would be most popular for late opening
- Technology requirements – how people would use the self-learning centre
- Stock requirements – most popular fiction genres, physical formats and subject areas.
- Physical space – preferences in the area of arts activities, exhibitions, lectures
- Information – best ways of informing people of library events and what categories of community information would be most sought by users.
- Human resource requirements – would face-to-face contact with staff be the preferred option for those with specific queries?
- Personal information – what facilities both in terms of physical infrastructure, internal layout and stock should be provided for those with physical or intellectual disability?

Survey questions, thirteen in all, were framed in order to address each of these information requirements.

The next step in the process was deciding on a sample size. A figure of 10% of the population of 18 years or over was chosen with the Register of Electors used as a means of calculating population size. The initial strategy for obtaining survey results

was face-to-face interviews with interviewers calling to people's homes, selected at random from the register.

A pilot study was undertaken first and this revealed problems with poor levels of response with people refusing to take part or not being at home. As a result the distribution strategy was altered and a mixture was used of face-to-face interviews in strategic locations like shopping centres and distribution of questionnaires through schools, adult education courses, crèches etc. Eventually, less than the 10% target sample was reached within an acceptable time frame but the final figure of completed questionnaires was deemed sufficiently representative.

This survey could serve as a useful template for any authority attempting something similar. Apart from the design of the questionnaire and the formulation of appropriate questions to elicit the desired information, the methods of deciding on a sample size and the problems encountered in arriving at the best method of distributing the questionnaire are particularly interesting.

### **9.3.2 Mayo County Library “Reach out and Read” project**

Reach Out and Read was a programme of over fifty events with the objective of promoting reading, which was run jointly by Mayo County Library and Mayo Education Centre and was funded by the National Reading Initiative. This was the first time the library service and the Education Centre had worked together on a major joint initiative and it was, by any measure, an enormous success. The aim of the scheme was to promote reading and an awareness of the importance of books and reading. The programme was aimed at all the key players involved in the reading process: teachers, parents, librarians and of course children themselves.

Its elements included talks on reading for parents and teachers, workshops for adults and children, exhibitions of children's books, reading clubs, book publishing, and story hours. Among the children's authors who visited the county were Peter Regan, Brianog Brady Dawson, Michael Mullen, Tom McCaughren, Ré O Laighlis and Mary Arrigan. The project also included a “Virtual writer in Residence,” which was a facility whereby students could submit their poems to a writer in residence via email.

Both librarians and teachers are involved in promoting reading but they approach the subject from different perspectives. One of the aims of Reach Out and Read was to

get the two groups working together to create a synergy that would enhance the level of reading in the county.

The programme succeeded in its main objective, which was to promote reading and to create an awareness of the importance of books and reading. Over fifty individual events were held which were attended by all the key players involved in the reading process: teachers, parents, librarians and of course children themselves. Teachers were shown the techniques of selecting books while librarians were made more aware of the school curriculum. This raised awareness will aid both groups in their ongoing work in promoting reading.

The programme also had the side benefit of making library staff more aware of the work of the Education Centre and vice versa. Staff in both organisations now know each other by name which augurs well for future projects.

From a librarian's perspective the highlights of the programme were the Author Visits. An average of fifty children attended each of these readings and there were unanimous calls for more visits to be organised. These visits also helped raise the visibility of the library service.

Another highlight was the series of talks on the school curriculum for parents. These lectures were also attended by library staff who were made aware of the new approaches to teaching reading, such as the use of "big books".

The programme with over fifty events in three months was perhaps too ambitious. With such a huge schedule it was impossible to do justice to each individual event. While the programme received quite an amount of press coverage, a more focussed marketing plan might have achieved better results. Some planned events did not materialise due to time constraints. In conclusion Reach Out and Read was a success both in terms of the quality of the events and in terms of the numbers who attended.

### **9.3.3 South Dublin Libraries – “Mapping the World” Seminar on Cartography.**

This daylong seminar was held in September 2003 as part of South Dublin Libraries' annual "History and Heritage" month in order to promote their new collection of maps of the South Dublin area and also a wide range of Irish maps in the local collection,

dating from the 15th century to contemporary maps. Invitations were sent to all those on the library's local history mailing list and entry was confined to the first ninety applicants. The event was fully subscribed.

An exhaustive catalogue of the map collection was produced in conjunction with the event and published in booklet form. Speakers at the seminar included experts in various aspects of historical cartography from Wales, U.C.D. and N.U.I. Maynooth and also a demonstration from an expert in the area of G.I.S. and online map resources.

The event was one of the most successful ever undertaken by South Dublin Libraries. The main benefits and elements which made it successful were:

- The G.I.S. aspect opened up a new world to many of the participants who had not previously had any experience of seeing maps on computer or had any knowledge of the power of G.I.S. systems.
- It was a valuable learning experience for the library in the benefits of promoting a specific service to a well-defined target audience.
- The event was fully subscribed and there was very positive feedback from the participants.
- The positive feedback was reflected in increased usage of the map collections and increased usage of the public access computers to access online map resources.
- The event served to highlight the G.I.S. system in South Dublin county Council.

#### **9.3.4 Wexford County Library - Readership Development Programme for Adults.**

Since the establishment of its first adult library Reading Circle in 1999, Wexford County Library has undertaken a number of reader development projects, including:

- A literature course on John Banville: the writer and his writings, developed in association with the Department of Anglo-Irish Literature, UCD, in 2001.
- About Books, an initiative funded under the An Chomhairle Leabharlanna/Arts Council Readership development research project, in 2001/2002.
- Three additional library Reading Circles supported in 2003.
- Reading down the Ages, a community reading pilot project, supported by County Wexford VEC, also in 2003.
- The first Wexford Book Festival which took place in 2004.

- A Literary Heritage Course, two phases of which were developed and delivered.
- An evening class in Irish Literature, developed in association with the VEC autumn Evening Classes Programme.
- A Library Book Column (monthly) in one local newspaper.

In the area of readership development, the following needs were identified:

- To support readers who wished to extend their reading experience.
- To research current creative reading interests.
- To increase interest in Irish writing.
- To grow audiences for emerging and less popular writers.

In the schedule of programming listed above, each element was developed from the findings of previous projects. Participants were surveyed, diaries were kept, feedback was collected and analysed, and initiatives were piloted in controlled environments. For example, members of the pilot Reading Circle (1999) requested the John Banville course and formed about 30% of participants. Feedback from the course influenced the make-up of the About Books project and with it encouraged the development of the first literary heritage course.

Some demand for the literary heritage course has allowed its transfer to the VEC evening classes programme, while the library service is testing an adaptation of the core model for a less literate group and with learning outcomes more focused on analysis rather than appreciation. Similarly the four reading circles, the literature courses and the Service's other popular programming is growing a base audience for the adult programme in the new Wexford Book Festival.

The About Books project and the literary heritage courses have been evaluated externally. In this area of adult readership development in particular, the Wexford experience has been that planning has been time expensive, learning outcomes are difficult to measure and achievement is slow.

### **Wexford County Library- Storytelling Programmes.**

In the late 90s, two storytelling houses and the public library service provided storytelling for adults and for children on an on-going basis. The library service identified storytelling as a gateway activity, attractive across generations and socio-economic groupings, which provided a route into literacy and critical reading,

heritage, good health and community development. Over the past six years, engagement in storytelling has been extended countywide using the vehicles of a co-ordinated calendar of public sessions, two storytelling seasons and an annual Storytelling Festival every November. Demand now outstrips supply. A County Wexford Storytelling Network, set up in 2000 and administered by the library service, co-ordinates activity.

Development has occurred around recognition for local styles and stories on the one hand and exposure to the international tradition on the other. Three groups of participants in particular have been surveyed regularly to measure achievement and future need: they are primary school teachers, local storytellers, and day-care centre staffs. Members of the county's five storytelling houses act as a focus group. This first phase of development will be evaluated by an external expert in autumn 2004. The following phase is expected to work around growing interested local storytellers to a professional standard & employment, and deepening selected communities' experience of storytelling.



#### 9.4 Library service audit template

***Please note that the following template only provides space in sections 4.0 and 5.0 for information regarding one branch library. In the versions sent to the relevant authorities space was provided for all branches that made up their library service.***

### Library Audit

***This form can be filled in on your computer.  
On completion please return it by email to “email address”***

*It would be appreciated if the completed audit form could be returned by “date”*

### 1.0 Membership

*In the space provided please fill out your library membership as a percentage of total population served (statistics collected by An Chomhairle Leabharlanna for the annual statistics)*

% aged 0 –14 years	
% aged 15+	
% of total population served	

## 2.0 Customer Satisfaction

**Using the results of the latest PLUS please enter in the percentages for the following headings for your library service. Please note that these headings were taken from the 2002 PLUS. If more recent PLUS findings are being used they may not be applicable.**

	Very Good	Good	Adequate	Poor	Very Poor
Staff helpfulness					
Staff knowledge and expertise					
Time spent waiting for service					
Success in locating specific item					
Success in browsing					
Success in information sourcing					
External condition of the library					
Internal condition of the library					

Ease of access (internal)					
Ease of access (external)					
Signs and guiding					
Layout and arrangement					
Provision of seating and tables					
Hours of opening					
Books and other materials					
Children's services					
Computers					
Overall					

*Over the remaining sections you will be required to carry out various SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) analyses on different subject areas. Below is an example of the type of information which is required.*

Example	Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
Location of branches	Most of the population live within 3 miles of a library	Communities which do not have own transport live furthest from a library branch	Many people don't know about smaller local libraries so must publicize these	Bad traffic conditions/public transport result in users turning to online book stores
Mobile service	Have 36 mobile stops and reaching many communities that have limited access to a library branch	Many stops located in communities that also use branch libraries	Able to reach new housing estates which otherwise would be waiting many years for a library service	Limited resources on mobile vans

### 3.0 Distribution of Libraries

According to your own opinion please carry out a SWOT analysis regarding the following 2 headings:

	Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
Location of branches (e.g. well located, accessible by public transport etc)				
Mobile service				

#### 4.0 Building

***Please carry out a SWOT analysis for each of your branch libraries. The name of the branch is not required. It may be useful to carry out two SWOT analyses, one for micro and one for macro projects.***

<b>Branch 1</b>	Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
Opening hours				
Car parking facilities				
<b><i>Lighting</i></b>				
<b><i>Space</i></b>				
Temperature				
Ambiance				
Furniture				
Exhibition areas				
Quiet areas				
Accessibility (lifts ramps etc)				

## 5.0 Stock and Services

*In sections 5.1-5.3 you are required to carry out SWOT analyses for each of your branches. Please assign the branches with the same branch number that you assigned them in section 4.0 above.*

### Branch 1

#### 5.1.1 Stock:

**Here you will be asked to assess your stock under five headings: Special Collections, Adult, Young Adult, Junior and Other.**

*When analysing your stock keep the following characteristics in mind: quantity, quality (publisher, layout etc), currency (current edition), appearance, range, issue statistics etc.*

<b>Special Collections</b>	Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
Local Studies Collection				
Print Loan Collection				
Literacy Collection				
Language Learning				



Collection				
Foreign Language Collection				
Periodicals/News paper Collection				

<b>Adult</b>	Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
Fiction				
Non Fiction				
Large Print				
Talking Books				
Reference Collection				
Multicultural Collection				
Music Collection				
Video Collection				
DVD Collection				

PC Games				
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<b>Young Adult</b>	Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
Fiction				
Non Fiction				
Talking Books				
Reference Collection				
Multicultural Collection				
Music Collection				
Video Collection				
DVD Collection				
PC Games				

<b>Junior</b>	Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
Fiction				
Non Fiction				
Talking Books				
Reference Collection				
Multicultural Collection				
Music Collection				
Video Collection				
DVD Collection				
PC Games				

Other Collections	Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats

### 5.2.1 Services

ICT (public use)	Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
Number of PCs				
Availability of internet access				
Printing facilities				
Scanning facilities				
Assistive learning technology e.g. Kurzweil etc				
Wi-Fi access (wire free internet access)				
Other (please specify)				

<b>Other Services</b>	Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
Photocopying service				
Fax service				
Housebound service				
Other (please specify)				



### 5.3.1 Activities

	Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
*Outreach support (please specify)				
Classes				
Reader development (e.g. reading groups, book promotions etc)				
Information talks/seminars				
Junior events				
Exhibitions				
National events				
Themed events				

Festivals				
Other (please specify)				

*\* Does your library service run any outreach programmes e.g. services to travellers etc. If so please list and carry out a SWOT analysis for each one in the space provided above.*

## 6.0 Promotion

### 6.1 In House Promotion

Please carry out a SWOT analysis for any of the following forms of promotion that you use.

In House	Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
Mailing lists:				
Adult				
Young Adult				
Junior				
Literary				
Local Studies				
Other				
Posters/flyers				
Brochure/ "What's on Guide" etc				
Library website				
Other (please specify)				



## 6.2 External Promotion

*Please carry out SWOT analyses for any of the following headings which are applicable to your library service. Information regarding your use, access to and relationship with each media type is being sought.*

<b>External</b>	Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
Local radio				
National radio				
Local newspapers				
National newspapers				
Television				
Newsletters				
Other (please specify)				

### 7.0 Internal Staff Communication

***Please carry out SWOT analyses on any of the channels and methods of communication listed below that you use.***

	Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
Intra branch				
Inter branch				
Vertical communication downwards (from senior management team)				
Vertical communication upwards (from branch staff)				
Use of email				
Use of local authority intranet				
Messaging from library management system				

Telephone				
Written memo				

### 8.0 Support (Local Authority)

***Please carry out SWOT analyses for the following headings (the first table should be filled out by the relevant library staff, the second should be filled out by the relevant Local Authority staff)***

<b>Table 1</b>	Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
Local Authority funding				
Communication with the Local Authority Department with which you are linked, e.g. Community Department, Corporate Services Department.				
Communication with the Corporate Department (do they help promote the				



profile of your library service).				
Relationship and involvement with Local Authority Arts Officer.				

<b>Table 2</b>	Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
Perception and relevance of the library in the eyes of the Local Authority.				
Perception and relevance of the library in the eyes of the County Councillors.				
Relationship with and the perception and relevance of the library in the eyes of the County Development Board				

*Thank you for taking the time to complete this audit of your library service. Please return it by “date” to either of the email addresses below.*

## 9.5 Community profiling template

### Introduction

Question	Answer
What is the purpose of this community profile?	
What process will be used to gather the information (e.g. gathering of statistical data, carrying out surveys, carrying out focus groups etc.)?	
Who will carry out the community profile (Library Department, Community Department etc)?	
What is the area that is being profiled (ED area name, combination of EDs, whole county etc)?	

## Part 1 Environment

	Question
Geography	Please give a brief overview of the area being served by the library and the service offered (size of area, population of area, number of library branches etc).
<i>Suggested source of information:</i>	Answer
<i>Own library sources</i>	
History	Please give a brief overview of the historical and future context of the area (population growth/projection, housing development etc).
<i>Suggested source of information:</i>	Answer
<i>Council sources, CDB</i>	
Infrastructure	What is the percentage of private car ownership (at least one car)? <a href="http://www.eirestat.cso.ie/Census/Tableviewer/tableView.aspx?ReportId=2186">www.eirestat.cso.ie/Census/Tableviewer/tableView.aspx?ReportId=2186</a>
<i>Suggested source of information:</i>	Answer
<i>Latest census</i>	
<i>Contact with local public transport agencies</i>	How effective is the public transport system in the area?
<i>Roads department of county council</i>	Answer
	Is there a comprehensive road network serving the area?
	Answer
Economic and Business Climate	Describe briefly the economic climate of the area.
	Answer
<i>Suggested source of information:</i>	
<i>CDB</i>	Describe briefly any new business development plans for the area.
<i>Planning and development departments of county council</i>	Answer

<p>Technological climate</p> <p><i>Suggested source of information:</i></p> <p><i>Latest census</i></p> <p><i>Contact with broadband and new internet technology providers</i></p>	What is the percentage of home PC ownership?
	<a href="http://www.eirestat.cso.ie/Census/Tableviewer/tableView.aspx?ReportId=2391">www.eirestat.cso.ie/Census/Tableviewer/tableView.aspx?ReportId=2391</a>
	Answer
	What is the availability of broadband?
	Answer
<p>Political Climate</p> <p><i>Suggested source of information:</i></p> <p><i>Local County Council</i></p>	Who are the main political stakeholders in the area?
	Answer

## Part 2 Facilities and Services

	Question	Answer
<p>Arts, Cultural and Heritage establishments</p> <p><i>Suggested source of information:</i></p> <p><i>Local phone directory</i></p> <p>Community directories</p> <p>Citizens information centre</p>	Are there any theatres in the area?	
	Are there any arts centres in the area?	
	Are there any exhibition spaces in the area?	
	Are there any galleries in the area?	
	Are there any museums in the area?	
	Are there any music centres in the area?	
	Are there any cultural centres in the area?	
	Are there any environmental centres in the area?	
	Are there any heritage centres in the area?	
	Please list any other establishments that fall into this category and are in the area.	
<p>Community Groups</p> <p><i>Suggested source of information:</i></p> <p><i>Local phone directory</i></p> <p><i>Community directories</i></p> <p><i>Library directories</i></p> <p><i>Local VEC colleges</i></p> <p><i>Citizens information centre</i></p>	For the following please provide an overview of the number, type, activity (membership) and voice in the community of each of the following type of groups in the area.	
	Youth groups	
	Parent groups	
	Traveller groups	

Local FÁS office	Community groups	
	Women's and men's groups	
	Support groups	
	Older people groups	
	Clubs and societies	
	Reading groups	
	Local History groups	
	Adult education groups	
	Advice groups	
Education Establishments	Please give the number of preschool/childcare centres in the area.	
Suggested source of information: <i>Local Health Board National Childcare Census Report (Department of Justice, Equality and Law reform) Community Directories Schools Library service Department of Education and science Local VEC Local FÁS office</i>	Please give the number of primary schools in the area.	
	Please give the number of 2 <sup>nd</sup> level education establishments in the area.	
	Please give the number of 3 <sup>rd</sup> level education establishments in the area.	
	Please give the number of further/continuing education establishments in the area.	
Health Service	Are there any health clinics in the area?	
Suggested source of information: <i>Local health board</i>	Are there any hospitals in the area?	
	Are there any retirement homes in the area?	

Recreational facilities  <i>Suggested source of information:</i> <i>Local phone directory</i> <i>Council parks department</i>	Please give a brief overview of the number of recreational facilities (playgrounds, cinemas, leisure centres, bowling alleys etc) in the area?	
Competition  Suggested source of information: <i>Local phone directory</i>	Who/what are the major library competitors in the area?	



### Part 3 Demographics

	Question
Population	What is population of the area being researched?
	Answer
<i>Suggested source of information: Latest census</i>	
Gender	What is the percentage of males and females in the area?
	Answer
<i>Suggested source of information: Latest census</i>	
Age	Please give percentage of males and females (together) in the area classified by age group.
	Answer
<i>Suggested source of information: Latest census</i>	
Employment	What is the percentage of unemployed aged 15+ in the area?
	Answer
<i>Suggested source of information: Latest census</i>	
	Please give the percentage of the labour force aged 15+ classified by broad occupational group.
	Answer
	Please give the percentage of the labour force aged 15+ classified by social class (occupation ranked by the level of skill required).
	Answer
Education	Please give the percentages of residents aged 15+ classified by attainment in education.
	Answer
<i>Suggested source of information:</i>	

<i>Latest census</i>	Please give the percentage of residents o/15 whose full time education has not ceased.
	Answer
Household composition  <i>Suggested source of information: Latest census</i>	Please provide percentage of households classified by nature of occupancy (tenure) e.g. owner occupied, local authority etc.
	Answer
	Please provide the number of males and females aged 65 years and over living alone as a percentage of all persons o/65.
	Answer
	Please provide a percentage of lone parent households as a percentage of all households in the area.
	Answer
	Please provide the percentage of households with children aged under 18.
	<b>Answer</b>
Disability  <i>Suggested source of information: Latest census</i>	Please give the percentage of disabled persons resident in the area.
	<b>Answer</b>
	Please provide percentage of disabled persons classified by type of disability.
	Answer
Ethnicity/ Communities  <i>Suggested source of information: Latest census</i> <i>*Survey</i>	Please give the numbers of non-Irish nationality as a percentage of the total area population.
	Answer
	Please give the percentage of the area population who are members of the travelling community.
	Answer

	*Please provide the percentage of persons resident in the profile area classified by native language.
	Answer
Income  <i>Suggested source of information:</i> ESRI (please note that ESRI data does not match Census data exactly, as different samples are used) *Survey	Please provide the percentages of households classified by weekly income and household type (o/65 living alone, lone parent, couple dependent children etc). <a href="http://www.esri.ie">www.esri.ie</a> (information only available by making contact with ESRI)
	Answer
	*If the above isn't available please provide percentages of surveyed people that fall into specified household income brackets.
	Answer

## Part 4 Lifestyle

	Question
Lifestyle  <i>Suggested source of information:</i> Survey	How do the people being profiled spend their free time?
	Answer
	On average between what hours does free time fall?
	Answer
	What are the main areas of interest/hobbies?
	Answer
	Where do those being profiled spend their free time/socialise?
	Answer
	What newspapers/magazine types do those being profiled read?
	Answer
	What TV stations/radio stations do they watch/listen to?
	Answer
Technology  <i>Suggested source of information:</i> Latest census Survey	What is the percentage of households in the area with a home PC?
	Answer
	What is the percentage of households with internet access?
	Answer
	*What percentage of those being profiled have access to a PC at work?
	Answer
	*What percentage of them have access to the internet at work?
	Answer
	*What types of hardware do they have (printer, scanners etc) at home?

	Answer
	*What hardware/IT do they plan to purchase for the home in the next 2 years?
	Answer
	*What is the attitude to IT?
	Answer
Transport	Please provide the percentage of persons resident in the profile area classified by means of travel to school, college or work.
Suggested source of information: Latest census *Survey	Answer
	Please give the percentage of households with no car.
	Answer
	Please give percentages of the population classified by time taken to travel to school, college or work.
	Answer
	Please give the percentage of the population classified by time leaving home to go to school, college or work.
	*Please give the percentages of the population classified by average time returning home after work.
	Answer

**Part 5 Library specific headings (for users and non users)**

	Question	Answer
<p><i>Suggested source of Information:</i></p> <p>Survey</p>	What is the general perception of a library?	
	What are the most common reasons for nonusers not using the library?	
	What percentage of the group being profiled are aware of the name and location of their local library?	
	What library stock and services are they aware of?	
	How convenient do they find their local library?	
	If they are a library user, do they use their local branch and if not why?	
	On what day and at what time of the day do users use the library?	
	On what day and at what time of the day would the group being profiled (user and non user) most like to use the library?	
	What do users use the library for?	