

Indigenous Marketing Plan

2004

Great Lakes Library Service

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This Marketing Plan, targets the library needs of the local indigenous community. For the purposes of statistical analysis indigenous people are those identified in the Australian Bureau of Statistics Census data as being aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander. According to the latest census there are 859 indigenous residents, representing 2.7% of the Great Lakes population (this figure has risen from 1.5% in 1991).

The Great Lakes community is amongst the strongest users of library services in the State, with stock turnover, loans per capita and loans per staff member figures regularly being at levels that place Great Lakes in the top three library systems in NSW. There are good indications that this level of usage will continue into the future.

The same cannot be said with any degree of certainty in relation to the indigenous community. Anecdotal evidence indicates very low usage rates. As part of the information gathering process on this demographic group the following organisations were involved in a focus group:

- Forster-Tuncurry Local Aboriginal Lands Council;
- Tobwabba Art;
- Forster High School;
- Forster Primary School;
- Tuncurry Primary School;
- Holy Name Primary School;
- Homebase Youth Centre.

This meeting supported the view that there is very little awareness of the material the library holds and that the service is not perceived as relevant to the indigenous community. This meeting also generated a range of suggestions for improving the service to this group.

As a separate matter the Karuah Aboriginal Lands Council was contacted for input.

The report recognizes that there are other broader factors that will also impact on the traditional role of the library and how the indigenous community will use the facility. These include a lack of time for people to visit the library, interest in formats other than books, the rising use of the Internet and a desire for comfort. In addition they may be financial, geographic and skills barrier to access the service.

The library is seen to have the potential to meet three levels of need within the indigenous population: the provision of information, the provision of leisure materials and acting as a place of relaxation.

In order to achieve this efforts must be made to alter the image of the library so that it is perceived as providing quality material relevant to their needs and that the library is a welcoming and comforting place to visit. Competition in the area of information provision comes largely from the Internet and this must be incorporated into the Marketing Plan. Similarly, the field of leisure provision is increasingly becoming congested and the library must make ever effort to present its relevance to the indigenous community as well as providing access to material they desire. Conversely, competition in the provision of a place of relaxation is far more limited and there is ample scope for the library to position itself as a key provider of relaxation space. It is proposed to undertake the following objectives in increasing indigenous usage of the library:

- Establish contacts with all key indigenous groups;
- Mail out its newsletter to all key indigenous groups;
- Participate in discussion on indigenous positions within Council;
- Investigate establishing an indigenous collection;
- Commence collecting data on members of indigenous origin;
- Install indigenous artwork;
- Install indigenous mosaic outside of library;
- Investigate indigenous storytelling options;
- Establish structure whereby indigenous classes at local schools can visit the library for activities;
- Investigate possibility of an annual event focused on indigenous culture.
- Invite State Library of NSW to provide training on indigenous genealogy. If successful, conduct seminar on this involving key players in local indigenous and genealogy community;
- If relevant, incorporate purchasing indigenous genealogical material into library's genealogical purchasing programme.
- Expand indigenous-related material at the Tea Gardens Library Branch.

In order to best promote the Marketing Plan objectives the library will tap into the local media and the library and School newsletters. More information will also be provided to

indigenous contacts at the schools. Clearly key contacts developed through the process will be the most effective promotional avenue, via word-of-mouth.

The cost of implementing the entire programme identified in the Marketing Plan is in the order of \$44,000. At this stage \$26,000 funding has already been sourced through grant funding and a further \$2,000 has been committed by the library to the art works.

This leaves a shortfall of \$16,000, but additional grant funding is being sort in the order of \$4,000. The Great Lakes Library Service has made provision in the 2004/2005 budget for a further \$2,000 to be contributed to the mosaic project. The overall project is also being reviewed for cost savings. Should a balance remain outstanding the library will investigate other grant funding options.

2. GENERAL LIBRARY ENVIRONMENT

Definition of Indigenous Peoples

For the purposes of this Marketing Plan indigenous people will be defined as those identifying themselves in the census as aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islanders. This will provide a useful statistical basis, though consultations with the local indigenous population may well include people outside this group.

Mechanisms For Obtaining Input from the Indigenous Community

The library has established a good network with Tobwabba Art – a local employer of indigenous people. This relationship will be developed further to obtain as much useful information as possible on the local community.

A focus group was also created drawing from key institutions in the indigenous community. These groups were:

- Forster-Tuncurry Local Aboriginal Lands Council;
- Tobwabba Art;
- Forster High School;
- Forster Primary School;
- Tuncurry Primary School;
- Holy Name Primary School;
- Homebase Youth Centre.

This group met on 28th July, 2004 and the library sought input from those involved that would add in the development of services to the indigenous community.

The outcomes of this meeting are included in Annexure A and play a central role in the recommendations/outcomes sought from this marketing plan.

Further feedback was also sought from the Karuah Aboriginal Land Council for the development of services in the southern part of the Great Lakes.

Outline of the Great Lakes Library Service

The Great Lakes Library Service opened to the public in 1998. It is maintained by the Great Lakes Council and derives the bulk of its funding from this organization. Additional grant funding is also sought from other government bodies.

The service operates out of a central library in Forster and has a staffed branch at Tea Gardens as well as service points in Bulahdelah, Nahiab, North Arm Cove and Stroud. The Tea Gardens branch only commenced operations are a fully staffed service point in 2003 and its impact on data is yet to be fully appreciated.

The library also has a well-patronised Internet presence. There are plans underway to utilize the Internet to provide an online library service.

The central role of the library is to provide equitable access to information and leisure materials. To meet this requirement of equity, and to comply with the Library Act (1939), the bulk of the library services are offered free of charge to the public.

The general public has an increasingly high expectation of the material held by the service. In addition to the traditional book material, the library stocks DVDs, magazines, books-on-tape, books-on-CD, videos, large print, CD-ROMs and Playstation games. Free access to the Internet is also now an integral component of the service.

Professionals within the library provide expert advice on how to obtain information.

In recent years there has been a growth in the number of people using the library as a place of relaxation or to interact with others. There has also been a noticeable increase in community organizations that have used the library to promote events.

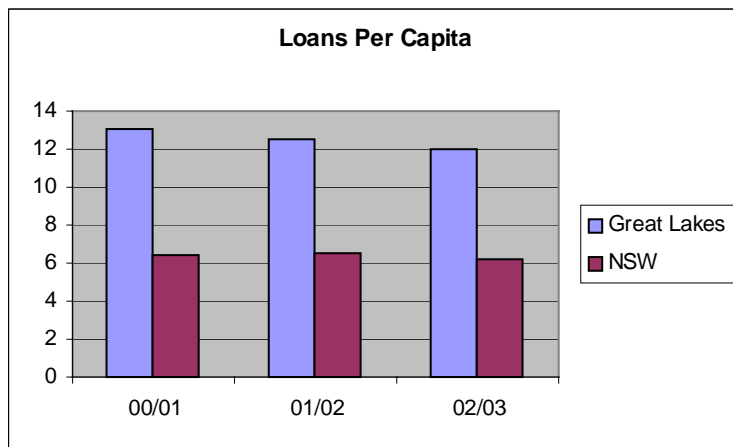
Patronage of the Library Service

On a per capita basis the Great Lakes Library Service is one of the most heavily used in NSW. The data below provides figures on library patronage over the past three years. It is evident that the library lends out items at rate more than twice the State median. This level of usage places the library as the most popular service in rural NSW and the third most popular in NSW. These statistics are compiled by the State Library of NSW¹.

Table 1: Loans per capita for both Great Lakes and NSW

	Loans per capita (Great Lakes)	Loans per capita (NSW)	Ranking in the State
2000/2001	13.03	6.37	4
2001/2002	12.51	6.51	5
2002/2003	12.05	6.26	5

Figure 1: Loans per capita for Great Lakes and NSW residents from 2000/2001 to 2002/2003



¹ State Library of New South Wales, *Public library statistics 2000/2001-2002/2003*, State Library of New South Wales, 2001-2003.

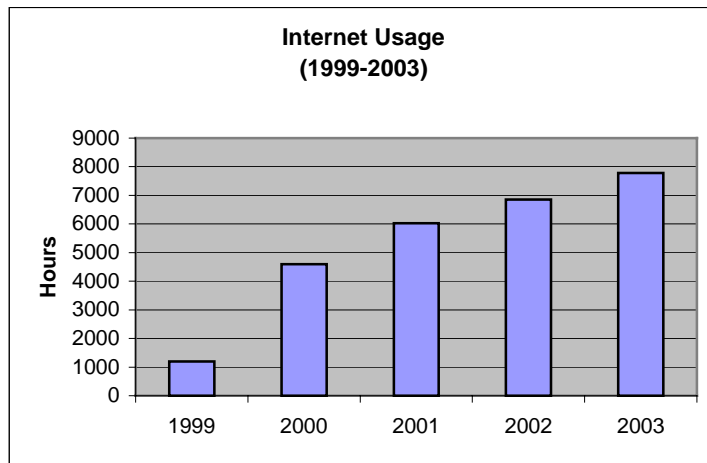
The high usage made of the library is reflected in the membership rate. 19,641 residents are registered library users, representing almost two thirds of the community. Each year Forster Library can expect 110,000 – 120,000 visitors. Since opening for service 15 years ago, there have been approximately 1.7 million visitors to this library service point.

Over the past three years the library has increased its provision of free public access Internet. This has met with very strong support from the community. Since 1999 there has been a 580% increase in patronage of this service.

Table 2: Hours of Internet usage booked at Forster Library

	Public Internet Usage (Hours)
1999	1 191
2000	4 597
2001	6 021
2002	6 855
2003	7 778

Figure 2: Public Internet bookings from 1999 to 2003



Note that in 2001 the Internet was introduced to the library’s branch service points. Whilst this has had some impact it must be stressed that at this stage this represented only 10% of the usage. There is an indication usage may plateau in the next couple of years, though Tea Gardens library is likely to drive these figures somewhat higher.

Projected Growth in Patronage of the Great Lakes Library Service

Total loans for a library system provide a fair indication of patronage. Great Lakes Library Service issued 406,772 items in 2003. This represents a 3% increase on the previous year. With a yearly population growth of 2-2.5% for the region², there it is expected that an annual growth rate in loans in the vicinity of 2-3% will be maintained. Indications from available 2004 data is that a level of 10% is possible.

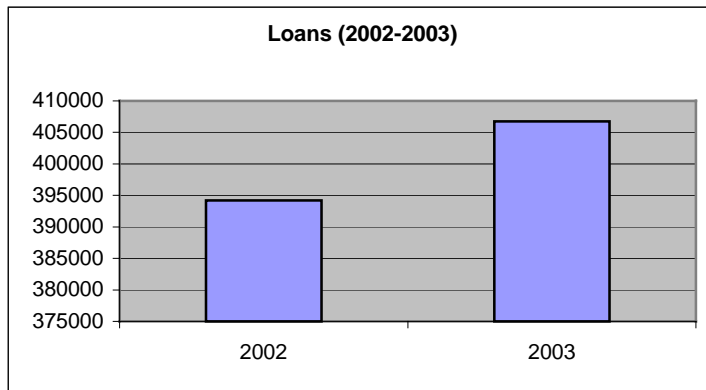
² Great Lakes Council, *Great Lakes community profile: 1999*, Great Lakes Council, 2000

ACTIVITY ANALYSIS

Lending Rates

The major service the library provides is access to books, magazines, videos, books-on-tape, books-on-CD, playstation games and DVDs. Whilst this only provides a limited perspective on the quality of the library service it still remains an indicator of the health of the library service. Figure 3 provides a graph of the past 2 years loans. There is evidence of strong growth and it would appear that 2004 will follow this trend, with up to a 10% increase being feasible.

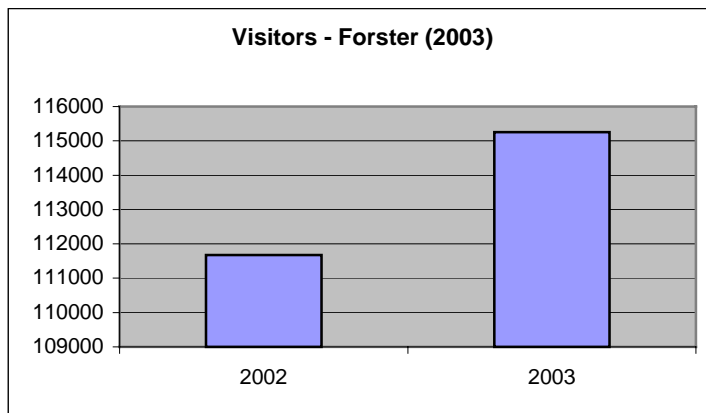
Figure 3: Annual loans for the Great Lakes Library Service



Visitor Numbers

Another indicator of the popularity of the library service is the number of visits it receives. Extensive data is currently only available for Forster Library and are provided in Figure 4. Again, what they reveal is strong patronage.

Figure 4: Annual visitor numbers to Forster Library



Visitor numbers fluctuate from year-to-year, though they are consistently between 110,000 and 120,000 per annum. There does appear to be a trend for people to borrow more items each, possibly indicating borrowing on behalf of other family members.

Visitor numbers are now being collected at Tea Gardens and early indications are that they should receive in excess of 20,000 visits per annum.

Membership

As at 1st July 2004 the library had 19,641 members. This represents in the order of 65% of the community. As Statewide figures are around 50% this is a healthy situation.

Internet Usage

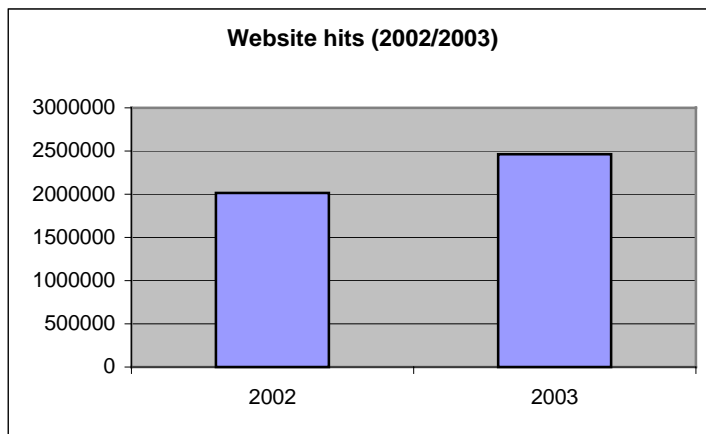
As the world increasingly turns to the Internet as a source of information and a means of communication patronage of public access Internet PCs also becomes a mechanism for measuring the activity of the library service. This data has already been provided in figure 2 above. It is evident from the data that this service continues to go through strong growth, though this may level out over the next few years.

Website Usage

In addition to providing Internet access the library has embraced the opportunities the Internet offers by establishing a website that caters for all of Council. The website includes information on the library and Council, links to useful websites, provides access to the library catalogue and will shortly allow online reference enquiries to be lodged.

As this represents an extension of the library into the virtual world patronage of the site also becomes a meaningful indicator of the performance of the library. Figure 5 provides data on the number of hits the website has received over the past 2 years. Since 2001 (the first full year of data, the number of hits per annum has risen 124%, from 1.1 million to 2.5 million. It is expected that the number of hits in 2004 will reach 3 million.

Figure 5: Number of hits on the Great Lakes Council Website

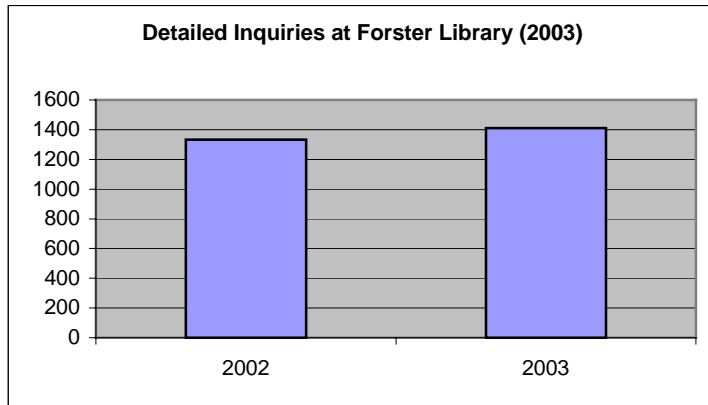


Information Enquiries

A key aspect of the library service is the provision of information. In 1999 the library established a reference service to assist the public. Since then there has been a steady increase in demand and the total number recorded in 2003 reached 2,113. Figure 6 provides the last two years of data, which shows a healthy growth rate of 6%. 2004 is

shaping up along similar lines. Data is now being collected from Tea Gardens and they expected to field around 600 enquiries per annum.

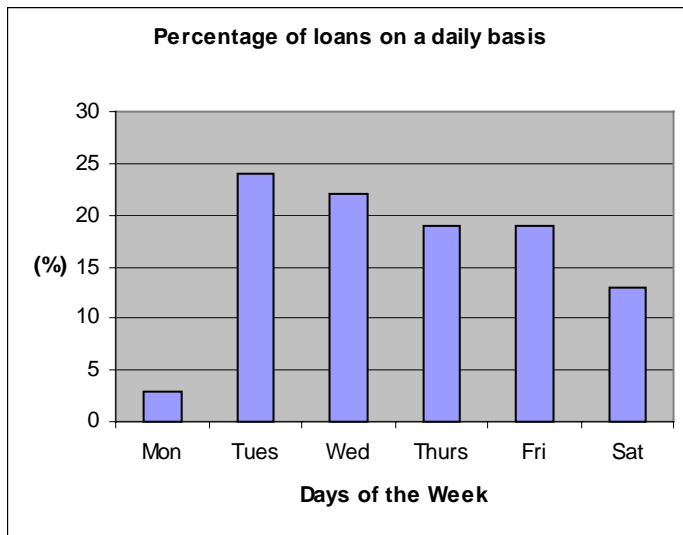
Figure 6: Information enquiries received at Forster Library.



Fluctuations in Demand

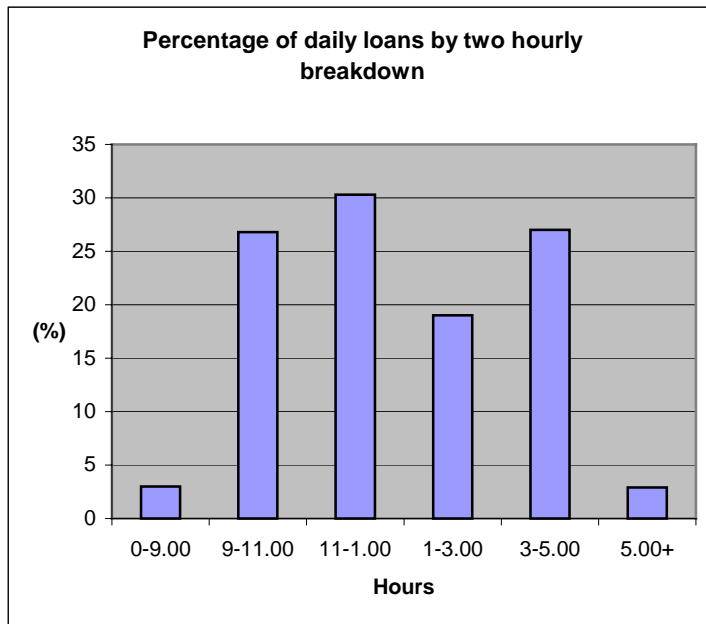
Underlying the general trend upwards are seasonal and daily fluctuations in usage. The library service is busiest on a Tuesday, which relates to the Forster Library being closed on a Monday. Figure 7 provides a profile of a normal week in the library service.

Figure 7: Percentage of loans on a daily basis



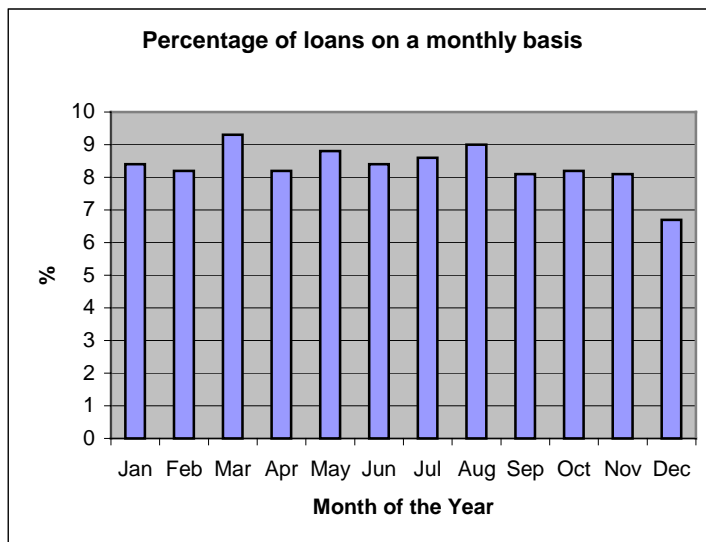
Loan rates also depend on the time of day. The library is busiest in the mornings, with a small increase in usage after three o'clock when school children visit (see Figure 8).

Figure 8: Stock movement throughout the day



Looking at the activity of the library from a seasonal basis it is evident that lending rates are reasonably constant throughout the year. There is evidence of a dip during December and a peak in March, but generally library patronage is strong all year (see Figure 9).

Figure 9: Monthly variation in lending rates as a percentage of total loans.



General Trends

All the indicators mentioned above show demand for the library service increasing. Table 3 provides estimates of future growth in these key areas.

Table 3: Growth trends in the library service

Indicator	2003 Figures	Expected Growth in 2004 (%)
Stock Issues	406,772	5-10
Visitor Numbers	115,254	Static
Internet Usage	7,778	10-15
Website Hits	2,516,015	20-30
Information inquiries	2,113	5

The bases for these estimations are as follows:

Issues: The rise in issues is associated with the quality of the service and collection and population growth within the region. Population growth in the region and the introduction of a new service at Tea Gardens will play a part. Furthermore, a range of customer-focussed improvements are expected to contribute to increased patronage. Available 2004 data indicates that a growth in loans of up to 10% is possible. There is potential for this growth to be limited by the quality of the collection if budgetary provision fails to meet community expectations.

Visitor Numbers: There does not appear to be any consistent growth in visitor numbers. Indeed the figures fluctuate from month to month. In May 2004 visitations dropped 9% at Forster (on the previous May), only to bounce back and increase 13% in June 2004 (on the previous June). In this environment the safest option is to presume a static level of patronage until trends can be better determined.

Internet Usage: Growth in this area remains strong, though there is expected to be a flattening out in demand. Provision has been made for growth in Tea Gardens however.

Website Hits: This is likely to be somewhat volatile and it would reasonable to expect a flattening out, though this has not been particularly evident to date. The figure of 20-30% is based upon past trends.

Information Inquiries: The library has been steadily fielding more inquiries and there is no reason to expect this trend to reverse.

Current Focus of the Collection

Great Lakes Local Government Area has the highest median age in NSW. It has long been seen as a retirement destination and people over the age 55 have both a high representation in the community and amongst library borrowers. Not surprisingly the library collection has shaped to meet these needs. Consequently, there has been an emphasis on fiction and leisure materials for adults. This focus has worked well and has resulted in the library service having one of the highest lending rates per capita in NSW.

There is scope, however, to develop the service to meet the needs of a range of other segments within the community. This market plan will focus specifically on developing the service to meet the needs of the indigenous sector.

3. MARKET ANALYSIS

Market Trends

Lack of Time for People to Visit the Library

In general working people appear to have less and less time to access services like the public library and this resulted in a growth of services that make for quick access to the collection (e.g. online catalogues, online reserves). This needs to be taken into consideration when developing library services.

Interest in Formats other Than Books

The explosion in differing entertainment formats (e.g. PCs, multichannel television, Playstation/PS-2/X-Box/Nintendo/Gameboy games, CDs) has made the entertainment industry increasingly competitive. There has been a similar growth in information being provided in a non-book format (e.g. DVDs). Patronage of non-book collections reflects interest in these formats. A snapshot of 2002 date reveals around 15% of loans being from non-print collections; by 2004 this had risen to 23%. Consequently it is expected that indigenous needs will be across a wider range of media than previously experienced.

Internet

The Internet is one of the most successful services the library has implemented in recent years. Its great strength is that it is available for all.

When promoting the library to the indigenous community, access to the Internet should feature strongly.

Increasingly the library is providing access to its services online and this may have some relevance to the Koori community.

Desire for Comfort

There is a desire for the library to provide a place to interact socially or to be comfortable within. This has seen the library provide more furniture, an attractive interior and it is in the process of investigating a drinks machine. People can now eat food in the library.

One of the things the library does not provide that would help with patron comfort is a space that can be closed off e.g. a study room.

Patronage of the Library Service

Contrary to some predictions in the library literature the library service has not seen a decrease in patronage over recent years. At worst the library usage has remained constant, or, as is the case in the past 12 months is has seen a steady increase. These predictions were based upon the increasingly competitive leisure market (e.g. videos, electronic games, Internet, pay television) and expected private use of online information.

It is likely that these forces have had some impact, but it has either been greatly exaggerated or offset by growth in demand in other sectors. In the latter case libraries have been very effective at adopting the modern technology and this has seen strong take-

up of new collections (e.g. DVDs) and patronage of new services (e.g. the Internet). There is also a case to be made for people seeking assistance in finding information in what is an increasingly complex environment. Recent surveys also indicate that patrons are turning to the library as a place of comfort and relaxation³.

Gaps in Provision of Information and Leisure Needs to the Indigenous Community *Financial Gap*

Staying abreast of the latest information is potentially costly. Whilst some information may be available over the net its authenticity and currency may be questioned. It is also necessary to have access to a PC and the Internet. Generally, current, accurate and objective information comes at a price. Similarly, magazines and other literature may provide useful (though often narrowly focused) information, but this also carries a cost.

The library offers free (or very low cost) access to such information.

In addition, indigenous people may face a genuine financial hurdle in obtaining leisure material in an environment that has seen traditional material (e.g. books) rise dramatically in price as well as the appearance of a plethora of entertainment media (e.g. Playstation, PS 2, Game Box). The library can play an important role in providing access to this media.

Technology Hurdle

The Internet is now a significant means of accessing information, for information or leisure purposes. This provides people with potential access to a wealth of information from their own home, but this does require access to technology. If such access is not readily available, a public forum, which offers free access can be an important service.

Geographic Gap

Indigenous people in the Great Lakes region face geographic isolation. Pockets within the community may be up to an hour's drive from a major centre and the region itself is distant from Sydney.

Skills Gap

Finding information in a world filled with so many alternative sources is challenging for the layperson. There is an important role to be played by offering access to experts skilled in locating information.

In relation to the above, an argument may be put forward that telecommunications are bridging these gaps. In reality reliable and adequately priced telecommunications are hard to come by in the country for an affordable rate. On top of that commercial information providers will levy an additional fee in order to make a profit.

There is certainly competition for information provision, but the price associated with it, including the means to access it, give the library a strong advantage.

³ Source: Cox, Eva *A safe place to go: libraries and social capital*, State Library of New South Wales, 2000

Benefit Analysis

The library offers a range of services that can directly benefit indigenous people.

Product: Leisure material

Benefit: The library gives free access to a range of leisure materials in a range of formats.

Product: Comfortable meeting place.

Benefit: Indigenous people are able to meet within the library to relax, interact and seek information without fear of exclusion.

Product: Wide range of non-fiction materials.

Benefit: Indigenous people will be able to gain ready and free access to a wide variety of non-fiction works that may be of relevance to their needs.

Product: Range of non-print material and magazines.

Benefit: As an alternative the library offers free access to a range of non-print formats.

Product: Access to the Internet and e-mail.

Benefit: Indigenous people can gain free access to online information and e-mail.

Product: Reference Service.

Benefit: Reference professionals can assist in finding information.

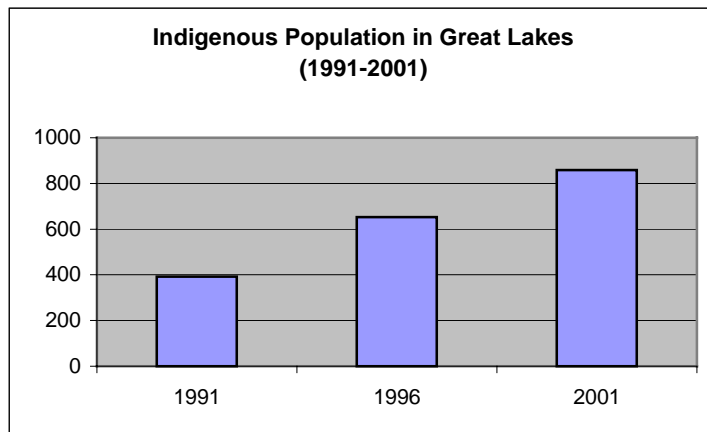
Product: Family History

Benefit: Indigenous people could trace their family history.

Profile of Great Lakes Community and the Place of Indigenous People Within It

The latest Census data reveals that Great Lakes has a population of 31,384, of which 15,451 are male and 15,933 are female⁴. Since 1996 the population has grown 9.7%.

Figure 10: Indigenous Population in Great Lakes, from 1996-2001



⁴ Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, *Census 2001: Great Lakes Statistical Local Area: Basic Community Profile*, 2002.

From 1991 to 2001 the indigenous population rose from 392 (1.5% of the population) to 859 (2.7% of the population).

Representation of Indigenous People as Library Members

There is no data readily available to determine the levels of indigenous usage, nor could it be easily and accurately obtained. One of the objectives of this Plan should be to implement a mechanism to start collecting such data.

As indigenous people represent between 2-3% of the community it would be reasonable to extend this representation into the library membership. If we had such a percentage using the service then it could be expected that around 600 indigenous people would hold membership. Anecdotal evidence indicates that actual membership and usage could be far lower than this.

Segments of the Indigenous Community

As this marketing plan focuses on indigenous people, this already represents a segment of the community. It should be noted that caution must be taken with segmenting a market as there is the very real danger of over-segmentation, which generates very little useful information for a substantial amount of additional work. There is no benefit to be derived from breaking the market up into segments that have no bearing on the service the library is looking to provide. There are, however, two segments within the indigenous community that merit some attention.

Forster-Tuncurry Catchment

562 indigenous people live in the Forster-Tuncurry, which represents 65% of their overall presence across Great Lakes. This is almost identical to the overall population percentage living in the Forster-Tuncurry area. Indigenous people in these locations have better access to the major facilities in the central library.

Within this area there is the Forster-Tuncurry Aboriginal Lands Council and Tobwabba Art as well as a range of primary schools and a high school.

Other areas within Great Lakes

It will be far more difficult to offer accessible services to indigenous people in these areas simply because of their geographical location. The library does have branches at Bulahdelah, Nahiab, North Arm Cove, Stroud and Tea Gardens which do offer a service, though the hours are limited, the collections small and there is an absence of qualified staff. The exception to this is the Tea Gardens Library, which has been newly constructed, has an expanded collection and paid staff. Their strength lies in being a pipeline to the central library services. The Internet also offers some opportunities in regard to online service provision.

A key component of reaching these segments is an effective promotional campaign.

The southern part of the region falls under the care of the Karuah Lands Council. This community would most directly relate to the Tea Gardens Library.

Current Perception of the Library by the Indigenous Community

Surveys of library users consistently rate the library as an important service in the community. A survey conducted by Council in 1998 found 90% of residents rated the library of medium to very high importance⁵ and a survey conducted in 2000 found 98% of non-users rated the library as slightly to very important (76% of those survey rated the library as very important)⁶. Generally, customer satisfaction with services provided is high, with around 90% surveyed indicating satisfaction with the collections and services⁷.

It is likely, however, that the library is perceived as not being relevant to the indigenous community. Feedback from the Indigenous Focus Group strongly supports this viewpoint. Indeed, it may not be so much a lack of relevance as a total lack of awareness of the services on offer.

Future Perception of the Library Service by Indigenous People

A key aim of this marketing plan must be to break down perceived barriers and make the library as welcoming to the indigenous community as to the non-indigenous population.

Specifically the library would look at creating the following impression:

- Has a presence of indigenous culture;
- Holds material relevant to the indigenous community;
- Is a comfortable place for them to meet, relax and study within;
- Contains, or can access, information that is relevant to them;
- Offers access to leisure material of relevance to them;
- Is accessible to them;
- Holds an extensive and developing range of non-print material;
- Has technology that enables them to access the Internet and e-mail free of charge;
- Provides access and such for indigenous local history

Key Stakeholders

The most effective way to attract indigenous people to the library is to convince key stakeholders of the associated benefits. The following are organisations that have been involved in the consultation process:

- Forster-Tuncurry Local Aboriginal Lands Council;
- Tobwabba Art;
- Forster High School;
- Forster Primary School;
- Tuncurry Primary School;
- Holy Name Primary School;
- Homebase Youth Centre;

⁵ Source: Great Lakes Council, *1998 Community Survey*, Great Lakes Council, 1999.

⁶ Source: Micromex Marketing Service, *Great Lakes Library: community telephone survey*, Micromex Marketing Services, 2001

⁷ Source: University of Technology – Sydney, *Customer Satisfaction Survey*, State Library of New South Wales, 2000

- Karuah Land Council;
- Bulahdelah – Gary Smith – 4997 4329

The schools and Homebase Youth provide direct conduits into the younger community, Tobwabba Art is a pro-active indigenous group and the Lands Councils provide direct access into the indigenous community.

4. COMPETITOR ANALYSIS

4.1 Information Provision

Competitors in Information Provision

The most recognised role of the public library is information provision and so this marketing plan will look at competitors in this area initially. In the indigenous community information could be provided to children and youth through the school system. For youth and adults the TAFE system may also play a role. All these organisations offer access to both print/non-print materials as well as the Internet, though the scope of their collections and the range of opening hours do differ.

The Internet also poses competition to the provision of information. School-aged children and TAFE students will have access via their respective educational institutions. However, Internet access via home is not that prevalent in Great Lakes⁸ so, overall access would be limited. In this scenario competitors do suffer certain limitations. There may be a problem in relation to hours of access (in the case of school and TAFE), potential limitations of legitimate sites that can be accessed (either through filtering software or parental control) and cost (in the case of home-based data). There is also the difficulty with home-based searching that there is no information professional on hand to assist with searching. One point of note is that the library has good speed of access to the Internet. This gives it a likely edge over normal home access.

It is strongly recommended that the Great Lakes Library Service does not seek to actively compete with either the High School or TAFE, but rather seeks to complement their service.

And finally, as is always the case in information provision, the library is competing with personal resources and work of mouth.

Competitive Positioning Regarding Information Provision

Discussions with aboriginal people indicates that the problem with using the library is a lack of awareness of services on offer and possibly that it is not seen as an approachable organisation. This makes the issue of alternative competitors less relevant. The library needs to develop a perception as being an important and welcoming service. From this greater patronage will flow.

4.2 Entertainment Provision

Competitors in Entertainment Provision

In analyzing competitors in the entertainment sphere this Marketing Plan is focusing on sedentary rather than active entertainment. This has been done because it keeps the comparison to a more manageable level and it is reasonable to assume that the library competes more strong in the area of sedentary entertainment.

⁸ Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, *Census 2001: Great Lakes Statistical Local Area: Basic Community Profile*, 2002.

Once again, the information contained within the figures is drawn from discussions.

The world of entertainment provision is a very competitive one. The library now vies with a vast array of electronic games, the Internet, television and video, music and bookstores for a share of the entertainment market.

The library has not sought to compete on all these fronts at all levels, but rather has been more selective in its approach. It tends to focus on non-fiction/instructional DVDs/videos and holds only limited electronic games resources, largely for budgetary reasons. Having said this the range of entertainment collections has risen markedly in the past few years. The Playstation collection came into existence in 2000, the DVD collection was launched in 2004 and the music collection has consistently been enhanced, as has the magazine area. The number of Internet terminals available has also increased noticeably. There are intentions to introduce a graphic novel collection in the medium term.

The edge that the library holds is the free availability of material. Its disadvantage is that many forms of entertainment maybe ready to hand whereas a trip to the library requires travel and a time commitment.

Competitive Positioning Regarding Entertainment

It is useful to determine the position of the library relative to other entertainment providers. Discussions with indigenous people, other library professionals and the observations of the Manager-Library Services indicates that though the library is low cost, its relevance to the indigenous community in relation to entertainment is so low that use is negligible.

The main aim must be to raise awareness of the relevance of the service to the indigenous community and that though there is a time commitment involved, the service is free.

Part of this process, as with information services, must be to make the library more welcoming.

4.3 Relaxation

Competitors in Place of Relaxation

The library has been conscious that there has been a general shift in the role that it is seen to play in the community and there is now an expectation, or at least desire, for it to be a place of relaxation. To this end much has been done to increase the level of comfort for a patron visiting the library. This needs to be actively promoted in the indigenous community.

Competition could come from shopping precincts, outdoor meeting places and private residences, but these can have limitations. Shopping precincts do not necessarily encourage social interaction and outdoor meeting places have issues of comfort and accessibility.

Competitive Positioning Regarding Places of Relaxation

In comparison to other venues the library's strengths lie in its openness to all and the fact that there is no cost in relaxing in the library. The challenge is to make the indigenous community aware of the availability of the library.

One drawback is the limited hours that the library service points are open. This matter should continue to be pursued to determine if an increase in opening hours at Forster can be achieved. Hours have been greatly expanded in Tea Gardens, though budgetary and usage constraints are likely to preclude the extension of library hours at the other branch service points.

5. SWOT ANALYSIS

SWOT Analysis of Information Provision to the Indigenous Community

Strengths

In relation to information provision the library has the following strengths:

- Access to an extensive range of information, including databases and a network of libraries Australia-wide;
- Professionally qualified staff experienced in information provision;
- The library is a free service;
- There are a network of access points scattered across Great Lakes;
- Online access to information is largely unfettered, and includes e-mail access;
- The service has embraced a range of technologies and information formats;
- Internet access is of reasonably good speed;
- Opening hours are reasonably wide.

Weaknesses

In relation to information provision to indigenous people the library has the following weaknesses:

- May be perceived as not relevant;
- May be perceived as being a slow option to obtaining information in comparison to online data;
- Access may be limited by opening hours;
- Collection may not be best tailored to indigenous people needs;
- Limited staffing levels present possible hurdles in service provision;
- Lending conditions may not be suitable to indigenous needs;
- Limited stock levels may impact on speed of response.

Opportunities

The current situation offers the library a range of opportunities:

- Raise the profile within the indigenous community of the library as a quality information provider. This would be done through the most suitable information channels for this community;
- Establish communications channels with the indigenous community;
- Introduce an indigenous flavour through the presence of artworks;
- Create a stronger indigenous presence in the library – this could include a collection tailored to this community;
- Continue to develop online services;
- Employ an indigenous member of staff.

Threats

There are the following threats to the library in regards to the provision of information:

- Indigenous people may turn to the Internet in preference to the library service;

- Local aboriginal people will not use the library because it has no relevance to them.
- Not enough funding to establish an indigenous collection.

SWOT Analysis of Entertainment Provision

Strengths

When promoting the library as a provider of entertainment the it has the following strengths:

- Low/minimal cost;
- Increasingly diverse range of collections;
- Reasonable level of accessibility.

Weaknesses

In relation to provision of entertainment the library has the following weaknesses:

- Low awareness of what the library holds;
- A desire for immediate access to material;
- Indigenous perception that the library is not relevant to them;
- Lending conditions may not be suitable to indigenous needs;
- Opening hours are limited in comparison to other entertainment providers.

Opportunities

The library has the following opportunities in relation to the provision of entertainment:

- Raise awareness of relevance of the library to their needs;
- Raise awareness of range of collections available in the library.

Threats

In competing for the indigenous entertainment market the library faces the following threats:

- Lack of funding to expand collections/services;
- Even more forms of entertainment coming onto the market;
- The growth of provision of leisure items directly to the end-user (e.g. direct downloading of music/books).

SWOT Analysis of Place of Relaxation

Strengths

When promoting the library as a place of relaxation the library has the following strengths:

- Free access;
- Reasonable accessibility;
- Good levels of comfort;
- Potential to be an obvious central meeting place.

Weaknesses

In relation to provision of a place of relaxation the library has the following weaknesses:

- Low awareness of suitability of the library for a meeting place;
- Limited space within the library;
- Perception that it is an institution rather than a welcoming place to meet;
- Opening hours are limited compared to other meeting venues.

Opportunities

The library has the following opportunities in relation to the providing a place of relaxation:

- Raise awareness of relevance of the library to their needs. Emphasis in particular freedom of access and welcoming nature of the library;
- Change indigenous perception of the library;
- Investigate longer opening hours.

Threats

In competing in this market the library faces the following threat:

- Not able to change perception by indigenous community.

6. OBJECTIVES

The library is seeking to raise its profile in the indigenous community and enhance its relevance and appeal to this group.

Objectives

1. Establish and develop communication channels into the indigenous community and encourage use of the library.

- a. Contact key indigenous groups in the region. By September 2004.
- b. The library to mail its newsletter to all key indigenous groups. By October 2004.
- c. Participate in discussion on indigenous positions in Council. By November 2004.

2. Shape the library collection and service to better meet indigenous needs.

- a. Investigate establishing an indigenous collection. By March 2005.
- b. Collect data on members of indigenous origin. By August 2004.
- c. Increase indigenous material at Tea Gardens Library. By June 2005.

3. Introduce indigenous culture into the library

- a. Install indigenous artwork. By August 2004.
- b. Install indigenous mosaic outside of library. By August 2005.

4. Hold Indigenous events in the library environment

- a. Celebrate indigenous artwork being installed. By August 2004
- b. Investigate indigenous storytelling options. By March 2005.
- c. Establish structure whereby indigenous classes at local schools can visit the library for activities. By April 2005.
- d. Investigate an annual event focused on indigenous culture. By March 2005.

5. Investigate genealogy services

- a. Invite State Library of NSW to provide training on indigenous genealogy. If successful, conduct seminar on this involving key players in local indigenous and genealogy community. An offer of involvement should be extended to the Karuah Aboriginal Lands Council. By May 2005.
- b. If relevant, incorporate purchasing indigenous genealogical material into library's genealogical purchasing programme. By July 2005.

7. PLAN FOR MARKETING LIBRARY SERVICES TO INDIGENOUS PEOPLE

Positioning

The intention is to shift the perception of the library service by indigenous people away from an institution that they know little about and that may seem irrelevant to them to a focal point for them to access the latest information and leisure material in a comfortable environment that offers both assistance and access to online technology.

This will be done through pursuit of the Objectives given above.

Marketing Information Systems

If an indigenous collection is established lending rates will be monitored.

Indigenous membership will also be monitored if mechanisms can be put in place to do so.

Distribution Channels

Distribution channels for the indigenous community are much the same as for the non-indigenous. In general, it can be expected that indigenous people will contact the library directly, particularly if the concept of a place of relaxation proves successful. The library will continue to provide phone contact also.

Reference assistance will also be provided over the Internet.

In relation to face-to-face contact the library will continue to develop links with key organisations in the indigenous community to ensure greater awareness of the service.

8. PROMOTION

Media Activities

There is no reason to think that traditional media channels would not be effective at reaching the indigenous population, though more targeted approaches are likely to be more productive. The following avenues will be pursued:

Personal Contact: The library will continue to develop links with indigenous contacts and where possible and appropriate present a face to the aboriginal community.

Press Releases: The library has strong links to the local radio and newspapers and where relevant (e.g. launch of artwork) these will be used to raise profile.

Posters and Fliers: Posters, fliers and registration forms could be distributed at key locations e.g. schools, Lands Council, Homebase.

Newsletters: The library will promote itself to indigenous people through its own newsletter, though as current patronage is not high this will only have limited effect. Newsletters will be mailed out to key organisations.

School newsletters will also be targeted.

Specific Events: The library will look to holding school visits with Koori groups and investigate the possibility of storytime sessions with indigenous tellers.

Communication to Staff

It is essential that staff support the promotion of indigenous services. This support will come by keeping them advised of plans and to seek input into the process. Such input will occur through normal staff meetings and direct personal contact.

9. FINANCIAL COMMITMENTS

Expenses

Indigenous Collection: Up to \$1,000 per annum spent by on indigenous resources.

Indigenous Artwork: Cost of \$18,000, of which Council will provide \$2,000.

Indigenous Mosaic: Total project cost in the order of \$20,000

Potential Income

Grant Funding Artwork: Already obtained \$16,000 from the Regional Arts Programme for this.

Grant Funding for Mosaic: Currently obtained \$10,000 towards the project, leaving a shortfall of \$10,000. Will seek a further \$4,000 from Arts Board funding, through Arts Midnorth Coast. The library has already allocated \$2,000 in next year's budget towards the mosaic installation, and further funding may be sources from discretionary grant funding.

**Indigenous Focus Group
Forster Library
28th June, 2004**

Present:

Individual

Donna Hall

Carol Conte

Kay Cunningham

Sue

Sheree McCathy

Lee Townsend

Jai Simon

Diane Emms

Chris Jones

Jean Matchett

Kim Tattam

Sally Webster

Cathie Whatson

Organisation

Forster-Tuncurry Local Aboriginal Lands Council

Forster High School

Tobwabba Art

Forster Primary School

Forster Primary School

Tuncurry Primary School

Holy Name Primary School

Homebase Youth

Great Lakes Library Service

Great Lakes Library Service

Great Lakes Library Service

Great Lakes Library Service

Great Lakes Library Service

Great Lakes Library Service

Questions Asked

- **Do indigenous people know much about what we have?**
No – very limited appreciation
- **What's the best way to promote the library?**
Posters at schools
Membership forms at schools – consider revamping for youth
Indigenous displays in the library
Indigenous artwork will make a difference – promote visits to the artwork.
Consider tailored events
- **What sort of image do you think we have?**
Not really as not seen as relevant.
- **How is the best way to raise the indigenous profile in the library?**
Artwork – separate indigenous collection.
- **Realistically, how much usage do you think indigenous people make of the library?**
Very limited.
- **Do kids have heaps of access to technology (e.g. Playstation games)?**
Normal sort of levels
- **Do you have much access to the Internet? Is the Internet important to the indigenous community?**
Again normal sort of access. Would be very interested in free Internet access.

- **Is an indigenous collection of any use?**
Would be very well received by indigenous community and those studying indigenous issues.
Strong support for this idea.
- **Is a traditional storytime session feasible? Who would conduct it?**
Yes it is. Best to do it under the umbrella of an event. Indigenous people could conduct the storytelling and the library would provide the venue and include tour of the library.
- **Does an indigenous employee makes things better or are there issues of neutrality?**
Yes it would be good, but would need to make sure we had the right person, who is interested in working in libraries.
- **Ronald Briggs – talk about indigenous family history – are they interested?**
Yes – good interest in having a talk.
Indigenous community has some good local history resources that could be put into a more accessible format. Possible grant application here by the Forster-Tuncurry Aboriginal Land Council.

Summary

- Use more promotional tools
 - Posters at schools – need to design this
 - Jazz up membership forms
- Collection
 - Create a separate Indigenous collection (include adult and junior but not picture books)
 - Create collection code on the library system
 - Use genre stickers to identify
- Events
 - Consider an annual event – could involve indigenous storytelling – consider a grant for this
 - Encourage more school visits
 - Strongly promote indigenous artworks in the library
- Local History
 - Host indigenous genealogy talk – presented by Ronald Briggs from State Library
 - Investigate getting indigenous local history into a more meaningful/accessible format – could involve grant funding applied for by Lands Council
- Staffing
 - Good interest in having an indigenous employee, as long as it is somebody who wants to be at the library
- Establish and develop communication channels into the indigenous community
 - Interact with key groups involved in the focus group.