

## Promoting events and services the Willoughby City Library way

The Willoughby City Library group includes Chatswood Central Library and four Branch libraries at Artarmon, Castlecrag, Naremburn, and Northbridge. Chatswood Library is one of the busiest public lending libraries in Australia, with an average of 2000 people per day visiting the library to access the wide range of services available. All age groups are heavily represented in library membership statistics, and members come from all over the Sydney metropolitan area, as well as within the Willoughby LGA. Willoughby City is home to a culturally diverse population and there is a strong tradition of supporting multiculturalism and providing specialised services for ethnic groups in the community. Within the Willoughby LGA, 31.2% of Willoughby City residents speak a language other than English in the home and 12.3% of residents do not speak English at all, or have limited English skills (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2006).

In consideration of the size and diversity of the user group, Willoughby City Library provides a vast range of events, activities, and services. For the youngest members there are Baby Bounce sessions and regular story times for Preschoolers. During the school holidays the Children's and Youth Services team organise activities for school-aged children and there is a yearly HSC Program, from March through to May, that includes study workshops and seminars featuring guest speakers. The Library hosts 15–20 author talks per year with popular fiction and non-fiction authors. There is also a Book and Movie Lovers' Club, Internet Tutorials, and English Conversation Classes for people from a non-English speaking background. Book and Movie Lovers' Club sessions and Internet Tutorials are held in Chinese as well as English. Every year the library celebrates Chinese New Year and Carnivale – featuring a different culture each year – with special activities and events for adults and children. Home Library Services (HLS) are available to those affected by age and/or disability. HLS members can request books in English or in any of the twelve community language collections held at the library.

Willoughby City Library events and activities are well attended and the day-to-day library services are very popular. Promotion of library services and events plays a crucial role in attracting the customers. The Community Information and Promotions (CI & P) team, consisting of a librarian and a library assistant, are responsible for the promotion of all library services and activities for the Willoughby City Library group. The CI & P team at Willoughby City Library makes use of broad audience marketing techniques via a range of media, as well as targeted marketing techniques to appeal to specific groups within the community.

Frequently, both techniques will be used to promote a single event or activity. This is true of our promotion of our author talk to be held on the 18th of March 2009, where Steve Ahern will be speaking about his book, *Harbour Terror*, a book that appeals to a wide audience – from teens to adults. The CI & P team have followed their standard procedure for broad audience marketing. This procedure starts 6–8 weeks before the event and includes: issuing a press release via the

Council's PR Section so that the event may be advertised in local and regional newspapers, including the event in the monthly library publication *What's On In Willoughby*, in-house design and publication of posters and flyers (using Indesign software) that are then displayed in all Willoughby's libraries and distributed throughout a wide network of community centres and educational facilities, advertising the event on the Council website, both on the *Author Talks* web page and the *What's On* web pages, issuing eNewsletters to subscribers on the email list and posting flyers to those on the standard mailing list, and, finally, ensuring that the event is noted on the slip printer at the circulation desk.

The above may read like a fairly comprehensive marketing strategy, however when promoting any event or service, it is important to consider whether there are any groups in our community for whom this event is relevant, but that may not be reached by our broad marketing strategy. In this case, the group in question is teenagers. To improve our chances of increasing our teenage audience at Steve Ahern's talk, some targeted marketing was required. The CI & P team mailed flyers to all secondary schools in the area, with a cover letter requesting the material be displayed on the school notice board and within the school library. The next step was to liaise with the Willoughby Council Youth Centre staff and request that they display the posters prominently and point them out to any regulars at the centre that might be interested. Finally, the CI & P team contacted local entertainment arcades, cinemas, and other businesses that attract teenagers in order to display promotional material at those locations. Most local businesses are happy to assist in this way, particularly if their promotional material is appropriate for display in the library.

Along with broad audience and targeted marketing techniques, the CI & P team at Willoughby Library also make considerable use of what could be termed 'opportunistic marketing strategies'. Opportunistic marketing refers to making use of whatever marketing opportunities exist at the time of promotion that are appropriate for the event being promoted. For example, an author talk that attracts large numbers of teenagers can be seen as an opportunity to promote any upcoming HSC seminars or other youth events. Seniors' Week is an opportunity to promote Home Library Services, large print and audio book collections, as well as library collections on superannuation, retirement living, maintaining fitness and health later in life, and travel. The opportunistic marketer is also aware of submission deadlines and publication dates of annual and quarterly publications put out by other departments within the parent organisation (Willoughby City Council in our case), or by local community groups.

At Willoughby City Library, promotional material is often published in both English and Chinese as approximately 15% of Willoughby residents are from a Chinese speaking background. Some essential brochures, such as those outlining the library's rules and regulations and online services, are published in Korean and Japanese (of which there are also considerable numbers of speakers in Willoughby City) as well as Chinese. Multilingual information is also provided on the library's *Multicultural Services* web pages. Providing bilingual and multilingual information is not so much a marketing

strategy as it is about providing equitable access to information and services. For the Chinese speaking community, the library offers a number of events and services in Mandarin and/or Cantonese, including the previously mentioned Internet Tutorials, English Conversation classes, the Book and Movie Lovers' Club, library tours, Chinese story-telling and some author talks. Promoting these events and services in Chinese is, quite simply, essential to informing many of the Chinese speaking residents in Willoughby of their existence. It is unlikely that the above listed events and services would be as well attended as they are without bilingual promotion.

Much of the promotional material produced by Willoughby City Library's CI & P team is designed and published in-house. Both members of the CI & P team have prior experience in information design, writing for the public, and web editing. These skills are kept up-to-date by attending appropriate seminars and keeping up with the latest development in the PR industry and relevant technologies. At Willoughby City Library we are currently looking at ways in which Web 2.0 technologies can best be applied to promote our programs and events and generally enhance our overall information service provision. The following websites provide free access to relevant technologies. At Willoughby City Library we are currently looking at ways in which Web 2.0 technologies can best be applied to promote our programs and events and generally enhance our overall information service provision. Current PR news and resources: B & T Marketing and Media at <http://www.bandt.com.au>, World Advertising Research Centre at <http://www.warc.com>, Public Relations Institute of Australia at <http://www.pria.com.au>, Chartered Institute of Public Relations at <http://www.cipr.co.uk>, Institute for Public Relations at <http://www.instituteforpr.com>.

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## Re-branding the William Angliss Institute Library as the LRC

### The background:

William Angliss Institute is a specialist TAFE college for Hospitality, Tourism, and Culinary Arts with offices throughout Australia and four campuses in China. It has over 18 000 student enrolments covering short courses, certificate level, and diploma level TAFE qualifications, as well as two Higher Education degrees.

The main campus is in Melbourne and the William Angliss Institute Library was established in 1966 with a focus towards building resources related to the hospitality, tourism, and foods industries in Australia. The Library collection comprises both traditional library resources and access to information and communication technologies including over 150 computers split over two floors.

What became evident was a lack of clarity about what this split two level facility was actually called – the Library (the more common old fashioned and biblio-centric terminology);

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