



Frankston City Libraries
'popped up' in a train station.

POP UP LIBRARY LEARNINGS

Pop up venues are appearing all over the globe, offering fun and creative alternatives to traditional experiences. Asha Davis (Mildura Rural City Council Library Service), Celia Rice (Casey-Cardinia Library Corporation), Deanne Spagnolo (Brimbank Libraries), Josephine Struck (Moreland City Libraries) and Suzie Bull (Mornington Peninsula Libraries) recently undertook a research project as part of the Shared Leadership program offered by the State Library of Victoria to find out how pop ups are being used in the library world. This is their list of things to consider when creating your own pop up library.

Firstly, consider the potential for partnerships. Campaspe Regional Library Service, Goldfields Library Corporation and Frankston City Libraries all installed pop up collections in train stations. The partnerships formed with V/line and Metro Trains have been positive for both the libraries and location providers.

Sunshine Coast Libraries successfully tailored their pop up to the Epic Diem Nerd Culture Expo by creating a blood splattered, zombie-themed space. However, not all of our case studies had a positive partnership experience. Wyndham Libraries partnered with a local shopping centre, ending up with a space that didn't meet the needs of their information technology and storytime sessions. To sum up, be creative, but also be clear about expectations for the use of the negotiated space.

Then consider your collection. Library pop ups fall loosely into two categories: pop ups using withdrawn and donated items and pop ups using current library stock. Withdrawn and donated items have the advantage of not needing to be returned. Linking these pop ups to a library can be as simple as adding signage to the display. Campaspe Regional Library Service attaches a sticker to items printed with a QR code that, when scanned, leads users to the library webpage.

Alternatively, the use of current stock has the potential to entice new users. Frankston Library use current stock, including audiovisual materials that are lent out to users via a laptop operating their library management system in offline mode, uploading the data later at the parent library.

Traditionally, pop ups are only around for a short time. Wyndham Libraries ran their pop up during Children's Book Week. Wodonga Library's portable bookshelves, designed by local artists, are moved every couple of months. However, Frankston City Libraries' pop up has been in operation for 10 years and illustrates how a successful pop up location can become a permanent library service. Its success led to a petition for its continued funding through Council.

Some budgetary considerations for your pop up may include staff time, stock and shelving. To keep costs to a minimum, Campaspe Regional Library Service uses recycled shelving, withdrawn stock and volunteers to take items to the pop up each week.

Success of your pop up can be measured in many ways. Frankston City Libraries keep statistics of how many items are borrowed. Sunshine Coast Libraries used their pop up to seek feedback on their draft library strategy, and success was linked to the number of surveys filled out. Campaspe Regional Library Service measures success by how many items are needed to refill their display.

Pop up libraries have the flexibility to be used in all sorts of ways. They can engage non-users of the library and help us rebrand libraries as fun, creative and exciting places to be.

For further information about pop up libraries and how they have been used in Australia, please visit our 2014 Shared Leadership report at www.libraries.vic.gov.au/infonet.