

Monitoring public library perceptions

Richard Hill, brand manager, librariesvictoria

An opportunity, recently capitalised on by the State Library of Victoria's librariesvictoria program, will offer all libraries, for the first time, a regular snapshot of Australians' perceptions towards, and usage of, public libraries. This has been achieved through negotiating the inclusion of several library-specific questions into AustraliaScan — a cultural monitor conducted annually by Quantum Market Research.

AustraliaScan is based on in-depth interviews and group discussions with a randomly selected, representative sample of 2000 adult Australians.

The results from the latest round of research, as conducted late last year, and to be published in a future edition of *inCite*, report on:

- current holdings of library membership cards throughout Australia;
- frequency of use (and purpose of use) of libraries throughout Australia;
- levels of satisfaction with services offered at libraries throughout Australia; and
- characteristics of library users and non-users.

Importantly, these measures will now be collected and analysed every year, so trends in perceptions and usage of public libraries by Australians can be monitored into the future.

About librariesvictoria...

The librariesvictoria program commenced in 1998 to give the Victorian Public Library Network a common identity and platform from which to conduct statewide marketing and promotional activities. The program is supported by the State Library of Victoria on behalf of the Victorian Public Library Network.

The inclusion of library-specific questions into AustraliaScan is just one tactic in a 12-month marketing strategy recently developed for librariesvictoria by Stanley & Milford, an independent marketing and communications consultancy.

Other tactics include negotiating an estimated \$500 000 worth of community service announcements to promote libraries on television and radio, and in newspapers, and establishing a statewide 1300 number (1300 362 962) and website (located at <http://www.librariesvictoria.net>). librariesvictoria also has an annual presence at the Royal Melbourne Show, and has produced a range of merchandise to help libraries promote themselves locally (including posters and wall height charts for children).

For more information about librariesvictoria, contact Heather Phillips, convener of the librariesvictoria Steering Committee, on 03 9784 1020 or e-mail heather.phillips@frankston.vic.gov.au.

Contact Richard Hill on 03 9826 5829 or e-mail richard@stanleymilford.com.au for more information about this research. ■

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