



CommunityNet Aotearoa

An internet resource for communities in New Zealand

CommunityNet Aotearoa Survey 2007

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2 SUMMARY

Introduction

The CommunityNet Aotearoa online survey is an important way of monitoring success in reaching audiences with the information and resources they need. It informs planning and development and helps us to focus our efforts most effectively.

This year, to enable a time series data set to be developed, the survey questions used are largely the same as the 2005 survey. The survey was carried out by email and website in February and March 2007, with 51 responses received. This has enabled comparisons to be drawn, which are displayed as percentages, with the 2005 results in brackets and *italics* eg 2007% (*2005%*).

Findings

Summary comment

The 2007 reader survey has found that the CommunityNet Aotearoa site is adapting sufficiently to meet and exceed the growing needs of the audience it serves. The survey shows that the current strategic direction of CommunityNet Aotearoa is in line with users' needs, and that all sections of the web site are useful and appreciated by users both individually and as representatives of community groups.

Overall

As shown below, the time series comparison allowed by the 2005 survey shows high and improved levels of reader satisfaction and appreciation in many facets.

- There is a good level of satisfaction with the website overall, with levels at 86% (69%) to 91% (79%) of maximum. 88% (79%) of respondents were 'somewhat' or 'very satisfied'.
- Visit frequency is up to 74% (70%) of respondents in the last month, with 14% (1%) visiting six or more times a month.
- Word of mouth/email 49% (43%), and web links 22% (31%) are the main ways people find the website, followed by search engines 12% (13%).
- The website design is well thought of with 71% (80%) of respondents 'agreeing' or 'strongly agreeing' that the website looks well designed. 14% (10%) of respondents disagreed with this statement, the highest level of 'disagreement' collected.
- The website is also thought easy to navigate with 79% (81%) of respondents 'agreeing' or 'strongly agreeing'.
- The majority of users thought web page display speed is 'fast enough' with 84% (83%) 'agreeing' or 'strongly agreeing', with 22% (13%) 'strongly agreeing'.
- Information on the website was thought to be:
 - easy to find, with 72% (73%) 'agreeing' or better 12% (7%) disagreed;
 - useful, with 90% (90%) 'agreeing' or better;
 - up-to-date, with 64% (66%) 'agreeing' or better; and
 - clearly written, with 86% (90%) 'agreeing' or better.

*Importantly, although totals for information on the website remained similar to 2005, those who 'strongly agreed' were significantly up in all four.

Two new questions were added this year revealing that:

- the website is thought to be user friendly, with 75% of respondents 'agreeing' or 'strongly agreeing', 10% disagreed;
- 37% of website visitors were 'not sure' as to how accessible the site is to people with disabilities, with only 28% 'agreeing' or 'strongly agreeing', and only 1 respondent disagreeing.

*Note further 2007 survey results are set out in Appendix 1.

Section specific

To distil the 2007 survey results, the following summary gives a brief overview of the results, focusing on the five main sections of the site:

1. 'How-to' Guides;
2. Hot Topics;
3. Notice Board;
4. Links; and
5. Panui.

*Note further 2007 survey results are set out in Appendix 1.

1. 'How-to' Guides

Approximately 26% (28%) of those visiting the site did so to access the resources available in the 'How-to' Guides, such as the Community Resource Kit 4%.

Usefulness Rating	Of little or no use	Moderately useful	Very useful	Don't know
'How-to' Guides (on Volunteering, Advocacy, Community Research, Funding, Governance etc)	2% (4%)	14% (18%)	79% (70%)	5% (4%)

When asked what new topics could be added to the 'How-to' guides, 40% of respondents requested one related to Human Resources Management and Administration. A need that was often quoted in the associated benefit of this guide was that:

- organisations often respond to requests for such information;and
- "many organisations do not seem to know about their responsibilities when it comes to employing staff".

2. Hot Topics

Approximately 15% (19%) of those visiting the site did so to access the Hot Topics section. Of those who did visit this section 80% were 'somewhat' to 'very satisfied' that it provided access to relevant, quality information. The majority of these were 'very satisfied' at 57%.

Usefulness Rating	Of little or no use	Moderately useful	Very useful	Don't know
Hot Topics (Information on current topics eg the Digital Strategy, Community Computing etc)	2% (9%)	33% (30%)	56% (54%)	9% (5%)

3. Notice Board

Approximately 28% (53%) of those visiting the site did so to access the Notice Board section.

Although the table below shows that the majority of users find the Notice Board useful to find and publish news etc, one comment summed up the need for improved navigation "Could be more user friendly - easier to find your way around, as events and training are currently very limited..."

Usefulness Rating	Of little or no use	Moderately useful	Very useful	Don't know
Notice Board information (on News, Job vacancies, Events, Training courses, Resource directory and Panui)	2% (6%)	28% (35%)	63% (51%)	7% (5%)
*Publishing your News, and advertising your Job vacancies, Events, and Training courses on the Notice Board (*New Question)	10%	21%	38%	31%

4. Links Directory

Approximately 7% (6%) of those visiting the site did so to access the Links Directory.

Of those who visit the Links Directory 82% (85%) 'agreed' or 'strongly agreed' they were useful, and 76% (74%) 'agreed' or 'strongly agreed' that they 'work', showing that those who use this section value it highly.

Usefulness Rating	Of little or no use	Moderately useful	Very useful	Don't know
Links (to Community websites and resources by Subject, Location, Alphabetically etc)	5% (7%)	23% (49%)	63% (30%)	9% (8%)

5. Panui

Approximately 7% (6%) of those visiting the site did so for the purpose of accessing the monthly Panui. This is backed up by a question on how the Panui is read, with only 7% reading it online.

The majority of respondents, 86%, stated that they read the Panui after being emailed it each month. Of the small number of respondents who did not read the Panui, 75% were not aware of it.

Usefulness Rating	Of little or no use	Moderately useful	Very useful	Don't know
Overall, how useful is the Panui to you?	0% (2%)	55% (46%)	42% (50%)	3% (1%)

Readers liked the up to date information contained in the Panui, and used it to keep informed on events, training and vacancies “it highlights latest resources and events happening; simple format” was a common comment.

Suggested areas for improvement were:

- the inclusion of more Te Reo Māori; and
- more information on events listed.

General comments on the site

“Well done, keep up with the good work, I also find the Panui really useful”;

“I refer organisations to this website on a weekly basis for information”;

“Believe it would be stronger if passed over to community - with resourcing”;

“I have used the website for several years, through three job changes in different community sectors..., and always found what I needed from it”;

“Truly a resource heaven!!”; and

“I think its a really useful idea to have it...”.

Areas for possible attention

- Increased promotion in other formats such as advertisements in community papers and relevant websites.
- Increased use or inclusion of Te Reo Māori.
- More information on events listed.
- Increased information on human resources issues.

Recommendations

In general, the survey shows that the current strategic direction of CommunityNet Aotearoa is valid, that all sections of the website are useful, and that we should keep the current mix of static and frequently changing information.

There is a significant amount of useful feedback and specific suggestions for improvement. These are summarised in the following action list:

Promotion

- Add functionality that reinforces ‘viral’ or ‘word of mouth’ marketing, as this is key to the website;
- improve publicity material (distributed via infomediaries) and Search Engine marketing. Only 20% of respondents report finding CommunityNet via Search

Engine, publicity or media. As the site's information is especially useful to new organisations, it must be findable by them.

Design and navigation

- Review font sizes used and accessibility for people with disabilities, especially the formats for printing.

Content

- Continue to focus on 'How-to' guides, using survey results to prioritise new content, such as a Human Resources guide;
- continue to update and check information regularly
- investigate increased use of Te Reo Māori; and
- investigate a means of increasing information collected on specific events.

Functionality

- Continue to add and showcase the use of new technology and if it is relevant and accessible to the community and voluntary sector, eg Blogs, Wiki, RSS feeds.

Panui

- Further promotion of the Panui to reach those beginning in this sector would be useful.

Conclusion

The 2007 reader survey has found that the CommunityNet Aotearoa site is currently adapting sufficiently to meet and in areas exceed the growing needs of the audience it serves.

However, work is continually required, to reach and connect with communities, such as: increased inclusion of Te Reo Māori; increased event information; and development of a Human Resources guide.

That said, the current strategic direction of CommunityNet Aotearoa was found to be in line with users' needs, and that all sections of the web site are currently useful and appreciated by users both individually and as representatives of community groups.