



AUCKLAND CITY COUNCIL

New Zealand Post Management Excellence Awards 2005

New Zealand Post Technology Innovation Award

Televised Community Noticeboards

Building Strong & Healthy Communities



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Auckland City Council's introduction of the Televised Community Noticeboards system through Triangle Television has created a sustainable community service in an innovative, responsible and accessible way.

This free community noticeboard service is open to not-for-profit community groups that deliver benefits to Auckland city residents.

"This is a great opportunity for community groups to promote themselves and their services at no cost," said Councillor Graeme Mulholland, who was chairperson of the council's Community Services Committee when the boards were introduced.

Auckland City Council strongly believes in helping the community to help themselves in order to achieve their goals. We value our commitment to outstanding customer service. It is through this innovative use of technology that Auckland City Council can not only raise its profile but more importantly, promote its vision of building strong and healthy communities.

Technology

Community groups have always had the requirement to advertise at very low costs. Historically Auckland City Council has responded to this by offering to display physical community noticeboards at busy intersections or by placing advertisements in "Catalyst", our local community magazine.

Whilst both these methods were useful in their own right, they could not always achieve the groups full advertising potential. Physical boards could be expensive (as groups had to pay for manufacture of the actual boards themselves), target audiences were limited, and they took much time and effort to display and move around the city. Articles in the Catalyst, whilst reaching more of the community, didn't always have the immediate impact required for a special event.

Auckland City needed to find a technological solution which would be high impact and wide ranging. A method which would be easily accessible for our diverse community, and one which would be cost & time effective for all parties. A solution which would deliver real benefits to everyone in the local community. Thus, the concept of televised community noticeboards was developed.

How the televised Community Noticeboards work?

- The televised community noticeboards are made up of eight 15-second adverts and screen three times a night, seven days a week, between 7.15pm and 10pm. Community groups also have the option of recording a three-minute interview which will be selected to screen each week. An interviewer is provided on request.
- Community noticeboards consist of text on screen outlining an event, occasion or general public notice. Broadcasting spots are daily at 7:15pm, 8:30pm (or 9:00pm depending on programming), and 10:00pm.
- Community groups can write their own text for their “board” (max 30 words) and provide a range of preferred broadcast dates.
- Noticeboard requests are sent (at least two weeks before screening) either by post, fax or email directly to Triangle Television.
- Triangle Television then send the request for airtime to Auckland City for funding approval. We review the noticeboard content and accept or decline the board’s inclusion in the free screening based on the criteria of our Community Group Assistance Fund.
- The noticeboards are free to not-for-profit community groups who provide a service to Auckland City.
- If funding is not approved, the community group can still run the board at a minimal charge of \$10+GST per night for 3 broadcasts, within Triangle Television’s normal advertising.
- Community noticeboards are not for the sale of commercial products or services.

Keeping track & measuring performance

The relationship between Auckland City Council and Triangle Television has been going strong since early 2004. The idea was to trial the community noticeboards to run for a period of one year, primarily to gauge community response and secondly to find out if the process worked for both Auckland City, Triangle Television and community groups. At the end of the one year trial period, Auckland City Council evaluated the project, looking at the current systems in place, how to improve them and looking at any unsolicited feedback received from groups who were actually using the service. Due to the success of the trial, the televised community noticeboards programme has been extended for a further year.

Each month, regular statistics are provided to Auckland City Council to demonstrate the community groups usage. The statistics also highlight the diversity of the groups using the service. Success is measured by these monthly statistics and by the fact that groups continue to return time and time again to use this valuable service. Feedback has been very positive, with some reporting the effects the service has had on the running of their groups. An example of which is provided below:

Carlton Croquet Club noticeboard

“Thank you for organising the noticeboards regarding the club's garage sale on Saturday 13th November. The fundraiser was a great success and we made over \$1,200 – will probably reach \$1,300 when all the money is in. No doubt the advertising on Triangle Television helped get the numbers there - quite a few people saw your noticeboards and said they stood out well.”

Unsolicited feedback such as this, demonstrates that the service is making a difference in the community.

Below is a typical example of the diverse range of Community Groups using the service over the period of one month (Nov 04).

Auckland Sexual Abuse HELP	Mt Albert Grammar School Comm. Ed.
Grey Lynn Neighbourhood Law Office	Asia Pacific Chamber of Commerce
Refugee Council of N.Z	NZ Tamil Society Inc
LIFE Care Centre	Auckland Women's Centre
Mensline (Lifeline)	Koe Visone Community Trust
West Auckland ESOL Home Tutor Society	Epsom Community Centre
Auckland Refugees As Survivors	Pt Chevalier Community Centre
Pt. Chevalier Community Centre	Mt Albert Community Centre/YMCA
Greenlane Christian Centre	Eating Disorders Association NZ
Youthskills NZ / SkillEX	Barnardos
Neighbourhood Support Office	Family Life NZ
ECPAT NZ Inc	Plunket
Royal School of Church Music	Human Rights Council Inc
Citizens Advice Bureau	NZ Assoc. of Rationalists & Humanists
Blockhouse Bay Antiques & Collectables Fair	Diabetes Auckland
Auckland East Arts - Eastern Bays Community Board	Shakti Family Settlement & Social Services
Auckland Catholic Tramping Club	Wurlitzer Organ Trust of Auckland

Effective Project Management Techniques

The current systems structure we have in place has proven to suit all parties needs. The accessibility of the process has been the key to its success. The process is very user friendly and uncomplicated, as all the user has to do is write a few lines in an email or fax – however the outcome may mean the difference to an event being successful, raising funds and continuing, or not, to function as a community group.

Building familiarity with the noticeboards is also a very important element to the project. Standardised electronic templates were provided to Triangle Television to ensure uniformity of the boards, whilst screening times are kept to the regular set times so that groups are aware of when to look out for them. Information on how to apply for noticeboards is also often screened on Triangle Television with many applications coming as a result of this form of promotion.

Both Auckland City Council & Triangle Television's websites also contain all the appropriate information on how to apply. On a face to face basis, Auckland City's Community Advisors promote this project by highlighting the service to community groups through their networks.

With the eligibility being based on the Community Group Assistance Funding guidelines, our local community groups are already familiar with the criteria, as it is consistent with applying for other funds. It is important that we are providing them with consistent guidelines.

Whilst Triangle Television is responsible the production of the notices for broadcasting, Auckland City is responsible for ensuring those that are applying fit the eligibility criteria. This partnership has been working very well and there is ongoing regular email communication taking place between all parties. Other systems, such as ensuring the noticeboard applications are submitted at least two weeks in advance of screening, allows both Auckland City & Triangle Television to have ample time to consider the applications for their eligibility. There is also the added benefit of Auckland City increasing knowledge of community groups in the city, especially new and emergent groups.

How does this further Auckland City Councils Vision & Strategic direction?

- Auckland City demonstrates its commitment to its community.
- We provide excellence in customer service.
- This project promotes Active Citizenship – its encourages people to engage in their community, be a part of what's happening out there.
- Promotes Auckland City's "Belonging" initiative – gives people a sense of belonging in their community through providing the opportunities to get involved.
- Both Auckland City Council and Triangle Television celebrate and recognise diversity.
- Capacity building - this gives groups the opportunity to grow and be more successful.
- Provides groups with a sense of ownership - we are helping them to help themselves.
- Promotes our support of community networking.
- Fulfils our need to provide a sustainable community service and is the right and sensible thing to do.

How does it benefit Community Groups?

- Community noticeboards are so easy to organise!
- They raise community group profiles.
- Groups can get their message across to potentially large numbers of viewers.
- High impact advertising - groups can highlight all kind of special events, or request for volunteers etc.
- Capacity building – helping community groups to achieve their full potential.
- Gives them a sense of ownership/control – something that is for the community, by the community.
- Free - vital to community groups as many have limited funds available.

Participatory approach – Stakeholders

In order to maintain a sustainable participatory approach, Auckland City provided Triangle Television with a contribution towards purchasing more equipment. A key benefit of this is that Auckland City Council has incorporated into its agreement with Triangle, that any equipment purchased also needs to be made available for community groups to hire (at a heavily discounted daily rate). This also means further access to technology for the community and even more potential benefits.

Aside from any new equipment, Triangle Television feels that maintaining the relationship with Auckland City Council is important as it gives them the opportunity to work on initiatives with the city and at the same time highlights their support and commitment to their viewers. Through the provision of these community noticeboards, they are also gaining a greater understanding of community groups' needs and interests, which in turn may provide them with further possibilities for extending programming opportunities in the future.

Conclusion

On completion of the evaluation period, Auckland City Council have since renewed their agreement with Triangle Television to ensure continuation of this valuable and sustainable community resource.