

TEN STEPS

for Establishing a Sustainable Multipurpose Community Telecentre



User's Guide



United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNESCO Bangkok

Introduction

The concept of *Multipurpose Community Telecentre (MCT)* may be new and sound complicated to many communities in developing countries. While harnessing technologies for the ultimate purpose of community development is being advocated worldwide, communities may be daunted by the idea of embarking upon unfamiliar ground. *Ten Steps* are designed to assist these communities to face this challenge.

Ten Steps comprises ten booklets, each dealing with a specific topic relating to an aspect of MCT. The booklets are written in informal style moving from one point to another in a succinct manner through brief paragraphs – almost telegraphic at times. Despite the different topics, the ten booklets follow the same format. Each booklet begins with the same introduction and note on the authors. Bullet points and text boxes are used freely to present suggestions and highlight main points. Users will find the format quite friendly and easy to follow.

Step One and *Step Two* are accompanied by a set of transparencies for use at meetings. Communities without an overhead projector can copy the texts onto sheets of paper or flip board big enough for the intended audience to see clearly. These transparencies or flip board can be used time and again to improve the community's understanding of MCT.

Relevant short anecdotes are given in all booklets to illustrate various points concerning the benefits of MCT, its programmes and services, its operation etc. These case studies can be used as and when needed.

Programmes and services given in the booklets are indicative of what have been offered in MCTs in various countries and could be considered for new MCTs. It is important that they are adapted to suit the local social/cultural context of the respective communities.

Using the booklets does not have to follow the suggested sequence, their logical order notwithstanding. It is advisable, however, for communities considering establishing an MCT to start with **Step One** and **Step Two**. The rest can be picked and chosen in accordance with the level of interest and concern of the communities. Some may want to know immediately about MCT's financial aspect more than its management. Users are by all means encouraged to comply with the community's interest.

Despite the above-mentioned flexibility, users are encouraged to read the whole set so as to be aware of and familiar with the contents of each.

The Booklets

Step One: Getting Started



This first booklet gives a short explanation of an MCT, its ownership and its possible services and programmes. It deals with the initial process of identifying and mobilising key persons in the community to form a Steering Committee as well as the actions to be taken prior to calling an Open Community Meeting. Factors contributing to sustainability of MCT such as availability of physical facilities,

funding, volunteers and, more importantly, the interest of the community to avail themselves of the programmes and services to be offered are introduced in this booklet.

Step Two: Holding an Open Community Meeting

Focusing on the first Open Community Meeting (OCM) on MCT, this booklet gives some tips on when and how to plan and convene the meeting. Topics to be covered during the meeting are listed along with a short suggestion of content under each. By following the booklet, the Steering Committee will be able to ascertain community interest in and support for an MCT, to estimate the number of prospective users, and to prepare by the end of the meeting a list of *foundation* programmes and services as endorsed by the community members.



To cope with those who cannot participate in the OCM when it is held, a questionnaire is provided in *Annex Two* of this booklet along with an explanation as to why and how to conduct a survey and/or interview.

Step Three: Management

Step Three underlines the importance of appointing key people to the Steering Committee and the right MCT manager while defending the benefits of incorporation and registration of MCT. The booklet gives succinct explanation of what constitutes a good management. Legal framework for MCT is introduced in this booklet for consideration of the Steering Committee. The role



and tenure of the Steering Committee, the Annual General Meeting (AGM), the composition of a Management Committee, its responsibilities and its election are described in this booklet. Included are examples of job checklist for use by the Committee, meeting agenda, format of minutes, mission statement, and organizational chart.

The case studies highlight the importance of record keeping.

Step Four: Staff Appointments

Job description, job advertisement, and recruitment are discussed in this booklet. Users will learn about the role of a selection committee and how an interview of candidates is carried out. Duties of the Steering Committee vis-à-vis the manager are briefly described and example code of conduct for the manager is provided.



Step Five: Services and Programmes



The booklet touches upon the points to be taken into consideration when designing services and programmes or planning on acquisition of additional equipment. Users will find useful lists of services and programmes that could be offered at different stages of MCT development, some of which can

be organised in collaboration/co-operation with other MCTs. Collocation among MCTs, which was first mentioned in **Step One**, is further elaborated in this booklet.

Step Six: Building and Equipment

Step Six raises pertinent questions regarding building and equipment requirements such as location, availability of shared space, internal spaces, furniture, equipment as well as other considerations.



Step Seven: Reach for Your Goals

Explaining planning as a process, the booklet begins with an example of SWOT analysis, a brief explanation on the relationship between vision/goals and activities, defining strategies and actions along with a timeline. The booklet ends with an advice on implementation and review which leads back to situation analysis.



Step Eight: Financial Management



Efficient MCTs have sound financial procedures and practices which include proper budgeting and financial systems, reporting and annual audit. This booklet explains the roles of treasurer and bookkeeper. Simple example helps users to learn various aspects of financial management from preparing a grant proposal and a budget to handling petty cash.

Step Nine: Operating Procedures

Having an operating manual facilitates day-to-day operation from unlocking doors to welcoming visitors and maintaining record for reporting purpose. Ultimately, this step suggests ways to enable a substitute or volunteer to operate the MCT unaided as well as to ensure that MCT can efficiently provide satisfactory services to customers.



Step Ten: Customer Service and Promotional Issues

The content of this last booklet deals with keeping customers satisfied in order to increase MCT membership and consequently candidates for the Management Committee.



Where promotion is concerned, **Step Ten** advises when to begin promoting MCT, what promotional activities are possible and what is needed for carrying them out.

Conclusion

With Ten Steps, UNESCO hopes that communities will be encouraged to discuss establishment of MCT for the benefits of their members. Users should keep in mind that these ten steps are not rigid instruction. Rather, they contain suggestions and initial ideas which can be referred to until such time that community members have attained sufficient understanding of MCT and how it works.

Sharing experiences and success stories should be a natural consequence that will help MCTs to grow. After all, it is a knowledge and learning society that we are striving for. ■

TEN STEPS

for Establishing a Sustainable Multipurpose Community Telecentre



Step One Getting Started



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UNESCO Bangkok

Introduction

Ten Steps for establishing a sustainable Multipurpose Community Telecentre (MCT) is intended to assist communities to *walk through* the basic requirements which need to be addressed when setting out to open and operate a successful MCT. It is a generic process only.

Each community will need to adapt the steps provided to comply with the legal requirements of their country and the programme and service needs of each individual community.

In addition to these *Ten Steps* Booklets, a set of transparencies to accompany *Step One* and *Step Two* has been provided. These transparencies will be particularly useful for public meetings and information and planning sessions. Some of them deal with specific topics covered in the subsequent Steps. Therefore, they can be used separately when occasions arise. If you do not have access to an overhead projector, it is recommended that the information on these transparencies, (particularly the possible programmes, services and collocation sites) be prominently displayed in some other format (black board/white board/poster size sheets of paper) at the Open Community Meeting, so that a survey can be undertaken at this time. ■

Content



Step One: Getting Started

- ▶ Defining the MCT
- ▶ The importance of Community Involvement
- ▶ Appointing a Committee



Step Two: Holding an Open Community Meeting

- ▶ Carrying out a vote
- ▶ Preparing a questionnaire
- ▶ Carrying out a survey



Step Three: Management

- ▶ The role of the Steering Committee
- ▶ The role of the Management Committee
- ▶ Organizing a Committee Meeting



Step Four: Staff Appointments

- ▶ Writing a job description
- ▶ Preparing for the interview
- ▶ The Interview process and contracting



Step Five: Services and Programmes

- ▶ Expanding your service
- ▶ Collocation
- ▶ Partnerships

Step Six: Building and Equipment

- ▶ Assessing your building requirements
- ▶ Assessing your furniture requirements
- ▶ Assessing your equipment and software requirements



Step Seven: The Planning Process

- ▶ Situational Analysis
- ▶ Mission and Action Plan
- ▶ Implementation and Review



Step Eight: Financial Management

- ▶ Preparing an Annual Budget
- ▶ Bookkeeping
- ▶ Preparing a Grant Application



Step Nine: Operating Procedures

- ▶ Producing Logs
- ▶ Preparing a Quotation
- ▶ Steps to keep your MCT running smoothly



Step Ten: Customer Service and Promotional Issues

- ▶ The Role of the Customer
- ▶ Handling Complaints
- ▶ Promotion and Marketing



Step One

Getting Started

A set of transparencies is provided at the end of this Step One booklet.



Transparency 1
How do we know if the community is interested in establishing a Multipurpose Community Telecentre (MCT)?



Transparency 2
Arrange a public meeting with key people who live and work in the community in which you propose to establish the MCT

The people you select should represent a wide cross section of the community. For example:



- Local government
- Health
- Education
- Agriculture
- Community groups
- Tourism
- Government (post office, administration, transport)
- Small business
- Women's groups
- Libraries

These people will be the *movers and shakers* in the community, people who have good networks and the ability to contact key people who can help with funding, facilities and equipment. In addition, it is also important that these people have a good understanding of the programmes and services needed by their local community.

Transparency 3

The purpose of the meeting

- To outline to participants what an MCT is, and what it can do for the local community
- To draw together a Steering Committee which will be responsible for establishing the MCT and overseeing the management for the first twelve months
- To plan an Open Community Meeting for potential users
- To identify a date, time and format for the public meeting.



Make sure you know why you have called this meeting and what you want to have achieved by the end of it.

Format of this Meeting

The speaker should advise the meeting that:



Transparency 4

Telecentres come in many forms

The forerunner to the MCT is the telecentre. Telecentres come in many forms and this is confusing. A telecentre can be community-owned and managed, operate as a franchise or, in some cases, be sponsored by an agency.

Multipurpose Community Telecentres are normally community owned and managed, incorporated entities which operate on a *not-for-profit* basis. The reason that this model is the most popular is that it is owned by the whole community. This ownership allows those using the centre to have a say in the type of programmes and services they would like to see the MCT provide, ensuring the centre is relevant to their needs.



Transparency 5

What do people call a telecentre?

In some instances the telecentre is simply a telephone shop which provides local, STD and ISD call facilities. Some providers add Internet and email to their telephone shop while other centres add facsimile and photocopying machines to these basic

services. Still other telecentres add a variety of additional programmes, such as secretarial services, business cards/stationery publishing, computer training, labour market support and newspaper production.

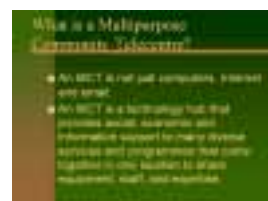
After more than 15 years of development, we now have a Multipurpose Community Telecentre and it is this type of centre that **Ten Steps** will concentrate on, given its proven ability to be self sustainable.

Although Telecentres come in many different formats, this book will focus on the Multi-purpose Community Telecentre model which provides a wide range of services and programmes to communities.

Transparency 6

What is a multipurpose community telecentre?

Many people believe a Multipurpose Community Telecentre is just computers, Internet and email. This is incorrect. An MCT is a *technology hub* which allows a community to establish many programmes and services which provide social, economic and information technology support.





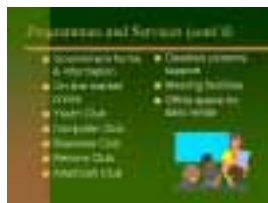
Transparency 7 - 11

What services and programmes can this mct offer?

There are many options.



Programmes and services required should be identified by the community at an Open Community Meeting. These possible programmes and services should also be discussed at this initial meeting so that those present will come to understand the many possibilities the MCT can provide.



More information?
See *Step Two Ten Steps Holding an Open Community Meeting Survey Sheet* and *Step Five – Ten Steps Services and Programmes* for additional comprehensive lists of ideas.

Transparency 12

Community input is required

To commence operation the MCT will require community assistance. This input may be provision of a rent free building, volunteers to assist with staffing the facility, people providing support through membership, community activities to assist with funding or other help as needs are identified.



Transparency 13

Funding requirements

Funding *will/will not* be available to cover basic establishment costs and equipment purchase. Before calling an Open Community Meeting it will be necessary to identify if funding assistance will be available. This assistance should then be explained to those present at the Open Community Meeting when it is called.



Transparency 14

Case studies

Help has been provided to many communities through the establishment of an MCT. This information can be shared through stories and illustrations which will help people attending the Open Community Meeting to understand what an MCT facility could achieve for their community. Select someone to tell these stories at the meeting.



The best way for some people to understand the MCT idea is to tell a story. Case study stories are presented in *yellow* boxes throughout this book. Choose the stories that are most relevant to your community.



Transparency 15

Services should not be duplicated

MCT's do not duplicate existing services, they complement, restore and initiate programmes and services which are not currently available. If you have a computer training service already successfully operating in your community or any of the other programmes listed under STEP 5 the MCT should not offer this support. The exception to this rule is the basic services (email, Internet, phones, fax and photocopying) which will be required to support all activities within the Centre.



Transparency 16

Collocation

Collocation with other community groups and facilities is possible. Libraries, emergency services, post office, agriculture, labour market programmes, community newspapers, technical training facilities can be considered. Encourage those present to add other possibilities, which would benefit from MCT support, to the list.

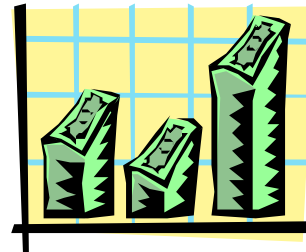
What other groups could share a building so the community gets a great service?

Transparency 17

Sustainability

Sustainability is possible if the MCT is a collocated, multipurpose entity (a cooperative or supermarket by another name). Collocation saves money as it:

- Allows better equipment to be installed and shared by all collocating partners;
- Encourages staff to assist in all functions operating in the MCT (example, if one service is very busy on one day more staff are allocated to assist, and on another day may help with a different programme);
- Provides opportunity for the Centre to be open long hours including evenings and weekends.



Transparency 18

Moving the project forward

If the outcome of this Key People meeting is supportive, those present should form a Steering Committee and after electing a Chair, Secretary and Treasurer, move the proposal forward.

Prior to calling an Open Community Meeting, the Steering Committee will need to meet to:

- Examine funding possibilities. Confirm funding to cover basic costs and purchase the initial equipment required.

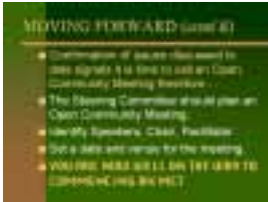


Consider:

- ▶ \$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$
- ▶ Building
- ▶ People / staffing

- Determine whether a suitable building in a good location is available free or at an affordable rent.
- Be satisfied that a suitable person/persons can be identified to run the Centre in accordance with the specified requirements listed under **Step Four**.

The steering committee should not sign any agreements until after the open community meeting has been held as the community may reject the proposal for an MCT.



Transparency 19

Confirmation of these dot points signals that it is time to call an Open Community Meeting to allow opportunity for all potential users to have input into this proposed new venture.



Transparency 20

Thank You.

..... Move on
to an open meeting



Annex One

Case Studies

Case Study 1

A Consultant was recently called to a small island in the Indian Ocean to help them establish a telecentre. The population was quite small and it appeared it would be difficult to provide what was being asked.

After some days of studying the situation the Consultant returned to the Steering Committee and told them 'it will be very difficult to establish a telecentre which can financially provide for itself as you ask. However, it will be possible to provide an MCT which will bring in enough money to pay its bills. I proposed that the telecentre, Tourist Centre, Training Centre, Community Newspaper, Book Exchange and Video Library join together and operate as one body:

- ▶ Sharing one building and saving rent;
- ▶ Sharing equipment (one photocopier, one set of computers, one fax machine, one scanner, etc. between all groups);
- ▶ Sharing staff (if the community newspaper is very busy, staff from other entities can assist this project, if many people want emails they move to this service and so on..);
- ▶ Opening for long hours (including nights and weekends) to allow people access from early morning to late at night instead of set business hours. This is achieved by having some people start early and go early, and others starting late and finishing late.

The Committee saw the wisdom of this sharing arrangement which would save money and yet bring more services and programmes to their community and implemented this new arrangement. ■

Case Study 2

High up in the Himalayan Mountains a small village was desperate to improve its standard of living. One day a man arrived from an international organization and promised them a telecentre which would help them to learn and to access the outside world.

The problem was that many of the people could not see what it could do for them as they had not learnt to read and write. As time went on, the Telecentre was established. Computers, scanners, photocopy machine, printers, etc. were put in place. They carefully covered this precious equipment and waited for the next step to happen.

Some time later a person sponsored by an international organization arrived and sat down with the community leaders. First of all she told them what it was possible to do and then asked them what the people would feel happy with. Five programmes were initially chosen.

The people of this very isolated community decided that:

1. The teachers in the school should be the first to learn how to use this new equipment.
2. When they had learnt they would teach the children these new skills.
3. The Telecentre would be a post office which sent and received emails/faxes for the people of this community. There was a particular need for this service to allow them to contact relatives in the capital and for quick transfer of relevant government forms. The road from their village to the capital was more often closed than open and the normal mail service was often delayed.
4. Precious forms and photo's would be scanned, repaired and laminated (covered in plastic) to preserve them as many were very, very old and irreplaceable. Tourist information, post cards and brochures would be produced to bring money into the MCT and the community.
5. The small video camera on the computer would be used for job interviews, saving people from having to travel to the capital down very dangerous roads.

The Telecentre was located with the Telecom facility. This meant the Manager of Telecom who had skills in computing could share his time between Telecom and the Telecentre. The assistant, who had been employed to help in the MCT could be available when he was repairing telephone services to take the money from people who were paying Telecom accounts.

The hospital was also to be part of this venture. They were not located with the MCT but were able to use its technology to send x-rays to the capital where a specialist doctor could decide whether or not the sick person could be treated in the community or should be transferred to a larger hospital.

Working together this community had moved from just a telecentre to developing an MCT which has become a very important part of the community and is continuing to pay its way. ■



About the Authors

Gail Short has had long experience in Multipurpose Community Telecentre (MCT) planning, establishment and sustainability and was responsible for the establishment of the Western Australian Telecentre Support Unit and Network which comprised 74 centres (now 93) when she retired from this task in 1999.

For the past few years she has worked as a consultant in the Asia/Pacific region assisting with establishment and sustainability issues which affect MCTs. In addition to this task she holds the position of Executive Officer, Community Teleservices Australia Inc. (CTSA), where she is assisting with the establishment of a new national support body. CTSA aims to provide national delivery networks, opportunity for cross fertilization between teleservice centres and collective lobbying power once fully operational. In 2001 she was appointed Vice President (Asia/Pacific Region) to the International Community Teleservices Centres Association.

For most of her life Gail has lived in remote locations in Papua New Guinea and rural areas of Western Australia and Queensland where she has experienced first hand the problems associated with poor infrastructure and telecommunications. Gail's aim in life is to make a difference and she has used this passion to successfully assist many people in her own country and throughout the Asia/Pacific region. ■

Deborah Rice provides information and management support to telecentres in rural Western Australia through her role as Regional Coordinator for the Western Australian Telecentre Support Unit. She was an inaugural member of the State Telecentre Advisory Board bringing regional matters to the attention of government. In response to requests by MCT Management Committees she wrote the Western Australian Telecentre Network *Toolkit*. Deborah organizes and facilitates regional workshops to assist MCT managers and Management Committee members identify, plan and deliver services to their communities.

Deborah is also a member of the Regional Telecommunications Working Group, and has highlighted the concerns of rural women and families to government, including health, education and transport, through her position on the State Women's Advisory Council.

Deborah has a passion for developing leadership in rural communities and has graduated from two state level leadership taskforces, including a study tour to South Africa researching successful leadership models. She enjoys working with community groups to promote and deliver services and programmes in rural areas. ■

TEN STEPS

for Establishing a Sustainable Multipurpose Community Telecentre



Step Two

Holding an Open Community Meeting



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Step Ten: Customer Service and Promotional Issues

- ▶ The Role of the Customer
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Step Two

Open Community Meeting

A set of transparencies is provided at the end of this Step Two booklet.

Widely advertise this meeting to ensure that everyone has the opportunity to attend. Use radio, paste notices, advertise in the local newspaper, print flyers.

Meeting Format:

It is important that people hear about the new venture early so that ownership is felt by the whole community. It is also important that potential users of the Centre have every opportunity to make comments and suggestions during this meeting. A suggested meeting format to allow this to happen would be:

Meeting opened by the Committee Chair who welcomes all who are present and outlines the procedures for the evening. The Chair should advise the meeting that the Committee is looking for support, ideas and information from those attending so that they can decide whether this project should go ahead.

Thank people for attending the meeting and let them know how long you expect it to be.

Transparency 1

Welcome the appointed facilitator/speaker who will cover the following topics.



Transparency 2

Telecentres Come in Many Different Forms and This Is Confusing.

Outline different types of telecentres which have been established, including a Multipurpose Community Telecentre.

Advise the meeting that a telecentre can be community-owned and managed, operate as a franchise or in some cases can be sponsored by an agency.

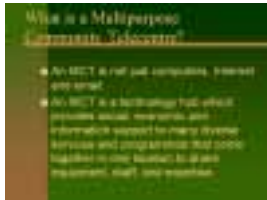


Transparency 3

What Do People Think a Telecentre Is?

Sometimes a telecentre is simply a telephone shop which provides local, STD and ISD call facilities. Some providers add Internet and email to their telephone shop while other centres expand further and add facsimile and photocopying machines to these basic services. Larger centres add a wide variety of programmes and services including secretarial services, business cards/stationery production, computer training, labour market support and newspaper production.





Transparency 4

What Is a Multipurpose Community Telecentre?

Many people believe a Multipurpose Community Telecentre is just computers, Internet and email. This is incorrect. An MCT is a technology hub which allows a community to establish many programmes and services which provide social, economic and information technology support.



Transparency 5

Case Studies

Read case studies. These can be found in Annex One of the *Step Two* booklet and each of the other nine Step booklets. Reading the case studies to the community meeting will help to illustrate what Multipurpose Community Telecentres have achieved in other communities and countries. You may like to tell other MCT stories known to the Committee.

Case Studies and stories are highlighted in yellow throughout this book

Transparency 6-10

Advise those present of the many different programmes and services which have been offered around the world. The overheads list programmes and services which can be offered. The Step Five booklet lists additional programmes and services which may also be relevant. Talk about the different groups listed (Internet related, community, business, clubs, etc) and allow people to ask questions.

Collect Information

Collect information on additional programmes and services required. Write a new list of programmes and services which the people attending believe will be relevant to their community. (This list can be made up of some items from the list provided and others which the people attending wish to add.)

Print this information on large sheets of *poster size paper* so that they can be referred to later in the meeting.

Services and programmes that this community wants:

- ▶
- ▶
- ▶
- ▶
- ▶





Transparency 11

MCT's Do Not Duplicate Services

MCT's do not duplicate existing services, they complement, restore and initiate programmes and services which are not currently available. If you have a computer training service already successfully operating in your community or any of the other programmes listed under *Step Five* the MCT should not offer this support. The exception to this rule is the basic services (email, Internet, phones, fax and photocopying services) which will be required to support all activities within the Centre.

Time to Vote

Once everyone is satisfied that all possible options have been added, *ask people to vote by a show of hands for the programmes and services which they would use.* You may wish to encourage those present to only vote for five programmes and services. Record the numbers interested against each programme.



If the crowd is too big, you will have to generalize and record

- a) interested
- b) very interested
- c) not interested.

If you can count the numbers then do this as you will obtain a more accurate vote.

The Speaker (with helpers) should then determine which are the 20 most popular programmes and services the community desires. The list of 20 (don't forget to include your basic services) then becomes the

foundation services the Committee will aim to provide when opening the MCT, IF the community provides the required support for this to happen.

The additional programmes and services listed should also be kept in numerical order, as once the first 20 have been established the Committee can again refer to this list, drawn up by the community, and endeavor to provide these additional services as finance and facilities allow.

Transparency 12
Collocation

Collocation with other community groups and facilities is possible. Libraries, emergency services, post office, agriculture, labour market programmes, community newspapers, technical training facilities can be considered. See *Step Nine* for additional suggestions). *Remember this is only a discussion on what is possible. The meeting can only identify possibilities and if the opportunity presents itself for this to happen in the future or after discussion with the mct committee, collocation may take place. Groups identified should not feel threatened.*





Transparency 13 **Sustainability**

Sustainability is possible if the MCT is a collocated, multipurpose entity (a cooperative or supermarket by another name). Collocation saves money as it:



- ▶ Allows better equipment to be installed and shared by all collocating partners;
- ▶ Encourages staff to assist in all functions operating in the MCT (example: if one service is very busy on a particular day more staff are allocated to assist. On another day another programme may need help and staff are reallocated to this area);
- ▶ Provides opportunity for the Centre to be open long hours including evenings and weekends through rostering of staff.

Time to Vote

It is now time to ask those attending the meeting to again have their say:

Show a list of possible groups who could collocate with the MCT.

- ▶ Rule out any group which the community objects to or does not think it possible to collocate with.
- ▶ Add a list of community groups which could possibly collocate.

Record a vote against each item on the list. List the outcome in numerical order.

Transparency 14

Community Input Is Required

Time to Vote



Before you conclude the meeting ask those present if they:

- ▶ Support the establishment of an mct facility in this community?
- ▶ Would become a user of the mct?
- ▶ Are prepared to pay a small fee to use the centre?
- ▶ Would use the centre (daily/weekly/monthly/occasionally)?

Record a vote against each item.

If you do not get strong support when these questions are asked, you need to reconsider establishing an MCT.

Transparency 15

Summarize

Before the meeting concludes – quickly summarize what has been decided.

- ▶ Programmes and services requested for the new MCT. *Read these out for confirmation.*
- ▶ Possible collocation groups. *Read these out for confirmation.*
- ▶ Support which has been promised. *Read these out for confirmation, detail level of use promised, willingness to pay fees, etc.*



Finally have those present confirm that they are happy that this is what has been decided by the open community meeting.

This action is necessary as the Committee is about to undertake a lot of work establishing the MCT if this is what has been decided. The Committee needs to know that the community is in agreement with the proposal.



Transparency 16

Thank all for attending and ask them to tell others who did not come to the meeting.

You might like to give people a drink and a biscuit before they leave as this will give them time to talk briefly about what they have just heard.

In addition to the above open community meeting:

- ▶ The Steering Committee may wish to hand out Survey Forms to allow people who did not attend this meeting to have their say. The survey forms should be filled in and returned to certain collection points. Traditionally it is very difficult to achieve a good result from this method, so this will need to be well planned. A number of helpful hints have been provided in Annex Two to this *Step Two* segment.

- ▶ The Steering Committee may wish to interview additional *key people*, not already on the Committee, on a *Face to Face* basis using the Survey Form as the question base and filling this in during the interview. This can be a very useful exercise and gives the Steering Committee opportunity to further publicize the MCT project.

The steering committee now has to determine need and move forward if need is identified.

If there has been a positive outcome from the Open Community Meeting, the Steering Committee now moves to *Step Three* in the establishment process.

Worthy of Note:

You may never get such a large group of community people together again to provide the input you need to open and run a successful MCT. A well-planned meeting will give you a lot of information (or market research) to use in your future planning.



Case Studies

Case Study 1: Do MCT's Really Work?

On a very dark and rainy night, a consultant arrived in a small isolated community. The town had had one set back after another as programmes and services were slowly being removed from their community to larger communities some distance away. The people were both sad and angry, so angry that even though the weather was bad they decided they would attend a meeting which had been called by a member of their community.

The consultant stood up to speak in the crowded room and noticed a very big man in the front row who appeared to be asleep! He stayed this way all through the meeting as she explained what an MCT could do for their town.

The consultant talked about the services they had lost or never had and the programmes they could now bring to the community through using a technology hub and opening an MCT. She told them stories about other new MCT's she had recently established and how they were growing rapidly. The room was very quiet as people listened.

At the end of her speech she told the people present that they would have to decide whether they wanted an MCT facility or not, and that if they did, the hard work was just starting as they would have to provide a building in which to house the new facility and support to get the project established.

When the Consultant had finished speaking the man in the front row who seemed to have been asleep, opened his eyes and said, '*Build it big – build it very big*'. He had not been asleep at all only listening very carefully. This man had lots of vision, he had started new services

in the town in the past and could see all the things the MCT could do for his community.

Today this MCT is one of the most important buildings in town. It has a very committed Management Committee and Manager. The first building was big, housing a Resource Centre, library, MCT, Community Development Office, community newspaper and many other smaller services. In three years it was far too small. Not to be defeated, the community doubled the size of the Centre and today it is one of the largest buildings in town. ■

Case Study 2: How Do You Grow An MCT?

Some years ago the writer was called to a community which was very keen to start an MCT. She was shown two buildings, one in an isolated back street which was quite nice and another, which needed some work, on the main street. It was recommended that the community use the building on the main street as people were passing all the time, whereas the more isolated building was some distance away and could easily not be noticed.

The community established their Centre and from day one it has been a success.

Why has it continued to grow and expand to the point that they now use two separate buildings and desperately need more space?

The Centre has a very committed Steering/Management Committee and an overall Manager who 'manages' and does not try to do all the tasks himself.

Who Does the Work?

The Manager identifies a need.

For example: training in basic computing and Internet access. The Manager then goes out and finds enough people to start the first

training course and identifies a person to do the training. This person will only be paid for this first course. While this trainer is running the course she/he will have the opportunity to identify enough people to run the next course which may be for small business or another computer training programme. The Trainer advertises these courses and soon this small part time job has turned into a full time job as people keep coming to undertake training in these areas. The Trainer is paid from the fees which are charged and the MCT also receives some of the fee money to cover the cost of the equipment and other support facilities provided.

Next the Manager identifies that the MCT could be a secretarial service. It could provide a service for small business, writing their letters, keeping their books and working out salaries which are due to employees. Most small businesses do not need more than two or three hours of secretarial support a week. The Manager finds the first small business he can help and finds a person to undertake this work. The same message is given to this person, if you want to earn more money, go out and find more small businesses who need your help. This business grows.

Today this MCT has nine people working in the Centre, some full time and others part time. They all have their own expertise but are willing to help one another when a big job has to be completed quickly. They have training, secretarial services, desktop publishing, a bank, labour market assistance, health assistance, a Development Officer and others.

The Centre is seeking much bigger premises for the MCT and other entities who have indicated a desire to collocate with them. They have moved from just starting new small business ventures to identifying big new business opportunities for the community. The MCT provides training to assist people to get employment as these projects are established.

This is just another example of what a small Community can do with the right Committee and Manager. ■

Annex Two

Conducting a Survey

There are a number of ways to conduct a survey. Three options are contained within this Annex Two. *Step Two* has strongly suggested that the major survey be undertaken at an Open Community Meeting. In addition to this survey, additional forms for information collection can be distributed. The following is a written survey process which can be used.

Conducting a Community Survey by handing out prepared forms for completion.

Keep it simple – offer a prize as an incentive to complete the Form. When the survey forms have been completed and handed in to the MCT put them in a box and get someone to pull out a winner. The prize can be free MCT membership for the first 12 months, free access to email for the first months, free training in a relevant course of study, or something similar.

Why Conduct a Survey?

Before money is invested in an MCT and a great deal of work is undertaken in establishing and developing such a centre, the Committee must know that the Community wants such a facility.

The survey results will:

- ▶ Confirm whether or not the Community wants an MCT;
- ▶ Confirm whether collocation is an option and with whom collocation should take place;

- ▶ Confirm whether the Community will provide support for the MCT;
- ▶ Confirm whether sustainability can be achieved, in part, through payment of memberships, fees for services;
- ▶ Assist the Steering Committee in deciding which programmes and services are required;
- ▶ Help the Committee to prepare a budget;
- ▶ Show what type of building is needed, for example if most people want training a much bigger space will be required than if they just want a community newspaper produced and email access;
- ▶ Provide evidence of Community need when applying for grant monies.

The answers to the survey points will be vital for any grant applications submitted.

Conducting the Survey

Given the MCT's ability to provide a wide range of services, it is recommended that the survey be conducted in separate parts.

Part 1: Arrange a public meeting using speakers and overheads to explain and show those attending what is possible. Collect information on programmes and services they require.

Additional information concerning support, willingness to use the Centre, how often they would access programmes and whether they would pay a fee for these services should also be collected.

Part 2: Face to face interviews These should be conducted with:

- ▶ business
- ▶ key community programmes
- ▶ government departments where applicable
- ▶ local industry
- ▶ shoppers in shopping centres



The prepared survey forms can be used to collect information during these interviews.

Part 3: Handing out survey forms for completion

The Questionnaire Form

When drawing up the questionnaire form make sure you have all the basic requirements:

- ▶ The Title – Make sure it tells the story (Example: ‘Multipurpose Community Telecentre – A new Community Service’)
- ▶ Clear statement on why the survey is being conducted (Example: ‘Community need and support must be established’)
- ▶ An opening statement on *What a Multipurpose Community Telecentre is*
- ▶ A short background note on what has taken place within the community to date to establish an MCT
- ▶ Concise notes on how to complete the survey form – Make sure respondents understand how you want them to answer the questions.

For example:

- Please tick one box on every question.
- Please fill out a separate form for each person in your household
- or, use only one form for your household.

- ▶ Questions on key issues you want to ask. It is recommended that you list the proposed services on the first page of the questionnaire and the questions second. Be precise with the questions otherwise the survey will lose its value. For example don't ask – do you think you would use any of the listed services, ask – please list the services you would use.
- ▶ Section for comment – it is important that provision is made for people to make comments at this early stage, as they may not fully understand what the MCT can offer or they may wish to suggest other programmes and services which have not come up for discussion previously.
- ▶ Section for optional personal information – If people are willing to provide this information it can be very helpful in determining what age groups are wanting to use the Centre, how many people live in the household and what community they come from. This information can be used when the Committee is planning youth clubs, etc.
- ▶ Information advising where to return the questionnaire
- ▶ Point of contact for additional advice

Make sure all the dot points raised at the open community meeting are included in your questionnaire.

Rating the Questionnaire

The two best ways to rate your questionnaire are:

- ▶ Assign a value 1 to 5 to each question with 5 being the highest, or
- ▶ Provide a series of boxes after each question and ask the respondent to tick the relevant box.



Multipurpose Telecentre Survey – Name of Community

Questionnaire:

Please advise which of the following programmes and services you would use and how often this would occur.

W = Weekly M = Monthly N = Never

Internet related: W M N	Yes/No	Labour market related: W M N	Yes/No
..... Email Internet access ISP provider Internet on-line selling Web page maintenance Home page design Data base design	 Unemployed work assistance Employment information board Labour market assistance Unemployed, retired, single mothers, disadvantaged etc Baby sitting service Interpreting/translation services Local media service (journalist) Equipment loan service Undertake stocktake/produce inventories for Shires, business	
Information related: Information access Information retrieval		Secretarial agency Home handyman Home support service Meteorological collection service Tender access point Travel agent Passport photos Photography/development/ restoration Car pool Teleadministration Telework assistance Driving tests/examinations Home and business alarm monitoring Communication shops ie telecom	
Computer related: Sales and service of equipment Software sales Computer use Scanning Training and instruction (operation and software)			
Business related: Telephone access e-commerce Desktop publishing			

Business related (cont'd):

- Book/report publishing
- Secretarial service
- Minutes and agendas
- Laminating
- Photocopying
- Sending/receiving fax's
- Printing
- Message retrieval/sending (telegram concept)
- Bookkeeping
- Phone answering service (small business)
- Business brokering
- Small business development
- Job application assistance
- Publish tourist information
- Publish local recipe books
- Production of community calendar with all relevant information for the year
- Publication of children's books
- Conference presentations

New business development:

- New enterprise initiative scheme (assisting to establish new businesses)
- Business incubators
- Publish local phone book/email/video-conferencing addresses/emergency services/sporting fixtures/general services, etc
- Meeting facilities
- Office space for daily rental
- Grant application assistance

Education related:

- University (distance)
- Technical education
- In-house training
- Upskilling seniors
- Upskilling children
- Emergency training (fire/rescue)
- First aid training
- Workplace safety/occupational health
- Professional development (health/education/government/police/agriculture, etc)
- Language
- Boating safety
- Examination supervision

Tourist related:

- Tourist information
- Heritage information
- Anthologies of the regions
- Community newspaper/newsletter production (compiling, printing/sales)
- Information radio

Government services:

- Government information/forms
- On-line market prices

Agriculture:

.....
Field day organisation
Market information for farm produce
Agriculture demonstration site
Landcare and imaging services
Agriculture information:
Market prices

Community related:

.....
Book exchange
Management of community programmes
(Special events, grants etc)
Children's toy library
Resource material for School children
Newspaper reading room
Social events board
Community advertisement board
Arranging social events
Eye testing (Lions Club)
Public administration
Assistance (forms)
Disabled persons assistance equipment
Small jobs information board

Clubs:

.....
TeleYOUTH
TeleSENIOR
Business Club
Mothers Information Club
Information Evenings Club
Kids Club
Homework Clubs
Whiz Kids
Arts/Craft Club

Collocation with the following services:

.....
Banks
Accounts collection for Government
Distance education centre
Emergency service site
Emergency vehicle operation site
Telemedicine/Telelaw
Police/justice
Library
Craft shop
Radio station/broadcasting
Agribusiness centre
Video library/screen latest releases
Heritage resources and library
Postal services
Community newspaper
Interactive video conferencing facility for justice, law, medicine, education, job interviews, professional development – police, public servants, accounts, doctors, nurses, health workers, teachers)
Professional service office-tax/insurance

Please tell us about your household:

How many people live in your home? () People

What are the ages of these people?

0-10 () 10-20 () 20-30 ()
30-40 () 40-50 () 50+ ()

Ask questions about collocation, other services they might need, fee for services.

Comments:
.....
.....
.....
.....

Try out your questionnaire:

Once the Committee has designed the questionnaire – try it out on a small group to see if the results you can achieve are those that you want.

Where to return this questionnaire:

Please leave this questionnaire in the boxes provided at....., etc. (The Post Office/Shire/Library might be willing to act as a collection point). If the questionnaire has been returned bydate you will be eligible to be included in the prize draw for one free month's email access or free membership for a year (or similar).

Getting the message across:

If the Committee has access to community announcements on the radio or in the newspaper, use this resource. The more you can bring the proposed new Centre to people's notice and remind them to return their questionnaire forms the better.

About the Authors

Gail Short has had long experience in Multipurpose Community Telecentre (MCT) planning, establishment and sustainability and was responsible for the establishment of the Western Australian Telecentre Support Unit and Network which comprised 74 centres (now 93) when she retired from this task in 1999.

For the past few years she has worked as a consultant in the Asia/Pacific region assisting with establishment and sustainability issues which affect MCTs. In addition to this task she holds the position of Executive Officer, Community Teleservices Australia Inc. (CTSA), where she is assisting with the establishment of a new national support body. CTSA aims to provide national delivery networks, opportunity for cross fertilization between teleservice centres and collective lobbying power once fully operational. In 2001 she was appointed Vice President (Asia/Pacific Region) to the International Community Teleservices Centres Association.

For most of her life Gail has lived in remote locations in Papua New Guinea and rural areas of Western Australia and Queensland where she has experienced first hand the problems associated with poor infrastructure and telecommunications. Gail's aim in life is to make a difference and she has used this passion to successfully assist many people in her own country and throughout the Asia/Pacific region. ■

Deborah Rice provides information and management support to telecentres in rural Western Australia through her role as Regional Coordinator for the Western Australian Telecentre Support Unit. She was an inaugural member of the State Telecentre Advisory Board bringing regional matters to the attention of government. In response to requests by MCT Management Committees she wrote the Western Australian Telecentre Network *Toolkit*. Deborah organizes and facilitates regional workshops to assist MCT managers and Management Committee members identify, plan and deliver services to their communities.

Deborah is also a member of the Regional Telecommunications Working Group, and has highlighted the concerns of rural women and families to government, including health, education and transport, through her position on the State Women's Advisory Council.

Deborah has a passion for developing leadership in rural communities and has graduated from two state level leadership taskforces, including a study tour to South Africa researching successful leadership models. She enjoys working with community groups to promote and deliver services and programmes in rural areas. ■

TEN STEPS

for Establishing a Sustainable Multipurpose Community Telecentre



Step Three Management



United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNESCO Bangkok

Introduction

Ten Steps for establishing a sustainable Multipurpose Community Telecentre (MCT) is intended to assist communities to *walk through* the basic requirements which need to be addressed when setting out to open and operate a successful MCT. It is a generic process only.

Each community will need to adapt the steps provided to comply with the legal requirements of their country and the programme and service needs of each individual community.

In addition to these *Ten Steps* Booklets, a set of transparencies to accompany *Step One* and *Step Two* has been provided. These transparencies will be particularly useful for public meetings and information and planning sessions. Some of them deal with specific topics covered in the subsequent Steps. Therefore, they can be used separately when occasions arise. If you do not have access to an overhead projector, it is recommended that the information on these transparencies, (particularly the possible programmes, services and collocation sites) be prominently displayed in some other format (black board/white board/poster size sheets of paper) at the Open Community Meeting, so that a survey can be undertaken at this time. ■

Content



Step One: Getting Started

- ▶ Defining the MCT
- ▶ The importance of Community Involvement
- ▶ Appointing a Committee



Step Two: Holding an Open Community Meeting

- ▶ Carrying out a vote
- ▶ Preparing a questionnaire
- ▶ Carrying out a survey



Step Three: Management

- ▶ The role of the Steering Committee
- ▶ The role of the Management Committee
- ▶ Organizing a Committee Meeting



Step Four: Staff Appointments

- ▶ Writing a job description
- ▶ Preparing for the interview
- ▶ The Interview process and contracting



Step Five: Services and Programmes

- ▶ Expanding your service
- ▶ Collocation
- ▶ Partnerships

Step Six: Building and Equipment

- ▶ Assessing your building requirements
- ▶ Assessing your furniture requirements
- ▶ Assessing your equipment and software requirements



Step Seven: The Planning Process

- ▶ Situational Analysis
- ▶ Mission and Action Plan
- ▶ Implementation and Review



Step Eight: Financial Management

- ▶ Preparing an Annual Budget
- ▶ Bookkeeping
- ▶ Preparing a Grant Application



Step Nine: Operating Procedures

- ▶ Producing Logs
- ▶ Preparing a Quotation
- ▶ Steps to keep your MCT running smoothly



Step Ten: Customer Service and Promotional Issues

- ▶ The Role of the Customer
- ▶ Handling Complaints
- ▶ Promotion and Marketing



The success of a new MCT rests heavily on the appointment of a community representative Steering Committee and appointing the right MCT Manager. These appointments cannot be taken lightly. It is absolutely essential that those who are elected to these positions are prepared to work hard, are dedicated to providing these new services for the community and have the ability to communicate with one another and the community.

What Are the Roles of the Steering Committee?

1. Incorporation

There are numerous tasks which the Steering Committee must undertake. In some countries it will be necessary to apply for incorporation.

Check out the need to incorporate your MCT.

The Steering Committee will need to find out whether this step is necessary for their Community Organization. Incorporation provides protection for Committees who are involved with money, wish to provide a service to the general public and to enter into contracts to allow this to happen. Incorporation can protect the individual members of these groups.

2. Write and submit a Constitution

A Constitution may also be required by law. A good Constitution will provide rules and guidelines for your MCT which will help you to avoid problems and issues which may arise from time to time. If this document is required you will be provided with a *Pro Forma* which will help you to complete the requirements of this task.

Your Steering Committee must check with the relevant Government department to determine whether this step is also necessary.

3. Registering your MCT

As with incorporation and the writing of a constitution, the Steering Committee must find out whether there is a legal requirement to register the MCT community owned and managed business.

A Committee member should be appointed to deal with this task and those of incorporation and the writing of a constitution.

4. Identify and appoint a Management/Steering Committee

Step One has dealt with the appointment of the initial Steering Committee. If the establishment of the Multipurpose Community Telecentre becomes a reality, this Committee should continue to manage the organization for the first twelve months. At the end of this time, it is normal for an Annual General Meeting to be held so that the community can elect new members to a Management Committee which will take the place of the initial Steering Committee. It is a good idea that half of the Steering Committee are re-appointed to this new Management Committee. They will be able to train the new members who are coming into this group and

AGM

The Annual General Meeting is where office bearers are elected to the Committee to take on various roles.

pass on information on programmes and services which have been, and are being, developed.

Further, if a policy is adopted for people to stay on this Committee for two years only, it will mean that every year some people remain while others leave. This allows knowledge of activities to be ongoing. The two year policy is not mandatory but it does provide opportunity for new people to contribute to the running of the Centre and to use their expertise to initiate new programmes and services. The Community should be asked at the Annual General Meeting what policy they wish to see adopted.

The Constitution will tell you how you should call for Management Committee nominations and will provide the words for the nomination forms. Once it is known who the Management Committee members will be, a meeting should be convened and nominations should be called for a Chair, Secretary and Treasurer.

5. The Committee Structure

In general, a Committee has eight to ten members. Included in this number are the Chair, Secretary and Treasurer. Careful consideration should be given to appointing people from a cross-section of the community as this gives a good balance. For example: education, small business, agriculture, financial expertise, woman's groups and community representation should be considered.

This expertise will be very valuable when the Committee is developing business plans, training programmes and new business ventures.

6. Management Committee Responsibilities

The Management Committee has a number of responsibilities it is required to meet.

What Are These Responsibilities?

Multipurpose Community Telecentre specific:

The Committee is responsible for the overall management of the MCT and while it can delegate some tasks to the MCT Manager others definitely are the responsibility of the Management Committee.

These duties include:

- ▶ Appointment of the MCT Manager
- ▶ Overall supervision of the MCT Manager
- ▶ Drawing up and endorsing the Strategic Plan to which the Committee and Manager will work. This document is sometimes called a Resource and Performance Agreement which sets out the goals for the MCT for the coming twelve months. Performance is measured against these goals on a monthly basis to determine whether the MCT is on target to meet its commitments both financially and with regard to the development of programmes and services promised.
- ▶ Developing policies and rules for the MCT
- ▶ Seeking community endorsement and input for programmes and services offered
- ▶ Maintaining financial accountability for the MCT
- ▶ Marketing the MCT and its services. The MCT Manager will assist with this but the Committee is responsible for the ultimate success of the Centre.
- ▶ Identifying monies which the MCT can apply for to assist with the provision of some programmes and services
- ▶ Committee members should indicate their willingness to assist the Manager in some way with his/her day to day duties. For example,

someone with financial skills may help with setting up procedures for financial activities. A Committee member with an educational background can provide advice and support concerning training issues. The Manager cannot do everything. If your MCT is to be successful the Management Committee must be active.

General Responsibilities

Employer Responsibilities – identifying any tax, workers compensation, superannuation and other government laws and requirements which must be met in your country, state or community.

Legal Responsibilities – making sure you observe the rules and regulations which are required by any funding authority, local government authority, Incorporation or Constitution Acts or documents. Check all outside bodies you are working with to make sure all legal issues are understood and met.

Risk Protection – it is the Committee's responsibility to make sure the building and equipment are insured and that any other insurance required to protect staff, members and the public is in place and fully paid. This can include:

- ▶ Public Liability Insurance (covers injury and/or property damage which occurs to a member of the public while they are using the MCT property. The MCT could be held responsible if it can be proved that it was not taking proper care at the time the problem occurred).
- ▶ Professional Indemnity Insurance. This insurance covers people against damages caused through their own negligence or improper advice which they may have given to another person while working in the MCT. Staff and volunteers should try not to give advice if they are not an expert in the particular area being discussed.

Financial Accountability – it is essential that proper books of accounts are kept at all times. All payments and receipts should be recorded and a statement of these and any other expenditure which has taken place should be presented at each Committee meeting. In addition, quarterly and annual financial reports should be presented by the Treasurer.

An annual budget should be prepared and income and expenditure should be measured against this document.

Bank accounts should be opened with three people being appointed to sign (two at any one time).

It is recommended that the MCT Manager does not have the right to sign. This task should belong to the Committee only. The MCT Manager can be given a small amount of petty cash to deal with small day-to-day purchasing requirements.

Tax issues and requirements should be examined. In many countries MCT's are exempt from taxation but not from filling out forms to allow this to happen. Make sure your MCT is complying with the tax laws of your country.

Financial statements should be audited annually and the auditors report should be presented to the Annual General Meeting.

Draw Up a Check List

It is a good idea for the Committee to draw up a list of jobs it has to undertake to and to tick off those it has dealt and add new ones which have come to their attention at each meeting.

The checklist could look something like the following:

No	Task	Date Listed	Date Completed	Comments
1	Obtain building Insurance	1/12/2002	3/3/2003	AMP Insurance
2	Advertise for MCT Manager	1/12/2002		Complete by 30/1/03

7. Management Committee Meetings

A credible organization will hold regular meetings and keep a record of the business attended to at each session.

How Does the Committee Meet the Need?

A possible meeting format would be:

Name of Management Committee

Date and time of meeting

Persons Present:

Apologies:

Agenda

The agenda should be prepared prior to the meeting. During preparation, any outstanding issues from the previous meeting should be identified and included as 'Business Arising'. Prior to confirming the agenda for the meeting, the Chair can ask if there are any items to be added. These items will be added at the end of the Agenda under General Business.

The Chair can also ask the Committee if they wish to put a time limit on the meeting.

If the Management Committee feels this is required, they can, when the specified time is reached, vote to continue if the item they are discussing is very important or if there is perhaps only one more item to complete the agenda. Setting a time limit can assist in keeping the discussion relevant as many meetings talk about a lot of issues which are not on the agenda and which should not be raised at the meeting.

Once these issues have been resolved the Management Committee should vote to accept the Agenda.

Moved/Seconded (Discussion prior to voting)

Item 1: Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The minutes can be read or taken as read if all members have received a copy before the Management Committee meeting commenced.

Moved/Seconded (Discussion prior to voting)

that these minutes be accepted.

1. Correspondence (in)
2. Correspondence (out)

Item 2: Business Arising from the Minutes

1.
2.

Moved/Seconded (Discussion prior to voting)

Item 3: Reports

3.1 Report from the Chair

Moved/Seconded (Discussion prior to voting)

3.2 Secretary's Report

Moved/Seconded (Discussion prior to voting)

3.3 Treasurer's report

Moved/Seconded (Discussion prior to voting)

Item 4: Manager's Report

Moved/Seconded (Discussion prior to voting)

that the Manager's Report be accepted

Item 5: Sub Committee Reports

A Sub Committee may have been formed to look into some issue such as a new programme, identifying suitable insurance for the MCT etc.

Moved/Seconded (Discussion prior to voting)

Item 6: General Business

.....
.....
.....

Item 7: Any Other Business

.....
.....
.....

Item 8: Date of Next Meeting

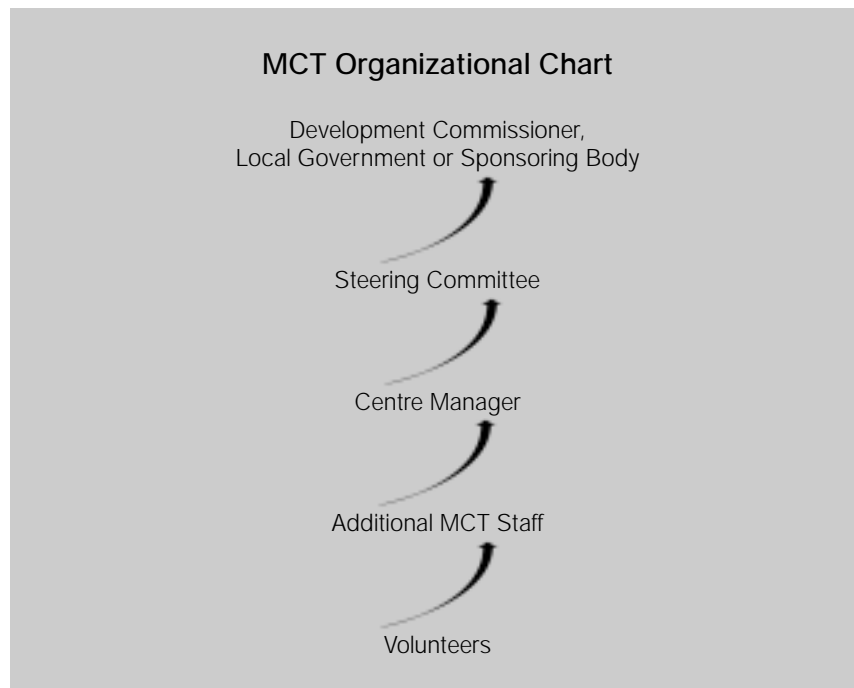
8. Development of a Mission Statement

It is good for the Committee to write a brief Mission Statement which will help them focus on why an MCT has been established in their community.



Example: The (name of community) Multipurpose Telecentre will seek to assist members of this community to improve their quality of life through the development and delivery of new programmes and services.

9. Develop an Organizational/Reporting Chart



10. Management Committee's Code of Conduct

The Steering/Management Committee needs to adopt some *General Principles of Official Conduct*. The following suggestions are made for possible inclusion.

- ▶ Members perform their duties with integrity and are honest in the use of official information, equipment and facilities
- ▶ Members are considerate and sensitive in the way they deal with fellow Committee personnel, MCT staff, MCT members and the general public.

Having ALL members sign a Code of Conduct ensures that everyone knows what is expected of them.

This is a good way of preventing problems in a professional way.

The success of your MCT is based on its quality, ethical and professional behaviour and principles.

To ensure the general principles are exercised it is necessary that the following specific issues are addressed:

1) Personal Benefit

The MCT is a community resource. Members and staff should not use confidential information which comes to their notice for their own benefit or that of anyone else.

2) Intellectual Property

The title to intellectual property in all duties relating to contracts of employment will be assigned to the MCT when it is first created unless otherwise agreed by separate contract.

3) Conduct

3.1 Standard of dress must be neat and acceptable within the MCT facility.

3.2 Members of staff and MCT members will act properly at all times and in accordance with the terms of the law and the rules and regulations of the Centre.

3.3 Duties will be performed in the best interests of the MCT on an impartial basis. The best interest of the MCT should come first at all times.

Confidentiality Agreement:

Confidentiality Agreement

I (Name)..... agree to keep to myself at all times any information that becomes available to me during my time of employment/volunteer work at the (Name)..... Multipurpose Community Telecentre.

I understand that 'information' is 'confidential and sensitive information' that has come to my notice while carrying out my duties and which would not normally be available to the general public.

I will make sure that any written confidential material is suitably disposed of as quickly as possible.

Signed: _____

Name: _____

Dated: _____

11. Promotion

It is the duty of the MCT Committee and Staff to continually promote the programmes and services of the Centre. Be careful not to make statements when you are not sure if the information is correct, particularly when this information may end up in a newspaper, on the radio or similar.

If you wish to provide information for the newspaper or make a statement on radio or television, *write down what you intend to say and make sure you do not get pushed into making statements about other things which may be incorrect.*

Annex One

Case Studies

Case Study 1

The Committee of a long established telecentre in the Asia/Pacific region became lazy in its supervision of the petty cash monies. The Manager had been at the Centre for a long time, so they felt he/she would have it in hand. It was not until the Centre began losing money and was in danger of having to shut its doors that the Committee realized that something was wrong.

Money was being borrowed from the petty cash tin. Monies were being taken out of the tin by a variety of people who were using it for all sorts of purchases. No receipts were being put in the tin once items were bought. No one knew what had been purchased and whether change was returned. The poor management of the petty cash tin lead the culprits to believe they could also put money paid for other services in their pockets.

The Committee regained control and established new rules for handling Centre money. They were very surprised how quickly the income increased. The Centre eventually returned to a viable status. ■

Case Study 2

The Committee of an MCT set out the roles for the newly appointed MCT Manager and left him to commence operating the MCT.

They were careful to check the financial statements at each Committee meeting, observed the staff at work and the supervision being undertaken by the Manager on a day-to-day basis. Everything seemed fine until the Manager suddenly left to take up another job.

The Committee went to examine the staff files and those of the volunteers working in the Centre who may have been eligible to become Acting Manager until a new person was appointed. *There were no staff files.* No record of time worked, time owed, holidays taken. This was contravening legal requirements.

The Committee was responsible for the MCT being non compliant with these requirements and were strongly criticized by those in authority.

Do not take things for granted – the Manager was a good person who was running short on time and rather than let the Committee know he could not cope with his duties, he had simply not undertaken some duties which he knew probably would not be checked. ■

About the Authors

Gail Short has had long experience in Multipurpose Community Telecentre (MCT) planning, establishment and sustainability and was responsible for the establishment of the Western Australian Telecentre Support Unit and Network which comprised 74 centres (now 93) when she retired from this task in 1999.

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TEN STEPS

for Establishing a Sustainable Multipurpose Community Telecentre



Step Four

Staff Appointments



United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNESCO Bangkok

Introduction

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- ▶ The importance of Community Involvement
- ▶ Appointing a Committee



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Step Ten: **Customer Service and Promotional Issues**

- ▶ The Role of the Customer
- ▶ Handling Complaints
- ▶ Promotion and Marketing



Appointing the MCT Manager

Appointing the MCT manager will be one of the most important tasks the Steering Committee undertakes.

How can a good result be achieved?

The Committee must decide what type of person they are looking to appoint to undertake this task. Because the MCT is a technology hub, most people believe the Manager should be someone who has outstanding technology skills. Unfortunately a large proportion of people with these skills do not have people skills. They forget to talk to their customers being more content to confine themselves to technology issues.

The best person to employ is someone who knows and understands the community and its needs, has an acceptable level of technology skills, can handle money and above all talk to people and make them feel comfortable in this new technology environment.

1. Write a Job Description Form

The Job Description form should:

- ▶ State what the Committee feels the Manager should achieve (the objective for this position);
- ▶ Clearly outline the duties the Committee will require the Manager to undertake;

Final reminder:
Remember appointment of the right manager will be one of the most important decisions the committee has to make.

- ▶ State the hours the Manager will be required to work;
- ▶ Specify reporting requirements.



Example Job Description Form

(Name of Centre)

MULTIPURPOSE COMMUNITY TELECENTRE MANAGER

.....

DESCRIPTION OF DUTIES

Objective/Mission:

The MCT Manager will seek to assist members of the community to improve their quality of life through the development and delivery of new programmes and services that will be provided in a friendly and supportive environment.

MCT Management:

The Manager will be responsible for the day to day management of the Centre.

This task will include provision and delivery of client services, provision and distribution of information, promotion/marketing of a variety of programmes and services (IT, social and economic based) provision of training services (both formal and informal) and satisfactory maintenance of all relevant equipment and Centre records.

Staff supervision:

The Manager will take responsibility for any additional staff employed by the Steering/ Management Committee and for supervision of volunteers who may assist from time to time.

Policy and procedures:

The Manager will assist the Committee with the development of policies and procedures relevant to the Centre, including acceptable accounting procedures, and will be responsible for overseeing their implementation and meeting their requirements. Example: Preparation of relevant reports.

Research and Marketing:

The Manager will promote the capabilities of the Centre within the community and create business opportunities where applicable. Further, he/she will take responsibility, together with the Management Committee, for the continued evaluation of the Centre.

Reporting:

The MCT Manager will report directly to the Steering/Management Committee.

The Management Committee will seek to ensure quality, confidentiality and credibility are observed and maintained. To this end, the Manager will be required to attend Committee Meetings and in a format determined by the Committee present a report of activities and outcomes since the previous meeting.

The report should contain:

- ▶ Information concerning continuing programmes and services
- ▶ New projects being undertaken
- ▶ New projects being planned
- ▶ Number of people using the MCT
- ▶ New memberships which have been taken out
- ▶ Financial statements
- ▶ Special events planned and undertaken
- ▶ Needs
- ▶ Problems which the Committee needs to address

Hours of Duty:

The Manager will work 40 paid hours per week. Flexibility will be required depending on programmes and services being offered. Negotiation will take place between the Manager and the Committee as to what hours are most appropriate. Some evening and weekend work may be required.

Other Duties:

Undertake tasks as directed by the Management Committee from time to time.

Referees:

The names, addresses and any other contact details of two people who can recommend your application should be included.

Question: Now that you have decided what you want the manager to do, how will a suitable person be found to do this job?

Answer: By writing a selection form which outlines the person you are looking for.

Where you live will determine the number of applications you will receive. This may be a few or many hundreds. If you receive 500 applications this can be a big problem. How many applications you receive can be controlled by making it clear when you advertise the position that you will only consider persons who meet all of the essential requirements of the Selection Form. Each applicant should be given a copy of the Selection Form and Job Description Form.

2. The Selection Form

The following example shows how it is possible to clearly identify the type of person the Committee is looking for.



SELECTION FORM

Essential:

Persons applying will need to show that they have the following abilities:

Community Service: Demonstrated knowledge and experience in working with/in a community is required.

Interpersonal and Communication Skills: Excellent interpersonal and communication skills (verbal, written and oral presentation). The Selection Committee will need to be sure that the person they select for the Managers position can easily talk to customers and others, can write a report that is clearly understood and can speak at public meetings and training sessions in an acceptable manner.

Management Skills: Demonstrated knowledge and experience of management issues: The potential MCT Manager should convince the Selection Committee that they know about and are able to assist in writing: business plans, annual reports, policy, funding submissions, budgets, letters and reports.

Supervision of subordinate staff should also be demonstrated.

Research and Evaluation: Knowledge of survey and evaluation procedures will be required to assist the Committee with ongoing evaluation of the MCT.

Training: Previous experience in the provision of training will be necessary, given the strong emphasis the Centre will be placing on this aspect of its operation.

Information Technology: Knowledge and understanding of information technology including computer literacy skills, computer packages and operating systems.

Desirable:

Previous experience in the MCT field

Basic research skills

Strong problem solving skills. Problems will arise from time to time between staff, students and members. The MCT Manager will be required to deal with these where appropriate.

Academic Qualifications: State highest level of education reached.

Referees: The names and addresses of two referees should be included with your application.

3. Advertising the Position

Try to advertise the position in places where the type of person you are looking for will see it. This could be:

- ▶ On the community notice board
- ▶ In the community newspaper
- ▶ Over the radio during a community notices segment
- ▶ By word of mouth



It is not wrong to ask people you think have all the qualifications to think about applying. You are not offering them the job only the opportunity to apply.

The advertisement should be clear and short but contain all the requirement information.

The following is an example that may be of help:

MANAGER
(Centre Name) MULTIPURPOSE COMMUNITY TELECENTRE

PART-TIME POSITION

The newly formed (Centre Name) Multipurpose Community Telecentre Steering Committee is seeking a person with strong communication and management skills, training ability and a reasonable level of computing knowledge to manage the soon to be opened (Centre Name) Multipurpose Community Telecentre.

Multipurpose Community Telecentres are a technology hub facility. Public access is provided to telecommunications and computers through which information, Internet/email, education, employment, training and business opportunities can be identified.

Potential applicants are encouraged to obtain a copy of the Job Description Form and Selection Criteria which outline the experience required from and to submit their application to.....by ...(date).....

For further information please contact: (Name, Title and contact number/address)

4. Selecting People to Interview

What do we do when all the applications are received?

Aim to select no more than 20 people for interview. If you do not find the person you want you can always interview others later.

Who should undertake the interviews?

The Steering/Management Committee should appoint three Committee members to form a selection panel. If the Steering/Management Committee prefers they may select two Committee members and someone from another MCT, from the funding body, Local Government or similar.

Sorting the Applications:

Once the application submission date has passed, these people sit down and remove all the applications that do not meet the selection form. If the applicants have not answered all the items in the Selection Form (Example: have not told you they have managed some community/small business enterprise or trained people before) they do not meet the requirements and can be removed. If the Committee cannot understand what has been written, remove the application as these people will not be able to write letters and reports.

Put the applications that are nicely presented, clearly written and meet all of the selection requirements to one side. **YOU WILL BE SURPRISED HOW FEW MEET THE REQUIREMENTS.**

If more than 20 applications are left, read through the applications again dividing them into three groups (excellent, good and not so good). Sort the excellent group into order (best to worst).

The Selection Committee should then set up a time to interview these people. Start your interviewing with the best application in the *excellent group*. If you have not found your person by the time you finish the

excellent group start on the group marked *good* and finally, if necessary, go to the *not so good* group. Sometimes the right person will take some finding and may not be in the initial group you interview. Be patient. Do not try to interview too many people on one day.

5. Conducting the Interview

To ensure the appointment of the Manager is conducted in a fair and reasonable manner it will be necessary for the Selection Committee to ask each applicant the same questions and give an appropriate rating.

The rating could be a mark out of 5 for each question. The Committee should compare notes at the end of each interview and tell each other why they chose that rating. It is not good enough to give excellent simply because you know the person and THINK they may do well. The applicant must have demonstrated his/her abilities during the interview.

Interview Assessment

Rating Scale:

- 5 ▶ Excellent
- 4 ▶ Very good
- 3 ▶ Good
- 2 ▶ Poor
- 1 ▶ Very Poor

Before commencing the interview it is recommended that the Selection Committee briefly outlines what the Steering/Management Committee's plans are for the new MCT. This will give the applicant time to settle down and feel comfortable.

Questions:	Name: MD GUPTA	Ranking
.....		
Community Experience		4
1. MCT's are community initiatives. Please tell the Committee what community experience you have had prior to applying for this job.		
Communication Skills		4
2. The Manager of the MCT must have a high level of communication skills. Please tell the Committee about your written, speaking and presentation skills.		
3. Tell the Committee how you have used these skills in previous jobs.		
Management Experience		5
4. Please tell the Committee about your previous management experience. Include information about the jobs you were required to undertake.		
5. Ongoing evaluation of the MCT will be a task the MCT Committee and Manager. Please advise the Committee what experience if any, you have had in this area.		
Training Expertise		5
6. Training will be a major part of the MCT services. Please outline training programmes you have been involved in.		
Technology Background		3
7. The MCT is a technology hub. The Committee asks you to advise them of your knowledge in this area.		
General		
8. Have you ever managed or worked in an MCT in the past?		No
9. The Manager will be required to work 40 hours per week. Some of this time may be worked in the evenings or on weekends. Are you happy with this requirement?		Yes
Information Component		
10. Advise the applicant of the salary the Committee proposes to pay and any bonuses that may be provided if certain goals are reached.		
11. Advise the applicant of the work conditions. Example: This will be a contract/salaried position.		
12. Does the applicant have any questions he/she would like to ask the Committee?		
RATING SCORE		21

Comments

Note in this section any additional skills/knowledge this person may have indicated during the interview. Give your opinion concerning this persons ability to carry out the MCT Manager's position. The comments may be important if 2 or 3 people gain the same rating score.

At the end of the interviews, list the position obtained in the interview procedure again the name of the person on your interview list. If you interviewed 20 people list 1-20.

Do not contact Referees until you have decided which applicant you wish to appoint. This will save you and the referees a lot of work.

Once the Selection Committee has made its decision it should advise the next Steering/Management Committee meeting. The Steering/Management Committee may wish to meet the proposed Manager (and perhaps the person the Selection Committee ranked second) and speak with him/her before a final decision is made.

Recommendation:

The Manager of an MCT is required to carry out many jobs, particularly in the early days. Duties can range from research to mending computers, conducting classes to evaluation to sweeping the floors. This is a heavy load and it is not for everyone. It is therefore RECOMMENDED that you employ your MCT Manager for an initial period of three months. After this time the Steering/Management Committee needs to talk about what the Manager has achieved and whether they are happy with this. If they are very unhappy they can ask the Manager to leave without any problems. If they think he/she is doing a reasonable job in some areas but not others, the Committee may wish to extend this trial period for a further three months. If the Committee is still unhappy at this time, a change is required.

If the Steering/Management Committee makes a decision to endorse the Steering Committee's selection an announcement can be made. If the Steering/Management Committee is not happy further discussions will need to take place. The Steering/Management Committee is the employer, they must feel they can work with the proposed Manager.

As custom requires, unsuccessful applicants should be advised they were not successful. This cannot take place in some cases due to the numbers who may have applied for this position. Try to overcome this problem by putting out a community announcement on the notice board or on the radio advising the community that (Mr. or Mrs. So-and-so).... has been appointed to this important position.

Confidentiality Agreement

Once the MCT Manager has been appointed and a date has been agreed for him/her to start duties, the Steering/Management Committee should draw up a Confidentiality Agreement for signature.

It is recommended that the Committee, Manager, Staff and Volunteers be required to sign a Confidentiality Agreement and that customers and members be aware that this has taken place. Signing this document means that anything these people see or hear of a confidential nature will not be told to anyone else.

Example:

CONFIDENTIALITY AGREEMENT

I (Name) agree to keep to myself at all times the information that becomes available to me during my time of employment/volunteer work at the (Name) Multipurpose Community Telecentre.

I understand that information is 'confidential and sensitive information' that has come to my notice while carrying out my duties and which would not normally be available to the general public.

I will make sure that any written confidential material is suitably disposed of as quickly as possible.

Signed: _____

Name: _____

Dated: _____

Code of Conduct:

It has been recommended in **Step Two** that the Steering/Management Committee needs to adopt some **General Principles of Official Conduct** to ensure:

- ▶ Members perform their duties with integrity and are honest in the use of official information, equipment and facilities.
- ▶ Members are considerate and sensitive in the way they deal with fellow Committee personnel, MCT staff, MCT members and the general public.
- ▶ The success of your MCT is based on its quality, ethical and professional behaviour and principles.

To ensure the general principles are exercised it is necessary that the following specific issues are addressed:

1) ***Personal Benefit***

The MCT is a community resource. Members and staff should not use confidential information that comes to their notice for their own benefit or that of anyone else.

2) ***Intellectual Property***

The title to intellectual property in all duties relating to contracts of employment will be assigned to the MCT when it is first created unless otherwise agreed by separate contract.

3) ***Conduct***

- a) Standard of dress must be neat and acceptable within the MCT facility.
- b) Members of staff and MCT members will act properly at all times and in accordance with the terms of the law and the rules and regulations of the Centre.
- c) Duties will be performed in the best interests of the MCT on an impartial basis. The best interest of the MCT should come first at all times.

The Manager has been appointed – it's all up to him/her now, the committee has no further responsibility.

Wrong! Wrong! Wrong!

Steering Committee's Duties

Over the past weeks/months the Steering Committee has undertaken many tasks which have allowed it to become familiar with the duties and requirements of the Manager and the programmes and services which need to be established.

It is now the duty of the Steering/Management Committee to ensure that the Manager is fully briefed, assisted and supported and has every opportunity to learn about his/her duties as quickly as possible. If there is another MCT close by which has been operating for six months or more, it may be a good idea to send the Manager to observe and work at this centre for a few days prior to opening your Centre. The Steering/Management Committee may wish to set up a *sister* relationship with a similar centre to their own. This will help everyone to learn about mistakes before they make them! The world is now full of MCT's so take advantage of this.

Training and development

If after the initial trial period the appointed MCT Manager is confirmed to the position the Steering/Management Committee should set up a programme for Performance Appraisal. The programme should allow the Committee to establish how the Manager is continuing to progress and where advice and help is required. The MCT will need to constantly introduce new programmes and services and to keep up with new technology as it emerges. This cannot be done unless the Manager has assistance to update himself.

Possible ways of doing this:

- ▶ Training through attending selected courses and seminars.
- ▶ Obtaining papers off the Internet (Time needs to be given to identify these.)
- ▶ Working with another MCT Coordinator for a day, who has learnt some new skill and is happy to pass it on.

You do not need to spend a lot of money on training, but if the opportunity arises for the MCT Manager to meet with other *like minded* people it is recommended that this be done. Establishing a network of MCT people is invaluable.

Case Studies

Case Study

The Steering/Management Committee of a particular MCT did not believe advice they were given that they did not need to employ a person whose best skills were in the technology field. They went ahead and appointed such a person to open their Centre.

He was a very nice person who kept the Centre very clean and all the equipment in perfect condition. But something was missing, he didn't go out and welcome people into the Centre and when people came he had very little to say to them.

Eventually he became discontented and resigned from the position.

The Steering/Management Committee employed another person to fill his place. This time it was a woman. She had a lovely time with all the equipment and was very computer/technology literate. Still no people came. Eventually she left. The Committee said the community did not want such a Centre, that was the problem. They would try once more. They employed another man and he too had wonderful technology and computing skills. Third time lucky they said. No one came and he too left after some months. Many of the Committee members left.

Finally the new Committee agreed that perhaps they should try someone who had proven people skills, lots of ideas and computing/technology knowledge. They found just the person. Within a week the place had been turned upside down. People came from everywhere – the Centre was always full of people and things were happening. The Committee was delighted, they worked hard. They moved the Centre to a much bigger site. The town had a very large number of unemployed people and the MCT was constantly helping them with training, job information and community programmes which helped to provide entertainment and help to all.

Remember that people who have had long experience with MCT's have learnt some things that might help you. ■

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Step Five Services and Programmes



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Step Five

Services and Programmes

The results from your questionnaire will give you a clear indication of what initial services and programmes people in your community want from the Multipurpose Community Telecentre (MCT).

As technology changes and people become more familiar with what the MCT can offer, these services and programmes will grow. It is important to keep asking people what else they would like to see at the MCT.

Remember:

It is important that the MCT does not compete with existing business in your community.

Try to form an effective partnership with other organizations to share resources and not duplicate services.

The MCT should start by providing access to computers, the Internet and email, and also provide services such as photocopying and scanning. The Management Committee, the coordinators and the volunteers will quickly come up with new ideas as they get to know what people want.

Often the MCT can provide new services and programmes using the equipment they already own. It is just a matter of using your imagination to capture the interest of community members.

Other times it will become necessary to buy new equipment so that new and exciting services can be offered. In this way the MCT can always provide services and programmes that address the needs of the community.

The Management Committee will need to determine if the purchase of new equipment will fit into the budget (see **Step Eight – Financial Management**), and then determine the prices to be charged.

Services and Programmes

Question:

- ▶ Who lives in this community?

Possible answers:

- ▶ government workers
- ▶ youth
- ▶ school aged children
- ▶ retired people
- ▶ small business owners
- ▶ students – University
- ▶ unemployed people
- ▶ families
- ▶ low income people
- ▶ disabled people

When you have determined the types of people who will be your potential customers, then you can design services and programmes that will suit their interests.



Questions:

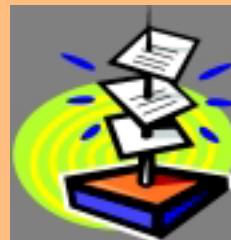
How do you know what services and programmes people in the community want?

How do you find out what new services people would use?

Answers:

Ask your customers as they come in if there is anything else they would use if it was available at the MCT.

Take note of requests that you are not able to provide for at the moment. If you regularly get similar requests then present this information to your Management Committee to determine how the service can be provided.



Equipment

What equipment has the MCT already got? What services and programmes can be offered using this equipment?

What new equipment is needed? Is there anyone else in the community that already has this equipment, and if so is there a chance of forming a partnership so that the community gets the best service?

Would it be possible to use second hand equipment to offer this service?

Skills

Who can help the MCT offer the services. Is there someone in the town with the skills to do the work? Does the opportunity mean that someone else needs to be employed?

Economics

Does the purchase of new equipment and the hiring of staff fit into the budget? Can the MCT pay this?

Will the community people be able afford this service or programme?

Most MCTs start by offering just a few basic services and programmes and then add more as they get a regular income and understand the needs of their community

Many MCTs have had to move into a larger building as they continue to offer more and more services.



Services

Phase One: these are some of the services the MCT could be offering when it first starts.

- ▶ Photocopying – this is often one of the most used services. People come into the MCT to get copies of important documents.
- ▶ Access to computers, printers and scanners
- ▶ Access to the Internet – as more information is becoming available on the Internet, this is becoming an important service.
- ▶ Email access for locals and tourists – email access to tourists provides significant income to MCTs that are in tourist areas.
- ▶ Telephone access – this can grow into a message service where phone or email messages are received and taken to the right person or business.
- ▶ Sending and receiving facsimiles – some important documents can be signed and faxed back for quick responses.
- ▶ Scanning – documents, photographs, text, graphics
- ▶ Provide meeting space for small groups – this is a useful way of bringing people into the MCT and promoting the services that you offer. By not charging very much, the MCT is providing a useful community service.

The MCT could be an **Email Post Office** – receiving and reading emails to people – and then typing and sending replies. This would be at a small charge.

.....

The MCT could provide free email addresses to members – for them to use the Email Post Office.

.....

What about a **TOY LIBRARY**? The MCT can obtain some toys that can then be lent to families in the community.

This way the children get to play with a number of different toys.



- ▶ Internet searches – for research purposes
- ▶ Book exchange – people can bring in a book and change it for another one.
- ▶ Identification or passport photos – this requires an instant camera or a digital camera and a good colour printer. The photos can be scanned into the computer to make ID cards.
- ▶ Small jobs information board – for people to advertise jobs that they want done. The MCT can charge a small amount to put these advertisements onto the board.
- ▶ Give access to government forms and information. Sometimes the MCT can assist people fill in the forms and then fax them back to the relevant organization.
- ▶ Supervise examinations for universities

Phase Two: As the MCT grows, these are some of the extra services you could offer.

- ▶ Typing – word processing. Many professional people require their reports to be typed, university students need major assignments typed and many job applications need to be typed. The MCT can gain a high reputation for quality work if typing is completed well and on time.
- ▶ Job Application Assistance – the MCT staff can assist people write their job applications and make sure that all the needed information is included.
- ▶ Record, type and send the minutes for various organizations. This records a committee’s decisions properly, and reminds people what they agreed to do.
- ▶ Binding – of documents, books. Some MCTs have published a small children’s book, then laminated and bound it for local children to borrow.

- ▶ Laminating – many school teachers like to get their posters laminated so that their posters last longer.
- ▶ Provide office space for visiting professionals and important persons – many visiting professionals such as doctors and government officers will need a confidential area to meet with people in private. The MCT can provide a room that is well set up with a desk, some chairs, a telephone, and power points for any other equipment. (Some MCT's make this into the Manager's office whilst visiting professionals are not in town).
- ▶ Write grant applications – for the MCT as well as other organizations. A good grant writer can help many community groups access funding for projects.
- ▶ Design and print – business cards, brochures, invitations, posters, labels, tickets, calendars, telephone directories, advertising flyers, business letterhead paper.
- ▶ Tourist information can be gathered, written and materials produced in the MCT. Tourist brochures, accommodation guides, where to eat information as well as postcards, playing cards, bookmarks and magnets can be designed and printed.
- ▶ Graphic design service – design logos, layout, artwork for organizations
- ▶ Restore and print old photographs – take the cracks and yellow out of the photograph. It is possible to take out unwanted images to make the photograph look more professional.



Note:

The services that a MCT can offer are only limited by your imagination.

.....

What other services can the MCT provide that will address the needs of this community?

One small community bought a key-cutting machine and offered this service as previously people had to travel about 100 kilometers to get their keys cut.



Although not linked directly to normal MCT activities, this shows how a community identified a need and then worked out a way of offering

- ▶ Produce posters to promote local events.
- ▶ Data entry – there are world-wide opportunities to tender for data entry on computers which is emailed to the relevant organizations.
- ▶ Interpreting/translation service – if this is needed and no-one else in town offers the service then this is a worthwhile activity to promote.
- ▶ Community Radio Station – some MCTs are looking at the possibility of setting up a community radio station based from the MCT. This will depend on what is already available and the space requirements.



Phase Three: as the MCT becomes more financially viable, it is possible to purchase new equipment so that new services can be provided. Here are some more ideas.

- ▶ Financial – bookkeeping services for local organizations, payroll services, access to financial software. The MCT can employ someone who is good at bookkeeping to assist businesses and other community groups keep all their financial records properly. This can be done either manually or using a computer accounting package.
- ▶ Internet service provider – the MCT can be an agent for an Internet Service Provider to give people a local contact when they are connecting their home or office computer to the Internet.

- ▶ Most MCTs who enter an agreement with an Internet Service Provider receive a commission for every customer they sign up.
- ▶ Develop databases for organizations – this gets all their information about their clients into one computer system. Once the database has been developed, it needs to be regularly kept up to date.
- ▶ Publish a local newspaper or community newsletter – there is the opportunity to charge local businesses to advertise in the paper and hence make it cheaper to the community.

Remember:

Ask your customers what else they would like to see offered at the MCT.



Long Term Development:

- ▶ Web page design and maintenance – more and more government departments, Shires, communities and businesses are wanting a web page on the Internet to promote their services. The design of a good web page takes skill so the MCT can employ someone capable of designing effective web pages. Web pages need to be regularly updated if they are to remain useful. The MCT can receive a regular income by providing this service
- ▶ Provide video-conferencing facilities – this can be expensive to set up and maintain



Before considering purchasing video-conferencing equipment, check with the telephone company that your telephone lines are capable of providing a fast service. You may want to consider satellite delivery.

– but if there are businesses in your community who would use the equipment regularly then it provides a very useful link to organizations in larger towns. Video-conferencing can be used by health workers linking into major hospitals for advice on a patient, by individuals seeking advice from professionals in all areas (legal, medical, financial, personal), for professional training, for job interviews, and many other uses.

Every MCT is slightly different. Although they all have some basic equipment such as computers, printers, scanner and access to the Internet, each centre responds to the needs of its own community.

If there is already access to photocopying in the community, then the MCT would not buy a photocopier which is a very expensive piece of equipment. Instead they would buy equipment that provides services that are not already in the town.

An MCT in a small village on the west coast of India bought a loud speaker and placed it on the top of the MCT. Late each afternoon information is obtained from the Internet weather information. At 6.00pm each evening they announce the weather forecast so the fishermen will know what to expect the next day. The whole village stop what they are doing and come to the MCT to listen to the forecast.

The villagers have said that this service has saved many lives. Previously the fishermen would go out and if the weather turned bad their boats would become trapped out at sea and many people have been lost.



In bad storms, the town would get swamped by waves and people were swept out to sea. Now people have prior warning and so move to higher areas before the storm.

The MCT has certainly provided a great service and saved many, many lives.

Programmes

Programmes are activities that you organize and provide from the MCT. They need to be developed to suit the needs of your community, and then you need to let people know that you are running these programmes. You can do this by putting up posters, talking on the radio, telling customers as they walk into the MCT or advertising in the local paper.

By organizing some programmes, you are making the MCT an interesting place to be where lots of activities take place. You can offer programmes to suit different types of people – for example workers, unemployed people, students, and people with various hobbies or interests.

Some ideas:

1. **Training** – most MCTs provide training to community members.

This is often a course that the MCT has put together to teach basic skills that the community want. It could be reading and writing classes, computer classes, sewing classes or learning new agricultural methods.

Sometimes the training is in partnership with a training organization or a University where the training materials are provided and assessment (assignments and exams) takes place.

- ▶ *computer training* – first ask yourself why this person needs to learn about the computer – is it for work purposes, to write letters to family and friends, to play games, to do homework, to further their studies. This will determine the type of training, the time needed and the level of expertise required. Computer training can be one-to-one, small



class of 3-5 people, or a larger class of 10-15 people. A larger class will need a well-planned outline of what they will be learning and the expected outcomes at the end of the course. One-to-one training is less formal and is paced at the learner's speed. It is also designed to teach the person the skills they specifically need.

- ▶ *Internet training* – for research purposes, to use email, to increase knowledge about their area of interest or hobby, for work purposes, to connect with other people with similar interests. The MCT can deliver different levels of training ranging from just exploring the Internet for hobby purposes to complex searches for study or professional reasons.
- ▶ Other courses – what information people need or want: agricultural information, professional development, web page design, desktop publishing, first aid training, emergency training (cyclones/fires etc), boating safety.

2. **Clubs** – the MCT can provide a place for people with similar interests to meet and share their information. This usually has a technology focus, but this is not always the case.

Find out what people are interested in and then set up a club to get all these people together.

Sometimes this will be very successful and other times people will only come a few times.

Whatever happens, you have still shown people what the MCT is capable of doing.

- ▶ *Computer Club* – for people interested in sharing and discovering more about computers
- ▶ *Youth Club* – to explore the Internet, learn about new programs, take a computer apart and then build a new computer, research homework topics, learn about web page design, play networked games.
- ▶ *Professional Business Persons Club* – often professional people feel isolated and want to talk with people in similar situations. The MCT can provide the

venue for these people to meet and then can find out what services and programmes would suit their needs. It is this group of people who could probably afford to pay for services provided by the MCT, so it is worth finding out how you can help them.



- ▶ *Seniors Club* – to learn more about technology, to play Internet based games – eg Bridge, Scrabble; to chat online with other seniors, to share their area of interest/expertise with others, to research their family history
- ▶ A club that supports the main industries in the community – for example agriculture, horticulture, arts/crafts. These clubs can share information but also find relevant information or markets on the Internet.

In Australia, a small, outback Aboriginal community is using the Internet to sell their original dot paintings all over the world. This way all the money they earn comes back to their own community and isn't lost to the *middle men*.

3. *Other Programmes*

- ▶ Labour market programmes – provide information and contacts for unemployed people, or people searching for new opportunities. Teach how to access information on the Internet, how to write job applications and curriculum vitae.
- ▶ Provide supported environment for people with disabilities to access information – eg larger screen / print for people with eyesight difficulties, wheelchair access, bigger keyboard and mouse for people with movement difficulties.

In one small town a man had been unemployed for a long time. He didn't like to go out of the house and spent most of his day sitting in his favourite chair.

The MCT coordinator convinced him to volunteer at the centre. The coordinator taught him how to use the computer, how to take photographs, how to put the photographs onto the computer and then helped him to write a short book about the history of his town.

To do this the man had to meet new people and interview them. He asked them questions about their family history and then borrowed old photographs that he restored and copied into his book.

Today this man is working at the MCT and is showing other people how to use the computer.



Collocation

In some instances it is very difficult for a MCT to be viable on its own. It is worth considering what other facilities there are in town and what else the community may want or need.

What is collocation?

By sharing the premises with other organizations it becomes possible to share equipment, staff time and ideas. The building becomes a central point for the community so that everybody has a reason to visit.

Who else could share the building?

Question: Who else could share the building with the MCT?

Ideas: Library, health services, toy library, agricultural advisory services, market services, professionals eg accountant, dentist, veterinary services, local government office, education support office, community newspaper, labour market programmes, other community groups, emergency services, post office, etc.

There are many issues that need considering when entering into a collocation agreement, such as

- ▶ who is responsible for the operation of the whole centre – do you appoint a centre manager? Is there a committee made up of a representative from each tenant?
- ▶ how do you share the operating costs – eg electricity, rates, cleaning, administration?
- ▶ who will greet the customers and direct them to the correct place?
- ▶ how do you ensure security of the whole building when the various tenants may have different opening and closing times?
- ▶ who is responsible for the maintenance of the building – what if a window gets broken, or the front door won't close?
- ▶ who purchases the consumables used by the whole centre – eg paper, tea/coffee; and how do you share these costs?

Whilst these questions need to be asked, and at times can seem daunting, the resulting multi-purpose centre will become an exciting place that draws members of the community together.



About the Authors

Gail Short has had long experience in Multipurpose Community Telecentre (MCT) planning, establishment and sustainability and was responsible for the establishment of the Western Australian Telecentre Support Unit and Network which comprised 74 centres (now 93) when she retired from this task in 1999.

For the past few years she has worked as a consultant in the Asia/Pacific region assisting with establishment and sustainability issues which affect MCTs. In addition to this task she holds the position of Executive Officer, Community Teleservices Australia Inc. (CTSA), where she is assisting with the establishment of a new national support body. CTSA aims to provide national delivery networks, opportunity for cross fertilization between teleservice centres and collective lobbying power once fully operational. In 2001 she was appointed Vice President (Asia/Pacific Region) to the International Community Teleservices Centres Association.

For most of her life Gail has lived in remote locations in Papua New Guinea and rural areas of Western Australia and Queensland where she has experienced first hand the problems associated with poor infrastructure and telecommunications. Gail's aim in life is to make a difference and she has used this passion to successfully assist many people in her own country and throughout the Asia/Pacific region. ■

Deborah Rice provides information and management support to telecentres in rural Western Australia through her role as Regional Coordinator for the Western Australian Telecentre Support Unit. She was an inaugural member of the State Telecentre Advisory Board bringing regional matters to the attention of government. In response to requests by MCT Management Committees she wrote the Western Australian Telecentre Network *Toolkit*. Deborah organizes and facilitates regional workshops to assist MCT managers and Management Committee members identify, plan and deliver services to their communities.

Deborah is also a member of the Regional Telecommunications Working Group, and has highlighted the concerns of rural women and families to government, including health, education and transport, through her position on the State Women's Advisory Council.

Deborah has a passion for developing leadership in rural communities and has graduated from two state level leadership taskforces, including a study tour to South Africa researching successful leadership models. She enjoys working with community groups to promote and deliver services and programmes in rural areas. ■

TEN STEPS

for Establishing a Sustainable Multipurpose Community Telecentre



Step Six Building and Equipment



United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNESCO Bangkok

Introduction

Ten Steps for establishing a sustainable Multipurpose Community Telecentre (MCT) is intended to assist communities to *walk through* the basic requirements which need to be addressed when setting out to open and operate a successful MCT. It is a generic process only.

Each community will need to adapt the steps provided to comply with the legal requirements of their country and the programme and service needs of each individual community.

In addition to these *Ten Steps* Booklets, a set of transparencies to accompany *Step One* and *Step Two* has been provided. These transparencies will be particularly useful for public meetings and information and planning sessions. Some of them deal with specific topics covered in the subsequent Steps. Therefore, they can be used separately when occasions arise. If you do not have access to an overhead projector, it is recommended that the information on these transparencies, (particularly the possible programmes, services and collocation sites) be prominently displayed in some other format (black board/white board/poster size sheets of paper) at the Open Community Meeting, so that a survey can be undertaken at this time. ■

Content



Step One: Getting Started

- ▶ Defining the MCT
- ▶ The importance of Community Involvement
- ▶ Appointing a Committee



Step Two: Holding an Open Community Meeting

- ▶ Carrying out a vote
- ▶ Preparing a questionnaire
- ▶ Carrying out a survey



Step Three: Management

- ▶ The role of the Steering Committee
- ▶ The role of the Management Committee
- ▶ Organizing a Committee Meeting



Step Four: Staff Appointments

- ▶ Writing a job description
- ▶ Preparing for the interview
- ▶ The Interview process and contracting



Step Five: Services and Programmes

- ▶ Expanding your service
- ▶ Collocation
- ▶ Partnerships

Step Six: Building and Equipment

- ▶ Assessing your building requirements
- ▶ Assessing your furniture requirements
- ▶ Assessing your equipment and software requirements



Step Seven: The Planning Process

- ▶ Situational Analysis
- ▶ Mission and Action Plan
- ▶ Implementation and Review



Step Eight: Financial Management

- ▶ Preparing an Annual Budget
- ▶ Bookkeeping
- ▶ Preparing a Grant Application



Step Nine: Operating Procedures

- ▶ Producing Logs
- ▶ Preparing a Quotation
- ▶ Steps to keep your MCT running smoothly



Step Ten: Customer Service and Promotional Issues

- ▶ The Role of the Customer
- ▶ Handling Complaints
- ▶ Promotion and Marketing



Building Requirements

It is important to find the best possible building for your Multipurpose Community Telecentre (MCT) so therefore you will need to research all the options.

From your survey you will have a good idea what services and programmes you intend to offer, and therefore the sorts of areas you will need to accommodate these activities.

Identify the initial space required but also be aware that the MCT will need more space as future services are offered.

Some questions to ask:

- ▶ Is there a rent-free building available?
- ▶ Is there a building available that is rarely used?
- ▶ Will the government, local shire, or a business supply a building or help to pay the rent costs?

The location of the building is another consideration. If it is on a back road where people cannot find it, then you will find it difficult to attract users, especially passing trade. You will also have to spend more money on advertising your services.

A building that is in the main shopping area is best, but sometimes these cost a lot more in rent. The people on the Steering Committee should be able to make an informed decision after the possible buildings have been identified, and knowing the types of people living in the community and the services and programmes that are planned for the MCT.

Many MCT's start in any building they can find, and then after 2 years, move into a more suitable space. If they have proved their worth to the community, then it is easier to gain support from government or businesses.

Examples of buildings that have been used as MCT's include:

- Purpose built MCT – although the ideal building, this is uncommon in the start-up phase and is an expensive, long term option.
- Collocated MCT with library, health services, agricultural offices, and local government offices
- Front veranda of a shop
- Post office building
- Child care centre
- House
- Church
- Hall
- School rooms
- Railway station
- Bank
- An empty shop
- Old hospital



One small community had an old hall that had cracks in the thick concrete walls, the wooden floor was uneven with some broken floorboards, and the area was very dusty and dirty.

The hall had not been used for nearly 20 years so was in great disrepair. Half the community wanted to see the hall demolished as they felt it was not safe. The other half wanted to see the hall restored and used again – but could not identify a reason.

The MCT Steering Committee wanted to establish an MCT in the town and needed to find a suitable location. After explaining what an MCT could do for their community, and the opportunities it could provide, the community decided to restore the hall.

SIGNAGE

People need to know:

- ▶ *where you are* – a prominent sign helps with this
- ▶ *what services you offer* – just mention the main ones
- ▶ *when you are open* – either the opening hours – or a sign that you bring in and out saying “OPEN”
- ▶ *how to contact you* – a telephone number or email address

Tourists know they can check their email at an MCT – so signage will attract them to your centre.

On the day arranged for the clean up nearly everyone from the community arrived. People came with their hammers, ladders, rubbish bags, brooms, and cloths. There was a lot of work to be done, but with everyone helping it didn't take too many weeks before the hall was fixed up, the cracks in the walls were filled, the wooden floor was fixed, sanded and polished, everything was painted, and the electricity was put on.

The community is very proud of its hall, and has filled it with the MCT, an agricultural service and a place for people to sell their handicrafts. They bought second-hand furniture and boards to form walls. They then purchased computers, printers, a photocopier, scanner and other equipment and now have a great service in their town that wasn't previously available.

People wonder why they ever thought about demolishing the wonderful hall that forms a part of their community history.



Building Requirements – Internal Spaces

Carefully consider the types of areas you will require inside the MCT.

- ▶ **Reception** – need an area where people are welcomed, they can identify who they should be asking questions to, and can then be directed to the appropriate place. This area should have a desk for the MCT Manager or volunteer to sit at, and a secure place to keep money – eg cash register or money tin in a locked drawer. It is a good idea to have a relatively large area so that if needed people can sit and wait comfortably.

This is a good space to have display boards promoting your services and programmes, and letting people know what training courses are being planned. Other groups could also display their information in this area – a Community Information Board, a Job Information Board, Government Services Information stand, pamphlet racks, etc.

- ▶ **Casual access area** – an area where people can use a computer for a short time – to receive and send emails, to do some word processing, to use the Internet. This area can also be used for photocopying, scanning, faxing. If the reception area is large enough it can be arranged to accommodate all these activities as well. It is useful for the MCT Manager to be able to see what is going on in the centre and also for other users to understand the types of services available.
- ▶ **Training room** – this room should be set up with computers so that computing related courses can be offered. Most training is in basic introductory computing so it is not necessary to have the latest equipment. It is possible to network the computers so that they all have the same software and settings to allow for more professional training and there is only a need for one printer to be attached to the network.

It is important that people feel welcome as soon as they walk into the MCT.

If someone feels uncomfortable the first time they come into the MCT they may never come back again.

This area is great for tourists checking email – and for local people to see what is going on.





- ▶ **Work room** – it is ideal if there is an area for the MCT Manager to work uninterrupted. At times the Manager will be writing grant applications, doing the book work, organising programmes and courses and need a desk and computer to work with. Files with information and bookshelves will need to be located in this space. If the room is large enough the laminator could be housed here and more complex jobs carried out in this space.



- ▶ **Meeting/video-conferencing room** – a room set up as a suitable space for committees to meet is desirable. This could be a multi-functional room in that the Management Committee and other groups could meet in this room as well as it being set up as a professional office space, and be suitable for video-conferences if the Centre decides to buy the necessary equipment. Non-computer related training could also take place in this room – for example First Aid training, literacy courses and agricultural training.



- ▶ **Reading room** – a dedicated space needs to be identified in a quiet place to be used as a reading room. Daily newspapers should be made available for persons wishing to use this room.

Some other considerations include:

- The building must be safe for the staff and the public.
- There needs to be emergency exits in case of fire – must have more than one door into/out of the building.
- Security – the building must be able to be locked – this includes doors, windows and perhaps security screens on the windows.
- Are there kitchen and toilet facilities available – either in the building or close by?
- Access for people with disabilities – eg wheelchair access
- Access to water
- Access to power – a reliable power source
- Ability to install sufficient power points to cope with the amount of equipment in an MCT
- Access to suitable telephone services – for voice and data
- Ability to install more telephone lines – the MCT will need at least 3 lines – telephone (voice) line, fax line, and modem / Internet connection line
- Good lighting – natural as well as artificial

Some countries have *Occupational Health and Safety Regulations* that need to be adhered to. These try to make work areas safe for staff and customers and include such things as ensuring stairs are safe, electrical wires and cords will not be tripped over, water is not near electricity, and heavy equipment is not likely to fall onto people.



Furniture Requirements

When first setting up the MCT, many communities look for second-hand furniture that is either donated or provided at a low cost. This means that more of your set-up funding can be used on buying the required equipment. Sometimes local carpenters will build benches and desks suitable for computers at a much lower price than are available from commercial suppliers.

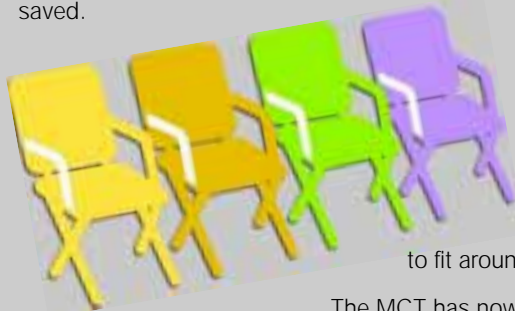
The furniture required will depend on the available space in your MCT, the layout, the equipment you have, and the services that you offer.

The most common furniture requirements include:

- ▶ Reception desk – for general enquiries, and to receive payments
- ▶ Chair – for Manager / volunteers
- ▶ Tables/benches for computers, printer, scanner.....
- ▶ Chairs – adjustable height (aim for 2 per computer)

One MCT Committee discovered that the local bank had replaced all their furniture. The old desks were in the garage out the back waiting for someone to decide what to do with them.

The MCT Chairperson approached the bank manager who agreed to sell them to the MCT at a very low price. The desks were rather old and very heavy, but the MCT was able to buy another much, needed computer with the money they saved.



Four years later, the MCT moved into a bigger building and got a local carpenter to build simple but strong benches around three of the walls. The new benches allow more people to fit around the computers comfortably.

The MCT has now sold or donated their original furniture to other community groups who needed cheap furniture.

- ▶ Shelves – for books, pamphlets, files
- ▶ Filing cabinets
- ▶ Pin-up boards for displays – these can be either wall mounted or self standing. Some MCT's use the self standing pin-up boards to create more private spaces where confidential work can be carried out
- ▶ Extra chairs for people waiting
- ▶ Wall clock – easy to read to calculate customer time using equipment
- ▶ Meeting table and chairs – usually to cater for 8-12 people

Equipment Requirements

The equipment will vary from one MCT to another depending on the services already available in your town and the types of services and programmes that you intend to deliver.

MCT's start with the basic equipment and then as their income increases, they purchase equipment to address needs identified in their community. If someone in your community already offers photocopying it is pointless buying an expensive photocopier when you could have bought a number of computers that would get more use. It is up to your Management Committee to choose the equipment that is likely to have a high usage by your community.

Listed below is a range of equipment that most MCT's would have:

- ▶ **Computers** – 3-5 units as a minimum. It is recommended that you purchase the best possible computers – eg Pentiums, 64-128MB RAM, 20GB Hard-drive, 15"



Older computers are usually sufficient for casual email access, where large computer memory is not needed.

Older computers are also suitable for basic word processing.



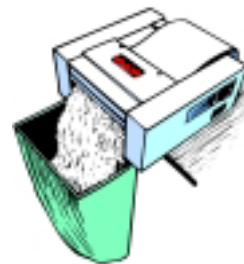
At least two, but preferably three, quotes should be obtained for all equipment over an agreed amount. It is important that you give each business the same information regarding what you want so the quotes can be compared.

Sometimes the cheapest quote is not the best as you need to consider other aspects such as the after sales service offered.

monitor, CD ROM, Floppy Disk Drive, keyboard and mouse. All software must be licensed.

- ▶ **Printers** – laser or Inkjet, colour or black and white. These are linked or networked to all the computers.
- ▶ **Modems** – either internal or external – 56K. You need to check the speed available on your telephone lines.
- ▶ **Server** – used to control the software and settings on the MCT computers
- ▶ **LAN** – Local Area network
- ▶ **Scanners** – flatbed scanner
- ▶ **Digital camera** – to copy pictures into documents/emails
- ▶ **CD Writer/Rewriter** – to back up data, record photographs, music, videos
- ▶ **Zip Drive** – alternative to CD Writer for back up system – external storage
- ▶ **Photocopier** – lease or buy – depending on the expected use it may be worth considering a second-hand, reconditioned photocopier. The newer models have a range of features to choose from if you intend offering more advanced photocopying services.
- ▶ **Laminator** – these come in various sizes including A4, A3, up to poster size. A laminator can be expensive, but in some communities it is well used.

- ▶ **Binder** – to bind documents, books
- ▶ **Hole punch** – an large hole punch is useful for larger jobs
- ▶ **Telephone** – consider hands free/speaker phone/cordless
- ▶ **Telephone answering machine** – or answering service
- ▶ **Facsimile machine**
- ▶ **Television** – for training purposes. Choose a size suitable for the room and number of expected people viewing it at any one time.
- ▶ **Video** – to record and play tele-education lessons
- ▶ **Paper shredder** – to destroy outdated confidential documents
- ▶ **Video-conferencing unit** – this is not usually included in the start up equipment. It is expensive, but may be worthwhile considering in the future.



Shredded paper can be used for garden compost, made into small bricks for burning, made into recycled paper for letters or cards.



Other office essentials

- Paper – for the photocopier, printers
- Pens
- Scissors
- Hole punch (small)
- Floppy disks
- Notepapers
- Diary
- Staplers
- Spare toner cartridges for the photocopier and printers
- Spare cables (if possible)
- Spare video cartridges
- Envelopes

Assets Register

It is important to keep records of all your equipment, so that if anything needs repairing or is stolen, you are able to supply all the necessary information.

Type	Details	Serial Number	Date	Purchased Cost
Computers X 4	Toshiba ABC Model-HIJ407 128MB RAM 10GB Hard drive monitor, keyboard and mouse	765-789-1G8	10/2/2002	\$1500
		765-752-1D2	10/2/2002	\$1500
		765-715-3R4	10/2/2002	\$1500
		765-186-489	10/2/2002	\$1500
Photocopier	Canon XYZ Black and white with sorter	45-783-ABC	12/2/2002	\$8500
Printer	HP 6700 Colour inkjet	ABC-123-456	14/2/2002	\$700
Scanner	AcerS2W3300V Model 6678-OWU	566618 45615 HDTYU 15646 43763	14/2/2002	\$150
Digital camera				

The equipment manuals and warranty cards need to be filed in a safe place. Staff need to be aware of where these are kept so they can *trouble shoot* any problems.

Sometimes after a power failure, equipment settings need to be re-programmmed – and the manual will give instructions on how to do this.

Software Requirements

It is important to purchase computer software packages that allow you to professionally carry out the services and programmes you intend to offer.

You also need to cater for all age groups, interests, and ability levels. Some people will want to use advanced features in programs, whilst others are just wanting a basic word processing program.

Make sure staff and customers are not tempted to put unlicensed or *pirate* copies of software onto the computers as this lessens your professional image.

Some software packages to consider include:

- ▶ Office applications
 - Word processing
 - Database
 - Spreadsheets
 - Desktop publishing
 - Presentations
- ▶ Internet/Email applications – eg Internet Explorer, Netscape
- ▶ Anti-virus programs – that can be automatically upgraded over the internet on a regular basis. – eg Nortons, VET, McAfee
- ▶ Accounting packages – eg MYOB, Quickbooks, Quicken
- ▶ Organizer – including a calendar, planner, contact list – eg Outlook
- ▶ Educational software – various CD ROMS – eg reading, maths, typing tutor, problem solving, music.
- ▶ Recreational software – various games – CD ROMS
- ▶ Networking software – Windows NT, Wingate, Win 2000)
- ▶ Web page design – Frontpage, DreamWeaver
- ▶ Multimedia software



Microsoft are often very generous in donating software to MCT's. You need to be specific when asking for a donation – eg

5 copies of Windows XP,

5 copies of MS office

1 copy Encarta encyclopedia

As with the Hardware Assets Register, the software packages need to be recorded and kept in a safe place. It is best to lock the software CD ROMS away as they are valuable items and easily stolen.

Software Register

Name and Version	Number of copies	Date of purchase	Date of registration	Price
Windows XP	6	2/1/2002	14/1/2002	\$xxx
MS Office Professional	6	2/1/2002	14/1/2002	\$xxx
DreamWeaver	2	2/1/2002	14/1/2002	\$xxx

Caution

Are your power cords safe???

To minimize the risk of breakdowns, it is important to maintain your equipment in good working order. This includes having power surge protectors on all equipment and enforcing simple rules such as *No Food or Drink Around Computers*.

After three years of operation, one MCT found that they were having continuous problems keeping their computers working. The computers were old, slow and not providing a professional level of service.

The MCT applied for some grant money from the Government, and on the second try were successful in obtaining enough money to purchase 4 new computers. The new computers came with new software and more memory space. The MCT's reputation in town increased, more customers came, and they were soon able to afford another computer.

Today this is a very busy MCT that offers many training programmes, youth programmes and does quality printing work. Children are using the old computers to play games, check their email, and to learn basic typing skills.

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TEN STEPS

for Establishing a Sustainable Multipurpose Community Telecentre



Step Seven

The Planning Process –
Reach for Your Goals



United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNESCO Bangkok

Introduction

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Each community will need to adapt the steps provided to comply with the legal requirements of their country and the programme and service needs of each individual community.

In addition to these *Ten Steps* Booklets, a set of transparencies to accompany *Step One* and *Step Two* has been provided. These transparencies will be particularly useful for public meetings and information and planning sessions. Some of them deal with specific topics covered in the subsequent Steps. Therefore, they can be used separately when occasions arise. If you do not have access to an overhead projector, it is recommended that the information on these transparencies, (particularly the possible programmes, services and collocation sites) be prominently displayed in some other format (black board/white board/poster size sheets of paper) at the Open Community Meeting, so that a survey can be undertaken at this time. ■

Content



Step One: Getting Started

- ▶ Defining the MCT
- ▶ The importance of Community Involvement
- ▶ Appointing a Committee



Step Two: Holding an Open Community Meeting

- ▶ Carrying out a vote
- ▶ Preparing a questionnaire
- ▶ Carrying out a survey



Step Three: Management

- ▶ The role of the Steering Committee
- ▶ The role of the Management Committee
- ▶ Organizing a Committee Meeting



Step Four: Staff Appointments

- ▶ Writing a job description
- ▶ Preparing for the interview
- ▶ The Interview process and contracting



Step Five: Services and Programmes

- ▶ Expanding your service
- ▶ Collocation
- ▶ Partnerships

Step Six: Building and Equipment

- ▶ Assessing your building requirements
- ▶ Assessing your furniture requirements
- ▶ Assessing your equipment and software requirements



Step Seven: The Planning Process

- ▶ Situational Analysis
- ▶ Mission and Action Plan
- ▶ Implementation and Review



Step Eight: Financial Management

- ▶ Preparing an Annual Budget
- ▶ Bookkeeping
- ▶ Preparing a Grant Application



Step Nine: Operating Procedures

- ▶ Producing Logs
- ▶ Preparing a Quotation
- ▶ Steps to keep your MCT running smoothly



Step Ten: Customer Service and Promotional Issues

- ▶ The Role of the Customer
- ▶ Handling Complaints
- ▶ Promotion and Marketing



Step Seven

The Planning Process

Planning is about setting goals and then developing strategies and actions to achieve the goals.

- Why?
- When?
- Where?
- What?
- Who?
- How?

Planning is a very important step in any venture. It makes you think about:

- ▶ **what** you have already got,
- ▶ **what** you want to achieve, and
- ▶ **why** you think it is important.

You come up with some ideas and plan

- ▶ **how** you are going to do these things and
- ▶ **who** is responsible for making them happen.

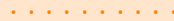
You also decide on

- ▶ **when**, and
- ▶ **where** the activities should take place so that the most people get benefit from the activities.

At the end of each step you need to ask yourself:

- ▶ **How** successful was that activity?
- ▶ Did we achieve **what** we wanted?
- ▶ **How** could we improve on it next time?
- ▶ **Where** are we now?
- ▶ Now that we have a MCT **what** else do we want to offer?
- ▶ **What** is the next step to making our community better?
- ▶ **Who** can we get to help us along the way?

**Where are we now?
(Situational Analysis)**



What is the population of this town?
What services are available?
What facilities do we have?
Who is available to help us?



**Making it
happen
(Implementation
and Review)**



Offer the services
and programmes
to the community
and then think about
how you can improve
or offer
more services.

**P
L
A
N**

**Where do we
want to be?
(Vision and Goals)**



What do we want
to achieve?
What are our goals?
What other services
could we offer?
What other programmes
could we deliver?

**How do we get there?
(Strategies and Actions)**



What resources do we need?
Who is going to do the work?
Who else do we need to speak to?



1. Situational Analysis

??? Where are we now ???

When planning the set up of the MCT, it is important to know your community.

Some questions you could ask yourself are:

- ▶ What are the services and programmes that are already available?
- ▶ What other facilities are there?
- ▶ Is there telephone access to this community?
- ▶ How many people live here?
- ▶ What is the breakdown of ages in this community?
- ▶ What is the general education level of the population?
- ▶ What are people generally interested in?
- ▶ Can we get equipment sent to this community?
- ▶ How far away are other services?
- ▶ Can people travel to get to these services?
- ▶ What industries support this community?
- ▶ Is there a main agricultural section of the community?
- ▶ Do tourists visit this community?

Another method to use in identifying your community, or planning for future development, is referred to as the SWOT Analysis. SWOT stands for Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats.

A chart is drawn up and the facilitator asks questions of the group so that everyone contributes to the process.

For example:

<p>Strengths</p> <p>Lots of people wanting training Tourists want email People want to use Internet. No other photocopier in town</p>	<p>Weaknesses</p> <p>Lack of teachers to deliver training Not enough computers MCT space too small</p>
<p>Opportunities</p> <p>Publish local newspaper Print children's book Tender for data entry jobs for big companies</p>	<p>Threats</p> <p>Unsure of Government funding May have to move premises in 12 months and pay rent</p>

2. Vision and Goals

??? Where do we want to be ???

It is important to understand WHAT you are trying to achieve, and for the whole Management Committee to be clear about the MCT goals so that everyone works as a team.

One simple way is described below:

In small groups of 5-6 people

- a) Using coloured pens on a large sheet of paper, draw what the MCT will look like in three years time. This can be represented in any manner as chosen by the group.

Give the group about 20 minutes to do this exercise.

The facilitator can prompt groups by asking questions such as:

- What will the MCT look like?
- What about the staff?
- Think about the customers.
- What services will you be offering?
- Where will the MCT be located?

- b) The small groups rejoin as a whole group. The facilitator then asks a representative from each small group to explain their drawing. The other groups can then ask questions.
- c) As the small group representative is explaining their picture, one person (usually the facilitator) writes down the key words used. This can be in two columns as demonstrated below.

Vision/Goals	Activities
<p><i>Example:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Happy, satisfied customers ■ Motivated staff ■ Cohesive management Committee ■ Collocated with library and Health ■ Innovative ideas ■ People want to come here ■ Community talking about the MCT in a positive manner 	<p><i>Example:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Job board ■ Youth programmes – homework, games ■ Business services – secretarial ■ Produce postcards for tourists ■ Display market prices – for farmers ■ Display weather forecasts

The facilitator should check with the small group that these words reflect the meaning of their drawing.

After each group has had their turn, the lists should be quite long.

When filling in the Vision / Goals column, you will notice that some words are used often. Put a tick next to them as each group uses this word. These *ticked* words will become your *Key Words* to use when writing your mission statement and vision.

- d) The small groups reform and are asked to write a sentence using some of the *Key Words* to describe their vision for the MCT.
- e) These sentences are shared with the whole group, and by using parts of various sentences, the whole group should agree on a final sentence that states their mission.

This process may seem to take a long time, but it is very important that everyone on the MCT Management Committee, plus the staff and volunteers feel involved with the long-term vision and goals of the MCT.

By everyone sharing the same *picture* and understanding where they are heading, fewer problems emerge and people feel part of an exciting team.



3. Strategies and Actions

??? How are we going to get home ???

It is now time to work out HOW you are going to implement the vision and goals of the MCT. This includes the steps for each goal and also identifying WHO will take on various tasks.

It is possible to group activities into three or four main areas – these are called the *Key Result Areas*. Some common headings are:

- ▶ Community Development
- ▶ Services and Programmes
- ▶ Policies and Procedures
- ▶ Staffing

Community Development includes such things as:

- ▶ Developing partnerships with other organizations/agencies
- ▶ Encouraging and supporting leadership programmes
- ▶ Identifying and responding to community needs
- ▶ Promoting cooperation between groups
- ▶ Researching collocation opportunities
- ▶ Supporting business enterprises
- ▶ Providing community access to technology



Services and Programmes includes such things as:

- ▶ Providing cost effective services
- ▶ Delivering services to encompass all sections of the community
- ▶ Offering programmes to reflect community needs
- ▶ Promoting the available services and programmes to the community

Policies and Procedures includes such things as:

- ▶ Financial management
- ▶ Purchasing policies
- ▶ Code of Ethics / Conduct
- ▶ Confidentiality Agreement
- ▶ Dealing with complaints
- ▶ Implementing planning procedures

Staffing includes such things as:



- ▶ Training
- ▶ Professional development
- ▶ Performance reviews
- ▶ Roles of the Management Committee
- ▶ Volunteer recruitment and training

Once you have identified your *Key Result Areas*, then you can sort your actions and activities under the broad headings.

It is then important to allocate tasks and set a timeline for when things are going to get done. This can be done in a table format as shown below.

Activity/Action	Who	Date	Resources needed	Outcome
Youth Programmes				
▶ <i>Homework club</i> for 10-15 year olds				
■ Set times	MCT	Feb	Computers	Completed
■ Speak to school	John	March		Completed
■ Send note home to all students in this age group	Mary	March	Advertising	Completed
■ Offer first session free	MCT	April	Coordinator salary – \$xx	15 students arrived
▶ <i>Computer club</i>				
■ Purchase old computers	Tom	Feb-March	\$xx	10 purchased
■ Pull apart computers	Tom	April		
■ Buy upgraded spare parts	Tom	May	\$xx	
■ Rebuild computers	Tom	June		
▶ <i>Job Board</i>				
■ Approach employment agencies	Mary	April	-	2 agencies approached
■ Obtain Government information	John	April	-	
■ Search relevant web sites	Carl	March	-	Commenced
Offer Business Services				
▶ <i>Secretarial services</i>				
■ Create sample documents	Mary	May		
■ Advertise in local paper	Mary	June	\$xxx	
■ Personally approach businesses	John	June		
▶ <i>Financial services</i>				
■ Employ bookkeeper	Committee	April	\$xxx	
■ Buy relevant computer software	Tom	May	\$xxx	
■ Advertise service	Mary	June	\$xxx	
■ Approach local businesses	John	June		

4. Implementation and Review

Making It Happen

By setting out the planned activities and actions in a table it becomes clear what the MCT Management Committee expects people to do.

It is important to note who is responsible for implementing the action as defined in the *WHO* column. This can then be used as the basis of your Management Committee meetings – people report against the activities they have agreed to undertake.

The *RESOURCES* column allows the Management Committee to budget for extra equipment or staff time. Some ideas may be fantastic, but if they require a lot of resources that are not available, then alternative approaches will be needed. This may include forming a working relationship with another organization in your community, or seeking grant funds to implement the activity. When seeking grant funds you will have to clearly justify the need for the service or programme in your town.

The *OUTCOME* column clearly outlines what the MCT is achieving. It is always encouraging to see results for your hard work.

Some activities will get instant feedback. For example a group of young people will let you know if they enjoyed an activity, and if the group keeps returning and getting larger then it is obviously a popular programme.

Other activities/services such as offering business financial services may take longer to establish and will develop depending on the reputation you earn.

It is important to reflect and review the MCT activities.

- ▶ What worked well?
- ▶ What didn't work well?
- ▶ What comments or suggestions did the MCT receive?
- ▶ Is there still a need for this activity?
- ▶ Do we need to modify the programme to suit slightly different needs?
- ▶ How can we improve the service?

By properly reviewing the activities, the Management Committee can ensure that the MCT continues to grow and does not just keep offering the same services and programmes.

The review phase leads back into another ***Where are we now?*** part of the cycle. You identify the new ***situational analysis*** which sets the framework for planning the next round of services and programmes.

MCT Management Committees who spend time on the planning process usually have a dynamic, interested and enthusiastic staff and committee. This is because everyone feels part of the team, the roles and responsibilities are shared, and people's strengths are being used.

Generally people like to feel that they are able to contribute to a worthwhile activity, and by using this planning process, people are able to see where they fit into the whole *picture*.

The planning process identifies specific goals and tasks, so people can volunteer for just a small part of the whole plan, but still feel that their contribution is valued.

Annex One

Case Studies

Case Study

One MCT appeared to be well organized and managed. Programmes were being implemented and the centre always had customers. The manager was very well organized and took control of all the activities. The Management Committee felt that they were lucky to have such a good manager, so didn't feel the need to always turn up for meetings. Some Management Committee members felt they had nothing to contribute to the centre so they stopped attending meetings.

One day the manager resigned from the MCT because her family was moving to another town. There was nobody in the town who understood the vision or goals of the MCT and what services and programmes had been planned.

The Management Committee had a meeting, but only three people turned up. Members had neglected to remain involved in the MCT as they did not think they were needed.

A new manager was appointed. This person tried their best, but had no direction from the Management Committee, and so felt very isolated and almost resigned.

The Chairperson called all the previous committee members, plus other community leaders, and organized a special planning meeting. Over three months the Committee, in consultation with the manager, developed a good plan.

Now this MCT has a lot of community involvement in the centre, with different people contributing in their areas of expertise and interest. The centre is able to offer a lot more services and programmes and has a real community atmosphere.

The MCT has learnt that defining the vision, goals, activities and actions of the centre is an important role of the Management Committee. ■

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TEN STEPS

for Establishing a Sustainable Multipurpose Community Telecentre



Step Eight

Financial Management



United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNESCO Bangkok

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- ▶ Handling Complaints
- ▶ Promotion and Marketing



It is important that the MCT has clear financial processes in place so that it can be accountable to its members, sponsors and to the government.

It is the responsibility of the Management Committee to ensure proper financial management of the MCT. This includes having proper systems in place to record all income and expenditure, submitting proper reports to funding bodies, setting a budget and ensuring that all expenditure is within the budget, and having an audit completed each year. It is best if three people are authorised to sign cheques – with two signatures always being required.

The **treasurer** monitors and checks the financial systems and statements.

The **bookkeeper** is responsible for the day to day tasks associated with the handling of money and accounts.

Role of the Treasurer

- ▶ makes sure that proper financial systems are in place – either manual or computerised
- ▶ ensures that the bookkeeper is following the correct procedures
- ▶ monitors and checks financial reports for accuracy
- ▶ submits an annual budget to the Management Committee for endorsement
- ▶ prepares monthly, quarterly and annual reports for the Management Committee
- ▶ ensures expenditure is within the budget
- ▶ prepares and submits financial reports required by funding bodies

- ▶ assists with the budget outline in funding proposals
- ▶ ensures financial statements are audited each year



Role of the Bookkeeper

- ▶ is responsible for daily financial tasks
- ▶ records all income and expenditure
- ▶ writes receipts for incoming money
- ▶ records petty cash payments
- ▶ deposits cash into the appropriate bank account
- ▶ files all financial documents
- ▶ ensures insurances are paid on time

Budget

The budget is a good planning tool and should include the financial expectations of income and expenditure including all the proposed programmes and activities for the year.

The whole Management Committee is responsible for the setting of the budget, in consultation with the MCT staff (and funding bodies if applicable).

The MCT Treasurer is then responsible for ensuring that spending fits within the budget. The Treasurer will also identify the difference between the budgeted amount and the actual amount.

A budget is an estimate of your income and expenditure for the year.

How to write a budget

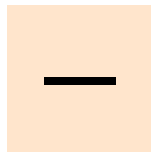
1. List all areas where you expect to receive money (including grant money).
2. List all areas where you expect to pay money (make sure grant money is spent on the agreed areas, eg salary, on-costs, rent, equipment).
3. Estimate the amount received or spent on each item per year (this should be similar to your current cash book).
4. Total your expected income.
5. Total your expected expenditure.
6. Subtract the expected expenditure from the expected income.
7. Record this as either an expected profit or an expected loss.

SAMPLE ANNUAL BUDGET

Budget Item	Estimated Amount
Income	
Cash carried forward
Grant money
Memberships
Training
Services
Sales
Bank interest
Other (specify)
<i>Total income</i>	\$
Expenditure	
Salaries	
Salary/Wage
Superannuation
Workers compensation
Annual leave
Tax
<i>Subtotal</i>	\$
Operating Costs	
Equipment
Maintenance
Electricity
Telephone
Rent
Insurance
Stationery
Consumables
Postage
Advertising
Other (Specify)
<i>Subtotal</i>	\$
<i>Total expenditure</i>	\$
 <i>Total income less total expenditure</i>	 \$



When you have subtracted the expenditure from the expected income, you will determine whether you are likely to have money left over or not.



If there is likely to be a surplus, then you may decide to purchase new equipment or offer more programmes and services.

The value of doing a budget is that you gain an understanding of what to expect for the year, and so can plan accordingly.

It should minimize the risk of getting a *nasty shock*.

If it looks like you may have a deficit, then you need to see if you can reduce any of your costs. Are there some services you offer that the MCT loses money on? If so, your MCT Management Committee will need to decide if the service is important to the community and should still be offered, or if the charges should be increased to ensure that the costs are covered. Another solution is to seek grant funds that will allow the MCT to deliver unprofitable but needed services to the community.

The Next Step

In future years this budget can include other columns detailing information from previous years.

This will give you a good comparison between years to see what income and expenditure remains relatively constant, and what is determined by other factors – eg tourist season, good crops and market prices. You will understand what is happening in your MCT and be able to plan around it.

An example of an annual budget showing previous years is shown on the following page:

SAMPLE ANNUAL BUDGET

(including previous years)

Budget Item	last year	this year	next year
Income			
Cash carried forward
Grant money
Memberships
Training
Services
Sales
Bank interest
Other (specify)
<i>Total income</i>	\$	\$	\$
Expenditure			
Salaries			
Salary/Wage
Superannuation
Workers compensation
Annual leave
Tax
<i>Subtotal</i>	\$	\$	\$
Operating Costs			
Equipment
Maintenance
Electricity
Telephone
Rent
Insurance
Stationery
Consumables
Postage
Advertising
Other (Specify)
<i>Subtotal</i>	\$	\$	\$
<i>Total expenditure</i>	\$	\$	\$
Total income			
less total expenditure	\$	\$	\$

There will always be some variation between the budgeted amount and the actual amount, and there will always be some unexpected expenses – for example if the equipment suddenly fails and needs expert maintenance.

It is advisable to keep some money aside for:

- ▶ Upgrading/replacing equipment
- ▶ Upgrading facilities
- ▶ Re-location (if you intend moving into larger premises, then be aware of other costs such as installing extra power points and telephone lines)
- ▶ Sick leave
- ▶ Holiday leave
- ▶ Long-service leave

Income and expenditure vary throughout the year depending on a range of circumstances.

- ▶ Is grant money paid annually, twice yearly, quarterly, or monthly?
- ▶ Do tourists come to your town all year or in particular seasons?
- ▶ When do people usually pay their memberships?
- ▶ When are your insurance premiums due?

Keeping a *running tally* of costs against estimates

A useful way of gauging how your actual amounts compare to your estimates is to keep a running tally divided into months and quarters.

A sample chart is included here to demonstrate the concept.

SAMPLE BUDGET AND ACTUALS COMPARISON

ITEM	Estimates in 1st quarter by month			1st quarter			Estimates in 2nd quarter by month			2nd quarter		
	July	Aug	Sept	Budget	Actual	Variation	Oct	Nov	Dec	Budget	Actual	Variation
Income												
Cash c/f												
Grant money												
Memberships												
Training												
Total Income												
Expenditure												
Salaries												
Superannuation												
Workers comp												
Equipment												
Maintenance												
Electricity												
Telephone												
Total Expenditure												
Income-Expenditure Surplus/Deficit												

SAMPLE BUDGET AND ACTUALS COMPARISON (continued)

ITEM	Estimates in 3rd quarter by month			3rd quarter			Estimates in 4th quarter by month			4th quarter		
	July	Aug	Sept	Budget	Actual	Variation	Oct	Nov	Dec	Budget	Actual	Variation
Income												
Cash c/f												
Grant money												
Memberships												
Training												
Total Income												
Expenditure												
Salaries												
Superannuation												
Workers comp												
Equipment												
Maintenance												
Electricity												
Telephone												
Total Expenditure												
Income-Expenditure Surplus/Deficit												

Bookkeeping system

It is important to develop a bookkeeping system that records all the MCT income and expenditure. It must be easy to ascertain how much was received or spent, what it was for, and who authorised the payment.

The following should be recorded on all invoices, receipts, cheques and other financial records:

- ▶ How much?
- ▶ What for?
- ▶ By whom?

The MCT Management Committee should allow the manager to make payments up to a certain agreed amount. Any larger items of expenditure will need to be authorised by the Management Committee to ensure that they fit within the budget.

Cheque Account

It will be necessary for your MCT to open a cheque account, so that payments can be made.

In order to provide some flexibility, many MCT's allow any two of three people to authorise and sign cheques. The bank will require that each person who has signing authority fill out a form with his/her signature on it. The MCT Manager should not be a signatory. The Committee should be responsible for all financial matters.

Accounting systems

If the MCT has a trained bookkeeper that person will be able to establish proper accounting systems suitable to the MCT's individual requirements.

Many MCT's use computer accounting software, but this still assumes a level of accounting knowledge, and it is important to keep a paper copy of everything.

Remember to back up all computer files in case of theft or computer breakdowns.

The most simple method of bookkeeping is the *cash basis* accounting system.

- ▶ Income is tracked through the MCT's receipt book and bank deposit details.
- ▶ Expenditure is tracked through the MCT chequebook.

Every transaction should be linked to a

- ▶ Receipt
- ▶ Cheque stub
- ▶ Invoice

Handling Money

Receiving money

Receipts should be issued for all payments received – whether by cheque or cash. The receipt should include the date, name of person or organization making the payment, reason for payment – eg service or products provided by the MCT, and the amount paid.

Small amounts of money can just be recorded in a cash book detailing the date, amount and type of sale – instead of issuing individual receipts. Once this reaches a certain amount, a receipt to cash sales can be issued for accounting purposes.

All money received is recorded in a receipt book.

All income should be recorded using the approved system for example in the *Cash Receipts Book*. At the end of each month the Cash Receipts Book is totalled and balanced.

Make sure that cheques are made out to the MCT and not an individual's name. The MCT can get a stamp made with the correct name so that it is easier for customers to make out a cheque.

The MCT should regularly bank all payments, so that very little money is left on the premises.

At the end of each month the *Cash Receipts Book* is totalled and balanced.

Making payments

An invoice should be received for all expenses and a receipt received for all payments.

Receipts or invoices for an expense should include the date, the name of the organization being paid, the purpose of the payment, the amount and the cheque number.

Paid invoices and receipts supporting the expenditure must be kept for each financial year.

- ▶ Invoices should be paid at the end of each month.
- ▶ File invoices in *Accounts to be Paid* file – to be given to the bookkeeper or Treasurer.
- ▶ All invoices should be checked for accuracy – that the goods or service has been received.
- ▶ When everything is in order, a cheque is written for the correct amount.

All money is deposited in the bank cheque account.

All payments are made by cheque.

A payment voucher is completed for every payment.

- ▶ A payment voucher is filled in for each cheque, and attached to the original invoice.
- ▶ A photocopy of the invoice is attached to the cheque and then mailed.
- ▶ The payment is entered in the *Cash Payments Book* – in cheque number order.
- ▶ File in cheque number order.

PAYMENT VOUCHER

Cheque number: _____
Date: _____
Amount: _____

Cheque paid to: _____

Details: _____

Cash book category: _____

Authorized and entered by: _____

Signature: _____

At the end of the month, the *Cash Payment Book* is totalled and balanced.

Petty Cash

A small amount of money (as agreed to by the Management Committee) should be available to allow purchases of minor items such as postage, stationery and other office supplies.

Petty cash should be kept in a locked tin or drawer.

All purchases must be supported by a receipt that is attached to a petty cash voucher explaining the expenditure. When the cash available is low, the treasurer or bookkeeper writes a cheque to petty cash to reimburse the funds. This ensures that there is always sufficient cash to purchase small incidentals without keeping large amounts of money of the premises.

PETTY CASH VOUCHER

Date: _____
Voucher number: _____

Details/Reason for purchase: _____

Payment category: _____

Supplier: _____

Amount: _____

Name of person using petty cash: _____

Signature: _____

Bank Reconciliation

At the end of the month the *Cash Receipts Book* and the *Cash Payment Book* are checked against the Bank Statement.

The Bank Statement records all monies deposited and all monies withdrawn (through cheques).

The Bank Reconciliation compares these records to make sure that everything is in order and on track.

Annual Audit

The MCT accounts need to be audited once a year.

The Treasurer and bookkeeper need to prepare the books for the auditor. It is advisable to ask the auditor what is required and in what format.

The auditor will check that your accounts are in order and that your financial management is organised.

As well as the *Cash Payment Book* and the *Cash Receipts Book* (with all the supporting documentation – for example cheque stubs, deposit books, bank reconciliations), the auditor will also require your equipment Assets Register to calculate the annual depreciation.

Writing a Grant Application

Through the **MCT PLANNING PROCESS** (See *Step Seven*) various services and programmes will be identified that need extra resources if they are to be delivered. These resources may include new equipment, extra staff hours for training or delivering a service, and/or subsidised access by the community to your resources.

Once you have established a *project need* and have decided to apply for funding, the next step is to search for an appropriate funding body – for example local, state or national government, large businesses, or other bodies specific to your area.

Contact the potential funding bodies to discuss your idea and check if your project is eligible under their funding guidelines.

Talking to an organization's funding officer can save a lot of time.

When a suitable grant has been identified: **READ THE GUIDELINES AND INSTRUCTIONS CAREFULLY.**

If an Application Form is included, make sure you use this and answer ALL the questions.

Often an Application Form will have *Selection Criteria*. These are the important questions that you will have to answer as they form the basis of the approval process. If you are unsure what a question means, ring the organization's funding officer to discuss how the question relates to your project. Usually these funding officers are very helpful and can save you a lot a worry and time.

As a general guideline, most funding proposals will include the following:

1. Title Page – or Cover Page
2. Organizational Details

Contact details

- ▶ Name of the MCT
- ▶ Name and job title of person in charge of the project
- ▶ Name and job title of alternative contact person
- ▶ Address of MCT
- ▶ Contact details – including telephone, fax, email address

Title of Project
(you can include one or two sentences outlining the project)

MCT Name

Mission Statement

For example:

TheMCT will assist members of this community to improve their quality of life through the development and delivery of new programmes and services.

Other information

- ▶ When was the MCT established?
- ▶ What type of organization is the MCT? For example, community organization, non-profit, Incorporated group, franchised business.
- ▶ Describe your organizational chart (see *Step Three – Management*).
- ▶ Describe your major achievements to date.

3. Project Summary

This is to give the funding body an idea of what you are trying to achieve. It will be their first impression, so it should capture the interest of the person reading and assessing your application.

Answer questions such as:

- ▶ Why are you writing this submission?
- ▶ What need or issue are you addressing?
- ▶ How was the need identified?
- ▶ Why would this funding body be interested in your project?
- ▶ What is your project idea? Briefly state this – give enough information to be interesting, but not too detailed that it is then repeated throughout the rest of the application.
- ▶ Who will benefit from the project? How?

4. Background Information

Describe your community

- ▶ location – including distance from major centre
- ▶ population – include a break down of ages, income, education levels
- ▶ major industries – including agriculture and business
- ▶ key opportunities (relevant to this submission)
- ▶ key issues

Describe any public meetings, community issues, or other community projects that are relevant to this project proposal.

5. Project Description

Provide an outline of what you want to achieve and how you plan to do this.

- ▶ What are your goals?
- ▶ What are the steps towards implementing your project?
- ▶ How many staff will you need?
- ▶ What will be their role?
- ▶ How will you advertise/market the project?

Describe why your project is the best approach to addressing the identified need.

6. Action Plan

Describe the project activities in detail and show how they will help achieve your aims.

It can be useful to include the plan in a table format, for example:

Action	By whom	Date (when)	Resources needed (cost)	Outcome
1.				
2.				
3.				
4.				

7. Reporting

When will you report back to the funding body? What are the major activities and milestones?

8. Budget

What do you expect the project to cost? How did you arrive at this figure?

What is your expected *project income*?

- ▶ Service charges/fees
- ▶ In-kind contributions (volunteer time, use of MCT facilities)
- ▶ Other cash contributions (from local government, or other agencies)
- ▶ Any other contributions

What is your expected project expenditure?

- ▶ Materials
- ▶ Equipment
- ▶ Staffing – administrative, teaching
- ▶ Administrative costs – advertising, telephone, electricity, etc.

Funding bodies are very interested in your budget as this will give a good indication of what resources are needed and how you are going to address these needs.

When applying for money you need to be realistic and honest about your costs.

When considering staff costs – break this down into how many hours you expect each person to work on the project, their hourly rate of pay, and their on-costs such as superannuation, workers compensation insurance.

Make sure the budget is on a separate page and is easy to understand.

TITLE OF PROJECT

Name of MCT

PROJECT INCOME

Cash Contributions

MCT		\$
Other contributors		\$
.....		\$
	<i>Sub Total</i>	\$

In-kind contributions

MCT		\$
.....		\$
.....		\$
Other contributors		\$
	<i>Sub Total</i>	\$

Grant funds sought

\$

Total Income \$

PROJECT EXPENDITURE

Materials

Paper/Stationery		\$
Spare parts		\$
.....		\$

Equipment

Computers		\$
Printer		\$
.....		\$

Staffing

Tutor		\$
Consultant		\$

Administrative expenses

Postage		\$
Advertising		\$
Printing		\$

Other

Insurance		\$
Travel		\$

Total Expenses \$

(Total Expenses should equal Total Income)

9. Results

What is the expected result if your project is successfully implemented?

- ▶ Will you have more trained people in your community?
- ▶ Will people have the necessary skills to successfully seek employment opportunities?
- ▶ Will the MCT be equipped to deliver better services/ programmes?
- ▶ Is the MCT providing greater access to information and technology in this community?

Funding bodies are interested in the expected results of the project - this shows the usefulness of implementing your proposal.

10. Evaluation

It is important to detail how you will evaluate the success of your project.

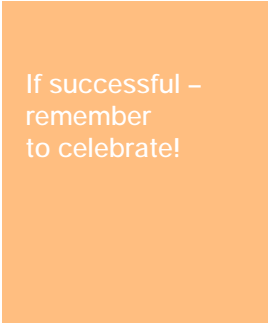
Describe how you will **measure** the effectiveness of your activities.

- ▶ How will you know if you achieved your goals?
- ▶ How will the funding body know if your project was successful?

11. Attachments

Some suggested attachments to include are:

- ▶ Letters of support (demonstrating a need for this project and supporting your project idea)
- ▶ Letters from other organizations contributing money to the project
- ▶ Relevant organizational certificates
- ▶ Certificate of Incorporation
- ▶ Constitution
- ▶ Names and qualifications of key people involved in the project
- ▶ Annual Report – including audited financial statements
- ▶ Business Plan



If successful –
remember
to celebrate!

About the Authors

Gail Short has had long experience in Multipurpose Community Telecentre (MCT) planning, establishment and sustainability and was responsible for the establishment of the Western Australian Telecentre Support Unit and Network which comprised 74 centres (now 93) when she retired from this task in 1999.

For the past few years she has worked as a consultant in the Asia/Pacific region assisting with establishment and sustainability issues which affect MCTs. In addition to this task she holds the position of Executive Officer, Community Teleservices Australia Inc. (CTSA), where she is assisting with the establishment of a new national support body. CTSA aims to provide national delivery networks, opportunity for cross fertilization between teleservice centres and collective lobbying power once fully operational. In 2001 she was appointed Vice President (Asia/Pacific Region) to the International Community Teleservices Centres Association.

For most of her life Gail has lived in remote locations in Papua New Guinea and rural areas of Western Australia and Queensland where she has experienced first hand the problems associated with poor infrastructure and telecommunications. Gail's aim in life is to make a difference and she has used this passion to successfully assist many people in her own country and throughout the Asia/Pacific region. ■

Deborah Rice provides information and management support to telecentres in rural Western Australia through her role as Regional Coordinator for the Western Australian Telecentre Support Unit. She was an inaugural member of the State Telecentre Advisory Board bringing regional matters to the attention of government. In response to requests by MCT Management Committees she wrote the Western Australian Telecentre Network *Toolkit*. Deborah organizes and facilitates regional workshops to assist MCT managers and Management Committee members identify, plan and deliver services to their communities.

Deborah is also a member of the Regional Telecommunications Working Group, and has highlighted the concerns of rural women and families to government, including health, education and transport, through her position on the State Women's Advisory Council.

Deborah has a passion for developing leadership in rural communities and has graduated from two state level leadership taskforces, including a study tour to South Africa researching successful leadership models. She enjoys working with community groups to promote and deliver services and programmes in rural areas. ■

TEN STEPS

for Establishing a Sustainable Multipurpose Community Telecentre



Step Nine Operating Procedures



United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNESCO Bangkok

Introduction

Ten Steps for establishing a sustainable Multipurpose Community Telecentre (MCT) is intended to assist communities to *walk through* the basic requirements which need to be addressed when setting out to open and operate a successful MCT. It is a generic process only.

Each community will need to adapt the steps provided to comply with the legal requirements of their country and the programme and service needs of each individual community.

In addition to these *Ten Steps* Booklets, a set of transparencies to accompany *Step One* and *Step Two* has been provided. These transparencies will be particularly useful for public meetings and information and planning sessions. Some of them deal with specific topics covered in the subsequent Steps. Therefore, they can be used separately when occasions arise. If you do not have access to an overhead projector, it is recommended that the information on these transparencies, (particularly the possible programmes, services and collocation sites) be prominently displayed in some other format (black board/white board/poster size sheets of paper) at the Open Community Meeting, so that a survey can be undertaken at this time. ■

Content



Step One: Getting Started

- ▶ Defining the MCT
- ▶ The importance of Community Involvement
- ▶ Appointing a Committee



Step Two: Holding an Open Community Meeting

- ▶ Carrying out a vote
- ▶ Preparing a questionnaire
- ▶ Carrying out a survey



Step Three: Management

- ▶ The role of the Steering Committee
- ▶ The role of the Management Committee
- ▶ Organizing a Committee Meeting



Step Four: Staff Appointments

- ▶ Writing a job description
- ▶ Preparing for the interview
- ▶ The Interview process and contracting



Step Five: Services and Programmes

- ▶ Expanding your service
- ▶ Collocation
- ▶ Partnerships

Step Six: Building and Equipment

- ▶ Assessing your building requirements
- ▶ Assessing your furniture requirements
- ▶ Assessing your equipment and software requirements



Step Seven: The Planning Process

- ▶ Situational Analysis
- ▶ Mission and Action Plan
- ▶ Implementation and Review



Step Eight: Financial Management

- ▶ Preparing an Annual Budget
- ▶ Bookkeeping
- ▶ Preparing a Grant Application



Step Nine: Operating Procedures

- ▶ Producing Logs
- ▶ Preparing a Quotation
- ▶ Steps to keep your MCT running smoothly



Step Ten: Customer Service and Promotional Issues

- ▶ The Role of the Customer
- ▶ Handling Complaints
- ▶ Promotion and Marketing



Every MCT will need to develop its own operating procedures. This STEP will provide some of the relevant headings, contain *prompting* questions and include sample information.

It is important to file all *Equipment Manuals* in an easy to locate place so that staff or volunteers can find out how to operate equipment or *troubleshoot* problems.

The *Operating Procedures* is often time consuming to write and is easily overlooked as the coordinator/manager is busy with other day-to-day issues. The importance of having procedures written down does not often become apparent until a staff member is away or leaves, and another person has to fill in.

The MCT Operating Procedures should include items such as:

1. Opening the MCT

- ▶ Unlock doors
- ▶ If a security system is in place, enter codes and set correctly
- ▶ Open blinds, turn on lights, air-conditioning,
- ▶ Turn on equipment, computers, printers, photocopier
- ▶ Connect computers to the Internet
- ▶ Check paper supplies in printers and photocopier
- ▶ Prepare cash drawer/cash register with sufficient change for the day
- ▶ Check answering machine for messages
- ▶ Place *open* sign outside

2. Closing the MCT

- ▶ Follow *cash handling* procedure for income received
- ▶ Disconnect computers from the Internet
- ▶ Log off and shut down computers in the correct manner
- ▶ Turn off printers, photocopier and other relevant equipment
- ▶ Turn ON answering machine
- ▶ Bring in *open* sign
- ▶ Tidy centre – wipe down tables/benches, and put all dishes away
- ▶ Ensure all windows are closed and locked
- ▶ Turn off lights, air-conditioner
- ▶ If appropriate set security system
- ▶ Lock doors

3. Reception

- ▶ It is important to carefully consider the image that is being projected by the MCT. What does a customer see when they first walk in?
- ▶ The MCT reception area must be clean and tidy.
- ▶ The client should quickly understand where to go and who to speak to.
- ▶ The reception area should look like an interesting and busy place.
- ▶ Brochures, leaflets and other information of interest should be attractively displayed.

First impressions are most important.

Consider name tags for easy identification of all staff and volunteers.

They create a feeling of belonging and being part of the team.

Are there any passwords that need to be recorded so other people can operate the MCT?

- ▶ Staff and volunteers at the reception desk should be clean and well dressed, speak clearly and be friendly and helpful to customers.
- ▶ Staff and volunteers should wear nametags (first name only if preferred) so that customers can clearly identify them.
- ▶ All staff and volunteers should answer the telephone in a similar manner, for example “*Good afternoon, xxxx MCT, this is (name)*”.
- ▶ Messages need to be recorded properly (for example in a message pad), including the caller’s name and telephone number, the date and time of the call, the reason for their call and any other details, and then delivered to the appropriate person.
- ▶ Log sheets need to be maintained – for telephone calls in and out; for faxes received and sent; for correspondence received and sent; and to record the number of customers using the various services – daily/weekly/monthly and annually.
- ▶ Signage, letterhead and fax cover sheets need to project the *corporate image* of the MCT. There should be consistency in the colours used, and the style of writing.

Some sample forms are shown on the following page. The MCT can use these as the basis for their own forms detailing the information they see as being important to their operations.

Telephone calls received:

Date	Time of call	Name of Customer	Phone Number	Reason for call

Telephone calls made:

Date	Time of call	Name of Customer	Phone Number	Reason for call	Person making call

Although this may seem tedious on a day-to-day level, this log sheet is valuable in recording information so that it can be referred to at any time. This assists the MCT in delivering a professional, quality service and ensures that customer queries are followed up in a timely manner.

By recording all telephone calls, particularly outgoing ones, there is less likelihood of unaccountable calls that do not relate to MCT business.

Facsimiles received:

Date	Time	Faxed from: Name	Details	Received by (who in MCT)

Facsimiles sent:

Date	Time	Faxed to: Name	Details	Faxed by (who in MCT)

Correspondence In:


Date	From whom	Details

Correspondence Out:

Date	Addressed to	Details

This information is valuable to keep track of all letters coming into and out of the MCT. It is also an easy way of maintaining a record of correspondence for the secretary to report to the Management Committee.


Letterhead paper and facsimile cover sheet maintain a similar image. This should be carried throughout the MCT.



Connecting Xxxx to the world

Xxxx MCT
 Post Office Address
 Street Address
 Town, State, Postcode
 Phone, Fax, Email Address

Date:
 Receiver address:
 Dear



Connecting Xxxx to the world

Xxxx MCT
 Post Office Address
 Street Address
 Town, State, Postcode
 Phone, Fax, Email Address

Facsimile Cover Sheet

To:	From:
Fax Number:	Date:
Subject:	Number of pages:

Message:

4. Using Equipment

It is advisable to set up a procedures manual detailing the basic steps for turning on and off equipment, and doing day-to-day procedures. These will include:

- ▶ turning on and off computers
- ▶ connecting to the Internet
- ▶ connecting customers to Email
- ▶ turning on and off printers – checking paper and toner
- ▶ using the photocopier – replacing paper and toner; and clearing common paper jams
- ▶ using other equipment – for example scanner, digital camera, laminator, television, video

If a volunteer had to operate the MCT for a day unaided, what would they need to know?

5. Keeping Statistics

It is a good idea to keep a log sheet of the services used by customers. This should be a simple form where only strokes (///) need to be entered as the coordinator/manager or volunteer deals with customers.

These statistics should be entered daily and then collated monthly.

The compiled statistics will give your MCT Management Committee a very good understanding of the usage of your services and show variation between months.

Statistical data becomes a very useful tool when planning future activities.

DAILY/WEEKLY CUSTOMER USAGE LOG SHEET

Service	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Total
Telephone						
Fax						
Internet						
Email						
Computer access						
Photocopying						
Laminating						
Training						
Desktop publishing						
Secretarial services						
Bookkeeping services						
Printing						
TOTAL						

Train all staff and volunteers to fill in this type of log sheet, as it is easy to overlook when you get busy.

MONTHLY CUSTOMER USAGE LOG SHEET

Service	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Total
Telephone							
Fax							
Internet							
Email							
Computer access							
Photocopying							
Laminating							
Training							
Desktop publishing							
Secretarial services							
Bookkeeping services							
Printing							
TOTAL							

The data collected can then be compiled into a general report. This information is useful for planning, reporting to government and other sponsors, and also to support grant applications.

6. Other Information / Statistics

Other information that is interesting and relevant to funding bodies as well as the community include:

a) opening hours

Day	Open	Close	Breaks
Monday			
Tuesday			
Wednesday			
Thursday			
Friday			
Saturday			
Sunday			

Total hours open per week _____

- b) How many people use the MCT each week? (average for the year). _____per week.
- c) How many people use the MCT per month? (note fluctuations over the year – is this normal? Can the differences be explained?)

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec

d) What are the main services being used? Rate the level of usage on a 1-5 scale with 5 being the highest.

Service	Rating
Telephone	
Fax	
Internet	
Email	
Computer access	
Photocopying	
Laminating	
etc	

e) What training programmes did you run this year?

Month	Course Name	Number of attendees
January		
February		
March		
April		
May		
June		
July		
August		
September		
October		
November		
December		
TOTAL		

f) What equipment did you purchase this year?

Equipment Details	Date	Cost

The details of the equipment should go in the Assets Register.

g) What grants did you apply for?

Grant sought	Reason	Amount	Successful (Y/N)

7. Quoting Services

When offering desktop publishing or other services it is important to quote properly.

This can be done on a form similar to the one below.

XXX MCT JOB QUOTE FORM

Customer Name: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____

Date ordered: _____

Date due: _____

Qty	Description	Unit Price	Total Price
TOTAL			

Notes: _____

Order taken by: _____

For attention of: _____

It is important to train the staff and volunteers in the MCT so that everyone is able to deliver a quality service.

The following form shows the types of training that would be required and recorded when the training was delivered. The form will need to be modified to suit your MCT.

1. OFFICE PROCEDURES		Date training received
Telephone	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Answering Taking messages Transferring calls 	
Diary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recording messages Marking in appointments Marking in books Recording unexpected happenings 	
Petty Cash	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Spending Recording 	
Photocopier	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Single side (A4, A3) Double-side copying Enlarging and reducing Lightening and darkening Collating 	
Fax machine	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sending a fax Handling a received fax <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ for the office ■ for a customer Printing an activity report 	
Computers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Start up and shut down procedures Printer management 	
Mail	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collection from Post Office Delivering mail in office Recording of outgoing mail Posting mail 	

2. CUSTOMER SERVICE		Date training received
Reception	Greeting	
Knowledge	Services and programmes offered Charges	
Payments	Writing receipts Recording information for accounts	
3. WORK ENVIRONMENT		
Cleaning	Tidying work spaces Dealing with confidential material Removal of rubbish	

Provision of a User Friendly Environment

Stand back and look at your Centre.

- ▶ Is it clean and tidy?
- ▶ Is it light and pleasant to be in?
- ▶ Do you have information and posters on the walls which invite people to undertake services and programmes?
- ▶ Do you have simple information pamphlets for customers to read and understand what the MCT is about and what it provides?
- ▶ Do you have samples of work (business cards, greeting cards, calendars, tourist information, laminating work) on a bulletin-board so that customers can see the quality of the MCT's work?

- ▶ Do you have somewhere for people to sit while they are waiting? This can be inside or out on a verandah or somewhere close.
- ▶ Do you offer people who have come a long way a drink of water, tea, coffee?
- ▶ Do the staff welcome people as they arrive or do they leave them standing waiting for a long time? People are much happier if you say welcome, we are very busy at the moment but will help you as soon as we can. Please have a seat and a drink while you wait.
- ▶ Have you any way of helping people who do not speak the local language?

Should the MCT charge fees for its services?

There should not be an attitude that community-owned and managed facilities should be free. While the MCT is owned and managed by the community it has to pay its way and therefore fees must be charged for the programmes and services offered. The nice thing about a community-owned facility is that from time to time the Management/Steering Committee and the Manager can offer a free service for a particular community service if finance is available. See *Step Eight* (Financial Management) for additional information.

Partnerships. There is always plenty of room for working with other people. Training courses, collocation, special days, grant applications. Keep your eyes open for opportunities and grasp them when they become available.

ONE THING OFTEN LEADS TO ANOTHER.

For example: A training course in small business may make the MCT aware of a number of small businesses which are not available in their community. The MCT could commence these businesses as a new initiative using the MCT as an incubator to grow them and charging for the support services the MCT offers. Once fully established the MCT may franchise them to suitable people.

PROVIDING A RELIABLE SERVICE

Opening times: For some strange reason many community-owned and operated businesses feel it is all right to open and close when they feel like it. This is very bad for business. The MCT should publish its times of operation and open and close at these times WITHOUT FAIL. Only a serious emergency should close the doors.

Be innovative, keep looking for the best way to do things.

Maintain a simple record of the times people visit the MCT. If you consistently find nobody uses the Centre on a Monday morning you can plan to run a club or training programme at this time or to perhaps shut the Centre every Monday morning and open every Friday night when more people wish to use the MCT.

Equipment: Check the equipment regularly and make sure it is working. It would be good practice to check it is working just prior to opening in the morning or last thing in the evening. Don't just check that the equipment is on, check that the scanner and printer attached are also working from the computer.

Ensure there is plenty of ink in printers/photocopiers and that paper is loaded. If you don't provide paper (people have to bring their own or pay for it before using) put up a sign which clearly says this and make sure you include this information in any brochures/handouts you provide.

If you discover equipment which is not working properly, contact an appropriate person to fix it as quickly as possible. *Out of Order* notices will be tolerated occasionally but if this is a regular occurrence the Centre will lose credibility.

Credibility and quality are key to the success of the centre.

Keep the equipment clean. Be careful what you use on expensive equipment. A small soft brush for removing dust and a slightly damp cloth for cleaning off dirt. Do not use a *wet* cloth as the water could cause serious damage to computers. *Do not* use strong cleaning agents.

Check service dates each week to see if maintenance is required. If you ignore maintenance requirements your equipment will quickly come to a halt.

WHERE POSSIBLE TEACH THE STAFF TO FIX MINOR PROBLEMS, THIS CAN SAVE TIME AND MONEY.

Telecommunications: Check that all your telecommunication lines are working (fax, email, telephone). If they are not, deal with this problem immediately. It is better for you to tell the customer the lines are not working than have them find out themselves. Try to get a time when the maintenance will be completed.

Supplies and Consumables:

DON'T WAIT UNTIL YOU RUN OUT OF SOMETHING BEFORE YOU PLACE AN ORDER.

Set a time each week to check your stock and place orders. Some MCT's are very isolated and it will take some time for new supplies to arrive. While it is understood that it is difficult to order a month's supply due to the costs involved, try to gradually build up your stock of consumables such as toner and paper. If it takes two weeks to get

a delivery you should try and hold a month's supply in case one delivery does not arrive. Just remember if you run out of these key components the MCT cannot operate and this will mean the MCT will have no income during this time.

Use your supplies and consumables carefully. Waste adds up to a lot of money. There is an old saying 'look after the pennies (metal money) and the pounds (paper money) will take care of themselves.' This is very true, we think we are just throwing out a few sheets of paper, giving away another pen or some paper clips, but when we add it all up it comes to a lot of money.

Paying the bills: Make sure the treasurer receives the bills immediately and pays the accounts quickly. It is very embarrassing if the power or telephone is cut off because a bill has not been paid and expensive to have it reconnected. Similarly if you get a bad name with suppliers, you will find yourself on the end of the list when you place orders.

Preparing a daily report for the Manager:

A. Check list:

Against a prepared list, check off each piece of equipment and service requirement.

(You will need to number each item)

For example:

DAILY CHECK LIST

Date

Item	Working	Not working	Maintenance requested
Equipment:			
Computer 1	Yes		
Computer 2		No	Yes
Computer 3	Yes		
Laptop	Yes		
Laser printer		No	Yes
Bubble Jet	Yes		
Scanner	Yes		
Photocopier	Yes		
CD burner	Yes		
Fax	Yes		
Laminator	Yes		
Shredder	Yes		
Binder	Yes		
Guillotine	Yes		
Consumables:			
	Amount	Order	Amount usually held
White paper	10 packets		30 packets
Green paper	5 packets		5 packets
Blue paper	5 packets		5 packets
Toner laser printer	No spare		2 cartridges
Photocopier	1 spare		2 cartridges
Ink BubbleJet	No colour		2 black 1 colour
Disks	5 packets		5 packets

B. Complaints

Record any written complaints received during the day in your written daily report to the Manager. Remember, when a person wishes to make a formal complaint they should be handed a Complaints Form (see example: under *Keeping the Customer happy* included earlier in *Step Ten*).

C. Written Report

Write a short report on the daily activities for your Manager. Include:

1. Programmes and services delivered during the day.
2. Numbers of people who used the Centre
3. Any items sold or hired (book exchange/ toy library).
4. Income and expenditure.
5. New initiatives suggested or asked for.
6. Unusual happenings.

The MCT may have a *full page* diary into which the daily report can be written. This keeps everything in order, eliminates the possibility of reports being lost and allows follow up to be undertaken to ensure complaints have been dealt with and equipment fixed.

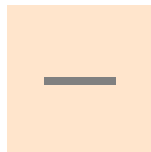
Pin – A (Check List); B (Complaints) to the relevant diary report page.

SAMPLE ANNUAL BUDGET

Budget Item	Estimated Amount
Income	
Cash carried forward
Grant money
Memberships
Training
Services
Sales
Bank interest
Other (specify)
<i>Total income</i>	\$
Expenditure	
Salaries	
Salary/Wage
Superannuation
Workers compensation
Annual leave
Tax
<i>Subtotal</i>	\$
Operating Costs	
Equipment
Maintenance
Electricity
Telephone
Rent
Insurance
Stationery
Consumables
Postage
Advertising
Other (Specify)
<i>Subtotal</i>	\$
<i>Total expenditure</i>	\$
 <i>Total income less total expenditure</i>	 \$



When you have subtracted the expenditure from the expected income, you will determine whether you are likely to have money left over or not.



If there is likely to be a surplus, then you may decide to purchase new equipment or offer more programmes and services.

The value of doing a budget is that you gain an understanding of what to expect for the year, and so can plan accordingly.

It should minimize the risk of getting a *nasty shock*.

If it looks like you may have a deficit, then you need to see if you can reduce any of your costs. Are there some services you offer that the MCT loses money on? If so, your MCT Management Committee will need to decide if the service is important to the community and should still be offered, or if the charges should be increased to ensure that the costs are covered. Another solution is to seek grant funds that will allow the MCT to deliver unprofitable but needed services to the community.

The Next Step

In future years this budget can include other columns detailing information from previous years.

This will give you a good comparison between years to see what income and expenditure remains relatively constant, and what is determined by other factors – eg tourist season, good crops and market prices. You will understand what is happening in your MCT and be able to plan around it.

An example of an annual budget showing previous years is shown on the following page:

SAMPLE ANNUAL BUDGET

(including previous years)

Budget Item	last year	this year	next year
Income			
Cash carried forward
Grant money
Memberships
Training
Services
Sales
Bank interest
Other (specify)
<i>Total income</i>	\$	\$	\$
Expenditure			
Salaries			
Salary/Wage
Superannuation
Workers compensation
Annual leave
Tax
<i>Subtotal</i>	\$	\$	\$
Operating Costs			
Equipment
Maintenance
Electricity
Telephone
Rent
Insurance
Stationery
Consumables
Postage
Advertising
Other (Specify)
<i>Subtotal</i>	\$	\$	\$
<i>Total expenditure</i>	\$	\$	\$
Total income			
less total expenditure	\$	\$	\$

There will always be some variation between the budgeted amount and the actual amount, and there will always be some unexpected expenses – for example if the equipment suddenly fails and needs expert maintenance.

It is advisable to keep some money aside for:

- ▶ Upgrading/replacing equipment
- ▶ Upgrading facilities
- ▶ Re-location (if you intend moving into larger premises, then be aware of other costs such as installing extra power points and telephone lines)
- ▶ Sick leave
- ▶ Holiday leave
- ▶ Long-service leave

Income and expenditure vary throughout the year depending on a range of circumstances.

- ▶ Is grant money paid annually, twice yearly, quarterly, or monthly?
- ▶ Do tourists come to your town all year or in particular seasons?
- ▶ When do people usually pay their memberships?
- ▶ When are your insurance premiums due?

Keeping a *running tally* of costs against estimates

A useful way of gauging how your actual amounts compare to your estimates is to keep a running tally divided into months and quarters.

A sample chart is included here to demonstrate the concept.

About the Authors

Gail Short has had long experience in Multipurpose Community Telecentre (MCT) planning, establishment and sustainability and was responsible for the establishment of the Western Australian Telecentre Support Unit and Network which comprised 74 centres (now 93) when she retired from this task in 1999.

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Deborah is also a member of the Regional Telecommunications Working Group, and has highlighted the concerns of rural women and families to government, including health, education and transport, through her position on the State Women's Advisory Council.

Deborah has a passion for developing leadership in rural communities and has graduated from two state level leadership taskforces, including a study tour to South Africa researching successful leadership models. She enjoys working with community groups to promote and deliver services and programmes in rural areas. ■

TEN STEPS

for Establishing a Sustainable Multipurpose Community Telecentre



Step Ten

Customer Service and Promotional Issues



United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNESCO Bangkok

Introduction

Ten Steps for establishing a sustainable Multipurpose Community Telecentre (MCT) is intended to assist communities to *walk through* the basic requirements which need to be addressed when setting out to open and operate a successful MCT. It is a generic process only.

Each community will need to adapt the steps provided to comply with the legal requirements of their country and the programme and service needs of each individual community.

In addition to these *Ten Steps* Booklets, a set of transparencies to accompany *Step One* and *Step Two* has been provided. These transparencies will be particularly useful for public meetings and information and planning sessions. Some of them deal with specific topics covered in the subsequent Steps. Therefore, they can be used separately when occasions arise. If you do not have access to an overhead projector, it is recommended that the information on these transparencies, (particularly the possible programmes, services and collocation sites) be prominently displayed in some other format (black board/white board/poster size sheets of paper) at the Open Community Meeting, so that a survey can be undertaken at this time. ■

Content



Step One: Getting Started

- ▶ Defining the MCT
- ▶ The importance of Community Involvement
- ▶ Appointing a Committee



Step Two: Holding an Open Community Meeting

- ▶ Carrying out a vote
- ▶ Preparing a questionnaire
- ▶ Carrying out a survey



Step Three: Management

- ▶ The role of the Steering Committee
- ▶ The role of the Management Committee
- ▶ Organizing a Committee Meeting



Step Four: Staff Appointments

- ▶ Writing a job description
- ▶ Preparing for the interview
- ▶ The Interview process and contracting



Step Five: Services and Programmes

- ▶ Expanding your service
- ▶ Collocation
- ▶ Partnerships

Step Six: Building and Equipment

- ▶ Assessing your building requirements
- ▶ Assessing your furniture requirements
- ▶ Assessing your equipment and software requirements



Step Seven: The Planning Process

- ▶ Situational Analysis
- ▶ Mission and Action Plan
- ▶ Implementation and Review



Step Eight: Financial Management

- ▶ Preparing an Annual Budget
- ▶ Bookkeeping
- ▶ Preparing a Grant Application



Step Nine: Operating Procedures

- ▶ Producing Logs
- ▶ Preparing a Quotation
- ▶ Steps to keep your MCT running smoothly



Step Ten: Customer Service and Promotional Issues

- ▶ The Role of the Customer
- ▶ Handling Complaints
- ▶ Promotion and Marketing



Step Ten

Customer Service and Promotional Issues

1. Service Delivery

If your centre does not provide customer service – it will not be successful.

Do the customers have rights?

The customers entering your Centre will come from many different walks of life. Some will know exactly what they want to do and others will need staff assistance. Keeping people happy is top priority for the MCT. If people are unhappy they will not return and the MCT will not prosper.

YES, THEY CAN EXPECT TO:

- ▶ Be treated with respect and dignity.
- ▶ Be provided with information on programmes and services being offered.
- ▶ Have the advertised programmes and services provided on a credible basis.
- ▶ Have access to a service as their turn arises (not be pushed back in the queue because someone else is more important or knows someone).
- ▶ Be advised in advance if a service or programme they are using/studying is to be changed.
- ▶ Have privacy and confidentiality respected.
- ▶ Have access to information which the MCT may have on file about them.
- ▶ Have the right to speak out if a programme or service is not up to the advertised standard.
- ▶ Have services delivered in a safe manner.



If customers have rights, do they also have responsibilities?

YES, THEY SHOULD:

- ▶ Act in a way that is acceptable to MCT staff and other customers.
- ▶ Dress in a way which is acceptable to MCT staff and other customers.
- ▶ Take responsibility for decisions they make.
- ▶ Give as well as take from the MCT – that is they should help the MCT to continue to operate and provide new programmes and service.

2. Introducing People to Your MCT

The MCT may be frightening for people who have not had anything to do with technology before. Do not try to impress them with how much you know, rather keep everything simple.

In the early days you may have a lot of people who just want to see what an MCT is. If this becomes a problem set aside times when you will show people what you do. You could show them some of the work which has been achieved, show them the equipment working, ask them if they would be interested in undertaking training or using the MCT and if so, what they would like to do. This builds up your client base.

DO NOT SHOW BIG GROUPS THROUGH UNLESS YOU HAVE A LOT OF STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS TO HELP. IT IS EASY FOR EQUIPMENT TO DISAPPEAR AT SUCH TIMES.

Keep it simple

Try to hand out something to people who use the Centre. Simple brochures, a free post card or something else small which tells people about the Centre is a good way of advertising.

3. Customer Participation

If customers have a say in what the MCT provides you will find your programmes and services are more relevant. For example:

Should customers have a say in what the MCT provides?

- ▶ Customers are the ones who are paying. They will tell you what they expect to learn from a course of training or some specific programme in return for their money.
- ▶ Customers will feel important and happy with the organization if they are consulted.
- ▶ If your MCT is community-owned and managed, asking the customers to comment about the Centre is even more relevant as it helps everyone to remember that the community owns the Centre.

How can you encourage customers to have a say?

- ▶ Invite users to become volunteer workers which will give them opportunity to have a regular say and input into the running of the Centre.
- ▶ Encourage users who are enthusiastic about the Centre to become members.

- ▶ Identify outstanding members and ask them to nominate for a position on the Management Committee at the relevant time.
- ▶ Set up a suggestion box so that people can leave a note suggesting something they believe should be considered for the Centre.
- ▶ When you hold meetings with different target groups (youth, seniors, woman's groups, school teachers, etc) give opportunity for them to make suggestions.

Note:

Try to include disadvantaged people such as financially disadvantaged, the aged, people who speak other languages.

Membership Benefits

It will be necessary for your Steering/Management Committee to decide what benefits members will enjoy and how much it will cost them. The MCT should be encouraging people to take out membership as they will:

- ▶ Be eligible to attend the Annual General Meeting of the MCT to vote on key issues.
- ▶ Be eligible to stand for office on the Steering/Management Committee.
- ▶ Have access rights after hours, through the use of a PIN number or some other special entry arrangement.
- ▶ Have the right to use certain equipment *free of charge*.

Members are very important as they are the future of the Centre. Without them you will not have Committee members. In addition, many members become volunteers and you will rely heavily on these people to help you run the Centre.

Many centres offer 6 monthly and 12 monthly membership divided into individual, student, family and business categories. It is normal to charge an annual fee for membership. The amount charged should be commensurate with the free services offered.

A sample form is shown here:

APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP
To xxxxxxxx MCT

Name: _____
Address: _____

Telephone Number : _____

Conditions of Membership

No food or drink near any equipment
No smoking in the MCT
All floppy disks must be virus checked prior to use.
No personal computer software may be loaded onto MCT computers.
Accounts will be paid when due.

I agree to abide by the above MCT conditions.

Signed: _____
Date: _____

Date membership accepted and paid : _____
Amount paid: _____ Receipt Number _____
Received by: _____
Expired date of membership : _____

Complaints

Customers have the right to complain.

DO NOT ARGUE WITH THE CUSTOMER.

The MCT Management and staff will not always get it right. Listen carefully, apologize. If the problem can be fixed immediately (make new photocopies, rescan a document) do this for no cost.

If it is a more serious problem, or if the customer wants training fees or similar refunded, tell the customer what action staff have to take when a complaint is made and what procedure must be followed.

Give the customer a *Complaints Form* to complete. The Manager is the person who will decide to refund money if equipment has failed or the programme has not been up to standard. If the complaint is more serious then the Steering/Management Committee will have to deal with it. Advise the person that he/she is a valued customer and will be advised of the outcome as quickly as possible.

The Complaints form could look like the following:

What if we get it wrong – and the customer is not happy?



(Name of Centre) Multipurpose Community Telecentre
NOTICE OF COMPLAINT

Date: _____

Name of Complainant: _____

Contact Address: _____

Complaint : _____

Signature of Complainant: _____

Staff members signature: _____

A Staff member must confirm that the person making the complaint has signed the form.

Promotional Ideas

PROMOTION OF YOUR MCT SHOULD START BEFORE YOU UNDERTAKE *STEP TWO*.

Step Two guidelines suggest that you should call a community meeting to tell people:

- ▶ What an MCT is
- ▶ How an MCT can operate
- ▶ What programmes and services can be offered.

This meeting will be your first opportunity to market your MCT – make the most of it. This can be achieved through the telling of stories about successful achievements of other Centres, providing printed posters and materials, allowing those who are attending plenty of opportunity to ask questions. If you have a lot of people present, break into groups so that more opportunity is given for discussion. Remember – this will probably be the biggest meeting the community will ever have about MCT's.

ONCE YOUR MCT IS OPERATIONAL YOU MOVE INTO THE SECOND PROMOTIONAL STAGE

Before you start out on your general publicity campaign it is important that you consider what resources you have to work with. It is probable that everyone will agree that advertising your services is good but you can only work within your budget and capabilities.

CONSIDER:

- ▶ What are your resources?
- ▶ Do you have volunteers/staff who have time to undertake this task?
- ▶ How much money has been allocated to publicity and promotion?
- ▶ Who do you want to reach?
- ▶ Do you want more members, more helpers, more users?
- ▶ Do you have a goal? Xxxxxx number of members within 12 months.
- ▶ Will you advertise little and often or do you want to have one big campaign every year/half year?
- ▶ Will you run competitions?



Keep the Community Informed:

It is a good idea for the Steering Committee to keep the community fully aware of what it is they are doing. Be sure that the community knows:

- ▶ Who the Committee Members are
- ▶ What the Committee is dealing with at any particular time
- ▶ When staff are being employed
- ▶ What programmes and services are being offered
- ▶ What new programmes and services are being planned

Invite community members to discuss with the Committee any concerns they may have at any time.

Develop an Advertising Plan

The Steering Committee should write down what it has decided to do, when it will do it, how it will do it, who will do it and how much money has been allocated to achieve these goals.

Why Is It Important to Promote Your MCT?

If your Centre becomes well known it:

- ▶ Will be more successful.
- ▶ Will find it easier to attract new programmes and services.
- ▶ Will have greater success in attracting funding to run new programmes and services.
- ▶ Will generate interest in other groups who may consider joining with the MCT as a collocated body.

There are many inexpensive ways to promote your Centre.

The following is a list of ideas which you might like to examine.

1. Put together a display board listing key services offered in your Centre and stand this out the front to attract the attention of people going past.
2. Print brochures/flyers you can hand out to customers and other people. You may be able to put some of these brochures in places where people will pick them up. Remember the tourist market - these people are always looking for email access so leave your brochures at hostels and other places providing accommodation.
3. Print business cards and leave these with people you think may be interested in using the MCT's services.
4. Look for high exposure opportunities. Try to get time on the local radio station so that you can tell people what an MCT is and what it can do for the community.

Marketing ideas
to promote your
Centre.

5. If the local newspaper is being compiled and printed by the MCT make sure you get free advertising. If someone else is printing the newspaper, see if you can get some free advertising in the community service section.
6. If you cannot get space in the local newspaper, print your own newsletter so that people continually know what new programmes and services you are offering. Make sure you get a copy of this information to key community people (local government, agriculture, education, health, woman's groups, etc)
7. If you plan to start a Youth Club ask for time to speak to the children at the local school.
8. Make yourself available to speak at meetings and functions.
9. Join a few (not too many) high profile groups who are involved in planning activities for your community. This will give you opportunity to tell them about your organization.
10. Hold an *Open Day* at least once a year to show and demonstrate to the community what you are doing.
11. Run a competition and see how many people can use the Internet in one day or give a prize to the person who bring the most new members.

Annex One

Case Studies

Case Study 1: Helping an Individual

An old gentleman who relied on a government pension to live found his money was no longer being paid into his bank book. He had a little money saved up and he lived on this hoping that the money from the government would come. Eventually his savings ran out and he had no food left in the house. He was frightened. He was 80 years old, lived a long way from the government offices and did not know how to get his pension restarted.

Eventually he went to his neighbour and told her his problems. Don't worry she said, we have an office in our community now at the Multipurpose Community Telecentre. They will help you with your problem. The neighbour took the old man to the office. The MCT staff sat him down and gave him a cup of tea and a biscuit as he was very distressed. The friendly officer asked him all about his problem. took his information and rang through to the Regional Centre. Because the MCT was registered office for dealing with such problems, the officer was told the money would be put in the old man's bank immediately.

When the old man went to the bank the next day and saw the money had been put into his bank book he was so happy that he came home and wrote a letter to the MCT thanking them for saving his life.

This is just another example of how an MCT can help individuals within the community.

Case Study 2: Helping an Individual

A lady in India was known for her fine needle work. She was convinced by an officer who saw her work that she should put some samples on the Internet. She agreed.

Not long after the work was placed on the Net she received an email asking if she made silk neck ties. She was not even sure what a neck tie was so she asked for help. Once she understood, she made some samples and sent them to the person making the request. Very quickly she received a very, very large order for ties similar to her sample. To complete this work she had to get a number of people from her village to help her.

This is a good example to show how small the world becomes when you have access to a *technology hub*. People who did not have the opportunity to show the world their beautiful handicrafts in the past can now do so.

Case Study 3: Helping the Whole Community

A community had received very bad news. The only bank in town was to be closed down in two months time. It was 50 kms to the next community with a bank and this was too far and too costly for many of the people.

The MCT wondered if it could help. An approach was made to another bank to see if they would allow the MCT to provide a banking service. A number of meetings were held.

The day approached for the old bank to close. The community was upset that this was happening as the bank had been in the community for a very long time and its closure would mean that more people would be out of work and there was nowhere to bank their savings. This time however, it was to be a happy ending. Word arrived that the MCT would be allowed to operate a bank out of its premises. Better still, the MCT would employ the old bank's staff and this would allow them to remain in the community.

Conclusion:

Today, Multipurpose Community Telecentres affect the lives of many people throughout the world. This phenomena which started in a small way in the mid 1980's has grown from basic computer/Internet/email training programmes to one which has the ability to affect lives socially and economically through the use of an MCT technology *hub*. **Ten Steps** offers those who are still thinking of joining this movement a simple approach to establishing a viable sustainable centre that is truly community-owned, operated and managed.

Words of Wisdom

*Community people helping community people.
There is no one who cares more for the community
than someone who lives there.*

About the Authors

Gail Short has had long experience in Multipurpose Community Telecentre (MCT) planning, establishment and sustainability and was responsible for the establishment of the Western Australian Telecentre Support Unit and Network which comprised 74 centres (now 93) when she retired from this task in 1999.

For the past few years she has worked as a consultant in the Asia/Pacific region assisting with establishment and sustainability issues which affect MCTs. In addition to this task she holds the position of Executive Officer, Community Teleservices Australia Inc. (CTSA), where she is assisting with the establishment of a new national support body. CTSA aims to provide national delivery networks, opportunity for cross fertilization between teleservice centres and collective lobbying power once fully operational. In 2001 she was appointed Vice President (Asia/Pacific Region) to the International Community Teleservices Centres Association.

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Deborah Rice provides information and management support to telecentres in rural Western Australia through her role as Regional Coordinator for the Western Australian Telecentre Support Unit. She was an inaugural member of the State Telecentre Advisory Board bringing regional matters to the attention of government. In response to requests by MCT Management Committees she wrote the Western Australian Telecentre Network *Toolkit*. Deborah organizes and facilitates regional workshops to assist MCT managers and Management Committee members identify, plan and deliver services to their communities.

Deborah is also a member of the Regional Telecommunications Working Group, and has highlighted the concerns of rural women and families to government, including health, education and transport, through her position on the State Women's Advisory Council.

Deborah has a passion for developing leadership in rural communities and has graduated from two state level leadership taskforces, including a study tour to South Africa researching successful leadership models. She enjoys working with community groups to promote and deliver services and programmes in rural areas. ■