

A graphic of a rainbow with five visible bands: blue, green, yellow, pink, and red. The bands are curved and sweep from the top right towards the bottom left.

**Pop Up libraries**

# Research brief

Mini-libraries are popping up in unusual places across Victoria, from country train platforms to cargo bikes around the city. How are we bringing our collections and services to the community through Pop-Up libraries? Explore what has been done nationally and internationally, in the physical and digital space, and what works.

Project sponsor: Jenny Mustey, Campaspe Library Service

Project members: Asha Davis, Mildura Rural City Council Library Service  
Celia Rice, Casey-Cardinia Library Corporation  
Deanne Spagnolo, Brimbank Libraries  
Josephine Struck, Moreland City Libraries  
Suzie Bull, Mornington Peninsula Libraries

# Contents

Executive summary	3
What is a Pop Up?	4
Pop Up gardens	5
Pop Up restaurants	5
Pop Up shops	6
Pop Ups and books	7
Little Free Library	7
Digital Pop Up libraries	8
Pop Ups as promotion	9
Pop Ups as social movements	11
Pop Ups at transit points	12
Pop Up librarians	13
Pop Ups and the public library sector	14
City of Wodonga Libraries	15
Frankston City Libraries	17
Wyndham Libraries	19
Goldfields Library Corporation	20
Sunshine Coast Libraries	21
Campaspe Regional Library Service	24
How can it work for you?	26
The P's of Pop Up libraries	29
References	31
Acknowledgements	34

## Executive summary

The concept of the Pop Up is worldwide trend infiltrating all kinds of ventures and social movements. A Pop Up is when businesses, governments, universities, community groups, individuals or brands temporarily activate places and spaces for promotion, trials, or the sharing of resources. This report looks at the trend worldwide, and covers how it has been used by the local library community.

In the literary sphere, Pop Ups have been used by individuals to share books and other resources such as in the worldwide Little Free Library movement. Pop Ups have been used by bookshops, publishers and digital providers to promote their products in new and unexpected ways. Pop Ups have also been used as a form of protest in the guerrilla library and librarian movements.

Pop Up libraries allow Australian public libraries to promote literacy beyond the four walls of the library. It is an opportunity to remind and inform local people about the library. Literary based engagement with the general public is the focus of any Pop Up library project, and adding a fun, funky flavour to your library brand.

This report examines the way six Australian public library services have used the Pop Up concept. Drawing on original research it delves into the how and why of the Pop Up library model, and the perceived benefits and success of each endeavour.

The report also explains how to create a Pop Up library for any public library service, examining risks and benefits, as well as issues to consider when planning a Pop Up library.

# What is a Pop Up?

Pop Up is an ever increasing global trend, crossing into many different industries around the world. By definition, a Pop Up is when businesses, governments, universities, community groups, individuals or brands temporarily activate places and spaces for promotion, trials, or the sharing of resources. The key element for Pop Ups is discovery. Ultimately, it helps communities discover new ways to engage, interact and progress. The key elements are the concept, the location and creating a memorable experience.<sup>1</sup>

Reportedly, the concept of a Pop Up shop began in New York City in 1999, as a way for fashion retailers to promote their stock and sell excess stock at reduced prices. The possibilities of the type of Pop Ups existing today are endless. Successes have been made with cafes, restaurants, shops, events, galleries, theatres, bars, markets, gardens, hotels, food trucks, flash mobs, performances, and yes, even libraries. According to the Pop-Up Union website, 'pop-ups can no longer be looked upon as a trend, but instead, must be seen as a trade that holds its own place in an ever-changing, vibrant, global marketplace'.<sup>2</sup>

Pop Ups appear as something which is spontaneous, vibrant, innovative and unexpected. Whilst a Pop Up is temporary in nature, there is no clear indication as to the definition of how long temporary is. Although they appear to be spontaneous and unexpected, planning is essential to ensure the success of Pop Up venues.

There are many advantages to creating a Pop Up venue:

- exciting new ways to discover products and services
- creating an enjoyable experience which differs to the norm
- engagement and interaction with others in the community
- experiencing new trends
- excite a response from a new series of customers
- promotion of local businesses
- potential for publicity in local papers
- encourage brand awareness
- clear excess stock
- make short term profits
- trial new concepts

---

<sup>1</sup> <http://popuppages.com/pop-ups/what-is-a-pop-up>

<sup>2</sup> Ibid

- respond to seasonal requirements
- positive use of vacant spaces

## Pop Up gardens



*PARK(ing) Day Twin Cities 2009*

Since 2005 an annual event known as PARK(ing) Day takes place around the world. The premise behind it is that community members, artists and designers transform metered parking spaces into a garden or “PARK(ing)” space for the day. The purpose is to draw attention to the urban design of our cities, and the lack of public spaces for recreational purposes. In 2011 there were 975 parks in 162 cities, throughout 35 countries and across 6 continents.<sup>3</sup>

## Pop Up restaurants

Scarf is a social enterprise in Melbourne, organised by a non-profit organisation. The purpose is to borrow restaurants when they are closed, and provide an opportunity for training, mentoring and employment in the hospitality industry for young people with limited opportunities. Refugees, new migrants, asylum seekers, people with disabilities and youth who have failed in the education system, are given ten weeks to work with the Scarf community, and develop skills, knowledge and networks. Diners form part of the training experience, as encouraging customers, and pay \$35 for a two course meal.<sup>4</sup>



<sup>3</sup> <http://www.cityfarmer.info/2010/09/06/lawns-do-have-a-purpose-transforming-parking-spaces-into-temporary-public-parks/>

<sup>4</sup> <http://scarfcommunity.org/2012/winter-scarf-dinners-bookings-are-open/>

## Pop Up shops

On November 13th 2012, New York and Los Angeles played host to Pop Up shops, in the form of 'The Beatles' bus. The buses were used to promote the release of 14 remastered Beatles albums on vinyl. Customers were able to board the bus and purchase the remastered records, and were treated with a free t-shirt for their visit.<sup>5</sup>



*The Beatles bus shop in New York City 2012*

---

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.ringofstars.ru/across/?p=16068>



# Pop Ups and books

## Little Free Library

The Little Free Library started out as a backyard project but is now a global movement. It involves ordinary citizens creating a Little Library on their land and filling it with books to then share with others. The movement is now a charitable foundation that advocates and promotes reading for children, literacy for adults and recognition of libraries worldwide. There are over 15000 registered Little Free Libraries in communities around the world.<sup>6</sup>

The Little Free Library concept continued to be developed as a part of the IDEAS CITY festival in New York in 2013. The PEN World Voices Festival and the Architectural League of New York partnered with the Little Free Libraries and ran a design competition open to architects and designers. The idea was to create Pop Up libraries that were innovative in design, fun, and user friendly, that had minimal impact on the locations where they were installed and were easily assembled and disassembled. The chosen designs were given a budget of a \$1000 for materials and construction and were then installed in locations around New York City with the result being intriguing spaces filled with books that were quickly adopted by the community.<sup>7</sup>



*A Little Free Library designed by Chat Travieso 2013*



*The first Little Free Library*

<sup>6</sup> <http://www.littlefreelibrary.org/>

<sup>7</sup> <http://archleague.org/2013/03/little-free-libraries-new-york/>



## Digital Pop Up libraries

Digital Pop Up libraries are a way of combining the popular eReader or smart devices, QR technology and eBooks.

In 2012 there was collaboration between Vodafone and a book publisher in Bucharest who created a digital Pop Up library in a subway station. The walls of the station were plastered with QR code-enabled large format posters enabling commuters to scan the QR code and download



*Piata Victoriei subway station in Bucharest 2012*

free samples of book and audiobook titles via the Vodafone digital library mobile site. Although a publicity stunt, this example encouraged commuters to sample eBook technology in a clever, forward thinking way.<sup>8</sup>

Another kind of digital library is the Library Box concept. Library Box is a Kickstarter funded file sharing software and inexpensive hardware developed by Jason Giffey in 2013. It enables users



*Library Box banner and logo 2012*

set up a mini server and Wi-Fi hotspot using a power source and the Library Box hardware. Users can set up a Library Box in a park or café, load it with digital information such as out of copyright eBooks and share it with those who have a Wi-Fi enabled device.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>8</sup> <http://www.telecompaper.com/news/vodafone-romania-launches-digital-library-at-bucharest-metro--891508>

<sup>9</sup> <http://jasongriffey.net/librarybox/index.php>

## Pop Ups as promotion



*Bookworld promotion at a metropolitan bus stop*

to vote for one of the finalists via the company's Facebook page. A tiny drought stricken town called Dirranbandi in NSW received the most votes to win.<sup>10</sup>

Penguin Books has borrowed the concept behind the ubiquitous food truck and developed a book truck and book pushcart which travels to book related events and festivals across the US. The truck and pushcart are stocked with a wide selection of the publisher's most popular authors and titles. The truck is parked near the event, while the pushcart, similar to a New York

Bookworld is an online company that specialises in selling Australian and international titles. In 2013/14 Bookworld revealed Pop Up shelves full of free books in select locations across Melbourne and Sydney in a promotion entitled *Giving Back - Free Books at Bus Stops*. The response was overwhelming and as a result Bookworld was flooded with requests for more Pop Up shelves throughout Australia. The public was asked to nominate where the next pop up shelves should go and six thousand nominations were received. The public were asked



*Bookworld promotion at Dirranbandi*

<sup>10</sup> <http://mumbrella.com.au/bookworld-transforms-bus-shelters-pop-bookshelves-christmas-189311>





*Penguin pushcart*

hotdog cart, and is moved to various locations in the area like bookstores, parks, markets, and popular shopping precincts to create awareness and generate buzz. The public are invited to follow the truck on social media as it travels around.<sup>11</sup>

To celebrate the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the BILLY design bookcase produced by IKEA, the company staged a BILLY on the Beach promotion. They set up 30 BILLY bookcases on Bondi Beach and filled them with 6000 items donated by publishers. The beachgoers were invited to take a book/leave a book, or purchase a book with a gold coin donation. At the end of the day all the remaining books and donations were given to The Australian Literacy and Numeracy Foundation.<sup>12</sup>



*IKEA promotion on Bondi Beach 2010*

<sup>11</sup> <http://www.penguin.com/static/pages/features/penguinbooktruck/>

<sup>12</sup> [http://www.ikea.com/ms/en\\_AU/about\\_ikea/press\\_room/press\\_release/national/billyevent\\_0110.html](http://www.ikea.com/ms/en_AU/about_ikea/press_room/press_release/national/billyevent_0110.html)

## Pop Ups as social movements

The Footpath Library started in Sydney in 2003 when a young woman who was volunteering to feed the homeless noticed a man reading a book under a street light. She began to regularly bring him books to read and from this the Footpath Library was created. The Footpath library donates “near-new” and new books to



*The Footpath Library in Sydney*



*A Guerrilla Librarian sets up in an urban space in New York 2012*

governing body. Guerrilla libraries provide a collection space for ideas or themes that are not generally well represented in more traditional library collections, for example, zines,

homeless and marginalised people across Australia. In 2014, Youth Projects' Pop Up library for Melbourne's homeless was nominated as a finalist for the Bookworld Pop Ups promotion. Similar Pop Up libraries for homeless people operate out of Sydney and the Gold Coast.<sup>13</sup>

Guerrilla libraries are usually underground and are created without approval or support of an authority or



*The Occupy Wall Street Library 2011*

<sup>13</sup> <http://footpathlibrary.org>

radical political ideas or erotica. Guerrilla libraries and librarians can often be highly politicised and controversial. In America in the early 1990s, with the increase of electronic resources, traditional librarians were said to hide books to protect them from being destroyed. This was done by either hiding them or stamping the books so as to make them appear that were still circulating.<sup>14</sup>

The People's Library of Occupy Wall Street<sup>15</sup> is an example of a recent guerrilla library. It started as a pile of books that kept growing and to protect them from the rain, protesters put them in boxes and started to organise them into categories. The boxes were labelled OWLS and the NYPD insisted on confiscating and destroying them, however librarians persisted and so OWLS continued to grow.

### Pop Ups at transit points

Airports, train stations, tram and bus stops have become popular locations to discover Pop Up libraries. They are ideal locations for quick pick up and drop off points for print and digital collections.

The Amsterdam Schiphol's Airport Library is the first permanent airport library geared towards long layover passengers. This is not a lending library but rather a reference library or as



*A library in a Tokyo subway 2012*



*Library at Schiphol Airport in Amsterdam*

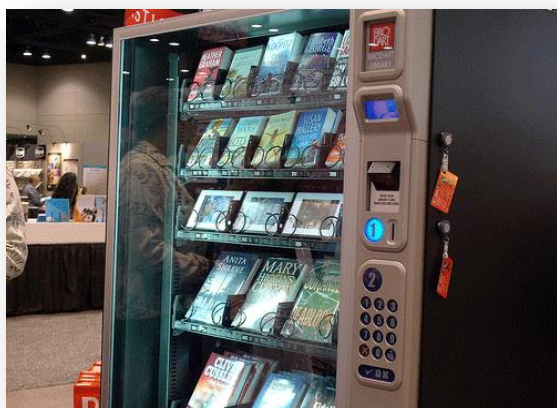
<sup>14</sup> [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Guerrilla\\_librarian](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Guerrilla_librarian)

<sup>15</sup> <http://peopleslibrary.wordpress.com/about/>





*Repurposing a telephone booth in the UK as a Pop Up library*



*A book vending machine in Chicago, USA 2009*

described by the airport “a sitting area with added value”.<sup>16</sup>

In the United Kingdom telephone booths have found a second life as Pop Up library locations.<sup>17</sup>

The Contra Costa libraries in California have been using book lending vending machines since 2008.<sup>18</sup> The kiosks have been termed *Library-a-Go-Go*. Book vending machines have also popped up in places such as Family Justice Centres and train stations.<sup>19</sup>

## Pop Up librarians

College of Business Librarians at Victoria University (VU) in Melbourne have taken to popping up all over campus to assist VU students with specialist business research as well as with finding information and using resources such as the library catalogue, databases and online resources. The Pop Up librarians began popping up at Footscray and the City Campuses in April 2013.<sup>20</sup>

<sup>16</sup> <http://www.airportlibrary.nl/en/about-airport-library.html>

<sup>17</sup> <http://entertainmentdesigner.com/news/experiences/pop-up-books-gone-literal-how-pop-up-libraries-revitalize-reading-by-reinterpreting-space/>

<sup>18</sup> <http://connect.crlibrary.org/2010/08/09/library-a-go-go/>

<sup>19</sup> <http://www.fashionatalie.com/artsy/pop-up-library-services-book-vending-machines-in-oakland-wowzers/>

<sup>20</sup> <http://www.vu.edu.au/news-events/news/pop-up-library-for-business-students>

# Pop Ups and the public library sector

Through our research it was evident there was no clear definition of what a Pop Up library is. As we have shown it means different things to different people. Our aim in this report is to create a definition that will be useful for the Australian public library sector.

A Pop Up library is a collection of resources taken outside the library walls to the public. These resources may be physical or digital. They may be part of the library collection, or be withdrawn or other excess stock that is not a part of the general collection. There may be an expectation that the items will not be returned. Pop Up libraries are about informal access to library resources. It is an extension of the library brand, and based primarily on the promotion of literacy and reading.

A Pop Up library should be unexpected in the space it occupies. It will generate a buzz, and garner attention. The temporary nature of the Pop Up library lends itself to this purpose. A Pop Up library should also have a strong connection to the public library sector in order to benefit from the buzz it creates.

A Pop Up library is different to the usual outreach activities that a library uses to promote its services. While a Pop Up library can act as promotion for the library service, promotion does not by itself constitute a Pop Up library. Pop Up libraries are not a stall as part of an expo, or a static display, or staff spruiking with pamphlets when library awareness alone is your aim. While a Pop Up library may increase membership that is not its purpose. Literary based engagement with the general public is instead the focus of any Pop Up library project, and adding a fun, funky flavour to your library brand.

The following section shows why and how many libraries around Australia have used the Pop Up library concept.



## Wodonga Library



Wodonga Library started the Little Libraries project with the aim of getting reading material to people in the community who would not normally come to the library. And as a flow on effect of this they would hopefully become members of the library.

Four local artists were asked to submit a drawing and a concept. They had a budget that they had to keep to and

certain criteria, for example, shelves for the books and easy movability (the libraries are small and have wheels, so that they can be shifted inside at night). Out of the four, three were chosen. The items used were all deleted or donated stock. Each site had a certain focus. For example, there was one at the local swimming pool, so the stock consisted of mainly junior fiction, picture books and magazines. One was at a neighbourhood house where a youth group was being set up so a lot of young adult fiction was sent. It is not a concern if books don't come back but the hope is that people will simply return the books or swap them with something

else.



There have been no formal statistics taken. Success is measured by how many times library staff need to supply more material, which has only been once at the pool, however the issue is more staff not requesting that it be stocked up rather than lack of demand.

For Wodonga Library, Little Libraries is a long term project, where they move the

structures around every 3-4 months. The next sites chosen are the local leisure centre, a corner store a little out of town, and the town's entertainment centre.



# Frankston City Libraries

Frankston City Libraries define a Pop Up library slightly differently from our definition. The emphasis is on taking the library service to a new and popular location, with reduced lending hours. While we emphasise the temporary nature of such an arrangement, the Frankston Library Express Service has been operating for ten years. This is an example of how successful a Pop Up library can become and how they have the potential to become an integral part of the services on offer.

The aim in the creation of this Pop Up was to reach out to new customers that didn't have time to use the library due to long work hours. Identifying the nature of the Frankston community as a dormitory suburb, the train station was recognised as the best place to promote their library service, catering to those on their way to work or to study. This placement had the added benefit of creating a strong feeling of safety in the railway station for the community. Initially the pop up was funded by a Council grant. When the initial funding expired there was a large petition from the community to keep the Library Express in operation, and the Council agreed to do so.

The Library Express is stocked with books, CDs and DVDs that rotate every three months between several outreach locations. Borrowing and returning functions are completed on a laptop in offline mode and then are uploaded to the library system at a later date. A staff member serves the customers and maintains the library when it is open as part of her regular full time hours. Relief staff have been trained to fill in when necessary.



This arrangement would not be possible without a strong partnership with Metro Trains Melbourne who provide a storage shed on the station for book trolleys and borrowing equipment.

The Pop Up is an outstanding success with 3082 visits in the 2012-13 financial year, 2811 loans and 4231 returns, a statistic that includes returns of other branch items to the Library Express.

# Wyndham Libraries

Wyndham Libraries partnered with Werribee Plaza to provide a Pop Up library in the Plaza's centre court for Children's Book Week in 2013. The aim of the Pop Up library was to promote reading and learning, attract non-member users, create outreach opportunities and strengthen the partnership between the library and the Plaza. When asked for a definition of what they thought a Pop Up library was the response was 'recreating the library experience in an external location'.

Throughout the week, eight events were held. Library staff hosted storytimes with guest readers including the Mayor, and library IT staff provided introductory sessions for iPad and eBook users. Volunteer youth ran Manga workshops for young people and there was a guest appearance from a Channel 10 weather newsreader who did his daily weather cross from the Pop Up library. Approximately 100 withdrawn items identified with 'pre-loved' stickers were taken from the Pop Up library and Wyndham Libraries also partnered with Collins Booksellers who had a shop in the plaza at the time.



In preparation for the Pop Up library, Wyndham library staff met with Plaza staff to negotiate space and furniture requirements. Libraries budgeted for staffing requirements and the agreement was that the Plaza would provide the space, furniture, microphone, stage and chair/lounge. Unfortunately the space did not meet the expectations of the library staff. The Pop Up library was created in a setting with what was described as a theatrical stage set up. Library staff were expecting a relaxed environment with comfy lounges and books cases for the Pop Up library items. Instead, a gated square with rowed seating facing a stage was provided.

In evaluation, library staff concluded that the attendees of the storytime sessions were already library members, many of which travelled straight over from storytime session in the library to the Pop Up library session. Internet access and restrictions also limited library staff in their delivery of programs throughout the week. The attendance was conducted via manual headcounts based on library staff talking with attendees. Therefore no adequate statistical data was recorded. Anecdotally staff reported that over 50% over participants were already library users.

In hindsight Wyndham Libraries concluded that partners need to be chosen with care and that expectations should be clearly documented but that the experience had not swayed them from trying out a Pop Up library in another location at another time.



# Goldfields Library Corporation

Two years ago, Castlemaine Library established a Pop Up library at the train station. Called Rolling Stock the idea was to promote the library service through a low cost and low maintenance promotion. Its aim was to inform non-users about the library service, to service current library members, and to remind people about the library service.

Rolling Stock is still in operation today, and is still proving to be extremely popular. On average, around 1400 books are used each year. It is no longer considered to be a Pop Up library, as it is no longer an 'unexpected' service. The library staff see it as a static service.



Castlemaine Library has one staff member responsible for the upkeep of Rolling Stock. It is restocked weekly, and is filled with supply of donated items for the library. No deleted library stock is used to fill it. Each item is stickered to explain the process of use, and to provide details about Castlemaine Library.

Statistics are gathered by keeping data relating to the number of items taken each week, and then data relating to the amount of stock removed from the stand. There is no correlated data relating to potential increases in membership as a result of exposure to the library service.

Rolling Stock does not require the use of any technology. The associated costs are extremely low, and it is not labour intensive. It is considered to be a low risk promotion of the library.



# Sunshine Coast Libraries

Sunshine Coast Libraries recently ran two Pop Up libraries. One was at the local University where staff placed a Pop Up library at a nerd/geek expo called Epic Diem. The other was to promote the Sunshine Coast Libraries Draft Plan and gather feedback at sites in the region.

The staff involved in both these programs thought the Pop Up libraries were worth the effort, especially in engaging with members of the community who would not necessarily be regular library visitors.



The aim of the Pop Up library at Epic Diem Nerd culture expo was to promote libraries in a completely unexpected space, create a partnership with a culture expo at its inception with the aim to continue partnership for many years to come, attract a different clientele base of non-users and to showcase the variety of technology materials, graphic novel and manga books in the collection.

In this Pop Up library all items needed to be loaned. The stock comprised current library materials as a mixture of DVDs, graphic novels, Manga, adult fiction, young adult fiction and non-fiction. The approach was to select items from the collection that suited the audience attending a nerd culture expo. The benefit of issuing items is that it is tracked by the library management system, so is beneficial for statistics. During the expo 140 items issued out of 1200 on shelves. Around 400 people came in through the doors and 80 attended the 2 author sessions.

A risk assessment was undertaken to comply with expo and venue conditions. The Pop Up library was open during festival hours 9am – 7pm.



They made use of technology such as laptops, iPads for use as Wi-Fi modems, barcode scanners to issue, reserve and create memberships. A data projector used for author sessions.

The only negative aspect was related to setting up the library, as it took a lot of work to build a fully kitted out library in one morning! The Pop Up library included two double sided shelves, two tables full of Manga and graphic novels, a screening area, chill out area of chairs, cushions, a complete membership

counter and a large amount of signage to suit the expos theme of Zombie Apocalyptic library.

Sunshine Coast Libraries formed a very good partnership with the expo organisers so have been invited to be the learning centre annual space and will be open again this year. The big success of the Pop Up library is the continued partnership and the aim that the expo will grow to be a big entity such as SuperNova which they can still be part of.



Overall the library staff found that it was worth building a library within this expo. Having the experience they have learned what worked well and not so well so they will start building the library the day before, and they will host more authors/workshops this year and taking less stock. This year they have Isobelle Carmody booked in as the main guest to attract more attention.

Sunshine Coast Libraries also ran Pop Up libraries to promote the draft library strategy and engage with customers that may not have come in to a library. For this project two full Pop Up libraries and five smaller displays were utilised in shopping centres.

The Pop Up used a few boxes of withdrawn items and a trolley of loanable titles which were sourced from the largest branches to reduce the impact. iPads with NextG connections were used to perform the surveys and show the Libraries' website.

The project was a success. As part of it, the library staff completed around 400 surveys regarding the library strategy and spoke to many more people about what the Libraries offer. Anecdotally, the staff reported that everyone they spoke to were really excited to see the library out and about doing things. Unfortunately there was no interest in actually loaning books in these situations but as some Pop Up libraries were set up at the beach it may not have been the most convenient location.

# Campaspe Regional Library Service



Campaspe Regional Library Service's Pop Up library at the Echuca train station, called Reading Along the Lines, was developed in the National Year of Reading to raise awareness of books, reading and libraries in the community in an unexpected and fun way.

This Pop Up library consists of a stand that holds 150 plus items, in a variety of formats, and genres. Each item is given a label that explains the concept of Reading Along the Lines; the label also gives users with a smart device the opportunity to connect with the Campaspe Regional Library Service website through a QR code.

The QR code takes users to a page that contains links to project partner V-line's website and directs users toward other library services found along V-Line transit routes.

The Pop Up library has had a minimal impact on staff time and library budget. Pop Up library items are a mixture of deleted library stock and



donations, items are processed by a volunteer, and another volunteer takes items to the train station and refills the display, with minimal staff time needed for printing labels and periodic checks of the display.

While no formal usage statistics have been collected, the number of items needed to refill the display each week as well as positive customer feedback



indicates that the Pop Up library is being well used.

Reading Along the Lines is a successful Pop Up library project that has developed into an extension of library services.



## How can it work for you?

We have discussed the general concepts of Pop Ups and our definition of Pop Up libraries. We have provided more in depth Australian examples of Pop Up libraries and investigated how they were set up and if they were successful. Now we will investigate how you can make Pop Up libraries work for your library service, considering the potential risks and benefits and the resources required.

The benefits of creating a Pop Up library for your library service are important and varied. In a nutshell the potential benefits are:

- increased awareness of library service and exposure to non-users
- taking staff out from behind the desk and into the community
- increased literacy
- potential for establishing and strengthening partnerships
- promotion of a positive image and challenging stereotypes of libraries
- low cost
- increased membership
- positive effect on staff by increasing skills and providing a creative outlet
- extending the life of your collection by recycling old and donated stock
- good use of volunteers
- Pop Up libraries are fun!

Establishing a Pop Up library is a simple and cost effective way to lift your profile and enhance promotion of the library in the community. When Pop Up libraries appear in unexpected spaces it makes people to see libraries in a different light. The unexpected nature plus the wow factor you can achieve with creative design means the Pop Up library is an effective way to reach non-traditional library users. Our examples of Pop Up libraries show that increased exposure to non-users is one of the benefits of creating a Pop Up library.

Taking services to the people is also an effective way to up-skill staff and provide them with a fun and creative outlet. Instead of serving customers behind a desk the Pop Up library encourages staff to be more proactive in approaching people and talking to them about the library. For some staff this is challenging, so it provides them with opportunities to learn new skills and gain confidence. For other staff they will love approaching and chatting with people and will find the experience fun. For libraries that engage volunteers, the Pop Up library is a good use of their time.

Partnerships are increasingly important to libraries, to combine resources and share expertise of organisations. Pop Up libraries offer a great opportunity to form or strengthen a partnership. The partnership could concern where you are setting up the Pop Up library: for example a shopping centre, swimming pool or railway station; it could involve what is in or at the Pop Up library such as donated books, an event or a coffee machine; it could also include promotion of the Pop Up library through local media or the centre where the Pop Up library is located. These are only some ideas for partnerships; there are many possibilities for collaboration.

It is also necessary to consider the potential risks in creating a Pop Up library:

- insurance and public liability issues
- space unavailable or doesn't meet needs
- vandalism and/or theft
- only attract the already engaged users
- community backlash such as use of resources questioned
- unsustainable due to lack of resources
- lack of success
- damaging partnerships
- community expectation raised too high (why can't we have one?)

However by addressing these risks it is possible to minimise the chance of them occurring. You can minimise the risks by:

- setting clear guidelines and expectations, and ensuring regular communication with partners
- considering space and security requirements
- examining whether you need public liability insurance or if you need to comply with any requirements of where the Pop Up library will be located
- identifying possible areas for concern in your community and prepare responses to these concerns
- regular monitoring of how the Pop Up library is going
- promoting widely, rather than just in the regular places, to reach the wider community
- recognising it as an experiment that is temporary in nature, therefore not overextending resources



Not all resources on the list are required, however this is a good guide to get you started thinking about what you will need for your Pop Up library to be successful. Resources include:

- physical and/or digital items that can be taken or loaned, such as books and magazines.
  - deleted stock and donations if they will be given away
  - general stock from collection if they will be loaned
  - stock can be tailored to a specific audience or more general in nature to attract a wide audience
- an agreed space in a high traffic area
  - think about places where you would not expect to find a library
  - ensure it doesn't detract from any core business already operating in the area
- staff time, commitment and enthusiasm for the project
- a method of measuring and evaluating your success
- consultation with stakeholders to gain support from partners
- promotional tools
- system of linking back to the library, for example QR codes on books
- shelving and/or stand for books and other items
  - think about using creative flair and quirkiness in the physical set up
- a clear message that resources in the Pop Up library are free
- keep it simple

# The P's of Pop Up libraries

The following points should be addressed in the planning, operation and evaluation of running a Pop Up library.

## **Purpose**

There should be clearly defined goals for running a Pop Up library. What outcomes do you want to achieve?

## **Planning**

Create a plan as to what needs to be done to ensure the Pop Up library can operate. Mind maps and project plans may be of assistance to determine all the necessary requirements are considered.

## **Palpitations**

Choose an element that is going to give your Pop Up library the 'wow' factor.

## **Partnerships**

Determine the stakeholders who are going to be involved with the Pop Up library. Outline which relationships need to be formed and how you plan to do this.

## **Place**

Choose a location for the Pop Up library.

## **Permanence**

How long will the Pop Up library exist? It may occur on a single day, over a week, month or other timeframe.

## **People**

Choose who will be responsible for the operation of the Pop Up library, and what staff time will be required in the planning, preparation and operation of it.

## **Participation**

Engagement of all staff and stakeholders is necessary, so have a communication plan in place and encourage ownership of the Pop Up library.

**Preparation**

Prepare your stock, shelves, stickers, posters and any other items necessary for the functioning of your Pop Up library

**Permission**

Find out if there are any permits required for the proposed location of the Pop Up library.

**Protection**

Find out if insurance is required for the location and use of space.

**Promotions**

Create a marketing or promotion plan to optimise the exposure and success of the Pop Up library.

**Percentages**

Develop ways to evaluate the success of the Pop Up library. You may wish to count the stock used, or the number of people visiting the site, or perhaps new memberships gathered on the day.

**Production**

Do the Pop Up library!

**Participants**

Create an enjoyable experience for the people who come to use the Pop Up library

**Ponder**

Evaluate the Pop Up library, and determine the successes and weaknesses. Suggest ways of improving it, or ways to grow from its success.

# References

- Airport Library. (2014). About Airport Library. Available from <http://www.airportlibrary.nl/en/about-airport-library.html>
- The Architectural League of New York. (2013). RFQ Little Free Libraries/New York. Available from <http://archleague.org/2013/03/little-free-libraries-new-york/>
- Bookworld. (n.d.). Bookworld Pop-ups. Available from <http://www.bookworld.com.au/popups>
- De Boer, J. (2012). A free library in the Tokyo subway. *Pop Up City*. Available from <http://popupcity.net/a-free-library-in-the-tokyo-subway/>
- Flood, L. (2012). The Beatles create pop-up stores to celebrate release of vinyl albums. *Paste Magazine*. Available from <http://www.pastemagazine.com/articles/2012/11/the-beatles-create-pop-up-stores-to-celebrate-rele.html>
- The Footpath Library. (2013). History. Available from <http://footpathlibrary.org/about/history/>
- Griffey, J. (2012). *The LibraryBox Project*. Available from <http://jasongriffey.net/librarybox/index.php>
- IKEA. (2014). Australians choose reading over romance. Available from [http://www.ikea.com/ms/en\\_AU/about\\_ikea/press\\_room/press\\_release/national/billyevent\\_0110.html](http://www.ikea.com/ms/en_AU/about_ikea/press_room/press_release/national/billyevent_0110.html)
- Levenston, M. (2010). Lawns do have a purpose – to transform parking spaces into temporary public parks. *City Farmer News*. Available from <http://www.cityfarmer.info/2010/09/06/lawns-do-have-a-purpose-transforming-parking-spaces-into-temporary-public-parks/>
- Little Free Library. (2012). What is a little free library? Available from <http://littlefreelibrary.org/>
- Mumbrella. (2013). Bookworld transforms bus shelters into pop-up bookshelves for Christmas. Available from <http://mumbrella.com.au/bookworld-transforms-bus-shelters-pop-bookshelves-christmas-189311>

Penguin Group USA. (2014). The Penguin book truck and Penguin book pushcart. Available from <http://www.penguin.com/static/pages/features/penguinbooktruck/>

Pop Union. (2014). What is a Pop Up? Available from <http://popuppages.com/pop-ups/what-is-a-pop-up>

Scarf. (2012). Scarf. Where dining makes a difference. Available from <http://scarfcommunity.org/>

Schwartz, M. (2012). Librarian and designer pop up a May Day library on the street. *Library Journal*. Available from <http://lj.libraryjournal.com/2012/05/industry-news/librarian-and-designer-pop-up-a-may-day-library-on-the-street/>

Telecompaper. (2012). Vodafone Romania launches digital library at Bucharest metro. Available from <http://www.telecompaper.com/news/vodafone-romania-launches-digital-library-at-bucharest-metro--891508>

W, K. (2013). Pop-up books gone literal: how pop-up libraries revitalise reading by reinterpreting space. *Entertainment Designer*. Available from <http://entertainmentdesigner.com/news/experiences/pop-up-books-gone-literal-how-pop-up-libraries-revitalize-reading-by-reinterpreting-space/>

Wikipedia. (2014). Guerrilla Librarian. Available from [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Guerrilla\\_librarian](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Guerrilla_librarian)

The Working Group. (n.d.). Occupy Wall Street Library. Available from <http://peopleslibrary.wordpress.com/>

Victoria University. (2014). Pop Up library for business students. Available from <http://www.vu.edu.au/news-events/news/pop-up-library-for-business-students>

# Acknowledgments

This report could not have been completed without the cooperation from each public library mentioned in this report. Accordingly, we would like to thank the following people:

- Ann Anderson from Frankston City Libraries
- Jenny Mustey from Campaspe Regional Library Service
- Jane Stronach from Sunshine Coast Libraries
- Leanne Boyd from Wodonga Library
- Elizabeth Arkles from Wyndham City Libraries

We would also like to acknowledge the support of our project sponsor, Jenny Mustey in every stage of the development of this project.