

Regional Digital Hub in Wairoa

Project Outline

Executive Summary:

Wairoa District Council (WDC) has been discussing with the Government's Provincial Development Unit (**PDU**) a number of opportunities to improve digital capability and business productivity in Wairoa. This proposal summarises:

- The solution which Wairoa District Council and potential partners/ supporters can provide;
- The location(s) of the proposed Regional Digital Hub(s);
- Potential partners, sponsors and supporters;
- Costs of establishing and running this venture; and
- Expected benefits for the region, its businesses and the broader community.

We thank you for the opportunity to provide this proposal to the PDU, and look forward to following up at your convenience.

PROACTIVELY RELEASED

Overview:

Wairoa is the second most disconnected region in NZ. (Statistics NZ, 2013) This disconnect feeds into the considerable socio-economic struggles which have collectively impeded the welfare of the community for at least two decades, 64% live in quintile 5, the most deprived, vs 20% nationally.

Free and frank opinions . Digital connectivity through a Regional Digital Hub will assist in bridging the digital divide our Takiwa faces. Commercial Information

Wairoa currently has very limited digital capabilities to encourage digital connectivity at its most basic, communication and knowledge access which leads to innovation and e-commerce. Wairoa currently has basic facility's delivering minimalist services. In terms of corporate, small business and personal digital use we lack the facilities necessary to participate on an even playing field with the majority of other New Zealanders. Commercial Information

- Business: No corporate meeting or training space.
- E-commerce: Limited digital classes and workshops, video conferences, e-commerce.
- Personal: Limited personal device ownership, limited free facilities in Wairoa, difficult to access online study and professional development opportunities.
- Rangatahi/education: We have structured supervised environments but need to open facilities for rangatahi to study and access digital creative processes in their own time.

We envision an environment which utilizes shared resources to spark community innovation e-commerce and creativity. (LIANZA; Te Rōpū Whakahaui, 2015) A place where the Wairoa community is reflected, a means for achieving community and personal goals and an environment of safety, innovation and education.

Despite these shortfalls, Wairoa has strong and passionate ambassadors for increasing the town's digital connectivity and encouraging both youth and adults to increase their technology capabilities. These ambassadors include the Commercial Information. The collective formed in early 2018 and consists of digital businesses and digital leaders. The collective has a core focus to transition Wairoa's economy to meet growing demand in the technology sectors with a strong focus on creativity and innovation. The Commercial Information have expressed interest in providing support through means of training for the people of Wairoa.

A Regional Digital Hub would align with existing initiatives endeavouring to meet Wairoa's appetite for digital connectivity. One such activity is the Commercial Information which was formed in Commercial Information and has over Commercial members. The Commercial Information seeks to engage youth in ICT through supervised gaming sessions and has an attendance of Commercial rangatahi per week, with Commercial % of the gaming club Māori and Commercial % of the coding club Māori. The Commercial Information is Commercial % female. The Commercial Information is an indicator of the appetite in the Wairoa community and indicates that a space for unsupervised facilities where the community can access technology in their own time and further enhance their digital capabilities.

Location: The Library

The Wairoa Library is on Marine Parade, the main street of Wairoa, which runs adjacent to the river. The Library is located next to a grass area, and close to the council buildings. It is situated close to the “East End” of Marine Parade, where the popular Gaiety Theatre and East Side Cafés are located. Most of Wairoa’s retail and service business are situated on Marine Parade, meaning the library location is in good proximity to local businesses, foot traffic and accessible to other amenities in the CBD.

The Library is owned and operated by WDC. A small digital programme already exists in the library. The library currently has 6 computers, situated on a mezzanine floor above the library. The computers are in popular demand and oversubscribed. Currently the most popular use of the computer is for emails, accessing government agencies such as IRD, WINZ etc., writing CVs, banking and other personal internet usage.

The council has future plans to renovate the library, to extend storage and incorporate the archives in order to increase accessibility of these for the public.

The Regional Digital Hub (RDH) can immediately be established on the mezzanine floor within the Library. With minimal physical works required to set-up a Regional Digital Hub, the mezzanine floor could be a temporary measure if preferable space is found, or could remain as the permanent RDH.

We anticipate it would take ^{Commercial Information} from receiving funding to establish a basic version of the Regional Digital Hub, on the mezzanine floor of the library with a glass wall for soundproofing and a number of computers/desks within the existing infrastructure. Within ^{Commercial Information} we anticipate to have a permanent fit for purpose RDH establishment – most likely within the renovated Wairoa Library. (see implementation timeline)



Implementation Approach:

WDC has applied for funding for the [redacted] Commercial Information [redacted]
[redacted]
[redacted]
[redacted]

Year One of the RDH:

The RDH will initially be installed at the Library, most likely on the mezzanine floor.

In order to establish the RDH at the library, the below physical works need to be done.

- A soundproofing wall possibly glass wall installed along the length of the mezzanine to reduce noise travelling from within the library;
- Build a wall at the end of the mezzanine level, to create a room for training, workshops and meetings;
- Installation of desks, equipment etc. – the ‘fit out’ of the hub.
- We are estimating that 15 desktop computers, desks and chairs as well as 1 multifunctional printer, projector and large interactive screen will be required for the fit out of the hub.
- Installation of fibre connection into library to accommodate the RDH

Establishing the RDH at the library could be a long-term solution, as the library is already the ‘digital hub’ of the community. [redacted] Commercial Information [redacted]
[redacted]
[redacted]
[redacted]

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Deliverables:

Completing design

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Complete fit out

Commercial Information

Launching facility

Commercial Information

Locking in co-funding

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Reviewing initial implementation of the Hub and suggesting changes

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End of year progress check each year and quarterly reporting on KPIs.

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KPIs:

Commercial Information "times used" recorded for computers (based on Commercial Information % increased use)

Commercial Information people throughout the year recorded as foot traffic (Commercial Information % increase)

Commercial Information to be held in the Hub per financial year.

Draft Implementation Timeline

Commercial Information Wairoa's Expression of interest in for regional hub

Commercial Information Begin consultation with WDC, Korou Digital Trust and library

Commercial Information Draft Application submitted by PGF team

Commercial Information Additional information submitted to PGF

Commercial Information Application Success and Funding Approved

Commercial Information Identify and approach named sponsor

Commercial Information Employ Project Manager

Commercial Information Scope works and tender process for building works

Commercial Information Staff begin training upskilled for RDH purpose

Commercial Information Building begins

Commercial Information Initial technology set up within RDH

Commercial Information Version of RDH within current library facilities

Stakeholder Engagement:

We anticipate that WDC will take the lead on ensuring the ongoing viability of the Regional Digital Hub. This support will be facilitated by the RDH being in the library which is an existing council facility. This will ensure the RDH be sustained beyond the life time of the RDH funding ^{Commercial Information}.

In addition to the council partnership WDC will attract a named sponsor ^{Commercial Information} for \$^{Commercial Inform} per annum. They have further identified strategic relationships for necessary future funding and will continue the libraries strategic relationship with their current internet provider who have already provided ^{Com} computers to the library.

As a revenue generator itself, the RDH can be leased out for short courses or as a commercial facility.

Initial engagement has been undertaken with ^{Commercial Information} all of whom have supported the concept in principle – as well as endorsement as part of ^{Commercial Information} from ^{Commercial Information}.

At this stage, while waiting for confirmation from the PGF as to the status of the hub before we seek further level of involvement/contribution from these parties as well as widening our community engagement Once further confirmation of the status of the Regional Digital Hub is received, engagement will be broadened to include further iwi, and NGO consultation and co-design as well as approaching potential national corporate sponsors.

Post-implementation, the RDH will be governed by WDC, with opportunity to partner with community group ^{Commercial Information}. The ^{Commercial Information} is a group of ^{Commer} businesses and ^{Comm} digital leaders based in Wairoa, with a core focus of transitioning Wairoa's economy to meet growing demand in the technology sectors with a strong focus on creativity and innovation.

Cost Estimates and Funding Sources:

SET UP			COST		INCOME
Project Manager	PGF	\$	Commercial Inform		
Connectivity and Installation	PGF	\$	Commercial Inform		
	Other	\$	Commercial Inform		
Fit out	PGF	\$	Commercial Inform		
Building	PGF	\$	Commercial Inform		
Essential ICT devices	PGF	\$	Commercial Inform		
Additional ICT devices	Council	\$	Commercial In		
Tech support & training	PGF	\$	Commercial Inform		
Additional business training	PGF	\$	Commercial Inform		
PGF Funding	PGF			\$	Commercial Inform
Commercial Information	Commercial Inform			\$	Commercial Inform
Named Sponsor	Other			\$	Commercial Inform
Total		\$	Commercial Inform	\$	Commercial Inform

Per year ^{Commercial Information}			Costs per year		Income per year
Connectivity rental	Council	\$	Commercial Inform		
Facilities rental	Council	\$	Commercial Inform		
Hub oversight	PGF	\$	Commercial Inform		
Computer subscriptions	Council	\$	Commercial In		
	Other	\$	Commercial Inform		
PGF Funding	PGF			\$	Commercial Inform
Commercial Information	Commercial Inform			\$	Commercial Inform
Named Sponsor	RDH			\$	Commercial Inform
Total		\$	Commercial Inform	\$	Commercial Inform

*\$ ^{Commercial Inform} PGF _{Com} funding over

Per year after ^{Commercial Information}			Costs		Income
Connectivity rental	Council	\$	Commercial Inform		
Facilities rental	Council	\$	Commercial Inform		
Hub oversight	Other	\$	Commercial Inform		
Computer subscriptions	Other	\$	Commercial In		
	Council	\$	Commercial In		
Commercial Information	Commercial Inform			\$	Commercial Inform
Named Sponsor ^{Commercial}	Other			\$	Commercial Inform
Facilities rental	Other			\$	Commercial Inform
Total		\$	Commercial Inform	\$	Commercial Inform

Benefits:

The benefits of the Regional Digital Hub will aim to address some of the disparities Wairoa experiences as part of the digital divide. The Hub will address some of the most basic digital connectivity needs at a personal and community level, as well as providing a facility for corporates and small businesses in order to level the playing field for Wairoa business development and growth.

We envision an environment which utilizes shared resources to spark community innovation e-commerce and creativity. (LIANZA; Te Rōpū Whakahaui, 2015) A place where the Wairoa community is reflected, a means for achieving community and personal goals and an environment of safety, innovation and education.

Personal/community use

The hub will provide accessibility for personal internet use. This will be of benefit for every member of the community. At a basic level the facility provides use of computers for basic use such as accessing government services, email, printing etc. which is at high demand in the community. Having a delegated staff member to assist with these activities further increases accessibility.

Building off this the computers will also provide technology for rangatahi to learn further digital capabilities. This links in with Wairoa's vision to increase connectivity throughout the district. Wairoa has a limited number of tertiary education providers, many students undertake study online or via correspondence – the Hub provides a means for more students to access this opportunity.

In addition to self-directed technology use the Hub will facilitate digital classes and workshops to encourage use of E-commerce for both business and personal.

Business Use

The Hub will be used to facilitate small business incubation and development. This will be done through a number of channels including encouraging use of the space, workshops and classes and providing a venue for business mentoring. Lack of technological infrastructure and ability tend to be major hurdles for starting businesses in Wairoa. This will address this gap and promote establishment of small/digitally based business.

There is no suitable venue in Wairoa for corporate meetings or training space. The Hub will provide a rentable facility to enable both local and visiting businesses to hire out and host meetings, training days or information sessions. This also provides a funding stream for the Hub.

Third Place

The project will benefit the community as a Digital Hub feeds into the vision for Wairoa to use the library as a 'third place'. A 'Third Place' is a place that is not home or work/school but a third environment where people can connect. Libraries have been increasingly recognised for being places of social connection, leisure, learning, habitat and refuge, and as a place to give back to the community. **Commercial Information** The Library exists as a 'Third Place' for many of our people already, but the limitations in technology infrastructure means this isn't able to be provided on a scale meeting the needs of the community.

This project is aimed at ensuring that the Hub meets the needs of Wairoa's unique community and the digital divide facing our people is reduced. The vision from the Future of Libraries 2015 Summit

aims for libraries to “reflect the communities they serve” (LIANZA; Te Rōpū Whakahau, 2015) . The Regional Digital Hub becomes a most necessary Third Place, building social capital and becoming an anchor of community life by facilitating broader, more creative interaction. Commercial Information

Social Innovation

Social innovation is based on the idea that people at the grassroots level already have the ideas, knowledge, tools and capabilities required to create their own innovative solutions to the challenges they experience in their communities. Commercial Information Wairoa is taking targeted action to create change at a grassroots level. The Regional Digital Hub provides an environment in which this grassroots change can be driven from. For many in Wairoa, participating in driving this change requires access to technology and/or capabilities that many others take for granted but are required to be able to engage with service providers, especially central government. The Regional Digital Hub will provide support in providing and accessing these services.

Risks:

Risk	Mitigation
<i>Project cost overrun – medium</i>	Budget management, additional funding can be sought however efficient project management should mitigate this
<i>Time frame – medium</i>	Milestones, having dedicated project manager as seen in budget
<i>Building may not be suitable for RDH purpose</i>	Architect meeting scheduled for Commercial Information to determine building suitability. Back up buildings have been identified.

Appendix 1: Overview of ICT Sector in Wairoa

Add further detail on the nature of the ICT sector and ICT usage in the Region/ District/ Town if available and if it will assist assessment of the proposal.

Whakarauora

Giblin Group was commissioned by WDC to complete Whakarauora – economic development report on Wairoa. The report referred to the need to build digital capabilities throughout Wairoa for business and personal growth. The Regional Digital Hub aims to factor in these recommendations.

Recommendation: Provide High speed internet access to meet business needs

Recommendation: Fund development of Commercial Information within Wairoa in conjunction with a recognised service provider such as the Commercial Information

Recommendation: Funding to be secured to ramp up Commercial Informa activities & community use IT equipment to promote digital literacy and connectivity

Recommendation: Secure funding to increase ICT vocational pathway resources at Wairoa College, Kura and proposed Community College, dovetailing with the Commercial Informat

Recommendation: that a business hub be established in Wairoa comprising high speed internet facilities, hot desks and video conferencing facility, suggested as being within the proposed Pillar 1 facility (Business, Employment and Economic Development). Could allow Wairoa business owners to remotely participate in events being held at Business HB's Napier 'hub' base

Proposed Whakarauora and digital connectivity complements Matariki Provision for Physical, Community and Business Infrastructure (Work Areas 4.1 - 4.6) (as well as Tairawhiti's 'Connecting with Markets & People'.

Commercial Information

Commercial Information was commissioned by the Commercial Information to complete Commercial Information. This proposes a grassroots innovation approach to the socio economic challenges faced in Wairoa. These are a diverse set of activities in which networks of whānau, marae, hapū, and iwi work to generate bottom-up solutions for sustainable development. These novel solutions will respond to the local situation and the interests and values of the community, where the community has control over the process and outcomes Commercial Information. The opportunity to lead our own change, creating novel solutions that respond to our local situation and the interests and values of our community; and where the community has control over the process and outcomes. Commercial Information

Initiatives like this need support and incubation which is what the Digital Hub will be able to provide.