

BIZINFO MYSTERY SHOPPER SURVEY

PREPARED FOR:

MINISTRY OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

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A. SURVEY SPECIFICATIONS

1. Introduction and Objective

In April 1999 the government launched a new programme of assistance to small and medium sized firms. This was designed in two related parts, named BIZinfo and BIZ respectively. The purpose of BIZinfo was to provide an information and referral service for SME's. By contrast the purpose of BIZ was to provide free training, mentoring and networking services.

- BIZinfo consists of an 0800 number serviced by three linked call centres, 35 regional BIZinfo centres contactable by phone as well as by walk-in, and a website.
- This mystery shopper study is part of a wider evaluation of the BIZinfo/BIZ programme carried out during mid 2000. It focuses on the BIZinfo service. Specifically it aims to assess the responsiveness of the service using a mystery shopper approach, emphasizing the phone access character of the service. A small test of reaction to the website was also included. A description of the approach taken and the criteria covered, follows.

2. Sample Size

- A total sample of 35 mystery shops were conducted on the BIZinfo call centres and local provincial centres.
- In addition five website evaluations were conducted.

3. Sample Spread and Composition

- Mystery shops were carried out from 12 different locations around New Zealand...

- Auckland	- Wellington
- Hamilton	- Christchurch
- Palmerston North	- Dunedin
- Hastings	- Blenheim
- New Plymouth	- Timaru
- Gisborne	- Rotorua
- In the six main centres a total of 23 calls were made to the 0800 phone numbers. In the six provincial centres, the remaining 12 calls were made to the local sites, using their white page BIZinfo listing.
- 12 of the 'shops' were conducted specifically by Maori-owned businesses. 19 of the 'shops' were specifically by females.

4. Sampling

- Purposive sampling, rather than simple random sampling was used for this study.
- The "Snowballing" method was used to contact the Maori and female samples. Interviewers were instructed to initially approach local Councils and local service organisations to gain leads to particular business owners.
- The remaining contacts were made largely by convenience of area, screening from the local "yellow pages".

- A spread of industry types, and business size was loosely imposed. These were wide spread across retail, service, construction manufacturing, agriculture, trade/factory, transport and communications. The majority of the interviews were with businesses of 1 to 10 employees.

5. Procedure

The procedure used for "mystery" contacts to the BIZinfo call centres was...

- Potential respondents (business owners) were contacted by telephone and recruited to participate.
- Interviewers visited the respondents' place of business. They briefed the respondent on the procedure to phone the BIZinfo call centre and ask for assistance or information on any subject of their choice.
- The majority of the "mystery calls" were tape recorded.
- The respondent self-completed a ratings form once the "mystery call" was complete.
- For the website evaluations, the business owner was initially contacted by telephone, then visited at their business by our interviewer.

The business owner accessed the BIZinfo website, browsed as long as they wanted, then self-completed the ratings form.

6. Ratings Form

- The ratings forms were self-administered for both mystery shopper evaluation and the website evaluation (see Appendix A and C).

7. Topics List

A list of 11 starter topics was developed covering various aspects of business information, development or problems. The list was designed to give respondents a choice and stimulate them to come to a real life business problem, for which answers might be currently useful to them. Respondents could choose any topic(s) they wished, or make a specific enquiry of their own. All topics except A and B, were asked about at least twice.

Employment subsidies and client's own ideas were asked about most frequently. No one chose to enquire about A or B.

The web evaluators were also offered the topic list (see Appendix B).

8. Evaluation Criteria

The evaluation criteria used on the ratings forms were designed to be a systematic step through of the purpose of the service and the information it was to deliver to callers, enabling us to define nine measurable criteria, viz...

- Responsiveness to the call - the number of times the phone rang.
- Identity - did the person mention the BIZinfo name.
- Role - did the person define their role and the referral options.

- Communication of service - backing or partnership by approved specialists.
- Local access - specialists/consultants available in local area.
- No fees - awareness of no fees/charges.
- Elicitation - understanding of enquirer's needs.
- Competence - person's competence in handling enquiry.
- Next step - caller left with an idea of where to go next.
- In addition, an inspection was made of the taped material to enable some qualitative analysis to be made.

9. Analysis

- Percentages - the percentage of callers scoring the call at each level, was calculated.
- Scoring - each criterion was converted to a score of 100 in order that a convenient summary table could be cast. Perfect performance was set at 100 and complete failure at zero, for each criteria.
Separate analysis was prepared for Maori, non-Maori and female owners of businesses. Similarly, separate analysis for the 0800 contacts versus the direct local/regional sites.

10. Timing

The mystery calls and the website evaluations were carried out between 18th and 24th July 2000.

B. OVERVIEW

Summary Score Table: Scores Standardised To Base 100 For Perfect And Zero For Complete Failure

1. This report describes the result of a mystery shopper evaluation into the response quality of the BIZinfo call centres and local sites. Thirty five "mystery shops" were conducted by real life small business owners recruited to undertake the shops in the context of their own business. In addition five website evaluations were also conducted by real life small business owners. The table opposite provides standardised ratings for the nine criteria upon which the response was evaluated.
2. Particularly high scores were obtained for leaving callers feeling they had been given a "next step" to take, for prompt phone response, and for leaving callers with the impression of providing a competent service.
3. The provincial sites failed to make use of the BIZinfo name using instead their local organisation identity. This can be rectified by having a separate phone number/line so that the answerer can differentiate the call.
4. The "no fees" availability and basis for subsequent support or training was rarely brought to the caller's attention.
5. Although a "desirable" rather than a "required" activity for BIZinfo, there was relatively low "sell-through" of further training/mentoring to the caller.

	Total %	Maori %	Non-Maori %	Female %	Provincial Site %	0800 Site %
Responsiveness to the call - the number of times the phone rang	91	86	94	91	97	88
Identity/brand name - did the person mention the BIZinfo name	55	55	55	56	8	83
Role - did the person define their role and the referral options	65	75	61	51	73	61
Communication of service - backing or partnership by approved specialists	46	50	43	32	42	48
Local access - specialists/consultants available in local area	66	50	74	63	75	61
No fees - awareness of no fees/charges	17	17	17	21	8	22
Elicitation - understanding of enquirer's needs	74	78	72	61	69	77
Competence - person's competence in handling enquiry	89	83	91	89	92	87
Next step - caller left with an idea of where to go next	94	94	94	93	97	93
Score (out of 100)	66	65	67	62	62	69
Base	35	12	23	19	12	23

6. The sample was specifically structured to enable separate comment on Maori persons enquiring. The overall differences between Maori and non-Maori were not significant. The one criterion on which Maori scored the services lower than did non-Maori, was that in which the caller was meant to communicate that additional training was available to them locally. This was not a factor of Maori's accessing provincial sites, because the provincial sites performed better than 0800 sites.
7. Similarly the sample was structured to enable separate comment on the female callers. The table shows that women scored the BIZinfo service lower than did the sample at large for role definition and communication of service. While the differences are not great, they appear to be attributable to less active questioning by this group.
8. Considering the transcripts of the tape recordings of "shops", left the impression that the BIZinfo staff tended to under-serve the opportunities that came their way. For instance they too readily diverted the caller onto a government department without showing him or her the opportunity to upskill themselves in that particular need. There was no hint in some of these calls that BIZinfo could be an avenue to personal business upskilling.
9. Along the same lines there was often not thoughtful elicitation of the character of the caller's need. Indeed, some of the BIZinfo staff spent much of their elicitation opportunity gathering profile statistics for BIZinfo records.
10. Very few offered the complementary service of the BIZinfo website to the caller.
11. While only a small sample of five business people were engaged in the website evaluation, the overall response could be characterised between "fair" and "good". It was no worse than other websites. Once recognised as a directory style website - it was seen to perform this function to an expected standard.
12. Inspection of the column of figures for the 0800 service shows that it performed no better and no worse than the provincial sites. Given that they have a more dedicated environment in which to cultivate the service, they may have been expected to perform better than the provincial centres.
13. Opportunities for BIZinfo to increase playthrough of its identity and offer additional depth of information could lie with the use of screen based information approaches, and standardisation of operator training.

C. FINDINGS 1 - MYSTERY SHOPPING

1. Responsiveness

Q. "How many times did the phone ring before it was answered?"

Eighty percent of the calls were answered within four or less rings of the phone. No calls went beyond seven rings and only one call gave a "hold" message.

Provincial phone sites did slightly better than the 0800 sites, on answering promptly.

This criterion scored 91 of the 100 possible perfect score.

	Total %	Maori %	Non-Maori %	Female %	Provincial Phone Site %	0800 Site %
Phone rang...						
4 or less times	80	75	83	84	92	74
5 to 7 times	17	17	17	11	8	22
All lines busy/'hold' message	3	8	-	5	-	4
Base	35	12	23	19	12	23
Score (out of 100)	91	86	94	91	97	88

2. Identity/Brand Name

Q. "Did the person mention or use the name BIZinfo?"

In total, for approximately half the contacts made, the phone answerer put forward the BIZinfo name very clearly.

However, the Provincial phone sites were not so good at this - with most of these sites not mentioning BIZinfo at all.

In total, this criterion scored 55 out of 100 possible score.

	Total %	Maori %	Non-Maori %	Female %	Provincial Phone Site %	0800 Site %
Mentioned BIZinfo...						
He/she put it forward very clearly	49	50	48	48	-	74
Just quickly in passing	20	17	22	26	25	17
Not at all/didn't hear it	31	33	30	26	75	9
Base	35	12	23	19	12	23
Score (out of 100)	55	55	55	56	8	83

3. Role Definition

Q. "When you asked what they did and where they fitted in, which of these points came across in their answer?"

In this role definition area, referral to a suitable firm or consultant emerged as the strongest point.

	Total %	Maori %	Non- Maori %	Female %	Provincial Phone Site %	0800 Site %
They were a first point of contact	66	75	61	53	83	56
They had the job of finding out or understanding what you needed/wanted	60	75	52	47	58	61
They would be able to refer you to a suitable firm or consultant	83	83	83	74	83	83
For some queries they would provide all the information you needed themselves	54	67	48	32	67	48
Base	35	12	23	19	12	23
Score based on all four responses	65	75	61	51	73	61

4. Communication Of Service

Q. "Other than the host organisations (eg. Chamber of Commerce, Manufacturers Association, Enterprise Waitakere), did it come through to you that they were backed up or partnered by approved specialists (or firms or consultants etc.) who they would involve to help?"

This point did not come through very clearly, with over half the callers giving a negative response. This criterion scored 46 out of the possible 100.

	Total %	Maori %	Non-Maori %	Female %	Provincial Phone Site %	0800 Site %
Yes	46	50	44	32	42	48
No	54	50	56	68	58	52
Base	35	12	23	19	12	23
Score (out of 100)	46	50	43	32	42	48

5. Local Access

*Q. "At any time did it come across to you that they would be able to put you in touch with specialists (consultants, mentors etc.) in your **own area**?"*

Two thirds of the callers picked up the message that they could be referred to a local specialist. This was slightly higher for calls made to provincial sites.

It is possible that in some areas there were no pertinent specialists, relevant to the issue raised by the caller.

	Total %	Maori %	Non-Maori %	Female %	Provincial Phone Site %	0800 Site %
Yes	66	50	74	63	75	61
No	34	50	26	37	25	39
Base	35	12	23	19	12	23
Score (out of 100)	66	50	74	63	75	61

6. Explicit No Fee Basis

Q. "At any time did they make the point that there was no fee, cost or charge to you, for the service you would get?"

This area of "no fees" was not communicated very well to callers, with less than one fifth picking up this point.

The low score of 17 out of 100 possible reflects this.

	Total %	Maori %	Non- Maori %	Female %	Provincial Phone Site %	0800 Site %
Yes	17	17	17	21	8	22
No	83	83	83	79	92	78
Base Score (out of 100)	35 17	12 17	23 17	19 21	12 8	23 22

7. Elicitation

Q. "When you described the topic you were interested in, did you get the feeling that...?"

Six out of ten calls resulted in the person who took the call asking more questions and trying to understand more. The remainder were split almost equally to more or less re-stating what was already said or not appearing interested in finding out more exactly what was needed. Female callers got more negative response than that shown in total.

Since there were only four Maori females involved in the study, the numbers are too small to comment on this group specifically. But examination of the individual ratings reveals they fared about the same as other females, and non-Maori.

The score for this aspect was 74.

	Total %	Maori %	Non-Maori %	Female %	Provincial Site %	0800 Site %
Opened up by asking questions	63	67	61	47	58	65
More or less just restated what was said	17	17	17	21	17	18
Wasn't interested in finding out needs	20	16	22	32	25	17
Base	35	12	23	19	12	23
Score (out of 100)	74	78	72	61	69	77

8. Competence

Q. "Which of these was your impression...?"

The majority of callers came away with very positive feelings on the competence of the phone site staff.

	Total %	Maori %	Non- Maori %	Female %	Provincial Phone Site %	0800 Site %
The person seemed to have a clear idea of what they could or could not handle, and did their bit well	89	83	91	89	92	87
The person seemed unsure, or unclear or hesitant or confused on the topic, or on where they could best refer it	11	17	9	11	8	13
Base	35	12	23	19	12	23
Score (out of 100)	89	83	91	89	92	87

9. Next Step

Q. "Which of these matches your final feeling...?"

Eight out of ten callers were left with a positive, clear "next step" to take. The provincial sites did this slightly better than the 0800 sites.

	Total %	Maori %	Non- Maori %	Female %	Provincial Phone Site %	0800 Site %
You came off the phone with a clear "next step" to go forward, if you wanted to	83	83	83	79	92	78
There were things you could do next, but they felt like maybe's or soft possibilities	17	17	17	21	8	22
Base	35	12	23	19	12	23
Score (out of 100)	94	94	94	93	97	93

10. Analysis Of Tape Recorded Conversations

Initially the tape recording of the mystery shopper calls was suggested as a mean of determining the correctness of the information supplied by the BIZinfo centres.

On inspection of the transcripts, it has emerged that the information is generally of a referral or suggestion nature, rather than verifiable facts. However, the transcripts have provided other insights which are useful to assess the level of success and quality of service offered by the BIZinfo sites.

We have picked several areas which reveal some failing with the service as it perhaps should be offered; and which could be improved for the future.

* The phone answered by a name other than BIZinfo

This is a particular problem with the provincial sites (not 0800) where the service is handled by local identities. For approximately a quarter of the calls made by our respondents - there was no mention "up-front" of "BIZinfo". All the offices appear in telephone listings as "BIZinfo", but the enquirer is confronted by some other named organisation, and some unwillingness on the person's behalf to acknowledge, or even know, they are working on behalf of BIZinfo. Two quotes of conversations follow to illustrate.

B = BIZinfo

S = Shopper

Interview A:

B: Good morning, Chamber of Commerce, Chris speaking.

S: *Good morning, I've come through at the Chamber of Commerce have I?*

B: Yes.

S: *Oh right.*

B: The Chamber of Commerce, ??? Development Trust.

S: *Oh right, right I was ringing, I've just got a leaflet in front of me on the Biz programme.*

B: Yeah.

S: *I think you might be able to help me with some information.*

B: Yeah, yeah, what type of information are you looking for?

Interview B:

S: *Hi, I'm Xxx from Yyy and I just had a couple queries about your business and what you could do for us.*

B: Oh right, yes.

S: *We've got a business it's an animal and pest control for forestry and agricultural businesses, that's like killing rats, bird scaring for vineyards, possums, stoats and rabbits, and we were thinking of employing someone to help and we were wondering if there's any financial assistance.*

B: We are a secretarial service, we don't have that sort of information, in what respect did you ring as...

S: *Is this a BIZinfo line.*

B: Oh, I'm sorry, okay, now I'm onto the right, yes it is the BIZinfo line. I'm sorry we do so many other things it's difficult to work out from which angle - we do Federated Farmers, we do secretarial service, we provide secretary work and that sort of thing, but you need to know about employing people and getting help from WINZ, is that what you're saying.

* Blunt redirection to a government department

There was a tendency, about one third of the calls, to very quickly direct the caller to a Government Department. While this may in some way have reflected the nature of the particular enquiries made, there appeared to be little attempt by staff to assist callers themselves; or to refer to the BIZinfo specialists or providers.

Most commonly these calls were passed to WINZ, Occupational Safety and Health and the Statistics Department.

B = BIZinfo

S = Shopper

Interview A:

B: We generally just refer people straight to Occupational Safety and Health, because anything that we have is stuff that's sent to us anyway and it's just as quick to get it from them as it is from us.

Interview B:

S: *Someone that could give me economic trends for say the next 12 months.*

B: What type of economic trends are you looking for?

S: *Oh, just, just what the, whatever's going to be inflation and what the, what's going to happen with the gross domestic product, that sort of thing.*

B: Gawd, that's going to be a bit hard, just trying to think, probably the best place to start is Statistics New Zealand.

S: *Sorry.*

Interview C:

S: *I'm thinking of getting some extra staff into the shop to cover the peak sort of lunch hour time and I've heard there could be some money from WINZ for firms that employ people on benefits.*

B: Yeah.

S: *What do you know about it?*

B: Don't know anything, we can't actually advise you, I'll give you the information that you need to speak to WINZ directly.

S: *Okay.*

B: Yeah, I mean all we know is that there is supplements that they give to people for you employing them, like basically for example they may give you 50 percent of the total wages, things like that, I don't know, but you do need to speak to them directly about it. We can't give you advice on it in case we give you incorrect, you know, in case we tell you something that's not actually correct because they change so often.

* Failure to mention course/trainer, mentor, etc available

In about half the mystery calls, there was no mention of courses, training or mentors being available to the callers. Very few calls resulted in the caller being told specifically that BIZinfo was a referral agency.

Again, this may have been due in some part to the nature of the enquiry, in that it did not warrant a referral to specific providers for assistance. However, there were certainly instances where referral to courses could probably have been of some benefit to the caller.

On the positive side there were some calls which were handled really well...

B = BIZinfo

S = Shopper

S: *Well, we effectively all I'm really after is obviously someone who's familiar with things like Access or ??? at this point in time we've got a bit of a hash job we've done ourselves.*

B: But what you're saying to me is that what you're requiring requires some skills that you haven't got or you've got at a lesser level and you really want someone that can come in and polish up, do something in a professional manner, which in fact, you're really looking at getting someone, employing someone to do that. What I'm saying is that there is no such sort of creature on tap without you paying for it sort of thing.

S: *Oh yeah.*

B: Yeah, so we're not, I mean to say look there are, if you want to increase your own skill levels there are Chamber of Commerce courses and workshops and whatever in doing these sorts of things, which are not probably for what you're, the reasons that you're wanting it is maybe not overly expensive. Hold on just a moment will you? Are you there? No look, the Chamber of Commerce doesn't, it has Excel courses and whatever, but it doesn't seem to have anything in Access, but there, I think, it's been pointed out be me by a colleague here, they've got there are three training organisations which we refer

people to in these sorts of situations. There's Ace, Horizon's and Accent are the three training organisations, ??? yeah, and really it's a matter of where you're in at the moment is really just wanting to upskill yourself to a level where you can actually produce these things for yourself. Right so there's two ways of going about it, is get someone else to do it for you, or get, lift your skill level to take it through.

S. *Do you guys do more like management type training?*

B. No, well no, we don't do anything from that, we, BIZinfo is a referral agency effectively, what we are is a one stop shop where people who are actually in a small and medium size business can come to, to actually get advice as to where to go to get professional advice and whatever, and also there are various things like for small businesses, free courses which the Chamber of Commerce run on behalf of BIZinfo and that sort of thing, so we're really an agency where we've got a lot of information and we can give that out to people, but we don't actually advise on specific information or specialised information, that is how to do certain things.

* Substantial portion of the interview devoted to collecting control information for BIZinfo

In about one third of calls the phone answerer spent a substantial proportion of the call time collecting data from the caller - number of employees, years in business, ethnicity, how they heard about BIZinfo, had they seen the ads etc.

While this may be of importance to BIZinfo, in many cases it seemed to "overpower", the caller's need for information.

* Client did more work than you would expect

In a number of calls, it was evident that the client caller was doing noticeably more work than you would expect from someone asking for assistance and information. Even to the point where clients were apologetic themselves because the BIZ person did not know answers or thought it would be difficult.

There was a lack of reasonable elicitation of the client's problems by BIZinfo staff, resulting in **clients** having to tease out information. Remember that all these clients were already in business and alerted by the "mystery shopper" notion to perhaps quiz a little more than a

"normal" call - we have some concern on how a "new immigrant" or someone not yet in business, would fare?

* Courses free

Where courses and training were mentioned to callers, there was a failure in the majority of cases to indicate that the services were free.

Indeed, in some cases, clients were given the impression that there would be a charge.

B: Okay, no that's good, there's some very, very good stuff there, there's some stuff there which is, which is actually free and also some other stuff which does cost a little bit, but I'd recommend some of the BIZ courses that are actually on for free, are actually very good. I've been along to a few of them myself. Okay, we'll get that in the post to you and you should have those in the next day or so.

B: (Referring to OSH consultants)... "there's bound to be people in Hamilton who do the same thing, if you've got a template of what you want in it I don't think you're going to be looking at a lot of money, you might be looking at a couple of hundred dollars maximum."

Overall, in assessing the tapes we feel respondents qualitative ratings have been generous. The respondents unawareness of the fullness of what is available to them has resulted in this situation.

Accuracy Assessment

11. Accuracy Assessment

Since it is possible for a service to satisfy its customers in the narrow sense, and yet not provide a quality service, we proceeded to assess each transcript for whether the references or facts given were correct or incorrect. The findings are shown in the table opposite. Of the 31 interviews which were successfully recorded, only six to seven gave an answer which was partly incorrect, or incorrect, five were indeterminate because they were referred to a colleague who was unavailable at that time.

This finding might be read in context with the modest level of complexity or specificity of the assistance requested by callers. As a measure it does not address how much the BIZinfo service might ideally have provided to a given caller. This is a facet for possible future consideration by BIZinfo

	Query	Referred/Answered	Correct	Partial Correct	Indeterminate
0001	Occupational Health & Safety	OSH	4		
0002	Website development	Web provider - Clear/Iprolink	4		4
	Are websites making money?	Web developer - IBEX Not many			
0003	Venture/Risk capital	Book called "Sources of capital available to SME". Awards package (grants)	4 4		
0004	Employment subsidy Parallel importing	WINZ Skills NZ Trade NZ. Int'l Dept. of Chamber of Commerce Statistics NZ Importers Institute	4	4	
0005	Occupational Health & Safety	Referred to someone who was currently at lunch			4
0009	Extra staff	WINZ	4		
0010	Extra staff for peak times	WINZ	4		
0014	Developing database - set up technique	Chamber of Commerce workshops/courses Ace/Horizon/Accent training organisations	4		
0016	Grow business	Enterprise Award Scheme Govt. helping businesses to find backers/capital - offered to send booklet "Sources of Capital"	4		
0018	Parallel importing	Ministry of Commerce Customs	4		
0019	Marketing/growing business?	Offered to send info. on courses, mentor, marketing publications. Small business marketing consultant	4		

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Accuracy Assessment (continued)

	Query	Referred/Answered	Correct	Partial Correct	Indeterminate
0023	Staff to look after shop	Advertise in papers Recruitment agency]		4	
0022	Occupational Safety & Health	Dept. of OSH	4		
0024	Want to put info. on website	Internet providers Website developers]	4		
	Will I make money being on website?	Don't know only 1% made money —			4
0027	Financing for business opportunities	Enterprise Awards Scheme Book - Sources of capital Organisations, other than banks, that offer finance - see Yellow Pages —	4		
0029	Setting up websites	Referred to colleague who was at lunch			4
0030	Requirement to do a budget - economic trends	Stats. NZ		4	
0031	Extra staff to cover peak hours	WINZ —	4		
0033	Agriculture development - new planting	Resource Management Co. Wrightsons Agriculture NZ Consulting Co. Offered use of "web" in BIZinfo local office —	4		
0035	Employment subsidies	WINZ Sent info. on Industry NZ Schemes]	4		
0036	Venture/Risk capital	Referred to a colleague who was on another call			4
0038	Extra staff	Referred to a colleague who was on another call			4
0040	Australian GST query on exports	No you don't pay GST, but there is a regime to set up - try IRD		4	

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Accuracy Assessment (*continued*)

	Query	Referred/Answered	Correct	Partial Correct	Indeterminate
0041	Business Management - and green dollars	Referred to another colleague who was busy			4
0015	Financing on machinery	Award Scheme for Industry NZ Need to complete forms etc.]		4	
0042	Financial assistance for extra staff Advertising - best avenue for it	WINZ Local papers	4	4	
0043	Employment subsidies	WINZ	4		
0045	New plantings of land - what sort of crops, returns per hectare - possibly grapes	Marlborough Research Centre Grape growers Association Wine Marlborough]		4	
0046	Employment subsidies for apprentice	WINZ Industry Training Organisation (ITI)]	4		
0026	Marketing/Management assistance	Referred to and sent info on: Mentoring Scheme Consultant]	4		
	Job subsidies	WINZ]	4		
0007	Employment subsidies	WINZ	4		
	Occupational Health & Safety	OSH & OSH consultants	4		

D. FINDINGS 2 - WEBSITE EVALUATION

1. Overall Rating

Three out of the five respondents put the overall rating in the positive end of the scale. Two felt it was not very good at all.

Verbatim Reasons for Rating Positively...

"Provided contacts which could answer questions on software/computer cost."

"Would have given it excellent but it did not mention the New Venture Trust."

"Gave me the information I required."

Verbatim Reasons for Rating Negatively...

"The site leads you to a door that you then have to pay to enter."

"Not much in the way of free information needed to expand or improve new business (at a glance)."

2. Comparison With Other Websites

Two respondents reported that the BIZinfo website compared about the same as other websites accessed. One said it was slightly better than other websites, and two respondents that it was not as good.

Comments Made on Comparison...

Neutral rating...

"Somethings need to be made clearer for people new to internet, not everyone setting up a new business understands jargon, but it's mostly comprehensible."

Negative ratings...

"If I seek information I expect to find it without the associated costs."

"Compared with www.knowledgebasket, it is rather more tabular and while the visual display is logical, it is not visually as simple."

Positive rating...

"It's fast, business-like, because not fancy Javascript. Gives opinions of a search engine."

3. Other Websites Considered Good For Information

"I look at existing bookshop websites and see how they have been structured - provide certain sorts of information but not others."

"Yahoo." (mentioned twice)

"www.knowledgebasket.co.nz, www.companies.govt.co.nz."

"Ask Jeeves - used plain language searcher."

4. Clarity and Readability and Ease of Navigation

Four out five respondents rated the clarity and readability and ease of navigation of the BIZinfo website, favourably.

5. Useful for Needs

Three respondents rated the website "excellent" in being useful for their needs. One respondent was neutral and another felt it was not very useful.

6. Improvements That Could Be Made

Verbatim Comments...

"There should be an explanation somewhere of terms like "SME" etc. Would like to know on the home page the overall total number of listings."

"It is a directory and all directories must be user-friendly."

"I am highly literate and find it logical and easy to navigate, but I think visual aids could make it simpler - eg. www.knowledgebasket.com and www.companies.com."

"Should be more lists for Auckland."

"In search for field - list of suggested searches."

"Not experienced enough to be able to say."

7. Access For Future Development Of Their Business

All five respondents said they would quite likely or definitely access the website in the future in the development of their business.

8. Respondents Confidence With Web Usage

Two of the respondents considered themselves "very confident and use the web quite often", while the three remaining felt they were "confident, but didn't use the web often."

9. Topic Areas Browsed

Respondents were offered the list of 11 topics to assist them in choosing an area to browse.

The five respondents accessed a wide range of topics covering...

- customer database marketing,
- parallel importing,
- growth strategy,
- employment subsidies,
- OSH,
- and also their own ideas.

One respondent browsed five topic areas, the others browsed between one and three topics.

APPENDICES