

Fishy freshers! ...or marketing gives you scales?? How attending Antony Brewerton's marketing roadshow prompted a fish theme for the Leeds Met Library in 2006

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The Leeds Met Library's publicity group was given the opportunity to do something different for induction this year when the university held a two week freshers' festival. Stalls in the Leeds Met Life event taking place across the two main campuses were asked to be fun and interactive rather than just hand out leaflets.

We jumped at the chance and remembered some ideas we'd come up with at Antony Brewerton's *Marketing Gives You Wings* event – e.g. 'Don't flounder in your first week at university – come to a library skills session' - we just had to make a connection with our day-to-day job! Then we realised that as library staff we are always Friendly, Informative, Supportive and Helpful = FISH.



A creative brainstorming session later, we decided on a lucky dip game (using a ball pool) to win fish-related prizes, giving us the chance to draw people in and then give them information about the library and our Skills for learning resources to help with their study needs. An accompanying 'fishy quiz' with fish-related answers to be found using the catalogue and library website was available at the stall and in the libraries. As this required more intellectual input than the ability to use a net we offered a DVD player as the main prize and (of course!) fish-related DVDs such as *Jaws* and *Finding Nemo* for the runners up.

We emailed library staff asking for volunteers to help run the stall and for any 'props' they might have to add to the display (promising confidentiality if this hinted at any fetishes) and ordered t-shirts for all those on the rota. Remembering that Oxford Brookes used stickers to identify how many people they'd talked to we came up with the idea of 'fish and tips'. Every ball was a winner – even if that was just a 'freaky fish' sweet (it's amazing what's out there when you look) and a useful library 'tip of the day'. This enabled us to calculate that we'd engaged with at least 1800 people over the two days.



When we started dreaming about fish we got a bit worried but in fact everyone had a great time running the stalls. Our aim was to encourage visits from people who wouldn't normally come near a library stall and we are sure that all who did came away with a very positive view of us, including many who returned for another go. We received lots of praise for the way the stall looked with both staff and students describing it as 'the best in the event'. The novelty factor drew more crowds than our 'competitors' and the fishy puns raised plenty of smiles and helped us engage with students who wanted to find out more about the library as well as having some fun. That just leaves us with the challenge of next year!

