Ballarat ICT cluster

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Centre for Regional Innovation & Competitiveness (CRIC)
background

1. State of Victoria (RDV) launched Regional Innovation Clusters Program in May 2004
   - Emphasis on innovation & enhancing competencies
   - Industry sectors targeted include food processing/agriculture, aquaculture, manufacturing, biotechnology, health & ICT

2. Identify/develop potential/emerging clusters
   - Understanding regional strategies/key industry sectors
   - Encourage innovation in business/technology development
   - Encourage better partnerships between regional firms and higher education
   - Cluster management & program evaluation
Ballarat ICT Cluster

1. Supported by RDV & City of Ballarat as part of cluster program

2. University to conduct research on the Ballarat ICT Cluster
   • Nature, breadth and potential
   • Evidence base to support future activities

3. Gather information on the broader business community (stage 1, survey)
   • Current utilisation of ICT
   • Networks/relationships with local ICT firms
   • Evident needs and/or opportunities to support cluster activities & growth
Ballarat ICT Cluster

3. Develop report and cluster strategy/organisational plan (stage 2)
   - Cluster vision, governance, organisation, communication and marketing plans
   - Key development opportunities, strategic recommendations, performance/benchmarking criteria & evaluation

4. Establish web-based cluster management and communication system
   - Recommend activities to include development in parallel with cluster research.
approach

- Goal is to maximise participation
  - Draw on existing data sources
  - Actively engage stakeholders
  - Jointly promote ICT cluster study/website
- Gather relevant data
  - Combination of surveys, stakeholder interviews, secondary data and workshops
- Collate and disseminate findings
  - Face-to-face, paper-based and online.
stage 1 activities

1. Ballarat ICT Cluster website established
2. Online surveys for ICT firms and Non-ICT firms designed
3. Database constructed
   - ICT organisations (86)
   - Organisations with ICT departments (22)
   - Non-ICT firms (228)
4. Approach to generating participation
   - Email invitation
   - Email follow-up if required
   - Further follow-up by telephone
survey responses

- Responses automatically entered into a database
- Email notification received as each survey completed
- Results can be monitored throughout survey period and exported later for further analysis.
- ICT directory seeded with information generated from survey responses
- Survey results quantitative & qualitative
main areas of activity

Base = Total Respondents (n=27)
industries serviced

1. Business Services (70%)
2. Accommodation, cafes & restaurants (63%)
2. Agriculture, forestry & fishing (63%)
2. Education (63%)
5. Personal & other services (59%)
5. Retail trade (59%)
5. Transport & storage (59%)
8. Communication services (56%)
8. Health & community services (56%)
8. Manufacturing (56%)
8. Property & business services (56%)
12. Finance and insurance (52%)
13. Wholesale trade (44%)
14. Government (Local) (41%)
15. Cultural & recreational services (37%)
16. Government (State) (33%)
17. Mining (30%)
18. Electricity, gas & water (22%)
18. Government (Federal) (22%)
20. Defence (11%)
Other (specify): (7%)

Base = Total Respondents (n=27)
target region for services

Base = Total Respondents (n=27)  
37% deliver services internationally
skill base

1. Programmer (59%)
2. Project manager (56%)
3. Systems development (52%)
4. Data analysis & management (48%)
5. Business & requirements analyst (44%)
6. Software architecture design (41%)
7. Computer design (33%)
8. Network design (33%)
9. Researcher (33%)
10. Communications design (30%)
11. Designer – Interface (30%)
12. Designer – Graphics (26%)
13. Training programs (26%)
14. Digital imaging (22%)
15. Education & online learning (22%)
16. Security (22%)
17. Information knowledge management (not systems) (19%)
18. Artificial intelligence & robotics (11%)
19. Animator/3D modelling / virtual reality (7%)
20. Games production (4%)
21. Other (specify): (22%)

Base = Total Respondents (n=27)
engagement in partnerships or joint activities with local organisations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Not at all</th>
<th>No but interested</th>
<th>Occasionally</th>
<th>Regularly</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ad hoc working relationship and sharing</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alliances or joint ventures</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joint research</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joint marketing</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supply chain partnerships</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Base = Total Respondents (n=27)
We learn or benefit from observing what other Ballarat producers or suppliers do.

We recognise and adopt technical improvements made by other Ballarat ICT businesses

We recognise and adopt marketing improvements made by other local Ballarat businesses

We recognise and adopt human resource management improvements made by other Ballarat ICT businesses

Generally we recognise and adopt operational improvements made by other Ballarat ICT businesses

We recognise and adopt logistics and supply improvements made by other local Ballarat businesses
collaboration versus competition

• ‘There is lots of work in the sector for the region’s firms, the issue is not competition between the firms it is directing organisations in the region to use the regions firms’.
hidden capabilities

• ‘...there are probably many local IT businesses who have skill sets that are unknown to the general public and other IT businesses’

• ‘...the products and services delivered by the main ICT companies in Ballarat are of world class standards, but [Ballarat’s ICT Industry] needs more support with selling them both domestically and internationally’.
missed opportunities

• ‘There is a lack of cohesion and participation on the part of most of the smaller ICT players in the region. They are losing business to Melbourne companies as a result. They need to have a higher profile in the public eye and better participation rates in PR and networking activities where potential clientele and partnerships may be formed. The "build it and they will come" era is well past.’
current barriers

• ‘The lack of adequate broadband throughout this region inhibits the consideration of web services by business to overcome problems of distance/ timeliness in the transaction of commerce’.

• ‘The single most important challenge to continued growth is a serious skills shortage of experienced C++ programmers’.
potential opportunities

• ‘The ICT directory will be a major step forward for local businesses as long as it is embraced by the majority of local ICT businesses rather than just a few’.
ICT Directory

The establishment of the Ballarat ICT Directory is just one of the anticipated outcomes of the Ballarat ICT Cluster Consultancy. Visitors to this website will be able to access the Ballarat ICT Directory to find local ICT companies and to research locally available products or tools. The aim will be to provide free, comprehensive, up-to-date and searchable information about Ballarat’s ICT capabilities and services.

If you would like to add a listing for your business please complete the ICT Organisations Survey.

For further information contact Helen Thompson either by telephone on 03 5327 9418 or via email h.thompson@ballarat.edu.au.
About the Cluster

cBallarat and the City of Ballarat recognise the potentially critical economic role of an information and communications technology (ICT) cluster and seek to underpin regional ICT activities with appropriate support.

During 2004 the Ballarat ICT Cluster Steering Committee was established with representation from small and large businesses, government and education providers. The Steering Committee identified that there was a need to conduct research as to the nature, breadth and potential of the Ballarat ICT Cluster. The City of Ballarat agreed to provide support and subsequently lodged an application for funding through the Regional Innovation Clusters Program administered by Regional Development Victoria’s Office of Science and Technology.

On the 15 July 2005, Minister John Brumby announced that the Ballarat ICT Cluster Consultancy had been successful in attracting funding through the Regional Innovation Clusters Program when the project was officially launched at the Greenhill Enterprise Centre.

The Ballarat ICT Cluster Consultancy has been designed to achieve the following three objectives:

- Establish a cluster profile study
  - That defines the characteristics of the Ballarat ICT Cluster.
- Develop an organisational plan
  - To guide the establishment and development of the Ballarat ICT Cluster.
- Establish a cluster management and communication system.
Get Involved

Your input matters

Get involved by completing one of the two surveys which are being conducted to gather information which profiles Ballarat’s ICT capabilities.

Survey 1: For ICT organisations (whose primary business is ICT)

Survey 2: For Non-ICT organisations (who use ICT in their day-to-day operations)

Ballarat ICT organisations

Participate by completing the survey for ICT Organisations and you will contribute to:

- Building an accurate profile of the Ballarat ICT sector.
- Showcasing the local ICT community, its products, services, skills and expertise.
- Promoting further development of Ballarat as a location for ICT suppliers and users.

Click here to view the survey background information for Ballarat ICT organisations

Ballarat organisations that use ICT

If you are involved in the broader business community or a representative of a local support organisation you can participate by completing the survey for other organisations. In doing
Ballarat ICT Cluster
www.ballaratict.com

on behalf of the Ballarat ICT cluster team

Thank you for your attention

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