

State Library of New South Wales Public Library Services Review

Huegin Consulting Group

3rd September 2010

This report is designed to be read at two levels - a moving table of contents keeps your place

Horizontal Logic:

The main story - this allows the reader to simply read the "heading" on each page to understand the complete storyboard

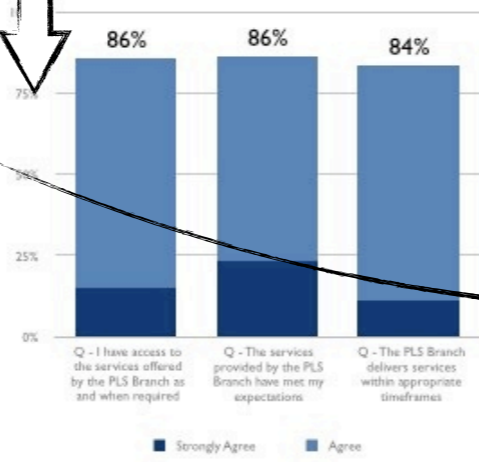
Vertical logic:

This allows the reader to read the detailed information supporting the horizontal logic (the main story)

- 1
- Executive Summary
- Public Library Issues
- Service Provision
- Quality of Service
- Service Demand
- Service Gaps
- 3
- Visibility and Service Location
- Marketing of Services
- Communication
- PLS Branch Role
- Appendix

1 Satisfaction with PLS Branch services is very high

2 meet expectations, are accessible when required and delivered within appropriate timeframes

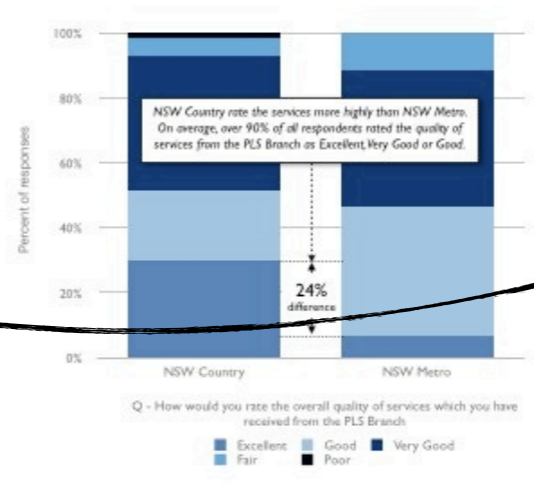


'Provide an approachable, timely and knowledgeable contact for public library issues, trends and innovations.'

'PLS Branch can be relied upon to provide requested outcomes'

'Is accessible and approachable. Provides great guidance and staff are great role models for public library staff'

The overall quality of services is rated highly



'Quality of what's offered is excellent overall [-.]'

'Staff approachable and knowledgeable. A can-do attitude makes my dealings with PLS Branch services enjoyable and useful'

'All PLS staff are terrific at responding to enquiries and provide great follow through'

Table of contents:

This tells the reader where they are in the overall document - separated by main- and sub-topics

Quotes:

These quotes are taken from the qualitative part of the survey to support the main argument

Executive Summary

Executive Summary

Issues

Provision

Quality

Demand

Gaps

Visibility & Location

Marketing

Communication

PLS Role

Summary of Findings

- The PLS Branch and staff have good knowledge and understanding of issues within public libraries
- Service provision meets the needs of public libraries
- Satisfaction with PLS Branch services is very high
- Driven by Consultancy Services and Advisory Services 2, demand is anticipated to increase by 21% over the next 12 months
- Public libraries want adjustments to current services and access to additional services
- Public libraries want higher visibility of PLS Branch staff and more services delivered within rural areas
- Adequate information regarding PLS Branch services is available but the marketing of services needs to be improved
- Communication processes are effective but could be further improved
- Uncertainty surrounds the role of the PLS Branch within the Public Library Network - some feel it should take a more proactive leadership role

The PLS Branch and staff have good knowledge and understanding of issues within public libraries

Executive Summary

Issues

Provision

Quality

Demand

Gaps

Visibility & Location

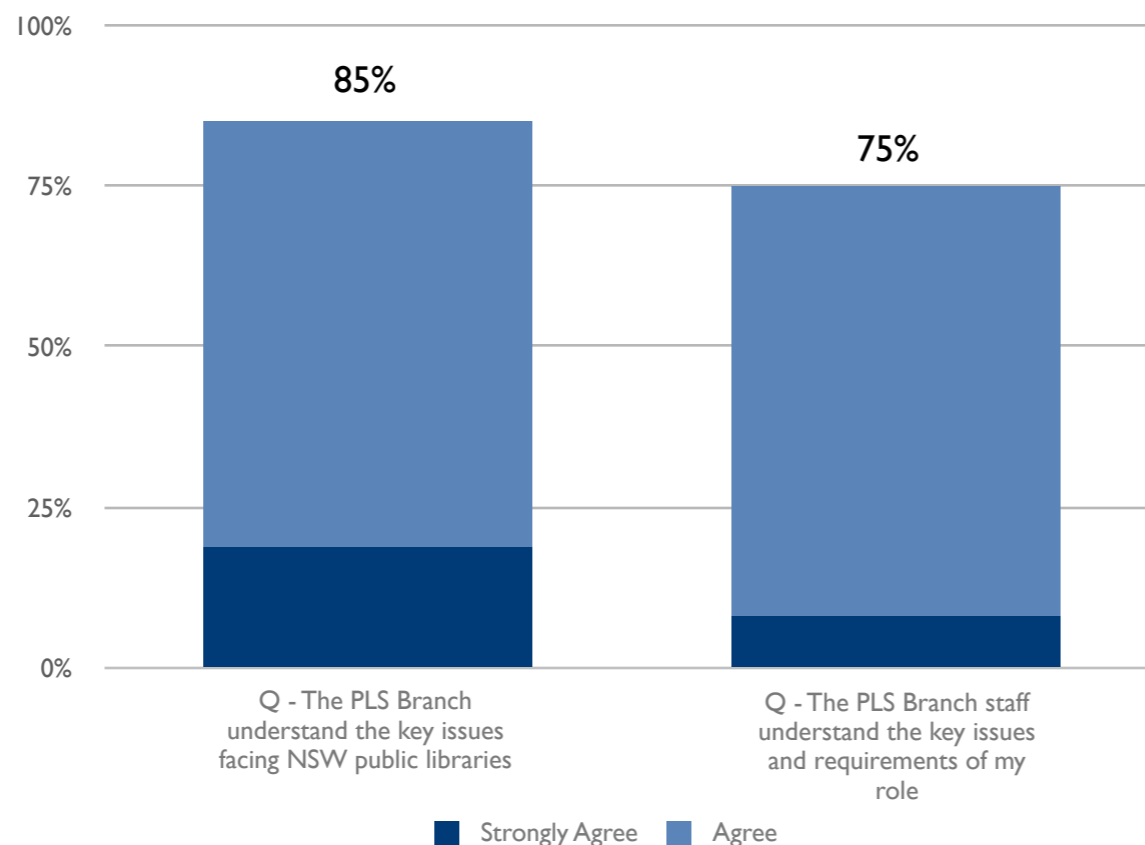
Marketing

Communication

PLS Role

Summary of Findings

The PLS Branch understand the issues facing public libraries and their staff



*'They have an **excellent understanding of issues**, articulate them effectively and provide a **coherent voice for us all**'*

*'There is **clear understanding of the issues faced**'*

*'They **know their clients** and have a **good handle across what is happening in NSW** and (to a lesser extent Nationally). They are a **fabulous sounding board**.'*

79%

of public library staff agree PLS Branch staff have relevant and current skills

Q - In my experience the PLS Branch staff have the relevant and current skills required to deliver services

*'PLS branch staff are **very supportive** and **proactive in addressing key issues** facing public libraries in NSW'*

*'The **consultants** get out and about a lot to **speak to staff about their key issues**'*

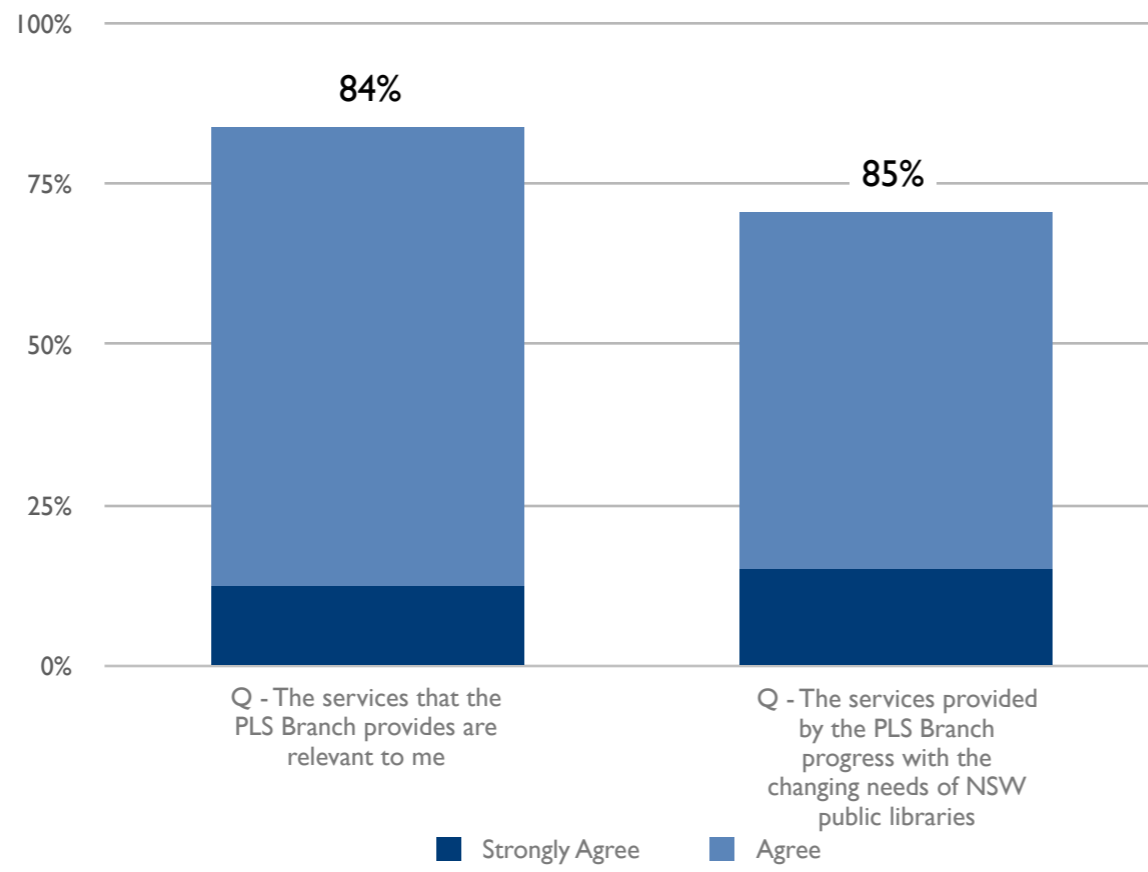
*'All PLS staff are **knowledgeable**, very **responsive** to enquiries, and provide **great follow through**'*

*'Many of the staff [...] are very **knowledgeable** and **helpful** [...] they **go above and beyond** and are very **passionate** about their roles and **inspire** you with their ideas.'*

Service provision meets the needs of public libraries

- Executive Summary
- Issues
- Provision
- Quality
- Demand
- Gaps
- Visibility & Location
- Marketing
- Communication
- PLS Role
- Summary of Findings

PLS Branch services are relevant to staff within public libraries and adapt with their changing needs

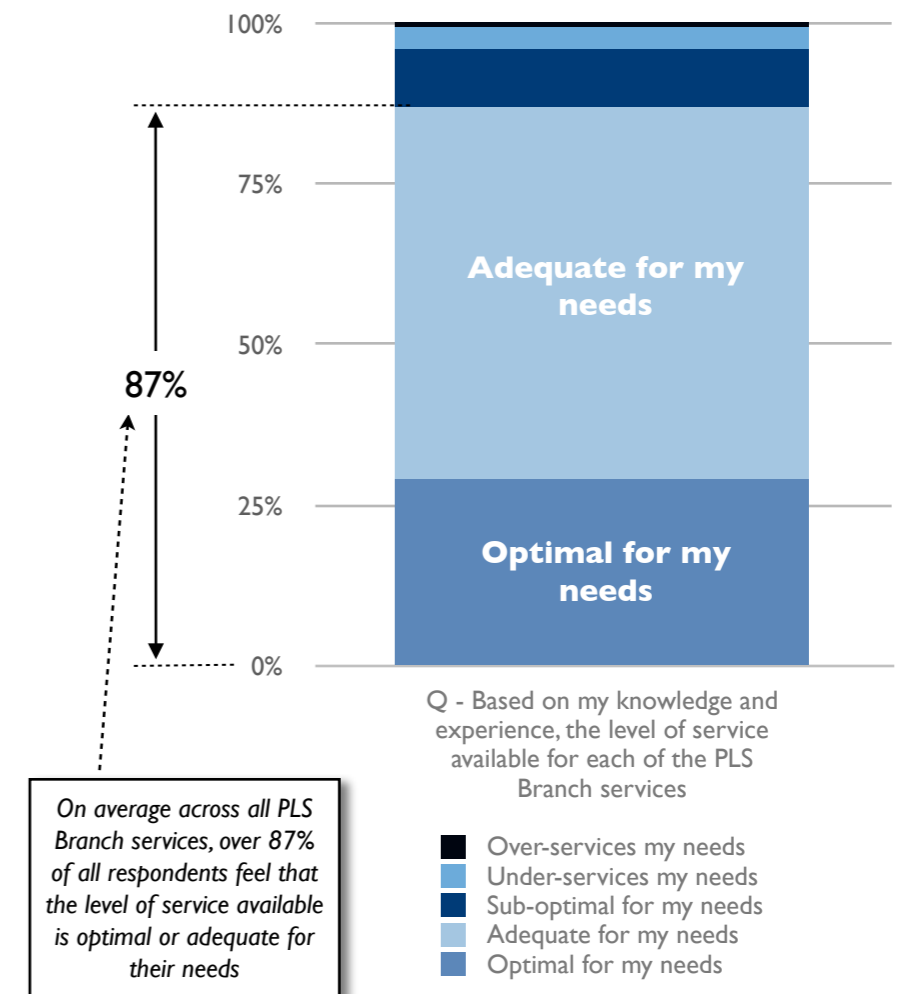


'All services are relevant, even if under-used.'

'The services PLS provide have adapted to the changing needs of public libraries. They recognise/anticipate trends, and identify needs and provide the service.'

'[...] there are at times very specific services that I require and services are customised to my needs'

The level of service available for each of the PLS Branch services is optimal or adequate for needs



On average across all PLS Branch services, over 87% of all respondents feel that the level of service available is optimal or adequate for their needs

'I use all the services the PLS Branch provides'

'[...] I could not manage without PLS support'

'The PLS Branch adds value to our service [...]'

Satisfaction with PLS Branch services is very high

Executive Summary
Issues
Provision

Quality

Demand

Gaps

Visibility & Location

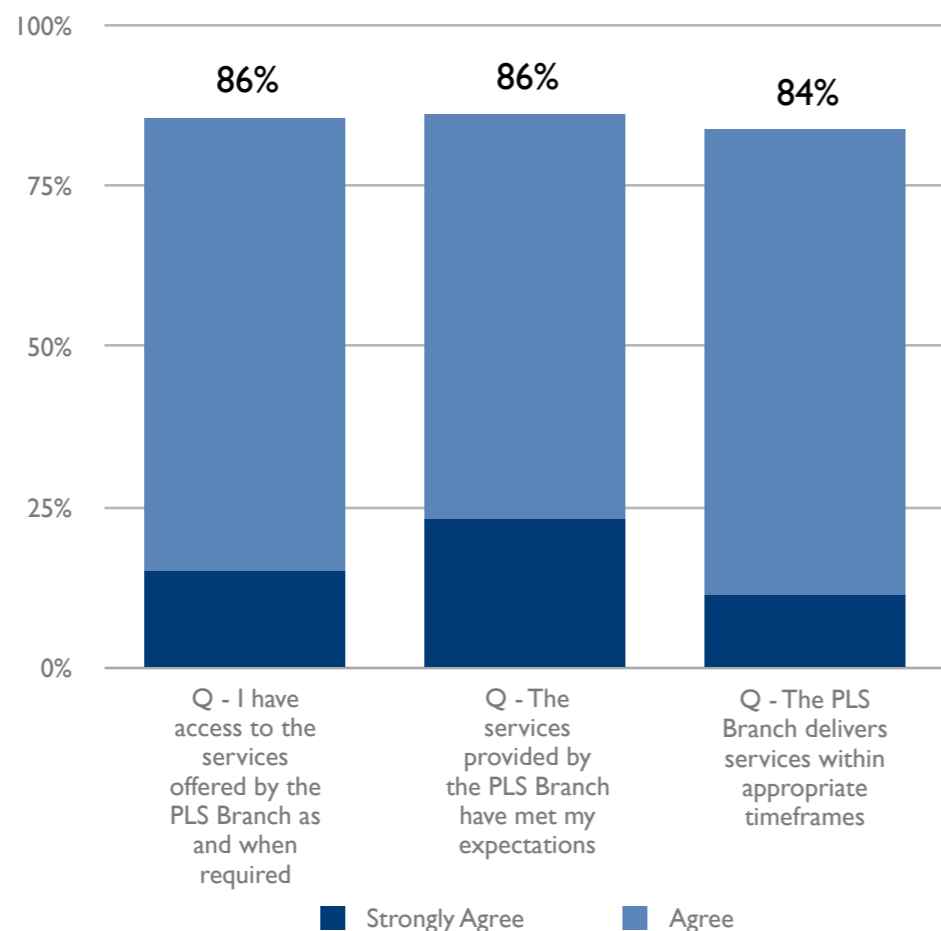
Marketing

Communication

PLS Role

Summary of Findings

Services are accessible when required, meet expectations and are delivered within appropriate timeframes

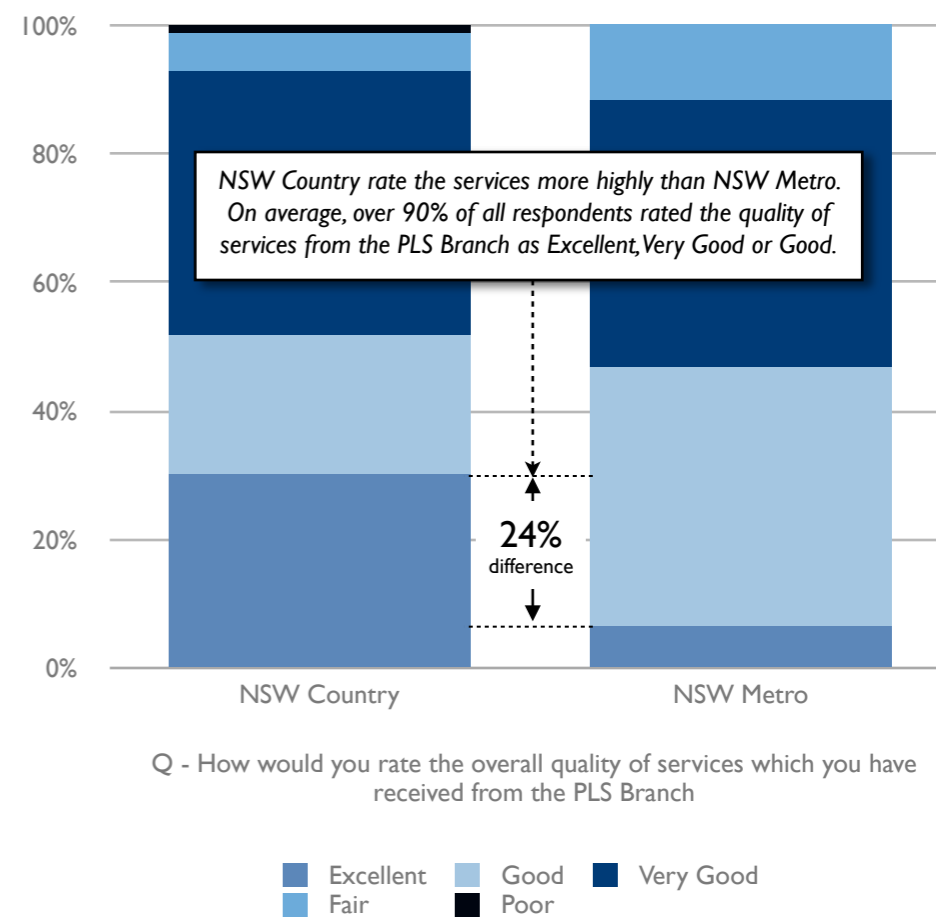


*'Provide an **approachable, timely and knowledgeable** contact for public library issues, trends and innovations.'*

*'PLS Branch can be **relied upon to provide requested outcomes**'*

*'Is **accessible and approachable**. Provides **great guidance** and staff are **great role models for public library staff**'*

The overall quality of services is rated highly



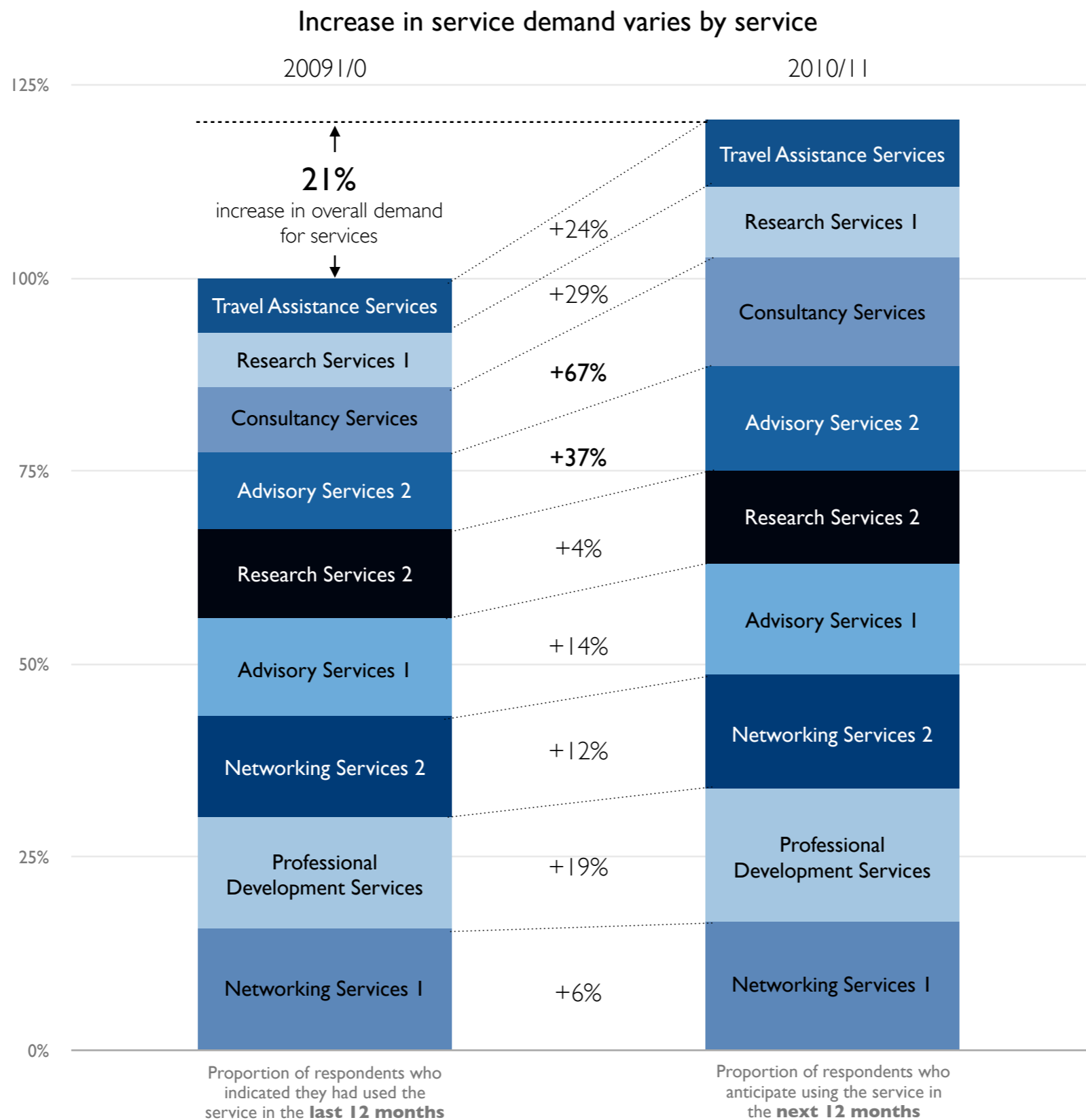
*'Quality of what's offered is **excellent overall** [...]'*

*'Staff **approachable and knowledgeable**. A **can-do attitude** makes my dealings with PLS Branch services very **enjoyable and useful**.'*

*'All PLS staff are **terrific at responding** to enquiries and **provide great follow through**'*

Driven by Consultancy Services and Advisory Services 2*, demand is anticipated to increase by 21% over the next 12 months

- Executive Summary
- Issues
- Provision
- Quality
- Demand**
- Gaps
- Visibility & Location
- Marketing
- Communication
- PLS Role
- Summary of Findings



21% increase in overall demand

- Consultancy Services and Advisory Services 2 are anticipated to have the largest increase in demand
- Networking Services 1 and Professional Development Services will remain the two most used services
- In the next 12 months a greater proportion of Country respondents are expected to use all services except for Networking Services 2

“More networking opportunities”

‘More staff training’

‘More seminars on [...]’

‘More programs on providing library services [...]’

* Refer to the appendix for a description of PLS Branch services

Public libraries want adjustments to current services and access to additional services

Executive Summary

Issues

Provision

Quality

Demand

Gaps

Visibility & Location

Marketing

Communication

PLS Role

Summary of Findings

Suggested improvements to current services

- Website improvements
- 12-month calendar of planned events throughout the year published on the website
- Change and improve Public Library News
- Distribute PLS reports to all public library staff, not just managers
- Create a 'site map' of all professional support groups
- Online professional development programs
- Using technology such as video conferencing to engage with staff in public libraries
- Email alerts to be more Australian rather than American focused
- Rotate consultants throughout the regions
- Seek approval from library managers before engaging their staff for seminars, etc.
- Directly advocate to Councils and other bodies more

Suggested additional services

- More state-wide coordination and initiatives facilitated or encouraged by the PLS Branch. For example:
 - Statewide marketing campaign to promote libraries
 - Cooperative collections and licensing for resources
 - Statewide managed opt-in services
 - Coordinated approach to development of services and functions
 - Bulk discounts with major suppliers
 - Innovative projects
 - Common or integrated shared ILMS
- Statewide standards, guidelines, policies and templates to avoid duplication
- Collection and contract management
- Specialist building consultant
- Showcasing of State Library collections to public library staff
- Mentoring program for new library managers
- Work experience opportunities for new public library staff
- HR consultancy services (e.g. restructuring, recruitment)
- More access to legal advice on key issues
- Act as the link between public libraries and other State Library services

Public libraries want higher visibility of PLS Branch staff and more services delivered within rural areas

- Executive Summary
- Issues
- Provision
- Quality
- Demand
- Gaps
- Visibility & Location
- Marketing
- Communication
- PLS Role
- Summary of Findings

Public libraries staff want the PLS Branch to have an increased visible presence in their libraries and deliver more services in rural areas

	Increased visibility	Increased services in rural areas
NSW Metro	✓	
NSW Country	✓	✓

'More face-to-face contact with consultants from State Library would prove beneficial'

'Higher visibility [...] by occasionally spending a small block of time working in a public library to gain first hand experience of the issues and experiences at the 'coal face'

'More needs to be provided to cater to the needs of country/rural libraries. Perhaps technology can help in this area'

'Most of the time services are delivered at SLNSW, but I would like to see more outreach across NSW [...] often staff are not able to attend because of the distances/times it takes to travel.'

However, many recognise the constraints faced by the PLS Branch which do not make these things possible

Funding constraints:

'I don't think that PLS is funded adequately to maintain an optimum service'

'They are struggling to provide a quality service within tight budgetary constraints, just like the rest of us.'

Resource constraints:

'I would like it take a more active role however I am aware of the level of staffing it has'

'[...] seemed to pushed to the limit'

Geographical constraints:

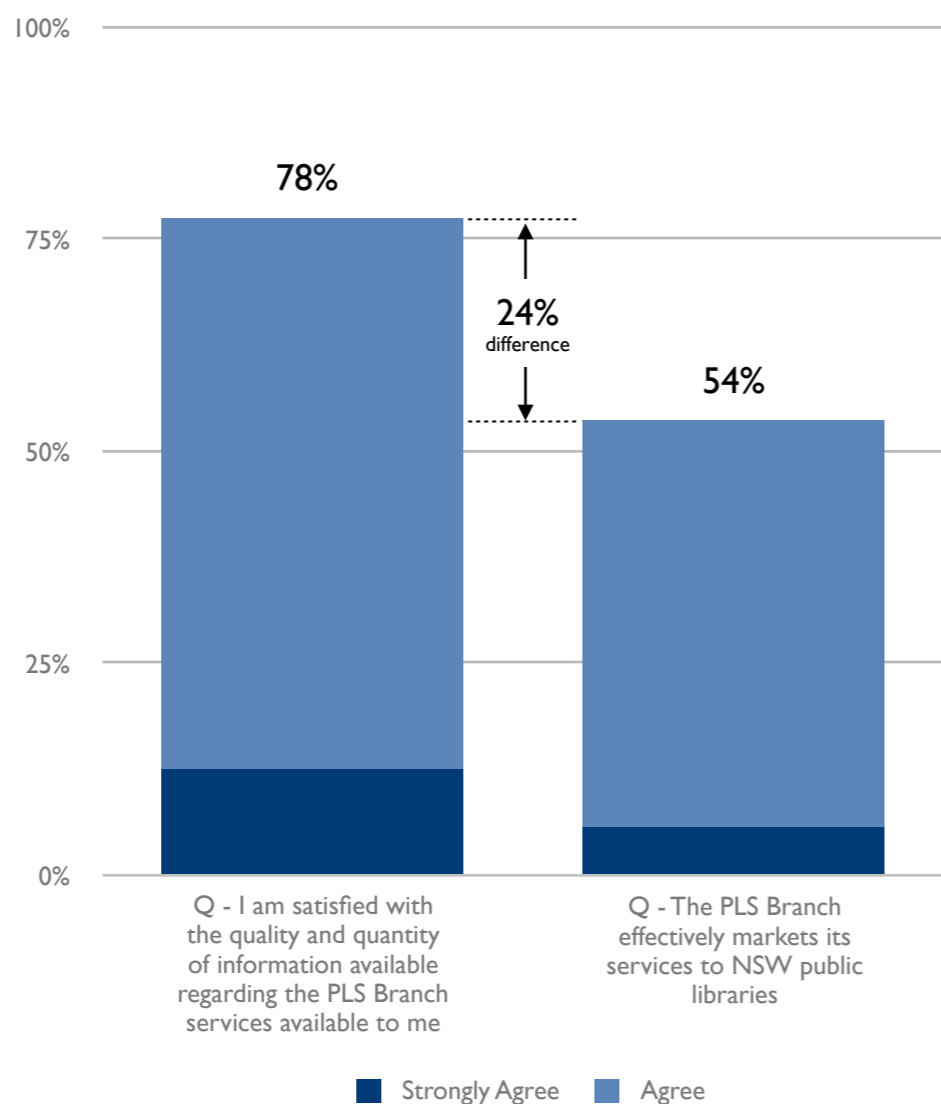
'[...] but NSW is a big state and funding off-site gigs is expensive and limiting [...]

'[...] Having said that, PLS Branch go out of their way to provide opportunities in the country [...]

Adequate information regarding PLS Branch services is available but the marketing of services needs to be improved

- Executive Summary
- Issues
- Provision
- Quality
- Demand
- Gaps
- Visibility & Location
- Marketing
- Communication
- PLS Role
- Summary of Findings

Public libraries are satisfied with the information available regarding PLS Branch services but feel that services could be marketed more effectively



'I don't think we are aware of all that PLS has to offer'

'To know in a concrete way what they actually do [...] I really recommend getting the word out there to the library community a bit more, you probably provide some excellent services, which we should be appreciating!'

'I've worked in public libraries for many years [...] they are definitely not a well known branch of the SLNSW.'

'I think PLS should better promote their range of services'

'More self promotion so I know which public library things are provided by PLS'

'The Branch does not sell its services to library managers well enough'

'It would be an advantage to advertise PLS Branch services more broadly and in particular to promote role/influence of PLS within the State Library and State Government'

Awareness of PLS Branch services within public libraries:

- There is high awareness of all services within public libraries
- Awareness of all services is above 90%, except for Travel Awareness which is 88%
- 93% average awareness across all PLS Branch services
- For most services, NSW Country are more aware than NSW Metro

Communication processes are effective but could be further improved

73% of public library staff agree that the PLS Branch has effective communication processes

Q - The PLS Branch has effective communication processes for keeping me informed on relevant matters

'I like getting the PLN emails - at least you hear what's going on'

'Looks out for interesting information and trends overseas and communicates it'

'Done effectively with E-list'

'Elists and other electronic communication facilities this [...] chance to respond to the information of most interest to you.'

Too many emails:

'Often useful information is lost in the noise - too much information at the wrong time.'

'The emails are often duplicated and it seems that I receive excessive emails on some topics'

'Could do with less spam on 'library innovations' [...] this isn't an effective way to communicate on these issues.'

'[...] Can be death by email'

Suggestions for improvement:

'Scattered approach of emails [...] coordinate and combine once a week'

'[...] less general emails - maybe a WIKI to include recent changes, trends, innovations etc?'

'I would prefer to move away from listservs in favour of blogs/microblogging'

'[...] Rather put this info on SL internet and let people access it themselves'

Executive Summary

Issues

Provision

Quality

Demand

Gaps

Visibility & Location

Marketing

Communication

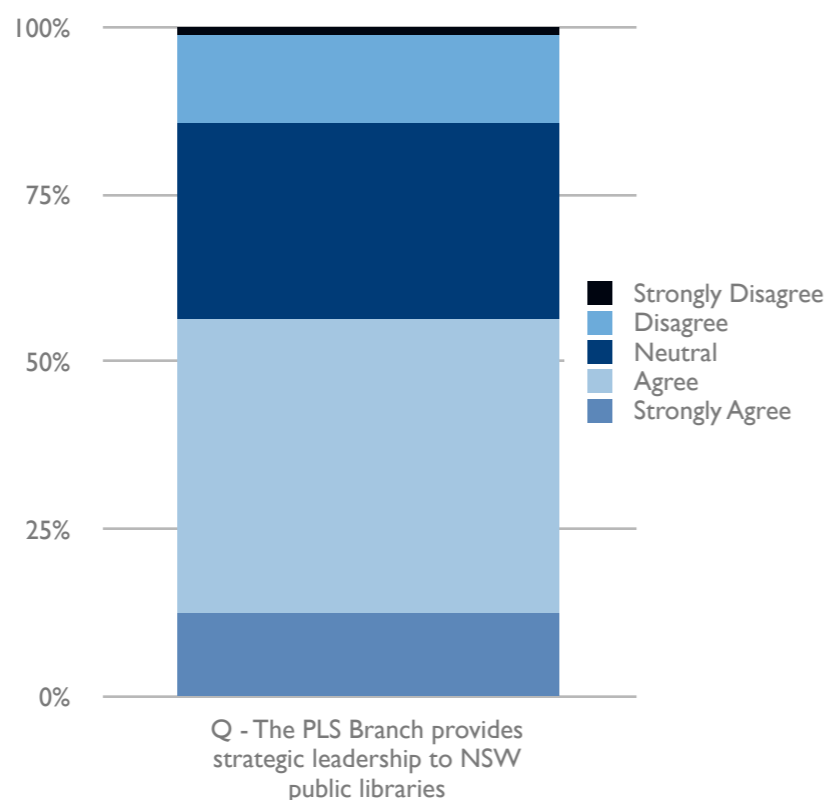
PLS Role

Summary of Findings

Uncertainty surrounds the role of the PLS Branch within the Public Library Network - some feel it should take a more proactive leadership role

- Executive Summary
- Issues
- Provision
- Quality
- Demand
- Gaps
- Visibility & Location
- Marketing
- Communication
- PLS Role
- Summary of Findings

56% of respondents feel that the PLS Branch provides strategic leadership



'PLS Branch is a terrific resource that can be called on at any time to **assist with strategic leadership** and has provided assistance on many occasions.'

'I find [...]. A sure sign of **strong (and strategic) leadership**'

'I think the seminars and workshops [...] have shown **significant advancement in strategic leadership**'

...but there is confusion around the role of PLS and some believe it needs to provide a more strategic leadership role

Role confusion:

'The **roles** of the associations and PLS need to be **more clearly defined**. Is PLS the (a) leader, or a service provider?'

'I'm **not very sure** of this [...]'

'The **vision and structure** of PLS are **not clearly in support** of their services'

'My **expectation** has always been that the SLNSW would **provide a leadership role for NSW public libraries** but I would say it has **played more of a support role**'

More leadership:

'I think PLS could take a **stronger strategic leadership role** [...]'

'In some areas [...] there is good leadership [...]. However, less so in **big picture strategic leadership**.'

'Needs **more of a strategic approach** to the **entire public library sector**'

'PLS understands but usually their **response is reactive and not proactive**.'

Summary of Findings

Executive Summary

Issues

Provision

Quality

Demand

Gaps

Visibility & Location

Marketing

Communication

PLS Role

Summary of Findings

- Public libraries are highly satisfied with the quality of services they have received from the PLS Branch
- Public libraries feel that the services available from the PLS Branch are relevant and adequate for their needs
- Potential areas for improvement include:
 - Higher visibility of PLS Branch staff within public libraries
 - Increased services delivered within rural areas
 - Increased marketing of PLS Branch services to public libraries
 - Improvements to communications - coordinated emails from the PLS Branch and/or different methods of communicating such as blogs or wikis
 - Clear definition and communication of the role of the PLS Branch within the Public Library Network