

## Donegal Education Centre

### Working with SPSS Ireland to establish an effective Needs Analysis System.

#### Situation:

The Donegal Education Centre is a part of the education centre network of learning communities where teachers are empowered to achieve their full potential as professional educators and where other partners in the local school community are facilitated in meeting their training needs so that they can perform their roles effectively.

The education centres support the in-service needs of local teachers, support locally identified needs and provide a range of activities for the educational community. There are 21 full time and 9 part time centres nationwide, supported principally by the Department of Education and Science. The Donegal Education Centre provides in-service training for both primary and post primary teachers in Co Donegal.

#### Challenge:

The main focus of the Donegal Education Centre is to provide in-service training to the teaching community in Donegal. In achieving this goal, it is critical that they understand the needs that exist within the teaching community.

The Department of Education designs an in-service training programme that the Education Centre runs on behalf of the department. In addition to these courses, teachers want to attend other in-service training such as night classes or evening courses. The education centre recognises this demand by providing these additional courses specific to the Donegal region. However in order to ascertain what courses teachers require, it is essential that a needs analysis is conducted.

Before the Donegal Education Centre engaged with SPSS Ireland, they were sending out basic flyer surveys, the survey information was not entered into electronic form and the needs analysis was developed from reading the returns from the hard copy flyers. The Education Centre decided to engage with SPSS Ireland in order to improve the effectiveness of this process.

#### At a glance

County: Ireland  
Industry: Public Sector

**Solutions used:** SPSS for Windows

#### Results:

*“The staff and service levels at SPSS Ireland were second to none. The company’s competency and professionalism were excellent and were definitely determining factors in choosing a solution for our Needs Analysis system here in the centre”*

Sally Bonner, Director of the Centre,  
Donegal Education Centre



## Solution:

The core challenge for the Donegal Education Centre was that they were unable to quantify the in-service training needs of the teaching community in Co Donegal.

The primary objective that the education centre had when deciding on partnering with SPSS Ireland was that they needed to drive in-service training requirements from a teacher's perspective. In this way, effective planning of training courses and resources could be derived as opposed to running courses based on their organisational acumen.

The Donegal Education Centre exists to support the teaching community in Donegal. It is essential that the services provided by the education centre, like most government services are driven by the needs of the target group, in this case the teaching community, and not by the needs assumed by the organisation with no concrete research to back them. Donegal Education Centre recognise this. By implementing an SPSS solution, they developed an effective Needs Analysis System.

They now have the capability to survey teachers in the area and identify the exact courses that the teachers require. Using this method the Donegal Education Centre can now strategically plan the in-service courses and related resources. Using the SPSS solution, the education centre are utilising 100% of the resources available to them to support the teaching community in Co Donegal in the most effective



County Donegal Education Centre  
Oideachais Chondae Dhún na nGall

## Benefits:

Since working with SPSS, the education centre's staff now has a much clearer view of the needs of teachers in Donegal. They have an effective Needs Analysis System in place which very easily enables the centre's Director, Ms Sally Bonner to focus in-service training on satisfying the requirements of the teachers in the Donegal area.

This system has also freed up time as the need analysis system is now 100% electronic based rather than the basic paper analysis system that was in place before. Rather than spending days analysing hard copies of surveys, the staff at the education centre use SPSS to produce their results in a matter of minutes.

According to the director at the Donegal Education Centre, "the staff and service levels at SPSS Ireland were second to none. The company's competency and professionalism were excellent and were definitely determining factors in choosing a solution for our Needs Analysis system here in the centre".

The Donegal Education Centre now has data to justify the in-service training courses that they are providing. In a similar manner this solution has been implemented in over ten education centres across the country who are currently experiencing similar success.

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