

National Science & Engineering Week 2008

Evaluation report

28 April 2008



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Overview

National Science and Engineering Week (NSEW) is a 10 day long, yearly celebration of science, engineering and technology which sees people of all ages taking part in, and organising, a vast array of events across the country. With no restrictions on who can organise events, the topics on which they are focused, the audience or the venue, the resulting programme is a hugely varied and eclectic mix suitable for people of all ages and abilities.

This year NSEW was given a theme for the first time. This theme, agreed together with the Department for Innovation Universities and Skills (DIUS) was 'A Question of Science'. All activities which occurred in NSEW 2008 were encouraged to fit within and promote this theme. This included NSEW events, mass participation activities, press activity and marketing.

Aims and objectives

The main aim of NSEW is to stimulate and support scientists, engineers, science communicators and the general public, on an individual or institutional basis, to produce the largest range of accessible and self-sustaining events across the whole of the UK. This is in order to engage and inspire as many people as possible with science, engineering, technology and their implications.

Objectives from the Department for Innovation, University and Skills

DIUS is the main funder of NSEW. Each year DIUS looks at the success of NSEW against the following broad criteria:

- 1) Continue to broaden and deepen the NSEW's reach into the public, particularly reaching more young people in difficult-to-reach areas
- 2) Raise the profile of NSEW at a national level.
- 3) Gain more extensive local and national media coverage.
- 4) Drive forward and promote the theme agreed with DIUS (A Question of Science), supported by exciting and engaging mass participation activities.
- 5) Continue to provide grants to enable black, minority ethnic and disadvantaged school groups to run a science and/or engineering based event and to increase those groups participation in NSEW.

Objectives from the BA

The BA's specific objectives are designed to help NSEW meet DIUS's broad criteria. They are split into three main areas:

Impact – assessing the effects of NSEW

Demographics – who is organising, attending and presenting in NSEW

Process – looking at ways to improve how NSEW is delivered

Impact objectives

- 1) To increase the number of events (specifically 50 extra engineering-focused events above 2007 numbers), attendees and organisers.
- 2) To increase the participation of scientists and engineers within NSEW.
- 3) To increase awareness amongst the general public of NSEW and the NSEW brand.
- 4) To increase traffic to the BA/NSEW website.
- 5) To increase regional and national media coverage in print and broadcast.
- 6) To promote the organisation of successful science events.

Demographic objectives

- 1) Increasing participation amongst the general public, particularly young and hard-to-reach audiences.

Process objectives

- 1) Improve marketing and communication channels to the public to promote the website and online programme.

Methodology

This evaluation lists each of the BA's Impact, Demographic and Process objectives and takes information from relevant sources to assess achievement against them. The information given here, and more qualitative data, is used to develop recommendations for the following year.

There are four main sources of information used:

- 1) The NSEW 2008 database
- 2) Completed and returned evaluation forms
- 3) Printed and broadcast media data supplied by Romeike
- 4) A national opinion poll omnibus survey

For the NSEW database, a total of 1377 events were registered by 619 event organisers.

For the evaluation forms, the 619 organisers who registered at least one event were sent an evaluation pack containing questionnaires prior to NSEW 2008. From the 619 evaluation packs sent out 271 organisers, 1416 adult attendees, 2045 child attendees and 201 presenters completed and returned questionnaires (by 7th April 2008). From the 189 schools given grants under the NSEW small grant scheme 109 returned evaluations.

For the national opinion poll omnibus survey, 1000 people (aged 16+) were asked before and after NSEW whether they had heard of NSEW and if yes, when they thought it was.

Impact objective 1

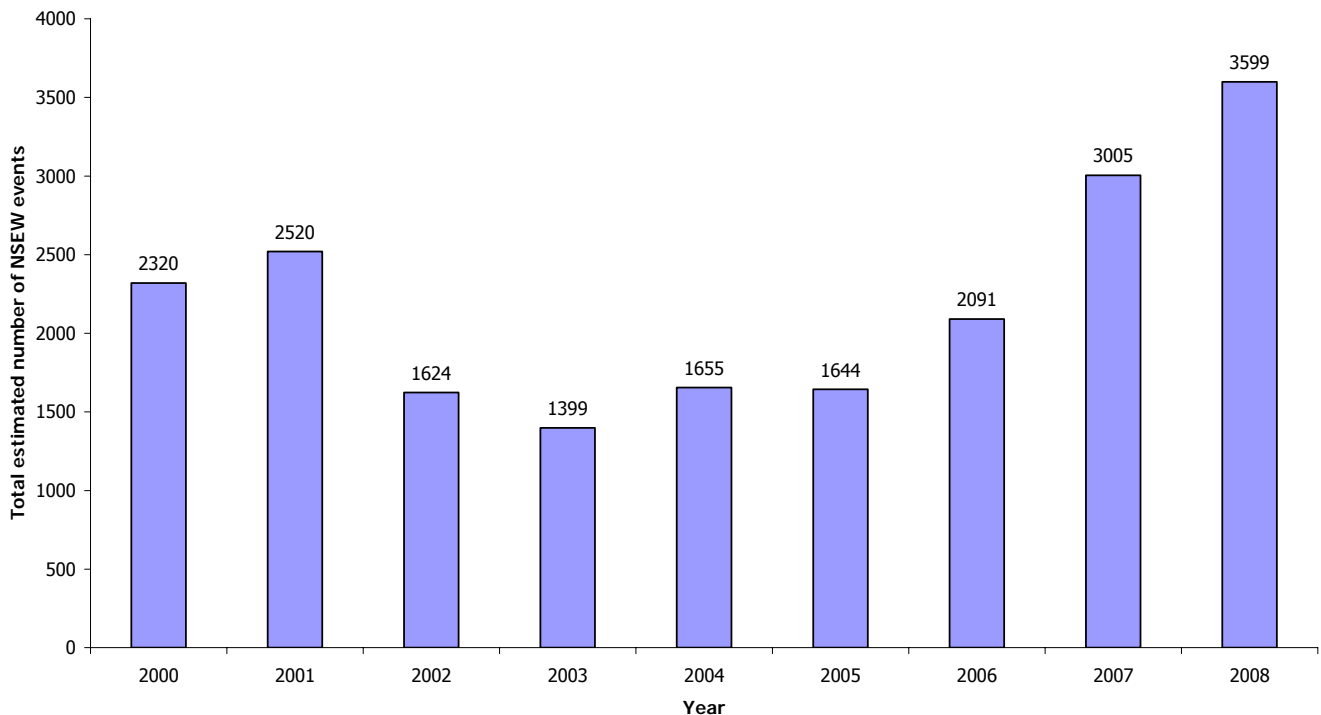
Objective: To increase the number of events (specifically 50 extra engineering focused events above 2007 numbers), attendees and organisers.

National Science and Engineering Week event numbers

NSEW 2008

Events registered in the NSEW database	1375
Unregistered events that we are aware of e.g. events funded by the school grant scheme, events sent in by email, Wrexham and Sheffield NSEW events, ETB known unregistered events	822
Number of schools involved in Ready to Learn – The Experiment	682
Unregistered events uncovered by the media trawl	(41 identified to date but not included below)
25% increment to take into account other non-registered events	720
Total	3599

Total number of NSEW events from 2000-2008



This shows that the number of estimated events has increased from previous years and is now at its greatest total ever, even excluding unregistered events still being uncovered by the media trawl.

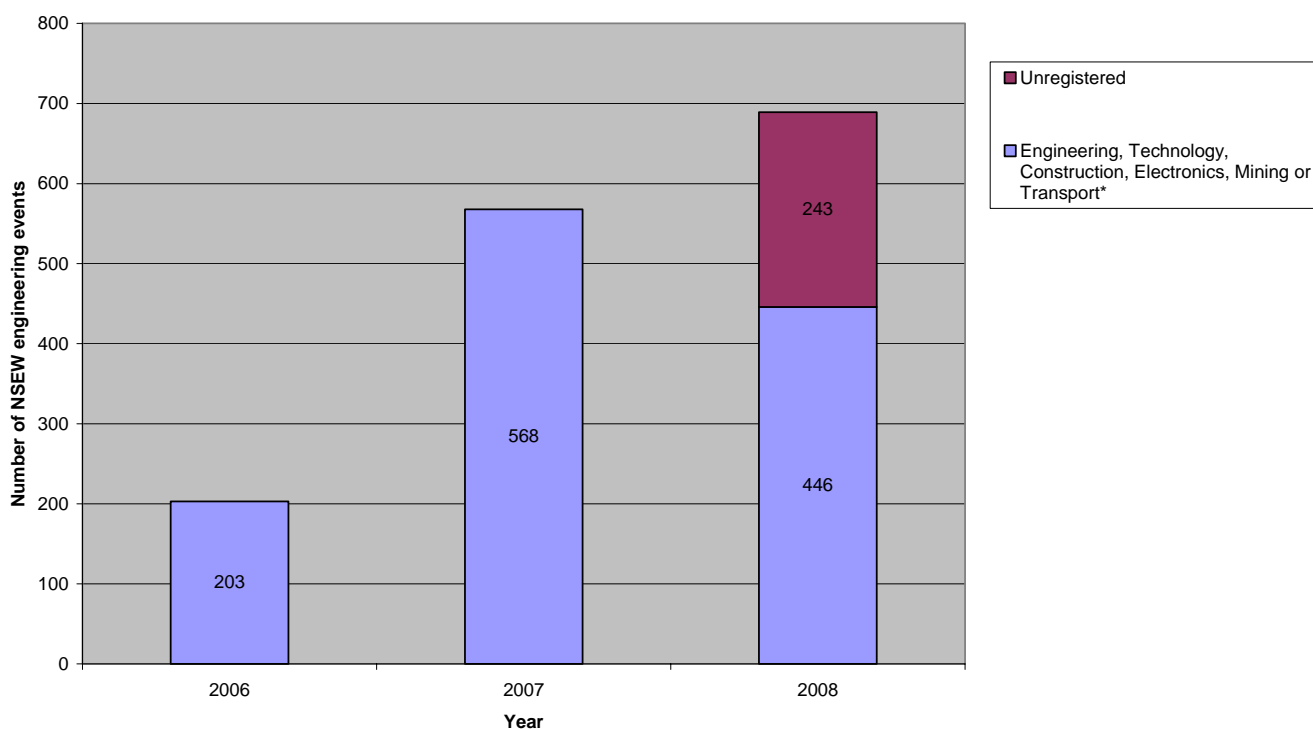
Total number of estimated engineering events:

For 2007, the name of the Week was changed from 'National Science Week' to 'National Science and Engineering Week' and ETB became a partner with the BA for NSEW. The ETB provided extra funding to enable to the BA to re-brand the Week and create extra branded resources. The aim of this partnership is to increase participation of engineering organisations and institutions and increase the number of engineering focussed events. The specific aim for 2008 is to increase the number of engineering events by 50 from the numbers seen in 2007 (568).

Using simply the keyword 'Engineering' and a NSEW staff event categorisation of registered events, there were 267 registered events in 2008. Using the keywords 'Engineering, Technology, Construction, Electronics, Mining or Transport' and a NSEW staff event categorisation of registered events, there were 446 registered events. ETB was also aware of 243 unregistered engineering events after NSEW; this gives a total number of engineering and related events at 689. This means that although the aim has been fulfilled for NSEW 2008 (at 121 new engineering related events), a large number of these events were not registered as they were in previous years.

Past years:

Number of NSEW engineering related events 2006-2008

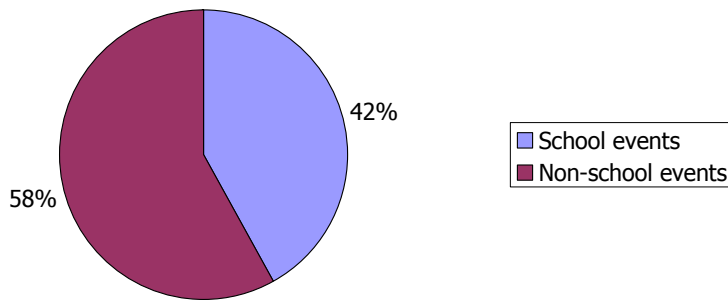


*In 2008 this included engineering events tagged by NSEW staff

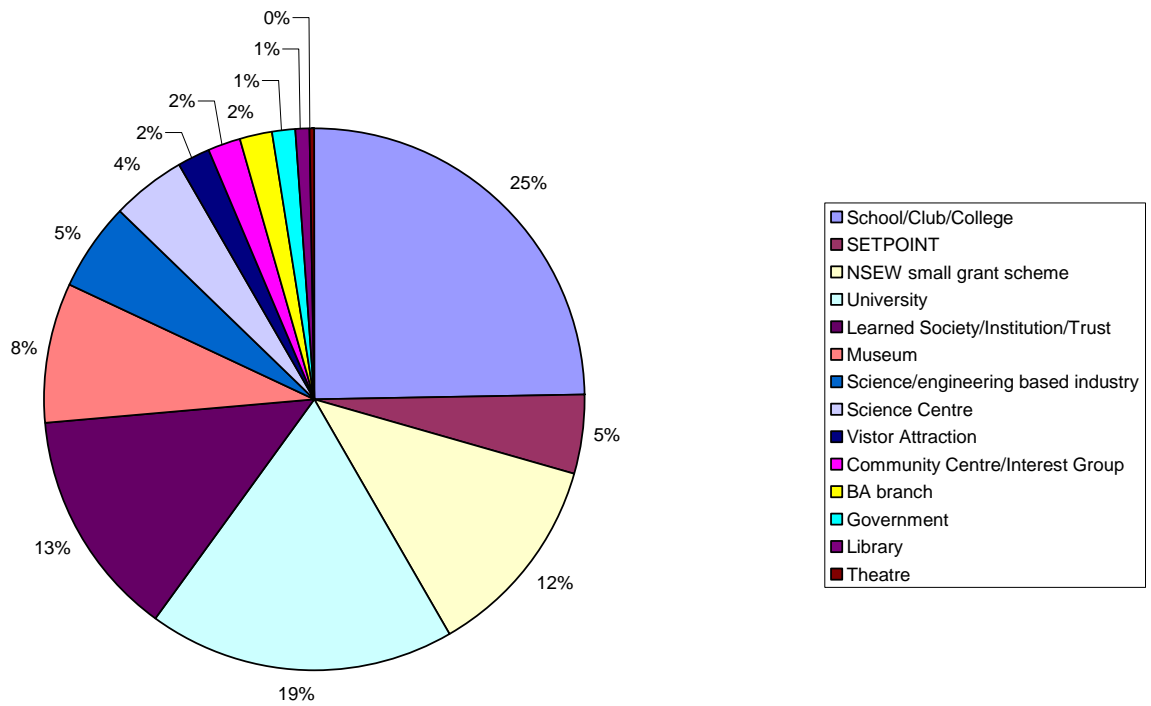
Number of registered events by classification

There were 650 (42%) events classified as school events (either occurring at a school, school club or college, organised by a local SETPOINT or funded by the NSEW small grant scheme). The other 914 (58%) events are classified as non-school (public or private), although these may or may not have been targeted at children of school age.

Number of school and 'non-school' events

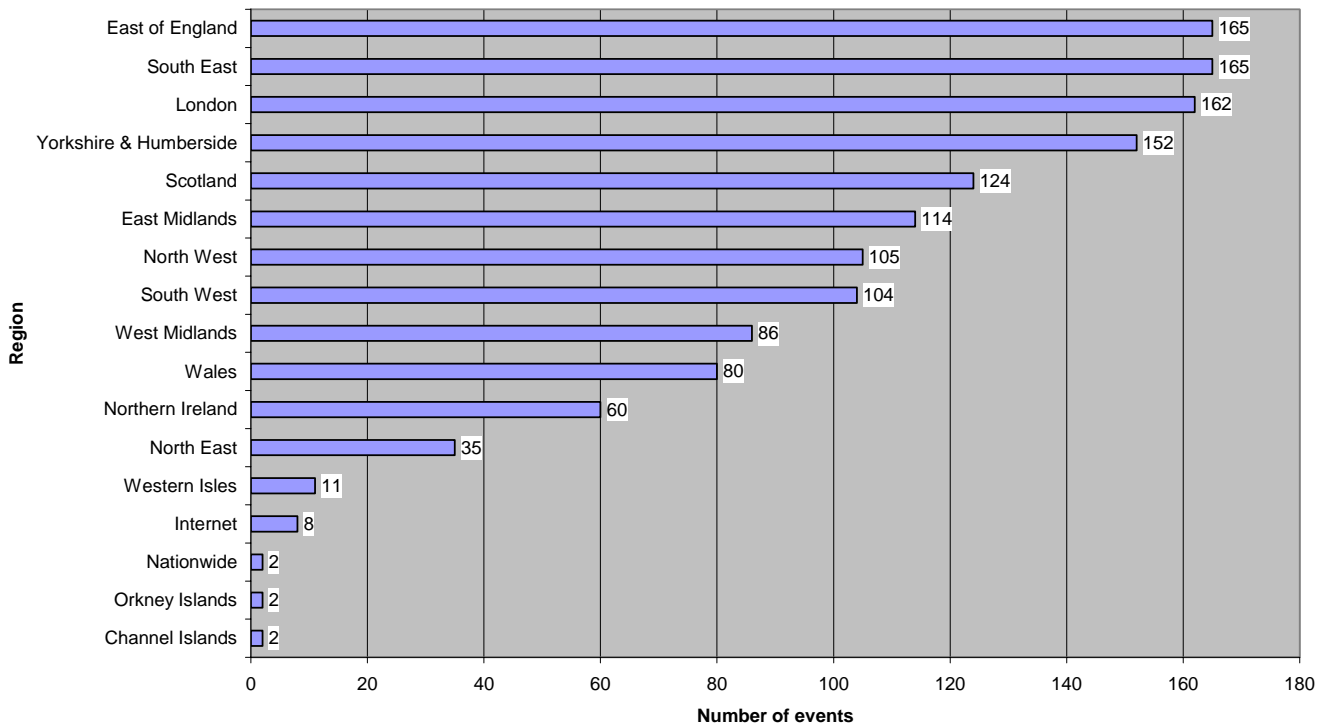


Number of registered events by general category



This indicates that a large number of different organisations held events during NSEW 2008. Schools held the largest number of events, but universities, learned societies, museums and science based industry also held a significant number.

Number of registered NSEW events per region of the UK



This graph indicates there is a good spread of events across the country, with the greatest number of events in the South East, East of England and London.

Number of unregistered events

A total 822 unregistered events are confirmed to have occurred but were not registered on the NSEW online programme. Of these 114 events were sent in by email, 247 events were from large festivals that had their own online programmes (Wrexham Science Festival, Sheffield Hallam University and Aberdeen BA Branch), 189 events were generated from the NSEW Small Grant Scheme, 29 were discovered by the phone survey (see below) and 243 unregistered engineering events were identified by ETB after NSEW.

In 2007, only 537 unregistered events were confirmed to have occurred. The increased number of unregistered events in 2008 does not necessarily indicate less people are registering their events this year; it may simply mean that more events have been discovered.

School NSEW events

Discussion with school teachers has indicated that more schools may organise NSEW events than the BA know of each year. To estimate unknown numbers, UK primary and secondary schools were randomly selected and contacted directly to see if they were involved in NSEW 2008. Note that these primary and secondary schools were randomly selected from a contact database of all UK schools bought from DLG. These schools had received a number of emails from the BA with information about NSEW prior to the Week.

Of 72 primary schools successfully contacted, 12 (or 17%) were involved in NSEW but had not registered. If this is extrapolated to all UK primary schools (22,056¹), it indicates that a total of 3750 primary schools may have been involved in NSEW.

¹ Number of UK Primary Schools taken from school contact database bought from DLG

Of 47 secondary schools successfully contacted, 17 (or 36%) were involved in NSEW but had not registered. If this is extrapolated to all UK secondary schools (5,426²), it indicates that a total of 1953 secondary schools may have been involved in NSEW.

In total an estimated 5700 UK schools may have taken part in NSEW according to this survey but only 650³ UK school events were registered with the BA.

Reasons for schools not being involved

Schools who said that they had not been involved in NSEW were asked why. The following were the reasons mentioned.

Primary schools –

- 1) Too busy - because of SATS or other reasons such as science coordinators changing over
- 2) Not heard enough about the week
- 3) Didn't have many ideas for events

Secondary schools –

- 1) Too busy – because of SATS and getting through the GCSE syllabus

Mass Participation Events

Two different mass participation events were organised during NSEW 2008. These events were online in the case of The Big Question Challenge or involved schools across the country in the case of Ready to Learn – The Experiment.

The Big Question Challenge

During NSEW 2008 the BA challenged the UK public to pose the most difficult, unusual, profound or perplexing questions they could to the UK's leading scientists and engineers. These questions were then answered online via a specifically created Big Question blog site (<http://bigquestion.wordpress.com>) and also featured on the main BA website (<http://www.the-ba.net/thebigquestion>). Some questions were also related to a number of NSEW key events and were featured in the national media.

Ready to Learn – The Experiment

Teachers' TV teamed up with the BA to give schools the opportunity to take part in a nationwide experiment during National Science and Engineering Week 2008. The project aimed to involve school children from the ages of 5-16. Children took part in an online test to analyse their readiness to learn – and answered questions on what they had for breakfast and how much sleep they had the night before.

This research project proved extremely popular – with a total of 682 schools, 716 Teachers and 78,431 pupils involved. Teachers' TV is currently working with The Tavistock Institute to analyse the results, which will be available in the Summer Term.

² Number of UK Secondary Schools taken from school contact database bought from DLG

³ 461 registered and 189 from the NSEW small grant scheme

Estimated number of attendees

The estimated number of attendees is calculated by taking the average from two different calculations. The first calculation method uses the event registration data where the expected number of attendees was estimated by organisers prior to the event. The second calculation method uses the evaluation data where the number of attendees was estimated by organisers after the event.

Method 1 - Estimates made during NSEW event registration:

During event registration organisers register their event and also estimate the number of expected attendees. In NSEW 2008 there were a total of 1375 registered events with a total of 374,924 expected attendees⁴.

If this figure is extrapolated to the estimated number of events [3599 not including media trawl figures, from which 41 events have been identified as of 23 April], we can estimate the numbers of attendees for National Science and Engineering Week as a whole to be 981,000.

Method 2 – Estimated numbers from NSEW evaluation forms

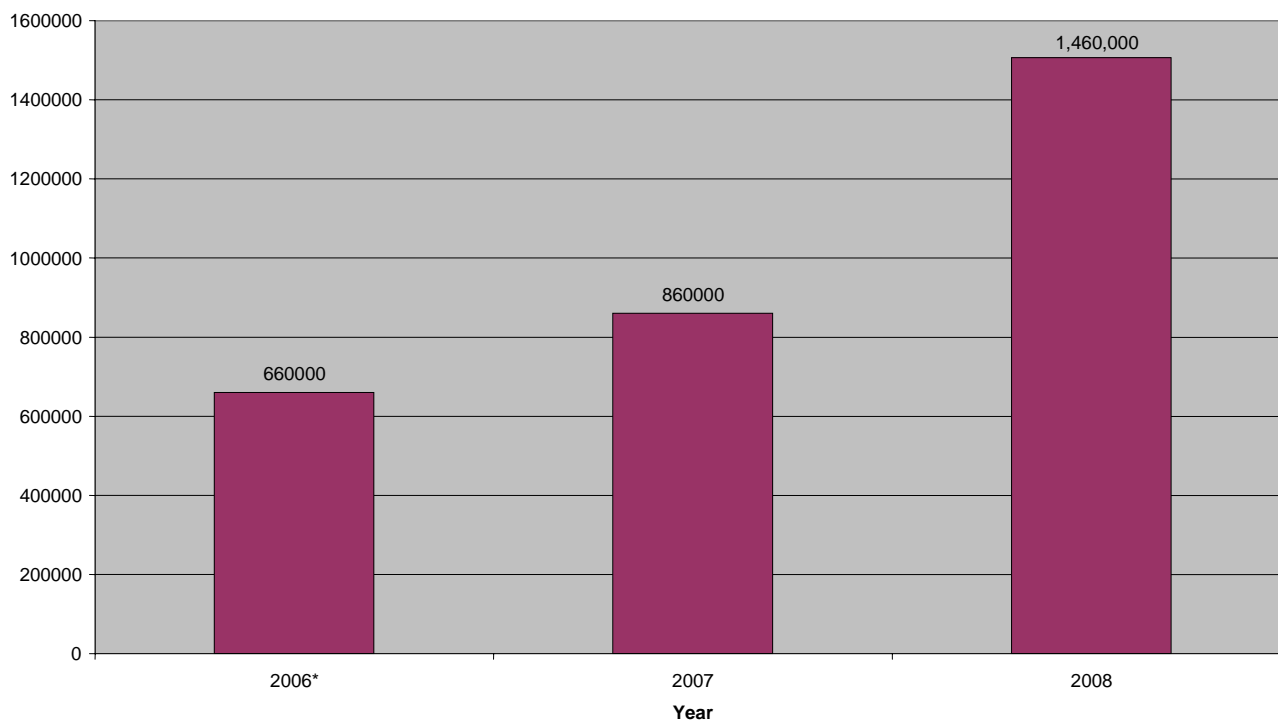
The 619 organisers who registered at least one event were sent an evaluation pack containing questionnaires prior to NSEW 2008. From the 619 evaluation packs sent out 271 organisers completed the form with a total estimated number of attendees as 145,953.

If this figure is extrapolated to the estimated 3599 events [not including media trawl figures from which 41 have been identified as of 23 April], then we can estimate the expected numbers of attendees for National Science and Engineering Week as a whole to be 1,938,000.

We would expect the true number of attendees of NSEW to lie between these two figures i.e. average = 1,460,000.

In past years:

Number of estimated participants during National Science and Engineering Week



* These are the average figures taken from estimations using method 1 and 2.

⁴ This figure does not include events from the NSEW small grant scheme

The figures were calculated by simply including registered events and did not include estimated attendance from events known to have occurred but not registered. This is to make the figures directly comparable with previous Weeks. However, other known attendees are from Ready to Learn – The Experiment (with 78,431 attendees), and the NSEW small grant scheme (44,300 attendees).

These figures indicate that there are substantially more attendees for NSEW 2008 than in previous years. The average estimated number of attendees is ~560,000 more than 2007.

Estimated number of attendees by event type

School events

Based on initial estimates given by event organisers prior to the event – the total number of participants in the 461 school events were 93,255 people (children and adults). 189 schools also organised NSEW week events through the NSEW small grant scheme. Of these 44,300 participants in total were estimated prior to the events. Therefore for the 650 school events there were a total estimated 137,000 attendees.

If the number of school children (78,431) involved in Ready to Learn – The Experiment is added to this total, the estimated number of school children attending NSEW events would be 215,986.

However, this figure is likely to be a substantial underestimate. According to the phone survey an estimated 5700 UK schools may have taken part in NSEW. This indicates that there may have been 1,200,000 attendees due to a high level of unregistered school events.

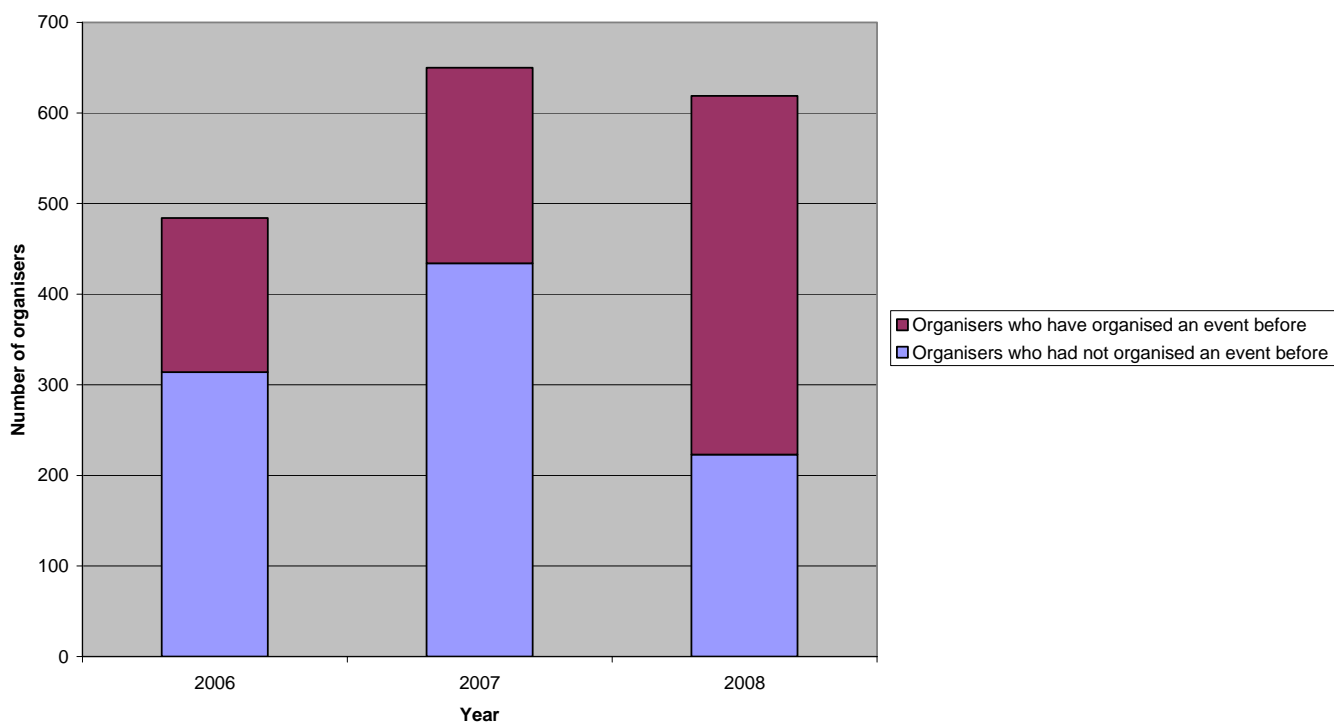
Non school events

The non-school events are classified as events which are either private or public and aimed at a variety of audiences. There are 913 registered non-school events, of which 189 were private. Of these 281,669 participants were estimated.

Note: School and non-school event numbers were not estimated in previous years.

Number of NSEW Organisers

The number of organisers (including those who have organised a NSEW event before) 2006-2008

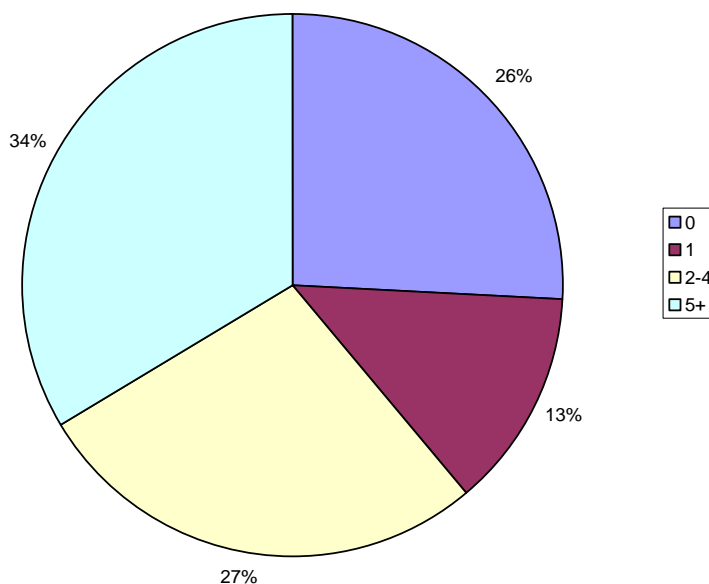


In total there were 619 organisers in 2008. This is a small decrease from 2007 numbers with 650 organisers registering events.

Of the 271 organisers who returned evaluation forms this year, 174 (64%) have organised a NSEW event before.

When asked how many other science events organisers produced throughout the year, 71 (26%) only organise NSEW events. On average each organiser arranged 3-4 events (range 1-70). 253 (93%) of organisers said they would organise another NSEW event.

How many events are run by NSEW organisers throughout the year



Presenters

From the 271 organisers who returned evaluation forms, the events involved 2279 presenters. If this is extrapolated to the 619 organisers it can be estimated that 5196 presenters were involved in 1375 events (i.e. 3-4 presenters on average per event).

Of the 202 presenters who sent in an evaluation form, 122 (61%) had not presented at a NSEW event before. (This is compared to 54% of them in NSEW 2007). This indicates that a higher proportion of presenters who were new to NSEW were used by NSEW organisers.

Impact objective 2

Objective: To increase the participation of scientists and engineers within NSEW.

Participation of scientists and engineers in NSEW can be in a variety of different forms. They can 1) be organisers of NSEW events, 2) presenters at NSEW events, 3) or they can take part in or support NSEW mass participation activities.

1) NSEW organisers

Number of scientists and engineers

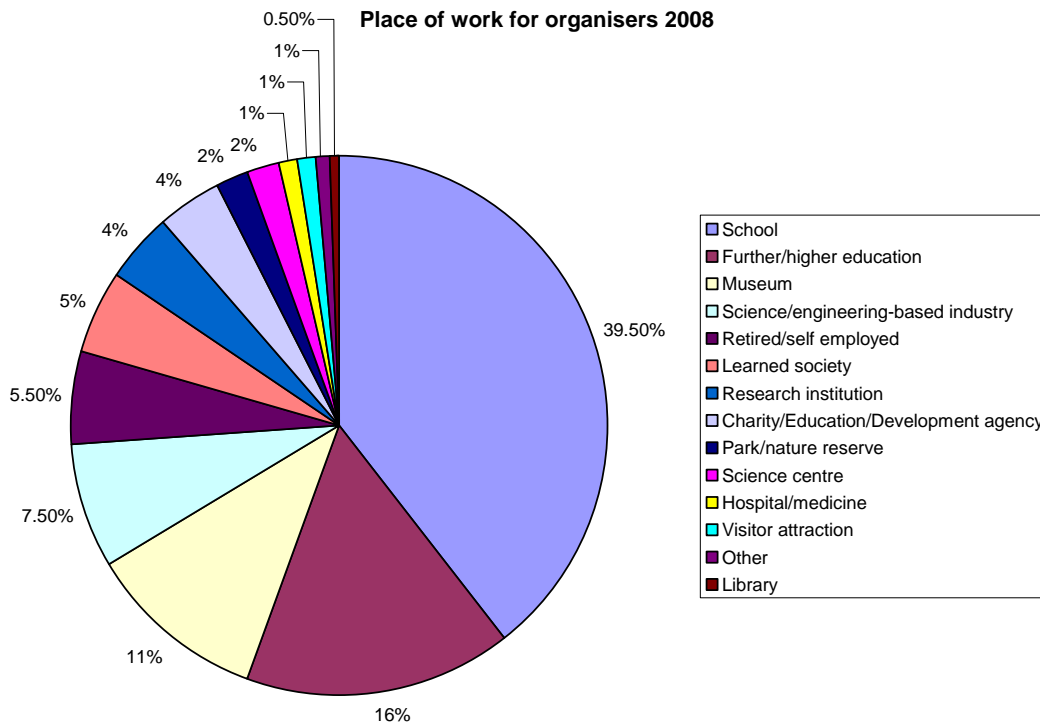
Out of 619 NSEW 08 organisers 271 returned evaluation forms. Of these organisers 180 (67%) were educated to undergraduate, postgraduate or professional qualification level. (83 (31%) educated to postgraduate level, 7 (3%) educated to professional qualification level and 90 (33%) educated to undergraduate level). If this is extrapolated to the 619 organisers an expected 415 organisers are educated to undergraduate, postgraduate or professional qualification level.

For NSEW 2007 – out of the 537 organisers sent the evaluation form, 162 returned it. Out of these - 64% were educated to undergraduate or postgraduate level.

In general this shows a slight increase in the percentage of those organisers (+3%) who are educated to at least undergraduate level from NSEW 2007.

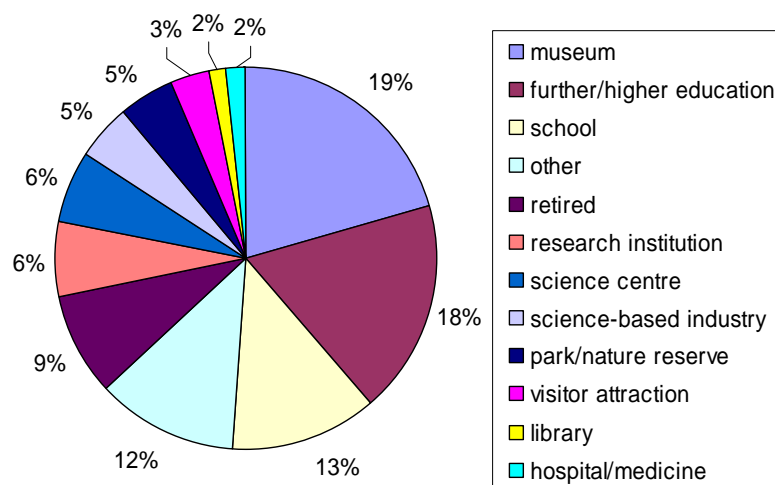
Place of work

By far the largest number of organisers⁴ work in a school (107 organisers or 39.5%). 75% of those organisers from schools are educated to at least an undergraduate level, and 21% educated to postgraduate level.



If this is compared to figures in 2006/7 – it is clear that there is an increase in number of organisers from schools and a lower number from museums/visitor attractions and science centres.

The shift in the “place of work” category to schools can in part be explained by the increase in the response rate of teachers receiving a NSEW small grant and due to increased marketing aimed at schools.



2) NSEW presenters

Number of scientists and engineers

201 presenters returned an evaluation form (compared with 260 in 2007 and 301 in 2006). Of these, 96 (48%) were employed as a scientist, a 9% increase from both NSEW 2006 and 2007 levels (at 39%).

70 (35%) had studied science to an undergraduate level, and 89 (44%) to a postgraduate level. This is a small increase in number of qualified scientists compared with NSEW 2007 (with levels at 29% and 42% respectively in that year).

If we extrapolate the number of presenters who are scientists to the 5196 presenters estimated to be involved in all NSEW registered events – the number of scientists involved is predicted to be 2494 (compared to 1650 in 2007).

3) NSEW mass participation activities

The Big Question Challenge

The Big Question challenge involved the public asking questions which were then answered by scientists or engineers on the Big Question Blog.

Over the course of NSEW, 727 Big Questions were answered by over 260 scientists and engineers (who each answered a range of questions from 1-33). A number of these scientists and engineers had not been involved in science outreach activities with the BA before. This blog is still active and new scientists and engineers are still getting involved.

Impact objective 3

Objective: To increase awareness amongst the general public of NSEW and the NSEW brand.

Awareness of NSEW amongst the general public is measured by accessing how many attendees had heard about NSEW before and through a randomised public survey carried out by GFK NOP Consumer. Further analysis related to this objective is discussed under Process Objective 1. This discusses the public marketing and communication channels used for NSEW 2008 and how this may have affected public awareness.

Attendees

Of the 1417 adult attendees that returned evaluation forms – 786 (55%) of adult attendees said they hadn't heard of NSEW before the event. 1112 (78%) of the attendees had not been to an NSEW event before or were not sure they had.

Of the 2043 children from schools whose evaluations were returned, 1342 (66%) of children had not heard of NSEW before. 610 (30%) of these children had not been to a NSEW event⁵ before or were not sure if they had.

⁵ It is likely that children filling out the questionnaire said yes to attending a NSEW event – if they had ever gone to any science related event before.

NOP Survey

GFK NOP Consumer carried out a random survey of 1000 adults aged 16 years and over to determine the level of awareness of NSEW amongst the public. Fieldwork was done on the weekend prior to, during and after NSEW and the questions 'Have you heard of NSEW?' and 'When is NSEW?' were asked.

Results for NSEW 2008 -

Date of Survey	Have you heard of NSEW?		If yes – when is NSEW?	
	Yes	No	Correct answer ⁶	Incorrect answer/don't know
22-24 th Feb 2008	15%	85%	14%	86%
7-9 th March 2008	15%	85%	35%	65%
28-30 th March 2008	18%	82%	36%	64%

Awareness increased in 2008 from before and after NSEW by 20%. Of those people who were aware of NSEW, for the first time, the percentage of people who gave the correct timing for NSEW more than doubled, rising from 14% to 36%. This strongly indicates that awareness of NSEW improved and that national and regional press coverage had a positive influence on public awareness.

As the name of the Week has only been recently changed (from 2007) – it is interesting to look at the awareness of the old name to get a further indication of public awareness.

Date of Survey	Have you heard of National Science Week?	
14-16 th March 2008	Yes	No
	36%	64%

If the 36% level of awareness is extrapolated to the UK population (over 16) at 48.6 million⁷ – the number of people aware of the old name is 17.5 million and for the new name it is 7.8 million.

Impact objective 4

Objective: To increase traffic to the BA/NSEW website.

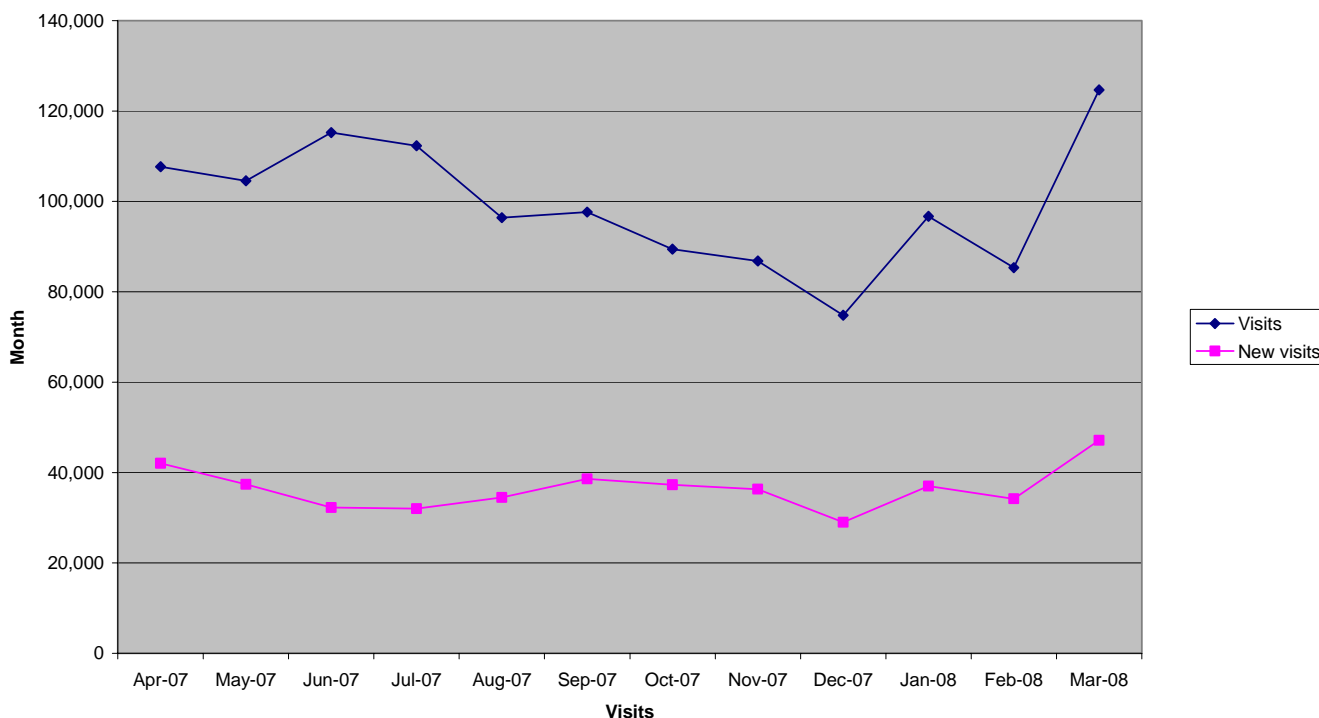
March is the month with the highest number of visitors to the BA website at 124,686 visitors due to increased traffic for NSEW.

The NSEW homepage was the most visited page on the BA website during March, including the BA home page, with 15,756 visits (this is compared to 14,958 visits to the NSEW homepage in March 2008).

⁶ A correct answer = 'March', 'in spring' and '7-16th March' in NOP survey

⁷ As estimated by National Statistics 2005

Number of visits to the BA website over one year

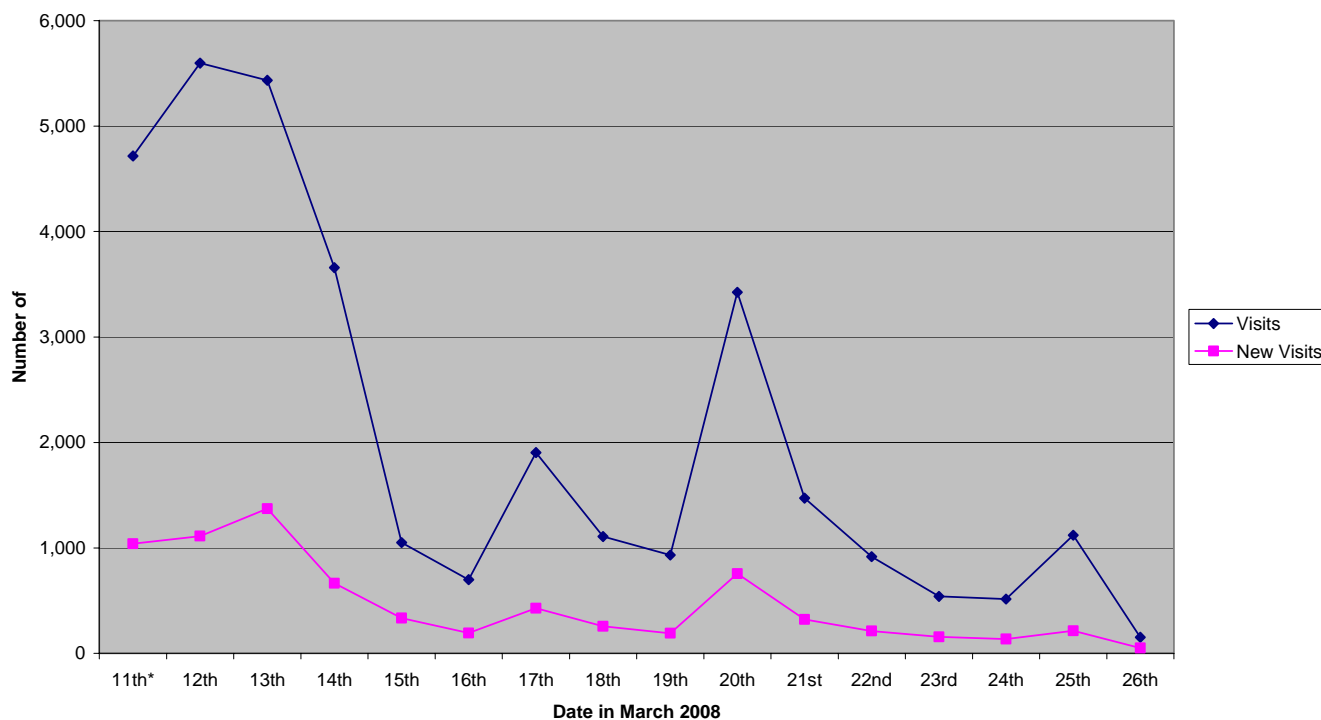


Big Question Challenge

This year the online mass participation campaign 'The Big Question Challenge' had its own blog site – <http://bigquestion.wordpress.com> which has its own web traffic results. The statistics given in this report are accurate for April 2008 but this online forum is still live and people will continue to visit the site. There is also information available on the BA website <http://www.the-ba.net/thebigquestion> and statistics for this page are also included here.

There have been a total of 37,145 visits on the Big Question Blog site since its creation for NSEW (it went live on the 3rd March 2008). This is more than double the level of the NSEW section of the BA website. The page where people could post their Big Questions was the 5th most popular on the BA website in March 2008, receiving 6,413 visits.

Web stats for Big Question Blog Site (NSEW 2008)



*Statistics only available from the 11th March 2008

NSEW Challenge Packs

Free online resources are created for NSEW participants. In particular, challenge packs which include a series of themed activities are developed for schools and science clubs to encourage them to organise NSEW events. This year the theme for the new challenge pack was 'Food for Thought'. Food for Thought received 1,380 visits during March 2008 and 5,819 visits over the year from April 2007 to March 2008. Over all the challenge packs were visited a total of 8,297 times during March 2008 alone and 29,642 visits over the year from April 2007 to March 2008.

NSEW Online Quiz

A NSEW quiz is created each year to encourage greater participation in NSEW and encourage those who are unable to attend, present or organise an event to still be part of NSEW celebrations. This year was the first year the Quiz was developed online and 231 people took part in the online quiz. There was also a PDF version which could be freely downloaded. This received 1510 visits during March 2008 alone and 2,326 visits from its creation in Jan 2008 to March 2008. The 2007 quiz was also visited 991 times in March 2008 and 5,064 times from April 2007 to March 2008.

NSEW Online shop

The online shop is available each year for organisers, presenters and participants of NSEW to buy merchandise which may be useful to them during the Week. This is run at cost and no profits are made. In NSEW, 22 different types of item and a total of 4053 items were purchased.

Impact objective 5

Objective: To increase regional and national media coverage in print and broadcast.

	2008	2007
National Radio - number of items	10	2
National Radio - number of media organisations	4	2
Regional Radio - number of items	45	30
Regional Radio - number of media organisations	24	21
International Radio - number of items	7	0
International Radio - number of media organisations	6	0
National TV - number of items	10	1
National TV - number of media organisations (distinguished different ITV shows)	4	1
Regional TV - number of items	1	4
Regional TV - number of media organisations	1	4
International TV - number of items	2	0
International TV - number of media organisations	2	0
National newspapers - number of items	22	17
National newspapers - number of media organisations	10	9
Number of tabloids	4	4
Number of broadsheets	6	5
Regional newspapers - number of items	N/A	
Regional newspapers - number of media organisations	N/A	
International newspapers - number of items	9 (tbc)	0
International newspapers - number of media organisations	9 (tbc)	0

In total, 10 different newspapers (6 broadsheet, 4 tabloid) carried 22 items in 2008, compared to 9 newspapers (5 broadsheet, 4 tabloid) and 17 items in 2007. This is a 30 per cent increase in the number of articles this year. Overall, the articles this year were also longer, with a higher profile, and 60 per cent of the items classed as news/features, compared to 53 per cent in 2007.

A number of major features were run during the week in national newspapers. In particular, the Times ran a substantial feature focusing on the UK's 'Big Questioners' in their Saturday Magazine (8th March). It was the cover story (and thus also promoted within the newspaper) and comprised a seven page feature. This has an estimated media value of approximately £737,500 (calculated based on a full page advertising rate at £35,000, plus cover, worth £50,000, and using a standard multiplier of 2.5 to calculate the relative PR value).

A major article in the Daily Telegraph on Tuesday 11th March, based on the popular big question 'Is there life on other planets' covered two-thirds of a page and led to a related piece highlighting National Science and Engineering Week events, and information about where to find out more about the week. Based on current advertising rates, it carried an approximate media value of £83,750 (an average full page mono advertising rate for a specified day costs £50,600 on average – therefore an article that covers two-thirds of a page article would cost more than £33,500, then the standard multiplier of 2.5 is applied).

The Daily Mail also ran a full-page feature generated by the National Science and Engineering Week team towards the front of their weekend magazine (8th March), on page 18. News items appeared throughout the week and shortly afterwards in the Sunday Times, the Times, the Daily Express, the People, the Guardian and the Mirror.

Print media coverage for the month of March is still arriving from the monitoring company. Analysis of the number of articles in regional newspapers up to the end of NSEW currently stands at 265 for 2008, compared to 630 for 2007. However, a count of the articles seen during the week and for the subsequent seven days suggests that this difference will reduce once all the coverage has arrived. Regional print coverage is largely achieved as a direct result of individual events. While support and guidance is offered to event organisers about generating publicity for their events it seems that increasing this focus may be necessary to help boost regional print coverage.

In comparison, regional radio coverage went up 50 per cent, increasing from 30 items in 2007 to 45 this year. The number of different stations around the UK reporting on NSEW increased from 21 to 24. The Big Questions Blog was a very popular topic and was mentioned in at least 15 interviews broadcast on regional stations all around the UK at the start of NSEW – from Jersey to Scotland. This interview syndication process was coordinated by the Head Office press officer.

National radio coverage increased from 2 brief listing mentions in 2007 to 10 items, of which 8 were more substantial as they included interviews with scientists involved with the week. In particular, the BA's President, Sir David King, took part in BBC Radio 4's Today Programme on the first day of NSEW, answering listeners' Big Questions. NSEW-related interviews were also broadcast on BBC Radio Five Live's Morning Report, BBC Radio 2 news, BBC Radio 4 news and on Independent Radio News.

Coverage on national and regional television more than doubled (13 items in 2008, compared to 5 in 2007). Significantly there were 4 high profile items on national television compared to 1 in 2007, as well as 5 Teachers' TV programmes. BBC Breakfast featured two NSEW stories – in particular a major segment on Friday 7 March where Professor Robert Winston was interviewed about the Big Question Blog – this was mentioned throughout the programme, with promo spots and a phone-in. It also then featured as the primary mention about that day's show on the BBC Breakfast online 'watch again' facility. Coverage was also achieved on a mainstream television show on ITV, The Alan Titchmarsh Show, enabling NSEW to reach a wide audience, with varied demographics. As a result, the ITV website carried a NSEW reference and URL throughout the week.

Impact objective 6

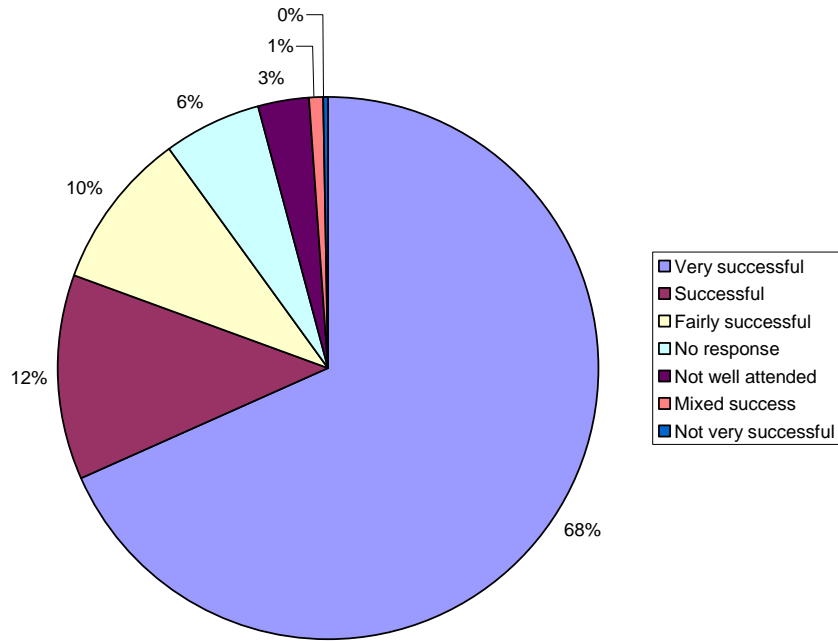
Objective: To promote the organisation of successful science events.

NSEW main events

Organiser feedback

Each organiser was asked how successful they thought their event had been. The resulting comments were condensed/translated into the following categories: Very successful, successful, fairly successful, mixed success, not well attended, mixed success and not very successful.

How successful organisers considered their events to be



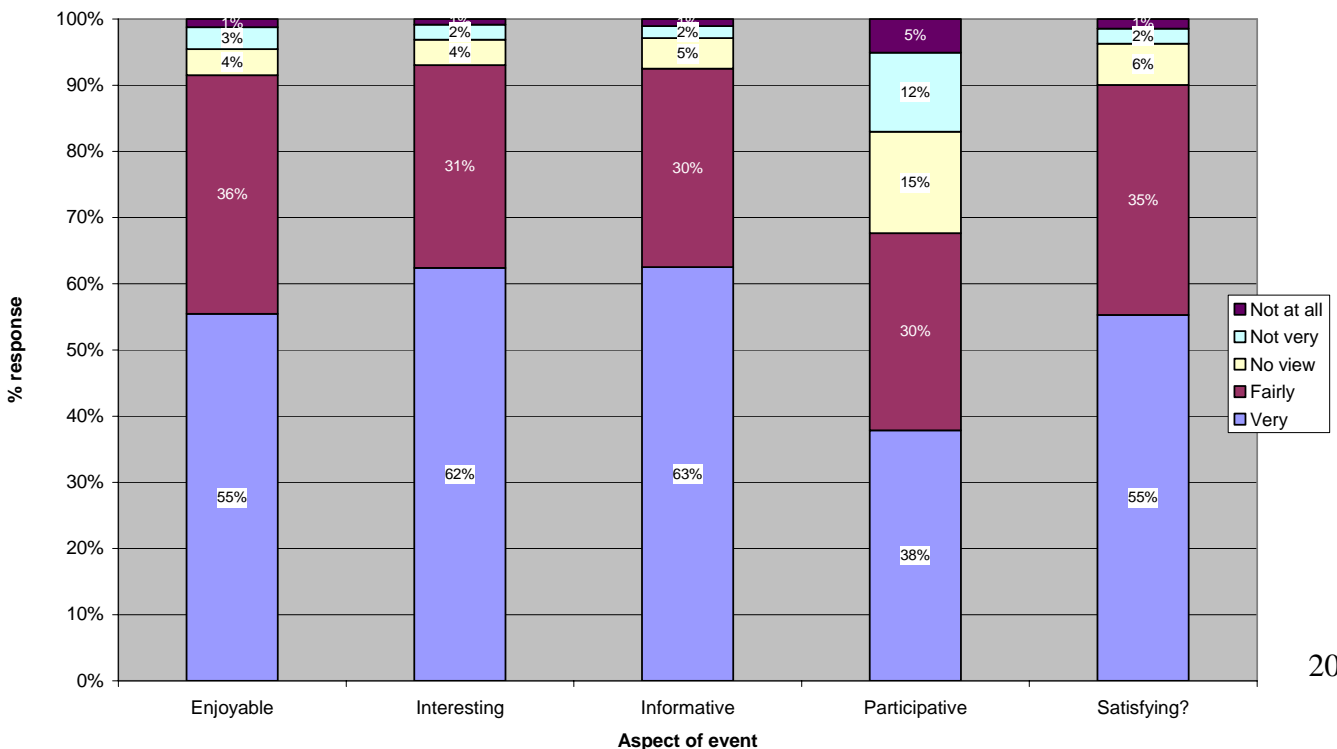
This shows that 80% of organisers felt their event was very successful or successful. This is compared to 2007 when 83% of organisers felt the same.

The top three reasons why organisers want to organise an event are as follows – 1) to enthuse people about science, 2) to inspire children to study science further, 3) to be part of NSEW. The three least common reasons (by a significant level) is to 1) gain practical experience in events 2) promote an understanding of an organisation 3) its part of an organisation’s remit.

Attendee feedback

As a measure of event success, attendees were asked to rate different aspects of the events they visited.

How adult attendees rated aspects of the NSEW event



The events rated extremely highly for all of the different aspects that were evaluated with 87% of people being very or fairly satisfied overall with the event, with only 'participation' scoring slightly lower.

School children –

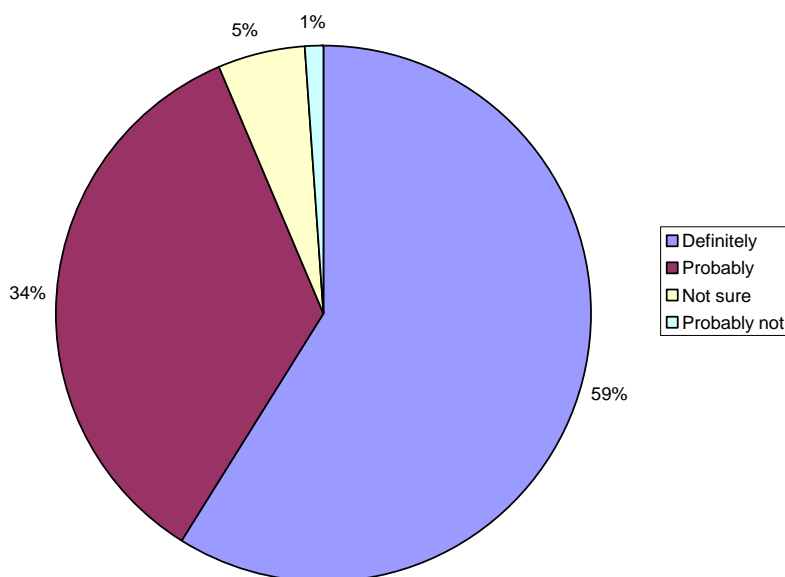
2082 children sent back evaluation forms. On this they gave the event a mark out of 10. The average mark was 8.4.

The children were asked what they thought of science and engineering after the NSEW event. Here are examples of comments:

- 'It was exciting and fantastic'
- 'It was fun creating a water rocket'
- 'Really good but I wouldn't like to be a doctor'
- 'I understand more now of what I didn't before'
- 'I don't think I would like to do it because I found it disgusting'
- 'It is very interesting and I would love to investigate it more'
- 'First I would have thought it would be boring, but now I have been here, it was very interesting'
- 'I like doing practical things; I find that part quite fun'
- 'Great. I held a crab and a zebra muscle'
- 'It should be a lesson at school because it is fun and interesting'
- 'It is more exciting than what I thought'

Presenter feedback

Percentage of presenters who would consider being involved in NSEW event again



When asked whether presenters would consider being involved in other NSEW events in the future, 93% said that they would definitely or probably (this is similar to NSEW 2007 when 94% of presenters said the same thing).

The top three reasons why presenters want to be part of an event is as follows – 1) to enthuse people about science, 2) to inspire children to study science further, 3) personal enthusiasm for the subject.

The three least common reasons (by a significant level) is to 1) gain practical experience in events 2) its part of an organisations remit 3) promote an understanding of an organisation.

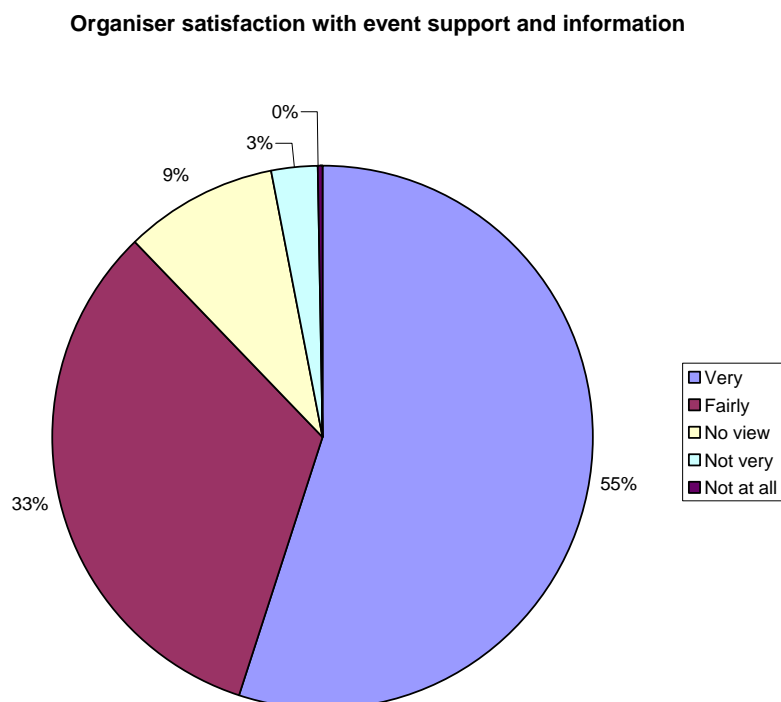
Feedback on the Big Question Challenge

This mass participation event proved popular with the public, and with the scientists and engineers who got involved. Although we asked for no formal feedback – many people emailed us to let us know how they felt about the project and there were also comments on the Big Question Challenge posted on online comment sites and in the general media. These comments are listed below:

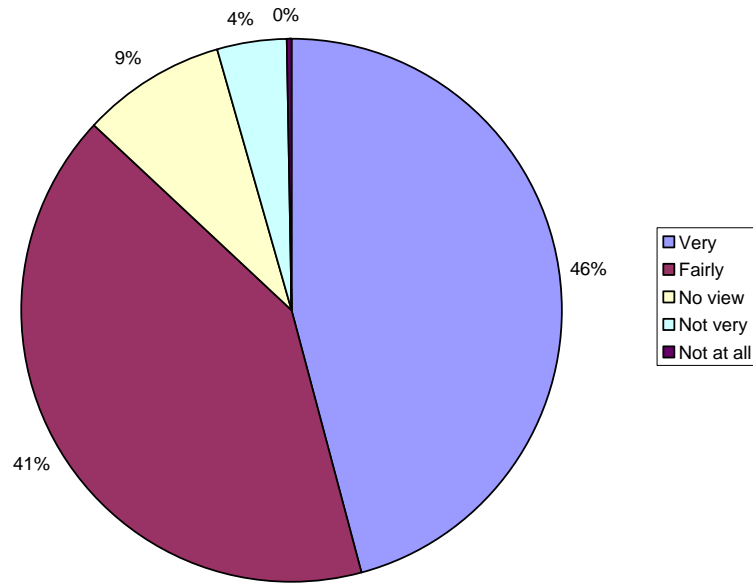
- Thank you for answering my question I thought it was a good idea – thanks!
- This is a really good idea and some of the questions are brilliant. If any research is sparked by some of the ideas on this website will the originator get the credit? Thanks for a much-needed site.
- This is an excellent site. You should publish this into a book - great as a Christmas gift as it full of very interesting questions and answers - could make the site some great income.
- This site is the highlight of my day – the questions are great!
- This is a fun thing to do! Yes, I am happy to help.
- *From personal blog site* - Ah! Finally, science outreach that doesn't require a railcard. As part of the celebration for "[National Science and Engineering Week](#)," British Association for the Advancement of Science ('BA'... though they seem to have dropped a couple of letters) is hosting a [Big Questions blog](#) where anyone can send in a science question for the general scientific community. Scientists (generally defined) can then respond to these questions via comment. They ask that you include a short blurb about who you are (presumably for quality reassurance). It sounds like a lot of fun. The students in the IPPP are getting together to answer a few of them tomorrow, and I encourage anyone out in the blogosphere to join in. Science and Engineering Week ends on the 16th, but I hope they keep the blog up. I think it's a novel use of the 'Web 2.0' to facilitate science outreach and scientist-public interaction.

Event support evaluation

Organisers were asked about their level of satisfaction for the level of event support and information and on the event entry system. Overall 88% of organisers were either very or fairly happy with the level of event support and information, remaining at similar levels to 2007. The event entry system was replaced in 2008 and 87% of this organisers that used this were very or fairly happy with the new system. The percentage of people who were unhappy with the event system fell from 8% to 4% in 2008.



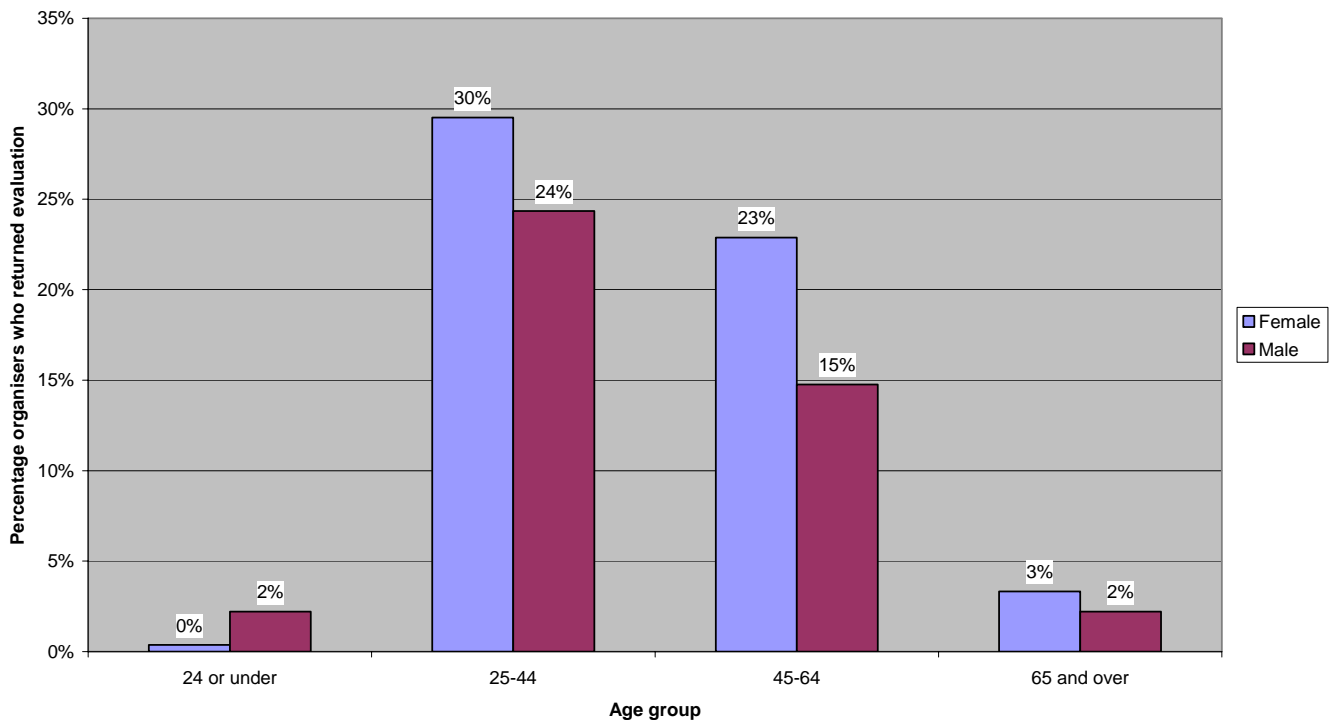
Organiser satisfaction with the event entry system



Demographic objective 1

Objective: Increasing participation amongst the general public, particularly young and hard-to-reach audiences.

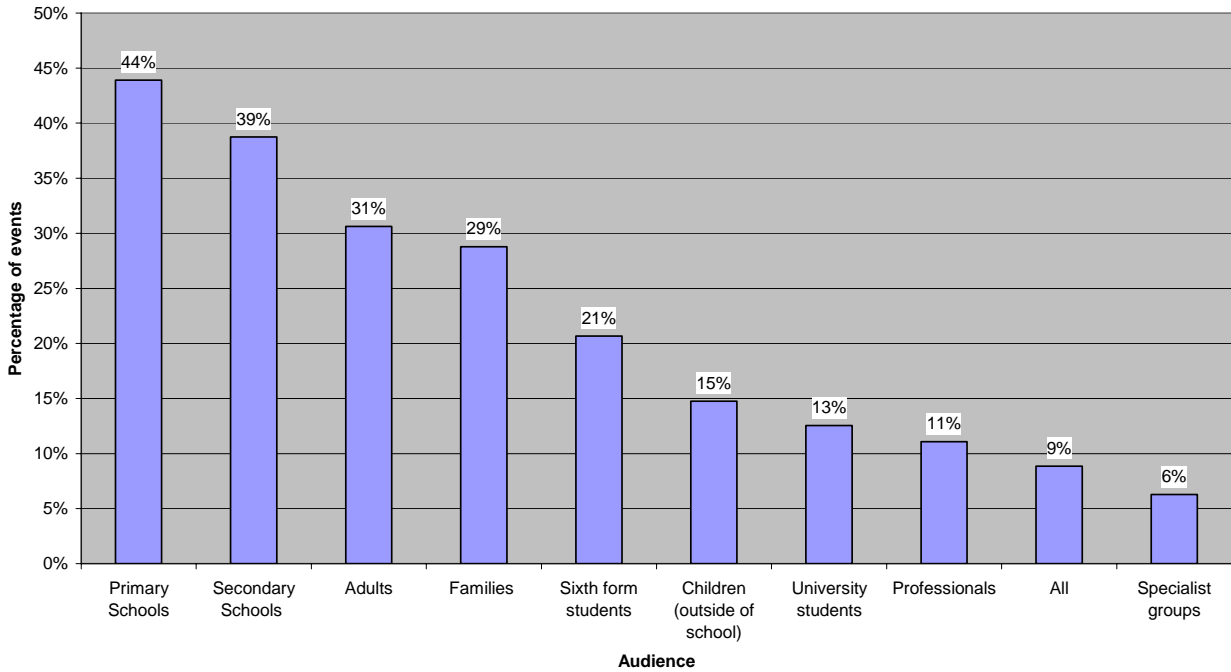
Organisers by age and sex



Of the 271 organisers who returned an evaluation form, the vast majority were in the 25-44 bracket, with similar numbers of male and female organisers (44% and 56% respectively). (In 2007, a very similar distribution of age groups is seen but the vast majority of organisers were female at 72%).

Event target audiences

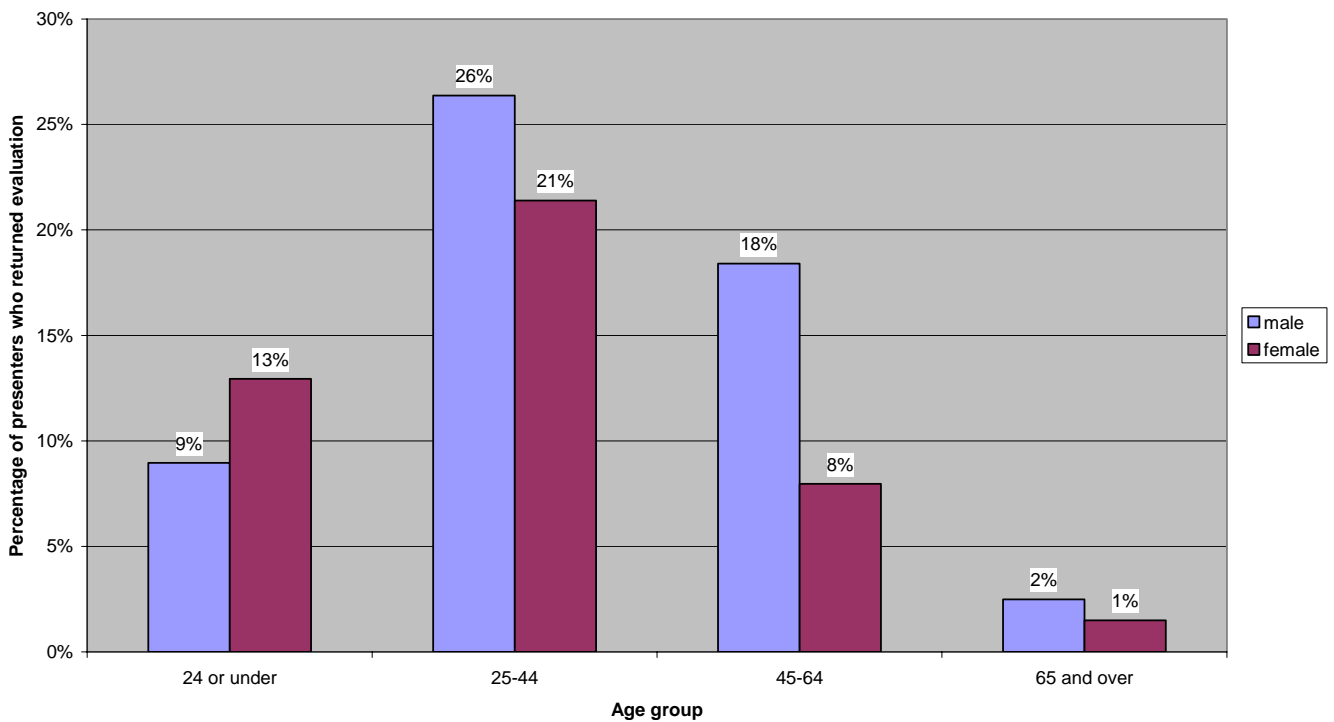
Organisers target audience



Organisers were also asked to specify which type of audience they targeted their events. This graph shows that 44% of organisers who returned their evaluation form had primary schools within their target audience. This targeting is almost identical to that seen in NSEW 2007.

Presenters

Presenters age and sex



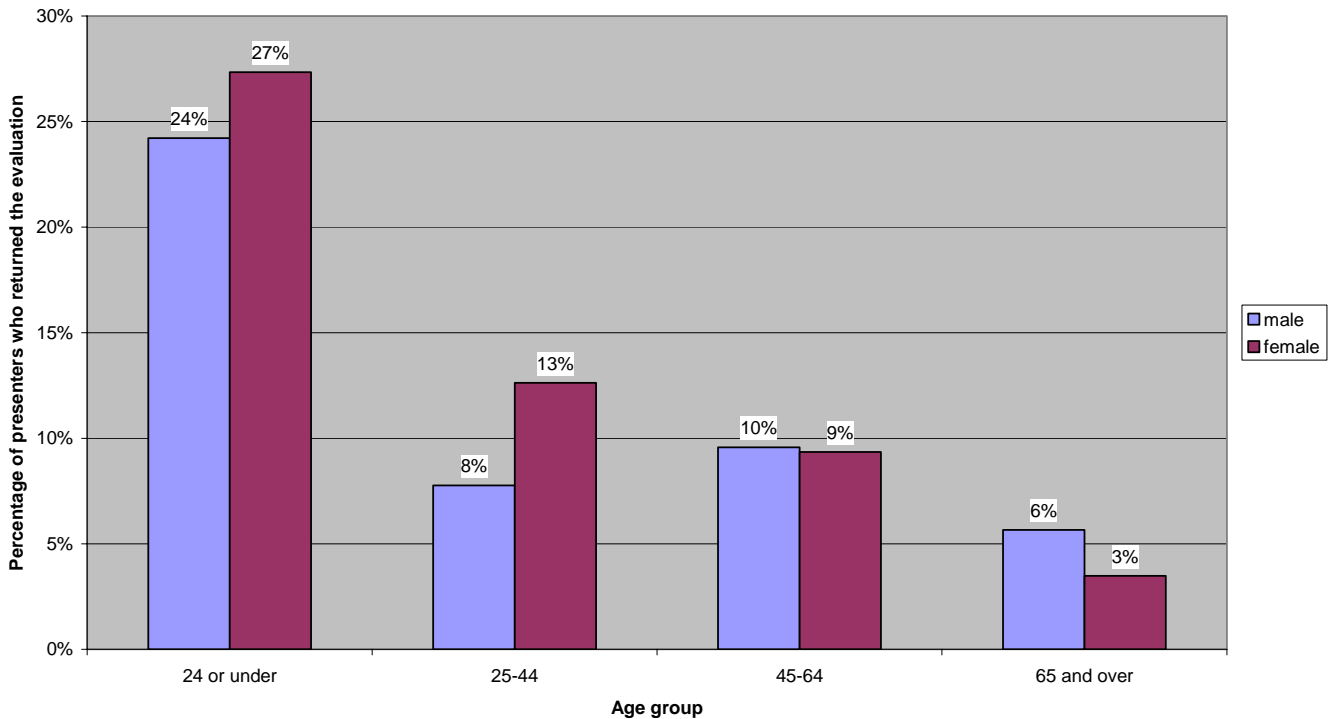
Out of the 201 presenters who returned evaluation forms - there are slightly more male presenters than female presenters (56% compared 44%) with but the age distribution is similar. This has changed

slightly from NSEW 2007 (when the male and female ratio was again similar) but the age distribution indicated the average female presenter was younger than the average male presenter.

Attendees

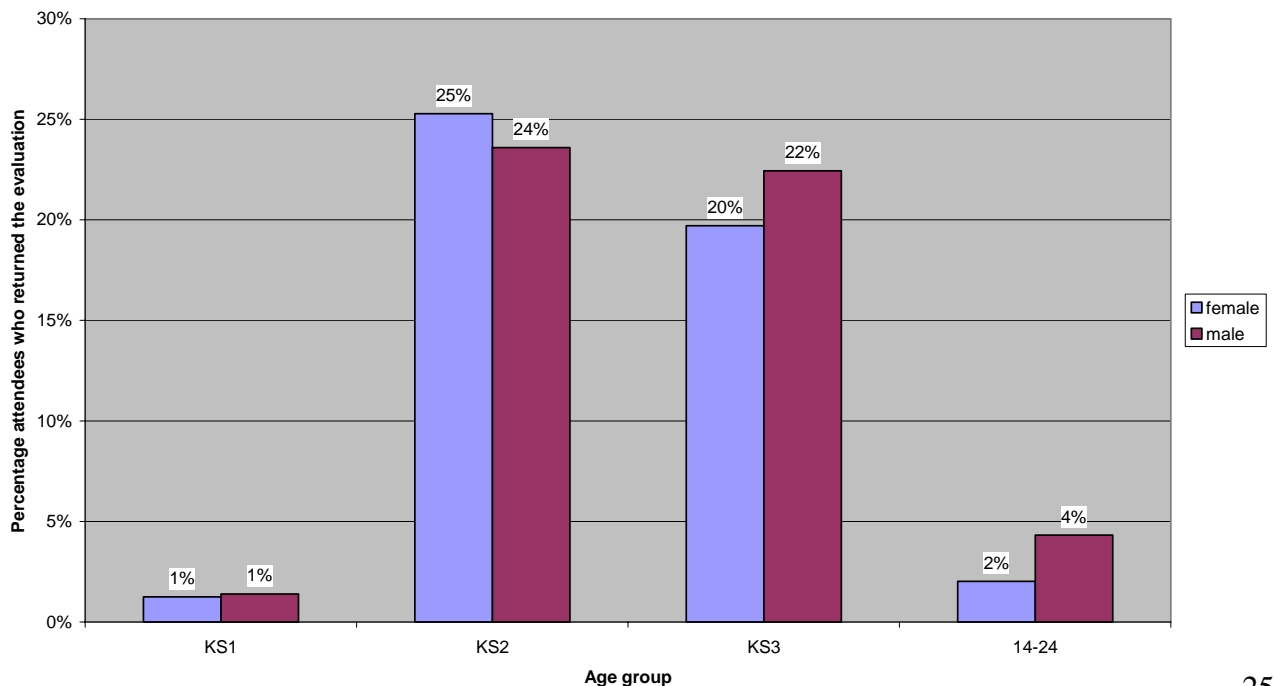
Out of the 1379 attendees from non-school events there were almost equal numbers of males and females (47% vs. 53% respectively) and similar numbers within each age group.

Attendees age and sex

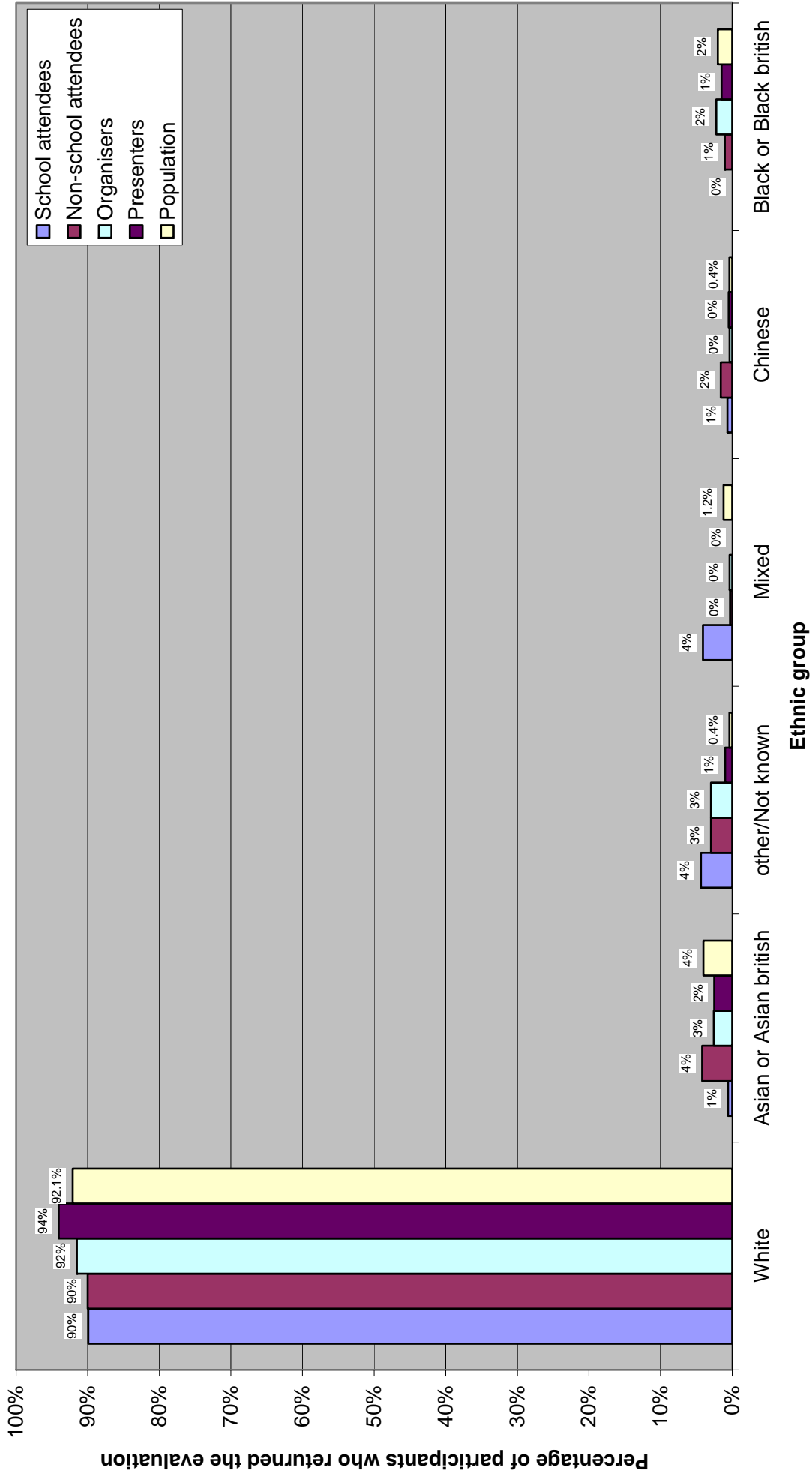


Of the 2081 school children who returned evaluation forms, there were again almost equal numbers of males and females (52% vs. 48%) and similar numbers for each age group. These results may indicate the vast majority of school children who attended NSEW events were in KS2 or KS3 (the same was seen in NSEW 2007). However, the higher number of school children in KS2 and KS3 age brackets may be due to the fact teachers get their pupils at this age to fill out evaluation forms.

Attendees age and sex at school events



Ethnicity of NSEW participants



Ethnicity

The participants in NSEW are primarily white, however the proportion of other nationalities are either comparable or greater than the national population (similar results were seen in NSEW 2007). Note this graph does not include the schools who organised NSEW events through the NSEW grant scheme for schools – the impact of this scheme is analysed below.

NSEW small grant scheme for schools

This was a new initiative started in NSEW 2007 and funded by DIUS. The aim of the scheme was to provide small amounts of money to schools, with either a high proportion of pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds or from ethnic minority communities, in order to run some sort of activity or event for NSEW.

In 2008 – 191 schools were successful in obtaining a NSEW small grant and an estimated 44,300 pupils in total attended these school events. Overall this included an estimated 18,166 pupils (41%) from ethnic minorities and 13,691 (31%) pupils eligible for free school meals as estimated by the schools in the application process.

Process objective 1

Objective: Improve marketing and communication channels to the public to promote the website and online programme.

Marketing policy changed from NSEW 2007 to NSEW 2008. The printed programme was no longer produced for 2008 and in replacement of this a new online programme was developed and a greater range and number of marketing materials were distributed across the UK.

The reasons for this change were due to four main problems associated with producing a printed version of the programme in 2007. These included:

- 1) The programme was never completely up to date. Events that were added or changed after the submission deadline had to be missed off the printed programme.
- 2) The printed programme could not reach as many people as we would like. This is because producing the programme in large enough quantities to send to homes, schools and businesses across the country is too expensive to consider.
- 3) Producing the programme uses an extremely large percentage of staff time and resources which could be used more effectively.
- 4) The design, production, printing and distribution of the printed programme used a large percentage of the budget for NSEW 2007 which could be used more effectively.

Therefore for NSEW 2008 the printed programme was not produced and instead the extra resources were used to direct and drive people to the online programme; through a larger number of simpler marketing materials. The following marketing materials were produced – 1) a information leaflet for all organisers including all UK schools (32,000 printed), 2) a general DL sized marketing leaflet which went to libraries, museums, science centres, NSEW event organisers, schools and any other organisations who requested copies (325,000 printed), 3) Posters – two kinds sent to event organisers to use at their events (2,000 of each), 4) A5 blank but branded flyers – sent to organisers to use to advertise their event (10,000 printed) 5) Bookmarks – sent to organisers to use at their events (30,000 printed).

Organisers

Where did organisers first hear about NSEW?		
	NSEW 2008	NSEW 2007
Professional contacts	43%	48%
Personal contacts	13%	8%
Online programme	4%	4%
BA website	17%	20%
Flyers/marketing/emails	15%	4%
National/regional Media	1%	3%
Other	8%	8%
Printed programme ⁸	-	5%

When organisers were asked where they first found out about NSEW, the majority of organisers indicated that they had found out about it through professional contacts. This is a similar result to NSEW 2007 when 48% of organisers had found out about NSEW through professional contacts.

Significant numbers of organisers also found out about NSEW from the BA website, marketing and personal contacts. The online programme seemed to feature less than the BA website at only 4% having first heard about NSEW through this resource (same as 2007). However, the percentage of organisers who first heard about NSEW from marketing increased from 4%-15% between NSEW 2007 to 2008 (or from 9%-15% if you include the impact of the printed programme).

⁸ No printed programme was produced in 2008

Although there was far more national and regional media coverage than in 2007, awareness of NSEW through this means is down from NSEW 2007. This may be because we won't see the impact of this media coverage until 2009 as these results were from organisers who would have started organising their NSEW event in 2007. Therefore the impact seen here is likely to be from media coverage in NSEW 2007.

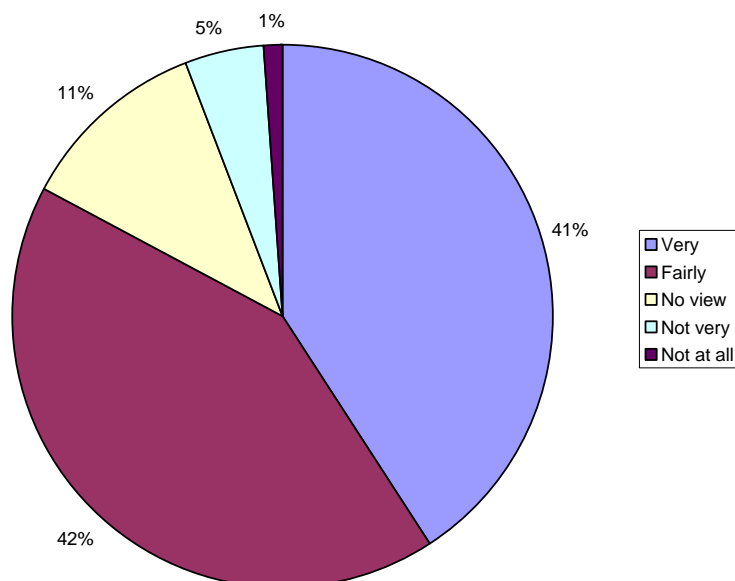
As described under Impact objective 3, there was an increase in the number of visitors to the BA NSEW homepage compared with last year (15,756 visits compared to 14,958 visits in 2007). There was also an impressive 37,145 visits on the Big Question Blog site. This indicates that although the overall increase in website activity is smaller than hoped, it is an increase in NSEW specific traffic.

Also several factors including 1) the increase in awareness of NSEW by the public in 2008, 2) the high percentage of organisers who used the marketing materials (highest compared with any other resource), 3) the 5% of attendees who had heard of events through the marketing materials and 4) the increase in the percentage of organisers who had first heard of NSEW from marketing materials up from 4%-15% between 2007 to 2008, all suggests that the change in marketing strategy in particular has had a positive influence on the awareness of NSEW.

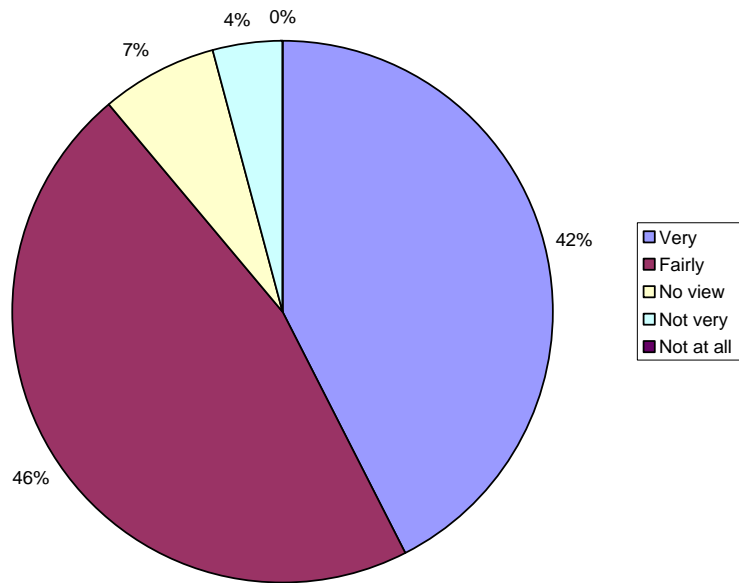
Marketing and website feedback from organisers

Organisers were asked about their level of satisfaction for the marketing materials and resources available and for the NSEW website generally. Overall 83% of organisers were either very or fairly happy with the marketing materials and resources available, 88% were either very or fairly happy with the NSEW website.

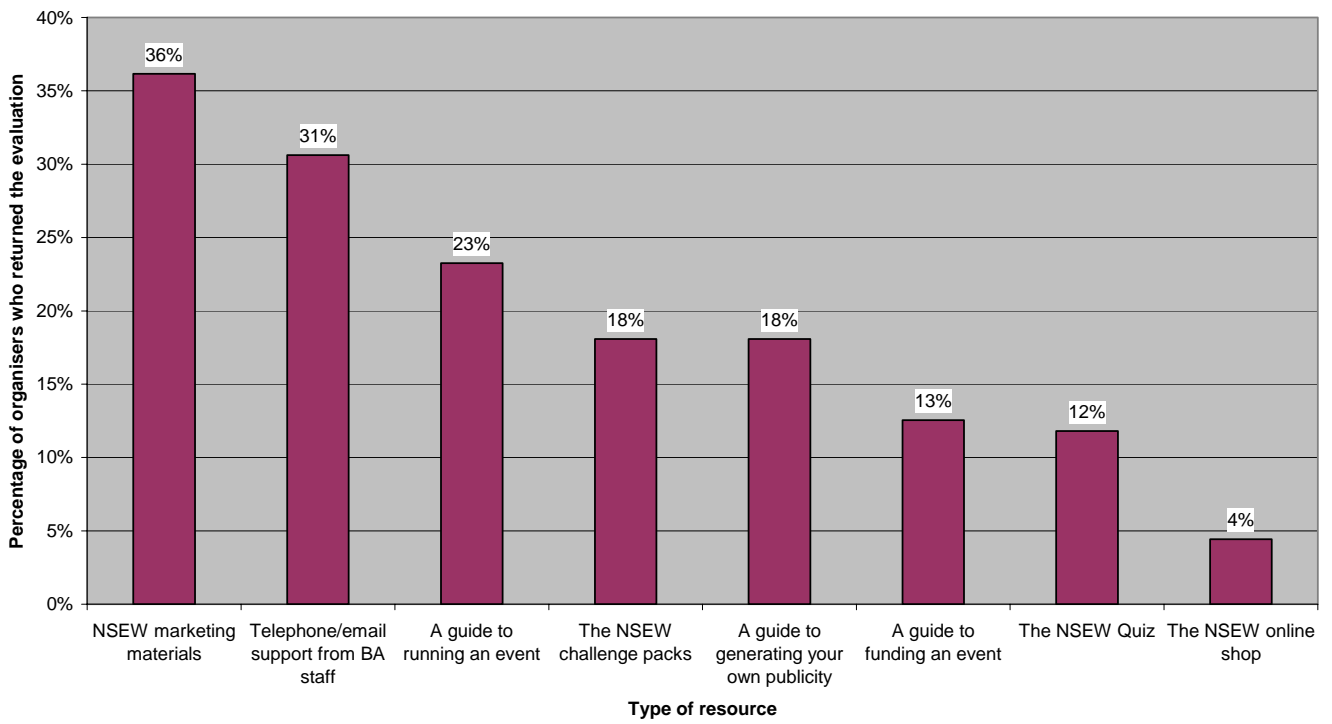
Organiser satisfaction with marketing materials and resources

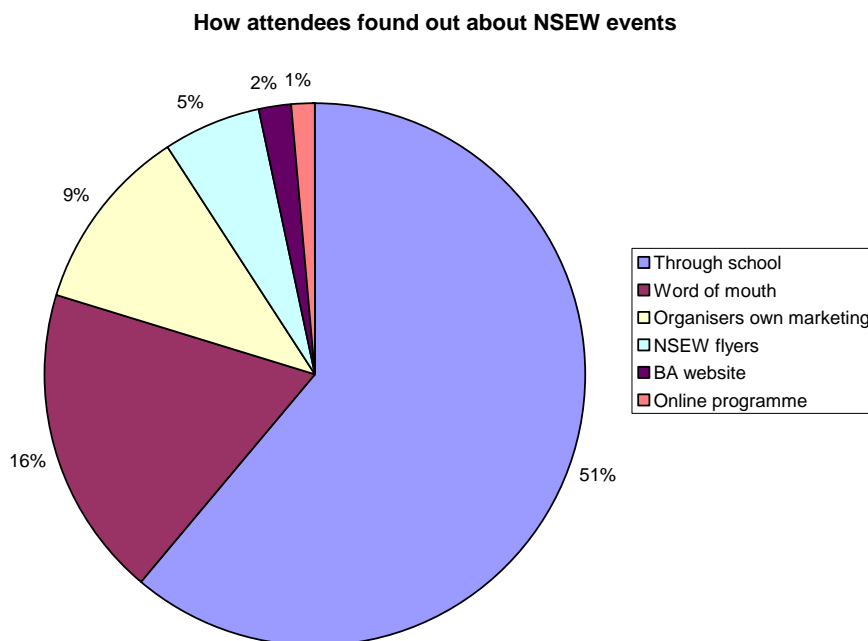


Organiser satisfaction with the NSEW website



Percentage of organisers who used each of the NSEW resources available





From this feedback it can be seen that most attendees hear about NSEW through school or by word of mouth (67%). The online programme contributes very little awareness to the NSEW events (1%) but NSEW flyers do play a more significant role (5%).