



UL ENGAGE

Community Briefing

2018 No. 40

St. Gabriel's Regifting Store

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Promoting University Community Collaboration

THE BRIEF

Project Aim and Objectives

The overall aim of this project is to research and develop the idea of implementing a regifting store that will be run by St. Gabriel's School and Centre for children with special needs. This is an initiative that will involve an attractive online component and be able to raise money for St. Gabriel's, as well as provide a sustainable and environmentally friendly addition to the community.

Project Objectives

The objectives of this project are as follows:

- Research information about the concept, effects, and perceptions of regifting
- Interview charity store workers on their perspective to gain insight about items that sell, obtaining donations, and selling items
- Survey the public both in and outside Ireland about thought on charity shops
- Plan a future pop-up shop by creating advertisements and working out logistics
- Design a template for an online website platform
- Identify next steps that need to be taken in order to make the store a reality

Project Rationale

Financial Need

This project was created out of a need for another source of income besides donations that would be able to contribute to St. Gabriel's school. The project ties into St. Gabriel's goal of being more self-sufficient in terms of funds, and will outline the well-researched next steps that must be taken in order to create and establish a regifting store.

Why Regifting?

Regifting is the idea of giving away a gift or item that you have received to a family member/friend or to a charity. There are many benefits of regifting, including reducing clutter, giving an item "a second chance", and helping the environment by limiting waste. Regifting, much like minimalism, veganism, and waste-free lifestyles, has become an environmentally friendly, sustainable, and very popular idea that continues to rise in popularity. Creating a regifting store will not only make the regifting process easier, but also produce funds for a worthwhile charity like St. Gabriel's School and Centre. The sustainability and popularity of the concept will be sure to make this store relevant and successful in the years to come.

COMMUNITY

Overview of Community Organisation

St. Gabriel's School and Centre is a non-profit organisation and registered charity in Limerick for children with special needs. Their mission is to support each child to reach their potential to live their life in a dignified manner.

They work with parents, carers, and their extended families to deliver a range of services around the individual needs of the child. Their services are delivered across a range of settings; at St. Gabriel's Centre, in the child's own home, as well as at pre-school, primary, or secondary schools.

St. Gabriel's Centre serves up to 550 children by providing a number of services on a daily basis.

Community Partners



Kate Sheahan – St. Gabriel's School and Centre (Fundraising and Events)

I work as the Fundraising and Development Manager with St. Gabriel's centre based in Dooradoyle. I am responsible for everything to do with delivering the organisation's fundraising programme. This could include developing corporate partnerships, coordinating mail campaigns, organising fundraising special events and appeals and sourcing income from grants and other statutory bodies.



Chloe Lawrence – UL student on Co-op term

I am from County Mayo in the West of Ireland and a student at UL. I am currently a second year History, Politics, and Sociology student. This semester I am on Co-op in St. Gabriel's centre working with Kate Sheahan in the fundraising and development department.

STUDENTS



Megumi Gates – Mount Allison University

I am a third year biochemistry honours student at Mount Allison University in my hometown of Sackville, New Brunswick, Canada. I have been volunteered for numerous organizations at my home university including one for kids with special needs. I love to paint, bike, make friends, and travel in my spare time.



Shuqi Wu – Shongdong University of Technology

I am a fourth year student majoring in Computer Science at Shandong University of Technology in China.

I like doing computer related stuff, for example, designing websites and editing videos. Being a volunteer at my home community for more than 3 months made me strongly interested in helping others.

OUTCOMES

Research on Regifting

This project started out as a mere undeveloped concept of organizing a “regifting” facility that will bring in funds for St. Gabriel’s. Although little information was available regarding a physical regifting store, we were able to take this idea off the ground by researching the concept of regifting, as well as attitudes towards and advantages of regifting. Several studies have found that due to growing environmentalism as well as economic difficulties, there has been an increase in regifting for the purposes of recycling and saving money. Regifting initiatives on the rise, such as with the launch of websites like regiftable.com that give advice and guidelines on regifting, and the creation of “National Regifting Day” in the United States (Ertimur *et al.* 2015). “National Regifting Day” occurs annually on the Thursday before Christmas and was put forward by Money Management International to promote regifting to save money and help the environment by limiting waste (Swilley Esther *et al.* 2014). We came across some potential problems with regifting as well, since it can be considered to be offensive or rude if not done properly (Adams *et al.* 2012). Some positive and negative aspects of regifting are outlined below:

Advantages

- Giving items a second chance
- Money-saving
- Reducing clutter
- Reducing waste/ recycling

Disadvantages

- Potential to hurt the gift giver’s feelings
- Gifts given can seem less thoughtful

The advantages here far outweigh the disadvantages since the negative aspects can be avoided entirely by following some basic guidelines. These may include refraining from regifting personal or “one-of-a-kind” items and thinking about whether or not the recipient will appreciate the gift before regifting (Regiftable.com 2018). With the help of guidelines, regifting is overall a sustainable, environmentally friendly, and growing practice that can have positive impacts on the community.

Interviews

Information on the best items to sell, times, and days was gathered through interviewing staff at charity stores around Limerick. We visited 3 charity stores; *Oxfam Ireland*, *Buy My Style*, and *Vincent’s*. At each store, we interviewed one worker who had been with the company for at least one year. Some workers were paid, while others were volunteers from the community. Each of the workers at the 3 stores gave similar responses. Here are the main findings from the interviews:

- **Best Items** – Clothing and household miscellaneous items (including “bric-a-brac”, ceramics, vases, figures, and knick knacks) sell the best. In terms of clothing, particularly women’s and children’s clothing are popular. Outerwear or seasonal clothing also sell quite well.
- **Best Days** – Weekdays are generally better for sales, perhaps because parents would shop after or before picking their children up from school. Saturdays are also very popular shopping days.
- **Age Group** – The demographic of shoppers consists mostly of females ranging from middle aged to elderly. Students or younger people are rarely seen shop at these locations.
- **Donations** – Most of the donations received are used, but new items are occasionally received as well (in box or with tags still attached).

OUTCOMES

Survey

Two variations of a quick, anonymous, one-minute survey was circulated to obtain information about individual views and thoughts about charity shops. One was posted online for external feedback and the other was circulated with paper around to St. Gabriel's staff. It is important to keep in mind that this survey used the words "charity shops" instead of "regifting stores" which could affect the results slightly. The results are both described and shown using pie chart figures below.

External

A total of 62 people responded to the online survey created using the *SurveyMonkey* platform. Since we decided to circulate a survey on Facebook, 77.4 % of the respondents were between the ages of 18 and 25. Questions regarding the most frequent days and times for shopping indicated that 67.7 % of respondents preferred to shop in the afternoon, and weekends were better shopping days for 59.7 % of respondents. Over 90 % indicated that they preferred to shop in-store rather than online. Just under 55 % of respondents said that they would be more likely to shop at charity stores if online browsing was possible.

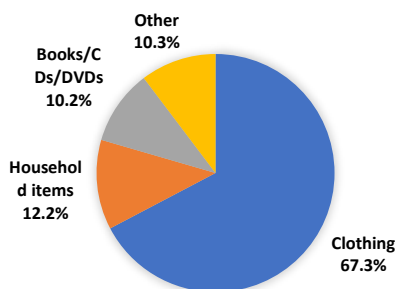


Figure 1. Categories of item bought most frequently

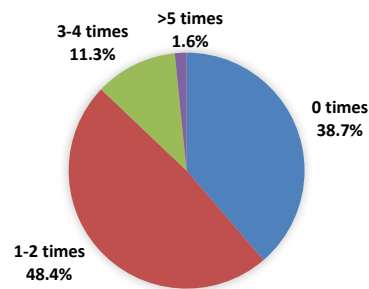


Figure 2. Frequency of visiting charity shops in the past 3 months

Internal

A total of 26 staff at St. Gabriel's responded to the paper survey. Over 60 % of respondents preferred to shop on weekends, and in-store shopping was a more popular option with 69.2 % of respondents preferring to shop in-store. When asked if online browsing was an appealing concept, 65.4 % said that online browsing would make purchasing more likely. Over 75 % of respondents said that they have received gifts they never used, and 100 % of respondents said that they would consider donating unwanted gifts to a regifting store. Finally, 50 % of respondents said that they would be more likely to purchase an item that was unused and 40 % said that they were unsure.

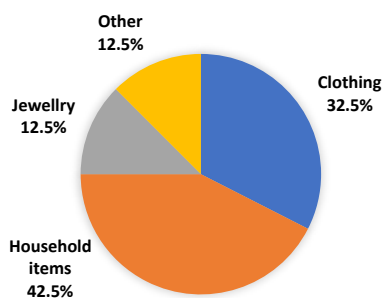


Figure 3. Categories of items bought most frequently

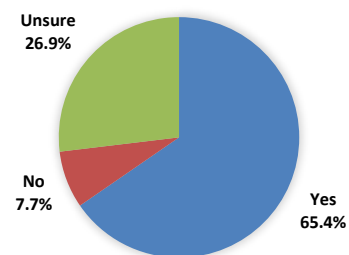


Figure 4. Question: would a regifting store interest you more than a charity shop?

OUTCOMES

Regifting Pop-up Shop in UL

In order to obtain more information about opening a regifting store, we planned some of the details necessary to run a pop-up shop in UL. All money raised from the sale of items will be donated to St. Gabriel's School and Centre. Perhaps the practicum students for next year could continue this plan and execute the event. These are some of the plan details that were thought of:

- **Best place, day, and time** – UL student courtyard, on a Tuesday during the school year, 3-4 hour time block (i.e. 11:00-14:00). We thought this would probably be the best time because it would coincide with the weekly market, where there is always a large crowd of students that could be potential customers. Need to obtain permission from UL Students' Union.
- **Advertisement** – Posters and social media (i.e. Facebook, snapchat) well in advance of the event. Starting at around 3 weeks before the event, posters would be put up asking for new item donations for the shop to sell. Closer to the event, different posters advertising students and staff to purchase items at the event could be used.
- **Storage of items** – Coordination with the UL Students' Union to use one of their storage rooms. Posters should also be put up in St. Gabriel's centre, along with an email being sent to each staff member to get donations from them as well. The community partner could hold onto those donations until closer to the date, when they could be collected and brought to UL.
- **Checking and pricing items** – All donated items need to be checked. These checks would be conducted by the practicum students and volunteers to ensure that all items are new and in sellable condition. All items would need to be priced as well.

Website Template

In addition to researching the use of an online platform to the store, we created a website template for an online platform that may help to make the regifting store more successful. Customers will be able to browse for items online, then visit the regifting store in person to purchase any items that spark their interest. The website is not made for ordering items, as this would make the store very complicated with packaging, shipping, and added costs and fees, but customers may be more likely to use the regifting store if they can browse in the comfort of their own homes. The website can be seen in the appendix section.

Conclusion

The next steps that need to be taken for the advancement of the regifting store concept were outlined, and a few posters ideas for advertisements were created. All of the work that we have done was gathered into a proposal document and given to Kate, will be able to guide new practicum students to develop the store further. Although the store has not been created yet, the work that we have accomplished will contribute to the actualization of the store in the future. Looking at the big picture, once the regifting store is established, it will bring in funds to support initiatives of St. Gabriel's as well as provide an environmentally friendly way to reuse and recycle unused items.

TESTIMONIALS

Testimonial from community partner Kate Sheahan:

“It has been a really positive and worthwhile experience working with Megumi and Shuqi. Both students engaged fully with the project and have made a very worthwhile contribution to bringing it to the stage it is now at.

The idea of a regifting store started out as a concept, however with their involvement, commitment, and very good digital knowledge, they have developed into something that has potential to launch at some point in the future as in-store and online selling platform.

They did a lot of research into the retail vintage/stroke charity shop business in Limerick and Internationally they carried out a survey which provided the basis for the content of the project.

I was delighted to have them working on the project. They have kept to their time lines and kept me informed at all times of their progress. They were a pleasure to work with and I can only wish them well in their own studies. I have no doubt but that they will be enormously successful in whatever careers they choose in the future.”



Kate Sheahan, Fundraising and Development manager of St. Gabriel's Centre.

Testimonial from community partner Chloe Lawrence:

“Working with Megumi and Shuqi was a great experience, they are two lovely girls and showed great initiative when it came to creating their project. It was interesting to learn about the cultural differences of three countries from them (Ireland, Canada, and China). Their idea of a regifting store is a great one that would really have an impact on the fundraising at St. Gabriel's centre. Their website was very well developed and easy to use and would be an essential part of the setting up of a regifting store. I greatly enjoyed my time working with the girls and wish them all the best in the future.”



Chloe Lawrence, co-op student intern at St. Gabriel's Centre.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Immediate Steps

Now that research and some development has been done for the regifting store, the next UL practicum students can help to carry on the project. Here are some things that can be done to develop the regifting store idea by helping to determine how to price items and gage how easy or difficult it is to obtain new donated items.

- Collection of unused item donations
- “Demo-runs” or pop-up shop events held around in UL and/or in Limerick
- Creating of a budget plan to estimate general start-up costs

Longer term steps

Further in the future before the regifting store can be set up, some important steps should be thought about to make this store more successful. Here are some of these steps:

- **Find a good location** – Specific store location and placement of bins or crates for item donations need to be decided.
- **Marketing** – Decide on store name, logo, opening hours, staffing, finalized budget, pricing system for items, advertising and so on.
- **Website** – Launch the website and keep updating it with a list of items for sale
- **Redecoration** – Peel off any old labels, check donated items to ensure they are new and sellable, and gift wrapping station for purchased items.
- **Plans for customer service** – Decide on a return and refund policy for store products. Plan for any possible situation that might arise, i.e. with customer complaints or defective products.

Encouraging Regifting

The concept of regifting has become popular given the economic and environment benefits (Ertimur *et al.* 2015). More importantly, the implementation of regifting can create a culture of waste reduction and can even become integrated into community traditions. We can encourage regifting and raise awareness in these ways:

- Participate in National Regifting Day (Thursday before Christmas) and tell friends about this.
- Regift unused items that are given to you by co-workers and acquaintances. Keep in mind the boundaries of regifting to ensure a positive experience.
- Hold a “regifting party” amongst friends or family! This is a fun and cheap way to get others involved by giving an unused gift and getting another gift in return (that you might use more).
- Encourage the younger generation to regift by telling your kids or younger friends and family members about the advantages of regifting unused gifts or donated them to a regifting store.

Today, the people who regift or donate items are normally adults. However, regifting can be an activity that involves all age groups, even those in the younger generation. Telling children and teens about regifting can help to instil environmentally good values in them. Donating unused gifts or items is a great way for them to help a charity in need and feel proud about their contributions. Perhaps the St.

Gabriel’s regifting store can hold a campaign to get specifically children involved and excited about regifting. Children who donate their items to the regifting store may receive a sticker or a badge that honours them for helping their environment and the children at St. Gabriel’s!



GALLERY



A wheelchair swing available at St. Gabriel's.



Some of the work that St. Gabriel's does for children with special needs.



The physiotherapy side of the work of St. Gabriel's.



Shuqi Wu posing beside the St. Gabriel's sign at the entrance.

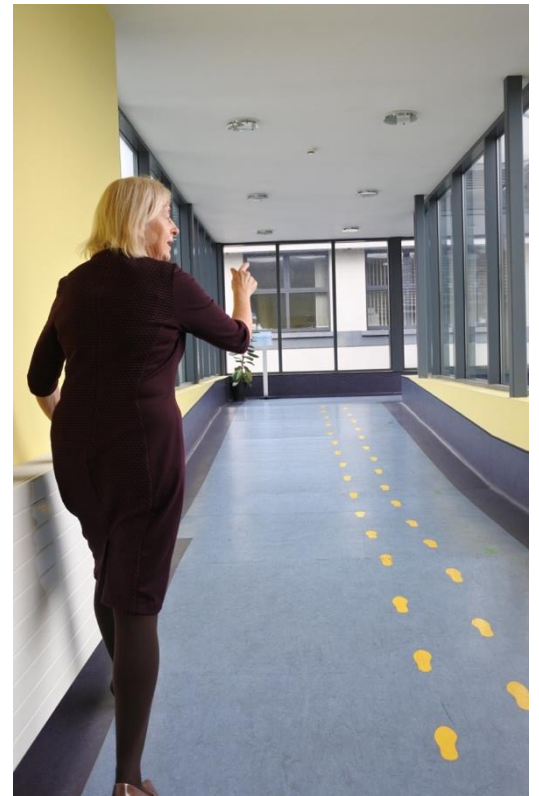


Design and model for the new St. Gabriel's Respite Centre to be built in Mungret, which is an initiative that the Regifting store could raise funds for.

GALLERY



Shuqi Wu (left) and Megumi Gates (right) with the St. Gabriel's sign.



Kate Sheahan, community partner and Fundraising and Development Manager, giving a tour around St. Gabriel's School and Centre upon arrival.



Chloe Lawson, a UL co-op student interning at St. Gabriel's (left), working alongside Megumi Gates (middle) and Shuqi Wu (right) to analyze the internal survey results of the responses given by St. Gabriel's staff.

GALLERY



Store #1 visited for interviewing, called “Oxfam Ireland”. A poster showing the works of the Oxfam organization (left) and the storefront visited in Limerick (right).



Store #2 visited for interviews in Limerick city, a charity store for the Simon Community organisation called “Buy My Style”.



Store #3 visited for interviewing, the St. Vincent de Paul foundation store “Vincent’s”.



Donations of unopened, unused gifts (above) will be sold in the regifting store to raise money and help the environment by recycling!

APPENDICES

Website Design

Link to see this website: <https://wsq486.wixsite.com/website-1>

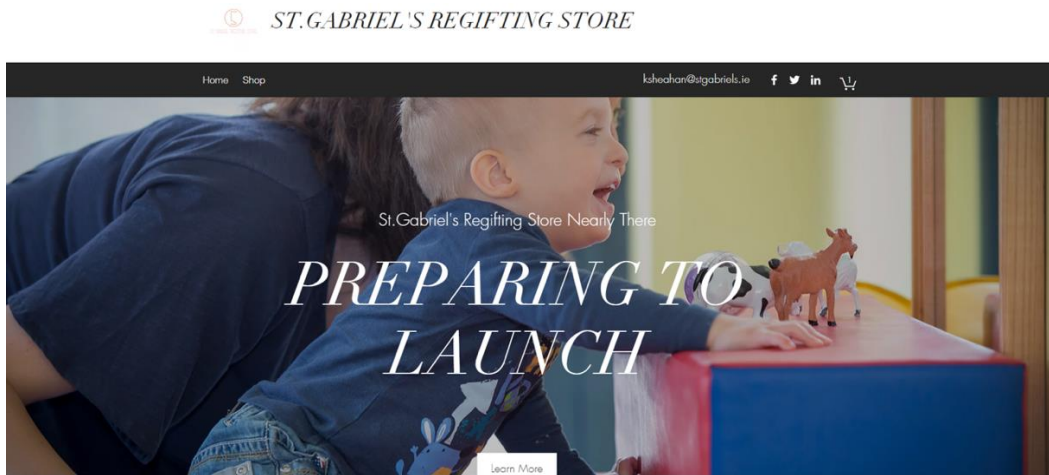


Figure 1: The opening “home” page of the website.



Figure 2: Photographs of “featured items” in the store can be seen below the home page. The “about” section is also featured here, where scrolling down will bring up this page.

APPENDICES

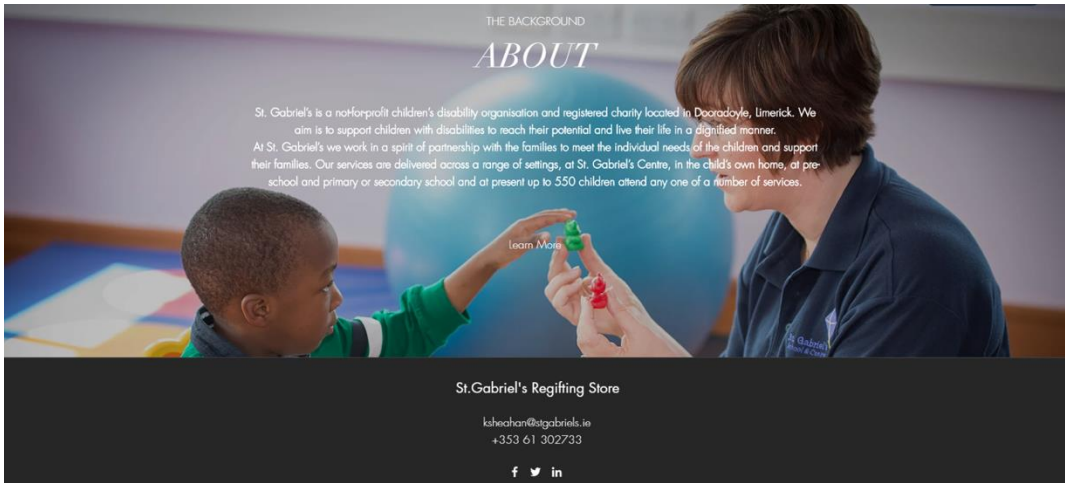


Figure 3: The “About” page of the website, where information can be found on St. Gabriel’s School & Centre, as well as the concept of regifting.

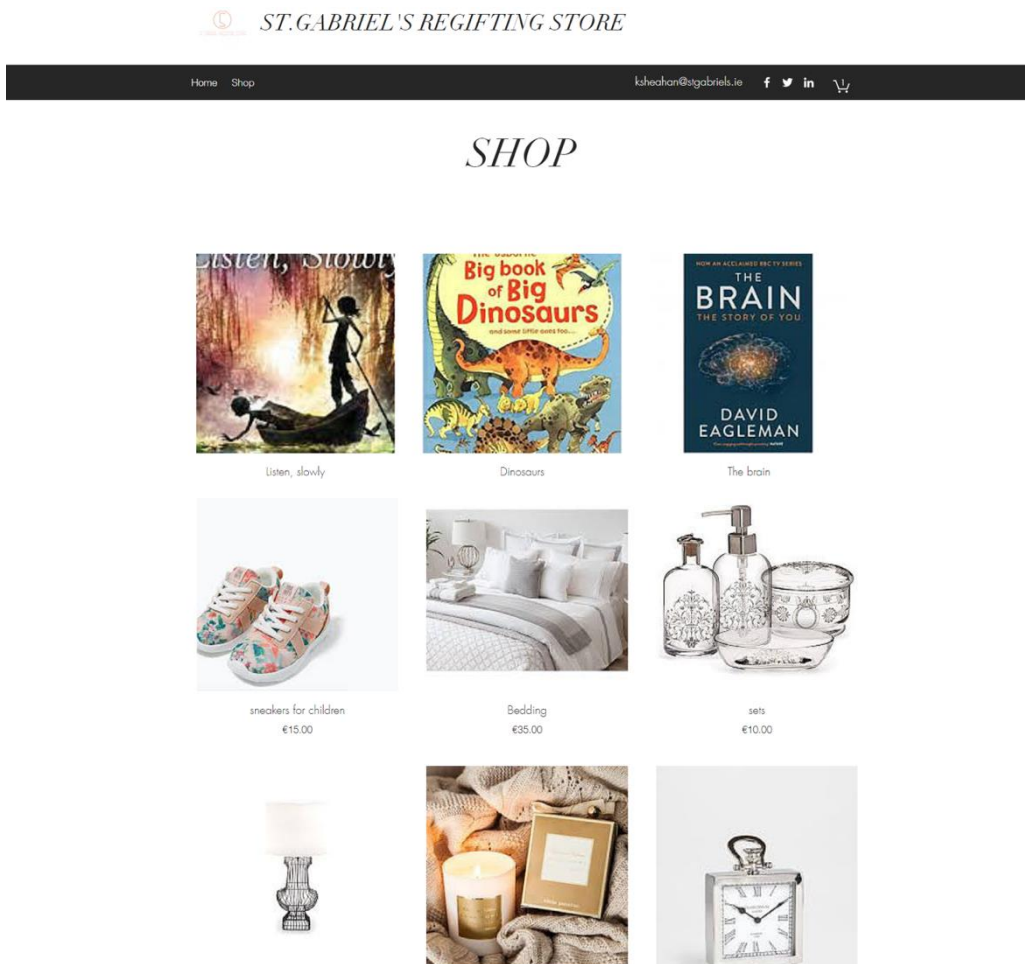


Figure 4: This is the “shop” page. A brief description of each item in the store can be found, along with a photograph and the price.

Survey Preface and Questions

Survey

St. Gabriel's Regifting Store



As part of UL engage we are investigating the opportunity of potentially developing a regifting/charity shop in aid of St. Gabriel's.

Through our initial research we found that the group of people most likely to use charity shops are people aged between 50–60 and mostly women. We are now looking to find what peoples thoughts are on the idea of regifting. In addition we want to explore the concept of developing a regifting retail and online store which would be a more modern take on the charity shops. We also want to establish what line of goods would be the most fitting for this concept, i.e unused gift items such as clothes and jewellery. We feel that this concept will have appeal to a newer customer audience as people are quickly becoming more aware of their carbon footprint with trends such as veganism and sustainability growing fast.

A charity shop is a retail establishment run by a charitable organization to raise money. Charity shops are a type of social enterprise. They sell mainly used goods such as clothing, books, music albums, home videos, and furniture donated by members of the public, and are often staffed by volunteers. Because the items for sale are obtained for free, and business costs are low, the items can be sold at competitive prices. After costs are paid, all remaining income from the sales is used in accord with the organization's stated charitable purpose.

Regifting is the idea of giving away a gift which you have received to either charity or a family/friend. The idea has become very popular in the United States with the Thursday before Christmas each year being named National Regifting Day. Regifting has many benefits as it allows the regifter to keep their lives clutter free while also allowing someone who wants the gift to enjoy it. The idea of a regifting store would not only allow the regifting process to be done easier but also help to raise funds for a worthwhile charity.

APPENDICES

1. **Age Category**
 - < 18
 - 19 – 25
 - 26 - 35
 - 36 - 45
 - 45 - 60
 - 60 +
2. **How often would you purchase an item in a charity shop?**
 - Never
 - Seldom
 - Frequently
3. **What items would you be most interested in purchasing?**
 - Clothes
 - Shoes
 - Toys
 - Jewellery
 - Household items (ceramic, knick knacks etc.)
4. **When, if ever would you visit a charity shop?**
 - Weekdays
 - Weekends
 - I don't visit charity shops
5. **Do you generally prefer to shop online or in-store?**
 - Online
 - In-store
6. **Would you be more likely to shop in a charity shop if you could browse items online first before going in to buy them?**
 - Yes
 - No
7. **Do you find at Christmas/Birthdays that you receive gifts that you don't want, need or use.**
 - Yes
 - No
8. **Would you consider donating unwanted gifts to a regifting/charity shop?**
 - Yes
 - No
9. **Would you be more likely to purchase an item in a charity shop if you knew it has not been used?**
 - Yes
 - No
 - Unsure
10. **Would a store dedicated to regifting unused gifts interest you more than a charity shop?**
 - Yes
 - No
 - Unsure

APPENDICES

Interview Questions


We decided that it would be helpful to interview second hand and thrift shop workers about what items they saw selling the best and during what times. We went into Limerick City and visited three second hand charity shops. These are the questions that we asked:

1. What items sell best in your store?
2. What is the most common age group and gender of people who shop at your store?
3. What time of day and on what day is your store busiest?
4. In what way do you obtain the items you sell in your store?
5. If the items you receive are used, how do you clean them? How do you decide which items to keep?
6. How do you price items? Is there a set price for shirts, shoes etc.?

APPENDICES

Sample Poster

A sample poster for a pop-up shop that could be held in St. Gabriel's School and Centre, on UL campus, or somewhere in Limerick city.



St. Gabriel's
School & Centre

GIVE NOW

Please donate your unused gifts for our pop-up regifting shop to raise funds for the St. Gabriel's School & Centre for special needs kids!

We need:

- ✓ Toys
- ✓ Scarves, hats, gloves
- ✓ Textbooks
- ✓ Other

Please drop off your items to :
St. Gabriel's Centre Front Desk

ksheahan@stgabriels.ie

APPENDICES

Bibliography

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St. Gabriel's Regifting Store

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 Community Partner: Kate Sheahan
 Academic Supervisor: Bernie Quillinan



Introduction

St. Gabriel's School & Centre is a non-profit organisation and registered charity in Limerick for children with special needs. In order to raise funds for St. Gabriel's, an idea of developing a regifting store was proposed.



Interviews

We interviewed charity shop workers from 3 stores in Limerick city about what items they saw selling the best and during what times. Here are the main findings:

- Clothes and household items (bric-a-brac, ceramics, knick knacks) are most popular
- Weekdays are better for sales, but Saturdays are also popular
- Most items donated are used, but new items are also occasionally received
- Most shoppers are female with ages ranging from middle aged to elderly

Website

With the creation of a dedicated store website, customers will be able to:

- Browse for items online before visiting the regifting store
 - Come into store to purchase items
- Customers may be more likely to use the regifting store if they can browse in the comfort of their own homes.

What is Regifting?

Regifting is the idea of giving away an unused gift or item that you have received. Regifting is an environmentally friendly and sustainable idea that continues to rise in popularity.

Objectives

In order to research and develop the St. Gabriel's Regifting Store, we have:

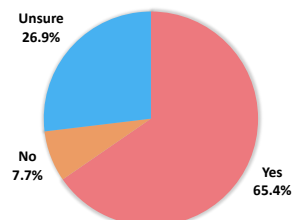
- Researched information on regifting
- Conducted interviews
- Distributed and analyzed surveys
- Designed a template website



Survey Data

62 External Survey Responses from Facebook users

26 Internal Survey Responses from St. Gabriel's staff



Q: Would a regifting store interest you more than a charity shop?

Clothes 52.3% responded that they buy clothes in charity shops

Weekends 60.2% responded that they shop more on weekends

Online Store 58.0% shoppers would like the option to browse online

Why Regift?

Advantages to regifting:

- Reduce clutter
- "Second chance" for unused item
- Limiting waste to help the environment

Advantages of a regifting store:

- Make regifting easier
- Donate new items and buy a better suited gift in one location
- Produce funds for a great charity

Next Steps

Store Trials

- Collect unused item donations
- "Demo-runs" or pop-up store events held around Limerick

Marketing

- Store location
- Opening hours
- Staffing
- Store name and logo
- Advertisement

Bibliography

Ertimur, B., Muñoz, C., Hutton, J.G. (2015) 'Regifting: A multi-perspective processual overview', *Journal of Business Research*, 68(9), 1997–2004.

Website Link: <https://wsq486.wixsite.com/website-1>



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