

Our Community **MATTERS**

Your community knowledge bank helping groups survive, improve, grow and innovate



Resources, News, Innovations and Tips on:

- ✓ Funding, Finance & Membership Management
- ✓ Leadership & Advocacy
- ✓ Management & Training
- ✓ Marketing & Media
- ✓ Boards, Committees & Governance
- ✓ Community & Business Partnerships
- ✓ Insurance & Risk Management

www.ourcommunity.com.au

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Welcome to the latest edition of *Our Community Matters*, our regular free community update. It is yet another benefit of membership of www.ourcommunity.com.au – the premier destination for Australia's 700,000 community, education and non-profit groups. Our Community provides community groups with the latest funding and fundraising news as well as practical management, board, marketing and community business partnership information. Our Community also operates the [Australian Giving Centre](#), the free online donation service that has so far raised almost \$5 million for Australian community appeals. A summary of our services is listed at the end of this newsletter. If you have trouble reading this newsletter or have any comments please let us know by emailing kathyr@ourcommunity.com.au

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1. Welcome by Rhonda Galbally AO, CEO of www.ourcommunity.com.au

The Commonwealth Games have come and gone in Melbourne and what a fantastic opportunity for community building and bonding they turned out to be!

Melbourne came together and came alive during the 11-day event, thanks to some terrific March weather, some great organisation and coordination, the good spirits of Melburnians and the huge army of volunteers that turned out to help out during the event.

But by far the most praiseworthy aspect of the Games from my perspective was the outstanding model of integration they represented. The Games included 12 gold medal EAD events (events for elite athletes with a disability) in the areas of athletics, swimming, table tennis and weight lifting, all of which counted in official medal tallies. EAD athletes and performers were also meaningfully included in the opening and closing ceremonies.

Mostly – wonderfully – this all passed without much comment. The Victorian Government and Games organisers are to be applauded for their efforts in breaking down barriers and setting some higher standards for future sporting events.

There are just two months to go now until the fourth annual Communities in Control conference. We've assembled an amazing group of speakers for this year's event, including the much-loved Australian author and community motivator, Bryce Courtenay. I'm very excited about this year's conference – I think it's going to be the best yet. You can find out more in **Part 2** of this newsletter or go to www.ourcommunity.com.au/cic.

Still on the theme of conferences, we have another exciting Our Community initiative to announce this month. We are partnering with the Australian Principals Association at the Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER) to deliver a conference on Effective School Marketing – an often neglected task that, if handled correctly, has the potential to unleash a surge in enrolments, money and community support. This is going to be a really fantastic event and a must for anyone who is interested in seeing their school really thrive.

Another thing that has been happening at Our Community in the past month is some finessing of our website. There has been such a huge growth in the amount of information available at www.ourcommunity.com.au that we have had to find new ways to help people quickly find what they want. The changes include a more user-friendly right-hand navigation bar that aims to give site users a better idea of where they are in the site, and a new search engine that will ensure you can find what it is you need – whether that's a community group to donate to, a template policy, a help sheet, information about a newsletter, or whatever. You can read more about the site changes later on in the newsletter or log on to www.ourcommunity.com.au and have a look yourself.

Next month we're going to be bringing you some very exciting news about a new Westpac initiative that has the potential to save your group a lot of time and money. Look out for next month's edition of Our Community Matters to find out more.

RHONDA GALBALLY AO
Chief Executive Officer
www.ourcommunity.com.au

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2. Get your entries in and become the 2006 Community Idol!

We have already had several early entries for the 2006 Westpac Community Idol competition, the competition where you get the chance to tell the world just how great your community group is – and win \$3000 for your group while you're at it.

Community Idol – which was the stand-out hit of the 2005 Communities in Control Conference – is designed to unearth the group that stands out as a beacon of community leadership.

It's not about being the biggest, or the most visible, or the best-resourced group; it's about showing leadership and truly working for and representing your community.



The 2006 Westpac Community Idol will be chosen from three short-listed finalists by the delegates at the 2006 [Communities in Control Conference](#), which will be held in Melbourne on Monday, June 19 and Tuesday, June 20 (with a special day focusing specifically on fundraising on Sunday, June 18).

The conference – the biggest and most popular event for anyone interested in community in Australia – will this year feature internationally acclaimed best-selling author and community motivator **Bryce Courtenay** as the keynote speaker, as well as a stellar list of headline speakers including:

- **Professor Meredith Minkler**, 2006 Pratt International Fellow, Professor of Health and Social Behaviour and Director of Public Health, University of California, Berkeley
- **Sharan Burrow**, President, ACTU
- **Andrew Demetriou**, Chief Executive, AFL
- **The Hon Dr Barry Jones AO**, one of Australia's living treasures and a deep thinker on the issues facing Australian communities
- **Jacqui Katona**, CEO, Lumbu Indigenous Community Foundation and world recognised leader for the campaign against uranium mining at Jabiluka, Kakadu
- **Peter Kenyon**, Founder and CEO, Bank of I.D.E.A.S.
- **The Hon Joan Kirner AM**, Former Premier of Victoria and Chair, Ministerial Advisory Council on Victorian Communities
- **Frances Leach**, the much loved and admired Broadcaster & Journalist, Vega 915 FM
- **Jude Munro**, CEO, City of Brisbane
- **Jeffrey Harmer**, Secretary, Department of Families, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (tbc)
- **Phil Ruthven**, Chairman, IBIS World, the world's leading strategic Business Information provider with Phil as Australia's leading social & economic commentator and forecaster
- **Professor Amanda Sinclair**, Foundation Professor of Management - Diversity & Change, Melbourne Business School, University of Melbourne and Australia's leading expert in non-traditional roles of leadership; regular columnist in Australian Financial Review
- **The Hon John Thwaites**, Deputy Premier of Victoria and Minister for Victorian Communities

Visit the Communities in Control website at www.ourcommunity.com.au/cic for more information about the conference and the Westpac Community Idol competition.

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3. Special event to help schools increase enrolments, money & community support

Our Community is partnering with the Australian Principals Association at the Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER) to deliver a conference on **Effective School Marketing - A practical conference on marketing your school for enrolments, money and community support.**

This conference is a must for:

- Principals from Government, Catholic and Independent Schools
- Vice Principals from Government, Catholic and Independent Schools
- School Councils
- School Marketing Managers
- Fundraising Committees

All registrations received by April 30 will be placed in the draw to win an iPod nano to be drawn and presented at the conference, which will be held at Moonee Valley Racecourse on **Friday, May 19 from 9.30am to 4pm.**

The Program covers:

- **Marketing – the often overlooked ingredient necessary for a school's success** by Ted Myers, Catholic Education Office NSW, Author of *Marketing for Better Schools* and Robert Miller, former Principal, Brunswick North West Primary School and currently Principal, The Grange Primary School
- **How to develop a strategic marketing plan for your school** by Bill Shannon, Managing Director, Shannon's Way Advertising Agency and Jan Parkes – Parkes and Parkes, Management and Marketing Consultants
- **Everything you need to know about working with the media** – a panel session hosted by Brett de Hoedt (Mayor, Hootville Communications and outstanding media trainer), with panellists Bob Yeates – the dynamic immediate past President, Victorian Country Press Association, Brian Walsh, Corporate Affairs Manager, AFL, and Aileen Berry, Director, News Ltd

- **Marketing for successful school/business partnerships** – a workshop by Kylie Cirak – Manager, Alcoa Australia Foundation
- **Marketing for ongoing student, family and community support** – a workshop by Frank Opray-Washington Services, and Andrew Blair, President, Victorian Association of State Secondary Principals
- **Marketing for money** - a workshop by Dr Ian Sloan, Principal, Mitcham Primary School, and Patrick Moriarty, Director of Training and Development, Our Community

For registrations and further information go to www.ourcommunity.com.au/schoolconference or phone 03 9320 6800.

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4. Dress your website to impress

Having an eye-catching website to grab the attention of people surfing the web has always been important, but a new Canadian study has given new meaning to the old phrase – “First Impressions Count”.

The study, published recently in the journal *Behaviour and Information Technology*, found that people decide on the likely usefulness of a website in just 50 milliseconds – or one-twentieth of a second.

The research team found that these first impressions counted because they tended to correlate with users' impressions of a site over a longer period. In other words, if a site visitor had an initial positive impression of a site, they were more likely to remain positive about the site after exploring and using it.

That means that if you want people to stay at your site – let alone do anything else like find out what your group is doing, become a member or make a donation – your site needs to catch their eye straight away.

There are a few basic things you can do to make that first 50 milliseconds count in your website's favour:

- **Design** - Keep the design simple and avoid using too many fonts. Keep colours consistent and simple, and use colour to highlight any areas of the homepage you want visitors' eyes to quickly look at. This simplicity of design will also help your website's homepage remain easy to navigate – something which goes hand in hand with layout.
- **Layout** – Put the most important features, attractions and information in prominent places on your homepage so they are easy to find. But don't try to cram too much onto your home page or it will look cluttered or disorganised. Do some test layouts and show them to friends, members and other people to gain feedback on what works, and what doesn't.
- **Branding** – Brand your website clearly. Make sure your organisation's name, logo and motto are prominent and easy to read and see. Ensure the branding of your site remains consistent across all your pages – as well as consistent with your group's other published material like newsletters and letterheads.
- **Links** – When linking to other parts of the site from your homepage, keep the text for each link short and to the point. When pointing to press releases or news articles, keep the headlines short but intriguing so people are willing to click on the link, read on and stay on your site.

Importantly, look at the guidelines for web page accessibility for people with disabilities (see <http://www.visionaustralia.org.au/info.aspx?page=639>) and see what improvements you should make.

More information on designing a winning homepage and website can be found at the Marketing, Media and Post Centre at www.ourcommunity.com.au/marketingmediapost – a joint initiative of Our Community and Australia Post.

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5. New employment laws now in place

The Federal Government's new industrial relations laws came into force on Monday, March 27. What do they mean for not-for-profits? The answers are complex and sometimes uncertain.

The first question that a not-for-profit will want answered is "Does it apply to us?" The answer, unfortunately, must be "It all depends." A report by Leanne Tully, a senior lawyer from law firm **Moore's Legal**, sets out the position.

"While many organisations will fall within the new system, others will fall back on the various State industrial relations systems.

The Federal Government wants to create a single, national workplace relations system. However, because of its limited constitutional powers, the Government has only legislated to cover:

- All Victorian employees.
- All employees in the ACT and Northern Territory.
- Employees in the other States only if the Employer is a 'constitutional corporation'.

The Federal Parliament has constitutional power only to make laws about 'foreign', 'trading' and 'financial' corporations."

So, Leanne Tully says:

1. If your organisation is not incorporated (and is not in Victoria, ACT or NT), Work Choices will not apply.
2. If your organisation is incorporated (and is not in Victoria, ACT or NT), the main issue will be whether it is a 'trading' corporation. A corporation can be a 'trading corporation' if trading activities are substantial and significant, even if they are not the primary purpose. If a significant part of the business involves telemarketing, raising funds through the sale of goods and services (e.g. op shops, gift shops, street stalls, training services and other fundraising activities), the company could be covered by Work Choices.

The main substantive changes from the old law are

1. Unfair dismissal
 - Employees cannot bring a claim if dismissal was even *partly* for operational reasons
 - Employees cannot bring a claim if the Employer has 100 employees or less (but note that employees can still claim for 'unlawful termination' if the reason for dismissal was discriminatory)
2. Terms and conditions of employment
 - The Workplace Relations Act 1996 will contain minimum entitlements to annual leave, personal leave, parental leave and maximum ordinary hours of work.
 - The 'Australian Fair Pay Commission' ('AFPC') will set basic rates of pay, casual loadings and pay periods
 - Federal Awards will continue to apply, but some provisions will be invalidated and Awards will effectively be frozen
 - Employers and Employees will be able to make Workplace Agreements which will totally exclude the Award

Entitlements for most Australian employees are now set by the new Australian Fair Pay and Conditions Standard. The 'Standard' will include:

- federal minimum wage of \$12.75 per hour;
- right to pay for every hour worked;
- maximum of 38 hours per week (on average, and more if reasonable);
- 10 days of personal leave per year;
- 4 weeks of annual leave per year, accruing every 4 weeks. (Note that 2 weeks per year can now be cashed in, if agreed in a formal workplace agreement);
- 2 days of compassionate leave per occasion;
- 12 months of unpaid parental leave.

More generous federal Award terms (if any) relating to these issues will continue to apply.

Moore's Legal advises that for employers covered by Work Choices, there will soon be scope for far-reaching changes to employment practices. However, employers must still consider contractual obligations to their employees, and any changes to the terms and conditions of existing employees will require their agreement.

Our Community thanks **Moore's Legal** for permission to reproduce material from its March 2006 Not For Profit Briefing.

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6. Changes afoot at www.ourcommunity.com.au

Regular visitors to our website at www.ourcommunity.com.au may have noticed a few subtle changes to our site recently.

With so much free information and resources now available on our website, we have had to find new ways to make it easier for you to find the things you're after – so we have introduced some new features to help you find your way around.

The main changes are to the right and left-hand navigation bars – which we have streamlined to make things easier to find. We've also introduced a feature on the right-hand navigation bar to make it simpler to navigate around the subject area you're in. Another big change is the inclusion of a new search engine, powered by Google, which makes it easier to find whatever it is you need on our site. All the changes are explained below.

The top section of the site remains the same – clicking on one of these tabs will take you directly to that section of our website

Find out how to use our services.

Renew your subscriptions here

Existing members log in here

Directory of Organisations

Our new search engine

Sign up for free Our Community membership, for the free Jobs Bulletin, and find out about other newsletters and training in this section

Here you can find other information options available in the particular subject area of the website you're in. For example, if you're in the Giving Centre (as pictured), you will see all of the other things you can do in that area of the Our Community website – donating money, receiving donations, etc.

These changes are the direct result of your feedback about how you use the site. Have a look yourself at www.ourcommunity.com.au and let us know what you think by emailing kathyr@ourcommunity.com.au

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7. Great Australian Leaders in Focus: Morry Schwartz

This month's Great Australian Leader in Focus is publisher and property developer, Morry Schwartz. Morry, who is Chairman of Schwartz Publishing and the owner of Black Inc., has helped to spur a resurgence in quality quarterlies, literary magazines and journals in Australia. In 2001, he launched the highly influential *Quarterly Essay*, a journal that has featured writers including David Malouf, Germaine Greer, Tim Flannery, John Button, Mungo McCallum, Don Watson and Robert Manne. Last year Morry launched the new magazine of politics, society and the arts, *The Monthly*.

Morry is also the Chairman of Pan Urban, the company responsible for the refurbishment of Melbourne's GPO building.

Our Community: Who do you consider to be the three great leaders of our time?

Morry Schwartz: I'll restrict this to Australian leaders – and my three choices are Paul Keating, Noel Pearson and Robert Manne.

These three people all created an agenda and had a clear vision for an ideal – a reality that didn't yet exist, rather than responding to the positions and realities of others.

Our Community: What are the three attributes you would consider to be essential to a leader?

Morry Schwartz:

1. A vision for a better world.
2. The gift of capturing attention, a forceful personality: Nothing happens without this.
3. The drive and energy to create change: Without results, leadership is barren.

Our Community: What are the three greatest barriers to new leaders emerging in Australia?

Morry Schwartz:

1. The haves look after their own and don't desire change – they already live in the best of possible worlds.
2. The power of the have-nots is diminishing – The historical pendulum is well and truly with the money.
3. There are currently so few inspirational leaders – a vacuum of role models.

Our Community: What advice would you give to a potential leader to take them to the next stage?

Morry Schwartz: Identify and secure a platform from which change can be effected.

Our Community: Nature/nurture – are leaders born or bred?

Morry Schwartz: Both. The leadership gene, that is forcefulness of personality, I believe is inborn; the commitment to a cause cannot be inherited, it must be a response the world we live in.

Our Community: What do you consider to be the three top leadership issues facing the nation?

Morry Schwartz:

1. Productivity – Low productivity leads to national poverty. But not productivity at all costs. It must be through smart usage of our assets, rather than at the expense of the workforce.
2. Sustainability – National wealth at the expense of the environment is short-term thinking; we mustn't enrich ourselves at the expense of future generations.
3. Safety net – There will always be a disparity of wealth within a society, but a decent society must ensure that even the most disadvantaged have a good life; education, healthcare, childcare etc.

Our Community: What insights have you gained personally on your leadership journey and how have they impacted on your style of leadership?

Morry Schwartz: I don't consider myself a leader. To the extent that I have influence through my publishing activities, I consider the most important contribution that I can offer is to encourage an open society by creating platforms for vigorous debate.

Our Community: Who have been your own leadership mentors and how did they assist in developing your own leadership style?

Morry Schwartz: Given that I don't consider myself to be a leader, the best answer I can offer here is to acknowledge my respect for parts of the ABC, particularly Radio National, being the best of the media in Australia.

For more community leadership wisdom, visit the Australian Community Leadership Centre at www.ourcommunity.com.au/leadership.

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8. Lease or Buy? Equipment finance – brought to you by Westpac

When buying new equipment, not-for-profit organisations tend to think first about how much money they have on hand. As Domini Stuart explains in the latest Westpac article on community group finances, there are also a number of other finance options available that can ease the burden of upfront purchasing.

When it comes to buying equipment – including everything from cars to computers, not-for-profit organisations have many of the same needs as a for-profit business.

However, because not-for-profit organisations don't have the same tax status as for-profits, different criteria may influence the way they finance this equipment.

"For a not-for-profit group, the real benefit of leasing or hire purchase over an outright purchase could be that the option smooths out your cash flow," says James Cudmore, Manager of Equipment Finance at Westpac.

"Many not-for-profit groups derive the bulk of their income from one or two major fundraising days each year – for instance, Red Nose Day or Daffodil Day. A lot of income comes in all at once, and a lot of costs can really drain the cash flow leading up to that day. So a big investment like a car could hurt if it's needed at the wrong time."

Not only can leasing or hire purchase ease cash flow problems by spreading payments over months or years, but lease repayments can also be structured to match your pattern of income.

"You could arrange to make relatively small payments throughout the year to keep things ticking along, then pay more when you anticipate a significant increase in your income," says Cudmore. "This can be very helpful to organisations with this kind of uneven (but relatively predictable) income stream."

Making the choice

So should you choose a lease or hire purchase? "For most businesses, the

What are your options?

Leasing

A financier buys equipment on your behalf and rents it back to you. You finance the total purchase price of the equipment and make regular payments to cover this for a period of time – usually up to five years.

Finance Lease

- You can generally finance the full price of the asset.
- If, as a not-for-profit organisation, you don't pay income tax, leasing may still offer a tax advantage via your financier.
- At the end of the lease term, you can choose to upgrade to new equipment or re-finance the existing equipment.

Novated Leasing

This enables you to give paid employees the option of leasing the vehicle of their choice as part of their salary package. The lease is in the employee's name, and he or she has ultimate responsibility for the leased vehicle (even after leaving your organisation). Many not-for-profit organisations have tax benefits with regards to Fringe Benefits Tax that may be relevant here.

Commercial Hire Purchase

The financier buys the goods and hires them back to you as the customer. You automatically own the asset at the end of the agreement.

- You can borrow up to 100 per cent of the equipment price.
- If you prefer, you can pay a deposit to reduce the extent of your borrowing.
- As you are building equity in the equipment with the payment of each instalment, you may want to consider hire purchase for goods with long lifespans and high resale value that you would prefer to own rather than replace.

Chattel Mortgage

You buy the goods directly from a supplier and the financier then takes a consideration over the goods until the contract is paid in full. If you pay GST, a chattel mortgage can help minimise the impact. Apart from mortgage stamp duty, the contract or repayments do not attract GST or stamp duty. Note that some not-for-profit organisations are actually exempt from some forms of stamp duty, so you should always check to see if there are any exemptions.

Equipment Rental

Renting is a flexible way to keep up-to-date with new technologies with a short lifespan due to high obsolescence, such as computers and telephones.

As with any major financial decision, it is important to seek advice from a qualified specialist before committing yourself.

difference between the two depends on how they're taxed, and it's hard to say that one is better than the other," says Cudmore. "However, if you're an Income Tax Exempt Charity, the amount of the tax deduction available may be less relevant.

"If you use hire purchase or a commercial loan to acquire an asset, you may be entitled to depreciate the equipment right from the start. If you were paying income tax, you might be able to claim the depreciation and the interest as deductions – but this is a benefit which may not be of value to an Income Tax Exempt Charity," explains Cudmore.

"However," he adds, "when you take out a lease, the organisation providing the lease remains the legal owner and can generally claim depreciation. The entire lease payments are generally tax deductible, which could make leasing an option to consider."

Naturally, it's important to consult your accountant or tax adviser before deciding which choice is best for you and your not-for-profit organisation.

Security shouldn't be a worry

Business people taking out commercial loans generally have to provide some property as security to ensure that the loan will be paid back. Smaller not-for-profit organisations may be concerned about their lack of available security for the loan. "With both leasing and hire purchase, the goods themselves usually act as security," says Cudmore.

"However, if you want to acquire goods such as computers and office equipment, an operating lease (equipment rental) could be the best option because the goods are technically owned by the institution doing the leasing. Here the benefit comes at the end of the lease period when you can simply roll over the lease and upgrade."

Cudmore adds: "If you'd chosen hire purchase, the goods would be yours. But, in the case of computers, for instance, they wouldn't be worth much after a couple of years, and getting rid of them could be a problem. If it's not your core business, you probably wouldn't want to be left with 50 computers to sell or dispose of."

Cash could still be king

What if you've just had your big fundraising day and you're in a position to buy that much-needed photocopier with cash?

"There may be a GST benefit from purchasing outright, and you may be able to negotiate a better price," says Cudmore. "For very large organisations acquiring a relatively small asset, it's probably cost-neutral whether you lease something or use your cash to buy it. But you do need to keep a close eye on your cash flow and be very sure that making a big cash payment won't disadvantage you in the longer term."

More Westpac financial literacy articles and a range of free help sheets relating to community group finances are online at www.ourcommunity.com.au/finance.

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9. Making friends – and keeping them

Many universities know the value of their alumni communities in helping to strengthen networks and connections, fostering feelings of loyalty, and opening up new areas of support.

But few schools and almost no community organisations have recognised and unleashed this potential in their own "alumni" – their past members, clients, and supporters.

Building an alumni community (or, if you prefer another term, a "friends of" group) can increase your group's reach – and, importantly, its fundraising opportunities – in a number of ways, by:

- Building your profile,
- Helping you gain support,
- Broadening your contact base,
- Increasing your audience, and
- Providing a link back to your local community.

And while there is a bit of hard work in establishing an alumni community, once the initial work is completed, the ongoing work in maintaining and improving the community is much easier.

Among the keys to establishing an alumni community or friends-of group that is long-lasting and beneficial for your organisation are:

- Ensuring your alumni are as broad a group as possible,
- Establishing and maintaining a good database of information on your alumni,
- Keeping your alumni interested and informed about what is going on with your organisation, and
- Enticing and inviting them to give their time, money or support whenever they can.

A full step-by-step guide to building an alumni community will appear in the next edition of Our Community's *Raising Funds* newsletter – Australia's most practical and best value fundraising newsletter. You can find out more about *Raising Funds* at www.ourcommunity.com.au/raisingfunds.

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10. Community Briefs

2006 – A great year for community

The United Nations Association of Australia has formally declared 2006 the National Year of Community.

In making the announcement, the UNAA says 2006 can be a year where people all over Australia can celebrate their local, regional, state and national communities, as well as build stronger community links.

To mark the National Year of Community, the UNAA is now working to link up with community organisations around Australia to further publicise the event. It has called on community groups to help promote the year at their events or in their publications.

For more information on the National Year of Community, as well as ideas on ways your group can mark the event, contact the UNAA NSW at yearofcommunity@bigpond.com or call (02) 9517 4777.

Moving from dead-tree to online publishing

A **new survey** by the UK National Council of Voluntary Organisations (NCVO) has found that 87% of the members of the UK's community sector are publishing online instead of or as well as producing printed material.

Most of those using online publishing do so to print reports and policy documents, but a few are also using it for events and directories. It's a cheaper way to reach a wider audience.

Moving a publication from dead-tree to online publishing can save your community group money — but it can also lead to income being lost (if, for example, you put a previously paid-for publication online for free).

One way to counteract this is to charge online users to see your material. Relatively inexpensive systems are now available through companies such as **PayPal** that allow you to charge for publications and let someone else manage the payments.

Money should not be the only consideration for organisations thinking of switching to online publishing. Online publishing also allows more flexibility, more rapid updating, and more responsiveness. (But it is still important to make everything available in an easily printable format for those who prefer permanent media.)

Helping the victims of Cyclone Larry

The Australian community has been shocked and saddened by the immense destruction caused by cyclone Larry, which battered towns and flattened crops in northern Queensland around Innisfail last month.

The Queensland Government says it has been inundated with offers of help from businesses and members of the public and, thankfully, now has plenty of food, water and other essentials for victims of the disaster.

The Government says the best way to help victims of the disaster is to make a donation to the Premier's Disaster Relief Appeal Fund.

You can make a tax-deductible donation online by credit card by going to www.ourcommunity.com.au/cyclonelarryrelief. Alternatively, you can donate by calling 1800 150 411 or through any branch of the Commonwealth Bank.

Eighty per cent say “no” to proposed changes to DGR reporting

In last month’s edition of Our Community Matters, we brought you the news that the Australian Tax Office (ATO) was looking at the possibility of making changes to the way Deductible Gift Recipient (DGR) organisations reported on donations.

The Tax Office was seeking preliminary views on an idea that DGR organisations could notify them when someone made a donation, so that they could “pre-populate” gift labels on individuals’ electronic tax returns. The ATO suggested that this would “make the experience of lodging tax returns for individuals easier”.

However, as we pointed out in the March OC Matters, there are a number of possible risks involved in a process that asks not-for-profit organisations to collect and store their donors’ tax file numbers. In particular, there is the likelihood that this would create extra work and expense for not-for-profit organisations.

Submissions to the ATO on this issue closed earlier this month and the office has advised that 80% of respondents indicated they were against the proposal. A further 10% agreed with the change, and the remainder indicated no particular preference either way.

“We will take your feedback into consideration,” the ATO says.

We would love to hear your views on this issue. If you made a submission to the ATO, please send a copy to kathyr@ourcommunity.com.au. You can read more about the issue at <http://ato.gov.au/nonprofit/content.asp?doc=/content/71359.htm>

2006 Partnership Awards Now Open

Entries for the 2006 Prime Minister’s Awards for Excellence in Community Business Partnerships are now open.

The awards help recognise successful community business partnerships, as well as raise the profile of partnerships and the wider issue of corporate social responsibility.

This year, there are again a number of nomination categories:

- Small Business – for partnerships involving a business employing less than 20 people.
- Medium Business – for partnerships involving a business with between 21 and 199 staff.
- Large Business – for partnerships involving a firm employing more than 200.

In addition, there are three other categories open for nominations:

- Impact on a Community – honouring a business with significant community involvement, a number of partnership projects or partners.
- Longevity – recognising an outstanding partnership operating for more than five years.
- Media – to honour positive coverage of partnerships and/or corporate social responsibility.

State-by-state winners in each of the first three categories will be named, and from them the national finalists will be chosen. In the latter three categories, national finalists are chosen directly from all entrants.

For more information on how to enter, including nomination forms, follow the “Awards” link at Our Community’s Community and Business Partnership Brokerage Service – www.ourcommunity.com.au/partnerships.

Corporate volunteering survey released

More than three-quarters of companies receive positive feedback from not-for-profit groups they are working with in a corporate volunteering arrangement, according to a new survey from Volunteering Australia and Australia Cares.

The survey, which posed questions to more 160 companies who have corporate volunteering programs, garnered 50 replies. Among other findings were:

- Corporate social responsibility considerations and allowing employees to contribute to the community were by far the two most important reasons why respondents had chosen to run a corporate volunteering program (54% and 52% respectively). Respondents also said it increased employee happiness (22%) and feelings of team spirit (20%).
- 80% of companies offer paid time off as one way of supporting those who were involved in their volunteering program. 40% of respondents allowed their staff one day of work time a year on the program, while a further 21% allowed employees two to three days per year.

- Almost 40% of respondents said they also encouraged employees' families to take part in corporate volunteering.

While many companies who took part in the survey reported positive feedback from their not-for-profit partners, there was a fairly large minority – 20% – that did not.

This finding adds weight to an investigation in the July 2005 edition of [Business Community Intelligence](#) – the Our Community/Deloitte best practice newsletter for corporate social responsibility and community-business partnerships – which pointed to deficiencies in many corporate volunteering programs.

The newsletter reported that while good corporate volunteering programs could be really great for the company and the community, bad programs could be truly awful.

"A badly conceived, poorly run or tokenistic program can soak up an organisation's already meagre resources, alienate the company from both its community group partner and its consumers, and leave a bitter taste in the mouths of the very staff the business may be trying to win over," the article said.

New renewal toolkits

The English organisation Renewal works in the area of neighbourhood renewal and its website (www.renewal.net) offers an online guide to "what works in neighbourhood renewal".

The site's materials are unusually frank, including many details of how things can go wrong; such comments as "Power relationships are crucial and there are few 'equal partners'", or "Keeping people engaged is hard work and partnership fatigue soon sets in" are important warnings.

Content includes a topic overview, followed by how-to guides, case studies, and project summaries. "Wherever possible, the documents are based on evaluated evidence," Renewal says. The available toolkits from Renewal.net include:

- **Local Strategic Partnership Delivery:** Designed to support Local Strategic Partnerships in producing credible plans, putting in place their means for delivery, and reviewing and improving existing strategies.
- **Defining The Problem:** Designed to assist organisations in defining the problems and needs of a neighbourhood for the purpose of community renewal.
- **How to Build a Partnership:** As described above.
- **Tracking Progress:** Designed to assist organisations in tracking the progress of a community renewal project.
- **Selecting a Project:** Designed to assist organisations in selecting and appraising a deliverable community renewal project.
- **Influencing the Mainstream:** Designed to assist organisations in realigning the design and delivery of mainstream service provision as a key aim of community renewal.
- **Implementing a Project:** Designed to assist organisations in implementing a community renewal project.

Volunteers: free, and worth every penny

In America, Independent Sector – a not-for-profit coalition of 550 charities and foundations – has calculated the increase in the value of a volunteer hour between 2004 and 2005 as 49 cents, up to US\$18.04 (A\$25.62) from US\$17.55 (A\$24.93), on the basis of the increase in the average hourly wage of all American non-management, non-agricultural workers.

This figure is not much help to us in Australia – the American minimum wage is US\$5.15 (A\$7.34), ours is close to double that – but it does remind us that the last official calculation of the value of the time of an Australian volunteer was made in 1999, when it was set at A\$15.90.

Since then the average wage has gone up markedly, and using the same formula a more appropriate figure for Australian volunteers today might be \$21 per hour. This figure should be the one used when making rough calculations about the value of unskilled workers; professional *pro bono* services should be charged at a higher rate. If you want to get even more technical, there are eight different calculations you may use to measure and analyse the economic (dollar) value of volunteer activity.

For more information on how to do each of these calculations, see Goulbourne, M. & Embuldeniya, D. *Measuring the Economic Value of Volunteering*, Canadian Centre for Philanthropy, http://www.nonprofitscan.ca/files/iyv/goulbourne_man_english_web.pdf

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11. Community Jobs

A selection of community jobs from Our Community's latest *Good Moves* newsletter:



NSW

Job Title	Organisation	
Experienced Site Auditor	Job Futures	Details
Project Coordinator	The Housing Connection	Details
Community Social Educator	The Housing Connection (NSW) inc	Details

NT

Job Title	Organisation	
Centre Manager	RDA Alice Springs Inc.	Details

QLD

Job Title	Organisation	
Support Worker	Jacaranda Clubhouse Association Inc	Details

SA

Job Title	Organisation	
Manager (Executive Officer)	People Living with HIV/AIDS (SA) Inc	Details

TAS

Job Title	Organisation	
Director of Development	St Michael's Collegiate	Details

VIC

Job Title	Organisation	
Diversional Therapist	City of Greater Dandenong	Details
Chief Executive Officer	Ukrainian Elderly People's Home	Details

WA

Job Title	Organisation	
Registrar - Independent Aboriginal Adult Education Centre	Karrayili Adult Education Centre	Details

www.ourcommunity.com.au/jobs



12. Fast Forward

If you found this newsletter helpful, please feel free to send it onto your friends and fellow community groups in your area.

If you would like to reproduce anything in this newsletter in your own newsletters or websites, you are free to do so. Please just add a small credit line, "courtesy of www.ourcommunity.com.au" and a direct link to the www.ourcommunity.com.au site if on a web page.

We would also like your input into this newsletter. If you have any thoughts, feedback or any issues you would like addressed we would appreciate hearing from you. You can send your comments to kathyr@ourcommunity.com.au or call (03) 9320 6815.

We now have button logos for those groups who want to set up links to www.ourcommunity.com.au from their own websites. Just visit www.ourcommunity.com.au/images and right click your mouse on the image you want and then click on SAVE to your own computer.

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13. About Our Community

Our Community (www.ourcommunity.com.au) is the national gateway for Australia's 700,000 community groups and schools. Through the Our Community Centres of Excellence, we provide the one-stop-gateway for practical resources, support and linkages between community networks and the general public, business and government – building capacity to strengthen the community in every Australian State and Territory.

Our Community's website currently consists of 15 major **Centres of Excellence**.

Make a Difference

- **Australian Giving Centre**: Helping Individuals and Workplaces Give in Every Way
- **Community & Business Partnerships**: Connect, Make a Difference and Form a Partnership
- **Boards, Committees & Governance Centre**: Build a Better Board; Be a Better Board Member; and Find a Board Position

Find & Manage Money

- **Community Funding Centre**: Helping all Community Groups and Schools Find Money
- **Community Financial Centre**: Banking Solutions and Services
- **Best Practice in Grantmaking**: Achieving Best Practice with Grants, Awards and Scholarship Programs

Build Capacity

- **Marketing, Media & Post Centre**: Delivering Better Results for Community Groups
- **Management and Training Centre**: The A-Z of Resources for Managing Community Groups
- **Leadership Centre**: Community Groups Can Do: Leadership
- **Communities in Control**: Giving Voice – and Support – to Grassroots Community Groups
- **Jobs / Recruitment**: The First Place for Good Moves in the Community Sector
- **Best of Community**: The First and Best Place for Community

Buy Supplies & Be Informed

- **Community Marketplace**: Providing all Community Groups with Excellent Value Products and Services
- **The Insurance & Risk Management Centre**: Helping Community Groups Manage Risk and Secure Insurance
- **TechCommunity Centre**: Technology Resources and Services for Community Groups.

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