

# GAP ONLINE ENGAGEMENT SERVICES

*Stakeholder engagement, public consultation and effective use of digital media*

**Digital engagement helps rebuild social capital and confidence in the democratic process. To gain credibility, it must be a genuine 'three-way street', with decision-makers listening as well as talking, and policies and implementation strategies reflecting public feedback, interests and demands.**

With a 16-year track record of working with the public sector, Global Access Partners (GAP) offers a comprehensive pool of infrastructure, resources and research capability required to conduct broad stakeholder and community consultations. We are experienced facilitators of online public engagement, with a number of successful projects delivered on behalf of government and industry clients.

Our digital platform for community engagement, Open Forum, allows governments and interested organisations to consult on specific issues and provides tools for aggregation and analysis of public opinion, as well as comprehensive reporting of results.

Our offerings include:

- ▶ Access to the Open Forum platform and community
- ▶ Scoping and managing public consultations on policy issues
- ▶ Stakeholder identification and outreach
- ▶ Editorial support and social media promotion
- ▶ Data interpretation, analysis and reporting
- ▶ Drawing community feedback into unified policy proposals

**Call us today to discuss how to widen the reach and improve the outcomes of your next public consultation.**

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As an independent  
not-for-profit  
institute for active



policy, **Global Access Partners (GAP)** has been promoting innovative approaches to stakeholder interaction since its inception. In 2008, it initiated the 'Second Track' process – a new method of government consultation which increases the ability of the individual to encourage real and lasting change in their area of expertise and interest, without compromising the core machinery of government. The institute and its digital platform **Open Forum** were instrumental in the delivery of the 2012 Strata Laws Online Consultation as part of the most significant strata reform by the NSW Government since 1961.

**Open Forum** is an  
interactive policy  
discussion website  
hosted and moderated by GAP.



It provides a platform for focused dialogue on social, political, economic, environmental and cultural issues and challenges. Open Forum has been proud to collaborate with Australian federal and state governments on projects such as AGIMO Online Consultation Survey in 2007, National Cyber Security Awareness Week 2008-2011, the National Human Rights Online Consultation 2009, and the NSW Strata Laws Online Consultation in 2012.

**Government agencies we have worked with include:**

**Department of Broadband, Communications & the Digital Economy, Attorney General's Department, Department of Finance & Deregulation, NSW Fair Trading, NSW Land & Property Management Authority, VIC Department of Innovation, Industry & Regional Development, QLD Department of Premier & Cabinet**

# OPEN FORUM & ONLINE CONSULTATION

## **Highlights from our experience in the field of citizen engagement on policy development**

### **2012 – NSW Strata Laws Online Consultation**

The New South Wales Government undertook a review of its strata and community title laws in 2012 to deliver significant amendments to the existing legislation. To support the reform, in December 2011 - February 2012 GAP hosted a community consultation on Open Forum to give individuals and businesses affected by the prospective reforms an opportunity to raise specific issues or concerns. In its 2.5 months of operation, the *NSW Strata Laws Online Consultation* received 1,230 individual submissions, while the Open Forum site attracted 19,138 visits from 13,558 people. GAP's comprehensive report on the public input derived from the process informed the new NSW Government strata laws which came into force on 30 November 2016. This was the most significant social reform in strata since 1961.

### **2011 – Queensland Office for Regulatory Efficiency**

In April 2011, GAP worked with the Queensland Office for Regulatory Efficiency to assist them in their role as part of the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) Business Regulation and Competition Working Group on their consultation *What areas of Regulation should COAG target for Reform?* The National Regulatory Reform Survey coordinated by GAP on Open Forum ran for 11 days. Out of the submissions received through this process, 17 were highlighted by the Queensland Treasury for further discussion, and 7 recommendations were selected for inclusion in the Treasury's *Addendum 1: Sectoral Reforms Stream Discussion Paper; Business and Community Online Survey* delivered to the Government.

### **2010 – The Productivity Commission Blog**

An online blogging platform was designed, built and administered by GAP on the Commission's behalf to host a public consultation on the Draft Report *"Market mechanisms for recovering water in the Murray-Darling Basin"*. Commissioner Dr Neil Byron led the blog, inviting the public to comment on the Draft Report or one of its key recommendations and findings. Over the 12 weeks of its operation, the blog brought together 812 unique visitors from 19 towns and cities across 7 Australian states and territories.

### **2010 – Online government consultation survey with UTS**

A survey was developed in collaboration with University of Technology, Sydney to extend their research on to public attitudes to the Government 2.0 Taskforce and AGIMO online government consultation trials. The survey was hosted by Open Forum. This projected collected research into user experience and preferences.

### **2010 – Submission to the GOV 2.0 Taskforce**

Blogger-in-Chief Sally Rose was invited to participate in a special industry leader panel forum as part of the GOV 2.0 Taskforce's consultation. Open Forum also prepared a written submission for the Taskforce which was quoted in their final report *"Engage: Getting on with Gov 2.0"*.

### **2009 – National Human Rights Consultation**

The National Human Rights Consultation Committee chose Open Forum to host and facilitate the *National Human Rights Online Consultation* on their behalf. This was the third government online consultation trials sanctioned by AGIMO. In only six weeks of operation, the online consultation received 12,622 visits from 8,932 people in 57 towns and cities across Australia, while the forum generated 456 individual submissions from 128 people. This project effectively and efficiently complemented the traditional public consultation methods of the National Human Rights Consultation Committee.

### **2008-2011 – National Cyber Security Week**

For four consecutive years, Open Forum had been a partner of National Cyber Security Awareness Week, an initiative run by the Department of Broadband, Communications and the Digital Economy. As part of this initiative, Senator the Hon. Stephen Conroy MP blogged for Open Forum, along with other relevant experts.

### **2008-2009 – Talk Openly**

A series of interactive, week-long 'live' blog discussions related to key portfolio issues. Guests included the Hon. Lindsay Tanner MP (*Regulation*, Sept 2008) and the Hon. Tony Abbott MHR (*Indigenous e-Health*, Nov 2008).

### **2007 – Australian Government Consultation Blog: Online Survey**

Open Forum was the online platform for a research project, led by the Australian Government Information Management Office (AGIMO), to gather public opinion regarding new emerging avenues of citizen and government interaction. The results of this research were summarised in two GAP reports, *"Shaping Government policy"* and *"Fostering Citizen – Government Interaction"*, which informed the AGIMO guidelines in this area.