

## e-Democracy in Action

Open Forum is an independent not-for-profit think tank presented in the style of an online magazine which is collaboratively authored by our growing community of “citizen journalists”.

We specialise in featuring the ideas of Australia’s political, business, academic and community leaders through blogs, discussion forums and the presentation of research. Our key goal is to canvass a wide range of views and encourage stakeholders from all sides of debates to engage with one another in the spirit of fostering cross-disciplinary approaches to public policy development and problem solving.

Having grown organically, Open Forum enjoys an impressive contributor database, with many bloggers being renowned experts in their field, and a very high level of readership comprising senior business executives, government policy makers, academics, thought leaders and community advocates.

We identify and draw attention to the most pressing issues and challenges in areas as diverse as politics, economics, healthcare, education, technology, sustainability, innovation, privacy and social security. Our registration-based service enables participants of all ages, backgrounds and walks of life to make connections, share their opinions and concerns, test their ideas, raise and discuss specific topics, suggest solutions and benefit from other people’s experiences. Membership, subscription and contributing are all free.

Unlike other websites with a similar agenda, Open Forum has no political affiliations. We believe that this independence is fundamental to the success of any policy development forum. Our user-generated content allows us to explore areas which are of relevance to the regulatory process, track citizen sentiment around a particular issue and use these as the basis for briefing notes and recommendations to government agencies.

Open Forum operates under the patronage of the Department of Broadband, Communications & the Digital Economy, NSW Department of Lands, Australian Business Foundation, Lenovo, BRW, MBF Foundation and VeriSign Australia, who form the Advisory Board.

New exciting sponsorship opportunities will be available to Open Forum’s aspiring partners in 2009.

## 2009 EDITORIAL PROGRAMME

- ▶ **Topic of the Month:** Each month we focus on a particular issue or policy area, exploring it through a dedicated discussion forum, blogs, recommended articles and surveys
- ▶ **Talk Openly** is designed to improve the flow of ideas between federal politicians and their constituents and give ordinary people a chance to directly approach a senior government member in an open, unbiased environment.
- ▶ **Youth Question Time** is a platform for high school students to engage directly with their local member of parliament. A variety of political parties and all States and Territories will be represented in this rubric in 2009
- ▶ **Business Blogs:** We will continue to develop our niche as a ‘forum of choice’ for Australia’s business executives to share their thoughts about the state and direction of the national economy
- ▶ **PoliBlogs:** As issues arise, representatives from all levels and sides of politics will continue to appreciate the non-partisan platform Open Forum provides
- ▶ **Community Blogs:** We are seeking out ‘ordinary people doing extraordinary things’ in their community to give them a voice amongst the leaders of politics and big business on Open Forum
- ▶ **Charity Blogs:** We help charitable organisations present their cause to the general public, in the spirit of promoting the culture of philanthropy and social investment
- ▶ **Think Tank Blogs:** Australia’s major think tanks have been invited to contribute in 2009
- ▶ **Student Blogs:** Following our highly successful partnership with the University of Sydney in 2008, a whole programme of student projects is currently in development with ANU, UTS, Monash University and Goolarri Media Enterprises
- ▶ **International Blogs:** We are planning to showcase alternative voices from the international community by featuring overseas bloggers
- ▶ **Attitude Surveys & Opinion Polls** allow our corporate and government clients to gain immediate community feedback and engage a wider audience into a conversation on key issues