



Transform Member Interaction with Social Technology

Facilitate information sharing, networking and collaboration by taking membership interaction far beyond face-to-face meetings and email discussions

CLIENT PROFILE | IPWEA

The Institute of Public Works Engineering Australia (IPWEA) informs, connects, represents and leads public works professionals across Australia. The association consists of some 2,500 members, but its networking and outreach community reaches as many as 10,000 professionals. They are civil engineers or workers in the public works sector, delivering community infrastructure services including roads, bridges, parks and recreation facilities, storm water drainage and flood mitigation and waste management.

THE CHALLENGE

Reinforce a sense of belonging to a professional community. IPWEA members have long connected to “mates” on job sites, at face-to-face networking meetings and through email discussion groups. But the informal nature of the interactions made it difficult to tap their true potential for membership growth, retention and outreach.

THE SOLUTION

IPWEA Communities of Practice—powered by Higher Logic’s Connected Community IPWEA sought a flexible, customizable online social networking suite with a rich selection of features for its members. The association turned to Higher Logic’s Connected Community platform, the industry-leading suite of professional social networking, collaboration and mobile membership tools for associations and nonprofits.

Connected Community allowed IPWEA to engineer a fully integrated solution—implementing a full-featured website, a social portal, the iMIS association management system and the ACCPAC accounting package.

AT A GLANCE:

The Institute of Public Works Engineering Australia (IPWEA)

- Headquartered in Sydney, New South Wales, Australia
- Provides member services and advocacy for professionals that deliver public works and engineering services to the community
- 9 staff members in the main office and 11 staff members in the regional offices
- 2,500 members who work for local government or in the wider public works sector
- Community site: IPWEA, www.ipwea.org
- Website: www.ipwea.org (Also powered by Higher Logic)
- AMS: iMIS
- Public Social Media: Blogs, Facebook and Twitter

**IPWEA**INSTITUTE OF PUBLIC WORKS
ENGINEERING AUSTRALIA

“IPWEA’s integrated approach to our Connected Community has increased new member prospects by more than 25% and improved outreach effectiveness to people interested in our services.”

~ Chris Champion
CEO
IPWEA

The Higher Logic suite enabled IPWEA to take a phased approach to rolling out new offerings.

- Fifty members and staff were chosen to beta test the social offerings.
- Social Tools, such as five “Communities of Practice”, were turned off for a six-month familiarization period with their new website built on the Higher Logic platform.
- Finally, IPWEA transferred its “Ask Your Mates” email discussion and other groups to the new platform, opening a main open forum as well as practice-based sub-forums.

The launch was a truly international affair. Higher Logic, based in Washington, D.C., helped coordinate efforts between teams in the United States, Australia, Canada and India.

THE BENEFITS

Members access IPWEA's integrated web and community site to:

- Share experiences and documents with peers.
- Find fellow public works professionals in their area or field.
- Learn about best practices, tips and tricks.

BRINGING PUBLIC WORKS PROFESSIONALS TOGETHER

Today, IPWEA members enjoy a whole new level of online interaction. Rather than communicating through awkward email discussion groups, they can now network with fellow public works professionals on IPWEA's centralized, feature-rich online platform. Registered community users—both member and non-members—automatically gain access to the general “Ask Your Mates” open forum, and can subscribe to practice-based sub-forms. Community members can also create customized profiles, browse discussion forums, view upcoming events, search libraries and upload documents, video and other files.

Response to IPWEA's Community site has been overwhelmingly positive, and growth has been rapid. Before Higher Logic's “Communities of Practice” social tools were launched, the site average 3,800 visits per month. Today the number has more than doubled, and traffic continues to increase. In the first three months of the new social networking offerings, IPWEA Community users made 227 posts in the “Ask Your Mates” open forum, uploaded 122 library entries, wrote 69 blog posts and accounted for 4,019 unique logins—with 30,214 total logins.

“ The Connected Community platform makes for a very active community of peers with similar interests. It also creates an enormous number of new member prospects, and increases outreach effectiveness to potential event attendees and people interested in our services. ”

~ Chris Champion
CEO
IPWEA

LEVERAGING NEW SOCIAL TOOLS

IPWEA's Community site has been a success for the association and its members. The system was developed in conjunction with a consolidation of the association management system (AMS)—from five separate state-based membership databases and scattered spreadsheets to a single, national AMS.

And because of Connected Community's seamless integration with iMIS and ACCPAC, members can now register online for events, paying by credit card or purchase order. All invoicing for events, products and services is now done through the centralized AMS.

Even with the success of the initial improvements, IPWEA isn't finishing innovating. Coming soon a branded mobile app, which will be integrated with and fed by data from the website.

**Connected Community™
from Higher Logic**

Connected Community is the industry-leading, cloud-based community platform for associations and nonprofits, with over 20 million engaged members in more than 100,000 communities. Organizations use Connected Community to bring like-minded people together in secure communities designed to ignite knowledge sharing, drive content creation, solve problems and improve performance.