Welcome to PwC Connect, your alumni newsletter for PwC Australia

This is the last edition of PwC Connect for this year and we want to thank you for your support in 2015. Our alumni network continues to play an important role in how we make a difference to the success of our clients, people and in our communities.

The holiday season is a time where giving back to our communities is front of mind, and at PwC giving back to society is at the forefront of our strategy. We’re very proud to have recently launched our new digital volunteering platform and PwC Workshops – a new skill-sharing initiative. If you’re involved with a Not for Profit, social enterprise, or community organisation, take a look to see if you could benefit from this new platform.

The inaugural BRW PwC Aspire Awards took place last month and recognised outstanding Australian private and family businesses. And, in other awards news, one of our own Assurance partners has been awarded ‘Woman of the Year’ by Money Management and Super Review’s Financial Services Awards. Read on to see who took home this prestigious title.

There’s been exciting activity throughout the states, with Brisbane OMP Paul Lindstrom recently sitting down to interview the Honourable Annastacia Palaszczuk MP, Premier of Queensland. In Canberra we held this year’s PwC Let’s Talk event at the Press Club with a fantastic panel debate on solidarity, and in Sydney we visited Tesla – the perfect setting to chat about the big ideas that are disrupting our current way of doing things.

We wish you and your families a relaxing and enjoyable holiday season and look forward to seeing you at PwC events taking place throughout next year.

National news

Private businesses are a natural home for innovation and value creation in Australia and many of PwC’s alumni have gone on to start their own businesses. In fact, two-thirds of all Australian businesses are privately owned, they deliver two-thirds of Australia’s growth and employ two thirds of all workers. BRW and PwC have joined forces to recognise and celebrate the contribution that private and family businesses make to the Australian economy, through a national awards program.

Relatively free of the short-termism that can distract public companies, private businesses can lay claim to many game-changing achievements, yet their stories are told and celebrated less often than those of their listed counterparts. BRW and PwC aim to change that with BRW & Private Clients Aspire Awards, a series of awards seeking out the transformations and initiatives that make private business the unsung hero of Australian prosperity.
“The BRW and PwC Aspire awards are an opportunity to showcase outstanding Australian private and family businesses and recognise those that are adapting to the changes around them by finding innovative ways to grow and create value. We’re truly excited to be part of celebrating and supporting this sector.” said Private Clients Leader David Wills.

The finalists celebrated their achievements at an event in Sydney last month. During his opening remarks, BRW editor Michael Bailey recognised the great stories happening in Australian private business.

“We’ve seen Australian companies building Ebola treatment centres in Africa, exporting loads of livestock into Asia, selling millions of books in 2015… which is a feat in itself! “PwC’s Private Clients is a great supporter of this sector - whether it’s helping startups with their business pitches or chairing family meetings of Australia’s successful family businesses. They’re incredibly passionate about private business and I could think of no one better to partner with for these awards,” he said.

Congratulations to all the winners and finalists who are truly leading the way in adapting to changes and looking at new ways to grow and create value. For information on this year’s winners and the awards click here.

**Anne Loveridge: FS Women of the Year**

Congratulations to PwC Assurance retired partner Anne Loveridge who was awarded the prestigious title of ‘Woman of the Year’ at the Money Management and Super Review’s Financial Services Awards.

The award recognises inspiring female leaders in the financial services industry who have challenged, influenced or changed the culture of the sector.

“I am thrilled to be awarded ‘Women of the Year’. It was a great honour to be selected alongside outstanding candidates who are achieving great things in the financial sector.” says Anne. “It is everyone’s responsibility to support change and break down barriers to create new possibilities for the next generation. Not only in the financial sector, but for women and men in all areas of business.”

Anne has recently retired from PwC and joins fellow PwC retired partner, David Armstrong, on the board of NAB.

PwC also took home the coveted Employer of the Year Award which aims to recognise organisations that have proactively sought to achieve diversity and gender balance in the workplace.

Enhancing diversity and inclusion is a critical part of the firm’s vision, values and strategy. Fostering inclusion, promoting broad perspectives and driving diverse career opportunities for staff will enable PwC to create a distinctive experience for our clients.

**Keen to make a bigger impact? Introducing PwC’s new digital volunteering platform**

We’re delighted to announce the launch of our new digital volunteering platform, as well as PwC Workshops -- a new skill-sharing initiative.

The new volunteering platform is designed to give Not for Profit, social enterprise and community organisations a simple and easy way to tap into the diverse skill sets and passions of PwC people. Each staff member is eligible to spend up to 15 hours volunteering their skills each year.

PwC Workshops are free learning and development workshops that enable PwC staff to share their skills in everything from Microsoft Excel to strategic partnerships, risk management, presentation skills, social media, financial management, budgeting and forecasting, real estate management, coaching skills and many things in between.

Workshops are generally two to three hours in duration, informal in nature and will be held around the country at PwC offices.
If you’re involved with a Not for Profit, social enterprise, or community organisation and you think it could benefit from accessing PwC volunteers or workshops, sign up at volunteering.pwc.com.au.

**PwC reveals gender pay gap**

According to the Workplace Gender Equality Agency data, the financial services sector has the widest gender pay gap at 24 percent.

**Revealed in the Australian Financial Review**, PwC have become the first firm in Australia to disclose pay equity numbers revealing an 11.4 percent gap, as part of a bold plan to address workplace gender equality and encourage others to do so. However this figure does not take into account the ratio of male to female employees in the firm, revealing instead a 2 percent pay differential for roles at similar grades.

Read Luke Sayers’ LinkedIn blog ‘Gender pay equity - disrupting the status quo starts with transparency’ here.

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**Looking at risk differently**

![Take control of your future by looking at risk differently](image)

The traditional view of risk is that it’s an issue that needs to be managed. But that’s not how we see it.

Our perspective reveals that risk is an opportunity that needs to be optimised. We believe that risk should inspire proactiveness, not reactivity.

In fact, at PwC, it’s our mission to help you take control of your future by looking at risk differently.

To that end, we’ve identified four of the hottest risks that are challenging businesses today. Organisations that actively monitor and control these interconnected areas are empowered to achieve comprehensive oversight and control of the risks/opportunities across their business.

These provocative, relevant and value-creating perspectives are designed to help you help your organisation respond effectively with brave and confident decisions.

To assess your risk profile, and to find out more, visit takecontrol.pwc.com.au.

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**Regional news**

**Brisbane**

PwC was proud to be a major sponsor of the 2015 CEDA State of the State event, where the Honourable Annastacia Palaszczuk MP, Premier of Queensland addressed a 750 strong crowd of Brisbane’s business community then sat down for an interview with PwC’s Office Managing Partner, Paul Lindstrom and reinforced a positive outlook for Queensland, focused on growing confidence, diversifying the economy, innovation and creating jobs.

In her address the Premier emphasised her Government’s commitment to listen and consult, and forge a constructive working relationship with the Federal Government. She called upon Queensland businesses to partner with her Government to foster economic confidence and growth.

**View the infographic** we’ve prepared summarising the key points from the Premier’s address.
Save the Date – Brisbane’s Alumni Reunion will take place on Thursday 17 March, 2016.

**Canberra**

Our Canberra office recently held this year’s PwC Let’s Talk “Solidarity: It's not you, it’s us” event at the Press Club. The event saw a panel debate focusing on the topic of solidarity and how to make everyone in a workplace, and more broadly in society, an advocate for inclusion by moving the conversation from a focus on others, to a focus on all of us.

Key quotes from the panel included:

“Bring change by influencing those in your immediate sphere and team.” – Air Commodore Robert Rodgers

“Use your voice: stand up for the vulnerable and marginalised.” – Jon Stanhope

“Power comes from having different voices and the value that this brings in the form of innovation and new ideas.” – Liesel Wett

**Melbourne**

About 50 former partners joined us in late November to reflect on the year to date over Christmas drinks. In between networking and catching up with old colleagues, attendees received an update about the firm’s 2015 performance, outlook and our workplace of the future, quickly taking shape across the road from Freshwater Place.

The planning of our next Melbourne Alumni Reunion is currently underway. Do we have your most up to date contact details? Let us know if your role or email address has changed [here](#).

**Perth**

PwC Perth partners and staff, both past and present, reconnected for an afternoon of fun and glamour at ‘A Day at the Races’ on Saturday 7 November.

Thank you to all of those who attended and we look forward to seeing you at the next one. Check our photos from the event [here](#).

**Sydney**
Realising innovation at Tesla

Sydney OMP, Joseph Carrozzi, recently hosted a small group of executive clients for a dinner at the Tesla showroom. The event's aim was to focus attention on the big ideas that are disrupting our current way of doing things.

"A battery powered car!" brought some mild cynicism from the few who hadn't yet caught the Tesla bug. But once explained that not only is the car able to do 0-100 km/h in just over 3 seconds (making it the 5th fastest road car on the planet), but it also broke all previous safety standards judged by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA). If anyone remained even slightly sceptical the final clinchers were; all IP relating to the car’s manufacturing and specifications is open source (available to the public), and the cost of a full recharge (lasts approx. 500 kilometres) is currently $15. Compare that to your gas guzzler!

Cars aside, the event sparked some animated conversation amongst the guests, who were open about their heightened interest in the need for ongoing disruption of the status quo.

As Tim Lovitt of PwC's Digital Enterprises team commented: "Organisations like Tesla prove that now, more than ever, thinking huge and not being encumbered by historical ways of doing things sits at the core of success. Organisations crave more than mere profitability. They want genuine societal relevance, they want a ground swell arising from the populous commentary. Tesla don’t advertise, yet they have been tagged 455,000 times this year on Instagram alone, and our new Prime Minister has even tweeted about them."

Thought leadership

CEO confidence for Asia Pacific shaken, stirred and lowest since 2012

In its fifth year, and in conjunction with our partnership with the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation, PwC is proud to present its annual survey of over 800 CEO's perspectives regarding the Asia Pacific region "CEO confidence in Asia Pacific shaken but strong".

The findings of the survey aren’t overly positive. Asia Pacific business leaders believe prospects for business growth over the next 12 months are dimming fast. Recent volatility in the financial markets has taken a toll on CEO confidence with just 28% of those surveyed feeling ‘very confident’ their organisation will see revenue growth over the next 12 months. That’s down from 46% a year ago, and, is the lowest level since PwC started tracking 12 month confidence for Asia Pacific CEOs in 2012.

Please use this link to learn more, as well as hear from our insightful interview with Mike Smith, CEO, ANZ, who kindly shared with us his thoughts and feelings about growth and the challenges for the region.

Strategy& 15th Annual CEO Succession Study – The value of getting succession right

In our 15th year of studying CEO successions at the 2,500 largest public companies in the world, we’ve assessed how much progress companies have made toward better succession planning, the value of that improvement, and how much more value some companies are leaving on the table with poor planning. Poorly managed CEO succession events cost Australian companies $8 billion.

Weighing the cost of obesity: A case for action – without further interventions, obesity will cost the economy $88b by 2025, and affect one in three Australians.
Alumni benefit

Our friends at 2XU want to ensure that you are training, performing and recovering with the best, so they are offering PwC Alumni a 30% discount* on all 2XU product for a limited time (until 24 December 2015). To access the discount code, visit the PwC Australia Alumni LinkedIn group.

Hot jobs

Looking for a new challenge? Check out these current opportunities.

Stay connected to PwC and your former colleagues by joining the PwC Australia Alumni LinkedIn group.

It's great to hear from you. If you have anything to share, or have any queries, you can reach us at alumni@au.pwc.com. If you've recently changed roles or email addresses, please keep us informed by updating your contact details at pwc.com.au/alumni.

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