

# TCA's On-line Project

## OUR STRATEGY FOR COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND WINNING THE FORESTS DEBATE



Timber Communities Australia (TCA), founded in 1987 as the Forest Protection Society, has battled continuously for the communities that work for and support our forests and timber industries. As a not-for-profit, no-government limited company TCA is reliant on the goodwill of sponsors and, to a lesser extent, its membership for funding to maintain its programs of promoting and defending the industry and its stakeholders on a national level.

The level of funding to TCA has diminished dramatically over the past decade. This can be attributed to various reasons, such as a shrinking industry, the collapse of MIS schemes and numerous members and stakeholders leaving the industry all together.

In recognition that it must change in order to continue to advocate for our stakeholders TCA's Board has agreed to a new organizational structure and business model. This is based largely around exploiting the use of the internet and social media to spread our positive message.

## OBJECTIVES

Timber Communities Australia's marketing objectives for 2012 include:

- Increasing awareness of the TCA brand;
- Repositioning TCA with necessary tools to be more proactive and open in promoting our industries and becoming the peak organization in the "green debate";
- Increase the perceived and real value of TCA membership and sponsorship;
- Increase revenue streams to support TCA initiatives; and
- Implement effective use of a range of tools supporting TCA's objectives.

## WORDS ARE CHEAP, BUT...

This is not the routine picture on the wall-style website. It will not be an electronic brochure full of out of date information. It will be a fully interactive information system that encourages input from industry, members, friends and supporters.

## THE NEW WEBSITE WILL FEATURE:

- General forums and blogs for TCA staff;
- Members-only forums;
- Members-only voting section, providing valuable feedback to industry and government on contentious issues;
- Branch noticeboards in the members' log-in section to promote news and activities;
- With agreement from authors and peak bodies, a repository for scientific and industry reports. With our improved analytical search engines this feature will put facts before fantasy on the internet.
- Try this test this for yourself – type **old growth forests** in Australia" as a Google search. Of the more than **1.16 million** responses to the search, how much is fact and how much is fiction? Just look at the first 20 responses.....
- We will adopt tools such as Twitter to "rally the troops" by drawing the attention of members and supporters to issues and initiatives. We will also use Facebook and our advanced commentating module will allow visitors to comment by logging into their existing Facebook, Twitter, Yahoo or Open ID accounts.
- Our forums will be moderated by both a moderating program incorporated in our

website and our new Communications managers.

- The website will be hosted professionally by a specialist digital company to maintain and protect its operational integrity.

In all facets, Timber Communities Australia's new website and business strategy aims to attract new and younger members, people from industries or interests facing similar issues to the timber industry and conduct mature, respectful debates about our forests and their industries.

Timber Communities Australia will ensure that forest industries will no longer be in the continual position of answering its critics but in the enviable position of educating potential critics and the general public about the wonderful story our sustainably managed renewable native forests and plantation industries have to tell.

### DON'T BELIEVE IN THE POWER OF THE INTERNET?

Try this test this for yourself!

1. Imagine you are a student doing an assignment on the Leadbeater's possum.
2. Type "leadbeater's possum" into any search engine.
3. Using the "facts" provided on the first page of the browser, write a positive essay on the timber industry!

It's not that easy to find "facts" is it? This is just one reason why TCA believes our new direction is the right direction.

Also, type the following into Google: any "forestry company" or "ethical paper" and it's not always the story you might expect to find!

TCA's new website and strategy will ensure that facts, not fantasies, are displayed in future, similar web searches.

### NOT INTO TWITTER? READ ON

Twitter is proving the most powerful form of social media available as a means of spreading a short message rapidly.

Witness the actions of "Occupy Melbourne" when the hundred or so protestors were ordered by Melbourne City Council to pack their camping gear and leave City

Square. A further 400 or so "reinforcements" arrived to confront police and security guards ordering the "occupiers" out of the Square.

We can learn from this. TCA will use Twitter and other media to generate and mobilize community support whenever the need arises.

### YOU BELIEVE IPHONE APPS ARE A GIMMICK?

We thought so too when Dominos Pizza introduced its pizza ordering service to mobile phones.

Six months and **\$15 million** of sales later, we are convinced of the power new media offers. Would a "Forest Facts" App for all TCA members, industry stakeholders and the general public be a "gimmick" – just like Dominos?

### ALL GREAT PROJECTS NEED FUNDING, WE NEED YOUR HELP

TCA needs the support of all forests and timber industry stakeholders to maintain its bold initiative.

Times are tough in the industry but this is not the time for fiscally conservative stakeholders to turn their backs. TCA needs your support to turn the tide of public debate that is affecting all businesses in the forests and timber sector.

We will gratefully receive and acknowledge your contributions to this project and your ongoing support.

To discuss how your company can become a part of this visionary project.

**Please contact:**

Jim Adams  
Chief Executive Officer  
Timber Communities Australia Ltd,  
PO Box 289  
Deakin West ACT 2600  
ph: (02) 6282 2455 or 0427 211 406