

# LEADING THE WAY

THE MAGAZINE FOR OFFICE PROFESSIONALS

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## Social Networking: Build your expertise



AUSTRALIAN  
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## WELCOME...

Welcome to another feature-packed edition of "Leading the Way". The theme of social networking focuses on content that is timely and topical, and highlights the use of online communities to market and promote organisations that we are responsible for as office professionals. We have also included face-to-face networking which is an important personable way to develop your contacts and grow your business, as well as making firm friends with people you meet. We hope you enjoy the articles on professional development and special interest which also compliment the theme. We are pleased to include a feature on the 2010 AIOP Conference held in July as a centre spread for your reflection.

## AIOP VISION

To be the organisation of choice for Office Professionals in Australia.

### AIOP Statement of Purpose

- Initiate and support the continuous personal and professional development of our members.
- Promote excellence in our role as the leading organisation for office professionals.
- Advise and contribute to the education of career-minded office professionals.
- Gaining recognition and respect in our chosen profession.

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"Leading the Way" is your magazine and we welcome your input. If you have any ideas or articles that you would like to see published in the May 2011 edition, please forward them to the National Editorial Committee for consideration. We extend our appreciation to the members of the Committee for their continuous dedication and support throughout this issue.

Our special thanks to Lynne Schickert, an inaugural National Editorial Committee member who recently retired from AIOP committee work, for her dedication to the production of a professional, quality magazine over the years and wish her all the best in her new adventures. ♦

**Linda Deutsch and Jenni Lumsden**

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Editorial Committee at a planning meeting:  
**Clockwise from back:** Linda, Olivia, Lynne, Maggie, Chris and Jenni.



## NATIONAL PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Pat Kriel MAIOP

As we continue *Moving Forward*, 2010 has proved to be an exciting and challenging year for AIOF. Our National Conference, with the theme – *Moving Forward – Our Future, Your Future*, held 25-27 July 2010 in Hobart, Tasmania was an outstanding event of which AIOF is proud.

Feedback from those who attended the Conference showed that they were challenged, rewarded and stimulated by the conference program, which featured nationally-recognised and local speakers. Delegates were welcomed at a Reception on the Sunday evening by Tasmania's Lord Mayor, Alderman Rob Valentine, followed by a Fashion Parade where one lucky delegate won a \$1,000 shopping spree with X/tras D/rect.

Day One commenced with the dramatic Taiko drummers calling delegates to session and the Conference was officially opened by Mrs Frances Underwood, wife of the Governor of Tasmania and the Patron of the Tasmania Division of AIOF. Plenary and workshop sessions on the Monday covered *Visual Assertiveness, Giving and Receiving Effective Feedback and Becoming a True Business Partner with your Boss*. That evening His Excellency, the Honourable Peter Underwood, AC, Governor of Tasmania, and Mrs Underwood hosted a Reception for delegates and their partners to mark the Conference.

Day Two plenary and workshop sessions covered *Dealing with the Media, Easy Techniques to Overcome Public Speaking Anxiety and The Future of Technology*. The concluding keynote speaker, Robyn Moore, was the highlight with her topic – *Happy, Healthy, Whole People – A Celebration of Wellness at Work and Home*. We finished the Conference off in style at the Gala Dinner with its "Ozmas" theme, where many of the delegates brought out antlers, jingle bells and other Christmas items for a fun night with all the trimmings!

**South Australia** was announced as the host Division for the next AIOF National Conference which will be held in **Adelaide** in 2013.

The National Award of Excellence winner for 2010 was announced and our congratulations go to **Debbie Marshall** of Tasmania Division. Debbie has been actively promoting and participating in AIOF activities since becoming a member in January 1997. She has worked tirelessly in her role as Tasmania Division President, Breakfast Convenor, Program Coordinator, Membership Officer and mentor to the many members of the Tasmania Division.

Once again, I acknowledge and thank our National Partners, **Marbig, Executive PA Magazine, Premium Wines Direct** and **Edible Blooms** for their continued sponsorship. I ask all members to support our National Partners whenever they can.

On behalf of the National Board and all the members I have great pleasure in welcoming some new faces: New South Wales Division President, Fina Nainoca and Tasmania Division President, Louise Ritchie. We also welcome our new National Education Officer, Melissa Payne.

We sadly said goodbye to two of our National Directors and Divisional Presidents, Lisa Ryan (NSW) and Elia Barnett (Tas) both of whom served on their respective Division's Committee of Management prior to taking up their posts as Division Presidents and members of the National Board. I would also like to particularly acknowledge and thank Carole Hutchens for her tireless commitment in the role of National Education Officer, a position she has stepped down from well over her three year term. Carole has worked hard to develop and maintain AIOF's approved education and professional development programs through our tertiary education partners Swinburne University of Technology, Charles Sturt University and the Australian Graduate School of Management.

I believe that education and training is an important direction for our future, your future and it is significant that Mrs Underwood, Tasmania Division's Patron, highlighted this aspect in her official opening at our National Conference and I would encourage you to read her address which is available for download from the AIOF website at [www.aiof.com.au](http://www.aiof.com.au).

As National President, I continue to actively promote AIOF as the association of choice for office professionals in Australia. With all the exciting things that are happening within our respective Divisions and Branches around the country, you can enhance your career by becoming involved in your respective Committee of Management and creating a high profile for our organisation.

Thank you all for your continued support of AIOF. I know you will join me in expressing thanks to the National Directors and Board Officers and dedicated State Committees of Management who all work tirelessly to further the position of our Institute.

As this is the last publication for 2010, I would like to wish you and your families a very happy and prosperous Christmas and New Year.

Pat Kriel MAIOP National President

Australian Institute of Office Professionals

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## COLLABORATION AND SOCIAL NETWORKING

Bryan Glick

For a lot of Chief Information Officers, “social networking” suggests users pounding away on Twitter and Facebook and hogging network bandwidth with YouTube and iPlayer video streams. But smart IT managers are realising the concepts that such services embody are central to improving collaboration both within the organisation and with customers and partners.

“As businesses look to become more effective across different departments, functions and processes, social computing in and around the enterprise will become more widespread,” says Sharyn Leaver, CIO research director at analyst Forrester Research.

Alastair Behenna, CIO at recruitment firm Harvey Nash, says that social media technologies are now ready to use in a corporate environment.

“I will be pushing to the brink of, or better still pushing past, the tipping point in my global organisation for the adoption of social media technologies in a monetised, embedded and mature series of technologies that measurably boost the bottom line,” he says.

### NETWORKING

Not Lans and Wans and Ethernet and all that, but making the most of your personal networks to be a more effective and successful IT leader.

A survey by analyst Pierre Audoin Consultants and the IT Service Management Association in September last year suggested that 68% of IT buyers now turn to their peers as their preferred source of advice on potential IT systems. That is almost double the second most popular route of searching for information on the web.

As US technology blogger and former Gartner analyst Vinnie Mirchandani recently wrote on his Deal Architect blog, “In the 1970s CIOs turned to IBM for advice; in the 1980s to Accenture (Andersen); in the 1990s to Gartner. In this decade they rely on each other - unbiased peer input.”

<http://www.computerweekly.com/Articles/2010/01/12/239908/CIO-2010-agenda-Collaboration-and-social-networking.htm>

### NETWORKING

## FACEBOOK, TWITTER, MYSPACE, LINKEDIN... SOMEBODY STOP THE MUSIC!

Cynthia Trivella

So how do companies get ready to take the plunge? It will take 1) time; 2) understanding; 3) preparation; 4) a willingness to stand up in front of your colleagues for Show and Tell and last, but never least; 5) evaluating the effects of the decisions made. I liken this entire process to being on a diet. Even though you know you need one, no one can make you adopt change if you're not ready.

Here is what I've seen companies do to manage these five stages:

- **Time=Observation.** This is what companies bide. Companies want to see what other organizations experience in the social network arena and decide if they are ready to handle the publicity, whether it's good or bad. This supports the efficacy of case studies and why inside knowledge matters. We all want to know what someone else has experienced and how they reacted to the outcome.
- **Understanding = Knowledge.** We all know knowledge is power that comes from learning and experience. We don't expect students to obtain a Bachelor's degree in fewer than four years, so why would we expect companies to upheave their cultural beliefs in a day? Company culture is an evolutionary process that thoughtful organizations create over time, not overnight.
- **Preparation = Teamwork.** In this instance, the phrase “It takes a village to raise a child” certainly applies here. All knowledge is gathered and stakeholder recommendations

weighed for expert and uniform opinion. This is where the company narrative has been mindfully crafted with buy-in from the top.

- **Show and Tell = Transparency.** This is the exposure stage in the process, with the company story public for all to see and know. This is when a company holds its collective breath and prays. It's scary and exciting all at once.
- **Evaluation = Results.** This is the last and hopefully first stage in the process. Evaluated results will be the culmination of the experience and guide an organization to better understand both where it falls and how it is perceived within the social network continuum. Being armed with this knowledge can only make a company stronger and more in control of the story it tells. Smart companies will use this information to retool their story and come out swinging in subsequent forays in a more focused way than during their initial entré.

About the author: Cyndy Trivella is the director of business development in Kansas City for NAS Recruitment Communications and a director on the board for SHRM of Greater Kansas City. She began her career in human resource communications on Madison Avenue in New York City over 12 years ago. Prior to that, she worked in corporate human resources as a recruiter and as a training and development coordinator.

Extracted from an article at: <http://www.ere.net/2010/03/25/facebook-twitter-myspace-linkedin-%E2%80%A6-somebody-stop-the-music/>

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# HOW TO GET THE MOST OUT OF NETWORKING EVENTS

Ron Gibson

**In business, personal connections are everything. People prefer to do business with those they have previously met or who have been recommended to them by people they know. This is strong incentive for business people and office professionals of every kind to build their personal networks.**

## **The most successful people in business are invariably the best connected.**

One of the best ways to meet people is by attending networking events. These might be “after-hours” meetings hosted by your professional association, lunches organized by industry groups, business breakfasts and the myriad social functions associated with conferences, seminars, trade shows and so on.

## **The value of networking events cannot be denied or over-looked as a critical way to meet people who can take your business to the next level.**

Attending networking events is one thing. But making the most of them is quite another and requires the ability to connect with others and engage them in a way that makes them interested in conversing with you...and reconnecting with you after the event. The questions that you ask, the ideas you bring to the table and your people skills combined with your networking strategy and your willingness to give of yourself first (before you ask for anything) are the fundamentals of what it takes to make solid connections for business.

As you read this article, you will gain insight into my philosophy of networking and get practical, real-world how-to advice on how to make the most of networking events, conferences and other face-to-face opportunities.

## **Advertising, brochures, websites and on-line networking via LinkedIn and Twitter all have a potential role in the growth of your business, but nothing can consistently connect you with prospects and land you new business like face-to-face networking.**

**Where to go.** The best events for networking are the ones your clients/customers and referral sources attend. Most people in business belong to an industry or trade association. Simply ask your clients (and referrers) what meetings they go to and ask if you can tag along with them. At the meeting, have your client introduce you to people they know. And if anyone asks what you are doing there, tell them you want to learn more about the industry and to meet people and get to know them.

## **Getting out to networking events will do more to build your business than making cold calls, advertising and spending money on a website or well-designed brochure.**

**My philosophy of networking.** The ability to network, and network well, is one of the biggest factors in business and personal success. For me, networking is about making friends and building real relationships. There are no tricks or systems. A great network is formed by a genuine desire to meet and get to know people and, most importantly, help them to succeed and prosper. The more friendships and relationships you have, the more clients you'll have, the more business you'll have. It's as simple as that. The hardest part is making the effort.

I like being friendly. I'm almost always the first person to say hello and initiate a conversation. I believe that most people are friendly and are happy to talk to me. I believe if I focus the conversation on the other person (rather than on myself), listen to what they say and add to the conversation where appropriate, I will likely make a good connection.

## **Be yourself. Talk real, act real, be real and you will find that good things will follow.**

I believe that most people go to networking events to better themselves and their business... and if I can help them move closer to meeting their goals then it could be the start of a good relationship that will better me and my business too.

I believe that until people get to know me better and realize that I can help them in some meaningful way, they are probably more interested in themselves. I believe helping people helps me. If people see having a relationship with me can be useful to them, they will work at making the relationship useful to me. **Giving begins the process of receiving.** If I make myself valuable to others they will want to make me part of their network.

## **Successful networking should be genuinely selfless and altruistic, always giving referrals, making introductions and opening doors for others without remembering your simple favours or keeping score.**

I know that it is up to me to make people aware of what my business is about. I know that the chances of getting a referral are greatly increased if people understand exactly what I do and the problems I solve. I also know that I'm kidding myself if I think that by just doing good work for my clients I'm going to get all the referrals I want. I've learned that I need to be doing something every day to make referrals continually happen and this includes reminding certain individuals that their referrals and introductions are important to me.

**For me, real networking is more about what happens after you meet someone rather than the initial meeting itself.** The key to getting the results you want from networking events is meeting people afterwards and getting to know them better.

**What are networking events for anyway?** Networking events are great for meeting new people, but they are not the place to bend someone's ear for an extended period. That initial encounter should be just about rapport building, discovering common ground and creating interest in taking the conversation further. It's the follow up and ongoing e-mails, phone calls and in-person meetings that turn new networking contacts into relationships and transform relationships into business.

**Networking is helping people.** This is the most basic rule and the reason selfish people fail at networking. Call it karma. Call it what you like. What goes around, comes around. **Your networking success will depend on how successful you are at helping others.** Think about it. If you cannot or will not help others who can live comfortably without you, why should they go out of their way to help you?

The most important concept that will help you get the most out of your networking efforts is to understand that you can provide value/be helpful to others without selling them your products or services. When you meet someone you like, ask yourself, “How can I help this person?” “What one piece of information or advice could I give this person?” “Who can I introduce this person to?”

## **Everyone goes to a networking event to better themselves in some way. When you're meeting people, the question you have to ask yourself is, “How can I make this person better off as a result of connecting with me?”**

I like to get my contacts to tell me about a business challenge they are grappling with. That way, I might know somebody who can help... and that's a good way to start a new relationship.

**For networking to work for you, you must have an attitude of helping people.**

**A good networking conversation is one where you find out how you can help each other.**

**People respond to anyone who will help them get what they want. So find out how you can help as many people as you can. Become their lead source, referral source, information source. They will be motivated to reciprocate by helping you get what you want.**

Make it known to your contacts that you are interested in helping them and serving them. If you do this consistently in your conversations and electronic communications your reputation will rise dramatically and, as a result, you will attract more business and referrals.

**What you can do for people means nothing until you take action to follow through and do it.**

**Have an objective when you go to a networking event.** That way, you will feel more purposeful and find your actions more directed instead of wandering around the room aimlessly. It could be that you'd like to meet a certain individual whom you know will be attending. Maybe you choose to find two potential referral sources for your business or for a friend's business. Perhaps you'd like to meet the speaker or re-connect with a certain someone you met at last month's meeting and who you'd like to get to know better. If you cannot come up with a specific goal for the event, introduce yourself to five people

and learn about their business and then make them aware of yours, which is an excellent goal for almost any networking occasion. **Don't leave until you achieve your goal/s.**

When I go to a networking event, my aim is to make 1 to 4 meaningful contacts and invite them to meet me for coffee. It's incredible what can happen over a cup of coffee. A good conversation in a relaxed setting often leads to good business and referrals for me.

**If you're not sure why you're going to an event or if your heart just isn't in it, your time is better spent elsewhere. Many people show up to events late, sit by themselves, speak only to people they know and then sneak out early. These people leave thinking, "Well that was a waste of time", when actually it was a wasted opportunity.**

**You are there to meet people.** I have attended many networking events where groups of people would just sit at one table or stand around together and talk amongst themselves. That's a waste of time and opportunity. Whenever I go to a networking event with a colleague, we split up to meet new people.

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Referred to as "That Networking Guy" by many organizations, Ron Gibson provides in-depth networking training and coaching, focusing on business growth and development. Ask Ron to speak at your next conference or sales meeting about how to bring in more business, more consistently and more often. Contact Ron on 0413 420 538 or email [gonetworking@inet.net.au](mailto:gonetworking@inet.net.au)

## Facebook – Friend(\$) or Foe(\$)? *Heidi Cornelissen*



With Facebook continually in the media gathering the popularity (or notoriety) that it has, I wonder what it's really all about. Facebook, being everywhere, is now part and parcel of our society today.

Most organisations and people want you to 'befriend' them or 'like them' (with the 'fan' option no longer being available!). The power and influence of social networking can no longer be denied – and Facebook seems to be the Big Mamma.

Facebook was launched in February 2004, by Mark Zuckerberg who is a Harvard undergraduate student who realised that it was time to change the traditional student directory they used. His realisation was that, although students develop affiliations on campus and constantly meet new people, they needed a further place to find out "more" about someone in whom they were interested. So – today, six years later the phenomenon is still exploding with a myriad of reasons why people join this community. Be it:

- To stay in touch with friends
- To pass time spent on your own
- To check up on what your kids are doing
- To promote your business
- To find a potential romantic interest
- Wanting to 'belong'... etc

What helps the growth is that Facebook is easy to use. It's free communication providing you with a certain degree of anonymity and control whilst still being able to "socialise" or connect to your heart's content. To be honest, initially, I didn't quite "get" the Facebook concept. It seemed a little fake, absurd and slightly desperate. I've since accepted what an awesome social forum it is – being able to connect with so many people, so effortlessly. Sharing photos, staying in touch, online chats and sharing events are all part of the fun – let alone the games, poking and farming!

It's no secret that many individuals (with healthy social skills) have made connections with people in places that wouldn't usually be possible. With new connections, obviously, your network of learning and experience extends nationally and internationally.

Relationships have been formed and sometimes even lifetime partnerships! That being said, I do however still have the following concerns: Individuals who have previously been isolated due to social phobias, low self-esteem or fears now have a means to connect and see what lies beyond their 'cocooned' worlds. But they can do this without having to face the pressures that the external world often provides. This experience of the world opening up for them may merely be for something they may not actually be. Characters, personalities and indeed entire lives can be developed and expressed as chosen.

People will 'like' you for who they think you are. Is this healthy for personal growth and self-acceptance? I'm not so sure. Is the fact that Facebook was created to find out "more" about others an indication that we as a society, don't ask enough questions of each other? Or spend enough time with each other? George Fraser, the author of "Click" is passionate about connecting with others — By this he means that heartfelt feeling of trust, and the exciting burst of energy. And then when at least two people willingly add special value to each other and what they can achieve together is more than either could achieve alone, that's when they CLICK.

So, bearing both the negative and positive aspects in mind, it's important to remember what George Fraser says "Superior interpersonal skills trump all other skills. Be careful who your friends are – your top 5 define you." So although the world is rapidly changing (both people & technology) don't forget what you're really about. What is it that you want from others? Is it merely interaction – or do you really want to connect (Click)? Is Facebook assisting you to move forward in your life, or helping you to hide away? As with everything in life, make your choices, set your personal boundaries and act within your integrity.

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