

## Case study 2

### **Australian Taxation Office**

#### *A decade of public relations support and strategic advice*

Wells Haslem Mayhew has provided public relations support to the Australian Taxation Office (ATO) for almost a decade.

#### **2014-2017**

##### *Aim*

To assist the ATO with communicating clearly to taxpayers.

##### *Strategy*

We reviewed and rewrote the ATO's communications, ensuring it was written in plain English. This included:

- Restructuring and editing over 1,000 pages to re-write the website – bringing it in line with the ato.gov.au Content Model.
- Restructuring and editing hundreds of pages within the ATO intranet – ensuring content was clear and concise for staff.
- Reviewing and interpreting exceptionally complex Law Administration Practice Statements (LA PS) and creating entirely new documents that clearly explained the LA PS - 545 pages.

##### *Outcome*

The ATO's website communications were clear and digestible, ensuring that website visitors and taxpayers clearly understood the often dense and complex information.

#### **2014-2016**

##### *Aim*

To provide strategic advice to the ATO leadership.

##### *Strategy*

Wells Haslem Mayhew provided ATO leadership communications guidance across a range of campaigns, including:

- Single Touch Payroll (communications strategy and issues management);
- Standard Business Reporting (general strategy); and
- Future of the tax profession 2016.

This included attending workshops in Canberra and Sydney and providing strategy documents.

##### *Outcome*

Better media coverage of various campaigns, the ATO brand remaining intact and even boosted, and satisfied internal stakeholders.

#### **2015**

##### *Aim*

To develop a practitioner roadshow to help educate the business community and the broader public about the positive changes taking place within the Australian Tax Office (ATO).

##### *Strategy*

We worked with the ATO team to arrange briefings for:

- tax agents & practitioners, accountants, and software developers;
- small businesses; and
- the broader community (general public).

We sought the assistance of Chambers of Commerce as they were the lifeline of their local business communities.

We helped the ATO educate tax practitioners, tax agents and general taxpayers on:

- tax practitioner changes;
- small business changes; and
- MyTax changes and other relevant matters.

We developed feedback channels for those stakeholders, especially the general public. We also developed media materials and liaised with media outlets ahead of roadshows.

The Community Conversations roadshows commenced on 2 September 2015 in Wollongong, with events following in Bathurst; Wagga Wagga; Coffs Harbour; Traralgon; Mildura; Geelong; Shepparton; Bendigo; Gold Coast; Cairns; Sunshine Coast; Port Pirie; Mount Gambier; Launceston; Busselton; Geraldton; and Darwin.

#### *Outcome*

The roadshows were successful and ensured that the general public, tax practitioners and agents were educated on the various changes taking place within the ATO.