



# The Stakeholder Management White Paper

A handy guide with actionable tips for anyone looking to improve the way they manage stakeholder relationships and data.



**CONSULTATION** MANAGER  
BUILDING BETTER RELATIONSHIPS

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# Introduction

Relationship management, and in particular stakeholder and community engagement is a vital part of many organisations, their activities and projects.

This White Paper provides useful information and actionable tips for industry practitioners who are responsible for managing stakeholder relationships and data.

## What is Stakeholder Management?

For anyone just starting their journey with stakeholder management (those more experienced folks, jump ahead), stakeholder management involves creating and maintaining positive relationships with stakeholders and is an essential element to the success of any activity, project, and organisation.

A **stakeholder** refers to any individual or group that can affect or be affected by the work your company is delivering. These might be customers, suppliers, employees, directors, government, shareholders, unions, and the community.

## What is a Stakeholder Management System?

A Stakeholder Management System is a tailored software system (sometimes known as a CRM\*) that builds a stakeholder knowledgebase across your organisation, capturing a complete history of every interaction with your stakeholders.

Used for community engagement, stakeholder engagement, communications and corporate affairs, a Stakeholder Management System focusses on building long-term effective partnerships to **minimise risk** and **protect your company and projects**.

\*A CRM is a Customer Relationship Management system, traditionally designed to drive sales. A Stakeholder Management System is a type of CRM tailored to stakeholder and community engagement.



## Why Use a Stakeholder Management System?

Why not use spreadsheets, documents or your existing CRM to manage your stakeholder data? Here's nine reasons why.

### 1. Build better relationships

Early engagement with stakeholders begets genuine relationships characterised by trust, mutual understanding and cooperation. Better relationships lead to better outcomes for communities, stakeholders and environment, enhancing the credibility of your organisation.

### 2. Paint a rich picture of your stakeholders

Good Stakeholder Management Systems can profile and segment your stakeholders multi-dimensionally, linking them to events, employees, teams, issues, locations, projects and so on. It's like a history book for your stakeholders as well as a window into what the future might hold, allowing you to predict outcomes.

### 3. Be the early bird, get that worm

In today's world of instant-everything, one less-than-positive Tweet or Facebook post has the potential to go viral and derail a project before you're even out of bed in the morning. A stakeholder management system enables you to effectively manage this social risk, identifying issues as well as opportunities early on, so you can nip them in the bud.

### 4. Service significant stakeholders

Early engagement with stakeholders begets genuine relationships characterised by trust, mutual understanding and cooperation. Better relationships lead to better outcomes for communities, stakeholders and the environment, and enhances the credibility of your organisation.







## 5. Put resources where they're needed

If you can map where your stakeholders are and what they are talking about, then you have a better case for getting resources and attention where it's needed, when it's needed.

## 6. Protect your reputation

Like an insurance policy for your brand, a Stakeholder Management System enables you to manage your corporate reputation and third party advocacy, as well as media coverage.

## 7. Make better decisions

Stakeholder Management Systems are fundamental to sustainable management processes. The corporate intelligence provided by the system yields a better understanding of organisational positioning, and thus enhanced responsiveness in the short term, and more informed strategic planning in the long term.



## 8. Report intelligently

As a central repository for every detail and interaction, a Stakeholder Management System can quickly produce data and reports all at the touch of a button. This allows you to see how 'real' issues are, providing data and support for your engagement and decision making processes.

## 9. Jump the approvals queue

Having a transparent history of interactions with your stakeholders facilitates a clearer and faster passage through regulatory approval processes.



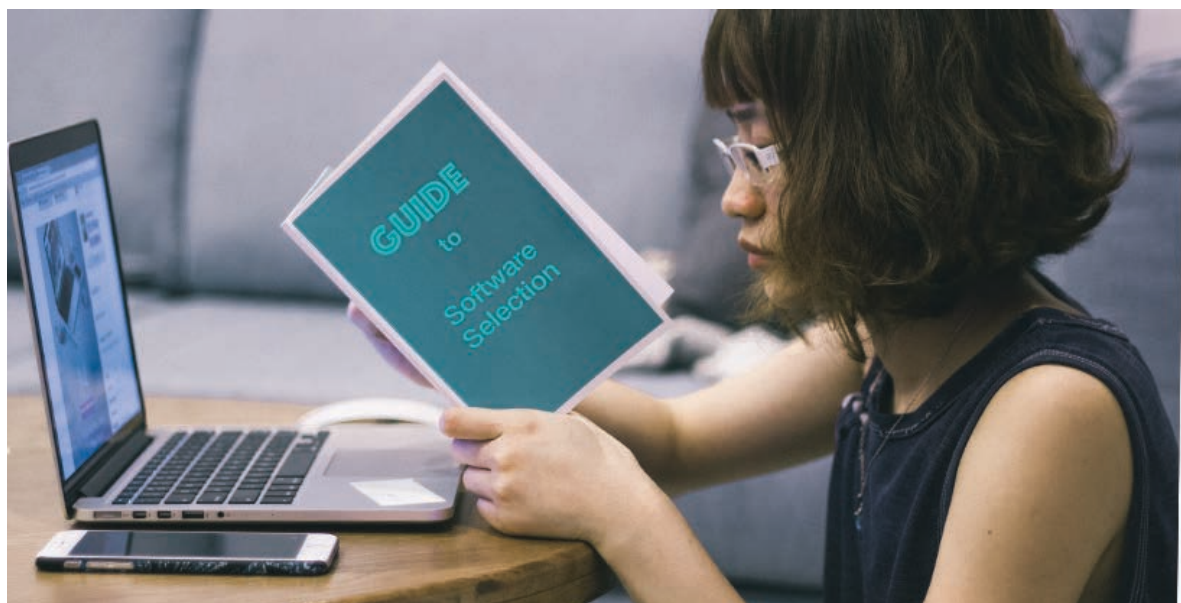
## How to Choose a Stakeholder Management System?

If you think a Stakeholder Management System might be beneficial for your organisation, then there are some **key questions to ask** to determine which of the following options is better suited to your organisation:

- 1. DIY - Develop tailored software from scratch**
- 2. Buy - Purchase an existing solution**

Designing, delivering and implementing a system in-house can be a good option if you have special requirements, as well as the human, time and monetary resources are available to do so. If your organisation doesn't have the budget, in-house expertise or time to wait for development of a new system from scratch, then outsourcing or purchasing an existing solution are great alternatives.

Check out the handy **software selection cheat sheet on the next page** to ensure you ask the right questions, and make the right choice!



# DIY

# BUY

## FLEXIBILITY



DIY gives you the ultimate in flexibility, but at a cost. Suitable when you have unique needs that have not been met by any other providers.



Many off-the-shelf systems offer customisations, feature-requests, and different levels of access to meet varying needs.

*Tip: check with the vendor how customisable the product is, and any associated costs.*

## CONTROL



Doing it yourself gives you a greater degree of control over what you want.

*Tip: Competing voices can get out of hand, resulting in disruptions and time delays. Ensure there are effective management processes in place early on to deal with this.*



To some degree, what-you-see is what-you-get, but if an off the shelf system is designed for the purpose you have in mind, this isn't usually a problem.

## COST



Typically significantly higher. Many projects encounter hidden or unforeseen costs that can blow the budget.



Built once and sold many times, off-the-shelf solutions are typically sold at a fraction of the cost of development. Maintenance and support costs are also much lower than DIY.

## SHELF LIFE



Technology changes more quickly than the days of the week and in-house solutions can be difficult to tweak and update.



Off the shelf solutions are usually maintained to ensure that they are up-to-date with security, system and technology changes.

## TIME



Doing it yourself requires a significant time investment - measured in years, not months.



Buying from the experts means no delays - instant gratification!

## INTEGRATION



You can set specific requirements for the system to integrate with internal applications and networks.



Off the shelf solutions will often have existing integrations with common systems.

*Tip: check if the system has an API available.*

## RISK



With such a large investment of resources and not being able to see the finished product until, well, it's finished the risk is much higher when doing it yourself.



Relying on the experts, and software that has been successful for others in the past gives you peace of mind. Off-the-shelf software is typically refined by years of user feedback.

## TRAINING



Training will vary depending on the complexity of the system, and you will need to deliver it yourself.



Off-the-shelf solutions usually offer free or paid training. Most also have free resources to help - videos, forums, user-guides, etc.





## Checklist for Implementing a Stakeholder Management System

The implementation process is vital to the success of your Stakeholder Management System. Use our **implementation checklist** to help identify the right software solution for your business and ensure successful roll-out and usage over time.

### IMPLEMENTATION CHECKLIST



#### Define objectives

What do you want to achieve with a Stakeholder Management System? Who will use the system? Set goals and KPIs so you can evaluate and measure the success of the software once implemented.



#### Get buy-in

Whether it is from senior management, mid-level staff or juniors, it is important to understand their needs, wants and pain points from the beginning.



#### Choose the right system

Once you've identified the team's requirements and budget, conduct research to determine the most effective solution. Use our handy **software selection cheat sheet** to make sure you don't miss anything.



#### Training

During roll-out you need to make it as easy as possible for your employees to use the system. This could be through ongoing training, recognition and/or rewards for usage.



#### Support

Many software solutions offer email, online chat or phone support. It is also a good idea to have an Administrator or go-to person within your organisation who will advocate for the system and troubleshoot any issues quickly.



#### Evaluate

Once the software is rolled out, evaluate the system regularly to check for any issues, make adjustments, and ensure that it continues to meet your needs.





## Want Powerful Stakeholder Management Software? Try Consultation Manager

Consultation Manager is Australia's leading Stakeholder Management System, helping you to easily manage your stakeholder data and relationships.

Used globally by tens of thousands, Consultation Manager has intelligent and efficient tools like SMS and eNews, mapping, quotations and calendars to keep your engagement on track and make sure nothing slips through the cracks.

### Protect your most important assets.

- Stakeholder Engagement
- Community Consultation
- Issues Management
- Ministerial and Government Relations
- Internal Relationship & Change Management



#### Work Smarter

Simple, powerful tools help you save time and costs. Spend less time reporting and more time engaging.



#### Stress Less

Having all the information at your fingertips helps you respond quickly when the pressure is on.



#### Manage Risk

Build a complete stakeholder history across your organisation. Never walk into a meeting blind.



#### Build Confidence

Informed decisions drive better outcomes, both for your organisation and your stakeholders.

## Want to know more?

Contact the friendly Consultation Manager team on [enquiries@consultationmanager.com](mailto:enquiries@consultationmanager.com)

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