



# Australian Water Association: Current

**Current** is a magazine produced by Mahlab for the Australian Water Association, the peak body for the water industry, from utilities and environmental engineering to research and sustainability. AWA hired Mahlab to recreate the vision of the magazine.

## Objective:

Current was re-imagined to help AWA reconnect with its audience and establish credibility as an industry source for news, advocacy, peer support and tech advances. AWA aimed to upgrade the magazine from a benefit of membership to a primary reason for membership. >>



The campaign broke website traffic, eDM click-through, engagement, ad revenue and media exposure records.



# Australian Water Association: Current

All advertisers recommitted to future issues

Current has become a trusted industry source

## HARNESSING THE POWER OF DATA

It's a digital world out there, with artificial intelligence, real-time data insights and digital innovation paving the way for transformation. And the water sector is benefiting.

By Martin Kruus

**DATA IS EVERYTHING**

Data is key in this rapidly evolving digital landscape. Utilities need to ensure they have systems in place that support effective analysis and data management. This will facilitate efficient and flexible decision-making and can be integrated as required with the customer-facing end of operations.

As noted by Sean Cohen, Smart Water Senior Manager, Smart Water the greater focus on service provision means utilities no longer have the option of simply getting on with operations in the background. "It's only very recently that there has been any expectation at all about any kind of innovation or customer-facing responsiveness from water utilities," Cohen explains. "The interest is starting to pick up, and it's not looking that far off."

In Australia, there are really not many points of connection that customers have to water consumption and production, where it goes and what it costs.

**HANDLING CUSTOMER EXPECTATIONS**

Cohen points to a number of convergent factors that are both contributing to a wider shift in customer attitudes towards service provision in the water sector, and compelling utilities to re-examine their service offerings. The idea that customer's not only have a growing range of digital tools at their disposal at a household level, but are also becoming more proactive about managing consumption, especially around utilities like water, and the energy revolution around renewables, has really changed people up to paying attention," he says. "The water industry is also being touched by the customer-centric smart home movement of Things IoT's revolution, and people have gotten used to the idea of looking upon their own private infrastructure as something that needs to be thought about."

Greater transparency about consumption can help customers make the right choices and deliver cost-saving benefits, with Cohen also highlighting the potential to raise awareness at a broader community level about sustainability issues.

He observes that utilities are increasingly focusing on how data can be used to both water to customer interests and drive a

*"Technology is just an enabler - it's actually about the data."*

Colleen Chemsawat, Australian Water Association

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### Method:

Mahlab used a stylish suite of fonts, attention-grabbing headlines, and a redesigned masthead to refresh Current's look and provide a modern and authoritative tone. QR codes were embedded within to entice readers to online content. The editorial tone was inclusive and interactive, publishing a wide diversity of stories from tips on harnessing human waste for energy neutrality to features on how Indigenous communities manage water.

### Results:

The AWA was pleased with its new look and received positive feedback from advertisers and readers. The campaign broke the organisation's records of website traffic, eDM click-through, engagement, ad revenue and media exposure. All advertisers involved in the first issue recommitted to future issues. It has become a trusted source in the industry, quoted at conferences, referenced by water authorities and approached by media for comment on key issues. ●

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Water is our most precious resource and has been cited by the country's Traditional Owners for thousands of years. Referred to as the "sleeping giant" of Australia, the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander business sector continues to boom, and it has a lot to offer the water industry when it comes to genuine engagement in the modern world.

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