

# Our First Year



Laughing together, a frequent occurrence on our team. Photo taken by our friend, Eugene Chan.

Tomorrow, on September 15, 2012, Groupaya celebrates its one year anniversary.

It completely snuck up on all of us. We've had our noses to the grindstone this whole year, focusing on doing great, meaningful work, on learning as much as we can, on exploring innovative ways to make a greater impact on the world, and on living our values. It's been incredibly intense and an absolute joy. We all feel very lucky to have had this experience together this first year.

We're doing this work, because we want to help create a world that is more alive. That journey has to start with each of us, individually. For me personally, doing this challenging,

meaningful work in collaboration with amazing people has brought me alive every day.

Here's a sampling of what we accomplished in our first year:

- We've been spending the bulk of our time and energy facilitating a multi-stakeholder dialogue in the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta around water issues for the [Delta Conservancy](#). We're calling it the [Delta Dialogues](#). This is one of the most critical issues California is currently grappling with, and it's without question the hardest problem I've ever tackled (which also makes it one of the most enjoyable).
- We designed and facilitated a participatory visioning process for the [Alliance for Arts Learning Leadership](#). Over 120 people representing over 50 organizations participated in [self-organized conversations](#) over a four month period to develop a 10-year roadmap for the Bay Area arts education community.
- We facilitated leadership team meetings for [IntraHealth](#), [Hawaii Community Foundation](#), and [Amyris](#), and strategy workshops for [Code for America](#) and [The Hub](#).
- We provided leadership coaching for [Amyris](#), [LinkedIn](#), and [eSilicon](#).
- We shared what we've been learning and thinking about, both informally through this blog and through brown bags, and formally at conferences. This past spring, I gave a [talk](#) at the [GEO National Conference](#) on [leading change](#). This past week, my friend, business partner, and Groupaya co-founder, Kristin Cobble, returned to her hometown of Tulsa to [speak](#) to local grantmakers about [learning organizations](#).
- We applied our own frameworks for becoming a high-performance, learning organization to ourselves. For me, this has been the most gratifying and humbling part of this past year. It's much easier to help others with this than to do it yourself!

We had the pleasure of doing all this work with many of our friends, including Jeff Conklin ([CogNexus](#)), [Joe Mathews](#), Heather McLeod Grant ([Monitor Institute](#)), Vanda Marlow, Thomas Souza-Buckup, [Mariposa Leadership](#), Pete Forsyth ([Wiki Strategies](#)), Shiree Teng, [CompassPoint](#), Stanley Jones ([Diligent Creative](#)), and [Matt Sengbusch](#).

We also added two new members to our team: Natalie DeJarlais and Dana Reynolds. Along with our original core of Kristin, Rebecca Petzel, Amy Wu Wong, and Betty Marcon, these wonderful people make up the Groupaya family. I am humble and grateful to get to do such meaningful work with such a caring, passionate, brilliant group.

This past week, our friend, [Mariah Howard](#), sent us this delightful one-year anniversary gift.



Amy (our Director of Delight) suggested that we share Mariah's wonderful gift more broadly, and so she decided to make it our official logo for the next week.

Thanks to Mariah, to all the friends we got to work with this past year, and to all of you for being a part of our first year! Can't wait to kick-off Year 2!