

Join the party Getting a handle on online communities

Digital Insight Report

April 2007

Online or virtual communities have fast become the must-have component for every website. Media groups are shifting their strategies, and placing people at the heart of communication rather than at the end of it. Many corporate online strategies are centred around online community: from the eBay trading community, to dating in Match.com, to the child-safe world of Habbo Hotel. The boom in online communities is unstoppable as the internet becomes more deep-seated in our day-to-day lives. What is an online community? Which communities are working? Who is benefiting from them today? How do they support your marketing strategy? This simple introductory Digital Insight Report will get you thinking.

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Speed read

- Online environments have created a new way for people to bond together
- Millions of embryonic communities have emerged, covering the most vast range of topics
- Online communities are developing their own rules and behaviour patterns which can be codified and structured
- These communities vary greatly in their resilience, intensity and longevity
- Marketers need to understand them to appreciate how the communication landscape is changing

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Preface

Communities are suddenly at the heart of the digital marketing mix. The arrival of convergence presents an immediate fusion with many different media channels, and everyone is talking about social networking and Web 2.0.

The virtual and physical worlds have collided. Online spaces are providing all of us smart vehicles for discussion, sharing, working and trading. In the office working on projects, or at home planning a holiday, the participative model for web spaces is creating a step-change in communications. These models cross all industry sectors, and the numbers are growing at a rapid pace. Some communities are transient, some here for the long term. Some are part of massive global retail or media firms, others linked to consumer brands. In this report we've collated a few examples to reflect the diversity of what's been developed in the last few years, and to get you thinking about how you could develop your own community effectively.

What are online communities?

Our definitions of online communities are evolving, but put simply they are the groupings of people who come together in digitally networked spaces, with some sense of shared identity. The underlying technology can be any form of messaging system or forum, which is available to participants, anywhere, anytime, typically through the internet, that facilitates an ongoing conversation. They can be open or closed, and for groups of any size, but typically the participants share a common interest, attitude or topic which translates into communication. Today, many senior marketers have online communities in their sights, but are unsure about the most suitable online community strategy for their organisation. There are a number of different types of online communities:

- Customer review communities
- Customer service communities
- Customer pressure groups
- Customer focus groups
- Massive multi player online games (MMP)
- Communities of practice
- Information communities
- Dating communities
- Friendship communities
- Brand communities
- Entertainment communities
- Expert communities
- Personal or business networks



“We’re entering a world of conversations;
marketing monologue is replaced by dialogue, and
marketers need to appreciate what this means.”

Danny Meadows-Klue
US Regional Newspaper Congress, San Francisco, 2000

Communities: diverse models and approaches

Customer review communities

eBay

In an anonymous trading exchange, such as eBay, how do you know who to trust? eBay utilises customer and supplier reviews, in a peer-to-peer reputation-based community where both buyers and sellers can be rated by those whom they have either bought from, or sold to. As both buyers and sellers develop their reputations within the community the more likely they are to trade and remain loyal to the eBay exchange – moving to another platform will mean they have to either build up their reputation over again or operate within an environment which does not benefit from this form of trust building system. This system is not foolproof and has been manipulated in the past, but it does create a valuable guide for the community and a reward for loyalty to and participation in the community.

Amazon

Everyone knows Amazon as the web’s retail giant, but Amazon also provides the facility for their customers to review and rate books online. The reviews are available to other customers, who in turn either provide another review of the book or rate the reviews themselves, allowing Amazon to state that the review was helpful to ‘x’ number of customers who purchased a book. This is simple, valuable and effective.

A screenshot of the Amazon.co.uk website. The page displays a book review for "A Dream Start" by Neil Gaiman. The review is by "Mr. Jamie Martin (uk)" and is dated 5 Feb 2007. The review text discusses the book's place in the Sandman series and its impact on the comic book industry. The page also shows a list of books viewed by customers who viewed this item, including "Absolute Sandman", "Watchmen", "Fragile Things", "Stardust", and "The Sandman: The Kindly Ones (Sandman)". The Amazon navigation bar is visible at the top, and the "Customer Reviews" section is highlighted.

This unique knowledge base created by Amazon's collective customers means that no other vendor will be able to build an exact replica. Competitors may include a similar review mechanism on their site, but their customer base will be different, as will the content of the knowledge base. As long as Amazon continues to develop a quality knowledge base, it will remain one of the competences which provide Amazon with a competitive advantage over their competitors.

Customer conversion: case study of Amazon

In 1998, Tom, a Barnes & Noble customer, would search on Amazon, when he could not find the book he was looking for at Barnes & Noble. If it was there and not too expensive he would order the book. He would do this two or three times per year. In 2000, Tom started to read the customer reviews which he found useful and found other reviews for household items, kitchen gadgets, tools etc. As a result, his transaction value increased to \$100 to \$200 and he made purchases several times per year. In 2001, he started to post his own reviews and had 15 to 20 on the site. Now, Tom's buying behaviour has changed and Amazon is his first port of call.

Both eBay and Amazon's customer review mechanisms have created an interdependent community from a large group of individual customers, who have become reliant on the evolving knowledge base to make future repeat purchases, creating a long term loyal customer base.

“The internet creates a new level of social interaction; harness it and it will transform not only your website but your whole business.”

Danny Meadows-Klue
IAB UK Conference
London, 2002

Customer service communities

IT: Zonelabs

Zonelabs are the authors of Zonealarm, a personal firewall for PCs, the entry level version for home users is free to download from the internet. Over 60 million copies have been downloaded.

Free products are too expensive to create an offline support team for as there is no revenue. Zonelabs' solution was to create an online support forum, where customers provide product support to each other. The online community enables Zonealarm to provide product support and customer service to all customers, ensuring that all customers are able to effectively use their products.

MESSAGE BOARD	MSGS	LATEST THREAD
Forum Information FOR: All Forum Users (READ-ONLY) Here are the latest Terms Of Service (TOS), User guidelines, and more.	3	Forum Guidelines - updated 12 March 2007 by Forum-Moderator on 08-24-2004 09:11 AM
Helpful Hints & Links FOR: All Forum Users (READ-ONLY) Helpful hints, explanations and links. <i>(To post here, submit post to Moderator.)</i>	107	Outlook 2003 Junk-mail Instructions by GeorgeV on 04-23-2007 09:17 AM
Official Information FOR: All Forum Users (READ-ONLY) This is where official ZoneAlarm statements may be posted regarding support issues.	3	127.0.0.1 popup alert or shows up in Spy Site Blocking by Forum-Moderator on 04-05-2007 10:43 AM
Public Beta Forum FOR: Zone Labs Public Beta Forum Discuss a current Public Beta with other testers. This is NOT a support forum , but may be read by ZL developers. Do not post any closed Beta information here!	229	Which *.exe is the virus scanner? by hkrause on 04-24-2007 05:15 AM
IMsecure and IMsecure Pro FOR: IMsecure and IMsecure Pro IMsecure and IMsecure Pro protect your chat service client, with chat encryption, and our new secure ID Lock vault!	1269	Zonealarm Internet Security 7.0.337.000 an Msn Messenger Live 8.1 Errors!!! by inregistered on 04-19-2007 03:42 PM

PC Hardware: Dell Corporation

Dell computers operate an online support community where consumers can post the problems they are having with their Dell equipment, as it is likely that other Dell customers have come across the same problem and resolved it. This creates a self supporting customer community, and in turn, reducing customer support costs for Dell themselves. Dell does have employees who monitor and provide information on the support forum, but the majority of the knowledge is held within their customer base and this is an ideal situation for them to harness and share the expertise of the customer base.

Benefits of a customer support community

1. Peer-to-peer product recommendations can accelerate the purchase cycle

When searching online for information about a product or service it is more likely that a prospective customer will go to the community as a first port of call, to find out more about the product/service, increasing their likelihood to buy.

2. Users are product/application experts and can provide peer-to-peer support

A BCG study in 2000 showed that 20% of customer queries could be answered by the user base and a US online community supplier believes that with the growth in familiarity with “self-help” solutions, this figure could be as high as 40%.

Research has estimated the cost of telephone support calls to range from \$33 to \$200 and email support to range from \$2.50 to \$19. Estimates for peer-to-peer support costs range from \$0.75 to \$2 a significant reduction in costs. Therefore there are cost benefits for implementing customer support communities.

3. Indirect customer acquisition

Prospective customers may be directed to a customer support community by an existing customer, a search engine or generic online community and ask an open question about a product or service and will may get both positive and negative feedback enabling them to make a more informed decision about a purchase.

Brand communities

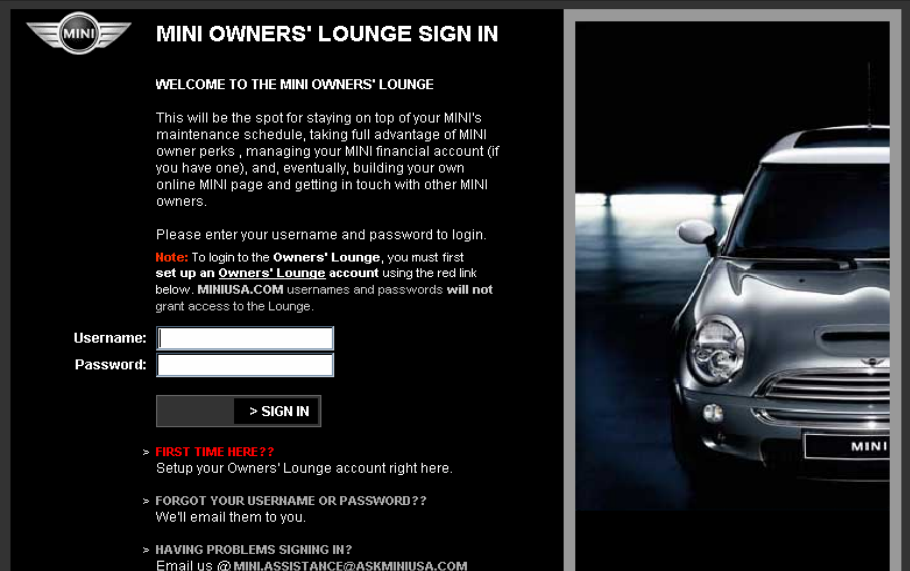
Harley Davidson

The Harley Davidson Owners Group (HOG) is probably the most quoted brand community with 600,000 members supported through an online forum, enabling them to share their enthusiasm for the Harley Davidson experience. The HOG community members share their experiences, road trip tips, and arrange meeting points around the world. “The Harley Davidson brand is 100 percent experience,” Roy Pinto, Milligan & Smith (2002). The online community supports the experience online.

Mini (US)

A new marketing director, who came from Harley Davidson, created an online community where the community is centred around the Mini and the community profile is that of a proud owner who wants to share their pride in and passion for their own unique Mini.

Owners sign into the “Owners Lounge”.



MINI OWNERS' LOUNGE SIGN IN

WELCOME TO THE MINI OWNERS' LOUNGE

This will be the spot for staying on top of your MINI's maintenance schedule, taking full advantage of MINI owner perks, managing your MINI financial account (if you have one), and, eventually, building your own online MINI page and getting in touch with other MINI owners.

Please enter your username and password to login.

Note: To login to the **Owners' Lounge**, you must first **set up an Owners' Lounge account** using the red link below. **MINIUSA.COM** usernames and passwords **will not** grant access to the Lounge.

Username:

Password:

> **FIRST TIME HERE??**
Setup your Owners' Lounge account right here.

> **FORGOT YOUR USERNAME OR PASSWORD??**
We'll email them to you.

> **HAVING PROBLEMS SIGNING IN?**
Email us @ MINI.ASSISTANCE@ASKMINIUSA.COM

Then make their way to the "Owner Network" centre.

The profile is then fully focused on the Mini and the owner

- Keeps track of the miles motored
- Describes the attributes of their Mini
- Details the accomplishments of their Mini
- Provides photos of their Mini
- Keeps a journal or travelogue of their adventures

The personalisation of the individual Mini and the owner's passion for their car is what drives the success of the community and the engagement with the brand.

Dove

One of the most successful FCMG branding campaigns in recent years is the award-winning Dove "Campaign for Real Beauty". This was an integrated global campaign which grew from a study by Harvard and the LSE where they found that less than 2% of women thought of themselves as 'beautiful'. Unilever launched the campaign in conjunction with their advertising partner, Ogilvy.

The multi-channel campaign used traditional and mobile initiatives to engage women of all ages from all over the world in a debate about "real beauty" and created an online community which facilitated ongoing debate. It's a smart move from a brand thinking differently about online.

www.campaignforrealbeauty.com is an interactive community which is promoted as a haven where women from all over the world can discuss and break the pre-set definitions of "real" beauty. The site lists events, activities and has message boards where women share their views on themselves, beauty, body-image and self-esteem. It's a global interactive campaign with web-user responses from 21 countries and is still growing.

The Dove campaign was successful because it got people talking. It asked the penetrating question “what is real beauty”, and challenged the current perception of beauty. They then followed through and gave their audience an opportunity and platform to voice their opinions, becoming part of a global conversation with ordinary people around the globe about a subject which raises opinions irrespective of country, level of education, religion or politics.

Many brands have evolved to represent lifestyles, values or experiences. These brands are recognised as valuable assets which may benefit from the inclusion of a web community in their brand strategy.

Communities are not suitable for all brands, but where they are it is important to understand what motivates consumers to participate in them and to create a community which meets these needs.

Expert communities: uniting specialists

Timezone

www.timezone.com, a forum for watch enthusiasts and collectors, hosted by watch retailer Timezone. The forum is focused on classic and luxury brand timepieces like Rolex, IWC and Omega. Members discuss the history of the watches, the models they own and collect and any service issues with the products or changes in ownership of the brands. Some academic research carried out in 2001 found that the Timezone customer base was loyal to Timezone with each member purchasing between two and ten timepieces per annum at a price point over US\$1,000.

Virtual Tourist

Virtual Tourist has evolved from a pure online community for independent travellers to a commercial online business, www.virtualtourist.com (VT). VT began life as an online community for back packing low budget travellers, where they could exchange travel tips and keep in touch with people and establish themselves as part of a community of peers, they now have access to other travel services through which VT generate revenue.

Emint

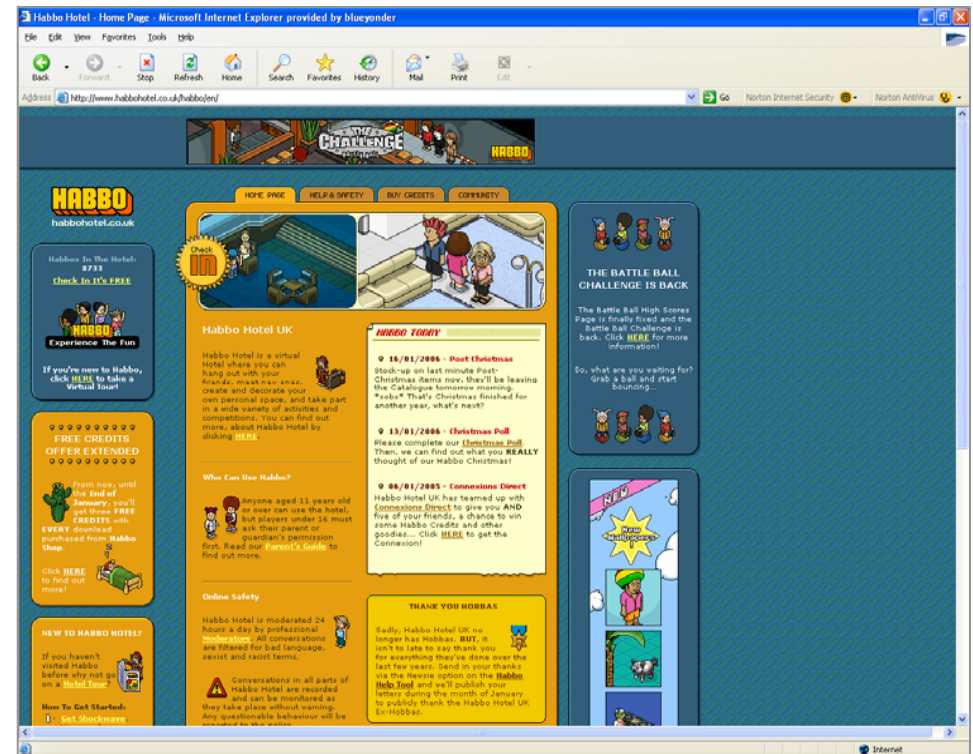
Emint is a community of “online community” practitioners, primarily academics and community moderators who exchange information, views, opinions and advice about the moderation, management and development of online communities. Emint is recognised as an expert community and representatives work with the UK government looking at policing online forums and providing online protection for children.

Online social networking communities

Youth communities: Case study Habbo Hotel

Habbo Hotel is an online luxury hotel for teenagers. It's a social space on the web that is animated and brought alive by teenagers. Teenagers gather at Habbo to make friends, get advice about drugs, contraception, teenage angst and play games. Habbo is moderated by teams of experts and volunteers who ensure the strict code of conduct is maintained and parents can be kept informed via a monthly newsletter. Teenagers adopt an online persona – an avatar - create their own room, where they can select furniture and décor and are free to invite their friends round. Virtual representations, virtual spaces, real conversations.

Habbo is successful because it tailored the community attributes to the target audience and has provided safety measures which are the key factor for this sector and the number one priority for the site. Habbo was developed and managed by Sulake, an interactive entertainment company specialising in developing, publishing and distributing multiplayer online communities and games.



Case study: Habbo Hotel

Community attributes

- Member safety: number one priority
- Moderated 24/7 x 365
- All activity logged and monitored 24/7 x 365
- Parental reporting available
- Customisable avatars
- Look and feel in line with target audience
- Community leaders who provide advice to the members on topics like drug abuse, sex, teenage relationships etc.

Marketers get on board

Habbo Hotel is increasing in popularity everyday and marketers are taking notice of Habbo as a route to the teenage market.

In Q1 2004, PepsiCo decided to launch “Mountain Dew” in Finland through a combined on and offline campaign. The campaign had a number of components:

Online

- A virtual Mountain Dew room was created within Habbo Hotel
- The room contained Mountain Dew branded furniture
- Mountain Dew branded clothing was available for the avatars
- The virtual swimming pool was filled with Mountain Dew
- Members were encouraged to “virtually” taste the drink
- Members could purchase furniture and clothing for their avatars

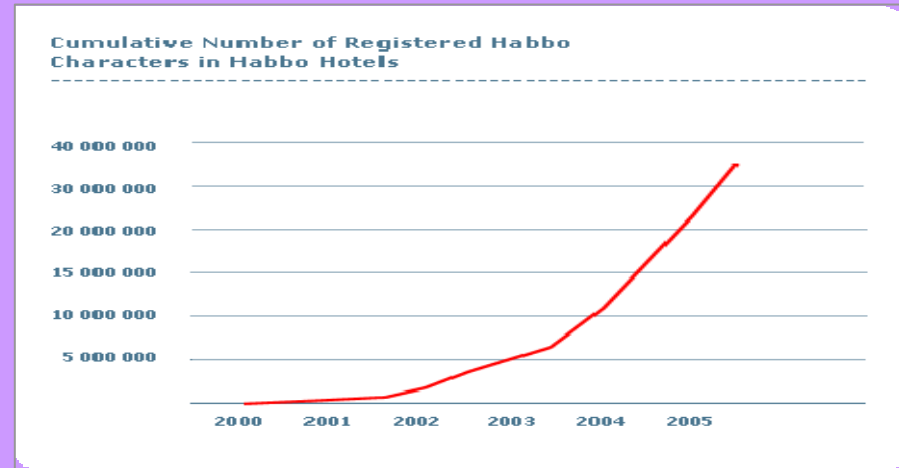
Offline

- The online purchases were only possible through the use of a specific SMS number which was located in the lid of the Mountain Dew bottles on the supermarket shelves resulting in an offline purchase.

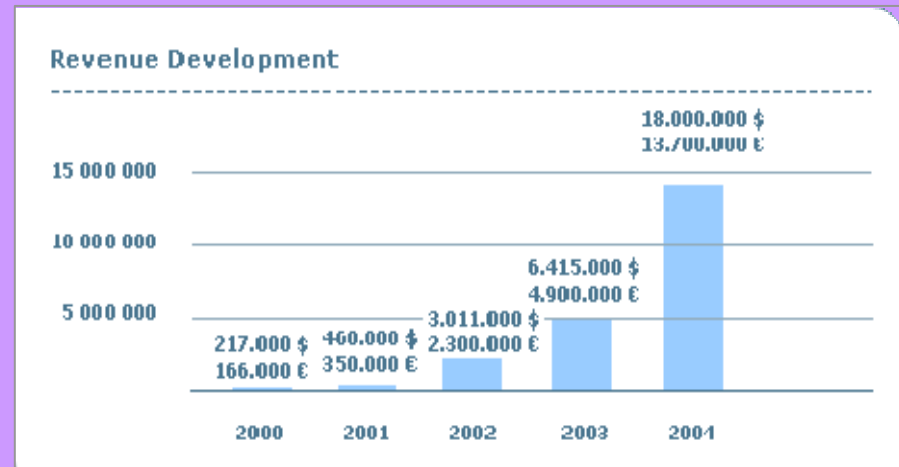
The result was Mountain Dew became the 2nd most popular soft drink in Finland within 3 months. A similar launch took place in Singapore shortly afterwards.

Audiences boom

The graph below shows the cumulative number of users since formation in 2000.



In addition to being a successful community aimed at the notoriously difficult youth market, (Habbo’s target audience is 12 to 18 years), Habbo Hotel is also a successful advertising business. In 2005 it had a turnover in excess of US\$18m with 35m registered users, from 16 countries, 5.4million unique visitors per month and a male female split of 50-50.



“You can attract youth through clever design, but you retain them through commitment to genuine and persistent listening to their needs.”

Communities as targeted advertising channels

Tribal Fusion offers an ad serving solution to advertisers, where they push targeted advertising into their online community network. Tribal Fusion has created a network of interest orientated online communities through building them or by partnering with established communities.

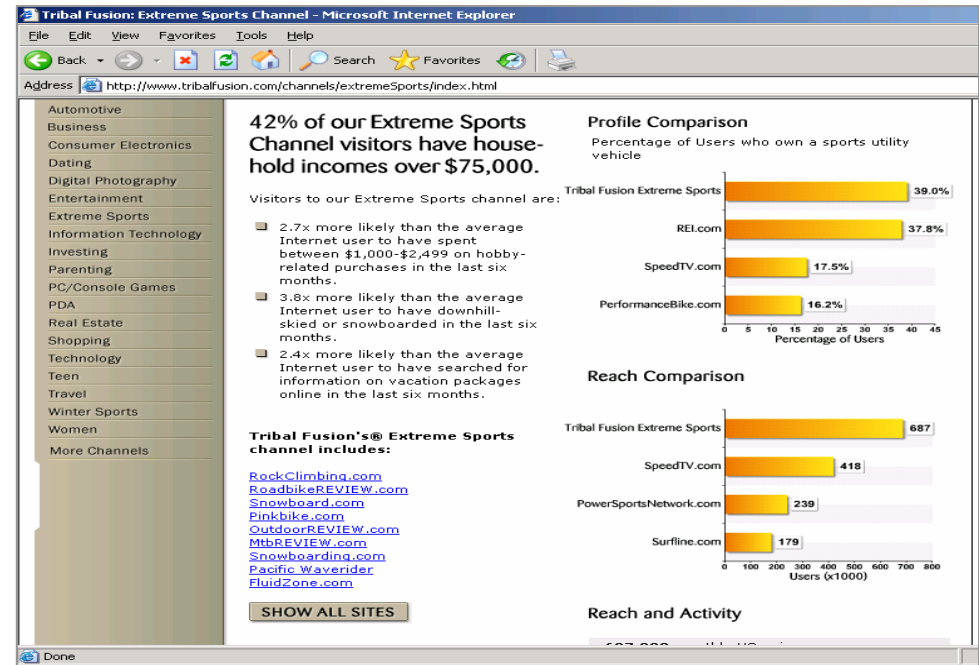


The key to their service is their ability to target a highly segmented audience whose demographic characteristics they can identify and utilise within an online campaign. For example:

- Households with income over \$75k pa
- Consumers between the ages of 34-54
- Have spent >\$1k online in last 6 months
- Regularly take part in winter sports

Through the use of online technology Tribal Fusion can also provide audience statistics:

- 687,000 unique visitors per month
- 15,7 million monthly impressions



This level of analysis of the user base, the topic of the community and the knowledge about the level of activity within these communities enables Tribal Fusion, and companies like them, to be able to offer routes to a more highly targeted audience increasing the return on advertising spend. Tribal Fusion is the first ad serving company to use online communities in this way and have established relationships with some successful online communities.

The move from interruptive advertising to engagement marketing is happening and online communities are at the centre of this transformation

Are you engaged?

Hints and tips from Digital Strategy

Successful communities are:

- Created with a clear objective in mind
- Well managed by a dedicated team
- Targeted at an identified customer segment
- Delivering significant value in the eyes of the audience
- Committed to ensuring their content is updated regularly
- Viewed as containing valuable, relevant and interesting information
- Attractive to topic experts
- Places where members are encouraged to participate and share knowledge
- Recognition driven, rewarding members through community status levels
- Moderated by professionals
- Available 24/7
- Responsive, easy to use and navigate around
- Complementary to the rest of the present organisation's business

The challenge for marketers:

- Moving from “interruptive” to “engagement” marketing programs
- Setting clear objectives for an online community
- Identifying a target audience
- Identifying a credible value proposition which can be delivered through the online community

Getting started

- Engage with a small sample of the target audience to develop the offering
- Be prepared to think outside the box – identifying and addressing unmet needs could have a bigger impact on a customer than replicating what you do today
- Identify an experienced partner to create, host, manage and maintain the first “online community” for your organisation – this will keep your start-up costs down and enable you to focus on what you are good at – understanding your business, your customers and their needs

Digital Viewpoints

Alex Burmaster: European Internet Analyst: Nielsen//NetRatings



"Tackling Web 2.0 is often discussed as a niche part of an overall online strategy. However, more people now visit Web 2.0 sites than don't. The top thirty or so Web 2.0 sites, for example, reach 53% of the UK online population and the zeitgeists – Wikipedia, YouTube and MySpace – each attract between a quarter and a fifth of Britons online. Their fame now transcends the online world. Even the tenth most popular Web 2.0 brand in the UK, Facebook, has over a million visitors.

Furthermore, one in three online adults have actually contributed to this ecosystem - posting opinion pieces online, whether in the form of user reviews, diary commentaries or blogs. Not really the attributes of a 'niche' existence.

So this leads to the question of why Web 2.0 has exploded onto the scene this way? Two quotes from thousands on the subject answer this well. In Wired Magazine, Chad Hurley, co-founder of YouTube, explained the allure of his creation: "Everyone in the back of his mind wants to be a star." Rishad Tobaccowala, CEO of Denou had an interesting take on Rene Descartes' existential gem to point out, "I post, therefore, I am."

Web 2.0 is the reality TV of the Internet.

Web 2.0's prominence is attributable to the fact it facilitates the inherent desire within people to tell their own story - to put themselves in front of the world and be somebody. In this way, Web 2.0 is the reality TV of the internet. After all, aren't the motivations for posting a video online, creating a MySpace profile or appearing on Big Brother inherently the same (aside from the prize money offered by the latter)?

Brands and advertisers are, of course, trying to turn this phenomenon into something tangible for their own ends. However, can they really debunk the "100 million users can't be wrong, they can, however, be useless" conundrum? Is it actually possible to make money out of Web 2.0? The respective founders of companies like MySpace, YouTube and Flickr would probably shout 'yes!' but what about everyone else? Is it a question of making money out of this "Social Internet" or more a question of harnessing it into an effective method for engaging the consumer?

The former task is certainly trickier. If one of the themes of Web 2.0 is "the user in charge" isn't it impossible to enter a sector that your potential customers are in charge of and expect to generate revenue without their permission? Although a simplistic way of putting it, this does highlight the tinderbox situation of big business inviting itself to a private party.

Whilst Web 2.0 provides brands a more realistic opportunity in terms of engaging the consumer, this is still an avenue fraught with peril.

Whilst Web 2.0 provides brands a more realistic opportunity in terms of engaging the consumer, this is still an avenue fraught with peril. To understand the delicacies of Web 2.0 and, potentially, how to tackle it simply follow these two steps. 1. Type "Chevy Tahoe" into the search box on YouTube and watch the videos that come up. 2. Type "Bazooka Bubblegum" into the search box on YouTube and watch the videos that come up.

Step 1 results in a slew of anti-Chevrolet Tahoe ads created from its own microsite that offered users the opportunity to design their own ads for their hugely successful SUV. The offerings that ended up on YouTube associate the brand with everything from global warming, and sexual inadequacy to social injustice. In contrast, after following Step 2, one is greeted with hundreds of amusing home-grown versions of the Bazooka Bubblegum song - brilliantly reinforcing as well as promoting the brand and its association with fun.

Both are American brands with strong individual identities yet the way they tackled, or harnessed, user-generated content had wildly contrasting results, proving that the best way to tackle Web 2.0 is thoughtfully and carefully!"

As European Internet Analyst, Alex Burmaster is responsible for identifying key trends from the Nielsen//NetRatings Internet research suite and conveying the impact these Internet trends have on society today – both from a commercial and sociological perspective. Alex has six years of experience in Internet research with specialist knowledge in online sectors including communities, retail, music, search, gambling and sport.

Training: Digital's Community Academy

The Digital Community Academy is the guaranteed way to boost your results. If you're involved in developing or running online communities then this is a chance to get an overview of the issues, structure your thinking, see some of the best in best-practice and improve your own vision. It's the essential way to get the knowledge you need to become more effective. Why spend years learning on-the-job if our team can accelerate your knowledge and understanding today? It's fast, effective and proven. At a time when the whole marketing and media industry is changing so fast, can you even afford to wait?

Designed by some of the world's pioneers in online communications, the Digital Community Academy is a fusion of classic lecturettes, training workshops, cutting-edge insights, and consultancy thinking. It's a winning formula that will immediately raise your understanding of how web communities work, and how you can harness them more effectively for your own business. It lifts your knowledge, raises your skills, and boosts your confidence – the vital ingredients in transforming your results.

Before the Academy even starts you'll receive research papers from us - Digital Insight Reports - and an exercise to get you thinking differently about how online communities work. We'll also want to know about you, your brands, and the challenges you face. This lets us customise the academy to ensure it covers the issues that matter most to you right now.

We'll answer these questions and more...

- What's the history of online communities?
- What is the structural format of a community?
- Why do some communities succeed and others never get going?
- How do you get communities started?
- What resources does a community take to run?
- What's the role of moderation in blogs, forums and chat?
- What are the common mistakes in building communities?
- How do you keep communities on track?
- What's the relationship between communities and other parts of the Web 2.0 landscape?
- What are the commercial models behind communities?
- How do I build a vision for my community?

How else can we help your business?

Here are some of the topics and areas we can cover:

Digital Web 2.0 Breakfast Academy

- An executive briefing on Web 2.0 for senior executives

Digital Community Breakfast Academy

- An executive briefing about Online Communities for senior executives

Digital's Community Strategy Development Workshop

An intensive series of workshops to build out the framework for your online community based around a flexible customised programme that typically includes:

- Vision mapping,
- Strategic advantages and SWOT analysis
- Resource requirements scoping
- Critical weakness analysis
- Competitor modelling

Digital Strategy Critique

- We'll annotate your existing plan with a series of questions your team may want to address before progressing

Digital Strategy's Management Support Services

- Many of our tutors can also assist in implementation challenges you are facing
- If you need additional resources to help make things happen after our Training Academies then simply ask your Academy Manager



Digital Social Networking Academy

At the Digital Training Academy we've developed an advanced training course to help you build your own community or social network. This requires planning and strategy; permission models are emerging as critical factors in the control of communities and barriers between the virtual and real are melting away. Driving traffic and acquiring audiences can be challenging and in these workshops we review some of the key issues web publishers need to take on board to harness community and social networks.

Co-author and series editor: Danny Meadows-Klue

Danny has been an international commentator on the digital networked industries since the mid nineties and is recognised as being a leading authority on digital marketing. He managed the UK's first online newspaper (telegraph.co.uk) where he stewarded it to win Newspaper of the Year repeatedly. He has helped run web businesses ranging from mass market portals and consumer magazines, to online stores and search and email services. He has been recognised by the DTI as being one of the 100 founders of the UK internet industry, and acknowledged by trade magazines for many years as being one of the most influential figures in his industry. He is the co-founder and former chairman of the UK and European Internet and Interactive Advertising Bureau trade associations, and has helped launch twenty further digital trade associations and initiatives around the world. He has acted as a government advisor in the DTI and Home Office, and retains roles on advisory boards for digital investment funds and digital firms. He has been lecturing on digital marketing and publishing for more than a decade and was recently awarded fellowships of the Institute of Direct Marketing, and the Royal Society of Arts. He set up Digital Strategy Consulting in 2000 to help firms make sense of the rapid changes brought about by the digital world, and show them how to harness the potential of the digital networked economy.

He is an enthusiastic educationalist and continues to teach university Masters courses and management courses. He is the inaugural chair of the examination board for the first Diploma in digital marketing, and a longstanding board member of the journal of Digital Marketing. Danny is a geography graduate of the University of Bristol and lives in London. Details of his current speaking engagements along with a full biography and recent articles are available on DigitalStrategyConsulting.com.



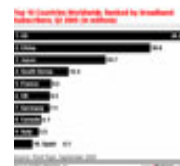
About the author: Julie Walker

Julie has held a number of senior positions within the knowledge and content management sector of the software industry, UK sales manager, European business development manager and general manager for Greater China and ASEAN, based in Hong Kong. In these roles, she has led companies to more than double their market revenues through strategic business development and identifying new market opportunities. Julie sits on the Greater London Regional Board for the Chartered Institute of Marketing.



Julie has a passion for integrating new technologies with business development strategy to create new online services in the media industry. In 2001, she created and self funded a start up company to develop a new online community based loyalty program for developing and maintaining customer loyalty. From 2004 to 2005 Julie led the online Content Integration & Technology business development strategy for Lexis Nexis, the leading legal publisher. Since Oct 2005, she has been on retainer with Ogilvy & Mather Worldwide as the global project director for a global services business transformation project.

More research: Digital Intelligence



Keeping on top of the latest research and trends is still a challenge for many, but Digital Intelligence can help you. To keep our Digital Training Academy classes up to date we trawl through hundreds of websites, magazines and research newswires every month and distil some of the key points into this review of the industry's growth and the evolution of marketing.

Delegates enjoy a free subscription to...

Research: Digital Insight Reports



Our Digital Insight Reports give you the inside track. Recent editions include Digital Europe – tracking the rise in online advertising spend across Europe, Digital Advertising Futures – our forecasts for online advertising growth and digital media substitution, how online is eroding the brands and revenues of traditional media.

Opinion: Meet the Digital Thought Leaders



Our monthly Thought Leadership interviews explain what key opinion formers believe the market is doing. Craig Newmark takes us behind the scenes at the classifieds website Craig's List. Richard Duvall shares his plans for the world's first online bank exchange, and web analyst Jim Sterne shows how any firm can unlock more value from their site.

About the Digital Insight Report series

In times of huge economic and technical change, knowledge becomes a critical success factor. We created the Digital Insight Reports to bring you insights from a particular part of this fast changing industry.

They are independent perspectives on key issues in doing business or marketing in the digital networked economy, and are published monthly.

What makes our Academies so effective?

- Leading trainers and freshest thinking
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To find out more about our knowledge development programme, click on to digitalstrategyconsulting.com



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Making sense of a digital world

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