



10 Tactics for Building Online Community



Introduction - Presenter

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Introduction - First Steps

- Determine whether and how online community will benefit your organization
- Choose appropriate tools given your budget, goals, and expected level of engagement
- Be prepared to devote sufficient staff time and resources to nurturing and growing the community



10 Tactics - Summary

- 1) Let the potential members of the community know why you are providing an online community, and how being an active member of a community would benefit them.
- 2) Use every opportunity to showcase your online community.
- 3) Seed the community so that early adopters aren't faced with an "empty" community.
- 4) Make it as easy as possible for people to sign up and to use the community tools.
- 5) Designate a staff person to be the facilitator or moderator of the community.



10 Tactics - Summary, cont.

- 6) Acknowledge those members who use the community frequently.
- 7) Seek input from the members. Take what you learn and put it into practice in the organization.
- 8) Use community functionality to publish ongoing lists of group events.
- 9) Announce new initiatives and other important organizational news in the community first.
- 10) Keep the community content fresh.



Tactic 1 - Let Your Members Know Why

- Let the potential members of the community know why you are providing an online community, and how being an active member of a community would benefit them.



Tactic 2 - Showcase Your Community

Use every opportunity to showcase your online community

- a) Use email.
- b) Use your newsletter.
- c) Use your home page.



Tactic 2 - Showcase Your Community, cont.

d) Set up occasional forums on topical events to keep refreshing the content.

e) Set up a feed for new blog posts on the home page of your website.

f) Promote the community through any other existing discussion lists your organization maintains.



Tactic 2 - Showcase Your Community, cont.

g) Add an invitation to staff email signatures.

h) Collect emails addresses and send reminder emails.

i) Mention the community in offline descriptions of your organization



Tactic 3 - Seed the Community

- Seed the community to avoid an “empty” community.
- Don't set up too many forums to start.
- Invite selected members to provide initial content.



Tactic 4 - Make it Easy

- Make it as easy as possible for people to sign up and to use the community tools.
- If your community is closed to non-members, entice them to become members.
- Help new users to adopt the tools quickly, by giving them simple directions for use.



Tactic 5 - Designate a Facilitator or Moderator

- Designate a staff person to be the facilitator or moderator of the community.

As the community grows, consider appointing volunteer moderators. On being a good facilitator, see

<http://www.rheingold.com/texts/artonlinehost.html>.



Tactic 6 - Acknowledge Community Members

- Acknowledge those members who use the community frequently.
 - Within the community site
 - In the organization's newsletters
 - The organization's main website, etc.



Tactic 7 - Seek and Use Members' Input

- Seek input from the members on your organization's agenda and other organizational issues.

Include at least one forum and one group that are focused on the organization's own operations.

Consider polling members within the community on a regular basis.

Give credit to the community for their input.



Tactic 8 - Use The Community for Announcements

- Use community functionality to publish ongoing lists of group events.
- Encourage users to use wikis and other community tools by seeking their input directly into organizational planning.



Tactic 9 - Announce News First in Community

- Announce new initiatives and other important organizational news in the community first.



Tactic 10 - Keep the Community Fresh

- Keep the community fresh.

Pay attention to what elements of the community are being used heavily, and which are not.

If you've created a forum that no one's using, consider taking it down.

If you find a lot of discussion on a particular topic, consider creating a forum and/or group especially for that topic.

Consider archiving outdated library items.



GoLightly Contact Info

For further information about GoLightly's Online Community and Collaboration Platform, please contact:

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Thanks for participating!

