

Developing Successful Online Business Communities: A One-Day Getting-Started Workshop

Getting a new community off the ground is not a trivial task—"the build it and they will come" mantra certainly doesn't apply here. In this one-day, hands-on workshop Beeline Labs will lead your team through every step of a community development process tailored for your organization, share best practices, and walk you through how other business communities are working.

You'll come away with:

- How to focus the community so that it benefits both members and your business.
- A plan for creating the right types of content and activities.
- Ideas on how to integrate the community with other marketing and business initiatives.
- Insights on how to market and launch the community.
- Best practices on how to manage and facilitate the community.
- Strategy for measuring the impact and value of the community.
- An implementation roadmap tailored for your organization.

Overview of workshop

Introduction: the business value of communities

Some context setting about the business value and tremendous possibilities for communities – from co-innovation and customer service to customer loyalty and word of mouth marketing.

What makes people want to be part of a community? What keeps them coming back?

In this interactive exercise you and your colleagues will find some surprising answers. And we'll share some new research and examples that provide further insights.

Clarifying purpose: why a community? For members – and for your organization?

This discussion will dig into the most important element of community development – establishing the purpose and focus.

Measurement starts from the start

Most measurement is almost meaningless because it's tacked on to the end of initiatives, and people tend to measure what's easy, not what matters. In this session we'll whiteboard your goals, the best metrics, and how to build those measurement approaches into the design of the community.

How to make the community a happening place

What content will be relevant, useful, credible and compelling to members? What are good sources to create this content and keep it fresh? What types of activities would members enjoy participating in – and how would those enhance the value of the community to members – and your business? How will members want to see community updates – and add their own?

Tools & technology

Now that you know the purpose, goals and likely activities of the community, what tools and technology will best support what people will want to do and what your team needs? What's essential? What's extra? What just might get in the way and be counterproductive?

Managing the community

The quality of community management is a predictor of the community success. Here we'll explore what makes successful community facilitators successful, including roles, skills and professional qualities. And we'll explore how to set up ground rules and guiding "community culture" principles.

Burning down the barriers to adoption

In launching communities most organizations need to overcome organizational, process and communications barriers. We'll brainstorm what's most likely to get in your way – and review techniques for removing those barriers.

Marketing your community

Finally, how do you launch a community to reach the right people? What needs to absolutely be in place – and what can be developed along the way? This session shares 10 ideas for successfully launching and marketing your community – internally and externally.

Wrap-up: Where are the biggest holes? The right next-step roadmap?

To conclude we'll look at where your organization is well along and buttoned up in its path to a successful community, what areas need the most attention, and together map out a next-step roadmap for your team.

Logistics

The workshop is very successful with anywhere from 6 to 24 participants.

- **Pre-workshop preparation:**

Beeline Labs will interview 2-4 key people in your organization in order to customize the workshop and gather the most relevant examples to share.

- **Deliverables:**

Workshop participants will receive a copy of any presentations used in the workshop and the 2008 "Tribalization of Business" research recently conducted by Beeline Labs along with Deloitte and the Society for New Communications Research.

Upon request, Beeline Labs will summarize the learnings of the day and provide a topline action plan based on the ideas and priorities surfaced by the group.