Online Community ROI: Models and Reports

Current Practice Research / March 2008

FORUM ONE
NETWORKS

Executive Summary

The Online Community ROI Models and Reports research study was initiated in February of 2008. The study extends the ROI research that we conducted in the last half of 2007 and to gain insight into specifically how organizations were valuing and reporting on their online communities activities. Further, we wanted to gain insight into who the stakeholders were for ROI metrics and how the reports were being received.

Bill Johnston (Forum One Networks) sent approximately 500 survey invitations to online community and social media professionals in our network of executives and practitioners.

We received approximately 150 completed surveys. Participants included large software companies, large community destination sites, niche community sites, platform providers and interactive marketing and advertising firms.

In addition to the survey results, there is a tremendous amount of useful write-in data from our research. We have organized the report with an eye towards summaries, but have included all write in data in an appendix (beginning on page 45) that follows the summary section.

Highlights from the report include:

- **Community Staff** (page 7): roles in the community team and breakdowns of contractor to staff;
- **Community Strategy Responsibility** (page 10): breakdown of roles responsible for online community strategy;
- **Online Community Goals** (page 14): the top three online community goals for surveyed organizations;
- **Measurement Tools & Techniques** (page 17): a list of tools and techniques used to measure online community and social media programs;
- **Critical Metrics** (page 19): a list of metrics critical to communicating ROI;
- **Reporting Data Sets** (page 27): a list of data sets being included in reports;
- **Report Stakeholder Satisfaction** (page 30): level of satisfaction of stakeholders receiving online community reports;
- **The Elevator Pitch** (page 34): the compelling sources of value/case studies that internal community evangelists constantly use;
- **Advice** (page 39): advice on community strategy development, measuring ROI, and/or reporting on ROI

Questions 1-5:
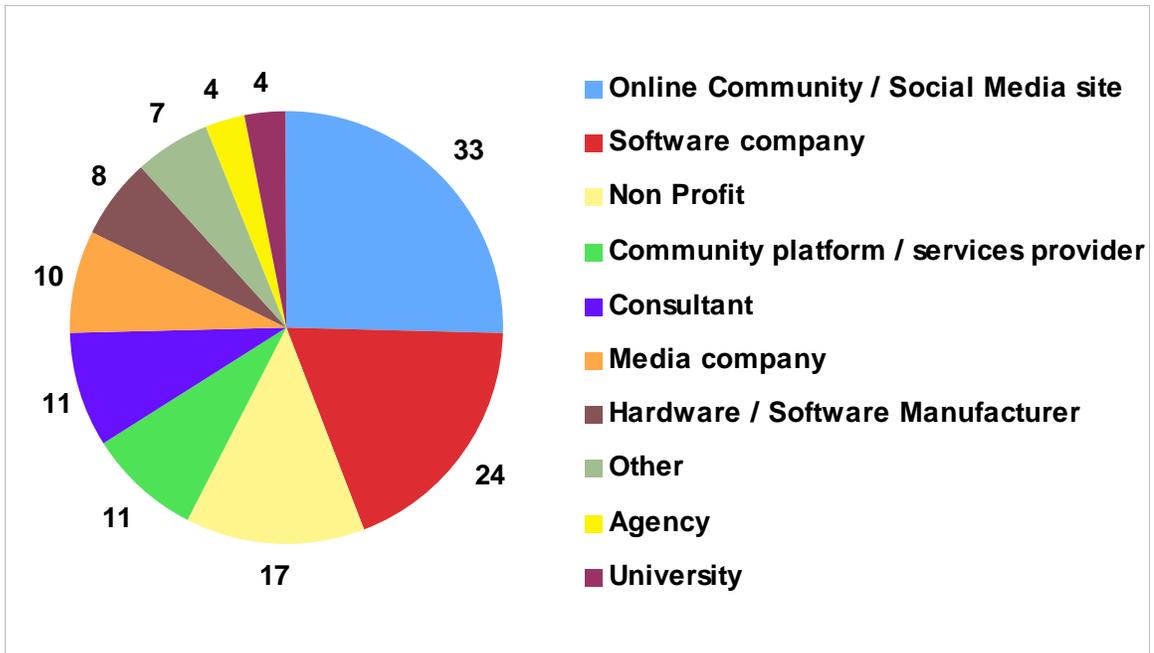Name, Organization, E-mail Address, Name of Your Organization, Job Title

Responses suppressed.

Question 6:
Which of the following best describes the organization that you work for?
Summary:
- **24%** are **Online Community / Social Media** sites
- **17%** are **Software Companies**
- **12%** are **Non Profits**
- **8%** are **Community Platform / Service Providers**
- **8%** are **Consultants**
- **7%** are **Media Companies**
- **6%** are **Hardware / Software Manufacturers**

Legend:
- **Online Community / Social Media site**
- **Software company**
- **Non Profit**
- **Community platform / services provider**
- **Consultant**
- **Media company**
- **Hardware / Software Manufacturer**
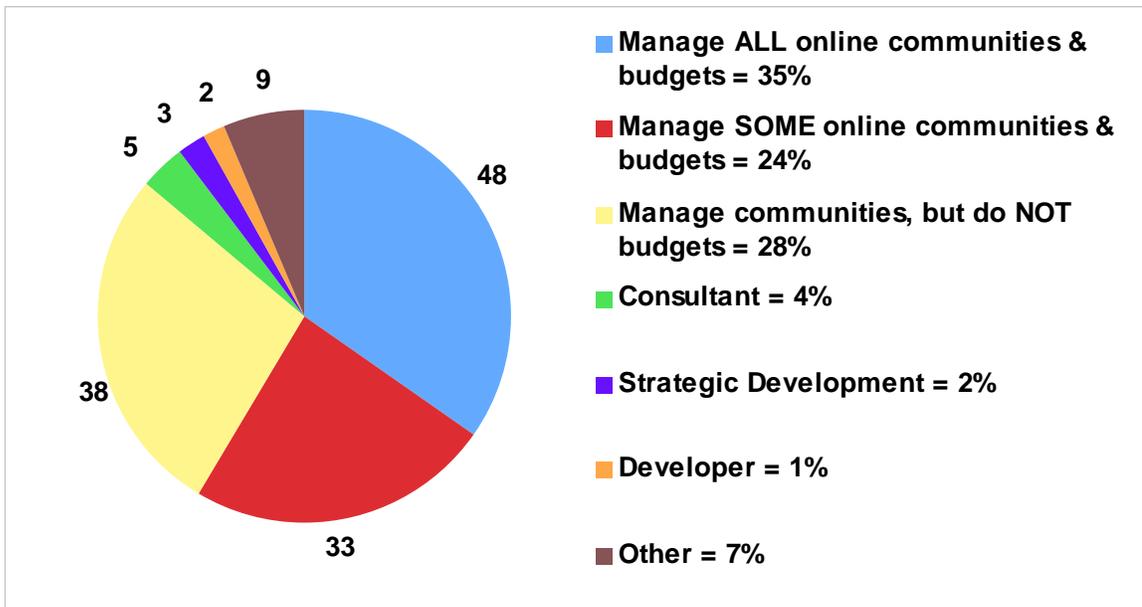- **Other**
- **Agency**
- **University**

Question 7:
What is your role with regard to online community for your organization?
Summary:
- **59%** of the respondents manage communities <u>and</u> budgets
- **28%** manage communities, but <u>not</u> budgets
- **4%** consult about communities
- **2%** do strategic development
- **1%** develop communities
- **7%** other

Manage ALL online communities & budgets = 35%

Manage SOME online communities & budgets = 24%

Manage communities, but do NOT budgets = 28%

Consultant = 4%

Strategic Development = 2%

Developer = 1%
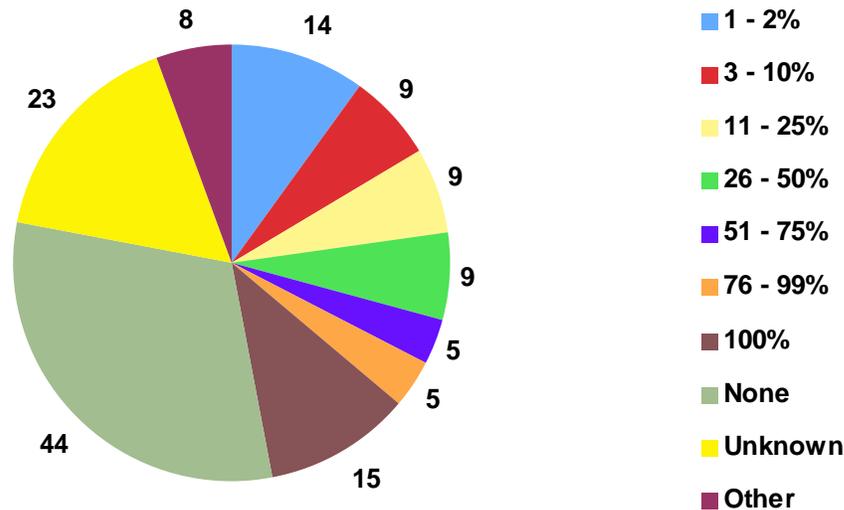
Other = 7%

"Other" responses:

- "I help others determine what their budget is."
- "I manage communities in projects that I lead."
- "I participate in on-line communities."
- "I work for someone who managers our company's community initiative."
- "Organizational Community Compagnon."
- "Our community budgets come from our customers."
- "Research them."
- "Advise those working in the interactive space."

Question 8:

What percentage of your company's revenue is <u>directly attributable</u> to your online community activities? (Members pay you for service / content, or members co-create value that you then resell.)

Summary:

- **10%** (14) of respondents said **1-2%**
- **18%** (9 + 9 + 9) reported between **3-50%**
- **8%** (5 + 5) reported between **51-99%**
- **11%** (15) of respondents said **100%**
- **31%** (44) reported **None**
- **16%** (23) said **Unknown**
- **6%** (8) reported **Other**

"Other" responses:

- "We don't measure revenue in terms of online community, we focus on influencer enablement."
- "Members create content that we place ads on; we also post member content in our paid business directory which enhances SEO thus ad revenue."
- "Very miniscule. There are ad sponsorships for each of our five sites, but little revenue as of yet."
- "We have a web site that wrote a book that generates revenue but not for our organization."
- "Community is in the launch process."
- "We're a social media pure-play, so all revenue and expenses derive from those efforts and that platform."

- "Our online communities are not monetized."

Question 9:

What is your organization's annual online community budget for communities that you manage, not including headcount? This should include development, hosting, management and metrics reporting.

Summary:

We were encouraged to see a healthy range of budgets for online community activities. Although the majority of respondents reported budgets under $100k, and several respondents (16%) reported budgets of over $500k.

- **26%** (32) of the people report having an annual budget under $10,000.
- **18%** (22) have an annual budget of $10,000-$49,999.
- **12%** (15) have an annual budget of $50,000-$99,999.
- **17%** (21) have an annual budget of $100,000 - $499,000.
- **6%** (8) are $500,000 - $1 million.
- **10%** (12) are over $1 million.
- **6%** (8) do not know what their budget is.
- **4%** (5) work with clients with varying budgets.

Note: Tool Provider answers were suppressed in the analysis of this question.
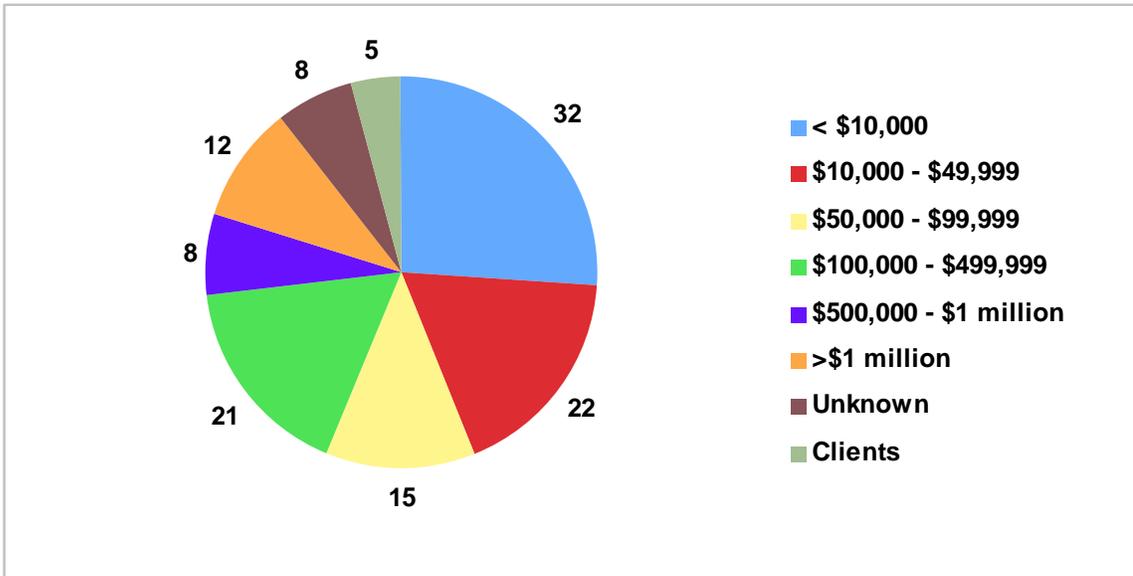
Question 10:
Please briefly describe your staff resources including full-time employees, contractors, and outsourced functions.

Summary:
The two most critical roles, based on responses, were that of **Community Manager** and **Moderator**. The Community Manager drives features, content and activity programs, technical (platform) decisions, metrics collection and reporting. The Moderator role was generally charged with being a community liaison, advocate, and "keeper / enforcer" of the rules. It is important to note that, based upon responses, community roles and team structure are in flux for most organizations. Many mentioned that community staff were "matrixed" from other parts of the company, including the corporate web team. There is a modest degree of outsourcing for functions like moderation, content development and community design.

Community team sizes for most respondents seemed to be healthy, with an average of 6 people on staff.

- Of the 88 respondents who provided a tangible number of full time employees, the **average** number is **6.6 full time employees**.
- Of the 24 respondents who provided a tangible number of contractors, the **average** number is **7.4 contractors**.
- 23 organizations mentioned specific **functions that they outsource**.

Selected Responses are below.
Please see Appendix A for the full list of participant responses.

Selected Qualitative Responses:

- "Full-time Community manager whose responsibilities are managing the forum moderators, off-line user groups and creating advocacy program. Contract User Group Manager. Site development responsibilities share resources used for general web development. E-Marketing Manager who oversees bloggers, etc."
- "We are a professional association that provides both online and offline membership services. We have four full-time employees and we contract with dozens of trainers (again, both online and off) and service providers."
- "We contract with companies that provide hosting, moderation and some community management. We oversee their moderation and provide additional community management with the equivalent of one and a half dedicated employees."
- "Staff is limited to run this non-revenue generating venture."

- "No 100% staff. All based on people contributing as part of other duties."
- "I hire moderators in each community. The number and compensation vary in direct proportion to the size and activity of the community."
- "We have only a handful of staff and rely heavily on in-house content, community moderation, etc."
- "I am an independent consultant who hires contractors to outsource things I can't do on my own."
- "Dedicated stakeholders for each community destination, content management and moderation generally contracted out (except for company blogs). Systems management and development outsourced."
- "We have a community steering team sponsored by the VP of marketing and includes directors of product marketing, web platforms, and IT as well as the community business owner. Each of the 3 areas (product marketing, Web and IT) has 2-5 employees working on community projects. As the business owner, I'm in charge of coordinating all activities, reporting metrics, and all strategy."

Selected Quantitative Responses:

- "0.25 FTE but adding 1 new one soon."
- "1-2 non dedicated staff person per site, assisted by a corporate person. The platform is a vendor's platform. One of the five sites has an intern and a volunteer editor."
- "Knowledge Manager, Communication Coordinator, interns."
- "2 employees full-time. Many others involved."
- "20 full time staff members, outsourced PR, 3 contractors (flash developers and animators)."
- "1 FT Business Analyst, 2 FT Developers, 1 PT Business Manager, 1 PT Systems Analyst, 2 PT Business Champions/SME, 1 PT Support Specialist."
- "Our department has 15+ employees though there are only a couple of us managing the community, we contract moderation services to our community provider."
- "We have 18 people, all who work - in some capacity - on helping clients build and utilize community online."
- "50 people in USA, Germany, UK and Ireland. Most of us are full-time employees but there are a few contractors within (circa 10 percent)."
- "About 90 full-time employees and hundreds of contractors."

"Outsourced Functions" include the following:

- Community platform from a third-party (2)
- Community third party vendors (1 company has hired 2 of them)
- Community design and technical functionality
- Provider of online communities
- Service providers
- Community consultants
- Communications
- Content management and moderation
- User Group Manager
- Moderation and some community management
- Moderation services to our community provider
- Hosting (4)
- IT management and services (3)
- Systems management and development
- Development team (as and when needed)
- Off-site development team
- Technical development
- Hardware and software upgrades
- Software development
- Web design and development
- Web design, legal work, and advertising sales
- Community development work happens offshore
- Freelance sales folks
- PR
- Trainers

Question 11:
Who is responsible for setting formal ROI goals for online community and social media activities at your company?

Summary:
We found it interesting that "Manager" scored the highest in responses, yet Community Manager was only listed a handful of times in that category. The range of responses on this question reinforces the notion that Online Community and social media strategies are emergent issues in most organizations.

- 21 replied "Manager"
- 15 replied "C-Level Staff"
- 12 replied "Others"
- 6 replied "President"
- 1 replied "Owner"

- 18 replied "Director"
- 13 said "VP"
- 9 responded "Client"
- 3 said "Board of Directors"

Note: Specific Job Titles are outlined below the following chart.
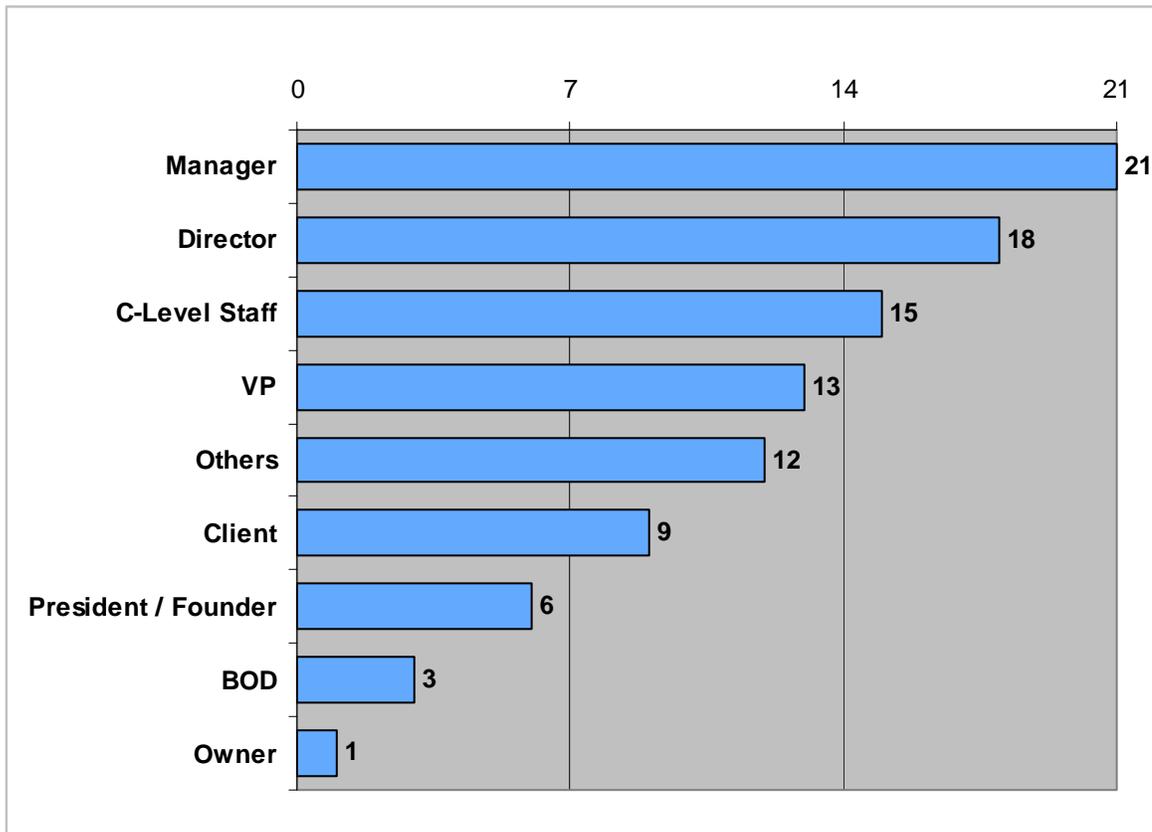
Managers:

- Business Manager
- Communities of Practice Manager
- General Manager, Management
- Client Interface Manager
- Manager of Knowledge Centered Support
- Knowledge Manager
- Manager of Education and Training, Education Services
- Online Community Program Manager, Marketing Communications dept.
- Online Community Manager
- Online Marketing Manager
- Editor In Chief (2)
- Head of User-Generated Content
- Head of Department
- Social Media Manager, Web Marketing
- Technical Community Marketing Manager (Marketing Dept)
- Product Manager (5)
- Sr. Product Manager with input from VP Product Manager
- Group Product Marketing Manager

Directors:

- Executive Director (2)
- Community Director (4)
- Creative Director

- **Director of:**
- ...Operations
- ...Partner Services
- ...Customer Success and Community Programs – Marketing
- ...Developer Relations
- …Internet Communications (Marketing & Communications department)
- ...Online Marketing
- ...New Media, Digital & Online Marketing
- ...Web Properties and Online Marketing
- ...Web Marketing (Web Department)
- ...Integrated Marketing
- ...Membership and Communication Unit

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C-Level Staff:
- CEO (5)   - CFO   - COO (3) & COO, Corporate Level   - CMO (2)   - CNO   - Managing Partner (2)   - Senior staff   - The senior management and leadership team (which is 10-12 folks)
Senior Vice Presidents:
- SVP   - SVP, WW Services
Vice Presidents of:
...Communications   ...Community   ...Customer Support   ...eMarketing and eCommerce   ...Interactive   ...Interactive and Strategic Planning   ...Internet Marketing and Marketing Communications Managers   ...Marketing   ...Marketing and Product Management   ...New Media

Selected Responses are below.
Please see Appendix B for the full list of participant responses.

| |
|---|
| "For my community, I am. Director, Content & Community." "VP, Interactive" "Within our group, these are set by the senior management and leadership team (about 10-12 folks)." "Product Champion or Strategic Marketing" "Community related: Online Community Manager, Group Product Marketing Manager." |

Question 12:
Is there a comprehensive online community strategy in place that guides your efforts or are you actively developing as you go?

Summary:
An astounding **67%** of respondents said they were actively developing a strategy, or had no strategy, while only 31% of respondents said they had a comprehensive strategy.

- **31%** (34) report that a comprehensive strategy **is already in place**.
- **53%** (58) are **developing** their strategies.
- **14%** (15) **do not currently have** a strategy in place.
- **3%** (3) said **not yet**.
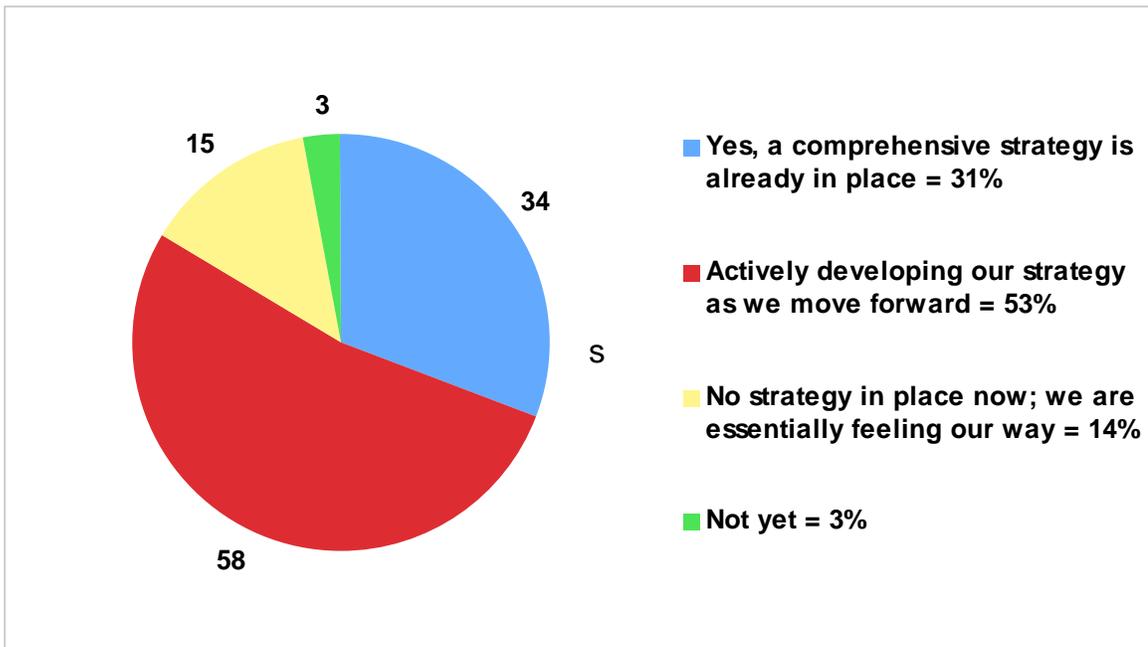
"Not Yet" Responses:

- "There is nothing in place, but in the future, we'll be looking at how we can further monetize/improve the site/network."
- "We don't have one yet."
- "It appears to me that in Continental Europe the understanding of the impact of communities for business is very little. In general there is equation from 'community' with fun and leisure."

Question 13:
What are the top 3 goals for your online community and social media programs?

Summary:
The most popular responses were to **Grow Membership** and **Make Financial Targets / Goals**. **Knowledge Sharing, Increase Community Participation** and **Increase Customer Engagement** are also important goals for organizations.
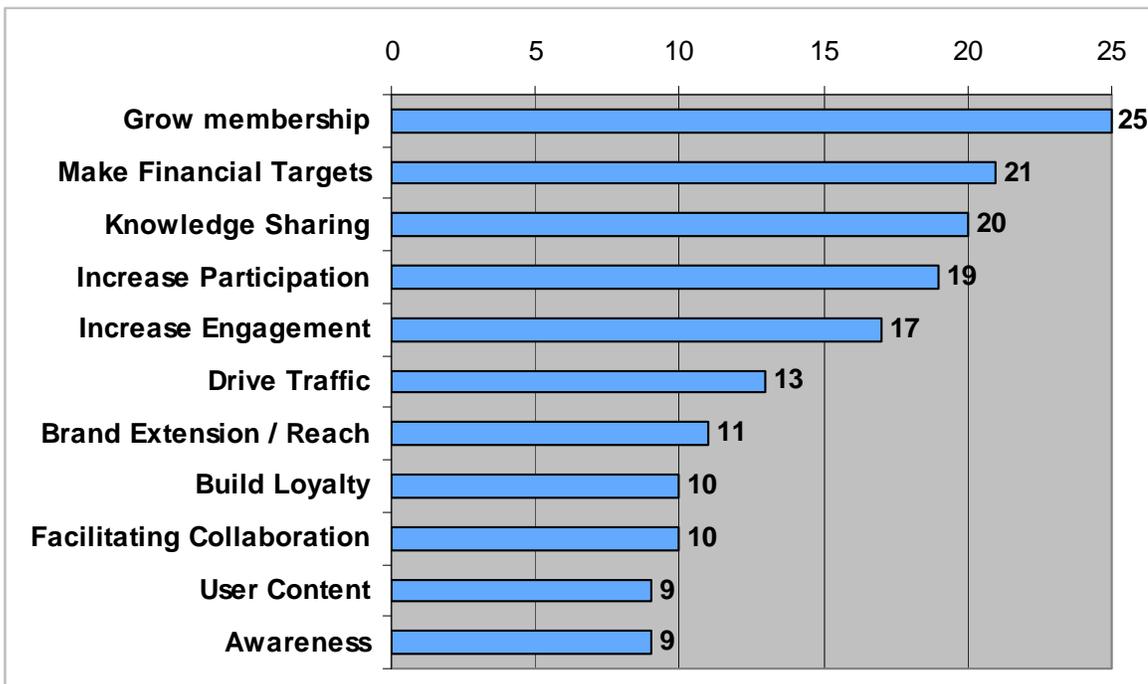
Selected Responses are below.
Please see Appendix C for the full list of participant responses.

- "Grow our audience reach through more meaningful engagement."
- "Achieving business model financial targets."
- "Engage our customers more deeply."
- "Sharing knowledge and expertise."
- "Identify and increase participation by key influencers."
- "Build more loyalty and trust."
- "Collaboration: Increased interaction internally and with our customers."
- "Increase brand awareness through social media & online community."

Knowledge Sharing:

- Connecting dispersed practitioners for learning
- Keep track of what is going on
- Knowledge Sharing
- Learning
- Leveraging experience of members
- Providing information, news and education
- Transfer knowledge from the older ones to the newer ones
- Disseminate best practices
- Inform and educate project staff as to the benefits of using the online community
- Sharing knowledge and expertise
- Support our instructor community
- To preserve cultural artifacts through photography, interviews, video, and audio
- Community members interact to learn from each other

Increase Engagement:

- Brand engagement
- Community engagement
- Engage our customers more deeply
- Engage readers
- Engagement
- Engagement influencers
- Engagement/Satisfaction
- Improve engagement on the Community, including customers answering one another's questions, and active engagement of product development with our Product Managers
- Increase user engagement
- Proactive Community Engagement

Facilitating Collaboration:

- Collaboration
- Collaboration: Increased interaction internally and with our customers
- Collaborative Research
- Communication: Creating multiple channels for allowing collaboration and content sharing and storage
- Creating and sustaining collaborative networks
- Improve service by facilitating collaboration
- Online networking opportunities that provide tangible benefit (increased business, # of collaborations, etc.)
- Provide an alternate 'support' and collaboration space for our customers
- Community members interact with us (training and engineering)

![Forum One Networks logo]

Question 14:
How closely are your social media and online community goals currently aligned with your corporate goals?

Summary:
We found it surprising that 59% of respondents felt their community goals were closely aligned with their corporate goals, yet only 31% (q 12) had a comprehensive community strategy in place.

- **33%** (36) feel their social media / online community goals are **very closely aligned** to their corporate goals.
- **26%** (29) feel that they are **closely aligned.**
- **17%** (19) feel their goals are **loosely aligned**.
- **10%** (11) feel they are **somewhat aligned.**
- **2%** (2) feel that they are **NOT aligned.**
- **12%** (13) said this question does **not apply** to them**.**
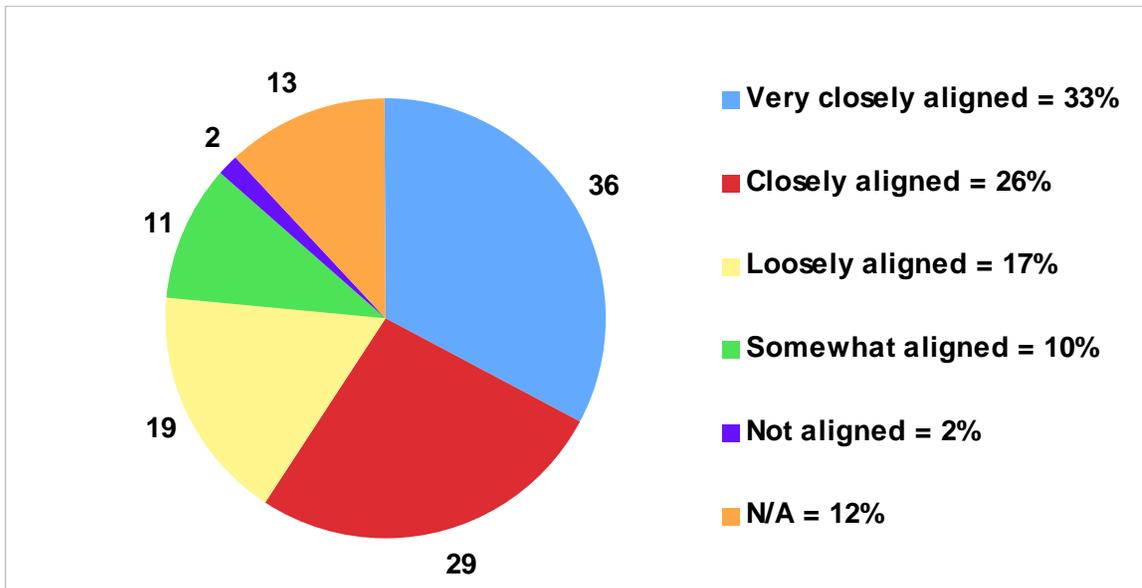
Question 15:
Please indicate which of the following <u>measurement tools and techniques</u> you use at your company. (Please check all that apply).

Summary:
The majority of respondents are relying on a combination of their default community platform metrics and standard web metrics.

- **86** (78%) reported that they use **Default Community Platform Reports**: Member counts, network size, number of posts, etc.
- **84** (76%) said that they use **Standard Web Metrics**: Google Analytics, Hitbox, Omniture, log files, etc.
- **40** (36%) reported that they do **Manual Harvesting**: BlogPolls, Technorati, Google Alerts, etc.
- **18** (16%) said that they rely on **Word-of-Mouth**: Nielson BuzzMetrics & NetRatings, Bold Mouth, WOMMA, etc. (Subscription-based tracking services).
- **15** (14%) gave **Other** responses.
- **5** (2%) reported that they use **Surveys**.
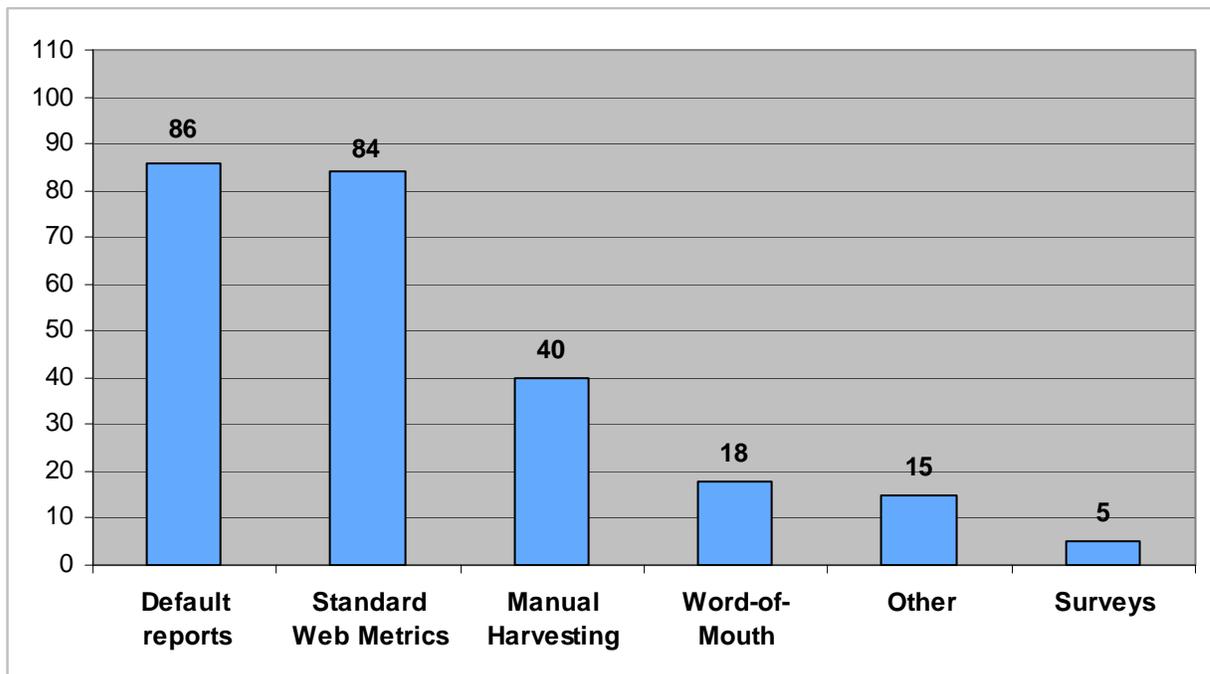
"Other" Responses:

- "Recognition (quoted and referenced in media, invitations from authors to speak at conferences)"
- "Extensive internal metrics platform, including operational performance, funnel flow, etc."
- "Business Intelligence by reputation criteria."
- "CoVibe Live"
- "Large data warehouse -- internal analytics."
- "Comscore and TNS."
- "In-house metrics tools."
- "# of new accounts: new accounts & account growth can be directly tied to the added value of the community offering."
- "Eloqua for tracking Community email marketing."
- "Number of applications into closed groups, number of contacts from web to the CRM."
- "External dialogue analysis by Kaava."
- "Sharepoint report, consolidated in spreadsheet."
- "Community-based evaluation activities generated from and by the community (AARs, peer assists, phone calls around an evaluation topic, etc.)."
- "Finance report, student numbers."
- "Our own model."

"Survey" Reponses:
- "Satisfaction surveys."
- "Survey Monkey."
- "User Surveys."
- Member surveys - telephone, in person, and online."
- "Annual Satisfaction Surveys and CS Contact Surveys."

Question 16:
Which of the following quantitative and qualitative metrics are critical for communicating ROI in your organization? (Please check all that apply.)

Summary:
The top-ranking metrics are: Traffic patterns & statistics; Community member engagement; Unique number of visitors; New Member Registrations; Member Satisfaction; and Product Feedback / R&D ideation.

The middle-ranking metrics are: Number of referrals to the community by members; WOM generated by community; transition of lurkers into active community members; impact of the community on revenue; organization or brand-mentions on other sites; and ratio of comments per post.

When looking at the data segmented by type of respondent organization, Traffic patterns, member engagement and unique community visitors scored consistently high.

Top-ranking metrics

Metric	Value
Traffic patterns & statistics	75
Community member engagement	74
Unique number of visitors	72
New Member Registrations	70
Member Satisfaction	59
Product feedback and/or ideation for R&D	45

Middle-ranking metrics

Metric	Value
Number of referrals to the community by members	33
WOM generated by community	31
Transition of lurkers into active members	29
Impact of the community on revenue	27
Mentions of organization or brand on other community sites	27
Ratio of Comments per post	25

Lower-ranking metrics

Metric	Value
% product forum posts that receive answers	20
Promote of cmty members to moderators	20
Keywords for forums & blogs	17
Cost savings for Customer Service	16
Av. # Customer Service tickets / month	13
Other	13
# of product trial downloads	12
Av. # Tech Support tickets / month	11
Cost savings for Tech Support	11
Av. time for a response	10

Segmented by Type of Organization

Legend:
- ■ Community member engagement
- ■ Traffic patterns & statistics
- ■ Unique number of visitors
- ■ New Member Registrations
- ■ Member Satisfaction
- ■ Product feedback and/or ideation for R&D

Categories: Online Community &Social Media, Software company, Non Profit, Media Company, Consultant

Axis: 0, 50, 100, 150, 200
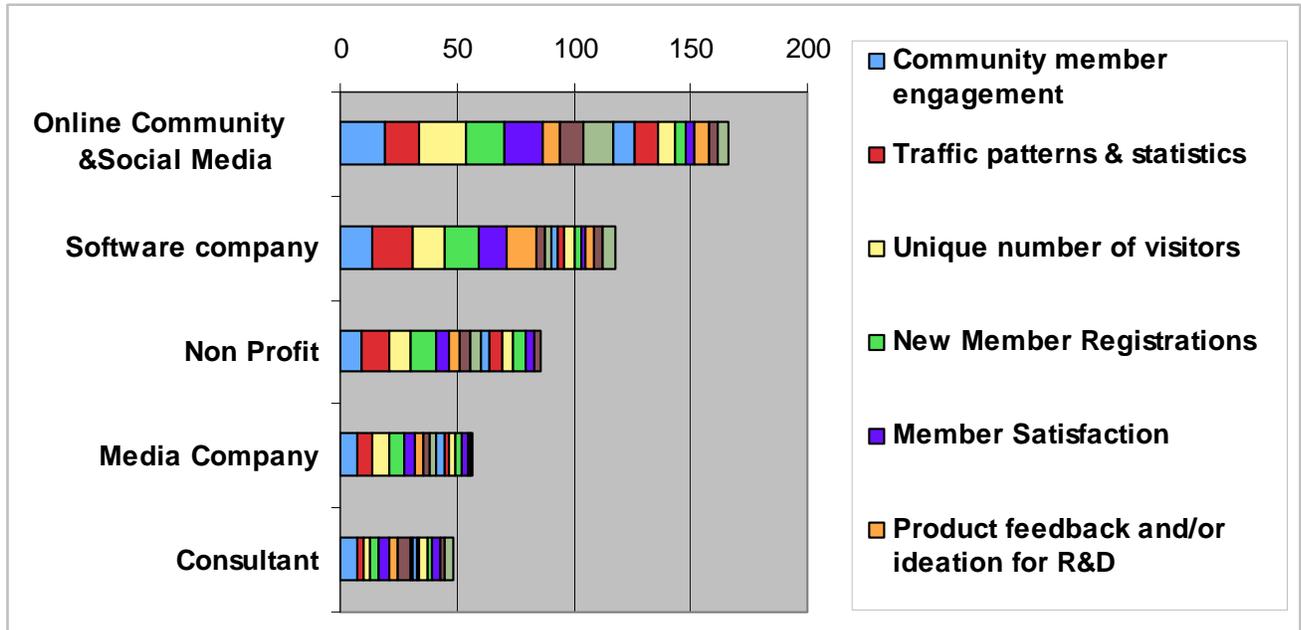
The 13 "Other" Responses
(to the question "Which of the following quantitative and qualitative metrics are critical for communicating ROI in your organization?")**:**

- "Connection of users to clients and vendors."
- "Depending from business case and stage of development."
- "Different set to match clients' business objectives."
- "Meeting org collaboration or learning goals."
- "Money raised."
- "Number of best practices / lessons learned approved in the knowledge base."
- "Number of ratings, ratio of comments to unique visitors."
- "Participation in some custom developed online tools."
- "Product evangelism."
- "Renewals and Upsells."
- "ROI has been elusive for us, as this is an internal 'knowledge management' effort."
- "User-triggered abuse mitigation."
- "We may not have achieved all of these but they are critical to our success going forward."

Question 17:
To whom in your organization do you and/or your team report results?

Summary:

We found it interesting and encouraging that C-level and VP-level staff (in particular the CEO) topped the list of stakeholders who are paying attention to online community and social media reports.

- 31 said "C-Level Staff"
- 12 replied "Manager"
- 9 said "Others"
- 7 responded "President"
- 3 said "Senior VPs"

- 24 said "VP"
- 12 replied "Director"
- 8 responded "Client"
- 3 said "Board of Directors"
- 1 said "Owner"

Note: Specific Job Titles are outlined below this chart.
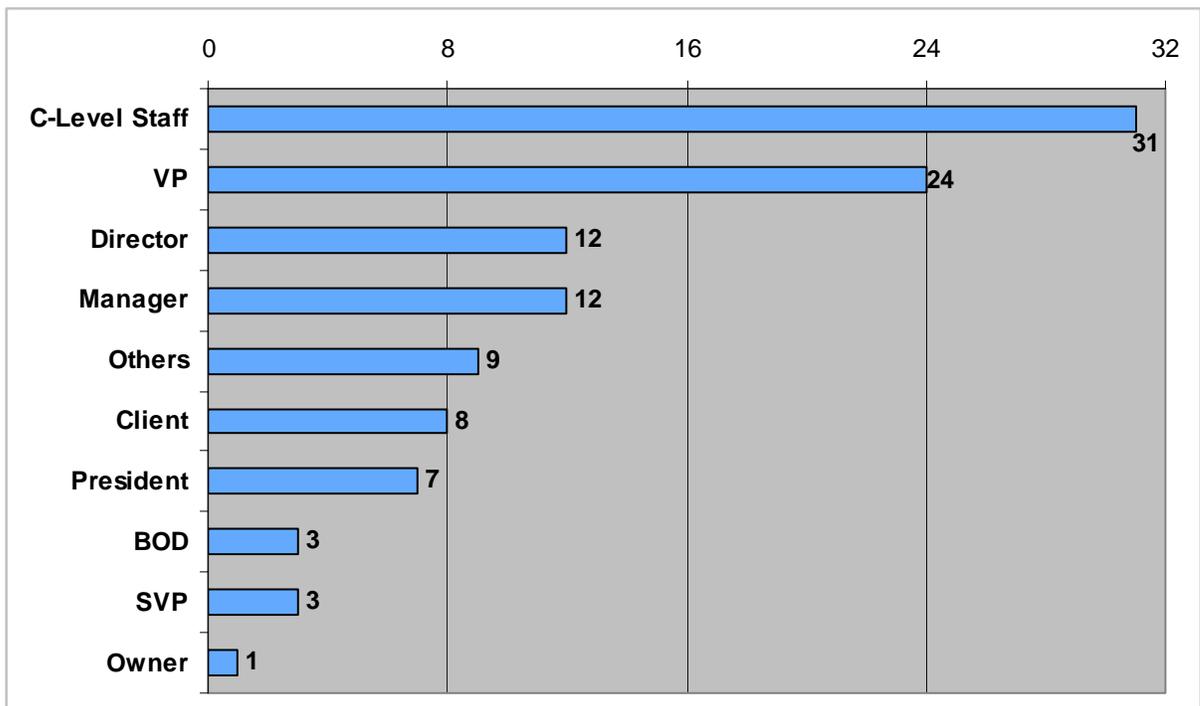
C-Level Staff:

- CEO (13)
- CMO (5)
- CFO (3)
- COO (3)
- CIO (2)
- Managing Partner
- Executive Management Team

- Senior Management Team (3)

Vice Presidents of:

- …Communications (2)
- …Content & Alliances
- …Customer Support
- …Development
- …HR
- …Marketing & Communications (2)
- …Marketing & Sales
- …Marketing (7)
- …Marketing, Global Product
- …Online
- …Operations (2)
- …Product (3)
- …Professional Services
- …Programs
- …Sales (3)
- …Services (2)
- VPs [non-specified] (4)

Directors:

- Executive Director
- Senior Director of my organization
- Our 3 Directors
- My Director (2)

- **Director of:**
...Customer Support
...Integrated Marketing
...Marketing Communications
...Online Marketing, Marketing
...Operations
...Product Management
...Web Marketing
...Alumni

Senior Vice Presidents:

- …Marketing
- …Editorial Operations

- …Product Management
- …WW Services

Managers:

- General Manager (4)
- Divisional General Manager
- Department/Unit Head
- Direct Management
- Business Development Manager, Online
- Business Unit General Managers
- Business Unit Managers
- Marketing Manager
- Online Managing Editor, Editorial
- Editor In Chief, Editorial
- Product Managers (2)
- Product Marketing Managers

"Other" Responses are listed below.
Please see Appendix D for the full list of participant responses.

- "Full staff."
- "Entire company is involved with the reporting of community metrics."
- "Head of our corporate Interactive Division."
- "Knowledge Management group."
- "Public Health Agency of Canada."
- "Support organization Business Units."
- "Editor, Road Transport group."
- "In general I recommend reporting results from head of community to head of business unit. Head of business unit has to summarize in the given form to the CEO."
- "It varies based on the community."

Question 18:
How often is the data reported?

Summary:
Of the 88 people who responded to this question, most people report monthly:
- **25%** (22) report their data **weekly**
- **44%** (38) report their data **monthly**
- **5%** (4) report **every 2 months**
- **18%** (16) report **quarterly**
- **6%** (5) report **twice a year**
- **3%** (3) report **annually**
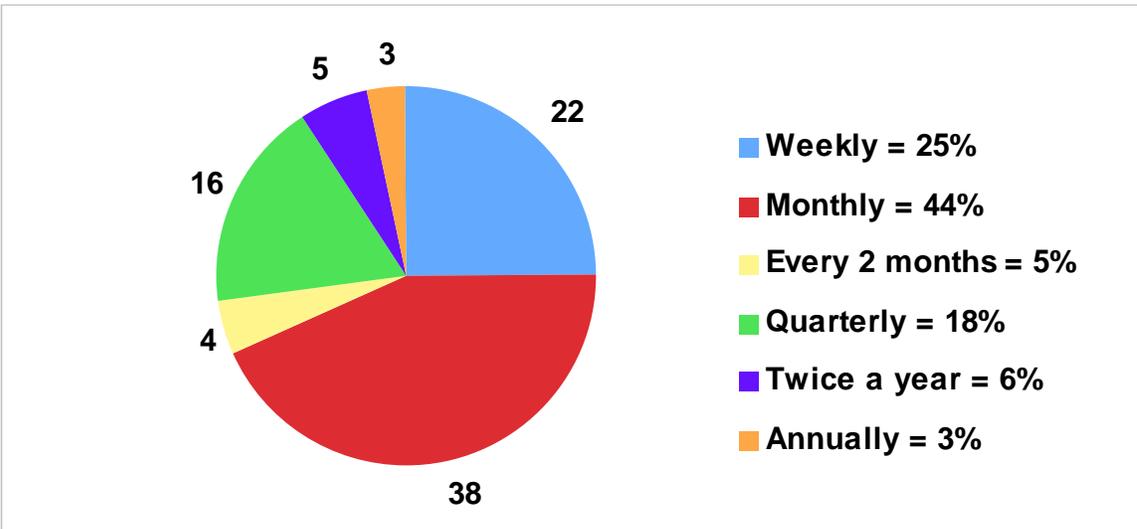
Weekly = 25%
Monthly = 44%
Every 2 months = 5%
Quarterly = 18%
Twice a year = 6%
Annually = 3%

Question 19:
What are the three most important success or performance indicators that are reported on regularly?

Summary:
The survey respondents indicated that the most important success indicators that are reported on regularly are: **Membership Growth**, **Member Activity Level**, **Site Traffic** and the **Number of Posts**.

Indicator	Value
Membership Growth	39
Member Activity Level	28
Traffic	23
Number of Posts	22
Unique visitors	19
Financial targets	17
Page views	16
Other	11
Online content	10
Engagement	9
Customers' needs	5
Sense of Community	4
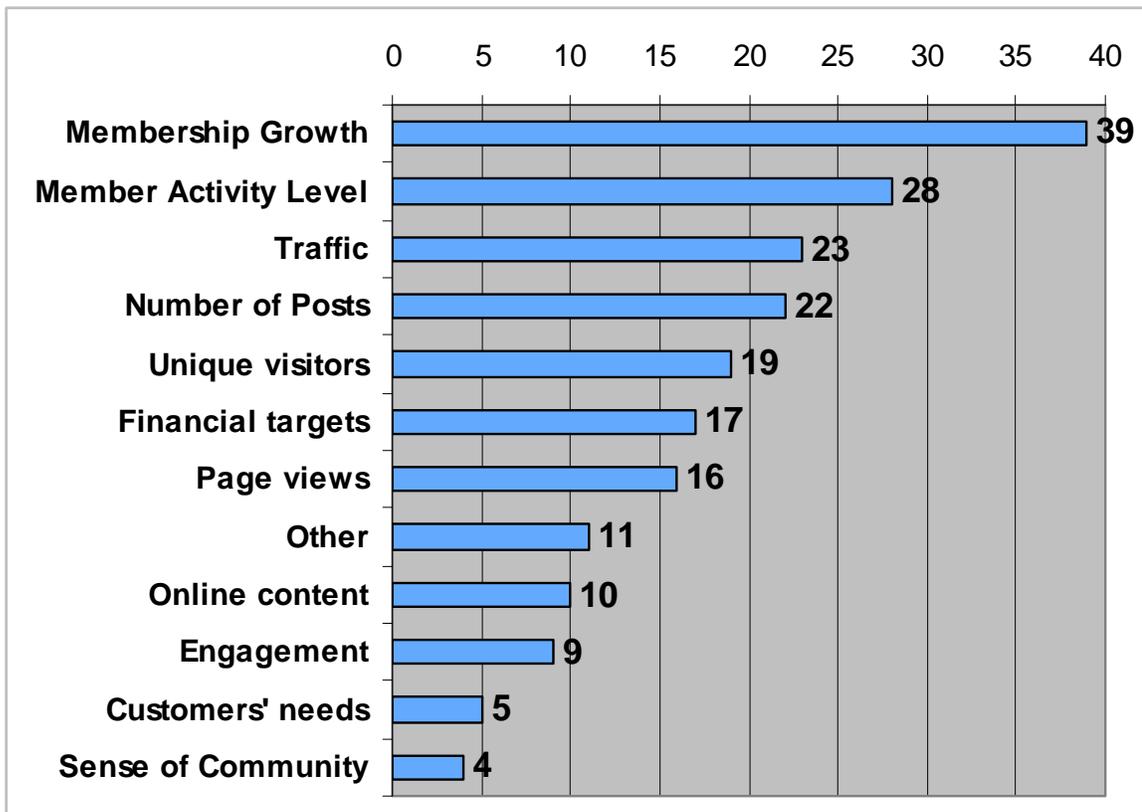
Selected Responses are below.
Please see Appendix E for the full list of participant responses.

- "Abuse Report Rate."
- "Number of members with a complete profile file."
- "Number of active (more than 3 posts per week) members."
- "Customer satisfaction as indicated thru customer engagement."
- "Email open and click through rates."
- "The activity level in Discussion Forums, Blogs, File Repository, etc."
- "Number of posts and Time to Response."
- "Number of visitors, members, and returning members."

> *Question 20:*
> What data sets are being included in your reports? What data sets are your key performance indicators based upon?

> **Summary:**
> - The most important data sets were reported as: the **Number of Members**, **Basic Metrics** (like Google Analytics), **Online Content** (number of downloads, submission of user-generated content), and **Number of Visitors** (both uniques and overall).
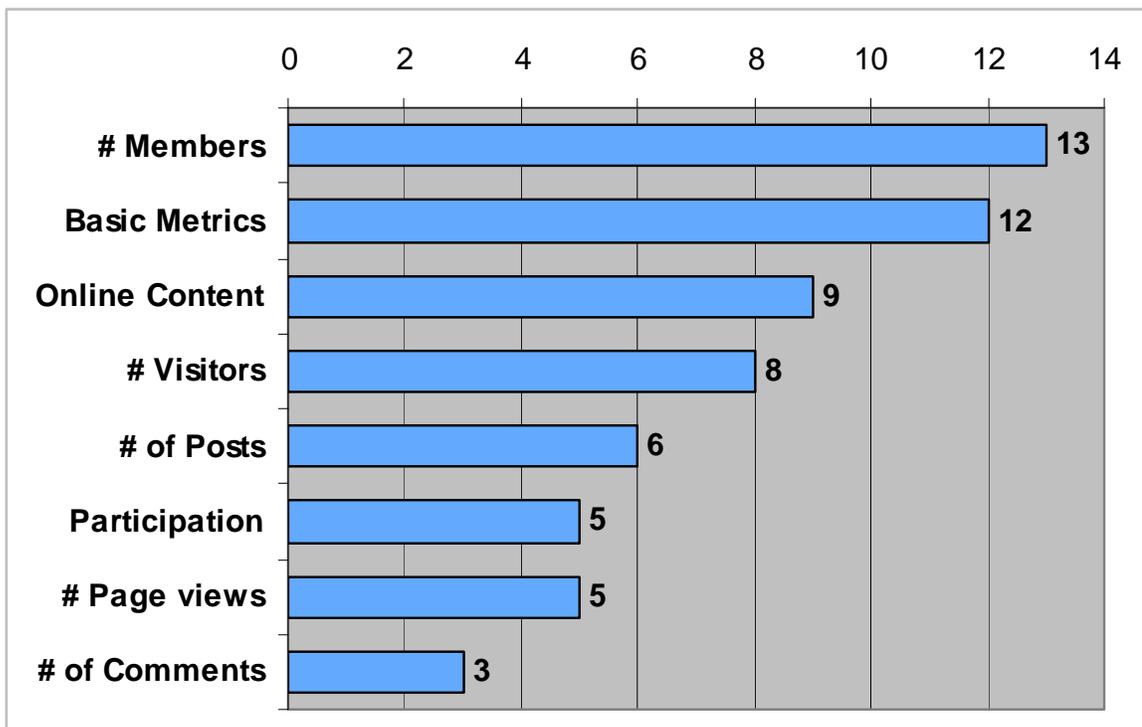> - **Number of Posts**, user **Participation** / activity level, **Number of Page Views**, and the **Number of Comments** were also important data sets.

Selected Responses are below.
Please see Appendix F for the full list of participant responses.

- "Visits per day, page views, overall visitors, overall members, returning members, number of posts, time to respond, power members."
- "Reach: Visits, number of world wide reactions from Technorati Preference: Repeat visitors, # of Registrations, Advocacy: Sentiment - number of positive comment that recommend us."
- "We like to track historically, number of registrations, increase in return visits, how long on the site and in the case of alumni associations - online contributions."

- "Basic community metrics - posts, registrations, post/member, Actionable ideas and suggestions, Internal Response and contribution to community - posts, registration, Positive & Negative feedback and follow up actions to take or taken."
- "Customers/product. Product discussions/clicks."
- "Direct survey data (every 6 months...both of community members and non-members), data from our membership tracking software and course/training management software (monthly), unsolicited member contact e-mails, direct personal company "retention visits" (performed at least annually) by our County's economic development organization."
- "Email open and click through rates."
- "We do a lot of qualitative with your normal quantitative. For a public-facing community the quantitative is much more important: all the basic Google analytics, interests in seeing how people find the site, where in world they are coming from, what pages, etc. For inward-facing it is much more about achievement of community goals."
- "User statistics taken from CoP platform."

Question 21:
What is the level of satisfaction / believability of the data with your executives? How satisfied are they with the reports that they are receiving?

Summary:
Of the people who replied to this question, **most respondents feel** their executives are **somewhat satisfied** with the reports they are receiving (27%).

We also took at look at the data being reported on, segmented by those whose stakeholders where "Very & Somewhat Satisfied" and "Satisfied & Dissatisfied" to see if there was disparity in the data sets.

Data that was reported by those who felt their management was "Very & Somewhat Satisfied" included: # of Members, Online Content (submission and downloads), member activity and basic web metrics.

Note: Tool Provider answers were suppressed in the analysis of this question.

Very satisfied = 23%

Satisfied = 19%

Somewhat satisfied = 27%

Dissatisfied = 5%

Unknown = 10%

N/A = 12%

Other = 4%

Chart legend:
- ■ Very & Somewhat Satisfied
- ■ Satisfied & Dissatisfied

Categories (x-axis): # Members, Basic Metrics, Online Content, # Visitors, # of Posts, Participation, # Page views, # of Comments

Category	Very & Somewhat Satisfied	Satisfied & Dissatisfied
# Members	9	1
Basic Metrics	4	5
Online Content	6	2
# Visitors	4	2
# of Posts	4	0
Participation	4	1
# Page views	2	3
# of Comments	2	0

"Other" responses:
"The understanding of the importance of communities is underdeveloped in continental Europe; for this you have to integrate the critical data in existing tools from the client."   "Because we use the data on an ongoing basis, we rarely emphasize a single report. Instead the data is part of our mental dashboard for the project."   "We are in transition from Dissatisfied by building new reports that capture specific social media metrics including sentiment."

Question 22:
How are your community metrics and ROI models changing over time? Are you getting pressure to modify data sets or to find new sources of value?

Summary:
Not surprisingly, given the answers to Q12 (General lack of community strategy) and Q 21 (generally low satisfaction with reporting models), most teams are feeling pressure to create better metrics and ROI models.

- 39 respondents said Yes, they are getting pressure to modify data sets.
- 11 said No
- 10 said they are too new to say yet
- 7 said No, not yet.
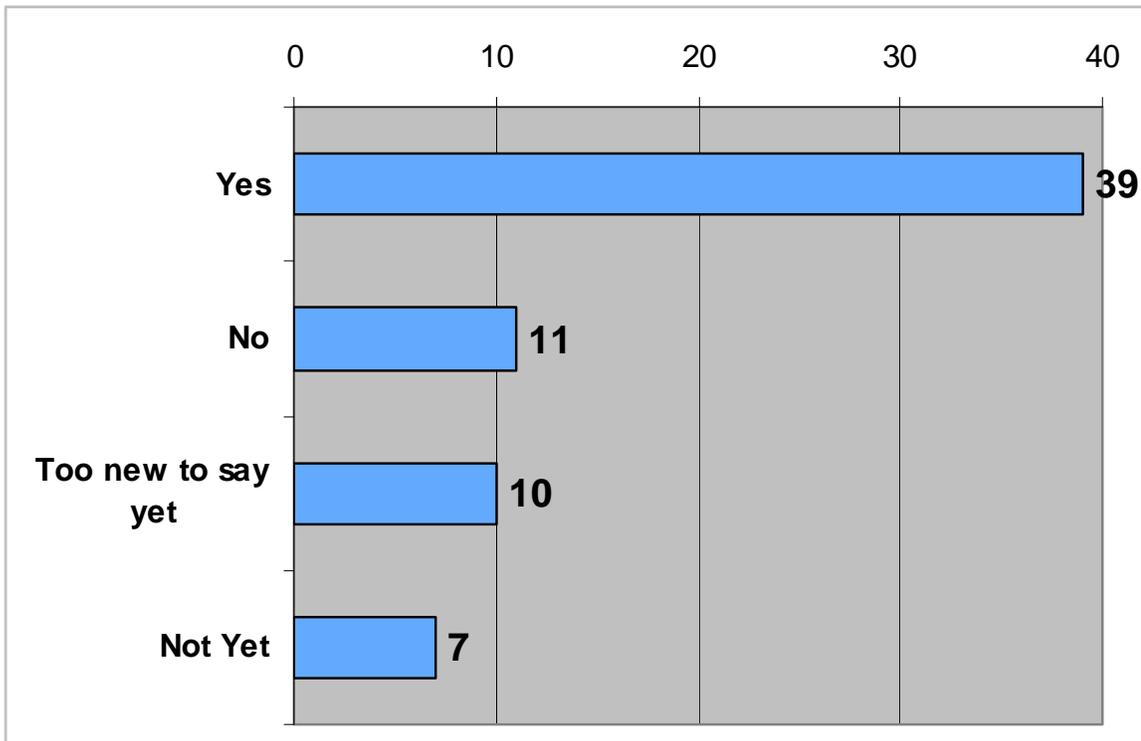
Selected Responses are below.
Please see Appendix G for the full list of participant responses.

Selected responses:
Yes, Pressure: • "**Yes**. Increased pressure to demonstrate influence of community members."

- "Yes, we are **shifting from traditional metrics to metrics more tailored to social media**. We are less concerned about visits and click-throughs and more interested in **how content is generating discussions on and off our site**."
- "Getting pressure on **finding success stories** that can be translated into money figures."
- "**Definitely, yes**. In fact, this year we are driving towards regular detailed data from which we can get a better view into trends and success/non-success."

Yes, and We Need Better Metrics:
- "**Metrics increasing linearly**. ROI remains evasive (cannot quantify service improvements directly attributable to CoPs)."

Yes, and We Are Always Evolving:
- "As our Community evolves, we are **trying to quantify more and more how the Community is contributing to our company's bottom line**, and to improve the way we contribute. Having members on the Community is useless unless they are engaged and coming back for more!"
- "Only pressure is to **respond quickly** and **be ready to understand** that what we are doing will change, or that what we THINK we are doing will change."
- "**Getting more granular as we grow.** We need more and more people to analyze them."
- "Always looking for ways to use the community to achieve our mission. Now **looking for ways to maximize use of Web 2.0 tools** to help spread word about our community and its activities."

No Pressure:
- "**No pressure.** Management is quite distanced from actual implementation."

Not Yet:
- "**Not as of yet**, but will need to."

Too New to Say Yet:
- "**Too early to tell**. We are in developmental states of site."

Question 23:
What were the 1-2 compelling sources of value from your community or social media efforts that you constantly communicate?

Summary:
This question was intended to solicit the "elevator pitch" of statistics or metrics that community managers and strategists use internally in their organization to evangelize community and social media efforts. Answers ranged from the unique ability of online communities to create value to cost reduction of existing communication channels and corporate functions.

- "When we enlist our community members to represent us physically or virtually, our **reach and conversion metrics dramatically increase**."
- "Your customers are talking about you; be part of the conversation."
- "A small group of influencers can have a huge impact."
- "Community members are more likely to volunteer their time, services, advice, and financial support than non-members."
- "People are dedicated to using the communities we provide and they are willing to put the time and effort into developing content for them."

The complete set of responses is listed below:

Community helps problem solve faster and more efficiently than Customer Support, saving our company time and money:
- "Customers are able to **get faster response** and answers to their problem utilizing the community over contacting Customer Support." - "Knowledge share, and hence problem solving, is **more efficient** due to the community model." - "Using WebBoard is **more efficient** then email, telephones or fax. It **saves us time and money** and increases our ability to service the consumers in our sector." - "We realized that non-formal documents uploaded into the online community get more attention than the official documentation available on our intranet." [Thus saving our organization time and money.] - "The ROI on employee time devoted to the forums far exceeds the returns on the usual support methods." [Thus saving our organization time and money.]
Availability of information and content for specific areas of interest:
- "Expanded resources & knowledge for **specific areas of interest** and centralized resources." - "Niche communities, **focused on specific areas of interest**. Market leaders on-line and in print with high cross over traffic."

- "**You won't find this content anywhere else** - written by our members to raise best practice within vendors."
- "Collective wisdom can be life-altering."
- "Vertical communities of very **special interest** are where it's at."
- "In a network, if 5% identify and share resources, **the rest of the network learns**."

Increases site traffic / more engaged relationship with us:

- "The more we invest into community, the **more organic traffic** we get."
- "Our members consume **49% more average page views per session** every month than non-members."
- "Our community sites get **more than 3 times the engagement** for solutions, capabilities and use case content than our traditional sites."
- "Our **forum generates more page views** than the site itself."
- "Our **community traffic by far exceeds traffic** to all traditional product areas."
- "**Increasing site traffic** proves that there is an interest and demand from our customers to have a more open and engaged in relationship with us."
- "Our programs on average **engage participants** for 45 minutes each time they visit."
- "People are **dedicated** to using the communities we provide and they are willing to put the time and effort into **developing content** for them."
- "**Time spent** on the site is higher on forums pages than anywhere else on the site, indicating that community members are more engaged."
- "Views of photo albums remain the most popular area of the community. Members may not wish to participate in discussions, but they do **want to see photos of their events**."
- "An online discussion moderated by subject matter experts that followed an in-person event with the same moderators achieved the most participation of any attempts to **engage our users**."
- "Our social media content generates more content and discussions off site, **increasing our reach**."
- "The ability of our blogs to **drive customer engagement** and PR activity."

Idea Creation / What we learn from members of the community:

- "Ideas for our books."
- "It's all about **what we learn from the developers** through our community interactions."
- "We will have the opportunity to **get first hand feedback** on products **and ideas for improvements and enhancements**."
- "We **discovered some problem areas** in usage and service adoption

that caused us to change our materials and strategy."
- "We have been able to **gather more than a thousand best practices/lessons learned** in two years use."

Lead Generation / Conversion:

- "Our website **generates** xx quality **leads** out of xx total leads."
- "**Converting** contacts, acquaintances, and other informal relationships into donor relationships."
- "**Converting** contacts into activists and issue leaders."
- "When we enlist our community members to represent us physically or virtually, our **reach and conversion metrics dramatically increase**."

People are saving time / building skills by using our site:

- "In our Sourcing Professional Forum, procurement professionals are constantly **sharing templates and best practices** across organizations, bootstrapping their RFP effort, saving time and increasing value."
- "People creating and **building productive relationships** with people that help them improve their practice or **do their work better**."
- "The National Board of Certified Teachers can **share best** teaching **practices** with ease never before possible."
- "In our premium areas, customers are **using online training** and certification to manage global implementations, knocking down traditional barriers to **skill building** in an online, social learning setting."
- "Our users have access to every single college coach in the country. This is something no other site offers. Our site is always free to the users and they will never be charged. All of our competitors charge users to use their recruiting website."
- "Our community members credit participation in our community with their **increased skills in using our products**."

Build customer loyalty:

- "Anecdotal stories of knowledge sharing, connections made for business purposes and special access created through connecting members."
- "Community members are more likely to volunteer their time, services, advice, and financial support than non-members."
- "Employees who belong to the community almost never 'turn over'. They are consistently the best performers out in the stores."
- "Offering a community to your clients where they can speak to you and each other significantly increases customer loyalty."

- "More connected members spread the word and come back frequently."
- "If you want to understand your stakeholders and develop the relationships, you have to think in communities."
- "Online dialogue creates a more open environment that deepens trust and team work throughout the organization."
- "Our community has one of the highest net promoter scores for our brand of any corporate offering."
- "Our members say that they like the site and related services - direct comprehension of value, esp. during account meetings."
- "Research shows that customers in a community can have a sense of involvement with the company as long as we make sure they are heard and that involvement can lead to great loyalty."
- "Our community members are actively engaged with the brand and don't hesitate to tell us what they like, and don't like. They feel a real sense of ownership of the brand."
- "Our ability to personally communicate with future users of our product substantially influences their perception of our company."
- "Increasing site traffic proves that there is an interest and demand from our customers to have a more open and engaged in relationship with us."

Online community is growing our membership base:

- "In a climate where professional associations, and especially manufacturer associations, have struggled to maintain members, we have consistently and significantly increased in membership year-over-year for the past 5 years. This growth directly coincides with our implementation of online community services. Over 85% of our members find our member-only e-mail discussion groups alone to be worth the price of annual membership."
- "95% of our members would recommend membership in our online community to other parents raising children with food allergies."
- "Our blog has increased community participation by 80% over the past year."
- "We boast membership in 125+ countries."
- "We have 8000 registered members across 95% of local authorities."
- "We have doubled the size of our community membership in the last 6 months. 2 years ago, only 34% of our Company's upsells and renewals were also members of the Community. In 2007, 75% of our upsells and renewals were Community members."
- "We have the largest active user community in the marketplace."

"Other" responses:

- "There is no one set of characteristics that define a successful/vital

Yahoo! Group. There are literally hundreds of valid configurations."

- "Context is King. For example, just adding comments to head-content often produces 'community droppings' not true community. Ask yourself - if this post were an email, who would be on the To: line?"
- "The 'value' is not monetary, it is used-based, linked to the number of people who normally wouldn't turn to the web, who do. More and more people are using the web to express their opinions about urban renewal in their neighborhoods."
- "The online community is key to our organizational strategy and goals. I don't really have to justify it internally. I just need to justify the speed at which the communities are growing (kind of slow)."
- "Developing personas."
- "Market trending to community trust over corporate based communication and generated content. Influencers drive major impact in terms of internal and external community strategy. Influencer needs and interests vary greatly by type (IT Pro, Developer, Consumer) and within communities. Influencer tend to migrate to like-minded communities where skill sets and business needs are similar."
- "We are seeding our knowledge base for the public release, so number of articles and new articles added is a high priority at present."
- "Our members have fun!"

Question 25:
What additional advice do you have on community strategy development,
measuring ROI, and/or reporting on ROI?

Summary:
There was a lot of great advice on strategy development, quantifying ROI and
reporting on value. We found the following key concepts:

- Understand and engage your community
- Put in the time and stay committed
- Ensure your senior-level people are engaged in the ROI discussion
- Every community is unique; you cannot compare metrics equally
- Gather reporting metrics early and often:
- Strategize around the purpose of community / define clear goals

Key Quotes:
- "Follow the golden rules of marketing and advertising = know your
  customer."
- "Use a mix of qualitative and quantitative. Figure out how to make sure
  you show community impact on the most important business metrics."
- "The best metrics are those that help you to better understand your
  community."
- "You have to figure this piece out, because it's often the only language
  that executives speak."

The complete set of responses is categorized below:

Understand and engage your community:
"**Listen to your members, make them feel safe** and like they own the community."   "Be ready to **understand** that what you had in mind **and what the community has in mind** are most likely quite different."   "**Understand the changing perceptions** of the membership."   "Online communities people/geeks should understand that 'community strategy' might mean also **engaging your local community**."   "Just follow the golden rules of marketing and advertising = **know your customer**. Throwing spaghetti against the wall is not going to help your ROI. "
Put in the time and stay committed:
"Have a plan in place before you start plus sufficient resources. **Be prepared to work for two years before seeing a financial return on**

your investment."

- "**It's a long-term investment. Do not expect short-term outcomes.** Get buy-in from top management and prove your effort by providing reports on human performance or sales benefits. Make the economic value report after 2, 3 years."
- "Get involved and **stay involved**. Be consistent. We see so many start ups run out of steam."
- "Be realistic about your goals and **how long a community will take to develop**."
- "This is a learning process and **should be monitored and adjusted periodically**."

Every community is unique; you cannot compare metrics equally:

- "Sometimes we have to accept that we can't put an accurate figure or value on ROI. **The best metrics are those that help you to better understand your community**."
- "**Return can be measured many ways**."
- "Every community is unique. That said, the ROI on each community will be different based on what the goal of the Community is. **The metrics for measuring our community have evolved** as we have come to better understand the value of the customer community to our company as a whole. **Don't feel that you have to measure your community in the same ways that another community measures theirs**--it may be like comparing apples to oranges."
- "It is very important to **be careful about comparing metrics across different types of communities**. What a commercial company wants to know about a tech support forum is quite different from what they might want to know from a CoP."
- "Doing this inside a membership organization, when dues are also a part of the equation, is tricky because many members see this product/service as part of their dues, not something they should pay for in addition to that. Also, **most of the metrics that matter for us are 'softer' in that it's about engagement and participation than cost savings or revenue targets.**"
- Set your ROI measures by what your organization values/wants to receive from your efforts. If all you're doing is counting the # of unique visitors, # of posters, and/or # of responses, that's fine if your goal is reaching x number of people. But those measures tell you nothing if your goal is revenue-based or based on actually influencing those visitors (to purchase, take some action, etc.). **Ultimately, you get what you measure, so be sure you're measuring what you want to get.** For us, it's revenue, positively impacting our members' bottom-lines and raising regional media and public awareness of our organization, what we do, and of our members and what they do.

- "**Use a mix of qualitative and quantitative.** Figure out how to make sure you show community impact on the most important business metrics."

Gather reporting metrics early and often:

- "Begin **gathering and reporting metrics** as early in the project as possible."
- "Very important that **the software** that actual delivers the community model **is capable of detailed reporting**. This helps the strategist in many ways - showing ROI being one critical way."

- "Measurement must be focused on your strategic business objectives - the reason for having the community. Many community managers are caught up in metrics that don't really do this - they hear that someone else has x number of page hits or x number of members ... these metrics may not prove the value of their own community."

Strategize around the purpose of community / define clear goals:

- "There is no success in online business (sellside and buyside) without community strategy."
- "Community takes significant strategic effort. Often, people who are not sure of how to start a community focus on the right technology to purchase, rather than **thinking about a solid strategy around the purpose of the community and how to acquire and maintain members**."
- "**Define a clear goal** for those inheriting the project."
- "For us, we started without a strategy, are **evolving to a Support and Usage support strategy without any lead gen for now.** When we are solid in that Support area, will evolve to classic marketing. For example there are no free trials currently in our community. Those are all over our website and we did not want this to be another 'marketing' channel at this time."
- "People in the organization should **understand what 'community strategy development' means**. Online communities people/geeks should understand that 'community strategy' might mean also engaging your local community."
- "**Start with the business goals:** what do the key stakeholders need to accomplish or see as returns from the community? Then map to key needs of users. (If the two cannot be reconciled, don't move forward with the community). This is the middle-place where greatest ROI can be found."
- "**You need to have a strategy;** we're trying to mandate a strategy and are coming up against resistance internally because online communities are so little understood among senior management."

Ensure your senior-level people are engaged in the ROI discussion:

- "If you are providing community services to clients, do your best to **make sure business sponsor and senior level folks are engaged in the ROI discussion** and ongoing review."
- "Try to **demonstrate ROI in terms that executives are already comfortable with**. For example we are trying to demonstrate ROI for forums with same metrics customer support team uses to demonstrate feasibility of our call centers."
- "You have to figure this piece out, because **it's often the only language that executives speak**."

We are trying to demonstrate ROI:

- "I am trying to work on **how to measure success stories** and also **how can you combine different indicators** in order to have one Indicator of the community pulse."
- "I find it hard to demonstrate ROI to our sponsors. We are not a lead-generation machine. It is about thought leadership and raising awareness. But how do you measure that? It always comes down to leads. We allow people to download white papers and attend webinars and give them the tools to contact the companies themselves. But unless they mention our community, no one knows it came from us."
- "It is tied closely to a **number of conversion events**."
- "The client has to **figure out what they are going to do with the information**. We work with them to interpret the information and then push hard to get them to invest in using the data to improve the results they are receiving. **Quantifying it** to dollars and sense is always important."

"Other" responses:

- "Find ways of **convincing traditional business elements to look at using social media as a tool** of connecting their customers with clients and vendors."
- "**Honesty**!!! If your website figures are particularly brilliant one week, and its due to a spam bot attack (or similar), say so, otherwise next week your be struggling to justify the drop in usage (Lesson learnt!)."
- "Perhaps I'm naive, but it seems to me like there is a good deal of 'art' still involved here, and 'science' is not by default more conclusive?"
- http://www.paulhyland.com/2008/02/social-media-measurement.html

FORUM ONE
N E T W O R K S

Final Comments

This research was conducted with sponsorship from Mzinga and SolutionSet. We would like to thank all of the participants who spent time giving us their frank and candid answers and feedback. Thank you. We really appreciate you all!

We hope that you continue to find value in the qualitative feedback that we are presenting in this format. Please let me know if you have any suggestions that would help improve our process.

Forum One will continue to explore the emerging issues around online community and social media as the primary purpose and agenda of the Online Community Research Network. http://www.onlinecommunityresearch.com

Best regards,

Bill Johnston

Chief Community Officer
Forum One Networks
bjohnston@forumone.com

About Forum One Networks & The Online Community Research Network

Forum One Networks http://www.forumonenetworks.com connects those who connect others online. We provide events, research, networking and strategic consulting for online community and social media professionals.

We firmly believe that the best source of information about online communities and social media are those who play in this space daily. All of our activities are based on this premise.

The Online Community Research Network (OCRN)
http://www.onlinecommunityresearch.com is a collaborative effort of online community professionals to better understand the principal challenges of building and managing online communities. The Research Network coordinates the collection, analysis and dissemination of useful information among online community professionals.

For further information, or for sponsorship opportunities, please contact Bill Johnston
bjohnston@forumone.com

APPENDIX

Appendix A:

Question 10:
Please briefly describe your staff resources including full-time employees, contractors, and outsourced functions.

Summary:
- Of the 88 respondents who provided a tangible number of full time employees, the **average** number is **6.6 full time employees**.
- Of the 24 respondents who provided a tangible number of contractors, the **average** number is **7.4 contractors**.
- 23 organizations mentioned specific **functions that they outsource**.

Below is a full list of participant responses:

10. Please briefly describe your staff resources including full-time employees, contractors, and outsourced functions.	FT/PT	Contractors
The average online community we work with has someone that puts about 10 hours per week into the online community. All use an outsourced provider of online communities.	0.25	
We recently hired a new marketing person who, at this point, is dedicating 25% of their time on community research and development. Based on his findings that will change - hopefully up!	0.25	
20 hours a week for 1 employee, contract out for software, hardware upgrades	0.5	1
Out-source for IT management and services; Part-time website manager	0.5	
1 employee (me) - I am dedicated to the Community, manage, moderate, admin the current community and will and do work to define and execute additional future communities with a cross functional team I define. I am not 100% community however and have other roles including Product Manager for select services and cross product UX design and processes responsibilities.	0.75	
Myself, as editor-in-chief, one consultant and two freelance editors/bloggers.	1	1
Outsource some of the consulting but mostly I do it all.	1	2
Fulltime in-house employees, outsourced contractors, volunteers	1	3
FTE - 1 Contractors - 3.5 FTE equivalents	1	3.5
5 independent contractors, 2 part time employees and a 35 volunteers	1	5
We have five full time equivalents, and a total of 25 associates for who we	1	
Two half time employees directly. All support employees contribute information/answers. (50 active out possible 5-10,000) Platform supported by IT services, internal.	1	
1 person	1	
Currently I am the only employee working on the communities, I rely heavily on volunteers.	1	
I am the full-time community manager, a full time employee. Several of our editors perform moderation duties on the community as part of their editorial roles. We have volunteer member moderators who also perform moderation duties.	1	
Just me! (Owner)	1	

Me, myself and I! (Communications Manager)	1	
One half-of-full-time facilitator, plus 10 days of management time. Technical development is outsourced.	1	
One person, two contract companies, designer and maintainer	1	
One programmer and one project manager work part time on this community.	1	
Outsource Hosting Management Admin in house	1	
Right now I am expecting to manage 3 or 4 communities, with the help of some outsourced contractors and a community consultant who also consults on multiple communities.	1	
Three partners working one day a week each (I am one of them), part time editorial (1 day a week) and contracting IT resource (again about a day a week)	1	
We have a full-time community manager whose salary and benefits are additional to the cost of the s/w.	1	
We have one full-time employee dedicated to the upkeep and content of our community. We outsource the actual community design and technical functionality.	1	
Work in a strategic capacity evangelizing online community concepts. No direct reports. Outsource community platform and hosting entirely. Moderation functions done internally.	1	
.25 FTE but adding 1 new one soon	1.25	
Myself - Serving as the visible community manager Part time Admin help - User Enrollment, Reporting Part time IT help - Upgrades, Hosting. Looking to outsource shortly. Part time content contribution from our Services & Product Management Team	1.5	2
Part time employees for moderation. One full time employee to oversee community	1.5	
1-2 non-dedicated staff person per site, assisted by a corporate person. The platform is a vendor's platform. One of the five sites has an intern and a volunteer editor.	1.5	
Manager (me) plus 1 person full-time, with one external person 1/4 time and other resources matrixed across the organization. Both my full-time person and myself do other work also.	2	0.25
One manager, one full time employee, one part-time (5 hours/week at most) contractor	2	0.5
2 full-time employees, 6 part-time volunteers, 2 part-time contractors, & one or more annual events	2	1
2 full time employees, 2 outsourced contractors	2	2
Two fulltime employees including myself, plus 16 field workers currently.	2	
2 full time employees (product manager and community director) and we outsource to two community 3rd party vendors	2	
At least two people focus on specific online community elements while our magazines have editors and staff members that blog.	2	
For one client, we manage a portal of 38 communities + several knowledge center communities. Team includes HTML person about 50 hrs/month; content developer/knowledge transfer specialist about 75 hrs month; knowledge director (me); about 80 hours/month; registrar/admin about 40 hrs/month and as needed programmer.	2	
Knowledge Manager, Communication Coordinator, interns	2	
Staff of eight dedicated to online activities, maybe 1/6th devoted to community-related activities	2	
The online community software is provided a third party. The staff includes myself and the web team and the staff members of Institute programs and seminars.	2	
There's me, a co-admin for the network and that's essentially it.	2	
Two employees full-time. Many others involved.	2	

1 3/4 time person; 1 1/2 time person; 1 full time consultant; 1 digital agency for design, development and marketing support; 1 moderation company; 5 external content providers	2.25	
1 full time Community Manager (me), one Manager over me (the Community is just one of the things he oversees), and a full time developer overseas.	2.25	
We outsource all of our web design, legal work, and advertising sales. We currently employ myself (CEO Type Role) a Vice President who takes care of the books and manages the finances of the business, and a marketing and sales person to attract high school athletes to the site. We are in the process of raising money to hire a CFO, a technology director, and 2 or 3 outside sales people.	3	1
3 full time Community heads, 3 part time moderators external, many volunteers	3	3
3 FT (1 manager, 2 member support specialists), content management vendor, development & hosting vendor, marketing programs specialist	3	
Full-time Community manager whose responsibilities are managing the forum moderator's, off-line user groups and creating advocacy program. Contract User Group Manager. Site development responsibilities share resources used for general web development. E-Marketing Manager who oversees bloggers, etc.	3	
Myself, a designer, a programmer and an IT person	3	
Online marketing manager, web dev team, agency to design look and feel	3	
Three FTE	3	
We are going to launch a community for a brand next April. So, at this moment, community is managed by me and now I'm going to hire people for the department: one full time moderator and two part time moderator too until April.	3	
We have only a **handful** of staff and rely heavily on in-house content, community moderation, etc.	3	
We licensed our community platform from a third-party, and all community development work happens offshore. In-house, we have two full-time employees who work on community, and engineering help on-site when needed.	3	
3 full-time, 1 part-time (community management AND customer service; 26 part time moderators (covering two sites with 24/7 moderation)	3.5	
Three full time community managers, off-site development team, a number of executive-level consultants and a sales manager with freelance sales folks.	4	2
four full-time employees, six full-time employees (engineering types) working part-time on the community project	4	3
We are a professional association that provides both online and offline membership services. We have four full-time employees and we contract with dozens of trainers (again, both online and off) and service providers.	4	12
4 full-time employees	4	
We 4 employees for this purpose	4	
5 fulltime, 4 contractors	5	4
5 fulltime employees plus outsourced development team as and when needed. Hosting outsourced	5	
Business Account Management, Fulfillment Team, Business Analytics and Reporting, Architecture and Tools (Community Member sites, internal influencer management tools) Program Account Management	5	

Description		
We are a not for profit neighborhood community venture. No member is full time, we all work on a per-project basis. Our work is subsidized by the French government. Students help us with software development.	5	
1 FT Business Analyst, 2 FT Developers, 1 PT Business Manager, 1 PT Systems Analyst, 2 PT Business Champions/SME, 1 PT Support Specialist	5.5	
1 program manager; 1 readiness manager; 1 web site manager; 1 communications manager; 1 evangelists, 1 operations manager	6	
4 full time employees engaged in community facilitation and general support, 1 project manager working with clients to develop community platform, 1 consultant (me)	6	
There are about six full-time employees working on the web site.	6	
1 full-time analyst, 2 technical staff, 1 business manager (part time), 1 development manager (part time), 2 developers (theoretically full time), 1 support specialist (2 hours/day)	6.25	
Six network directors (community managers); 1 admin. Outsourced communications. 6 contract network admins (content, not technology)	7	6
Blog & wiki lead, Forum Lead, Sys admins, Developers, Marketing person, SEO analyst, team/people manager,	7	
Journalists, In House IT dept, In House legal team, Sales Team, Marketing Team, (all work across both print and on-line titles) On-line editors	7	
four community managers, three developers, social media evangelist	8	
Me, two managing editors, art director, production manager, 3 producers, interns, 2 software development contractors.	9	
Community is operated by one group within marketing with 1 to 2 FTEs. The content and moderation of the community is supported by multiple groups within our product divisions to provide the content expertise. Resources for content and moderation is approximately equivalent to 8 additional FTEs however the work is spread across more than 2 dozen workers.	10	
We have a community steering team sponsored by the VP of marketing and includes directors of product marketing, web platforms, and IT as well as the community business owner. Each of the 3 areas (product marketing, Web and IT) has 2-5 employees working on community projects. As the business owner, I'm in charge of coordinating all activities, reporting metrics, and all strategy.	10	
Our major client we work for has: 5 full time employees, 6 software development persons outsourced, 3 consultants outsourced	11	3
Staff of 12	12	
3 senior developers; 6 digital designers; 3 digital producers; 1 copyrighter; 1 digital planner; roster of freelance creative services	14	
7 Web Developers, 2 designers, 3 product development, 12 community management.	14	
Our department has 15+ employees though there are only a couple of us managing the community; we contract moderation services to our community provider.	15	
We have 18 people, all who work - in some capacity - on helping clients build and utilize community online.	18	
20 full time staff members, outsourced PR, 3 contractors (flash developers and animators)	20	3
20	20	
50 people in USA, Germany, UK and Ireland. Most of us are full-time employees but there are a few contractors within (circa 10 percent)	45	5
About 90 full-time employees and hundreds of contractors.	90	100

We have 100+ employees focused on building and managing communities for our clients.	100	
Average	**6.6**	**7.4**

Other, non-quantitative replies:

Dedicated stakeholders for each community destination, content management and moderation generally contracted out (except for company blogs). Systems management and development outsourced.
Extensive product development and management staff, including over a dozen community managers.
No 100% staff, all based on people contributing as part of other duties.
Outsource web design and development, in-house maintenance.
I am an independent consultant who hires contractors to outsource things I can't do on my own.
I'm a sole practitioner but I often bring in partners or am brought in as a partner by others.
We are a company that builds communities for our clients. We provide both the SaaS platform and the services to help them strategically implement and manage their communities. We have a staff of >100 people.
We contract with companies that provide hosting, moderation and some community management. We oversee their moderation and provide additional community management with the equivalent of one and a half dedicated employees.
Staff is limited to run this non-revenue generating venture
Mostly FT staff, small proportion of contractors
Mostly in house hired
2 full-time contractors
9 freelance community moderators
All volunteer or freelance
Communication and Design professionals
In each community I hire moderators. The number, and compensation vary in direct proportion to the size and activity of the community
Interestingly, we are a company that builds and manages communities for other companies. However, we also manage three of our own communities.
Stop gap measures.

Appendix B:

<table>
<tr><td><i>Question 11:</i>
Who is responsible for setting formal ROI goals for online community and social media activities at your company?</td></tr>
</table>

Summary: Of the 98 responses to this question:
- 21 replied "Manager"
- 15 said "C-Level Staff"
- 12 said "Others"
- 6 responded "President"
- 1 said "Owner"

- 18 replied "Director"
- 13 said "VP"
- 9 responded "Client"
- 3 said "Board of Directors"

Below is a full list of participant responses:

11. Who is responsible for setting formal ROI goals for online community and social media activities at your company? (Title and Department, please)	
Response	**Respondent's job title**
I am...the Executive Director, with input from a Board of Directors. Me	Executive Director
Myself (Creative Director)	Creative Director
Editor-in-chief (me)	Editor-in-chief
Director Web Properties and online marketing, and myself, Community Director	Director, Customer Success and Community Programs
I set the goals at this time - Sr. Product Manager with input from VP Product Manager. Me	Sr. Product Manager - User Experience & Business Tools
Myself, Editor In Chief, Editorial. General Manager, Management	Online Community Manager
Product Manager, Community (me) in conjunction w/ VP of Product (my boss)	Product Manager, Community
No one really... Myself if anyone: Manager of Education and Training, Education Services. We have no formal ROI goals.	Manager of Education and Training
As management consultant it's part of my work in collaboration with my clients to set formal ROI goals. Me and Client	Managing Partner
COO, Director of Partner Services (me)	Director of Partner Services
For the Microsoft Certified Trainer community, me.	Evangelist
I am / me	Founder
I am / me	Partner
I am / me	Director, New Media, Digital & Online Marketing
I am / me / CEO	CEO
I handle all of these activities. me	Founder/President

I usually work with my client to set goals. Often it is just getting the conversation STARTED about goals that is important. However, I make sure ROI is not all about page views because in my context the goals are about learning or task accomplishment, not page views or advertising.	Founder
It's not a company, per se, but I would be responsible for such goals. As of the present, I have not done so. (will be me)	Webmaster, Network Administrator
Me	[No title given]
Me	SVP
Me plus my CEO	Vice President of Community
Me, see title above. (Corporate Convergence Editor)	Corporate Convergence Editor
Me.	Executive Producer, edweek.org
Myself and our CMO	VP, New Media
Myself and our VP of Marketing and Product Management	Community Product Manager
Self	Client Interface Manager
For my community, I am. Director, Content & Community	Director, Content & Community
Product management	Sr. product manager
Manager, Knowledge Centered Support. Social media is a separate project internally, Human Resources in control.	Technical Writer but actually Forum Administrator/Manager
Technical Community Marketing Manager (Marketing Dept). Director of Web Marketing (Web Department).	Technical Community Marketing Manager
Content Business Owner, Director	Community Director
Director of Community, Content and Customer Services, Community	Director of Community, Content and Customer Services
Director of Internet Communications, in the Marketing and Communications department	Director, Internet Communications
Director of Operations	Director / Consultant
Director, Customer Success and Community Programs - Marketing	Marketing ops
Director, Online Marketing	Director, Online Marketing & User Experience
Executive Director	Executive Director
Head of User-Generated Content	Community Manager Road Transport Group
HoD (Head of Department)	Professor of Knowledge Management
The 3 Directors	Managing Director
The Director of Developer Relations - for our software communities. Integrated Marketing Director for all others.	Manager, Software Network
Business Manager	Community Business Manager
Project Manager	Founding member
Communities of Practice manager	Communities of Practice Manager
Community related: Online Community Manager, Group Product Marketing Manager. Our social media activities extend beyond our Community team to the marketing team, as well as any departments that want to leverage the Community. The list would go on and on!	Online Community Manager

Knowledge Manager, reporting to the Director of Membership and Communication Unit, approved by the Executive Director	Knowledge Manager
Online Community Program Manager, Marketing Communications dept.	Online Community Program Manager
Online Marketing Manager	Online Marketing Manager
Product Managers, many departments: Groups, Messenger, Mail, etc.	Community Strategy Analyst
Social Media Manager, Web Marketing	Social Media Operations Manager
Vice President, Interactive and Strategic Planning	Vice President, Interactive and Strategic Planning
VP Communications	Web director
VP Customer Support, Sr. VP WW Services	Group Program Manager
VP eMarketing and eCommerce	Sr. Marketing Manager
VP Marketing	VP
VP of Internet Marketing and Marketing Communications Managers	Internet Marketing
VP, Interactive	Executive, Technology Strategy and Planning
Almost always the client	Proprietor
Client	Community Manager
Client	VP, Client Services
It's our customers... titles vary. client	Director of Business Intelligence Services
The client tends to decide what they need from their online community.	CEO
This is done by the client. Head of Knowledge and Learning.	Director
We are consultants so we provide recommendations for ROI.	CEO
Community Consultants, Services	Manager, Community Consulting
Community Team	Consultant
Competitive Intelligence and Internal Communications departments	Communications Manager
Funding agencies	WebBoard Specialist
Knowledge Centered Support, part of eServices.	Forums Manager (Senior Technical Writer)
Various people depending on their role. We have a couple of internal and external communities.	Community Consultant
Within the organizations I work with, Product Champion or Strategic Marketing take that role.	President
Chief Operating Officer, COO	Web Content Manager
COO	CEO
COO, Corporate Level	PTC
CEO	CEO
Managing Partners	Managing Partner
President, board of directors	President of the board of directors
Since we are a nonprofit it's not so much an ROI issue as one of meeting our mission. The board of directors sets all goals for ROI and mission.	President
Chief Network Officer CNO	Chief Network Officer
CMO	Director of Community Strategy
Owner	Owner

Senior staff	Director of Online Initiatives
President	Chairman
CFO	Community Manager
Because we are a provider of online communities, rather than a user of them, I don't think I can answer this question without throwing off your data. N/A	Senior Community Manager
n/a	Research Assistant
Formal ROI have not yet been set.	Sales Support
Goals what goals?	Mind Bender
haven't done it	VP, Sales & Client Development
No one at the moment...	Online Content Manager
no one yet	Web Manager - Community
No one yet, we are still in the process of assigning responsibilities and roles.	Senior Reference Consultant
None	CEO
Not sure	Shared services
Tbd	Marketing Manager
There are no goals	Email and Social Network Manager
We're establishing that currently.	Community Director
Under determination - no central strategy yet	Product Manager, Online Community
Unknown	Sr. Content Specialist
Within our group, these are set by the senior management and leadership team (about 10-12 folks)	Community Manager

Appendix C:

Question 13:
What are the top three goals for your online community and social media programs?

Summary:
- The most popular responses were to **Grow Membership** and **Make Financial Targets / Goals**.
- **Knowledge Sharing, Increase Community Participation** and **Increase Customer Engagement** are also important goals for organizations.

Below is a full list of participant responses:

Grow our audience reach through more meaningful engagement
# of contributors
# of users
Achieve a 10,000 member community base by YE 2008 with 10% weekly participation
Attracting registered members
Client Acquisition
Client Retention

Client retention (why most clients build communities)
Enrollment
Grow membership income (annual fees)
Grow memberships
Growth
Growth and expansion from within
Increase members by YE
Increase membership
Increase Membership
Increasing active subscribers
Register users
Retention
To grow up to 1,000 members per community by the end of the first year
To have 30,000 registered members by end 2008.
To have membership across 100% of local authorities (410)
To attract 100,000 high school athletes by the end of 2008
Traction/momentum
Membership
Drive more traffic to our forums and blogs
Drive page views
Drive traffic
Encourage repeat visits
Increase organic traffic
Increase repeat visitors
Increase traffic (pageviews)
Increase Traffic to community site
Increase visits
Increased PVs
Traffic
Traffic in the forums
Traffic outreach - better marketing and PR effect to members
Achieving business model financial targets
Attracting small/"micro" donors to the website
Drive community related revenue.
Drive revenue
Financial viability
Generate positive revenue streams for client via their communities
Generate Revenue
Increased product sales
Influence sales
Making money
Market capture
Monetize the community
Raise money
Reduce our cost of marketing through social media and online community
Revenue
Revenue

Revenue (indirect based on community value positively influencing purchase)
Revenue Growth
Sales
in 12 months we're positioned to charge dues for the networks that are currently free
To look at ways of monetizing blogs
Brand engagement
Community engagement
Engage our customers more deeply
Engage readers
Engagement
Engagement
Engagement
Engagement
Engagement
Engagement
Engagement influencers
Engagement/Satisfaction
Improve engagement on the Community, including customers answering one another's questions, and active engagement of product development with our Product Managers
Increase user engagement
Proactive Community Engagement
To engage the Huichol people in setting priorities for their cultural preservation
(These are examples) Connecting dispersed practitioners for learning
Keep track of what is going on
Knowledge Share
Knowledge Sharing
Learning
Leveraging experience of members
Providing information, news and education
Transfer knowledge from the older ones to the newer ones
Disseminate best practices
Inform and educate project staff as to the benefits of using the online community
Foster Knowledge
Sharing knowledge and expertise
Sharing knowledge and expertise between customers and employees
Support our instructor community
To preserve cultural artifacts through photography, interviews, video, and audio
Community members interact to learn from each other
Information exchange
Information sharing
Thought leadership
Thought Leadership
Thought Leadership
To attract participants in Huichol subject matter discussions from all over the world
Active **participation**
Drive increased user participation
Identify and increase participation by key influencers

Increase Participation
Increase participation
Interaction
Involvement
Participation
Participation
Participation (Content Creation)
User participation
Direct service to community--articles, discussions, materials
Think global, act local
Use of the community platform by its members to increase offline activity in support of org mission
Network participants
A sense of loyalty and belonging
Build client loyalty
Build Fan Communities
Build Loyalty and customer perceptions
Build loyalty and trust with our customers
Build more loyalty and trust
Drive loyalty and brand metrics
Increase loyalty among readers
Loyalty/retention
Product loyalty
Collaboration
Collaboration
Collaboration: Increased interaction internally and with our customers
Collaborative Research
Communication: Creating multiple channels for allowing collaboration and content sharing and storage
Creating and sustaining collaborative networks
Improve service by facilitating collaboration
Online networking opportunities that provide tangible benefit (increased business, # of collaborations, etc.)
Provide an alternate 'support' and collaboration space for our customers
Community members interact with us (training and engineering)
Better integrate online community building with offline community building efforts
Brand extension
Expand our reach--beyond library automation into other technology needs for K-12 market
Outreach for our programs
Outreach to employees
Outreach to relevant stakeholder groups
Outreach to their customers
Reach and support more customers
Awareness
Awareness
Build awareness of top tier products with key online influencers
Company & product awareness
Develop awareness of products

Increase our brand awareness through social media and online community
Increase PR/presence of our brand
Increased regional awareness of our organization and its programs (measured by press coverage, surveys, etc.)
Promotional Awareness
Build consumer relationships
Eventually understanding the needs of our customers
Input into product development
Reduce call center demand
Voice of Customer
Augment our current adoption programs with **online tools,** conversation, and peer to peer help
Drive Adoption of our Software Tools
Redesign, relaunch of main website with interactive features like RSS feeds, mapping
Social networking tools
Technology leadership
Content: to continuously improve re-usable and available information
To look at ways of syndicating content
Provide more content through various mediums
Mobilize neighbors to contribute content to the web-site
Increase amount of user generated content
Find more ways of integrating user-generated content
Create more user generated content
Gathering content
Provide more community content
Generate national conversation around public affairs issues
Improve communication between developers and among community members and R&D
Better communication for members to interact with each other
Communication
Communications throughout the state of Utah
Ease communication
Email newsletter (either biweekly or monthly)
Lead Conversion for client
Lead Generation
Lead Generation
To connect high school athletes and college coaches
Track and increase the number of Community members who upsell and renew with Success Factors
Community profiles
No online business without community building, management and development
Sense of community

Appendix D:

<table>
<tr><td colspan="2">Question 17:
To whom in your organization do you and/or your team report results?</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Summary: Of the 110 responses to this question:</td></tr>
<tr>
<td>

31 said "C-Level Staff"
12 replied "Manager"
9 said "Others"
7 responded "President"
3 said "Senior VPs"

</td>
<td>

24 said "VP"
12 replied "Director"
8 responded "Client"
3 said "Board of Directors"
1 said "Owner"

</td>
</tr>
</table>

Below is a full list of participant responses:

Editor In Chief, Editorial; Online Executive Editor, Editorial; Online Managing Editor, Editorial; General Manager, Management; Director of Online Marketing, Marketing
Senior Director of my organization, who shares results with VP Sales, VP Marketing, CEO. Also report regularly to Strategic Accounts, sales, marketing peer teams, as well as Education marketing teams in other divisions.
Currently only to my Director, although quarterly in the Marketing Review with Sr. Management, including our GM
Director and CIO
Director of Customer Support
Director of Operations
Director or Web Marketing; Director of Integrated Marketing; Brand Managers; Community Managers & Business Unit Stakeholders
Directors of Product Management, many divisions.
Executive Director
The 3 directors
Department Head/Unit Head
Product Managers, Business Unit General Managers, Sr. VP Marketing, Sales Organization, Marketing Organization
Business Unit Managers
Business unit stakeholders, our direct management, and our partners in marketing
Clients (CMO, Marketing Manager)
Editor, Road Transport group
General Manager
Product Managers, Product Marketing Managers, Industry Leads
Publisher, General Manager, Business Development Manager, Online
Alumni Directors, VP of Marketing, VP of Operations
CEO, COO, VP HR, CFO
Executive Management Team--the president of company and his VPs
GM CSS Communities, VP CPE, VP Customer Support, Sr. VP WW Services
HoD, VPs
Marketing VP
Myself (Founder/President), and the VP.
SVP Product Management, SVP Editorial Operations
VP, Content and Alliances; Chief Marketing Officer

The VP of Global Product Marketing and Management, who reports to the CEO.
To the vice president of Services.
Vice President of Marketing, Several Marketing Directors, CEO
Vice President of Services who in Turn reports to the CEO.
Vice President, Marketing and Communications
VP Marketing, President
VP of Communications, CMO
VP of Marketing and Communications
VP of Marketing, Marketing Communications Director, Divisional General Manager
VP of Online
VP of Product
VP of Sales
VP Product, VP Operations, VP Marketing & Sales
VP Product Manager, VP Sales, VP Marketing, CEO, President, Director Support, Director Marketing, Product Managers, Support Managers, Legal, VP Professional Services.
VPs: Programs, Communications, Development
Always directly to my client. They are diverse: KM manager, learning and organizational development manager, project director, etc.
Client & Client's management
Client - Strategic Business & Development dept
Client Business sponsor
I am working for different clients, with a team of 5. 1 x project manager; 4 x facilitators
Those who subsidize us in the French government
To our client companies and to our executive team (CEO, CMO, CFO)
Board of Directors
Senior Management Team, of which I am a member. Board of Directors as well.
To our organization's Board of Directors and, with less detail, to our County's economic development organization, of which we are a member organization.
Chief operating officer
COO
CEO
CEO
CEO and external sponsors
Founder/CEO, founder/CMO, founder/strategy and development
Our CEO staff
Our management team, including the company CEO.
CFO, CMO, CIO
CMO
Managing Partners
Entire company is involved with the reporting of community metrics
Executive Vice President of Product Development and Strategy
Full staff
Head of our corporate Interactive Division
In general I recommend reporting results from head of community to head of business unit. Head of business unit has to summarize in the given form to the CEO
It varies based on the community.
Knowledge Management group
My President

Myself [no job title given]
Myself, Owner
President
Public Health Agency of Canada
Support organization Business Units

Appendix E:

Question 19:
What are the three most important success or performance indicators that are reported on regularly?

Summary:

- The most important success indicators that are reported on regularly are: **Membership Growth**, **Member Activity Level**, **Site Traffic** and the **Number of Posts**.

Below is a full list of participant responses:

# of edits	Community Contributions
# of members	Community engagement (forum posts/comments, blog posts/comments, downloads)
# of new business how-to guides	
# of new members	
# of new members (with breakout of members recommended/sponsored by other members)	Community taking on leadership and control of its own destiny (sustainability)
	Content Downloads
# of posts	Content generated - Actionable Ideas, Suggestions
# of users	
# registrations	Continuation of the non-profit foundation entity
% of posts/registrations	
(These are examples; they vary by client) Community member responses to meeting community purpose/goals - impact	Continued engagement on the Discussion Forums
	Continued growth in our idea submission application--ideas, votes, comments, moving the ideas into the product
Abuse report rate	
Active members	
Active participants	Contributions
Active Returning Members	Conversion rate
Activity	Coverage/discussion from other sites/platforms (especially regional media, other associations)
Activity	
Ad revenue	
Advocacy	CTR on ads on community templates
Annual renewals	Customer satisfaction as indicated thru customer engagement
Blog entries and views	
Blog posting and reading	Downloads
Blog registrants	Downloads & Uploads
Client retention	Early Warning regarding product issues.
Community activity and growth metrics	Ecstasy

Efficiency improvement	Member Responses
Email open and click through rates	Members
Engagement	Membership
Engagement (comments and discussion)	Membership (sign-up)
Engagement of network champions	Membership Count
Engagement on standard community tools	Membership registrations
Enquiries from interested agencies who work in the same sector	Membership/registrations
	Membership/registrations
Ezine / rss subs	Minimum Standards implementation
Facilitator level of activity	Money raised
Family sales	Monthly financial summaries
For our communities, the activity level in Discussion Forums, Blogs, File Repository, etc.	More postings online
	Most commented on posts
	New Ideas
Forum, newsgroup answer rate	New member acquisition
Growth metrics	New members
Growth of community (in size, activity) - scalability	New members
	New members
Happiness	New members added
Hits	New members joined
HTTP Traffic	new memberships
Income	New modules created.
Income generated as direct result of the community	New registrants
	New registrations
Increase community members	New registrations
Incremental Sales	New Unique Members
Influence & Preference	New Users
Influential hits	Newcomers welcomed and integrated into the community
Innovation with customers	
Intensity	Number of active (more than 3 posts per week) members
Joy	
Key accomplishments	Number of best practices / lessons learned
Knowledge (forums, comments, surveys, etc)	Number of community members
	Number of logins
Lead generation	Number of members
Leads generated	Number of members with a complete profile file
Level of activity	
Level of participation by members through downloads of whitepapers and participation at webinars	Number of new community documents
	Number of new content items created (new posts, new threads, etc)
Lift in revenue	Number of Page Impressions
Links	Number of Posts
Listens	Number of posts
Logins	Number of posts and Time to Response
Logons right now we are changing	Number of publications
Managed and unmanaged posts	Number of scholarly activities
Member engagement	Number of students
Member growth	Number of Topics Created

Number of unique members	Satisfaction
Number of Users	Satisfaction - achievement of objectives
Number of visitors, members, and returning members	Site visits
	Size # members
Page views	Solutions (a special web section) visitors
Page views	Sponsor revenue
Page views	Submissions of user generated content
Page views	Successful operation of field and community programs
Page views per session	
Page/Forum Views	Support deflections
Pages added	The Number of Friend Referrals
Pageviews	Threads read
Pageviews	Time on site per visit
Pageviews	Time spent in the site
Participation # of posts	Top participating schools & countries
Participation in network activities	Topics discussed (the top ones)
Participation in the custom tools	Total downloads
Participation rate	Total number of communities active on the community platform
People are using the tool on a regular basis	
Percentage of local authorities with at least one member registered in the community	Total Number of Posts
	Total number of registered users
Posting frequency	Total Posts
Posts	Traffic
Progress in terms of contacts/visits	Traffic
Project collaboration	Traffic
Purchases of memberships	Traffic
Quality of engagement	Traffic
Questions answered	Traffic
Rate of UGC consumed by users	Traffic - SEO referrals
Ratio of time spent by employees to questions answered	Transaction rate
	UGC growth
Reach	Unique pageviews
Reach	Unique Traffic
Reach	Unique visitors
Registered members	Unique visitors
Registrations	Unique visitors
Registrations	Unique Visitors
Repeat Visits	Unique visits
Repeat visits	Uniques
Results of satisfaction surveys	User users (rate & review)
Return rates	Users conference registration numbers
Revenue	Views
Revenue	Viral reach
Revenue	Visits
Revenue/community	Visitors and all indicators available in analytics
Sales Budget	
Sales leads	Visitors to content on site
Sales Revenue	Visitors to landing pages

Visits	Volume of reads
Visits	WOM out in the field
Visits	WOM reach
Volume of activity in discussion groups (which is very low as we are a B2B community)	Word of mouth
	Workshop production

Appendix F:

> ### Question 20:
> What data sets are being included in your reports? What data sets are your key performance indicators based upon?
>
> **Summary:**
> - The most important data sets were reported as: the **Number of Members**, **Basic Metrics** (like Google Metrics), **Online Content** (number of downloads, submission of user-generated content), and **Number of Visitors** (both uniques and overall).
> - **Number of Posts**, user **Participation** / activity level, **Number of Page Views**, and the **Number of Comments** were also important data sets.

Below is a full list of participant responses:

# of members, # of posts, submissions of user generated content
# of posts, # of comments, # of members.
Activity levels in terms of usage of all the modules within our product.
Actual operative KPIs (key performance indicators), Audit reports
Basic community metrics - posts, registrations, post/member, Actionable ideas and suggestions Internal Response and contribution to community - posts, registration,   Positive & Negative feedback and follow up actions to take or taken.
Basic Metrics (visits/visitors)
Business or community metrics. we advise capturing more than 100 KPIs (key performance indicators)
Customers/product. Product discussions/clicks.
Direct survey data (every 6 months...both of community members and non-members), data from our membership tracking software and course/training management software (monthly), unsolicited member contact e-mails, direct personal company "retention visits" (performed at least annually) by our County's economic development organization.
Email open and click through rates.
Forums, blogs and newsgroups.   Influencer activity in blogosphere.
Increase in traffic (unique & http) Increase in successful searches Increase member accounts
Internal tools and moderator feedback
Member records

More anecdotal then quantitative.   We built this as a side-project and it has become a differentiator for us in our sales process. There is no strong push for ROI measurement because of the feedback coming back to leadership from customers and prospects.
Number of members, member geography breakdown, member job title, industry sectors, size of company, whitepaper downloads, webinar participation (registration and attendance) and satisfaction, discussion group posts and views
Page views & Uniques, generated from HBX. New content items created generated from community tools or simple count of comments. Look at differences week/week, month/month and year/year.
Reach: Visits, number of world wide reactions from Technorati Preference: Repeat visitors, # of Registrations, Advocacy: Sentiment - number of positive comment that recommend us.
Sales revenue
Sharepoint metrics (unique users; active members; downloads; page hits; page views; interactions (discussions/responses); origin of members
Standard analytics
Standard Google Metrics
This would be done by our Evaluation Coordinator
Time spent, sign ups for mailing list, ratings, feedback, cpm
Today we rely on simple sue statistics
Too much to list. Traffic, downloads, visit time, search results, # of comments, posts, etc.
Unique visitors, average session length, repeat visitor, total sessions, percentage of food bought,   Health and happiness of virtual pets, etc,
Unique visitors; unique pageviews; monthly registration; new versus returning member traffic; discussion forum tracking; community members by company size; most popular pages; most popular downloads; tracking any revenue that came through the community, whether it's a request for customized training materials or if their membership contributed to an upsell or renewal
User statistics taken from CoP platform
Visitors, - normal web
Visits per day, page views, overall visitors, overall members, returning members, number of posts, time to respond, power members.
We are most concerned about user traffic and organic growth. Eventually we would like all of our growth to be by word of mouth from our existing users to help us keep our marketing and advertising budget low.
We are only just starting to include forums data in the monthly KCS (knowledge centered support) reports to managers
We do a lot of qualitative with your normal quantitative –   For a public facing community the quantitative is much more important - all the basic Google analytics, interest in seeing how people find the site, where in world they are coming from, what pages, etc. For inward facing it is much more about achievement of community goals.
We like to track historically, number of registrations, increase in return visits, how long on the site   And in the case of alumni associations - online contributions.
Web analytics and proprietary reports
Web log analysis, summaries of user experience, field reports

Appendix G:

Question 22:
How are your community metrics and ROI models changing over time? Are you getting pressure to modify data sets or to find new sources of value?

Summary:
39 respondents said Yes, they are getting pressure to modify data sets.   11 said No   10 said they are too new to say yet   7 said No, not yet.

Below is a full list of participant responses:

YES:
Pressure to find value: yes
Yes- increased pressure to demonstrate influence of community members
Yes pressure to find new sources of value. All our income comes from advertising to date. Happily small business online spending is healthy in Australia and we have a valuable niche.
Yes, we are shifting from traditional metrics to metrics more tailored to social media. We are less concerned about visits and click throughs and more interested in how content is generating discussions on and off our site.
Yes. Push to make networks self-sustaining financially
Yes. We're focusing more on user generated content metrics.
Yes. We are evolving right now.
Continuing to evolve over time
Always looking to improve
Definitely. In fact, this year we are driving towards regular detailed data from which we can get a better view into trends and success/non-success
They are being refined.
This is a very difficult question to answer. We have many communities with varying goals. **We are always seeking better ways to improve the quality of the output.** Our clients want more customization in their reporting options.
Pressure to prove more directly how expanding our web presence increases our revenue.
Always looking for ways to use the community to achieve our mission. Now looking for ways to maximize use of Web 2.0 tools to help spread word about our community and its activities.
As objectives change quarterly, metrics and models must conform.
As our Community evolves, we are trying to quantify more and more how the Community is contributing to our company's bottom line, and to improve the way we contribute. Having members on the Community is useless unless they are engaged and coming back for more!
As the community matures, different values become more prized, no pressure to modify data sets...hell, we don't have 'data sets'.
I adjust to the changing economy and online environment...
Determine impact of community on RPM on templates w community v those without. -Determine the 'trickle effect' that community has on revenue and retention overall (any lift?)   -Break this out into active community participants v. passive
Everyone is looking to make money faster
Getting more granular as we grow. We need more and more people to analyze them.

Getting pressure on finding success stories that can be translated into money figures.
Limited functionality in what we can track but want to know more about the customer journey and behavior
Many of the people we have talked to want to see multiple revenue sources. Obviously our main source of revenue is advertising revenue but we have found a few auxiliary sources of revenue to help create value and to monetize our traffic and users.
New sources of value. Overcoming "so what" factor of basic metrics. Needing to measure qualitative points (engagement, etc.)
Only pressure is to respond quickly and be ready to understand that what we are doing will change, or that what we THINK we are doing will change.
Our community was very active at the beginning and now we don't have nearly as many visitors per day. I believe the quality of the posting, etc. has not diminished so there is still value in the community -- but we need robust numbers to back that up.
Still initiating reporting of community traffic to be included in KCS reports
We are really looking at how online community participation impacts learning, process change in an org and system change. We NEVER have the resources to measure at this level. So it is a big issue.
Adding more qualitative evaluation to the numbers
Pageviews are still king here, although there are discussions about shifting focus to unique visitors and time spent on the site.
Metrics increasing linearly. ROI remains evasive (cannot quantify service improvements directly attributable to CoPs).
Need more data, especially across site areas.
In the last six years I was developing metrics and ROI models (Business Intelligence) based on Reputation
Developing advanced engagement metrics.
we need better metrics
We're always looking for better ways to measure ROI/success.
We're being pressured to find more consistent metrics -- metrics that don't change with technology changes
Shifting away from classical web metrics (PVs, Time on Site) and toward behavioral measures: Actions taken, revenue generated.
Right now we're honing in on goals. Next we'll try to figure out how to measure.
I'm too new to the company to comment.
Too early to tell-we are in developmental states of site
Too new to say
We are just starting our communities
We are really just starting to investigate online community so we have no basis for ROI. To justify the development I think we'll have to do we will need to figure this out.
We are too new to have real metrics. We will be doing analysis on revenue impact from the community but I don't anticipate it having much impact initially. Over the long term, we do see it driving revenue for us.
We have not really started evaluating ROI yet.
WE have only just started to include community forums data
We just launched our community site, so these will definitely change over time--we're in a period of great flexibility, so the pressure isn't exactly on yet!

NO:
We're constant.
No
No
No
No
No change
No pressure, management is quite distanced from actual implementation.
No.
No. But we do change/modify metrics based on Community evolution and sourcing.
Not really.
Not receiving pressure to demonstrate ROI. Starting to do more of this to increase the scope of program.
NOT YET:
Not as of yet, but will need to
Not currently
Not really, though I expect in the next year to two years as we start to put more dedicated resources to the community we'll become more formalize in our justification models.
Not yet
Not yet, we're a start up in Beta testing mode
Not yet...
Just started so not change to record yet.

FORUM ONE
C O M M U N I C A T I O N S

Final Comments

This research was conducted with sponsorship from Mzinga and SolutionSet. We would like to thank all of the participants who spent time giving us their frank and candid answers and feedback. Thank you. We really appreciate you all!

We hope that you continue to find value in the qualitative feedback that we are presenting in this format. Please let me know if you have any suggestions that would help improve our process.

Forum One will continue to explore the emerging issues around online community and social media as the primary purpose and agenda of the Online Community Research Network. http://www.onlinecommunityresearch.com

Best regards,

Bill Johnston

Chief Community Officer
Forum One Networks
bjohnston@forumone.com

About Forum One Networks & The Online Community Research Network

Forum One Networks http://www.forumonenetworks.com connects those who connect others online. We provide events, research, networking and strategic consulting for online community and social media professionals.

We firmly believe that the best source of information about online communities and social media are those who play in this space daily. All of our activities are based on this premise.

The Online Community Research Network (OCRN) http://www.onlinecommunityresearch.com is a collaborative effort of online community professionals to better understand the principal challenges of building and managing online communities. The Research Network coordinates the collection, analysis and dissemination of useful information among online community professionals.

For further information, or for sponsorship opportunities, please contact Bill Johnston
bjohnston@forumone.com