

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & ACTIVITY TIPS

A Learning Series Crowd-Sourced Attendee Resource*

1

We created a Job Search Academy – This is a full-blown community dedicated to helping our members through the spring and summer of finding a job – a library of resources, blogs, monthly online chats with recruiters and mentors, etc. (Sally Rushmore, KAPPA DELTA PI)

2

Use actionable language for your members to participate. Turn lurkers into content contributors by being clear about the engagement process. Tell them what you want them to do. It's okay to put out a call to action. (Higher Logic Learning Series Attendee)

3

Create content ABOUT the community, not just for the community. Start by talking about what your members are doing in the community. Treat it like a community newspaper for your organization. (Richard Millington, FeverBee)

4

Identify and nurture power users. Lurk, Listen and Like. Repeat. Recognize and reward them for engagement. These content contributors are evangelists for your organization. Use them to grow. (Lauren Wolfe, Higher Logic)

5

Try using advertising space on your community site creatively. In addition to running in-house ads, encourage members to:

- Update their profile picture.
- Ask for help in the technical community.
- Share their latest triumphs by writing a blog.
- Search for members in the member directory.
- Check out the FAQ's.

(Angelika Lipkin, Higher Logic)



6 Hire a passionate community manager. Community management is about more than social. (Higher Logic Learning Series Attendee)

7 Post commonly asked questions in a discussion forum and let your members provide suggestions – most people are happy to provide their expertise. Saves lots of time, provides a variety of suggestions and gets people engaged with each other. (Jamie Sewell, Coin Laundry Association and PlanetLaundry)

8 Help members connect. We created a mentoring program in our community site and it gave them another reason to participate. Engagement has grown. (Higher Logic Learning Series Attendee)

9 Use targeted emails to promote community features and benefits. Send a weekly digest of the most recent discussions or latest events posted. Essentially drive members to the hottest content and discussions by including a call-to-action. (Higher Logic Learning Series Attendee)

10 Start an “Introduce Yourself Here” thread in your Open Forum community. Pull a list of new members from your AMS and send them a welcome message welcoming them to your community site and asking them to introduce themselves in the thread. This allows members to post their very first message in a non-intimidating setting and build virtual relationship with other members. Members are then more likely to contribute and share in other discussions after their initial post. (Angelika Lipkin, Higher Logic)

11 Feature a member – This is a color picture and part of our rotating pictures with 3-5 bullet points and gives where they teach and a link to “find out more.” (Sally Rushmore, KAPPA DELTA PI)



MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

Stephanie Mortimer

- Harrow, United Kingdom
- High School Science Educator
- Kappa Delta Pi member since 2002

" I like being challenged with different viewpoints in the teaching world and seeing what others have to say about particular subjects. I love the sharing of ideas and sharing good practice that is present in the open forum."

Email kdpglobal@kdp.org to nominate an upcoming member spotlight

Connect with Stephanie

12 Lead by example. A great leader will step in and encourage people to participate, but the leader will also participate. Start with discussions and ask members to respond. (Higher Logic Learning Series Attendee)

13 Engage with popular public social media sites such as Twitter. Use them as communication channels to drive engagement to your community site. Cross-pollinate content across your social media channels, playing to each channel's individual strength. You own all of the content in your community. (Higher Logic Learning Series Attendee)

- 14** Make sure that you impersonate a member or ask a volunteer to respond to any post that goes unanswered for more than 48 hours! (Leah Chow, Higher Logic)
- 15** Offer leadership and volunteer opportunities. The #1 way we've got our members engaged is by giving them a place to engage in real-time. (Higher Logic Learning Series Attendee)
- 16** Give users a good reason to post content. Attention is always good. Say thank you when users contribute with relevant content or comments. (Higher Logic Learning Series Attendee)
- 17** Help members achieve their career goals by using polling in your community site. Ask them what they need to do their job better. (Community Manager)
- 18** Offer a "Technical Support" community for members to post questions on how to navigate the community or challenges that they're experiencing on the community or mobile app. You can upload all of your YouTube tutorial videos and how-to documents in this community as well. (Angelika Lipkin, Higher Logic)
- 19** Invite new members. Find out which of your members haven't logged into your community in the last six months and send them a personal invite to participate. This introduction may be all you need to get them engaged. (Higher Logic Learning Series Attendee)
- 20** Create a brand new community newsletter aggregating the highlights of your community, including trending topics, most downloaded documents, most read blogs. (Angelika Lipkin, Higher Logic)
- 21** Use photos of real members! Images are better able to convey emotion. Make sure that the images that you publish have as much emotional impact as you can put into them. (Higher Logic Learning Series Attendee)
- 22** Post a "Question of the Week" (Sally Rushmore, KAPPA DELTA PI)
- 23** Curate content. A steady stream of exclusive content in your member community is the core of engagement – return visits, participation, and value. Promote the content to members your monthly publication. Your community is a good source for articles, but also interviews. Bonus: Post the online versions of your monthly publication in a resource library. (Higher Logic Learning Series Attendee)

- 24** Host an “Ask the Expert” session in your community site. Ask a subject matter expert or thought leader to take questions from members for a two –hour period. This created urgency and encourages members to post questions to their most pressing issue and have an expert provide their insights and share their experience. (Angelika Lipkin, Higher Logic)
- 25** Create a community site mission statement and post it on your homepage. Your community exists to help members find more success in their lives, career and daily projects. Remind members what’s in it for them and engagement will follow. (Higher Logic Learning Series Attendee)
- 26** Un-campaign and create ongoing programs that keep your members connected to day-to-day engagement. Un-market by becoming a resource to your communities. Use your resource library to build a knowledge repository that is un-matched. (Higher Logic Learning Series Attendee)
- 27** The average American spends 2 hours and 42 minutes on their mobile devices – so make sure your community site is mobile-friendly. So when it comes to posting, the messaging has to be concise. The shorter the better! (Higher Logic Learning Series Attendee)
- 28** Video provides your community members with easily digestible (and viral) content. Members spend 100% more time on webpages that contain video (Marketing Sherpa). Thus, use video as another form of content to increase your community activity and engagement. (Lauren Wolfe, Higher Logic)
- 29** Promote your community – whether it be announcing your new mobile app, your community site webinar recording, the power of the member directory, the engagement success of your community site via your existing monthly newsletters. Encourage members to join the conversation. (Community Manager)
- 30** Ask your members to tell their story. Everyone is unique. If you become a conduit for this type of communication between people, you will capture the emotions of your audience like no other. (Higher Logic Learning Series Attendee)
- 31** Create a hyperlink on the primary navigation of your website homepage to redirect to your online community. This serves as a reminder of your top member benefit. You could also use API’s to pull the top discussion group threads or blog posts to your website homepage to serve as teasers. (Angelika Lipkin, Higher Logic)

32

Customer service is key in the engagement games. Community managers require training to learn how to proactively and reactively respond across multiple scenarios. Don't just put the person familiar with social networking in front of your members. (Higher Logic Learning Series Attendee)

33

Games with prizes! Conduct a "Connection Game" at your event with your mobile app. Try an in-app scavenger hunt to help members navigate the features. (Higher Logic Learning Series Attendee)

34

When trying to engage members, share more than news. Make sure you provide valuable content. If you provide content your members want to read, they'll keep coming back. You can then work in some marketing messages with advertising. (Higher Logic Learning Series Attendee)

35

We use the 90-9-1 Rule. This rule states user participation in an online community more or less follows these 90-9-1 ratios:

- 90% of users are lurkers.
- 9% of users are commenters.
- 1% of users are creators.

Since we know most of our community is lurking, we actively target market to that group in an attempt to convert them to commenters or creators. (Higher Logic Learning Series Attendee)

36

Don't blatantly self-promote on your community site. When a member asks a question, they aren't looking for you to respond by trying to sell them an additional product. Instead provide a resource rather than capitalizing on a promotion. (Higher Logic Learning Series Attendee)

37

Having a compelling graphic will make your social post stand out amongst the competition and reach a larger audience. Make sure to include a strong call-to-action on the image. We see 4x the reach and click through rate. (Higher Logic Learning Series Attendee)

38

Encourage members to login to the community site at least once per year by creating a link for them to renew their membership on your community site. Once there, members will most likely peruse the homepage to see the top discussions, blogs, and resources that are being shared and update their profile page. (Angelika Lipkin, Higher Logic)

39

Add a space for one-minute videos telling your members about something that is going on in the community or organization in the coming week. We call this "Got a Minute?" (Sally Rushmore, KAPPA DELTA PI)

40 Make content searchable and accessible by turning complicated information into content that is searchable and easy to understand. (Higher Logic Learning Series Attendee)

41 Create business cards for your community site. (The Research Chefs Association, RCA-Connect)



42 Invite guest bloggers to your blog. Do you let your members or leaders blog? Allow them to have a voice and watch participation mature. Practice what you preach and truly allow your community to be the community they want. That's the real key to engagement. (Higher Logic Learning Series Attendee)

43 Our members click on tips and numbers. Use analytics and reporting to share data and intelligence with your membership. (Higher Logic Learning Series Attendee)

44 Celebrate Community Manager Appreciation Day! We put together 10 tips for CMAD, you can download them here: <http://resources.higherlogic.com/higher-logic-cmad-2014>. (Lauren Wolfe, Higher Logic)

45 Here is my golden rule of social media engagement: Be action oriented. Provide links to industry-specific content and also fun stuff (articles, resources, photos, videos, action alerts, campaigns) that help move the conversation forward. (Higher Logic Learning Series Attendee)

46 One of the latest trends in social marketing is letting your customers convey the message for you. Ask your members to record the welcome message on your community site or perhaps a training video. You'll create a strong sense of authenticity essential to building engagement. (Community Manager)

47 Assess pain points, frustrations, and also those of contentment in order to establish meaningful connections with your community members. Feedback is essential for engagement and future growth. (Higher Logic Learning Series Attendee)

48 Tell one story several ways. For example we take a long magazine article and use it for a series of blogs, a case study, several tweets and content item in our Resource Library. Why use great content one time, in one way? (Higher Logic Learning Series Attendee)

49

Drive engagement through mobile apps. Do you have a mobile app for your community site? You should. We use Higher Logic's MemberCentric for NJSCPA Connect. To promote our mobile app we host an APPY HOUR at our annual meeting. Our members loved it and participation grew. (NJSCPA)

Album: www.flickr.com/photos/njscpa/sets/72157629982278438



50

Create a social personality. Obtaining engagement can be a challenge. Why not create a mascot to do the work for you? Your members will build a personal connection to him/her. Plus, give them a fancy title...just because it's fun. (Floyd Frog, Higher Logic's Chief Engagement Officer)

51

If you want an answer, ask a question. (Richard Millington, FeverBee)

52

Create a group of "go to" members you can reach out to for posts and replies. We created a group of "Engagement Leaders" and gave them a ribbon on their profile that they love. (Brianna Broad, AcademyHealth)

53

Make it easy to participate by using multiple entry points and ways for your members to participate. (Higher Logic Learning Series Attendee)

54

Use volunteers as "Community Ambassadors" to help create buzz in the community, respond to posts, and answer questions. (Catherine Wood, Canadian Society for Training and Development)

55

When new members join your community, ask them to participate in a discussion group right away. Make it a ritual or routine every new member does. The member will feel accepted into the community. This is essential for engagement. (Richard Millington, FeverBee)

56

Give priority to activity in your community and not content. When you want people to participate, highlight activity. (Richard Millington, FeverBee)

57

We're starting a staff managed blog for our community. Staff will coordinate authors for bi-weekly blog postings. We'll promote the blog postings through social media, our community itself, newsletters, etc. We also place portions of a discussion on the community in our newsletter and drive members to the community to see the full discussion. (Michelle Czosek, WSAE)

58

Have a #hashtag-a-thon and provide sample tweets or posts to make it easier for people to engage. We only had a few posts on our Facebook, then provided this guidance last week during undergraduate research week and we blew up compared to before. Then use tagboard.com to be able to visualize what has been tagged across sites <https://tagboard.com/urw2014>. (Robin Howard, Council on Undergraduate Research)

59

Always use fresh content (up to date) and make it relevant to your audience (targeted) and easy to find. (Rachel Tristano, Council of Residential Specialists)

60

For more community tips throughout the year, follow us on Twitter via our hashtag: #HLLearn.

61

I've found that having people guess what is in a picture that has been posted generates a lot of engagement. We have people guess the species of various veneers each week. Ours is the hardwood plywood business, so the people guessing are woodworkers. Picking pictures that are relevant to our audience is key. (Ex: Afrormosia Architectural Wood Veneer)

(Elizabeth DiFiore, Thruway Hardwood and Plywood Corp.)



62

Delegate discussion initiation to members of the community (thought leaders/SMEs/volunteer leaders/ etc.) rather than staff; other community members will be more engaged in the discussion if it is perceived to originate from their peers. (J David M. Rozsa, CAE, ACA, Metacred, Inc.)

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The biggest success we've have with getting people engaged in our communities is to ask simple, interesting questions. We will post an image with two different pictures and ask them to vote for one. Or put up a quick poll with a few statements to choose what they agree with most. Asking questions rather than posting statements works very well for us. (Melanie Wise, Pennsylvania Builders Association)

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92.2% of association members reported volunteering with their association or another organization, according to ASAE's Decision to Volunteer, which published the results of a survey of more than 26,000 association professionals. Celebrate Volunteer Appreciation Week – read our blog for more ideas: www.higherlogic.com/blogs/lauren-wolfe/2014/04/10/volunteer-appreciation-week. And leave us a comment with what you do in your organization. (Lauren Wolfe, Higher Logic)

65

Cluster! While communities tend to start slowly, there are always a few talkative souls. Leverage the smallest group activity to generate greater exposure (follows, likes, etc). Do whatever you can -- Retweet, Share -- in order to gather those with similar interest. A few can teach many how to communicate in the digital world. (Nick DiFrancesco, Pennsylvania Association of Community Bankers)

66

NAPFA is an association for Fee-Only financial planners and many of our members transitioned from a commission earning financial practice to Fee-Only. We receive a lot of questions from new and potential members so I think we should have a community called "Now What?" as in "I know I want to be Fee-Only, Now what do I do about it?". We can populate with questions that we have collected from emails and calls that we get "Where do you go to get help on compliance issues?" and "What software did you choose?"; we can also post sample docs that we have in the community of information for getting them started, and invite NAPFA members to share their expertise with their new colleagues without any commitment to a mentor relationship. New and potential members can add more questions and experienced members can share at their leisure. (Bevin Callan, NAPFA)

67

Community management idea I discovered today: Host online discussion with academic journal authors; doesn't have to be just meeting speakers. (Kristi Donovan, AUPHA)

68

Communities should avoid solely top-down rules. Ask members to contribute to rule creation! (Zach Elkin, Stealth Education Startup)

69

Avoid burnout—turn off, unplug, and get offline once a month. Meet with your community in person. Invite them to your office for "Coffee With The Community." Discuss issues, address concerns and enjoy an afternoon break. If you rest and re-set, your community (and your body) will thank you for it. You could also try a Google Hangout if your members are not local. (Community Manager)

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Concise posts are easier to digest, especially as more users check their feed from this smartphones or tablets. We try to keep ours to around 50 words. (Higher Logic Learning Series Attendee)

** Tips are listed in the order they were received. Attendees who wished to submit anonymously are listed as "Higher Logic Learning Series Attendee" or otherwise designated. Special thanks to everyone who participated! If you have any questions pertaining to this document, contact Lauren Wolfe via email at Lauren@higherlogic.com.*