



COMMUNITY MANAGEMENT CONFERENCE

Everything You Need To Know If You Weren't There



A nighttime photograph of a city skyline, featuring a prominent tall tower on the left and various illuminated skyscrapers. A large, semi-transparent blue circle is centered over the image, containing white text. Two thin blue lines extend from the top-left and bottom-right corners of the circle towards the edges of the frame.

**IT'S ONLY YOUR
BILLION-DOLLAR BRAND
REPUTATION AT STAKE.
MANAGE IT ACCORDINGLY.
INVEST IN COMMUNITY
MANAGEMENT.**

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While the first CMI conference focused on the bare bones of the role of community managers and defining it, the second edition put the focus squarely on community management. The conference took a step back to examine a number of different perspectives and hear from some bigger brands and more speakers about the specific tasks that community managers undertake on a daily basis. At the end of the day, however, it all come down to engagement.



THE 10 GOLDEN RULES OF ENGAGEMENT

With Clarke De Pastino @clarke_d

These days, as brands constantly battle to win consumers' attention, engagement matters — a lot. "It's real, it's tangible and it's not going away," said Clarke De Pastino, VP, Engagement, at Ipsos SMX. De Pastino knows more than a thing or two about successfully engaging via social media, which is why he was on-hand at CMI to share '10 Rules of Engagement', all of which revolve around one golden rule: do unto others what you'd want them to do unto you.

1. Demonstrate and Deliver Value

In competing for consumers' time, community managers need to develop a solid value proposition. They need to show the people in their communities why they should engage — what's in it for them. A word of caution, however:

"Once you've defined this value proposition you have to deliver on it," said De Pastino. "If you don't you will lose members quickly and when you lose members it's hard to get them back."

2. Build Relationships

With 2 billion people engaging with brands online daily, we are officially living in the participation age. To win people's time, community managers need to show them that they are valued. That requires investing enough time in them to actually build one-to-one relationships.

"By building connection between the brand and the consumer we're really creating a more vested interest

in the brand," said De Pastino. "That's a very powerful thing."

Of course, as with any good relationship, it's a two-way street.

"A great community manager has to be willing to share the same information about themselves as they're asking of their members," he added.

3. Respect Requires Transparency: Be Transparent

Consumers have never been more savvy and media literate. Once community managers build relationships with them, they have to remember to be transparent. They need to tell the community exactly why they're doing certain things. That dialogue levels the playing field.

"If you're anything but transparent what you're doing is running this unnecessary risk of brand backlash against you," said De Pastino.

4. Involve the Brand

In a branded environment community managers can't employ half measures. Just having a branded Facebook or Twitter page isn't enough. You have to go all-in. Customers judge brands based on how involved they are. That includes engaging in two-way conversations, listening and replying, and ensuring executive participation.

“To effectively use the brand you have to have a real top-down buy-in from the executives in your company,” explained De Pastino.

5. Show Impact

A universal best practice of community management is reporting back to community managers the value of their participation. It’s important that community managers acknowledge and validate their community members’ contributions, effectively showing them that they’re listening.

“It demonstrates that not only are we listening to them, but that we’re valuing their time; and in showing them we value their time they become more vested in what we’re trying to do with them,” said De Pastino. “It’s an expression of gratitude.”

6. Recognize and Reward

Rewarding contributions is another important strategy for creating a vested interest in the community and is critical for motivating members. A mixed bag of tactics including draws, sweepstakes and contests is effective in achieving that end.

“Truthfully speaking, we should not be the stars,” said De Pastino. “If you’re representing a brand you need to make your members the stars of your community and take every opportunity to do so.”

7. Write Engaging Content

Creating compelling content is a critical component

of community management and one of the biggest challenges for community managers. People want to be entertained and interested and that means, in bringing the brand’s online voice alive, community managers need to be not only good brand ambassadors, but also effective photographers, copywriters and ideators.

“The first step in order to be successful in doing all of those things,” explained De Pastino, “is you have to determine your brand voice online because your brand voice online might be different from the brand’s personality offline.”

8. Communicate Regularly

People have short attention spans and that’s why community managers have to make sure that they communicate with their communities on a regular basis. In doing so, community managers need to make sure that they manage expectations, using clear and concise language — particularly important given the greater frequency with which people are engaging with mobile devices — to give their community members a strong call to action.

“When you cater to people in mobile it’s pretty great because they’re on the go,” added De Pastino. “This is really important because as our attention span gets shorter and we’re out or about, we’re not necessarily giving ourselves time to do things like check email.”



@sherm85

If you’re representing a brand, make your community members famous within that community (aka, give credit when due) @clarke_d #CMITO

9. Refresh the Member Base

Community managers need to avoid being lulled into a false sense of security when it comes to community's member base. Just because the community might have thousands of followers doesn't mean that they're engaged, or even active. Always be recruiting.

"By monitoring the composition of your members it lets you really proactively ensure that when you have [n] objective your community can perform," said De Pastino.

10. Moderate Closely

Moderating is an exercise in diplomacy. There's nothing worse than a negative post that goes unanswered as negativity breeds negativity. Community managers need to take the time to read every post and reply frequently.

"[The community manager's job] is to be there to make sure everybody plays nice," concluded De Pastino.

"A great community manager has to be willing to share the same information about themselves as they're asking of their members."

TAPPING INTO YOUR COMMUNITY FOR SUPPORT

With Andrew Zimakas @andrewzimakas

Community can be a powerful thing as Tangerine (formerly ING Direct) recently discovered, following their sale to Scotiabank, which necessitated the bank's name change and new identity as it would be operating as a separate entity from its new parent company. Tangerine, CMO, Andrew Zimakas was on hand to take CMI attendees through Tangerine's rebranding process and ultimate name reveal, explaining how social media played a crucial role in each phase of the transition process.

At the outset, immediately prior to and immediately following the sale to Scotiabank, there was a lot of uncertainty. The bank had 18 months to find a new name and identity. The yet-to-be-named Tangerine used social media to reassure its online audience that it was "business as usual." When the name change was announced, the company continued to use its social channels to communicate its values whilst being transparent and upfront about what was going on, as well as building awareness about the impending name change. Its customers, explained Zimakas, are central to the banks' identity and it put a lot of value on actively engaging them throughout the process. The challenge was to preserve the essence of the brand and reassure stakeholders that its modern and innovative identity would remain the same, just the name would be changing.

"It was a trepidatious challenge because it wasn't that we were starting from a sick brand, this was a brand that was generally liked, even loved, and so that was daunting," said Zimakas. "At the same time it was also a great opportunity because while all this was happening

we were on a journey essentially to reposition the brand from being really known as a savings bank to becoming an everyday direct bank. So, it acted as a really important springboard for helping us communicate that."

Tangerine's social communities include its social ambassadors, employees, clients, non clients, media and its social C-suite, including CEO, Peter Aceto. Pre-reveal, the brand engaged its social ambassadors with a limited edition scarf program, established before the sale, to reward its most passionate fans. It also conducted a social media crisis simulation two days before the reveal event dealing with how to react to negative questions and comments about the new brand.

"It really tested our strength of resolve and it also really tested our processes to make sure we were ready when the time came for the reveal," said Zimakas.

PR, ambassadors and the brand's social communities played an important role during the reveal itself. It was good learning for the brand in terms of ensuring that you don't put all your eggs in your earned media and PR basket as it lost all earned media support on TV due to coverage of the Rob Ford scandal. Luckily, Tangerine's social efforts bailed it out.

"From a social media standpoint, within the first six hours, post reveal, our team had sent over 800 responses through our social channels and for the first three weeks following the reveal, there were over 8,500 posts online about #Tangerine and the brand launch," said Zimakas. Thanks to its social activity, overall sentiment was



@Marketing_Mag

Don't put all your eggs in the earned media basket: on the day

@TangerineBank announced its new name, Rob Ford admitted to crack

use. #CMITO

positive and negative sentiment was lower than the brand expected. It also added some 4000 followers across social properties. To make the transition period that would follow the official name reveal as seamless and as easy as possible for its social communities, Tangerine changed its social media handles a couple of weeks before the official name change and with its most important channels Facebook and Twitter, it simply transitioned the name so that its existing fans and followers would stay put. It used its social communities to educate fans and followers, letting them know important practical things, such as when they would be receiving new debit cards, AMB access, how the name change was going to affect the name of the products and the fact that everything else wasn't going to change so they could rest assured.

“These groups proved to be especially helpful during the brand transition because they were able to jump into social media conversations, respond to concerns right away and sometimes even convert skeptics,” said Zimakas. “More than anything these folks acted as a secondary voice to our main social media channel, and they assured our ambassadors, our clients and even our non clients that we were actually listening to them and typically taking action on their feedback.”

During the official launch event, Tangerine had lots of employees active on social media engaging people on various channels, leveraging different voices across the organization, including its social C-suite, which had developed its own communities. It also used social media to amplify its offline marketing efforts.

“From a social media standpoint nearly 8,000 social media posts mentioned Tangerine, 16 million media impressions [were earned] and again, the overall sentiment continued to be positive and, in fact, even more positive than during the reveal period.”

Zimakas identified three key takeaways that Tangerine took from the experience: engage and build your communities from day one - advocates will support you; take your best relationships offline; keep employees in the loop.

BUILDING A COMMUNITY MANAGEMENT ORGANIZATION

With Keith McArthur @RogersKeith

A good community manager needs to wear many hats. They need to be active listeners and talkers, regularly replying to their followers. They need to be adept content creators, shrewd social media strategists, ideators, brand managers, customer service reps and social engagement experts. At a company that manages many brands online being all of these things is much more complicated. Community management must become a necessary part of the culture throughout the entire organization. Rogers have become quite good at this, being a company that manages 100 brands, 105 Facebook accounts and 135 Twitter accounts. Keith McArthur, VP Social Media at Rogers, spoke at CM1, sharing five “hashtags” that help build community management organizations.

1. #GiveYourOrgEars

Community management really comes down to a mastery of the art of conversation and all good conversations start with listening. It's important that community managers know what to say and, importantly, when to talk.

“It's important to listen carefully to avoid embarrassing scenarios,” said McArthur. Good listening, at a company as large as Rogers, involves establishing top-down social buy-in. The company began by putting out daily summaries about social intelligence regarding Rogers customers, products, services and competitors to executives. That eventually evolved to the point where the company now takes social insights and builds them into the reports that executives are already receiving.

2. #MindTheHippo

“Well, it's not really a Hippo, it's actually HIPPO,” said McArthur, which stands for Highest Paid Person's Opinion.

“Your social media strategy needs to align directly with the company's strategy and focus,” he explained.

Community management organizations need to know why they're talking to their various customers — are they trying to: move prospects from consideration to purchase; get existing customers to buy more; learn from them about how to improve products and services; improve the customer experience; to lower call centre costs.

3. #LiveTheBridge

“A good community manager lives exactly between the company and the customer,” explained McArthur. “You're listening to what the customers are saying and bringing it back to the brand, and you're listening to what the brand is saying and relaying it back to the customers.”

In facilitating an open dialogue with customers, particularly when it comes to demonstrating that their grievances will be actively addressed with information relayed back and forth in an honest and transparent way, good community management organizations can oftentimes turn brand skeptics into brand ambassadors.



@diannenice

All good conversations start with listening #CM1TO @keithmcarthur

4. #EmbraceBoring

“Successful community management organizations are all about process, structure and measurement,” explained McArthur. For their various properties that dictate, for example, who can tweet, when they can tweet and what they should tweet. Structure is crucial too. Good community management organizations will build social teams around specific things like governance, community managers, social data, content platforms, HR, marketing RMI, corporate communications social data, customer service and strategic initiatives. Measurement is integral to understand what people are saying on the listening side and encouraging continued buy-in.

5. #UnFail

When big brands face social media backlash they will turn a fail into a win by reacting strategically. When Rogers faced social backlash over a fail around promoted tweets for its Rogers1Number — wherein people were using #Rogers1Number to unleash a torrent of unrelated Rogers gripes — it reacted by leaving the hashtag up, leveraging it to show they were listening to the social media conversations that were taking place. “We started promoting tweets for the rest of that day where we were talking about the fact that we were learning from this, we were listening,” explained McArthur. Rogers reaction was met with a positive social response. “If you do the right thing on social media you get the good feedback.”

“A good
community
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BRICK AND MORTAR TWEETING - BUILDING BRAND, DODGING BULLETS AND DISCOVERING EVANGELISTS

With Gregg Tilston @greggtilston

It's tough to take someone from social to bricks and mortar where they buy, but it's something that Flight Centre, which boasts over 30 brands in 11 countries and 15,000 employees, is very good at. Gregg Tilston, Global Social Media Leader for the Flight Centre Travel Group, attended CM1 and shared four different challenges his company successfully leveraged, turning them into opportunities in order to successfully build its brands, dodge bullets, discover evangelists, and ultimately drive customers down its sales funnel.

1. Holy ****

By utilizing Hootsuite since day one, Flight Centre has been able to nimbly respond to “holy ****” social moments” or “how do you deal with this moments” resulting from customer malcontent. It's all about engagement. “We don't have the volume of Dell, we don't have the volume of Best Buy, but we do engage with every single person,” said Tilston.

“Success when responding to customer complaints,” he added, “lies with improvisation when crafting responses to customer complaints — have fun, be cheeky, get creative and build brand affinity.”

2. Animal Rights

Tilston recounted an experience wherein Flight Centre was able to leverage social media backlash it received regarding the treatment of Thai elephants, Thailand being a destination to which Flight Centre books flights. Via social media, Flight Centre was made aware of a petition on corporate responsibility that a group of people planned to present to Flight Centre executives.

Flight Centre quickly responded with an open letter on Facebook and one-to-one communications with individuals via social channels and even met with the petition organizer, pledging to make changes to promotional imagery depicting the animals.

“We're still mindful today that we need to be responsible from that perspective,” said Tilston, adding that, from the experience, the company learned to tackle issues (and detractors) head on, be open and to respond to everyone.

3. Partner Strife

During a time that Air Canada workers went on strike, Flight Centre worked with the airline, a partner, to ensure that customers' travel plans wouldn't be disrupted. It was given access to Air Canada's backend in order to manage bookings made directly with the airline and created a post, promoted via social channels, about how it was helping worried travellers. Air Canada also posted that Flight Centre was doing that on its behalf, leveraging that partner strife to funnel their social communities through to Flight Centre's own channels. “The lesson learned,” said Tilston, “was to act quickly in leveraging that partner strife, using a hub and spoke strategy to provide value to affected travellers and, ultimately, the community at large.”

“I think one of the biggest things from a hub and spoke perspective — the blog was the hub and the spokes were all the channels pointing to it — pick an area where you're going to put your central resource for information and start pointing to that.”



@LangloisJulia

Hopefully geek speak happens soon. I'm a fan. @greggtilston #CM1TO

4. Natural Disaster

Flight Centre is headquartered in Brisbane Australia, a city that was affected by heavy flooding in 2011. Not only was it a situation where the company had to help its customers, but it also had to help its employees. It created a staff update blog, posting to keep staff informed about the situation, and locked and loaded its social channels to support and point to such resources so people could have ready access to information, ultimately putting the crisis process out in the open, going beyond staff to its customers and the general public.

“Facebook really became a place where people were actually going and meeting online, sharing information,” said Tilston, adding that the company learned to be prepared, to get information out everywhere, ensure access and facilitate meeting places.

SURPRISING AND DELIGHTING YOUR COMMUNITY

With Mitchell Fawcett @mitchellfawcett

In engaging communities, an important tactic for community managers to employ is surprise and delight. Mitchell Fawcett, Founder and Agency Director of Motive Communications spoke to attendees at CM1 about how to do just that.

Successful surprising and delighting followers is rooted in creating an emotional connection with the community. Community managers need to figure out what their customers value and what their business can offer. Fawcett recounted a story about a record-breaking high school swimmer, and ardent Taco Bell customer and fan, who tweeted the brand asking if it could send him a customized Taco Bell branded speedo that had the phrase “I think outside the buns” on the back. “They rewarded a very loyal customer with something that’s completely outside of their product line,” said Fawcett. “They responded on Facebook as well and that gave this the opportunity [to go] viral, which it did, and it’s a great indication of a brand that’s listening where other brands may have completely ignored the request.”

Negative situations can also provide community managers and their brands the opportunity to surprise and delight. For example, Fawcett talked about a consumer who had purchased an app called ‘Codename Cygnus’, only to discover the very next day that it had gone on sale at 50% off. The app creator immediately replied, offering to help out the disgruntled customer, turning a negative into a positive due to the speed and the personal one-to-one nature of the response. It’s a great example of reactive surprise and delight, which is where brands and community managers can really go the extra mile. Fawcett also talked about a campaign for Edge Shave Gel, which featured messaging around fighting irritation. The brand proactively responded to a tweet from a person complaining about being irritated because he didn’t have any cereal. The brand ultimately mailed him some. Edge engaged

him in a random act of kindness, going outside its product line to give a random gift, but tied the action back to its brand campaign. “It’s about engineering emotional connections,” explained Fawcett, “going the extra mile to create something that people want to talk about.”

“Social platforms,” said Fawcett, “allows community managers to engage in legitimate sleuthing to mine information about their customers — tastes, preference, birthdays, favourite places to name a few — that their brands can proactively use to create value through hyper-personalized service.” It’s something Fawcett and his agency do well on behalf of the Westin Bay Shore Hotel. They monitor social media to create social guest lists that enable them to outfit customers’ rooms with personalized gifts like preferred snacks or even printed and framed versions of pictures their customers posted to their social media channels. “Of course,” he added, “very little about being a community manager for a brand is altruistic.”

“If I know that a customer is a social influencer, a journalist or media, or has an audience that they can share their message with, they’re absolutely going to be a priority.”

Some key takeaways for community managers from Fawcett’s presentation include:

Who to Surprise and Delight

New customers, loyal customers, customers with past complaints, customers with milestones, social influencers and media.

What Community Managers Need

Listening skills, excellent CRM software, operational integration, responsiveness, empowerment, time.



@MartinBerthelot

I love the effortless humour @mitchellfawcett brings to his presentation.

Another great talk at #CMITO.

BUILDING COMMUNITIES: LESSONS FROM PRIME TIME

With Tessa Sproule @TessaSproule

It's arguable that the CBC was Canada's original community manager. It's spent a long time building up a community around its content and since the advent of social media it's only accelerated that practice. Tessa Sproule, Director, Digital Content, was at CM1 to share some community building lessons from prime time.

"So much of the audience participation in the stories that we're telling has a direct impact on other audience's interpretation of the stories we're telling," said Sproule. "It's this incredibly symbiotic relationship with the stories that we're trying to tell. Community management, community building, getting people really excited to be part of that story is fundamental to us being able to tell stories going forward."

TV is a very social medium. The moments that people share around the stories on TV screens have lasting impact. Thanks to changing consumer habits, people are watching TV in very different ways. Think multiscreen viewing. Thanks to the proliferation of mobile devices people are consuming video content on the go. They're also taking their participation in the stories being told beyond "water cooler moments." They're discussing them with their peers in real time, via their social channels. "These days, in many ways, the audience has become the network," explained Sproule, "the means by which content is distributed." The community and community building has become the marketing, the catalyst for discovery with social media the remote control. It can get people talking even before a show airs.

"Our position, and what we've been trying to do with social TV, the buzzword term for it, is to try and make the conversation with the community part of the story we're trying to tell," said Sproule.

A challenge is that the majority of conversations about brands happen offline or in 'Dark Social', where conversations occur online but are hidden, and cannot be tracked (conversations via email for example). Keeping those things in mind, the key is to make sure people are given something to talk about. The CBC's approach is to create interesting content that can precede the launch of a show so people are talking about it in advance so the CBC has a built-in audience to target.

In creating that content, Sproule highlighted an important rule: it's not about the show or the brand, it's about the fans. "It's their story," she said, "however they want to get into it." They should be at the centre of what's being done. The CBC creates content-related programs that allows it to learn about how they're participating, enabling it to find a "sweet spot" with a particular subset of the audience that they could target, calling that sweet spot the 5%.

"They're the ones that essentially drive the vast majority of your visible community social stuff that you're going to track and see," said Sproule.

That's how ROI can be demonstrated. It comes down to interactivity and sharing and liking in relation to



@oneadvert

It's not about the number of likes but the engagement rate. YES YES YES

@TessaSproule #CM1TO

the number of followers on social media channels, focusing on the people that can be reached, engaging them to be your marketers and distributors. There's a lot that happens beneath the surface of social. It's about what else can be tapped into and ultimately leveraged via social with the 5%.

"Watching TV is really easy," said Sproule. "It's hard to get people to do things beyond sitting passively, but if you can focus on the the few that are doing it, with your brand, with your show, and amplify them, get them really engaged, then you will have more impact because other people will see it. It's just the nature of the way this stuff works."

"The power has shifted completely into the hands of the audience," she concluded. "The audience has complete control over the experience."

"We have to fundamentally shift the way we that we think about how we engage with audiences and how we can build communities around programs and move one community from here to there."

The audience is the message of what the story is that's being told. Embrace that and give them something to talk about.

HOW TO BUILD A COMMUNITY WITH YOUTUBE

With Bob Cornwall @bobcornwall

More than 1 billion people visit YouTube every month. Over 100 hours of video are uploaded to the Google-owned platform every minute. These days content is at the heart of everything social. That said, YouTube's a platform through which brands can drive meaningful impact, providing a great opportunity to build communities. Bob Cornwall, Brand Activation Lead at Google, was at CMI to share with attendees five key elements for successful community building on YouTube that revolve around one important concept: brands need to think content first, not campaign first.

1. Define Your Content Strategy

Brands need to find the intersection between what target consumers care about and what brand thinks about. That area of overlap needs to be authentic, distinct and totally ownable by the brand so it can deliver something that creates a meaningful connection with consumers and ultimately win them over.

"This is what we call at Google, winning the moments that matter," explained Cornwall. "This becomes the essence of how you start to define your content strategy."

2. Structure Your Content Strategy

There are three different kinds of content that YouTube leverages: Hero, Hygiene and Hub.

Hero: It involves large-scale tentpole events, or "go big or go home moments" designed to achieve mass consumption — The Volvo Trucks' "Epic Split" video featuring Jean Claude Jean Van Damme, for example.

Hub: More frequent regular programming that pops up, multiple times throughout the year. It's designed to be push content geared towards getting at prime prospects.

Volvo Trucks' 'What's Your Story' videos featuring drivers and owners telling their stories about safety, security, uptime, productivity, driver appeal and fuel efficiency.

Hygiene: The most frequent, it's always on content that answers common consumer questions and is designed for a brand's core target. An example would be a Volvo Trucks' braking video that provides a unique product demonstration. "When we leverage this structure the level of impact that a content producer can get on our platform is massive," said Cornwall.

3. Don't Just Create

"If you want to deliver the hero, hub, hygiene framework and leverage that structure within the platform, it's best that you not just create, but curate and collaborate," said Cornwall. "This is a way to take some of the heavy lifting off your shoulders."

When collaborating, Cornwall encouraged attendees to do things like delivering high-level content like live programming or low collaborations like partnering with a YouTube creator and having their brands integrated into their content. When curating, he recommended licensed community content and on the low level brands can create playlists of content their customers would be interested in.

4. Be Relevant

"It's important to always have your finger on the pulse of what's culturally relevant and what trends are picking up and, where and when you can, lean on those trends to help bring your message to way more people," said Cornwall. "Figuring out how to market the moment will be key to unlocking success."



@40deuce

"Content first. Not campaign first," says Bob from @YouTube #CMITO

Curating and collaborating makes it much easier to do that, as does using tools like Google Analytics.

5. Don't Always Expect Engagement, Ask for It

Many YouTube creators conclude their videos by asking viewers to like, share, comment or subscribe to their channels. Having a call to action is critical to building community on YouTube.

“You want to have that call to action that encourages a sharing behaviour that’s going to get you traction with the user group,” said Cornwall.

“It’s important to always have your finger on the pulse of what’s culturally relevant and what trends are picking up and, where and when you can, lean on those trends to help bring your message to way more people.”

INFLUENCING THE INFLUENCERS: BRINGING VALUE TO YOUR BRAND

With Casie Stewart @casiestewart

For community managers, utilizing influencers is extremely important for engaging the community at large, as they inspire action in their dedicated army of followers. Casie Stewart knows this well and can speak from personal experience. Not only is she an expert in social and digital media, currently Social Media Director at GelaSkins, but she's also an award-winning lifestyle blogger, herself a sought-after influencer by brands. She spoke at CM1 about the importance for brands to build value by influencing the influencers.

"It's not about just reaching out to notable bloggers and giving them stuff," said Stewart, "it's about building productive relationships."

"That's what you want to do with influencers, you want to kind of court them" said Stewart. "If you want to work with influencers then what you need to do is find the people that love your brand. You don't want to find an influencer just because they're popular."

In doing so, community managers should create experiences that not only instill in the influencers genuine goodwill towards brands, but also give them something to talk about. It's a two way relationship about creating memorable experiences. And, in creating shared, memorable experiences, community managers can create lasting relationships between influencers and brands, effectively bolstering brands presence, but they need to make sure that those experiences are authentic.

If there's someone that connects with your brand that you think can really bring some value to it bring them on to help you plan it because that's something

that will add way more value than just having people come out and show up to something. A tweet only lasts for so long. When you have a relationship with someone who's an influencer there's so much potential that can come out of that." This turns influencers into brand advocates and that's something that can prove to be pretty powerful. That said, community managers need to be careful that the people with whom they form relationships truly love the brand.

Stewart concluded with some helpful tips for both influencers and brands.

Influencers

Be honest, be yourself, talk about budgets, trust your gut, don't sell out.

Brands

Do your research, invest in people, create positive experiences, don't go for the one night stand, be honest and upfront about budgets and expectations, build relationships.



@Lchinyou

I don't want a one night stand with your brand. Build a relationship, not a wham-bam thank you ma'am." @casiestewart #CM1TO

BE LOCAL EVERYWHERE: BOOTSTRAPPING YOUR WAY TO GLOBAL BRAND LOYALTY

With Destin Haynes @destinfall

HootSuite is the world's most widely used social relationship platform with 9 million users and an extremely beneficial community management tool. The mission of HootSuite's Community department is to build a long-lasting community presence for the platform by creating vibrant online communities with its users. It represents HootSuite in local markets via online and offline outreach to inspire new users and inspire people to serve as brand ambassadors, so it's safe to say that Destin Haynes, Director, Freemium Community at HootSuite, knows quite a bit about the importance of community. She presented at CM1 about building community by being local everywhere and creating global brand loyalty.

Community Has a Lot of Impact on Loyalty

"Community really helps people bond with the brand," said Haynes. "There are also a lot of other areas in the loyalty loop where community is so important: becoming aware of offering; considering whether or not you're going to buy a product, evaluating that product. The importance of community really does stem from those influencers and those brand ambassadors. They're doing that marketing, doing that promotion, talking about your product or your tool on your behalf, helping other people make their decisions about your product or your company."

In building community it's important to be local everywhere, to find ways to be locally relevant in every market. Community managers can't assume that one thing will work in every single market. HootSuite employs particular grassroots tactics to that end:

- Ambassador programs help Hootsuite expand into new markets, gather local intel, promote HootSuite messages, network and learn, and help ambassadors understand their goals.
- HootUps are organic, ambassador-led user-powered (sometimes popup) events that include partnerships and fun educational seminars. They have a low barrier to entry and are easy to organize.
- #HootSwag has been a big part of HootSuite's global outreach strategy since day one. They include limited edition swag like HootKits and localized Owly stickers.

For HootSuite, explained Haynes, building communities globally comes down to four key pillars: listening and monitoring — for your brand, your competitors and listening to what the community wants and giving it to them; localizing content, social media channels and providing translated version of the product (web and mobile); being genuine by developing a tone of voice, looking for fun conversations to be a part of, showing humanity behind the brand and avoiding focus on broadcasting and selling; and having conversations by being a good neighbour, learning about community members, engaging and responding and maintaining the relationship.

"Of course, in all of that, the ultimate goal is to surprise and delighting communities," concluded Haynes.

"Community really helps people bond with the brand"



@MartinBerthelot

Over social media, a personal touch can make all the difference. Use limited editions to make it special. #HootSwag @destinfall #CMITO

CM1 PANEL

Jamie Cuthbertson @JamieLeighTO

Sherry Jean @justsherryj

Meg Siegel @seagell

Moderator: Kimi Addullah @kimiabdullah

The CM1 panel tackled questions around proving community moderator value to organizations. Here are a few of the key questions and answers to come out of the conversation:

What value do you believe experienced community managers bring to a brand?

Sherry: "As a community manager you have a one-one link to your fan. You don't have to wait for an email to come in. You're the first person to respond to somebody, the first person they want to share something great with or launch a complaint to, so having that instant one-one interaction is very valuable. You get to take the pulse in terms of what's working for your brand and what's not working and we can see immediate results from that and bring it back to the brand team."

Meg: "As I grew as a community manager I used to work on smaller businesses where I had more creative freedom, I got to experiment a lot more and try things out. Now that I have that experience in my past I can take what I've learned and apply it to bigger brands and bigger teams."

Jamie: "I think a great community manager is that bridge between the audience, or consumer, and the brand. So, I think an experienced community manager knows that brand really well and knows the audience really well and can be that communication between the two. They know what works, what doesn't work and where to take risks and how to speak to both audiences."

Do you think that brands are now recognizing the value in

having someone experienced in the role?

Jamie: "I think community managers are proving their worth over and over again, and I think once brands work with an experienced community manager and see the difference between an intern and an expert community manager they'll recognize the value and invest in that. So, I think that community managers are forging the way and showing brands how important it is."

How brands quantify ROI on community management?

Meg: "I think that [being active on social] helps you be top-of-mind with consumers, it helps you rank higher in search if you're constantly updating your platforms and your engagement rate will grow if you attract the right people. So, your audience growing, your engagement rate growing and just more people talking about you in general are good measures."

In their career, how are community managers able to display their successes?

Sherry: "I think the easiest and the automatic thing for proving success is showing follower growth and showing good numbers and metrics, but if we're doing things properly from a content standpoint you should be involved in conversations for those campaigns early on. For me, I know I've been successful at being a community manager when the marketing team has a new idea and they bring me into the conversation right away to get my ideas on what something would look like from a digital standpoint."



@laurenxisbet

"It's important for community managers to be the social media thought leaders within their organizations" @jamieleighTO #CMITO

THE ORGANIZERS



Dx3 is Canada's largest conference and trade show focused on digital marketing, digital advertising and digital retailing. It brings agencies, brands, publishers & retailers together for two days of networking and education.



The Tite Group is a Toronto-based, agile content marketing agency. "There has to be a better way" guides the agency's strategy in the transformation of their client's brands into media properties.



FITC produces inspirational and educational events for the design & technology community. Over the last 12 years, they have produced over 70 events around the globe, including Tokyo, Amsterdam, NYC, San Fran, and Toronto.