



An eUsers White Paper

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Online Community Adoption

This is a list of recommendations for successfully launching an online community of almost any type. It is particularly aimed at the development of communities within organizations with geographically distributed members, but is generally applicable to most online communities of action.¹ Think of the steps below as a loose collection of informal, best practices for adoption.

Note: For a lighter touch, the list can be presented as a Top Ten Ways to Aid Adoption.

[10] Recognize that the road to successful adoption starts at the very beginning of the project – "build it, and they will come" won't work

[9] Choose your customer/user collaborators carefully – stack the team with thought leaders, not just people who have the time to participate

[8] Marketing starts at the beginning, too. Give the project a name. Announce *what* you're doing and *why* you are creating this community. Distribute trash & trinkets to your collaborators.

[7] Make your collaborators part of your team – co-opt your core supporters in the requirements/design phases. You want them to not be able to wait for the release – and tell their colleagues the same.

[6] Iterate with your collaborators. Don't use them to collect requirements and then abandon them. Use them to test the designs. Collaborative/participatory design creates ready-made advocates come release. Keep the dream alive.

[5] Seed the community with compelling content *before* release. Make it useful from the user's first log-on.

[4] Develop and deliver, in-context training for success at rollout.

[3] After release, follow-up early and often with your collaborators to see how they're doing – stay in touch with your core customer team.

[2] Create a reward structure for use/participation. Use both material rewards [trash & trinkets], and symbolic ones [on-site recognition of contributions] for those who drive your target metrics.

[1] The #1 requirement is to *design-in utility for the user that compels them to participate*. in the community.

¹ This list of steps skips over a considerable array of issues critical to the creation of a successful online community. In addition, adoption will be colored by local culture & politics. For more information about how to achieve your target adoption rates, contact info@eusers.com