Drive business value with communities

Consumers are relying more and more on the input of others to help inform their online decisions as they jump from site to site, clicking from one brand property to another. Companies are trying to keep up—figuring out ways to attract customers to their digital properties and keep them there, or how to use social tools to help drive this engagement and deliver value beyond single transactions such as tweets and likes. Brands looking to build and enhance long-term value need to focus on increasing customer engagement and building loyalty. A company's ability to build a social engine that creates a real community of customers is a key competitive advantage in this digital age.

High value of earned media

Brands need to invest in connecting with their customers, the community of people who purchase their products and actively contribute useful content on their brand. And they need to provide opportunities for them to connect with one another. It is the individuals in the community who create the earned media—user-generated content such as product reviews, blog posts, and likes—that drive social marketing. When you can successfully build a community around your dot-com or e-commerce site as well as long-lasting relationships with people, those communities will become one of your most valuable corporate assets.

Consumers are exposed to an overwhelming amount of information online, including paid media, owned content, and earned media. This makes it difficult to capture and hold the attention of those you want to reach. Earned media, created by the people who participate in your communities, is the most valuable, trusted, and influential form of marketing—and its value will continue to increase with the proliferation of digital content. According to Nielsen, eight-in-10 (83%) of global respondents say they trust earned media such as word-of-mouth information and recommendations from people in their social networks, with the same percentage saying they take action on these opinions at least some of the time.[1]

Earned media is the end result of a thriving community of users across all channels. Investing in building a community increasing their engagement boosts both earned media and advocacy.

Social communities as a revenue driving engine

Social media is far more valuable when it becomes a predictable indicator of future earnings and potential growth. While investment and results in social media are often cyclical as with any other marketing campaign, passionate community members are predictable in their social activity across channels. Frequently measured social media activity, like number of tweets, is meaningful within the context of those people. Thus the best social engagement strategies are holistic, unified, and focused on a community of people—those individuals that create the earned media that keeps the brand relevant and extends its reach to other consumers.

A best practice for starting your social engagement strategy is to allow social spectators—those who merely read and view your content—to become active participants who interact with content, make comments, and share with others in their network. Converting these participants into advocates can be achieved by providing them a platform through which to create valuable earned media for your brand. Forrester Research suggests that while these "mass influencers" make up only 16% of online consumers they account for 80% of the influence impressions about products and services.[2]

Lifetime revenue, both influenced and direct, increases when people raise their level of social connection to a brand. Customers who start out as social spectators and then become active social participants frequently end up purchasing from that brand both online and in-store.[3] When you can develop a customer base that is "fully engaged," according to Gallup's global customer engagement studies, they represent "an average of a 23% premium in terms of share of wallet, profitability, revenue, and relationship growth over the average customer."[4]

Building customer connection through branded communities

Customer communications are no longer one-directional, with brands broadcasting one way to prospects and customers—and the buying process isn't a neat funnel through only a single channel. Today's consumers actively engage in conversation throughout their buying lifecycle, and purchase in a nonlinear, multichannel, multidevice and social manner. With branded sites often being the first stop for buyers in the explore state of the process, and nearly half of prospective buyers visiting a brand's web page to gather relevant information that will help inform their purchase decision[5], marketers need to quickly engage customers with experiences that not only give them a reason to stay, but also to come back.

Building community and facilitating customer conversations within your branded property can play an important role in keeping visitors engaged during the window in which they are on a site. According to Forrester, websites that display the "latest trends, customer sentiment, and buyer profiles" are the most effective for driving exploration and many buyers will spend more time on web pages that have social content than those that don't.[6] Rather than having a potential customer searching social sites to gather the earned-media they find valuable, such as reviews, tutorials, or recommendations, an active community will provide this relevant, authentic content helping inform and influence their decisions all from within your branded property. And, as customers move between channels, a thriving community helps keep continuity and context with your brand by providing a place where individuals with similar interests know they can return to share knowledge and experiences.

Adobe Experience Manager Communities
Adobe Experience Manager Communities helps companies build their social engine through dedicated, branded communities that curate, encourage, and facilitate consumer engagement using forums, blogs, file sharing, calendars, activity feeds, and more.

Adobe Experience Manager Communities is designed for companies that are ready to integrate social engagement into their customer journey. These companies:

• Recognize the value a community plays in deepening brand engagement and building long-lasting relationships

• Are striving to create unique, innovative, and engaging social experiences

• Have outgrown tactical point solutions that aren't connected to their marketing and content systems

• Are committed to delivering relevant, consistent experiences across all channels

• Need to drive more conversions and grow revenue

Key capabilities of Adobe Experience Manager Communities

Administration	Site Wizard	Site Templates	Group Templates	Bulk Moderation	In-Context Moderation	Member Management	Responsive Design	Analytics
Members	Profiles	Scores	Badges	Activities	Notifications	Messages	Social Graph	Social Logins
Functions	Forums	Q&A	Blogs	Calendars	Files	NewsFeeds	Groups	Assignment	Catalog
Commons	Comments	Reviews	Ratings	Votes	Tags	Attachments	Search	Translations
Enablement	Resources Management	Learning Paths Management	SCORM Engine	Video Analytics	Progress Reporting	Assignments Reporting
Platform	ASRP/Cloud Storage	JSRP/JCR Storage	MSRP/Mongo Storage	User and Group Sync		

Create

Adobe Experience Manager Communities makes it fast and easy to create scalable, turnkey community sites for multiple audiences.

- Use site wizards to create any type of community quickly, easily, and without technical expertise.
- Drag-and-drop the functionality you need, such as activity streams, calendaring, file sharing, blogs, forums, and more.
- Built-in themes and templates ensure you're able to build sites that are consistent with your brand and unique.
- Allows for complete customization through support an for industry-standard theming framework.
- Easily update and edit images and text components while in preview mode.
- Quickly choose your settings to enable user access and moderation privileges, tagging, and site translation.
- Leverage a shared digital asset library and best-in-class content authoring to optimize engagement with customers on mobile or desktop.
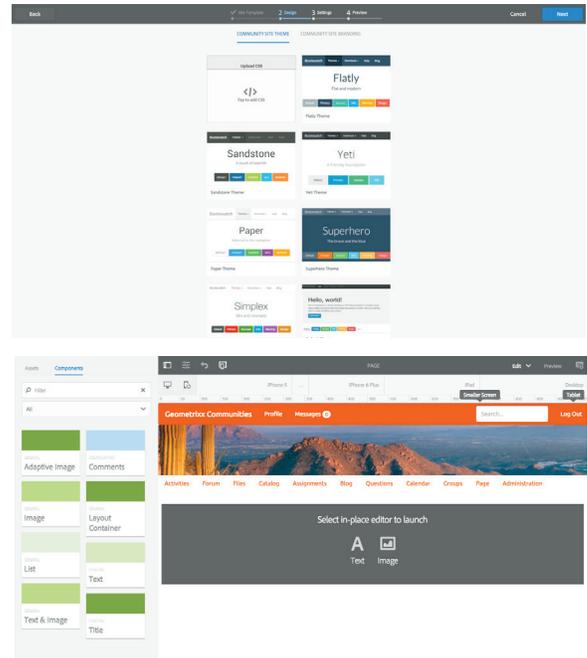
Pre-built themes and templates help you get started quickly.

Engage

Adobe Experience Manager Communities helps encourage community engagement and learning with tools to curate, moderate, and measure those interactions.

- Build public or private groups where customers can connect directly through 1-1 messaging and inboxes, and follow others and their content.
- Encourage community engagement using blogs, calendars, comments, reviews, ratings, forums, and Q&A. Optimize user-generated content for SEO and organic searches.
- Use bulk moderation tools to quickly act on community-generated content, including flagging, editing, deleting content, and banning users when necessary.
- Reward individuals for their contribution within your community and identify and promote subject-matter experts with tools for scoring and badging.
- Enable community learning and knowledge exchange with support for learning content. Track and measure learning progress, and promote social knowledge sharing to increase learning content engagement.
- Create catalogs to help community members quickly search and find learning resources.
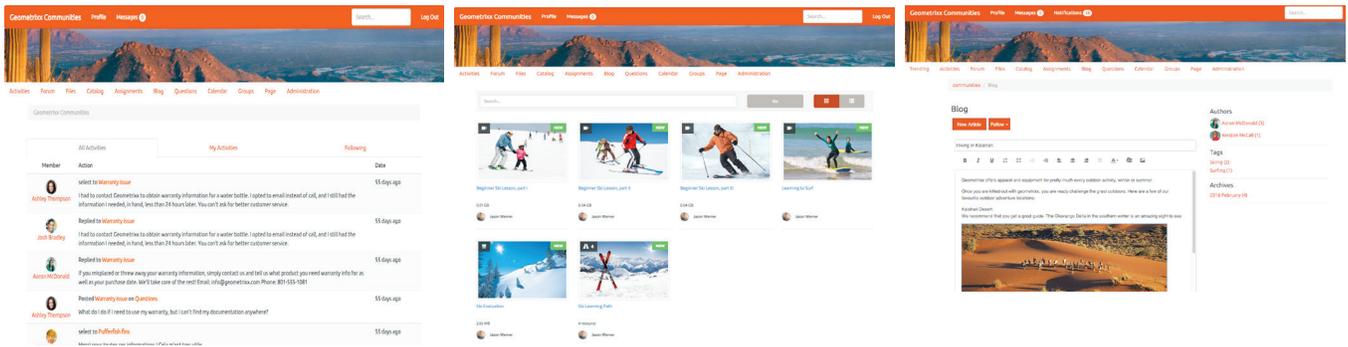
Activity streams help community members easily follow discussions.

Set your site up to enable community learning.

Provides easy-to-use blog authoring with rich text editing and scheduled publishing capabilities.

Supported environments

Server platforms

• Linux
• Microsoft Windows Server
• Oracle Solaris
• IBM AIX
• HP-UX

Adobe Experience Manager is optimized to run in a virtualized infrastructure, such as the Amazon Elastic Compute Cloud (Amazon EC2) and VMware vSphere.

Java runtime versions

• Java SE 7 (1.7)
• Java SE 8 (1.8)
• Java EE–compliant application servers

The Adobe Experience Manager solution comes packaged with an application server. Alternatively, it can be installed in the following:

• JBoss Application Server
• Oracle WebLogic Server
• IBM WebSphere Application Server
• Apache Tomcat

Client platforms

• Microsoft Windows
• OS X and iOS
• Linux

Browsers

• Internet Explorer 7 or later
• Mozilla Firefox
• Google Chrome
• Apple Safari

Recommended configurations are included with standard maintenance. Additional configurations are available on request.

Measure

Adobe Experience Manager Communities helps you track and analyze engagement levels within your community site helping you quickly turn that data into action by optimizing your site content.

• Measure the level of engagement across your community using site analytics.

• Quickly generate visually rich reports by user views, views over time, rating, user drop off rates, engagement by device, and more.

• Collect enrollment, pass/fail, and test score information for your learning resources.

• Use sophisticated analytics to identify advocates across your community and help them evangelize your brand.
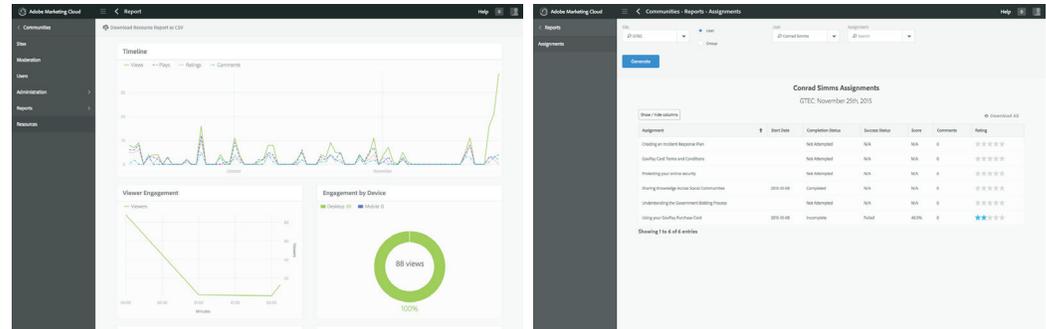
Quickly generate reports on community engagement.

Track progress on learning content.

Adobe Experience Manager

As part of the Adobe Experience Manager solution, Communities provides robust, yet easy-to-use site authoring capabilities, shared digital asset management for consistent experiences across all of your customers' touchpoints, responsive design to meet your audience wherever they are, and integration with Adobe Analytics to provide actionable insights across your communities.

For more information
www.adobe.com/go/aem

[1] The Nielsen Global Trust in Advertising Survey, Q1 2015 *http://www.nielsen.com/us/en/insights/news/2015/digital-formats-are-among-the-most-trusted-advertising-sources-despite-slow-growth.html*

[2] Forrester Research, Inc., analysts Josh Bernoff and Augie Ray quoted by Mashable, "The State of Online Word of Mouth Marketing [STATS]," April 2010, *http://mashable.com/2010/04/25/word-of-mouth-marketing-stats*

[3] Vision Critical, From Social to Sale, *https://www.visioncritical.com/resources/social2sale/*

[4] Gallup Customer Engagement Score (Gallup CES) *www.gallup.com/services/169331/customer-engagement.aspx*

[5] Forrester Research, Inc, The Forrester Wave™: Social Depth Platforms, Q2 2015, by Kim Celestre, June 22, 2015

[6] Ibid

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