



**Márcia Cristina
Alves de Araújo**

**Gestor de Comunidades Online: em contato com
pessoas**

Online Community Manager: in touch with people



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Relatório de estágio apresentado à Universidade de Aveiro para cumprimento dos requisitos necessários à obtenção do grau de Mestre em Gestão, realizada sob a orientação científica do Doutor António Garrizo Moreira, Professor Auxiliar do Departamento de Economia, Gestão e Engenharia Industrial da Universidade de Aveiro

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agradecimentos

Agradeço inicialmente a Deus, pela existência, pelo direito à razão e por saber tudo que ela pode proporcionar, ao direito de mudar a mim e ao mundo através dela.

Agradeço, principalmente, a meus grandes ídolos e motivadores, meus pais: Antonio Araújo e Maria Cleonice Araújo. São responsáveis pelo meu caráter, pelos principais ensinamentos, alicerce em cima do qual me construo. Ao meu irmão por me questionar sempre, à minha cunhada por me admirar e apoiar e a toda minha família, em especial aos que vivem em Portugal.

Ao Professor Dr. António Carrizo pelo apoio, conselhos, orientação e carinho não só para o trabalho mas durante todo o mestrado. Agradeço também à Sónia Fidalgo que, proativamente, resolveu os protocolos do estágio e à Profa. Silvana Bittencourt pela motivação.

Agradeço a todos na Toluna, em especial a Monika Nagyova e ao Romain Dufournier por acreditarem no meu potencial e a toda a equipe que fez de meus dias em Paris dos mais especiais: Sara, Anouk, Diana, DeB, Diego, Ying e Jamila. Eles me mostraram o valor da diferença e do respeito, cada um com sua cultura, agregaram muito na minha.

Agradeço aos amigos, muitos deles foram minha família durante esse tempo fora de casa e me deram muita energia e suporte emocional para esse trabalho especialmente Mariana, Ursula, Cintia, Karla e Manuela. Também aos longe de distância que nunca deixam de me inspirar. Finalmente, agradeço ao Thiago, companheiro que tem dividido comigo os sorrisos diários.

palavras-chave

Comunidade; Membros; Comunidades On-line; Gestão de Comunidades On-line; Gestor de Comunidades On-line.

resumo

A importante colaboração de diversas personalidades ligadas à área da História da Arquitectura, bem como o levantamento fotográfico realizado contribuem para o conhecimento e valorização de um saber tradicional. Nos últimos quinze anos, o crescimento da rede mundial de computadores conhecida como internet tem facilitado a rápida interação on-line de grupos de pessoas com interesses comuns em vários ambientes. Uma nova abordagem de comunicação é necessária e, neste contexto, um novo profissional surge: o Gestor de Comunidades on-line. O novo modo de comunicação não é um modismo, é sim um sinal de uma grande mudança. Para uma melhor compreensão do papel do Gestor de Comunidades On-line, este documento pretende mostrar como uma comunidade é construída, o que é uma comunidade e como ela pode ser gerenciada em um mundo virtual. O método científico aplicado para alcançar a meta foi a Observação Participante em onde o pesquisador realizou em um estágio em uma empresa on-line por seis meses e trabalhou como gestor da comunidade do Brasil e de Portugal participando ativamente dentro da comunidade real durante este tempo. Assim, a observação pode ser considerada como completa visto que o pesquisador tornou-se membro do grupo que foi estudado. A revisão da literatura foi baseada no conceito central de comunidade no sentido amplo. Posteriormente, foi um esforço para compreender como o conceito é transportado para o mundo virtual e como se encaixa no novo contexto. Como resultado, alguns casos foram apresentados mostrando como são os problemas reais enfrentados pelo Gestor de Comunidades On-line, como eles podem ser resolvidos e, finalmente, algumas recomendações para uma política de comunidades on-line.

keywords

Community; Membership; Online Communities; Online Community Management; Online Community Manager.

abstract

In the last fifteen years, the growth of the global computer network known as the internet has facilitated the rapid emergence of online interactions of dispersed groups of people with shared interests. A new communication approach is required and in this context a new professional comes up: the Online Community Manager. The new mode of communication is not a fad, but it is a sign of a big change. For better understanding the role of the community manager this document aims *to show how a community itself is build, what a community is and how can it be managed in virtual world*. The scientific method applied to achieve the goal was Participant Observation in which the researcher carried on an internship into an online company for six months and worked as a Community Manager for Brazil and Portugal participating actively inside a real community during this time. A complete Observation was done once the researcher became a member of the group that has been studied. The literature review was based on the central concept of community in the broad sense. Later, it was an effort to understand how the concept is transported to the virtual world and how it fits into the new context. As a result some cases were presented showing how are the real problems faced by the community manager, how they can be solved, and finally some recommendations for a Community Management policy.

CONTENTS

Introduction	01
Chapter ONE	05
Community management in practice	05
1. The Online Company - Toluna S.A	05
Company Description	07
Chronological line	08
Mission and Vision	09
Company objectives	09
Strategy, Competitors	09
Toluna Business Model	10
Stakeholders	11
2. The Community management at Toluna	12
Moderating the content	15
The 12 Commandments of Toluna moderation	16
Moderation rules - common cases	17
Chapter TWO	23
Background	23
1. Community (definition)	23
Community conceptualization	23
Membership.	26
2. Online Community	28
2.1. The Online members	30
Core members	29
Conversationalists	32
Informationalists	32
Hobbyist	32
Functionalists	32
Opportunists.	32
2.2. Online Community Management	33

2.3. Social Media and Online Communities	34
3. Community Manager (CM)	33
3.1 CM Profile	36
Technical and personal competences	39
Chapter THREE	45
Methodology	45
Chapter FOUR	49
Learning with the practice	49
Case A: Collect and use the feedback from community members	50
Problematic	50
Methodology	50
Points to consider.	53
Case B: Create an online environment in which members are willing and help one another.	54
Problematic	54
Methodology	54
Points to consider.	56
Case C: Showing the human side	56
Problematic	56
Methodology	57
Points to consider.	60
Case D: Find tools to the community	61
Problematic	61
Methodology	61
Points to consider.	62
Case E: Adapt to the Culture	66
Problematic	66
Methodology	68
Points to consider.	69
Chapter FIVE	73

Recommendation to implement a policy of Online Community Management	73
1. Communication	73
Set a tone	73
Provide information	73
Adapt to the culture	74
2. Membership Development	74
Find the main actors	74
Personal connection	75
Help members help each other	75
Collect and use the feedback	76
3. Fit the tools	76
Interaction service 2.0	76
Monitoring tools	76
Productivity watch	77
4. Moderation	77
Contents management	77
Contents creation	77
Contents Observation	78
5. Community Manager Profile	78
Personal Profile	78
Technical profile	79
Hide personal identity	79
The mandate for a Community Manager	80
 Concluding but not ending	 81
 Bibliography	 85
Webgis	89
CM Sources	91
Attachments	

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 01 – Toluna’s Homepage	05
Figure 02 – Polls and Opinion’s categories	06
Figure 03 – Opinion Topic	06
Figure 04 – Toluna Business Model	11
Figure 05 – Toluna’s Stakeholders	12
Figure 06 – Toluna’s encouragements	14
Figure 07 – Content Moderation Rules (for users)	17
Figure 08 – Example of Problematic members list	18
Figure 09 – Example of Problematic members: Adult post	20
Figure 10 – Example of Problematic members: Self promotion post	20
Figure 11 – Members asking each others for improvements	51
Figure 12 – Members complaining about the company inside the forum	52
Figure 13 – Members explaining each other the company’s rules	51
Figure 14 – Positive attitude for a kind support answer	56
Figure 15 – Positive attitude for a kind support answer II.	59
Figure 16 – Using Toluna own tools to get members’ feedback.	63
Figure 17 – Using Toluna own tools to get members’ feedback.	64
Figure 18 – Using Toluna own tools to get members’ feedback (Gender).	65
Figure 19 – Using Toluna own tools to get members’ feedback (age group).	65
Figure 20 – Using Toluna own tools to get members’ feedback (poll data).	66
Figure 21 – Bad translated poll.	69
Figure 22 – Bad translated poll and wrong results	70
Figure 23 – Fixing bad translation poll.	71

LIST OF TABLES

Table 01 – Toluna Communities Managers’ tasks	13
Table 02 – Moderation cases	15
Table 03 – Toluna’s Moderation Rules	16
Table 04 – online members’ types.	32
Table 05 – Blog post for Toluna’s Online Italian Members	38
Table 06 – CM Technical competences	41
Table 07 – CM Personal competences	42

LIST OF ATTACHMENTS

I – Internship papers

- Contract

- Recommendation letter

II – Toluna Matters

- Tutorial and Frequent asked questions

- Facebook fan page

INTRODUCTION

The world is talking about/through the internet, online Social Medias and networks. This is not essentially a new subject and online communities themselves have been around for decades, just in different forms. It is only now, with the rising star of Web 2.0, that they are getting particular attention that those social systems is are a core part of the Internet. Web 2.0 is not a necessary term because the very existence of the internet was based on the ability to communicate, and collaborate with others. However, what has changed is the shift from the idea of using the Web just to publish content, to one more focused on collaboration and communities. People effectively participating, sharing, exchanging experiences and information.

Hence, there is a lot of news around what new Web 2.0 applications and models software companies are building. However, long after the software is built, the number of sites actually running them will probably vastly outnumber them. Consider when the web was built and the number of companies focused on building different kinds of browsers and applications. Some of them are still here and others gone, but the actual number of organizations deploying web sites far outnumbers those who created them. Similarly, there will be a large number of sites that deploy Web 2.0, social networks and online communities. Each of them should have some representative such as a community manager.

This new communications environment creates both large risks and opportunities because of how fast information spreads and because of the difficulty in directing or enforcing how individuals – particularly those without other vested interests for many organizations – communicate. Community management can be an approach that assumes influence but not control while managing risk and promoting productive behaviors. In order to gain competitive advantage in this new environment they organizations will have to excel at community management and many people now understand this, (community-roundtable.com, 2011).

But what is a community manager? Which functions they can handle into this scenario of people interacting all the time in a virtual world where the impacts come directly to the real world and real life. The new mode of communication is not a fad, but it is a sign of a big change in the relationship between the people either as a company, a customer, a market or a society.

For better understanding the role of a community manager this document aims to **show how a community itself is build, what a community is and how can it be managed in a virtual world.**

To achieve the goal an analysis of the community term will be done as a background, the real meaning of the world community and the application of the concept in the “new” online/virtual line. A community is basically a social group in which the members are **together** and **sharing** common interests. It is going to be easier to understand the whole purpose of the study after the reading of the main concept. After that it will be explained how a community becomes online, who the community manager is and how she/he is supposed to follow and manage those virtual groups of people.

The researcher could bring out this topic because she worked during six months as a community manager at Toluna S.A.¹ to fulfill the internship requirements of the master in Management, from Aveiro University.

Toluna has its headquarters in France. It is an online market research panel and survey technology company that offers products such as surveys, polls and product testing studies to its customers based on its worldwide panel with over 4 million active members or panelists that participate on the surveys in more than 34 countries (Toluna S.A.S., 2010).

¹ For simplicity reasons Toluna S.A. is going to be referred as Toluna.

The study is organized in five chapters: Chapter ONE briefly describes Toluna: what the company is, their businesses, their history, main objectives, strategies and the way they manage their online community of people in 34 different countries. In this chapter the objective is to make clear why the researcher chose this company for the study – a company whose the activities are mainly online – and why the Community Manager (CM) job is determinant for the core business.

The second big chapter addresses the literature review, whose main concept revolves around virtual community. The research was done around the concepts adjacent to the group of people together and sharing common interests. Membership, online community, online members, online community management and community manager are the topics researched based on articles published very recently.

The methodology comes after the background with research features as a qualitative study with the participant observation as study method once the researcher collected the information within the group she was involved in and participating directly in the company (Toluna S.A) and the online community (Portuguese Language Community – Brazil and Portugal). The research is exploratory in nature because *it aims to provide greater familiarity with the problem, in order to make it more explicit* Gil (2008).

The community management in practice is in the fourth chapter and brings the description of the researcher experience as a Community Manager during six months at Toluna. In this chapter the goal is to show through eight real cases some important aspects of the community manager job to make the reader understand how some small details can strongly influence a community and can change the course of the whole organization.

Finally, the fifth chapter with the concluding remarks to summarize the most important achievements on this investigation. Furthermore, directions for future researches will be also presented.

Community Management in Practice

1. The Online Company - Toluna S.A.

Toluna is an online market research panel and survey technology company that offers products such as surveys, polls and product test studies to its customers which are done by its worldwide panel with over 4 million active members (or panelists) that participate in the surveys in more than 34 countries ("Toluna Group Presentation," 2010). The whole business is based on the activity of the panelists or members of the company. They answer the online surveys online requested by the clients therefore the members are fundamental to the company. Therefore, effectively communicating with them becomes critical for the success of the company.

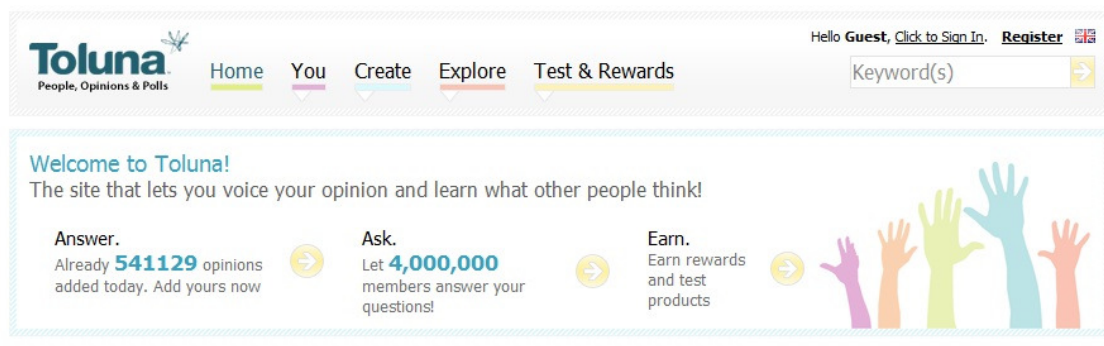


Figure 1 – Toluna's Homepage

source: <http://uk.toluna.com/>

People can subscribe on the website (www.toluna.com) and participate in the panel as well as in the community organized by country. In the panel, Toluna sends surveys to the panelists, mostly by e-mail, and collects their opinions. These opinions will help Toluna's clients to make decisions about the future products and services developed by companies for each of the markets researched. In the

community, members can discourse, similar to in a forum, on different topics divided by categories of interest - Food, Cinema, Business, Fashion, health and others. In this way the groups of interests can meet and build their network, the members meet in the community and then they can interact between each other using the tools provided by Toluna (see figure 1).

Categories

Choose a category or sub-category to view related polls and opinions

* Click on the arrows next to each category to view its subcategories

Arts & Culture ▾	Beauty & Cosmetics ▾	Business ▾	Cars & Motors ▾
Computing & Internet ▾	Education ▾	Environment ▾	Fashion ▾
Films & Cinema ▾	Food ▾	Gadgets ▾	Health ▾
Home & Garden ▾	Literature ▾	Music ▾	News & Politics ▾
Other ▾	Science ▾	Society & Culture ▾	Sports ▾
Television ▾	Travel ▾		

Country and language setting: United Kingdom

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Figure 2 – Polls and Opinion’s categories

Source: <http://uk.toluna.com/categorylist>.

how do you like to get your news? internet, paper or tv?
267 opinions in 266 threads, created by on 25/02/2011

i like to look at the bbc website or the local newspapers website. i hardley buy a newspaper these days. how do you get your news?

Opinions Agree? Yes(48) No(5)

Write your opinion here!

Opinion by Posted on 10/06/2011
Both, internet and newspapers. I think the information in the newspapers is more systematized
Agree? Yes(0) No(0)

Topic's Author

Member Since: 08/02/2009
Created **4 polls** and **13 topics**
Expert Member
Rated 4.7 by 189 people
[View profile](#)

Share this topic

Link to this topic
 Embed on blog/website

Publish on:

Facebook
 MySpace!
 Twitter
 Digg
 Email this opinion topic

If this opinion offends you, click here to report it

Figure 3 – Opinion Topic

Source <http://bit.ly/mvePnN>

Toluna's online community works as a kind of social media where people have their own profile, interact and ask for each other's opinion through the polls and topics (figure 3). The community members may be friends or not but once they get in touch they develop a relationship that motivates them to be in the forums creating content and helping their friends in the community.

Company Description

Toluna's headquarters are in Paris, France, its main country of operations. However, Toluna as a holding is listed on the AIM market of the London Stock Exchange. The company is present in 34 countries with over 4 million panel members with offices in Frankfurt, Munich, London, Timisoara, Amsterdam, Wilton, Los Angeles, New York, Seattle, Dallas, Toronto, Andover, Tokyo, Haifa, Gurgaon and Sydney. The main activities at the Paris office include sales, research and development, panel management and IT functions (*Toluna Annual Report, 2009*).

Toluna operates in: USA, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, Malaysia, Tunisia, China (Singapore and Hong Kong separately), Turkey, Russia, Netherlands, Belgium, United Kingdom, Ireland, France, Canada, Switzerland, Peru, Spain, Argentina, Mexico, Italy, Japan, Brazil, Portugal, India, Chile, Sweden, Norway, Finland, Czech Republic, Greece, Poland, Austria, South Korea and Denmark. (Toluna, 2011)

Toluna's first business model was the service of sending out product tests² to the members of the web site and afterwards collecting their feedback and opinions about the product. It was founded in May 2000 by Frederic-Charles Petit (current CEO of the company).

² Toluna Product Tests – important step for companies who are interested in testing their new products. They give the products and the company sends them out to the members. Later on the members show their feedback on Toluna's website who prepares statistics for the products holders.

Toluna has managed to develop an original community and social approach to its panels. With the technology based on web 2.0, Toluna created the world's first *social voting community*. This new approach allows the company to increase the engagement and level of participation of its members, being able to offer reliable data to its customers in a B2B business model (*Toluna Annual Report, 2009*).

Chronological line:

2000 – Toluna was founded in May by Frederic-Charles Petit

2002 – Toluna started offering a new kind of service related to online panels, with 100.000 people in France.

2004 – Toluna decided it was time to go international and then expanded into new markets abroad

2005 – The company managed to offer shares and to be listed on the AIM market of the London Stock Exchange. This helped to raise 6 million Euros used to finance the upcoming international expansion. Later that year, the first office outside France is opened in London.

2006 – There are already more than 1.000.000 members in Toluna in all Europe (*Toluna Annual Report, 2009*).

2007 – Panel members up from 1.3 million to 1.8 million, successful launch of our new "Panel Portal" software as a service solution and creation of first web 2.0 panel community.

2008 – Toluna named the fastest growing company in France, the first office in America is established in New York and significant progress in our community strategy; Toluna.com now deployed in the UK, France, Germany and Spain

2009 – The company acquires one of its main competitors, Greenfield/Ciao surveys, owned by the multinational Microsoft. This acquisition improved the market position of the company in the USA, Canada and Asia Pacific (*Toluna Annual Report, 2009*).

2010 – Celebration of Toluna's 10 years anniversary. Toluna assembles global thought leaders to discuss Future of market research – company hosts "The future is now" summit in Paris.

2011 – Acquisition by ITWP, a newly incorporated company formed by Verlinvest for the purpose of implementing the acquisition and with the financial support of Verlinvest, a significant shareholder in Toluna. Leading online panel community pioneer brings dramatic improvements in reliability, depth, targeting and speed to do-it-yourself surveys

Mission and Vision

The main vision of Toluna is to “democratize market research, developing tools and means to make market research accessible and cost efficient for everybody.” Toluna aims to satisfy its clients’ current information needs by anticipating market trends. The area of development becomes then a key area to engage with people rapidly and efficiently. Toluna strives to offer its clients real time access to people to collect from one to hundreds of questions answered by anyone, from anywhere at any time(*Toluna Corporate Presentation, 2009*).

Company objectives

Toluna has defined its key performance indicators in the annual report 2009, financial key indicators as revenue, underlying profit before tax, underlying basic earnings per share and cash generation from operations. Non-financial key performance indicators are the number of panelists, geographic distribution of panel, number of clients, client satisfaction levels and level of repetition of a business with its clients (Toluna S.A.S., 2009).

Strategy

The objectives should be reached based on the combination of organic and acquisitive growth. On a regional level, the key strategic focus is on the US market, Asia and Eastern Europe, which are regions where Toluna has not been particularly strong. For this last region the offices in India and Romania will play a

key role. Furthermore, the company is planning to strengthen the platform of services and technology. To keep client satisfaction levels high, client services are offered locally and 24/7 (Toluna S.A.S., 2009).

Competitors

The competitors are selected based on their international actions. The company defines the following three as its biggest global competitors:

- Research Now: 37 online panels in Europe, North and South-America, Asia and Australia. Operations in 20 different offices worldwide (Research Now Main Site, 2010).
- SSI Survey Sampling International: 5 million members in 54 countries. It consists of 27 panel communities in different countries with 17 offices in Europe, the United States, South America, Australia and Asia (SSI Main Site, 2010).
- Lightspeed: Panels in 24 countries in North America, Europe and Asia Pacific. Lightspeed belongs to the communication group WPP and has 18 offices. The panel consists of 3.5 million panelists worldwide (Lightspeed Corporate Site, 2010).

Toluna Business Model

The company's business model is relatively new and does not follow the typical provider-company-customer chain. In the case of Toluna, an additional factor is added. This additional factor is the panelist or members of the website. The functioning of the company is best described (see figure 1)

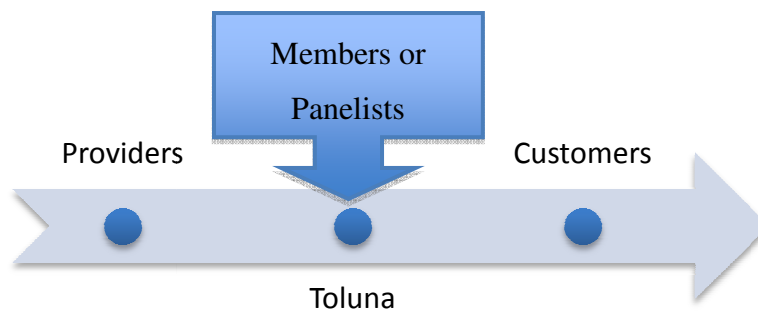


Figure 4 – Toluna Business Model

Source: by the author.

The customers hire Toluna to run their surveys or to send test products to members or panelists to receive market feedback from them. In that way the service offered by Toluna is not only dependent on the company and the providers of the company but also dependent on the company's panelists. In a certain way, the members can be "providers" to the company in the sense that they provide the necessary opinions and feedback for the customers, but also they fit the "customer" profile of the company as they receive the whole web service.

Stakeholders

The main stakeholders and their interests are the following:

- Toluna's Employees – They care for their jobs and salary;
- Toluna's Customers of – They are the people who buy Toluna's products and services, they can drive the company way and ask for new solutions;
- Toluna's Members (Panellists) – They get rewarded in a fair way for their participation in surveys and in product tests and care about quality, opposite of the Clients.
- Toluna's Other providers – They want to get more orders from Toluna and be paid on time. Toluna wants to avoid replacement of providers.

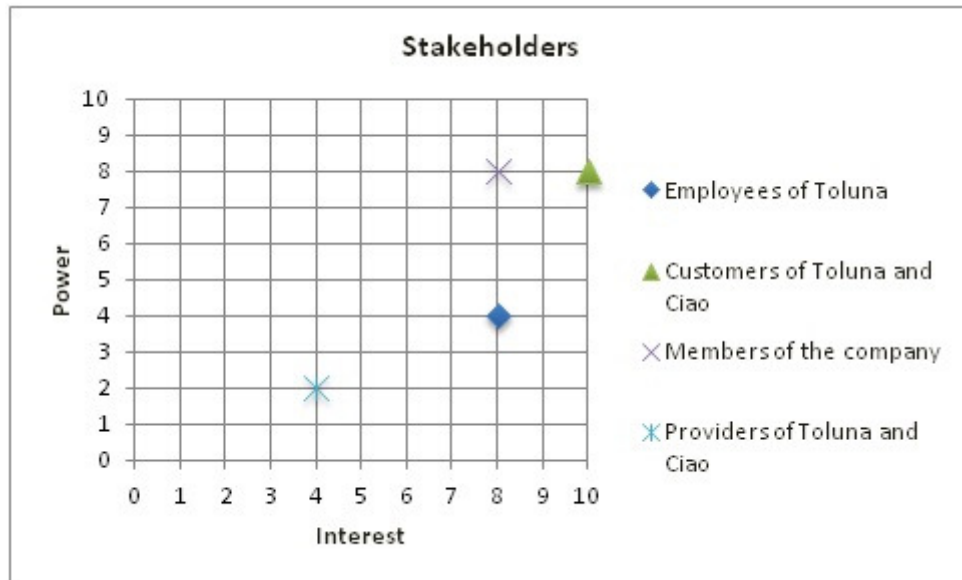


Figure 5 – Toluna's Stakeholders

Source: by the author

First, the stakeholders with high power and high interest should be engaged closely and influenced actively (right top square). Second, the stakeholders with low interest and high power should be kept satisfied. Third place, the stakeholders with low power and high interest should be kept informed (right bottom square). Finally, the stakeholders with low power and low interest should only be monitored (left bottom square).

2. The Community Management at Toluna

The Community Managers (CMs) at Toluna are basically the support staff. They need to be able to deal with the members of the specific countries panel. There are some general rules and tasks powered by the company as moderation of the Community Websites (separated by country): editing and creating of content; resolving technical and community issues on the website; Member Support – answering members' questions and solving the problems members were experiencing. In completing this task be in touch with various departments; Translations: translations for our Websites as well as various translation requests (See table 1).

Moderation	Communication	Customer & Internal service
Moderate the sites – Enforce Community guidelines	Update Blog regularly Create quarterly newsletter	Translations Maintain style New UI (user interfaces) messages
Monitor activity & react	Communicate & Update members	Customer Service related to community management
Identify users or malicious users	Define areas for improvement - Adjusting content to local needs	Other Marketing activities Special Campaigns

Table 1 – Toluna Communities Managers' tasks.

Source: Toluna's CM Manual

Toluna's CMs have to post quality content on the website itself (community forum) in an attempt to encourage members to do the same, they have also to create and edit content on Facebook or on the applicable social media according the company's social media strategy. The CMs have a Super User³ account which they can use to post the content as a normal member, pretending to be an ordinary user. In fact, the CMs might behave as a member, the difference is that they know the tools and they can manage all the content. Most of the time Toluna's CM makes contact with Power Users⁴ to ask for help in the moderation, together they can find out problems on the site and report to the project managers and technical teams of Toluna.

Thus, the content management is one of the most important tasks of the CMs on this company. They might create daily polls or opinions topic – pick current/interesting issues to discuss and try always to improve the quality: i.e. including pictures or videos. They can Vote up or down the accounts and polls with

³ User as a non-Toluna member must to create interesting content provide inside tips for members use public messages, follow members to gain support and popularity. Engage in content

⁴ The **Power User** is someone who is very active inside the community and gets some privileges as a member to help the community management.

editors tool⁵ making other members know about that accounts and pools. The CMs participate in the community topics trying to drive the content. Sometimes they make the topics more popular using social media (mostly Facebook) via public messages. All positive content and positive members must be encouraged, including positive tips on how to continue improving e.g. “keep up the good work” or “try adding a video next time!”, as shown in figure 6.

Toluna provides Community Managers with a manual where they can find solutions for the common community problems according to the company strategies. For the community forums moderation, Toluna make the rules as clear as possible to the community managers. In this way they can go and set the content according to that rules (table 03). This makes the community manager role easier because they know what action to take.

However, the community rules are not enough for the different cases that the CMs have to experience. The community is made of people, a assorted group of people, which is fundamental for the site, a market research company which is interested in different opinions from as many diverse people as possible.

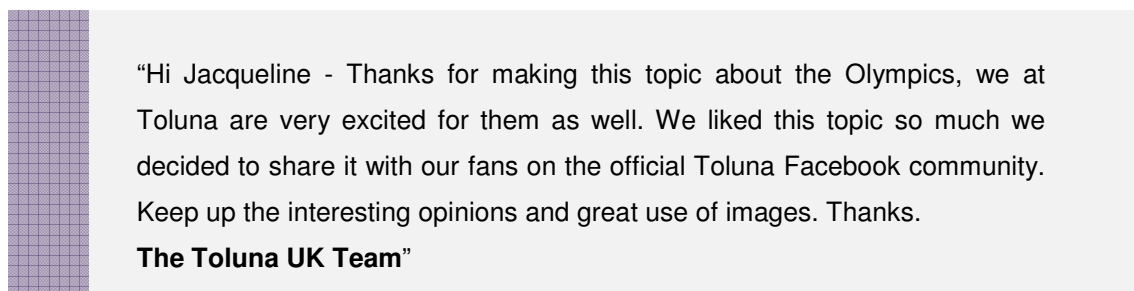


Figure 6 – Toluna’s encouragements

Source: Toluna.com

⁵ Helpful tools: Google Trends (but US specific, relevant to UK), Twitscoop (twitter trends), Local Newspapers, News feed.

Moderating the content

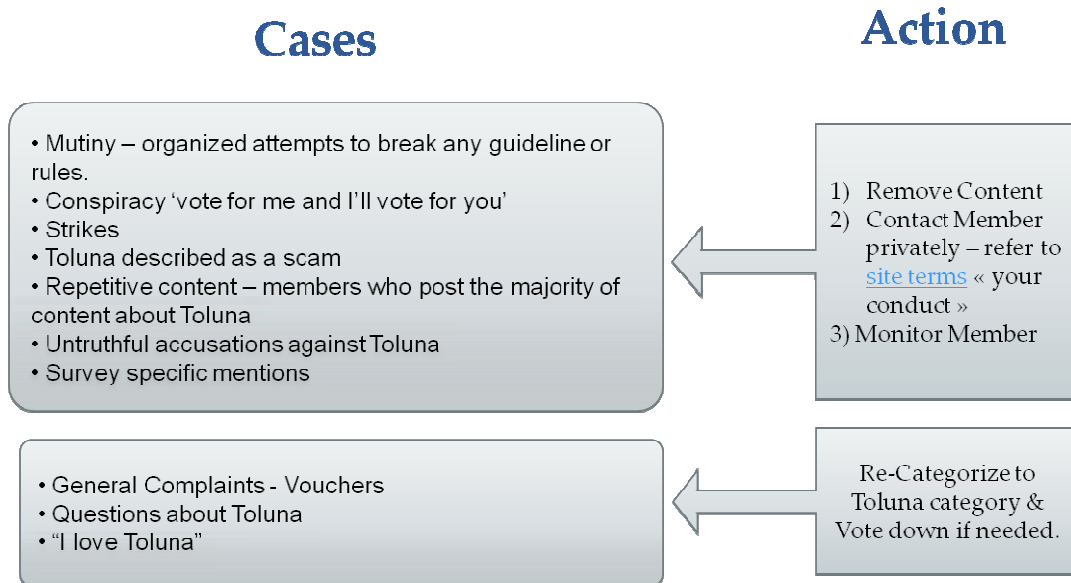


Table 2 – Moderation cases
(Source – Toluna's CM Manual)

From the members' side of things, the rules have to be very clear: they must know how far they can go. On Toluna's website⁶ the members can find a tutorial explaining all the necessary processes, including the moderation rules (figure 07). The rules must ensure that members content is not subject to detection by the site moderators (communities' managers). In a quite simple way, the company tries to show what must not to be present in the community' discussions. As previously mentioned, the community is open and a large number of issues are posed by different types of people. The content must very carefully watched and controlled.

⁶ <http://uk.toluna.com/tour/Site/index.aspx>

The 12 Commandments of Toluna moderation

- 1) **Any violation of our T&C:** Any abusive / vulgar / racist content should be removed immediately.
- 2) **Duplicates:** remove the poll with fewer votes / topic with fewer opinions
- 3) **Junk content:** Any poll or topic that has no “real value”- silly questions, gibberish etc.
- 4) **Adult content:** Any poll or content of an adult nature which has not been categorized under “Society and culture” and one of the 18+ sub-categories should be automatically deleted.
- 5) **Categories:** remove content that has been badly categorized. Use your judgment and try to be flexible; pay more attention to the category than the sub-category. Apply this rule mainly when the category selected clearly does not match the content; for example, a poll about films categorized as “Cars & Motors”.
- 6) **Self promotion / advertisements:** Any promotional content or links to ecommerce sites etc. should be removed.
- 7) **“Conspiracies”:** Any “vote for me and I’ll vote for you” polls and topics should be deleted
- 8) **Wrong language content:** Polls / topics written in one language but marked as another should be automatically deleted.
- 9) **Upper case use:** Content created entirely in upper case letters should be removed.
- 10) **Spelling mistakes:** Use your judgments. If you feel the spelling is unusually bad to the point that the poll / topic is unclear, remove it.
- 11) **Repetitive content:** This is a culture specific issue. Each culture has certain themes that are repeated endlessly; some of these themes are seasonal (holiday related content for example) and some run year round. Unless a poll or topic dealing with these themes has an exceptionally high response rate, or unless it is an original take on a redundant subject, the content should be removed.
- 12) **References to Toluna:** As a rule, references to Toluna should be left on the site, with the following exceptions:
 - Repetitive references: see item #11
 - Offensive references, such as “Toluna is a scam”
 - Personal support requests: these should be deleted but in this case the member must be contacted for follow up

Table 03 – Toluna’s Moderation Rules
(Source – Toluna’s CM Manual)

Toluna
People, Opinions & Polls

1. What is Toluna?
2. The Social Rewards points system
3. **Creating content**
4. Adding video and pictures to your content
5. Polls
6. Opinion Topics and Opinions
7. The Toluna widgets
8. Surveys
9. Interacting with your fellow Toluna members
10. Personal options and settings

- 3.1 Choosing between a poll and an opinion topic
- 3.2 General tips
- 3.3 Creating a poll or an opinion topic
- 3.4 Viewing content you've created
- 3.5 Browsing content on the site
- 3.6 **Content moderation**
- 3.7 Reporting abusive content

Content moderation

Following these simple rules will ensure your content is not subject to deletion by the Toluna site moderators:

- Please be sure to read article 6 of Toluna's [Terms & Conditions](#). You will find a detailed explanation of the types of content prohibited on Toluna.
- Polls, topics and opinions written entirely in upper case characters are subject to deletion.
- Polls and topics that were not properly categorized may be subject to deletion.
- Polls and topics written in one language but marked as another, as well as opinions written in the wrong language (for example, a Spanish opinion on an English topic) are subject to deletion.
- Self promotion / advertisements: promotional content and links to e-commerce sites are subject to deletion.

[« Back](#) | [Next »](#)

Figure 07 – Content Moderation Rules (for users)

Source: toluna.com

Moderation rules - common cases

In the daily life of a CM on Toluna's website, it is common to find some cases where the rules are not adhered to. For those cases the company provides in a manual the right actions to take. The bad content must be always removed or managed by the Communities managers. Hereinafter follow some examples and actions proposed by the company.

a) Abuse

Abuse is considered as anything malicious, or often unfair or improper to gain benefit.

Common cases for Toluna's Community

- Bullying – Targeting members;
- Organized and disruptive behavior;
- Members supporting disruptive behavior;
- Swearing;

Proposed Action by Toluna

- Identify key members involved;
- Remove content and warn members via private email.
- Retain a list (in excel) of abusive, difficult and problematic members.
- The same list will also contain quality members.

	A	B	C	D	E
1	Username	Community	Reason	Email	
2	tashatam	UK	organises other members against Toluna, provokes some members	tashatam@hotmail.com	

Figure 08 – Example of Problematic members list

Source: by the author

b) Presentation and Spelling

This includes, bad presentation or spelling, polls and topics written in one language but marked as another, content created entirely in upper case letters, content which does not have a purpose, or is unclear or nonsense, any spelling, punctuation or grammatical mistakes.

Common cases for Toluna's Community

- CAPITAL LETTERS;
- Punctuation (!!??);
- Text speak – (hi how r u);
- Unclear, junk⁷ and nonsense.

Proposed Action by Toluna

If content is badly presented but high quality or interesting, then vote down topic. With new tools, edit content and inform members – do not edit for repeated offenders of grammar – CM's are not ghostwriters. Let members know about changes so they learn over time. If your community has a general high standard you may choose to remove this content. In the case where the content is junk or nonsense, remove it and inform member of the standards of Toluna.

⁷ Any poll or topic that has no "real value"

c) Opinions and Polls

The content itself, e.g. all the topics discussed. Here, the CMs must judge the quality of the topic or poll, evaluate what should be promoted or not. Good content has to be encouraged and the members have to know that someone is actually reading and caring about the topics.

Common cases for Toluna's Community

- Interesting Facts
- Jokes
- Poems
- Status style updates «wow I'm VIP» or «I'm going to bed»

Proposed Action by Toluna

Interesting facts can be modified to fit the format of the site – provide tips to ask questions and give opinions. For jokes, poems and status update: Remove Content and suggest the member uses the public messages (wall). If you choose, you can also deter this behavior by flagging the content as low quality = No social rewards points.

d) Adult content

Any content deemed inappropriate for minors. The minimum age to join the Toluna is 16 years. Therefore, any adult content is inappropriate in the community. Although people in the group discussion are adults such content is considered inappropriate for the community. Often the adult is associated with sexual topics when members publish inappropriate photos, links and videos.

Common cases for Toluna's Community

- Interesting content with Adult themes
- Poor/Repetitive Adult Content

- Adult Pictures

Proposed Action by Toluna

- Make sure content is in the correct category;
- Send reminder to member to assign categories with care;
- Remove content with editors' tool;
- Check other content of the member to check for malicious users and notify the member.

For the picture case, change it by logging in to members account. Set the image to the default and inform the member of the change via email.



Figure 09 – Example of Problematic members: adult post.

Source: toluna.com

e) Promotion and SPAM

Any promotional content or links to e-commerce sites, self promotion, other companies' promotional, external promotion content.

Common case for Toluna's Community

- Member advertises external sites

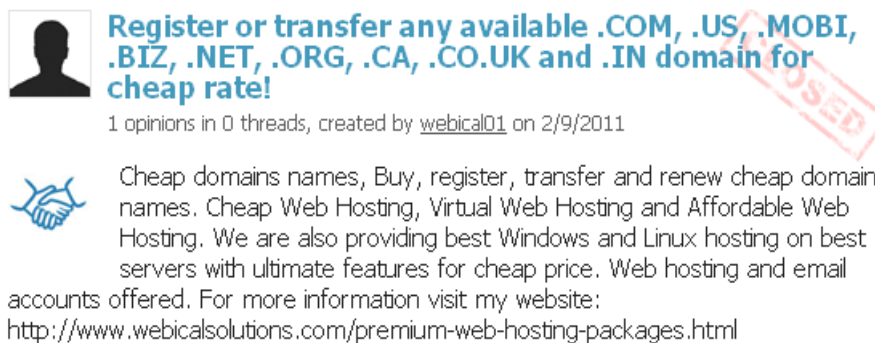


Figure 10 – Example of Problematic members: self promotion post.

Source: toluna.com

Proposed Action by Toluna

Remove Content with Editors Tool; Check the members other polls/topics to assess the value of the member and decide on further action and Warning if member is genuine but unaware of the rules.

Background

1. Community (definition)

To understand all the scenarios that will be presented from now on, an analysis of the meaning of “community” is necessary. What is a community? How was it born? And how is it developed? The concept includes two significant elements: sense of community and social networks. The networks are crucial to organize the community, but in order to become a community certain qualities, in terms of solidarity or community spirit, are also needed. The human part is important, the feeling of belonging and also common interests between the members (Ferlander, 2003).

Gusfield (1975) distinguished the two major uses of the term community. The first is the territorial and geographical notion of community (neighborhood, town and city), which is questionable when just physical space does not build the community. The author noted that the two usages are not mutually exclusive, the second is “relational,” concerned with “quality of character of human relationship, without reference to location”. This goes against Durheims’ (1964) observation, who defends modern society develops community around interests and skills more than around locality (McMillan, 1986).

Community is a commonly used term, but also one of the vaguest within the social sciences. It has been defined in many ways. A community is basically, *a social group in which the members are **together** and **sharing** common interests* (McMillan 1986, p. 08). This “together” was before understood as a physical place, in the geographic meaning. After the internet, the “together” gained new shapes and the community process got new concepts and definitions.

The word "community" comes from the old French *communité* which is derived from the Latin *communitas* (*cum*, "with/together" + *munus*, "gift"), a broad term for fellowship or organized society⁸. In the business dictionary⁹ community is a: *Self-organized network of people with common agenda, cause, or interest, who collaborate by sharing ideas, information, and other resources.*

The "self-organized network" must be carefully analyzed, as network¹⁰ is an important word in the process of understanding what a community is and later on in defining how the community can be well-connected in an "online or virtual" place.

For Gilchrist (2009, p. 101) "*Networking was seen as a core process of community development, and also a key purpose.*" This author advocates a new model of community development that promotes networking as a skilled and strategic intervention and provides recommendations for good networking practice.

"Community development happens through networking... the process of community development work is a process of developing relations with people and encouraging people to build relationships with each other which will also have the benefit of educating people about the way in which they can best live together and to how they can best relate to sources of resources and power... so the way you do community development work is through this kind of multi-directional process of relationship building which is networking... it's essential. You couldn't do it without networking" (Gilchrist, 2009, p. 101).

In affirming that a community is a self-organized network it is in itself a complete definition, a community is considered as a group of people or organizations, that are connected or that work together. So if the "together" means inside a network,

⁸ OED Online. July 2009. Oxford University Press. <http://oed.com/>

⁹ <http://www.businessdictionary.com/definition/community.html>

¹⁰ Network is a famous word and has different meanings. In this case is important to clarify that network means a group of people, organizations etc that are **connected** or that work together.

then it is more important than the geographic aspect that determined the community definition before internet.

The community cannot depend only on the physical meaning, but what it is also important is which group of people is being analyzed. It could be formed in different ways. The group can share interests in the same place (local communities) or not (community of interest). However this group of people is never homogeneous; a mix can be found. Sometimes they happen to be sharing the same physical place, sometimes not. It is common to find the emphasis on locality in discussions of the traditional communities. Once the virtual place was created, the discussions turned to interests, because the internet gives freedom, consequently the possibility for the local communities also organize itself in the virtual place, turning the community in a complex definition.

Furthermore, a community is a complex system of inter-relationships woven across social difference, diverse histories and cultures, and determined in the present by political and social trends. The process of community development is based on confidence, critical consciousness and collectivity. Consciousness is the link between the two. Confidence grows as people begin to question their reality, and act together for change. Collective action grows in strength as individuals form alliances that have the potential to become social movements (Ledwith, Campling & Workers, 2005)

Since the local aspect does not determine the community by itself, this aspect will not be considered here, because the community does not rely upon conceptualizations of physical space, but rather, on social space. Hereupon it can be argued that communities are essentially based on the shared interests and the internet provides the tools for the common groups meet and interact.

A focus on the interests requires a consideration of human factors. The idea of a community continues its hold on private sentiments and public imagination. It means a valued dimension of society and has become a preferred means of

addressing policy problems, locally, nationally and even globally. Communities take many forms and operate across various areas and levels (Gilchrist, 2009):

- Communities of identity (to share cultural activities and experiences);
- Communities of interest or passion (to pursue or resist shared fates);
- Communities of purpose (to achieve a common goal);
- Communities of practice (to exchange experience and learning);
- Communities of inquiry (to provide mutual aid and encouragement);
- Communities of circumstance (to deal with temporary, sometimes unplanned, situations).

In addition, McMillan (1986) argues that a sense of community must be developed. He describes elements that work together to produce the experience of being part of a group and how the “sense” of community born and grows. The author defends that to understand the community four elements need to be understood such as membership, influence, integration and fulfillment of needs and shared emotional connection as follow:

Membership is being a part of something, the feeling of belonging or sharing a sense of personal relations. When a person chooses to be a member, chooses to belong or not, it brings an emotional feeling, a responsibility.

“The sense of belonging and identification involves the feeling, belief, and expectation that one fits in the group and has a place there, a feeling of acceptance by the group, and a willingness to sacrifice for the group. The role of identification must be emphasized here. It may be represented in the reciprocal statements “It is my group” and “I am part of the group” ” (D. W. Mcmillan, 1986, p. 10).

McMillan (1986, p. 11) summarizes membership in five attributes: boundaries, emotional safety, a sense of belonging and identification, personal investment, and a common symbol system. *“These attributes work together and contribute to a sense of who is part of the community and who is not”.*

Influence is a sense of mattering, of making a difference to a group and of the group mattering to its members. People are more attracted to a community in which they feel that they are influential. They feel that they are important for someone or that they are doing something that is going to change the course (McMillan, 1986)

Integration and fulfillment of needs is the feeling that members will need to be met by the resources received through their membership in the group. That is why they look to go into the community, they try to find people who share their thoughts, people that will help them to solve their problems and gaps (McMillan, 1986).

Shared emotional connection *“is the commitment and belief that members have shared and will share history, common places, and time together and similar experiences,”* (McMillan, 1986, p. 9).

Those elements will work together to produce the experience of a sense of community. The community will not survive without those feelings, the psychological side of the people. *“Sense of community is a feeling that members have of belonging, a feeling that members matter to one another and to the group, and a shared faith that members’ needs will be met through their commitment to be together”* (McMillan, 1986, p. 9). A sense of community, at the same time, leads to increased interaction between people and facilitates the creation of social networks.

Hence, the definition of community involves two main elements: social networks and a sense of community, which are created through the act of communication¹¹. A community is organized and structured into complex networks of relationships. In order to become a community certain qualities and content within the

¹¹ 'Community' and 'communication' stem from the same Latin root word, *communis*, which means common or togetherness.

relationships, in terms of solidarity or a sense of community, are also needed. People get to know each other through participating in social networks, which leads to a broader sense of self. This in turn constitutes a community identity, solidarity and belonging (Ferlander, 2003).

2. Online Community

The internet has facilitated the rapid emergence of online interactions of dispersed groups of people with shared interests (Wilson & Peterson, 2002). The concept of community no longer has geographical limitations, as people can now virtually gather in an online community and share common interests regardless of physical location. The idea that a community is defined by face-to-face interaction was challenged. So it is important to thoroughly understand the community definition itself and then transport and reconstruct it into the virtual world with the new scenarios.

In fact, the definition for Virtual or Online Community is very close to the simple community one. The business dictionary¹² says that community is a: *“Self-organized network of people with common agenda, cause, or interest, who collaborate by sharing ideas, information, and other resources.”* This can also be transported to the online community. It will have the same result, considering that the connections between people are based on values of trust, mutuality, reciprocity and dignity, and which lead to conviviality, compassion and cooperation.

Community interactions occur wherever people are connected over computer networks – whether these people are buying, selling, collaborating or merely seeking diversion. Online communities, are defined as groups of people who engage in many interactions online, wherever these people with common interests are able to interact (Williams & Cothrel, 2000). One essential difference between virtual and traditional communities is a voluntary and conscious choice.

¹² <http://www.businessdictionary.com/definition/community.html>

Membership in traditional reference groups may be imposed, for example among proximity of residence amongst other things. *“People are free to join in the virtual community of their choice and choose to do so, for example, because they find like-mindedness among its members. This may make the virtual communities that one does not necessarily feel deeply connected to”* (De Valck, van Bruggen & Wierenga, 2009, p. 186).

Therefore the online environment brings a certain freedom to the members, if they do not agree with the group norms they have the easiest option to leave the virtual community and join another that is more similar in beliefs and behavior. In this way the online group tends to be stronger, because the interests will be true. Another point is that in a virtual place the members are invisible, they may choose between an online or offline status, so they will do the membership per passion. *“Virtual community members are generally not exposed to each other`s offline behavior, but sharing information about opinions and experiences is usually what it is all about, many members actively seek information and advice from other members. The most important source characteristic that determines the internalization process is credibility”* (De Valck et al., 2009, p. 187).

Community Management inspires interest in different areas, it is multidisciplinary. Sociologists tend to focus on networks of social relations, ethnographers on the roles and activities of small groups of individuals, and technologists on the structure of the underlying software supporting the community. It is not easy to find a consensual definition for those all areas, the focus here is in the social one, therefore the people are the center of attention (De Souza & Preece, 2004).

In this paper the authors try to generally define the online community as *“a group of people, who come together for a purpose online, and who are governed by norms and policies.”* Online communities are dynamic, evolving and constantly change. The authors also defend that internet technologies are nothing without the people as a *“technology it does not guarantee the successful online community. Success is determined by social factors as well as software functionality”* (De

Souza & Preece, 2004, p. 580). Success is guaranteed by the people who will power this technology. Communities are made of people, and individuals constitute the people in the community.

Once the internet gained the web 2.0 concepts, people could interact with the network, which was not possible before. Previously, a small group was responsible for producing content for big groups to view. An organization could for example publish a website showing all their portfolios but could not see the direct feedback from the people who were watching it; the consumers could not contact the organization directly by the web. It was one way communication.

On the web 2.0 everyone can interact and participate, people can go and talk about any topic and about everyone. They are able to share opinions and experiences with the ones whom create the content. Furthermore, they can get in touch with the others who are also interested in the same content; they can change and create new content. Groups can interact directly and build communities to share interests.

Consequently, online communities started to become a way to watch different groups and different areas, they therefore represent a way for organizations to interact directly with their customers, partners, and even competitors. It creates the opportunity for new relationships with these groups, and that is one of its greatest promises and achievements. With online tools it becomes much easier to discover, form, and manage relationships, as well as interact, collaborate and interface across them.

2.1. The Online member

The online member has similar features with the normal community member concerning interests and goals. Community membership involves a distinction between 'insiders' (or the included) and 'outsiders' (or the excluded). The community boundary serves to define members from non-members. The concept

of community is therefore defined not only by relations between members, but also by the boundary between members and non-members (Ferlander, 2003). The sense of membership, of the feeling of being a part of something, of belonging or of sharing personal relations are the same. The big difference in the virtual world is that the member has the clear choice of being a part or not, of the social group or community.

De Valk (2009) ran a cluster analysis and proposed that in the online environment, membership can be shown in different ways. The author argues that members according to the connective level and community may assume different features. The result of the cluster analysis is a classification of the respondents into six clusters. The classification variables include frequency and duration of visits. It divides the members in the following types: Core members, Conversationalists, Informationalists, Hobbyists, Functionalists and Opportunists (See table 04).

Contributing content to the community does not make members automatically part of the communities core. It is only when members are truly immersed in the community that they belong to the core member group. The conversationalists, informationalists and hobbyists circle around the core members. All these member types are socially involved in the community. The conversationalists and informationalists are located slightly closer to the core than the hobbyists, because they have been community members for a longer time and they are also to a larger extent involved in retrieving and supplying information (De Valck, et al., 2009).

The functionalists and the opportunists are found in the community's periphery. These member types are not socially involved, they hardly make any contributions, and (together with the hobbyists) they are relatively novice members. The opportunists are located further from the community's core than the functionalists, who have a genuine interest in increasing their expertise. The dynamic nature of community membership that is characterized by shifts in focus and an evolving

pattern of participation. The position member type roughly represents in which order members move from one role to the other (De Valck et al., 2009).

Type of member	Features	Focus
Core members	They visit the community daily for about one and a half hours. They make extensive use of the community's knowledge reservoir by retrieving information. They submit information, articles, and reviews. Furthermore, they participate actively in forum discussions and chat sessions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Retrieve - Supply - Discuss information - Highly socially involved.
Conversationalists	They visit the community three to four times a week for approximately half an hour. They retrieve and supply information, but not to such a high extent as the core members. It is especially their relative high level of engagement in forum discussions and chat sessions that characterizes their participation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Discuss information - Socially involved.
Informationalists	They score low on discussing information. This group's visit frequency and duration is comparable to that of the conversationalists. However, they tend to visit the community somewhat less frequently, but they spend more time per visit. Together with the core members, they are the community's most extensive retrievers of information. They show reciprocity in their behavior by also supplying information to the community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Retrieve and supply information - Socially involved - Mature members.
Hobbyists	They score relatively low with respect to the amount of information supplied, and the extent to which they participate in forum discussions and chat sessions. After the core members, they are engaged in updating and maintaining their personal page within the community and in writing guest book messages.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Socially involved - Education level is relatively low.
Functionalists	Only for the extent to which they retrieve information from the community, their score is higher than average.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Retrieve information - Not socially involved, - Highest education level.
Opportunists	They are the community least frequent visitors and their visits usually do not last long. They hardly supply any information, nor do they join forum discussions and chat sessions. This group represents the community's least active and least regular participants.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Not social is involved - Retrieve information

Table 04 – online members' types.

Source: Adapted by the author from De Valk et al., (2009).

2.2. Online Community Management

Community management is nothing new, it exists in the offline world through community organizing and in the digital realm, the act of “managing” communities has existed ever since the earliest incarnations of message boards and even chat rooms. Community Management is getting so much attention because people started to participate directly on the web (web 2.0) such as on social platforms, Facebook, Twitter, blogging and a host of others that are taking digital community dynamics, which have formerly existed in the background and niches, and bringing them into the mainstream. It is not unusual for your average Internet user to have access to a minimum of one or two networks, whether it is Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter or something else.

How to motivate people to act together? How will perceive that the community profile as relevant? Who are we going to contact and where will we find them? Communities are not homogeneous, there will be conflicting interests sometimes marked by violence and hostility. So that is why the community needs to be managed. It is important to remember that the voices from the community, in all their diversity and all their roles, are very important (community-roundtable.com, 2011).

“Community management is the discipline of ensuring that communities are productive. In this context, there is a need of seeing the communities as collections of individuals who are bound by needs or interests rather than authority or hierarchy, which is why a new approach to management is good applicable” (community-roundtable.com, 2011).

Individual as community workers, we listen to the deepest feelings of the local community. (...) what are their deepest concerns? What affects their lives the most? These emotions are the key to the motivation to act. The act of listening, of giving people full attention, is empowering in itself. It is about taking people’s experience seriously.

The group unites people in their current experience. What are the different interests represented between groups? How active are groups in the community? What are the success people have achieved by uniting in groups? We should always build on the strengths and the experience of the community;

Does not the community make people feel a sense of belonging to the community? How do people feel about being in the community? What are the skills that people have? (Ledwith et al., 2005).

2.3. Social Media and Online Communities

The social media is a topic that many people like to talk about, it is something really new and that creates a lot of attention on internet discussions. Everyone wants to be there, to participate and discover the new tools. However, online communities are not completely related with social media, a community manager is not just a “social media analyst” as many people are saying in the blogosphere¹³. Community gives people destinations, it is a place where the people can interact and connect. If you think about your own life or if you think about your neighborhood for example it is a place that has a personal connection to you, it is a place that draws you. The trick for a community is to create that magical place for people to come to and interact.

It is common to think that internet community is a light thing and to not trust that a community can have a value and can change a situation or a company business. In fact, community already exists, it just was not connected by the internet. For example the press, they spend a lot of time figuring out how they are going to spread the message to communities, however they do not think community as a community, they think of it as a business activity, but in reality they are community. They are extremely attentive to the feedback that they get and they will modify

¹³ It seems that many people are content to call themselves community managers because they manage a Twitter account, post content on a Facebook fan page (with the goal of “engaging” the masses, or at least those who actually visit the page or allow posts on their newsfeeds) or run a group on LinkedIn. (<http://blog.angelaconnor.com/>)

their business to respond to that. So the community may change the press business, it can be crucial and help the main decisions, not something light or without value.

Managing a community is not only having a campaign, people think that the marketing can be developed in the community but in reality a great community, just like in real life, like in a neighborhood, that people want to go on, it must have real meaning for people. The community management is a multidisciplinary work, a pretty hard one. The user simply wants to go in a place where they can engage and get information, participate and partake. It seems easy, but it is not, because communities are organic, communities are people, and people are complex (Baughman, 2009).

The community needs to be about the community members. A community is a place where people are together and connected in a purposeful way. For the members, it might be a destination of choice. Social Media is just the “online” world for something that has always happened (Baughman, 2009).

Social media platforms enhance the power of online communities in four ways (community-roundtable.com, 2011): they promote deep relationships, allow fast organization, improve the creation and synthesis of knowledge, and permit better filtering of information. It can be analyzed in a deep way as follows:

- **Deep relationships:** Community members using social media tools and features establish multifaceted relationships that are far richer than those in earlier-generation online communities, such as discussion boards. In this way they can interact easily and get in touch, fulfilling their needs.
Example: Members who interact in a work group and then become friends on facebook and share personal information.
- **Rapid organization:** Social media tools enable calls to action around common interests or upcoming events and promote the easy formation of electronic communities. Hundreds of thousands of people can be mobilized in just a few hours.

Example: An interesting real case of the Italians members' strike on Toluna online Community. In a few days a little group of members mobilized many other members into a strike in the activities from the community, they stopped the business of the company. As in this case market research is conducted with the community members, the community manager had to deal with the community in order to avoid a complete termination of the websites activities. Table 05 shows the Blog post that was used to bring members back to the community.

- **Knowledge creation and synthesis:** Modern online communities can collect the knowledge generated by members into persistent documents and other artifacts that are much more useful than the disjointed discussion threads and bulletin boards of *yore*.

Example: Wikipedia, where everyone can share, add or create new content.

- **Information filtering:** Harnessing the knowledge of a worldwide community of mostly amateurs would be worth little if there were no way for people to separate truth from gossip. Fortunately, ever-improving categorization, search, and filtering tools make it possible to identify the most popular or helpful contributions. Information filtering also helps alleviate problems of misuse in communities, such as misrepresentation and fraud, infighting and other hostilities which are an abandonment of the original purpose.

3. The Community Manager

Many authors and groups are talking about the Community Manager (CM). It is not something which is very clear. A lot of the information about it is not official, as there are not many publications on this topic. Community management is one of the newest (and least understood) roles that is making its way into large organizations, but is critical to successful 'social' initiatives. Many social initiatives – whether social marketing, support communities, product innovation efforts, or internal web 2.0 deployments – do not initially recognize the need for community management until there is a problem (community-roundtable.com, 2011).

“This activity begins to take shape within marketing departments, with the appearance of the position of community manager. Integrating social media with the many channels of communication is the challenge ahead. A goal that little communication agencies take over. Perhaps they feel that it is too therefore to seize opportunities in this area” (Heurtebise, 2011).

These new communications environment create both large risks and large opportunities because of how fast information spreads and because of the difficulty in directing or enforcing how individual, particularly those without vested interests in your organization, communicate. Community management is an approach that assumes influence but not control, whilst managing risk and promoting productive behaviors. For organizations to gain competitive advantage in this new environment they will have to excel at community management and many organizations now understand this (community-roundtable.com, 2011).

The job of a CM is a new business that is not yet formalized, because of the continuing evolution of the Internet and social media. This business is becoming more strategic in companies who realize the importance of using the power of Internet media to promote both their image and both to control the feedback from users. Historically, employers were those who had an important activity on the Internet (sites Media e-commerce sites). Today, we see that all the major brands are interested in this approach because it allows them to retain their customers and control the communication about their products and services by users.

The community manager is the leading representative, the ambassador of an organization or even a product on the internet. A strategic position, its role is to speak and especially to talk about his company and its products on the web by acting *on the verge of information*, the development of content and the creation and animation of communities.

Dear Members,

It's time for us to apologize for all the technical problems we've experienced in the last weeks and ensure you that our teams are working hard to fix these issues as soon as possible and permanently.

In the meanwhile, as you can see, the site is losing quality and variety of the contents, since most of opinions and polls posted are focused on Toluna itself and its problems.

This is against the aim of our community, which is to share ideas and opinions and receive feedback about the topics you are most interested in.

We are following the behavior of some members and we accept all the requests for transparency and explanations but we don't have to tolerate offensive content with the sole goal of questioning the credibility of the company and our employees.

We want to underline that each non working feature on Toluna website concerning the Product test area, for example the page with the list of winners, is due to a big issue in our system and database's exchange of information. It is due to the same technical issue that some members were selected several times to test products.

It is our interest to ensure and prove to you that our product test area and our monthly prize draw are not fake, and the best way to do that is to ask you, members, all the feedback you can provide us concerning testing a product, winning the lottery and of course, receiving a voucher or a bank transfer.

Collaborating is the best way, we think, to show how big our community is and that all the problems experienced by some members are only a few and isolated cases.

The page with the testers will be back soon and completely fixed, in the meanwhile you can find some feedback of real people testing products by clicking on these links:

<http://it.toluna.com/opinions/502235/Toluna-Test-Novita-chewing-Hollywood.htm>

<http://it.toluna.com/opinions/385530/Un-esclusiva-Caudalie-Vinexpert-Riche-Crema.htm>

<http://it.toluna.com/opinions/673661/Toluna-Test-nuovo-deodorante-Roll-uomo.htm>

Talking about how big the community is we need to say that every time we give the possibility to test a product we receive loads of requests; a clear example is the iPhone 4G test: 6 product available and 200 000 requests. The same reasoning has to be done for the winners of the prize draw: Italian community counts more than 142.000 people just as there are lots of members active on the website answering polls and giving their opinions, there is also a big number of members only taking surveys, and so collecting a big quantity of sweepstakes, which multiplies their eligibility as winners.

Toluna is doing its best to solve problems and to gain your trust, that's why it would be a pleasure for us to receive your emails with all your doubts and questions.

Thank you for all you can add and for your comments.

Table 5 – Blog post for Toluna's Online Italian Members
Source Toluna Italian Blog (<http://bit.ly/IKFze4>)

One area in which community managers have work to do is in the area of measurement and communication of outcomes. Although fewer organizations with community management had no idea what they were getting out of social approach, the same organizations had only a moderately better definitive understanding of what they did get out of social approaches. Community managers need to be at the forefront of documenting the benefits – both quantitative and qualitative – of using social and community approaches (community-roundtable.com, 2011).

All social initiatives derive their value and benefit by enabling relationships between individuals, but this does not happen at scale without human intervention. Relationships and people are too complex to be mediated through technology alone (community-roundtable.com, 2011).

At a high-level community management is the discipline of ensuring productive communities and it includes the following responsibilities:

- Define ideal scope, desired outcomes, and necessary boundaries;
- Ensure participants receive more value than they contribute;
- Promote, encourage, and reward productive behaviors;
- Discourage and limit destructive behaviors;
- Facilitate constructive disagreement and conflict;
- Advocate for the community and its members;
- Monitor, measure, and report;
- Marshal internal advocates, resources, & support;
- Manage tools and member experience.

3.1 The Community Manager Profile

The CM is essential to enforce group norms by facilitating community members with rules and tools that allow them to establish and maintain an amiable ambiance in the community (De Valck et al., 2009). The purpose of the Community Manager is to ensure the brand identity on the Internet, managing the

communication between company and customer and reducing the distortion of information that may take place in online communities¹⁴.

Understanding the profile of a CM is an important part. Firstly, this person will be a representative of a product via the internet. It is important to note the difference between expertises and attributes when recruiting for a community management to represent a brand or a company. The top attributes of a Community Manager are the desire to be helpful, someone who is concise and credible, a sense of humor, curiosity, fearlessness, influential, persuasive, diplomatic, patient and mature. The expertise required for the role of community manager is strategic business acumen combined with exceptional communication and people skills (Chauvin, 2011).

From a strategic position, the community manager must speak on the Internet about his company and its products by acting both *on the verge of information*, the establishment of content and the creation and animation of communities (Chauvin, 2011).

Technical competences

The position of Community Manager requires an excellent knowledge of the Internet and web 2.0 marketing tools. The candidate will be a naturally curious to discover the latest innovations found on the web. Technical knowledge will be a plus. The Community Manager is not a single person but at the center of trade between the various marketing departments of the company (product marketing, customer marketing). An ability to have a good relationship is paramount (Chauvin, 2011).

¹⁴ “La finalidad del Community Manager es velar por la identidad de la marca en Internet, gestionando la comunicación entre empresa y cliente y reduciendo la posible distorsión de la información que algunos usuarios puedan llevar a cabo en las comunidades online” (<http://www.webcuatro.com/redes-sociales.html>).

There is no group dedicated to this new profession. However, candidates with Marketing or journalism training is sought for their writing skills. Beyond training, a first-hand experience in web marketing and content management online will often be required. It is a mistake to think that a community manager does not need to know about computers, this might be one of their first interests, since the CM will be dealing with the computer all the time. Some basic technical competences are required mainly with internet tools, computing, writing, managing and measuring (See table 06).

Personal competences

It is very important, to start thinking of how to teach people to use efficiently, consistently and ethically all these tools and possibilities. We need to figure out how to make sense of all this technology. In this regard, schools can and should be one of those paths.

Technical competences	
Web Search	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Search engine optimization (SEO) • Indexing and Google management • Web Gathering and Clipping.
Web Medias	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publishing and digital • Social networks • Blogs, • Exchange sites, rating sites • Message board tool
Computing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Content management system • Software for image editing, video editing software • HTML and internet tools.
Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Write in the right way • Adapting to the context • Know the target group.
Measuring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capture how often individual members engage with the organization within the organization's social media spaces. • <i>Return on Engagement</i>, on participation, on involvement, on attention, on trust. • Statistics to control the quantitative dates from the Online Community

	(Google analyses, Histats...)
E-Marketing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recruitment • Outreach Strategies • Building Brand Visibility
Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Setup strategies and goals. • Setup of webinars (on line seminars) sessions • Key performance indicators (KPIs) and objectives for enrollments • <i>Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)</i>

Table 06 – CM Technical competences.

Adapted by the author from <http://bit.ly/jTsJsO> and <http://bit.ly/mABI2Q>

People still do not know how to produce content. They are afraid to change an article on Wikipedia, and do not want to write nonsense. On the other hand, people often expose themselves needlessly on Social Medias and even on their blogs. People use the web, simply by using, most often in error and not very productively.

The community manager needs to encourage members, to guide them for the purpose of the community. This person needs to have special skills to drive the group. Some personal competences which are required are (community-roundtable.com, 2011): leadership, persuasiveness, networking, adaptability, communicability, creativity, proactivity, curiosity (see table 07 for descriptions). Without some of those skills and others more related with managing people, is not possible to go into the community and moderate it.

Personal competences	
Leadership	Online communities need leadership. There needs to be someone making the tough decisions – decisions that will often be made with a good amount of diplomacy. There isn't much tolerance of authoritarianism when it comes to community building.
Persuasiveness	The power to induce the taking of a course of action or the embracing of a point of view by means of argument or entreaty. It is the process of guiding oneself or another toward the adoption of an idea, attitude, or action by rational and symbolic means. Attitude and posture very necessary for the CM.
Networking	They need contacts, to know the right people to help them solving their

	problems on time, they need. to know and interact with the community's stakeholders and then find better resources.
Adaptability	Simple ability to change (or be changed) to fit changing circumstances. A Community is people and they are always changing, the CM needs to be aware of the environment and find quickly new ways to drive through.
Communicability	Online community managers are often seen as the public face of an organization. If people aren't happy with the business, they might take it out on the community manager. If they have a question about the company's product, they'll often ask the community manager before they go through the regular contact forms or customer support telephone numbers.
Creativity	Invest with a new form, to produce through imaginative skill, to make or bring into existence something new. The ability to transcend traditional ideas, rules, patterns, relationships, or the like, and to create meaningful new.
Proactivity	An online community needs to be interesting and fun. The community manager needs to be constantly aware of the wants and needs of its members, and respond to them. They can't wait until your competitors are stealing your members before they act – by then, it's too late. A community manager needs to have their finger on the pulse and always be working behind the scenes. Where are the bottlenecks on the community? How are people interacting with specific features? How can they be improved?
Curiosity	A good online community manager will be inquisitive. They'll always be asking questions – to themselves, community members and the organization they work for. They'll be setting themselves goals and asking how those goals will be met. They will be asking community members how the community can be improved. They will be asking their organization how they plan on adapting to the new challenges and opportunities the community poses. Questions aren't just good – they're essential.

Table 07 – CM Personal competences

Source: By the author

Methodology

The methodology can be viewed as general knowledge and skills that are needed to guide the researcher in the research process make timely decisions, selecting concepts, hypotheses, techniques and appropriate information (Thiollent, 2000).

This research is presented as exploratory in nature as, according to Gil (2008, p 41), *“Exploratory Study aims to provide greater familiarity with the problem, in order to make it more explicit. These studies have as main objective the improvement of the discovery of ideas or intuitions. Their planning is therefore quite flexible, so that allows the consideration of various aspects related to the fact studied. In most cases, these studies involve: (a) bibliographic (b) interviews with people who have had practical experience with the problem studied, and (c) analysis of examples that “encourage understanding”.*

This study is based on a Qualitative Research that is especially effective in obtaining culturally specific information about the values, opinions, behaviors, and social contexts of particular populations. The strength of qualitative research is underpinned in its ability to provide complex textual descriptions of how people experience a given research issue. It provides information about the “human” side of an issue – that is, the often contradictory behaviors, beliefs, opinions, emotions, and relationships of individuals (Lakatos and Marconi, 2005).

The scientific method applied is Participant Observation in which *“a researcher takes part in the daily activities, rituals, interactions, and events of a group of people as one of the means of learning the explicit and tacit aspects of their life routines and their cultures”* (DeWalt and DeWalt, 2002, p. 1). Participant observation is one of several methods that fit into the general category of qualitative research.

Qualitative research has as its goal the understanding of the nature of phenomena, and it is not necessarily interested in accessing the magnitude and distribution of phenomena. It is important also to note that in the Participant Observation personal characteristics may influence the level of participation (DeWalt and DeWalt, 2002).

The researcher carried on an internship into the company for six months and worked as a Community Manager for Brazil and Portugal participating actively inside the community during this time. The researcher could observe not only the community's dynamic but also the organization. The shift time was Monday to Friday from 10am to 18pm, regular work time in France, where the company is located. Thus, the Participant Observation can be classified as a complete participation, when the researcher is or becomes a member of the group that is been studied (DeWalt & DeWalt, 2002).

The internship was part of a Master in Management from Aveiro's University, Portugal. As a subject of study, the internship requires an evaluation at the end it, which is based on a written report. So this is a report, however the researcher chose a topic to fundament the final assignment.

Three different topics were considered for the study during the internship, the first was about the merged that happened in the company in 2010 with another big online survey called Ciao Surveys, the internship happened to begin in the middle of this merge when lots of problems were experienced by the company. The second option was to analyze Toluna's internationalization strategies once the company has its business in more than 30 different countries. Those two options were not used for the same reason: data would not be released for publication. All the information was confidential because Toluna's core business is based on its online and could be easily copied. So the researcher chose by write about Online Community Management because it was related with the internship's tasks, the

one that could be deeply and carefully observed because it was in the daily routine.

As the Online Community Manager is a profession that grows around the world, the topic happened to be new and creative. There are not so many publications about online community management besides of blogs and forums. So the researcher started to get inside this universe through professional forums especially on Linked in and in a Community Managers Roundtable¹⁵. After that some other resources could be found as such as books and articles. Inside the professional forums it was possible to know many people involved with this subject and exchange impressions and get more information.

The literature review was based on the central concept of community in the broad sense. Later, it was an effort to understand how the concept is transported to the virtual world and how it fits into the new context. The objective of the literature review was to understand who the new professional called Online Community Manager is. There are not so much publications in this area because it started to be discussed mostly after 2009/10. Many references were acquired online through scientific journals, blogs and websites were. The research was conducted in Portuguese, English, Spanish and French, so this study is limited to these languages. For the bibliographic resources the following resources were used: the library of the University of Aveiro, Science Direct platform, as such as Ebsco, Elsevier, Google Books and Google Scholar. Sources also limited the search for resources.

The field of research was the Brazilian and Portuguese community, with 70,054 members and 28,438 consecutively according to Toluna data in 2011. Therefore the results of research observation are valid for these two countries as the other countries in which the organization operates were not analyzed for such purposes.

¹⁵ Community managers group on Linked In: <http://linkd.in/ssYmFs> and <http://linkd.in/uGuUGf>
Community Managers Roundtable: <http://community-roundtable.com/>

Observation and data collection took place during the internship. Later on the literature review was performed in order to match practical data with the data that could be released from the internship. Several case studies were performed to exemplify the intricacies and difficulties of the community manager. In the final part of the internship the report was written.

Learning with the practice

Managing an online community is a step by step, difficult job as sometimes little things may change the whole course of the plan. Hereinafter a Community Manager will share six real cases that were experienced during an internship in Toluna, an online company based on France.

Apparently, it seems simple. Nonetheless, simplicity and attention to details seem to be key elements for a moderator in an online community. Being aware of the whole member activities and following the results of the applied strategies are key important key action as a CM as, sometimes, feedback comes as a bad surprise and a brand new solution needs to be deployed rapidly, especially in an online environment where all information is shared in real time.

In each case analyzed the context of the problem will be explained the problematic in order the reader can be acquainted to the specific situation. After this framing the methodology is put forwards in order to explain how the community manager addressed the situation and what tools were applied for each specific situation. Last but not least the chapter pinpoints the main key issues as well as the most important elements for those who consider a community manager job.

As mentioned before, the cases are real examples in a real online community. The choice of the cases was based on the researcher interest and opinion during her six internship months, where she was the community manager and had the opportunity to closely monitor the community. Although for each case presented many others could have been advanced, the six cases presented in this chapter address the most common problems experienced as an online community manager.

Case A

Collect and use the feedback from community members

1. The problematic

Toluna members (as mentioned in the first chapter) can access directly to the website and give their opinions about the new products and services that the clients are planning to launch in the market. Instead of using the space for the indicated purpose they sometimes use to talk about the company itself. This fact was a surprise at first for community managers, however they could realize that it is a very important tool for getting the members feedback about the work they are doing in the community.

Hereinafter there are two examples of how the CM can proceed when the members are using the community to talk about the company. The first one is positive and the second one is negative, that is to show how the same tool can come with different answers. In 2010 Toluna was planning to change the website for a new designed page and they could use their own forums to ask to the community members what innovations could be deployed by the company for them (figure 11). In the second example Toluna could realize that a group of members were growing a movement against the company, they were trying to propagate that the whole Toluna's business was a fraud. In a few days, using the social media and Toluna's official website to communicate between each other, they moved hundreds of people to join the movement and made a big number of members believe that Toluna was a "waste of time". As a consequence, a large number of members unsubscribed (figure 12).

2. The methodology

Here is the case in which the CM tried two situations. At the first one, the company needed some tips about what to do for the new web site. So the CM launched a

simple question as “member” of the community¹⁶: “What do you think that Toluna should do to improve the website?” With this simple question the CM could capture a huge number of opinions in the same day. The members not only gave the real opinion, they also asked friends to do and to make sure that everyone in the community were participating once that discussion is very important and valid for them.

After the topic was discussed in a forum the CM contacted the respondents and asked for more details about the opinion, saying that the idea was useful for the company and confirming that all the members’ participation is very important. In this way the members could be assured that the company listen to them straight way.

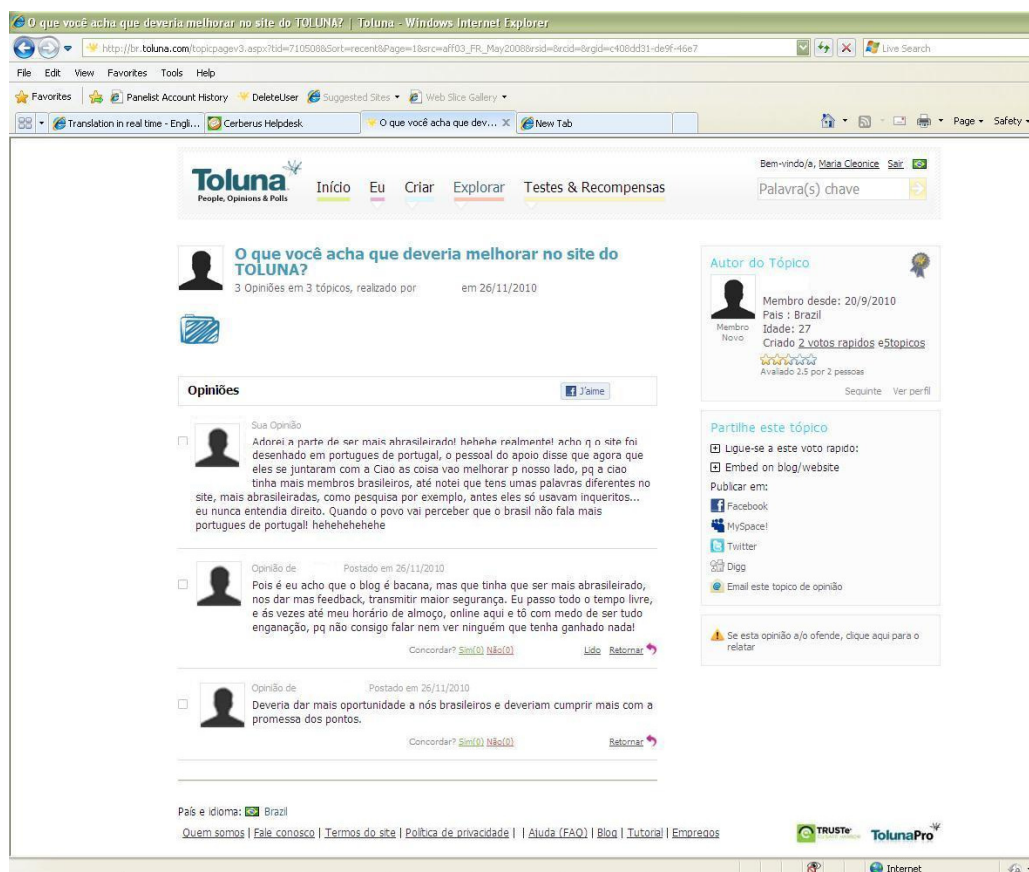


Figure 11: Members asking each others for improvements.

Source: toluna.com

¹⁶ The Community manager usually does not use the real identity inside the community, in way they can play to get the actual results.

The second example from using the feedback is to learn what is wrong inside the community. One member who had a bad experience in the website went directly and created a topic against the company. The member read in a blog post where someone was saying that the company was not fair and reliable, immediately the member came to the community and said the information in a forum. Once a topic is created the CM cannot go and delete it, only if the topic is not inside Toluna's rules of moderation it can be deleted (see Moderation Rules: page 15).

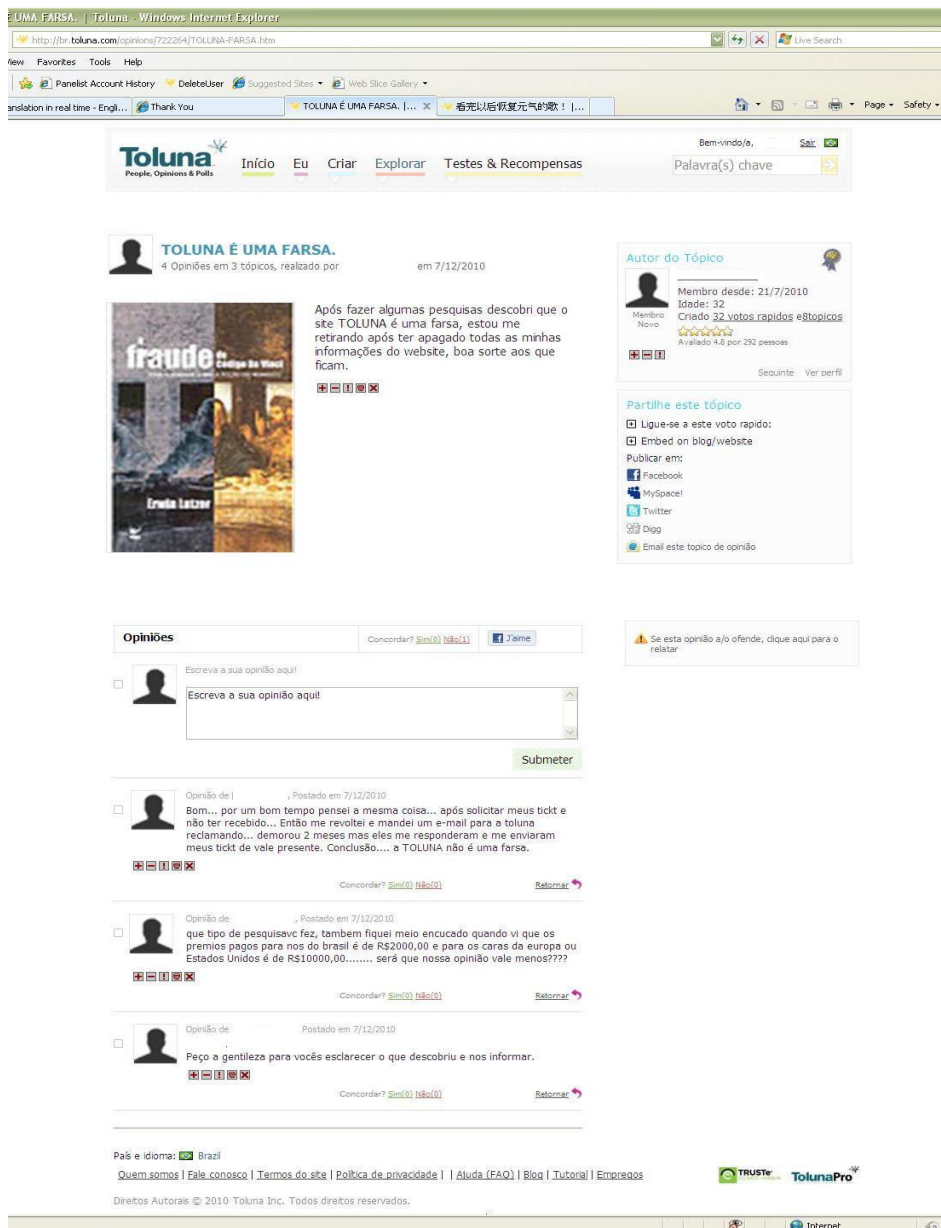


Figure 12: Members complaining about the company inside the forum.

Source: Toluna.com

The CM had to contact each of the members in the topic saying that the information was not true and contacted also the topic creator warning that he could not talk in that way about the company inside a forum. An official blog post was made by the Senior Community Manager and posted at the blog to make clear that the company is taking care of the problem. It is very important that the members note that there is someone caring about the community, even if this person is anonymous, the members will see that presence and count the person in for the next time.

3. Points to consider

From this case there are some topics to consider, especially about the members' behavior inside the own community. Through the examples it can be seen that the members can move quickly for their goal, it could be positive or negative for the CM. Some points can be considered about this issue:

- Once content is posted there is no way to delete it. It is easier to avoid them to be published than manage its impacts, positive or negative ones;
- The answers to the community problems are always within itself;
- Each member wants to be treated as an individual person, they are individuals and the moderator needs to treat them as if they were unique. As seen in the background: Membership is being a part of something, the feeling of belonging or sharing a sense of personal relations. When a person chooses to be a member, chooses to belong or not, it brings an emotional feeling, a responsibility.

“The sense of belonging and identification involves the feeling, belief, and expectation that one fits in the group and has a place there, a feeling of acceptance by the group, and a willingness to sacrifice for the group. The role of identification must be emphasized here. It may be represented in the reciprocal statements “It is my group” and “I am part of the group”” (McMillan, 1986, p. 10).

Once the members realize that there is someone caring about the community, a moderator, they change the attitude and count this person in. They know that all the content is being watched and they will send constantly important messages through the forums.

Case B

Create an online environment in which members are willing and help one another.

1. The problematic

As mentioned before the community is a social group in which the members are together and sharing common interests. Once people have common interests they are up to help each other to achieve main's common goals. It is a natural process, the knowledge passes by the members in an easy way. For the community manager members' participations are a key factor for the community to exist. To make the people active is actually the most important job for the CM; a community is not done by one person.

The internet has been used to publicize and manage the collaboration between community members. It is a kind of crowdsourcing¹⁷ where people work together and build something for a whole group. As an example it can be noted that there is any course teaching how to deal with Facebook, Twitter or any other social media or website; the people just go online and learn by themselves. They ask for help inside the web to strangers through specialized blog or tutorials, they ask to their friends or community members. Some people spend time just writing tutorials, creating videos, blogs and others in order to help people to deal with new tools. What do they get back? The feeling of sharing something, helping someone or just participating and be noted. This topic is something that could be more explored by other studies.

¹⁷ Crowdsourcing, methods of soliciting solutions to tasks via open calls to large-scale communities have proliferated since the advent of the Internet (Vojnovic and Dipalantino, 2010).

Toluna has the whole information about their system available in the website as a Tutorial and a FAQ (Frequent Asked Questions) page where any person can go and read everything, even if it is not registered as an official member. Besides the information in the official website, there are some CMs managers to deal with the members extra doubts and solve their problems. However they are not enough for answering all the questions on time. The problem seems to be that the member wants the answer as soon as possible, then they go and open a forum to get help from other members inside the community as a quick way. This collaboration attitude from members' side is very important for Toluna once their business is mainly online and they are the key stakeholder from this business. A positive member-to-member relation, in this way, will bring lots of benefits to the community and to the moderator. Accordingly, the CM should create and feed the relationship between members.

2. The methodology

As an example for this topic there is a member who just joined the community and wants to know how the points system works. That is a simple question and very usual from the members' side in which the answer can be easily found on Tutorial or FAQ. The member, by the way, prefers to go and ask in a forum to the other community members. It is a kind of word of mouth where information from the members is more reliable than the official one provided by the company.

Accordingly, the CM should create this environment where members can share their own experience with the others helping.

Toluna
People, Opinions & Polls

Home You Create Explore Test & Rewards

Hello Guest, [Click to Sign In](#), [Register](#)

Keyword(s)

how do toluna points work

4 opinions in 3 threads, created by on 25/04/2011

i just joined the site acouple days ago. i read hwo to get points and it seems to nt be working out for me. i read you can gain points by giving opinions and voting on polls but on all the polls i vote it says i must complete my profile which ive done and tried to do about 20 times. can someone help me?

Opinions Agree? Yes(0) No(1) Like

Write your opinion here!

Write your opinion here!

Submit

Opinion by , Posted on 26/04/2011

I too have filled out my profile and can't answer several of the sponsored poles. From what I can tell, those polls I can't answer are from the US and since I'm from Canada, I'm not eligible. Perhaps you are having the same issue. I also read that you can earn points from completing surveys, but I've never managed to finish one yet (they all say I'm not the right demographic or something to that effect) and only give me a sweepstakes entry. The other way to earn points from what I've read is to fill out answers to opinion questions. I think only responses longer than 80 words get points, and from what I've read, they aren't giving out the points very fast for it. There's a long wait. I'm filling some out to see what happens. I figure I might as well while I wait for other polls or surveys to become available. Also, if you post up your own polls or opinion questions, you can earn points, but I think you need 500 votes, or 21 opinions before receiving points for those. I'm not positive on those numbers though.

Agree? Yes(1) No(0) Reply

Topic's Author

Member Since: 19/04/2011
Country: Canada
Age: 47
Created 3 polls and 10 topics
Rated 5 by 2 people
[View profile](#)

Share this topic

- Link to this topic
- Embed on blog/website

Publish on:

- Facebook
- MySpace!
- Twitter
- Digg
- Email this opinion topic

If this opinion offends you, click here to report it

Figure 13: Members explaining each other the company's rules.

Source: toluna.com

3. Points to consider

- Inside a community people have the same interests so they will be available to help each other most of the time;
- A member will prefer the opinion from another member instead of the moderator;
- The CM has to be inside the community as a member to drive the content and to make people participate and interact;
- The solutions are always inside the own community.

Case C

Show the human side

1. The problematic

McMillan (1986, p. 11) summarizes membership in five attributes: *boundaries, emotional safety, a sense of belonging and identification, personal investment, and a common symbol system*. So if a member is participating in a community he is looking for the fulfillment of emotional needs. That is something very personal; each person wants to be unique and feel special. This aspect is a big challenge for the community manager job. In a big community it is difficult to find and fulfill all the expectations from all. Usually the CM accepts generic solutions to solve as many cases as possible, one option too impersonal, which may have negative outcomes for the community.

At Toluna the CM as well as moderating the community support service takes care of the site, which is done by email. The member can access the "contact us" and send the question directly to the support. The daily demand for emails to the Brazilian community, for example, is fifty to sixty. For some communities the daily emails demand is doubled or tripled. With a high volume of emails it is hard for the Community Manager to keep the personhood required by the members, since each member likes and wants to be treated in special way.

2. The methodology

To customize the contact with members during service support, the Community Manager used to answer the e-mails treating the member in the first person and talking direct with them calling the member "you"¹⁸ and always mentioning the real name.

It is very important to determine the way to communicate before start it. It depends of the community objectives and the members' profile. The tone to be used must be set right in the creation of community. At Toluna the objective is to make people give their opinion about new products and services creating an online environment where they can interact and feel comfortable to say the truth. The aim is to get a sincere participation so the CM should leave the members act spontaneously.

¹⁸ The main purpose is to be as informal as possible.

Once defined the way of communication and the type of language to be adopted the CM can adopt her/his own style trying to lead the group members and drive them to the community goals.

The culture is an important variable when the communication type is being set. That is why the community manager needs to be inside the culture and find out the right point and manager to run from the mistakes.

For the Brazilian community the close contact is very important. Brazilians are confident people and appreciate to keep a friendly relationship even for business matters. So strategy for the country was to create a friendly relationship with the members and between them so that a sincere and trustworthy environment could be created. Some very active members were called by the CM to help with the moderation in order to get some benefits inside the community, they could get inside a category called “power users” and fell like managing the community by the company side. They could develop then the sense of community that McMillan (1986) was talking about. *“Sense of community is a feeling that members have of belonging, a feeling that members matter to one another and to the group, and a shared faith that members’ needs will be met through their commitment to be together”* (McMillan, 1986, p. 9).

During six months many cases appeared showing how the way of communication is important for a community and how matter is for the members to participate as much actively as much they can. The role of community manager is to be aware of what the members are looking for and give them the right and simple answer. As an example there is a member (figure 14) who simply wanted to change the country inside the platform, an automatic procedure for the CM if the member had not said that the change would be caused by an acquired scholarship to study in this new country. It was not just an automatic change of country; it was a complete change of life for that person. So the CM procedure was to require country change and try to be close to the member. The CM said: “congratulations for the scholarship! I wish you all the best for the future in the new country”. The members

replied saying: “Thanks and God Bless you”. During the following contacts the same members had a very positive attitude and helped inside the forums.

--Forwarded Message Attachment--
Subject: Res: Customer has updated Case
Date: Wed, 17 Nov 2010 17:05:03 +0100
From:
To: cm.pt@toluna.com

Muito obrigada Márcia,
Deus te abençoe!

De: Marcia ARAUJO <cm.pt@toluna.com>
Para:
Enviadas: Quarta-feira, 17 de Novembro de 2010 5:56:30
Assunto: RE: Customer has updated Case #222046 ID:[48xmg7/288799]

Oi Dani,
Obrigada pela colaboração com nosso site.
Já mudei o país, entretanto não consigo atualizar o restante dos detalhes, isso tem que ser feito por você na parte “minha conta” – “informações pessoais”. É importante que tudo esteja certo pois utilizamos as informações para lhe enviar as futuras recompensas.
Como te falei, agora você vai participar dos estudos no Canadá, o escritório que gerencia as nossas operações lá fica nos EUA, diferente do nosso aqui na França. Portanto, não verei mais seus email, a não ser que você mande diretamente para esse endereço cm.pt@toluna.com
Será sempre um prazer ajudar.
Boa sorte na sua experiência no Canadá.
Não hesite em contactar nossa equipe em caso de duvidas
Atenciosamente,
Márcia Araújo
Community Manager Brazil/Portugal

Figure 14: Positive attitude for a kind support answer.

Source: toluna.com

In the second example the members were asking about the product tests; it was also a simple question that could be answered with an automatic template. However at the end of the question the members said in capital letters the city’s name from where she was from, for coincidence the city was the same where the CM came from. So in the answer the CM sent good wishes for the people from that city saying that the place was being missed a lot. The feedback from the member once more was very positive by saying “Health and peace to you and your family. Recife is waiting with open arms!” (figure 15).

It is very common for the support to use templates for answering the e-mail because there are a huge number of them, depending of the community more than

500 per day. Only one CM, in this case, is not enough to finish the box. So the quickest way is to do massive answers with template. As the Portuguese community is not large, the moderator can manage to give special attention to the people.

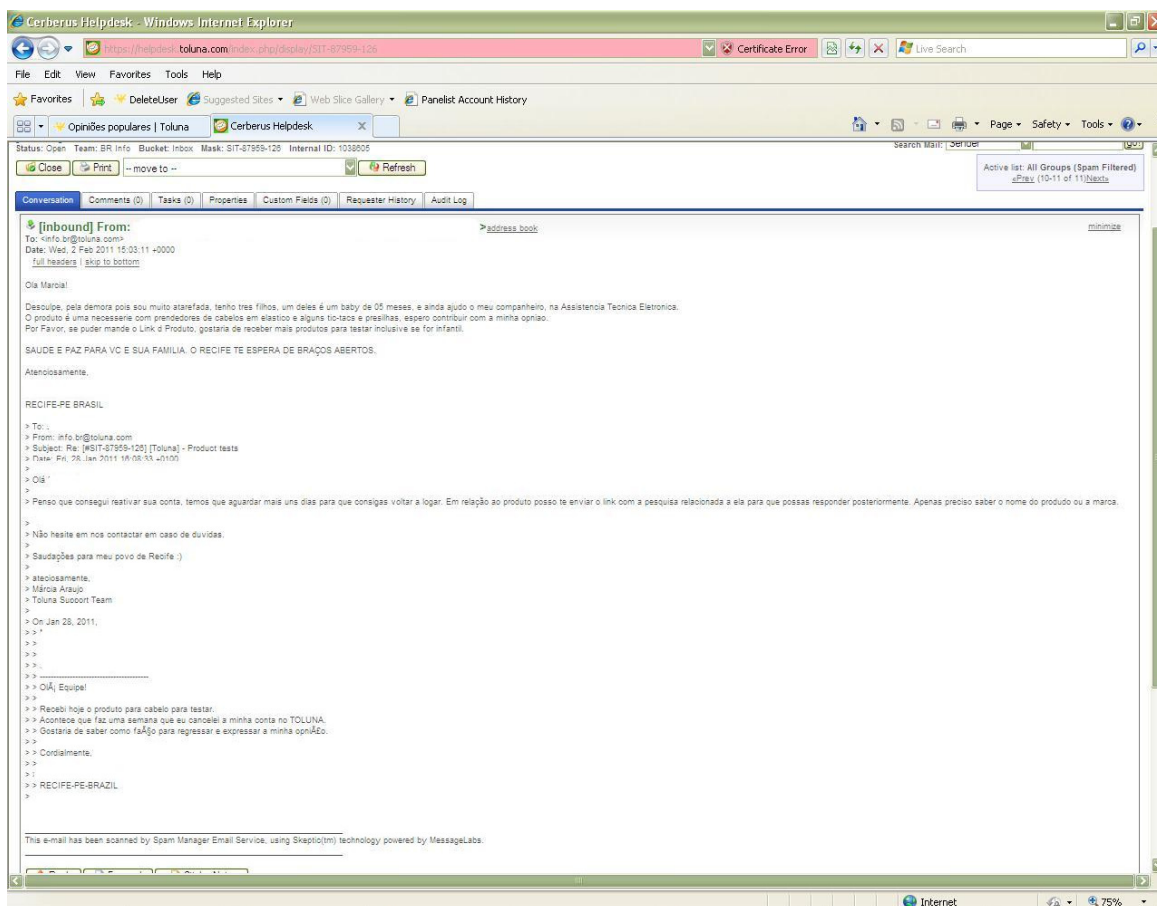


Figure 15: Positive attitude for a kind support answer II.

Source: toluna.com

3. Points to consider

- The community Manager has to talk directly to the members;
- Avoid templates and massive answers;
- If the members felt that is not been treated as a unique person the feedback will be different and negative;
- Talk to the people with verbs in first person and try to call them by name;
- Determine and set the way of communication before start the activities is also important to make people know that someone is truly caring about.

Case D

Find tools to the community

1. The problematic

There are many tools that can be useful for an online community management process. The objective is being in touch and as close as possible from the members, through the web is easier to interact, there are a variety of resources within the web. It is part of a Community Manager's job to find the right tools and apply to the context.

Social media platforms are now widely used by the CMs. It is possible through them to create groups and forums to interact directly with members and between them. Social media are useful and an important tool. Facebook is the most common and has interesting features that can be developed together with an information technology professional to streamline the activities inside the community. However it is important to note that Facebook is not the only tool available. The community should not only rely on a platform, moreover, when that is the property of others. Pairing the online community activities to a single platform is a risk, since some conditions may arise and destroy the work.

The Community Manager needs to develop their own tools and platforms to manage a community that is why a CM needs to gain some knowledge in computing and informatics. A sustainable work should be promoted so that the community is not fragile and dependent on insecure platforms that simply come into disuse as the Social Media ones. These should only be used as support.

2. The methodology

In this case the CM used the tools from Toluna's platform to help with the community moderation. Toluna develops a system of surveys, which is in fact the core business of the company, thus is easy to the moderator to use this

technology for the community management. So the same tool can be used in different ways, as in the follow examples

By using the right tool the CM could find out, in the first example if the members were happy with the spelling language in the web site. Brazil and Portugal had the same page translated for Portugal Portuguese. The CM was experiencing some problems with the moderation and decided to create a topic in a forum asking about the language preference, in this way the CM could justify the creation of a new website with different translation. The CM wrote a blog post informing the members that some mistakes were caused by the different translation from Portugal Portuguese to Brazilian Portuguese.

Then a question was launched asking to the Brazilian members if they considered both Portuguese the same language and if there was any problem to have the website in an only language (figure 16). The answer was positive and the CM could realize and prove with numbers that a new translation would be appreciated by the members from that community. Later on the CM could convince the senior community manager to do a new translation from Portugal Portuguese to Brazilian Portuguese using the tools available in the own Toluna website.

3. Points to consider

- Find and fit the best available tools to your own community;
- Do not depend on platforms in which you have no control, try to develop your platforms and tools to ensure that your community will not disappear;
- Look into your own resources and bring it to the community, create new resources with the available tools;
- Show to the community the importance and the usability of these tools and motive them to use those tools effectively.

Bem-vindo/a a Toluna! O lugar ideal para dar voz à sua opinião e conhecer o que os outros pensam!

Responda
Já **1.063.616** opiniões
adicionado hoje.
Acrescente o seu agora

Pergunte
Deixe **1.000.000** membros
responder às suas perguntas!

Ganhe
Ganhe recompensas e
teste de produtos

Você que viu o Blog Post da Toluna (<http://brblog.toluna.com/2011/01/13/atualizacao-dos-dados-pessoais/>).
Acha que o Português do Brasil e o de Portugal ainda podem ser considerados a mesma língua?

Você que viu o Blog Post da Toluna
(<http://brblog.toluna.com/2011/01/13/atualizacao-dos-dados-pessoais/>). Acha que o Português do...

37% **Não**
29% **Sim**
34% **Indiferente, entendo os dois.**

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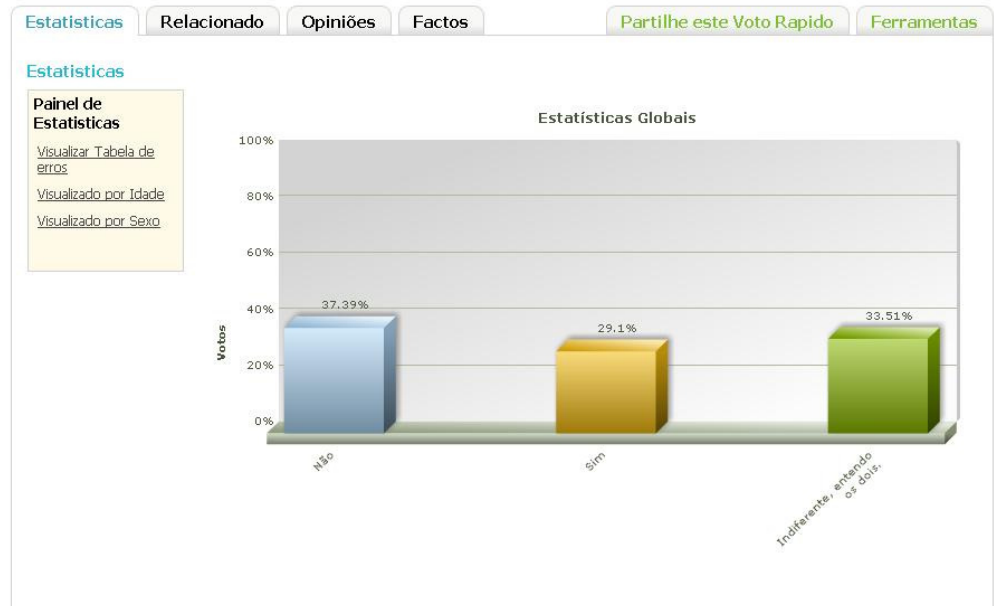


Figure 16 – Using Toluna own tools to get members’ feedback

Source: toluna.com

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Responda
Já **1063616** opiniões
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Acrescente o seu agora

Pergunte
Deixe **1.000.000** membros
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Qual dessas mídias atrai/influencia mais você atualmente?

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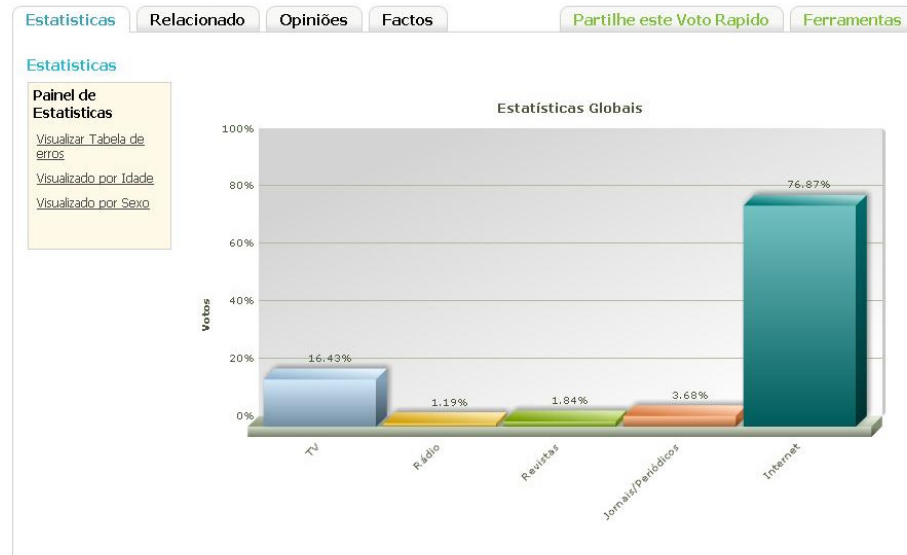
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Figure 17: Using Toluna own tools to get members' feedback II.

Source: toluna.com

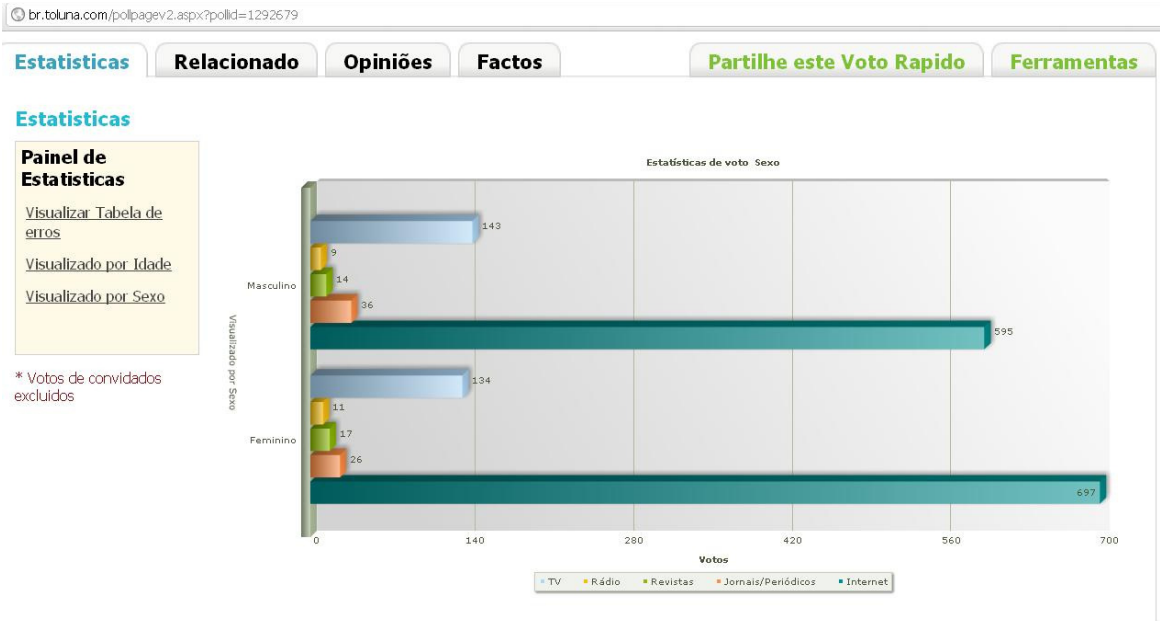


Figure 18: Using Toluna own tools to get members' feedback (gender description).

Source: toluna.com

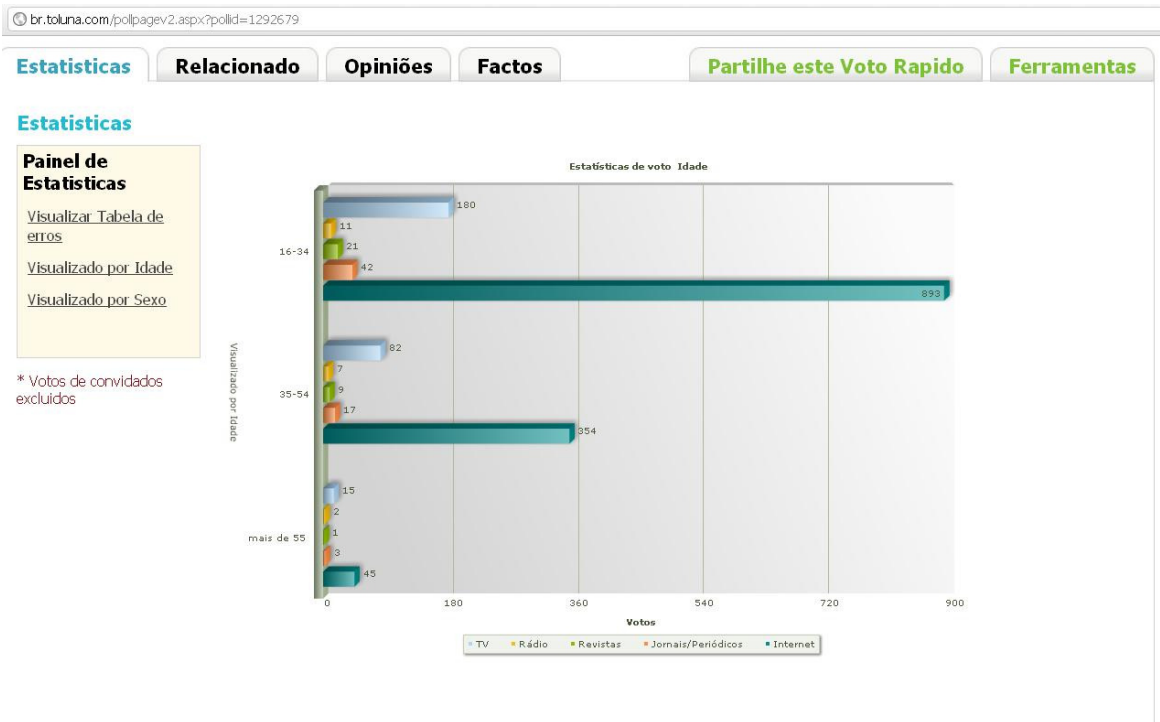


Figure 19: Using Toluna own tools to get members' feedback (age group).

Source:toluna.com

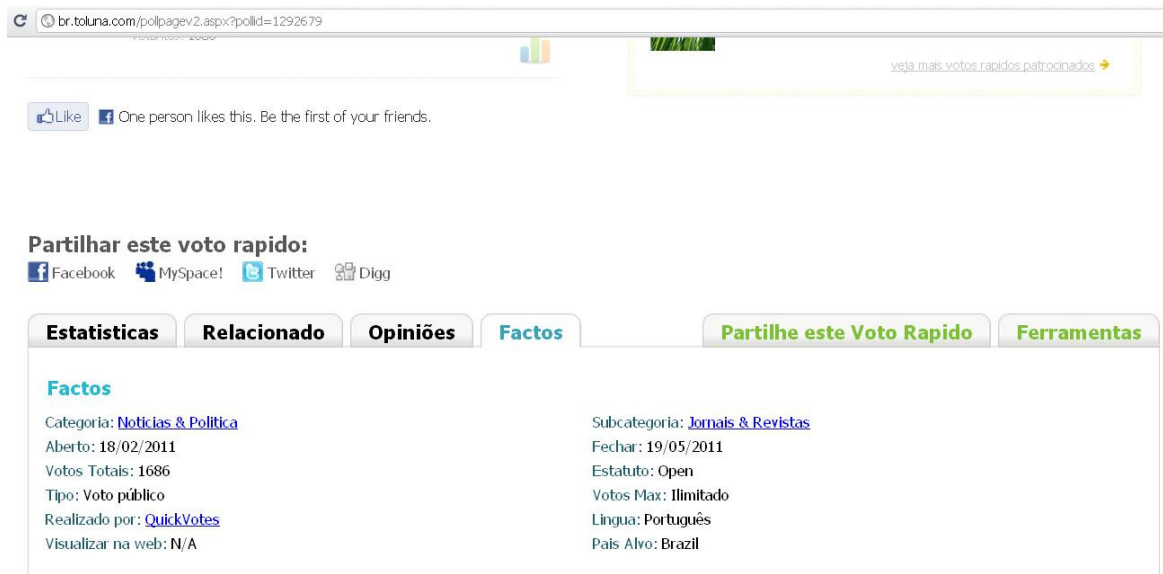


Figure 20: Using Toluna own tools to get members' feedback (poll data).

Source: toluna.com

Case E

Adapt to the Culture

1. The problematic

The success of international business for a global company is the applicability of the organizational culture knowledge and customs' functioning of the local culture. In the implementation of global strategies, the company needs to establish their culture by respecting the other. The advent of globalization has transformed the world into a global village, where each country has its own set of beliefs and values. Acting on transnational levels is to recognize and make use of intercultural peculiarities in the preparation of international strategies. It requires availability and suitability for the abandonment of the culture of the organization to new types of markets. Thus, the cultural and symbolic gains ground in organizations not only seen as aspects of organizational culture, but as central elements in the process of internationalization of companies.

Culture is also an important external force. Due to the fact that Toluna operates in more than 30 different countries, they have to deal with a lot of different cultures.

Toluna has to hire people from all the different countries, because they know the culture and they know how to deal with it. Each community (country) has its own community manager, who is able to deal with the members by the native language. Toluna SAS is a company that is founded in France, the headquarter is situated in Paris, so all the CMs are hired to work in Paris and they share the same room. In this way they can share experiences and learn with the others. It is interesting to note that the French people do not like to speak English, so inside the company the only room that communicates in this language is the CMs one. It is not easy for the company to change the organizational culture even when the company has the whole business international.

Toluna's website has an unique format which is translated by specialized translators companies for each respective country. Later on the Community Manager has to look into the little details and make the required changes. For the Portuguese community there was only one website and it was in Portugal Portuguese. The follow examples will demonstrate that this fact caused some problems for Brazilian Community. The same problem happened with Belgium and France, Hong Kong and China, The Netherlands and Belgium, Germany and Switzerland, United States and England. For all those mentioned places, Toluna has only one CM, except to United States and England witch have a huge number of members. Two countries with the same language do not mean that culture is same. Even inside the same country is necessary to consider the differences.

The differences between Brazilian Portuguese and European Portuguese are grossly compared to those found between British and American English; however the differences between Brazilian and European Portuguese are even much greater. It is not only about the language itself but by their culture. Brazilian Portuguese is full of mixture and influences from the different people how did history in the country. Therefore it is extremely necessary to establish this difference in the Portuguese language as is already done for the English language. The following cases are presented to demonstrate some examples in this regard.

2. The methodology

In order to convince the company to adapt the translation the Portuguese Community Manager decided to collect some examples in the main business activity. Once one of the goals for Toluna is take the members opinions, organize and sell to clients. One of Toluna's product is the Quicksurveys¹⁹ so the CM took one of the surveys and proved that the result were completely wrong just because of a single word (figure 21). The client would get the wrong answer and apply a bad solution just by taking that report. In the example the question was: "Of the appliances below, which one do you have?" as possible answers: TV, Microwave, Fridge and washing machine. The word "Fridge" in Portugal means "*frigorífico*" but in Brazil "*frigorífico*" means freezer, the right word in Brazilian Portuguese would be "*geladeira*". Hence the wrong translation changed the question's meaning the members said that they had more TV than fridge which is not the reality.

The other example is also about poor translation, but this case there is nothing to do with the countries language. The client wanted to know if the people are sail fan. The word "sail" in Portuguese means "vela" so the CM did the question: "Você gosta de velas" but "vela" also means "candle", in this way the sentence got a double meaning. The results were wrong because people understood "candle" instead of "sail". Most of people said "yes" (figure 22).

¹⁹ Toluna Quicksurveys is an online self-service tool that allows you to create a survey of up to 15 questions and launch it live to Toluna's global online panel community of 4 million consumers and receive results in real-time.

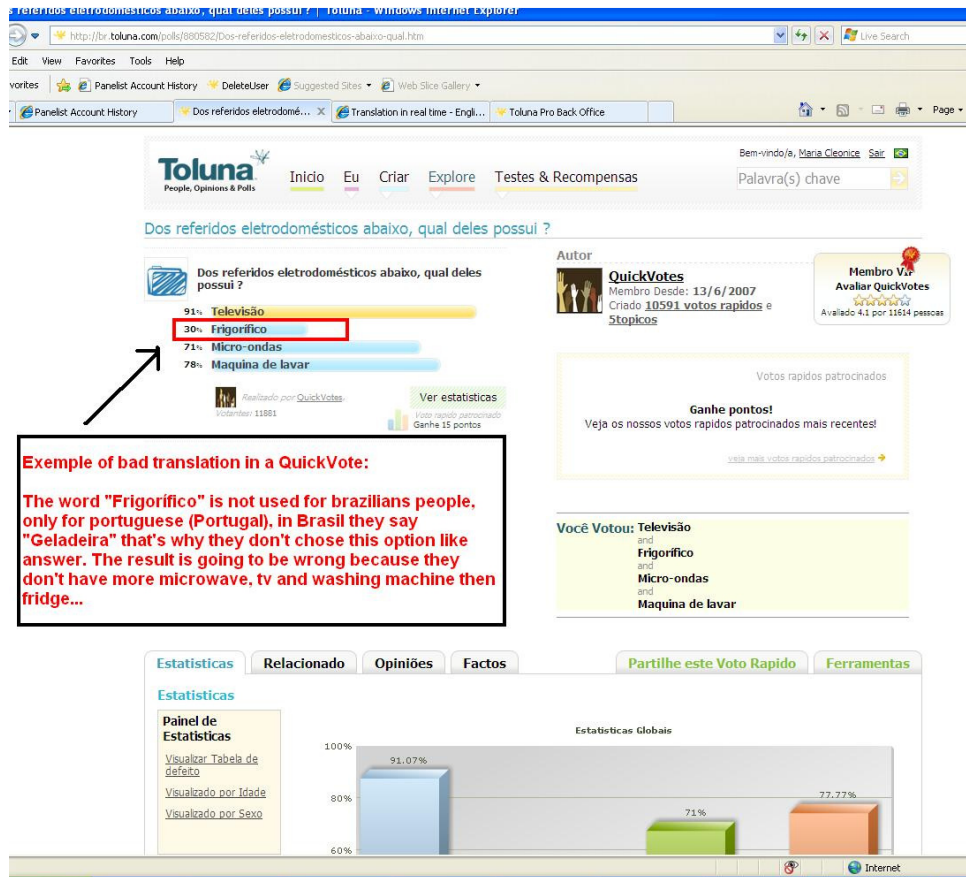


Figure 21: Bad translated poll.

Source: toluna.com

The Community Manager noted that there were too much positive answers and decides to recreate the topic in another way and make it clearer. The new question was “você gosta de velejar?” so the verb was used instead of the substantive. As a verb the word “velejar” cannot be confused with “candle”. To make sure that the question would be clear the CM also added a picture from the most famous Brazilian sailor, Tobim Grael (figure 23). The results were completely different for the new question where most of the people said “no, I am not a sail fan”. So the client could get the right feedback because the Community Manager could see the gap and solve it quickly. Also because the CM was a native, if a foreign translator were doing the job maybe the mistake would not be noted and the client would get the wrong report from that question.

3. Points to consider

- Cultural features are crucial for a community and the people will not for sure if the Community Manager is caring or not about it;
- Be aware of translations, even when the language is the “same”;
- Try to find out your community profile and fit the action with that;
- Make the same action in different ways and compare the results to see if the right decision was made.



Figure 22: Bad translated poll and wrong results.

Source: toluna.com

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 Já **113076** opiniões
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Pergunte
 Deixe **1.000.000** membros
 responder às suas perguntas!


Ganhe
 Ganhe recompensas e
 teste de produtos

Você é fan de vela ou gosta de velejar?

Você é fan de vela ou gosta de velejar?



Sim
OU
 Não

 Realizado por **QuickVotes**
 Voluntários: 1958

 **Voto pessoal**
 Ganhe 15 pontos

Vote

Autor


QuickVotes
 Membro Desde: **13/06/2007**
 Criado **11016** votos rápidos e
5 tópicos

Membro VI
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Votes patrocinados

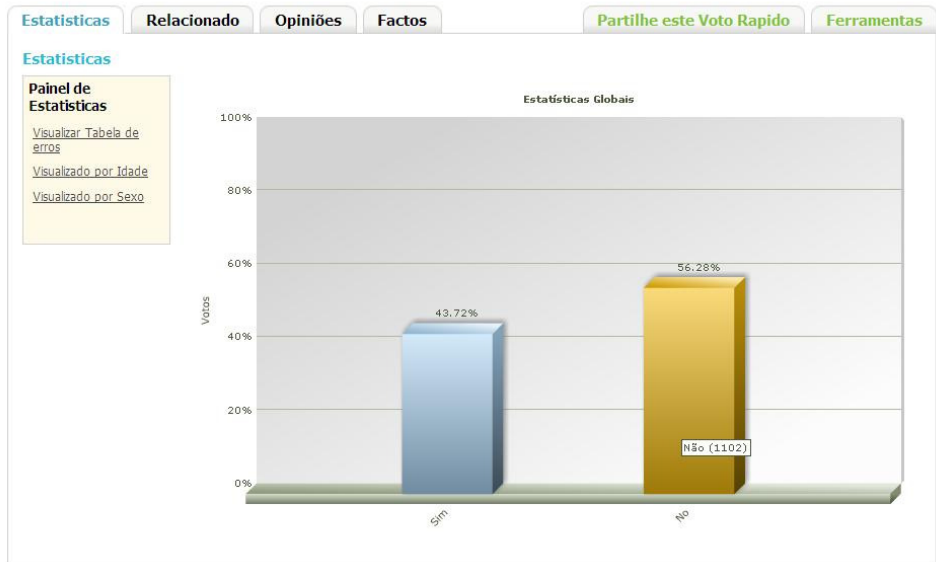

 Est-ce vous avez des enfants?
 Répondez maintenant et gagnez 30 points !


 Quelle est votre situation professionnelle?
 Répondez maintenant et gagnez 60 points !


 A quelle tranche d'âge appartenez-vous ?
 Répondez maintenant et gagnez 30 points !

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Figure 23: Fixing bad translation poll.

Source: toluna.com

Recommendation to implement a policy of Online Community Management

This section is a reflection on the previous chapter and of the study in general. Some recommendations will be presented for a community management policy based on the studied theory, in the cases presented and in the researcher participant observation.

It will be divided in five topics: Communication; Member Development; Tools; Moderation and CM profile.

1. Communication

Set a tone

Learn how to deal with the people in the community is an important step during the community management process. The tone must be set before the online community activities started. It will depend on the community objectives and the members' profile.

It is important to reinforce the community's focus, to articulate between the members and the community the same objective. When the interests become muddy, the community falls apart.

Provide information

The moderator can create a space out of the community to post some extra information. It can be a blog, another simple page or even a page or Facebook

(Facebook or another social media depending on wherever the members are). Micro blogging solution such as Twitter can also help.

The community Manager must be the pioneer, the information provider, especially when it comes to matters related directly to the community. It is very dangerous when the information traces the reverse path, communication failures may occur. Once information goes on line there is no way to take it out.

Adapt to the culture

The communicator must speak the same language from the community members and it does not mean only the official language. The cultural aspects have to be understood for the Community Manager. This is something widely discussed in several areas, especially after the world has become a global space where all cultures meet and mingle.

Each community has its own culture, for example a group of doctors has their own vocabulary, rules and behavior. The moderator has to be inside the community to understand and adapt the way of managing the specific group.

2. Membership Development

Communities need critical mass to remain active and hold the attention of members. Attrition always occurs and member development must be an ongoing effort. A clearly defined community focus helps coordinators conduct to identify potential members as well as the content, tools and services that will draw them in.

Find the main actors

Work with individuals who influence the group or play leading roles in the community. They can become effective evangelists and focal point for community formation. Community organizers need to know and cultivate such opinion leaders.

Some members will be more than normal members, they will help the moderator to do the job, they will be one more resource for the community management and the most important, they will bring out real problems and help to find the most appropriate solutions just because they are part of the problem and they are the community itself.

Personal connection

“Communities are made of people, and individuals constitute the people in the community.” Preece(2000, p.594). There is no substitute for one-to-one contact among members. There are many approaches such as encouraging recruitment activities by existing members, direct e-mails/messages, online or offline contact, phone calls or sending gifts or letters.

Draw from personal experience in answering questions, which helps to promote a sense of intimacy and comfort. Understand participants' needs, even if it means reading between the lines. The moderator's job is to find out what a community member really needs and what form the response should take. Provide all the sources they need, a link to additional information or simply feedback and support.

Help members help each other

The role of the moderator is to stimulate conversation, when the interactions between the members start it will be easier for the moderator to conduct the project. The group will be able to stand on their own legs and the individuals start a help to help job by their own.

Participation in a community is generally a matter of choice. The motivations behind the participation are more complex than the desire for a reward, financial or otherwise. Understanding how to inspire voluntary effort has relevance beyond the online community management.

Collect and use the feedback

Member feedback drives changes to its look, feel and functionality. Monitoring members' attitudes must be a core competence in a community manager job. They will show everything they need to be done for the community and they will do by themselves if they feel motivated to do. So one of the main roles from a moderator is to stimulate the members' participation and collect their feedback from it to use in the future strategies.

3. Fit the tools

Interaction service 2.0

There are many different tools that provides to the Community Manager ways to communicate and interact with members. The CM must be aware of which one is the most popular among the members and it will depend on several factors such as group profile and culture.

Facebook is an example of interaction service tool. However, not the social media platform can be different. Who knows what will happen with Facebook or any other social media website. The community existence cannot depend on it. It is only a support for the management process.

Monitoring tools

Many of the key benefits of online communities are measurable and there are many different monitoring tools that can be used by the Community Manager. There are some important data as such as: How many members are actively participating; Members meeting new people who can help them; Whether the debates are positive/constructive or negative/destructive; More members are volunteering to helping out; The ideas and feedback the community is generating; How many of the discussions is been generated by the moderator and how many

by the community; The community is recruiting new members themselves; Offline events and real-world meetings; Technical problems and others.

The Community Manager must find out the tools that fit with the purpose community objectives and get the feedback to monitor the applied strategy. *Google Blogsearch, Twitter Search, Monitter* are some examples of available tools.

Productivity watch

An Online Community Manager needs to monitor its own tasks. Have an online job is not easy, there are many challenges. For example: How to divide the time to care about the community and the time to care about the particular issues. Generally the CM's shift time is well beyond the usual worker's time. It is important to have a discipline so that work does not invade the personal life. There are many productive watch tools that a CM can use to follow the performance and to organize the tasks during the available time.

4. Moderation

Contents management

The first step is to create a manual where members can find the rules and rights to drive their participation. Then make the rules as clear as possible to the group, in this way they can go and set the content according to that rules. This makes the community manager role easier because they know what action to take.

In fact, the CM might behave as a member, only as a member of the group it will be possible to see the content and play with it. The moderator can call the help of a super user member and together they can find out problems in the community.

Contents creation

The best content for an online community is content about the online community. Focus on making connections introducing members to each other. Write content about members - not the industry. Ask questions which stimulate activity. Make the content in the community unique. Make it impossible for competitors to copy. Make it the place to come to find out what your peer group is doing.

Contents Observation

The members can mobilize the whole group very fast and change the direction of the CM job. It is important to watch the whole content and make the members know that there is someone caring about the content. It is common to find some cases where the rules are not adhered to. For those cases a manual with the right actions to take must to be consulted (a moderation rules manual presented on chapter one). The bad content must always be removed or managed.

The contents observation is a day-by-day job and it is something the moderator has to do very frequently to ensure that nothing wrong will happen inside the community. The members the CM will also learn more about the community itself watching the content produced by

5. Community Manager Profile

This new role of an online community manager is not "people management". In fact, it is more like "program management" where there is not direct control over the members. It requires some technical knowledge, it is not necessary to be an IT engineer, programming or system administrator to work in this role. In fact, even though the software tools have become easier, the knowledge of how to use them effectively and properly is getting more complex.

Personal Profile

The community manager needs to encourage members, to guide them for the purpose of the community. This person needs to have special skills to drive the group. Some personal competences which are required are: leadership, persuasiveness, networking, adaptability, communicability, creativity, proactivity and curiosity.

Technical profile

There is a lot of news around what new Web 2.0 applications and models software companies are building. So the community manager must be aware of the new technologies. It means some knowledge engineering role that combines skills of relationship building, leadership, knowledge gathering and distribution, documentation, basic web skills, and even elements of design.

Some basic technical competences are required mainly with internet tools, computing, writing, managing and measuring. As mentioned in the background some knowledge is required such as Web Search, Web Medias, Computing, Communication, Measuring, E-Marketing and Management.

Hide personal identity

The online community members do not need to know about the moderator personal life. It is important to the online community manager to create a pseudo name to deal with the members. This is a key factor to preserve the Community Manager personal life once all the information can be found in the web when someone name is typed in a search engine.

In the virtual world a person can pretend to be another one and it can be dangerous for the Online Community Manager that has its all work in the web. Thus, the safest way is to preserve personal identity it will not influence in community management performance.

The mandate for a Community Manager

Communication

- Set a tone

. The tone must be set before the online community activities started. It will depend on the community objectives and the members' profile.

- Provide information

The community Manager must be the pioneer, the information provider, especially when it comes to matters related directly to the community.

- Adapt to the culture

The communicator must speak the same language from the community members and it does not mean only the official language

Member Development

- Find the main actors

They will bring out real problems and help to find the most appropriate solutions just because they are part of the problem and they are the community itself.

- Personal connection

Understand participants' needs, even if it means reading between the lines.

- Help members help each other

The motivations behind the participation are more complex than the desire for a reward

- Collect and use the feedback

Member feedback drives changes to its look, feel and functionality. Monitoring members' attitudes must be a core competence in a community manager job.

Fit the tools

- Interaction service 2.0

The CM must be aware of which one is the most popular among the members and it will depend on several factors as such as group profile and culture.

- Monitoring tools

Many of the key benefits of online communities are measurable and the CM needs to look for the available tools to apply to the specific objective.

- Productive watch

How to divide the time to care about the community and the particular issues?

Moderation

- Contents management

Create rules and make it as clear as possible to the group, in this way they can go and set the content according to that rules.

- Contents creation

The best content for an online community is content about the online community.

- Contents Observation

The contents observation is a day-by-day job and it is something the moderator has to do most frequently to ensure that nothing wrong is happened inside the community.

Community Manager Profile

- Personal Profile

Leadership, Persuasiveness, Networking, Adaptability, Communicability, Creativity, Proactivity and Curiosity.

- Technical profile

Some basic technical competences are required mainly with internet tools, computing, and writing, managing and measuring (Web Search, Web Medias, Computing, Communication, Measuring, E-Marketing and Management).

- Create a pseudo name

It is important to the online community manager to create a pseudo name to deal with the members.

Concluding, but not ending

In the last fifteen years, the growth of the global computer network known as the internet has facilitated the rapid emergence of online interactions of dispersed groups of people with shared interests. These online groups exhibit a wide range of characteristics and serve a variety of purposes, from small groups engaged in tightly focused discussions of specific topics, to complex created worlds with hundreds of simultaneous participants, to millions of users linked by an interest in markets or exchange networks for goods and information.

Online communities are nothing new it is just the same people in the "conventional" communities now going together in a virtual environment. The big difference is that online means that this group is in the web and everyone can join, especially by interest, regardless of physical distance. Thus, groups grow and gain strength faster. Concerns remain within the communities, the anthropological and sociological sense of being a member. Basically people seek fulfillment of personal needs and want to feel special, so they look for others with common needs and together they go to achieve the common goals.

Groups grow. With the improvements in contacts and communication among people with common interests and networked they go even bigger and more important, getting their own voice. In this context, a new professional shows up, the one who will mediate the relationship between the interests in different contexts, because the interests are diverse and may be sometimes associated with financial exchanges, it means organizations. Then, the community manager is the one who is in the middle of interests, who intermediates the different relationships, between members by themselves or between the members with other actors such as company.

Through a literature review and a participant observation made by the author as Community Manager for a community of over 700,000 people, sought to better

understand the universe and these new roles, community manager and a the virtual communities. As a result of the observation the study showed some practical cases experienced by the author during the internship in time to assemble a community management policy.

The online community manager is not a social media manager. Social media is one of the tools which the CM can use within a community management strategy. The CM should be concerned with the community and its central objective, always looking in direction to the represented group and this implies the use different tools. A list of technical and personal skills is required to an online community manager to know the way to deal with the group. The CM must to be active, including as a member. Only as a real member the manager will understand the problems experienced by the community and resolve them.

It is important to realize that communities, regardless of interests, are formed by people, and people want to be treated as people at the end of the day they all want attention and they want to feel special in different ways. Whatever the community is, even if there are financial interests involved as in the community analyzed.

Community Management has been a topic widely discussed on blogs and websites. However there are little official references on the subject. Some difficulties were faced when trying to find sources. The time researching and gathering information during the internship was limited, since there were lots of tasks to be performed daily. Some of the data obtained for the study was considered confidential by the company and could not be used Equally, it was not permitted to use any of the internal system information or internal documents of the company. Only the data on the official website was allowed to be published.

Online community manager is a relatively new subject and it is a wide field for anyone that is wishing to use other types of methodological analysis. Among the cases presented, one or more of them could be deepened through the application

of quantitative methods to assess such member's satisfaction or dissatisfaction faced to the problems experienced. Another topic could be the impact in numbers of certain actions as the one to adapt the communication the community culture. Anthropology, psychology and sociology of online communities also seem very relevant areas to be analyzed, since there is a change of behavior of these groups. There are several cases that can be analyzed.

Many issues related to the network are studied today, some of them are not new, just present a new perspective, needs sometimes are not into complex issues, sometimes the problem to be solved may be right next door.

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<http://br.toluna.com/pollpagev2.aspx?pollid=1292679>

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<http://pillarsummit.com/uncover-the-secrets-of-great-community-managers/>

<http://www.feverbee.com/books/>

<http://www.feverbee.com/2009/04/unexpectedcommunitybooks.html?cid=6a00d8354de10f69e201310f247bde970c>

Blogging. Blogs are tools now essential for creating community by generating good content useful. There are many tools, the most popular Wordpress (Wordpress.com).

Livestreaming. Blogs are lighter and easier update, with less chance of customization. The pioneer was Tumblr (tumblr.com), but with Posterous (posterous.com) you are gaining some round.

Microblogging. If not directly Twitter (twitter.com), a service of causing microblogging rage, and allows its users post comments based text, with a maximum length of 140 characters. Yammer also interesting (Yammer.com) and Social Cast (socialcast.com) platforms with more features than Twitter, which allows all employees a company communicate in an environment private.

Social networks Have been the protagonists Internet in recent years. The leader undisputed with over 300 million users around the world is Facebook (Facebook.com). Behind, MySpace (Myspace.com), Tuenti (tuenti.com), Orkut (orkut.com) and others depending of in which country you are. Regarding the "professional" LinkedIn (Linkedin.com) and Xing (xing.com).

Services release 2.0. The most popular YouTube (youtube.com) Vimeo (vimeo.com) to post videos, Flickr (flickr.com) the reference site for photographs, and others as an example of "active digital "Slideshare (slideshare.net) to through which users can send Powerpoint-type presentations.

Productivity Tools

Ecto (illuminex.com / ecto). An application of desktop, which is integrated with the main blogging tools on the market, after serving the backup on the computer, and to update multiple blogs from a single interface.

Tweetdeck (tweetdeck.com). Possibly desktop application for Twitter leader also includes MySpace and Facebook in a single interface to manage groups and several accounts simultaneously. Allows sync with iPhone application.

Seismic Desktop (seismic.com). Another Twitter desktop application that provides characteristics similar to Tweetdeck. Basecamp (basecamphq.com). Tool online project management. Includes list of "To do's", milestones, file storage, alerts, messaging and other aesthetic Blog features.

MailChimp (mailchimp.com). Manager mailings that offers an interesting list of capabilities such as management, tracking, analysis HTML templates and customization. It integrates with Wordpress, Twitter, Salesforce ... Is the choice of heavyweights such as Mozilla, Canon, Intel etc.

Get Satisfaction (getsatisfaction.com). Customer feedback platform where you can get answers to their questions, solutions to problems.

UserVoice (uservoice.com). Similar to Get Satisfaction, to track and manage feedback users and consumers.

Google Apps (google.com / apps). Suite online business office that includes applications such as Gmail, Google Calendar, Google Docs or Google Sites.

Twitter Analyzer (twitteranalyzer.com). An interesting web application that provides usage statistics and twitter accounts of retwitts and commendations.

Social Oomph (socialoomph.com). A service created to facilitate the account management Twitter, automatically return "Following", send automatic DMs response, schedule tweets.

Friendorfollow (friendorfollow.com). Application management of Twitter followers.

Huitt (hwitter.com). Allows you to "unfollow" massively to people who do not are following on Twitter.

Monitoring Tools

Google Blogsearch (blogsearch.google.es). This tool crawls and indexes the information contained in tens of thousands of blogs, offering users the ability to search within the data.

Twitter Search (search.twitter.com). The engine Twitter Search lets you know in real time all you are saying about you or about your brand.

Socialmention (socialmention.com). Searches on blogs, microblogs, places to publish links, images or videos, tracking terms individual to discover what is said or says of a product, service, or topic person. It also offers social media alerts and a widget.

IceRocket (icerocket.com). A seeker blogs that adds Google search results Blogsearch and Technorati, and provides trends the searches.

Backtweets (backtweets.com). Search links on Twitter, why Twitter users have linked your blogs or websites. Receives RSS alerts.

Radian6 (radian6.com). Web Application track the online conversation about products or people. It costs about \$ 500 a month.

ScoutLabs (www.scoutlabs.com). Company providing a platform based on the Web chats that firms maintain Live on their products. It costs less than Radian6.

Nielsen Online (Nielsen-online.com). Payment tool capable of measuring qualitatively the opinions and content generated by the Internet in Spanish blogs, forums and social networks that extend the Internet.

Smmart (gale-development.com). Platform pay for monitoring and improving the reputation of a mark in the media digital blogosphere, search engines and networks social.

Monitter (monitter.com). Monitor what are saying about your company on Twitter at multicolumn real interface similar to TweetDeck. The application allows searches for your brand or product or the competition and customize its appearance to taste the user.

Google Trends: ([google.es / trends](http://google.es/trends)). Search trends and compare the volume of search by country and region.

HowSociable?: (Howsociable.com). Tool measurement-based brand visibility 22 different types of metrics.

Addict-o-matic: (addictomatic.com). Create one custom page with the latest alerts about your brand or product.

Tinker: (tinker.com). Follow conversations Facebook or Twitter directly.

Facebook Lexicon: ([facebook.com / lexicon](https://facebook.com/lexicon)). This is a tracking tool keywords trends. Shows the volume of posts on specific words by the amount of data that is created by the users associated with different keywords.

To whom it may concern,

Please accept our recommendation of Marcia Araújo, born on 29th of January 1985. Marcia worked as an intern for our company Toluna SAS for 6 months from 17th September 2010 to 16th March 2010.

Toluna SAS is the leading global online market research panel and survey technology company offering market researchers an access to the world's most highly profiled, responsive and rigorously maintained online panel with a global community of 3.7 million members across 30 countries for sample only and full service data collection projects.

Toluna has offices in London, Paris, Frankfurt, Amsterdam, Sydney, New York, Dallas and Seattle and is listed on the London stock exchange (TOL) since 2005.

As the Community Manager for our panels in Portugal and Brazil, Marcia was responsible for a number of different tasks:

- Moderation of our Community Websites for Portugal and Brazil: editing and creating of content, resolving technical and community issues on the website;
- Member Support: quickly answering members' questions and solving the problems members were experiencing. In completing this task she had to be in touch with various departments in our company and develop an awareness of frequent problems;
- Translations: translations for our Websites as well as various translation requests from our offices

Marcia is a very bright and enthusiastic worker. She has always worked proactively and suggested a lot of improvements as well as own solutions to problems presented. She is able to organise her work independently and to take responsibility for her own tasks. She is also great working in a team, always willing to help and train other team members.

She is very reliable, not afraid of difficult tasks and works very well under pressure. She is very goal-oriented and will do everything to achieve her aim.

She was always a model employee when it came to attendance and keeping schedules. Her pleasant manner made her popular with the rest of our team.

We have no hesitation in recommending her to any future employer. Should you wish to speak to us personally about Marcia, please feel free to contact us.

Sincerely,

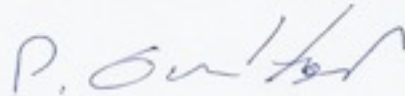
Romain Dufournier
Community & Content Manager



ATTESTATION

Je soussigné Philippe GUILBERT en ma qualité de Directeur Général de TOLUNA SAS, sise 14 place Marie-Jeanne BASSOT, Levallois-Perret (92300), confirme par la présente que Mademoiselle Marcia ARUJO, née le 29 janvier 1985, de nationalité brésilienne demeurant 14 rue HOUDON à Paris 75018 effectue un stage en qualité de responsable de communauté lusophone du 17 septembre 2010 au 16 mars 2011 au sein du département Panel et Communautés selon les termes de la convention de stage tripartite signée entre l'intéressé, la société TOLUNA et l'Université de Aveiro et qu'elle perçoit une indemnité de stage mensuelle brute d'un montant de 650 euros pour un horaire hebdomadaire de 35 heures.

Fait pour valoir ce que de droit
A Levallois le 20 septembre 2010



Philippe GUILBERT
Directeur Général

TOLUNA SAS
14 Place Marie-Jeanne Bassot
92300 Levallois-Perret - France
Dpt RH - T : +33 (0)1 40 89 71 00
Siret n° 432 033 181 00053



**COOPERATION
AGREEMENT**

The University of Aveiro, Department of Economics, Management and Industrial Engineering, hereafter designated as UA/DEGEI, located at Campus Universitário de Santiago, 3810-193 Aveiro, holder of taxation number 501 461 108, represented by Head of Department Prof.^a Doutora Helena Maria Pereira Pinto Dourado e Alvelos,

The Toluna SAS, hereafter designated as the Host Organisation, located at 14 Place Marie-Jeanne Bassot Levallois-Perret, 92300 Paris, represented by Monika Nagyova,

and

Márcia Cristina Alves de Araújo (student number 48552), hereafter designated as The Trainee, residing at Rua Banda da Amizade, 14, 1.º E, 3810-059 Aveiro, bearer of ID Card Number IG571625H and student of the Master Degree Programme in Management at UA/DEGEI,

considering

- that UA/DEGEI, as part of the mission confided to it in its statutes, places special importance on cooperation with society;
- the education and training required throughout the economic and social structures of the country;
- the need and the opportunity to include a training component in an employment context within the ambit of the degree programmes taught at UA/DEGEI;
- that social and economic structures represent the natural and most adequate environment to carry out that training component, which can take place under the form of a Traineeship, a Project or another similar education and training placement, and that the Trainee, the Host Organisation and the UA/DEGEI benefit strongly from that collaboration,

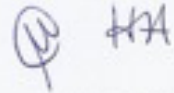
celebrate the present Traineeship Agreement, which is regulated by the following clauses:

Clause 1
Object

The object of the present Agreement is the realisation of a curricular traineeship within the context of the Master Degree Programme in Management at UA/DEGEI.

Clause 2
*Duration of
Traineeship*

1. The traineeship, which will have a duration of 6 months, beginning on 17/09/2010 and ending on 16/03/2011, will be carried out by Márcia Cristina Alves de Araújo, within the context of the Master Degree Programme in Management at UA/DEGEI.



Clause 3
*Obligations of the
signatories*

1. The University of Aveiro, Department of Economics, Management and Industrial Engineering is obliged:

- a) within the framework of its attributions, to provide the necessary academic conditions for the execution of the activities of the traineeship;
- b) to nominate a Traineeship **Supervisor** who will be responsible for:
 - a. developing a Training Plan together with the Trainee and the Mentor (of the Host Organisation);
 - b. to supply the Mentor and the Trainee all the information they require to facilitate one another's work;
 - c. to hear and analyse any suggestions presented to it by the Trainee or the Mentor in relation to the working model of the traineeship and/or of the Degree Programme itself;
 - d. to participate in the final assessment panel of the Trainee, within previously defined parameters;
 - e. to meet once per month with the Trainee to discuss the progress of the traineeship, suggesting strategies and innovations, helping to remove barriers to the success of the Traineeship and generally providing strategies to valorise the Traineeship;
- c) to take out student insurance on behalf of the Trainee, providing accident cover for the journey between the Trainee's usual place of residence and the premises of the Host Organisation where the training takes place, and accident cover within the Host Organisation during the training period.

2. The Host Organisation is obliged:

- a) to provide the working conditions required to carry out the activities stipulated for the traineeship;
- b) to nominate a Traineeship **Mentor**, who will be responsible for:
 - a. integrating the trainee into the Host Organisation, informing the trainee of his responsibilities for the traineeship period;
 - b. accompanying the Trainee in understanding the codes of conduct and good practice in the Host Organisation, motivating him to suggest workable ideas within the organisation and to develop approved ideas towards promoting the Trainee's professional "know-how";
 - c. to participate in the development of the Training Plan and to perform the Final Assessment of the Trainee;
 - d. to inform the Trainee about information or material on which professional confidentiality must be observed;
 - e. to present the Trainee with the final grade for the Traineeship.

3. The Trainee is obliged:

- a) to carry out the Traineeship that is the object of the present Agreement;
- b) to show interest in learning and carrying out the tasks confided in him within the context of the Traineeship;
- c) to be punctual and assiduous in relation to the working hours established by the Host Organisation;
- d) to treat the members of the Host Organisation and people related with it with consideration and respect;
- e) to follow the instructions given to him by the Traineeship Mentor;
- f) to fulfil the norms of environmental management, safety and discipline in



place within the Host Organisation;

- g) to respect the regulations in place in the Host Organisation and the legal norms in relation to Professional confidentiality.

Clause 4
Execution of the Agreement

1. The results of the Traineeship will be set down by the Trainee in a Final Report, which should be agreed upon by the Supervisor and the Mentor.
2. The Training Plan, which should be analysed and discussed openly by those concerned, and which may be the object of a public debate, cannot contain confidential material.

Clause 5
Ownership of Rights

1. Should products or innovative systems, subject to legal protection under Industrial Property and/or Author's Rights, result from the Traineeship mentioned in the present Agreement, the ownership of the respective rights fall jointly to the Host Organisation and UA/DEGEL.
2. The rights attributed to UA/DEGEL do not prejudice the right of the Trainee to be designated as owner within the context of a request for protection of invention or industrial creation.
3. Any financial benefits obtained from the exploitation of rights referred to in the previous paragraphs will be shared between UA/DEGEL, the Host Organisation and the Trainee in a percentage to be agreed upon.
4. For the purpose of the present Agreement, financial benefits are those that result from the exploration, creation or invention, after deducting the costs inherent to the research to be carried out and commercialisation of the creation or invention as well as any charges or taxes due.
5. The signatories are bound to the obligation of confidentiality relative to the referred products or systems.

Clause 6
Assessment of the Traineeship

1. At the end of the Traineeship, within a time-scale to be defined by the Supervisor and the Mentor, the Trainee should present a Final Report, which should contain a description of the activities carried out in the Traineeship and a reflection thereupon.
2. The assessment of the performance of the Trainee in the activities carried out in the Traineeship will be carried out by the Supervisor and the Mentor. Should the evaluations be negative, the Trainee should be invited to repeat the Traineeship.
3. The Trainee will be assessed by a Panel made up of the Supervisor, the Mentor and the Professional Placements Coordinator of the Master Degree Programme in Management.
4. The assessment of the Traineeship and the Final Report will be made by the Panel referred to in point 3 in an interview to be held in the place where the Traineeship took place or at the University of Aveiro.



tel. +351 234 270 361
fax +351 234 270 215

campus universitário de santiago
3810-183 aveiro
portugal

Clause 7
*Validity Period of
the Agreement*

The present Agreement comes into effect on the date of its signature and ends after the final assessment of the Assessment Panel referred to in n.º 3 of Clause 6.

Clause 8
*Resolution of
Disputes*

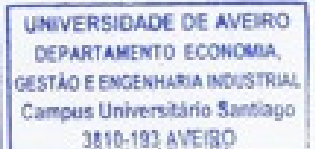
1. Any disputes arising from the present Agreement, namely in relation to its interpretation, integration and application will be decided upon under the terms of the law in place in an arbitrational forum composed of three referees.
2. Each of the signatories to the Agreement will nominate one referee; the nominees will nominate among themselves a fourth referee, who will preside over the forum.
3. Should no agreement be reached, the fourth referee will be designated by the Court of Appeal with jurisdiction over Aveiro.

Signed in triplicate on 17th September 2010

For the University of Aveiro, Department of Economics, Management and Industrial Engineering


The Head of Department


(Prof.ª Doutora Helena Maria Pereira Pinto Dourado e Alvelos)



For the Host Organisation

Legal Representative of the Host Organisation


(Monika Nagy)

The Trainee


(Márcia Cristina Alves de Araújo)

facebook Search

Toluna

Company

Basic Information

Founded 2000

About The site that lets you voice your opinion and find out what other people think! www.toluna.com

Company Overview Toluna is an online community dedicated to making your voice heard!

Tell the world's leading providers of products and services what you think and earn rewards by participating in surveys.

You can also express your opinion through polls and opinions you create directly on Toluna!
... See more

Products www.toluna.com

Website <http://www.toluna.com>

Toluna Page in English – Source: <http://www.facebook.com/Toluna>

facebook Search

Toluna em Português

Company

Basic Information

Founded 2000

About O site www.toluna.com é um lugar onde pode partilhar as suas opiniões e pode descobrir o que os outros pensam!

Description Toluna é uma comunidade online que deixa a sua voz ser ouvida!

Diga a um dos líderes mundiais no fornecimento de produtos e serviços o que pensa e ganhe recompensas ao responder a inquéritos.

Pode ainda expressar a sua opinião através de tópicos e votos criados directamente no site da Toluna!
... See more

Website <http://toluna.com>

Likes and interests

Likes eMarketer, Facebook Brasil, Liga Portuguesa Contra o Cancro, Descobrir PORTUGAL, Toluna, Brazil, Toluna Netherlands, Toluna España, Toluna Deutschland, Toluna France, Facebook Marketing Solutions, Pastéis de Belém, Toluna Asia, Toluna Italia, Facebook and 3 more

Toluna Page in Portuguese – Source: <http://on.fb.me/rWgPEp>



1. What is Toluna?
2. The new Social Rewards points system
3. Creating content
4. Adding video and pictures to your content
5. Polls
6. Opinion Topics and Opinions
7. The Toluna widgets
8. Surveys
9. Interacting with your fellow Toluna members
10. Personal options and settings
11. Rewards

1.1 The Toluna Community

1.2 What can Toluna members do on the site

The Toluna Community

Toluna - the world's fastest growing poll and opinion community!

Toluna is your one stop site for everything polls & opinion related; if you're looking for an online community that allows you to create and participate in online polls and surveys and gives you the tools and audience to voice your opinions look no further - **Toluna** is the place for you!

[Next »](#)

Toluna's Tutorial. Source: <http://us.toluna.com/tour/Site/index.aspx>

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

Source: <http://us.toluna.com/help>

Additional information about Toluna

1. [Where can I find additional information about Toluna?](#)

Toluna Overview

1. [What is the Toluna Community?](#)
2. [What are Toluna points?](#)
3. [What are Social Rewards?](#)
4. [How do I become a member?](#)
5. [Is registration free?](#)
6. [Why should I become a Toluna member?](#)

Member status - my account and profile settings

1. [How do I change my email address and password?](#)
2. [How can I edit my personal information?](#)
3. [How can I set my personal language, poll and opinion preferences?](#)
4. [How can I terminate my account?](#)

Privacy

1. [What is done with the information I filled out when signing up?](#)
2. [Why do you ask questions about age, income, and other personal information?](#)

Creating polls and opinions

1. [What kind of content can I create on Toluna?](#)
2. [Do I have to be a registered member to create polls and opinions?](#)
3. [Are there any content restrictions?](#)
4. [Do I have to choose a category and enter tags for my polls and opinions?](#)
5. [Is there a limit to the number of polls and opinions I can create?](#)

Polls: options and settings

1. [How do I create a poll?](#)
2. [Can I customize my poll's size and layout?](#)
3. [Can I limit voting on my polls to registered members only?](#)
4. [Can I add an image or a video clip to a poll?](#)
5. [Can users select more than one answer to a poll question?](#)
6. [What does the "skip sign-in option for voters" option do?](#)
7. [How can I view poll results in detail?](#)
8. [Some polls only display results and cannot be voted on- why?](#)
9. [Is there a limit to the number of answers for each poll?](#)
10. [How can I view the polls I've created?](#)
11. [What are sponsored polls?](#)

Opinion topics and opinions: options and settings

1. [What is an opinion topic?](#)
2. [How do I create an opinion topic?](#)
3. [Will I earn points for my opinion?](#)
4. [Can I copy an opinion from another member or another source?](#)
5. [Can I customize my opinion topic's size and layout?](#)
6. [Can I add an image or a video clip to an opinion topic?](#)
7. [Can I set a minimum length for opinions left on the topic I created?](#)
8. [Adding your opinion to an existing topic](#)
9. [How can I express my view on other members' opinions?](#)
10. [How can I view the opinions I've created?](#)

Points and rewards

1. [Do points have to be used within a certain time limit?](#)
2. [How can I check my points balance?](#)
3. [Who is eligible for rewards?](#)
4. [How can I spend my points?](#)
5. [How long will it take to receive my check once I redeem my points?\(US members only\)](#)
6. [How often does the cash sweepstakes take place?](#)
7. [How will I know I was selected as a winner in the cash sweepstakes?](#)
8. [How does the point system work?](#)
9. [Why has the reward program for profile \(personal interest survey\) completion changed?](#)

Participating in surveys

1. [What if I have technical difficulties with a survey, and why does this happen?](#)
2. [Why is the survey full when I just received the invitation a short time ago?](#)
3. [What are personal interest surveys and where can I find them?](#)
4. [How can I participate in surveys?](#)
5. [How many points will I earn for my participation?](#)
6. [How long does it take to complete a survey?](#)
7. [Will Toluna try to sell me something?](#)
8. [Sometimes it seems as though I've answered a lot of questions only to find out I don't qualify for the whole survey. Why?](#)
9. [Why does it take longer to receive credit for some surveys than others?](#)

Exporting Toluna widgets

1. [What are widgets?](#)
2. [How do I export a poll or opinion to my blog or site?](#)

Inviting friends to Toluna

1. [How can I invite friends to join Toluna?](#)
2. [How many points will I earn for inviting a friend?](#)

Contacting Toluna & support

1. [I've forgotten my password, what can I do?](#)
2. [How can I contact Toluna?](#)

Additional information about Toluna

Where can I find additional information about Toluna?

Before reviewing the FAQ, it is highly recommended that you review and familiarize yourself with the Toluna tutorial, which contains detailed information and tips for Toluna members. You can also visit the Toluna blogs at <http://usblog.toluna.com/> or <http://cablog.toluna.com/> for updates and the latest news.

Toluna Overview

What is the Toluna Community?

Toluna is an online community dedicated to making your voice heard! Tell the world's leading providers of products and services what you think and earn rewards by participating in surveys. Express yourself through the use of Toluna's polls, opinions and reviews; let other people know what you think, and find out if they think the same by including your polls in your own personal blog.

What are Toluna points?

Points are a form of virtual currency, awarded to Toluna members for various actions (such as participation in surveys) and for the popularity of the content (polls and opinion topics) they create. When you sign up for Toluna, you will receive 500 points to welcome you to the site. When you have earned at least 60,000 points, you may redeem your points for a cash reward. You can also choose to be rewarded with additional entries to our monthly drawing for just 500 points per entry.

What are Social Rewards?

The idea behind the Social Rewards points system is that members of the Toluna community are rewarded for the popularity and quality of their content, which is measured by the other members of the community. For a detailed overview of Social Rewards rules, please consult our tutorial.

How do I become a member?

To sign up for Toluna simply click on "Register". You will be asked to provide some basic information during your account creation, as well as some information about yourself in order to participate in our surveys. After you sign up you will be sent a confirmation email in order to finalize your registration. You must click the link in this email to confirm your registration to the Toluna community.

Is registration free?

Registration for Toluna is entirely free! You will never be asked for any payment. On the contrary, it is you who earns points that can be exchanged for cash rewards or cash sweepstakes entries by creating polls and opinion topics, and by taking part in our surveys.

Why should I become a Toluna member?

Becoming a member lets you take part in surveys and allows you to create your own polls and opinion topics. You can accumulate points redeemable for cash rewards, and you could win up to \$2,500 in our monthly drawing!

Member status - my account and profile settings

How do I change my email address and password?

Login, then from the "You" menu, select "Your account"; from the right side menu select "Login information". Enter your new email address and/or password and then click submit. You will be sent an email containing a verification link, which you will need to click in order to complete the process.

How can I edit my personal information?

Editing your personal information: login, then from the "You" menu select "Your account"; from the right side menu select "Personal information", make the necessary changes and then click submit.

How can I set my personal language, poll and opinion preferences?

From the navigation menu, select "My account", then make your selection from the menu on the left. Since there are polls and opinion topics in many languages on Toluna, you can limit the ones which are displayed to the languages you speak. Please note that the language filter does not change the site's language or limit you from creating polls in other languages. You can also

choose not to see polls you have already voted on as well as opinion topics you have already posted your opinion on.

How can I terminate my account?

To terminate your account you must first login, then from the "You" menu select "Your account". At the bottom menu displayed on the left side of the page you will find the "Cancel your account" link. Before your account is terminated you will be asked to confirm. Please note that final termination of your account may take a few weeks, during which you may still receive emails from Toluna.

Privacy

What is done with the information I filled out when signing up?

Your response data is stored on our secured server that allows only Toluna to call upon those panelists who match specific criteria to participate in surveys. This query is completely automated and panelists are contacted via e-mail by Toluna to participate in our secure surveys. All responses are held in aggregate, which means that individual responses are not linked to personally identifiable information. The information you provide will never be used to advertise or sell to you. You are not responsible for buying any product or service at any time, nor will any company solicit you as a result of joining the Toluna panel community.

Why do you ask questions about age, income, and other personal information?

This information is used to match panelists with specific survey requirements. In some cases, our clients require feedback from people in a certain income bracket who have children, for example. Please be assured that this information is securely kept and strictly confidential. See our privacy policy for more details. The more information you provide, the greater your chances of receiving invitations to surveys you may qualify for, and the more opportunities you may receive to earn cash rewards.

Creating polls and opinions

What kind of content can I create on Toluna?

There are two types of content you can create on Toluna: polls and opinion topics. Polls are closed questions with a predetermined number of possible answers. Opinions are meant for use when you wish to discuss a topic in an open fashion. Other members can leave their own opinion and feedback regarding your opinion topic, and you can leave your opinion on other members' topics. For a detailed explanation on how to create polls and opinion topics, please consult our tutorial.

Do I have to be a registered member to create polls and opinions?

Yes; registration is required in order to create new content.

Are there any content restrictions?

Users are responsible for their actions and the content they place on the site. Inappropriate or offensive polls can be flagged by other members and will be subject to deletion by the site moderators, and may result in termination of your account. Inappropriate material includes any remarks of a xenophobic, racist, pornographic or defamatory nature; for a detailed explanation of content restrictions please consult our site terms.

Do I have to choose a category and enter tags for my polls and opinions?

A category and sub category must be chosen; tags are optional. However, we strongly recommend the use of tags; this allows other users with similar interests to find and participate in your polls and opinions.

Is there a limit to the number of polls and opinions I can create?

No, there is no limit at this time; in fact, the more content you create, the more points you can earn within the Social Rewards program restrictions. However, there is a 15,000 points per month limitation on points earned via Social Rewards.

Polls: options and settings

How do I create a poll?

From the "Create" menu select "Create a poll". You will be redirected to the poll creation wizard where you will be guided through the process.

Can I customize my poll's size and layout?

You can modify the poll widget's size for use on external sites; when creating your poll simply enter the desired width and height under the preview widget.

Can I limit voting on my polls to registered members only?

Yes; when you create your poll select the "Only registered users can vote" option. Selecting this option means your poll's results will be more detailed and better demographic information will be available.

Can I add an image or a video clip to a poll?

Images can be attached to your poll either by searching Google Images, directly from your computer or from any webpage; videos can be attached from YouTube only. For a detailed explanation on how to attach images and videos to your polls please consult our tutorial.

Can users select more than one answer to a poll question?

Yes! Simply select "Multiple choice answers" when creating your poll.

What does the "skip sign-in option for voters" option do?

When non registered users vote on a poll on Toluna.com they are prompted to register within the widget. This stage can be skipped by selecting the "skip sign-in option for voters" during the poll creation process.

How can I view poll results in detail?

Simply click on the poll question; you will be redirected to a detailed breakdown of the poll results.

Some polls only display results and cannot be voted on- why?

The poll may have expired, or you may have already voted on it (some polls are limited to one vote per user).

Is there a limit to the number of answers for each poll?

There is no limit; however, we recommend keeping the number of answers to a minimum.

How can I view the polls I've created?

From the "You" menu select "Your public profile"; here you will be able to view all the content you created.

What are sponsored polls?

Sponsored polls consist of 1-5 questions and will earn you 15-150 points for your participation. Sponsored poll appear on the home page, and can also be found by selecting "Sponsored" from the "Explore menu".

Opinion topics and opinions: options and settings

What is an opinion topic?

Opinion topics are meant to be used when you wish to discuss a subject in an open fashion. Other members can leave their own opinion and feedback regarding your opinion topic, thus creating an ongoing discussion.

How do I create an opinion topic?

From the "Create" menu select "Create an opinion topic". You will be redirected to the opinion topic creation wizard where you will be guided through the process.

Will I earn points for my opinion?

Yes; if your opinion is 80 words or longer, you will earn 100 points. Points for opinions are awarded every few weeks, after they have been reviewed by the Toluna moderators in order to ensure they are not duplicates and that no other form of cheating was attempted. There is a limit of 5,000 points per month on points awarded for opinions.

Can I copy an opinion from another member or another source?

This is strictly forbidden. The content of the opinion you leave is strictly personal; in no case whatsoever can your opinion come from another member or website. If we determine that a member has copied opinions from other sources, or that they have posted the same opinion on multiple topics, their account will be subject to cancellation and their points will be forfeit.

Can I customize my opinion topic's size and layout?

Yes, but you can only modify the opinion widget's width, and it will take effect ONLY if you are going to export your opinion topic to a blog or any other external site. If the opinion topic stays on Toluna it will be displayed in a fixed size. There are 3 preset widths as well as a custom width which can be selected under the preview widget. You can also select the number of opinions you want to display.

Can I add an image or a video clip to an opinion topic?

Images can be attached to your opinion topic either by searching Google Images, directly from your computer or from any webpage; videos can be attached from YouTube only. For a detailed explanation on how to attach images and videos to your opinion topics, please consult our tutorial.

Can I set a minimum length for opinions left on the topic I created?

Yes; the minimum length is set during the opinion topic creation process. The default minimum length is 20 words, but you can set the minimum at 10,40,60 or 80 words.

Adding your opinion to an existing topic

You can add your opinion to an existing topic by clicking on the topic; this will redirect you to the opinion page where you can add your own opinion. You can also type your opinion directly into the opinion widget.

How can I express my view on other members' opinions?

Under each opinion you will see the "agree" buttons; if you agree with the opinion, click "yes", otherwise click "no". You can also sort the opinion on any topic so that they are displayed in order of concurrence; simply click "Sort by agreement" on the top right side of the opinions.

How can I view the opinions I've created?

From the "You" menu select "Your public profile"; here you will be able to view all the content you created.

Points and rewards

Do points have to be used within a certain time limit?

Yes. When points are credited to your account they will remain valid for one year. If after this period the points have not been used, they will automatically expire and be deleted from your account. Your points will never expire all at once; instead points will expire one year after you originally earned them (for example: if you've earned points on the 15th of March 2009, they will be removed on the 31st of March 2010 if they are still in your account). This deduction will always occur at the end of the month.

How can I check my points balance?

From the "You" menu select "Your points". The points page allows you to view the actions that have earned you points, your current balance and how you've spent your points so far.

Who is eligible for rewards?

At this time, only residents of the US and Canada are eligible for rewards.

How can I spend my points?

You can spend your points by selecting "Get Rewards" from the "Rewards" menu; here you can see the full list of rewards available in your country.

How long will it take to receive my check once I redeem my points?(US members only)

Please allow up to 8 weeks for check delivery. When you redeem your points for a cash reward paid by check, you will be asked to confirm your postal address. Please make sure we have your correct address to avoid any delays in delivery.

How often does the cash sweepstakes take place?

This drawing is held once every month, for a total of 12 times a year.

How will I know I was selected as a winner in the cash sweepstakes?

Winners will receive notification requesting postal address verification and an affidavit of eligibility so that a check can be mailed.

How does the point system work?

We value our community members' opinions, and to show our appreciation, we offer several ways for our members to earn points that automatically convert to cash rewards upon redemption:

- **Survey Completion:** Earn at least 1,000 points, **or more**, for each survey you qualify for and complete. Points awarded vary by survey.
- **Survey Participation:** When a panelist attempts to take a survey, but does not qualify* for the study, he or she is still rewarded with an entry to our NEW, monthly cash sweepstakes offering more chances to win, with three lucky winners of \$2,500, \$1,000, and \$500, plus two prizes of \$250!
- **Personal Interest Survey (Profile) Completion:** Panelists can **earn additional points** by completing the member profiles. Each completed profile is worth an additional 100 points!
- **Joining the Community:** As a thank you for joining, all new panelists are entered into our NEW, monthly cash sweepstakes offering more chances to win, with three lucky winners of \$2,500, \$1,000, and \$500, plus two prizes of \$250!
- **Social Rewards:** you can also earn points for the popularity of polls and opinion topics you create! See Toluna Overview for more information, or [click here](#).

Points awarded for survey completion, personal interest surveys (formerly called profiles), and other participation on Toluna.com are awarded in point values where 3,000 points = \$1. Points automatically convert to cash values whenever you request a payment. You can request payment when you have reached a minimum account balance of \$20, or 60,000 points. Payments will be made in multiples of \$20. For example, if you have a balance of \$22, and request a check, you will receive payment for \$20, and have \$2 remaining in your account.

*Some research studies seek to gather opinions from people in a certain age group or who have prior experience with a certain product, for example. Panelists who do not meet the qualifications will still be rewarded with an entry to our monthly cash sweepstakes. [Click here to view the Sweepstake rules](#).

Why has the reward program for profile (personal interest survey) completion changed?

We took the previous group of longer personal interest surveys and re-grouped them into 15 (mostly) shorter ones to make completion as painless as possible for our members. The more personal interest surveys you complete, the better your chances of being selected for surveys that you qualify for. You'll be awarded 100 points for each personal interest survey you complete. Unlike the previous bonus dollars awarded for personal interest survey completion, the points you earn are not tied to future survey completion. Any bonus dollars previously accumulated will remain in your account until redemption or expiration.

Participating in surveys

What if I have technical difficulties with a survey, and why does this happen?

We do a variety of surveys for many clients. Some of these surveys are programmed by us; others are programmed by our clients and hosted on their systems. A major factor in technical issues is that survey respondents are using a wide variety of operating systems, browsers, Internet connection types, and hardware, and not all are necessarily compatible with the technology of all surveys that may be available. And, of course, sometimes, human error is a factor. If you encounter a technical problem with a survey, usually, if you wait a while, then try again later, the problem will be resolved. If you are still seeing an error after waiting a while, please report it to us at <http://toluna.com/contactus> and note the Survey ID. We apologize for any inconvenience caused by technical errors and will do our best to get them resolved.

Why is the survey full when I just received the invitation a short time ago?

Sometimes this happens if a survey is generating greater than expected response. Also, sometimes, the invitations aren't necessarily delivered right away by your email service provider. We apologize for any inconvenience you may experience and thank you for your participation; please know that more survey opportunities will become available.

What are personal interest surveys and where can I find them?

Your personal interest surveys (formerly called "profiles") can be accessed by clicking "You", then "Interest surveys". Personal interest surveys are designed to allow us to better personalize the service we provide you; completing your personal interest surveys means you will receive more and better targeted survey invitations. Interest surveys are divided into three categories: surveys

you haven't answered yet, surveys you answered but have since been updated and require your attention, and surveys you haven't answered yet. For each completed personal interest survey you are awarded 100 points.

How can I participate in surveys?

Simply sign up for Toluna, opt-in for surveys and check your email inbox regularly. If a survey matches your profile, you will receive an invitation by email. The more up to date your personal interest surveys are, the more chances you have of being invited to take part in surveys you qualify to take. If you did not opt-in for surveys when you signed up, you can do so by selecting "Your account" from the "You" menu.

How many points will I earn for my participation?

For each survey you will earn (depending on its length) between 1,000 and 20,000 points.

How long does it take to complete a survey?

Survey length is strictly dependent on the study.

Will Toluna try to sell me something?

No; under no circumstances will surveys be used to sell or promote a product, nor will you receive any advertising or promotional material as a result of joining the Toluna community.

Sometimes it seems as though I've answered a lot of questions only to find out I don't qualify for the whole survey. Why?

This is because some surveys are looking for a very specific group of people who meet a very narrow set of demographic or other criteria. Sometimes, determining whether someone qualifies for a survey takes just a few questions; other times, it may take more questions. Please know we appreciate your participation and that even when you don't qualify, your participation helps contribute to the success of the study.

To increase the chances that you will qualify for future online surveys, complete all of the member personal interest surveys. Remember, you are awarded 100 points for each personal interest survey you complete!

[Click here to complete additional personal interest surveys.](#)

Why does it take longer to receive credit for some surveys than others?

The timing of credits for points or sweepstakes entries depends on the survey. For some surveys, credits are applied very quickly or within a few days; for others, the credits are applied after the survey has closed.

Exporting Toluna widgets

What are widgets?

Widgets are commonplace and are used by bloggers, social network users and owners of personal web sites. Widgets are data files that can be embedded into a site's HTML code and are typically displayed in a small viewing pane on the site. They are most often used to display customized or personalized content on a web site, such as to share photos or music recommendations, and of course, polls and opinions!

How do I export a poll or opinion to my blog or site?

Once you've finished creating your poll or opinion, you will receive html code that can be placed directly into your blog or site. You can retrieve the html code at any time by going to the poll/opinion page and clicking the "Tools" tab.

Inviting friends to Toluna

How can I invite friends to join Toluna?

From the "You" menu select "Invite a friend to Toluna". You can then use the form to invite friends directly from your various email accounts.

How many points will I earn for inviting a friend?

Each time you invite a friend, your account will be credited with 500 points once your friend completes the registration to join the Toluna community.

Contacting Toluna & support

I've forgotten my password, what can I do?

At the top of the home page, click on "Forgot your password"; you will be asked to provide the email address you used at registration, and your password will be sent to that address.