

# Do You Need to Pay for Online Community?

*Emergent Research Forum papers – Research in Progress*

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## Abstract (Required)

Despite the importance and benefits of the online community, there is a lack of discussions in the literature about whether it is necessary for a firm to sponsor its online community economically. This study aims to answer the following research questions: what will affect consumers' participation potential in new product development? Could leaders' responses enhance consumers' involvement in online communities? How will brand interact with customers' participation potential in innovation? An online survey instrument is employed and data is collected from two online communities. Structural Equation Modeling is used to assess the research model. We find that firms are not necessary to sponsor its online brand community economically. In addition, brand trust and brand knowledge play different roles for company-initiated and consumer-initiated online brand communities. Furthermore, we find that both brand knowledge and brand trust have significant mediation effects between leaders' responses and consumers' participation potentials in new product developments.

## Keywords (Required)

Online community, brand trust, brand trust, innovation.