

Day 1: Emerging Media Training

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You can access the links and overview of the [Day 1 Training](#) or the [Day 2 Training](#).

Introduction: For those who are interested in my career they can check out the [About section](#) of my [teaching site](#) or the [About section](#) of my [personal site](#). They each tell different sides to the same story.

Framing: The Case Studies: This section introduces the idea of targeting your audience online and the idea of building interactions online. Before you make any move in cyberspace, you need to understand your audience and then build components for those people. These aren't difficult steps, but they are necessary.

- a. **P&G's BeingGirl.com:** One of the nation's largest marketing firms decided to pull much of its funding for American soap operas and shift that money into the development of digital communities. One of its first attempts: [Being Girl](#). This introduces the idea of *The Groundswell's* SocioTechnographic profile, a way of thinking about the kinds of people who exist online.
- b. **New Line Cinema's *Lord of the Ring*:** After spending \$300 million to secure the rights for all three movies, NLC embarked on a bold public relations initiative that gave many of the movie assets away to its most strident fans. Those who built the largest online fan communities were then flown to the set of the movie. It marked a pivotal change in the way public relations could be done in the digital world.
- c. **Pepsi Refresh:** In 2010, Pepsi eschewed the traditional Super Bowl advertisement and pumped \$15 million into a social media marketing campaign. My former student Amanda Clark breaks down what went wrong with this particular campaign (e.g. abandoning the Hispanic market, allowing people to game votes) despite a well-crafted campaign.

Part 1: Identifying the Types of People: There is a marvelous book, *The Groundswell*, written by Josh Bernoff and Charlene Li of Forrester Research. These two analysts do an amazingly thorough job breaking down the types of people on the Web, presenting those to businesses in a way that's easily digestible. I break up their groupings into two groups:

- a. **Builders:** Creators, Critics, and Conversationalists are the people who make things about your identity, critique what you do, and talk about it with other folks.
 - a. **Creators:** These people are making things (e.g. blogs, videos, audio) and posting them on their own sites
 - b. **Critics:** These are people with built-in audiences who criticize and rate what you do
 - c. **Conversationalist:** These are people who gather information and share that out with their rather large social networks

- b. Watchers:** Collectors, Joiners, and Spectators are the people who provide an audience for those builders, the people who oftentimes make up the bulk of your audience.
- a. Collectors: These are people who gather information, either through their own websites, or through social sites such as Delicious. (I have shared my favorite links using Delicious as an example. You can find them on the Day 1 Presentation.)
 - b. Joiners: These are people who "Like" pages on Facebook, for instance, or who gather in digital, social places. Finding these enclaves helps you build an audience.
 - c. Spectators: These are people who are happy to simply sit back and watch what is happening. You can track these people with Views on YouTube, for instance, or page views on your website.

Part 2: Identifying Objectives: If we return to *The Groundswell*, Bernoff and Li break down the five objectives companies could have as they begin to develop their digital strategy. However, companies should be very careful not to over-reach as they begin. The best strategy is to take one objective and apply it to each platform. In other words, if Twitter is a customer service platform its best not to mix in sales or other objectives. Customers get confused, and your strategy begins to unravel.

- a. Listening: Think of this as market research. Once you identify power users, or people within the SocioTechnographic Profile you want to reach, you can set up either a private community where you can prompt posts or you can monitor what the most prolific are doing.
- b. Talking: I've included a host of links in this section, however, Southwest Airlines and GE are each handling their blogs in distinct manner. Southwest is letting its down-to-earth corporate image shine through, and GE is trying to educate people on its alternate energy and sustainable earth programs (each of which is largely unknown in the U.S.)
- c. Energizing: Dell is reaching out to the IT market, one it already has a large foothold in, by blogging about news and information around its products. It's conversational, not salesman-like. The idea: build trust by providing solid information to people pre-disposed to purchase the company's products
- d. Service: Comcast derives its value by enabling a team of workers to handle multiple customer service complaints, thus driving down its cost per call.
- e. Embracing: Starbucks is pushing its product development out to its most loyal customers, offering them a way to submit and vote on what the company should be providing.

Part 3: Incentives: Game mechanics help us understand how we play and interact with each other within interactive environments. As we build communities, it's important to understand what this looks like online. In "The Right Problem" I examined how three user-generated communities practically managed to keep their digital spaces running. However, I thought it important to examine the underlying ideas behind all communities as well.

Back in the late 1970s, two men -- Roy Trubshaw and Richard Bartle -- created the [Multi-User Dungeon games](#). The persistent text adventures were the first multi-player game-like stories on the Internet. After nearly two decades of creating and managing these games, Bartle explored in great detail the 4 types of interactions he saw within these digital environments and how game designers (or in this case, community managers) could influence those. In the modern world, managers handle these interactions through "game mechanics," which are the tools of influence.

- Achievers: These people want badges. They like to overcome challenges and receive public rewards
- Explorers: These people like to take things apart. They want to know how systems work. They want people to come to them to find these things out.
- Socializers: These people want to gather information and direct people to answers. They are the social search and glue of your community.
- Killers: These are people who like to muck up your system. They try to break whatever you've created.

Part 4: Measures: The most often asked question is how to measure the success of communities. What we discussed in this section how to add both quantified results (e.g. numbers such as Likes) with qualitative results (e.g. interviews, representative examples). Before you can measure, you first have to understand what the Objectives from Part 2 measure.

- Listening: The measurement comes from identifying power users and culling qualitative information from conversations, either privately or publicly
- Talking: As with traditional campaigns, awareness requires lots of spectators, joiners, and collectors. You can measure how many people have come across these spaces, and from there develop qualitative measures.
- Energizing: You can begin to add qualitative and quantitative measures by developing Point-of-Sale measures through a corporate blog such as Dell's. For instance: you can offer discounts or pricing measures to those who are signed in to your system (much like Amazon's affiliates program).
- Service: This offers the most direct quantitative measure as you can tie a cost-per-call with the reach of the customer service media you create.
- Energizing: This offers a direct quantitative measure as Starbucks demonstrated by allowing people to sign in, allowing people to vote, and allowing people to actively contribute. You will get a number of countable measures that stretch beyond a simple Like.

Part 5: Parsing Facebook: In this section, we examined what Facebook pages dedicated to just 1 of the 5 Objectives listed in Part 2 would look like. The one that interests me the most is LiveScribe, a direct-sale Facebook page built around the community of business users who use this tool to capture information in a better, more efficient way. These three pages, though, give a very good overview of what you can do when you narrow your focus to one Objective. Then if you can address the Achievers, Socializers, and Explorers while also engaging in relevant community management ideas (covered in Day 2), you can build a vibrant community.

Tool: How To Listen With Technology: In this section, I've created some basic tutorial videos on how you can use Twitter and Google Reader to build listening folders full of information published on the Web. You can use this information as market research (listening), to create your own informational hub (talking), or to respond to what people are saying (support). The key is wrapping your head around how these basic tools can be used to help keep your hand on the pulse of the Web.

Tool: 100 Different Search Engines: This is a link to the various search engines that exist online. It's English-oriented, but it's a start to finding the kinds of search engines that are available to find people.

Links: These are the Delicious links I use to store relevant and interesting articles I come across online. I update these weekly.

Day 2: Advanced Digital Strategies and Tactics

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Online Community Notes: Returning to *The Invisible Gorilla*, we remember that sometimes what we learn about digital worlds runs counter-intuitive to what we believe. Two ideas stand out here:

- People are more likely to join online communities around an interest or hobby they have, and then move that interest into real life. In other words, if you want to build a strong online space, do that around activities and interests...not brands and identities; and
- The best way to diffuse information throughout a system is through Weak Ties, those built around an interest or hobby. Companies that try to form Strong Ties with customers (e.g. getting customers to invest lots of time with its digital properties) are actually creating an information problem as it limits the growth of the community.

Some Articles: It's important to frame how we view the Internet, which means occasionally taking time to look at some statistics about the Web and how people are using it. I've posted a few articles that give framing facts. Here are my favorites:

- 35 hours of video are uploaded to YouTube every minute
- 70% of YouTube's traffic comes from outside the United States
- The two reasons people go to corporate websites -- price shopping, discount shopping -- are the two things companies believe are least important to its customers
- 70% of U.S. customers spend 13% more on sites with good customer service

There are countless other framing facts, but what I take from these is that you must have good community managers patrolling whatever site you build, you must look to create multimedia content, and you must be willing to discuss what your customers want to hear.

Branding + Advertising: This section is a series of stories that came out of the [South by Southwest Interactive conference](#), one of the largest global creator/technology conferences in the world. The point of these articles: everyone is struggling with the issues you're grappling with now. Even if you feel behind, it's good to remember that we're still very early in this process.

Social Media + Social Good: One of the surest ways to test the hypothesis of social media within a company is by engaging in a philanthropic event. The first big social media campaign tried by a major corporation was the P+G Tide campaign, which is linked on the presentation. The company organized a 4-hour charity auction, pitting cities against each other (and individuals within cities against each other) to raise money by selling retro Tide t-shirts.

Also included are links to the social good causes that spontaneously arose at South by Southwest this year (along with a keynote address by the TOMS shoes founder). The point is that these can be put together quickly and easily, while providing good coverage and metrics for companies hoping to quantify how memes move through social media.

The Red Cross (which also shows how to handle a social media gaffe) does an excellent job reaching out and promoting its works.

Game Mechanics: Throughout the next few years, we're going to be hearing much about The Game Layer, which means finding ways to add competitive and socializing events (re: Bartle's Taxonomy) into places we don't normally associate with games.

There are a few companies -- SCVGER, Groundcrew -- working to create tools to allow people to tap into this market. This is the flow of technology: from idea, to simple tools, to complex tools and ecosystem. We're at the simple tools phase. Companies are tinkering around with the idea of games within their communities. More radically (and thanks to mobile computing), we're seeing the development of companies like The Go Game, which are offline communities or Chore Wars, which requires you to take measures in real life and then bring them into digital space.

All of this supports Bartle's ideas about game play and what must be part of any community in order for it to thrive.

Community Management: There are simple rules for managing a community, but businesses must first make a commitment to including the community at the executive level. That means giving the community manager decision-making abilities. That's how information is diffused through your business. After that, your community managers simply do what customer service representatives have been doing for generations: making it pleasant and useful to participate.

Within this section are two articles that I wrote: the first breaks down how Slashdot, Metafilter, and BoingBoing -- two of the largest online communities and the third one of the most active -- manage the river-like flow of information as it cascades through the system. At news organizations in America, it would take dozens of people to manage these things. At technology-based communities, much of the work is diffused through the crowd. This is a hallmark of good community management: scale. You can't simply have one person sitting atop a vast flow of information.

There's also an article that breaks down some of the very simple rules required for community management.

Crowdsourcing Your Content: An important component to any community is developing the Builders -- creators, critics, conversationalists -- and encouraging them to create content for you. This isn't always easy. I've included a few groups that have done a good job by using game mechanics, good community managers, and time. There's simply no substitute for how these kinds of communities are developed.

It's important to remember that when you're building a community and you're attempting to get people to contribute: people huddle around ideas and interests, not brands.

Parsing Twitter: While Twitter may not be big in Budapest, the lessons learned from the best corporate accounts can help you identify the ways in which you want to approach building your community. However, it's also important to recognize that the ecosystem for Twitter -- the number of third-party software applications that sit atop the Twitter platform -- is complex. You can do just about anything you want with Twitter. That means it's important to *think* before you act. Choose an objective, examine the software available within the ecosystem, and then explore the ways you want to build your account.

We've discussed the Comcast twitter account (@ComcastCares) on Day 1, examining how they route customer complaints to answers, saving time on person-to-person phone calls.

@MotoDeals, Motorola's Twitter account, answers the two questions people have most when they come to a corporate site: pricing and discount (along with tips for how you can use their hardware in novel ways). If you don't want your website to be about pricing, maybe it's time to build a vibrant community that deals with such things.

The Social Media Listening Station: These two days have really been about understanding how these emerging technologies work, and how you can apply them. Unfortunately, every situation requires some tweak to this information in order to solve the problem you're facing. One practical solution: create a listening station. (In the same way I suggested building a Social Media for Social Good campaign.)

If you're using your Google Reader, Google Alerts, Twitter, and other networks of information and conversation, you can begin to track down specific kinds of users, get a sense of the specific types of conversations and memes, find holes in strategic areas, and identify the objective that makes the most sense for clients. These listening stations are great ways to dip your toes into the Customer Relationship Management arena. While you won't be tracking one person through the entire ecosystem of your client's network, you can get snapshots of the general trends developing. This will help you head off potential problems as well as set up new strategies.