



A COLLECTION OF COMMUNITY MANAGEMENT ADVICE

Curated by Marketwire and *TheCommunityManager.com*



MARKETWIRE



JANUARY 28, 2013

“

Community managers are perhaps one of the most powerful groups on the Internet, but often spend their careers entirely behind the scenes. To commemorate Community Manager Appreciation Day (#CMAD) on January 28, 2013, Marketwire and The Community Manager have asked community managers about what they do, how they do it, and where they see the future of community management going. We received more than 600 responses and compiled the top thoughts, tips and advice into this eBook.

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QUESTION 1

How do Social Media Managers
and Community Managers Differ?

“Social Media Managers deal with an overall approach to each platform, while Community Managers deal specifically with the communities on the platforms themselves. Basically, Social Media Managers handle the acquisition part of digital community building, while Community Managers handle acquisition and retention through content strategy.”

STEPH PARKER, NEIMAN

“I see Social Media Managers as those externally facing people who focus on all of the growth numbers. They work hard on content, SEO, social metrics, leads, and outreach. The Community Managers feed them some of the internal information, but they’re working on things that are more internal and for people that are already customers. They’re creating opportunities for members to engage, making sure they have the resources they need, making the day to day awesome, offline events (or even online events in some cases) and then working on word of mouth referrals and impacting something like a NET promoter score.”

**JENN PEDDE, 2U, INC.,
THECOMMUNITYMANAGER.COM**

“While the Social Media Manager is simply responsible for ensuring that marketing strategies and promotions are executed well using the various channels available to them, the Community Manager’s concern is cultivating an ecosystem of conversation and customer service. While the promotions and marketing strategies may start the conversation, the Community Manager keeps the conversation going, and provides the necessary feedback - and humanity - to bring a brand to life.”

MARK SHANNON, HENRY’S

“The role of Social Media Manager is wider and includes tasks like monitoring, overall strategy integration and crafting messaging. Community Managers’ roles are more specific and centered on managing the community - responding to posts, forwarding questions to those with the answers and facilitating the group discussion. Community Managers aren’t active when it comes to deciding on brand strategy, however they are key in communicating the essence of the brand with the public, employees, etc.”

SARAH LUE, CBC/RADIO CANADA

“I don’t like the term ”Social Media Manager”. That’s like using the word ”Telephone Manager” which doesn’t actually tell you what they’re doing. They could be doing telesales, customer service, feedback outreach or any other thing that uses the telephone. To that point, Community Managers can use social media to build community. But using social media does not make you a Community Manager unless you are, in fact, building community.”

DAVID SPINKS, FEAST

“Picture a high street. One side is lined with shiny chain stores, shouting at you with bright signs and neon lighting. The other is lined with independent shops, focusing their attention on you and your interests. Social Media Managers man the shiny chain stores, hold the attention grabbing signs and secure visitors with attractive offers. They get you in and then manage the traffic. Transactional custom that comes and goes. Community Managers invite you in to the independent shops, offer you tea and have a chat to learn what your interests are and how they can help you. They trigger your senses and encourage you to build a lasting connection.”

HEATHER CHAPMAN, ICM RESEARCH

“Social Media Managers work in the marketing department. Community Managers work in the everything department.”

PETER REDMER, MAGENIUM SOLUTIONS, LLC

“Being a Community Manager is about creating a conversation, creating connections, and bringing together a community of people around a product - online via social media - and often offline via events. Being a Social Media Manager is about broadcasting and responding to social media.”

KATIE MCPHEE, EVENTBRITE

“Social Media Managers are “the mic”, while Community Managers are “the DJ”. One is a master at pumping up the volume, while the other activates voices and mixes them together in rhythm.”

RYAN RUTAN, JIVE SOFTWARE

“From my personal experience, Social Media Managers are more focused on the larger analysis of the social media properties for a brand. Their job is rooted much more in the numbers behind campaigns and follower trends for social media properties. Community Managers find topics that resonate with the audience and create strategies to increase engagement within the brand’s community. We help serve as the outward face of the brand and reflect the voice of the company.”

KARA LEE, SPRINKLR

“Social Media Managers must focus content, traffic and engagement of the social community. Community Managers also have a support/product awareness component- they must report bugs and issues to the product team and they should be the voice of communication between the engineers and the users. Social Media Managers also typically do not have an in-person portion of the community, where Community Managers may plan in person events.”

JULIA WILSON, BITLY

“While the roles often dovetail at points (and are often confused for each other!) the Social Media Manager deals solely with the online groups and networks, and managing content on those networks. The domain of the Community Manager is much more broad reaching, and touches many more facets of a company. Community Managers interact with product, community members both online and offline, events, internal company communities, customer support, and content management.”

KAREN SCHOELLKOPF, HARVEST/WALKABOUT NYC

QUESTION 2

What Role Does Community Management Play in Marketing?

“The real power of community management is that it connects directly with the customers, bypassing standard marketing channels that are seldom more than a one-way, outbound form of messaging. Through this direct connection, quick, nimble data providing true insight can be gained that can help the company target a more powerful value proposition, essentially acting as product marketing (not promotional marketing). By continuously sustaining that larger conversation with those who want to purchase products and services that fit their needs precisely and for a good value, you can better serve them by ever-nearing an ideal business model.”

**CADE PETERSON,
SONY COMPUTER ENTERTAINMENT AMERICA**

“It’s parallel to marketing. Community Managers can provide deep & helpful feedback from users/community members to the marketing team. And marketers can give input about new initiatives to Community Managers. But they’re not the same.”

CALI HARRIS, TECHSTARS

“Community Managers are not necessarily marketing people nor should they be. You should hire a Community Manager for their interpersonal skills and ability to clearly communicate with people in an online forum. Yes, Community Managers do leverage some marketing techniques, but they should be more focused on the engagement with the public part of the job instead of how to position the company, product, service. Community Managers and people in marketing should work closely together to ensure their efforts are in concert with one another. Marketing should be interested in the feedback from the Community Managers about what the public wants and how.”

LOVISA WILLIAMS, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE

“Marketing brings people in the door, but community makes people stay. If the community is happy, members will naturally talk, just like how you can’t stop talking about your new boyfriend, and the outcome is word of mouth marketing. While the goal of community is not marketing, it can produce the most effective kind of marketing if done well.”

SARAH JUDD WELCH, LOYALCX

“Community Managers are the main voice to the user community. They are responsible for getting users to understand how to use the product or service and get excited about new features and developments. Early on in start-ups many Community Managers are also responsible for the basic marketing strategies.”

JULIA WILSON, BITLY

“Creating an online social community allows the brand to create their own casual focus group, who they can tap into in and gain insights they never would in formal research. A Community Manager also provides a voice to the brand that is not speaking ad slogans, but as a human would, which makes it easier to engage in a conversation with consumers. Creating a loyal community of people who love your brand makes it easier to share brand news or products, since you are sharing it with a group you know cares.”

REB CARLSON, MKG

“Marketing is about brand awareness and lead collection. Community often seems similar because it can involve brand awareness, but the primary focus of community is brand AFFINITY. Make people love the company. If we do our job, Marketing can do theirs easier.”

EVAN HAMILTON, USERVOICE

“The right execution of the social media strategy.”

SABRINA MOSSENTA, VIADEO.COM

“Community management plays a huge role in marketing in that it makes the marketing process so much easier. At a conference last year, our marketing team came up to me and thanked me because by the time they spoke to prospective or existing clients, they already loved us and were wanting to know more about the product. Our marketing team didn’t need to spend their time convincing the client that our team itself was something to believe in, they already wanted to be a part of what we were doing.”

SHERRIE RHODE, SWEET TOOTH

“At a smaller company, Community Managers may play a significant role in marketing, even creating all the ads and promoting them! Larger companies will probably have their own marketing division. In this case, it will be a close cooperation between them and the Community Manager to ensure the message to the community and media is succinct.”

MATHEW ANDERSON, PETROGLYPH

“Community management supports marketing by providing platform specific expertise, vetting content from the target audience perspective, providing engagement to marketing posts, managing ambassador/advocate programs and providing feedback to marketing about the success or opportunities for improvement.”

GINA MULIC, ROGERS

“Where to begin?! It allows an organization to listen to what its fans want and shape programs around their needs. If done right, it gives brands the right to talk about their products because it first and foremost serves the needs of the brand’s customers.”

ADAM WEITNER, EDELMAN

“I wouldn’t say it plays a role in marketing, but it does have to work with marketing, as well as every other department in the company. Where I see community and marketing working together is in the following: Marketing gets people in the door, and it’s important that you have a funnel that leads those new users/customers to become active community members. A good community will greatly improve word of mouth marketing. People who love your product and community will talk about it. Community can be presented as a valuable feature of a product when you’re marketing that product. Community members are often great sources for testimonials for your marketing materials.”

DAVID SPINKS, FEAST

“Community management picks up where marketing leaves off. Like in a restaurant, marketing is the hostess that greets the customer and leads them to their table, while community management serves them and really makes, or breaks, their experience.”

**TERA KRISTEN,
FREELANCE COMMUNITY MANAGER**

“Community Managers focused on marketing objectives typically spend their time highlighting, supporting and rewarding advocacy - and they typically focus on advocates who are most likely to impact brand impression or conversion. Because trust has moved from organizations to individuals, this advocacy plays an increasingly important role in marketing.”

RACHEL HAPPE, THE COMMUNITY ROUNDTABLE

QUESTION 3

What is the Relationship Between Customer Service and Community?

“These departments are inextricably linked. Like a cheeseburger and French fries. Sure you can have one without the other, but why would you want to?”

**JENN PEDDE, 2U, INC.,
THECOMMUNITYMANAGER.COM**

“Community Managers are not support agents, but it is our job to know what our community is feeling. Working with support to better understand your customers will only make your community better.”

CARTER GIBSON, USERVICE

“Often the community believes that social media is the perfect place to complain but the communities we build are designed not just as a place for customer griping but also as a place to ask questions, connect with people of a similar mindset and to share stories about a brand that they have formed a relationship with.”

SHANNON HUNTER, CAPITAL C

“It’s a lot easier to find a brand’s social accounts than it is a customer service number today. It’s also easier to express a complaint via Tweet and post than to sit on hold to let someone know you had a bad experience. With this in mind, it’s key that Community Managers are on top of the feedback they are receiving. We’ve all seen the “bad experience at Store XYZ” posts that have snowballed into people commenting about their bad experiences. Instead of shutting that thread down, help solve the problems. Maybe training within the organization really is an issue that needs to be addressed. If it is, address it and thank the community for bringing it to your attention.”

MAC SLAVIN, PROFESSIONAL BULL RIDERS

“With so many options for social media available to our customers, their avenues for complaints and “word-of-mouth” have been vastly expanded. What may start off as a bad customer service experience can quickly turn into a PR nightmare as it makes its way out into the community. Customer service and community managers have to work together to address the customer service issues that a company may face, and to guide the conversation back to a positive resolution.”

MARK SHANNON, HENRY'S

“For customers, the customer experience is a continuous one, not one segmented into evaluation, purchase and support. Because of that customers don't typically distinguish between channels when they have a need even though organizations have different functional groups to manage the different aspects of the customer process. Communities increasingly serve as the one point of contact for customers related to a company and community teams act as ombudspersons, providing a single consistent experience to customers and shielding them from internal complexity while ensuring questions are answered.”

RACHEL HAPPE, THE COMMUNITY ROUNDTABLE

“They are one and the same. If they aren’t in your community, you’re doing it wrong.”

ADAM WEITNER, EDELMAN

“They are intertwined. Customers will turn to online communities for help and advice about your product or service, I can guarantee this. Whether the community is the “official” channel for customer support or not, how support related posts are handled will reflect directly on your brand and reputation. This can create potential for new sales as well as enhance customer retention and lower support costs, too.”

PETER REDMER, MAGENIUM SOLUTIONS, LLC

“There is a direct correlation between customer service and the community. While we may not officially play the role of customer service, we are often the first point of contact or “middle man” for our customers. Their experience with us and how their question is handled directly influences their view on the company and brand. Customers appreciate having someone local to go to when most companies don’t have the resources or manpower for multiple offices.”

LEILA NAJAFI, EVENTBRITE

“From the consumer’s perspective there is no distinction between the two even though operationally there may be. Effective Community Managers are not customer service agents but they should strive to create a situation where the two departments operate seamlessly.”

ALASTAIR SIBLEY, KETCHUM

“Customer service is a sub-set of community. Granted, most communities have an element of customer service associated with them; however, active participation in a healthy community is not just getting answers to problems. It’s also about establishing an identity and networking with like-minded practitioners. Communities that focus on people and relationships, will be relevant longer to its members.”

RYAN RUTAN, JIVE SOFTWARE

“Community and customer service are very closely tied together, or should be. As Jeannie Walters recently said, customer service is very reactive while customer experience is proactive. I believe this applies to community as well. You should always be reaching out to your community and find out how things are going, not just waiting for a problem to arise. Build that relationship even when you don’t need it.”

SHERRIE ROHDE, SWEET TOOTH

“They are separate but equal. Customer service’s primary goal is helping the customer. Community compounds that with servicing emergent needs with entertainment and engagement about a brand or product.”

MATTHEW KNELL, AOL

“In general these teams should act as cooperating teammates for both these departments are often the first point of contact. Community often lives at the “top of the funnel” and want to be the friendly voice to invite people to interact with our brand and add to our culture. Whereas our support “ranger” colleagues tend to deal with the more technical troubleshooting aspects of the user experience. We see our role as being more proactive/preventative in identifying the issues our users are having, being a support system, and directing them to the appropriate resources.”

LAURA HORAK & CONNOR MEAKIN, HOOTSUITE

“You can’t have a community without some form of customer service. In my mind, the best Community Managers are also savvy customer service professionals.”

KELLY LUX, SYRACUSE UNIVERSITY ISCHOOL

QUESTION 4

Describe the Biggest Lesson
You've Learned in
Your Time in Community Building.

“The Community Manager is the expert. You can’t fault coworkers for not knowing how to do this because it just doesn’t come natural to them. They don’t get it. You have to work for them as much as you have to work for your community. Education makes everyone’s lives easier, especially yours in the long run.”

**JENN PEDDE, 2U, INC &
THECOMMUNITYMANAGER.COM**

“Forget about what is cool and sexy. Do not get distracted by other flashy companies surrounding you. Focus on what makes your community unique and align yourself with those out for your best interests.”

JENNIFER LAYNE CARDON, GOGO BOT

“Kindness always, always wins. (Even though, at times, it can be tough to practice kindness.) After all, community is really about people. And being nice makes for better people. And better community interactions.”

CALI HARRIS, TECHSTARS

“List up and listen up. Create a list of those that you would want to eventually be listed alongside with. Then listen to what they have to say for a few months.”

MIKE FRAIETTA, SOCIAL EDGE CONSULTING

“Building a community takes longer than you’d expect. You have to talk to many many people before you establish some roots, cultivate those roots and tend the garden, as it were, before people take notice and seeds fall and grow on their own. And you can never give enough thanks to the early adopters and the people who continually help out. Some come and go, others stick around, and thanking them often is never out of style.”

GWYNNE MONAHAN, CILO

“Always take one step back and think like a community member.”

JONHA REVESENCIO, LEO BURNETT SINGAPORE

“It’s really easy to get wrapped up in the “busy work” online. I really had to practice stopping and asking myself “how is this providing value to my community” and if I can’t answer it, I shouldn’t be doing it.”

JENNIFER GRAYEB, AETNA

“You can’t fake a successful community. If you don’t approach it genuinely, it will never survive.”

DAVID SPINKS, FEAST

“For the most part your worst, most ardent trolls and detractors are ultimately on your side; they want things to be better. They just really suck at communicating it.”

DAVID DEWALD, TECHWELL

“When you assume, you make an ass out of you and me. Always question, take the time to analyze, don’t rush in.”

BLAISE GRIMES-VIORT, EMODERATION

“Sometimes you just have to bite your tongue, put aside any personal judgments or beliefs, and respond in a way that’s the best for your community and company.”

SARA STEELE-ROGERS, EVENTBRITE

“Don’t underestimate the value of over-communication! If it’s important, go the extra mile to find new ways to say the same message, sometimes even to the same audience.”

RYAN RUTAN, JIVE SOFTWARE

“I believe it’s important to get buy-in from internal stakeholders around your community and social strategy. This is a big lesson, because if you don’t, you’ll be pushing an 18-wheeler uphill for a while.”

JOSEPH MANNA, INFUSIONSOFT

“Community ain’t easy. :) If it is, you’re doing it wrong.”

EVAN HAMILTON, USERVOICE

“A goal is not a vision. Be very clear about what you’ve been hired to do. And don’t be afraid to seek clarification or set boundaries. Ask yourself: Have you been hired to carry out a vision or meet a goal? Believe it or not, those are two very different jobs. You won’t always have the freedom to decide what the vision is, but the ability to make a decision about doing the job is critical.”

**SHEENA MEDINA,
FREELANCE SOCIAL MEDIA STRATEGIST**

“Acknowledgement goes a long way. If you can’t immediately solve a customer’s issue, making sure they know you hear them is enough to keep them happy. During my time as a Community Manager, I have seen the biggest complainers turn into our biggest advocates.”

**DONAL O’CONGHAILE,
SMILEY 360 & SOCIAL MEDIA LINK**

“You’re only one person and there are going to be pits and peaks. If a campaign doesn’t work, learn from it and move on. You have to be agile and willing to listen to what your community needs and any given time.”

ALEXA PLEW, EVENTBRITE

“Every community is different and you can’t just put out the same content to all of them. Communities need to be customized for content, language, culture, and syntax in order to resonate with the people you are trying to engage with. The answer to most social media policy/legal questions is, it depends. It depends on the geographic location of the community, the culture of the community, the expectations of the community, and the technologies being used. This means most solutions are custom solutions even though the thought process is the same for most issues.”

LOVISA WILLIAMS, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE

“The biggest lesson I have learned is to always have a crisis plan in place.”

EBONY HILLSMAN, THE CREATIVE PROTOCOL

QUESTION 5

How Do You Envision the
Dream Community/Social Team
Set Up at a Company?

“My team and I collaborate to delegate all the different social, branding and engagement strategies. We work closely with the PR, Consumer Marketing and Customer Service teams too.”

ALISON HILLMAN, TRULIA

“To be truthful, I think Eventbrite has found the sweet spot. In addition to having a Community Manager that heads up corporate community, we have local Community Managers that focus on building brand awareness in individual markets. It is great to have these satellite positions that know the in’s and out’s of the cities. We can focus on what will make the most impact in each of our cities. These sub-communities then feed in to the larger Eventbrite community and everybody feels the love!”

ALEXA PLEW, EVENTBRITE

“The community team has seats at both the management table and the product table, and the head of community has a voice in both the strategic direction of the company as well as the product. The social team is part of the marketing team, but has a seat in community as well.”

SARAH JUDD-WELCH, LOYALCX

“In most cases, I recommend against outsourcing a Community Manager. Someone outside the company simply can not do as good of a job as someone intimately involved with the business.”

CASSANDRA CAMPBELL, LIBERTY VILLAGE BREWING COMPANY

“Maybe it is possible for one person to embody it all, but the dream community/social team needs: analytics and reporting skills, the creativity skills that comes with coming up with content, some multimedia skills, big picture ideas, and overall an understanding of how people actually use social. I think it’s less about having a huge team, but instead a small core group of people (about two to three) who are super smart. Ideally there is someone who can execute the strategy, someone who knows how to answer the “why” questions in terms of metrics, and someone who is thinking three months ahead of everyone else.”

REB CARLSON, MKG

“Skill sets that include strategy, understanding of the product lifecycle and recognition of business goals and how to align product positioning, messaging and community development with business and product roadmap. They should be included on new product planning, providing launch plans from inception of product, and involved with sunsetting of product before there are customer complaints. In my dream view, community/social teams are the core of product marketing.”

**CINDY SOLOMON,
GLOBAL PRODUCT MANAGEMENT TALK**

“Head of Community, running a department just as important and independent as marketing. Community Managers focusing on areas like forums, events, etc. Content creators creating great content. Social Media Managers focusing on publishing and interacting via social media. Support representatives handling issues and questions.”

EVAN HAMILTON, USERVICE

“Whether it’s handled by an outside agency or in-house, whether it’s one person or a whole team, the key is this: having a dedicated resource for both social media and community management. It’s a demanding job. If you “tack on” community or social media duties to someone who already has a full plate (or a different area of expertise) it not only spreads that employee too thin, but doesn’t allocate enough resources for the often overwhelming task that it is.”

PETER REDMER, MAGENIUM SOLUTIONS, LLC.

“The ideal community set up would be a central community driven team owning policies and processes, and acting as advocates and educators. Small and nimble, with a great reach.”

BLAISE GRIMES-VIORT, E-MODERATION

“There will be several Community Mangers that tackle different aspects of growing the community. A Content Manager focused on content, a relationship builder focused on engaging members and finding out their WIIFM, a Site Developer that ensures the platform is designed to enable sharing and meeting new members, a Social Media Manager that ensures the right kinds of messages from the organization is being shared with their target audience.”

ESE EMERHI, IHREME CONSULTING

QUESTION 6

What Advice Would You Give to
a Brand New Community Manager?

“Take a deep breath, and focus. Find your resources, talk to other Community Managers that have done this. Don’t reinvent the wheel. You’re not alone!”

**JENN PEDDE, 2U, INC &
THECOMMUNITYMANAGER.COM**

“We wear lots of hats. One day we’re planning events, and the next we’re blogging. Learn how your strengths interact with each other and be prepared to feel like you have to have ADHD to succeed.”

CARTER GIBSON, USERVOICE

“Don’t be afraid to experiment with different types of content, but always remember to give your communities the credit they deserve. Also, don’t take feedback personally - it’s all part of growing and becoming a better brand voice.”

STEPH PARKER, NEIMAN

“**ALWAYS** keep separate apps for personal & professional twitter. ;)”

SHANNON HUNTER, CAPITAL C

“You have to constantly learn and adopt. One piece of advice I got early on was that if something doesn’t work, try something different. Don’t fear failing, embrace it.”

SHERAZ BHATTI, CITELIGHTER

“Listen. Listen to your community, listen to your co-workers, listen to management. You’ll learn a lot about your company and a lot about the community you’re starting to manage.”

MAC SLAVIN, PROFESSIONAL BULL RIDERS

“Test. Never assume you know what or how your community will react. Try new things and develop those that work and learn from the ones that don’t.”

TIM MCDONALD, HUFFINGTON POST/AOL

“Stop worrying about how every hour of your day should be spent, and focus on getting to know the community. Schedule calls with everyone who will speak to you. Meet with people in person when possible. Focus on building relationships above all else.”

JENNIFER GRAYEB, AETNA

“Identify the short term goals you can achieve in your new role and stick to them. You’re going to be pulled in a lot of different directions, which is ok, just make sure you have your own set of tasks that you can measure yourself against.”

NICK CICERO, LIVEFYRE

“You’re going to fail a lot. That’s okay. Embrace it. Don’t be afraid of inactivity. If you don’t post anything, because you’re worried that no one will respond, then you’re guaranteed to fail. And start simple. Communities don’t happen over night and you don’t need a grand strategy to make it work. Just start by genuinely caring and talking with one person, then two people, three, etc.”

DAVID SPINKS, FEAST

“Get ready to realize just how many crazies there are out there.”

ADAM WEITNER, EDELMAN

“Before you invest any time in coming up with a build road map, spend your first month engaging and getting feedback from the existing community. The amount of R&D you can get from them in that first month, will set you up for success 4-5x compared to where you started.”

RYAN COX, COX CONSULTING

“Community is mix of top-down and bottom-up preference. Your job is to align your corporate goals with your customers want in a manner that establishes balance. Make sure you know how success is measured, and when in doubt, listen.”

RYAN RUTAN, JIVE SOFTWARE

“Be open to learning new skills: data analysis, video editing, event planning...whatever it takes to engage, analyze and report on your community building efforts. Take the time to learn what happens in every functional area of your organization, and create open lines of communication with people - the more you know about what is going on, the better you will be at your job.”

KELLY LUX, SYRACUSE UNIVERSITY ISCHOOL

“To build a community, you must not be afraid to get off the computer, go out and talk to people offline and develop genuine relationships.”

CONNIE CHANG, GOGO BOT

QUESTION 7

What's Your Prediction for the Future of Community Management?

“I fully expect the term “Community Manager” to not be *AS* prevalent as it is as this moment. Much like how developers distinguish themselves by what part they work on or what languages they know, you’ll see community folks start to diversify by title and have incredible skill sets in certain areas.”

**JENN PEDDE, 2U, INC. &
THECOMMUNITYMANAGER.COM**

“Find yourself a professional network for support and development. Interview all company stakeholders (& make friends during the process). Identify key business goals. Develop a strategy to reach those goals, Get to work, Measure/Analyze/Report. Tweak. (Oh, and learn how to juggle. ;).”

**HILLARY BOUCHER,
THE COMMUNITY ROUNDTABLE**

“I was given this advice when I first started and it didn’t make sense until a few months after I started, of course, hindsight is always 20/20. But always remember, it’s a marathon, not a sprint. There are times when you want to be everything to everyone and you simply cannot. You have to prioritize your time and determine what makes sense for you and the business.”

LEILA NAJAFI, EVENTBRITE

“That when I say
“Community Manager”
people say “Oh awesome!”
instead of “Oh, awesome...
what’s that?” ;)”

CARTER GIBSON, USERVOICE

“I think the future is optimistic. I think the HR department of many corporations should embrace community management the way start ups do and adapt it. It will help driver users and keep your biggest fans happy. Just my guess (or vision).”

SHERAZ BHATTI, CITELIGHTER

“Community management will become an important skill in the sociology of the Internet. It will stop being just a marketing practice and it will be needed to organize information and to produce knowledge that will boost economic growth.”

GRISELDA CUEVAS, GREEN LOVESEAT

“I believe that the Community Manager will enter the C-Suite as a Chief Community Officer, or a similar role. Since Community Managers touch everything from product to customer service to marketing, there are few people suited to lead the customer experience from the top down moving forward.”

NICK CICERO, LIVEFYRE

“Communities have existed since the beginning of time, and the core concepts that make a community survive have always been the same. The future will be no different. What I think we’ll see in the future is more companies placing value on community, hiring senior level community experts, and starting companies with community at their core.”

DAVID SPINKS, FEAST

“I believe that community management will become the practice and application of customer retention, whereas marketing will continue to acquire new customers.”

TERA KRISTEN, COMMUNITY BUILDER

“Community management will split into several different specialties with distinct and only vaguely related skill sets. As such we’ll continue to see a diversification of our job titles and companies will start to hire for specific purposes and against specific needs. Eventually we will become embedded at every level of our respective businesses.”

ALASTAIR SIBLEY, KETCHUM

“Either we’ll fail to differentiate ourselves and become a marketing lackey, or we’ll bloom into a real department and help make or break brands.”

EVAN HAMILTON, USERVOICE

“Less centralized, more distributed. Communities live in fragments and sections as much as they do in collections. You can create community in a single interaction.”

MATTHEW KNELL, AOL

“In future I think there will be smaller and more specialized communities, so an important Community Manager skill will be mapping all this communities, placing a brand in a strategic way and creating content appropriated to more expert users.”

PAOLA SANGIOVANNI, PINTEREST ITALY