

The Brand's
Pocket Guide
to Insight Communities

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Insight communities

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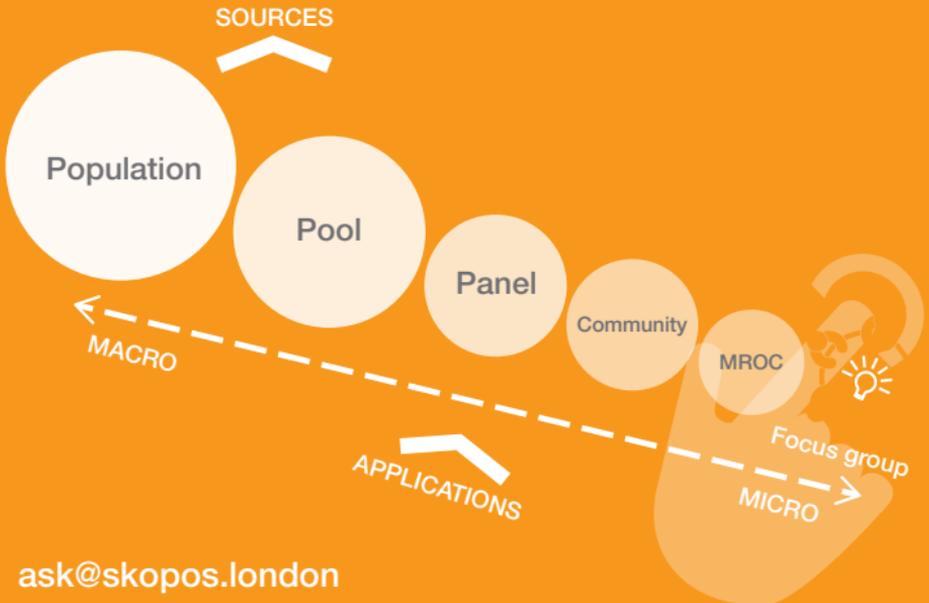


Definition & detail

Customers, prospects, fans, partners, employees, stakeholders or - indeed a combination of these groups - may form a 'community' when actively recruited (asked to join) a group or forum. These participants provide rapid, on-going feedback (actionable intelligence), to inform organisational decision making.

Of course, insight communities are private and invite-only (so, safe & secure). Participants must opt-in - and are recruited on the basis of programme specifications, so you know you are talking to the relevant audience. Size is an important consideration and matters...

The Skopos Spectrum of community scale...



Variants

There are many types & variants of insight communities capable of meeting many needs:

Key criteria and choices for your community design:

- Needs/purposes/objectives then
- Size/ quantity
- Marketing/Research - or both?
- Ad Hoc or Tracking - or both?
- Static or interactive? Soft or hard?
1, 2 or 3D?
- Quant or Qual?
- Branding/ name
- Level of opt in or obligation
- Incentives/ rewards - (please and thank you)
- Online? Offline? Both?
- Platforms/ tech
- Mobile? Social?



Applications

Insight communities are the ideal way to get close to your audience - gathering their opinions, ideas and experiences over time, no matter where they are.

There are many practical applications. Foremost amongst these are: consumer journey mapping; VoC feedback programmes; concept innovation projects; media campaign ideation; employee engagement initiatives; etc.

Uses and applications for an insight community include:

NPD

Editorial content

In the moment

Rapid response

Decision support

Customer sat/CX

Ad effectiveness

Ethnography

Etc.



Platform features

Technology has been a massive enabler for communities.

All insight community platforms now facilitate:

Profiling - participant profiles can be created, so that you can learn more and create richer, deeper, relationships

Segmentation - participants can be grouped into specific sub-communities and assigned particular tasks and exercises (this also aids back-end analysis & reporting)

Forums - discussions can be broadcast to large participant groups in an engaging environment, to explore relevant topics

Live discussion groups - content, ideas and concepts can be posted – and you can observe your respondents sharing their feedback in real-time. The sessions are recorded and transcripts logged

Surveys & polls - quantitative tools, such as surveys and polls, can be utilised to provide the 'hard' numbers

Media sharing - rich multimedia can be broadcast, whilst participants can also upload their own media content quickly and easily

Auto reporting - custom reports can be extracted mid discussion, or upon conclusion of the discussion period

Participation management - admin centre facilities allow you to review and probe the latest responses, in addition to managing participation in one seamless environment

Messaging - messaging functionality enables the contacting of participants via email/text - to prompt response and/or update them on new assignments.

Customisation - platforms can be customised (& re-skinned) with unique banners, login pages, branded emails, etc



The challenges

In our experience of building and managing many many communities, the first main challenge lies in the maintenance of high levels of long-term engagement. Failure to fully engage with participants results in 'churn' which is a factor of the...

- Degree of interest within the topic area
- Extent of the interaction with the panel
- Perceptions of whether the feedback is truly valued and acted upon
- Nature of the surveys/discussions (quality, length, look & feel, frequency, etc)
- Community proposition/ branding

The second challenge is closely related to the engagement consideration. This relates to guaranteeing ROI. We must ensure that the resource (financial, time & head-space) invested - in programme set-up and management - is leveraged fully. Unless we can guarantee that the output and insights achieved are felt to exceed in value the set up and maintenance costs, we will never succeed in reassuring the business that they have a valuable resource indeed!

Learning:

Most communities die
of hunger not
over feeding



The benefits

The benefits of an insight community approach include:

Cost Effectiveness

Speed – rapid response capabilities

Reach – niche audiences can be more readily found

Real-Time – In the moment research (mobile)

Richer experiences

Communities can utilise the full gamut of multimedia capabilities - further enhancing the participant experience

Insight illumination

The flexibility and functionality of insight community platforms (incorporating the auto-reporting tools) aid the analysis and insight identification process

Intuitive processes

Insight community platforms are easy-to-use (well most of them are) for the client team and participants, so neither waste valuable time getting to know the technology

Always-on availability

Access to the community portal is available 24/7

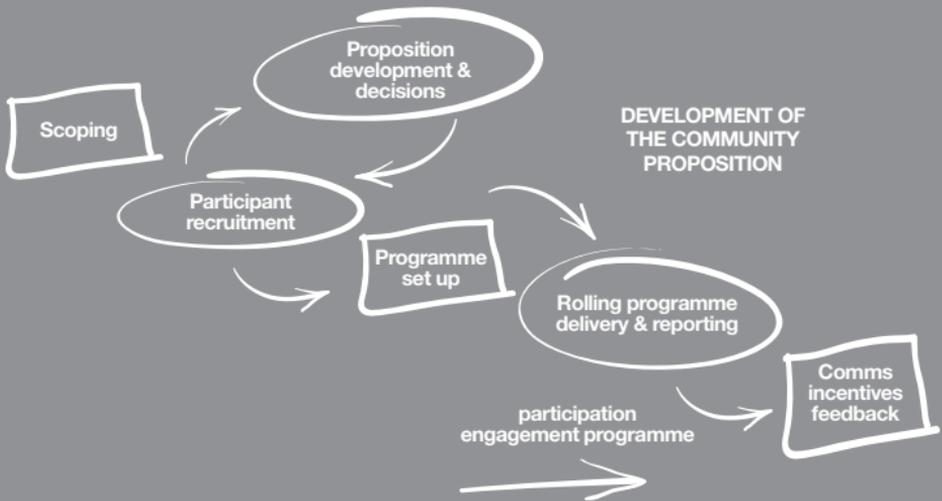
Tailored designs

Communities are fully configurable to suit the needs of the project, the people (participants & client team) and processes



Optimal design

With the implementation and on-going management of any successfully insight community programme, there are a number of components that must be planned and considered at inception to ensure success:



In our experience, an initial ‘scoping’ workshop should form the first element of any community insight programme.

In parallel, it is important that a programme of participant engagement should be established and run on a continuous basis once the community is live. There needs to be regular contact and tasks for participants to complete. More on engagement in a moment...

Enriched experiences 08

Creating true engagement is centred around communicating to participants that...

- Their voice has been heard
- Their feedback is valued
- They are, indeed, agents of change

In practical terms, based on our considerable experience, this translates into:

- Paying attention to the quality & mix of activity being fielded
- Implementing rules around project contact rates and activity length
- Creating a feedback plan and follow through

AND doing all of the above in the most visual and interactive, enjoyable fashion possible, so that the experience is enriched for everyone.

Skopos London has been supporting organisations in the delivery of insight & illumination programmes since 2001. We would be very happy to talk things through with you, with no obligation. References and testimonials are, of course, available from our extensive, blue chip, client list.

The Pocket Guide to Insight Communities is part of a set created by Skopos London.

ask@skopos.london