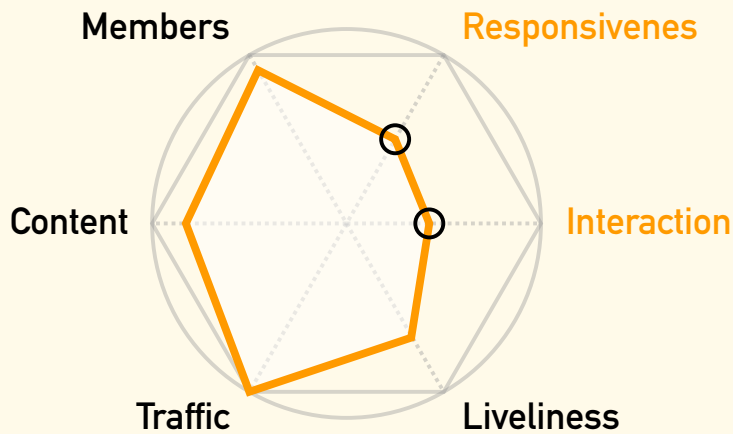
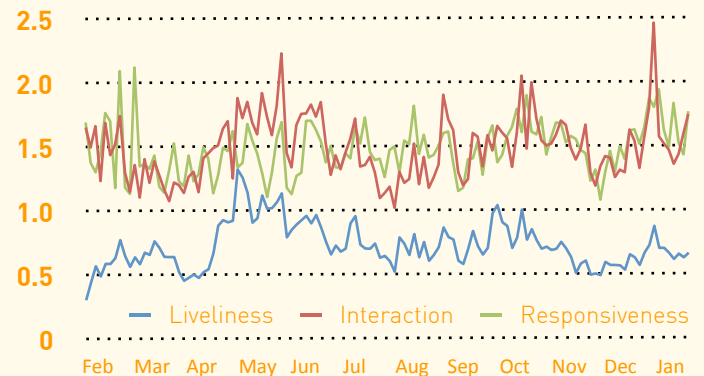
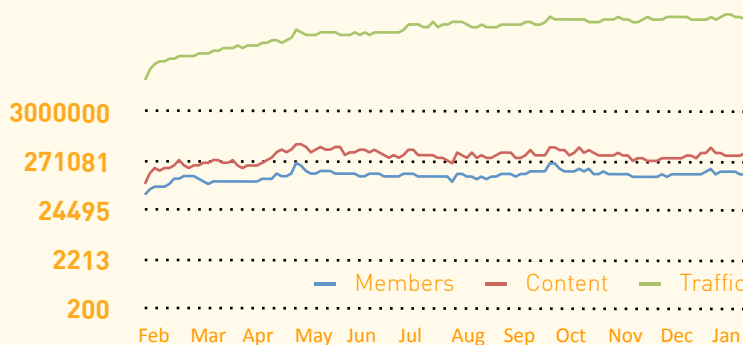


Dashboard



| | | Percentage of Benchmark |
|------------------|------|-------------------------|
| Members | 271K | 95% |
| Content | 354K | 90% |
| Traffic | 4M | 100% |
| ○ Responsiveness | 1.9 | 50% |
| ○ Interaction | 2.3 | 40% |
| Liveliness | 0.7 | 80% |



January 2009



10%
FROM
PREVIOUS
MONTH
Month Over Month

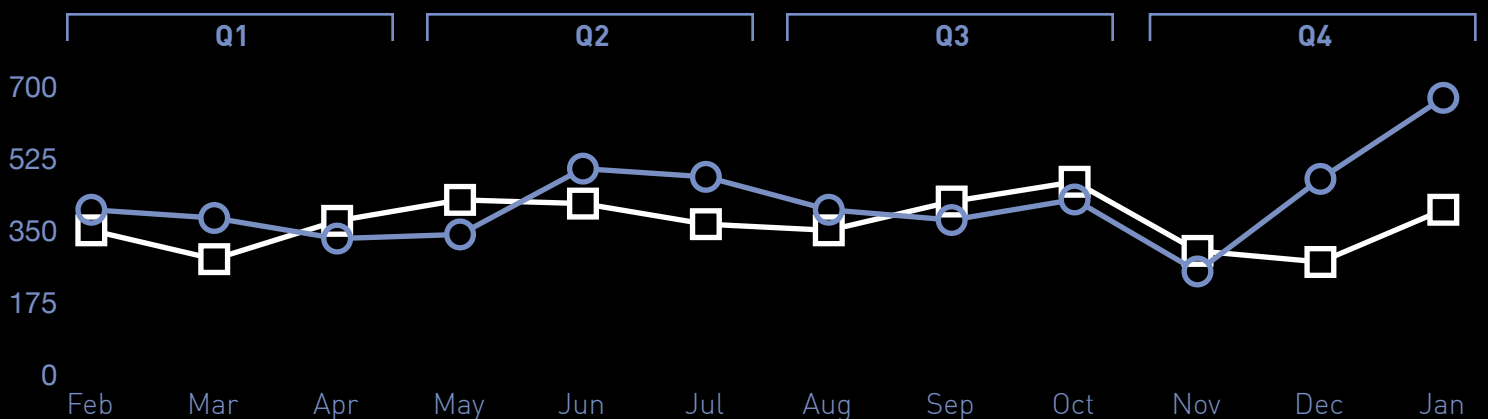
**Community
Health Index**

672

0 Min - 1000 Max

F M A M J J A S O D J

□ Acme Inc. ○ Benchmark



Variables

Measuring Community Health

Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit. Aliquam orci. Curabitur placerat pede quis mi. Vestibulum purus dui, semper sit amet, luctus accumsan.

Pellentesque eu nunc in augue posuere viverra. Nam rutrum tempus magna. Quisque id orci eu est sollicitudin iaculis. Nulla consequat nunc sit amet pede. Phasellus ultrices purus non arcu. Praesent a ipsum vitae diam commodo consectetur. Vivamus vel pede quis erat vehicula molestie. Pellentesque dictum.

Extrinsic

Members

Total amount of registered users.

Content

Total amount of posts weighted by viewership.

Traffic

Total amount of visits to the community.

Intrinsic

Responsiveness

Average amount of elapsed time between responses relative to the expected response time.

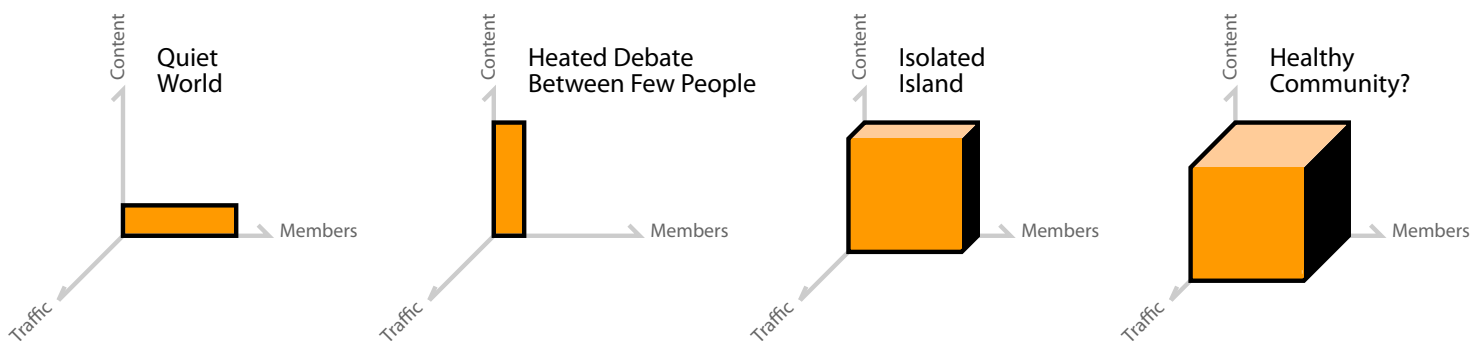
Interaction

Average amount of distinct users weighted by the amount of conversations they have.

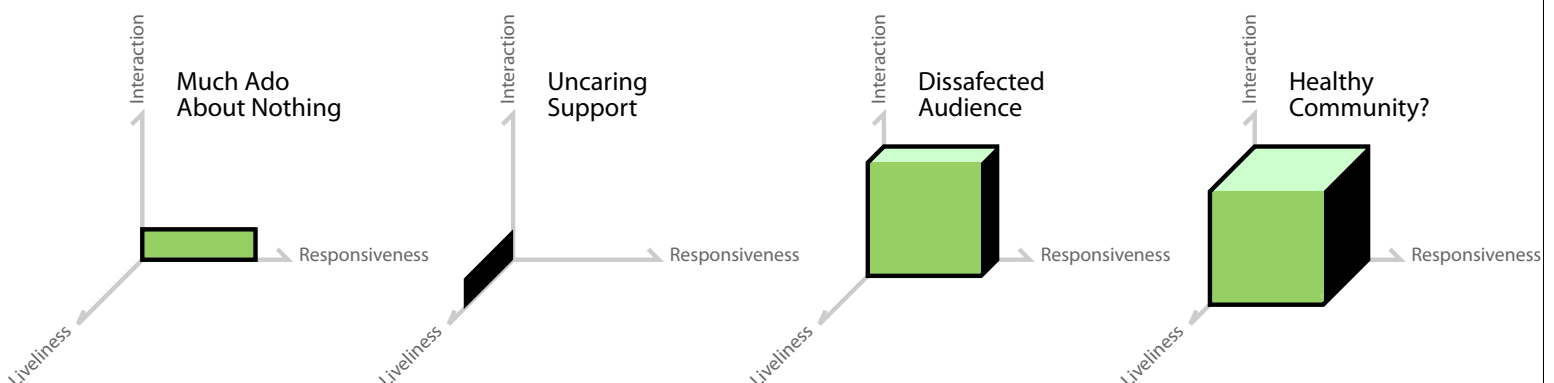
Liveliness

Relative amount of posts per board to the expected number of post per board for a given time period.

Extrinsic



Intrinsic



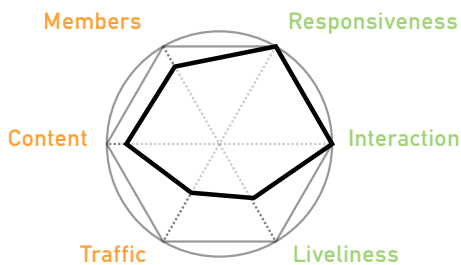
Typologies

Typology of a Community

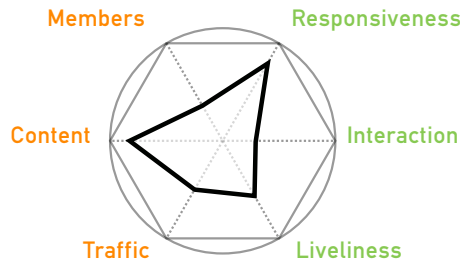
How to read you CHI Radar

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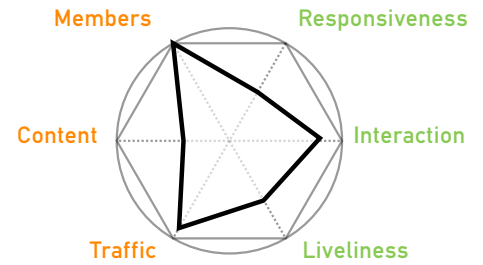
Sales & Marketing



Support & Satisfaction

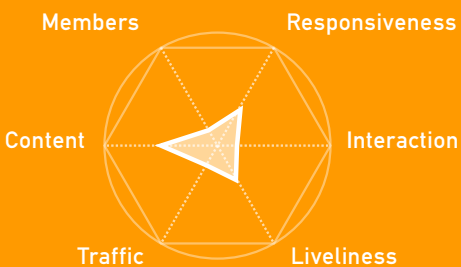


Feedback & Innovation

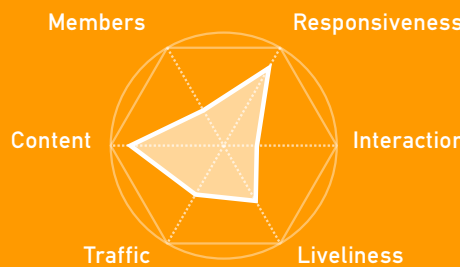


Community Age

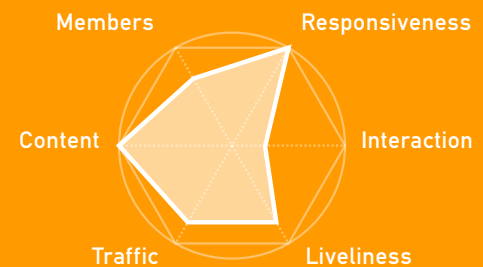
Support - New



Support - Mature

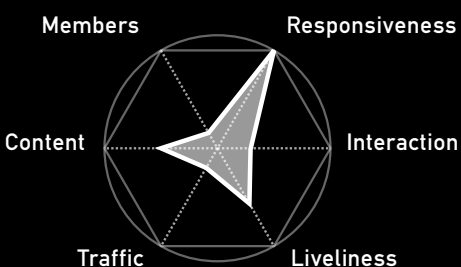


Support - Old

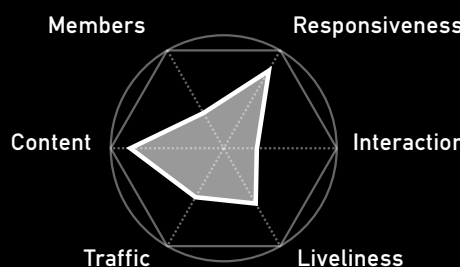


Community Health

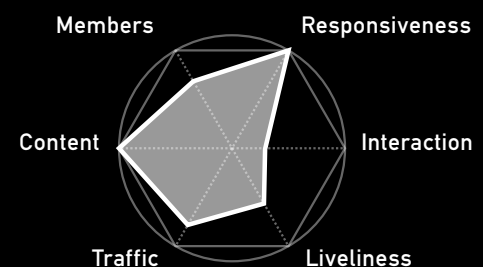
Support - Sick



Support - Healthy



Support - Optimal



Acme Inc.

Community Assessment for January 2009

By most measures, the Acme Inc. Forums have been hugely successful. With more than a million users visiting the site each month, the community is one of the largest and most active in the industry. As a result, the Acme Inc. Forums are often viewed as the benchmark by which enterprise customer communities are judged. However, compared to our benchmark communities, the Acme Inc. Forums are not as successful as they could be.

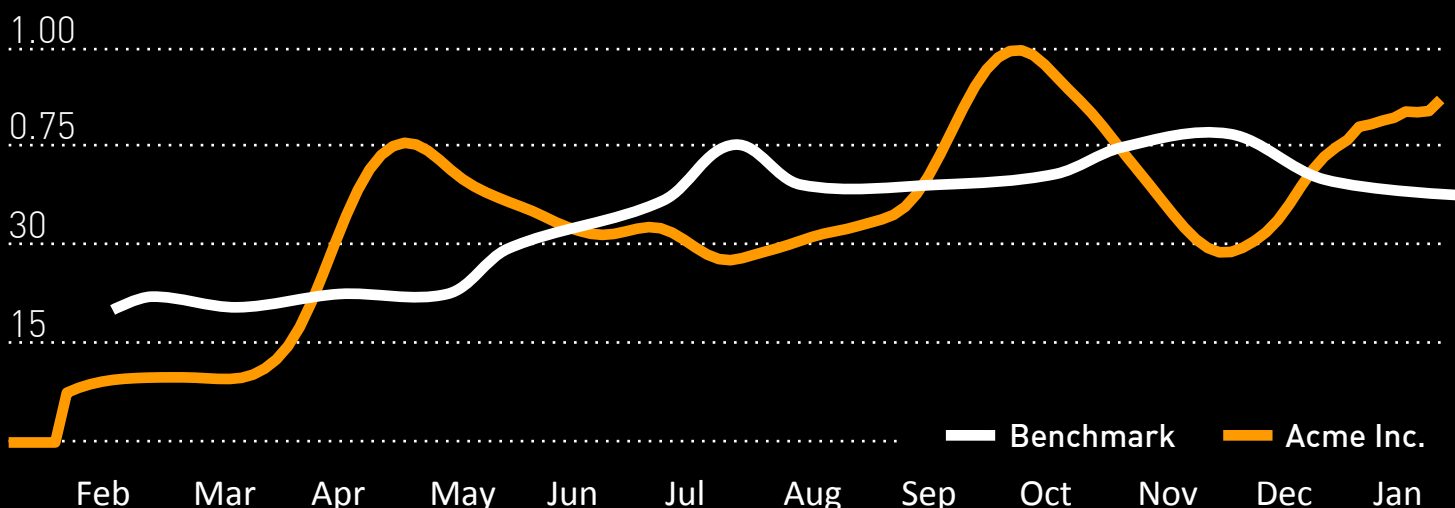
For the purposes of this study, we compared Acme Inc. Forums to a set of benchmark communities that were selected based on the following criteria:

- ★ The community must be at least two years old.
- ★ It must be among the top 5% of all communities based on the Lithium Community Health Index.

Health Trend

Acme Inc. Vs. Benchmark

The most common measures of community health are either user registration or message posts. We believe that a more accurate measure of community health is actually a function of both registrations and posts. We calculate the Community Health Index (CHI) by multiplying monthly registrations by the number of posts, normalized for community size and smoothed to remove extraneous noise. We believe that this gives a more accurate indication of the growth of a community over time.



Technographic profile of online communities

Much of the discussion that follows refers to the social technographic profile developed by Forrester Research, Inc. We have refined this user segmentation to more accurately reflect the specific participation patterns of online community members. Based on our experiences with online communities, we have introduced an additional unique segment of prolific creators: the super users.

Creators

Critics

Joiners

Spectators

Collectors

Super Users

Creators

- ★ Synthesize contents
- ★ Post/blog/etc

Spectators

- ★ Search for answers
- ★ Read posts

Critics

- ★ Reply/comment
- ★ Rate contents
- ★ Report abuses

Collectors

- ★ Tag/label contents
- ★ Bookmark
- ★ Subscribe to RSS



Joiners

- ★ Find interesting posts
- ★ Ask questions
- ★ Link/email contents

Super Users

A distinctive and rare (<1%) group of contributors who could contribute up to 50% of the community contents.

A successful community is all about its users

A successful community recognizes and caters to the needs of every social technographic group. This translates into features that empower and encourage users to participate in different ways.

Many communities cater to the spectators, who typically comprise half or more of a community. They do so, however, at the expense of the minority segments: creators (including super users), critics, collectors, and joiners.



Success factor 1:

A rich and rewarding ranking structure I

A rich and rewarding ranking structure is essential to the success of a community. A good ranking structure should recognize and reward the different levels of participation in every social technographic group. An ideal ranking structure should:

- ★ Have enough branches to reward different areas of contribution. Ranking systems typically reward creators, and fail to recognize the contributions of the collectors, critics, and joiners who contribute to the community by tagging, organizing, and rating contents, reporting abuses, or simply sharing contents with others.
- ★ Offer many levels within each branch to accelerate promotion without saturating the upper ranks.
- ★ Be sufficiently complex so that users can't anticipate their next rank or predict the top rank.
- ★ Contain some element of mystery, so users are surprised (and pleased) when they are promoted.
- ★ Reward users when they are promoted by giving them special features or customization privileges, such as personalized icon, tagging, access to private boards, access to beta features, and so forth.
- ★ Associate certain high ranks with roles that enable users to help moderate.
- ★ Be flexible enough to confer a unique rank on a truly exceptional user.

Success Factors

Success factor 1: A rich and rewarding ranking structure II

In contrast to the ideal ranking structure, Acme Inc. Forums uses a ranking system that favors creators and critics with high post counts at the expense of joiners and collectors. The Acme Inc. ranks, named for precious metals, offer no surprises to the Silver user who is promoted to Gold. Lastly, Acme Inc. Forums do not use privileges effectively to reward active users.

Ranking
structure of
Acme Inc.
forums

Diamond

Platinum

Gold

Silver

Bronze

Newbie

Ideal ranking
structure of a
successful
community

Super Users

Wizard

Guru

Professor

Elite

Expert

Scholar

Historian

Publisher

Critic

Investigator

Librarian

Writer

Reviewer

Researcher

Organizer

Author

Reporter

Linker

Tagger

Contributor

Rater

Sharer

Collectors

Creators

Critics

Joiners

Success Factors

Success factor 1: A rich and rewarding ranking structure III

Acme Inc. uses less than 20% of the average number of ranks in benchmark communities.

To prevent users from saturating the top rank, Acme Inc. makes advancement difficult. Consequently, users can stagnate in the same rank—Bronze, for example—for long periods of time with no hope for promotion. As a result, majority of the community finds little incentive to make the contributions required to rise above Bronze.

Total number of ranks

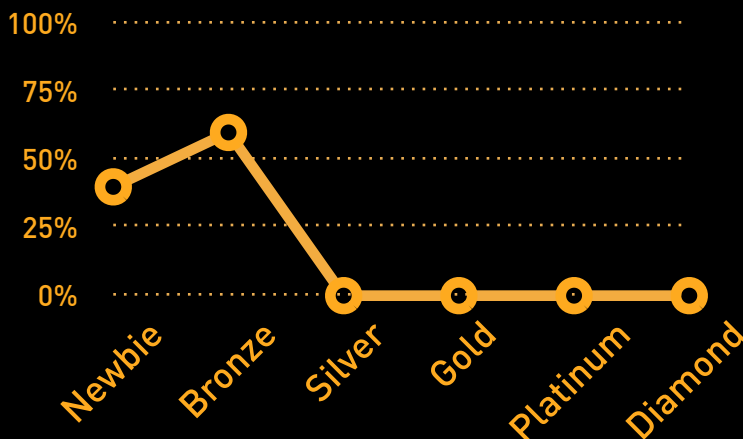
31

6

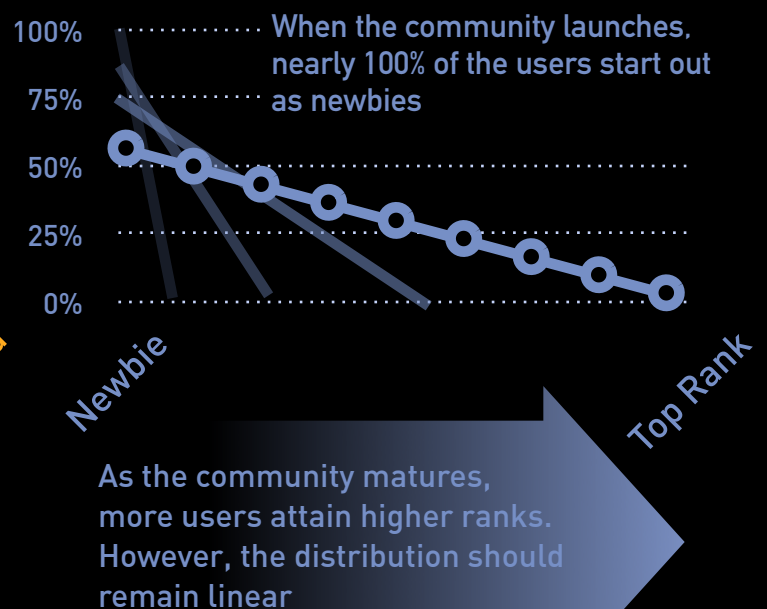
5 10 15 20 25 30 35

■ Benchmark
■ Acme Inc.

Acme Inc. forum's ranking structure



Ideal Ranking with many closely spaced intermediate ranks



Relative population distribution across ranks

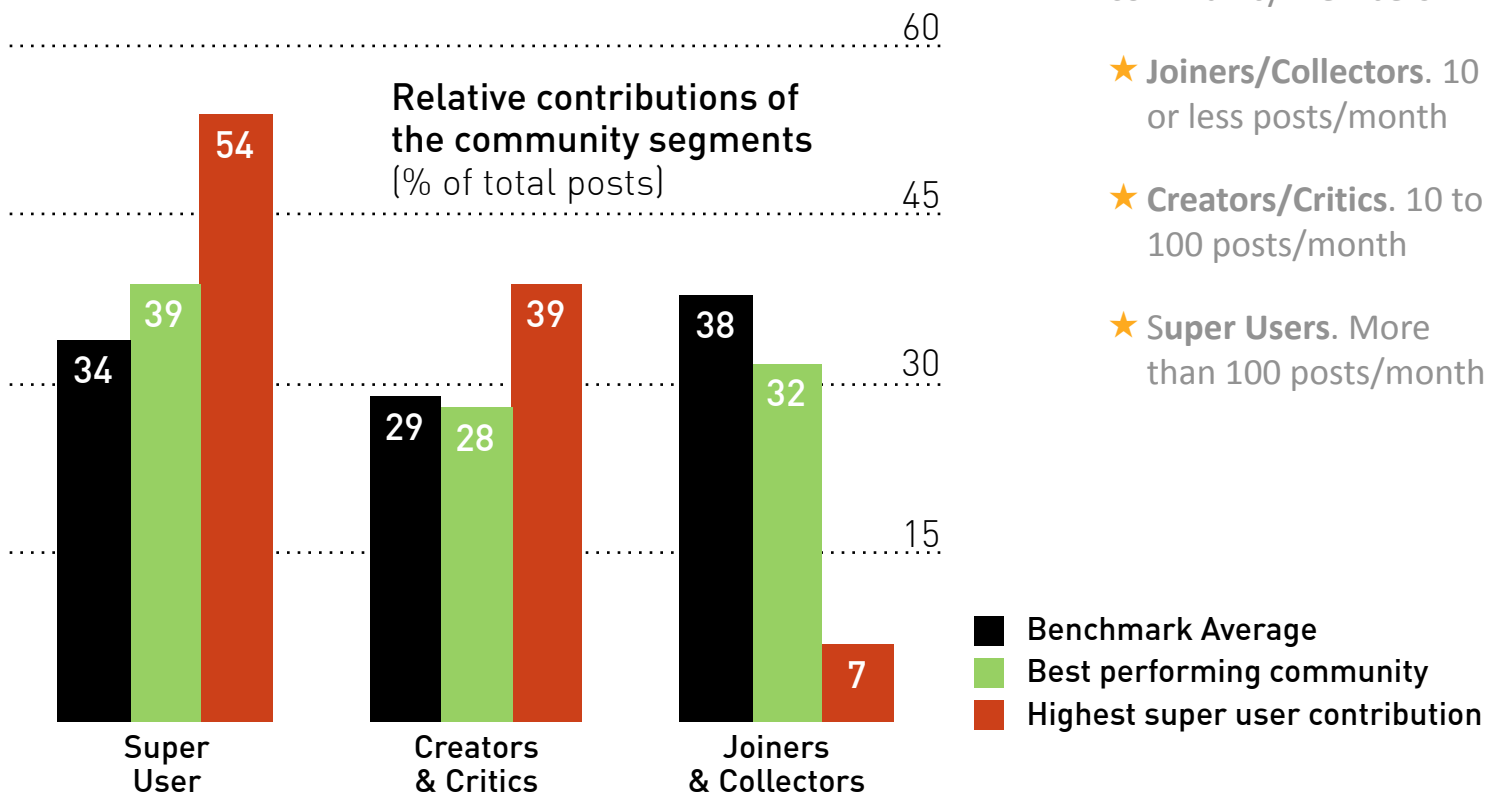
Success factor 2: A stronger base of super users I

Because their participation level differs so dramatically from that of typical creators and critics, we have identified super users as a distinct social technographic group.

- ★ These hard core users spend much more time on the community than any other social technographic group (18 hours/week vs. 1.3 hours/week for creators/critics, and 5 minutes/week for joiners/collectors).
- ★ They are the product experts, gurus, enthusiasts, influencers, and evangelists. They answer questions and evangelize the company's brand (47% of Acme Inc. Forums' accepted solutions come from super users alone).
- ★ Although super users constitute less than 1% of the community population, they can contribute up to 50% of the total posts.

The statistics obtained in this study are based on the following segmentation of community members.

- ★ **Joiners/Collectors.** 10 or less posts/month
- ★ **Creators/Critics.** 10 to 100 posts/month
- ★ **Super Users.** More than 100 posts/month



Success factor 2: A stronger base of super users II

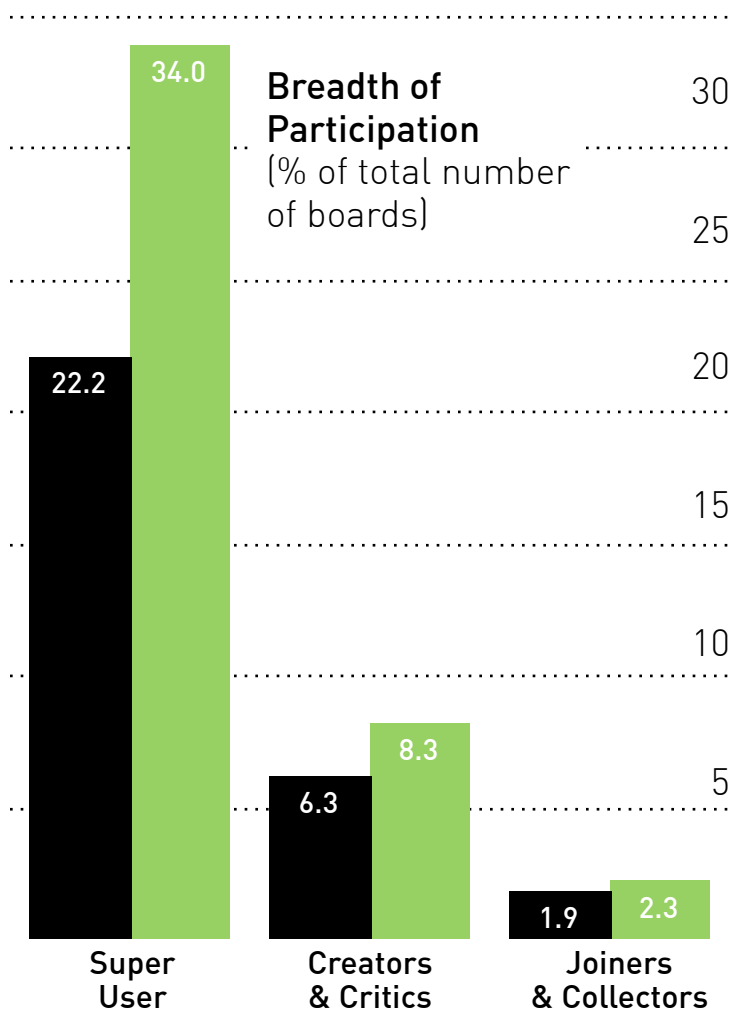
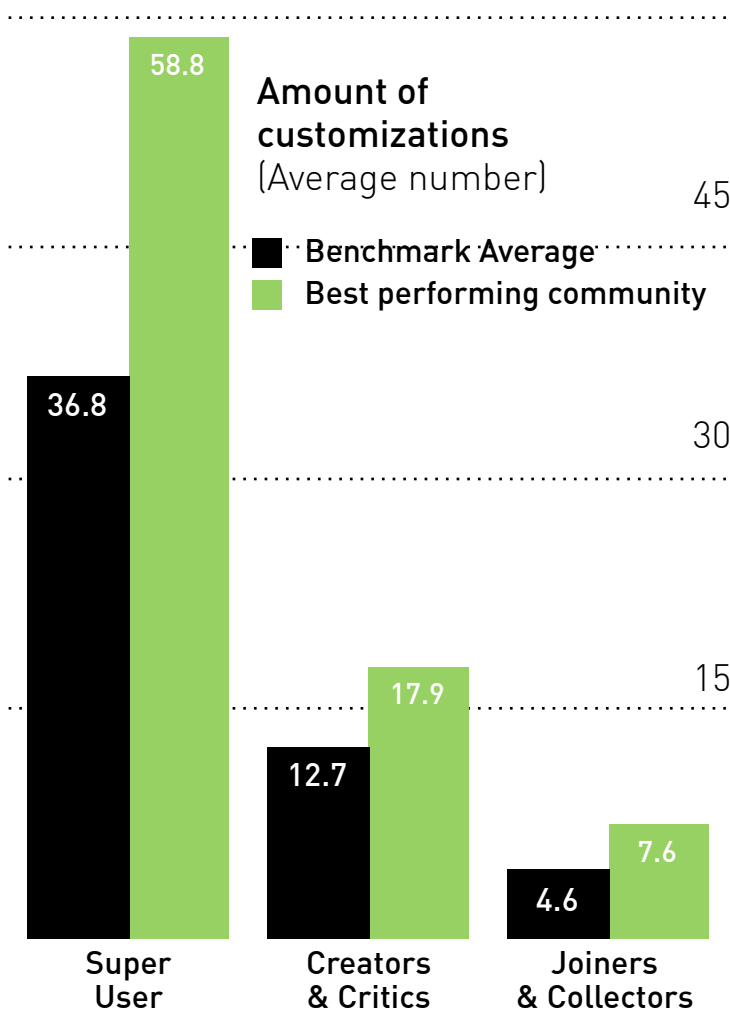
Although super users represent a small percentage of the community, they produce a disproportionate amount of valuable content. They also have different motivation factors and behavior patterns that set them apart from typical creators and critics.

★ Super users tend to view the community as their home, so to speak. As a result, they make extensive use of customization settings to create a more efficient working environment.

60

★ As experts and enthusiasts, super users tend to participate more broadly in the community. They keep up with and post on more boards than all other technographic groups combined.

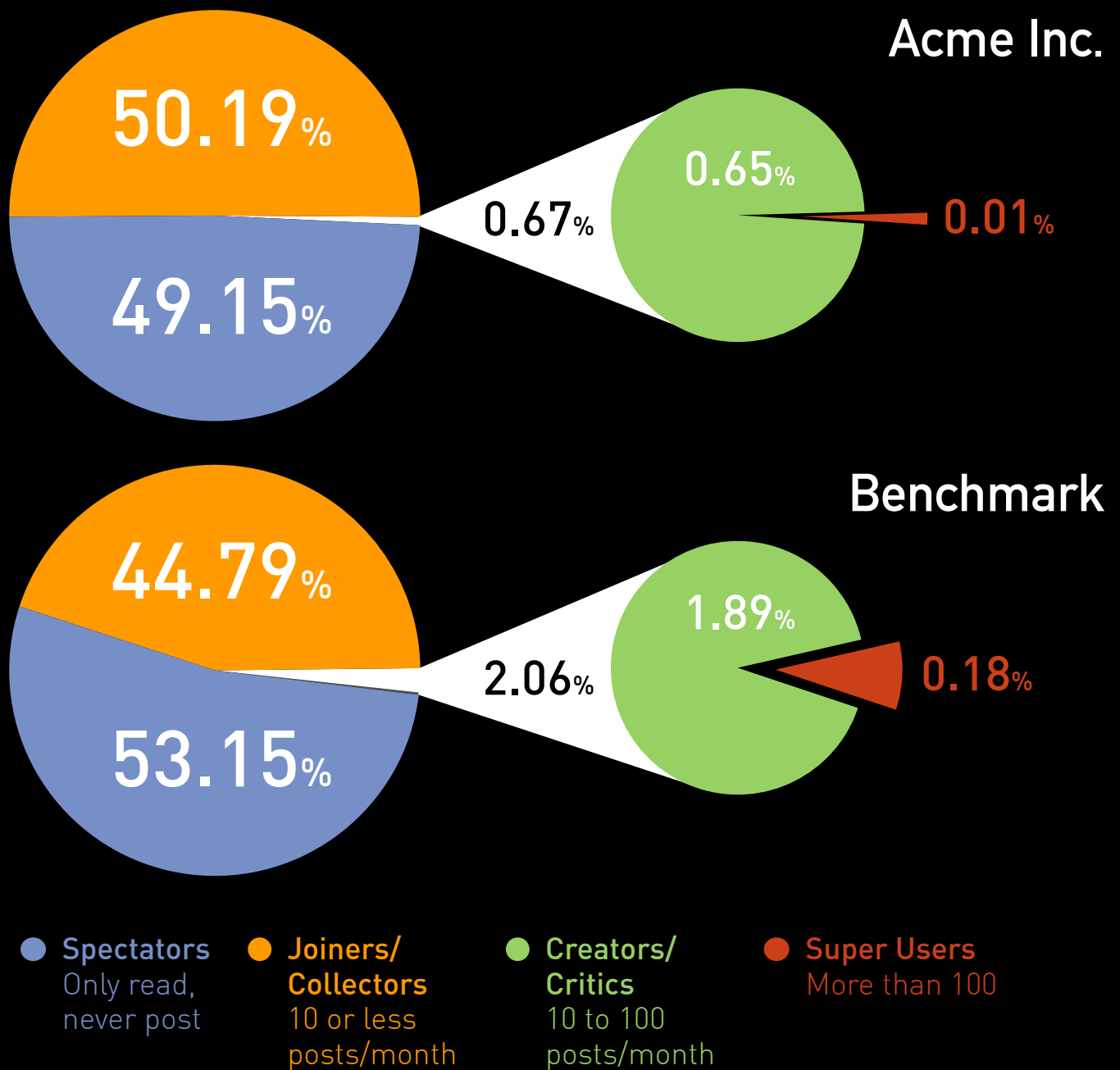
35



Success factor 2:

A stronger base of super users III

Clearly, super users are extremely valuable to a successful community. However, Acme Inc. has only 5.5% of the expected number of super users compared to the benchmark average.



Success Factors

Success factor 2: A stronger base of super users IV

The Acme Inc. Forums not only suffered from a deficit of super users, but they also hampered the productivity of their super users by disabling skin customization.

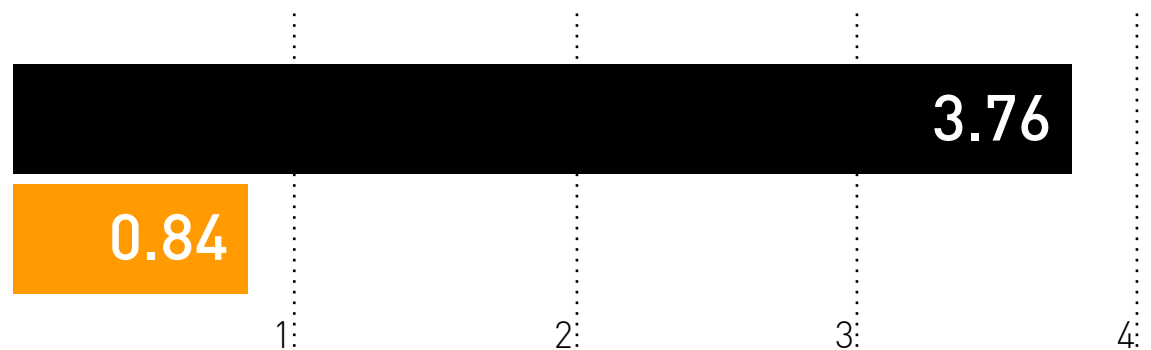
Thread coverage by each Acme Inc. super user is only 19% of the benchmark average.

Average amount of threads responded by each super user



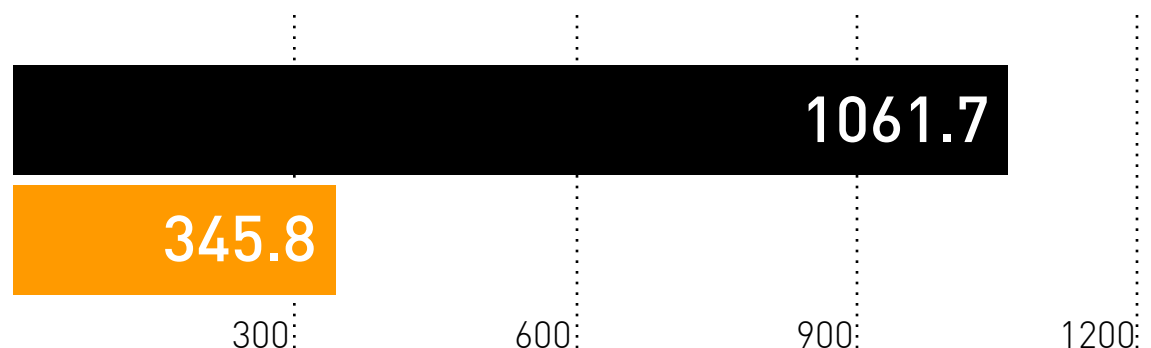
Each thread receives fewer super user responses (22% of the benchmark average).

Average amount of super users replies per thread



Acme Inc. super users spend less time on the forum (33% of the benchmark average).

Average weekly minutes online per super user



Success Factors

Success factor 2: A stronger base of super users V

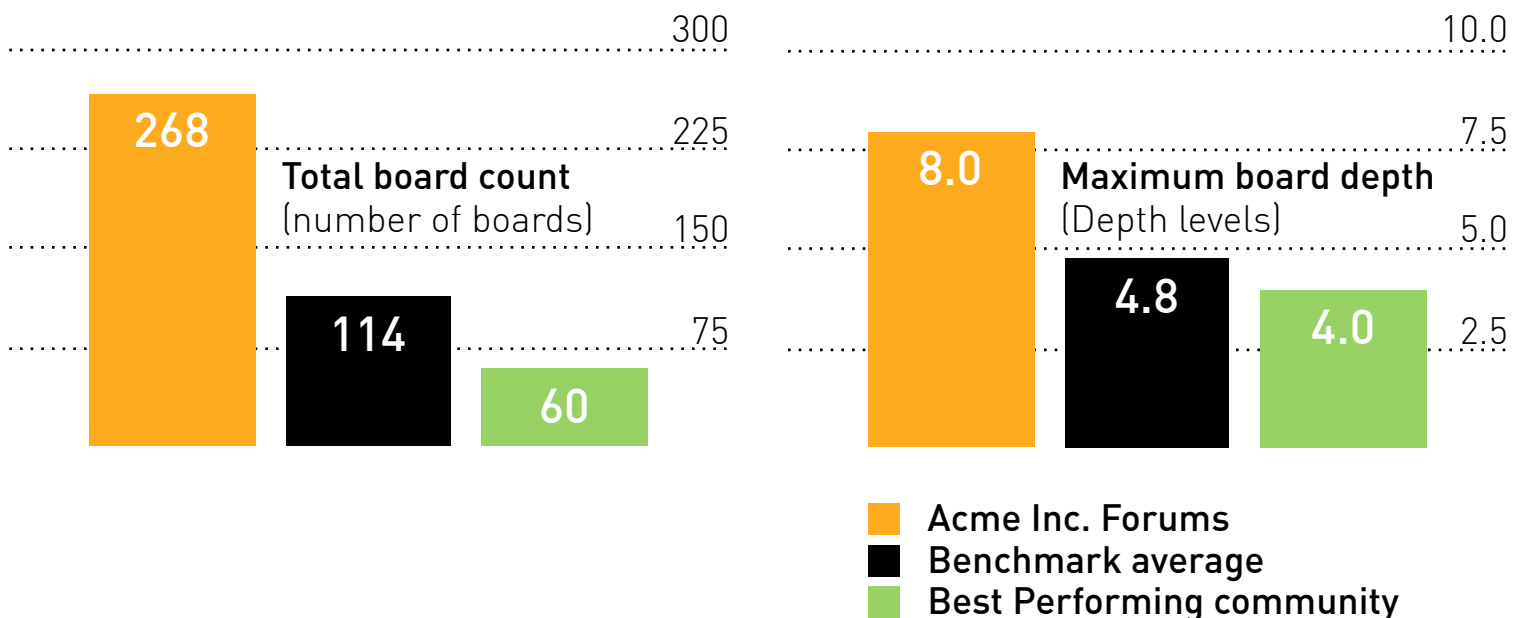
The structure of a community has a significant impact on the activity level of super users. The Acme Inc. Forums homepage takes a siloed approach that directs users to a particular board. This approach works well for spectators who are looking for specific answers. However, the same siloed organization makes it difficult for experts to easily access and stay current with multiple boards.

★ Acme Inc. Forums have 2.3 times the number of boards as the benchmark average.

★ The average board depth (the number of clicks required to access board content) is almost twice the benchmark average.

★ As a side effect, the siloed structure also discourages fans who simply want to hang out on the community.

Structural organization of the community



Action items

Building and maintaining a successful community is a long-term iterative process. These are steps that Acme Inc. can take immediately to improve the performance of its community.

- ★ Increase the number of branches and levels in the ranking structure.
- ★ Associate ranks with rewards in the form of increased access and privileges.
- ★ At the very least, give super users the ability to apply customized skins.
- ★ Make it easier for super users to traverse the entire community and encourage them to develop multiple areas of expertise.
 - ▶ Consolidate where possible to reduce the number of boards.
 - ▶ Reduce the number of clicks required to access any specific board.
- ★ Listen to and interact with community members.
 - ▶ Inaugurate a suggestion board, where users can offer feedback and suggestions.
 - ▶ Offer a mechanism for users to report abuses and inappropriate content.

Some parting thoughts

Integrate, improve, innovate, repeat.

★ Integrate the community with the company's other online content.

- ▶ Provide a clear and visible link to the forum from the company's homepage.
- ▶ Utilize a single search engine for both forum and company content.
- ▶ Cross-link content between the community and the company's website.

★ Benchmark the community against a set of frequently updated top communities.

- ▶ Implement features that have proven successful in the benchmark communities.

★ Use the success of your community to launch other groundswell applications that open new channels of communication and help you build different kinds of relationships with your customers.

