

2023



COMMUNITY INDUSTRY TRENDS REPORT



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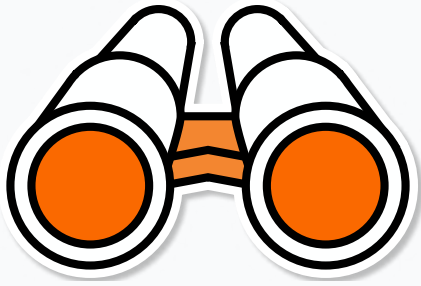
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Executive Summary

Welcome to the 5th annual Community Industry Report!

Contraction and commitment.

These two seemingly oppositional words best describe the findings in this year's Community Industry Report.

Based on a survey of 425 community professionals, there are many signs that the community industry is contracting:

- Community teams have fewer full-time employees.
- Community functions that once had a dedicated person have now become part of someone's job.
- Forums and message boards have fewer moderators.
- Organizations aren't as likely to increase their investment this year as they were in the past.

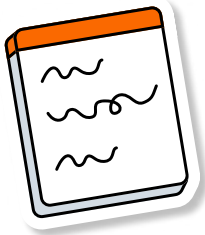
It's no surprise that, because of these changes and economic uncertainty, 59% of you are concerned about layoffs.

But, even though you're facing challenges, you are having success.

Half of you reported your community has been very successful at impacting business goals, up from 43% in 2022.

And you remain committed to community-focused work. Most of you plan to stay in this field – and you continue to find joy because you know **how important this work is.**

As one respondent shared:



"I love feeling like I can make an impact on the quality of someone else's life and livelihood. [My community members] have told us that being in a community of like-minded individuals has changed not only their business, but their life. That helps me show up even on the hard days."

This quote is a beautiful reminder that **building communities are about more than ROI**. It's about the **people in our communities and how we make them feel**.

In the coming year, it is my sincere hope that we take time to **reset and regroup** so we can focus on what is most important about the work we do and how we do it. **I see us come out the other side stronger than ever.**



Jess Hobbs

Director of Community Programming, CMX

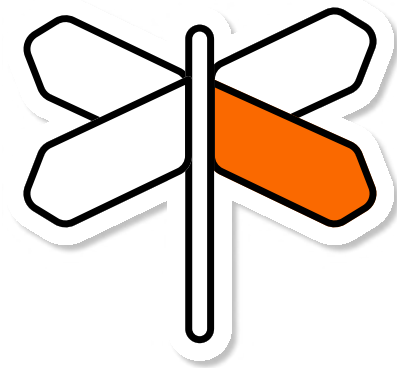
Key Findings

1

#Uncertainty

Community professionals are confronted with economic uncertainty.

Only 44% of respondents believe their organization will be increasing their investment in community, down from 62% last year. 59% of community professionals are concerned about losing their job.



2

#Shortage

Community teams are shrinking – and they’re asked to do more.

Community teams are **smaller than ever**, with only 54% of teams reporting they have at least two full-time people on the team. At the same time, community professionals are more likely to report they only have **one moderator for their message board** and they’re **managing events in-house**.

Key Findings

3

#Impactful

Communities' positive impact to the business is increasing, despite the rough economic landscape.

Half of respondents consider their communities to be very/extremely **successful at impacting business goals**, up from 43% last year. 80% report community has had a **positive impact** on the business and 79% say they have seen **increased interest in community** from other departments in their organization in the past 12 months.



4

#Technology

30% of communities are using 5+ tool in their tech stack, but there are signs they still aren't getting what they need.

Yet only 36% are using a **tool for community/automation** and 42% of community pros say their organization has a CRM, but it **does not connect community and customer data**.



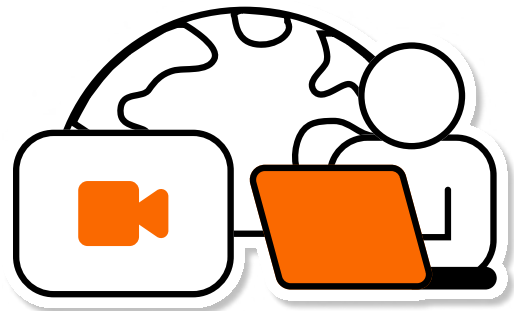
Key Findings

5

#Hybrid

Both in-person and virtual events are staples for communities.

Not surprisingly, the percentage of those who **host in-person events** has doubled since last year while the percentage of communities who host virtual events **remains steady**. While respondents believe in-person events are better for 1:1 connections and business impact, they think **virtual events are better for their community** and for bringing in **diverse audiences**.

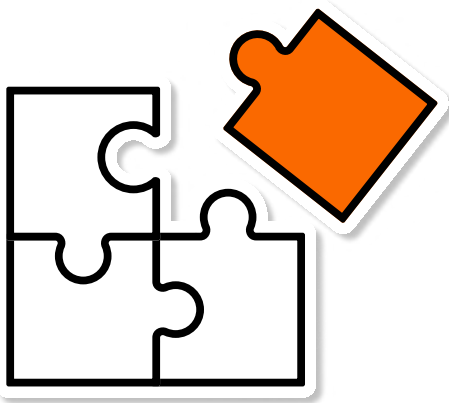


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#Committed

Community pros are committed to this industry despite challenges.

This year we uncovered the top areas where community professionals want to see improvement: **salary, having sufficient budget and staff, and making an impact**. That said, the majority of community pros **are happy** in this industry and **plan to remain** in this field for at least the next two years.



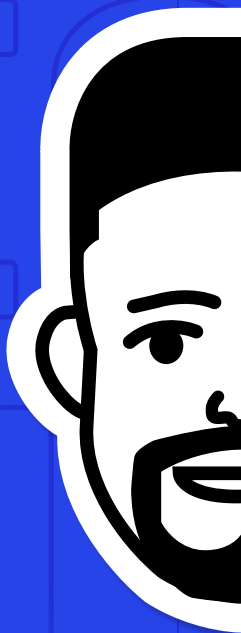
THE COMMUNITY PROFESSIONAL

One of the most important things about communities is the people who make the magic happen. As we have done in the past, we're sharing data about **years of experience, title, location, gender, and race/ethnicity of our community.**

In addition, we dug deeper this year to understand how community pros think about their work right now – and what they are considering for the future.

In this section:

- Profile of a community professional
- Type of work community professionals focus on
- Salary data
- Job satisfaction
- Layoffs
- Commitment to the industry

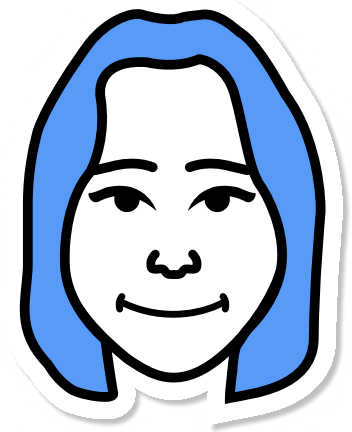


Profile of a community professional

Let's start with a look at some basic **demographic** and **firmographic** data.

As we see each year, respondents offer perspectives that come from a range of **experience levels, titles, and races**. This year, we had representation from **25 countries**.

Our insights come from community professionals who work within or consult with an organization. We also welcomed responses from those who are currently unemployed.



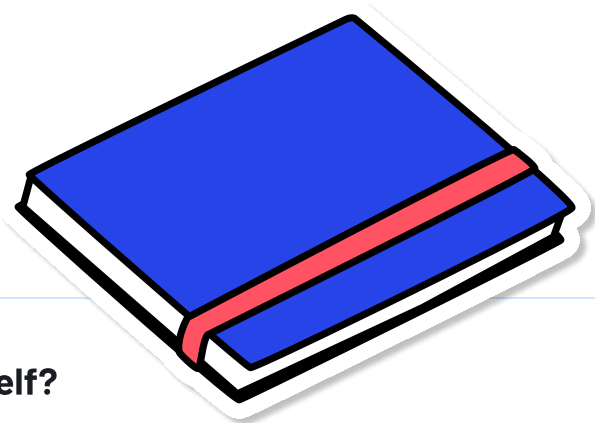
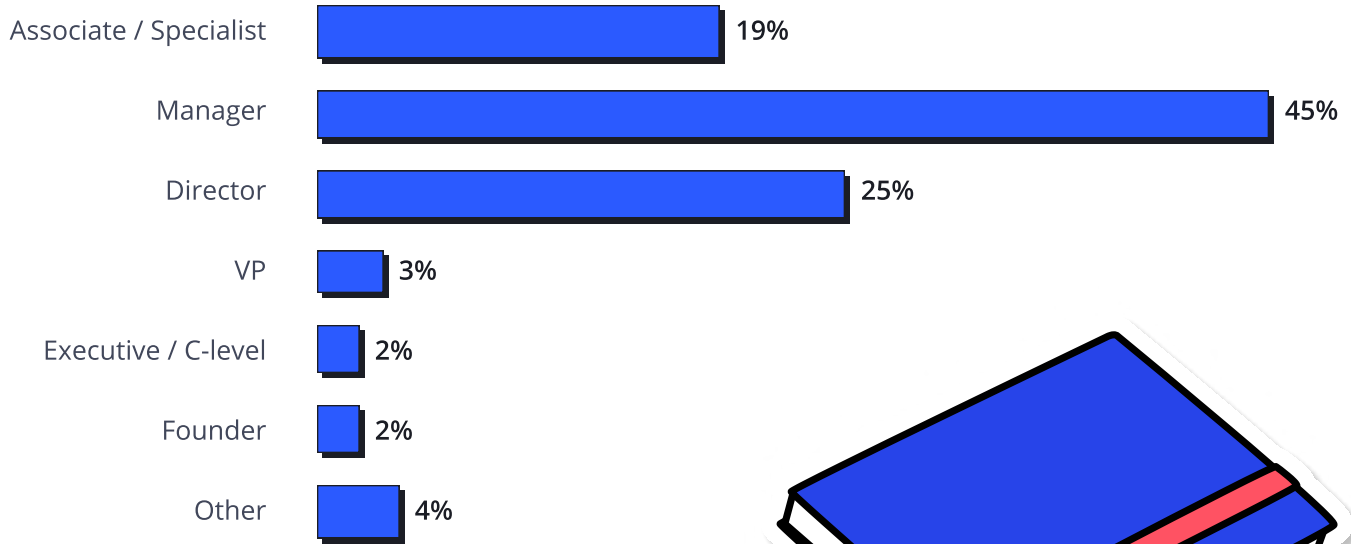
Please describe the nature of your community building work

I'm a full-time employee and spend 100% of my time on community building	62%
I'm a full-time employee and spend part of my time on community	26%
I was a full time employee working on community but am currently unemployed	5%
I'm a community consultant/freelancer	7%

How many years of experience do you have as a community manager/professional?

Less than 1 year	8%
1-2 years	21%
3-4 years	19%
5-7 years	21%
8-9 years	11%
10+ years	20%

Which option best describes your level?



What title best aligns with how you view yourself?

68%

Community professional / builder

9%

Customer experience professional

7%

Marketing

3%

Business Owner

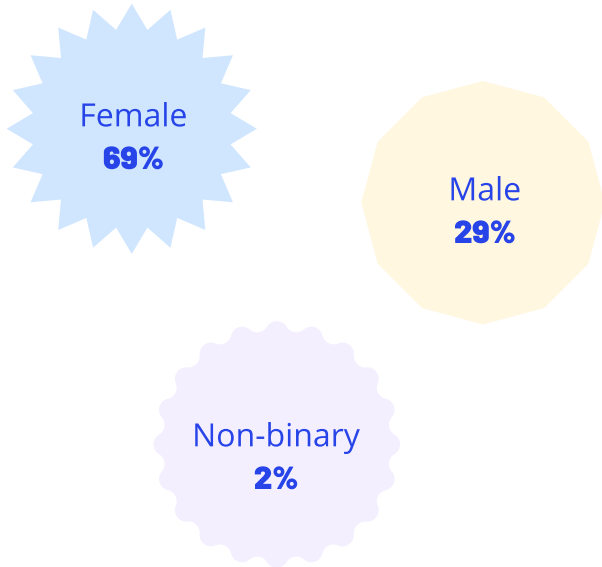
2%

Social media strategist/manager

11%

Other

How do you identify?

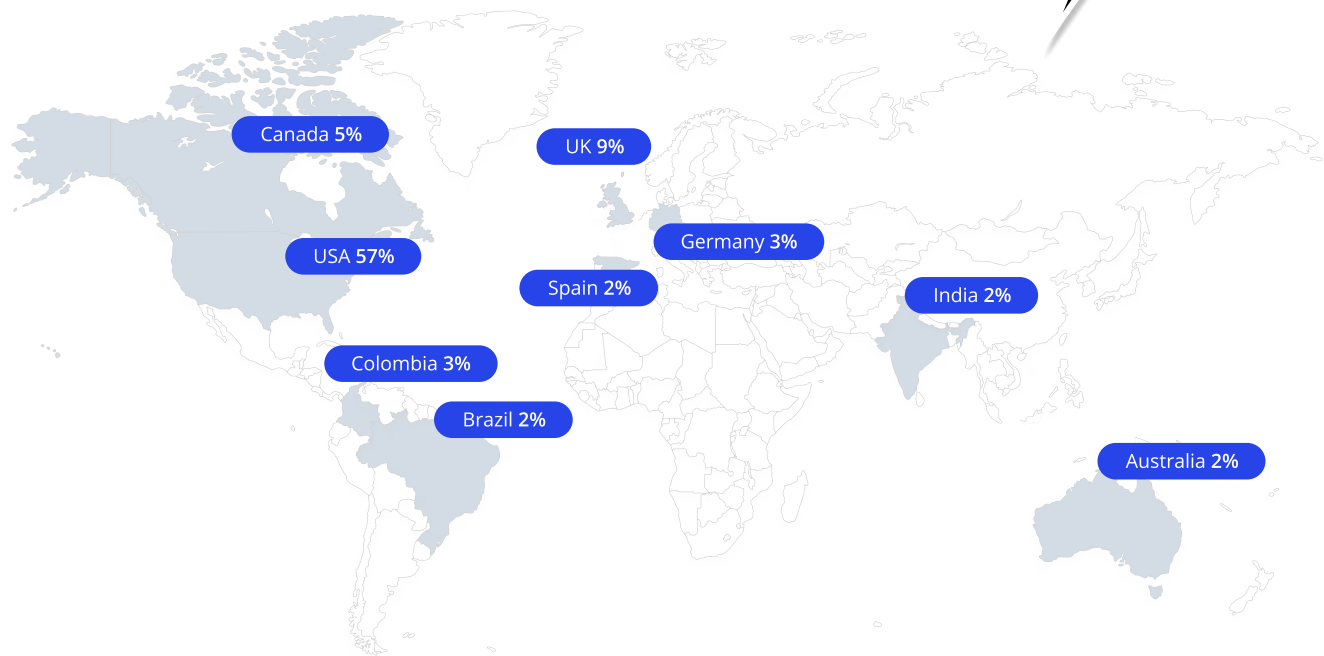


What is your racial or ethnic identity?

White	69%
Hispanic or Latino/a/x	11%
Black or African descent	6%
East Asian	4%
South Asian	4%
Southeast Asian	3%
Multi-racial	3%
Indigenous	1%
Middle Eastern	1%
Other	3%

What country do you live in?

Respondents come from 25 countries, most commonly:



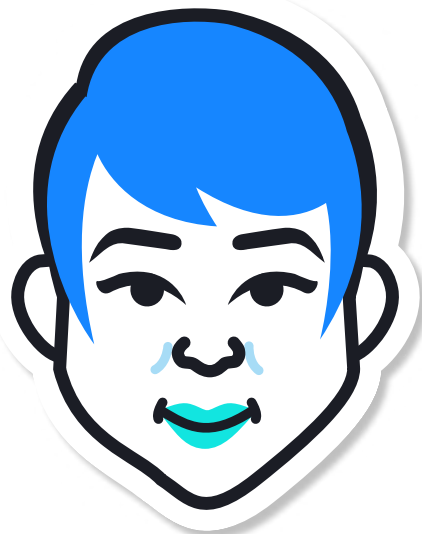
Type of work community professionals focus on

As anyone in this line of work knows, community professionals can be difficult to define because “community” means so many things.

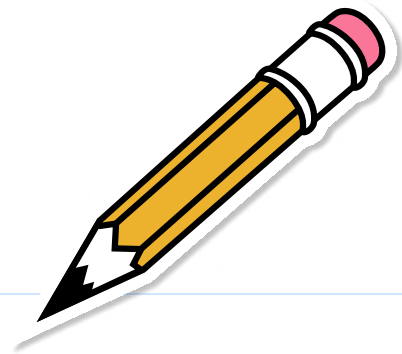
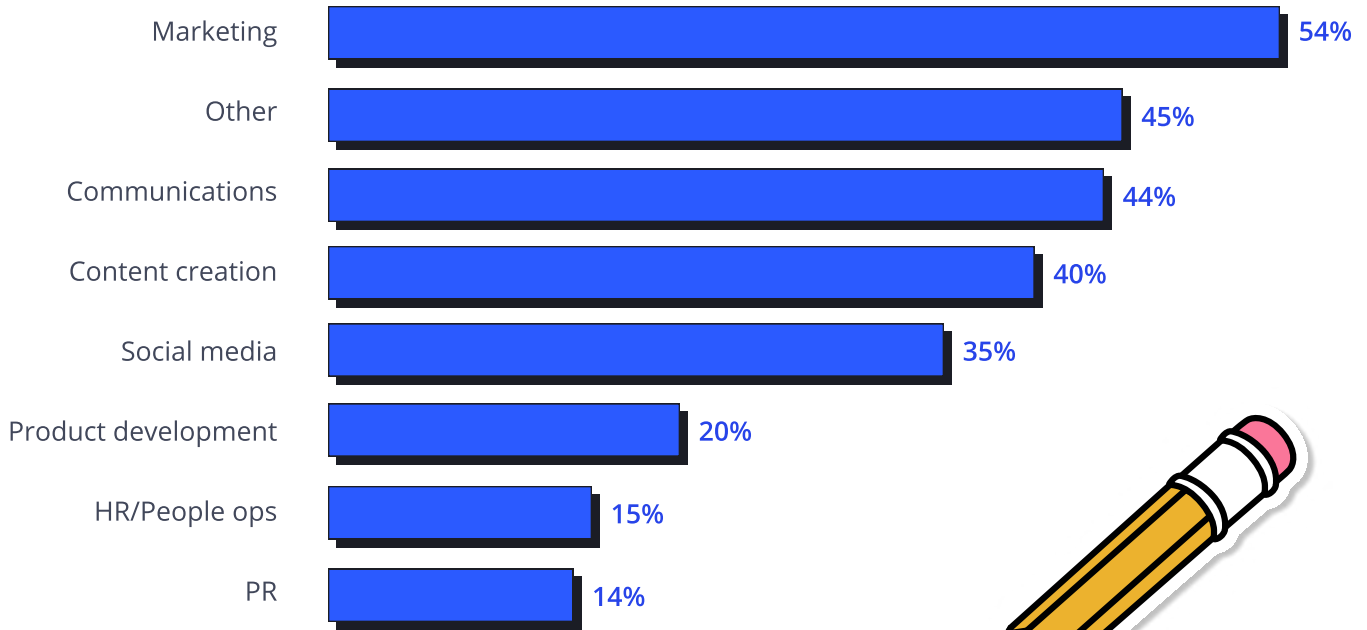
25% report that **community is only part of the work** they do. Most often, these community pros are also responsible for various **marketing tasks**.

New this year, we explored what type of community efforts our respondents work on.

Almost **80%** are involved in building the **community strategy** and **engaging directly with the members**.



What else do you work in addition to community?



What is your role with your community?



Salary Data

Even though job descriptions are diverse, community managers often ask us what an appropriate salary range is. Of course, salaries vary based on responsibilities, years of experience, and location, some of which we break down below. Overall, salaries have increased since last year when we started collecting this data.

We did not receive enough data to provide statistically significant insights from regions outside the US, so all of the data shared here are for US-based salaries. Please note that some of our sample sizes are small.



Level

Associate

2023	2022
SAMPLE SIZE: 28	SAMPLE SIZE: 51
\$100,934.81	\$86,340.00

Manager

2023	2022
SAMPLE SIZE: 83	SAMPLE SIZE: 140
\$110,427.11	\$110,991.71

Director

2023	2022
SAMPLE SIZE: 55	SAMPLE SIZE: 91
\$140,003.82	\$139,720.88

Years of Experience

Up to 2 years

2023	2022
SAMPLE SIZE: 52	SAMPLE SIZE: 77
\$87,516.15	\$84,429.35

3 - 4 years

2023	2022
SAMPLE SIZE: 27	SAMPLE SIZE: 55
\$119,709.26	\$100,528.00

5 - 9 years

2023	2022
SAMPLE SIZE: 67	SAMPLE SIZE: 104
\$133,713.58	\$124,850.00

10 +

2023	2022
SAMPLE SIZE: 39	SAMPLE SIZE: 85
\$151,628.21	\$153,435.29

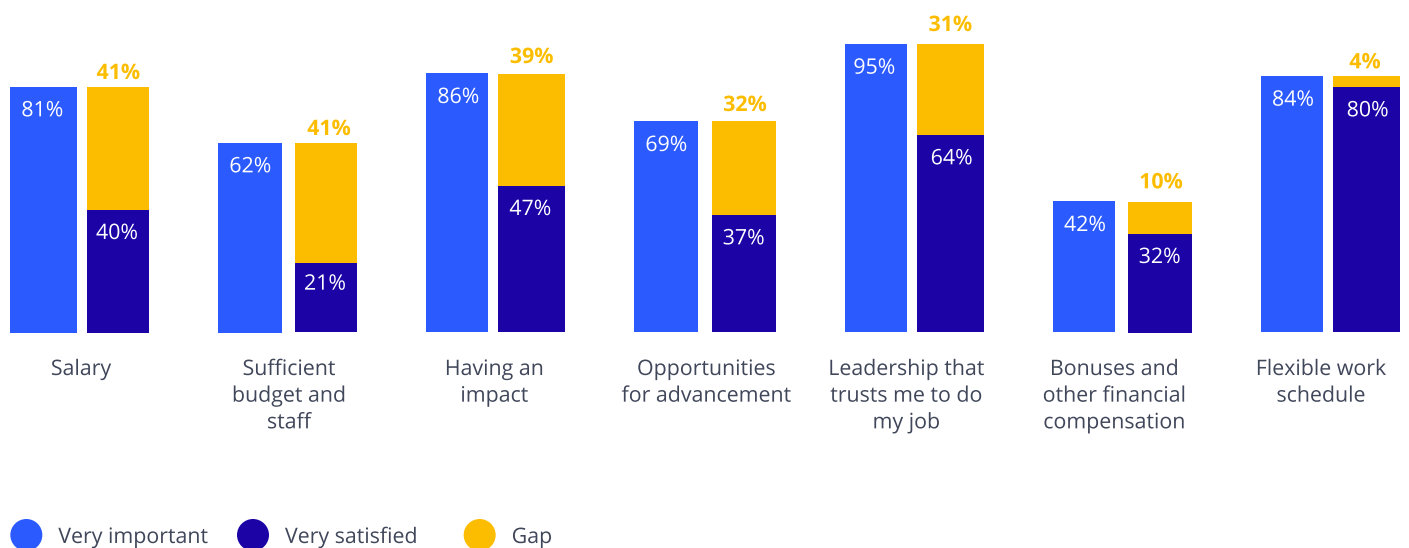
Job satisfaction

Although **monetary compensation** is important, it’s only one aspect of job satisfaction. This year we wanted to understand what is important to community professionals and **how satisfied** they are in each of these areas.

Of the factors we provided, community professionals say that their **leadership’s trust, making an impact, and having a flexible work schedule** are most important to them. In fact, these are ranked as even **more important than salary**.

When asked how satisfied they are in each of these areas, respondents revealed gaps between **importance and satisfaction** in many areas. The biggest gaps (and places where we need to see improvement) are with **salary, having sufficient budget and staff, and making an impact**.

How important are each of these aspects of your job? How satisfied are you?



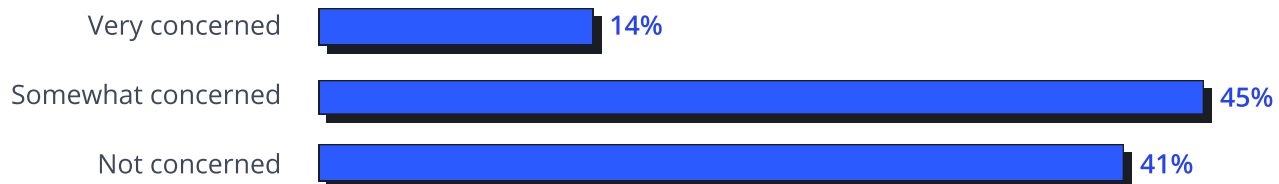
Layoffs

A new area we started tracking is layoffs. We've all heard from within our personal networks and on LinkedIn that people are looking for work, but we wanted to see how common this is among community professionals. 12% of community professionals **have been laid off** in the past 2 years, with almost **half of those layoffs** occurring within the last 6 months. And 59% of respondents are concerned about **losing their job**.

Another interesting trend we're seeing is the **openness to freelancing and consulting**. 67% of respondents are somewhat/very likely to consider **consulting** as an **alternative to a full-time role**.

12% of community professionals have been laid off in the past 2 years.

How concerned are you about losing your job within the next year?



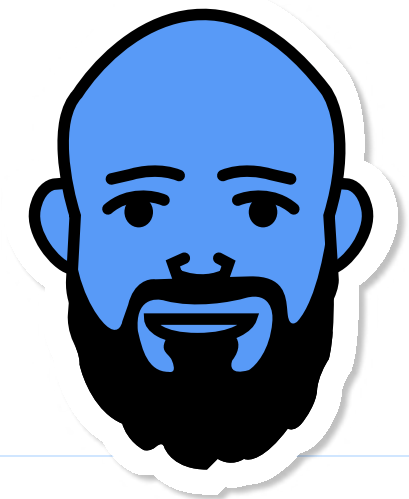
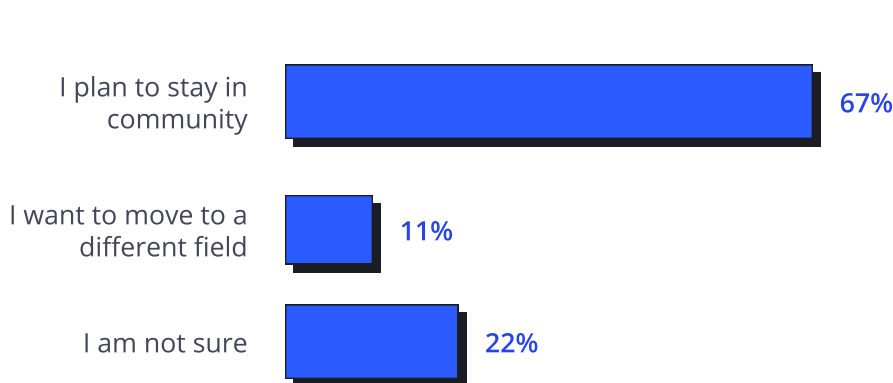
How likely is that you would consider freelancing/consulting as an alternative to a full-time role?



Commitment to the industry

Even though these times are uncertain and there is room for improvement, the majority of community pros are happy in this industry and plan to remain in this field for at least the next two years. And, there is a lot to celebrate and be joyful for.

Do you think you will still be a community professional in the next 2 years or do you plan to move to a different field?



What do you love about being a community professional?

I really love helping folks and creating a space that is diverse, inclusive, and friendly. Also, being a community professional is rewarding creatively... there are lots of different things you can do and lots of interesting problem solving involved. I love taking in feedback from the community and trying to use it to improve our platform and all the things that we offer.

The community field is equal parts challenging and rewarding. It is challenging in that there isn't an established, one size fits all blueprint for every community, and its value is not easy to quantify or well understood by most Executives. It is rewarding when you see your efforts to connect people succeed, and your members tell you how important the community is to them.

Generally speaking, I love connecting people to what they need. Whether it's an answer to a question, a person who they can learn from, or building confidence in someone because they are a poweruser. I love the technical problem-solving for building our community site. I love training people on how to use our community. The whole thing—social, technical, communication—rolled into one.

I love bringing people together and watching them get to know one another and become 'buddies'. It makes me happy to see that people feel safe and welcome in the community space. I love that I 'run a place' that has the potential to truly help people. I also love putting the spotlight on our community members who decide to share their best practices/how to's/success stories.

COMMUNITY OPERATIONS AND PROGRAMS

Now that we have a better understanding behind who makes communities run, we are diving into how they function.

One of the biggest trends we're seeing this year is that community teams are getting leaner, while they are also being asked to do more.

In this section:

- How long community has existed, stage of community
- Community team
- Frustrations
- Ideas for building community
- Automating community
- Tech stack
- Community programs
- Online forums and message boards
- Types of events communities are hosting, platforms they are using, which types events are working
- How teams manage their events
- A closer look at community-led events

How long community has existed, stage of community

Before we look specifically at how communities currently operate, it's useful to understand the baseline of **what a community looks like**.

While almost half of communities have existed for at least 5 years, new communities are continually launching. 13% report **their community is new this year** – and 25% report **they are actively building their community**. The rest of community pros are focused on **revitalizing, scaling, and maintaining their community programs**, all which have their own set of challenges.

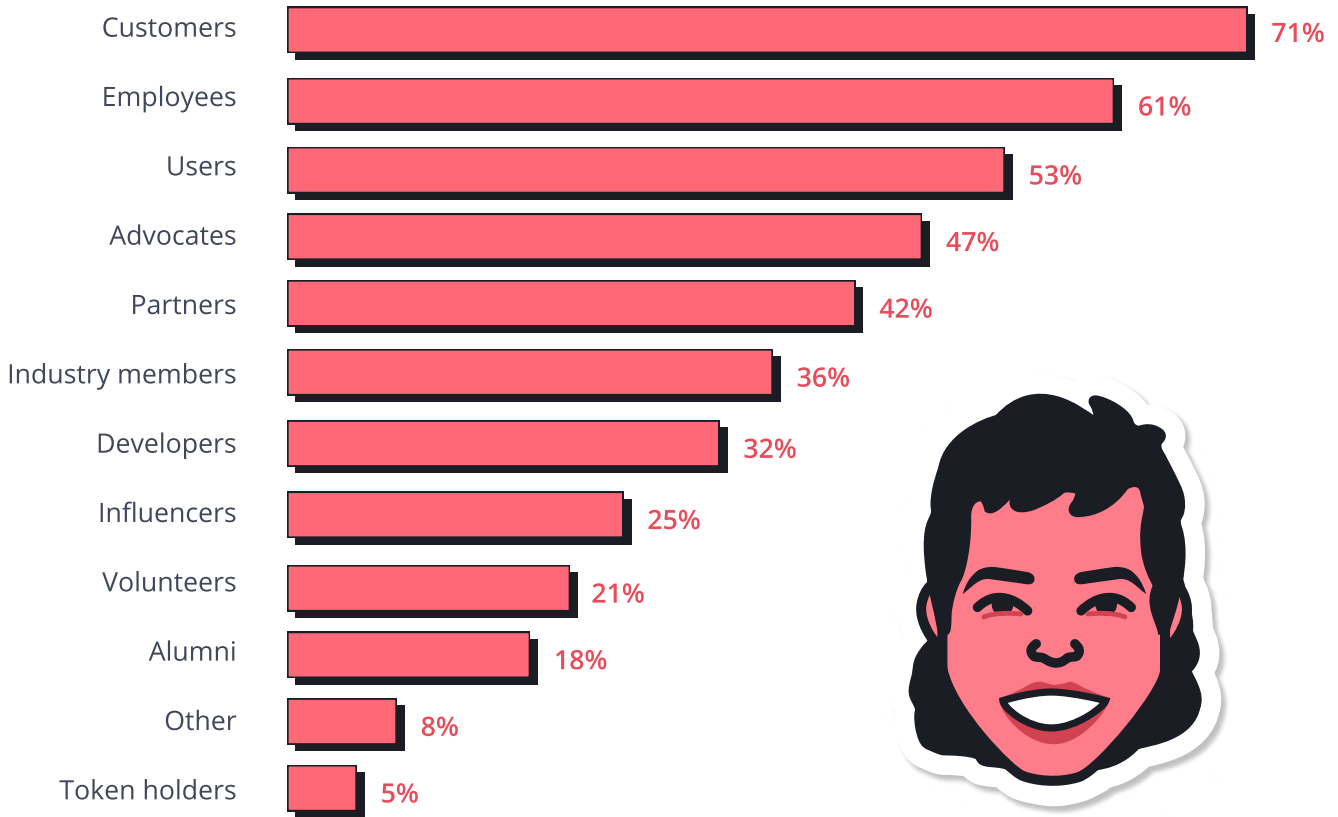
Approximately how long has your organization's community existed?

Less than 1 year	13%
1 - 2 years	23%
3 - 4 years	19%
5+ years	45%

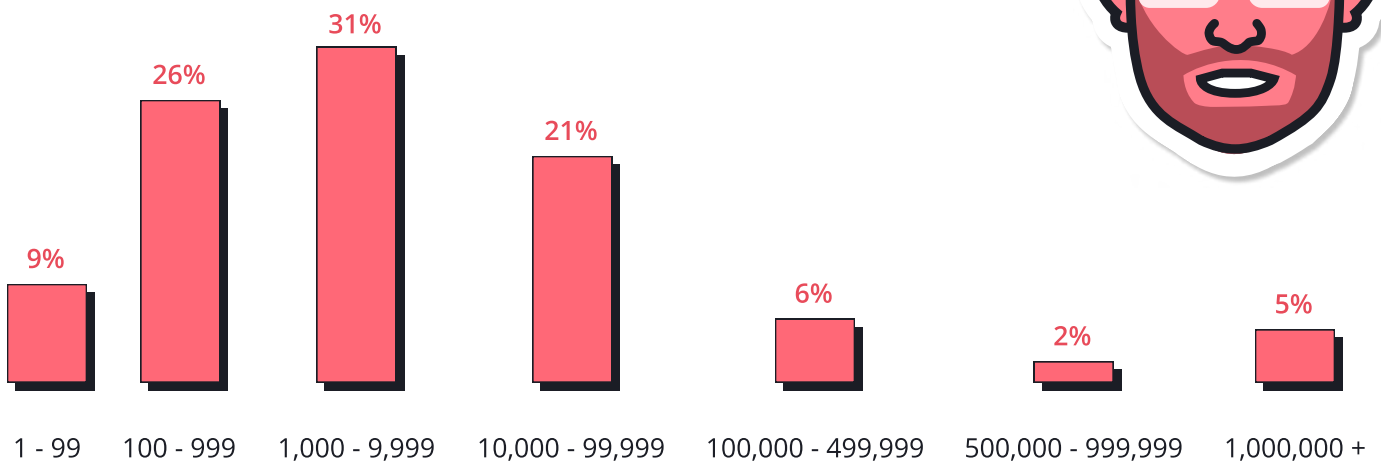
Which option best describes the stage of your community program?

Scaling an existing community	40%
Building a new community	25%
Maintaining an existing community	17%
Revitalizing a community	14%
Other	4%

Who participates in your community?



Approximately how many total members are in your community?



Community team

One thing we have tracked over time is the number of full time employees that are part of the community team. This year, **community teams are smaller than ever**, with only 54% of teams reporting they have **at least two full-time people** on the team.

However, the good news is that 90% of community teams **continue to have a dedicated community manager**, which is higher than in any other year.

Approximately how many employees work full time on your community team?

	2023	2022	2021	2019
1	36%	31%	29%	34%
2 - 5	41%	41%	46%	41%
6 - 10	8%	12%	12%	9%
11 +	5%	8%	9%	7%
No one	10%	8%	4%	9%

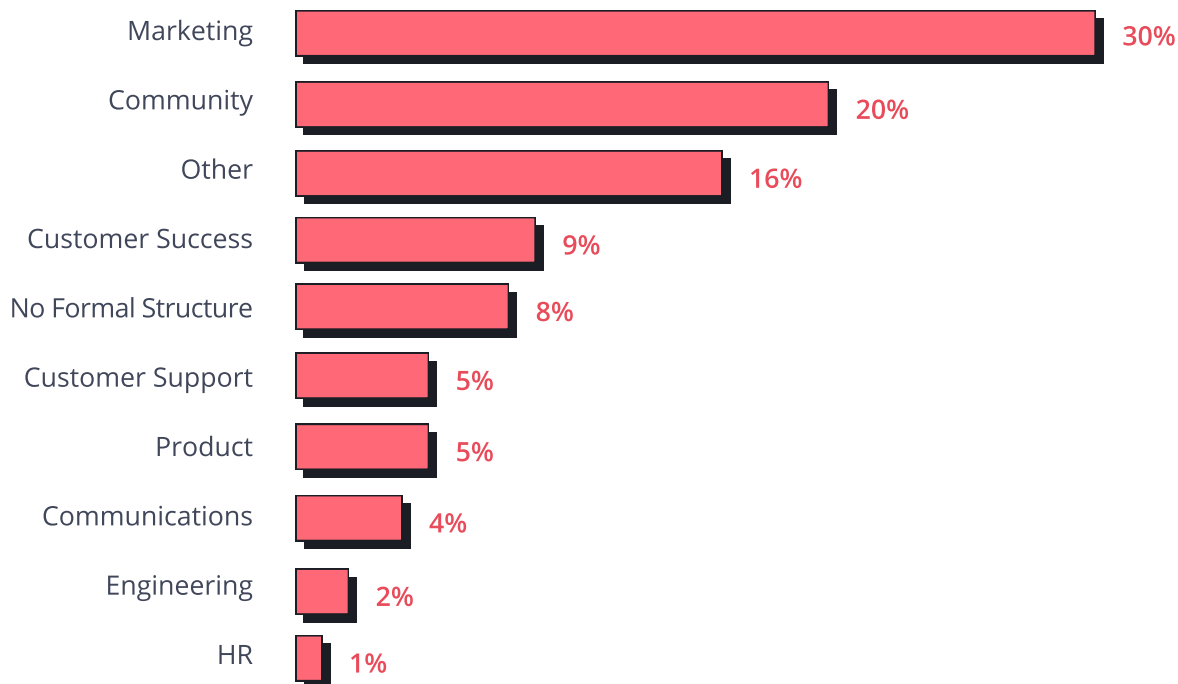
Community team and department

While just 20% of respondents **work in a dedicated community department**, the rest are embedded in other departments, most commonly marketing.

Regardless of what department community professionals are in, one shift we're seeing is **how the work is allocated**. Last year we started how teams manage the essential tasks surrounding community. For each responsibility was asked respondents to share if they had a dedicated person who worked on this, if it was part of someone's role or if it was something they were not focusing on.

For most roles, we're seeing a smaller percentage of teams who have a dedicated person responsible for each activity. In short: **community pros are being asked to do more**.

What department is your community team part of?



% of communities who have a full-time person for various functions

	2023	2022	YOY Change
Engages directly with the community	38%	46%	-8%
Focuses on operations and processes	29%	35%	-6%
Develops education and training	18%	23%	-5%
Designs community products and experiences	24%	28%	-4%
Grows community through marketing	20%	24%	-4%
Runs in-person or virtual live events	22%	24%	-2%
Run chapter-based event programs**	15%	15%	0%

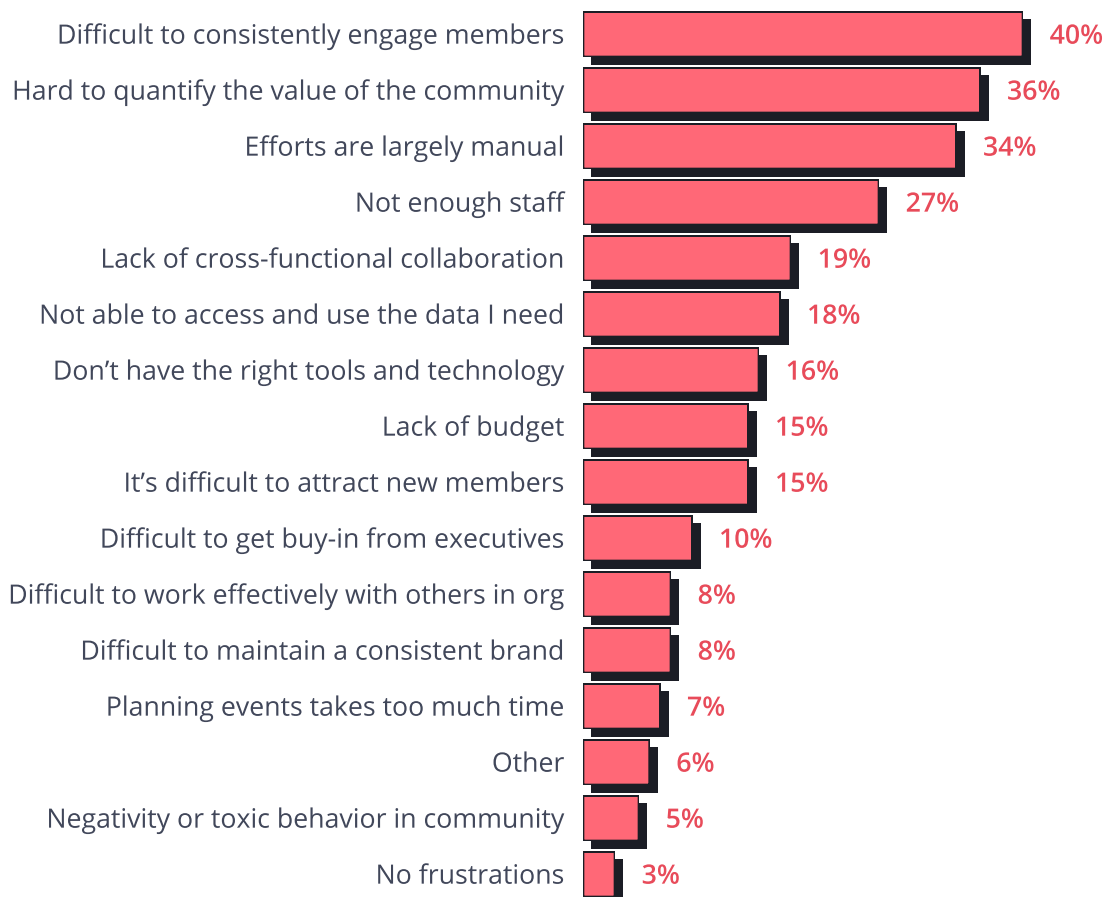
** While there is no year-over-year decrease in organizations that have a full-time person who runs chapter-based event programs, only 51% currently have someone working on this, which is down from 62% last year.

Frustrations

As we see each year, the top community-related frustrations continue to be around **consistently engaging members, quantifying the value of their community, and managing manual tasks.**

Because community engagement is always a **top challenge**, we asked respondents to share their **tips** for building community.

What are your top frustrations about managing your community and its activities?



Ideas for building community

What is your #1 tip for building community?

It doesn't matter who or how you are trying to build; what matters the most is WHY and where that WHY is coming from. If this is a trickle from leadership, poke holes where they see the gaps the community can fill and work backward from there. Never start the building without understanding its purpose and how it solves the business.

Listen to your audience while engaging with rewards and recognition. This can mean thematic challenges aligned with diversity history month observations, photo competitions, or quizzes. Reward and recognize those that participate and they will become your community champions.

Be consistent. It takes time to build momentum, and to build trust and familiarity. Don't keep trying and scrapping new things, have a well thought out strategy, and keep at it. That doesn't mean not to adjust when something isn't working, but you have to make incremental adjustments, and when something IS working, lean into it and keep it going.

Find out how many active community members (within a forum, for example) you need for the community to function on its own without input from the Company. Nobody needs dead communities. Depending on the topic and frequency of community use, this can be anything from 12-3000.

-Start with 'why' always.

-Document why you are doing it, for whom it is & why would they join.

-Create your user persona, mentor persona, and contributors persona to tap into the right kind of people.

-Once that's done, start with a small group of 100 people run experiments on them & build personal connections with them before you scale the community.

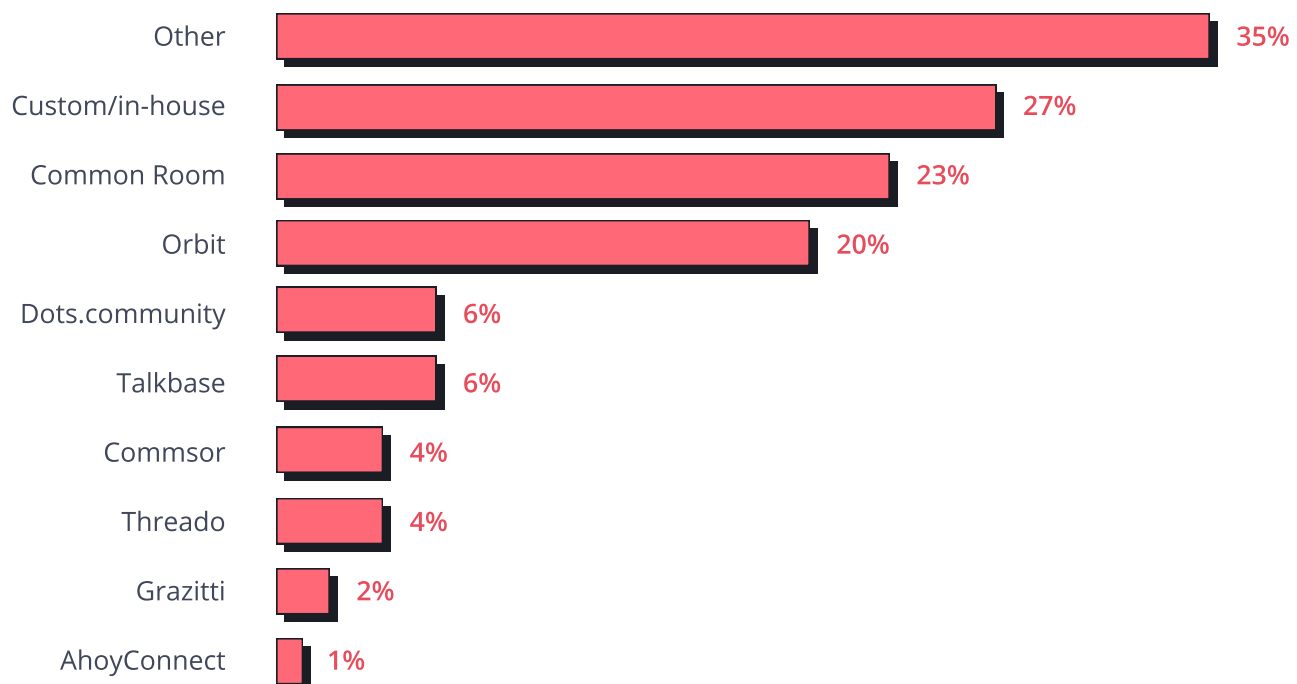


Automating community

One of the top frustrations with managing a community is the **manual effort required**. While some aspects of community such as 1:1 conversations aren't – and shouldn't be – scalable, **there are tools that can help automate some tasks**. Yet, only 36% of community professionals are using these types of tools.

For those using automation tools, there is very little standardization across **tech stacks**. When given a list of tools we thought were most common for **automation and data aggregation**, the most commonly selected responses were “other” and custom in-house solutions. (The “other” responses varied greatly but included tools such as Waves, Airtable, Salesforce, Zapier, Higher Logic, Hubspot and Power BI.)

Do you use any of the following community automation/data aggregation tools?



Tech stack

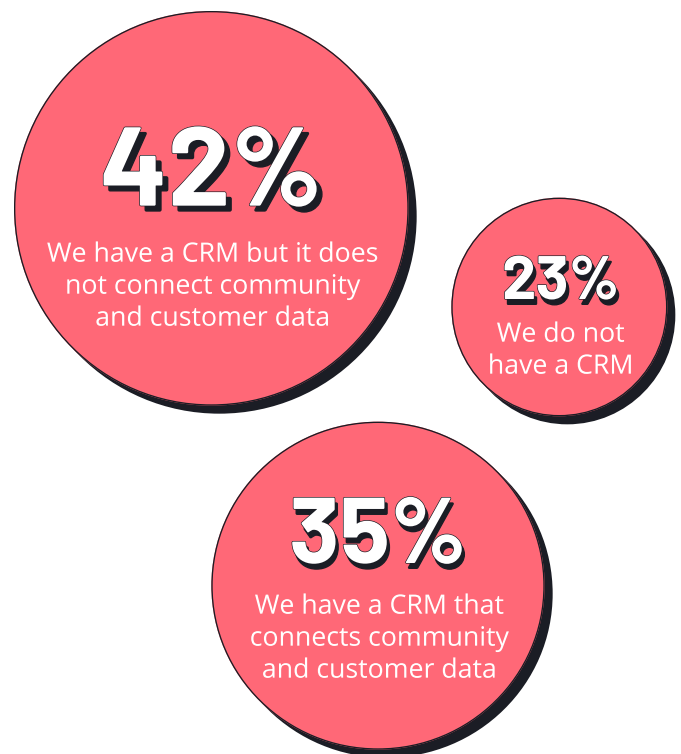
There are very few, if any, tools that do all of the things community pros need them to do so it's **common for community pros to use a variety of tools**. On average, communities have 3.8 tools in their tech stack. 30% are using **5 or more tools**. While the breadth of tools help community pros get the functionality they need to manage their community, the downside of multiple tools is that there is no "single source of truth".

Community also needs to be better integrated into **marketing tools**. 42% of community pros say their organization has a CRM, but it **does not connect community and customer data**.

How many tools do you have in your tech stack for your community?

1	14%
2	18%
3	26%
4	12%
5+	30%

Does your community data connect to your CRM?

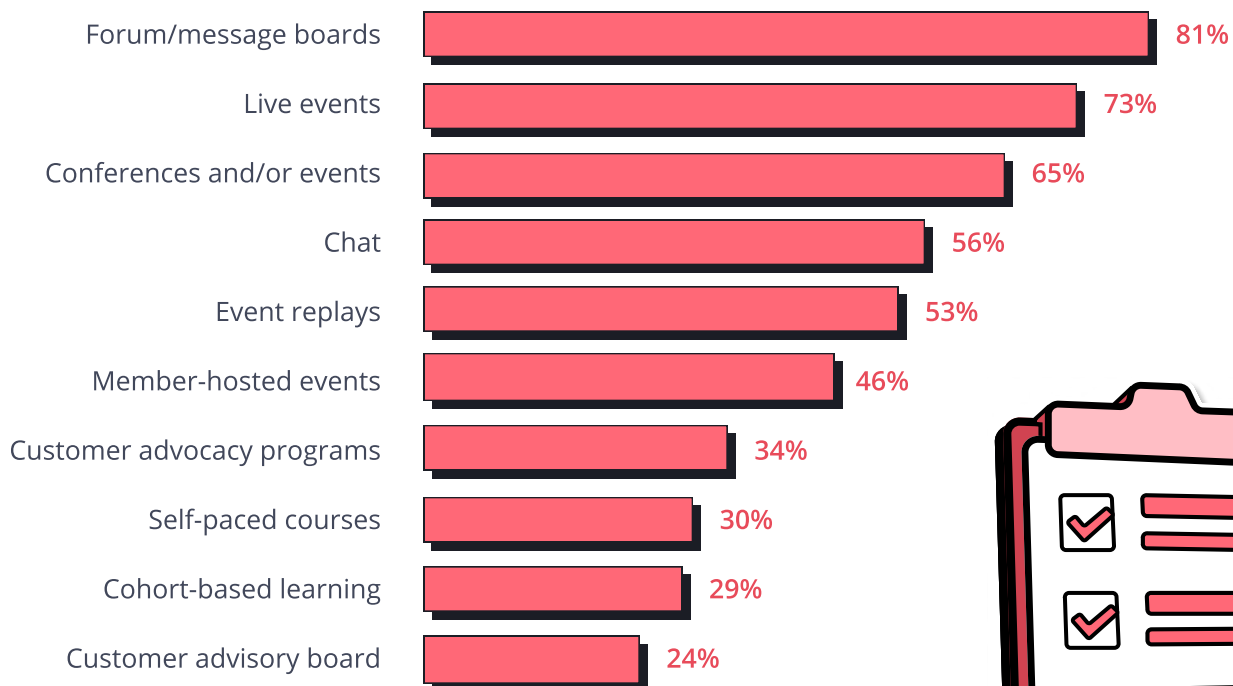


Community programs

Communities offer a range of programming to support their members, and this year we increased the options we included. As we've seen in the past, **online forums and message boards** are the most common type of program.

30% of communities offer **self-paced courses and/or cohort-based learning**, which are two new options we needed this year.

What type of programs does your community host/offer?



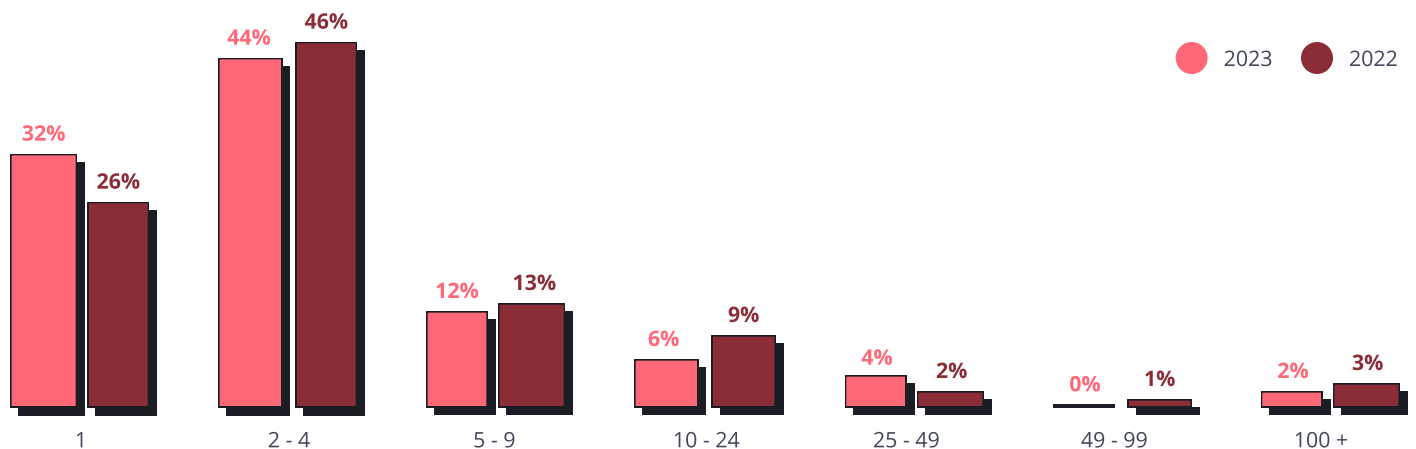
Online forums and message boards

One of the trends we’re seeing since last year is that more organizations are moving the **management of their online forums and message boards in house**. Perhaps because of this, it’s not surprising that we’re also seeing an increase in those who say they only have **one moderator for their forums and message boards**.

What best describes how you manage your online forums/message boards?

	2023	2022
In-house: All of our forums or message boards are started by employees	61%	38%
Community-led: Some or all of our community programs are started by our community members	8%	14%
We have a mix of in-house and community-led forums or message boards	31%	48%

How many moderators do you have for your forums and/or message boards?



Platforms, online forums, and message boards

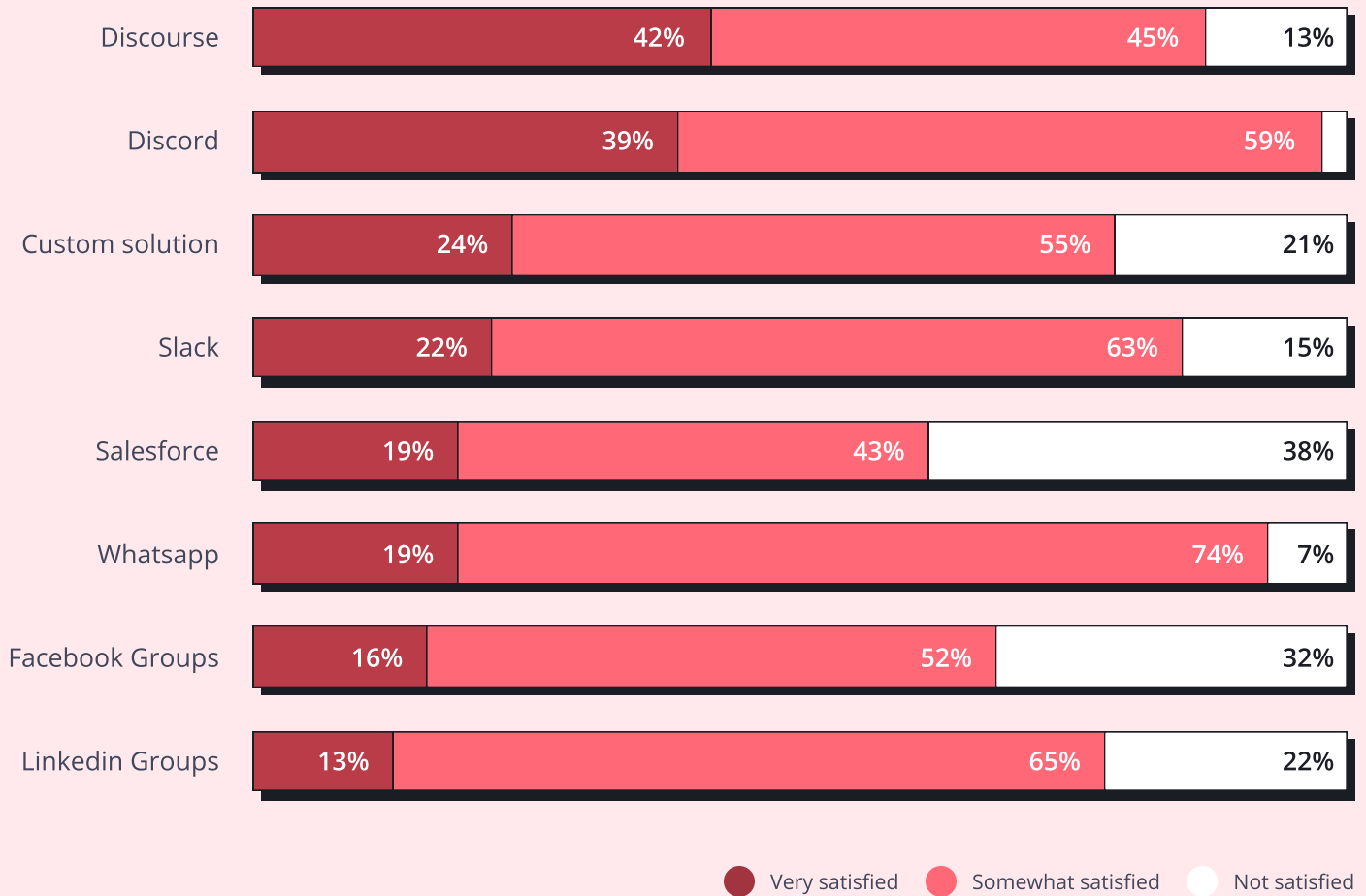
Since 2021 we've been tracking the platform(s) communities use to manage their **forums and message boards**. Over time, we're seeing an increase in those who use **Slack and Discord** while we are seeing a decrease in those who use **Facebook groups and custom solutions**.

Even though Slack is most popular, community pros are more likely to report they are very satisfied with **Discourse and Discord**.

What platform(s) do you use to host your community forums/message boards? Select all that apply.

	2023	2022	2021
Slack	28%	25%	27%
Other - Write In	20%	25%	30%
Discord	17%	14%	8%
Facebook Group	17%	19%	26%
Discourse	9%	7%	10%
Custom/Built in-house	9%	11%	16%
Whatsapp	8%	NA	NA
Linkedin Group	7%	9%	9%
Salesforce	7%	8%	12%
Twitter Communities	6%	4%	16%

How satisfied are you with your platform for managing your community?

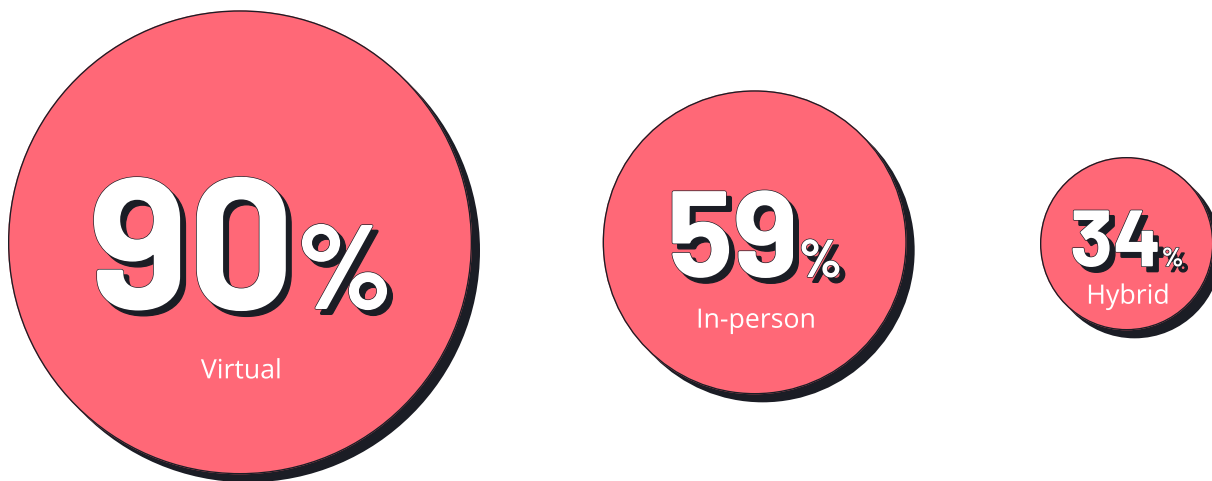


Events

Communities are (finally!) back in person! Last year, 29% of those who host events said they offered an in-person event, and this increased to 59% this year. However, **virtual events** remain a staple for 90% of communities.

We realize that communities are seeking the **right balance** between in-person, virtual, and hybrid **events**, so we collected data to better understand when each **type of event works best**.

What type(s) of events did you host for your community in 2022?



	In-person events	Virtual events
Better business impact	x	
Better for community		x
Better for learning	Tie	Tie
Better for 1:1 connection	x	
Better for diverse audiences		x

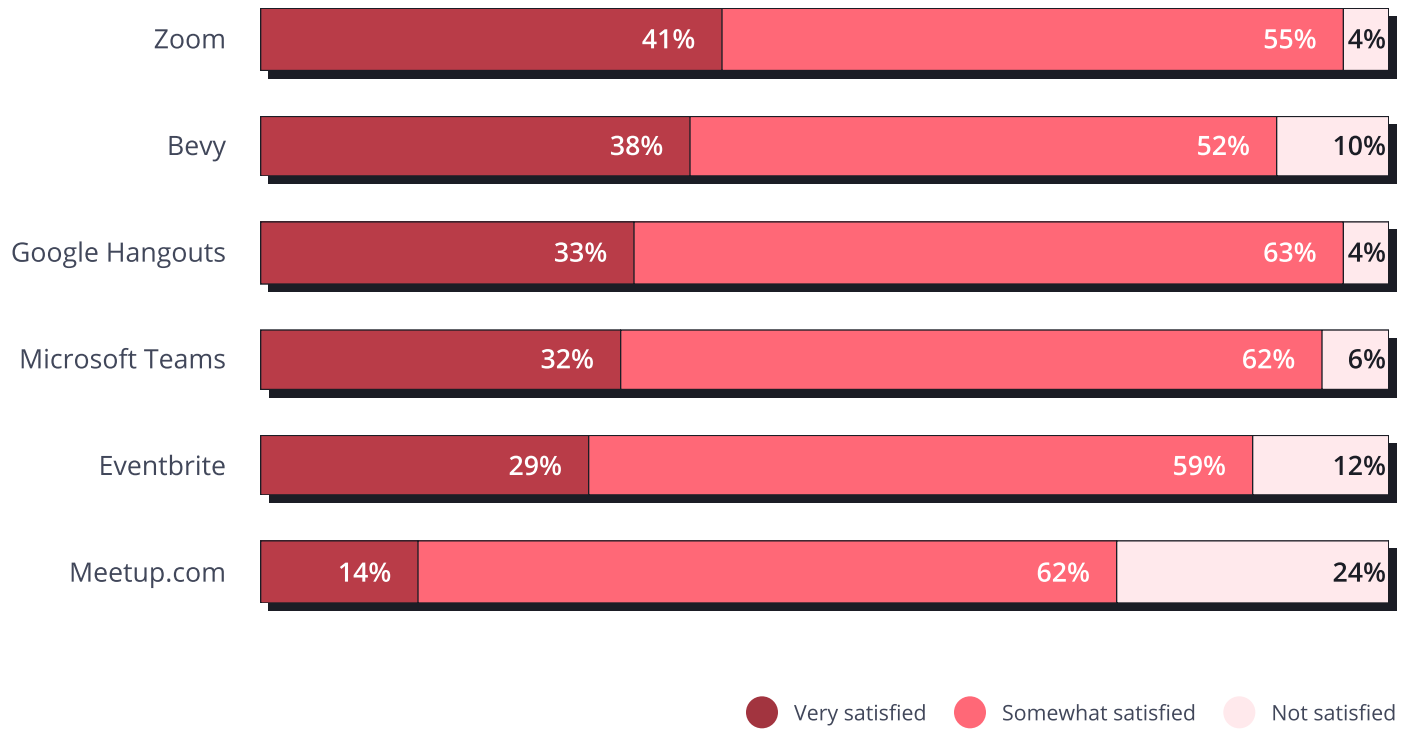
Event platforms

We're seeing shifts in the platforms people use to host events. The popularity of Zoom has increased every year since we started collecting this data, while we see a decrease in most other platforms. Zoom is also the platform that has the highest percentage of users who are very satisfied.

What is the primary platform(s) you are using to host events?

	2023	2022	2021	2019
Zoom	77%	73%	59%	NA
Other	25%	29%	18%	33%
Eventbrite	16%	13%	NA	37%
Microsoft Teams	12%	13%	18%	NA
Bevy	11%	12%	18%	9%
Meetup.com	11%	9%	NA	30%
Google Hangouts	10%	14%	35%	NA
Hopin	9%	10%	24%	NA

How satisfied are you with your platform for managing your events?



Event management

Last year we started tracking how teams manage their events, and this year we're seeing **more organizations bringing their events in-house**. Perhaps related to this, more departments have become involved in managing events this year.

What best describes how you manage your events?

	2023	2022
HQ-led: All community programs are run by employees or contractors	62%	56%
Community-led: Some or all of our community programs are run by community members and local chapters	9%	12%
We have a mix of in-house and community-led programs	29%	32%

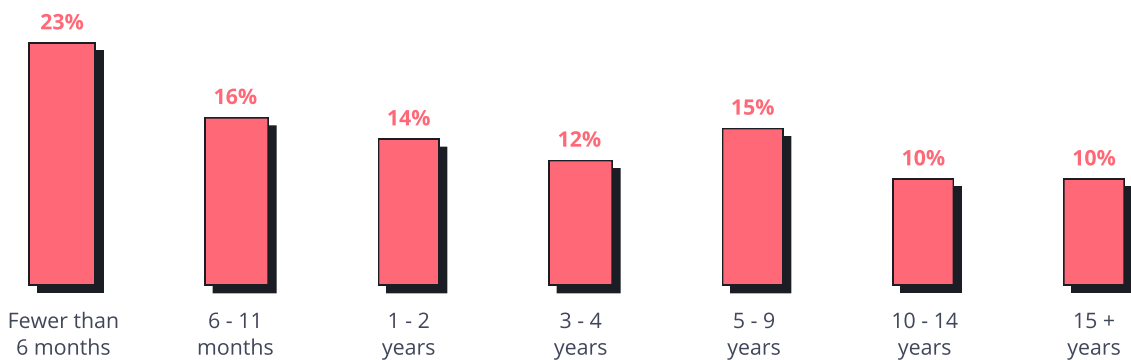
Which team(s) are responsible for managing your company's virtual events?

	2023	2022
Community management	77%	55%
Demand generation/marketing	24%	12%
Field marketing	18%	9%
Event management	32%	21%
It varies based on the event	34%	27%

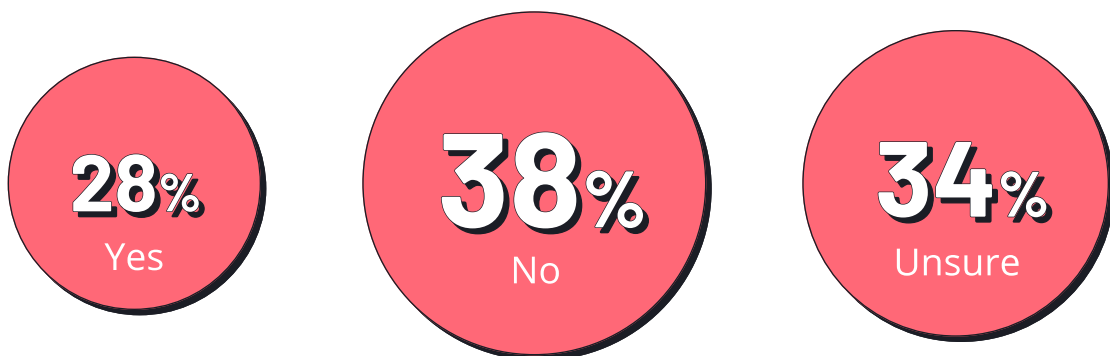
Community-led events

Even though more organizations are bringing events in-house, 39% of those who have community-led events have launched them in the past year. 28% of those who are not yet using community-led events are interested in launching a program this year.

How long has your community had community-led events?



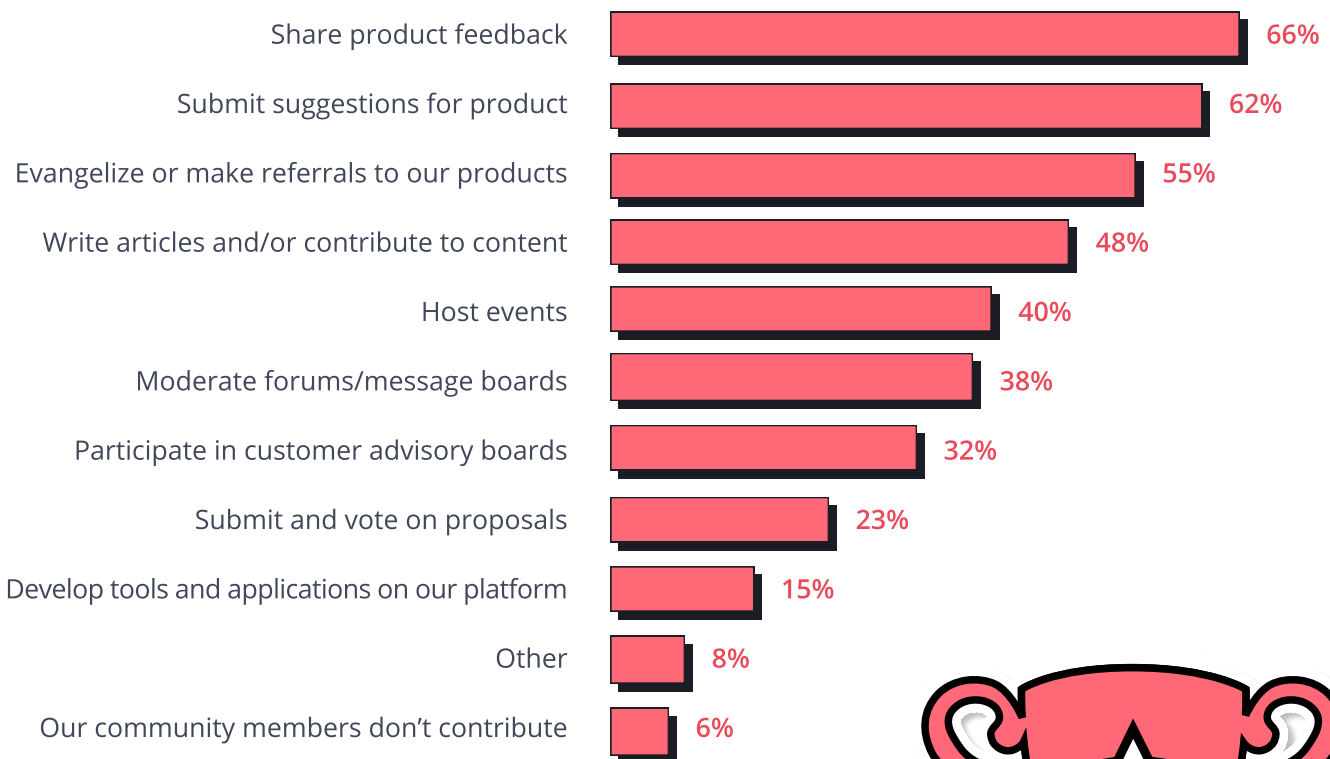
Do you plan on launching a community-led event program in 2023?



Community contribution and rewards

94% report their community members are contributing to the business in some way. Most commonly, they are focused on using member feedback to improve their products.

How are your community members contributing to the business?



DEI

One crucial aspect of community that we've been tracking since 2021 is **DEI**. We believe strongly that communities need to have **goals and policies** in place to **support diverse audiences and create a safe space for everyone**.

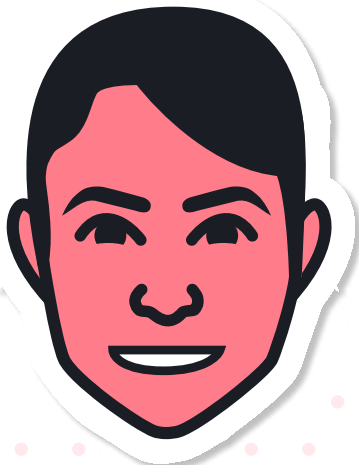
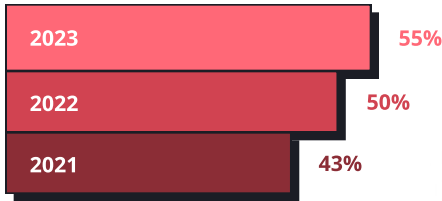
Unfortunately, this year only 45% have specific goals related to DEI for their community, down from 57% in 2021.

Do you have specific goals related to diversity, equity, and inclusion for your community?

Yes



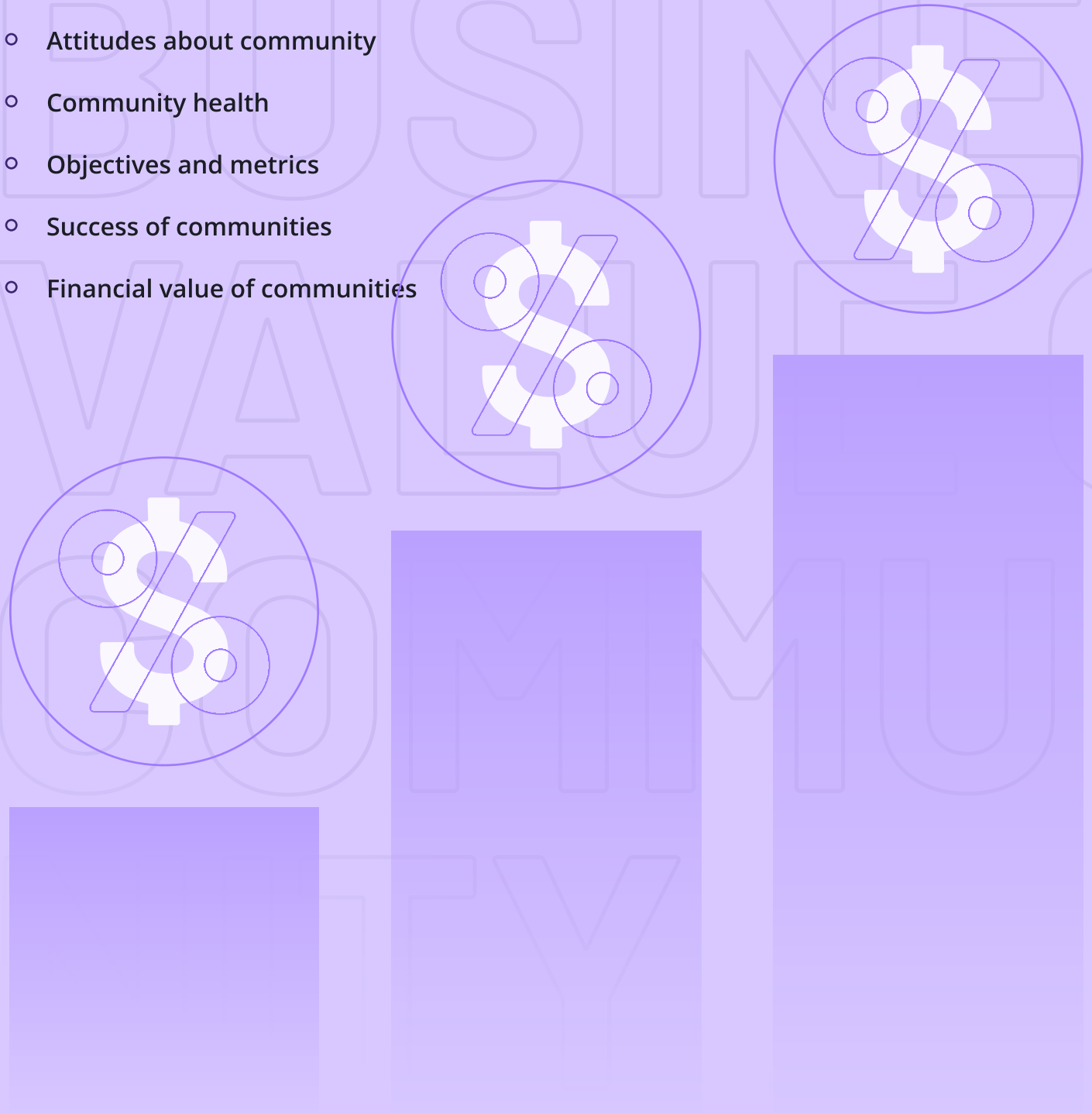
No



THE BUSINESS VALUE OF COMMUNITY

In this section:

- Attitudes about community
- Community health
- Objectives and metrics
- Success of communities
- Financial value of communities



Attitudes about community

Each year we ask respondents to share how they think their community is **impacting the business** and what the **investment from the business** into the community will be.

One finding stood out to us: only 44% think their organization will **increase their investment** in community over the next year, which is down from 62% last year. This is the **lowest level of confidence** we have seen since we started collecting this data.

That said, **all other signs remain positive**. Community pros continue to report their communities are **critical to and are positively impacting the business**.

82%

agree that community is critical to their company's mission

80%

say that community has had a positive impact on the organization in the past 12 months

79%

have seen increased interest in community from other departments in their organizations in the last 12 months

44%

think their organization will increase their investment in community over the next year

Impact to the business

Another reason to celebrate: 50% of community pros report their community is **extremely/very successful at impacting business goals**, up from 43% last year. Considering the tumultuous year this stat is especially noteworthy.

A closer look at communities that impact the business

Those who say their communities are extremely/very successful at impacting business goals are more likely to do the following.

Team Structure

- Have 2+ people working full-time on their community
- Are part of a dedicated community team

Programs

- Report volunteers are members of their community
- Run chapter-based event programs
- Host customer advocacy programs
- Host member-hosted events
- Host a customer advisory board
- Offer chat functionality in their community
- Offer cohort based learning
- Offer community-led events
- Have community members participate in more types of activities

Operations

- Use community automation/data aggregation tools
- Have a CRM that connects community and customer data
- Reward their community members in multiple ways
- Have specific goals related to diversity, equity, and inclusion for the community
- Send a community health survey to their members
- Track metrics to measure the health of their community

Also note: Those who say their communities are very successful are also more likely to have more years of experience. If you are new to community, don't forget to give yourself time and learn from others. CMX has a wealth of resources that can help.

Top objectives

Each year we ask community pros to report on the **primary objective** for their community and then ask them to share the **metrics** they are using to **measure this objective**.

It's been useful to track the shifts over time because it can be indicative of what is important to the business. In a year fraught with **economic uncertainty**, it comes as little surprise that more communities cite **marketing/acquisition and customer retention** are **top priorities** compared to last year.

	2023	2022	2021	2019 (online)	2019 (in-person)	2017
1	Acquisition (22%) Success (22%)	Support (24%)	Support (26%)	Retention (29%)	Retention (37%)	Support (26%)
2	Support (21%) Retention (21%)	Success (24%)	Retention (24%)	Support (23%)	Content/ contribution (17%)	Acquisition (23%)
3	NA	Acquisition (19%)	Success (18%)	Content/ contribution (23%)	Acquisition (14%)	Retention (18%)

A closer look at community objectives:

The SPACES model

S

Support for customers/users

(e.g., members answer questions for each other)

P

Product feedback

(e.g., get ideas from members on how to improve the product)

A

Acquisition/marketing

(e.g., use the community for leads, new customers, brand advocates)

C

Content creation

(e.g., members create content to help the community)

E

External engagement/retention

(e.g., increase customer loyalty and retention)

S

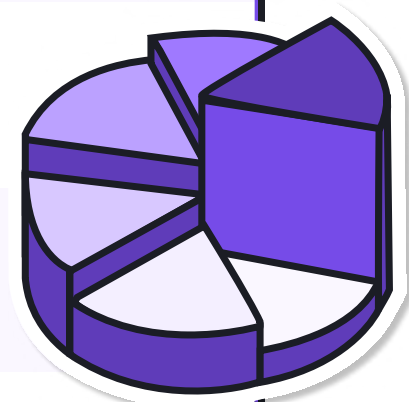
Success of customer/user success

(e.g., customers provide education and teach each other how to best use the product)

Top metrics

So how do communities know if they are impacting their top objective? Below is a list of most common metrics that are mapped to each objective.

Objective	Top Metrics
Support for customers/users	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of percentage of answered questions (35%) • Active users (35%) • Conversation engagement (35%) • Case deflection (33%) • Customer satisfaction (31%)
Product feedback	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Customer satisfaction (39%) • Conversation engagement (39%) • Product ideas (35%) • Feature adoption (35%)
Acquisition/marketing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New customers (53%) • Active users (53%) • New user/member signup (46%) • Website traffic (33%)
Content creation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New user-generated content (49%) • Conversation engagement (37%)
External engagement/retention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Active users (59%) • Customer retention (49%) • Customer satisfaction (38%) • Conversation engagement (35%)
Customer/user success	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Active users (48%) • Conversation engagement (47%) • Net Promoter Score (42%) • Customer satisfaction (41%) • Customer retention (39%) • Number of event attendees (37%) • New user/member signup (34%)

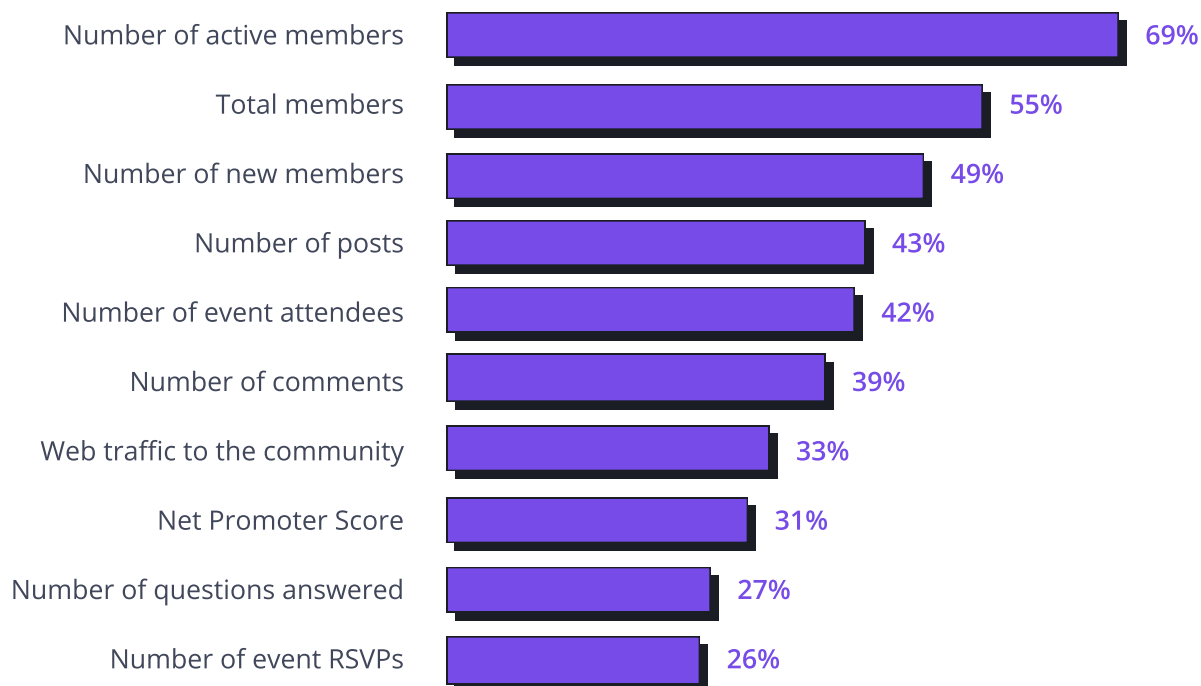


Health of your community

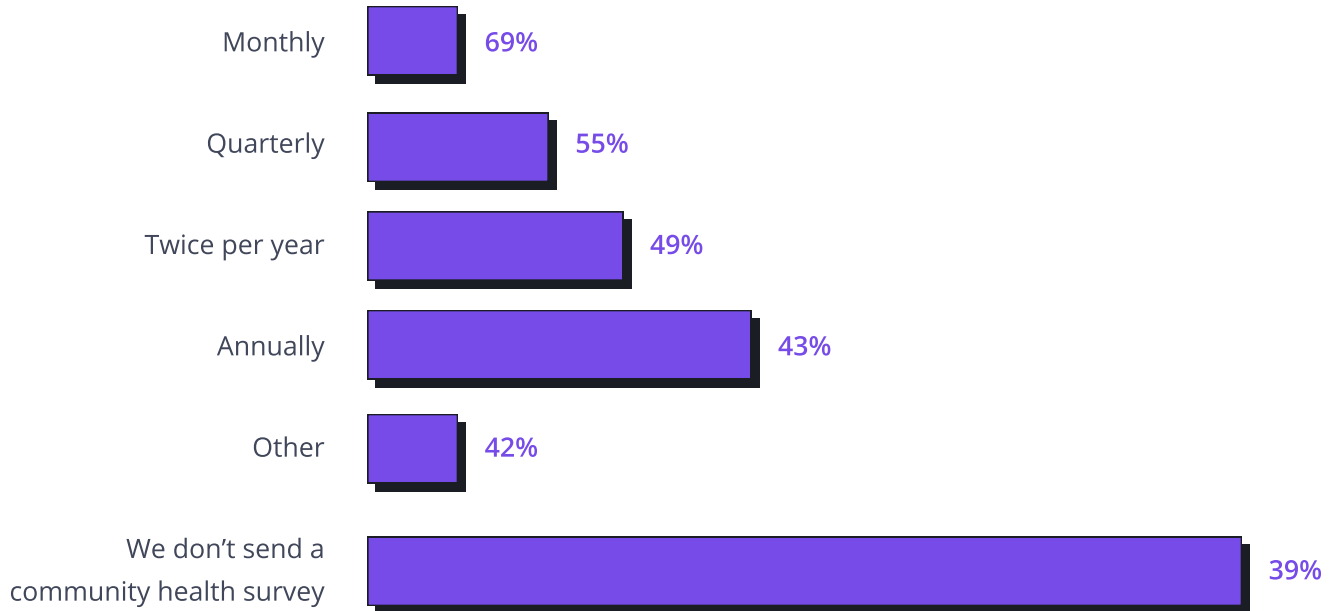
Even though communities differ as to what objective is most important, all community pros want to have a **healthy community**. The most common metrics communities use to gauge health are focused on **number of new, active and total members**.

While these metrics are easy to measure, they don't tell the full story, which is why it's essential for community pros to **survey their members** – yet only half of respondents are doing this.

What metric(s) do you use to measure the health of your community? - Top 10



How often do you send a community health survey to your members?



Financial value of community

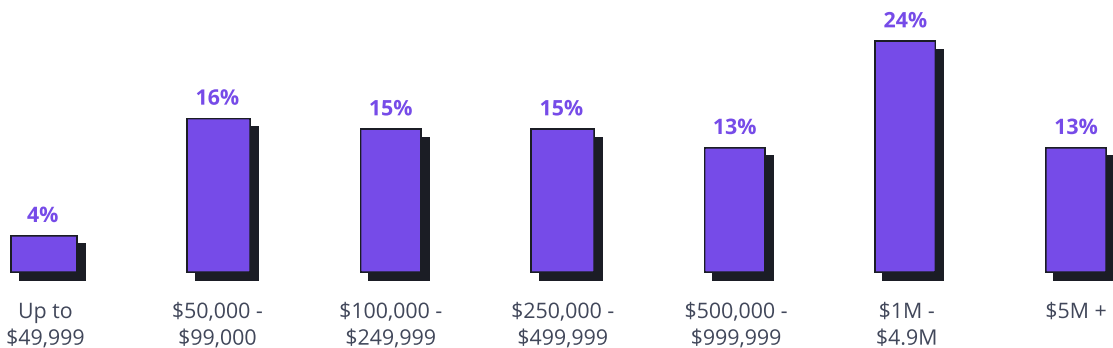
As we do each year, we ask respondents if they are able to **financially quantify the value** of their community. And, as we see each year, only a small percentage (12%) are able to do this.

Even though ROI is something that interests leadership, we believe this one metric is limited and doesn't reflect the **full value of community**. We believe that other metrics such as **surprise and delight, consistency and rituals** should be part of the conversation.

Additional ways to measure and communicate the value of your community:

- DEI
- Surprise and delight
- Consistency
- Rituals
- Sharing voices from diverse audiences
- Creating a safe space where all voices are heard

How much business value has your community provided to the organization in the past 12 months?



Methodology

The **2023 Community Industry Report** is based on the responses of 425 community professionals who completed an **online survey** in January and February 2023.

To invite responses, we shared the survey across the **CMX community** in our Facebook group, Slack, and email list. Our results include community professionals from **25 countries** representing a range of **industries and company sizes**.

For some questions, respondents were given the opportunity to write in an answer. Several of these anonymous responses are included throughout the report.

Number of employees	
1	1%
2 - 9	11%
10 - 49	24%
51 - 200	18%
201 - 500	13%
501 - 2,000	13%
2,001 - 5,000	6%
5,001 - 10,000	4%
More than 10,000	10%

Industry	
Technology	55%
Nonprofit	10%
Education	8%
Other	8%
Professional services	5%
Other	14%

Focus of community	
B2B	54%
B2C	39%
Education	16%
Nonprofit	15%
Other	11%
Web 3.0 / Crypto	5%
Government	4%

Where to go from here

Thanks to everyone who participated in this year's survey and read the report. We hope it has helped you and prompted you to ask new questions.

As we shared at the outset of the report, **contraction and commitment** are the two words that encapsulate what we learned about the community this year. They seem like an unlikely pair, yet they are precisely the indicator we need to illuminate where we go together from here.

These two seemingly oppositional words ask us to **regather and recommit** to the process and beauty of community. What we all deeply love and believe in. This time of contraction allows space for us to work together to find essential meanings and understandings to ground the community professional in connected knowledge and moments so we can grow and thrive and lead our organizations into a future that succeeds with community fully integrated.

What does regathering and recommit look like:

- We know you're resilient and committed. Keep showing up for your communities.
- Evaluate your programs and activities and recommit to the ones that are working for you while being open to adjusting what isn't working.
- If you find your community needs an adjustment revisit what successful communities are doing differently (page 44). We're not suggesting you do all of these things but this is a starting place of ideas that can help you figure out how your community can evolve.

Good news, we can see this happening already. Community leaders are gathering in many ways to co-create definitions and guidelines that will create nodes of understanding.

As in previous years, we hope this report helps you plan for the year ahead, design your community strategies, and build more successful communities and community teams.

If you have ideas on questions we can answer in future reports or ways to make this report more valuable to you, we would love to hear from you. Reach out anytime: team@cmxhub.com

About CMX

Our mission at [CMX](#) is to advance the community industry and help professional community builders thrive. We do that through free online community spaces, training courses and certifications, virtual and in-person events, a job board, and lots of content like this report!

If you're building community or curious about building community, we're here for you!

All are welcome at CMX. You are a beautiful part of our community in whatever form you show up in.

Each one of you is a part of completing the CMX picture.

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