

# *Meaningful Change Management*

How online communities improve customer satisfaction, provide fast and easy support, and create powerful brand advocates.





**A leader in community.**  
**Trusted by more than**  
**2,000 brands**

[Learn more](#)

**Khoros named a leader in the IDC MarketScape:**  
Worldwide Collaboration and Community Applications 2021 Vendor Assessment



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# The enterprise powerhouse.

Over the last three years, online communities have continually proven themselves as powerhouses for AND across their organizations.

No longer confined to one narrow slice of impact, online communities contribute lasting, meaningful change at every level of the enterprise – and across departments.

**From improving customer satisfaction, to providing fast and easy support and empowering members, communities drive increased revenue, boost customer satisfaction, and make connecting easier than ever before.**

This eBook highlights unreleased data from the 2022 State of Community Management report, explores trends in online communities, and showcases what success looks like in communities at the forefront of this innovation, like Spotify, Flexera, and Zoom.



# Customer communities provide business-wide value.

No longer a 'nice-to-have', online communities are now a cornerstone of successful customer experience strategies.

**A thoughtful customer community program can positively impact every customer interaction from sales, purchase, support, satisfaction, product innovation, and onward through the lifetime journey of a customer.** By funneling customer interactions into your community, you turn daily interactions into actionable insights.

Since 2009, we've tracked, measured, and reported on average and best-in-class online community programs and developed proven strategies and tactics for long-term success.

In this eBook, we'll explore how Khoros communities excel as strategic initiatives, drive diverse business outcomes, exemplify foundational program development, and demonstrate outsized value for their organizations.



# *Meaningful Change Management*

Build a foundation for long-term community success.



# Strong foundations lead to long-term success.

When you're launching an online community it's tempting to rush ahead to the fun stuff – exciting programs, calculating ROI, etc., but we believe you have to go slow to go far – and that starts with building solid foundational elements to support your community program as it matures.

The foundations of successful community programs include projects like identifying member personas, understanding the desired member journey, and setting reasonable measurement targets aligned with your community goals.

Two of the critical building blocks for a successful community are policies and guidelines that are easy to understand. In very simple terms “policies” are “how we kick you out” of the community and “guidelines” are “why we kick you out” of the community. Both are required to create a framework for your members to interact and collaborate.

**This is good news for Khoros community programs ... 100% of Khoros communities in our 2022 survey sample had both policy and guideline documents in place!**



**100%**  
**of Khoros Communities**  
**Have Policies and**  
**Guidelines in Place.**

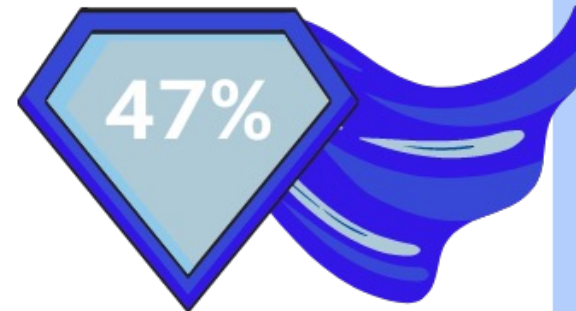


## Khoros' superpower? Turning members into advocates.

Leadership programs (a.k.a., advocacy, MVP, or superuser programs) are a key component of successful online communities. They directly correlate with higher member engagement, greater ability to measure value, and robust executive participation.

Even with these benefits, only 30% of all communities surveyed in 2022 had formal leadership programs in place. Unsurprisingly, Khoros communities are ahead of the curve here, too. Nearly 50% of Khoros communities indicated they have formal leadership programs in their communities.

Often community managers hesitate to roll out leadership programs, not wanting to overburden, or bother, their members. But our research shows almost every community has members who want to get involved and take on more structured roles. Empowering your advocates by giving them real opportunities not only helps you, but also helps them share expertise, gain recognition, and grow their professional persona. It's an untapped investment that can reap real rewards for both your organization and your key members.



**47%**  
**of Khoros  
Communities  
Have Formal  
Leadership Programs.**



## Set it and forget it? Not for your member experience.

The last thought you want your members to have when visiting your community is, “Wow, am I in the wayback machine?” It’s easy to let user interface (UI) and user experience (UX) updates slide when faced with a full plate of community tasks, but thinking about your member experience should be on your annual to-do list.

Our 2022 research shows 80% of Khoros communities conduct regular UI/UX audits – compared with only 57% of the overall population. Audits like these help ensure members can easily engage in the behaviors that help make their community journey, and your community, successful.

If you’ve never conducted a UI/UX audit for your community, think about places where you have “flat” interactions, where the community pushes out content, and how you can replace those with tools, programs, or activities encouraging collaboration. As you explore your community, consider the experience of each type of member (review your member personas!) and ensure you are making thoughtful design choices to enhance the experience for ALL members.



**80%**  
of Khoros  
Communities  
Conduct UI/UX Audits

## Outcomes in Action: Superusers at Spotify

Spotify transformed music forever when it launched in 2008. Today, Spotify is the world's most popular audio streaming subscription service with 406M users, including 180M subscribers across 184 markets.

Spotify Community provides support, marketing awareness for new features, and product innovation through user-submitted Ideas. When their community launched in 2012, they saw a single superuser's impact on the community, which inspired the creation of the Spotify Stars Program. Community operations has since recognized and developed superusers' value by investing in the program and tools to empower their ability to help others.

Spotify Stars (formerly Rock Stars) launched as a superuser program in 2013. Five years later, Stars have created 158K posts and 12,600 answered questions. Spotify nurtures Stars with annual in-person events, and facilitation of direct superuser feedback opportunities with Spotify executives, product leadership, and engineering teams.

Spotify didn't stop once they got Stars up and running. Feedback on historical program performance led to significant program changes in 2022, with 40% increase in applications and 60% improvement in retention. NPS Score in the program improved from 11 to 45 with the additions of Chat and Ideas to the community in 2016.

If you want to follow Spotify's lead, start small – you just need one superuser to start a program. And ABI (always be iterating!) — what works in the beginning may not be successful long term, make sure you're setting goals, and making improvements as your program grows.



**Leslie Fountain**  
Community Project Manager -  
Content, Spotify

“Since growing our moderation staff, we’ve reported an average success rate of approximately 90% in providing a response within 24-48 hours to new posts, compared to an estimated 30% in 2020-2021. **Using Khoros Care allowed us to see our performance levels and recognize that thousands of posts were being flushed when unanswered.** The insights from our dashboard helped build a case for increasing the staff to achieve a higher success rate.”

# *Meaningful Change Management*

Drive impactful business outcomes with your community programs.



## Khoros communities drive business outcomes.

If you've worked in community for more than a minute, you've probably had someone tell you that community is "nice" because it "makes people feel good," but it doesn't serve any "real business need." *We strongly object to this point of view.*

**While community can be great at connecting people and helping them feel more empowered, it is also an incredible change agent. Our 2022 research showed community programs' are increasingly able to connect community participation to tangible business outcomes.**

The forced adoption of community tactics due to COVID-19 allowed naysayers to see the vast potential for organizations leveraging communities to connect with employees, customers, and prospects – in real-time.

Khoros communities continue to prove themselves as drivers of substantial business outcomes at every level of the they organization. Khoros communities make customer feel seen and heard, and they contribute to everything from increased revenue to improved customer satisfaction to organization-wide innovation and development.



## Support communities have outstanding outcomes.

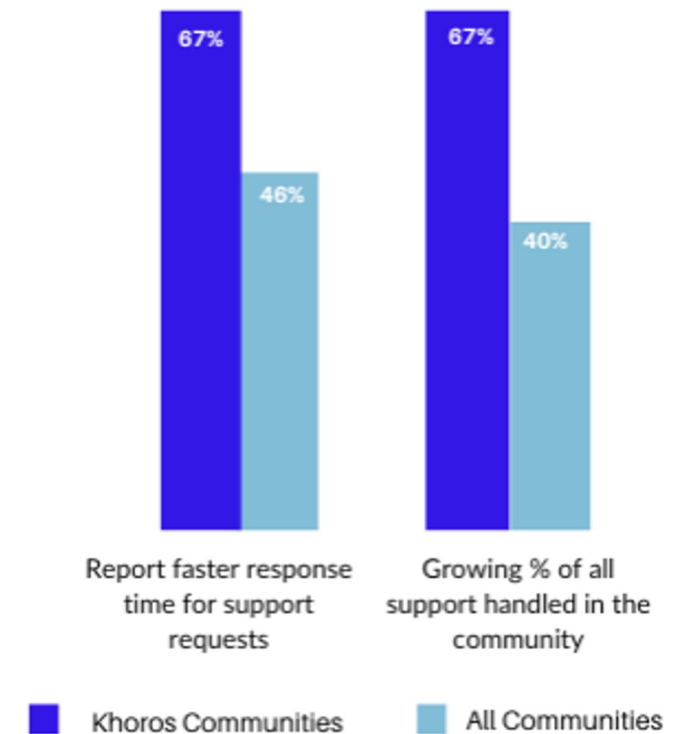
Khoros customers can prove this connection between their communities and business outcomes better than the average community.

**67% of Khoros communities report their community programs directly contribute to tangible support outcomes, including faster response time for support questions, and a growing percentage of all support being handled in the community.**

These outcomes can be traced to higher customer satisfaction and lowered support costs as community-based support initiatives are vastly more cost-effective than traditional methods.

If you use your community for support-related activities, think about these two metrics and track them over the next six months. Even if you haven't placed a deliberate goal around response times or support volume, you may see an organic shift based on the dynamics of community-based support.

### Tangible outcomes tied directly to community



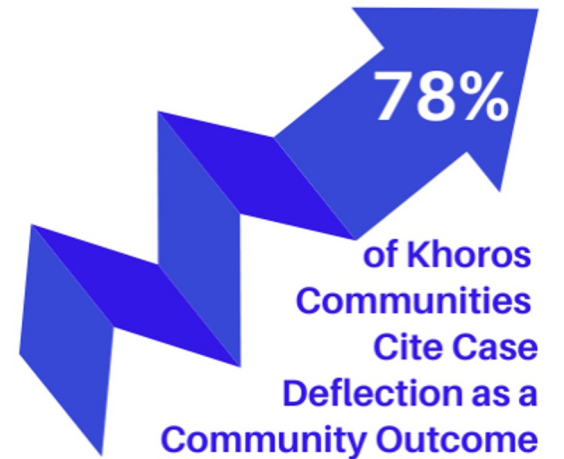
## Case deflection is on the rise.

Case deflection is the rate at which customers can find their own answers to issues that otherwise would have used a support resource – submitting a question or ticket, chatting with a person or bot, or (gasp!) making a phone call.

In many online communities with support as a use case, case deflection is an easy outcome to track – and can provide huge financial returns. Moving a rote interaction into a knowledge base, forums, or FAQ frees up humans to focus on more meaningful community tasks, like driving engagement, building advocacy programs, and measuring your success.

**Khoros communities have taken this advice and are seeing the rewards. 78% of Khoros communities cite case deflection as a community outcome, versus just 39% of all communities.**

How can you begin to measure case deflection? If your customer gets the answer they were looking for and leaves the community without logging a case or reaching out to customer support, you can consider the case deflected. A simple formula would be tracking the number of searches ending with the member consuming content and leaving, vs. the number of searches that ultimately result in a more high-touch form of support outreach.



## Outcomes in action: Case Deflection at Flexera

On the previous page we said tracking case deflection outcomes can lead to “huge financial returns,” and we weren’t kidding. Here’s an example: **In the last year alone, Flexera proved over \$1.3M in savings through case deflection, giving an overall case deflection of 31%.** Let that sink in, and then we’ll back it up.

Flexera helps organizations inform their IT with total visibility into complex hybrid ecosystems, so they can transform their by rightsizing across all platforms, reallocating spend, reducing risk, and charting the most effective path to the cloud. To best understand community at Flexera, let’s look at their mission and vision statements:

- Our mission is to **connect people who have questions about Flexera solutions with people who have answers.** This is what we strive to do to be successful *today*.
- Our vision is to **position the community as the first place Flexera’s customers and partners choose to seek information and help.** This is where we want to go *tomorrow*.

With these statements in mind, the Flexera team increased their community investments to improve forum activity, solution rate, knowledgebase activity, and blog activity while increasing the total self-help options available. They also offer customers and partners the ability to engage directly with Flexera technical support through a case portal hosted inside the community. All roads lead to community at Flexera.

Note: As case deflection definitions can vary, Flexera calculates it this way:

Authenticated Visits \* Seeking support % \* Resolution rate % \* Would have opened a case % \* Case cost



**Austin Grimes,**  
Senior Community Manager  
Flexera

“The Flexera Community, powered by Khoros technology, is a critical pillar of Flexera’s long-term strategy of customer engagement, support, and retention. We continue to see massive cost savings for the business year after year in the form of thousands of cases deflected and immeasurable time savings for our technical support team. We will continue to double down on our self-help and community strategy in the coming years to further demonstrate the value of community and Khoros to Flexera.”

# *Meaningful Change Management*

Master strategic  
development in your  
community.





# Khoros communities excel at strategic development.

The 2022 State of Community Management research revealed that Khoros communities exhibit advanced strategic elements versus their peer communities on different platforms.

**100% of Khoros communities have a strategy.**

A community program without a formal strategy has a much harder time correlating positive outcomes back to business goals. An effective community strategy also aligns your organization's goals with your member needs, ensuring you keep engagement high and provide ROI.

If you don't have a community strategy in place now is the time to start. [Click here](#) for a community strategy quick start guide.

**100%**  
of Khoros  
Communities  
Have a  
Strategy

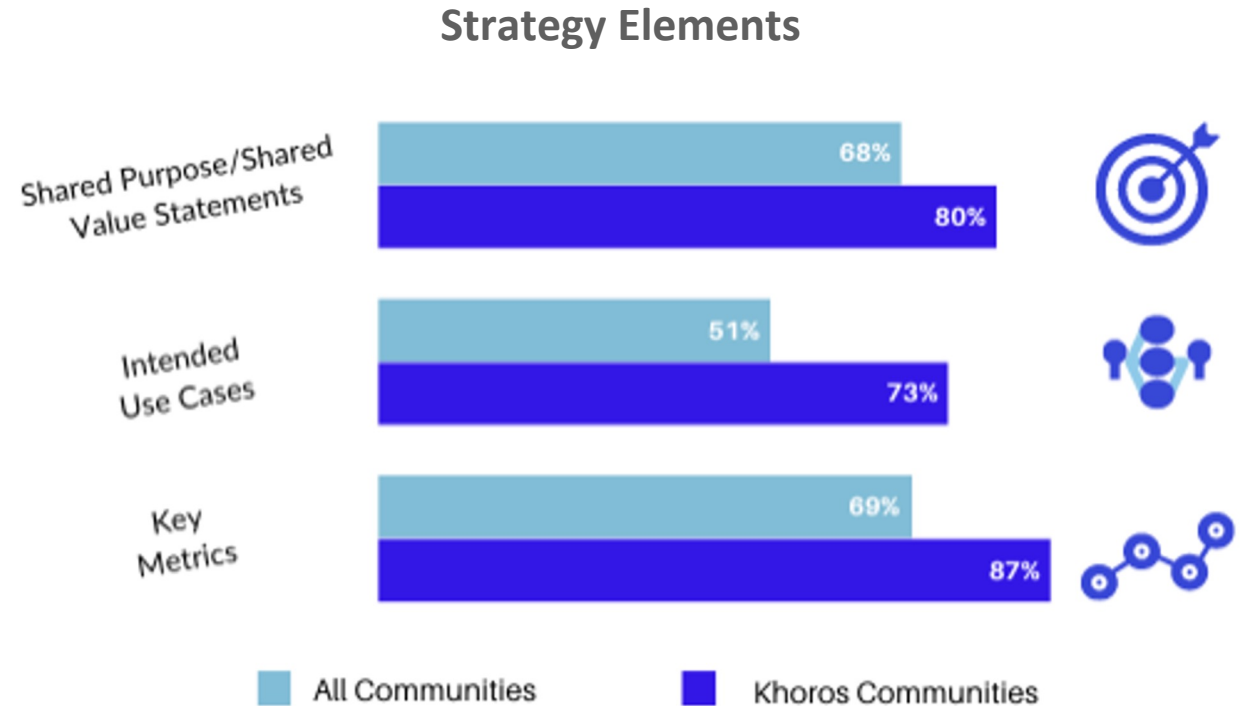


## A more advanced strategy leads to more impactful outcomes.

A thoughtfully designed community strategy includes the interests of both the organization and community members, but what elements really make a difference?

Advanced strategic elements include factors directly tying positive business outcomes to community initiatives – like clearly defined business objectives, key metrics and KPIs, and shared purpose/shared value statements.

Khoros communities have significantly higher rates of these elements in their strategies than their peers in the 2022 State of Community Management research.



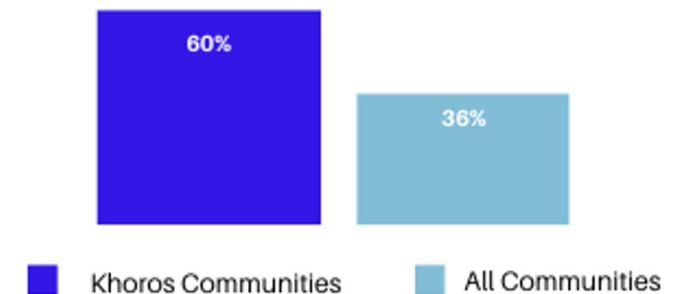
## You've got a strategy, now what?

Your community strategy describes your destination. A community roadmap gives direction to your community program so you can get there in a measurable way. While the term “roadmap” might seem more at home in an engineering org, for community builders it often looks like very detailed project plans, outlining specific activities, and the resources required.

Roadmaps mark milestones in a community's journey, making tracking progress easier. **60% of Khoros communities have an approved roadmap, compared to just 36% of the overall sample.**

Khoros communities are better positioned than the average community to translate strategy into action, and action into success. Approved roadmaps itemize the resources needed for effective outcomes, and connecting resources to how they will advance the community strategy makes it easier to measure value and secure funding.

### Communities with an approved roadmap



## Getting started with strategy.

If you already have a community strategy, you can jump to the next section.

**If you're still reading, it's time to start building your community strategy.**

While there isn't a one-size-fits-all approach to strategy development, as an organization we tend to err towards a simple strategy that can evolve and be responsive as the community matures.

You can download this free Community Strategy Worksheet to walk through organizational and member objectives, begin crafting your shared purpose/shared value statements, and identify the behaviors you want to impact through community initiatives.

**THE COMMUNITY ROUNDTABLE**

**WORKSHEET: COMMUNITY STRATEGY**

A well thought out community strategy includes both the interests of the organization and the interests of the members, and is one of the single best ways to ensure the success of a community. This template is designed to help you create a simple community strategy.

**Organizational Objectives:**

Why is your organization investing in building a community?

What is the desired outcome that will deliver efficiency or productivity (ROI)?

How will that outcome be achieved and how will you measure it?

When can we expect the outcome to be achieved?

Who needs to participate to achieve that outcome, and in what way?

This worksheet is intended for individual use. [contact us](#) for corporate licensing.  
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# *Meaningful Change Management*

Prove your community's value to justify additional resources.



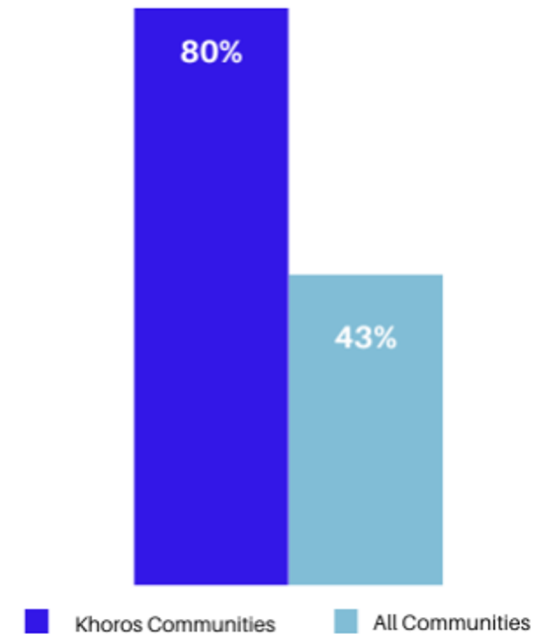
## Tangible value translates to resources.

As online communities mature, organizations need to see the tangible value for the business (at a minimum), and the return on investment (ROI) the community provides. These two factors help community teams justify additional investment and secure the resources needed to execute their roadmaps and continue delivering value to the organization.

ROI is a critical measurement for community teams looking to increase investment as it's the language business leaders understand, and Khoros communities can talk the ROI talk. **80% of Khoros Communities can calculate the ROI of their programs, vs. just 43% of all communities in our 2022 survey sample.**

This tangible ROI translates into better funding, more executive support, and community programs with sustainable success.

Communities that can calculate ROI



## Positive perceptions can lead to increased budgets.

In community, the budget approver often indicates organizational leadership's perception of community. As communities mature, budget approval tends to move down the organizational hierarchy, from the board of directors to more operational roles (SVP/VP). This indicates community programs are gaining acceptance and becoming operationalized business units.

In 2022, 100% of Khoros' community budgets increased, vs just 55% of overall respondent's budgets. Additionally, a full 100% of Khoros communities are perceived positively by their executive and leadership teams.

As leaders recognize the tangible benefits of community within their organization they undertake in organization-wide community evangelization. The emergence of COVID-19 forced organizations to re-think interactions with their customers – and led to spotlight how effective well-resourced community programs are at connecting people.



# *Meaningful Change Management*

The impact of COVID-19 on  
community programs.





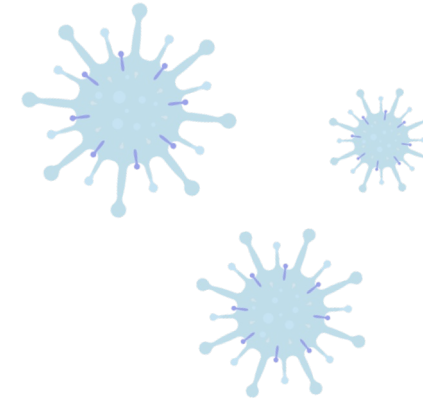
## Communities and COVID-19.

The effects of the global pandemic on community programs are seen in both the operational and organizational aspects of individual communities.

Member participation in content & programs dropped year over year, likely due to fatigue and burnout associated with COVID-19. While you could view this as negative, it's helpful to consider it a prompt to reevaluate your content & program development, ensuring you're serving the needs of your members in new and innovative ways.

In 2021, the uncertainty of how the pandemic would impact business operations caused many companies to freeze budgets across the board. As 2021 progressed, it became clear communities were uniquely qualified to provide business value in a suddenly remote world and budgets improved.

Now, community managers find themselves still in the spotlight, leading to increased reports of burnout and lower workplace engagement.



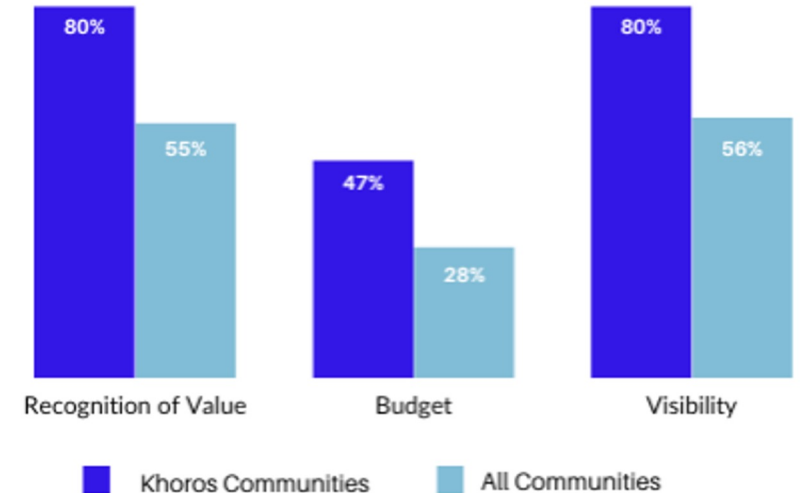
## The impact of COVID-19 on Khoros communities.

The global pandemic brought on by COVID-19 accelerated the community industry in ways we couldn't imagine. Organizations with effective communities in place often experienced less turmoil than those that had yet to adopt community approaches.

Other organizations were quick to jump on the community train and were able to reap almost immediate rewards. Our research indicates the technology a community uses had an effect on how they weathered this storm.

Khoros communities enjoyed increased recognition of value, budget, and visibility due to the COVID-19 pandemic. **Khoros community managers are also more engaged and less burnt out than their peers using different community platforms.**

### Increases due to COVID-19



## Outcomes in action: COVID at Zoom

The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on office workers was immediate: stay home. And where did they turn to connect? For millions of people, the answer was Zoom. In 2020, Zoom's usage increased from 10M to 300M daily meeting participants in 243 countries. Not only did their user base grow astronomically, but their product offerings also expanded to accommodate the rapidly evolving user base.

As usage increased exponentially, customer support became a primary area of focus to ensure users were receiving helpful and timely support. Customers clamored for a 24/7 online forum to ask questions, seek solutions, and collaborate with fellow users around the world. In March 2021, Zoom put together a team and tasked them with creating the Zoom Community, and in less than five months, they rolled out the global Zoom Community. Positive reactions flooded in from users. And, just five months after deployment, Zoom had 100K+ registered members.

Zoom's success focused on delivering a happy experience to their customers and providing them with a platform to collaborate and share solutions. To measure success, the Community Team focused on a combination metrics: number of page views, number of registered users, number of unique visitors, number of posts, number of replies, and number of accepted solutions.

Shortly after rollout, Zoom Community's metrics were staggering and a testament to its impact. It garnered over 130K registered users, but it pulled in over 8.6M page views, and 3.9M unique visitors. Content contribution was equally impressive — clocking in at 45K posts to over 2K accepted solutions.



**Alexis Brown**  
Senior Manager, Global  
Community, Zoom

“In light of the pandemic, we knew it was pivotal to listen to our customers and agilely adjust our operational processes accordingly. **Before the launch of our Zoom Community, users could contact support via one-on-one tickets, through agent and bot interactions, and by utilizing our robust repository of knowledgeable support articles.** Building upon these self-service offerings and taking direction from customers' input, the Zoom Community was created.”

# Meaningful Change Management

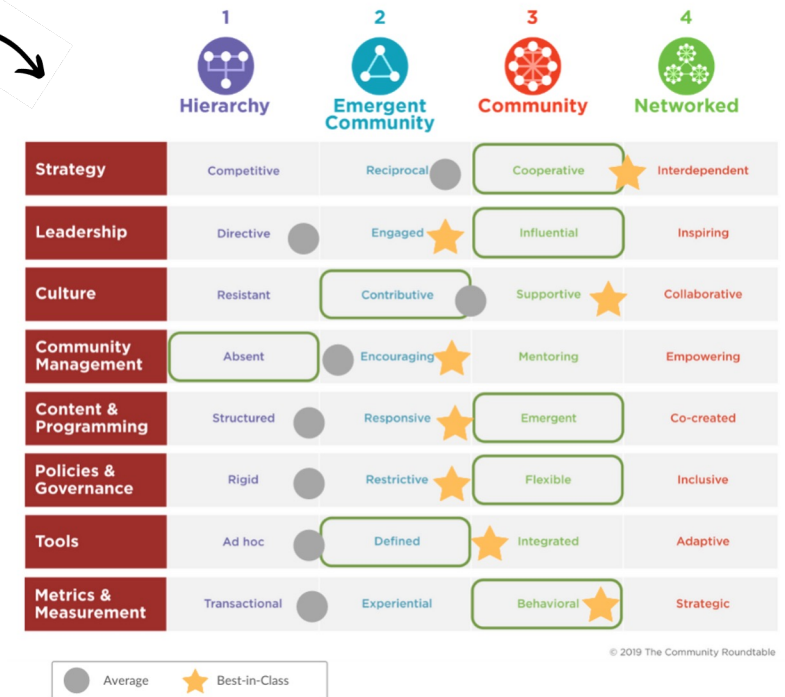
Putting ideas into action.



## Actionable ideas for business outcomes.

- ❑ **Build the foundation for success** – Take a look at where your community is today (you can use this free assessment tool) and see if there are gaps in your foundation. Do you have a roadmap? Have you mapped community personas? Is an advocacy program on your to-do list? Pick one foundational component and make it a priority for the next quarter.
- ❑ **Drive impactful business outcomes** – Your community has an impact on your organization’s overall business. Using your (possibly newly drafted) strategy, work with cross-departmental colleagues and start tracking the tangible impact on business processes like support response times, customer satisfaction, renewal rates, and number of qualified leads.

### Community Score Assessment



## Actionable ideas for business outcomes.

- ❑ **Master strategic development** – If you don't have a community strategy drafted now is the time to start. A formal community strategy correlates to bigger budgets, higher engagement, and long-term success for both your community program and you as a community professional. If you don't know where to start check out this Strategy Worksheet.
- ❑ **Prove value to increase resources** – No one is looking for fewer resources for their program, and a proven way to get more resources is to provide tangible proof of your community ROI. This [Community ROI Calculator](#) works particularly well as a starting point for support communities.
- ❑ **Impact of COVID-19** – It's easy to focus on the negative outcomes brought on by COVID-19. We encourage you to use dips in engagement to reevaluate content and programs and find what works for your community members today, not just what worked in 2019. Many communities have seen a rise in interest and participation in asynchronous programs and are expanding interactions unbound by location or time zone.



# The Community Roundtable

Since 2009, we've led the community industry by providing trusted research, training, tools, and advice to successful global community programs.

Through our private peer community, TheCR Network, we've helped thousands of community professionals build best-in-class communities at organizations like Microsoft, UKG, Bain and Company, Analog Devices, The International Red Cross, and more.

Learn how our peer network, training, tools, and advisory services can help you solve your community challenges and scale your community program.



TheCR Network is the community industry's *most trusted resource* for ideas, information, training, networking, and community support.