

# How To Build an Online Community: *A Recipe for Success*

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# Today's Menu:

- + Defining Online Community
- + Planning for an Online Community
- + Developing an Online Community
- + Engaging an Online Community
- + Measuring Progress
- + Adding the Secret Ingredient

# Key Takeaways:

- Define your goals and plan for success.
- Do your research and ask the audience.
- Get internal buy-in.
- Write engaging content and be responsive.
- Align branding and integrate communications.
- Remember to promote the community.
- Collaborate internally and with partners.
- Realize it's an ongoing learning process—embrace it!



## **Defining Online Community:**

**“Technology today has made it possible for human communities to behave like swarms of their own. Unlike the herd mentality, a swarm is constantly on the move, alive, and changing.” [\[link\]](#)**



# Case Study:



- New Website
- New Content
- New Communications
- The Role of Community

# Planning for an Online Community:

- **Consortium:**
  - 65% would share HP2020 information via an online networking site.
- **State Coordinators:**
  - 41% already on LinkedIn.
  - 65% interested in a LinkedIn group.
- **Why LinkedIn:**
  - Longevity and recognition
  - Large membership base
  - Geared toward professionals



# Planning for an Online Community:

- **Key Considerations:**

- Budget and resources
- Organizational goals
- Audience needs
- Consensus building
- Technical requirements
- Key performance metrics



# Developing an Online Community:

- **HP2020 Group:**
  - Engage stakeholders.
  - Foster collaboration around implementing HP2020.
  - Have a community manager.
- **November 2010:**
  - Created group.
  - Cross-promoted group.
  - Invited key stakeholders.
- **December 2010:**
  - Promoted group at HP2020 launch event.



# Developing an Online Community:

- **Key Considerations:**

- Branding
- Staffing and operations
- Content development
- Outreach and promotion
- Compliance



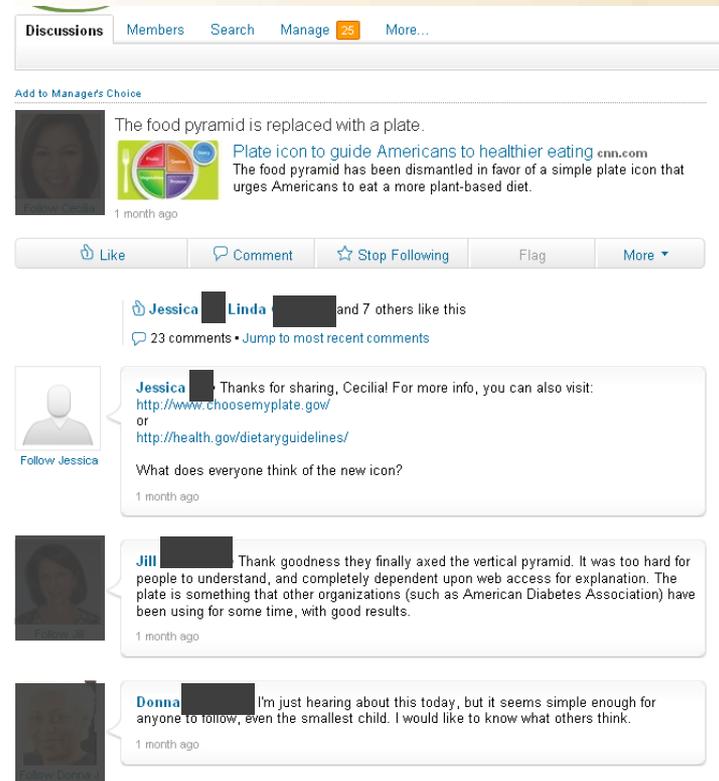
# Engaging an Online Community:

- Set group “rules.”
- Communicate shared goal and purpose.
- Post engaging content.
- Respond.
- Ask for feedback.
- Sync communications.

The screenshot shows a Facebook group discussion page. At the top, there are navigation tabs: Discussions, Members, Search, Manage, and More... Below this is a section titled 'Managers Choice (undo)'. The main content is a post from 'Jessica' with the text: 'Introductions—Get to Know Fellow Members. Now that Healthy People 2020 is live—the real work begins. To kick-off 2011, please take a minute and introduce yourself to the group. This will be an ongoing thread that we hope new members will continue to update upon joining. So, share with us: ---Where are you from? ---What brings you to the Healthy People 2020 group? ---Name one Healthy People 2020 topic area you are currently working to address. 6 months ago'. Below the post are interaction buttons: Like, Comment, Follow, Flag, and More. A notification says 'Rebecca and Naomi and 18 others like this' with a circled '143 comments' and a link to 'Jump to most recent comments'. Below are three more posts from Rebecca, Erin, and Matt, each with their own text and interaction options like 'Reply privately' and 'Delete'.

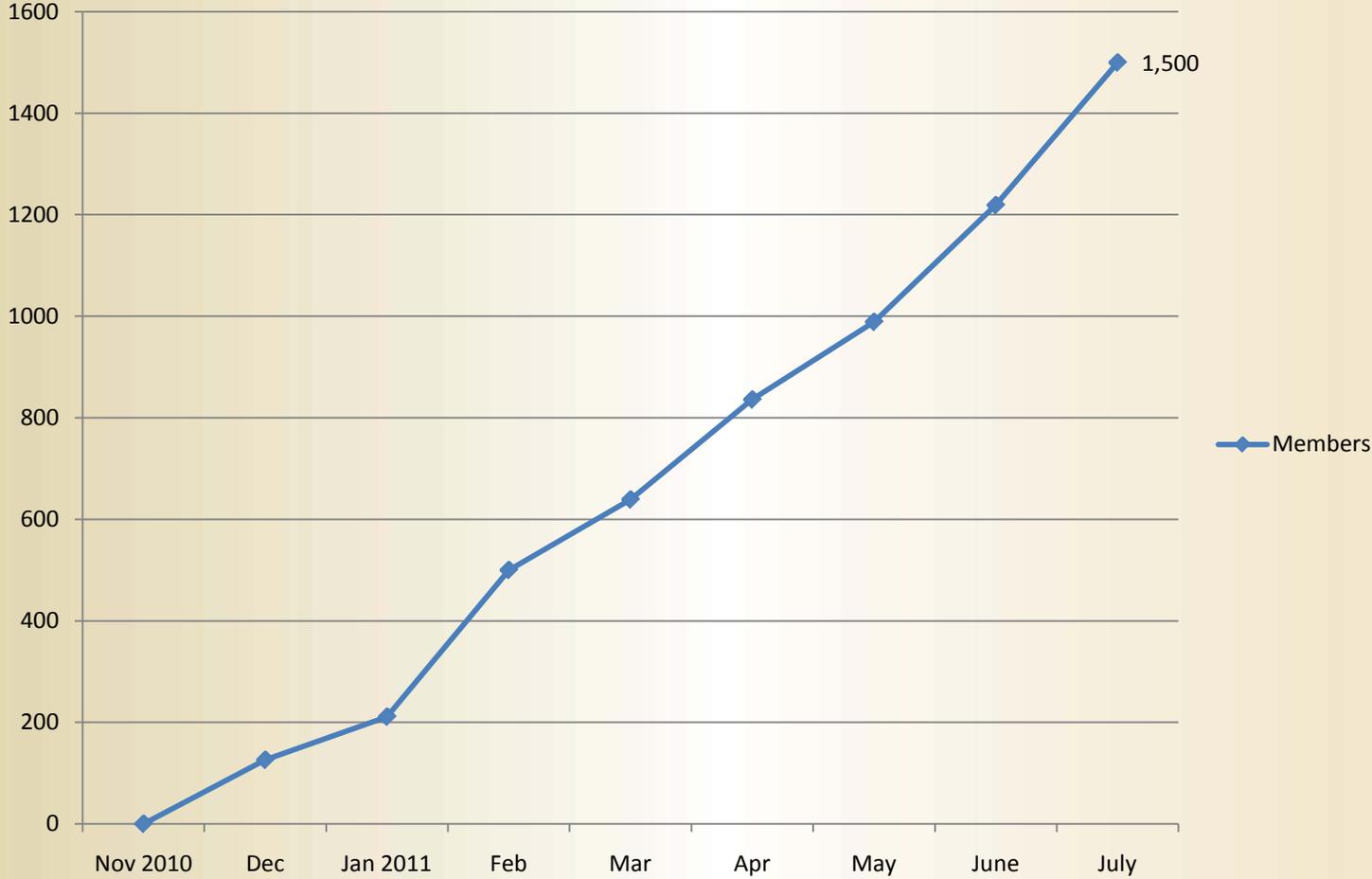
# Engaging an Online Community:

- **10 Ways To Engage:**
  - Utilize the “Like” button.
  - Thank people.
  - Ask for feedback.
  - Ask specific questions.
  - Ask yes or no questions.
  - Ask timely questions.
  - Ask true/false questions.
  - Ask “edgy” questions.
  - Ask about preferences.
  - Use fill-in-the blank posts.



The screenshot shows a Facebook discussion post. At the top, there are navigation tabs: "Discussions", "Members", "Search", "Manage" (with a notification badge for 25), and "More...". Below the tabs is a section titled "Add to Manager's Choice". The main post features a dark square profile picture, a small image of a colorful plate icon, and the text: "The food pyramid is replaced with a plate. Plate icon to guide Americans to healthier eating [enn.com](http://enn.com). The food pyramid has been dismantled in favor of a simple plate icon that urges Americans to eat a more plant-based diet." Below the post are interaction buttons: "Like", "Comment", "Stop Following", "Flag", and "More". The post has received 23 comments. The first comment is from Jessica, who thanks the poster and provides two links: <http://www.choosemyplate.gov/> and <http://health.gov/dietaryguidelines/>. She asks, "What does everyone think of the new icon?". The second comment is from Jill, who says, "Thank goodness they finally axed the vertical pyramid. It was too hard for people to understand, and completely dependent upon web access for explanation. The plate is something that other organizations (such as American Diabetes Association) have been using for some time, with good results." The third comment is from Donna, who says, "I'm just hearing about this today, but it seems simple enough for anyone to follow, even the smallest child. I would like to know what others think."

# Measuring Progress:



# Measuring Progress:

- **Determine KPIs:**
  - Exposure (Reach)
  - Engagement
  - Influence
  - Action

**Tip:** Look at both qualitative and quantitative data.



# Adding the Secret Ingredient:

- Passion
- Purpose
- Authenticity

**Hint:** You can be human!



# ODPHP's Other Online Communities:



- @gohealthypeople Twitter community
- @healthfinder Twitter community
- The *Be Active Your Way Blog*
- Coming Soon: healthfinder.gov Facebook community

# Your Recipe for Success:

- + Defined goals
- + Audience feedback
- + Internal buy-in
- + Community management
- + Ongoing promotion and evaluation
- + Customer Service
- + Flexibility
- + Love

Serving Size: Unlimited.

# Questions?

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## **Tweet:**

I just learned the “8 Ingredients to a Successful Online Community” from [@socialbtrfly](https://twitter.com/socialbtrfly): <http://slidesha.re/pNL0j5>.