



Getting the New Member Experience Right

Shared by Camilo Lemos, Community Manager, Autodesk

SNAPSHOT

THE CHALLENGE

A large Customer Support Community discovered a deep lack of proficiency and content engagement with new users.

THE GOAL

Enhance the new member experience to increase engagement and retention.

THE OUTCOME

A newly structured three-part welcome email series led to a considerable increase in new registered user sessions and engagement.

THE CHALLENGE

In December of 2013, Autodesk took on redesigning its entire Customer Support Community, a peer-to-peer platform built over 30 years ago to support their software technology/web applications customers.

To kick-off this community redesign, Autodesk performed an internal audit to examine new user versus senior user performance. Despite having over 2,500 new registrations daily, they uncovered a deep disconnect for new users. The majority signed up for an account in order to find a quick solution to their technical question, then never returned or engaged further.

Autodesk also found deep informational and structural gaps within the community from a new user perspective, with content difficult to find and often posted incorrectly and on the wrong message boards.

This lack of proficiency and engagement by new users motivated Autodesk to reassess their entire content structure approach from the new member perspective. During this audit process, Autodesk also discovered their current email welcome system for new registered users was incredibly under-used and ineffective.

THE GOAL

Enhance new user engagement within the community and increase open/click-through rates of new member emails.

THE OUTCOME

Although the initial redesign of the Autodesk Community enhanced the platform interface and informational/content structure, new users still were not engaging properly or frequently.



CAMILO LEMOS
AUTODESK

“We took a “telling, not selling” approach to these welcome emails, sharing relevant information with new users in a friendly, warm, and easy to follow way, to help them navigate the community and get their answers quickly, so they can get back to work and be more productive.”

Camilo Lemos,
Autodesk Community Manager

To help remedy this situation while waiting for further site redesigns to unfold, the Community Team turned to its “Welcome Email” system as a way to help new users feel welcome, engaged and proficient.

A three-part welcome email series enhanced user proficiency by breaking up content into weekly prompts. This gradual rollout of information guided new users directly to specific topics such as “How to Post” and “How to Search” in a light, visual, and intuitive way.

The community response was incredibly positive, with Autodesk seeing a considerable increase in registered user sessions. New users were now engaging with content and essential tools giving the overall support community a boost in engagement.

RESULTS & METRICS - COMMUNITY

- 50% Increase in Registered User Sessions
- 18% Increase in Kudos
- 13% Increase in Accepted Solutions

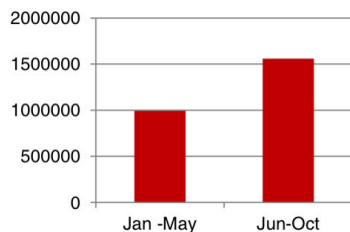
RESULTS & METRICS - EMAIL

- 29% open rate vs. industry benchmark of 22%
- 6.3% click-through rate vs. industry benchmark of 3.7%
- Only 0.5% of users chose to unsubscribe

THE TAKEAWAYS

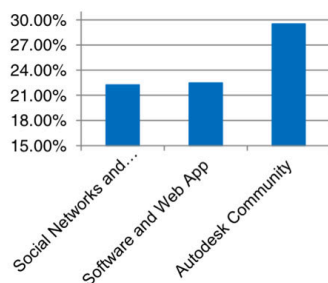
1. **Think Organic** - Don't be afraid to experiment with low-tech solutions to problems. Instead of waiting for a tech solution to solve your problem think about how to tackle the issue with the tools you have.
2. **Tell, Don't Sell** - Share relevant information in plain language and provide easy to follow steps for newbies.
3. **New Members Programs Matter** - The SOCM 2016 research showed that communities with new member programs had a third more active members than those that didn't. Learn more at <http://the.cr/SOCM2016newbies>

Registered User Sessions



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Open Rate



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