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TRANSCRIPT

# Debbie Kwan on Community Migrations

**SUMMARY KEYWORDS**

platform, intranet, community, designing, migrating, advisory groups, microsoft, information, internal, pain points, internet, moving, work, igloo, qualitative, differently, users, analysis, project, involve

**SPEAKERS**

Debbie Kwan, Anne Mbugua

**Anne Mbugua** 00:02

Hi, Debbie, if you could introduce yourself, what you do the kind of community you work for. And how many years have you been in community?

00:13

Okay, so currently, I'm the internal digital lead at the Canadian Partnership Against Cancer. We're a small organization, about 150 people. And we're funded by the federal government. So we work with the Canada cancer control community in Canada to implement the Canadian strategy for cancer control. So in my role, I manage our internal digital engagement tools, which includes our intranet, which uses SharePoint and our communities which uses Yammer. Mm hmm. Oh, go ahead, I have to answer how long I've been in community. So I've been working in community since 2016, when I first joined this organization, but I first started with external community management. And in my role in internal communities, it has been just about over a year.

**Anne Mbugua** 01:06

Right. Thank you so much, Debbie. Now, if you wouldn't briefly describe, you know, your experience with migrating from igloo to Microsoft 365, I'd love you to really share your story and how that experience of that process went.

01:25

So we it was a decision by the organization that we were going to move to Microsoft 365, to streamline our digital environment and to integrate everything with Microsoft, and also to save costs. So because we knew which platform we were moving to, we just had to make the best out of the platform. So luckily, a year prior, we did like some discovery work with the with the internal communities, because there were a lot of usability issues that were arising or being noticed all the time. So I was actually tapped to do a current state analysis of our igloo community, the igloo, internal community. And so we were able to find out what were the biggest pain points, and what is the biggest problems. And so when we moved to Microsoft, we knew what were the biggest issues we had to solve. And the biggest issue was that information was extremely hard to find. And things just weren't organized. And that was caused by several things. Like for example, there was a lack of ownership of the intranet. There are unclear processes, the content was extremely out of date, and there was a very poor navigation and search experience. And so when we created the new intranet on Microsoft, those were the things that we focused on and made sure that we were able to solve these problems.

**Anne Mbugua** 02:52

So those were the challenges that you were facing when you were migrating from igloo to Microsoft, 365. Right.

02:59

Okay, the bigger challenge probably was that we were given a really short timeline, we only had five months to do the whole migration. So that included auditing the content, figuring out how the new internet was going to be structured, designing a new information architecture, all of that stuff had to be finished and actually doing the migration, that all had to be done in five months. So I would say that was probably the biggest challenge.

**Anne Mbugua** 03:27

Your time factor? Yeah, five months is really a short time to have to do all that. Right. So having faced those challenges, what were some of the lessons that you learned?

03:38

I think that it was really helpful to have to focus, like to know what problem we were focusing on. Because it's such a limited time, you can only do so much. Like, it just wasn't possible to do everything we wanted to do. So because we knew the biggest things we had to solve for, that helped us focus. So for example, we prioritize like, the content audit, we prior prioritize designing a new information architecture, we prioritize making sure that the search made sense, things like that, and also, like, making sure that we have like a proper governance in place.

**Anne Mbugua** 04:15

Right, right. So looking back now, what would you do differently? Looking back at you, you know, you've migrated already now, you know, you're you're gone through your challenges and you're acknowledged what your lessons were, what would you do differently?

04:30

I think that one thing that I would definitely do differently is set up better metrics. Yeah. So because like it was a decision that we didn't choose, right like we didn't say, Oh, like this, we want to do this, let us do this. It was more like this is happening. So because it was gonna happen anyways, we didn't. And because we didn't have much time we we didn't set up metrics to track and measure what's improving. And what would what be successful. emigration. So like, afterwards, like, you know, we don't really have any data that says, you know, because of what we did, we've seen participation or engagement or satisfaction improved by however much percent, like all we have is qualitative information, like we received positive feedback. But, you know, just through comments and things like that. And we did receive some qualitative feedback through like some of our launch activities. Like, for example, when we launched the new intranet. We did a scavenger hunt to help people get familiar with the new intranet. And one of the questions that we made sure to include in the scavenger hunt was to ask them what they liked, and what, you know, what was hard to find. But that's just qualitative. And it doesn't really, it doesn't really give us a number to say, Oh, we this was a successful project.

**Anne Mbugua** 05:52

Right. Right. Right. So I'm thinking of a scenario where, you know, a community manager is thinking of migrating to a new platform. And let's put it this way, you know, they they haven't been given a choice as to what platform you know, they've been told this, is the platform, just in your use case, too, right? What would be some of the pro tips that you would give them when they're thinking about, you know, migrating to this platform?

06:20

I think two things. First, it was really important for us to involve users like staff members, right from the beginning. So as I mentioned, we were lucky we did the current state analysis. So they already provided so much feedback through focus groups. They provide a feedback such as like, you know, what were the pain points, what they would what, what their wish list would be, like, how could an intranet or internal community help them be more productive and engaged. So they gave us so much valuable information there. But we also involve them, involve them throughout the process. So we had advisory groups. So like every change that we were applying to make, or everything we were planning to implement, we had these advisory groups to provide feedback. And like, I feel like that you know, what, when you're on the project team, you get, you can get lost in like, how things work and like the technical side of things. And it's hard to remember that people who don't have those information have that those inner workings, they see things differently and experience things differently. So even those touch points with the advisory groups is kind of like a good, like reality check. It's like, we have no idea what you're doing. This does not make sense to us. So it's good to have that constant feedback. Because at the end of the day, you're designing it for them, right? They're the users. And they're the ones you want to like, like it. So Right. Yeah. And I guess a second thing would be, it was really helpful for us to have examples, like good internet's or good internal communities. So because we were concentrating so much on the intranet, we looked at the business report called The Nielsen Norman best 10 internets report. And they have like, screenshots and like information about like how, what, what those project teams did to the design, the new intranet, and they tell you what platforms are using. So we just kind of looked at examples that use Microsoft, and just kind of use them for inspiration. And we even design some of our templates after these award winning internets.

**Anne Mbugua** 08:28

I really love those four tips, right? Because it really is about your members or your users, right? It's not, it's not really necessarily about you and moving to this platform. And that can be very tricky for community manager who doesn't, who hasn't been given sort of like a choice of doing their own research when it comes to tools and platforms. So what would you say to a community manager, who is shopping around now for a platform and they're thinking about migrating? What would be one of the things that you would say, this is what you need to think about when you're migrating?

09:00

I think it's really important to do like the current state analysis of like, you know, the existing intranet if there is one. And if there isn't an existing one, it's still important to do user research. Finding out from your members, you know, what, what, if there is an existing platform, what are the pain points? And then and also what's working well, and like, you know, what they imagine would be great with the internet or like the internal communities like what they would want to do. Like one thing for example, that we also discovered was that in on igloo, there's a lot of functionality for like discussion forums and like, engage like two way interaction, but it wasn't being used. But we found out through our current day analysis that people wanted it. So it's like, so we had to go back and think why is it that people aren't using it if it is available, but people want it? So like, there's different there are different reasons why They didn't. But anyways, just go back to your question. I think user research and understanding aspirations and pain points are is important, no matter what platform you're going to use, or if you have the opportunity to choose your platform, because if you know, what are the things that you need to solve for, or what are the biggest requirements, then you can find a platform, or assess platforms to see which ones will best support those requirements that you need.

**Anne Mbugua** 10:30

Thank you. So another thing that I usually sort of ask is what inspires you about your community?

10:39

What inspires me? I think it's just Well, I love technology. And I love how like I love vigor and how technology can help people get what they need. Because there's a lot of things that people don't notice makes difference that makes a difference. So for example, like, user experience, how a platform is designed to help people do what they need better, or connect better. I really like figuring those things out. So this was like a, it was a very fun, but like a challenging, but in a fun way project because I was able to figure out, how do we configure these things, to help people achieve what they need to do.

**Anne Mbugua** 11:24

Right. Right. Right. Thank you so much, Debbie for sharing about, you know, migrating because it can truly be a headache, right, coming from one platform to another, and then also having to, you know, on onboard sort of your members and you know, and teach them that these are, this is the new platform that we're now using, right? And I you know, and then also trying to show value, right to be in a leadership, especially if you're thinking about moving to a new platform that you have decided to choose or based on your your members, right. So really appreciate you sharing your journey and your story. And I'm going to end the recording right now.