MemberWise Webcast

Tuesday 31st October 2023
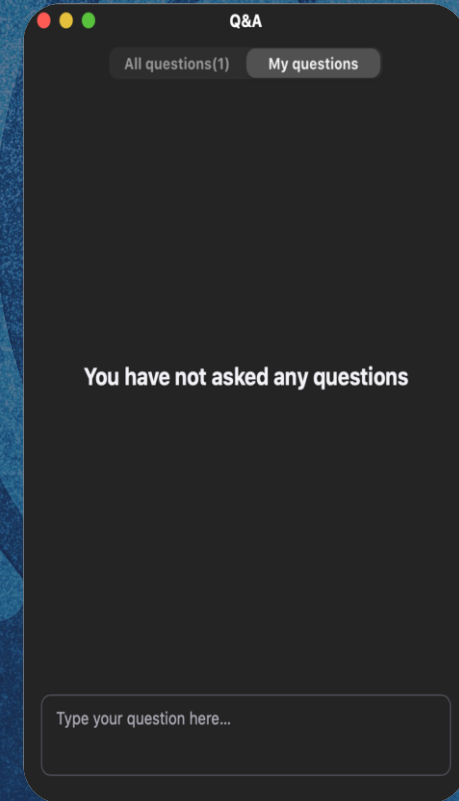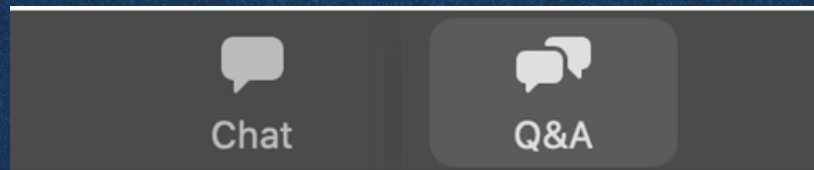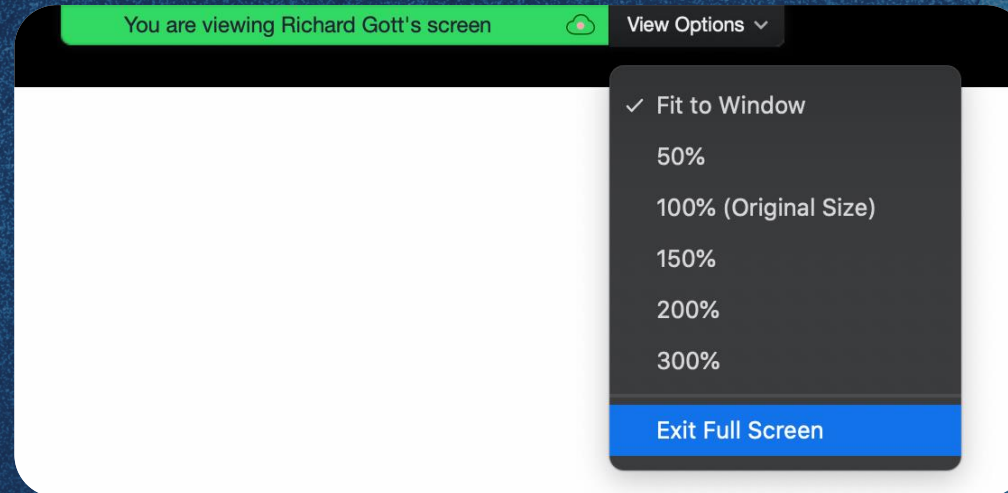
MemberWise

Webcast Functionality

- View options

- Comments

- Questions

- Polls

- Recorded

What we will discuss today…

- Learn more about recent product enhancements and application of online community tools in the UK membership sector.

- Review examples of compelling membership-sector online communities

- Understand the new content additions and revisions to the Ultimate Guide

- Have your questions on online community answered

Hello!

Mark Eichler

Chief Product Officer

Mark.Eichler@cantarus.com

to discuss...

First Look at the Updated Guide

What is an Online Community Platform?

Key Community Metrics from the DigX 23/24 Report
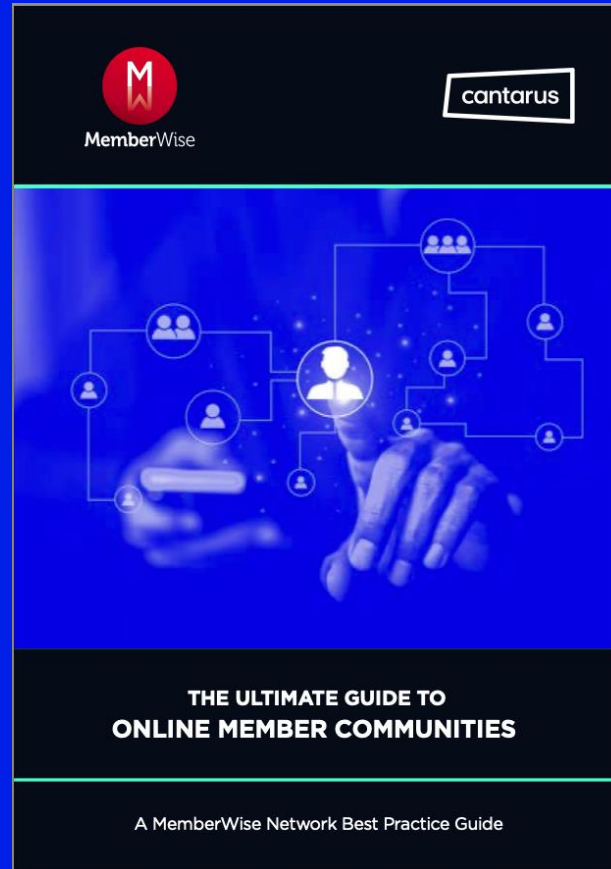
Product Feature Enhancements

Artificial Intelligence in Online Community

Online Community Strategy Evolution

Questions and Answers

Guide Updated for 2024

Guide Updated for 2024

Guide Updated for 2024

> **"** An Online Member Community, ordinarily managed by a membership organisation or association, facilitates direct members interaction – with each other and the organisation – in online environments. **"**

Participant Benefits
(including staff participants)

- Knowledge Creation/Access
- Human Connection – Relationships
- Programme/Project Participation

Facilitator Benefits

- Insight into Member Sentiment
- Data Collection
- Revenue
- Support Cost Savings
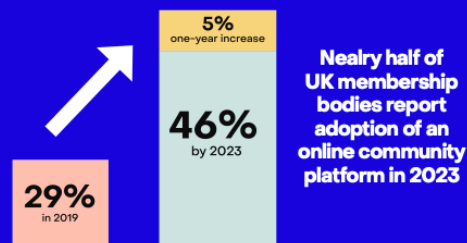- Marketing Impact
- Content Development

Guide Updated for 2024

Community Adoption in 2023

The metrics confirm that membership bodies are responding to the community opportunity like never before. The Digital Excellence (2023/24) Report confirms that online community platform adoption continues to rise in the UK and Ireland membership and associations sector.

46% of membership bodies in the UK confirm adoption of a hosted community platform by 2023. This is up from 29% in 2019 and with 5% total increase in the last year alone. The vast majority – near 70% - of membership professionals surveyed agreed or partly agreed that their online community "Has had a positive impact on member value" (this figure includes those who utilise Facebook or other public social media platforms).

5% one-year increase

46% by 2023

29% in 2019

Nealry half of UK membership bodies report adoption of an online community platform in 2023

Community Benefit in 2023

The 2023 MemberWise Digital Excellence (2023/2024) Report further confirms membership bodies are seeing value from their community investments..

The vast majority – over 70% - of membership professionals surveyed agreed or partly agreed that their online community "Has had a positive impact on member value (this figure includes those who utilise Facebook or other public social media platforms).

72% report positive impact

MemberWise

2023/24 DX DIGITAL EXCELLENCE

Community Application

In the membership sector, online community is applied to meet numerous business needs. These can include:

- **Questions and Answers**
  Online community facilitates answers by knowledgeable peers with reputations established by title, employer and other confirmed attributes. Answers to questions on professional practice and workplace dynamics are highly valuable.

- **Content Circulation & Comment**
  Offering members new content of professional value through online community facilitates member comment and prompts further sharing of related information by members.

- **Region, Section, Committee and Interest Group Management/Participation**
  Dedicated private spaces reflecting the organisational structure of a membership body are common. Local administrative rights allow chairs to run and manage their groups.

- **Member/Customer Endorsement**
  Members who love their organisation use the community to endorse their member benefits. "Customer advocacy" features facilitate programmatic rewards and recruitment/management of member advocates.

- **Knowledge Creation**
  Users contribute what they know, discuss approaches, and create documents and content reflecting consensus, including through wiki-like versioning features.

- **Learning "Classrooms"**
  Where the learning objectives are light – such as, watch a video, answer questions, discuss in a group – online community may fill learning requirements directly or with an integrated learning platform.

- **Programme Management**
  Several common programmes are a good fit for being served through online community platforms. Mentoring is an example of where some community products offer a specific module for this purpose.

- **Event Registration and Participation**
  A number of community platforms offer event registration within the context of community. Utilisation of video from conference presentations, file sharing and private spaces for registrants facilitates pre-event and post-event-experiences.

- **Networking**
  Members seeking other members to connect with, including through a faceted directory allowing peers to be found by employer, location and interests, are common.

- **Sense of Belonging**
  Emotional impact drives value for many community participants. Utilisation of community for new member onboarding and welcoming is standard.

- **Marketing & Lead Generation**
  Opening a subset of online community conversations and resources will allow Google and similar search engines to offer insight into the quality of member-initiated conversations and content.

- **Member Sentiment Assessment**
  Data and reporting as to emerging professional challenges and trending topics are augmented by polling and survey tools that can offer "finger on the pulse" insights for leadership and staff.

Guide Updated for 2024

Online Community Platform Features:

Bringing forth the right mix of platform features is a vital part of platform selection. More features typically equates to more expense, but this can vary by platform.

Feature robustness →

→ Forums	→ Full website presence	→ Inappropriate words filter	→ User directory	→ External vendor app ecosystem
→ One-to-one and small group messaging	→ Robust branding and design capacity	→ Activity feeds	→ Full software development kit (SDK)	→ ISO 27001/27018 certification
→ File and link sharing	→ SEO & organic sign-up	→ Robust profiles	→ Language selection & programmatic translation	
→ Differentiated subgroups & privacy	→ Tagging and content management	→ Robust community management tools	→ Multi-website/microsite	
→ User search	→ Personalisation	→ Reply by email	→ Scale to millions of system concurrent users	
→ Single sign on (SSO)	→ Mobile app	→ Full content management system	→ Case management / ticketing system	
→ Email outputs	→ External video streaming	→ Automation rules	→ Task management	
→ User self management	→ Polling/surveys	→ Modular extensions	→ Artificial intelligence	
→ Moderation	→ Query engine & configurable reporting	· Mentoring	→ Deep personalisation	
→ Reporting	→ Gamification	· Marketing automation		
→ Robust API & integrations	→ Wiki collaboration	· Paid event registration		
	→ Ratings and reviews			
	→ Spam control			

Typical cost & time commitment →

TOP TIP:
Comparison of features to over 20 community product vendors of all sizes is well-facilitated by the London-based Feverbee community consultancy on their website:
www.feverbee.com/community-platforms.
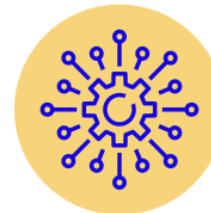
Community Feature Enhancements – 2023 Update

Product feature evolution for established platforms include further progress bundling features like chat into community products.

The largest players specialising in serving the membership and association sectors are continuing to progress integrations with email marketing platforms, enhancing content management opportunities, and even adding customer relationship management tools targeting smaller organisations. New solutions providers offer to empower members to define the spaces in which they network and engage. Facilitating smaller spaces in-addition-to / rather than having the community spaces determined by the organization.

A number of mobile first solutions are being brought to market facilitating traditional social media experiences without the sacrificing of member/user data to the largest multinational corporations. The UX principles established by platforms like WhatsApp, Facebook and Reddit are applied to private environments within the smaller spaces of mobile devices.

Artificial Intelligence Features – 2023 Update

But perhaps most compelling product additions in the online community sets space are with the adoption and utilisation of AI features directly within the community platform products. In the past, it was more common for external AI platforms to be utilised with integrations. In 2023 we are seeing AI features within the core community products themselves with no dependency on additional licenses. These new AI-based features may benefit both the providers of the community spaces and the participants in the community. Sentiment analysis and enhanced reporting are among new features allowing community sponsors to better understand the "what, why, and what next" the behind the conversations. Members and users are benefiting from more nuanced prompts to continue reading similar content. Perhaps particularly valuable in communities serving membership bodies are tools assisting with the writing posts. The additional confidence in presenting well-formed content to peers may boost volume by those sensitive about their writing skills.

Guide Updated for 2024

User Experience

Facebook, Twitter, Reddit, Instagram, etc. offer community experiences and are valued by much of the world's working-age population. The UX offered by an online community platform will be judged against those offered by multi-billion-pound companies.

Functional usability isn't the only UX factor for user adoption. As the online community is a virtual representation of the membership body, the user should recognise "their" organisation in the online community. First impressions are vital. The benefit of the platform and ideally the membership body must be in evidence at user initial interactions.

1) **Value** "This content helps me"

2) **Interface:** "I know how to use this"

3) **Place** "I know where I am"

4) **People** "I know who else is here with me"

5) **Safety** "I can express myself and build relationships here"

The goals of users are different from the goals of the organisation offering an online community. Usability of product features for thread management, moderation, subcommunities, tagging, etc. should be considered in the context of non-technical staff running the platform to meet goals on knowledge creation, engagement, and value.

Online Success Stories from the Membership Sector

Large Membership Body
Annual Turnover   **£10M – £15M**
#Members   **Approx. 200 Member Charities**
#Staff   **20–50**

" I was confident the community project would be a success. While online communities can look engaging and appear to offer strong social/emotional components, the proof of the pudding is in the data. We had the right tools and strategies to focus on specific areas. "
Nancy Kinder, Member Community Manager

Temperature Check & Next Steps

Membership bodies encountering a number of the following circumstances may want to review how online community could help:

·   Members are asking for online engagement environments.
·   Members are self-serving their needs to engage with other members in public social media outside our ability to manage.
·   Committees and working groups are managing work in email without more robust tools or organisational visibility.
·   Event value ends with the event; members lack access to online presentations and continued conversations
·   Leadership needs a better "finger on the pulse" of member sentiment and modern challenges of the profession
·   Members asking the same questions repeatedly
·   Members who are geographically dispersed want to connect/network
·   Due to external factors (e.g. COVID-19) traditional networking opportunities may not be possible
·   A short term requirement to demonstrate immediate and tangible member value
·   Compelling need to initiate a member benefits app with engagement features

If the business needs and feature sets described here sound compelling, review of platform options and conversations within an online community, like the MemberWise Network, may be a good next step.

Experience the MemberWise Network's Online Community, MemberWise Connect Today.

https://connect.memberwise.org.uk

What is an Online Community Platform?

- An online community platform will offer the kinds of experiences offered in public social media platforms, but with additional features for security, integration, and management of the users and content created.

- Conversation functionality at the heart, but richer

- Nuanced conversations and engagement options with multiple tools

- Platform administrators have the tools to manage the review and manage the conversations and content toward community value and standards.
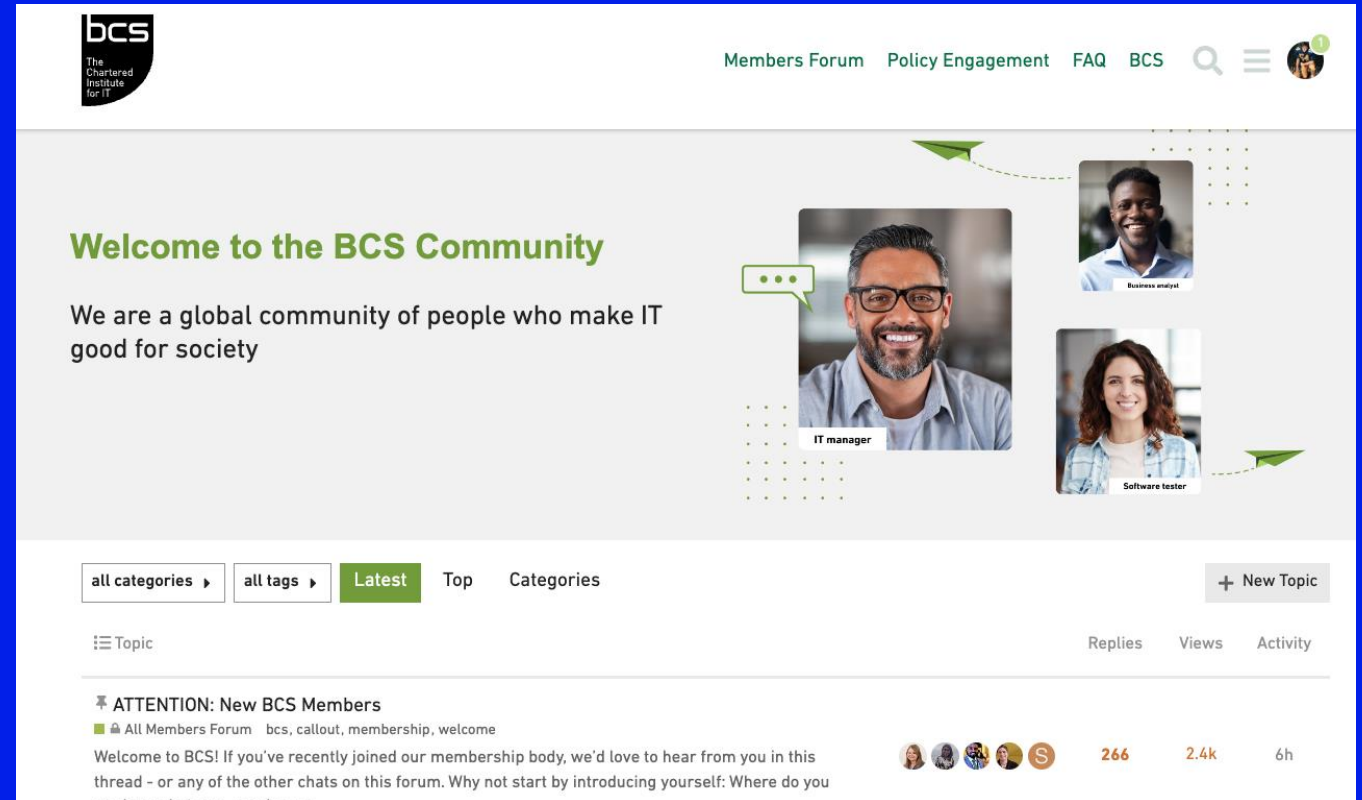
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- Email outputs
- User self management
- Moderation
- Reporting
- Robust API & integrations

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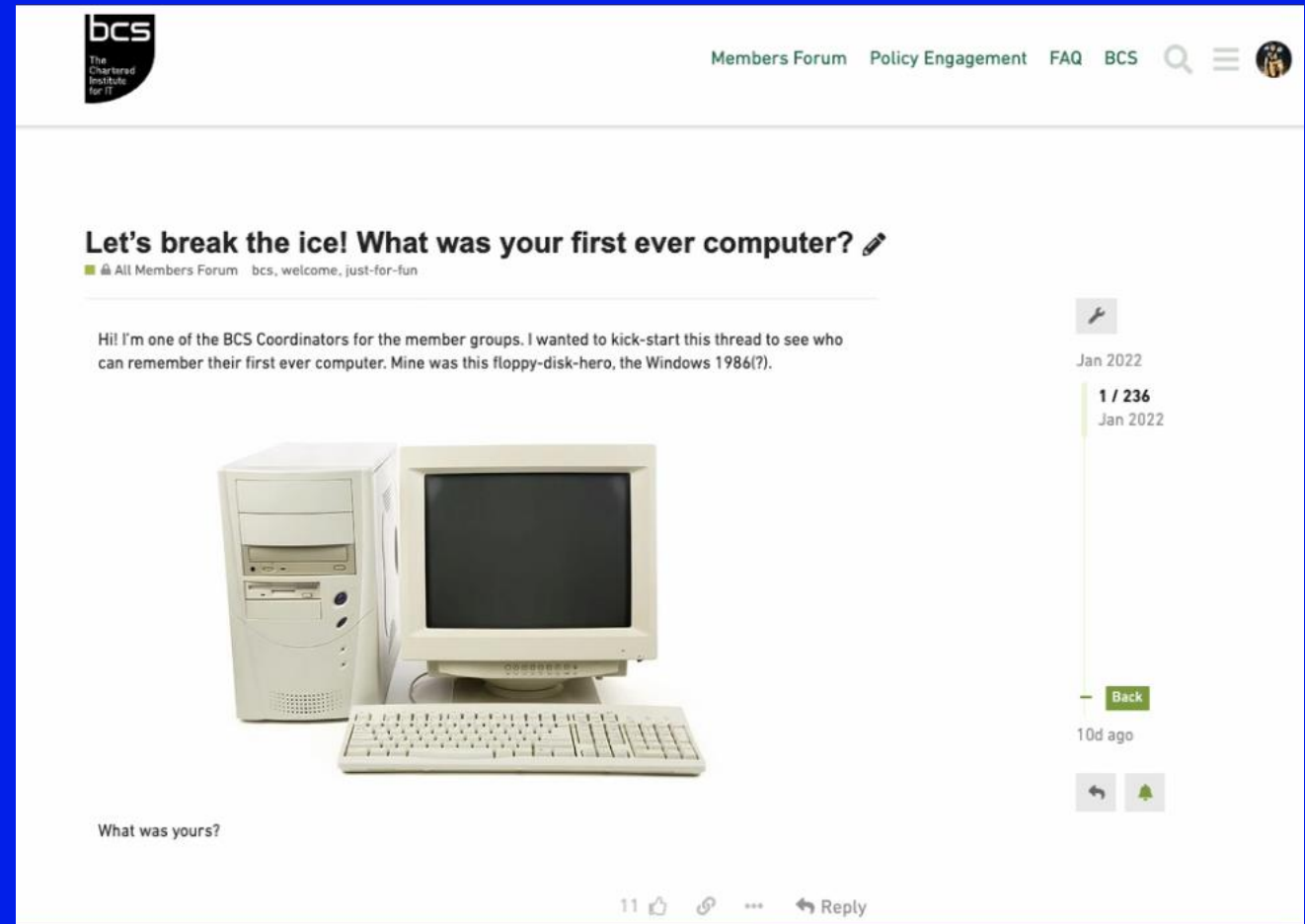
British Computer Society

What is an Online Community Platform?

British Computer Society

What is an Online Community Platform?

Cantarus Demo Site

Key Community Adoption Metrics

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Key Community Adoption Metrics

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Key Community Adoption Metrics

The Tangible Benefits of having an Online Member Community:

	Agree –	Somewhat Agree –	Somewhat Disagree –	Disagree –
Has had a positive impact on member va	28%	44%	15%	8%
Contributes toward member engagement retention	27%	43%	15%	8%
Has contributed towards increased new member acquisition	16%	29%	23%	20%
Enables us to engage with members on a more regular basis	27%	45%	14%	10%

Product Enhancements: Competitive

Events & registration

lite CRM

richer CMS

bulk email

import tools

content & document UX

chat

gamification and leaderboards

user-defined groups

Product Enhancements: Mobile

platform **apps**

social media UX

offline access

notific-ations

breaking content silos

Product Enhancements: AI

toxicity detection

language translation

recommend content

notific-ations

sentiment assessment

NSFW recognition

writing help

But Wait: What is AI?

Artificial: false, unnatural, contrived

Intelligence: mind, brain, reason

Online Community & AI

Artificial Intelligence reflects machines performing complex tasks in ways that approach human competency
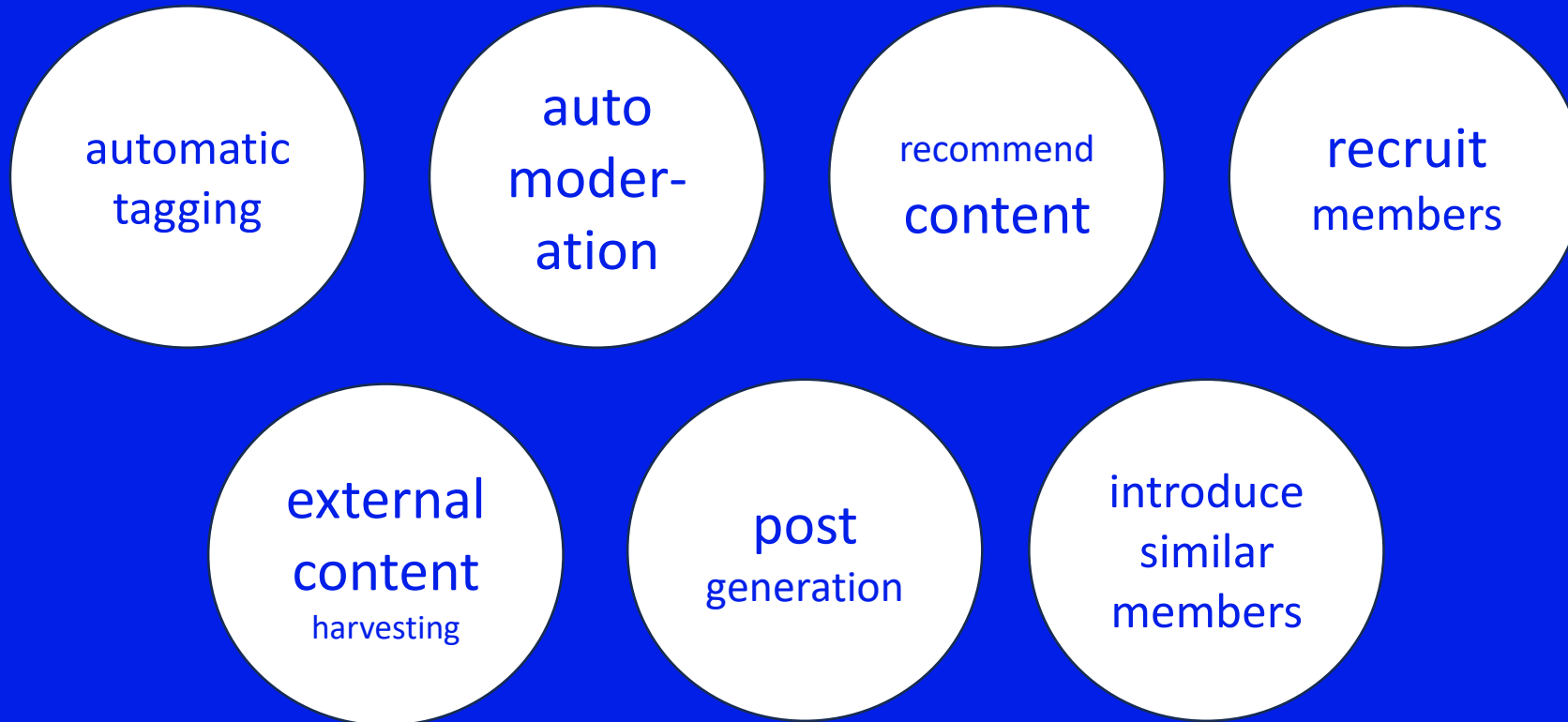
Online Community & AI

Artificial Intelligence has the potential to completely remake the online community space and membership sector tech broadly

Future Enhancements: AI

automatic tagging

auto moder-ation

recommend content

recruit members

external content harvesting

post generation

introduce similar members

Membership Sector Tech & AI

Online Community Strategy

Richard Millington
Founder of FeverBee