The State of Community Management

2020

Mature Communities Power the Customer Experience

THE COMMUNITY
ROUNDTABLE

Sponsored by

Khoros

Khoros

Top Enterprise Community Platform

Powering the world's best communities to deepen relationships, foster loyalty, and spark new ideas.

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ABOUT THIS eBOOK

This eBook is based on the 2020 State of Community Management research, produced by The Community Roundtable. This eBook is sponsored by and made possible with support from Khoros. It compares the results of three data segments:

1. Average External Communities

2. Advanced External Communities

3. Average Khoros Communities

This eBook considers Khoros customer communities in three areas:

- Impact of strategic maturity

- Influence of operational investments

- Results of engagement

The complete report can be found at: https://the.cr/socm2020
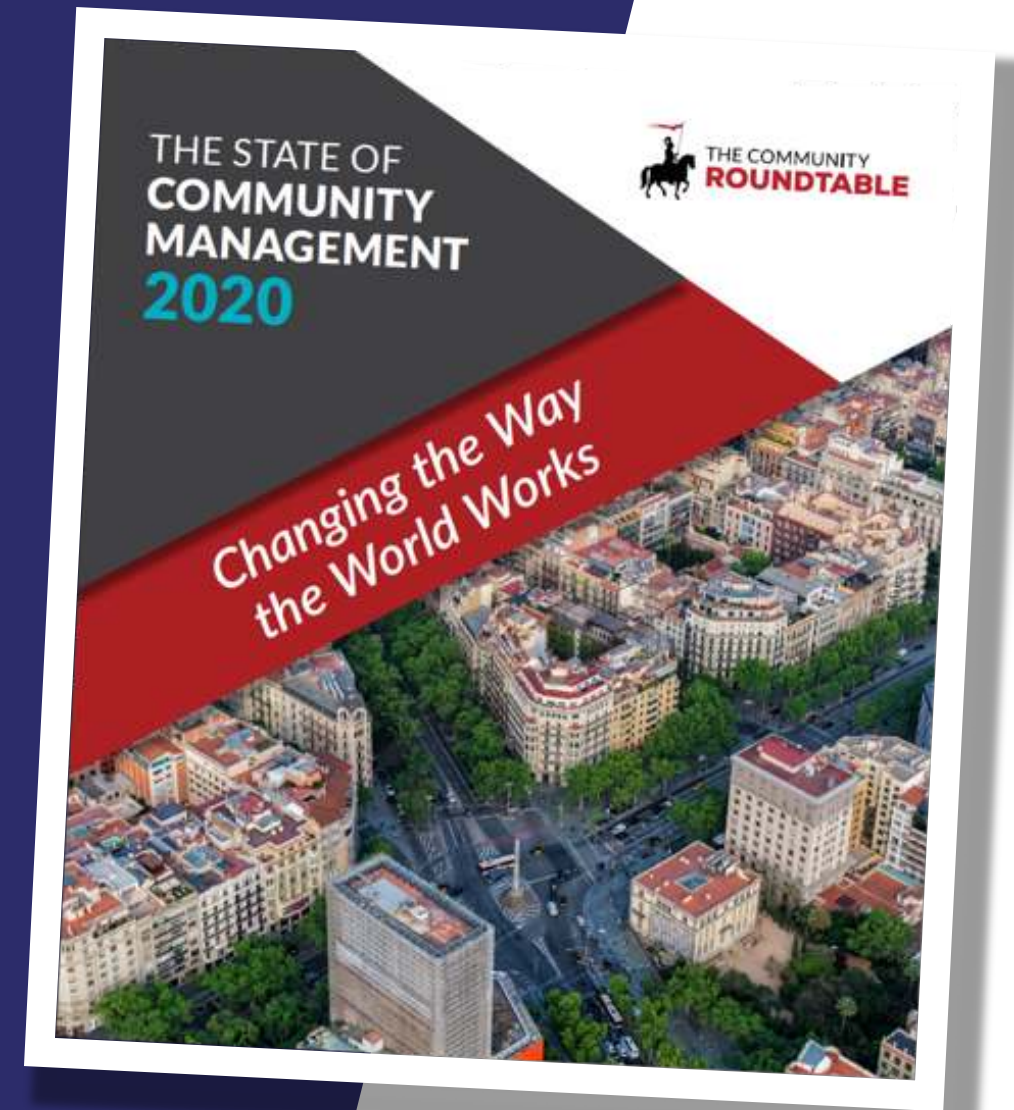
STRATEGIC MATURITY ENABLES EFFICIENCY

BROAD AND DEEP ALIGNMENT

Communities with advanced strategies – those that are measurable – are better funded, better aligned across functions, and better performing. They deliver a streamlined, responsive, and efficient customer experience.

Khoros communities are *twice* as likely to have advanced strategies, and they connect their performance directly to more business objectives across the customer experience than any other segment in our research.

Business Outcomes Connected Directly to Communities

Lower support costs
Customer loyalty
Product improvements
Awareness and branding
Product usage
Quality improvement
Productivity and efficiency
Innovation
Revenue growth
Communications efficiency

0%   20%   40%   60%   80%   100%

■ Khoros Customers   ■ Advanced External   ■ Average External
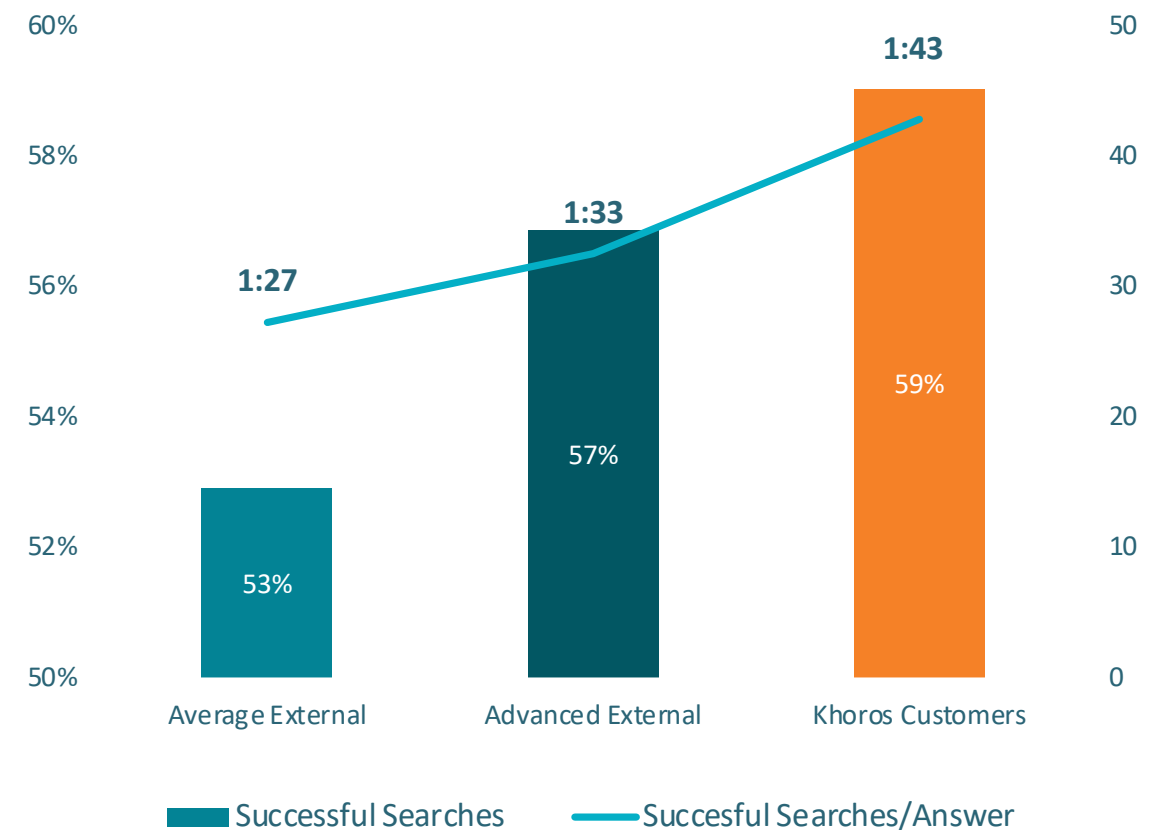
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STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT DRIVES PERFORMANCE

Value Maximized

Communities generate value by making expertise transparent and accessible. This success can be observed by the ratio of expertise accessed to expertise contributed. Expertise accessed is represented here by the percent of searches that result in a click-through. Communities with a clear strategy aligned with their operations and management are efficient when providing a clear pathway for customers to find answers.

Khoros customers do exceptionally well exposing and surfacing existing content, which maximizes the value of that content. For each answer contributed, content is accessed 43 times. By connecting users to existing answers, these communities maximize member ROI.

Successful Searches Demonstrate Access and Transparency

Chart data:
- Average External: 53% Successful Searches, 1:27 Successful Searches/Answer
- Advanced External: 57% Successful Searches, 1:33 Successful Searches/Answer
- Khoros Customers: 59% Successful Searches, 1:43 Successful Searches/Answer

Legend: Successful Searches | Successful Searches/Answer

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POWERSCHOOL: STRATEGIC IMPACT

PowerSchool
Powering Brighter Futures

Name: Jbid Kissel
Position: Senior Manager
Use case: Customer Support
Industry: Education

"We are currently trending 30% higher in activity since last year."

PowerSchool designed their community to empower and streamline customer experience, bringing a multitude of customer support channels under one roof. Using the Khoros platform, the community supplements a direct business-to-customer support system with a collaborative space that increased activity by **30%** over the past year.

As an organization providing support to a diverse set of educators across school systems, PowerSchool is uniquely positioned to benefit from collaboration. Since bringing their community online, PowerSchool has seen a **274%** increase in average monthly member entrances and a **390%** increase in average monthly posts. A solid community strategy and supportive platform increase engagement and value through dialog, answers, and innovation.

High engagement generates value and increases interest in other use cases. Recently PowerSchool has used their community to help schools find resources for online instruction during the COVID-19 crisis. This effort undertaken by support, product, and marketing teams demonstrates how well their community naturally addresses business objectives, creating generative community value. PowerSchool received over **50,000** views of this initiative, which prompted the creation of an "Ideas Portal" where members can suggest product enhancements.

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Thoughtful Governance ENHANCES **STRATEGY**
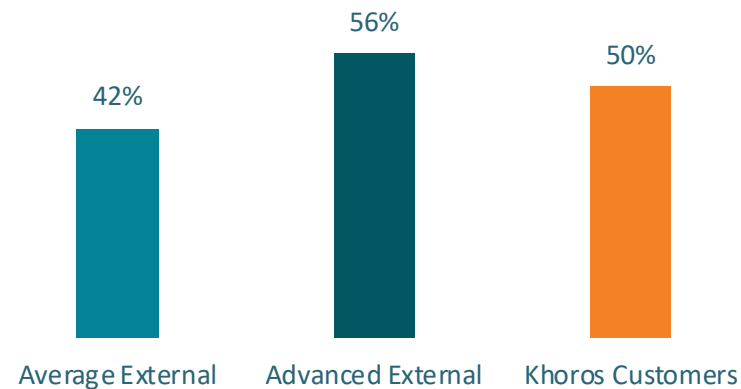
THOUGHTFUL GOVERNANCE ENHANCES STRATEGY

FUNDING EMPOWERS MATURITY

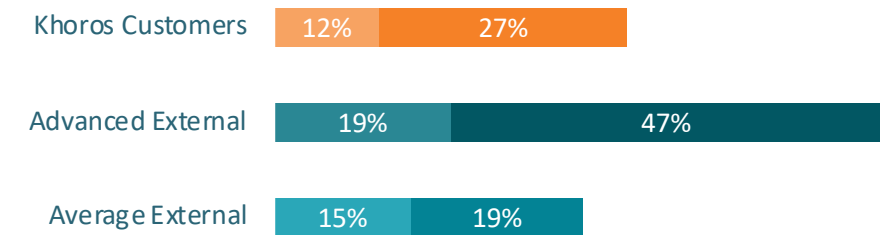Dedicated budgets and funded roadmaps are two markers of a mature community program.

Organizations that understand the community process as an operating standard empower community teams to make long-term decisions, critical to sustainable performance.

Additional staff could help Khoros communities invest in leadership programs, which is a key contributor to engagement and value.
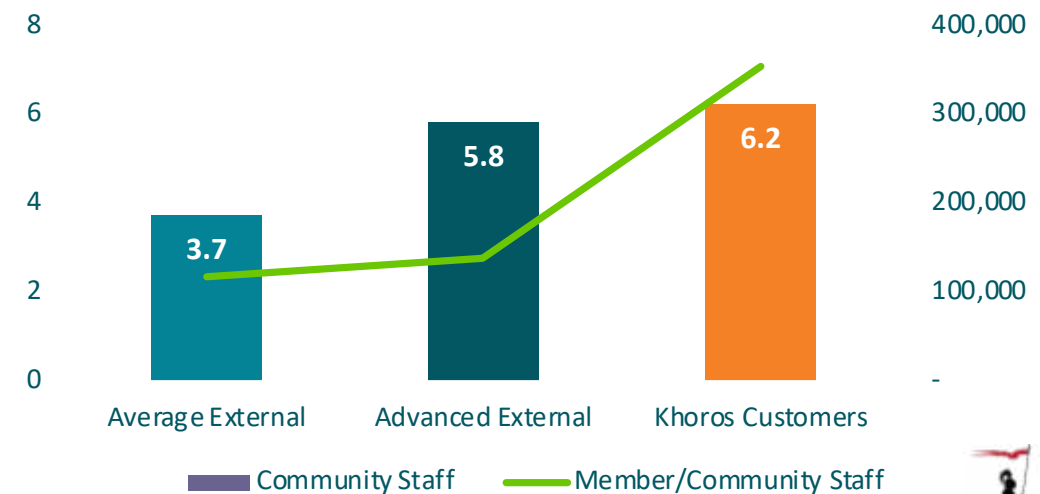
Communities Programs with Dedicated Budgets

- Average External: 42%
- Advanced External: 56%
- Khoros Customers: 50%

Programs with Approved and Funded Roadmaps

- Khoros Customers: 12% | 27%
- Advanced External: 19% | 47%
- Average External: 15% | 19%

Community Staffing

- Average External: 3.7
- Advanced External: 5.8
- Khoros Customers: 6.2

Community Staff — Member/Community Staff
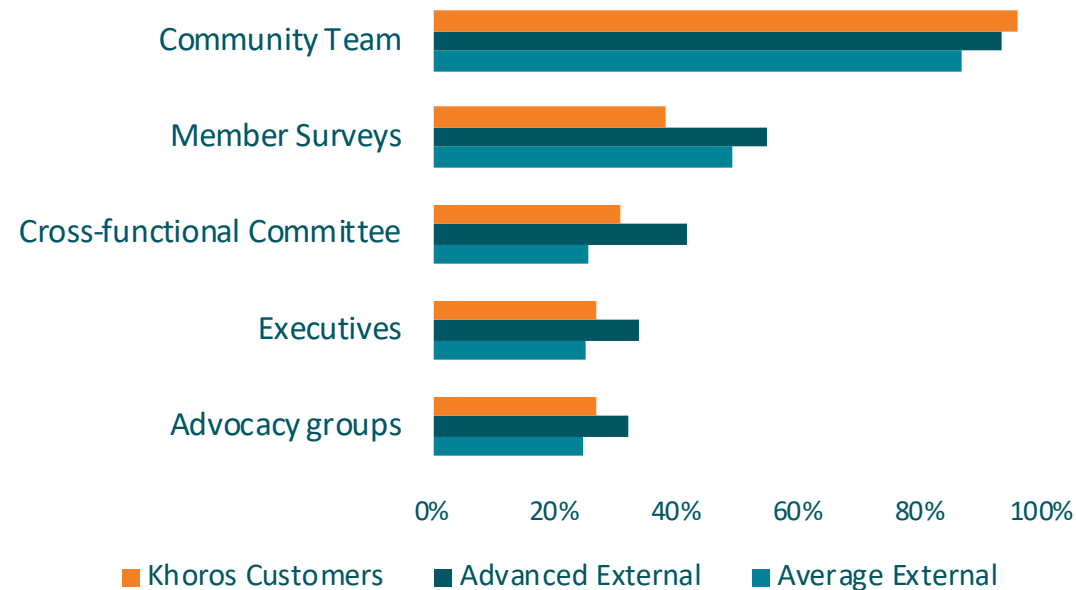
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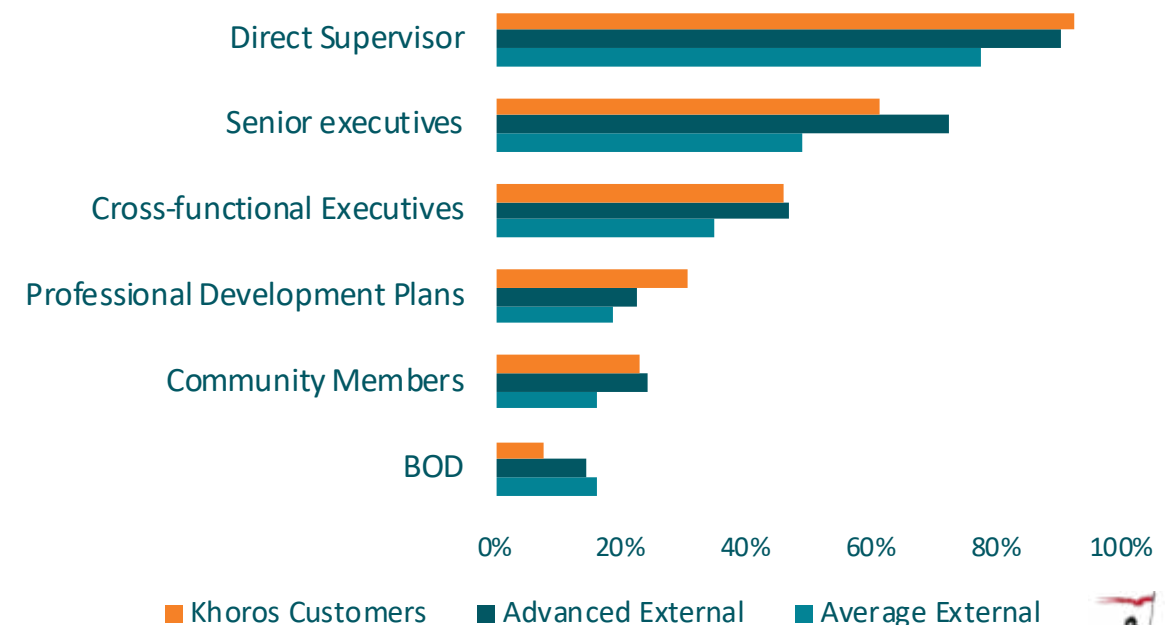
CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE IMPROVES WITH INTEGRATION

Customer communities improve the customer experience, product use, and operational efficiency by unlocking access to cross-functional expertise. This value can be used to increase brand resonance and customer loyalty.

Including multiple stakeholders in reporting and decision-making improves the impact communities can have on the entire customer lifecycle.

Decision-Making Stakeholders

Categories: Community Team, Member Surveys, Cross-functional Committee, Executives, Advocacy groups

Reporting Channels

Categories: Direct Supervisor, Senior executives, Cross-functional Executives, Professional Development Plans, Community Members, BOD

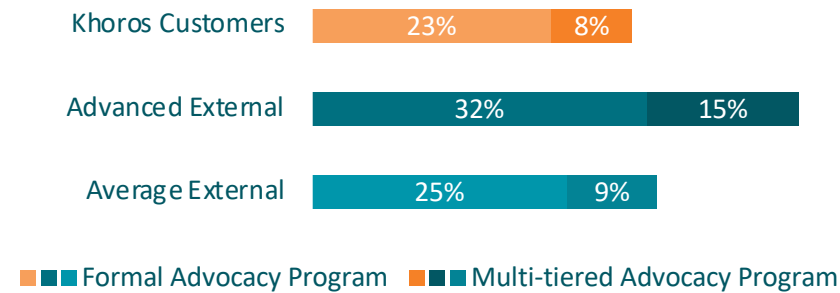Legend: Khoros Customers, Advanced External, Average External

ADVOCACY PROGRAMS FUEL ENGAGEMENT
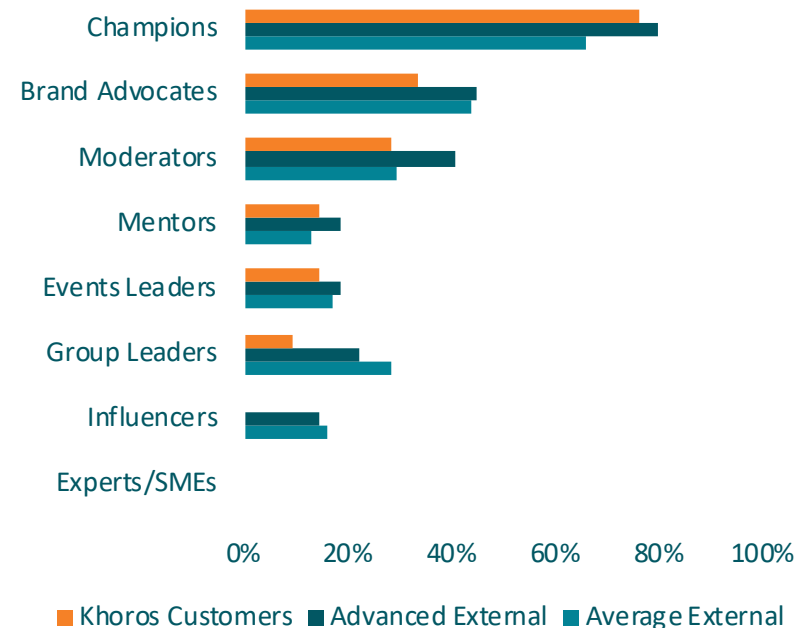
MEMBER LEADERSHIP MAXIMIZES VALUE

Advocacy programs develop member leadership, deepen relationships, and reward more regular and higher value engagement. They also often contribute powerful insights back to the organization.

The best programs address multiple audiences, based on their unique needs. Targeting a variety of advocacy tiers increases engagement, prompts more sharing of expertise, and captures more perspectives.
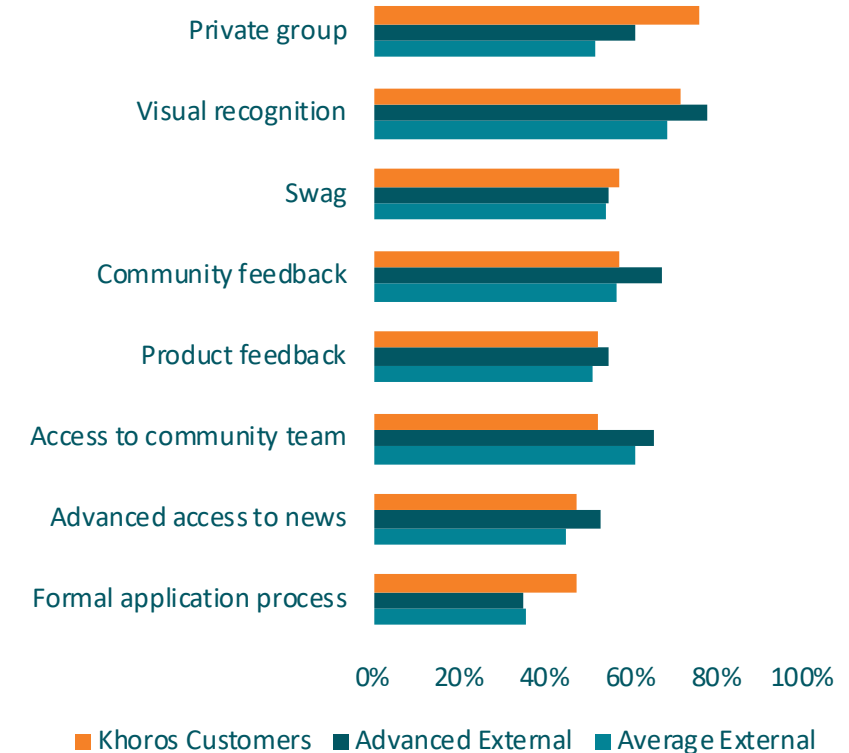
Maturity of Advocacy Program

	Formal Advocacy Program	Multi-tiered Advocacy Program
Khoros Customers	23%	8%
Advanced External	32%	15%
Average External	25%	9%

■■■ Formal Advocacy Program   ■■■ Multi-tiered Advocacy Program

Advocacy Program Tiers

Champions
Brand Advocates
Moderators
Mentors
Events Leaders
Group Leaders
Influencers
Experts/SMEs

0%   20%   40%   60%   80%   100%

■ Khoros Customers   ■ Advanced External   ■ Average External

Top Benefits of Advocacy and Member Leadership Programs

Private group
Visual recognition
Swag
Community feedback
Product feedback
Access to community team
Advanced access to news
Formal application process

0%   20%   40%   60%   80%   100%

■ Khoros Customers   ■ Advanced External   ■ Average External

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TEALIUM: ACTIVE ADVOCACY

TEALIUM

Name: Kristen Meren
Position: Community Manager
Use case: Advocacy Programs
Industry: Software

"We are replicating many community features in our Employee Portal, because of the growth we have seen."

Tealium Education recently revamped their community and added two community managers. The update aligned advocacy initiatives with the pillars of their community, identifying three core advocacy tasks: create killer content, drive engagement, and build internal advocacy. The Tealium team focused on welcoming new members and engaging previously passive members.

To accomplish this, the Tealium team created a series of new member onboarding emails and badges to prompt profile completion. Recognizing the power of active members requires thoughtful advocacy, so they also revamped an advocacy program that gives perks and unlocks groups for champions and superusers. Kristen Meren, one of the community managers, explained that these initiatives "helped us foster connections with our marketing, customer success, education, and engineering teams."

2019-2020 Community Results

- 45% increase in answers marked as solutions
- 42% increase in average click-through rate for search terms
- 55% increase in unique knowledge base visitors
- 38% increase in unique community visitors

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DEFINING COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

At The Community Roundtable we categorize engagement behaviors based on the commitment and motivation they represent. Different engagement behaviors generate different value because of this and need to be assessed differently.

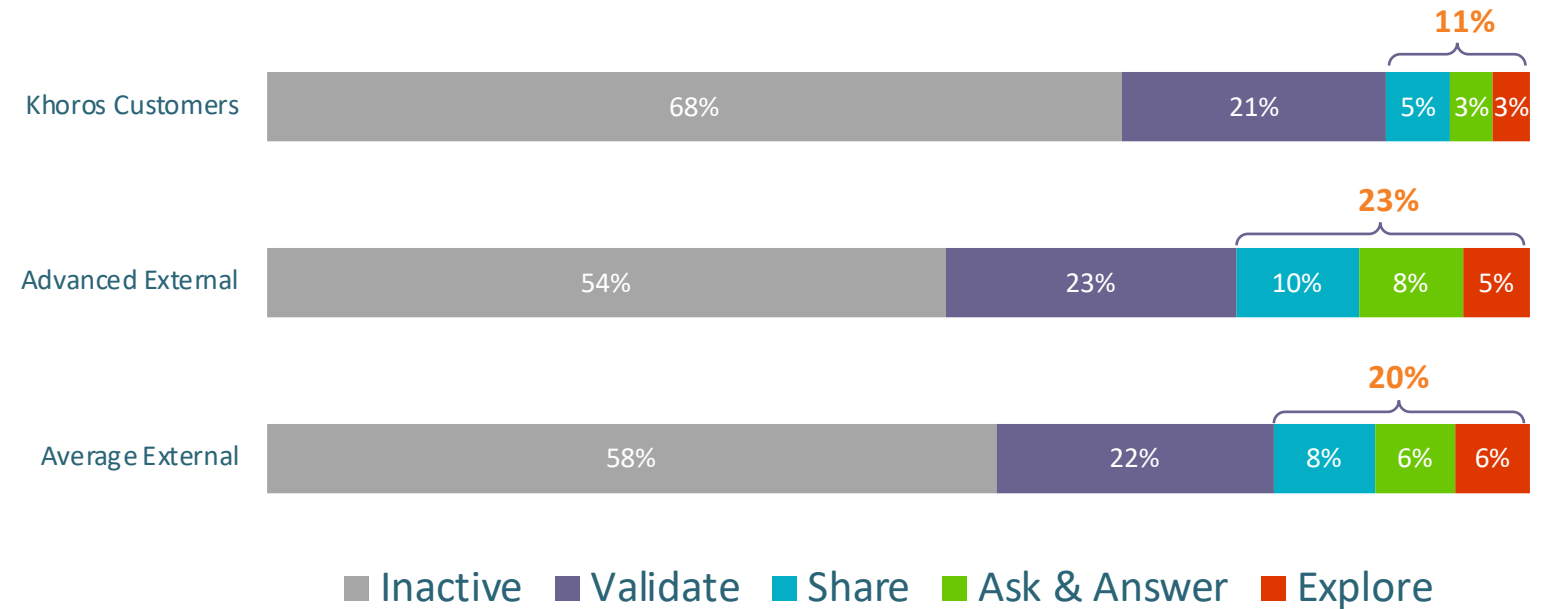| Example Behaviors	Value
Validate: view, react, bookmark, tag, and repost	Members feel seen, heard, and valued
Share: original perspectives, examples, pictures, and files	Connect members and builds relationships
Ask: information exchange, and questions	Captures and makes expertise transparent & accessible
Explore: dialog, brainstorming, and discussions	Generates ideas, creativity, and innovation

The Community Engagement Framework™: Measuring Engagement and Value
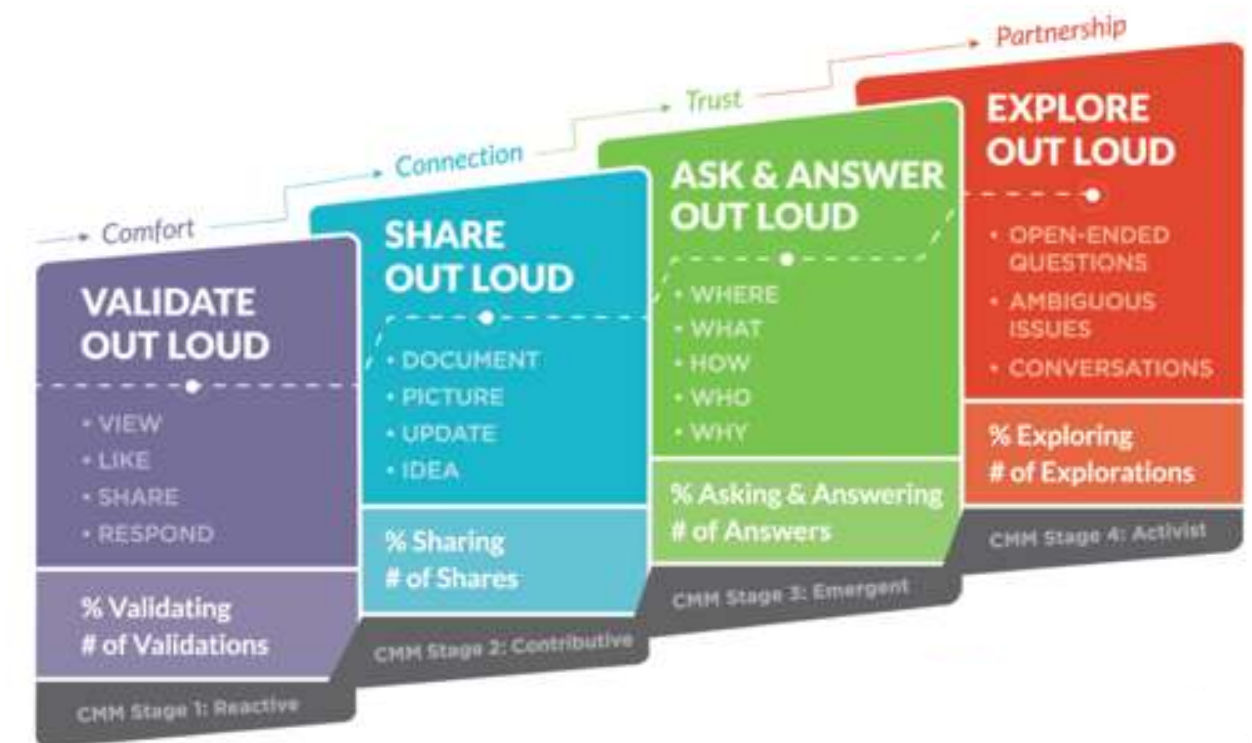
Together a healthy community has this entire range of behaviors, although percentages differ depending on community purpose.

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ENGAGEMENT GENERATES SHARED VALUE

The contributing members of Advanced Communities, on average, share, ask, and explore 15x more than average members. In Khoros communities this is about 12x, suggesting an opportunity to increase the percent of members who contribute – as well as access value.
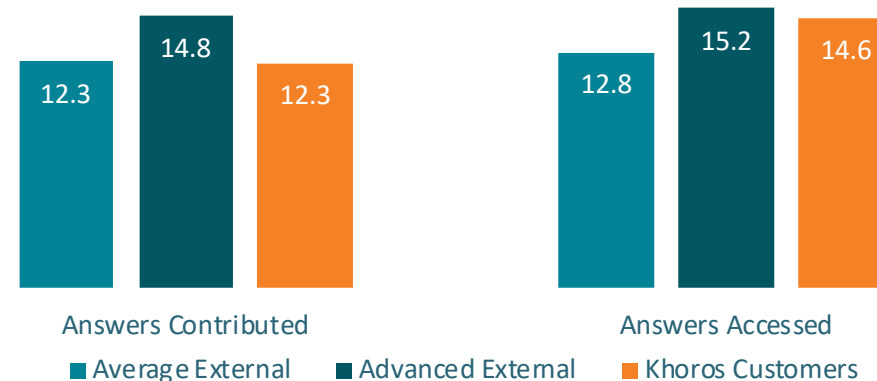
11% of Khoros community members fall in the contributing category, compared to 23% of those in Advanced Communities'. This suggests an opportunity to increase and broaden engagement rates by investing in advocacy programs.

Khoros Communities Have Opportunity to Increase Engagement...

	Inactive	Validate	Share	Ask & Answer	Explore	
Khoros Customers	68%	21%	5%	3%	3%	11%
Advanced External	54%	23%	10%	8%	5%	23%
Average External	58%	22%	8%	6%	6%	20%

■ Inactive ■ Validate ■ Share ■ Ask & Answer ■ Explore

...by Increasing Contributing Members

Ratio of Contributing to Validating Behaviors

	Average External	Advanced External	Khoros Customers
Answers Contributed	12.3	14.8	12.3
Answers Accessed	12.8	15.2	14.6

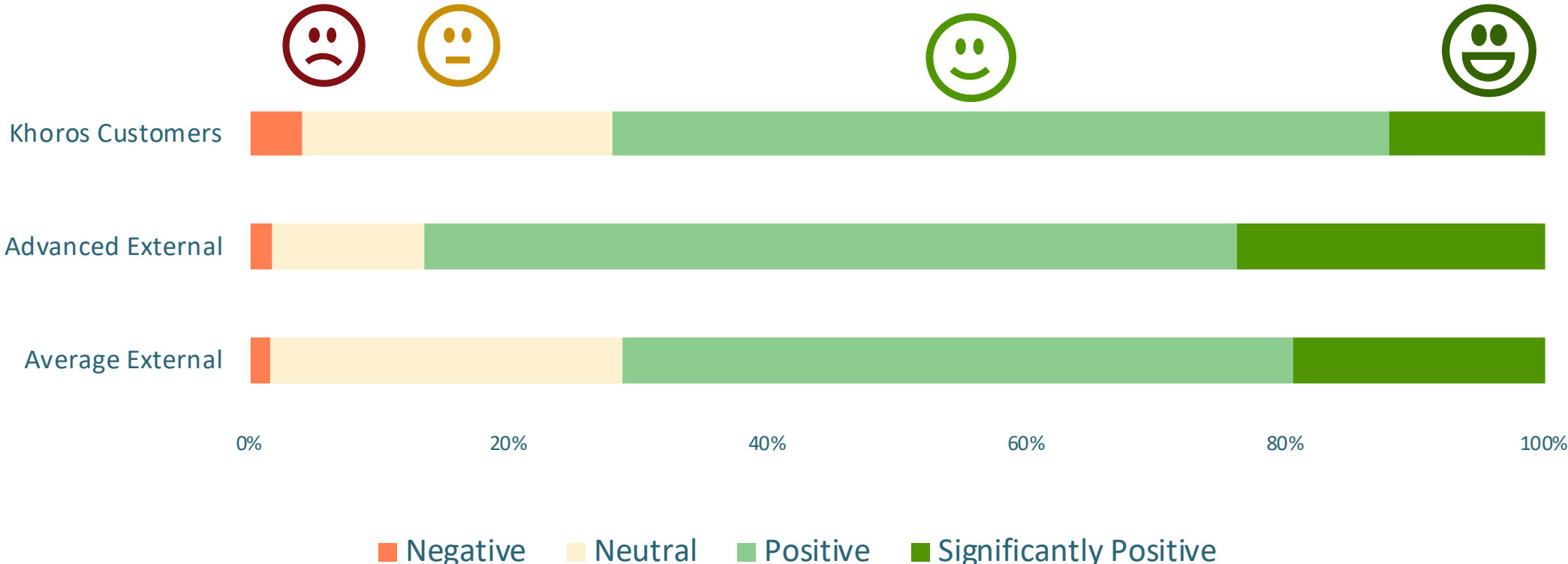■ Average External ■ Advanced External ■ Khoros Customers

Recommendations
1. Invest in advocacy programs
2. Focus on validating and connecting members
3. Prompt sharing of expertise and experiences

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COMMUNITIES CONTRIBUTE TO BRAND PERFORMANCE

Counter to prevailing assumptions, communities generate very little negative sentiment and are overwhelmingly positive contributors to brand resonance and value. Accessing expertise provides the bulk of community value, but communities are also engines of brand advocacy.

## Communities Generate Overwhelmingly Positive Brand Sentiment

Legend: Negative · Neutral · Positive · Significantly Positive

Categories: Khoros Customers · Advanced External · Average External

Axis: 0% · 20% · 40% · 60% · 80% · 100%

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RECOMMENDATIONS: INVESTMENTS THAT MATTER

Strategic

- ❑ Measurable strategies
- ❑ Funded roadmaps
- ❑ Dedicated budgets

Operational

- ❑ Formal, multi-tiered advocacy programs
- ❑ Increase in community staffing
- ❑ Strategic, operational, and tactical reporting
- ❑ More inclusive community governance
- ❑ Programming focused on connecting and sharing
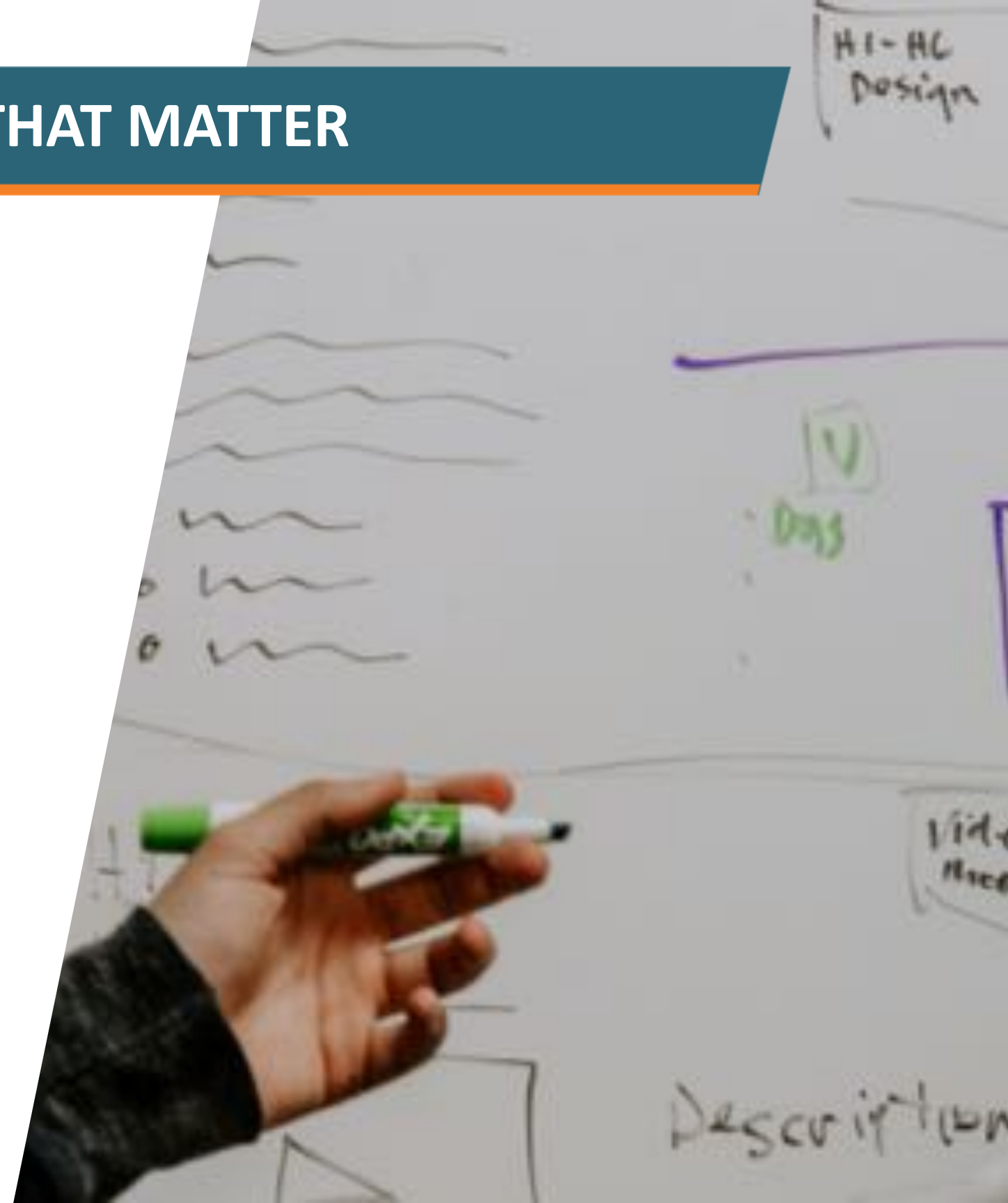
About The Community Roundtable

At the Community Roundtable, we collaborate with clients to implement proven, practical strategies for better communities.

Clients rely on our models, research, and peer networks to take their communities to the next level.

Research

Frameworks, Benchmark and Community ROI Models

Community of Practice

Resource Subscription

Speaking & Research Services

www.communityroundtable.com