Using Automation to Support Motivation in Online Communities

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FeverBee

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MOTIVATION THEORY

For almost as long as online community management has been a profession, practitioners have been doggedly determined when it comes to driving engagement. We've all been striving to find the silver bullet, the one thing that will get our members to do more than just keep coming back — we want them to engage. And the news is good. That silver bullet exists and its name is motivation.

In order to crack the engagement puzzle, we need to understand what motivates our members. There are a multitude of different theories and models which attempt to explain human behavior and motivation — or more specifically, what motivates people to act in a certain way. These theories broadly fall into two groups — process and content. Content theories deal with what motivates people (individual needs and goals). Process theories are more concerned with how the motivation occurs. In this eBook, we'll focus on the process theory for motivation.

Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory

Frederick Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory debuted in 1959 and is still commonly accepted today. It postulates different 'hygiene' factors in the work environment result in either satisfaction or dissatisfaction. These sets of motivating factors act independently of each other and essentially encompass what we've come to know as intrinsic and extrinsic motivators.

Intrinsic motivation is driven by an interest or enjoyment in a specific task, and doesn't rely on external factors — it exists within the individual. Achievement, responsibility, gaining knowledge, and competence are all examples of intrinsic motivators.

Extrinsic motivation is driven by the desire to attain a desired outcome or reward. Money, competition, positive feedback, and avoiding punishment are all examples of extrinsic motivators.

Which type motivates more will vary for different people. Extrinsically motivated people perform to achieve a specific end goal, and once achieved, that goal no longer motivates. Intrinsically motivated individuals perform for their own satisfaction or achievement, and the motivation is generally self sustainable and long lasting — that's optimal for online communities.
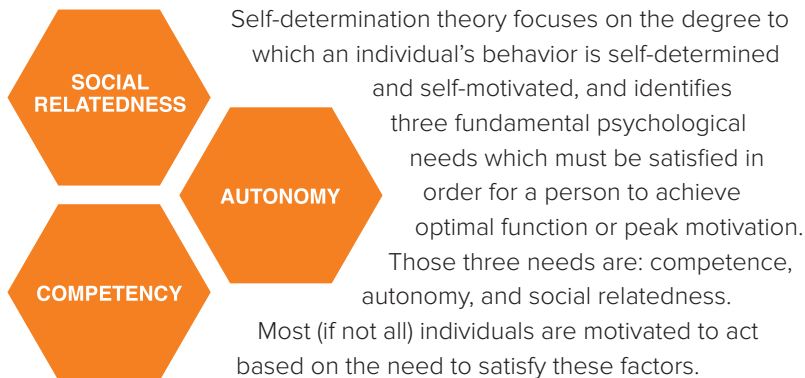
MOTIVATION THEORY

Intrinsic and Extrinsic Actions in Online Communities

We're already using these motivations in our communities. While individuals will be motivated in different ways, an intrinsic approach will have a stronger effect on long-term engagement.

So how can we harness the power of these intrinsic motivators to build thriving communities? The key to tapping into this self-sustaining motivation is to find intrinsically motivating factors in which to appeal. Enter self-determination theory (SDT).

Self-determination theory focuses on the degree to which an individual's behavior is self-determined and self-motivated, and identifies three fundamental psychological needs which must be satisfied in order for a person to achieve optimal function or peak motivation. Those three needs are: competence, autonomy, and social relatedness. Most (if not all) individuals are motivated to act based on the need to satisfy these factors.

A Focus on Intrinsic Motivators for Your Community

We make the assumption people join communities to find the solution to a problem, but in truth it runs deeper than that.

A successful community manager will work to ensure the community appeals to a long-term motivational driver — that might mean highlighting the benefits of sharing personal information in return for relevant experiences, therefore satisfying the need for **social relatedness (or connection)**. It might mean supporting members to become thought leaders in their chosen area, appealing to their need for **competency**. Or it could mean empowering individuals to express themselves freely, satisfying their need for **autonomy**.

These are long-term, self-sustaining approaches. If you succeed, your members will convince themselves that they believe in the community, and will do what they can to ensure its survival.

So let's look at some practical ways we can satisfy these three intrinsic motivators within a community.

MOTIVATION THEORY

Competence, Autonomy, and Social Relatedness within Community

COMPETENCE

1 **Share knowledge and expertise.** Community members are responsible for introducing new information, resources, and advice. Contributions should be targeted to specific topics and areas of interest, to increase the skill level of other members.

2 **Educate through webinars and live chats.** Encourage members to share their knowledge and teach each other. Provide a supportive environment so members are comfortable hosting their own webinars, live chats, and presentations.

3 **Segment engagement by member group.** Set up challenges and tasks for members based on their level and interest (newcomer, veteran, blogger, quick responder, etc.). Every member should be able to participate at their optimal level, not someone else's.

4 **Games are great in moderation.** Organize games and competitions with an intrinsic angle (winners achieve recognition, not fleeting rewards). Help everyone gain status within the community.

5 **Encourage brainstorming.** Maintain an open dialogue for community and industry feedback. Find out what challenges members and support peer to peer or group brainstorming.

6 **Highlight individual achievements.** Give positive feedback for contributions, whether it's sharing expertise in a discussion, hosting a webinar on a pertinent industry topic, or participating in a game and making it to the top of the leaderboard.

MOTIVATION THEORY

AUTONOMY

1 **Communicate mutual goals.** Encourage people to talk about their values and beliefs, and demonstrate how they align with the community's values. Provide every member with opportunities to discuss agendas and goals. Example: offer enhanced profiles or signatures as a space for members to express themselves.

2 **Use supportive language.** How you say something is as important as what you say in the first place. Encourage members — don't control them. Reinforcing support will empower them to make their own decisions, rather than leading them down one, generic path.

3 **Provide an easy route for feedback.** Make sure the opportunity is front and center for members to make suggestions and drive new projects within the community.

4 **Clear boundaries are key.** Autonomy includes a need to control our environment, so outline clear community boundaries, guidelines, and conditions to help members understand and rationalize the reasons for those boundaries.

5 **Set up trust levels for member tasks.** Grant members varying levels of community platform permissions, so they can perform moderation tasks. This instills trust and removes task burdens from the community managers.

6 **Consult community power-users in a crisis.** Disruptive behavior and conflict is inevitable within any community. Reach out and take advantage of your community's MVPs and active participants when dealing with disruptors.

MOTIVATION THEORY

SOCIAL RELATEDNESS

1 **Show genuine interest in all members.** Get to know your members individually, including their needs, wants, and experiences beyond traditional community topics.

2 **Connect with members on a human level.** Create an empathetic, non-judgmental community culture.

3 **Build a strong network of volunteers and mentors.** These power-users will go above and beyond traditional community contributions, and should respond to every contribution or inquiry in a timely manner.

4 **Make relationships and networking easy.** Provide opportunities for members to help one another, and create an environment that nurtures new and developing relationships.

5 **Stick to the rules.** Have firm guidelines and rituals around welcoming new members.

6 **Don't take it too seriously.** Authentic human interaction comes from real conversations, and that includes disagreements, in-person meet-ups, and silly Gifs.

Implementing Intrinsic Strategies into the Community

Implementing these strategies will vary in different communities, and it's crucial to remember individuals are motivated differently. A successful community requires a range of personalities, so try choosing approaches from all three sections.

Now that we've established ways in which we can leverage motivational factors within online communities, the next step is finding scalable ways to implement those strategies. One of the biggest dilemmas facing community managers is how to make use of limited time.

We know the key lies in intrinsically motivating our members, but we need to communicate those motivating factors. Our time is best used crafting persuasive messages, but we need support disseminating them. This is where automation comes in.

We have two goals: streamline the job by reducing time-consuming or tedious tasks (granular monitoring isn't scalable), and simply get the right message to the right person at the right time.

HOW AUTOMATION SUPPORTS MOTIVATION IN COMMUNITY

Automation Rules help community managers interact with community members through creative, rules-based logic. Automation is a streamlined way to stay organized and active with members, while also improving communications, reporting, and user recognition.

Automation affords you the ability to provide high-touch responses or feedback to members with little to no effort, and when used properly, automated email series are a good way of priming the behavior of your audience — you can take a gradual approach to demonstrating the kind of participation that will help them to maximize the value they get from being an engaged member of your community.

It's really based on what your community members have or have not done, and emails are sent only to small segments. It's very important to get a small group to perform an action in a timely manner, without bombarding the general population with a message that doesn't resonate.

Automated emails can be used in many ways within the bounds of a community platform and play an important role in habit-forming technologies, which aim to create associations with internal triggers that cue members without the need for other external stimuli. That specific role

is to make the required action as easy as possible, while simultaneously boosting the member's motivation to do so.

These autoresponders are effective because they are triggered by a certain action, making them timely. Here are some benefits:

- People are automatically inducted into your way of thinking, with little to no overhead
- You can deliver high quality content immediately, priming them to open your future emails
- The automated nature frees up your time for more important tasks, while keeping your members engaged

Any automation rule can follow a member's movements within the community and trigger an action when a certain condition is met — most commonly an email (or email series): If X happens then make Y happen.

HOW AUTOMATION SUPPORTS MOTIVATION IN COMMUNITY

The most common example, found in just about every community platform, is the welcome email: X is the receipt of a registration record and Y is sending an email. Other options include:

- Improve campaigns and outreach by setting up automated messages for new users or those who have not been active in a certain number of days

- Select rules that immediately update user profiles with ribbons to reward the best advocates

- Create and export spreadsheets or subsets on new automation rules for better tracking

Automation in Action

Ground rules for automating community outreach are laid out — how do you categorize and execute? Here are some useful ways to automate community building through engaging new members, re-engaging existing members, rewarding and communicating.

> "An automated welcome email alleviates initial stress by giving permission."

ENGAGE NEW MEMBERS

It can be intimidating to jump straight into an established community and begin participating. An automated welcome email alleviates initial stress by giving permission: a new member posts in a thread or shares knowledge, with a friendly nudge from this email.

It works toward satisfying a member's need for social relatedness by initiating them into the wider group, and takes advantage of the fact that once a member makes an initial post, they are more likely to post again.

Think carefully about what the call to action (CTA) in that email should be. Long, generic introduction threads are of little value, unless you create a social norm within your community to drive existing members to engage with each post. Asking a specific question ("What is the biggest challenge you currently face?" or "What is your three-month strategy?") will likely elicit a response that turns into ongoing dialogue. Keep that new member engaged for long enough to get past the initial barrier.

HOW AUTOMATION SUPPORTS MOTIVATION IN COMMUNITY

Case Study: Healthcare Industry Organization Starts New Member Campaigns

One organizational community implemented a Membership Monday campaign to drive new members to the organization at large. It used automation rules to send two emails:

- Email to 1,102 individuals in a community made up of prospective members (these individuals enrolled in a trial membership via the organization's new contact form)
- Email to 6,007 non-members who belong to at least one community on the community platform, including the prospective member community

After running conversion queries for these automation rules, it discovered a 3% conversion rate for the first email, in which individuals who received the email are now members. It also found a 4% conversion rate for the second email, also tracking new members.

The results are even more interesting when paired with the organization's membership dues. Annual charges are $125. The campaign yielded 258 new clients — that equates to $32,250 in revenue from the two new automation rules campaigns. The campaign did not require any outside marketing expenses (list rental, paid search, direct mail, etc.).

Organizations can calculate real ROI when it comes to its automated email campaigns. They could even take it one step further and calculate average lifetime membership and total lifetime value.
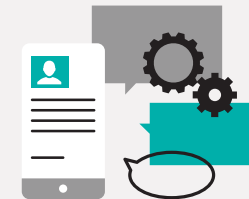
HOW AUTOMATION SUPPORTS MOTIVATION IN COMMUNITY

RE-ENGAGE EXISTING MEMBERS

If the initial email didn't trigger the member to participate (or if they posted once and then didn't return), a reminder email serves as a friendly nudge. A key factor of successful, habit-forming technology is the timeliness of the trigger, so a follow-up email during the working week (for professional communities) or weekend (for hobby communities) might engage someone you missed the first time around.

Establishing a social norm is just as important in this re-engagement process as that trigger. If members respond to your nudging and make

a first (or further) post, unless they receive encouragement from other members of the community, it is unlikely any of their needs will be met (possibly resulting in a lost member). You need to continue to nurture the environment of relatedness and support.

A second motivating factor can also be leveraged here — the need for competency. Re-engaging a member by pulling them into a post can be a powerful tool that will help them demonstrate knowledge or expertise. Getting people to make a small commitment first is likely to result in a larger commitment later.

> " A key factor of successful, habit-forming technology is the timeliness of the trigger. "

Dynamics Communities produced a 26% conversion rate by implementing a "We Miss You" automated campaign.

Source: Dynamic Communities Case Study, Page 12

26%
Conversion Rate
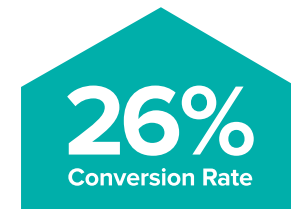
HOW AUTOMATION SUPPORTS MOTIVATION IN COMMUNITY

Case Study: Dynamic Communities, Inc. Uses Automation to Bolster Collaboration

Dynamic Communities, Inc. activated new automation rules in its Collaborate communities in Fall 2015. There are two primary automation rules that trigger short, friendly emails to individuals, urging them to stay engaged based on action they've already taken. Dynamic Communities used a "We Miss You" rule and a rule encouraging individuals to put up a profile picture.

"What stands out here is that in only four months (not to mention holiday months where we always see low activity levels), we've brought 331 members back into our community from a period of inactivity," says Michelle Spitzer Lowry, Director of Community and Member Engagement at Dynamic Communities, Inc. "With a simple email from a community manager, they're back answering questions and participating in discussions — very impactful."

These rules run automatically each day, triggering emails to individuals who meet the criteria. After four months the campaigns have driven new engagement. By implementing a "We Miss You" rule automation campaign, Dynamic Communities saw a 26% conversion rate, while the profile picture rule produced a 23% conversion rate.

Additionally, Collaborate's community managers (those that were the "senders" of these email campaigns) received many direct email responses with alternative types of engagement and actions. Responses included thank you's, members who wished to re-engage as volunteers, speakers, and chapter leaders, and simple affirmation that members want to participate.

Dynamic Communities has only scratched the surface of what it potentially can do with these automation rules. It has been an excellent way to build personal relationships with members, helping them with everything from routine questions and getting more involved to registering for meetings and additional training. Future plans include adding automation to the onboarding process and increasing engagement for the chapter communities.

HOW AUTOMATION SUPPORTS MOTIVATION IN COMMUNITY

REWARD ENGAGED MEMBERS

Gamification is a powerful motivational tool within many communities. Reinforcing actions you want to encourage — starting a new thread or offering an opinion — is a strong way to prime positive behavior and initiate behavior change. An email praising a valuable contribution is likely to elicit further engagement.

In some communities (most notably hobbyist or gaming communities), badges or ribbons earned for achieving certain goals and visible on a user's profile are strong motivators, as well as address the need for competence. In other communities (corporate or professional communities), it might be more appropriate to reward members by increasing their trust levels, or granting access to private areas. Branded communities might offer product discounts or beta testing invitations.

Whatever the carrot, automated emails triggered when a member meets a specific goal will serve to strengthen the relationship between the community and that member motivated by achievements.

COMMUNICATE AND EDUCATE

It is easy to assume your members know all of the intricacies of your platform, but the reality is they don't. Anyone that has ever tried to teach themselves how to use a software product will know you end up using a very tiny subset of the tools available, and create personal workarounds for sticky problems. The same can be said of community platforms. Unless you have conducted user tests, chances are high you're making assumptions about what people do and don't know. Appeal to the need for autonomy by empowering your members to use your platform in ways that give back control.

Automation can be used to support empathetic communication. For instance, if a member has logged in through a mobile browser five times in one month, you could email them with details about your mobile app with a link to download. The further you lower the barrier to entry, the more your members will engage with your community.

> " Appeal to the need for autonomy by empowering your members to use your platform in ways that give back control. "

HOW AUTOMATION SUPPORTS MOTIVATION IN COMMUNITY

Tips for Writing Effective Automated Campaigns

How can you apply these strategies about motivation, intrinsic factors and automated outreach to a precisely worded email to members? The following writing tips will keep you focused on productive, motivating emails.

1. **Write captivating subject lines.** Even though a member action triggered your email, it still has to compete for attention. Make your subject line something that stands out (for the right reasons). Some of FeverBee's top converting subject lines include, "An email from a real person!" (for a personalized welcome email) or "Take your team out for a drink on us" (for a change in membership pricing) or "Quick favor" (to ask for brief feedback on an idea).

   These are captivating sentences — all have enough of an interest factor for people to at least scan the email before deleting it, and they resonated with the audience. That last point is an important one — subject lines can be subjective, so it's important to test what works for your audience.

2. **Write emails as an individual.** Use a from address associated with a real person, and be careful how you label it. People are more likely to respond to an email from *Sarah at FeverBee*, rather than *FeverBee Community*. Ensure any member can reply to the email address. Email marketing firm, Campaign Monitor, has additional handy tips for writing great subject lines.

3. **Write persuasively.** Make sure your content is "benefit-focused". Rather than writing about features, write about how you are going to make the reader's life better/easier. For example, new members are going to be more likely to engage in an introduction thread if they believe sharing a current challenge will trigger a team of community members to help brainstorm solutions with them, rather than answering a basic "Introduce yourself" question. Similarly, they are more likely to revisit the community to answer a question because their knowledge or expertise has been specifically requested, than if you send them a list of threads they missed since their last visit.

4. **Design (and write) for people that scan.** Respected UX researchers Nielsen Norman Group conducted a study into the way people read email. (The study was done back in 2006 but the results are widely recognized as relevant today.) A stunning upshot: 'Participants fully read only 19% of [emails].'

HOW AUTOMATION SUPPORTS MOTIVATION IN COMMUNITY

Put your important message first. People don't bother reading flowery introductions — you're competing for their very valuable time, so you need to maximize what you do with that. Make sure you break up your content, using headings and bulleted lists to divide it into sections that are easy to skim.

5 **Write effective CTAs.** Your CTA needs to be clear and unambiguous. Make sure people know where they should go and what they should do, before they click. Use audience- appropriate language, and stick to the established tone of your brand. For extra effectiveness (and to hook the people scanning), make sure your CTA stands out — anything from an alluring color to a punchy one-liner can help. Campaign Monitor conducted research showing a call to action button was 26% more effective than a text alternative.

6 **Analyze your results (to write better next time).** There is no point in making changes if you don't monitor your statistics and analyze the results to see what works and what doesn't. Campaign Monitor created a free Google Analytics dashboard (with instructions) to make it easy.

Bring Together Motivation, Automation and the Right Campaigns

Think about how to take advantage of email communications or automation for your community by pinpointing the primary motivators to achieve better engagement and communication. Below are examples of successful automated campaigns. Keep intrinsic motivation in mind when developing your own motivating campaigns and processes.

Competence with Digital Recognition

The need for competence can be satisfied using a Digital Recognition campaign, which encourages members to:

- Link their social media sites, participate in mentoring or blogging, and perform other desired actions on the community to demonstrate knowledge and proficiency

- Gain an industry certification, at which point members can unlock and display badges presenting their achievements

- Reach X amount of contributory engagement points, in order to reach an elevated digital status with a visible ribbon or badge

# HOW AUTOMATION SUPPORTS MOTIVATION IN COMMUNITY

Case Study: AARC Uses an Automation Rule to Re-Engage Top Contributors

The American Association for Respiratory Care (AARC) decided to reach out to previously active members through a new automation rules campaign, in order to get them re-engaged and active again. The email campaign went out to members who had written more than four discussion posts (replies included) but had not posted in the last 90 days.

The results from the 105-day campaign were impressive: 26% of the 1,284 recipients posted a message, and as group they added 914 posts, which accounts for 25% of all posts in that time period. This is an average of three posts per person.

Using an automation rule to micro-segment your community audience can be immensely beneficial in engagement and retention efforts.
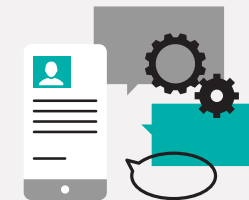
Social Relatedness with Active Member Engagement

The need for social relatedness can be satisfied using an Active User Stay Engaged campaign, by:

- Triggering a "We Miss You" email when a user has made four discussion posts in the past, but has not posted within a more recent time frame, spurring them to post again

- The 'People Like You' rule helps community managers connect members who share similar interests or live in the same area

HOW AUTOMATION SUPPORTS MOTIVATION IN COMMUNITY

Case Study: Education Theatre Association Leverages Active Members

"My favorite automation rule is the "We miss you" rule," said Ginny Butsch, community manager for the Education Theatre Association. "It sends an email to anyone who has posted in the community previously, but hasn't posted in the last 30 days. It's very casual and personalized, just a check-in to see how they have been, compliment their past activity, and encourage them to return.

"Since we started sending the rule in September 2015, we've seen a 33.6% conversion rate (those who return to post again). In addition to that exciting statistic, members frequently respond to me directly, and thank me for noticing their absence and apologize for their inactivity! I love it."

" Members frequently respond to me directly, and thank me for noticing their absence and apologize for their inactivity! I love it. "

Ginny Butsch
Community Manager
Education Theatre Association

The Education Theatre Association saw a 33.6% conversion rate by implementing a "We Miss You" automated campaign.

Source: Education Theatre Association Case Study, Page 17

33.6%
Conversion Rate
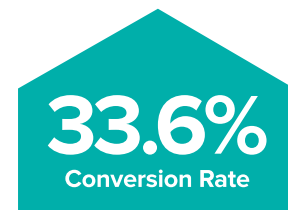
HOW AUTOMATION SUPPORTS MOTIVATION IN COMMUNITY

Autonomy with New Members and Mobile Apps

The need for autonomy is a harder one to define and satisfy:

- The Try the Mobile App campaign affords members the opportunity to take control over their environment, by prompting them to download an app if they visit the community from a mobile device X times
- The New Member Welcome campaign prompts new registrations to introduce themselves and complete a bio — word this correctly to encourage freedom of expression

Case Study: Mobile App Activity Increases for AANAC

Lynn Sywyj from the American Association of Nurse Assessment Coordination (AANAC) explained the member mobile app logins increased by almost 400% using the automation rule email titled, "Do you know the community is mobile?" to generate more awareness about the app.

Case Study: PPA Strengthens its New Member Welcome Campaigns

The Professional Photographers of America (PPA) conducted an automation rules campaign in October and November of 2015, with the primary goal of welcoming new members. The automated email asked recipients (474 new members total) to complete four actions: log in to the community, update their profiles, connect to a friend or colleague and post a new thread.

After 30 days, PPA saw exciting results. About 73% logged in to the community in that time period and as a group posted 148 discussions, which amounts to about 3% of all posts in those 30 days.

This automation rules campaign proved engaging with new members within the first week of joining the online community was beneficial for them taking subsequent action and contributing. It solidifies the importance of onboarding communications with new community members.

TRACKING YOUR OWN AUTOMATION JOURNEY

Keep Motivation and Automation Simple

The trick to successful automation campaigns is getting the tone, cadence and value proposition right. Today, people are bombarded by emails from all over the Internet, and they avoid burnout by filtering out anything not immediately valuable or personal. Every email should have a clear purpose and use a tone that communicates your brand values.

The Automation Checklist

We covered a lot of ground here for motivation and automation – don't feel overwhelmed. Quickly go through our Automation Checklist to make sure you found all the right strategies and advice for your organization.

My Automation eBook Checklist

- ❏ What's the difference between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation? (Page 4)
- ❏ How to incorporate motivators into my community? (Pages 5-7)
- ❏ Healthcare Org Starts New Member Campaign (Page 10)
- ❏ Dynamic Communities, Inc. Bolsters Collaboration (Page 12)
- ❏ How Can I Write Top-Notch Campaigns? (Pages 14-15)
- ❏ AARC Re-engages Contributors (Page 16)
- ❏ ETA's Active Members (Page 17)
- ❏ AANAC's Mobile Activity (Page 18)
- ❏ PPA's New Members (Page 18)
- ❏ Advice From FeverBee (BONUS: Page 20)
- ❏ Advice From Higher Logic (BONUS: 22-23)
- ❏ ASAE's Campaign Success: (Page 24)
- ❏ Enjoyed what you read? Share this resource with a colleague.

BONUS CONTENT: AUTOMATION THEORY BEST PRACTICES FROM FEVERBEE AND HIGHER LOGIC

FeverBee's Recommended Automation Campaign

At FeverBee, we send out a welcome email immediately, followed by a series of autoresponders going out at a rate of one per week for four weeks. When a new member signs up to our community, they are automatically inducted into our onboarding campaign, and we have tweaked the email templates over time in order to achieve optimal open rates.

Templated welcome emails are an expected part of the registration process, and while they don't typically have a high response rate, members generally save them for later reference if they contain pertinent details.

FeverBee's Automated Welcome Campaign

FeverBee Experts is a Discourse-based community that does not have built-in automation or campaign functionality. We have customized our platform using APIs and plugins to integrate Discourse, WordPress and Mailchimp so that we can take advantage of the benefits of automation. If you don't have the technical capability or resource to do something similar on your own platform, you can manually add new members into a mailing list as they sign up.

Here are the four email welcome campaigns FeverBee is currently running:

Email 1: Resources – First we send new members some free resources. This encourages them to open our emails in the future by only providing useful information (and not bombarding them with marketing speak). There doesn't need to be a CTA in this email. The point is to prime the member to associate our emails with value.

Email 2: Culture – Next we explain what makes our community unique and describe the type of discussions we want to encourage. We demonstrate how people can interact to get the most value. The CTA here is to guide people to participate in a targeted discussion, while priming the type of participation we expect.

Email 3: Value reinforcement – In this email we tackle a very specific problem by demonstrating practical steps members can take to improve their communities (i.e. We reinforce our value). No clear CTA is included in this email.

Email 4: Purpose – The final email explains clearly (and humorously) why we created the community and what we hope to get from it. We want people to be as passionate about our goals as we are. This also highlights additional value we can offer.

BONUS CONTENT: AUTOMATION THEORY BEST PRACTICES FROM FEVERBEE AND HIGHER LOGIC

Additional Resources Recommended by FeverBee

This article explains in detail how to create a manual auto-responder series using Mailchimp.

Communities built on enterprise platforms like Higher Logic, Lithium or Salesforce will have inbuilt automation functionality. Hybrid platforms like Standing on Giants will work to integrate your other business systems to achieve the same result.

Image 1: FeverBee's automated emails scheduled in its Mailchimp system

BONUS CONTENT: AUTOMATION THEORY BEST PRACTICES FROM FEVERBEE AND HIGHER LOGIC

Higher Logic's Automation Recommendations

Here we've outlined Higher Logic's best practice campaigns it recommends to all clients.

New Member Welcome

The New Member Welcome campaign aims to incentivize new members to complete the most important member immersion activities (e.g. making a first post or building a bio), and it encourages more engagement during the onboarding journey. This campaign could be leveraged to appeal to both the needs for social relatedness (induction into the group), autonomy (encouragement to build a bio that communicates goals and agendas or values and beliefs), and competence (encouragement to build a bio that communicates niche skills and knowledge).

Get "Passives" Engaged

The Get Passives Engaged campaign is intended to convert non-contributing members into contributors, by pushing out notifications of relevant or popular content. This campaign could be leveraged to satisfy the need for competence by engaging members in content that allows them to demonstrate their individual skills.

Figure 2: List of Active Automation Rules within Higher Logic's platform

BONUS CONTENT: AUTOMATION THEORY BEST PRACTICES FROM FEVERBEE AND HIGHER LOGIC

Active Users Stay Engaged

The Active User Stay Engaged rule is particularly clever in that it leverages one member action to trigger another. When the user performs a specific action within a certain time-frame, they receive a related prompt intended to spur additional engagement based on the original action (e.g. A 'we miss you' email is sent if a user posts X posts and then none within a specific timeframe).

As well as maintaining engagement, this campaign has the added bonus of introducing the member to new functionality along the way (e.g. Try the mobile app). This campaign could be used to appeal to the need for social relatedness, but also communicates that a member's absence has been noticed by the wider group.

Digital Recognition

The Digital Recognition campaign uses gamification principles to recognize and reward members for contributions. This campaign can be implemented as part of a process to ultimately satisfy the need for competence, culminating in visual displays of accomplishment.

Figure 3: Examples of recognition badges

BONUS CONTENT: AUTOMATION THEORY BEST PRACTICES FROM FEVERBEE AND HIGHER LOGIC

Case Study: ASAE's Automation Campaign Success for its Community

The American Society of Association Executives (ASAE) uses automation in Higher Logic's platform for Collaborate, its member community, available to more than 21,000 members representing 10,000 organizations. ASAE recognized early engagement and onboarding for first time members as integral to its engagement and renewal rates. It incorporated new onboarding strategies with the implementation of automation rules in Collaborate, with the goal of improving retention for both new members and those using the community.

Staff and Collaborate members came together to form the Member Engagement Automation Team (MEAT) for building out custom automation rules and best practices. The team has compiled 56 unique rules and 35 monthly KPIs associated with its onboarding process, with subsequent A/B testing to prove ROI. Initial email conversion results include 16% increase for members' first posts, 50% increase to keep conversations going and 17% increase for welcoming new members in discussions.

Conventional email marketing conversion rates generally hover between 1-2%. ASAE saw conversion rates that far surpassed these averages. It's recent campaign to email discussion authors without a profile picture (encouraging them to add images) saw a nearly 44% conversion. Encouraging more conversation yielded a 36% conversion, and welcoming new members yielded a 25% conversion.