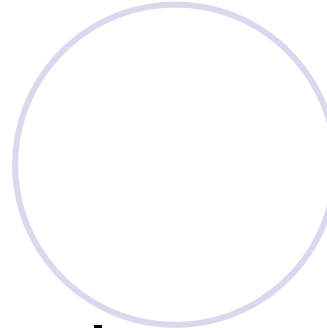
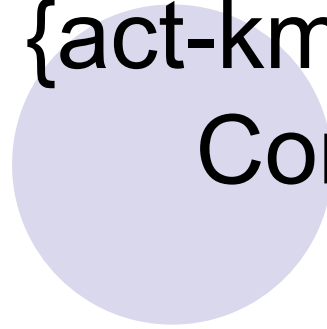
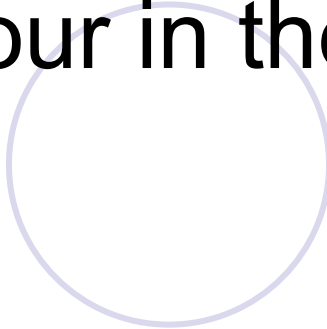
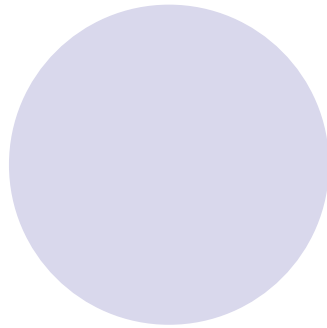
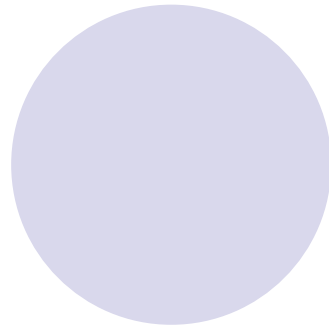


Throwing Pebbles into a Dark Cave: A study of participation and behaviour in the {act-km} Online Community



Ørjan Taule
Greg Timbrell
Patrick Lambe



Agenda

- What's special about online communities?
- The elements and attributes of our community.
- Dazzle you with statistics and graphs
- Talk about 'core-ness'
- Introduce some interesting terms
- Advise on how to lengthen your threads and so stimulate online conversation.

What's so special about Online Communities?



- Every conversation is recorded
 - Consumed now or later
- Based on the written word
 - Reputation, interpretation
 - Few tools for emphasis 😊
- Size – you can talk to 1500+ people at the same time
 - Most of whom you don't know
 - Throwing pebbles into a dark cave
- Conversations are atomic
 - No interruptions



Elements of Online Communities

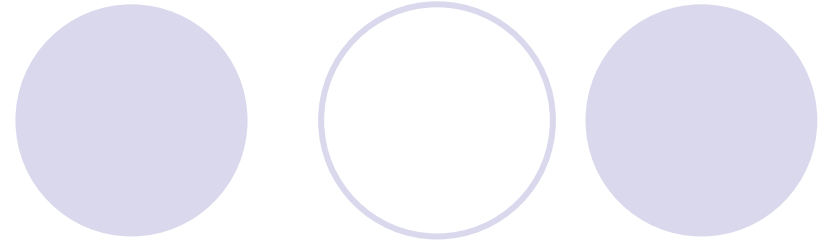
- Posts
- Response Posts
- Addressed vs Non-Addressed
- Post Topic
- Post Genre
 - e.g. Advertisement
- Thread
- Singleton
- Seed Post

Activity Measures



- Post activity
 - Singletons
 - Seed posts
 - Thread length
 - Thread span per poster
 - Number of response posts
 - Number of elicited responses
 - Addressed vs. non-addressed
- Membership growth
- % Lurkers / Posters
- Posts per active member
- Posts per strata
 - Top 10, Top 20 etc.
 - Relative participation levels
- Relative size of poster group

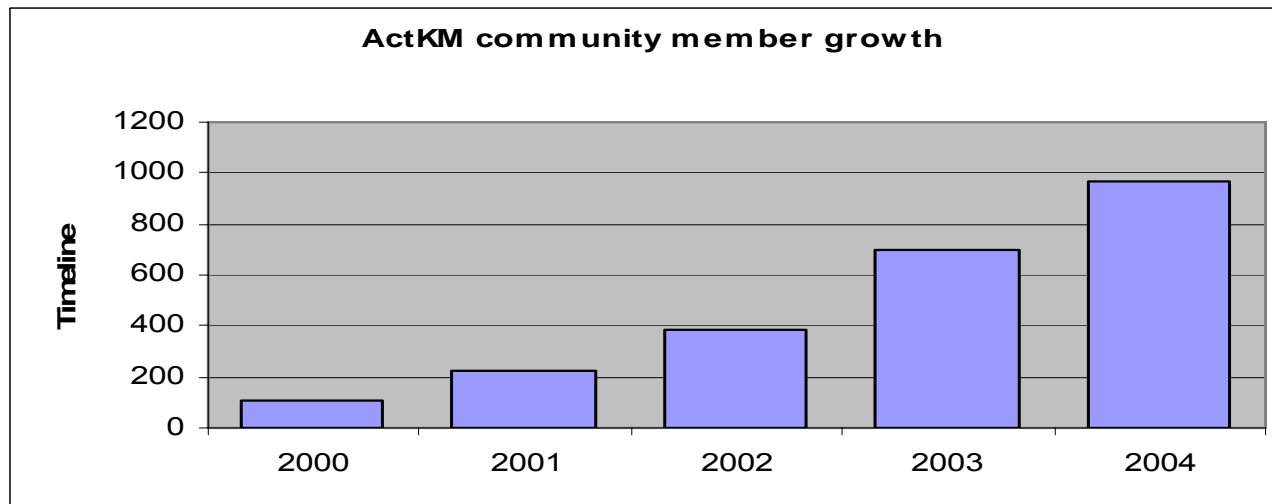
Attributes of Online Communities



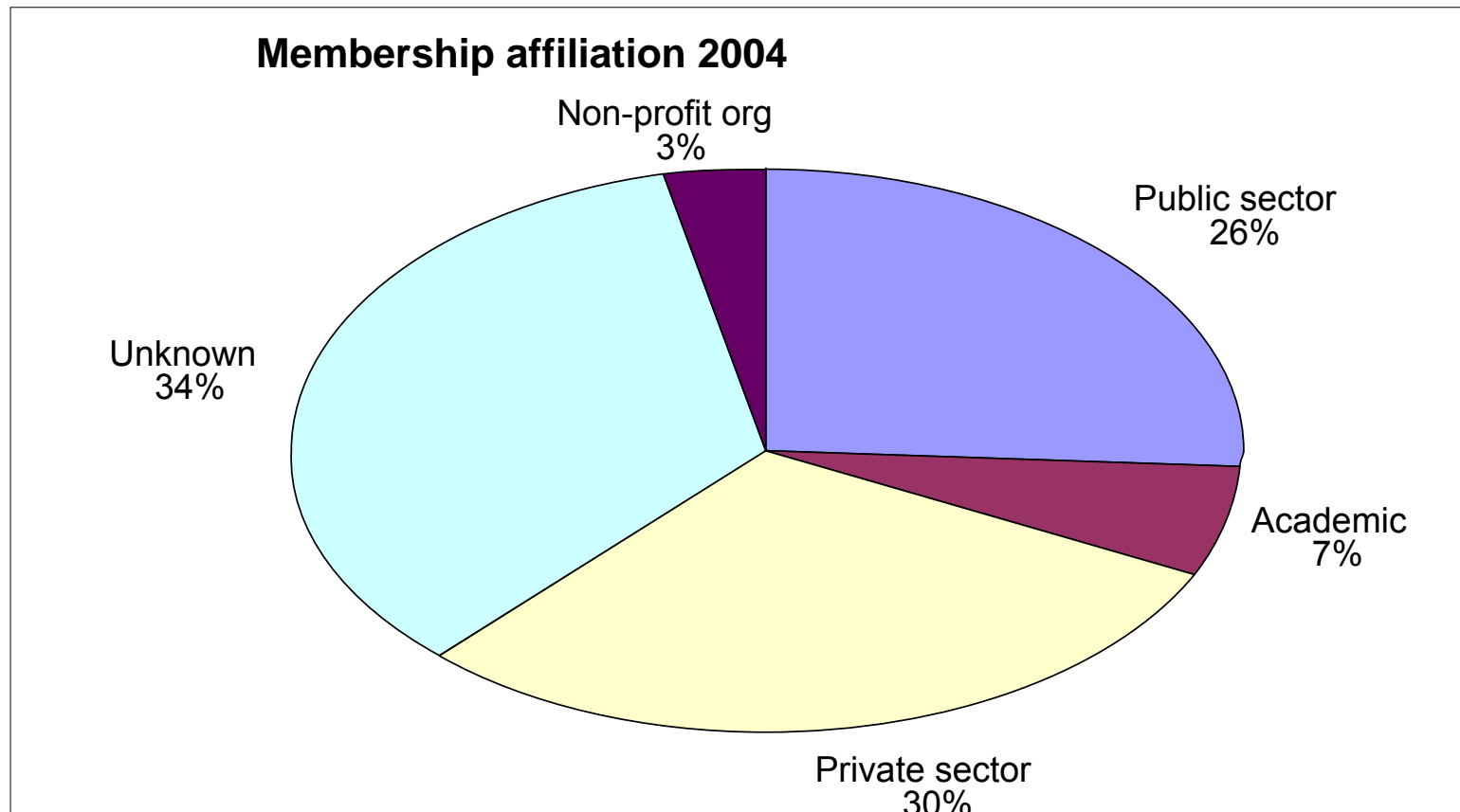
- Topic
 - Public Sector KM
- Membership and Milieu
 - Open and Non-anonymous
 - Milieu to come
- Medium
 - Yahoo Groups
- Operating principles
 - Netiquette, moderation, group culture
- Theory-Practice Propensity
 - Both: epistemic & practice
- Activity
 - Includes all activities including this conference, meetings, offline discussions

{act-km}

- Established December 1999
 - Thanks Shawn!
- Currently has 1523 members
- experiencing a 45% increase in posts for the same period last year
- About 2/3 male, 1/3 female

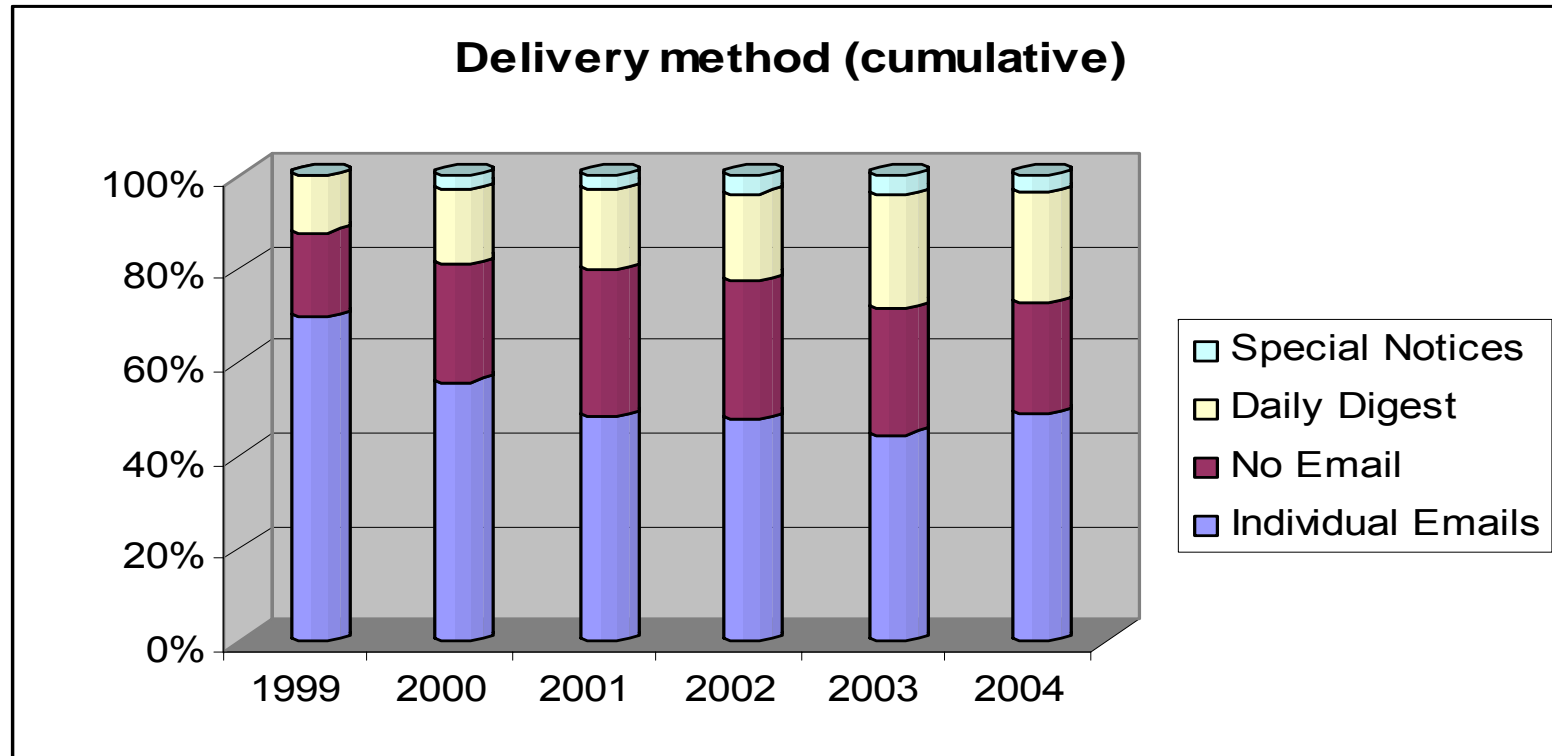


Affiliation

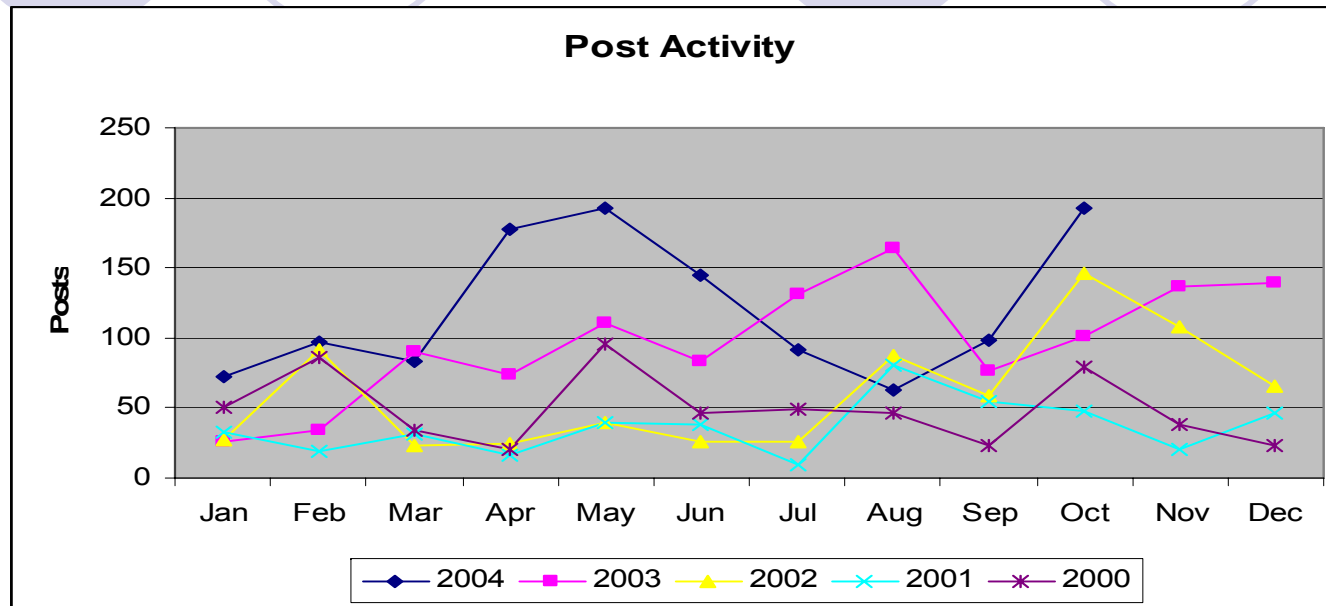


47% Designated KM Role – Milne and Callahan

Activity Profile



Activity Profile



Has {actkm} got rhythm?

<i>r</i>	2004	2003	2002	2001	2000
2004	1				
2003	0.272439	1			
2002	0.31254	0.256452	1		
2001	-0.16137	0.370501	0.314671	1	
2000	0.073963	-0.17057	0.330759	0.02092	1

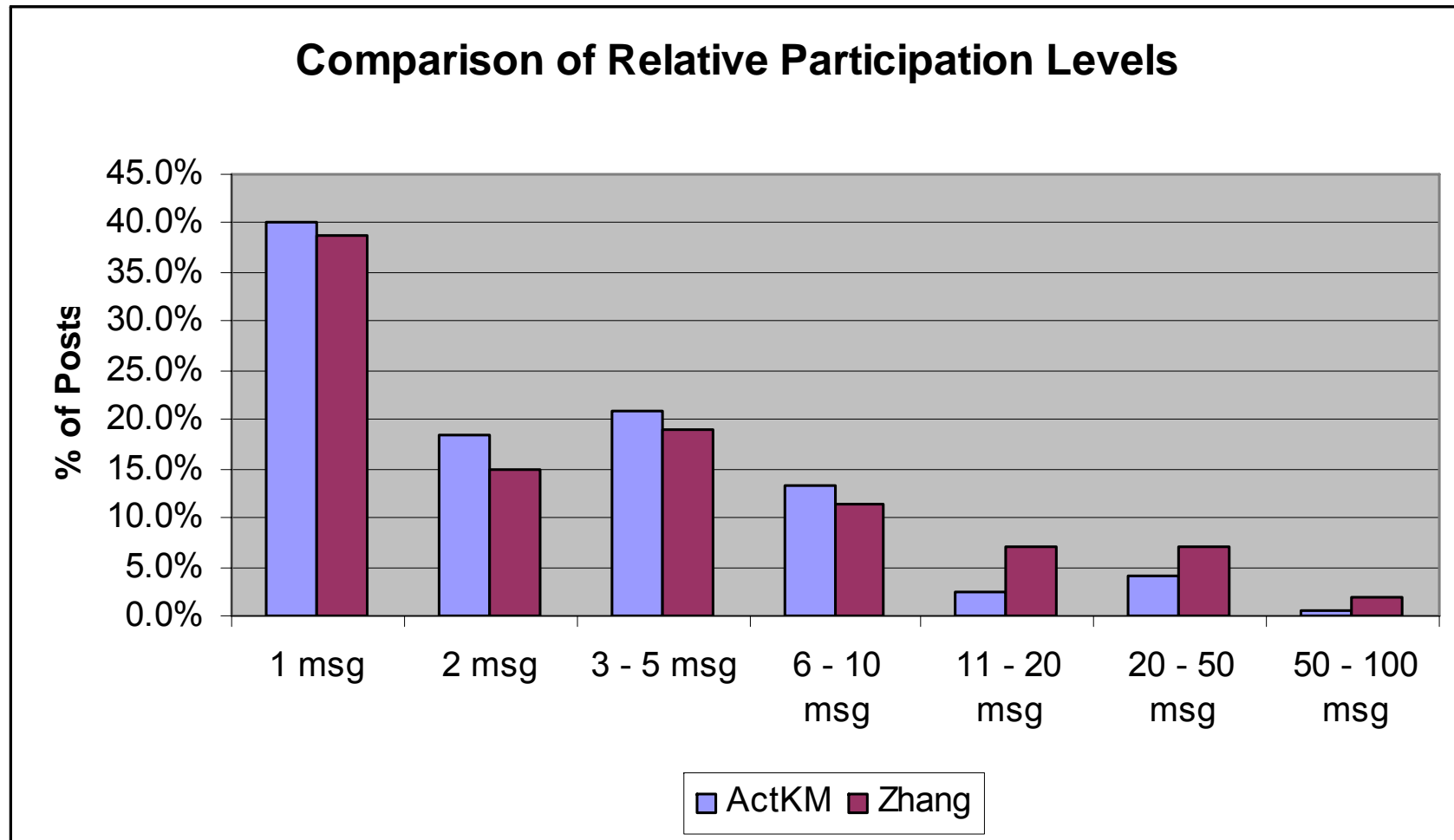
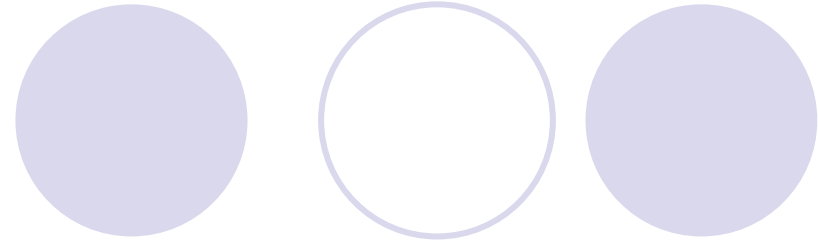
Activity Profile

	Members	Messages	Posters	% Posters	% Lurkers	Posts per active member
01	222	459	107	48.2%	51.8%	4.29
02	387	1447	111	28.7%	71.3%	13.04
03	702	1627	86	12.3%	87.7%	18.92
04	1016	3093	168	16.5%	83.5%	18.41

Activity Profile

Number of posts	2002 (387)			2003 (702)			2004 (1016)		
	Posts	Cumulative	% of Total	Posts	Cumulative	% of Total	Posts	Cumulative	% of Total
Top 10	229	229	44.9%	293	293	41.7%	315	315	40.6%
Top 20	102	331	20.0%	114	407	16.2%	98	413	12.6%
Top 30	48	379	9.4%	76	483	10.8%	68	481	8.8%
Top 40	35	414	6.9%	51	534	7.3%	55	536	7.1%
Top 50	22	436	4.3%	36	570	5.1%	46	582	5.9%
Top 60	20	456	3.9%	27	597	3.8%	37	619	4.8%
Top 70	13	469	2.5%	20	617	2.8%	27	646	3.5%
Top 80	10	479	2.0%	17	634	2.4%	20	666	2.6%
Rest	31	510	6.1%	68	702	9.7%	109	775	14.1%

Activity Profile



Activity Profile

% of total membership	2002	2003	2004
Top 10	2.58%	1.42%	0.98%
Top 20	5.17%	2.85%	1.97%
Top 30	7.75%	4.27%	2.95%
Top 40	10.34%	5.70%	3.94%
Top 50	12.92%	7.12%	4.92%

Core Group is posting more. More people are watching.

Who is the core?

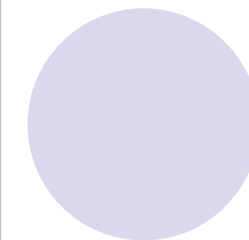
	Wenger et al (2002)	Wasko and Teigland (2002)
Outsiders	Non-members with an interest in the group	People that posted seeds but never received a response
Periphery	Members that keep to the sidelines watching the interaction	People that posted 10 or less responses
Seekers		People that posted only questions
Active	Occasional participation but not as much as the core group	
Insiders		People that posted more than 10 responses
Core Group	Active participants in the community.	

Core – in face-to-face communities: around 30%
“They identify topics for the community to address and move the group along its learning agenda”. (Wenger)

PARTICIPATION METRICS

	No. of Posts	% of total Posts	Singletons & Seed Posts	Replies	Threads started (34)	Thread-Span	Posts that elicit responses	Non-addressed Posts	Addressed Posts
Patrick	64	8.32%	4	60	2	30	36	17	47
Mark	40	5.20%	3	37	1	12	21	5	35
Georges	35	4.55%	8	27	1	14	9	22	13
Joe	35	4.55%	0	35	0	8	18	2	33
James	31	4.03%	19	12	3	12	7	24	7
Greg	31	4.03%	10	21	10	17	24	9	22
Dave	27	3.51%	4	23	2	13	15	20	7
Stuart	20	2.60%	4	16	4	10	14	6	14
John	17	2.21%	13	4	1	2	3	16	1
Laurie	15	1.95%	1	14	0	12	9	10	5
Matthew	12	1.56%	3	9	1	8	6	6	6
Cris	11	1.43%	9	2	0	2	0	9	2
Peter	10	1.30%	1	9	1	6	7	1	9
Luke	10	1.30%	3	7	0	6	3	6	4
Kate	10	1.30%	2	8	1	8	6	4	6

Aust	Bala Pillai	70	7%
UK	Dave Snowden	50	5%
USA	Douglas Weidner	43	4.3%
Aust	Matt Moore	38	3.8%
USA	John Maloney	38	3.8%
Sing	Patrick Lambe	35	3.5%
Aust	James Dellow	34	3.4%
Canada	Craig Hubley	34	3.4%
UK	Martyn Laycock	31	3.1%
USA	Joe Firestone	30	3%
Aust	Shawn Callahan	23	2.3%
Aust	Greg Timbrell	22	2.2%
USA	Kaye Vivian	19	1.9%
Aust	James Robertson	17	1.7%
Fran	Benoit Couture	14	1.4%
Aust	Mark Schenk	13	1.3%
Aust	Marshall, Sylvia	11	1.1%
Aust	Colette Woodford	11	1.1%
Aust	Community Information (Andy Mac)	9	0.9%
USA	Dr. Dan Kirsch	9	0.9%



From
the last
1000
posts

40.3

55.1



Interesting Terms

- List Troll
- Trollitis
- List Jacking
- Metaspamaphysics
- Spamouflage
- Announcers

- 
- Summariser
 - Peripheral Thread
 - Threadworm
 - Thread catalyst
 - Divine Lurker
 - Nitpickers



Thread Lengthening Techniques

- Asking a question at the end of the post.
- Addressing a question to a specific person thereby inviting their reply. If the targeted person is a core member or thought leader this also increases thread length.
- Writing on a contentious topic or making loud claims about an existing topic of interest.
- Replying aggressively to an individual thereby inviting further reply
- Writing on a topic that is novel and introducing new material or ideas within the original post.
- Pre-arranging replies with other members offline.



Thread Lengthening Techniques

- Making a reference or introducing a topic about lurking or lurkers.
- Having the last word with someone who also likes to have the last word
- Being of established reputation
- Diverging with an interesting side discussion
- Specifically inviting replies to the community
- Introducing two contrary statements or arguments
- Ask for advice on practical or theoretical topics
- Set up a challenge for the community



Questions

Greg Timbrell

Queensland University of Technology