

Developing a Communities of Practice Programme

Are you looking for a way to structure your communities of practice organisation wide?

Perhaps the greatest contribution knowledge management has made to organisations is the development and facilitation of knowledge sharing communities of practice (CoPs). Driven by the passion of the membership for the topic at hand, CoPs can provide alternative mechanisms for co-operation, where no formal structures exist. CoPs in many organisations have now been proven to provide a profitable knowledge sharing and learning platform for widely dispersed organisations. They are credited with being the vehicle for effectively developing and sharing best practices, being a source of innovation and new thinking and an informal communication conduit, feeding important business intelligence across the organisation.

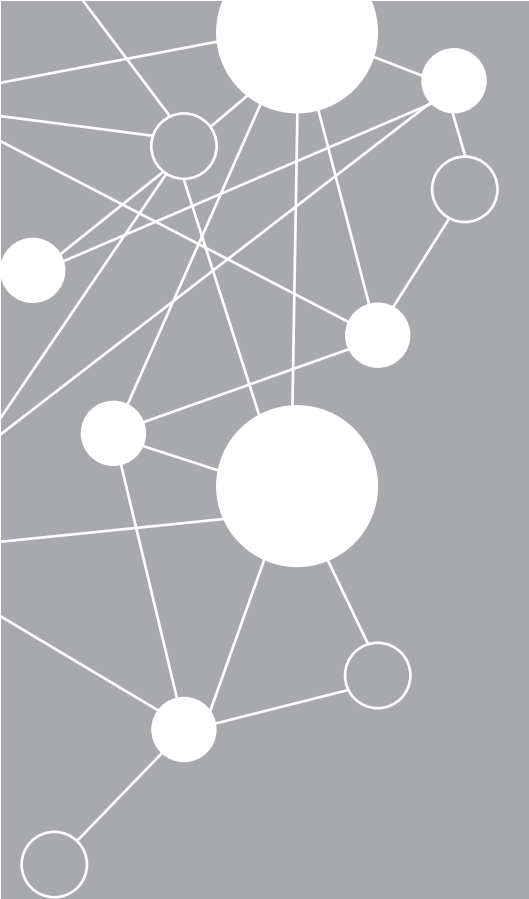
CoPs will form naturally and informally within organisations. However, left to their own devices, their impact is often limited to local geographies. To gain the full power of CoPs, organisation wide facilitation is required. CoP programmes typically help individual CoPs to form and thrive. They provide the facilitative services and technology which can assist CoPs to extend geographically and to also learn from each other on how to develop and sustain their activities. They also act as a conduit to senior management, informing them of the value CoPs are achieving and advising senior management on the important roles that they can play in the creation and sustaining of profitable CoPs.

How can Optimice help?

The Optimice partners are experienced knowledge managers with a long history in developing successful CoP programmes for global corporations. Their experience can be made available through a variety of initiatives including:

- .. Designing a management framework for organisation wide CoPs
- .. Assisting with the development of the business case for a CoP programme
- .. Advising on the establishment of a CoP “programme office”
- .. Assisting with the design and facilitation of CoP events, ranging from the launch of a new CoP, to on-going meetings

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- .. Assisting with the selection and deployment of collaborative technologies used to keep CoPs connected and contributing
- .. Help establish measurement mechanisms for assessing the on-going health of CoPs
- .. Assisting with the business benefits analysis from a CoP programme

The Benefits

As powerful as CoPs are, the organisational acceptance of an organisation wide programme and the potential expense associated with facilitating them can still experience a level of organisational resistance. In particular, line managers will be concerned about their staff members' time spent in CoPs and how these activities align with their own line management responsibilities. CoP programmes are now becoming commonplace and can take many forms within organisations today, whether they be stand-alone, embedded in business improvement programmes or other corporate support programmes.

Having an experienced and trusted advisor can smooth the way to establishing a successful CoP programme. Optimice can help accelerate the time from start-up to benefits realisation. Through their extensive experience in establishing and operating CoP programmes, as well as advising both public and private sector firms in establishing their programmes, Optimice is able to ensure that your organisation can benefit from the extensive global experiences gained by the Optimice partners.

Who we are

Optimice was founded with the objective of improving, or optimising, collaboration and networking between people. Our mission is to facilitate the development of valuable business relationships.

Optimice's partners have extensive experience in the creation and sustaining of community of practice programmes. Using our backgrounds in Consulting, Knowledge Management and Collaboration we have developed approaches and techniques which are targeted at improving people relationships to drive better business results.

Contact Optimice on www.optimice.com.au to learn more about how we can help optimise your organisation's business relationships.