Community Admin Guide and Best Practices

Yammer

Best practices for managing communities in Yammer

Communities are central to the way that people organize and communicate within Yammer. Yammer communities can be about broad topics or for a community of practice or for a specific ideation campaign.

Community Managers should do their best to encourage and involve community admins to foster engagement on Yammer. Community admins will have great insight into how Yammer is being used for specific use cases. We have provided resources to equip community managers and community admins.

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Setting up a community

Before you start a community or revive an existing one, you should plan and prepare for your success. Thinking ahead with some preparation will help lead your community and its members in the right direction from the beginning.

Purpose of the community

Identifying the purpose of a community is critical for success. Communities that have a clear purpose and objectives help members understand what and how they should use the space to communicate. A community admin can add additional details for expectations, examples of sharing, or related process updates within the Info Box. This is the first step for communities to become successful.

Community naming conventions

Additionally, some networks have created a naming convention for specific communities. For example,
the variety of office locations at an organization, all the community's names included the three-letter suffix + Office [PHX Office, NYC Office, LON Office, HAM Office].

Other networks have left it up to the community admins decide how to name each community.

Size of the community

It depends on the objectives and goals of the community. Often communities start more with a broad topic and eventually work their way into a more narrow and specific community, like cross-collaboration within a variety of departments. Other times a community starts out with a specific objective in mind, then realizes it needs a broader reach to achieve the objectives, for example a community of practice around project management. Regardless of size, determine the use for the community and identify specific audiences to engage will help the engagement of the community.

Templates

If you are looking for templates, plans and guide for setting up your community, review the additional resources in the Yammer Adoption Resource Center.

Community member management

You can enable the dynamic membership for communities connected to the Microsoft 365 community service. New members will be added to communities based on who the new member is, which teams they are part of, departments, and location. They will be added and removed from the relevant communities. Learn more about Microsoft 365 Dynamic Groups here.

You can also manually add new members or bulk upload via CSV file via the Edit Community Settings.

Recommended Yammer communities

As more members join the network, community managers may highlight specific communities for them to discover and self-join.

Recommendations to these communities may be based on engagement, activity, or broad topics that would relate to members within their organization. Sample communities could include: New Hires, Emerging Technologies, CEO Connection or Diversity and Inclusion. View more details and sample descriptions here.

Often the community's purpose and additional instructions will be included in the **Community Info Box**. Some communities specifically use this space for specific #topics related to their purpose, special events, or additional context for members.

Responsibility of Community Admins

Best practice includes having a minimum of two Community Admins, in the case someone is out of office, another admin can step in and help assist the community members. You can have more than two admins within a community. However, understand the actions a community admin can take before promoting too many community admins.

Community Admin Tasks checklist

Before you create a new community or to evaluate an existing one, Community Managers can use this list to share with new Community Admins and/or append it to fit the needs of the Community Admins within their network.

✔	Community Admin Tasks
	Before you begin, determine the purpose and goals for the community. Indicate a simple objective, how this community benefits the community and members.
	Search to see if there's an existing community that suits the purposes rather than creating a new community. Yammer will check for exact community name duplicates, but variations of the community may be useful to search for within the network.
	Decide on the community privacy. We encourage communities to be open by default.
	Appoint one additional admin as back up to help facilitate admin responsibilities.

Yammer customers have found benefit in doing a Yammer Community Canvas session, as noted in this blog post. We've also created a simple Community Canvas Template that you could use for defining the goals and objectives for your community. Customers will host a session like this annually to make sure the objectives are aligned to the reality and needs of the community.

Additional resources: Community Admin Checklist

Customization options for Community Admins

During Community Creation or Edit Community Settings

| Edit	More Details
Community name	As descriptive as possible. You can edit this after community creation. If the exact name already exists, Yammer will not let you create the community. Search prior to creating a community, to see if something similar exist already.
Community description	The description can be up to 150 characters and should let members know more details about the community purpose. This should be as clear as possible and is helpful in search.
Community privacy settings	Public or Private can be set up during creation. This can be changed at any time through Edit Community Settings. All members will get a notification that the community privacy has changed.
Community logo	Upload community logo, a square logo is preferred. You can also select a banner to match branding of the community.
Add additional admins	Select from existing or new community members and promote them to administrative responsibilities. Community admins will have a STAR on their profile picture within the community they are owners. Network admins will also have a STAR on their profile picture.
Bulk add members	Use a .csv file to add new members to the Yammer community. If you have a community larger than 250, break up the members to communities of 250 or less. Additionally, you could use Microsoft 365 Dynamic Group Membership to add members.

Branding the community

Community Admins can extend their communication efforts by branding it to reflect upcoming campaigns and initiatives. Preview your cover photo in the Community Cover Photo instructions to brand your community. Here's a few cover photos that you can use for your communities.
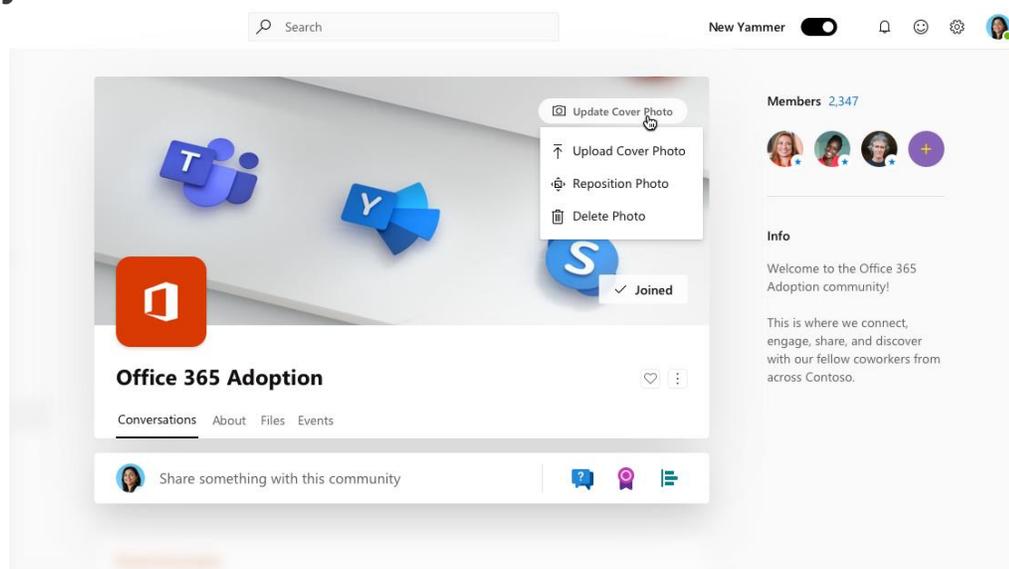
Ongoing Community Admin Actions

Within each community, admins are given specific actions and responsibilities to manage, encourage and empower their communities and its members.

Action	More Details
Edit Info box	Community Admins can edit this rich text box to include best practices, common #hashtags or links to additional documentation.
Pin conversations	Pin an important post to the top of your community.
Pin documents	Link popular documents, websites, or other content important to the community members.
Post announcements	Community Admins can post an announcement that pushes notifications of a Yammer post into members Yammer inbox and/or email inbox. Announcements also can have rich text within them. You can make any type of post (poll, praise, question) an announcement.
Delete message/files	Within the community, the owner can delete a message. Only Community Admins or the file owner can delete files posted within a community. Be mindful of this, as it may be more appropriate to have the member delete themselves.
Close conversations	You can close a thread to stop new replies. You can also reopen the thread at any time. Before closing the thread, it's best practice to state the reason to the community members.
Create Live Events	Schedule, create, and product live events in Yammer for your community. You can include Yammer conversations and questions before, during, and after the live events. More details and technical requirements can be found here.
Share a Post	Create cross community engagement by sharing conversation that happen in other parts of your Yammer network into the community.
Add Members	Encourage members to join your community.
Mark Best Answer	Make sure questions have the best answer. You may need to follow up to get additional responses.

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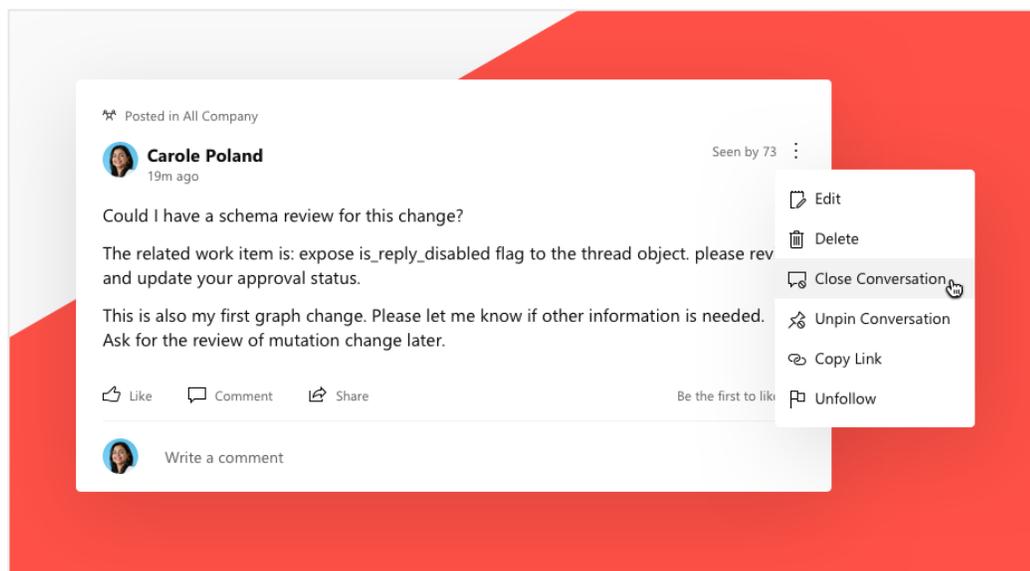
Communication and Content Planning

Once your community is created and you've got a good plan in place, it's time to start communicating. Depending on the purpose of your community, you may already have content in mind, or an editorial calendar in place.

If not, here's a few ideas to get the conversation started.

- Send an email with the community's purpose objectives and goals. Include the link to the community if the community is public and members can self-select to join.
- Start a welcome post introducing the main objectives, goals and a question relating to the community And then pin this post to the top of your community for new members to view..
- Record a video or create a live event in Yammer to kick off the launch of the community.
- Share your Yammer Etiquette Guide and other resources to get members up to speed with how to use Yammer.
- Market your community online and offline, including newsletters, team meetings
- Connect with a leader who may be passionate or supportive of your community and see if they'd be willing to host a YamJam or Live Event in Yammer.

Sample new community member communications:

Use the template below and customize it for your audience. This could be posted as an announcement or sent via email to your community members.

[Template]

Welcome to our new Yammer Community [**insert name**]! We will be using this community to [**add community purpose/objectives**]. Join the conversation in Yammer [**link community**].

Once you have joined the Yammer network, visit our community [**link**] and post an update. Consider updating your profile and notification settings. We encourage you to share, ask, learn, and build connections in the [**Company name**] Yammer Network. Don't forget to download the Yammer App on your mobile device.

New to Yammer? No problem! Here's 5 tips for new community members:

1. Search for your answer before posting a question.
2. There is no need to follow every member in a community. If you join a community, you will see all those messages in your feed.

3. If you think there are useful conversations going on in other places share them to the community.

4. Encourage interesting and dynamic responses to your post—@mention people in posts and encourage replies. Go beyond a status update, give it some context and request feedback.

5. If you want a response from one specific person, use the @mention as opposed to private messaging, as the conversation will be useful to others in the network.

For more best practices on how and what to post, view the Etiquette Guide [**link**].
If you need help or have questions on using Yammer, visit [**link Yammer Help Community**].

We look forward to seeing you in Yammer!

Sincerely,
[**Community Admins & Leadership Sponsor**]

Engagement tactics for new communities

Once the community is up and running, here are few tactics Community Admins can take to keep the momentum going. The frequency may change based on how active your members are in the community. Remember you don't need every member to participate in every conversation.

1. Welcome and encourage new members to introduce themselves to the community.

2. Ask questions and mark best answer—see [**Conversation Starters**] for ideas.

3. Tag an expert to draw their opinion or insight into a conversation.

4. Share other relevant conversations happening in the network to the community.

5. Add topics to conversations. Create a #topic related to your community initiatives.

6. Post weekly roundups or related content to the community.

7. Praise community members for behavior you'd like to see replicated.

8. Don't leave a post to your community un-answered! If you're unsure of the answer, @mention someone who may know.

9. Add relevant content—upload files and notes to add context to conversations.

10. Use Announcements for important updates that need to reach the entire community. This will prompt an email and a notification to all community members, so only use Announcements for important updates. Be sure to provide supporting documentation or links.

If you need more ideas or inspiration, check out our Yammer Blog.

[Customer Story] How BMO engages employees on Yammer

7 Tips to Run a Successful Yammer Community

Effective ways email can be used to strengthen your Yammer network

6 ways to bring some fun to your Yammer network

Conversation starters:

If you aren't sure what to post or how to keep conversation moving, try one of these open-ended questions or conversation starters. Edit and customize these to your specific community. Tag a few community members to kick off the conversation.

- This is what I learned today/week...

- This is how I spent my day...

- This is how I decided...

- What do I know now that I didn't know when I started here...?

- What's your favorite part about [insert]? What's your least favorite?

- Is there something people consistently ask you to help with? What is it? How did you gain your expertise?

- What do you need help with this week?

- What are your favorite sources of information related to this community?

- Who should be part of this community that isn't yet?

- Why are you part of this community? What do you hope to get out of it as a result?

- If you had to do <XYZ> again, what would you do differently?

- Why surprised you about <XYZ>?

- A problem I ran into... and here's how we fixed/troubleshooted/solved it.

- One mistake our customer / partner keeps making...

If you need more ideas or inspiration, check out our Yammer Blog.

How to start buzzing Yammer conversations

Hosting events within a Yammer Community

Hosting events such as YamJams or Live Events within Yammer communities are a great way to engage community members at a single point in time within your community. We have plenty of resources to get you started on either one of those types of events.

Live Events in Yammer

A live event in Yammer includes a live video and a Yammer discussion, so that you can post questions or comments before, during, or after the event. As a community admin you can create and schedule Live Events directly within your community.

Posts during your live event will be defaulted to a question type post, and you can easily filter to find the unanswered questions to ask during the event or follow up with after the event.
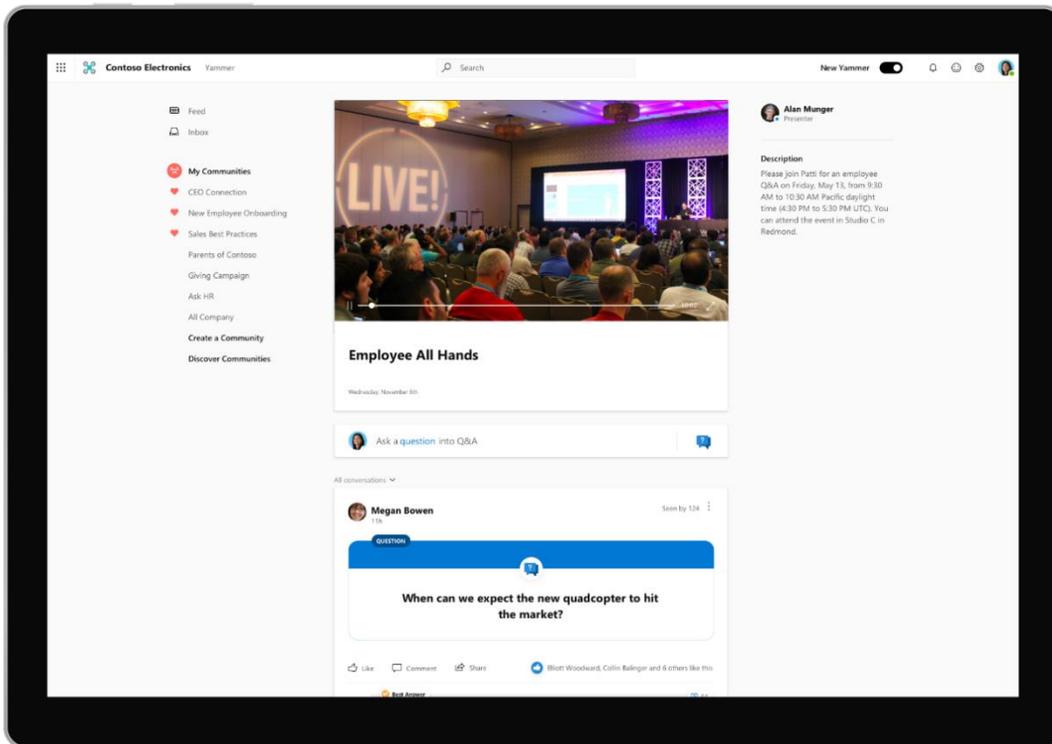
Resources: How to Host a live Event in Yammer Playbook; Resources and Templates for your live events

YamJams

YamJam's are often like an "Ask me Anything" these events can be host by a single leader, like the CEO or a leadership team, or around a specific topics or initiatives.

Resources: YamJam Playbook; YamJam Scorecard

Measure community success

Just because you can measure it, doesn't mean it tells the full story. Be sure the data supports the purpose and objectives of the community.

Community reporting scorecard

Some Community Admins have created a simple scorecard for their community to highlight progress, growth, and success of the community.

Before you measure anything, consider:

- What are your community's' goals and objectives?
- What metrics are already accepted for this specific community? Are there measurable KPIs that the community has direct or indirect impact on?

The basics

- What types of data can you measure? What do they tell you?
- How can they help improve engagement, connections, conversations?
- What types of other data outside of Yammer is helpful to consider?
- How frequently are you reporting and to which stakeholders?
- What tactics are you using to achieve the current status/future status?

Examples

If you want to measure the correlation between Yammer engagement and employee attrition, you will need to gather attrition details (names, emails) and the Yammer data, with help from HR and potentially a Yammer Admin.

If you wanted to correlate Yammer engagement and sales revenue within a specific team or region, you gather sales revenue End of Quarter and Yammer data, with help from Sales Analysts and Yammer Admin.

The nuts and bolts

- If you have access or can gain access, the Microsoft 365 Usage Reporting dashboard can provide information at the network level, including active users, numbers of posts read, likes, and device usage. Additionally, you will be able to drill down to view activity per community.

- Within the Microsoft 365 Reporting Usage for Yammer you can drill down into a bit more specifics on user, content, and device activity. You may need to request access to this information.

- In the Yammer Product within the community-level, community members will have data available, including active members and non-members, user activity including posts, reads, and likes.

- Finally, if you have technical resources to help pull Yammer API there may be additional information you can pull to showcase your community.

View the <u>Measuring Success Guide</u> for more details and examples for how to measure adoption, engagement and success in your community and network