

Exclusive communities vs social media: what's the difference?

When building your online community, one of the first decisions you will need to make is which platform to use. Social media can be used in numerous ways, but there are significant benefits to owning your online community platform.



Take control over your own online community

While social media offers a basic way to engage people who follow you, owning your community platform offers so many benefits to admins and end-users alike, and future-proofs your network.



The best of both worlds

Whilst Facebook, LinkedIn, Instagram etc can be useful for promoting your news, it's unlikely that all members of your community will be on any one of these platforms - and potentially frustrating if they can only connect with you if they have one of these social accounts. Running your own online community (with the option for members to join using their social accounts) gives you the best of both worlds - you're connected to social channels but not reliant on them.



You own and manage your data

One of the most important parts about having a private community portal is that you own all of the data, and any activity by members is automatically updated in your database. This means you can easily contact members, view consent options, run search filters and track activity for every member of your community - including those that haven't signed up to your online platform. You can also send communications and run more advanced CRM activities from your own platform, rather than the limited messaging functionality within the likes of Facebook and LinkedIn.



Your members aren't being advertised to

Creating meaningful connections is tough with constant distractions, especially from advertisements! With any social media platform, ads are inescapable, whereas a private portal enables you to avoid adverts completely, or only share adverts from local or member-owned businesses.



You can be sure that all members see content

The nature of social media algorithms makes it difficult to ensure that your members are seeing all of your content. By owning your content platform, you can feature important news and content, and send notifications to your community when something new is published.



Your community has permanence

Social media fads come and go, but your community should have a permanent home. When people decide to take a social media break or delete their accounts entirely, make sure you'll still have a way to stay in touch! By creating a permanent place online (with your own website URL) that members can always return to, it's symbolic of the lifelong support that you offer your community.

ToucanTech offers an online solution to suit every community. The all-in-one software provides public and private website platforms, a connected comms and content system and an underlying database that automatically stores engagement data.

Get in touch with a member of the team today at hello@toucantech.com