

Key Functionalities of SAP Community

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Abstract: The SAP Community is a platform for a true virtual community where people and companies come together to exchange ideas, solve problems, benefit from stimulating advice, and collaborate far more effectively than ever before. Members consider it a place that is engaging for peer-to-peer interaction. It has become very useful for SAP to help its customers gain insights through a large participation and information that has value, relevance, and immediacy. This system demonstration is designed to present the key interaction functionalities of the SAP Community, including Webcast, chat, and expert (discussion) forums.

Keywords: SAP Community, interaction, Webcasts, chats, expert forums

1 A Networked World

The Internet has expanded the ability to connect with each other and entirely transformed our notions of time, space, relationships. Today it gives people the ability to connect and be more closely related to others who share their purpose online in a business community. SAP is helping companies and their employees, customers, and partners collaborate and succeed in the Internet economy. In addition, SAP is using the Web as a tool to communicate in one voice around the globe, achieve superior understanding of customers' needs, and cultivate championship outside SAP.

The SAP community offers a rich set of online events, including interactive Web events like e-business summits, live discussions with SAP experts focused on both SAP products and general business issues, and Webcasts on topics of compelling current interest, pairing SAP's own experts with other industry thought leaders and forward-looking customers.

All SAP Community key functionalities – Webcast, chat, expert forums – can be accessed at www.sap.com/community. To participate, you need to be a community member. Both SAP Community membership and online events attendance are free of charge.

1.1 Webcasts

In a business environment continuously transformed by new technologies, Webcasts fill a powerful need.

It enables customers, partners, SAP- and non-SAP experts to leverage their collective experience, share best practices, and gain insight into their most pressing business challenges online. It also provides

direct access to SAP expertise through the participation of the company's executives and most knowledgeable industry experts. Participants can watch the Webcast and download presentations, plus read the speakers' biographies. One day after the online event, the Webcast is available as replay.

1.2 Chats

SAP chats are scheduled to take place on a weekly basis. They are part of the SAP Community online offerings and feature strategic topics – sometimes alongside Webcast – including SAP solutions and technology. SAP chats provide a carefully blended mix of renowned business people – strategists, recognized thought leaders, industry experts. All are active participants in the SAP Community. One day after the event, the chat transcript is available. Chat participants are encouraged to exchange ideas, not only with the assigned experts, but also among each other for closer peer interaction.

1.3 Expert Forums

In the expert forums, members can participate in interesting, informative, and stimulating discussions. These allow people to take part in online discussions, share best practices, and request advice about SAP solutions and technology. Through the forums, attendees can network with peers, stay in touch with friends, and communicate with leading experts and industry gurus. Members can access the forums 24x7. During chats, the moderator encourages participants to extend the discussion to the forums if their questions have not been answered during the live chat.

As mentioned earlier, participants can post topics, share best practices, and request advice about SAP solutions. And now they can even rate postings.

Anyone whose posting is rated "useful" by other members will receive 20 points each time in the Membership Reward Program. This program is our way of showing appreciation to those who participate, recognizing members for their activity in the SAP Community. Members can redeem points for merchandise in the SAP Shop.

SAP expert forums have proved to be a truly valuable communications tool and source of insight for SAP solutions and technology. With a minimum of time and cost, SAP has achieved a solid level of confidence regarding its global go-to-market strategy. Thus, the SAP community is helping SAP keep in touch with current and future users.