Building Online Communities

Sue Fidler

sue@suefidler.com

www.suefidler.com

Resources

- Paper

- References/Reading list
- Resources
- Examples
- Checklist

www.suefidler.com/convention_07

- Introduction – who's using the web?
- What is an Online Community?
- Audiences
- Purpose
- Tools
- Management and Moderation
- Bringing it all together

Sue Fidler

Introduction – who's using the web?

Sue Fidler

Who is using “e” communications?

- 34+ Million people have access in UK
  > 60% of the UK population
  > 70% have broadband

- spend 10 hours a month on line
  - 25 million active surfers*

- Mobile penetration will top 100% in 2007
  - soon more mobiles than people

*Neilson Net Ratings 2006

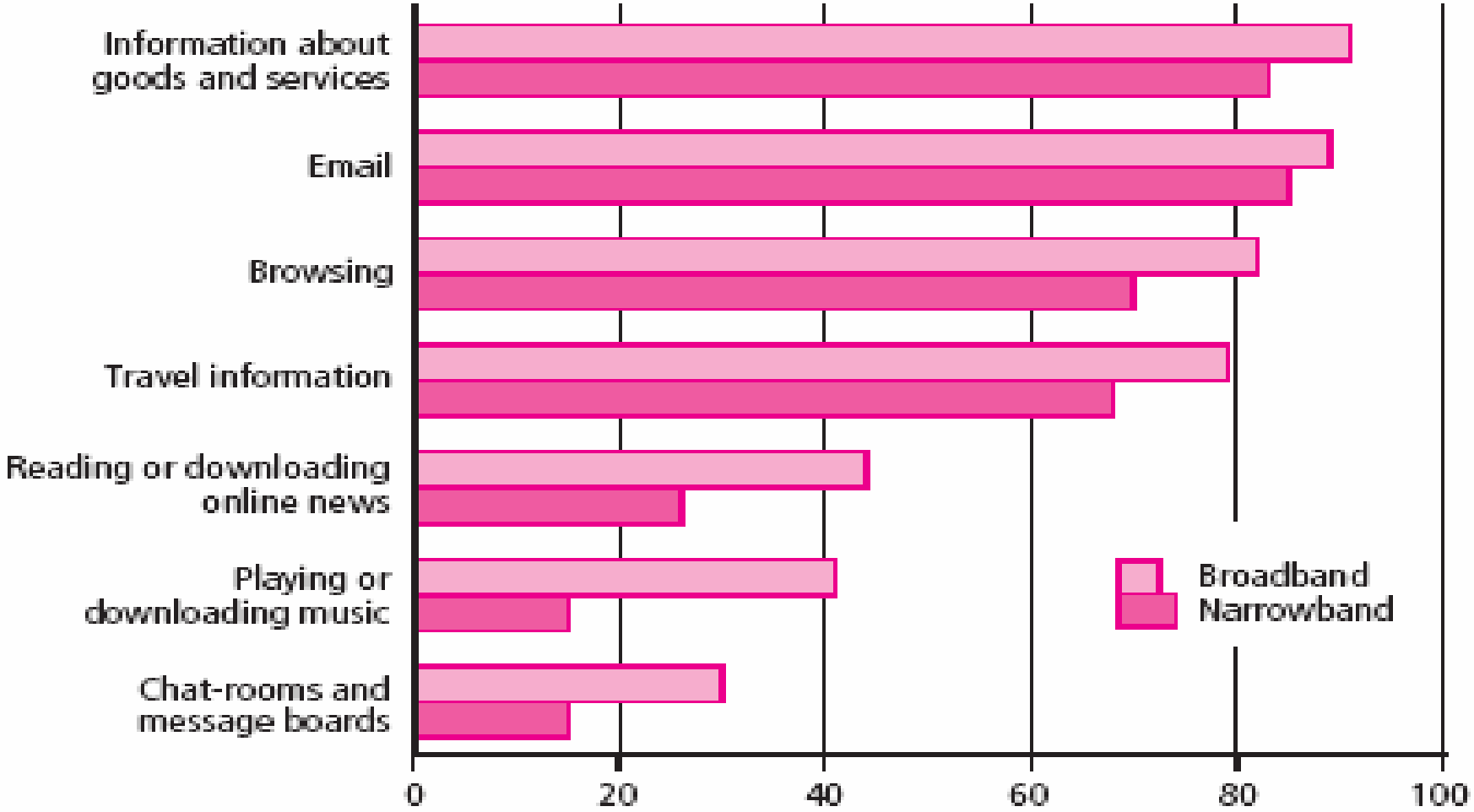
What are they doing?

- > 32 million texts sent per day in UK
- > 60 billion emails sent daily worldwide
- > 50 million blog sites worldwide have been updated in last 30 days

Selected online activities: by home connection, February 2005

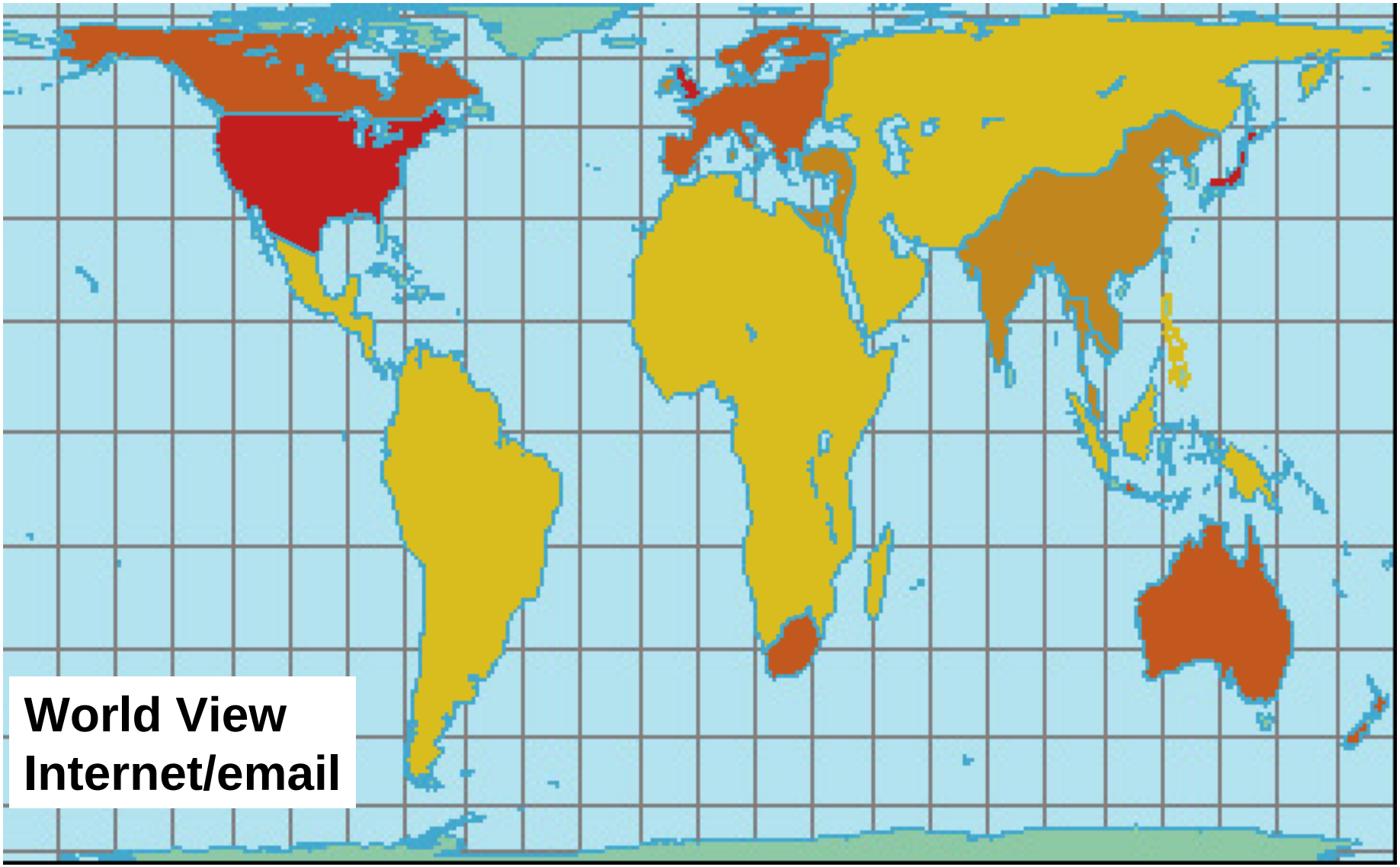
Great Britain

Percentages



Source: Omnibus Survey, Office for National Statistics

Building Online Communities



Sue Fidler

Internet, email and mobile use is growing exponentially in the UK and worldwide.

What is an Online Community?

Sue Fidler

What is a community?

it provides a venue for exchanges between individuals as part of a more or less defined group.

it encourages the sharing of opinion, knowledge and/or information between those individuals.

it elicits or builds on a sense of "belonging" to a group in the individuals who participate.

What is an online community?

Is an Interactive Space:

- **Has a distinctive focus**
- **Integrates content and communication**
- **Incorporates member-generated content**

From Net Gain: Expanding Markets Through Virtual Communities
by John Hagel III and Arthur Armstrong

Most important question No.1

Who is your online community?

Audience

Sue Fidler

Audiences

- Donors
- Supporters

- Campaigners
- Advocates
- Activists

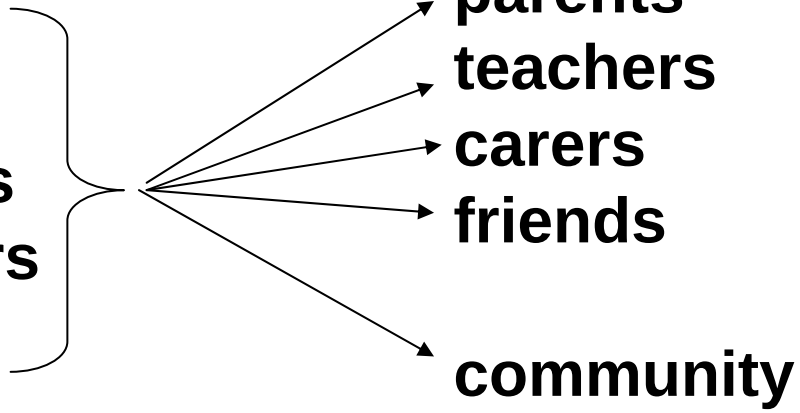
- Clients
- Beneficiaries
- Service Users

- Volunteers

- Peers
- Stakeholders

Audiences

- Clients
- Beneficiaries
- Service Users



Audiences

So each potential audience group may have a network that you can expand your ‘community’ into

Most important question No.2

What are they looking for?

Purpose

Sue Fidler

Most important question No.2

What are they looking for?

Purpose

- Provide Service
  - healthcare/ childcare/ education
- Provide Support
  - sharing/ knowledge/ insight
- Networking
  - bringing people together
- Build brand/ fundraising/campaigning

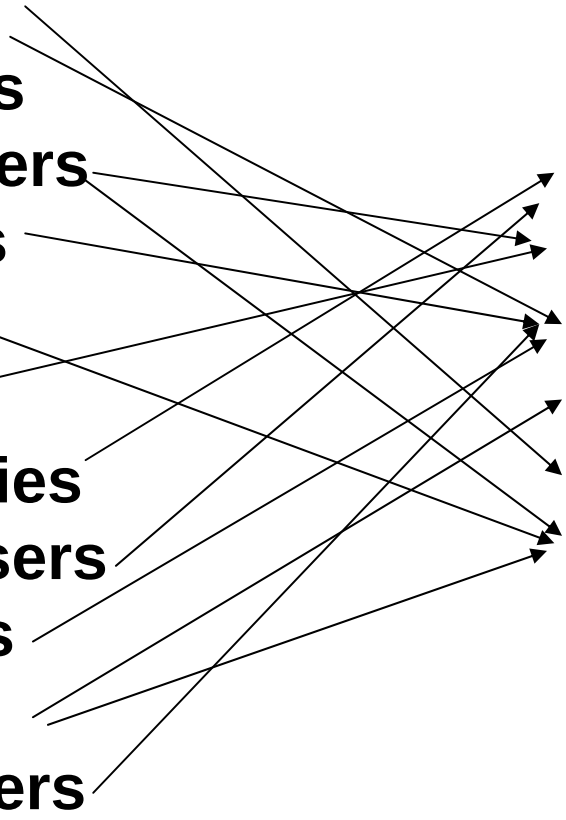
Purpose

What do they want – what do they use?

- **Web stats**
  - **most visited pages**
  - **entry and exit pages**
- **Emails reports**
  - **most click throughs**
- **FAQs – what do you get asked for most**
- **Survey/questionnaire -> focus group**

Purpose

- Donors
- Supporters
- Campaigners
- Advocates
- Activists
- Clients
- Beneficiaries
- Service Users
- Volunteers
- Peers
- Stakeholders



- Provide Service
- Provide Support
- Networking
- Build brand
- Fundraising
- Campaigning

Tools

Sue Fidler

Most important question No.3

What tools suit the audience and purpose?

Tools:

Website

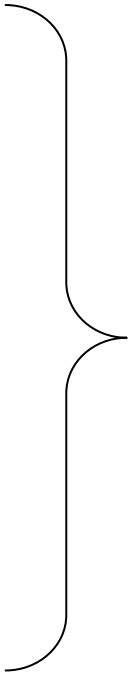
- engaging
- interesting
- refreshed
- interactive
- give benefit

STICKINESS

Tools:

Email

- engaging
- interesting
- “news”
- readable
- give benefit



OPEN RATES/
CLICK THROUGH RATE

Tools:

Push Technology

Push technology: a style of communication where the request to transmit originates with the publisher.

It is the equivalent of someone saying "I have something to tell you“.

Push Technology

- Email
- RSS - Really Simple Syndication – information provided by a site and displayed on yours
- Podcast - an audio file that you download
- WIDGET - Graphic which has live data from a site – such as how much has been raised against a total

Push Technology

RSS feed

Crime time (Tue, 20 Feb 2007 14:30:00 GMT)
Time-travelling copper Sam Tyler investigates a series of armed robberies. Can he collar the culprit?

Watch a clip from this episode (Tue, 20 Feb 2007 14:30:00 GMT)
Part of the Crime time promo for the BBC UK Homepage

Download Sam to your desktop (Tue, 20 Feb 2007 14:30:00 GMT)
Part of the Crime time promo for the BBC UK Homepage

Life in the 70s: Step back in time (Tue, 20 Feb 2007 14:30:00 GMT)
Part of the Crime time promo for the BBC UK Homepage

Guide: Characters and actors (Tue, 20 Feb 2007 14:30:00 GMT)
Part of the Crime time promo for the BBC UK Homepage

More new drama: Hotel Babylon (Tue, 20 Feb 2007 14:30:00 GMT)
Part of the Crime time promo for the BBC UK Homepage

Widget

Push Technology

- Provide Service
- Provide Support
- Networking
- Build brand
- Fundraising
- Campaigning

Feeding information to a Group to form a sense of community / knowledge

Tools:

Discussions

- Chat room
  - real time chat between a live online group
- Instant Messenger
  - IM real time chat one-2-one group

Building Online Communities

YOUTHCOMM
YOUTHLINE

YOUTHLINE | RADIO | COMMUNITY | SHOWCASE | ABOUT US

You Are Here: Home / Youthline
Sunday, July 08, 2007

Free information and support for 11-25 year olds

0800 096 1425
The call is confidential and it will NOT show on your phone bill!

1-2-1 Confidential Chat (Click Here To Chat)
Chat to an advisor online using our confidential and free messaging service.

We're here to listen, tell you what you want to know and where to go for help. We will surf the web for you and post you information on anything from homework to homelessness.

Youthline is operated by 16 to 25 year old, trained volunteers.

IT'S YOURS, IT'S FREE, USE IT!
WE'RE HERE TO HELP!

Search

Now on Youthcomm Radio:
The Love Zone
with Youthcomm
(click above to listen)

YOUTHLINE HOME
ABOUT YOUTHLINE
MEET HELEN BACK
VOLUNTEERING
SUPPORT & ADVICE LINKS

FOR FREE, CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION & SUPPORT:

Call:
0800 096 1425
or Click:
1-2-1 HELEN BACK CHAT

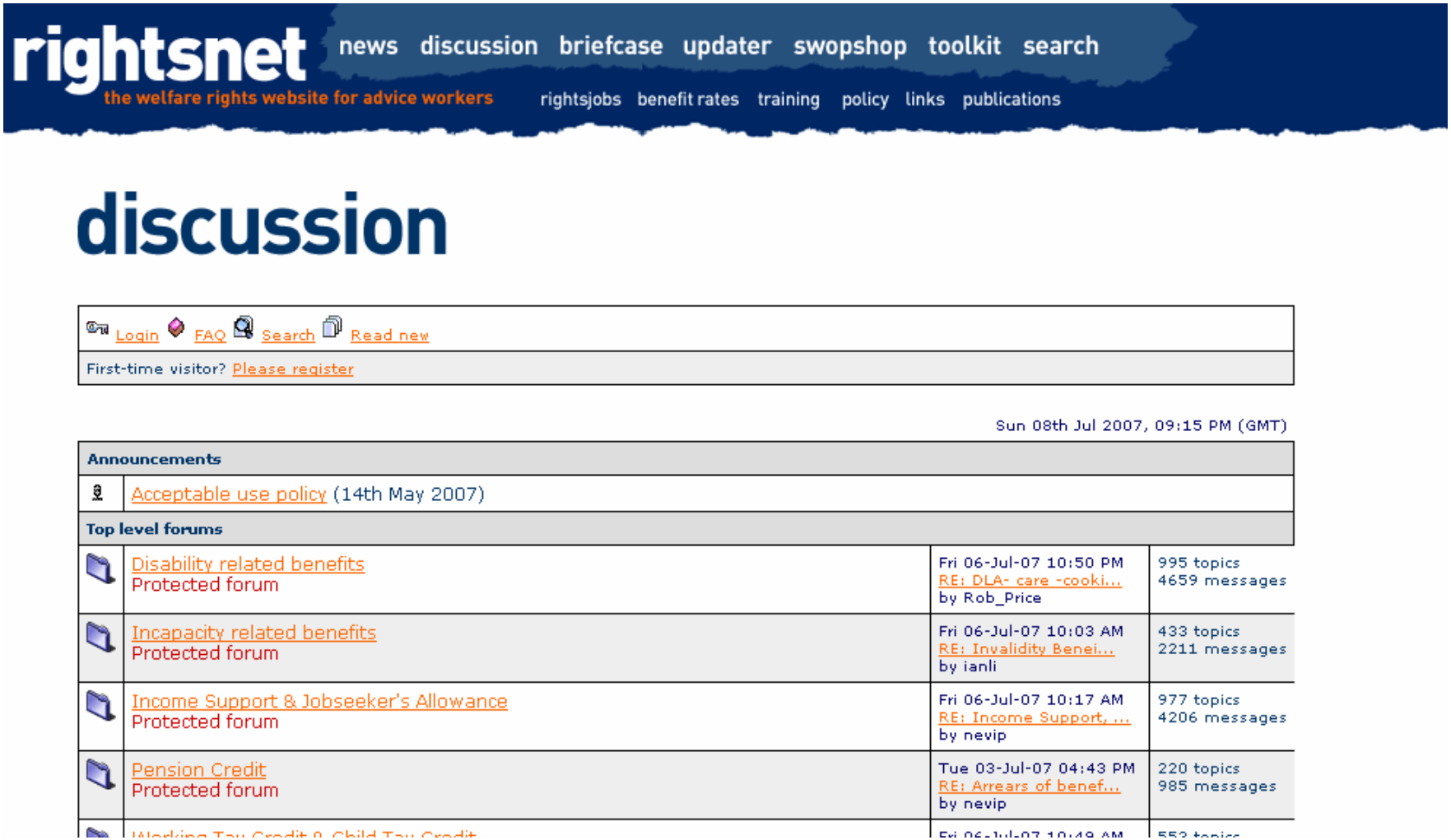
Sue Fidler

Tools:

Dialogues:

- Forums – bulletin board or list serve
- Blogs (Web Log) – an updated, chronological publication of personal thoughts and Web links.
- WIKI - website (or pages) which anyone can edit, add to comment on and delete, without moderation or censorship

Building Online Communities



Sue Fidler

Discussions and Dialogue

- Provide Service
- Provide Support
- Networking
- Build brand
- Fundraising
- Campaigning

Allowing personal networking and sharing

Tools:

Image Sharing

- image/video gallery

- FlickR - is a photo sharing website - an online community platform used as a photo repository

- YouTube - is a free video sharing website on which users upload, view, and share video clips.

ANIMALS MATTER TO ME

HOME | THE CAMPAIGN | GET INVOLVED | IMAGE GALLERY | THE COALITION | › SPREAD THE WORD ‹

Image Gallery

Images per page: 16

Search image:

Join our gallery of 10 million to show your government that animals matter to you or simply search an image of your friends, family or schoolmates.

Please **enter your email address** below:

SUBMIT YOUR IMAGE ▶

zoom

MEL from Australia:
Monty!! <3 Xxx.

zoom

kelsey from Australia:
milo <3.

zoom

Neil from Australia:
Polar Bear.

zoom

natalia from Poland:
it wasn't.

zoom

Alina from Denmark:
Murzik.

zoom

Monica from Indonesia:
Sam from Indonesia.

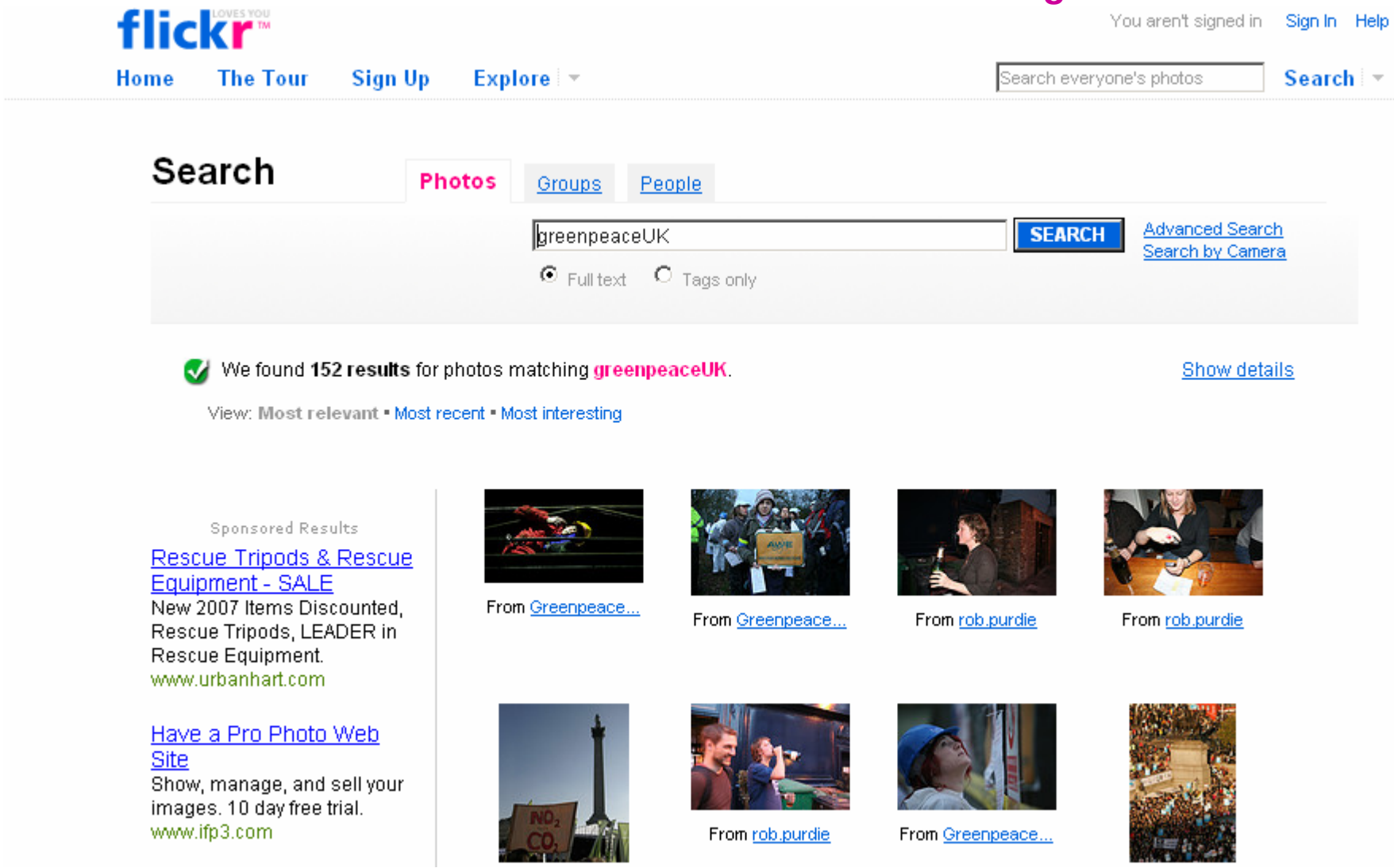
zoom

Julie from United States of America:
My girl Seri.

zoom

Isabel from Spain:
irc.

Building Online Communities



Sue Fidler

Tools:

Games, Surveys and Questionnaires

Sense of belonging by doing something, or taking part in something

Image Sharing

Games, Surveys and Questionnaires

- Provide Service
- Provide Support
- Networking
- Build brand
- Fundraising
- Campaigning

Sense of joining in

Tools:

Networking:

- MySpace/bebo/Facebook - social networking sites offering user-submitted network of friends, personal profiles, blogs, groups, photos, music and videos.

- Second Life - one of several online games, that allow people to inhabit alternative virtual worlds as a character of their choosing. These avatars play out their lives in 20,000 acres of digital space

Add to friends
Send Message
Add Favourites
Forward to Friend
Add to Group
CANCER RESEARCH UK
Together we will beat cancer
Add your photo to this slide show - show your support!
myspace.com
Add your photo to this slide show
Add this slide show to your profile
Help more people get their lives back
Cancer. Just the word can stop you in your tracks. Wherever you are in your life, whatever your plans, cancer can make it feel as though the world has come to a stop.
The good news is that thanks to advances in cancer research we are finally getting to grips with cancer. Today, many people with cancer hear that their chances are good, that they can survive – and get their lives back.
Cancer Research UK is dedicated to funding research into preventing, diagnosing and treating cancer of all kinds. And it's work-
Customise your profile and show your support
Icons
Desktops
Skins
Banners
Support Us

Networking:

- Provide Service
- Provide Support
- Networking
- Build brand
- Fundraising
- Campaigning

INTERACTIVE
Community building

Management and Moderation

Sue Fidler

Most important question No.4

How will you manage your online community?

Management

Time and resources

- Who is building the tools – costs
  - in-house/freeware, agency/bespoke

- Who is updating the content – resources
  - staff, volunteers, community leaders

Out of date content is worse than none

Moderation

Time and resources

- How risk averse is your organisation
- How controlling do you need to be
- Who has the time/resources to moderate the user generated content

Self-Moderation or Controlled by you?

Management

Seeding and Promotion

- Seeding – getting the content going
  - staff/volunteers

- Promoting
  - Web, Email, news, peer sites, discussion forum, tell a friend

Empty communities do not attract users

Bringing it all together

Sue Fidler

Most important questions

Who is your online community?

What are they looking for?

What tools suit the audience and purpose?

How will you manage your online community?

Bringing it all together

- Audience
  - **who**
- Purpose
  - **why**
- Tools
  - **what**
- Management
  - **how**

Final thought

The most important point:

You must have an audience with a subject they want to discuss or share and then provide the tools for them to do it

They need to care enough to join

Resources

- Paper

- References/Reading list
- Resources
- Examples
- Checklist

www.suefidler.com/convention_07

Building Online Communities

Sue Fidler

www.suefidler.com/convention_07

sue@suefidler.com

www.suefidler.com