Encouraging Contribution

Social Web, 2010

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Encouraging contribution

• Goal of lecture:
  – Give examples of ways to make people do things online
  – Share content in a social networks; write reviews and articles; or respond to surveys

• Encouragement = motivation

• Two categories
  – Intrinsic
  – Extrinsic
Intrinsic motivation

• Interest or enjoyment of the task itself
• Altruistic
  – Contributions are of a benefit to others
  – Examples: Movie and book reviews, Answering questions
• Egoistic
  – Fun
  – Learning about an interesting topic
  – Meeting and maintaining contact with friends
Manipulating intrinsic motivation

- Difficult to manipulate, but can be leveraged
  - Point out intrinsic value by reminding and explaining value to self and others
  - Emphasize uniqueness of contribution
- Intrinsic motivation increases quality of contribution.
- Example: MMO games, Folding@home, Wikipedia
Extrinsic motivation

• Comes from outside the individual
• Direct
  – Money and rewards
  – Threats, risk of punishments (e.g. account removal, removal from search hits)
  – Setting goals
• Indirect
  – Improved social status within or outside of community, fame
  – Improved professional skills
  – Minimize cost of contribution (make it really easy)
Social status & contribution ranks

• Promoting active users
  – Personal profiles
  – Who is online?
  – What are they doing?
  – List top contributors

• Scores & ranks
  – Facebook & Twitter – friends and followers count
  – Forums – post counts
  – Amazon – Reviewer ranks, helpfulness votes, list of reviews
  – CouchSurfing – reviews of person by others

Find a good metric for the type of contribution that matters in your community, then score people by that metric and make this score visible to other users.
Paying people

• Level of pay is important
  – Very low payments are often considered insulting
  – Higher payment gets much more work done
  – Perception of payment level varies around the world

• Payment lowers intrinsic value
  – Quality of contribution is mainly intrinsic
  – Paying nothing can be better than paying too little

• Payment is much easier to introduce than to remove
Setting goals

- Fundraising on Wikipedia
- Complete your profile on LinkedIn
- Contribute at least as much as the average user
- Fundamental in everyday management of projects, groups and individuals, but rarely used on the social web
Minimize cost of contribution

• Suggest relevant content that needs to be contributed
  – Friends to add
  – Status messages and photos to comment on
  – Questions to reply to
  – Articles to edit
  – Products to rate

• Examples:
  – Wikipedia – Edit without account
  – Akinator – Train a learning algorithm by winning
A note on network structures

• People stay around to interact to people
• A few people do most interaction
• Don’t lose the center nodes!
References


