Regulating Behavior in online communities

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Social Web 2010
A social necessity

- In any form of interaction online or offline certain social etiquette must be adhered to.

- These rule/norms are in place to protect the entities in participation or facilitate constructive interaction.
Overview

- Policies and guidelines: what are they?
- Regulation: What do they contribute to the community?
- Enforcing Regulation
Policies and guidelines

• Defined as a pattern or behavior expected within a particular community in a given situation.

• The shared belief of what is normal and acceptable.

• They impose uniformity of behavior within a given social community, but often vary substantially among communities.
Rules vs Norms
Rules

- Rule are usually steadfast regulations.
- Must always be adhered to.
- Usually serve the interests of the creators of communities.
- Stem from the goals of the creators and administrators.
Norms

- Norms are more synonymous with social etiquette.
- Evolve over time and are subject to change as the goals of the community change.
- They usually stem from the needs of the members and are meant to serve their interests.
Norms cont...

• Norms are unofficial, informal and implicit and are enforced by members of the community themselves through social pressure.
Regulations: What are they for?

- Organize and coordinate the community
- Evolving, competing entities
- Constructions of meaning & identity
Regulations: What are they for? cont...

- External signals
- Internal signals
- Negotiated settlements and rewards
- Control mechanisms
Regulating behavior

- Regulation by the administrators
- Regulation by the users
- Regulation by moderators appointed by administrators
Regulation by Administrators

- Effective in smaller communities with a sufficiently large administrative force.
- In larger communities regulation is handed off to automated machines.
- Popularity restricted to corporate networks where security is of primary concern.
Regulation by users

• This methods works best for large user driven communities.

• Gives the appearance of fairness.

• The enforcement of regulations are more contextually aware.

• The sanctions levied are of a more social nature.
Regulation by Moderators

• Combine the benefits of the previous methodologies.

• Allows the administrators to choose responsible members.

• Allows for the interests of both the members and administrators to be addressed.
Enforcing Regulation

• Deterrence
• Prevention
• Detection and Recovery
Deterrence

- Discourage members from defying rules and norms.
- Most efficient form of regulation.
- Usually enforced by demonstrating the consequences of deviant behavior.
Prevention

- Enforced by disallowing deviant behavior.
- Usually enforced by pre-reviewed contribution.
- Not as cost effective as deterrence as the cost of contribution is doubled.
Detection and Recovery

• Detecting patterns or instances of unwanted behavior.

• Most effective in member regulated communities.

• Appropriate measures taken once detected.
Conclusion

• Regulations bring about better communication and interaction by ensuring that pertinent information is shared in a safe and comfortable atmosphere taking into consideration the members’ goals and sensibilities.
Thank you