Why Community Is Valuable In Business
An Introduction

By James E. Barbush, Barbush Enterprises
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What do you think of when you hear the word "community"? I first think of my neighborhood (on Blue Mountain Parkway), and then my town where I live (Linglestown), then my regional area (the Harrisburg area). That's a local view of the vast array of communities and types of communities that exist. There are church communities, gated communities, local communities, private communities, worldwide communities, residential communities, rural communities, urban communities, and many more. There are communities in organizations, clubs, associations, and interest groups. There are business communities (your business is a community) and communities for groups of businesses (chambers of commerce). There are face-to-face communities where people meet physically in the same place, and there are digital communities where people meet on-line, in text format, picture format, and audio/video. Since we have communities for everything, we should be able to answer the question, *Why is community valuable to its members?* More specifically, *Why are you in each community that you belong to?* Then, we should be able to address, *Why is community valuable in our businesses?*

Since becoming involved with social media in September of 2010, I have been collaborating with an entrepreneur who has learned a lot about community. He has been studying, teaching, and promoting the concept of *"On-Line Communities"*. His name is Jason Verdelli, President and CEO of Phase2Solutions. Jason has taught me excellent things about creating On-Line Communities. Many of his teachings on community are available on his website. There you will find some very meaning articles with definitions and statement about communities. Here are some statements that bring out important words that are associated with communities:

> *"As a company, we focus on the right blend of people and technology to provide you with a foundation to help you <u>achieve your goals through your community</u>."*

> *"Our solution providers offer a wide array of services and strategies to help you meet <u>your business goals</u> while <u>engaging and connecting</u> with clients, prospects, and referral sources on a <u>deeper, more efficient level</u>."*

> *"We believe in <u>the power of community</u>. We develop brands and offer services that help organizations <u>connect purposefully</u> with the community that can help them achieve their goals."*

> *"We operate by 4 main principles that help any brand achieve their goals through their community. These principles are <u>purpose</u>, <u>people</u>, <u>platform</u>, and <u>process</u>. To achieve your vision, you are going to need the leverage the power of community. We are here to make it happen."*

> *"We believe…*
> *Brands are a vehicle for <u>achieving a vision.</u>*
> *Brands need to engage their community for <u>a greater good.</u>*
> *Brands need <u>purpose</u>, <u>people</u>, <u>platform</u>, and <u>process</u> to win."*

Note the underlined words in the above quotes. I want to focus on the words and concepts that I have learned are most important in our development of the communities that we are in.

Community involves the following:

- Achieving your goals and vision through your community
- Engaging and connecting with clients, prospects, . . . on a deeper, more efficient level
- Engaging the members of your community for a greater good
- Connecting purposefully with your community
- Your brands need purpose, people, platform, and process to win
- Recognizing and utilizing the power of community

Another way of bringing forth those concepts is as follows:

Your community has Actions to perform: Achieve, Connect, Engage,
Your community has Objectives to meet: Greater Good, Goals
Your community has Components to use: Purpose, People, Platform, Process

QUESTIONS WE NEED TO ANSWER

Here are some of the questions that we need to answer about our communities. If we do not have the answers, we need to figure out why, and then determine what to do about it.

1. *In the communities we belong to, are those words heard and are those concepts evident?*

2. *In the communities we belong to, are there clearly defined Actions, Objectives, and Components*

3. *Are each of our communities engaging and connecting our community members and others around our community whom we want to reach?*

4. *Are each of our communities achieving goals for a greater good?*

5. *Does each of our communities have a stated purpose with platforms and processes that will enable our community members to engage others about what we are doing?*

Now, let's speak specifically about the community within your business, whether you are an employer or an employer.

COMMUNITY WITHIN YOUR BUSINESS

In all my 38 years of working for companies and state agencies, I don't remember any leader in the company or state agency I worked for ever mentioning anything about community in the organization. Similarly, in my 5 years of being involved in and learning about interaction through Social Media, I have experienced the challenge it is to develop a community that is deeper than just a shallow knowledge of someone's surface identity. On some Social Media platforms, people do a lot of "posting" and "reading" without any meaningful engagement and interaction. People may read posts and find value in it, but often, most people do not comment in response to a post. People broadcast posts to countless numbers of people on-line, but they may never engage the individuals in the audience. All that makes me wonder –

- *Have we lost a sense of community in our modern day world?*
- *Have we focused on components of what a community should be, whether face-to-face or on-line?*
- *Do we even know what kind of community we should have?*
- *Do we have a focus on people, purpose, goals, mission, and vision?*

To answer those questions in the context of our businesses, we need to have reasons for why we need to develop community within and around our businesses. Since this article is an introduction to a discussion on communities in business, **I will provide brief insight here but also provide you with links to more in-depth insight on the topic**.

Later in this article, I will give you links to some excellent material about on-line community by [Jason Verdelli, Phase 2 Solutions.](#) But here, I want to give my own words about why a business needs to develop community face-to-face and on-line. We need to develop a blend of face-to-face and on-line engagement that meets the needs of the members and audiences with whom we want to engage. In this age of vast web communications, most businesses should not restrict themselves to only face-to-face engagements, ignoring on-line engagements. And certainly, most businesses should not restrict themselves largely to on-line engagements, ignoring face-to-face engagement. It's easy to e-mail blast and publish on-line. But, what good is that if there is no interaction between the giver of the information and the receiver of the information. For some products, interaction is not necessary. People just buy products and services and need no further information. But, many products and services need the interaction between the giver and receiver of those products and services.

I have learned that simply publishing information on-line is limited in its usefulness if I do not engage with members of the community and the audience I want to reach. If I publish something and have no responses to what I publish, how do I know that I am making an impact on anyone? I don't. If I get a few comments, how do I know that my impact has not been more than a few members of the community? I don't.

I have learned that I need to develop ways to engage the members of my community and the audiences I want to reach so I can determine if what I am promoting is having an impact, meeting my expectations to help people and give out useful information, to see if people understand our mission and vision. I have learned that if someone sends me information, it will be beneficial to the cause if I comment on what I have received.

Why Community Is Valuable In My Business? Barbush Enterprises is an umbrella organization with various business ventures within it. Ventures under Barbush Enterprises include these services:

1. James Eugene Barbush, Professional Speaker & Leadership Developer
2. Professional Civil Engineer in Marketing and Business Development
3. Social Media Manager: On-Line Digital Marketing and Publishing

Under Barbush Enterprises, I founded Harrisburg Biz Leaders, a brand to engage with business leaders in the Harrisburg area to provide them with experiences and information that were geared to leadership development and personal development. In a roundtable format, I **engaged attendees** in meetings conducted twice a month to help them become the leaders they are destined to be. The goal was to inspire people to become motivated so that they can do the things they needed to do in their businesses and personal lives. **The impact of engaging the members of that community** is demonstrated in an article written by Jason Verdelli, Phase 2 Solutions, titled – *"Because Of Your Community…"*. Jason starts the article with this:

"Building a community around your company, mission, and vision is much more important you think. It is a real representation of your brand. It is the fuel to achieving your vision. It empowers those that support your vision with a sense of belonging around the purpose you give to your community."

I recommend that you ponder that paragraph with these questions in mind:

1. *What is the <u>mission</u> and <u>vision</u> of your business?*
2. *Is your business achieving your goals through your <u>community</u>.*
3. *Are you and your community members meeting <u>your business goals</u> while <u>engaging and connecting</u> with clients, prospects, and referral sources on a <u>deeper, more efficient level</u>."*
4. *Does your <u>brand</u> reflect your mission and vision?*
5. *Are the members of your community empowered to <u>connect purposefully</u> with the members in and around your community?*
6. *Can you identify a community of members that are in and around your business?*
7. *Can you identify and explain the 4 main principles of your business which are <u>Purpose</u>, <u>People</u>, <u>Platform</u>, and <u>Process</u>*
8. *Are the members of your community <u>engaged for a greater good</u>.*

Your Business Community. So, are our business communities considered to be communities with members within the business (owners and employees), members around the business (customers), and members related to the business (collaborating firms, networking groups, referral groups, suppliers, and other)? The purpose of this article and the below linked articles is to help us to be "community minded" in our pursuit of our missions and visions.
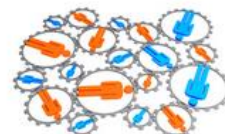
Below are links to <u>articles about community</u> found on the website of Phase 2 Solutions.

1. *Because Of Your Community…*
2. *The 4 Principles Of Creating A Culture Of Community In A Digital Age*
3. *Does Your Organization Have A Sense Of Community?*
4. *Who Are The People That Make Up Your Community?*
5. *The Power Of Becoming A Community Centric Organization*
6. *What Does Your Digital Community Say About You?*
7. *Why Your Company Needed An Internal Community Yesterday?*

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Who is Jason Verdelli of Phase 2 Solutions

At Phase 2 Solutions, Jason Verdelli will walk you through proven steps to create a . . . .

Digital Business Development Program DBD Program) to achieve *Your Business Objectives (YBOs).*

1. **MEET TO UNDERSTAND YBOs.** Our first step in helping you achieve YBOs is to understand exactly what they are and what is keeping you from achieving them. Together we will break down YBOs to understand your ideal customers, key business metrics, current challenges, and current efforts. The information gathered during this step will help us go to work in making a solid recommendation to help you achieve YBOs. **Schedule An Initial Consultation**

2. **COLLABORATE WITH EXPERTS TO DETERMINE A BEST SOLUTION.** Once we've gathered details to understand YBOs, we will collaborate with our team to collectively recommend the best solution that combines digital media and business development. Our team is collectively made up of experts and world-class companies with proven track records in areas spanning from digital marketing and development to business intelligence and talent acquisition. **Meet Our Team**

3. **RECOMMEND A PROGRAM TO ACHIEVE YBOs.** Your *Digital Business Development Consultant (DBD Consultant)* will share our collective recommendation and make sure you fully understand how we are going to help you achieve YBOs. The recommendation will include a detailed process on how we plan, implement, measure, and improve to make sure YBOs are met. **See A Few Results From Our Recommendations**

4. **DEVELOP THE PLAN TO ALIGN PURPOSE, PEOPLE, PLATFORMS, AND PROCESSES.** Your *Digital Business Development Strategy (DBD Strategy)* is a real-time collaborative document that serves as home base to YBOs. The plan will follow our proven methodology of brand community to make sure every recommendation is aligned with the right *purpose, people, platforms, and processes*. Your *DBD Consultant* will meet with you on a monthly basis to create and review projects within the plan. **Start Your Plan Today**

5. **IMPLEMENT PROJECTS WITH YOUR STAFF TO ACHIEVE YBOs.** Each project we create within your plan will be completed either by your staff or by one or a collection of our world-class solutions partners. For example, if we are recommending email marketing automation triggered from your CRM system, we will assign tasks to one of our CRM Integrators And Email Marketing System Setup Specialists. Some projects might require only staff involvement. This is where your *DBD Consultant* will step in to help coordinate internal projects so you can be rest assured that everyone is collaboratively working toward meeting your business objectives. **Learn More About Our Solutions Providers**

6. **MEASURE KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS THAT ALIGNED WITH YBOs.** Business success is only achieved when you understand what metrics define business success in your business. Each project that we plan and help execute will always include *Key Performance Indicators (KPI's)* that are aligned with overall YBOs. We believe these business metrics need to trigger business decisions. This is why we implement a *Business Intelligence Dashboard* so you and every other appropriate person in your company can see metrics that empower decisions to be made. A *Business Intelligence Dashboard* also provides us with the feedback we need to make improvements to your *DBD Strategy* in order to continually make progress to achieve YBOs. **Learn The Importance Of A Business Intelligence Dashboard**

7. **IMPROVE RECOMMENDATIONS AND PROCESSES TO ACHIEVE YBOs.** Throughout each month of working together, your *DBD Consultant* will constantly look for ways to improve our recommendations and processes to make sure we are driving you toward YBOs. Not every project is perfect or as predictable as we might expect. This is a reality. Instead of avoiding the issue, we've instituted a process for improvement to assure you that the best possible *DBD Strategy* is in place and working for you. **Start Reaching Your Business Objectives Today**

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Who is James Barbush of Barbush Enterprises

"LIFESTYLE LEADERSHIP through INSPIRATION"
INSPIRE means TO BREATHE LIFE INTO.
INSPIRATION results in MOTIVATION

Leadership should be a *LifeStyle*, rather than a method.

When leadership is a lifestyle, it does not only involve our relationships at work but it involves all of our relationships, everywhere. As a lifestyle, leadership consists of *Life Giving Actions* rather than teaching instructions or methods to get something done.

Life Giving Actions inspire people such that they are motivated to do what they need to do. You don't motivate people, but your life-giving actions inspire them to do what must be done.

Training is learning of methods. **Motivation** is vague as an initial step.

"Inspiration" means *"to breathe life into"*.

**If a speaker breathes life into me,
then I am motivated to do what I need to do.**

**Let us inspire you to a *Leadership Lifestyle*
to be used anywhere you are and in anything you do.**

It's not a method. It's not a motivation.

It's a *"life giving action"* that will *"put wind in your sails"*.

Catch Your Wave

What's Your Leadership Style?

Can Someone Catch It?