

**CONNECT** to the topic page 22

**Host Mary Tsui:** Good afternoon everyone. Many of us are becoming increasingly involved in online communities, and an issue that is on many people's minds is how they can create a following. Well, today we'll get some answers to that question from Michael Petchko, a very successful young entrepreneur who has just published an e-book on this very topic. Michael, welcome!

**Guest Michael Petchko:** Thank you, Mary. Great to be here.

**Host:** So Michael, how can we create a following in an online world in which it seems that millions of people are now vying for our attention?

**Guest:** Well, Mary, let me first say that today we live in a world in which life is parallel. That means that we don't do things in a sequence. We create, we market, and we interact with other people all at the same time—that's what I mean by parallel. So even if you're still developing your ideas, you should get online and start meeting people and letting them know that you exist. Then when you introduce your product or service, you'll have a group of people waiting to learn more about it.

**Host:** OK, so how can we get started?

**Guest:** First you need to create a great profile. You should not only be likeable and trustworthy, but you should also cultivate that image online. Your profile should be 90 percent your face, not some inanimate object, because the point is that people need to know who you are. This is about you.

**Host:** And of course they need to communicate with you.

**Guest:** That's right, but it's a two-way street. You also want to communicate with them—by liking and commenting on their posts, and by responding when they make a comment to you. And when you interact, do it in funny, witty, and positive ways.

**Host:** Now it's interesting that you mention being positive. How important is that?

**Guest:** Extremely important. Many of us know this from experience, but studies have also shown that staying positive is a key tactic to building followers. You know the old saying, "If you can't say something nice ..."

**Host:** "... then don't say anything at all."

**Guest:** Let me say one more thing about the power of staying positive. If you look, say, at the hashtags that get the most reaction on Instagram, you quickly see that they're very positive. For example, hashtag love, hashtag cute, hashtag like, hashtag fun, hashtag smile. You get the picture, yeah?

**Host:** Instagram? Picture? Yeah, I get it.

**BUILD** your vocabulary page 23

- 1 access: *Access* means to obtain or retrieve data.
- 2 business capital: *Business capital* is goods or money that is used to produce other goods or create income.
- 3 contribute: *Contribute* means to give something such as money or time to help a person, cause, or organization.
- 4 generate: *Generate* means to cause something to exist or happen.
- 5 indicate: *Indicate* means to show that something exists or is true.
- 6 influence: *Influence* means that a person or thing affects someone or something in an important way.
- 7 investment: *Investment* is the money that is spent to create a profit.
- 8 obtain: *Obtain* means to get something, usually after making an effort.
- 9 potential: *Potential* means that there is a possibility that something will happen or exist in the future.
- 10 robust: Something that is *robust* is strongly formed or made.

**FOCUS** your attention page 25

**Speaker:** Social communication, which concerns a person's ability to communicate socially, is based on two notions: social reciprocity and self-expression. Let's take a look at those ideas. First, social reciprocity is social interaction that we display through the use of joint attention to share experiences and emotions with another person. So what is joint attention? Joint attention is a person's ability to coordinate visual attention through eye contact and through the use of gestures with a social partner regarding an object or an event. For example, if we're watching television with another person, we often look at the TV and then look at each other at approximately the same time. Now let's look at the second notion, self expression, which involves speech, formulation, pragmatic language. Speech is the expressive production of sounds to produce words, phrases, and longer utterances. Formulation refers to the use of words, phrases, and longer utterances to communicate messages in a variety of contexts and with a variety of people for various purposes. Finally, we have the appropriate use of language, based on a context in which the language is used. This is what is known as pragmatic language.

## WATCH the lecture page 26

**Nancy Lee: E01** Hello. Our focus today is a topic in sociology that has increasing importance for all of us, and that is online social communities. Think about it. As human beings, we spend our entire lives growing up and learning how to live within social communities. And our membership in these communities—or networks—affects our identities. It contributes to who we are as social beings. **E01a** All aspects of our lives are somehow influenced by the people in our social networks—work, play, professional, family, and friend networks. Right? And we, in turn, influence the other people in our networks. So, given our intense need for social interaction, it shouldn't be a surprise that social networking and online communities exploded once the technology became widely available. **E02** Today I'd like to focus primarily on the benefits or advantages of online communities, rather than on the drawbacks or disadvantages. And I'd like to organize these into five overlapping arenas. These arenas are personal relationships, professional relationships, commercial relationships, investment relationships, and play relationships. OK? That's personal, professional, commercial, investment, and play. We'll look at these briefly one by one. **E03** Let's first consider personal relationships. We all know that one positive aspect of social networking is that it allows us to make new friends and strengthen our current relationships with old friends and family members. Social networking does this by giving us a place to keep up-to-date with one another. We show pictures that let everyone know what we've been doing, we announce good and bad news, and we have a stage for expressing our opinions about everything from politics to fashion. **E04** Many of us have been regular users of Facebook, Twitter, RenRen, or Mixi for years. These networks are ubiquitous—you can't escape them really. And recent research indicates that most users report positive social benefits from being members of these networks: 50 percent of teenage users say their relationships with their friends have improved as a result of social networking sites. About 65 percent of college students report that they make new friends easily through social networking sites. **E04a** Research has also shown that over 50 percent of older users report feeling happier—feeling more connected with people and even feeling an improved sense of well being as a result of social interaction in online communities. OK, these are all very robust figures in support of online social networks. **E05** A second area where online communities show consistent positive benefits concerns professional connections. If you're involved in business, large or small, you're probably exchanging information and contacts on networking sites—sites like LinkedIn, Ning, or Xing. These sites have hundreds of millions of active users. In virtually every professional field—from education

to law to running a restaurant—people are looking to strengthen and expand their networks. They're looking for new business opportunities. Or they're looking for new jobs. They're trying to obtain more knowledge about their field. **E05a** Often, people access these networks just because they want to feel more connected with other professionals. In communities like Catalyst and CareerDiva, users can exchange information about business to get professional support—but they can also share personal experiences and frustrations and receive emotional support and advice from their peers. All right, that's the second area where we clearly see benefits of online communities. **E06** A third benefit of online communities, of course, is the power of social networks for commercial purposes. Many companies aim to develop an online marketplace where they can sell their goods and services, but a lot of companies also want to build a social community. They do this through the use of Social Media Marketing, or SMM. SMM is a type of Internet marketing that uses social networking websites as a marketing tool. SMM aims to get users to “share content” with their social network. **E06a** “Shared content” is a kind of business capital for a company: It increases brand exposure. It increases their customer base. It disseminates product information quickly. SMM also generates social interaction, with the intended aim of creating a stronger relationship between a company and its customers. And social networks for commercial purposes works within smaller niches as well, not just for large companies. **E07** OK, so we have social, professional, commercial, and now the fourth area concerns investment. Investment is vital for any business organization: finding the resources to operate and expand. And investment is not just monetary investment but social investment also. Nonprofit organizations like the Red Cross, the World Wildlife Fund, or TED, all need social communities to raise awareness of their ideas and causes—and also to raise funds for operations. **E07a** One way they do this is through crowdfunding. Crowdfunding is the practice of presenting a product or a venture to an online community, and members of the community are encouraged to participate, to give money, and to share ideas—and share their passion with others in their network. Crowdfunding communities such as Kickstarter, MeetUp, or IndieGoGo are not just for entrepreneurs trying to make money off of an idea or product. Social causes such as NGOs and Nonprofits are also active users of crowdfunding, and these types of organizations are supported by passionate online communities. **E08** All right, so we've looked at four different types of relationships that can benefit from online communities. The fifth type of online community concerns play—what we do in our leisure time, what we do for fun. One aspect of play communities is huge, and that is gaming: playing games online with other players in a virtual gaming community. **E08a** A recent poll in *Game Studies*, a

journal of computer game research, suggests that approximately one out of every four Internet users visits online gaming sites on a daily basis. These are visits to gaming communities such as Steam or GameSpot or Kotaku, where game players can interact with a number of games and an unlimited number of players from around the world. Members of these online gaming communities feel they are doing more than just playing games—they feel a sense of camaraderie, a sense of belonging, a feeling that they are part of a genuine community. **E09** OK, so today we've looked at five benefits of online communities. I'll leave you with this final thought. People have been using the Internet for decades now. And online communities have been a major social force behind the growth of the Internet, which has enormous potential benefit for improving social relationships and building social communities.

## HEAR the language page 28

- 1 As human beings, we spend our entire lives growing up and learning how to live within social communities.
- 2 Today I'd like to focus primarily on the benefits or advantages of online communities, rather than on the drawbacks or disadvantages.
- 3 We all know that one positive aspect of social networking is that it allows us to make new friends and strengthen our current relationships with old friends and family members.
- 4 About 65 percent of college students report that they make new friends easily through social networking sites.
- 5 A second area where online communities show consistent positive benefits concerns professional connections.
- 6 In virtually every professional field—from education to law to running a restaurant—people are looking to strengthen and expand their networks.
- 7 Often, people access these networks just because they want to feel more connected with other professionals.
- 8 Many companies aim to develop an online marketplace where they can sell their goods and services, but a lot of companies also want to build a social community.
- 9 Nonprofit organizations like the Red Cross, the World Wildlife Fund, or TED, all need social communities to raise awareness of their ideas and causes—and also to raise funds for operations.
- 10 A recent poll in *Game Studies*, a journal of computer game research, suggests that approximately one out of every four Internet users visits online gaming sites on a daily basis.

## TALK about the topic page 29

**Kenzie:** It looks like everybody's here.

**Hugh:** Hi.

**Kenzie:** We have a lot to review, so let's get started. Ben, can you start us off? Any thoughts about online communities?

**Ben:** Sure, yeah. Well, first, I wonder if the lecture was a little bit too positive. Like, it was all positive about online communities—no drawbacks. I think it was a little bit too one-sided in that way.

**Shelley:** So you think there are some downsides to social networking?

**Ben:** Yeah. Sure.

**Hugh:** Well, I have to agree—because nothing is perfect!

**Shelley:** Yeah, nothing is perfect. But I think online communities have more positives than negatives. I mean, we've all made new friends through Facebook, right? And some of us have been a part of crowdfunding projects. I've met people with interests in film and stuff, and it's helped me to develop my own film interests.

**Kenzie:** Hm. Let's focus on the lecture. We can talk about films later.

**Ben:** Actually, I'm glad Shelley mentioned crowdfunding. I think we're actually supposed to find some more information about that for next class.

**Kenzie, Shelley, Hugh:** Right!

**Kenzie:** So does anyone have any examples of successful crowdfunding campaigns? Shelley, any ideas?

**Shelley:** Absolutely. Kickstarter in New York has had more than 10,000 successful campaigns, with like a 33 percent success rate.

**Hugh:** So about a third of the campaigns have been successful? That's cool.

**Kenzie:** Any other ideas?

**Hugh:** Examples of crowdfunding?

**Kenzie:** Yeah.

**Hugh:** Well, I was looking up some sources, and a big one is called IndieGoGo. One group raised \$3 million for a music project.

**Shelley:** So Ben, you're a musician. Do you know of any successful music projects?

**Ben:** Yeah, yeah. Let me think. Actually this small-time musician named Julia Nunes. She raised about \$80,000 on a crowdfunding site. But she was already popular on YouTube.

**Shelley:** Oh, so she became popular first and then raised money second. That makes sense.

**Kenzie:** All right, so we have examples of successful film and music campaigns. That's a good start.