



Ryan Lytle / 18 hours ago

As more companies and more industries buy into the benefits of [social media](#) and community development, the number of job opportunities available for professionals with community-building skills also continue to grow.

Companies are looking for professionals who can blend their skills to effectively deliver updates to a community, but also have the ability to tap into that community to collect feedback for a company to use for improving its product or delivering its message.

While the job opportunities grow, so do the number of professionals who include community skills on their resumes and profiles. On [LinkedIn](#) alone, the number of people who have added "[Community Management](#)" to their skills list is up 46% year-over-year.

But being a quality community manager goes beyond having the knowledge and background to use social media networks. Here are 10 qualities a community manager should possess to improve the chances of success in the position, according to professionals who work within social media and community today.

1. Strong communication skills

It's no surprise that the person who is acting as a representative of the brand should have strong people skills. [Google](#) DC Community Manager Corrie Davidson said that the community manager, in many ways, is the face of a brand, and this person must be able to effectively communicate the message to the audience. "Whether it be short form or long form, you have to be able to write," she noted. "Blog posts, guest articles, emails, proposals, social content — you have to be able to craft your ideas and messages to fit any medium."

But the community manager position goes beyond the online relationship, Davidson said. "They need to be outgoing, friendly and relatable. They should be comfortable interacting with people offline as well as online; a natural networker."

2. Good judgement

In many industries, one role of a community manager is of a curator. This person must be able to parse through all the content coming out of an organization and determine what to share, how to share and when to share.

For news organizations, deciding how to engage with an audience is especially important in times of difficult news, noted [NBC News](#) Senior Community Manager Anthony Quintano. "On days where we have really upsetting news to report on, we're very careful about the kind of stories we share, and what information we put out there."

Community managers must also determine the best ways to handle feedback from the audience, and decide how to respond in an appropriate fashion, said Dave Kerpen,

chairman of [Likeable Media](#), a social media agency that employs community managers. "When people ask questions, how do you answer? I believe not answering those questions is answering those questions."

3. Empathy

To engage a community in a discussion about a brand, a community manager must know the type of people who make up the audience, said Tim McDonald, the community manager for [HuffPost Live](#). "You're dealing with a bunch of different personalities. If you're not empathetic, you're never going to be able to put yourself in those people's shoes, which means you won't be able to communicate a message to them."

Being able to demonstrate empathy is important, noted Kerpen, because a community manager must be able to effectively converse with the audience. This person should see the brand from the perspective of a fan or consumer, and use this point of view to guide his or her engagements with the community, he added.

4. Dedication



Unlike with other positions, there is no end of the work day for community managers. When news breaks, whether the organization you represent is on the giving or receiving end, a community manager has to be available to the audience. "When you're a community manager, you're on 24/7," said [Adobe](#) Community Manager Rachael King. "Good or bad, something huge can happen at any time, and when it does, social is the first place it hits. You are technically the face of the brand, so you have to deal with it."

Community managers have to look at their positions as a lifestyle rather than a job, Google's Davidson added. "If you want to check in at 9 a.m. and out at 5 p.m., you're in the wrong field. When you've dealt with nothing but mean-spirited comments, hundreds of emails, demanding partners and a grueling schedule of tasks — all in a 14-hour work day — you need something other than a paycheck to keep you going."

5. Organizational skills

For many community managers, the job consists of managing multiple platforms, tracking feedback and then sharing this information with their employers. This work can be overbearing, but remaining organized can help professionals stay on top of their responsibilities. "I believe that community managers have to be able to multitask, and that means staying organized," Likeable Media's Kerpen noted. "It's a very fast-paced job and there are a lot of things thrown at you at once — and you need to stay on top of it."

Davidson said that she uses multiple spreadsheets that she updates daily with data across a range of metrics for a variety of people and terms. "One wrong entry can throw off goals and spreadsheets across our whole team, affecting other teams and projects. Whether I am planning an event, managing vendors, reviewing a contract or creating content, success or failure is in the details."

6. Adaptability

Flexibility in the workplace is key for a successful community manager. The work this professional does will often extend beyond creating conversations with a brand's audience on social media networks. For many, this means carrying the responsibilities of multiple jobs.

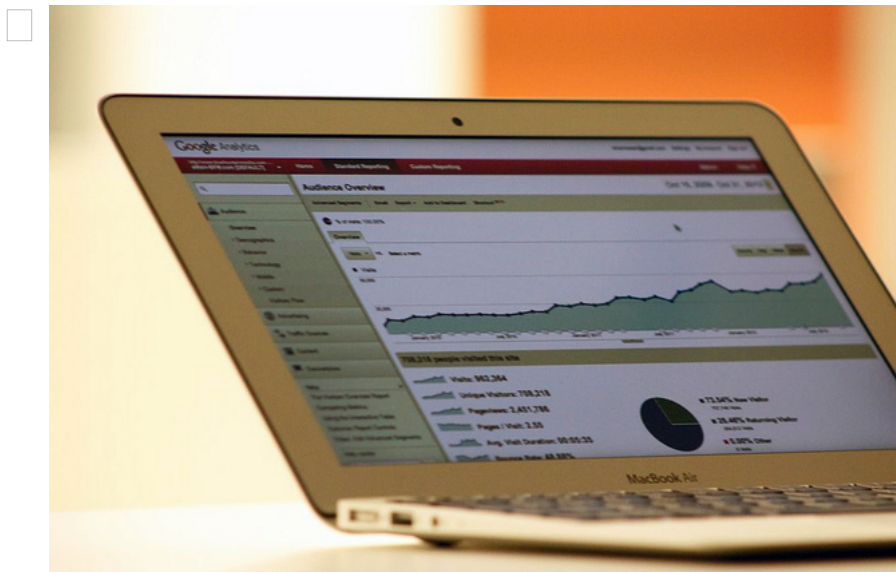
"Adaptability is important because the community manager wears a lot of hats," Kerpen said. "On any given day, they have to be a marketer, a PR person and then a communications guy who has to react to a story."

7. Level-headed attitude

It's the Internet. There are going to be situations, often on a daily basis, when a member of the community attacks the brand. As the community manager, it is vital that your response alleviates the situation; not intensifies it.

"The problem is you've got the keys to the brand's voice," Adobe's King said. "Anything you say on behalf of the brand can and will be held against you, and can be inferred as the brand's perspective. You have to have a cool head and remember that the audience is attacking the brand, usually, not you."

8. Background in analytics



In each industry, the way a community manager handles social and site analytics may differ, but it's vital that this professional is educated about how communities are responding to engagement, and can determine what efforts are working and not working. "I hate when people say they can't measure the metrics of engagement," Google's Davidson said. "If you can't measure it, you aren't doing it right. Build tracking links, look at your website traffic, measure your reach and impressions. Have a goal and reach it."

HuffPost Live's McDonald said that he uses analytics to figure out what the community is not telling him anecdotally. "The community isn't always going to tell you what they want. They'll tell you one thing but then want another. You need to look at things to see if they're working because people aren't always going to tell you."

9. Ability to enable the community

One of the most important responsibilities of a community manager's job is not to continue to push the brand's message, but to empower the audience and give it a voice, said NBC News' Quintano. "If we're just talking about ourselves, eventually people will turn away," he noted. "The only reason we are successful is because of our audience. We want to try to reward them as much as possible."

At *HuffPost Live*, McDonald said the organization realized that roughly 70% of all comments on site were in response to other comments. "We wanted to turn those comments into the conversation [on *HuffPost Live*]," McDonald added. "We wanted to give the audience a voice on equal footing with our on-air guests."

10. Passion for the brand

In many ways, the community manager is the eyes and ears of a business or organization. But this professional also is responsible for being the voice of the

company, and the audience wants to interact with someone who loves the brand as much as they do. For a community manager who just goes through the motions, he or she is not going to be successful and the company will ultimately suffer, Kerpen noted.

"Passion is really important," he said. "At the end of the day, you are the representative of that brand. You have to eat, sleep and breathe the brand."

Did we miss any other important qualities? Share your thoughts in the comments below.

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