

AND IT'S A BOY...

Community Building has come to an end, and therefore also this blog. But I'll probably create another blog, with my new portfolio (soon online).

Blogging is a fun thing to do, but it demands a lot of commitment, a lot of research and a lot of work. It is really fun to do, but non the less it requires some time, if you want to be your posts to be somewhat interesting.

In this blog I've tried to bring up some conversation (e.g. the post about virtual crime or the question about community overload), but it seems that I didn't succeed. Like I said before, blogging requires a lot of research and I'm kinda new into the blogosphere, so it will take a while before I have found some really interesting blogs, that could relate to the things I write.

The point of this blog was to participate in a community (any community, free to choice) and to talk about your activities in it. But unfortunately I chose the wrong community, why is that?

WHOOPS, WRONG COMMUNITY!?

In my second post I talked about Flixster and why I have chosen that community of all the others. Honestly: I haven't got a clue.

SHARING

I thought that my interest in movies would be something that I could share and discuss about movies. Flixster has these features, but in my opinion it wasn't the ones I was looking for.

But in a discussion you need to have someone (or something: e.g. chatbot) to discuss a movie or review with. And as you can see, I am not that popular in the community. The main reason is that I haven't connected enough with other people, but I tried, I looked for people with similar interests and commented on their favorite movies or reviews. But I couldn't get them to talk back.

The reason for this is (in my opinion) that people have similar characteristics in the online world as offline. Their friends are mostly people they know (personal or via via), but only 30 percent of their friends are people which they invited because of similar interest or because of the many comments they give on their reviews/movies.

I must admit that I haven't been active on the community as I should be. Why is that?

I thought flixster would be a community which could feed my love for movies, in some way they have done it through my profile, but only my friends would see the things I have changed and the few people how (accidentally) passed by.

FLIXSTER AS A COMMUNITY

I believe that Flixster has got what it takes to be a fun and nice community, but they don't have the true community feeling.

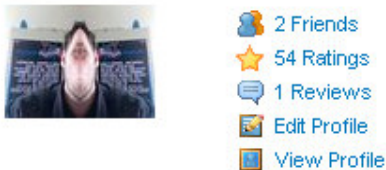
They have splitted the community from the website as a different part (see navigation below) where you can look for people like you or join the forum.

The features they have (quizzes, forums, inviting people, reviewing, ...) those are fun parts in the community. But they are not integrated as one tool, as one community.



SO WHY DID I JOIN AGAIN?

Hi Johnny



Flixster is about watching movies and tell your friends about it. But when you don't have any friends (like me) it is rather difficult to talk about it. In my opinion it needs to be more open to everyone (sort of miniblog) where you can post your findings (with little characters) so that everyone (in the community) can reflect on it, or just ignore it and leave it be.

I have rated a couple of movies (54 ratings) and just one review, so the rating part (with stars) is a nice feature, but the reviewing isn't. Why is that? Because it isn't integrated (properly) with the rating, when they have integrated it, I would have 54 reviews instead of one.

WHAT I WOULD IMPROVE?

Flixster is a nice concept, sharing your opinion about movies or rating them, quizzes about movies and actors, setting up your own quiz etc.

Those are nice features, but they don't have an added value when you are all alone in the community.

What I would improve first, is the welcoming of the community. When I registered, I only received an email with a confirmation link for my account. And then it was up to me, I didn't

know what to do or what the community expected of me. So I started with the beginning, see who is online as well, Ruud Denivel and Martijn Ooms and that's it.

So I would bring in some kind of mentors, or standard letters which welcomes you from the beginning and guides you through the many features. That would be a whole improvement.

Because of my absence in the community, those mentors (or standard emails) could invite you to be more active in the community. That would be a silent reminder that you haven't done much or ask for feedback: why aren't you active anymore...

A lot of ways to keep people busy, but the effectiveness is different for everyone, but it would help me to participate some more.

E.g. LinkedIn uses emails to keep you informed about what can be done on the community or they and welcomes you from the beginning.

WELCOME

The screenshot shows a welcome email from LinkedIn. At the top, it says "Welcome to LinkedIn!" with a "Postvak IN | X" label. Below that, it identifies the sender as "LinkedIn Updates" and provides a date of "24 sep." and a "Beantwoorden" button. A green banner states "Afbeeldingen worden niet weergegeven." followed by a link to view details. The main content starts with the LinkedIn logo and the word "Welcome". A paragraph of text says: "Thank you for using LinkedIn! You have joined over 25 million professionals using LinkedIn to stay connected and reach new people through trusted referrals." Below this is a large heading "Get things done... better & faster" in orange. Underneath, it says "Use LinkedIn to get whatever job you do today done better — it's the best way to connect with:" followed by a list of benefits: "Job candidates", "Business partners", "Industry experts", and "Hiring managers". A blue link "Search your network now" is provided. The email is divided into two columns: "Find Contacts" and "How LinkedIn Works". The "Find Contacts" section states: "The average LinkedIn user knows 15 to 20 people who already have their professional network on LinkedIn. You probably do, too. Find out which of the people you know are already 'LinkedIn'." The "How LinkedIn Works" section says: "To learn more about LinkedIn, come and take our tour." At the bottom, it shows the user's email "berkmansjohnny@gmail.com" with links to "add additional emails", "edit profile", and "contact settings". The footer includes the URL "http://www.linkedin.com/" and the copyright notice "© 2008, LinkedIn Corporation".

YOU HAVE AN ACCOUNT, NOW WHAT?

The screenshot shows an email from the LinkedIn Team. The subject line is "I have a LinkedIn account. Now what?" with a "Postvak IN | X" label. The sender is identified as "LinkedIn Team" and the date is "8 okt." with a "Beantwoorden" button. A green banner states "Afbeeldingen worden niet weergegeven." followed by a link to view details. The email content starts with "LinkedIn" and "Johnny,". The main text says: "You've taken the first step of creating a LinkedIn account -- but now what? Your next step is to visit the [New User Guide](#). In three easy steps we'll show you how to get the most out of LinkedIn." Below this, it asks: "Or are you still not sure what LinkedIn is and how it can help you? Visit the [What is LinkedIn?](#) page." The email concludes with "Regards," and "The LinkedIn New User Team".

PLENTY OF FEATURES

But there was a feature called 'People like me', and... it didn't work, people wouldn't add me as a friend and so that was the end of creating an enormous network with as many people as possible.

Like I said earlier, I would try to narrow the standards down to small steps, Flixster has interesting features, like creating your own quiz or doing tests, ... but they have put a lot of work in your personal page/profile. But it isn't a process, it's just: put in it what you (dis)like and see what others think about it, that is how I have experienced it. Off course they tried to bring in interactive parts (like quizzes and rating systems). But they have forgotten the main part of a community and that's **conversation** and **connection** (*imo*).

SO IT WAS A BOY!

Flixster: Watch movies. Tell your friends.

I watched a lot of movies and rated them, but I had no one to talk with, so that's a real mishap when thinking of a community feeling. Like I mentioned several times, they have a lot of fun features, but they aren't connected with each other. The thing they have in common is your own profile, where there will be said: "you have done 3 quizzes, you have 2 friends etc...)

So as a community they have failed to connect their users with each other. It must be about criticizing/commenting movies you love/hate. And share that opinion with everyone, not just your own friends. So create an open community and link the features with each other (e.g. rating and review, quiz and friends, welcoming and keep you updated,...)

And what every community has to keep in mind, when a user doesn't find his/her place in your community, they will go to another one. So in my case, I will check out other communities and hopefully I will find something which can keep me interested enough. (other communities like Flixster are mentioned below)

<http://movies.lionhead.com/> || <http://www.criticker.com/> || <http://www.spout.com/> ||
<http://my.spill.com/> || <http://www.theopusmoviecommunity.com/>