

REDEFINING COMMUNITY

The challenges of 2020 didn't make consumers more distant—it brought them online and eager to connect.

If 2020 taught business owners anything, it's that the world can change at a moment's notice and brands need to be prepared. Whether facing a groundbreaking new competitor, a global pandemic, or a social media boycott, Vesta co-founder and CEO Susan Frech finds solutions in community powered marketing.

"Community powered marketing shows the value of building an audience and growing the engagement with them," says Frech. "People are online now more than ever, so with the right tools, brand marketers can give them a place to come together."

Formerly known as Social Media Link, Vesta harnesses the power of community by creating brand-owned online communities with their innovative SaaS platform. Once users are drawn to the brand's online community, their engagement with the activities, discussions, surveys, and more help the company build loyalty, generate advocacy, and enhance their digital presence.

"Consumers are looking for increased personalization. If a user doesn't have kids, and a website keeps pushing content for parents, they won't feel welcome," Frech explains. "Our platform captures their feedback and uses it to create highly targeted content to engage each consumer. The more they interact on the platform, the more Vesta can personalize the user experience."

The benefits of inviting members to join a brand-owned community go beyond a convenient digital experience. When planned strategically, it creates a loyal fanbase that will negate risk. "If you're relying on a third-party social media channel for business and consumers choose to boycott that company, you're stuck. But if you own the community platform, you're able to have control no matter what the future brings," says Frech.

The same principle of risk management applies to companies looking to launch a new product or service. By going to their community for feedback on new ideas, brands can focus on providing what consumers are after. "Once a new product hits the market, community members can write authentic online reviews, give recommendations, and create user-generated content that will drive new consumers to the brand," Frech adds. "The exchange furthers emotional loyalty and transforms the customer base into an army of brand evangelists. It future-proofs the business."



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CASE STUDY Growing a Community

Veggies Made Great had developed a small loyal following on their own, but when daily operations and tracking became too much to effectively manage, they turned to Vesta to create a scalable community where they could engage with their core audience of "Veg Heads" and capture their insights to help grow the brand.

Through Vesta's platform, Veggies Made Great community members are able to connect with like-minded individuals, win free products, and find opportunities to get involved. For their "Plant a Coupon" campaign, members stuck coupons on Veggies Made Great products at their local grocery stores and talked to interested customers in person and online. In return, they were given coupons for products they already love. The involvement not only created an opportunity for members to interact, but it also created new fans through community powered marketing. As a result, the online community has helped drive a 20% increase in sales since its launch.

