

# Zero to tribes / Hypernation

## How to build worldwide communities from scratch

#Hypernations

Subtitle: How to build worldwide connected communities from scratch

Angle: Lessons learned from SW / Ted / etc... (interviews / tips) + Theory + DAOs

### 1. The ignition / igniting your first Tribe

- a. you are the community: why it matters to be the community you want to ignite
- b. in search of an event community fit (the equivalent of product market)
- c. Choosing your business model (non-profit / for profit / hybrid) - Ted/Tedx | StartupWeekend / Makesense | General Assembly / Galvanize | Twilio etc...
- d. Saying yes, how to manage the early quality vs quantity dilemma
- e. Scaling fast, staying lean and grassroots

### 2. The Scale / how to conquer the world

- a. Fundraising with sponsors / foundations in the case of non profit
- b. Partnership with large corp
- c. The right team, how to grow your early community team and how to organize it
- d. Developing your core values and core purpose, in search of the hedgehog

- e. The community journey, from attendee to more, how to build a progression / place to grow
- f. Avoid community death, implementing "passing the beaker"
- g. celebrating success, PR, and social network (facebook could help here too)
- h. getting the community together, how to take advantage of global events
- i. taking over the world, opening new offices, growing your core team (how we managed 6k+ volunteers in 140+ countries with 60+ people only)

### 3. Sustainability and real impact

- a. Measuring the unmeasurable, capturing stories
- b. legal, how to manage a global org
- c. Growing your Board and partnering / acquiring other organization
- d. Good and bad M&A stories
- e. experiencing with incremental and spin off innovations ideas
- f. growing new products
- g. in case of fire, when everything goes bad, how to exit and save the community

## Forewords

This book is based on my own 20 years of experience with tech and entrepreneurial communities. I'm very excited to share with a new generation how to build sustainable communities whether local or worldwide. This book is designed to be a field book for those of you seeking to grow your tribes.

While I wanted it to be as practical as possible for those who just want things done.

In the second part of this book we will I also wanted to discuss the underlying history and evolution of communities, to detect the patterns and general laws of communities.

I hope you will enjoy it, community buildings and specifically hypertribes are closer to an art than a science, and I can't wait to see what the next generation will be able to build!

# Chapter I: Igniting your community

## 1. Feeling lonely?

“Hence it is evident that the state is a creation of nature, and that man is by nature a political animal. And he who by nature and not by mere accident is without a state, is either above humanity, or below it; he is the ‘Tribeless, lawless, hearthless one,’ whom Homera denounces—the outcast who is a lover of war; he may be compared to a bird which flies alone.”

The Politics vol. 1 (Aristotle)

### a. Hypertribes

Feeling lonely is one of the worst thing that can happen to us Homo sapiens; it is so bad that we are still using it as a coercitive tool by sending people to

prison; it also increases chances of premature death by 26%<sup>1</sup> it is basically as bad as smoking 15 cigarettes a day! (Holt-Lunstad, 2010)

We now know that homo sapiens are hard wired to be social, our brain evolved to survive through cooperation, like our primate cousins. We seek to be a part of a group more precisely we seek to find and fit in a hierarchical group like our chimpanzee cousins (cf. Chimpanzee Politics by De Wall) This is why social networks are so efficient they are tapping into our inner need of sharing and connecting with others but fail at solving loneliness, even worse it seems using social media more than 30 minutes a day is linked to worse well-being<sup>2</sup> and an increase level of stress.

This book is about a scalable solution to loneliness and a lot more: hypertribes, we define a hyper<sup>3</sup>tribe as: “An online community of people united by a common purpose who meet regularly offline”

## **b. Where hypertribes came from: A history of human societies**

As first human communities, they started around tribes of hunter gatherer and then became cities as we moved towards an agricultural society. Religion played an important role as a source of cohesion by presenting reward and punishments that greatly reinforced the gains from cooperation faat a very large scale both geographical and in time [ Fukuyama, Francis. The Origins of Political Order (p. 37). Farrar, Straus and Giroux.

]

Then religions spread and ultimately built a network of connected churches that served as the scaffold of modern Europe as an example. Then came the radio and the television and the more interactive internet and now we see the result of this evolution in the form of hypertribe.

Offline individual to community -> Tribe / City / Countries / Nation-States

...

Offline community to Online -> Online communities

Online individual to Connected group -> Social Networks

Online Communities to Offline -> Hypertribes

b. Don't be lonely anymore: find and join a hypernation

There are plenty of hypernations now, we can trace back their history to the early days of the internet and the first online communities

	1970	1975	1980	1985	1990	1995	2000	2005
Chat		1973: Talkomatic for PLATO system / 1980: CompuServe's CB Simulator / 1988: Internet Relay Chat						
E-mail lists		1975: MSGGROUP / 1986: LISTSERV mailing list software						
Multiplayer games/virtual worlds		1975: Adventure / 1986: Air Warrior / 1991: Neverwinter Nights / 2003: Second Life						
BBSs		1978: CBBS / 1983: Exec-PC / 1985: The WELL						
Commercial online services		1979: CompuServe's consumer service / 1985: GEnie / 1989: AOL						
Usenet		1980: Usenet / 1995: Deja News / 2001: Google Groups						
Web-based communities		1994: Theglobe.com / 1995: Salon.com						
Social networks		1995: Classmates.com / 2002: Friendster						
Build-your-own social networks		2005: Ning						

Source : <https://www.computerworld.com/article/2526581/timeline--the-evolution-of-online-communities.html>

#### d. Tribe genesis Tribe design

When designing a tribe you have to start by choosing what loneliness you're addressing. Let's take startup weekend as an example. Back in 2007 if you wanted to launch a new business most of the advises you got were related to joining your local chamber of commerce. Chamber of commerces were created more than 400 years ago ([https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chamber\\_of\\_commerce](https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chamber_of_commerce)) when joining them to talk about building a startup you would have been welcome with a process more related to opening a restaurant or an accounting firm than a google.

First you should have a business plan and also setup a legal entity before even thinking of doing anything... This why frustrating and to many entrepreneurs looking to build a technology startup chambers of commerce were irrelevant and therefore most of them felt lonely.

We now know that these methodology were irrelevant for startups who by there very nature are searching for a business model instead of executing on a 5 years plan (cf Steve Blank) This lead to a void that started a revolution first in the Silicon Valley and later in Boulder / Seattle New York and the rest of the world.

In his book « Mama's last hug » De Waal talks about the importance of emotions in these terms : [p.10][#Mama's Last Hug:2019, de Waal] « (emotions) structure our society to a degree that we rarely acknowledge »

[#Mama's Last Hug:2019]: Mama's last hug quote Mama's last hug stuff.

Our brain is wired to be social, whether you are an introvert or an extravert, loneliness is not part of our normality. This is why it is used as a punishment / coercion tool.

Often community builder starts with a personal problem, they are looking for a community that does not exist.

>> <Insert Marc nager tip :

Et the early days of Startup weekend something amazing happened, people realized they were not alone, for years the only way to meet other entrepreneurs was through serendipity, maybe on a college campus or in some Chamber of commerce. Startup weekend was the first time people who were just thinking about entrepreneurship realized they were not crazy and not alone.

/Marc tip>

>

In this book we are defining a tribe as a unit that serves one purpose: fighting a specific feeling of loneliness.

Whether it's a tribe of entrepreneurs, whether it's a tribe of physics enthusiasts whether it's a tribe of people looking to do CrossFit, at the end of the day a tribe is this unit of people anyone can join to not feel lonely anymore.

Your first step therefore is to identify loneliness, are you passionate about a subject but can't think about anywhere to go or to join? Or maybe there are a couple of events around you (you can search them on Facebook / meetups / eventbrite etc..) but you don't feel like you belong. This is a fundamental difference between a product and an event, a product might solve a need, but an event as part of a tribe should solve loneliness. An existing tribe might welcome you but you might still not feel welcome, maybe there is a different age group maybe there is a lack of excuse to interact with new comers etc.. We will talk about the different strategy to avoid rejecting people you actually want to join your tribe!

## **b. Tribe genesis: How tribes are born**

The first step to build a community is to find and attract your first tribe. Speaking in public being feared more than death by some (<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/speaking-in-public-is-worse-than-death-for-most-5l2bvqlmbnt>) it is not surprising that organizing your first meeting to meet your tribe might be a little frightening.

At this point you must be wondering why am I talking about organizing an event, when we don't even have people to talk to? The old chicken and egg problem long solved by evolution : the mutated egg came first #teamegg (<https://www.science.org.au/curious/everything-else/which-came-first-chicken-or-egg>) The same goes with how to build a tribe, if you don't have an excuse to meet no one will want to join, so the "event" comes before the tribe



The very general process going like this

1. An excuse to meet / not be alone anymore
2. Making it happen

Now that you are convinced by this brilliant argument let's do a break down on how you can finally launch your first tribe!

### **c. An excuse to meet**

So you have made the choice of not being alone anymore, to to help those who are. Now the next logical question is how to reach out to that crowd? If you want to build a tribe that fights the loneliness of elderly people and you know most of them don't use social media today, then using facebook might not be the best way to reach out to them directly. That being said you could also reach out to their grandchildren that way; An indirect or a direct approaches are fine.

I assume the people reading this book will come from different background and expertise, different culture or geographies, my point is just that you will know better than anyone else where to talk to people, online or offline. Let's just review some of the main ways you can reach out to your future tribe, this list is of course non exhaustive and will likely evolve as technology does.

#### Off-line

- A. Printing flyers and putting them where your target will be
- B. Stickers, with indication on how to join (yes you can put it in some dive bars restrooms!)
- C. Talking to people, handing cards (for the extraverts out there)
- D. Talking at conferences relevant to your crowd
- E. Art / tags in key places (Kyle!)

- F. Leaving books / something in the street with an instruction
- G. Having a stand in the corner of strategic place (university)
- H. Speaking in subway or in public places with no stage

#### On-line

The general idea here is to take the opportunity to get people to share or participate we will dive a lot more into that very important aspect when we will address hyper tribes in a later chapter

- A. Social media (I won't list them all)
- B. Sharing document (share / edit) like a google doc
- C. Virtual / augmented reality / Mixed reality (It will become a big thing!) cf hyper reality <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YJg02ivYzSs>
- D. Blog posts
- E. Meetup / Eventbrite / Facebook Events ... (this is a really great way to start / you can also join existing groups )

As you can see, there are no excuse not to reach out to people.

We have talked about the medium but we did not talk yet about the details of our "excuse to meet"

The excuse to meet can be also break down in very different forms but the basic components of it are consistent.

First component : The venue

Second component :

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<sup>1</sup> [https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736\(18\)30142-9/fulltext](https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736(18)30142-9/fulltext)

<sup>2</sup> <https://guilfordjournals.com/doi/abs/10.1521/jscp.2018.37.10.751>

³Giving birth to a new word is an important task, for those interested here is how I came with the idea of a hypernation.

It took me a while to agree on this term to describe a well known phenomenon. This is not my first buzz word neither (sorry!) as I contributed to the use and spread of the word Scaleup (That I defined as a business post product market fit in search of maximizing its vision)

My process always relates to etymology and the search of the historical meaning of words to get their profound meaning. For example did you know that following your passion really means following what makes you suffer? (Passion latin root is patio: to suffer)

When looking at the history of communities I looked at different words that encompass that phenomenon. The word tribe was the first one that came to mind, it might come from the number three (latin: tribu) refereeing to the three divisions of the early people of Rome the latin word tribu itself is likely linked to “Tribuere” meaning to distribute. Unfortunately this wonderful word is negatively connoted with colonialism and would have been hard to get adopted especially in the USA.

The second one was religion the first example of really connected communities, it might come from the latin word Religare to ‘bind’ which is perfect to convey how people can now connect with each other, but as we do it without the need for a god this was not neither the right word to use.

The last one is Nation that comes from the latin verb nasci 'born' and can be traced back to students communities in the Middle Ages, the word means a large body of people united by common descent, history, culture, or language, inhabiting a particular country or territory:

I also look at cybernetics / cyber from the greek *kubernētēs* to *steer* but cybernation already exists and means something very different : *The automatic control of a process or operation (as in manufacturing) by means of computers)*

At the end the word hyper (Greek huper) mixed with the word Nation (a large body of people united by common descent, history, culture, or language, inhabiting a particular country or territory:) made the most sense : in a way the profound meaning of a hypernation becomes being united beyond where you were born.