Gamification Planning Workbook

Online Community Edition
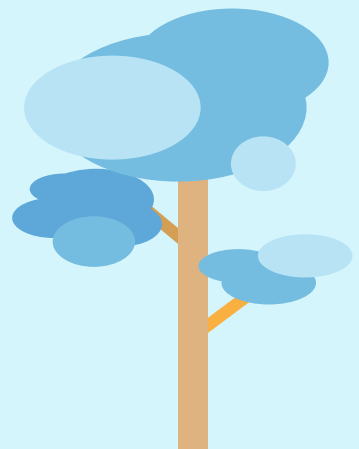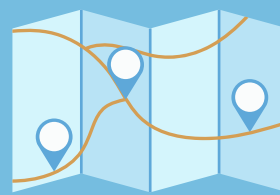
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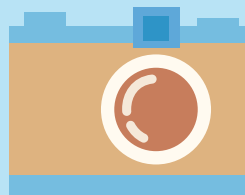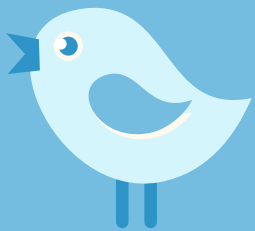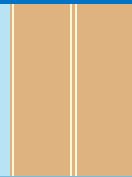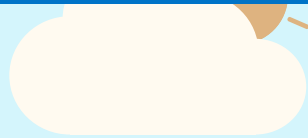**Online communities are powerful.** Companies can build brands, increase customer spending, reduce support calls, and much more. If you're looking to do more with your online community, gamification can be a powerful device to add to your toolbox. With gamification, you can increase engagement and drive targeted behaviors in your community.

Gamification also requires planning and preparation in order for your business to reach its goals. Starting with the proper groundwork will lead to a successful launch and ongoing engagement.

Once this workbook has been completed and you know what results you want to see in your online community from gamification, Badgeville's game design and behavior experts will work with you and your business to build the program that will help to achieve your goals.
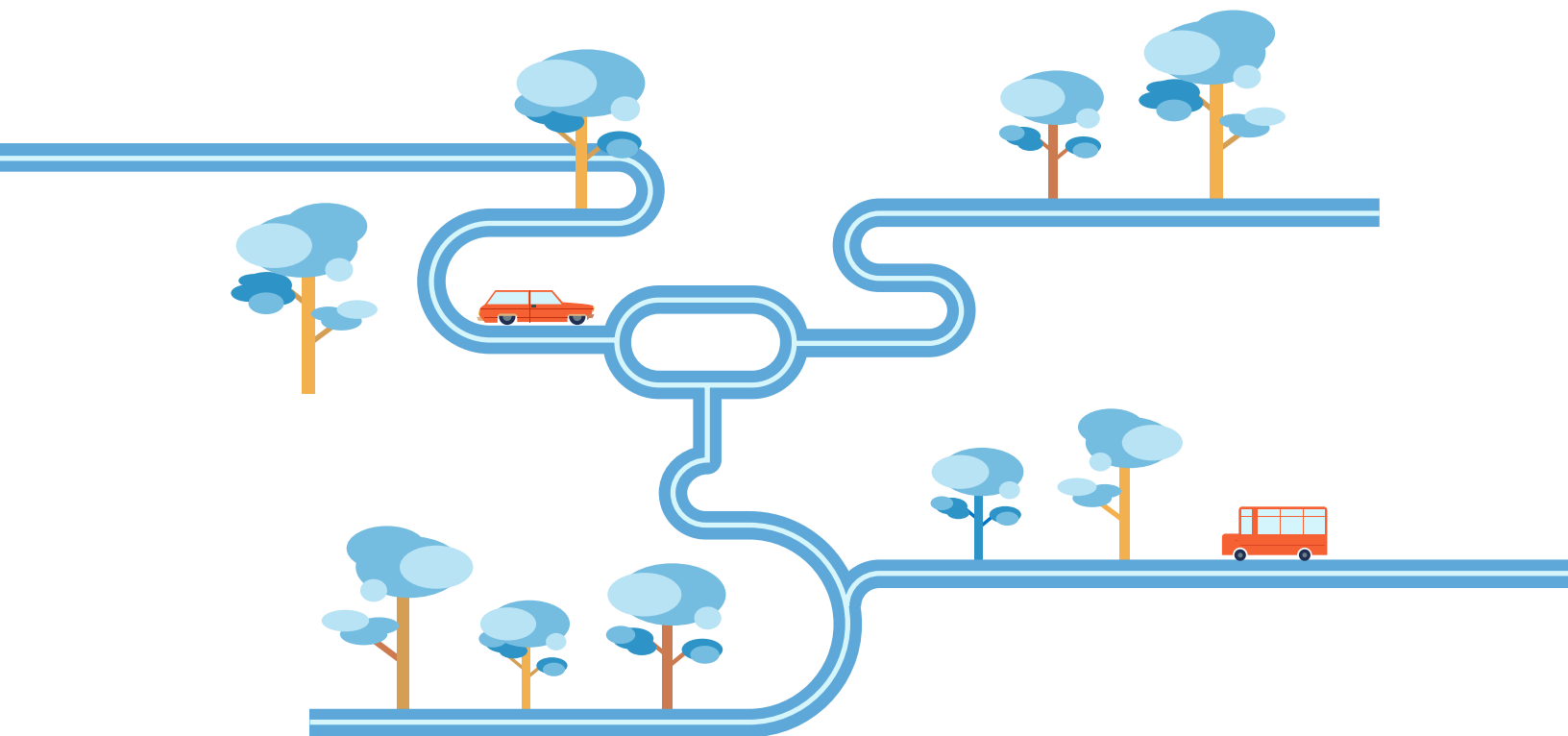
Introduction to Gamification

While gamification does take a few cues from iconic games, don't get too carried away with the gaming aspect. Gamification doesn't involve playing a game at all, rather it uses the principles of gaming to make an experience more fun and engaging.

So, what is it exactly? Simply stated, gamification is the combination of game mechanics and reward systems used in a real world, non-game setting in order to compel users to behave and engage in a specific way.
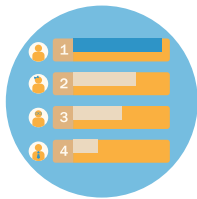
Confused? Let's break down that definition.

Game Mechanics

The term *game mechanics* refers to the components of a game; the mechanisms utilized by game designers to fashion and reward express activity among players. Also, in the case of a gamification program, this refers to customers, employees, or other users.

Examples of game mechanics being used today

Leaderboards:

A display of the current names and scores of competitors
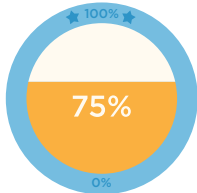
Progress Bars:

A graphic that brandishes the progress users have made in completing a task

Badges:

A digital emblem rewarded for completing a specific task

Points:

Awarded for engaging in desired behaviors

Real World, Non-Game Setting
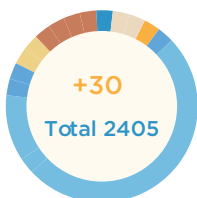
For the effectiveness of this workbook, the *real world, non-game setting* the above definition refers to is that of an *online community*. Businesses and online communities can use gamification to drive desired user behaviors that are advantageous to their brand, such as commenting on and sharing posts, links, promotions, etc. Gamification can also be used to increase customer and employee engagement by making online experiences more personalized, connected and rewarding.

How does gamification accomplish this task? Take a look at the 4S Model of Intrinsic Motivation below.

The 4S Model

Successful

Structured

Smart

Socially Valued

🔺 Successful

People playing games seek a feeling of victory. Success in a game typically involves overcoming a challenge and here we have our first 'S': success-- people want to feel successful.

🏛 Structured

Games are structured. Game designers have agonized over every last detail to ensure your effort pays off. Nobody wants to participate in an activity where they might never succeed. This brings us to the second 'S': structure-- people want to feel structured.

🎓 Smart

The structure of games not only teaches players how to win, but it gives them a new set of skills. A good game lets them then use those skills to demonstrate how clever and talented they are. This leads us to our next 'S': smart--there is almost nothing people like more than to feel smart.

🥂 Socially Valued

Modern games, connected by the internet, allow players to take specialized roles and tackle challenges as part of a larger group. This dimension of specialization ensures that everyone can feel as if they are contributing; you don't have to be the best player to be a valued part of the group. People have a powerful desire to belong--they want to feel socially valued.
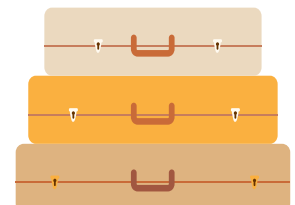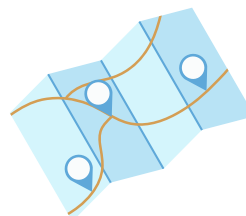
Get started on the workbook

The workbook should take no more than one hour if you know what your community goals are. If it's taking too long, you may find that you need to call a meeting to clarify exact goals.

What are the goals of your online community?

Common goals of a customer-facing community are branding, reducing support calls, and increasing customer spend. Common goals of an internal, employee-facing community are improving collaboration, increasing employee satisfaction and engagement, and boosting productivity.

1. _____

   _____

2. _____

   _____

3. _____

   _____

4. _____

   _____

5. _____

   _____

Key to Success

The key to a successful gamification program is to align business goals with what motivates users on the community. A qualified gamification expert can help you map out these details.
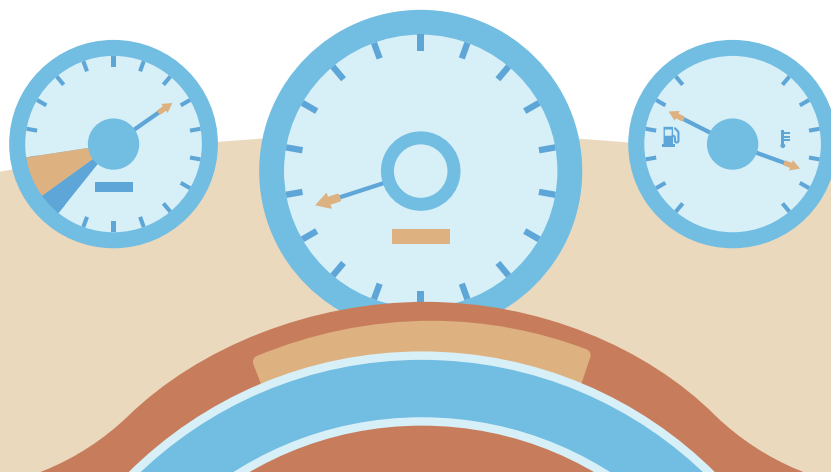
How will you measure these goals?

Metrics are the numbers you will look at. What numbers will you be pulling up to analyze and understand success?

The metrics I will track are _____

KPIs (key performance indicators) are often the most effective way to measure online community goals. Common KPIs are: to achieve a certain amount of content produced per person, etc.

1. _____

_____

2. _____

_____

3. _____

_____

4. _____

_____

5. _____

_____

- Increase time on site
- Motivate new behaviors
- Decrease existing behaviors
- Certify by skill set
- Draw attendee attention to key locations at event
- Generate buzz around event
- Encourage self-improvement
- Increase productivity
- Minimize errors and oversights
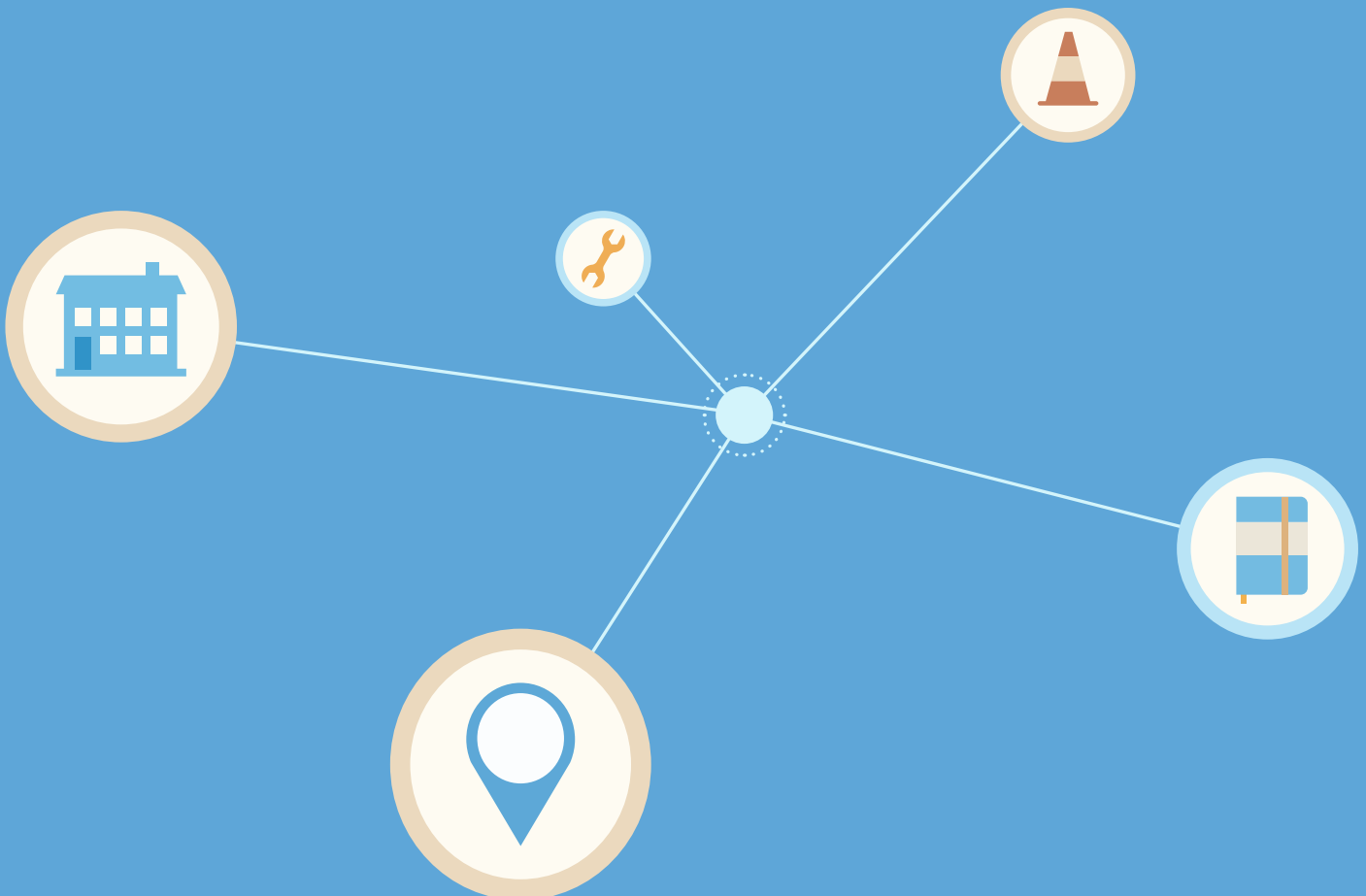
Establishing a baseline

Before you begin any program or try anything in your community, you should have a baseline in order to understand the effects. Start tracking metrics and prepping for your KPIs in order to get an accurate assessment. Here is a way to begin gathering your baseline:

How many users visit my community every day?

How many users are registered for my community in total?

How active are my users?

- How much content do they create?

- How much content do they consume?

- How many are lurkers? How many are active?
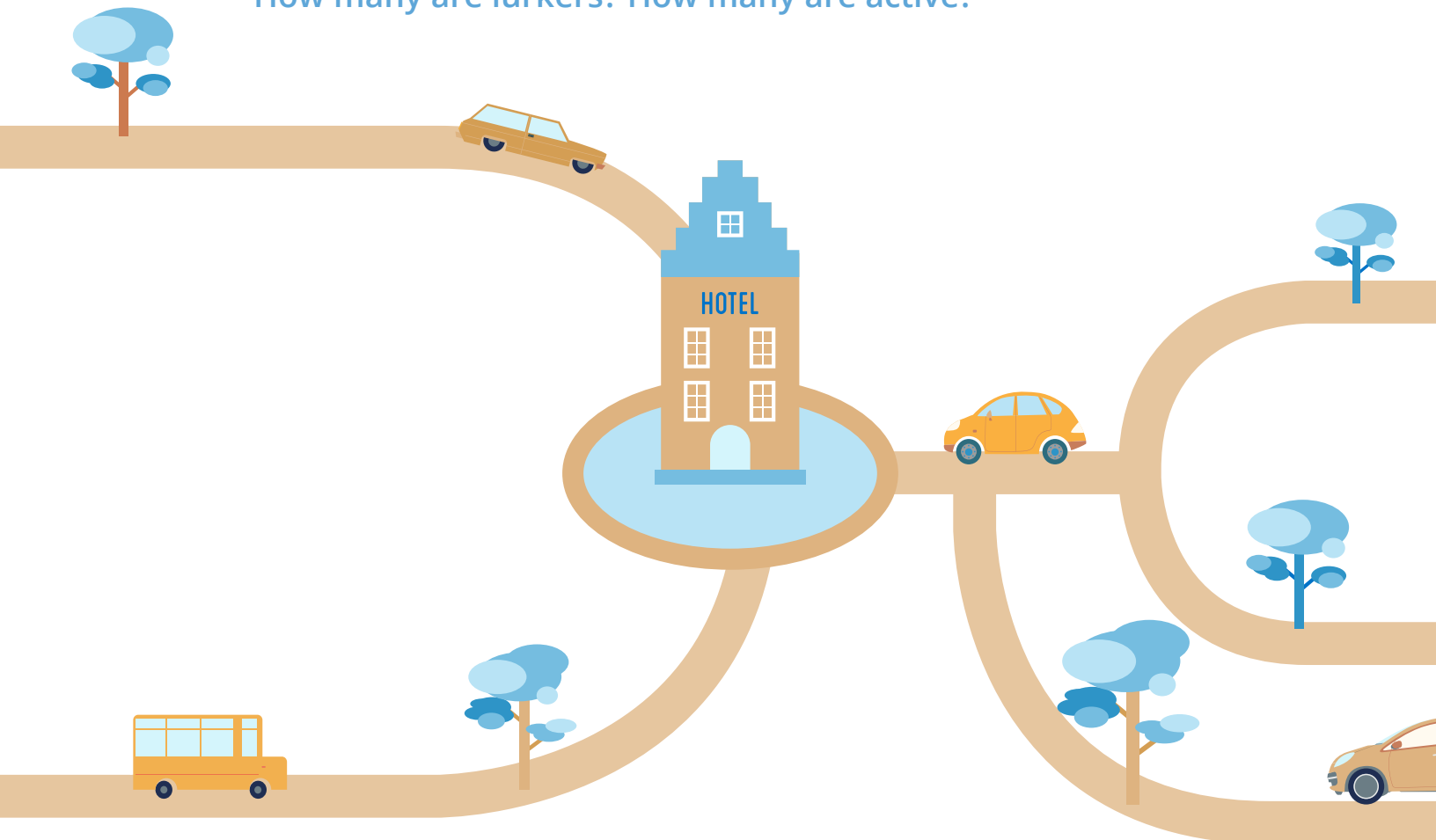
Types of Users

Establishing different user types, or stages, can be a way to get valuable insight into what people are doing on your communities. Here are a few example user types:

Lurker

Someone who only consumes content, but doesn't contribute anything. No blogs, no comments, nothing!

Active User

Someone who contributes content and regularly visits the community. You may want to come up with an exact definition for your community. How often do they need to contribute content? How often should a user log in to be considered active? A common requirement is that the user must log in at least once in the past 30 days.

Troll

This type of user is more common on consumer-facing communities. This user wants attention and will do whatever it takes. They will often add offensive comments to the community. Too many trolls can destroy the health of a community.

Cheater

Some users are very motivated by gamification and will cut corners to get badges, points and recognition. A well-designed gamification program will help you find the cheaters and get them to quell their cheating.

It can be helpful to think of them as "stages" because many begin as lurkers, but evolve into active users. If you can incentivize a troll or cheater to control their bad behavior, ideally they'll become active users, or they may leave the community altogether.

What are you hoping to achieve with gamification?

Do you want more engagement? Do you want users to perform certain actions? Do you want more content creation? By deciding on what you're trying to drive, the right gamification program can be built for you.
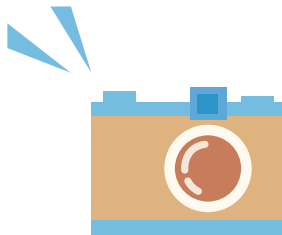
1. _____

   _____

2. _____

   _____

3. _____

   _____

Who are the stakeholders?

Who is dedicated to the success of the community? Who gets measured on the success of the community and the related business goals? These team members will be your allies when you're building and planning your gamification program.

1. _____

_____

2. _____

_____

3. _____

_____

Common Stakeholders

Getting stakeholders involved is critical for the success of your program. Common stakeholders are people like:

- Community Managers
- Marketing Managers
- Marketing Executives (VP, CMO)
- Head of Customer Success

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Now you have a much better understanding of what to measure, who will be involved and what you're trying to achieve with your gamification program. These are the first steps to a successful community and engagement strategy.
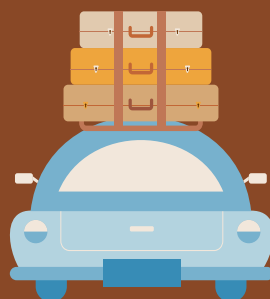
Want to get started? Just reach out to Badgeville at sales@badgeville.com and we can begin to build the right gamification program for you!