



Online Community Managers: The Invisible Layer in Platform Governance



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Acknowledgement of Country

I acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the lands and waterways
I'm coming to you from today - the Waddawurrung People of the
Kulin nation.

I pay respect to Elders past and present, and thank the Traditional
Owners for custodianship of the land.

We'll cover

- What is community management
- Definitions
- Potted history
- Role in ecosystem
- Models for collaboration
- Questions & discussion

WHAT IS COMMUNITY MANAGEMENT?

A technosocial governance practice shaping:

- Behaviour
- Norms
- Culture
- Social design
- Psychological safety
- Experiences & outcomes



DEFINITIONS

Trust & Safety: Platform risk + policy enforcement

Moderation: Behavioural oversight + norm application

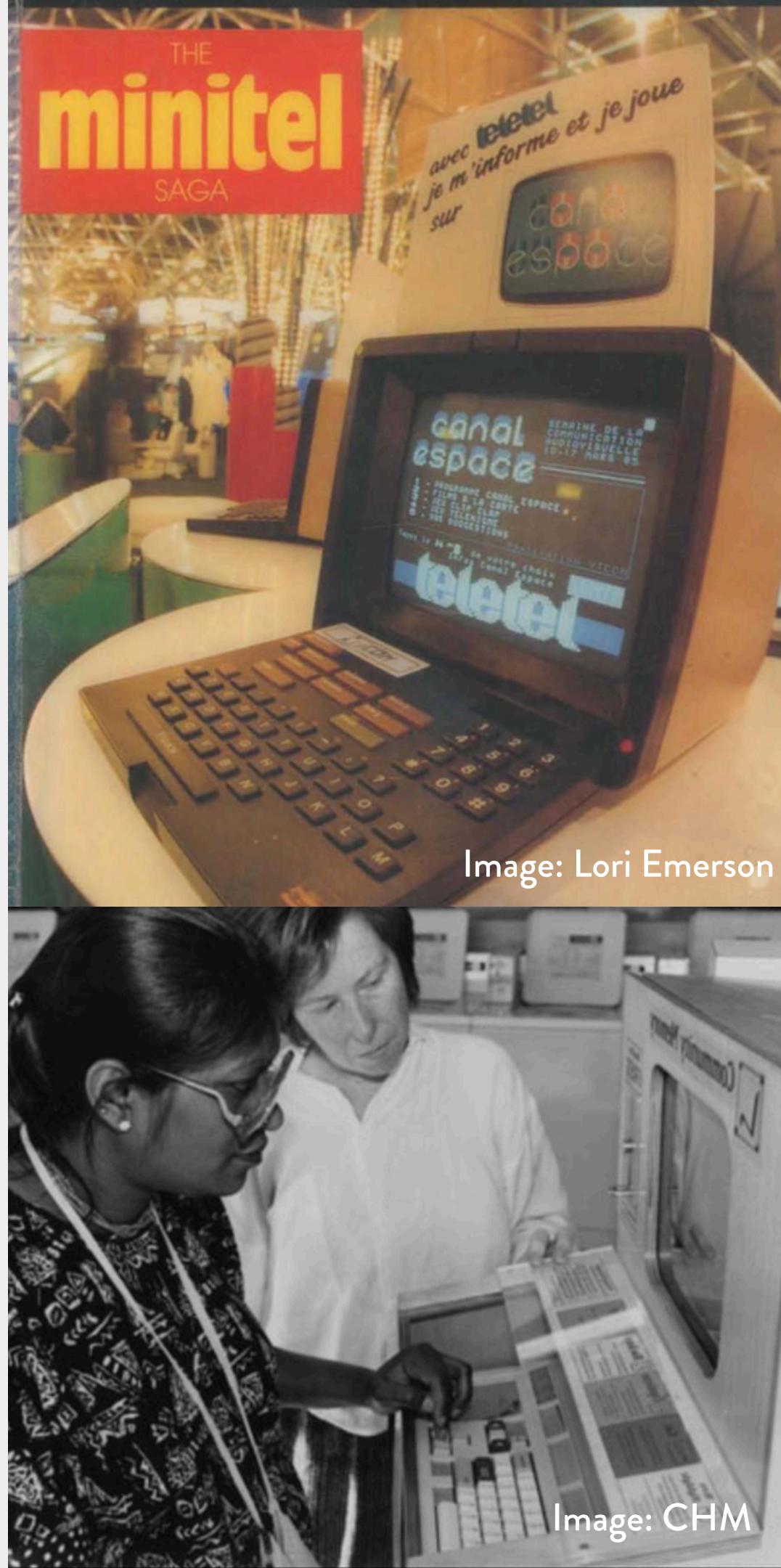
Community Management: Relational governance, cultural stewardship. Includes moderation; may encompass certain T&S functions

A POTTED HISTORY OF CM

A 50 year lineage:

- Community Memory (1973)
- MSGGROUP (1975)
- Minitel (1978-2012)
- Usenet
- PLATO
- BBS Sysops

CM = OG human governance layer of digital social life



The WELL

Birth of the professional CM (1985)

John Coate's "cyber-inn-keeping":

- Facilitation
- Mediation
- Cultural design
- Governance

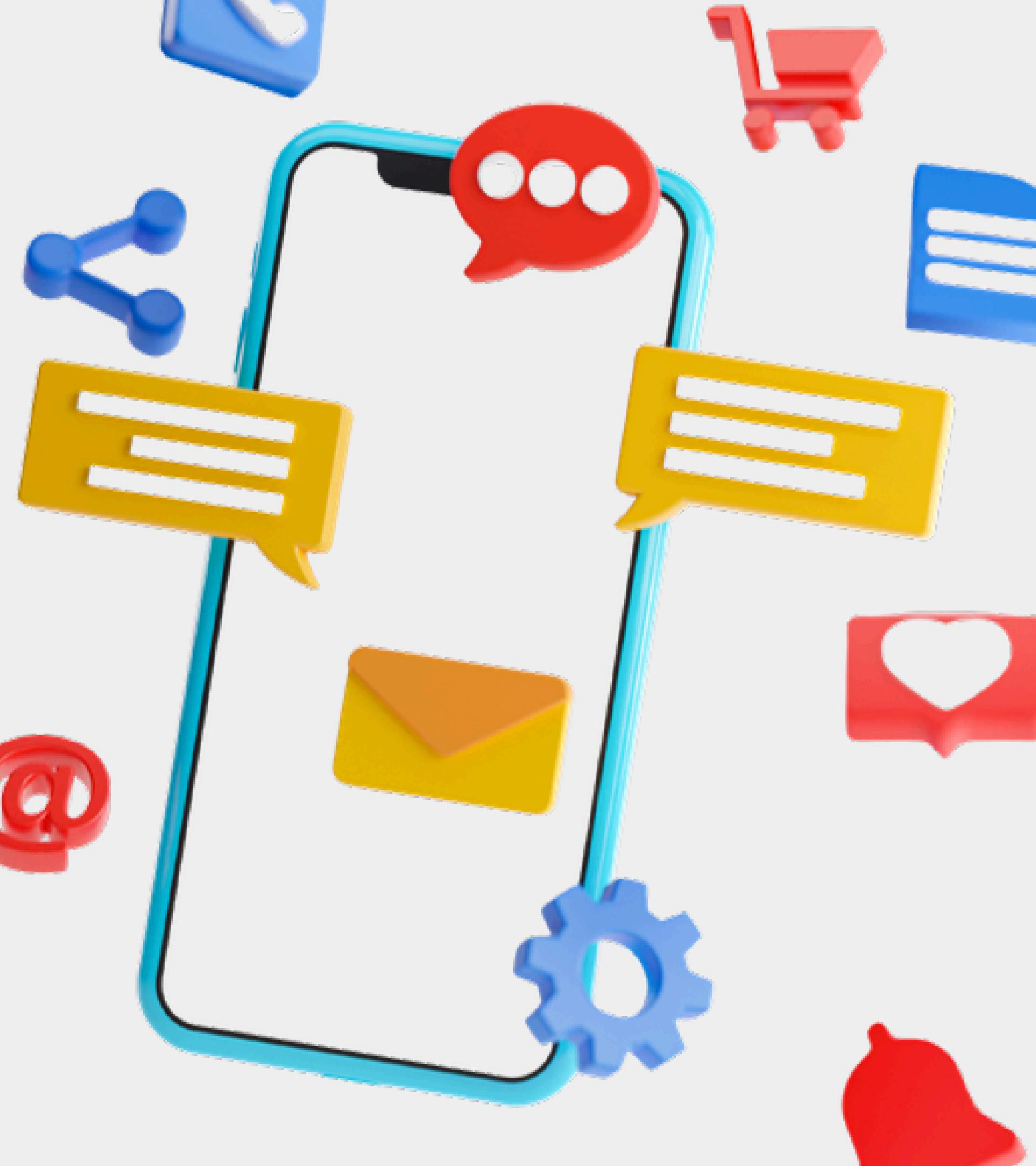


Image: John Coate



Image: Whole Earth Catalogue

The WELL crew: tex, fig, nancy, dhawk, calliope, robngail.



PLATFORMISATION

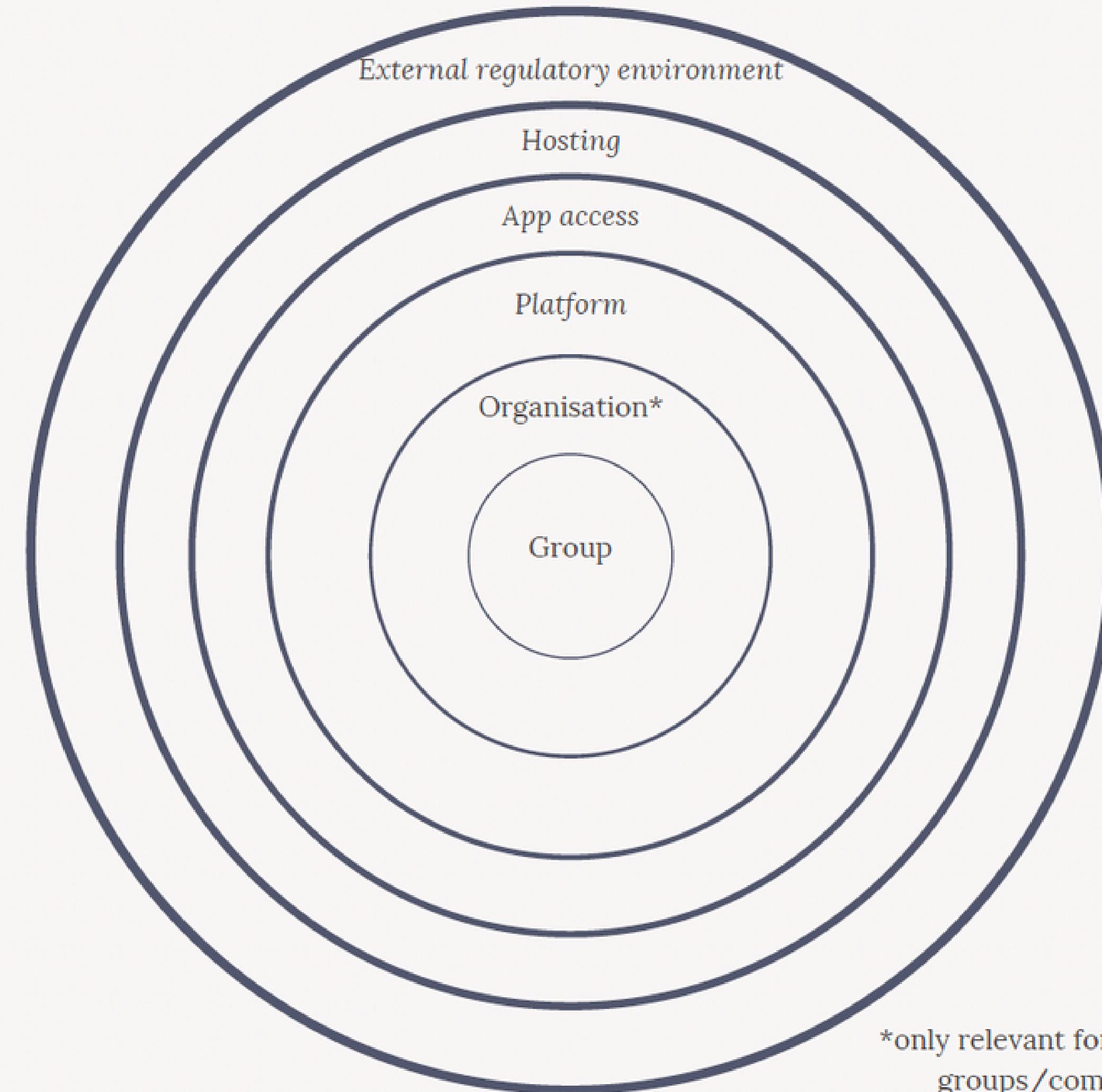
1990s–2000s:

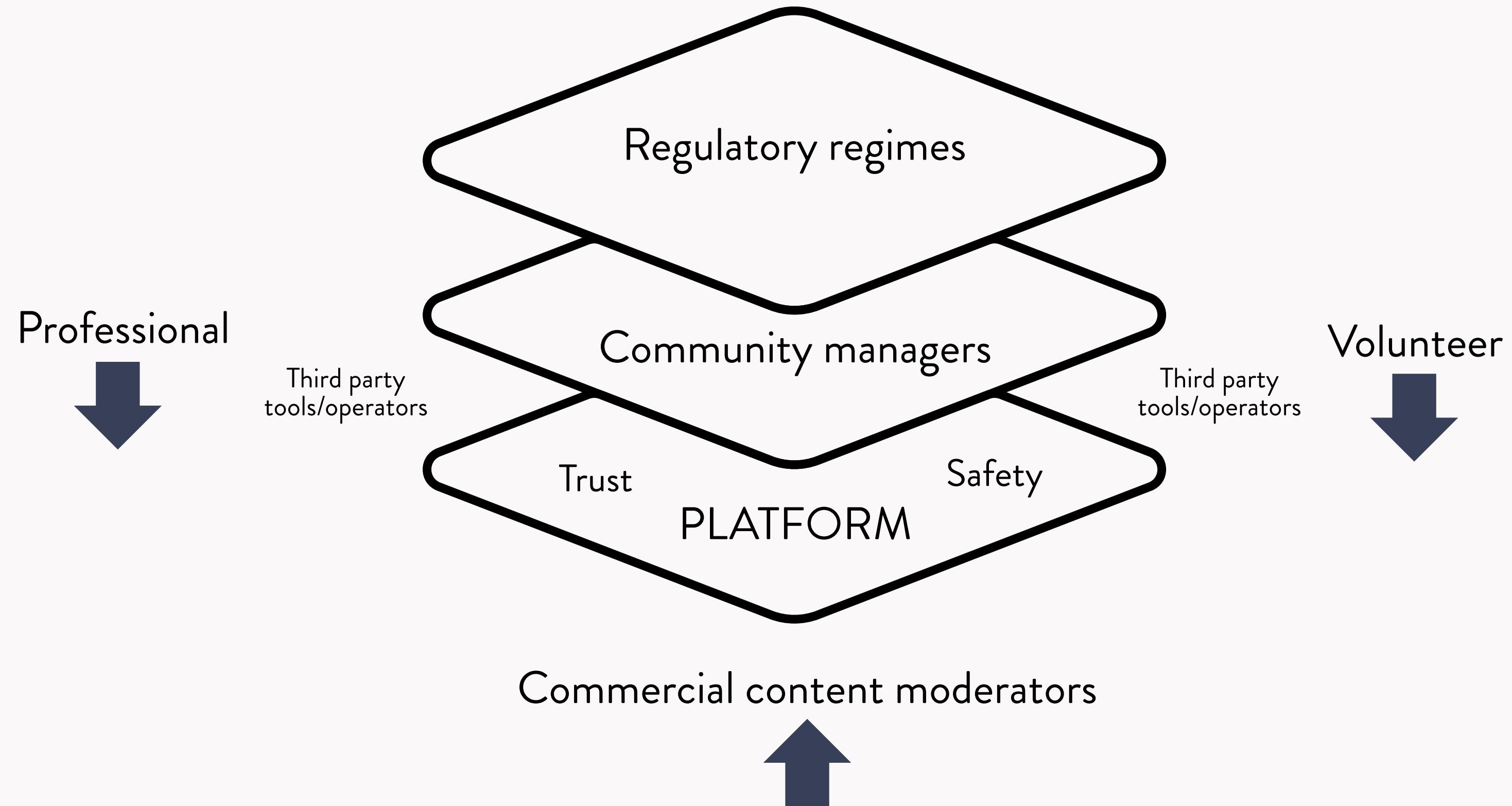
- Centralised power
- Loss of agency
- Reactive labour
- Engagement > health
- Relational work less visible
- 2010s: Social media takeover

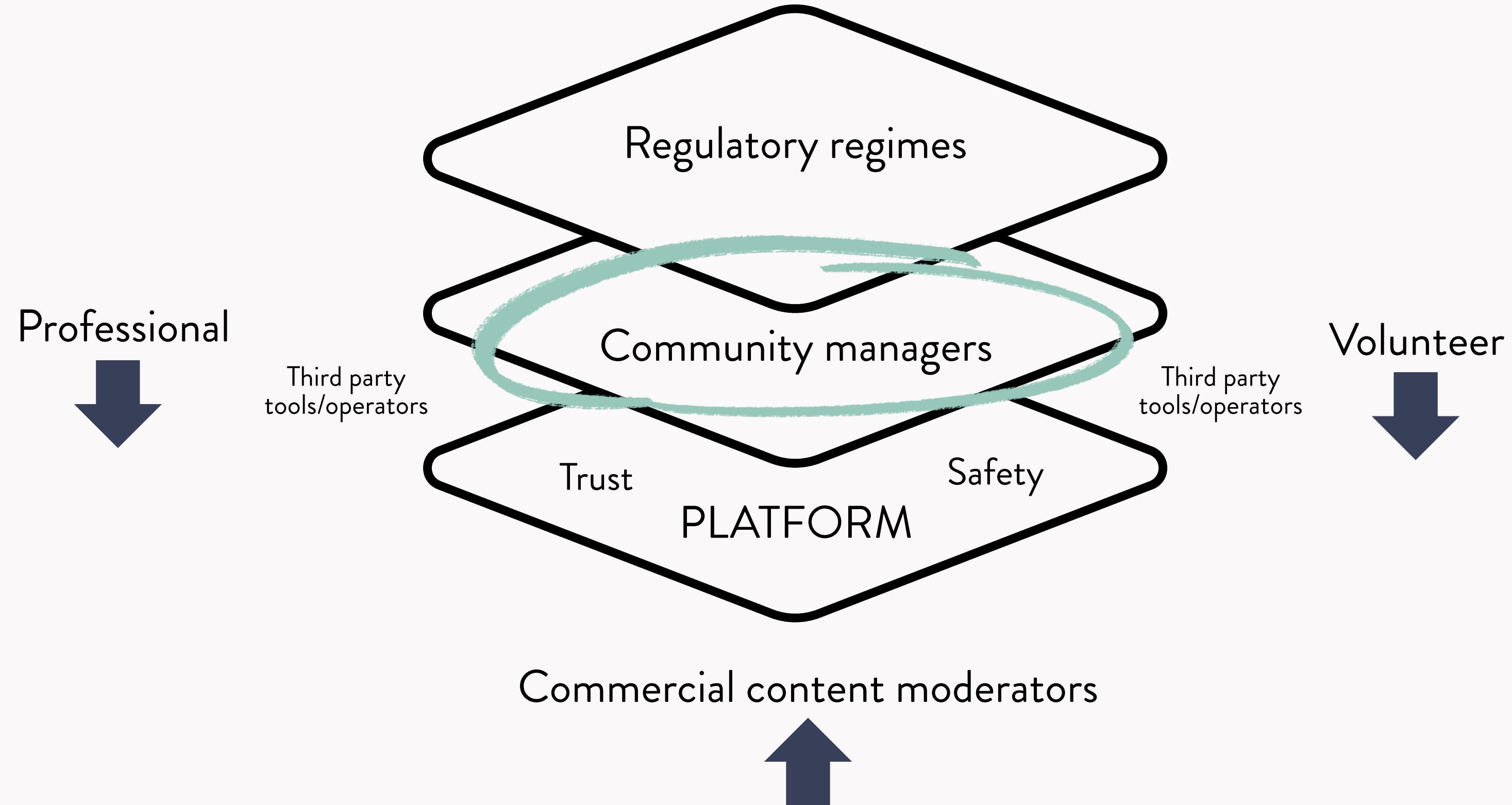
WHAT COMMUNITY MANAGERS DO



- Set behavioural norms
- Mediate conflict
- Monitor social health
- Governance design
- Detect emergent harms
- Steward context + memory
- Micro-regulators
(legally accountable in many jurisdictions)







CM + AI

- Discourse of inevitability and empowerment (not displacement)
 - Contextual flattening
 - Repair labour
 - Power asymmetries

```
from sympy.core import *
from sympy.core.sets import FiniteSet, Union, Intersection, symbols, simplify, Dummy, oo, Interval, And, Or, Piecewise, cacheit, integrate, oo, Lambda, Pow, exp, I, FiniteSet, Ne, Eq, Union, poly, series, factorial, binomial
from sympy.core.function import PoleError
from sympy.functions.special.delta_functions import DiracDelta
from sympy.polys.polyerrors import PolynomialError
from sympy.solvers.solveset import solveset
from sympy.solvers.inequalities import reduce_rational_inequalities
from sympy.core.sympify import _sympify
from sympy.external import import_module
from sympy.stats.rv import (RandomDomain, SingleDomain, ConditionalDomain, is_random,
ProductDomain, PSpace, SinglePSpace, random_symbols, NamedArgMixin, Distribution)

# -145,159 +143,6 @@ def __call__(self, *args):
#     return self.pdf(*args)

# +-----#
# *** Returns the sample from scipy of the given distribution ***
# def __new__(cls, dist, size, seed=None):
#     return cls._sample_scipy(dist, size, seed=seed)

# @classmethod
# def _sample_scipy(cls, dist, size, seed):
#     """
#     * scipy does not require map as it can handle using custom distributions.
#     * However, we will still use a map where we can.
#     """

#-----#
```

COLLABORATIVE FUTURES

- Integrate CM into product and policy design
- Resource CM as safety infrastructure
- Incorporate community health metrics
- Build workflows connecting CM + T&S
- Recognise CM as a strategic governance function





Q & A



Thank you

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