

Thoughts on communities

Carl published a post about online communities a few days ago and I want to contribute to the discussion.

I don't think I have an unhealthy relationship with social tech, but it's not ideal. And I'm looking for ideal. Yet, to be honest, I don't know what ideal means to me.

I believe there's two fundamental aspects at play when it comes to online communities: the human nature of the participants and the scale factor. In my—albeit limited—experience, some issues will inevitably arise when you have people clumped together somewhere, whether that's a physical or a digital space. That's the inescapable reality of human interactions.

That said though, the space in which those interactions take place can have a huge impact on the end result. If you take 50 people and you throw them together in one big empty room, it's almost inevitable that noise will arise. But if you instead place those 50 people in a space that is structured with small quiet areas where small groups can form and interact the end result will be a lot less noisy.

I believe the same is true online and [Mastodon vs Twitter] is a good example of that. We need platforms that are malleable, that can adapt to our use case. But we also need to accept that after a certain scale, a community will inevitably transform. You can have a chilled dinner with 5 or 6 friends. You can't have one with 600 of them. After a certain scale moderation becomes necessary, having defined roles become necessary. I believe there's no way around that issue. That is unless you are extremely careful in the way you're vetting people at the door. But that's easier said than done.

I think it's an unfortunate reality

To conclude this post let me answer those final questions in order to keep the conversation going.

I personally have used Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, Mastodon and Slack. Out of those right now I just barely use Slack, the others are no longer part of my life. I occasionally consume content coming out of Twitter and

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Instagram but that's about it. I don't think those platforms provide any real value to my life.

Where should you look? Dedicated niche websites. Dedicated forums, subreddits, blogs. I'm a strong believer in small dedicated communities.

} 나도 이 작은 커뮤니티에서 활동하면 좋겠어.

I don't think we need something new. We need a new mentality, not a new tool. There's plenty of tools but they all try to reinvent the wheel. My "community" lives on emails those have been around since the 1960s. So I personally don't think we need new tools.

Anyway, those are just some random thoughts on the subject. If you also have thoughts **get in touch** or write a reply on your own site.

Where do you go from here?

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