



Community of Practice (CoP) Implementation Guide



ACC

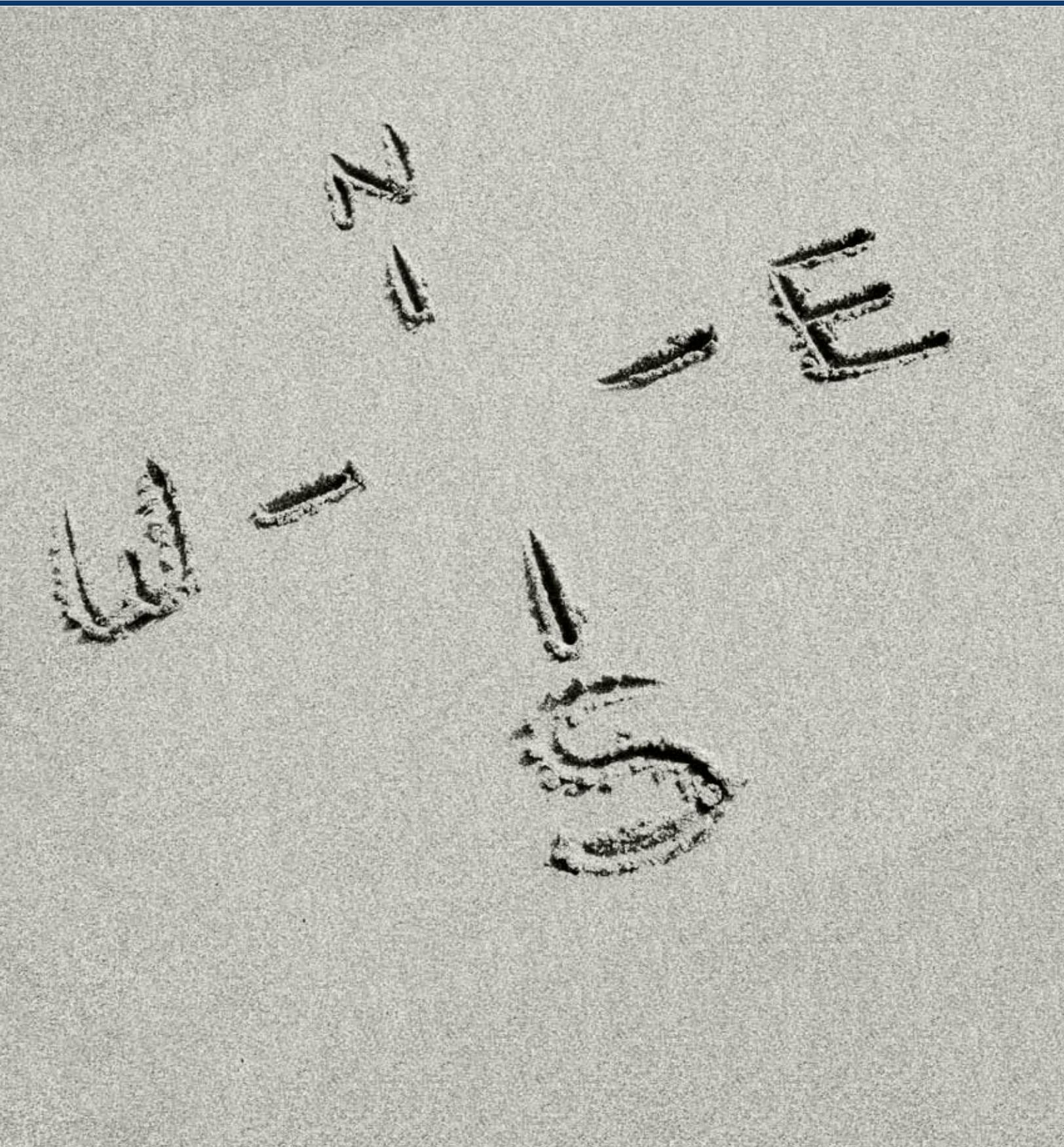
Acquisition Community Connection

Where the Defense Acquisition Workforce Meets to Share Knowledge



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ABOUT THIS GUIDE

The Defense Acquisition University (DAU) Community of Practice (CoP) Implementation Guide (“CoP Guide”) delineates the process and operating procedures for establishing, deploying, and maintaining communities of practice (CoPs) hosted on the Acquisition Community Connection (ACC) practice center (<https://acc.dau.mil>). This guide is offered as a tool to support the establishment and nurturing of communities, and it reflects the ongoing learning and experiences of operating and facilitating a large community of practice center. The terms “community” and “communities” (as well as the acronym CoP) are used in this Guide to describe communities of practice.

WHO SHOULD USE THIS GUIDE?

The CoP Guide is intended for those interested in learning about communities of practice and, specifically, how DAU establishes and sustains communities and virtual collaborative environments. This guide will assist you in working through the steps of establishing a viable CoP, creating relevant knowledge, building a knowledge base, and providing for the sustainment of communities.

GUIDE LAYOUT

The layout of this guide is designed to make it easy for you to access and review the information most pertinent to your interests. The chapters of this guide address the ACC operations and support, and the key elements of community building.

- Chapter 1—**Overview of Acquisition Community Connection (ACC)**: Discusses the structure and scope of the ACC.
- Chapter 2—**ACC Operations**: Discusses the basic management and operating procedures, rules of engagement, and account management of the ACC.
- Chapter 3—**Roles and Responsibilities**: Discusses the key roles and responsibilities needed to make a community successful.
- Chapter 4—**Content Management**: Discusses the process for managing content, including access rights and permissions.
- Chapter 5—**Community Building**: Discusses the process for “how to” establish and sustain a community, including the three phases of community development.
- Chapter 6—**Measuring Performance**: Discusses community metrics and measures of success.
- Chapter 7—**Outreach and Communication (O&C)**: Discusses how to create community awareness and techniques for marketing communities.
- Appendix A—**DAU/ACC Three-Phase Community-Building Process**
- Appendix B—**Sample Community of Practice Workshop Agenda**
- Appendix C—**Charter Template**
- Appendix D—**ACC Metrics**
- Appendix E—**Contacts and Resources**
- Appendix F—**Glossary**

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



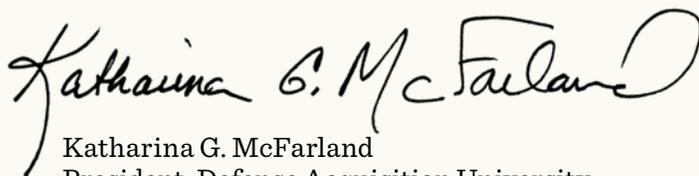
This is our fourth edition of the DAU Community of Practice Implementation Guide. It reflects our lessons learned and experiences in establishing and supporting large online communities. The purpose of this guide is to help you make the Acquisition Community Connection (ACC) and its communities not only relevant, but the best that they can be for connecting the acquisition workforce.

A decade ago, DAU embarked on a journey to expand the learning environment of the Defense Acquisition Workforce by employing the use of communities of practice and attempting to engage the workforce in sharing and collaboration. Those communities of practice were hosted on the online community forum known as the ACC and were centered on acquisition career fields. Today, the ACC has grown to more than 140,000 members, receives more than 1 million unique visitors per year, and millions of page views per month. The community topic areas have grown to include a broad set of acquisition- and business-related topics, and hundreds of workspaces have been established to support the collaboration needs of the workforce. The ACC provides a collaborative “cloud” capability that allows individuals to share and connect across organizational boundaries. The social nature of the ACC invites users to participate in contributing content, responding to questions, and engaging in professional networking.

The ACC also hosts Performance Learning Tools like the Defense Acquisition Guidebook and numerous other Web-enabled guidebooks and tools. The guidebooks are maintained by content owners on a real-time basis, offering the workforce ready access to an integrated set of references, tools, and templates. Along the way, we have introduced new features that allow users to better navigate, contribute, rate, and discover content.

More than ever, communities of practice play a central role in helping the workforce stay connected and traverse the dynamic landscape of the acquisition environment. Communities provide the acquisition workforce with the tools, resources, and people connections that help them to perform on the job. The ACC is well suited to support today’s changing acquisition environment and is vital to fostering a culture that continuously learns, shares learning, and acts upon that learning.

I encourage acquisition workforce members to join communities and connect with other practitioners, to hone their skills, support job performance, and become engaged in shaping their community.



Katharina G. McFarland
President, Defense Acquisition University



OVERVIEW OF ACQUISITION COMMUNITY CONNECTION (ACC)

WHAT IS A COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE (CoP)?

A Community of Practice provides a forum for practitioners of a discipline to interact, to share knowledge and experiences pertinent to their tasks at hand, and to solve business problems. Communities provide a mechanism for individuals to keep each other current in the developments of a shared discipline, and they assist with better top-down communication by providing multiple and more direct methods of disseminating information and ideas.

Available via the Internet 24/7, the ACC is an externally facing, *unclassified* site that serves the defense acquisition workforce by hosting publicly accessible communities of practice (CoPs). The CoPs provide quick access to information and resources, as well as the ability to interact, ask questions, and share experiences with workforce members across the Department of Defense (DoD), thereby supporting job performance, avoiding duplication of effort, enabling faster and better-informed decisions, and advancing the connection of people and ideas.

The ACC is operated and maintained by the Defense Acquisition University (DAU), under the auspices of the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition, Technology and Logistics (USD(AT&L)). The ACC is the collaborative arm of DAU's Acquisition, Technology, and Logistics (AT&L) Knowledge Management System (AKMS). Its primary purpose is to extend the reach of DAU by providing a global learning environment that supports a mission ready defense acquisition workforce, and its goal is connecting people to acquisition know how across DoD and industry.

THE BENEFIT OF CROSSING ORGANIZATIONAL BOUNDARIES

Communities of Practice cross organizational boundaries and introduce users to new and diverse sets of ideas, allowing them to learn before doing, to find and to accelerate solutions, to think differently about problems, and to leverage the know-how of a variety of experienced practitioners. The boundary-spanning aspect of communities offers fertile ground for workforce innovation and fosters the transfer of best business practices across organizations

Since its launch in October 2001, the ACC has expanded significantly to a large practice center covering Defense Acquisition Workforce career fields and cross cutting critical business practices. Though its target audience is the more than 140,000

members of the defense acquisition workforce, the actual audience is far larger (potentially more than a million), encompassing all levels within the military services, defense agencies, industry, and the federal government. In addition to its large scale, the ACC serves a diverse user base, comprised of a wide range of age groups with a variety of experience levels and backgrounds. Nor is it constrained by the conventions of traditional hierarchical structures, thereby providing broad access to peers, expert help, best practices, lessons learned, and innovative ideas, that cross organizational boundaries.

BENEFITS OF MEMBERSHIP

Irrespective of membership, much of ACC's information is publicly available without being logged on. However, ACC account holders gain additional capabilities that guests do not have. They can do the following:

- Access peer/expert contact information (personal profiles)
- Create their own professional network
- Request to join a specific community
- Suggest knowledge or edits to existing knowledge
- Ask and/or answer questions
- Create and share bookmarks for sites internal and external to ACC
- Subscribe for updates
- Blog about subjects that interest them
- Create RSS feeds
- Store and share personal files on their profile pages

I have been very impressed with the Web site. I found it easy to navigate and was able to find what I needed within a couple of mouse clicks. As an added bonus, I found the current phone number and e-mail address of a colleague and old friend with whom I had lost touch. I promptly e-mailed him and reestablished contact. Thanks!

TYPES OF KNOWLEDGE AREAS

Originally, ACC had three basic types of knowledge areas: Communities of Practice (CoPs), Special Interest Areas (SIAs), and Workspaces. As of this version of the CoP Guide, we have eliminated the designation for SIAs. Our rationale was based on the feedback from our users and their confusion over the difference between a CoP and an SIA. Though we maintained that SIAs were typically less collaborative than CoPs, essentially the tool provided the same capability to collaborate, regardless of the designation. For the ACC audience, the difference between the two was difficult to discern and understand. Therefore, all knowledge areas previously known as SIAs are now CoPs, and all knowledge areas will now be classified as either a Community of Practice or a Collaborative Workspace.

CHAPTER 1

Typical attributes of a Community of Practice:

- Is open to the public
- Focuses on providing a repository for a broad range of relevant, topical information
- Provides access to significant processes or critical business issues that are specific to the community
- Facilitates connections and collaboration among its community members

Typical attributes of a Collaborative Workspace:

- Is centrally located and access is restricted to its members
- Is used to share ideas, exchange information, and collaborate on a specific project or team initiative (e.g., Integrated Process/Project Teams (IPTs), Tiger Teams, studies, and “incubation” of CoPs)

LEVELS OF PARTICIPATION

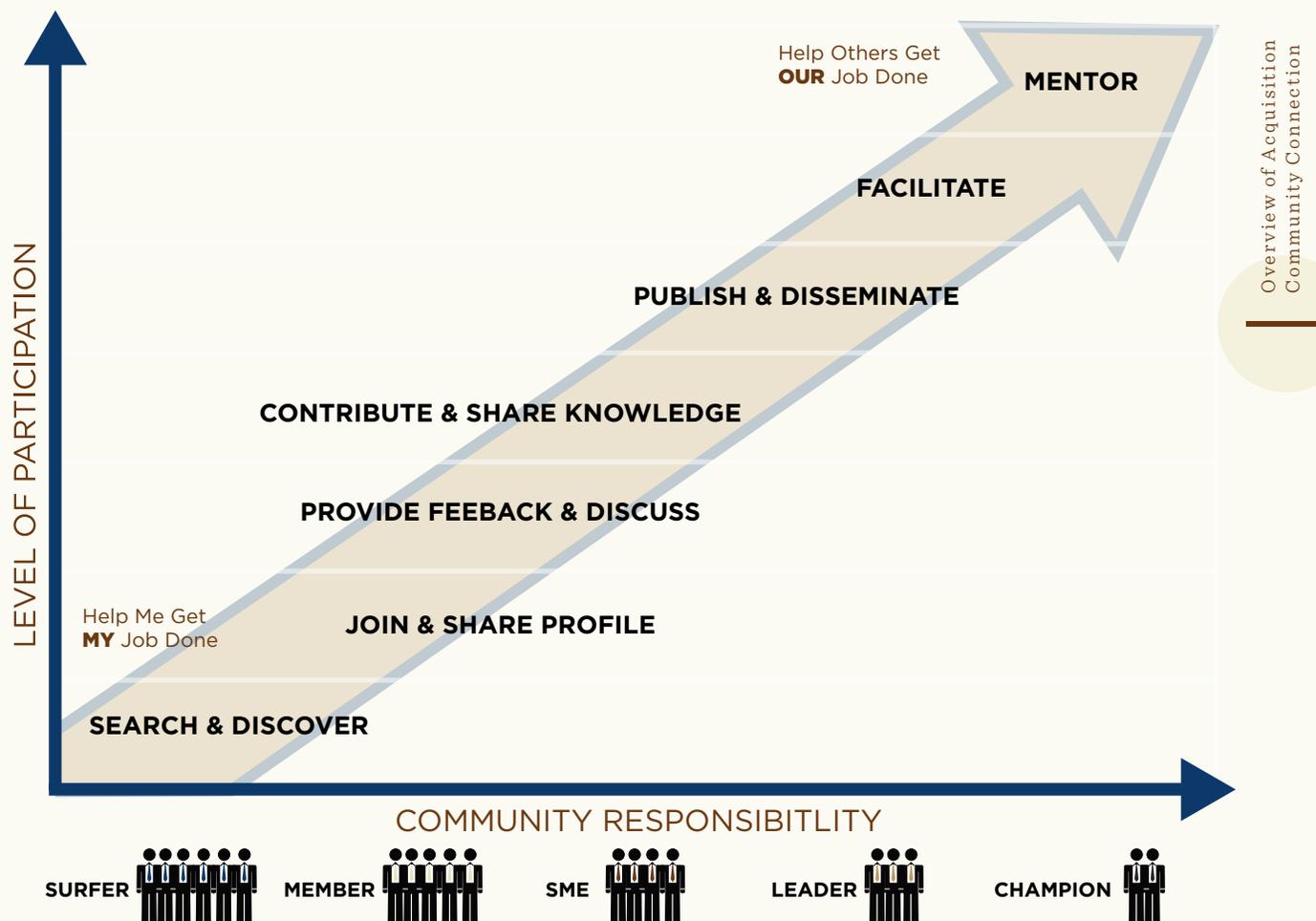
Communities have eliminated the barriers of time and space by enabling DAU to extend its reach to support the workforce on a real time basis by providing access to resources and support beyond the classroom, and to engage our industry and federal partners more fully. However, levels of participation vary greatly among our users. As illustrated in Figure 1, participation falls generally under three primary categories of users:

1. People who do not join or log on but are casual surfers or “consumers,” i.e., individuals seeking knowledge:
 - a. Discover ACC through commercial search engine results
 - b. Represent a large percentage of the page views logged
 - c. Experience the site for the first time
 - d. Receive value, often without progressing up the matrix
2. People who will join for more advanced research but rarely interact or contribute:
 - a. Make up the majority of the membership
 - b. Are often junior level people seeking help or answers to questions
 - c. Are “community of interest” members (i.e., generally defined as those with an interest in a subject versus those who are practitioners)
3. People who will join, interact repeatedly, and contribute knowledge:
 - a. Make up a small percentage of the membership
 - b. Are typically recruited and engaged to be part of the core community group
 - c. Are mainly subject matter experts with experience and knowledge to share

Many users are initially drawn to the site via commercial search results, which typically return the ACC in their top 10 results when searching on acquisition-related topics. Participation in the ACC is free and completely voluntary, and its content is predominantly open to the public, requiring no login to access its extensive knowledge base. As a result, most participation falls in the lower-left quadrant of our participation matrix diagram (Figure 1).

The majority of users are consumers of the information residing on the ACC. This is validated by the high percentage of page views registered by guests (i.e., those visitors who either don't have an account on ACC or have not logged on) and by user feedback that indicates a need for access to relevant and timely sources of information. They are primarily interested in accessing information that will allow them to do their job. They receive value from their interaction through increased productivity—finding what they need quickly, gaining greater awareness, and in some cases, reducing rework.

**FIGURE 1. PARTICIPATION MATRIX
BUILDING TRUST & COMMITMENT**





CHAPTER 2

ACC OPERATIONS

MANAGEMENT

DAU's Global Learning and Technology Center (GLTC) is responsible for the management and operation of the ACC infrastructure. Management responsibilities include planning and budgeting for the operation and maintenance of the system, as well as developing the process and infrastructure controls needed to launch, build, and sustain viable Communities of Practice and Collaborative Workspaces. DAU's ACC Support Team (acc@dau.mil) serves as the technical and administrative staff supporting all aspects of the software operation and end-user support.



DAU will work closely with the Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD) and Service organizations to support the development of CoPs, but the final decision on the use of ACC to host a community will reside with DAU. In the selection process, priority consideration will be given to those communities that have demonstrated a clear sense of business need, articulated the expected organizational gains, and made a commitment to the continued growth and sustainment of the community.

These questions will help assess the level of readiness for establishing a Community of Practice, as well as its potential for success:

- Is there top level community sponsorship?
- Is there an existing sense of community within the targeted stand-up?
- Is there a sense of energy and passion around the community?
- Is there a recognized need that the community can provide, thus providing value to the defense acquisition workforce?
- Is there a significant or critical issue facing the community that knowledge sharing can positively impact? (This implies there is a sense of urgency around an issue.)
- Are there resources (i.e., money and people) to support the community?

Once a community and its content are created, the challenge becomes to sustain that content. To accomplish this, DAU uses both internal and external community practitioners. Internally, DAU maximizes the use of its faculty and staff, within their particular areas of expertise, to more closely tie course content to relevant communities. Externally, DAU encourages subject matter experts from the services, other government agencies, and industry to assist in owning and supporting the development and growth of the communities (*see Community Sponsor role in Chapter 3*).

The ACC operates under the following principles:

- A community's purpose supports the business drivers/objectives of the acquisition community and adds value.
- Community membership and participation is voluntary.
- Communities are self directing—they set their own agenda and determine their own focus.
- Communities are responsible for the configuration and maintenance of their content (content must be regularly reviewed for accuracy, outdated content must be removed or archived, etc.). However, GLTC Knowledge Project Officers (KPO) stand by to assist with the details of maintaining CoPs, when required.
- Communities within ACC will adhere to a consistent theme/user interface, thereby easing navigation.
- Community roles are assigned and operate within the established business rules of the ACC (*see Chapter 3—Roles and Responsibilities*).
- Community members, editors, and leaders are responsible for ensuring that content accessible by the public is releasable to the general public and that information in restricted workspaces conforms to applicable DoD policy and guidance; under no circumstances is classified information to be posted on the ACC.
- Copyrighted materials may not be posted on ACC except as defined under the Rules of Engagement section below.

CHAPTER 2

RULES OF ENGAGEMENT

The ACC provides a collaborative capability that allows individuals to share and connect across organizational boundaries. The social nature of the ACC invites users to participate in contributing content, responding to questions, and engaging in professional networking. Because much of the content in the ACC is open to the general public, it is important to adhere to the following rules of engagement when contributing content to the ACC (please view the legal notices (<https://acc.dau.mil/legalnotice>) for more information):

- ACC is an unclassified system; **DO NOT contribute classified information anywhere in the ACC.**
- ONLY publicly releasable information can be posted in spaces accessible by the general public.
- Community editors may request to add limited distribution materials (including but not limited to Sensitive But Unclassified (SBU), For Official Use Only (FOUO), but not including Not Releasable to Foreign Nationals (NOFORN)) to restricted spaces only. These will be considered on a case by case basis, but under no circumstances will limited distribution materials be allowed in any public spaces. Requests to post this kind of information should be addressed to the chief editor at acc@dau.mil and must be approved by the ACC government lead. Should the request be granted, the poster must ensure that all such documents are properly marked in accordance with DoD guidance.
- **DO NOT** contribute items that discuss information that could place service members in jeopardy or that would be of use to adversaries (e.g., technical information about specific DoD systems, operational plans, troop rotation schedules, position and movement of U.S. naval craft, descriptions of overseas military bases, or vulnerabilities of weapon systems).
- **DO NOT** contribute business sensitive, copyrighted, proprietary information, and/or unlicensed or restricted software. Copyrighted materials may only be posted with the approval of the author, and a copy of the authorization should be attached with the posting. Instead of posting the document, consider inserting a hyperlink to the copyright holder's site.
- Inactive accounts or accounts without current contact information (i.e., e-mail address or phone number) will be disabled or deleted.

Members agree to use the ACC for its intended purpose and are expected and/or encouraged to participate, as follows:

- Keep personal profiles updated
- Post a photo that is appropriate for use on a government Web site
- Suggest/contribute content that is useful to other practitioners
- Engage in discussions and ask questions
- Interact with peers and subject matter experts
- Become a member of a community
- Subscribe to content
- Tag or blog about content

Members are not permitted to do the following:

- Promote personal agendas
- Market commercial items
- Abuse e-mail privileges. (Where permission to send e-mail to a large distribution list exists, it should be used sparingly. Inappropriate use of e-mail, and use of e-mail for spamming purposes, will be grounds for revoking membership.)

ACCOUNT ELIGIBILITY

Since the start of the ACC, users from beyond the traditional DoD organizations have proven to be very valuable and active members of the community, and all participants have benefited from this diverse level of collaboration. Accordingly, the ACC support team uses the following criteria for determining eligibility for and managing ACC account membership (*see Permissions Needed for Contributing Content in Chapter 4*):

- Individuals from the Department of Defense and other government agencies (federal, state, and local, with a .gov or .mil address) are eligible for accounts.
- Contractors or subcontractors with active government contracts and who are verified via the General Services Administration (GSA) Web site are eligible for accounts.
- All membership applications are individually reviewed by the ACC support staff and approved, if validated.
- Use of a .mil, .gov, or defense contractor e-mail address will expedite processing of an account.
- Individuals must provide enough information during registration to support due diligence in verifying account eligibility for the ACC.



ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

A CoP requires a variety of roles to support its development and ongoing sustainment activities. In this chapter, we will address the various community roles, as well as ACC support roles.

COMMUNITY ROLES

Table 1 details generic community roles and their typical tasks. These roles reflect the types of activities that need to be performed, but this does not suggest that individuals cannot perform multiple functions within a community. One person might cover several of these roles in a community, for example, acting as editor, subject matter expert, and facilitator at the same time. Please note that these roles differ from the similarly named ACC access permission levels (*see Table 3 Default Access Rights and Permissions Descriptions in Chapter 4*).

TABLE 1. SPECIFIC COMMUNITY ROLES

Role	Description	Tasks
Community Sponsor	<p>Required role for Community of Practice</p> <p>Provides high-level sponsorship and support for the community at large</p> <p>Promotes the value of membership across an organization, thereby encouraging community growth and commitment of organizational resources</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bolsters community membership by spreading the word • Ensures that the community focuses on business-critical issues by monitoring the outcomes achieved by the community • Acts as the community's champion, encouraging participation in community activities • Provides resources for expansion and usually "sponsors" the community leader and facilitator roles in the community
Community Leader	<p>Required role for Community of Practice</p> <p>Guides the community's purpose and strategic intent, energizes the process, and provides continuous nourishment for the community</p> <p>Acts as a sounding board for ideas</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organizes and coordinates start-up activities • Assists community development by establishing and articulating community purpose and strategic intent • Interfaces with the community sponsor and reports the progress of the community, if applicable. • Identifies community stakeholders and potential community members. • Connects members with each other. • Brings in new ideas when the community starts to lose energy. • Builds/maintains participation and membership by promoting the community, monitoring membership changes, and recruiting new members. • Plans/schedules periodic face-to-face meetings. • Acts as liaison with other communities; • Serves as a subject matter expert (SME) on the focus of the community • Acts as lead editor for the community, designates content editors, and assumes overall responsibility for its content, including scheduling periodic reviews (i.e., every 18 to 36 months) with the core members to ensure that the CoP is still focused on what is important to the greater community.
Subject Matter Expert	<p>Required role for Community of Practice</p> <p>Knowledgeable and experienced member of the community who uses his or her knowledge of the discipline to judge what is important, groundbreaking, and useful</p> <p>Enriches information by summarizing, combining, contrasting, and integrating it into the existing knowledge base</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Helps to establish the community organizing structure • Assists in identifying and mapping critical knowledge applicable to the community • Harvests/creates new knowledge • Works with the content editor to ensure that knowledge objects are relevant, valid, and best sources • Works with the content editor to refresh and expand the knowledge base • Suggests potential topics for face-to-face community meetings and participates in those meetings • Monitors questions and participates in discussions • Provides process analysis expertise • Participates in the community as a member

Role	Description	Tasks
<p>Content Editor</p>	<p>Required role for Community of Practice and Collaborative Workspaces</p> <p>Responsible for content within his or her respective area(s)</p> <p>May be a SME or coordinate with SMEs to maintain the accuracy of their communities</p> <p>Qualifications include familiarity with the structure, layout, and functionality of the content area being managed</p> <p>Must successfully complete editor training and exhibit the following attributes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Committed to acting on behalf of the community and supporting the expression of differing or opposing viewpoints • Currently practicing a discipline relative to the community she or he wishes to edit or must have extensive, practical experience in that discipline • Willing to volunteer time to review and validate content for publishing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manages the process for review and approval of member contributions and, as appropriate, works with SMEs to validate and approve member contributions (for workspaces, content management may be more open, with members having more permissions and no requirements for member contributions to be monitored by an editor) • Communicates guidelines to members for contributing knowledge objects and initiating discussion threads • Works with SMEs to identify and map critical knowledge objects and to develop logical organization of content, making it readily available and easily accessible to members • May develop specific engineered performance support content • Cross-references and submits information from outside the community, making it available to members • Initiates personal contact with community members to generate interest in the community site • Seeks out potential content contributions and understands what is of particular value to the members • Participates in community meetings • Contributes knowledge and shares experiences • Monitors questions to ensure they are answered in a timely manner
<p>Facilitator</p>	<p>Required role for Community of Practice</p> <p>Fosters and facilitates member interaction</p> <p>Ensures that community forums are productive for all members by acting as an independent community process expert</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitors community activity to ensure community responsiveness to members • Serves as a knowledge broker • Provides collaborative tool expertise • Provides expertise about group dynamics and techniques to help the community solve problems and evolve over time • Assists in building/maintaining participation and membership • Stimulates knowledge sharing across the community by coordinating collaboration within the community • Monitors questions to ensure they are answered in a timely manner • Initiates personal contact with community members to generate interest in the community site • Seeks out potential content contributions • Seeks to understand what is of particular value to the members • Coordinates and facilitates face-to-face community meetings • Interfaces with the ACC Support Team on outreach and marketing efforts for the community
<p>Community Member</p>	<p>Voluntary role rather than prescribed</p> <p>Members participate because they get value from their participation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alerts content editor of inaccurate or out-of-date information • Keeps personal profile up-to-date • Shares knowledge, experiences, and lessons learned • Suggests contributions • Participates in discussions, answers questions

CHAPTER 3

ACC SUPPORT TEAM

In addition to the specific community roles, overall operation and support of the ACC is critical to ensure 24/7 availability and accessibility for the communities. The ACC support team is a dedicated staff of government and contractor personnel who provide the operational infrastructure, procedural guidelines, technical support, user support, and community support for the major acquisition domains hosted under ACC. The team also provides training, deployment, and startup functions. Detailed descriptions of these functions are provided in Table 2.



TABLE 2. ACC SUPPORT TEAM FUNCTIONS AND TASKS

Function	Tasks
Practice Center Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manage consistent community look and feel • Design and configure ACC templates • Design and maintain model community • Establish and maintain security, content management processes, and measure/document performance trends • Set security permissions across the ACC practice center • Document, maintain, and adhere to standard operating procedures • Monitor ACC metrics and provide technical expertise and assistance with automating metrics collection in the DAU Data Mart • Track usage trends and report activity
ACC Account Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review, approve, or deny new account applications • Assist with changes in individual contact information • Review, disable, or delete old accounts to help monitor the software seat licenses • Assist users with login and/or password information • Coordinate changes in individual contact information • Assist community editors to assign new members to appropriate group(s), if needed • Notify editors of possible new community members • Provide individual access to communities • Coordinate group access to communities • Assist editors with setting/maintaining permissions on the site (for individuals and groups)
Outreach, Marketing, and Communications Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interface with the community leaders and facilitators to advertise and market the communities • Publish articles in subject-appropriate periodicals • Track and coordinate conference participation • Coordinate communication materials (i.e., newsletters, articles, brochures, guides, posters, etc.) • Monitor inventory of marketing materials • Speak about the ACC and specific communities at events • Advertise community successes • Recruit new members
Provide Technical Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Troubleshoot and respond to ACC user questions • Monitor technical and systems operation of the ACC, including testing new software versions and implementing hardware and software upgrades • Establish shortcut URLs to support the ACC • Move content • Delete topics and communities • Create spaces for CoPs and Collaborative Workspaces • Coordinate required access/permissions groups; • Assist with the development of topics/content/graphics • Coordinate training • Support the community-building process • Consult with and advise communities • Coordinate and conduct workshops for the purpose of establishing or reconstituting a CoP • Develop and maintain templates (offered as a fee-for-service contract) • Support HTML, graphic, and instructional design (offered as a fee-for-service contract) • Develop performance support content (offered as a fee-for-service contract)
Community Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As required, serve/assist in community roles, such as content editor and facilitator, to help populate the site with content by mapping knowledge objects to the appropriate areas within the context of the organizing framework: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Post new material » Review existing content for currency/applicability » Ensure subject matter reviews of contributions made by community members • Archive/delete items, as appropriate • Develop text surrounding knowledge objects, relating content to specific needs of the community • Web-enable and cross-publish material to support an integrated community support structure, where needed • Conduct knowledge audits and mine existing data sources to assist in the continual updating of the CoPs • Facilitate discussions within the community (i.e., initiate discussions, coordinate SME participation, and monitor discussions for inappropriate content) • Monitor usage activity • Track usage trends and report activity



CONTENT MANAGEMENT

Communities are only as valuable as the currency, relevancy, and reliability of the information they contain and the participation of their members. This chapter addresses our content management philosophy and the operating processes on the ACC to support content management.

“We are starting from scratch to develop a Risk Management Program for a multibillion-dollar project. Big undertaking. Lots of work. Extensively used your Web site to make sure that we are not reinventing the wheel.”

ACC’s operating principle is to ensure timely access to relevant and reliable content via designated community content management roles (as described in Table 3), established content management processes, and the active participation of community members. Without good content management processes in place, the community quickly becomes a dumping ground and eventual graveyard of content, useful to no one. Community leaders, content editors, facilitators, and subject matter experts are responsible for managing content, identifying knowledge gaps, and ensuring the overall quality of community content and responsiveness to members. The intent and design of communities also encourage maximum participation by members to share and contribute content, ask and respond to questions, and provide feedback to the community. Community members play a critical role in helping to keep content fresh and relevant.

Lists of both contributions and discussions “roll up” to the top level of a community, making it easy for editors, SMEs, and community members to view and track the relevancy and currency of knowledge objects. It should be the goal of every community to monitor discussions, especially, to ensure that all are answered in a timely manner. Unanswered questions have a negative impact on the credibility and morale of the community, so the editors are strongly encouraged to coordinate answers if none are forthcoming from the community members or SMEs.

A feedback button on every page of the ACC allows members and users of the site to easily report broken links, outdated information, and other issues related to content. The feedback is tied to the unique page identification, making it easy to quickly resolve problems with the page and fix content issues. (<https://acc.dau.mil/tutorial/feedback.htm>) for the ACC tutorial on the use of the Feedback button. This and other tutorials on participating in the community are available at <https://acc.dau.mil/usertraining>.)

The ACC Support Team monitors communities to ensure quality. DAU leadership reserves the right to take communities offline that are not maintained, fall below a minimum level of quality, or do not directly support the defense acquisition workforce and its work processes and products. Quality will be measured in terms of currency of material, accuracy of material, and activity within the community (i.e., page views, number of contributions, attachment downloads, members, etc.).



CONTENT CATEGORIES

There are four categories of content within the ACC: topic pages, contributions, conversations (questions and answers), and personal profiles. Topic pages house not only explanatory text on a given subject, but also contributions and conversations relative to that same subject. Contributions are made up of a variety of “types,” with each containing a contextual description that clarifies the value of the contribution, and, if appropriate, one or more attachments to add further clarification. There are 16 default types of contributions. However, these types can be modified or deleted and new types created to meet each community’s needs. Conversations are self-explanatory, with one small addition: Like contributions, conversations may include attachments. Each ACC account holder has a personal profile page automatically created when an account is approved. It contains the information supplied by the user when she or he applies for an account: Name, e-mail address, telephone number, bio, etc. The user’s contributions, conversations, and network activity are displayed on his or her profile page. All these types of content also are referred to as knowledge objects.

CHAPTER 4

PROCESS FOR CONTRIBUTING CONTENT

The process for member content submissions varies according to the community or workspace. The following minimum business rules for capturing, validating, re-freshing, and expiring content are required:

- All contributions and comments are attributed to an individual; ACC does not allow anonymous contributions.
- Users must have a valid account and must be logged in to suggest contributions, ask questions, or respond to questions (see the default permissions in Table 3 below).
- Knowledge objects have a required minimum set of associated descriptive information (metadata). Those fields marked with an asterisk are required to be completed.
- Suggested contributions are “pending” until reviewed and either approved or denied by an editor. The contribution will not be available for viewing by the community until/unless it is approved.
- Editors of restricted workspaces decide the appropriate permissions needed to contribute content to their space.

It is the responsibility of content editors to ensure that the publicly accessible content they post or approve for posting is, in fact, releasable to the general public and is not restricted in any way (FOUO, NOFORN, Limited Distribution, etc.).

PERMISSIONS NEEDED FOR CONTRIBUTING CONTENT

Access rights/permissions refer to the level of functionality that user groups have within any given ACC community. Chief editors assign access rights to individual members or groups; however, editor/SME/core permissions are granted with the concurrence of the CoP leader/primary editor. The default levels of access are described in Table 3. Unique roles can be coordinated with the ACC Support Team on a case by case basis; however, under no circumstances may users contribute any type of content anonymously (i.e., as guests).

Guests are those visitors who either don't have an account with the ACC or who have not logged in. Guests can view public content on the site but cannot suggest contributions or view personal contact information. To join the ACC, a user must complete an *application* and must be a member of DoD, government, or DoD's supporting defense industry (see *Account Eligibility* in Chapter 2). Requests for accounts are evaluated and either approved or denied by a member of the ACC support team.

After obtaining an account, a user can choose to become a member of a community or communities within the ACC. Typically, community membership provides additional access rights and permissions (see *Table 3 Default Access Rights and Permissions Descriptions*).

Only members logged in to the site can view other members' profiles; personal contact information is not viewable by guests. The log-in option allows the personal contact information to be accessible to accounts/members, providing them with a way to network with other practitioners and to follow more seasoned professionals. Logged-in accounts have access to additional privileges as described in Table 3.

TABLE 3. DEFAULT ACCESS RIGHTS AND PERMISSIONS DESCRIPTIONS

Group Name	Default Access Rights/Permission
Guest	Guests are casual surfers or members of the ACC who are not logged in. This group's default permissions allow them to view communities, topics, contributions, questions, responses, links, highlights, and relationships located in spaces open to the general public. They can also request membership to the ACC (see Account). Their ability to participate is restricted, along with their ability to view account profiles.
Account	Accounts are those who have requested and met the requirements for membership of the ACC. They may or may not belong to a CoP, but if they do, they still are considered an account when and if they travel outside that CoP. The default permissions for accounts allow them to participate at a higher degree or level than guests. Accounts have all the access rights/permissions assigned to guests, plus, when logged in, accounts can view members profiles and contacts. They can request to become a member of a CoP; subscribe or unsubscribe to content updates; and e-mail pages to people. Accounts can also suggest contributions, questions, responses, and relationships, or suggest changes to existing items. They can edit those items that they have suggested and that have been approved by an editor (see Editor).
Community Member	Community members are accounts who have requested and been granted membership in a CoP. They have slightly elevated permissions within the confines of the CoP(s) of which they are members. The default permissions of community members include all those of an account, plus the following: editing your personal profile and adding new questions and responses without editor approval.
Core Member	Core members function at a level slightly higher than a community member; inheriting all the permissions of the community member, plus the following: adding new topics, comments, and links, and deleting links without editor approval.
Editor	Editors are usually the highest-ranking members inside a CoP and inherit all the functionality of core members, plus they can approve all pending content types and community membership requests. They have the proper permissions assigned to delete or edit any contributions within a CoP and have full control over the CoP, except they may not delete a topic, nor can they delete a CoP.
Community Administrator	Community administrators are rarely needed inside a CoP, and by default, no permissions are assigned to this group. However, the group can be customized with the permissions needed to delete a topic and/or to delete a CoP, if certain guidelines are met. In almost all cases, these duties are best left to the chief editor group because of the potential for severe harm to the community's knowledge base.
Chief Editor	The chief editor group is reserved for the sole use of the DAU ACC Support Team. Only those on the Support Team can become members of this group. However, not all members of the DAU Knowledge Management team are members of this group. This is the most powerful group within the application and can perform all the functions defined for any group listed, plus additional functions not defined here.



COMMUNITY BUILDING

ACC has two basic types of knowledge areas: Communities of Practices (CoPs) and Collaborative Workspaces (Workspaces). Establishing a CoP is an evolutionary process and requires a more formal process than a Workspace to ensure the following:

- Community objectives have been thoroughly thought out.
- Appropriate roles and responsibilities have been assigned.
- Content management issues have been addressed.

While Workspaces may often nurture the future growth of a CoP, the process used to address Workspaces (private or public) is informal and intended to allow for quick and easy setup without the necessary rigor involved when establishing a CoP. Workspaces provide users with the ability to share and interact in a private (i.e., restricted) space.

REQUESTING A COLLABORATIVE WORKSPACE

To request a Workspace, the member must substantiate the requirements for said space. Individuals or groups interested in establishing a Workspace may submit a request via e-mail (acc@dau.mil), answering the requirements listed on the Workspace area of the ACC (<https://acc.dau.mil/workspaces>). You must be an ACC member and logged in to access the space. All requests go to the chief editor for processing. As a part of the process, the chief editor will inform both the DAU director of knowledge management and the ACC project manager of the request, including the name of the individual requesting the space, the Workspace name, the intended purpose of the space, and the supporting organization. The basic criteria for requesting a Workspace are as follows:

- Requester must provide a point of contact and phone number, originating organization, Workspace name, Workspace purpose, and target audience/membership.
- Requester must demonstrate that the Workspace is directly related to supporting DoD “Big A” acquisition, which is the overall acquisition environment, including requirements generation, budgeting system, and the acquisition process.
- To the maximum extent possible, the individual provided with the space should be willing to share work products, knowledge, or lessons learned with the related CoPs, where appropriate to do so.

ESTABLISHING A CoP

Individuals or groups interested in establishing a CoP should contact the ACC Support Team at acc@dau.mil. The ACC Support Team uses a three-phased approach to help guide those interested in establishing a CoP (*Appendix A*). The phases are as follows:

- Get Started
- Implement and Build
- Launch and Operate

PHASE I—GET STARTED

Step 1—Hold Initial Concept Meeting. The purpose of the initial concept meeting is:

- To determine if the request is an appropriate fit within the context of the ACC practice center;
- To review the community-building process outlined below; and
- To determine the timing of next steps.

At the conclusion of the initial concept meeting, all involved should walk away with an understanding of the potential scope of the new community, suggested individuals and organizations believed to be critical to the effort's eventual success (e.g., potential core membership), a proposed timeframe for the implementation of a community, and a draft agenda for the initial core member planning workshop. If, during this meeting, participants determine that a community is not appropriate at that time, a Collaborative Workspace may be established as an alternative or as a building block for a potential future community.

Step 2—Conduct Core Planning Workshop. At the conclusion of the workshop, participants will have identified:

- Focus areas to start the community;
- An organizing framework for its content;
- Suggestions on specific content to populate the site; and
- Proposed individuals to fill key community roles and responsibilities.

The objective of the workshop is to have the participants identify problem areas and critical issues the community faces, and then prioritize and weigh these issues in the context of whether knowledge sharing will have a positive impact upon them. The workshop is typically a 1- or 2-day session (depending upon scope and complexity of the community) and seeks to engage participants in a conversation around the following topics:

- Purpose/intent of the community (What is the purpose of the community? What are the community's objectives?)
- Problem areas that the community is trying to solve (Can knowledge sharing assist in solving these problems?)
- Critical business issues/challenges that the community faces (Are these the issues/challenges upon which the community should focus?)
- Target audience/membership of the community (Who is the community's target audience?)
- Community roles (What community roles should be assigned?)
- Measures of success (How will success be measured?)

At the end of the day, typically five or six issues emerge and form the basis of the community's focus. A sample agenda for the Core Planning Workshop is provided in *Appendix B*.

CHAPTER 5

Step 3—Draft Community Charter. It is strongly recommended that each community establish a charter that specifies the community’s purpose and objectives. The output of the workshop provides much of the input for the charter, and the action of drafting the charter allows the members to reflect on the true focus of the community. A charter template is provided in *Appendix C*.

PHASE II—IMPLEMENT AND BUILD

Step 4—Establish Community Structure. The actual implementation and building of the online community starts with establishing a community structure. The cornerstone to a successful community is a logical structure that is both useful and intuitive for the users. When establishing a viable organizing structure, it should be based on critical business issues identified by the community and be flexible enough to accommodate growth, while being rigid enough to locate information in relatively few mouse clicks. The intended audience should also be considered in developing the community structure to ensure that the content best serves their needs.

Step 5—Inventory Knowledge Assets. Knowledge mining or mapping is used to define where the knowledge “nuggets” or objects reside and to determine the individuals responsible for their upkeep. The intent is not just to fill the community with content, but also to selectively choose those knowledge objects that support the identified focus areas of the community and to provide useful information to community members. During this step, knowledge gaps also are identified.

Step 6—Organize the Content. The community as a whole or by assigned roles must decide where each knowledge contribution should reside within the community structure. If a knowledge object can easily fit into more than one topic area of the structure, it must be determined which topic area of the structure will be the primary residence, and with which topics the knowledge object will be shared. Having only one instance of the knowledge object minimizes time spent keeping the information updated and accurate.

Step 7—Identify and Develop Content. This is an optional step within the Implement and Build Phase, but one that is encouraged. During this step, content is developed to address knowledge gaps identified during the knowledge inventory. Often during the process of establishing a community, core members will identify knowledge gaps or areas that would benefit from further instruction. This content can be created and submitted to the community in the form of “Frequently Asked Questions” (FAQs), learning materials, or other forms of content. These additional knowledge contributions should be created and housed appropriately within the community’s structure.

Step 8—Identify Content Editors. Now that the charter has been created, the structure established, and the knowledge objects identified, created, and organized, it is time to identify content editors. Content editors are responsible for monitoring both existing and new content within the community (see *Chapter 3—Roles and Responsibilities*).

Step 9—Train Content Editors. To effectively perform their job, the content editors must be properly trained in the use of the tool, and specifically, the role and responsibility of the editor. It is recommended that two or more editors be trained in the functionality of the ACC tool to ensure built-in redundancy and an equitable distribution of the workload, thereby lessening the load placed upon any one individual.

PHASE III—LAUNCH AND OPERATE

Step 10—Launch the Community. The official opening of the community kicks off communication efforts to target the appropriate practitioner audience and efforts to raise awareness.

Step 11—Market the Community. Effective marketing of the community is essential to its overall growth. Marketing can be accomplished in various ways, from telling a friend, to passing out brochures at a conference, to e-mailing a news group, etc. This role should not reside with just a single member, but, rather, should be embraced by all members. Community leaders should set the example for others. All members serve as ambassadors for their community and should use any opportunity to spread the word and encourage others to join. See *Chapter 7* of this Guide for more information on Outreach and Communication methods.

Step 12—Manage the Content. Management and operation of the community is an iterative process. Content editors must continually refresh and purge content, monitor discussions, and approve or deny the suggested content based upon its potential value to the community. Editors must also decide if a knowledge object should be prominently featured within the community to draw additional attention to it. As the community evolves, new issues arise, and areas of focus may change. Part of the role of the community leader and content editor is to keep the community relevant to the needs of the members. Ensuring that the content is up-to-date is critical to the credibility of the community as a valued resource and to keeping the members interested and engaged. Members should also be encouraged to contribute content that is relevant and useful to the community and report outdated or incorrect content. Complete content reviews are recommended at 6- to 12-month intervals.

Step 13—Facilitate Interaction. The facilitator of the community is primarily responsible for keeping the community growing by encouraging the formation of relationships between the members. The facilitator has several methods to help accomplish this goal. Methods include the ability to arrange and run community meetings, start discussions on hot topics of concern to the members, and put people with questions in touch with subject matter experts who have the answers. For more details on facilitator responsibilities, see *Chapter 3—Roles and Responsibilities*.

Step 14—Determine the Effectiveness of the Community. The last step of the community-building process seeks to measure the success of the community in meeting its intended objectives. Metrics provide a way to measure the growth and effectiveness of the community toward its objectives and goals and to identify potential areas of improvement (see *Chapter 6—Measuring Performance*).



MEASURING PERFORMANCE

How do communities measure their effectiveness? Metrics, both quantitative and qualitative, can assist community leaders in determining how effective the community is in reaching their target audience and providing value to their members. Communities are encouraged to use metrics not only to track their activity levels but to identify actions that will help to build and to improve the community.

“I could have saved at least one month of time off my research and work by using the resources that ACC CoP provides.”

Quantitative metrics provide a numerical measurement that can be used to gauge activity levels (i.e., number of page views, visits, contributions, attachment downloads, and helpful votes) and growth (i.e., number of members and communities) and to assess trends within the ACC and individual communities. In addition to the metrics mentioned above, the ACC also captures the following metrics for communities:

- Lifetime activity
- Total count of knowledge objects viewed and downloaded
- Item creation activity
- Most- and least-active people
- Most-viewed items
- Most-popular items



Though these measures may be relatively easy to capture, they only provide part of the metric equation. The more important question is, “Do the communities add value?” We can infer a relationship between level of activity and value, but it is not a precise correlation. Much of the value of ACC is tied to factors that are difficult to measure but have a positive impact on job performance. These factors may include better access to knowledge, increased awareness of and adherence to policy, and increased adoption of best practices. All these factors contribute to time savings and increased productivity.

PERFORMANCE METRICS (QUANTITATIVE)

ACC metrics are collected and managed using DAU’s Data Mart. The data are extracted directly from the report tables in ACC and uploaded nightly to Data Mart. Data Mart provides a robust reporting and dashboard capability to capture and to display selected metrics for reporting and managing the ACC. The ACC dashboard data are available to DAU personnel only, but automated reports can be sent to editors.

The Data Mart dashboard for ACC displays metrics for page views and member accounts. Each of these metrics is tracked by monthly totals and trends, as well as aggregate totals for the fiscal year. Contact hours (i.e., the amount of time users are engaged and actually using the ACC) also are tracked by calculating $((\text{number of visits} \times \text{average visit length in minutes}) / 60)$. A standard set of ACC metrics reports is accessible from the dashboard.

The ACC practice center and the individual community metrics are captured in standardized report formats. ACC metrics capture lifetime, fiscal year-to-date, and monthly totals for each metric element. *Appendix D* provides a list of metrics. Community leaders and editors can request a monthly report that provides both a breakout of specific communities, as well as a rollup of those communities into a top-level view of activity across a community grouping, such as contracting. Community leaders can request these monthly community reports by contacting acc@dau.mil. Customizable reports and charts can be created on demand.

A discrete set of community metric reports is also available to community editors and leaders as part of the ACC toolset. The reports capture community lifetime totals and display results based on various timeframes. In addition, the tool provides activity metrics on each community topic and knowledge object, based on various periodicities, and captures the following metrics, which are useful in measuring community activity:

- Number of page views
- Number of metacard views
- Number of questions
- Number of answers
- Number of relationships and highlights
- Number of e-mailed pages
- Number of contributions
- Number of attachments downloaded
- Number of videos downloaded

PERFORMANCE METRICS (QUALITATIVE)

While quantitative activity metrics, like number of page views, number of visitors, and member accounts, are more easily captured, the more important measures focus on how communities contribute value. Studies report that the typical information worker spends up to one-fourth of his or her day searching for the right information (see *Table 4 Knowledge Management and Work Performance Studies*). These studies have documented lost productivity due to redoing work, searching for expert help, or searching for an answer. When we consider qualitative performance metrics, we strive to show the value of ACC in three areas:

1. Value of DAU Extended Reach—The ability to extend DAU assets to a greater number of people, thereby increasing the value of DAU.
2. Value to the Workforce—The ability to positively impact the users' ability to perform their jobs. This may take the form of time savings, increased productivity, reduction in errors, reduction in duplication efforts, improved quality, increased awareness of and adherence to policy.
3. Value of Collaboration Workspaces—The ability to quickly establish Collaborative Workspaces for teams, at little to no cost.

In addition, there are two mechanisms available on the ACC to address qualitative user feedback: a Helpful Vote allows users to rate content helpful, and the Feedback button allows users to report bad links and incorrect data, as well as to rate the content's reliability and usefulness. User testimonials are yet another way to gauge the value of communities. ACC user testimonials are captured and help us better understand the value of the community. The value of the ACC has been documented in its sustained growth over eight years and in the comments of users who find it provides a much-needed source of relevant and easily accessible acquisition information.

TABLE 4. KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT AND WORK PERFORMANCE STUDIES

Study	Description
Time Spent Searching Cuts Into Company Productivity	By <i>Denise Dubie</i> , Network World http://networkworld.com/news/2006/102006-search-cuts-productivity.html
Northrop Grumman study found that knowledge workers spend 12 percent of their time searching for experts.	A KPMG study concluded that 60 percent of employees spent 1 hour per day duplicating work. Several studies describe the time wasted when someone sends a “blast” e-mail to an entire department, team, or group searching for an answer.
KMWorld—The High Cost of Not Finding Information	<p>Susan Feldman, March 1, 2004 http://kmworld.com/articles/readarticle.aspx?articleid=9534 (online version) http://ejitime.com/materials/IDC%20on%20The%20High%20Cost%20of%20Not%20Finding%20Information.pdf (downloadable version)</p> <p>Studies by IDC, as well as organizations such as the <i>Working Council of CIOs</i>, <i>AIIM</i>, the <i>Ford Motor Co.</i> and <i>Reuters</i> have found that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge workers spend from 15 percent to 35 percent of their time searching for information. • Searchers find what they seek 50 percent of the time or less, according to both Web search engines and our own surveys. An IDC study in 2001 (“Quantifying Enterprise Search,” IDC, May 2002) found only 21 percent of respondents said they found the information they needed 85 percent to 100 percent of the time. • Forty percent of corporate users reported they cannot find the information they need to do their jobs on their intranets. <p>IDC analysts defined the typical workweek of an information worker by breaking it up into tasks performed. The study found that a typical worker spends 9.5 hours per week searching for information and 9.6 hours analyzing information. Put together, these tasks consume almost 50 percent of the workweek! (Even worse, of the 9.5 hours spent searching for information, 3.5 hours yield no results.)</p>



OUTREACH AND COMMUNICATION (O&C)

Communication is an essential ingredient in the growth and evolution of ACC and its communities. This chapter describes the objectives, the target audience, and the tasks associated with launching outreach and communications (O&C) initiatives. Its scope is broad and provides direction and guidance for communication and education initiatives.

O&C is designed to promote and generate awareness of a community by creating a continuous flow of information from an individual community to its membership and to the workforce. In addition, it is designed to alert community members and users of new functionality as it is added to the community space.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The major goals of O&C for communities residing in the ACC are as follows:

- Create awareness of ACC communities, evolving capabilities, and implementation efforts
- Increase participation, thereby supporting job performance, of the defense acquisition workforce in the ACC communities by encouraging them to do the following:
 - Join (become a member) of one or more communities
 - Contribute content
 - Share experiences with others
 - Participate in online discussions
 - Become a subject matter expert (SME) for topic(s) of interest
 - Network/collaborate with other community members
- Facilitate a knowledge sharing culture
- Assist communities in promulgating their messages to their members and to the acquisition community

TARGET AUDIENCE

The ACC target audience consists of the defense acquisition workforce, including their industry partners. As we build partnerships with the federal workforce to support their acquisition requirements, they, too, become part of the audience that benefits from the ACC communities.

O&C METHODS

To achieve the O&C goals of raising awareness, promoting participation, facilitating knowledge sharing, and assisting individual communities, we have listed common methods that the ACC team uses to promote the ACC and its communities. Community editors may combine any or all of the following methods to market their specific communities. Please contact acc@dau.mil for assistance, if needed.

TABLE 5. ACC OUTREACH AND COMMUNICATION METHODS

Action	Audience	Method	More Information
Submit news to the ACC Practice Center Spotlight/ Highlight section for a 2- to 3-week period.	ACC users	Online	E-mail acc@dau.mil with your request and a paragraph describing the launch or update of your community or other news-worthy items.
Submit news to the Defense Acquisition Portal (DAP) news rotator.	DAP users	Online	E-mail dap@dau.mil with your request and a paragraph describing the launch or update of your community or other news-worthy items.
Add a Community Announcement contribution to your community page, or edit the community page to add announcements directly.	Your community users	Online	You can use these two methods to highlight community events and meetings, new directives, or other items of immediate interest to your community.
Invite bloggers in your field to blog about your community , its features, and its benefits. Alternatively, start your own blog discussing the community on the ACC or elsewhere.	Anyone	Online	E-mail established bloggers and invite them to blog on your community and its events, or begin a blog on the ACC by logging in, going to the subject about which you would like to blog, and selecting Other Actions > Blog . You can then link to the blog entry from your community’s main page, from e-mails, and elsewhere
Invite users to subscribe to your community by e-mail and RSS feed.	Anyone	Online	Encourage visitors to subscribe to your community with a message like this: “Get updates on new content! Sign in and select the Subscribe or Other Actions > Subscribe link at the top of the page to get e-mail notification when this page or section changes.” Encourage them to subscribe via RSS (which pushes content out to their reader of choice) with language like this: “Be the first to find out about new [your community] content! Look for the orange RSS symbol to subscribe to our RSS feed from Outlook, Google Reader, or another RSS aggregator.”
Find ways to integrate community content with portals via RSS feed.	Anyone	Online	While DAP is systematically integrating ACC community feeds into the career field gateways and should eventually integrate yours, you may need to contact the owners of other portals (for specific services and agencies) to discuss how they can consume RSS feeds from your community to display on their portal.
Create a Facebook page, GovLoop page, LinkedIn page, or Twitter feed for your community. Post short messages about current events relevant to the community and link to new or interesting community content regularly.	Anyone	Online	Create accounts for your community on any of these social networking sites (or sites specific to your service or agency) and invite community visitors to subscribe to them from your community. E-mail the ACC editor at acc@dau.mil and ask for examples of communities that incorporate social media like Twitter and Facebook. Make sure to publish new messages (“tweets”) regularly to direct them to useful features and content on the community.
Send community e-mails to orient new members, introduce them to team members, and invite them to participate.	Community members	E-mail	Using the ACC’s automatic e-mail functionality, send customized e-mails for your community needs. Make messages clear, simple, consistent, and targeted.

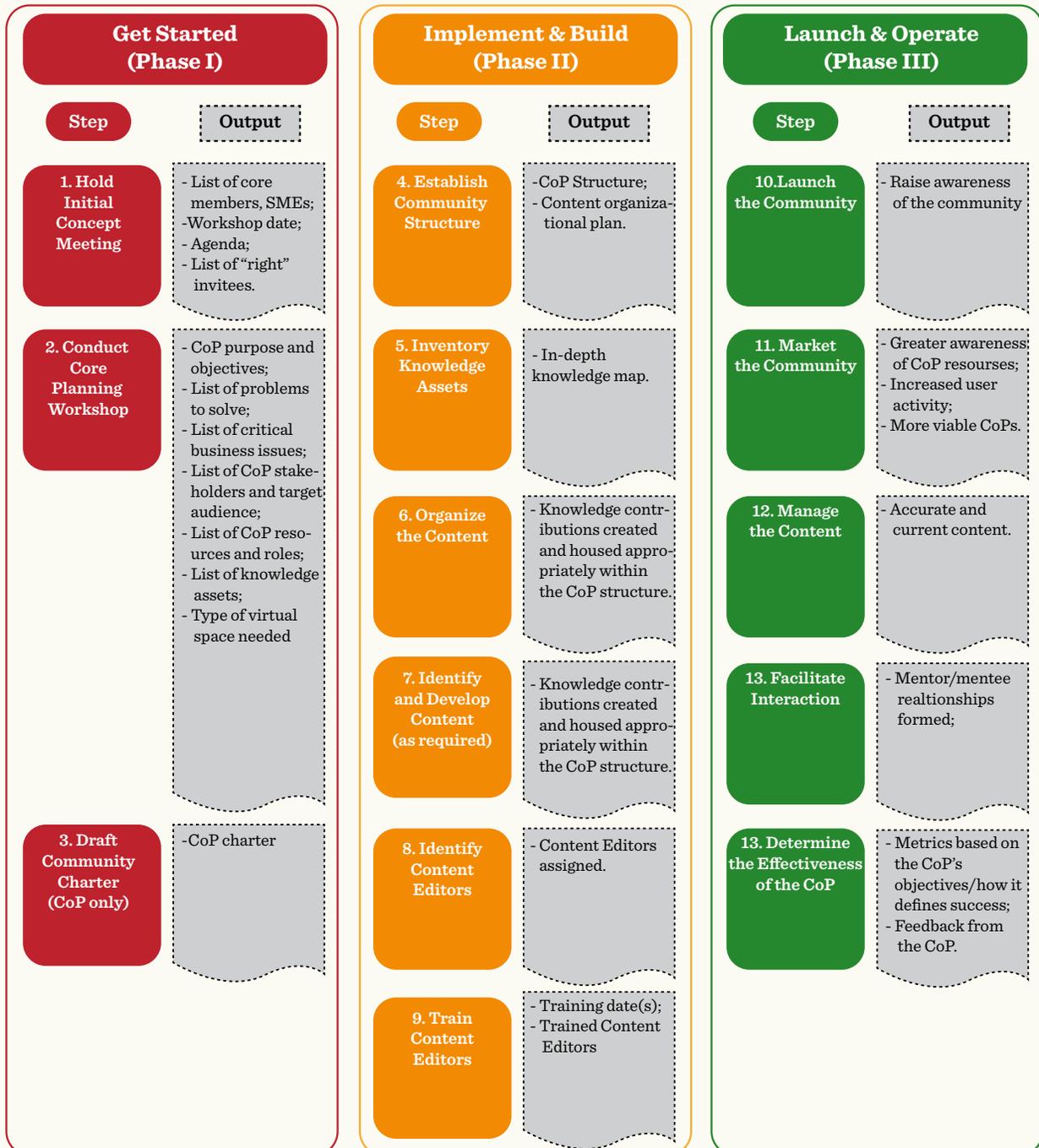
CHAPTER 7

Action	Audience	Method	More Information
Add your community URL to your e-mail signature block. This is an easy, low-cost way to publicize your community of practice.	Anyone	E-mail	Add a brief tagline to your regular e-mail signature inviting readers to visit your community.
Send e-mail blasts about major new communities or events to targeted acquisition-related audiences.	DAU alumni, faculty, and staff or DoD acquisition workforce	E-mail	Compose an announcement and submit it for distribution in DAU or defense acquisition workforce e-mail blasts by contacting the DAU GLTC director of knowledge management.
Request a brief and memorable shortcut URL for your site that will let users go directly to your site without navigating the whole ACC. Use the shortcut URL in publications and brochures.	Anyone	General	Contact acc@dau.mil to request a specific shortcut URL. If granted, it will take the form, “ https://acc.dau.mil/YOURSHORTCUT .” Some examples include the Defense Acquisition Guidebook at https://acc.dau.mil/dag and the Log CoP at https://acc.dau.mil/log .
Optimize your community for search engine page rankings (i.e., how high your page appears in search results).	Anyone	Optimize search results	For content that doesn't require sign-in, you can optimize by doing the following: Tag content appropriately and uniquely. Organize your CoP taxonomy with a shallow structure so search engines don't have to go down many levels to reach content. Add a thorough, well-written, descriptive paragraph to your community's front page to provide search engines with more substance. Make sure the page title matches the content on the page, to make the page rank higher in search results.
Organize and publicize real-time community meetings to strengthen the community network and to build members' trust and willingness to participate in the community.	Community members	Organize events	Publicize when, where, and why your community is meeting. These meetings can be physical (i.e., face-to-face) or virtual, such as phone, Web, or video conferences.
Develop briefing demonstrations to present your community's benefits and goals.	Anyone	Present personally	Highlight the purpose and feature key capabilities of the community, demonstrate ease of use, and provide information for joining and subscribing to the community.
Participate in topically related events (e.g., conferences, seminars, and symposia) and share your community's benefits with potential members.	Anyone	Present personally	Ask event organizers if you can set up a display or booth at the event or even give a presentation or sit on relevant panel discussions. Consider bringing brochures or other handouts and community business cards to events.
Develop and distribute brochures or other handouts highlighting the benefits of membership in your community.	Anyone	Print materials	Many desktop publishing programs (such as Word, WordPerfect, and MS Publisher) have premade templates for brochures. If your organization has a print shop, graphic designers there can help you to design a more professional brochure.
Request and distribute AKMS brochures that include benefits of ACC membership.	Anyone	Produce print materials	Request AKMS brochures from DAU Publications at acc@dau.mil .
Print and distribute community business cards displaying your community's name and URL and list key benefits on the back.	Anyone	Produce print materials	You may choose to print your own cards with built-in word processing program templates and business card paper. Several commercial vendors online also provide a free introductory batch of a few hundred personalized business cards to new clients. Also, check with your organization for a way to order custom business cards.

Action	Audience	Method	More Information
Set up an information kiosk or bulletin board to distribute information on the community to passers-by.	Anyone	Produce print materials	Print displays with interesting graphics. Clearly outline benefits of joining the community. If you have promotional items, business cards, or brochures, this is a good place to make them available.
Order and distribute personalized promotional items with your community's name, logo, and URL to attract attention and remind people of its existence.	Anyone	Produce print materials	Examples are ink pens, lanyards, and stress balls. You can find a wide variety of these products, generally with bulk discounts, on various commercial providers' sites.
Print and laminate two-sided reference guides that provide the community's URL, purpose, features, benefits, and a quick how-to for features.	Anyone	Produce print materials	These laminated sheets tend to be kept when paper publications might be recycled. They also last longer and stand out among other brochures
Advertise in trade publications and newsletters.	Anyone	Produce print materials	Identify the publications your target community members tend to read and submit advertisements, including the name, benefits, and URL of your community, along with any upcoming events
Create QR (Quick Response) tags to let Smartphone users get to your community quickly.	Smartphone users	Produce print materials	Create QR tags (two-dimensional barcodes) using inexpensive or free services and applications found online. Then publish the tags on your promotional materials (i.e., newsletters, brochures, business cards) to give Smartphone users quick access to your community.
Submit news to the ACC Month in Review newsletter.	ACC editors and users	Publish in newsletter	E-mail acc@dau.mil with your request and a paragraph describing the launch or update of your community or other newsworthy items.
Submit news to DAU INSight newsletter.	Internet DAU	Publish in newsletter	Contact Insight@dau.mil with a 600-800 word article.
Submit an article to subject-specific publications , such as professional organization newsletters, trade magazines, and other places where your target audience will concentrate.	Specific groups	Publish in newsletter or magazine	Locate the publication's editorial e-mail address and request publication guidelines
Submit an announcement to the DAU Alumni Association.	DAU alumni, faculty, and staff	Publish in newsletter	Contact the DAU Alumni Association at dauaa2@aol.com with the announcement text.
Submit an article to the Defense AT&L magazine about your community's features, benefits, and successes.	DoD AT&L workforce	Publish in magazine	Submit an article of 600 to 800 words. For past issues and examples of articles, see http://www.dau.mil/pubscats/Pages/DefenseAtl.aspx .
Publish a community newsletter.	Community members	Publish in newsletter	Write a brief, informative newsletter for plain text (no images, no bolding/italics, no color) and e-mail it to community members. Do this by going to Other Actions > E-mail . A dialogue box will open. In the "To:" field, select Groups and then choose Community Members. Title the message, copy your newsletter content into the message body, and click Send . Contact the ACC chief editor at acc@dau.mil for examples of newsletters other communities have sent.

DAU/ACC THREE-PHASE COMMUNITY-BUILDING PROCESS

THE DAU / ACC 14-STEP COMMUNITY-BUILDING PROCESS



SAMPLE COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE WORKSHOP AGENDA

8:00–8:30 a.m.	Welcome, Background, Meeting Objectives, Review of Agenda
8:30–9:00 a.m.	Introductions, Sign In, Logistics
8:30–9:00 a.m.	Introduction to KM and Communities of Practice
9:30–9:45 a.m.	Break
9:45–11:30 a.m.	Group Brainstorm: What are the critical issues/challenges facing the community?
11:30 a.m.–12:15 p.m.	Group Brainstorm: Which of these issues/challenges can be improved by knowledge sharing?
12:15–1:00 p.m.	Lunch
1:00–2:30 p.m.	Group Brainstorm: Which of these issues/challenges can be improved by knowledge sharing? (continued)
2:30–3:30 p.m.	Identify key stakeholders and community members: Who/what is the community’s target audience?
2:30–3:30 p.m.	Community of Practice Demonstration
4:00–4:45 p.m.	<p>Wrap-up: Action Items, What’s Next?</p> <p>Key actions derived from workshop:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community purpose and objectives are established. • Key topic/thrust areas are identified and community is organized around those topics. • Community roles and responsibilities are identified and assigned.

CHARTER TEMPLATE

Community Name:

(Identify the name of the community, e.g., Logistics CoP.)

Community Membership/Audience:

(Identify the functional types that the community is targeting or is trying to attract, e.g., DoD logistics workforce, industry partners working logistics, other individuals working related logistics areas.)

Community Purpose/Intent:

(Identify the purpose/intent of the community, e.g., the community is focused on documenting, sharing, and transferring best practices.)

Type of Community or Knowledge Area:

(Identify the type of virtual space that best supports the community's purpose.)

Community Objectives:

(Identify the community objectives, i.e., the specific areas/issues that the community is interested in addressing.)

Community Roles:

(Identify by name the individuals who are filling roles.)

Sponsor _____

Leader _____

Content Editor _____

Critical Business Issues:

(Identify the critical business issues faced by the community.)

Resources:

(Identify the resources required to support the community, i.e., the organic resources that are available, the contractor support that is required, and any performance-engineered content that needs to be developed.)

Measures of Success:

(List measures of success as determined by the community during the workshop.)

APPENDIX D

ACC METRICS

Metric	Lifetime Totals	FY-to-Date Totals	Current Month
ACC Practice Center Wide			
Number of Communities	x	x	x
Number of Topics	x	x	x
Number of Contributions	x	x	x
Number of Discussions and Posts	x	x	x
Number of Accounts	x	x	x
Number of Account Requests	x	x	x
Number of Account Requests Rejected	x	x	x
Unique Logins	x	x	x
Accounts Created	x	x	x
Webtrends Data: Actual Number of visits			x
Webtrends Data: Average visit length			x
Webtrends Data: Unique Visitors			x
Webtrends Data: Number of page views			x
Community Wide			
Number of Page Views	x	x	x
Number of Topics	x	x	x
Number of Contributions	x	x	x
Number of Discussions and Posts	x	x	x
Number of Memberships	x	x	x
Number of Membership Requests	x	x	x
Number of Membership Requests Rejected	x	x	x
Knowledge Created	x	x	x
Discussions Created	x	x	x
Memberships Created	x	x	x
Page Visits by Members	x	x	x
Page Visits by Nonmembers	x	x	x
Metacard Visits by Members	x	x	x
Metacard Visits by Nonmembers	x	x	x
Highest-Ranked Items	x	x	x
Most-Viewed Items	x	x	x
Webtrends Data: Actual Number of visits			x
Webtrends Data: Average visit length			x
Webtrends Data: Unique visitors			x

CONTACTS AND RESOURCES

Resource	Access Point	Description
ACC Support Team	acc@dau.mil	Contact for ACC Support Team for Level 2 support and questions.
ACC User Info and Training	https://acc.dau.mil/usertraining	Includes tutorials on how to navigate the ACC, contribute knowledge objects, and initiate and reply to discussions.
ACC Virtual Tour	https://acc.dau.mil/acctour	Online tour that provides an overview of the Acquisition Community Connection (ACC).
DAU Community of Practice Implementation Guide	https://acc.dau.mil/copguide	View or download a digital copy of the Guide.
Tutorial: Navigation Overview	https://acc.dau.mil/tutorial/Navigation_Overview.htm	Guides you through the basics of the left navigation area, the breadcrumb path, and the community navigational graphics.
Tutorial: Contribute Content	https://acc.dau.mil/tutorial/Contribute.htm	Illustrates how to contribute knowledge to the ACC Web site.
Tutorial: Join a Discussion	https://acc.dau.mil/tutorial/Discuss.htm	Covers the basics of starting a discussion on a given topic at any level (i.e., Community, Topic, or Contribution level).
Tutorial: Subscribe to Content	https://acc.dau.mil/tutorial/Subscribe.htm	Demonstrates how to subscribe to a topic, discussion, or contribution. Also shows the advantages of doing so.

GLOSSARY

Account: An account is someone who has requested and met the requirements for membership in the ACC and has privileges to log in to the ACC.

Acquisition Community Connection (ACC): Hosted by the Defense Acquisition University, the ACC is an external-facing community of practice site focused on acquisition topics of interest to the defense acquisition workforce. It facilitates the exchange of ideas and sharing at a macro level.

AT&L: An acronym that refers to the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition, Technology, and Logistics.

Collaborative Workspace: Collaborative workspaces provide users with the ability to share and interact in a private (restricted) space.

Community of Practice: A forum for practitioners of a discipline that allows them to interact and share knowledge and experiences pertinent to their tasks at hand and to solve business problems. Communities provide a mechanism for individuals to keep each other current in the developments of a shared discipline, and they assist with better top-down communication by providing multiple and more direct methods of disseminating information and ideas.

Content Categories: Refers to the four categories of content within the ACC: topic pages, contributions, conversations (questions and answers), and personal profiles.

Content Management: Refers to the processes established to ensure a high level of relevant, authoritative, and fresh sources of information.

Contribution Types: There are 16 default contribution types designated in the ACC. Contribution types include, but are not limited to, references, lessons learned, examples, presentations, and related Web sites.

Data Mart: A specialized version of a data warehouse. Like data warehouses, data marts contain a snapshot of operational data that helps people to strategize based on analyses of past trends and experiences. The key difference is that the creation of a data mart is predicated on a specific, predefined need for a certain grouping and configuration of select data. A data mart configuration emphasizes easy access to relevant information.

Guest: Guests are those visitors who either don't have an account on the ACC or are not logged in.

Knowledge Object: Refers to any of the four content categories of information, along with its associated metadata, that can be added to the community of practice site.

APPENDIX F

Member: A member is someone who, after becoming an ACC account holder, has requested and met the requirements for membership in one or more communities of the ACC. Members have slightly elevated permissions within the confines of the CoP(s) of which they are members.

Metadata: Data (or information) about data. It is the descriptive information about a particular knowledge object that includes the type and characteristics of the object, e.g., document owner, type of document, benefit/value statement, etc.

Participate: Participation in the ACC could take many forms: searching/browsing for information, contributing knowledge or discussion threads, mentoring or being mentored by another member, serving as an editor, SME, etc. Touching the system in any way is considered “participating.”

Practice Center: The term used to describe the entire Acquisition Community Connection, including all CoPs, and Workspaces.

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