

## Community Participation and C2C Helping: Does Participation Reduce the Likelihood to Help?

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## Value of C2C Helping in Communities

- Over 40% of consumers turn to online consumer communities for help with products (Maoz 2012)
- C2C helping reduces service cases by 15% (Maoz 2012)
- Firms that leverage online communities can reduce service costs by 10-15% (Gartner 2012)
- Consumer communities are dominated by third party websites while over 1/3 of firm hosted communities are “Ghost Towns” (ComBlu 2010)
- Community members can help firms address problems they cannot address themselves



## Who is Helping Whom?

- Prior research suggests that community participation promotes C2C helping
- Which type of third party community should firms support/promote?
- How should firms structure their own communities in order to promote C2C helping?
- C2C helping in brand specific communities
  - C2C helping is a defining characteristic of brand specific communities (Muniz and O'Guinn 2001)
  - ...but so is oppositional loyalty. Is this a good thing? (Thompson and Sinha 2008)
- C2C helping in product category communities
  - Non-brand specific consumption communities (e.g., Fischer, Bristor, and Gainer 1996)
  - Do they promote in-group helping? Oppositional loyalty?

## What is C2C Helping?

- Consumer to consumer (C2C) helping behavior is “behavior that enhances the welfare of a needy other, by providing aid or benefit, usually with little or no commensurate reward in return” (Bendapudi, Singh, and Bendapudi 1996, p. 34)
- C2C helping behavior is defined from perspective of the recipient (e.g., Bendapudi, Singh, and Bendapudi 1996; Gruen, Osmonbekov, and Czaplewski 2006)
- This definition avoids self-serving or deceptive declarations that can occur with self reporting
- However, it is subject to underreporting if recipient fails to acknowledge help



## Brand Community Participation & C2C Helping

- Participation in a brand community increases knowledge about products and identification with fellow owners (Muniz and O'Guinn 2001)
- This provides the motivation and ability necessary for helping behavior (Guy and Patton 1988; Berry, Seiders, and Grewal 2002)

*H1: Higher participation in a brand community increases the likelihood of individuals helping members within the brand community*

- Participation also fuels oppositional loyalty against rival brands and their admirers (e.g., Thompson and Sinha 2008)

*H2: Higher participation in a brand community decreases the likelihood of individuals helping members in a rival brand community*

## Brand Community Participation & C2C Helping

- But what about helping non-brand specific product category members?
- Oppositional loyalty towards those who don't share their brand allegiance should decrease the likelihood to help

*H<sub>3A</sub>: Higher participation in a brand community decreases the likelihood of individuals helping members within the product category community*

- However, brand community members are motivated to recruit non-members (Muniz and O'Guinn 2001)

*H<sub>3B</sub>: Higher participation in a brand community increases the likelihood of individuals helping members within the product category community*

## Product Category Participation & C2C Helping

- Participation in a product category community should also foster product expertise and identification with fellow members (e.g., Hogg and Abrams 2003)

*H<sub>4</sub>: Higher participation in a product category community increases the likelihood of individuals helping members within the product category community*

- If brand communities are viewed as out-groups, participation will reduce the likelihood to help; otherwise, the greater expertise that comes with participation will lead to an increased likelihood to help

*H<sub>5A</sub>: Higher participation in a product category community decreases the likelihood of individuals helping members within brand communities*

*H<sub>5B</sub>: Higher participation in a product category community increases the likelihood of individuals helping members within brand communities*

## Study Context

- Product category was 3D computer graphics cards
  - Technology lends itself to developing expertise and C2C helping
  - Two dominant brands with 98% market share and established brand communities (ATI and NVIDIA)
  - Active product category community
  - Nature of product (cost and use) fosters product and brand involvement
- Collected data from a high traffic computer community which hosted both brand communities and a product category community
- Use of a common user account allowed tracking of participation within and across communities
- Study context had a “Thank You” system by which members can acknowledge help, providing a measure of helping from the recipient



Title	Start Date	Replies	Views	Last Message I
Killed GPU - not connected to slot but power was Laurijan, Sep 12, 2014		Replies: 3 Views: 283		RCoon Sep 12, 2014
Which GPU can my psu handle? siganos, Sep 8, 2014 ... [2]		Replies: 30 Views: 1,109		EarthDog Sep 11, 2014
Upgrading GPU to best my current system will allow.. nathan323, Aug 21, 2014		Replies: 11 Views: 718		OneMoar Sep 8, 2014
 New graphics card Advice? surrealbx, Sep 6, 2014 ... [2]		Replies: 35 Views: 1,373		Tatty_One Sep 8, 2014
Intel integrated graphics problem Wulbo, Sep 7, 2014		Replies: 5 Views: 275		eidairaman1 Sep 7, 2014
NVIDIA GTX870M 6GB mobile graphic issue Rado D, Sep 5, 2014		Replies: 2 Views: 466		Rado D Sep 6, 2014
What Graphics card should I buy £100-£200 For Gaming Jasper Chavasse, Aug 26, 2014 ... [2][3]		Replies: 59 Views: 2,076		Countryside Sep 1, 2014
EVGA GTX 780 Strange Heaven 4 Results? demonred, Aug 29, 2014		Replies: 13 Views: 605		GrelverBlade Aug 30, 2014
2 290x, add a 2nd 780/780ti or wait for 880 springs113, Aug 23, 2014 ... [2]		Replies: 34 Views: 1,440		springs113 Aug 27, 2014
A few questions about multi-gpu setups. Upgrayedd, Aug 25, 2014		Replies: 17 Views: 552		D007 Aug 27, 2014
8800GTS or ATI HD4850 Live OR Die, Aug 27, 2014		Replies: 4 Views: 439		Melvis Aug 27, 2014
Crossfire Blue Screen Wulbo, Aug 22, 2014		Replies: 4 Views: 302		FreedomEclipse Aug 23, 2014
Water cooled R9 290s CF or Water cooled 770s in SLI? Joker, Aug 20, 2014		Replies: 15 Views: 694		RazrLeaf Aug 22, 2014

## CF 280x to GTX 970

Discussion in 'Graphics Cards' started by Imdabossou, Wednesday at 2:50 PM.

Nov 26, 2014 at 2:50 PM

#1



**Imdabossou**



Joined: Dec 6, 2012  
Messages: 20 (0.03/day)  
Thanks Received: 4  
System Specs ▾

I am thinking of selling my two R9 280x cards and getting a single GTX 970, as the power consumption/heat of the two cards is quite excessive, and crossfire usually just causes me more issues. I have read that the gigabyte 970 is the best cooled and practically silent. I also heard that the 390x will be coming out soon so the R9 280x prices could drop even more. I bought them together for around £600 in total so it will be sad to see them go, as they only cost around £120-150 second hand now.

What do you guys think? good idea to sell the cards and stick with a single GTX 970? I think in some games I could loose a few frames but will it be worth it?

Nov 26, 2014 at 2:58 PM

#2



**64K**



Joined: Mar 13, 2014  
Messages: 734 (2.80/day)  
Thanks Received: 391  
System Specs ▾

If you're in a hurry then sell the two R9 280X and pick up a GTX 970. That 970 is plenty for your 1080p TV. It might be best to wait and see what AMD is going to bring with the R9 300 series though. There might be a better deal coming.

Imdabossou says thanks.

## Data

- Collection of all messages posted in a forum as well as the Thank You's each post received across all three forums
- General account information for each user was collected
- Secondary data collection phase conducted to gather data on behavior across 31 others forums for control variables
- A total of 1,069,066 messages were collected from 17,026 unique users
- Analysis focused on a 25-month period from April 2008 to April 2010 during which all three forums were available
- Unit of analysis being the individual member on a monthly basis

## Measures

- *Help month*: the observed dependent variable indicating the month in which help was provided
- *Forum participation variables*: number of posts in a given forum in prior 3 months
- *Membership duration variables*: number of months that have elapsed since first post in each forum
- *Thanks in ATI, NVIDIA, and Graphics*: the number of Thank You's a member has received in the brand and product category forums; provides measure of the amount of help given in these forums
- *Thanked in other forums*: the number of Thank You's received in the other 31 forums; provides measure of general helpfulness of the member outside of this specific product context
- *Thanks given to others*: number of Thank You's given to others; provides measure of the amount of help received
- *Posts per day*: the average number of posts made by each member per day

# Analysis

- Helping was measured based on whether an individual received one or more “thank you’s” in a given month
- This approach ensures that the measure reflects the willingness to help, rather than the number of people that benefited from a single helping event
- Hazard models are able to accommodate time varying covariates and repeated events (Cleves, Gould, and Gutierrez 2004)
- Therefore, a repeated failure hazard modeling approach was used
- A Cox PH model was first estimated to assess sensitivity of results to distributional assumptions
- A Gompertz parametric hazard model was estimated which includes a frailty term to account for the presence of unobserved heterogeneity
- The results of the Cox PH and Gompertz models were consistent therefore the latter is reported

# Results

	Mean	Gompertz Parametric Hazard Model with Unobserved Heterogeneity		
		ATI Forum	NVIDIA Forum	Category Forum
ATI 100 Pre3	.0171	3.304**	.721*	1.759**
NVIDIA 100 Pre3	.0046	.419**	16.768**	1.081
Graphics 100 Pre3	.0090	.724*	.605*	1.295*
ATI Thanks	1.7103	-----	1.061**	1.051**
NVIDIA Thanks	.6279	1.101**	-----	1.055*
Graphics Thanks	.8052	1.047**	1.047**	-----
Posts Per Day	.3579	1.220**	1.199**	1.276**
Thanks Given	38.7792	1.001	.999	.999
Thanks Rec Other	39.5177	.999**	.999	.999**
ATI Mem. Duration (Mos.)	12.9900	.922**	1.011†	1.034**
NVIDIA Mem. Duration	3.5259	1.041**	.941**	1.079**
Graphics Mem. Duration	12.7201	1.002	.994	.889**
Log-likelihood		-1399.217	-933.804	-854.631
Number of Observations		16,400	6,846	18,326

†p<.1 \*p<.05 \*\*p<.01

Note: A hazard ratio greater than 1 indicates an increased likelihood to help while a hazard ratio less than 1 indicates a reduced likelihood to help. Empty cells indicate where a variable is part of the dependent variable and thus excluded as an IV.

Note: The Pre3 participation variables reflect number of posts in the prior three months in units of 100. The membership duration variables reflect number of months since first joining the forum. The Thanks variables are count variables.

# Summary

✓	H1: Higher brand community partic = more likely to help in brand community
✓	H2: Higher brand community partic = less likely to help in rival brand community
✗	H3A: Higher brand community partic = less likely to help in product community
✗	H3B: Higher brand community partic = more likely to help in product community
✓	H4: Higher product community partic = more likely to help in product community
✓	H5A: Higher product community partic = less likely to help in brand community
✗	H5B: Higher product community partic = more likely to help in brand community

# Replication Study

- Limitations of main study
  - Dependent on a help acknowledgement system
  - Complex analysis
  - Single study context
- Replication study context: Computer processors
  - Two dominant brands with established brand communities: AMD and Intel
  - Large product category community
  - C2C helping plays important role
- Data collected from a large computer enthusiast community
  - 1,022 threads containing 7,147 messages from 210 unique users
  - Spanned a 4 month period from June to Sept. 2007
  - First 3 months used to compute participation variables
  - Manually coded messages from 4<sup>th</sup> month based on evidence of helping





# Analysis


- Dependent variable was whether help was rendered in focal month (0/1)
- 3 month participation counts for each of the three communities (ATI, Intel, Product Category)
- Control variables:
  - Thanks given
  - Membership duration in months
- Analyzed using logistic regression

# Results

	Intel Forum			AMD Forum			Category Forum		
	B	SE	Sig.	B	SE	Sig.	B	SE	Sig.
AMD 100 Pre3	-7.382	2.805	.009	13.229	3.019	.000	-4.205	2.053	.041
Intel 100 Pre3	12.318	2.504	.000	-6.682	2.620	.011	-6.540	2.030	.001
General 100 Pre3	-4.510	2.094	.031	-3.433	2.346	.021	21.178	4.362	.000
Thanks Given	-.204	.231	.378	-.717	.539	.183	.399	.282	.157
AMD Mem. Duration (Mos.)	.002	.021	.932	.018	.024	.451	-.010	.020	.616
Intel Mem. Duration	.023	.017	.176	-.014	.019	.453	-.013	.016	.416
General Mem. Duration	-.024	.020	.228	.000	.022	.987	.019	.019	.320
Constant	-.573	.287	.046	-1.249	.337	.000	-.406	.292	.164
Model Sig.		.000			.000			.000	
-2 Log-likelihood		205.747			167.585			205.443	
Nagelkerke R <sup>2</sup>		.396			.390			.450	

## Discussion



- The more individuals participate, the more they help fellow community members
- Evidence of the ability to help: The more helpful members are in one community, the more they are able to help in another
- Yet, higher participation leads to withholding that help
  - Brand community versus rival brand community
  - Product category community versus brand community
-  Product category communities treat brand communities like rival groups

## Brand Communities: Benefits at a Price



- Brand communities are a two edged sword
  - Brand communities enhance helping within the community and reduce helping towards rivals
  - Brand communities can limit the access to help from members of the product community
- As the number and size of brand communities expands within a product category, the total amount of C2C helping behavior could decline
- At the market level, brand community strategies may therefore backfire by “Balkanizing” consumers
- Only firms with the largest brand communities are likely to realize a relative advantage (but at the expense of consumers)

## Managerial Recommendations

- Considering promoting brand specific communities for C2C helping if:
  - Brand already has the largest brand community
  - Brand has a large market share
  - In a new product market without a developed product category community
- Consider promoting product category communities for C2C helping if:
  - An established product category community already exists
  - Brand has a small market share or is a new entrant
  - Brand lacks an established brand community
  - Competitors have large established brand communities
- Avoid “fighting fire with fire” when faced with a competitor with a large brand specific community: court the product category community instead!



Allen Edmonds  
The Great American Shoe Company

## Questions / Comments?

