

# Building Communities of Practice

CREATING AN INFORMATION MANAGEMENT MOVEMENT



# Agenda



- ▶ **What's a Community of Practice?**
- ▶ How to Start a Community of Practice
- ▶ How to Support and Sustain Communities of Practice



# What is a Community of Practice?

- ▶ “Communities of practice are groups of people who share a concern or a passion for something they do and learn how to do it better as they interact regularly.”

-- Etienne and Beverly Wenger-Trayner

*Introduction to communities of practice, 2015*



# Examples of Communities of Practice

- ▶ AIIM!
  - ▶ (And other professional associations)
- ▶ Hobbyist groups
  - ▶ Video game support communities
- ▶ Technology user groups



Image sources: MMO Champion, WarcraftPets.com





**Jesse Wilkins**

6287 Contributions    29626 Points

- ### My Communities Quick List
- AIIM Company of Fellows...**  
40 members
  - Special Interest Group: Oil and Gas**  
48 members
  - Digital Ethics Group**  
40 members
  - CIPs Unite!**  
175 members
- [View all communities →](#)

- ### Followed Content
- Volunteer Notetakers Needed...

**Advice on what to do in Atlanta, GA**  
David Robinson in AIIM Open Forum 12 days ago

Discussion

To Atlanta, GA members Hello. I'm presenting at the upcoming AI+IM Global Summit arriving in Atlanta 3/29/25 and looking for some local advice on how to best use the Saturday evening and Sunday before ... [show more](#)

Recommend 5 Replies



**Christopher Foley** 1 day ago ⚡ Most Recent

Hi David, On my last visit to Atlanta, I took in the Coca-Cola Museum (great fun) and the Atlanta History Centre. Not sure what I will do this time. Anyway, looking forward to the AIIM Summit. Chris ... [view reply](#)

**Volunteer Notetakers Needed for AI+IM Global Summit 2025!**  
Tori Liu in AIIM Open Forum 4 days ago

Discussion

Planning for the AI+IM Global Summit 2025 is well underway, and we need your help! We're looking for volunteers to assist with notetaking during our sessions and workshops. All notes will be used to create ... [show more](#)

Recommend (1) 4 Replies

- ### Quick Links
- AIIM+ Pro: Training Courses
  - Membership Self-Service Hub
  - Meet AIIM Ambassadors
  - AIIM+ Members-Only CIP Study Guide
  - AIIM Main Website
  - AI+IM Global Summit 2025
  - Job Center
  - AIIM Swag Shop

### Community Events List



**MAR 25** AIIM+ Community Conversations

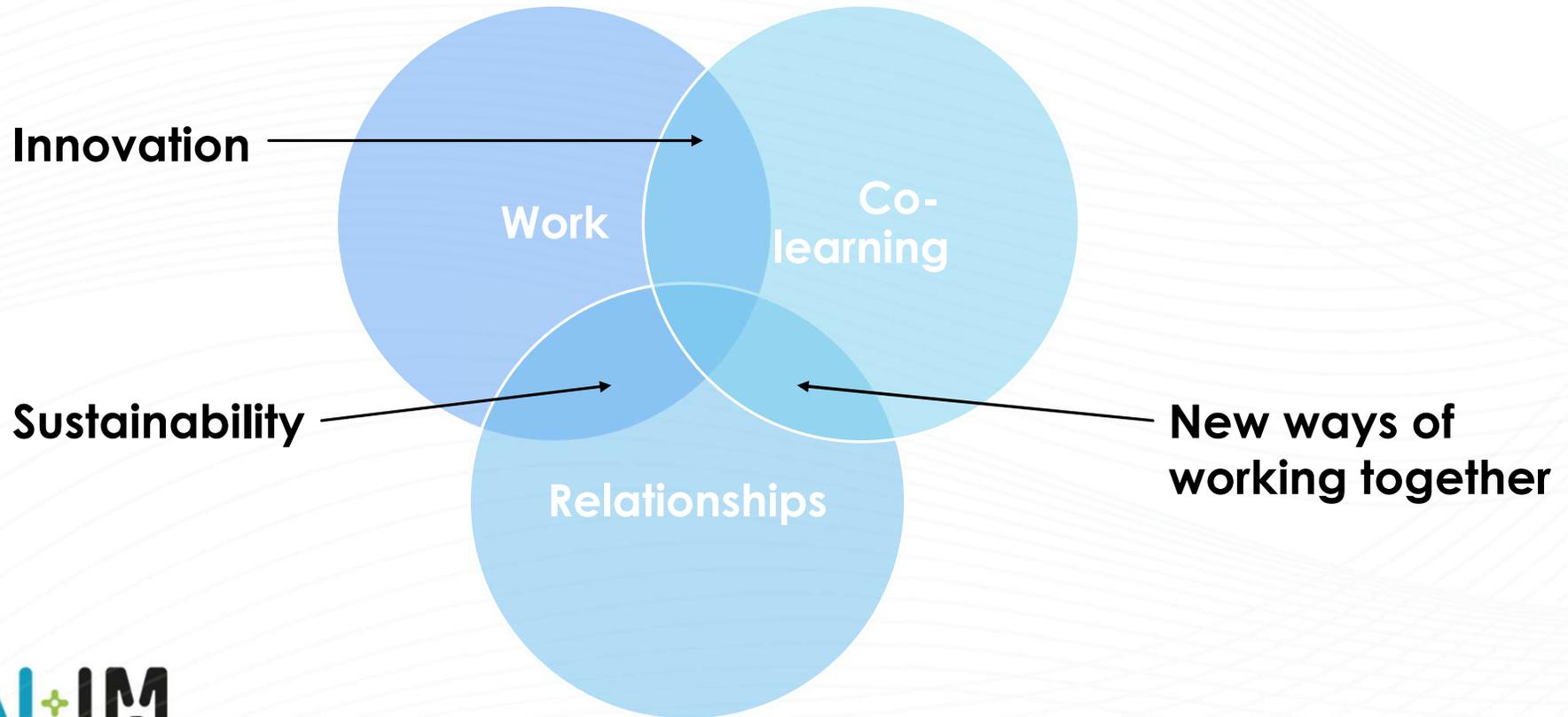
**AIIM New Member Meet Up and Orientation**

# The Elements of a Community of Practice

- ▶ Domain: A shared interest
- ▶ Community: A group of individuals that fosters interaction, engagement, and relationships
- ▶ Practice: A shared set of resources, stories, tools, etc.



# Another Model of Communities of Practice



# Benefits of Communities of Practice

- ▶ Make tacit knowledge explicit
- ▶ Share lessons learned – and horror stories
- ▶ Decrease the learning curve for new employees
- ▶ Reduce rework and “reinventing the wheel”
- ▶ Spark new ideas and approaches
- ▶ Identify issues to be raised to the Center of Excellence or management



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# Does a Community of Practice Already Exist?

- ▶ Informal communities of practice are very common
- ▶ Lunchtime or happy hour meetings
- ▶ Slack or Teams channels etc.



Vertical sidebar navigation menu with icons for Home, DMs, Activity, and More.

All channels

Create channel

Search for channels

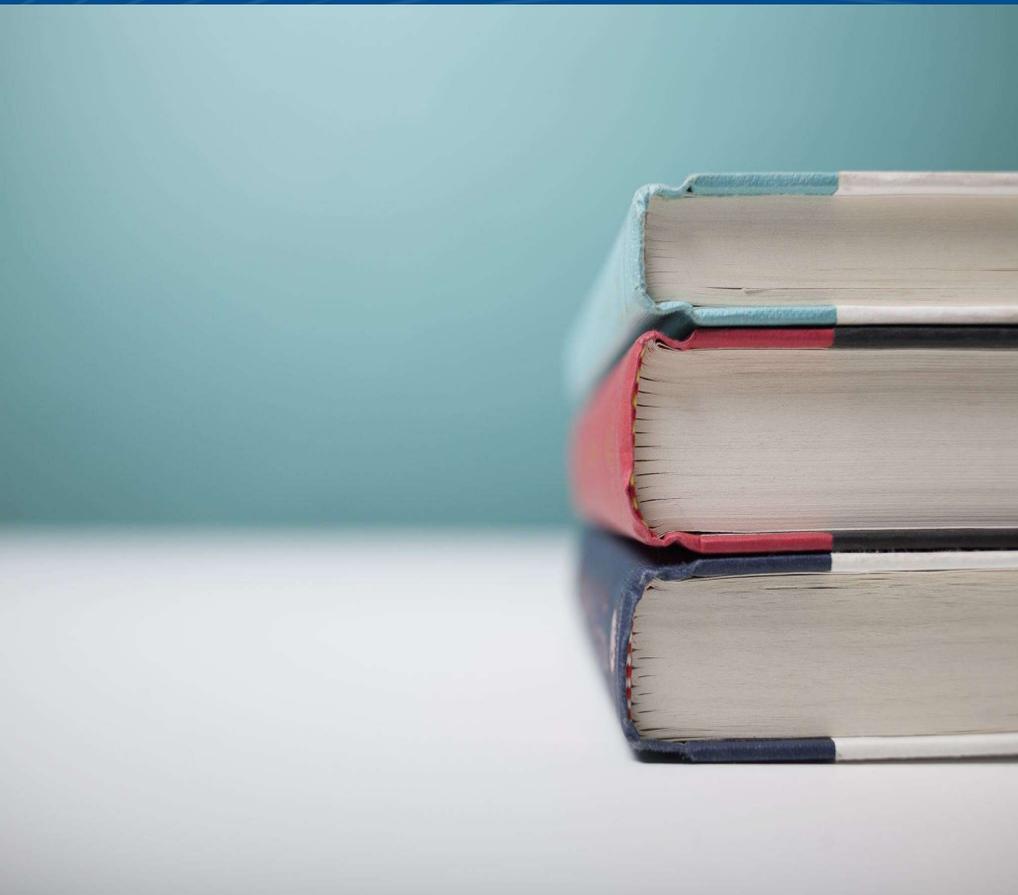
- List of channels including # ais-compliance-by-design, # auditwork, # bokrepository, # business-of-independent-audit-of-ai-system, # concierge, and # conference.

# It Starts with Management Support

- ▶ Support for the concept of a CoP
- ▶ Understanding of the need for a CoP for a particular domain
- ▶ Understanding of the need for ongoing support
  
- ▶ Gain management support by outlining the benefits!



# Identify the Domain



- ▶ What is the area of focus?
- ▶ Is it so broad it needs sub-focuses?
- ▶ Are there established references and resources?



# Identify Potential Community Members

- ▶ Who are the ideal participants?
- ▶ What issues and challenges are they trying to address?
- ▶ Who are the second-order participants?



## Identify and Share the Benefits of Participation



- Why should community members join the CoP?
- The more benefits, and the more concrete and meaningful they are, the better



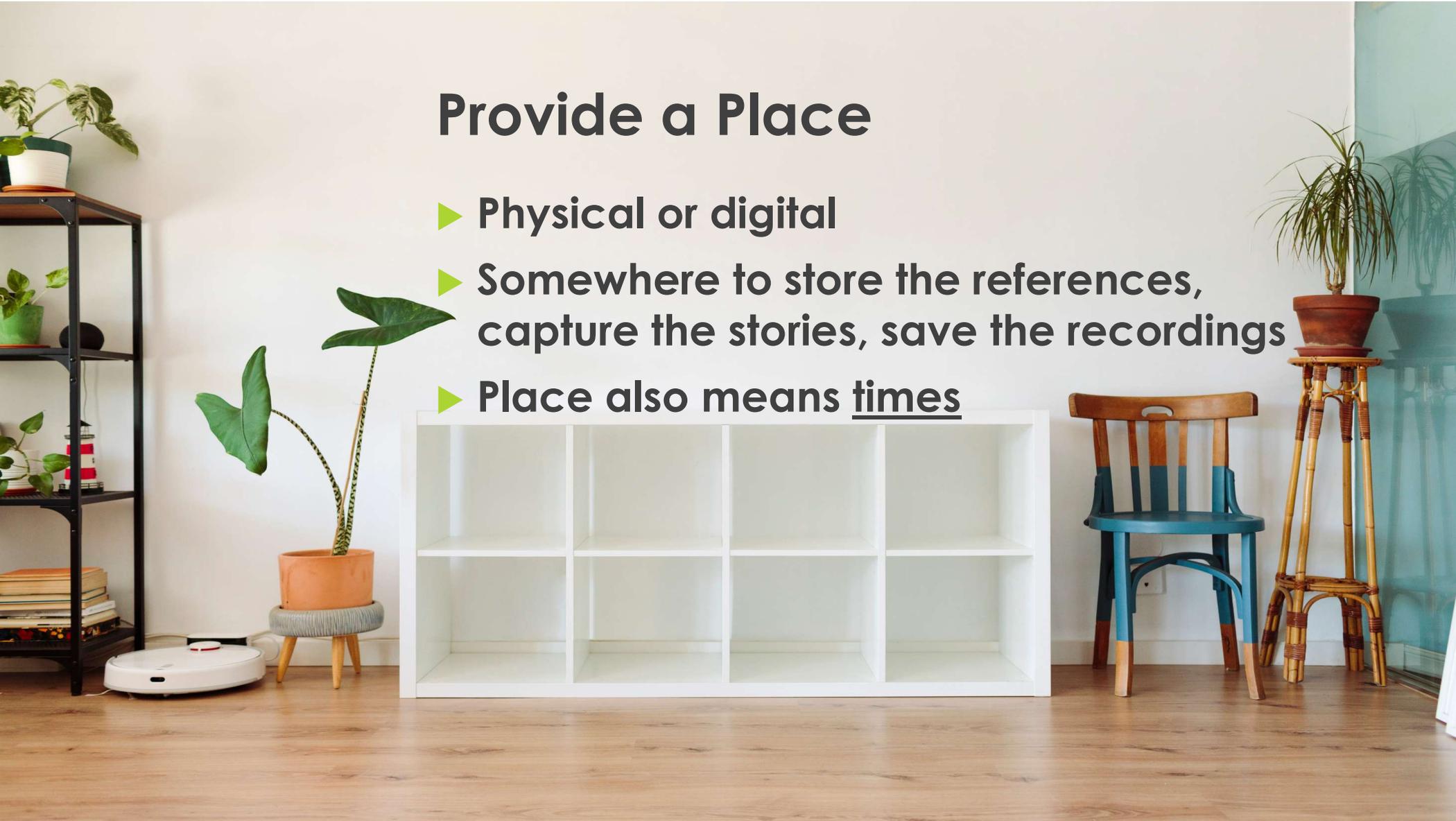
# Identify Some Good Facilitators

- ▶ Domain expertise and enthusiasm
- ▶ Willingness to share
- ▶ Excellent communications and interpersonal skills
- ▶ Available!



# Provide a Place

- ▶ Physical or digital
- ▶ Somewhere to store the references, capture the stories, save the recordings
- ▶ Place also means times

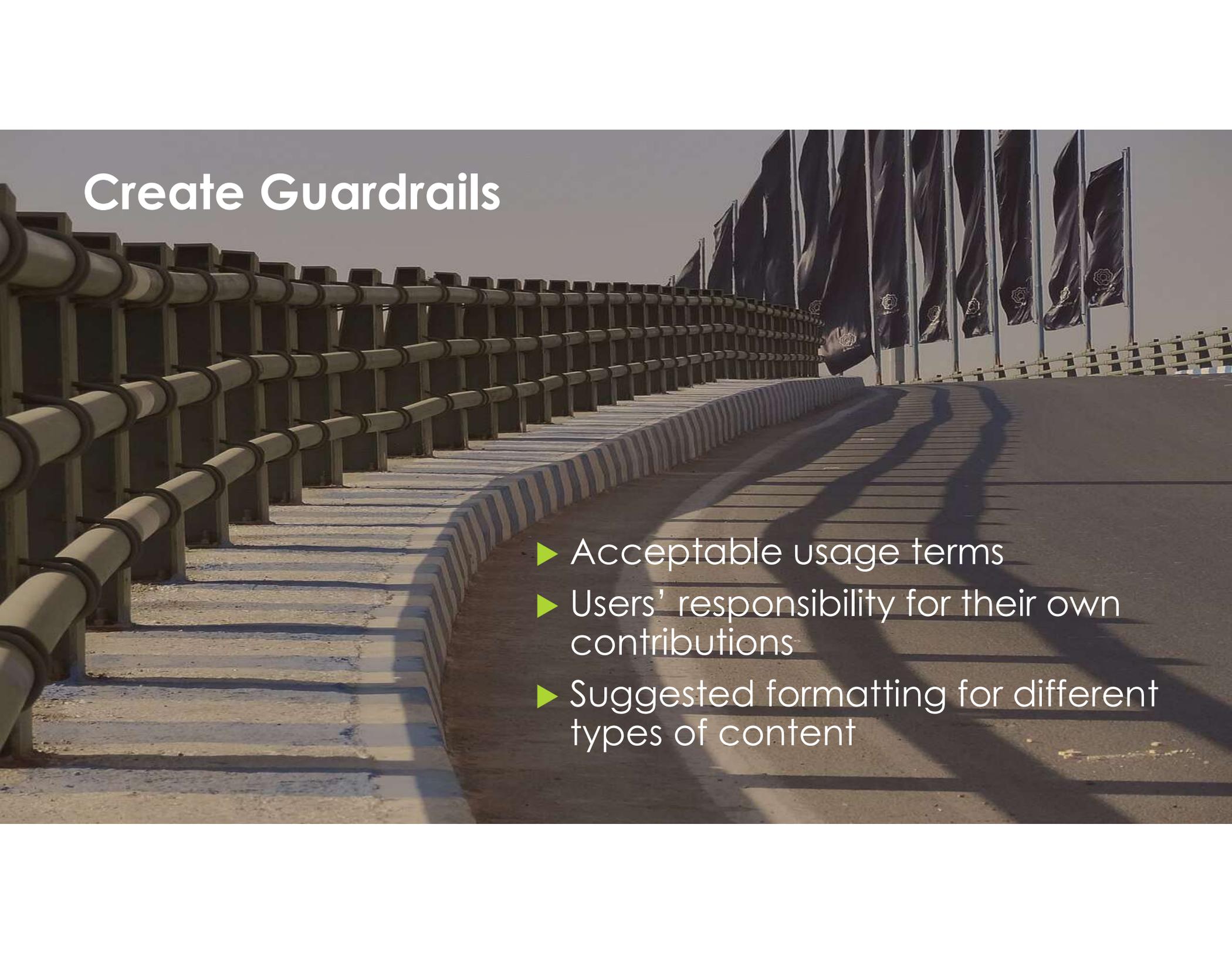


# Early Adopters

- ▶ Create “seed content”
- ▶ Get familiar with the tool



# Create Guardrails

A photograph of a long, multi-tiered concrete guardrail structure on a road. The guardrail consists of several parallel rows of concrete posts and rails, extending into the distance. In the background, a row of flags on poles is visible against a clear sky. The scene is brightly lit, suggesting a sunny day.

- ▶ Acceptable usage terms
- ▶ Users' responsibility for their own contributions
- ▶ Suggested formatting for different types of content

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# Continued Management Support

- ▶ Time
  - ▶ Logistics
  - ▶ Recognition
- ▶ Lighter touch + organic growth tends to be more successful



# Create an Onboarding Process

- ▶ New members start connecting quickly
- ▶ New members access relevant information easily
- ▶ Help new members to learn the tool and the capabilities



# Curate the Community

- ▶ The right people, for the right reasons
- ▶ Sharers, not hoarders
- ▶ Select for openness and honesty
- ▶ Judgement-free zone
- ▶ The value of lurkers



# Encourage Continued Participation

- ▶ Schedule regular events
- ▶ Conduct polls and themed discussions
- ▶ Crowdsource development of resources

# Review the Practices

- ▶ Identify and update or remove outdated content
- ▶ Reuse content where it makes sense to



# Reuse the Content

- ▶ Turn videos into guidelines or checklists
- ▶ Turn guidelines and checklists into videos
- ▶ Create infographics



THERE ARE  
**CIPs**  
IN 55 COUNTRIES



1. Australia  
2. Austria  
3. Bahamas  
4. Belgium  
5. Brazil  
6. Canada  
7. Cayman Islands  
8. Colombia  
9. Croatia  
10. Cyprus  
11. Czech Republic  
12. Finland  
13. France  
14. Germany  
15. Ghana  
16. Great Britain  
17. Hong Kong  
18. Hungary  
19. Iceland  
20. India  
21. Ireland  
22. Italy  
23. Jamaica  
24. Japan  
25. Lithuania  
26. Luxembourg  
27. Malaysia  
28. Mexico  
29. Netherlands  
30. New Zealand  
31. Nigeria  
32. Norway  
33. Oman  
34. Pakistan  
35. Panama  
36. Peru  
37. Philippines  
38. Portugal  
39. Puerto Rico  
40. Qatar  
41. Romania  
42. Russia  
43. Saudi Arabia  
44. Scotland  
45. Singapore  
46. Slovenia  
47. South Africa  
48. Spain  
49. Sri Lanka  
50. Sweden  
51. Switzerland  
52. Trinidad and Tobago  
53. Turkey  
54. United Arab Emirates  
55. USA

Are you the next  
**Certified Information Professional?**  
[www.aiim.org/certification](http://www.aiim.org/certification)

Image source: AIIM



# Tweak the Menu and Schedule

- ▶ Determine what the right activities are
  - ▶ Problem solving and productivity-related activities
  - ▶ Bonding and relationship-building activities
- ▶ Determine (and tweak!) the frequency of scheduled activities





**Questions?**

# Additional Resources

- ▶ Introduction to Communities of Practice
  - ▶ <https://www.wenger-trayner.com/introduction-to-communities-of-practice/>
- ▶ Creating Communities of Practice
  - ▶ <https://www.communityofpractice.ca/>
- ▶ Communities of Practice and Organizational Performance
  - ▶ [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/270899705\\_Communities\\_of\\_Practice\\_and\\_Organizational\\_Performance](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/270899705_Communities_of_Practice_and_Organizational_Performance)



# THANK YOU!

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