

BUILDING A COMMUNITY WITH MEMES



Research, Analysis and Design by **JON COURTNEY**

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1 RESEARCH OBJECTIVE

2 RESEARCH GOALS

3 DATA COLLECTION &
METHODOLOGY

4 SURVEY RESULTS

5 INTERVIEWS

6 ACCOUNT TYPES &
USABILITY TESTING

7 ANALYSIS &
INTERPRETATION

8 NEXT STEPS

9 CONCLUSION

The background of the slide is a solid yellow color. In the center, there are three overlapping, semi-transparent yellow silhouettes of human heads and shoulders, facing forward. These silhouettes are slightly offset from each other, creating a sense of depth and representing a group of people.

INTRODUCTION



How to build a successful online community

What are memes?

Keys to Community Building

Attract & retain members

Create a sense of belonging

Create value through exchange

Encourage contribution

Encourage collaboration

Provide leadership

Regulate community members behavior

What is a Meme?

Memes are an amusing or interesting item (such as a captioned picture or video) that is spread widely online especially through social media

Often involving the creative manipulation of cultural symbols and media

Reflect broad societal trends

Memes persist because of digital cultures dynamic interaction

Consumption of memes can be a source of enjoyment and a break from daily life



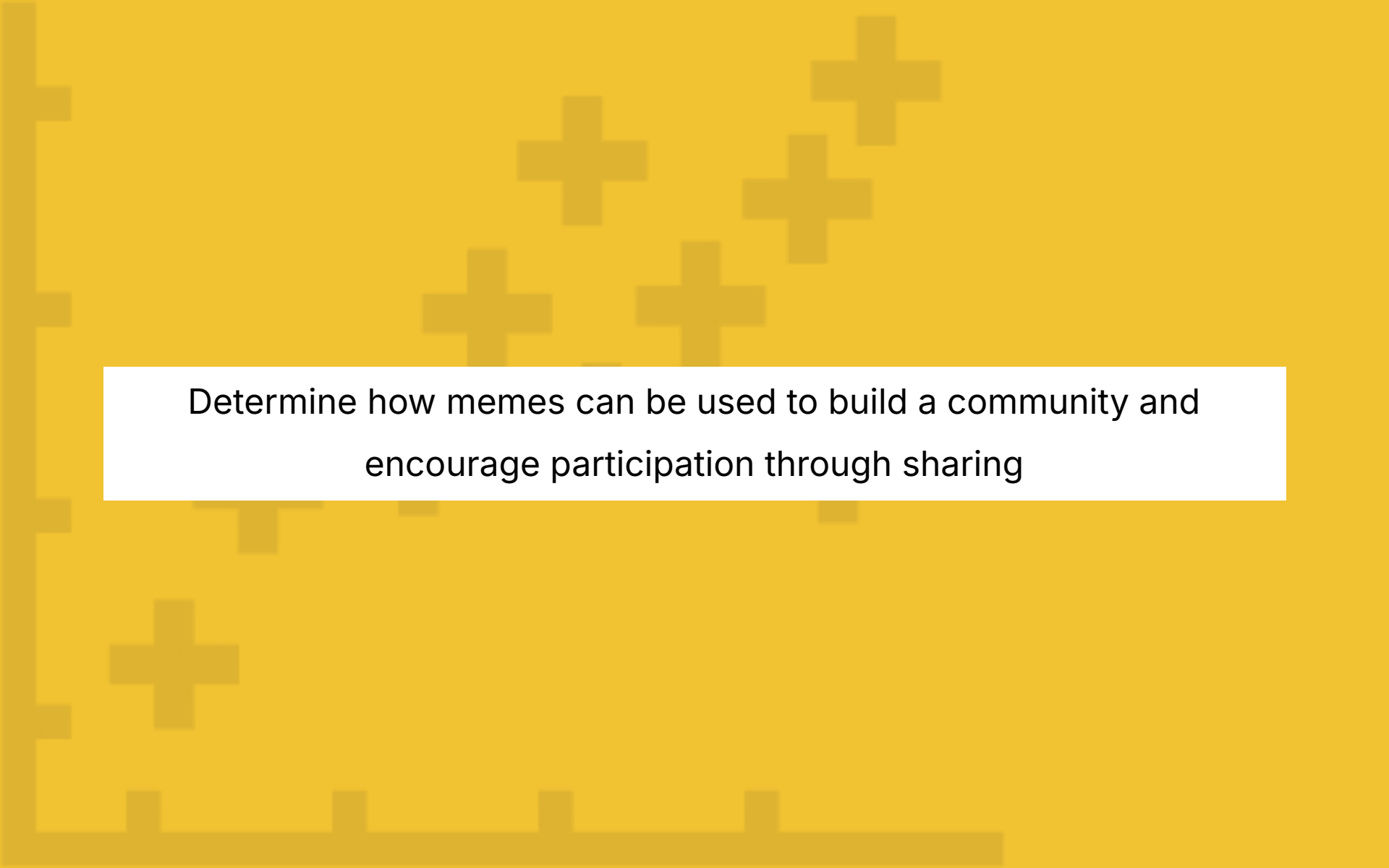
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This research reveals the challenges of building a sharing based community around a single specific content type

Identifies the types of user accounts that would be ideal for this type of community

Develops solutions for how sharing in this type of community could be accomplished

1. RESEARCH OBJECTIVE

The background is a solid yellow color. It features a decorative pattern of light yellow plus signs and squares scattered across the surface. A white rectangular box is centered on the page, containing the text.

Determine how memes can be used to build a community and encourage participation through sharing

The background is a solid yellow color. It features a faint grid pattern with small squares at the intersections. Several larger, semi-transparent plus signs are scattered across the background, some appearing to be part of a larger, faint grid structure.

2. RESEARCH GOALS

Understand the role memes play in community building and engagement

Identify the key elements of effective community-building

Explore individuals sharing motivations and patterns



3. DATA COLLECTION & METHODOLOGY



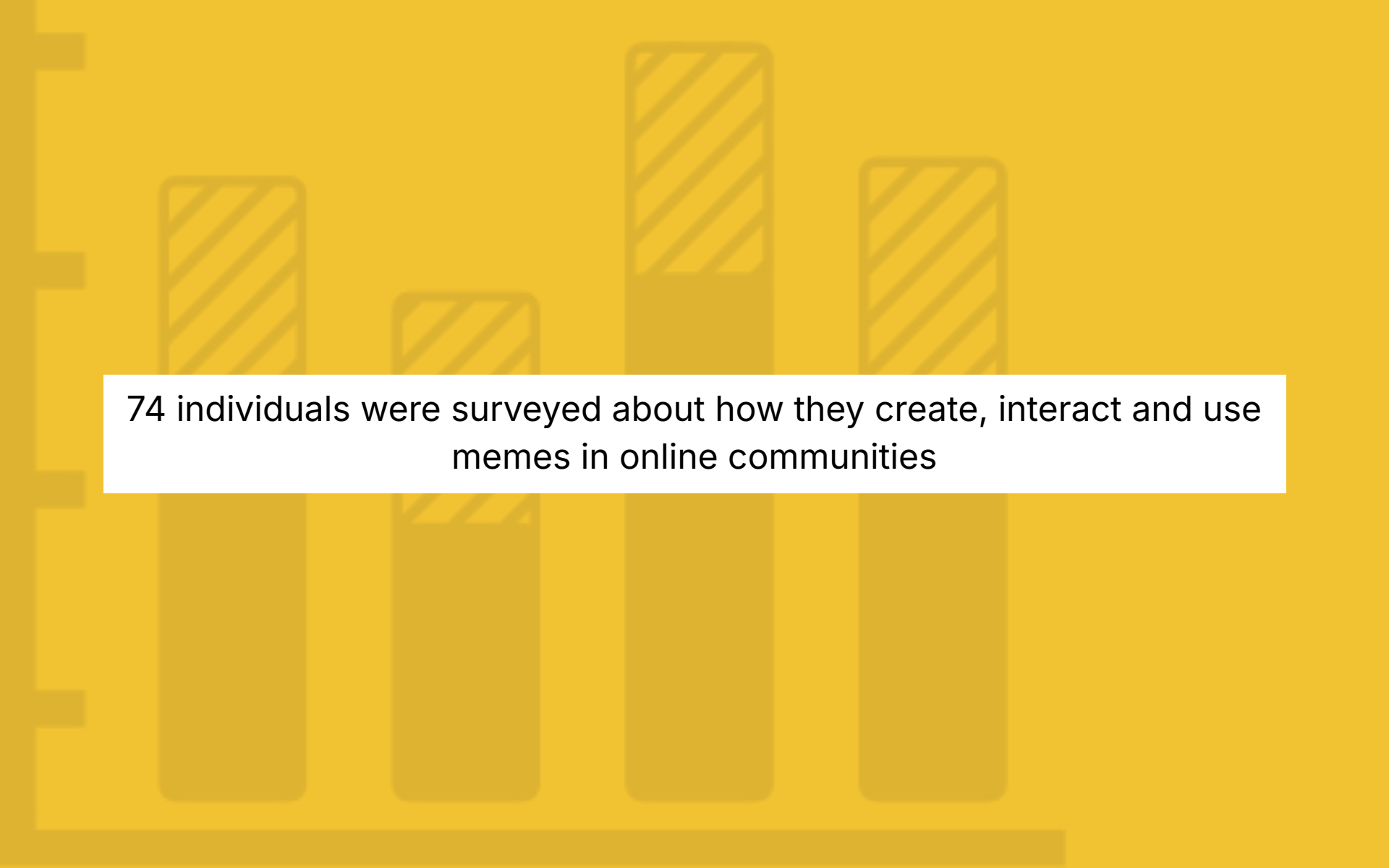
Survey

Semi-structured interviews

Usability testing



4. SURVEY



74 individuals were surveyed about how they create, interact and use memes in online communities

Survey Demographics

Over the age of 36: 60%



Demographic	Percentage
Over the age of 36	60%
Female	63%
College Degree	76%

Female: 63%

College Degree: 76%

Common Threads

Humor is a key factor in meme engagement

Engagement is created through the sharing of memes

There are preferred platforms and meme types

Humor

40% of respondents prefer "funny" memes

67% of respondents find humor to be "very important" in memes

100% of respondents said that humor is the most effective type of meme for creating a sense of community

Community Engagement

47% of respondents engage with relatable memes

53% of respondents said that sharing memes increases engagement

53% of respondents feel more connected when sharing
community-specific memes

Preferred Platforms & Types

Instagram is the leading platform for viewing memes

Images are the most preferred meme format

"Everyday Life" memes are the most popular type of content

5. INTERVIEWS

12 individuals were interviewed

6 were interviewed about how they create, interact and use memes in online communities

3 were interviewed as usability testers in the role of meme creator

3 were interviewed as usability testers in the role of meme consumer

Interview Demographics

Female: 50%

Male: 50%

Common Threads

Humor is the core element of successful memes

Individuals have motivation to share memes

Individuals have a preferred type of meme content

Humor

Humor is the most crucial element in a successful meme

Satire and irony often make memes more impactful and engaging

Humor combined with a clear and straightforward message is the key to ensuring that a meme resonates with a broad audience

Motivation to Share

Motivation to share memes comes from things individuals find personally amusing and believe will engage their audience

Individuals curate the memes they share, selecting content that aligns with their preferences and the interests of their specific audience

Sharing is driven by the relevance of the content, specifically memes that are timely, culturally significant, or related to their community

Preferred Meme Types

Individuals often share memes that reflect their specific interests

GIFs were frequently mentioned as a preferred format due to their animated nature

Content that is funny yet non-hurtful is the most popular type of meme to share

6. ACCOUNT TYPES & USABILITY TESTING

Meme Creator

Meme creator account type creates and shares memes with self-created & self-moderated communities

Meme Consumer

Meme consumer account type views and shares memes with other users both in the app and outside the app

Meme Creator

Clear UI design and navigation

Easy sharing process

Community management options

Meme Consumer

Clear UI design and navigation

Cross-platform sharing

Combined group and individual sharing

SHARING PROTOTYPE DEMO

7. ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Mememes that are funny, relatable, and timely are more likely to be shared and create a sense of connection within a community

Mememes play a significant role in community dynamics by increasing engagement and strengthening connections among members

Users value the ability to share content seamlessly across platforms and to specific groups or individuals

Ensuring that the sharing process is simple and efficient is essential for user satisfaction

Features that support community management, such as community creation and moderation, are crucial for maintaining an active and inclusive community

Clear and intuitive UI design is critical for a positive user experience

8. NEXT STEPS

Perform further usability tests with a new set of participants, focusing specifically on the changes made to the UI, navigation, and sharing process

Develop and integrate new features such as a better onboarding processes that includes tutorials or guided overlays

Collect additional feedback from stakeholders to ensure that the proposed changes meet both user needs and business objectives

9. CONCLUSION

This research shows that in a community that's built around memes, humor and relatability play a major role in creating and maintaining community engagement. And that memes are not just a form of entertainment; they are a powerful tool for building connections and enhancing the involvement and engagement of members in online communities.



THANKS!



DATA & RESOURCES

The data used to create this report is available for peer review and secondary research at this [link](#)

Instagram. (n.d.). <https://www.instagram.com/>

Kraut, R. E., Kiesler, S., & Resnick, P. (2016). *Building successful online communities: Evidence-based Social Design*. MIT Press.

Merriam-Webster. (n.d.). *Meme definition & meaning*. Merriam-Webster. <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/meme>

Powazek, D. M. (2002). *Design for community: The art of connecting real people in virtual places*. New Riders.

Threads. (n.d.). <https://www.threads.net/>

Vitiuk, I., Polishchuk, O., Kovtun, N. & Fed, V. ((2020). Memes as the phenomenon of modern digital culture. *WISDOM*, 15(2), 45–55. <https://doi.org/10.24234/wisdom.v15i2.361>

Wiggins, B. E., & Bowers, G. B. (2014). Memes as genre: A structural analysis of the memescape. *New Media & Society*, 17(11), 1886–1906. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1461444814535194>