Discussion Forums

Kerri Vuolo, March 31st 2015

What are discussion forums?

- A discussion forum is an online "bulletin board" where you can post messages that others can respond to
- Centralized location for discussion of topics
- Also known as discussion board, discussion group, message board, or online forum
- Can be local or international

History

- Discussion forums began before the internet with BBS in 1978
- Usenet was another early form of message board used internationally
- WIT software developed in 1994, most widely used

What are forums used to discuss?

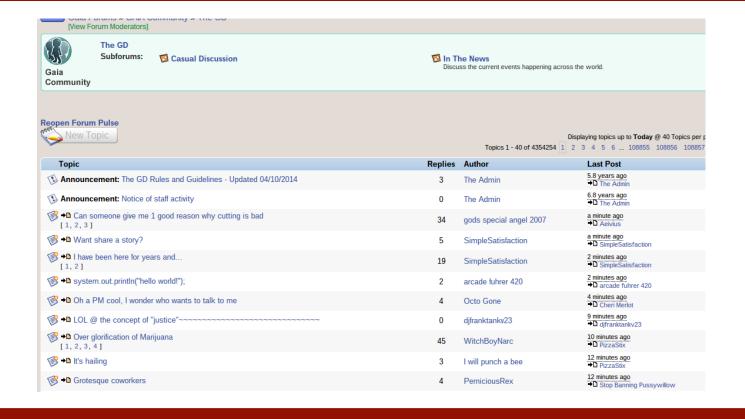
- Anything and everything!
- Often based around hobbies or lifestyles
- Automobiles, exercise, parenthood, gaming, sports, and politics are some popular topics
- Also used for education and online learning

Examples

Top 10 forums:

- 1. Gaia
- 2. ConceptArt
- 3. Something Awful
- 4. PB Nation
- 5. Martial Arts Planet
- 6. Fan Forum
- 7. Honda Tech
- 8. C6 Corvette Forum
- 9. The Student Room
- 10. NeoGAF

Examples



Examples



Advantages

- Provide an easy way for people to get relevant information about a certain topic
- Foster a sense of community
- Inspire users through encouragement and sharing of accomplishments
- Allow users to connect throughout the world
- Anonymity

Disadvantages

- Discussion needs to be moderated
- Spammers
- Negative association with host site
- Information may be inaccurate

Recommendations

- Forums are a great choice for niche businesses
- Better suited to larger companies with the staff to moderate discussion
- Also useful for online education

Future

- Continued growth expected
- Potential linking of other social media sites
- Further development of software

Resources

http://whatis.techtarget.com/definition/discussion-board-discussion-group-message-board-online-forum

http://www.makeuseof.com/tag/how-we-talk-online-a-history-of-online-forums-

<u>from-cavemen-days-to-the-present/</u>

http://www.thebiggestboards.com/

http://www.referenceforbusiness.com/small/Di-Eq/Electronic-Bulletin-

Boards.html

http://edu307fall2011.edublogs.org/2011/10/31/advantages-and-

disadvantages-of-online-forums-2/