

Assessment Two

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## Introduction

“Change happens. They keep moving the cheese” (Johnson, 1998, p. 74). Arthur Fox, the founder of Innovation Global Network (IGN), and Ronald Chernesky, founder of investFeed, realized that cheese ‘traditional business communities’ must evolve in order to stay relevant in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Arthur Fox uses situated learning, legitimate peripheral participation, in his online community. “Learning involves the whole person; it implies not only a relation to specific activities, but a relation to social communities – it implies becoming a full participant, a member, a kind of person” (Lave and Wenger, 2011, p. 53). Participants become familiar with the online community before becoming an active member, and the participants share their learned knowledge during the community events with other communities (Wenger, White and Smith, 2009, p. 484). Ronald Chernesky uses constructivism in his online community. Constructivism focuses on “collaborative learning, authentic tasks, reflection and dialogue, and the promotion of identities and learning communities” (Allen, 2005, p. 254). Appendix E depicts how Group 2 obtained two organizations.

Arthur Fox launched IGN in 2012. IGN is an active business network designed to provide a space for “professionals who are looking for best practices, expertise, and help with innovation, entrepreneurship and organizational change as well as provide a place where people who have best practices and processes could inform and educate and make contact with people looking for it” (A. Fox, personal communication, February 10, 2017). With currently over 2,400 members and about sixty newsletter subscribers, IGN is a place where members can build up their ecosystems, meet people who are potential collaborators and partners and allow each individual to meet their specific goals by creating a place that has both traditional networking features and outreach features (A. Fox, personal communication, February 10, 2017). The

Innovation Global Network offers both free basic membership and premium memberships for Innovation Leaders and Innovation Providers which averages between \$150 to \$198 per year for individuals.

Ronald Chernesky and Andrew Freedman started investFeed in 2014 (StreetInsider.com, 2015). “This was a concept that was derived from my partners and I coming from the trading floor in New York. We had seen a lack of transparency in the financial markets and especially when it came to online investing and social trading” (R. Chernesky, personal communication, February 11, 2017). The two financial entrepreneurs noticed that social media sites were the primary source for investment research (StreetInsider.com, 2015).

“Every time you make a trade that trade will go into the livestream just like it would in Twitter” (R. Chernesky, personal communication, February 11, 2017). “Right now, we have a little over 15,000 users who are signed up on our platform” (R. Chernesky, personal communication, February 11, 2017). “We have a little over 100,000 users who are following us on Twitter” (R. Chernesky, personal communication, February 11, 2017).

### **Seeking to Accomplish**

The main goal of the Innovation Global Network “is to help professionals and entrepreneurs to find best practices and experts they need to help them with all aspects of creating and marketing innovation and entrepreneurship and organizational change” (A. Fox, personal communication, February 10, 2017) The Innovation Global Network also seeks to “help the consultants and other service providers to expand their ecosystems to help them to find engagement opportunities, collaborators, partners and other opportunities” (A. Fox, personal communication, February 10, 2017).

“So {at investFeed} we are building this transparent environment where everyone can see everyone's trade in real time, {a participant} can see their real portfolio, {a participant} can see {his or her} performance. So it creates now this layer of transparency where {her or she does} not have to questions someone's motives or if they are telling the truth or not, as the data really backs up exactly what {he or she is} doing” (R. Chernesky, personal communication, February 11, 2017). investFeed provides a platform for the average investor to use stock data, research and recommendations from top ranking members (StreetInsider.com, 2015). “We are really focused on staying true to the transparency part of the financial markets and bringing transparency to. . . online personal investing. . . the average person needs to make an investment decision on what stock to buy and what stock to sell and . . . the traditional way has been reaching out to advisers, brokers, looking through financial research, . . . watching stock market TV channels” (R. Chernesky, personal communication, February 11, 2017).

Both companies are striving to educate their participants by giving them the skills to develop a successful business or a prosperous portfolio. Mr. Fox and Mr. Chernesky are developing a zone of proximal development. Vygotsky, Wertsch, and Engestrom summarized the zone of proximal development as participants “who receive help can perform an activity they would not be able to perform by themselves” (Allen, 2005, p. 249). “A community is formed that generates solutions to problems found in everyday lives of the individual members” (Allen, 2005, p. 249).

### **Goals**

At IGN, members submit content through articles on best practices, on innovation and on insights and trends in regards to the marketplace. Members can submit questions asking for help, and they can comment both publicly and privately on both the articles and the questions

“which can lead to potential opportunities for these people to collaborate or help each other in the future so it increases the likelihood for engagement between those people” (A. Fox, personal communication, February 10, 2017). Members can submit events and webinars and recruit people to participate. Once a month, founder and innovation leader Arthur Fox, organizes an online event for the members, particularly the premium members of the network. These networking events allow members to introduce themselves, present on a topic in which they excel and create learning opportunities for the membership. The opportunity events allow the premium members to present business opportunities to other premium members (ie. services they are commercializing, seeking collaborators for a project) in an attempt to collaborate or assist each other and work together in the future (A. Fox, personal communication, February 10, 2017). Mr. Fox also holds meetings with the innovation leader members to discuss specifically about projects they can create and design together to help each other and promote each other such as publishing book chapters and articles.

According to Wenger, White and Smith, community orientation is defined as a community’s identity in relation to its “patterns of activity” (2009, p. 1762). The patterns of activity are as followed: 1) meetings, 2) open-ended conversations, 3) projects, 4) content, 5) access to expertise, 6) relationships, 7) individual participation, 8) community cultivation, and 9) serving a context (p. Wenger, White, Smith, 2009, p. 1768). Arthur Fox employs all patterns of activity. IGN focuses on building an online community to “cultivate actual human-to-human relationships with mentors, peers, and customers alike, attracting those customers at lower cost, defeating his competition, finding new niches and verticals for his business, and, above all, building a better business” (MackWebSolutions.com, 2012).

investFeed is working on creating a unified experience to have a mobile financial app where {a participant} can manage all of {his or her} finances from one platform (R. Chernesky, personal communication, February 11, 2017). “Than another aspect that we are starting to get into, aside from the social investing part of our platform is we are bringing transparency to personal investing we have had a lot of demand from our users wanting to know if we are going to have jobs on our websites and if they can have a career profile” (R. Chernesky, personal communication, February 11, 2017).

According to Wenger, White and Smith, a community needs to evaluate their technology needs and their community’s “readiness for technology change” (2009, p. 2373). investFeed has analyzed their stage of community development, and investFeed is a rapidly changing their online community. They are envisioning how Web 2.0 can grow their business. investFeed has connected with their audience, “people who want a voice, an involvement, to be heard” (MackWebSolutions.com, 2012). investFeed treats their participants with human dignity (MackWebSolutions.com, 2012).

## **Metrics**

The metrics used by Innovation Global Network include membership growth and the rate of membership growth. Arthur Fox looks at conversion to premium memberships and participation events. He “also look {s} at the Google Analytics to see how much viewership they are getting, how many users, how many new users, how many pages per month that {the users} look at every time they visit” (A. Fox, personal communication, February 10, 2017). Appendix B shows a screenshot of the audience overview metric shared by Arthur Fox of Innovation Global Network. This metric indicates the activity of 11,143 users over in 2016. Within this time period, 60.2 % of Innovation Global Networks visitors consisted were new to the sight with

39.8% of returning users. Users averaged approximately four pages per session with the average session lasting five minutes and twenty-four seconds.

“{investFeed} uses google analytics and some third-party platforms to be able to get a pretty solid understanding of what pages our users are viewing and how long they are staying on these pages for and what's really important as I mentioned the customer support” (R. Chernesky, personal communication, February 11, 2017). investFeed views their analytics daily. This allows them to compare new visitors vs. returning visitors. Google Analytics allows invest. Appendix D shows a screenshot of the audience overview metric shared by Ronald Chernesky of investFeed. Feed to track their users in real time; therefore, investFeed can track the following data: 1) what pages their users are utilizing, 2) what exactly their users are employing, and 3) where their users have exactly left the website. These analytics give investFeed a better foundation on what is important to their users and what needs improvement from their users (R. Chernesky, personal communication, February 11, 2017). Meetings are also held with the innovation leaders.

## **Conclusion**

Innovation Global Network is a community that attracts a specific type of user. While Mr. Fox indicated that the site has 2,400 users, only half of those users were indicated in the shared metrics (Appendix B). Users only spend an average of five minutes on the site which might indicate that they are not receiving an adequate user experience. While the site seems to offer good networking options, the premium membership fees are on the higher end. Innovation Global Network's metrics also revealed that within the past year, 60% of their Internet traffic has come from new visitors to the site with only 39% coming from returning users. This could indicate that the Innovation Global Network took the appropriate steps to ensure that their site

was search engine optimized but lacks in valuable content. According to MackWebSolutions.com (2012), “{an individual} absolutely cannot expect to build a vibrant, sustainable online community without valuable content” (p. 35). The site also needs to be streamlined for a cleaner, more user friendly look. Design and user experience considerations add value and attract the right audience to your site (MackWebSolutions.com, 2012).

The metrics at investFeed indicated that the number of users have increased for the quarter. Users are asking that the community to expand so that investFeed can have a job board and this can be the user’s personal profile. One recommendation for K-12 would be to adapt this platform for education. The app would be gamified, so student can invest, “tweet,” post and make money to appear on a leaderboard. The higher education community is an opportunity for college students to be involved with trading and finance and for investFeed to build their online community. Recruiting members with established social ties to a community increases a strong commitment to the community (Kraut & Resnick, 2011).

“Two-year colleges are an undeniable vital part of the nation’s educational system; therefore, it is important to better understand the role they play in future workforce preparation efforts” (Bragg, Hamm, Trinkle). Work-based learning offers community college students the opportunity to gain work experience while earning a degree. Both investFeed and Innovation Global Network can develop relationships with work-based learning departments within community colleges and hire college students to give them actual work experience. These new relationships can help IGN and investFeed disseminate their content (MackWebSolutions.com, 2012). College students can develop their communication skills, interpersonal skills, problems-solving, and information processing (Wake Tech Community College).

To increase investFeed following on Facebook, Ronald Chernesky could implement Facebook Live. Facebook Live is a method in which individuals or organizations can have live discussions with their followers. Ronald Chernesky can discuss stock news, etc., invite financial experts, colleges students/professors to his live chats. His followers can ask questions and post comments within Facebook. His followers can re-watch or watch his live discussions at any time to gain financial understanding but also see the founder and CEO as a human being.

Both Innovation Global Network and investFeed have sustainability. Sustainability is defined as “able to be maintained at a certain rate or level or able to be upheld or defended” (MackWebSolutions.com, 2012). Their community goals guide them to continually move forward to stay on top.

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Appendix A  
Online Communities Interview with  
Arthur Fox, Founder and Chief Innovation Leader at Innovation Global Network  
2/10/2017  
12:30 pm

**Stephanie:** My name is Stephanie Talalai. I am enrolled in the Educational Technology Leadership Doctoral program at New Jersey City University. Um, we are enrolled in a class that's called Advanced Methods for Building Online Communities and part of our assignment is to locate and analyze an organization's online community strategy. So, we are really looking to find out what your organization is seeking to accomplish through their online community, what actions you have taken toward accomplishing your goals and what metrics you employ to understand the progress towards your goals. So, is it ok if I interview you for this project?

**Arthur:** Absolutely

**Stephanie:** Ok, and I'm going to record this so that it can be transcribed and put into our assignment. Is it ok if you are recorded?

**Arthur:** Yes

**Stephanie:** Ok, thank you. What is your name?

**Arthur:** Arthur Fox

**Stephanie:** Ok Arthur, it is nice to meet you.

**Arthur:** Nice to meet you too.

**Stephanie:** Um, what is your job title?

**Arthur:** Founder and Chief Innovation Leader.

**Stephanie:** Excellent. And the name of your organization?

**Arthur:** Innovation Global Network

**Stephanie:** Ok, and um what's the history of your organization? Your year you were established, your other organizations or innovations that you have?

**Arthur:** The ah well the network, the organization itself, I think it officially created about oh about 8 years ago, or so. But the Innovation Global Network itself was actually launched a little over four years ago, so it was about 2012 I think it was, the network was actually launched. Basically, I spent over 28 years in the corporate world. I worked for a company called Pfizer in their consumer healthcare division. I was the global director of consumer insights and identification. I had responsibility for developing the ah global market research programs and also for mentoring the innovation teams that focused on developing new product ideas for those global brands. I had been involved with innovation for well over 28 years but particularly since

the mid 90's when I created the first innovation team at Pfizer for its multi-functional team and created the first new innovation pipeline for the company. And ah it was so successful I helped the company develop an innovation process for the whole consumer healthcare division and also asked to start to mentor the new innovation teams on all the different brands. And because of all that I had innovation in my DNA. And ah after leaving the organization, I did some consulting work but was ah all the while better leverage my passion for innovation. And ah I spoke to some of my colleagues and ah who were in different corporations and ah to get their insights and most of them told me that their companies were poor developing new products due to a lack of best practices and processes. And they were looking for expertise and help outside of their organizations but had trouble finding it and ah I spoke to some of my colleagues as consultants, service providers and academics to get their insights and they gave me a set of interesting insights they felt they had best practices and processes but ah found it difficult to find them, excuse me to identify and engage the people who need them and ah particularly since the global recession when corporations had become very lean and then very difficult to ah to get access to people and start these organizations ah they also told me that they had thousands of contacts but really were only connected to about 5-10% of them. 99.5% of the people they met along the way they haven't been in touch with in years. Their contact networks were atrophying and ah most likely the longer you are out of touch with someone the less likely they are to ever to get in touch with you and so they were losing opportunities, they were losing them as resources. They also gave me insight there existed an ecosystems with other consultants and service providers people who they ah would bring them in on projects when they needed help ah sometimes they would get contacted by organizations in other countries who were looking to do work in their country and they needed an expert within the country to help them, guide them or actually do work for them or maybe they had services they were trying to commercialize globally and they wanted someone locally to help them commercialize on services. So the ah they realized those ecosystems were very valuable and they were looking to expand them and so when I put together all of these insights I said you know there is a need for a place where professionals who are looking for best practices and expertise and help with innovation and entrepreneurship and organizational change can find it and where people who had best practices and processes could inform and educate and ah make contact with people looking for it and who could inform and educate all of their contacts past and current ah at the same time and in a place where they can build up their ecosystems, meet people who are potential collaborators and partners. So I found this network to allow each individual to meet their specific goals ah by creating a place that has both traditional networking features and outreach features.

**Stephanie:** That is really interesting. Wow So how long have you been employed with the organization?

**Arthur:** Well as I said, I created the network, I started the design work really about 8 years ago, ah the organization consists of me (laugh). Ah run all aspects of the network myself with the exception of the programming and the tech support.

**Stephanie:** Oh, ok so you do all of it yourself except the programming and the tech support so that's wow. Um, so your goals are to reach out to um to other companies, help them with their innovation and...

**Arthur:** Ah yes well the goals of the organization is to help professionals and entrepreneurs to

find best practices and experts they need to help them with all aspects of creating and marketing innovation and entrepreneurship and organizational change and also help the consultants and other service providers to expand their ecosystems ah to help them to find engagement opportunities, collaborators, partners, and other opportunities.

**Stephanie:** Can you explain about your online community, how large it is, how it actually works?

**Arthur:** The network has over 2400 members and about 60 newsletter subscribers.

**Stephanie:** So what happens within the community ecosystem?

**Arthur:** Ah, well what happens it that ah members come looking to satisfy their various personal objectives. Ah our members will be lurkers and will read content that was submitted to the network ah a lot of the members submit content through articles on best practices ah on innovation, there could be articles on insights and trends in regards to the marketplace. They can submit questions asking for help. When they do that, members can comment on those articles and they can do that both publicly and privately so if they want to get into an offline conversation with someone they can do that. Members can reply to comments both publicly and privately as well. Ah so sometimes members tell me that they get almost as many ah private comments and replies as they do public comments and replies so this way if maybe you are reading an article and you say hey maybe this person can help me but I don't really want to talk about for everyone to hear they can then have a discussion offline with each other. Ah then this could lead to potential opportunities for these people to collaborate or help each other in the future so it increases the likelihood of engagement between those people. The members can submit events if they wish, webinars and recruit people to participate but generally people like to actually work with me and ah about approximately once a month I organize an online event for the members, particularly the premium members of the network who ah there are two types of events, there are networking events, these are events where the premium members can introduce themselves and one or two or three members will present on a topic they are an expert in and it's a learning opportunity for the members is also another opportunity for the members to get to know each other. The whole purpose of these networking events is for people to really get to know each other because their relationships are different when they talk to each other verse when they just comment on articles. Ah is it also an opportunity for people to broaden their retrospectives and learn what they don't know. ah

**Stephanie:** I'm sorry do and all these things happen within you online ecosystem so you have your chats and all your discussion boards your file sharing within your online ecosystem.

**Arthur:** Correct, that's right. I also organize opportunity events for the premium members where ah where a member might have some sort of a business opportunity that they want to present to the other premium members and ah often it will be services that they are commercializing or they need help with and they are looking for collaborators and this is another opportunity for these people to get together and help each other and work together in the future. Ah more recently I have actually started ah having meetings with the innovation leaders to talk specifically how they can, things they can do together to help each other and promote each other and take their relationships and their relationship to the network up to another level. So there are discussion about, for example, you know maybe publishing a book together with the different members writing different articles and chapters and working on surveys together. Ah, and they can,

whoever wants to participate can co-promote the work that is done together.

**Stephanie:** Wow, that's great. Um so when you talk about premium membership, is there a um free aspect and a paid aspect to your online community?

**Arthur:** Yup, that's correct.

**Stephanie:** ok

**Arthur:** There's a free individual basic membership ah individual basic members can ah do a lot of the types of things you can do on LinkedIn. They can screen through the membership based on profile information, and invite those people to join your personal contact networks and if they accept them they can message each other back and forth and they can see each other's activities on the network. They ah can read the content on the network and comment on it, they can submit their own content. They can comment and reply both publicly and privately. Private comments enable Members to take a discussion offline to talk about items they do not wish to make public. Sometimes Members get as many or more private comments as they do public comments. Individual Basic members can also join Best Practice Communities focused on specific topics. They can also submit content to those Communities and create their own Communities. There are two premium Memberships. The Innovation Leader Membership is for individuals who wish to actively engage, network and build relationships with other innovation experts. It is like getting an instant contact network within the Network. They can instantly Message each other and can send up to 10 Messages/month to anyone they are not connected to or who are not Innovation Leader Members. They can also send emails to submit their expertise and offers to help to anyone in the Network. I also regularly organize Online Events for the Innovation Leader Members. There are two main types of Events. In the Networking Events they can introduce themselves and their expertise to each other and ask for help with specific issues. 1-3 Members also present on topics they are expert at to promote discussion and learning. This interaction helps the Members build up their relationships with each other. I also organize Opportunity Events for the Innovation Leaders in which a Member presents a specific business Opportunity to the other Members. These also help expose Members to new innovation services and tools. The second premium Membership is the innovation provider membership, which is for organizations and companies, these are for consultants and service providers who want to build awareness of themselves and establish reputations as service providers within the network and it provides them with tools for doing so, so they get their own organizational profile page, they can create special best practice communities with their company's name on them, they advertise on the network, advertise their services on the network so it provides a number of opportunities to build up their reputations as companies.

**Stephanie:** That's great. Um ok, so can we talk a little about the um metrics that you employ to understand the progress you are making toward your goals?

**Arthur:** Alright. The ah, metrics I use are fairly basic. I look at the ah membership growth and the rate of membership growth. I look at conversion to premium memberships and I look at participation events and I also look at the Google Analytics to see how much viewership I am getting, how many users, how many new users, how many pages per month that they look at every time they visit. Etc.

**Stephanie:** Ok, is there anyway that you have like a screenshot or something of the metrics that

you can share with us? It's part of the paper that were supposed to submit.

**Arthur:** Yeah uh, I don't have a dashboard I show you unless I you know um, I can bring up Google Analytics and that's um basic Google Analytics. Would that be important to you?

**Stephanie:** Um, it's part of the it's you know were supposed to ask to see some kind of I guess what the metrics look like so that we as students have an idea of what metrics even look like, so if you have anything that you can share that involves your metrics that would be great.

**Arthur:** Ok, well I'll do that I'll send you a screenshot of some Google Analytics. (See Appendix B)

**Stephanie:** That would be great. And um last questions, what is your organization's future intentions um for an online community? You have any future plans?

**Arthur:** Yeah, the key focus in the near future will be to continue building the value proposition of the Innovation Global Network by encouraging more service providers to use the network to communicate and engage professionals in regards to their innovation solutions and opportunities. I'll be looking for more strategic partners to provide who can enhance the network with their offerings and ah and encouraging more innovation providers to submit listings for their innovation solutions so the ideas would be so when members come to the network and they are looking for innovation solutions they should be able to. Ah, scroll through a menu and find ah a number of solutions for the issues they are looking for. You know, companies that can help them.

**Stephanie:** This is really interesting. Thank you so much for sharing. Do you have any questions about the assignment?

**Arthur:** Ah, the only question I have about the assignment is I guess you will be writing a paper about this I assume and ah

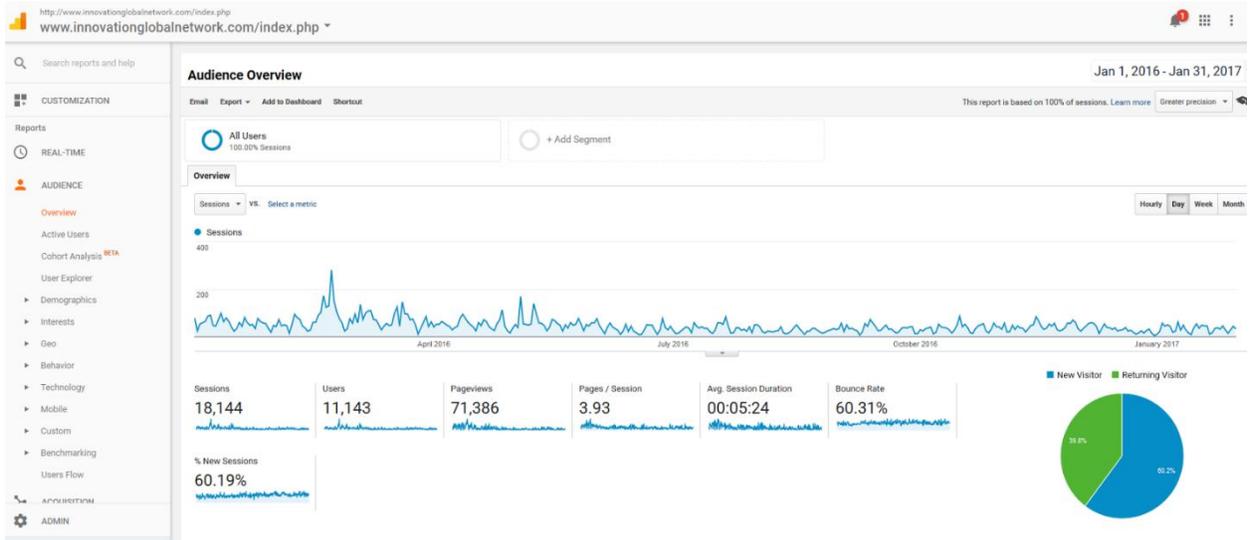
**Stephanie:** Yes

**Arthur:** And will this be, will this be to anyone beyond your group and your teacher?

**Stephanie:** No, ah the three of us, myself, Meredith and Ruth-Anne will be co-writing the paper and submitting it to the teacher and won't go beyond that.

**Arthur:** Ok, terrific

## Appendix B Innovation Global Network Metrics



Appendix C  
Online Communities Interview with  
Ronald Chernesky, Founder and CEO of investFeed Social Investing  
2/11/2017  
11:15 am

Ruth-Anne: Hello, my name is Ruth-Anne Sokol. I am enrolled in the Educational Technology Leadership, Ed.D. program at New Jersey City University. My group members and I are enrolled in EDTC 816 Advanced Methods for Building Online Communities. For Assessment Two, we are assigned to locate and analyze an organization's online community strategy. The research objectives are focused on the following: 1) What is the organization seeking to accomplish through their online community?, 2) What actions have they taken toward accomplishing these goals?, and 3) What metrics do they employ to understand their progress towards these goals? (e.g. issue turnaround time, customer satisfaction, external participant numbers and activity, lurker-to-leader conversion, speed/quality or question answering). May I interview you for the project?

**Ron:** Yes

**Ruth-Anne:** This interview will be recorded, so it can be transcribed. Do you agree to be recorded?

**Ron:** Yes

**Ruth-Anne:** What is your name? What is your job title? and What is the name of your organization?

**Ron:** My name is Ronald Chernesky and I am the CEO of investFeed Social Investing

**Ruth-Anne:** What is the history of your organization?

**Ron:** So the history of my organization is, we started Investfeed in 2014 and this was a concept that was derived from my partners and I coming from the trading floor in New York. We had seen a lack of transparency in the financial markets and especially when it came to online investing and social trading. So we developed a concept that we thought would bring transparency to online personal investing. So in 2014 we decided to leave the trading floor and roll with this, so three years later here we are building InvestFeed.

**Ruth-Anne:** So you have been employed with this company since its inception in 2014?

**Ron:** Yes, Correct!

**Ruth-Anne:** Describe your job responsibilities as the CEO.

**Ron:** As the CEO, just like any online start-up it's you kind of wear all hats for a while, a, as far as the CEO role, I am handling everything from managing our sales team, marketing, web design, dealing with accountants, lawyers, everything from soup to nuts just making sure the overall realm of things operate accordingly on a day to day basis, from the CEO side, I am really looking at things from an operational standpoint, were operating accordingly as our budget allows and were meeting objectives on a monthly basis to make sure all our stats are kind of in line with what were predicting. So you know, yeah it's kind of a wear all hats kind of world until you start getting past that barrier and you could start bringing on additional team members and allocating work to them.

**Ruth-Anne:** It sounds like you're almost there!

**Ron:** Yeah, we are three years in now so we are finally getting to a point where the team is starting to grow pretty fast. It is getting to the point where I was kind of managing everything at one time and now we have a development team, and sales team, we are starting to build a marketing team and these teams are starting to build within Investfeed. Now and it's all starting to organically happen, it took a long time to get to this point.

**Ruth-Anne:** What are your organization's goals?

Our overall goal is going back to the transparency part that I said, we are building a platform that is kind of like Twitter, that you know the difference between Twitter and Investfeed is the users on Investfeed have to connect their brokerage account and say whether it is TD Ameritrade, Fidelity

**Ruth-Anne:** Okay

**Ron:** And anytime you make a trade in your brokerage, no I am sorry once you connect your account, every time you make a trade, that trade will go into the livestream just like it would in Twitter.

**Ruth-Anne:** Okay

**Ron:** So we are building this transparent environment where everyone can see everyone's trade in real time, you can see their real portfolio, you can see their performance. So it creates now this layer of transparency where you don't have to questions someone's motives or if they are telling the truth or not, as the data really backs up exactly what they are doing. so we are really working to build that out.

**Ruth-Anne:** OK, that is great, How large is your online community?

Ron: Right now we have a little over 15,000 users who are signed up on our platform and you know it is not much, and we are just starting to get into some more acquisition as far as ramping up our traffic for 2017. We have a very active community you know it is, I would say a mass majority of retail investors and retail traders who use our platform, for right now we are going into our growth stage and really looking to ramp up our acquisitions.

**Ruth-Anne:** What are your online communities such as Facebook, Twitter, etc.?

So as far as our online community such as Facebook and Twitter, I guess you could say we do have a decent following on Facebook, Twitter we have a pretty large following, we have a little over 100,000 users who are following us on Twitter. Luckily, we were able to obtain this many followers as some of the partners with Investfeed have contacts with some public figures and a few celebrity contacts and overtime we were able to get so re-tweets going and a lot of followers to our cite at one time. So this really helped with growing our traffic and our user base, you know kind of putting us on the map as a company.

**Ruth-Anne:** Great

**Ron:** The majority of our signups, they do come from Twitter and a lot also come from Google, we are using different marketing strategies.

**Ruth-Anne:** The next question is, What is your organization seeking to accomplish through its online community?

so right now our goals are we have for the first year developing full, building the platform, building our mobile applications and getting them to where we wanted to be, and rolling into the second year we really wanted to make sure this model, this concept that we thought out would really attract users we could kind of formulate a community to start making this work for both you know the contributors and the people who are viewing the information, so now we are going into 2017 and we are starting to get to a point we have realized our model works, what we kind of set out to do. So now, our goal is we are working on scaling up, users onto our platform.

**Ruth-Anne:** Okay

So what were seeking to accomplish, is kind of what I said. We are really focused on staying true to the transparency part of the financial markets and bringing transparency to you know online personal investing. You know the average person needs to make an investment decision on what stock to buy and what stock to sell and you know the traditional way has been reaching out to advisers, brokers, looking through financial research, you know watching stock market TV. channels.

**Ruth-Anne:** Right, Right

**Ron:** So we kind of see an opportunity within the space, you know I guess to say disrupt and reinvent the way this is done as we kind of don't believe in all these traditional methods that have been out there for so long, so our goal is to build out a fully transparent platform and move investors into this way of thinking in being able to see other investors portfolios and their track records and their portfolios and their performance, kind of having accountability and proof.

**Ruth-Anne:** Okay, thank you!

**Ruth-Anne:** What actions has it taken toward accomplishing its goals? For example, creation of internal/external incentives for desired activity, leading by example...

**Ron:** This is a good question, you know, kind of when you get to this point in this business you know you have to think of internal and external incentives to win over you community that really love what you are doing and want to be a part of the community and want to share their trades, share their portfolio um, believe in your mission. This is interesting, over the past year we have really tried a variety of different measures as far as you know would either run a competition for users to win an iphone at the end of the month. Whoever has the highest portfolio rating, and various competitions. Out of all of these what we are actually finding to be the best out of all incentives is really it comes back to you know customer service. We are finding if users are reaching out to us on Investfeed and they are saying Hey maybe why doesn't this work or when are you getting a new feature that does XYZ and if we're able to get back to those users you know within minutes they really appreciate this experience and it really builds loyalty with the users and you know then we have really build a strong user who is there with you for a while, so that has been kind of our philosophy going into this. There are lots of different ways to promote Investfeed and try to attract and retain users on the platform. So yeah, as far as far as incentives we kind of moved just into trying to provide a really good client user experience where they you know just believe in our mission and want to be a part of what we are doing and support us.

**Ruth-Anne:** Okay, thank you, Next question. What interaction's do you encourage within your online community? Explain, Please give examples.

**Ron:** Okay, So what we encourage, so the platform obviously was built like I said to bring transparency to personal investing. So we encourage when a user signs up to connect their brokerage accounts to you know when they are making trades to be able to share those trades on our platform and share their portfolio with other users on our platform, and especially for the more career professional investors and traders who you know have been in the industry for a while, when new investors or traders sign up they are a little bit lost not knowing, they are just interested in how to get into investing, how does it work, how does it start. So we really

incentivise the educational part of it, of really probably giving everyone the right introduction and showing how everything works. You know kind of mentoring them along the way to get them to the point to try and understand how our platform really works. You know having them really believe in our mission. When we have new users sign up with a lot of questions, we will actually set up a Skype call with them and we will do a 15 to 30 minute mentoring session to show them how the entire platform works. So this works really good, after they get a really solid foundation for how everything works you know they feel comfortable with the community and you know after that usually they are on board as a loyal user.

**Ruth-Anne:** Good Ok

**Ruth-Anne:** What metrics do they employ to understand their progress towards these goals? And at this time I would ask that you share any of the metrics, actual data or dashboards.

Sure not a problem, to answer the question as far as what metrics we employ to understand, I guess you could say the goals of our users and what happening on community, you know we use google analytics and some third party platforms to be able to get a pretty solid understanding of what pages our users are viewing and how long they are staying on these pages for and what's really important as I mentioned the customer support, so if we are receiving a lot of questions or inquiries on one or two particular items on our platform you know we know this is probably important and something must be wrong so we will work to address this as a whole how can we fix this item on our platform to make this a better experience. You know as far as the turnaround time and the customer satisfaction and make these changes and being able to deploy them onto the platform as quickly as possible is one of the highest priorities for us. As far as the data and dashboards and things like that that we use, let me see what I can share. This was shared:

**Ron:** I found a google doc that I can share. It is a “snippit” of our traffic and activity. This is just one metric that we look at, and I can show you it is from November 1st 2016-present.

**Ruth-Anne:** So that is quarterly

**Ron:** Yes, we log in everyday to just look at our analytics and see how everything is going. From more of a developer side they understand how to compute all these Numbers and compute all these numbers to see what is happening on the Investfeed platform. So overall you can see from a basic view, that things are going good, the traffic is increasing and we are almost hitting an all time high on our traffic on a daily basis. So we are able to compare new visitors vs returning visitors. So one of the developers on our team logs into google analytics and you know tracks the data to see how many user are on our platform you know in real time, what pages are they clicking on, what exactly are they doing? and this gives us a better foundation to figure out what are the most important features on investfeed and you know what do we need to work on building out. what pages are users coming to, where they stopped when they leave the website,

because that makes us realize that something is wrong, why are they leaving our platform when they hit the second or third page. So these are all very critical metrics from a user experience so we can figure out how we can improve it everyday. That is the easy part, being able to retain that user and convert them into an active user and they are signing in everyday using the investfeed platform, that is where a lot of work comes in to get to that point.

**Ruth-Anne:** So that would lead me to my last question, What is the organization's future intentions of the online community?

**Ron:** So our future intentions for our community now are, we are really working on scaling up traffic and we are realizing as we are starting to scale up traffic that we, we support some of the major brokerages right now, but we don't support them all. So we are working with brokerages, Robo Advisors, we are starting to work for different financial mobile apps as well that can plug into investfeed, so we are kind of working on building a unified experience where, so you know you have Fidelity, TD Ameritrade, and if you have a Robo Advisor account or if you simply have a mobile financial app that you manage your finances through, we will be at a point soon so you can plug that directly into Investfeed and you know you can manage all these accounts from one platform instead of having to you know jump around to multiple platforms. Then another aspect that we are starting to get into, aside from the social investing part of our platform we are bringing transparency to personal investing we have had a lot of demand from our users wanting to know if we are going to have jobs on our websites and if they can have a career profile, kind of like LinkedIn.

Yeah so these are features that we started building out as well, so now users have a full career profile on their page, we just rolled out a financial job section.

**Ruth-Anne:** Yes, I saw that

**Ron:** Yeah so this gives our users not only the opportunity to manage their finances on this platform they can also apply to jobs and you know make investfeed their personal identity. So if you're in finance or you work in capital markets were starting to see that investfeed is turning into a place where users especially within capital markets, investing, trading, hedge funds, things like that. they are starting to establish their presence, let's say putting up a link saying, hey this is where I am , I am at investfeed compared to linkedin.

**Ruth-Anne:** Right

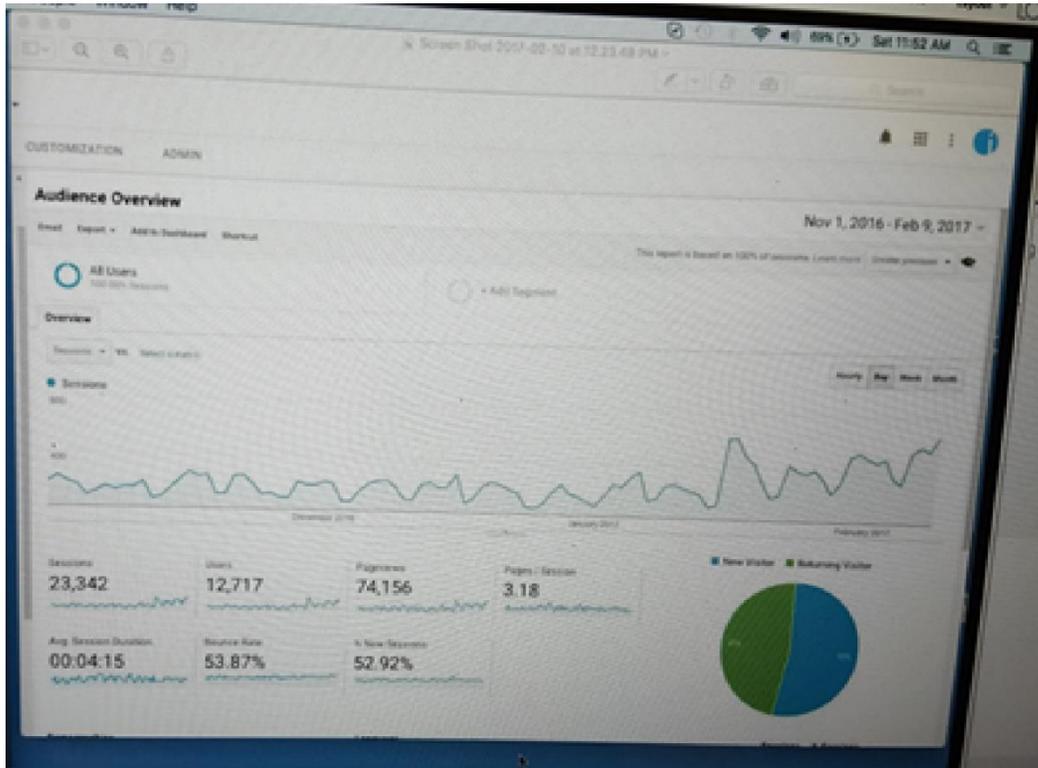
**Ron:** So it is a pretty interesting time to be seeing this right now. and I guess we will see where it goes. you know we are not getting our hopes up but it is just good to see that the users want to establish their identity on our platform.

**Ruth-Anne:** I am very impressed!

**Ron:** I appreciate it! It took a while, it took a lot of work.

That was the last of my interview questions. Do you have any questions? Thank you for participating in the Assessment Two: Community Analysis. If you have any additional questions, you may contact me at anytime. Thank you for your time.

Appendix D  
investFeed Metrics



Appendix E  
Group Collaboration Narrative

**Sphero**

1/26/2017 - Sent two emails. One to the general Sphero information email address and one to Danielle Hammernik, a contact Stephanie made at ISTE 2016

1/27/2017 - Received a reply from Latisha at Sphero Customer Service assuring Stephanie she would pass Stephanie's request along to the appropriate people.

2/1/2017 - Emailed Latisha stating that I had not received a response from anyone at Sphero. Received a reply from Danielle thanking Stephanie for reaching out with this opportunity and asking how she could help. Stephanie replied explaining the assignment and requesting interviews.

2/2/2017 - Sent a follow-up email to Danielle.

2/6/2017 - Received an email from Danielle stating that she could arrange for two interviews. I replied agreeing to the two interviews with Bill and Pete.

2/7/2017 - Stephanie sent Danielle, Bill and Pete from Sphero our interview questions for review.

2/8/2017 - Stephanie received the following message from Danielle.

Hi Stephanie,

Happy to share general insight with you regarding our company's community initiatives. After looking at the questions however, we are unable to provide you with the details you're seeking regarding goals, metrics, and customer information.

After learning more about your program, we are unable to coordinate meetings with Sphero.

**Aiko Thurlow-[Toolmuse](#)**

1/29/17 - Emailed requesting an interview

1/30/17 -Aiko accepted to be interviewed; however, after the call, she thought her business may not fit the parameters of the assignments - Aiko suggested contacting Ester Surden-  
[NJTechWeekly](#)

2/8/17 - Emailed Aiko requesting an interview after Sphero declined

2/9/17 - Aiko declined because she was unveiling a new version of her company

**Esther Surden**

1/31/17 - Ester emailed a list of possible contacts (Emailed the list on 2/8/17)

1. Jason Vitug, [Phroogal](#)
2. Ron Chernesky, [investFeed.com](#)
3. Charles Jo-[StartupStudyGroup](#)
4. Arthur Fox, [Innovation Global Network](#)

**Ronald Chernesky**-[investFeed](#)

2/8/17-Emailed requesting an interview

2/9/17-Responded to setup a time

2/11/17-Interview

**Arthur Fox** - [Innovation Global Network](#)

2/8/17 - Emailed requesting an interview

2/8/17 - Responded to setup a time

2/10/17 - Interview