

Interest Groups Discussion

Immerse with interest groups to learn about what is being discussed in a topic

What it does

BENEFITS	INPUT	OUTPUT
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Brings in new perspectives• Captures the latest• Facilitates quick and early discovery• Reveals patterns	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• List of interest groups around topics of interest to your project and ways to access them	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Understanding of latest developments, variety of viewpoints, and trends in a subject area

Groups often form around shared interests in particular subject matters. Whether the groups are affiliated with a professional organization or come together in an informal structure, their shared interests fuel active dialog about what is happening around a given context.

Spending time on online forums or at planned gatherings and engaging in discussions is a way to find out about the latest developments. The key to gaining the most from interest group discussions is to be an active listener of conversations, or if online, an active follower of forums. By following what is being discussed among interest members, we can learn a lot about themes, points of view, news items, forthcoming changes, extreme user behaviours, and other content that can be captured easily and shared with team members.

How it Works

STEP 1: Seek out interest group forums.

Conduct online searches, visit professional association websites, and scan social networks for interest groups organized around the subject of interest to you. Find out when and where groups get together, how forums are organized, and what forthcoming topics will be addressed.

STEP 2: Find out what is being discussed in interest forums.

Scan interest forum directories for the topics being discussed. This will give you a high-level view of what matters to people organized around the subject matter.

STEP 3: Dive in.

If you are entering an online forum, read recent postings to get a sense of what people are discussing. Read further back to understand how the conversation has changed over time. Participate and post questions and comments.

STEP 4: Capture your findings.

Write brief statements that capture what is discussed in these forums. Record what you see as the various points of view on the topic, the latest developments being discussed, trends mentioned, extreme contexts and behaviours that emerge, and similar types of information that is valuable to you. Collect these findings in a form that can be shared with others.

STEP 5: Review and summarize.

Review your findings to look for larger themes or patterns that may be emerging. Try to identify what is driving these themes. This may suggest opportunities for additional research. Summarize.

STEP 6: Share and discuss.

Share your summary with stakeholders and/or subject matter experts to get their opinions of the findings.