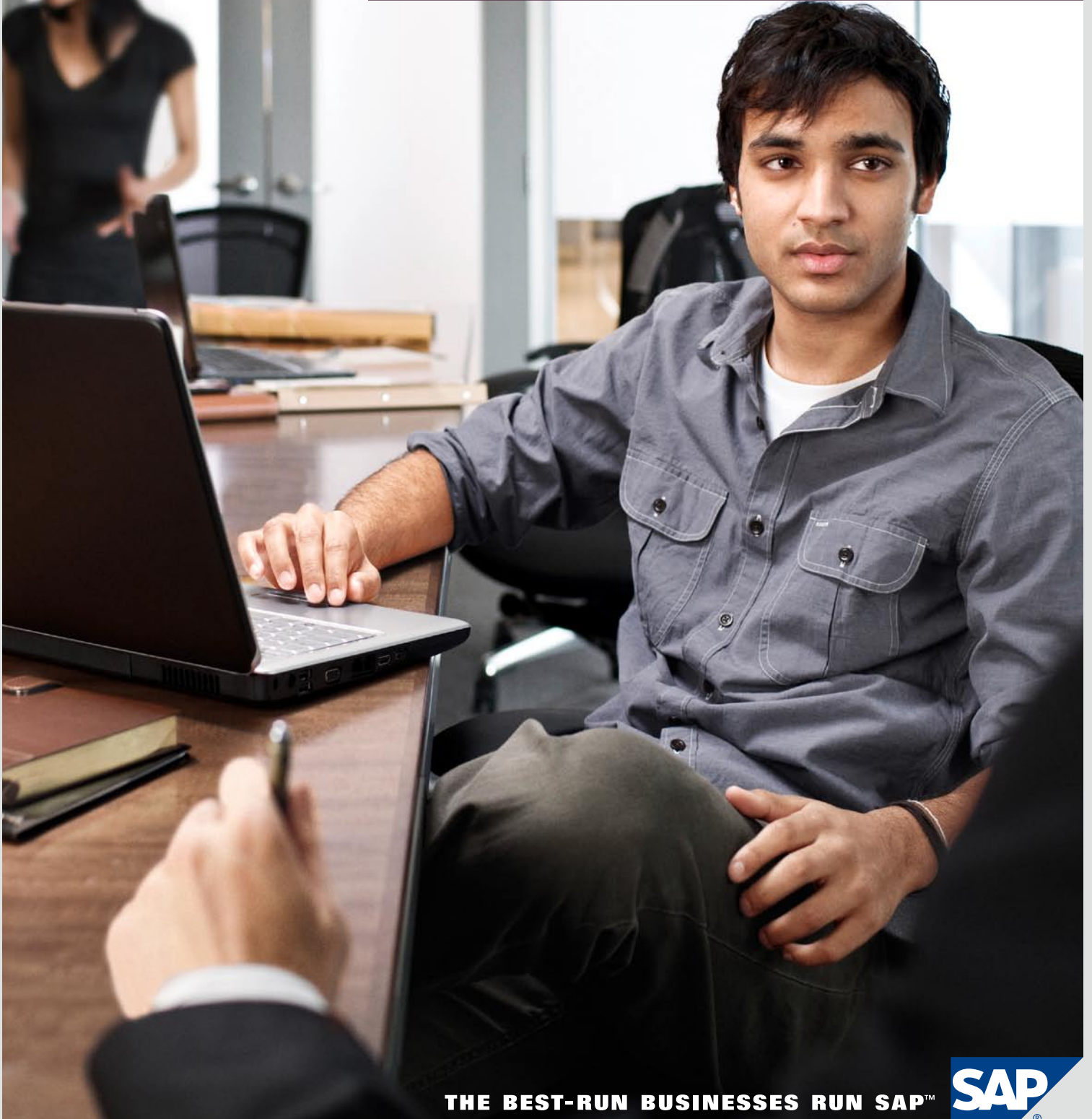


Communities of Innovation at SAP  
SAP Mentor Initiative

## GETTING MORE FROM COMMUNITIES OF INNOVATION AT SAP

INCREASING PARTICIPATION TO  
MAXIMIZE VALUE DERIVED



THE BEST-RUN BUSINESSES RUN SAP™





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## Overview

The communities of innovation at SAP, part of the customer-focused SAP® ecosystem, are driven by the collective power of individual users. Those with the highest level of participation gain the most, as evidenced by an elite group of participants – the SAP mentors – whose passion fuels the fire of innovation.

With more than 1 million members and roughly 25,000 new participants each month, the communities of innovation at SAP are growing rapidly. These insiders know that one of the best ways to stay current and gain knowledge about SAP® software is to tap into the minds and experiences of other community members through forums, blogs, and Wikis. This allows members to test and share ideas and quickly resolve technical and business issues through collaboration.

What's really remarkable is what the numbers represent – the activity that takes place on a daily basis within the communities. The power of these communities lies in the hands of the individuals at their keyboards – the people who contribute approximately 6,000 online posts per day. It's their responsiveness to each other and the quality of their feedback that keeps these communities strong, vibrant, and dynamic.

### Active Participation Counts

Most people who access the communities of innovation begin on a casual basis, researching an occasional technical issue. But just like the lottery, you have to play to win. Staying on the sidelines delivers only marginal value. The people, and therefore the organizations for which they work, gain the most value from the communities by becoming engaged and active.

### Influencing Brand Identity

As its participation in the communities increases over time, an organization is able to use the communities to affirm its brand identity and position as an industry leader – an important differentiator in today's competitive economic climate. "Many organizations take pride in having their company appear at the top of the list of contributors to the community," says Mark Finnern, chief community evangelist for SAP. "One community member went to a prospect and started to introduce his company. The prospect interrupted and said, 'No introduction needed. We know you from the SAP Developer Network site.' Prominence in the community is opening doors."

**"You build a reputation based on the quality of your content, your expertise, and by showing that you are active in the communities."**

**Richard Hirsch**, Senior Portal and SAP NetWeaver Technology Platform Consultant,  
Siemens IT Solutions and Services

Beyond frequency of postings, the value of the content posted also has a bearing on corporate identity. "Bloggers and posters are awarded points by peers for contributing to various areas of the communities. The more points you get, the higher your ranking," Finnern explains. "This is another way a company can demonstrate its technical and business process expertise."

### Achieving SAP Mentor Status

An elite group of contributors to the communities of innovation achieves SAP mentor status. The SAP Mentor initiative identifies and awards this special status to exceptional members of the SAP Developer Network (SDN) and Business Process Expert communities. As Finnern emphasizes, "SAP mentors are subject matter experts who are passionate about SAP and share their opinions and insights with the community through exceptionally high-quality and frequent contributions." SAP mentors make up the top 0.01% of the SDN and Business Process Expert community members. Nominated by other SAP mentors, SAP employees, and fellow community

members, SAP mentors hold the title for a period of one year.

Benefits SAP mentors receive from the SAP Mentor initiative include:

- Recognition as an SAP-credited expert on a mentor home page on SDN
- An icon next to their posts in the forums to indicate their premium status
- Privileged access to SAP employees (including executives and product management)



The communities deliver value by connecting an ecosystem of business people, developers, and IT services professionals spanning business strategy, business processes, technology, and operations. Within the ecosystem, participants co-innovate and collaborate to achieve results that in everyday business would strain individual resources to the limit in terms of time and expertise. While unified by shared business goals, communities are fluid enough to ensure that information is fresh, relevant, and accessible.

### To Learn More

For an overview of the communities of innovation at SAP, please visit [www.sap.com/ecosystem/communities](http://www.sap.com/ecosystem/communities).

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Mark Finnern, Chief Community Evangelist, SAP AG

- VIP seating at such events as the SAP TechEd and SAPHIRE® conferences
- Free entry to one SAP TechEd conference and one “Community Day” event of their choice
- Access to SAP mentor-only forums and Wikis
- Inclusion in the SAP mentor online meet-up series

### Benefits of Participation

Communities of innovation at SAP coordinate and harness the collective power of developers, partners, customers, business process experts, and other professionals who have a deep interest in the success of the community. Through their collaboration, communities of innovation are ushering in an era of enterprise service-oriented architecture (enterprise SOA).

## Communities of Innovation at SAP

The Business Process Expert community enables business process platform adoption through collaborative definition, modeling, composition, and sharing of business processes and best practices.

[bpx.sap.com](http://bpx.sap.com)

The Enterprise Services Community program collaboratively creates specifications for core SAP processes for definition in Enterprise Services Repository.

[esc.sap.com](http://esc.sap.com)

The industry standards initiative fills the gaps in end-to-end processes with the definition of interfaces and standards that SAP, partners, and customers can implement.

[sdn.sap.com/irj/sdn/standards-and-opensource](http://sdn.sap.com/irj/sdn/standards-and-opensource)

The Industry Value Network program comprises industry-specific business groups that bring together customers, independent software vendors, technology vendors, and systems integrators with SAP to deliver value through preintegrated industry offerings.

[www.sap.com/ecosystem/communities/ivn](http://www.sap.com/ecosystem/communities/ivn)

The SAP® Developer Network community enables developers to co-innovate in a robust and highly collaborative environment using a combination of discussion forums, blogs, Wikis, software and tool downloads, and e-learning.

[sdn.sap.com](http://sdn.sap.com)



“SAP mentors are subject matter experts who are passionate about SAP and share their opinions and insights with the community through exceptionally high-quality and frequent contributions.”

Mark Finner, Chief Community Evangelist, SAP AG

## Spotlight on SAP Mentors

Most people who access the communities of innovation begin on a casual basis, researching an occasional technical issue. That's how it began for Richard Hirsch, a senior internal consultant with Siemens IT Solutions and Services (SIS) specializing in portal technology and the SAP NetWeaver® technology platform. Hirsch is the gateway for colleagues from divisions within Siemens who need help using SAP® software.

### The Beginning of a Beautiful Relationship

In 2004 SIS developers needed detailed technical information about a host of SAP technologies and products in order to be able to enhance their work. "We needed a way to collaborate and communicate with other developers across the company," Hirsch explains. SIS developers began to actively use forums on the SAP Developer Network (SDN) site to get answers to questions about the SAP NetWeaver Visual Composer tool, the SAP Composite Application Framework tool, and the SAP NetWeaver Portal component. "The responses – which often arrive within hours – enabled the SIS developers to quickly solve technical issues," Hirsch adds.

SIS developers continue to use SDN to share knowledge and explore special pilot projects. Hirsch observes, "I'm an information consumer and

producer. When I want technical information on the SAP NetWeaver technology platform or many other things, I can find it on SDN much faster than through standard search engine tools. Speed of response – that's the key with SDN. In terms of information production, the blogs – as well as collaboration with others through forums and Wikis – are crucial. They raise awareness of me as a blogger, but also of Siemens IT Solutions and Services as a company."

### Earning SAP Mentor Recognition

Hirsch was among the first individuals to achieve the status of SAP mentor for 2007 and was renominated for the honor for 2008. His frequent postings caught the eye of fellow community members and peers who nominated him. As a mentor, Hirsch is recognized as an SAP expert and has been awarded privileged access to SAP information and events.

### Impact of Corporate Reputation

Distinction as an SAP mentor enables Hirsch to not only build his professional network but the Siemens network and reputation as well. "You build a reputation based on the quality of your content, your expertise, and by showing that you are active in the communities," he explains.

### Mentoring in Action

A mentor may be called on to help other members navigate the communities of innovation. For example, Hirsch guided one consultant to solve his own problems by pointing him to

some links in SDN. He also encouraged him to be more active by creating blogs. That consultant was Jakob Diness, a business consultant with Invendium A/S, based in Denmark. "I use SDN, especially the forums and the blog section for the SAP NetWeaver Visual Composer tool. I found this to be a very useful way to see what and how the tool is used for different platforms and installations," says Diness. "I posted a problem and Richard responded. He was very useful in guiding me in how to find information; introduced me to blogs, Wikis, and forums; and encouraged me to write about how I solved the problem in a blog."

Diness not only solved his problem but his blog describing the solution was posted on the front page of his company's Web site and was featured in SDN. "We are very excited to be present in SDN and the Business Process Expert community as a company," Diness adds. "It is a good way to show that our company is contributing to the expert use of SAP NetWeaver Visual Composer."

### Inspiring Participation, Gaining Value

For Hirsch, being a mentor and active in the community delivers multiple benefits. "Based on the activity that I have, I can contact people at SAP that I wouldn't have access to as easily," Hirsch explains. "Through my blogs I can talk to people and influence things to some degree by just showing my activity level and my innovation. That, to me, is benefit enough."

## SAP® Mentor 2009

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