

## **National eXtension Videoconference**

*Presented May 4, 2005*

K-State location: Waters Hall, room 137

Notes by Pat Melgares, Marketing Coordinator, K-State Research and Extension

### AGENDA

Institutional teams

FAQ Initiative

Communities of Practice

Call for Engagements

### Institutional teams

The purpose of these teams is to facilitate institutional cooperation and participation

- Help to institutionalize eXtension
- Assist faculty/staff with joining communities of practice (COPs)
  - Form communities of interest (COIs) within the COPs

Directors of Extension at landgrant universities will identify people at each institution to help. These people may come from the following, or other, areas:

- Organizational management
- Communications/Marketing
- Content Development
- Information Technology
- Faculty
- County representative

Directors at landgrant universities have been asked to submit potential members of institutional teams to the national office by May 20, 2005.

### FAQ Initiative

FAQs are Frequently Asked Questions. The idea is to provide an online location where citizens can go anytime to find answers to commonly-asked questions. The goals of this initiative include

- provide Extension faculty/staff an opportunity to participate in eXtension,
- identify communities of interest,
- identify national content leaders,
- build a national FAQ model,
- collect FAQ and answers (summarize these; this is expected to take place in summer, 2005)
  - FAQs will be published to a web-based “WIKI”
  - There will be a call to participate in answering FAQs

The FAQ initiative will help local, state and national leaders in eXtension to develop smaller communities of interest who form to share and discuss information around specific topics.

## About Communities of Practice

*Presented by Craig Wood, Associate Director of eXtension*

Communities of Practice are virtual teams:

- They are multidisciplinary
- Might consist of county educators, industry experts, clients, many others
  - These people will develop Communities of Interest, groups which might have daily interaction around a topic of interest.

**How do Communities of Practice form?** Some ways include

- Market analysis of users
- Expressed need by citizens for emerging content
- Self-forming, because of regional/national needs or interests
- Regional or state subject-matter teams form a nucleus to build a national or regional community of practice

Communities of Practice may be national in scope.

- Internal evaluation (within a landgrant university, for example) may determine whether we are meeting users' needs.
- A group may review the "best-of-the-best" material from all U.S. landgrants to meet a Community of Practice need.

## **Guiding Principles of Communities of Practice**

*By Carla Craycraft, Associate Director of eXtension*

- 1) Believe in openly-shared product development
- 2) Content author will retain development recognition for promotion and tenure purposes, but content belongs to eXtension.
- 3) The educational product will belong to the eXtension system and not to any one institution or entity.
- 4) Individual members of COPs leave content developed within the community.
- 5) Believe that others in the field can make decisions about content.
- 6) Believe in the unselfish joint ownership and peer-reviewed development of content
- 7) Believe that change is constant in content areas.
- 8) Believe that some content is unique to local, state or multi-state areas, while some may be regional.
- 9) Believe that we can no longer afford duplication of effort in the system.

An action plan for Communities of Practice

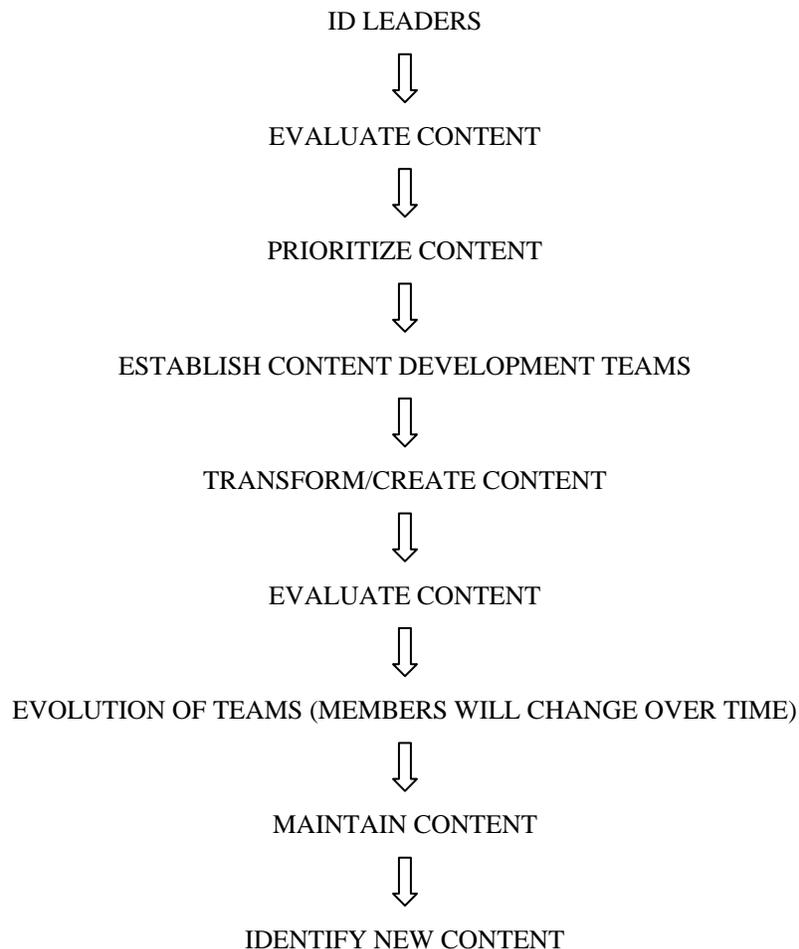
- I. Boundary Conditions
  - a. Mission, vision and operating guidelines
  - b. Customer-centered focus
  - c. Active involvement in Communities of Interest
  - d. National, regional and local expertise
  - e. Educational product development must be high quality and engaging and aimed at improving lives

- f. COPs should be entrepreneurial.
- g. COP leadership must emerge

(A few other items were listed, but I was not able to get those to notes...pjm)

- II. Identify Communities of Interest and develop a plan for continual interaction.
- III. Develop a plan for user assessment and evaluation.
- IV. Develop a strategy to inventory existing content. All Communities of Practice will develop FAQs.
- V. Develop FAQs.
- VI. Develop an “Ask the Expert” model (all COPs). This requires additional commitment from the “expert” (for example, to answer email, or otherwise interact with users).
- VII. Construct content teams
- VIII. Plan for continually updating content. Determine who does it, and how will it be done.
- IX. Identify quick response members.
- X. Plan for evaluating the Community of Practice over time.

So...the **evolution of Communities of Practice** might be viewed as follows:



Institutions will receive the following support from eXtension:

- Virtual collaboration work space (online; secure server)
- Technological infrastructure to facilitate work
- Team development opportunities (face-to-face)
- Communications, marketing, business development resources
- Training (entering and maintaining content)
- Content design standards for production
- Technical production assistance
- General and overall marketing strategies
- Assessment mechanisms to define audiences

#### Call for Engagement

Includes the following steps:

- Pre-application (deadline this year will be July 8)
- Full application (July 29/Sept. 9)
- Planning grant award (up to \$100,000; will fund up to 5 planning grants)

All of these applications will be done online. Go to <http://intranet.extension.org/>

eXtension is seeking “Pioneer Communities of Practice.”