

Who Is Don Philabaum?

Don Philabaum is the founder, President and CEO of IAC, an Akron based Internet technology firm he founded in 1995. The firm provides online communities to groups and organizations world wide. Recognized as the “father” of online community, Don understood the potential value of online communities for groups and organizations in 1995 when he registered the URL’s www.onlinecommunity.com and www.onlinecommunities.com.

Entrepreneurial Businessman

IAC was Don’s second business. As a college student, he started a graduation photography company that photographed high school and college graduates as they received their diploma on graduation day. Over time, his firm served 550 high schools and colleges. His team of 100 photographers traveled throughout the United States during May and June to photograph nearly 200,000 graduates.

With 30 computers and a centralized order tracking system to identify what stage of the production process the graduates’ photographs were, by 1990 Don and his team had become very proficient in computer technology. It was



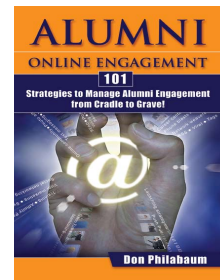
at this time that he was exposed to some of the early “bulletin board” online communities like “the Well” which set the stage for his next business. In 1995 he moved his family to Telluride, Colorado and wrote a business plan to create online communities for organizations as diverse as funeral homes to grocery stores!

In 1996, one of IAC’s first “projects” was a free website for college students to start their own business. The service enabled students to sell their CD’s, offering copywriting, translation services, online email customer service and other “dorm room” businesses. Search engines were in their infancy so Don and his team created **Toplinks**, a site that cataloged the best academic resource sites for students within a range of topics. The first social networking community IAC created was **StudentAccess**, an early version of popular social networking sites like Facebook.com and MySpace.com.

Education Technology Provider and Consultant

By 1997 Don and his IAC team were offering online communities to alumni associations worldwide. His firm provided alumni online communities to the London School of Economics, two of the top business schools in Europe, HEC and Bocconi School of Management and over 200 American and Canadian colleges. The firm helped alumni associations engage over 4,000,000 alumni online 24/7. In 1998 his team introduced affinity shopping malls to alumni associations as a way to help them generate income from alumni shopping at websites like Amazon.com.

As the "private" password protected online community industry was emerging, Don recognized organizations needed training and help in running their online communities so he began writing a series of white papers and books. His first book, published in 1998, "*Create a NET-Centered College Campus*" suggested colleges develop online communities for prospective students, parents and alumni. Nearly 1,000 college professionals downloaded his report "*Facing UP to the Facebook Generation*" and attended webinars to learn how to engage their young alumni. In 2006 he published his second book, "*Alumni Online Engagement, 101 Strategies to Manage Alumni Engagement from Cradle to Grave.*" Don is also the author of www.wiredcommunities.com, a blog that provides advancement industry best practice.



Business Technology provider and Consultant



INTERNET
STRATEGIES
GROUP

By 2006, the advertising industry began to understand how online communities like MySpace could fundamentally change their industry by providing a repeatable, predictable and measurable way to amplifying word of mouth and buzz marketing. Staying current with the trends, Don founded a new company Internet Strategies Group whose mission is to help the education and business market learn how to reinvent their marketing effort via Web 2.0 tools and services. www.internetstrategiesgroup.com

Don also authors www.onlinecommunities.com a blog that provides online community and social media best practices within the business community. His latest book, "*Customer Online Engagement, Amplifying Word of Mouth and Buzz Marketing using Online Community and Social Media*" provides a blue print for any business that wants to increase profits by selling more services through "trusted" networks. Don has been a featured speaker across the United States, Canada, Europe and Asia.

Community participation

Don has been active in business education partnerships with community schools and was recognized with the Harold K. Stubbs Business Partner award. He is actively looking for strategic partners to help organize an online tutoring program that enables college students to tutor students in high school and junior high. Interested? He needs your help!

Today, Don splits his time between his businesses, family and speaking engagements worldwide. **He is currently finishing a book for the K12 school market and another for the higher education market on how to use online community and social media to better serve students.** Don is a 1975 graduate of Kent State University with a major in Telecommunication.

