

Community Engagement and Online Deliberation

Todd Davies, Michael Levin, Laura O'Laughlin
Partnership for Internet Equity and Community
Engagement

National Conference on Dialogue and
Deliberation
August 6, 2006

“Online deliberation”

A common theme:

The challenge of using electronic media in a way that deepens thinking and improves mutual understanding.

See also:

<http://www.online-deliberation.net>

PIECE

Partnership for

- Internet Equity

and

- Community Engagement

between...

- the East Palo Alto Community Network

and

- the Symbolic Systems Program at Stanford

Ideals of the PIECE approach

- Community-based
- Participant-observation
- Problem-driven

A Problem-Driven Design Process

- Problems Identified
- Other Observations and Assumptions
- Available Approaches
- Principles
- Consequences
- Initial design and feedback
- Re-design









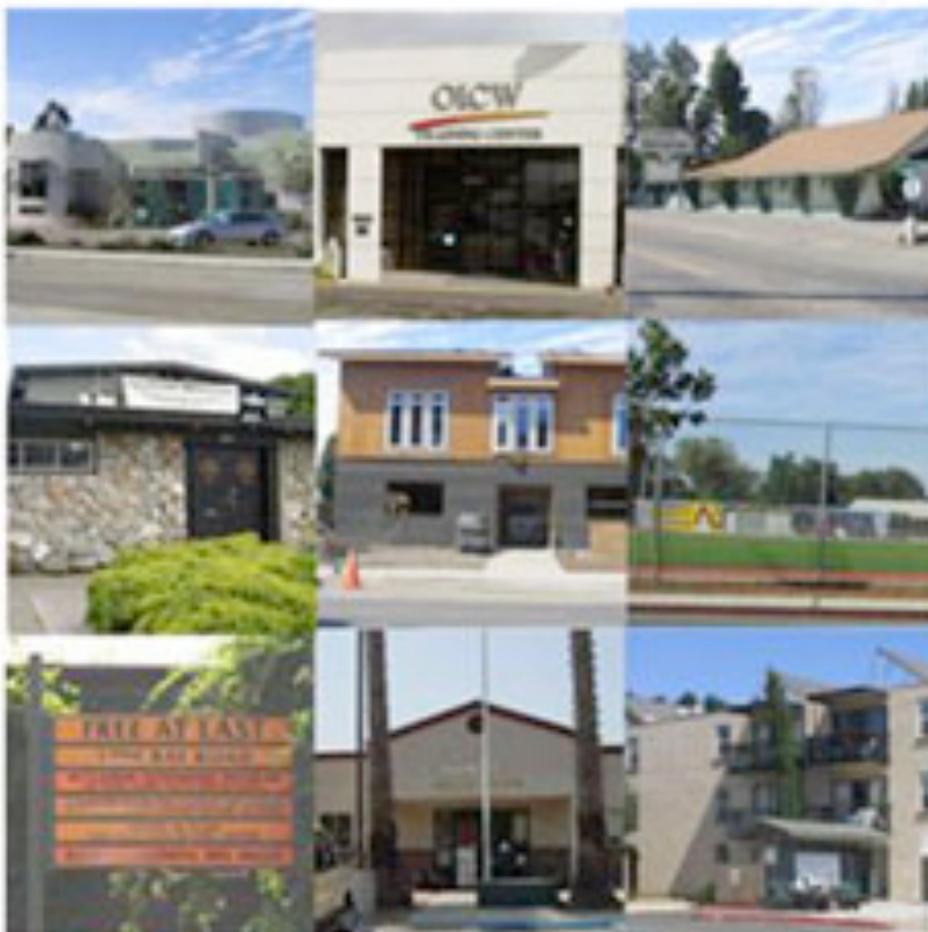


Digital Village

East Palo Alto

Belle Haven Parent Center - Cesar Chavez Parent Center - City

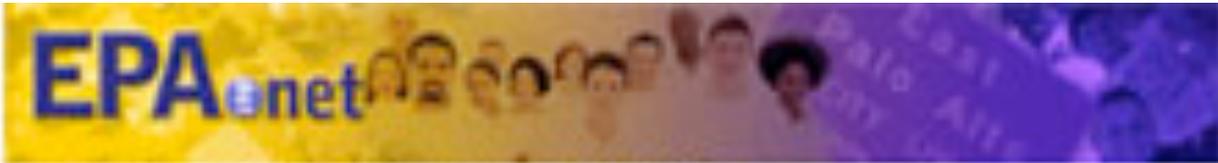
Team Ministries - EPA Senior Center - Free At Last - Hepeloni



Christian School - Light Tree Apts - OICW - St. Samuel Church



Technology Access Points



Home About Us News Hot Jobs Service Values Discussion Features & Profiles

- Home
- News
- Jobs
- Service
- Discussion
- Features & Profiles
- Hot
- Jobs
- Service
- Discussion
- Features & Profiles
- Home
- News
- Jobs
- Service
- Discussion
- Features & Profiles
- Home
- News
- Jobs
- Service
- Discussion
- Features & Profiles

July 16, 2003

East Palo Alto Celebrates 20 Years

East Palo Altans vote 1,778-1,766 for incorporation

By Staff Writer
Staff Writer

East Palo Alto, a neighborhood of approximately 12,000 people, voted to incorporate as a city on July 1, 2003. The vote was 1,778-1,766.

East Palo Alto is a neighborhood of approximately 12,000 people, voted to incorporate as a city on July 1, 2003. The vote was 1,778-1,766.

1983 - 2003 20th Anniversary Celebration
July 1, 2003 - 7:00 P.M. City Council Chambers

On July 1, 2003 at 7:00 P.M. the City of East Palo Alto held its residents, neighbors and friends to join with us in celebrating 20 years of growth and progress. The City's independent existence was decreed July 1, 1983 in the late 1980s growth and redevelopment have made it possible. The City is currently entering into one that is more uniform, affordable, diverse and multi-cultural. The City continues to drive, encourage and support responsible economic development activities that address the

Search for jobs

Level:

Position:

Find similar to this job [View](#)

Home

East Palo Alto Celebrates 20 Years

East Palo Altans vote 1,778-1,766 for incorporation

Home

News

Jobs

Service

Discussion

Features & Profiles



***Research Results for the
East Palo Alto Community
Network / Plugged In***

Adapted from a 2005
report written by Brandi
Thompson

Four Goals for the Community Network

- 1) Increased Participation of Residents in Online Information and Idea Exchange,
- 2) Increased Technology Skills and Use of Technology by Staff of Community Based Organizations
- 3) Increased Access to Relevant Information for Community Residents,
- 4) Increased Technology Skills for Community Residents

1. Increased Participation of Residents in Online Information and Idea Exchange

With the purpose of leading to an increased sense of commitment to the community

-The site averaged 236 users per day in fall 2003. In early 2005, this was up to an average of 2,082 users per day.

-Residents described using EPA.net to gain “information about community events” as well as “access to community news.”

2. Increased Technology Skills and Use of Technology by Staff of Community Based Organizations (CBOs)

With the purpose of attaining increased efficiency and effectiveness

-Free At Last, commented that the TAPs had a “tremendous impact” on the organization and that they were able to “stream line business operations.”

-There is now DSL access for offices, with direct connection to the county, which makes the transfer of data much more efficient.

3. Increased Access to Relevant Information for Community Residents

Increasing Ease of Utilizing Community Resources

-One EPA.net Community Advisory Board member noted that “she realized that her community possessed a number of community organizations working in many areas to make East Palo Alto a stronger and better community” as she became involved with the site.

- Though they may be coming in specifically to use the TAP, residents may also inadvertently discover other resources the host organization has to offer.

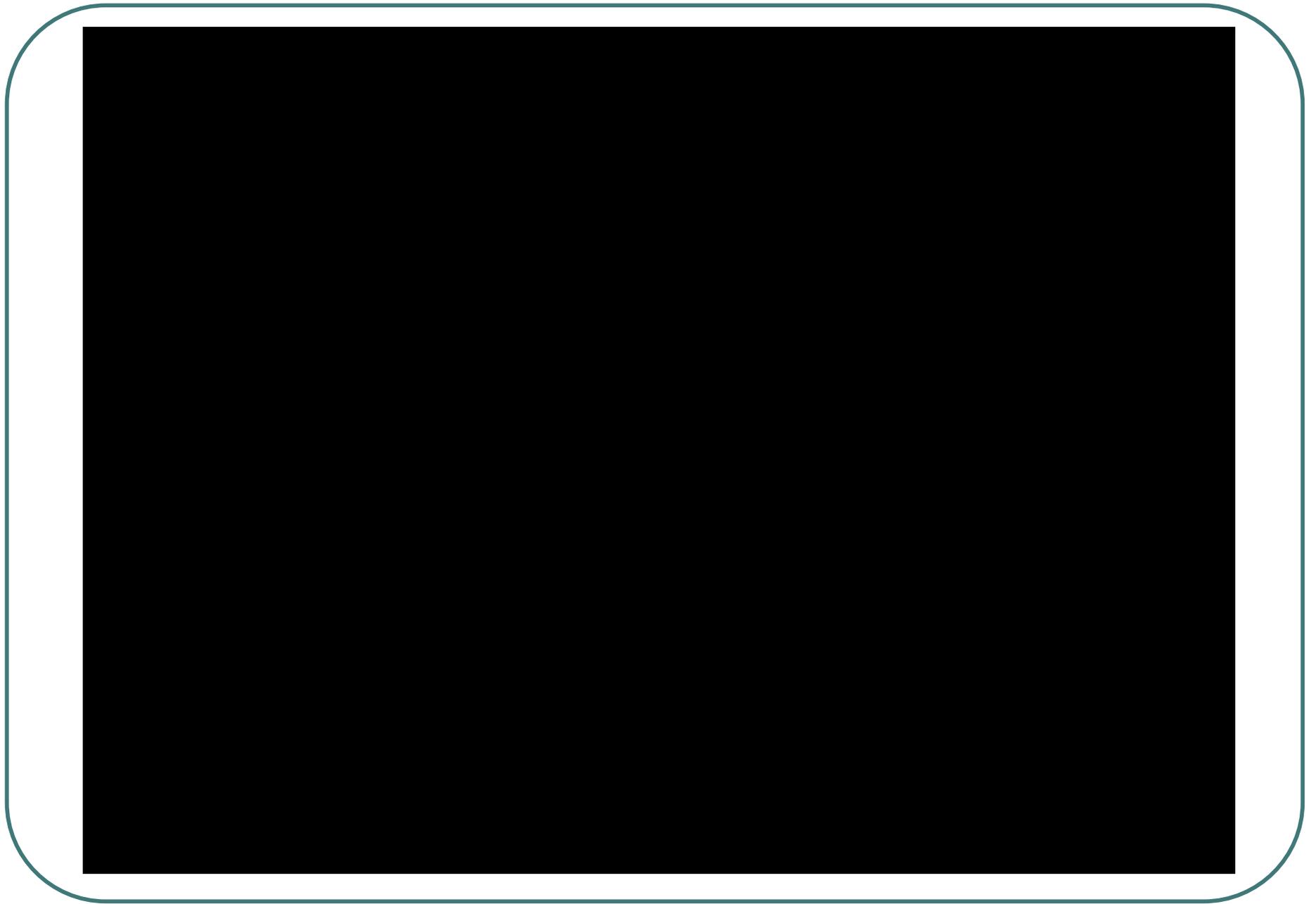
4. Increased Technology Skills for Community Residents

Leading to greater educational and employment opportunities

-As a representative from the Ecumenical Hunger Project noted, the TAP “enables clients to put together a resume and look for jobs.”

-EPA.net provides opportunities for residents to learn and apply new skills.

-
- The East Palo Alto Community Network has achieved all its goals since its programs began in 2002, and continues to work to improve the skills, computer access and online participation of EPA residents.



Participant observations in East Palo Alto (2002-2003)

Problems posed by reliance on f2f meetings for community decision making:

- Low attendance and representation
- Insufficient meeting duration and frequency
- Not enough communication between meetings
- Not enough information available during meetings
- Not enough communication between groups
- Insufficient (access to) group records
- Streamlined decision procedures
- Lack of transparency for those unable to attend
- Present in all communities, but of amplified importance in underserved communities

Other Observations and Assumptions

- Email use universal in some, technology-oriented groups (e.g. TechCollab)
- Other tools being used: Yahoo! Groups, Zoomerang
- Many residents in non-tech oriented groups did not use email
- Community Network making Internet access nearly universal, with training opportunities
- Language and literacy barriers can be overcome through representation
- Decision making thought to require face-to-face meetings

Available Approaches

- Making more effective use of existing asynchronous tools for threaded text conversation (email, message boards, blogs, wikis)
- Synchronous tools (e.g. voice chat software used by Fishkin/Luskin), combined with email
- Better publicity for and public records of f2f meetings
- New asynchronous tool for deliberation tailored to target groups

Deme: a platform for online deliberation (2003-)

Principles:

- ***Supportiveness.*** The platform should support the group overall, so that there is either an improvement or no decline in the ability of the group to meet the needs of its members or stakeholders.

Deme: a platform for online deliberation (2003-)

Principles:

- ***Supportiveness***
- ***Comprehensiveness.*** The platform should allow the group to accomplish, in an online environment, all of the usual deliberative tasks associated with face-to-face meetings.

Deme: a platform for online deliberation (2003-)

Principles:

- ***Supportiveness***
- ***Comprehensiveness***
- ***Participation.*** The platform should maximize the number of desired participants in the group's deliberations, and minimize barriers to their participation.

Deme: a platform for online deliberation (2003-)

Principles:

- ***Supportiveness***
- ***Comprehensiveness***
- ***Participation***
- ***Quality.*** The platform should facilitate a subjective quality of interaction and decision making that meets or exceeds what the group achieves in face-to-face meetings

Demo Group

DEME version is 0.5.0

This is the description of the group, which can be edited by anyone with access to the group. In this case, you are in the Demo Group, which is meant as an interactive introduction to Deme and its features.

[\[Edit this summary\]](#)

Welcome, **todd** [:::my settings](#) [:::logout](#) [:::my groups](#)

Meeting Areas

- [Learn Deme Here](#)
- [Sandbox](#)
- [Deme Discussion](#)
- [mymeetingname](#)
- [RM Players](#)
- [testi testi](#)
- [Discussion](#)
- [Members assembly](#)
- [Eureka!](#)
- [Puppu](#)
- [The Cybernetics of on-line deliberation](#)

[Create new meeting area...](#)

Announcements

- Jan-14: test
- Dec-29: Test2
- Nov-29: This is a short announcement.
- Sep-17: Test
- Mar-15: Welcome to the Demo Group! Click the "Learn Deme Here" meeting area link on the left to get an introduction to meeting area features.

[View all announcements](#)

[Add new announcement](#)

General Options

- [My profile](#)
- [Member List](#)
- [Calendar](#)
- [Links](#)
- [Library](#)
- [FAQ \(Frequently Asked Questions\)](#)
- [Search](#)
- [Chat](#)
- [Leave this group](#)

This site uses [DEME](#) software.

This item: **3. Example: Document**
[-< To item index](#) |

3. Example: Document [Document]

Preface:

This is an example of a document, and you are reading the "preface" of the document. Read the document below for more information about documents, and, if you like, you can post a comment on this document.

Document posted by: **andrew**, Feb 02, 17:21

General comments on this document:

[New document announcement](#)
[Example of a general comment on a document](#)

A document can be anything that contains text you want people to read. It is possible to post and view documents other than plain text ones (e.g. pictures, Word documents, video clips), but currently only plain text documents support in-text commenting (explanation of in-text commenting will follow shortly). But there are many possible documents that can be posted in a meeting area even now. A document could be the proposed bylaws of your group, a press release you are drafting together, an interesting article you want everyone to read, or something else, as long as it is in text form.

Deme was designed to support document collaboration, document-centered discussion, and decision making about [Example of an in-text comment -andrew](#) documents. "Document collaboration" means that two or more people work together to draft and/or revise a document. In the action menu (the pulldown menu filled in light blue) you can always select "New document" to post a document from scratch. When you are currently viewing a document in the folio viewer's item display, the action menu will also contain an option for

[Global comment](#) | Sort comments by: **item** subject date author

- [3. Example: Document](#) **Example of an in-text comment - andrew - Feb 02, 17:26**
- [3. Example: Document](#) Example comment - todd - Feb 22, 16:59
- [3. Example: Document](#) No comments on comments? - guest - Jun 14, 1
- [4. Example: Decision](#) New Poll: "Example: Decision" - andrew - Feb 02, 14:05
- [3.1. Example: Document](#) New Document: "Example: Document" - andrew -
- [5. Example: Link](#) Link: "Example: Link" - andrew - Feb 02, 17:38
- [6. Example: Project](#) Project: "Example: Project" - andrew - Feb 02, 17:41
- [6.a. Task: "Example: Task"](#) - andrew - Feb 02, 17:48
- [6.b. Task: "Example: Task Handler"](#) - andrew - Feb 02, 17:52

[3. Example: Document](#) **andrew** [prev](#) [next](#)

Message #: 7

Comment: **Example of an in-text comment -**
Feb 02, 17:26

I am inserting this comment into the text of "Example: Document", in between the words "about" and "documents." I don't have anything particularly to say about these words, or the surrounding context, other than to show that an "in-text" comment like this can be placed anywhere in the text of a document. This is done via the "Comment on item" feature selected from the action menu when a document is loaded into the folio viewer.

Notice that, when you click on the item reference for this comment (the underlined first part of its header), the folio

This item: **4. Example: Decision**[← To item index](#)

--- select an action ---

Example: Decision [Decision]

Question: Let's try to make a decision. The decision concerns whether the text of 'Example: Document' is sufficient as an overview of how documents function in a meeting area. Click 'Vote now' to make your choice known, and note that you can annotate your vote with a comment. I have selected 'consensus' as the decision rule, meaning that everyone has to agree for this proposal to pass.

Decision called for by: [andrew](#), Feb 02, 17:31[Announcement Message](#)Voting has closed. [Closing message](#)

| Choices | Total votes |
|---|-------------|
| Approve "Example: Document" | 1 |
| Don't Approve "Example: Document" | 1 |

Member choices/comments:

andrew [Approve "Example: Document"](#)
Feb-02, 17:32
I agree with the current state of "Example: Document"

guest [Don't Approve "Example: Document"](#)
Jul-05, 07:05
Just to see what happens.

Did not vote:
[Global comment](#) | Sort comments by: [item](#) [subject](#) [date](#) [author](#)

- [3. Example: Document](#) Example of an in-text comment - [andrew](#) - Feb 02, 17:31
- [3. Example: Document](#) Example comment - [todd](#) - Feb 22, 16:59
- [3. Example: Document](#) No comments on comments? - [guest](#) - Jun 14, 10:05
- [4. Example: Decision](#)** [New Poll: "Example: Decision"](#) - [andrew](#) - Feb 02, 17:31
Vote Has Closed - - Jan 13, 14:05
- [3.1. Example: Document](#) New Document: "Example: Document" - [andrew](#) - Feb 02, 17:31
- [5. Example: Link](#) Link: "Example: Link" - [andrew](#) - Feb 02, 17:38
- [6. Example: Project](#) Project: "Example: Project" - [andrew](#) - Feb 02, 17:41
- [6.a. Task: "Example: Task"](#) - [andrew](#) - Feb 02, 17:48
- [6.b. Task: "Example: Task Handler"](#) - [andrew](#) - Feb 02, 17:52

4. Example: Decision [andrew](#)[prev](#) [next](#)

Message #: 8

 Comment: [New Poll: "Example: Decision"](#) -
Feb 02, 17:31

Respond to this comment

Let's try to make a decision. The decision concerns whether the text of 'Example: Document' is sufficient as an overview of how documents function in a meeting area. Click 'Vote now' to make your choice known, and note that you can annotate your vote with a comment. I have selected 'consensus' as the decision rule, meaning that everyone has to agree for this proposal to pass.

Group Options

- My Settings
- Member List
- Calendar
- Links
- FAQ
- Library
- Bulk Subscribe
- Email Options
- Meeting Areas
- Homepage

<< hide options

Item View
Combined View
Discussion View

Goto
Actions

Index

19. Goals [Document]

Preface:
 Here's the list from my whiteboard last night - feel free to comment/revise/add more. I've added a few things.
 Document posted by: **todd** - Oct 01, 15:16

General comments on this document:
[See document announcement](#)

Some Dema Project Goals for 2004-2005 (not complete)

- Email integration (posting) - Brendan and Andrew
- Bug/tweak list (item 4, Dema 0.3) - Alex and Andrew
- New stuff for users - Todd, plus others as needed for coding
- Documentation website
- Friendliness - new tooltups, labels
- Aesthetics
- Outreach to developers, funders, users, stakeholders - Todd +
- Dema development workshop
- New funding proposal for Haas
- Grant proposal for outside funding
- Academic outreach - Todd +
- Conference in March/April
- Revise white paper, publish
- Other design goals
- Novice/infrequent user vs Experienced/frequent user modes
- Reformat indexes, display by relevance
- Better cross-referencing interface and appropriate same-window placement
- Sectioning items/discussion
- Better organization and editability of item index
- Wiki-like editing/comments keyed to versions in header
- Better privs/customizability [look/feel/options_todd](#)
- Code cleaning/rewriting
- [Virus checking?_todd](#)
- [Implement poll/survey_todd](#) | [Member participation statistics_todd](#) | [Presence detection_todd](#)

Link to this item

debugging...
[See raw doctrefd text](#)
[See orig text](#)

Top

Comments | [Expand all](#) | [Collapse all](#)

- New Document: "Goals"** - todd - Oct 01, 15:16
- Virus checking?** - todd - Oct 11, 16:02
- Presence detection** - todd - Oct 11, 16:04

Comment: **Presence detection** - Oct 11, 16:04

Would be very useful at some point, especially if profiles had links to IM addresses.

[Link to this message](#)

- Member participation statistics** - todd - Oct 11, 16:07
- Implement poll/survey** - todd - Oct 11, 16:41
- look/feel options** - todd - Oct 12, 21:06

Meeting Area Members

Online (3)

- aarontam ▲
- newmanb
- todd ▼

Chat

aarontam joins the chat. ▲

aarontam says to all: hi!

todd says to all: hi hows it going?

newmanb says to all: pretty good. ▼

hide chat >>

Development

Development.Groupsace.org

Groupsace.org
My Groups
Development

Group Options

- My Settings
- Member List
- Calendar
- Links
- FAQ
- Library
- Bulk Subscribe
- Email Options
- Meeting Areas
- ▶ Homepage

<< hide options

Meeting Areas

Create new meeting area

- General**
(15 posts since 09/25) | Info
- New Meeting Area**
(7 posts in last 2 hours) | Info
- Testing New Name**
(9 posts in last 3 days) | Info
- New Marea**
(2 posts in last 23 min) | Info

[more]

group image file here

This is the general development area. Feel free to post any questions or comments you may have. Also, feel free to posit suggestions and advice for the layout.
[Edit this description]

Announcements

[Add Announcement]

[06/24/05 12:05PM] by **aarontam**
Action: [Edit] [Delete]
This is a test announcement. There will be many more announcements in the future.

[more]

Group Members

Online (3)

- aarontam
- newmanb
- todd

Chat

aarontam joins the chat.
aarontam says to all: hi!
todd says to all: hi hows it going?
newmanb says to all: pretty good.

Start Chatting

hide chat >>

Groups that could benefit...

- Volunteer advisory boards
- Neighborhood associations
- Consortia of nonprofits
- Grassroots activist groups
- Labor union chapters and caucuses
- Clubs and religious congregations
- University-based groups
- Ad-hoc citizen groups (e.g. for community planning)

PIECE Contributors (2002-)

Kim Karen Chen

Alex Angiolillo Cochran

Todd Davies

Magda Escobar

Jonathan J. Effrat

Roma Jhaveri

Christina Mills

Benjamin Newman

Brendan O'Connor

Laura O'Laughlin

Michael Levin

Andrew Parker

Leo Perry

Gautam Raghavan

Randy Saffold

Renata Danielle Sanchez

Benjamin Sywulka

Aaron Tam

Brandi Thompson

Tom Wasow

Rolando Zeledon