



# A Farm in Every Window: A Study into the Incentives for Participation in the Window Farm Virtual Community

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# Outline

- Introduction
- Window Farm Community
- Incentive/Participation Models
- Methodology
- Results
- Future Work/Conclusion



# Introduction

- Many virtual communities fail or die off due to users not participating.
- Need better understanding on the motivations and incentives on contributing to virtual communities.
- No unifying model or consensus on incentives or incentivization in virtual communities and this makes studying them very difficult.

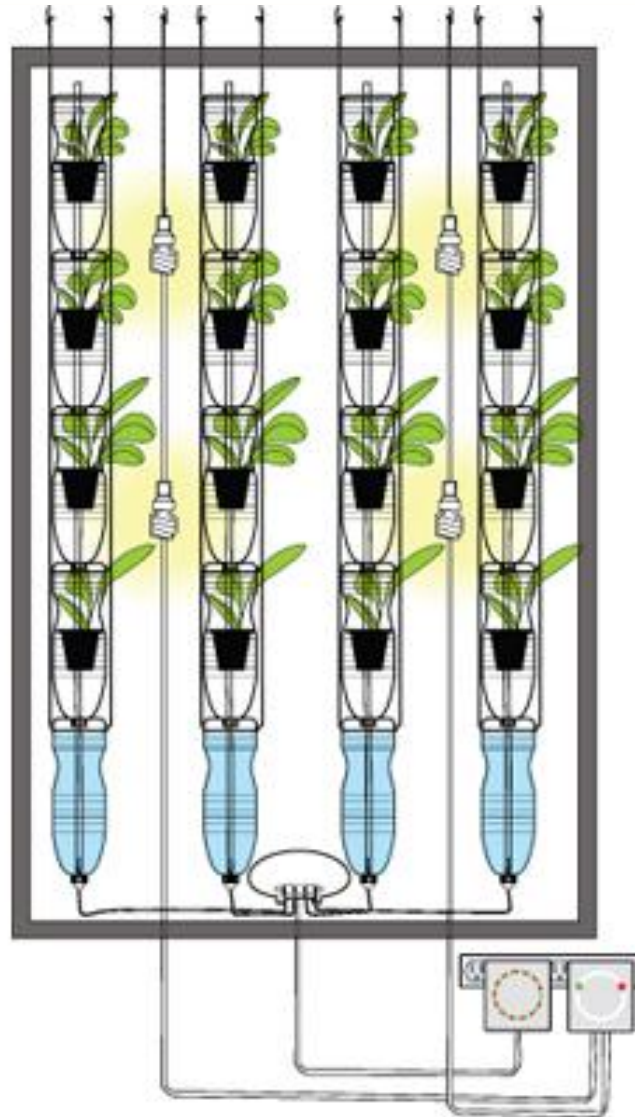


# Introduction

- Our study looked into the incentive structures for members of the Window Farm virtual community.
  - Look and tie different models & methodologies from different disciplines
  - Propose a methodology to tie motivations reported by users to the activity they express in the community



# Window Farm





# Window Farm Community

- Multi-blogging platform
- R&D-I-Y (research and develop it yourself)
- 20,000 registered users
- 2,000 visiting users in a month
- 45-60 activity contributors in a month
- About 10 users are responsible for over 80% of the content in a month



# Methodology

- Used models and methodology from different disciplines (see paper for more)
- Two parts (survey & classification and analysis of the behavior in the community)
- Tied results from survey to classification of behavior for particular users





- Survey
  - 48 Responses
  - Asked questions about Motivations for different behavior and actions
  - Also asked questions on sense of community and activity levels
- Behavior classification
  - (Question, Answer, Sharing, Social)
  - Done by hand





# Results

- Overall Motivations
  - Self satisfaction and self-improvement
  - Learning new skills
- Answering and Sharing had two similar Motivations (Fun to do, Obligation to community)
- Answering had a different motivation (Ideology)
- Sharing differed also (Getting feedback on ideas)



# Results

- Neither the Fun or Obligation to community motivation were positively correlated with answering questions or sharing ideas.
- Ideology was positively correlated to answering questions.
- Getting feedback on ideas was correlated to sharing ideas.



# Future Work

- These motivations tie well with Open Source communities (best practices?)
- Connect models better to develop better unified understanding of motivation
- Run experiments to test models and features in communities.
- Develop better methodology and methods to explore this topic



# Questions?

- Thanks to Britta Riley and Window Farm Team
- Send questions to [difrad@rpi.edu](mailto:difrad@rpi.edu)
- Twitter: @difrad