
How to Keep a Community Positive Even When it Doesn't Want to Be

— Cassie Hoglund —
Proletariat Inc

Introduction

- Over a year working directly with the Spellbreak community
- Assisted multiple small studios in ramping up their social media presence, establishing a brand tone, and crafting positive spaces for their fans
- Ran communities on Twitch and Discord



What Are We Solving For?



Persistent Negative Activity

Potential Sources of Negative Activity:

- Poorly Received Content Updates
- Communication Issues
- Unexpected Player Experiences

Key Takeaways

Be confident in a foundation of communication strategies to address unwanted negative activity on your social pages.

Have a clear roadmap to identifying your communication style and strengths.

Retain a mental scale for determining what kind of communication can suit unexpected negativity the best for the circumstances.

What Style is Most Appropriate for you?

There are many “right” ways to engage with, and grow, your community.

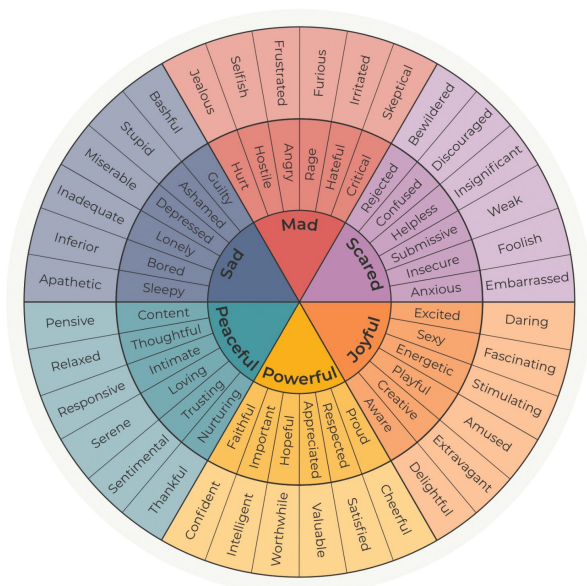
Consider these brand tones

- Wendy's (very sassy)
- Fall Guys (self deprecating/memer)
- Xbox (comedic)
- Spellbreak (enthusiastic)



Consider Your Strengths

The Feeling Wheel



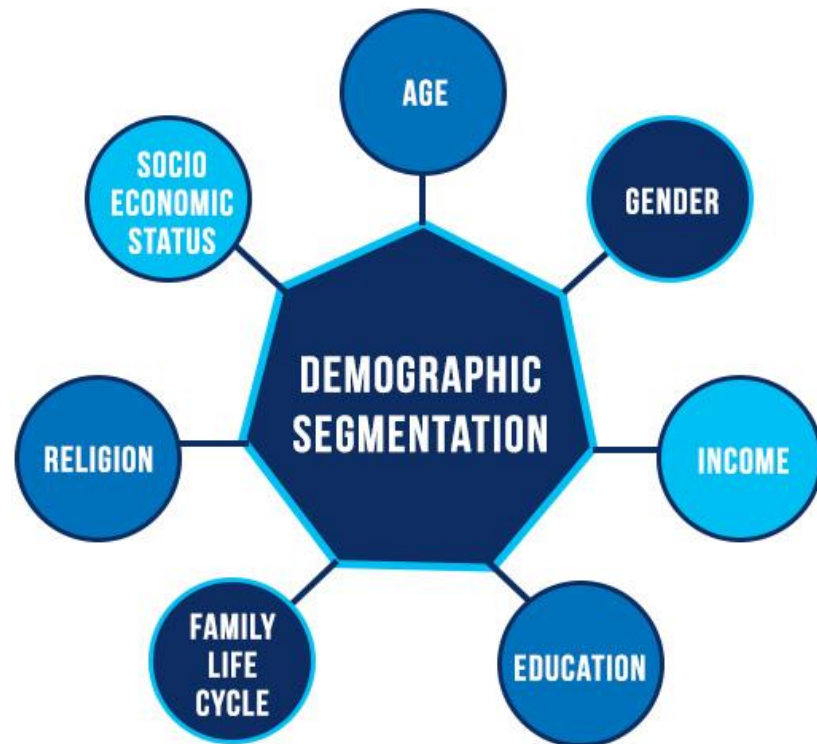
What is your team good at conveying in written communications?

- Humor
- Clapbacks
- Wholesomeness
- Enthusiasm
- Empathy

Consider Your Demographic

Finding your target audience can help further narrow your brand tone

- Age range (<18, 18-35, 35-45, 45+)
- Core gamers
- Families
- Genre stans
- International



Don't be Afraid

No matter what you choose, there will be players out there that like your tone.

Make sure your tone is attracting audiences that you want to engage with and be associated with your brand.

You don't have to accomodate bad actors. Don't let them convince you otherwise.

Reward Your Allies

Advocates and positive voices are your bread and butter, no matter the audience or tone.



Reward those that can go toe to toe with you in a sassy back and forth, that share wholesome fan art, that respond to your puns with more puns. Rewarding behavior you want to see is fundamental to getting more of it.

Titles We Are Looking At

SPELLBREAK



Boyfriend
DUNGEON



Solutions - Introduction



There is no best or worst here. Direct is not “better” than subtle, and vice versa. It is not a moral scale. We are not talking about right and wrong ways here; only proven options.

Make a Public Statement



Benefits

- Publicly acknowledging the pain point and committing to addressing it can be enough for a lot of consumers
- Can buy time for internal processes to finalize a solution
- Shareable

Example of a Public Statement



Kitfox Games 🦊
@KitfoxGames

...

The content warning for Boyfriend Dungeon inadequately describes the events of stalking and emotional manipulation that exist in the story. We'll update the game next week with a more accurate CW. We apologize for any hurt inflicted by our mistake. Thank you for playing!

10:43 AM · Aug 14, 2021 · TweetDeck

309 Retweets 253 Quote Tweets 2,563 Likes



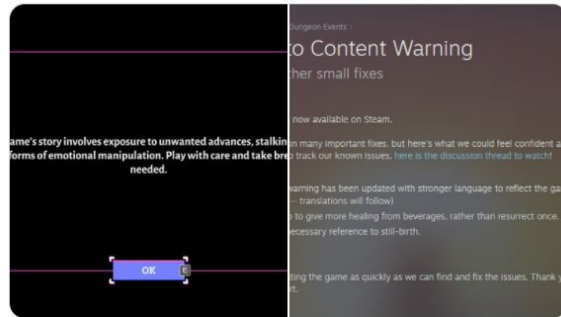
Kitfox Games 🦊
@KitfoxGames

...

We've updated Boyfriend Dungeon on Steam and Epic (itchio coming soon) with an updated content warning and a few other fixes.

Read the full update here:

store.steampowered.com/news/app/67493...



8:55 AM · Aug 17, 2021 · TweetDeck

118 Retweets 21 Quote Tweets 753 Likes

Increased Transparency



Benefits

- Increase understanding
- Garner goodwill
- Re-establish expectations
- Re-target desired demo

Example of Increased Transparency

12/03/2021 6:00 AM

Endwalker Congestion and World Status in Early Access

Hello, this is FINAL FANTASY XIV Producer & Director, Naoki Yoshida.

The Early Access for Endwalker, which started on December 3 at 1:00 a.m. (PST), has been accessed by an extremely large number of players, making it the largest number of simultaneous connections we've ever encountered in the history of FFXIV.

We apologize to the thousands of people who are waiting to log into the game for the inconvenience caused, as the maximum number of logins has been reached for each World.

While hours have passed since the commencement of early access, and although the login servers have avoided going down completely, the load on each World has become very high, and some Worlds are going down due to extremely high load conditions. We sincerely apologize for the inconvenience.

We would like to share an update on the situation and our response.

■ Why Worlds are going down

We have been hitting login caps across each World, and the frequency of characters simultaneously moving between zones (entering duties, moving to another area, etc.) has been very high. This resulted in an immense amount of network load which caused Worlds to go down. We apologize for the inconvenience.

■ Preventative measures

To prevent Worlds from going down, we have adjusted the number of characters that are permitted to simultaneously move between areas, limited the amount of instantaneous

12/11/2021 8:40 AM

Response to Congestion (as of Dec. 11)

Hello, this is Naoki Yoshida, Producer and Director of FINAL FANTASY XIV.

We apologize for the huge inconvenience caused to players by the extremely high levels of congestion in each World since Early Access and the official launch of Endwalker. We are currently working to address various issues while maintaining our strengthened 24-hour support systems, but for now I'd like to provide an update about the current situation.

■ Current Congestion Situation

It has been eight days since the start of Early Access, but we are still experiencing congestion and apologize for the inconvenience associated with this. Likewise, we continue to see large numbers of players accessing the game over the weekend, although the peak numbers are slightly lower than last weekend and players logging in are gradually dispersing into the other time slots. In addition, the queue lengths and wait times are conversely tending to increase because of the progress made in our resolutions for each error and our raising of the login queue cap. We will continue our efforts to expedite the processing of logins and the stabilization of queues, and we appreciate your understanding and cooperation on this matter.

■ Error 2002 Related to Login Queues

As we mentioned in our previous announcement (<https://sqex.to/eUgyp>), there are two causes of Error 2002.

Occurrence of Error 2002 When the No. of Players Waiting in the Queue per Logical Data Centre Exceeds 17,000

Shift Focus



Benefits

- Bring temperature reducing topics to the forefront
- Enable community to provide constructive feedback
- Protect new users

Example of Shifting Focus



Spellbreak
@PlaySpellbreak

It's time for a little game!

Can you find all the differences between these two photos?



1:00 PM · Mar 20, 2021 · Sprout Social

[View Tweet activity](#)

21 Retweets 18 Quote Tweets 211 Likes



Spellbreak
@PlaySpellbreak

My roommate pronounces Mario like Marry-oh.
Prove she's wrong. How do you say it?

MAR-ee-oh

85.9%

MARRY-oh

14.1%

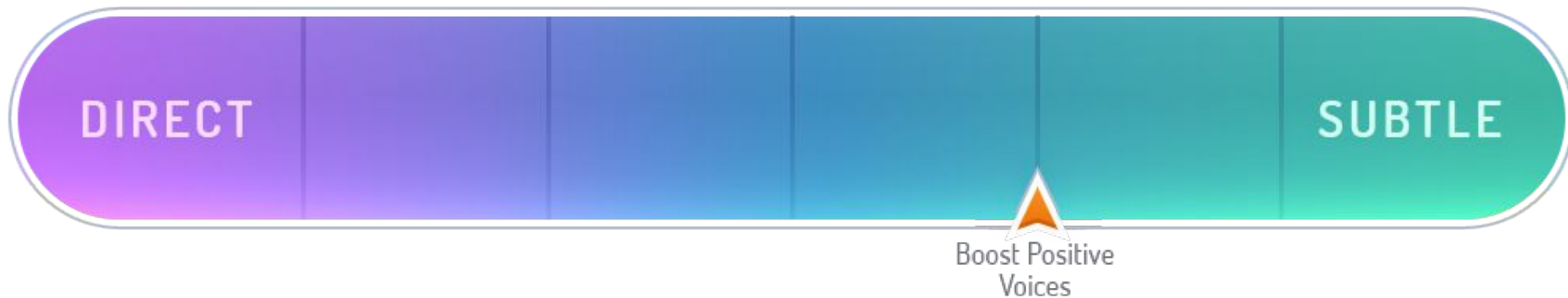
1,270 votes · Final results

2:16 PM · Mar 26, 2021 · Twitter Web App

[View Tweet activity](#)

2 Retweets 1 Quote Tweet 67 Likes

Boost Positive Voices



Benefits

- Reward positive engagement
- Establish baseline for direct engagement
- Turn players/creators into advocates

Example of Boosting Positive Voices



Spellbreak
@PlaySpellbreak

Interested in Spellbreak lore?

Join the discussion with veteran players right now!

Eldegold @eldegold · May 19, 2021

LOREBREAKERS!

Join me, @Green_SlothTTV, @Merlin_D_Wizard, and @CasualAdobo for everything lore related to @PlaySpellbreak!

Join us Friday 5pm EST for the FIRST EVER LOREBREAKER PODCAST! Come and ask questions, listen to our theories, and have a gLOREious time! (Part 1)

[Show this thread](#)

2:00 PM · May 21, 2021 · Sprout Social

View Tweet activity

4 Retweets 3 Quote Tweets 35 Likes



Alyssa's [#Breakersona](#) is ADORABLE! Have you shared yours, yet? 🥰

alyssa - buy my shirt ❤️ @LittleMissLoki · Jul 29, 2021

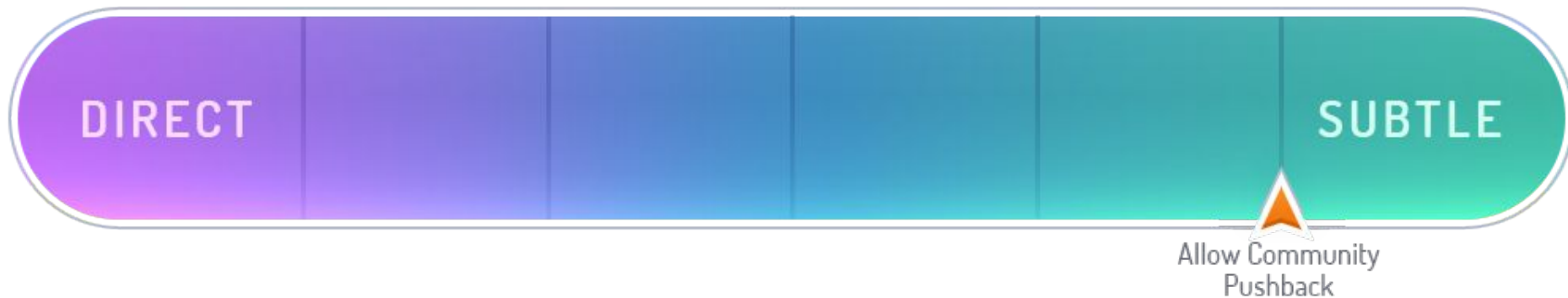
Hey everyone!! Show me your [#BreakerSona](#)!! Draw yourself how you would see yourself in the Hollowlands in your favorite costume, in a custom costume, as your favorite character, etc!

All skill levels welcome, and even folks who have never played can join! Use the [#BreakerSona](#)!

[Show this thread](#)



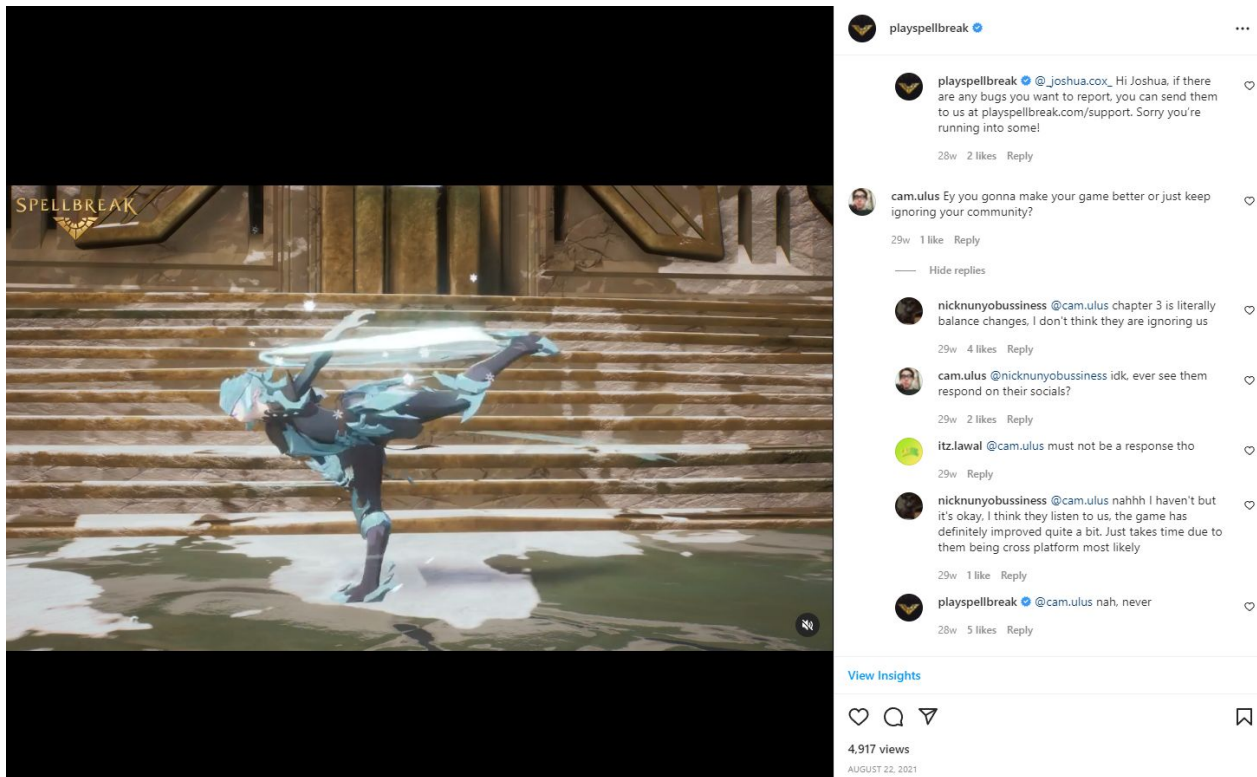
Allow Community Pushback



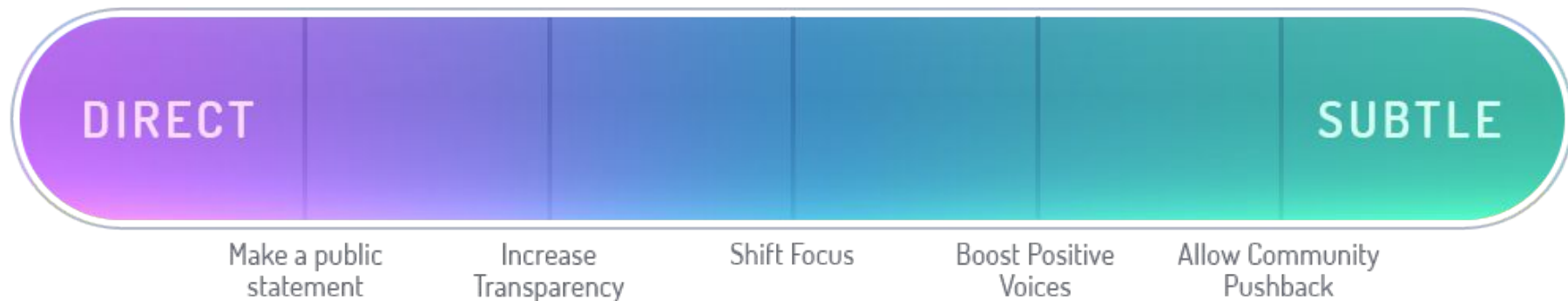
Benefits

- Players can defend your product more fiercely than your brand
- Shows a passionate, positive sect of the community
- Breaks up negative discourse
- Turn advocates into superfans

Example of Allowing Community Pushback



Consider the Spectrum



These are just some of many communications options you can employ along this spectrum.

Always consider what kind of method would best suit the needs of your community before publishing.

Your Takeaways

A meter for putting communication strategies into perspective and concrete examples of how to employ each one

Introduction to identifying who your audience is and how to talk to them.

Feel empowered to take on unexpected communication challenges in productive, purposeful ways

Thank You

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