

# Developing Professional/ Technical Sigs

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# Goal for this Discussion

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Review how professional Sigs can add value to User Groups

# Professional Sig?

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Special Interest Group that caters to people who make their living through the use of these tools.

# Looking to get to the “Cheese”

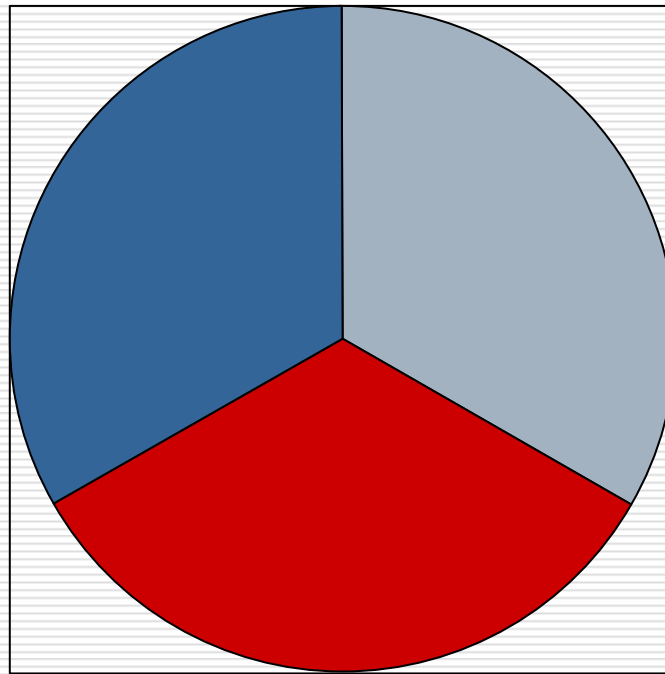
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We're all looking for new ways to get to our goal. More members, more benefits for existing members.

# Potential Professional Markets

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# Observation: Time vs. Money

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Traditional User Groups value money over time. Professional Groups (and IT Partners) value time over money.

# Sample Sigs

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- SharePoint
  - Active Directory
  - SQL
  - Oracle
  - .Net (C#, VB.net, ASP.Net)
  - Project Management
  - Anything critical to organizations
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# Opportunities

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- Partner with Local IT Organizations
- Partner with national Organizations
- Jump on to the hot technologies
- Headhunters will suddenly notice you
- Deal with WIIFM (What's In It For Me)

# New ways to get the Cheese

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# Local Partners – Why?

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- ❑ They're willing to commit to long term marketing approach (if they "get it")
- ❑ It's in their best interest
- ❑ They need to be very committed to the technology of the Sig

# Local Partners – Why Not?

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- They want to heavily advertise their product or services
- They want exclusive access as presenters
- They don't "get it"

# The Players

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- User Group
- Champion
- Local Partner
- National Vendor
- Local Community

# User Group

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- ❑ Needs to accept differences
  - WIIFM different for Pros, Partners
  - Bar is set higher for quality
- ❑ Needs to want success
- ❑ Sigs aren't orphans
- ❑ Profit for Participants isn't bad

# Champion

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- Has to "Get" User Groups
- Has to "Get" Business
- Willing to have slow curve
- Wants to gain Visibility in professional community

# Local Partner

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- “Gets” User Groups
  - Can’t Advertise self
  - Can Market and Benefit
  - Willing to let others play
  - Recognizes it isn’t a “Acme” meeting, it’s a UG meeting

# National Partner

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- ❑ UG Needs to morph Sig to their needs (may have to present as independent group)
- ❑ Sig Champion needs direct access to their resources

# Local Community

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- ❑ Push specific IT issues dealt with Sig
- ❑ Push networking, skill levels
- ❑ Identify the level topic presented (higher often better), keep level consistent

# Quid Pro Quo

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- ❑ Local Dealer gets low cost Marketing, establishing their facility as “expert”
- ❑ Sig Champion gets to establish themselves to the IT community as “expert”
- ❑ UG serving new segment, expands value and reach

# There can still be problems

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# Are there Problems?

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- ❑ UG takes Partners for granted
- ❑ Partners decide it's their party
- ❑ Sig Champion doesn't see value in rest of UG
- ❑ UG sees program as only a way to get new members

# Conclusions

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- ❑ Professional Sigs can be a great opportunity for UG growth
- ❑ Pro Sigs require different level of handling, care
- ❑ Partners can be a great resource

# Want this PowerPoint?

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