Cloud User Guide
Contributing to Community as External User
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Contributing to community as external user

Once you accept an invitation to join a community’s external group, you can begin contributing to that group. For more information, see How to begin contributing to community on page 3.

A company may invite you to join one of their groups and become part of their online community so they can work closely with you, making you an external contributor.

Becoming an external contributor is a way to collaborate in a community on a limited basis. As an external user, you can view content and participate only in the group you belong to.

For details, see the following topics:

- How to begin contributing to community
- Setting up your profile
- What else can external contributors do?
- Objectives of external contributors

How to begin contributing to community

When you first join a community’s external group as an external contributor, you can begin participating by accepting invitations, setting up your profile, and addressing your actions.

Accepting group invitations

The first thing that you should do when you sign into the community is to accept any group invitations. You’ll be doing all of your work in groups, so accepting invitations is how you can see group content and activity.

- Go to Home > Actions and then accept group invitations that you see under Pending.

Note: You can only belong to a maximum of 20 groups, so choose wisely!
Setting up your profile

Your user profile provides community members with an easy way to learn about your skills and interests. Your profile shows up in search results when community members search for keywords contained in your profile. You can update your information at any time.

Checking out your actions

When you are assigned something to do, such as a task or something that’s been Marked for Action for you, you can see an alert next to Actions in the left sidebar. For more information, see Using Marking feature.

Use the following quick tips to use Actions effectively:

- Click Action Items to see a list of your Action Items. From here, you can Resolve them, or bring in other participants. To see the Action Items you have already resolved, click Resolved.

- Click Tasks to see a list of tasks assigned to you, which you can sort by project. To see the tasks you’ve completed, select View: Include completed. For more information, see Using projects and tasks.

Customizing email notifications

You can take advantage of custom email notifications if you feel like you might miss something important when you're not signed in. For more information, see Customizing notifications.

Setting up your profile

Setting up your profile is the first step to participating in the community.

Your user profile provides community members with an easy way to learn about your skills and interests. Your profile shows up in search results when community members search for keywords contained in your profile. You can update your information at any time.

To set up your profile:

1. Go to Your Avatar > Edit profile in the upper right corner.
2. On the Avatar or Photos tab, change your avatar and manage your photos.
   
   Your avatar and other photos let people see and recognize you in person. Your avatar lets community members quickly associate your comments and status updates with a simple visual cue.

3. On the Profile Details tab, fill in as much profile information as you like.
   
   Note that your profile can found when people search, so if you have professional roles or interests that would be useful for others to know about, you should include them. You may not be able to edit certain fields, such as username. Usually, the community manager sets up these fields for you.

4. On the Privacy tab, edit your privacy settings.
These control how different types of users see your profile. For more information on privacy settings, see Setting up content visibility options.

5. Click Finished.

The profile is set up and becomes available in search.

What else can external contributors do?

Jive is a place where you can build your network, come together as a team, share files, collaborate on documents, and get answers fast.

The group you belong to looks forward to hearing your ideas, and they need your expertise to get work done. Think of the group as a 24-hour hotline where you can communicate your concerns and give your opinion. You can write documents and get input from all the experts without taking notes or sifting through long email chains.

Using your Inbox

Your Inbox shows the activity that’s most you-centric — the information that’s sent directly to you and has your name on it. This automatically includes @mentions, replies to discussions you're participating in, content people share with you, your latest acclaim, new follower notifications, and direct messages.

Use the following tips and tricks to get the most out of the Inbox:

• You can follow content items in your Inbox even if you haven't yet or don't want to participate directly. All updates and replies to that item now flow into your Inbox. For more information about streams, see Overview of streams.

• You can use the Filter menu in Inbox to sort the view to @mentions, messages, notifications, or shares.

• You can filter Inbox by participant by entering a user name in the box. You can see only the items that include this person as a participant.

• Manage your unread communications and follow-ups by using the blue dot next to messages you haven't read yet and clicking Unread Only to see only the messages marked with the blue dot.

• When you click the Split View icon in the top right of the Inbox stream and then select a message, you can see the content of the message in the lower pane and the list of messages in the upper pane.

• Get rid of activity on any item that no longer interests you by clicking Hide new activity in the lower pane of the split-pane view. The current activity stays in your Inbox, but you'll see no more update alerts for that item. For more information about notifications, see Customizing notifications.

Discovering documents and discussions (and other content), commenting and collaborating

Exchange ideas when you participate in discussions, questions, and documents:

• To comment on a content item, you should click Add a Comment or Reply at the bottom of a document, blog post, question, or discussion. You can reply to an
individual message in a thread or the original post. Everyone reading the thread sees your response.

- Documents have owners who control whether you can change the content of the document, comment on it, or view it. You may be able to see documents that you don’t have permission to comment on or participate in. If you think you should be able to comment on a document and you can’t, contact the author and ask for permission.

- If you can edit a document, you can see Edit near the Actions menu.

- A comment or a reply may have a badge showing Decision, Action Item, or Success. These badges help you avoid endless discussion and quickly determine the state or outcome of the conversation. For more information about marking, see Using Marking feature.

- Comments and replies may also be liked or marked as helpful. These are tallied for reporting activity in places or the entire community.

- A badge shows others how helpful someone has been to you. To give someone a badge, go to their profile page and click Actions > Give Badge.

Using attention streams

You can see streams on the News page and the Activity page of any place. Streams are updated when someone creates a document, replies to a blog post, posts a status update, and so on.

Objectives of external contributors

As an external contributor, you are a crucial part of a community that needs your input. You may not be a community member, but someone in the community invited you because they knew you’d add value. The benefit of being an external contributor is that you only see the parts of the community that affect you. You don’t have to worry about seeing anything you shouldn’t.

Your role is to help the community reach outside of its circle and to share knowledge, so that you and other group members can work together successfully and efficiently. You can feel free to ask questions in your groups and to post and comment on documents and discussions. When you become part of the conversation, you improve how work gets done.