

## **Clarifying Community Arrangements: A Typology for Marketing Theory and Practice**

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## Introdução

Contemporary marketing is shifting from an individualistic focus to engaging fluid communities united by shared passions. In this context, the linking value of products—their ability to connect people—has become paramount for brands. Despite this, the academic literature remains fragmented and conceptually ambiguous, with overlapping terms for concepts like brand communities, subcultures of consumption, and others. This study aims to solve this by proposing a typology to classify and differentiate community arrangements, unifying theory and providing practitioners with robust, practical tools.

## Problema de Pesquisa e Objetivo

This study is guided by the central question: What are the fundamental dimensions that distinguish various community arrangements? The primary objective is to develop a conceptual typology capable of systematically classifying these groups. This will be achieved through a three-step process: first, reviewing and synthesizing the academic literature for each community arrangement; second, identifying and defining the critical analytical dimensions that allow for comparison; and finally, structuring these dimensions within a coherent property-space to build the typology.

## Fundamentação Teórica

Subcultures of consumption: Based on a shared commitment to a brand, with their own hierarchy, ethos, and rituals that profoundly impact identity.

Fandoms: Transcend passive consumption, reappropriating content to create new productions and forming a participatory culture.

Brand communities: Based on social relationships among a brand's admirers, with a consciousness of kind, shared rituals, and mutual moral responsibility.

Communities of practice: Where learning occurs via social interaction, featuring mutual engagement, a negotiated joint enterprise, and a shared repertoire of practices.

## Discussão

The conceptual typology positions community arrangements based on two axes: Identity Impact and Interaction/Output Focus. Consumption subcultures have a high identity impact and a relational/support focus. Fandoms also show a high identity impact but with a generative/evolutionary focus, geared towards content production. Brand communities, conversely, have a lower identity impact and a relational/support focus. Lastly, communities of practice exhibit a lower identity impact and a generative/evolutionary focus, aimed at knowledge creation.

## Conclusão

This article addressed the conceptual fragmentation in the study of marketing communities by proposing a bidimensional typology. Based on identity impact and interaction/output focus, the model differentiates and positions subcultures, fandoms, brand communities, and communities of practice, offering greater conceptual clarity. Although it is a theoretical model with inherent limitations, this research opens promising avenues for future empirical and longitudinal investigations, solidifying a roadmap for understanding the central role of communities in contemporary marketing.

## Contribuição / Impacto

The bidimensional model offers significant theoretical and managerial implications for the study and management of community arrangements. Theoretically, it transcends conceptual silos, enabling nuanced analysis and distinguishing social/relational value from intellectual/creative generation. Managerially, it provides practical tools for adapting engagement and strategies to community dynamics, recognizing their fluidity. It simplifies complexity into two clear dimensions, serving as a heuristic tool for researchers and managers, and forming a solid basis for further research.

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