

Meta: Follow Panion's journey from friendship app to community-building platform, and discover our newest feature: the community-building web app.

Social Media:

Last March, when coronavirus turned the world upside down, Panion had to think on its feet. How could we continue our mission of building meaningful connections within this "new normal"? Our answer: online communities.

Follow Panion's journey from friendship app to community-building platform in this week's blog.



Panion's Journey: Recognizing The Power of Community

This last year has been full of hurdles for businesses big and small. And we're no different here at Panion.

At the beginning of 2019, we were on the road to becoming one of the fastest-growing friendship apps, providing a way for members to meet like-minded people wherever they went, facilitating new friendships in new cities.

Unbeknownst to us, a pandemic would soon sweep across the globe, drastically changing the way we engage with strangers and creating distance and hesitation towards in-person interactions for years to come.

We had to think on our feet. How could we continue our mission of building meaningful connections within this new even more digitized world of human interaction?

During the pandemic, we noticed some interesting patterns emerging. Our group activity feature was becoming a support network for people who felt alone and lost during the pandemic. What emerged was a beautiful support system, which was, in essence, tiny online communities, where people were checking in on complete strangers!

That's when we realized the power of online connections and that they could be just as meaningful within the right contexts. So we decided to shift our focus towards community building.

"When the coronavirus hit, Panion's vision of building deeper in-person connections was put on hold. Instead, we took a deeper look at how online interactions were being shaped by the pandemic and realized we could make an impactful change in a new way. We shifted our focus to the world of emerging online communities," Melanie, CEO, and Founder of Panion, comments.

Why Did Panion Need to Change?

"Panion decided to shift its focus from friend-matchmaking to online community building and not because we've left the idea of forming meaningful friendships behind, but because becoming a community-building platform makes more sense business-wise for the world we live in today," adds Melanie.

Here are the main reasons we decided to shift focus:

Shared values and changing landscapes

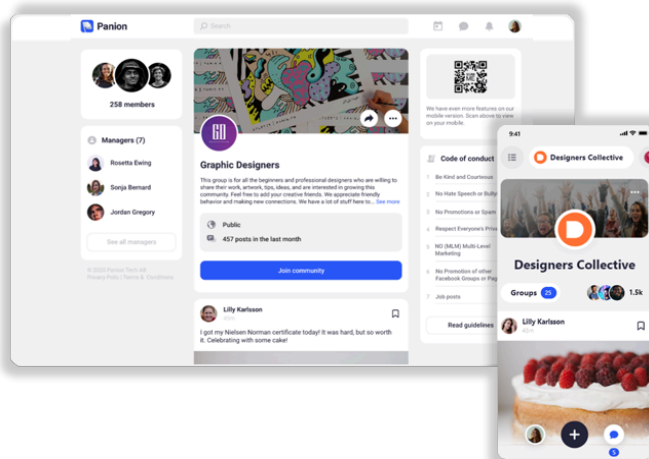
By 2020, Panion had been a working app for almost two years, helping individuals discover like-minded people in their own cities. These years gave us incredible insight into the nuances of how to match people invaluable ways, the pinnacle of Panion's core offering.

It quickly became apparent that while individuals may share the same interests and the same hobbies, this doesn't necessarily mean they will get on as friends. We discovered that two other things were much more important: shared values and common experiences.

By nature, communities are designed to bring together people with similar goals, values, or experiences, whether it be to rally behind a social cause, reach a specific professional goal, or support each other through a collective experience. By creating communities that mirror these types of collectivity and then helping members connect through common interests within those communities, we feel we can provide a more meaningful social experience with even more chances for valuable connection.

The events of the pandemic forced Panion to rethink its strategy of connecting people in person and therefore had to reconsider how to encourage meaningful human interactions while also prioritizing the safety of its members and potential new customers.

Where Panion is Today: Community Builders



Our vision for Panion has never changed. Whether through face-to-face friendships or online communities, we are still bringing people together to build meaningful and impactful relationships.

“Three years ago, we could never have imagined we’d be so focused on community-building. A year later, after extensive research and user testing, we are ready to go live with the Beta version of our web platform. We are taking Instagram’s approach to transition from solely a mobile app to a cross-platform solution— getting something limited yet functional out into the world, then adding new features on a rolling basis,” says Melanie.

To develop our product to where it is today, we have spoken to nearly 250 community managers to understand their challenges and what is needed to effectively and efficiently maintain and grow their online communities.

Our web platform offers a customizable dashboard for community managers to manage their community spaces. At the same time, our app provides members a simple way to stay social on the go.

The Future of Panion: The Leading Platform for Empathy-Driven Communities

Panion is still young. Over the last year, we've worked hard to stay true to our values while building an entirely new concept. It's made us realize that it's not what we do but our impact that's most important.

So what makes Panion different from the other community platforms out there?

- We take a more human-centric empathy-driven approach to connecting people online.
- As a previous friendship-focused product, we have years of matchmaking expertise behind us.
- Our innovative filtering and tagging system helps you find people you can connect with on a deeper level.
- We provide a space where people can build and join impact-driven communities and communities focused on shared experiences.
- Our platform helps bring a local feel to a global network by enabling curation based on geo-location.
- There is flexibility in the way that communities can be divided and organized. Larger organizations can create multiple communities within one platform or app, with further divisions within each community, and smaller communities can create groups within their community to customize the experience for members with different needs and interests. Therefore, complex global networks can provide a well-organized segmented experience where people can join multiple communities and switch between communities based on their circumstances.

Unlike other platforms out there, we don't see human relationships as transactional or simply exchanging knowledge for convenience. We believe that getting to know the people behind the screen is much more important for establishing a sense of safety, security, and shared connection that genuinely impacts your well-being.

As our own community grows, we will continue to release tools inside our platform that make meaningful connections more accessible. There are great things to come in 2021, so keep an eye on our blog, and join a community on Panion today!

If you're a community builder and you're keen to understand what Panion is all about, join The Neighborhood, our community for community builders, where you'll find relevant content to help you grow and engage your community while having the opportunity to network with leading community builders around the globe. You can request access through the Panion app ([Play Store](#) | [App Store](#)).