Crowdsourcing Process

Using the Crowd to Get Work Done

- Background on Crowdsourcing
- Step-by-step Process to use Crowdsourcing
- List of Outcomes Crowdsourcing can Deliver
- Resources for Performing Crowdsourcing

Crowdsourcing is an innovative information gathering method for leading edge thought content provided by multiple freelancers/contributors and streamlined to employ maximum aggregation and distribution efficiencies across the board. Every organization regardless of size or market has the ability to integrate the crowdsourcing process to lower costs, raise the innovation bar and add turnaround speed to get on to the next project easier, faster and smarter.

Over the last decade, outsourcing has become an exciting concept for lowering costs by leveraging the lower wage bases found in populous areas of the world. The combination of an educated workforce and low wages in these areas has proven to be employable in many ways. The Crowdsourcing process taps these same dynamics while adding a new dimension in that the scale, response time, and ease of reach to this workforce is comparably larger. For the first time in human history, a unique piece, project, specific need, or business problem can be posted on the Web, granting millions of people access to opportunities to compete and provide winning work. This free market approach ensures the best product for the investment by cultivating healthy competition and choice. This benefits all parties since freelance workers will have access to a source of projects that fit their unique talents and skill sets while authors/aggregators will be able to embrace a new opportunity to generate revenue from their home or office. The aggregators announcing these project opportunities now have the option to harness the Internet herd to finish work cheaper and more efficiently with a much larger inventory of innovative ideas. And in most cases, the buyer does not pay for the work until it is done with a winning project selected. This effectively reduces risk for the buyer and places it on the freelancers who are competing to provide the best output.

There are now approximately 100 Web sites using this custom approach to complete work via the Web and the concept is still young. Over time however, we will see crowdsourcing dwarf outsourcing in the volumes of work completed. It will become a very normal thing for organizations to post a high percentage of their project needs online to be completed by contracted freelance workers. The faster you and your organization learn to integrate this option, the sooner you will reap the rewards.

Goals

1. Identify methods to lower back office costs – There are many possible opportunities where in-house or expensive contract work can be crowdsourced. These opportunities will vary based on the size and the industry of the organization but one commonality is that everyone has the potential of finding some degree of savings by applying this concept. To this end, we want to target a specific ROI metric and set a goal to achieve it.

2. Develop ways to add innovation and creativity from the crowd – There are two different methods for adding innovation through crowdsourcing. The first is tied to the fact that when creative tasks are crowdsourced, the responses will come from talent all over the world at a much higher volume than is conventionally achievable. For example, if you need a logo designed, it is not uncommon to receive over 200 submissions. To this end, the volume of submissions and diversity of those submitting will add innovation by expanding your resources. The second outlet for innovation is the opportunity to post idea requests and solutions to the crowd. Instead of just a few internal minds surveying

possibilities, crowdsourcing provides instant access to thousands – in many cases, the same customer base you might be trying to impress. The goal is to actively use the crowd to augment creativity where it will benefit most.

3. Develop new methods for getting work done faster than in-house alternatives – In a world where everything moves faster, added speed is seldom considered a disadvantage. At times, speed is a function of agility and efficiency geared toward how many people can be harnessed to provide the work. Crowdsourcing enables the option of harnessing a diverse, responsive workforce to get work done immediately. This means it is feasible to achieve a thousand people competing to provide work on a task with only a 24-hour turnaround. Where might this level of agility and in completing a project or task be an asset for you?

4. Develop an ability to find solutions to problems that have not been solved in the past– Asking the crowd for help in solving an existing problem effectively mitigates risk for your organization. Sites like Innocentive.com provide a forum for seekers and solvers to help one another. The business problem you pose may be mechanical, chemical, financial, marketing, or engineering based. Regardless the need, you can post the problem with an appropriate reward bounty and people from all over the world will compete to solve it. To this end, honing and developing this ability to solve even the most complex problems through crowdsourcing could be the difference maker.

5. Add crowdsourcing as a tool to fill roles that do not require full time staff – It has become very common for organizations to contract out work that either cannot be done in-house, or that would not be financially wise for full time staff to complete. This could be a task that needs to be done seasonally or irregularly through the year.

Essentially, the crowd can execute any task which is creative or academic in nature. This includes writing, marketing, accounting, research, editing, creative design pursuits. If it does not make sense to have a full time person on staff to execute, then crowdsourcing should be approached as a much more cost efficient alternative.

Process

Step One - Choose the best Website for announcing the task/project

There is a growing list of crowdsourcing sites and the quality of work you get will vary depending on which community you tap into. There are sites with thousands of workers ready to do any generalized scope of work, and there are sites that do very specific kinds of work. Choosing the wrong place to post your projects can be a disaster. For this reason, it is important to gain an understanding of what sites are available, how many workers they have, and what their terms of use are. We can provide a list of sites, and lots of anecdotal information on the best avenue if you need advice. Additional thoughts to consider when seeking out the best site to post your project:

- ➢ Three filters for selecting your site - First choose a site that is built to do the type of task you want done. Next, look for a large worker base. If they have 65,000 workers, you are likely to get higher quality and turnaround than a site with 600 workers. The final filter should be reviewing and evaluating the site's legal terms and conditions.
- ➢ Relative to terms and conditions, be sure to also check the site's agreement document for signing and rewarding winning contributors. You want to be able to download a copy of this agreement after being signed by the worker(s) you choose

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so you have a clear "work for hire" situation and no potential intellectual property issues.

➢ Each site will have a slightly different expectation of bounty amounts. In other words, the bounty that attracts good designers for a brochure design competition will vary from site to site. Make sure you understand what sites are in your price range if that is an issue. This brings us to the following step.

Step Two – Choose the appropriate bounty amount and project time window

The boundaries of what is an effective bounty or reward to offer are very much in flux. Crowdsourcing as a concept is so new that specific tasks like designing a logo or writing 1000 words of copy are still finding the fair price point. In addition, the most effective bounty amount could vary based on the site. There are some general rules that make sense to heed.

The first is to offer enough that you get the attention of some quality workers. To find that amount, you must observe other contests (or requests) and see what the range of offers has been for similar work. For example, if the task has typically been commanding anywhere from $300 to $600 dollars, this is a good indicator you should not offer $200 or $800. A mistake here will assure the quality of work you receive will be low and money will be wasted on this subpar submission.

We advise clients to look at the bounty in terms of how much quality they want or need. If you want high quality, bid at the higher end of the range. If you work is not high demand, bid at the low range. It is also important to make a thoughtful decision as per how long to run your contest, or give the competing crowd to complete the task. If you pick a window that is too

short, you risk missing out on some qualified participants that simply could not get the work done in time. You also risk not having enough time to provide feedback to the participants so they can do second and third versions of their original attempts. Additional thoughts to consider:

➢ Various sites handle their add-on fees in different ways. The bounty may only be part of the cost. You may have a service fee and extra marketing fees (optional) on top. Most sites will provide an "a la carte" pricing menu of options to help you better promote your job, or to handle the process in extended ways. Keep this in mind when budgeting for the total amount of the project.

➢ In some cases, you may want to select a second work product in addition to the one you are presenting. For example, you take the research done by provider one and agree to release the bounty to them while negotiating a deal with provider two for the research they did. In this case, you can offer a lower amount – maybe half – of the original offer for the winner.

➢ There are two different ways you can offer bounties on most sites: guaranteed and non-guaranteed. The difference is your commitment to award someone the work no matter what. In a non-guaranteed project, you will not award the work unless you see something you like. Workers will put a higher priority on working for guaranteed projects so be careful to make a wise decision on which way you go.

➢ The longer you can leave the work window open, the better quality product you will get in the end so do not constrict the window unless time-sensitive demands force this.

➢ If you have no idea how long to leave a work window open, look at some of the other projects on your crowdsourcing site and follow the lead of others posting jobs consistent with yours.

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Step Three – Provide complete and valuable instructions

One of the lessons we learned early on when crowdsourcing lots of projects was the need to provide thorough, clear instructions. This aids potential workers in refining their submissions so their first round production is much more on target. When you don't provide proper instruction, crowdsource participants will become frustrated going through a number of cycles trying to get it right based on minimal feedback. For example, when crowdsourcing the design of a book cover, we provided zero instruction about colors we liked/disliked, how we wanted the graphic displayed (2D or 3D), and whether we needed a back cover and a front cover. The result was over 300 submissions with the first 200 far off the mark as a direct result of our overly simplistic direction.

Be sure to give ample thought to your style preferences, parameters, and specific dislikes before making your announcement. Also, if appropriate, provide examples for them to see what you are looking for. This is especially important if you will have copyrighting done. Additional ideas include:

- ➢ In many cases, complete instructions will cause some workers to stay out of contests and that is OK. It is better all around to have 50 people that are qualified and motivated trying to earn your work then 200 that you will have to sort through.
- ➢ Always include information about what file formats you will need the work completed in. Workers may show you samples in formats you cannot download and use for their own protection. This is understandable and expected. You just want to make sure they know what formats you will need the finished product in.

➢ If you are doing a creative project, be sure to provide any information about the target audience/demographic for the creative work. You will have designers on the other end who are used to getting detailed information about who the design is for and what it will be used to accomplish. For example, don't run a project for a new logo and fail to give the designers any feel for the customer base or preferred style.

Step Four – Provide ongoing feedback as the project/contest runs

In many cases, your online workers will ask questions, make comments, and offer advice. You must have a person assigned to monitor this correspondence and provide feedback. Most sites allow crowd participants to post questions everyone can see so if you do not reply, the entire workforce will think you are disengaged. Our observation has been that higher quality talents almost always ask questions and if we do not provide answers quickly, they get frustrated. This is understandable from their viewpoint. The feedback and answers that you provide will have a big impact on the final quality of the work. This is the reason someone needs to own the responsibility of communicating with the crowd while the work request is out. Consider the following when providing feedback:

➢ Make sure you know whether the feedback you are about to give will be given privately (individually), or publicly to the whole group of participants. One mistake in this area could cause everyone to stop working. For example, disclosing to a preferred participant that you love their efforts and that they will probably be the winner. Everyone else could see this comment and stop trying.

➢ Keep in mind that many of the crowd workers are in foreign countries and may not write in perfect English, or understand American idioms and common phrases in some cases.

➢ The more you treat the crowd workers with respect and dignity the harder they will

produce for you. If you treat them as disposable laborers, you will draw low quality work. We have also noticed they are becoming more savvy and sophisticated about who is placing the jobs. If you treat them poorly the first time, do not expect much attention and response the next time you place a job.

Step Five – Make the final selection of the winning work/solution

After reviewing all submitted works and following up on any remaining correspondence, all you have to do is choose a winner. This should be easy right? Not always. One of the blessings/curses of crowdsourcing is that you may have many quality options to choose from. This is especially the case when you have posted a creative project, which merits an important piece of advice. <u>Before you ever engage in crowdsourcing a project, come to an agreement internally as per how the winner will be chosen</u>. Too many companies get excited about crowdsourcing projects and end up with ten solid options for winners, each of which may look good to someone. Then they deliberate on making the final selection. Whether the decision will be an executive one or decided by the vote of a committee, just be sure you have a selection process developed and ready to roll out. Here is some selection filtering options:

➢ While the contest is ongoing you can solicit comments from individuals who will be involved in the selection and use this survey to rank the work product as it comes in. This way everyone that has a say can be logging onto the contest and monitoring progress.

➢ Because the submissions are Web-based, it is possible to send a link of top submissions to a group of customers, friends, clients, family, or any other group you think may assist with the decision making process.

➢ Choose three people in advance who will vote on the winner. As long as they do not choose varying options you can quickly get to a decision. If each does make a different choice you will need to widen the selection group until a consensus is reached.

Step Six – Close out the job in a thorough manner

There are a number of tasks that really need to be done in order to close out a job well. One warning is that these contests and their participants do close up and move quickly. Once your crowd sees a contest has ended they only care about who the winner is. Ultimately, the winner only cares about the reward. To this end, any feedback or information you want from those involved is best gathered before the end date. Consider the following:

➢ Be sure to thank all who worked hard on your project and did not get chosen. This only takes a few moments and helps establish strong rapport which may have a positive impact on future projects.

➢ Make sure you receive all applicable file formats or versions of the work requested as close to the end of your project as possible. There is minimal chance you will be able to communicate with the winner one week later. So, if you need a graphic in three different formats (common for logo's and related works) be sure to request them within hours of your closing date.

➢ Capture a screenshot of the crowdsource Web page with the top ten submissions and keep it on file in case you find out later you cannot use the selection you made. This gives you a chance to follow up the providers of your second and third choices. This serves as a backup since the participant may pull their submission leaving you unable to retrieve it later.

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➢ If appropriate, do a final assessment of the financial impact, innovation level, and turnaround time of the project. How did this method compare to traditional means of accomplishing similar work? Be sure to factor in the management and correspondence time to gauge the true cost. It is important to comprehensively evaluate all facets and derived value of crowdsourcing. Though it may currently be a hot trend that is not a reason to adopt this process. It must provide clear advantages.

Step 7 (Conditional) – Verify you are not violating any copyrights/trademarks

This step is only necessary if you are having copyrightable creative work done. This step needs to be done BEFORE you close out a contest so if infringement is discovered, you can continue the contest and complete the task as planned. In some cases, the providers of the work may use other works found on the Internet as the base concept or visual. In this scenario what may still appear to be original work could be 80% of another logo or graphic the participant has ripped off. You are responsible for making sure there is no violation along these lines. To this end if someone writes copy for you it makes sense to run it through a text search engine to determine if the same copy exists on the Web. Be forewarned, workers getting paid a low wage to crowdsource a task may often look to cut corners, and in some countries the concept of trademark/copyright violation does not mean much.

Expected Outcomes

The most important outcome of this process is that you are able to complete a project or task in a way that benefits both the organization and crowd community. Organizations can benefit

in three possible areas:

ROI – If the work can be done less expensively by the crowd and with added quality and turnaround speed, then profit margins will increase.

Quality/Innovation – If the work can be done in a way that provides a wider scope of options to choose from, or with a higher level of quality, then the organization has benefited from the crowd dynamic. In many cases, the crowd has the depth of creativity to provide solutions that would never have been discovered in-house. At the same time, a larger group working on a task or challenge has a better chance of solving it or completing it with a high level of quality. There are many talented people out in the crowd eager to find job posts in line with their skill set.

Speed of completion – The crowd has two benefits that can improve turnaround time on completion. One is that a myriad of crowdsource participants are always ready and waiting to tackle a new posting. They are hungry for the work and will dedicate their immediate time to completing your task if you ask them to. The second benefit is the scale of the crowd relative to the structure of the project or task. It is possible to break up a large project across many crowd workers so all of them are completing their assignment at the same time. This ability to harness a large number of workers at the ready can have a dramatic, innovative impact on speed of completion.

The more experience you gain with the crowdsourcing process, the more comfort you will have in the benefits it can provide. The final desired outcome is that you fully integrate and institutionalize this tool within your organization so that it becomes a regular method for solving problems and completing projects. For this to happen, the skill of using this tool must

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be shared and directed throughout the organization. Don't allow it to become only the resource of the department that pioneered its use. Train all different levels and departments of the organization so that everyone can use and benefit from the efficiencies of the crowdsourcing process.

Supporting Documents

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*Hover over site names to access each hyperlinked site.

Product/Service Research & Development Platforms

Innocentive - *Open innovation problem solving.*

X PRIZE Foundation - *The X PRIZE focuses on designing and running incentive competitions in the $1M – $30M arena focused on solving grand challenges.*

IdeaConnection - *Idea marketplace and problem solving.*

Yet2.com - *IP market place.*

PRESANS (beta) - *Connect and solve R&D problems.*

Hypios - *Online problem solving.*

Innoget - *Research intermediary platform.*

One Billion Minds - *Online (social) challenges.*

NineSigma - *Technology problem solving.*

UTest – On-demand software testing via a global community of professional testers.

BrightHub - Online community of experts & life-long enthusiasts helping to solve science & tech problems.

Mob4Hire - Offers crowdsourced testing and market research for mobile apps.

Feedback Army – Simple, cheap usability for website development.

CMNTY Corporation – Place for communities & companies to collaborate on new/revamped products & services.

Ideation, Brainstorming, Social BI, and Problem Solving Platforms

Atizo – Virtual Brainstorming platform for open innovation

IdeaScale – Bring out ideas from customers/clients and stakeholders by giving them a platform to share, vote and discuss feedback

Idea Bounty – Get thousands of minds thinking about your idea brief and pay only for what you use

Ideaken – Collaborative idea and problem-solving platform

Innovation Exchange - Open innovation marketplace

Battle of concepts - Student challenges to generate winning concepts (Site Translation Required)

ChallengePost – Crowdsourced problem solving and challenge posting site. Enables

government agencies and software companies to invite the public to solve problems. Challenges increase awareness, foster participation, and generate innovation

Spigit – After acquiring Crowdcast.com, a crowd forecasting and prediction social business intelligence company, Spigit expanded its offering of social business intelligence solutions. Spigit currently offers initiatives like ICON for private crowd/constituent Q&A research and Spigit Engage for connecting decision makers with social groups for feedback to propel innovation and revenue streams, reduce product cycles and cost, and mitigate operational challenges.

Crowdvertising and Crowdtasking/Micro-Tasking Platforms

Fiverr – Features lots of individual postings of specific creative jobs (and much more) that will be completed for $5. This includes everything from wearing a t-shirt with your company name on it to sidewalk chalking your website and company logo.

AgentAnything – Aims to bring busy, hardworking people together with college students in need of a little extra money for running just about any type of errand or micro-task you can think of.

CrowdCrafting - Free platform enabling people to create and run projects that use online assistance in performing tasks that require human cognition such as image classification, transcription, geocoding, and more. The site helps researchers, civic hackers and developers to create projects where anyone around the world with time, interest, and an internet connection can contribute

WeGoLook – Using a team of 7,000 "Lookers" around the world, WeGoLook enablesremote

verification of an item, property, or person by dispatching a "Looker®" to seek outwhat is required and provide a personalized and affordable report. Key benefit is purchasing with confidence to avoid costly surprises.

Trada - Paid search optimization (SEO & SMO) solution without the cost and complication of an in-house team. With Trada, you have access to a community of paid search experts who do the daily work of campaign setup, build out, research and optimization.

Branding and Marketing

Blur Group –Crowdsourced blogging, logo design, etc.

Brand Tags - Tagging brands

Slogan Slingers – A niche site devoted to slogan and tagline contests. Review and rank submissions, share with friends to receive votes, and throw out those that don't fit. Easy and to the point.

NameThis – Similar to 99designs, this is a way of creating a 48-hour contest to find a brand name for your venture. The NameThis community suggests names, and then votes on the best ones. Fees are paid to the best three ideas. It costs $99 to harness the namethis "crowd brain".

BootB – Custom creative ideas for any creative need

CrowdSPRING – Creative designs

Edge Amsterdam – Elite creative sourcing platform

LeadVine – Crowdsourcing lead generation

99Designs – *Logo design generation*

GoodBuzz – *Social marketing platform that accelerates word of mouth online of offline*

PopTent - *Place for videographers to build their portfolios & connect w/ companies for work*

Flickr Creative Commons – *Access to thousands of community pro-quality graphics/images license-free*

Jovoto - *A global platform to enable creative excellence through mass collaboration*

MyPitch - *A meeting place for creative people and talents in more than 158 countries*

Zooppa – *People powered commercial branding and ad creation*

Logo Tournament - *Choose from 50-200+ custom designs; featured in Washington Post,PC World*

Leadvine – *Find new customers, search listings, & make money with the information you already have*

RantRave – *Widespread public opinion transmission (pr and marketing platform)*

Squidoo – *Topic crowdsourcing for creating and publishing web content*

DesignCrowd - *Online marketplace providing logo, website, print & graphic design services*

SquadHelp - *Enables entrepreneurs and small businesses to obtain branding and marketing assistance. Clients can start a contest to post what they need, when they need it, for whatever they want to pay.*

MycroBurst - *Located in Pennsylvania, MycroBurst offers a variety of graphic design projects for individuals and small businesses including logo, web, stationery, and t-shirt design. The*

company is backed by 7 years of experience and harnesses in excess of 33,000 talented designers. Regarded as one of the most affordable design crowdsourcing sites.

DesignContest – Another site for logo design, web design, t-shirt design, business card/brochure design and more. Claims over 1,000 live contests with over 2,000 designers, and 200 entries per contest

AwardDesigns – Spanish graphic design and copy creation platform launched in 2011

Choosa – Crowdsource logo design

Content/Copy Creation and Crowdsource Publishing Models

CrowdSource – Offers solutions related to content creation, content moderation (reviews, forum posts, profile photos, etc.), product matching and categorization, transcription, and search relevance work to improve conversion rates

Crowdscribed – Crowdsourcing of books covering many style options (corporate books, non-fiction, human interest, etc.). Allows for multiple versions of books with different endings, etc. Options for publishers and original authors to crowdsource and act as aggregators with minimal risk and high return

Textbroker - A marketplace for customized content that provides unique and exclusive written articles created to your specifications

Tongal - Allows businesses to activate a global community to procure and distribute a diverse selection of video content

Helium - Knowledge co-op where writers are also editors who read and rate every article on the

site

iStockphoto – *Crowdsourced stock photo inventories with over 100 million to choose from*

CloudCrowd - *An online work platform that breaks work into serialized project workflows, and makes individual tasks available to crowdsourced workers*

Market Research, Direct Answers (Q&A), Advice, & Collective Intel.

Quora - *Delivers answers and content from people who share your interests and people who have first- hand professional knowledge on the topics you present*

Yahoo! Answers – *The original pioneering Q&A platform*

SurveyMonkey – *Allows you to create surveys and push your campaigns out across the social space to qualify potential interviewees for testimonials or allow constituents to vote and rank what you propose*

Bar Database – *Crowdsourced database of bar listings, descriptions/reviews, drinks, and prices*

Holigraph[beta] by CrowdiPR - *Technology and patent research crowdsource company based in the UK*

Collective Intelligence & Prediction

Intrade - *global prediction markets*

Lumenogic - *collective intelligence markets*

[Ushahidi](#) - *crowdsourcing crisis information*

[MicroPoll](#) – *conduct polls on your website*

General Human Resource, Transcription, and Freelancing Sites

[ClickWorker](#) - *Online task solving*

[ChumBonus](#) - *Crowdsourcing recruitment*

[Mechanical Turk by Amazon](#) - *Access to an on-demand, low-cost, scalable workforce*

[oDesk](#) – *Remote Staffing for long-term work*

[Freelancer](#) – *Outsourcing for small businesses*

[eLance](#) – *Hire and manage an online workforce. Elance helps businesses hire and manage in the cloud. For businesses looking to staff-up a team on an hourly or project basis, Elance offers instant access to qualified professionals who work online and provides the tools to hire, view work as it progresses and pay for results.*

[CloudCrowd](#) – *Wide range of projects and work options for freelancers and work-from-homes*

[Servio](#) - *Organization of Editing and Translation services into sophisticated Internet assembly lines*

[MicroWorkers](#) – *"Micro" task solutions for generating web traffic and collecting revenue from it*

[CrowdFlower](#) – *Labor on demand for large scale data needs*

[ShortTask](#) – *Fast turnaround projects*

DeskLancer –*Crowdsourcing for small business – 24/7 workforce of small tasks*

AOL SEED – *Freelancer site geared toward writers and photographers*

Demand Studios – *Freelancer site geared toward writers, filmmakers, copy editors, bloggers and gurus*

BizReef - *Allows customers to outsource projects in web design, programming, graphics, writing and translation to rated freelancers. It has a network of more than 25,000 freelancers who bid on projects*

Casting Words – *Founded in 2005 by Rachel Richard and Nathan McFarland, this is a technology oriented transcription and web-sourcing firm located in Northern New Mexico with the aim of connecting online workers with work. Their main products are transcription services, primarily aimed at technologically savvy podcasters including expedited services*

Guru - *An online marketplace for freelance talent who's proprietary Ranking System leverages performance data to make the freelancer selection process easy and reliable. Once connected, Employers can securely pay Freelancers through Guru.com's SafePay system*

iFreelance - *A marketplace for jobs such as website development, graphic arts, writing, editing and software and script programming that are posted by clients and bid on by freelancers*

Gengo - *A Tokyo-based web application company specializing in translation services. Gengo gets native speaker to translate your documents for as little as $0.05/word*

ReplaceMyself - *A membership based site that allows members to outsource their business work to the Philippines for starting as little as $2.50 an hour*

Samasource - *A non-profit that provides IT, content moderation, data entry, and other*

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outsourcing services to clients by giving digital work to marginalized people around the world

Sites to Check for Copyright and Plagiarism Issues

TurnitIn – *Site for checking plagiarism*

Copyscape – *Check for copies of your pages on the web*

Ithenticate – *Scholarly comparison database*

Sites to Check for Crowdsource Trademark Issues

Trademarkia – *Search on patents, trade marks, logos, domains, incorporates, fights, etc.*

Businesslink – *(UK Trademark Search) This search tool will help you check that the company name or trade mark you are thinking of using for your business is not already registered or similar to one already existing*

TM View – *(Europe Search) Trademark availability and infringement search for European nations*

USPTO – *(US Trademark Search) Search for trademark availability or infringement in the U.S.*

IP Australia – *(Australian Trademark Search) Search for trademark availability or infringement in Australia*

Novagraaf – *Intellectual property protection site. Use IP2Check Tool to check on desired brand*

or product names, etc.

Open Innovation Software

Imaginatik - *Collective intelligence software*

TopCoder - *Competition-based software crowdsourcing*

CodeLean - *A Danish-owned IT company, established in 2008, that focuses on Microsoft .NET technologies and makes full use of agile development methods and the SCRUM project management approach to deliver cost-effective solutions to the company's clients.*

CoFundos - *Cheap and really good platform for the development of open-source software*

Intermediary Open Innovation Services

Big Idea Group - *Organize innovation contests and idea hunts*

Skild - *A software service for professional contest organizers*

Pharmalicensing - *Open innovation for the life sciences*

Chaordix - *Crowdsourcing engine for innovation. Depending on need and project design, they can guide the process from project planning, to recruiting and moderating your crowd, to research, design, and implementation, to branded site design and project management, to data analyticsand reports, and strategy recommendations.*

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[Exnovate](#) – A network on open & collaborative innovation

[Evly](#) – Use social networks/communities to find innovative solutions for diverse challenges

[Board](#) [of](#) [Innovation](#) – Development of next-generation business models by finding new revenue streams, exploring design partnership models, and inspiration through keynotes and workshops

Creative Co-Creation

[Spreadshirt](#) - Shirt community where you can create your own shirt and promote it

[Threadless](#) - Create and sell your t-shirts

[Cafepress](#) - Shop, create or sell what's on your mind

[Zazzle](#) - Create and sell products

[CreateMyTattoo](#) - Crowdsourced tattoo design

[Artistshare](#) – Fans funding new artists

[Quirky](#) - Community product development

[Jovoto](#) - Co-creation & mass collaboration

[Ponoko](#) – Buy, sell and make custom products with or without design skills. Ponoko's crowd of designers will help you design, and manufacture products and tell you how much it would cost to have your designs made for real.

eYeka – *Co-creation community*

Crowdfunding Platforms

Kickstarter – *One of the largest funding platforms for dynamic creative projects in the world*

Sellaband – *Crowdfunded bands*

Funding Circle – *Person to person lending helping businesses find low cost loans quickly with better returns for investors*

Spot.us – *Funding platform for bringing citizens, journalists, and news publishers together in an online marketplace based on crowdsourcing and crowdfunding methods and principles. Users can submit story tips, and journalists pitch their story ideas for funding*

Cofolio – *Allows small businesses to efficiently raise money from their local community*

WeFunder – *A crowd-investing platform for startups. It helps crowd investors purchase stock for as little as $100 in the most promising new businesses around the country*

Quirky – *A social product development company that makes innovation accessible by bringing product ideas to life with the help of the online community*

IndieGoGo – *The leading global platform for crowdfunding. Create a funding campaign to raise money quickly and securely. This trusted platform has helped to raise millions of dollars for over 65,000 campaigns, across 211 countries*

CrowdRise - *An innovative, crowd-sourced community of volunteers and online fundraisers that have come together to support online fundraising for charity, events and special projects. It's a*

way to raise money by turning participants and supporters into effective online fundraisers

NewJelly – *Funds all kinds of creative projects: art, food, technology, film, music, or design*

RocketHub – *Helps artists, scientists, musicians, entrepreneurs, photographers, and social leaders post fundraising campaigns to raise funds and boost awareness*

GoFundMe – *Do-it-yourself online fundraising service for medical expenses, volunteer trips, sports and more. Allows users to create their online donation page and share it socially with friends*

Peerbackers – *Allows individuals to directly finance entrepreneurs by contributing small amounts of capital in exchange for tangible rewards. Democratizes the funding process by allowing all persons, even those with very little to give, to show their support*

Philanthropic Crowdfunding Platforms

MicroPlace – *Paypal-owned initiative aimed at helping to alleviate global poverty by enabling everyday people to make investments that help the world's working poor. It focuses on microfinance loans sent via the Internet, using PayPal, allowing users to choose specific lending clients and businesses and loan them money over a designated period of time.*

FirstGiving – *Leading online fundraising platform dedicated to the purpose of empowering passionate nonprofit supporters to raise more money than they ever thought possible for the causes they care about*

DonorsChoose – *An online charity that makes it easy to help students in need through school*

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donations. Donors can browse project requests and give any amount to the one that inspires

[iOby](#) – Connects donors and volunteers to environmental projects in their neighborhoods to inspire new environmental knowledge and action

Crowdsourcing Case Studies & Corporate Initiatives

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Product & Problem-Solving Ideas Crowdsourcing

[Ideas4Unilever](#) – Unilever open innovation platform

[Kraft](#) – Collaboration kitchen

[IBM Collaboration Jam](#) - IBM's more internally-focused idea generation project

[Dell IdeaStorm](#) - External idea sourcing

[Vocalpoint](#) - P&G's network for women

[Developer](#) - Vodafone's mobile app development community

[My Starbucks Idea](#) - Shaping the future of Starbucks one shared idea at a time

[IdeaScale](#) – Collect ideas from customers and let them vote

[Challenge.gov](#) – Crowdsourced solutions for government problems

[Nokia Ideas Project](#) – Crowdsourcing Idea platform from Nokia.

Product Design Crowdsourcing

[Peugeot](#) - *Peugeot's innovation testing*

[Fluevog](#) - *Open shoe design*

[LEGO Mindstorms](#) - *Open source robots*

[BurdaStyle](#) - *Open source sewing ideas and inspiration*

Peer Production & Idea/Inspiration Sharing

[Linux](#) - *Open source software*

[Wikipedia](#) – *Peer-produced encyclopedia*

[Pinterest](#) – *Works like a virtual pinboard for posting image-based ideas and message for event planning, décor, fashion, etc. Useful for gaining fresh ideas*

[HubPages](#) - *Publish, discover and interact with people who share your interests*

Social Cause and Human Interest Crowdsourcing

[iBridge Network](#) - *Platform for university innovation*

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[Science Commons](#) - *Generic license agreements*

[Picnic Green Challenge](#) – *Sustainable business ideas to save the planet*

[Eureka Medical](#) - *Medical open innovation platform*

[Fold it](#) - *Solve puzzles for science*

[Cerebrus](#) - *An automated processing engine to translate any type of photographic satellite data into usable GIS data by harnessing the power of the crowd*

[Galaxy Zoo](#) – *Help astronomers explore the universe*

[OpenIDEO](#) – *Open innovation platform for solving challenges for the social good*

[Popularise](#) – *Review local planned project postings, submit ideas, show support and vote on or help publicize best ideas, and ultimately join together to build a city the way you want it*

[Civil War Diaries and Letters Transcription Project](#) – *Crowdsourcing to rebuild historical records*