

## Community Creation

SpaceShare's tools reach the individuals at your event and help them weave them themselves into new communities. We use a mix of open source technologies and our own software, integrated with a growing pool of ideas and "social engineering," to help people make the connections they want or need at your event. Packaged together, these tools and techniques will transform how people find new connections and share information, starting by expanding your conference to include the journey, broadening people's contacts across their usual boundaries, creating new groups, and continuing the discussions around topics of interest long after your conference officially ends.

### Community Creation: An Attendee's Story

Since it is our job to build the technologies and walk you through their implementation, we like to start with "the story" of a SpaceShare community package, from the perspective of one of your participants.

**Step by Step: Each step will be made clear and simple to attendees.**

**When registering**, attendees are encouraged to participate in three additional steps.

1. Sign up on the "Green Travel" system and find their neighbors. Everyone is encouraged to see who else is traveling from their home community. They then have the opportunity to share the ride or flight. Hotel roommate matching is also facilitated. The first event on the agenda may be for travel partners: a few questions to get people talking, such as "what is happening and what could happen in our state to promote solar?"
2. Become, or find, a "conference mentor." Long time participants and first time attendees will be encouraged to sign up on a similar system as "Green Travel", but rather than match zip codes and car seats, it will match experienced participants to new attendees, and sort them based on their matching interests. (This system can be quietly combined with the Green Travel system, allowing people sign up for both in one step, or use either separately.)
3. Group creation begins when each registrant is asked to introduce herself on an online forum. We will create a bulletin board with

many topics of interest, for example “solar and architecture.” Within each category will be a subcategory ***Introductions***. Each attendee will be encouraged to pick a favorite topic of interest and write a brief introduction, including what they are an expert in and what questions they have.

**Two weeks before the conference**, everyone receives an email, encouraging them to read the introductions of people who chose the same topic, and email at least one person. Each topic of interest has two other subcategories besides introductions: ***Networking*** and ***Issues and Education***. Speakers will have been encouraged to introduce their topics under ***Issues and Education***, where people can not only review what the speaker plans to talk about but also ask questions before the talk. If there is time available for small group breakouts, such as at lunch, people with a similar interest can now plan where they want to meet. People inspired to take initiative can set up meetings or lunches and announce them here.

**During and after the conference**, conversations can continue. Groups can have breakout meetings, people can connect for lunch with others with the same interest. If someone doesn't have time for a question during a talk, they can ask it here under “issues and education,” and the speaker or another audience member can answer it. Not only is the information shared, but when people who were previously part of the audience can answer even one small question, it changes how they experience the conference.

## The Results: From Attendee to Participant

This is a vision of a different type of conference, composed of participants instead of attendees. Everyone can contribute to the conversations, everyone can leave a record of their thoughts. All of this can run smoothly along with your regular events, taking very little time, saving people time as they can be more efficient in their communications. Even a relatively quiet newcomer can now have carpooled or flown in with other people and started talking about the conference, then met with a mentor who shows them the ropes. They'll also be part of a virtual group before and after the event, meeting the people who's interests most overlap theirs at a lunch during the event. Speakers will find it easier to communicate, to get feedback about what to change for next year. And beyond all these social connections, the forums will allow more questions to be asked, and richer answers to be given by the whole community, with a record after the event.