The Nerdfighter Community

The nerdfighter community is mainly a meet-up community for people who wish to make videos, do creative projects and to help with various charities. It was started by Hank and John Green back in 2007. It all started with the video project Brotherhood 2.0. and grew into a community of fans and people with the same interests.

'John Green is the New York Times bestselling author of Looking for Alaska, An Abundance of Katherines, and Paper Towns. He is also the coauthor, with David Levithan, of Will Grayson, Will Grayson. He was 2006 recipient of the Michael L. Printz Award, a 2009 Edgar Award winner, and has twice been a finalist for the Los Angeles Times Book Prize. Green’s books have been published in more than a dozen languages.

Green’s book reviews have appeared in The New York Times Book Review and Booklist, a wonderful book review journal where he worked as a publishing assistant and production editor while writing Looking for Alaska. Green grew up in Orlando, Florida before attending Indian Springs School and then Kenyon College. '[1]

'William Henry "Hank" Green II (born on May 5, 1980 in Birmingham, Alabama) is a professional blogger and the founder of the enviromental technology blog EchoGeek. He is also a singer/songwriter, as well as the co-owner of DFTBA Records. Hank Green has achieved Internet fame through his day-to-day YouTube video blogs(or Vlog), known as the Brotherhood 2.0 Project, along with his brother, author John Green and with their shared Vlogbrothers channel, which is currently the 84th most subscribed YouTube channel of all time.

DFTBA Records (short for "Don't Forget to Be Awesome") is a record label co-founded and co-owned by Hank Green and Alan Lastufka Its main focus is music generated by prominent YouTube stars. The label was founded in 2008.'[2]

Brotherhood 2.0.

Brotherhood 2.0. was a video project that Hank and John Green started in 2007. It started when the two brothers started noticing that the relationship they had for years consisted primarily of emails and instant messages. John and Hank proposed a challenge to each other, that they would swear off textual communication with each other for the year of 2007. Instead, they would make public videos back and forth every weekday for the entire year. They allowed each other holidays and weekends off. These public videos were placed on youtube for the youtube community to see. According to an August 15th interview with Fox News, John came up with the idea for the project after realising that for 12 months he had not spoken to his brother, despite communicating with him on a regular basis.

The brothers exchanged information, wrote and performed songs and read from novels as well as speaking about their daily lives. After a song written by Hank, Accio Deathly Hallows
-a song based on the release of the final Harry Potter book, was featured on the front page of Youtube, the popularity of the project skyrocketed with many films produced after this date being viewed up to 20,000 times. It was also around this project that The Nerdflighter Community formed.

Along with having to submit video every weekday to youtube there were also a few rules that the brothers had to follow. No film that they put up on youtube could be more than four minutes long. If a brother failed to upload his film by 12.00 AM EST, then he would be allocated a punishment. If a brother communicates with another brother by any text based mode of communication, then he will be allocated a punishment. Finally films would not be made on weekends or holidays.

The whole aspect of punishments was one of the main things that helped form the community. Before the introduction of punishments for not doing videos fans of the two brothers were watching passively. As the videos continued they started asking for punishments from the people watching and commenting on the videos. This gave the fans a way to give feedback to the two and helped start the whole community.

The term “Nerdfighter” which is now the name that the community calls itself by was first introduced by John Green February 1st, 2007. He described the people who were fans and members of the community which was quickly growing around this project as Nerdfighters, people who fight with their brains. People started making their own blogs, joining in projects that were set by the two brothers or by other members of the community and creating videos inspired by the two brothers. Finally in late 2007 the nerdfighter community forum and group space “In My Pants” was created. Within the forum there are a number of categories that the community participate in. One of the big attractions of the forum is “The Blurbing Book Club”. The Blurbing Book Club was started when John Green, who’s an author started recommending books for the nerdfighters to read. He soon discovered that the nerdfighter community were quite interested in this and as such created a book club on the forums where every month he would recommend two books for the nerdfighters to read. During the month nerdfighters would then comment on and discuss the books as they were reading them.

Projects

The community also partakes in projects which are sometimes started by the two brothers but now are more often proposed and done by other nerdfighters. Some of the projects that have been completed in the past include “The Project For Awesome” which is done through out youtube on December 17. During this day Nerdfighters promote their favorite charities by making videos about them. When the Nerdfighters create their video promoting their charity they should have the same video-tumbnail. All other Nerdfighters are then asked to comment on and rate all the videos, which are easy to find since they have the same video thumbnail, so that they’ll get into the most watched list. While the project is
going on during the day there is a long live show presented by Hank and John Green as well as from of the other personalities that would be quite famous in the youtube community. The Project for Awesome was first started in 2007 and has continued on till this year.

Some of the other projects that were during were much more lighthearted like “The Happy Dance Project” which originally started as a funny joke between the two brothers but the nerdfighters thought it was very amusing and they created a video of many of the members of the community doing funny dances. All the members of the community created their own video and then sending it to Hank Green who then added music to it and posted it on youtube.

One of the biggest nerdfighter community project was, in associan with the Harry Potter Alliance, raised money for the Haiti. The project was called the “Helping Haiti Heal” proect which was first propsed by the Harry Potter Alliance, whom specialise in raising money for charities. Between the two communities they sent out over 5 planes to Haiti. They named all the planes whimsical names which the communities chose. The planes were called: Harry Potter, Ron, Hermione, DFTBA (Don't Forget To Be Awesome) and Dumbledore. These planes were sent out 24th of April 2010. the two communities cecided the best thing to do would be send out the planes themselves rather then sending the supplies to Haiti using and external source which could possibly risk some of the money for supplies going towards administration rather than to the people of Haiti.

The Nerdfighter community has a lots of emphasis on “decreasing world suck” which means that the members of the community wish to make the world a better place through different means. This is done through their projects. Some of them are entertaining and fun like the “Positive Pranking Project“ movement which was started September 2010 in which the nerdfighters were encouraged to, instead of doing cruel things for a prank, do small things to brighten someones day. Some of these pranks included prank telephoning people telling them fun and positive facts to help make them happy. Other pranks included ringing someones doorbell but instead of just running away leaving sweets and candy on their doormat instead and “TPing” their house, which actually meant that they left the American candy Tootsie Pops in peoples flower beds or hanging from their trees.

The nerdfighter community is a close group of people who delve in creative projects, help each other through tough times and encourages it’s members to contribute to society in positive ways like trying to make the world a better place through small, meaningful tasks. Within the community they encourage it’s member, whom are often young people to get involved and to debate about what they’re interested in on the forums. One of the most important aspects of the society is how it allows young people who are interested in current events, intelligent discourse and debating to be allowed express themselves without being made fun of or ridiculed because they're interested in such things. The nerdfighter community ranges in age from thirteen and fourteen year olds to people in their fourties and it's most important rule is that everyone within the community must be friendly
towards each other. A community which originally started as two brothers sending amusing videos between each other has flourished into a strong member based community of people who work to try a make the world a better place, a funny video or a donation at a time.

Methods of Communication

The main forms of communication for this community are the following:

Forum

The nerdfighters forum is most often used as a form of communication by the members. This is where the members discuss current events as well as partaking in the projects and joining the book club. They have an area where new nerdfighters can introduce themselves and organise “Nerdfighter Gatherings” around their areas. This is so the nerdfighters can meet with each other in real life and discuss their interests. It has an area where the nerdfighters can discuss the Vlogbrothers videos as well as an area where they can broadcast their own videos to other nerdfighters or post videos that they find of interest. They also create scavenger hunts and puzzle games that are played world wide. The scavanger hunt was started while John was travelling for a book launch and hid items in different parts of the world during his tour, posting on the forum hints to where he had hid them. Finally the forum also has an entertainment and fun section as well as an uncategorised area. As the community is mainly to do with creative activities the forum allows members to show off their crafts and projects.

Videos

One of the other main methods of communication the nerdfighters use is videos. As the whole community started as a video blog between the two brothers a lot of the community also communicate with each other using video blogs, which are posted on the forum. These are used to allow the more creative people in the community to showcase their talents, whether it be singing, video editing or other creative skills. The nerdfighters follow each others video blogs and answer each others questions in their own ones. This method of communication is quite interesting as they talk about their own personal life on their video blogs, which are then displayed to the public but also showcase their talents on the same blog and speak to their friends on the video blogs. Most of these video blogs also follow the four minute rule that the two brothers used in the Brotherhood 2.0 project and still use in their videos today (unless the community allows them to increase the length for special cases).

Twitter and Facebook

The nerdfighters also communicate with each other, as well as the founders of the community using both twitter and facebook. The main way the two brothers communicate with the members is
through twitter where they can ask advice from the nerdfighters on projects and such. The nerddighters also can sumit their contribution to a project on twitter.

There is also a nedfighter group on facebook. They update the members on nerdfighter gatherings that are going on in America and Europe. They also update nerdfighters on when the two brothers will be touring for various reasons and then they will be doing livestreams using BlogTV.
The NewWest Missoula interviewed Hank Green on the 30th of December 2007. They spoke about what the Brotherhood 2.0 project was about and, more importantly what was making it so popular. The report goes to say that “By posting their video communications on YouTube, John and Hank allowed any viewer into their brotherhood.

It was weird at first, Hank said, because people on the Internet want to feel something, and often the easiest thing to feel is anger, so people in the comment section generally fling hate on everyone available.

But some viewers like to feel connected and good, too. They responded to the humor and sincerity of Hank and John and have become involved in charities, for instance, and otherwise have made a difference in the world, or, in the language of Brotherhood 2.0, have decreased “world suck.”

Right. These guys do take themselves pretty seriously. But in a good way. I guess that’s why they’re nerdfighters. (The term came from a video game, which, because of a bad font, “appears to be called nerdfighters,” John had said to Hank.)” [3] The same website later published an article about the “Tricks of the Social Networking Trade” in which they talk about both the Brotherhood 2.0 project and his own website and blog EcoGeek.org. In this report Hank spoke about what he thought were the reasons the Brotherhood 2.0 project was so popular as it currently has more than 10 million views on Youtube but more importantly it spawned it’s own internet community which has more than eight thousand members. While Hank was speaking at a New West event at the Missoula Art Museum he said that one of the easiest ways to become successful on the web is to “put your creative energy into something and do it consistently and do it well. If you can do something you know you like, then people will find it.” [4]

The Nerd Fighters also took part in the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency’s (DARPA) competition, in which they released 10 red weather balls across the country of America and offered $40,000 to the first group to locate all of them. The winner of the competition was MIT and NPR spoke with Riley Crane, who was from the winning team about how his team won the prize by location the balloons in fewer than nine hours. The mentions the Nerdfighter community in this, who was a close second to finding the balloon. The fact that an online community came so close to winning was a shock to a lot of people. However the Nerd Fighters and the other participating members were tricked by MIT, who release 200 fake balloons to throw them off. This was not against the rules.
References


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A Day in the Life of a web developer/professional bloggers.

Hank Green, as well as a good few of the Nerdfighters taking part in the community are web developers. Some of them work in big companies but people like Hank Green can work from home. As the video blogs are still done three times a week the community get a good insight into what the web developers say they do during their day. Of course a lot of this information comes from web developers who specialise in video blog and blog communication.

The first thing a web developer would do would be to check the site they’re working on and, using HTML, PHP, JavaScript and other programming languages update the site they’re working on. This could include a complete redesign of the website if the client so asked for it. If it was an ongoing client they may just be updating the website with new content that the client would ask for. Web Developers spend a lot of time answering emails from their clients, giving them progress reports on what they’ve done as needed. They spare their time between the creation and design of a new website that a client has asked for and the maintenance and updating of existing websites they’ve created for clients.

Once this is complete they would then start on the updating of their own website, in the case of professional bloggers. Professional bloggers would spend a large portion of their time updating their websites with important and interesting information which is relevant to the site they run. It could take a professional blogger many hours to complete a blog post which would be up to a professional standard. In the nerdfighter community a professional blogger for said community has much, much more to do than write a single blog post. It can involve recording a song, either professionally or in their own house, creating a piece of digital artwork or making an entertaining video. No matter what the talent might be, writing or singing, a professional blogger in this community is expected to showcase their talents in the best way they can think of.

This could mean that the entire day could be spent writing a song, recording it multiple times until your happy, editing the video until the blogger is happy and then uploading it. The next day could then be spent making a stop motion animation. The job of being a web developer and professional blogger is that, although some of the work you do during the day will be the same from day to day, you have an awful lot of freedom to do what you would like to do and blog/video blog on whatever you wish to blog about.