

New Relic®

New Relic Online Technical Community

2016 Member Survey

Introduction

New Relic's Online Technical Community helps you realize the full potential and value of our services for your business, and for your career development. In short, we're succeeding if you're succeeding.

How do we know if you are succeeding? To find out, we have to ask you. That's why we launched the first ever Online Technical Community survey last fall. Our goal was to find out who you are, what you need, and how we can better support you. Learning more about the people who are invested in this community will help our team know how (and where) to focus our efforts in the form of projects and initiatives.

Can't wait to read the full report? Here are our big takeaways:

- **You want to self-serve.** We need to bring new features into the community that make it easier for you to do that. We'll be trying to make answers easier to spot and more consistently marked, and a host of other features.
- **You know a lot.** Now we need to figure out what would motivate and encourage you to share that knowledge with others. Your experience is needed in the community.
- **You're not connected to others in the community.** Most of you have not completed a profile, for example. In order to make the community more valuable, we need to help you get to know each other as New Relic customers, and as humans. We'll be running campaigns and working with you to change the culture of our community from ask/answer to a network of supportive customers.

Following is more detail of what we learned from you, and how we might be able to put that to use. As with anything we do, we want your feedback, so please feel free to share your thoughts and ideas with us in the [Feedback Category](#) of the Online Technical Community.

Section One: Who is the Online Technical Community?

The Online Technical Community was launched over two years ago with the intent that New Relic customers would have a place to ask questions and learn tips, tricks, and best practices from each other and from our New Relic support and product engineering experts.

We had no idea who would show up, and how the conversation would evolve. Now that we've been at this a while, we wanted to know: Who are you? Our hope is that by better understanding who's in the Community, we can tailor our content, campaigns, and services to better meet your needs.

Here's what you told us about who you are.

How long have you been a customer?

Most of the respondents to our survey (62%) have been New Relic customers between one and three years. Adding in the respondents who reported they have been customers for 4 or more years, our total bumps to 78%. This suggests that the people in our community are fairly experienced with New Relic products.

How Long Have You Been a New Relic Customer?



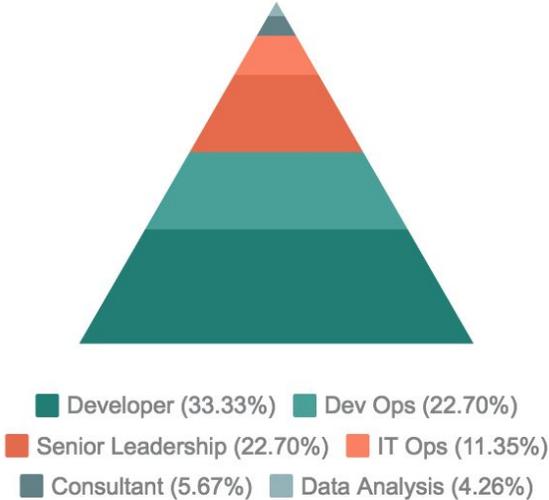
What does that mean?

These numbers might tell us more about the survey respondents than about the community in general. Based on the user account data we have, we think we have a much larger proportion of new customers, but they would be understandably much less likely to respond to a survey about the Online Technical Community, possibly thinking they don't have enough experience to contribute to the survey.

However, knowing that our respondents are fairly New Relic savvy is helpful as a lens for understanding the rest of our survey results, and allows us to learn more about how we can better serve the people who have been part of the Community longest.

What is your role at your organization?

What is Your Role at Your Organization?



Respondents to the survey come from a wide variety of roles, with Developers claiming the largest percentage (33%). We were somewhat surprised to find that Senior Leadership and DevOps made up the second largest percentage of our response base, at 23%.

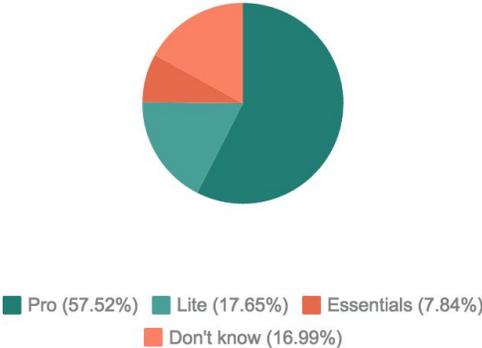
What does this mean?

If this title breakdown is representative of the entire Online Technical Community, the vast majority of our members are practitioners - individuals using New Relic services to inform their daily work. Staying focused on practical technical information will be important to serving these members. The number of members who identify as Senior Leadership suggests that we may need to think about new kinds of

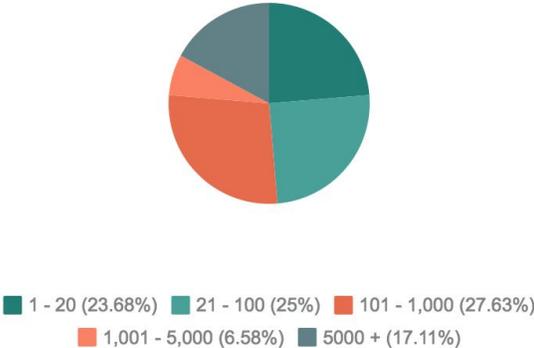
content as well. Content for these members might not focus on the nuts and bolts as much as how the data can be used to inform your business. These would be new kinds of discussions for us to foster.

What is the highest New Relic subscription you have? How many people work at your organization?

What is the Highest New Relic Subscription You Have?



How Many People Work at Your Company?



One thing this survey solidified was the suspected ratio of paying vs. non-paying customer members of the community. We now know that the majority of our community members (more than 80% of respondents!) pay *some* amount of money for our products. This was somewhat surprising given that our paying customers have the opportunity for ticketed support, while Lite customers have access solely to the community. It turns out that whether you are paying or not, community forums are a preferred way for our members to get product support (see “How do members prefer to get technical support” later in this report).

What does this mean?

We know that many of our Pro customers add several, if not dozens, of staff to their New Relic product accounts. Yet, the average number of accounts per organization in the Online Technical Community is less than two. Clearly, we have some work to do to help organizations see the value in participation on the Community, which may also help them align around standards and best practices for New Relic in general.

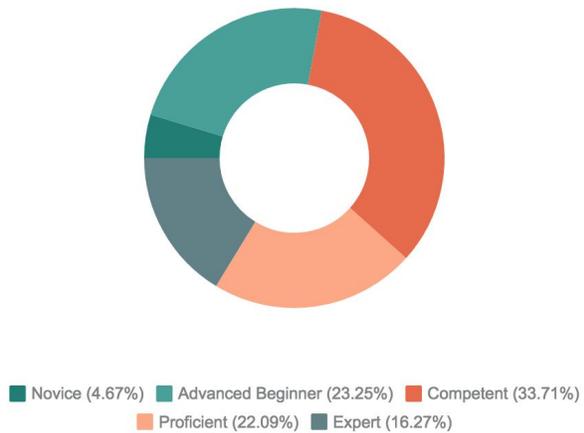
How would you rate your level of New Relic expertise?

Respondents to the survey come from a wide variety of roles, with Developers claiming the largest percentage (33%). We were somewhat surprised to find that Senior Leadership and DevOps made up the second largest percentage of our response base, at 23%.

What does this mean?

This data confirms what we already know: you all have a real depth of expertise to draw from. We'd like to see you draw in that knowledge to share with each other much more often in the Online Technical Community. Hearing how other customers are tackling problems can be even more helpful than hearing how it *should* work from a New Relic support engineer. We'll have to do some follow up research with you to better understand what keeps you from answering questions in the community, and what might incent you to do more of it.

How Would You Rate Your Level of New Relic Expertise?

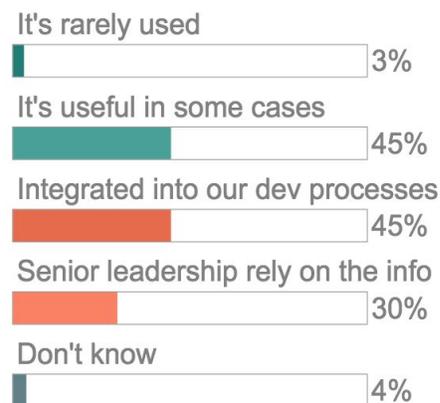


How important is New Relic to your business?

A bigger chunk than we were expecting (45%) said that New Relic is so important to your business that it is integrated into your development processes. That is music to our ears! The next biggest grouping said that Senior Leadership rely on the information that New Relic provides (30%).

It gets even more interesting when we facet the survey

How Important is New Relic to Your Business?



results to reflect those of you who have New Relic integrated into your development processes.

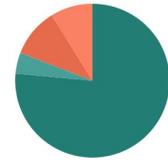
What does this mean?

Nearly half of you depend on New Relic during your development process. We need to ensure the Community is available as an official and reliable resource for the information you need to make New Relic work for you. This is a goal we are actively striving to achieve. So, we faceted the survey results to specifically reflect those of you who have New Relic integrated into your development processes. Let's briefly go over some of the more interesting data that changed with this facet.

Participants who have integrated New Relic into their development process.

1. Subscription levels of these participants is higher, the bulk being Pro subscribers. This proves to us that the level of commitment to and reliance on New Relic in this group is higher than the average.

What is the Highest New Relic Subscription You Have?



■ Pro (76.48%) ■ Essentials (4.41%) ■ Lite (10.29%)
■ Don't know (8.82%)

2. When asked to rate their level of New Relic expertise, this faceted group rated themselves highly. The general survey results showed us that only about 40% would rate themselves "Competent" or higher. This faceted group, however, shows us that the majority (80%) consider themselves "Competent", "Proficient", and even "Expert". We can assume that this particular group feels the most capable and confident in helping others when it comes to New Relic.

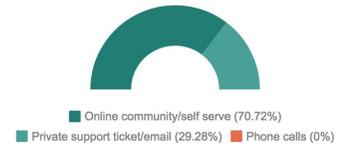
How Would You Rate Your Level of New Relic Expertise?



■ Novice (2.44%) ■ Advanced Beginner (15.86%)
■ Competent (36.59%) ■ Proficient (24.39%) ■ Expert (20.73%)

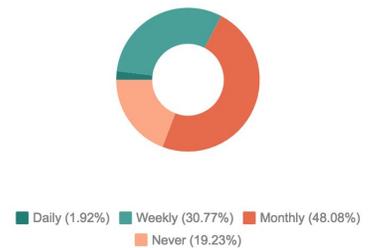
3. When it comes to preferences for receiving support, the numbers here do not reflect much of a change between respondents who integrate New Relic into their development process and other groups. We were intrigued to learn that, just like the rest of the community, these ultra-invested respondents *also* prefer to self serve when they bump into an issue or question. That is interesting because we assumed that the more a participant relies on our product, the more important phone and ticketed support would be.

How Do You Prefer to Receive Technical Support?



4. When asked what actions this group does the most in the community, this faceted group seems to do the most searching for answers on a daily, weekly and monthly basis. This is much more interaction and engagement than any other groups we looked at. Other facets showed little daily or weekly actions being done in the Community. This was an exciting bit of data seeing as this invested group is utilizing the community and its content regularly.

How Often Do You Search Through Posts for Answers to a Question?



Section Two: How Do You Get the Technical Information You Need?

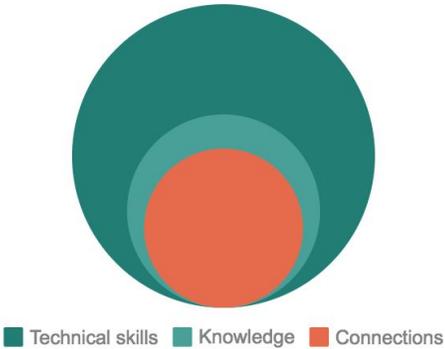
We know that there are many different ways that you can get the technical information you need to make the most of New Relic. On the one hand, it's great that you have so many choices. On the other hand, we want you to be able to find everything you need easily, in one place.

If we're going to continue to improve the Online Technical Community and make it make it easier for you to find everything you need, we have to know what it is you're looking for.

Here's what you told us.

What is important to you when it comes to growing your performance management abilities?

When it Comes to Growing Your Performance Management Abilities, Which of the Following are Most Important to You?



Acquiring technical skills and learning how to use tools like New Relic are important to all our Community members. The vast majority of respondents (68%) said that learning how to use New Relic to complete certain tasks was the most important thing for them to get from their Community involvement. 19% said that learning about how New Relic can be applied to their business and industry trends and strategy were most important while 11% indicated that networking was the most important to them.

What does this mean?

This data tells us that knowing how to use New Relic would really help your day job, and your career, too. Gaining industry knowledge and building a network are in no way unimportant to our customers even if your primary objective is answering that question so you can fix something and move on with your data . This data solidifies our strategic efforts in the Online Technical Community. We're here to help you grow your current and future career skills, and meet the people who will help you get there.

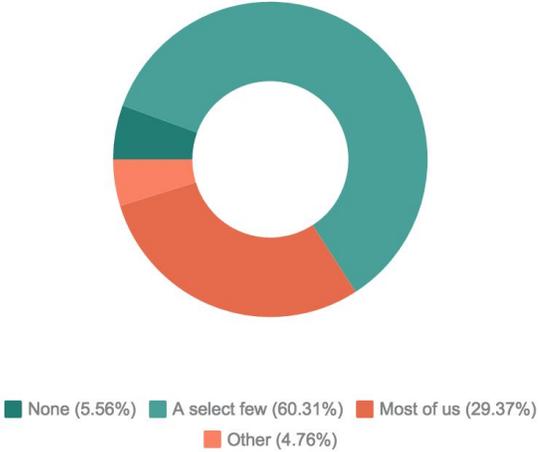
How many of your colleagues use New Relic?

We were expecting “Most of Us” to be the popular answer. No matter how we facet this data, even for customers who have integrated New Relic into their development process, the majority of respondents indicate that only a select few of their colleagues are using New Relic.

What does this mean?

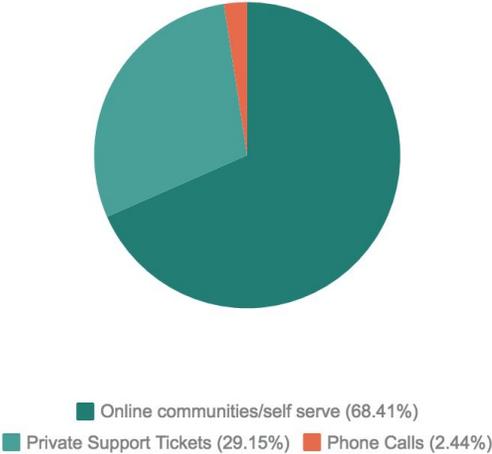
No wonder making connections is a popular theme. If you need a buddy to help you with your New Relic questions, based on this data it seems likely that you only have *a few* people at work to turn to. CEO and founder of New Relic, Lew Cirne, recently said during his FutureStack keynote that “[digital is a team sport](#)”. The Online Technical Community is available to you, not only to learn, but to be your team. Chances are, the user that helped you yesterday is a user you can help today. With this community, you aren’t limited to “a select few” to turn to when you need an answer or want to pass on some knowledge.

How Many of Your Colleagues Use New Relic?



How do our members get the information they need to succeed?

How Do You Prefer to Receive Technical Support (1st choice)



“Self service” was the top choice for our customers, including the group who have New Relic integrated into their development processes at work. No matter which way we facet the data, 60% or higher—every time, every group—prefer to self serve when it comes to Technical Support.

What does this mean?

These results are not totally surprising, but it did make us wonder: if even the people most invested in our product want to find the answers they need by themselves, is our community set up for that kind of use? We’ll be

looking at ways to make self-serving in the Online Technical Community easier in the next year. For example, we might be able to make it easier to determine which questions has answers, and make those answers easier to read in the post.

Section Three: About Your Use of the Online Technical Community

Data from the community tells us that the majority of Community members drop by to search for an answer, and potentially post a question. Very few of you are in the Community frequently to create, like, and share content. We wanted to better understand what actions you are taking, and what you need more of in our community.

Here’s what you told us about our Community.

What would you like to see more of in the community?

Turns out, you want to see what we would characterize as more “official” content from New Relic. Tips and tricks, answers to your questions, and product engagement were the first, second, and fourth most requested kinds of content from respondents.

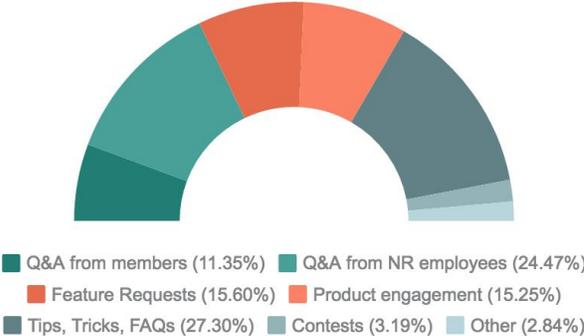
What does this mean?

When we first launched this community, the goal was to provide the technology to have New Relic questions publicly shared and answered by other customers AND New Relic staff. This has been the bulk of our work in the community to this point. We clearly have more work to do. Based on these responses, we think we need to work to get questions answered faster, and make sure those answers are clearly marked.

As the community continues to grow, we are seeing the community push into other interesting content areas like feature ideas, workarounds, wins, tips, tricks, contests, libraries, etc. We believe that in order to reach our goal of becoming the best community of practice we can be, we need to foster more types of transparent content—we need to be even more than a Q&A forum. We’re excited to grow the community into these new directions.

For example, a recent success has been the Online Technical Community’s new [Level Up: Relic Solutions category](#). This is a space where Relics can post about interesting puzzles they solve and custom instrumentation tactics with context the community will find useful. This *Level*

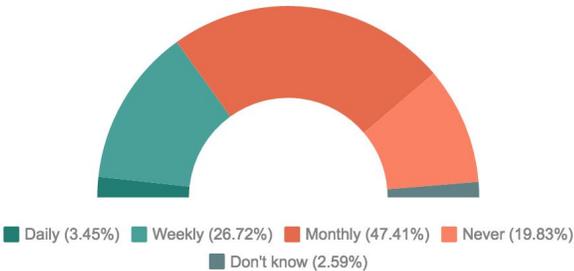
What Would You Like to See More of in This Community?



Up initiative ties in with our second most requested: more “questions and answers from the people that work at New Relic” (66%). This means that not only could this community be a successful space for support, but also a place of context where experts can share specific use cases and unique ideas.

How often do you do the following in the Online Technical Community?

How Often Do You Do the Following in the Online Technical Community



As you all know there are many ways to engage in the Online Technical Community. Actions you can take include replying, posting, liking, and voting. This graph tells us about the action of *searching through posts for answers* and how often our customers do that. It appears that this action is happening monthly, weekly, even **daily** for some of you. However, the most common frequency of engagement for respondents is monthly, at 47.51%

What does this mean?

We have eyes in the community *all the time*. Though you might not be “engaging” in the Community more than monthly, you are reading a lot of posts and we consider that a huge success. “Having eyes” on our Community could mean that most of you come often, search for an issue or idea, read, and get your answer.

However, we have the opportunity for more engagement and awareness when it comes to *all* the actions a community member can perform. 65% of respondents have never posted an answer to a post. The health of our community depends on our users helping other users. We need our users to have more confidence in order to help out and share their successes. This is another example of why engagement is exactly what our strategies are focused on. Thanks to this data, we know now that we are right on track.

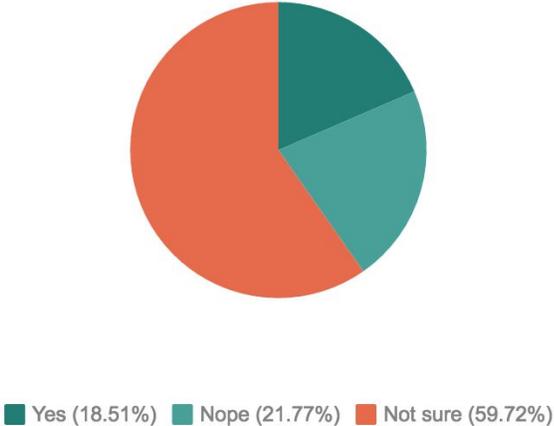
Did you fill out your profile?

Only 18.5% of respondents told us that they have filled out their Online Technical Community profile while the majority (60%) are unsure.

What does this mean?

We here on the Community team feel like we hang out with you everyday. We can pick your community avatar out of a crowd. Some of you are lovingly known around the team by only your @handle. We know and understand your needs, we hear all of your concerns and we love interacting with each and every one of you.

Did You Fill Out Your Profile?



A full and detailed profile, to us, signals that you are willing to be known and make connections in the community. Your community profile can be your “resume” of New Relic skills. Our hope is that you will be accountable and excited by profiles reflecting the contributions you have made. Even if you want to keep it somewhat anonymous, twitter handles, pictures of your pets, funny avatars that make us laugh, are all a part of how we make the human connections that drive all communities. Complete profiles benefit the members of this community by also allowing you to identify with each other over similar roles, industry, background and interests.

We knew in our gut that users with full, filled-out profiles are more likely to be more engaged than people without. Our observation over the years is that there is a clear difference in behavior and engagement of the two groups. Let’s look at the amount of engagement (posting helpful tips, bookmarking, upvoting, and liking) the group of people who did **not** fill out their profile do on a monthly or weekly cadence:

How Often Do You Post a Helpful Tip or Workaround?



■ Daily (0%) ■ Weekly (3.85%) ■ Monthly (15.38%)
■ Never (76.92%) ■ Don't know (3.85%)

How Often Do You Use Up-votes, Bookmarks, and Likes?



■ Daily (0%) ■ Weekly (11.54%) ■ Monthly (30.77%)
■ Never (53.84%) ■ Don't know (3.85%)

This shows that 45% of member without completed profiles take these actions about once a month. The combined totals for respondents who take action weekly is just 14%. None of these participants take any of these actions daily. In short: pretty low engagement.

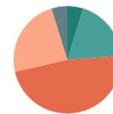
Now let's look at the results of this 'actions per month' question for the respondents who **did** fill out their profiles:

How Often Do You Post a Helpful Tip or Workaround?



■ Daily (0%) ■ Weekly (0%) ■ Monthly (33.33%)
■ Never (66.67%) ■ Don't know (0%)

How Often Do You Use Up-votes, Bookmarks, and Likes?



■ Daily (4.76%) ■ Weekly (19.05%) ■ Monthly (47.62%)
■ Never (23.81%) ■ Don't know (4.76%)

A whopping 80% of users who filled out their profiles are taking these actions monthly! We also see more weekly (19%) and even daily (5%) engagement happening among this group.

Survey Wrap Up

There was a lot to learn in the results from our very first Community survey. Here are some of our biggest takeaways:

- **You want your support to be self-service.** When it's time to get help, you want that help to come online. We've worked hard to make the Online Technical Community that resource for you, but we're going to need your assistance as we design and experiment with new features to meet this demand.
- **You are experienced with New Relic products.** You've been customers for some time now, and consider yourselves experts. You can help us ensure that the Online Technical Community is a resource, where you can ask the questions and where you can get the answers you need. We'll need to follow up with you to understand what keeps you from sharing and engaging more.
- **Our most active members have completed their profile.** These members are not just in it for the transactional nature of getting a question answered. They know that connecting personally but sharing some of who they are in the form of a profile will enrich their experience, extending their New Relic team and helping to build their careers.

It's clear that we have so much more we can do to make your participation in the Online Technical Community even more valuable to you. We'll be digging deeper into some of these questions in the coming months, as well as rolling out new features, content, and campaigns. Thank you for everything you do to make it all possible.