Self-Sustaining LabVIEW User Group Meetings

A GUIDE ON HOW TO EXECUTE YOUR OWN USER GROUP MEETINGS

Table of Contents

Toolkit

Purpose of a User Group

A user group is designed to increase LabVIEW software proficiency and adoption among local users. The goal is to empower users by providing them a place to learn and discuss various LabVIEW programming techniques, technologies, application design patterns, and much more.

During these meetings, attendees:

- Build core LabVIEW skills to complete their projects faster
- Learn about the latest LabVIEW technologies that could make them more efficient
- Network with peers in their area to share questions, examples, and challenges
- Learn about new and exciting things local companies and developers are doing with LabVIEW

What Is a Community Leader?

User group communities are about the people. The best chance you have to build a strong user community is to build a group of people who feel like members and who would likely consider each other to be colleagues, or even better, friends. To do this, a user group community needs a committed leader who is passionate about LabVIEW and wants others to grow and develop their LabVIEW skills.

Successful community leaders:

- Want to be involved in hosting a meeting that helps other people
- Want to create a forum where others can learn
- Stay focused on the best interests of the group
- Make key decisions when needed

Benefits for Community Leaders

NI greatly appreciates your time, energy, and passion to be a community leader for a user group meeting. In your role as a community leader, you have the opportunity to develop strong relationships with users in your region and to further engage within the LabVIEW community. In addition to networking, being a community leader has the following benefits:

- **Recognition—**Build credibility with your peers through demonstration of expertise by developing content that can be used in user groups around the world. Participate in the LUGnut awards during NIWeek and have an opportunity to win the Best Self-Sustaining User Group Meeting award.
- **Certification Points—**Earn certification points through the Recertification by Points program. By presenting and hosting meetings, you can earn anywhere from five to 20 points per meeting and accumulate points redeemable toward recertification. For more details, refer to the Recertification by Points Program handbook.
- **Networking—**Build your network of colleagues and receive access to attendees' contact information.

Keys to a Successful User Group

NI wants to ensure that, as the community leader, you build and maintain successful user group meetings. Through our experience, all successful user group meetings have five things in common:

1. **Consistency**
   Having a set time and place for your meeting is crucial. Working with the members of your user group, establish the three main aspects that must remain consistent:
   - **Cadence—**Hold your user group meeting during the same month and week of, ideally, each quarter. For example, every second Tuesday of the second month of each quarter. If possible, determine your meeting dates at the beginning of the year so members can reserve those dates on their calendars.
   - **Location—**Establish a central meeting location for your group. As your user group meeting continues to evolve, you might need to relocate to make the meeting more convenient to attend.
   - **Time—**Poll your attendees to establish the best time for your meeting (lunch or evening meetings).

2. **Communication**
   Have an efficient way to communicate with all your members. Keeping them up to date on new meetings, discussions for future presentations, upcoming customer training, and more is key to success. The most effective way to have consistent communication with your user group members is to use an active LabVIEW User Group page on the NI Community Forum. See the Community Page section on page 26 for more information.

3. **Relevant**
   As a community leader, you want to get a feel for the LabVIEW skill level of your group, making sure that the presentations and meeting content are tailored to the attendees' skill level. People want to come to a meeting where they feel they can acquire new knowledge and share their skills. People do not want to attend a meeting that feels like a sales pitch from the presenter or members of the group.

4. **Inclusive**
   User groups of any kind are competing for the time of its members. Why do these members still agree to spend an hour or more of their day at a LabVIEW user group meeting? They make this decision because they find it beneficial to network in their area, gain knowledge, and, most importantly, feel like they are part of the group. Find ways to include members as much as possible in the planning of the content, discussing challenges or projects they are facing at work, presenting their code, and so on. Remember that people like to spend time doing what they enjoy and feeling included is critical. For more information on recruiting volunteers and delegating tasks, see page 8.

5. **Fun!**
   As if graphical programming isn't fun enough, the best user groups also supply a social experience for their members with contests, food, and more. Try to organize coding challenges or other events outside of just the same basic presentations every year. Being connected and having a good time together is what user groups are all about!

Roles and Responsibilities

To have a successful user group meeting, a significant amount of planning and execution is required before, during, and after each meeting. Determine your dates and book your venue at the beginning of the year. For each meeting, begin the planning process at least six weeks in advance to allow adequate time to plan a successful meeting. For a recommended planning timeline, see page 10. As you read through the roles and responsibilities, keep in mind that although you are the main point of contact as the community leader, you do not have to do all the planning yourself. Determine which tasks you would like to have ownership of and then recruit active members to volunteer to help with the others.

Securing a Venue

When determining a venue, establish a central location that is convenient to the majority of your attendees. In the beginning, you might have to try a few different locations to find the ideal venue for your user group. However, after you find the best location for your meeting, consistently use the same venue or create a pattern if you are having to rotate. When evaluating venues, consider the following:

- **Consistently Available—**After you determine the cadence of your meetings, plan your meetings for the year. This allows you to secure meeting dates with your venue and, if needed, adjust your meetings with sufficient advanced notice if the venue is unavailable.
- **Free/Low-Cost Facility—**Because most user group meetings are free of charge, find a venue that is free or low cost. Consider the following options when looking for a free/low-cost facility:
  - Network with members of your user group to see if they either work for a company or know of a company that is willing to let you use a room at its facility.
  - Use the NI Alliance Partner Directory to see if there is a partner facility in your region that is willing to let you use a room.
  - Contact a local university.
  - Host your meeting at a local restaurant that does not charge a private meeting space rental fee.
- **Private Meeting Space—**Regardless of your venue, you need a private meeting room that allows your group to collaborate in a secluded, distraction-free environment.
- **Projection Capability—**Depending on the topic of the meeting, you want your venue to have the ability to show a PowerPoint presentation or demo. Confirm that your venue has the ability to connect your laptop or USB drive to a projector screen or television.
- **Time Before and After—**Reserve your room 30 minutes before and after your meeting to allow time for A/V equipment setup and teardown. This also gives the attendees time to arrive early and socialize after the meeting.

Securing Topics and Presenters

As the community leader, you are responsible for securing topics and presenters for each meeting. Typically, meeting dates are planned for the entire year, but the content of the meeting is planned meeting to meeting. For more suggestions on meeting formats and topics, go to page 11.

Below are some best practices when securing topics and presenters:

- During the current meeting is the time to start planning the topics and presenters for your next meeting. As you are wrapping up your meeting, let your attendees know you are looking for presenters.
- Secure your presenters and topics a month prior to your next meeting.
- Collect the topics and abstracts from the presenters two weeks before the meeting so you can promote the topic in your invitations and build interest from attendees.
- Send your presenters a reminder one week before the meeting. Provide any needed directions about the venue location and offer to meet at least 15 minutes before the meeting so you can make sure they feel comfortable with the A/V equipment and acoustics of the room.

For more information about recruiting presenters, see page 13.

Creating a Registration Link

Depending on your meeting, you might want to track who is planning on attending, and, thus, you need to create a registration page. For some venues, this might be a requirement. For example, some companies require a list of names of attendees in advance to allow them access to the building/room, or restaurants need a headcount in advance to prepare for the meeting. If you are serving refreshments or food during the meeting, have attendees register so you can plan accordingly.

There are many options to create a registration link but when determining the best option, keep your invitees in mind. You do not want your registration process to be so complicated that it discourages them from registering. This causes either inaccurate headcounts or lower attendance. Collect each attendee's name, email address, company, and phone number at minimum. This way, if there are any changes or updates to your meeting (cancellation, venue change, and so on), you have multiple ways of contacting the registrants immediately.

Below is a list of recommend ways to create a registration link:

- Eventbrite
- Google Sheet
- Email Communications

For more information on how to create these registration links, see page 14.

Promotion

After all your planning, you want to ensure you get a successful return by having a well-attended meeting. To do this, you have to promote, promote, promote! There are several different ways to promote your user group meeting and each one plays a valuable role:

- **Promote at Current Meeting—**At the end of your meeting, take the time to encourage your attendees to join the community page and let them know about the next meeting date.

- **Email Invitations—**During your meetings, provide a sign-in sheet so you can collect each attendee's name and email address. Using this list, create and maintain an attendee email group that you use to send upcoming meeting invitations. Three weeks and one week before the meeting, send a personalized email featuring the registration link, upcoming topics and presenters, food sponsor, and anything else that might be applicable to your meeting.

Additional resources:

- Best Practices for Promotional Email Invitations on page 21.
- Promotional Template Examples on page 22.
- How to Build a Contact List and Sign-In Sheet Template on page 25.

- **Community Page—**Three weeks before the meeting, post an announcement on your community page reminding people about the meeting. If you have not determined the topic or presenter at this time, that is okay but it is important to remind members about the upcoming meeting. If you are still looking for a presenter, this is a great opportunity to recruit one as well. A week before the meeting, post another community announcement with more updates about the meeting such as the registration link, topics, presenters, and so on.

  Additional resources:

  - Promotional Template Examples on page 22.
  - How to Post an Announcement on a Community Page on page 30.

- **Calendar Invitations—**Nowadays, most people rely on their calendar to know where to be and when to be there. You can send a calendar invitation that features the same content that invitees would receive in the email invitation above. If you decide to send an email invitation only, still send your presenter a calendar invitation to ensure they remember the meeting.

Food Options

User group meetings do not always have to have food but it does help entice invitees to attend, particularly if the meeting is over lunch or dinner. Whether you should have food depends on your venue and the preference of your attendees. It is important to poll and get feedback from your attendees on food preferences. Also keep in mind that people might have dietary restrictions and if you are providing food, you need to accommodate these requests. Regardless of the way you handle food, notify your attendees of this in the email invitation and on the community announcement so they can come prepared for the meeting.

Here are a few recommendations on ways to have food during a meeting:

- **Pay Per Person—**This situation works best if your meeting is at a restaurant. Each attendee can do a separate check and be responsible for paying for their own food. When booking your venue, make sure the restaurant is willing to split checks.

- **Everyone Contributes—**If you have a meeting where you can have food catered, ask your members to contribute a fixed amount for that meeting. Keep the amount to $10 or less so it does not become an expensive burden for your attendees.

- **Sponsor—**If possible, look for a company that is willing to sponsor your food. Network within your meeting to see if people work for a company that might be interested in sponsoring. It does not have to be the same sponsor for every meeting. If you can find a sponsor, make sure to give recognition to your sponsor in the promotion communication, during the meeting, and in the follow-up communication.

- **Bring Your Own Food—**If you have a venue that allows you to bring food from outside their venue, let people know that this is a "brown bag" lunch or dinner meeting and attendees are encouraged to bring their own food.

- **Potluck—**Although not the most popular option, potlucks can always be successful if the group wants to contribute and can offer a wide variety of food if each member brings something different. Have people sign up in advance on what they are going to bring to prevent overlap.

Day of Logistics

The host of the meeting plays a key role in the execution as he/she is the "face" of the meeting and makes sure everything is handled logistically on-site. It is important for your host to arrive 30 minutes before the meeting for setup and stay 30 minutes after the meeting for cleanup, networking, and questions. Below is a list of responsibilities for the host:

- Room Setup
  - Bring cables and appropriate connectors needed for connecting laptops to projectors/televisions.
  - Make sure everyone can see the projector screen/television.
  - Test A/V equipment to confirm it is working properly before attendees arrive.
  - Provide a food table (if offering food) in the back or side of the room for people to access during the presentations without interrupting.

- Before the Meeting
  - Stand by the door and use this time to personally greet each attendee. Be sure to introduce yourself to new members.
  - Encourage attendees to sign in and leave their contact information to receive invitations to future meetings. See the sign-in sheet template on page 25.
  - Encourage attendees to use their time before the meeting to talk with other attendees and grab some food (if available).

- Host the Meeting

  - Make certain the meeting begins and ends on schedule. If there are multiple presenters, ensure they stick to their allotted time and do not intrude on another presenter's time.
  - Welcome everyone to the meeting and introduce new attendees.
  - Inform attendees of the format of the meeting.
  - Introduce all presenters and thank them for their presentations afterward.
  - Conclude the meeting by:
    - Thanking the presenters again.
    - Announcing the date and time for the next meeting.
    - Recruiting topics and presenters for the next meeting.
    - Encouraging attendees to join the community page to see the presentations given.
    - Inviting attendees to sign in if they did not have a chance at the beginning of the meeting.
    - Thanking the sponsor for the food (if applicable).

- **Post Meeting**
  - Network with attendees and use this time to recruit presenters for future meetings.
  - Thank the new attendees for coming, capture their contact information, and encourage them to return for the next meeting.
  - Make yourself available for questions.
  - Check that no personal items are left behind and the room is clean and left in an appropriate manner.

Post-Meeting Follow-Up

After your meeting, keep the attendees engaged so they are more likely to participate in future meetings. Post or send any follow-up communication within one week of the meeting so the content is still relevant and of interest to the attendees. Similar to promoting events, there are several different ways to send follow-up communications to your user group attendees:

- Collect slides from the presenters and post the slides on the community page. On the announcement, take the time to thank your presenters again and invite members of the page to contact you if they are interested in presenting at future meetings.
- Use the sign-in sheet you collected at the meeting to send a follow-up email inviting people to visit and join the community page to view the slides of the presentations and stay updated on future meeting dates.
- Send a personal follow-up email to new attendees.

See post-meeting follow-up templates on page 24.

Value and Importance of Community Pages

NI supplies an easy-to-use web community platform called the NI Community at ni.com/community. It is important for your user group meeting to have a community page on this platform. The key to the community page is to keep it updated, refreshed, and active so you are engaging the members between meetings. These pages are a great way to:

- Post your meeting dates for the year.
- Send promotional reminders about upcoming meetings.
- Share past presentations.
- Recruit presenters and sponsors.
- Facilitate ongoing discussions among members between meetings.

For more information about how to create and use a community page, see page 26.

Recruiting Volunteers and Delegating Tasks

Although you are the leader of the community group, that does not mean you have to be responsible for all aspects of the meeting at all times. As your group continues to evolve, you will find members that are passionate about LabVIEW and the success of the meetings. Encourage these members to take an active role in helping with meetings by volunteering their time. Ultimately, volunteers can make your job a lot easier, but, in the end, you are still responsible for the success of the meetings and making sure you have the right people executing the right tasks.

To set a volunteer up for success, make sure they know the ultimate goal of the request, how they can accomplish the request, and how their request plays into the overall picture. When recruiting volunteers, consider the task at hand and the time commitment of the volunteer. To encourage more participation, it is recommended to break large tasks into smaller tasks to get commitments from members who cannot commit to a longer time frame. Also, remember that volunteers will expend enormous efforts on tasks when they can be recognized for them. Take the time to recognize their effort in public forums like an announcement during the meeting, community page posts, a mention in an email to the group, and so on.

Depending on the level of commitment and the time members are willing to dedicate, volunteers will either want to take on easier or more complex tasks. Below is a list of suggestions for easier, less time-consuming tasks:

- Maintaining the attendee email list
- Collecting and posting the slides from presentations given at meetings
- Coordinating venue reservations and food orders
- Ensuring the room is setup before the meeting
- Hosting the meeting
- Creating a registration link

If a task is more complex and time-consuming, members can form committees that are in charge of tasks. They can collaborate and coordinate together to complete the task. These can include:

- Recruiting presenters
- Determining future topics
- Creating and deploying promotional emails and follow-ups
- Recruiting and maintaining members

Recruiting and Maintaining Members

A community is nothing more than the sum of its members. One of the main tasks you need to pursue regularly is recruiting new attendees for your group. A group can quickly become stagnant and, thus, needs fresh ideas from new attendees. Below is a list of suggestions on ways to recruit new members:

- Represent your community group at conferences or events you attend if possible.
- Create a logo to help attendees identify with your group.
- Create an email signature to show your affiliation to the group and share with members.
- Post about your meetings in other newsgroups, online forums, email lists, and so on that have prospective attendees.
- Periodically ask your own members to think about any other people they know who might benefit from taking part in your community group. Host a "bring-a-friend" night to encourage current members to invite new people.
- If you have an external presenter, enlist their help promoting their session with their affiliates.

Maintaining members is just as important as recruiting members. If people are loyal to the group, they are more apt to participate in the user group meeting rather than just attend. Below is a list of suggestions on ways to maintain members:

- Learn about your members and take a genuine care and interest in their job, role, and so on.
- Provide an easy way for members to change their email address, typically through a sign-in page each meeting or emailing the community leader.
- Have attendees wear name tags.
- Seek out new contact information if you receive a bounce back email after sending promotional invitations. Ask another member of the same company if they have the member's new contact information.
- Send a personal email to a regular member who has not attended in a while. See how the member is doing and politely "check in" with them on why they have been absent at the meetings lately.

Recommended Planning Timeline

Below is a simplified chart of the planning process for each user group meeting.

6 Weeks Prior to Meeting	Confirm date, time, and venue reservation
4 Weeks Prior	Secure presenters and topics Create registration link
3 Weeks Prior	Post first invitation on community page Send first promotional email invitation
2 Weeks Prior	Collect topics, abstracts, and biographies from presenters
1 Week Prior	Send reminder to presenters Post second invitation on community page Send second promotional email invitation
1 Day Prior	Pull registration list and create sign-in sheet Order food (if applicable) Send short email reminder to all registrants
Day Of	Set up room Host meeting
1 Week Post	Post slides from presenters on community page Send follow-up email Update contact list with new attendees

Content Suggestions

Every user group is designed a little differently, however, the main goal when determining your content is that you engage your audience. To engage your audience, you must meet their informational needs by knowing their level of experience and interest. This is about building a community as much as it is about finding speakers and learning about LabVIEW. If you engage your audience with beneficial content, attendees are more likely to be loyal to the group and volunteer.

Here are few content suggestions:

- **New Member Introductions—**Take a few minutes to introduce new members by getting them to share who they are and something about their job role.

- **Recent Tips and Tricks—**Keep your group informed about what's going on with LabVIEW by starting each event with a five-minute summary of new material (if available). You can check a list of relevant blogs/resources and talk about the latest information:
  - LabVIEW News
  - NI Community
  - Recent Support Request
  - Something Learned on the Job
  - NIWeek Session Content

- **Technical Presentations—**Technical presentations are a mainstay in almost every user group meeting. You can work with colleagues and local experts to prepare a variety of topics for your meetings. You can also download technical presentations from the LabVIEW User Group Resource Center. (Remember to link back to the *original* presentation when posting presentation content after the meeting.) If you have a range of skill levels, consider splitting your agenda into multiple sections to allow for beginner topics, mixed networking, and advanced topics.

- **Coding Challenges—**Coding challenges are a great way for group members to learn from one another. Issue a specific programming challenge to your group before an upcoming meeting and then have volunteers walk the group through their approach to the challenge and their LabVIEW code at the meeting. Another option is to issue a challenge at the beginning of the meeting and have several small groups work together to complete the work. Consider pairing beginner users with advanced users to foster mentorship.

- **Code Reviews—**Code reviews, in general, are a software engineering best practice. Ask for volunteers to share their current project code with the group. They simply need to state their specific objective and talk everyone through their coding approach. Encourage group members to ask questions and supply recommendations.

- **Case Studies—**Case studies are a review of a completed project. Ask for volunteers to share the objective of a project they worked on, their approach, any challenges they faced, and lessons learned.

- **Panel Discussion—**Panel discussions are a great way to get several members of the group involved and require little preparation on their behalf. Identify a topic to be discussed and create a list of questions that could allow an opportunity for the panelists to share different perspectives. Before the meeting, use your community page to ask members to provide any questions they might have for the panelists as well.

- **Table Topics—**Gather topics in advance and have people rotate around the tables to brainstorm and share best practices. This is a great way to get your attendees collaborating. Collect topics by polling the group to share challenges they are facing to see if other members can help.

- **Promote Certification—**Take advantage of NI's quarterly virtual certification prep sessions and host user group meetings geared toward prepping for the exam.

- **NI YouTube Channel—**Find NIWeek keynotes and demo content at youtube.com/user/nationalinstruments. Share this at the beginning of meetings to inspire discussions.

- **SquareBattle Competitions—**Create your own team of squares to compete against other teams in an arena in SquareBattle, a game developed by Endigit and written in LabVIEW. A SquareBattle competition is a fun way to learn about LabVIEW and object-oriented programming and promotes community networking. For more information about SquareBattle competitions, visit http://endigit.com/SquareBattle/.

- **Open Group Discussions—**Allow members an opportunity to interact on topics that are important but not often given sufficient time. Give members enough notification to prepare thoughts and questions.

- **Webcasts—**Browse a wide variety of NI webcasts online at http://us.ni.com/webcasts. Webcasts are perfect to use directly as meeting content or for background information on a particular meeting topic.

Recruiting Presenters

NI knows your time is valuable and we do not expect you, as the community leader, to prepare a presentation for every meeting. However, scheduling speakers is the core element of your responsibilities. The better your LabVIEW user group is locally known, the greater chance people will be to present in exchange for the free promotion and networking opportunity.

Finding technical and industry experts who are willing to speak at user groups is sometimes a challenging task. Try to find presenters who are passionate about what they do and the topic they share. To find passionate and knowledgeable presenters:

- **Recruit Within**—While networking with attendees, have discussions around projects or challenges they are currently facing in their job. Suggest that these topics may be of interest to their peers and ask if they are interested in sharing at the next scheduled meeting. Find ways to entice your members by letting them know they can receive recertification points, free swag if available, recognition from their peers, and more.

- **Reach Out to NI Alliance Partners—**The Alliance Partner Directory is a great place to find a member in your area who would possibly like to present at your meeting. Alliance Partners can talk about their services, interesting applications they've been working on, and tips/tricks they would like to share at the next user group meeting. This is also a great opportunity for the Alliance Partner to be recognized in the area as a credible technical expert.

- **Build a Steering Committee—**Identify a few people who can rotate content responsibility for each user group meeting.

- **Consider Lengths of Presentations—**Not everyone feels comfortable presenting for a full hour. If you keep the sessions short enough, presenters don’t see the preparation as an onerous task or feel like they might run out of material to cover.

- **Use Contacts Through Your Work and Networking Circle—**Take time to look through your contact list and see if you have anyone who can deliver a valuable presentation to your meeting. You can also have members of your group do the same.

How to Create a Registration Link

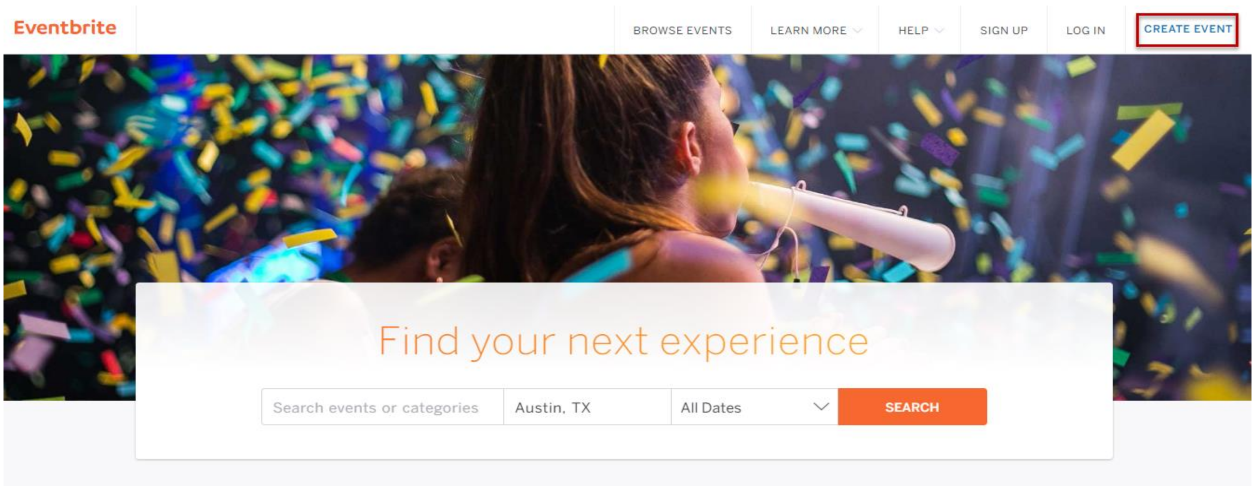
Eventbrite

Using the Eventbrite platform, you can create a free, user-friendly registration page that features information like your event logistics, logo, topics, and presenters. Eventbrite offers a quick registration process where invitees simply click register and fill out the required information.

Please note that Eventbrite refers to all registrations as "orders," so attendees could be confused and think they have to pay to attend. To overcome this, include somewhere in your description that the meeting is free to attend.

To create your registration link:

1. Log on to Eventbrite.com.
2. Click on **Create Event** and fill in the appropriate event title, location, date, time, and logo/image.



3. Add a description for your event in the event description field. This description should look similar to your promotional email and include things like the topics, presenters, presenters' biographies, and so on.
4. Provide a point of contact for the meeting in the organizer name field.

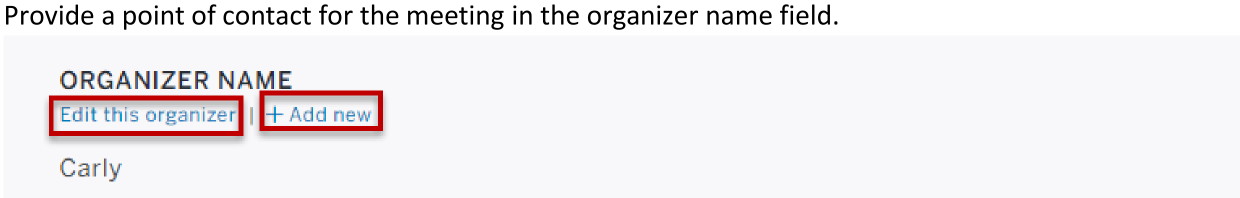
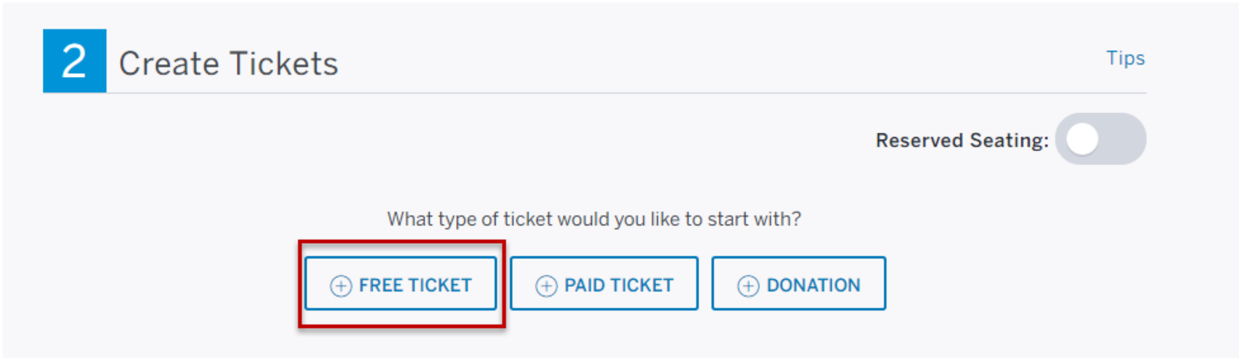
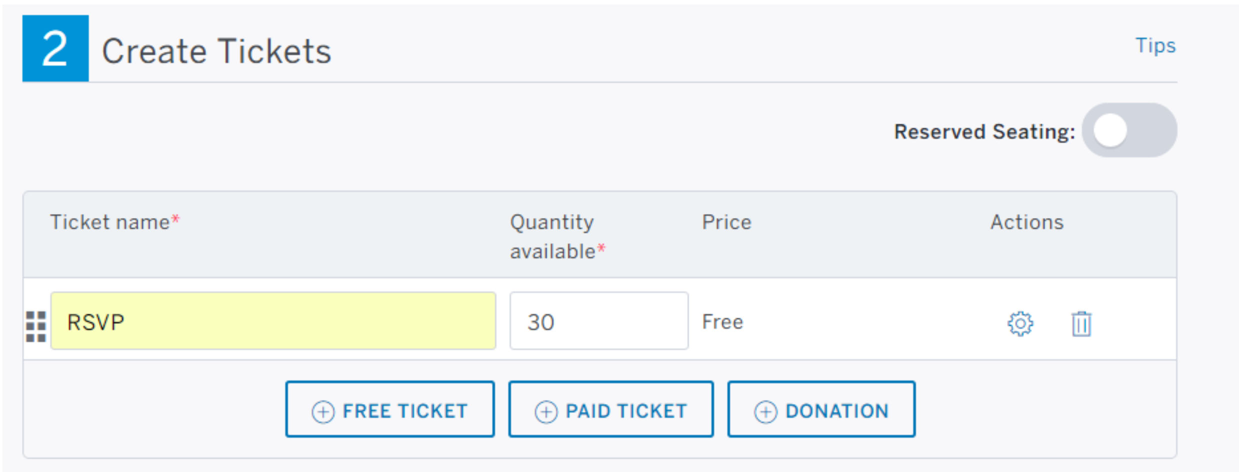


Table of Contents

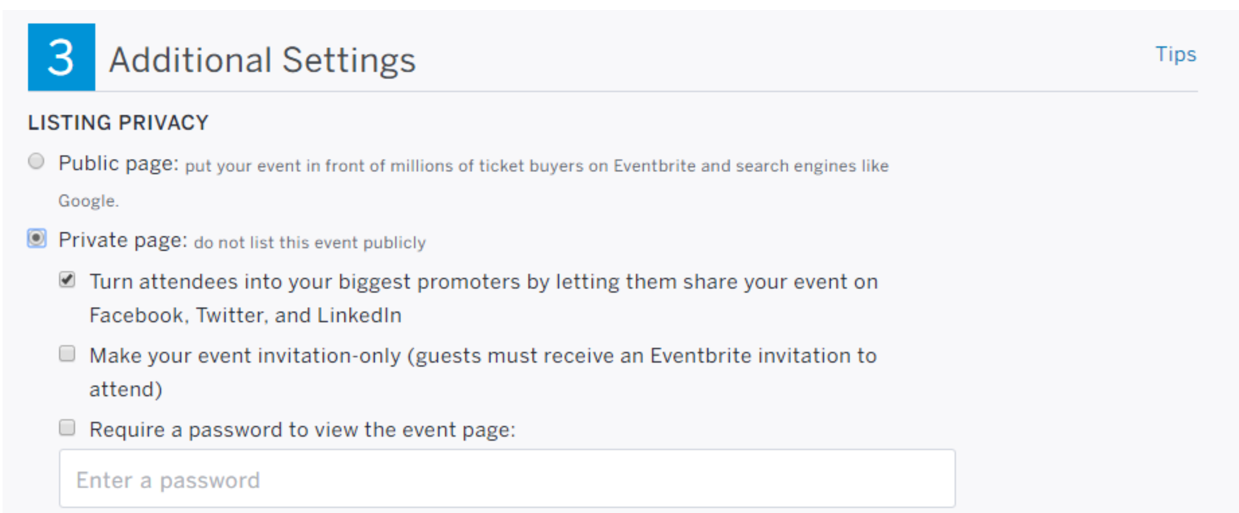
5. Scroll down and select **Free Ticket** in the Create Tickets section.



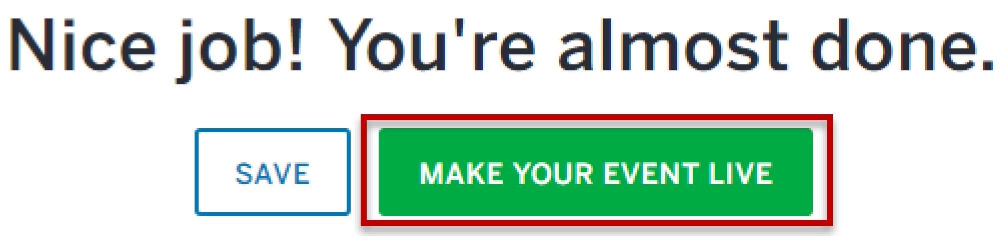
6. List your ticket name as “RSVP” and enter the quantity available based on your venue space.



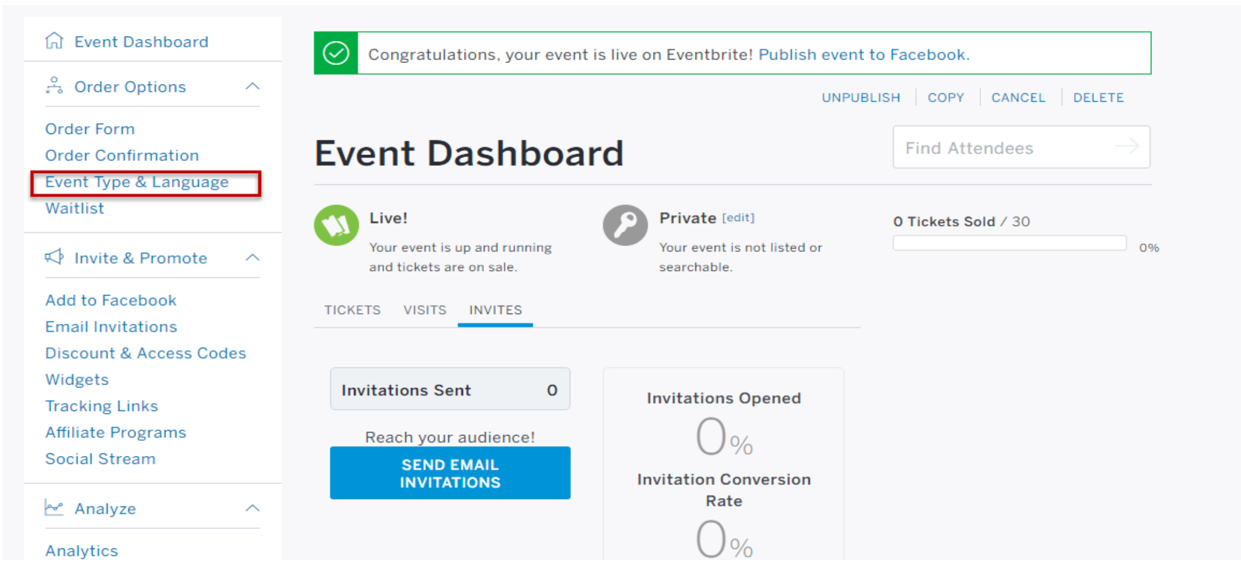
7. Mark your event as “Private page” under Additional Settings, and select the first option to turn attendees into your biggest promoters by letting them share your event on Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn.

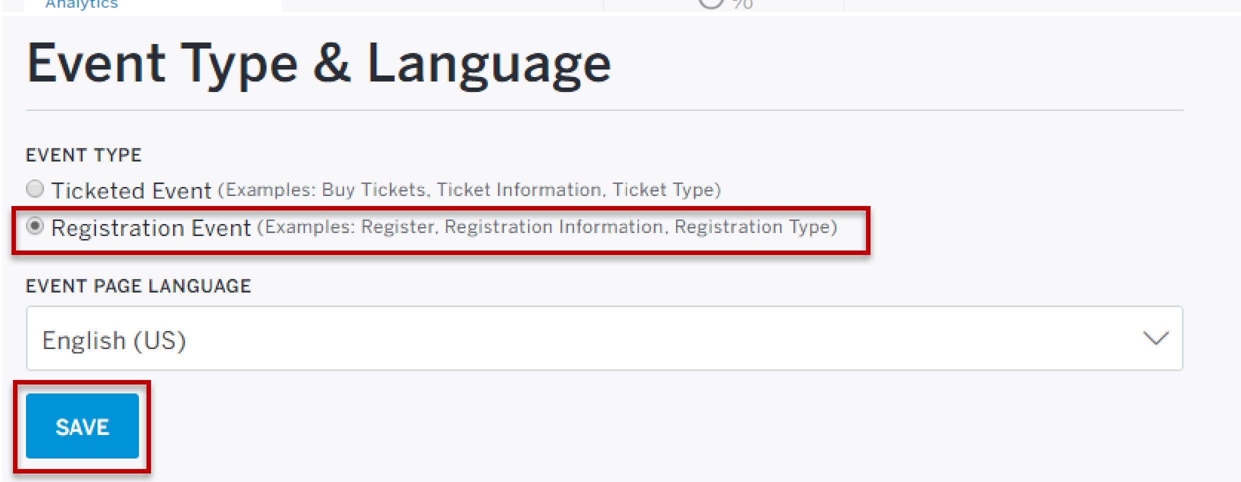


8. Click the green **Make Your Event Live** button at the bottom of the screen.

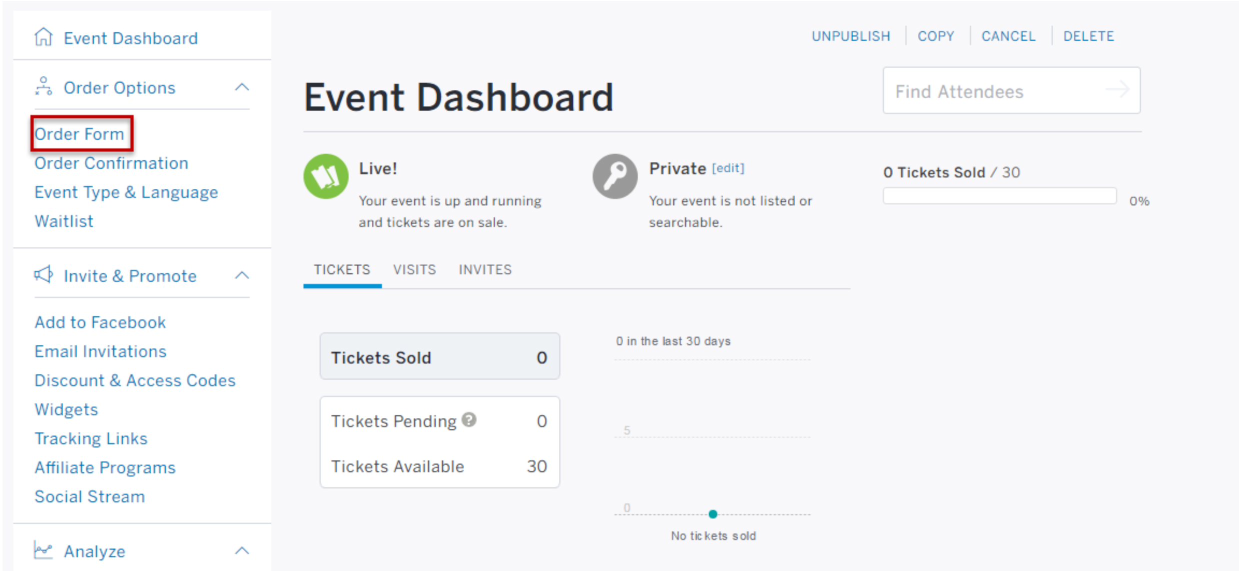


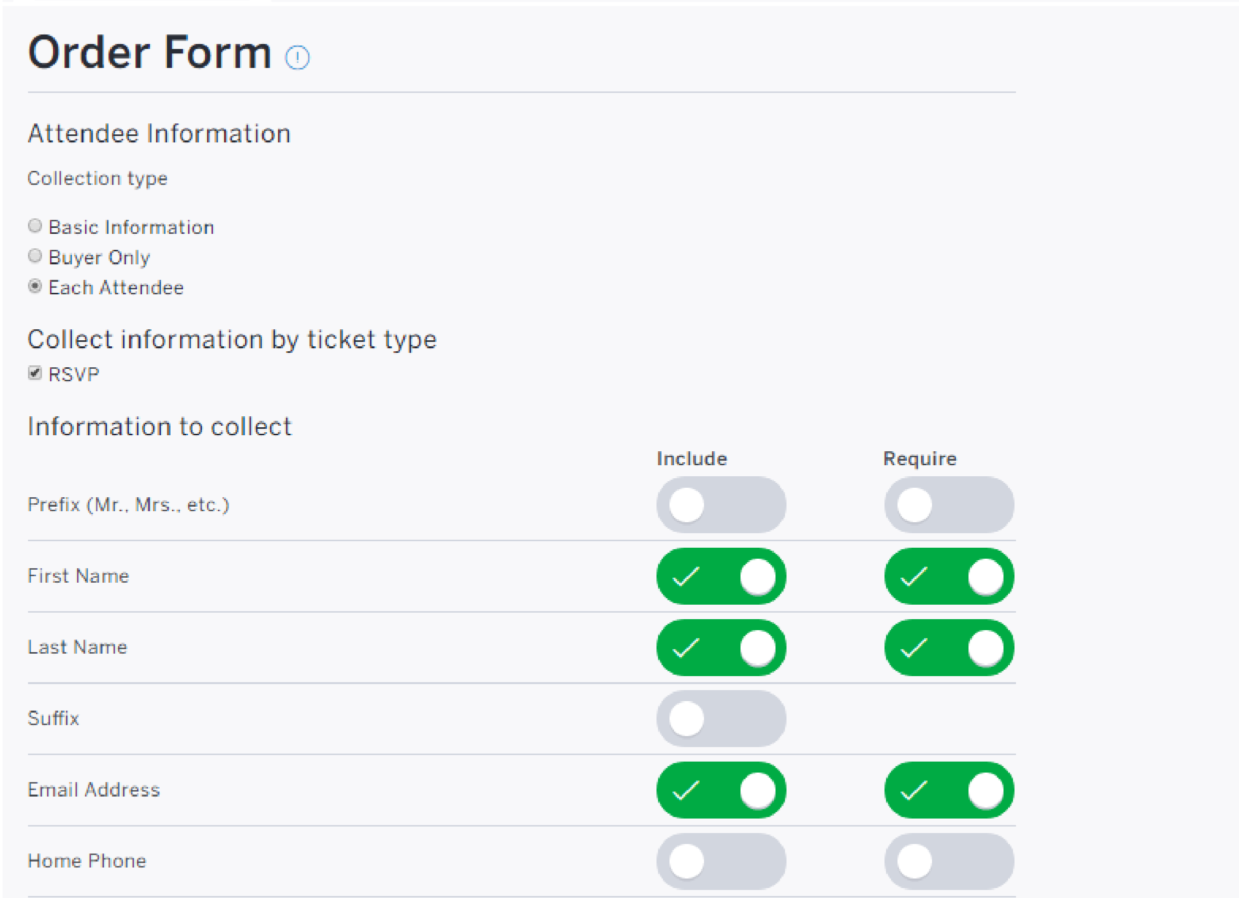
9. Select **Event Type and Language** on the left toolbar of the next page. Change from Ticketed Event to Registration Event and click **Save**.





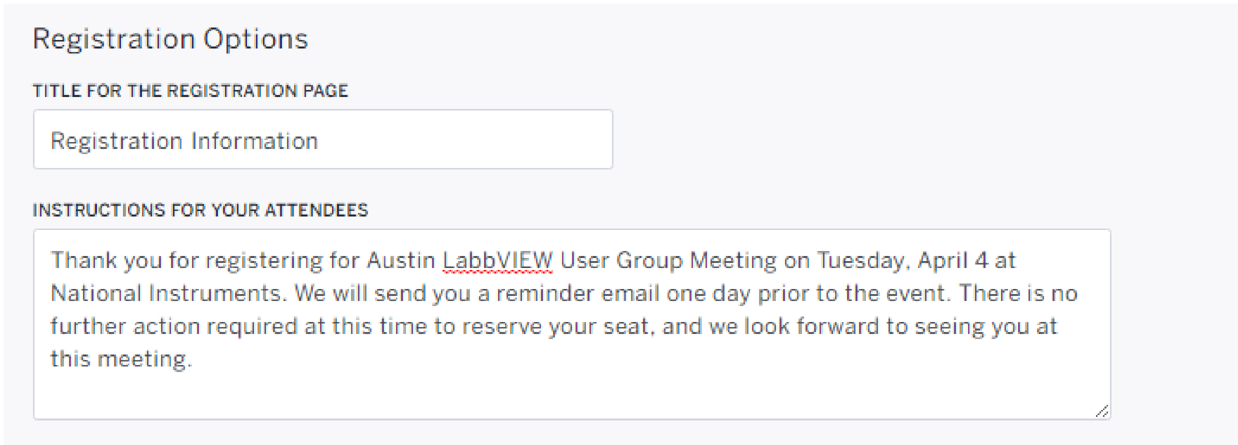
10. Select **Order Form** on the left toolbar. Under attendee information, change to “Basic Information.” Update this to “Each Attendee.”



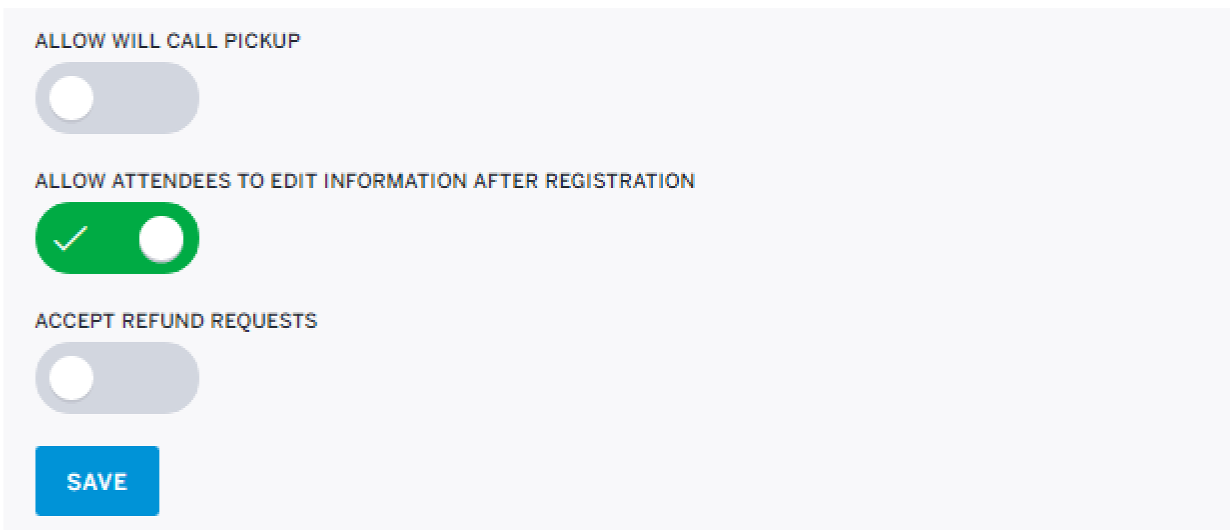


11. Decide what information you want your registrants to provide and use the buttons to turn them off and on. Collect registrants first name, last name, email address, phone number, and company/organization at minimum.

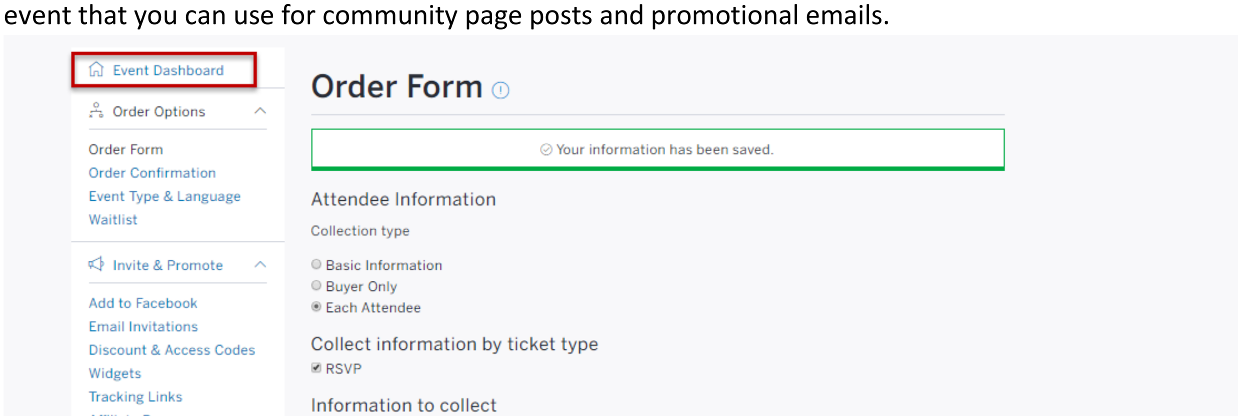
12. Go to the Instructions for Your Attendees section and type “Thank you for registering for [event] on [date] at [location]. We will send you a reminder email one day prior to the event. There is no further action required at this time to reserve your seat, and we look forward to seeing you at this meeting.”

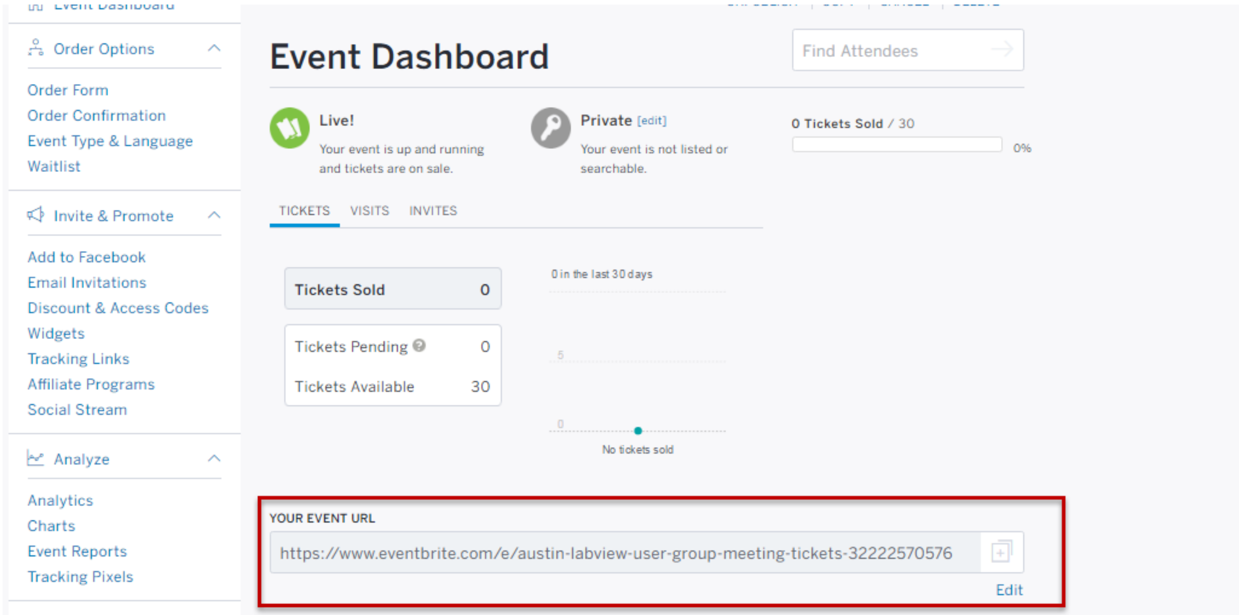


13. Scroll down to the bottom of the screen and deselect the **Accept Refund Requests** button and click **Save**.



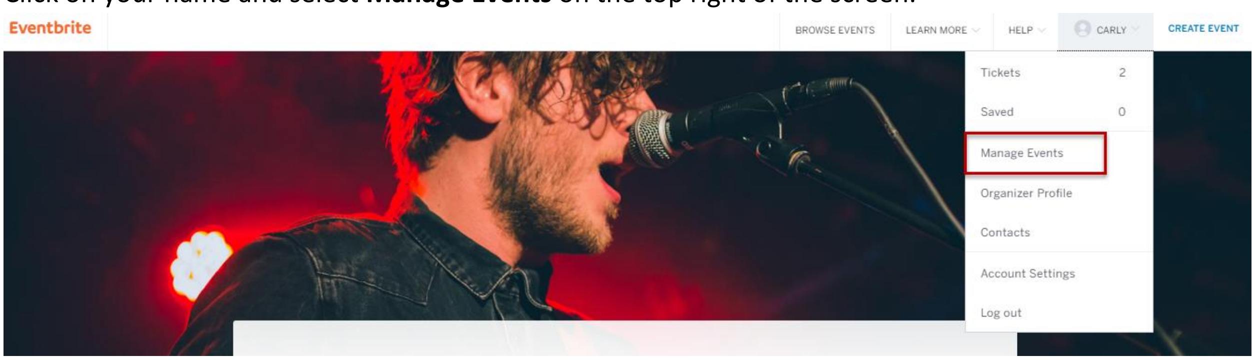
14. Select **Event Dashboard** on the left toolbar. On this screen, you can find the URL created for the event that you can use for community page posts and promotional emails.



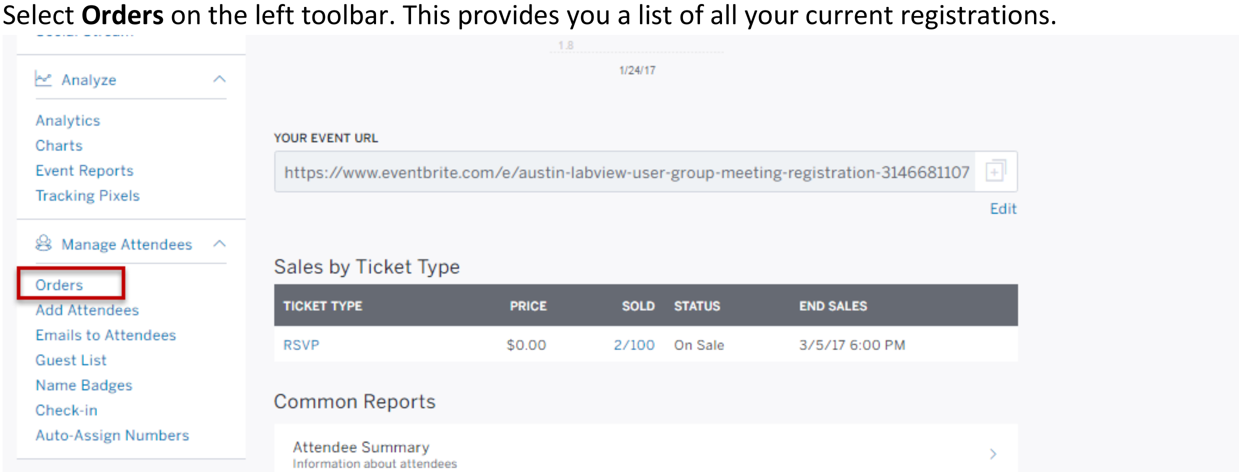


To check the status of your registrations:

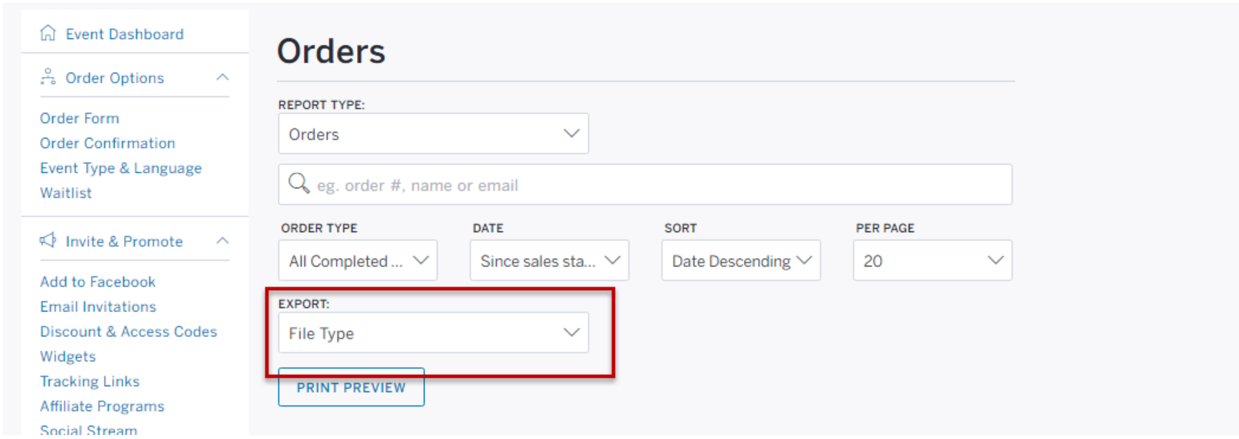
1. Log on to Eventbrite.com.
2. Click on your name and select **Manage Events** on the top right of the screen.



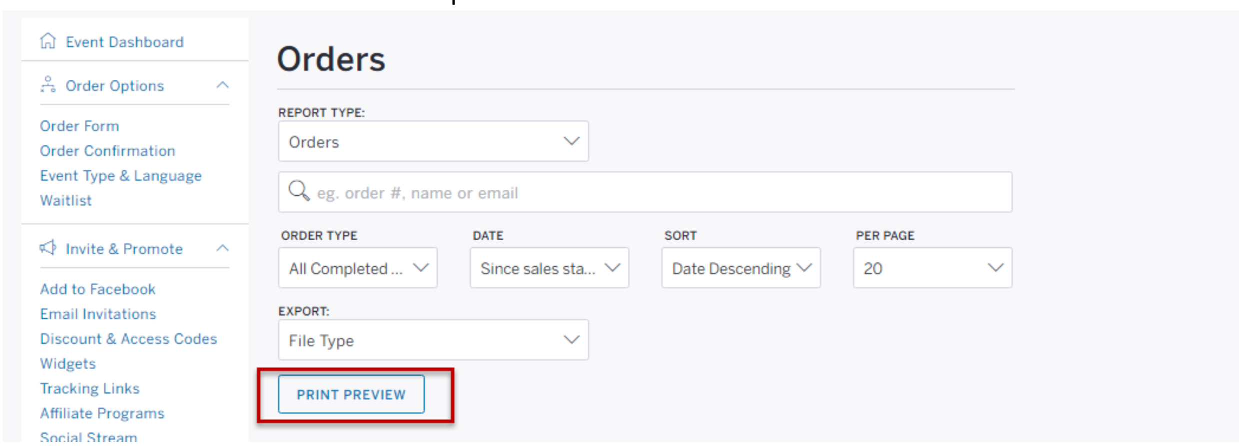
3. Select your event.
4. Select **Orders** on the left toolbar. This provides you a list of all your current registrations.



5. Under Export, click the drop-down arrow and select **Export to Excel** to create your roster using the recommended [sign-in sheet template](#).



6. Use the blue **Print Preview** button to print if needed.

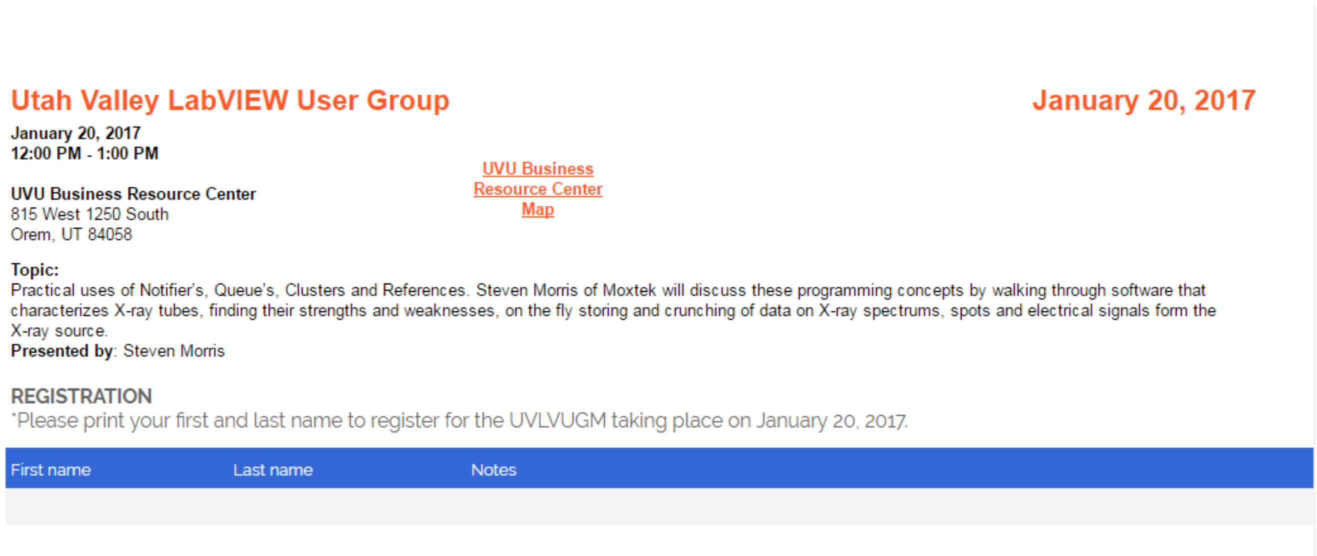


Eventbrite includes the following features:

- All registrants receive a confirmation email after they complete their registration.
- Registrants can add the meeting to their Outlook, Google, Apple, and Yahoo calendars.
- Invitees can share the registration link through Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn.
- If invitees or registrants have questions about the meeting, Eventbrite provides a Contact the Organizer option.
- All registrant information is kept confidential and can be viewed by only the event organizer who created the registration form.

Google Sheet

Below is an example of a Google Sheet that was designed to be used as a registration link. Using this option, you can design your page any way you see fit. However, keep in mind, that any information that registrants provide is visible to anyone who clicks on the registration link.



Utah Valley LabVIEW User Group **January 20, 2017**

January 20, 2017
12:00 PM - 1:00 PM

UVU Business Resource Center
815 West 1250 South
Orem, UT 84058

UVU Business Resource Center Map

Topic:
Practical uses of Notifier's, Queue's, Clusters and References. Steven Morris of Moxtek will discuss these programming concepts by walking through software that characterizes X-ray tubes, finding their strengths and weaknesses, on the fly storing and crunching of data on X-ray spectrums, spots and electrical signals form the X-ray source.
Presented by: Steven Morris

REGISTRATION
*Please print your first and last name to register for the UVLVUGM taking place on January 20, 2017.

First name	Last name	Notes

Email Communications

When you send your promotional emails, you can request that invitees RSVP directly with you. When using this option, remember to provide your contact information on the community page announcement so members of the community page can RVSP as well. Although this is a more personal experience for the invitees, this can become a manual process for you to keep track of your registration list and can clutter your inbox.

Best Practices for Promotional Email Invitations

Below is a list of best practices when creating and deploying a promotional email invitation:

- Send your invitations three weeks and one week before your meeting.
- Send the email invitation Tuesday through Thursday between 10:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. local time to improve the likelihood of it being read and acted on immediately.
- Include the following in the body of the invitation:
  - Date, time, and location of the meeting
  - Registration link (if applicable)
  - Topics and presenters if confirmed
  - Invitation to join the community page
  - Verbiage about the food (if applicable)
- Keep your invitation short and direct, prompting your invitee to take action.

On the next page, see Promotional Template Examples.

Promotional Template Examples

Three-Week-Out Email Invitation

Subject: Register for the [enter area] LabVIEW User Group Meeting on [date]

Hello,

You're invited to our upcoming LabVIEW User Group Meeting at [enter location] on [enter date and time].

Location:
Date:
Time:
Duration:
Topics Include: [only include if confirmed]
How to Register:

Join the [enter community page name] community to stay up to date on upcoming meetings, presentations, and discussions.

If you still need presenters, include: If you are interested in presenting at this meeting, please contact [enter contact name and email address].

I hope to see you at this meeting!

One-Week-Out Email Invitation

Subject: Last to Chance to Register for the [enter area] LabVIEW User Group Meeting on [date]

Hello,

This is your last chance to register for the upcoming LabVIEW User Group Meeting at [enter location] on [enter date and time].

Location:
Date:
Time:
Duration:
Topics Include:
How to Register:

Join the [enter community page name] community to stay up to date on upcoming meetings, presentations, and discussions.

I hope to see you at this meeting!

Community Announcement

You're invited to our upcoming LabVIEW User Group Meeting at [enter location] on [enter date and time].

Location:
Date:
Time:
Duration:
Topics Include:
How to Register:

If you still need presenters, include: If you are interested in presenting at this meeting, please contact [enter contact name and email address].

I hope to see you at this meeting!

Post-Meeting Follow-Up Templates

Generic Email Template

Hello,

Thank you for attending the [enter area] LabVIEW User Group Meeting last week. We hope you had an opportunity to enhance your LabVIEW development skills and network with other LabVIEW users in [enter area]. Please visit the [enter community page name and hyperlink community page] Community Group to find the slides that were presented during the meeting. Remember to join the [enter community page name] Community Group to stay updated on upcoming events and discussions.

If you are interested in presenting at our next meeting, please contact [enter contact information].

I hope to see you at our next meeting!

Personal Email Template

Hello,

Thank you for attending the [enter area] LabVIEW User Group Meeting last week. It was a pleasure to meet you and I hope you enjoyed the meeting and had an opportunity to enhance your LabVIEW development skills and network with other LabVIEW users. [Enter something personal about your interaction with the attendee to make them feel like you remember them]. Please visit the [enter community page name and hyperlink community page] Community Group to find the slides that were presented during the meeting. Remember to join the [enter community page name] Community Group to stay updated on upcoming events and discussions.

Please let me know if you have any questions about our group or if you are interested in how you can get involved.

I hope to see you at our next meeting!

How to Build a Contact List and Sign-In Sheet Template

As you build a contact list, think about what information you want to capture from the attendees. You do not want to make the sign-in sheet too complicated as attendees will be less likely to complete it. Below are some best practices when creating a sign-in sheet:

- Keep in mind what information you collected during the registration process.
- Capture attendee's name, email, phone number, and company at minimum.
- List the people that registered on the sign-in sheet so they just have to mark that they attended next to their name and do not have to provide their information all over again.
- Design the sign-in sheet to provide enough room for attendees to write in their information (particularly the email box).

After each meeting, update your contact list with any new attendees. Through time your attendee list will grow if you focus on recruiting members. For more information on how to recruit and maintain members, see page 9.

NEVER SHARE CONTACT INFORMATION WITH OTHER MEMBERS OF THE GROUP UNLESS YOU HAVE RECEIVED PERMISSION FROM THE CONTACT

Below is an example of a sign-in sheet created in Microsoft Excel. Remember that you can create your sign-in sheet however you like. Get creative by adding a logo or a graphic!

[enter logo or graphic]

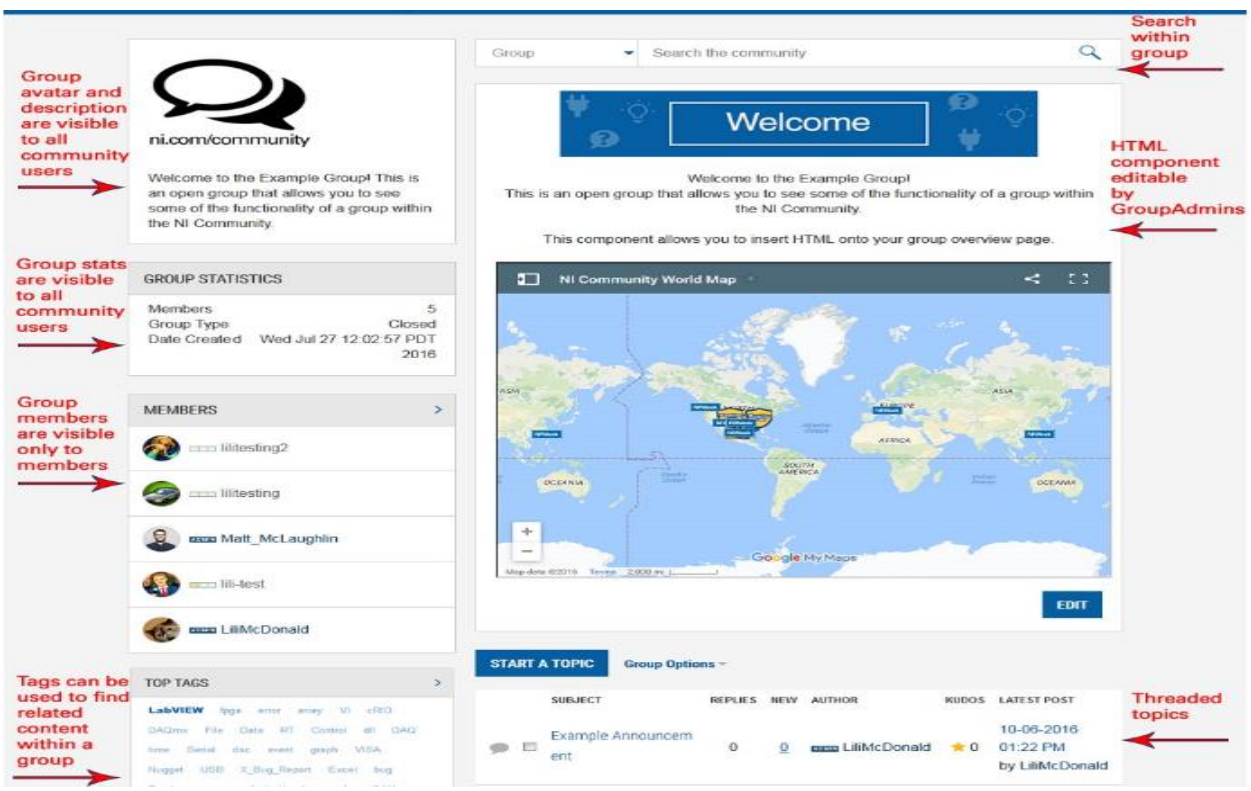
Attended?	First Name	Last Name	Phone Number	Email Address	Company
	[enter registrants information if you created a registration link]				

Community Pages

A community page is a virtual space for people within your community to collaborate with others on best practices, plan in-person meetings, or discuss any topic of your choice. The NI Community pages are segmented into different categories such as Local User Groups, Academic and University Groups, Product User Groups, Special Interest Groups, and Partner Groups.

Community Page Features

- **Overview Page**—Each community page has a main overview section that features the group name, avatar, description, HTML component, group statistics, group membership list, and topics.
- **Thread Topics**—Community pages contain threaded topics. A group admin can make a topic read-only and pin it to the top for all users. Members can give topics within the community page kudos to show their appreciation for the content.
- **Tags**—Tags can be used to identify related content within groups.
- **Privacy Options**—You can choose from two privacy options when creating a community page:
    - **Open**—Membership is approved automatically when a user requests to join an open group. Nonmembers can see the content within a group, but they cannot see the membership list.
    - **Closed**—Only members can view and search the content in a closed group. A user has to request to join a closed group, and a group admin must approve this request. You won't see closed groups in the site navigation unless you are a member of the group.



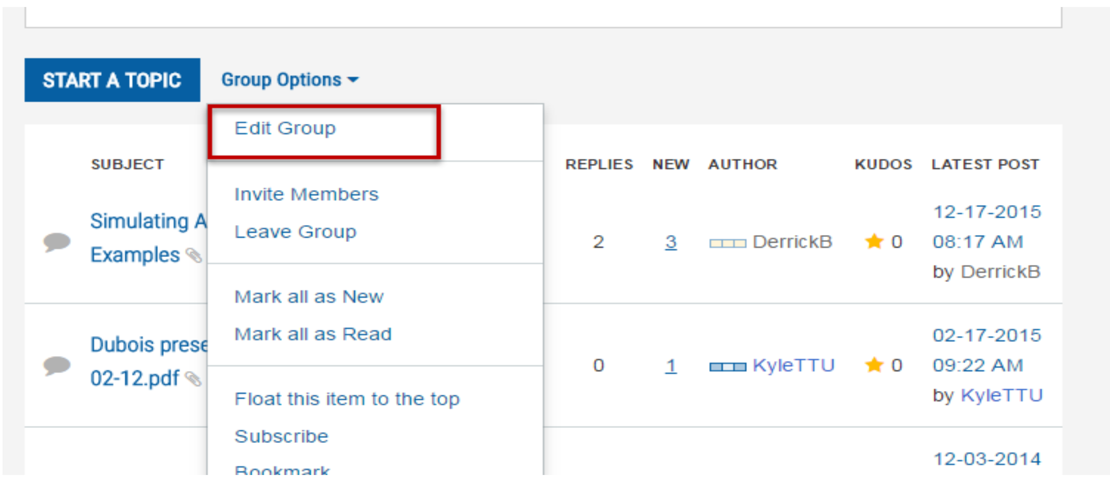
How to Create a Community Page

If you are interested in creating a new community page for your group, please provide the following information via email to community@ni.com:

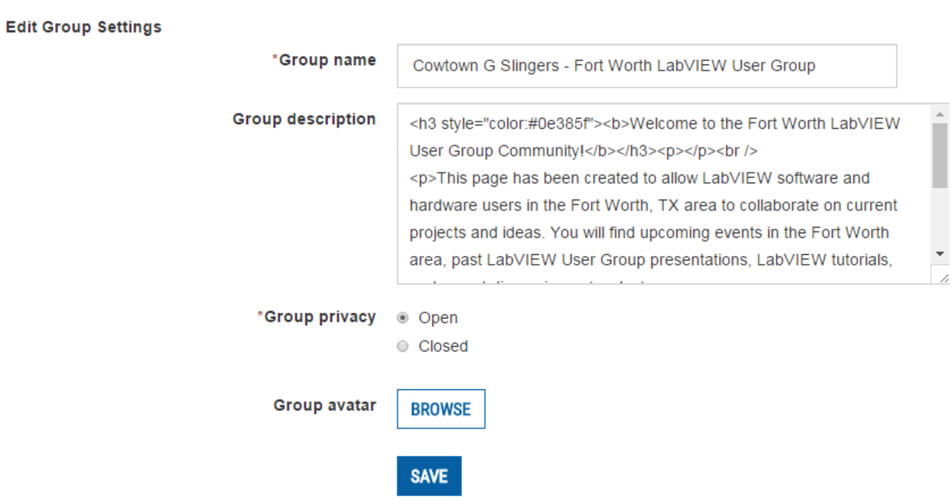
- Name of your proposed group
- A group description
- Type of group (open or closed)
- Primary focus of your group (a regional group, support, code sharing, and so on)
- The audience/member base for this group
- Names of any group admins in addition to you

How to Customize Your Community Page

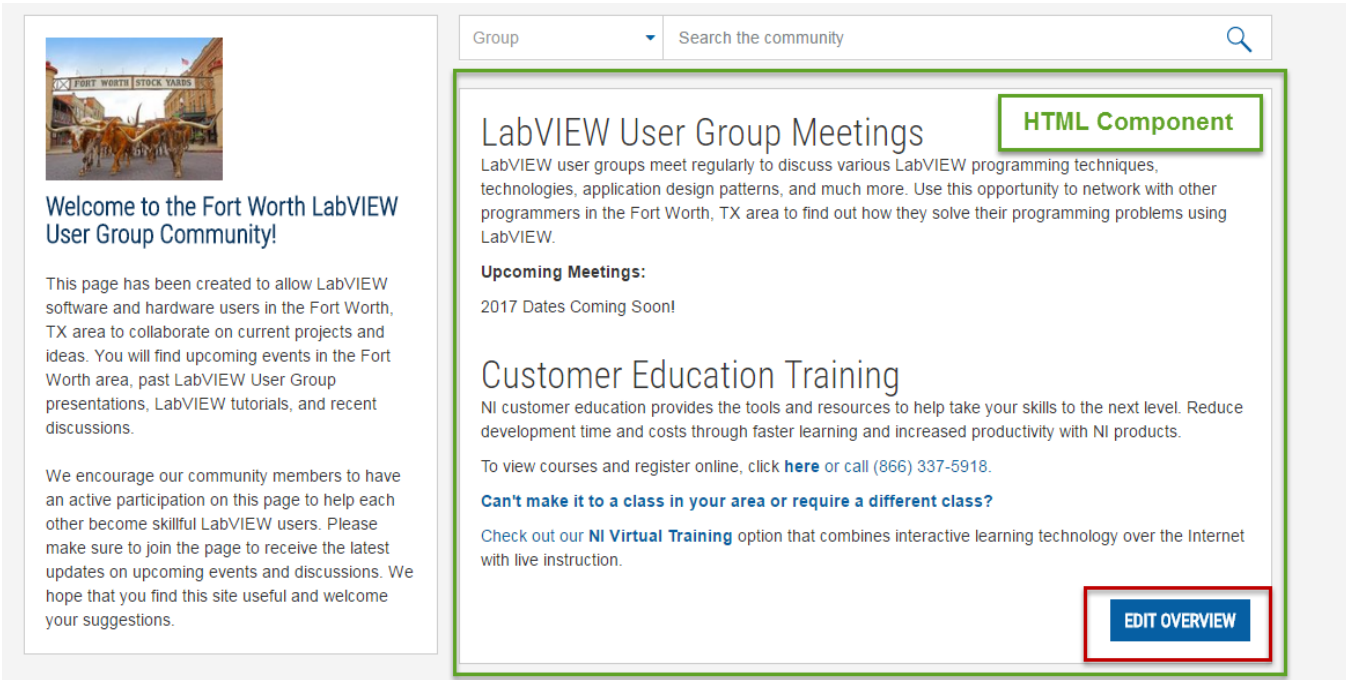
- **Group Avatar and Group Description**—To update the group avatar and description, click on **Group Options** and choose **Edit Group**.



On this page, you can update the group name, group description, and group privacy (open or closed) as well as add a group avatar. For the group description, you can add plain text or HTML.



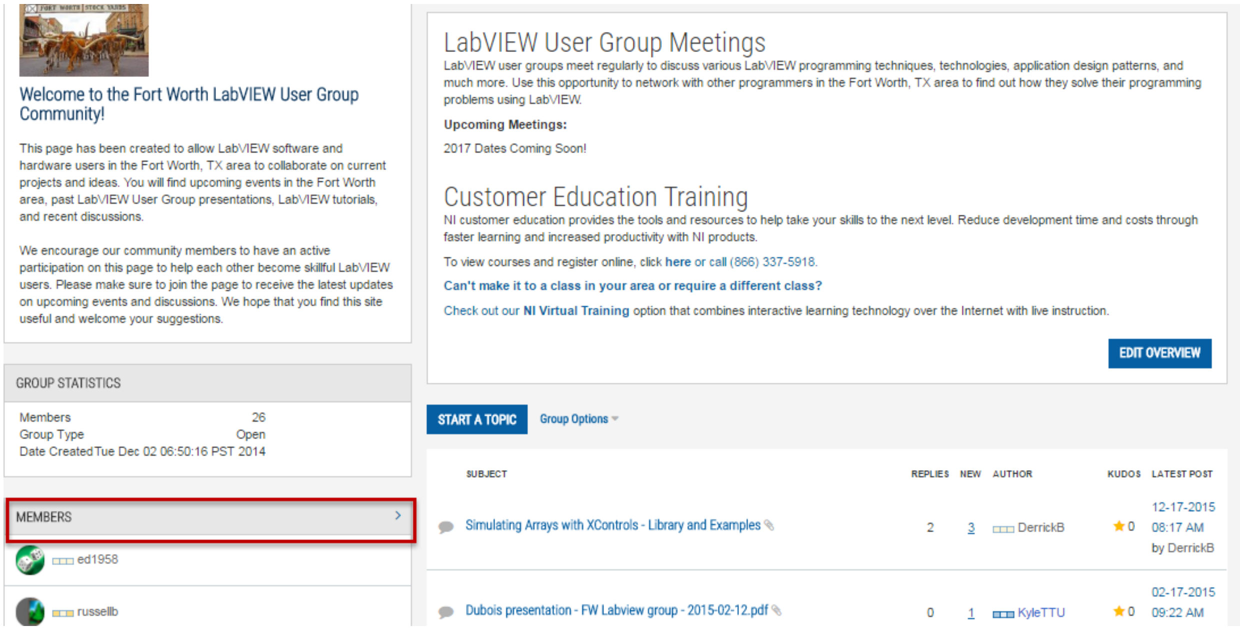
- **HTML Component**—To update this section, click **EDIT OVERVIEW**, enter the information you want to provide (using HTML formatting), and select save. In this section, you can provide more information about your user group, upcoming meeting dates, community leader contact information, and so on. For help adding HTML to the component, see HTML Templates for User Groups.



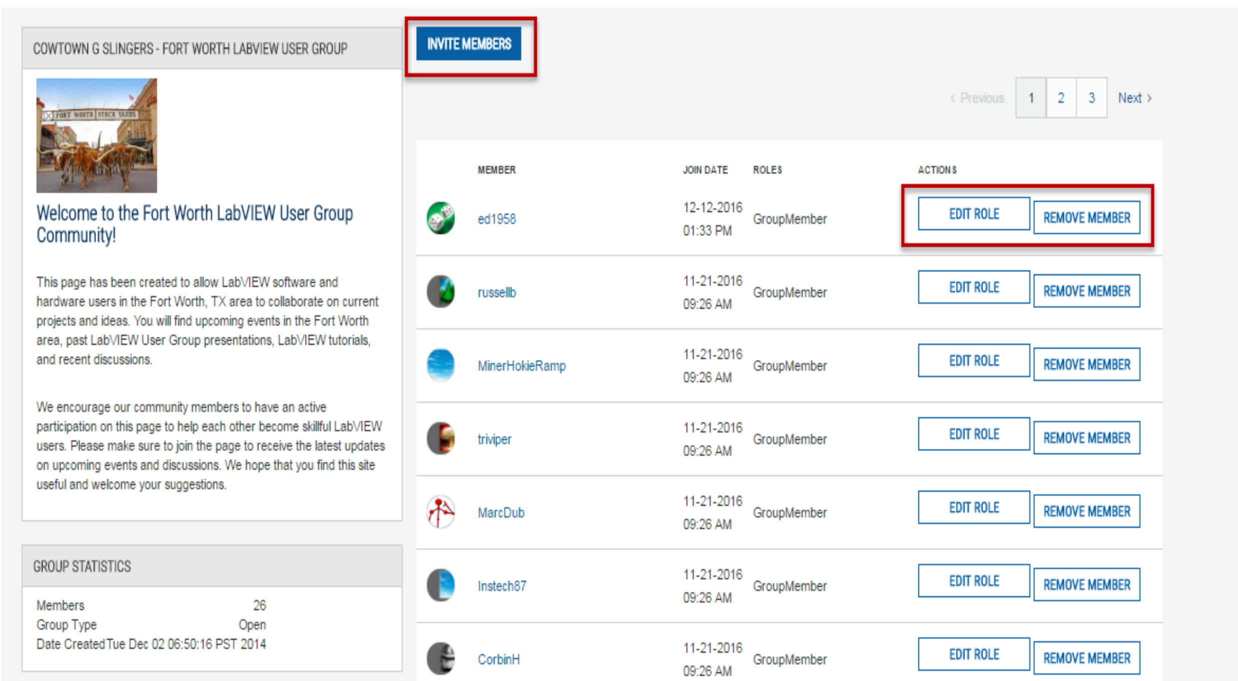
How to Manage Members on the My Community Page

- **Invite Users**—To invite users to join your group, navigate to **Group Options»Invite Members**. You can then invite users by their usernames. If you do not know the username of the person you want to invite, send the person a direct link to the group via email, so the user can request to join the group.
- **Approve/Reject Members**—To approve users to join your group, navigate to the Pending Requests link under the Group Statistics component on the overview page. Follow the link to approve or reject members. You can approve or reject multiple requests at the same time by using the check boxes next to the requests and then selecting the appropriate option from the dropdown menu. You have to approve users only if your community page is closed.
- **Remove Members**—To remove users from your group, select **MEMBERS** and then click the **REMOVE MEMBER** button next to the user you want to remove.
- **Make a Member a Group Admin**—To make a user a group admin, select **MEMBERS**. Click on the **EDIT ROLE** button next to the user you want to promote. Then click on the **ADD** button for the group admin role.

Overview Page



Group Membership Section



How to Post an Announcement

On the overview page, select **START A TOPIC** and enter a subject in the subject section and enter a description in the body section. In the body section, you can use rich text or HTML formatting. Use the **PREVIEW** option to preview your post and make sure the formatting is correct before you select **POST**. In this section, you can also upload a file, choose to receive emails when someone replies, create tags within your post, and prevent people from tagging your post.

For a more effective community, use the **START A TOPIC** option to post meeting updates, registration links, follow-up communications, and so on. Members subscribed to your community receive an email when a topic has been posted to the community page.

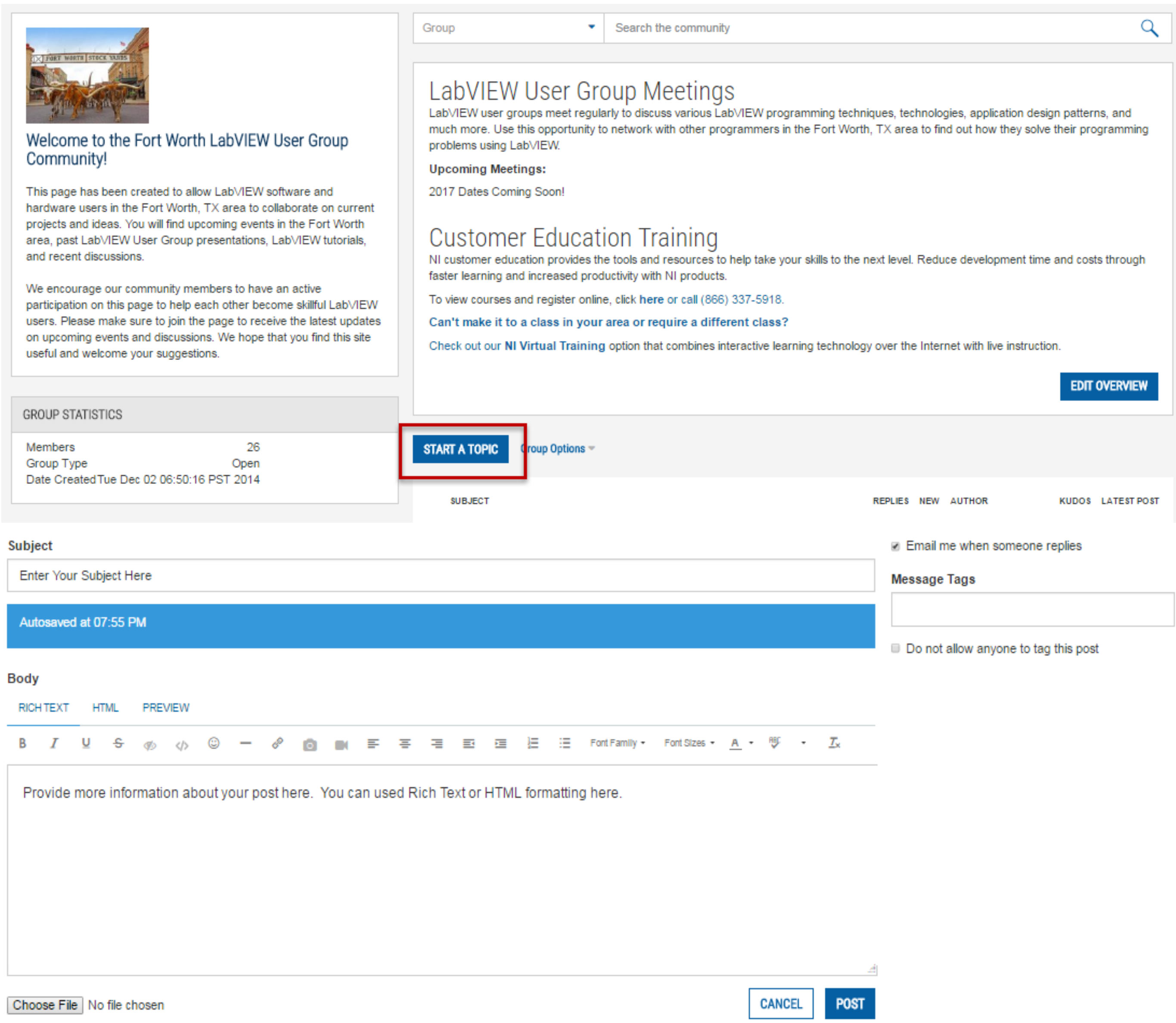


Table of Contents

Once a topic is posted, you can click on the post, select **Topic Options**, and choose the options you want for your post. Select **Float Topic for All Users** so all members can see the latest post at the top of the topics.