

Walking as a Practice Case Study Meetup

One of the most active solution-driven hubs for connection and wellness in the United States stands out for its capacity to bring people together - for walks and other activities.

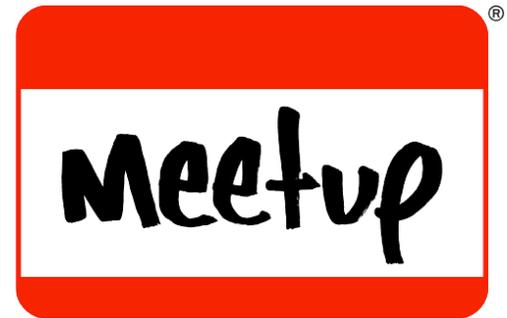
Meetup was launched in 2001 and is now the world's largest network of local groups with over 24 million members in 180 countries. Meetup makes it easy for anyone to organize a local group to come together face-to-face. "We help people get together in the real world," says Meetup Community Engagement Manager, Andrea Murphy. "Meetup connects people through activities, and walking is a very lightweight activity that translates well across most categories."

Meetup generates more than 3.7 million monthly RSVPs across all of their categories. Various forms of walking are among the largest categories of Meetups in the United States, with about 1,000 walking-related Meetups involving well over 250,000 members. From June 2014 to June 2015, 63,284 walking events were posted on Meetup with 237,409 total RSVPs, and this is probably an underestimate as it is based purely on keywords. Thousands of other events involve walking without naming it in the description. These numbers tell an important story about people wanting to connect more and walking together being an easy and comfortable way to do it. After all, we are designed to walk.

Traditional neighborhood walks, stroller strolls, urban exploration, walking tours, dog walks, and foothill hikes are typical activities you may find across different categories. There is also find an abundance of themed events that involve walking, such as photography expeditions, art gallery hops, pub crawls, geocaching, scavenger hunts, museum tours, networking sessions, and topic discussion rambles. Andrea notes, "Walking complements so many other activities and it's generally accessible and universal. I often don't think about it as a separate activity; moreover, it's an intentional tone to a variety of interests."

Meetup is helping to shape Walking as a Practice in the U.S.A. and beyond. The website is easy to use, it draws participants based on a variety of interests and geographic locations, and it is anchored in in-person connection. Whether walking is the focus, the tool, or a simple tone, it thrives in the Meetup model. Since this relationship works so well, be ready for a flood of interest once you begin cultivating your own Meetup walking community!

Action Step: You can find hundreds of walking themed Meetups by visiting: <http://walkers.meetup.com/>.



- Founded: 2002
- Headquarters: New York, NY
- Website: www.meetup.com
- Mission: Meetup's mission is to revitalize local community and help people around the world self-organize. Meetup believes that people can change their personal world, or the whole world, by organizing themselves into groups that are powerful enough to make a difference.
- Walking as a Practice typology: Personal Health and Connection