



## **New social network for creatives invites ownership through crowdfunding**

***Pic-Nic Village, the latest concept from social entrepreneur Pete Lawrence, challenges Facebook with its advertising and corporate free policy***

**7th September 2010** – Social entrepreneur Pete Lawrence today announced a [crowdfunding](#) initiative to finance the development of a social network that intends to blur the boundaries between business and leisure. [Pic-Nic Village](#) is one of the first communities to shun the advertising model favoured by larger social networks such as Facebook. A modern day co-operative, it aims to connect like-minded creative thinkers who want to share, enjoy and benefit from each other's talents, ideas and thoughts of a personal, business or social nature.

Lawrence was inspired by his last venture, The Big Chill Festival, which spawned a web forum now cited as an early example of social media. Building on this experience, Pic-Nic Village represents an evolution in social networking where communities are owned and shaped by members. Pic-Nic Village will feature an online 'media centre' for showcasing members' projects, hobbies and passions, which will expand into offline networking events, conferences and gatherings for the community.

Lawrence expects the [Pic-Nic Village](#) community to attract thinking people who want to collaborate with other lively minds in order to gain fresh, original and often alternative perspectives on business, personal or social matters. "I'm inspired by connecting people and then stepping back and watching the sparks ignite," he says. "Pic-Nic Village will be a catalyst for unearthing and nurturing each member's unique qualities. It will help them fulfill their potential personally, spiritually and financially. I'd like to think that we can blur the boundaries between work and leisure, helping members maximise the potential of their projects and have fun in the process."

[Pic-Nic Village](#) believes that the crowdfunding exercise could raise investment of £750,000 or more. The money will be used to develop the online community for launch in 2011. In addition to the initial share monies raised by crowdfunding, Pic-Nic Village will be financed by subscriptions in the region of £10 per month.

People can be part-owners of the Pic-Nic Village community with influence over its decision making by investing in one of its Founder Member schemes:

- Two-year membership package: £100 buys one share in the company and two years of full membership of the Pic-Nic Village web community [following its launch in 2011].
- Lifetime membership package: £300 buys lifetime membership of Pic-Nic Village plus three shares in the company.

“The advertiser-funded model adopted by many of the larger social networks taints the very heart and soul of the community ethos,” says founder Pete Lawrence. “The feedback I’m getting is that people would place a high value on a corporate and advertiser-free environment. The crowdfunding exercise is a great way to validate the demand for a community which is shaped by its own members.”

Pic-Nic Village will consist of a collaborative social networking platform that will provide messaging, chat and location geomapping features with the functionality of a personal ‘media centre’, enabling members to store pictures, movies, music, posts, events, news, blogs, projects, job offers, editorial and external links. The community will be focused around specific guilds – art, architecture, design, film making, fashion, gardening, music and walking, for example – enabling discussion both within, and outside of, niche communities to be a catalyst for new ideas, initiatives and collaborations.

With a clean and elegant design, the social media platform will be accessible from both desktop and mobile devices. Members will be able to shape the direction of the community by putting forward ideas for additional features and functionality.

Early research about the viability of Pic-Nic Village revealed keen interest. Mark Offord, managing director of a design and brand consultancy in Suffolk commented, “Social media is currently lacking the love factor. I love the idea of a community where there is a form of ownership and pride in belonging to a group that is meeting other stimulating minds virtually and maybe a few times a year in the flesh.”

A percentage of profits from Pic-Nic Village will be invested in the ongoing development of the community and the creation of the Pic-Nic Village Foundation to support and nurture members’ creative ideas, with particular emphasis on start ups.

To learn more, please visit [www.picnicvillage.com](http://www.picnicvillage.com).

ENDS.

## **Note to Editors:**

### **About Pic-Nic Village**

Pic-Nic Village is an evolutionary social community where creative thinkers can collaborate in an online social network or face to face at events, conferences and forums. Funded, owned and shaped by its members, it will be a catalyst for new ideas, initiatives and collaborations. Lively discussion on a range of topics and issues will take place in forums and common interest guilds. More information is at [www.picnicvillage.com](http://www.picnicvillage.com) or [www.twitter.com/picnicvillage](http://www.twitter.com/picnicvillage).

### **About Pete Lawrence**

Pic-Nic Village is the latest concept of social entrepreneur Pete Lawrence. In the mid 90s, Pete founded the first boutique music and arts festival, The Big Chill, which went on to spawn London venues and a buzzing online community. Pete was first labeled a tastemaker when he spontaneously recorded hitherto unknown US folk singer Michelle Shocked on a walkman around a Texas campfire for his fledgling Cooking Vinyl label. The resulting album "The Texas Campfire Tapes" with its £1 field recording budget, went on to top the Independent album charts in 1987 and sell half a million copies. Since then he has been a DJ, writer, broadcaster (with a series of two hour chill-out show on BBC Radio 2) and music programmer (recording under the name of Chilled by Nature and also producing many mix albums for Big Chill Recordings). He has worked with over 3000 artists and given early exposure to names such as Lily Allen, Goldfrapp, Amy Winehouse, Seaskick Steve and Zero 7. Pete was voted into Time Out's Top 100 'movers and shakers' in 2006 alongside the likes of Ricky Gervais, Gordon Ramsay, Madonna, Philip Green, Brian Paddick, Ken Livingstone and Tony Blair. More background on Pete here: <http://www.petelawrence.net/biography.html>

### **Quotes about Pete Lawrence**

"I have always wondered just how he keeps so ahead of the game, from Cooking Vinyl and world music discoveries, through to all the extraordinary Big Chill events and festival. There seems little doubt he'll keep on doing it." **Mark Ellingham, founder of Rough Guides and publisher of Sort Of Books.**

Pete's ability to predict our cultural and media future were brilliantly manifested by the success of the Big Chill. I've always looked to Pete for his profound knowledge of all things cool and elegant. Pete's quiet sense of integrity has always led the way, and many of us joyously follow him. Pete is a genuine visionary who has had a colossal impact on us all." **Erica Ruben, former Executive Producer of Central Park SummerStage**

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