Proposal for Establishing a Dedicated Forum for the BARC

Current Communication Channels and Their Limitations

Primary Communication Channels

Club members mainly use email chains for communication and zoom for scheduled meetings.

Challenges with Current Methods

Communication lacks organization, causing fragmented conversations and difficulty tracking important topics.

Impact on Information Retrieval

Retrieving past information from email chains can be difficult, and not all users store emails indefinitely. While important information is put on the website, day-to-day information has a high chance of being missed or lost.

Overview of How Club Members Currently Communicate

Message Overload and Delays

Email chains often cause message overload and delayed responses, reducing communication efficiency. (Reply-All Spam, directed reply's etc.)

Lack of Structured Topics

Existing tools lack structured topic categorization, making it hard to archive and retrieve meaningful discussions.

Limited Accessibility

Asynchronous members and less tech-savvy users face difficulties accessing and participating effectively.
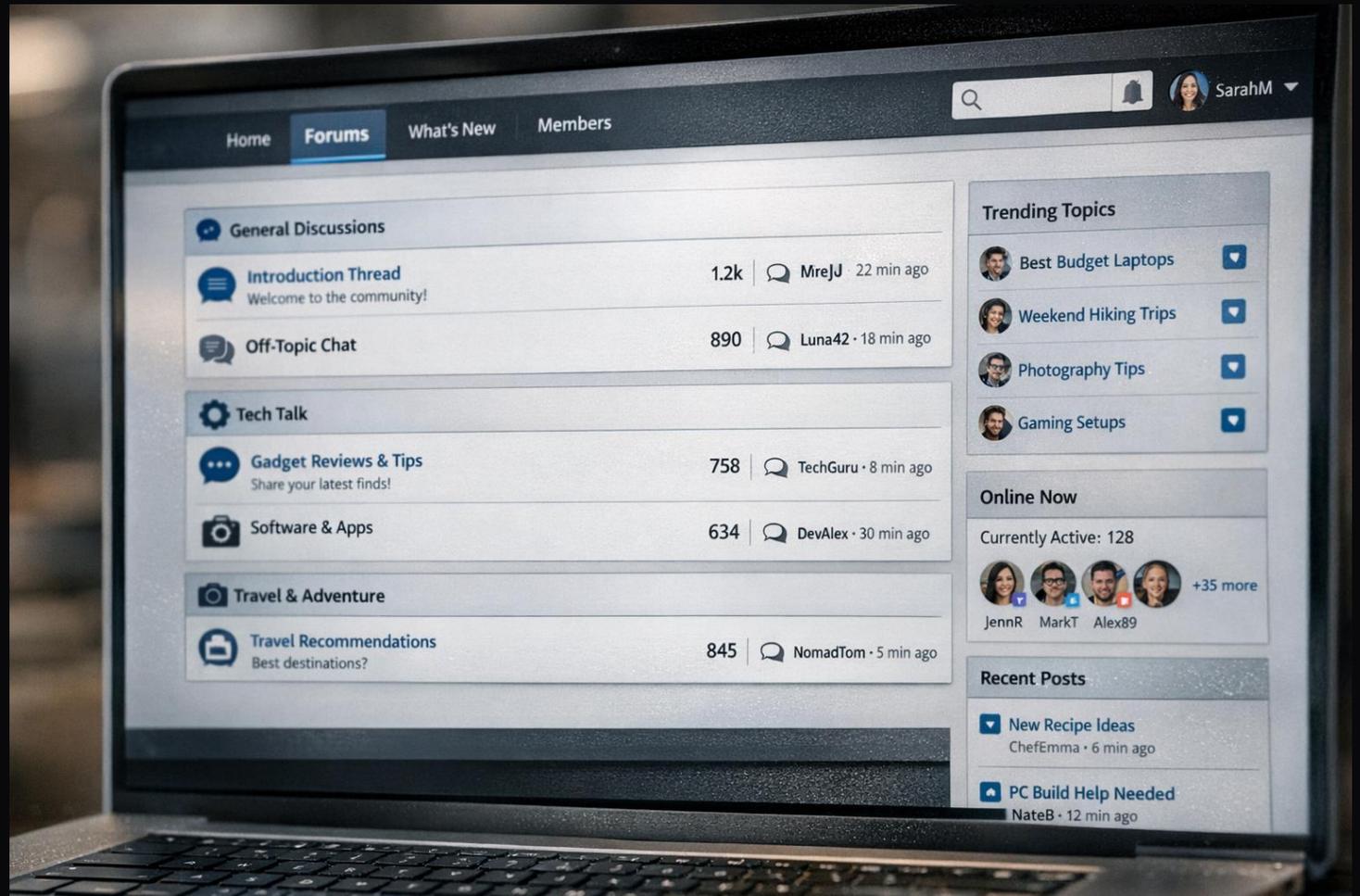
Challenges with Existing Methods

What is a Forum?

An online forum (also called a message board) is a website where people can have discussions by posting messages.

Instead of talking in real time like a chat, users **start topics** (often called *threads*) and others reply when they want.

Typically:

• Discussions are organized by topic or category

• Messages stay posted so others can read them later

• Users can ask questions, share information, or give advice

• An online forum is like a bulletin board on the internet where conversations happen over time rather than instantly.

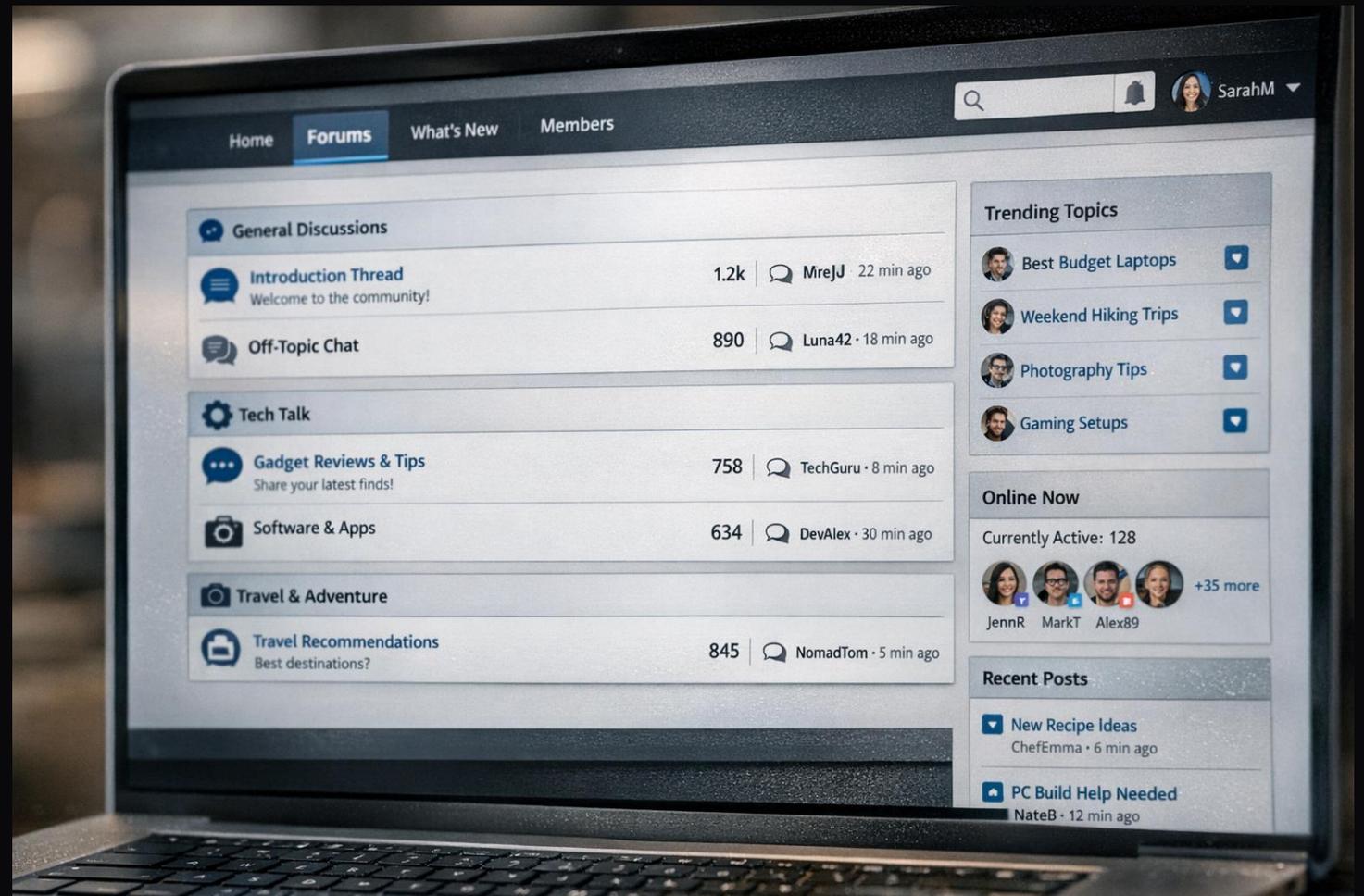# Benefits of a Dedicated Forum for the BARC

Centralized Hub for Discussions and Information Sharing

Centralized Communication

A dedicated forum centralizes all club communications, consolidating discussions by topics and projects efficiently.

Private Storage for club information

Only members of the BARC would be able to access and view the data inside of the forum.

Enhanced Member Engagement and Knowledge Exchange

Interactive Discussion Features

Threaded discussions, polls, and pinned formats enable detailed and structured knowledge sharing among members.

Permanent Searchable Archive

Creating a permanent archive stores all discussions, decisions, and resources for easy access and transparency.

Thread subscriptions

The forum would be set up with a email server, so if a user chooses, they can receive email notifications when there are new reply's to a specific board or topic.

Web server requirements

Phpbb (the forum software) requires very little beyond a basic webserver to run. If by chance the clubs webhost cannot fulfil these requirements, I can host to forums on my web server and the club website can simply provide a link to forum.

Costs

I'll cover the costs of hosting the forum if the clubs webhost is not suitable. I can set up and manage the forum at no cost to the BARC. Phpbb is open-source software and is free to use.

Technical Requirements and Costs

I have set up a sample forum on my web host at

https://digital-eclipse.net/forum/

If anyone wants to look around the demo account credentials are:

Username: demouser
Password: P@ssw0rd

If approved the forum could be up and running quickly.

Test Setup

-By default, no data would be displayed publicly on the forum.

-Only members of the BARC would have accounts made for the forums, accounts could be made based on member registration for the year.

-Additional moderators could be added down the road if the need arose.

- As membership would be completely local, a classifieds section could be made with minimal risk for getting scammed.

Ongoing Moderation and Data Security