Community Events and Meetups

Regular events keep the community engaged and accelerate network growth. Events serve three purposes: recruitment of new members, skill-sharing among existing members, and public demonstration of the network's value.

Build Nights

Monthly hands-on sessions where newcomers build their first node with help from experienced members. Format that works:

- **Venue:** Makerspace, library meeting room, or restaurant private room. 2-3 hours.
- **Format:** 15 min intro presentation → 90 min guided build → 15 min test on the live mesh
- **Materials:** Pre-order 4-6 extra kits to sell at cost to walk-ins. Keep spare USB cables, soldering irons, and spare antennas on hand.
- **Cost to participants:** Hardware cost only - roughly $30-50 for a single-unit entry node depending on the board (see the Onboarding page for current single-unit hardware pricing). Experienced helpers volunteer their time.

Document and promote the event on social media. "Before and after" photos of someone building their first node and seeing it appear on the map are highly shareable.

Annual Range Test

A fun event where participants drive, hike, or bike to test the limits of the network. Structure:

1. Designate a base station at a high-elevation location
2. Participants spread out across the coverage area with mobile nodes
3. Track who can communicate from the farthest point
4. Record SNR/RSSI at each test location
5. Share results in a coverage report - excellent content for your community map

The range test also generates real coverage data that helps you identify gaps for future backbone expansion.

Tabletop Exercises

Simulate a disaster scenario where the mesh is used as a coordination tool. Good exercise scenarios:

- **Extended power outage** - Cell networks are down, no internet. How does the community coordinate? Objective: verify which of your own repeaters actually stay up during the outage (battery/solar reserve) - a mesh is only available in a grid-down event if its infrastructure nodes have independent power.
- **Evacuation coordination** - Simulated wildfire. Use the mesh to coordinate shelter-in-place vs. evacuation by zone.
- **Search and rescue** - Member is "lost" in a park. Use the mesh to coordinate the search team.

Tabletop exercises reveal gaps - in coverage, in procedure, and in member skills - before they matter. Document findings and publish improvements.

Meetup Frequency Guidelines

Event Type	Frequency	Time Investment
Build night / intro session	Monthly	3-4 hrs to organize, 2-3 hrs to run
Infrastructure work party	Quarterly	Full day
Annual range test	Annually	Weekend event
Tabletop exercise	Annually (before storm season)	Half day
Virtual sync call	Monthly	1 hr

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