Microsoft

How Microsoft Shifted from Support to True Engagement with Khoros Communities

Khoros

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The Microsoft Power BI Community grew over 600% from its initial launch, but our support headcount remained flat. We've seen millions of dollars in deflected support costs because of our community's peer-to-peer support, but most importantly, our customers are happier.

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Sandy Rivas

Senior Program Manager, Microsoft

Khoros

Executive summary

Though technology giant Microsoft offered general support on their website and by phone, they wanted to evolve their customer support strategy to not only help customers with products, but to engage with them, too. To support their customer engagement strategy, they decided to partner with Khoros to build a branded online community.

When Microsoft introduced their Power BI product, it was so popular that their traditional support systems were quickly overwhelmed. The support team needed help, and more importantly, they needed a way to better engage this new group of customers. To accomplish both goals, Microsoft decided to build a product-specific online community, powered by Khoros. The Power BI Community soon became the channel of choice for customers and their community activity grew 600% – without Microsoft adding more members to their support team. In addition to powering self-service support that made customers happier, customers began turning to it to share ideas and communicate about products. Microsoft then replicated the successes of the Power BI community for their Power Apps and Microsoft Flow product communities. All three products then became part of an integrated application platform called Microsoft Power Platform.

Khoros powers the online communities for all three products, which allows Microsoft to tie them together in creative ways. Microsoft educates customers about different ways to use each product. They also use cross-community syndication to ensure that customers who ask a question in one community can receive responses from experts in all three communities, and members of each community can converse without leaving their home community. Power users can even nominate content to be syndicated. Now Microsoft has the ability to nurture relationships with all types of customers, from novices to experts. But success for Microsoft is not only in metrics, it's also in relationships. They've seen community members who barely knew Excel go on to work full time in the industry, and they've created a space for business owners to expand and improve their reputation by showcasing their expertise across communities. Microsoft has also fostered true community spirit: on the Power BI community's first birthday, community members made a Happy Birthday video for the product team in which they expressed what they love about the product. The genuine expression of brand love helped strengthen the community as a whole. Microsoft customers now have a better, more holistic customer experience.

Khoros

How they made it work

Leveraged

a community to scale support, then expanded their strategy to include customer engagement

Built

upon the success of their first product community and created successful communities for other products

Partnered

with Khoros and iTalent to develop a syndicated solution that allowed sibling communities to converse, allowing customers to seamlessly learn about new products

Expanded

customers' awareness of products they were already using by offering demonstrations and chances to experiment

Results

Microsoft has grown their community activity by 600%, resulting in reduced response times, increased solution rates, increased customer satisfaction, millions of dollars saved through call deflection, and benchmarking data to measure success with future online communities. Now, 75% of their online community content comes from members — which means it is self-sustaining and highly trusted.

90% response rate in 48 hours or less

65% solution rate (many discussion types do not need solutions)

$1M+ savings in support costs each month

> With Khoros, we've found a technology partner that works with us, not just for us. What we value about Khoros is their knowledge, expertise, and willingness to collaborate.

Sandy Rivas

Senior Program Manager, Microsoft