



Customer Success Story

Microsoft Office Live Attains Significant Success through Online Community

Customer:
Microsoft



Industry:
Technology

Products:
Telligent Community

URL:
community.office365.com

Partner:
ComBlu



Microsoft Office Live Workspace is a free file sharing and online storage place where users can save, access, and share documents (such as Office Word, Excel, and PowerPoint) and files. Microsoft Office Live Small Business offers additional low-cost features, including Web site design, optimization, and marketing and e-commerce tools. While showing promising growth at the outset, the products were suffering from low usage rates globally. Technical challenges and customer confusion were the biggest drivers of customer inactivity. Microsoft was looking for a scalable support solution for low-cost or free products.

Challenge

Microsoft needed to efficiently manage support costs for a free product

Users were signing up for products but then leaving due to technical difficulties. Traditional support is costly, and costs are linear in nature – more customers equal greater cost. To improve product abandonment rates, Microsoft needed a way to scale support costs for a product with many customers and little revenue. In addition, if a customer needed support, there were many entry points, each leading to a completely different look and feel. Many entry points for obtaining product assistance led to a disjointed customer experience, confusion, – and ultimately a low customer return rate.

Solution

Microsoft harnessed user generated content

Together with Telligent and ComBlu, Microsoft developed an integrated support community, which blended the two products into a seamless user experience to help drive engagement. The site provides a single destination for all types of product assistance, enabling users to search across all self-help information. The question-and-answer functionality enables Microsoft to harness the power of the peer-to-peer support and user generated content. To build

“Telligent helped us build more than just a community. They helped us build an entire business, including a platform and a strategy.”

Community Strategist at Microsoft

the community, Microsoft identified and activated a customer fan base as a key component of its peer-to-peer initiative, supplementing the group with support agents who were redistributed from traditional phone and e-mail support functions. Customer service representatives are able to direct customers back to answers already present on the site. The discussion section of the forum allows the community to interact and collaborate. Comments and ratings help to determine the effectiveness of content and answers; members can comment on and rate all content types. Social bookmarks enable users to share content and solutions across the Web, linking with social sites like Facebook and Twitter.

Results

Community members provide answers for peers

Microsoft is now able to support a large customer base on a lean budget. The new community is less expensive than traditional support models, and its one-to-many nature makes it more scalable. Page views and answer rates have increased substantially since the community launch. Today, the community is considered to be a standard of excellence for both community and customer support models. The impressive results are now being emulated across the Microsoft business enterprise.

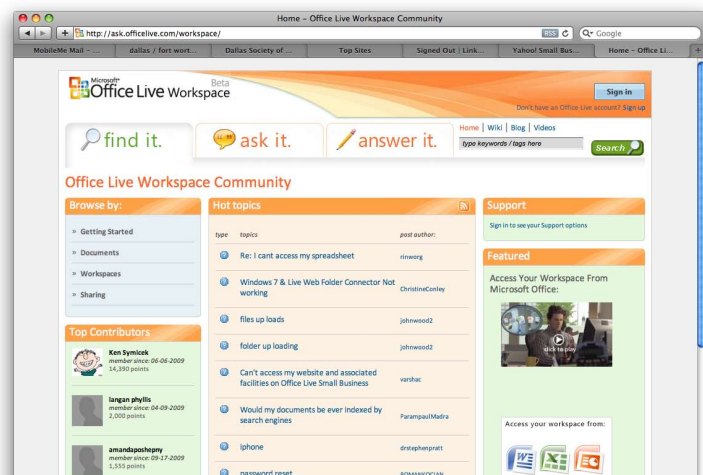
- Microsoft Office Live Small Business page views increased 77 percent
- Microsoft Office Live Workspace page views increased 359 percent
- Answer rates for both communities are over 60 percent
- Nearly 10,000 questions answered since the launch - 100 percent of support is now handled through the communities

About Telligent

Telligent is an enterprise collaboration and community software company. The company's fully integrated platform and portfolio of applications transform how organizations listen to, engage and measure interaction with customers, partners and employees. Telligent powers collaboration for many of the world's largest brands, including Dell, Microsoft, Electronic Arts and Reader's Digest. For more information, visit telligent.com.

"I know this project is an immense success because it's difficult to tell where the product stops and the community starts."

Community Strategist at Microsoft



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(877) 492-9484 • +44 203 178 3010

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