Improving Esri customer support through Khoros platform extensions

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Who
Esri, the global market leader in geographic information system software, location intelligence, and mapping

Goal
Raise the visibility of valuable community resources to better support the business goals of lowering support costs, fostering product innovation through user-generated ideas, and increasing customer retention and growth

Challenges
Time-intensive manual content sharing process; language barrier between international communities

Solution
Instant content syndication tool; dynamic language translation

Results
Up to 3X more views for content; equal access for international users to the community's robust resources

SITUATION

Creating a community of users and partners has always been a part of Esri's business model. As an early entrant into the digital community space, Esri utilized discussion forums in the 90s to collaborate with customers. Since then, they have evolved and expanded their community-driven vision through the online Esri community experience.

Maximizing the visibility of the valuable content and subject matter experts (SMEs) is a key driver of community ROI, because the more views these resources get, the more support tickets are avoided and the more satisfied customers are.

CHALLENGE

Two of the biggest barriers to optimizing the visibility of content and SMEs were the language barrier and the manual processes required to share content across different boards.

Sixty percent of Esri's community traffic originates in countries outside the United States, with many of them in non-English languages. The company needed a way to automate the translation of content so that their users around the world had equal access to community resources.

And, because there are more than 1,200 content boards, Esri needed a more automated way to share content that is relevant to more than one board, since manual copying and pasting is prohibitively time-consuming.

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SOLUTION

Engaging the right technology partner

Following Khoros' acquisition of Jive, where the community was originally built, Esri began migrating to Khoros after extensive evaluation of other industry players and determining that Khoros was the best fit for its needs.

Esri selected iTalent Digital as its strategic partner for customizing and extending the Khoros platform based on iTD's track record of working alongside its customers as a true partner.

> "We didn't want just a professional services vendor. We needed a good, experienced partner, somebody we could trust, somebody that we could go forward with and understood what our vision was."
>
> — Chris Catania, Head of Community, Esri

Simplified content sharing

iTalent Digital's share capability, built on SmartConX, its proprietary integration platform as a service, eliminated the need for manual content sharing by enabling cross-posting to multiple boards with the click of a computer mouse. This is a highly configurable tool, both in terms of content that can be shared and who has permission to share it.

Dynamic language translation

Esri added iTD's LanguageConX tool to the SmartConX platform to dynamically translate content into the preferred language of each user. This way, all community members can benefit from the resources of the whole platform, rather than being limited to the content they can find in their own language. Not only does this deliver more value to members, but also provides more opportunities for international community expansion.

RESULTS

Within the first nine months of implementing the content sharing tool, more than 1,000 posts had been shared, most of which are blogs, generating an additional 461 replies to them. Cross-posting the content via the content sharing tool has increased the number of views by up to 300%.

Seven languages are currently being supported in the community, with more than 15 million characters translated per month. Not only has this enabled dialogue between members who speak different languages, but it has encouraged additional non-English-language groups to use the Esri community as a place to self-support, rather than turning to third-party platforms that Esri doesn't control.

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