

Case study Simyo

Reduce service costs with an online forum



About Simyo

Simyo is a young telecom service provider with a unique background. Simyo was the first online-only service provider in the Netherlands. This was exceptional at the time and is still one of the company's most important cornerstones.

Advantages of using Simyo

- Clear overview of costs and usage
- Reliable KPN network
- Free adjustment of call bundles
- Manage your own account online

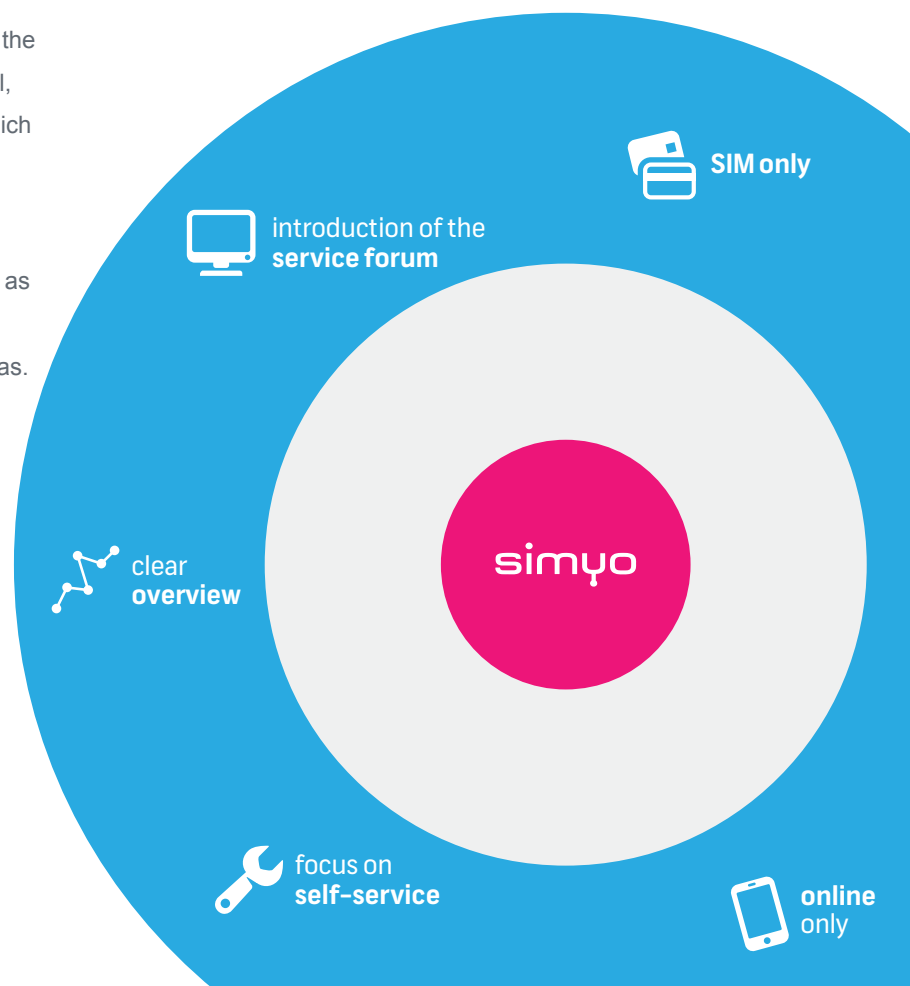
Simyo offers 100% self-care, online-only services. Using Simyo's online tools, customers can register and manage their accounts on their own. Customers profit from a clear overview of their usage and the ability to adjust, start or terminate their bundles. This means that customers are in full control of their packages and costs remain low.

The principle of online self-service was still incomplete without a forum. As a complement to the services offered through FAQs, Twitter and email, the forum gives customers a channel through which they can easily access their own or other users' questions that have already been answered.

Simyo offers SIM-only annual and monthly plans as well as prepaid packages. Their offers are straightforward and stripped of unnecessary extras.

The Simyo Challenge

Simyo maintains a low-cost strategy, offering a high-quality network at low rates. In order to keep its operational costs to a minimum, Simyo only operates online. It does not have any retail stores and does not invest in TV or radio advertising. Users just manage all aspects of their accounts themselves on the Simyo website. Registering as a customer, adjusting bundles, topping up—all these are provided as online self-service on the regular website or on the mobile site for smartphone users. Customers can also request support online. In order to complement this online service strategy, Simyo has implemented a customer support community.



Solution

The Simyo forum was officially launched in December 2011. By means of this service forum, customer questions are answered by Simyo representatives as well as by fellow Simyo customers (peer-to-peer support). The solutions they provide remain easily accessible to all customers.

Objectives

- **The forum is the number one customer contact channel**
- Reduce the number of contacts by email or telephone
- Realize and retain customer satisfaction in relation to the forum
- Increase the lifetime value of customers
- Increase search engine traffic
- Promote forum interaction (establish a bond with and between active forum members and increase the number of highly active members, i.e. the Super Users)

Customers register at the forum using their 'My Simyo' account, Simyo's personalized online customer environment. Because their forum account is linked to their 'My Simyo' account, moderators can easily look up the customer-specific information about forum users, and provide fast and effective support. This is a significant advantage compared to web-based care through external forums or Twitter, where no customer details are available. A 'My Simyo' account is required to be able to post. Searching the forum for solutions, however, does not require an account. In this way, customers who have not registered for the forum can still use it to find information.

Prior to the launch, inSided provided a two-month implementation track in which both the community strategy and the technical side were realized. Continued areas of support include establishing objectives and KPIs, pinpointing integration with the Simyo website, providing internal and external communication, establishing the content strategy and providing a moderator training. inSided remained involved after the initial track. There is regular communication regarding the forum's progress and its further development.

The forum is now used as the main point of customer contact to provide service and information. It is an interactive platform and the contents can be easily modified. The forum is also used to announce network downtime or other important messages, keeping customers up to date in real time.



**The forum is the
number one
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Forum Organization

It is essential that the community is widely supported within the organization itself.

Sr. Marketing Manager Mischa Oudolf is ultimately responsible for the community's progress/advancement and objectives. The webcare team is responsible for answering questions and moderating customer enquiries. This team is a part of the regular customer service department. Moderators operate in four different roles on the forum: they serve as guards (enforcing house rules), customer service representatives, content managers and conversation masters.

Sr. Marketing Manager Lieve Gerretsen keeps in close contact because of her responsibility for Simyo's online marketing, such as website integration. Community Manager Alex Reijgersberg is responsible for the community's day-to-day management and supervises the other moderators. In addition, General Manager Onno van der Poel is involved in strategy development and improvement processes.



Mischa Oudolf (Sr. Marketing Manager)



Through its service forum, Simyo displays its transparency, high-quality information and excellent service level. The focus is on constantly improving the forum and the provided services, for example through quality monitoring procedures for moderators and regular community consultations, as well as by involving the forum in campaigns.

Integration in the Simyo Website

The Simyo forum facilitates interaction. Therefore, special care was taken to properly integrate the forum into the Simyo website, so that customers can find it with ease. Through integration with e.g. the Customer Service pages, customers are immediately made aware that they can post their question on the forum.



Expanding the Community through Active Community Management

Ever since the forum's launch, Simyo has experienced a steady increase of both forum members and member activity. Solid community management and moderation stimulated forum activity even further. Various targeted activities make sure the forum keeps growing. Important activities implemented to support this include:

FAQ

Making important content clearly visible to the community. Analyzing the topics that were started on the forum reveals specifically what content community users were looking for. A clear overview of this content is then provided in, for instance, FAQs so that members are able to find their own answers more easily.

Contact

Moderators maintain a personal relationship with the Super Users by regularly contacting them, for instance through private messages. Moderators show personal interest in these users, explicitly value their contributions and assist them in the support they offer at the forum.

Community building

Strengthening mutual relationships. When Simyo started participating in off-topic conversations and actively asking customers for details, such as the type of phone they use, and responding to personal information, it strengthened the bond among users. Customers develop a feeling of mutual connection and return to the forum more often.

Tags

Adding tags. Keywords may be used to indicate the topic of a conversation. These tags also serve to give members an overview of related topics. This enables them to quickly find the information they are looking for.

Moderators

Improving moderation quality. Moderator activities were monitored and analyzed to establish which areas needed improvement. This included actually marking the right answer and ensuring it is displayed directly below the question in a topic.

Structure

Structuring of existing content. Topic titles are continuously adjusted to properly reflect the topic's contents.

Increased Activity from the Most Active Members

By consistently giving attention to active members on the forum, appreciating them and listening to them, users feel strongly connected.

For the Sinterklaas (Dutch equivalent of Santa Claus) holiday, for instance, active members were sent a traditional gift: a large chocolate letter accompanied by a unique hand-written poem. This made active members even more active. Currently each month over 500 reactions are posted by the 10 most active members.

And every month a substantial number of new members are joining the forum. Six months after going live and following the implementation of a number of improvements, the amount of forum members is now increasing exponentially with almost 1,000 new members registering in a single month. In 2013, the amount of members increased to over 13,000.



"I have just started and already Sinterklaas has paid me a visit. Delicious, thank you Simyo team!"



"I received a chocolate letter today too, with a personal 'thank you' note. Thank you, Simyo!"



"I also got one, of course.... How many of these hand-written packages do you think they mailed out?"

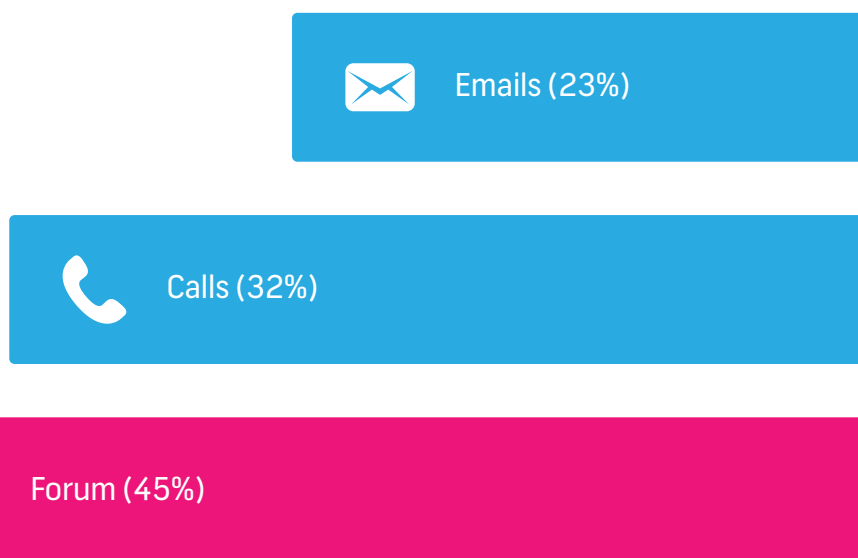
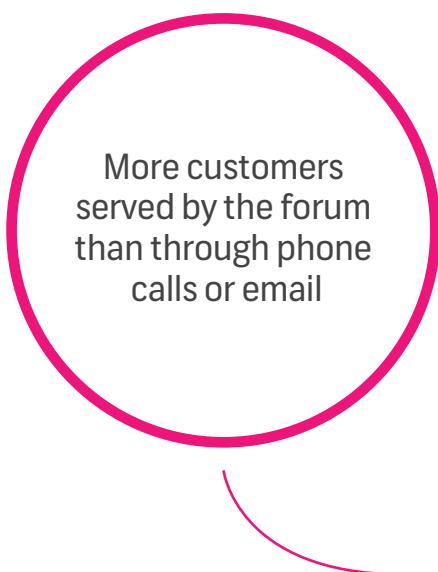


Results

More customers are assistedd through the forum than by email or calls. Moreover, the answers they are given remain accessible for other customers, turning the forum into an ever-growing knowledge bank.

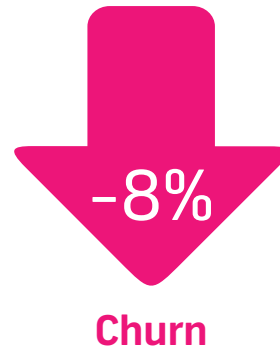
Customers who are not actively asking questions themselves may also solve their issues by means of the forum. They can find the answer on the forum themselves or look for an answer through search engines such as Google and be directed straight to the forum topic that contains the relevant information.

In addition, customers are providing peer-to-peer support, keeping moderation by Simyo itself to a minimum. Research indicates that 45% of the visitors who have a question actually find an answer on the forum. This amounts to a total of 23,000 customers served per month, leading to a call reduction of €50,000 per month (a result twice as high as initially predicted).



Increased loyalty

When customers come in contact with the forum, they develop a stronger connection with the Simyo brand. They quickly find solutions, have immediate access to Simyo representatives and are presented with open and transparent information, which increases their sense of belonging and loyalty. It has been calculated that the churn rate among customers who become forum members is 8% lower than that of members who do not register at the forum.



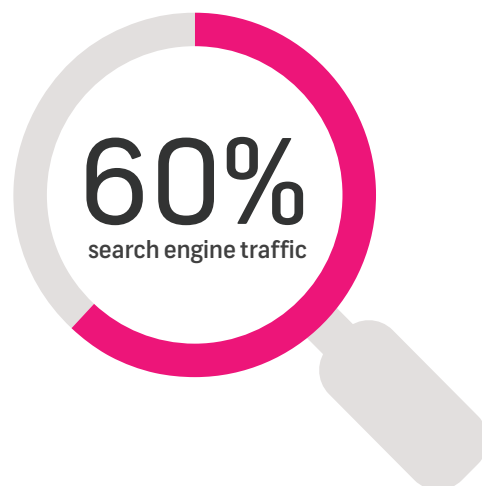
Customer satisfaction

In order to measure customer satisfaction with the forum, an online survey asks them how satisfied they are. Most people give the forum a rating of 4 on a scale from 1 to 5. The average score is 3.3. This means that members indicate that they are (very) satisfied with the forum.

Increased search engine traffic

Since the inSided platform is optimized for search engines and a solid content management strategy has been implemented, forum topics are easily found through search engines. Over 60% of the visitors are directed to the forum through search engines.

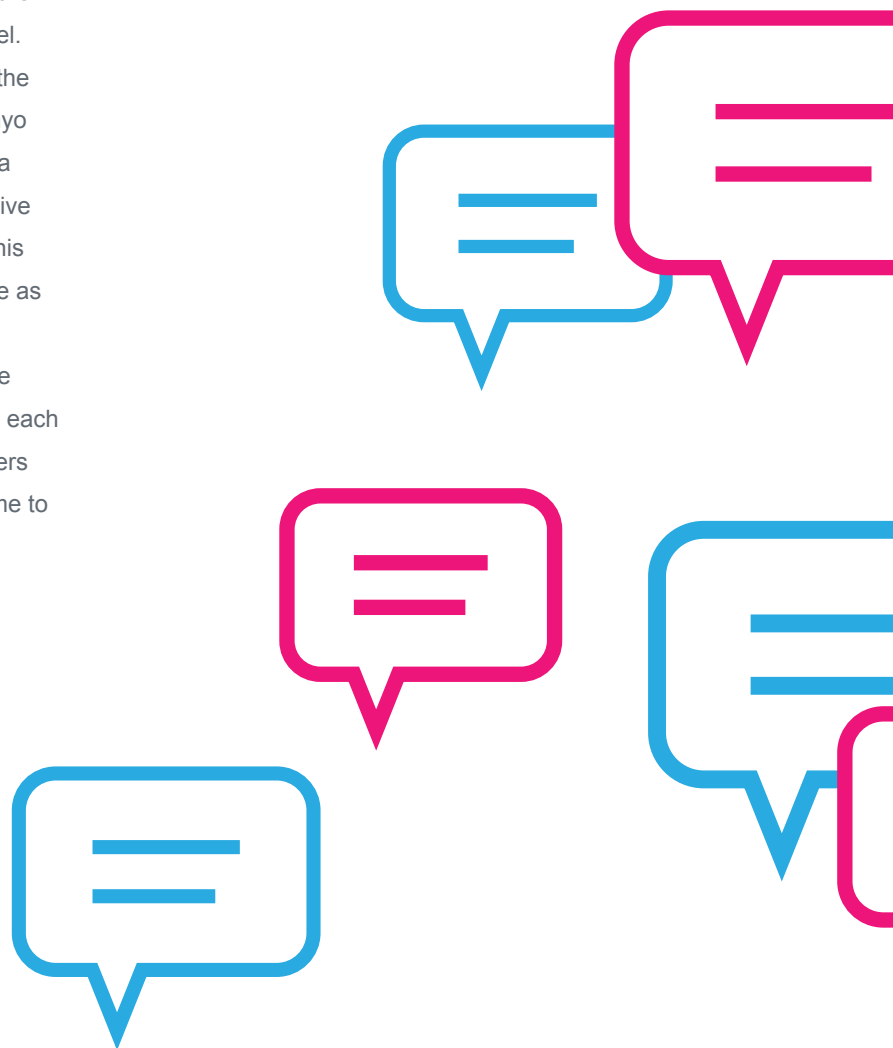
In September and October, quick forum posts on the introduction of the nano SIM particularly increased search engine traffic. Even before this new type of SIM card was available, Simyo started a topic to announce that it would keep customers up to date on the availability status of the nano SIM. This topic went well with search engines and was viewed over 5000 times in two months. By being the first to break topical news that is relevant to its customers and using the right keywords, topics were highly ranked in search results.



Realizing Co-Creation

Simyo is a SIM-only provider and as a result has very few tangible products. This makes it hard to involve customers in product development. The development of the app provided an excellent opportunity to increase the involvement of forum members with the organization.

In addition to testing the app, suggestions by forum members are also used to implement changes on the website, forum or any other communication channel. This has led to e.g. a greater number of FAQs on the forum, which were created in cooperation with Simyo customers. When the new website was launched, a special topic was started where customers could give their feedback. In order to channel the feedback, this topic was announced on the Simyo Facebook page as well as on Twitter. All feedback was collected and reported back to the department responsible for the website. The feedback was carefully analyzed and each point was dealt with individually. The forum members who contributed the points were mentioned by name to deepen their involvement with Simyo.



Onno van der Poel (General Manager)

“ For an online brand like Simyo, it is important to provide service through an online platform. A tangible return on investment (ROI) is achieved through a reduction of calls and more customers are being served through the forum than through other service channels.

The structured content and visibility of the information make sure a large part of our customers find an answer to their questions through the forum, without contacting the other, more expensive, service channels.

Further Growth

Introducing the Simyo forum has already produced significant, measurable results. Naturally the ambition is to add even more value and activity. Future planning includes the following activities:

Peer-to-peer support

This refers to increasing the percentage of customers that help other customers. In order to realize this, customer involvement with the forum is increased through the organization of, for example, offline events where community members can meet and discuss potential improvements to the forum. At inSided, the average percentage of questions answered by other customers is 40%. At the Simyo forum, 22% of questions are answered by other customers. There is still plenty of room for improvement: For instance, customers who contact the organization through other channels can be directed to the information on the forum to increase traffic in the community. They can also be approached actively by means of e.g. a newsletter.

Co-creation

Simyo likes to involve others in brainstorming about its products and services. It created a sub forum especially for the purpose of co-creation, where a selected number of interested members can participate in coming up with improvements to its services.

Quick answers

At the moment, 99% of new questions are responded to within one working day and over 89% are fully answered within 48 hours. The goal is to answer 100% of questions within 48 hours, so that customers will get an answer even more quickly and will not need to contact other service channels.



inSided Community Platform

The cloud-based inSided platform delivers an enterprise-grade solution to build, integrate and manage branded customer communities across digital touch points and devices.

On community pages, customers engage with each other and your company, get an overview of all relevant information and can browse new or popular topics related to your brand and products. Content can furthermore be embedded on your website, on your support pages and in your product using plug and play widgets that provide your customers with relevant information when and where they need it.



Q&A forums

Give your customers a place to ask questions, get relevant answers, and engage with each other and your company



Ideas & surveys

Improve products with research and feedback (surveys, ideas, news, tips & sweepstake submissions)



KB / FAQ content

Build a knowledge base as you go, and serve out the most relevant content using machine learning and AI

True SaaS



Content Intelligence



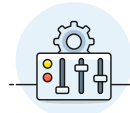
Gamification



Moderation



Analytics



API



SSO & social authentication



CRM integration

Technology is just one click away. Success is not.

Success is much more than just the right technology. As your dedicated partner, it is a mindset for us. Success is about a great kick off, continuous growth, focus on ROI and creating a world class team with thorough experience. Use our proven approach to ensure you get all essential knowledge and support, in every step of the way.



We help you to start and show success within 6 to 12 weeks



We help you to grow your platform and continue to deliver value



We help you set ambitious yet achievable goals and show ROI



We help you to build and train your team, and learn from peers

Drive real, measurable impact

The inSided platform will help you improve user engagement and increase product adoption. It enables an efficient CSM and support organization while keeping service levels high, and improves retention. Our customers typically see 15-25% reduction of support costs, 10-15% higher NPS scores & customer advocacy, and 8% reduction in churn.

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