Cutting support costs and improving the customer experience with an online community

T-Mobile NL, with 4.3 million customers, is the largest telecom operator in the Netherlands. As far back as 2009, the company recognized that customer support expectations were shifting and began to invest in online support platforms.

The initiative had two objectives: improve the customer experience while also reducing T-Mobile NL's support costs. As part of this customer-centric digital approach, **T-Mobile NL implemented its first customer community with the help of inSided**.

Today, T-Mobile NL customers use the community to ask questions, provide advice, and discuss the company's service. The content they create serves as a user-generated knowledge base that's always up-to-date.

In addition, T-Mobile NL's community connects with the company's CRM system. Single Sign On integration allows support staff to access customer details from the community moderation environment, enriching the T-Mobile NL user database.

With more than 250,000 members and 4 million annual visits, **T-Mobile NL's community is now the largest telecom forum in the Netherlands, and one of the largest in Europe**.

And as a result of T-Mobile NL's investments in social support and the community, the number of customer support calls to the company fell 60 percent, saving millions of euros.

$4 million
savings each year via peer-to-peer support

10%
of customers are community members

65%
of questions are answered by customers

Around 400,000 users visit the community each month and receive support from other customers or T-Mobile NL experts. With thousands of questions answered, the community has contributed to a 60 percent reduction of calls to T-Mobile NL's call center, saving the company millions of euros.

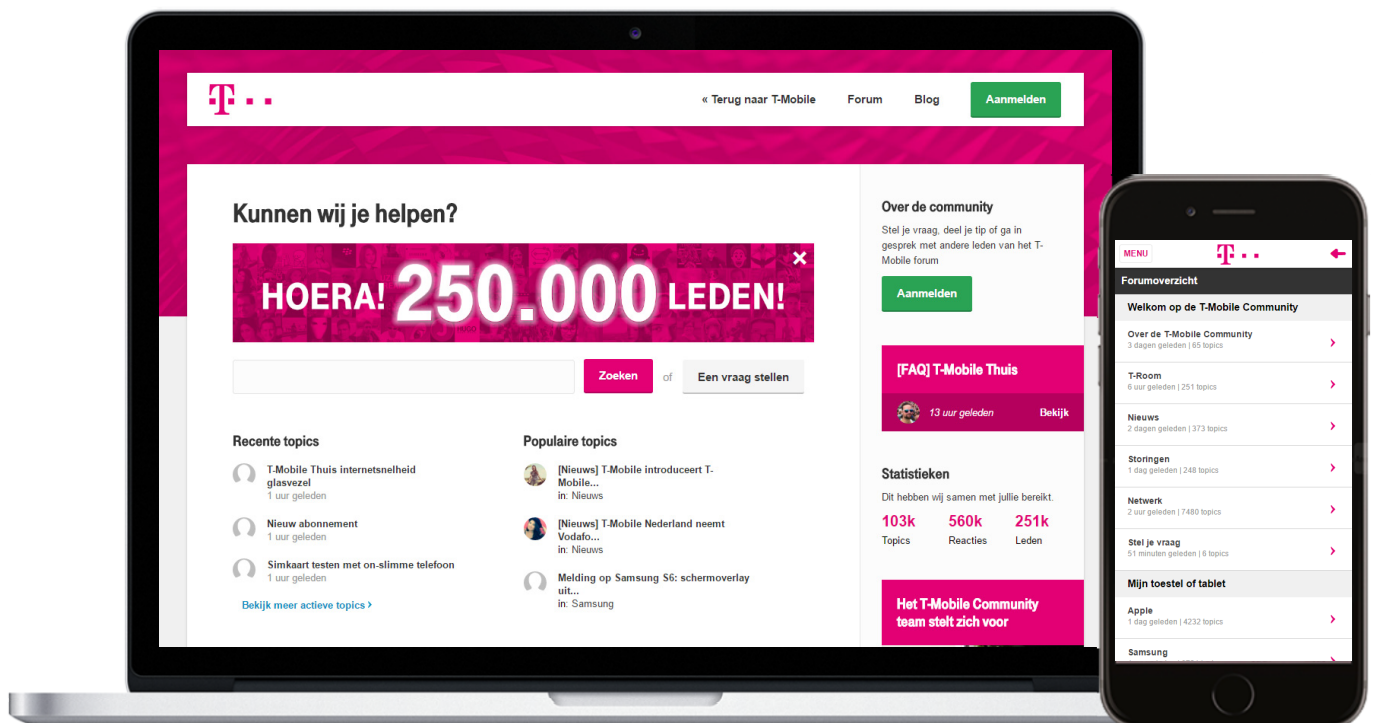# Communicating essential information more efficiently

As part of its community-building effort, T-Mobile NL uses its forum to share news and announcements - like its early-2017 move to unlimited data and voice service.

The company also leverages community content in the support section of its website, ensuring that T-Mobile NL's support pages are up-to-date and relevant to the questions that real customers have.

On the "Device Help" page, for example, many tips and how-tos were generated by members of the T-Mobile NL community. Only content that is "marked as answer" by a T-Mobile NL employee will appear in the support portal, so customers can be confident that the advice they see is legitimate.

As part of its holistic communications strategy, T-Mobile NL has committed to updating community visitors on a consistent basis - with both good news and bad. In one instance, BlackBerry's messaging network was experiencing issues, and a T-Mobile team member proactively wrote a community post to explain the root cause. Even though the issue was unrelated to T-Mobile, this post became the primary source of information for BlackBerry users across the Netherlands. The post was read 40,000 times on its first day, and the number of T-Mobile NL community registrations increased threefold.

More than 60 percent of traffic to T-Mobile NL's community enters through Google. The community has been active for several years, includes a large amount of content, and uses inSided's SEO-optimized platform, helping it rank higher in Google search and attract non-customers looking for information about T-Mobile NL's services.

Empowering customer experts to build brand advocacy

With an active community, gamification tools, and multichannel social support, T–Mobile NL is a pioneer in providing great customer care online – a necessity in the telecom market, where customer retention is critical.

An especially important piece of T-Mobile NL's social support approach is **empowering engaged community users to provide help and advice**. Three years after the community's launch, T-Mobile NL invited a small group of active members to assist with moderation. After receiving training at T-Mobile NL's headquarters, they were awarded the title of 'Customer Expert'.

There is no financial reward for this role; experts are rewarded in other ways. In order to ensure that they are always kept up to date on relevant developments within T-Mobile, experts have access to their own dedicated community area, where they can interact directly with T-Mobile team members. The experts also meet about four times annually at the T-Mobile headquarters for joint offline activities, such as tours of the T-Mobile network center and demos of the latest devices.

Investing in this cohort of brand advocates has paid massive dividends. **T-Mobile NL's 25 Customer Experts answer over half of all community questions and generate 20 percent of the total monthly content posted to the community.** Their efforts have saved T-Mobile NL more than $2 million in call deflection.

The experts are also T-Mobile ambassadors: **One of the experts has attracted 100 new customers.** Without the community - a platform that allows these "super users" to interact, get corporate updates, and help other customers - T-Mobile NL would miss out on this low-cost, high-value brand advocacy.

More than 65% of the questions on the T-Mobile NL community are answered by members (customer-to-customer support). Helping others and building relationships are important motivations for visitors to become and remain active. In addition, gamification elements such as badges are used to reward users for their contributions.

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66 *In about five years' time webcare will no longer be called webcare and online customer interaction will be the main link between customer and company. Available 24/7, used by all levels within the organization. Webcare, or whatever it will be called by then, is made up of a large and diverse group of people, both internal and external to the company, who handle regular questions and complaints. They provide online sales, generate leads and are central to all customer communications. Customers inspire them to think about processes, procedures, products and services, and in collaboration with the customers they organize meetings in which internal specialists participate. They comprise a crucial factor in shaping your brand experience.*

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Ruud Huigsloot, Customer Contact Innovation Manager T-Mobile

INVOIDED

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 futhermore 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

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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

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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. Visit insided.com for more information.

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