RingCentral

BACKGROUND

RingCentral provides cloud-based communications systems for businesses based on its powerful Message Video Phon™ (MVP®) global platform. Their highly sophisticated solutions include enterprisegrade voice, fax, text, online meetings, conferencing, and collaboration which easily connect a company's office and employees (even if remote or mobile). Since everything is done online – from purchase to activation, and set up to management – intricate hardware systems are not required, which also means no installation or technical knowledge is necessary from a vendor. Functionality, flexibility, no hassles, a consistent monthly cost with no contract, and no setup costs makes RingCentral's offering a popular choice for businesses.

The search for an online community solution was already ongoing as the company had expanded and became robust for the software in use (a product designed for consumer product companies fielding questions and concerns from the public) when Byrne Reese, Senior Product Manager, began working at RingCentral. New colleague Mike Stowe, Senior Manager of Developer Product Marketing, had used AnswerHub at another company and was impressed with the product.

INDUSTRY

Cloud-based communications systems

PRODUCTS & SERVICES

RingCentral is a fully cloud-based communications solution focused on voice, with fax, text, conferencing, and web meeting facilities also available. There is no need to use separate applications for your day-to-day calls, conferencing, and online meetings.

> "Support is such a critical part of the story, but as your ecosystem grows, you can't give everyone the same amount of attention. We didn't have a good ecosystem and no third-party software was available. The most logical thing that came to mind was AnswerHub and it met our needs."

CHALLENGES

- RingCentral needed to connect more deeply with its 3rd party developers. The company wanted to provide a better experience by offering a peer-to-peer developer community. There was little engagement in their current community and they sought to be more developer-focused. This would likely lead to more developers building products on top of RingCentral, increasing its market share in a very competitive market. Having a developer-centric culture would be a key differentiator from the competitors.

- RingCentral maintains an open platform that customers use to integrate ready-to-use business apps and custom build their own via the API. Developers can also build custom apps and integrations to improve business productivity.

- An investment in documentation had been previously made to offer necessary support to developers, but having an online community was critical to keeping costs reasonable. A knowledge-sharing community increases efficiency by letting members help each other. Instead of one-to-one support, an online community provides a one-to-many support approach.

- One of the biggest challenges RingCentral faced was that its current customer community provider was going to pull the plug on their platform in less than two months. RingCentral had thousands upon thousands of customers engaging in their online Q&A forum. They needed to find and get an alternative up and running as soon as possible to avoid downtime. They were aware of AnswerHub because the developer community had been using it for almost six months, so they began to look at AnswerHub as a possible new solution.

- As an innovative, ever-growing company, RingCentral wanted a modern solution for their needs of an online community and to take pressure off traditional support channels. Whatever platform was to be chosen, an understanding of developers was paramount. After researching different options, AnswerHub became the clear choice.

"It can be a very time-consuming and frustrating task to field the same questions over and over again, and AnswerHub made it so we don't have to. With the private spaces, for example, users would frequently ask about them, but because previous answers are now available, those questions are easily addressed by the community's populated Q&As. Also, I like that we can interact with small groups securely.

RingCentral can share knowledge seamlessly between the two audiences and this is a powerful outcome of capturing and sharing knowledge for all to benefit from.

IGNITETECH

SOLUTION

- RingCentral chose AnswerHub because it was simple to use, the layout was clean (something the company's developers requested of the new community), and it had tools to make migrating from the previous system simple. The flexibility in the AnswerHub theme made it easy to integrate it into the current website's branding requirements.
- The RingCentral community is open. There is no password, so developers thinking of building on RingCentral's platform can easily check it out.
- When private sites were needed for beta testing of products key to RingCentral's long-term strategy, AnswerHub was able to help.
- RingCentral combined its customer and developer communities into AnswerHub, which brought significant cost savings and allowed the expense to spread across the budgets of two departments instead of one. Also, this lowered the cost of providing support to both customers and developers as each group was helping fellow members by answering questions, providing resources, and following up on posts.
- A favorite feature is that the private space only appears to those who are participating. There are no "locked doors" for the rest of the development community to wonder about. This saves time and aggravation by avoiding repetitive questions about private spaces from the general users.

OUTCOME

- Since launching the community, unique users per month has grown 86%, and there has been a 50% increase in content. These statistics represent much greater engagement than RingCentral saw with its previous platform.

- The developer community has embraced AnswerHub as the central place to answer each other's questions, and to find their own answers, too. This has built an even stronger community than what RingCentral had before starting to utilize AnswerHub.

- With teams moving to a more distributed workforce, especially during the pandemic, the number of developers building on top of the platform increased three-fold, and the number of customers (both paying and non-paying) almost quadrupled. Having this community has saved RingCentral a tremendous amount of support costs and enabled developers to push RingCentral tools and SDKs to meet the demands of the remote workforce.

- RingCentral has more control of the community's content, delivering specific knowledge to both its developers and customers in one centralized platform. Having one partner (AnswerHub) to support two distinct groups within RingCentral has been extremely valuable because best practices can be exchanged, and a seamless experience for both customer and developer has been created.

- The company's sales and support teams can now monitor activities within the customer community for lead generation, resulting in higher revenues. While this was not a consideration that was part of choosing AnswerHub, it is extremely valuable to RingCentral.

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