

**GIRO**

BACKGROUND

GIRO Inc. is a leading optimization software maker for the public transport and postal industries. Launched in 1979 as an offshoot of a university project in operations research, the company now employs more than 600 skilled and expert staff. Its specialized software solutions – used by over 200 clients worldwide – enjoy an extremely positive reputation. Whether for planning, scheduling, or operations management, GIRO provides clients with software and services that help them increase their efficiency while offering better customer service. Global best practices inspire their team, and they assign no less than 30% of resources to R&D. Clients co-innovate with the company (including since its inception) and build long-term relationships.

GIRO's main products, HASTUS for public transport and GeoRoute for postal services, are used every day by major organizations in more than 28 countries, and in cities from Los Angeles to Sydney via New York, Paris, and Singapore. More than 150,000 vehicles and 137,000 postal carriers benefit from the software GIRO offers. As the software provider grew, it became clear that a new, more robust community solution with additional benefits was needed. While conducting an open-source search, the company found OSQA (the precursor the AnswerHub). After members of the engineering group learned that AnswerHub was commercially available, they reached out to learn more.



INDUSTRY

Computer Software

PRODUCTS & SERVICES

Computer Software for Public Transport and Postal Operations



We looked at building the community which we needed ourselves through open-source tools, however, we realized that continuing to support and maintain the site would be more expensive in the long run. We didn't have official funding at the time of the pilot, but AnswerHub's quick deployment demonstrated the speed at which we could get a site like this up and running.



CHALLENGES

In 2018, GIRO had a company-wide hackathon in which the executive team solicited ideas from every group within the organization. The contest intended to bring out problems that the groups saw within GIRO so they could be resolved and make it a more effective company. The winner of this two-month hackathon would receive full funding for the new project. There were roughly 40 entries. The engineering group sought to solve the problem of distributed knowledge and documentation, as they believed that because the silos with each department had their own documents, it led to inefficiencies, knowledge loss, and a poor culture. Further, they theorized that a peer-to-peer knowledge community would solve such issues, specifically for their engineering team.

Since documentation was scattered all over GIRO, information and answers were not easy to find, even after spending significant time searching. There was no way to query across all the formal knowledge that existed and no mechanism to capture informal knowledge. Experts within the company were not widely known to employees, so going directly to the source wasn't necessarily an option. GIRO was engaging with more partners – both on the strategy side as well as technical support – and they considered a community model has the most likely solution to address their growing customer and partner base.

SOLUTION

AnswerHub was easy to use right out of the box, making GIRO's centralized site operational very quickly. The teams within the company were able to add knowledge and documentation immediately attracting visitors. The intuitive Q&A feature made it extremely easy for GIRO team members to communicate their most pressing needs and accelerate knowledge capture and sharing throughout the org.

AnswerHub's article component was valuable because GIRO wanted to move away from static and stale documentation located in various folders throughout the enterprise. The new knowledge community would allow for peer collaboration and up-to-date content to be created, captured, discovered, and shared throughout the teams.

With AnswerHub, developers could come to one place and find answers to their technical questions and documentation immediately by searching in one location. AnswerHub also made it easy to mark questions as answered, ensuring that content stayed accurate. This significantly reduced the time it took to get answers back to the team and its customers.

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OUTCOME

What started as a hackathon project has become one of GIRO's greatest assets for its people and customers. The uniqueness of this situation is that AnswerHub goes beyond just a technical audience. It provides a corporate-wide type of intranet (an immediate need GIRO had) for all units, allowing it to become a digital community and helping establish the company's culture.

Over time, groups other than engineering would go to the site to find answers to technical questions. More specifically, the legal and HR groups began to see the value of having a fast and easy-to-search knowledge-sharing site. In fact, they reached out to the IT group to see how they could become a part of the community. AnswerHub's configurable UI and API connections made it extremely easy to connect and include other business units into the community. This site grew from just the engineering team to all business units within GIRO over an 18-month period. The new community has everything in one centralized location, which has been a real game changer for GIRO, making the organization more efficient for employees and customers.

Being able to find answers to not only technical questions but also HR, legal, and product questions, has made working at GIRO more engaging and efficient. 80-90% of all formal and informal knowledge is now captured in AnswerHub. GIRO utilizes the Ideation Engine in AnswerHub to exchange ideas and vote content up and down. The company's experience has, in essence, come full circle from the hackathon to capturing ideas across the entire organization.

Analytics and dashboard reports are now available throughout the entire organization, and illustrate which departments are using the site the most. This is valuable for the IT team to know, and they determined it is important to continue supporting the community at the corporate level. The AnswerHub site has grown to where all 700 of GIRO's employees have access to the 'non-shared' and can contribute and digitally transforming their culture.