Test-Aankoop Creates Europe-Wide, Collaborative and Interactive Community Based on Telligent

Opportunity

Test-Aankoop is one of the leading consumer rights organisations in Europe, providing customers with informed, independent advice into the purchase of goods and services. Headquartered in Belgium, Test-Aankoop delivers this advice through testing products, highlighting inferior products or services, and raising awareness of consumer rights. Beyond Belgium, this non-profit organisation has tight collaborations with consumer rights organisations in Spain, Italy and Portugal.

Test-Aankoop is a great believer in the maxim 'you don't stay ahead by standing still'. Despite already having close to one million satisfied customers, the organisation aims to grow this number significantly and offer an even more rewarding and responsive consumer rights service.

Social engagement is a major factor in this strategy. Test-Aankoop understands that a collaborative relationship — driven through digital marketing and support communities — has the potential to create deeper and richer customer relationships. Moreover, an online social community would provide unique, real-time insight into customers' needs, preferences, and behaviour — 'Voice of the Customer' insight that can be used to tailor existing services and create new ones.

However, according to Bram Vermeire, IT Manager at Test-Aankoop, early attempts at building that online community were not entirely successful. "Our customers are interacting socially all the time, and so should we. Here in Belgium, our existing online customer forum offered only very limited functionality and demanded a significant degree of manual administrative intervention. It simply wasn't flexible enough to take Test-Aankoop into the future."

The catalyst for change occurred when Test-Aankoop unveiled a new consumer program focused on renewable energy. Established with the aim of increasing awareness of the benefits of using sustainable energy both in the home and at work, the new program was an ideal opportunity to deploy a next-generation online community.

Test-Aankoop had previously standardised on Sitecore as its Web content management system (CMS), and it was Sitecore that recommended Telligent®, A Verint® Company. "We enjoy a long and trusted partnership with Sitecore, so when they suggested Telligent for our online community platform, we didn't hesitate," says Vermeire. "The Telligent Community operates straight out of the box, it's intuitive to use — and of course it integrates seamlessly with our existing Sitecore environment."

Solution

The Telligent Community provides Test-Aankoop with a flexible, highly customizable online community platform. Customers use this dynamic, immersive social environment to share their experiences of renewable energy, although in time the community will be widened to support other consumer rights activities.

Solutions

Verint Telligent®
Community

Industry

Consumer Services

Region

Europe

Results

- 9,000 active community members
- 4 European countries
- Increased brand awareness and loyalty
- Improved customer insight

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> " The forums enable Test-Aankoop to create interesting and engaging customer dialogue, We can moderate discussions, responses can be flat or threaded, and the audience can 'like' thread replies, with the highest rated content surfaced up front. The tool is genuinely transformative."

– Mike Desaever, Functional Analyst, Test-Aankoop

Recent discussion groups in the forum include, for example, customers discussing the merits of investing in solar panels – such as which provider offers the best deals and which panels perform best. Another group is sharing the value of using different forms of energy to heat water systems. And another group in debating whether energy prices are likely to rise in the short-term.

"The forums enable Test-Aankoop to create interesting and engaging customer dialogue," explains Mike Desaever, Functional Analyst. "We can moderate discussions, responses can be flat or threaded, and the audience can 'like' thread replies, with the highest rated content surfaced up front. The tool is genuinely transformative."

A key aspect of that transformative capability is the rapid, straightforward open source integration with Test-Aankoop's Sitecore Web CMS. The Telligent Community runs side-by-side with Sitecore, delivering social applications and services along with user-generated content directly in the Sitecore platform.

Desaever and his team use Telligent's REST web services, together with single sign-on authentication, to extract the data from Telligent and instantly populate the Sitecore environment. "The Telligent-Sitecore integration is fast and seamless," he says. "Having previously developed the Sitecore system, we were immediately at home in the Telligent developer ecosystem. Like Sitecore, Telligent is built on the Microsoft .NET platform and their integration is published as an open source SDK on GitHub. Adding Telligent community to our Sitecore environment creates a truly dynamic and interactive experience for Test-Aankoop's customers."

Benefits

The Telligent community is helping to transform Test-Aankoop's 'Voice of the Customer' strategy, with almost 9,000 users in four countries now turning to the social community to discuss renewable energy.

Vermeire comments, "The Telligent platform, together with the straightforward integration into our Sitecore CMS, is creating a collaborative, interactive community on renewable energy. It enables Test-Aankoop's customers in four European countries to share and interact with each other on renewable energy advice, creating a network of knowledge, resources, and accessible information."

Other advantages of this collaborative energy community include:

- Increase in awareness of both renewable energy options and the Test-Aankoop brand, through continual publication of relevant, user-generated content.

- Improved customer intelligence and insight, which can be used to tailor future consumer rights programs.

- Increased customer satisfaction and loyalty, via tailored, immersive, interactive experience.

- Flexibility to expand the community to include blogs, wikis, activity stream, ideation, calendar, gamification, and more.

- Rapid Sitecore integration, based on API-first development model.

Vermeire, Desaever, and the rest of the team are not standing still though. In time, other features will be added to the Telligent-Sitecore system, including a notifications feature, the ability to upload media like videos and photos, gamification, polls, and additional community entry points within the Test-Aankoop Web pages.

"With Telligent, almost any community is possible," says Vermeire.

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