

OUTSTART

CASE STUDY: OutStart Participate Social Business Software



Digital Television Entertainment Services provider Uses Social Software to Enhance Customer Relationships

THE CHALLENGE

A rapidly growing provider of digital television entertainment services was challenged to control its support costs while supporting a surging customer base and a set of products that continued to grow more robust and complex. To meet these challenges, the customer decided to deploy social software to extend their support systems to include peer-to-peer social networking and troubleshooting. In the planning stage for this initiative, the customer had a number of key requirements including:

- No increase in headcount.
- A Software-as-a-Service (SaaS) implementation to avoid a major up-front investment that grew with the project.
- Complete ownership of the content and community.
- Best practices guidance, as they had no experience starting or managing a social CRM implementation.

THE SOLUTION

After a review of different solutions, the company selected OutStart's Participate platform and engaged OutStart's professional services department to launch its social software for service site. In addition to meeting the customer's list of required platform features, OutStart was also able to provide all the services required in launching this community. Additionally, this solution met the customer's challenges head on:

- No additional headcount from customer was needed to launch and manage this community. OutStart's solution included moderator(s) who were quickly trained on the customer's subject matter and were responsible for administering the community and escalating issues to the customer as needed.
- To meet their investment criteria, OutStart offered a SaaS model. The system was configured to match branding and domain name requirements and was presented to end users as a seamless extension of the customer's own support website.
- The company wanted to retain full ownership of this community to ensure that content was focused on peer-to-peer social networking and troubleshooting and would be moderated based on their defined terms and conditions.

Based on OutStart's experience in successfully deploying social CRM systems, the customer was guided through a rapid implementation that included the following phases:

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Project kick-off

Meet with the customer's project team and validate the business objectives, project requirements, and implementation plan.

Configuration workshops

Guide the customer through OutStart's recommended Participate features to best meet their needs, such as discussions by most common troubleshooting topic, and polls to gather key insights from customers and Roundtable Expert Events so that the customer could interact directly with their customers during key product rollouts. Other activities in this phase included defining a User Interface that matched the customer's branding, and creating a program to recognize and encourage hyper-affiliate members to be an active part of the community and answer peer-to-peer questions.

Content Population

Work with the customer to organize and seed their community with insights and online conversations so that customers would be greeted by a vibrant community on Day 1.

Rollout Readiness

Draft a test plan and punch list and validating with customer that all features, content, and outreach activities are complete prior to receiving written sign-off from the customer.

Post-launch Services

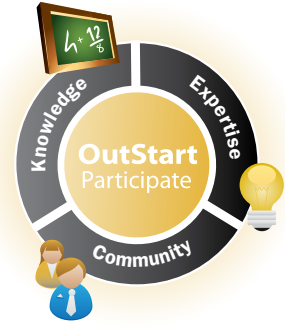
An OutStart Services Consultant delivers daily moderation and activity listening services in support of this customer, as well as weekly and monthly reporting that informs the customer of key metrics and qualitative trends in this customer community. Additionally, OutStart manages a hyper-affiliate program for this customer community which is responsible for answering a large percentage of questions in the forums.

THE RESULTS

Within the first year of launch, this customer community reported the following quantitative achievements:

- Typically more than 70,000 sessions, 400,000 reads, and 6,000 posts in a month
- Response time of less than 24 hours for 95% of all questions posted in this community
- Successful creation of an active hyper-affiliate program that typically accounts for more than 30% of all responses to customer questions.
- Estimated call deflections resulting in ROI exceeding 250% on a monthly basis

The customer has realized qualitative benefits from its deployment of social software for business as well, including positive end



user feedback on the solutions found in this community, and reports from the customer's engineering group that collected comments from the community were extremely helpful in helping to rapidly identify and resolve new issues. This customer is now planning to take advantage of other Participate features including Blogs and Wikis.

ABOUT OUTSTART

At OutStart, we're out to solve a big problem.

Most organizations possess a wealth of underutilized collective intelligence around their products, services, and processes. This underutilization negatively impacts employees, customers, and partners, costing precious time and money while hindering performance. Said simply, "what you people don't know will hurt you."

OutStart's social business software and learning systems act like a lifeline: connecting people to the know-how, creativity, and learning they require to be efficient, effective, and agile.

Since its inception in 1999, and backed by leading venture capital firms, OutStart has matured into a profitable and rapidly growing company with an impressive range of customers, who are surpassing their expectations and delivering exceptional business results. The company is honored to have customers like Autodesk, BB&T, Boeing Company, BT, CVS Caremark, DIRECTV, EDS, Internal Revenue Service, Lufthansa, McDonald's, MetLife, Prudential, TiVo, Australian Defence Force, U.S. Navy, UK Ministry of Defence, Verizon Wireless, and Yum! Brands.

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