

# Customer Community 101

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3 WAYS TO TRANSFORM YOUR  
CUSTOMER RELATIONSHIPS



 salesforce community cloud

## Introduction

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Customers expect, no, demand individualized, 1-to-1 experiences with your company and a service experience that is smarter and more personalized than ever. These same customers are the ones driving your business growth, so exceeding their expectations is critical. But lean support staffs make it difficult to deliver these interactions to each and every customer and many self-service options fall short. Not built for collaboration and disconnected from your company's other customer support systems, these self-service channels also fail to provide fast, personalized experiences for your customers.

The best customer service experience is the one that never has to happen because your customers are empowered to solve their own problems without even picking up the phone or sending an email. What's the solution to service that satisfies your customers without stretching your support staff too thin? A customer community that enables your customers to help themselves and each other – building brand loyalty amongst your customers and freeing up your agents to focus on the more complex questions and problems.

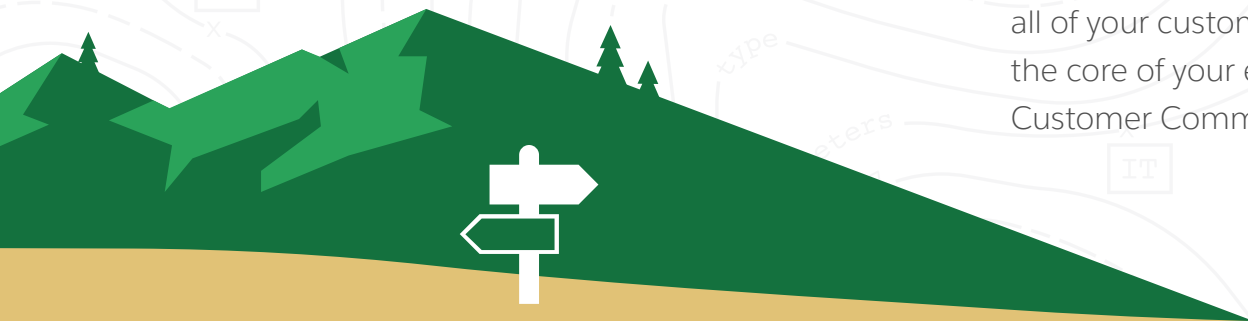
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# Self-Service at the Core

Today's consumers are moving fast and when they come across a problem or question, they don't want to waste any time in getting answers to these questions. These same customers are expecting more and more that they will be able to find these answers themselves. Social media channels encourage more personal and direct interactions with companies and create a deeper connection between the brand and the consumer.

How do you deliver fast, personalized service to these social-minded customers, without a support agent speaking to them on the phone? A self-service community deeply integrated in all of your customer support processes. Self-service can become the core of your entire service processes with Salesforce Customer Community.



## Fast, Smart Support – No Phone Call Necessary

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Within the customer community you can include a full knowledge base and Q&A section so answers are readily available to customers. With rich search and recommendation capabilities, customers can quickly find the most relevant answers to their questions in one place. Customers can also connect to the mobile-responsive community from any device, without sacrificing functionality – putting the right answers in the customer's fingertips.

When your customers have the ability to solve their own questions and concerns, that means fewer calls, emails, and tweets directed at your customer service department. According to a Salesforce customer relationship survey, customer communities result in a 31% increase in call deflection, so your support agents are free to tackle the tougher cases. Customer satisfaction also increases.

Companies that implemented a customer community saw a 31% increase in call deflection.

**SALESFORCE CUSTOMER RELATIONSHIP SURVEY**



## Home Depot Appeals to Its DIY Customer Base

Home Depot's customer self-service site allows its passionate and fiercely independent do-it-yourself customer base to ask questions and look up articles within the community, many of which are written by Home Depot employees. Topics in the community include a variety of discussions, like building materials, electrical, or tools and hardware so Home Depot customers can find information

that fits their particular project. If customers can't find what they are looking for, they can post questions within the discussion board and select employees can also participate in discussions and point the customer in the right direction.



## Looking for even more helpful community content?

Visit the Salesforce Community Cloud resource center.

CHECK IT OUT



## CHAPTER 2

# Customers Helping Customers

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Within a customer community, your customers aren't just empowered to help themselves, they can help each other, too. Your service agents aren't the only ones with thorough knowledge about your company's product or solution, many of your customers who are using it every day are also experts. By leveraging this passionate group to also answer questions within the community, you add a human face to your brand that also promotes other customers to become brand evangelists.



## A Support Ally

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When customers can't find answers to their questions in the knowledge base or FAQ section, they can post questions directly within the community and ask for help from fellow community members. Additionally, robust sharing rules allow your community manager to alter settings and manage who sees what. So while some questions and comments can remain public for the entire community to see, you can also manage sensitive questions and comments in a private channel.

Your customer service agents are never disconnected from the community. When a question goes unanswered or community members seem stuck, an agent can jump in and provide answers, share relevant files or documents, or create a support case. A customer community enables your support team to deliver premium customer experiences, efficiently, in a one-stop shop.

You can also incentivize active community participation with gamification, like leaderboards and special badges for your most active community members. Customers have direct access to their peers, who are often using your product in new and interesting ways – including ways that may not have occurred to you.

But your customer service agents are never disconnected from the community and are always able to jump in and provide answers when the community is not able to come up with them on its own. This might mean an agent could share relevant files or documents, create a support case or escalate it, or just answer the question right within the feed by commenting. A customer community enables your support team to deliver premium service, efficiently.

When customers see that you're listening, they will be more loyal to your company.





## PonoMusic Connects Music Lovers

Rock and roll legend Neil Young started PonoMusic to revolutionize the listening experience with a high fidelity audioplayer and by looking to bring back the communal aspect of music. Young and his team set up a Kickstarter campaign to fund the creation of the PonoPlayer and were surprised when the discussion board within the Kickstarter became a hub for people to come together and talk about not just Pono, but music as a whole.

The PonoMusic team was inspired by these vibrant discussions and sought to create a social music store that blends the e-commerce, the Pono website, and the community. To do so the Pono team used Community Cloud to build a Pono social music store where the focus wasn't on the e-commerce aspect.

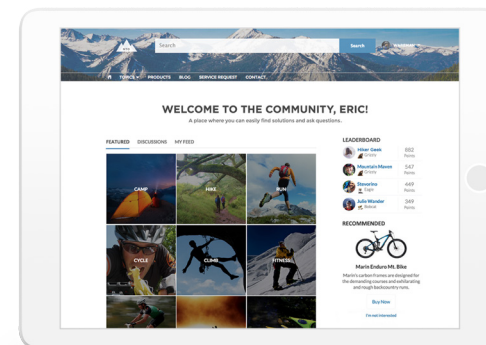
The Pono community is a place where people can hang out, talk to like-minded people and maybe buy some music. The public-facing community is a space where consumers can connect with one another on the topics that they're passionate about, while also assisting with the customer service side by answering questions for those who are interested in learning more about Pono.



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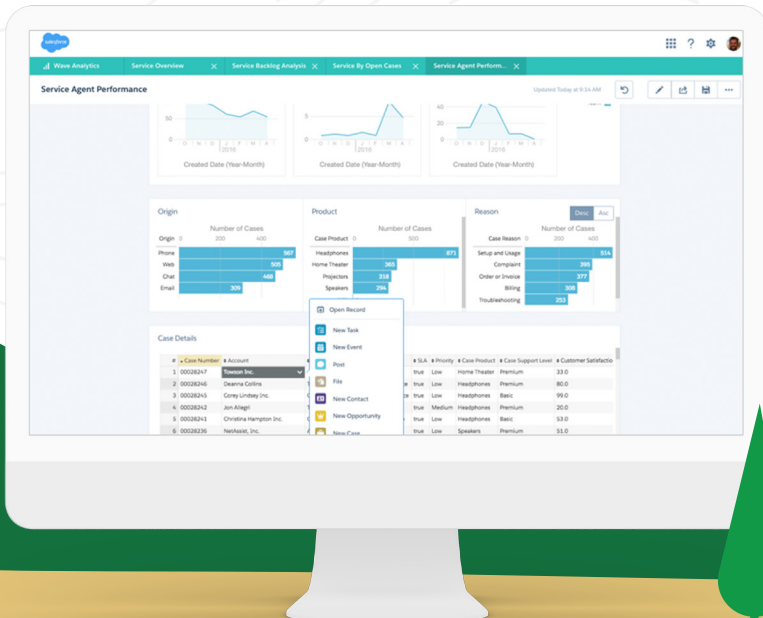


## CHAPTER 3

# Deeper Insights, Richer Relationships

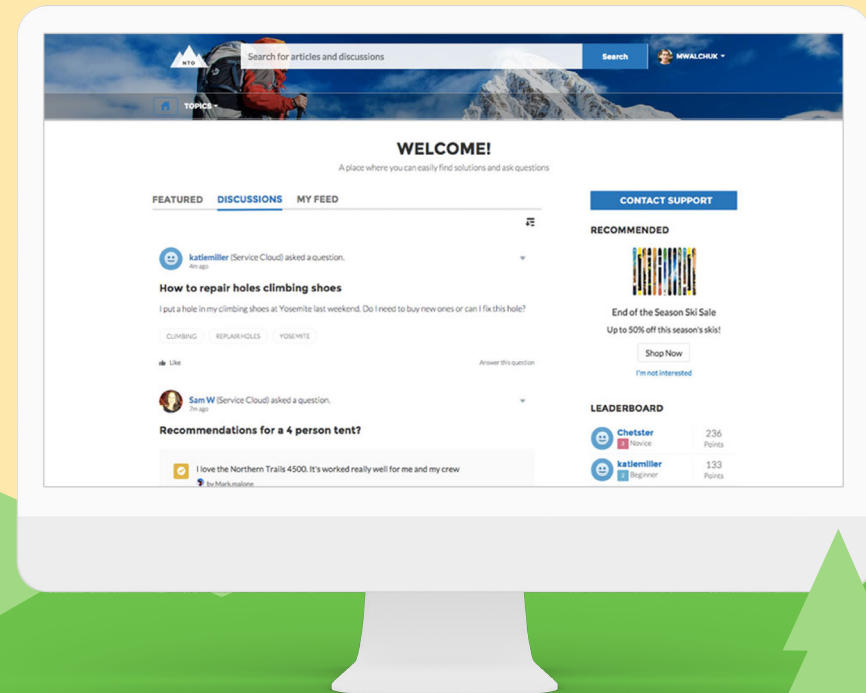
For true multichannel support, it's important to connect your customer community to your other service processes. With the combination of Service Cloud and Community Cloud, all of your customer service processes are on one platform – delivering a unified, 360-degree view of your support department and enabling a fast and personalized customer service experience.

With Service Wave Analytics, you can monitor all of your support metrics in real time and make business decisions based on these metrics immediately, rather than waiting to run a report with your data analysts and receiving the results two weeks later. Real-time results means you can clearly identify and track emerging issues and stay on top of them. Community Cloud is easily integrated with Service Cloud, meaning that your customer community is not a separate entity from the rest of your customer support channels. You can also create a workflow so that when a question in the community goes unanswered for a certain amount of time, a case is automatically created and directed to a service representative to answer the inquiry.



## A Direct Line to Your Customers

With a customer community, you can gather customer feedback and insights – their questions, concerns, and opinions are all within the community – and incorporate them in your business decisions. Your business is constantly in touch with that customer voice in a more intimate, personalized way. You can take this one step further by leveraging your passionate customer community members to create ideas within the community and highlight the top ideas through community endorsement. When customers see that you're listening, they will be more loyal to your company.



## Hit the Ground Running

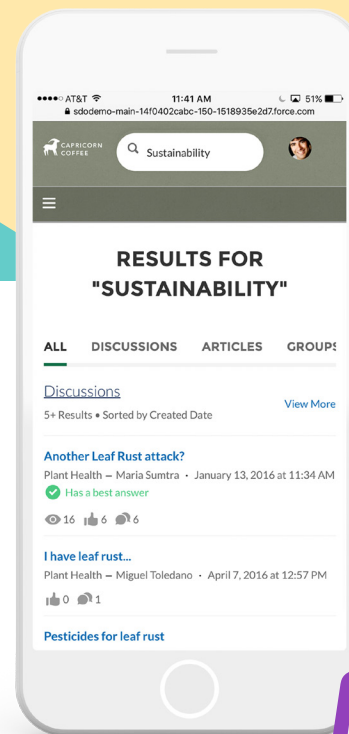
Getting up and running with an interactive community that's customized to your brand can feel like a big undertaking. Lightning Bolt and Lightning Community Builder enable rapid implementation of the community, without sacrificing any security, personalization, or reliability. Community Cloud features rich customization options with state-of-the-art frameworks to create a look and feel that matches perfectly with your brand.

With the Salesforce1 Mobile App, your community managers can access the community – even multiple communities – from anywhere so they can make changes or answer customer questions on the go.



## Make It Yours

Whether you want your community on mobile or desktop, branded or unbranded, open or closed, Salesforce gives you the ability to customize all aspects of your platform to not only make it yours, but to deliver the best experience for your customers.



## Conclusion

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Setting up a customer community is a win-win: your customers are empowered to find answers to their questions in real time, leading to greater customer satisfaction. On top of that, you have greater insights into your customers because of these personalized interactions. With Community Cloud, your customers can find everything they need to make the most of your product through a direct line to helpful resources, your support staff, and other customers.

## Start Creating a Community of Action with Salesforce

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With Community Cloud, you can open new lines of communication, from customer to customer as well as with your brand. It's all possible with the right tools. Want to learn more? Click below to see a free demo.

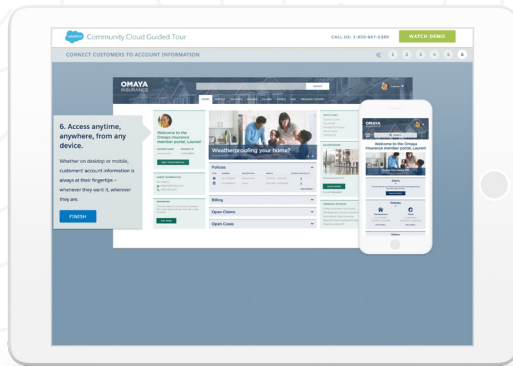
**48%** Faster resolution time via self-service

**48%** Increase in employee engagement

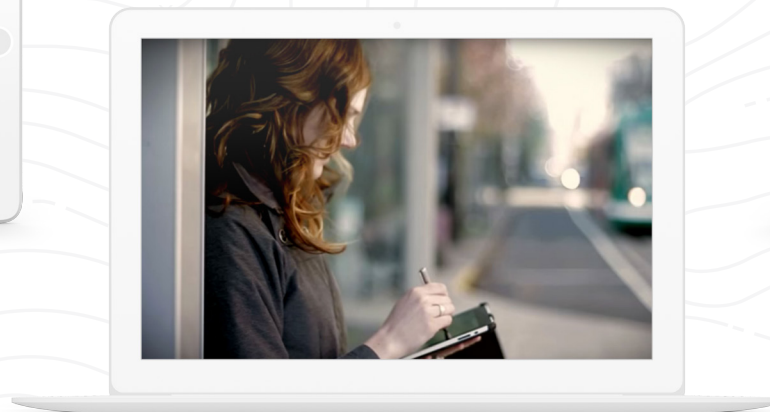
**45%** Increase in customer satisfaction

[WATCH DEMO](#)

# Resources You May Like



GUIDED TOUR



WATCH DEMO



GET THE E-BOOK



CONNECT TO YOUR CUSTOMERS  
IN A WHOLE NEW WAY



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