

Case Study



StudyMode

INDUSTRY: e-Learning

FOUNDED: 1999

HEADQUARTERS: Los Angeles, CA

TYPE: Privately Held

COMMUNITY SIZE: 15,000+

WEBSITE: StudyMode.com

COMMUNITY SITE: studymode.com/answers

COMPANY OVERVIEW

StudyMode is a platform for students to create, discover, and share study materials. StudyMode believes that education should evolve as the world evolves and is committed to developing cutting edge ed-tech tools to help students change the concept of studying from a chore to a life-changing skill.

Founded in 1999, StudyMode originally provided a search engine to help students complete essays and research papers. The company has since shifted toward a content-sharing model and has grown into an established destination for students looking to learn and increase their knowledge on any topic.

CLIENT SITUATION

StudyMode is committed to building the technology to help students research and learn more efficiently. They understand learning happens not just inside the classroom, but also in everyday life. According to Ralph Andrew Chochlac, Director of Product Management at StudyMode, “StudyMode is dedicated to helping students improve their research and writing skills. Our collection of research papers has helped millions of students, but they lacked a way to connect one on one on specific questions.” Chochlac continued, “To empower our students to connect and learn from one another, we required an online community that would complement our current offerings.”

Initially, StudyMode considered building an in-house Q&A solution, but the venture was deemed time consuming and expensive. “Our goal was to go-to-market quickly and avoid reinventing the wheel,” said Chochlac. “We decided that a solution with strong moderation and user management capabilities was the best option.”

DESIRED SOLUTION

StudyMode began the search for a Q&A solution that would enable the them to:

- Quickly build a robust community where students can create connections and discuss questions and answers.
- Focus on the customer experience instead of dedicating valuable time and resources to the development of an in-house solution.
- Easily customize the community to create a seamless, user-friendly experience.
- Moderate questions for effective community management.
- Obtain powerful analytics to assess community activity and health.

In the search for a Q&A community platform, StudyMode evaluated several open source options, as well as a commercial solution, Answerbase. After review, the evaluation committee determined that an open source solution would not meet StudyMode’s requirements for advanced moderation, customization, and user management. The team also concluded that Answerbase’s API limitations prevented the solution from fulfilling StudyMode’s customization expectations. Ultimately, AnswerHub was selected as best suited to launch, manage, and build the StudyMode community.

“With AnswerHub, we can focus on evolving our community instead of building and maintaining the IT infrastructure,” explained Chochlac. “Customization was a key criterion – we did not want to be locked into a specific type of user experience. AnswerHub’s API allowed us to customize the look and feel of the community and really make it our own.”

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BENEFITS

StudyMode implemented AnswerHub in 2015. “Prior to launch, we ran a series of tests to gauge community interest. We wanted to ensure that on day one, we would have questions coming in and that we understood user expectations.” Chochlac continued, “Our team is very involved in answering questions posted to the community. With AnswerHub, we can easily moderate questions and answers, and report on the community’s performance.”

Since implementation, StudyMode has realized the following benefits with AnswerHub:

CENTRALIZED KNOWLEDGE AnswerHub allowed StudyMode to integrate the Q&A community into their existing website. Students now have one centralized place to access research papers, capture and share knowledge, and collaborate. “We believe every question is worth asking, and with our new community, our students never have to study alone,” stated Chochlac. Using AnswerHub’s Spaces feature, StudyMode organizes questions and answers by topic – including art and film, history, and literature – to ensure students can quickly find information critical to success.

INCREASED ENGAGEMENT With AnswerHub, StudyMode has created an engaged community where students regularly ask questions, supply answers, and share quality contributions. In the last two months, StudyMode has experienced an increase in community engagement, with a greater than 80% answer rate.

COMPLETE CUSTOMIZATION Because AnswerHub is fully customizable, StudyMode was able to build a community that met its specific branding requirements. StudyMode relied heavily on AnswerHub’s API to create a unique user experience and establish a consistent flow from the existing website to the Q&A community.

ADVANCED MODERATION Quality contributions are critical to community success. StudyMode closely monitors community contributions to ensure students receive the best answers to their questions. StudyMode regularly reviews key metrics, including the number of questions and answers, as well as the average time to answer. “Timing impacts community adoption and the likelihood that a user will return to the community,” explained Chochlac. “Our team works diligently to answer questions as soon as possible. We also encourage our users to address questions of interest and contribute to our knowledge sharing community.”

ABOUT DZONE SOFTWARE

DZone Software is committed to providing outstanding software and unparalleled customer service. Our goal is to be the world leader in enterprise collaboration and knowledge sharing. DZone Software’s product, AnswerHub, enables organizations to create their own online communities for private and public use. Every day, sites powered by AnswerHub help thousands of users manage big content, big knowledge, and big communities. For more information, please contact 919-238-7100 or info@dzonesoftware.com.