

The 5 capabilities you need in a help center for B2B Software



Summary

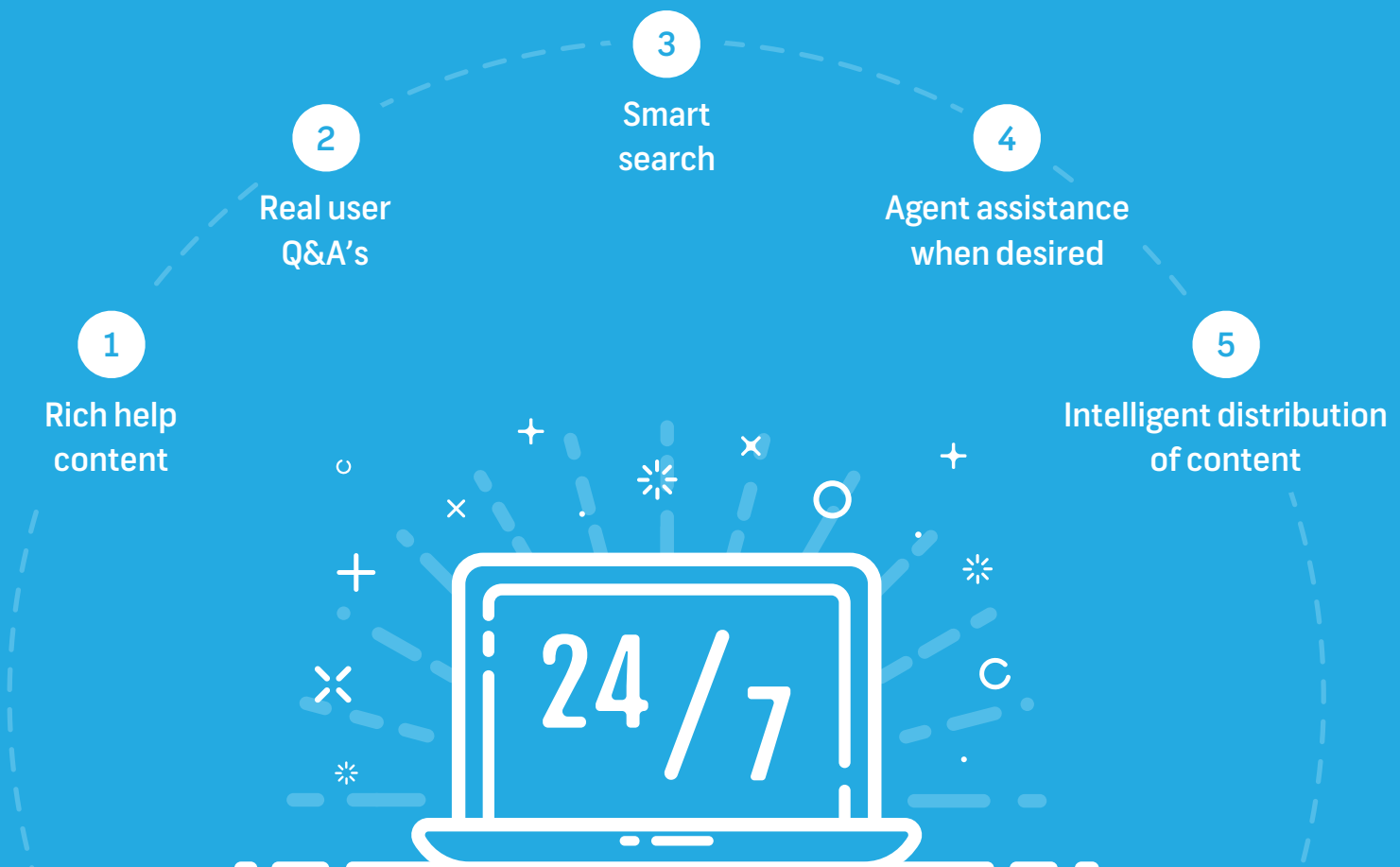
Business users should get the maximum value out of your software. They will have questions and will need recommendations on how to use your product. The best way to help them is to answer these is effortless, everywhere, hyper relevant and human when desired. Your digital help center is the foundation to fulfill this promise.

An online B2B help center provides answers to your users. It has all the relevant and actual knowledge in place, either generated by your company or by your own customer experts. It has short answers as well as more detailed long reads and discussions, and an overlaying search leads customers in the fastest way to the best answer. Depending on the complexity of your software product, an integration with ticketing or chat can be pushed more or less.

And since your users spent more time in your product then on your website, the possibility to distribute knowledge into your SaaS product itself is an unknown but increasingly important capability.

Why read this report?

When considering to build or replace a new help center, there are 5 capabilities you need to understand and embrace as a software company. This report gives you a deep understanding of these capabilities, and is based on a benchmark of 100+ industry leaders within B2B Software.



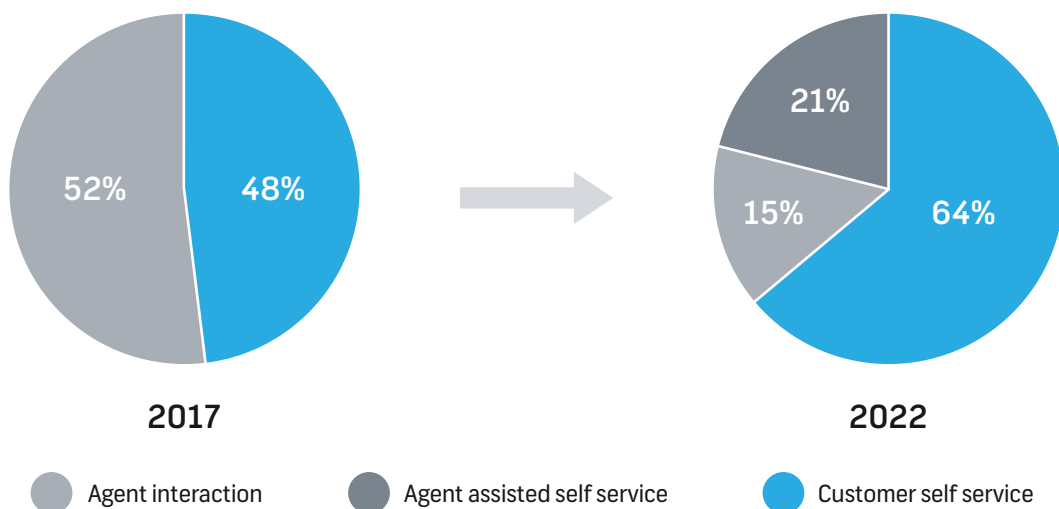
Self service first

Business end users massively use self service as the preferred way of getting answers to their questions. According to Forrester, 72% don't want to call for support. They prefer to search in your product itself, browse your help and FAQ pages, Google or use chat.

Unfortunately, right now less than 50% of your users will actually find an answer by themselves. The remaining ones will be unsatisfied or will have to contact your company – taking up their (and your) valuable time. It effects the product adoption, puts more pressure on CSM and support and leads ultimately to less renewals. The cause is often a siloed service experience: hidden FAQ's, chats without context, a standalone community, outdated search results, etc.

To solve this, a smart and integrated help center should be at the core of your self-service ecosystem. When done right, your help center will have a positive impact on ticket deflection, efficiency of the support team, renewals and advocates and customer experience.

Predicted shift to self-service (Gartner, 2017)



1. Rich help content

We are all different in how we learn how to master a software product , like how to configure a dashboard. Some of you might want to read the full how to guide first. Others immediately try and error themselves.

There should be a balance between visual and written content, for example short how-to videos for impatient people and extensive detailed articles for more detail orientated people. Traditional FAQ's never really cut it. They are hard to maintain, mostly outdated and way often too generic. A smart help center offers a rich variety of different content types. By blending all these content types into one central knowledge, you provide all needed information to optimal answer your customers' questions.

- ✓ Text
- ✓ Editorial
- ✓ Updates / new releases
- ✓ Video
- ✓ Featured content
- ✓ File uploads
- ✓ Tutorials & how-to's
- ✓ Product documentation
- ✓ Discussions & user generated content

Ensure quality by user validation

It is hard to determine upfront which content is relevant. Therefor you should use the most powerful validation tool there is: your own users! For example, a simple thumbs up / thumbs down functionality gives you great insights in the performance of your content.

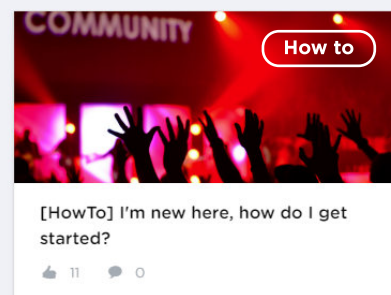
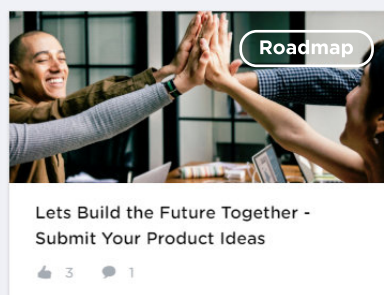
Did this topic help you find an answer to your question?



A good structure to organize content

Labeling and tagging of content is needed to ensure better search results and a better service experience for your customers. With the right discipline, it helps you to build a structured and easy-to-index knowledge base. From a user perspective, categorization based on use cases helps. Common categories for a SaaS company can include:

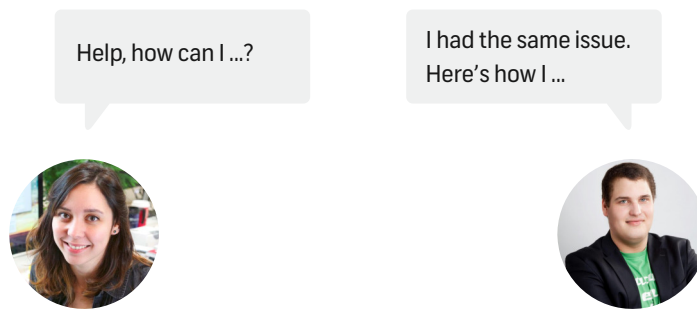
- ✓ Getting started
- ✓ Best practices
- ✓ Settings & integrations
- ✓ Reporting



2. Real user input & validation

There is a fundamental difference in building knowledge using a traditional inside-out way versus a modern outside-in approach.

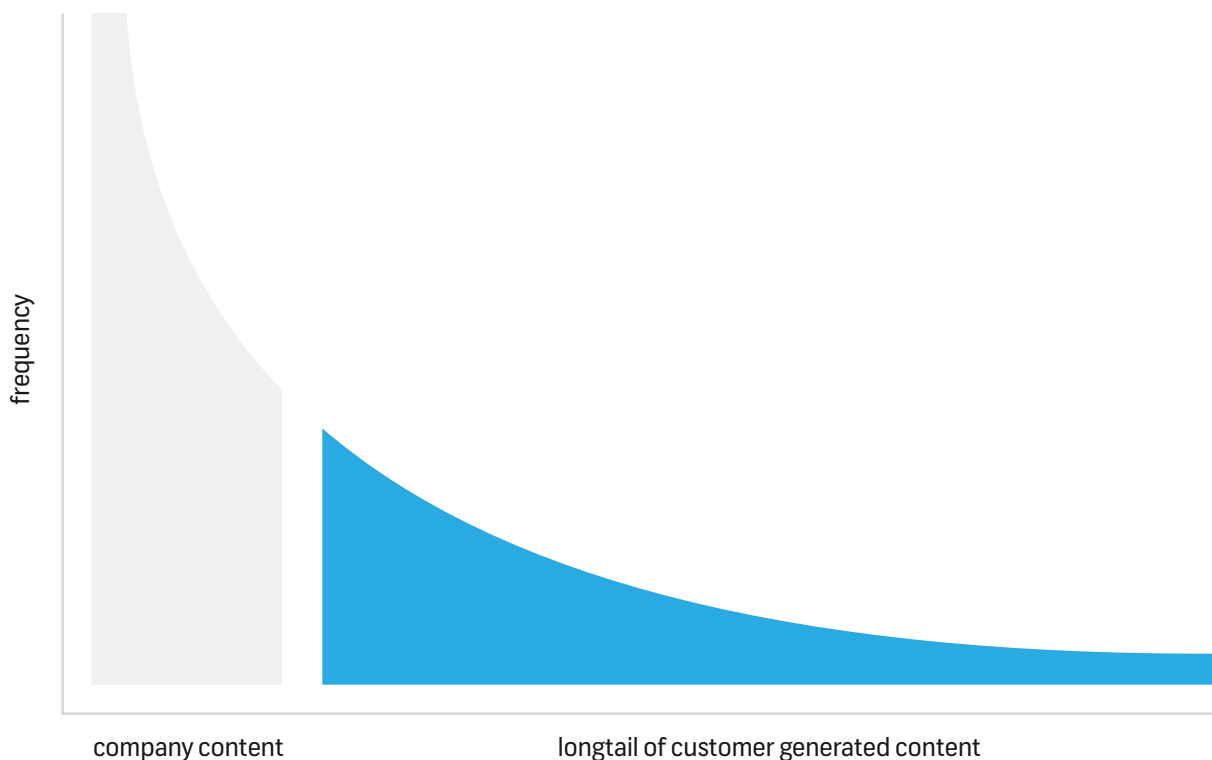
Outside-in means that you utilize your biggest hidden workforce: your own users! Allowing them to ask questions and provide answers within your help center results in a wealth of relevant and actual content. It provides a question driven way to incrementally build a knowledge base, based on customer demand.



Build a richer knowledge base by combining your company's content and user generated content

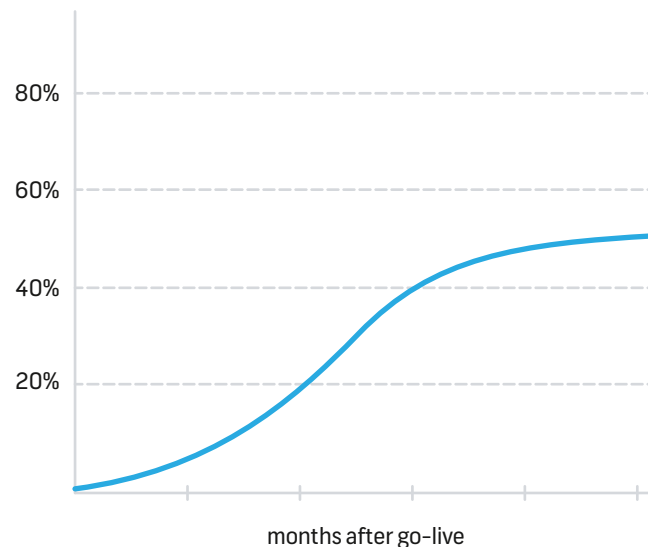
With the outside-in approach, a significant part of answers are created in a more human and authentic way. This builds more trust and, increases your SEO ranking, and above all, more actual and relevant content.

Combine company created and customer created content
to cover the full spectrum of questions



Peer-to-peer support


The part of all questions provided by other customers is called the peer-to-peer support percentage. The more generic your product is, the higher this percentage can be.



In general, up to 50% of questions for SaaS providers can be answered by other users

Get product input from your users using ideas, surveys & validation

An interactive help center is the best place to gather real user input. This input can be used to improve products with research and feedback (surveys, ideation, news, tips & sweepstake submissions). A product owner can be in direct contact with its users, in order to validate and improve the roadmap and even include user feedback during sprints and prototyping. Ideation and conversational research are proven methods to achieve this. A help center should be able to facilitate this, ideally with the ability to have this content public or by invite only.


**tomasmouton** inSpire others
Possibility to upload documents ?
Hello! Sometimes we have the necessity to upload some documents on the community. Use cases: ->We write some help and support articles (for our routers, apps) and we would like to...

Vote 16

161

9

13 days ago


**Ditte** Super user
Grant or deny posting rights in category or board. ?
Hi all, We're having some troubles with end users posting topics in boards like "News and announcements", despite having a general "ask a question" board where they can add all their...

Vote 14

140

8

7 months ago

**Riina** Ready to inSpire others
Empower superusers to be able to mark best answers to questions ?
I think it would be a great addition to the Custom User Roles settings to be able to add the option for a certain user group (in our case the superusers) to be able to mark best answers to questions...

Vote 12

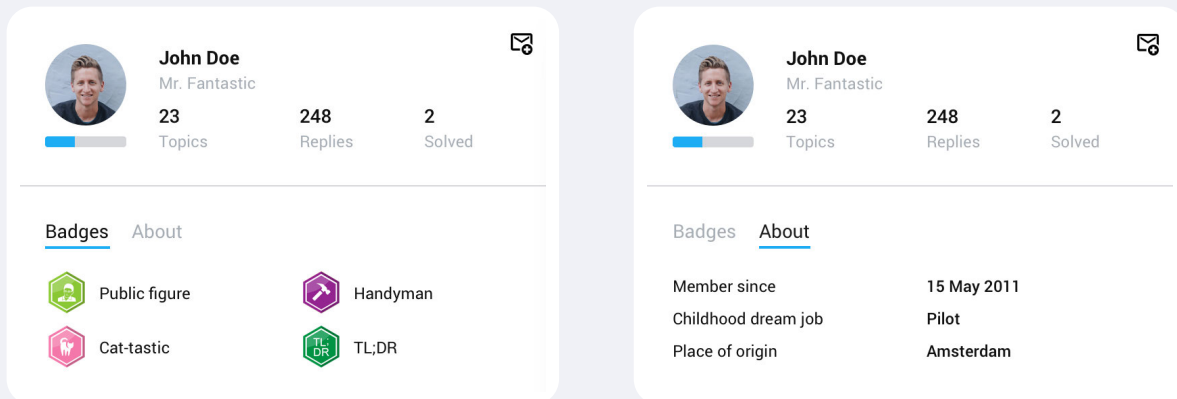
87

3

3 months ago

Gamification

Gamification involves applying gaming elements to your help center to motivate and reward your customers. It is one of the best ways to engage your users and keep them coming back for more, by creating incentives for continued participation using proven gamification elements include ranks and badges. People can earn these based on rules which encourage desired behavior, such as given trusted answers or the validation of content.



Example of a user profile card where a user is grown in rank and has earned badges in a specific domain of expertise. The badges show John's field of expertise to other customers.

.....

"We want to gather input from our customers, and have conversations on ideas and the need that's driving those ideas. We also see other customers giving answers and valuable tips on workarounds. This is why we created a community powered help center" – Rene de Jong, CMO Infoland

.....



3. Make it easy to find answers with smart search

A smart help center is full of knowledge, including old and new and many different content types. It shouldn't be left to your customers to look for the right structure and relevance of this knowledge.

Search is at the core of the service experience, and relevance is the one aspect of search that can't be overlooked. Nothing will have as much impact on the quality of the experience. By offering a smart search option you can guide the customer to the most relevant piece of knowledge.

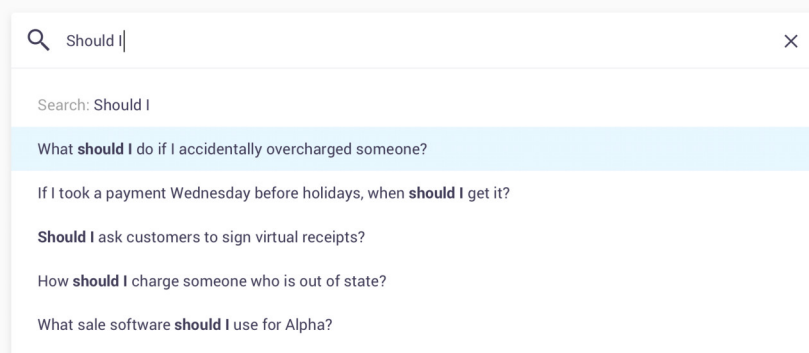
But what is the definition of 'smart'? As a combination of query rules, custom ranking and typo tolerance, smart search recognizes your customers' intent to provide them instantly with the most relevant results.

Custom ranking

Results can be sorted based on votes, recency, views, or a combination of these factors. Therefore, the right algorithm and presentation of search results is the secret behind the best search experiences. It will guide your customers to the most relevant information and prevents people to create duplicate topics and support tickets.

Query suggestion

Query suggestion is a well-known UI experience that only companies with big data and user research can offer. Providing suggestions helps the user type longer queries. For mobile users, it reduces the amount of typing required to execute a search. But it's not just about typing less. It's far more powerful - it helps users formulate the best search. Good suggestions are proven queries that ensure the best results. The quality of the suggestions is as important as the results they generate.



Gain insights from user search data with search analytics

By analyzing what your users search for, you can understand what they want and which keywords they use. By looking at how they interact with search results, you can understand how well your knowledge performs. Most importantly, through search, you can get valuable feedback about your users' intent: feedback that accelerates their service journey and your service metrics. And by having a structured approach towards analysis, you will be able to close the knowledge gap. It will teach you which content is missing or is not accurate anymore.

4. Agent assistance when desired

A smart help center is your best first line of defense, allowing your customers to find all the generic answers themselves. Or open a topic and wait for other experts to reply. But in certain cases, people desire immediate human interaction. To guard the customer experience, this option shouldn't be hidden too much.

The power of self-service content over assisted channels differs per SaaS company. At Google Analytics, for instance, 95% of all incoming questions have a generic element which can be answered via self-service content. The more generic incoming questions are, the less prominent human-assisted channels or your ticketing system should be positioned in your help center.

When no answer is found

Customers might be unable at first to find a (good enough) answer within all the information you provide. In that case a widget can be shown with available alternatives, including:

- ☐ Create a topic and ask other experts for help
- ☐ Show live chat (if available)
- ☐ Create a ticket
- ☐ Show phone number or CSM details (if available)

For every option, providing the next channel with the right context (such as search queries or customer profiles) will help increase resolution rates.

Knowledge loop

The answer given via a ticket or live chat might be valuable for other users as well. In a smart integrated help center it is possible to push relevant 1:many knowledge back to the public help center via API calls. This ensures a more actual and relevant knowledge base and less need to escalate in the end.



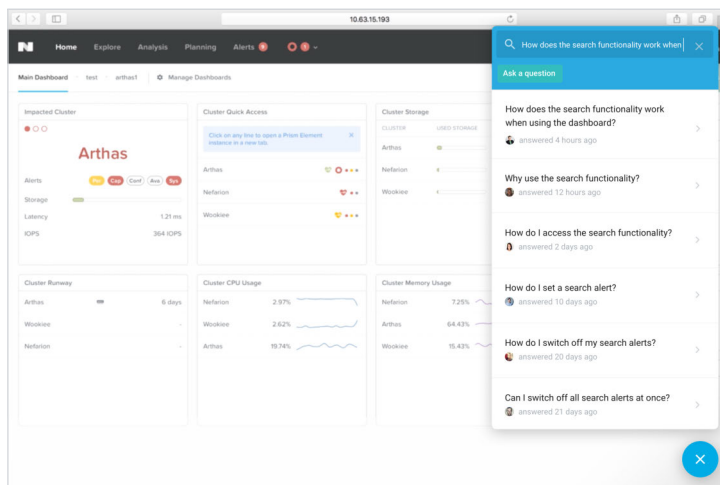
5. Intelligent distribution of content

Providing answers where your customers are, is the main promise of effortless self service. But how do you ensure that you provide the right answers in the right channel, without the need to create different content for each?

On average, less than 10% of your traffic goes to your help center. So ideally, most of the content in your help center will be consumed outside of it.

Provide context relevant help on every page in your software product

Finding answers without effort is a main element for great service experiences. Most questions come up when using your SaaS product. Leaving them in the dark and forcing them to go back to Google or browsing your website for a hidden FAQ section is not effortless. But providing them with relevant answers on the same page is. A help center with the ability to unleash relevant Q&A's in your product values your customers' time.



Example of a widget showing relevant help center content on a product page. The content in the widget is contextual, self learning and is able to generate new questions when no answers are found.

Make sure people can find help when they use Google

Also in B2B, Google is a main source for information. The more known your SaaS brand is, the more searches will be done in Google. As Google optimizes questions over keywords, real user Q&A's accelerate self service. The longtail of content, written in a human way, and sometimes answered by other customers, results in highly ranking answers in Google and other search engines. However, Google doesn't find your content automatically. Your help center needs to be fully optimized in terms of content, page layouts and structured data (using for instance schema.org).

How to set up a Sonos speaker with the Sonos Controller app for iPhone and iPad

1. Launch the Sonos Controller app from your Home screen.
2. Tap on ** Set up a new Sonos system**.
3. Tap on Next on the welcome screen. ...
4. Tap on Standard Setup. ...
5. Tap Next on the Standard Setup screen. ...
6. Tap Next on the Connect To Power screen.

More items...

[How to set up and use Sonos Controller on iPhone and iPad](https://en.community.sonos.com/how-set-and-use-sonos-controller-app-iphone-and-ipad)

<https://en.community.sonos.com/how-set-and-use-sonos-controller-app-iphone-and-ipad>



Self-service content from a help center directly highlighted in Google search results

About inSided

inSided changes the way business end users receive digital customer service. Our smart help center is designed for B2B software companies and helps you to scale support and CSM, increase product adoption and renewals. The help center is fully configurable and has low cost of ownership due to automatic updates and a usage based monthly fee.

The inSided platform enables an efficient CSM and support organization while keeping service levels high, and improve retention. Our customers typically see 15-25% reduction of support costs through self-service, 10-15% higher NPS scores & customer advocacy, and 8% reduction in churn.



vodafone

T-Mobile

Telefonica

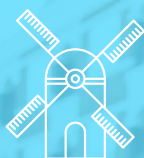
SONOS

TOMTOM

Technology is just one click away. Success is not.

Success is much more than just the right technology. As your dedicated partner, it is a mindset for us. Success is about a great kick off, continuous growth, focus on ROI and creating a world class team with thorough experience. Use our proven approach to ensure you get all essential knowledge and support, in every step of the way.

Contact us for a free trial or demo



Amsterdam

Singel 118
1015 AE Amsterdam
The Netherlands
+31 20 427 95 97



New York

3 West 18th Street
New York, NY 10011
USA
+1 929 207 0164

www.insided.com

hello@insided.com

[@insidedmedia](https://www.instagram.com/insidedmedia)