

ACRONIS INCREASES BETA TRIALS THREEFOLD BY PROVIDING ITS CHANNEL PARTNERS WITH TARGETED END-USER SOCIAL MEDIA CONTENT THROUGH SOCIALONDEMAND®.

Background

Acronis technology enables every time, everywhere secure data access, reduces the risk of valuable data loss and controls storage costs for organizations of all sizes across physical, virtual and cloud environments. Formed in 2002, Acronis has 18 offices and 750 staff worldwide, currently supporting approximately 175,000 business customers, 80% of which are managed indirectly by its 30,000 channel partners.

Challenges

Acronis is constantly looking at ways to further enhance its engagement and collaboration with its channel partner network, but when it came to social media, the company faced new challenges.

As part of its annual partner survey in late 2011, Acronis gave its channel partners the chance to discuss how important social media was to them. Whilst the responses were overwhelmingly positive, many partners confirmed they just didn't have the time and resources to drive social media effectively and many did not even know where to start. It was evident that Acronis needed to actively support its 30,000 channel partners in social media engagement.

Another draw-back to an indirect model for vendors such as Acronis is a lack of 'touch-points' and direct influence over the end-users. Acronis wanted to leverage its channel of partners as brand ambassadors, but with such a wide partner base controlling and managing such a task was a challenge.

“ We use socialondemand as provided by Acronis and it works beautifully for us – very simple to get the news and use it. We have reposted hundreds of Acronis posts on our Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn accounts and have had thousands of 'clicks' and retweets. Also, our social networks seem to have grown a lot since we started using AcronisGoSocial. Frankly, it's one of the best channel tools provided by a vendor I've ever used. ”
5 Stars *****

Michael Goldstein,
President, LAN Infotech

Approach and Solution

Late 2011, after attending one of our live demos, Acronis launched a UK pilot of socialondemand, the channel social media syndication platform from purechannelapps™.

socialondemand enables partners and Acronis staff to select and publish relevant social media content to their own social media accounts. The high value content is available in real time and re-publishing this content takes three clicks for a partner.

“Wanting to gain a competitive advantage, we were one of the first vendors in Europe to adopt socialondemand,” commented Celine Astre, Global Senior Partner Program Manager with Acronis. “As we wanted to focus our attention on delivering a consistent and controlled flow of relevant end-user content, we initially offered the social media solution to a small subset of 25 partners, including resellers and distributors,” she added.

Not only did Acronis offer the socialondemand platform to their channel, but they encouraged their internal teams to leverage centrally created PR content to evangelise the Acronis corporate messaging to their own social media connections.

The Results

Following on from the success of the UK pilot, Acronis now offers socialondemand in three languages - English, French and German - to partners around the globe under the brand 'AcronisGoSocial'. Acronis starts 2013 with over 370 partners on-board and 686 linked social media accounts between them, Acronis has instantly amplified its social media voice through its channel partners to a new base of over 191,000 social media connections.

Of the 460 posts made available to Acronis partners in 2012 through socialondemand, 8,849 reposts have been made by partners to date resulting in 131,930 downloads, clicks or retweets - an average of 287 per post.

A total of 34% of indirect followers have clicked a link in a post created by Acronis within socialondemand.

Notably, the ten most active Acronis partners posted 2,269 posts within socialondemand, which resulted in 16,932 downloads, clicks or retweets.

Benefits

Control

By using socialondemand, Acronis is able to deliver a consistent message through its channels to create 'one social voice' being heard from both its partners and staff.

"We were delighted when, very quickly, partners saw the value of the platform and content, and whilst the tool allows partners to edit any content provided, we found that the majority of users were happy to post the content as it was provided," confirmed Astre.

ROI

Return on investment from social media has notoriously been difficult to prove, but socialondemand has driven some tangible results for Acronis. "By being active in social media, you help people in your community make informed IT related decisions, which in turn will send more business your way. A valuable benefit that we are delighted to share with our partner community" said Astre.

"socialondemand is definitely more cost effective than other marketing communication vehicles in achieving this, and we have seen a threefold increase in beta trials of our solutions since deploying the social media tool. "

Differentiation

"Acronis dared to go where many other companies only talked about going - social media is an incredible marketing tool, but the key is learning how to utilise and leverage your existing connections to achieve a single goal for them and your channel partners." stated Olivier Choron, CEO and Founder at purechannelapps.

Channel Enablement

Using socialondemand, Acronis has enabled its channel partners to build a positive and influential presence in the social media space, saving partners time and money in content creation and giving them a balanced supply of Acronis and industry news in the process.

The Future

In time, Acronis would like to open the programme to all of its worldwide partners and adding more language options. The company is also about to trial socialleads globally, the new purechannelapps module that enables vendors to close the social ROI loop and drive sales more quickly by connecting active social media prospects directly with sales partners.

