



Creating a Modernised Training Experience with Influitive

By:

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Intro

Appropriate training is critical to the success of any new product adoption. Users get the maximum value when they know the ins and outs of a solution and how to make it fit their needs. In some cases, not knowing how to install a product correctly can even be dangerous. The proper training ensures everyone gets what they need, the results they want, and more satisfied customers.

At **Aico**, we pride ourselves on the free training programme that's existed for more than a decade. Aico is the European market leader in home life safety, producing a variety of alarms to protect every home. Every year we train 5,000 electrical installers, housing providers, call centres, and gas engineers to install our products. Although our free training isn't required, it helps installers stay up to date on legislation and install our alarms efficiently and effectively.



The cornerstone of Aico's business ethos is quality, service, innovation, and education. We have a large market share, and it's great that our alarms sell themselves. But we want people to get the most out of our products because proper installation means the return rate on our products is less than 1%. Installers also benefit from the accreditation associated with our training, and we list them on our website through our "Find an Installer" search.

We have always trained our installers well, but we wanted to discover more ways to engage them and provide more value.





Business Changes Inspired Us to Rethink Our Approach

I've seen two major shifts at Aico since I came to the company in 2017. The first change was modernising our training delivery. We previously trained 10 people per session and gave them each a massive folder of paperwork as part of the process. Around 2018, we began to use more mobile demonstration units, allowing us to take our training on the road and double the number of trainees in each session.



The second shift was our transition from a B2B model to one that included a B2C focus. We're dominant in the B2B space and have been for a long time—we have a 90% market share in social housing providers in the U.K. So we decided to expand our outreach to homeowners and private landlords. This shift resulted in a change in marketing strategy.

We've also undergone massive growth in digital marketing over the last couple of years. When I became the Marketing Manager, we had a Facebook page, a LinkedIn page, and a Twitter account. We've since expanded to TikTok and Instagram, and our YouTube channel, **Aico TV**, has doubled in size over the past 12 months and is at the forefront of our marketing efforts.



2,000

Aico **Advocates**

1,150

Regularly Engage
on the Platform





As part of this modernisation, we examined engagement points throughout and after the training process. We realised that our engagement levels with our installers weren't as high as they could be. Sure, we had subscribers to our newsletter and social media channels, but our installers are some of our biggest advocates and we knew we could do better with continuous engagement.

Levelling the Playing Field Through Education



Our first thought was to create a loyalty programme, and we formed an internal focus group to explore the idea. Initially, we thought about rewarding people for buying products, similar to the club cards and point systems of companies like Sainsbury's or Tesco. But the playing field wasn't equal—large installers buy in bulk, so they would benefit more than smaller players, who purchase a few products at a time. We wanted to offer something that would provide equal opportunity to all installers.

Going back to our company ethos, we landed on the idea of forming a community around education. That way, everyone who completes our installer training would be on an equal playing field. We created another focus group, which spent a year researching other customer communities and compiling best practices. That was how we landed on Influitive.



“With Influitive, we benefited from the support team, the Influitive Institute training, and access to documents and videos—all of the “extras” for other companies were part of the Influitive package.






21,263

Acts of
Advocacy


15,281

Challenges
Completed



Several colleagues had used Influitive to build engaging advocate communities at other companies, and it seemed like the perfect fit for Aico. We liked the gamification feature, and our education plan fits seamlessly within Influitive's rewards system and challenges (targeted asks for which participants get points upon completion).

The other two things that put Influitive ahead of its competitors were its easy-to-use interface and support. Other community-based engagement platforms required us to pay for additional support or only offered support for a short period, which made us concerned about the longevity of the solution. With Influitive, we benefited from the support team, the **Influitive Institute** training programme, and access to documents and videos—all of the “extras” for other companies were part of the Influitive package.



Training Works Best When It's a Journey

The next step was creating an inter-departmental implementation team, including marketers and trainers. One of our first questions was whether we wanted to make all our training modules available in the community. We decided to keep the initial training module in-person and then provide installers with additional modules through our community, Expert Installer.



From there, implementation was relatively easy. We already had the content; we just had to translate it into bite-sized asks. Our team at Influitive was always flexible and creative in coming up with advice to meet our needs. They helped us build and schedule content, so it's ready to push out when appropriate. With their help, we began seeing value in creating a journey around the training process rather than giving everything to installers at once. When installers complete each module, they unlock more, and they continue on that path because they want to see what's next.

+ Many installers didn't see our in-person training programme through to completion. The content was relevant, but it was hard for many people to align their work schedule with the training schedule. Even though the mobile unit allowed us to be more flexible, we couldn't accommodate everyone in every situation. Now that these modules are available virtually within our Expert Installer community, people can complete them in their own time, at their own speed, in a comfortable environment.

Some of the best feedback I get is notifications of completed challenges. I see that people train in the evenings and weekends, which means they find the content valuable enough to train in their own time. Getting this content to more installers illustrates the value of creating an interactive, virtual community versus relying solely on in-person training.

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133 Engaged
Members

66 Discussion
Topics

“Community engagement remains consistently high because people like being rewarded. People strive to be their best, and features like the leaderboard and monthly rewards capitalise on that desire.”

Encouraging People to Succeed

Our initial goal was to reach 1,000 community members within the first year of launching the Expert Installer community. We have surpassed that target, reaching more than 2,000 Aico advocates. Of these, 1,150 installers regularly engage on the platform. Community members have completed 21,263 acts of advocacy, including 15,281 challenges. We also have a lively discussion board, with 133 members engaged in 66 discussion topics. The Aico Installer Community also showed a significant measurable return on investment in its first year, with a value of \$111,960.

Like everyone else, we performed a lot of virtual training via Zoom or Microsoft Teams at the start of the pandemic. Our initial registration numbers were great, but they dwindled as the months wore on and people got tired of those platforms. By contrast, the engagement in our Expert Installer community has remained consistently high because people like being rewarded. People strive to be their best, and features like the leaderboard and monthly rewards capitalise on that desire.

My advice to anyone starting a community: Set aside some time to schedule and preload the content. The content doesn't always have to be about the business, either. We have had success keeping information topical, such as a thread that featured photos of Storm Eunice. We've also learned to lean heavily on the Influitive content library for non-educational challenges, which lessens the workload for programme administrators. People love when we ask them to post a picture of their favourite breakfast or their most memorable vacation. Those ideas help keep the community fresh and fun.



We've also discovered that many people are more confident behind a screen than in an in-person classroom environment. Someone might be more willing to share their experience in an online forum than they would in a more formal training setting. They feel less pressure online, and by answering each other's questions in community discussions, they're expanding everyone's knowledge base. Our internal technical team is always prepared to answer installers' queries, but we often find other installers answer the questions pretty well. Technical support only checks responses for accuracy, which frees their time to answer harder, more complicated queries.

“Engagement is all about continuing a conversation. When you give people reasons to return to your community, it brings them closer to the company.”



A Relationship Built on Transparency and Confidence

Engagement is all about continuing a conversation. We give people reasons to return to our community, which brings installers closer to the company. Without Influitive, we would have been forced to go deeper into social media, which can be great for interactions, but not so much for our education and training goals.



We train 5,000 installers every year, so there's plenty of room for our community to grow. We've just signed up for an additional two-year contract with Influitive because we see the potential to further the community and nurture more Aico ambassadors. As we emerge from the pandemic, we also see the opportunity to bring online advocates to in-person experiences. Our marketing team is starting to plan more in-person events and think about how our online ambassadors could play a role. Just because we've created Expert Installer as a digital community doesn't mean it has to stay exclusively online.

Influitive has bridged the gaps between Aico and our installers. Now that we have access to more of them, we can continue to work on engagement, improve their professional outcomes and, ultimately, the experience for our customers.

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