

KHOROS COMMUNITY:

THE GOOD  
THE BAD  
AND THE UGLY

# THE COMMUNITY PLATFORM STANDOFF

The purpose of this research series is to explore the good, the bad and the ugly side of the community platforms challenging the top of the market.

Throughout 2021, Community was placed front and center on the world stage. If you're reading this, you probably already part of this shift.

Community champions were there leading the line, already skilled at cultivating productive online relationships.

Successful communities shone as beacons of productivity, where individuals were comfortable, empowered, connected, engaged, seen, and heard.

What's clear now is the impact community is having is accelerating.

So it's not surprising to see even more attention being paid to these community programs; the costs, the problems, the brand experiences. Everything.

As such, more questions are going to be asked about value for money, especially in a marketplace that is getting more and more competitive each year.

It's no secret that Khoros has priced itself far above the rest of the market, so what better place to start our review of the major platforms?

**We asked 75 Khoros communities to share their thoughts around costs, support quality, flexibility, and future goals.**



THE GOOD

## The Good:

# The relationships with the Khoros technical team.



Having worked with technical teams from a smorgasbord of vendors, we know first-hand how important it is to get support when roadblocks reveal themselves.

Previous feedback from clients and partners has been critical of Khoros' technical team, so this is one area we wanted to explore. With the level of investment brands are making in Khoros,

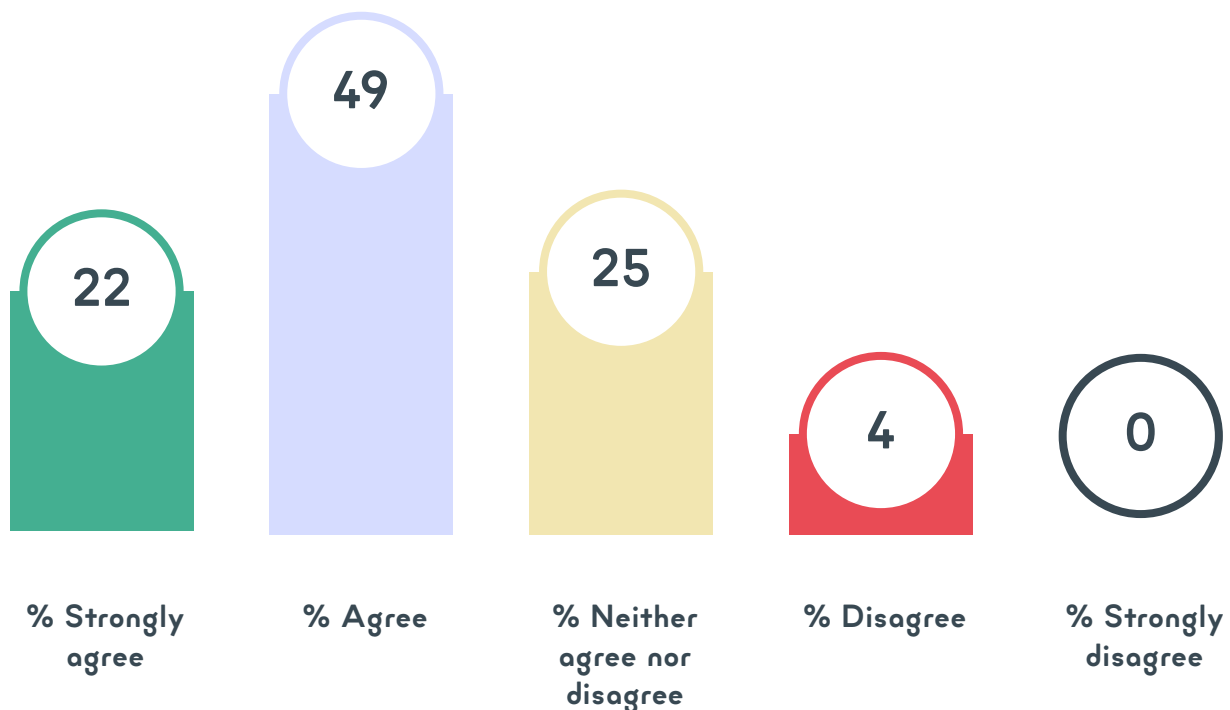
the relationship with the technical team should be excellent. Every customer should get treated like a princess.

Our findings show a different, more satisfied story; Satisfactory to Excellent accounts for 98.61% of the responses.

It's fair to say Khoros do a good job at keeping the wheels spinning.

The Good:

# Khoros works well with community managers to meet the needs of their community.



With the increased attention community is getting, we expect community managers to be put under more pressure.

Therefore, it is great to see the overwhelming majority are getting the support you need to fulfil the needs of your community.

Strip away issues with cost and you are still left with an excellent all-in-one platform with a rich feature set.

## The Good:

# What you like most about the platform.

We've curated the responses that best represent that common themes:

“ Its user friendly, the options are clearly defined, easy to use admin console, and moderation options. ”

“ It works - it provides the platform we need right now and the team have been supportive on the journey we have been on. ”

“ The customization options through Khoros are a huge boost to our team, as they allow us to repurpose out of the box functionality in novel ways that help differentiate content areas within the community. ”

“ The “add on” support workflow tool to set up queues and priorities for support teams and the “Studio” backend that lets you easily make changes. The platform is pretty easy to navigate and intuitive. ”

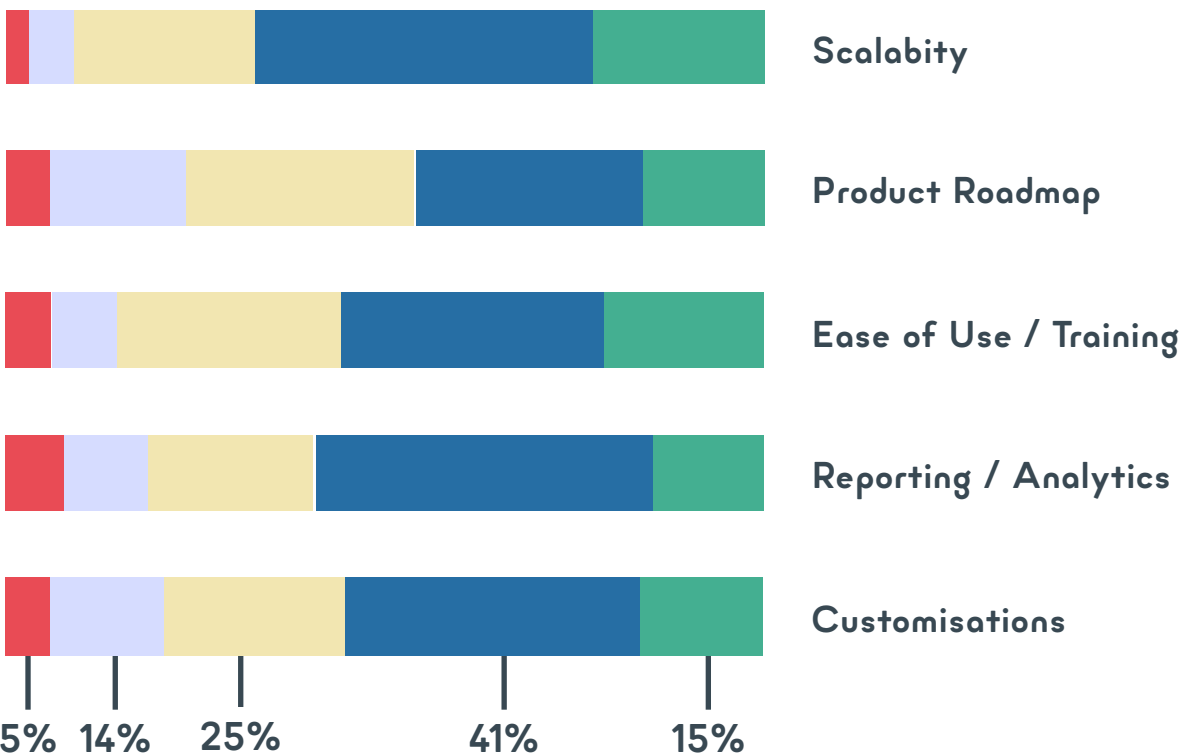


THE  
**BAD**

## The Bad:

# Underlying problems with Khoros capabilities.

### Rating Key:



Khoros has always boasted a rich feature set, so it's not surprising to see that reflected by the mostly positive feedback on it's capabilities.

However, the feedback that stands out to us is for customisations.

Nearly 44% rate their capabilities as Average or below.

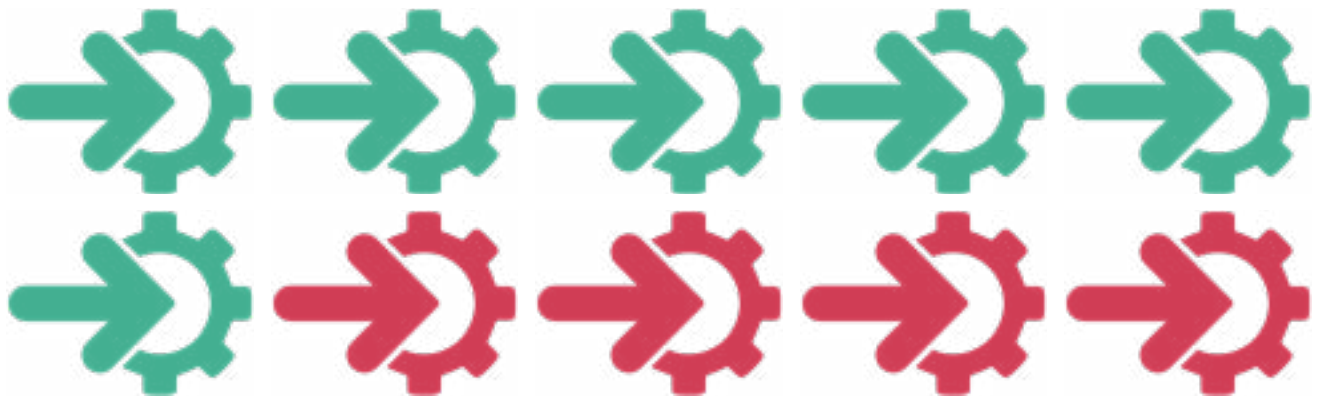
For one of the most expensive platforms on the market, this shouldn't be the case.



The Bad:

# Integrations are complicated

Rated: **6 OUT OF 10**



We are huge advocates for integrating communities with other self-service channels like chat-bots and knowledge bases. Data is everything, so it's a little surprising to see an average of 6 out of 10.

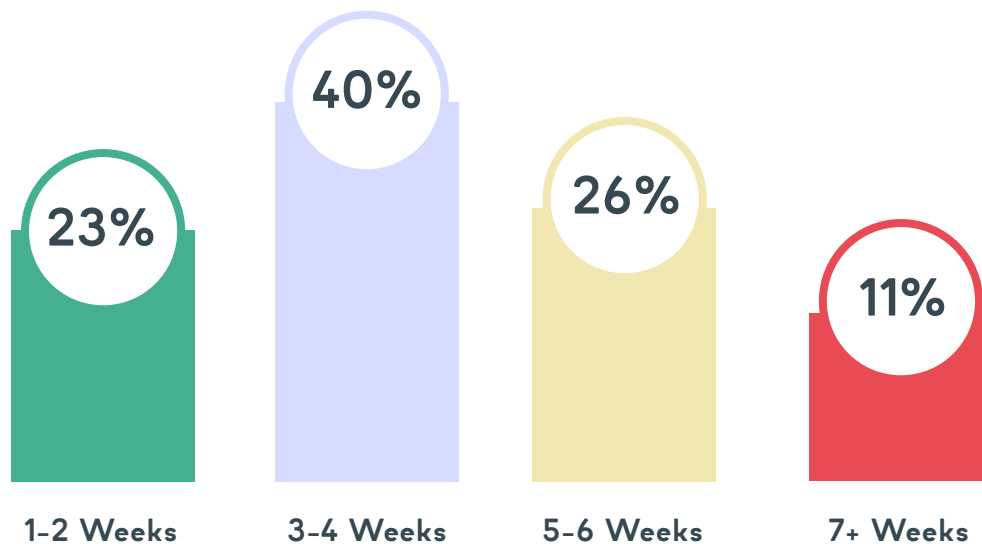
However, organisations with the budget to select Khoros as their community platform are often big enough to have a complicated existing internal IT infrastructure.

This means integrations are going to be more complicated and cause more headaches, hence the underwhelming average.

We know first-hand how quickly things can get complicated, so this may reflect human frustrations rather than platform limitations.

## The Bad:

# The time to implement upgrades is often too long



The flexibility to react quickly to the needs of your community is paramount.

The last thing you want is a trending post about how the community is failing members. Unfortunately this isn't unusual to see.

On first glance, our findings suggest the vast majority of Khoros users can implement upgrades within reasonable timeframes.

However, 11% say it takes 7+ weeks.

If that's representative of the larger Khoros customer base, that's a lot of communities lacking the agility to react quickly.

We also know from our research that the majority of these users aren't paying for the more advanced features like Gamification, Ideation or Q&A.

This begs the question; what upgrades are taking so long?

## The Bad:

# Khoros Support is often slow to respond to support tickets

Average rating:

6 OUT OF 10

As a premium community platform provider, Khoros should be treating each individual customer as the most important person in the world.

They should have the resources to react to customer issues quickly and confidently.

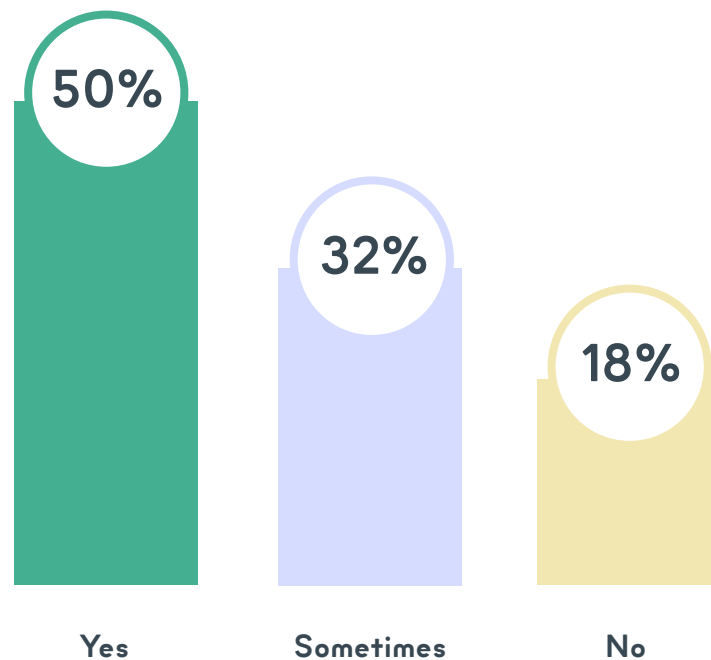
However, outside of this report, public feedback suggests Khoros support is often notoriously backlogged and a common complaint is speed.

An underwhelming average rating in our research confirms customers aren't consistently getting the level of personal service that should come with their package.

For those communities with ambitions to grow quickly, this is a major roadblock. It severely restricts the speed at which you can correct problems. Again this raises the issue of paying top-tier pricing for only a standard service.

## The Bad:

# Community managers often struggle to make changes



When weighing platforms, most people look at the customer facing user interface, but forget about the admin interface which can often be a nightmare for community managers.

Yet for any ambitious community that is striving to improve member experiences, it is vital the platform enables the community managers to do more independently (without developer support).

Our findings show nearly 1 in 5 can't make any sort of changes, meaning there are a lot of frustrated community managers waiting for changes.

32% can make the occasional change before having to involve developers, but this lack of flexibility is the achilles heel of the platform.

It's no wonder support is backlogged.



The Bad:

# Room for improvement?

We've curated the responses that best represent that common themes:

“

Reduced dependency on a third-party vendor or the platform support for platform upgrades and minor changes in the platform. I also would like to see better self-service options on the platform's community.

”

“

Pricing and making the platform much more easier to use for non-technical personals.

”

“

I think the ability to set changes and permissions at a more granular level would be fantastic. Most communities don't need this functionality, but for more robust large communities with various segments of membership, it can be a godsend.

”

“

There seem to always be roadblocks. We'll read about improvements to the platform, and often find these are now paid features, although the base package often doesn't get fully used, so we often feel nickle and dimed with an already large contract.

”

“

The cost of additional features does hinder growth somewhat. We have always found a workaround, but it is time we could better spend elsewhere.

”

“

The platform does not make things easy or obvious. For example... save a draft message... good luck finding it! I had to call our support element to do so. That's just one of many examples of our platform's lack of ease. All of these challenges affect community members' interest in using it.

”

“

It is quite cumbersome to make changes frequently. Customizations are not that easy.

”

“

More customizations that are easy to implement by community managers.

”

“

More insights, more integrations, more guidance on best practices, more ootb "customizations", better customer journey tracking, less technical limitations, lower price so that we could invest this money in consultation and other improvements.

”

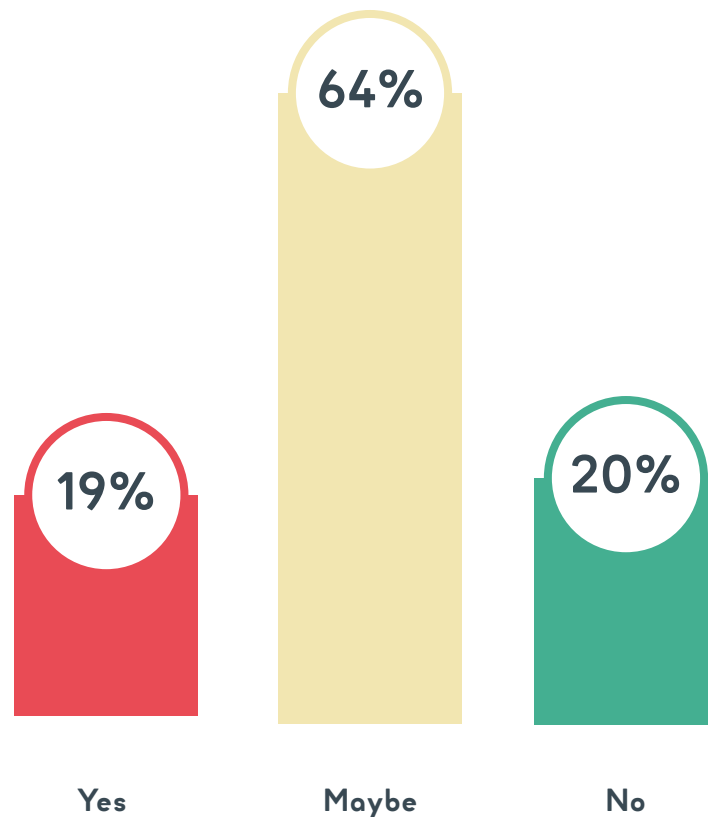




THE UGLY

The Ugly:

# The cost of customisations likely hinders growth.



One obvious reason for the low rating for customisations earlier is cost.

Any experienced community manager will tell you how critical customisations are for building a thriving community.

Unfortunately, no single platform can provide for the needs of all the different communities out there. Additional customisations are always needed to make your community your own space.

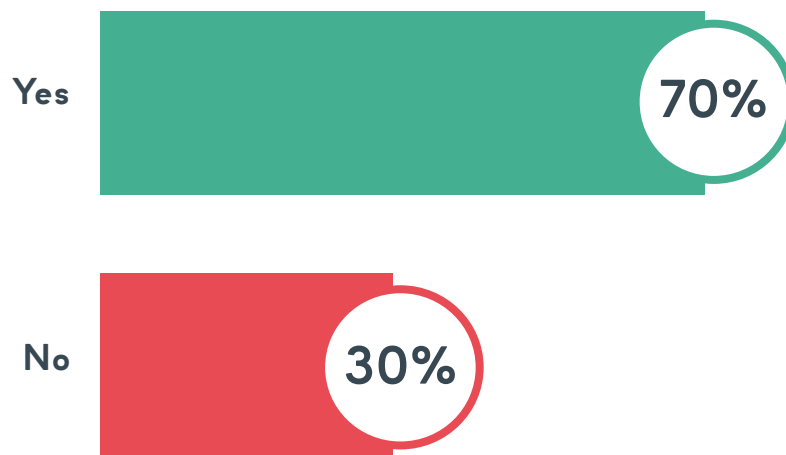
However, 19% of the Khoros communities surveyed reported that cost is a direct hindrance of customisations, while 64% are on the fence.

Only about 20% of Khoros community users can confidently say the cost of customisations isn't a hindrance to the growth of their community. That's a major red flag, especially in an age where viable competitors are can offer better or the same features for lower costs.



The Ugly:

# Helping community managers identify ways to show ROI



Given the rapid emergence of community as a driver of growth and the increased attention being paid to community budgets, having a platform provider working with you to identify ROI is a huge bonus.

Showcasing the ROI of community has always been a little tricky but helping you here will only result in leadership better recognising the impact of your community, making it easier to argue for more budget or people later on.

Nearly one-third of our respondents said they didn't have this level of support.

The Ugly:

# The cost of features like Gamification, Ideation and Q&A

Yes

43%

No

57%

It's not surprising to see the majority not utilising these community features. When you consider the cost for these add-ons it more than doubles your annual budget. With more eyes on community than ever, the argument for the jump in budget needs to be rock solid.

Yet any community manager worth their salt will tell you how important these features are for building a robust, engaging community. Once you reach a certain size, they are vital.

So the problem with this pricing structure is that building a community is a marathon not a sprint, and over time you'll end up paying far more than you needed to.

Especially when there are other great platforms offering full functionality out-of-the-box at lower costs.



**THE VERDICT**

# “ Forget paying top-tier pricing for a standard service. ”

From a feature standpoint, Khoros remains a solid platform for brands looking to use the best tools on the market. However, for those who haven't looked at costs recently, you should now understand how you're paying top-tier pricing for only a standard service.

For those who have reviewed costs recently, you should now understand that your frustrations about cost, flexibility and support are widely validated by other platform users.

**With the slow support times and the price of customisations hindering improvements, you have to ask yourself if you are getting the level of personal service you need.**

Khoros remains a robust platform, so of course you can tick along as you are, but you'll always be working in a high-cost standardised offering that isn't flexible.

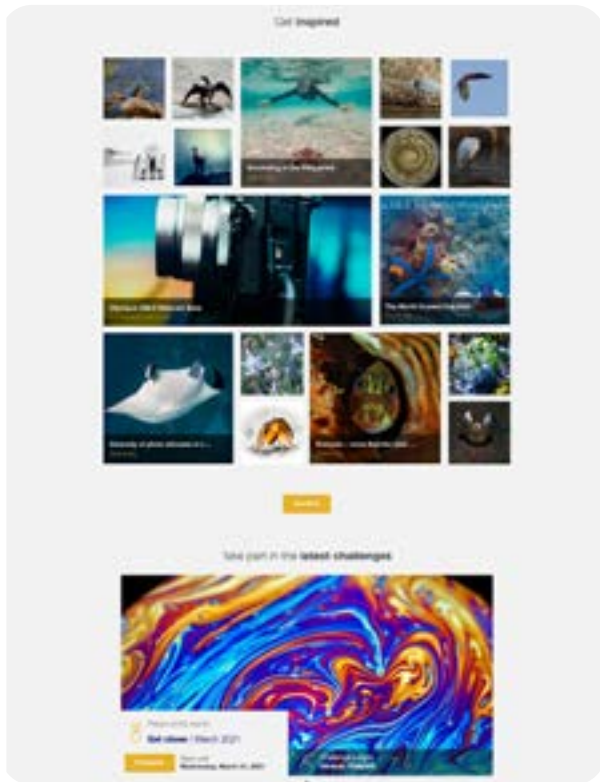
Migration is likely not a word you want to hear, nor is it one we raise lightly, but considering the long-term costs and the ongoing limitations, the damage to your community's growth and ambitions is likely worse than the minor disruption of a migration.

If you want to know which premium platforms we recommend as affordable alternatives, you can read our blog: ["The Only 3 Quality Affordable Khoros Alternatives"](#).

## **Bottom Line:**

Khoros isn't "bad", but our results here show the major frustrations aren't resolvable without additional substantial investment.

# OUR PROJECTS



## Olympus

**Project:** Online community

We worked with Olmpyus to upgrade the MyOlympus community to drive product discussion, content sharing, competitions and create first-rate customer service environment.

After the initial upgrade, 4 Roads continued to add additional custom-built functionality to support the growing needs of the MyOlympus community.

[READ CASE STUDY](#)



## Nordic Semiconductor

**Project:** Online Community

4 Roads was responsible for the new community build and a seamless migration, which involved porting all user information and ticketing details from two existing systems to the Verint system.

This included transferring user scores, reputation details, 30,000 forum posts and all personal information.

[READ CASE STUDY](#)

## A Little About 4 Roads

4 Roads is a team of specialist developers, designers and social business strategists using technology to bring businesses and audiences closer.

Built around an ethos of empowering clients and their customers, an approach we describe as Intelligent Self Service, our deep understanding of the digital landscape allows us to leverage established and emerging technology to help businesses create seamless customer experiences. This includes Online Communities, Virtual Events, Augmented Reality, AI, and more.

Established in 2007 by IT entrepreneur and Managing Director Rob Nash, brands like Olympus, Hitachi and Aston Martin count on us to find the solutions that work best for them and their customers.

## Continue The Conversation

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# 4 ROADS

Helping brands do more for their customers.

