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redis

Case Study

Redis builds sophisticated educational experience to improve product enablement for technical users

Background

Redis is the world's most loved real-time data platform, delivering unmatched performance, scalability, innovation, and cost-effectiveness across cloud, on-premise, and hybrid deployments. Originally released in 2009, Redis (which means "Remote Dictionary Server") is an open-source database software with more than 1.4 billion downloads. It has been crowned the Most Loved Database by a survey of ~100,000 Stack Overflow developers for 5 consecutive years (2017-2021).

Fast Facts



Customer Since
2018



Use Case
Developer Education



Appsembler Products
Appsembler Tahoe and Virtual Labs



Industry
Computer Software



Size
Mid Enterprise



Location
United States



Company Website
www.redis.com

The Challenge

While Redis has massive adoption (1.4 billion downloads) and has received multiple awards from its users (composed of developers, system administrators, and devops), it was looking for ways to more effectively reach developers.

Their challenge existed because developers, system administrators, and DevOps are notoriously hesitant at opting-into traditional marketing and sales funnels. And while Redis produced technical white papers and webinars aimed at these users, they wanted to augment these traditional marketing challenges/strategies with a bottom-up, educational approach with the aim of improving user engagement with their products. This challenge can be broken-down into two (2) underlying themes:

- 1 Technical buyers are more interested in educational, product-first learning experience (vs. traditional marketing); and
- 2 It's difficult to win a customer if you don't have the recommendation of a bottoms-up practitioner, typically a developer, who has succeeded with your product.

Seeing this problem and its underlying themes, Redis' Education Team, then led by Alvin Richards, Chief Education Officer, was tasked with the initiative to engage Redis' developer community, allow them to self-identify, and in the process create the breadcrumbs that Redis' commercial team could then use for their targeted outreach efforts. In the process, Redis' Education Team also created a body of knowledge that provided immersive and hands-on learning experiences for Redis' practitioners.

The Solution

On the surface, Redis' problem appeared easy to solve. After all, according to eLearning Industry, there are over 1,000 learning management systems (LMS) in the market i.e. there was no shortage of LMS vendors who could help Redis get their online university off the ground.

But what about reducing the friction between Redis' products and their user base? Or delivering hands-on, technical software training at scale?

In short, the real impediment to Redis' solution was finding a team and a learning platform that:

- 1 — Deeply understood the unique needs of a technical audience (developers, system admins, DevOps);
- 2 — Had experience launching scalable learning experiences for technical audiences for other software companies; and
- 3 — Had the product suite that could deliver scalable and hands-on learning experiences.

In 2018, Redis selected Appsembler to host and deliver their hands-on, self-paced courses. Using Appsembler, Redis quickly built courses that covered basic principles of databases, advanced concepts and theories, in addition to courses that covered specific features within Redis' products. The courses were available 24/7 to any student in the world and within 12 months of launching, Redis University had 5,500+ registered learners and 8,500+ course enrollments. The majority of learners were based in the United States, which was not surprising given Redis' commercial presence in the country, but many learners also signed-up from India, where many IT service providers and consultancies housed large off-shore engineers and staff. Another key finding was the large number of learners from South America, which subsequently

drove Redis to focus sales and marketing efforts into that geographic region.

To Redis' surprise, they also discovered that 5% of their learners were students taking Computer Science courses in technology universities like UC Berkeley and San Jose State University. And while university students don't represent immediate commercial opportunities, they did inform Redis of the potential areas where they could expand their product and technical curriculum.

For a walkthrough of all the technologies that Redis University uses to deliver their courses, watch Alvin Richards' talk at the 2019 Open edX Conference titled "Education in the Open Source World."

The Results

At the start of this case study, we discussed Redis' massive user base and their challenge in identifying who that user base was, nurturing them, and improving their involvement with Redis' products and community. In addition to the thousands of registered learners and course enrollments that Redis University generated, Redis expanded their products' reach, acquired new users, and educated the world on their open source software. Redis also succeeded in providing their users with an easy way to complete hands-on, software exercises during online training and removed the friction between Redis' learners and their products. As Kyle Davis, Head of Developer Advocacy at Redis stated: "With Appsembler, we can give our users quick wins very early. They just launch the browser, log in, and instantly they're using Redis."

In addition to reducing the friction between learners and Redis products, Redis University was also a sophisticated lead generation tool that attracted, educated, and identified potential users/accounts for Redis' commercial teams. As Alvin Richards said:



"What Redis got is a connection to an unknown audience. Remember, we started with 1.4 billion Docker pulls, but we don't know any of those people. Redis University is a way for us to actually connect with a community that we don't have a connection to ... and what we ended up creating are highly-qualified leads."



While Redis is unable to provide specifics of Redis University's commercial impact, another open-source software company, MongoDB, publicly stated that 15% of their revenue is derived from leads who's first-touch was with [MongoDB University](#). In an April 2021 Business Insider article titled "[\\$2 Billion Redis Labs CEO Says It's Aiming for an IPO Within a Year](#)," Redis is expected to cross \$100 million in annual revenue in 2021.

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