

'Miele Pedia' Delivers Critical Product Knowledge to Appliance Retailers

Miele
Best Use of Performance Support
October 2017



Company Background



Company At-a-Glance	
Headquarters	Gütersloh, Germany
Year Founded	1899
Revenue	€ 3.71 billion
Employees	18,370
Global Scale	World-wide
Customers/Output, etc.	Manufacturer of domestic appliances including: cooking, baking and steam-cooking appliances, refrigeration products, coffeemakers, dishwashers, laundry and floor-care products. Commercial use dishwashers, washers/extractors, tumble dryers for commercial use; washer/disinfectors, sterilizers used in medical and laboratory applications.
Industry	Premium domestic appliances
Website	www.miele.com

Budget and Timeframe

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Overall budget	€25,000
Number of (HR, Learning, Talent) employees involved with the implementation?	1

Number of Operations or Subject Matter Expert employees involved with the implementation?	6
Number of contractors involved with implementation	3
Timeframe to implement	3 months
Start date of the program	March 13, 2017 in Austria and Germany

Business Conditions & Business Needs

Miele develops and produces durable domestic and commercial appliances, including a wide range of washing machines, dryers, rotary ironers, and vacuum cleaners, as well as built-in kitchen appliances for cooking and baking, steam-cooking, dishwashing, refrigerating and freezing food, and preparing coffee.

Retail vendors represent the high quality of Miele products in shops all over the world. For customers, vendors are the Miele ambassadors and experts for all technical features. Selling white goods in a shop means that counseling and guidance are more important than the lowest price. Vendors need to be highly qualified. However, it is difficult to have knowledge of more than 500 features and also be an excellent vendor. For this reason, Miele decided to implement a two-pronged strategy:

- Miele offers a large variety of classic, web-based training for a permanent learning process.
- At point of sale, vendors are supported with relevant information, “at-a-glance,” for more than 500 features that characterize the Miele product family.

Overview

Miele Pedia is an online information tool explaining more than 500 features of Miele’s domestic appliances. This support is delivered through Miele eLearning portals in 25 languages to two target audiences: vendors in shops and Miele employees who need instant product background information. Miele Pedia answers ad hoc questions such as “What is the difference between PowerWash and PowerWash 2.0?” or “How does the wireless food probe work?”

Currently, Miele offers a considerable eLearning program. The Miele Online Modules (WBTs) in this program provide product knowledge and focus on the learning process. Information on product features, sales arguments, and product handling is offered in a meaningful order using different methods.

Text and visualization have a balanced relationship. Visualizations are enriched by animations and interactions in order to stimulate learning through as many perception channels as possible. To strengthen sustainability, the modules are completed with learning-level controls.

Miele Pedia takes over exactly where web-based training stops: When specific information about requested Miele product features is needed. Learning sustainability is strengthened, since learning content can be retrieved in small, “feature-specific” portions.

With Miele Pedia, searchable information can be retrieved in more depth. As basic knowledge about devices and their functions already exists, Miele Pedia can be asked questions and can search jobs to refresh the memory about individual product features.

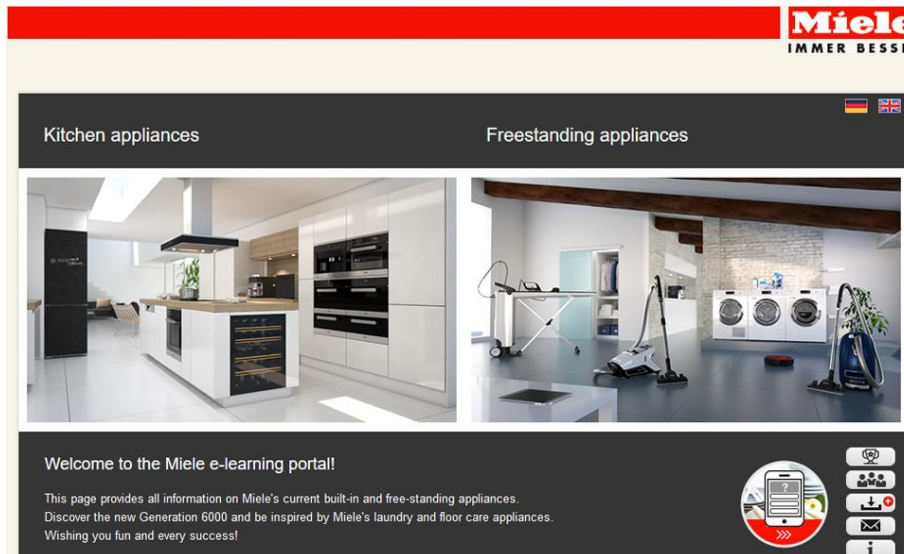
Miele Pedia also can provide in-depth information that is not contained in online media. Here, the focus is not just an overview, but specific knowledge. More information can be found for special equipment features.

Miele Pedia also extends online learning into the workplace environment. From eLearning content offered by WBTs, Miele Pedia allows real workplace learning and provides a very smart way of supporting sales activity.

Quick, uncomplicated information searches are now in the foreground. Miele Pedia transitions from eLearning to e-information. In combination with classic WBT and mobile learning, Miele Pedia provides “learning-on-demand.”

Miele’s central product knowledge is present in every single interaction between vendor and customer all over the world and extends crucial knowledge throughout and beyond the enterprise.

Figure 1: Miele eLearning Portal



Source: Miele 2017

Design

Miele Pedia is a digital performance support tool for vendors designed to deliver instant, in-depth information during the sales process.

Information can be accessed in two ways: Users can search for the function itself, typing e.g., “CupSensor” or “PowerWash 2.0” at the same time they are explaining the function to the customer. If vendors don’t remember the exact term of the function, they can search for the appliance by text or by pictures, e.g., “washing machines.” So even an intuitive access to information is possible.

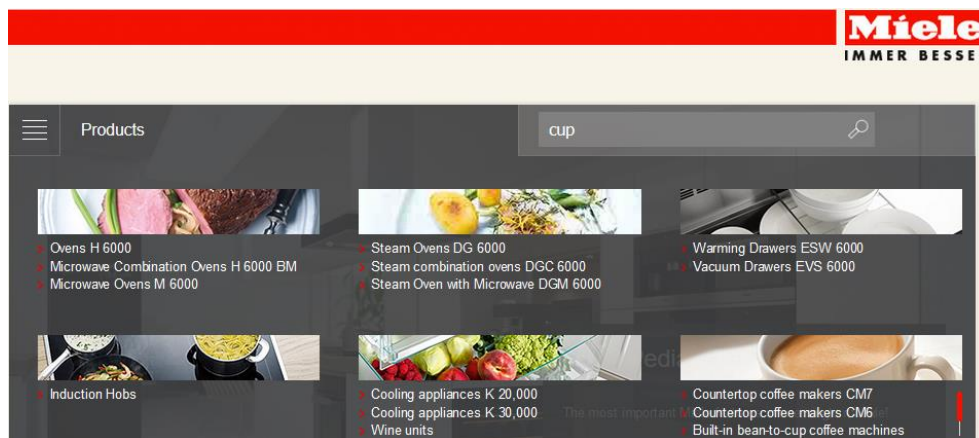
The look and feel of Miele Pedia is the same as Miele’s print catalog, “World of Miele,” because the target audience – vendors and employees – are used to finding specified information there. The standard brand colors, pictures, and information design are familiar to them. Miele Pedia is a part of the Miele world and is accepted by vendors and employees.

Navigation is simple and searching for information is easy and fast. Information is only two clicks away. Miele Pedia is used in preparation for or post-processing of a sales conversation. If vendors need to look up additional information during the sale, they find

it immediately on their tablets. The customer's will to purchase profits directly from a nearly "all knowing" vendor.

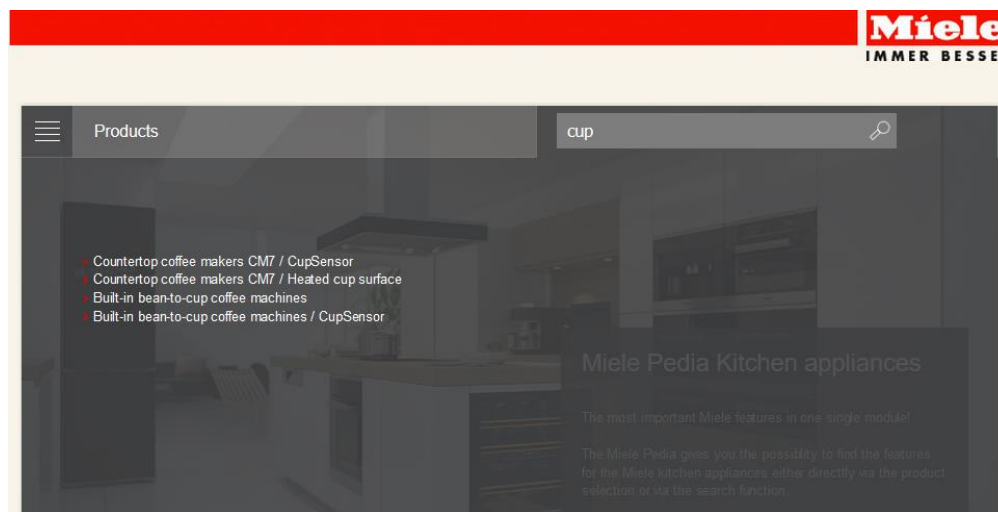
Miele Pedia shows the transition between an eLearning offer and an e-Information tool. Together with web-based training for product knowledge in the eLearning portals, Miele Pedia combines the methods of workplace learning and performance support. The welcome page offers two ways to search.

Figure 2: Search for Appliances or their Pictures



Source: Miele 2017

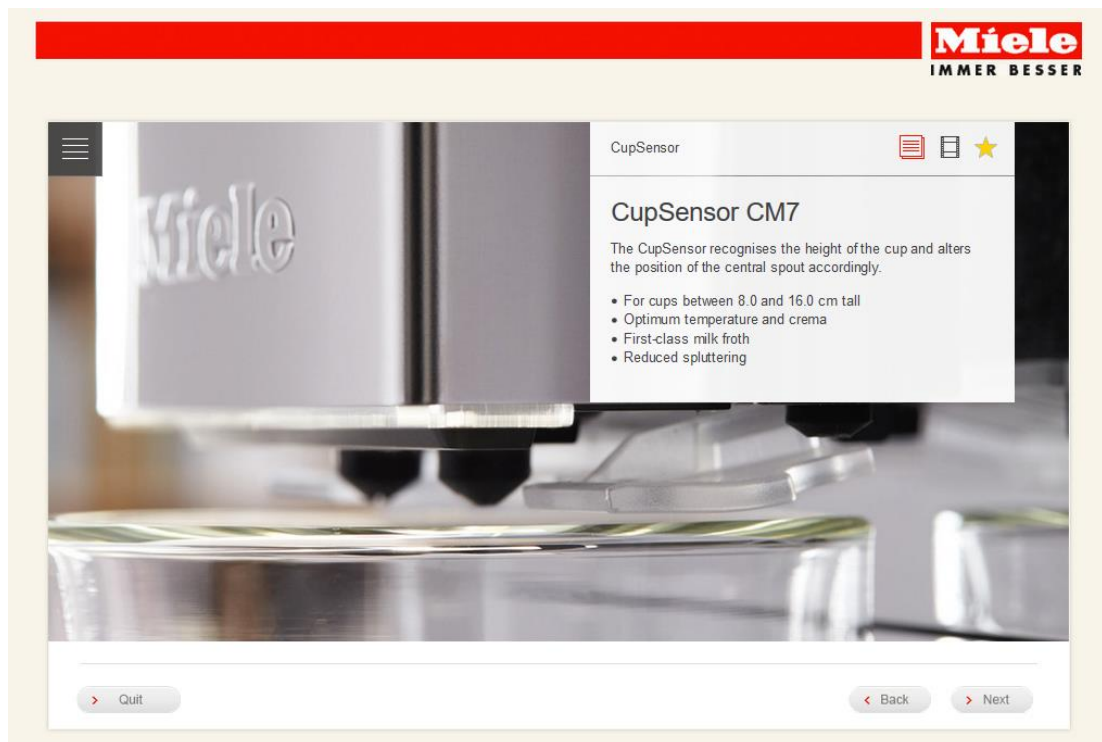
Figure 3: Search Feature List if the User Knows Name or Parts of Name



Source: Miele 2017



Figure 4: Search Result – Information Page with Picture, Texts, and Links



Source: Miele 2017

Delivery

To make usage as easy and effective as possible, information about functions is given less in text and more in pictures, videos, and animations. The information in Miele Pedia is deeper than in the related web-based training, because it is constrained to only one topic. If an employee or vendor is searching for information on a function like “CupSensor,” in general or more detailed, it can be found in Miele Pedia. The information in Miele Pedia is so granular it can be used even with bad Wi-Fi bandwidth in every single shop and Miele establishment in the world.

To enforce the dissemination, Miele Pedia is configured as a Web application for tablets and smartphones. It works with IOS and Android devices and needs only a prevailing Browser. Tablets or Smartphones can be used at the point of sale. Miele Pedia is available at eLearning portals where web-based training and mobile eLearning sessions are available. These portals are open resources and can be used by all vendors and Miele employees. The easy access to Miele Pedia with a single-sign-on (SSO) technique allows more than 180,000 vendors to access information in 25 languages.

Measurable Benefits

Evaluation functionality included within Miele Pedia gives information researchers the ability to evaluate and comment on provided information. Evaluations are visible to all other information researchers and gives valuable indication on the relevance of individual information. Researchers' evaluations provide feedback for Miele and offer excellent opportunities to optimize content following the company mission statement: "Always better."

Previous feedback (>500) is better than expected, with a rating of 4.2 (of 5.0) in Germany and 4.5 (of 5.0) in Austria. However, since the Miele Pedia only has been online since the middle of March, this feedback represents only a first but positive impression. At the earliest, more representative results can be expected by the end of 2017.

It will be interesting to see how the individual pages and which pages have been rated. The previous selection of information was derived from available online modules and was supplemented with topics or answers to frequently asked questions. These FAQs came from Miele Call Centers and represent the real information needs of customers. These questions are asked to Miele Pedia target groups.

The product knowledge that is directly and deeply available everywhere at any time for vendors gives an enormous push to sales efforts. Miele Pedia saves time in the sales process, and offers the ability to positively react to customers' needs when answers on specific wants and features are searched. Miele Pedia also has the ability to statistically relate its use to achieved sales.

Overall

The structure of Miele Pedia is simple: The interested person opens Miele Pedia, enters a search term, and opens the desired page with the requested information. It takes a maximum of three clicks to find the desired information.

As easy as the Miele Pedia application is, the creation process was very complex. A single Miele Pedia page required 40 Miele subsidiaries to provide specific information to operate their markets in different languages, with different product ranges, and different target groups.

This complexity is reflected in the system architecture of the content management system, which was new and challenging despite a large number of existing WBTs. The knowledge



was expensive to prepare but worth the great performance gain in sales subsidiaries. Miele Pedia's usability is the crucial point for its success.

First, Miele Pedia is designed as a medium that quickly and easily meets specific information requirements of target groups. Information is processed at Miele Headquarters and is made available to Miele subsidiaries for adaptation and localization. Currently, the target group has "read only" access that will be extended to "read/write" permission in the next step.

In the next step, target groups and Miele Headquarters can benefit from the knowledge, experience, and competences of additional authors. From Miele Pedia, a bi-directional exchange of knowledge emerges that democratizes company communication. The knowledge and needs of sales and marketing departments flow directly into the central knowledge base and shape and design further development.



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