How F5 increased natural search visits by over 36% with Khoros
We switched to Khoros because we found the perfect balance between search, speed, and feature set.

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Executive summary

F5 is a US-based technology company specializing in enterprise application security and delivery. F5's community roots reach back to 2004, with a mission that has remained constant: the community is a place for conversation. Three years ago, in support of an enterprise pivot and digital transformation, F5 decided to commit to a scalable and robust online community. Since the beginning, F5 has tried several community platforms looking to balance search, speed, and feature sets. Most recently, with these other platforms, F5's community growth numbers and SEO metrics could not meet the demands of the enterprise. To support the company goals, the Community Team underwent an in-depth RFP process in early 2021 looking for a more full-featured, flexible, and scalable platform. With support from Khoros partner Slalom, F5 chose Khoros Communities. F5 chose Khoros because of their depth of expertise, proven business outcomes, scalability, and the rich experiences Khoros Community offers members.

F5 focuses on providing long-term value to the members with rich engagement opportunities and expert but unofficial advice and content. Maintaining these core values was a priority for F5 when they partnered with Khoros. With Khoros, F5 hosts forums and articles, and the community now has both a Suggestions feature (member submitted Ideas) and an Events feature. F5 has begun experimenting with the Khoros Group Hubs feature, growing substantially since launch. Their organizing principle has been Groups For People rather than Groups for Products or Technology. With Khoros as their partner, the F5 community will continue supporting the company's digital transformation, syndicating relevant community content into future product offerings, and helping customers and partners innovate and problem solve.

The F5 community team found the Khoros Professional Services team had the level of understanding they needed in a software partner. F5 didn’t need to explain the background of community features, like threaded conversations, because Khoros Professional Services team members already have a deep understanding of community. The honesty and transparency of the Professional Services team helped the F5 community team accomplish their goals better and faster than any previous platform change.

Before partnering with Khoros, F5’s page load times were so high that users around the world found it difficult to connect quickly and almost impossible for SEO crawlers and bots to engage, which negatively affected SEO ranking. Immediately after launching with Khoros, load time averages decreased from seven and a half seconds to under three seconds, which immediately improved their SEO ranking - increasing Natural Search visits by 36%. With Khoros, F5’s CHI score improved. Khoros also supported the F5 community team with a drastically improved responsive (mobile) offering, providing a much faster and more accessible experience for their approximately 20% mobile visitors.

In the coming months, the F5 community team will add several specialized Groups to support goals for membership growth, engagement, and awareness of the company’s cloud, security, and DevOps offerings. Further, the team will promote enterprise-wide support for information sharing with features such as federated search, content syndication, and other off-platform integrations. For F5’s community, the Khoros platform represents the perfect balance of speed, search, and member-first features delivering the highest quality experience around learning, deploying, optimizing, and securing F5 products.

Want to learn more? Visit us at Khoros.com or email us at questions@khoros.com
How they made it work

Worked
with Khoros partner Slalom to assess the community’s performance, feature opportunities, and community staffing (e.g., content manager.)

Partnered
with the Khoros professional services team for community strategy, implementation services (including complex Data Transformations), and post-launch support.

Incorporated
OOTB forums, articles, events, and suggestions into their community.

Built
several new community groups for MVPs, DevOps, Partners, and Government Users.

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Results

F5's load times went from seven and a half seconds to under three seconds after they went live with Khoros, instantly improving the community’s stature with search engines. The first four months after launch with Khoros, F5's natural search visits went up 36%, meaning they were increasing exposure across the internet and bringing in more potential members. F5's CHI (Community Health Index) score exceeded their expectations: within six weeks of going live with Khoros, their score was 648 — the fifth-highest CHI score for a B2B community. This score allowed the F5 team to reinforce the value of the community to leadership, improving company trust in the community. F5's internal metrics showed that the speed of their Cumulative Layout Shift (CLS), which measures visual stability, went from .5065 seconds to .008 seconds (effectively 0) — one measure among many that proved the F5 community site is stable and performing as expected.

250% faster page load times
36% more visits from natural search
.008 CLS speed
“We feel like we’re on a team with Khoros, and when something isn’t right, we can tell them exactly what happened and the Khoros team will say: Let’s figure out how to solve it.

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