

Direkt zu Jacques‘

Communication in a Successful Partnership System

When Jacques Hèon and Dr. Olaf Müller-Soppart founded their first wine depot in Düsseldorf in 1974, they had a clear vision: highest quality wines direct from vineyards and competent service with qualified personnel. By using direktzu®, the company implemented a powerful communication instrument within the Jacques‘ Wein Depot partner system.

Wine sellers just like at the vineyard, with free tastings of high-quality wines, is still one of the cornerstones of Jacques‘ Wein Depot’s corporate vision. Because of the special set-up of the partner system - a central brand on one side and independent sales reps in more than 280 depots on the other - the organisation of the company faced unique challenges. Open, active and successful communication is crucial to the company’s success in a retail franchise like Jacques‘ Wein Depot. The reason the Many-to-One® communication platform direktzu® was introduced was that the management of Jacques‘ Wein Depot wanted to have everyone participate in corporate management, making decentralized knowledge available to everyone and increasing the quality of corporate decisions. At the same time, better understanding and enhanced trust between partners and corporate staff resulted. Since its implementation in October 2011, **Direkt zu Jacques** is one of the relevantec GmbH’s most active platforms. Registered users wrote 260 bundled posts, sharing news and information on subjects including sales, set-up and equipment, accounting and finances, store management, IT, logistics, marketing and sustainability. With the help of rating and comment functions, the silent minority was also coaxed into participating. - Over 1,500 comments and more than 9,000 ratings attest to the relevance of users‘ feedback and ideas.

Following their corporate vision to work respectfully and fairly with franchise owner/partners, the Jacques central office not only writes about the most important issues, but answers every concern. By viewing comments and ratings, various priorities can be recognized which can be integrated into strategic decisions. Even ideas which cannot be implemented are handled and answered with respect. In this way, decisions within the organisation are more transparent and are better accepted by the partners.

The internal communication on the direktzu® platform is fully integrated into the working day of the depot owners and the employees in the central office. The platform has 90,000 unique visits per year and 300 registered users. Before its introduction, telephone, e-mail, fax and letters were the normal modes of communication. Issues were often only dealt with by two parties, even if they might be interesting and useful for a larger group.



Screenshot of Direkt zu Jacques‘

Key figures since October 2011:

- 22.940 feedbacks given
- 19.709 ratings given
- 323.388 page hits
- 471 reactions from the central office

Johannes Jentgens, responsible for staff development and depot service, attributes the successful integration of direktzu® into corporate organisational processes to the fact that all issues which are part of the depot’s daily work are visible and transparent for everyone. All users have the option of presenting their ideas and opinions. Every post and every answer documents information and knowledge which can be retrieved at any time. The importance of this cannot be stressed enough. Already so many questions and issues have been answered for new franchise owners/partners who would otherwise need to start from scratch.

“Not only the rate of activity, but also the quality of communication has increased step by step since the introduction of **Direkt zu Jacques**“, said Johannes Jentgens. “The partners needed a bit of time before they discovered the potential of this platform to be part of the constructive effort to develop the company and to exchange their experiences.“ The close communication also enables the partners to discover new potential and innovation for the „Jacques System“. Processes can be significantly improved and work flow hindrances are quickly detected and alleviated. More than ever, partners contribute to the successful development of the company.

The need for user discussion has increased so much that management is thinking about integrating an add-on into the existing **direktzu**® platform to offer members of the organisation a forum to continually exchange their experiences without directly sending everything to management as before.

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