

# 3 Risks You Take By Not Investing In Customer Education



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Offering a great product is only a part of what makes for successful users in today's Subscription Economy. After all, if users don't find sustained value in your offering it's likely they will stop using your product. A great onboarding experience is essential, yes, but you also have to help users learn about new features and find answers when they have questions.

Customer Education is one of the most effective mechanisms to ensure that your customers are regularly deriving value from your innovative products and services.

Investing in Customer Education can help you onboard, engage, and retain customers at scale. Of course, there are risks to not investing as well. What follows are three risks that we've identified based on our work with hundreds of leading technology companies.

# 1. Users cannot quickly find value in your product

When you're in the weeds of your product day-in and day-out, it's easy to equate your familiarity and comfort navigating it with the experience of your customers. However, your ease of use is a direct result of experience and the innumerable hours you and your team have spent developing it.

For your customers, it's more than likely that your tool is just one of the many that they use on a regular basis. If users don't (easily) see the value of your tool, they are less likely to learn how to use it, and your product may be relegated to shelfware. While investments in UX and design are critical as a starting point, a Customer Education program, including things like step-by-step tutorials, video walk-throughs, and in-app guidance, will ensure that your users quickly and effectively learn how to use your tool.

Think about it this way: if your product is a city and your UX designs are the streets signs, Customer Education is the GPS that gets your user from Point A to Point B in the most efficient way. Without a GPS, your user may still get where they wanted to end up, but chances are it will take them a frustrating number of wrong turns, or sheer luck, to get them in the right place. Your product may be the greatest invention since sliced bread, but if your users can't find that greatness, it may as well not exist.

## 2. Generic onboarding does not address diverse use cases

There are select cases in which an individual or group needs to know and understand all the capabilities of your product (think: power users). But for most users of your product, there's likely only certain subsets of functionality that are relevant. Without tailored training, how do you expect users to know what is specifically relevant for them?

This not only relates to job role, but also users' experience level, familiarity with related products, and other characteristics that lend diversity to your user base.

It might seem obvious that different users need different things from your product, and yet, many companies view their users as a homogenous block, offering cookie-cutter onboarding for the first few weeks of the contract, and then leaving users to fend for themselves. This is where the power of Customer Education swoops in to save the day!

An impactful Customer Education program is often made up of multiple learning paths or courses that are tailored for different audiences based on their role, starting knowledge level, or other factors. Examples of this differentiation include:

- ***New vs. Existing Users:*** New users often benefit from product walk-throughs and other high-level tutorials that introduce your product, while current users often need resources that are more focused on a specific task or product capability.
- ***Department/Job Function:*** The difference between what software developers and sales professionals do day-to-day is vastly different, so offering them the same training, especially as it pertains to your product's features, is unlikely to be effective.
- ***Title:*** If you're a c-suite executive, what you need to know to do your job well is not the same as a director, manager, or an intern. Accordingly, integrating a new product or tool into a tech stack looks very different from the perspective of each of these roles.

- **Risk Level:** This characteristic refers to what could go wrong if a user isn't properly educated. For example, a CFO misusing accounting software can have dire consequences for the company, but an individual who incorrectly records vacation time is unlikely to incur the same repercussions.

To ignore your users' diversity is to hinder their success with your product. Offering tailored training throughout the customer lifecycle instead of a one-size-fits-all approach to early onboarding will help your users find value in your product and drive long-term product adoption.

### 3. Users are not finding ongoing value in your product

We're living in a hyper-competitive business landscape in which customers have more choices, and more opportunities to change their minds, than ever before. For SaaS and technology companies, customer retention is driven by users' ability to find value in your product on an ongoing basis. The most effective, engaging, and scalable way to drive this value over the long term is through a Customer Education program.

There's no doubt that the first 30/60/90 days of a new account are critical for setting up new users of your product for success. But what happens after that if...

- A user has a question or needs a refresher on how to use a certain feature?
- A new employee joins your customer's company and needs to get up to speed?
- Your product changes or you launch a new feature?

These scenarios are common occurrences, but all too often, companies cross their fingers and hope that users will figure it out on their own. Instead of proactively helping users succeed:

- Your CSMs and Support teams end up bombarded with repetitive questions that prevent them from offering more personalized attention
- The new employee gets frustrated trying to teach themselves and recommends a different tool they've successfully used before to leadership
- Your new feature sees low adoption rates because no one was taught how to use it or is even aware it exists

These risks are very real and with a competitive business landscape, any of them could be the reason a customer decides to take their business elsewhere. The solution? You guessed it: Customer Education. Let's look at each of these scenarios again with a Customer Education lens:

- Users consistently have questions about Feature X and your CSMs and Support teams are overwhelmed and frustrated that they have to keep answering the same question.
  - **Solution:** Since Feature X is confusing, consider creating a video tutorial or step-by-step guide that shows users how to use the feature. Instead of rehashing the same explanation, CSMs and Support can simply share a link to the resource which users can then explore at their convenience.
- Because they joined after the initial account onboarding, new users don't usually have access to the same training and/or resources you previously provided when the account was new. The lack of support is frustrating for the users and your customer now has the additional task of onboarding their employees onto your product.
  - **Solution:** The next time you conduct a new customer onboarding, consider recording the training session and then hosting it in on-demand in an online portal, along with any relevant presentation slides or toolkits. This way, when new users join, you can simply direct them to a similar training their colleagues went through.

- You launched a new product feature, but most of your product's day-to-day users don't receive your emails and few saw the press release you put out. Low awareness of your launch has led to low adoption.
  - **Solution:** With a Customer Education solution like Skilljar, not only can you add documentation, walk-throughs, and other new feature guides to an online resource portal for on-demand access, you can also set up in-app guides that direct users to explore your new offering, right within your product.

With an investment in Customer Education, situations like the above transform accounts from a potential flight risk into long-term customers who not only regularly find value in your product, but also feel supported and heard when issues arise. And from a financial perspective, longer-term customers mean higher ARR, lower churn, and ultimately, a healthier, more competitive business.



Customer Education is now a must-have for modern SaaS and technology companies. If your users feel ill-equipped to be successful with your product, it's more than likely that they will explore other options, putting your company at risk. Investing in Customer Education can help you onboard and engage users, increase the efficiency of your Customer Success and Support teams, and differentiate your offering from competitors. To learn more, check out the resources below and schedule a time to connect here: <https://info.skilljar.com/skilljar-demo>

## Additional Resources

- eBook: [Training for Lead Generation, Customer Onboarding, and Support](#)
- eBook: [How Customer Education and Support Can Solve Each Other's Problems](#)
- eBook: [How Customer Education Can Help Scale Your Customer Success Team](#)

# About Skilljar

Skilljar's award-winning customer training platform enables you to successfully onboard, engage, and retain your customers and partners. Our cloud learning management system (LMS) makes it easy to create courses, distribute to web and mobile devices, and track results.

Skilljar helps you accelerate product adoption, automate onboarding workflows, reduce support costs, and increase long-term customer satisfaction.



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