

Help center metrics that matter

Help center best practices

A handful of numbers tell you whether your help center is working: whether people find answers, which answers need work, and whether fewer questions reach your team. Here's what to track, what each number tells you, and a monthly routine that turns the numbers into improvements.

Start with the questions you want answered

A metric is only useful if it leads to a decision. Most help center metrics answer one of four questions:

1. Are people using the help center?
2. Do they find what they're looking for?
3. Which articles need work?
4. Is it reducing the questions that reach your team?

The metrics that matter

Metric

What it tells you

A good sign

Visitors	How many people use your help center	It grows along with your customer base.
Searches	What people want, in their own words	The top searches match the topics you see in support.
Failed searches	What's missing, or what readers call by a different name	They make up a smaller share of all searches over time.
Article views	Which topics matter most to readers	Your most-viewed articles are also your most accurate.
Satisfaction	Whether articles help, based on reader ratings	It holds steady or rises, and no popular article is rated poorly.
Self-service rate	How many visits end with an answer instead of a message to your team	It rises, or holds steady while visitors grow.
Contact requests	How many people still need a person	They grow more slowly than visitors.

AI answer ratings

Whether readers found the AI answers helpful

The share of AI answers rated helpful rises.

Look beyond your help center too. Your support tool's ticket volume and top ticket topics are the final test: as your customer base grows, repeat questions should take up less of your team's time.

Work out the rates

Raw counts grow with your traffic, so the rates tell you more:

- **Failed-search rate** = failed searches ÷ all searches
- **Self-service rate** = visits where someone searched or read an article and didn't contact your team ÷ all visits
- **Contact rate** = contact requests ÷ visitors
- **Satisfaction** = positive ratings ÷ all ratings

Read the numbers together

One number rarely tells the whole story.

- **High views and low ratings** mean many people rely on an article that doesn't help them. Fix it first.
- **Repeated searches**, where people search again straight away, mean the first results didn't help, even if something came up.

- **A popular troubleshooting article** often points to a problem in the product. Share it with your product team.
- **More contact requests after a release** often mean an article is missing or out of date.

What good looks like

Every product and audience is different, so compare your help center with itself rather than with someone else's benchmark. Month over month, look for:

- Failed searches taking a smaller share of all searches.
- A self-service rate that rises, or holds steady while visitors grow.
- A shorter list of low-rated articles.
- Fewer support tickets on topics you've documented.

Get clean numbers first

- **Leave out your own team.** Writers and support agents open articles all day. Filter out your office's IP addresses so their visits don't count.
- **Leave out bots.** Automated traffic inflates visitors and views.
- **Compare like with like:** a month with the month before, not a week with a month.
- **Keep a short log of events.** A release, a price change or a marketing campaign can move every number, and a note makes spikes easy to explain later.

- **Wait for enough ratings.** Two or three ratings say little about an article.

Numbers that can mislead

- **Time on page:** a long visit can mean a thorough article or a confusing one.
- **Bounce rate:** someone who lands on the right article, reads it and leaves has succeeded.
- **Page views alone:** more views can mean people are hunting for an answer they can't find.

A monthly routine

1. **Compare the headline numbers** with the previous month: visitors, searches, satisfaction and contact requests.
2. **Open the failed searches.** Pick the biggest few gaps, then write or fix those articles.
3. **Review your lowest-rated articles.** Read any written feedback, then fix the ones the most people read.
4. **Read new comments**, and look at the searches where readers rated the AI answer unhelpful.
5. **Check that your ten most-read articles** still match the product.
6. **Share a short summary** with your team: what you fixed, and what readers struggled with that your product team should know about.

If your statistics only keep a short history, run the routine every two weeks, so nothing drops out of view before you look.

How HelpCenter.io helps

Statistics in HelpCenter.io shows Visitors, Searches, Article views, Views / visitor and Satisfaction, each compared with the previous period, plus a **What needs your attention** list of things to fix. **Visitor journeys** follows visits from the first page to **Self-served** or **Contacted support**. **Content performance** lists your top and underperforming articles, and **What people search for** shows failed searches and content gaps. With AI Answers on, you also see how readers rated the AI answers and what people ask AI about your articles. Bots are left out unless you include them, you can filter out your own IP addresses, and how far back you can look depends on your plan. See [Read your help center statistics](#), [See what people search for](#) and [Find your best and weakest articles](#).

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