

# From a paper-based offering to a global digital platform in 9 months

EFQM Knowledge Base and Assess Base

A NearForm customer story

**Client:** EFQM

**Objective:** Digitise the entire customer journey

**Solution:** This consists of:

A Digital Services Platform to power the EFQM community Knowledge Base.

An online assessment platform, Assess Base, to provide a suite of assessment tools for use with the updated EFQM 2020 Model.



## **About EFQM**

Established in 1989, EFQM (European Foundation for Quality Management) is a not-for-profit member-based Foundation, headquartered in Brussels, Belgium. As the creators of the EFQM Model, the Foundation supports organisations to be adaptable and flexible to deliver outstanding performance gains. EFQM has over 2000 trained assessors, a community of experts and over 30,000 organisations using the Model worldwide.

## **The Challenge**

To thrive in this complex and changing world, EFQM recognised organisations need tools to enable fast decision-making and approaches to make them more agile. EFQM needed to move away from the long-established Model version, which was paper-driven and based on the old economy way of working. To digitise their whole customer journey, as well as update the Model, EFQM needed new technology. An updated Knowledge Base and a new Assess Base were to be the start of this digital transformation.

The updated Knowledge Base provides its EFQM community with the best-curated content and analytics. The new Assess Base offers a suite of tools for assessments, gauging how advanced an organisation is, as well as practice for companies to decide whether the Model works for them.

*“Working with NearForm allowed EFQM to design and execute on our strategic vision. Following a design and discovery phase, NearForm was the catalyst in helping EFQM to become a digital-first organisation. The impact of going from a paper-based process to a digital game-changing global offering in 9 months exceeded all our expectations and kickstarted a cultural shift. Our new Digital offering was met with great excitement and praise at the EFQM forum. NearForm has enabled EFQM to change the market and we’re excited about partnering with the team into the future.”*

**Russell Longmuir**  
CEO EFQM

## The Process

The nine-month project consisted of two phases, Discovery and Delivery.

Phase I was the Discovery Stage. NearForm held a kickoff meeting in Brussels to meet with the key stakeholders. It was a starting point to capture the problems and opportunities. We translated these into requirements, a journey map and a work plan to guide the design and associated technology decisions. The outcome of the Discovery Stage was a design prototype, which formed the basis of the Business Case to get EFQM Board approval.

Phase II was the Delivery Stage. Due to timelines and the importance of the project, iterative sprints ensured that we prioritised and promptly handled any necessary refinements to the scope or functionality. The team incorporated feedback from users following the workshop we held. We also worked with nominated assessors to get additional feedback.



## The Solution

Both Knowledge Base and Assess Base, along with the new 2020 Model, were centre stage at the global EFQM Forum held in Helsinki, Finland in October 2019.

Knowledge Base enables the EFQM community to collaborate, submit and access content. The Digital Services Platform uses the latest technology (Gatsby, GraphQL, React and Hasura) to provide a responsive, permissions role-based solution with a configurable workflow engine.

The cost-effective hosted solution lets community members submit content. The EFQM team reviews, approves and publishes the content with visible status updates at each stage. It promotes all new publications on the Knowledge Base homepage. The solution eliminated traditional technology problems associated with managing content, such as poor performance, limited functionality, weak security and limited search.

Assess Base is the digital backbone of the new 2020 Model. It meets the needs of two different users: members and EFQM Assessors. Members use one of the three Assessment Tools:

- **Questionnaire**
- **Business Matrix**
- **Business Matrix Advanced.**

EFQM Assessors perform external assessments as part of the Business Matrix Advanced process.

Assess Base streamlines and digitises the previous paper-driven process. This includes translating the Model's questions into various languages, which is essential as the Model is used globally.

An organisation's assigned System Administrator authorises team members to populate the forms using the platform's permissions-based functionality. Assess Base supports multiple simultaneous users and auto-save ensures all the information is saved. The Assess Base intuitive workflow guides the user through each step of the Model. There is an interactive dashboard which contains an overview of the company's activity. It enables the organisation to review the assessment progress and access the related reports. When an organisation requests an external assessment, the Foundation's Administrator uses Assess Base to assign one of its certified Assessors. As the single point of truth, Assess Base ensures that the Assessor has access to the latest organisational input.

## The Results

EFQM described the project as a 'game-changer'. What started as a conversation to replace their old Knowledge Base, turned into a broader transformational initiative.

Although Knowledge Base was the initial focus for the project, it is Assess Base that plays a more pivotal role for EFQM. With Assess Base, EFQM has new lines of business and revenue and greater access to their customers.

Since September 2019, over 300 EFQM Certified Assessors have completed training in Assess Base and the 2020 Model. In addition, training has been extended, with three EFQM partners now running training using Assess Base in their local languages: Spanish and German. At the Helsinki soft launch, Assess Base was available in three languages. Currently Assess Base is used in all sizes of organisations, including BMW, Bosch and UNOPS.

*"It was a privilege to work with Vinciance, Geoff, Russell and the EFQM team to help shape and deliver their digital strategy and see the real impact that it has had. It's also an honour to be part of the vibrant and passionate EFQM community. We are really just at the start of our partnership; we see so much opportunity ahead for EFQM as they now have a solid digital foundation to build upon, and we hope to deliver further innovation for the benefit of the EFQM community in 2020 and beyond. "*

**Damian Beresford**

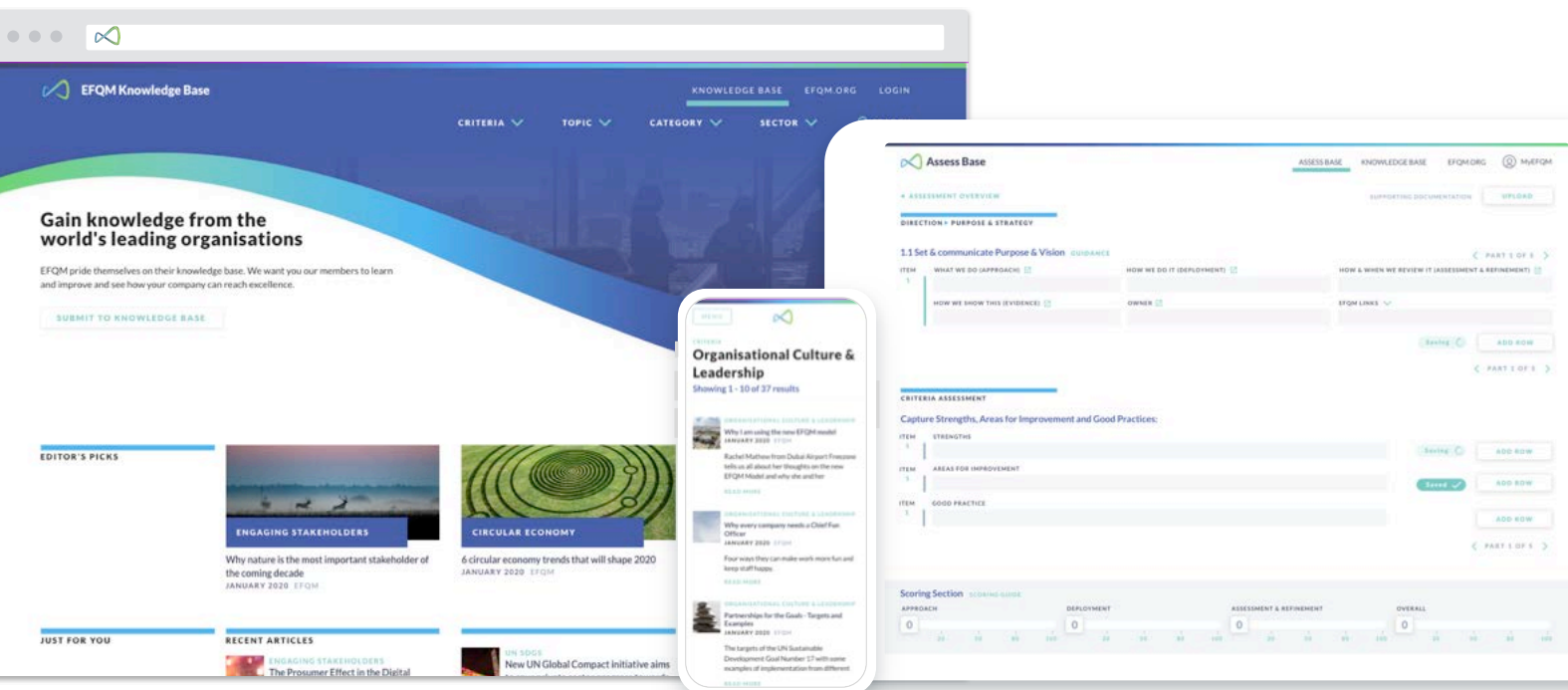
Technical Director NearForm

For NearForm, this is another success for our design-led approach to digital strategy and shows how focusing on user needs also results in a positive business impact. Technology-wise, this was another success for Orion, our digital content platform accelerator. Orion uses AWS cloud-native services and a serverless execution model, and uses a leading technology stack that includes GraphQL, React, Gatsby, Hasura and PostgreSQL."

## Next Steps

The EFQM digital journey continues in 2020. The rich backlog of features for Knowledge Base and Assess Base will let the Foundation exceed the expectations of their Community by providing greater impact.

In line with the ‘digital-first’ mindset of EFQM, the next phases will enable the Foundation to pursue more business opportunities in new markets and industry sectors.



## Get in touch

If you are looking to hear more about how NearForm can deliver solutions and results for your organisation, get in touch today and we can schedule a call.

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