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Scoold vs Question2Answer

TL;DR: Scoold is more feature-rich, enterprise-oriented, and has official cloud hosting, while Q2A is slightly easier and cheaper to deploy because it targets commodity PHP hosting. [31]

Scoold is an open-source (Apache 2.0) Q&A platform positioned for team/organization knowledge sharing. It can be deployed on premises or to any cloud. Scoold requires a Java 21+ runtime. It features a Q&A-style format, full-text search, spaces (private groups), webhooks, backup/export, and a REST API. [1] Question2Answer (Q2A) is an older open-source project (GPL v3) built using PHP and MySQL. It is widely used and translated in 40 languages and is also available as a Wordpress extension. [2] Both products can be self-hosted, but Scoold offers much easier install path with premium upgrade option to a “Pro” license, and official cloud hosting (Scoold Cloud). Q2A is primarily self-hosted and points users to third-parties for hosting and custom development. [3] Q2A’s license, GPL v3, can negatively affect the ability for organizations to redistribute modified versions or derivatives. [4]

Scoold is inspired by Stack Overflow-style Q&A format with voting, reputation and badges and revision history. It has unique features like private spaces and geolocation filtering of content. Scoold has multiple integration points: an OpenAPI-compatible REST API, webhooks, and more. Data portability is a core feature with easy backup and export. [5] It also supports enterprise-grade security and authentication (SSO with multiple IDPs, 2FA, mTLS), with some of these capabilities available only in Scoold Pro (e.g. SAML). [5]

Q2A also provides the same core Q&A building blocks found in Scoold - tags, integrated search, voting, comments, closed questions, reputation points, RSS/email notifications. It positions itself as quick to install and easy to customize via CSS themes. [6]

Where Q2A is especially strong is extensibility: its official documentation defines a plugin system based on modules and overrides (including 150+ core function overrides), enabling deep customization without directly editing core code. [7]

Operationally, Scoold is designed for cloud deployment and is built on the battle tested Java runtime. The Pro version has enterprise-native feature like SAML and integrations with Slack/Mattermost/Teams. [8]

Scoold Cloud offers effortless Scoold Pro hosting with subscription starting from €49/month, and includes automatic updates, patches and backups. [9]

Q2A, by contrast, targets commodity web hosting: its installation assume a standard PHP/MySQL stack and claim a short install process; its official docs also list third-party service providers for “easy hosting”. [10]

Practically, Scoold is best aligned with small to medium sized teams that are privacy-conscious or need a cloud solution with minimal effort. Q2A fits teams that prefer a classic PHP application and highly modular customization coming from the larger community base. [11]

Category	Scoold	Question2Answer (Q2A)
Features	Stack Overflow-style Q&A; full-text search; comments, tags, votes, reputation/badges; spaces; webhooks; backup/export; REST API; geolocation filtering; email digests, social login, 2FA and more. [12]	Core Q&A features incl. categories/tags, voting/comments/closed questions, points-based reputation, RSS/email notifications, “fast and secure” positioning and spam controls. [2]
Deployment options	Self-hosted or cloud (Scoold Cloud); requires Java 21+, can be deployed on K8s (Helm) and Docker. [1]	Self-host on a typical web-hosting stack (PHP + MySQL); guidance assumes standard web-server environments and emphasizes quick install. [13]
Hosting	Official cloud hosting available on Scoold Cloud: cloud.scoold.com [14]. [9]	Self-hosted only; docs list third-party hosting providers as available but not endorsed. [15]

Category	Scoold	Question2Answer (Q2A)
Pricing/licensing	Open-source (Apache 2.0) + paid Pro version (starting at €499) and an optional Scoold Cloud subscription (starting at €49/month). [16]	Software is free/open source; official license is GPL v3 (copyleft). [17]
Target audience	small to medium sized teams looking for an internal Q&A/KB (e.g. support or dev docs). [18]	Site owners/communities wanting a general-purpose Q&A site on PHP/MySQL; project claims broad adoption across many sites/languages. [2]
Integrations	Slack, Mattermost, Teams; Zapier, n8n; REST API; advanced SSO, email notifications, data import from Stack Overflow. [20]	Out-of-the-box integration with WordPress[21] and Joomla[22]; extensible via plugins (modules for custom pages/widgets/logins, custom search, captcha, etc.). [23]
Customization	Fully customizable (white label) branding; light/dark themes; custom CSS styles, custom badges; external JS scripts supported. [12]	CSS themes + custom sidebar/widgets/pages/links; deep modification via modules/layers and 150+ core function overrides. [23]
Security/compliance	Advertises 2FA, mTLS, multiple SSO IDPs, GDPR/CCPA cookie consent tooling; Scoold Cloud includes encryption at rest. [24]	Project positions itself as safe from XSS/CSRF/SQL injection and includes anti-spam levers but docs recommend extra hardening steps (e.g., removing installer file, moving config, etc). [25]
Support	Basic support is included in all versions via community channels (GitHub issues); paid tiers and Scoold Cloud include	Limited commercial support. Community support via the Q2A site; docs also list third-party providers for hosting and

Category	Scoold	Question2Answer (Q2A)
	email support (and other priority support options). [16]	development services (not endorsed). [26]

Scoold / Scoold Pro:

- **Pros:** Privacy-first platform, suitable for teams and enterprises with extensive built-in features. [5] Clear documentation and upgrade paths for “buy vs. build vs. host” OSS license, premium Pro version, and managed hosting with published pricing. [16]
- **Cons:** Meaningful capability gating (some advanced features are only available in Scoold Pro), and Pro is distributed under an EULA rather than as open source. [27]

Question2Answer:

- **Pros:** Very approachable deployment model for many teams (PHP/MySQL), with an explicit “quick to install” claim. [28] Highly extensible via official plugin architecture (modules, layers, overrides), and supports CMS/SSO integrations through documented mechanisms. [29]
- **Cons:** Unclear docs, outdated UI, GPL v3 copyleft license can be more restrictive than permissive licensing for some commercial redistribution or embedded-product strategies. [30]

Sources:

- Scoold official product page (feature matrix, pricing tiers, deployment claims). [27]
- Scoold Cloud official pricing page (subscription pricing, hosting notes, billing model). [9]
- Scoold OSS license text (Apache License 2.0). [32]
- Question2Answer official homepage (version date, adoption claim, core features). [2]
- Question2Answer license details (GPL v3). [33]

- Question2Answer official developer docs (plugins architecture). [7]
- Third-party overview listing both products among open-source Q&A platforms (licensing/stack context; note date is 2020). [34]

[1] [3] [5] [8] [11] [12] [16] [18] [20] [22] [24] [27] [31] Scoold | An Open Source Q&A Platform

<https://scoold.com/>

[2] [6] [14] [19] [21] [23] [25] [28] Question2Answer - Free Open Source Q&A Software for PHP

<https://www.question2answer.org/>

[4] [32] [raw.githubusercontent.com](https://raw.githubusercontent.com/Erudika/scoold/master/LICENSE)

<https://raw.githubusercontent.com/Erudika/scoold/master/LICENSE>

[7] [29] Question2Answer - Developers - Creating Plugins

<https://docs.question2answer.org/plugins/>

[9] Scoold Cloud - Hosted Scoold Pro servers

<https://cloud.scoold.com/>

[10] [13] Install Question2Answer

<https://docs.question2answer.org/install/>

[15] [26] Question2Answer - Services

<https://docs.question2answer.org/services/>

[17] [30] [33] Question2Answer - License Details

<https://www.question2answer.org/license.php>

[34] 7 open source Q&A platforms | Opensource.com

<https://opensource.com/article/20/2/open-source-qa>