Social Business: Delivering the Promise of KM?

As we all know, KM has been an uphill sell for a long time. Failed projects. Misdirected strategies. Lack of adoption. Expensive and ineffective technologies. These are the kinds of things that put a bad taste in the mouth of executives and investors. What KM really needed was a killer app—a no-brainer, value-creating, business-improving reason to adopt and support a knowledge-based strategy in the fast-moving and diverse organizations that are common today. We might have stumbled onto it. In shorthand, we call it “social business.” More drawn out, it is the application of social technologies as they are applied to operational and mission-critical business functions. More on that later.

Five Ways Social Intranets Solve CIO Problems

So every CIO is supposed to have a social strategy because social is taking over the universe. It’s the preferred way people communicate at work or at the office. OK, you get it. But what if I told you that, in fact, a social intranet will help you elevate your game and make savvy CIOs more valuable in their own companies? Or that a CIO who does a good job deploying a social intranet will likely solve other thorny enterprise IT problems? Five reasons why CIOs should embrace social intranets.

A Positive Experience at Every Touch Point

While we may still be waiting for flying cars and calorie-free ice cream, the future may be closer than you think when it comes to knowledge management. Here are five progressive ideas you can implement now to start building the knowledgebase of the future: 1. A search engine that knows what you are thinking. One of the most frustrating aspects of using a knowledge management tool is finding the answer you’re looking for. Precious seconds are wasted trying different search queries and navigating complex hierarchies. But what if you didn’t have to search at all? One of the most important advances in customer service knowledge management is the incorporation of customer context.

Didn’t We Already Solve That Problem?

In the very funny movie, “Groundhog Day,” Bill Murray’s character is forced to relive the same day over and over again—constantly repeating the same dialog, actions and events. More and more companies are finding themselves in a similar “endless cycle” these days. Employees who quit or retire with specialized expertise and knowledge take it with them. As a result, companies are forced to spend time and money training their remaining employees to re-solve the exact same problems over and over.

CEO Mandate: A Higher Return on Knowledge

The top CEO challenge—according to recent surveys including IBM’s annual CEO survey—is responding to customers and marketplaces with greater relevance and immediacy. That’s because lack of relevance and responsiveness carries huge economic consequences—missing opportunities, poor customer service, lower sales, customer churning, sub-optimal products and services, costs associated with reinventing the wheel and more.

Critical Practices That Drive Successful Analytics and Data Projects

Six important practices can propel organizations to the forefront of their industries by tapping into the huge business value in content. Analytics tools (such as Smartlogic’s software suite, Semaphore) identify, classify, extract, integrate and surface the information contained in content, making it digestible, intelligible and valuable. This kind of “content intelligence” supports existing information management, enterprise search and business intelligence systems.
As we all know, KM has been an uphill sell for a long time. Failed projects. Misdirected strategies. Lack of adoption. Expensive and ineffective technologies. These are the kinds of things that put a bad taste in the mouth of executives and investors.

What KM really needed was a killer app—a no-brainer, value-creating, business-improving reason to adopt and support a knowledge-based strategy in the fast-moving and diverse organizations that are common today.

We might have stumbled on it. In shorthand, we call it “social business.” More drawn out, it is the application of social technologies as they are applied to operational and mission-critical business functions. More on that later.

One of the early and best-known proponents of social business has been Jive Software. Headquartered in Palo Alto, it has a global presence and an international overview. Wanting to explore the intersection of KM and social, I met with Tim Zonca. Tim is director of product marketing at Jive, but don’t let that fool you. He’s not your typical pitchman. After ditching med school to join the tech world, he’s spent most of his career focused on things like enterprise content management, business process management and driving collaboration in the enterprise. He seemed like the man to talk to.

I start with the typical hard-driving pessimistic journalist question (I’m not really one of those, but I play one on TV). “How much of ‘social business’ is a reality, and how much of it is early-adopter, too-cool-for-school, pie-in-the-sky dreaming? Isn’t ‘social’ just a code word for ‘messing around at work?’”

And the answer, apparently, is no.

“That perception might have been there at one time, but it has changed pretty drastically, especially in the last six months,” insists Tim, right off the bat. “We talk to a lot of customers, and lately we’re spending time not only with a CIO or CTO-level person, but almost always a line-of-business leader. We’ve had cases where the CEO and even the board is involved. That’s because they’ve seen their counterparts and competitors embrace social business technology in mysterious and impactful ways. ‘We can’t ignore this,’ they are saying. ‘This is transformational, and it’s going to affect everyone in the organization,’ they say. So senior people are looking at it at a very strategic level now,” Tim declares.

And I believe him. Social business collaboration has taken a steep rise to the forefront of organizations. Collaboration, social intranets, etc. are now freely talked about. I can remember when that kind of thing would get you kicked out of a meeting, but these days... not so much.

I wanted to know from Tim how he would characterize the current state of actual acceptance and deployment? Is it still mostly talking points among the consultants? Or has there been actual progress in adopting social for business?

“Maybe it’s a byproduct of who I talk to,” he answers. “But many of the largest financial services organizations and other regulated industries are taking it seriously. There are even companies that are 150 years old in manufacturing that have adopted this stuff. ‘Late last year/early this year we’ve really seen a shift toward the mainstream. There have been a few factors driving this: consultants, analysts and media like yourselves are bringing it to the attention of business. Also, customers are starting to talk about the value they are seeing. There was a McKinsey paper that came out last summer which spelled out the potential that social might provide to an organization. At that time, they anticipated that $1.3 trillion could be either gained or saved using social technology. After that, we started having many more conversations,” says Tim. I’ll bet they did!

“We have since dug into our customer base to find out where they are seeing this kind of value, or, indeed, were they at all?” adds Tim. “It was a large sample, around 400 customers, and they were not little science projects, but massive customers using social business at scale. And we found that social was bringing them a 15% increase in productivity across the board, which translates to about a 2% to 4% revenue impact per year. So it’s pretty substantial,” he says.

But Tim is also very realistic in his analysis of the state of the market. He is no dummy. “When I say it’s ‘moved to the mainstream,’ I would not say it’s tipped entirely that way. But we’re definitely past the ‘early adopter’ phase, and we’re hitting the ‘early majority’ market, for sure.” But the message I get from Tim is that the world hasn’t entirely embraced social business, quite yet. That’s a realistic assessment, I think.

Teasing Out the Value

The subject of value came up—a lot—in our conversation. So I drilled down on that subject with Tim. “You’ve teased it out a little bit already,” says Tim. He likes that expression—”teased it out”—and so do I. For the record, I am hereby borrowing it for casual conversation. Full disclosure: if you hear me use it, I got it from Tim.

But rather than tease, I asked full on: “What types of productivity can you possibly get from social business tools?”

“Less time in meetings and on email; finding the information experts they need to...
that the functional departments are divided quite naturally by their immediate goals and interests. For example, business wants to keep everything, just in case; IT wants to get rid of everything, because it costs them a lot; legal want to manage and maintain governance over information, to keep their you-know-whats out of the sling. And I can’t imagine them all getting in a room and agreeing on... anything.

“This is exactly where I think the value of these various use patterns comes into play,” says Tim. “I think, in part, you’re right. They are probably thinking ‘we’re in legal; what do we care about what marketing is doing?’ But I believe these cross-functional use cases is where the real value appears. One example is sales enablement. That usually means there’s one team providing sales opportunities (leads), a marketing group providing collateral, another group providing competitive intelligence to the central sales team. It just makes sense for those marketing and sales teams to work together.” True enough.

A different use case is deal management,” Tim describes. Just so you know, this is where a sales team uses social tools to more effectively execute a deal. Why is that necessary? “We have one customer, a huge technology provider, who had 260 people, around the world, working on one account. This spans global account managers, regional account managers, naturally, but it also spans people outside of sales, such as those who are working on ‘proof of concept’ information, and statements of work, and terms and conditions agreements, people in finance helping to structure the deal(s)... So deal management recognizes that there are important reasons to bring people from different departments to work toward a common purpose.” OK, I’m convinced.

Who’s In Charge?

I wondered, as I often do: who’s in charge? To what degree is this an IT discussion? Seems to me that the business side also needs to have a seat at the table in order to make the strategic aspects work. Who would you say leads the social business “bandwagon?” Business or IT? And if your answer is “both of the above,” do you see actual cooperation between those organizations?

“A couple years ago there was definitely more of a split between the lines of business and IT. And we also found that the decision would come primarily out of one group or the other. IT would say ‘Here’s the decision. Let’s go.’ Or, line-of-business would say, ‘this is the way of the future. Let’s go,’” answers Tim.

“But now, pretty much every time, IT is involved. It’s become mission-critical and touches every employee.” And thus, it’s a structural decision that needs an infrastructure to support it.

“But, having said that,” adds Tim. “there is one business group that seems to have a strong say. And that’s corporate communications.” Huh? “It’s because they’re struggling to figure out a better way to communicate with ALL their employees and make sure everyone is strategically aligned. And all the corporate information—from HR and from the top down—gets disseminated. So social makes sense as a platform for that. I’ve heard plenty of anecdotal evidence that it is true.”

On a more or less personal side note, this is exactly why knowledge management was so attractive to us, at KMWorld, all those years ago. And also why it has been so impossible. Tim is right; there are terrific examples of use cases where knowledge sharing is a prerequisite for the task. But unfortunately, there are probably more where knowledge sharing is damningly unlikely. We’ve been talking for years about how to institute “incentives” and set “policies” that are supposed to create knowledge-sharing organizations. Most of the time they don’t work.

But Tim (and Jive) have been very wise to pick the cases that work the right way. Deal management (some would call it case management) is one example where the various players are not altruistically dropping what they’re doing to help out; this is a case where being part of the team IS their job. “You don’t have to convince them to do it,” says Tim.

Plus, it helps when it’s easier. “Social gives people one place where they can coordinate across links, everything is a threaded discussion, you don’t have to sift through stuff lost in people’s inboxes. People are already doing this work; social technology just gives them an easier way to do it and save time.”

Pretty much the goal of KM. Social might be the answer to making it real. Read on for more thoughts on the subject.
Five Ways Social Intranets Solve CIO Problems

(And makes them look good, too.)

By Tim Zonca, Senior Director of Product Marketing, Jive Software

So every CIO is supposed to have a social strategy because social is taking over the universe. It’s the preferred way people communicate at work or at the office.

OK, you get it.

But what if I told you that, in fact, a social intranet will help you elevate your game and make savvy CIOs more valuable in their own companies? Or that a CIO who does a good job deploying a social intranet will likely solve other thorny enterprise IT problems?

Five reasons why CIOs should embrace social intranets:

1. Social intranets drive demonstrable value across the enterprise.

Yes, lots of other products from the pre-social period—when transactional packages and systems of record dominated—showed substantial ROI. Content management systems allowed companies to let anyone edit a Web page or manage content. ERPs made it far easier to track gross margins and organize complex manufacturing and procurement cycles. But all of these earlier advances were effectively siloed in one or a few business units.

Traditional intranets were the first effort to use a broad knowledge management tool for business process and efficiency improvements. But they rarely worked because, let’s face it, they were rigid, top-down systems that forced users into content-centric practices, rather than allowing them to engage in context-driven collaboration that suited their needs. The intranet put control of information distribution in the hands of a few overseers, the definition of a broadcast network rather than a social medium.

Social intranets add the critical interactive dimension missing from conventional static intranets. They add a rich layer of connection and collaboration, providing the human context that makes content meaningful and useful. And whereas traditional intranets rely on a few people to curate assets and keep everyone informed, social intranets turn everyone into curators and stakeholders, collectively ensuring that information is up-to-date, relevant and brought to the attention of those who need it.

Done right, a social intranet can lead to dramatic improvements in information flow, knowledge capture, innovation, strategic alignment and workforce productivity.

“Traditional intranets rely on a few people to curate assets; social intranets turn everyone into curators.”

A recent analysis of several hundred companies by a top-three global business consultancy showed just how big the impacts can be.1 In a study of several hundred companies, researchers found that, on average, best-of-breed social intranets:

1. Improved employee productivity by 15%;
2. Grew top-line value by 2%-4%;
3. Reduced email load by 21%;
4. Reduced meetings by 16%;
5. Reduced the time to find knowledge, expertise and best practices by 34%; and
6. Reduced employee turnover by 24%.

In addition to the companywide benefits, social systems moved the needle significantly in lines of business such as sales and marketing:

1. Increased sales per rep by 13%;
2. Decreased deal cycle time by 22%;
3. Decreased sales rep onboarding time by 23%;
4. Decreased sales support needed by 14%;
5. Reduced time on marketing campaigns by 12%; and
6. Decreased collateral development time by 28%.

These value metrics can help a CIO build a strong case not only for social intranets but also help them frame the IT department as a key driver of broad ROI possibilities and actual savings in huge categories that touch the entire company.

2. Social intranets provide analytics that demonstrate the value of knowledge sharing.

Coupled with the right analytic tools, social intranets offer unprecedented insight into critical processes and behavior. For starters, CIOs and community managers can track adoption, usage and other key activity metrics to measure and optimize the social intranet itself.

But that’s just the beginning. As social intranets become a primary channel for connection, expertise location, enterprise search and collaboration within an organization, they generate a mother lode of intelligence that can be used to answer some of the questions at the heart of company success: How engaged are employees? How aligned is the organization? How effective are onboarding and training assets. How successful are internal initiatives and programs? What functions are underperforming?

Semantic analysis and other techniques can reveal intents and sentiments, opening a huge array of other potential uses including more proactive engagement, interventional training and capacity additions.

As a result, the CIO moves from someone responsible primarily for tactical and operational support to someone who provides more crucial strategic direction and a better understanding of what employees are thinking, saying and doing. By capturing real-time activity and results, the CIO is accessing—for the first time—critical information that fuels an organization’s growth.

3. Social intranets solve the collaboration conundrum.

Building a useful and widely used collaboration environment for the enterprise has historically been hard. The graveyard of “big IT projects” is littered with orphaned document management systems, little-used intranet portals, half-baked Wikis and the like.
Why did they fail or underwhelm? Because all of them are too hard to use or a poor fit in their own special way.

Many worked great for a certain cohort that was heavily bought-in, but failed with other parts of the organization that were less enthused with, say, learning a Wiki markup language or dealing with an intranet that was rarely updated with timely information. Some collaboration tools scale nicely across an organization but fail to pull together enough key functionality to make them relevant.

Likewise, collaboration tools that may work for one part of a business can fail to entice other parts to partake. A collaboration tool that works great for a marketing communications team by giving them video upload, group editing and blogging capabilities may be far less well-received by the finance team if it fails to make it easy for them to internally publish key financial data and maintain security.

Also, many collaboration tools do not play nice on mobile devices. And few collaboration tools do a job good of capturing reputation and relevance data in order to identify the best responses, most appropriate documents or the most useful resources on specific topics. The latter is a key part of collaboration because, frankly, how many times have you seen emails fly around your staff asking where a document is located? Or someone trying to find an email sent six months ago that included a key piece of information?

The upshot? Legacy collaboration tools scale poorly, are not easy enough to use, don’t fulfill needs of all intended users, and can’t capture reputational information or perform sophisticated network analysis to identify relevant information and people.

Many CIOs have been raked back and forth for much of their careers over the hot coals of the collaboration software crisis and the inability of organizations to build on-the-fly collaborations around projects (as opposed to workflows).

Social intranets can solve all (or at least most) of these collaboration issues. By taking the best usability and scalability features of Facebook, Twitter and other consumer social media tools, the best social intranet technology provides a simple, lightweight, omnipresent collaboration layer that has feature richness required to accomplish real work but is free from the crushing complexity of many legacy collaboration tools.

At the same time, next-gen social intranets can scale up more easily than point-source collaboration solutions, which may work well for teams but not for entire companies. Because relevance and reputation, as well as advanced network analytics, are built into leading-edge social intranet platforms, two additional and complicated layers of other software—enterprise search and network analytics—are made redundant. They are also simultaneously and deeply integrated into the work project flows, where search and knowledge resource discovery are most used. In other words, content is far easier to socialize, share, search and categorize within a proper social intranet framework.

4. Social intranets make self-service far more viable.

Lots of CIOs have attempted to set up a self-service schema for their users to solve key problems without pinging the help desk or picking up the phone. But self-service has generally failed at many levels, all the way from device support to applications behaving badly to the inability of the IT support staff to properly or easily identify key sources of problems for end users.

Self-service, at best, is a live conversation that incorporates the best aspects of online communities and social media. For this reason, social intranets make self-service a far more viable option.

“Self-service, at best, is a live conversation that incorporates the best aspects of online communities and social media.”

Further, social intranets put in place a SaaS framework for users that makes the browser the center of their application universe in an app-store-meets-enterprise combination. Users don’t have to worry about conflicts between different pieces of hosted application software because that software is only interacting at the internet layer.

At the same time, users can be trusted to install and try out software in accordance with their needs within a social intranet app store framework. By removing software complexity from the equation, social systems make it far easier for CIOs to focus on higher order tasks.

5. Social intranets actually make security easier.

This is a simple but powerful numbers game. A well-executed social intranet deployment will reduce the number of unsanctioned applications running on a CIO’s network. And users will have less need for third-party sharing or collaboration tools focused more on the consumer internet.

By reducing (if never entirely eliminating) the use of other social tools that previously were in use, a CIO can rest more easily knowing that the majority of social traffic on his network is running through known ports and through an SSL internet browser transaction layer, a much safer environment than random applications selected by end users.

Simplifying security becomes a bigger imperative in an age when workers demand to access internal networks from anywhere using any device they want, and share access to portions of those networks with third-party collaborators on a nearly on-demand basis.

So by reducing the number of moving parts in an organization’s IT ecosystem, social intranets just make life easier. This is not to say a CIO can shut down their firewall, turn off their anti-virus programs, and forget about malware—let alone fire their security-focused network engineers. Rather, social intranets make it easier for them to manage security issues with their existing staff in an era when getting additional seats is harder and harder.

From Geek To Revenue Growth Engine

These are just a handful of the potential benefits a savvy CIO can realize through a smart social intranet strategy. That strategy should not only seek to socialize business processes but also to leverage the way social media inherently works to build a better informed, more responsible, more secure, more collaborative and more efficient organization.

We suspect that there will be a whole lot more benefits coming to light as social intranets become more widespread and organizations gain valuable experience with their own implementations.

For the future-focused CIO, deploying a social intranet turns the page from bolting on obvious social features to revolutionizing how people work and how business results are achieved.

If you haven’t gotten started yet, don’t wait. Soon social will become a total no-brainer and a key differentiator for both top and bottom line behavior at the IT department and company-wide levels. Now is the time to take the lead. And reap the benefits.

See www.jivesoftware.com/resources/whitepapers/how-social-business-pays-off

1 See www.jivesoftware.com/resources/whitepapers/Growth%20Engine From%20Geek%20To%20Revenue%20Growth%20Engine

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KM World October 2013
A Positive Experience at Every Touch Point

Five Progressive Ways to Build the Knowledgebase of the Future

By Kelly Koelliker, Senior Product Marketing Manager, KANA

While we may still be waiting for flying cars and calorie-free ice cream, the future may be closer than you think when it comes to knowledge management. Here are five progressive ideas you can implement now to start building the knowledgebase of the future:

1. A search engine that knows what you are thinking.

One of the most frustrating aspects of using a knowledge management tool is finding the answer you’re looking for. Precious seconds are wasted trying different search queries and navigating complex hierarchies. But what if you didn’t have to search at all?

One of the most important advances in customer service knowledge management is the incorporation of customer context. Context is any piece of information known about the end user—location, customer type, products owned, open cases, etc. As companies collect more data points about each customer, the amount of context available grows and the relevance of search results increases.

By matching this context with associated knowledge articles, the knowledgebase can often predetermine the likely articles that will be helpful to a user—without having to search at all. For example, if we know that a customer lives in New York City and owns a Samsung Galaxy, a new article about expanded 4G coverage in the New York City area for Android users is likely to be very relevant to that customer. Even if the customer does not know the device model number and error code, the device can be matched with the search query terms to hone in on the right article with minimal effort.

2. Content that writes itself.

Large organizations spend countless hours authoring content for their knowledgebases. Not only is this process time-consuming and expensive, but how can you even be sure you’re writing the content that is needed? What if the knowledgebase could automatically write all the content its users were looking for?

This notion is not too far-fetched, thanks to social media. Thousands of users go online every day to help one another in online forums and communities. By intelligently listening to these data sources, knowledge administrators can mine the community for the top questions and answers needed by their customers. Routing these articles through a workflow ensures the answers are correct and vetted by the appropriate experts.

3. Problems that fix themselves.

Maybe we can’t actually create self-healing telecommunications and copy machines, but what if these devices could at least tell you what’s wrong and how to fix it? I already described the importance of customer context and how it can help you find answers without searching. Devices can provide the knowledge base with contextual information, too. When a device breaks, the model number and error code are often enough context to determine the knowledge article needed to resolve the issue. By installing a knowledgebase directly on the device or connecting wirelessly to a central server, this context can be passed from the device to the knowledgebase automatically. As soon as you notice the failure, you are already able to see a knowledgebase article describing how to resolve the issue. This tactic can be used on televisions, copiers, machinery, mobile devices or any other number of consumer products in use today.

4. The universe in your pocket.

A few years ago, Web self-service revolutionized customer service. Instead of calling the contact center and sitting on hold, you could log onto your computer and find help on your own. While Web self-service is still a critical element of providing excellent service, customers no longer want to be tied to their computers. Mobile service on a variety of devices gives your customers the freedom to get help when and where they need it.

True mobile service is much more than formatting some FAQs to fit on a phone screen. Standard search and browse usability on a mobile device can be quite complex—and reading page-long articles on a four-inch screen is a far cry from a great user experience. To create a positive customer experience on a mobile device, the knowledge management system must:

- Be formatted to display on a variety of devices;

- Offer guided resolution trees with questions and answers, rather than forcing the user to read lengthy articles;

- Use context, including the device’s GPS, to present personalized results specific to the user’s need; and

- Provide escalation options, such as mobile chat and case submission options, if the user is unable to find their answer through self-service.

5. One version of the truth.

I guess this idea isn’t so futuristic, but it’s a statement that has been much easier said than done for years. As users look for help on the Web, phone, online chat, email and now social media, large organizations often stockpile multiple silos of information scattered throughout the organization. Different departments manage different aspects of the customer journey. Mergers and acquisitions bring overlapping technologies into the IT landscape.

So how do you really offer your customers one version of the truth? You need a single solution that presents knowledge to users across all channels, while providing the flexibility to display content that is formatted and permissioned for each user scenario.

As customer expectations increase rapidly, it’s important that organizations keep up. These revolutionary capabilities will allow companies to use knowledge management to provide faster, more accurate service across all channels of communication. By leveraging an omnichannel customer service platform (such as KANA Enterprise), you can truly differentiate from your competition by offering your customers a positive experience at every touchpoint.

KANA Enterprise is the first omnichannel, end-to-end customer service solution. As such, it is built to respond to customer inquiries across all channels. A single knowledgebase serves content in the right format for each channel, ensuring that customers receive the same answer on the phone, Web, chat or any other channel. Customers can transition from one channel to another over the course of their journey and not miss a beat. One version of the truth is finally a reality.

Dig in to KANA Enterprise Knowledge Management by reading the data sheet that’s accessible from www.kana.com on http://www.kana.com/kana-enterprise-all-product-news. See the new KANA Enterprise in action by contacting us at info@kana.com or visiting us online at www.kana.com.

Contact KANA
info@kana.com
North American Sales: 866-672-3791
North American HQ: 800-357-8738
EMEA: +44 1628 509 006
APAC: +61 2 92 649 566

Connect with KANA
Web: www.kana.com
Twitter: @KANASoftware
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YouTube: KANASoftware
In the very funny movie, “Groundhog Day,” Bill Murray’s character is forced to relive the same day over and over again—constantly repeating the same dialog, actions and events.

More and more companies are finding themselves in a similar “endless cycle” these days.

Employees who quit or retire with specialized expertise and knowledge take it with them. As a result, companies are forced to spend time and money training their remaining employees to re-solve the exact same problems over and over.

The solution, however, isn’t to simply extract the knowledge from current employees and bottle it up on a server somewhere. That approach to knowledge management has failed, according to Don Tapscott, an adjunct professor at the University of Toronto. In an interview with *McKinsey Quarterly*, he said “We had this view that knowledge is a finite asset … [that] you manage it by containerizing it.”

But that’s not true. Don put it, “Knowledge is an infinite resource. You don’t achieve it through containerization; you achieve it through collaboration.”

Social platforms such as tibbr offer the collaborative tools necessary for effective knowledge management. These robust platforms allow knowledge sharing, ideation and project collaboration to happen across systems and applications.

They tell the real story of what’s going on inside a company better than Monday morning staff meetings or briefing books prepared the previous week. Social platforms reveal what’s in the minds of the employees who are on the front lines every day. Just as Twitter and Facebook allow political campaigns to take the pulse of the public minute by minute, private enterprise social networks can help to make sure that you are taking the pulse of your business in real time, all the time.

But social technologies need to integrate with the way employees actually work. Let’s check into enterprise reality to show you what I mean:

Donna with ACME Corp. is entering initial orders for a new million-dollar deal for backhoes needed in Kansas City in 90 days. The order then takes on a life of its own. The manufacturing work order is approved by another manager and then entered into a legacy ERP system. A global supply chain process follows, weaving from China to Long Beach to Kansas City. Meanwhile, in order for Donna to answer a simple status update question from the sales rep, she has to log into an order-processing system, a legacy ERP and a delivery-tracking portal. Finally, she gets back on her new “enterprise social network” to answer the question. That’s life in the real world!

**“Social technologies need to integrate with the way employees actually work.”**

Savvy enterprise software vendors have begun to respond by adding a social layer on an existing application or rebadging existing software. Whether it’s content management, CRM, ERP or HR software, everyone has a social channel to sell—it’s the flavor of the moment. But as a result, the enterprise buyer is faced with a bewildering array of choices. Do I buy a social channel for every application I use? It’s like buying a TV for each TV channel I watch. How many TVs and how many channels?

For the enterprise social revolution to succeed you need three things:

**Follow everything:** Facebook has taught us that the easiest way to consume information is from the ubiquitous “wall,” which has become the 21st-century version of a dashboard. All sources of information at work—content, data, people, business process, outcomes and exceptions—need to be able to declare their status and share intelligence to the right people in the network in real time.

**Support everything:** The social network needs to be integrated with every system and available on any device that employees use. Our fictitious Donna shouldn’t have to log in to multiple systems and then respond to a question on a separate social network. The social aspect should already be integrated with these systems, so Donna receives the information she needs and can answer the sales rep from the same place.

At the same time, while many of us wait with bated breath for the next big mobile device, in the real world, an employee’s old computer and three-year-old Blackberry still matter. The ability to access information from any legacy business system and network, irrespective of the browser or the device, is essential to the success of enterprise social.

**Control some things:** The enterprise has secrets it wants, and needs, to keep. Moving beyond passwords and authentication, enterprise social technologies must preserve and seamlessly support existing layers of privacy, retention and auditing policies that may be required for legal compliance and risk management.

The staggering impact of social networks in employees’ personal lives foreshadows the change we’ll undoubtedly be seeing very soon in the enterprise. Facebook has ensured that in enterprise social, spring is in full bloom in corporate boardrooms as well as on shiny billboards in Silicon Valley. However, for the revolution to succeed, we need to respond to enterprise reality: the way Donna works in Peoria.

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Ram Menon, Executive Vice President of Social Computing, TIBCO

Ram Menon is responsible for TIBCO’s social computing business. Since joining TIBCO in 1999, he has held a variety of executive positions. Prior to his current role, he served as executive vice president and chief marketing officer.

From 2001 to 2003, he served as chief strategist of the company responsible for new product strategy and emerging vertical markets. Prior to TIBCO, Menon was with Accenture, a global consulting firm, where he specialized in supply chain and e-commerce strategy, consulting with Global 1000 companies.
CEO Mandate: A Higher Return on Knowledge

T
he top CEO challenge—according to recent surveys including IBM’s annual CEO survey—is responding to customers and marketplaces with greater relevance and immediacy. That’s because lack of relevance and responsiveness carries huge economic consequences—missing opportunities, poor customer service, lower sales, customer-churn, sub-optimal products and services, costs associated with reinventing the wheel and more.

CEOs recognize collective knowledge as a critical asset—under-utilized and yet fundamental to business agility and competitiveness. Relevant knowledge—everywhere—is their key competitive differentiator and the greatest source of profitability.

Just like any other asset, knowledge will only generate returns to the extent that it is re-utilized by employees and customers to take higher value business actions. Otherwise the asset only sits there, latent and untapped. What’s more, at most companies, employees spend a significant amount of time trying to find and process information, often at a high cost. For example, IDC’s survey on the “High Cost of Not Finding Information” reported that knowledge workers spend anywhere from 15% to 35% of their time searching for, assembling, and then unfortunately, recreating information that already exists.

Companies have an urgent and financial incentive to get a higher return on their collective knowledge. Many see the opportunity presented by their collective knowledge and big data, but face a challenging conundrum of relevance versus volume as data and content are increasingly fragmented across countless and ever-changing sources.

Understanding Knowledge: Why Traditional KM Failed

Traditional KM has failed to achieve the goal of shared, ubiquitous, dynamic and contextually relevant enterprise knowledge at the worker’s and customer’s fingertips. KM initiatives historically considered knowledge a transferable commodity that could be stored in a system of record and used mechanically. In reality, knowledge goes beyond data and information, and is personal and contextual.

Data is factual information—measurements, statistics or facts. In and of itself, data provides limited value. It must be organized into information before it can be interpreted.

Information is data in context—organized, categorized or condensed.

Knowledge is a human capability to process information to make decisions and take action.

So, if knowledge is a human capability, how can it be housed in a system of record, such as a knowledgebase? It can’t. This is the fundamental flaw of most knowledge management initiatives—and why traditional KM has failed.

“Just like any other asset, knowledge will only generate returns to the extent that it is re-utilized.”

How to Get a Return on Knowledge

A new breed of context-aware technologies are transforming knowledge management initiatives, allowing companies to capitalize on their collective knowledge—across systems, the Web and social media—to become more relevant and responsive to their customers.

Unified indexing and insight technology brings content into context—assembling fragments of structured and unstructured information on demand and presenting them, in context, to users. Applying this technology to reach, correlate and contextualize knowledge and experts from anywhere will generate a meaningful return on knowledge—and help your organization be more responsive and relevant to customers.

1. Crawl, enrich and contextualize the knowledge ecosystem. Designed for the enterprise, unified indexing and insight technology securely crawls the systems storing your valuable information (e.g. email, databases, SharePoint, Salesforce, CRM, ERP, social media, etc.), no matter the source or format. The technology unifies the data in a central index, normalizes and enriches the data (using text analytics), and creates mashups on demand within the user’s context.

2. Present relevant content and experts, in context. Just like the suggested items on ecommerce websites you visit, your employees and customers will see personalized views of the information and experts they need—from your entire knowledge ecosystem—in their context. This information can help them solve customer support cases faster, be more relevant, build better products and more.

3. Empower contribution. In an environment where knowledge is used (and re-used) people see value in sharing. With a clear audience and context, your employees and customers will be motivated to create content, rate it and share knowledge about customers, cases, products, etc. to make your knowledge ecosystem stronger. Leading organizations are using unified indexing and insight technology to unleash the value of contextual knowledge. For example, a FORTUNE 500 organization saw both a 30% reduction in case resolution time and a 10% increase in customer self-service satisfaction by providing customers and employees with better access to knowledge.

A recent Forbes article highlighted the trend, saying that we’re in a “new era of search-powered wealth creation,” powered by organizations that are unlocking the value inherent in their disparate sources of knowledge. Companies that adopt these new methods to exploit their collective knowledge will create new value and reap significant rewards. Those that do not will be outpaced.

For best practices and guidance on how to compute the financial benefits of these new KM initiatives, visit Coveo for a free copy of the Coveo eBook “Measuring a Return on Knowledge in a Big Data World.”

Coveo’s highly advanced, Unified Indexing and Insight platform transforms knowledge management initiatives by redefining how people access and share fragmented knowledge around the customer-focused enterprise. Coveo brings together the collective and yet fragmented information from cloud-based, social and on-premise systems, and injects it into the context of every user, every time.

More than 500 companies use Coveo to achieve their business goals. Among Coveo customers are L’Oreal Switzerland, Lockheed Martin, YUM! Brands, GEICO and SunGard. For more information, visit www.coveo.com, follow us on Twitter @coveo or like us on Facebook.

For additional information follow this link to our blog: http://blog.coveo.com/author/esteban-kolsky/
Six important practices can propel organizations to the forefront of their industries by tapping into the huge business value in content.

Analytics tools (such as Smartlogic’s software suite, Semaphore) identify, classify, extract, integrate and surface the information contained in content, making it digestible, intelligible and valuable. This kind of “content intelligence” supports existing information management, enterprise search and business intelligence systems.

Here are some words of advice based on our experience:

1. Avoid unplanned big content.
   Growing volumes of data within organizations need growing resources—human and capital. Understanding what is in your unstructured data allows you to discover, manage, control and store only the content you know is valuable. Content intelligence adds a layer of machine-readable knowledge by describing what the content is about and automatically applying metadata with that information. This metadata, in turn, gives content management systems and enterprise search and process engines context. Because the context of a piece of information determines its usefulness, relevance and treatment, you can use this metadata to keep, store and retrieve the content you know is valuable.

2. Information architecture extends the reach of your point solutions.
   A strong information architecture decreases the need for information management point solutions, increases efficiency by reducing duplicate work effort and provides consistent results for end users. Content intelligence adds a semantic layer to content, ensuring that existing information management investments can all benefit from one implementation. Any system connected to enterprise content can use the facilities of a content intelligence platform to add:
   ◆ Classification facilities that increase search and findability in SharePoint and other content management platforms;
   ◆ Precise metadata that powers the lifecycles of content and records management systems;
   ◆ Enhanced indices of quality facets for precise recall by enterprise search engines;
   ◆ Rules based on meaning that drive workflow and document governance;
   ◆ Documented, open and standards-based interfaces such as RDF, OWL, SKOS and SPARQL that are key to easy integration, vendor independence, and delivery of world-class performance over enterprise volumes.

3. Precise classification delivers quality linked data.
   Semantic Web projects rely heavily on manual tagging, which is inherently inconsistent even among people trained in the same field. W3.org describes this as “the chaotic, informal and weakly structured world of social approaches to information management, as exemplified by social tagging applications.” Content intelligence adds structure around traditional enterprise content so that related content consistently links to like content within and outside of organizations. It automatically adds quality links to data that enrich content beyond simple descriptive tags and categorizes each piece of information as a specific type. This allows the information management tool chain to deliver on the promise of semantic data.

4. A modular platform delivers quick wins.
   A modular platform that allows licensing of separate constituent parts yields flexibility and budgetary pragmatism.
   ◆ Model management and governance benefit from ontology management;
   ◆ Text mining is useful for quick-fire model building;
   ◆ Transparent, understandable and accurate metadata tagging stems from rule-based classification;
   ◆ A user experience engine ensures information is surfaced in context;
   ◆ An application framework embodying best practices means projects are off the ground in days; and
   ◆ Out of the box integrations with popular systems, such as SharePoint, ensures the legwork is taken out of systems integration.

5. Auto-classification powers text analytics.
   Content intelligence is powered by a combination of a precise rules-based engine, a statistical-based natural language processing engine, and an ontology management tool. The combination delivers the quality of a rule-based system with the speed of statistical text analytics—all based on a set of rules established by each organization. The resulting standardized metadata drives the ability to find unknown information, patterns and connections within text as well as the ability to search for connections among concepts. It can be exported as linked data and used for:
   ◆ semantic processing;
   ◆ records and workflow governance;
   ◆ sentiment analysis;
   ◆ advanced content compliance;
   ◆ concept relationship mapping; and
   ◆ creating content types.

6. Content intelligence will increase ROI.
   International firms, government agencies, non-profit organizations and small businesses in many industries benefit from content intelligence.
   ◆ Media companies use content intelligence to improve the quality of information feeds—boosting distribution, readership and subscriptions;
   ◆ Government authorities use content intelligence to tag information according to their standards for compliance, intelligence processing and citizen self-service;
   ◆ Healthcare companies use content intelligence to boost the level of Web self-service and improve the quality of critical health information they provide to patients;
   ◆ Investment banks use content intelligence to consolidate their information costs, better promote their primary research and automate information compliance;
   ◆ Online directories use content intelligence to increase their advertising revenues;
   ◆ Corporate intranets use content intelligence to boost use and maximize return on information assets; and
   ◆ Information managers use semantics to manage taxonomies, and ontologies, classification schemes and records retention policies.
The KMWorld Buyers’ Guide, with two annual editions, is the only industry sourcebook serving the combined market for:

- Document and Content Management
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For additional information or answers to specific questions, contact:

Kathy Rogals kathy_rogals@kmworld.com OR Paul Rosenlund paul_rosenlund@kmworld.com at (561) 483-5190
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For more information on the companies who contributed to this white paper, visit their websites or contact them directly:

**Coveo**
PH: 800.635.5476  
Contact: info@coveo.com  
Web: www.coveo.com

**Jive Software**
915 SW Stark St, Suite 400  
Portland OR 97205  
PH: 503.295.3700 or 877.495.3700  
Contact: jivesoftware.com/contact  
Web: jivesoftware.com

**KANA Software Inc.**
840 W California Avenue, Suite 100  
Sunnyvale CA 94086  
PH: 800.737.8738  
Contact: marketing@kana.com  
Web: www.kana.com

**Smartlogic**
560 S. Winchester Blvd. Suite 500  
San Jose CA 95128  
PH: 408.213.9500  
Contact: info@smartlogic.com  
Web: www.smartlogic.com

**TIBCO Software Inc.**
3307 Hillview Avenue  
Palo Alto, CA 94304 USA  
PH: 855.842.2770  
Fax: 650.846.1005  
Contact: info@tibbr.com  
Web: www.tibbr.com

For information on participating in the next white paper in the “Best Practices” series, contact:  
 paul_rosenlund@kmworld.com or kathy_rogals@kmworld.com • 561-483-5190