

## Chapter 33

# Issues and Challenges in Enterprise Social Media

**Sarabjot Kaur**  
*IIT Kanpur, India*

**Subhas Chandra Misra**  
*IIT Kanpur, India*

### ABSTRACT

*Contemporary organizations face the challenge of collaboration among the widely dispersed workforce. Information technology is an enabler and a facilitator of organizational processes. One such application of information technology is enterprise social media (ESM) platform which serves as an effective medium for organizational communication and exchange of ideas among peers in a workplace. The chapter describes the structural and functional aspects of ESM with a focus on knowledge sharing activities supported by its usage. Issues and challenges in respect of its design and adoption have been discussed.*

### INTRODUCTION

Social media is a ubiquitous phenomenon enabling social connections worldwide. This communication platform has given rise to a new social order wherein users can create and disseminate information, opinions, self-created content and knowledge to widespread audience. Business organizations are also catching up with the phenomenon in terms of utilizing the functionality of social media tools for intra firm communication among employees for enterprise wide social networking and collaboration (Fulk & Yuan, 2013). Many organizations are using Enterprise Social Media (ESM) tools for information sharing, crowdsourcing ideas and solving problems, and relationship building (Riemer & Scifleet, 2012). The present article attempts to understand the enterprise social media tools from the perspectives of its functional and interactional aspects along with highlighting the key issues associated with its usage.

DOI: 10.4018/978-1-5225-7601-3.ch033

## **BACKGROUND**

Social media provides a platform to create and share user generated content along with the functionality of connecting with people. Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn, wikis, blogs etc. are some examples of popular social media tools. Users can look for people with similar interests, connect with them, create groups and share varied types of content. Web tools similar to popular social media are being utilized in the enterprise context to foster collaboration and knowledge sharing within the firm. These tools are known by varied names such as Enterprise Social Media (ESM) or Enterprise Social Software Platforms (ESSP).

### **Defining Enterprise Social Media**

Leonardi et al. (2013) define Enterprise Social media (ESM) as “Web-based tools that allow workers to communicate messages with specific coworkers or broadcast messages to everyone in the organization; explicitly indicate or implicitly reveal particular coworkers as communication partners; post, edit, and sort text and files linked to themselves or others; view the messages, connections, text, and files communicated, posted, edited and sorted by anyone else in the organization at any time of their choosing” (p.2). According to Boyd and Ellison (2007), these are “web-based services that allow individuals to construct a public or semi-public profile within a bounded system; articulate a list of other users with whom they share a connection; view and traverse their list of connections and those made by others within the system”(p. 211).

ESM includes tools like as blogs, social network sites (SNSs) and wikis. A lot of different packages are available for use by enterprises. SharePoint by Microsoft, is an online application platform where members can collaborate for team projects, upload and modify files, initiate discussions and work together in a virtual space making the collaborative work easier to execute and monitor. Jive is another name in the same list that provides functionality of enterprise wide connections facilitating online sharing and collaboration among employees across the world. Other tools in use are Yammer and Chatter.

### **Benefit of ESM Tools**

ESM provides an ability to maintain social connections along with accessibility to digital content (Kane, 2015). It gives a way of connecting with employees across the organization facilitating interactions and information sharing. Online connections, social interaction and communication patterns can reveal a lot about the various knowledge communities in the organization. Along with providing a functionality similar to traditional media of communication exchange such as email, it provides a way to connect and display the shared information to a preferred set of people who can further benefit from the exchange. The mutual communication partners, shared information and membership of different online groups can help employees understand the prevalent social dynamics along with locating the relevant support for knowledge (Ellison et al., 2015).

Some of the major benefits are listed below.

7 more pages are available in the full version of this document, which may be purchased using the "Add to Cart" button on the publisher's webpage:

[www.igi-global.com/chapter/issues-and-challenges-in-enterprise-social-media/214571](http://www.igi-global.com/chapter/issues-and-challenges-in-enterprise-social-media/214571)

## Related Content

---

### Team Identification, Team Performance and Leader-Member Exchange Relationships in Virtual Groups: Findings from Massive Multi-Player Online Role Play Games

Daniel M. Eveleth and Alex B. Eveleth (2010). *International Journal of Virtual Communities and Social Networking* (pp. 52-66).

[www.irma-international.org/article/team-identification-team-performance-leader/43066](http://www.irma-international.org/article/team-identification-team-performance-leader/43066)

### Would You Accept a Facebook Friend Request from Your Boss?: Examining Generational Differences

Katherine A. Karl, Richard S. Allen, Charles S. White, Joy Van Eck Peluchette and Douglas E. Allen (2017). *International Journal of Virtual Communities and Social Networking* (pp. 17-33).

[www.irma-international.org/article/would-you-accept-a-facebook-friend-request-from-your-boss/180673](http://www.irma-international.org/article/would-you-accept-a-facebook-friend-request-from-your-boss/180673)

### Designing an Online Civic Engagement Platform: Balancing "More" vs. "Better" Participation in Complex Public Policymaking

Cynthia R. Farina, Dmitry Epstein, Josiah Heidt and Mary J. Newhart (2014). *International Journal of E-Politics* (pp. 16-40).

[www.irma-international.org/article/designing-an-online-civic-engagement-platform/111189](http://www.irma-international.org/article/designing-an-online-civic-engagement-platform/111189)

### The Social Study of Computer Science

Matti Tedre (2009). *Handbook of Research on Socio-Technical Design and Social Networking Systems* (pp. 23-38).

[www.irma-international.org/chapter/social-study-computer-science/21394](http://www.irma-international.org/chapter/social-study-computer-science/21394)

### Flow as a Framework to Engage Youth in Participatory Politics on Social Media Platforms

Sohail Dahdal (2017). *International Journal of E-Politics* (pp. 34-48).

[www.irma-international.org/article/flow-as-a-framework-to-engage-youth-in-participatory-politics-on-social-media-platforms/193211](http://www.irma-international.org/article/flow-as-a-framework-to-engage-youth-in-participatory-politics-on-social-media-platforms/193211)