

Chapter 27

Competencies 2.0: A Theoretical Model for Defining and Managing a Presence Plan on the Web

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ABSTRACT

Web 2.0 is changing the rules, reducing costs of access to technology, increasing the volume of cyber social contact through networking, both social and professional, making possible that any information is just a click away. This evolution causes the birth of new requirements, including the adaptation of people and, because organizations are made up of people, changing their map skills. This chapter presents a theoretical model for defining and managing a presence plan on the Web, emphasizing in those individual Competencies 2.0. It is defined from a Delphi method, involving experts in the use and development of Web 2.0. The strengths of this model are two: 1) It is a model that attempts to explain new tasks resulting from magazines not covered in sufficient depth from an academic and scientific perspective, though, they have been studied and discussed in forums 2.0; and 2) It explains the relationship between individual and organizational competencies 2.0, so that the first one can act on to modify the latter. On the other hand, this chapter has certain shortcomings, mainly two: 1) It has not been empirically validated, although research is underway to rectify this deficiency, and 2) There is no academic scientific knowledge enough, probably due to the novelty of this issue.

INTRODUCTION

Web 2.0 is changing the rules. On one hand, a dramatic cost cutting has made a very complex technology accessible to practically all social classes (ADSL + Wi-Fi, mobile phones, IP telephony and video, digital cameras, GPS). Simultaneously, we

have witnessed an exponential growth of network software tools (SaaS) with zero or very low cost, thanks to business models based on advertising or Freemium schemes (Free & Premium, Free & Fee). Finally, information (all the information) is just a click away.

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As a result, over-informed people (not necessarily well informed) interact with each other through a universal network, continually finding new personal or professional uses which generate a collective value much greater than the sum of their individual contributions.

While technology has undergone a tremendous evolution, the uses that people make are clearly a revolution. The burden of change is not in the technology itself, but in people.

However, not all people have the ability or willingness to react to these changes in the same way. A new digital gap arises not only between areas of the globe with different technological development levels, but also between similarly developed areas and even inside certain areas with a high level of development.

Some experts such as Marc Prensky (2001), inventor of the terms digital immigrants and digital natives, considered this gap mainly generational, but from our point of view this approach assumes a gross simplification – very useful in certain scenarios but not always applicable.

METHODOLOGY

It has been made a thorough research in the academic literature relating to Web 2.0 in order to develop a model based on existing studies. As a result, began an exploratory study. Based on the method used to define competencies that could be labeled as traditional, it was performed a two-round Delphi in order to identify and define skills which were being developed through the use of Web 2.0 and also to describe the relationship between those individual and the organizational competencies. Two groups of experts were formed. All of them were users of Web 2.0; managers in organizations; and also they usually participate in forums and social and professional networks. The first group identified and defined 20 competences, both individual and organizational. The results were transferred to the second group who

ordered them in order of the importance given. 8 competencies were ordered nearly similar by experts. In the following step of this research were defined the correspondences between this 8 individual competencies and the organizational ones. This paper aims to describe the 8 individual competencies 2.0 and pretend to model them.

The Web 2.0 Impact on the Economy

First, the Internet's infrastructure suffered a new wave of evolution, in which distributed computers - according to the client-server model - are transferring their contents to the Web, or as it is often called in this context, the Cloud ¹. For businesses in the cloud, connectivity, data security and confidentiality become matters of prime importance, and management of service level agreements with their respective suppliers is taking apart CIOs from their traditional technological profile and converting them in pure service managers. IP technologies provoke huge impact on traditional industries. New giants like Google, Amazon and eBay offer their data centers at very competitive prices to companies around the whole world (Platform as a Service, PaaS). Telecom operators become unusually relevant. Videoconference is putting business travel in serious jeopardy. Software is offered as a remote service (Software as a Service, SaaS).

Second, users find multiple and very easy ways to upload their own contents - and also replicate contents by others - to the cloud, producing a very substantial change on business models based on physical copies with well-known consequences in industries like press media, music, movies or videogames. People have switched the concept of copyright and are firmly committed to share contents in the cloud. Information becomes fully accessible and ubiquitous, ceases to be valuable itself, and is no longer classified by taxonomic but folksonomic² criteria - using labels, or tags, provided by the users.

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