

# Chapter 16

## Social Organization, Social Tools: Social Media and Organizations in the Context of a Hybrid Culture

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### **ABSTRACT**

*The social organization, the “Enterprise 2.0” (McAfee, 2006) is literally the organization where social software and platforms are daily used. Technology is (or should be) considered as an enabling platform of learning and collaboration in several functional areas; the communication and marketing area can probably have more benefits from a social approach. How can company’s members learn to work in this new context? With which results? Are social tools comprised and used in organizations today, or are they only new tools suspiciously looked at by the organization’s members? This chapter is focused on the identification of the edges that usually obstruct the process of creating and developing a social organization, particularly on the cultural issues influencing the organizational processes.*

### **INTRODUCTION**

Post-bureaucratic organizations have dispensed with the techniques, mind-sets, and values of bureaucracy (Child, McGrath, 2001). They have met new forms to become less hierarchical and less coercive than bureaucratic ones, and this happens even more thought the use of digital ad social tools. The “social organization”, the “Enterprise 2.0” is becoming a myth for big and medium companies. The literature definition suggests each company would have more benefits becoming a social organization, due to the internal collaboration and external distributed communication and marketing, but it is even more difficult to build a real social organization. This chapter is focused on the identification of the edges that usually obstruct the process of creating and developing a social organization, particularly on the cultural issues influencing the organizational processes. In the contemporary Age, companies are “inhabited” by people belonging to different generations, different technology proximity levels and different social approaches

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(Moretti, 2013). Organizations are becoming even more hybrid, and also their culture is becoming different from the past. It is still not possible to talk about a digital culture, but an almost-digital, hybrid culture, difficult to be cultivated (Harshak, Schmaus, Dimitrova, 2013).

Therefore, we are interested in understanding what all these cultural changes could mean for the training context and business. How businesses and consumers interact? How subjects are involved in the training process? What happens in the relationship between subject “old” and “new”, which are in a hybrid space? There are good practices for the development of processes? Which business processes can be developed using virtual digital tools? And finally, what can be done in organizations to enhance the good practices highlighted in this scenario? The answers are several and we will get here only showing a particular business sector (vocational training) in a specific sector (the banking sector) through a specific virtual digital tools (social networks). To get in our case, we will briefly analyze the virtual digital tools that can be used to improve business training processes, identifying the elements that make Social Networking Sites - SNS - the best tools for the development of processes in specific sectors.

## **BACKGROUND: SOCIAL AND DIGITAL ORGANIZATIONS**

According to McAfee (2006), the definition of “Enterprise 2.0” is linked to the emergent use of social software platforms into the enterprises, or among enterprises and their own customers. According to the Enterprise 2.0 Observatory at the Politecnico of Milan School of Management, this word defines a wider evolution of the organizational and technology enterprise model, based on the application of collaborative tools 2.0 and found on the technology as enabling platform for processes and relations.

By the way, the technology factor is not enough to face the issues related to the collective learning, the participated innovation and/or the value co-creation; all these phenomena are basically informal, bottom-up defined, and the community dimension plays a central role.

According to Hamel (2012), the communities and the community management play a central role in the change between the Management 1.0 to the Management 2.0. According to McWilliam (2000) and Scotti & Sica (2007), we can identify “places” of community management can be identified as following:

1. **Into the Organization:** Where communities operate as a collaborative interaction hub (Intranet 2.0, Corporate blog, Social network, Social Learning);
2. **Outside of the Organization:** Where a new form of marketing is growing up: the conversational marketing, with a huge impact also on the internal processes (Social media monitoring, Brand Community, Social Innovation, CRM 2.0);
3. **On the Innovation Processes:** Where communities are the places of knowledge shared and participated innovation (Innovation Lab, Knowledge creation management, Academy 2.0).

In this framework, the social organization can be described as a new way to read the enterprises, to allow more people to work collectively and increase the value of competences, talents, creativity and energy. The creation of social value passes through the capacity of generating the so-called “mass collaboration”, exploring the wide potential of social media, creating collaborative communities online and offline. This is the result of interaction among three factors: social media, communities and the value proposition:

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