

Chapter 5

Web 2.0 Social Networking Technologies and Strategies for Knowledge Management

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ABSTRACT

Effective information systems have become necessary for organizations to be successful and stay competitive. With the proper adoption of new strategies and Web 2.0 technologies, information and knowledge generated from these Web 2.0 technologies will continue to enable organizations to adapt quicker and give them additional advantages across the global business landscape. Knowledge workers need better tools to allow them to effectively manage the growing amount of information and knowledge. Social networking is one of the IT solutions to this problem. This chapter discusses the Internet phenomenon known as Web 2.0. It explores Internet use, Internet users, and the continuous improvements being made to the Internet. The purpose of this chapter is to explain the impact that social networking has on the modern enterprise; particularly, when it comes to collaboration and knowledge sharing. The growth trajectory of Web 2.0 software such as social networking, blogs, tags, RSS feeds, wikis, YouTube videos, and widgets are presented, and each component is outlined in detail. Each application is also applied to a practical business setting. The benefits and challenges of each application are discussed, and examples of organizations that are implementing Web 2.0 strategies are presented. Some limitations and concerns of Web 2.0 are discussed. The chapter concludes with an examination of the implications of Web 2.0 on companies and their business and marketing strategies.

INTRODUCTION

Today's knowledge management (KM) systems focus on centralized sets of repositories, organized around established business processes. The current knowledge management systems are expensive to

implement and the long-term commitment of the major resources of their deployment, maintenance, and daily operation can be seen as a huge burden. Consequently, even customized solutions end up going unused, with the knowledge workers running these custom KM solutions not having

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the information technology (IT) tools to provide support for their responsibilities. Based on these underutilized KM systems, the continuing evolution of Web 2.0 is providing a new KM solution, a collaboration based solution (Harris & Rea, 2009; Levy, 2009). Social networking technologies provide immediate solutions to the large investments for the deployment, maintenance, and daily operations for today's KM systems (Burrus, 2010; Diehl, Grabill, Hart-Davidson, & Iyer, 2008). It is time for organizations to start looking at tomorrow's knowledge management solution and realize this new solution is a more efficient and effective model for today's enterprise knowledge management systems. Each time a new system is implemented; large investments into systems that have promised automation and seamless integration to share knowledge across the organization rarely become a reality (Fitzgerald, 2008; Parise, 2009; Strehlke, 2010).

To understand the most fundamental aspects of knowledge management, one must first understand the process of knowledge acquisition, the use of intellectual property and the use of non-material assets. It is the knowledge within the organization that is the basis of an organization's development and allows them to find solutions to business problems. The knowledge management system becomes an essential tool for all the organizations actions, with the goal being that decisions can be made quicker and are justified and strengthened by the knowledge within the system itself. Using these systems to have knowledge about clients, similar to a customer resource management system also increases the level of success in providing them with the best solutions. In proving solutions to clients, the knowledge that is captured also allows the knowledge system to help drive innovation. The learning organizational culture is a requirement for the constant changes in business processes and management practices that are driven by staying focused on the KM system and continuing to improve that knowledgebase

(Kreitzberg, 2009). Web 2.0 social networking (SN) technologies provide organizations with a set of tools to facilitate the knowledge acquisition, transformation, and sharing. Employees using SN to interact with other coworkers and teams will create an environment where information is exchanged with ease. SN eventually promotes a learning organizational culture that engages these people, connects information, and establishes strong relationships.

The knowledge management system should help maintain continuous innovations that lead to the creation of new goods and/or services and establish new business processes (Pascu, Osimo, Turlea, Ulbrich, Punie, & Burgelman, 2008). Knowledge management is a solution that requires organizational, human and technological resources to provide the assets for the system (King, 2007). Choosing not to focus on any of these aspects will many times lead to failure of the system. It is the values of the organization which is the general problem in the realm of knowledge. And more accurately it is the human component that will determine the level of success of knowledge management systems (Kreitzberg, 2009). Building trust across the organization so everyone trusts the KM and the solutions it will provide. Trust in the people that help create the organization is important and a lack of it is one of the biggest reasons of failure from human aspect of knowledge management. Once organization implements Web 2.0 and SN tools, talent and expertise can be retained through portal, networking and relationship building.

The purpose of this chapter is to explain the impact that social networking has on the modern enterprise; particularly, when it comes to collaboration and knowledge sharing. The growth trajectory of Web 2.0 software such as social networking, blogs, tags, RSS feeds, wikis, YouTube videos and widgets are presented and each component is outlined in detail. Each application is also applied to a practical business setting. The benefits and

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