

Becoming a Social Business

Why organizations choose IBM solutions



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“Standout organizations are 57 percent more likely to allow their people to use social and collaborative tools.”¹

Introduction

As global business accelerates ever faster and companies work to quickly respond to customer demands, competitive threats and rapidly evolving trends, the richness and efficiency of social collaboration plays a key role in enabling future success. The challenge then is finding the best approach. For more than 20 years, IBM has been a leader in the enterprise collaboration space, with a successful track record of delivering innovative solutions to many of the world’s largest corporations and its most dynamic small businesses. This paper will help you understand IBM’s approach to help you become a Social Business and why IBM is best suited to help organizations apply collaboration across globally distributed organizations in new ways that will help drive long term success.

What is a “Social Business”?

“Organizations that apply emerging technologies like Web 2.0 accompanied by organizational, cultural, and process changes to improve business performance in an increasingly connected global economic environment.”²

Social Business means opportunity

Individuals are sources for an incredibly valuable array of information, ranging from content to expert opinion to personal and professional networks. As the rapid growth of social networking and mobility has erased the boundaries that separated individuals in the past, people increasingly use their relationships with other people to discover and use this information in order to accomplish innumerable tasks. New opportunities for growth, innovation, and productivity, therefore, exist for organizations that encourage people—employees, customers and partners—across the business network to engage one another and build trusted relationships. To do so, organizations are applying new socially collaborative environments that support richer means of interacting. They are transforming the way they work in order to become Social Businesses.

IBM is on the leading edge of helping organizations become Social Businesses because IBM has social collaboration in its DNA. Many vendors, such as Microsoft® and smaller, one-dimensional players are only recently entering the space in response to trends, providing only basic social features with their products. IBM, on the other hand, which is recognized as a social platform marketplace leader by IDC³, delivered its fourth major social collaboration platform release in 2010. Over 400,000 IBM employees use IBM software for social collaboration, helping them do their jobs better.

Organizations turn to IBM as a trusted partner with deep experience in the social space and for collaboration software solutions for three main reasons:

- To capitalize on new, more social ways in which people work and interact with one another
- To clean up the mess caused by document-centric approaches to collaboration
- To embrace open, modern technology built to evolve with their needs

“Individuals who are very technically specialized are sharing knowledge using wikis, blogs and communities, and, for the first time in our history, we are learning how products can be made successful in other marketplaces.”

—Gilberto Garcia, innovation director, CEMEX

New, social ways of working

To optimize organizational effectiveness, today's businesses require new means of collaboration. IBM collaboration solutions create people-centric ways of working by infusing social capabilities into the way they work. A people-centric approach puts the emphasis on people—their identities, their expertise, their interests, the content they've created—to break down the barriers to connecting individuals to the right information and expertise that can help them excel at their jobs.

Creating “exceptional experiences” for people

The added efficiency of a people-centric approach can pay big dividends when you consider that people can waste significant amounts of time daily trying to track down information or expertise within their own organization. Some of the products available in the marketplace may do little to help with finding expertise because they are not integrated into the way people work. Such solutions need to be accessed through a completely separate interface. As a result, before they can take any collaboration-related steps, people may need to leave the application or process on which they are working for a potentially confusing user interface. In contrast, IBM solutions help create an exceptional work experience by embedding social capabilities in the applications and business processes people use to do their jobs. For example, people using Microsoft Word software or a call center or sales force application can tap directly into their professional networks from the applications, without losing the context of their work. The IBM approach can help increase worker productivity and accelerate adoption by achieving the following:

- Adding new social capabilities to applications that people already know how to use
- Enabling search that is not limited to content or subject, but incorporates social tagging to improve results
- Showcasing subject experts in the context of the business process being performed, such as providing customer support or preparing a sales proposal

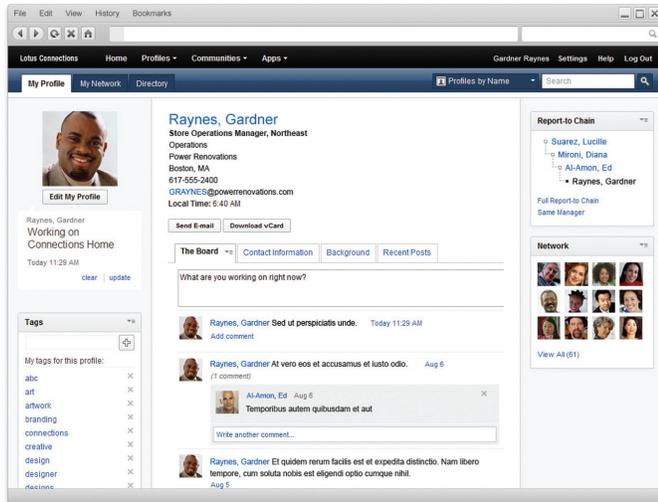


Figure 1: IBM collaboration solutions help people connect to experts and the richness of their work, not just their contact details.

Providing in-context answers with social analytics

To complement social capabilities, IBM solutions provide embedded marketplace-leading social analytics. These analytical tools “learn” from interactions and associations among people, topics and ideas. The tools capture and aggregate information by examining content, social relationships and interaction activities to create personalized experiences and recommendations for each individual. Social analytics takes collaboration to the next level by making the social network intelligent, helping increase its value over time. Benefits include the following:

- Reducing the “noise” that causes distraction by filtering out irrelevant information
- Improving work output by recommending relevant content and expertise
- Enabling expertise discovery by building reputations that identify subject matter experts

“We needed a powerful tool to connect our people all over the world. We chose Lotus Connections software because it is a powerful collaboration platform that goes way beyond the simple sharing of documents. Furthermore, it is people-centric instead of project- or document-centric.”

—Michiel Boreel, CTO, Sogeti Group

Keeping people connected, everywhere

Today, people are always on the go. And with the explosive growth in Smartphone use, people can accomplish more while on the go than ever before. To optimize their effectiveness, people need up-to-date information and access to experts and content at all times and in the most convenient way possible. Because IBM recognizes that there isn’t a one-size-fits-all mobility answer for all types of people, we support the following:

- Scalable platforms that translate to mobile devices with full functionality
- Interoperability across leading device types, including BlackBerry, Apple iPhone and iPad, Android, Nokia and Windows Phone platforms
- Powerful security to help protect information



Figure 2: IBM solutions for Social Business translate to practically all popular mobile devices.

Additionally, IBM has created specialized, productivity-boosting capabilities for on-the-go simplicity, including the following:

- Easy-to-use quick searches for contact lists and user directories
- Click-to-call and click-to-conference features
- Voice over Internet protocol (VoIP) enablement
- Customized offline applications and access
- An intuitive interface for multitasking

The goal is to optimize productivity and accessibility by creating an innovative social environment accessible everywhere, which is tailored to the needs of each individual user.

Cleaning up the document-centric mess

The ability to easily share information has never been more important. At the same time, the use of document-centric tools (that is, tools that were designed for simplifying how files are created and exchanged) as collaboration hubs has led to multiple challenges.

Eliminating silos of overlapping information

Many organizations have large numbers of poorly integrated silos of information that often pop up like weeds across departments throughout the organization. Each silo is built for a specific team, obscuring valuable information from non-team members. What's more, over time, this document-centric approach tends to spawn more and more individual team sites, ballooning storage and administration costs. IBM solutions can help organizations overcome the collaboration limitations of these siloed repositories and reduce costs by achieving the following:

- Providing an integrated view across team sites to gain visibility throughout the organization as a whole, making information accessible to everyone
- Offering people-centric solutions that connect people and information using rich profiles, blogs, wikis and other social features, which make those artifacts visible beyond just the team site
- Promoting the importance of people and their expertise by embracing new, creative ways of expression and easier ways to find one another and needed resources, rather than locking users into rigid sharing and collaboration approaches

Controlling the proliferation of duplicate information in overlapping team sites

The amount of information available within organizations continues to grow rapidly. As a result, yesterday's document-sharing approaches—which showcase email inboxes and network

drives—often exacerbate challenges related to storage, maintenance and complexity by creating copies and replicated files. Alternatively, IBM collaboration tools can help reduce management challenges by enabling users to do the following:

- Actively manage files among large groups of people from a single, centralized location, helping reduce version-related confusion with strong administrative oversight
- Provide feedback viewable to all members—who can respond to and comment on the feedback as well—in centralized locations outside the confines of email- and file-processing programs
- Rate the usefulness and relevancy of files located in designated areas—helping make search capabilities more effective
- Tag files for search and discovery by others across an organization

Easing the governance burden

Team site proliferation can make infrastructure management very costly and difficult. For example, team sites often result in duplicate files, sites and site memberships. Additionally, “dead” team sites can contribute to old and unwanted information that bog down enterprise searches. Not only do these factors create a confusing management burden for IT, they can also lead to poor user experiences when people need to log in multiple times and go to different places to access the content they need.

The IBM approach to collaboration provides an effective way to manage and keep control of your collaboration environment and eliminate team site redundancy. By enabling you to access existing sites from a single location, it gives you a way to contain team site proliferation, while simplifying user and login management. Ultimately, the IBM approach can help to improve the user experience by enabling people to find help and share information through a single central method rather than having to search through multiple sites to find what they need.

Open, modern technologies that adapt to your needs—not the other way around

As the document-centric approach loses favor, organizations need a path forward to help them evolve to a people-centric way of working. Unfortunately, some vendors would prefer to attach collaboration capabilities more tightly to the document creation and management tools of the past to lock organizations into their document-centric platform. Others can provide only tools with limited reach that are costly to scale and integrate at an enterprise level. IBM believes that open platforms are the preferred direction for organizations, integrating with the tools of the past but able to evolve readily to the changing demands of the future.

“We looked at several providers, such as BPOS and Google Apps, but finally decided to go with IBM because it gave us the same options and features and everything we needed, plus the LotusLive™ solution was the only one to give us free guest accounts. The guest account feature is very important for us, being a small company, because we work with over 700 translators and several hundred customers all over the world, and so we just can’t afford to pay for so many accounts.”

—Sonja Kirschstein, director of projects, aatranslations

Building on open platforms to avoid lock-in

To increase return on investment (ROI) and keep costs under control, organizations need comprehensive technologies that can be easily integrated with their existing systems, while providing flexibility for future changes. IBM solutions are built on an open architecture that gives you more choice and flexibility over the long term by supporting the following:

- Vendor choice, to integrate the right capabilities to fit business needs
- Avoidance of costly rip-and-replace upgrades
- Transparent pricing to avoid hidden costs associated with minimum requirements and mandatory tie-ins
- Extensive integration to leverage your existing assets
- The creation of personalized systems designed to support your people's specific needs

Moving to the cloud to increase competitive advantage

Given ongoing developments in cloud computing, new money saving opportunities and computing models have arisen. For companies seeking to lower costs and enable better cost structures that can flex according to business fluctuations, or that are making a transition to a less-traditional office workplace, the cloud is an increasingly popular alternative to standard approaches. Moving to the cloud is advantageous because it lets you reduce the amount of cumbersome hardware you manage, while providing improved access to collaboration capabilities for workers distributed beyond the office. Additional benefits of cloud computing include potentially significant cost savings related to maintenance, repair and energy consumption; reduction of carbon footprints; faster startups; the near elimination of complicated installations and upgrades; and potentially fewer IT support issues. IBM believes that blending capabilities in hybrid cloud and on-premises solutions provides further options for companies looking for flexible ways to address their collaboration needs. IBM cloud capabilities provide essential business services in a user-friendly environment, designed with convenience in mind and able to deliver the following:

- Integrated email, web conferencing, social networking and collaboration, which can help simplify and improve daily business interactions with customers, partners and colleagues virtually anytime and anywhere
- A convenient and cost-effective online delivery model that helps reduce costs and start-up time, eliminating complicated installations and reducing onsite IT support requirements
- Security-rich features designed to help protect against system vulnerabilities and unwanted intrusions
- Comprehensive services for a single, competitive monthly fee
- Complimentary guest access

Investing heavily in research and development

IBM is going to great lengths to develop next-generation technologies that help clients become Social Businesses, while evolving the existing portfolio. We have invested heavily in research for advancing mobile services and capabilities and opened a research development center for developing software for mobile solutions. The newly launched IBM Center for Social Software, opened in 2009, is charged with pushing technological boundaries and coming up with new ideas to help solve the most difficult challenges related to collaborating across distributed enterprises. Moreover, the award-winning IBM developerWorks® website enables social interaction among eight million developers and IT professionals worldwide. And regular IBM Jam events bring together people beyond our company to generate new ideas. As a pioneer in applying Web 2.0 technology to business, IBM is delivering innovation that matters to clients the world over.

The IBM developerWorks site won the 2010 Forrester Groundswell award in the business-to-business “supporting” category.⁴

The right company to help you become a Social Business

Leading organizations worldwide have made IBM their enterprise software vendor of choice for decades because of its focus on delivering solutions designed to help people work smarter. Today, more than one-third of Fortune Global 100 companies have purchased social collaboration solutions from IBM Lotus software. IBM stands out by achieving the following:

- Being an innovator in ways to channel the power of today's social collaboration tools
- Creating intuitive, people-centric approaches to collaboration, compared with traditional document-centric collaboration
- Using open, modern technologies that support solutions that can be tailored to your specific business needs

IBM is infusing social capabilities into the way people work, whereas other vendors are simply adding features that miss the opportunity to transform way business is done. As you continue your journey toward becoming a Social Business, look to IBM to help you make it a success.

IDC identified IBM as the market share leader in social software platform providers in July 2010.⁵

For more information

To learn more about IBM solutions for Social Business, contact your local IBM representative or IBM Business Partner, or visit: ibm.com/social

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¹ "Working Beyond Borders: Insights from the 2010 IBM Global Chief Human Resource Officer Study," IBM Global Business Services, September 2010 (<http://www.ibm.com/services/c-suite/chro/study.html>).

² "Social Business Framework: Using People as a Platform to Enable Transformation," Michael Fauscette, Erin Traudt and Mary Wardley, IDC Report No. 223862, July 2010.

³ "IDC Worldwide Social Platforms Revenue by Vendor, 2007–2009," Erin Traudt and Michael Fauscette, IDC Report No. 223817, June 2010.

⁴ "IBM developerWorks: The Technical Resource Choice for Millions of Developers" (<http://www.ibm.com/developerworks/aboutdw/groundswell2010.html>).

⁵ "IBM Named Worldwide Marketshare Leader in Social Platforms Software," IBM press release, July 2010 (<http://www.ibm.com/press/us/en/pressrelease/32050.wss>).



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