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Patrice Curtis is the founder of Curtis Research Group, which provides market intelligence to small- and mid-size businesses, global corporations, and national non-profits. The firm supports public relations, sales, marketing, and product development efforts by supplying specific information that organizations need in order to grow.

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In the spring of 2006, then associate professor at Harvard University Andrew P. McAfee wrote an article, 'Enterprise 2.0: The Dawn of Emergent Collaboration'. In it, he stated that knowledge workers tended to use two ways to extract and share information within their enterprises. The first was through channels, largely email but also including instant messaging. In essence, using channels relegated information to a one-to-one or one to a limited number of users (TO, CC, BCC, or Forward). The second method of sharing and extracting involved platforms, which included intranets and corporate websites, any place where corporate information and knowledge was uploaded and searchable.

However, Professor McAfee discovered that knowledge workers used channels more than intranets, but that over half were not happy with them, while less than half of knowledge workers agreed, 'that it was easy to find what they were looking for on their intranet'. McAfee drew on his findings from a book called 'Thinking for a Living' by Thomas Davenport (2005) and a Forrester Research study by M. Morris entitled, 'How Do Users Feel about Technology?'

In this article, McAfee coined the term 'enterprise 2.0', and focused attention on the use of social media technology and applications to meet the needs of corporate knowledge workers.

In 2006, then, the idea of using social media tools in the enterprise was not widely considered. By the end of 2007, however, many business organizations began to consider whether and/or how to employ social media tools to take advantage of the collaborative aspects of personal social media tools.

What happened in 2007 to cause this shift? The answer is, 'employees happened.' As Web 2.0 social networking applications (e.g., Flickr, Del.icio.us, MySpace, and YouTube) grew in popularity, individuals experienced the ease of sharing information and collaborating on the web in their personal lives, they started to look for and expect that experience in their professional lives.

An ongoing study of social media tools (SMTs) by Carl Frappaolo (see <http://www.aiim.org/>) and Dan Keldsen has discovered that 'organizations that have embraced knowledge management are far ahead of the rest of the industry in adopting Enterprise 2.0 and leveraging its benefits'. The survey is based on 414 responses from individuals. In fact, Frappaolo says, 'Knowledge Management continues to thrive in many organizations, manifesting under many other names such as portals, collaboration, innovation management, and now Enterprise 2.0'. (<http://www.takingaiim.com/2008/02/km-its-good-for.html> accessed 28 February 2008)

Web 2.0 is a term created by Tim O'Reilly to encompass the applications and software that facilitate interaction and the sharing of information between users. Enterprise 2.0, coined by Professor Andrew McAfee, is the flipside of the same coin, referring to software and applications that service the same purpose within an organization. Throughout this report, enterprise 2.0 will be referred to as 'social media tools,' which refers to both applications and software.

Social media encompasses online technologies used by people to share content - text, audio and visual - and to interact with content, with each other, and with these technologies. Social media tools include wikis, blogs, forums, professional profiles, photo-sharing, instant messaging, email, discussion groups, podcasts, vidcasts, and collaborative tagging.

'If the Web 2.0 is in its infancy, then Enterprise 2.0 is a total newborn', - Andrew McAfee, 'The New Internet: Web 2.0 for Business', (October 2006)

Enterprises now struggle with three main questions:
What value can social media tools provide the enterprise?
How do we choose the right applications? And how do we deploy it?

This report responds to these questions. It begins by considering the internal use of social media tools in the corporate environment. The section includes several vignettes illustrating how enterprises from banks to online publishers are employing SMTs. It does not look at the external-facing use of SMTs, largely limited to the product development, and sales and marketing business functions. Chapter 2 discusses issues relating to the adoption of social media tools, including assessing need and choosing the right application type. Chapter 3 explores the launch of SMTs, including putting together the project team, creating supportive policies, and encouraging adoption.

As a caveat, social media tools are still new in the enterprise; there are models that appear to work better than others do, but in fact, there is no proven answer to any of these questions. It is hoped, however, that this report will provide value in providing guidelines for the enterprise ready to write their own chapter in the future of enterprise 2.0. ■

USE THIS REPORT:

Managers and Business Directors:

- Review text and tool kit activities to identify social media tools likely to solve business needs
- To build buy-in for planning, implementing and measuring social media projects
- Adapt tool kit activities for organisationally specific social media projects

Individual Professionals:

- Review text and participate in completion of tool kit activities to contribute ideas, personal experiences and insight to social media projects
- Adapt and use tool kit exercises to build a business case for social media projects you would like to implement

Senior-level Management:

- Review text for overview of social media tools and how they can have a positive impact on business
- Evaluate existing information policies with regard to social media tools
- Provide strategic guidance and sign-off on social media pilots and projects.

Appendix 1: Social Media Application Tool Kit

Activity 2: Develop the Problem Statement

In this activity, you will take the strategic view, determining what issues each stakeholder department has. The experience of enterprises that have successfully launched social media tools shows that representatives from human resources, legal, and IT will be intimately involved in the implementation of social media. Be sure you invite them to participate in this process.

Throughout, you will need to manage expectations. Start with the end in mind: if the C-suite has pre-determined limitations, you may work to extend those, but it is best to assume in the beginning that those limitations will hold.

Invite all parties to a strategy session. At this point, it is best to cast a wider net rather than cutting out those that may turn out to offer unusual or innovative perspective. Use the meeting to discuss the points of pain and issues from their perspectives, which SMTs might address the problems, and what challenges an SMT project would need to overcome to do so.

The first row of the table shows an example.



Business Function Stakeholder	Issues / Concerns	How SMTs May Help	Challenges to Overcome
Human Resources	Employees want access to the most up-to-date information on company benefits and how to get value from them	Create a benefits Wiki where employees can look up terms as well as share comments on how to maximise their use of our benefits system	Need to transfer and keep updated a great deal of technical information; provide information in legal format but also 'plain language'; need to monitor any contributions for accuracy; will employees contribute their ideas?

At the end of the session, select one or more projects that offer a strategic match of interests, relevant tools and points of pain. Summarise your plans with a Problem Statement, explaining how your chosen SMTs will address the problem.

Remember to focus the presentation of the Problem Statement on benefits. A presentation might be peppered with words and phrases like:

- low-cost
- fast
- agile
- initial limited roll-out

Distribute the Problem Statement to those who participated in the strategy session, for them to share with their teams and provide any additional feedback.

Use the Problem Statement to gain authorisation for your project(s).

FreePint FUMSI Report – Social Media Tools Report and Tool Kit



Social Media Tools Report and Tool Kit

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“Enterprises now struggle with three main questions:
What value can social media tools provide the enterprise?
How do we choose the right applications?
And how do we deploy it?”

Patrice Curtis takes away much of the mystery of SMTs for business purposes. Her thoughtful report, Social Media Tools Report and Tool Kit, provides businesses with a framework for understanding the value of SMTs to their objectives, case studies of organisations that have achieved success, and a series of practical, hands-on worksheets to put project teams on the path towards success.

View a sample from this report, including table of contents, introduction and one tool kit activity:
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