



State of Ohio Enterprise Social Networking

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

PURPOSE

The purpose of this case study is to facilitate the development of a platform for networking opportunities, the friendly sharing of resources and ideas, and collaboration between agency employees to promote participation and innovation in state government fiscal initiatives. We also intend to show that with the implementation of a statewide enterprise social networking platform there are realizable benefits to the retention, professional growth, and opportunities for state employees. As the state starts to see seasoned staff hitting retirement eligibility, we believe we must engage in multiple methods to attract and retain talent. A more robust enterprise social network is one tool to help attract and maintain the talent necessary to serve the State of Ohio's needs.

SCOPE

We propose to implement a social software platform with a small group of targeted active participants of the Ohio Fiscal Academy and alumni and then broaden the network by including all state fiscal professionals and managers. Through this pilot we can identify the potential to include more state fiscal professionals in hopes that eventually all state employees can participate in a cross-functional communication tool or social networking site.

METHODS

According to Microsoft, 85% of Fortune 500 companies are using the enterprise social media tool imbedded within the Microsoft Office 365 suite called Yammer. This facilitates communication and collaboration between employees on a platform that is already in use for email and other "cloud-like" work platforms. As private sector companies are making good use of these tools, state governments and public-sector institutions need to make every effort to stay on pace with these trends in order to stay competitive in the labor market.

FINDINGS/RESULTS

We surveyed our Ohio Fiscal Academy participants and alumni to glean insight into an appetite for enterprise social media. We discovered that close to 80% of the 78 respondents would use such a tool for professional development and for subject matter expert contact information. Encouragingly, our survey also conveyed strong support for a tool that would allow state employees to build and maintain professional relationships across state agencies. The literature we found uses several terms to refer to this technology, such as "Social Software", "Enterprise Social Networking", and "Enterprise Social Media" so these terms could be used interchangeably as different references are cited. We will present examples, case studies, and business cases that illustrate what has been proposed and/or tried in a variety of environments and what was learned from these sources.



RECOMMENDATIONS

There is a demonstrable need and immediate benefit to creating an enterprise social networking platform for State of Ohio employees. We believe that with the creation of a pilot program in an atmosphere already supported by Microsoft, such as Yammer, we could test out the implications of social media in the workplace, as well as identify any limitations, such as development of internal policies, best practices, and use restrictions, if necessary.



INTRODUCTION

The State of Ohio employs over 50,000 employees statewide, but lacks a platform for social networking, information transfer, and idea exchange. Often between state agencies there is little collaboration or opportunity for open innovation, which make best practices, historical knowledge and creative ideas difficult to transfer and maintain. By creating an online professional network for state employees, it reduces duplicative research efforts, builds efficiency and encourages communication and collaboration in state government.

BACKGROUND

Government agencies across the United States are realizing an increased need to become more efficient, responsive, and accountable — especially during times of shrinking budgets. Today's realities require that all levels of government, from local to federal, need to make do with the resources at their disposal as they work for their communities and agencies and implement public policy in a timely manner. Through the research process we discovered that organizations including private sector companies, publically traded companies, universities and all levels of government from Federal to local have studied or implemented web-based platforms to harness available technology in the hopes of promoting collaboration and networking, connecting people and subject matter experts, and facilitating professional and personal development. Studies identify several terms to refer to this technology, such as "Social Software", "Enterprise Social Networking" and "Enterprise Social Media" so these terms could be used interchangeably as different references are cited. Case studies below will illustrate what has been proposed and implemented in a variety of environments and what was learned from those experiences.

Social Media is defined as "a form of electronic communication through which users create online communities to share information, ideas, personal messages, and other content" (Merriam Webster). Social media encourages participation, openness, conversation, community and connectedness and has transformed the way that businesses communicate and market to their customers on a daily basis. Social networking sites (SNSs) are defined as "web based services that allow individuals to construct a digital identity by developing a profile, articulating a list of users with whom they share a connection, viewing their list of connections made by others within the system" (Boyd and Ellison, 2007). These SNSs are now becoming an integral part of professional and personal life. Organizations that connect employees expand their abilities to facilitate collaboration and will ultimately improve communication (Koch 1).

Social Networking Sites are designed to merge an employee's social life with their professional life, which somewhat blurs what used to be distinct boundaries between the two (Koch 701). The changing workforce, with the entry of a generation more prone to social media, definitely is fostering this appreciation of online collaboration; however, the overall idea has been around since early 2000. Large Fortune 500 companies, such as IBM and HP, started off with proprietary, custom networking systems that increased productivity and had thousands of users actively engaged. The SNS Beehive from IBM had many features similar to sites like Facebook, but was restricted to internal IBM employees. "Employees reported connecting with other close colleagues and 'weak ties', but reported greater content sharing with their more distant connections" (DiMicco et al, 2008).

Understandably, the discussion of social media is much different between public and private sector workplaces, but public sector agencies can use social media to promote transparency,



participation and collaboration. The biggest challenge is the adaptation of these networks to situations in administrative and government institutional settings (JI Criado et al, 2013). Today in politics we see platforms like Twitter rapidly changing how our State and Federal leaders communicate to their constituents. President Trump, for example, has over 35 million Twitter followers and tweets regularly throughout the day with updates and current happenings in the White House. Ohio Governor John Kasich embraces social media as a communication tool with over 854,000 Twitter followers.

Studies reveal that “the capacity of social media in government fosters co-production of services and public policies, crowd sourcing of solutions to social and political problems, and political and democratic engagement in a growing dialog about political issues. Consequently, the diffusion of social media in government involves critical aspects for the future of public administration (JI Criado et al, 2013). This same author also explains how social media in government is still in its infancy. We believe that the State of Ohio could be a trendsetter in developing a statewide platform for social networking. This would not only benefit state employees, but ultimately it will benefit our customers with efficient tools of communication.

CURRENT PROCESS

The state currently employs several “Knowledge Management” types of applications to include Fiscal Knowledge Exchange, FIN Source, as well as the SAFE Manual and the OAKS FIN Process Manual. These platforms all host and maintain statewide best practices for fiscal professionals and are used as resources during processing routine activities and work processes. While these are all great tools for formal policy exchange, Team #StateMates7 believes that the State of Ohio has an opportunity for a more informal approach to information exchange, networking, cross-agency relationship building, and career enhancing opportunities. Additionally, the platform being proposed would serve to assist those with more “exceptional” issues that are outside of the every day. An article published by Deloitte suggests that while “knowledge management installations can improve business performance by facilitating information sharing and retaining intellectual capital, they tend to result in repositories of outdated information because knowledge management has not historically been incorporated into daily work activities. In contrast, the unique capabilities of social software support the dynamic flow and creation of formal and informal knowledge across the enterprise, embedding knowledge activities into employees’ daily work and driving meaningful improvements in their performance” (Miller et al. 9).

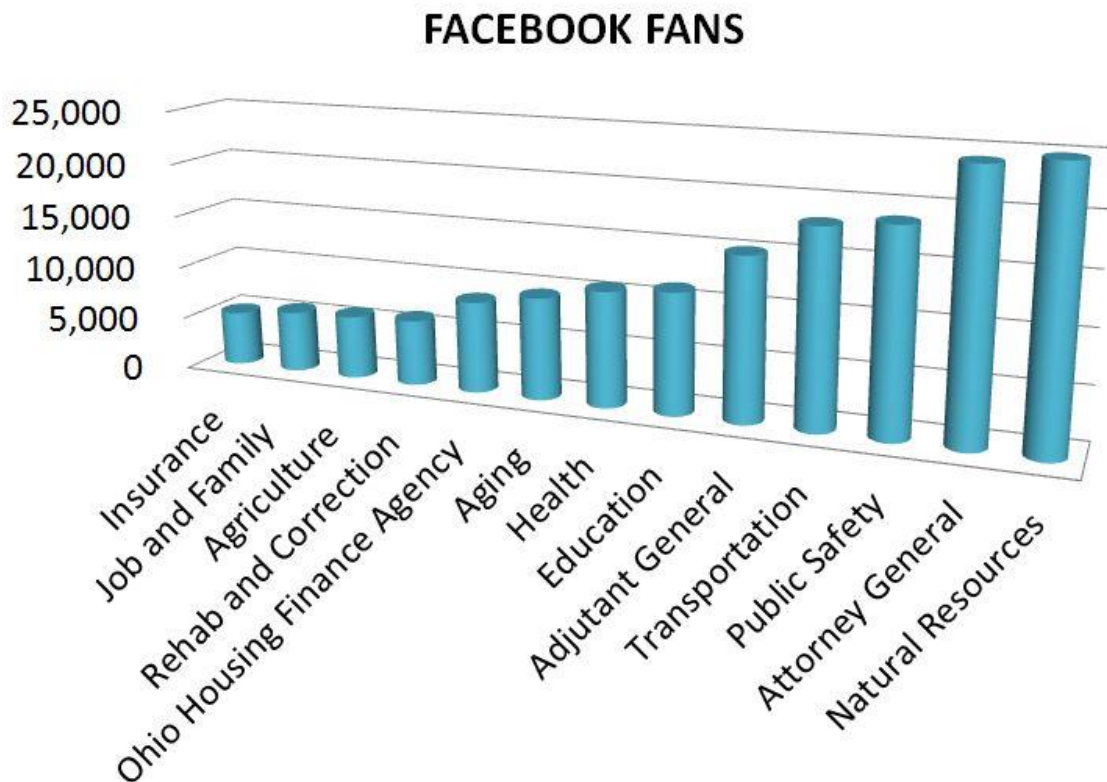
In addition to those mentioned above, another development occurred as recently as July 2017 with the Department of Administrative Services Human Resources Division announcing that it’s finalizing an agreement with LinkedIn for an enterprise presence for the State of Ohio. This gives the State of Ohio a new recruiting tool and allows the creation of a State of Ohio LinkedIn Career Page. They hope to create brand awareness for the state as an employer, attract and engage LinkedIn members to follow the state’s career and agency pages, as well as target LinkedIn members with specific skills for specialized positions that can be difficult to fill. Our team was encouraged by this development and hope that this is the beginning towards an upward trend in positive technological advances in the state’s use of social media.

Finally, with the rollout of Office 365 across the State of Ohio, Skype for Business has become a more popular tool to increase connectivity between state agencies and their staff. Skype for Business allows users to instant message people they are connected with, as well as view their



availability. More opportunities exist within the Office 365 platform that we intend to recommend throughout this project.

Other considerations throughout this project took into account the overall social media presence in an external capacity across state agencies. Out of 34 agencies researched, we found that only three agencies had no online social media presence at all. Those agencies without social media included more internal, administrative agencies including Department of Administrative Services and Office of Budget and Management. In total, as of August 2017, over 188,000 Ohio constituents utilized social media to follow current happenings throughout the State.



The current process across the State of Ohio reveals that while many knowledge management solutions exist, the state lacks a framework for its employees to exchange ideas, network, and share information. Our survey (discussed further below) revealed that only 25% of respondents are currently involved in a professional networking organization and individual responses indicated that out of those affiliated with professional networks, none of those networks were affiliated with the State of Ohio. Examples of those organizations included Association of Government Accountants, Government Finance Officers Association, Franklin University Leadership Center, National Institute for Government Procurement, and the Lean/Six Sigma Community.



OBJECTIVES

-  Providing a common space/portal/social media platform to address the need
-  Promote interagency collaboration and networking
-  Facilitate professional and personal development
-  Identify Subject Matter Experts across agencies for points of contact
-  Increase efficiency across all agencies in state government with the modernized approach of social media

NEEDS

Employee Contact Information

Networking opportunities

New job onboarding options

Historical knowledge transfer

Meetup opportunities

Career Development Information (Leadership & Management discussions)

Easy and informal Q&A's about system and procedural issues

Dealing with the exception type issues of every day work flow

RESEARCH MODEL/Framework

In Spring 2017, Team #StateMates7 conducted a survey, via Survey Monkey, that asked OFA participants a series of questions regarding our ideas for this proposal. Of nearly 150 requested to complete, 77 responded and the conclusions are outlined in the Findings section.

Also considered was how social media has affected industries as a whole in regards to employee development in both public and private entities. Evidence supports that the development of internal social media in companies has had positive effects on employee



morale, development, and efficiency. Finally, the team researched overall social media trends, how different networks are set up, and how existing state agencies use social media currently to work with constituents.

SUBJECT MATTER EXPERTS

Ohio Department of Administrative Services' OIT Personnel answered questions regarding current capabilities for a platform of this nature. The team spoke directly with Marshawn Kerner, IT Manager, who suggested that Yammer may eventually be a part of the Government Cloud developed by Microsoft and recently adapted by the State of Ohio. As part of ongoing conversations with Marshawn, several professionals at Microsoft, including State and Local Government Technology Strategist, Mike Smucny, gave us insight into what other governments were using Yammer in this capacity. After some research Mike explained that no government currently used it, since not fully integrated into the Government Clouds yet, but that it is being considered by other states.

Additionally, the team reached out to IBM to request more information about what has occurred since the days of the Beehive, which was in use over 10 years ago (discussed in greater detail later). IBM Design Researcher David Millen explained, "The Beehive project was an IBM Research project that ran for a number of years. It has been discontinued as a research project. Much of the core technology and insights about social computing platforms was incorporated into the IBM Connections Solution. See <http://www-03.ibm.com/software/products/en/connections-family> for some up-to-date product information."

The team also reached out to former IBM employee, Joan DiMicco, who coauthored an article that helped structure much of our research methodology. Ms. DiMicco provided an update on the latest development and explained, "I've seen and been part of a lot of online social community deployments and my word of advice is that the magic doesn't just happen when you turn it on --- it takes an energized and committed community of users. Sometimes that can emerge organically because you have a critical mass of people that have no alternative tool, but most of the time it will need a top-down or peer-driven commitment to use the tool for key information sharing. We found that the playfulness of Beehive drew people in, but at my current company what really gets people checking in on the platform (Chatter) regularly is that people announce employee departures and promotions on it. Again, all about the social relationships."

FINDINGS

The findings of our research begin with our survey results and analysis. As described in the research strategies section, we distributed a survey to over 150 fiscal professionals, including OFA alumni, across the state to gauge their interest and reactions to our proposal of the development of a State Fiscal Professional Network. We provided a brief explanation of the background of the topic and stated our goals of the enterprise that facilitates networking opportunities, friendly sharing of resources to promote participation, and innovation in state government initiatives. We received great feedback from 77 respondents.

The first question asked was to select which topics would they most like to discuss or see discussed on this enterprise. They were given six different topics and "Professional Development" and "Fiscal Professional/Subject Matter Expert (SME) Contact Info" received highest response at 79% each. Based on such a high response rate for these topics, we were encouraged by the apparent enthusiasm but also inferred that it could indicate difficulties in



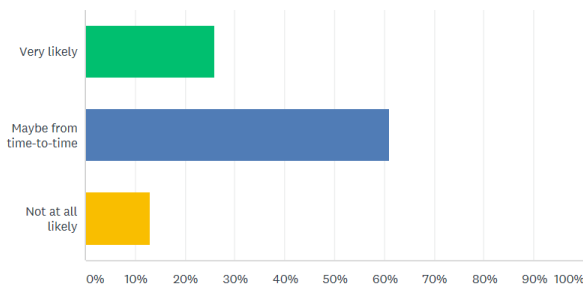
locating SME's and a lack of professional development opportunities or resources across the state. Discussion Boards were the next highest response at 70% followed by Job Postings at 55%. The lowest tier of responses was Social Events at 29% and Charitable Events at 8%. Overall we feel these results are a positive indication of the multiple uses our respondents see in a social networking platform as they were able to mark as many answers they felt applied. In all, 77 respondents chose a total of 246 answers, which means on average each respondent chose 3 or more of the topics available that they would like to see on the platform.

Additionally, data collected via the survey shows a majority 75% of the respondents are not currently involved in another professional organization/network and only 13% of respondents are “Not at all likely” to attend a professional development or networking event facilitated by this platform on their own time. This combination suggests an opportunity to reach a large population of fiscal professionals that are willing and able to participate in the conversations, collaboration and events potentially facilitated by a networking platform. Building and maintaining professional relationships can provide vital resources throughout your career and providing a common web platform for this would address the need for many respondents who are not already involved in a network.

Q4

How likely would you be to attend formal professional development or networking events facilitated by this platform on your own time?

Answered: 77 Skipped: 1



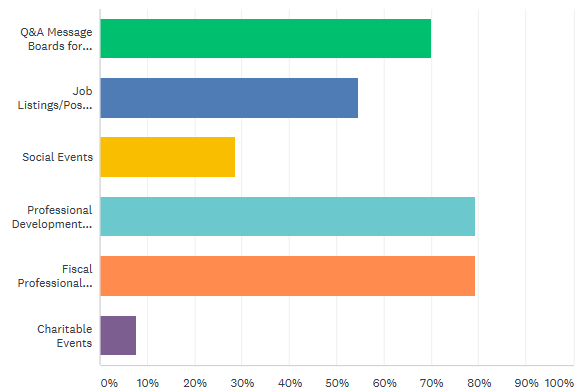
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Very likely	25.97% 20
Maybe from time-to-time	61.04% 47
Not at all likely	12.99% 10
TOTAL	77

responses overwhelmingly show that, based on the information provided, respondents would not be willing to pay a minimal fee to gain access to the network and services provided by the network. Eighty-three percent (83%) responded “No” to this question so we feel a no cost to participant solution is needed to drive participation, engagement and ultimately success.

Q1

What topics would you most like to discuss or see discussed via this platform?(mark all that apply)

Answered: 77 Skipped: 1



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Q&A Message Boards for State of Ohio Fiscal Professionals	70.13% 54
Job Listings/Postings	54.55% 42
Social Events	28.57% 22
Professional Development Events	79.22% 61
Fiscal Professionals/Subject Matter Experts Contact Info	79.22% 61
Charitable Events	7.79% 6
Total Respondents: 77	

Another positive outcome is the most likely reasons to actually participate in the network which correlate with the desired discussion topics mentioned previously. The highest percentage, 81%, of respondents cited “Professional Development” and “Training” and “Discussion Boards” were the next highest response at 65% and 64% respectively. The lowest tier of responses was “Informal Meet-Ups” at 29% and “Formal Meet-Ups” at 19%.

While the survey reflects high levels of interest and potential participation,



A sampling of respondent comments adds even more context to these survey results while also presenting themes and ideas that influenced the direction of our proposal and ultimately our final recommendation.

POSITIVE REACTIONS & SUGGESTIONS

“I HAVE BEEN WITH THE STATE FOR ABOUT THREE YEARS. WHEN I STARTED I ASSUMED THERE WOULD BE SOME SORT OF FISCAL NETWORKING OR STATE EMPLOYEE NETWORKING EVENT, BUT I COULD NOT FIND ONE. IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR ALL INDUSTRIES HAVE NETWORKING-LIKE EVENTS”

“SOUNDS LIKE THIS TOOL COULD BE A GREAT NETWORKING OPPORTUNITY TO CONNECT TO MORE FISCAL PROFESSIONALS WITHIN OTHER STATE DEPARTMENT(S).”

“IT IS ALWAYS ON MY 'TO DO' LIST, TO HELP BROADEN MY PROFESSIONAL NETWORK. BUT, LIFE ALWAYS SEEMS TO GET IN THE WAY AND I NEVER TAKE THE STEPS TO MAKE IT HAPPEN. IF THOSE KINDS OF ACTIVITIES COULD SOMEHOW BE INCLUDED IN MY DAILY WORK DAY, IT WOULD CERTAINLY HELP.”

“MOST OF THE PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS HAVE VERY DIFFERENT GOALS AND OBJECTIVES SINCE THEY ARE DEALING WITH PRIVATE INDUSTRY. IT IS VERY HELPFUL TO SHARE WITH OTHER FINANCIAL EMPLOYEES THAT ARE GOVERNED BY THE BOUNDARIES AND PRACTICES OF THE STATE OF OHIO.”

A similar example to our survey is a project that was performed in 2009 by the Center for Technology in Government (CTG) at the University of Albany. Their report titled, “Exploratory Social Media Project” looks at how “the emergence of social media and social networking presents the possibility of transforming the way government agencies communicate and cooperate among themselves and with the public” (CTG, 1). Their project is in response to the growing interest, use and concerns about social media use in the public sector among government professionals and the CTG wanted to focus on what area of government social media use is most pertinent to expertise and interest while also identifying gaps in the current literature being published on the topic. To accomplish this, the CTG first facilitated an in-depth workshop of 23 professionals from 16 New York State agencies to identify the values they seek in their current and future use of social media, as well as their most critical questions and concerns related to that use. Next, a second workshop was held with 40 New York local government professionals in which they were asked to rank the identified values and concerns as well as add anything they felt was missing.

Results of these workshops uncovered many intriguing questions and creative uses of social media technology. Three of the top four responses to the question, “What value can your agency gain from using social media tools?” were “Information dissemination and exchange”, “Enhanced collaboration”, and “Instantaneous information sharing”. Here we see comparisons to our results but also begin to identify values that slightly deviate from the focus of our survey. The most prominent values identified by the NY State workshop focus the dissemination, exchange and speed of information sharing but it makes sense that these values also contribute to enhanced collaboration. In regards to enhanced collaboration the report states, “This



enhanced ability to share knowledge and information in turn could improve agency operations as problems are solved from multiple perspectives instead of one isolated and limited viewpoint. In addition to internal collaboration, participants also hoped that social media tools would enhance their collaborations with other state agencies and allow them to learn and share information with agencies from other states” (CTG, 3).

The questions and concerns were identified in this workshop by responding to the question: “What are the most pressing questions/concerns/challenges that your agency is facing in regards to social media tools?” The areas of concern that were brought up were ranked by both the state agency professionals and the local government professionals. The two concerns that each group included in their top three ranking were “Governance” and “Legal and regulatory ramifications”. The report lists topics related to governance as who can post information on an agencies behalf, leakage of sensitive information and perceived endorsement of advertisements on an agency site. The legal and regulatory area includes specific concerns such as: appropriate use by employees, accuracy of content, adherence to laws and legal agreements with social media providers. Overall, government agencies are faced with some issues that are shared by private companies while others are specific to the public sector. These points begin to identify a need to understand the differences in how social media tools can be used, that is, from an organizational perspective communicating with the public or an individual’s professional perspective who is working within the state network. The goals and objectives an agency has from its social media use will most likely determine the technology that best suit their needs.

ANALYSIS

While there is a large volume of literature that acknowledges the use of social networking software by professionals is increasing dramatically, it is widely assumed that the software will improve information sharing, communication and group work within a company (Riemer, Richter, 4). However, questions such as how is it implemented, how is it used, does it improve or reduce productivity and how will use evolve remain open. These are important questions for an organization to study and consider before implementing any sort of social software. Data collected in our survey and others conducted reflects there is skepticism that social software can deliver measurable business performance improvements. Research suggests this skepticism is not uncommon, as enterprise acceptance of new technology often lags student and public use. “As discussed in (Lovejoy & Grudin), in the 1990s some researchers still argued that organizations would discover that email reduced productivity and remove it. Ten years later, industry analysts made similar arguments about instant messaging — IM was a way students wasted time and should be avoided by organizations. Now email is mission-critical and some managers and executives use IM” (Skeels, 95).

IBM’s Social Computing research group has also examined social networking software use by professionals. The group developed and studied Beehive. DiMicco et al. stated, “The goal of our research is to determine how using a social networking site inside of a company differs in terms of social connections and also in terms of different user motivations”. Beehive launched within IBM in May 2007 and a year later supported over 30,000 users and 250,000 plus friend connections. The research group conducted qualitative interviews, analyzed usage logs and followed up with original subjects to see if usage or motivations for Beehive had changed. The researchers observed that employees are meeting on Beehive and forming significant bonds, which is markedly different from others findings that people use Facebook to keep up with their friends and not for “social browsing”. This observation that employees are open to meeting for personal and professional reasons is a distinct characteristic of social networking within the



workplace and could possibly be attributed to existing common ground (DiMicco et al., 716). As the study looked closer at motivations for use, distinct themes became apparent and were labeled as caring, climbing and campaigning:

CARING

THE COMMON THEME MENTIONED IN ALL INTERVIEWS WAS ENJOYMENT OF THE SOCIAL ASPECT OF THE SITE. EMPLOYEES HAVE A DESIRE TO CONNECT ON A PERSONAL LEVEL WITH CO-WORKERS AND OTHERS ACROSS THE COMPANY AND IT WAS FREQUENTLY MENTIONED AS A TANGIBLE BENEFIT (DIMICCO ET AL., 716).

CLIMBING

USERS REPORTED FEELING LIKE THEIR USE OF THE SITE WAS SPECIFICALLY ASSISTING IN THEIR PERSONAL CAREER ADVANCEMENT. THESE USERS COMMUNICATED AROUND TOPICS OF PROFESSIONAL INTEREST GENERALLY WITH MORE SENIOR EMPLOYEES IN THE COMPANY AND HAD A PARTICULAR FOCUS USING THE SITE TO ACCOMPLISH LONG TERM GOALS (DIMICCO ET AL., 716-717).

CAMPAIGNING

THE THIRD MOTIVATION PRIMARILY MENTIONED BY USERS WAS USING THE SITE AS A UNIQUE PLATFORM TO PROMOTE AND CAMPAIGN FOR THEIR PROJECTS. THESE USERS ALSO TALKED ABOUT GETTING IDEAS IN FRONT OF SENIOR MANAGEMENT FELT SOLICITING SUPPORT HELPED THEM MOVE FORWARD WITH IDEAS (DIMICCO ET AL., 717).

Overall this comprehensive study concluded that patterns of use and user motivations of an ESN site within the company intranet differ from users of Internet SNSs. They found users are not using the site to keep up with close coworkers; rather employees are using the site for “social browsing” discovering and connecting with employees they do not know at all. Findings indicate that connecting beyond an employee’s own network is a key activity and motivation for using Beehive (DiMicco et al., 719). The authors went on to state that, “From an enterprise perspective, it is becoming increasingly important for companies to provide internal social software tools. Given that the next generation of employees uses social software as their dominant communication means, companies need to bridge generational gaps and boundaries by supporting this method of communication between employees” (DiMicco et al., 719).

While the IBM study focuses on uses and user motivations, other research has focused on the resulting emotional effects of users and non-users of an internal SNS. The case study *Bridging the Work/Social Divide: The Emotional Response to Organizational Social Networking Sites* takes an in-depth look at a large U.S. financial institution that attributes higher morale and reduced turnover among IT employees to the implementation of its internal SNS (Koch et al., 703). This site was the result of the company looking for ways to improve a disjointed IT new hire program plagued by low morale and high turnover. In 2008, the company wanted to



leverage the power of social networking, so they created an internal SNS, On-Board*, which started as an introduction to the community and evolved to a point where the more senior new hires began using the site to acclimate and mentor incoming new hires. Under the supervision of executives, On-Board developed four pillars with which events and content must fall into. These pillars are networking, career development, workforce initiatives and continuing education. Users can also suggest, plan or lead an event which provides leadership opportunities for all users and chances to increase their exposure within the company (Koch et al. 704). The author's analysis seeks to uncover the reasons, in particular the emotional response, for the apparent success of the SNS. Below is a summary of the emotional response described by each group.

NEW HIRES (USERS)

Various emotions were evoked and interviewees described On-Board as “the best tool for getting involved and forming relationships”. The system blurs the boundary between work and social life but this boundary blurring creates positive emotions for users. It's important to note that this boundary blurring mostly incorporates social activities into the everyday work rather than incorporating work activities into after-hours social activities. However, these activities helped users develop social resources, a relationship that became essential when the user needed access to someone who could help solve a problem (Koch et al. 705-708).

MIDDLE MANAGERS

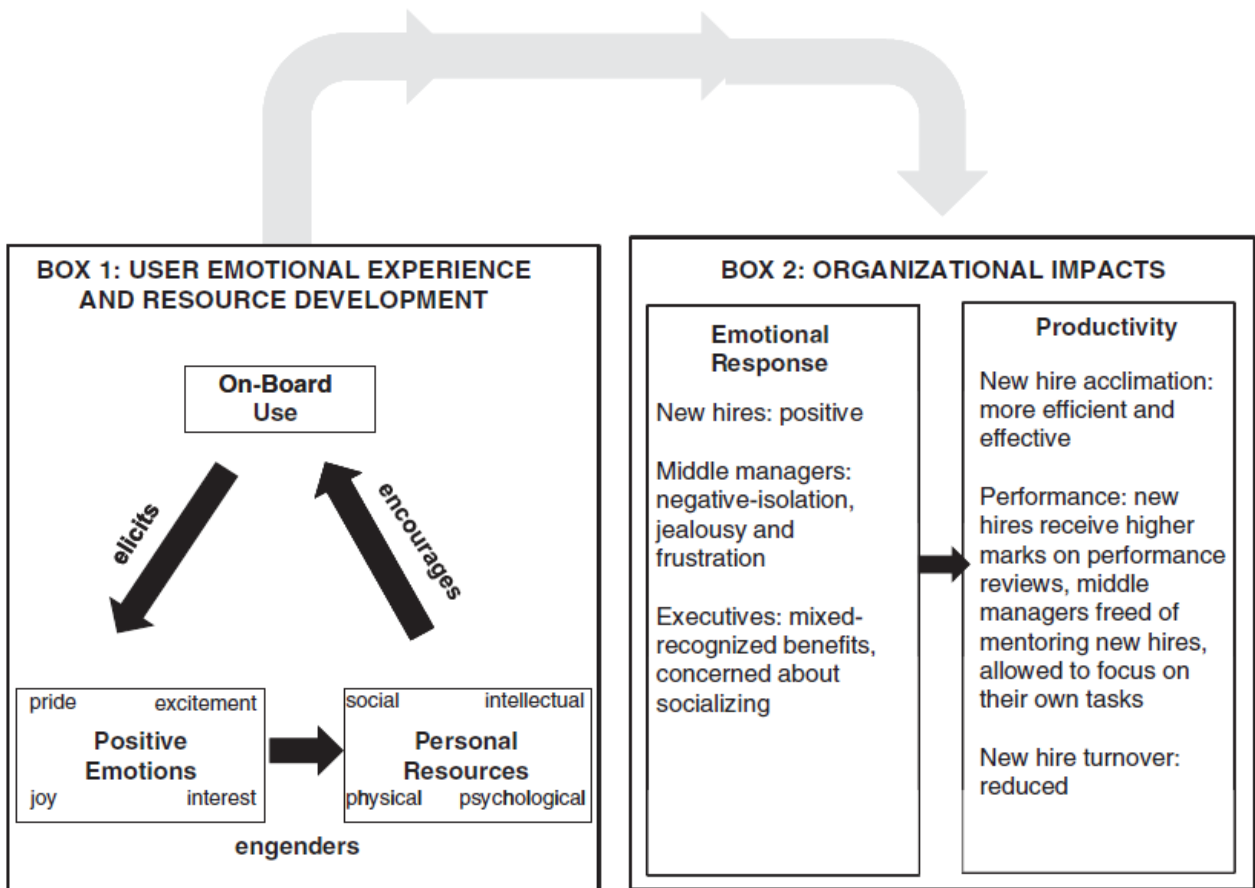
In contrast to the feel-good perspective of the new hires, IT middle managers expressed more negative emotions with respect to the system. They reported feelings of isolation and inequality because the SNS helped new hires circumvent hierarchy to build relationships with senior executives. They felt On-Board's socializing would give new hires more exposure to management which could affect promotions and assignments. Since these managers were not users of the system they felt left out and expressed resentment that new hires were engaging in social activities at work (Koch et al. 706).

EXECUTIVES

This group was not as negative as the middle managers but their response was much more conservative than the new hires. They have not entirely embraced the socializing aspect of On-Board. They recognize the site is an SNS, but envisioned it being used more for discussions on work projects and updates. Since it is difficult to measure benefits in terms of knowledge sharing and teamwork, executives are ambiguous as to the ultimate value of On-Board. In spite of this noncommittal emotional reaction, they continue to support use of the site and remain convinced that at least part of the increase in morale and decline in turnover is attributable to the On-Board system (Koch et al. 706).



Koch et al. developed the figure below to visually depict how On-Board influences the new hire program. They state, “On-Board use is associated with positive emotions, which form the foundation for the development of personal resources, which then encourages further On-Board use.” And reinforce the benefits of these resources by stating “The resources that the new hires are developing reinforce the positive emotions felt by the new hires, generating high commitment to the department and the organization. These personal resources are also useful in overcoming negative situations: as new challenges arise, new hires should be better equipped to manage the issues rather than feeling overwhelmed and stressed” (Koch et al. 708).



Overall this study increases our understanding of social personal resources and the effect on positive emotions. The SNS in this study facilitated social capital development by giving new hires access to people who could provide useful information and perspectives by helping maintain relationships thus building a network of people that can do small favors, and finally by facilitating friendly relationships within the new hire peer group. This allowed the company to shift the burden of acclimation away from middle managers and human resources. While this case study is a positive example of SNS implementation there is also an important message that before an organization attempts a similar initiative, they should consider the how the system may impact users and non-users as well as the stigma associated with SNS in the workplace (Koch et al. 710).

There is also research in contrast to the studies of internal systems like Beehive and On-Board, which explore the enterprise use of publically available SNSs. And while many organizations

now commonly use publically available social networking sites for customer facing innovation, marketing, and after sales service, in the years prior to these popular sites allowing business pages, employees often independently joined and interacted with coworkers on public social media. In many cases, and not surprisingly at tech-savvy organizations like Microsoft and IBM, these employee experiences predated the establishment of internal only media applications (Leonardi et al., 4). Studies of this early usage identified tensions created by the use of public sites such as the legitimacy of the software, the potential they raise for proprietary information leakage, hierarchy problems when managers and employees become friends, or personal and work boundary issues (Skeels & Grudin, 100-101).

Conclusions from these early studies recognize the tensions created from use of the public sites but also focus on the evolution of the software along with the social conventions governing use. They acknowledge that work-life boundaries are increasingly permeable and predict rapid progress and adoption of social networking sites in enterprises (Skeels & Grudin, 102-103). These predictions have seemingly come to fruition as a more common approach to implementing social media in the enterprise, as previously mentioned, is through in-house implementation of applications that are not open to external audiences. This movement has been influenced by security concerns and in recent years, many vendors have entered the enterprise social software market with proprietary solutions that can be either installed on company servers or hosted in the cloud. Such enterprise social networking (ESN) tools now typically integrate a full variety of social media functionality and client companies for these systems include many of the largest and most successful organizations in the world, including Proctor and Gamble, Deloitte, American Express and hundreds of others (Leonardi et al., 5).

If decision makers at an organization want to harness and utilize this technology it can still be difficult to understand the place and role of ESN in business processes. ESN tools by their nature are open and flexible technologies that do not always lend themselves to immediate forms of usage determined by their features. These characteristics make it hard to predict how and what form ESN will be put to use when rolled out to a particular organizational context (Riemer & Richter, 3). Because of this, senior executives and decision makers are skeptical to the value of ESN, but the Deloitte Center for the Edge argues, “Their reluctance is understandable but self-defeating” and that social software has the potential to address operational “pain points” and significantly enhance business performance in the short-term and transform it in the long term (Miller et al., 4).

There are different philosophies when it comes to how ESN can be implemented but there is a common theme across research that suggests ESN is contextual in nature and that the structure of how employees use social networking software becomes better defined and appropriate over time. Riemer and Richter state that, “ESN adoption needs to rely on experimentation and sense making by its users, a process that takes time and is open-ended, in that the potential of ESN only manifests when people make sense of and incorporate them into their day-to-day work practices” and Miller et al. cites a real business case saying, “as employees identified and shared specific ways to use the software to improve their performance and work more efficiently, they integrated it into their daily workflow”. Because of this, an organizational decision maker should be aware of a concept called the social software maturity curve (Miller et al., 18).

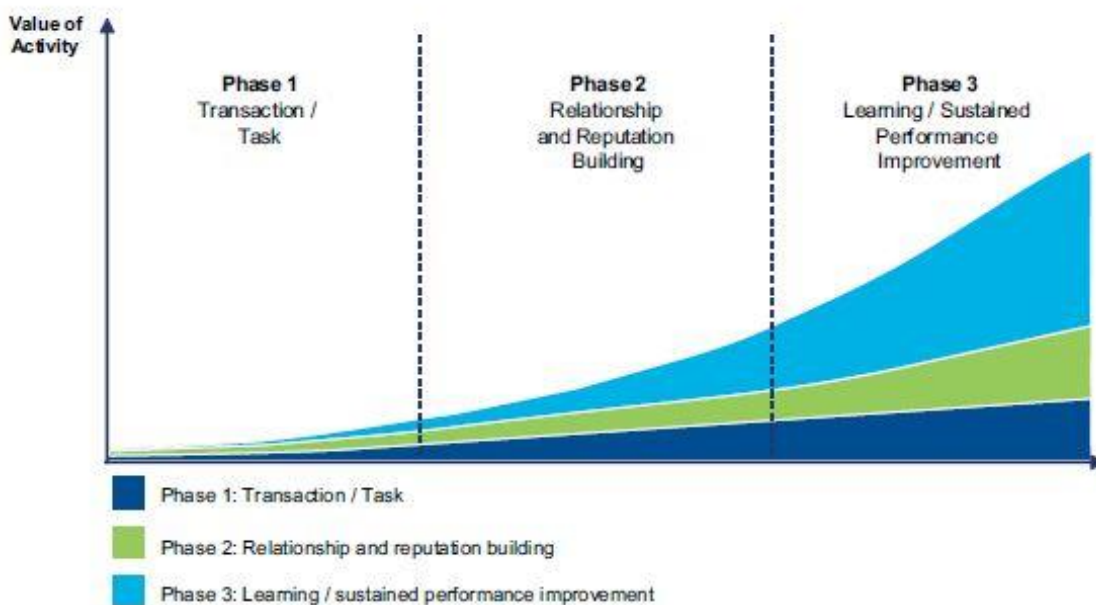
This concept of the maturity curve can be explained in three phases. The initial phase of this process is related to users completing transactions or tasks, specifically exception handling. Performance improvements from social software is driven by exception handling which is one of the biggest opportunities to utilize the functionality. The current business environment is one of



near constant disruption, increased technological innovation and constant change. Because of these factors, employees increasingly encounter non-routine issues which disrupt the standard processes. These “exceptions” are becoming the norm and employees can spend exorbitant amounts of time searching for relevant information or expertise to resolve an issue (Miller et al., 7). Regarding these situations, Miller et al. states, “The current technologies store information and support standard business processes but fall short of supporting the dynamic informal communications needed for handling exceptions. To improve efficiency and effectiveness, employees need tools that enable navigating across organizational boundaries, connecting to the right people, and accelerating exception resolution.” Phase 1 of the curve will be successful if users can contribute with modest effort to quickly resolve issues or see their contributions valued which will lead to more frequent use.

Phase 2 focuses on relationship building and will include users who develop reputations and make contributions that help others better understand their expertise and helpfulness. From this, users will naturally form relationships and engage in discussion around shared expertise and interests. This growth in content and information makes the platform attractive to a wider audience and becomes a forum to engage in problem-solving and lessons learned. As this environment evolves, relationships and ongoing interaction increase the chances for new knowledge to be generated. This 3rd phase, Learning/Sustained Performance Improvement, is where informal teams form and solve more significant performance challenges, positive feedback encourages further participation and other users want to solve challenges within their own areas of interest as well as share their stories of success (Miller et al., 18-19). An organization’s matured use of social software should ensure a framework that enhances knowledge creation and collaborative innovation.

Figure 15. The social software maturity curve



Source: Deloitte LLP

IMPLEMENTATION CONSIDERATIONS

In order to effectively rollout a social media platform of this size, we understand many considerations need to take place in advance. Some of those concerns were raised in our Fiscal Academy Survey which included the following thoughts broken down by topic:

CONCERNS & MAINTENANCE

“SECURITY. WHO MAINTAINS IT? WHO TROUBLESHOOTS IT WHEN THINGS BREAK?”

“IF THIS WERE TO BE A DISCUSSION BOARD THERE COULD BE INCORRECT INFORMATION DISSEMINATED.”

FISCAL KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE

“MUCH LIKE THE FISCAL KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE, I THINK THAT SOME ENTITY WILL WANT TO HAVE CONTROL OVER WHAT INFORMATION IS EXCHANGED.”

“YOU SHOULD WORK WITH THE FISCAL KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE NOT AGAINST THEM.”

NEGATIVE REACTIONS TO SOCIAL NETWORKING

“NEED TO PREVENT THE SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORM MENTALITY”

“USING STATE RESOURCES FOR SOCIAL EVENTS”

Based on an overview of all comments, respondents do have some concerns. These include maintenance, monitoring and upkeep of the actual online application/site, accuracy of information on the discussion boards. Is there a risk of misinformation being posted/shared on the site, do the discussions need to be monitored or vetted? Other comments mentioned the shared practices feature is very similar to the recently launched Fiscal Knowledge Exchange. Would this site be different than the FKE? Or is the proposed functionality better served as an enhancement to the FKE? This feedback and concerns are valuable and shaped our research as we moved past survey results into scientific articles and studies of actual business cases where Enterprise Social Media (ESM) or Enterprise Social Networking (ESN) platforms were successfully implemented to accomplish similar goals and objectives as we have listed

Other considerations that would have to be managed by the State of Ohio and respective agencies like Department of Administrative Services’ Office of Information Technology division would be items like security, administrative guidelines on usage, as well as monitoring. Participating agencies could develop their policies and procedures on usage.

Another important consideration is how a platform of this nature would be impacted by public records requests. Currently, platforms like Skype for Business are not subject to public records, according to Chief Information Technology Officer, Michael Carmack. He explains, “That is up to each agency. Most agencies, including DAS, are categorizing Skype IMs as transient records not subject to retention.”



Survey participants also questioned about how a platform of this nature would prevent dissemination of incorrect information. In short, there's no way to prevent that. However, regardless of whether an employee uses an online platform or picks up the phone and calls for advice, there always runs that risk that they may be told incorrectly or that there may be a better way to do something. Human error exists regardless of the nature of the information transfer.

Finally, how to rollout a platform of this nature would be another important consideration. For the purposes of this project, our suggestion is to start with a small test group of users to see how the overall process flows. In this case, the test group would be Ohio Fiscal Academy graduates and members, as well as leadership. With the observance of successful rollout, the state could then look into including CFO's and other Fiscal staff and finally all state employees.

CONCLUSION

Finding ways to facilitate communication, innovation, and collaboration are the most integral components of running a successful organization. Given the way that state agencies act independently from one another, the opportunity to share projects, policies, and workforce tools in one platform could bridge the divide in government and allow employees to work more effectively and efficiently for its customers.

When analyzing our survey results, we also believe that a platform of this nature would be well received amongst employees. Some of the comments regarding the positive aspects of the network included the following quotes.

"I PARTICULARLY LIKE THE IDEA OF A WEB FORUM TO SHARE INSIGHTS, BEST PRACTICES, SOLUTIONS, ETC. FISCAL SHOPS THROUGHOUT STATE GOVERNMENT OPERATE ALMOST ENTIRELY IN SILOS, WITH EACH AGENCY (AND DIVISIONS WITHING AGENCIES) CREATING UNIQUE SOLUTIONS TO COMMON PROBLEMS. SHARING BEST PRACTICES WOULD TREMENDOUSLY BENEFIT FISCAL PROFESSIONALS ACROSS AGENCIES."

"SOUNDS LIKE THIS TOOL COULD BE A GREAT NETWORKING OPPORTUNITY TO CONNECT TO MORE FISCAL PROFESSIONALS WITHIN OTHER STATE DEPARTMENT(S)."

"I WOULD SUGGEST A MONTHLY TOPIC FOR DISCUSSION THAT COULD BE MONITORED BY AN EXPERT. THE USERS COULD STILL SHARE THEIR EXPERIENCES, ASK QUESTIONS, AND PROVIDE SUGGESTIONS FOR THE NEXT MONTH TOPIC. IT WOULD ALSO BE HELPFUL TO BE ABLE TO SEARCH ON KEYWORDS TO SEARCH FOR PREVIOUS TOPICS AND DISCUSSION FOR LATER REFERENCE."

"I DON'T LIKE THE Q&A FORMAT. I'D BE MUCH MORE APT TO HAVE CONTACT INFO FOR FOLKS THAT CAN HELP ME OUT REAL TIME."

We believe a platform like this could assist employees with the everyday "exception" type issues that need immediate answers. The routine tasks and best practices that are already outlined in Fiscal Knowledge Exchange or FIN Source may not have the information needed to handle exceptions. Therefore an Enterprise Social Network would allow them to pool their existing professional resources across state government to direct them to a Subject Matter Expert who can realistically answer their questions more quickly. All too often staff is directed to help desks



or message centers where response times can be delayed and often the dissemination of information from one person to another can lead to different opinions. With this platform, we could get real time answers, while also allowing staff to develop professional relationships and foster greater networking across the state.

Our study of social networking sites reveals that patterns of use and user motivations differ from users of Internet social network sites. Within the walled garden of the enterprise, employees choose to reach out and meet new people rather than only connecting to those they know.

They also share details of their life outside of work which has not been found with any frequency in other enterprise social software tools. If motivated by career advancement goals or a desire to champion a project idea, they use the social network site strategically to connect and spread their message to a large audience (DiMicco et al. 719-720).

Rather than develop a networking platform from the ground up, the team's decision was to explore existing Enterprise Social Networking platforms that already have the framework in place for an entity to gain license to use, assuming that it had the ability to handle a large number of users and adapt to the needs of the organization. Our Subject Matter Expert, Ms. Joan DiMicco, suggests that presently the most popular workforce platforms being used include IBM Connections, Salesforce's Chatter, Microsoft's Yammer, and Jive. Yammer, which is structured very similarly to Facebook, would interface well with existing State of Ohio software and Office 365 platform. The latest IBM Connections Solution Platform is structured off the IBM Beehive Project referred to throughout this paper and appears to be another strong candidate to explore. Licensing the use of a platform like this is a more economical route and permits a slow rollout of test subjects to explore how the platform meets the needs of the users will identify any deficiencies, as well as the popularity of the program, before a long term financial commitment is made.

Independent of the platform selected, a successful implementation requires a focused commitment to the application, while understanding that visible results and success will build over time. As Joan DiMicco stated, "it takes an energized and committed community of users" and "again, [it's] all about the social relationships."



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