

The Tornado Effect - The Social Enterprise Lost in the Chaos... **..A few helpful hints when implementing *Social Networking* in your *Enterprise!***

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The "Tornado Effect" is the concept of all the components to Social Networking Revolution have been thrown at you in a fast and furious swirling manner driven from the consumer side and quickly being adopted in the enterprise, without proven returns or benefits. But you are asked to implement it anyway! You have over 25+ blogs, 30+ wikis, 30+ tags, 45+ RSS feeds, 15+ VOIP/IM solutions, 25+ Collaboration Tools, 60+ Project Management Tools, and 100+ Content Management tools swirling in the social enterprise funnel. That's over 300 various applications and point solutions your need to wade through and then attempt to integrate and use them with your enterprise for a benefit and return. If that wasn't complex enough, this large pool of separate point solutions, then they throw in the big boys; IBM, Microsoft, Intel, and Google, each with their complex solutions suites and high costs per user basis.

Ok, enough, is enough...how do you manage through the chaos to bring your company or organization the social enterprise solution you have set-out to accomplish?

Step 1 – Business Requirements

- Document you business requirements
- Have a solid vision, mission and goals for your social enterprise's purpose and direction
- Make sure you have measurable results to present to senior management
- Be able to capture both tangible and intangible results and unexpected benefits
- The social enterprise can be applied to many areas within your business or organization; marketing, human resources, operations, customer services, sales, management, etc..

Step 2 – Technical Questions to Ask

As you develop your "technical requirements" document, don't forget to check...

- Hosted or Behind your fire wall?
- Is it License or SaaS model?
- Is it a per user fee or per server or software license?
- What levels of security is provided? Does it have encryption options?
- Do they offer an "integrated" solution with all the Web 2.0 tools built-in?
- Is it scalable? Can we start small and grow?
- Does it contain collaboration, communication and web 2.0 tools?
- Is it easily customizable? What can be customized?
- Can I add it or integrate it into my current web environment?
- Do they provide an open API and Widgets?
- Do they have multi-languages to support your global enterprise?
- Is it easy to learn and use? Is it intuitive?
- How difficult and time-consuming is it to populate?
- Do they provide customer support and services?

Step 3 – The Selection Process – 4 Tips!

Make sure you can demo the platform or tool ahead of time to test it ease-of-use, remember a social enterprise platform needs to be used by your team or department, if it is cumbersome or difficult, you may not get the adoption and benefits you seek.

Conduct your Total Cost of Ownership (TCO), it is rarely a simple software purchase, but at times includes; integration services, additional servers or hardware required, customization services, maintenance fees, training fees, etc., etc.

Ask for similar Clients and their Results, you maybe the first to adopt a social enterprise program in your company or organization, but I am sure there are other businesses or industries who are applying these platforms and tools in the same way. It would be interesting to see how they accomplished it and the benefits and results they are seeing. If you can't speak directly to them, then a case study or fact sheet would do.

Take the "gut" check – what does your gut tell you about this new partner, their offering? You need to feel good about their new social platform, its integrated components, ease-of-use, and the team working with you! I now this is more of an intangible tip versus the first 3, but it is as important.

Step 4 – Getting Started

Don't forget to include Yooplus's **we+ workspace** in your evaluation process.... **It's the most cost effective, multi-lingual, ease-to-use and integrated social enterprise platform, enabling your professionals, on the market today.**

Once you narrow down your three options and have their proposals. Here is a little chart to populate to see which solution meets the needs of your social enterprise program or project.

Just cut and paste the diagram into a Word or PowerPoint document, add your top 3 choices at the top of each green column and fill in the dots to the level each meets your requirements. For example, if you are looking for a platform and they offer one, then the circle is completely filled in, if they offer only a software product, then you may give them a ½ circle colored in. So you can end up with a visual representation of your three top choices.

	Yooplus we+ workspace		
Platform or Tool	○	○	○
Integrated Components			
Web 2.0 Tools			
Blogs	○	○	○
Wikis	○	○	○
Tags	○	○	○
RSS Feeds	○	○	○
Bookmarks	○	○	○
Search	○	○	○
Collaboration Tools			
Calendar	○	○	○
Files	○	○	○
Projects	○	○	○
Communications Tools			
VOIP	○	○	○
IM	○	○	○
Messaging System	○	○	○
eMail Link	○	○	○
Management Tools			
Team/Profiles	○	○	○
Milestones	○	○	○
Tasks	○	○	○
Status	○	○	○
Widgets			
Offer	○	○	○
Customize	○	○	○
API/Web Services			
Customization	○	○	○
Integration	○	○	○
New Apps	○	○	○
Mash-Ups	○	○	○
			SaaS or License Model
			Web 2.0 Notes:
			Collaboration Notes:
			Communications Notes:
			Management Notes:
			Widgets Notes:
			API/Services Notes:

I am sure there are other requirements, not listed above but, these tend to be the most sought after by the clients looking to implement a social enterprise platform from our experience.

Some final thoughts....

Stay Focused and On-Track - Once you select your key provider and share your vision, direction and expected benefits and results, make sure you set-up a time-line and target dates for implementation, training, launch, measurements and documented benefits and results. Constantly, revisit your Business Requirements and Technical Requirements documents to ensure you are encompassing your vision. Here is a link to a good template document to set-up your project. (<http://yooplus.com//template.doc>)

Think Out of the Box – the social enterprise is in it's infancy and you can apply this type of platform and tools to many business processes or ideas. Don't limit yourself to common practice areas but look at the whole business life cycle and see what is possible... Think blending both internal and external resources to accomplish a goal or objective for example. Or post your customer support in a wiki and let your customers populate and update it for you, creating a social support network or community.

Make it a Big Deal – the most surprising thing about the whole social enterprise phenomenon is the unexpected benefits that occur from implementing a social enterprise program or project. So be prepared to find amazing unexpected results in unexpected places and let people know about it. So, toot your own horn! For example, collaboration with your partners and customers on a day to day basis. New ideas posted in blog from all corners of your organization.

Participation is the Driver – the most effective social enterprise projects or programs become the part of your standard operating procedures (SOPs). The more your team or other professionals use the platform the valuable it becomes. You will only get out what you put into it. So its needs to be easy to use, easy to access, and part of your teams daily routine.

Enterprise Tools need Enterprise Support - be aware that when you apply technology, products, tools or platform across your enterprise that your provider has demonstrated a level of customer care and support to meet your needs for today and tomorrow. This includes everything from customization, new widgets to training and access to "live" person to help trouble shoot.

Summary

The diagram below best describes the market situation as your are facing it, working to implement and benefit from social networking in the enterprise. You have the chaos of over 300+ point solutions made up of; blogs, wikis, RSS feeds, VOIP, IM, collaboration tools, project and content management tools and at the top the "big boys" providing their complex, costly and lofty solution suites. The sweet spot is right in the middle with a cost effective, multi-lingual intuitive and integrated social enterprise platform called the we+ workspace from Yooplus. A platform that is customizable and provide the additional widgets and web services to integrate in or add onto your current environment. The we+ workspace adapts to your business, organization, department or processes, not the other way around, providing you the flexibility and creativity to bring your social enterprise to life! To learn more about the **we+ workspace**, from Yooplus, visit their site at www.yooplus.com.

