Enterprise Social Media Strategy

Connecting People and Knowledge Using 21st Century Tools

The old adage "it's not what you know, it's who you know" has taken new meaning since the emergence and rapid growth of social networks. Whether companies recognize it or not, for example, employees often use their contacts on LinkedIn or Facebook to gather input and explore solutions to their work questions.

The use of social networks in the enterprise context raises several complex issues:

- Are people divulging confidential information?
- Are they spending too much time networking, losing focus on their objectives?

Companies sometimes react out of ignorance or fear, and attempt to block social network sites at the firewall; or write policies to forbid or limit the use of social networks while on the job. Yet the potential issue gets bigger as more "social media" such as YouTube, Twitter, SlideShare or Quora appear. At any rate, employees will use social networks whether you like it or not, so from a purely pragmatic standpoint, we should adopt the "if you can't beat it, join it" approach.

At **cébé IT & Knowledge Management**, we believe that social media (including blogs, wikis, social networks, and real-time cloud-based collaboration tools like Google Docs) should be carefully embraced because they can bring benefits to the organization. Here's your choice:
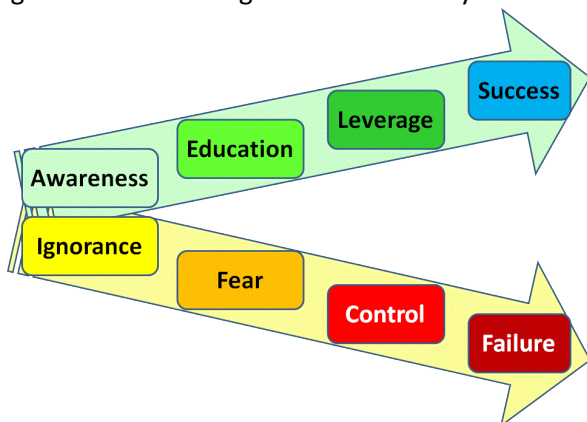
Success comes in several forms, which include faster access to relevant knowledge and experts; faster adoption of productive collaboration techniques; a positive

image of the company both outside and with its own employees; a higher capacity to recruit the best and brightest; and greater employee loyalty.

To leverage social media in the enterprise, you must:

- Understand which business goals can be positively impacted, and how you will measure success.
- Decide on the target audience: experts only, all employees, former employees, customers?
- Make a conscious decision, supported by senior management, to embrace social media smartly.
- Involve a sample of end users in the study phase.
- Classify the types of knowledge you're after.
- Decide which capabilities can be located in the cloud (e.g., LinkedIn) and which should be installed inside (perhaps team blogs or project wikis).
- Conduct a pilot project.
- Write smart and concise policies that rely on the trust that most employees want to do the right thing for the organization.
- Realize that process and people will be your key success factors, not the tools. A large investment in technology is neither advisable, since the tools will change, nor necessary, thanks to open-source or cloud-based offerings.
- Instead, focus your efforts on change management and governance, which will determine success.

Having "been there and done that," we offer the methodology and strategy to address the above points. In close collaboration with both business and technology leaders, we will assess your readiness, develop a roadmap, educate senior and middle management, prioritize and select the technical capabilities required, develop and communicate simple policies, and initiate change management and governance processes.