



6 Ways to Get Business Value from Social Software



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Introduction

In 2006, Harvard Business School professor Andrew McAfee coined the term Enterprise 2.0 in a seminal article for MIT Sloan Management Review. He described how the emergence of Web 2.0 technologies such as blogs, wikis and social networks had pervaded the walls of businesses. Employees had begun using these social tools to collaborate and communicate more efficiently, seeking out free or cheap applications on the Web, often without the blessing of IT departments. Seeing an opportunity, a plethora of start-up vendors emerged to provide social software with the security and privacy controls enterprises needed in order to sanction its use within company walls. Incumbent vendors began retrofitting their legacy software suites to incorporate more social features as well.

But as competition increased between all the vendors, the way in which Enterprise 2.0 value was defined took on a narrow framework; adoption, for adoption's sake, became the primary goal. As this occurred, companies were deprived of a value framework to help them define and measure the business results they hoped to achieve by implementing Enterprise 2.0 technologies.

This focus on adoption, instead of business value, had detrimental effects for enterprises looking to harness the power of social software, and we've seen proof of it time and again. According to Gartner, 70 percent of social implementations fail because they lack a business purpose. While adoption is important – high adoption has been critical to the success of every Socialtext implementation – it is not the end goal. Companies need to measure how social software is helping them satisfy their customers, grow revenue and adapt to change.

This white paper defines a strategic framework for gaining business value from social software. It outlines six successful implementation strategies, each oriented around a set of business results that can be achieved. Each Business Value Focus area has its own set of risks and rewards. The key to achieving your business goals with social software is to choose the focus area that is right for your organization, then orient your implementation around achieving its rewards and mitigating its risks.

This Business Value Framework is the outcome of a clear pattern that has emerged across the ~6,500 businesses who have deployed Socialtext. Though the examples in this white paper focus on the experiences and insights of Socialtext customers, the Business Value Framework is broadly applicable to any organization considering enterprise social software.

The purpose of this Business Value Framework is to serve as a practical guide to help you choose the implementation path that is right for your organization – the one with the right balance of risk and reward, so you can attain your desired business results with social software.

Formal vs. Informal Processes

This Business Value Framework makes a distinction between formal and informal processes, and the recommendation is that you choose one or the other as your place to start. Formal processes are defined as those things your organization does on a repeated basis, such as the formal steps engineering takes to plan and roll out a software release, that marketing takes to launch a product, or that corporate communications takes to keep employees posted on corporate events and resources. Informal processes are all the many interactions that take place outside of this structure. They are not predictable and repeated, and therefore cannot be codified and defined. To respond to a change or a new opportunity, knowledge workers use informal interactions. Informal processes make up the bulk of knowledge worker interactions.

Formal and informal processes are both important for business performance. And social software can greatly improve both. Both affect a company's ability to acquire new revenue, quickly satisfy customers, and react to the one constant aspect of the business world: change. This Business Value Framework distinguishes between formal and informal processes for the purpose of giving organizations a way to focus and de-risk their initial implementation.

Social Software Business Value Focus areas

		Within a Department	Across Departments	Customers & Partners
Formal Process	Risk	Process owner champion; Participant training	Process owner champions; Participant training	Organizational alignment & engagement w/customers & partners
	Reward	Improve departmental KPIs	Improve cross-departmental KPIs	Reduce existing costs & grow existing lines of revenue
Informal Process	Risk	LOB executive engagement	Exec sponsorship; IT commitment; broad adoption	Organizational alignment and community building
	Reward	Reduce e-mail by 30%+	Reduce cost of searching for people & info; Discover opportunities	Create new lines of revenue; Adapt to change

Attaining Business Value within a Department

Within a Department / Formal Processes

This Business Value Focus area is a good candidate place to start if one or more departments in your company have these symptoms:

- Departmental Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) are not performing as well as they could be
- People within the department are each doing things their own way vs. the best way (e.g. best practices not shared)
- People within the department are re-creating the wheel vs. leveraging work already done

Risks:

- Overall risk level: Low
- Process owners need to champion new processes
- Participants must be trained

Rewards:

- Departmental KPIs are improved
- People within the department are more effective; they follow best practices and deliver better work product
- People within the department are more efficient; they leverage work already done, there is less overhead burden for coordination (fewer/shorter meetings/con calls, etc.)

By defining the key types of information to be shared and how the information sharing is to be done, departments can improve performance of their KPIs. For example, a support department can improve time-to-resolution and first-call resolution. A marketing department can increase program performance and cost-per-opportunity.

An example of an organization that started with this Business Value Focus area is OSIssoft, a company that helps the world's largest energy and utility firms monitor their systems infrastructures. OSIssoft has over 200 engineers in its support department, in offices across the globe. The support department had formal processes in place for serving customers with known issues, but they lacked formal processes to help engineers with newly-breaking issues. As a result, when working on newer issues, each engineer had to piece together their own best answer. Support engineers were duplicating efforts, and customers were not getting consistent answers that represented all that was known at the time. Where good information existed, it was walled off in e-mail boxes and desktop folders. In the absence of a formal, vetted knowledgebase article, engineers did not have a way to know the advice or workaround that would best serve a customer right now. In addition, each customer had to wait while the engineer worked up their own answer from scratch.

To resolve these issues, OSIsoft implemented new formal processes using a social software workspace for their technical support department. Inside the workspace, they created a template for capturing information about new issues. They added a button in their case management system so an engineer can now create a blank templated page in the workspace when he or she encounters a new issue. Now, when a support engineer encounters a new issue, he or she simply clicks the button and fills in what they've learned, right then and there, in the flow of their work. Team members across the globe are alerted to the new issue automatically. The next engineer who encounters the issue works from the new issue page, and adds any new information.

The result: OSIsoft got a 15-fold increase in the number of new articles created per month, a rate that keeps much better pace with new issues. They solve customer problems much faster; often in minutes vs. hours. They support their global customers in a more consistent way. OSIsoft's support engineers have developed a strong sense of team with all team members contributing, and all team members benefiting. In addition, by simply monitoring page activity, OSIsoft sees the issues that are coming up most frequently, which gives their development team an easy and effective way to prioritize their work.

This a prime example where using social software to implement new formal processes helped to free the flow of work and improve important departmental KPIs.

Within a Department / Informal Processes

This Business Value Focus area is a good place to start if your company has these symptoms:

- People within a department are spending too much time trying to communicate changes and updates, and coordinate with each other (e-mails)
- Yet people within a department are still not as informed as they need to be (ex. messages and call-to-actions not aligned across touch points in a marketing campaign)
- KPIs are not performing as they could be, as people are unable to keep pace with changes, and are bogged down by e-mail

Risks:

- Overall risk level: low-to-medium
- LOB executive must engage
- Need a departmental champion

Rewards:

- E-mail volume is reduced for everyone in the department by 30%+; overall efficiency is increased
- The degree of synchronization & alignment within the department is improved; people are informed as changes occur, all touch points in a project stay aligned
- Departmental KPIs are improved

Many companies have realized business value quickly by starting in this Business Value Focus area, deploying social software informally in one or more departments that have the biggest pain. These companies typically suffer the above set of characteristic pain points because many of their communications needs are poorly served by existing "one-size-fits-all" communications tools such as e-mail.

E-mail is an ideal communication medium for topics directed at specific individuals, such as the location for today's lunch. It is a very poor communications medium for other types of information exchanges, such as:

- Keeping teammates informed of progress, setbacks, and changes
- Asking questions when you don't know who might have answers
- Disseminating information that people may need to find later
- Opening a topic that will spur a dialog with multiple people
- Information that could increase corporate intelligence, such as competitive insight or product feedback

E-mail is the wrong medium for the bulk of knowledge worker business interactions, and using it as a one-size-fits-all communications medium clogs inboxes that then have to be managed. According to Gartner, 30 percent of e-mails people receive in a given day are "occupational spam." With clogged inboxes, your organization loses more than just productivity, you miss valuable opportunities – for example you lose a sales lead or you fail to respond to a customer in a timely fashion. Luckily, social software can help cut down on e-mail while at the same time leaving people more informed and in synch. It accomplishes this with a "pull" medium that is less intrusive than e-mail and is a better fit for the bulk of knowledge worker interactions. Social software does the work of informing others with automated activity streams and subscribed notification mechanisms.

St. Louis Public Radio is an example of an organization that implemented social software to first provide better informal processes within a department. Previously, their employees relied on e-mail to update each other on tasks and to ask questions to find the right people and information. Now they use a private and secure microblogging tool for these types of interactions, as it is a much better fit for the need.

Now, when a reporter in the News department picks up a late-breaking news story, he sends out a quick microblogging message letting other members of the department know that he is on the story. This eliminates what used to be a slew of e-mails with people checking to see who was working the story. As the reporter needs to find people and information along the way, quickly, he sends out a microblogging message. Whoever has something to contribute does, and the reporter gathers answers quickly while no inboxes get cluttered. The reporter also sends out microblogging messages to keep his boss and co-workers informed of his status, which is especially important with a job function that is so time-critical. With the ability to tightly coordinate and respond quickly to change, SLPR serves members as their first resource for news and analysis on everything affecting the St. Louis area.

Attaining Business Value Across Departments

Across Departments / Formal Processes

This Business Value Focus area is a good place to start if your company has these symptoms:

- People across departments are spending too much time trying to coordinate with each other on joint projects (update meetings, e-mail)
- Yet people across departments are not as informed as they need to be (work quality is not what it could be)
- Formal processes result in information lag (ex. don't know the sales tool is not working until the quarterly meeting; don't know the dependency was not met until the weekly project meeting)

Risks:

- Overall risk level: Medium
- Process owners need to champion new processes
- Participants must be trained

Rewards:

- KPIs that are effected by formal processes across multiple departments are improved (ex. cycle time or on-time performance of cross-functional projects)
- People involved in cross-department projects are more efficient; they have more time for thoughtful, value-added work vs. spending time trying to coordinate with each other
- Work output is more timely; problems are addressed as they occur

One example of an enterprise that started in this Business Value Focus area is FONA International, a company that designs and manufactures more than 3,000 flavor products for the world's largest food and beverage companies. FONA lacked an effective way to share organizational news and events, updated regulatory documentation, and messages from the management team. They also had a number of cross-department formal processes that were not working.

One example was the process to schedule the right cross-section of employees to take part in FONA's twice-daily flavor tests. Their process for this created an overwhelming e-mail burden, estimated at 50,000 e-mails a year. Another example was the process to track the training and certification of each employee, required for regulatory compliance. To do this, they e-mailed spreadsheet files, and different people updated different pieces of the spreadsheet. This not only created an e-mail burden, but resulted in version confusion, accuracy concerns and lack of an audit trail.

To resolve these cross-department process issues, FONA implemented a collaborative social software intranet with company announcements, a master calendar, updated regulatory

documentation, competitive intelligence, and other resources. The social software was also used to deliver a much improved process for scheduling the twice-daily flavor tests. Now, scheduling is tracked via a shared workspace, and FONA eliminated those 50,000 e-mails a year with this single process improvement. To improve their process of tracking training and certification, FONA now uses social spreadsheets in a shared workspace. Each person keeps their own information up-to-date in the shared spreadsheets. The spreadsheets reflect the latest state of the business, always. Version confusion is eliminated, and there is a complete audit trail of all changes.

Across Departments / Informal Processes

This Business Value Focus area is a good place to start if your company has these symptoms:

- It is hard to locate needed expertise
- People across departments are unaware of valuable knowledge or insight that they could use to improve company performance
- Opportunities are missed because people lack awareness of what's going on around them
- It takes a long time to onboard new employees because of "tribal knowledge"
- Employees have little means to get to know anyone who is outside of their department or physical space
- KPIs are not performing as they could be

Risks:

- Executive sponsorship
- IT commitment to drive deployment
- Fast adoption of a broad base of users

Rewards:

- People across the organization can easily locate expertise needed to inform their projects and decisions; work quality is improved
- People across departments are aware of the valuable knowledge and insight that exists in the company and they use this to improve company performance
- People across departments can recognize and take advantage of opportunities, quickly and on their own initiative, because they are aware of what's going on around them
- New employees are onboarded quickly
- Employees know each other and have a strong commitment to their co-workers

This Business Value Focus area is key to knowledge worker effectiveness. As John Hagel and John Seely Brown highlighted in *The Only Sustainable Edge*, the majority of knowledge worker

time is spent solving problems through informal processes vs. executing formal processes. Enterprise systems such as customer relationship management systems (CRM), enterprise resource planning systems (ERP), and traditional intranet applications were designed to automate formal processes. Exceptions to formal processes can't be resolved with these systems.

At the typical corporation, knowledge workers have difficulty finding the people and information they need. Some research findings highlight this challenge:

- IDC Research found that "knowledge workers spend 15-30% of their time seeking specific information and these searches are successful less than 50% of the time. For the Fortune 500, the cost of the fruitless searches represents between \$60 and \$85 billion in direct costs and twice that in opportunity costs."
- According to a survey by Recomind (2009), "More than 50% of employees want the ability to locate expertise to help them with their daily jobs."
- A Butler Group study found that employees spend 1/4 of their day searching for people and information, which accounted for 10% of labor costs.
- According to Vanson Bourne (2008), "to find experts, 71% of people 'ask around,' 46% use the company directory, 34% use the company intranet and 30% actually send a company-wide e-mail."

As employees struggle to find the people or information they need, a company risks losing a prospect or new revenue because it was beat out by competitors who could move faster. But an even greater cost to the organization is the lack of ability to take advantage of opportunities. People only know what they know. Or, stated differently, people don't know what they don't know. So the greater opportunity cost is not the inability to find the specific information you know you need, but the inability to discover important information and opportunities you never knew about, as you do your work.

By making intranets social, companies help employees discover the important topics that are underway across the company, and who has specific expertise and information that might help inform a decision. These nuggets are put to use immediately by people across your organization. As your knowledge workers discover this important information in the course of doing their work, your organization improves its ability to respond to change, serve customers and generate revenue. By making discovery an ongoing process that builds your core competency, your organization can ultimately react to market opportunities faster than competitors.

An example of a company who started with this Business Value Focus is TransUnion, one of the big three credit reporting companies. TransUnion needed a way for employees to brainstorm securely and efficiently. To serve its customers, the company runs a lot of custom software code, which began causing IT performance issues across the enterprise. The solution to the problem was to purchase new equipment. Instead, a small group of people using social tools started a conversation about ways to solve the issue without buying new hardware. People began surfacing ideas in a central location, automated activity streams created an awareness of the conversation, and as people discovered the topic a broader group began participating in the brainstorming. As a result, the company saved an estimated \$2.5 million because employees figured out ways to resolve the performance issues without new equipment. The company's executives agree this never would have been achieved without social tools or by utilizing traditional discovery methods.

"It was never very clear to us, looking in, who the authoritative sources were, who was good at solving problems," TransUnion CTO John Parkinson told *Internet Evolution*. "Now we can see a lot of that because we're starting to see patterns emerge, to see who's following whom, who's the good source of questions, who offers good answers. All those things that you sort of know by the grapevine, we now have data for."

Another way to look at the value of social software for informal process is to view these processes through the strength of "weak ties." Mark Granovetter, a sociologist now at Stanford, researched the difference between strong and weak ties between people. The ideal structure for a social network has a core of strong ties for process decisions that recur on a regular basis (formal process), and a dynamic periphery of weak ties that provide new information and contacts (informal process).

This "strength of weak ties" has been found to accelerate business results. Harvard Business School's (HBS) Morton Hansen, for example, found that weak ties helped accelerate product development processes and projects. London Business School's Marie Louise Mors and Bjorn Lovas further showed that weak ties helped reduce information search costs. Rutgers professor Daniel Levin and UVA professor Rob Cross found that the benefits of weak ties were amplified if knowledge seekers trusted that information sources were competent in their fields.

This academic research provides further validation that social software not only saves people time searching for people and information, but it accelerates process and project cycles. It has an even more significant effect if done in a sharing culture that fosters trust. With social software, employees can share and discover information and people that speeds the time in which their colleagues can manage informal processes. This provides immediate business value because companies improve their ability to acquire new revenue, quickly satisfy customers, and react to the one constant aspect of the business world, which is change.

Attaining Business Value with Customers & Partners

Customers & Partners / Formal Processes

This Business Value Focus area is a good place to start if your company has these symptoms:

- Your organization does not have the partner mindshare you need. The majority of time spent with partners is spent providing tactical items and updates
- You cannot roll out new partner programs fast enough. The process for rolling out a new partner program is too labor-intensive
- Your organization does not have an efficient and effective way to supply customers with the information they need, when they need it

Risks:

- Overall risk level: Medium
- Organizational ability to collaborate and align internally

- Organizational engagement with customers & partners

Rewards:

- Increased partner mindshare. More strategic relationships with partners, with face-time reserved for strategy discussions vs tactical items
- Partner programs rolled out more quickly, with fewer resources
- Partner revenues increased. Partner program more successful; a higher percentage of partners providing measurable value
- Customers and partners choose to self-service their own information needs. Customers and partners are more informed, satisfied, and loyal

Establishing collaborative spaces for partners or customers, also known as a private B2B extranet, can strengthen relationships and improve the execution of transactional formal processes. Adoption risks are relatively low for these formal processes so long as there is alignment between the firm and its customer or partners. However, before collaborating with your customer or partner, your organization needs to collaborate within.

One of the largest law firms in the United Kingdom found this out the hard way. Their largest customer threatened to fire them because the several lawyers servicing the account appeared to have little coordination between them. The result was redundant work, and higher search and coordination costs for the client. The relationship was becoming strained. So the law firm moved quickly to structure the formal processes for the client by utilizing a shared online wiki workspace. After its implementation, not only did the lawyers know what each other was working on for the client, but more importantly, the client did too. Since then, the law firm has seen client satisfaction and loyalty improve substantially.

A more common use case for interacting with customers and partners is establishing a shared support resource, and providing documentation previously reserved for contact center personnel. In doing so, customers and partners gain the ability to self-service their support needs. The primary KPI benefit is reduced support incident volume and costs.

Often businesses who implement this self-service function for formal processes find that the next logical step is to add informal processes, allowing customers or partners to interact with each other directly and openly (see next section).

Customers & Partners / Informal Processes

This Business Value Focus area is a good place to start if your company has these symptoms:

- Your organization has gained maximum business value from social software within and across departments, you have a fairly large number of partners and believe there is an opportunity to leverage a partner network to enable your organization to learn much faster and respond to new opportunities much faster
- You want to build a community of partners that help you learn about how your product is being sold or received in the market

Risk:

- Overall risk level: High
- Organizational ability to collaborate and align internally
- Ability to gain and retain ongoing commitment of each partner or customer organization
- Ongoing resource commitment to cultivate the community and drive engagement

Rewards:

- By allowing your partners to collaborate directly with each other, your organization can adapt much faster to change, and take advantage of new opportunities
- Because of insights provided by your partner community, you are much more in touch with the needs of your market
- Because of your partner network, you are able to create new lines of revenue

An important distinction must be made between Enterprise 2.0 and social media. Social media includes the public use of social software such as Facebook or Twitter, or the cultivation of an open community (such as a support forum). Enterprise 2.0, by contrast, stands for private use within or between organizations.

An example of a company that expanded their initial implementation into this Business Value Focus area is Marketing services firm 'mktg'. The organization initially deployed social software Within Departments / Formal Processes, for its business development team. After achieving the desired business value in this focus area, it expanded Across Departments / Informal Processes. Once the organization was able to collaborate quickly and effectively internally, they deployed a private partner extranet to enable formal processes, delivering information to their partners in a way that reduced overhead while increasing mindshare.

Finally, 'mktg' enabled informal processes by allowing their 6,000 event marketing contractors to connect with each other directly via social software. When they tested a new marketing concept simultaneously at 80 local retail events, the informal processes enabled by this social software extranet led to a substantial (as high as three-fold) increase in revenue for their client.

As the marketing concept was being tested, the conversation about it, taking place openly via the extranet, allowed 'mktg' to sense valuable insight very quickly, collaborate on it internally, and roll out mid-stream changes with a speed and ease it never had before.

Prior to deploying the social software partner extranet, 'mktg' needed an entire seasonal cycle to gather insights from a campaign and then roll out changes in response to those insights. With social software, they are now able to sense input immediately, and roll out changes across as many as 8,000 simultaneous events in a much faster timeframe. This allows them to provide higher value for their clients and not only increase revenue but deliver new sources of revenue. In the meantime, their competitors are still operating on a seasonal clock, trying to figure out the learnings from last's season's information.

Does Deployment Method Matter?

Social Software vendors offer differing deployment methods, ranging from packaged software to Software-as-a-Service (SaaS).

Secure on-site deployment may be required by IT policies, and it also has the benefits of ease of integration with existing enterprise applications and infrastructure. On the other hand, SaaS offers rapid updates to the service, which is important for relatively new and evolving categories of software. SaaS may be a better fit as a shared hosted deployment that involves customers & partners.

SaaS and secure on-site deployment are not mutually exclusive. IT departments can gain the benefits of both with an on-site SaaS appliance, deployed behind the firewall, deployed as a serviced connection managed by the vendor.

Whether SaaS hosted software or SaaS appliance, SaaS also creates better alignment between customer and vendor, because the entire vendor organization is focused on continuing to earn every customer by way of service contract renewal.

Conclusion: Free the Flow of Work

The focus on business value will guide social software in 2010. The customer examples provided in this paper show the different ways companies can derive business value from social software. Each Business Value Focus has a different set of risks to manage, and a different set of rewards. This paper gives examples of companies that chose each of the different Business Value Focus areas, and the real-world results they achieved.

Companies can use this Business Value Framework to assess where in their organization it makes the most sense to implement Enterprise 2.0 first, and how to expand the business value from there.

As a practical next step, use the Assessment Guide below to discover the right Business Value Focus for your business. It may be necessary to gain input from others in your company to complete the Assessment. Then revisit the above risks and rewards to define your implementation strategy for social software.

Appendix II: Assessment Guide

Now that you've read the Social Software Value Framework whitepaper, let's put it to practical use. This Assessment Guide is designed to help you identify which of the problems that can be solved with social software have the highest value to your organization, so you can tackle them first.

This assessment tool asks you to score the value to your organization of improving each candidate issue addressed by social software. Rate each issue on a scale of 1 to 5, with 5 meaning the value of solving the problem is big, and 1 meaning the value of solving the problem is small.

The issues are grouped by the social software Business Value Focus area that most directly addresses them.

Once you have rated each candidate issue, add up your score for each Business Value Focus area and enter them into this summary table. The focus areas with the highest scores are the ones that could bring you the greatest business value for your initial social software implementation.

	Within a Department	Across Departments	Customers & Partners
Informal Process			
Formal Process			

You should then consider the risks vs. rewards for that implementation area, as described in this whitepaper, to inform your implementation strategy.

For the first focus area, "within department," choose up to 3 candidate departments and complete the assessment separately for each.

Candidate department #1
the problem

Value of solving

Within _____ Department / Formal Processes					
Departmental KPIs are not performing as well as they could be	1	2	3	4	5
People within the department are each doing things their own way vs. a known better way	1	2	3	4	5
People within the department are re-creating the wheel vs. leveraging work already done	1	2	3	4	5
<i>Total of scores:</i>					

Within _____ Department / Informal Processes					
People within a department are spending too much time trying to communicate changes and updates, and coordinate with each other (e-mails)	1	2	3	4	5
Yet people within a department are still not as informed as they need to be (ex. messages and call-to-actions not aligned across touch points in a marketing	1	2	3	4	5

campaign)	
KPIs are not performing as they could be, as people are unable to keep pace with changes, and are bogged down by e-mail	1 2 3 4 5
<i>Total of scores:</i>	

Candidate department #2
the problem

Value of solving

Within _____ Department / Formal Processes	
Departmental KPIs are not performing as well as they could be	1 2 3 4 5
People within the department are each doing things their own way vs. a known better way	1 2 3 4 5
People within the department are re-creating the wheel vs. leveraging work already done	1 2 3 4 5
<i>Total of scores:</i>	

Within _____ Department / Informal Processes	
People within a department are spending too much time trying to communicate changes and updates, and coordinate with each other (e-mails)	1 2 3 4 5
Yet people within a department are still not as informed as they need to be (ex. messages and call-to-actions not aligned across touch points in a marketing campaign)	1 2 3 4 5
KPIs are not performing as they could be, as people are unable to keep pace with changes, and are bogged down by e-mail	1 2 3 4 5
<i>Total of scores:</i>	

Candidate department #3
the problem

Value of solving

Within _____ Department / Formal Processes	
Departmental KPIs are not performing as well as they could be	1 2 3 4 5
People within the department are each doing things their own way vs. a known better way	1 2 3 4 5
People within the department are re-creating the wheel vs. leveraging work already done	1 2 3 4 5
<i>Total of scores:</i>	

Within _____ Department / Informal Processes	
People within a department are spending too much time trying to communicate changes and updates, and coordinate with each other (e-mails)	1 2 3 4 5
Yet people within a department are still not as informed as they need to be (ex. messages and call-to-actions not aligned across touch points in a marketing campaign)	1 2 3 4 5
KPIs are not performing as they could be, as people are unable to keep pace with changes, and are bogged down by e-mail	1 2 3 4 5
<i>Total of scores:</i>	

Value of solving

the problem

Across-Departments / Formal Processes					
People across departments are spending too much time trying to coordinate with each other (update meetings, e-mail)	1	2	3	4	5
Yet people across departments are still not as informed as they need to be (work quality is not what it could be)	1	2	3	4	5
Formal processes result in information lag (ex. don't know the sales tool is not working until the quarterly meeting)	1	2	3	4	5
<i>Total of scores:</i>					

Value of solving

the problem

Cross-Department / Informal Processes					
People across departments are unaware of valuable knowledge or insight that they could use to improve company performance; opportunities are missed because people lack awareness of what's going on around them	1	2	3	4	5
It is hard for people to locate needed expertise within the company	1	2	3	4	5
Overall, KPIs are not performing as they could be	1	2	3	4	5
<i>Total of scores:</i>					

Value of solving

the problem

Customers & Partners / Formal Processes					
Your organization does not have the partner mindshare you need. The majority of time spent with partners is spent providing tactical items and updates	1	2	3	4	5
You cannot roll out new partner programs fast enough. The process for rolling out a new partner program is too labor-intensive	1	2	3	4	5
Your organization does not have an efficient and effective way to supply customers with the information they need, when they need it	1	2	3	4	5
<i>Total of scores:</i>					

Value of solving

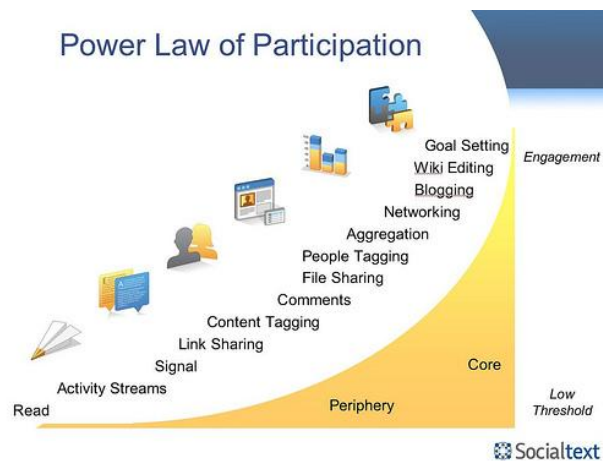
the problem

Customers & Partners / Informal Processes					
Your organization has gained maximum business value from social software within and across departments, you have a fairly large number of partners and believe there is an opportunity to leverage a partner network to enable your organization to learn much faster and respond to new opportunities much faster	1	2	3	4	5
Your organization is not in touch with how your product is being sold or	1	2	3	4	5

received in the market					
Because you lack a partner network, you are unable to create new lines of revenue	1	2	3	4	5
<i>Total of scores:</i>					

Appendix II: Power Law of Participation

Enterprise 2.0 deployments across an organization have failed 70 percent of the time because vendors and service firms tried to muscle users onto the system rather than present people with an easy, universal use case that yielded employees and the company immediate business value. That's because many pieces of social software, while easy to use, require a fair amount of content creation. Consequently, at the early stages of an enterprise-wide adoption of social software, we see the [power law of participation](#) play a prevalent role, much like the consumer Web.



This law states that a minority of people contribute the majority of the content. Initially, most people are passive readers of that content. For example, on Wikipedia, 500, or .05 percent of users, account for 50 percent of the contributions to the online encyclopedia, while the vast majority of Wikipedia users don't make a single contribution. With social software in an enterprise, the same holds true; a small minority of people will perform active roles such as editing a page, writing a comment or penning an internal blog post for their colleagues to read. As social software platforms have evolved, new capabilities such as microblogging have a lower threshold for participating.

To turn more people into contributors who can share valuable information with colleagues, companies should take small steps that help their users get acclimated to the system. More important, those first steps should provide the users with immediate and clear business value, which would prompt them to use the social tools more deeply. For this reason, the emergence of microblogging could be one of the most important developments in the Enterprise 2.0 industry. Mimicking Twitter, enterprise microblogging allows users to post messages to a secure stream

that asks "what are you working on?" Due to the small scope of the messages (140 characters or less), and their "reply optional" nature (which differs from the traditional e-mail etiquette), employees can generate business value by using microblogging for three key needs:

1. Sharing links and information. During the day, people can easily trade links to critical industry materials. This has a benefit for executives, who can share what literature they have read without disrupting their employees with an e-mail.
2. Sharing status or context. Employees can keep their colleagues in-the-know about a project or their general whereabouts. This is an area where easy mobile access to microblogging especially increases business value. A sales person might microblog "Heading into a meeting with the manufacturing client. Please no one touch the demo system. Will check back in an hour."
3. Getting valuable answers. Often, in our daily work lives, we have questions and we don't even know who to ask. In this case a person might e-mail an entire group, (or worse) an entire company. Or, the person might give up and simply move on lacking any answers. A private and secure microblogging tool provides the option to get fast answers from a broad group. When a question is posted in a microblogging message, those who have insights to contribute do so, valuable information is surfaced quickly, and no inboxes are cluttered.

By using microblogging to satisfy these three key needs, employees can quickly realize value from the social platform with minimal effort and little to no training. As they become more comfortable, they can build on those small successes and begin using other parts of the platform, such as contributing to a wiki or building their social networking profile.

The notion of [going broad and shallow before you go deep](#) we experienced first-hand recently here at Socialtext. We recently held a webinar to discuss microblogging with one of our customers. Fittingly, we allowed people to ask questions via Signals, our microblogging tool. During the course of one hour, we noticed that people not only became comfortable posting Signals that talked about their current projects or razzed a co-worker with a few jokes, they started feeling compelled to explore other parts of our social software platform as well. Some began giving each other tips for how to build their Socialtext dashboard (a personalized home page where, through the simple adding of widgets, you can consume both enterprise and consumer content in one central place). Before our very eyes, we saw the Power Law of Participation move to the right.

About Socialtext

Microblogging + social networking + collaboration

With Socialtext, your workforce benefits from a powerful combination of social software technologies adapted for business use. Your workers share and connect with private microblogging, social networking, and integrated activity feeds. They see each others' "personality stamp" at every turn and get to know each other better through rich, dynamic profiles. With Socialtext, co-workers connect with each other in a way that is fun and natural, share with each other in a way that is highly productive, and leverage each other continuously. With Socialtext in place, people have a better way to work together.

Highest adoption, lowest TCO

The Socialtext social software platform is designed for adoption. It is as easy to use as the Internet applications that are so popular today. Users simply click to the interface and start productively using the application. Microblogging and personal productivity features capture the interest of users immediately, and integrated social networking creates self-perpetuating rapid adoption.

Rapid deployment, Software-as-a-Service

Provided as software-as-a-service, the Socialtext platform can be up and running in days, and returning tangible business results in weeks. Our professional services team provides end-to-end implementation and support services to ensure success.

Business results

Using Socialtext, companies across the globe have reduced the time employees spend searching for information by 30%, and have sped up their cycle times in virtually all functions across the organization. Socialtext customers have reported compressing project cycles by 25% and reducing e-mail volume by 30% or more.

More information about social software for business

Visit our resources page for more whitepapers, short product videos, and other resources:

<http://www.socialtext.com/products/resources.php>

WP-6 Ways to Get Business Value from Social Software-V4