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ASK ME Socializing Knowledge

Get the Secrets to Socializing Knowledge

**Seven Secrets
to Socializing
Knowledge**

Solution Paper

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Seven Secrets to Socializing Knowledge

The expertise and knowledge of your employees and the information they create is your most strategic asset and the lifeblood of your organization. The extent to which you can capture and leverage that enterprise knowledge capital is a key factor for success in today's global connected economy. Organizations that harness this power accelerate innovation, get quality products to market faster, and better serve their customers–all factors that directly contribute to success. Unless you have a strategy and methodology for effectively leveraging enterprise knowledge capital, your're falling behind...without even knowing it.

The knowledge management (KM) discipline has been around for almost twenty years, but in many cases has failed to deliver on the promise of effectively harnessing and leveraging enterprise knowledge capital. Recent years have seen the advent of social business tools, designed to drive collaboration and engagement. While powerful, these tools frequently don't capture the knowledge created as a by-product of employee collaboration and interaction.

The stage is now set for a new breed of solutions that combine the structure and process of traditional knowledge management, with the deep engagement benefits of social business software to truly socialize knowledge. This paper divulges the seven secrets you need to know to successfully choose and deploy this new breed of knowledge management solution in your organization.

1. Build Community

Knowledge only gets effectively socialized when employees are truly engaged, both with one another and with their goals. Look for solutions that facilitate this engagement by organizing people into communities– groups of people that share common interests and can help each other succeed. Communities bridge departments, organizations, disciplines, geographies or rank, creating virtual teams that break down institutional silos. When people make connections in a non-threatening environment, dialog happens, knowledge flows and businesses thrive.

2. Look Beyond Simple Q&A

There are many KM solutions that incorporate Q&A systems, but not all are created equal. Look for solutions that provide sophisticated Q&A functionality such as threaded conversations, feedback loops, and a way to publish Q&A content so that it can be leveraged across the organization.

3. Realize Your Potential Through Participation

The true power of a knowledge management system is only realized when everyone's on board–regardless of rank, longevity with the organization or experience. Great ideas and contributions can come from anyone at anytime, so it's key to find solutions that are designed to drive participation across the organization. Solutions must be non-threatening; easy to use; and provide real value. Only then will usage grow organically and to a level where you can harvest all of your intellectual capital.

4. Benchmark ROI Early and Often

Implemented properly, your knowledge management system will provide numerous operational cost savings to your organization. From speeding up internal processes to locating and leveraging new best practices, the associated ROI shows up in many ways. Look for solutions with built-in benchmarking and ROI tools, and make sure you start using them early to establish the base line from which you can measure your progress. Being able to measure time-saved, adoption rates, usage and other key metrics will help you get a comprehensive read on how effective your KM system is performing.

5. Keep it Current

One of the most important things to look for in a KM system is its ability to automate the information gathering, meta data tagging and profile updating that keeps your system current.

Successful systems capture profile attributes such as technical competency, areas of expertise and training level, through a combination of manual processes and intelligent auto-profiling tools. These auto-profiling tools dynamically create and manage expertise profiles from the usage patterns and contributed content, keeping your knowledge workers focused on what they do best, instead of maintaining expertise profiles.

6. Look for Integration at all Levels

Successful KM systems must integrate with your existing environment at many levels. From pulling profile and user information from existing directories, to following established workflows and business rules for publishing content, the system must be flexible and open. In addition it's important to give your users a choice in how they interact with the system. Some may be open to working in a new application, whereas others prefer to stick with email. You also need to be sure that the system you choose can integrate with existing SharePoint deployments and has the ability to interface with a variety of enterprise data sources.

7. Find a Proven Partner

There are a plethora of new companies offering enterprise social business tools. Many of their products are great at driving engagement and dialog, but lack the structure to transform ad hoc communications into useful assets, or mine enterprise document stores to uncover related knowledge. Ensure that you choose a vendor that has a proven track record in complex enterprise environments.

Summary

With the advent of social business software, it's easier than ever to drive engagement and dialog, but many social business tools lack the necessary processes, integration points and structured approach inherent in traditional KM applications. When evaluating and deploying the next generation of KM solutions, be sure to select a tool that combines social engagement with structured process and deep data expertise to fully unlock and share your enterprise knowledge.

About Hivemine

Hivemine provides social business software products, including AskMe, an award-winning solution featured in the 2010 Gartner Magic Quadrant for Social Software in the Workplace. Hivemine products and solutions combine knowledge management process with social media tools to enable workers to engage and get the information they need fast by connecting them with the right co-workers, conversations, or documents across the organization. Hivemine transforms conversations and collaborative outputs into accessible knowledge capital that can be leveraged to drive business growth and provide sustainable competitive advantages.

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