

Social Business Solution Series

# Five Keys to Effective Expertise Identification



**Hivemine Social  
Business Solution Series**

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## Five Keys to Effective Expertise Identification

Increasingly, organizations (or self-empowered user groups within the organization) are turning to social networks as a tool for identifying expertise within the enterprise. This can be a time-consuming and expensive process, requiring contacting several people before the one with the right information is found. And, if self-empowered users are installing free consumer-grade social networking tools, it can open up the organization to costly data breaches.

As an alternative approach to the hit-and-miss nature of social networks, some organizations are using data mining tools to try and identify expertise in their organization. While these tools can be helpful in determining who knows what, they lack the social networking interface that drives adoption and ongoing usage.

Ideally, an expertise identification solution should leverage both social networking and data mining technologies. It should also be secure, built for business, and designed to integrate into the established enterprise environment.

And here's the good news—these types of solutions are now becoming available. As you evaluate these solutions for possible deployment in your organization, here are five keys to success:

### **1. The Social Network Should Be Just The Beginning**

While building an effective social network is important, it's just the starting point for expertise identification. In the same way laying the foundation is a critical first step in building a house, deploying a product with a primary focus of building the social network will leave you with a hit-and-miss expertise identification solution that requires users to ask questions and follow referrals until they find the person with the information they need. And there's no guarantee it will happen in a timely manner or yield the best expert for the job at hand.

### **2. Collaboration Should Be A Means To An End**

Many of today's social tools (wiki's, blogs, chat rooms, etc.) are good for connecting people and creating an environment in which effective business collaboration can occur. But it's also just as likely that those same tools can foster a high volume of chatter that has little to no business value. Don't assume that valuable business interactions will naturally arise from access to collaborative tools. Make sure the solution you deploy includes tools that focus and measure collaborative interactions for business value, and drive the outcomes that your business is looking for—e.g. reduced R&D costs, more rapid innovation and improved customer service.

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### 3. The Solution Must Build Knowledge

You make an investment each time an employee seeks out an expert and engages in a collaborative discussion to get an answer to their question. Unfortunately, you make that same investment again when a different employee has the same question. For many organizations, that re-investment is happening hundreds of times per week and represents a significant hidden cost. The expertise identification solution you deploy should be one that's capable of capturing, storing, and making easily accessible the results of collaborative interactions for future use across the organization.

### 4. The Solution Must Be Smart

Answers are rarely "one size fits all" and your expertise identification solution should not be either. Don't select a solution that relies on only keyword search to match experts with questions. The solution you deploy should use the best of today's analytic technology to match specific requests for information with experts and existing content from across the organization. Be sure to look for a solution that provides a means for tapping into the expertise that resides within groups. Often 1+1 is much more than 2 when the knowledge of the crowd is effectively harnessed.

### 5. Let People Work The Way They Want To Work

Users are unique and how they go about their daily work varies even in the same functional area. Many solutions fail to be adopted because they attempt to mandate how employees must work. Look for an expertise identification solution that builds an understanding of expertise as a by-product of how they already work—one that delivers real results without creating extra work for them to do.

### About Hivemine's AskMe

Hivemine's business social solution AskMe meets all of these requirements by delivering business-ready social networking on top of a knowledge management and business process management foundation. This unique and powerful combination enables AskMe to help organizations of any size tackle the triple challenge of expertise identification, employee disconnect, and knowledge erosion. Tackling these challenges speeds innovation, reduces costs, improves customer service, and allows organizations to thrive in today's fast-paced global economy.

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