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DIGITAL
INSIGHTS

Social Collaboration

- How Social Collaboration can help increase office productivity
- Master the crisis by applying Social Collaboration tools
- SoCo Software – a roadmap to make the perfect choice
- Communicate and motivate – efficient Social Collaboration in enterprises
- Seven rules for making Social Collaboration a success in your enterprise

aquarius Digital Insights – Social Collaboration

In the series „aquarius Digital Insights" we intermittently collect and publish the most impressive trends and recent developments from various segments of digital business.

In this edition on „Social Collaboration" we have assembled the following interesting topics:

- How Social Collaboration can help increase office productivity
- Master the crisis by applying Social Collaboration tools
- SoCo Software – a roadmap to make the perfect choice
- Communicate and motivate – efficient Social Collaboration in enterprises
- Seven rules for making Social Collaboration a success in your enterprise

If you have any question regarding „Social Collaboration" or other digital topics, please do not hesitate to contact us!

Enjoy reading!

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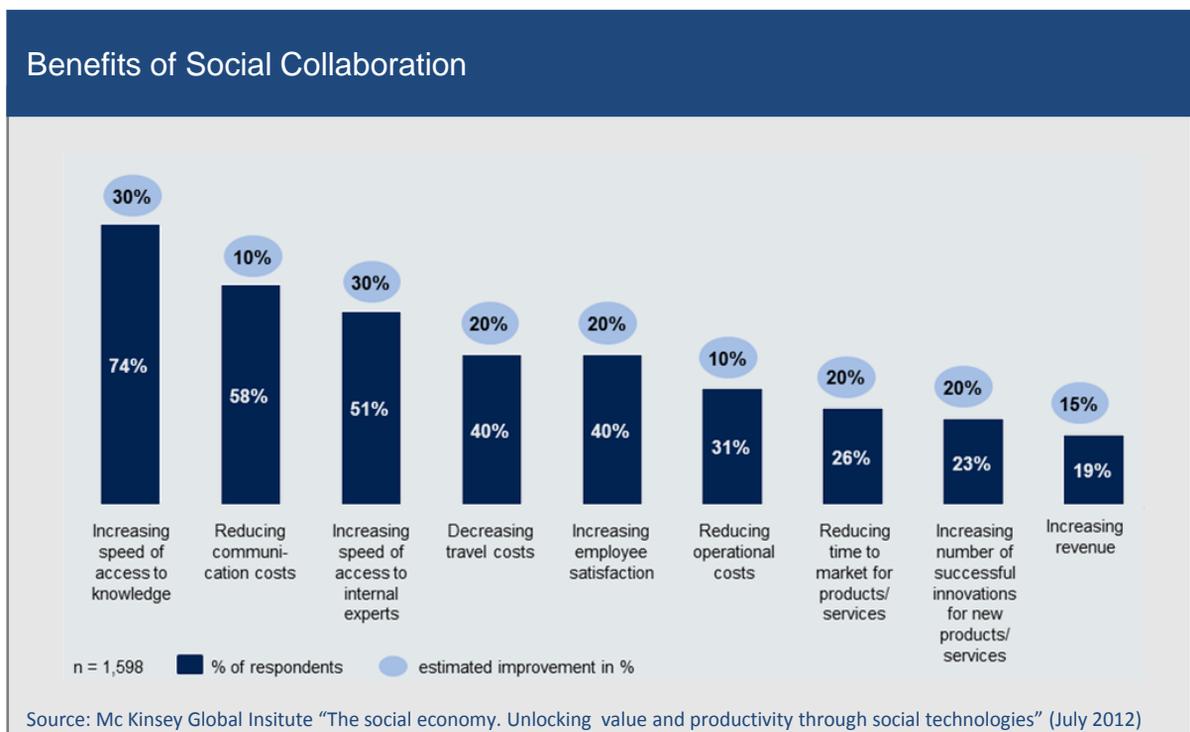# How Social Collaboration can help increase office productivity

November 2012

Offices in most countries have been transformed in the last century by the introduction of computer technology. The outputs of white collar workers vary from the administrative to research and even creative output.

Most software development has focused on optimizing the creation of output – Powerpoint, Excel, Adobe Creative Suite or CATIA being some of the examples. While there are certain optimizations that come with every new software generation, little efforts have been made to change the way people interact in the office and how the work is organized. eMail and file servers have become the solid foundation of working practices.

What was initially deemed as the ultimate tool for working together, eMail, has become a curse for most people. Parallel to the relatively static office environment, our organization of our private lives has been transformed by Facebook, Twitter, Google+ and co. This revolution can now be harnessed in the office.
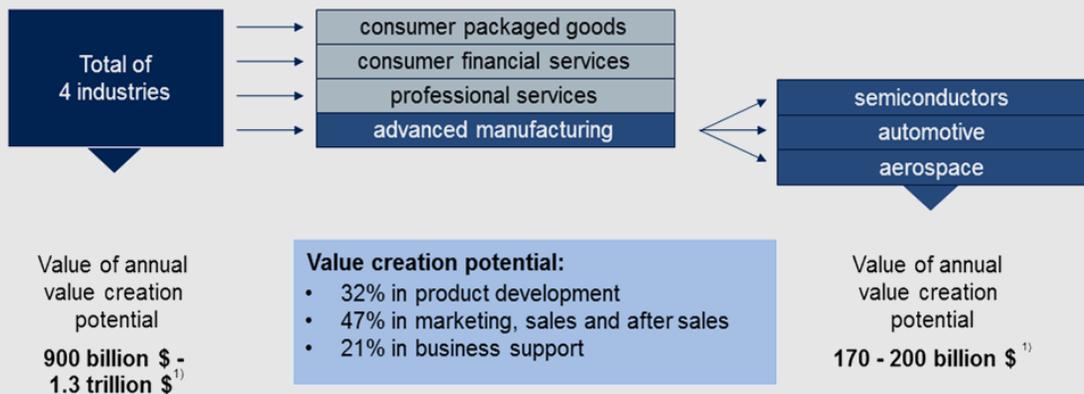Many large organizations are investing into the enterprise 2.0. Why are these companies doing this? Social Collaboration has been found to generate some concrete benefits:

Benefits of Social Collaboration

30%	10%	30%	20%	20%	10%	20%	20%	15%
74%	58%	51%	40%	40%	31%	26%	23%	19%
Increasing speed of access to knowledge	Reducing communication costs	Increasing speed of access to internal experts	Decreasing travel costs	Increasing employee satisfaction	Reducing operational costs	Reducing time to market for products/ services	Increasing number of successful innovations for new products/ services	Increasing revenue

n = 1,598   ■ % of respondents   ● estimated improvement in %

Source: Mc Kinsey Global Insitute "The social economy. Unlocking value and productivity through social technologies" (July 2012)

Most large software companies have realized the benefits for their clients and the market for their software packages. The big players like Microsoft, VMware, IBM etc. are all offering new social collaboration tools and/or have purchased new players in this field. As always opening a software package and installing it on a server (or subscribing to the cloud as it may be) should not be the first step in an organizational change project.

Potential for Value Creation through Social Collaboration

The future potentials of Social Collaboration show clearly that the possible impacts are of considerable scale.

Total of 4 industries

consumer packaged goods
consumer financial services
professional services
advanced manufacturing

semiconductors
automotive
aerospace

Value of annual value creation potential

900 billion $ - 1.3 trillion $[1]

Value creation potential:
- 32% in product development
- 47% in marketing, sales and after sales
- 21% in business support

Value of annual value creation potential

170 - 200 billion $[1]

1) Global annual economic surplus, not net present value

Source: Mc Kinsey Global Insitute "The social economy. Unlocking value and productivity through social technologies" (July 2012)

Conclusion: Social Collaboration structures offer certain possibilities for enterprises to increase the productivity of working processes. This is the prerequisite for resisting disadvantageous market developments, as the following article shows.

Master the crisis by applying Social Collaboration tools

November 2012

In the last 2 years we have seen many companies setting up projects for "Enterprise 2.0" or "Social Collaboration". Where does this trend come from and why should the economic crisis be the right point in time to invest in internal projects?
The answer is quite simple: Social Collaboration increases productivity. And productivity is crucial for mastering the crisis – the goal being either to suffer only a minimized amount of loss or even to gain strength through the crisis.
But how does Social Collaboration increase productivity? We can approach this question by looking at the definition of productivity: Productivity is the amount of output per unit of input. If we now look at what Social Collaboration does in terms of the input-output-ratio, we can disclose its secret: Social Collaboration accelerates output while it reduces the necessary input.

Benefits of Social Collaboration Initiatives

Q: Which benefits of Social Collaboration could already be observed in your organization?

	"absolutey" or "quite a lot"	"yes, a few"
Better knowledge-sharing	33%	37%
Better informed employees	28%	37%
More engaged employees	22%	36%
Faster problem solving, decision-making	17%	28%
Process streamlining	13%	28%
Decreased email	13%	28%

n = 391

Source: NetStrategy/JMC: "Digital Workplace Trends 2012" (2011)

If you look at all the Social Collaboration benefits that various online resources are citing, ultimately it all comes down to this. To further enhance our understanding of the social collaborative mechanisms that increase productivity, let`s take a closer look at the different Social Collaboration benefits:

Input reduction:

- **Easier to keep up to date and reduce the number of eMails:**
  A large share of the communication formerly carried out via eMail is transferred to the Social Collaboration platform`s own message systems, where incoming information is automatically and individually filtered for relevance and clustered by topic, thus enabling a structured and time-saving way of keeping up to date as well as very quick processing of the most important information without having to scan the whole inbox.

- **Easier and faster access to knowledge and other kinds of resources:**
  Through open virtual libraries all kinds of resources are made accessible to all employees across department and location borders (apart from confidentiality restrictions). All resources are tagged by their authors and can be further tagged by their readers so that finding specific information becomes quick and easy.

- **Easier and faster access to internal experts:**
  Employee social profiles contain tags on expertise and experience. Employees can tag their own profiles and profiles of colleagues. The tags-based search enables employees to quickly find colleagues with specific expertise or experience.

- **More efficient project management:**
  Collaboration tools like shared calendars and shared tasks lists allow project managers to set up an efficient team work around virtual meetings.

- **Process streamlining:**
  Social Collaboration improves the accessibility of colleagues and supervisors on different levels and introduces online tools that help to simplify and streamline many processes.

- **Reduced communication costs:**
  As Web 2.0 communication tools are often less expensive than classic communication tools and as communications are simplified through collaborative tools communication costs can be reduced.

- **Reduced travel costs:**
  The usage of web-conferencing tools reduces the frequency of necessary business travelling.

- **Reduced operational costs:**
  By reducing time to market and creating more virtual and flexible workplaces, operational costs can be cut.

Output acceleration:

- **Easier and faster team creation and interaction / collaboration:**
  Based on the expertise and experience tags in the employees profiles, expert teams can be put together very easily in a virtual group. The collaboration tools enable effective team interaction and with this accelerated high quality output creation independent from department or location: Documents can be stored in the shared library, presentations and brainstormings take place via web conferencing (incl. screen sharing), several employees can work simultaneously on a document via co-authoring or use structured workflows to gather feedbacks and approvals.

- **Avoidance of double work:**
  Due to the easier access to experts and resources, employees can easily check on available resources before creating new documents.

- **Faster problem-solving and decision-making:**
  Fast problem-solving and decision-making is made possible by streamlined processes, direct access to experts on all levels and sharing of experiences throughout departments and locations.

- **Higher employee satisfaction and engagement**:
  By simplifying working processes (e.g. search for resources) and reducing major annoyances (e.g. eMail overflow), employee satisfaction is increased significantly. Increased employee satisfaction is the key to higher employee engagement rates.

- **Reduced time to market for more successful products / services:**
  Simplified processes, easy accesses and efficient communication save a great amount of time that can be invested in core product and services development. Collaboration between experts on all levels and throughout different departments and locations increases the quality of products and services at the same time.

Conclusion: Often Enterprise 2.0 projects are treated solely as software evaluation and implementation projects. But even more important than finding the right software is the cultural change that needs to take place in order to generate the benefits mentioned above with the help of Social Collaboration software. This means that Enterprise 2.0 cannot be the solution when ad hoc productivity increase is needed, but it is the very basis for mid- and long-term productivity lifts. The mid- and long-term potential is huge and it becomes bigger with every step a company takes in its Enterprise 2.0 implementation. This makes it all the more important to take the first step today!

SoCo Software – a roadmap to make the perfect choice

December 2012

The future is bright for Enterprise Social Collaboration software vendors. This can be predicted easily both based on the current Social Collaboration projects of some of the biggest companies and based on specific forecasts: For example the International Data Corporation (IDC) – subsidiary of International Data Group (IDG), "the world`s leading technology media, events and research company" – forecasts a global annual spendings growth rate for this kind of software by 42.4 percent between 2011 and 2016, meaning a raise from 767.4 million US Dollars in 2011 to 4.5 billion US Dollars in 2016 .

On the winners side are both big and small vendors, the biggest 3 according to 2011 revenues being IBM, Jive Software and Communispace. For the vendors the key question will be how to best meet the enterprise requirements. Strategies long from providing very specialized tools (like Microblogging) to offering full range enterprise collaboration platforms with a huge scope of features.

On the other side are the software vendors` customers – the companies that want to introduce Social Collaboration and therefor are looking for new tools. The efforts to be undertaken by these companies in order to become a winner in the big run for Enterprise Social Collaboration – meaning that there is a positive return on invest – are considerable: When they have succeeded in defining their business goals and their employees` needs and use cases – what by itself can take months due to complex organizational structures and several departments with specific requirements – they have to evaluate what kind of technology solution will meet best all their requirements. The evaluation comprises three major steps.

1st step: Decision on software model
In the very early hours of Social Collaboration some companies have started building their very own Social Collaboration platforms. But with growing market need for such platforms the landscape of software vendors has developed and diversified so much that today there will only be very few cases in which building an own Social Collaboration platform would seem worth the effort.
So the focus will rather be on deciding what kind of software model to buy: The choice ranges from full on premise solutions to full off premise solutions via hybrid solutions. While trends are going in direction of "Software as a Service" (SaaS) and cloud hosting, the benefits of each model must be matched with the company`s individual requirements to make the right decision.

2nd step: Basic vendors and products evaluation

After deciding on the general model, the next step is to do some basic vendor and product evaluations. This software evaluation phase of Social Collaboration projects can be conducted very efficiently if a concrete roadmap is created based on two pillars:

- the individual evaluation criteria priorities
- the amount of evaluation efforts per criteria.

With this kind of roadmap we can ensure that no vendors make it from long list to short list that do not meet top priority requirements and that no in-depth evaluation efforts are invested in vendors that could have been excluded based on easy to research criteria. Among the criteria to be evaluated first there will be business parameters (e.g. management team, number of employees, financial background, vendor focus and strategy) as well as IT (e.g. security, privacy, customizing and integration flexibilities), legal (e.g. compliances, warranties) and financial (initial license model and costs, maintenance packages and costs) criteria. Also some first evaluations on the product will need to be done in this step. For example one should think about the desired focus of the product that can be on free personal interaction or on structured interaction based on platform functionalities or on collaborative document and knowledge management.

3rd step: Detailed vendors and products evaluation

The focus of this last step is the in-depth evaluation of features and functionalities based on the individual company requirements. There are three main feature categories that have to be considered:

- People features (e.g. rich profiles, expert search, network building, group creation)
- Communication features (private, group and public communication in written and oral form by social features like microblogging, stream messages, blogs, forums …, workflows and tasks management)
- Information features (e.g. storing and sharing of information and knowledge, co-producing, brainstorming, linking, tagging)

There are lots of resources online that are trying to help with these kinds of evaluations. You can even find interactive tools telling you which requirement categories are met best by which tools.These resources can give some first orientation but because of the complexity of requirement sets in big enterprises they cannot replace company individual evaluations.

Don`t hesitate to start your evaluations – following the above roadmap you can be sure that your evaluation process will be efficient and worth its efforts.

Learning technology landscape

Along with other requirements, the right Social Collaboration software offers the foundation for setting up efficient structures and processes. But in order to guarantee long-term success in the company, it is inevitable to motivate and inform your employees in the right manner. The following article tries to give you an insight in these demands.

Communicate and motivate – efficient Social Collaboration in enterprises
January 2013

Turning your organization into an Enterprise 2.0 is not mainly an IT project, but real organizational change. You are introducing new processes, new tools, new levels of transparency and knowledge sharing. This results are the classical emotions associated with change: excitement, interest and fear. Therefore it becomes crucial to take your employees along.

Reducing the barriers to change is the key within the social collaboration introduction process. Our approach focuses on engagement, information and motivation.

During the concept phase engagement is the key factor to ensure later adoption of the social tools. This engagement should be with all the relevant key employees and might even include worker representatives where applicable. Engagement ranges from surveys, focus groups, workshops and testing of the application, thus ensuring continuous input from the organization and increased buy in.

Long before the launch of the application into the organization the rollout planning will have to be finalized. Communication will have to be at the center at this stage. Who will require what information at what point? Are there any trainings required? Will there be a helpdesk? Coaching? Internal campaigning? Handbooks? Finding the right mix of communication and training measures will help alleviate fears, communicate benefits and explain the steps that will be required from the users.

While some employees will realize the benefits of the new working approach quickly and embrace it, many might need a nudge. Creating new work rules is certainly part of any change program, but motivating people might be the better way to increase goodwill towards any new tool. This motivation can range from taking social engagement into the appraisal process to gameification and awards.

Assuming the right social collaboration concept has been implemented through engagement, information and motivation a success path to the enterprise 2.0 can be followed. Any questions? Do not hesitate to contact us.

Seven rules for making Social Collaboration a success in your enterprise
January 2013

In regard to the timeliness of the topic, it might be helpful to dispose of some universally valid, golden rules – especially for freshmen in the field of Social Collaboration. Social Media has transformed the way we interact in our private lives. This revolution is not sweeping into some of the largest and most prestigious organizations. The trend towards social collaboration is however not as easy as introducing a new tool, by making it available to employees.

aquarius has been at the forefront of technological change from the outset and continuously works in the field of digital induced change. Our aim of leveraging our clients digital potential has given us the experience to make your organization into an Enterprise 2.0. From this experience of realizing actual projects we have crystalized the following success factors for social media projects:

1. Social media is about people. Social collaboration is about employees. They are the focus and you must provide clear benefits for them. Otherwise the new tools will not be accepted.

2. Social collaboration projects can be driven by many parts of the organization. To make it a success a team across different departments has to drive the process (IT, Coms, Ops etc.).

3. Analyze the actual processes and develop relevant social media use cases for these. This means getting your boots dirty on the ground and engaging your employees.

4. Clearly understand what you want to do where, when and how. Also make sure you have defined what you do not want to do.

5. Only choose the tool when you know what you want to achieve. No tool is likely to cover all your bases make sure you understand the limitations for your use cases and do not always trust what is says in the tools marketing literature, especially as this will have to work in your organizational network.

6. Introducing a new tool into the organization that alters work processes is a change project. Make sure you have the right rollout strategy and communications to make the introduction a success.

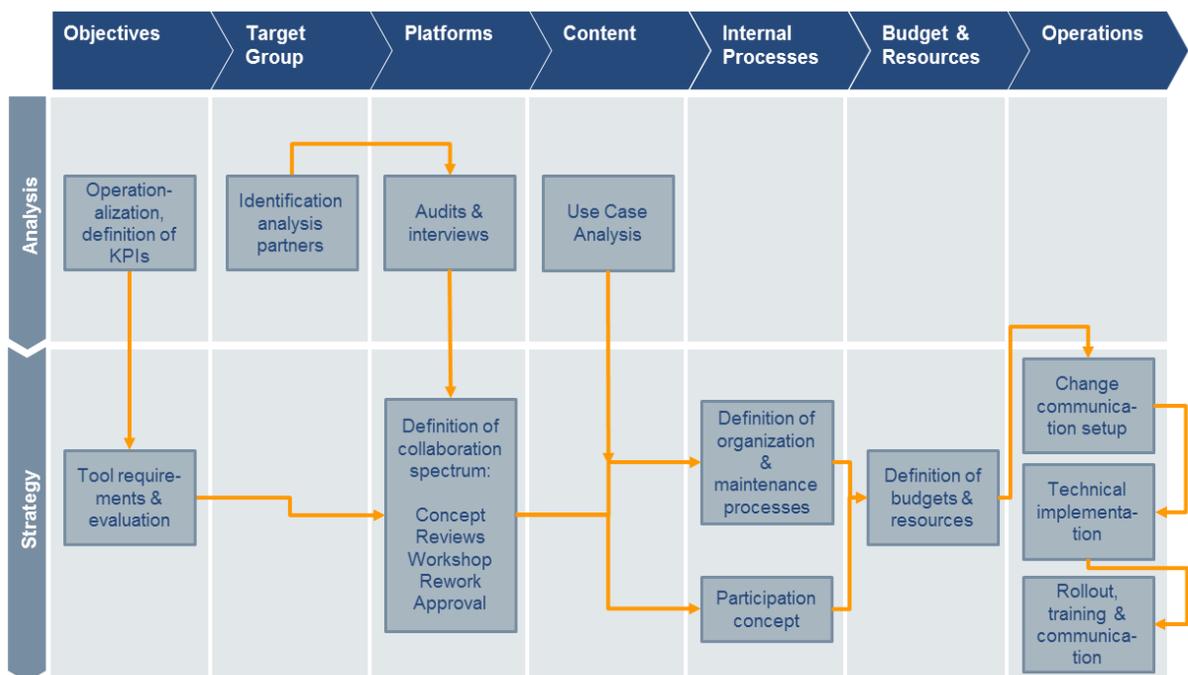**7.** Once it is running: measure success and continuously optimize.

7 rules

Should you have any questions regarding social collaboration just contact us - we are here to help!

Scan the barcode to get in touch:

Development and implementation of a Social collaboration strategy

aquarius has extensive experience in realizing social collaboration projects and delivering results within organizations. We have developed a typical project approach and a set of tools that allow us to start quickly to improve collaboration in your organization. Our office in Europe and Asia and our global clients give us an outlook that goes beyond narrow borders and enables us to work with your organization centrally and support local markets.

Objectives	Target Group	Platforms	Content	Internal Processes	Budget & Resources	Operations
Analysis						
Operation-alization, definition of KPIs	Identification analysis partners	Audits & interviews	Use Case Analysis			
Strategy						
Tool require-ments & evaluation		Definition of collaboration spectrum: Concept Reviews Workshop Rework Approval		Definition of organization & maintenance processes / Participation concept	Definition of budgets & resources	Change communica-tion setup / Technical implementa-tion / Rollout, training & communica-tion

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Do you plan own Social Collaboration activities?
We are looking forward to supporting you.

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About aquarius

aquarius consulting is a strategy and communication consultancy specialised in digital media and eCommerce. We are based in Munich, Shanghai and Hong Kong. Since 2005, we advise our customers worldwide in 47 countries and in 41 languages on all segments of digital business. Our consulting team consists of strategy consultants with expert knowledge based on years of industry- and consulting experience.

When appropriate, aquarius works closely with its sister company aquarius solutions to provide complete project management including strategy, conception, development and implementation. The team of aquarius solutions has substantiated experience of conception and implementation of digital marketing and sales initiatives – online and mobile.

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