

An Enterprise Strategy Program Paper

Social computing in the enterprise Building a social computing strategy

Abstract

This document describes the Microsoft vision for social computing in the enterprise and explains how to build an effective social computing strategy. It is designed to help C level executives and enterprise architects appreciate the value of enterprise social computing, understand the Microsoft vision for enterprise social computing, and grasp what's involved in building a strategy for social computing in the enterprise.

Author(s)

Marc Ashbrook, Architect, Microsoft Todd Ray, Senior Business Strategy Consultant, Microsoft

Publication date

December 2012

Version

1.5

We welcome your feedback on this paper. Please send your comments to the Microsoft Services Enterprise Architecture IP team at ipfeedback@microsoft.com.



Acknowledgments

The authors would like to thank the following people who contributed to, reviewed, and helped improve this whitepaper.

Contributors:

Ming-Li Chai, Sr. User Researcher, OCDG Design, Microsoft Corporation **Moritz Berger**, Director Business Architecture, Productivity Business Architecture, Microsoft Corporation

Thanks also to:

Hilary Long, Attorney, LCA, Microsoft Corporation

Maura FitzGerald, Sr. Program Manager Lead, SharePoint, Microsoft Corporation

Harald Becker, Sr. Product Planner, Office, Microsoft Corporation

Rob Dendtler, Enterprise Architect, MCS, Microsoft Corporation

Ben Johnston, Enterprise Architect, AU Enterprise Architects, Microsoft Corporation

Roy King, Sr. Partner/Channel Marketing Manager, Lync, Microsoft Corporation

Stefan Fischer, Enterprise Strategy Architect, MCS, Microsoft Corporation

Linda Chandler, Enterprise Architect, MCS, Microsoft Corporation

Bart Bischoff, Director Program Management, Business Productivity, MCS, Microsoft Corporation

Robert Standefer, IP Development Architect, Enterprise Strategy, Microsoft Corporation

Mike Wise, IP Development Architect, Enterprise Strategy, Microsoft Corporation

George Anderson, IP Development Director, Enterprise Strategy, Microsoft Corporation



The information contained in this document represents the current view of Microsoft Corporation on the issues discussed as of the date of publication. Because Microsoft must respond to changing market conditions, it should not be interpreted to be a commitment on the part of Microsoft, and Microsoft cannot guarantee the accuracy of any information presented after the date of publication.

MICROSOFT MAKES NO WARRANTIES, EXPRESS, IMPLIED OR STATUTORY, AS TO THE INFORMATION IN THIS DOCUMENT.

Complying with all applicable copyright laws is the responsibility of the user. Without limiting the rights under copyright, no part of this document may be reproduced, stored in or introduced into a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means (electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, or otherwise), or for any purpose, without the express written permission of Microsoft Corporation.

Microsoft may have patents, patent applications, trademarks, copyrights, or other intellectual property rights covering subject matter in this document. Except as expressly provided in any written license agreement from Microsoft, the furnishing of this document does not give you any license to these patents, trademarks, copyrights, or other intellectual property.

The descriptions of other companies' products in this document, if any, are provided only as a convenience to you. Any such references should not be considered an endorsement or support by Microsoft. Microsoft cannot guarantee their accuracy, and the products may change over time. Also, the descriptions are intended as brief highlights to aid understanding, rather than as thorough coverage. For authoritative descriptions of these products, please consult their respective manufacturers.

© 2012 Microsoft Corporation. All rights reserved. Any use or distribution of these materials without express authorization of Microsoft Corp. is strictly prohibited.

Microsoft and Windows are either registered trademarks of Microsoft Corporation in the United States and/or other countries.

The names of actual companies and products mentioned herein may be the trademarks of their respective owners.



Table of contents

1	Executive summary			
2		The value of social computing2		
_	2.1	Finding the person who knows the answer		
	2.1	Working within communities to get things done		
	2.3	Increasing organizational memory		
	2.4	Attracting and retaining talent		
	2.5	Improving sales and service		
3	The	Microsoft vision for social computing	2	
4	Creating a social computing strategy			
	4.1	Strategy rationalization		
	4.2	Social valuation		
	4.3	Business transformation planning	11	
5	Con	Conclusion1		
6	Resources		15	
	6.1	Microsoft websites	15	
	6.2	Microsoft blogs		
7	Collaboration Capability Value Measurement			
	7.1	Concept References	16	



1 Executive summary

Enterprise social computing redefines how IT delivers value at the personal and organizational level. At the personal level, social computing provides a richer, more flexible and customizable environment that supports new ways of "getting things done" for information-related and collaborative work. Gartner states that "By 2015, context-aware personalization will be expected by consumers and will highly leverage social media." In addition to technical features and capabilities, social computing implies more personal connections among people, information, and activities.

Deploying newer technologies is not necessarily beneficial in and of itself, although doing so may extend users' comfort zone with collaboration and content creation tools. Creating a social computing strategy provides the ability to understand and measure return on investment (ROI), establish common standards, support high-value scenarios such as core process execution, and management of risk and compliance. According to Gartner "Now organizations want to use social media to advance their business goals in a measurable way. This objective requires a strategy that takes into account how the enterprise organizes itself and where it needs to focus its efforts."² For organizations, any approach to enterprise social computing requires inclusion of business architecture (people, processes, organization, and incentives), information architecture (information management, access control, and classification), and technical architecture (including device support and integration). Through the explicit design of a social ecosystem, organizations build value by creating social solutions that are based on managed portfolios of social capabilities and building blocks. Many proof points exist to demonstrate the very broad range of addressable benefits as organizations share their successes in areas from enterprise resource planning (ERP)^{3,} and customer relationship management (CRM)⁴ to digital marketing⁵ and employee engagement platforms. ⁶ For example, "Gartner discussions with CIOs have revealed that by leveraging social computing, the expectations of users can be monitored through the ERP life cycle. This can help in setting the right user expectations, and thereby improve usability, which is a critical factor for successful ERP implementation."⁷

This paper explains the challenges and opportunities in social computing, and it describes the key components that make social computing initiatives successful. It discusses how social computing adds value in the organization by empowering people to identify and engage experts, collaborate across boundaries, increase and preserve communal knowledge, attract and retain talent, and improve sales and service. It also presents the Microsoft vision of enterprise social computing, which focuses on moving from personal computing to interpersonal computing, where Share is the new Save. Finally, it discusses how to create a strategy for enterprise social computing by tying benefits to business objectives,

Microsoft Proprietary and Confidential Information

¹ William Clark, David W. Cearley, Avivah Litan, "Context-Aware Computing and Social Media Are Transforming the User Experience," Gartner Inc., February 2012.

² Carol Rozwell, "2012 Strategic Road Map for Business Gets Social," Gartner Inc., January 2012.

³ China Martens, "Emerging Trends: Social Collaboration Is Poised To Accelerate ERP Business Processes," Forrester Research Inc., December 2011.

⁴ Microsoft case study, "Healthcare Solutions Provider Eases Customer Data Collection, Boosts Agility," May 2012.

⁵ Sean Corcoran, "Embedding Social Media Into The Marketing Mix," Forrester Research Inc., April 2011.

⁶ Microsoft case study, "Infosys Uses Social Media to Engage Employees and Increase Competitive Edge," May 2012.

⁷ Sunil Padmanabh, Jeff Woods, "How Social Computing Can Streamline the ERP Life Cycle," Gartner Inc., July 2011.



establishing a vision, and defining a roadmap. This paper lists additional resources to which you can refer in the "Resources" section.

2 The value of social computing

Social computing is enabling collaboration on a scale that's never before been realized or possible. Employees are forming virtual teams across organizational boundaries to get their work done. Organizations are integrating with their supply chains and partners to more discreetly manage their pipelines and enhance the services they provide to their customers. In addition to their employees and partners, organizations are also connecting directly with their customers to influence the design of their products and services. This section describes a few of the many ways in which an organization can realize value from social computing initiatives.

2.1 Finding the person who knows the answer

In today's workplace, information is fragmented among many people. Organizations build document repositories to collect and share information. Email and instant messaging tools speed the transfer of information, but in a typical organization solving a problem still means finding the person who knows the answer. Simply identifying the right person can be challenging. Searching for that person requires contacting people who know people who know the person you need to talk to.

Social computing in the enterprise reduces the time and cost required to find the right person. A social organization offers a profile service to its people, which is a place for them to publish their expert knowledge and organizational information. People can add their specific identities, skills, expertise, and even hobbies to their profiles, and can provide links to published content and to current projects. By integrating a person's social identity into this aspect of social computing, an organization can drastically reduce the amount of effort it takes to find just the right person.⁸

2.2 Working within communities to get things done

An organization can realize value from a social computing strategy by targeting collaboration across boundaries. Social computing in the enterprise builds business communities that cut across departments and geographies. Within these communities, people who have common interests can find and learn about each other more quickly. People can also see where others are located, whether they are available, and how to best reach them.

Such networks of communities enable people to quickly find and tap into the right skill sets, talent, and knowledge regardless of where in the world that knowledge is located. Even people who are widely

⁸ Paul Manikas, "The Value of Social Computing in Product Development," MSDN, June 2011.



separated by geographical boundaries—or even organizational boundaries, in the case of customer or partner virtual teams—feel that they are engaged in an endeavor where their efforts make a difference.⁹

2.3 Increasing organizational memory

Most of the information that is needed to run an organization every day is inside the heads of its employees. This tacit knowledge is crucial to ongoing operations, but when people move to different teams or leave the organization, they take it with them. When someone joins a team, the team slows down to help the new person get oriented and to compensate for that person's low initial productivity. Social computing lets organizations preserve tacit knowledge and share it through various communities. It also gives new team members instant access to documented knowledge and to previous communications, team-member profiles, and timelines of social interactions that have occurred.¹⁰

2.4 Attracting and retaining talent

One of the most valuable features of a business environment is the opportunity for employees to learn and develop professionally. Business communities and corporate social networks that facilitate effective collaboration across the organization provide a stimulating environment in which people can learn from others and share ideas in a natural way. In a social organization, communities are fluid and self-governing; that is, communities form around the relevant interests and objectives of employees, who can choose to what degree they want to participate.

These kinds of learning opportunities and dynamic channels of engagement attract top talent. And employees are more likely to stay longer at an organization that provides means and ways for enhanced participation and stronger engagement within the organization.

2.5 Improving sales and service

Marketing professionals need to understand what people are saying about their products and services and broaden the reach of their message. Sales professionals need to easily keep track of the network of people and business events that are relevant to closing deals. Service professionals need to identify and resolve customers' issues through an ever-increasing array of communication channels. Basically, there are two core capabilities that social computing can influence within sales and service: listening for brand sentiment and amplifying an organization's message.

Socially adept consumers will use social networks to air their opinions publicly and challenge organizations to listen and respond quickly. These social networks provide marketing organizations with new insights into consumer perceptions of brand and the product and services that are offered. Social computing in the enterprise should provide tools that help monitor and analyze the conversations that are being conducted on public networks. At the same time, a social computing strategy should provide

⁹ The Social Organization, "The Economic Value of Communities," June 2010.

 $^{^{10}}$ Michael Fitzgerald, "Why Social Computing Aids Knowledge Management," CIO.com June 2008



the tools that are needed to communicate not only with those consumers, but also internally and with partners and vendors.

Marketing strategies can benefit greatly from the use of social media as an additional channel to broadcast announcements, messaging, and offers. By using a combination of public and enterprise social computing strategies, an organization can deliver the right message to the right customers at the right time, and monitor the impact of that message.¹¹

3 The Microsoft vision for social computing

Throughout the world, we're seeing value creation and consumption shifting from individuals to the collective, organizing structures moving from closed hierarchies to open networks, task coordination evolving from top-down to bottom-up, and knowledge transfer shifting from a linear distribution to dynamic participation. In this new world of social collaboration, organizations are re-examining how they operate and are looking to capitalize on the new efficiencies of agility and robustness. These efficiencies can be gained by sharing knowledge, working together, accelerating learning, and providing a connected experience that empower groups of people to get things done.



Participation and sharing are vitally important for any enterprise that wants to maintain its collective memory. Participation must be simple and rewarding, with embedded social gestures that ebb and flow throughout the systems that people use every day. Social collaboration should be more than just a place where one goes to be social. It should be part of the daily working environment. By providing insightful awareness, gratifying participation, and preserving communal knowledge, social collaboration helps individuals enhance their experience and enables the organization to create an embedded culture of sharing. When social collaboration is deeply embedded in services and applications, the line between consuming and creating

blurs, and Share becomes the new Save.

To enable people with similar interests to find each other, easily form affiliations, and work toward common goals, Microsoft is creating experiences that draw people in and encourage them to become highly capable of crossing geographic and organizational boundaries to get things done. We're building social experiences that help people easily create groups in which disparate social exchanges are transformed into a contained, persistent space. Just as individuals manage and cultivate identities, groups will have identities that can be created, shaped, and discovered. Group communications, whether asynchronous or in real time, will be natural, fluid, and integrated, providing a seamless and connected experience, regardless of application, device, or location.

-

¹¹ George Anderson, "CIO considerations for CRM in a social media world," Microsoft, June 2012.



Social collaboration also puts people at the center of computing and ensures that employees, partners, and customers can connect with the right people and information. To realize our vision, we're taking a two-pronged approach: providing the *connected experiences* that people want and the *connected platform* that IT needs. ¹²

Connected experiences. We believe that social computing should be a natural part of how we work and seamlessly woven into the tools that people use every day. Social must be easy, frictionless, and contextual. For example, during a conversation in a newsfeed, it should be easy to escalate into a private instant message in which



adding voice and video is frictionless. Seamlessly integrated tools should let participants follow up via email and circle back to the original conversation with updates, all while the conversational context follows them across each tool, regardless of where they are or what device they have with them.

Connected platform. Social computing must be integrated into a connected platform that IT can confidently rely on to manage and secure the information and experiences that it provides. Information in social networks is valuable intellectual property, so the platform must have sophisticated security, management, and compliance capabilities that let IT provide the connected experiences that people need without getting in their way.



A social fabric connects these experiences and the platform over which they flow. To provide this fabric, we acquired Yammer and are integrating the unique capabilities of Yammer,

SharePoint, and Office to provide a seamlessly connected experience that people will love. The people-centric paradigm of Yammer and the document-centric models of SharePoint and Office is a powerful and complementary combination. Today, Yammer and SharePoint are connected through Web Parts and Open Graph capabilities. We're developing deeper connections between the three that will involve integrated document management and feed aggregation, plus unified identity. We're also taking advantage of our new 90-day release cycle for SharePoint Online and Office 365 to add new capabilities that will let us provide connected experiences that combine social, collaboration, messaging, and unified communications.¹³

It's an exciting time in enterprise computing. We're convinced that social collaboration will play a key role in everyone's future. It will transform daily work—how we all manage customer relationships, analyze data, make decisions, finish projects, share content, discover people and information, and create

Microsoft Proprietary and Confidential Information

¹² Jared Spataro, "Putting Social to Work," Microsoft, November 2012, http://blogs.technet.com/b/microsoft_blog/archive/2012/11/12/putting-social-to-work.aspx

¹³ Jared Spataro, Jeff Teper, Scott Guthrie, and David Sacks, "SharePoint Conference 2012 Opening Keynote," Microsoft, November 2012, http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BLsIjvIyAxo



relationships between people and things. Integrating social aspects into all of these activities makes work more enjoyable, efficient, and innovative. Providing a platform where these connected experiences happen regardless of place and device will transform personal computing into interpersonal computing. Social collaboration will shift the focus of technology to human interactions and interdependencies. We believe that an organization that provides these connected experiences will transform itself into a pervasively social enterprise where groups of people can work together seamlessly, easily, and enjoyably to do great work.

4 Creating a social computing strategy

Creating an organization in which social computing is pervasive, one that provides a place where people can work together to achieve common goals, requires more than just a few enabling software tools; it takes planning. By now, most organizations have experimented with or have invested in enterprise social computing. Given the increased demand for ever-evolving social capabilities, it is critical for organizations to provide the right mix of social computing strategies, values, and technologies that address longer term business needs.

Although tactical responses may address some of these needs, many organizations now struggle with proliferating approaches and adoption challenges that are caused by the lack of an overarching social computing vision, strategy, and corresponding architectural plan. A study conducted by the Altimeter Group found several common patterns in failed social computing attempts.¹⁴

- Adoption drop-off. Initial enthusiasm and usage was followed by a slow decline, and ultimately only
 a core group of users continued to use the social computing tool. Altimeter found that "the reality of
 everyday work pushed enterprise social network use to the side, causing people to pull away from
 their social activities and return back to their original work and communication patterns."
- **Isolated success.** Usually only a few departments strongly adopted the social tools that were deployed. IT, marketing, sales, corporate communications, and support departments typically had the highest adoption rates, while "other departments found it difficult to adapt the enterprise social network to their specific needs."
- **Cultural and organizational blockers.** Adoption of new social computing tools was hindered by cultural confusion and a lack of executive engagement as managers assumed that the new tools would be used for personal communication or nonbusiness-related content and would negatively affect productivity. Organizations that lacked the social business maturity required to realize the full value of their investments were unable to "understand, appreciate, and leverage the enterprise social network."

Given these common failures, organizations that encounter business demand for social computing should consider moving toward a more strategic approach by developing a social computing strategy that ties benefits with business objectives, establishes a vision, and defines an architectural roadmap. We at Microsoft consider the following to be the most important components of any social strategy.

¹² Charlene Li, Alan Webber, and Jon Cifuentes, "Making the Business Case for Enterprise Social Networks," Altimeter Group, February 2012.



- Defined social objectives and targeted communities that will be engaged
- Clear executive sponsorship and cultural willingness of an organization
- Aligned resources that support social computing in the fabric of the way work is done
- Explicitly defined, goal-oriented plans and roadmaps
- Flexible software tools that support the plan and strategy

As you can see, creating an effective social strategy with the right components is key to a successful social computing initiative. To support this awareness, Microsoft has created a Social Strategy and Planning Method that helps organizations work through the creation of a social strategy to achieve maximum business value.



Figure 1. Social Strategy and Planning Method

The remainder of this document discusses how to create a social computing strategy that is based on this method.

4.1 Strategy rationalization

When researching this paper, the authors spoke with an executive from a large logistics company. This executive advised that although the implementation of a virtual water cooler was met with strong negative sentiments, connecting social feedback mechanisms into task management to help with optimization and exception handling scenarios immediately created a connection to the organization's core key performance indicators (KPIs).

For Electronic Arts, a leading interactive game company, connecting people and ideas was the core motivation for their social computing initiative. ¹⁵

-

¹³ Microsoft case study, "Electronic Arts Embraces Social Networking to Create Better Games on Tight Timelines."



In both cases, social computing supports mission-critical goals. However, the implementation focus and strategy for each organization were very different. Such differences will typically exist between industries but also between departments and because of local legal and cultural constraints. A marketer will want to connect customer campaigns to social Internet channels, whereas a sales team will likely consider the existing CRM investments as a good starting point for social augmentation. Whenever the scope of a social computing initiative is sufficiently broad, it is possible to maximize business benefits by building solutions across internal and external functions and boundaries, as in the example of the world's most attentive airport.¹⁶

Defining the scope of a social initiative helps craft a focused and effective vision. A vision provides aspirational statements of positive outcomes that will come from investing in social computing. The vision lets leaders articulate their belief in the importance of social computing to their organization, which directly addresses the key component of executive sponsorship and cultural willingness. It gives the targeted communities the confidence that top managers support the initiative and believe it's important to the organization.

A social computing vision statement can take many forms, from a paragraph of text to a presentation slide to an envisioning document that includes a business case. Regardless of its form, the vision statement should clearly define who will benefit from the initiative, describe the social activities and behaviors that are desired, and detail the benefits that the organization hopes to gain from it. In the following example vision statement, note that memorable terms and images complement the words and help associate the vision statement with the social computing domain.

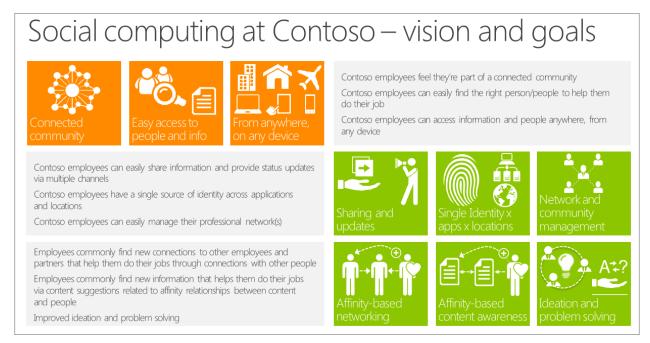


Figure 2. Example vision statement

_

¹⁴ Microsoft case study, "Airport Loyalty Program Serves Travelers, Increases Online Revenues by 45 Percent."



4.2 Social valuation

As a recent addition to the collaboration and communication capabilities of organizations, social computing is being studied from many perspectives, including business opportunity and value, risk and cost, adoption and demographics, and technology and architectural alignment. Because social computing is relatively new and opinions vary as to its value, organizations should start by understanding the targeted benefits of social computing and tying them to the organization's business objectives.

To help facilitate discussions that focus on the business value of social computing within the enterprise, the following table lists potential benefits to consider. Almost every successful social computing initiative is tied to at least one of these benefit areas. An initiative that provides collaborative business communities probably gains from every benefit area and capability impact listed in the table.

Table 1. Fundamental Benefits Model for Social Computing

Benefit area	Capability impact
Access to information and knowledge	Improved ability to access and interact with information and knowledge assets
Access to the network	Improved ability to access and interact with people, groups of people, communities, and the entire network
Connectedness	Improved sense of connection with information, individuals, groups, communities, and the whole organization
Information sharing and reach	Improved ability to share information with people, groups of people, communities, and the entire network
Network engagement and knowledge capture	Improved ability to engage employees, co-workers, and business partners and to get feedback about people, content, and ideas, as well as capture valuable knowledge
Insights	Improved insights and ideas that help the organization accomplish its goals

Different organizations will focus on different benefit areas, but the key is to tie the targeted benefits to your organization's business objectives and then to tie the business objectives to the business drivers that affect the organization.





Figure 3. Benefits, objectives, and business drivers

Business drivers explain why an investment is made. Although they are outside the organization's direct control, they're the reason why senior managers believe an initiative will have an impact in a given time frame. An example of a business driver might be the recent lack of qualified job applicants. Objectives define the end state at which an investment is aimed. For example, an objective may be to reduce employee attrition and to attract new talent. Benefits describe what will happen in the business if it achieves its objectives. For example, if the organization achieves its objective of reducing employee attrition, it will realize the benefit of an improved sense of community among its employees. This benefit will be measured by regular feedback from a semiannual employee satisfaction survey. The following graphic ties together these concepts and illustrates the links between benefits, objectives, and business drivers. It is based on the Benefits Dependency Network (BDN) created by Cranfield University in the United Kingdom.¹⁷



Figure 4. Links among benefits, objectives, and business drivers, based on the Cranfield BDN

-

¹⁷ Joe Peppard, John Ward, Elizabeth Daniel, "Managing the Realization of Business Benefits from IT Investments," MIS Quarterly Executive, March 2007.



4.3 Business transformation planning

From the list of key components required in a social computing strategy (presented in the beginning of this section), you can see that it's important not only to provide a goal-oriented plan but also to identify target communities. Simply put, a social computing *roadmap* provides such a goal-oriented plan, identifies the target communities, and designs an approach for achieving the vision.

The first step in creating a roadmap is to identify usage scenarios and the people who work within them. Segmenting people into personas is an ideal way to understand their needs and characteristics. ¹⁸ It is important to understand that, as people adopt the social way of working, they are likely to experience shifts in their usage patterns. In any new social environment, individuals start out as consumers (or *lurkers*, in the terminology of open Internet communities) before moving to a more active usage pattern. Typically, the following phases occur in the evolution from a hungry information worker caterpillar to a social community butterfly.

- **Consume.** Weak connection to the community, success is when something is found that's useful, largely monitoring incoming information
- Convey. Early blogs, microblogs, and posts to express and share interests, opinions, and trends
- Connect. Discover and share with others who have a common interest
- Cooperate. Form affiliations and align actions toward a common goal
- **Co-create.** Shape a joint solution or creation

It is noteworthy that throughout this journey, the patterns shift from individuals to communities to groups. These steps in the social spectrum are connected and co-exist in time. The attitude and role of any participant will be different across many contexts; on a new project a person might demonstrate the consume pattern, but on a more mature project they might demonstrate the cooperate pattern. Creating personas to understand the various individuals within the targeted communities will provide valuable input into the creation of an adoption strategy for moving individuals and communities through the evolutionary cycles.

After you understand the target community and how the individuals may shift their usage patterns over time, it's common to create future-state usage scenarios. These scenarios help you bring the vision to life and assess the people, business, and technology capabilities that are required to enable them. They also help you identify the gaps between the current state and future state of the capabilities. The following example usage scenario is based on the vision that was provided earlier.

¹⁸ Marc Ashbrook, "Persona Analysis for Initiative Planning," Microsoft, 2012.



Social collaborative creation

Contoso's engineers and scientists are typically power users who are eager to try new ways of working more efficiently. They're somewhat mobile; their project work and knowledge transfer involves traveling between offices in the United States and abroad. Many Contoso engineers and scientists participate in information exchange within groups with horizontal organizational affiliation but with semi-formal



expectations regarding knowledge contribution to the organization. To reduce information loss and security risks associated with email, Contoso has encouraged its engineers and scientists to start working inside of community spaces that are related to cross-organizational topics.

In this scenario, Contoso's technical staff can exchange information inside a long-lived community of more than 300 members who are dedicated to alternative energy academic research (AEAR). John, a senior mechanical engineer in San Francisco, is the designated community lead. John belongs to multiple communities, so to interact with a given community he either enters through a community portal or responds to an alert on his mobile device or laptop.

When he enters the AEAR community site, John notices a lively discussion from the previous evening in Australia on recent solar panel advances originated by Sheila, a materials scientist of good repute. John also sees that Sheila is soliciting input from the community on a new solar panel specification that takes advantage of the advances, which he is also interested in. So he decides to follow Sheila, the specification document, and the team site in which it is located.

Back on his home page, John sees a consolidated view of activity across the community and other sites to which he belongs and is following, as well as the people, documents, and tags he's following. Although John is not following all the members of Sheila's team working on the document, he sees any changes made to it in his activity feed and ends up assigning a team member to provide detailed feedback as it advances through the review cycle.

When you have established the scenarios and identified the required capabilities, it's critical to assess the current state of the computing environment to determine a capability baseline, and then to assess the identified opportunities for current and future capabilities: that is, to perform a gap analysis.

In addition to defining the usage scenarios and identifying the existing capability gaps, it is important for any social initiative to evaluate the current organizational culture. Looking at the culture lets you plan ahead for predictable factors such as generational shifts, availability of technology in the workplace, and the targeted community's expectations driven by the phenomenon known as the Consumerization of IT.¹⁹ To allow employees to benefit from and participate in exchanges through social computing, organizations should establish policies and incentives and pay close attention to possible disincentives that would affect the motivation to share. Thinking through the possible issues can lead to mitigation and adoption strategies such as gamification, social rewards such as badges, and employee recognition outside the

_

¹⁷ Microsoft's Viewpoint on the Consumerization of IT.



system. These types of strategies will not only help mitigate adoption blockers for the new social computing initiative but can add additional value by addressing existing challenges that predate the initiative.

Finally, the key output of the strategy work is a future-state *architectural roadmap*, typically a diagram that shows major initiatives over many years. In line with the previous vision and scenario examples, the following figure shows the Contoso Social Computing Roadmap.

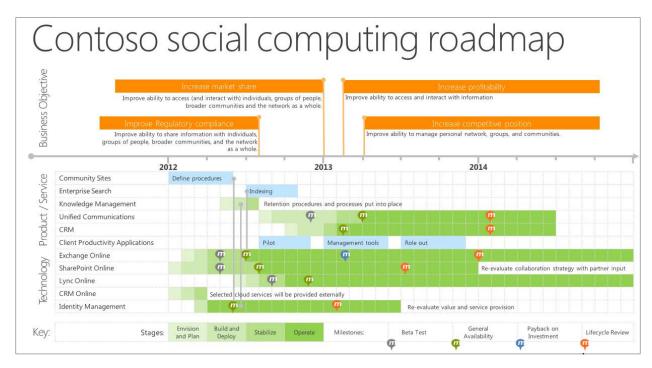


Figure 5. The Contoso Social Computing Roadmap

5 Conclusion

When the social computing vision, strategy, and roadmap are in place, it's important to perform detailed initiative planning, piloting, and implementation. In some cases, a proof-of-concept and additional, more detailed business case work may be required for an initiative. In all cases, organizations should invest in change management, training, communications, and other guidance appropriate for the audience, culture, and organizational structure and capability. Organizations should also establish a program to track and measure adoption and value.

Successful enterprise social computing initiatives don't happen by chance. They almost always result from sound, step-by-step planning. To avoid adoption drop-off or isolated, transitory success and to overcome cultural and organizational hurdles, a social computing initiative needs to build a business case to engage users and to generate organizational support. A successful social computing initiative usually starts with a



well-defined vision, identifies potential users, understands how they work, and follows a roadmap to fulfill its vision.



6 Resources

6.1 Microsoft websites

- Innovate with Social: Improving Collaboration and Connections in the Enterprise
 http://www.microsoft.com/enterprise/events/innovatewithsocial/default.aspx#fbid=yc8qVPg9cA
- Microsoft SharePoint 2010 Social Computing Resource Center: http://msdn.microsoft.com/en-us/sharepoint/gg987020.aspx
- Microsoft Research: Social Computing http://research.microsoft.com/en-us/groups/scg/
- Microsoft SharePoint Social Computing Team Blog http://blogs.msdn.com/b/spsocial/
- Enterprise Collaboration and Social Computing in SharePoint Server 2010 http://technet.microsoft.com/en-us/sharepoint/ee263906.aspx
- Overview of Social Computing in Microsoft SharePoint Server 2010 http://channel9.msdn.com/Events/TechEd/NorthAmerica/2010/OSP211
- The Architecture Journal: Enterprise Social Computing http://msdn.microsoft.com/en-au/architecture/aa699425
- Implementing Social Computing at Microsoft www.microsoft.com/en-us/download/details.aspx?id=23586

6.2 Microsoft blogs

 Chris Bortlik's blog http://blogs.technet.com/b/cbortlik/



7 Collaboration Capability Value Measurement

7.1 Concept References

- Clark, William, David W. Cearley, and Avivah Litan, "Context-Aware Computing and Social Media Are Transforming the User Experience." Gartner Inc., February 2012. www.gartner.com/DisplayDocument?id=1916115
- Rozwell, Carol, "2012 Strategic Road Map for Business Gets Social." Gartner Inc., January 2012. http://www.gartner.com/DisplayDocument?doc cd=227646
- Martens, China, "Emerging Trends: Social Collaboration Is Poised To Accelerate ERP Business Processes."
 Forrester Research Inc., December 2011.
 <u>www.forrester.com/Emerging+Trends+Social+Collaboration+Is+Poised+To+Accelerate+ERP+Busines</u>
 s+Processes/quickscan/-/E-RES60626
- Microsoft case study, "Healthcare Solutions Provider Eases Customer Data Collection, Boosts Agility,"
 May 2012. www.microsoft.com/casestudies/Case Study Detail.aspx?CaseStudyID=710000000514
- Sean Corcoran, "Embedding Social Media Into The Marketing Mix," Forrester Research Inc., April 2011. http://www.forrester.com/Embedding+Social+Media+Into+The+Marketing+Mix/fulltext/-/E-RES58795?objectid=RES58795
- Microsoft case study, "Infosys Uses Social Media to Engage Employees and Increase Competitive Edge," May 2012. www.microsoft.com/casestudies/Case Study Detail.aspx?CaseStudyID=710000000622
- Padmanabh, Sunil, and Jeff Woods, "How Social Computing Can Streamline the ERP Life Cycle."
 Gartner Inc., July 2011. www.gartner.com/DisplayDocument?doc cd=214097
- Paul Manikas, "The Value of Social Computing in Product Development," MSDN, June 2011.
 http://blogs.msdn.com/b/discretemanufacturing/archive/2011/06/27/the-value-of-social-computing-in-product-development.aspx
- The Social Organization, "The Economic Value of Communities," June 2010. www.thesocialorganization.com/2010/06/the-economic-value-of-communities.html
- Michael Fitzgerald, "Why Social Computing Aids Knowledge Management," CIO.com, June 2008.
 www.cio.com/article/395113/Why Social Computing Aids Knowledge Management
- Li, Charlene with Alan Webber and Jon Cifuentes, "Making the Business Case for Enterprise Social Networks." Altimeter Group, February 2012. www.altimetergroup.com/research/reports/making-the-business-case-for-enterprise-social-networks
- Microsoft case study, "Electronic Arts Embraces Social Networking to Create Better Games on Tight Timelines," www.microsoft.com/casestudies/Case Study Detail.aspx?casestudyid=4000004267
- Microsoft case study, "Airport Loyalty Program Serves Travelers, Increases Online Revenues by 45
 Percent," www.microsoft.com/casestudies/Case Study Detail.aspx?CaseStudyID=710000000308
- Peppard, Joe, John Ward, and Elizabeth Daniel. "Managing the Realization of Business Benefits from IT Investments." MIS Quarterly Executive, March 2007. www.som.cranfield.ac.uk/som/dinamic-content/research/documents/peppardwarddaniel07.pdf
- Microsoft's viewpoint on the Consumerization of IT, www.microsoft.com/enterprise/viewpoints/consumerization/default.aspx#fbid=P2R1V9Dp5I2