Study on

Determining the Value of Social Technologies for Knowledge Sharing and Learning in Organizations

Information for Participants
Motivation for our study on evaluating the value of social technologies for knowledge sharing and learning in organizations

Social technologies (e.g. social software platforms) offer high potential for organizations

- Have the potential to leverage employees’ collective intelligence\(^7,9\)
- Have the potential to decrease the amount of time searching and to increase productivity of employees\(^7\)

Uncertain value of social technologies due to different challenges

- Often constrained by employees’ lack of “effective” adoption and use\(^1,4,6,10\)
- Most companies do not capture the full value of internal social technologies\(^2,3\)

Our objective is to apply a scientific approach to help decision makers

- understand how and why employees collaborate in knowledge sharing communities
- uncover how employees benefit from knowledge sharing communities

(Note: numbers refer to references in the appendix)
### Overview of our study on the value of social technologies

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<th>Objective</th>
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<td>Understand <em>how</em> and <em>why</em> employees collaborate in knowledge sharing communities</td>
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<td>Assess in which ways employees <em>benefit</em> from knowledge sharing communities</td>
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<th>Focus technology</th>
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<td>Social technologies (e.g. enterprise social software platforms including discussion forums, wikis, or similar) that are used for collaboration within a company</td>
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<th>Approach</th>
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<td>We develop a short online questionnaire and distribute to employees (available in English and German)</td>
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<td>The evaluation is free-of-charge and anonymity is guaranteed</td>
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<th>Expected results</th>
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<td>Our scientific evaluation seeks to</td>
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<td>identify critical factors for employees’ knowledge sharing</td>
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<td>provide guidance for companies on how to further benefit from social technologies</td>
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Your benefits as a participating organization in brief

1. You receive a detailed report containing a scientific assessment …

   1. … on what **motivates or hinders employees** to share or access knowledge via your social technologies
   2. … on the **benefits for your employees** in terms of knowledge acquisition and work performance
   3. … which is specifically **tailored to your company** and where the questionnaire is adapted to your requirements
   4. … based on **statistical analyses** as well as actionable **recommendations for your company**

2. These insights should enable you to …

   1. … **identify and improve the factors** that determine the value of your social technologies
   2. … **justify investments** into your social technologies
   3. … **sharpen the understanding** of what value people get from participating, and what they are trying to achieve
   4. … **assess the value** of your social technologies for your organizations and provide guidance on how to increase this value

Your participation and your final report are free-of-charge!
Process of the study and next steps

Data collection

- We will forward you a proposal for a questionnaire, which we will adapt to your specific requirements
- We prepare an online questionnaire that you can forward to your employees or a certain part of your employees
- Expected effort: approx. 10 min. per employee, depending on the length of the final questionnaire

Enterprise-wide aggregation and assessment

- We will aggregate the survey results for your organization and analyze the collected data accordingly
- You will gain insights into how employees work and learn with the organization’s social technologies
- Our analyses follow a theory-driven approach that evaluates the results from a theoretical perspective

Report with individual results and recommendations

- You will receive a detailed scientific report on the results of the study that will assess the value of your social technologies
- In addition, the report will provide practical guidance on how to increase the value from social technologies

Expected effort: approx. 10 min. per employee, depending on the length of the final questionnaire

Result Report
- Company

Chair for Business Information Systems
Prof. Dr. Stefan Smolnik
Why we are the right partner for evaluating the value of your organization’s social technologies

Extensive experience in conducting empirical studies

- The **Enterprise Social Software Platform** study with eight participating companies analyzed a total number of more than 1,700 respondents
- The **Employee Portal** study with 22 participating companies – most of them internationally operating large corporations – analyzed a total number of more than 10,000 respondents

Practical competence in social technology projects

- From 2006 to 2013, the team conducted a benchmarking forum for assessing the **knowledge management in professional service firms**
- Prof. Smolnik’s team has carried out studies on **corporate training with several companies** in a large project supported by the BMBF*

Scientific competence

- Prof. Smolnik’s team has published over **80 peer-reviewed research articles** in the area of **knowledge management** and **social technologies** in the past (see [www.fernuni-hagen.de/bas/publikationen](http://www.fernuni-hagen.de/bas/publikationen) for an overview of our current research publications)

* Bundesministerium für Bildung und Forschung
Confidentiality remark:
As a neutral clearing house, the Chair of Business Information Systems at the FernUniversität in Hagen is responsible for the development, undertaking and analysis of the study. All study participants’ data are anonymized and neutralized for the analyses and are not traceable to their source. The Chair of Business Information Systems ensures the confidentiality and safety of the participants’ business-related data.
Theoretical model on which the study is based

Value creation in a knowledge-sharing-community

1. Experience with collaboration
2. Increased learning and knowledge acquisition
3. Application of knowledge in practice
4. Enhanced work performance

Promoting factors: factors that support an individual’s engagement for collaboration

Employees’ collaborative learning and knowledge sharing

Challenging factors: an individual’s perceived barriers for collaboration

Community

Determining the value of social technologies for organizations – Information for participants
Selected publications


References