

# The Social Business System - connecting people and content



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## Process Used

This report references previous AIIM survey findings, each of which is referenced within the document.

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# Introduction

Social business systems connect social elements such as micro-blogs, community spaces, and social network sites to provide users with a complete dynamic view of the organization. As collaboration moves beyond email to social, the opportunity exists for this unified collaboration platform to become the preferred place for all workers to “live.”

The social business system becomes the space where users can locate expertise, reach out to and interact with colleagues, and effectively share ideas and information through user experiences such as posts, activity streams, and social graphs (a term coined by Brad Fitzpatrick in 2007)<sup>1</sup>, delivered to a variety of channels and devices, all the while creating the sense of belonging in an increasingly dispersed workforce.

Knowledge exchange, expertise sharing, and project collaboration are as likely to involve existing content as they are to create new content. Traditionally, however, organizations have faced challenges exposing existing information and expertise—called “information at rest”—making any latent knowledge difficult to use. The social business system brings that content into the activity stream, social graph, and flow of work, setting the information in motion, which gives that content both relevancy and immediacy, adding value to each interaction.

Therefore, connections between the social business system and the existing back-office content management repositories, which form a foundation for an enterprise knowledgebase, need to be searchable, shareable, and secure. As the collaboration channel of choice, social business systems will play a strong role in surfacing relevant content within existing repositories for sharing, ranking, and tagging while maintaining the integrity and security of the original repository. Users also have the ability to follow content, activities, and people, resulting in a social graph that connects users, process, and content, and provides alternative routes for people to discover and use that information and knowledge. Once collaboration efforts are complete, documents and other media can be more securely managed and archived within the robust environment of these connected Enterprise Content Management (ECM) and records management repositories.

Social business systems have been on a rapid evolutionary path in the past three years. While they are now converging to a standardized set of functionalities, they may have quite different heritages—unified communications platforms, forums and expertise locators, cloud-shares, activity streams, site-based collaboration, enterprise system modules, or various combinations of these. In this paper, we will first explore the strategic options and requirements for implementing social business systems, and then consider how well such systems can pull in content from multiple repositories and lift it into the more open collaboration environment, while protecting its security and context.

## Drivers and Issues for Social Business Systems

The adoption of social network sites such as Facebook and Twitter into everyday life has had a profound impact on how individuals communicate. As a result, it is not surprising to see the business world making every effort to take onboard the techniques used by consumer social tools. In March 2008, AIIM started tracking a concept known as Enterprise 2.0.

Early adopters of Enterprise 2.0, an expression coined by Andrew McAfee in a 2006 MIT Sloan Management Review article<sup>2</sup>, explored how social and collaborative techniques could be used in a business context. Further AIIM 2011 research, in collaboration with Geoffrey Moore, who wrote “Crossing the Chasm,” introduced the term Systems of Engagement. The term, Systems of Engagement, refers to the manner in which new business has moved from a transactional (record)-based model to that of a communication-centric model—hence the move from Systems of Record to Systems of Engagement. In the following years, the industry has taken on these concepts, and the use of social and collaborative tools within business is collectively known today as the Social Business System (SBS).

The SBS is designed to complement traditional workplace communication and collaboration tools, such as email, instant messaging (IM) and web conferencing, with social elements. Additional functionality can include employee profiles, online presence indicators, activity streams, micro-blogging, discussion forums, wikis, brainstorming software, recommendations, ratings, joint document editing and annotation, tagging, and links.

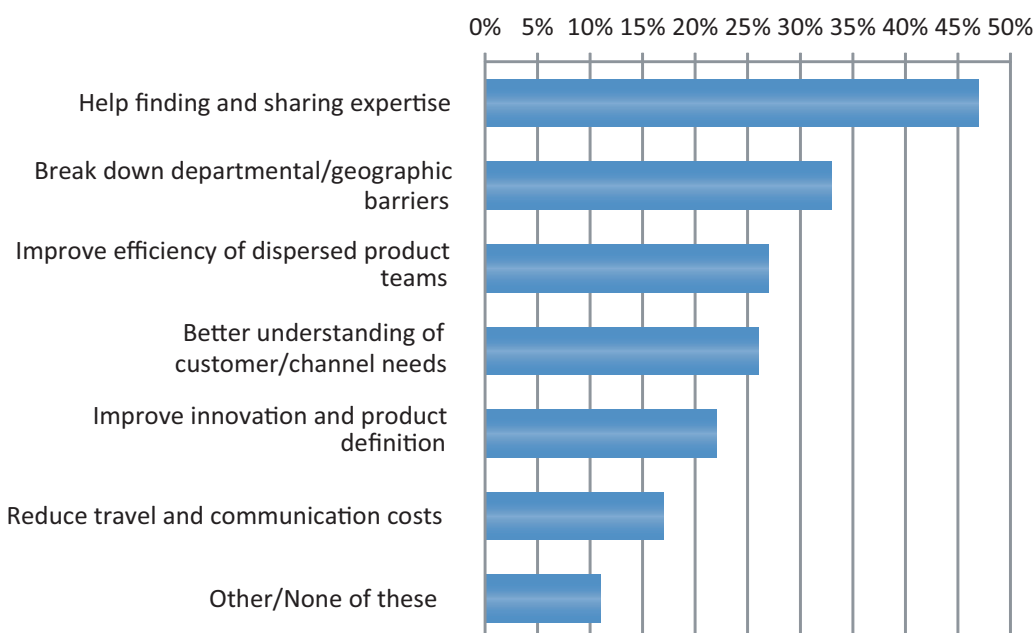
Interest in SBS products has been growing in recent years with Forrester Research<sup>2</sup> recently forecasting that spending will grow at a compound annual growth rate of 61 percent through 2016, a year in which this market will reach US\$6.4 billion, compared with \$600 million in 2010.

The 2011 AIIM Industry Watch – “Social Business Systems”<sup>3</sup> identified a number of the primary influencers for adoption of SBS products:

- **Finding and sharing expertise** – Organizations of all sizes have multi-skilled employees, each of whom has varied expertise and experience. However, these aspects are certainly not easily identified by others in the organization, especially where remote or distributed working is a factor. Consequently, the ability to identify which employees have the skills required for a particular project or role is invaluable. It is helpful to have a tool that brings up a list of employees who have self-identified as experts in a specific area or topic
- **Breaking down geographical and departmental barriers** – Content traditionally stored within departmental applications created a number of data silos—data that was essentially locked to the majority of the organization, only accessible from particular applications on certain desktops. Opening the door to this information using an SBS, and allowing access remotely over web browsers and mobile devices, creates a content sharing model that enables remote working and the distribution of resources, both physically and intellectually.  
No longer do team members have to be located in the same department, office, or even country. However, with the benefits of this enabling technology has come experience that this type of working requires simple and effective communication techniques, such as instant messaging and video conferencing, without which projects and teams actually become harder to manage.
- **Better understanding of customer needs** – Consumers have adopted social technologies wholeheartedly. As a result, they are coming to expect that they should be able to perform actions such as accessing their bank details from their mobile device, or informing a roadside recovery service of a breakdown using a GPS-enabled mobile device. The immediacy of such communication adds both massive benefits (for example, knowing exactly where a customer is), and a completely new set of requirements for responding to the request in a timely and efficient manner.
- **Improved innovation and product definition** – In a global business world, where innovation and product differentiation are king, being able to increase internal idea sharing and development feedback is seen as a primary influencer for the adoption of social business. Simple techniques such as ideation communities can engender organic innovation and propel business development forward.
- **Reduced travel and communications costs** – While not being cited as one of the critical drivers for deploying an SBS, reducing travel and telephony costs will become one of the most important financial success metrics—and one of the most straightforward to measure. At the same time, an SBS could be deemed to be a trendy offering. Obtaining board members’ approval may be achievable purely on that basis. Once the initial interest is over, metrics such as improved communication and innovation, which are difficult to measure, become hard to promote. Reduced travel and communication costs are simple to measure and will impact a company’s profitability positively, creating a compelling reason to purchase.

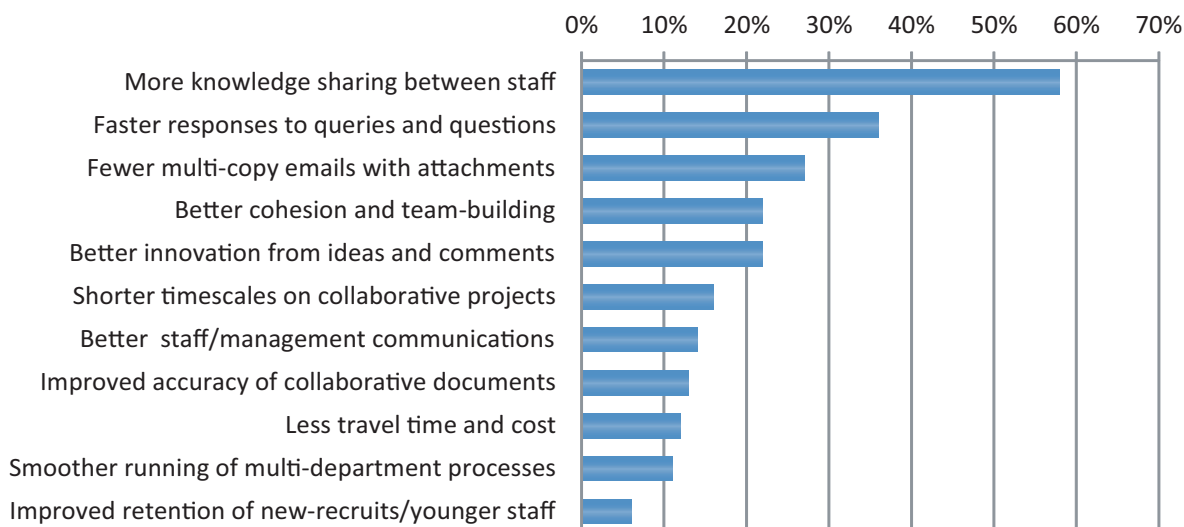
Figure 1 outlines primary reasons for organizations’ willingness to adopt an SBS.

**Figure 1: 2011 AIIM Industry Watch – “Social Business Systems” - Which TWO of the following would you say are the key drivers for social business/Enterprise 2.0 in your organization?**



Those organizations that successfully deploy social business systems find numerous business benefits, such as increased knowledge sharing between staff and faster responses to queries and questions. A more physical and direct cost benefit identified is that fewer multi-copy emails with attachments are used, massively reducing network load and server storage requirements. Figure 2 outlines various benefits organizations receive in adopting an SBS.

**Figure 2: 2011 AIIM Industry Watch – “Social Business Systems” - What are the THREE biggest benefits you have found from using social business/Enterprise 2.0 in your organization?**



A more intangible aspect of these systems is that of employee engagement or belonging. Humans tend to be social in nature and a work environment that embodies and incorporates this aspect of human nature can deliver a critical element to employee success—employee fulfilment. The majority of employees want to engage with others, and it helps to stimulate and empower them to do their job more effectively.

Couple this with the fact that the primary stakeholders of social business systems tend not to be IT but departments such as human resources, corporate communications, and lines of business, and we have a platform that is advanced by the business, empowering the users (be they internal or external customers and business partners) and delivering productivity and immediacy of business-changing proportions.

## Issues

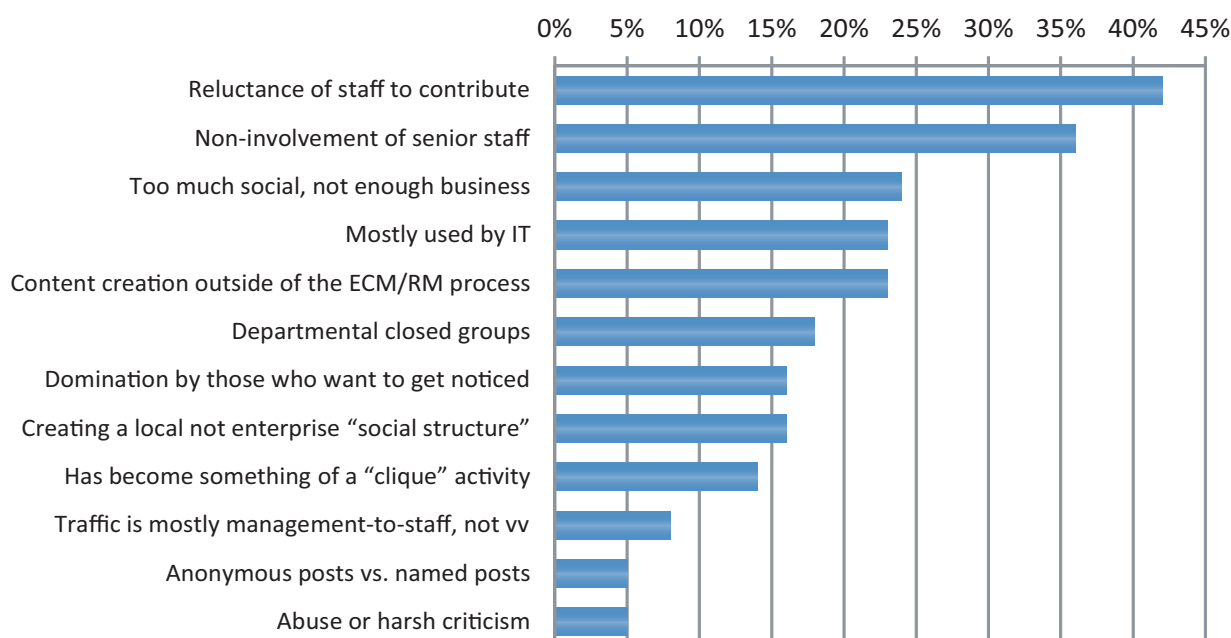
However the deployment of an SBS is not without challenges. Figure 3 displays further AIIM research that details the biggest issues that users have found to date when adopting an SBS within organizations.

The biggest issue identified was that of users’ reluctance to contribute. This highlights the fact that just because a business has deployed an SBS, it does not necessarily mean that the SBS has the correct blend of features, or that the organization has properly communicated the goals and usage expectations of the SBS (see the section, Requirements of a Social Business System, below). However, a well-designed and deployed SBS will counter these issues with facilities such as ease of use, higher engagement and visibility for remote workers, personalized content, and a consistent, familiar interface. Deployment efforts will also use an organization’s governance and change management programs to affect SBS adoption.

Without properly selling the benefits of **any** system to employees and engaging them in its selection and deployment sets that project up for failure and an SBS is no different. However, a well-planned, communicated, and executed rollout of an SBS should also resolve other issues such as “too much social, not enough business” and “domination by those who want to get noticed,” although ongoing monitoring and coaching once the system goes live will further success.

The rollout must address the concerns about the management of any content created in the various social channels available in an SBS, which by default fall outside of the standard ECM or RM processes. Definition of what content is relevant for inclusion into these processes, and the mechanics of migration of such content, is a crucial aspect in delivering the primary corporate- and compliance-related aspects of social business systems. Figure 3 (below) highlights issues in adopting an SBS.

**Figure 3: 2011 AIIM Industry Watch – “Social Business Systems” - What would you say are the THREE biggest issues you’ve found with social business/E2.0 applications in your organization?**



## Types of Social Business Systems

As with any complex business solution, social business systems can be deployed in many shapes and sizes. Deployments range from extensions to existing, niche products such as expertise locators or micro-blogs, to dedicated suites, built specifically to answer all of the requirements of a unified enterprise collaboration platform. Most of these systems can also be deployed as on-premise or cloud-based solutions.

- **Build-outs from expertise locators, forums, or enterprise Q&As** – As discussed above, one of the primary drivers for social business systems is the location and sharing of expertise within an organization. It is, therefore, no surprise to see a number of social business systems growing from existing expertise locator tools, forums, and enterprise Q&A suites. These tools will have been originally built and deployed specifically to serve a single purpose, but over time have been extended to incorporate the various other aspects of the SBS, such as social graphs and micro-blogs.

As with all solutions that have grown from niche starting points, while being particularly strong in their main heritage functionality, large variations occur in terms of strength of delivery of the new, non-core functionality.

- **Extended activity streams or micro-blogs** – An important element of any SBS is the use of activity streams as a mechanism to deliver relevant content to users in an easily digestible, time-enabled format. Many existing activity stream and micro-blogging tools are being extended to incorporate feeds from other enterprise repositories such as CRM, external social networks, human resource systems and collaboration workspaces.

Again, the success of the creation of a complete SBS from the perspective of one particular component depends not only on the capabilities of that original component, but on the capabilities and strength of the new functionality—in particular, the integration of all of the various content into one seamless stream.

- **Team-share collaboration sites and intranets** – The deployment of team or project micro-sites within organizations has skyrocketed in recent years, largely due to the widespread adoption of tools such as Microsoft SharePoint. These sites provide a simple, yet often unstructured, way for users to share documents, comments, and calendars for particular teams or projects.

The addition of social facilities to these tools, if designed and well-integrated, can deliver an intuitive user experience. However, as these typically provide a very narrow view, eg the domain of a particular project, they should not be seen as the main delivery point for an SBS, but purely as a channel for viewing relevant activity streams and submitting content to an overall solution.

- **Extended cloud-shares** – Cloud shares, which allow users to store documents on cloud-based storage and access them from a multitude of devices, have become a popular tool for consumer and business users alike. A number of providers such as Box and Google have extended these solutions to provide limited collaboration and social tools to users.



In a similar way to team-share sites, these tools are coming from a slightly closed perspective and do not provide an ideal arena for a complete SBS, largely due to the limited integration levels with in-house and legacy content. However, they do act as a useful conduit or filter on overall activity. Given the levels of user adoption in this area, market forces may determine that cloud-share based social business systems gain significant traction.

- **Modules within ECM or other enterprise systems** – Already entrenched enterprise systems, such as ECM, are also being extended to provide social and collaborative facilities. These tools have the benefit of already being integrated into the fabric of the business and are typically accessible through the organization's portal system. Therefore, adding a stream-focused SBS into this environment should be relatively straightforward. However, problems may occur since these systems tend to be heavily regulated and corporately managed, something that may not mix well with the more social aspects of social business systems. Licencing restrictions may also come into effect, dictating that all users, even non-core users, will need full ECM user licences to access functionality.
- **Unified collaboration platform** – Unified collaboration is the convergence of all forms of social and enterprise communications techniques that are available to an end user. It could be called the deluxe version of an SBS. Other solutions may be derived from existing software or systems, whereas this approach uses a new set of tools and techniques deployed as a common point of reference for the business user.

Integrated activity streams, extended profile pages, mobile device access, and the majority of the standard SBS functionality (see the section, Requirements of a Social Business System, below) will be delivered by one solution, providing dedicated and well managed integration between components. Any functionality not provided out of the box should be able to be integrated into such a platform using the Content Management Interoperability Services standard (see Appendix 1) or XML connections.

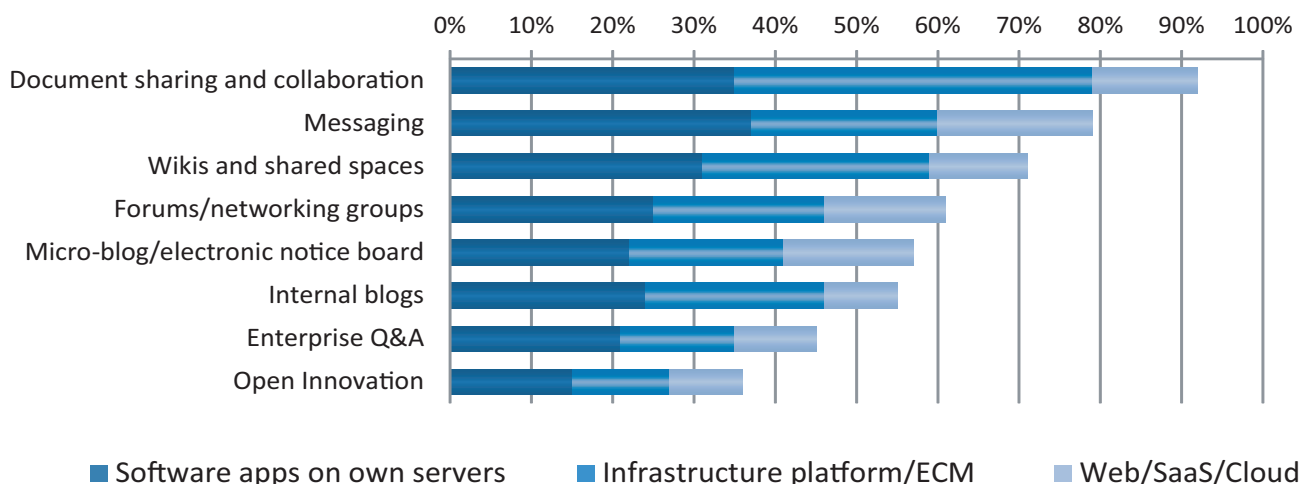
The unified collaboration platform, provided by solutions such as Cisco WebEx® Social, is the highest level of social business system available. It delivers a solution that provides all of the required SBS functionality from a single point, having been designed and built specifically for this purpose.

Irrespective of the type of social business system being deployed, all have standard facets, including:

- The requirement to connect with existing or on-premise content systems, (with SharePoint and EMC Documentum as the de-facto options)
- A robust roles-based security model
- Integration to enterprise directory services
- The incorporation of email and video messaging, even if many struggle with video technology

There appears to be no real consensus on where or how organizations are currently deploying social business systems. Further AIIM research (Figure 4) shows the split as 40 percent with a local application, 35 percent through ECM, and 25 percent using Software as a Service (SaaS) or cloud-based services. This could suggest that each delivery approach has equal merits in terms of functionality, cost, and reliability. However, a more likely explanation is that a number of organizations have arrived organically at social business systems using various application routes, and are adopting the SBS extensions to base systems as described in the previous section. Figure 4 shows how organizations are currently deploying social business systems.

**Figure 4: 2011 AIIM Industry Watch – “Social Business Systems” - What does your organization use to deliver these kinds of social/enterprise 2.0/collaborative capabilities?**





# Requirements of a Social Business System

As discussed earlier, a social business system brings together social and collaborative elements with traditional enterprise systems to create an engaging, dynamic, communications and collaboration platform to enhance the performance of the organization. Any SBS should have a number of primary business and technology requirements:

- **Multiple touch points** – In some organizations users have one desktop application for accounts, one for email, one for news, etc. Social business systems allow organizations to integrate the content and functionality of these traditional business processes and applications into one constant stream of activity. However, one crucial aspect of this is that users need to be able to interact with this stream from a number of touch points, be it by viewing or contributing. These touch points need to be accessible to the widest possible audience from the most relevant point of contact, while staying within corporate governance and permission rules. They may range from a webcam-enabled collaboration call from a remote field location, to participation in social streams over email.
- **Mobile support** – Given the now ubiquitous nature of technology, it is imperative that users can access, share, and contribute content and resources from their mobile device, be it iOS, RIM, Android, or other. And mobile access needs to mean more than just a mobile-enabled webpage; users are demanding functionality similar to the other touch points described above. Examples include posting event photos straight into the social stream or participating directly with customer support using an SBS forum from a mobile device or tablet.
- **Robust and supportable connectors** – It is important to understand that one of the cornerstones of a social business system is that it needs to bring together relevant content from as many sources as possible. This means that the SBS must be able to integrate using standardized connectors to RSS feeds, enterprise resource planning ERP systems, video libraries, Twitter feeds, and more. These integrations need to be robust, controlled, and consistent. They should require as little maintenance as possible and provide well-defined, manageable upgrade routes.
- **Two-way interaction** – A consistent theme running through all of the requirements thus far is that all communications need to be two-way. An SBS is not simply a corporate broadcast channel with users tuning in on their various devices to see what is happening. It is a two-way communication medium with its success or failure largely dependent upon the level of adoption and interaction from the end users.  
  
The numerous types of interaction described above will place a heavy burden on the SBS infrastructure and requires consistency and governance to define how generated content is stored, accessed, made available, and removed.
- **Respect for security, policy-based management** – An organization looking to deploy a social business system needs to remain aware that it is a *business* system, not purely a social network that *users* can access at work. As such, any SBS needs to integrate with existing security mechanisms and corporate policies for access, control, and storage.  
  
Remember, the SBS will be integrating with, and retrieving data from, numerous business systems, including commercially-sensitive information and personal employee data. The display of, and access to, this data needs to be governed as carefully as in the original systems themselves.
- **Flexible social graph** – Brad Fitzpatrick<sup>1</sup> describes a social graph as “the global mapping of everybody and how they’re related.” Today, these graphs define our personal, family, or business communities on social websites. Unfortunately, we are duplicating our same social graph on multiple websites, resulting in inaccurate data and time spent managing it. The enterprise social graph should make use of semantic and analytical tools to correlate social data into meaningful business and collaborative pattern. It is not enough to show relations between people; the enterprise social graph needs to extend to people, content, activities, expertise, recommendations, and suggestions.
- Despite the challenges of collating all of these information sources, social graphs should be self-managed from a single trusted source, replicated to websites of our choosing, thus resulting in accurate, efficient relationship management. For an SBS to succeed, it needs to become that single trusted source for an organization. In order to achieve that, the SBS should be designed to be as flexible as possible, while still providing the corporation with its required security and compliance.
- **Unified content model** – Each individual enterprise tool or application creates its own silo of information, large or small. A primary requirement of a social business system is to create a unified content model that defines the types of information available to an organization (such as blogs, wikis, emails, etc.) where it resides, how to integrate to it, and who has permissions to access it. This differs significantly from previous attempts to unify data, where data warehouses and data marts were used to collate the data itself.

- **Standards** – The social business system is about interaction with multiple channels, applications, and feeds. To create this interaction without using standards would be unwise; a number of pertinent standards have risen to the foreground.

Open Social is an API that can be embedded in a social network itself or used to access data from other compliant social networks. Activitystrea.ms was originally developed to represent a stream of events and is used by the likes of Facebook, Twitter, and Google Buzz. The Open Social standard actually references the Activitystrea.ms standard, and it appears that the two will get closer over time.

A more generic standard of note is CMIS (see Appendix 1), which defines interactions between content. It is specifically used in tools such as Lotus Connections to handle file-based communications with other packages such as Microsoft SharePoint, Firefox, and WordPress, and in tools such as Cisco® WebEx Social connector to SharePoint and Documentum.

- **Governance and metadata or tagging** – The incorporation of governance and compliance capabilities within the social business system is vital. This will operate across several levels and facilitate such areas as the definition of common, centralized metadata, a common integration model, standardized development models, cross-organization policy management, and extension to partner ecosystems.

Having a flexible means of managing governance is essential, as the creation of these governance methods and procedures will be a challenging task.

- **Integration to Microsoft Office** – One of the more straightforward is the integration to the de facto business productivity suite, MS Office. The depth of this integration depends on the exact end-user requirements, but could include: using Lync as a collaboration client, the ability to post content directly from Word or Excel, and taking micro-blog entries from One Note.
- **Integration to email systems** – Email is a mission-critical business tool and any SBS needs to include this functionality. Early SBSs did not always incorporate email, forcing users to choose email or social, but an integrated solution that promotes email to a first-class participant and content source is the ideal approach.
- **Platform approach** – As discussed above, there are various alternatives for implementing a social business system or unified collaboration platform. However, the primary requirement is that a platform approach delivered at an infrastructure level is used. This allows the platform to be able to:
  - Deliver a consistent stream of information to the multiple user experiences, such as the mobile, desktop, and business applications
  - Integrate existing real-time collaboration systems, such as instant messaging, web or video conferencing and Internet telephony
  - Provide contextualized feeds to other systems, such as CRM and human resource systems.

Adherence to security policies as discussed above becomes a further consideration for the platform, ensuring that compliance, governance, and regulatory issues are all managed effectively.

The platform approach provides the framework and consistency for the various tools and applications to work on, as opposed to building a collaboration capability out of a series of unconnected applications and tools.

The aim of implementing any social business system should be to achieve at least basic conformance with all of these requirements. Failure to do so can expose corporate users to loss of either functional or security and compliance capabilities.

# Building a Vehicle for the Future

Having established the types and requirements of social business systems, it is important to consider the corporate aspects of implementing a new nerve center for the business, and how to bring all of these elements together into one coherent system and deployment strategy.

Choosing a broad-based social business platform that matches the corporate needs for a virtual social space, a collaboration space, an employee engagement space, and a communications hub is not a simple task.

The platform needs not only to connect to traditional back-office repositories, including existing collaboration and social tools, but it needs to surface elements of that information into the social graph where it can be shared, tagged, ranked, and if appropriate, edited. At the same time, it should maintain the integrity and security of the original repository.

All of this information, existing and new, transactional and social, needs to be exploited and delivered to a number of channels, including online, mobile, and tablet using a variety of narrowcast (e.g. notification is sent to user's tablet) and responsive (e.g. user comments on a user's status entry) techniques. Given its pervasive nature and the "always on" society that has arrived, mobile will, in many cases, become the dominant user experience. Any mobile interaction must be simple to execute and engaging, yet still be secure and recorded.

For some products, the social graph is a focal element in delivering this informed connectivity mechanism on these channels. It helps users to contextualize seemingly unrelated information, make recommendations and suggestions, connect people and content, and locate expertise. As the primary information stream, the social graph needs to assimilate detailed user profiles and multiple social content types, including video, audio, and social networking feeds. However, whatever core mechanism is used, it must provide users with the ability to simply and effectively manage, filter, and view their streams to avoid information and activity overload.

A number of non-technological aspects must also be considered. The whole mentality of an organization looking to optimize its business by using an SBS is different from traditional business models. As such, the deployment of the new platform needs to be performed under full change management procedures, and the levels of adoption and acceptance need to be carefully observed. Once implemented, governance of the SBS is also a critical consideration. How the system is managed, usage policies, and the definition of which content should be passed to existing records management systems, are all of vital importance, and need defining prior to implementation in order to make deployment as smooth as possible.

A social business system is not an out-of-the-box solution, so when selecting a supplier, an organization should choose a long-term partner who offers multiple licensing and hosting options and integration to existing repositories, while still providing a comprehensive suite of functionality.

All of these ingredients must come together as part of a coherent, well-managed project in order for the implementation of a social business system to succeed.

## Conclusions

Social business systems are moving beyond the experimental stage. They are now becoming the business-critical hub through which all workers communicate and collaborate with colleagues. Multiple communications channels, from desktop to mobile to tablet, allow users to visualize, share, and disseminate both new and legacy content in this unified, enterprise collaboration world.

The level of mobile, always-connected users within an organization will propel the speed of adoption and the type of devices that any second-generation SBS is required to support, together with the system focus, be it project collaboration, content management, content sharing, knowledge dissemination, staff engagement, or unified communications. Irrespective of any specific focus, all social business systems must include the ability to perform all of these enterprise operations.

However, the SBS must also integrate with the back-office content repositories that have traditionally formed the corporate knowledge base and are core to governance and compliance regimes, and it must connect to these content stores in a robust, secure, two-way future-proof manner.

There are many social offerings available—from pure-play start-ups to corporate IT giants—as well as many different origins and types. Various offerings have transformed out of pure-play tools, such as those for experience sourcing, blogging, and instant messaging, versus those that have been born as complete, end-to-end, social business systems.

Organizations using existing tools and systems that have grown into social business systems may decide to remain loyal to these systems, on the premise that the additional functionality provided meets the requirements list above and those specific to the organization.

However, those organizations looking to deploy an SBS from nothing or without a suitable, functionality-rich upgrade path should look to an established end-to-end provider to achieve the most effective, integrated, simple-to-deploy, and cost effective solution.

## Recommendations

1. Perform a detailed requirements gathering (scoping) exercise.
  - a. Identify all of the touch points through which users will need or want to interact with the system
  - b. Identify existing content and systems that need to be integrated into the SBS
  - c. Determine who the primary stakeholders for the SBS will be; try and involve more than just the IT department (e.g. Legal, HR, Corporate Communications)
2. Explore and understand the governance aspects of the system **before** building the system.
  - a. Define the rules – Avoid the “too much social, not enough business” scenario by providing clear boundaries, and use case studies to explain benefits. Take a sensible approach to enforcing these rules
3. Evaluate which aspects of a social business system are most important and relevant to your organization to generate your own “Primary Drivers”. For example, a large consulting company based in multiple offices may focus on expertise sourcing, remote communications and external collaboration as their primary drivers. Then use the “Primary Drivers” to help identify which types of SBS are applicable.
4. Identify a supplier with an established history of success who can provide functionality, service, and support. Such a supplier should be treated as a business partner, selected based on existing customer testimonials, corporate stability, and correlation to your organization’s own business models and mindset.
5. Communicate your goals and plans to your employees; social business systems will not work without them. Ask staff how they ideally want to interact with the system and from which devices.
6. Deploy the solution in stages. Bring your users along as each stage is rolled out.
7. Ensure that the many communication channels identified in the scoping exercise are prioritized and then deployed according to priority.
8. Measure the return on investment and communicate results using the tool
  - a. Measure both the explicit benefits (reduced communication and travel costs) and the implicit benefits (improved team communication and reduced customer service times).

## References

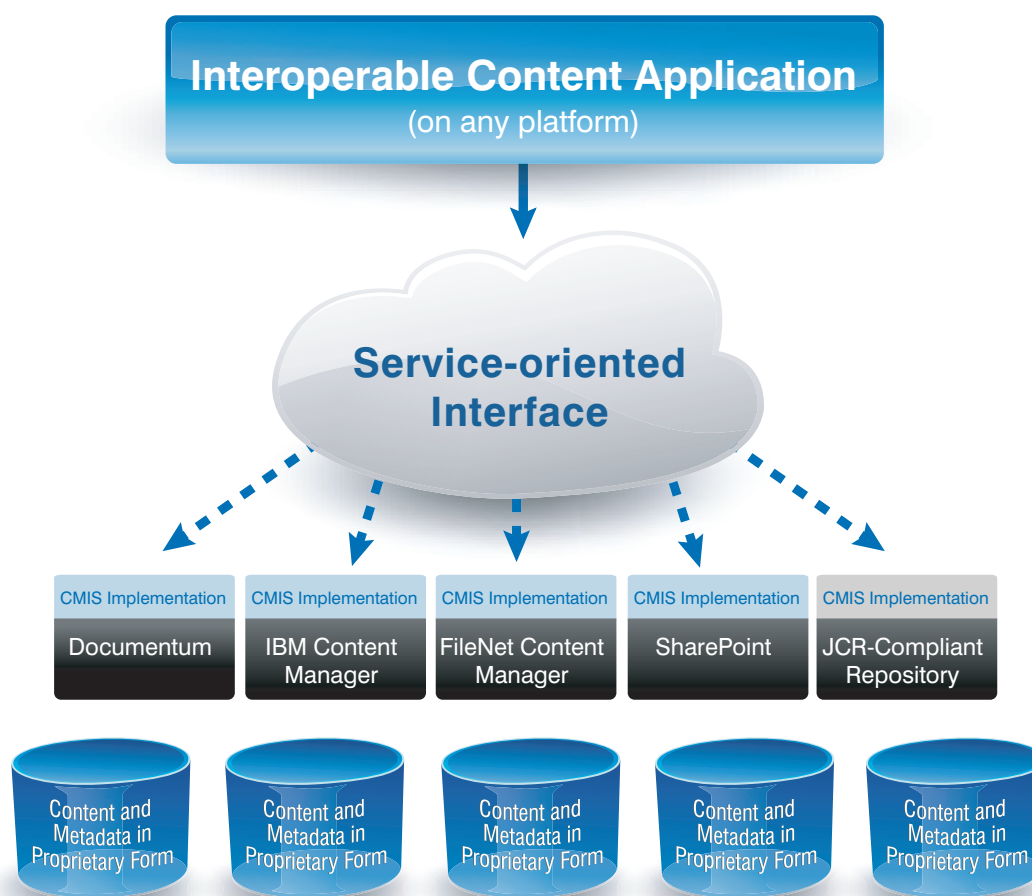
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## Appendix 1: Content Management Interoperability Services (CMIS)

In 2008, a committee was formed to standardize a web services interface specification to enable interoperability of enterprise content management (ECM) systems. EMC, IBM, and Microsoft led the way by developing the initial draft for the standard with other ECM vendors such as Alfresco, Open Text, Oracle, and SAP providing input through the standardization process.

The resulting Content Management Interoperability Services (CMIS) standard makes use of web services and the widely used Simple Object Access Protocol (SOAP) and Representational State Transfer (REST) protocol. Its focus is on the basic content functions such as creating, reading, writing, deleting, and searching for content across repositories. CMIS makes sure content repositories and solutions are able to interoperate by being independent of operating systems and architectures. Figure 5 provides an overview of how the CMIS standard works.

*Figure 5. CMIS Standard Illustration*



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The significance of CMIS is that it provides a standards-based foundation to allow different ECM systems and components to communicate. Vendors developing new ECM systems, connectors, or components will need to ensure that they support the CMIS specification to ensure maximum interoperability and usefulness to end users.

## About Cisco



Cisco Systems, Inc. is the worldwide leader in networking for the Internet. Today, networks are an essential part of business, education, government and home communications, and Cisco Internet Protocol-based (IP) networking solutions are the foundation of these networks.

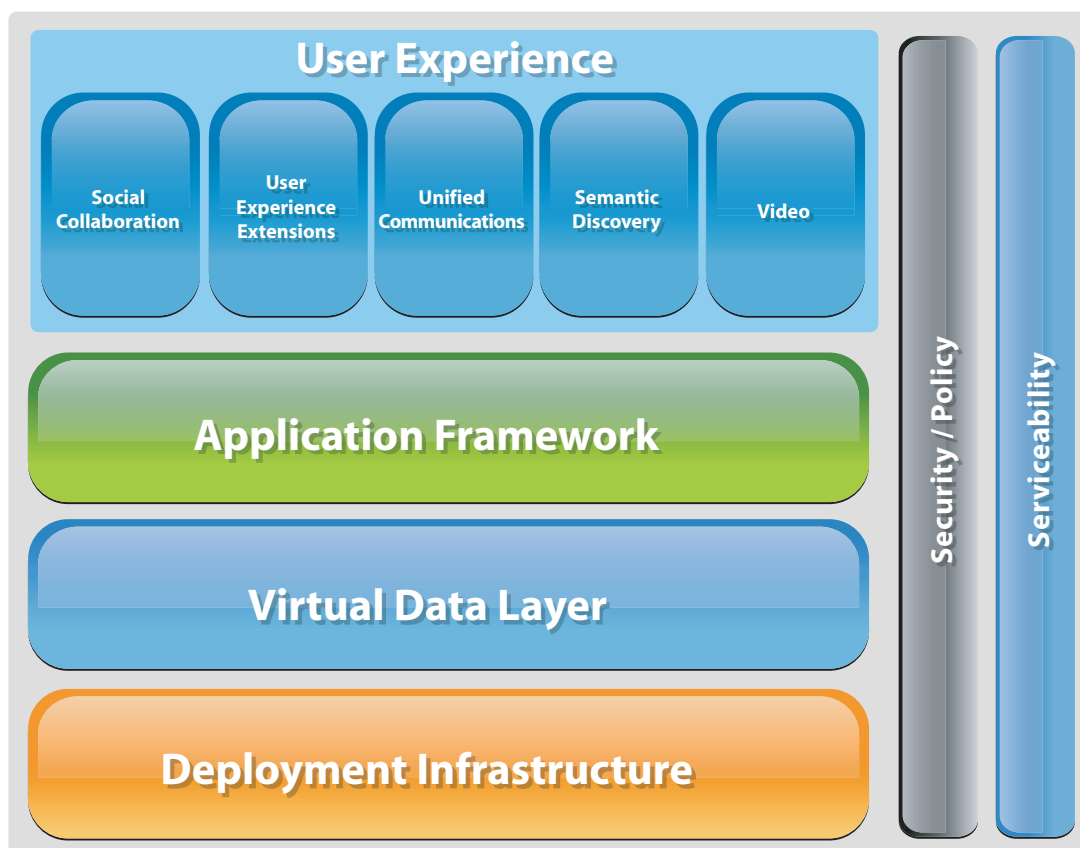
Cisco hardware, software, and service offerings are used to create Internet solutions that allow individuals, companies, and countries to increase productivity, improve customer satisfaction and strengthen competitive advantage. The Cisco name has become synonymous with the Internet, as well as with the productivity improvements that Internet business solutions provide. At Cisco, our vision is to change the way people work, live, play and learn.

Cisco WebEx Social is a people-centric collaboration platform that combines the power of social networking, content creation, and real-time communications.

Unlike email and other document-centric tools, WebEx Social is designed to connect people, capture the vast knowledge and expertise within your organization, and make those resources easily available to employees anywhere.

WebEx Social helps organizations transform business processes for increased employee productivity and innovation, while substantially reducing IT infrastructure cost and complexity. To learn more about Cisco WebEx Social please visit [www.cisco.com/go/webexsocial](http://www.cisco.com/go/webexsocial). Figure 6 provides an illustration of the WebEx Social platform architecture.

*Figure 6. WebEx Social Platform Architecture*







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