

CIO EXECUTIVE DOWNLOAD



# THE IMPACT OF WEB 2.0 ON ENTERPRISE APPLICATIONS

**A strategy to improve business performance through software  
that works the way people work**

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## INTRODUCTION:

# A strategy to improve business performance through software that works the way people work

Through each stage of its evolution, enterprise software has held the promise of making employees, partners and customers more productive and enabling better business performance through improved communication and collaboration. While some enterprises have realized these benefits, almost universally they have also seen a rise in the complexity of end-user interactions.

Technology shifts have added layers to the IT stack that require diverse skill sets and challenge IT organizations to deliver at the speed business demands. First, the end of the mainframe era led to distributed computing that both relied on and drove the creation of efficient, scalable processes for structured data. Next, taking the same approach to unstructured data gave rise to content management. More recently, the rich interactive technologies collectively referred to as “Web 2.0” emerged and enterprises are trying to determine their rightful place in the IT portfolio.

Today, these technologies are fundamentally altering the way in which people work, improving productivity and lessening the burden on IT as end users adapt the software to meet their needs.

This “consumerization of IT” has significant ramifications for today’s enterprise. With consumers having access to the latest technology products and services before they reach the business market, people now want and expect the same interactive, user-friendly technology experience and instant information access in the workplace that they enjoy at home.

Accordingly, businesses are under intense pressure to provide it, either by integrating consumer technology into their enterprise systems or by deploying enterprise solutions that are as intuitive and engaging as consumer experiences on the Web.

Given today’s interconnected marketplace, enterprise software must do all this securely, across traditional organizational boundaries, so both customers, employees and business partners can all participate in a seamless exchange of information and ideas. Moreover, companies must deliver a better experience across all communications channels.

Living up to these expectations requires more flexibility in defining and optimizing business processes, placing greater emphasis on communication and collaboration, and a more cohesive integration of multiple data and information sources. This paper will examine the potential of “user-centric computing” to boost productivity, cut costs and foster true business agility.

## EXPECTED AND DESIRED BENEFITS

Enterprises are not blind to the benefits of consumerized technology. In a chaotic economy, they are eager for tools that can help them meet strategic goals, like improving customer service and business agility, while realizing more value from existing resources.

In a survey of 300 companies (in the U.S., Germany, France, and the U.K.) with more than 500 employees, IDG Research Services found that more than half believe the consumerization of IT has already had a positive effect, particularly on innovation, efficiency, collaboration, cost reduction, and business agility. Fewer than one in five believe it has had any negative impact at all.

Not surprisingly, IT and business managers worldwide say they expect user-centric applications will help them achieve these significant benefits:

- **Improved process efficiency and collaboration (71 percent)**
- **Lower costs (63 percent)**

### SUCCESS STORY: **Borough of Southwark, London, UK**

Near the center of London, just south of the River Thames, lies the borough of Southwark. Home to London Bridge, the rebuilt Globe Theatre, and more than 250,000 residents—many of them highly mobile—Southwark receives 2 million requests a year for 230 different borough services. Those services range from library cards and recycling collection to construction permits and welfare payments.

Previously, meeting those requests was a cumbersome and time-consuming process. Borough employees taking requests for public housing vouchers, for example, had to fill out a 45-page paper form with 1,000 data items, and then enter the data manually. Today, they fill out electronic forms that automatically save data to multiple back-end systems—thanks to an application that uses Adobe® LiveCycle® ES (Enterprise Suite) and the Adobe® Flash® Platform. The system, known as One Touch, checks the data against existing records, populates the forms accordingly, flags errors and duplication that might lead to fraud, and spawns all the necessary processes to meet the request.

Southwark cut the wait time for borough services from more than a month to less than 24 hours while more efficiently tracking requests to ensure none fall through the cracks—a life-altering improvement for residents in crisis. In addition, people can now request multiple services simultaneously rather than contacting the borough council repeatedly. For example, new residents can apply for a parking permit, change their voter registration, and enroll their children in the school lunch program, all in a single call.

As a result, the borough is delivering three times as many services while cutting call volume fivefold and eliminating \$1.7 million in costs. Moreover, One Touch eliminates the need to train borough employees in multiple forms and complex procedures over as much as two years; instead, they're now fully productive in a single week.

“Our aim is to look holistically at the needs of citizens and address all service opportunities in one interaction,” says Dominic Cain, head of client services in Southwark. “This is a big leap in the quality and efficiency of services we can deliver.”

- **Increased business agility (60 percent)**
- **Improved customer loyalty (48 percent)**

Moreover, the majority (76 percent) agrees that using Web 2.0 applications and tools to enhance the experience of enterprise systems users is an important step toward improving overall business performance and customer satisfaction. The features they expect to see in this next generation of enterprise applications include ease of use, seamless integration with other platforms, and Web services.

## ALIGNMENT WITH BUSINESS GOALS

Asked about their business goals for the next 12 months, respondents worldwide rate the following extremely or very important:

- **Reducing costs (88 percent)**
- **Improving process efficiency and collaboration (80 percent)**
- **Improving customer loyalty and retention (79 percent)**
- **Protecting existing revenue streams (77 percent)**
- **Increasing business agility (73 percent)**

### SUCCESS STORY: **impuls Systems GmbH/impuls Finanzmanagement AG, Gersthofen, Germany**

A health insurance broker and consultancy, impuls offers its customers a Web site where they can compare plans from 40 different insurance providers, submit applications to the ones that best meet their needs, learn which plans will accept them, and complete the necessary paperwork to enroll in the plan of their choice. This workflow is complex, requiring the company to manage 20,000 different fee variations while handling sensitive personal and medical data in confidence according to law.

Using Adobe LiveCycle ES and Adobe® Acrobat® Connect™ Pro, impuls created a solution that allows customers to fill out and sign electronic applications and contracts securely, with a form completion wizard that prompts them for necessary information. If they have further questions, a “click to chat” button connects them to a live sales representative in a Connect Pro meeting room, where the sales representative can share up-to-date multimedia content addressing their concerns. The system automatically forwards a copy of the completed contract to the insurance company to ensure prompt coverage; it also allows customers to retrieve copies of their documents through the impuls online customer portal.

By automating this process, the company freed sales representatives to take more calls in the same amount of time. In fact, it recently doubled its sales staff to 100 to handle the increased call volume. More importantly, however, impuls can now capture data as customers fill in the LiveCycle forms, compare them to past customer information, and alert its sales representatives on the spot to opportunities to cross-sell or upsell additional products and services. As a result, sales effectiveness has improved: the call center has become 200 to 300 percent more effective than direct sales, with a 90 percent close rate.

Although the order is slightly different, these goals are almost identical to the benefits respondents expect from making their enterprise systems more intuitive, integrated, and streamlined (as noted above). Understandably, given the current economic climate, survey respondents are prioritizing their need to minimize costs. That in turn leads to the imperative to work more efficiently and collaboratively.

In addition, respondents assign a high value to solutions that can help them do more with less:

- **Streamlining paper-based processes to improve efficiency and reduce costs (68 percent)**
- **Easily creating custom communications while managing risk (66 percent)**
- **Building the next generation of enterprise applications (61 percent)**
- **Enabling more effective engagement with legacy applications and data (59 percent)**

## BARRIERS TO ADOPTION

Companies believe that interactive, user-friendly enterprise applications will enhance their ability to meet strategic goals more easily at less expense. However, they are struggling to realize the full benefits of the investments they have made in these areas. Respondents' top challenges include:

- **Software usability (42 percent)**
- **Time required for manual data entry (42 percent)**
- **Managing multiple input channels, including Web, phone, e-mail, and fax (39 percent)**
- **The ability to customize communications for specific recipients (39 percent)**
- **Data input errors (37 percent)**

These concerns clearly point to the need for a solution that uses an intuitive, contextually relevant interface and integrates with all transactional applications and input channels. Such a solution would eliminate the need for additional training and ensure communications are relevant to and personalized for their recipients. More important, it would automate and streamline many currently manual processes for getting information into various systems; thus saving time, increasing data quality, and minimizing errors.

One systems design and development director points to the overarching benefit of

**Despite steep adoption and acceptance, user-centric applications are perceived as less robust and efficient as their back-end systems. However, 21 percent of respondents report that external interfaces outperform supporting back-end systems. There are no significant differences by region.**

user-centric applications: “We are hoping that we can transition more of the reporting tasks to the users themselves, allowing us to either free up our resources for other tasks, or eventually reduce our outsourced headcount.”

## THE SOLUTION

Communication and collaboration are integral in preparing a company for the inevitable economic upturn. Thus, businesses need applications that empower their employees to interact effectively with customers, partners, and each other, all without placing additional burdens on an overworked (and probably understaffed) IT department.

To create a rich, intuitive application that integrates multiple forms of data and information from multiple sources—and presents it in a way that users understand—IT must meet these four benchmarks:

- 1. UNDERSTAND user needs. Create a strategy to guarantee user adoption that increases productivity by evaluating user needs at the start of the development lifecycle.**
- 2. EVALUATE the ways in which collaborative technology can improve workflow across the borderless enterprise—for example, by developing an online application for customers that delivers timely, accurate CRM data to customer service representatives.**
- 3. CREATE visibility into enterprise data sources in order to bring this data together cohesively and contextually so employees can easily find and share knowledge that improves their productivity and their ability to deliver high-quality customer service—for example, creating an online corporate directory that pulls data from human resources, chat, calendars, and other systems, providing a single interface for employees to connect with each other.**
- 4. ENABLE line of business users to manage and configure these applications themselves so they can model, visualize performance, and change processes on the fly as business conditions change, without involving IT.**

Historically, this last consideration has caused IT a great deal of concern. The traditional argument against allowing line of business users any control over their own applications has always been that their lack of technical know-how increases their risk of breaching application or data security. Surprisingly, though, the IDG Research survey shows this is not a major concern when it comes to Web 2.0-style applications. Nearly two-thirds of respondents say they believe giving line of business users more control over managing their own applications would increase efficiency.

This suggests that IT is more comfortable applying the flexible consumer-oriented technology to the needs of the enterprise. By building applications in a way that lets business people adapt the software to their needs and the needs of customers, IT can balance line business requirement to control operational processes against IT’s need to manage the infrastructure itself.

“Delivering software that works the way people work is an imperative for IT organizations today if they want to remain relevant. Fortunately, new user-centric technologies are making it much easier to improve customer experience and extract value out of existing IT investments,” says Rob Tarkoff, senior vice president and general manager of the Business Productivity Solutions group at Adobe Systems.

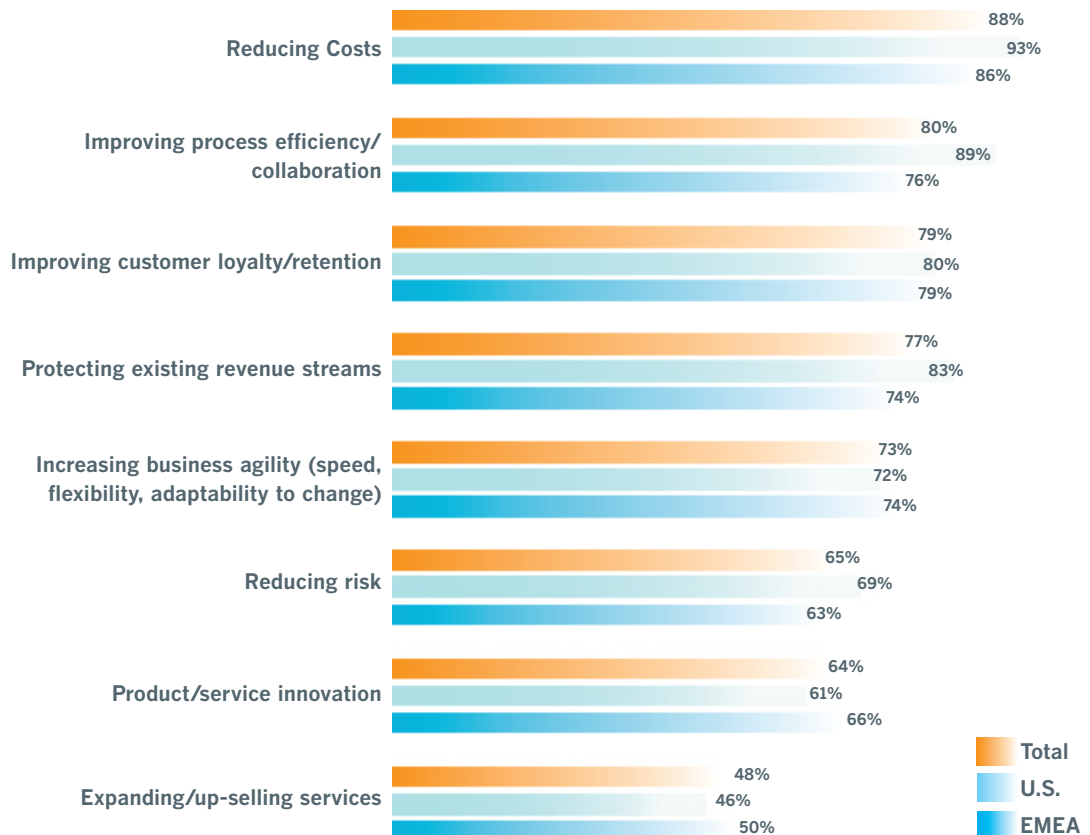
One of Adobe's customers, Procter & Gamble, is adopting Web 2.0 tools for both internal processes and in brand building, according to P&G's Linda Clement-Holmes. "We see tremendous brand-building opportunity in social media. By adopting Web 2.0 tools within the enterprise we are sharpening our skills for consumer interactions too," she says. "One clear attribute of emerging Web 2.0 tools and applications is ease of use and simplicity. The heightened expectations in the consumer market are making their way into the enterprise. Employees expect intranet tools to be as simple and straightforward to use as they are in the public sphere."

## THE ADOBE EXPERIENCE: WHERE COMMUNICATION, COLLABORATION, AND EXPERIENCE ARE CRITICAL

Adobe Systems is ideally situated to provide the platform for this next generation of rich, interactive applications. Adobe's products are industry standards: user-friendly, platform-independent, and ubiquitous. In fact, the majority of survey respondents report their companies are currently using products in the Acrobat family (58 percent), and that Adobe offers solutions that can help them achieve key business goals such as improving process efficiency and collaboration (64 percent) and increasing employee productivity (60 percent).

### IMPORTANCE OF BUSINESS GOALS OVER THE NEXT 12 MONTHS

(EXTREMELY/VERY IMPORTANT RATINGS)



Source: IDG Research Services, March 2009

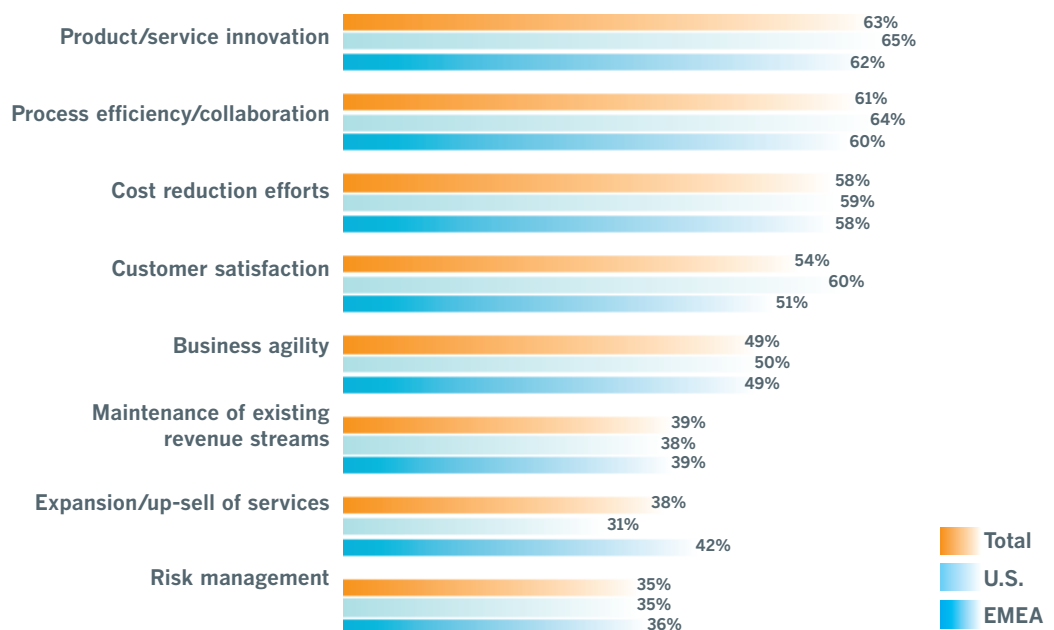
The company has a long history of offering software that works the way people work: Post-Script moved publishing from proprietary professional systems to the desktop; Adobe® Acrobat® and PDF freed people from the burden of paper; the Flash Platform unlocked online expression by transforming the Web from static links to rich interactive content.

LiveCycle ES helps organizations improve customer experiences and employee productivity by capturing, visualizing, and exchanging critical business information through integrated, rich application interfaces, secure documents, and automated business processes. LiveCycle ES makes it easier for people to interact with data residing in systems by creating intuitive user experiences, and to improve efficiencies across the enterprise through business process automation while delivering enhanced customer service with personalized communications management.

Adobe is also expanding the boundaries of the traditional workplace with Acrobat Connect Pro, a Web conferencing solution that lets users instantly share multimedia presentations from their desktops and receive simultaneous feedback from hundreds of participants. Combining streaming video, animation, and interactive content with security features that control access, Acrobat Connect Pro is ideal for hosting meetings inside and outside the firewall, online seminars, and self-paced and real-time eLearning and training courses.

Advanced as these solutions are, they remain true to their Adobe roots: easy for IT to deploy, easy for line of business users to configure and manage with minimal IT intervention—and, most of all, easy for employees and customers to use. This powerful combination makes for an agile business, resulting in greater productivity, higher efficiency, and im-

## PERCENT INDICATING “CONSUMERIZATION OF IT” HAS HAD A POSITIVE IMPACT IN EACH AREA



Source: IDG Research Services, March 2009

proved responsiveness in a fast-changing marketplace—the precise outcomes IDG survey respondents say they are looking for.

## ADOBE: SOFTWARE PROVIDER AND CUSTOMER

Adobe gains greater insight into its enterprise customers' needs by using, evaluating, and offering feedback on its own products. "I wear two hats at Adobe," says Senior Vice President and CIO Gerri Martin-Flickinger. "I'm the CIO, but I'm also an Adobe customer. As a customer, I focus on creating a partnership with the business, helping them understand what IT organizations want and need from enterprise offerings."

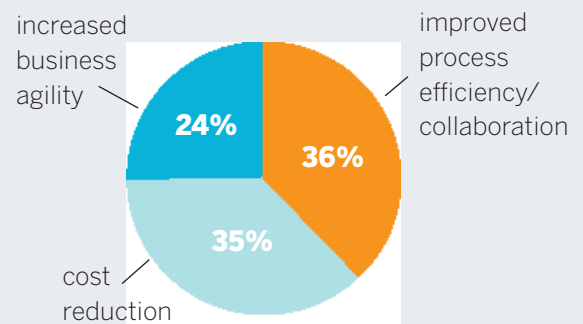
The company's commitment to using its own applications to give its line of business employees greater control of internal processes has led to a wide range of innovative practices:

- ✓ Form-based processes throughout the company are now paperless, from purchasing to expense reporting to vacation requests. One notable example is the process of bringing new employees into the company. As soon as the hiring manager fills out the initial online employment form for a new hire, Adobe's LiveCycle-based employee onboarding application spawns multiple tracks of approvals and automated processes. It tells facilities management when and where to set up a workspace, and with what furniture and equipment. It prompts security to create an employee badge. It alerts the IT team to configure a computer, create a network account with the appropriate permissions, and set up an individual virtual meeting space in Acrobat Connect Pro. The hiring manager receives confirmation at every step, making the onboarding process faster, simpler, and more predictable.
- ✓ The human resources department uses LiveCycle ES, integrated with Adobe's SAP HR system to manage employee evaluation forms, including reviews, goals, manager comments, and development plans. This creates a high-level overview of employee progress and allows employees to initiate as well as participate in their own review processes.
- ✓ To improve internal transparency, the IT department created an Adobe Flex-based dashboard on the corporate intranet that pulls data from back-end systems to show current IT projects, their progress against budget, how much time the company has spent on them, and the latest status report. Any Adobe employee, anywhere in the world, can see what IT is working on at any time.
- ✓ Board Bridge, an internal application that combines LiveCycle ES with the Adobe® AIR™ runtime, lets the company's board of directors access, edit, and distribute documents securely, both online and off, with no IT involvement.

### QUICK POLL

In a poll of CIO's Peer-2-Peer Research Panel, 65 percent of respondents say user-centric applications are effective at controlling costs. Seventy-six percent say user-centric applications have helped them improve process efficiency at their organizations.

The top three benefits cited are:

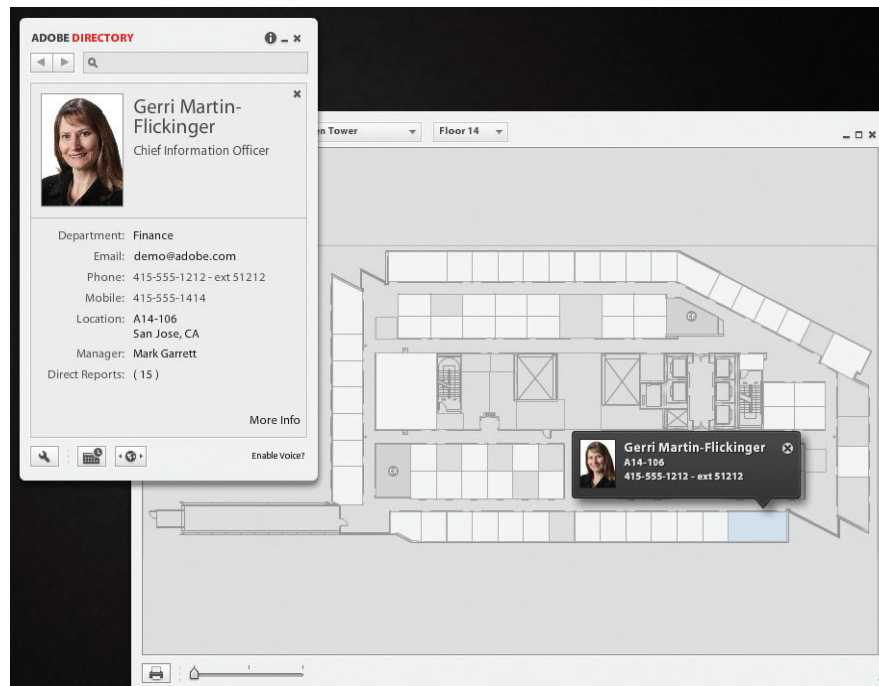


- ✓ The company's internal employee directory has evolved from an online phonebook into a multi-featured social networking tool that incorporates employee photos, office location maps, organizational chart functionality, and VoIP capability.
- ✓ Employees each have their own Acrobat Connect Pro meeting room where they can hold recordable, replayable virtual meetings that include modules, or "pods," for voice and video, document sharing, remote desktop control, and more.

Meeting in Acrobat Connect Pro has become standard procedure for work groups and product teams, which are often spread across multiple cities around the world. Martin-Flickinger recalls that in her third week as CIO, she arrived at her office during a major release weekend to discover the building was nearly empty.

"I was on the verge of panic until I realized that we were handling everything in an Acrobat Connect Pro meeting room," she says. "One pod contained a project plan with minute-by-minute activity. One contained a chronology. There were breakout pods for subteams, lists of participants and what they were doing—it was an unbelievable electronic experience involving more than 200 people from all over the world, and we could replay everything with complete documentation on demand, yet there weren't more than five people at corporate headquarters."

In addition to serving as its own customer, Adobe shares its experience and expertise with enterprise customers through the Adobe@Adobe program office, designed to help customers make their enterprise systems more user-dependent vs. system-dependent. The Adobe@Adobe program office participates in workshops and seminars, provides technology advice, and even shares the source code for some of Adobe's internal solutions so other companies can adapt them to their specific needs.



## CONCLUSION

**Expectations today for IT are higher than ever.** Our research showing the impact of the consumerization of IT is but one measure of the depth and breadth of the challenges facing CIOs and IT decision-makers. Compliance, security, mobility, social media apply pressure across the IT organization. And that's not to mention the slow-to-recover economy, which has layered on the need for cost cutting and containment while maintaining the expected level of services to keep the business going and growing.

In Thomas Friedman's best-seller "The World is Flat, A Brief History of the Twenty-First Century," he writes that a set of technological and social disruptions in the late 1990s — the rise of the Internet, fiber-optic communication, the proliferation of the Windows operating system, interoperability or software, to name a few —

“(M)ade it very easy for people all over the world to work together —that leveled the playing field. It created a global platform that allowed more people to plug and play, collaborate and compete, share knowledge and share work, than anything we have ever seen in the history of the world.”

As we know, those factors were not one-time events. Those waves continue to break against the shores of modern organizations. And within individual organizations sits a microcosm of this flattened world. Line of business managers drive IT decisions. CIOs are charged with innovation, and must understand customers as well as — if not better than — service desk employees.

People expect to be able to do their work, simply and easily, any time they choose and from any device. Software from Adobe is one of the reasons why this is possible. After all, Adobe technology has influenced almost every way people engage with ideas and information, from traditional print to the web. Adobe has built the foundation of many of the rich multimedia experiences that have made the Web as basic a part of daily life as electricity and running water.

This technology pushes authority and decision-making responsibilities out to the edges of the organization, empowering and enabling employees to better serve customers both internally and outside the organization.

As recently as 10 years ago, enterprise-class technology required an enterprise-class team of IT experts to keep business running. Today, though, Adobe makes it possible for your employees and customers to have the same easy, intuitive interactive experiences at work as they do at home — and free your IT team from the burden of supporting them. As a result, employees are better able to manage their customer relationships, get more done in less time and directly contribute to improved business performance. ■

## Social Networking Success Requires Solid Plans

By Chris Kanaracus, IDG News Service

Users who shared their social networking implementation stories at the Enterprise 2.0 conference in Boston on Wednesday emphasized that success requires careful consideration of corporate culture and goals, as well as effective technology.

“My biggest piece of advice is to make sure social media is grounded in the challenges of your business. It’s different for each business,” said Shawn Dahlen Jr., social media program manager at Lockheed Martin, during a presentation.

Lockheed has created a platform called Unity, which is based on Microsoft SharePoint. But the choice of technology was more pragmatic than anything else, since SharePoint was already a mainstay in Lockheed’s IT environment.

The platform “provided an evolutionary path” from a document-centric culture to one that embraces wikis and blogs, Dahlen said.

A grassroots approach worked for Lockheed when it came time to roll out Unity.

Initially, the company did little more “than put up some posters” to attract the attention of workers in the company’s information systems and global services division, Dahlen said.

A subsequent step was a series of presentations to various Lockheed executives, which “got them excited about what we were doing.”

Today, 20,000 of the 55,000 workers in the IS & GS division are contributing content to Unity, Dahlen said in an interview after the presentation. But the real rate of adoption is more like 60 percent, since only 35,000 of those employees are “addressable” — the others work in top-secret or nation-building activities, for example, and therefore cannot participate, he said.

Strong support from Lockheed’s high-ranking corporate managers has been key to the success

of Unity, which is now being rolled out across the company.

But an all-out order to use it would have been counterproductive, said Christopher Keohane, social media product manager, in an interview.

“If you set the right cultural tone, you’ll find the adoption,” Keohane said. “The more you mandate it, you get people just ‘checking the box’ to say they did it.”

The most effective way executives can drive a social platform’s adoption is simply by participating themselves, as well as being receptive to communications and ideas that stream in from the rank-and-file, Keohane said during Lockheed’s presentation.

“Not everyone’s idea has to be accepted, but you have to show they are listening and taking action on stuff,” Keohane said.

A much smaller company than Lockheed Martin that nonetheless faces the organizational challenges of widely distributed teams also presented at the conference Wednesday.

Design company IDEO, which has about 500 employees and offices in North America, Europe and Asia, has focused its efforts around a corporate intranet called The Tube, said Gentry Underwood, head of knowledge sharing.

Over time, IDEO has developed a number of design principles for social-networking software, Underwood said.

One is to “build pointers” to people, instead of trying to pull every scrap of information every worker might possess into a giant knowledge base, he said.

That approach is good for collecting facts and figures, but not much else, he said. “A lot of the really good [knowledge], it’s too contextual,

too experiential, too tacit.”

Therefore, an IDEO employee’s profile on The Tube focuses on delivering an abundance of information about the worker that is useful to the business, such as his or her workload over the coming weeks, contact information, short and long-form biographical information, and a list of their ongoing tasks. Managers can use the aggregated data in the process of assigning workers to various projects.

The profiles pull in information from existing IDEO systems, including Microsoft Active Directory and a time-tracking application, he said. Since every organization has a raft of such legacy software, a social-networking implementation is “like a custom-fit suit,” he said. “What we try to do is take all these pieces together and make one experience.”

Nearly all IDEO workers have now “taken ownership” of their personal profiles, he said.

That rate of adoption “never would have been possible by saying, ‘OK, there’s a new system and everyone is responsible for maintaining their people page,’” he said.

The company’s approach saw it invite about 10 percent of its workforce -- choosing people who were seen as social leaders -- to use The Tube first. This created enough buzz to spark broader interest once it was made available company-wide.

The software’s usability is another key focus for IDEO. Like Lockheed Martin, IDEO is using an agile development methodology to fine-tune its platform. A new version of The Tube is released every week.

“The vision you’re going to get this stuff right on the first step? It doesn’t happen,” Underwood said. “It needs to be thought of as a living system that is growing as the company does.” ■

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## Unified Communications, Collaboration Can Help Save Cash

By Denise Dubie, Network World

Considering the current economic climate, some companies might not see an immediate need for unified communications and collaboration tools, but IT leaders argue the technology can help businesses increase productivity, cut costs and reduce their carbon footprint.

IT leaders at companies such as State Street Corp. invest in unified communications and collaboration technologies to help it better link its employees worldwide and enable virtual teams for the global business. Madge Meyer, executive vice president of Global Infrastructure Services at State Street in Boston delivered the keynote at Network World’s IT Roadmap: Boston Conference & Expo and explained how her organization built a global model with virtual teams. She said despite regional differences, customers should

be able to expect services delivered consistently around the world.

“The challenge of globalization is managing change across all the regions,” Meyer told some 400 attendees at the conference. “You have to leverage all these technologies to share information, even down to inexpensive desktop monitors and cameras to simulate group meetings with people around the world.”

That type of desktop Web conferencing and collaboration tool is also part of a unified communications and collaboration project recently completed and made available to employees at Danone, the Paris-based parent company to consumer packaged goods companies such as Danon and Evian. Mike Close, CTO of the company’s

North American operations, said the company worked to transform “the way we do business” to better serve customers, but also to “attract the next generation workforce.”

“We started the project focused on instant messaging and e-mail, but when oil prices spiked, videoconferencing became the first technology to put in place,” Close said.

And so far this year, Danone has hosted 1,050 videoconference calls with 70 high-definition monitors. The company estimates that 15% of all videoconference calls reduce travel costs and employee carbon emissions. Yet the challenge faced with adopting such technologies isn’t always financial. For instance, Close said getting people to change the way they work required his team to pay special attention to training.

“We had to constantly communicate and provide training again and again to get a critical mass of people using the new tools,” Close said.

That is not uncommon, according to Irwin Lazar, vice president for communications at Nemertes Research. For many companies, the biggest hurdle following business buy-in is an organization’s culture. He said companies looking to justify an investment in unified communications during the downturn might be challenged with a simple cost-savings argument. Creating a more productive work environment could help address the financial as well as the cultural challenges.

“VoIP, for instance, is a difficult argument to make based on cost savings alone, but if you work in disaster recovery and other unified communications tools such as video conferencing, more tangible benefits become apparent,” Lazar said. “Companies can cut travel costs with video tools, enable collaboration and cut phone bills with instant messaging and keep an increasingly virtual staff connected.” ■

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