Solution Guide for the Social Enterprise

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

Real-world ideas for transforming your business through the use of enterprise social networking
Solutions for Information Technology

As an IT professional, your ultimate goal is to help people get the most out of your company’s technology resources.

Yet IT departments often find themselves focusing on routine, repetitive tasks. To add more value to the organization, IT teams need a way to spend less time on solving technical issues and more time partnering with the organization to advance the strategic technologies that can make a real difference to the business.

Enterprise social networking can dramatically simplify the flow of communication between IT staff and the people they support, helping employees resolve technical questions more quickly and with less IT intervention. Enterprise social networking can also help IT teams deliver more value from the enterprise applications that people use every day—making information easier to find, share, and discuss.

In this guide, we’ll provide you with a few examples of how Socialcast is enabling IT teams to work within their organizations to create secure social communities that boost productivity and performance.

At a Glance

Socialcast helps unify people, information and processes across the enterprise:

- Enable self-serve answers to technical questions
- Get more out of Microsoft® SharePoint® through embedded social capabilities
- Eliminate silos by unifying business applications into a more streamlined flow of work

Socialcast organizes communication and collaboration in one place, so teams can email less, meet less, and spend less time searching for information.

Case Study Showcase

Humana, Archant, VMware

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Faster Technical Answers

Routine questions create a lot of work for IT staff. Employees ask similar questions, requiring the same answers. Problem tickets are generated and assigned. Each IT staff member works on his or her assigned task, often without the benefit of the team’s collective knowledge.

Socialcast enables IT departments to create a searchable knowledge base that can help users resolve minor problems quickly and with less IT intervention. Socialcast can also integrate updates and events from IT helpdesk applications directly into the community using Socialcast Reach, improving visibility on the status and resolution of issues or updates to technology.

Create a Group for IT team members to centralize communications around specific technical topics or activities and reduce dependence on email

Embed real-time conversations into IT applications to create cross-team visibility and solve IT issues faster

Create a searchable knowledge base of frequently asked questions (and answers) for users, enabling them to become self-sufficient in solving common problems

QUICK TIPS
Make SharePoint Social

Documents stored in Microsoft SharePoint, Intranets, and wikis can quickly stagnate and become difficult to find. With Socialcast, companies can add a secure social layer to SharePoint, enabling people to easily share and discuss Intranet-based content with colleagues and team members.

Get the most out of your SharePoint platform by adding social capabilities that allow employees to collaborate in real time around documents, events, and tasks within SharePoint. Surface important information to others with social buttons that share links to SharePoint pages inside Socialcast. Using Socialcast Reach extensions, companies can easily embed activity stream feeds into SharePoint sites and have conversations and share information with people, teams or organizations without having to leave a SharePoint page or Intranet.

QUICK TIPS

- Add a “Recommend” button to SharePoint sites to make content easier to discover and share
- Create a Group on Socialcast, and add it to a SharePoint site to enable conversation and interaction
- Post a message or comment, Like, edit or delete messages directly from SharePoint
- Easily integrate a SharePoint document library, calendar of events, and tasks into your Socialcast activity streams
Socialize Business Applications

Business applications that automate processes for a departmental function such as Sales or Customer Service don't necessarily work well with or benefit other departments, resulting in informational “silos.”

Socialcast can help unify these various departmental systems into one streamlined flow of work. Using Socialcast Reach extensions, social capabilities can easily be added to business applications for in-context sharing and conversations. Questions, answers, and feedback loops are now integrated directly into the data and systems that people use every day.

Employees have up-to-the-moment insight without wasting time retrieving information from multiple business systems

Socialcast Reach enables IT to embed real-time activity stream feeds into any business system that accepts an HTML / Javascript snippet

Communicate in real time, post questions, share links, or Like content or sites—all within a business application

QUICK TIPS
Humana, a leading health benefits company, uses Socialcast to maximize the company’s investment in Microsoft SharePoint. By adding Socialcast Reach extensions to SharePoint sites (Help Desk, Innovation, Event Planning, Corporate News, Executive Communications, etc.), employees can have conversations, Like, Recommend and share content without leaving SharePoint. And that same flow of communication shows up in Socialcast. Content and information are no longer kept in closed silos, but are easily shared across the company, creating new levels of discussion and collaboration.

Humana also quickly learned how to extend the social layer further using Socialcast’s robust APIs. Nearly 20 different applications have been built to help Humana measure and monitor associates’ engagement in the Socialcast community, and also reward the associates who were using the social features correctly. These tools have helped Humana learn about what drives value in the community, and provide insight to executive leadership on how to increase participation.

“Ironically, what SharePoint misses is the ability to have easily-discovered, interactive discussions organized around groups and common interests, and that’s where Socialcast really shines.”

Jeff Ross
Community Manager for Enterprise Social Media, Humana

RESULTS:
- 22,500 Humana employees actively use Socialcast to tap into company knowledge
- 80% of questions asked within the Socialcast community are answered
- More than 6,000 posts are created each week
- More than 100 Socialcast Reach extensions make content on SharePoint sites interactive and more easily discovered
For Archant, the UK's largest independently owned media business, deploying Socialcast was an important step in taking a traditional publishing house into the Digital Age. Archant needed a way to help traditional journalists get comfortable with more modern ways of communicating, and a means to connect editors across publications to share knowledge more efficiently.

The Socialcast community, called “Connect,” is used by more than 1,400 Archant employees to instantly link individuals, work groups, and offices.

The Archant IT help desk also uses Connect to communicate with the company about technical issues. As a result, the help desk can quickly see who is affected by known issues and respond accordingly. Posts by users in the Socialcast community help surface new technical issues to IT faster. Quick resolution can prevent issues from escalating. Connect users also help spread the word in the community as soon as technical issues are resolved, further reducing calls to the help desk.

“By posting resolutions or fixes through Connect, less one-to-one interaction is required by IT staff to solve problems, freeing the help desk to tackle more complex issues.”

Chris Thompson
Head of Development, Group Business Development, Archant

RESULTS:

- 1,400 Archant employees are active on Connect (more than half the company)
- Posting answers to technical support questions on Connect creates a searchable archive for faster self-serve problem resolution
- IT teams are more efficient in solving technical support questions
VMware, the global leader in virtualization and cloud infrastructure, recently rolled out a new “Bring Your Own Mobile” policy for US employees. The new BYOM program was a big change, requiring employees to pay for their own mobile devices, and was quite controversial at the start.

Anticipating the many questions and technical support issues that this new policy would trigger, the BYOM team set up a group inside Socialcast and asked that all related questions be posted there. Within a week, attitudes among people participating in the group shifted from negative to positive. Employees began using Socialcast to help each other pick out the best phone plans, while IT monitored the group for technical issues. Ultimately, the BYOM group in Socialcast eliminated thousands of potential support tickets and created a knowledge base of relevant information for employees to access. Within 30 days, half the company's US employees had signed on for the BYOM program.

“With Socialcast there was no training, no manuals. If users have to sit down to use a new system it will be dead on arrival.”

Mark Egan
CIO, VMware

RESULTS:
- A Socialcast “Town Hall” meeting enabled executives to explain the rationale for BYOM and field questions
- The BYOM group allowed users to share experiences and learn from each other
- Access to C-level management within the BYOM group encouraged dialogue and helped users feel more comfortable with the policy change
Start transforming your business into a social business today.

Start a conversation with your colleagues and executive team. Consider how enterprise social networking can help your IT teams create deeper alignment with the business and the employees they serve. Then set your course for the future.

Socialcast is helping thousands of companies on the journey to the social enterprise. Let us know how we can help you succeed.

www.socialcast.com