‘By 2014, refusing to communicate with customers via social channels will be as harmful as ignoring emails or phone calls is today.’

Gartner, The Rising Force of Social Networking and Collaboration Services
The emergence of enterprise social collaboration

The revolution in communication technology that has taken place over the past 25 years has transformed the way in which businesses operate.

The rapid uptake of email and the growth of mobile devices has delivered anytime, anywhere access: enabling truly global, follow-the-sun enterprises to interact with their employees, supply chain and customers in near real-time. Social media has created online communities linking people regardless of location or time zone. For a generation brought up with these technologies the idea of a workplace without them is unthinkable – and the same is happening now with enterprise social collaboration.

Starting with SMS, instant messaging and blogs and taking a more structured form with social networks such as Facebook and Twitter, collaborative media are now the new norm by which the next generation of employees communicate. In fact, for many under the age of 20, email is almost redundant as they instead use the messaging tools of their preferred social networks. It’s not a trend, but an essential part of people’s lives, connecting them 24x7 to share news, ideas, thoughts – information – via tablets, smartphones and netbooks. They’re accustomed to accessing information via multiple channels, using the device that suits their purpose at the time. They assume that technology will be designed to meet their needs and they expect the same in their working lives.

It’s not something business can ignore. In fact, by bringing these tools into the working environment a business can take advantage of collective knowledge, make it easier for people to solve problems and work together, become more responsive, more competitive. Enterprise social collaboration can put your business ahead of the curve.

Even some of the new technologies are out of date

Email, corporate intranets and knowledge management solutions would hardly be considered ‘old’ technologies. But in the context of true collaboration they are out-dated, using rigid methodologies and structures that don’t take advantage of the free-form approach of enterprise social collaboration. Breaking away from fixed workflows and enabling free communication and discussion enables employees to find the most effective way of solving each new challenge rather than following a single, inflexible approach. It frees creativity, empowers decision-making and drives greater productivity and job satisfaction.

Changing demands of a new workforce

Within a few years the ‘social media’ generation, typically spanning those in their teens to their forties, will dominate the workforce and their behavior will influence a new way of working. They expect to bring their own devices to the workplace and switch seamlessly between work and social communication, or work remotely and on the move with access to all the tools and information they need. If they do not find the tools that they need they will simply use their own or move on. To attract and retain these employees businesses will have to invest in new technology, integrating elements of social media throughout the enterprise to provide the environment in which they will be able to work most effectively.

This isn’t about pandering to their needs. A new wave of enterprise social collaboration will drive efficiency and enable greater levels of co-operation regardless of location, whilst removing much of the ‘noise’ and productivity drain that is the result of email overload in many organizations today. These new tools will help manage the volumes of data that are hampering businesses and distracting individuals from their core tasks. Anytime, anywhere working will enable employees to work in the way that is most effective for them – and most productive for the business.

‘Enterprise adoption of social software has accelerated over the past few years as companies look for competitive advantage through productivity increases generated by building a more collaborative and knowledge sharing environment.’

IDC, Enterprise Collaboration and Social Solutions: Competitive Analysis
Your journey to social collaboration, enabled by Atos

In most businesses there is no single platform that delivers multiple methods of collaborating, sharing and managing projects and workflow, making it necessary to carefully assess the needs of the business and determine the most effective route towards further integration.

In our own organization we have already started to implement collaborative technologies and ways of working based on an understanding of our existing communications and IT infrastructure. This approach enables us to help you based on our practical experiences of the challenges and obstacles we needed to overcome in a real, working environment.

Once we have established a clear view of your business we then start to define a roadmap that will move you towards a fully enabled collaborative environment at a pace that suits the needs and expectations of your business. This roadmap is implemented using technology to support the core business, its internal operations and the needs of the users and their working ‘communities’.

Choosing the right technology

Every collaborative solution requires the careful integration of different technologies to create the right landscape for the individual business. This includes a range of different applications that go far beyond communication and social networking tools to include content management, process handling, resource planning, analysis, interpretation and reporting. In many cases additional niche products will be required to deliver specific functionality unique to the needs of an industry sector or business. It’s essential to ensure that these applications are carefully integrated to create a seamless social platform rather than simply implement a series of disconnected and unstructured communication and resource management solutions.

We’ve looked at over 200 of the existing hardware and software technologies designed to enable collaborative working and evaluated how they fit into the development of an enterprise social collaboration solution.

By assessing offerings from leading vendors and emerging specialists including ERP, ECM, unified communications and enterprise social networking we have assembled a toolkit with which we can create the most appropriate solution, always based on the best option for your business.

The Atos journey to enterprise social collaboration

Our evolutionary process gradually delivers the necessary changes throughout your organization using a four step approach that we have developed to deliver your business objectives. Getting this pace right is critical to the success of the project: moving too fast will lose the support of your employees whilst moving too slowly will lead to disillusionment as they fail to see the benefits of the new system quickly enough. As with the environment we are seeking to build, collaboration with your people is key throughout the process.
Step one: Define your strategy

This is where we work with you to assess how enterprise social collaboration can help you achieve your business goals and review your existing application landscape in preparation for the creation of your own vision of collaboration. It's an essential step in aligning your priorities with your implementation roadmap and enables us to set the pace appropriate for your people and your organization.

Once your social strategy is defined we can then move to product selection, creating a full business case based on our independent advice. We will then create an implementation program that drives community adoption across your business based on tangible and measurable benefits designed to deliver value.

Step two: Deploy and integrate

Our integration blueprint encompasses all of the technologies and processes that your people use to collaborate and defines how we will bring these into a single, unified structure whilst preserving or enhancing their efficiency. Broken and inefficient processes are analyzed and removed or fixed and new ones interfaced with your internal systems.

Using our industrialized systems integration methodology we then deploy the solution across your entire business as well as extending integration to external platforms essential to deliver the full benefits of enterprise social collaboration.

Step three: Ensure successful adoption

Removing any barriers to adoption is essential to avoid employees simply ignoring the new system and using their existing tools. By understanding the needs of the user and effectively demonstrating the benefits of any change we will help to promote adoption across your business. A collaborative environment is dynamic and needs to reflect the real needs of the users, thus part of this process includes listening and applying any lessons we learned during the deployment phase.

A correctly designed environment will naturally gain advocates and these users will help with the viral roll-out of the new system. As with social media, once a ‘critical mass’ begin to see and understand the benefits of the new system they will drive broader uptake.

Step four: Manage and maintain

We will provide the right blend of application and data hosting with ongoing operational support as well as provide long-term application lifecycle management. By gathering feedback we will be able to suggest changes that could then be incorporated into future product releases, ensuring that your systems continue to evolve as the needs and expectations of your users change.

Leading the market: blueKiwi from Atos

An Atos company, blueKiwi is Europe’s leading provider of enterprise social collaboration software. Its solutions help companies of all sizes - and across industries as diverse as financial services, insurance, banking, telecommunications, utilities, retail, and consulting firms - connect with their customers through an enterprise social network. blueKiwi social networking software enables organizations to improve productivity and grow innovation through the open and collaborative sharing between internal (employees, members, or staff) and external (customers, partners, or students) communities. blueKiwi is available as a hosted SaaS (software on demand) with the option of a Private Cloud configuration. blueKiwi is available on many devices including mobile platforms such as tablets and smartphones.

blueKiwi helps:

- Drive company innovation
- Improve productivity, lower costs and reduce time to action
- Energize sales, marketing and product teams
- Improve communication and develop loyalty
- Facilitate new employee on-boarding and training
- Manage documents, events and tasks for projects or interest groups
- Establish a culture of creative thinking across the organization.
The new workplace

With a collaborative environment, based on social media, the new workplace is wherever it needs to be. Mobility is the new standard and employees will be free to work where and when they are most productive. Careful management will create a much more flexible approach that better serves the work/life balance of the individual and the needs of the business.

In addition the trend for people to use their own devices (smartphones, tablets, netbooks etc) within the workplace is hard to resist but poses significant compliance and security risks. However, a collaborative environment based in the cloud or delivered on an SaaS basis can take advantage of this trend whilst protecting the business.

This new way of working will be a driver of change across the organization, encouraging people to work more effectively with suppliers and customers and breaking the dependence on outdated, linear workflows. At the same time some of the new challenges will become easier to handle. For example, Big Data threatens to overwhelm business, but by making it easier for individuals to access and collectively analyze and interpret only the information they need, decision making will become devolved, faster and more accurate.

For us enterprise social collaboration is about designing, implementing and operating collaborative solutions within your existing IT landscape and business processes. At the same time it’s about promoting and fostering the cultural change within your organization that will encourage new behavior and accelerate the successful uptake of the new system.

La Poste sees benefit of social network

France’s leading postal operator and leading European provider of consumer retail services, La Poste, used blueKiwi from Atos to build an internal social network that would allow them to easily exchange ideas and encourage stronger relationships across different locations and lines of business, reducing dependency on costly face-to-face meetings.

Since creating the network the company has increased engagement and interaction between geographically dispersed employees and reduced labor and travel costs by encouraging members to engage in discussion and information exchange instead of in-person meetings. As a result the original project has been expanded to create three new communities within La Poste Groupe.
In 2011 60% of firms had social technology investments. Integration is a necessary step before social technologies can have broad-based business impact.

Forrester, Integration: The Next Frontier For Social Enterprise
‘Our ambition is to be a zero email company within three years.’

Thierry Breton, CEO, Atos 2011
Looking beyond email

At Atos, we believe that Zero email™ is the best managerial concept to drive our organization to become a truly social organization, fully adopting the technologies of the future workplace. Based on our own experience we have created an approach that will help you transform the way employees communicate and collaborate.

One in five UK workers spend 32 days a year managing email.1
25 percent of the average corporate worker’s day is spent on email related tasks.2
48 percent of managers find the need to constantly reply to emails stressful.3

There’s no doubt that email has been a powerful enabler that has delivered benefits in both social and business environments, but its success has also brought with it a number of problems. Today most employees spend so much time simply processing the volume of emails that they receive, many not directly requiring their attention, that it is negatively affecting their productivity. Management via email has become impersonal, creating distance between teams, and email lacks the flexibility to foster a genuinely collaborative working environment.

At Atos we have recognized this challenge within our own business and implemented a strategy to move away from a reliance on internal email by the end of 2013, replacing it with a much more productive, collaborative environment. This doesn’t mean losing the benefits that email offers. Instead, by introducing an enterprise social network integrated with our core systems and processes, we will enhance the power of social media. The result and processes, we will enhance the power network integrated with our core systems.

Instead, by introducing an enterprise social collaboration for a better way of working


Individuals will be able to switch between workgroups as their responsibilities change, removing much of the background ‘noise’ of broadcast email and ensuring they are focused only on the tasks relevant to them.

Management will be able to keep in touch with their teams and oversee the projects more easily, enabling them to direct their attention where it is most needed.

New employees will become part of the team more quickly and effectively, with easy access to support, training and development in a more natural and welcoming environment.

Delivery teams will be able to share information more effectively and work collectively towards clear and common goals.

Visibility will improve across the business as the status of any project will be clearer, making it possible to effectively focus resource in areas where it is needed.

By reducing the tendency to check emails at home there will be a removal of the ‘blurring’ of work and social life, providing a better work/life balance.

We believe removing email can increase productivity by up to 20% by connecting people with relevant content, enabling them to find information more easily and helping to reduce the cost involved in managing information. This is supported by applications being available anywhere, at any time, and via any device. Working more collaboratively breaks information silos, creates greater transparency, and offers significant financial savings. It’s part of the journey towards a truly collaborative working environment.

Zero email™ in your organization

Our Zero email™ offering is unique as it is based on our own experience in implementing such an initiative internally. The offering uses our transition to becoming a Zero email Company™ and combines it with our long history and expertise in consulting with international enterprises and national bodies, implementing leading-edge technologies, and running business processes in a secure environment. We work in partnership with our clients, defining their ideal ‘to be’ environment and crafting the building blocks of change that suit them. We have comprehensive experience and knowledge of the market and can identify which technologies and tools will best align with your requirements, from basic collaboration or knowledge management tools to full enterprise social network solutions, we define the best supporting technologies to fit your needs.

Email is not the answer

Can be distracting, damaging productivity: how frequently do you check email?
Workflow can become blurred: the cc that allocates tasks without discussion
Information management problems: the inbox becomes a filing cabinet
It creates silos: teams become distant as they work only via email
It damages innovation: discussions are less effective and creativity is hampered.

Source info to be in footnote
Our expertise in enterprise social collaboration

With our own internal move to eliminate email and create a collaborative working environment based on social media we have gained the expertise of delivering on an enterprise scale.

This experience is also backed by our global presence, giving us the ability to design, deliver and deploy in parallel across multiple locations, worldwide, saving time whilst preserving the quality and integrity of the product. This ability to deliver is backed by solutions built using proven technology and supported by our ability to host solutions in the cloud with 99.9 per cent availability. We are experts in data protection and information security, ensuring that you can operate a comprehensive and powerful collaborative working environment whilst minimising the risk of security or legislative issues.

Working with you we will help make collaboration tools the cornerstone of your IT landscape, helping define the evolutionary path for your business, based on solid objectives and a strong business case. Collaboration is about people and, as the workforce evolves, so will the expectations of your employees. We understand this and as a result every aspect of our solution is designed with the user in mind. Only by doing this can we deliver the full benefit of collaboration and give your people the tools they need to give your business long-term competitive advantage.

A new wave of social media is changing the way people communicate, creating a flexible, collaborative environment that fosters creativity and drives greater efficiency. The next generation of employees are already taking advantage of these changes in their social lives: and they’ll expect the same in the workplace. The employee that delivers this will attract and retain the best talent, reaping the rewards of a more productive workforce, more effective communication and, ultimately, gaining competitive advantage.
The Social Collaboration Evolution Lifecycle

**Awareness**
- Email check
- Inspiration session
- Zero email game
- Quick scan
- Zero inbox
- Zero email network

**Envision**
- Vision & strategy
- Maturity scan
- Work style analysis
- Business case / risk
- Requirements
- Roadmap

**Experiment**
- Pilot plan & action
- Community management
- Persona’s
- Process analysis & network analysis
- KPIs

**Implement**
- Deployment program
- Integration
- KPI dashboard
- Communication & change management

**Nurture**
- Performance management
- Managed services
- Continuous learning
- Evaluation & improvement plan
- Continuous learning

Enterprise social collaboration for a better way of working
About Atos

Atos is an international information technology services company with annual 2011 pro forma revenue of EUR 8.5 billion and 74,000 employees in 48 countries. Serving a global client base, it delivers hi-tech transactional services, consulting and technology services, systems integration and managed services. With its deep technology expertise and industry knowledge, it works with clients across the following market sectors: Manufacturing, Retail, Services, Public, Health & Transports, Financial Services, Telecoms, Media & Technology, Energy & Utilities.

Atos is focused on business technology that powers progress and helps organizations to create their firm of the future. It is the Worldwide Information Technology Partner for the Olympic and Paralympic Games and is quoted on the Paris Eurolist Market. Atos operates under the brands Atos, Atos Consulting & Technology Services, Atos Worldline and Atos Worldgrid.

For more information, visit: atos.net