

Enhancing organizational learning in the implementation company with enterprise social software

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Abstract: The paper contains a description of a social software platform prepared especially to address the need for supporting the processes of organizational learning. Different kinds of social software were used and their suitability in business environment was discussed. According to the SLATES paradigm formulated by McAfee (McAfee, 2006) social software can be used to achieve many different goals, many of them related to organizational learning. Finding the right tool to support the social part of learning in organizations seems to be very important nowadays, when many companies have to bear with global competition and build their competitive advantage on effective human capital management. We believe that there is a need for establishing a clear insight into advantages of using social software within knowledge-based organization.

Key words: organizational learning, wikis, blogs, RSS, tags, Enterprise 2.0, social networking

Introduction

During the last years we were witnessing a huge change in the way people exchange different kind of resources. This change comes from the proliferation of the Internet as a medium. In the first phase Internet was just another medium of mass-communication. The websites were rather static and there existed relatively small number of content providers. After some time the situation begin to change and previous content receivers were becoming content providers. Also the number of services emerged which primary goal was to enable communication and resource exchange between people. Among such services there are social networking websites, wikis, blogs, RSS, social bookmarking, tags.

When Internet gained on popularity companies realized that boundaries that were protected them from competitors from other parts of the world had disappeared. The exchange of digitalized resources like codified knowledge, information and multimedia contributed to knowledge diffusion and make it easier to gain competence in chosen area for barely anyone. It occurred that at the same time the phenomenon of globalization took place and connectivity between previously separated markets caused that exchange of goods became much easier. One of the most noticeable result of these changes for the companies was the need to adjust to the changing environment much faster than ever before. That fact forced companies to look for a solutions that could help them to manage a change more effectively.

Because of the key role of knowledge in today's economy it is said that this is a knowledge-based economy (Ziemba, 2009). In 1996 OECD (OECD, 1996) defined knowledge-based economy as an economy which is "directly based on the production, distribution and use of knowledge and information". Different definitions of the knowledge-based economy point to the key role of knowledge in creating added value by the company and as a competitive advantage. Often exhibited is also the link between the use of the knowledge and the use of information technology. Contemporary enterprises have to deal with the situation, in which the success of the enterprise depends not solely on the amount of the traditional forms of capital, above all, on the quality and quantity of knowledge held by the organization.

The relationship between the usage of knowledge and the usage of information and communication technology (ICT) is often mentioned. It is based on the fact that ICT is very effective in gathering, creating, transforming and transferring explicit knowledge (Roberts, 2000).

In the knowledge-based economy there are many companies which do business with knowledge and competences of their employees as a key assets. One of the most widespread kind of such enterprises are the companies that offer consulting services. The growing need for management information systems (MIS) and especially Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) systems resulted in establishing many consulting companies that specialize in implementing MIS according to the specific requirements of their customers. Those companies build their competitive advantage on the base of the knowledge about the best practices applied to the certain line of business and the knowledge about adjusting ERP system to the requirements. The significant amount of creativity is often needed to find the right solution of the emergent problems.

Implementing companies seek the tools which can help them in managing organizational knowledge. Probably the most important feature of such a solution would be the ability to gather and preserve organizational knowledge. The organization has to be prepared for the situation of losing their employees. It is also important because knowledge in the knowledge base can be sought which means that the preserved knowledge can be reusable and can be used for teaching purposes. Usually the employees of the implementation company form teams in which they work together during the implementation projects. They have to be able to communicate and collaborate effectively (Bajenaru, 2010).

This paper aims to provide an insight on how social software can be used in business environment. We concentrate on implementation company which is a good example of knowledge-based organization. First paragraph contains the state-of-art in the researches in the field of organizational learning with strong emphasis put on the social aspect of learning. The second depicts how social software affects the processes of organizational learning. In the third paragraph we decided to provide a description of how a platform of enterprise social software for implementation company has been designed and how different kinds of social software were used. The last paragraph contains a conclusion remarks.

Organizational Learning

The above mentioned factors caused that organizational learning (OL) plays important role in the contemporary enterprises. Many of them decided to pay closer attention to the processes that comprise organizational learning. Researchers underlines its potential to increase organizations' overall performance (Lopez, Montes Peon, & Vasquez Ordas, 2005).

Organizational learning can be defined as: "The process of improving actions through better knowledge and understanding" (Fiol & Lyles, 1985). Although relatively old this definition can useful because it is an example of one of the most popular approach towards OL that stresses the importance of improving quality of organizational behavior. Other definitions or explanations what are the characteristics of OL emphasize the fact that learning does not necessarily lead to improved quality of organizations' actions and occurs in an iterative manner. For example Rowe and Boyle define OL as: "An iterative process of action and reflection that results in the modification of an organization's actions". This definition underlines the fact that learning is an outcome of the enterprise experience processing in which in order to learn it is necessary to reflect on the results of the organizations' actions. Many researches come to the conclusion that learning in the organizations depends heavily on the exchange of knowledge between members of this organization and emphasize the social aspect of learning in the organizations (Brown & Duguid, 1991), (Lave & Wenger, 1991), (Schwandt & Marquardt, 2000), (Sanchez, 2001).

Easterby-Smith and Araujo (Easterby-Smith & Araujo, 1999) argue that organizational learning process can be perceived from two distinct perspectives: technical and social. Those researchers who put more attention to the technical perspective concentrate on the effectiveness of information processing, information interpretation and response to information which comes from both inside and outside of the organization. The other emphasize the role that plays experience obtained in the workplace and how this experience can be derived from different sources, both tacit and explicit.

There are certain characteristics that affect the way people learn at the group level. Among them we can distinguish interpretation, knowledge sharing and storing. That corresponds to Huber's (Huber, 1991) findings on four main constructs of OL: knowledge acquisition, information distribution, information interpretation, and organizational memory. Knowledge acquisition refers to the process of collecting knowledge from different sources. It means that we assume that the knowledge is some kind of resource that can be gathered.

One of the main assumption is that a group, be it small group of close friends or colleagues from the same department affects the processes of learning which occur at the individual level. It means that an individual, who

learns within organization is forced to customize his or hers cognitive processes to those imposed by a group. Hence interacting with other members of the organization causes the changes in the way an individual interprets situation, experience and information. Besides changes on the cognition level there are also changes at the behavioural level what means that an individual changes its behavior according to group. Wenger and Lave (Lave & Wenger, 1991) argue that group of people working together on the same tasks form communities of practice. The appropriate conditions for organizational learning are obtained by participating in these communities. Collective learning comes from the effort to achieve the common goal and from shaping social relations within the group.

Similar view is presented by Weick and Roberts (Weick & Roberts, 1993) who state that the behavior of units is ruled by the knowledge obtained from the relations with other people and shared ideas on the group in which these relations take place.

Enterprise 2.0 in enhancing processes of organizational learning

Enterprise 2.0 is a term first coined by Andrew McAfee from MIT (McAfee, 2006). Enterprise 2.0 refers to applying technics encompassed in the term Web 2.0 in supporting internal communication within corporate environment. Web 2.0 refers to the changes in the usage of Internet towards greater participation of users in the process of content creation and towards amplified collaboration among Internet users. Such effect is achieved thanks to the new functionalities of websites and new applications that ease content sharing in the Internet. Among them we can mention: comments published to the content on the websites, feedback in the form of content evaluation, subscription to the chosen content, greater involvement to the content creation through widespread of wiki approach and blogs.

Enterprise 2.0 enhances the communication within organization. It helps with conveying by the management information on the goals of the enterprise and methods that are going to be applied to reach them. On the other side, thanks to E2.0 an average member of the organization can easily express his or hers own opinion and evaluation of the management's plans and activities. E2.0 provides a platform for knowledge creation, both in personal dimension and on the level of the whole enterprise. It can be also used to disseminate information and to enhance collaboration (Zhang A. M. Hildebrandt H., 2009).

There are several technologies that the term Enterprise 2.0 refers to:

- Blogs,
- Wiki,
- Tags,
- RSS,
- Social ranking.

All above-mentioned technologies have one characteristic in common: they are really simple to use. They don't resemble other groupware technologies, nor tools for organizational knowledge management. They operate on the basis of the Web and users don't need anything to use them but internet browser (except for RSS, in case of which browser must support RSS feeds). In addition their specification are freely available and because the simplicity of the concept they are easy to implement for software providers.

In contrast to the traditional understanding of creating personal Web pages one of the main technologies of Web 2.0 – blogs – allow for definitely more frequent and more regular updates of the page content and for easier interaction between page creator and his or hers readers. The tools like trackback and pingbacks allow the blog authors for an almost immediate notification about the fact of publication of links to their blog posts on the other Web sites (Lennon, 2009).

Blogs can be used very effectively for publication of the employees' opinions on management decisions and current situation of the company. They can also trigger discussion about subjects important for the company. In the business environment Kolari et al. (Kolari et al., 2007) indicate that blogs can be used to present and discuss the product portfolio of the company and to publish information and opinions useful for the members of the organization.

Really Simple Syndication – serves to inform users (here referred to as subscribers) of the changes being made to the content of the specific web page. In the corporate environment RSS can be used to inform subscribers about the new content appearing on the blog of the member of the board. One of the main issue with using RSS is

the proper composition of the headline that is received by subscribers. It is important to formulate a headline in such way that it attracts a potential reader.

Enterprise 2.0 assumes is user's freedom in development of links between the elements of organizational knowledge. Before there were always somebody (knowledge engineer or webmaster) who provided a classification (taxonomy) of organizational knowledge. However, the taxonomy does not verify well in terms of the classification of content on Web pages. In the report cited by the McAfee (McAfee, 2006), developed by Forrester Research, the second most frequently pointed by experienced users problem in the use of corporate intranets was inappropriate content classification. In the framework of Enterprise 2.0 users apply so-called tags to categorize the content. Such a classification system began to be called folksonomy. In practice, this means that people (users) provide a classification scheme for themselves.

In the enterprise tags allow employees to classify the content gathered in the corporate intranet. From the end user's point of view of they ensure an easier search for information. However, from the knowledge engineer's point of view they allow for a very easy check, what types of information are considered by users as the most desirable. Thanks to such solution content creators for the intranet are gaining knowledge of the habits of users regarding searching through the content. In addition, using the web analytics tools it is possible to determine the path, users move through the intranet, which further increases the resource info on their demands for the organizational knowledge.

The Wiki definition taken from the Wikipedia (a web encyclopedia, created using wiki technology) describes wiki as a "website which allows its users to add, modify, or delete its content via a web browser usually using a simplified markup language or a rich-text editor" ("Wiki," n.d.). One of the biggest advantages of wiki usage is its simplicity – it doesn't require a user to learn anything to be able to edit a content of the webpage.

Wikis are attractive to companies because of the low cost of implementation. Actually no specialists are needed for this task. Virtually everyone, regardless of their skills can become the provider of the content. In accordance with the rules of the Wiki a software gives the user the ability to record changes, and if user has administrative permissions Wiki gives him or her also the privilege of the approval of modifications made by other users, or their withdrawal. Creating Wiki pages is easier than creating pages using HTML, because the Wiki software offers the user an editor and a simplified syntax.

Among different purposes for which wikis are applied in the corporate environment we can introduce:

- Knowledge management,
- Documentation management,
- Project management,
- Notetaking,
- Building intranets.

2.2.5. Głosowanie społecznościowe

Social ranking refers to providing evaluations of the content of the website. The members of community gives grades to the content thus providing their opinions on how the content is perceived in terms of usefulness, readability, clarity and completeness. On the other hand when the content author repeatedly receives high grades it can him or her with building social capital and higher social rank.

In the case of corporate's content social ranking allows to achieve the following purposes: check the quality of the knowledge stored in the knowledge base, evaluating knowledge vendors (authors). On the basis of these opinions, it is possible to identify people, being the source of knowledge in the topic, as well as people endowed with a special skill for knowledge transfer. The height of the grades can be used also for tuning of search algorithm and to create a better recommendation. Using the data collected in the server logs and analysis of the data from ratings issued by users, it is possible to better match the search results to the person's needs.

According to Huber (Huber, 1991) there are four main processes (constructs) of OL: knowledge acquisition, information distribution, information interpretation, and organizational memory. Knowledge acquisition refers to the process of collecting knowledge from different sources. It means that we assume that the knowledge is some kind of resource that can be gathered.

We suggest that to support the processes of the organizational learning a platform comprised of social software can be used. We designed and created such platform with respect for the strength of each considered types of social software.

Knowledge acquisition is a process which is a base for any other constructs / processes defined by Huber.

Knowledge acquisition has been always problematic because of the necessity to extract knowledge from experts who frequently don't know exactly what they know or don't know how to codify the knowledge in their possession. Employees can be a great source of knowledge. Tools like blogs and wikis can be of great help in such case because the simplicity and promptness of use lies in the very nature of these tools. Even very busy experts can find time to publish status or provide short comment expressing their view on specific topic. Through the ability to publish a question on one's wall the speed of propagation of information within organization can be noticeably higher.

Information distribution refers to the methods used to convey from one source of content to the other. Thanks to the effective knowledge distribution organization provides itself the increase the efficiency of their activities. It is a common problem for knowledge based organization that different pieces of information are stored in different parts, departments of organization. Thus the solution proposed in this paper is based on the assumption that we should provide means for ensuring easy access to organizational knowledge to every organization's member.

There is a number of tools encompassed in the term ESS that can be used to address this issue. First of all RSS is a tool that can be used to simplify the process of notifying content receivers about the novelties in the organization's knowledge base. Through the subscription service users can easily stay in touch with the changes made to the specific topic. Such subscription can be made for the topic created in wiki. Wikis can be used to gather and store organizational knowledge. Blogs alike can be used to disseminate knowledge within corporate environment. Through the publication of the blog post its author offers a piece of knowledge to the public.

Information interpretation is important to learning because even when we gain some knowledge and we share it with others it's not always enough for organizational learning to occur. Very often it is necessary to build a shared mental model for the proper knowledge incorporation and usage. To achieve such common understanding it is necessary to provide a proper interpretation. According to the findings of Cress and Kimmerle (Cress & Kimmerle, 2008) wikis can support learning through enabling processes of assimilation and accommodation. Each user that reads wiki topic can also edit it or/and comment on it. Through the joint collaboration on that specific topic a community is able to gain common interpretation and understanding. We should also take into account that blog authors usually let readers to comment on their work. This can also led users to obtain common interpretation. Using social networking tools like commenting on other users' statuses people can enhance shared understanding.

Before organizational knowledge can be used it needs to be gathered first. Then it has to be accessible for its potential users. Organizational memory refers to the solutions that provide an ability for the organizational knowledge to be stored and effectively searched. In terms of ESS wikis are a great tool to fulfill that need. One of their main characteristic is built-in versioning. In typical wiki implementation it is easy to track the changes being made to the content of the topics.

Enterprise social software platform for an implementation company

Based on presented characteristics of enterprise social software a platform supporting the processes of organizational learning has been prepared. In order to simplify the process of its creation an existing wiki engine has been used – namely Foswiki. Foswiki is an open source project that is a so-called fork of much older an popular wiki engine called TWiki. Both engines are written in Perl programming language. Foswiki is offered to the public at no cost under the rules of GPL license (“Foswiki - FAQGNUGeneralPublicLicence,” 2012). Thanks to that everyone is allowed to use it and to modify its source code. It also worth to note that Foswiki's base functionality can be easily extended with the usage of many ready-to-use add-ons.

The ESS platform has been designed to enhance organizational learning and one of the most important aspects of OL is collaboration and knowledge sharing. Hence the platform design has to take into account the information needs of different organizational members. Because of scarcity of space we don't provide here the whole analysis but only the most important facts. Eight main groups of employees have been identified:

1. Board of directors – their needs in terms of information concentrate on the results of implementation projects and problems with its realization which can affect financials of the organization
2. Implementation consultants – they need every information that can help them to end an implementation project within the deadline and budget.
3. Customer service consultants – they need every information that is connected with the details of implementation for the specific customer.
4. Programmers, IT consultants – they focus on gathering requirements for specific solutions and developing it as well as maintaining IT solutions being implemented within the information system.

5. Process support (assistants, office workers) – mainly they need to know who is working where and when.
6. Project managers – information that can help to plan and monitor the implementation project.
7. Sales department – they must know what are the features of the IS and previously applied solutions.
8. Customers – need to know what are the options in terms of functionality of the IS and how to use it – user's manuals.

There are different goals for which people prescribed to the above mentioned roles use a wiki. Everybody is going to use it in the search for knowledge but some of them will write down knowledge to the system as well. Project manager can use a wiki system to oversee the outcomes of the projects he or she manages.

The core technology of the platform is wiki. Information are stored in the platform in the form of so-called topics. Every topic is one wiki page, with its own unique URL. Topic consist of its content, template which describes how the content should be displayed and data form, containing structured information about the content of the topic. Hence it is possible to treat topic as a unique typed knowledge object – the name of the data form becomes an object identifier and form itself, along with the template describes the details of implementation (Harvey, 2010). Every employee is entitled to create new topics, comment on the content of the existing topics and modify its content. Thus the main paradigm of the wiki technology is here directly implemented.

The whole knowledge base was divided into several namespaces, containing knowledge related to different subjects. In the terminology used in the Foswiki project those namespace are called webs. The under-lying assumption says that knowledge related to projects, customers, business processes and IT solutions should be described with different metadata. This kind of partition reflects the actual needs of the particular organizational roles . On the other hand it helps with the creation of separated semantic namespaces for different realms of organizational knowledge. Consequently it helps with searching for information since everyone who wants to find information about, for instance, projects, will go to the namespace 'Projects'. Foswiki itself doesn't restrict users to look for topics within one web.

For the implementation company there were following webs defined: Projects, Solutions, Customers, Best Practices and Tasks. Projects is the web designed to gather knowledge related to the projects being realized by the implementation company. Solution is a web designed to gather knowledge related to the IT solutions prepared by the company in order to realize specific customer's requirement. Customer contains basic information about customers and contact data. Best Practices is devoted to gather knowledge about typical implementation and service problems and, of course, how to solve these problems. Tasks is the web for managing workflow - assigning and monitoring execution of tasks during implementation projects.

Because part of Foswiki is an inner macro language it is also possible to create applications within each topic. An example of such application, inspired by Peter Theony, founder of TWiki, is presented below – figure 1. This application makes it easier to search through the wiki topics.

Baza Projektów

Dodaj nowy
 Pokaż wszystkie
 Export to Excel

	Klient	Typ	Wersja	Status
Filtruj	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

Ilość rozwiązań: 0

Dodaj nowy projekt

Klient:	<input type="text"/>	
Typ:	<input type="text"/>	Wybierz typ
Projekt:	<input type="text"/>	Użyj WikiWord
DataUtw?:	<input type="text"/>	Podaj datę utworzenia
DataZak?:	<input type="text"/>	Podaj datę zakończenia
Baza:	<input type="text"/>	Podaj nazwę bazy
SAP:	<input checked="" type="radio"/> 8.81 <input type="radio"/> 8.8 <input type="radio"/> 2007A <input type="radio"/> 2004C <input type="radio"/> 7.6	
SQL:	<input checked="" type="radio"/> 2008R2 <input type="radio"/> 2008 <input type="radio"/> 2005 <input type="radio"/> 2000	
Status:	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Gotowe <input type="radio"/> Realizowane <input type="radio"/> Porzucone	

Stwórz nowy projekt

Figure 1 An example of application in Foswiki

The data contained in the data forms can be used to define knowledge domains. By defining the domain of knowledge it becomes possible to create knowledge networks, built on the basis of the content contained in the individual topics. For example: for the topic associated with the category 'Service', containing information related to the installation of additional solutions, where service consultants are the target audience it is possible to define the competence of the author of this specific topic. In turn, on the basis of information about the competence of the individual authors of entries it is easy to point to areas where you can expect expert advice from a specific person. In the case of a large organization identifying the source of competence can be laborious. In order to minimize the costs of acquiring knowledge we must provide a simple and effective way of creating knowledge networks. The network allows for the exchange of information in the domain, mainly between people who sets it up. At the same time, thanks to the model of knowledge creation and knowledge access in wiki the free movement of knowledge is provided. Also outside of the network it was created by organizational members with similar competence. Tags have been implemented in the platform using the add-on called 'TagMe'. It allows to attach to selected pages (or to all) a part of the page, in which it is possible to choose one or more tags from the set of previously created. It is also possible to create new tags or to modify existing. Users can check how many times different tags were used to provide description to the topic's content. This allows you to gain knowledge about the popularity of different thematic spheres in the knowledge base. Figure 2 shows the browsing view for all tags created for the topic describing an IT solution.

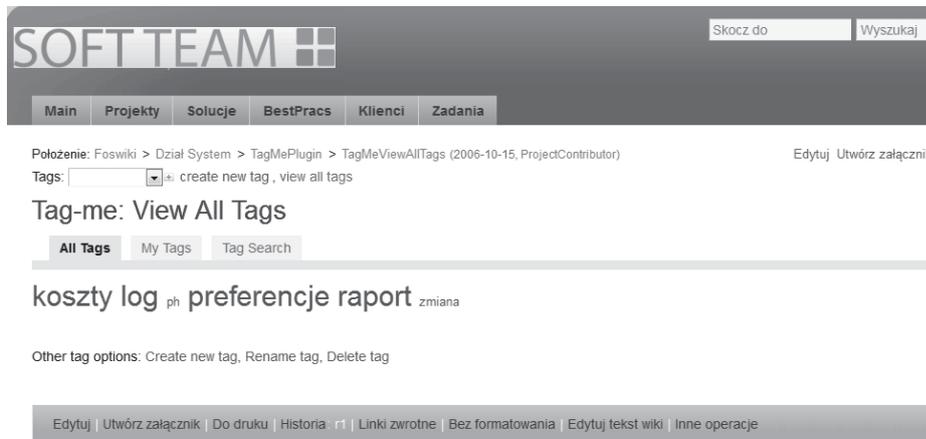


Figure 2 Browsing tags

Users can also use tags to search within knowledge base. It is possible to browse through topics using tags applied to the content by other users, thus taking advantage of folksonomy (Tosic & Nejkovic, 2009). The classification we obtain this way allows for better fit to the content gathered in the organizational knowledgebase. One of the technics especially useful for establishing and controlling the quality of the knowledge gathered in the knowledge base is social ranking. In the enterprise social software platform users can evaluate the topics in wiki. The topics are evaluated according to three categories – tab 1.

Table 1 Categories for topics evaluation

Category	Goal
Usability	To gather information evaluating the usefulness of the topic
Completeness	To evaluate the completeness of the knowledge in the topic
Clarity	To evaluate if the knowledge in the topic is presented in the form easy to comprehend

Data gathered from ranks provided by users can be used to determine the best sources of knowledge. Such employees can be offered a special to bonus what can be motivated for others. The other possible area for utilization for that data is social networks analysis. We can find out who is learning from whom analyzing the grades provided by content readers to content authors.

One of the unmet information needs, revealed during the initial audit was the need of easy access to the news coming both from inside of the organization and from the outside. RSS seems to fit perfectly to address this need. We decided to utilize RSS to present information from the SAP’s world and from inner ‘Best Practices’ webspace.

The blog functionality has been added to the platform in order to provide a better insight into the solutions prepared by employees. Also the management has a chance to speak up. Using blogs is feasible in explaining the reasoning staying behind business decisions. From an average employee point of view it exposes a chance to comment on the blog thus expressing his or hers attitude towards the management’s posts.

Future research

The organizations faced a number of obstacles in use of social solutions to support identified learning methods. One of the most important is the lack of support for knowledge distribution outside the organization. Such knowledge is available at the user level, group level and organizational level, however, is not distributed further. For knowledge-based organizations and any other innovation-centric organizations it is important to share and acquire knowledge from the environment. Therefore, it is necessary to undertake studies on the use of innovative solutions in this area.

Problem of knowledge exchange is also visible in virtual organizations where the dynamics of changes in the connections among business partners is also high. It is particularly important in the case of an application of heterogeneous IT systems of business partners. The challenges that occur in B2B interactions include (Li, 2010):

- an organization's autonomy, which means that activities, tasks and decisions taking place in an organization should be hidden from the environment,
- an integration of various business processes taking place in the environment as part of own processes,
- a direct integration of management IT systems without the use of intermediary solutions that can impact the exchange of data.

These solutions include semantic ontologies to support a codified, explicit knowledge representation and software agents to support the distribution of so-encoded knowledge resources. Its use allows for easier searching and classifying knowledge contained in the system, provides a better understanding of the information content and improves the development process, usability, maintenance and interoperability of such knowledge resources. Ontologies also support the possibility of using modern IT solutions such as software agents in multi-agent systems. In such systems an ontology can be seen as a representation of a software agent knowledge resource or can be used in agents communication process. In this case, ontologies support "understanding" of the message and increase software agents cooperation abilities. Semantic knowledge representation allows understanding of concepts and terms, which are also understandable for humans. It includes a set of vocabulary, semantic relationships of terms, and some simple inference rules and logic for business processes. For example a software agent can use ontology to transform the new term into the one used in the database. This contextual search ability, give an agent opportunity to acquire a better information which can be used in an agent goal realization.

The use of agent technologies will make it easier to integrate distributed devices as part of business processes in which a human being participates, dynamically specify processes with their participation, codify such processes as part of the concept of composite software and obtain new knowledge about processes and entities that participate in them.

In order to ensure interoperability in such systems, it is necessary to move from a business model which aim is to define the significance of connection of devices in the context of the resulting business objective to a technical model that allows using appropriate IT solutions supporting a given business process and ensuring that individual technical solutions work together.

Conclusions

With the growing interest in Web 2.0 technologies comes a significant increase in interest in their use in the field of knowledge management and organizational learning. This is so for several reasons among them the most important are those related to increase in meaning of knowledge in creation of value added (knowledge-based economy) and the phenomenon of prosumption. The use of social software helps in enhancing the social aspect of organizational learning. Such software has been used in support of many OL related processes: knowledge gathering, storing and sharing. But the subject of orchestration of different kinds of social software in the purpose of enhancing organizational learning hasn't drawn a lot of researcher's attention so far.

This paper aims to address the need for effective use of social software merged in one collaboration platform. The approach we applied corresponds to the SLATES paradigm proposed by one of the pioneers of Enterprise 2.0 - Andrew McAfee. The study of the literature and the analysis of weaknesses and strengths of existing social software

platforms has resulted in the social software platform prepared with clear goal of supporting organizational learning within knowledge-based organization. We presented the reasoning that stood behind that initiative. The platform has been built based on the experiences gathered in the course of participatory observation and analysis of information needs of different groups of implementation company's employees.

The use of social software gives a social aspect to the processes of organizational learning. In turn, the social nature of the collection and sharing knowledge is commonly perceived as a key factor in effective managing of organizational learning. Employees in companies where such software is being used become prosumers, what means that they are both the authors and the consumers of organizational knowledge. Hence the knowledge they provide fits better their needs and expectations.

Although there are critical comments regarding the difficulties with introduction social software to the business practice the advantages coming from ease of use, reduced cost of implementation and the benefits associated with increased productivity decide on the growing interest in social technologies by enterprises. Social software turns out to be particularly useful for companies, which are known as knowledge-based. Because most of the added value produced by this type of company results from the application of the knowledge and skills of workers, the assistive technologies in a simple and efficient knowledge management are relevant here.

Not without significance for the assessment of this type of solution is the fact of their universal use by almost all young people to communicate and exchange knowledge in the private sphere. Familiarity with various elements of Enterprise 2.0 is beneficial for acceptance of this type of software for professional applications

The social software platform in the middle of a pilot implementation in an existing company. The data gathered in the course of exploitation will serve to create an assessment of real value of this tool for supporting the processes of organizational learning.

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