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# Web 2.0 at Work: Departmental Use Cases

## Executive Overview

The introduction of Web 2.0 technologies into the enterprise greatly increases the value of your company's most important assets: employees' knowledge, relationships, and initiative. Making knowledge more visible increases innovation and shortens turnaround times. Increased collaboration accelerates productivity. Your company transforms into a more-socially connected organization that reacts faster and more effectively to the market.

## Introduction

The consumer Web has shown us the power of the Internet as a social, collaborative platform, particularly when compared to existing rigid corporate environments. Wikis, blogs, Really Simple Syndication (RSS) feeds, social networks, tagging, and mashups are flexible, user-driven tools that have the potential to bring many benefits to the enterprise. Leading companies are harnessing Web 2.0 technologies and applying them to build their next-generation workplaces. The new Enterprise 2.0 workplace becomes an internet-powered, user-focused, and community-centric social fabric. This social Web ties together people, ideas, content, processes, systems, and other enterprise artifacts. Importantly, these connections are both explicit (for example, let's have a meeting) and implicit (for example, tracking user activities to rank the relative value of documents).

In addition to connections, another key aspect of the social Web is its participative or do-it-yourself (DIY) nature. Employees are empowered to create and publish content that is easily consumable both internally within the company and externally by customers and partners. The social Web captures and makes accessible previously invisible knowledge, and ignites new conversations among employees that lead to new innovations that would not have previously occurred.

However, Web 2.0 technologies in the enterprise have significant differences from the consumer Web. Enterprises have many mission-critical processes and must often adhere to regulatory requirements. Thus, there is a need for these new tools to provide high availability, security, and integration with existing systems and applications to support data confidentiality, system reliability, auditability, and other IT requirements. Inside the enterprise, these Web 2.0 solutions must be deployable in an integrated fashion by IT to

provide employees with secure access to DIY features and integration with relevant legacy systems such as customer relationship management and e-mail. Other considerations such as liability, reputation, and validated information must also be considered, especially when Web 2.0 technologies are used for external-facing initiatives.

## Making Web 2.0 Work in the Enterprise

So how do you make this exciting new workplace a reality? Most companies don't just need a blog or wiki or social network. Their needs extend beyond to an array of custom social applications that improve productivity across many business processes and spur innovation across the enterprise. These social applications must provide user experiences that encourage employee participation and are enterprise secure. What most businesses want is a flexible, enterprise-class platform for building and deploying social applications as their needs evolve.



Figure 1: Connecting the enterprise social fabric with a flexible, enterprise-class platform for building and deploying Web 2.0-enabled social application.

## How Oracle Makes Web 2.0 Work in the Enterprise

Oracle addresses this market need by providing the industry's most complete, open and manageable enterprise portal platform that delivers richer connections and faster time-to-value. This platform from Oracle Fusion Middleware includes Oracle WebCenter Suite, an integrated suite of products used to create social applications, enterprise portals, communities, composite applications, and Internet or intranet Web sites on a standards-based, service-oriented architecture (SOA). The suite combines the development of rich internet applications; a multi-channel portal framework; and a suite of horizontal Enterprise 2.0 applications, which provide content, presence, and social networking capabilities to create a highly interactive user experience. Interacting with services such as instant messaging, blogs, wikis, RSS, tags, Voice over IP, discussion forums, activities and social networks directly within the context of a portal or an application improves user and group productivity, enhances the return on IT investments, and creates a more agile and intelligent business.



**Figure 2: The social Web ties together people, ideas, content, processes, systems, and other enterprise artifacts.**

In the pages that follow, several examples of innovative companies benefiting from Enterprise 2.0 are presented.

## Human Resources

### Company Wikis

Imagine a companywide wiki organization chart that anyone could update (with all updates tracked, of course). Now it's in the hands of every employee—not just that one poor soul tasked with maintaining organization charts—to make sure their name, title, and place in the organization is correct. Company wikis give power to the people—and human resources just took one thing off their plate.

## Internal Career Blog

How about an internal career blog or a set of blogs that provides points of view and advice on career management at your company? The good and the bad might be revealed, but won't be anything that employees aren't already saying or e-mailing to one another. With a blog, management can track what is said and be more prepared to act on what it learns.

## Recruiting Mashup

Think about the power of a recruiting mashup that brings together job postings, candidate profiles, and company benefits. Your interviewers are more productive because they can more-easily answer candidates' questions or proactively provide information to them.

## Idea Factory Community

Human resources' focus on your company's people gives it a tremendous opportunity to be at the center of the people-driven Enterprise 2.0 wave. You can start the dialogue with the executive suite about how decision-making and innovation can be transformed. Start with an idea factory community where employees can freely share ideas using wikis, blogs, and discussion forums, and see what happens.

## Finance

### Personalized Financial Dashboards

Imagine giving all the executives in your company the ability to create their own personalized financial dashboards for the businesses they run. Rather than providing fixed reporting views that are hard to change, executives could drag and drop various reporting widgets—preconnected to datasources—onto a Web-based workspace and create custom mashup dashboards on the fly. What are the benefits of this move to user-centric financial reporting? They are improved executive decision-making and better return on investment from your business intelligence investments.

### Wiki Workspace for Quarterly Budgeting Process

The quarterly budgeting process will never be the same after implementing Web 2.0 technologies. Rather than e-mailing last quarter's budget in spreadsheet attachments to your team, you could get everyone to collaborate on the same page by simply sending out a URL to a preloaded wiki-based workspace. This workspace would allow team members to comment, edit entries, upload related documents, or collaboratively drill into individual line items—all while capturing each contributor's input and making budget planning easier, faster, and more collaborative.

## Tagging and Social Search to Find Financial Documents

Financial controllers in your organization likely spend long days at the end of each quarter rolling up revenue and cost information from scattered documents, resulting in information overload. What if the salespeople and line-of-business executives who authored this profit-and-loss information could share documents so that the most up-to-date information was easily accessible by controllers even months later? With tagging and social search technologies, line-of-business owners can tag financially relevant documents with meaningful keywords. Tagging and other related user actions—such as opening a document—impact the relative ranking of these documents for social search engines, allowing controllers to quickly search and find the most relevant documents for their needs.

## Mashup-Based Trade Optimization Applications

For many large companies the finance function includes asset management, treasury, and trading operations. Trading desks, in particular, can benefit from mashup-based trade optimization applications. Mashups leverage the capabilities of rich Web 2.0 user interface technology (such as Asynchronous JavaScript and XML, or Ajax) to access distributed and remote resources, bring data and analytics together in a consistent way, and present it all in a familiar and interactive front end for traders. And mashups can easily be extended, for example, to add instant messaging feedback loops between traders.

## Marketing

### Blogs for Connecting to Customers

Are you interested in engaging customers in a two-way conversation about your products or services? Blogs are the perfect vehicle for doing just that. There are no limits to how far you can go in your implementation of customer-driven blogs. You could have a few tightly controlled corporate blogs managed by designated employees to spread official corporate messages, or you could harness the creativity of your own employees and let a thousand blogs bloom to spread the word. Either way, most companies are finding the blogosphere an effective, low-cost marketing medium to build increased awareness, acquire and retain customers, tap into customer insights, and drive more sales.

### Competitive Wikis

Competitive analysis is often a core marketing function, but staying on top of fast-moving competitors and providing timely information to salespeople is a challenge. What if everyone in your company could participate in providing competitive information? Sales, service, support, and other market-facing functions likely all have valuable pieces of information about competitors. By creating a collaborative, wiki-based workspace that is open to all employees,

marketing can tap into key competitive information, regardless of where it resides, and instantly alert sales via e-mail or RSS notifications.

### 360-Degree View of the Customer Mashup

Understanding your customer base is critical for success, but finding and aggregating all relevant internal and external information is time consuming. Keeping all the data all up to date is almost impossible. Mashups allow marketers to aggregate, synthesize, and act upon different information they need to meet their customers' needs. Mashups can bring together enterprise data from systems such as portals and CRM or enterprise resource planning applications and combine it with external data such as RSS feeds from blogs and news sites, ad hoc content from wikis, Microsoft Word documents, and other sources. The result is a dynamically refreshed 360-degree view of the customer.

### Sales Feedback Loop with Social Bookmarking and Tagging

How do you know all those materials you produce to support sales are actually useful? Would you like a dynamic feedback loop to know which marketing assets the sales force values the most? By providing social bookmarking and tagging capabilities to your sales community, you can track which content and topics are most in demand by viewing each community's tag cloud over time. It is a simple, real-time feedback loop to discover what you should focus on for future content planning.

## Research and Development

### Social Networks to Share Ideas Faster

Are you looking to accelerate your product development output? If you are in a highly competitive, intellectual property-driven industry such as pharmaceuticals or high technology, then consider creating social networks that share data and ideas interactively with the scientific community or customers relevant to your industry. Although some initially balk at this open sourcing of proprietary ideas, companies from consumer goods to pharmaceuticals to banking are using innovation communities to drive new product development at rates far above their industry norms.

### Customer Feedback

Are you still using focus groups as the primary way to glean customer requirements? Now you can engage customers with highly personalized user experiences on your Web site. For example, you can gather customer comments on product blogs or on open wiki workspaces for customer product feedback. Many companies, particularly those that sell to consumers, are also monitoring

their brand on the blogosphere to gauge customer likes and dislikes. RSS feeds from key blogs provide a way for product managers to stay on top of relevant sources of customer feedback.

### Internal Product Team Collaboration

Internal product teams can benefit from the use of wikis and blogs to augment existing collaboration tools based on portals and content management. Wikis enable mass collaboration so everyone is on the same page and can contribute and consume content with a holistic understanding of the context. Blogs encourage informal conversations that continue where meetings and hallway conversations leave off. The result is faster dissemination of ideas, broader access to best practices, and improved cohesiveness of virtual teams.

### Social Bookmarking and Tagging to Better Manage Information

Managing information overload is a big challenge for research and development organizations. Try using social bookmarking and tagging technologies to help employees better manage their information, easily share relevant content with colleagues, and quickly find experts on a given topic. Social bookmarking and tagging coupled with a social search engine can improve search results and actually improve your ability to locate information as more people and more content become part of the community.

### Conclusion

Making Web 2.0 work for your enterprise is more than just deploying a one-off blog or wiki. Organizations will need to extend beyond to an array of custom social applications that improve productivity across many business processes and spur innovation throughout the enterprise. These new user-focused, participatory tools require the same high availability, security, and integration with existing systems and applications that mission-critical processes and applications require. Oracle WebCenter Suite empowers communities, maximizes IT resources, increases innovation, and transforms the enterprise into a more-socially connected, agile organization that can react faster and more effectively to the market while providing the enterprise-class performance enterprises require.



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