

Experiencing the New Social Enterprise

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Social media and networking tools, popularly known as Web 2.0 technologies, are rapidly transforming user expectations of enterprise systems. Many organizations are investing in these new tools to cultivate a modern user experience in an “Enterprise 2.0” environment that unlocks the full potential of traditional IT systems and fosters collaboration in key business processes. »

In a recent InfoWorld survey

(see related story page 5), 7 out of 10 respondents indicated that their organizations are intent on delivering modern user experiences to employees, customers and business partners.

Today's knowledge worker is typically overwhelmed by e-mail and conference calls and frustrated by an inability to intuitively derive answers from the applications at hand. But through highly customizable applications and collaborative services such as blogs, wikis and social communities, organizations can empower their employees with access to information and content in context and optimize the connections between people, information and applications.

Andrew McAfee, generally credited with coining the term Enterprise 2.0 in a 2006 article in MIT Sloan Management Review, observed that these technologies have the potential to create "an online platform with a constantly changing structure built by distributed, autonomous and largely self-interested peers. On this platform, authoring creates content; links and tags knit it together; and search, extensions, tags and signals make emergent structures and patterns in the content visible, and help people stay on top of it all."¹

As the concept has evolved, Enterprise 2.0 has at times seemed an almost mythic challenge. Advocates were chided for overpromising what it could deliver, and detractors dismissively derided the "consumerization" of IT. The reality is that, as McAfee predicted, Enterprise 2.0 is compatible with older systems and "can be added to the channels and platforms already in place."²

In a recent article, Computerworld Editor-in-Chief Scott Finnie offered a welcome dose of practical insight about Web 2.0 and the enterprise: "... it's on its way to becoming pervasive. But it's not a technology; it's more like a business strategy."

¹ Andrew P. McAfee, "Enterprise 2.0: The Dawn of Emergent Collaboration," *MIT Sloan Management Review*. Spring 2006. <http://sloanreview.mit.edu/the-magazine/articles/2006/spring/47306/enterprise-the-dawn-of-emergent-collaboration/>
² *ibid.*

Andy MacMillan, vice president of Product Management of Enterprise 2.0 at Oracle, also takes a practical view. Enterprise 2.0, he says, "is really the concept of adding social tools and some social paradigms to enterprise business processes and activities."

Increasingly organizations recognize the mandate to create a modern user experience that transforms existing business processes and increases business efficiency and agility. They want to create tools to encourage contributions and an infrastructure with which to expose the right information or the best ideas for dealing with an issue or a problem.

Take, for example, a typical interaction between well-established ERP and CRM systems to initiate a sales order. Usually, data is input and follows a set of repeatable and automated business rules and processes. But when an unusual or unanticipated situation arises—such as when a customer requests a discount because that person's company agreed to participate in reference activity—there is likely to be a disconnect between systems whose resolution requires ERP and CRM user interaction. Earlier, that might have required an e-mail, a phone call or a walk down the hall, any of which could slow down the process and wasn't tracked as part of the business process.

With Enterprise 2.0 tools, ERP and CRM workers can communicate within their system in real time and the interaction and decision are captured as content other workers can manage and reference to resolve any future conflicts.

Enterprise 2.0 can also play a vital role in providing services to customers and creating self-help communities among them. For example, when Panda Security was preparing to introduce the free version of its Cloud Antivirus product globally, it anticipated a massive influx of customers. It needed a new, second-generation Web portal that could handle the traffic and provide downloads flawlessly, possibly millions of times, on demand. The company also wanted an architectural platform that could manage content long beyond the launch, so that customers could share information with each other and access information on viruses.

A technology consulting team from Deloitte Spain,

“This is a real business value conversation; this isn’t a technology field trip.

Most organizations believe their people are one of their key assets; they are the ones that resolve escalations or exceptions in the process, they’re the ones that ultimately make improvements, so if I can enable those things to happen more quickly in the context of that existing application, then I’m making that application more valuable.”

Andy MacMillan, Vice president, product management, Oracle Enterprise 2.0

part of international accounting firm Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu, recommended that Panda Security invest in Oracle WebCenter Suite. With it, Panda Security created an advanced unified portal platform including Enterprise 2.0 services and a content management repository that has attracted millions of new users, keeps the company apprised of malware threats and protection updates and provides a forum where users can interact on common issues.

Another organization employing Enterprise 2.0 is the Canadian Partnership Against Cancer, an independent nonprofit organization working to improve the country’s cancer control system. Seeking to provide the widest-possible access across Canada’s vast geography, it worked with Oracle and Deloitte to create the Cancer View Canada (www.cancerview.ca) portal, which provides a centralized resource; offers a collaboration tool helping cancer control groups across the nation connect on various initiatives; and utilizes blogs, wikis and discussion forums to create a compelling collaborative environment.

These organizations are recognizing that social and collaborative services can optimize the connections between people, information and applications. Work-

ers with access to these tools can easily navigate, discover and access content in context and leverage services such as instant messaging, Web conferencing, presence and brokered connections to make the right connections with other workers and groups.

“The goal is not to replicate something just like Facebook or YouTube inside the enterprise,” says MacMillan. “It’s to think about how an application such as Facebook engages people to participate, share, connect and drive value. How do you then make that about doing those same things but focus them on a business process or activity?”

Enterprise 2.0 involves more than just setting up a wiki or other social media component to connect people. Rather, it’s about integrating these tools with existing applications and infrastructure to transform the existing business model and tap into the creativity and intellectual capabilities of all employees.

“This is a real business-value conversation,” says MacMillan. “Most organizations believe that their people are among their key assets; they are the ones that resolve escalations or exceptions in the process and the ones who ultimately make improvements, so if I can speed those things up in the context of that existing application, I’m making that application more valuable.”

MacMillan urges evaluators to focus on “hard ROI.” Resolving customer issues more quickly, raising customer acquisition rates and improving the product development process and results can go a long way to making the case.

As Erin Traudt, research director for IDC’s Enterprise Collaboration and Social Solutions program, recently wrote, enterprise social software has three unique characteristics—culture, transparency and scale—“that inherently make it unlike other technology decisions and implementations. . . . It is rare that a software application can have such a broad and apparent impact on an organization, its key stakeholders (employees, customers, and partners) and company brand.”³

³ Erin Traudt, “7 Quick Tips for Social Business Transformation, Dec. 14, 2010. *PC World*.

Oracle WebCenter Suite:

The Modern User Experience Platform for the Enterprise and the Web

There's little dispute that Web 2.0 tools are entering the enterprise and Enterprise 2.0 is changing how businesses operate. There are many differences in how and what tools should and can be deployed and their business benefits.

Simply introducing blogs and wikis does not transform a business, observes Andy MacMillan, vice president of product management for Enterprise 2.0 at Oracle.

Platforms and applications are not new, but how people work and interact has changed greatly. Forward-looking organizations are seeking a modern user experience that tightly integrates a platform approach with applications, collaboration tools, infrastructure, existing solutions and today's Web 2.0 tools.

Oracle's Enterprise 2.0 strategy focuses on integrating Web 2.0 collaborative technology into enterprise business processes and activities, structured and unstructured, to connect people, processes and content to achieve business objectives.

"Transactional systems of record still have to play their role," MacMillan says, adding that the Enterprise 2.0 tools make it possible for enterprises to quickly pull together all the right people to resolve an issue. Moreover, "I'm capturing that knowledge and can retain it and make it available so I can solve that problem in the future too."

Enterprise 2.0 is pervasive across the many applications and business processes promulgated by Oracle, says MacMillan. But the focal point is Oracle WebCenter

Suite 11g, providing a platform encompassing portals and Websites, composite applications, social collaboration and content management. This platform delivers a modern user experience that enables the development and deployment of internal and external portals, composite applications and mashups with integrated social and collaboration services, all on an enterprise content management infrastructure.

Among the failings of traditional portals, in Oracle's view, is the lack of openness or support for modern Web programming and an inability to integrate into customer infrastructures and integrated datacenter solutions. Portals initially were used as a "wrapper" to provide visibility into an infrastructure that wasn't very agile, says MacMillan. Today the infrastructure is more agile and the portal has evolved to utilize service-oriented architecture (SOA) and collaborative social tools.

"Oracle WebCenter is the cornerstone of what we are doing with E2.0," says MacMillan. "It's a modern user experience platform for the enterprise and the Web, based on a composite application concept with many integrated social capabilities, so you can build a composite application and add social tools for executing that application."

Oracle WebCenter Suite consolidates the best user experience capabilities from a significant portfolio of leading portal products and related technologies to seamlessly

Which of the following benefits do you think your company would realize by investing in Enterprise 2.0 Portals?



BASE: 61 RESPONDENTS

Enterprise 2.0: Are You on Board?

IT ORGANIZATIONS SEE THE DELIVERY OF a modern user experience via an Enterprise 2.0 portal platform as key to improved customer satisfaction, productivity and collaboration.

In a recent InfoWorld reader poll conducted on behalf of Oracle, about 7 out of 10 respondents indicated that the delivery of modern user experiences to all constituents is on their organizations' strategic roadmaps. But despite the high level of commitment, there is middling success to date. Just 16 percent assessed themselves as very effective in delivering that modern user experience to employees. The results were even less for delivering it to external constituents, with just 8 percent indicating they are very effective at delivering it to customers and 10 percent doing so with business partners.

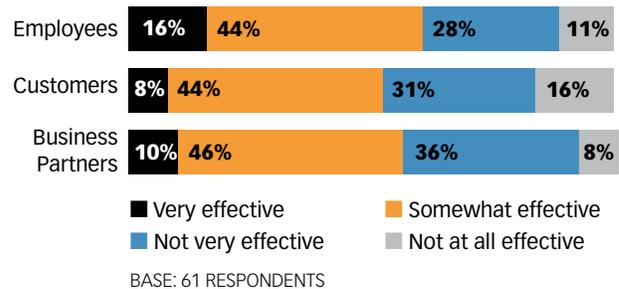
Those without a strategy were generally split between being resource-constrained or unsure why their organization was not on this path. Among those unable to muster the resources, reasons ranged from the need to invest in technology upgrades to prioritization of other projects, to a lack of a clear vision.

Almost half of the survey participants said they were feeling significant pressure from employees to deliver on the promise of Enterprise 2.0, and another 30 percent indicated they were feeling moderate pressure. About the same number said they were feeling pressure from customers but somewhat less from business partners. Only 7 percent of the respondents said they felt no pressure whatsoever.

Increasingly, organizations expect Enterprise 2.0 portals to deliver a modern user experience by providing highly customizable applications that enable users to access information and content in context and collaborative services to optimize connections between people, information and applications.

For the survey, Enterprise 2.0 portals were defined as Web-based software frameworks, which, like traditional enterprise portals, provide access to and interaction with relevant information assets, knowledge assets and human assets to targeted audiences, including

In your opinion, how effective has your company been at delivering "modern user experiences" to each of the following constituents?

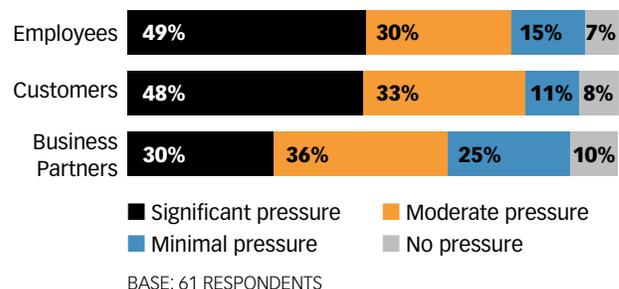


employees, customers and partners. A large plurality of respondents said they felt somewhat effective in delivering to those constituencies (44 percent for employees and customers, 46 percent for business partners), but almost half rated their efforts as not very effective or not at all effective.

That may reflect that earlier portals provided little more than limited visibility into enterprise applications. The portal concept has evolved to encompass social media capabilities and business-logic-based components that enable users to build their own composite applications for greater access to and insight into business processes.

The respondents largely agreed about the key benefits they expect from Enterprise 2.0 portals: 72 percent checked improved customer satisfaction, 69 percent selected improved employee productivity and 67 percent cited enhanced employee collaboration (respondents could select multiple benefits.)

How much pressure does your IT organization feel from each of the following groups to deliver a "modern user experience" that facilitates access to information and content in context with integrated collaborative services?



integrate a modern user experience for the enterprise with your enterprise applications. It has four main components: Portals & Websites, Composite Applications, Social & Collaboration, and Content Management.

Quickly Create Dynamic Portals and Websites

Oracle WebCenter Portal enables users to easily create dynamic enterprise portals such as intranets and extranets. Within Oracle WebCenter Suite, you can create out-of-the-box communities with Oracle WebCenter Spaces, enabling you to create individual, team and organizational work environments to connect people and content. Personalized dashboards let you monitor performance and minimize page transitions by integrating information and keep it in the context of what you are doing.

Easily Build Composite Applications and Mashups

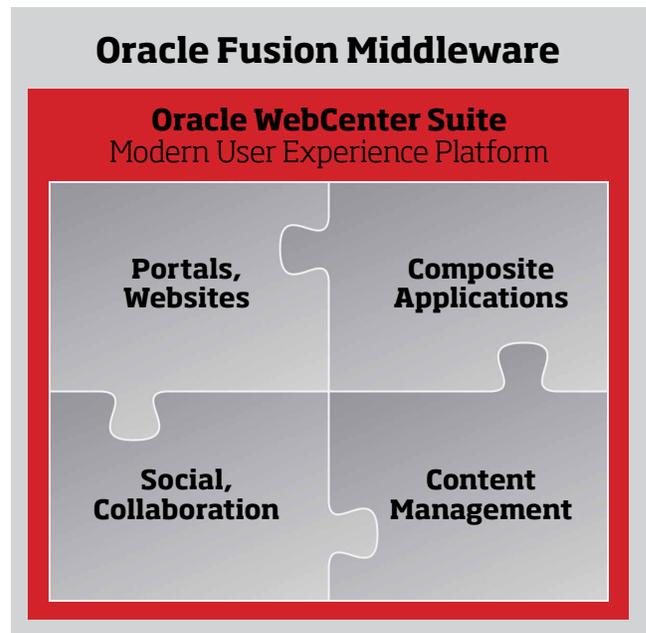
With Oracle WebCenter Suite, you can easily assemble composite applications with Oracle's common user experience architecture. This includes best practices and design patterns for developing next-generation user experiences and is based on Oracle Application Development Framework (Oracle ADF), the common development framework for all Oracle Fusion Middleware user interfaces and Oracle Fusion Applications.

Out-of-the-Box Social and Collaboration Tools Enrich Applications

Oracle WebCenter Services delivers social and collaborative services to help optimize connections between people, information and applications. Enterprise-ready social computing services such as wikis, blogs, RSS, discussion forums, tags, links, social networking and activity streams can be embedded directly into applications. Oracle WebCenter Real-Time Collaboration and Oracle WebCenter Intelligent Collaboration provide services such as instant messaging, presence, Web conferencing and brokered connections to further optimize connections between individuals and groups.

Complete Enterprise Content Management Infrastructure

Oracle WebCenter Suite includes a complete enterprise content management infrastructure, Oracle Universal Content Management, that provides a single repository



for all structured and unstructured content and lets you capture and manage the entire content lifecycle. You can also publish content from any portal or Website and provide item-level security, in-place rendering of content and file conversion.

"Oracle WebCenter Suite is focused on the idea of building modular reusable components and combining those business-logic-based components with social networking capabilities to enable business users to build their own composite applications," MacMillan explains.

Oracle WebCenter Suite delivers social and collaborative capabilities to optimize connections between people, information and applications. "These conversations now become content," says MacMillan. "We are trying to bring the benefits of a content management platform—in terms of how things are searched for and managed as a corporate asset—to this new set of content being created."

With Oracle WebCenter Suite, organizations can deliver social and collaborative services for optimized connections between people, information and applications. Users can navigate, discover and access content in context and take advantage of personalized applications, portals and sites to deliver modern user experiences for employees, customers and partners, which, in turn, improve the overall productivity of the business users.