

# Is Your Company Ready for Web 2.0?

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# Purpose of Presentation

1. Define Web 2.0
2. Suggest key questions to ask to help identify where Web 2.0 applications might be useful.

# Definition 1: Web 2.0 as *Technology Infrastructure*

- Refers to the ways hardware and software can be used to deliver sophisticated interactive processes over the World Wide Web to anyone with an Internet connection and a standard web browser.
- Other hallmarks of Web 2.0 technology:
  - Speed with which sophisticated applications can be developed
  - Ease with which data from different systems can be combined
  - Independence from specific types of computers or operating systems

# Definition 2: Web 2.0 as *Communication Process*

- Refers to the ways people can:
  - use the web to easily publish information online
  - share that information with others, and
  - develop relationships with people who share common interests.
- Frequently these behaviors are individualistic, spontaneous, and decentralized.
- It is not unusual for more traditional or hierarchically structured organizations to approach Web 2.0 applications with some caution given a perceived lack of centralized control.
- The more people who participate in Web 2.0 exchanges of information, the more powerful “network effects” become.

# Definition 3: Web 2.0 as *Software Application*

Typical applications:

- Blogging
- Microblogging
- Wikis
- Social & Professional Networks
- Shared Bookmarking
- Tagging
- Feeds & Subscriptions

# Related Concepts

- Remote Hosting
- Lightweight Applications
- Mashups
- Crowdsourcing
- Social Networking
- Perpetual Beta
- Blogging
- Collaboration
- Community
- Community Manager
- Expertise Management
- Cloud Computing
- Semantic Web
- Enterprise 2.0

# Why Web 2.0 Is Relevant to Your Company

- Your employees may already be using Web 2.0 products and services -- and it may not just be "20-somethings."
- Web 2.0 applications are relevant to many of the internal & external business processes already supported by IT, e.g., HR/recruitment, market research, sales, customer support, procurement and logistics, training, knowledge management, R&D.
- Even the most traditional elements of IT infrastructure (e.g., HR, finance) are potentially available via remotely hosted web based applications.

# Why Your I.T. Department Is Relevant to Your Web 2.0 Strategy

Even though many Web 2.0 applications operate in a decentralized and user-controlled fashion, there is still a need for I.T. involvement in order to promote:

- Standards so that systems can communicate
- Technical support to provide reliability
- Security to ensure authorized usage
- Leadership so that systems support business goals
- Discipline to promote efficiency
- Accountability to define responsibility



# How Web 2.0 Can Impact I.T.

- Availability of externally hosted applications makes "end-runs" around I.T. possible. Eventually some of these applications need integration and support -- from the I.T. department.
- Potential for decreased reliance on internally managed I.T. infrastructure makes ongoing cost of maintaining this infrastructure increasingly visible.
- Constant changes in available technologies increases the need for I.T. staff to acquire and manage new skills. This can pose a challenge to an overworked or understaffed workforce.
- Lack of commonly accepted metrics makes Web 2.0 ROI calculations -- and justifications -- challenging.

# Basic Questions about Creating a Web 2.0 Action Plan

1. Can Web 2.0 methods help you reduce the costs of your current business processes?
2. Can Web 2.0 methods cost-effectively extend the reach or functionality of your current business initiatives beyond what IT is already doing?
3. Can Web 2.0 methods enable new, creative, and more competitive business initiatives?

# 1. Questions about *Potential Cost Reductions*

1. Can web 2.0 methods cost effectively replace existing systems and processes?
2. Can connecting people more directly reduce the time it takes to communicate information about your products and services?
3. Can reducing the number of people involved in a complex process reduce errors, mistakes, and expensive re-work?

## 2. Questions about *Improving Current Business Processes*

1. Are you having difficulty training people or transferring knowledge from more experienced to less experienced workers?
2. Are there areas where you wish you had quicker access to what your customers are thinking?
3. Are you satisfied that your company's image with customers is as humane or as friendly as you think it should be?
4. Are you concerned that there is too much "reinventing the wheel" going on in your organization?

### 3. Questions about *Enabling New Business Initiatives*

1. Do you currently have any "back burner" ideas you have been wanting to try but have delayed due to concerns about incurring new training, communication, or data manipulation costs?
2. Have you been looking for simpler ways to reduce "siloing" and compartmentalization that exists in your organization?
3. Have you been looking for ways to simplify or streamline customer support?

# Discussion Topics

1. Effective Web 2.0 planning and adoption requires attention to business processes and business goals, not just technology.
2. Using Web 2.0 technologies as the basis for cost control or cost reduction requires an understanding of what current costs are.
3. Web 2.0 technologies are more effective when they help get the right people involved, not just more people.

# Additional Reading

The following links are to posts and "white papers" on Dennis McDonald's Web Site:

- How Much Will Your Enterprise Web 2.0 Project Cost?
- There's Nothing Wrong with the Social Networking Industry that Some Honest (Cost) Information Won't Fix
- How To Develop a Business-Aligned Social Media & Social Networking Strategy
- Market Segmentation, Relationship Management, and the Relevance of Web 2.0 Applications
- Business and I.T. Must Work Together to Manage New "Web 2.0" Tools
- Ten Realities of Managing and Using Technology to Generate Business Value
- Slide Presentation: "Expertise Management Systems"