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Executive Summary

SWOOP Analytics provides a unique online social networking platform which analyzes online interactions from Enterprise Social Networks, in real time. Through SWOOP, we have been able to collect anonymized operational data from 57 organizations, over an extended 6-month period. The organizations ranged in size from 100 to 26,000 active users (average 4,400), across a full breadth of industry sectors and geographies. This is the largest ever collaboration benchmarking analysis using data sourced from operational activity. This second edition of our benchmarking studies makes use of our proprietary collaboration benchmarking framework, which positions specific measures against stages in the ESN maturity: Platform Adoption, User Engagement, Connecting, Sharing, Solving and Innovating.

Intended Readership

We anticipate that those responsible for the successful implementation of an enterprise-wide collaboration platform will gain most from this report. The Community Manager is provided with a structured approach, supported by analytics, to shepherd their communities towards achieving their true potential. Internal Communications Managers can learn how to move beyond simply broadcasting corporate messages, to engaging with their audience through interactive conversation. Senior Line Managers, CEO, COO and Functional Leads will likely find familiarity with the benchmarking approach being employed, from similar experiences in their own lines of work. While an Enterprise Social Network can be disruptive to traditional lines of communication, management should find comfort in the fact that performance improvement techniques, devised from decades of quality management experience, remain critical to business success.

Key Insights

From this 2017 benchmarking, our key insights are:

• **An organization’s Enterprise Social Network performance is a reflection of its overall performance**, meaning a successful ESN network correlates to a successful business.

• **Two-way communication is a core predictor of organizational trust and ultimately job fulfilment**. Two-way communication was the largest area of variation across the 57 organizations measured. If reciprocity is not being measured, an organization is ‘flying blind’.

• Online networks are able to effectively maximize both diversity and cohesion; something we have not seen in a decade of studying offline social networks. **The ability for staff to be exposed to a diversity of experiences and thought, at the same time as being highly connected on a day-to-day basis, is a breakthrough in digitally facilitated human productivity.**

• Online social networks are susceptible to key player risk i.e. over reliance on a selected few. On average 7 per cent of active users are responsible for 50 per cent of the connections being made. This is substantially lower than for offline networks. **It is therefore critical to manage for redundancy and succession in online groups, if they are to be sustained.**

• Passive participation rates (less than one activity every two weeks) is still uncomfortably high at 68 per cent on average (down from 75 per cent in 2016). Networks will always have a core of active participants and a periphery of less active, so 100 per cent active participation is not a realistic goal. **Understanding the balance between your active inner circle to your passive outer circle for networks is akin to balancing assets and liabilities on your balance sheet.** We suggest therefore that a good initial target for core to periphery split should be about 50 per cent.

• Participation rates are not a function of organizational size, with many large organizations
sustaining high participation rates and vice versa. **Independent of your organizational size, the objective should be to create highly cohesive groups/teams that are also interconnected through network leaders.**

- Perhaps one of our most important findings was that even poor performing organizations usually have at least one ESN group that is operating at a mature level of collaboration. In essence this means that organizations have the capability to improve their collaboration performance through developing their own internal benchmarking initiatives. **Independent of your current level of maturity with ESNs, internal and external benchmarking will be critical to your journey to business success.**
1 Introduction

We find that one of the biggest challenges for sponsors of Enterprise Social Networks (ESN) is answering the question “what has been our return on investment?” The reason why this is a hard question to answer is the same reason it’s hard to answer for any piece of core organizational infrastructure. The ESN’s value is interwoven with other core infrastructure like organizational culture, vision, strategy, core competencies and the like, into a complex web of interactions that defy separation and independent reporting of ROI. Collaboration guru Jacob Morgan identifies many cases where organizations have been able to identify ROI after the fact. However, he also points out that those organizations demanding an ROI for something as fundamental as collaboration, may have bigger cultural issues to deal with.

There is another way however. Without resorting to an auditable ROI, organizations can still judge how they are performing against like organizations, to assess their relative performance. This is not something new. The ‘quality movement’ has relied on benchmarking to assess organizational progress for decades. The popular business improvement method Six Sigma identifies the benefits of Benchmarking as:

- Providing a focus on best practices;
- Strives for continuous improvement;
- Enable partnering to share information;
- Needed to maintain a competitive edge; and
- Facilitates adaptation based on customer needs after examination of the best.

Benchmarking services are widely available across many organizational disciplines and industry sectors for precisely this reason. You do not have to be the ‘best’ in the world at everything, but you do want to compare favorably with those organizations that matter most to you e.g. your closest competitors, or other organizations you admire. To date, these benchmarking services do not extend to ESNs though.
2 SWOOP Benchmarking

This is the world's largest benchmarking analysis of ESN performance. The dimensions for comparisons are the result of more than a decade of applied research and development, focused specifically on social networking-enabled collaborative performance. In our inaugural 2016 benchmarking report we compared 16 organizations. In 2017 our benchmarking report covers 57 organizations with 250,000+ individuals and 5.5 million+ interactions, across the full breadth of industry sectors; indicative of the growth in adoption of ESNs worldwide. At the time of writing, the sample is limited to Microsoft Yammer. However, we are already collecting Workplace by Facebook and non-Yammer Microsoft Groups metrics for addition to our benchmarks in the future.

Our rapidly growing benchmark sample provides unique insights into what is important in driving business performance through ESNs. We have identified that the best performing enterprises display the strongest performances on the key dimensions of reciprocity, diversity and responsiveness. The large variances between organizations on several of our key performance indicators suggests there is a growing gap between those that are mastering digitally facilitated collaboration and those that are not. The size of this variance provides a measure of the ‘opportunity gap’ that new adopters are provided with; and a means for monitoring their performance over time. While this benchmarking study compares organizations at the enterprise level, the good news for early adopters is we have found there are individual groups in all organizations that compare favorably with groups anywhere in our sample base. A foundational characteristic of networks is the ‘long tail’ effect, where extreme performance is captured typically by a selected few. By having a ‘best practice’ example within your own organization, the benchmarking framework can be used internally to bootstrap groups in the lower performing long tail, toward that of the high performing head. The majority of the key indicators provided in this report are available in the SWOOP online dashboard. Of the hundreds of groups that organizations are forming on their ESNs, it is now possible with SWOOP to be benchmarking your internal groups against your own ‘best performers’, online and in real-time.

In this report we will describe our benchmarks established in our inaugural study in 2016; but this time we are reframing them to align with the ESN maturity framework that we have recently released. This will be followed by the benchmarking results and insights achieved from this year’s study. Finally, we have included a section on internal groups, the engine room for ESN performance; and how you can conduct your own internal benchmarking to escalate your organization’s collaborative performance.
3 SWOOP Benchmarking Measures

3.1 Alignment with ESN Maturity

We recently released our e-book which relates the SWOOP dashboard measures according to an ESN maturity framework. The SWOOP dashboard measures are designed for immediate real-time feedback. The benchmarking measures are designed and calculated over an extended period (6 months). Many of the Benchmarking measures can be found on the SWOOP dashboard. Other measures are only appropriately reported over longer time frames e.g. a minimum of 6 months. The maturity framework identifies 6 stages of evolution of ESN exploitation, from the initial stage of encouraging staff to log onto the platform, through to the use of the ESN to facilitate a fully innovating, adaptive and responsive organization. Using SWOOP’s analytics, we can trace the journey from first digital analytics through to online collaboration champion, using operational data. A full description of the maturity framework can be found in the e-book.

**BENCHMARKS BY MATURITY LEVEL**
_Swoop Analytics Collaboration Benchmarks_

**SOCIAL NETWORKING**
- % Engagers
- % Catalysts
- % Responders

**CONNECTING**
- Threads Per User
- % Direction
- Post / Replies

**SHARING**
- % Public Messages

**USER ENGAGEMENT**
- % Broadcasters
- Activity Per User

**PLATFORM ADOPTION**
- Active Users
- % Observers
- % Recognition

**SOCIAL MEDIA**

**JOB FULFILMENT**
- % Diversity

**% Reciprocity**

**Mean Two-Way Connections**

_Figure 1 - ESN Maturity Model_
The above graphic positions each measure against the stage of **ESN maturity**, they are most related to. Two important transitions are identified that require a significant change in the way both individuals and organizations are thinking and acting. The first occurs when an organization becomes less reliant on social media to attract staff (User Engagement Stage) and more cognisant of the need for staff to connect and build relationships. We call this the ‘Social Media to Social Networking’ transition. The second important transition point occurs when we move from happily connecting and sharing knowledge, to acting on that shared knowledge to create tangible value. We call this the ‘Social Networking’ to ‘Jobs Fulfilment’ transition. This is where the rubber hits the road in terms of tangible business results (and ROI). Everyone in the organization has a job to do. Increasingly these jobs are becoming interdependent on others. When the job is done, be it a difficult problem solved, or a new opportunity grasped, tangible enterprise value has been achieved. Relationships can be leveraged to more effectively share tacit knowledge, problem solve and ultimately create new value through innovation.

When assessing each benchmarking indicator, it is helpful to identify them with the maturity stage for which they are most indicative. The following table identifies how each SWOOP measure should be interpreted in relation to the ESN maturity stage:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stage</th>
<th>SWOOP Benchmark</th>
<th>Interpretation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>PLATFORM ADOPTION</strong></td>
<td>Number of Active Users</td>
<td>On launching a new ESN platform, this should be the first measure to monitor. Basically, how many of the eligible staff have logged into the system and taken a tangible action e.g. made a post or like etc. We have not included ‘reading’ as an activity, due to the difficulties in capturing reliable data, and also because it can give you a false sense of success. For this score, the lower the score, the better.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Observers*</td>
<td></td>
<td>Observers are classified as those that have been active less than once every two weeks. Given that these staff have taken a positive step to engage with the platform, it is important to convert observers to more active participants. *For this score, the lower the score, the better.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>USER ENGAGEMENT</strong> (around content)</td>
<td>% Broadcasters*</td>
<td>Internal communication was often about crafting the internal press releases i.e. broadcasting the corporate messages. This is appropriate initially, when trying to attract people to the platform. *For this score, the lower the score, the better.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*For this score, the lower the score, the better.*
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stage</th>
<th>SWOOP Benchmark</th>
<th>Interpretation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>% Recognition</td>
<td></td>
<td>This is a measure of ‘social recognition’ and in the social media context, a ‘like’ or a ‘mention’ is usually an indicator of positive feedback on posted content.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activity/User</td>
<td></td>
<td>This simple ratio can provide a quick assessment of engagement with the platform. A high score indicates that activity isn’t being dominated by a selected few.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Connection stage</td>
<td>% Engagers</td>
<td>The Connection stage marks the important transition from engaging with the platform and content, to engaging with people. This is an important step in the move toward effective collaboration.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% Catalysts</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% Responders</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Key Player Index</td>
<td></td>
<td>These are all ‘positive personas’ and depending on the context, individuals can play positive roles with any of them. That said, we prefer to see a high proportion of Engagers, who are people who connect others. Catalysts are also important because of the way they drive activity and connections. Responders are seen as the ‘care-givers’ and are key to sustaining communities and groups.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SHARING</td>
<td>% Public Messages</td>
<td>This measures how reliant the organization is on a selected few power networkers. Networks will always have a core and a periphery but if that core becomes too small, the network becomes at risk should certain key players leave the network. A high Key Player Index means less risk or higher resilience to the loss of core members.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>At this stage the organization is actively sharing knowledge. This may be in the form of explicit content, or in the form of tacit knowledge, shared through rich and regular conversations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>This is an indicator of overall transparency. In general, we would like to see this score to be high, indicating a maximum opportunity for broader knowledge sharing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stage</td>
<td>SWOOP Benchmark</td>
<td>Interpretation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------</td>
<td>-----------------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% Direction</td>
<td>This measure mimics a ‘cc’ in an email. It indicates a purposeful and directed sharing of knowledge. Anecdotally, we have seen this measure as an indication of ‘Line Management’ participation. Directing attention to their reports is a common habit for line managers and vice versa.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Replies/Post</td>
<td>This simple ratio is an indicator of how conversational a network has become. Once the volume of Replies exceeds the number of Posts, we can be confident that conversations facilitating tacit knowledge sharing are starting to happen.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Threads Per User</td>
<td>Discussion threads per user is used to assess the breadth with which online discussions are pervading the organization. We can infer that if the majority of participants are actively involved in conversation threads, then broad based knowledge sharing is happening.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOLVING</td>
<td></td>
<td>Problem solving marks another important transition from knowledge sharing to action. Tangible benefits only arise from positive actions i.e. job fulfilment. Organizations must reach this stage of maturity if they are to demonstrate real tangible value.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% Response Rate</td>
<td>The response rate is an indicator of both how much an organization is sharing its problems in the form of questions, and then how much people are responding to them. It is one of the most direct measures of value available. In this edition, the measure has been changed to only include written replies i.e. excludes likes, mentions etc., to emphasize the importance of conversation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% Reciprocity</td>
<td>This measures the degree to which connections are reciprocated. We know that high reciprocity leads to higher trust and therefore a higher potential for positive actions.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
This is a related reciprocity measure. By counting the raw average Two-Way Connections, rather than calculating it as a %, we can apply the measure equally to small and large groups i.e. someone with 5 reciprocated connections out of a network of say 20 is equally valuable as someone with 5-reciprocated connections in a network of say 10, using this measure.

**INNOVATING**

*This stage is placed as the final maturity stage, as it is an indication that an organization is creating new value. It is also something that most organizations struggle with.*

% Diversity

Successful innovation is regularly linked to diversity in an organization. Diversity can be measured across many dimensions e.g. cross business unit, geography, gender etc.. In this benchmark we use the diversity across ESN group activity. An individual with high diversity would be equally active across a large range of groups.

It is important to appreciate that while this report is assessing Enterprise level performances against these maturity stages; inside the Enterprise there will be different groups at different stages of maturity. More on this later.

### 3.2 An Overall ‘Network Centered’ Performance Measure

So how closely related are network performance and organizational performance overall? No doubt this topic could be debated at length, but we are now seeing indications that network performance is overtaking formal hierarchical control as the prime indicator of organizational performance. The recent 2017 Deloitte Global Trends report signals a tipping of the scales that we have been anticipating, frankly, for decades. The Deloitte survey of some 10,000+ business and HR leaders across 140 countries voted “Organization of the Future: Arriving Now” as the number one human capital trend that concerns them most. Described as:

‘... actively building organizational ecosystems and networks. Agility plays a central role in the organization of the future, as companies race to replace structural hierarchies with networks of teams empowered to take action.’

How network performance relates to overall organizational performance has been of academic interest for several decades now. Eminent social capital researcher, Prof. Ron Burt, from the University of Chicago identifies maximum performance is achieved when an organization successfully balances both open and closed dimensions of a network.
Figure 2 - Organizational Performance Framework

In section 7, we present benchmarking results using the above framework.
4 Benchmarking Results & Insights

4.1 Demographics

Our sample is formed from organizations that have a minimum of 100 active participants.

Using the Global Industry Classification Standard (GICS), we can see that the sample has representation across all sectors. A high proportion of the benchmarked organizations are global in their operations. Headquarters are located in USA, UK, Australia, Japan, India and Sweden.

4.2 Where are the biggest gaps between the best and worst?

Benchmarking offers the opportunity to learn from the measured highest performing organizations. Areas of greatest opportunity exist where there is a large range of scores demonstrated. Where large variances exist in a key maturity dimension, the strength of the opportunity is amplified. The following graphic plots the average variances for each of the benchmarked dimensions:

As we can see, several of the key performance indicators associated with mature collaborative organizations are well represented in the areas with most improvement potential. The Mean 2-Way is our preferred measure for organizational cohesion.

It measures the average number of reciprocated relationships that each staff member has. If a team is comprised of members with reciprocated relationships with other team members, then we can infer that such a team would be very cohesive. This has been demonstrated through academic studies. Activity/User identifies how broad based activity is on the platform. Threads/User provides a deeper indicator of connectivity, being the relative density of conversations across the organization. In summary, the areas that showed the largest gaps to ‘best practice’, were related to broadening and deepening the levels of discussion and the resulting relationships created.

Figure 3 - GICS Industry Segmentation

Figure 4 - Improvement Potential from Benchmarking
4.3 Stepping Your Way Up the ESN Maturity Curve

We have structured this benchmarking report around the ESN Maturity framework. We will report on the benchmarking results as they relate to each maturity stage. We will also suggest realistic targets for each metric, based on what has already been achieved by our best practice leaders.

4.4 Platform Adoption

4.4.1 Active Users

At this very early stage, we are most concerned with getting staff to experience the ESN (platform). One obvious measure is to identify the percentage of staff that have logged on. This will be a meaningful measure for many, but for some, the figures could be skewed by policy decisions made about how the platform is initially introduced. Some choose an incremental approach, where only a proportion of staff are invited in. Others will have a policy to ensure that everyone is logged in, even if they are not real candidates for early participation. Even after someone has logged in, if they are not active i.e. potentially just reading content, the data is somewhat unreliable. Therefore, we have chosen to use ‘active participants’ as the first signal of engagement i.e. they would have to have at least contributed something; as a minimum, a simple ‘like’.

In our sample of 57 organizations, the average active user community is 4,434. The largest organization had nearly 26,000 active users over the most recent 6-month period.

4.4.2 % Observers

Once a staff member has become active on the platform, they are included in our benchmarks. The next level of participation we have set is to be active on the platform more than once every 2 weeks, on average. ‘Observers’ are those that have not achieved this level of participation over the most recent 6-month period.

The average score is 68%, which is an improvement on 2016 (75%). Across the sample however, %Observer scores as low as 30% have been achieved. Looking in more detail at the frequency distribution, we can see that the majority

Average % Observers: 68%

Range 30% - 94%

---

Figure 5 - Organization Size Distribution
As we can see, there is no correlation between organization size and %Participation rate. We can see that many of the highest %Participation organizations have tens of thousands of active users. On this basis, we would suggest a target of 50%+ active participation is not an unreasonable goal for ESN usage.
4.5 User Engagement

4.5.1 % Broadcasters

Now that we have managed to influence staff into becoming active on the platform, we need to try and keep them there. The most common method is to provide content that they can access only on the platform. Given that ESN platforms are a derivation from consumer social networking sites, there is significant experience available on how to engage people through social media. User engagement around content requires people to react to the content, either by commenting, sharing or simply acknowledging with a ‘like’. Ineffective content is therefore content that gains little or no traction. We have characterized people who are responsible for this style of content as “Broadcasters”. In other contexts, broadcasting may not be a negative behavior. But in an ESN it is. We believe that this measure should have targets to minimize broadcaster behavior.

We suggest trying to keep the %Broadcasters to below 10%

4.5.2 %Recognition

A core characteristic of any social system is social recognition. The ubiquitous ‘like’ or related signal the ‘mention’, form part of the social recognition system. The measurement of social recognition is important for assessing how users are engaging with the social model of collaboration. There should however be an upper limit to the %recognition. If the proportion of social recognition becomes too high, we run the danger of turning the ESN into a mutual admiration system, at the expense of developing tangible outcomes.

We suggest a target range for %Recognition to between 30% – 50%

Average % Recognition: 56%

Range 27% - 80%

A common measure of success for social media systems is the raw activity that the platform is attracting. Social systems however, are characterized by a ‘long tail’ effect, whereby lead users are responsible for a significant proportion of the activity. A quick measure to identify the extent that this is occurring is to measure the ‘Activity/Active User’ ratio. The average activity/user works out to be a little under 1 activity/week/user. Best practice performance works out to just under 3 activities/week/user. This is a measure that we would like to maximize without limit.

We would suggest a practical initial target for this measure is more than 1 activity per week for every active user and then toward or exceeding the best practice of 3 activities per week.

Average Activity/User: 21%

Range 2.7% - 73.9%
4.6 Connecting

Connecting signals the transformation from a media focus to a relationship focus.

4.6.1 %Engagers, %Catalysts, %Responders

The positive Persona scores assess the percentage categorizations for the non-observers i.e. those that are active more than once every two weeks. We can see that the dominant persona is the Catalyst i.e. someone who is able to attract a significant number of responses to their posts. In the consumer social media world, the Catalyst would map directly to social media influencers. These are important people when we are trying to build engagement around content. An Engager is our aspirational persona. Engagers are able to balance posting and responding. This behavior therefore lends itself to relationship building and the movement from engagement around content, to building connections. Responders may be responding to Catalyst behavior, indicating their appreciation of content through a ‘like’ or ‘reply’. Responders are important for generating and extending constructive conversations; a key requirement for moving into the more mature problem solving and innovation stages.

In terms of targets for the positive Personas, we would suggest %Engagers above 30%. %Catalyst and %Responder should be comfortably between 30–40%.

In analyzing persona behavior within high performing groups, we have identified that individuals will either settle into a preferred behavioral persona, or others, who are adaptable and able to change personas according to the current group context or need. The following chart illustrates an example of a group’s leadership persona patterns over time:

Figure 8 - Behavioral Persona Distributions
Figure 9 - Persona behavior over time

In the above example we can see a group with a single dominant Catalyst and a number of supporting leaders. Leader 2 has been able to switch Personas from Responder to Engager. There were no leaders broadcasting, which is a positive. However, there is a key player risk, if Leader 1 were to depart.

In summary, we identify Observers and Broadcasters as negative personas, in the context of moving an organization beyond content consumption, to collaboration. The positive behavioral personas of Engagers, Catalysts and Responders are required to push organizations into relationship building; a key prerequisite for effective collaboration.

4.6.2 Key Player Index

In the world of social media, it is all about content and content consumption. The key players are the influencers, who can attract eyeballs to content, and therefore advertisers and revenue for the content owners. Engaging users around content is the 'end game' for social media. For Enterprise Social Networking it is more like the beginning of the journey. Once an organization starts to prioritize connections and relationships over content, it is the relationship network that becomes the focus. The key players are the people central to these networks. They are the ‘go to’ people and the people that are positioned to broker new connections. Networks can become over-dependent on a single hub. When this is the case, a network can disintegrate, should the hub leave the network. The extent to which a network is at risk of this happening is captured by our Key Player Index. This index calculates the degree to which the network is dependent on a selected few.

---------------------------------------------

Engaging users around content is the 'end game' for social media. For Enterprise Social Networking it is more like the beginning of the journey.
An average of 7% of network participants are responsible for 50% of connections

This average score looks surprisingly low, with even the best score being only 17% and the lowest a mere 3%. A score of 50% would mean all connections are shared equally, and therefore the theoretical maximum. This lower key player score appears to be a characteristic of online social networking systems, where the bulk of the connecting activity is being conducted by a very selected few. In our survey-based analysis of ‘off-line’ networks, the mean scores are around double that for online networks.

A low Key Player Index means that the network is at risk if a few key people were to leave. Just like hierarchical roles, it is always good to build some redundancy into the network, encouraging multiple hubs to form, and to lower the key player risk.

We would encourage a target to be initially set at minimum 10%.

4.7 Sharing

The sharing stage leverages the connections that we have built. Connections provide the pathways for knowledge sharing. Knowledge comes in two forms; explicit and tacit. Explicit knowledge is just another name for information or content. Most organizations have many ways for sharing information. While we might argue about which ways work the best, for the most part, explicit knowledge sharing is relatively easy, compared with tacit knowledge sharing. By definition, tacit knowledge is not codified. It is shared through frequent and rich communications. The most effective means for sharing tacit knowledge is face to face. However, the ESN is available to fill the gaps between important face to face knowledge sharing sessions. The richer and more frequent the online discussions are, the more effective face to face interactions will be, once the opportunity arises.

The chart below illustrates how our online world merges with our off-line face to face world. Today we can facilitate diverse and less intense discussions online and increasingly some of these discussions may be with non-people i.e. AI chatbots. However, the more sophisticated and often more valued interactions will require an increased intensity of discussion, debate and negotiation, and the full fidelity available through face to face contact.

[Figure 10 - Online vs Off-line Discussions]
4.7.1 %Public Messages

A number of benchmarks can be used as indicators of sharing. The %Public measure identifies the percentage of messages that are open and transparently available across the network. While there are always good reasons for maintaining privacy for certain messages, we believe that a ‘sharing organization’ should be continually challenging private spaces. For example, it is a common practice for teams to be formed as private groups in ESNs. Often setting these group areas to private is because team members just don’t think anyone else would be interested in the detail of their day to day work. And largely this may be true, but by setting these groups up as private, it completely removes the opportunity to share.

An average of 8% of messages are shared by NOTIFICATION

Range 1% - 31%
as we see the formal lines of communications would already be typically in place.

We suggest a target %Direction of between 10% - 15% would be sufficient.

4.7.2 %Direction

The %Direction measure is an interesting one. In Yammer it measures the proportion of ‘notifies’ used, which is equivalent to a ‘cc’ in an email. Anecdotally we have seen line managers use this feature to alert their staff about something on the network, be it a document or discussions, that they feel they should bring attention to; or also vice versa. While the ‘Notifies’ function is not exclusively used by formal lines of business, it is a good example of an intentional ‘share’, and therefore has been aligned with this stage of maturity. The average is 8% but a high of 31% in one organization. Engagement of the formal lines of business is important, but not necessarily critical.

An average of 74% of ESN Groups are PUBLIC

Range 18% - 100%

We would therefore suggest an appropriate target for %Public is greater than 80%

4.7.3 Reply/Post Ratio

We often refer to the Reply/Post ratio as ‘pump priming’. When networks are starting up, it is common for the leaders to post a lot of content to attract people to the network (Reply/Post < 1). At this stage we expect the number of posts to exceed the number of replies during start-up. But as the network matures and becomes more conversation centric, we would expect the ratio to reverse, with Replies outnumbering Posts. If this isn’t happening, then there is a good chance that effective knowledge sharing is not occurring.

At 1.34 we see that on average, organizations are still only marginally replying more than posting. This suggests that ESN discussions still have some way to go. The current best practice score is 3 replies for every post made.

We would suggest a practical target for a Replies to Posts ratio should be above 2 replies for every post.
4.7.4 Threads/User

This measure is designed to capture the breadth of engagement of staff in discussions. The more discussion threads that staff are involved in, the more likely that active knowledge sharing is occurring. The results suggest engagement in active discussions is still very low, with an average of just over 2 threads per active user, over the full 6-month period. Best practice of just under 8 is still only 1 thread/user every 3 weeks or more. This is another measure that there should be no upper limit.

Average Threads/User: **2.05**

Range 0.28 - 7.82

We would suggest a practical initial target based on best practice leaders would be more than 4 threads/user over a 6 month period, or 1 thread/user every 6 weeks and then moving toward best practice of 1 thread every 3 weeks.

4.8 Problem Solving

A problem shared is a problem solved. This well-known saying correctly identifies that problems are rarely solved in isolation. But it is also true that a lot of knowledge is shared without an express purpose. For example, gossip is a form of knowledge sharing, but it rarely moves the organization forward, and sometimes quite the contrary. The transition from knowledge sharing to problem solving is another key transition, just like the one between engaging around content and connecting. Once a problem solving purpose is acknowledged, we have a path to true value creation. Tim Baker and Aubrey Warren in their book "Conversations at Work: Promoting a Culture of Conversation in the Changing Workplace" identify conversations without questions being simply statements passing back and forth with no result. "Questions add the vital ingredients of reflection, investigation, and integration"; all of which are required to solve difficult problems.

4.8.1 %Response Rate

The Response Rate looks to directly capture responses to questions asked. For this benchmark we only include written replies; some of which may be further questions. ‘Likes and mentions’ have been excluded from this benchmark (though are available in the SWOOP dashboard), because a ‘like’ can be a conversation killer i.e. how do you extend a conversation after a ‘like’?

Average Response Rate: **40%**

Range 14% - 64%

Figure 11 - ‘Reply’ Response Rate Distribution
We can see that most performances fit in the range of 30 – 60%. Those handful of organizations with written reply response rates over 60% are generating richer conversations. Those operating below 30% are likely to be still ‘broadcasting’ style organizations; which should only be justified in the early phases of ESN maturity, where you may still be looking to use content to attract staff to the platform.

**We would recommend a target of at least 50% be adopted for this important measure.**

### 4.8.2 % Reciprocity and Mean Two-Way Connections

The %Reciprocity and Mean Two-Way Connections are variations of the same theme. A two-way connection is formed when you initiate an interaction with someone e.g. you ‘like’ their post and they, in return have perhaps replied to one of your posts. Two-way connections are seen as a signal for a relationship being formed.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Average 2-Way:</th>
<th>3.08</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Range</strong> 0.21 - 11.23</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

And of course, the more two-way interactions you have with someone, the more likely you are to have formed a stronger relationship with them. The Mean Two-Way Connections is the average number of two-way connections for each staff member. The %Reciprocity is simply the percentage of all connections that are two-way connections.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Average % Reciprocation:</th>
<th>14.6%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Range</strong> 3.3% - 29.6%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The following diagram explains the relationship between the number of 2-way connections and %Reciprocity:

![Figure 12 - Relationship between 2-Way Connections and %Reciprocity](Image)
We can see here that both people have the same “inner circle” of 2-way connections. However, their “outer circle” of 1-way connections differ to the extent that the person on the left has a lower %Reciprocity because of their larger outer circle. We say they have a large ‘weak tie’ network, meaning that their network is more diverse and potentially more exposed to new ideas. In contrast, the person on the right has a much smaller outer circle and therefore higher %Reciprocity. They are less exposed to the diversity available through a large weak tie network and therefore closer to a silo. By aggregating individuals to the enterprise level, we can start to assess whole organizations in the same way.

Where both measures are high, we would suggest a full Enterprise wide collaborative culture has been achieved. However, in this context it is only practically achievable for smaller organizations, with say less than 150 people; which according to Dunbar is the maximum number of close connections that an individual can practically maintain. However, it is encouraging to see some of the larger organizations heading in the right direction by keeping a good balance between 2-way connections and %Reciprocity.

The special cases, where we have high average 2-Way scores, but relatively lower %Reciprocity, it appears that the network has a dense core of interlinking participants and a large periphery of only lightly connected participants; which we are calling ‘the gallery’ of weak ties. For larger organizations, this is considered a good outcome, showing that the many cohesive teams are still loosely connected through weak ties. On the other hand, where we have high %Reciprocity, but relatively lower average 2-Way scores, suggests the network is made up of cliques i.e. smaller disconnected silos. For example, a retail organization may have stores that collaborate strongly internally, but not with other stores.

Figure 13 - %Reciprocity vs Mean 2-Way Connections
We would suggest that organizations should be trying to maximize both measures, looking to achieve a %Reciprocity above 25% and a Mean 2-Way score of over 7.

The average 2-way connections score is less influenced by the relative size of the organization, so it is this measure that we have chosen to represent the relative cohesiveness of organizations. If you have a group with a high number of two way connections, it is more than likely that the group is densely connected, and therefore more cohesive in its operations. It is common to judge an ESN group by how active it is. But if the activity is simply statements or opinions ‘passing in the night’, performance is simply an illusion. The Mean Two-Way and %Reciprocity scores are the most reliable measure of relationships forming and problems being solved.

4.9 Innovating

While regular problem solving is akin to incremental innovation, we reserve the final stage of maturity for when organizations exhibit a culture of continuous innovation, adaptability and responsiveness. Clayton Christensen introduced us to the concept of disruptive innovation in his book “The Innovator’s Dilemma” some 20 years ago now. Disruptive innovation occurs when a diversity of views is brought to bear on a problem or opportunity.

4.9.1 %Diversity

In essence, a key prerequisite for successful innovation is diversity of thought, which comes from a diversity of connections, leading to a diversity of experiences. Diversity can be measured across a multitude of dimensions. While the popular media aligns diversity with gender, business enterprises are more regularly concerned about diversity of connections across the formal lines of business, or exposure to a diversity of perspectives and thinking.

The diversity dimension used for this benchmark is diversity of participation in ESN groups or communities. One can build diversity by being active in a larger number of groups. The diversity measure takes into account the number of groups one is a member of, and how evenly activity is

Figure 14 - %Diversity Distribution
spread across those groups. Through participation in the ESN, staff can build their diversity of thought by being active in a larger number of online communities or groups. The enterprise diversity score is simply the average of individual staff diversity scores.

To maximize a diversity score, an individual would need to spread their activities evenly across a large number of groups. There is a practical and sensible limit to how much one should aim do this however.

We would suggest a practical target for %Diversity is to exceed 50%.

While diversity is required to source the breadth of ideas and opportunities available, the conversion of highly prospective ideas into successful implementations requires focused collaboration and cohesive teams. Therefore, it is the dual benchmarks of Reciprocity and Diversity that together reflect how innovative an organization is likely to be. In fact, not just innovation, but overall organizational performance, as we explore in a later section.
As with any multi-dimensional benchmarking exercise, unless an organization leads the field on all dimensions, it can be difficult to declare a clear leader. We would argue that by aligning the benchmark measures to a maturity categorization, those measures aligned with the more mature stages are indicative of superior performance.

Therefore, those organizations that lead on key performance indicators like **Reciprocity**, **Mean Two-Way connections**, **Diversity**, **Response Rates** and **Threads/User**, should be considered ‘leading collaborative organizations’. Our benchmarking results show that these key indicators are positively correlated and therefore reinforce each other.

Notably, we find that the highest correlation occurs between %Diversity and the cohesion measure of Mean 2-way, and conversation density measure Threads/User. The high correlation between a cohesion measure and a conversation density measure is not unexpected. However, their correlation with Diversity is somewhat of a surprise. In fact, we regularly find diversity competing with cohesion, when we have analyzed networks by survey. However, in the online world, it appears that Diversity and Cohesion actually reinforce each other.

In the online world, Diversity and Cohesion actually reinforce each other.

**Table 2-Lead Indicator Correlations**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Mean 2-Way</th>
<th>% Response Rate</th>
<th>% Diversity</th>
<th>% Reciprocity</th>
<th>Threads/User</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mean 2-Way</strong></td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>% Response Rate</strong></td>
<td>0.38</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>% Diversity</strong></td>
<td>0.86</td>
<td>0.48</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>% Reciprocity</strong></td>
<td>0.56</td>
<td>0.67</td>
<td>0.66</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Threads/User</strong></td>
<td>0.88</td>
<td>0.24</td>
<td>0.80</td>
<td>0.58</td>
<td>1.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

An important point to reinforce, and one we have written about previously, is that the default measure of collaborative performance by most ESN platforms is activity. Yet activity alone bears virtually no relationship to these key collaboration indicators.
The above chart plots one of our key performance indicators of reciprocity/cohesion against activity levels for each group at one of the more active benchmarking partners. It can be clearly seen how poor activity levels are in predicting collaborative performance.

At the other end of the maturity spectrum, our results show that the %Observers is most negatively correlated with these leading indicators. This reinforces the view that low participation rates will never sustain a productive collaboration environment. This might sound obvious, but it dispels a view that perhaps a small cadre of early adopters could carry the day, in terms of collaboration.

Table 3 - Key Indicators vs %Observer Correlations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Mean 2-Way</th>
<th>% Response Rate</th>
<th>% Diversity</th>
<th>% Reciprocity</th>
<th>Threads/User</th>
<th>% Observer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mean 2-Way</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Response Rate</td>
<td>0.38</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Diversity</td>
<td>0.86</td>
<td>0.48</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Reciprocity</td>
<td>0.56</td>
<td>0.67</td>
<td>0.66</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td></td>
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<td>0.88</td>
<td>0.24</td>
<td>0.80</td>
<td>0.58</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>%Observer</td>
<td>-0.92</td>
<td>-0.48</td>
<td>-0.93</td>
<td>-0.64</td>
<td>-0.82</td>
<td>1.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A common question of those organizations with low participation rates is whether the ESN sample is indicative enough of their collaborative performance. For example, we know that ESN participation rates are significantly less than say, email usage. We have previously conducted multi-channel research covering collaboration ESN, Email, Chat, Project Time Recording and Face to Face. What we found is that while the ESN was not the most used communication channel, it was by far the channel that staff used most to connect beyond their immediate workgroups. So while ESN analysis may not give strong insights into team level collaboration, it is still the best indicator of Enterprise-wide level collaboration.

We summarize this in the chart below, developed in co-operation with Chris Slemp from Carpool. The intent of this chart is to illustrate a typical innovation cycle use case, with individual idea generation, through to collaborative exploration of the idea, to engaging with potential sponsors and then implementing/exploiting the idea, to deliver the innovation. We have attached icons for toolsets that are most aligned with each stage. Yammer and other ESNs like Workplace and Jive, we believe, are most aligned to the Explore-Engage high diversity interactions. Exploitation teams, often in the form of private groups, can also be found in Yammer in some organizations, but alternatively may be using Microsoft Teams, Slack or Workplace Chat.

Given that this benchmarking study relies on Yammer data alone, it is possible that there are organizations that collaborate strongly without the use of an ESN. It has been our experience however, that the ESN is the most representative of an organization’s enterprise-wide collaboration performance. Those organizations that rely only on email or chat, are likely to be prioritizing local performance in teams over global performance overall. Effective enterprise-wide collaboration will require the use of a whole portfolio of toolsets.
7 Network Performance = Organizational Performance?

7.1 Organizational Performance Comparisons

We have used the performance framework identified in section 3.2 to plot each of our benchmarked organizations on an overall performance chart. We identify our measure of Diversity with Burt’s Y-axis of open networks and Reciprocity (Mean 2-Way Connections) as our measure of the degree of closure in the network. Increasingly, network performance is reflecting organizational performance, so we have dedicated this section to how our benchmark participants rate, according to these two key enterprise measures.

As we can see there are a few standout organizations that are successfully balancing diversity and reciprocity for maximum performance. We have cautiously taken the liberty of overlaying the ESN Maturity Stages to provide a notional ‘status quo’ for ESNs. We accept that for many organizations, their ESN is not their only collaborative tool; and perhaps not even their most utilized collaboration tool. Therefore, a direct mapping of the ESN network performance results to a maturity level may be premature. However, we feel that over time, as SWOOP also matures to incorporate additional collaboration channels, the results will reflect collaboration maturity.

The below results indicate that a majority of organizations are still operating in the ‘Social Media’ stages, which is consistent with reports from our clients. It is encouraging to see that many of the larger, more mature ESN users have network performance scores that place them as effectively connecting and sharing knowledge. Again this is consistent with the feedback we have gained from these organizations. We have written previously about making the transition from Social Networking to Problem Solving; where we identified the key indicators like an increase in %Response rate and cross formal lines of business interactions. The transition into the higher valued problem solving and innovating stages is still perhaps a little harder to interpret purely from the analytics alone, without associated empirical research. Hence assigning the maturity stages to organizational performance scores is still somewhat speculative at this time.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organizational Performance</th>
<th>ESN Maturity Curve</th>
<th>BrainStorm Inc.</th>
<th>Real Foundations</th>
<th>Virgin Trains</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Diversity</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reciprocity</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Platform Adoption</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Engagement</td>
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<tr>
<td>Connecting Sharing</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Problem Solving Innovating</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Figure 17 - Organizational Performance Results
7.2  Who are our Collaboration Champions?

Three organizations stood out in our Organizational Performance model for having the highest scores in both %Diversity and Reciprocity. Two were relatively small organizations with less than 300 staff, being a USA based Real Estate services company Real Foundations and also USA based training company BrainStorm Inc. It could be argued that it is easier to reach the top stage of the collaboration journey if you are relatively small. And that is true. But there are also many instances of small companies not thriving in the online collaboration environment, as we illustrated in Figure 7. Therefore, perhaps the most impressive performance is from UK Rail Operator Virgin Trains, who has been able to achieve these results across a staff of just under 3,000 active participants.

Is Virgin Trains’ position at the top stage of our maturity model justified? Are they truly innovating? A cursory online search identifies many industry awards for Virgin Trains. Den Carter, the Internal Communication & Engagement Manager, provided us with the following comment:

‘Virgin Trains has been innovating for over 20 years, transforming long distance high speed rail travel in the UK with a daringly bold approach that challenges our competitors. Recent award-winning steps include introducing BEAM, the UK’s first completely free on-train streaming video service, and automatic delay repay, which drops compensation into a customer’s bank account if a journey has been delayed – regardless whether or not the delay was within Virgin Trains’ control. We’ve also helped our customers shift from paper to electronic train tickets, with a 20% modal shift in a year.

Our passion for innovation starts from the inside. Our digital workplace is App-based, and we don’t have an intranet. Although our primary internal communications channel is face-to-face, we complement this with a series of Apps, including Yammer, to boost employee engagement. We’ve won a string of employee engagement and technology usage awards for our colleague engagement, and we measure employee wellbeing, which is high.’

While the two smaller organizations may not have quite the same level of public profile, BrainStorm Inc, like Virgin Trains, has won a multitude of ‘Best Place to Work’ awards across the USA, from prestigious organizations such as Fortune and Outside. The criteria for such awards is totally consistent with what we believe is required to be at the top of the ESN maturity curve. Community Manager Noah Sparks indicated to us that Yammer had recently been used to facilitate a company charity event, which had contributed well to their workforce engagement efforts. He also, however, mentioned that Yammer was not being used universally across the organization, with some divisions notably absent. This was a reminder for us to be cautious about over-reading the performance benchmarking results. To identify how pervasive ‘working as a network’ is occurring, the performance metric would need to be read in concert with SWOOP’s Cross-Team Collaboration widget, to identify the extent to which interactions bridge the formal lines of business.

![Cross-team Collaboration](image)

Figure 18 - SWOOP Cross-Team Collaboration Widget
Real Foundations may not have had the public recognition of the other two organizations, so we reached out to Naomi Souza, Director of Presence and Assets, to understand a little more about what makes Real Foundations tick:

‘We believe there are three main ingredients that have made RF the collaborative, innovative company we are today:

1. It’s How We’ve Always Worked. We have always had an open, sharing culture – even when we used old fashioned tools. And collaboration is part of our everyday work and not an additional task to complete.

2. We Lead by Example. Our most senior practitioners are not cheerleaders – they actively participate in and contribute to this culture. Our most active Yammer-er is consistently a firm founder.

3. We Evolve. Our leadership team puts ongoing thought into the role that Yammer plays in our larger knowledge ecosystem.

Chris Shaida, the Real Foundations CEO reinforced Naomi’s comments saying,

‘We believe that our knowledge is an active asset of our enterprise and Yammer helps us realize a return on that asset every day.’

Conducting some desktop research on our list of network performance leaders, we were regularly presented with stories about recognition and awards for innovation and/or employee engagement. The publicly listed companies were all well-performing and recognized leaders in their respective industry sectors. We are therefore comfortable in claiming that Network Performance and Organizational Performance are now one and the same.

We are comfortable claiming that Network Performance and Organizational Performance are now one and the same.
The importance of internal benchmarking to drive improvements in collaborative performance cannot be over-emphasized. As we intimated earlier, even the worst performers in our Enterprise Benchmarking have examples of good group performance, that compare favorably with those of the best performers.

While this report focuses on benchmarking at the Enterprise level, this same collaborative benchmarking approach can be applied internally, at multiple levels and dimensions, for SWOOP customers. SWOOP’s analytics start from the individual staff member’s collaborative profile, as the smallest unit of analysis. From here reporting can be aggregated to, for example, lines of business and office geographic locations. However, we have also analyzed groupings as diverse as age range, gender, seniority, work role, professional discipline and the like. Comparisons are open to any staff member. We do however prevent comparisons between individuals for the obvious privacy reasons.

In the graphic below we compare a Benchmarking Leader against a Benchmarking Laggard. We plot the Mean Two-Way Connections for each group against the Group Activity over the most recent 6-month period. Using our ESN Maturity framework, we are intimating that the most mature groups are those that are both connecting and active; and the least mature, less connecting and less active. We further qualify the results by suggesting that those groups with low connectivity and low activity are the lowest impact groups. Those groups that have high activity but generating a low level of two-way connections, are largely broadcasting groups i.e. have not moved beyond the ‘Engaging through content’ stage to the ‘Connecting’ stage.

In contrast there are also groups that have been able to build strong two-way connections with relatively lower levels of activity. Typically, these will be smaller groups behaving somewhat like teams. We have therefore suggested that these groups are operating at the ‘connecting’ and/or ‘sharing’ maturity stage. Finally, those groups that are operating at both a high level of connectivity and high levels of activity are inferred to be operating at the highest ‘solving’ and ‘innovating’ level of maturity. While this mapping of maturity stages to activity patterns is somewhat speculative, we have had sufficient empirical feedback to suggest that we are on the right track.
Comparing the Benchmark Leader and Benchmark Laggard groups, we can see that while both have a fair proportion of their groups operating in the ‘Low Impact’ region (long tail effect), the proportion is much higher for the Laggard organization. Both organizations have a reasonable proportion of their groups demonstrating broadcasting behavior. It is the proportion of groups at the more mature phases, where the differences are more apparent. That said, even for the Laggard organizations, there are still a handful of groups demonstrating mature collaboration behaviors. This means that Laggard organizations will likely have ‘best practice’ examples within their own organizations to benchmark against; and therefore improve their collaborative behaviors and performance overall.

Figure 20 - Group Benchmark Comparisons
Looking beneath the cover of the Enterprise, we see the ubiquitous ‘long tail’ distribution of engagement. This happens at all levels, be they individual networkers, groups, business units, there will always be a long tail distribution of engagement. The long tail distribution first came to prominence with Internet enabled e-commerce and companies like Amazon being able to economically sell low print run books to a large number of niche buyers. Networks exhibit the same long tail distributions. And therefore to exploit networks, one needs to identify how best to engage the long tail. Trying to bring everyone up to the same level of network performance is like fighting nature though. It’s not possible. What is possible however, is to manage the collaborative maturity of the organization. Analysis of self-forming groups within the ESN identifies that in most organizations, there are groups operating at all levels of the maturity curve. Those at the most mature end have understood how to effectively leverage their activities, to create and sustain the connections required to deliver collaborative benefits.

In our SWOOP persona speak, we don’t want an organization full of Engagers. What we do need is a healthy mix of Engagers, Catalysts and Responders, which may include some staff who are adept enough to adapt their behaviors as the context demands. The key difference between high and low performing organizations is a demonstration of trusted relationships being formed. Complementary collaboration behaviors are exhibited, that create tangible value; more so than broadcasting content and hoping for the best.

The good news for those at the earliest stages of maturity is that more than likely, best practice groups already exist in your organizations. So, start comparing, contrasting, learning and then delivering on your promise.

Best practice collaborative performance is not about turning everyone in the organization into a ‘super networker’
Dr. Laurence Lock Lee is the Co-founder and Chief Scientist at SWOOP Analytics and also Co-founder of Social Network Analysis Consulting firm Optimice. He is an experienced professional, with over 40 years’ experience as a researcher, technology leader, educator and management consultant. He is one of world’s leading practitioners in Social Network Analysis for organizational change, having conducted more than 100 consulting assignments for clients around the world. He holds a PhD on corporate social capital, from the University of Sydney. In the 1980s, at BHP Research, he led the largest private sector Artificial Intelligence laboratory in Australia. He also previously led the national Knowledge Management consulting practices at BHP Information Technology (BHPIT) and at Computer Sciences Corporation (CSC). He has published two books and numerous journal and industry articles. He is a regular contributor to CMSWire and blogs at SWOOP Blog.