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Top Social
Collaboration Tools
Transcript

Accenture Chief Information Officer, Andrew Wilson with Accenture Managing Director, Chris Crawford

Andrew Wilson: Tell us about some of the tools and specific platforms that you think are now succeeding inside Accenture and why it is successful?

Chris Crawford: I would start off with the Stream. The Stream is our internal social media feed, it aggregates from a lot of different sources into a single view, as we have seen more and more enterprise products and more and more enterprise platforms that have this idea of a social feed coming in. We have seen the need to aggregate that into a single view. I think it's unique for an organization of our size and diversity, but the Stream pulls in information and discussions from our blogs, from our Yammer site, from our different lines of business tools, from our media platforms, so that users just have to look at one place in the morning or throughout their day on their hand-held, on their tablets, rather than having to check 14 different sites for updates. So the Stream is key.

One other thing I would call out is ideas.accenture.com. Ideas is our internal ideation platform that allows anybody to set up and manage a campaign around idea generation, in a process-driven, structured manner. We have looked at a couple of enterprise tools that are out there that are very good but they seem too big for our needs, for the casual user or they were just too simplistic with a kind of a post and vote type scheme. So we expanded on some of our internal capabilities that we had with the Stream and Circles, which is our group function and created this ideation platform around that. This has had tremendous uptake, we've done hundreds of campaigns since we launched last Spring and they have been as small and as simple as "what's the best lunch place in Chicago," to the more business-focused such as "my particular retail client is looking at expanding in this way, what potential problems do you see in that?" And they would generate ideas that are not only positive but negative; they give them an idea of what to watch for in risk. Doing the risk analysis in this way is a tremendous game-changer because it rewards people for looking for problems, where previously some of those problems may have been shoved down: you are not a team player, don't talk about what could go wrong. Now it kind of elevates that and gives a chance for the teams to react to those problems before they occur, kind of a pre-mortem on a project and we are using the ideas. That is a creative use of the ideas platform that I have seen recently.

Andrew Wilson: Do these teams and the individuals in our workforce, do they need training in this or do they just adopt it?

Chris Crawford: The common thing is nobody ever taught me how to use Facebook, nobody taught me how to use Twitter; you shouldn't have to teach me how to use these internal platforms. At the same time these things are becoming so feature rich that we are careful that we are not just optimizing for the power users who are the ones that are giving us feedback. We really have to look at that zero-day experience, when you show up for the first time what do you see in the Stream? Do you see a bunch of posts that a relevant to you or does it look like a bunch of noise and then you never come back. So we do look at how to advance this, but we try and make it friendly and allow those capabilities to be discovered as you use the platform more and more.

Andrew Wilson: Chris that ideas generation and ideas capture sounds really powerful, any specific examples that you can point to where we can see that at work?

Chris Crawford: We have had a number of what I would say are obvious ones where there was an opportunity at a client, maybe a retail client, who is looking at going out to a new approach to customer service and they have challenged the team, first the internal team on what they would do to expand on the idea.

But then I have also seen them taking it to a wider Accenture audience - who they see as some of their consumers - and they would go out and they ask for input on the idea and some of the challenge with the client team here is getting over the idea that some of the feedback might not always be positive, it might just not be the log-rolling of "oh great idea, this is going to be a winner", but also kind of soliciting different ideas, not only how do we expand on this idea, but what are potential problems you see with this idea. How will people react to it? In this case, I thought it was a brilliant use of the platform and really a daring or courageous act by the project team to be willing to not only think of good ideas, but also how their pet idea may fail or could be improved upon.

Andrew Wilson: And that certainly is an example of unleashing the potential we couldn't unleash before without this new technology, without this social and collaboration view.

Chris Crawford: Not just technology but the attitudes of we are greater than one, we can get ideas from anywhere around the world, around the company.

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