Managing Content in Enterprise Social Networks

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Osterman Research, Inc.
P.O. Box 1058 • Black Diamond, Washington • 98010-1058 • USA
Tel: +1 253 630 5839 • Fax: +1 253 458 0934 • info@ostermanresearch.com
www.ostermanresearch.com • twitter.com/mosterman
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Enterprise social networks are internal, Facebook-like social applications designed to be used by company employees, and may or may not include access by people outside of a company. These networks enable users to collaborate around files, application data, projects and other issues and items of interest to an organization. There are a large number of enterprise social networks available, such as Salesforce Chatter, IBM Connections, Microsoft Yammer, VMware Socialcast, Huddle, Jive and scores of others.

These social networks are becoming more important to the overall communication and collaboration framework for many organizations. Because these networks permit a greater degree of collaboration than email, they’re more useful for teams of people who work together on projects. Also, enterprise social networking platforms offer unique advantages compared to other tools, including the ability to discover expertise across an enterprise, share information in ways that would be impractical with email, speed the decision-making process, and provide a sense of corporate cohesiveness and information sharing that can boost employee productivity and overall organizational efficiency.

Because of the growing penetration and importance of enterprise social networking, the business records contained within these systems must be archived just like any other electronic content. Failure to do so can result in significant harm to an organization and will be more damaging in the future as the importance of enterprise social networks increases, just as a failure to archive email today can create significant problems.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

• While some decision makers have not yet been able to sell the business case for enterprise social networking, a growing number of organizations are deploying these systems to solve a host of communication and collaboration problems.

• With increasing use of enterprise social networking tools inevitably comes the growth of corporate content that is generated by employees on these platforms, and stored within their data repositories. This content must be archived and supervised in order to satisfy legal, regulatory and other compliance requirements.

• While many enterprise social networking platforms already have built-in archiving capabilities, these often aren’t sufficient to satisfy all of an organization’s legal or regulatory obligations.

• Third-party archiving solutions for enterprise social networking will ideally offer a number of important features, including storage of content in purpose-built repositories, comprehensive archiving support for each network’s unique capabilities and the ability to support multiple content types.

ABOUT THIS WHITE PAPER

This white paper discusses the key issues organizations should consider when managing content contained in enterprise social networks. It also discusses the results of an in-depth survey Osterman Research conducted with 173 firms during late May and early June 2014, about their use of enterprise social networking tools, and the impact these systems have on their content archiving and management requirements. Finally, it provides a brief overview of Smarsh, the sponsor of this paper, and the company’s relevant archiving solutions.
THE GROWING ROLE OF ENTERPRISE SOCIAL NETWORKING

Social networking use—much of it on “public” tools like Facebook and Twitter – is increasing rapidly. Three out of five users increased use over the past 12 months, and nearly two out of three users anticipate an increase in social networking activity over the next twelve months.

The growth of social networking in the workplace, we believe, is driven by the growing acceptance of social networking by senior management in most organizations today, the utility of social networking for collaborating with peers, and the gleaning of information that would be difficult to find in other venues. Two key issues that will impact how specific organizations and industries adopt enterprise social networking solutions:

• Organizations with a corporate culture that rewards information-sharing and collaboration will be more likely to adopt enterprise social networking solutions.

• While highly regulated industries will be somewhat slower to adopt enterprise social networking because of the regulatory restrictions that may be placed on new communications or collaboration technologies, the ability to archive, monitor and otherwise manage interactions using these tools will help to foster adoption among these industries.

MAKING THE CASE FOR ENTERPRISE SOCIAL NETWORKING

Enterprise social networking solutions for the enterprise are designed primarily to:

• Improve collaboration within an organization

• Improve the quality and speed of decision-making

• Create content-like wikis, blogs and collaborative documents

• Enable improved access to the skill sets of employees across an organization

• Integrate social content with CRM tools

• Improve the flow, quality and timeliness of information between employees and business partners

• Mitigate the disadvantage of distance for employees who work in geographically separate locations.

An enterprise social networking system can be used for a variety of traditional and innovative scenarios. They can provide new ways to work on documents, hold meetings and keep everyone on a team up-to-date. Enterprise social networking systems can provide new ways to find expertise, work with customers and build communities of interest that cross into the external domain. The key point to note is that enterprise social networks require strong adoption programs to prove their validity and gain a return on the investment.

Many decision makers have not yet been presented with a sufficiently strong business case for the adoption of enterprise social networking, despite these scenarios that ultimately increase productivity. While there are a large and growing number of vendors that provide precisely these capabilities, the perception of social networking as a “consumer”-focused toolset without business benefits will continue to dominate the mindset of many organizations (at least temporarily), particularly those that don’t have the corporate culture to support true enterprise social networking.
DRIVERS FOR ENTERPRISE SOCIAL NETWORKING

There are a variety of factors that motivate organizations to deploy enterprise social networking tools. Our research found a key problem that organizations want to solve with the deployment of these tools is improved communications and/or collaboration between departments and functions, cited by 76% of our survey respondents.

Other problems that organizations want to solve with enterprise social networking tools include improving communication and/or collaboration across geographies (34%), reducing in email volume (33%), and enabling employees to find expertise across the organization (31%).

Not surprisingly, CIOs and senior IT managers are primarily responsible for the final decision to deploy enterprise social networking tools within a company. Our research found these roles were involved in 82% of organizations’ final deployment decisions, compared to only 43% of organizations where senior business managers were involved in the final decision. This is an important point to consider: the need for archiving tends to be a line-of-business issue due to legal and regulatory requirements, yet IT continues to be charged with specifying and deploying enterprise social networking solutions. Because multiple stakeholders are often involved in the selection and deployment of enterprise social networks, the needs of the various lines of business that will use these tools must be aligned with compliance, IT and other relevant functions to ensure that all of the organizations’ goals are being met.

ENTERPRISE SOCIAL NETWORKING IS GROWING

The use of enterprise social networking is growing at a healthy pace. An April 2014 Osterman Research survey of mid-sized (100-999 email users) and large organizations found 18% of respondents currently use an enterprise social networking tool, and this figure is expected to increase to nearly 26% by early 2016. This reflects an increase of 42% in just two years.

The penetration of enterprise social networking tools will increase within the organizations that have deployed it. For example, as shown in Figure 1, just 9% of organizations that have rolled out enterprise social networking have provided it to the majority of their information workers in 2014, but this will increase to 14% by 2016. Moreover, we found significant differences in the penetration of enterprise social networking by organization size: among mid-sized organizations, only 5% have deployed it to the majority of their information workers, growing to 6% by 2016. However, among larger organizations, 13% have deployed it to the majority of their information workers today, but this figure will grow to 22% by 2016.

In many cases, deployment of enterprise social networks is ultimately planned for an entire organization; the figure above shows the deployment of most enterprise social networks starts with a smaller internal group.

Among organizations that haven’t yet deployed an enterprise social networking platform, 11% plan to in 2014 or 2015, while another 37% plan to after 2016 or at some future undetermined date.

GROWTH OF CONTENT

With the increasing use of enterprise social networking tools comes the growth of corporate content generated by users of these tools and stored within a company’s data repositories. The diversity of enterprise social networking tools and the even larger number of “public” social networking tools that often contain corporate content means that the number of repositories that store corporate data will increase.
SHOULD YOU ARCHIVE CONTENT FROM ENTERPRISE SOCIAL NETWORKING PLATFORMS?

The initial, and broader, question that organizations should ask is: Do we need to archive the electronic content that contains our business records and other relevant information? The answer should be a resounding “yes” for a number of reasons:

- **Litigation support**
  Legal drivers tend to be one of the primary motivators for organizations to archive their relevant electronic content. Our research found that for 43% of the organizations with an enterprise social networking system deployed, content is being archived for eDiscovery, regulatory compliance or some other purpose. For the vast majority of organizations that are archiving content, the archive is available to an organizational administrator.

  Because organizations will periodically be involved in a legal action – either as a defendant, plaintiff or third party – an archiving system is essential as a means for searching and producing relevant content in response to an eDiscovery order. An archiving solution is also beneficial if an organization must implement a litigation hold to ensure that relevant electronic content that might be necessary for a legal proceeding is not discarded in the normal content deletion process. And, an archiving solution is essential for formal or informal early case assessments, allowing senior managers, legal counsel and others to understand the implications of a legal case early in the litigation process.

- **Regulatory compliance**
  For heavily regulated firms, including those in the financial services, healthcare, energy, pharmaceutical, public sector and similar types of industries, an archiving system is essential to satisfy regulatory obligations to retain certain types of data. For example, broker-dealers and other types of financial services providers...
in the United States must satisfy Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) and Financial Industry Regulatory Authority (FINRA) obligations to retain and supervise relevant records for a minimum time period.

**Improved retention capabilities**
While many enterprise social networking tools have some form of archiving capability, we recommend organizations implement their own archiving functionality for two reasons. First, organizations will often gain efficiencies if they can intelligently leverage existing retention and supervision policies for other forms of electronic communications, like email and instant messaging, and apply them to enterprise social networking communications. Second, using the archiving capability native to an enterprise social network, no matter how good, leaves an organization at the mercy of the enterprise social network. The social network may not retain certain types of information that the organization may value.

- **Knowledge management**
  A less common driver for archiving is knowledge management and data mining for purposes of preserving “corporate memory” or the digital heritage of an organization. This is an important application for archiving because it allows employees to search their older content which may still be useful, and to retain data that might have value for the business as a whole.

- **Big data analytics**
  A still-nascent application of archiving that only a handful of organizations are currently exploring is its use for big data purposes. Because email and other content archives contain a wealth of information about how and when employees interact with customers, prospects, management, fellow employees and others, analytics applied to archived content can provide valuable insights that would otherwise be unavailable. For example, CRM systems contain only a fraction of the interactions that take place between salespeople and customers, but mining data from an email archiving system could provide the missing intelligence to help an organization better understand its sales processes.

**MORE CORPORATE CONTENT WILL BE STORED IN ENTERPRISE SOCIAL NETWORKS**
As organizations employ enterprise social networking tools to a greater degree, a growing proportion of corporate content will be stored in these systems. For example, an Osterman Research survey conducted in March 2014 found that today, 57% of all content is stored in file servers, 39% in email systems and only 13% in collaboration systems, which includes enterprise social networking platforms. However, we anticipate a growing proportion of corporate content will be stored within enterprise social networking and other collaboration systems, increasing the necessity to archive content for legal, regulatory and other purposes.

**ESN ARCHIVING IS PART OF GOOD INFORMATION GOVERNANCE**
Archiving of enterprise social media content, and content from non-enterprise tools like Facebook and Twitter, is simply an extension of the best practice of archiving all relevant electronic content. It should be part of any organization’s information governance program for a number of reasons. First, regulators and courts are starting to ask for public and enterprise social media content. Second, what is said online will become increasingly important in legal cases, and it will be a burden on an organization that doesn’t capture content from enterprise and public social media systems in the very near future.

The survey conducted for this white paper found that 25% of organizations have had to produce content from their enterprise social networking solution — the same survey conducted in 2013 found that figure was only 15%.
Also, content from non-enterprise networking tools is archived by some organizations (although not most, as shown in Figure 2) and must be produced for compliance, eDiscovery or other purposes. Our research found that among organizations that do archive content from public social networks, content had to be produced a mean of 0.6 to 17.4 times, depending on the platform, during the past 12 months.

**Figure 2**
Methods for Retaining Social Media Content

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Platform</th>
<th>Centrally Archive All or Relevant Content</th>
<th>Ask End Users to Archive Relevant Content</th>
<th>Do NOT Archive</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Facebook</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>81%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Twitter</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>84%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LinkedIn</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YouTube</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>83%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Google Plus</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>85%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other social media tools</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>86%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Osterman Research, Inc.*

Following are examples of the requirements and precedents to produce social media content for legal and regulatory actions:

- **FINRA Regulatory Notice 10-06**
  "Every firm that intends to communicate, or permit its associated persons to communicate, through social media sites must first ensure that it can retain records of those communications as required by Rules 17a-3 and 17a-4 under the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 and NASD Rule 3110."\(^{ii}\)

  In addition to Notice 10-06, there are a number of other financial services-focused regulatory obligations that have implications for social media archiving, including FINRA Notice 11-39, NASD 2310 and FINRA Rule 2210(c)(6). In addition, the SEC offered advice in a January 2012 National Examination Risk Alert about how investment advisers should use social media\(^{iii}\).

- **Calvert v. Red Robin International, Inc.**\(^{iv}\)
  The plaintiff in this case was ordered by the court to "bring all materials, electronic or otherwise, including e-mails, Facebook messages, and any other communications he has had with putative class members in this action."

- **Armstrong v. Shirvell**\(^{v}\)
  The defendant in this case requested "[a] complete copy of all communications between you and the following individuals...whether it be on Facebook, in a blog, via e-mail, text message, voicemail, letter, facsimile, or anywhere else..."

An inability to produce data quickly and completely creates more legal risk for organizations. Because courts and regulators can fine or issue other sanctions against organizations that fail to produce data from email, the same standards will increasingly apply to data stored in other forms of electronic communications, such as enterprise social networking tools. Courts and regulatory authorities increasingly understand the importance of archiving electronic content from virtually any source. As judges and regulators become more aware of the relative ease with which content can be archived and produced from any source, excuses for not doing so might become less acceptable.
KEY ISSUES TO CONSIDER

As organizations seek to deploy enterprise social networking tools and archive the related content, there are important issues decision-makers should consider.

COMPLIANCE IS NOT SIMPLE

Compliance in the context of enterprise social networking is not necessarily a simple thing to undertake. Depending on a company’s specific legal or regulatory climate, compliance can be complex and requires the use of appropriate tools and services to ensure it is managed properly. In fact, among those organizations we surveyed that haven’t yet deployed an enterprise social networking platform, nearly one in four indicated the reason they haven’t is because “there are too many regulatory, compliance or other issues to overcome.”

THE IMPORTANCE OF A UNIFIED ARCHIVE

If an organization is going to use an enterprise social networking system, the archiving of its data should be integrated into a unified archiving solution. Email, social media, Web communications, instant messages and other content should be accessible within a single archiving solution, while still allowing for content types to be preserved and searched in their native format. The many advantages of a unified archiving solution include the ability to search across all content types from a single interface; a greater assurance that data will not be missed during the search and production process; reduced training costs from having a single versus multiple interfaces; and lower costs for eDiscovery and related activities.

STORAGE IN NATIVE FORMAT

Ideally, content from enterprise social networking systems should be kept in its native or “original” format when archived, and stored in a purpose-built repository. This is important, because when data is converted into an email format (so that content can be search and produced as part of the email archive), vital pieces of information about the enterprise social networking interaction are lost, including the context, related messages and other metadata that is associated with the specific social networking platform. The conversion of content into the body of an email puts the organization at risk for over- or under-producing data, and understanding the conversational context of social networking interactions becomes more difficult. This context is essential for proper eDiscovery and compliance supervision, and particularly important for activities like early case assessments.

THIRD-PARTY ARCHIVING SATISFIES MORE SOPHISTICATED REQUIREMENTS

Many enterprise social networking tools provide some basic archiving capabilities that don’t require the use of third-party offerings. Content from Microsoft Yammer enterprise accounts can be exported to a .csv file for archiving purposes, and Jive includes the ability to archive discussions.

While these limited archiving capabilities may be useful for particular applications, they will likely be unable to meet the needs of organizations with sophisticated eDiscovery or legal hold requirements, nor will they meet the demands associated with specific regulatory compliance obligations.

THE INFLUENCE OF OTHER SYSTEMS

Our research found the choice of an enterprise social networking system was at least partially dependent on other parts of the infrastructure in place within the organization. For example:

• We found that for 64% of those surveyed, the existing email system had an important or very important influence on the choice of a particular enterprise social networking system.
• For 41% of organizations, the electronic content management system was important. For example, among organizations that have chosen Microsoft as their enterprise content management (ECM) vendor, 29% have deployed Microsoft Yammer. Among non-Microsoft ECM shops, Yammer penetration is 13%.

• For 38% of organizations, the customer relationship management and enterprise resource planning systems in place had an important or very important influence. For example, among Salesforce-enabled organizations, 31% had deployed Salesforce Chatter as their enterprise social networking platform compared to only 4% of non-Salesforce-enabled shops.

• We also found that the vendor offering the enterprise social networking platform was an important or very important consideration for 53% of organizations surveyed.

It is also important to note that for several leading vendors, enterprise social networking factors prominently in the roadmap of their offerings and so is an essential component of their future communications, collaboration and content management strategy. For example, Yammer figures prominently in Microsoft’s long-term roadmap, as does Connections for IBM, Chatter for Salesforce, Community for Zimbra, Socialcast for VMware, and so forth.

These findings indicate the choice of an enterprise social networking platform is often dependent on a company’s existing infrastructure and critical enterprise systems. At first, companies may be reluctant to adopt enterprise social networking because decision-makers don’t believe it has the mission-critical importance of older legacy systems just yet. However, since it’s only a matter of time before enterprise social networking tools become more commonly used, it’s important to have a third-party archiving and supervision solution in place now that can handle a variety of different content types and technologies.

**PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE**

Traditional electronic content archiving used to focus primarily on email, but organizations today need to stay abreast of current archiving requirements across different content types, including enterprise social networking. As archiving options and capabilities expand to cover social media, enterprise social networking, text messaging, instant messaging, voice and other content types, make sure you have an archiving provider that can cater to current and future technology and regulatory or legal requirements.
ABOUT SMARSH

Smarsh delivers cloud-based archiving solutions for the information-driven enterprise. Its centralized platform provides a unified compliance and e-discovery workflow across the entire range of digital communications, including email, public and enterprise social media, Web, instant messaging and mobile messaging.

Founded in 2001, Smarsh helps more than 20,000 organizations meet regulatory compliance, e-discovery and record retention requirements. Smarsh is headquartered in Portland, Ore. with offices in New York City, Atlanta, Boston, Los Angeles and London.