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IntraMart:
Changing the
Paradigm
of Business
Intelligence

Greg Schmidt,
CEO

Social Media Wouldn't Address All the Issues in Business Communication

Dr. Pehong Chen,

The Redwood City, CA based BroadVision (NASDAQ: BVSN) is a software vendor of self-service web applications for enterprise social software, electronic commerce, Enterprise Portals, and CRM. The firm has a market cap of $47.28 million

It is an undisputed fact that the prevalent ways of business communication are broken. There is no agreement on the respective solutions for improvement. Though 'Email Overload' is a common explanation, it describes only part of the problem. Most of us receive far too many emails, and it gets worst in case of larger organizations.

Adding to the complexity is the realty that several new products promising more efficient communication end-up exacerbating the problem. Such solutions end up fragmenting company knowledge across a wide range of different services starting from tech start-ups with a limited grasp of how business communication differs from consumer communication.

Yet, bringing in changes to the current ways of business communication would not happen instantly. We cannot just throw new tools at employees and expect them to become experts overnight. It is also impractical to simply tell them to use their existing tools more effectively. The need of the hour should be a combined strategy of new tools and new working practices, and we require managers with true leadership skills and capable of utilizing these new tools coupled with new strategies. Simply put, "Do what I say" won't change the way employees work, instead a "do what I do" approach seems much more viable.

Social Media in Business Communication
A few years ago, the introduction of social networks into organizations was seen as the savior of business communication. However, many companies were unprepared and found the attempt untimely. As a consequence, their approach to social media was without a clear idea on the practical implementation of the tools into the working environment. I believe that social networks can play an important role in business communication, yet cannot offer a complete solution, and need to be far more sophisticated than many of the popular options.

The Way Out
The way to effective business communication is easier once you have a clear understanding on the way employees in an organization work. With this knowledge, we can provide them with tools that support their work, rather than tools that irritate them or force them into inefficiencies. What I would like to emphasize on is business communication that is truly independent of devices. For instance, this way, a field-based sales representative can connect with the rest of the company with ease, using their Smartphones.
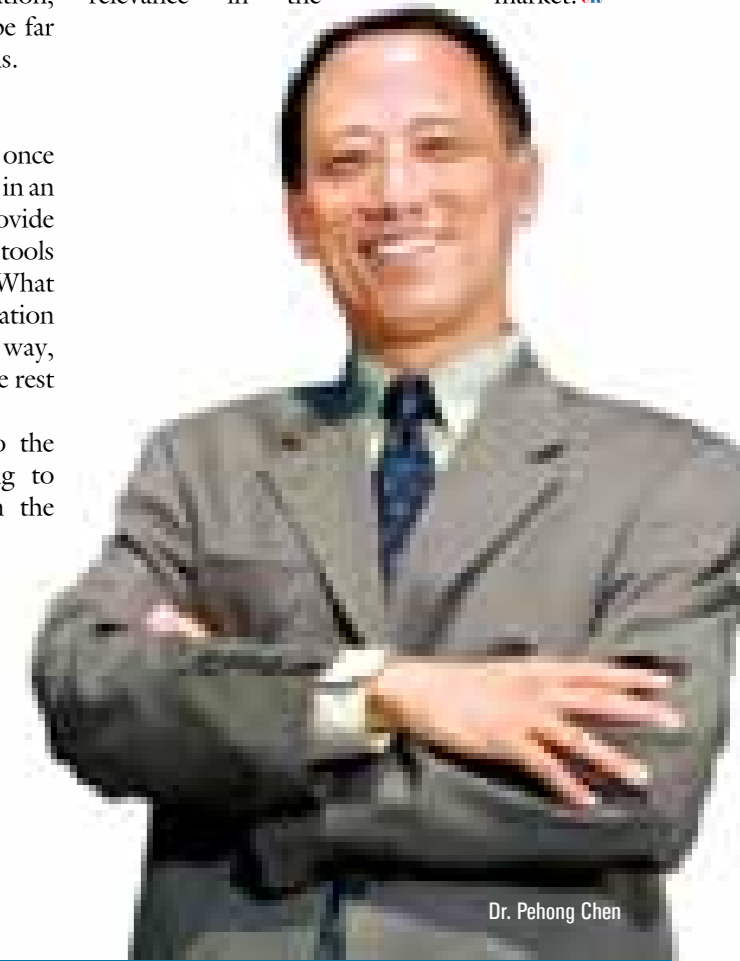
Inevitably, this scenario brings two aspects to the front that is adaptation into cloud, and learning to trust corporate data to cloud providers. But, in the post-Snowden world, it is understandable that several companies are concerned about hosting their data where it might be accessed by foreign governments. That's why I strongly believe in the concept of a "federated cloud" wherein companies store their data within the same authority as they are themselves regulated, and the emergence of new protocols and conventions for the exchange of this data between regions takes place.

In Short
The attempts to update the contemporary business practices should no longer be restricted to tackling the 'email overload'. Instead, new tools, practices, data storage and exchange tools should be incorporated. Despite the importance of collaboration and communication, many organizations consider this as a problem that is too difficult to solve. However, in my view companies who successfully transform themselves into true digital businesses will be those who reform their communication and collaboration practices. And those who stick to twentieth century email-centric practices would soon lose relevance in the market. **CR**

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Dr. Pehong Chen