Special Track

Social Media and Knowledge Management: A Fruitful Marriage for Firms?

Track Chairs
Luca Gastaldi | Politecnico di Milano | luca.gastaldi@polimi.it
Antonio Ghezzi | Politecnico di Milano | antonio1.ghezzi@polimi.it
Emanuele Lettieri | Politecnico di Milano | emanuele.lettieri@polimi.it

Organizers
Luca Gastaldi | Politecnico di Milano | luca.gastaldi@polimi.it
Antonio Ghezzi | Politecnico di Milano | antonio1.ghezzi@polimi.it
Emanuele Lettieri | Politecnico di Milano | emanuele.lettieri@polimi.it
Antonella Martini | University of Pisa | a.martini@ing.unipi.it
Mariano Corso | Polytechnic University of Milan | mariano.corso@polimi.it

Description

Social Media (SM) have radically transformed and are continuously transforming the way we, as individuals and professionals, communicate, collaborate, consume and create knowledge (Yates and Paquette, 2011; Aral et al., 2013). One example, above all the others, attests how deep these changes are. In the first quarter of 2013 the number of monthly active users on Facebook has overcome 1 billion for the first time; this means that 1 person out of 7 uses Facebook regularly to get in touch with peers, friends and colleagues and exchange knowledge with them.

As SM are exploding in popularity among citizens and consumers, companies seek to extract value from this phenomenon to innovate their practices of Knowledge Management (KM) (Luo et al., 2013). In the last years, many authors (e.g. Enders et al., 2008; Kietzmann et al., 2011) remarked that companies have paradigmatically changed the way they organize and manage knowledge. This radical—and probably not reversing—change urges the updating of our current understanding of the disrupting interplay between SM and KM, and the nurturing of a scientifically-based and practice-relevant debate about whether and how managers could extract value from this interplay (e.g. Kietzmann et al., 2011).

In this regards, a missing link emerges. The SM phenomenon arose as an applied paradigm for communication and networking among and with individuals, with a limited theorization backing it. A wide part of our current understanding is based on anecdotal evidence, grey literature or unproved assumptions. Additionally, the on-going theoretical effort is more devoted to investigate specific examples of SM (e.g. Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest, Wikipedia, etc.) rather than developing new interpretative lenses and establishing clear guidelines for managers on how to collectively use them to improve the usage of their knowledge assets. This confirms the need to crystallize the lessons learnt and provide managers with clear guidelines about whether and how managers could extract value from this interplay (e.g. Kietzmann et al., 2011).

The following questions illustrate some potential areas of interest, but offer only a starting point that have and should be complemented:
• How organizations can effectively and efficiently exploit SM to better manage their knowledge assets?
• Which are the activation triggers and decisional levers that managers can use to orchestrate SM and KM?
• How can SM influenced and be harmonically included in a firm’s KM strategy?
• How to effectively leverage SM to enhance the two-way knowledge exchange with customers?
• How to design a governance of SM in line with the firm’s KM strategy and organizational structure?
• Which are the trade-offs brought about by the integration of SM in the firm’s knowledge assets?
• Which learning mechanisms are more effective in capturing the knowledge developed through and by SM?
References


Keywords

- Social Media
- Knowledge Management

Guidelines

Researchers wishing to contribute are invited to submit an extended abstract (in Word format) of 1,000-1,500 words by January 20, 2014. The abstract should address theoretical background, research objective, methodology, and results in terms of expected contribution to Knowledge Management theory and practice. Authors are encouraged to follow the guidelines for both extended abstracts as well as full papers that will be made available on IFKAD site.

Deadlines

- Abstract submission: 20 January 2014
- Review decisions sent to authors: 20 February 2014
- Full paper submission: 15 April 2014
- Registration to the conference (for at least one author of the paper): 20 May 2014
- Conference sessions: 12–13 June 2014

Further Information

For further information, please contact: luca.gastaldi@polimi.it