

## 3 Winning Social Media Applications Help Telecom

by Mike Mitchell

Do you allow your staff to access social media or networking sites during business hours? Many businesses are blocking sites like Facebook and Twitter because they distract from business activities. There are, however, 3 social media applications that could create interest, build morale, and provide a positive impact on your department. The opportunity for employees to share their knowledge and collaborate on projects could also benefit your organization by spurring innovative ideas and streamlining processes and procedures.

### Wikis

Building a knowledge base of obscure technical information is a great way to increase productivity and reduce analyst's frustration by sharing jewels of wisdom. I know from personal experience that not all manufacturer documentation is current. Even upon initial distribution! They release technical bulletins with fixes and updates but not all staff receives all updates.

Wikis are a great way to store those important updates for all your employees to easily access. Employees can become frustrated when they cannot access a vital piece of information because the manager locked the technical update manual in the office and is now in a meeting or out of the office for the day.

You can also use a wiki to document that IDF hidden in the ceiling of an obscure closet or mechanical room (you know you have at least one!) Analysts can add their unpublished technical discoveries about equipment, software, or procedures.

### Forums

Create a forum to allow employees to post problems they encounter. Encourage all your employees to share their advice and knowledge. This gives your staff an opportunity to collaborate to solve a problem, improve a procedure, or voice their thoughts about a project.

The forum can be divided into key areas based on specific manufacturers, types of equipment, or software applications for convenience of posting and response.

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### Blogs

Introduce a blogging platform for your staff. A blog and a forum can function similarly but a blog, as an individual effort, does not have the variety of topics and themes of a forum. This would be a wonderful opportunity for someone to post a new work-related idea or process and then get honest feedback from the crowd of co-workers.

A business blog should be strictly a business-related tool. Negative or irrelevant posts should not be allowed. The purpose of this employee blog should be to enhance the knowledge of the readers or to get feedback pertaining to a particular idea or topic.

Remember to put ground rules in place before implementing any form of social media. Each of these applications needs a certain degree of monitoring. It only takes one person to sabotage the information on a wiki, disrupt the exchange of ideas on a forum, or highjack a blog.

Allow your staff to have some fun while sharing knowledge and ideas.

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