

ENTERPRISE SOCIAL NETWORKS AS A MEETING TOOL IN THE CZECH REPUBLIC

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Abstract: Meetings are an essential prerequisite for successfully communicating and transferring internal information. The question is whether or not businesses in the present day are organizing and leading meetings effectively. The goal of this paper is to conduct a comparison of the requirements for effective meeting leadership with the current state of businesses in the Czech Republic. Furthermore, the paper aims to answer a research question relating to the feasibility of using enterprise social networks for conducting company meetings. The goal of the survey research was to map the current state of the investigated problematic and its trends. The paper's methodology is based on managed interviews conducted in 2014. An overall comparison of the data that was acquired shows the current trends and points to a discrepancy between the requirements for conducting meetings and reality. The results indicate the possible use of modern technologies for more effectively conducting meetings within businesses in the form of enterprise social networks. The paper discusses the use of the latest trends and innovations concerning technologies that help managers effectively transfer internal information; it also outlines a concept for further research directions. The paper attempts to emphasize the fact that it is necessary to pay attention to modern technologies and embrace new, sophisticated tools for ensuring effective meeting leadership.

Keywords: Management, Information Technology, Human Resource Management, Enterprise Social Network, Meeting, Organization.

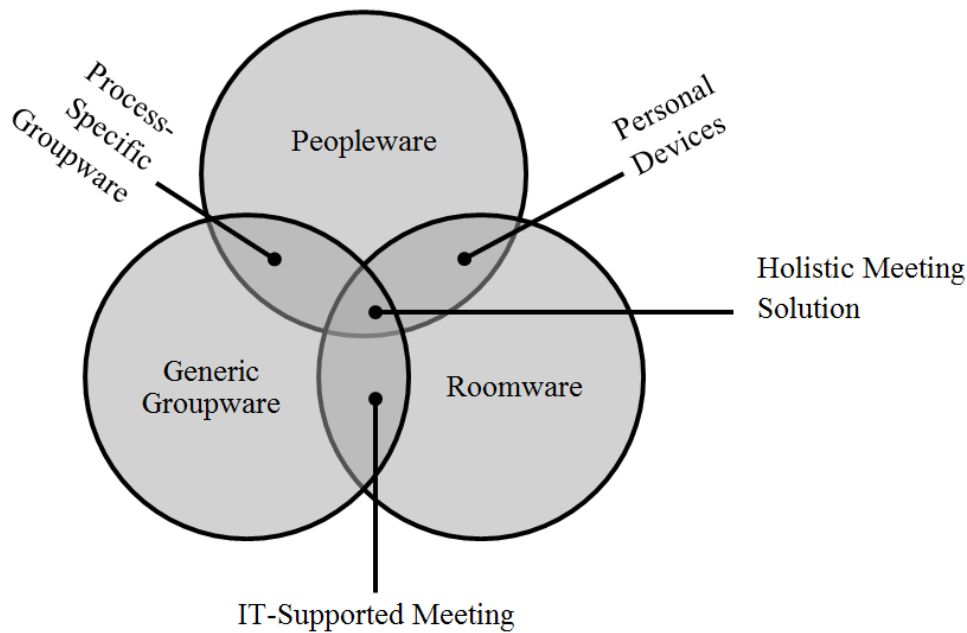
JEL Classification: M12, M15, M19.

Introduction

Meetings are an important form of interaction in business environment [19]. Working meetings are one of the basic tools of corporate management at all levels of management. Working meetings performs two basic functions. The first is a meeting of staff for communication, coordination and cooperation in solving specific tasks, projects and other business activities. Another function is the method of training of workers in the workplace, if at a meeting one or more workers to educate others. [9] Meeting effectiveness describes the extent to which meetings help achieve the goals of the meeting attendees (i.e. employees) and the organization [18]. Nixon and Littlepage found that good meeting procedures (i.e. promoting open communication, task-oriented focus, systematic approach, and timeliness) were related to meeting effectiveness [16]. Meeting effectiveness is determined by meeting characteristics that are set up or occur prior to the meeting and during the meeting itself [1].

Fig. 1 shows different dimensions that have to be considered when designing meeting support. It is important to note that the different dimensions overlap. This paper focuses on IT support during the working meetings.

Fig. 1: Dimension of working meetings



Source: Adjusted by [1]

Meetings are often not held in a way that makes all participants feel engaged. Meeting support systems try to overcome this barrier by helping meeting participants in the meeting workflow. [19] Based on technologies, there are some systems for meeting scheduling for arranging meetings, some with more attention to user preferences [2], [6]. Development of technology and the ability of organizations to recognize trends, new business opportunities, become the determining factor of competitiveness [7]. Search sophisticated technologies are a key factor for efficient internal communication in all organizations. One possible technology offers Enterprise Social Networks, using this tool, users can quickly connect anywhere in the world [10].

New approaches emphasize the role and quality of the human factor, an example communication skills, decision making and innovative thinking. We can follow the research trend emphasizing endogenous approach. [15] The company PwC conducted international research that interviewed 1344 general directors from 68 countries. The research results reflect trends influencing business conduct not only right now but also in the next three years; this is due to the growth of the global economy. Technological progress, demographic changes and advancement in the economic strength of individual countries are three main factors that influence business conduct. In particular, these are the digital economy, social media, mobile devices and big data. [17] Providers of enterprise social networking provide many benefits for the organization [4], [23], or [8]. Therefore, the paper also deals with the research topic described below. Working meetings and internal social networks were chosen from among the primary aspect of human resource management and aspect of IT management.

1 Statement of a problem

The goal of this paper is to conduct a comparison of the requirements for effective meeting leadership with the current state of businesses in the Czech Republic. Furthermore, the paper aims to answer a research question relating to the feasibility of using enterprise social networks for conducting company meetings.

2 Methods

The paper's methodology of the primary research uses the basis of guided interviews conducted from October to December of 2014. Methodology of the secondary research was based on questionnaire survey, of 2015, in the months of January-February.

2.1 The primary research methodology

The paper's methodology uses the basis of guided interviews conducted from October to December of 2014. The basic sample for interviewing included all top and line managers, predominantly HR managers. Non-probability quota sampling was used for determining the respondent sample [5], [22].

Companies were selected on the basis of predetermined criteria and determination by secondary analysis. The following criteria were established:

- Legal entity;
- number of employees greater than 50 – to increase the validity of the data in the research investigation;
- all areas of the Czech Republic;
- actively engaged in business.

2.2 The secondary research methodology

Subsequently it was conducted further research and tested the chosen research question. Methodology of research was based on questionnaire survey, of 2015, in the months of January-February. The questionnaire was prepared in an online form using Google Forms. Online link for completing the questionnaire was sent by e mail form, incl. cover letter.

Sampling of respondents was determined by the following criteria:

- Legal entity;
- all sectors according to CZ NACE;
- all areas of the Czech Republic;
- actively engaged in business.

3 Problem solving

Empirical generalization and interpretation of the determined results was conducted on the basis of the research results.

3.1 The results of the primary research

Tab. 1 depicts the so-called hard data that was acquired, which represents the numbers in percentages of the data listed by the respondents. The most common types of legal business entities for the respondent sample were the private limited company and the joint-stock company. The largest number of organizations fell into the 50-250 employee range with the 1001-5000 employees range following. The highest number of respondents was listed pure line or line and staff organizations; next ensued divisional and matrix structures.

Tab. 1: Hard Data

Organization Size		Organization Structure	
50 - 250	59 %	Pure Line	27 %
251 - 500	6 %	Staff	8 %
501 - 1000	12 %	Line and Staff	27 %
1001 - 5000	18 %	Divisional	12 %
More than 50000	4 %	Line – Functional	12 %
		Matrix	14 %

Source: Own calculation

Tab. 2 shows the form of working meetings with comparison need for communication and share documents online. According to the answers of respondents working meetings are held in oral form, which does not coincide with the need to communicate and share business documents online. The overall comparison of acquired data presents the current trend and points out the contradiction between the requirements for the organization of working meetings, including document sharing and reality.

Tab. 2: Type of working meetings vs. the need to communicate and share documents online

Type of working meetings		The need to communicate online		The need to share documents online	
Oral	87 %	No	36 %	No	14 %
Online	13 %	Yes	64 %	Yes	86 %

Source: Own calculation

3.2 The results of the secondary research

Secondary research follows on primary research. The minimum number of respondents was set at 272, according to the above formula (1). Calculating of the minimum number of respondents is as follows [13]:

$$n \geq (z^2 \cdot p \cdot q) / \Delta^2 \quad (1)$$

where: n denotes the minimum number of respondents; z denotes reliability coefficient; p and q denotes percentage of respondents knowledgeable and ignorant of the issue; Δ denotes the maximum permissible error.

Return of questionnaires in absolute terms amounted to 842, which is sufficient due to the calculated minimum number of respondents (272).

Research question is as follows: Implementation of enterprise social networks does not affect the effectiveness of working meetings.

For statistical evaluation was used program STATISTICA. The reference constant was determined 3 (no change). The level of significance of the test was determined $\alpha = 0.05$. Results were calculated by t-test, based on the composition of the data matrix, the selected test, defined variables and constants reference. The following Tab. 3 comprehensively represents the results of the test performed.

Tab. 3: T-test result in STATISTICA

Variable	Test averages against the reference constant (value)							
	Average	St.dev.	N	St.er.	Constant reference	T	SV	p
x₁	3.990385	0.794339	104	0.077891	3.000000	12.71495	103	0.000000

Source: Own calculation

Tab. 3 shows that p value was less than the significance level α and the average value of the variable x_1 is greater than the reference constant. We admit that the implementation of enterprise social networks positively affect the efficiency of the working meetings.

4 Discussion

Mainly companies with a large number of employees engaged in internal communications systematically. It is interesting to observe the different approaches of enterprises to internal communication. [11] Human resource management must create conditions for increasing an organization's intellectual capital and a positive climate within the organization. It is appropriate that the organization have a thorough strategy for developing internal communication. [12] In recent years, information technology has had a great influence on human resource management [21]. This technological development allows companies to use modern tools to manage internal communications including the effective working meetings.

It is important to allow personal and technical connections at the meeting, i.e., technical devices that people bring to a meeting, such as smart phones or networked PDAs. The underlying goal is to reflect these contexts in computer systems for meeting support. An analysis of current meeting support systems shows that there is still space for improvement when considering all design perspectives simultaneously. [19]

Enterprise social networks can offer a variety of benefits to modern business management. The results of the research questions and conducted by T-test show that the use of enterprise social networking managers can achieve more efficient management meetings. These benefits support many researches, see references [14], [20], or [3]. Significant advantage is the ability to quickly and efficiently prepare documents for corporate meetings. Workers can provide the required topics, key issues relating to the topic of the upcoming business meeting. Can be prepared plan of the content of the working meetings more purposefully, and on the basis of a preliminary discussion with co-workers. Another advantage is the possibility of organizing business meetings online (if the situation requires limited by invitation only) that allows greater availability of the participation of employees and managers across the organization structure throughout the world. After the meeting, it is possible to place the minutes of the meeting on the internal network or share the minutes of the meeting with other workers. Enterprise social network also enables to publish video from the business meeting. Very valuable information is a feedback from employees. Employees can comment on individual, discussed agenda items, time and work schedules, responsibilities of employees, and the overall conduct of meetings. It will be interesting to continue monitoring new IT trends in business management.

Conclusion

Enterprises made up of foreign divisions throughout the world that need together to share information, plan, solve problems, make new strategic decisions. The overall comparison of the research data presents current trends and research results encourage the use a potential management tool for working meetings. Using this modern enterprise's internal software allows comply business requirements and implement working meetings online. Other advantages include the online share, comment and evaluate the working documents in real time across geographic mobility of employees. This meeting support software bridges the gap to the personal and corporate contexts.

In conclusion, it is possible to add that, there are many factors that affect the effective working meetings. One of the factors is knowledge of internal communication, leadership meetings, the purpose of the meetings, participants, place and date of a meeting, IT support, and others factors. The researches presented in this paper add another perspective to working meeting support. Future development of research could be focused on the comparison of online social networks and enterprise social networking.

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