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Gartner Says 80 Per Cent of Social Business Efforts Will Not Achieve Intended Benefits Through 2015

Social and Collaboration Trends to be Discussed at the Gartner Portals, Content & Collaboration Summit 2013, 29 April-1 May in San Diego, CA and 16-17 September in London

STAMFORD, Conn., January 29, 2013 — Enterprise social networks will become the primary communication channels for noticing, deciding or acting on information relevant to carrying out work. However, Gartner, Inc. estimates that through 2015, 80 per cent of social business efforts will not achieve the intended benefits due to inadequate leadership and an overemphasis on technology.

"Businesses need to realise that social initiatives are different from previous technology deployments," said Carol Rozwell, vice president and distinguished analyst at Gartner. "Traditional technology rollouts, such as enterprise resource planning (ERP) or customer relationship management (CRM), followed a "push" paradigm. Workers were trained on an app and were then expected to use it. In contrast, social initiatives require a "pull" approach, one that engages workers and offers them a significantly better way to work. In most cases, they can't be forced to use social apps, they must opt-in."

This means that the leaders of social business initiatives need to shift their emphasis away from deciding which technology to implement. Instead, they should focus on identifying how social initiatives will improve work practices for both individual contributors and managers. They need a detailed understanding of social networks: how people are currently working, who they work with and what their needs are.

"There is too much focus on content and technology, and not enough focus on leadership and relationships," said Ms Rozwell. "Leaders need to develop a social business strategy that makes sense for the organisation and tackle the tough organisational change work head on and early on. Successful social business initiatives require leadership and behavioural changes. Just sponsoring a social project is not enough — managers need to demonstrate their commitment to a more open, transparent work style by their actions."

Gartner outlined two additional key predictions around social and collaboration:

By 2016, 50 per cent of large organisations will have internal Facebook-like social networks, and that 30 per cent of these will be considered as essential as email and telephones are today.

"The popularity and effectiveness of social networking sites as a group communication tool among consumers is prompting organisations as well as individual employees to ask whether similar technologies can be deployed privately," said Nikos Drakos, research director at Gartner. "There is increasing interest for using social technologies within organisations to connect people more effectively, to capture and reuse valuable informal knowledge, and to deliver relevant information more intelligently where it is needed through social filtering."

Using Facebook-like enterprise social networking software for communication has several advantages over email and traditional check-in/check-out repository-centric collaboration in terms of information capture and reuse, group organisation, and social filtering. A Facebook-like social networking environment within an organisation can be used as a general-purpose communication channel where information and events that originate in external systems — such as email, office applications and business applications — can be injected into conversations, and vice versa. With an understanding of the key influencers in the social network, communication channels will become even more effective.

In 2017, the majority of all new user-facing applications will exhibit gamified-social-mobile fusion. Three key feature sets (social, mobile and gamification) are already emerging in the marketplace in user-facing applications. These features increase the attractiveness, usability and effectiveness of the applications they are found in. Over the next five years, these three feature sets will continue to co-emerge and fuse into a superset, such that, by 2017, they will appear in the majority of user-oriented applications and apps.

"Users should include gamified-social-mobile fusion as a desired set of characteristics when evaluating new application investments," said Tom Austin, vice president and Gartner Fellow. "Applications and app-providers that fail to exploit the benefits of gamification-social-mobile fusion should expect underwhelming adoption, and therefore sales, of any user-facing products competing against alternatives that exploit the benefits of this fusion."

More detailed analysis is available in the report "Predicts 2013: Social and Collaboration Go Deeper and Wider." The report is available on Gartner's web site at <http://www.gartner.com/resId=2254316>.

Additional information and analysis on social and collaboration will be discussed at the Gartner Portals, Content & Collaboration Summit 2013 taking place 29 April-1 May in San Diego, CA, and 16-17 September in London, UK. The Gartner PCC Summit 2013 focuses on disruptive trends such as social, mobility, context awareness and consumerisation, and delivers the tools and insights needed to tap into unprecedented portals, content and collaborative opportunities.

More information on the San Diego Summit can be found at www.gartner.com/us/pcc. Details on the UK Summit are at www.gartner.com/eu/pcc. For press registration, please contact ianessa.rivera@gartner.com (US) or laurence.goasduff@gartner.com (UK).

Information from the Gartner PCC Summits 2013 will be shared on Twitter at http://twitter.com/Gartner_inc using #GartnerPCC.

More information on Gartner's top predictions for 2013 will be presented in the webinar "Top Technology Predictions for 2013 and Beyond" taking place 27 February at 1:00pm or 4:00pm UK time. To register for this complimentary webinar, please visit <http://my.gartner.com/webinarDetail/resId=2297221?srcl=1-2994690285>.

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