



Internal Business Collaboration

What problem did TELUS need to solve?

With the growth of social media, the employees of many companies have been eager to test some of these new technologies, and find uses for them within the enterprise. This is especially true for the millennial generation who are recently entering the workforce. They have grown up with social media, and expect these tools to be available to them in their workplace; and they are inclined to not work for companies which don't have or use these tools. One social technology finding increasing use and acceptance in the corporate environment is microblogging. In the absence of any corporate direction or sanctioned deployment, employees of some companies have been creating ad hoc microblogging groups on their own, using technologies available outside the corporate firewall, and outside corporate control.

What were the TELUS requirements for a secure business collaboration solution?

This became a problem for TELUS, when it was recognized that proprietary information, and that covered by NDA's could not be protected in the popular public Enterprise Social Network environment we had been using. An alternative solution was needed, and the cloud based site was shut down.

The solution needed to be affordable, provide a toolset and implementation that was at least comparable to what they had previously been using on the public microblogging site, and have a modern UI. Protecting proprietary and confidential data; the effects of the U.S. Patriot Act on data privacy, and not having any corporate data stored on 3rd party servers, was the primary requirement. TELUS also wished to have an open source solution they could modify and improve to meet their needs.

The Social Media Research Team (SMRT), extensively tested the most popular microblogging solutions, and ultimately selected Sharetronix. Sharetronix had two different platforms from which to choose; SocialPulse™ (which is open source) and CorporatePulse™. The decision parameters were: (1) could be installed on corporate servers, thereby providing data security, (2) open source - SMRT members could modify the source code; creating their own customized solution, (3) API's to provide a gateway into the power of Sharetronix, allowing the development of Blackberry applications, integrations with different websites and more, and (4) was more cost effective and powerful than the other tested solutions.

How is Sharetronix used in TELUS?

TELUS migrated the 200 users from the cloud based site onto 'TELUS Buzz'. Since then, the site has grown to over 3,000 users in the first 5 months. "We are not actively promoting it; but are looking for organic growth. Social media is not here at TELUS for social media's sake; and hopefully people will find it useful, and of real value as a part of their daily process," says David Dai, SMRT Manager at TELUS. "What is interesting is that we are discovering the human side of team members across the organization. People are using it for a wide array of projects, Q&A and idea sharing. Users mostly stay online during the workday, and check in occasionally to track what's new."

A new graduate program at TELUS is the Leadership Development Program. The company annually chooses 10 top recent graduates and brings them onboard. These new graduates receive training, relocation expenses, and benefits. This program is very important for TELUS, as it produces a culture of innovation, and helps bring new people and technology into TELUS. There are many older generation employees who do not understand the benefits of microblogging. Mixing together newer and older employees, with a modern and simple tool like 'TELUS Buzz' help cross-pollinate cultures, generations and technology.

What do you like most about Sharetronix?

"Sharetronix being open source allows us to customize the product to fit our needs. Public and private groups allow us to control conversations, but most of our discussion occurs in the main activity feed. We encourage the use of hashtags, and if anything becomes interesting; it trends up. TELUS Buzz has the potential to become one of the most important tools put in from an IT perspective in the past year; because of the type of conversation it sparks. It has led to changes in direction and focus on company advertising and marketing. It inspires conversations in a very easy to use manner that is without expectations, and has a real ability to change culture and how the organization works. Sharetronix does one thing, and it does it very well" - David Dai.

