



**USAID**  
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

**USAID Web Support Services**  
Part of the CIO Knowledge Management Team

# **Social Networking**

## **Business Requirements Document**

An Initiative of the Global Development Commons  
Sponsored by AID/A & M/CIO/KM  
September 2008

# Social Networking Business Requirements Document

An Initiative of the Global Development Commons  
Sponsored by AID/A & M/CIO/KM  
September 2008

## Revision History

Version	Date	Description	Author	Reviewers	Approver
1.0	8/04/08	First cut	Ntongi	Harvey, Greg	
1.1	8/07/08	Incorporated AT&T and VisualPoint feedback	Ntongi	Harvey, Mike	
1.2	8/08/08	Added USG initiatives and sources	Ntongi	Wesley, Joe, Bill	
2.0	8/29/08	Revised solution analysis	Ntongi	Greg, Mike, Wesley	
3.0	9/29/08	Final draft: incorporated Wesley's feedback	Ntongi	Greg, Harvey, Bill, Wesley	Harvey, Wesley

## Table of Contents

3	<b>Executive Summary</b>
	<b>Requirements Analysis</b>
5	Business Drivers
7	USG Cases of Web 2.0
9	Stakeholder Input
12	Requirements
	<b>Solution Analysis</b>
16	Solution Roadmap
16	Feasibility
17	Strategy
17	Implementation
18	Software Overview
24	<b>Conclusion</b>
	<b>Annexes</b>
26	Annex A: Platform Specification Sheets
30	Annex B: Functionality and Feature Tables
31	Annex C: Sources

## Executive Summary

Administrator Henrietta Fore recently launched the Global Development Commons, a vision for transforming the way that USAID and the development community work. The Global Development Commons (Commons) seeks to accelerate the sharing of development knowledge and broaden its reach by catalyzing emerging Internet and communication technologies. By way of more open and collaborative models of doing business, the global development community – governments, multi-laterals, NGOs, foundations, academia, business, and citizens – can capture real-time information and exchange in order to better coordinate and take action in the fight against global poverty.

To begin to make progress towards this vision, one immediate objective under the Commons is to:

*Improve USAID's own knowledge management and information infrastructure to enhance users' ability to search, share, and contribute to development knowledge.*

Social networking has been identified as one potential enabler to achieve this goal. In order to better understand how social networking may create new opportunities for locating expertise and capturing and sharing knowledge, the Administrator's Office and the Knowledge Management Team undertook a study of stakeholder needs and demand. An incoming class of Junior Officers and over 20 individuals, across the field, operations, and strategy faces of USAID, were consulted to provide input into the near-term direction and requirements for introducing such capabilities within the Agency and across the extended enterprise.

This investigation will inform the Commons' Steering Committee on the opportunities and constraints for implementing a social networking beta pilot in the near-term. This report provides a summary of the key market drivers behind USAID's increased interest in enterprise social networking solutions; the minimum policy, user, and technical requirements for a near-term pilot; a review of potential software platforms that could be deployed; and, preliminary considerations for moving from this feasibility research to real-world application. Select highlights from this investigation include:

- The majority of stakeholders would welcome the introduction of social networking to the Agency. They embraced the opportunity to be empowered with a decentralized self-service toolbox of social software applications to meet a range of business needs such as networking, team collaboration, and learning exchange.
- Stakeholders believe social networking technology would add-value by improving their individual productivity and the Agency's effectiveness in capturing collaborative intelligence among internal audiences and across the extended enterprise - where much of USAID-sponsored knowledge exists. The key advantages include the improved ability to associate knowledge with the people that create it; more ways to identify and connect with those people; and, a reduced dependency on IT support to create and moderate collaborative spaces.
- Despite these benefits, even advocates of social networking approached the proposition with a surprising degree of reservation. Uncertainties center on cultural barriers to the widespread adoption of new technology and more open and collaborative ways of working. Individuals are also concerned with how well they will be able to navigate acceptable use policies and protect their personal privacy.

- The ad-hoc, bottom-up nature of social networking also presents new challenges for the Agency's communication and technology gatekeepers. A responsive yet responsible policy approach is needed to protect the safety of personnel and the security of sensitive information. New technologies also need to fit within the Agency's baseline information technology architecture as to enhance rather than exacerbate already fragmented systems.
- Given these constraints, the possibility of introducing a platform that seamlessly interfaces the internal Agency with the extended enterprise does not appear feasible in the near-term. Agency security and privacy policies restrict where corporate data can be stored. Immediately available social software platforms do not readily allow for the secure flow of internal-external communications across the firewall.
- As such, it is proposed that the Agency provide internal users a safe and secure testing environment by incorporating social networking tools into the re-design of the Agency's intranet. In addition, the Agency will seek to raise awareness of the growing number of emerging public platforms on the World Wide Web that address development issues, improve its guidance to employees seeking to engage with these platforms, and identify potential synergies and future partnerships for improving internal-external collaboration.
- This dual approach will allow the Agency to advance its real world learning and discovery to better understand user behavior and preferences, refine business need priorities, and take a balanced policy approach to managing the risks and rewards.

### Defining Social Networking

- Visible profile
- Public or semi-public display of connections
- Means for members to contact and interact with other members and their connections (email, IM, chat, blog, message boards, mobile, VOIP)
- Ability to add user-generated content (comments, reviews, rating, tagging)
- Options for self-selected widgets to generate interactive information exchange and work spaces (forums, wikis, communities)

# Requirements Analysis

## Business Drivers

Internal and external business drivers are increasing the interest in and demand for more open and collaborative ways of working. A couple of the most significant drivers are highlighted here.

**Today's complex development challenges demand seamless communication and action of multiple actors.** Transitioning from planning to emergency assistance to development interventions requires the knowledge and capabilities within and across organizations and stakeholders. Real-time communication and coordination can assist in assuring vulnerable and affected populations receive the economic and humanitarian assistance they need. The global community first learned of the recent earthquake in China from Twitter - a mobile text to web blog platform - not from Outlook or CNN.

Networking and collaboration is critical to USAID's mission. Putting it into practice has and will continue to be central to its success. A look at today's global food crises alone demonstrates the interdependency of internal and external efforts to execute an immediate and strategic approach to food security that links relief, development, energy, and trade. Now, as social networking moves from meeting rooms to cyberspace, leveraging the latest technology is the next logical step.

**The emergence of enterprise social software offers new alternatives for the ways in which we communicate, where and how we come together, and how we look for and share information.** Social networking has created potentially powerful ways to build on-line communities of people, expand connections, and interact with people and content.

Organizations across government and the private sector are only beginning to understand how enterprise social software - *tools for collaborating and networking within and beyond the enterprise* - can add value to existing business processes and create new opportunities to enable people to build relationships across disciplines and geographies; get knowledge to people and specific communities in real-time; and provide a 'living' platform where knowledge can be exchanged and captured in a dynamic way.

Several U.S. Government pioneers – the Department of State, the Intelligence Community, and the Transportation Security Administration - have begun to navigate the complexities of privacy, security, and intellectual property issues associated with social networking. While planning for and using social networking wisely will be critical, these agencies are experiencing some transformative benefits from improving stakeholder communications.

Outside the U.S. Government, an increasing number of social networking sites dedicated to development issues are emerging on the World Wide Web. Examples from both U.S. Government and public platforms are highlighted below. In each of these cases, social networking has brought about a fundamental change in the way stakeholders communicate and build collaborative intelligence. Rather than divorcing individuals and groups from the knowledge they create, there is a direct association. This association equips users to assess the quality and validity of the information and build upon it to retain its visibility and relevance.

## Cases of Social Networking

### Diplopedia

The encyclopedia of the Department of State is a wiki run on the intranet, called 'OpenNet'. It was established in late 2006 by the Office of eDiplomacy. To date, it has 1,000 registered users and 4,400 substantive articles pertaining to diplomacy, international relations, and administration.

*Security:* Information is classified as Sensitive but Unclassified. OpenNet is available to anyone with State intranet access. A read-only archive is mirrored on Intellink-U which is open to the US intelligence community and other national security organizations.

*Training and support:* State initially trained 200 people. The rest found their way on their own. Half a dozen power users monitor new activity and offer to assistance to employees editing articles.

*Content management:* Diplopedia does not enforce a neutral point of view policy. Viewpoints are attributed to the offices and individuals participating, with the hope a consensus view will emerge. Content is grouped by category: abbreviation using terminology common to diplomats and lay people.

*Disclaimers and disputes:* Articles include a disclaimer stating that it is 'informative and deliberative but not authoritative'. Users are encouraged to link articles to authoritative content, such as official manual and statutes. The Office of eDiplomacy is poised to serve as an adjudicator should disputes among editors over content not resolve themselves.

### Intellipedia

Intellipedia was founded in early 2006 to change the culture of the US intelligence community following criticisms for failure to 'connect the dots' before the attacks of 9/11. It currently has 37,000 users and 35,000 articles. It includes information on regions, people, and issues of interest for individual with appropriate clearances from the 16 agencies of the intelligence community and other national security organizations. Unique features to Diplopedia include:

*Security:* Intellipedia consists of three wikis – one Top Secret, one Sensitive but Unclassified, and one Open Source.

*Training and support:* The CIA and NGA have developed training programs to help employees integrate the tools into daily work habits. The courses focus on the use of Intellipedia to capture and manage knowledge and stress immersion in the tools by working on a specific project.

*Promotion:* Exemplary wiki contributors are rewarded with simple but effective gimmicks – such as branded mugs and shovels for the best 'gardeners'.

*Enhancements:* A YouTube-like video channel, a Flickr-like photo sharing feature, content tagging, blogs and RSS feeds have been added to the wiki platform.

## Cases of Social Networking cont...

### A-Space

A-space seeks to provide the intelligence community the unprecedented capability to search classified interagency databases, Intellipedia, and the Internet simultaneously. It also offers collaboration tools. Initial operational capability was scheduled for late 2007.

*Security:* The system is web-based rather than a full desktop client to minimize the complexity of the first release. Information is compartmentalized. Authorization depends on individual access levels and security guidelines. Analysts can request access to a compartment or specific piece of information.

*Content management:* Summary information for each report is classified at the lowest possible level, permitting analysts to discover everything that has been published. Reports will be able to be tagged with important related words and phrases via TagConnect and labeled by usefulness. It will eventually be able to recommend related documents much like Amazon recommends related books.

*Social networking:* Users will be able to post profiles that contain updated contact information and details of their areas of expertise to create awareness of counterparts across agencies working on common areas of interest.

### microLinks

MicroLINKS is an award winning web site of a USAID-led microenterprise development learning project that brings practitioners and donors together to improve the access and impact of financial and business support services for small and micro entrepreneurs. Through a suite of interactive forums and events, it creates an online environment that supports communities of practice and peer-to-peer exchange. microLinks is currently exploring the integration of profiles into its platform. At this time, photos of USAID personnel will not be included due to privacy and safety policies.

### Netsquared.org

Net2's mission is to help nonprofits jumpstart the use of leading edge social technology. It makes a new generation of online tools available - blogs, wikis, RSS feeds, podcasting, and others - that make it easier to collaborate, share information and mobilize support.

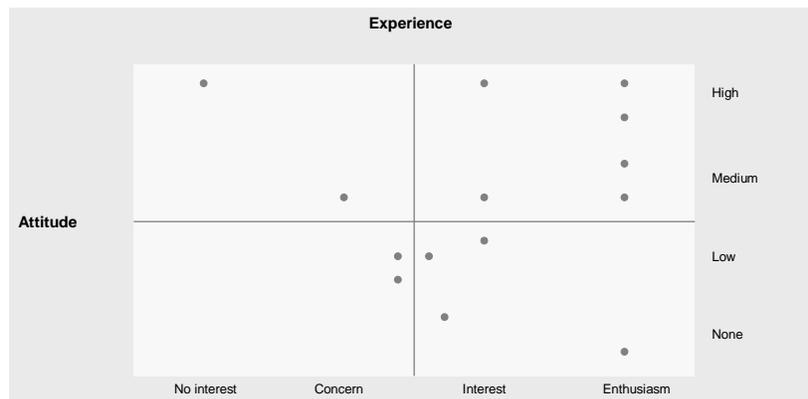
### Tradenet.biz

XTradenet.biz is a platform where farmers and traders can share market information via mobile networks and the web. Buyers indicate what they are looking for. Their contact information is sent to subscribers as an SMS message in one of four languages. Similar to Ebay's transaction model, buyers and sellers then deal directly with one another. TradeNet is expanding its services throughout West Africa using a franchise model.

## Stakeholder Input

### User Profiles

**Potential users have a diverse range of experience and interest in enterprise social networking.** The phenomenon of social networking has only recently emerged as commonplace in the home for personal interests and entertainment. For most USAID employees, social software as a productivity tool in the workplace is uncharted territory. The majority of potential users - experienced and non-experienced - easily translated ways they believe social networking capabilities could be leveraged to enhance both their individual productivity and the Agency's ability to capture and share knowledge. These potential early advocates span functional and generational boundaries. Less enthusiastic individuals raised valid concerns that are addressed later.



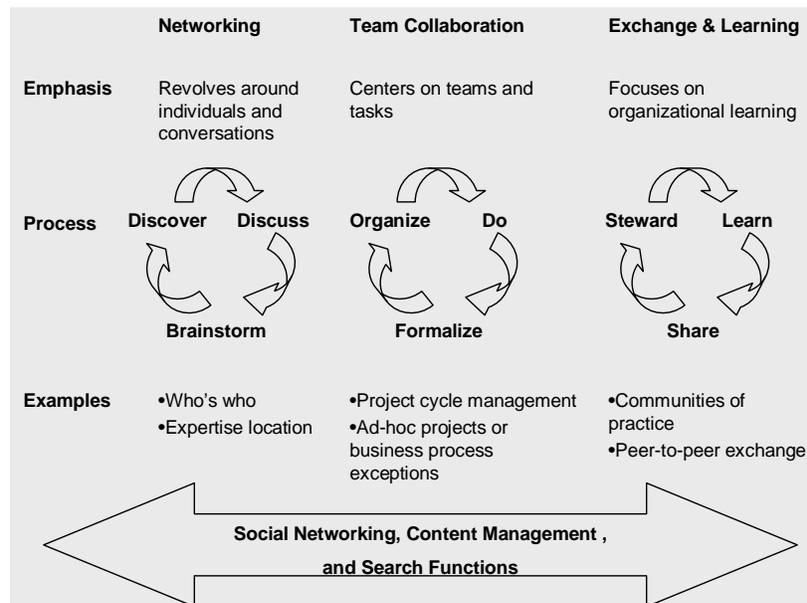
### User Needs

**Stakeholders identified a range of collaborative features and social computing capabilities to improve individual productivity and the Agency's ability to capture and share knowledge.** These include the abilities to:

- Locate, approach, communicate with, and collaborate with each other virtually, in real-time through alternative communications and presence awareness.
- Build profiles that can be used to locate expertise, to tag web content, and to share bookmarks.
- Access forums to share views and solicit feedback.
- Create basic applications or Web sites that they and others can edit for their teams and projects.
- Organize and share documents and materials and communicate for a specific project or process.

The most common features demanded were instant messaging, VOIP, presence awareness, shared workspaces, wikis, blogs, shared bookmarks, tagging, and alerts.

These capabilities and features are sought to solve different sets of business needs. These needs can be categorized into *networking*, *team collaboration*, and *exchange and learning* among both internal-only audiences and across the extended enterprise.



Adapted from Forrester, 2007 and CMS Watch, 2008

The value of profiles and networked connections is seen not only within *networking* but also in *team collaboration* and *exchange and learning* activities. Through profiles, users can associate people with the knowledge that they create and make judgments as to the relevance and value of the information. Contributions by subject matter experts can be identified as well as the documents, communities, and websites they recommend or use most frequently. Peer-to-peer networking and communications enable users to seek guidance on how best to apply the knowledge to their specific context.

**Prioritization of these needs will depend on the intended audience.** The needs of potential users in Washington vary according to their function and time with the Agency. The Junior Officers emphasized interest in profiles to know who's who and to have the ability to connect with individuals that have experience and expertise relevant to their new assignments. Inward facing stakeholders in support functions leaned towards internal collaborative workspaces to capture repetitive and exceptional business processes. Outward facing program implementers emphasized profiles and collaborative tools for project management and exchange and learning.

Less represented in this initial analysis are Missions. Segmentation of the potential stakeholders at the mission level requires further attention. Preliminary findings indicate Mission staff may be more concerned with tapping into local knowledge and expertise that lies outside of the Agency. The sense of immediacy to manage the procurement and delivery of services day-to-day also

indicates there may not be much room for them to engage in trial and error until social networking capabilities become obviously useful and relevant.

**Content management and search functions are critical cross-cutting features.** Structured and moderated spaces can be incredibly valuable in capturing and retrieving the knowledge that currently transpires in conference rooms and email distribution lists. Informal spaces for free-flow discussions and ad hoc sharing provide less opportunity for standardized content management but can still be valuable. Free-flow discussion often is a precursor or adjunct activity to structured collaboration. A formal high-level taxonomy is needed to provide a consistent base structure, however, decentralized user control over categorizing content at lower levels has its advantaged in ensuring content remains aligned with the relationships and structures people actually use over time<sup>1</sup>.

## User Concerns

**Stakeholder concerns span the spheres of policy, culture, and technology.** Users highlighted some of the potential negative implications and barriers for introducing social networking and computing capabilities to the Agency. Along policy lines, many are uneasy about how well they will be able to navigate 'acceptable use' policies and norms to share information in a way that does not conflict with politically sensitive development issues, procurement, and privacy. The Agency was described as having a largely 'written' and 'hording' culture. That is, discussion and debate are not documented and disseminated until the matter at hand has been finalized. Subject matter experts are rewarded for being one of a select few with knowledge in a particular area. Incentives to overcome these barriers remain unclear.

**The basic technology and support infrastructure in USAID is generally perceived to be insufficient and highly fragmented.** Some stakeholders are more concerned with getting the technological needs for basic business processes met and streamlining duplications across the decentralized patchwork of existing technology solutions. Others prefer to get USAID's knowledge management 'house in order' before expanding to new platforms that engage the extended enterprise and the non-affiliated community. Others are satisfied with the available means of networking and collaborating. Email is the gold standard. Resistance to new technologies that are not instantly intuitive and valuable means that not every individual will want to play in the sandbox.

**Lastly, collaboration at USAID has a mixed record of success.** Irrespective of the technology offered, collaborative projects and communities of practice initiatives have both succeeded and failed. Two factors appear to drive greater success: a hot issue that spurs temporary activity; or the willingness to invest in providing demand-driven content and moderation.

---

<sup>1</sup> McAfee, 2006.

## Requirements

The requirements may fluctuate over time as USAID and other US Government Agencies navigate existing policy frameworks, identify and prioritize business needs, and learn more about user behavior and preferences. The following policy, user, and IT requirements reflect the current state understanding.

### Policy Requirements

<b>Security</b>	<p><b>Internally hosted</b></p> <p><i>The safety of USAID personnel and security of sensitive information cannot be guaranteed unless the platform is hosted within USAID. Permissions for non-USAID persons can be throttled to provide access to authorized areas as is done under the current AllNet model.</i></p>
<b>Privacy</b>	<p><b>Compliance with the Privacy Act</b></p> <p><i>Collection of personal information from USAID personnel or the public may trigger a Privacy Impact Assessment. This assessment may be circumvented if the information exists under a current system of record or is offered voluntarily. External persons are not privy to the same level of personnel details. Profile views will require modification to move outside the firewall. Photos are not currently authorized for external view.</i></p>
<b>Acceptable Use Policy</b>	<p><b>Consistent with existing communication and knowledge sharing policies</b></p> <p><i>Generally, USAID information can be categorized as 'classified', 'sensitive', and 'public'. Sensitive matters – those regarding strategic, policy, and procurement decision-making – must remain within the Agency's firewalls. Once an official decision is taken on such matters it can be made available as public information.</i></p>
<b>Intellectual property</b>	<p><b>Retained ownership and control of USAID and extended enterprise information</b></p> <p><i>Information published outside USAID can be protected under creative licensing agreements. USAID rarely copyrights or trademarks. Rather, it requests proper attribution. Publishing information belonging to members of the extended enterprise requires compliance with 'Fair-Use' guidelines.</i></p>
<b>OMB Compliance</b>	<p><b>Paperwork Reduction Act; USG database hosting policies; Internet Channeling Notices; Password-required websites Audit</b></p> <p><i>See 'USAID Information Collection Checklist' and OMB 0404, 0405</i></p>

## User Requirements

<b>Collaborative Features</b>	<p><b>Real-time collaboration and communication</b> <i>Instant messaging, VIOP, presence awareness</i></p> <p><b>Team collaboration</b> <i>Team workspaces, basic library services (search, document repository, multi-media), links, discussion threads, alerts and notifications</i></p> <p><b>Social networking and computing</b> <i>Profiles, networked connections, wikis, blogs, shared bookmarks</i></p>
<b>Administration</b>	Owner-led set-up, moderation, and modification
<b>Permissions</b>	Owner-led control of permissions
<b>Taxonomy</b>	Standardized high-level framework for formal collaborative spaces.
<b>Content Management</b>	Owner-led content management for formal and informal collaborative spaces
<b>Email notifications</b>	Proactive email notices to indicate changes in content
<b>Platform</b>	Separation between the enterprise platform and common personal networking platforms
<b>Passwords</b>	Integrated authentication for single sign-on access
<b>Language</b>	Multi-lingual

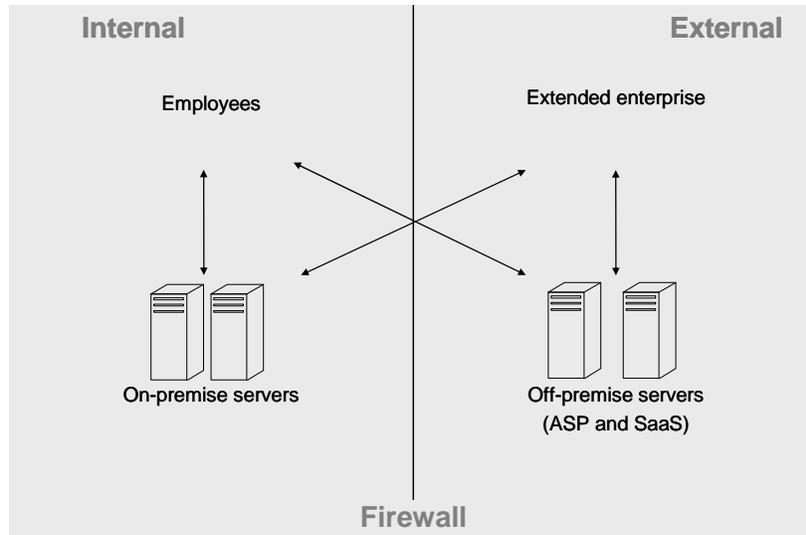
## IT Requirements

<b>Application</b>	Pre-approved for Agency use
<b>Access</b>	Web-based access to avoid desktop installation and configuration
<b>Support</b>	Minimum burden on already overstressed IT
<b>Bandwidth</b>	Option to operate on high or low bandwidths
<b>Scalability</b>	Ability to grow with user demand
<b>Back-up</b>	Reasonable recovery assurance

# Solution Analysis

## Software Overview

The segmentation of software products available in the marketplace today reflects the dilemma faced by most organizations – not only USAID - when trying to meet security and privacy requirements for internal and external audiences. As illustrated below, the result has been a divide between solutions hosted inside the firewall for employees and externally hosted solutions outside the firewall for customers and partners<sup>2</sup>. The current challenge lies in finding secure and efficient ways to manage user authorization and authentication to facilitate the secure flow of information back and forth across the firewall.



*Adapted from Wainhouse, 2008*

Given restrictions as to where Agency data can be stored, any pilot on an enterprise scale will be restricted to an internally hosted platform. USAID has recently approved access to several public social networking sites on a temporary basis, including Facebook, MySpace, and Ning. However, none of these externally hosted platforms have sufficiently robust security to ensure the protection of privacy data and sensitive corporate information.

Four potential platforms that meet the internal hosting requirement were identified. These include Drupal, Ecco, SharePoint, and a custom-built solution modeled on Ning. An overview of each of these platforms and their strengths and weaknesses can be found in Annex A. Annex B provides a detailed comparison of functionality and features.

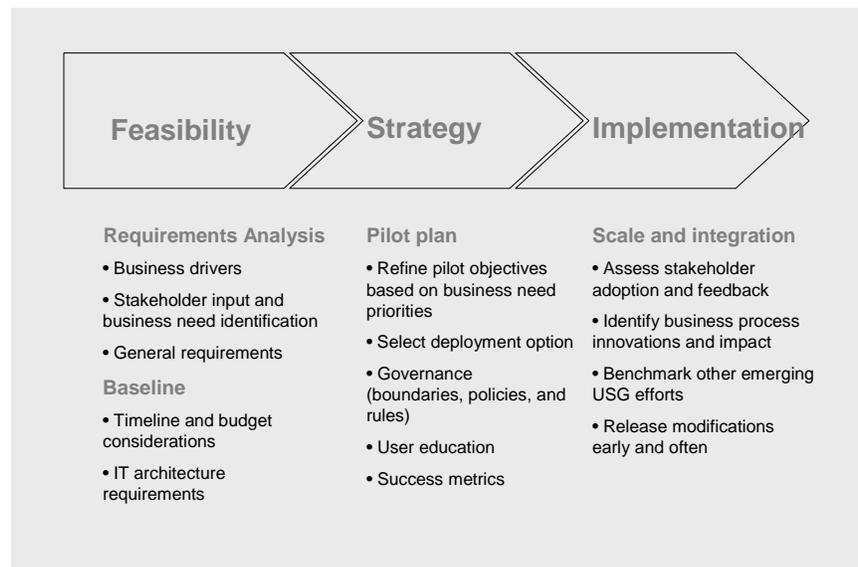
Each application offers a distinct 'sweetspot' in terms of functionality. They do not meet all of the business needs – networking, team collaboration, learning exchange, and content management - to the same degree. They vary significantly in terms of cost, security, integration, ease of implementation, and external hosting options. As opportunities arise in the future to better interface internal and external audiences, leveraging the same platform for both internal and external audiences would ease the portability of information from one side to the other.

<sup>2</sup> Wainhouse, 2008.

# Solution Roadmap

There are only a few emerging models to follow when it comes to deploying enterprise social networking solutions, particularly in a U.S. government environment. Social networking is in a beta phase of development itself. New software solutions are being introduced to respond to growing demand and experimental approaches to implementation are emerging daily.

The illustrative roadmap below offers one way for the Agency to think about moving from this Requirements Analysis into real world learning and application.



*Adapted from Rollyson, 2008*

Comprehensively addressing each of these components is beyond the scope of this study. Rather, this section broadly outlines one proposal for a near-term pilot given the *feasibility* requirements informed by this study. It highlights a preliminary set of objectives to inform the *strategy* for a beta pilot and discusses promising practices from other U.S. Government initiatives to guide *implementation*.

## Feasibility

In addition to meeting the Common's budget and timeline constraints, the feasibility of a near-term pilot is contingent on meeting three pre-conditions. The first is that any new platform needs to align with the internal baseline technology architecture of the Agency. Using a readily available software platform pre-approved for Agency use would avoid delays in vetting a new application for potential integration, security and regulatory conflicts. The second is the requirement that corporate data be hosted within the Agency's firewall to ensure the security of information and the privacy and safety of personnel. Lastly, the success of any enterprise-wide pilot will depend on moving a critical mass of users along the path from awareness to trial to adoption.

## Strategy

A preliminary set of strategic objectives for the pilot include:

- The establishment of a 'proof of concept' as to how well social networking delivers on the expected benefits to individual productivity and innovations in business processes related to expertise location and learning exchange;
- The development of training and education materials on the benefits, risks, and acceptable use to increase user confidence and reduce potentially negative outcomes;
- The identification of the risk-reward trade-offs between opportunities to innovate business processes and the need for a more responsive IT infrastructure and policy environment.

To accomplish these objectives within the boundaries of the current set of requirements, it is proposed the Commons pilot two distinct internal and external approaches rather than attempt to interface internal and external audiences on an enterprise scale in the near-term. The first approach would be to integrate social networking and collaboration tools into the redesign of the Agency's intranet platform. An intranet-based platform offers several advantages to accelerating user awareness, trial, and adoption. It is a readily accessible location that employees frequent regularly. It also provides a safe and friendly environment within the Agency's firewall whereby users can test the tools among colleagues as user norms and standards evolve.

The second approach would focus on promoting enterprise-wide awareness of the growing body of public social networking platforms emerging on the World Wide Web that address development issues. The Agency would seek to provide better guidance to personnel interested in engaging with these platforms as well as identify possible opportunities for formal partnerships.

## Implementation

The basic components for implementing a pilot plan are identified in the roadmap above. There is no widely accepted blueprint for execution. However, there are a number of characteristics and success factors that have become evident in how others have approached internal enterprise-scale initiatives. A list of these, drawn largely from consultations with the Department of State and the Transportation Security Administration, are highlighted below.

- A clear vision and steadfast commitment from top leadership, such as the Administrator.
- Built-in capacity for fast-cycle beta testing to deploy early stage experimental ideas, gather feedback, and make modifications quickly and often.
- A well-resourced program management office that consists of moderators to monitor content and assist users, mediators to address potential user and policy conflicts, and software developers responsible for designing modifications and new releases as needed.
- A robust architectural foundation from which new technology applications can be layered as business needs and opportunities evolve over time and feasibility requirements adjust.
- Facilitation of the automatic flow of basic profile information from existing databases rather than relying on individual users to update basic details.
- A simple user dashboard interface that integrates social networking tools into the same location as other frequently business tools used such as email and calendars, and the full integration of content management and search functions.

- Open access to anyone authenticated on the official internal network.
- Clearly specified Terms of Use Agreements that are developed with input from IT, HR, Legal, etc, and signed by users.
- User education on what tools to use when and proper etiquette. For example, the use of blogs or forums to express personal opinions and conjecture rather than a wiki; when it is appropriate to use IM versus email, etc.
- Allows for the internal sharing of sensitive but classified information. Sensitive information can be marked with a graphic label. Any user can report mislabeled content or other abuses such as the sharing of privacy data, endorsement of a particular partner product, or bad language.
- Built-in mechanisms for users to provide suggestions and feedback on new releases. Users can rate and comment on suggestions to raise the visibility and relevance of good ideas.
- Use of rigorous metrics to monitor the number and frequency of users and responsiveness to their feedback.
- On-going stimulation of users to contribute content through top-down facilitated discussion topics, questions and answer sessions, and competitions.
- A reward structure based on increased visibility and peer recognition rather than financial incentives.

## Conclusion

Enterprise social networking is in a beta phase of development itself. However, experts believe the question for most organizations is not whether to introduce social networking but when and how. As more individuals realize the benefits of social networking and associated Web 2.0 technologies it is projected they will find their way into the workplace. Just as email and the World Wide Web have emerged to become integral productivity tools - despite similar security and cultural issues - it is believed social networking will traverse a similar path, albeit more quickly.

USAID is not alone in trying to find ways to bridge communications between internal and external audiences. The importance of seamless communication and collaboration between the Agency, the extended enterprise, and the non-affiliated community remains core to the Commons vision and critical to USAID employee's ability to effectively build communities that inform and execute its mission on a day-to-day basis.

The findings in this study have informed one possible approach for the Agency to take a first step. It offers the beginnings of a roadmap to leverage the resources and political momentum of the Commons to proactively embrace the opportunity to pilot new social technologies in the near-term. The proposed approach here would engage employees on an internal platform that provides a secure and friendly testing environment, while exploring synergies with pre-existing public social networking sites that engage the wider development audience. Combined, they offer both users and policy decision-makers the opportunity to accelerate their learning and discovery from real-world application to inform a more comprehensive, longer term social networking strategy.

# Annexes

## Annex A: Platform Specification Sheets

<b>Spec. Sheet</b>	<b>Ning</b>
<b>Description</b>	Social network and website creation software
<b>Features</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Member profiles</li> <li>• Add text and widgets</li> <li>• Event listings</li> <li>• Real-time activity stream</li> <li>• Discussion forum (text, photos, attachments)</li> <li>• Video</li> <li>• Post and organize photos and slideshows</li> </ul>
<b>Strengths</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Anyone can create own custom network for particular topic or need</li> <li>• Ability to run Open Social Gadgets within networks</li> </ul>
<b>Weaknesses</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can only be used on Ning servers</li> <li>• Lacks scalability of open API</li> <li>• Requires knowledge of web programming to change features and underlying logic</li> <li>• Limited content management</li> <li>• Facebook integration</li> </ul>
<b>Potential fit</b>	Networking, Exchange and Learning
<b>Unlikely fit</b>	Content Management, Collaborative Workspaces
<b>App platform</b>	Platform built on Java; PHP API available.
<b>Business model</b>	Free service in exchange for ads; Fees for no ads, extra bandwidth, non-Ning URL.

## Spec. Sheet      Drupal

<b>Description</b>	Content management system and community and blog software
<b>Features</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Content Management Systems</li> <li>• Blogs</li> <li>• Collaborative authoring environments</li> <li>• Forums</li> <li>• Peer-to-peer networking</li> <li>• Newsletters</li> <li>• Podcasting</li> <li>• Picture galleries</li> <li>• File uploads and downloads</li> </ul>
<b>Strengths</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Open source</li> <li>• Can be hosted internally</li> <li>• Scalable, flexible, and extensible framework</li> <li>• Large community helping to develop</li> <li>• Multi-lingual</li> <li>• Growing base of experience with Drupal inside USAID</li> <li>• Integration with other USAID technology efforts (Drupal on intranet and AllNet)</li> </ul>
<b>Weaknesses</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Users' ability to master it</li> <li>• Requires extensive knowledge of web programming for set-up, maintenance, and modification</li> </ul>
<b>Potential fit</b>	Networking, Collaborative Workspaces, Exchange and Learning, Content Management
<b>Unlikely fit</b>	-
<b>App platform</b>	Open source; written in PHP; Apache (recommended) or IIS, Unix / Linux / BSD / Solaris / Windows / Mac OS X; MySQL and PostgreSQL.
<b>Business model</b>	Free code

## Spec. Sheet      Tomoye Ecco

<b>Description</b>	Community of practice software
<b>Features</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Questions and answers: email participation; ask anywhere; best answers; recognition</li> <li>• Find experts and network: personal profiles; people search; most helpful people; most relevant people; peer networking; internal and external participants</li> <li>• Community content: video pages; sample wiki pages; document collaboration; social tagging; weblogs; personal file sharing; social bookmarking; social search</li> <li>• Technical: content management membership based security for non-technical leaders as well as flexible roles and groups based security for administrators; metrics; multilingual participation; scalable; open API; customize the interface to match your brand or group; change templates and system text using CSS and intuitive interfaces</li> </ul>
<b>Strengths</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sharepoint ready</li> <li>• Content management for non-technical people</li> <li>• Security for non-technical people</li> </ul>
<b>Weaknesses</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Technical support</li> <li>• Licensing costs</li> </ul>
<b>Potential fit</b>	Networking, Exchange and Learning, Content Management
<b>Unlikely fit</b>	Collaborative Workspaces
<b>App platform</b>	Microsoft Windows Server
<b>Business model</b>	Yearly or perpetual software licensing and support. Per seat internal user pricing. Per server external user pricing.

**Spec. Sheet****SharePoint**

<b>Description</b>	Collaboration and document-management platform
<b>Features</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hosts websites that access shared workspaces and documents</li> <li>• Document organization in document libraries</li> <li>• Document version control capabilities</li> <li>• Specialized applications like wikis and blogs</li> <li>• End-user functionality such as workflows, to-do lists, alerts, and discussion boards.</li> <li>• Collaboration: collaborative workspaces; connect organizations through portals</li> <li>• Portals: built-in social networking technologies</li> <li>• Allow teams to work together effectively, collaborate on and publish documents, maintain task lists, implement workflows, and share information through the use of wikis and blogs.</li> <li>• Create a personal MySite portal to share information with others and personalize the user experience and content of an enterprise Web site based on the user's profile.</li> <li>• Search quickly and easily find people, expertise, and content in business applications.</li> <li>• Enterprise content management to create and manage documents, records, and Web content.</li> <li>• Business Process and forms to create workflows and electronic forms to automate and streamline your business processes.</li> <li>• Business Intelligence allows information users to analyze and view data, and publish reports.</li> </ul>
<b>Strengths</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tightly integrated with other Microsoft technologies such as the Office Suite.</li> </ul>
<b>Weaknesses</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Social networking capabilities pale in comparison to 'pure' social networking platforms thus collaborating with external vendors</li> </ul>
<b>Potential fit</b>	Collaborative Workspaces, Exchange and Learning, Content Management
<b>Unlikely fit</b>	Networking
<b>App platform</b>	Microsoft Windows Server
<b>Business model</b>	Enterprise licensing

## Annex B: Functionality and Feature Tables

### Functionality

	SharePoint	Drupal	Ecco	Custom-built 'Ning'
<b>Description</b>	Collaboration and document management platform	Open source content management and community software	Community of practice software	Social network and website creation software
<b>Sweet spot</b>	Enterprise portal solution tightly integrated with Windows	Open source and highly customizable	Community intelligence features (tagging, bookmarks, most helpful and active users, most connected people, and highest ranked content)	Easy set-up and use for non-technical users
<b>Potential business need fit</b>	Networking, Collaborative Workspaces, Exchange and Learning, Content Management	Networking, Collaborative Workspaces, Exchange and Learning, Content Management	Networking, Exchange and Learning, Content Management	Networking, Exchange and Learning
<b>Unlikely business need fit</b>	-	-	Collaborative Workspaces	Content Management, Collaborative Workspaces
<b>Licensing</b>	Enterprise level license already purchased by Agency	None	Purchase of annual licenses for each user required	None
<b>Ease of pilot implementation</b>	SharePoint-trained specialists required for out-of-the-box customization, maintenance and support.	In-house expertise available for set-up, maintenance and modification.	Vendor support required for out-of-the-box customization, maintenance, and support.	External developer required to custom engineer, maintain, and support.

## Functionality cont...

	SharePoint	Drupal	Ecco	Custom-built 'Ning'
<b>Hosting</b>	Internal and SaaS	Internal and ASP	Internal and ASP	Internal and ASP
<b>Strength of security and authentication</b>	Excellent (Department of Defense Certified)	Good	Good (Section 508 compliant)	Poor
<b>Third-party alliances</b>	Seeking third party developers to enhance social networking capabilities	Fast growing eco-system of application developers	SharePoint-ready (seamless authentication between products, publish content to and from Ecco community and SharePoint sites, index, search and bookmark across sites)	Not applicable
<b>Open API</b>	Limited	Yes	Yes	No
<b>Scalable</b>	Yes	Yes	Yes	Limited scalability
<b>Multi-lingual</b>	Yes	Yes	Limited	Limited

## Features

	SharePoint	Drupal	Ecco	Custom-built 'Ning'
<b>Real-time collaboration and communication</b>				
<b>Instant messaging</b>	Integrated	Module		
<b>VOIP</b>	No	Yes	No	No
<b>Presence awareness</b>	Integrated		Yes	
<b>Team collaboration</b>				
<b>Forums</b>	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
<b>Website creation</b>	Yes	Basic website installation and administration for non-programmers		Website templates
<b>Version control</b>	Yes	Detailed changelog for core feature updates by version		
<b>Collaborative workspaces</b>	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
<b>Multi-media sharing (video, slides, photos)</b>	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
<b>Social Networking and Computing</b>				
<b>Profiles</b>	Integrated	Module	Yes	Yes
<b>Wiki</b>	Yes	Module	Simple wiki	

## Features cont...

	SharePoint	Drupal	Ecco	Custom-built 'Ning'
<b>Blog</b>	Yes	Yes	Yes	
<b>Bookmarking</b>	'Favorites'	Yes	Yes	
<b>Tagging</b>	Add-on	Taxonomy keyword tagging	Yes	
<b>Rate/rank</b>	Add-on	Yes	Yes	
<b>Dashboard</b>	Yes	Yes		No
<b>Open social gadgets</b>	Can be incorporated into dashboard	Yes	No	Yes
<b>Other</b>				
<b>RSS feeds</b>	Yes	Yes		Yes
<b>Decentralized permission system</b>	Yes	Role based permission system	Membership based security for non technical leaders	
<b>Analysis, tracking, and statistics</b>	Yes	Content popularity and visitor navigation; access statistics	Documents metrics for each page and user	
<b>Email alerts</b>	Yes	Yes	Yes	
<b>Mobile compatible</b>	Yes	Limited functionality	Limited functionality	TBD

## Annex C: Sources

Bernoff J. and Charlene Li. 'Harnessing the Power of the Oh-So-Social Web'. MIT Sloan Management Review. Spring 2008 Vol.49 No. 3.

Brown, M. 'Expertise Location: Your Next Frontier'. Forrester Best Practices. October 2, 2006.

CMS Watch. 'The Enterprise Social Software Report 2008 – Sample Version 1.0'. 2008.

Economist Intelligence Unit. 'Collaboration transforming the way business works'. The Economist. April 2007.

Everest, Kathryn. 'IBM: Business Drivers for Social Networking'. IBM Canada Ltd. Presentation, [www.slideshare.com](http://www.slideshare.com).

Forrester. 'Enterprise Collaboration Market Drivers'. Topic Overview: Collaboration Platforms. March 2007

Moore C. and Rugullies R. 'The Information Workplace Will Redefine the World of Work – At Last!'. Forrester Big Idea. June 1, 2005.

McAfee, A. 'Enterprise 2.0: The Dawn of Emergent Collaboration'. MIT Sloan Management Review. Spring 2006 Vol. 47 No.3.

Rollyson C. 'New Strategy for Enterprise Competitiveness: Social Network Roadmap'. 2008

Select Minds. "Corporate Social Networking: Benchmarking Study".

USAID/KM. 'Knowledge Management Operational Plan 2008-2010 Working Draft'. June 20, 2008

USAID/Brown M. 'Social Networking Sites and International Development'. January 22, 2008.

USAID/LPA. 'Agency Rebuilding Starts with 40 New Hires'. Frontlines. June 2008.

Wainhouse. 'The Enterprise Social Networking Landscape: Market Dynamics, Sizing and Forecast'. Wainhouse Segment Report. June, 2008.

Walker, Richard W. 'More Agencies adopt wikis to share knowledge'. FCW. April 29, 2008

Wyatt, Kash. 'Defense 2.0 a work in progress' GCN. July 7, 2008.

[www.usaid.gov](http://www.usaid.gov)

[www.cmsmatrix.org](http://www.cmsmatrix.org)

[www.drupal.org](http://www.drupal.org)

[www.microsoft.com](http://www.microsoft.com)

[www.ning.com](http://www.ning.com)

[www.socialnetworkroadmap.com](http://www.socialnetworkroadmap.com)

[www.tamoye.com](http://www.tamoye.com)

[www.tradenet.biz](http://www.tradenet.biz)

[www.wikipedia.com](http://www.wikipedia.com)