



Choosing the right collaboration software for your organisation

Choosing the right collaboration software is a bit like a Premier League football manager trying to identify a replacement for a star striker. The market is full of them and they can cost a fortune. They are often overhyped and come with reputations that guarantee you success; if you're not careful you might think you are buying a Leo Messi but end up with a Fernando Torres. Sitting on the bench, costing the club money and not delivering much to the business. You then wheel him out every now and again hoping the form will turn around but, by then...the fans have turned against him and you know it's all over.

It isn't a great shock that collaboration software can have a success rate as low as 10%¹. It can be such a difficult thing to choose the right tool for your organisation. We have come up with some tips for selecting the right software for you and your people.

Identifying your problems

It's important you have a fundamental reason driving you to make a change. This doesn't need to be an earthshattering step change, it can be as small as trying to make employees lives easier in a specific area. But it's important that there is a driver, a question to be answered or a problem to be solved.

A good way of understanding this is by asking your people. In a previous blog² we talked about the benefits of the consultation effect on user adoption and productivity. More than this, performing some good ol' fashioned discovery and requirements gathering straight from the horse's mouth goes a long way to helping select the correct tool.

Choose a multi-purpose tool

There are many tools available on the market but try to keep the amount you use to a minimum and keep it simple for the users. Most the tools on the market offer a good selection of functionality around their main specialism. It's important you identify the problems from your discovery phase and complete a Gap Analysis against the tools to make a decision. Broadly, there are some killer features you will want to make sure are included in any tool you go with;

Real time communication

Instant messaging, calling, video conferencing and screen sharing is a must in the modern workplace. Allowing people to quickly share ideas, clarify actions and work together on projects is helping people move fast in already frantic workplace

Document Management/File Sharing

Documents are the fabric of the work place; it's what you produce as your piece of work/output and often a large part of the input into much of what you do. It's important you have a tool that has a good document storage facility that allows you to share coupled with some organisation tools for categorisation, search and multi user input

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Document Management/File Sharing

All things have a timeline, an owner and a dreaded deadline. Whether it's a large transformation project, a small work package with a team or just a way for employees to track and manage their own time, tools to help people track and manage are becoming essential - 77% of people report on working on 2-7 project simultaneously (CMS Wire)³

Mobility

40% of the workforce work remotely, so having a mobile friendly tools is a must in the modern workforce (Clinked)⁴. Furthermore, the workforce are now admitting to completing personal tasks on work time (75%) and work tasks in personal time (77%) so providing mobile friendly tools will allow people to be more productive in line with flexible working being employed (Techradar)⁵.

Social

Spending on Enterprise Social Networks is expected to hit \$4.5Billion in 2016 (TechTarget)⁶ so don't get left behind. A social element to you solution should be a given and most tools offer them. Remember you need to focus of some adoption planning to make the most of this

Choose a multi-purpose tool

Almost all the tools on the market offer you a freebee to hook you in. When you think you have narrowed your search then set up a control group and test a few out. On paper it's difficult to make a decision and the best people to help you decide are the communities who will be using the tools. This is a good way to feel out usability issues, compatibility to the culture of the workforce and how far the tool goes to meet the practical needs and issues you have identified for your organisation.

The Ntegra handy list of popular collaboration software

If you are thinking about Collaboration software for your organisation, we have put together a useful list of the most popular tools on the market.

Tool and Main Focus	Description
 Polycom Tele and Video Conferencing	Known for its teleconference capabilities. Their offering is focused on real-time collaboration tools and is good for companies who like to interact but are dispersed around multiple locations; <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Video and Voice conferencing• Real time content sharing – sharing docs, working on them together via conference

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Tool and Main Focus

Description



Team Collaboration

Slack focuses on practical team based sharing of information. The features are focused around converging 4 key areas;

- Document Storage
- Instant Messaging and Chat
- Convergence and Integration of Social Media and Apps– Twitter, Google Hangout, Drop box etc...
- Powerful Search



Social Media Platform

Focuses primarily on solution geared towards advertising and marketing campaigns via Social Media. The main features revolve around;

- Content Planning and Publishing
- Engagement and Moderation
- Advocacy and Audience Segmentation
- Social Listening capability
- Trend Discovery
- Analytics



Project Management tool

Focused on project lifecycle and delivery, Basecamp has a series of features around getting the job done;

- Milestone management
- Task and tie tracking
- Messaging
- File Sharing



Document Management

A fully managed document management solution focused on the effective storage and management of documents throughout their lifecycle. Key Features;

- Compliance Framework (specifically geared towards ISO and FDA regulations among others)
- Security Framework
- Search
- Integration available with CRMs such as Salesforce, Microsoft Dynamics and Netsuite

Tool and Main Focus	Description
 <p>Unified Communications and Customer Relationship Management (CRM)</p>	<p>Bitrix does a little bit of everything and is the self styled “#1 Collaboration Platform with CRM”. A good all-rounder offering;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social Intranet – feed, likes, shares and badges • Workspaces – working groups, tasks, dependency management, calendars and gantt charts • Chat and Messaging • Workflow • Client Management Tools – Contacts, Commercial/Deal Management, Payment and Invoicing management
 <p>Communication and Collaboration</p>	<p>Jive comes in a number of guises. Jive-n and Jive-w combine offer a formidable array tools to keep people connected. Named in the “Magic Quadrant” of work place collaboration leaders by Gartner. Key features;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social Intranet – feed, likes, shares departmental pages to support the organisation • Chat/Messaging • Organisational people finder
 <p>Collaboration and Project Management</p>	<p>Billed as being the first tools to “go across the firewall”. With a reputation of strong cloud security freeing companies from their own corporate networks, Huddle offers a wide selection of tools;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaboration – Chat, Messaging shared work space to share content • Project management – Calendars, Task Management, Milestone Management • File sharing
 <p>Project Management Suite</p>	<p>Focuses on project lifecycle related activity but has;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project and Task tracking • Instant chat/messaging • Document storage • Good integration options with Google Drive, DropBox etc...

Tool and Main Focus

Description



Work. Online

Online Office Suite

Provides a wide range of functionality across;

- Sales and Marketing
 - CRM
 - Surveys
 - Campaign and Contact Management
- Email and Collaboration
 - Chat
 - Document Management
 - Project Management
- Business Process
- Finance Management
- HR Management
- Help Desk Management



Enterprise Social Network

Igloo provides its services in 4 categories;

- Communications – blogs, forums and calendars all available
- Collaboration – Team spaces, mentions, notifications
- Knowledge Management – People directory, Wikis and Forums
- Workflow – version control and moderation capabilities

Like what you have read? Would like us to talk about something specific? Think Ntegra can help your organisation? Get in touch... info@ntegra.com

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