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IN THE WORKPLACE



Welcome to the Wiki Workspace

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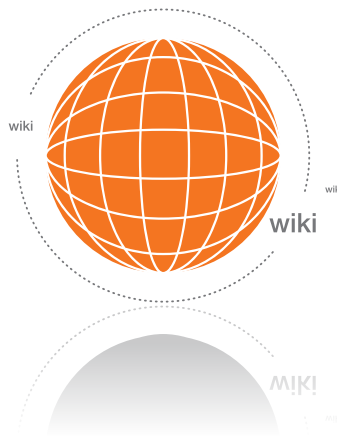
band. The organizational diststructure will look more like an abstract expressionist painting than like neat little boxes cascading down in an orderly organizational chart. Welcome to the wiki workspace.

“This new promise of ease of collaboration is that peer production will harness human skills, ingenuity and intelligence more efficiently and effectively than anything we have witnessed previously,” said Tapscott. He has coined the phenomenon ‘wikinomics,’ based on openness, peering, sharing and acting globally.

One of the most interesting trends in the wiki workspace is the new ability to enable greater collaboration between individuals in this global wireless mobile world. In the process, the value of human capital is changing, as is how we invest in it and organize individuals in the non-hierarchy of the new business environment. These are exactly what we are beginning to see evidence of in corporate real estate (CRE) and facility management. The emergence of the wiki workspace and the four principles as defined by Tapscott are changing the way we plan, design, manage and operate in both real and virtual spaces.

The effect of mobile technologies

Organizations are constantly adapting to changes in the world—particularly the introduction and adoption of new technologies, management styles, organizational structures, work processes and workplaces. Just look at the effect that mobile technologies and the Internet have had on how we work together. They have minimized the carefully constructed, unidirectional, traditional hierarchies and control management styles. They have also changed the ways in which we work—as decisions now often come from the bottom up. We can collaborate more easily across time zones and borders, in any place we find more convenient—in the office, a hotel lobby or an airport lounge. Our status is now determined not by our title but by the extant collaborative network of professionals, regardless of whether they come from our private Rolodex or are posted online for all to see on LinkedIn—one of today’s many professional and social networking sites. The old enterprise is morphing into the new socialprise right before our eyes. What we once predicted is now here—the lean and agile workplace.¹



What do the Pat Metheny group and a Jackson Pollack painting have in common with the new workplace of the future? According to Don Tapscott, author and business innovator, leadership will be concerned with orchestrating amorphous networks of employees with particular skill sets who come together for a project, disband and go on to other work when it is over—much like a jazz

An open sharing of information

Being open is a rather new phenomenon in the corporate lexicon. The most treasured employees used to be the in-house staff and their work was augmented by outside contracted staff. The practice of outsourcing can be traced back to the military but it started in the 1980s when Kodak delegated its IT operations to IBM. Twenty years later, it is extremely difficult to tell who is the corporate staff and who is the outside vendor, as the practice of partnering has allowed for more open sharing of information in both CRE and facility management. Even the last bastion of in-house work, portfolio strategy, is now being done with the assistance of contracted real estate consultants and architectural firms. This is evident in the work that firms like NELSON and CB Richard Ellis are doing for many Fortune 500 organizations. People—both internal and external—to the organization, are requesting more visibility to the business and more empowerment and independence to make decisions that foster the sense of community.

New sources of innovation have also appeared outside the corridors of an organization's research and development departments with "new idea-agoras," which are brokering solutions to problems with monetary rewards going to the best idea. Beginning with the scientific community, problems are beginning to surface that will affect the built environment. Recently, a company posted an engineering query on www.Innocentive.com that offered US\$50,000 for a new method to produce lightweight tiles. We believe this is only the beginning of postings looking for new energy efficiency methods and systems, new furniture designs and even new operational technologies.

Even new designs for places of work reflect this new attitude toward openness. To reflect Bank of America's values as a company and its role in the community, the firm ensured that the design of its new New York highrise was as unobstructed as possible. As you enter the ground floor on Eighth Avenue, you can see straight through the building to The Times Center at the back. On the floors above, only 10 percent of the offices are closed with the rest in open plan, which is meant to encourage collaboration on the active newsroom floors.²



This aspect of extreme transparency is also critical in the BMW manufacturing facility in Leipzig, Germany, designed by Zaha Hadid. Conveyor belts with unfinished auto bodies are seen parading above workers' heads—whether they are lunching in the cafeteria or working at their desks. This ensures that no one ever forgets what they are there to do.³

Collaboration through peering

Peering refers to people having the same status as one another and sharing information. The Open Standards Consortium for Real Estate (OSCRE) serves as a perfect example of peering. In this group, corporate, government and institutional CRE and facility management representatives come together to work with real estate brokers, architects, vendors, outsourcers and industry professional groups to create standards and share knowledge and experiences with one another.

Within corporations, collaboration is happening in a more cross-functional approach. CRE and facility management groups are working closer with human resources and information technology—who are being brought together for many reasons. HR worries about recruitment

and retention and turns to the CRE and facility management groups to ensure that the workplace is one that will attract and help retain staff. These groups are now collaborating on new ways of working as they launch alternative officing initiatives where employees have more of a choice of where and when they work. IT, CRE and facility management are collaborating on new technologies for these digital natives who may not have to take up costly real estate space as they are mobile 24/7. They are also collaborating on technologies that make new buildings smart machines for more productive work and better performance.

Introducing socialprise applications

Facebook and MySpace have had a profound effect on collaboration in the social world. They have now found their match on the corporate side with new socialprise applications. This new online phenomenon is actually a mixture—Web applications that combine data from more than one source into a single integrated tool—of social networking and enterprise applications. Employees can find colleagues, previous coworkers and friends on sites such as LinkedIn. Microsoft's SharePoint is another application that allows employees

to collaborate with fellow team members across multiple office sites and work with shared documents, manage projects and find people with particular expertise or specific content across the enterprise.

Wikis and blogs have become ubiquitous as collaboration mediums. A blog can often-times be considered the world's biggest coffee house. Blogs have changed the concept of journalism. Everyone can be a reporter simply by accessing the Internet. Blogs are even searchable thanks to services like Technorati and IceRocket. Another perfect example of mass collaboration is Wikipedia, which runs on a wiki and allows users to easily add content to Web pages. Both blogs and wikis are becoming common tools in corporate real estate and facility management.

We began to develop alternative work environments in the early '90s. Today, most companies have multiple ways their employees can work out of the office and yet still provide places (headquarters, satellite offices, pay-for-use facilities) where employees can convene to work together. When you stay at a hotel in any major business center, you can share your thoughts and ideas with colleagues around the globe through technology. Hewlett Packard has installed its telepresence product in the Marriott hotel chain's major locations, allowing you to look across a table and virtually experience collaboration in real time with other participants. This could not have come at a better time.

Acting globally

When talking about collaboration, it refers to sharing information between remote locations around the world. OSCRE has joined forces with PISCES (Property Information Systems Common Exchange Standards) in Europe to ensure that the real estate standards being developed can



be used anywhere. Integrated Workplace Management Systems need to be both local and global. Users want to view their language as they use the IWMS system, whether in Canadian French, Polish or Russian. The Japanese facility manager measures Tokyo space in tsubos, the British in square meters and the Americans in square feet. As a result, reports on the global portfolio have to be automatically converted to the appropriate unit of measurement and totals calculated.

But why?

Now you are thinking, why do I want to explore the world of the wiki workspace? The benefits are:

- Reduced costs (less travel, reduced cycle time and real estate, faster time to market);
- Improved customer satisfaction;
- More efficient and effective project work;
- Improved innovation;

- More efficient collaboration around the world;
- Better, more streamlined communication across the organization;
- Creation of a culture of continuous improvement;
- More lean management of CRE and facility management; and
- Improved professional development.

Perhaps one of the biggest benefits—and one for which we are all searching—is finally achieving a better work/life balance. Welcome to the wiki workspace. **FMJ**

¹ See the MIT and Gartner study of 2002, *The Agile Workplace*.

² See http://archrecord.construction.com/innovation/2_Features/0411Green.asp

³ See <http://archrecord.construction.com/projects/portfolio/archives/0508BMW.asp>



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