



SIEMENS

Siemens fosters a culture of open collaboration to connect employees globally with Socialcast

INDUSTRY

Electrical Engineering & Electronics

LOCATION

Munich and Berlin, Germany

EMPLOYEES

348,000

SOCIALCAST USERS

155,000+

KEY CHALLENGES

The massive, global workforce at Siemens posed challenges to speed and connectivity, and in order to remain a leader in innovation, the company needed to accelerate every collaborative process across the organization while ensuring security.

SOLUTION

Socialcast offered the flexibility and scalability Siemens required to implement an ESN, as well as the customization to make the tool accessible regardless of geographic location or division.

BUSINESS BENEFITS

The Siemens Social Network helped increase productivity, open innovation, business performance, employee satisfaction and their ability to effectively leverage the collective intelligence across the global powerhouse.

Fortune 500 Global company Siemens (www.siemens.com) produces a diverse portfolio of technologies, services and industry solutions in areas such as electrification, automation and digitalization. In addition to being the largest engineering company in Europe, the Siemens global footprint reaches beyond headquarters in Germany to all regions worldwide. In business for almost 170 years, Siemens operates in more than 280 sites across the world with a total of 348,000 employees (as per September 30, 2015).

The Challenge

Though the vast talent network is behind the company's greatest feats, Siemens experienced challenges common to operating such a widespread workforce, like speed and connectivity. Siemens is a top patent applicant in countries around the world and the company also wanted to maintain a leadership position through more open collaboration, innovation, as well as faster problem-solving and decision-making.

Having already demonstrated the power of information and connectivity in their own solutions, the data-driven company needed a central, borderless space to capture and effectively leverage some of the most valuable data within their own company: employee expertise and ideas.

Siemens searched for a companywide solution in 2012 to accelerate those processes and facilitate global collaboration. After learning about Socialcast by VMware in a market study and a subsequent detailed vendor comparison, Siemens evaluated the enterprise social network (ESN) and found it met its business and technical requirements.

"We chose Socialcast because it is the best solution that fits our requirement for a partner to help Siemens implement an enterprise social network solution," said Michael Bach, then head of IT Infrastructure Governance and Strategy for Siemens. "VMware is a reputable vendor and has the experience to deliver reliable and valuable products. Our key decision criteria was selecting a partner capable of delivering flexible deployment options, initially behind the firewall, an intuitive, user-friendly interface as well as support for the standard mobile platforms of the enterprise (Android and iOS).

The Solution

Socialcast offers the flexibility with multiple deployment options and the scalability necessary to meet the requirements of an on-premise, enterprise-wide solution. In addition to their secure, behind-the-firewall, on-premise deployment, Siemens also smoothly migrated their solution to vCloud Air in 2015, which provides the benefits of cloud computing—even faster adoption of new features and updates, instant software upgrades, less maintenance and decreased costs.

Through Socialcast, employees can now securely network internally from any company-owned device using the free mobile app without being impeded by schedules and time zones, which leads employees to engage in richer, more meaningful, real-time conversations. Even one-to-many communications on Socialcast, such as town halls are more interactive because employees can "like" and comment on them.

The enterprise social collaboration solution tool helped Siemens expedite collaboration and ideation, mitigate the risk of losing knowledge when employees leave, bridge geographic locations and better cultivate company values like sustainability. Available in multiple languages across the globe, employees can participate in groups and share knowledge with the entire workforce, breaking down silos and divisions. Customized back-end administration gives Siemens the ability to create groups for the entire organizational structure that comply with country-specific privacy laws.

Business Results & Benefits

User adoption by the early adopters (about 15% of the total workforce) is strong, however to bridge the chasm to the rest of the employees remains a challenge. One of the reasons may be that the registration for the Siemens Social Network is voluntary. However, the 155,000 active members have already created more than 10,000 groups, collaborated on projects outside of their teams, transferred knowledge and skills, shared news and best practices, helped troubleshoot, solved problems and contributed new ideas. User adoption continues to increase month by month as other employees see the power of collaboration through an enterprise social collaboration solution and generate new use cases. "Since deploying Socialcast, we've seen user adoption steadily increase, and the tool has become integral to the daily activities within multiple lines of business," said Daniel Fuerg, application service manager at Siemens, whose responsibilities include Socialcast service management. "This is evident by the requests we get to integrate it with workflow applications and the increased reliance on Socialcast notifications over email for work communication. Email still exists and is used, but there are a lot of things you can do better in Socialcast."

Enabling collaboration through this single platform yielded multiple benefits to IT in particular, both as managers and users. Decreased costs and time spent managing those technologies are also benefits for the Siemens IT department. In addition, users can now find answers and solve their own technical issues, decreasing IT service tickets.

The user-friendly interface and ability to find information faster not only increased workflow productivity, but also improved employee retention and satisfaction. "The Siemens global workforce is now a connected, global community where employees can share opinions and be invited to participate in the bigger picture," said Ramona Litzenberg, IT application service manager at Siemens. "Leveraging a tool like Socialcast enables our work environment to be much more appealing across generations and cultures to both existing and new employees."

Siemens partners with researchers, startups and other experts outside the company to solve problems and engineer new solutions, but by connecting their existing internal knowledge base, they save more time on these processes and decrease time for project completion. Because Siemens used Socialcast Reach to integrate their enterprise social collaboration solution with the company's intranet, they also increased feedback and collaboration, enhancing it with a social layer. Coupled with customization capabilities and ease of use, the Siemens Socialcast Network makes ideation and innovation accessible to anyone with a Siemens email address and who is registered in the Siemens Social Network

