

Whitepaper

# Enterprise Collaboration for NexGen Innovative Workplace

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## 1. Why Collaboration

One of the primary driving forces to create a customer-centric organization, is to provide great employee experience. In the next 10 years, 75% of workforce will be millennial<sup>(1)</sup>. Needless to say, engaging and providing superior experience to these employees would be critical for growth of the organization. According to a research by MIT CISR, top 25% of companies based on ratings of their employee experience, have 2X customer satisfaction, 2X innovation within their organization, and 26% more profitability<sup>(2)</sup>.

Every major technological revolution has profoundly changed the way we live and the way we work, even if we don't always realize it at the time. Social networking is one such revolution. The world today likes staying connected. Employees are now continuously connected to their family and friends, and expect the same experience in their professional life as well. Enterprise collaboration platforms make this possible. In addition to tangible benefits like cost reductions, enterprise collaboration also provides

multitude of benefits like motivated employees, greater sense of ownership and a more transparent and flexible organization.

Analysts estimate enterprise data growth of 50X Y-o-Y through 2020<sup>(3)</sup>. Communication volume, variety and velocity have increased manifold and managing it efficiently is a prerogative for an organized work day. The advent of communication media has resulted in reduced attention span among people. According to a British study, an average person switches between devices 21 times an hour<sup>(4)</sup>. In this attention deficient world, a deluge of excess information can overshadow the important details, while restricting information exchange leads to teams working in silos. The right collaboration platforms ensure that employees can seamlessly access necessary information at the right time.

Businesses today need to collaborate with multiple parties to create value. They cannot work in silos. Thus, creating a need for collaborative ecosystem, where not only the organization, but also their suppliers and clients work in cohesion.

## 2. Collaboration Ecosystem

Collaboration fosters innovation. Hence, creating synergies across the value chain is necessary to make collaboration relevant and significant within the organization.

### Collaboration business case across the value chain

	Transient Benefits	Strategic Benefits
<b>Within Organization</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communication across geographic boundaries and across teams.</li> <li>• Faster information sharing.</li> <li>• Unified, personalized and contextual experiences on a single platform.</li> <li>• Two-way communication between employees and senior management.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Solving business-critical problems through collaboration platforms.</li> <li>• Transparent and faster decision making.</li> <li>• Sense of real-time pulse of employees.</li> </ul>
<b>With Vendors/ Suppliers</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Faster communication resulting in faster TAT.</li> <li>• Quick feedback and updates on quality of supplies.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Early warning to allow preemptive action.</li> <li>• Enhanced long term relationships.</li> </ul>
<b>With Clients</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One-on-one connect enabling better understanding of client requirements.</li> <li>• Greater customer satisfaction.</li> <li>• Connect with clients to explore opportunities in their day-to-day challenges.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understanding the client's business strategy to effectively contribute in driving it.</li> <li>• Creating a customer-centric culture in the organization.</li> </ul>

## 3. How to ensure the success of your collaboration platform

The key objectives of any collaboration platform are to provide better reach, deeper engagement, richer services and enable faster

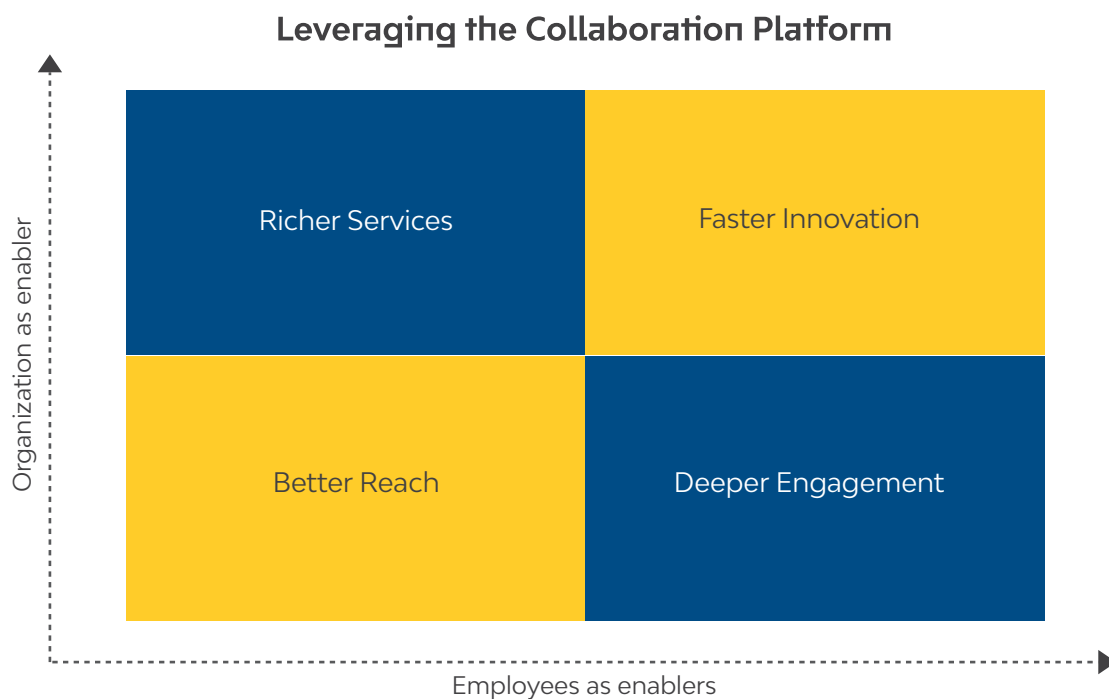
innovation. Often, organizations are so engrossed in technical integration aspect of the collaboration platform, that ensuring sustained engagement takes a back seat.

A figure below summarizes the extent of contribution required by the organization, and the employees in achieving business benefits from the platform. The first step to achieve enterprise

collaboration is to ensure better reach and connectedness by bringing together all employees on a common collaboration platform. Increased participation by motivated employees with nominal contribution from the organization, ensures deeper engagement across teams. Proactive action by the organization to provide integrated experiences to employees ensure that they enjoy richer services, and look up to the collaboration platform as a one-stop solution for all their needs. Faster innovation, however requires

both the organization and employees to adopt the platform and endeavour to derive value from it.

Better reach is the fundamental benefit that any organization looks for while adopting a collaboration platform. However, it is the other three parameters that ensure sustained engagement of the platform, and create value add to employees and organization in the long run. Once the primary collaboration tool is in place, leverage it to extract most value for the organization.



### 3.1 Better Reach

This is mostly platform-driven. As long as the choice of technological platform is right, employees will have a seamless way to connect with each other. Factors to consider while selecting the right collaboration platform, include:

- Business objective that the platform has to achieve & leadership endorsement for the same.

- Regulatory and Compliance environment of the industry in which the organization is a part of.
- Familiarity, features and ease-of-use of the platform.
- Demographics and comfort level of employees in using digital platforms.
- Work environment like mobility, availability of desktops, etc.

## 3.2 Deeper Engagement

Motivated and enthusiastic employees, usually champions of the platform, actively contribute to do their work more effectively and efficiently. Generating meaningful and relevant content is the key to success. Be it ideas for a new product launch, feedback on designs, manager's interaction with team members, etc. A few pointers that ensure continuous employee engagement are:

- Encouraging a culture of knowledge sharing.
- Replacing existing one-on-one, or one-to-many communication with collaboration platform.
- Understanding the needs of each team and identifying business-critical use cases and workflows that can be moved to collaboration platform.
- Fostering a sense of community and ownership.
- Listening and acting on employee feedback.

## 3.3 Richer Services

Providing integrated experiences on the collaboration platform to create a wow factor in employee experience.

- Enhance experience by meeting the employee's needs over and above their work related needs, by integrating with lifestyle partners.
- Bots to provide humanized experience.
- Integrated systems to provide unified experiences. Integrate the platform with existing systems to enhance productivity.

- Increase relevance to employees by engaging them in contextual conversations

## 3.4 Faster Innovation

This is the stage where the organization starts seeing strategic value-add from the collaboration platform. Both employees and the organization need to contribute to create a culture of rapid innovation.

- Promote real-time awareness of opportunities for innovation.
- Rapid knowledge sharing ensuring that there is no duplication of effort.
- Collaborate with SMEs outside of immediate work environment to generate and implement new ideas.
- Crowdsourcing ideas to improve processes and provide better products/ services through a customer-centric approach.

## 4. Conclusion

The vital element of a successful collaboration tool implementation is of course choosing the right platform, best suited to employees' day-to-day needs. A top down approach to motivate employees, by involving senior management, would go a long way in increasing adoption of the new platform. Moreover, the management will get a first-hand view of employees' needs and aspirations.

Collaborating and connecting with co-workers on a single platform will foster a sense of community

and in turn enhance overall employee experience. However, beyond the initial excitement and curiosity phase, the organization has to proactively take up steps to ensure employees are engaged on the platform. To achieve this, activities like, leadership interactions, idea crowd sourcing and implementation etc. need to be initiated, through which employees can voice their views and actively be a part of the ongoing changes in the organization. This creates a sense of ownership among employees.

Other productivity add-ons, like bots, integration with existing systems etc., will be required to ensure that the platform is a one stop shop for all information and services that an employee seeks.

In due course, the collaboration platform provides strategic benefits and helps the organization become a more transparent, connected, flexible and employee centric organization.

## 5. References

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## About the Author



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Apoorva is a Consultant for LTIMindtree’s Next Generation Workplace Practice. She has been actively involved in driving adoption of workplace by Facebook at LTIMindtree, through various engagement activities, bots etc.

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