EMPLOYEE AND CUSTOMER INNOVATION THROUGH TECHNOLOGY

Christa Semko
Dell Inc.
“We spend a tremendous amount of time communicating. We have to talk in real-time...because we’re in a real-time business. A sense of urgency about communicating and solving problems is imperative.”

- Michael Dell
DELL WAS AN EARLY ADOPTER AND INNOVATOR IN ONLINE COMMUNITY SPACE

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<th>Industry Evolution¹</th>
<th>Social Relationships</th>
<th>Social Functionality</th>
<th>Social Colonization</th>
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<td></td>
<td>Users find each other online</td>
<td>Users interact in new ways online</td>
<td>Social not limited to “social sites”</td>
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1. Forrester, “Future of Social Web”

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<th>Blogosphere Outreach (Internal Blogosphere)</th>
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<td>Sponsored Offsite Properties</td>
<td>2005</td>
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- 1M+ Followers on Twitter today
- 2,000 ideas in 1st 2 weeks
- Digital Nomads.com
“A company this size is not going to be about a couple of people coming up with ideas. It’s going to be about millions of people and harnessing the power of those ideas.”

- Michael Dell
MANAGING OUR IDEA GENERATION SITES

IDEASTORM
- Public POSTS ideas for Dell products and services
- Community COMMENTS or VOTES on ideas (+10 points for each promote and -10 points for each demote)
- Popular ideas float to the top via the wisdom of the crowds
- Dell responds with Ideas in Action (on Direct2Dell)

EMPLOYEEESTORM
- Employees POST ideas for employee-specific items (HR, Facilities, Cafeteria) and/or customer-specific items (Sales, Marketing, Products)
- Employees COMMENT or VOTE on ideas (+10 points for each promote and -10 points for each demote)
- Popular ideas float to the top via the employee opinions
- Dell responds with Ideas in Action (on One Dell Way)
**OBJECTIVE:**
Encourage ideas, feedback, input and dialogue from customers

**RESULTS:**
- 12,000+ ideas generated by the community
- ~700,000 promotions of ideas
- 87,000+ comments
- ~400 ideas Implemented by Dell

www.ideastorm.com
EMPLOYEE STORM
LAUNCHED JUNE 2007

OBJECTIVE:
Encourage ideas, feedback, input and dialogue from employees

RESULTS:
- 5,000+ ideas generated by employees
- 272,000+ votes on ideas
- ~25,000 comments
- 200+ ideas implemented by Dell
COLOR OPTIONS
A LITTLE ZING TO BUSINESS LAPTOPS

13.3-INCH DISPLAY
COMPACT BUT BIG ENOUGH TO FIT A FULL-SIZED KEYBOARD UNDERNEATH

BACKLIT KEYBOARD
FOR WORKING IN THE DARK

FINGERPRINT READER
EXTRA SECURITY APPEASES JITTERY MANAGERS

BETTER BATTERY LIFE
UP TO 19 HOURS ON A SINGLE CHARGE

eSATA PORT
LETS USERS CONNECT EXTERNAL HARD DRIVES AT FAST SPEEDS

CASE STUDY – LATITUDE (AUG. 2008)
REGULAR FOLLOW-UP
INTERNALLY AND EXTERNALLY
KEY LESSONS ALONG OUR JOURNEY
#1 - BE PREPARED FOR THE INITIAL SPIKE OF IDEAS

- IdeaStorm received 2,000 ideas in first 2 weeks
- Community expects immediate response/engagement

#2 – EXPECT AND ACCEPT NEGATIVE COMMENTS

- Transparency is the key to success.
- Admit your mistakes – take ownership.
- Community expectations on feedback will always be high. Better to communicate “you don’t know” or “are reviewing” than nothing at all.
  - Remember, social media is about two-way dialogue and the company and leaders’ voice is critical to that dialogue
  - Caveat – must walk to the fine line between transparency and corporate sensitive information
#3 – INTERNAL INPUT IS AS CRITICAL AS EXTERNAL INPUT

- Don’t leave employees out of the mix
  - Lesson learned – may be better to start efforts with employees FIRST
- Dell has a mirrored social media environment internally and externally
- Responding to employees concerns and comments is critical to encourage continued participation
#4 – HIRE THE RIGHT PEOPLE TO REPRESENT YOUR COMPANY ONLINE

- **Passion**
  - People who are truly passionate about social media – live it inside and outside of work.
  - People who your community would accept and see as one of their own.

- **Online Experience/Personality**
  - You can not judge a good online personality from an in-person interview. If you can find them online, READ. Someone might be great online and awkward in person.
  - People who aren’t afraid of being in the public (picture, name, etc).

- **Communication Skills**
  - Need to be able to walk away. Personality should not be that of a need to win every argument or have the last word.
  - People who are talkative and can build relationships with strangers.
  - Ability to balance the relationship/customer aspect with planned messaging and other communication goals.
#5 – IDEA MANAGEMENT IS THE SECRET SAUCE TO IDEAS SUCCESS

• Reporting
  – Detailed for appropriate business unit
  – Executive overview

• Idea grouping and categorization
  – Align right ideas with right POC / SME
  – Idea Assignment, tracking, nagging, ownership
  – Balance the push and pull of information

• Historical information tracking