

Social Media Requirements

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This document outlines a process that can be used for the implementation of a B2B social network platform. Examples could be a partner directory, a way for customers to share applications and best practices or a post-event support site.

We propose the following steps:

- 1) Assess your community needs. Find out how active prospective participants are in the online space. Do they use wikis, frequent blogs, interact on Facebook? Is there value to them in communicating with each other?
- 2) If you see the external need for a community, the next stage is to work on the business requirements. You know there is value to your users. Now what is the value to you? This could range from improving customer retention rate to generating more website traffic from search engines. Try and pick objectives you can measure.
- 3) Plan how the community should look. This can be as rough as a paper sketch or a detailed document. You should be clear on issues such as what kind of content there will be in the space and whether there will be public/private areas of the network.
- 4) Look around the different areas of the business and see if there are any other such needs. Although these can be factored in later, this can help future-proof the implementation of a social network.
- 5) Now, finally, you can start outlining the technical requirements. The table on the next page is intended as a starting point. For each community, you can grade each item on a level of importance. You can use this when assessing any of the many platforms available.

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The categories are based loosely on those developed by [Forrester Research](#).

	Importance (1-10)	Notes
Creators		
Single sign-on across all properties		Important if creators would participate in different communities
Profile access levels		Eg. Expert, staff with separate security access
Content access levels		Eg. Registration required for high-value content
WYSIWYG editor		
Direct HTML editing		
MS Word import		
Specify post categories		Ability to organize items around categories
Specify post tags		More open than categories, but also an organizational tool
Upload and insert images		
Upload documents		
Shared document space		Ability to add media to separate posts, eg. Using Flickr for images
Custom data fields		For specific customizations, eg. Link related posts
Post to multiple communities		Important if creators would participate in different communities
Critics		
Single sign-on across all properties		Important if users would participate in different communities
Comment on each item		Including moderation options
Edit existing content		Wiki functionality
Collectors		
Share content		Across Digg, Del.icio.us etc.
Tag content		Create folksonomies
Vote on content		
Follow activity of other users		Eg. Like Facebook activity feed, or Friendfeed service
Joiners		
Register profile		List basic information/picture
Tie individual profile to company		ie. membership levels or groupings
Add friends to profile		Show associations
Spectators		

RSS capabilities		For the community overall or specific sections
Search across all platform or just sections		Advanced searching capabilities
See which content is most popular		Navigational aid