

SMART TECHNOLOGY IN THE WORKPLACE

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Introduction

Advance technology in workplace has made the companies to extend their productivity and efficiency over the time with new communication and data management system. Higher efficiency in managing information and communication with different stakeholders higher has become very crucial for future growth of the firm. Advance technologies have removed the physical boundaries in workplace that and virtual workplace has doubled the efficiency that was few years back. New tools and techniques introduced in communication system have made it possible to expand the business swiftly and very cost effectively. The requirement for physical workplace area has been reduced through uses of advance technological tools like video conferencing, Cloud storage, social networking sites etc. Robust networking channels developed in recent era has boosted the workplace efficiency, created a strong tie among the different stakeholders and a channel for smooth flow of information throughout the organization.

Part-1: How the workplace employability and efficiency can be improved through appropriate uses of technology

The efficiency and workplace employability or employee engagement can be improved through the use of technologies. Technologies can be used at different level of the organization. Two of the smart technologies that are widely used in business organization are web conferencing and office applications online (in the cloud). Brief overview of these two technological tools along with their benefits is discussed below:

Web conferencing

Web conferencing is mainly an online service through which business organizations can arrange live meetings, conference, training program with different members of the organization without being physically present via internet connection. Particularly TCP/IP connections are main networking channel for we conferencing (Dijk and Deursen, 2014). Organizations usually conduct web conferencing through using a telephone or mobile speakers with VoIP connection. Web conferencing can be real time point to point communication mode or multitask communication where the information from single sender can be received by multiple users at different locations. Two online web conferencing service providers are ReadyTalk and Webex. Here the comparison between the two providers is presented:

ReadyTalk is an online web conferencing service provider whose main focus is in customer's reputation. It has developed the tool in such a way to make it reliable, intuitive and simple for the users. It allows the users to conduct meeting with confidence regardless of choice of devices, location and level of experience (Engdahl, 2012). The support team of ReadyTalk is very much responsive, helpful and always available for customer service. Key features of ReadyTalk are pre meeting tools, in meeting tools, and post meeting tools. The technologies used in ReadyTalk don't need the users to download any complicated software. The flash based player had made it easy for the users to enter into a conference quickly. The users who don't use flash can join the conference via Java. The operating systems in which this web conferencing tool is supported are Windows, Mac, Linux and web browsers needed for this tool are Firefox, Explorer and Safari etc. The subscription fee for this tool is USD 49 per month and USD 470 per year for up to 25 participants (Geekie, 2016). The main benefits of ReadyTalk are no complicated or sophisticated software download is required, works as sophisticated marketing tool, increase audience engagement and provides all in one service. As a marketing tool ReadyTalk helps to share contents in social networking sites, leverage the contents and provides toll for tracking and syndicating. Its enhanced polling and collaboration features have made audience more interactive, cooperative and productive.

WebEx is the market leader in web collaboration software market. It has more than 4.7 million registered hosts all around the globe and participants form more than 229 countries. WebEx is a simple web based conferencing application that allows the users to meet and arrange conference from anywhere, any time at any device. Regardless of the size of the organization WebEx provides the web conferencing services for arranging any kind of meeting such as sales meeting, General meeting and other corporate meetings. With super amazing collaborating features and technical support WebEx has provided the most effective solution for conferencing needs (Gilster, 2010). WebEx service is provided by Cisco and price varies according to the packages as it provides customized packages to companies according to their requirements. The major advantages of WebEx as a web conferencing tool are its simple functional features which have made it more users friendly. With a simple click on mouse users can join a conference or meeting. The user interface in the application allows the users to share presentation, edit and update spreadsheets. Sharing of information at remote places is also possible using this application.

Office Online Application (in the Cloud)

Office online application enables the users to work anytime anywhere on any device. These applications also provide the features of cloud storage and chatting. Two most popular office online applications are Office 365 and Dropbox. Both of the applications are discussed below:

Office 365 vs. Dropbox

Office 365 is online application by Microsoft. Microsoft is continuously adding new features to office 365 and enhancing the facilities in mobile collaborating. The main objective of mobile collaboration is that everyone should be able to communicate with each other effectively. The main feature is able to work on any device at any places at any time. It is like traditional Microsoft office words, excel or PowerPoint (Guo, Pathak and Cheng, 2015). Users can easily store and edit the past files on one drive and also share them with other co-editors. Secondly they can chat on one drive easily and share information and files at the same time. The main benefits provided by office 365 are users can edit files and view the edited files by other coeditors at any browsers at any point of time. Secondly users can easily share files which are always accessible online and off. For arranging a joint meeting these helps a lot as before meeting all materials could be sent to all participants without any hassle. Additionally the built in intelligence features help users in updating resume, preparing presentation slides, preparing budgets, as it simultaneously works like a pro for providing the service of designer and assistant.

Dropbox provides the similar service of as the office 365 provides. Dropbox is powered by outlook.com. With the help of dropbox one can work on files, share files, collaborate projects and individually or in a team (Harlow and Webb, 2014). The cloud storage service is the main attractive features of drop box. Without subscribing up 25 GB size files can be stored and with subscription unlimited file size can be stored in the cloud. Files stored can be easily edited and viewed from any devices. Changes made in one device automatically sync to other devices. The major distinctive feature of drop box is that files can be share with anyone even with persons who don't have drop box account.

How to use these applications in order to improve the workforce efficiency and employability

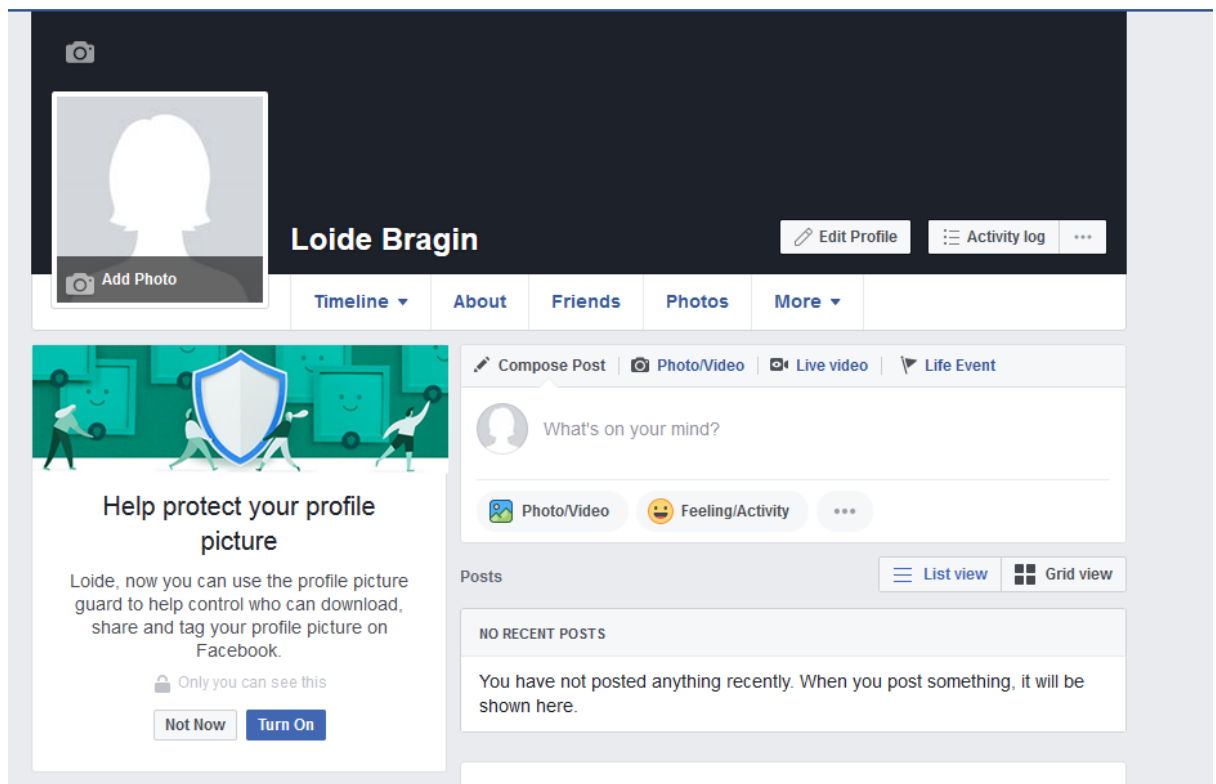
For improving the efficiency within the organization the strong communication and network channel should be in place. These applications for web conferencing and office online applications mainly work for facilitating the communication system in an organization. With web conferencing applications users can easily connect with each other from remote places and arrange meeting at anywhere any time without being physically present (Liu and Zhong, 2017). This help to reduce the time and cost for arranging a traditional meeting and uses of resources. This is how workplace efficiency is improved. On the other hand office online software also helps the users share file and store file on cloud storage so that they can be reached from any devices online. Users now don't need to mail any file or documents to each person separately rather everybody on the cloud network gets the file once it is uploaded in the cloud storage. This has also alleviated the time consuming process of mailing. These technologies can be used for increasing workforce employability. As these applications helps to increase the collaboration among the staffs, they become interconnected with each other. This helps to keep all the workers in the organization always updated about the events occurring within the organization (Toyama, 2017). This is how employee engagement and employability is ensured.

Part-2: How to ensure appropriate use and application of technologies in the workplace

Creating own professional accounts in the social networking sites

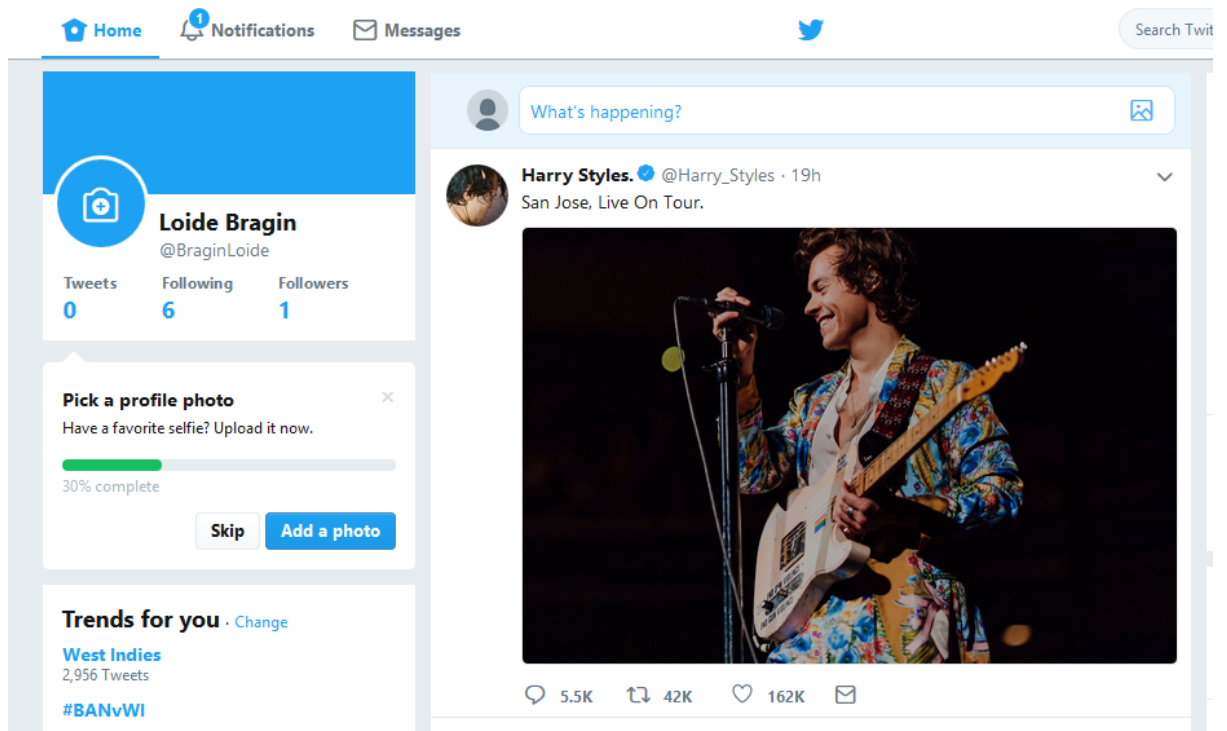
1. Facebook:

Weblink: <https://www.facebook.com/loide.bragin.5>



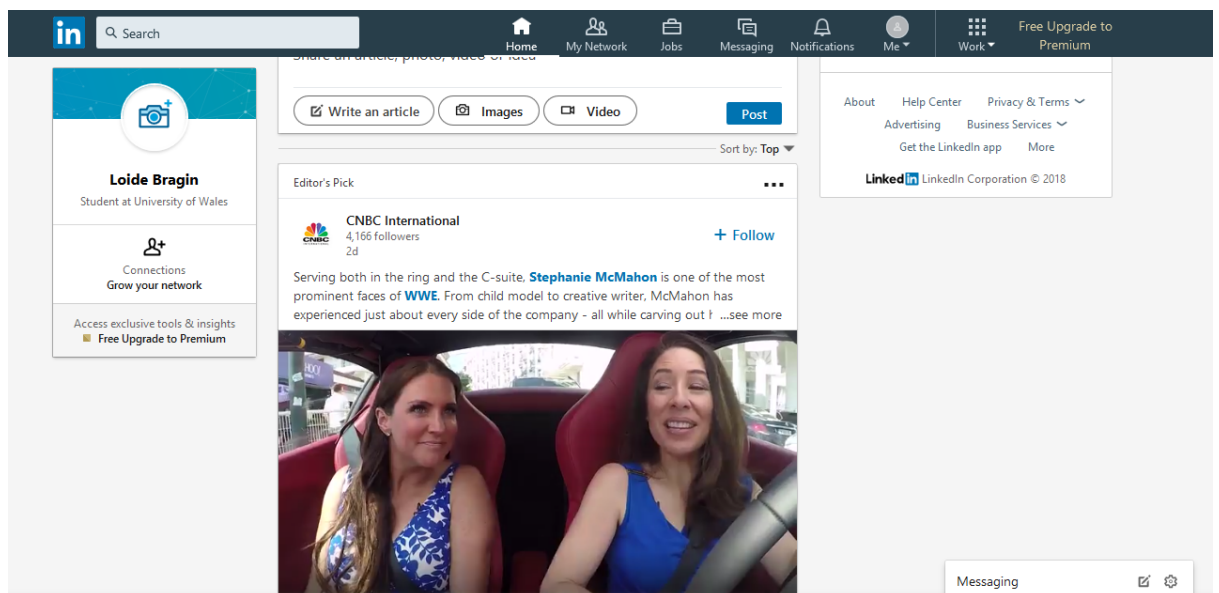
2. Twitter:

Weblink: <https://twitter.com/BraginLoide>



3. LinkedIn:

Weblink: <https://www.linkedin.com/in/loide-bragin-368834168/>



Possibilities that may be provided by the social networking sites for improving communication and collaboration in workplace

The advantages of using social networking sites in workplace are unlimited. The easiest and cheapest ways of communication are served by the social networking sites. They are the most popular ways of marketing and promotion of product and services. Organizations use these sites for recruitment purpose also. They seek of CV of potential candidates through online application form. Facebook and Twitter are mainly used by people for personal information sharing. LinkedIn is used by organizations and individual searching for job (Liu and Zhong, 2017). The disadvantages of these social networking sites is lost of privacy and illegal data mining by criminals and hackers who take advantages through misuse of these information. Privacy issue is more critical for public organization. Now every private and public organization has to maintain public pages in social networking sites and it makes them more vulnerable to violation of privacy right. Also different applications attached to social networking sites uses cookies which collect user's information and this information can be easily abused (Toyama, 2017).

Measured that can be undertaken to ensure the security of personal and professional information

For ensuring the safety and security of information users need to follow the proper privacy guidelines provided in the social networking sites. Users of Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn can change the privacy settings as per their needs for safeguarding the personal information shared in the networking sites (Qureshi, 2010). Users can simple go to the accounting setting option and can make necessary changes. The users also carefully share information within a circle of known people and don't give access the unknown application to their account information. Confidential official files and documents can be shared in secret group of the organization in order to ensure safety. Organization can also use firewall and antimalware applications to prevent any hackers from intruding and stealing information (Secure e-mail solution for small businesses, 2010). For organizational network sites strong authentication of users must be ensured so that no spam or virus can damage the system.

Conclusion

The recent development or advancement in information and communication technology is catalyst for drastic changes in how the business organizations operate and manage their business activities. Information management system has been improved over the time for better processing and storing of information. Sharing of information inside and outside the organization costs half that was in the past. Smooth communication system and timely share of required information has bring the workers in the organization closer, have made them more connected to each other. This has consequently increased the collaboration and cooperation among the staffs or employees. This is how new technologies in workplace has increases the workplace efficiency and employability

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