

## **Social Media in organizations: fostering creativity and communication – changing culture on their way**

As innovation seems more and more relevant for business success, companies of all branches are searching increasingly for new methods that unfold their innovative capabilities. One of them take the center stage of this contribution due to its assumed potential to foster creativity and communication: Social Media is believed to unleash creativity providing a platform not only for a new quality of direct and iterative communication with customers (Open Innovation) but for idea management and knowledge management inside the organization as well. These hopes of a technical induced boost of innovative culture are dashed often enough, the aspired new level of creativity and communication seldom fulfills the observed outcome. Nonetheless, more and more organizations are opting for this path, hopping on the bandwagon. The proposed contribution discusses why creativity and communication not only need appropriate methods but a new organization culture. Further, the process of implementing Social Media needs to define first, what all participants understand talking about creativity and communication. Developing a collective understanding of communication and creativity throughout an organization (re-)shapes the organization culture. The process of implementing a Social Media tool inside the firm is not only about implementing an IT tool. The process reveals the hidden conceptions of creativity and communication of the participating employees and managers, and therefore makes those debatable and changeable throughout the organization. If this happens, the implementation process leads to a collective new understanding, changing the organizational culture on the way – no matter if the Social Media tool is implemented successfully.

The paper shows what organizational actors implementing Social Media think about creativity and communication, how these concepts are entwined in each other, and how these understandings not only reflect the organizational culture but are deeply embedded in it. The contribution will discuss these conceptual considerations based on empirical findings of two qualitative indepth case studies conducted between 2009 and 2011: The first is that of a German manufacturing company, a SME of 1.500 employees, giving insight into the understanding and change of creativity and communication (and therefore culture) along the implementation process of a Social Media tool for idea and knowledge management in the R&D department. This inspection of a implementing organization is based on 17 qualitative interviews, interpreted by content analysis, and a discourse analysis (Keller) of three implementation workshops with 21 participants. These findings are framed and contrasted with 13 qualitative interviews conducted with German Social Media experts of globally active IT consulting firms asking for their experience in implementing web based idea management systems in organizations. This material reveals the implementors' view of communication and creativity and how they experience and also shape the culture of organizations they bring their Social Media tools to.

The empirical material, contrasting Social Media implementees' and implementors' understandings of communication and creativity and their related experiences with changing culture have not been published or presented before. The contribution provides a qualitative foundation for re-thinking the concepts of creativity, communication, and culture in organizations 2.0 and discusses theoretical consequences of the presented findings.