Implementing a model of Enterprise 2.0 in companies of different sizes

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The Enterprise 2.0 model is slowly spreading in all types of companies: small, medium and large. This is an emerging model that involves the customer in improving the product/service to acquire competitive advantages. In this paper we consider 3 case studies of different sizes of companies that have implemented the model 2.0 and from a comparison among themselves we annotate the differences.

Keywords – web 2.0 tools, enterprise 2.0, interactive websites, business community, customer opinions.

I. Introduction
McAfee [1], in 2006, gave the first definition of Enterprise 2.0: “Enterprise 2.0 is the use of social software platforms within the company or between companies and their partners or customers”. The affirmation was revolutionary because before social media (MySpace, Facebook, ...) was used only in the private life and not for business goals. McAfee wants to bring social networks and web 2.0 tools [2] (blogs, chats, forums, wikis) inside the companies. In this way the enterprise interacts with all stakeholders and in particular with customers to improve products/services [3][4] and thus can acquire competitive advantages. To stimulate the active participation of customers, enterprise websites present interactive elements of web 2.0 useful for a bi-directional communication.

Nowadays, it is very important to have business pages on Facebook: Social networks, in the companies, introduce innovation, a new way of working and impose a radical change in the organizational structure. Managing a blog, forum, facebook, business community are commitments that require time and investment.

The paper presents the following structure: in the next section we describe the research methodology. The third section focuses on the case studies. In the fourth section we show the results of our research. Finally some discussions and conclusions are drawn.

II. Research methodology
For our research, we take in consideration 3 case studies: small, medium and large enterprise. We selected 3 companies that have implemented, also partially, an Enterprise 2.0 model that we named DIVS (small), PASTS (medium) and AUTS (large).
In our research we are interested to web 2.0 tools (e.g. chat, forum, blog, facebook pages, videos on youtube) integrated inside website and not independent and separated. In particular we monitored the following features present in websites: language, access in the interactive section/page, web 2.0 interactive channel, level of integration in the web community, type of customer impact in the product cycle, procedure to process customer opinions/suggestions. Regarding the last feature we based on information gathered on websites and/or other sources.

III. Case studies

In this section we consider three case studies that we have named DIVS (small), PASTS (medium), AUTS (large).

DIVS

The company produces sofas and chairs by hand and tailored to customer request. The manufacturing is traditional and hand-crafted. The project of the website restyling with interactive elements, funded by a regional law, started from the need to experiment new marketing channels. The goal of the web project is to improve brand visibility, increase the perceived quality and, overall, a better customer satisfaction. In this way the company developed expertises in Internet marketing and distribution, with a significant impact on administration, logistics, sales and purchases.

PASTS

The company produces pasta to bronze drawn and slowly dried. To obtain a good product it continues to improve production technologies and to choose the best varieties of the hard wheat. In recent years the company has invested in advanced technology preserving always the tradition. The company always tries to hand down, preserve and consolidate traditional production principles: quality grains, fresh semolina from the own mill and slow drying at low temperature. Currently the enterprise has built new factories and exports in over the world.

AUTS

The business mission of the company is focused on the automotive industry. The industrial group, which has global dimensions, designs, builds and sells cars with different brands. Thanks to agreements and international alliances, the enterprise plays, in the market, a role as global player. The large company use software of text/opinion mining. The medium company has few persons (one/two employees) to follow the business community and the collaborative project. It use cheaper tools for brand reputation and sentiment analysis [6] that monitor the polarity of opinion (positivity or negativity) while the large company use software of text/opinion mining. In all case studies, the model of Enterprise 2.0 allowed to the companies to acquire competitive advantages and increase the customer satisfaction.

IV. Research results

We have carefully examined websites of the three companies and analyzed the features of interest. Results are summarized in Table.

V. Discussion and conclusions

Medium-large companies, generally, have proprietary applications to process information coming from external market and have the professional figure of the community manager [4] to manage online business community. This figures stimulate online discussions on specific topics and monitor the degree of customer satisfaction. The community manager can attract new customers and retain old ones. Small companies can not afford an employee who executes only this function, but they can take in consideration the support of an external web agency (that manages corporate websites) or an internal employee who works in the commercial/marketing/sales office and who spends the time in other internal activities (recommended).

Results of websites analysis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Features</th>
<th>DIVS</th>
<th>PASTS</th>
<th>AUTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Websites languages</td>
<td>Italian, English</td>
<td>Italian, English, French, German, Japanese, Spanish</td>
<td>Many languages of different countries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Easy access in the interactive section/page</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Web 2.0 interactive channel</td>
<td>Facebook, Twitter, Fliker, Youtube, Blogspot</td>
<td>Social community where posts are shareable with Facebook, Twitter, MySpace, Odnoklassniki</td>
<td>Many web communities, for topics, delicio.us, digg, Facebook, Fliker, Friendfeed, LinkedIn, Reddit, Twitter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level of integration in the web communication</td>
<td>Single</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Procedures to process customer opinions/suggestions</td>
<td>Manually</td>
<td>Monitoring by web tools</td>
<td>Software of opinion mining and tools of sentiment analysis</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The large company of the case study to launch a project of customers participation has created a team of 30 people dedicated exclusively to monitor and process external customer opinions [5]. Moreover in a specific section of the website, the company allows to customers to graphically equip a car according to their wishes.

In all case studies, the model of Enterprise 2.0 allowed to the companies to acquire competitive advantages and increase the customer satisfaction.

References