VIRTUAL COMMUNITIES IN AN ENTERPRISE PORTAL AND THE EFFECT ON CORPORATE GOVERNANCE FOR GENERATION Y

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Abstract

With Generation Y entering the workforce, virtual communities may prove to be a worthwhile investment for enterprises because Generation Y uses similar tools. The objective of this research study is to identify if virtual communities in a corporate environment increase corporate governance in Generation Y.

This research was carried out in a St. Louis based fortune 500 multinational enterprise. A prototype virtual community was implemented with collaboration and social features including team rooms, community calendars, user profiles and micro blogging.

The analysis of the surveys and server usage supports that users felt the system helps with corporate governance. However in some aspects views of how much the system helped declined. These results illuminated barriers to successful implementation of a virtual community including change management, inclusion of relevant business content, amount of content, amount of users, type of users and culture of the company.

Reflections on the Learning Experience

Research in the field of Management and Information Science is carried out by first analyzing the current research being done in the field. A research topic must be chosen that is based on current or future technology due to the quickness that information technology evolves. The research topic must also be unique and contribute knowledge to the field. A literature review is done to describe current research findings and the background of the research. The literature must also reinforce the need for the research project. Next, research questions must be defined along with the methodology of how you will test the research questions. Finally, the experiment is carried out and research questions can be answered along with future directions.

The literature review is very text intensive and must require many citations to ensure the research is genuine. I have become well acquainted with journals in the library databases like ABI/Inform and ACM. These journals give me reputable sources to cite, but some of the information is not up to date enough. To solve this problem I went to industry publication services like CIO Magazine and Gartner.

Once the literature and background information is found, the experimental design of the experiment to test your research questions must take place. In my project I had to implement a software system that explicitly tests my research questions. This was carried out by using questionnaires. I also learned that many participants are not comfortable with supporting experimental concepts. To be able to sell participants on my idea I had to take on a sales person mentality to ensure my projects success.

Once my prototype was implemented and data results gathered, I then had to interpret them. I had limited statistical knowledge and worked closely with my research professor to help me with the results. The professor taught me statistical relevancy, different statistical methods and how to tell a story with my results that would help me answer my research questions sufficiently.