

OUTSTART

CASE STUDY:

OutStart Participate Social Business Software



Defense Contractor Needs to Capture and Surface Institutional Knowledge

THE CHALLENGE

A global defense contractor had two primary human capital challenges:

- A workforce was beginning to retire and leave the organization, taking their considerable experience and insight with them.
- A geographically distributed workforce resulted in people working in silos, unable to leverage their collective intelligence across the enterprise.

Several of the departments within the organizations had been unsuccessfully attempting to promote collaboration by leveraging content management platforms to store files. After an extensive evaluation process, the company chose to pilot OutStart's Participate due to its comprehensive social business software features and the ability to integrate with MS Office to meet several key objectives:

- Capture employees' insights, ideas, and experiences and deploy them across the enterprise.
- Break down organizational and geographical barriers to enable collaboration and participation across all departments.
- Enable employees to have confidential collaborations and conversations, when necessary.
- Provide a new online knowledge and expertise repository as a training resource for new hires.
- Strict security and permission requirements.

THE SOLUTION

Working closely with OutStart's Professional Services group, the company was able to implement a comprehensive solution that met their rigorous security standards, yet which fostered open and intuitive collaboration.

The social business software features currently in use include:

Expert Networking

The Expertise Profiling Engine capability is used to enable collaboration between individuals and matching subject matter experts. The workflow feature pushes questions to a pool of subject matter experts via email, and the resulting collaborative conversations are then captured and made available to others who would benefit from the same information.

Conversation Starters

Ideas used for seeding the platform with product and sales enablement questions and answers that the experts feel are the most important for the users, and that they spend the most time answering.

Expert Directory

Allows users to quickly locate qualified subject matter experts by expertise category or profile.

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Social Business Networking

Enables users to find individuals (thought leaders, managers or team members, or any employee within the community) by areas of interest, expertise, or profile.

Private Collaboration

Defines the configuration and workflow controls to assure confidentiality of the information, when necessary, through security permissions.

Dynamically Saved And Reusable Content

All information seeker/subject matter expert interactions are automatically saved by the system to be shared, reused, and surfaced through future user inquiries.

In support of this solution, OutStart's Professional Services group provided the following rollout and outreach services:

- **Site Branding:** Assisted the customer in branding the site to convey collaboration benefits of the solution.
- **Outreach Plan:** Created outreach messaging (weekly HTML newsletters, messages from project sponsor) that consistently portrayed Participate as a secure, stable, and dynamic enterprise solution in order to encourage collaboration and adoption.
- **Member Contests:** As part of its outreach plan, OutStart worked with the customer to launch weekly contests that targeted key desired activities, such as responding to questions on the site and rating content.

- **Stakeholder Sessions:** Led early review session of the platform with the organization's stakeholders to fine tune functionality and messaging, as well as to assist with pre-launch testing.
- **Online Demos:** Hosted online user training sessions to convey the business sponsor's expectations of the pilot, and to provide more in-depth demonstrations of the system while addressing user questions. These sessions were also recorded for later reuse and posted directly on the platform.
- **Post-Pilot Evaluation:** Worked with the customer to create a post-pilot business case and survey for evaluating the success of the pilot against business objectives.

THE RESULTS

Using both quantitative site participation reports and qualitative user satisfaction surveys, the customer evaluated pilot performance in the areas of adoption, efficacy, and efficiency. In addition to strong participation from the pilot group of users, the customer was encouraged by feedback received from users on the valuable insights they gained from their coworkers during the pilot, the convenience of using the system, and the ease of networking with peers. For example, two-thirds of survey respondents reported that after two weeks, they saw a decrease in the number of incoming information requests because the responses

were already in the system, and rated the system interface for logging and submitting content as "easy" or "very easy". In addition, approximately half of all respondents said that based on their experience with the pilot, they expected to save time by not having to ask for and answer redundant information requests if the system was expanded throughout the enterprise.

Based on the success of this pilot and indicators that the system could be easily adopted by the organization, the defense contractor decided to move Participate into production for enterprise-wide deployment.



ABOUT OUTSTART

At OutStart, we're out to solve a big problem.

Most organizations possess a wealth of underutilized collective intelligence around their products, services, and processes. This underutilization negatively impacts employees, customers, and partners, costing precious time and money while hindering performance. Said simply, "what you people don't know will hurt you."

OutStart's social business software and learning systems act like a lifeline: connecting people to the know-how, creativity, and learning they require to be efficient, effective, and agile.

Since its inception in 1999, and backed by leading venture capital firms, OutStart has matured into a profitable and rapidly growing company with an impressive range of customers, who are surpassing their expectations and delivering exceptional business results. The company is honored to have customers like Autodesk, BB&T, Boeing Company, BT, CVS Caremark, DIRECTV, EDS, Internal Revenue Service, Lufthansa, McDonald's, MetLife, Prudential, TiVo, Australian Defence Force, U.S. Navy, UK Ministry of Defence, Verizon Wireless, and Yum! Brands.

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