

technology viewpoints

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This issue of CGI's *Technology Viewpoints* takes a look at the Web 2.0 topic from four key viewpoints:

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To learn more about CGI's Web 2.0 offerings, please visit our Web 2.0 page on www.cgi.com or contact us at info@cgi.com.

Web 2.0 is *the* hot topic. It's on the agendas of almost every major tradeshow and covered throughout the media. This issue of CGI's *Technology Viewpoints* delves into CGI's perspective of what Web 2.0 is and discusses the benefits it brings to organizations—both inside and outside of the enterprise.

The current outlook

Web 2.0 is not text-book

The industry at-large can't agree on a definition of Web 2.0 – but a common definition isn't necessary. What can be said is that Web 2.0 is a noticeable evolution of the first generation Web. What does this mean? It means Web 2.0 is about self-determination. Just think of MySpace...broadband everywhere...Wi-Fi...rich Internet applications...mashups.... It's the user as the publisher.

So, just as Web 2.0 doesn't have a common, text-book definition, Web 2.0 has changed the text-book format to an interactive medium that includes groupware, social networks and more.

Web 2.0, in this sense, is about individual empowerment – and it's just getting started.

Enterprise 2.0 empowerment

For businesses and governments, this empowerment translates into new forms of collaboration within and outside of their organizations. It also "flattens" the organization – communities are created and united despite physical boundaries: global is made local.

The buzzword "enterprise 2.0" is the effect and adoption of Web 2.0 techniques, approaches and technologies inside and outside the enterprise. Driving this trend are end-user expectations for new forms of employee and customer interactions. Rich Internet applications allow organizations to support their stakeholders in a more dynamic way.

Organizations are at different stages of the Web 2.0 adoption curve, but all are looking to answer common questions: How do we move forward? What do we move forward with? And how do we measure success?

The benefits

Use collaboration to fuel productivity

Web 2.0 provides the foundation for improving the organization's collective intelligence. It's as basic as improving how people work with people.

("The benefits" cont.)

There's a social emphasis to systems now. Whereas before internal computer systems acted as database entry tools, Web 2.0 takes advantage of applications that support dynamic workflows.

Build stronger relationships

Taking the concept of improved workflows outside of the organization, Web 2.0 allows companies and governments to have conversations with their customers.

There's some fear from organizations that there's a loss of control with Web 2.0. Yet, while the reality is that brand control has changed, knowing customers' praises and complaints allows organizations to create a better response.

Information on what customers are saying and what they want allows organizations to have a better view of their market and to become more agile in delivering services that build customer preference and profitability.

Follow your customers

Web 2.0 also allows organizations to enhance the way they find and interact with their customers. Take Facebook, for instance. It's a matter of communicating and interacting with customers where they are rather than waiting for them to come to you.

Security strategies

Keeping up with new channels

With the number of different social networking platforms appearing, privacy and security continuously has to be taken into account and looked at from different perspectives.

Take mashups, for example. Strategies need to be in place to deal with the adoption of services from outside of the enterprise into internal applications, or the exposing of internal services through the Web to customer-facing applications.

This is reminiscent of conversations from a few years ago about instant messaging and how it's supported as a communications mechanism – as is done with voice, fax and e-mail – outside of the enterprise. It's another platform and the same principles apply; these new, evolving communications also need to have the necessary legal regulations in place.

Identity comes into play

There's a level of trust that one can have with applications inside the enterprise. But when applications go outside, a heightened level of security needs to be taken into account. This is where identity and access management become key – particularly in this new world where Web 2.0 meets SOA.

Bottom line: Identity needs to go beyond enterprise boundaries.

WEB 2.0 WITHIN CGI

To connect members of CGI's communities, CGI created "Focus Connections," web-based libraries with a broadcast and publishing engine. We adopted RSS, both in-bound and out-bound, allowing us to push out strategic intelligence in the form of vetted, weekly e-mail broadcasts. We also incorporated broadcast e-mail capabilities to quickly answer questions from the user community, and have e-mail-based forums, similar to newsgroups, that provide an easily accessible repository of all dialogues.

CGI's Focus Connections use blogs, wikis, Microsoft SharePoint, a Google search appliance, and a version of SourceForge, an open source tool. CGI uses two server-based environments – one Linux- and one Windows-based.

While incorporating and linking all of these technologies may sound complicated, once CGI pulled them together and placed the "front pages" on the infrastructure, it became a simple and familiar way to access information and people within CGI – and, more importantly, provided a cost-effective tool to increase our collective knowledge to best help clients.

Helping clients

Types of services

CGI helps clients adopt Web 2.0 strategies and solutions within their enterprises. Through our planning services, we help organizations adopt a Web 2.0 strategy by building a vision for how Web 2.0 will best serve their enterprises. We then plan the strategy's resulting techniques, from determining what technologies should be used to pulling together change management plans.

Clients also count on CGI to help them implement this vision through an incremental, pilot project approach that tests and evolves the adoption of Web 2.0.

How one client is adopting Web 2.0

CGI is working with a large organization that is a leader within their industry. They want to improve their industry's knowledge and provide tools to help move their industry ahead. Through a knowledge-based approach, CGI is helping them create a wiki-type model to bridge their internal knowledge to the external market.

In this way, the client is leveraging Web 2.0 to create a social networking platform for their industry. As a result, they hope to advance their marketplace and be a good corporate citizen – while demonstrating their market leading position.

By leveraging Web 2.0 to support their interactions with the marketplace, the CGI client also hopes to achieve closer relationships with their customers.

ABOUT CGI

At CGI, we're in the business of satisfying clients. For more than 30 years, we've operated upon the principles of sharing in clients' challenges and delivering quality services to address them.

A leading IT and business process services provider, CGI has approximately 26,500 professionals operating in 100+ offices worldwide, giving us close proximity to our clients. Through these offices, we offer local partnerships and a balanced blend of global delivery options to ensure clients receive the combination of value and expertise they require.

In the area of technology adoption, CGI helps organizations achieve the promises of SOA, Web 2.0 and more through a practical approach to transformation. We define success by exceeding clients' expectations and helping clients achieve superior performance.