Social business for defense
Defense and intelligence organizations are in the process of transforming themselves to address unpredictable and asymmetric threats. At the same time, coalition operations are the norm, they are dealing with tough budgetary constraints, and they are trying to work together to solve problems that span organizational silos. Social media offers a way to combat these challenges. By analyzing social media activities, defense and intelligence agencies can monitor and respond to unfolding external events. This is a valuable supplement to more traditional sources of open-source intelligence (OSINT). By harnessing the power of collaboration in social media technologies, they can become more efficient in mission-oriented problem-solving.

IBM defines social business as the use of social media technologies for corporate benefit. Embracing social business should be part of the transformation. In this paper, these topics are explored:

- Why defense and intelligence organizations need to change?
- What social business can offer them?
- How to get started?

Why change?
Defense and intelligence organizations are facing an unprecedented set of challenges as shown in Figure 1.

**Figure 1:** Defense challenges.
Defense organizations share many of these pressures, so they can learn much from the social business initiatives that are helping other government agencies transform.

**What can social business offer?**

Social media technologies offer defense and intelligence agencies the opportunity to transform their external interactions and optimize their internal operations as follows (Figure 3):

- **External.** Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and others can promote a positive image of defense and intelligence organizations to citizens and communities. Agencies can also monitor and analyze social media interactions of individuals and groups or of specific events as a supplementary source of OSINT.

- **Internal.** The powerful, integrated capabilities of electronic collaboration platforms improve internal efficiency, enabling groups to cross organizational boundaries to solve problems or engage in specific missions.

![Figure 3: Social media for the military.](image)

Against a backdrop of budget cuts, they face unpredictable, technologically savvy adversaries and asymmetric threats while having to cope with a wide variety of mission types that range from offensive operations to natural disaster recovery.

Coalition operations are now the norm. Teaming with military counterparts from other countries and a vast array of other government departments and non-government organizations adds considerable complexity to defense agency operations.

Other government agencies are embracing social media technologies (Figure 2) as a way to help them be:

- **Connected** with citizens, leaders and partners so they can correctly position their policies and services.
- **Open** so they can embrace the drive toward transparent government.
- **Responsive** so they can use information and insight to anticipate and address evolving situations or opportunities.
- **Secure** with appropriate controls and protection in place so they can prevent leakage or contamination of sensitive information.

![Figure 2: Government response.](image)
Transforming external interactions
Transforming external interactions has two major components: gathering intelligence and promoting positive defense.

Gathering intelligence
By 2015, the spectrum of social media data will represent about 30 percent of the data available to government organizations. Social media is made up of a vast array of data types, as represented in the Conversation Prism, a depiction of a whole view of the social media universe, categorized and also organized by how people use each network. Government adversaries are increasingly relying on social media to coordinate operations (Figure 4).

Future intelligence solutions must be able to process this information and combine it with more traditional sources of information in a timely fashion. If done correctly, this will increase the quality of the intelligence product. Currently, some civil and military intelligence organizations are already embracing social media to supplement their OSINT collection. For example, after the earthquake in Haiti in 2010, the United Nations and other organizations gathered reports from social media and other sources and sent the data to the US Southern Command, which combined these reports with more traditional intelligence to help target relief efforts.

Positive defense
Social media can be an effective way to get information to a broad range of citizens and partners. Figure 5 shows NATO’s Facebook page, which had more than 85,000 “likes” at the time the page was visited.
A Facebook page and other social media outlets can provide citizens and partners with important information and agency interaction, which promotes positive citizen sentiment and can help organizations recruit.

**Optimizing internal operations**
Social business can help defense and intelligence organizations use their knowledge to their best advantage and facilitate more efficient work.

**Using knowledge**
Like many government organizations, defense and intelligence agencies tend to work in silos. Use of a social software platform such as IBM® Connections supports cross-silo working, resulting in a much more productive organization.

Figure 6 shows the profile feature in IBM Connections, which can be used to find the people and skills needed for a task or project, regardless of their department.

In addition, with profiles, users can grow and maintain their network of coworkers and post a short status message informing the network of what they are doing. Features are also available for sharing expertise, ideas, content and new innovations with members of a network and beyond.

**Efficient work**
Defense organizations are constantly being challenged to save costs; therefore, they must strive relentlessly for efficient work. Social software platforms such as IBM Connections include features that help an organization work more efficiently.

The Communities feature in IBM Connections (Figure 7) is one such example. People with a common interest can set up public, private and moderated communities to exchange and share information and ideas.

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Figure 6: Locating experts with profiles.

Figure 7: Using communities for efficient, cross-departmental work.
Users can share files, watch videos (in the media gallery), vote on ideas, plan projects and manage them. Wikis, blogs and forums serve as places for sharing ideas and opinions. A calendar provides a central place to plan and coordinate team events.

**How?**

You can turn to IBM for help in transforming your agency into a social business. IBM offers an integrated set of consultancy and enablement services (Figure 8) that can develop and deliver a social business in a structured way.

These services are supplemented by a comprehensive suite of commercially available software, including:

- **Big data solutions** from IBM. Manage massive amounts of data in different formats, in different places, at rest or in motion.
- **Smarter Analytics.** Recognize subtle patterns and trends in your data that can help you anticipate and shape events and improve outcomes.
- **IBM Cognos® Consumer Insight.** Monitor and analyze sentiment expressed in social media.
- **IBM Connections.** Power your organizational transformation with a powerful, cross-platform collaboration suite with integrated capabilities (Figure 9).

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**Figure 8:** IBM services for social business.

**Figure 9:** The integrated capabilities of IBM Connections.
What can social media do for you?
Social media technologies can help defense and intelligence agencies transform their business to cope with today’s mission needs and budgetary constraints. Social media technologies can drive mission benefit by addressing the change drivers for a military organization as follows.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Driver</th>
<th>How social media can help</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Coalition operations are the norm</td>
<td>• Find and connect with experts in other member groups.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Use built-in transparency and accountability to demonstrate value of coalitions.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Budgetary pressures</td>
<td>• Use a collaborative virtual environment to improve efficiency.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Use virtual training to develop critical skills throughout all departments.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Even more complex missions</td>
<td>• Tap into mission expertise and lessons learned from anyone in the organization, regardless of their department.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Use blogs and wikis to address challenges and solve problems.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Continued need for security</td>
<td>• Use a secure, hosted electronic collaboration platform to handle sensitive information.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Use access control and logging.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expanding technology impact</td>
<td>• Use internal “crowd sourcing,” blogs and other means to promote innovative use of technology.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Provide education and information about the value that new technology can add to missions.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Unknown, asymmetric threats</td>
<td>• Monitor social media usage of adversaries and known threats.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Use secure blogs to collaborate with other parts of the organization that are monitoring threats.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Conclusion: Getting started
For organizations interested in using social media technologies to drive mission benefits, here are three practical suggestions:

1. Become an active (personal) user of a few social media sites to understand what they offer to you as a customer.
2. Get a small team in your organization (ideally one that crosses divisions) to use IBM Greenhouse (at no charge) to explore how electronic collaboration can help them solve a mission problem.
3. Sponsor a proof of concept to explore the value from capturing and analyzing social media data to supplement OSINT.

For more information
To learn more about this offering or to continue the discussion, contact John Palfreyman at 2dsegma@uk.ibm.com or visit ibm.com/gbs/contact.