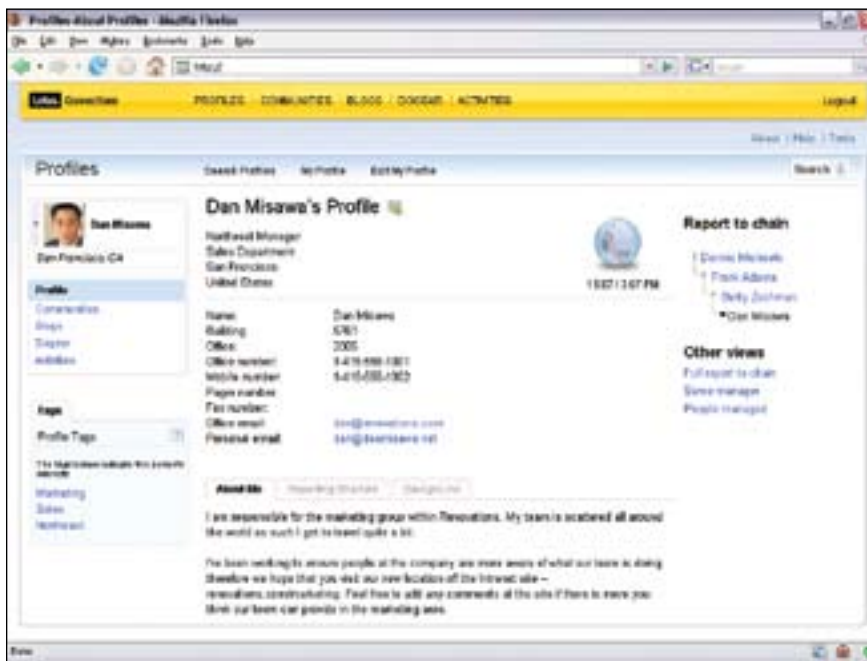**Lotus**® software

IBM Lotus Connections

Highlights

■ *Empowers people and teams to create dynamic networks to work together, more effectively*

■ *Helps remove the barriers between people and information*

■ *Helps drive innovation so you can grow revenue*

■ *Delivers powerful social software capabilities in an integrated platform, from a single source*

To create a sustainable competitive advantage in the face of relentless change and intense competition, leading companies are focusing on innovation. The reason is simple: innovative companies typically grow more quickly than their competitors.* The challenge is to harness and act on the best ideas from employees, partners and even customers.

IBM Lotus® Connections social software is designed specifically for business. The software includes five parts: profiles, communities, Web logs (blogs), Dogear (social bookmarks) and activities. Lotus Connections can help drive productivity and innovation by providing a forum for building dynamic networks of coworkers, partners and customers to foster community-based innovation. Best of all, Lotus Connections works with your existing e-mail, instant messaging and portal software.

Profiles in Lotus Connections software provide a springboard from which users can explore a wealth of information relevant to a particular job- or project-related focus area.

Social software makes business sense by accelerating social capital creation

Point-to-point communication and collaboration solutions, such as e-mail and instant messaging, can only play a limited role in supporting the free flow of ideas. These solutions streamline communication between people you know, but they don't provide a way to learn about new people based on similar interests and roles.

Most businesses lack tools to help them capture the valuable information, contacts and professional knowledge of the large numbers of workers who are approaching retirement in many countries. Information that took years to accumulate will simply vanish when these employees leave—unless you take action to capture it soon.

At the same time, new entrants to the workforce are often already comfortable with and adept at using social software, because they've grown up with it. Knowing that social networking capabilities can help them quickly find the information and contacts they need, new hires will increasingly expect access to social networking tools.

Lotus Connections can help you overcome these challenges. It enables you to capture individual's unique institutional knowledge that's currently only stored in their heads. People can use Lotus Connections to easily locate expertise, share information and expand their professional networks—to accomplish more in less time. Consider the "pivot browsing" capability in Lotus Connections, for example. A user can search the organization's profiles for someone with a particular expertise or skill set. When she finds someone she thinks could help her, it's easy for her to then "pivot" to see his blog entries, the communities he belongs to, his bookmarks and so on. Pivoting is possible because everything in Lotus Connections is "tagged" to facilitate these important connections between information and people.

Key components are provided in an integrated, scalable package

Lotus Connections runs on major operating systems, including the Linux® and Microsoft® Windows® platforms, and has five parts, which are outlined below. People can easily access Lotus Connections via their Web browser and—with the help of service-oriented architecture (SOA)

or Web 2.0 interfaces—they can access it through applications such as IBM Lotus Notes®, IBM Lotus Sametime®, IBM WebSphere® Portal and Microsoft Office software.

Profiles

People burn through countless hours every year searching for information and help. Imagine how much productivity would increase if they could easily discover the right people at the right time. Lotus Connections profiles enables people to find those with particular interests or expertise by searching keywords (tags) related topics such as expertise, skills, current projects and responsibilities. Profiles reduce geographic and structural barriers, enabling employees to develop and maintain personal relationships with others across the organization. Profiles can also include a person's photo, reporting structure, an audio recording of their name's pronunciation, work time zone, interests and more.

Communities

Making it easier for people to find each other is only the first step to driving innovation and productivity. Making it easier for people to work together is just as important. Through

communities, Lotus Connections users can create, find, join and work with people who share a common interest, responsibility or area of expertise. Using a community blog, IBM Lotus Sametime software and e-mail, people can interact with one another and share ideas and information. Moreover, through other Lotus Connections capabilities, including Dogear and activities, the community can share useful bookmarks and manage shared activities.

Blogs

In many organizations, it's been difficult for individuals to develop their voice and express ideas and opinions to people outside of their immediate work groups or the company. Blogs provide a way for people to present their ideas and receive feedback from others. And users across the network can easily find the blogs and learn from these experts without interrupting the experts or clogging up e-mail in-boxes. Lotus Connections blogs give you full control over who can access, create and edit specific blogs. For example, you can limit access to certain users inside your firewall, or you could open up access to partners, customers or the general public.

Dogear

Even with today's sophisticated search engines, it can be difficult for people to find the Web sites and the other resources they need to do their jobs effectively. With Dogear, people can save, organize and share bookmarks, and discover bookmarks that have been qualified by others with similar interests and activities. (Users also have the option to keep bookmarks private.)

Activities

Lotus Connections goes beyond simply helping people establish connections and share information. Through the activities component, it also provides capabilities that facilitate the faster completion of tasks. People can organize their work, plan next steps and easily tap their expanding professional network to help execute projects more quickly. For example, it enables people to track work with dashboards and manage, share and track to-dos for a project.

Optimize security, costs and control over your social software environment
Lotus Connections also makes good business sense from security, financial and maintenance perspectives. Because IBM offers a complete and

integrated solution with all of the components you need, you can deploy it on your infrastructure, behind your firewall. Because you control the solution, you can take appropriate steps to ensure that sensitive information is not compromised and is protected. Moreover, your IT team can centrally manage all of the components, simplifying administration and helping to minimize distractions and extra work.

Lotus Connections is based on Web 2.0 technology, which facilitates another key advantage of the solution: the ease with which you can extend, embed or "mash up" the core components. Standard technologies in Lotus Connections, such as XML, HTML and Java™—combined with the simplicity of representational state transfer (REST)-style application programming interfaces (APIs) and atom feeds—enable this flexibility.

Why IBM?

For more than 20 years, IBM has worked closely with organizations of all sizes to understand their needs and develop leading-edge and cost-effective solutions to address them. Lotus Connections—which IBM has used successfully in-house since 2005—continues IBM's leadership in extending the business advantages of online collaboration. If you're ready to open up a new world of innovation possibilities by tapping employee, partner and customer knowledge and insights—contact IBM today.

For more information

To learn more about IBM Lotus Connections and the value it can bring to your business, contact your IBM sales representative or visit:

ibm.com/lotus/connections

IBM®

* IBM Institute for Business Value CEO Study 2006.