Why social reporting is vital for your face-to-face event

You are planning the next face-to-face (F2F) event of your network and you would like to know how social reporting[1] can add value. This paper argues for the use of social reporting during F2F events:

[1] Social reporting provides space for network members to create trust and a common identity online.

[2] The created online space can then be used to share tacit knowledge beyond the event.

[3] Reporting is a first step for participants to digest and appropriate new knowledge.

[4] To upscale the event's impact, knowledge is shared online with the wider community.

[5] Its multimedia aspect lets you collect knowledge in all its form in one online space.

Social reporting

Experience from face-to-face meetings show: Social reporting boosts learning and sharing. Writing blog post, capturing short video statements from participants or jointly discussing guiding questions in front of the reporting wall supports participants in their individual learning process. Transfer of learning needs a plan and structure. Social reporting facilitates the reflection process.

Social reporting takes advantage of social media (Facebook, Twitter, blogs, Youtube) to report collectively and live from events. Social media allows to share and comment information/insights/knowledge in real time through text, photos, videos, power point presentations, etc.

Pressure cooker?? See page 2, point 2!

Social reporting doesn't just happen online. Offline tools and activities, such as a reporting wall or graphical recording processes, support individual and collective reflection on the workshop content and feed into the social reporting and harvesting process

Characteristics of social media

With the introduction of personal computers and the Internet, access to and the use of new media became widely available: photo, video, podcasts, Internet based news, etc. Today anybody can receive and emit information.

Social media is interactive new media. Audience can contribute, comment or share the information with others. More concretely, social media can be categorized into five features:

User-generated content: Users are not anymore just simple readers but contribute to content creation. E.g. blogs, wiki, Twitter, Evernote, feedly, etc.

Peer to peer communication: Earlier users connected to the desired content (for example a book or a newspaper). With the Internet users are connected to users. E.g. Facebook, Twitter, etc.

Networking: Building a community of users is another characteristic of social media. Likeminded people meet in online spaces to interact. E.g. Linkedin, Facebook, twitter, and forums.

Multimedia oriented: social media lets users to store and share multiple content -text, video, photo, audio/music, and other formats- in an interactive way. New communication forms become possible.

User friendly: Social media is easily accessible and easy to use. Though debatable, social media developers pay great attention to design simple, attractive, and enjoyable tools.

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[1] Social reporting is when workshop participants share and discuss their learning experience (reflections, summaries, opinions, ideas) on social media, using text, photo, video and other new media.

Why use social reporting

Social reporting bears the characteristics of social media that -if used correctly- provides additional value to knowledge sharing:

Build identity and weave social networks [1]

Who is your network? For a network to be more than just a platform to ask questions, it needs a face. Ideally, the members themselves weave a rich social fabric and define the network's identity. - But how to do this, when members are scattered most of the year around the world?

Taking advantage of visual communication media, social reporting has the power to facilitate identity building. Participants see themselves in photos and videos giving them a sense of belonging to the network community. The team spirit awakens. - A strong network identity and personal relations among the members create trust. And trust is an important ingredient for tacit knowledge sharing.

Share tacit knowledge beyond the event [2]

F2F events are like pressure cookers. Within a compact time frame many experts and practitioners meet and engage in intense knowledge sharing exercises. The beauty of this exchange is: it is conducive not only to explicit, but especially to tacit knowledge sharing. - How to take this augmented personal exchange beyond the workshop period?

Social reporting facilitates this step from time-bound offline face-to-face exchange to long-term online knowledge sharing. By posting workshop content on the Internet you underline the importance of web based communication tools for the network's future activity level. - Social media can take –to some extent- the F2F environment online, which is so fruitful for tacit knowledge sharing[2].

Create deeper learning experiences [3]

Social reporting is an opportunity for the participants to react to the workshop content using less conventional reporting tools, such as videos, photos, drawings, or blog/Twitter/Facebook comments. By reporting from the F2F they reflect and digest the new knowledge. This is the first and vital step to appropriate new information and to transform it into personal knowledge.

Reach out [4]

During a F2F event the participants share knowledge that ultimately changes the way SDC and its partners are working. Sharing your insights online with a wider community you upscale your impact.

Reporting immediately from the event is a trump. Immediacy attracts. Colleagues, partners, and other practitioners are more likely to read up on testimonies and insights when they know that it is being generated right now, rather than to read a PDF report weeks after the momentum has subsided.

Communicate with all your senses [5]

Social reporting is multimedia oriented. A F2F blog page for example is a great container for all forms of workshop information and knowledge. It helps to recreate to some extent the face-to-face experience.

For more Information & support visit www.sdc-learningandnetworking.ch

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[2] Social Media and Tacit Knowledge Sharing, www.waset.org/journals/waset/v64/v64-208.pdf