SAYING "YES" TO A LANDSCAPE OF CHANGE

IDEASCALE

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The communication landscape has changed.

Recent cultural evolutions and new technology as well as updated user expectations have set the stage for a new era of connection, sharing, and innovation. Everyone is generating data, sharing information and opinion, and they're doing it all the time. And, in numerous cases, the ability to communicate has outstripped organizational leadership's ability to make meaningful change from that vast realm of data that is now available to them. It is sometimes easier to maintain the status quo rather than risk backing the wrong change that could mean detonating the revenue returns for the next year.

This is not an isolated trend – it is a global condition. And the difference between companies that are building active innovation programs to keep pace with this data and those that aren't often correlates to businesses that are around in a decade and those that are not.

Collecting and making sense of this online information requires sophisticated, easy-to-use technology solutions that empower innovation, but it also requires a culture where change is possible.

The Benefits of Active Open Innovation

Good software that facilitates an ongoing feedback loop offers a few key benefits.

- It provides a near real-time venue to understand problems and opportunities.

- It enables leaders to gain awareness and stay ahead of issues.

- It also serves as an entrée into existing, ongoing outreach programs to customers, employees, and stakeholders

- It's present where the majority of an audience already communicates anyways: online.

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IdeaScale is a powerful tool that connects geographically-disbursed populations anywhere, anytime, on any subject that is relevant to them. Leaders who deploy this technology are empowered to leverage these insights and from there develop new programs and services, discover cost-savings or revenue opportunities design sustainable solutions, build and maintain relationships with employees, citizens, or customers, and much, much more.

"Yes We Can": Real Change Is Possible

The best way to do this, however, is to first listen and then start to actively iterate company-wide change based on those suggestions. Sometimes, this is difficult, since truly innovative or market-disrupting ideas do not yield a return on investment early in the game. It is hard to make a straightforward business case for how to change a company, product or program based on insights reaped from the crowd, however, those changes can often be the next generation of a business, the sea change that comes to define an industry, or even millions of dollars of savings.

For example, TheSAVE Awardis a program that debuted in September 2009. It was an initiative launched by President Obama that sought ideas from federal employees about how to make the government not only more effective, but also more efficient when it came to spending (hence its name: "Securing Americans Value and Efficiency").

Every year, the President puts out an open call out to all federal employees inviting them to publicly submit their money-saving ideas online using IdeaScale technology. This call is promoted by various branches, departments and organizations within the government encouraging employees to share whatever thoughts they have on the subject. The ideas are submitted, users vote the ideas up and down and the best ideas usually bubble up to the top. The Office of Management and Budget then narrows down the best ideas to a "final four" which can be viewed and voted on by the American public. The winner is granted the honor of presenting his or her idea to the President in Washington.

But after four years of working to create a more efficient government with the help of the crowd, it seems that a lot could be said about the value of crowdsourcing when it comes to the government.

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Consider this:

- Over the past four years, **more than 85,000 ideas have been shared**.

- The crowd couldn't wait to participate.The outpouring of ideas in 2009 after **just the first few weeks numbered around 38,000.**

- The first year's winner, Nancy Fichtner suggested that medications and supplies used to treat VA patients be sent home with the patients rather than destroyed. A simple suggestion, perhaps, but one that will save the American people **an easy $14.5 million before 2014.**

- The second year's winner, Trudy Givens, proposed that the government end mailing physical copies of the Federal Register to employees (and instead opt for emailing it). **That's another $4 million saved every year.**

- Last year, Matthew Ritsko suggested establishing a centralized tool repository, or "lending library," for NASA employees to use when developing and building space flight projects. **His idea alone received nearly 40% of the total online votes.**

And those are just the winners. **Dozens of the most promising ideas have been included in the President's Budget, specifically in the Terminations, Reductions, and Savings section that are saving taxpayer's millions of dollars every single day.**

And the ideas have come from all over the government. The winners alone have represented the Department of Veterans Affairs, the Bureau of Prisons, and NASA.

Say "Yes" to Change and Become a Global Leader

Companies that want to grow need to engage the thoughts and ideas of a diverse, global audience. Allowing those people to collaborate in an ongoing online dialogue will change the face of a company and eventually even an industry. Launch innovation management IdeaScale today.

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