

Beyond Corporate Walls: External Collaboration is Key

Information vital to a company's bottom-line is often found beyond its own walls. Offshore suppliers are the first to know if production is falling behind. Partners in a new venture possess valuable market knowledge and access to resources. Clients have time-critical feedback on project implementation and issues.

To remain competitive and agile in today's business environment, successful organizations have enhanced and extended their concept of teamwork, forming corporate project teams that include colleagues in other companies. Close collaboration among an extended, cross-company team helps generate new ideas, identify potential issues, improve workflow and speed effective decision-making. External collaboration, corporations are realizing, is the key to leveraging the valuable knowledge of suppliers, partners and customers.

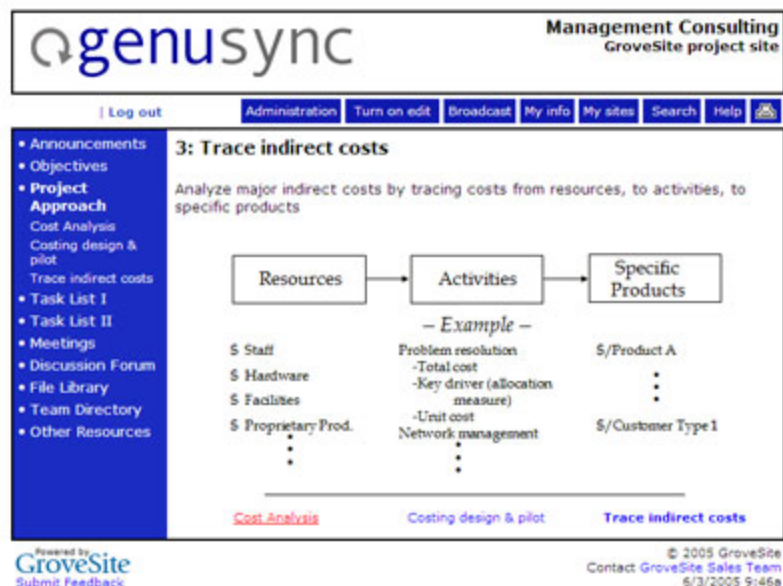
Collaborate to leverage the knowledge of key suppliers, partners, and customers

Unfortunately, these important 'outsiders' are often overlooked when businesses consider software and Internet technologies to support team collaboration.

Collaboration Technology

To foster greater communication among cross-company and dispersed teams, businesses are turning to web-based collaboration software.

Today, individuals work in secure, online collaborative workspaces organized to meet a team's specific project goals. Here, they can share documents too large to e-mail, view project status and responsibilities, track issues and project deliverables, and weigh-in on important discussions. No longer must they wade through countless e-mails, physically mail packages of documents and disks, fax information or try to schedule meetings across multiple time zones.



genusync Management Consulting
GroveSite project site

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- Objectives
- Project Approach
 - Cost Analysis
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- Task List I
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- Meetings
- Discussion Forum
- File Library
- Team Directory
- Other Resources

3: Trace indirect costs

Analyze major indirect costs by tracing costs from resources, to activities, to specific products

Resources	Activities	Specific Products
\$ Staff	Problem resolution	\$/Product A
\$ Hardware	- Total cost	⋮
\$ Facilities	- Key driver (allocation measure)	⋮
\$ Proprietary Prod.	- Unit cost	\$/Customer Type 1
⋮	Network management	⋮

Cost Analysis Costing design & pilot Trace indirect costs

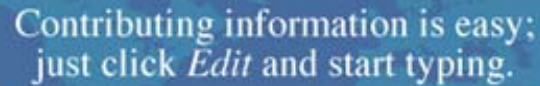
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Asynchronous web collaboration tools which allow individuals to participate on their own schedules often feature calendaring, task management, document sharing, discussion forums, messaging, and workflow automation capabilities.

Simple, Secure, Hosted Collaboration Solutions

Simple. Secure. Hosted. These three words are key to selecting the most effective online collaboration tool for companies with dispersed and cross-company teams.

Simple. Consider, for example, the collaboration needed during a corporate merger. Management teams from both companies, lawyers, and investment bankers must work closely together in a short period of time, sharing timetable information and document drafts. These individuals, though separated by great distances, many time zones, and disparate computer networks, need a collaboration tool they can use immediately - without any training.



Contributing information is easy;
just click *Edit* and start typing.

GroveSite (www.grovesite.com) meets the need for immediate usability with easy wiki-style collaboration. Its online workspaces look and act like a traditional website, including left hand navigation, simple icons and typical underlined web links – concepts already familiar to anyone who uses the Internet. Contributing information is easy; just click Edit and start typing. There is no software to install or learn.

Instead of orchestrating the cumbersome logistics of training a dispersed team on its features, companies and their team members can hit the ground running, focusing on production and results – not technology and process. In fact, GroveSite is so user-friendly that its usage spreads virally through an organization, as different project teams hear of it by word-of-mouth.

Secure. Collaboration software must be easily accessible to team members, but must not expose an organization's information to a security risk. Controlling access through login authentication (using e-mail addresses and passwords), GroveSite's secure workspaces provide a safe environment where collaborators – internal and external – can exchange ideas quickly and easily, speeding the business process and improving overall productivity. If desired, SSL encryption can be used as well, adding the same level of Internet security used for on-line credit card transactions.

With GroveSite, collaborative workspaces are located on GroveSite's secure servers rather than on customers' internal corporate servers and networks. This ability for a project team to collaborate securely "outside the corporate firewall" reduces the risk of external exposure to other company information.

Hosted. Hosted collaborative workspaces, which are administered and supported by the software provider, are an excellent solution for multi-enterprise teams. Hosted solutions like GroveSite are usually available on a subscription basis, eliminating the need for an expensive upfront software purchase and a lengthy installation.

As a hosted collaboration software provider, GroveSite takes responsibility for technology updates and monitors company web space 24/7, 365 days a year. With a simple, secure, hosted solution, any ad hoc work group within an organization can get started immediately, without impacting a company's already-overburdened IT department.

A Proven Solution: GroveSite

GroveSite's clients use their online collaborative workspaces in a variety of ways: sharing documents and images, communicating task status and responsibilities, tracking important discussions, keeping calendars organized and current, and creating online tables for structured project data.

Sharing Documents and Files

GroveSite allows users to upload files - even large ones - in easy, categorized libraries defined by the team. With GroveSite's thumbnails, (mini-versions of graphic or image files) teams see exactly what file they need before opening or downloading it.

A national retailer has taken advantage of this feature, sharing product specifications, photos of product samples and other materials with a dispersed team of designers, global sourcing experts and overseas vendors. Instead of relying on a difficult-to-use FTP (File Transfer Protocol) site with limited ability to structure information, this client has taken advantage of GroveSite's easy-to-use file sharing capabilities.

Using GroveSite, the globally dispersed team collaborates on proposed product changes, simultaneously working to review manufacturing glitches and communicate logistics for delivery of product to stores. Enhanced communication has allowed suppliers to understand and build the right product, on-time, on-budget.

High Style furniture design Product Design & Development
New Graduates Furnishings

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Specifications for EndTable
Summary View [Expanded View] [Add a New File]
[Multi-file Download]

Category	View	Filename	Status	Owner	Uploaded	Size
IMG		t098_plan.gif	Final		3/17/05	5kb
SAMPLE		t098_endtable.jpg	In Revision	Mark Moderator	6/3/05	40kb
SPECS		t098.pdf	Final	Denise Administrator	6/3/05	32kb

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Coordinating Project Tasks

GroveSite's tools for online project management make it easy for a manager to streamline communications by creating a project plan that allows members to assign tasks, track critical dates, attach files and report on project status.

A franchiser shares its task plan, responsibilities and status for launching each new franchisee using GroveSite's Project Plan feature. The goal for the collaboration is to open each store and earn revenue as quickly as possible. The team of franchiser personnel, franchisee management, lawyers, real-estate site selection consultants, architects, contractors, interior and furniture designers, technology

AB Coffee Company Franchise Launch
Jeff Wilson, Chandler, AZ

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Marketing Task List
Expanded View [Summary View] [Add a New Task]
[Reports] [Download] [Bulk Upload] [Reset Dates]

Task#	Pri	Task name	Status	% Comp	Resp	Start	Due
001		Contact Franchisee	Complete	100	John Folk	12/11/04	12/13/04
002		Conduct Local Market Research				2/2/05	2/10/05
003		Create Collateral	In progress	80	Chris Norem	4/13/05	4/17/05
Predecessors: 001 Contact Franchisee Last Updated: 6/3/05							
004		Finalize Marketing Plan	Complete	100		5/8/05	5/10/05
005		Launch Franchise Initial Ad Campaign		0	Stephanie Lakewood	6/2/05	6/10/05
Notes: Banners; pre-grand opening activities; radio and TV spots Predecessors: 004 Finalize Marketing Plan Last Updated: 6/3/05							
006		Grand Opening!		0		7/10/05	7/13/05

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implementation teams, and HR/hiring/training staff, must communicate various tasks with efficiency. GroveSite allows them to highlight task due dates, responsibility and status, improving overall visibility and accountability for results.

Tracking Issues

Consider the case of an IT Value-Added Reseller (VAR) who is customizing and installing a software package for one of its clients. The VAR must collaborate with the software manufacturer, its client's management and staff, and its own dispersed programming team to share requirements, project tasks, responsibilities, and key documents. Any member of the team can identify an issue, each of which may be critical to completing the installation satisfactorily and on-time.

GroveSite allows team members to track critical project issues and hold asynchronous conversations that list the team's thread of responses to the issue. Additionally, members can assign responsibility for the issue's resolution and send notification to the team when the issue is resolved or when new messages are posted.

ABC Company: Software 3.0 Upgrade
Project Team Site

IT SOLUTIONS

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ABC Company, Inc.
• About the Site
• Site Members

TASKS & ISSUES
• Task List
• Issues Log

UPGRADE INFORMATION
• Calendar
• Meeting Minutes
• Migration Documents
• User Testing & Training

Issues Log

Expanded View [Summary View] [Add a New Issue]
[Download] [Reports]

Priority†	Number	Category	Issue	Status	Resp	Discuss
1- Urgent	001	GENERAL	Compatibility with ABC Company's email software	Open		3/21/05 1 postings [add new]
			<p>Opened: 03/06/05 Issue Notes: There may be an issue with the compatibility of the software with the client's email software. Technical resources are performing tests to determine the scope of the problem. Discussion Summary: [add new] 3/21/2005 12:09a - Tom Selling - Spoke with email administrator</p>			
3- Medium	002	SCHEDULE	Reschedule final migration	Open		[add new] posting
			<p>Opened: 03/14/05 Issue Notes: Final migration falls on company holiday. The IT Company project manager will work closely with the ABC Company resources to schedule a better date. Discussion Summary: [add new]</p>			
Total Records: 2 out of maximum of 1000.						

Root Admin: [Edit Schema] [Bulk Upload]

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Immediate Results

GroveSite has proven its value time and again with a host of clients - ranging from the work-at-home entrepreneur to global corporations - providing a cost-effective, password-protected, secure communications center in which to collaborate.

With access to the right data and the ability to communicate complication-free, corporations can begin to realize the benefits of improved teamwork, higher productivity, faster idea generation, streamlined workflow, and better decision-making. External team members, individuals outside the company and often far away, become an even greater asset when they can work hand-in-hand with internal personnel. Easy, secure, web-based collaboration tools can help tap the knowledge of these valuable, often overlooked, external contributors.