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Recommended Citation

Vehring, Nadine and Riemer, Kai, "DESIGNING THE ROLL-OUT OF ORGANIZATION-WIDE ICT INFRASTRUCTURES - THE FINTOP CASE" (2012). *ECIS 2012 Proceedings*. 75.
<http://aisel.aisnet.org/ecis2012/75>

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DESIGNING THE ROLL-OUT OF ORGANIZATION-WIDE ICT INFRASTRUCTURES – THE FINTOP CASE

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Abstract

Implementing organization-wide ICT infrastructures is a challenging endeavor, even more so when the technology in question is both a network technology and raises privacy concerns among employees. This teaching case introduces students to the German insurance provider FINTOP in the final stages of planning its organization-wide roll-out of the Real Time Communication and Collaboration (RTC) technology IBM Lotus Sametime. FINTOP's IT management is faced with the challenge of how to design the roll-out process in the face of a strong management vision, various stakeholder concerns and a culture of employee participation in decision making. The case is targeted at postgraduate or advanced undergraduate Information Systems students. Its aim is to provide instructors with a multi-faceted case that exposes students to the political nature of IT decision making, as well as the particular nature and characteristics of communication infrastructures. As network technologies, such infrastructures are quite different from more traditional enterprise systems due to their openness to accommodate a wide range of use cases. At the same time communication infrastructures, such as instant messaging and social media are making strong inroads into organizations currently.

Keywords: IT and Organizational change, Technology Roll-out, IT Decision-Making, IT and Organizational Culture, Real Time Communication and Collaboration (RTC), IBM Lotus Sametime.

1 Introduction

Wolfgang Roth had just arrived back in his office after an informal talk at lunch with his colleague Christine Stark. Before going back to work, he leaned back to reflect on the last couple of weeks and on his conversation with Christine. For the last 10 years Wolfgang had been working as a manager for the IT department of the insurance company FINTOP. In his role Wolfgang had supervised several projects of technology deployment and organizational development. Right now, IT management was considering a possible introduction of the Real Time Communication and Collaboration (RTC) technology IBM Lotus Sametime across the entire company. For the last couple of months, the IT department had been testing this technology. During this time, employees in IT had repeatedly reported to get great value from using Sametime and in particular its presence information and chat features which had proved useful for team communication and coordination.

Wolfgang was convinced that the technology would yield similar benefits for the rest of the organization and thus really excited about a possible roll-out of Sametime to “the big stage”. However, he was also aware of some problems that might occur during the actual roll-out and use of the technology due to its presence information feature. Presence information was great because it allowed co-workers to see each others’ presence even though they did not share the same office. Essentially, the feature allowed seeing (visualized with a green icon next to a person’s name) if someone was logged into the system and working on the computer and thus available for communication. However, at the same time this feature raised issues of privacy and employee monitoring. In Germany, the introduction of technologies that could be used for monitoring employees’ behavior or performance was subject to work regulations. Thus, Wolfgang was aware that if they wanted to implement Sametime with its presence information feature, they would need to consider possible employee concerns and find an agreement with the company’s workers’ council on the actual design of the roll-out process. Hence, Wolfgang had looked for his colleague Christine – a member of the workers’ council – during their common lunch break. As he had already expected, Christine had expressed some concerns about a possible roll-out strongly taking the employees’ point of view.

While Wolfgang was sitting in his office thinking about his conversation with Christine, Christine was doing the same in her office. Although she had expressed several concerns about a potential use of Sametime from her standpoint as a member of the workers’ council, she had also recognized some meaningful use cases of Sametime. As she was working as a team leader of a small team of 10 people, she could imagine using Sametime for their daily team communication and coordination. However, as a member of the workers’ council, she also had to focus on some possible downsides of Sametime, e.g. the possible misuse of presence information as an instrument for surveillance and control. Thus, Christine found herself in conflict between representing the interest of the individual employees and her personal interest as a team leader. She decided to talk to some of her colleagues to get a better idea of the possible “pros and cons” of an introduction of Sametime. Meanwhile, Wolfgang was also reflecting on his next steps to prepare an official meeting with all relevant parties to decide on the condition of a company-wide roll-out of Sametime.

2 Company background

FINTOP was organized as a cooperative, as a mutual insurance company. This meant that all customers were themselves members of the company and thus were allowed to take part in the general assemblies of the company, such as the annual general meeting. As an insurance company, FINTOP’s main business consisted of selling and processing insurance contracts and providing consultation and insurance protection for their private and business customers / members.

2.1 Company history

FINTOP was founded in the late 19th century as a regional insurance company with the aim to protect third-party liability risks of local farmers. In the 1960s and 1970s, FINTOP extended its business substantially by including new types of insurance (e.g. accident insurance) and by geographically expanding its services to all areas of the Federal Republic of Germany. Starting at the beginning of the seventies, FINTOP founded several associated companies, e.g. for legal protection insurance, life insurance or health insurance due to legal constraints. After the fall of the Berlin Wall, FINTOP extended its business into the new German states. In effect, what had started as a regional insurance company had grown over the past 50 years into a national company operating all over Germany.

2.2 Organizational structure

Organizationally, FINTOP was divided into a front and a back office structure. The actual customer consultation was done by sales agents belonging to the front office. These sales agents operated all over Germany in about 2,100 legally independent *sales organizations*. Their daily work was characterized by advising customers in their sales organizations as well as at their customers' home, such as when advising on and selling a new insurance policy or when settling a claim. Sales agents worked as self-employed individuals. However, they were bound to FINTOP by an exclusive agreement – meaning that they only sold products and services provided by FINTOP – and supported in their daily work by about 400 FINTOP field workers. Normally, these field workers did not have their own office at FINTOP but were also located all across Germany. Besides working in their home offices, they spent most of their time travelling to directly support sales agents in advising customers whenever there was a very specific customer problem that could not be addressed by the sales agents alone. About 3,000 employees worked in the FINTOP *head office*. The head office comprised a set of supporting departments, particularly the IT department and human resources (HR) as well as several operating departments. The latter functioned as the back office providing day-to-day support for the decentralized sales organizations. They were subdivided into several divisions, each of which consisted of approximately 15 small teams. Each team typically comprised between 8 to 12 team members. A team member's main work consisted of processing files – e.g. editing a new customer contract or transacting an insurance case – for sales organizations and customers. Furthermore, a team member's working day was characterized by a huge amount of communication (cf. Table 1), e.g. with sales agents, customers and colleagues inside or outside their teams.

Communication with ...	Communication pattern
Sales agents	In the context of file processing, back office employees had to frequently communicate with the sales agents in the field.
Customers	There were some teams where team members directly communicated with the customers. However, the main communication partners for the customer were the sales agents.
Team members	In order to ensure constant availability of the back office teams for communication with front office agents, team members had made it a habit to inform other team members via email whenever they left their workplace (one-to-many communication). In addition, there was also direct one-to-one communication, e.g. to discuss complex and non-standard cases.
Members from other teams	There was also some interdepartmental communication with members of other teams, divisions or operating departments, e.g. to discuss specific problems or to coordinate lunch.

Table 1. Back office communication patterns.

2.3 Organizational culture

FINTOP had positioned itself as a *service and customer-oriented organization* and followed the concept of ‘one face to the customer’, i.e. the idea of an integrated service unit. Wolfgang explained:

“...front and back office should function as one unit and there should be no artificial separation between these two structural elements. A good relationship between the employees of the head office and the sales agents and a mutual understanding of the interests of the other is very important to be able to resolve customer problems fast and jointly.”¹

Management of FINTOP promoted the idea of an integrated service unit and the vision of “one big family” and aimed at a continuous improvement of the relationship between back office and front office. Because of this, large events were organized every few years where members from the head office and sales agents met to get to know each other better and to discuss possible improvements in their communication and collaboration. Furthermore, FINTOP’s management encouraged employees of the head office to spend some time at one or more sales organizations. This allowed the head office staff to get a better understanding and appreciation for the daily work and unique problems of the sales agents. Although there was a good relationship between back office and front office in general, employees sometimes experienced structural frictions and conflicts. Max, who was working in one of the operating departments of the head office stated:

“Sales agents use various communication media to contact us during the day. Often sales agents try to contact us simultaneously by using different channels like email, telephone and fax because they need a fast response. At times, this can be very demanding and annoying because of the sheer amount of communication and interruptions in my daily business.”

However, besides these little frictions in the daily business, management’s efforts in the past had led to a sense of cohesiveness such that the idea of an integrated service unit was not only signaled outwards but was reportedly lived inwardly.

Besides a clear customer focus, FINTOP’s organizational culture contained another important component: FINTOP also had positioned itself as an *employee-focused company*. In its annual business report of 2010, FINTOP stressed that mutual trust had been the foundation for the good collaboration between the management board, the line managers, the employees, and the workers’ council in the past. Furthermore, FINTOP expressed that support and qualification of the individual employees was a considerable part of FINTOP’s organizational culture as it enabled employees to identify with, and to develop close ties to, the organization over the long run. Furthermore, FINTOP undertook substantial efforts to be considered a family-friendly employer by providing a range of family-friendly arrangements for its employees, e.g. flexible working hours, more than 100 different part-time working schemes, special leave for the care of relatives and its own day care center for children. Beyond that, FINTOP had been promoting alternating telework for more than 700 employees since the late 1990s. These employees alternated between a workday at home (home office) and a regular office day. Normally, two team members with complementing rhythms shared a desk at the head office.

2.4 The workers’ council

As FINTOP was a German company, it was subject to German Works Constitution Act. Under German legislation the Works Constitution Act regulates the collaboration between the employer and the elected workers’ representation, namely the workers’ council. The workers’ council represents the

¹ As it was impossible to tape-record interviews with FINTOP management and employees, all quotes have been reconstructed from notes taken during the interviews and translated into English.

interests of the company's employees. It identifies and takes care of the needs of employees and takes action on their behalf to improve and ensure favorable working conditions. Among the main duties of the worker's council are, for example, ensuring that applicable work laws are observed (e.g. occupational health and safety or employment protection laws), environmental regulations kept, and fair employment conditions provided (e.g. for disabled people, immigrants, and families). Moreover, a workers' council has the right to be kept informed by management about all circumstances relevant to observing these laws and regulations. It also has the rights to take part (with varying degrees of influence) in important business decisions such as employee lay-offs, and closing down or relocation of substantial parts (e.g. divisions) of a company. Furthermore, it represents employees' interest by contributing to and participating in specific operational decisions, e.g. when a technical device is introduced that could be used as an instrument for control and surveillance.

Naturally, FINTOP's organizational structure contained a workers' council that had been elected by the elective employees. In line with its organizational culture, FINTOP's management practiced a participatory management style and recognized its accountability towards the workforce. The workers' council was regarded an influential and important stakeholder in any innovation and change process. Christine explained:

“Management does not only regularly involve the workers' council in decision-making, but tries to achieve consensus with us prior to organizational changes, e.g. the roll-out of a new technology.”

2.5 Corporate strategy

As an insurance company, FINTOP operated in a tightly regulated, yet highly competitive market that had been impacted by the global financial crisis of 2008. Although FINTOP had been successful in maintaining a strong position in its market, it was always looking for new ways to improve efficiency – e.g. by enhancing or changing existing processes through the introduction of new technology – in an environment where many financial services companies had had their financial coffers proffered with public bailout money.

FINTOP had a clear consulting and service focus. Sales and distribution of its products and services was solely done by the sales agents who were bound to FINTOP and supported by FINTOP field workers. In the past this arrangement has enabled FINTOP to achieve a solid basis to start from in the increasing competition in the insurance market. To develop additional potentials for an ongoing growth and to keep up with the increasing complexity of insurance products and services, FINTOP was aiming at strengthening the field workers and thereby improving the decentralized support of the sales organizations. Having a clear customer focus which was expressed by the idea of an integrated service unit, FINTOP aimed at the continuous improvement of collaboration between sales organizations, FINTOP field workers and head office. For the near future, FINTOP had a clear vision of increasing the amount of one-stop deal making. This meant that sales agents should be provided with all the relevant information and details needed for negotiating and closing an insurance contract during first customer contact, even if this contact was to happen at the customer's home. To achieve this vision, management was looking for a technology which would allow head office and field workers to support sales agents in advising customers from a distance without the need to arrange a new customer meeting where the field worker had to be physically present.

2.6 ICT infrastructure

In general, the IT department provided all employees of the head office and the sales agents with a desktop computer and / or laptop with a unified LINUX system. The default application configuration of these LINUX systems was as follows: (1) information systems for processing customer data and contracts; (2) OpenOffice for creating and processing text, spreadsheets and presentations; (3) Adobe Reader for reading PDF files; and (4) Lotus Notes for communicating and collaborating internally and

externally. At FINTOP, two information systems existed simultaneously which were operating on the same customer data base. The IMS (Information Management System), sourced from IBM, had been rolled-out to the head office in the 1970s. This information system allowed employees to maintain and handle customer contracts electronically. The IIS (Insurance Information System) was an in-house development that had been developed in the 1990s by FINTOP's IT department. This development was based on the initial idea of providing the sales agents with an application system for the handling of customer data and contracts. About three years ago, the IIS was also rolled-out to the employees at the head office. Since then, back office and front office had been using the same system and thus had the same view of the customer data. However, some divisions were still using the old IMS or a combination of the IMS and the IIS as there were some specific features that were only provided by the IMS. For the long run, the IT department planned to further extend the IIS so that using the IMS in parallel would no longer be necessary.

Lotus Notes was seen as a platform for internal and external communication and collaboration. As communication and collaboration was a very important aspect of the daily work at the head office and between head and front office, employees at FINTOP could draw on a variety of different communication media (cf. Table 2).

Telephone	Every workplace at the head office, the sales organizations, as well as at the home offices was equipped with a landline telephone. Field workers were also outfitted with a mobile phone. Phone calls were a common mode of communication because of its direct and personal character.
Email	For sending emails, employees could draw on two options: 1) The email function of Lotus Notes and 2) a rudimentary email function of the IIS that allowed sending emails inside the IIS. Email was frequently used as it facilitated the documentation and archiving of communication episodes.
Text Messaging	Some employees communicated by using the messenger feature of the IMS which allowed synchronous communication between two or more communication partners. In contrast to some typical Instant Messengers, such as Skype or AOL messenger, the IMS messenger feature was only rudimentary and did not provide presence information. Furthermore, the IMS messenger only allowed writing very short messages with a limited amount of characters.
Fax and letter	Faxes or letters were mainly used to send official documents which needed to be signed by one or more of the parties involved in the daily business of the insurance company. Thus, this communication media were often used to support communication and document sharing between head office, sales agents and their customers.
Discussion forums	About ten years ago, FINTOP had rolled-out a platform that featured discussion forums with the idea to strengthen internal knowledge sharing. This platform was based on the open-source standard Jive. Besides several discussion forums which facilitated communication and knowledge sharing between employees and sales agents, this platform also included a knowledge data-base which contained quality assured knowledge, e.g. official documents or training material.

Table 2. *Communication media for internal and external communication.*

2.7 Prior technology roll-out

Generally, FINTOP considered IT an important element of its business and had a strong IT department with a staff of about 500 people. The roll-out of the Jive system mentioned in Table 2 reflects quite well FINTOP's general philosophy in managing IT. The introduction of new technologies was not so much driven by technological possibilities. It was usually rather application-oriented and driven by specific needs. In the case of the Jive system, Management's decision was based on the results of an internal project on organizational knowledge management and on the demand to improve knowledge exchange within FINTOP. Thus, management had a distinct interest in an active and company-wide use of the new system and was keen for users to adopt it.

Consequently, Jive's discussion forums were introduced all over the company and supposed to be used by all employees to actively discuss technical and operationally relevant questions. However, as

Wolfgang stated, the actual use of the forums varied substantially between the different groups within FINTOP due to their individual needs concerning knowledge sharing.

“The forums are used frequently by the decentralized sales agents to discuss relevant questions. But in the head office only a small number of discussions are conducted via Jive. I think that’s because of people’s physical proximity. However, some employees of the head office use the forums to communicate with sales organizations. We in the IT department often use them to actively support the roll-out and adoption of new technologies by answering technological questions.”

3 The roll-out project

Similar to the roll-out of the knowledge database and the discussion forums, the idea to roll-out Sametime was driven by a specific need: the perceived need to facilitate RTC across the organization.

3.1 The project background

The need for RTC had been identified by the FINTOP field workers who were looking for a tool that would allow them to reduce travel time and cost and to support sales agents virtually and directly in advising customers. As this would have allowed implementing the vision of increasing the amount of one-stop deal-making, management was supporting and pushing the idea of rolling out a tool for real-time communication and application sharing. As Wolfgang put it:

“We’re looking for a tool to support application sharing and real-time communication with different channels, like chat, audio or video, maybe later, to support the field workers. At the same time, management is looking for a tool to support online trainings and meetings in real time, sometime down the track.”

Consequently, the IT department identified Sametime as a possible tool that could meet the previously identified need. About eight years ago, the IT department had used Sametime as a tool for their daily internal communication. At that time, implementing Sametime across the whole company was not an option because of its licensing structure and the resulting high total licensing fees. Eventually, the IT department discontinued using Sametime. However, due to changes in the license fee policies by IBM, who now owned the Lotus application family, rolling-out Sametime as a tool for companywide RTC became a viable option. The selection of Sametime over other technologies was further driven by its seamless integration with Lotus Notes that was already in use by the majority of IT users in the company.

3.2 The technology

According to Riemer and Fröbler (2007), RTC systems like Sametime consist of communication components and various collaborative features and comprise four building blocks (see Table 3). While it is possible to describe the specific components or features of RTC technologies, such as text chat, presence signaling or application sharing, the technology itself appears as a flexible platform that supports diverse modes of use. Due to their openness, such platforms or communication infrastructures are necessarily subject to experimentation, interpretation and appropriation processes by their users in order to bring about RTC-enabled work practices.

Building blocks	RTC	Sametime
Unified Communication	Integration of various information and communication channels, e.g. IP telephony and instant messaging.	Users can communicate by using various communication channels, e.g. chat, VoIP and video telephony.
Presence signaling	Status information can give information about the availability of the user and his/her media and communication devices.	Presence information is available for all users who are signed-in to the system.
eCollaboration portfolio	RTC systems can comprise features of groupware applications, e.g. team calendars, document folders, or application sharing.	Sametime includes multiple collaboration features, such as group chat, application sharing or document sharing.
Contextualization	RTC systems can be integrated within the context of the user, e.g. with organizational processes and business applications.	There are multiple options to integrate Sametime into organizational processes.

Table 3. Building blocks of RTC systems in general and Lotus Sametime in particular.

Sametime belongs to the same IBM Lotus product family as IBM Lotus Notes. Based on a client-server architecture, Sametime provides four different types of user clients (Scott and Duff, 2010):

1. The *Sametime Embedded Client* is integrated into the Lotus Notes client. Two different login procedures settings are possible: 1) Lotus Sametime can be set to automatically log on when the Lotus Notes client is started (single sign-on) or 2) the user can decide to log on to the Sametime client independently.
2. The *Sametime Connect Client* is a stand-alone client which can be used independently from a Lotus Notes client.
3. The *Sametime Mobile Client* enables users to use Sametime on a mobile device. This client provides basic chat and presence information features.
4. Lotus iNotes is the web collaboration client for Lotus Notes users. These users can also draw on basic functionalities of *Sametime in the iNotes client*.

3.3 The management vision

Although FINTOP's management was not looking for a tool that provides chat functionalities in the first place, it welcomed the basic features of Sametime – messaging and presence information – which allowed them to substitute the rudimentary chat feature of IMS with the more mature messenger feature of Sametime. Furthermore, IT management welcomed the possibility that with Sametime messaging and presence information could be integrated into other applications and even documents.

Besides this, middle management or team leaders like Christine also welcomed the idea of rolling-out such a technology to support communication within and across teams at the head office:

“My team needs to always be available on the phone. So team members have to coordinate team availability. At the moment they send around emails or shout over the corridor, which is not always pleasant. So I think it would be really good for them to use the Sametime group chat and presence to inform each other about their availability. It will allow us as a team to sustain and improve established communication practices.” (Christine)

Other team leaders stressed the existing importance of chat and how Sametime would be welcome once the old IMS was no longer available:

“When I heard that they are planning to replace the IMS by the newer IIS in the near future, I realized that this would mean that the IMS messenger feature won't be usable anymore. But we often use the IMS messenger feature for our team communication, e.g. to coordinate lunch breaks and team availability. I mean it really works, why should we do without it? A new chat would really fill that gap.” (Robert)

While this was one ongoing discussion, IT management had bigger plans. It was also thinking about facilitating communication between field workers and sales agents. According to Wolfgang:

“They [top management] talk about this integrated sales organization all the time. I mean, if you want integration then we should have a means for everyone to talk to everyone more efficiently. I mean sales agents often are at the customer’s house and can’t strike the deal, because they don’t know a particular legal detail or contract feature. If they leave the customer, need to make a new appointment, I mean, deals are lost because of that. If they had a channel to reach the field worker, or someone in the back office, where they can see who’s online. That would be brilliant.”

But it seemed that the prospect of implementing Sametime had everyone racing for the latest idea to use it. Wolfgang remembered one discussion with a representative of FINTOP’s executive team:

“I would like to streamline communication within and between head office and sales organizations with Sametime. But they are already thinking about the customer. I mean, it’s true, you could integrate Sametime into our customer web portal so that customers are able to chat directly with the sales agent or a specific service unit. But is this feasible? What are the implications - workload and all? Also, I mean, one step at a time, I’d say.”

Furthermore, it was common wisdom that as online chat was a dominant aspect of young people’s everyday life and could thus be considered a business medium for the future. Making this step seemed only natural, so management aimed at testing its usefulness in a productive enterprise context.

In order to get the ball rolling, the IT department had run a pilot test in the last six months in order to trial the technology and build organizational support for the roll-out. This pilot test allowed the IT department to test Sametime, to observe its acceptance and employees’ responses and to prepare the organization for a wider roll-out. Wolfgang remembered:

“The pilot test went quite well. We were able to identify a lot of useful use cases for our daily work in the IT department. For examples, we really liked the presence information which allowed us to keep awareness of the activities and the availability of our colleagues. And we really liked the ability to discuss technical questions via group chat. That’s a real productivity booster for us, especially when you always have some people working from home.”

Based on this successful pilot test in the IT department, management finally decided that Sametime should be rolled-out to the whole company. The question remained what the best way would be to organize the roll-out of the new infrastructure that guaranteed success.

4 Where to next?

In his office Wolfgang reflected on the next steps. He was aware that, due to legal constraints, the workers’ council had a right of co-determination when deciding on the roll-out of a new technology which could be used for monitoring employees. He needed to find a way to convince the workers’ council to agree to the roll-out of Lotus Sametime. Therefore Wolfgang was looking for an appropriate design of the roll-out process which would be in line with the company’s culture and would meet with employees and workers’ council approval. In this context, he was wondering:

“How do we have to design the roll-out process to address possible employees’ concerns or anxieties that might result from the presence information feature of the new technology?”

However, this was not the only aspect that needed to be addressed. Being aware of the open and flexible character of the new technology, Wolfgang was also asking himself:

“What design do we need to enable employees to become familiar with the new technology? Also how do we facilitate them finding some initial use cases and practices that they find useful in order to spur adoption? And which role do we as managers have to play during the roll-out and

adoption of the new technology? How can we reach the critical mass of users? How is it possible to take all employees along?"

Besides all these questions, Wolfgang was aware that a consensus was needed which would allow to achieve management's vision. His principal stressed:

"We are willing to take small steps but finally, we are looking for a company-wide use of this technology. We need to get the [workers'] council on board! Do it!" (Tim)

While Wolfgang was looking for a proper approach to designing and managing the roll-out and for the right way to sell the project and its encompassing organizational visions to the workers' council, Christine for her part was also giving thought to some serious aspects. Christine had always cherished to be part of the workers' council because it allowed her to take a stand for employees' rights and to participate in organizational decision-making that might have an influence on employees' everyday work conditions. In this respect, she feared possible concerns from the employees' side when introducing a new technology that might be experienced as a tool for monitoring and controlling. Some employees had uttered concerns like these:

"I don't want them to see if I am online or not. What if I'm at home? I mean I have children, I might not be at my PC all the time. Can they see this? What if I am signaling online? And I have stepped away from the computer?" (Franziska)

"I don't like the idea of big brother watching me. I don't know, I mean if they can see when I am online, it makes you wonder what else they can see." (Paul)

On the other hand, there were also some positive and more balanced views:

"I think it would be okay for me to display my presence to my team members including our team leader. Our team is really nice and we share a good relationship. So I don't mind that others see my presence. But what about other teams which do not have such a good relationship? I guess that there could be some employees who might be afraid of being controlled by their colleagues or team leader." (Julia)

"I would appreciate to have presence information of the other team members, especially from those who are working from home. I think this would help us better performing and feeling as a team. But what about the sales agents ... will they be able to receive our presence information as well? Not everyone might like this. I mean they will just call all the time." (Max)

Christine was contemplating what would be the criteria under which she would agree to a roll-out. Although she did not find the answer immediately, she felt certain about the following aspects for the design of the roll-out process: 1) it should appreciate and mitigate employees' fears and 2) it should allow employees to test and become familiar with the new technology at their own pace.

However, Christine was not only aware of her role as a member of the workers' council. Likewise, she was reflecting on her role as a team leader and on the possible benefits that might result from the roll-out of Sametime for the daily team work. In her role as a team leader she was wondering:

"What could be beneficial use cases for the new technology in our everyday team work and communication? How could we as team leaders support our team members in testing the new technology and in finding useful usage scenarios? If there are clear benefits, how could we prompt them to use the new technology finally?"

In essence, Christine found herself caught in a dilemma. While she had to represent employees' interest, she was also part of the middle management and had to find ways of using the new technology effectively in her daily work. Thus, she had to balance and to come to a compromise between her different organizational roles and the resulting implications for the design of the roll-out process.

While Christine was still trying to balance her conflicting interests, Wolfgang prepared the next official meeting with the executive management, IT management, and workers' council. He hoped that they would be able to finally decide on the roll-out and its design during this meeting. To facilitate and make the final decision as simple as possible, he prepared a presentation including all relevant aspects such as 1) the benefits and possible use cases for the company, 2) some key parameters for the roll-out process or 3) ideas for how the workers' council would be accommodated.

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5 Exhibits

<u>Section 87 Right of co-determination</u>	
(1) The workers' council shall have a right of co-determination in the following matters in so far as they are not prescribed by legislation or collective agreement: [...]	
6. the introduction and use of technical devices designed to monitor the behaviour or performance of the employees; [...]	
(2) If no agreement can be reached on a matter covered by the preceding subsection, the conciliation committee shall make a decision. The award of the conciliation committee shall take the place of an agreement between the employer and the works council.	
<i>Exhibit 1. Excerpt from the German Works Constitution Act (English translation).</i>	

Enterprise instant messaging	Quick text chats can answer simple questions outright or can be escalated to multiway voice or video chats or an online meeting. Switch communication methods as your conversation evolves, e.g. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manage your contact list with recent and frequent contact views, plus search your corporate directory. • Transfer files, share screen captures and get instant screen sharing. • Track your chat history with time and date stamps, search (by person or date), and view sent files and links.
Rich presence awareness	Rich presence-awareness information lets you know whether now is a good time to initiate a real-time conversation via instant messaging or a phone/conference call. Sametime software can integrate multiple presence elements to provide a comprehensive view of someone's availability, e.g. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Online presence status and icons (online, available, away, in a meeting or do not disturb). • Custom status messages via a free text field. • Alerts to signal when people become available.
Online meetings	Collaborate with online meetings that enable high-quality document-, application- and screen sharing, e.g. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invite people to meetings by dragging and dropping from the contact list. Accept meetings with a single click. • Get a consolidated view of your calendar and with one click, access meetings in the Meetings panel, which integrates into the Sametime Connect client. • Access online meetings from a browser or a client.

Mobility	<p>Extend many of the desktop Sametime client to a range of mobile devices, e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver rich presence awareness, including online status, availability, geographic location and custom status messages. • Use instant messaging, including one-on-one and group messaging, manage multiple active chat sessions and see chat history. • Participate in Sametime online meetings on your Research in Motion® BlackBerry® smartphone.
Telephony	<p>Integrate telephony and provide telephony feature, e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrate existing infrastructure through plug-ins provided by your telephony vendor.
Voice and video	<p>Provide high-quality integrated desktop voice and video -ours or yours - to help cut telephony costs, e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A dual audio/video interface delivers both built-in and partner media capabilities in voice and video chats or in Sametime online meetings. • Use VoIP and voice chats with multiple participants. Audio/video is now based on the industry standard SIP, improving interoperability with third-party audio/video conferencing systems.
Community collaboration	<p>Community collaboration tools help people find, reach and collaborate with communities of users who may not be in their contact list, e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Broadcast community channel tools, including skill tap (a real-time request for information to a defined set of experts), instant polls, and broadcast announcements. • Persistent group chat to keep a continuous chat discussion running on a specific topic.
Unified communication and collaboration platform	<p>Deliver a consistent user experience with a flexible, security-rich, and standards-based unified communications and collaboration platform, e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support a wide variety of environments with built-in support for major server and client operating systems, including mobile device support, and directories. • Take advantage of built-in integration with IBM WebSphere® Portal, IBM Lotus Notes®, IBM Lotus Quickr™, IBM Connections, Microsoft® Office, Microsoft Outlook and Microsoft SharePoint software to use unified communications in context of your work. • Use a robust software developer kit (SDK) featuring Eclipse-based rich-client and Web 2.0 APIs to communications enable business processes.
<i>Exhibit 2. IBM Lotus Sametime features and capabilities.</i>	
Source: http://www-01.ibm.com/software/lotus/products/sametime/features.html	