

IS3103 Information Systems Leadership and Communication

**Tutorial 3: “Email: from Hero to Zero – The Beginning of the End?” Case Study
(Week 8 – 5 October 2022)**

1. Is email still an effective way to communicate?
2. What are the reasons that led to the Zero email initiative?
3. What did Atos do to overcome each of the four barriers to change in the social collaboration transformation? Consider the first/second-order changes that were introduced.
4. Do you believe that the Zero email initiative positively affected Atos’ performance?
5. What are the challenges or disadvantages of implementing the Zero email approach?



Teaching Case

Email: from hero to zero – the beginning of the end?

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Abstract

In 2011, the CEO of Atos, Thierry Breton, announced an unprecedented move for the company. The global information services giant would become a 'zero' email company with the objective of eradicating internal email use and replacing it with blueKiwi – enterprise social network software. This case serves to teach the challenges and key lessons behind the social collaboration transformation in a large organization where 76,000 employees switched to a new mode of collaboration. The approach of how to become a zero email company is detailed, highlighting the importance of the first-order and second-order change. The case helps to understand what it takes to shift organizational culture and employee mindset, as well as what challenges and barriers need to be overcome to make such an important step on a large organizational scale.

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Prelude

Electronic mail, most commonly referred to as email, is a method of exchanging digital messages from point A to point B or from one sender to one or more recipients. Modern email operates across the Internet or other computer networks. In more technical terms, email is a computer protocol that uses various techniques to route the information to the receiver. Some early email systems required the author and the recipient to both be online at the same time, in common with instant messaging. Today's modern email systems use the store-and-forward model where email servers accomplish different actions and are responsible for the end-to-end process (accept, forward, deliver and store messages). Email invention is attributed to Ray Tomlinson in 1971 when he included email in ARPANET as a program that he named SNDMSG. The famous '@' was introduced to indicate which user belongs to which computer.

Email is composed of three components: the message envelope, the message header and the message body. The message header contains all the various control information, including sender's email address and all recipient addresses. Usually descriptive information is also added, such as a subject header field and a message submission date/time stamp.

It is estimated that every day over 294 billion emails are sent, http://email.about.com/od/emailtrivia/f/emails_per_day.htm, out of which around 90% is spam.

Introduction

Back in 2011, the CEO of Atos, Thierry Breton, announced an unprecedented move for the global information services giant – becoming a 'zero email' company. Despite scepticism and criticism that accompanied the announcement, the Atos Zero email™ program was born with the unique objective of changing the way that 76,000 employees based in 47 countries communicated and collaborated. Breton was persuaded that email was not the most effective way to collaborate, connect and communicate; instead, a shift was needed to a more collaborative platform. Indeed, 'He estimated that barely 10% of the 200 messages his employees received on an average day were useful, and that 18% were spam. Managers spent between five and 20 h a week reading and writing emails' (*Financial Times*, 2013). A study done at Atos among 300 employees measuring their total email traffic for 1 week showed that they generated 85,000 messages (sent or received emails). Another scary statistic revealed that 73% of employees spent more than one-quarter of their time managing email, and the majority sees this time as wasted, providing no added value to their productivity.

These numbers clearly give reason and justification to Thierry Breton for making such a rare decision in the corporate world. However, the move was not an easy one, and certain challenges arose at all levels of the organization.

How much time do you spend on email on an average business day (including filing, searching and deleting)?

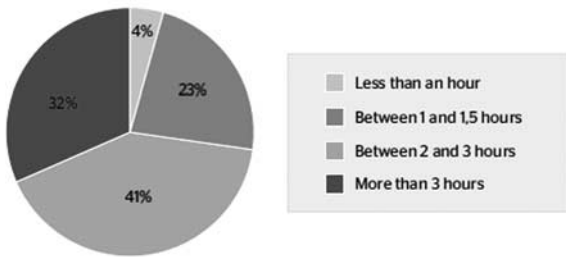


Figure 1 Time spent on email at Atos (Atos AT, 2013).

Atos – a ‘zero email’ company

Email challenges

Email is largely considered to be the ideal tool to use for communicating, collaborating, managing people, archiving, etc. Today its use is still widespread in organizations and will probably not decrease anytime soon. It clearly brings many advantages, ranging from its simplicity to its speed of use. However, despite all its advantages, it also presents a number of drawbacks. At Atos, its 76,000 employees produce on average 60 emails per day, which results in over 1,000,000,000 emails each year. It was estimated that more than 50% of Atos employees spend 2 h (Figure 1) per day on email. The same study found that 21% of employees received more than 100 emails per day (Figure 2). For the Atos CEO, there was no doubt that this email overload was a critical challenge that needed to be solved as it was ‘fast polluting our working environments and also encroaching into our personal lives ... the volume of emails we send and receive is unsustainable for business’ (Atos, 2011).

Another important fact is that many recently hired employees, who are usually represented by the younger generation, were coming to Atos with an ‘always-on’ mentality and ‘always connected’ tools like smartphones. This younger generation are not big fans of email; in fact, only 18% of them prefer to use email as a method of communication (Millennial Branding, 2014). Others follow all the recent trends and use the available tools and apps that they find freely available to connect and communicate amongst themselves. It is clear that once they cross enterprise borders, their existing usage habits will also affect how companies communicate.

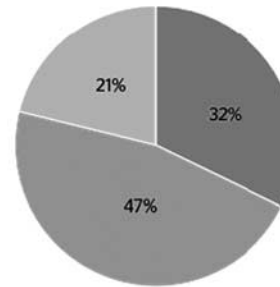
Overall, 75% of Atos employees spend on average more than 25% of their work time on email activities (Figure 3). ‘I get too much email’ was recognized as another important factor by 73% of respondents.

Staff turnover is another good reason for shifting away from an email mindset. More specifically, due to a relatively high turnover in large organizations, the knowledge that is accumulated by employees in their email in-boxes essentially disappears when they leave the company.

The misuse of the ‘cc’ functionality is often quoted as another reason for the email overload. This creates email ping-pong resulting in poor email practices in organizations, which leads to too many emails that need too much time to properly manage.

All of these factors led to the decision for Atos to ban internal company email only, not email to customers and other actors outside the company.

How many emails do you receive on an average business day?



How many emails do you send on an average business day?

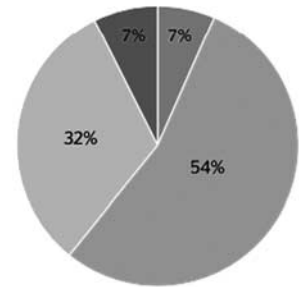


Figure 2 Received emails at Atos (Atos AT, 2013).

Social collaboration transformation

It is clear that the way we work, communicate and collaborate is shifting. However, this shift is not an easy task, as paying attention to email is more than a habit – it is practically an addiction. The first thing that almost every single employee does upon their arrival to work is to open their mail client (e.g. Outlook) and read, sort, answer, archive or delete email messages. All of these actions take time, especially if you are not really concerned with the email topic and are simply ‘cc-ed’ in the email chain, which might be a very long one, from the original email to all ‘cc-ed’ ones. The number of ‘reply to all’ actions can explode, resulting in the wasting of your time, as you still need to read each email to be sure that you are not actually responsible for some pending action on your side.

Prior to deciding about the final solution to use, Atos had already considered some existing tools that are mainly used for UC&C technology (Unified Communications and Collaborations) such as Microsoft Lync technology or SharePoint. Despite the advantages of Microsoft Lync and SharePoint, both had several points that did not match Atos’ collaboration strategy. Microsoft Lync is a tool that cannot be used when people are offline and it is generally less suitable for capturing structured knowledge. SharePoint is not the best tool for social collaboration, nor does it enable smooth and fast communication between employees.

Atos realised that this situation was not sustainable and called for a change. This change was to transform the social collaboration techniques of the company.

This shift meant that Atos had to move away from an outdated way of communicating to a new collaborative framework that called for innovative ways of engaging in new and different ways. One important fact that probably differentiates Atos from similar enterprise social network (ESN) implementations is that Atos decided to implement social collaboration globally. The first step was to focus on changing the organizational culture, which meant that the social collaborative

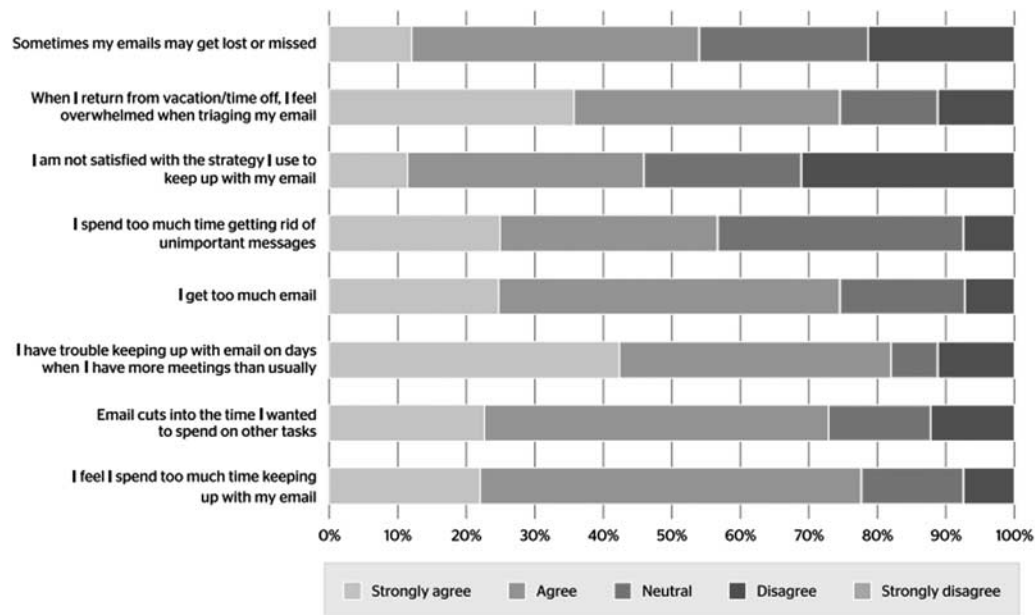


Figure 3 Atos employees' survey on Email use (Atos AT, 2013).

environment would need to be reshaped to achieve cultural shifts:

- Individual to community shift**
 blueKiwi, the enterprise social networking tool, was joined by 76,000 Atos employees, who began to collaborate in more than 7400 communities. The result was the removal of many silos and the simplification of the overall organization to one that was 'closer' and 'smaller'. This led to an easier way for employees to find experts or share the knowledge that was missing in the previous arrangement. By adopting this collaborative approach, many individual mindsets were eradicated.
- Controlling to leading: the collaborative leadership factor**
 Collaborative culture requires a new management style. To achieve that new style, Atos invested in change management to support their top and middle managers. Over 5000 managers were trained on the benefits of the ESN and were provided with examples of benefits in order to lead by example in the communities to which they belonged. It is clear that social collaboration impacted the organization by advancing a new and unique social culture.
- Experts to ambassadors shift**
 In order to spread the word and make the initiative a clear success, someone needs to promote it – an ambassador. In February 2014, Atos had over 3500 ambassadors whose role was to train their peers and promote the zero email program. This was a very important adoption factor. Another important decision was to create a space for experts in communities where they could answer questions asked by other employees, customers or external partners.
- From information overload to time for business**
 Atos has seen an important cultural shift where email was the key challenge for collaborative transformation. Faster and more efficient communication and collaboration was a result of Atos' social collaboration transformation. Previously, employees were assigned their daily tasks through email, but today this is done in the discussion forums where

collaboration is greatly facilitated between all involved parties. In other words, Atos shifted away from information overload towards creating more time to do business and less time being concerned by email overload.

blueKiwi

Atos introduced ESN by acquiring a start-up company, blueKiwi, in 2012. blueKiwi is an advanced ESN that enables organizations to improve productivity through social collaboration.

Some of the features offered by blueKiwi are: activity streams (real-time tracking of what is happening within the organization), teamwork spaces (public or private workspace or community), enterprise blogging (simple posts), content sharing (share information and content), and enhanced collaboration tools and mobility (stay connected while on the move).

blueKiwi was the key success factor of the zero email initiative. It eliminated the complexity of the standard Atos job environment by providing a one-stop place where employees could collaborate, organize, exchange and share information. What is unique about the blueKiwi approach is that the focus is not on who you are inside of the organization but what you know (experience and expertise). This created a positive environment where employees could contribute, share and exchange regardless of their functional position. For Atos this means that they managed to create a central repository of knowledge using the collective approach. Moreover, blueKiwi empowered employees by giving them access to knowledge facilitating their decision-making process.

Another important contribution by blueKiwi was the 'social recommendation engine', which helps employees to create new connections and grow their network through their expertise and knowledge.

Overall, Atos' social collaboration transformation started with the clear identification of the need that corresponded to

First-order change	Second-order change
Adjustment within the existing system	Change of the existing system
Doing more or less of the same thing	Trying things 'outside the box'
Generally reversible	Generally irreversible
Non-transformational	Transformational
Not much new learning	Requires new learning
No fundamental shift in values or behavior	Fundamental shift in values or behavior
Old story can still be told	New story needs to be told

Figure 4 First- and second-order change (Atos AT, 2013).

the email overload and was followed by important cultural shifts. The entire process required a very clear and precise approach.

The approach

To shape the zero email vision, Atos relied on the scientific approach based on the work of Watzlawick, who differentiated between first-order and second-order change processes (Watzlawick *et al.*, 1974). The first-order change process is doing more – or less – of something that we are already doing. First-order change is always reversible. On the other hand, second-order change is deciding – or being forced – to do something significantly or fundamentally different from what we have done before (The National Academy, 2014). This approach, described in Figure 4, was adopted by Atos to implement the change.

Overall, first-order change does not require any important changes and its implementation remains within the existing system. However, remaining with the first-order change was not enough for Atos to reach its objective of zero email, as a more important shift was needed: second-order change. This includes the paradigm shift where employees need to think 'outside the box' and learn the new approach. Important training is needed, along with an important shift in values and behaviours. What was clearly driving the second-order change was the CEO's decision to stop internal email. The difficulty of the 'second-order' change was the fact that employees needed to learn a new approach and at the same time question the existing process. In other words, questioning values and norms is needed to make the change. However, this change is not possible without clear leadership engagement, involvement and support.

All these changes would not be possible without the employees' support. This was definitely the case for Atos' decision, as 69% of employees expressed their support for the zero email initiative. Hence, Atos implemented a mixed strategy where first-order and second-order changes were combined and used independently. The first-order change remained necessary, mainly because Atos did not give up on the external communication method, which is still email. This is why a mix of the two approaches was needed.

The barriers to change

Some important barriers had to be overcome before starting the implementation of the Atos zero email initiative. These barriers are not only common to Atos as an organization, but they can be easily applied to any big company where 'change' usually brings several obstacles that an organization has to approach carefully.

The most important ones in Atos' case were:

- Cultural change
 - Atos has employees in 66 countries where cultural approaches to change may be very different
 - New organizational culture had to be shaped to model the new ways of collaborating and working
- Management support
 - In every organization success usually comes when middle- or low-level management support is strongly present. The same situation exists within Atos where this management support was one of the first barriers to overcome
- Technology
 - The introduction of every new technology brings important challenges as employees may reject the new technological advances for various reasons (e.g. fear of the unknown, used to the existing technology, syndrome of 'too old to change', etc.)
- User habits, education and expertise
 - User habits, education and expertise are three areas that had high importance among barriers to overcome. How to efficiently educate employees to use the new social platform and gain expertise in order to minimise issues are two important aspects that Atos had to deal with. Influencing user habits taking into consideration different generations was revealed to be another barrier that needed a careful approach

Overall, Atos had to deal with several barriers before introducing the change. The approach that was used is described in the following sections.

How to get to zero?

In order to become a zero email company, Atos followed several phases (Figure 5) that consisted of creating awareness among employees about the importance of the initiative. The envision phase supports the Atos strategy, proposes the roadmap and builds all the requirements necessary to succeed. It was also important to go through the experimental phase, which was used to pilot the program and produce quantifiable key performance indicators (KPIs). The implement phase consisted of the program's implementation and an active communication and change management support structure. This led to the nurture phase, which concerns the

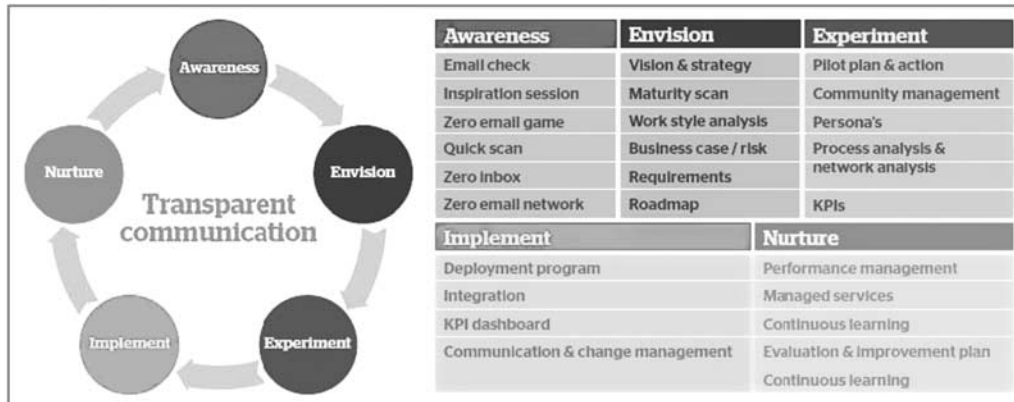


Figure 5 The social collaboration evolution cycle (Atos UK, 2014).

program evaluation and ways it can be improved based on key experiential lessons.

An important driver of reaching zero email was the leaders' engagement. To support that engagement, in 2013, 10% of a Top-700 leaders bonus was tied to the zero email campaign performance.

A bonus scheme is applied to reach the objectives, which turned out to be a very smart approach, as higher-level managers delegated the actionable objectives to those at lower levels, who were much closer to teams or one-on-one levels.

Sharing success stories was another way of promoting the initiative. Atos accumulated more than 100 success stories from the thousands of bottom-up collaboration efforts and identified a set of 'lighthouse communities' that represent what success looks like to serve as examples for others.

Example of zero-driven process change

How to create a requirement document without email? At Atos, prior to the zero email program, this would have been done by setting up a project team, getting all stakeholders involved, identifying the key requirements, preparing a document and sending it via email to all those involved for their comments, remarks and suggestions. The final step would be to set up a meeting to review and discussed the new user requirement document. Then the process would be reiterated with repetition of all the steps and always sending new versions of the updated documents through email. Following the 'first-order' process this is what a typical project setting would look like.

Another possibility in front of Atos is to use the 'second-order' change to create the user requirement document. Atos, in this example, used a micro-blogging platform (Yammer) as supporting tool, an online mapping tool (mindmap) and a document management system (wiki). In this scenario, Atos' team did not use email as the communication method. The first advantage was avoiding any formal meetings (face-to-face meetings), which saved valuable time for many involved stakeholders and project team members. The second major advantage is significant gain in time as faster production time was made possible. Third, involvement of more people in the 'second-order' change approach was possible when compared to the previous approach.

Overall, the process looks like this: (1) Team creation – this was done by gathering around the virtual cool water –

Yammer, enterprise microblogging tool. In a couple of days more than 30 people were involved in the project and submitted the requirements for the user document. The next step was to leverage the employees' involvement by launching an asynchronous online brainstorm; (2) Brainstorming – Mindmeister, an online mind mapping tool, was used to visualize and organize the content from Yammer that was structured in groups and subgroups. After an initial version a mindmap was created, and a link was posted on Yammer inviting people to update the mindmap. In only a few days, the whole initial mindmap completely changed, receiving high attention and focus from an significant number of participants. The next phase of the process was triggered by decreased attention from participants. It was decided that the final version was ready to go to the next phase; (3) Community writing – after exporting the mindmap to RTF format (Rich Text Format) it was imported into the enterprise wiki – Confluence. A wiki structure was created with a parent page, several subpages and sub paragraphs. One of the reasons for transforming the document to a wiki is that a wiki can handle different version controls. This enables several features such as the roll-back possibility. A new message was posted on Yammer inviting employees to participate and write the user requirements document in the wiki space. In total, over 60 people contributed providing their comments and creating the final version of the document that was ready for rating; (4) Quality rating – Atos uses rating of work process, which provides a rating for the completed work. The members of the Atos Scientific Community provide a rating on a scale of 5, and if the document gets a rating higher than 3.7 then it is accepted; in the case of a lower rating – additional work has to be done.

Overall, email collaboration has numerous disadvantages vs wiki collaboration. In the case of Atos, email was not the best way of supporting the unstructured business processes. Wiki is a much more suitable tool to support Atos' business needs. It is a very simple website with 'Edit' and 'Save' options. When the 'save' button is hit, participants get a signal notifying them about the new version in place. These different dynamics are presented in Figure 6.

Marc Bovens, Zero Email Global Program Manager at Atos, explained the tools used at Atos:

It's a combination of tools. We call it ZEN: Zero Email Network. It's actually an implementation of Microsoft

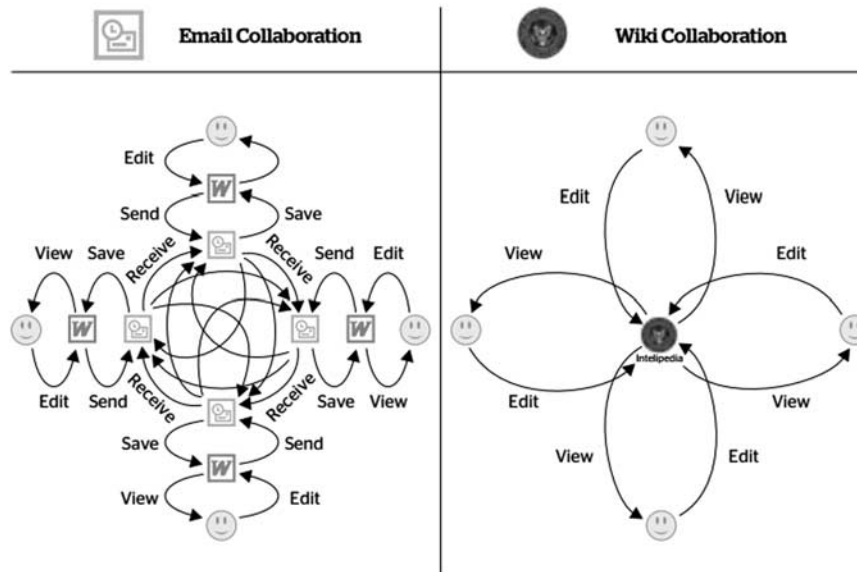


Figure 6 Email vs Wiki collaboration (Rasmussen, 2007).

SharePoint, combined with Lync [an online communication tool from Microsoft], combined with a piece of software called blueKiwi, which is a company we acquired in 2012. It provides the social network. Obviously, these three are well integrated. From within the ZEN-blueKiwi platform, for example, we have integrated Lync for presence. People can click on any picture and start instant messaging or start a call over the internet. We have a good integration between communities and the SharePoint sites so people can easily connect to the blueKiwi collaboration community.

To address a little bit the question of what were the phases [of rollout for the zero-email plan], in the first year, we spent a lot of time on what we call 'email etiquette'. We also started to train our management teams.

(PCMAG, 2014)

Lessons on driving change through social collaboration

In 2013, Gartner wrote about the Atos zero email initiative: 'Atos is rallying around no email, but eliminating email is not its target objective. Atos is using its campaign more for its hot-button marketing power – both internal and external to the company. CEO and chairman, [Thierry] Breton, is trying to mitigate email as a barrier to change. And by announcing the zero email initiative to the world, he is sending a clear message to the organisation that there is no going back'.

Before looking at the lessons learnt from this experience, it is important to set the right stage and look at Atos' financial numbers for 2013 and get the full understanding of the zero email initiative results.

Atos financial results

Thierry Breton said, 'In 2013, we completed the three-year plan announced in December 2010. As expected, profitability improved significantly with the operating margin increasing to 7.5% of revenue, free cash flow totalled more than €350 million, and earnings per share was up +50% compared to 2011. During this period, the Group focused on cash

generation, leading to a net cash position above €900 million at the end of 2013'. The zero email program was credited by Atos' CEO as being a primary contributor of this business performance improvement. For Gartner, this claim was not so evident 'because numerous factors impact overall business success, it is difficult to tie a no-email program directly to corporate performance'. Indeed, while the zero email initiative did not achieve zero email by the end of 2013, for Gartner, 'there is [still] evidence of strong social collaboration adoption and numerous success stories that, in aggregate, could have impacted overall corporate performance'.

Zero email results

The Atos' zero email initiative was kicked off in 2011 with the objective of completely removing internal email usage.

In 2013, from an average 100 emails per mailbox per week in 2011, the number of emails decreased to 40, which represents a 60% reduction. For mid-2014, a new reduction target of 80% was set. In addition to this reduction, 220 Atos processes have been certified as 'email free'. Finally, there are currently more than 74,000 employees on blueKiwi who participate in 7466 communities, posting an average of 300,000 times per month and accumulating over 2 million pages viewed per month. Atos also estimated that 25% of work time previously spent on email activities shifted towards business activities.

Overall, Atos' zero email initiative results are as follows:

- >74,000 ESN users
- More than 7446 communities created (n = members)
 - 7145 small ($n < 200$ members)
 - 250 medium ($200 < n < 1000$)
 - 46 large ($1000 < n < 5000$)
 - 10 extra-large ($n > 5000$)
- >15,000 employees posting at least once per week
- >35,000 employees viewing 1.9 million pages per month (as of December 2013)
- >15,000 posts by Atos top management in December 2013



Speaking about Atos' zero email results, Thierry Breton said in February 2014, 'A great example of our people working together to achieve our business goals is our Zero email™ program. Since we announced our ambition three years ago, we have collectively reduced internal emails by 60% and global collaboration has improved by 20 times. In this new, emerging collaborative world we have taken the lead'.

Marc Bovens added,

... clearly this has had an effect on the operating margin of Atos. It is really increased our sales performance. Our sales costs have decreased. We are able to do more business, and that is partly contributable to this new way of working. What we have done at Atos as an organization after this Zero Email program, we thought, 'Okay, how do we continue, having attacked information overload quite successfully?' We have decided to establish a new organization which is really about achieving the business benefits, the business outcomes from group collaboration.

(PCMAG, 2014)

Lessons learnt

Atos undertook this long and difficult path of shifting the organizational culture and employee mindset on a large scale to access:

- Smarter and better ways of collaborating
 - Larger and more flexible teams could be created and the global team approach could be introduced to leverage the collaboration benefits
 - New technologies could be used for a faster and more dynamic collaboration between employees
- Opportunities to create new ideas, products and services and advance innovation with crowd-innovation communities
 - Innovation is an important new benefit as shorter time to market and better results can be observed
 - Real-time access to information and involvement from a wider group of people
- Higher competitiveness and productivity where knowledge is the key to success and will remain the organization's best asset but only when shared
 - Employees are better connected with their peers and get faster access to knowledge and available content. Efficiency can be driven much faster, which can reduce costs of managing information
- Fulfilment of employees' needs through online communities and by sharing knowledge and best practices
 - Better work-life balance could be achieved
 - Empowering employees by giving them roles and responsibilities
 - Higher recognition of high-performing individuals

It took 3 years for Atos to get some results out of its zero email initiative. Three years may sound like a very long period, but if you want to succeed you need to be patient. For Atos, 'Social Collaboration implementation is a marathon, not a sprint. Its transformation begins in the inside of our organisation and

Daily Email Traffic		2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Total Worldwide Emails Sent/Received Per Day (B)		182.9	191.4	196.4	201.4	206.6
% Growth			5%	3%	3%	3%
Business Emails Sent/Received Per Day (B)		100.5	108.8	116.2	123.9	132.1
% Growth			8%	7%	7%	7%
Consumer Emails Sent/Received Per Day (B)		82.4	82.6	80.2	77.5	74.5
% Growth			0%	-3%	-3%	-4%

Figure 7 Worldwide email traffic.

Source: <http://sourcedigit.com/4233-much-email-use-daily-182-9-billion-emails-sentreceived-per-day-worldwide/>

gradually grows out to become a real social business ecosystem with employees, partners and customers'.

Zero email: the other side of the coin

Can email be replaced?

Atos' zero email initiative is clearly a success. But the question is: Can this email shift be sustainable and last? Are the employees really more productive by not using their inbox? These questions are not easy to tackle, but if we look at the current statistics (Figure 7), it is evident that email growth is not slowing down. On the contrary, in the business context over 108 billion emails were sent in 2014 globally.

So, can email technology be replaced? For Atos, there is no doubt that it can, and it seems Atos will drive this initiative until the complete eradication of email.

For Marc Bovens there is no doubt about the future of email:

A lot the emails were around the organization of meetings, agreeing with people 'this is the agenda' and then making sure all the decisions reached in the meeting were distributed to all the people involved ... These emails are all gone. We have a set of expert communities now really focused on expertise. It's easier to find someone now. But you can also fundamentally change the process now. To give you a very successful example, take workforce management. More and more, we are setting up job markets complementing our workforce management, top-down, searching for the right expertise that is available tonight or tomorrow. We now post it into a job market for people to act and say, 'I can do this. I'm available next week. This is the right assignment for me, and I will take it'. You reverse the process.

(PCMAG, 2014)

But, if we ask Atos employees about their experience with the zero email initiative, there are some interesting points that suggest that there is always the other side of the coin to look at.

Better for an employee?

Clearly, Atos' zero email initiative has a top-down strategic approach where email is replaced by social collaboration technology being pushed by the top management.

From an employee standpoint, the 'Email overload' problem is not a result of having 'bad email technology', but

rather a consequence of more work, more professional contacts and much faster communication. In other words, the 'information' issue will remain present no matter which technology platform is used. Overall, it is argued that today an average employee processes a much larger quantity of information in 24 h compared to 10 years ago.

Hence, if an email is to be replaced by another technology, the key question is whether the 'information overload' will continue on this new technology or decrease.

Overall, Atos employees claim that 'information overload' did decrease as they stopped using their Inbox, which, consequently, should have resulted in an employee productivity increase. But this still seems to be a 'grey' area, difficult to measure and confirm. Another challenging point is that the quantity of the 'external' email (e.g. coming from partners or third parties) did not decrease, which is directly impacting the 'internal' email overload as employees still have to manage this 'external' information flow.

Look ahead

Atos did not fully achieve its 2013 objective of zero emails, but for Atos' CEO, Thierry Breton, it is clear that the zero email initiative is a very strong contributor to the overall performance of Atos in 2013. Gartner also supports this with a slightly more nuanced and cautious view by saying that 'there is evidence of strong social collaboration adoption and numerous success stories that, in aggregate, could have impacted overall corporate performance'.

The reality is that Atos is continuing this unprecedented shift by increasing its target for 2014 and beyond; the company is convinced that this is the right change.

In the end, one might wonder whether we are witnessing the beginning of a revolution and the end of email as we know it. One final remark from Atos about the zero email initiative provides an interesting view about the paradox vs paradigm challenge of running such an initiative:

If organisations are prepared to recognise this shift and are brave enough to challenge conventional ways of thinking – if the vision of phasing out email and freeing up employees' time to do more important things could, for example, become a reality – then the idea of doing more with less becomes less about paradox and more about paradigm. In other words it's not impossible, it's just difficult, [http://uk.atosconsulting.com/content/dam/uk-atosconsulting/documents/We%20Are/atos-consulting-positioning-paperdoing-](http://uk.atosconsulting.com/content/dam/uk-atosconsulting/documents/We%20Are/atos-consulting-positioning-paperdoing-more-with-less-the-new-productivity-paradigm.pdf)

[more-with-less-the-new-productivity-paradigm.pdf](http://uk.atosconsulting.com/content/dam/uk-atosconsulting/documents/We%20Are/atos-consulting-positioning-paperdoing-more-with-less-the-new-productivity-paradigm.pdf).

Suggested Questions for Class Discussion:

Q1. What are the reasons for the success of the zero email initiative?

Q2. What were the key enablers of the zero email initiative?

Q3. What can drive motivation and engagement of managers and leaders to go through the zero process?

Q4. What are the reasons that led to the zero email initiative?

Q5. How was the social transformation done at Atos?

Q6. What are the main benefits of zero email-driven processes?

Q7. Do you believe that the zero email initiative positively affected Atos' performance?

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