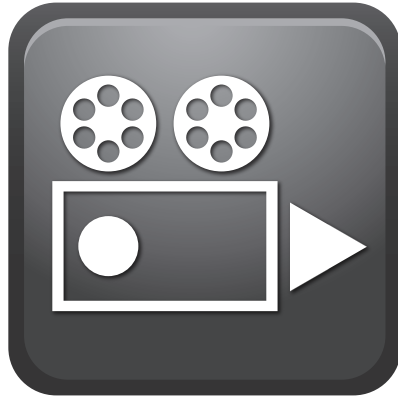


Management Information Systems 16e

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CHAPTER 7 TELECOMMUNICATIONS, THE INTERNET, AND WIRELESS TECHNOLOGY

CASE 2 Virtual Collaboration for IBM Sametime



SUMMARY IBM Sametime is a virtual collaboration environment that is used by firms as a part of their enterprise systems. The objective of these systems is to increase collaboration among remote or mobile work teams while not increasing travel costs and meeting costs. Using video, audio, and interactive software, IBM Sametime allows groups of people to meet electronically even though they are geographically separated.

(a) IBM Sametime

URL https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2GpjjW_M0t4; L=1:37

(b) IBM Sametime meetings on a tablet

URL <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cYGOyyFYvXE>; L=6:51

CASE IBM Sametime is IBM's telepresence and collaboration environment. Formerly known as Lotus Sametime, the technology is widely used by Fortune 500 firms and other firms with a global presence. IBM describes the main features of Sametime as enterprise instant messaging, online meetings with high quality audio and video and resource sharing, mobile device support, and voice and video integration within business networks, all within a flexible platform with a simple user experience. More recent versions of Sametime emphasize integration with social media, mobile devices, and cloud technology.

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Benefits

IBM claims the following benefits for IBM Sametime:

- **Enable faster, expertise-based decisions across the networks of people engaged in your social business:** Provide an immediate and cost-effective way to help teams work with their professional network contacts to respond to customer demands and changing market conditions. Help people spend less time trying to find experts who can answer questions and more time being productive – wherever they are working.
- **Improve customer engagement and answer questions quickly:** Provides an exceptional customer experience which includes immediate access to customer care representatives. The results lead to a stronger customer understanding, improved client satisfaction and loyalty, as well as lower help desk and customer service costs through faster issue resolution.
- **Provide people choice and flexibility with simple and seamless communications to get the job done:** A unified user experience across a broad set of real-time social communications capabilities allows escalation from instant messaging to group chats, voice chats, multi-way video chats or audio/video online meetings.
- **Speed business processes for better outcomes:** Sametime software provides standard Web 2.0 tools that make it easy for software vendors and enterprise developers to embed communications into their business processes.
- **Make it easy for people to access key functions from their desktop and mobile apps:** See within applications who is available for collaboration and then communicate in a single click. Built-in integration of Sametime social communications tools with IBM and Microsoft software to use real-time social communications in context of your work. Sametime also enables integration with third-party business applications.
- **Cut travel, conferencing and communication costs:** See who is available right now and let the software find them. Use online meetings, Voice over IP (VoIP) and more. Organizations can reduce travel expenses, lower audio- and Web-conferencing service expenses, and dramatically reduce telephony expenses. These cost savings are large enough that Sametime implementations typically pay for themselves in under a year.
- **Hire and keep the best talent:** Evolve a more collaborative culture across teams—around the world or in the same building by leveraging social communications. Provide better employee work-life balance by extending the ability to work with their professional networks virtually anywhere while ensuring effective management and working environment.

continued

- **Unify and extend your communications environment:** Gain integrated voice, computer and telephony. Use Sametime software's integrated voice over IP (VoIP) and high-quality desktop video capabilities—or use third-party plug-ins—to integrate with your existing systems. Use optional one-number phone service, soft-phone and intelligent call management capabilities through an existing telephony infrastructure. Sametime software's robust software developer kit (SDK) features an Eclipse-based rich client and Web 2.0 APIs to speed extensions to the platform.
- **Protect your investments in applications, voice and video:** Interfaces with existing data and telephony networks using standards-based tools and middleware help you use your existing infrastructure. Sametime software supports and integrates with multiple client and server operating systems, e-mail platforms, directories, telephony, audio conferencing and video conferencing systems.

One of the major attractions of the newest version of Sametime (Sametime 9) is its ability to provide high quality collaboration via mobile devices like tablet computers. As the world has moved further toward social and mobile, so too has Sametime, with features like a tablet app that enables high quality video and voice communication with users on other platforms and a full compatibility with a range of social technologies. Sametime also fully integrates with the cloud, pulling information about users' schedules and displaying it within the app and storing information from the meeting so that it is easily accessible later on.

VIDEO CASE QUESTIONS

1. Based on the video and text of the case, list and briefly describe five areas where Sametime may increase employee productivity. What do you think will produce the greatest increase in employee productivity?
2. How does IBM Sametime support collaboration?
3. What types of communication are integrated within Sametime's digital environment? What type of communication is missing? Does it make a difference?
4. In what ways has IBM Sametime 9 changed to become social and mobile?
5. How does Sametime use the cloud?

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