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Abstract:

In recent years the advent of social networking has exploded across the Internet. Online communities such as LinkedIn.com and Facebook.com have captured the attention of millions. These environments allow individuals to connect, communicate, and discover new virtual experiences with other people. In the age of Web 2.0, Internet users are redefining the rules of social interaction by leveraging a range of new technologies to create and sustain virtual communities based upon common interests. Communications channels such as blogs and Wikis, amplified by collaborative technologies such as social networking, provide powerful tools for sharing information and sustaining relationships across geographic borders and common areas of learning. What is often referred to as 'collective intelligence,' the body of knowledge created by these social online gatherings of like minds, can easily produce a 'sum of the parts is greater than the whole' effect. The purpose of this research is twofold: first, to evaluate how social networking impacts collaboration and learning within the high tech sales industry and; second to determine if a need exists for the development of an online social networking environment to address the particular interests of the Information Technology (IT) sales professional.

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