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Singapore businesses to get help in social networking deployment

Businesses in Singapore looking to unlock the power of social media can now turn to the Enterprise Social Business Centre of Excellence, a joint collaboration between IBM and the Institute of Systems Science of the National University of Singapore (NUS-ISS).

Supported by the Infocomm Development Authority of Singapore (IDA) and the Singapore Workforce Development Agency (WDA), the centre aims to show businesses how to leverage social media platforms to improve productivity, connect for innovation and create communities for competitive advantage.

The Enterprise Social Business Centre of Excellence will thus focus on three pillars: training, pilot and practice and research and development. Executive seminars targeting C-level executives on the benefits of tapping on social technologies within their businesses will commence in May 2012. Customized two day courses on social media deployment will also commence around the same time. Lim Swee Cheang, director of NUS-ISS said that they expect about 100-300 students in the first year. Training would be conducted by both ISS and IBM staff with additional infrastructure support provided by IBM.

Lim also added that interested individuals and businesses can keep an eye out for subsidies from the IDA and WDA.

Increasing social interest in Asia

Citing a 2011 GlobalWebIndex, Sandy Carter, vice president of social business sales and evangelism at IBM, said that Asia leads the way in social network penetration with Asian nations dominating the top 10 positions.

However, businesses in the region lagged behind their Western counterparts in the adoption of social networking that Carter said have been working silently on integrating social media into their businesses for the past two years.

According to Carter, active engagement of customers was one of the best methods to increase customer and employee satisfaction, time to market and innovation. She said that even if the initial comments were negative, successful engagement could help a business turn this sentiment around.