



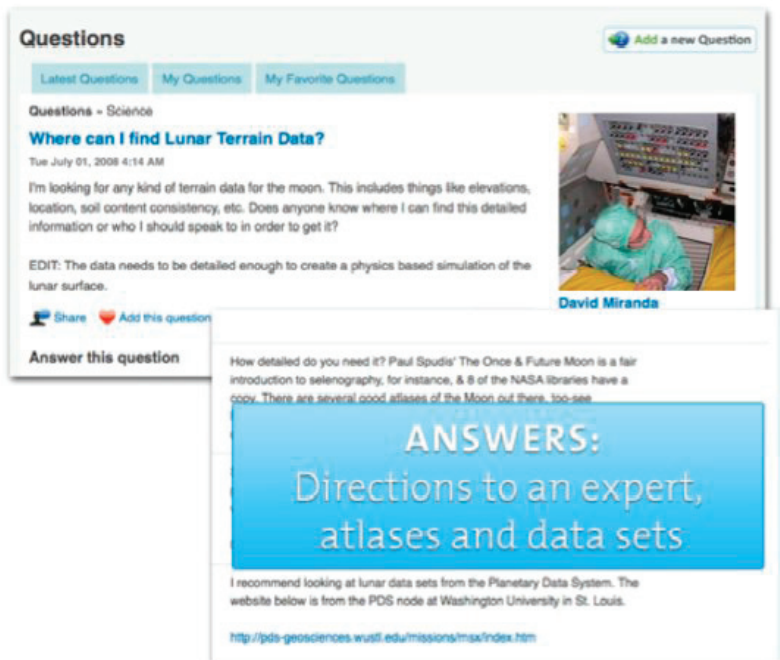
NASAsphere



About The NASAsphere Socialcast Community

In order to investigate how NASA knowledge workers would use and apply online social networking in the NASA environment, the Jet Propulsion Laboratory's Knowledge Architecture and Advanced Technologies team developed and implemented a social networking pilot. The purpose of this social networking pilot was to investigate adoption and use of online social networking technology by NASA employees and contractors to cross-center and organizational boundaries and facilitate collective intelligence.

NASAsphere, powered by Socialcast, was an online social network pilot that enables employees to move across physical boundaries established by disparate locations of centers, to move across traditional communication boundaries established by organizations, and to move outside personal networks, in order to share and foster collective intelligence for the betterment of conducting NASA business.



Source: NASAsphere Case Study, 2009

The NASAsphere Pilot Program

New ideas and new solutions were becoming increasingly difficult to generate by individuals at many levels and the requirements for input from a community of people found across NASA centers to solve problems was growing. The speeds at which information needs to travel, as well as the broadness of its dissemination, were crucial factors to meeting NASA mission goals.

Using Socialcast, NASA created the NASAsphere pilot program to see if they could open up information bottlenecks and speed up the time it takes to get information to the right people to make informed decisions. By the end of the pilot, NASAsphere had proved that it facilitated the sharing of undocumented knowledge people carried with them, their experiences and ideas to create a collective knowledge across NASA centers where at least one person participated.

NASAsphere participants invited 398 of their colleagues from around NASA, with a fifty-five percent acceptance rate.

Easy to Use

- Easy interfaces for content contribution
- Search existing content and experts
- Pilot participants rated functionality and tasks of product as easy to use

Easy to Grow

- Pilot grew from 78 activated accounts to 296 activated accounts in 60 days
- Invitation system means viral growth by knowledge workers to grow the NASAsphere community

Easy to Manage

- Administrative dashboard to manage lists, users, services
- Vendor is very responsive to bugs and issues
- Pilot managed with .5 contractor time

Easy to Integrate

- Back end MySQL and Ruby on Rails
- Pilot tested integration of LinkedIn, Twitter, and NASA STI RSS feeds

Cost Effective

- Cheaper than a cell phone bill and information can be reused over time

Source: NASAsphere Case Study, 2009

The NASAsphere community grew from 78 initial activated accounts, to 295 by the end of the 60-day pilot. The numbers of answers and comments posted in response to “questions,” and “ideas” showed NASA employees actively sharing knowledge and collaborating. Ninety-three percent of the questions answered were by a different NASA center than where the question was posted.

Overall, participants kept to the expectation that NASAsphere should be used for work-related knowledge sharing. Of the nearly eighty questions posted, only five were considered to be “non-work” related, but weren’t considered inappropriate. Overall, the majority of users “strongly agreed” or “agreed” saying, “it was easy to communicate openly,” and that discussions and comments were “on topic,” “helpful,” and “appropriate.”

Source: “Findings from the NASAsphere Pilot” Jet Propulsion Laboratory - California Institute of Technology Knowledge Architecture and Technology, By Celeste Merryman, Copyright 2008 California Institute of Technology, Government Sponsorship Acknowledged

