



The Tens: Ten Enterprise Social Media Tips for Leveraging the Serendipity Economy

The Serendipity Economy is a challenge to industrial age assumptions. Developed by Daniel W. Rasmus, the Serendipity Economy framework asserts that time delays in value, network dynamics and other factors make it impossible to predict the value that may be generated by a social network. Overtime, as the *serendipity potential* of a network increases, value is inevitable, but neither the character or the magnitude of that value can be predetermined.

1. **Go big or go home** Enterprise social networking is about, well, networking. Limit the network to a few people in a pilot and the results will also be limited. The only way to create serendipity is by letting people connect.
2. **Integrate Social Profiles with Performance** Before a new employee completes his or her first day, their social profile should be created and ready to searched. The social profile provides the searchable parameters that let others know about a persons interests and expertise.
3. **Make the System Accessible** Don't just deploy software and hope for the best. Design an inclusive social media experience. If the technology overwhelms or underperforms, then it will be quickly abandoned. Successful social media often displaces legacy systems. If this doesn't happen, then you don't have it right.
4. **Give people permission to collaborate** Too often organizations look for incentives to get people to collaborate, forgetting that they gave their workers neither time nor permission to go outside their assignments and routines to seek new ways to provide value.
5. **Track results** There is no metadata for a serendipitous activity. Some organizations are using hashtags (#) to identify #value inside a conversation they think will lead to value.
6. **Learn from Failure** Not all serendipitous activity is going to lead to positive results, but all negative results do lead to learning. Use social media as the channel for capturing lessons learned and discussing what to improve or what to avoid.
7. **Look beyond productivity and efficiency** If all measurements focus on cost reductions or productivity improvements, then Serendipity Economy activity will be overlooked. Organizations need to make a special effort to recognize serendipitous activity and its resulting value because their instruments aren't designed to reveal it.
8. **Executives: lead by doing** not by saying you support enterprise social networking. Executive involvement validates the network as a sanctioned tool for work, which helps drive engagement and increases the potential for realizing value. If executives don't actively participate, they devalue the efforts of others and eventually derail open, collaborative work.
9. **Celebrate value** When value is realized, recognize it, its source and its participants. Make this policy and practice in order to reinforce that people have permission to collaborate, and that their efforts are appreciated.
10. **Be patient** Serendipity Economy results won't appear overnight. That doesn't mean great things aren't happening, just that they haven't bubbled to the surface yet. Stay vigilant and if you do the other things in this list, your patience will pay off.