IdeaFactory: Using Social Media to Engage Employees at TSA

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Homeland Security
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What is IdeaFactory?

• IdeaFactory is a custom-built social network that empowers all TSA employees to:
  • submit ideas,
  • provide comments on how to improve new concepts, and
  • rate ideas that should be recommended for implementation
• It uses social media concepts to harness the “wisdom of the crowds” and expand upon the traditional suggestion box

As of January 1, 2010, there were:
• 10,700 ideas
• 84,000 comments
• 318,000 ratings
• 28,000 users
• 50+ new programs
Users Build Solutions to Problems

Build New Idea

What is the problem?

How difficult would it be? How much would it cost?

What steps would you take to implement the solution?

What is your proposed solution or remedy?

What does this problem represent?

What problem are you trying to solve?

In posting your ideas, please consider and answer the following if possible:

My Idea...
The User Community Rates and Collaborates on the Ideas to Make Them Better

• Users rate ideas on a scale of 1-5 light bulbs

• Toolbox allows users to collaborate with peers and track ideas

• Users provide comments to enhance ideas and inform employees
Program Office Experts Respond to All Evaluated Ideas, Whether or Not They Make the Cut
The White House
Named TSA
IdeaFactory a
Model of Open Government
Getting Started: 5 Tips for Establishing a Crowdsourcing Initiative

• Identify the business need
• Ensure senior leadership champions effort and provides support
• Understand your users
• Focus your social media mission
• It’s OK to start small and grow
Lesson Learned #1: Cultivate the Community

- Keep the program fresh with new challenges, frequent communications and regular updates
- Listen to what your users want and respond
- Use effective moderation to create a collaborative atmosphere on the site
- Identify and celebrate champions and successes
- Enable employees to help other employees
Lesson Learned #2: Transparency is Key

- Say “why” you can’t implement ideas
- Be flexible and open to changing your processes
- Expect negativity-you can’t make everyone like everything
- Establish thresholds and set employees’ expectations for what happens with ideas
- Give people an inside look at who and how the program is managed
Lesson Learned #3: It’s a Program, Not a Web Site

- Enhanced security
- More efficient operations
- Work/life improvements
- Higher morale
Questions?
Email ideafactory.tsa@dhs.gov