

Cisco Europe

i-Zone

- Collect Ideas from Employees and Identify Opportunities for the European Market
- Collaborate Across the Entire Business with Executive Support
- Execute Actionable Ideas that have a Real Business Impact



Cisco Systems is a worldwide networking, electronics, voice, and communications technology provider. The company is a pioneer in technology that changes the way companies connect, collaborate and succeed. Cisco continues to lead its industry with their diverse technologies and a commitment to innovation serving global key markets, in particular Europe.

The Challenge

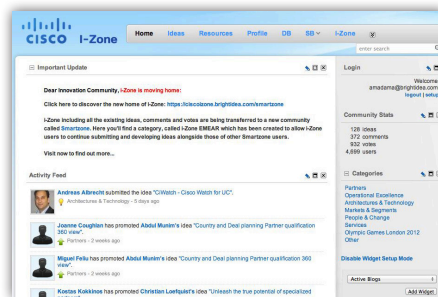
Cisco has always focused on the latest technology innovations. Back in 2008, the European arm of Cisco renewed its focus on sustaining competitive advantage through utilizing the fast internal network of knowledge and intellectual capital. Cisco Europe was not starting from scratch. A framework for employee ideation had been in place in other areas at Cisco using Brightidea software. The fundamental challenge however remained how to create real business impact in Europe that was measured and sustainable out of running an innovation program.

Tasked with creating an innovation strategy for Europe, Matt Asman, Cisco's European Innovation Manager, sought to utilize Web 2.0 technology matched with tangible business goals. Clear ownership was needed to build a holistic program for the company that was not limited to broadly based employee ideation. For Asman, the goal was to move beyond innovation as a core value, but rather a strategic goal backed by tools that facilitated opportunities for continuous innovation across multiple business functions. Business goals included better productivity, increased competitive advantage, as well as increasing employee, customer and partner satisfaction.

The Solution

Cisco set up its Innovation Europe programme in 2008 as a formal mechanism to capture and share innovation across the company's European markets. Its objectives were to explore all the possible sources of innovation in all areas of the business and to harness the creativity of Cisco employees, in support of future business development throughout the European region. At the heart of this internal programme was the i-Zone, an idea management portal powered by Brightidea that supports focused ideation, feedback and voting in an online community.

Equally important to the process and tools was tackling the perception of what innovation means at Cisco. Asman states, "there was this perception in the company that innovation was all about Research and Development or New Product Development, and I really believed we as a company needed to expand our thinking



beyond Innovation being all about R&D."

The European arm of i-Zone focused on a number of key strategic priorities to improve and sustain Cisco's thought-leadership; create a next generation innovation workforce, build an effective end-to-



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MATT ASMAN

Innovation Manager at Cisco

Industry

- Technology Services

Challenges

- Improve productivity and innovation across all areas of the business
- Engage and educate employees about the importance of innovation

Solution

- Dedicated Innovation Program supported by Brightidea software and tied to specific business units and executive-level support.

Results

- 400+ Ideas
- Over 5,000 users
- 5,000 + comments/votes
- 10+ Ideas under development
- 1 idea with multi-million dollar revenue potential

end innovation process, deploy the right technology and platform to facilitate the process and generate the quantity and quality of ideas to make innovation successful.

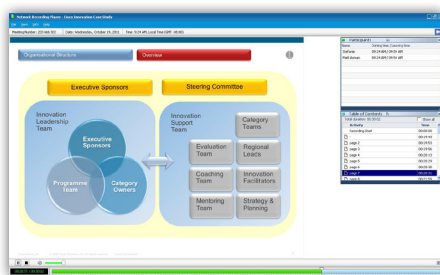
The creation of a steering committee and leadership teams helped build the right organizational structure to support the program. The enterprise i-Zone platform was expanded and branded for specific campaigns connected to various business units within Cisco. Employees were able to submit ideas in six categories: Partners, Operational Excellence, Technology, Markets, People and Services. Ideas went through three stages of review by category 'owners', by an Evaluation Committee and by an Executive Leadership Team, before the strongest ideas received commitment from the business.

Results

During its first 15 months, i-Zone attracted more than 3,500 registered users and generated hundred's of ideas, comments and community interactions. During the most recent phase of the innovation program Cisco has successfully increased the number

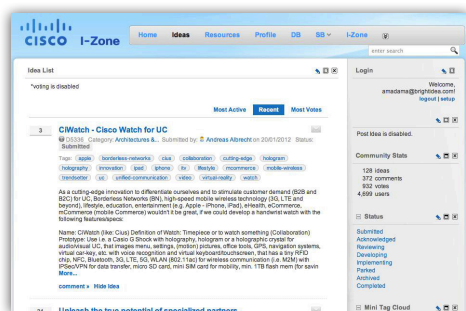
business. Three of the ideas are now close to being implemented, with several in prototype and two expected to create significant revenue potential for the company within 3-5 years.

Cisco is always looking for ways to improve participation levels in i-Zone and to stimulate and maintain employees' interest in the innovation process. One of the most recent enhancements is innovation challenges, where people are asked to focus on an industry-wide or customer-specific issue. Each innovation challenge, which involves



virtual innovation brainstorming, lasts for three months after which the ideas that are generated go through Cisco's established evaluation process. This approach has successfully generated hundred's of additional ideas for the company to pursue.

The next phase of Cisco's European Innovation Program will see i-Zone rolled out to selected partners within their worldwide channel partner program, a move likely to create greater levels of partner engagement and new opportunities to maintain the company's technology leadership.



of ideas generated through the internal innovation portal by nearly 50% and grown the community to nearly 5,000 users.

Cisco's Executive Leadership Team have approved 10 of the ideas submitted, which have progressed through the system to receive support and investment from the

“A single new technology idea that was posted to the i-Zone and went through our evaluation process is now about to go to market with multi-million dollar revenue potential in the next 3 years.”

MATT ASMAN
Innovation Manager at Cisco



For an online demo and more information contact Brightidea today at 415-814-1387

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