



IBM Software Group

WebSphere Commerce V7.0

Social commerce overview



@business on demand.

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This presentation introduces social commerce in WebSphere® Commerce version 7.

Goals

- To introduce what social commerce is and the benefits it can provide for an e-commerce site
- To summarize the social commerce features available in WebSphere Commerce V7



At the end of this presentation, you should understand what social commerce is and how it can benefit an e-commerce site. You should also understand the social commerce capabilities enabled in WebSphere Commerce version 7.

Agenda

- Introduction to social commerce
- Social commerce features in WebSphere Commerce
- Social commerce administration overview



This presentation begins with an introduction to the concept of social commerce and then examines the social commerce features enabled in WebSphere Commerce version 7. The presentation concludes with an overview of administration tasks.

What is social commerce

- An application of Web 2.0 social networking concepts to product marketing
- A decision to invest in community building among current and future customers
- A way to engage customers in marketing your products for you



Social commerce, at a high level, represents the introduction of social networking capabilities into e-commerce. The popularity of social networking, associated with Web 2.0, has been growing rapidly over the past few years and social commerce aims to focus that popularity into product marketing opportunities.

Adding social commerce capabilities to your Web site is essentially a decision to invest in creating a community that your current and future customers can participate in together. They can share and learn from each other in an open environment that is free from traditional marketing jargon and product claims.

Creating an open community environment shows you respect your customers' opinions and this respect enables you to engage them in promoting your products for you in their own words. You are taking word of mouth into an electronic form where its potential reach is much broader than a single customer's personal connections.

Benefits of social commerce

- Creates customer loyalty
- Drives traffic through the site
- Expands search engine presence
- Increases purchase rates



Adding social commerce features to your commerce site can have many advantages. By building a sense of community around your brands, you can enhance customer loyalty and drive repeat purchases.

As shoppers come to think of your site as a source of information they can trust, it will drive more traffic through your site. Similarly, having community generated content that links back to your products can enhance your search engine ranking, driving more new customers to your site.

Also, the presence of content that has been created by actual users of your products rather than by your marketing team can increase a shopper's confidence in their purchase decision. This can result in a higher conversion rate of browsers to buyers.

Applying Web 2.0 to WebSphere Commerce



In version 6, WebSphere Commerce uses the Dojo open source toolkit to provide shoppers with a more interactive, engaging shopping experience. Enhanced UI widgets and Ajax updates in the Madisons starter store are evident when browsing the store, selecting items for purchase and completing the checkout process.

In version 7, WebSphere Commerce is expanding the reach of Web 2.0 capabilities to the entire shopping life cycle from demand generation to remarketing. This reach is achieved by adding support for active participation and communities through social commerce. Communities can build word of mouth and help create buzz around a particular product, increasing demand. After a purchase is made, comments and questions about the product can be discussed in the community and shoppers can help each other. Reviews and blogs help extend the marketing of a product beyond the what retailer-driven initiatives can accomplish

Social commerce features in V7

- Category blogs
- Photo gallery
- Social profiles
- Product reviews and ratings
- Multi-channel precision marketing



The social commerce feature in WebSphere Commerce provides integration support for several common social commerce technologies.

Blogs allow a customer to submit a free-form comment, called a blog entry, about a category of products. Other users can comment on a blog entry, creating a conversation among the category's visitors.

The photo gallery features allows shoppers to upload photos related to a category. Similar to blogs, other shoppers can comment on the photos.

Public social profiles allow shoppers to share a limited amount of information about themselves with other shoppers. Shoppers feel like they can get to know each other and those who contribute to the social content can build a reputation within the community.

Product reviews and ratings allow shoppers to provide specific feedback about a product that is aggregated to form an overall rating. Ratings and reviews can help other shoppers to make purchase decisions by giving them access to multiple opinions, pros and cons about different products. Even though they don't know any of the reviewers there is a certain amount of trust formed by reading reviews written by customers rather than seller provided product descriptions.

In order to encourage participation in the social commerce community, new marketing support has been designed that allows you to target contributors. You can design promotions that reward customers for creating social content such as writing their first blog entry or adding a comment. You can also create user segments around participation in blogs, photos, and reviews and ratings. For example: power reviewers, participants and readers. Multi-channel precision marketing is managed through the Management Center Marketing tool.

Feature providers in V7

- Integration implemented using WebSphere sMash technology
- Bazaarvoice provides ratings and reviews
- IBM Lotus® Connections and Pluck provide blogs, user profiles, and photo galleries



WebSphere Commerce does not directly implement social commerce features. Rather, it relies on integration with external products and services. The integration of these products and services are accomplished with WebSphere sMash technology.

Bazaarvoice provides a service for hosting ratings and reviews. Pluck provides a service for hosting blogs, profiles, and galleries. These vendors require service agreements separate from the WebSphere Commerce product license. IBM Lotus Connections is a product that also provides hosting for blogs, profiles, and galleries.

Category page with social commerce

The screenshot displays the Madisons e-commerce website's outdoor furniture category page. The page layout includes a navigation menu on the left, a main product grid, and a social commerce section at the bottom. The social commerce section is divided into two parts: 'Outdoor blog' and 'Outdoor Photo Gallery'. The 'Outdoor blog' section shows three user-generated posts with profile pictures, names, and timestamps. The 'Outdoor Photo Gallery' section shows three user-uploaded photos of outdoor furniture. Two blue callout boxes with lines pointing to the social commerce content are labeled 'Blogs' and 'Photos'. The page footer contains the text 'Social commerce overview' and '© 2009 IBM Corporation'.

This screen capture shows an overview of the Madisons category page with social commerce enabled. User generated content in the form of blogs and photos is displayed at the bottom of the page. Social commerce page content is provided through a custom Dojo widget that you add to your store page.

Product page with social commerce

The screenshot shows the Madisons website product page for a 'Patio Set'. The page includes a navigation menu, a search bar, and a product description. A callout box labeled 'Share to social networks' points to social sharing icons (Facebook, Twitter, Digg, Delicious, etc.) located below the 'Add to Cart' button. Another callout box labeled 'Reviews' points to the 'Reviews' tab, which displays user-generated content including an overall rating of 4.5 out of 5 stars and two individual reviews with star ratings and text.

10

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This screen capture shows an overview of the Madisons product page with social commerce enabled. There are links to share the product information with an external network. Links to popular social networking sites such as Digg, Delicious, Facebook and Google bookmarks allow shoppers to easily bookmark a product they are interested in and share the information with their online network of friends and family.

User generated content in the form of product reviews is displayed in a tab on the bottom half of the page. Since reviews are contained in a tab, they share screen real estate with the product description.

Creating blog entries

Outdoor Blog [Back](#)

Create Entry

Enter a title (required)

Write an entry (required)

Create The administrative policy of this site prevents content from displaying immediately.

11

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A blog is typically a means for a person (or small group) to share thoughts, ideas, or information. In social commerce, this sharing of information is directed towards products or categories of products for sale on a Web site. Where product reviews are typically very concise, blogs offer shoppers a way to share opinions, stories, general recommendations and even ask questions. The only restriction imposed by the social commerce design is that a blog entry must relate to something in the store's catalog. This restriction is enforced by placing the UI for creating blog entries within the category display pages.

The screenshot shows a web page titled "Viewing blog entries" from the IBM Software Group. The main content is a blog entry titled "Desk Lamps Blog" with the text "Which adjustable lamp is best?" by John, dated 11/9/2009 10:59 AM. Below the title is a question: "Can anyone recommend one you've tried?". There is a "back" link. Below this is a section for "Inappropriate Content?" with a "Comments" link. A comment by John, dated 11/9/2009 12:17 PM, asks "Is the brass lamp worth the extra money?". Below the comment is a "Recommend this entry?" section with a "Thumbs up" button and a note that the entry has been recommended 0 times. There is a "Write a comment" text area and a "Create" button. A message at the bottom of the text area states: "The administrative policy of this site prevents content from displaying immediately." Callouts point to various elements: "User generated comments" points to the comment section; "Customer blog entry" points to the main blog title and text; "Community moderation" points to the "Inappropriate Content?" section; and "User generated ratings" points to the "Thumbs up" button. The footer contains "Social commerce overview" and "© 2009 IBM Corporation".




Blog entries can be viewed by both registered and unregistered shoppers. In addition to reading the blog entry, a registered shopper can participate in the online discussion several ways. They can contribute directly to the conversation by leaving a comment or rating the usefulness of the entry to them. Any registered shopper who has a concern about the appropriateness of a blog entry's content can easily take action to notify a moderator about their concern. This is not a replacement for regular moderation by an administrator, but does give the community the power to help keep the discussion meaningful and on topic.

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Blog listing

Outdoor Blog

Create Entry Refresh

	Very happy with our purchase by: John 11/7/2009 6:27 AM	0	1
	We love our Madisons furniture! by: Tracy 11/7/2009 6:10 AM	0	0
	Cedar furniture is great! by: Sue 10/5/2009 6:55 PM	4	0

[View more entries](#)

Multiple blog entries about the category

Blog entry comments

Blog entry recommendation

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When more than one shopper writes a blog entry about a particular category, a list of entries is available for shoppers to view. Each item in the list links to the full text view of the blog entry. Shoppers are guided to the most interesting entries by those who came before them. The rating and number of comments associated with each entry is summarized in the list.

Photo gallery

The screenshot shows a web interface for a photo gallery. At the top, there is a blue header with 'IBM Software Group' on the left and the 'IBM' logo on the right. Below the header, the title 'Photo gallery' is displayed in a large blue font. A callout box on the left contains the text: 'Photo, user name, timestamp, rating and comments'. The main content area is titled 'Outdoor Photo Gallery' and includes links for 'Upload Photo' and 'Refresh'. It displays three photo entries in a grid:

- Our new patio set:** A photo of a patio set. User: John, timestamp: 11/7/2009 6:29 AM, rating: 0, comments: 0.
- Nice set for a sm.:** A photo of a small table and chairs. User: Alice, timestamp: 10/5/2009 8:02 PM, rating: 0, comments: 0.
- A view of the park:** A photo of a park view. User: Tom, timestamp: 10/5/2009 7:50 PM, rating: 0, comments: 0.

Below the grid is a link 'View more photos'. At the bottom of the page, there is a footer with a colorful bar on the left, the text 'Social commerce overview', the page number '14', and the copyright notice '© 2009 IBM Corporation'.

Similar in structure to the blog listing is the photo gallery. Photos are something that people naturally tend to share. Web sites like Flickr are dedicated to sharing photos and social networking sites like Facebook provide photo gallery capabilities. Allowing customers to post photos to your Web site can generate more interest in products as potential buyers see what real buyers have done with a product. By comparison, staged marketing photos often lack a “real life” feel. Shared photos can also lead people to think of themselves owning the product and enjoying life the way the person is in the photo.

Viewing ratings and reviews

The screenshot shows a product review interface for 'Patio Set Reviews'. At the top, there are tabs for 'Description', 'Attachments', and 'Reviews'. The 'Reviews' tab is active. The overall rating is displayed as 4.5 out of 5 stars. Below this, there are sort options: 'Highest rating' and 'Newest post'. A list of reviews follows, each with a user profile picture, a title, a star rating, a text review, and the reviewer's name and date. The first review is by John, dated 11/6/2009, with a rating of 5 stars. The second review is by Alice, dated 10/5/2009, with a rating of 4 stars. At the bottom of the page, there is a footer with 'Social commerce overview' and '© 2009 IBM Corporation'.

Overall rating

Sort options

List of reviews

15

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Ratings and reviews provide both a quantitative and qualitative summary of what shoppers think about a product. The overall rating is displayed at the top of the page followed by a list of the individual reviews. Reviews can be sorted by date created or by rating value.

Create new review

Rating

Title

Review details

Description Attachments **Reviews**

Patio Set Reviews [Back](#)

Write a review

* indicates required fields

* Click to rate product
★ ★ ★ ★ ★ (Select a rating)

* Enter a title

* Comments

[Create](#)

**The administrative policy of this site prevents content from displaying immediately.

16

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Registered shoppers can enter new product reviews. The rating value is selected on a scale of one to five and the review consists of a title and comments field.

Social profile creation

New registration option

Create an Online Community profile:

* indicates required fields

* Screen Name:

* E-mail Address:

Hometown:

Birthday:
 yyyy/mm/dd

Gender:

Interests:

The maximum character length is 150



Creating a social profile allows customers to share minimal information about themselves but still create an online presence. Profiles help people new to your site develop a sense of joining a community. They can find past purchasers with similar interests sharing experiences with a product they might be considering. The type and amount of information captured in the social profile is configurable. Social profiles are created when a shopper registers on the site and can be edited at any time from the My Account page.

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My Account page

Cart: 0 item(s) subtotal: \$0.00

My Account

Settings

Personal Information

My Address Book

Quick Checkout Profile

Wish Lists

Personal Wish List

My Orders

My Orders

My Coupons

My Coupons

Social Content

My Blogs

My Photos

My Reviews

My Account Summary

Welcome, John McDonald

This is your account summary. You can change your personal information and manage the options available for your account.

Personal Information

Name	John McDonald
Address	23 Elm St
City	Calgary
E-mail	jmcDonald@ibm.com

Social Content Profile

Screen Name: John
E-mail Address: jmcDonald@ibm.com
Hometown: Calgary
Birthday:
Gender: Male
Interests: Hiking, cooking

[Edit](#)

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The My Account page is the one place where a shopper's photos, blog entries and reviews are not organized by catalog structure. The social content pages provide a summary of all their contributions. Shoppers can also update their social profile.

Administration tasks

- Options vary by provider
- Initial configuration
 - ▶ Example: are blog comments allowed
- Ongoing moderation
 - ▶ Reviewing content before it is publicly displayed
 - ▶ Modifying / removing offensive content
 - ▶ Responding to content flagged as inappropriate



Since this presentation did not go into specific vendor implementations of the features provided in social commerce, a detailed discussion of administration tasks is not appropriate at this time.

In general, tasks fall into two categories: initial configuration and ongoing moderation.

Initial configuration is the result of your social commerce planning phase where you make decisions about what type of content you want to include. For example, you might choose to support shopper blog entries but not comments on the entries. This initial configuration choice also has an impact on your UI since you won't need to provide an area to enter comments or include them in the summary list of blog entries.

Once you have decided what social content you want to support on your Web site, the next phase of administration is ongoing moderation. Depending on the social commerce software or service provider, this might or might not be done by someone in your organization. Regardless of whoever performs the task, some level of moderation is needed to ensure the contributions are on topic and not offensive.

There are three types of moderation, but the support available will vary by provider. The first type is pre-moderation. In this case, someone reviews all user-generated content before it is published on the site. When a shopper submits content, they will not see it on the site right away. The second type is post-moderation. Here, user content is displayed immediately and the moderator scans the content looking for problematic material. The moderator might choose to make modifications to a contributor's content and leave it on the site or it might be necessary to remove content entirely. The third type is reactive moderation. This is typically done in addition to pre or post moderation. Reactive moderation tasks include reviewing and making decisions on content flagged as inappropriate by shoppers on the Web site.

Summary

- Introduction to social commerce
- Social commerce features in WebSphere Commerce
- Social commerce administration overview



This presentation introduced the concepts of social commerce and then examined the social commerce features enabled in WebSphere Commerce version 7. The presentation concluded with an overview of administration tasks.

References

- **Social commerce**

<http://publib.boulder.ibm.com/infocenter/wchelp/v7r0m0/index.jsp?topic=/com.ibm.commerce.soccom.doc/concepts/csmsocoverview.htm>

- **Working with social commerce widgets**

<http://publib.boulder.ibm.com/infocenter/wchelp/v7r0m0/index.jsp?topic=/com.ibm.commerce.soccom.doc/tasks/tsmsocwidgets.htm>

- **Troubleshooting social commerce**

<http://publib.boulder.ibm.com/infocenter/wchelp/v7r0m0/index.jsp?topic=/com.ibm.commerce.soccom.doc/refs/rmsoctroubleshooting.htm>



This slide contains some useful references for social commerce in version 7.

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