Ensuring productive collaboration between the service delivery organizations of large enterprises and their clients is no easy task, especially in the midst of ever-accelerating globalization and with delivery organizations assuming responsibility for increasingly complex, judgment-related tasks. Traditional tools – from phones to emails, from instant messaging to the occasional video conference – do not provide a conclusive answer. Instead, a surprisingly useful combination of tried-and-true Net Promoter Score (NPS) analytics and “big data” social network analysis (SNA) can lead to deep, granular and timely insights into functional collaborations (or otherwise) in large, globally distributed work groups.

The need for zero surprise governance in large service delivery organizations

While back-office and other support service delivery models have significantly matured over the past two decades, the methods for measuring client satisfaction in extended enterprises—and governing large, geographically spread groups—have scarcely evolved beyond email, phone calls, and PowerPoint presentations. However, these are suboptimal tools for ascertaining the health of relationships between clients and providers, be they internal or external. They also fall woefully short of capturing accurate insights and pinpointing the resolutions required to enhance the effectiveness of large, complex, matrixed shared services or of offshore captive or outsourced delivery environments.

Indeed, significant challenges in managing these environments exist. People distributed across geographies and cultures may sometimes be unable to communicate the nuances needed to solve issues quickly, especially those that are more complex and judgment intensive. These issues are compounded by the limited overlap of time zones, which potentially prolongs the time needed to resolve misunderstandings. Perhaps most importantly, the human touch is often lost—and it is hard to replace that touch with an ERP workflow.

Given the criticality of maintaining positive relationships with clients, extended enterprise organizations must obtain highly actionable insights into the communications with their providers and attain “zero surprise governance” in their client loyalty and satisfaction initiatives.

“Zero surprise governance” is a term that describes the ability to gather, absorb, and filter communication-related data in a way that allows rapid detection of client satisfaction problems throughout large, extended organizations across clients and their service providers, be they internal or external. It prevents businesses from being blindsided by difficult-to-identify relationship issues.

Our experiences in transforming and running global delivery organizations as part of our clients’ larger operations pushed us to investigate the possibility of turning the drawbacks of distance into unprecedented advantages. Our initial realization was that people working remotely from each other leave a trace of their informal problem solving, information sharing, and overall feedback behavior.

This trace extends far beyond that of the usual notices logged in ERP messaging systems and is one that only humans can leave. These traces could lead to understanding the origin of conflicts and, perhaps, solutions for them.
Today, we have the ability to tap into the power of two complementary disciplines that enable us to advance the state of governance and collaboration in large, globally extended organizations: Net Promoter Score (NPS) and social network analysis (SNA) of email communications.

**The NPS component of the equation**

NPS\(^1\) is a mature but underused client loyalty metric. There are numerous reasons some enterprises fail to embrace it fully or at times obtain lackluster results when they do. Indeed, NPS requires a level of organizational discipline that many delivery organizations do not possess.

First, the multitude of process owners from which data must be gathered may often suffer from survey fatigue, and it is difficult to engage a large sample size every six months.

Second, businesses fail to realize that process owners’ NPS is a lead indicator of the all-important, yet difficult to obtain, C-suite NPS. In fact, in our experience, process owner scores predict those of senior executives up to 69% of the time.

Third, analysis of the key drivers of NPS (see Figure 1) is quite challenging, and most organizations lack the in-house knowledge and expertise to generate truly actionable results. Thus, some do not fully utilize NPS, even though the scores are likely to reflect on the organization’s ability to keep large groups of globally distributed service providers aligned with the needs of their clients.

Fourth, negative, damaging sentiments can fester during the six-month time lag between process owner surveys. Catching dissatisfaction at its inception makes solutions easier—but that detection is often left to the conventional, coarse means of escalations and paper-based performance reporting.

Finally, the responses from participants are far from granular, are prone to biases from an individual’s own filters and perspectives, and might fail to provide a roadmap for corrective actions to boost client satisfaction.

**Enter SNA**

SNA is a big data discipline that monitors, harnesses, and filters relevant relationship-health data in a timely manner and helps diagnose the effectiveness of collaboration amidst large groups of people, such as a network.

Genpact believed an NPS could be a highly valuable tool when coupled with an SNA of email communications to create a powerful analysis of client satisfaction indicators.

To test its theory, Genpact’s Innovation Group partnered with research scientists at the Center for Collective Intelligence (CCI) at MIT’s Sloan School of Management. CCI’s mission is to advance science supporting the interaction between humans and machines and create organizations that are more effective.

MIT\(^2\) previously worked on theories explaining, through advanced statistical analysis, how effective collaboration between people can be detected by their behavior as manifested in their interactions. They used RFID devices and organizational maps to successfully test their hypotheses in innovation and other environments. The Genpact team, however, introduced a different hypothesis: could email exchange traces help explain the development of NPS? In other words, they wanted to test whether using email traffic as a “marker” could predict customer satisfaction.

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Figure 1: Additional focus needed on Operational Performance, Business Impact and People Management as they drive greater impact on NPS

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\(^1\) An NPS, as described by netpromoter.com, “enables organizations to measure their performance through their customers’ eyes.”

\(^2\) Specifically, Peter A. Gloor, a research scientist at the Center for Collective Intelligence at MIT’s Sloan School of Management where he leads a project exploring Collaborative Innovation Networks (COIN).
Together, Genpact and MIT began testing several hypotheses for a well-functioning team. Would a clear and stable set of “nodal people” for the distribution of information be a valuable, positive sign of productive collaboration? Is there a correlation between the speed and cadence of email communications and a functional group of people? What would the tone of emails reveal about the overall collaboration quality?

Genpact and MIT then tested the hypotheses using an Internet-based social network analysis software program to scrutinize metadata from the June to December 2012 email communication log associated with 14 of Genpact’s major accounts.

The results of the study—which validated the above hypotheses—drove Genpact to develop a communications scorecard framework that could help predict customer satisfaction across five analytical dimensions: central leaders, steady leadership, responsiveness, initiative, and sentiment. The team then industrialized the analytics work through a robust work process (see Figure 2).

By continuously monitoring these key analytical dimensions across the members of large teams, organizations can gain powerful directional insights into performance-related issues that may seriously impact customer satisfaction. Further, by utilizing an at-a-glance dashboard and regular alerts, they can access an immediately actionable remediation roadmap.

A new era of large, global operations management

No organization can manage what it cannot measure. This issue becomes especially pressing in large, fragmented, global work groups and the operations they run. Given increased globalization and the specialization of business functions, these conditions will continue to grow in importance. We feel that radical, proactive, specialized solutions are needed. By applying NPSs’ and big-data-related SNA analyses to teams’ email communications, a business is empowered with the directional yet material insights necessary to uncover early manifestations of dysfunctions in collaborations between large groups of people in an extended enterprise. In addition, the business may be able to rectify issues before they become intractable and service delivery degrades.

Analytics have helped improve business processes for some time now—from NPSs’ to the Smart Enterprise Process (SEP®) framework that Genpact uses for its own operations. The use of big data and network analytics have to provide scientifically rigorous yet immediately applicable method for the management of global operations and may indeed go beyond the current scope of use.

Figure 2: Determining network satisfaction – how it works

- Monthly collection email data (excluding body) between client and delivery teams
- Internal client communications only tracked as part of email thread
- Monthly reports across five parameters to detect trends
- Individual parameter scores are flagged; they can represent “false positives” and are directional but may warrant investigations
- If warranted, additional network analysis is performed to pinpoint the source of the flagged scores, e.g., who are the network leaders

Genpact’s zero surprise governance framework enables granular, timely identification of organizational nodes (a particular individual or a group) that may experience problems, resulting in timely investigations and corrective actions. It breaks down “big box” extended-enterprise organizational boundaries by providing views directly into the box, thereby allowing for quick rectification of client satisfaction issues.
Genpact Limited (NYSE: G) is a global leader in transforming and running business processes and operations, including those that are complex and industry-specific. Our mission is to help clients become more competitive by making their enterprises more intelligent, meaning more adaptive, innovative, globally effective and connected to their own clients. Genpact stands for Generating Impact – visible in better management of risk, regulations, costs and growth for hundreds of long-term clients including more than 100 of the Fortune Global 500. We offer an unbiased, agile combination of smarter processes, analytics and technology, which limits upfront investments and enhances future adaptability. We have 60,000+ employees in 24 countries with key management and corporate offices in New York City. Behind our single-minded passion for process and operational excellence is the Lean and Six Sigma heritage of a former General Electric division that has served GE businesses for more than 15 years.

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