Aragon Research

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Social Network Analysis
Just Got Better with Saba DNA

Summary: Saba announced a robust social network analysis tool that works as part of its Saba People Cloud social platform.

Event: At its Saba Global Summit user group event in Miami, Saba announced its Dynamic Network Analysis tool as part of a broader set of announcements regarding its socially enabled platform called Saba People Cloud.

Analysis: While known primarily as a learning and talent provider, Saba has been quietly expanding its enterprise social network (ESN) capabilities. With a social network analysis tool Saba calls Dynamic Network Analysis (DNA), enterprises can understand how people and the networks they are part of interact. DNA helps organizations understand how people and teams interact, and it can also help identify high-potential talent.

Since the 1990s, most analytics has focused on data and information. Very little time and money have been spent on people and how they work. Social network analysis, which is about how people, groups of people and networks of people interact, is poised to go mainstream with offerings such as Saba People Cloud.

The biggest issue with ESN is to understand and quantify how things get done and what the value of the ESN is to the enterprise. SNA provides a graphic representation of relationships that were formerly invisible to most people in the enterprise (see Figure 1).

Saba's DNA provides six out-of-the-box SNA usage scenarios including:

- My Influence Analysis – the basic graph of who you follow and who follows you.
- My Inner Circle – people you work with often.
- My Managers Team –The social network of the team you are part of.
- Network. A visualization of the entire network that you are part of.
- My Network. A visualization of the social network you interact with.
- Group. Shows the social network of a group you have created or one you belong to.
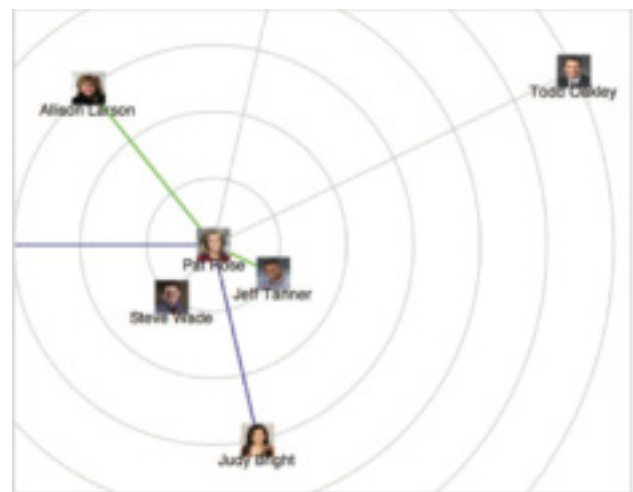

Figure 1: Saba DNA. (Source: Saba Software Inc.)

In ESN, SNA can identify how teams work together and how they don't. There are a number of talent scenarios where SNA can be

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used to identify future leaders (people development) and also problem areas (e.g. a group that doesn't interact with any other part of the company).

In other industries, such as tracking of mobile users by wireless carriers, SNA can be used to identify influencers and target them for marketing campaigns and predict future behaviors.

By adding SNA as a standard component of ESN platforms, adoption and understanding will increase. Aragon Research expects other vendors to introduce more SNA capabilities during 2012.

Planning Assumption: By YE 2014, the SNA function will be a mandatory part of an ESN.

Aragon Advisory: SNA is here to stay and users should insist on having it. Enterprises should examine products such as Saba DNA so they can understand how work is getting done and how bottlenecks can be eliminated.

Enterprises evaluating ESN products should ask their short list of candidates for road maps that outline their current and future capabilities in the SNA arena.

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