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IT firms go Twitter way to engage GenY

Infy launches 'My Voice', Keane floats 'Socially', Mphasis starts 'Manager's Universe'

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SOCIAL media – both external sites like Facebook, Twitter and internal portals – are becoming an important tool for people-heavy IT companies to deal with their young employees. HR heads feel that the new generation prefers this mode of communication.

So, firms are now using external websites or starting their own portals to leverage social media. Even if it sometimes brings in negative feedback as in the case of Infosys where the internal media was often used to give vicious comments on the management's HR initiatives, mainly iRace.

Infosys HR head Nandita Gurhar, said that the Gen Y (people born after 1982) who are coming into compa-

nies now, require a different mode of communication. "This category is frank and brusque, and wants to be part of all decisions concerning them. So, traditional business etiquette has been given a go by," she said.

The company, apart from its bulletin board and internal portal, has started other sites like 'My Voice' and blogs to encourage interactive discussions.

Ravi Kumar, senior vice-president-global delivery, Keane said his firm had implemented – 'Socially' – a few months ago and a lot of employees, irrespective of age, got onto it quickly.

The new method of communication signals moving away from the ivory tower concept and going into a person's cubicle, said R Elango-HR head, Mphasis. "Companies who want to



have genuine interactive conversations with employees will have to look at this option. It will soon get to a point where firms will use it just like email now," he said.

Mphasis uses instant messaging for communicating inside the firm. It has al-

so started an interactive platform called 'Manager's Universe', which is similar to Wikipedia where employees can create discussion forums and comment. Elango said that while comments may sometimes be negative, they have never come ac-

ross incidents where it has been personal or vicious.

According to consultant Jessie Paul, who has worked in Infosys and Wipro, firms will have to get savvy for engaging with the Gen Y. "Use of this medium, while generally free, requires investment into supply of people and content," she added.

A few companies have already got the message, and are either setting up their own team or are outsourcing to maintain such sites. While social media has begun to garner lot of attention from HR teams, MindTree's senior vice-president, head (people function), Babuji Abraham said, "We feel social media is not formal, but more of an engagement medium."

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