

## **USING THE WEB TO HARNESS GLOBAL COLLECTIVE INTELLIGENCE**

According to Rumelhart (1992), knowledge resides in the pattern of connections built in and around systems. The challenge is in learning how to harness this intelligence. This knowledge can be useful for helping you find innovative ways to leverage talent around the world using the power of the Web.

### **What is Collective Intelligence?**

Individuals are the source of intelligence, networks are the vectors that connect individuals, cultural norms are the informal structures that facilitate human interaction, and organizations are the formal structures around which knowledge is created. All these elements work together to give rise to collective intelligence. Thus, collective intelligence arises when several individuals are connected via networks, guided by informal or formal structures, to work on a specific problem. The rise of the Internet and Web 2.0 technologies has facilitated the process of the rise of collective intelligence.

The result of the harnessing of collective intelligence via the emerging web technologies is “User Generated Content” (UCC). Intelligent web services and tools such as interactive applications, blogs, wikis, chat rooms, etc. are creating a new participative web which allows users to develop, rate, collaborate, customize, and distribute content via the internet (OECD, 2007).

### **What is Crowdsourcing?**

Crowdsourcing is the next step in the evolution of UCC from being just a product of non-professional/amateur nature to being actively leveraged by organizations for economic activity.

Organizations normally take a task traditionally performed by an employees or contractor, and outsource it to an undefined, generally large, group of people, in the form of an open call. For example, the public may be invited to develop a new technology, carry out a design task (also known as community-based design and distributed participatory design), refine or carry out the steps of an algorithm (see Human-based computation), or help capture, systematize or analyze large amounts of data (Wikipedia.org).

To better understand the various actors and levels of crowdsourcing, Sami Viitamäki of the Helsinki School of Economics has built a model for crowdsourcing (Source: The FLIRT Model of Crowdsourcing ). It comprises five essential elements: Focus, Language, Incentives, Rules, and Tools. In this article you will learn more about the Flirt Model of Crowdsourcing.

This article outlines various cases and examples of how the crowdsourcing model is being used by various organizations to enhance productivity, innovation, profits, marketability, reach, and other kinds of business value. Understanding how other companies are using Web 2.0 technologies for leveraging collective intelligence and creating business value can help you find innovative uses of crowdsourcing model in your web globalization efforts. Examples of crowdsourcing include: [epopinions.com](http://epopinions.com), [YouTube](http://YouTube), [NASA clickworker](http://NASA clickworker), [Netflix](http://Netflix), [Innovation Exchange](http://Innovation Exchange), [HumanGrid](http://HumanGrid), [elance](http://elance), [spreadshirt](http://spreadshirt), [cafepress](http://cafepress), [iStockPhoto](http://iStockPhoto), [Lego Factory](http://Lego Factory), and [MensaProcess](http://MensaProcess). The article details how these organizations are effectively using crowdsourcing efforts.

Finally, this article also details the tools that can be implemented in order to reap benefits and control for risks involved with crowdsourcing efforts such as:

- The platform (a common space for the community to gather in)
- Tools for creating original content and interacting with it.
- Tools for the company to harvest community input and measure it.

Crowdsourcing is a new and rapidly growing approach to harnessing collective intelligence and facilitating open innovation. When carefully designed and properly managed, crowdsourcing processes and tools can help you gain access to a worldwide network of knowledge, skill, and creativity.