Extreme Competition

Peter Fingar
Executive Partner
Greystone Group

pfingar@acm.org

BPM 3.0: Listening Posts, Sockpuppets, Trolls, Drones and Trust

Social BPM, Social CRM—Social *This* and *That*—are all the rage in the business world today. Yada Yada Yada about these topics that abound, thanks to bloggers, IT analysts and business writers. *Yawn*. Here's a U.S. Air Force Request for Proposal that *really* captured my attention:

Solicitation Number: RTB220610
Added: Jun 22, 2010 1:42 pm
Agency: Department of the Air Force
Office: Air Mobility Command
Location: 6th Contracting Squadron

0001- Online Persona Management Service. 50 User Licenses, 10 Personas per user. Software will allow 10 personas per user, replete with background , history, supporting details, and cyber presences that are technically, culturally and geographically consistent. Individual applications will enable an operator to exercise a number of different online persons from the same workstation and without fear of being discovered by sophisticated adversaries. Personas must be able to appear to originate in nearly any part of the world and can interact through conventional online services and social media platforms. The service includes a user friendly application environment to maximize the user's situational awareness by displaying real-time local information.

0002- Secure Virtual Private Network (VPN). 1 each. VPN provides the ability for users to daily and automatically obtain randomly selected IP addresses through which they can access the internet. The daily rotation of the user s IP address prevents compromise during observation of likely or targeted web sites or services, while hiding the existence of the operation. In addition, may provide traffic mixing, blending the user s traffic with traffic from multitudes of users from outside the organization. This traffic blending provides excellent cover and powerful deniability. Anonymizer Enterprise Chameleon or equal

0003- Static IP Address Management. 50 each. License protects the identity of government agencies and enterprise organizations. Enables organizations to manage their persistent online personas by assigning static IP addresses to each persona. Individuals can perform static impersonations, which allow them to look like the same person over time. Also allows organizations that frequent same site/service often to easily switch IP addresses to look like ordinary users as opposed to one organization. Anonymizer IP Mapper License or equal

0004- Virtual Private Servers, CONUS. 1 each. Provides CONUS or OCONUS points of presence locations that are setup for each customer based on the geographic area of operations the customer is operating within and which allow a customer's online persona(s) to appear to originate from. Ability to provide virtual private servers that are procured using commercial hosting centers around the world and which are established anonymously. Once procured, the geosite is incorporated into the network and integrated within the customers environment and ready for use by the customer. Unless specifically designated as shared, locations are dedicated for use by each customer and never shared among other customers. Anonymizer Annual Dedicated CONUS Light Geosite or equal

0005- Virtual Private Servers, OCONUS. 8 Each. Provides CONUS or OCONUS points of presence locations that are setup for each customer based on the geographic area of operations the customer is
operating within and which allow a customer's online persona(s) to appear to originate from. Ability to provide virtual private servers that are procured using commercial hosting centers around the world and which are established anonymously. Once procured, the geosite is incorporated into the network and
integrated within the customers environment and ready for use by the customer. Unless specifically designated as shared, locations are dedicated for use by each customer and never shared among other customers. Anonymizer Annual Dedicated OCONUS Light Geosite or equal

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0006- Remote Access Secure Virtual Private Network. 1 each. Secure Operating Environment provides a reliable and protected computing environment from which to stage and conduct operations. Every session uses a clean Virtual Machine (VM) image. The solution is accessed through sets of Virtual Private Network (VPN) devices located at each Customer facility. The fully-managed VDI (Virtual Desktop Infrastructure) is an environment that allows users remote access from their desktop into a VM. Upon session termination,
the VM is deleted and any virus, worm, or malicious software that the user inadvertently downloaded is destroyed. Anonymizer Virtual Desktop Infrastructure (VDI) Solution or equal

Contracting Office Address: 2606 Brown Pelican Ave., MacDill AFB, Florida 33621-5000 United States
Place of Performance: Performance will be at MacDill AFB, Kabul, Afghanistan and Baghdad, Iraq.

While "analytics" are becoming part and parcel of most BPM systems and are the hot topics of BPM experts such as Thomas Davenport, we need to look beyond—to what I call Manufacturing Consent 2.0. What's hot about analytics is that instead of looking backward to analyze "what happened?" predictive analytics help executives answer "What's next?" and "What should we do about it?" Contemporary analytics is all about looking forward to make fact-based decisions about what *might happen* versus looking backward (as in that old-fashioned Business Intelligence stuff) to understand what *has happened*. But there's even more. Manufacturing Consent 2.0 serves as the engine, steering wheel and accelerator for going beyond predictive analytics and on to *action*. Manufacturing Consent 2.0 is about *manipulating, versus predicting, what happens next*, and what happens next takes place inside Social Networks around the globe.

Noam Chomsky's 1988 book, *Manufacturing Consent: The Political Economy of the Mass Media*, uses the propaganda model and posits that corporate-owned print, radio, and television news sources are businesses that distort news reportage—what types of news, which items, and how they are reported. To minimize financial danger, news media businesses editorially distort their reporting to favor government and corporate policies in order to stay in business. In short, Chomsky asserts that *propaganda in a democracy* replaces *violence in dictatorships* as a means of serving the elite and powerful. Today, extend the ideas from 1988's one-to-many publishing and broadcasting to today's many-to-many social media where the "truth" is *constructed* through two-way conversations and you have Manufacturing Consent 2.0.

We write in *Enterprise Cloud Computing* (http://www.mkpress.com/ECC), "Social constructionism focuses on the 'truths' that are 'created' through the interactions of a group. Social constructs are the by-products of countless human interactions and choices rather than laws resulting from nature, as revealed in science. Social constructionism is about the categorical structure of reality—the ways individuals and groups participate in the creation of their *perceived* reality that ultimately becomes institutionalized and made into tradition. Socially constructed reality is an ongoing, dynamic process. Reality is reproduced by people acting on their interpretations. In short, people are driven by stories and those narratives lead to social constructionism."

Listening Posts

Because social networks are where they are talking about your company, your products and your services, step one in the brave new world of social constructionism is listening to what people are saying about you. Traditional focus groups, surveys and market research studies won't cut it in today's connected world. Today, we need to be actively listening all of the time to our customers, influencers, competitors and communities of people that can impact our businesses. Social media have established a constant flow, er torrent, of conversations. So if you want to have the very best analytics possible, then you first have to have the means to *listen* to the flood of chatter and jabber.

PepsiCo recently created the Gatorade Mission Control Center inside of its Chicago headquarters, a room that sits in the middle of the marketing department and could best be thought of as a war room for monitoring the brand in real-time across social media. The room features six big monitors with five seats for Gatorade's marketing team to track a number of data visualizations and dashboards—also available to employees on their desktops. Mission Control measures social media conversations across a variety of topics and shows how hot those

conversations are in real time. The system also runs detailed sentiment analysis around key topics and product and campaign launches.

Meanwhile, Dell's Ground Control tracks on average more than 22,000 daily topic posts related to Dell, as well as mentions of Dell on Twitter. The information is sliced and diced based on topics and subjects of conversation, sentiment, share of voice, geography and trends. Such systems also must be on the lookout for competitors as well as customers, for competitors are likely to post *trolls* raising negative points.

Gatorade: Mission Control   Dell: Ground Control

Persona Management Systems

Okay, so much for the listening part—now you have to act on what you've heard or seen (e.g., YouTube). This brings us back to the above bid solicitation from the Department of the Air Force that awarded the $2.76m contract to Ntrepid, a newly formed corporation registered in Los Angeles. This stuff is so super-secret that if you visit Ntrepid's *entire* Web site, this is *all* you will see:


Ntrepid's "persona management software" (PMS) provides licenses for 50 users with 10 personas each, for a total of 500. The personas are replete with background, history, supporting details, and cyber presences that are technically, culturally and geographically consistent. It also provides for secure virtual private networks that randomize the operator's Internet protocol (IP) address, making it impossible to detect that it's a single person orchestrating all the posts. The software also provides static IP address management for each persona, making it appear as though each sockpuppet (fake person) was consistently accessing from the same computer each time. Further, the software uses methods to anonymously establish virtual private servers with private hosting firms in specific geographic locations. This allows a server's *geosite* to be integrated with its social media profiles, effectively gaming geolocation services. The Air Force says that the "place of performance" for the contract would be at MacDill Air Force Base, along with Afghanistan and Iraq.

Photo: Virginia National Guard

So here we are, social networks, listening posts and persona management systems. Just as DARPA gave us the Internet, welcome to the brave new world of the DoD's PMS.
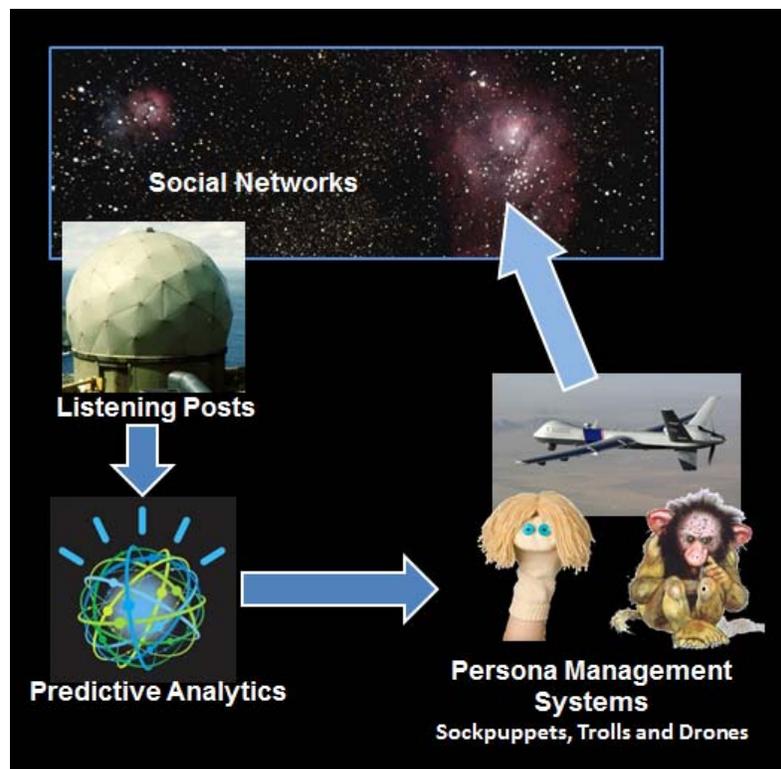
Using sockpuppets, trolls and drones the military can infiltrate social media to conduct psychological cyberwarfare by creating the illusion of consensus. And consensus is a powerful persuader. What has more effect, one person saying the BP wasn't at fault for the Gulf oil spill? Or 500 people (er, sockpuppets) saying it? For many people, the number can make all the difference.

BPM 3.0

Forget BPM 2.0 or "social BPM," for the future is "persona management BPM"—call it BPM 3.0 if you like. It's no longer design-time social BPM or run-time social BPM, it's persona management systems across both domains, across the globe. Companies will go to great lengths to master the art of Manufacturing Consent 2.0 and going beyond what we typically think of as process management. It's no longer just managing back office processes or enterprise processes or inter-

enterprise processes. Now it's on to managing community-facing "listening-post processes" and "sockpuppet processes."

Of course, unleashing sockpuppet processes dives straight into the deep waters of business ethics. But short of a revival of "critical thinking"—a field of study seemingly dropped long ago by our educational systems—get ready to live *in very interesting times* (ancient Chinese curse). Today we seem trapped in a world of sound-bite thinking—no matter the source. We can only hope for the arrival of TMS or Trust Management Systems that provide a counterbalance in the brave new world of PMS.

Whatever Became of Critical Thinking?

Esteban Colberto created a blog post with some very interesting questions, "My questions to you are:
- Are you a sock puppet?
- How do I know for sure?
- How do you know that I'm not a sock puppet?
- What if we're both sock puppets?
- If we all had sock puppet technology, would we spend all of our time hiding our dirty sock puppets?
- If all we're doing is dirty sock puppet laundry, what's the point of social media in the first place?" [i]

Today, George Orwell's book, *1984*, written in 1949, is a relevant backgrounder for BPM 3.0. Chomsky's 1988 book is still in the top rankings at Amazon after 23 years. Read it and extrapolate the information to the new worlds of social media in business, to social BPM and on to BPM 3.0 with PMS.

Who really wrote this column anyway?

What are *your* thoughts (not your sockpuppet's or troll's thoughts) on all this?

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[i] http://forums.colbertnation.com/?page=ThreadView&thread_id=25753

BPTrends Linkedin Discussion Group
We recently created a BPTrends Discussion Group on Linkedin to allow our members, readers and friends to freely exchange ideas on a wide variety of BPM related topics. We encourage you to initiate a new discussion on this publication or on other BPM related topics of interest to you, or to contribute to existing discussions. Go to Linkedin and join the **BPTrends Discussion Group.**