International Journal of Electrical and Computer Engineering (IJECE)
Vol. 15, No. 5, October 2025, pp. 4653~4661
ISSN: 2088-8708, DOI: 10.11591/ijece.v15i5.pp4653-4661

Strategic integration of social media in information technology sector communication: designing effective practices

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Article Info

Article history:

Received Aug 7, 2024
Revised Apr 2, 2025
Accepted Jul 12, 2025

Keywords:

AI-driven tools;
ASMIT framework;
Information technology
Collaboration;
Project management diversity and inclusion;
Social media information technology

ABSTRACT

This paper explores the transformative role of social media in enhancing communication and workflow efficiency within the information technology (IT) sector. We have introduced the adaptive social media for information technology collaboration (ASMIT) framework. Its goal is to provide a holistic strategy for digital transformation in the IT sector. Employing a mixed method approach, the research combines a systematic literature review with case study of HCL Technologies. Thematic analysis categorizes findings under five core pillars of the ASMIT framework. Results indicate that AI-driven tools, when embedded within collaborative social media platforms, significantly enhance organizational agility, project coordination, and security. The study contributes to IT scholarship by bridging technological integration with human-centered collaboration strategies.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The information technology (IT) sector, with its fast-paced technological advancements and dynamic project environments, requires communication strategies that can adapt to the changing demands. Social media platforms have emerged as useful tools for facilitating collaboration, knowledge transfer, and project management in this dynamic sector [1]. Communication of sensitive information presents security risks, highlighting the necessity for efficient protection mechanisms. Strategic communication research addresses how organizations interact with stakeholders and are perceived as social actors in shaping public culture and addressing societal issues [2]. Communication is deemed strategic when it is driven by specific goals and aligned with strategic objectives. According to Brigas *et al.* [3], strategic communication encompasses vital communications necessary for the survival and continuous prosperity of an entity, emphasizing the deliberate utilization of communication to participate in crucial dialogues such as citizen engagement. Efficient communication management strategies on social media require exploring various narrative and visual techniques to create visual content that supports the concise and clear communication of ideas. Media platforms must promote active public participation to develop a strategy that fosters closer relationships and personalized content [4].

Strategic listening enables organizations to promptly recognize and respond to environmental changes, while social media listening aids in identifying significant signals from various spheres during decision-making processes to maintain or achieve external alignment. Borner and Zerfass [5] underscored the significance of aligning strategic communication at both primary (external environment) and secondary level (internal organizational processes), with the latter focusing on the harmony between strategy and operational activities. Strategies should be adaptable to societal shifts, incorporating citizen feedback and transitioning

from a prescriptive to an emergent perspective on strategic management [6]. Hence, strategic communication should involve engaging stakeholders and developing and executing strategies [7]. According to Fraccastoro *et al.* [8], the importance of integrated marketing communication demonstrates how social media platforms facilitate communication between companies and consumers.

Effective organizational communication is the backbone of the IT sector's operational efficiency and innovation. By leveraging the right tools, frameworks, and practices, IT companies can overcome communication challenges, fostering a culture of transparency and collaboration that drives success. AI-powered tools like chatbots and virtual assistants streamline IT communication by automating routine queries and enhancing knowledge management [9], [10]. Media richness theory explains the selection of appropriate communication channels based on the complexity of tasks. IT teams often use rich media like video conferencing for ambiguous tasks requiring immediate feedback and lean media like emails for routine updates [11], [12]. The IT industry predominantly utilizes digital communication platforms like Microsoft Teams, Slack, and Jira. These tools facilitate synchronous and asynchronous communication, supporting tasks like bug tracking, code sharing, and collaborative brainstorming. In environments with significant financial and technological resources, organizations often adopt sophisticated platforms like Jira, Confluence, or Trello. These tools provide advanced features such as i) task automation: automating workflows, reminders, and integrations with other tools, ii) AI augmentation: predictive analytics for project delays, sentiment analysis, and intelligent task suggestions, and c) comprehensive collaboration: seamless integration of file sharing, video conferencing, and advanced reporting dashboards.

Conversely, organizations in low-resource environments often rely on basic platforms such as WhatsApp, Facebook Workplace, or Microsoft Teams' free versions. While these tools enable essential communication and file sharing, they face limitations like i) scalability issues: difficulty handling large teams or complex projects, ii) security concerns: limited encryption or compliance with stringent international standards, and iii) feature gaps: lack of integrated task tracking, AI-driven insights, and advanced customizations. These disparities hinder the ability of low-resource organizations to achieve the same level of efficiency and inclusivity as their high-resource counterparts. While these platforms improve connectivity, they also introduce workflow fragmentation and security vulnerabilities. There is information overload and technostress; instead of increasing productivity, this can lead to missed opportunities, inefficiencies, and security risks. Several established IT collaboration frameworks such as agile collaboration frameworks like Scrum and Kanban, which are project management methodologies that emphasize teamwork, flexibility, and iteration, promoting efficient and effective project delivery by collaborative efforts, and NIST cybersecurity framework which provides a framework for a converged security program and a common language to improve understanding and collaboration have been used to enhance IT teamwork. However, these models address individual aspects of IT collaboration but fail to provide a unified approach.

Given the fragmented nature of current IT collaboration models, there is a need for a framework that integrates AI-enhanced security, adaptive project management, knowledge flow, and inclusivity. To address this, we have introduced the adaptive social media for information technology collaboration framework (ASMIT), which combines security, adaptive project management, and intelligent knowledge flow optimization to create a more cohesive and efficient collaboration model. The framework is validated through a case study analysis of HCL Technologies and systematic literature review.

The objectives of this research are threefold: first, to explore the potential benefits and challenges of integrating social media platforms into IT project workflows; second, to evaluate the effectiveness of the ASMIT framework in addressing the technical, social, and organizational dimensions of IT collaboration; and third, to identify and analyze gaps in the existing literature related to security, inclusivity, and adaptability in social media-supported IT environments.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

The integration of social media into the IT sector represents both transformative opportunities and pressing challenges, especially in the context of organizational communication and collaboration. Storey *et al.* [13], notes that while social media facilitates widespread communication and engagement, the functional benefits must be aligned with non-functional needs such as compliance, security, and adaptability. To address these complexities, the ASMIT framework outlines five foundational pillars essential for effective integration of social media tools within IT systems ensuring systems can evolve with emerging technologies and user behaviours. Protecting organizational data and user information from unauthorized access or breaches. Facilitating administrative control, monitoring, and policy enforcement. Supporting seamless integration across diverse platforms and services and promoting visibility into system operations, data usage, and decision-making processes.

2.1. Technical integration and augmentation

The first pillar, technical integration, involves embedding social media tools seamlessly into existing IT infrastructures. This ensures that social media platforms are not standalone systems but are integrated with other communication tools, databases, and software applications [14]. It enables the smooth flow of information across various platforms while maintaining technical compatibility. Additionally, augmentation refers to the enhancement of these tools with advanced features like analytics, AI-driven insights, and automation that further streamline operations [15]. According to studies, social media tools enhance workflow integration by offering user-friendly interfaces, faster problem solving, and quicker project completion [16]–[18]. Al-Farsi and Petrov [19] proposed embedding social media functionalities into Integrated Development Environments, resulting in a reduction in coding errors and increased knowledge transfer among team members [20], [21].

2.2. Adaptive project management

In the IT sector, where change is constant, project teams need to adapt swiftly to social media tools, by enabling continuous feedback loops and real-time collaboration, supporting agile methodologies [22]. Studies confirm that the use of social media in project management increases efficiency and flexibility, which are critical to maintaining competitive advantage and delivering projects on time [23]. Tools like Trello, Asana, and Slack have become central to agile project management practices, enabling teams to adjust quickly to new information or changes. Scrum is an Agile project management framework that enables effective collaboration and product delivery through defined roles, time-bound iterations (sprints), and standardized practices. AI-enabled project dashboards now provide predictive insights into task delays, team workload, and stakeholder sentiment, enabling project managers to dynamically adjust workflows [24], [25].

2.3. Supporting diversity and inclusion in IT communication

Global IT teams are increasingly multicultural and multilingual, and thus inclusive communication has become both a social imperative and a strategic advantage. Inclusive digital environments enhance employee morale, innovation, and performance. Social media platforms which offer features like automatic translation, screen reader compatibility, multilingual chat, and customizable interfaces ensure that communication is equitable and accessible. Organizations are also using social media tools to promote employee resource groups (ERGs), host diversity campaigns, and facilitate dialogue on equity-related issues. AI-enhanced sentiment analysis and DEI dashboards now provide actionable insights into engagement trends. This enhanced inclusivity has led to increased user engagement and overall societal well-being [26]. The diversity of ideas and perspectives that come also helps organizations better understand customer needs and create products or services that resonate with a wider audience [27]–[29]. Platforms such as LinkedIn and Workplace from Meta have built-in features for fostering inclusivity, from language support to customizable communication preferences [30].

2.4. Security and compliance equilibrium

The security and compliance equilibrium pillar emphasizes the importance of maintaining robust security protocols while ensuring compliance with legal and regulatory frameworks. As organizations increasingly adopt social media platforms for professional purposes, securing sensitive data and protecting user privacy becomes paramount. Organizations are increasingly embedding security features into collaborative platforms, such as end-to-end encryption, data loss prevention (DLP), identity access management (IAM), and multi-factor authentication (MFA). While these advancements improve the management of cybersecurity within social media, user education and the implementation of robust security measures remain challenges. This pillar addresses the need for integrating social media tools in a way that adheres to compliance standards, such as general data protection regulation (GDPR), HIPAA, and ISO 27001 [31], [32].

2.5. Social dynamics and knowledge flow

According to Dimitriades [33], knowledge management (KM) is defined as the management discipline concerned with the systematic acquisition, creation, sharing, and use of knowledge in organizations, aiming to improve a firm's competitiveness. Social media tools support knowledge flow by enabling employees to share expertise, exchange ideas, and collaborate on projects in real-time, regardless of their physical location. Knowledge sharing plays a major role in creating organizational memory. Social media enhances social dynamics within organizations by facilitating informal communication, breaking down hierarchical barriers, and encouraging cross-functional collaboration [34]. Organizational culture has been identified as a crucial moderating factor in various relationships, as seen in studies focusing on sustainable project management, workplace bullying [35], and organizational performance in the context of CSR activities. Social media platforms offer strengths such as reach, richness, and availability for sharing

knowledge, but weaknesses related to confidentiality and depth can hinder effective knowledge flow [36], [37]. Challenges arise concerning privacy and data security when utilizing social media platforms for learning purposes, emphasizing the need to ensure the credibility and quality of shared educational content [38]. Table 1 illustrates few studies from systematic literature review.

Table 1. Overview of articles from literature review

ASMIT Pillar	Findings	References
Technical integration and augmentation	AI-enhanced IDEs and chatbots for development support; Integration of social media in IT platforms and CRM systems	Sutherland [4], Pechová *et al.* [10], Vrontis *et al.* [11], Storey *et al.* [13], Sabla and Gour [14], Preethi *et al.* [15], Dai *et al.* [16], Leite *et al.* [20], Batrinca and Treleaven [39], Rahuman [40], Ovi *et al.* [41], Chowdhury *et al.*[42].
Adaptive project management	Agile and DevOps integration with social platforms; Use of AI dashboards for project tracking	Daraojimba *et al.* [17], Al-Farsi & Petrov, [19], Kanagarajoo *et al.* [22], Taboada *et al.* [24], Pinto and Pinto [25], Walee *et al.* [23].
Supporting diversity and inclusion	Multilingual tools, DEI dashboards, and inclusive communication strategies	Rosas *et al.* [18], Zaki and Ahmed [26], Metwally *et al.* [27], Hofhuis *et al.* [28], Liao and Huang [29].
Security and compliance equilibrium	Data protection, regulatory alignment (GDPR, ISO 27001), platform-based encryption and compliance features	Yang *et al.* [30], Watney [31], Khan *et al.* [32], Sinha and Malik [43].
Social dynamics and knowledge flow	Knowledge sharing through social platforms; use of internal wikis, forums, and gamified learning	Leonardi *et al.* [1], Zerfass and Volk [2], Brigas *et al.* [3], Borner and Zerfass [5], Kane [21], Dimitriades [33], Mukhtar and Iqbal [34], Tubussum *et al.* [35], Pekkala and van Zoonen [36], Nisar *et al.* [38], Macnamara and Gregory [44], Al-Busaidi and Al-Wahaibi [45], Piorkowski *et al.* [37], Kak [46], Davila [47].

3. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK: ADAPTIVE SOCIAL MEDIA FOR IT COLLABORATION (ASMIT) FRAMEWORK

ASMIT framework posits that organizations can enhance their social media strategies for communication within the IT sector by focusing on five foundational pillars, considering the specific moderating elements within their organizational context. It underscores the significance of adopting a harmonized approach that capitalizes on technological innovations particularly AI-enabled communication tools, real-time collaboration platforms, and secure cloud infrastructures while addressing the distinct obstacles encountered in the IT sector, such as the necessity for secure cooperation and support for diverse, geographically dispersed teams. The ASMIT framework integrates these five key pillars to enhance IT collaboration:

- Technical integration and augmentation: emphasizing seamless interoperability between social platforms and existing IT tools, such as JIRA, Slack, or GitHub.
- Social dynamics and knowledge flow: leveraging social media to improve knowledge sharing, community building, and informal mentoring within distributed teams.
- Adaptive project management: Embedding social feedback loops within iterative project cycles to promote flexibility and timely issue resolution.
- Security and compliance equilibrium: Ensuring communication tools align with data protection laws (e.g., GDPR, ISO 27001) and organizational cybersecurity protocols.
- Supporting diversity and inclusion in IT communication: Promoting equity through multilingual interfaces, and inclusive content strategies to engage underrepresented talent in the tech workforce. Table 2 illustrates five pillars of ASMIT framework.

4. METHOD

This research adopts a mixed methods approach, integrating a systematic literature review with a case study of HCL Technologies. The case study is grounded in secondary data sources, including industry reports, whitepapers, and documented case studies that examine HCL's contributions to digital transformation initiatives across global enterprises. Additionally, corporate publications such as HCL Technologies' annual reports and official blog posts are analyzed to gain insights into the organization's strategies for enterprise collaboration and technological integration. This method involved identifying, organizing, and interpreting recurring themes and patterns across the selected studies and organizational data, particularly in relation to the five pillars of the ASMIT framework. Inclusion criteria were peer-reviewed journal articles, conference papers, and book chapters; studies published between 2013–2024; articles addressing one or more pillars of the ASMIT framework; and English-language publications. Exclusion

criteria were studies outside the IT domain; articles focusing solely on social media for marketing or entertainment; and non-peer-reviewed materials like blogs or editorials. We searched the following databases: Google Scholar, Scopus, Web of Science, and ScienceDirect. Search terms were "social media" and "IT sector," "agile methodologies" and "social media," "diversity & inclusion" and "social media," "knowledge management" and "social media," "security compliance" and "social media." Initially, a total of 17,900 articles were identified through database searches. Following the removal of duplicates, 7,350 articles remained for further evaluation.

The title and abstract screening phase led to the exclusion of studies that did not align with the research objectives, reducing the number to 512 articles. A more rigorous full-text screening was then conducted, refining the selection to 203 articles. Finally, after applying inclusion and exclusion criteria, 87 articles were selected for in-depth analysis, ensuring a comprehensive and relevant evidence base for the study. The PRISMA flowchart visually represents the literature selection process, outlining the number of studies identified, screened, included, and excluded in Figure 1

Table 2. The five pillars of ASMIT framework

ASMIT Pillar	Description	Applications	Example of Tools	Key Benefits
Technical Integration and Augmentation	Embedding social media tools into IT systems and enhancing functionalities through AI	APIs enable seamless integration with CRM, ERP, and project management tools	Microsoft Teams with AI Copilot; HubSpot-CRM integrations; Zoho Social	Boosts workflow automation, enhances decision-making
Social Dynamics and Knowledge Flow	Leveraging social media platforms to promote informal communication and community building	Platforms support the formation of Communities of Practice (CoPs), content repositories	KMS Lighthouse; Hootsuite; Sprout Social; SharePoint	Enhances organizational memory, supports innovation
Adaptive Project Management	Using social media features to support agile workflows, continuous feedback loops	Integrated dashboards and agile boards allow for sprint tracking, resource alignment	Jira + Slack integration; Trello; Asana	Improves task visibility, enhances responsiveness to change cycles.
Security and Compliance Equilibrium	Balancing open collaboration with data protection, privacy, and regulatory compliance requirements.	Encrypted messaging, policy-based access control, compliance monitoring tools	Microsoft Defender for Office 365; Okta; Proofpoint	Mitigates cybersecurity risks, ensures GDPR/ISO compliance, and fosters digital trust.
Supporting Diversity and Inclusion	Promoting equitable communication and participation across multicultural, multilingual teams.	AI-powered translation, inclusive UX design, and DEI analytics embedded into social collaboration platforms.	Google Translate API; Workplace from Meta; Microsoft Viva Insights	Enhances employee morale, increases engagement

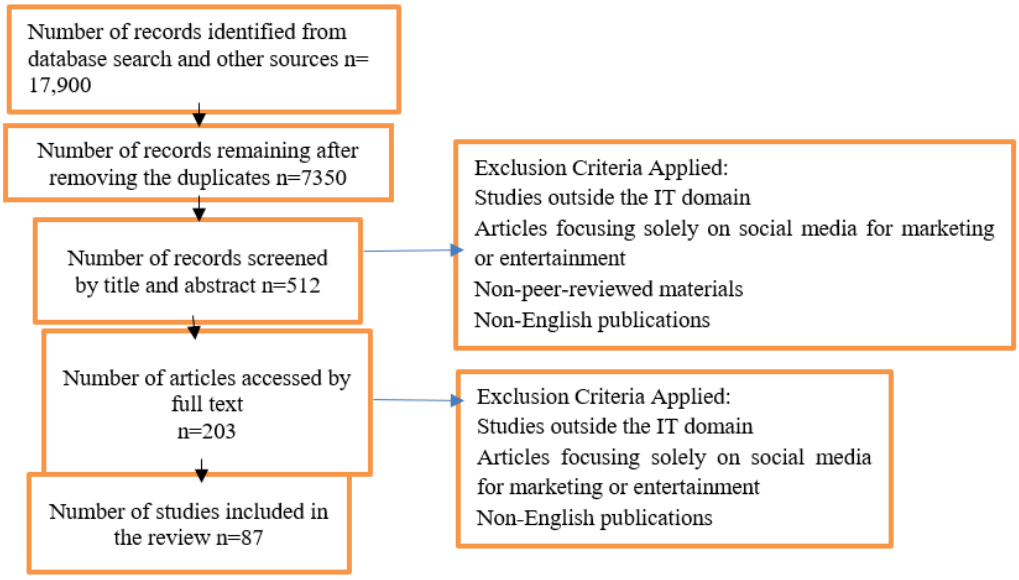

Figure 1. PRISMA flowchart

5. CASE STUDY ON HCL TECHNOLOGIES

HCL Technologies Ltd. is a leading global IT services and consulting company headquartered in Noida, India. HCL's commitment to sustainability, digital inclusion, and data security further cements its reputation as a transformative leader in the global IT ecosystem. The company's use of in-house platforms like HCL Software, HCL Volt MX, and HCL Domino demonstrates a strong commitment to proprietary innovation. These platforms, particularly HCL Volt MX for low-code development and HCL Domino for collaboration and workflow solutions, showcase the company's ability to develop and utilize its own technology.

5.1. Technical integration and augmentation

HCL employs enterprise collaboration platforms such as HCL Connections and Sametime Premium, with core business systems including ERP, CRM, and cloud-native infrastructure. These systems are further augmented by AI-driven functionalities including chatbots, workflow automation engines, and intelligent search assistants. A prime example of this is HCL's DRYiCE platform, which utilizes automation and machine learning to streamline issue resolution, incident prediction, and ticket classification. IntelliOps is an integrated, full-stack AIOps and business flow observability solution that manages end-to-end agile hybrid IT operations for predictive and continuously available digital services aligned to core business objectives.

5.2. Social dynamics and knowledge flow

HCL has a long history of people-centered management strategy [48], [49]. HCL has institutionalized mechanisms to promote social collaboration, knowledge sharing, and collective intelligence. Through its HCL Connections platform and internal communities of practice, employees are encouraged to share domain-specific expertise, propose solutions, and co-create assets. Moreover, the integration of AI-based sentiment analysis tools into these platforms provides insights into team morale and collaboration bottlenecks, which are then used to inform managerial interventions and workflow redesign. Platforms like HCL Connections act as centralized knowledge repositories, fostering an environment of continuous learning and cross-functional collaboration, core to ASMIT's third pillar [46].

5.3. Adaptive project management

The company has adopted enterprise-wide Agile and DevOps practices, supported by social media-based tools that enable distributed teams to maintain situational awareness, manage dependencies, and track iterative progress in real time. HCL Accelerate, a value stream management platform, offers integrations with Jira, GitLab, and Trello. This allows for streamlined project management and DevOps workflows across these tools by visualizing and automating workflows, especially beneficial for enterprise use. Dashboards embedded within platforms use AI to forecast resource constraints, highlight potential delays, and auto-prioritize backlog items based on client feedback. This agility allows HCL project teams to respond dynamically to evolving client requirements, embodying the ASMIT principle of adaptive, socially driven project governance.

5.4. Security and compliance equilibrium

Given the sensitive nature of IT services and consulting, HCL Technologies strongly emphasize maintaining a balance between security and the open, collaborative nature of social media platforms. The company ensures that its social media tools are compliant with global security standards, such as GDPR, and ISO 27001. Security protocols in platforms like HCL Connections and Yammer include end-to-end encryption, multi-factor authentication, and policy-based access control. Additionally, HCL's security operations centers (SOCs) leverage AI-powered anomaly detection to identify abnormal behavior and automatically quarantine compromised accounts or data flows. Furthermore, HCL's cloud security framework ensures that all social media interactions, data exchanges, and collaborations take place within a secure, compliant environment [43].

5.5. Supporting diversity and inclusion in IT communication

Diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) are embedded into HCL's digital ecosystem through its diversity & inclusion council, which operates several employee resource groups (ERGs) and leads global campaigns via enterprise platforms like Workplace by Meta and HCL Connections. HCL's DEI strategy includes real-time translation features, screen reader compatibility, and gender-neutral UI design, ensuring inclusive access to collaboration tools across its multilingual, multicultural workforce. These digital affordances are complemented by analytics dashboards that monitor engagement by gender, location, and accessibility requirements [47], [50].

6. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results of this study affirm the efficacy of the ASMIT framework in fostering enhanced communication, collaboration, and inclusivity in IT project environments through strategic social media integration. HCL Technologies serves as a compelling case where AI-enabled tools, such as chatbots and sentiment analysis, were seamlessly embedded into platforms like HCL Connections to streamline operations. These tools not only enhanced technical integration and project agility but also enabled adaptive project management by supporting real-time feedback and predictive insights. The organization's deployment of agile methodologies and DevOps, combined with social media platforms, enabled dynamic responsiveness to client needs and strengthened knowledge sharing across geographically dispersed teams. These practices aligned with literature highlighting the importance of embedded analytics, automation, and continuous feedback loops for project efficiency and innovation.

Furthermore, HCL's emphasis on inclusive communication and regulatory compliance illustrates the framework's holistic applicability. By integrating features such as multilingual support and accessibility enhancements, the company fostered a diverse and inclusive digital workplace, which in turn promoted greater employee engagement and innovation. Social media was also effectively leveraged to promote Employee Resource Groups and facilitate equity dialogues, reflecting a socially responsive IT culture. At the same time, the implementation of stringent data protection protocols and adherence to standards like GDPR and ISO 27001 ensured that collaborative platforms remained secure and compliant. While the ASMIT framework proves scalable and adaptable, its broader adoption may depend on organizational readiness, infrastructure availability, and sensitivity to regional regulatory landscapes, highlighting areas for future research and cross-industry adaptation.

7. CONCLUSION

The integration of social media within the IT sector has transformed communication, collaboration, and project management by embedding social functionalities into development tools and workflows. However, challenges such as security risks, compliance issues, and information overload necessitate a structured approach to implementation. This study, through a systematic literature review and a case study of HCL Technologies, underscored the importance of AI-driven tools and governance policies in optimizing IT collaboration. The proposed adaptive social media for information technology collaboration (ASMIT) framework provides a structured, secure, and efficient model that aligns technical, organizational, and security-driven elements to maximize the benefits of social media integration. The findings demonstrate that a well-designed social media strategy, supported by AI-enhanced automation and security protocols, enhances task efficiency, fosters inclusivity, and strengthens knowledge sharing. By adopting the ASMIT framework, IT organizations can create a dynamic and innovative collaboration ecosystem while mitigating risks associated with data privacy, misinformation, and compliance.

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