

# WHEN YOU HAVE A BIG PROBLEM TO SOLVE, IT'S BEST TO ASK A FEW THOUSAND OF YOUR CLOSEST FRIENDS.

EARLY IN 2002 one of our customers, IBM, was just beginning to undergo major change. A new CEO had just been appointed CEO. He introduced a new corporate strategy called On Demand, and he declared that IBM would be the first and best example of an On Demand business. While the world was struggling to understand the new strategy, IBM's leadership knew what they needed most

[Achordus] engages and inspires [people] to apply their judgement and insights in a new way. This not only produces great ideas, but helps us shape the kind of inclusive, collaborative working environment and culture we need for an On Demand business.

Senior VicePresident,  
Integrated Supply Chain, IBM

were some really great ideas. As one of the largest and most diverse businesses in the world, IBM knew the creativity they needed was there. It just had to be uncovered—somehow.

When you have a big problem to solve, sometimes it's best to ask a few thousand of your closest friends. IBM concluded that engaging employees in large-scale conversations focused on urgent business problems would unleash the company's creativity. That's when they came to TeamSpace. We quickly helped IBM

visualize an electronic forum where employees from around the world would meet to solve problems. The forum was designed to give employee dialogue a sense of urgency and momentum. IBM is still using it internally as ActionNet. We have licensed it back from IBM and now offer it to the market as Achordus.

## A FOCUS ON THE ISSUES

Achordus is an online, collaborative workspace that steps large groups through a structured, 4-phase problem solving process. It is facilitated by an expert from TeamSpace working with stakeholders from the business who really know the issues and the people involved. A topic is timed and takes three to four weeks to run, plus some preparation up front and an after-action review at the end. An Achordus engagement can vary in size from as few as 50 participants to over 4,000.

Successful Achordus sessions have also ranged in scope. Some organizations pose very general questions about business climate and culture, while others focus around more specific questions about business process and procedure. Some choose very targeted and specific action oriented topics. The choice and scope

of topic affects the actions that arise. In general, the more targeted the topic, the more immediately actionable are the actions that arise from it.

In any case, the result is an outpouring of practical ideas for resolving real issues facing the entire organization. Along the way participants are encouraged to participate, learn, share best solutions and enable plans that drive success. The resulting environment facilitates broader communication and networking among participants who often include employees, managers and executives.

## TRANSFORMATIONAL RESULTS

Through 2006, IBM alone has used "Achordus" in seven global business units. They have covered a dozen major leadership topics that have generated nearly a hundred great ideas to be implemented worldwide. We helped IBM understand how upward and outward dialogue could change their business, and Achordus is making it happen.

To request a demonstration of Achordus please contact **Chris Brennan** at [cbrennan@achordus.com](mailto:cbrennan@achordus.com)

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