

Chapter 12

Knowledge Management Portals for Empowering General Public and Societies

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ABSTRACT

With the advent of the web technologies, portals are providing a wide range of comprehensive support for information processing and management focusing on content management with specific foundation for knowledge development. Knowledge management portals are emerging as web tools that can assist facilitate knowledge management in the aspect of learning, social awareness, policy implementation, and empowering the common citizen of the community. Knowledge management portals can be a rigid platform for providing integrated access to relevant content and resources in one location, for sharing and distributing information, and for bringing the community people together for knowledge interchange. This chapter focuses on the aspects of knowledge management portals through a horizontal literature review and put forwards a few cases that are being utilized in various aspects of the society for the knowledge attainment of the general public of the society.

INTRODUCTION

Knowledge Management (KM) is not merely a technology-driven process rather a policy imperative, facilitated by technology for better management and a system with increased utilization of the system's intellectual and business assets. Usually, KM decisions are based on who (people), what (knowledge) and why (objectives); leaving the how (technology) to be derived from the first three parameters. In this perspective, the basic aim is to leverage wealth of information that are currently available within a system to maximize impact and results. Moreover, critical sets of data, information and knowledge assets should be identified, captured and effectively disseminated within and outside the system (UN, 2005).

Knowledge, information and data are considered to be a system's principal assets and a main source of its comparative advantage (UN, 2005). Management of knowledge is, therefore, becomes essential to

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make the system more valuable to the stakeholders. Management of knowledge or knowledge management is primarily evolves within the society by the cumulative desire of the common citizens. These are indigenous knowledge. As time proceeds, technology advances, complexity of storage of huge data or information becomes simpler, dissemination process become more efficient, KM systems turned towards promoting their economic value. Gradually, KM systems could able to grasp attention of business communities.

Hence, knowledge management can be seen as a set of processes that seeks to transform the organization's present pattern of knowledge processing to enhance both it and its outcomes. A discrete knowledge management activity is one that has the same goal as mentioned or that is meant to contribute to that set of processes. The discipline of KM is the study of such processes and their impact on knowledge and operational processing and further outcomes. However, KM does not directly manage, create or integrate most knowledge outcomes in organizations, but only impacts knowledge processes (performed by operational process agents), which, in turn, impact knowledge outcomes at the periphery. For example, if a knowledge manager changes the rules affecting knowledge production, then the quality of knowledge claims may expand. Or if a KM intervention supplies a new search technology, based on semantic analysis of knowledge bases, then that may result in improvement in the excellence of business forecasting models Firestone, et. al., 2005).

In this aspect, Data Warehousing, Data Mining, Business Intelligence (BI) and

Online Analytical Processing (OLAP), Business Performance Measurement

(BPM), *Customer relationship management* (CRM), Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP), Collaboration Management, Groupware, Search and Retrieval applications, Content Management (CM), Semantic Network/Text Mining applications, Document Management, Image Processing and Management, e-Conference applications, e-Learning applications, Expertise Locators (Yellow Pages), Best Practices Database applications, and Enterprise Information Portals (EIPs), have all been characterized as KM tools, and projects involving the deployment and utilization of one or another of these tools have been characterized and reported as KM schemes (Firestone, 2003).

The role of relevant information, knowledge and communication in development is at the core of attention. With regard to access to information, it appreciates the importance of access to the global information pool, but attaches equal importance to feeding local content into the system, based on the right of social and cultural appearance, diversity and communication (Fust, 2003).

In recent years, knowledge management has become a new branch of business management for achieving breakthrough in business performance through the synergy of people, processes and technology. It evolved from the need for advancing beyond the failing paradigm of ICT management that accounts for over 70%-80% system failures. As 'ICT' becomes more of a commodity and endowed with more complex 'potential' capabilities, the need for re-focusing on its strategic execution emerges. Furthermore, during this transition process from an era of information scarcity to information overload, there is a need to re-focus on human sense-making processes underlying decisions, choices, and performance. In this new paradigm of increasingly uncertain and complex business environments, dynamically evolving performance outcomes are the key drivers of how 'smart minds' use 'smart technologies' to leverage strategic opportunities and challenges (Brint dot com, 2007).

However, knowledge management is complicated by the disposition of knowledge and the necessity to address it indirectly through knowledge artifacts (Loebbecke & Crowston, 2012). Loebbecke & Crowston (2012) find three major challenges to successful Knowledge Portal (KP) deployment, such as: (1) sufficient contribution, (2) favorable organizational culture, and (3) knowledge

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