

Chapter IV

Knowledge Management Portals for Empowering Citizens and Societies

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ABSTRACT

Knowledge management is not a simple technology driven modus operandi, rather it is policy driven issue that is intermingled with technology, decision, management and intellectuality. Along this route, empowering common citizens utilizing knowledge development utilities is a challenge to the researchers and development practitioners. Furthermore, dissemination of intellectual content on the Web for public view, their understanding, capacity development, and specifically for being utilized as a tool to increase their social, educational, political and economic ability is by far the most difficult part of the system. The process complicates further, when emerging technologies are being adopted to provide the solution, especially for the common people of the community with their social and political implications. However, in recent years, knowledge management has become a new branch of system management for achieving breakthrough in entrepreneurship, social and governance performance synergizing people, process, technology and policy. At the same time, emerging technologies like, data mining are being utilized for carrying out intelligent decision among dispersed source of huge data. Semantic Web Technologies are also being incorporated in the decision making processes. This chapter is focusing on knowledge management issues for developing knowledge management portals to empower citizens and societies. In this context, the chapter introduced critical aspects of knowledge management perspectives, justified establishment of knowledge management portals acting as a tool of empowerment, provided insight on data mining as a technology of implementation, throws a solution by introducing Semantic Web Technologies as an essential technology for establishing knowledge management portals, puts forward contemporary challenges during the establishment of knowledge management portal, illustrated a few cases that are acting as knowledge management portals, and concluded before giving a few hints on future research issues for empowering common element 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 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.

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 information and communications technology (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; Berry & Linoff, 2004).

Along these contexts, not only development of KM systems is important, but also dissemination of knowledge through pertinent KM systems is essential. Despite the newly evolved technologies, not many methodologies or algorithms are available in the contemporary field for providing solutions to manage huge sets of content. Furthermore, algorithms complicate further with scarcity of known methodologies, when the contents are being utilized to produce knowledge, especially for the common masses. Therefore, knowledge management to empower the common citizens remains an intricate issue to all involved in this field.

The complicity deepens further while researchers incorporate methodologies, as such data mining to extricate accurate information from a set of huge data. There are Bayesian, apriori, decision-tree, clustering, prediction, neighbor and similar algorithms are available to provide solutions for generating knowledge from data synthesizing their inherent content. Data mining products are taking the knowledge management field by strong thrust. Major research houses and entrepreneurs in this arena are incorporating data

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