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DYNAMICS OF KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT AMIDST COVID-19

INTRODUCTION

Knowledge management is the systematic management of an organisation's knowledge assets for creating value and meeting tactical & strategic requirements. It consists of the initiatives, processes, strategies, and systems that sustain and enhance the storage, assessment, sharing, refinement, and creation of knowledge

Each enterprise should define knowledge management in terms of its own business objectives. Knowledge is power, and it provides organizations with a competitive edge and reason to be successful. Technology is essential in transforming the way organizations work and to maximise the application of knowledge, productivity and customer experience.

For a digital-first organization, knowledge centralisation has to be the starting point. It then involves adopting a set of digital-ready practices, which will shape employee actions and organizational performance. A future-ready organization needs to be proactive, have information governance in place and be AI-ready.

There are 3 spheres of Knowledge Management - Technology, People and Knowledge Management Processes. Technology provides a secure central space where employees, customers, partners and suppliers exchange information, share knowledge, guide each other and the organisation to better decisions. Knowledge Management ensures participation by the team members in knowledge sharing, collaboration and reuse to achieve business results. The Knowledge Management Processes include knowledge contribution, content management, retrieval and membership in communities of practice.

Knowledge management talks about knowledge strategy comprising of vision coupled to strategic objectives, clearly defined terms for knowledge, a service Knowledge Management System, Knowledge Lifecycle, Knowledge Governance and Knowledge Culture.

Knowledge based on Information Hierarchy constitutes of:

Strategic Knowledge - involves the ability to deliver cost effective quality services to the business

Tactical Knowledge - ensures the management of service value

Operational Knowledge - helps in understanding the management, compliance and operational effectiveness.
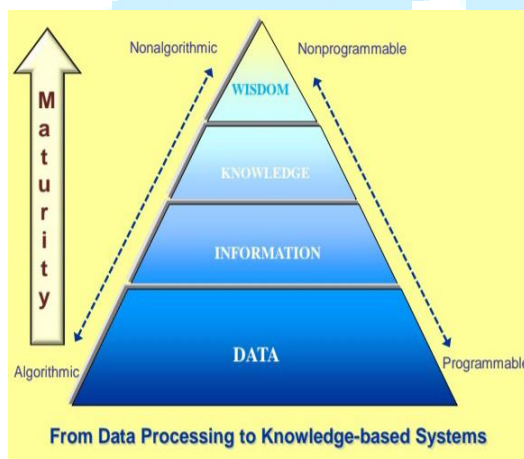
Knowledge has evolved over the years from data processing to knowledge-based systems. The following is the evolution of knowledge from;

● **Data** - unorganised and unprocessed facts or a set of discrete facts about events.

● **Information** - aggregation of data that makes decision making easier.

- **Knowledge** - is derived from information in the same way information is derived from data. It is a person's range of information.

- **Wisdom** - a state of the human mind characterised by profound understanding and deep insight, often accompanied by formal knowledge.

Knowledge as an Individual Asset is important to indicate that knowledge is located, primarily, in people. It is an individual asset that develops, mainly, through the learning process. Knowledge must be extracted and controlled for the common benefit of the organisation in order to achieve the purpose, Knowledge Management has been initiated at both the research and operational levels. The various characteristics of Knowledge Assets are Integrity, Availability, Repeatability, Measurable and Traceability.

Knowledge Management as a Discipline is an emerging discipline oriented towards increasing innovation and providing competitive edge, in those organizations that integrate it into their operational processes and business activities, in order to capture, document, retrieve, reuse, create, transfer and exchange knowledge. It is a broad and complex concept, with multiple dimensions and interrelated activities that generates a valuable asset for the company - knowledge.

Knowledge Management Research has been approached from different disciplines. There are studies that come from psychology, sociology, economics, engineering, and computer science. Each contribution from these areas has served to provide findings on various aspects, however, so far, a comprehensive, universal and explanatory framework has not been reached. There is a need for interdisciplinary research, more than research activities being focused on a single area of knowledge.

Future of Knowledge Management is going to be digital. One of the most interesting technological trends is the use of artificial intelligence in conjunction with knowledge management. Example: one subject of knowledge management is providing information to customers who have specific questions regarding a company they are doing business with.

Data Visualisation is a graphical representation of information and data is becoming more prominent in knowledge management practices. We are in a visual society and are driven by the desire for instant access to information.

Agile Knowledge Management allows an organization to address the challenges of business and operational performance, as well as the development and implementation of knowledge management-based strategy and methodology, which usually focuses on, collaboration, and customer-centric design, has been widely used by knowledge managers.

The Knowledge Lifecycle is an important aspect of Knowledge Management it includes:

- **Evolution Process** - which adds details to the process and continues to evaluate that the controls are worth implementing.
- **Asset Definition Process** - composed of planning, research, and approval processes.
- **Asset Rollout Process** - is a set of processes for facilitating adoption of Knowledge Management across the organisation.
- **Asset Enforcement Process** - pertaining to activities that review, control, and correction of Asset practices, capability reviews, templates and detailed guidance on implementing controls.

The **critical factors** for successful Knowledge Management are:
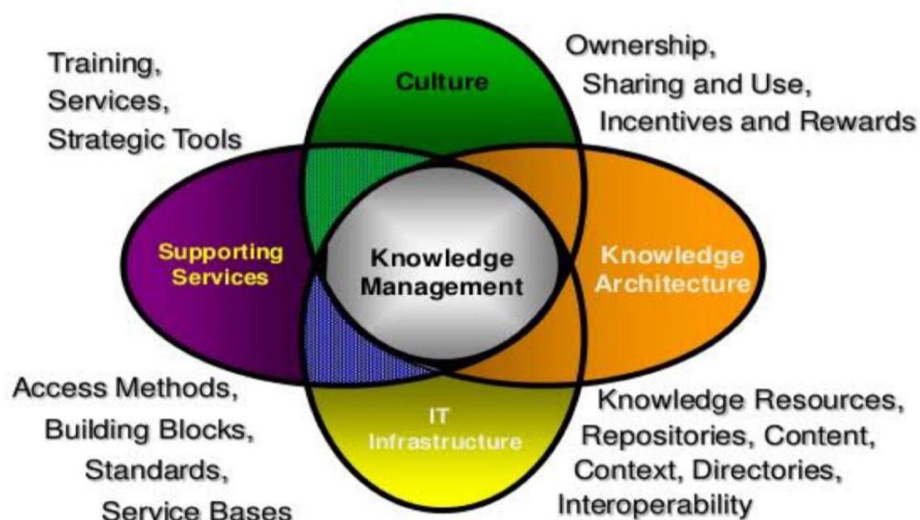
1. Strategy

- Knowledge Strategy that identifies the vision, business goals, stakeholders and activities to be accomplished.

- Detailed Planning which incorporates activities, schedules, monitoring, milestones, risk management and tracking tools to support success

- Integration of Knowledge sharing into normal activities so that it does not appear as a burden but rather as an enabler.

2. Executive Leadership

Executive Sponsorship which is essential for establishing the knowledge sharing environment. The cultural changes necessary to shift to a sharing environment must be actively supported and fostered throughout the organisation by the executive team.

3. Relevance

- User's understanding and commitment to use the knowledge environment. A critical mass of users who are willing to share, contribute, and use what is available must be established for the potential of the environment to be realised.

- Motivation and reward systems which must be created to inspire people, to encourage contributions and use the knowledge environment.

4. Enablement

- Technical Infrastructure must support sharing from both a cost and architectural standpoint.

Ongoing training and support will be necessary to establish the critical mass of users and to ensure the continued understanding and effective use of the environment as it evolves.

SIGNIFICANCE TO KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT

Knowledge management is significant because it boosts the efficiency of an organization's decision-making ability. Innovation is simpler to foster within the organization, customers enjoy increased access to best practices and the turnover rate is reduced. As the marketplace becomes more competitive, the organisation must be proactive and respond quickly to new information and innovations. Knowledge assets have gained prominence over financial and physical assets, and help the organisation to differentiate itself from its competitors and gain competitive advantage.

AMAZON

Amazon has expanded into services that go beyond the boundaries of strict e-commerce. For knowledge management Amazon is one of the best examples. Amazon is known for its world class customer service; it has been excelling at knowledge management since they took the plunge into e-commerce in the late 90's.

Amazon applies core knowledge management and user experience principles to excel. One such principle is that of housing a single interface to meet the needs of all its customers. This keeps all items easy to find and has allowed Amazon to skyrocket and diversify its business from selling books to having its own product lines. The way Amazon stores, categorizes and manages their vast quantities of information is one of its greatest competitive advantage.

INFOSYS

Infosys is an information technology company and provides outsourcing services. It was known and recognized for organizational learning and its knowledge management initiatives. The company won awards in the ASIAN MAKE (most admired knowledge enterprise) in 2007,2006,2005,2004. Here the knowledge management is used to facilitate the best practices, and assist the company to face challenges. This has helped the company to deliver higher quality results, better productivity, and customer satisfaction.

BRITISH AIRWAYS

British Airways is the second largest United Kingdom based flag carrier. Knowledge management plays a very important role in the airline industry, taking into account the size of the industry and the complexity of operations. It has developed effective knowledge management initiatives to improve the strategic planning, internal communication, customer experiences and the operational research of the company.

FORD MOTOR COMPANY

Ford Motor Company is a manufacturing company of various cars globally. Ford adopted knowledge management practices for the process development of its products. With the use of Knowledge Management practices, Ford has increased its quality and decreased its costs based on its previous performance.

WALMART

Wal-Mart stores have created an incredible mark in the retail business industry. The giant chain store has an effective knowledge management system that enables it to maintain a competitive edge over other companies even at times of economic crisis and has enabled it to cut its operational cost and create value for its shareholders.

WORLD BANK

The World Bank is an excellent example for knowledge Management. For many years, it has been trying to broadcast its operations to convert from an essentially hierarchical, Washington-based financial institution to a company that empowers its clients through knowledge sharing and information. At a recent conference for international development, a representative from the Bank noted that it was not only solely working on capturing the straight forward knowledge, but also on the more conditional aspects of knowledge such as discussions and opinions. The World Bank is trying to formulate a robust action plan to boost knowledge management.

BHARTI AIRTEL

Bharti Airtel is an Indian global telecommunication company. The Knowledge Management objectives are consistent customer experience by reducing variation in performance across business units or across time and speed in business results by eliminating re-invention. Empowering each individual

employee to leverage the collective knowledge of the entire organization in serving customers such as customer delight, revenue enhancement, productivity or value maximization. Success of Knowledge management in Bharti Airtel are content focus on hard business results, high expectations and seriousness of top management without losing sight of the culture angle.

TATA STEEL

Tata steel is a steel-making company, which introduced knowledge management in the late 1990s. The group formed a "knowledge repository" by the employees, where they shared their experiences and knowledge. After a year the company formed "knowledge communities'' for like-minded people to share their experiences. "Knowledge management index" was developed by Tata steel to evaluate the performance of an individual employee, later it was linked with the performance evaluation to knowledge management and balanced scorecard to monitor the performance of individual employees, divisions, as well as organization as whole. In the year 2003 it was recognized as one of Asia's most admired knowledge enterprises and was the only steel company in the world to receive the MAKE award.

KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT AND HR FUNCTIONS

HRM and KM are two people-centered concepts focusing on using, sharing and creating knowledge. Mainly, knowledge cannot be managed in the void, without people and vice versa. Most researchers suggest that KM can be interpreted as a form of HRM. In particular, HRM supports employees in creating and managing knowledge through the sharing of ideas, opinions and experiences. Some key HR strategies for effective people-centric partnership in KM are identified as trusting HR philosophy, institutionalizing learning to

learn, and fine-tuning HR systems in recruitment, retention, performance and reward management

Recruitment and Selection: Constantly new and changing demands in the world of work create challenges for HR professionals attempting to identify and develop relevant talent. The recruitment and selection process are what provide the input of human capital. From a Knowledge Management standpoint, recruitment and selection should aim at filling knowledge gaps, which allows an organization to adopt a more flexible approach, as opposed to simply "filling jobs". In this era of knowledge economy, where knowledge transfer and sharing are critical for developing a competitive advantage, the function of the HR department is to select and recruit individuals who would subscribe to this culture of sharing information and knowledge dissemination.

Retention: Traditionally, organizations retain only those people who add value to the organization through their experience, expertise and knowledge. Many scholars claim that organizations should value the high levels of tacit and personal knowledge that many people have, and it should be down to HRM to build effectively a good level of loyalty and retention rates. Employee retention improves the effect of knowledge acquisition and innovation performance. It increases employee commitment and trust, thus fostering knowledge specialization and fortification and creating an innovation culture. Moreover, employee retention increases knowledge retention and organizational knowledge base. Knowledge retention will even augment when benefiting from the employee knowledge-acquisition.

Performance Management: When compared with other HRM practices, performance management seems to have the strongest impact on the activity of knowledge sharing within an organization. Criteria that are measured send a message to employees of what is valued in the organization. Therefore, performance management can hinder or support Knowledge management activities within and across organizational agents. A research by Hannula et al. stressed the use of this practice in measuring various competencies, as it tends to be a strong indicator for assessing KM activities within a firm.

Training and Development: Training and development allow the employees of an organization to acquire and develop key skills that improve personal and organizational performance. The process itself is viewed by many scholars as being an effective HRM practice that aids the implementation of the KM strategy, activities and outcomes.

Knowledge transfer concerns various forms of learning, the creation of a knowledge sharing climate, the establishment of training units which assess and analyse training needs, provide and evaluate training, and lead towards learning organizations. Application of training is important to develop employees' learning capabilities and provide a common language and shared vision. This would develop a high level of self-efficacy so that employees may feel more assured of their abilities and will be more likely to exchange knowledge with others, thus fostering the acquisition of new knowledge and the dissemination of individual knowledge within the firm.

Compensation and Reward System: Compensation management acts as an effective tool to motivate employees to acquire, use, share, transfer and create knowledge. Compensation management systems should recognize innovation, risk-taking and group collaboration. Furthermore, some scholars have suggested that relative compensation should also be based on contribution, knowledge and skills without sole emphasis on hierarchical position, taking into account teamwork and flexibility rather than functional and individual measures. Rewards should be engineered based on employees' perceptions and not those of managers, with proper justification and communication.

The Role of Culture in Knowledge Management Implementation

Infrastructures are key components of corporate capabilities. Organizational culture is one of the significant obstacles to the implementation of knowledge management in organisations. Effective knowledge creation depends upon the way in which people relate to each other in the organisation. Untrustworthy behavior, constant competition, 'that's not my job' attitude are impediments to proper knowledge transfer and sharing. The activities of the human resources department should focus on creating an appropriate culture in the organization that facilitates sharing of information and motivating individuals to make their tacit knowledge, gained through years of experience and practice, explicit.

Knowledge Management Systems

Knowledge management systems refer to any kind of IT system that stores and retrieves knowledge, improves collaboration, locates knowledge sources, mines repositories for hidden knowledge, captures and uses knowledge, or in some other way enhances the KM process. A knowledge management system is a tool used by companies to help organize

documentation, frequently asked questions and other information into easily accessible formats for both internal and external customers.

Using knowledge management software can help keep documentation up to date, assist customers in finding their own answers and manage knowledge access and permissions across user groups. It's a tool that's valuable to both small businesses that are just starting out, and global enterprises that need to distribute knowledge to a wide variety of audiences.

Tools for Implementing Knowledge Management Programs

Implementing a knowledge management program is no easy feat. As with any disruptive system or technology, there are challenges to implementing a **knowledge management system**. By participating in a collaborative knowledge base system, every organization has the opportunity to accelerate their efficiency, productivity, agility, and learning. At the same time, a successful system requires thoughtful planning, and obstacles will necessarily present themselves.

KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT DURING COVID-19

Knowledge is a strategic resource to drive decision makers in the management of a pandemic, to mitigate health and socio-economic effects. In just a few months, COVID-19 has impacted businesses around the globe in fundamental ways that are still being realized. Remote work has skyrocketed, business forecasts and models are changing, and the technologies that are relied upon to interpret events, communicate, and collaborate are more important than ever.

According to the survey, about 50% of organizations were somewhat agile when it came to transitioning remotely. Companies already had a few employees that worked remote but they still faced some challenges when it came to having a full-scale remote workforce.

Respondents noted that the most helpful software for a potentially turbulent economy includes collaboration/knowledge sharing tools (ex: slack), customer service tools (ex: chatbots), workforce analytics, employee experience, and personalized customer experience solutions. Forty percent of companies surveyed said they were somewhat seeing benefits from using AI. AI was delivering tangible benefits for these companies when it came to the efficiency/replace manual processes, improve customer experiences/satisfaction, and automation.

Due to this survey the implications of COVID-19 on knowledge management shows that trustworthy and easy-to-find information is critical during uncertain times. There should be a greater emphasis on flexibility throughout the organization. Digital transformation and the move to the cloud open up innovative ways to share information. AI is essential to help provide digital transformation at high speed. There will be more reliance on KM for consistent information and guidance.

Executives should look at three-step processes of knowledge accumulation, integration, and reconfiguration. This model for managing knowledge reflects a more strategic and practical perspective, as it is process-oriented and most applicable for leading organizations. Knowledge accumulation coupled with integration and reconfiguration ensures that this actually helps companies exchange knowledge to overcome challenging situations in the time of COVID-19.

In this model, organizational knowledge, firstly, is accumulated by creating new knowledge from intellectual capital and acquiring it from external environments. In this process, executives can particularly develop a workplace which is effective in:

- Acquiring knowledge about new products/services within the industry.
- Benchmarking performance with competitors or industry.
- Using feedback to improve subsequent practices.
- Utilizing teams (e.g. committees or management teams) to manage knowledge resources.

- Developing and implementing education or training programs.
- Carrying out a career path program or recruitment program to acquire experts.
- Conducting organizational events (such as a "knowledge contest" or "knowledge fair") that promote knowledge activities.

Secondly, knowledge is integrated internally to enhance the effectiveness and efficiencies in various systems and processes, as well as to be more responsive to market changes. In this process, executives can particularly develop a workplace which is effective in:

- Monitoring or controlling organizational knowledge to keep products or services in line with market requirements.
- Regularly assessing knowledge requirements according to environmental changes.
- Linking the knowledge sharing system using various software and programmes.
- Defining "core knowledge" or "core competence" areas.
- Using expert groups to evaluate the quality and effectiveness of organizational knowledge.
- Disseminating organizational knowledge among employees.
- Rewarding individuals or teams based on the quality of knowledge generated.

Thirdly, the knowledge within organizations needs to be reconfigured to meet environmental changes and new challenges in the time of COVID-19 and at the same time should not be leaked to the competition in any shape or form unless agreed upon by senior executives. In this process, knowledge is globally shared with other organizations in the environment. Executives are aware of networking with more successful competitors is a key activity for companies to share successes and communicate best practices as a way of identifying new collaboration opportunities that can occur to meet COVID-19 challenges and keep the highest standard of operation in the industry. In doing this, executives can particularly develop a workplace which is effective in:

- Creating knowledge alliances with suppliers, customers, or other partners.
- Sharing knowledge management visions and goals with external partners (such as suppliers and customers or other partners) to develop collaborative activities, shared goals and trust-based relationships with them.

- Extending (or linking) knowledge related policies or rules (measurement, rewards) with external partners (such as customers, suppliers or other partners).
- Linking our knowledge sharing system with external partners (such as customers, suppliers or other partners).
- Facilitating and implementing activities such as conferences, contests, seminars with external partners.

FUTURE OF KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT

The field of Knowledge Management is constantly changing, and adding to its arsenal of tools, technologies and objectives. The combination of skills and expertise, data, search, communication and technology that KM encompasses means that it's vital to stay current in order to provide access to information for both employees and customers. The future of Knowledge Management is going to be the (remote) digital workplace. According to Piazza, "the future of the KM discipline is all these things, all these components articulating for other things: people, process, content and technology."

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE AND KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT:

One of the most interesting technological trends in the upcoming years is the use of artificial intelligence in conjunction with knowledge management. The advantages that AI chatbots have over more traditional automated chatbots is that an AI chatbot is better able to understand behavioural patterns, analyse sentiment, and can actively learn and

adapt to individual customer requirements. This is just one example of how AI can be used to facilitate a more effective presentation and articulation of knowledge.

AGILE METHODOLOGY IN KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT:

The top 4 agile methodologies shaping up knowledge management are

- **Scrum:** The Scrum methodology allows active client participation at each stage, so that any required changes are addressed immediately and acted on. This ensures that the project is delivered within time and meets the client demands effectively.
- **Extreme Programming (XP):** Extreme Programming methodology aims to put together the best practices of traditional software development and takes them to an extreme level to ensure high quality deliverables.
- **Lean Agile Methodology:** The methodology focuses on reducing redundant tasks and wastage in software development. Wastage in software development would mean writing wrong codes, reworking, or even inefficient usage of time and resources.
- **Kanban:** The Kanban framework ensures that the teams do not commit to more than what they can deliver in a day, the work in progress is visualized and reviewed each day, and when a task is completed before time, the next task in line is taken up immediately.

VISUALIZATION IN KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT:
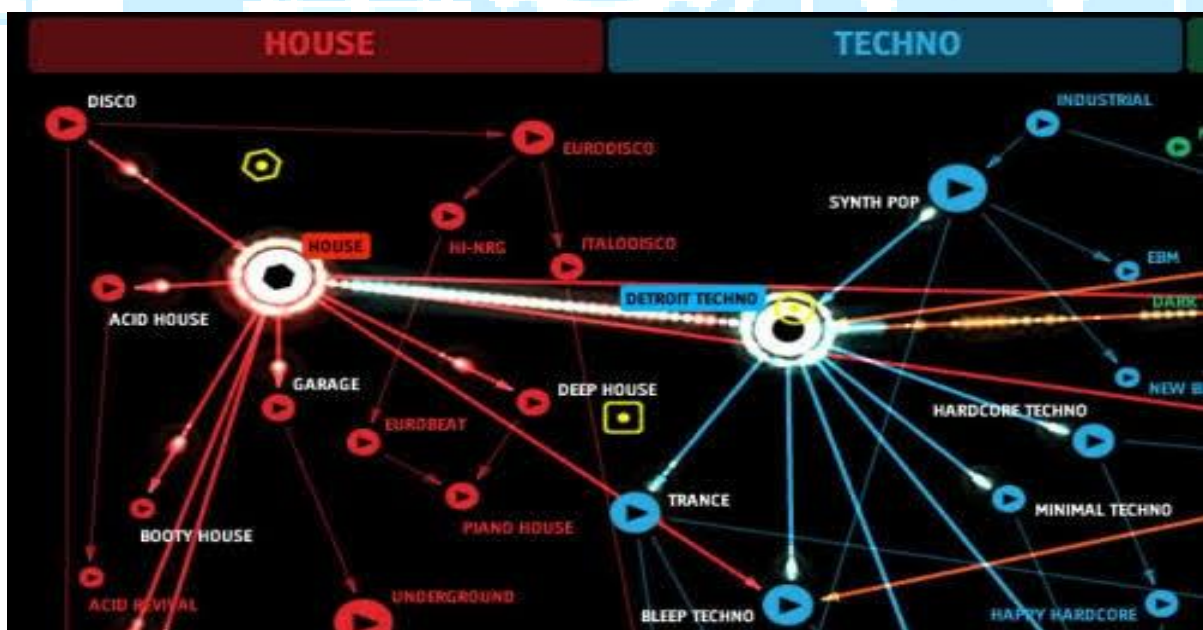
Knowledge visualization is concerned with designing, implementing and applying appropriate visual representations to create, transform and communicate knowledge. It is becoming more pervasive in knowledge management practices. Visualization is helpful in the future, in terms of effective knowledge management because visualization helps to compress complex data into relatively simple and plausible form which is easy to perceive and process. Knowledge visualization is pivotal in the contemporary organizational setting. It is an effective tool that can help to process information effectively and communicate it to the target audience, whereas, knowledge management should use this tool wisely respectively to the needs of the particular organization and take into consideration the environment, where visualization systems are applied.

Knowledge Management Drives and Enhanced Collaboration: Knowledge management professionals have a common goal that focuses on the dissemination of knowledge to an employee or employees who are actively looking for information and data. Today's KM has begun to evolve into collaborative knowledge management, or as some have termed it, Knowledge Collaboration, a process of structuring group interactions to facilitate problem solving and the sharing of knowledge.

CONCLUSION

The future of Knowledge Management is multi: multimedia, multichannel and multilingual. Today, more data is streaming into organizations from more sources than ever before. But it is not enough to simply collect and store it. Data must be put into usable forms to be accessible for a variety of purposes. Knowledge management systems help companies accomplish that goal. Throughout all Knowledge Management solutions and services, a wave of modern technologies, such as AI, machine learning, natural language processing, and others, are serving to enhance traditional capabilities.

Many consumers have become well-acquainted with AI-powered assistants such as Alexa, in which information is retrieved and assembled, in near real time, in response to a spoken query—on just about any topic. According to McKendrick it is estimated that today's information workers may spend up to 2 hours searching and assembling the specific information they need to do a task. AI holds great promise to take on much of the heavy lifting of sifting through corporate information sources, as well as customizing interfaces and providing end users with the answers they need, almost instantaneously.

Implementing complete knowledge management takes time and money, however, the results can be impressive and risks can be minimized by taking a phased approach that gives beneficial returns at each step. Organizations that have made this kind of investment in knowledge management realize tangible results quickly. They add to their top and bottom lines through faster cycle times, enhanced efficiency, better decision making and greater use of tested solutions across the enterprise.

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