



TenStep Supplemental Paper

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Checklist: What Knowledge Management Systems Should Deliver

Experience has shown that implementing a Knowledge Management (KM) solution is both attainable and desirable within most organizations. Typically, it is possible to conduct a standard initial implementation within thirty business days. Within that timeframe, users are able to demonstrate the success of installing, populating and using a modest knowledge base system to address service or support issues within a well-defined problem area.

Your KM initiative should have the following characteristics.

- Support for multiple channels of user access, including Web, email, chat and VoIP
- Personalized, self-service end user experience (whether accessed from inside or outside the organization)
- Costs must scale effectively as service needs grow and expand
- System must support self-service and assisted service with equal facility and be able to track interactions from the unassisted side into the assisted side so that support staff can put a customer's problems into context
- Ability to capture feedback from end users, customers, support staff and knowledge management
- Rapid solution development with proactive service for end users so that any unsolved problem is solved as quickly as possible
- Must apply to any subject area, from sales to customer service, where knowledge elements can be captured, organized and ranked for relevancy. Ideally, a KM system should be able to handle multiple subject areas within the same overall framework.
- KM vendors must supply training and consulting support so that organizations can learn how to utilize the system and build their knowledge bases
- KM systems should be able to incorporate pre-existing knowledge bases, especially for widely used IT products and technologies.

It is important to solicit continuous feedback on the applicability of existing knowledge elements to new situations, new problems and new scenarios. This permits the number of element relationships to grow and explains how organization and relevancy ranking can improve with time, thereby increasing the value of the knowledge base itself.

This initial implementation enables organizations to understand the processes and methodologies necessary to carry out a successful KM project and can provide a powerful demonstration of a KM system's capabilities within the user organization. The right supplier can also provide all the necessary project management, systems engineering, knowledge management consulting, technical training and support needed to obtain the results targeted from an initial deployment.