



TenStep Supplemental Paper

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Use Small Knowledge Management Solutions to Gain Initial Experience

Implementing a Knowledge Management solution is both attainable and desirable within most organizations. Typically, it is possible to conduct a standard initial implementation within thirty to sixty business days. Within that timeframe, users can demonstrate success installing, populating and using a modest knowledge base system to address service or support issues within a well-defined problem area. If you need additional assistance, the vendor 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. A small Help Desk would be a typical implementation that could be up and running in a few months.

This initial small implementation will help an organization understand the processes and methodologies necessary to carry out a successful Knowledge Management project. This initial implementation can also provide a powerful demonstration of a Knowledge Management system's capabilities.

To really be successful, however, the small initial implementation of a Knowledge Management solution must showcase most, if not all, of the major features you want in subsequent larger implementations. These features include:

- Support for multiple channels of user access, including Web, email, chat, etc.
- Personalized, self-service end user experience (whether accessed from inside or outside the organization). That is, the system knows who you are and some of your preferences.
- Costs must scale effectively as services needs grow and expand.
- Self-service features to find information on your own, as well as a seamless way to escalate to human support if needed through chat, email or phone. If possible, the solution should track the self service interactions so that support staff can put a customer's prior problem solving experience into context.
- Ability to capture feedback from end users, customers, support staff and knowledge management
- Must apply to any subject area, from sales to customer service, where knowledge elements can be captured, organized and ranked for relevancy. Ideally, a Knowledge Management system should be able to handle multiple subject areas within the same overall framework.
- Training and consulting support must be available from the vendor so that organizations can learn how to utilize the system and build their knowledge bases.
- Ability to merge and incorporate pre-existing knowledge bases, especially for widely used IT products and technologies.



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It is important to gather continuous feedback on the value of existing knowledge elements to new situations, new problems and new scenarios. This permits your understanding of the underlying data elements to grow and helps you build new relationships between data elements. This, in turn, increases the ability of people to find their own information, thereby increasing the value of the knowledge base itself.