What's Next for Knowledge Management?
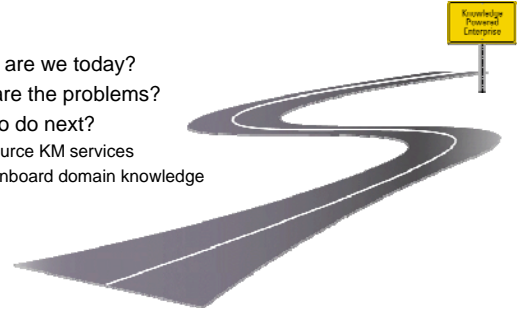### Evolution and Revolution

Reid Smith and Guillermo Arango
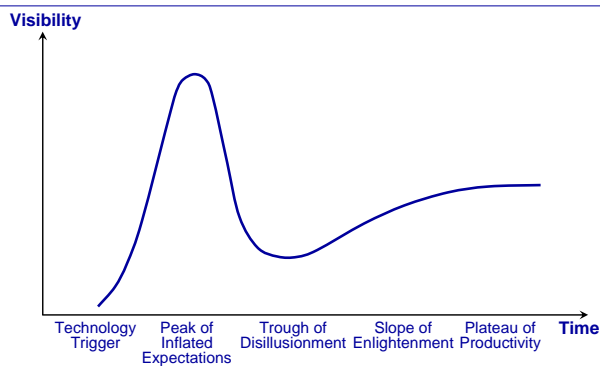
Medstory

Schlumberger

- Where are we today?
- What are the problems?
- What to do next?
  - Outsource KM services
  - Add onboard domain knowledge

Visibility

Technology Trigger | Peak of Inflated Expectations | Trough of Disillusionment | Slope of Enlightenment | Plateau of Productivity | **Time**

Hype Cycle due to Gartner, Inc.

Gustave Flaubert
Dictionnaire des Idées Reçues
(Dictionary of Generally Accepted Ideas)
1853

- **Conversation** – Politics and religion must be kept out of it.

- **Incompetence** – Always 'utter'. The more incompetent you are, the more ambitious you must be.

- **Innovation** – Always 'dangerous'.

- **The Learned** – Make fun of them. All it takes to be learned is a good memory and hard work.

- **Learning** – Despise it as the sign of a narrow mind.

- **Stockbrokers** – All thieves.

KM Generally Accepted Ideas

- **Knowledge** – A corporate asset.
- **Knowledge Management** – Systematic approaches to help information and knowledge grow and flow to the right people at the right time to create value.
- **Knowledge-Sharing Culture** – Critical for success.
- **Connections** – Essential (people to people, people to information, people to communities, …).
- **People** – The "Killer App".
- **Community of Practice** – Fundamental building block.
- **Tacit vs. Explicit Knowledge** – It's 80/20.
- **Stories** – The best way to convey experience.
- **Lessons Learned** – Not "learned" until they result in a change of behavior.

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KM Generally Accepted Ideas

- **KM Projects** – Focus on business objectives.
- **Management Support** – Don't leave home without it.
- **Governance** – Central KM group needed.
- **Change Management** – Technology won't succeed without a change in work process.
- **Processes** – Honor all links in the Knowledge Flow Cycle.
- **Technology** – Merely an enabler.
- **Content Management** – Important, but only part of KM.
- **Taxonomies** – Can't do without.
- **Best Practices** – The Holy Grail.

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If it works, don't fix it. But is it working?

- **"Do It Yourself" knowledge management**
  - Symptom: high initiative mortality rates
  - Diagnosis: knowledge about getting KM to work is also 80/20!
  - Recommendation: employ experienced specialists

- **"It would be nice, but we can't afford it"**
  - Symptom: disillusionment sets in when considering resources and effort
  - Diagnosis: organization's size (structure, pace of change) are barriers
  - Recommendation: cut down the cost of deploying KM best practices

- **"Thanks, but I can't wait"**
  - Symptom: good roll-out practices perceived to take "too long"
  - Diagnosis: organizations want apples, we offer them gardening manuals
  - Recommendation: accelerate time to results

- **Large sectors of the economy (e.g., SMEs) are disenfranchised**

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What to do next?

Deliver a step-change improvement
  - in success rate of KM initiatives
  - in effort it takes to deploy **KM services**
  - in time it takes to achieve results
  - in adoption by disenfranchised organizations

Outsource KM infrastructure and logistics
Managing, leveraging and protecting the firm's knowledge assets does not imply that the firm must "own" KM infrastructure and logistics
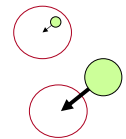
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Outsourcing

"Outsourcing[†] is the procuring of services or products from an outside supplier in order to reduce costs, fill the gap of (or replace) in-house capabilities and minimize time scales of projects, without the loss of control or flexibility."

The Outsourcing Institute

[†] Outsourcing does not mean nor does it imply offshoring.


The internal KM function as a precursor to outsourcing

Companies that invested in an internal KM function have taken a step toward outsourcing. Typically, the KM function is expected to provide

– qualified personnel
– processes and technology
– the right industry knowledge
– plans, metrics and estimation guidelines
– experience in the ins and outs of what it takes to succeed.

… so that they can take care of the direction, infrastructure and logistics of KM programs, leaving the regular employees to focus on doing their jobs with minimal KM overhead.

Learnings from manufacturing, software, IT services, …
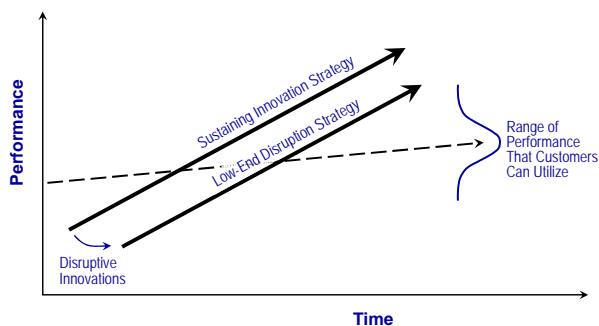
Christensen & Raynor: The Innovator's Solution: Creating and Sustaining Successful Growth.

These aspects of KM are "out of scope"

- Defining a KM strategy aligned with the business objectives of the organization
- Establishing and operating a governance structure
- Change Management
- Membership and participation in communities of practice or similar structures that promote desirable behaviors
- Creation, reuse and application of knowledge
- Application of KM techniques to drive or enable organizational or cultural transformation
- Use of KM as a tool for innovation

But KM infrastructure and logistics are "in scope"

- Operating the IT infrastructure of KM as a managed service
- Ontology development and evolution
- Documents – validation, organization, migration
- Brokerage and facilitation services
- Journalism – harvesting, editing and publishing success stories, best practices and lessons learned.
- Expert services – consultants, analysts, research organizations
- Auditing business impact – setting up, operating and reporting on measurement programs

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What levels of service could be offered?

- Hosting
  - Turnkey versions of the technology enablers
- ASP
  - KM applications management and service desks
- KM Services
  - managing a company's ontology, investigative and editorial work to produce best practices, CoP facilitation, search tuning, …
- End-to-end KM processes
  - Knowledge salvage services
  - Knowledge continuity services

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What does it take to be a supplier of KM services?

- Like the internal KM function
  - qualified personnel
  - processes and technology
  - the right industry knowledge
  - plans, metrics and estimation guidelines
  - experience in the ins and outs of what it takes to succeed.
- Plus
  - Service Level Assurance
    + Will SLAs be the next step in the evolution of KM metrics?
    + Will internal process maturity (KMMI?) become a standard requirement?

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Road map for the presentation

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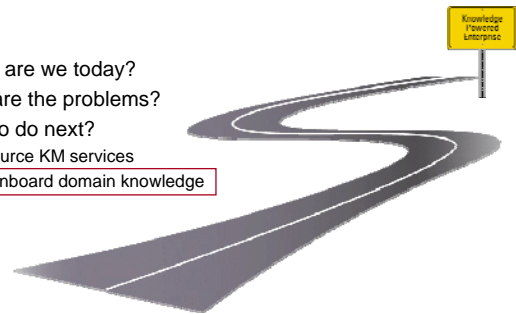
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Technology Changes the Game

Buckminster Fuller

"If you want to teach people a new way of thinking, don't bother trying to lecture or instruct them. Instead, give them a tool, the use of which will lead them to new ways of thinking."

Marshall McLuhan

"It is the medium that shapes and controls the scale and form of human association and action."

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What to do next?

Deliver a new generation of technology, with onboard domain knowledge

Change the game of knowledge management

In this game, technology is not "merely" an enabler – it is an essential carrier of domain knowledge

The new medium – technology with onboard domain knowledge – will lead to new ways of thinking about performance support

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The Knowledge Environment of the Firm

Business Demands

Documents

Best Practices Lessons Learned

News & Data Feeds

Dashboard
Intelligence Reports – KPIs

Data Management & Mining

Portal
Search
Browse
Email, IM, …

Projects

Service Desk

Applications

Expertise Locator

Workflows

Collaboration

19

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Onboard Domain Knowledge

Projects

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Collaboration

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ASCO Breast Cancer Information Exchange

Data Mining & Analysis

Onboard Domain Knowledge
– Software that Knows the Domain

- **Portal**
  - Ontology for precise search, publishing, content management, …
  - Structured display – highlighting relationships – 360° perspective
- **Intelligence and News / Data Feeds**
  - Knowing what to look for, where to look, how to make queries, …
- **Expertise Locator**
  - Skills taxonomy, knowing where to look, relationships, …
- **Data Management & Mining**
  - Coupled with precise search
- **Applications – Analytics, Data Interpretation**
  - Knowledge Appliances – transforming data into "decision ready" knowledge
- **Workflows**
  - Presenting the right information at every step
- **Collaboration**
  - "in context" – with structured annotation

What to do next?

- **Knowledge Management Services outsourcing**
  - **Focus on the value-creating activities**

- **Technology with onboard domain knowledge**
  - **Change the rules of the game**

$$Power = Knowledge^{Shared}$$

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