Knowledge Management Scenarios

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Overview

The growing amount of unstructured data and information in document form is forcing organizations to find new ways of making this knowledge accessible to their employees. This process is made harder by heterogeneous systems and developments that vary from country to country.

Knowledge Management provides you with the tools needed to publish, distribute, and locate information. It also provides functions for improving teamwork within your enterprise.

The following scenarios give you an overview of the functions of Knowledge Management, and describes how they can be used productively.

Scenario 1

Anna works as a research assistant in an expanding pharmaceutical company. Recently, this company bought a small foreign firm. Cooperation is assured even though both firms are in different parts of the world: Knowledge Management unifies data and information from the entire organization and makes it available to all employees.

After converting the IT systems in the foreign organization, WebDAV was used to import hundreds of documents from its file system into Knowledge Management and then to classify them. During this process the documents were analyzed by the system and structured in taxonomies and categories on the basis of their content. You no longer access the data using the file system, but via taxonomies across the whole organization.

Anna uses the portal in her daily work. One of her tasks is to publish the project team’s results at certain time intervals. The team also has colleagues from the foreign subsidiary. Anna not only uses minutes from meetings, but also the development engineers’ laboratory reports from the last few weeks.

Anna knows her colleagues’ reports were stored in a certain directory. Unfortunately, she does not know the name of this directory. However, Anna can use the portal’s enhanced search function to quickly find the required documents. She does not need to know where and in which folders these documents were created: The portal’s search engine spares her this work. Although Anna made a slight typing error when entering the search query, the system can still find the corresponding documents thanks to the fuzzy search facility.

After collecting the documents required, Anna begins compiling her report. One file seems to her to be of particular importance. For this reason, she wants to have more information about it. When she clicks on Similar Documents in the search result list, the system searches for documents with similar content. Anna uses this function frequently, since it helps her to understand contexts better.
Anna completed her report in the afternoon and checked it into the portal. Before all employees in the organization can read it, Anna's boss must approve her document. Using the approval workflow, Anna's boss receives a message in his universal worklist telling him that he has a document to approve.

The document is released in the evening after Anna's boss has checked and approved it. It can now be called up using the portal from everywhere in the organization.

Anna creates a subscription to make sure her results reach the people who need them quickly. This function uses e-mail to inform project members both home and abroad of the availability of the document automatically. Subscription is also used to notify people of corrections or changes to the document.

**Scenario 2**

Paul is a development engineer in the foreign enterprise described above. He has been working on a new project with colleagues from the parent company for some time. He also uses the portal daily.

Paul checks his e-mails and takes a look at his current notifications, as he does each morning. He finds a message informing him that a colleague from the parent company has created a new document about the updated development results. Paul calls up the document and reads it. As he will use this information more frequently in the near future, he adds this document to his favorites.

Paul starts a discussion to talk about the results described in the document with other project members online. The advantage of this asynchronous cooperation: Colleagues from the whole company can take part in the discussion. This saves costs that would otherwise be incurred by business trips or video conferences.

After starting the discussion, he wants to send a personal response to Anna, the document's author. He does this using the feedback function.

Paul sends the document directly from the portal via email. This enables Paul to inform his colleague Karl, who works in Product Management and is not directly involved in the project, about the development results.

Paul rates the document as "good", making the information search in the portal easier for his colleagues. An employee can use this assessment to judge the content quality of the found document much quicker.

Before leaving the office in the evening, Paul takes a look at the status of the discussion he started today. Employees from both enterprises have made contributions to the discussion. Paul will evaluate the results the following day.