

Finding Corporate Knowledge: Three Case Studies

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Universal challenges

- Too many information silos
- Dirty data
- No metadata/classification nor taxonomy in place
- Differing needs of different groups
- Multiple physical locations with differing protocols for storing information
- Loss of intellectual capital when people leave
- No point person/information professional

Three Case Studies

- Environmental engineering firm
- Architecture/design firm
- The Exploratorium

Environmental Firm Background

- Located in the Sacramento, CA area
- Founded in 1979
- Five offices in California with plans to expand to Nevada and Oregon
- Have traditional library of externally published documents
- Internal document library (both print and digital)
- Project began in May 2007 and is still ongoing

Environmental Firm Staffing

- **Diverse staff**
 - Chemists
 - Environmental engineers
 - Geographers
- **Interviewed staff to learn how they find information and what their pain points are**
- **Presented at annual all-staff meeting**

Environmental Firm Research for Solutions

- Researched some trusted sources for the right software
 - Capterra's Library Automation Software Finder
<http://www.capterra.com/library-automation-software>
 - Marshall Breeding's Library Technology Guides
<http://tinyurl.com/4v3hrn>
 - "Helping You Buy: Integrated Library Systems." Wayne, Richard. *Computers in Libraries*, Oct. 2007, Vol. 27 Issue 9, pp. 23-30.

Environmental Firm Wrap-Up

- Cataloging print and digital/external and internal documents
- Dumpster Day
- Intranet needs to be totally redesigned and marketed to staff
- Continue to train staff, tout benefits of information portal and get buy-in to contribute documents for cataloging into system

Architecture/Design Firm

- Located in the San Francisco Bay Area with 6 offices in the U.S. and one in Asia
- Staff
 - Landscape architects
 - Photographers
 - City planners
- Lots of young staff using Google to find images/information when the firm already owns similar information

Architecture/Design Firm Challenges

- Lots of file types/silos
- Canto Cumulus image database
- CEO wanted simple “Google-like solution”
- Intranet that is so badly designed no one uses it
- Each office has a different culture for sharing and maintaining documents

Architecture/Design Firm Solutions

- Looked at a lot of enterprise search solutions
- One place I started was <http://www.capterra.com/>
- 43 possibilities
- Narrowed this list to 19, then to 8
- #1 choice was Newforma's Project Center: <http://www.newforma.com/>

Architecture/Design Firm Info Pro

- Firm wanted to hire another IT person
- Best solution was a librarian/information professional
- Wrote job description and had it posted to many job sites
- Hired recent grad of SJSU's SLIS program who had worked part-time in architecture firm for ten years

Architecture/Design Firm Wrap-Up

- CEO didn't have much faith that we'd find the right solution the first go round
- No solution implemented yet, but they are on the verge of implementing Newforma's Project Center
- Web 2.0

Exploratorium Background

- Museum of science, art and human perception in San Francisco
<http://www.exploratorium.edu>
- 577,000 in-person visitors/year
- Web pioneer – 1993 (about 24 million hits/year)
- Innovative teacher professional development programs
- Began thinking of KM/KS in 2003

Exploratorium Challenges

- Museum founded in 1979
- Internal content in many formats
 - print
 - images (both digital and print)
 - video (Hi8, VHS, U-Matic)
 - audio (cassettes and reel-to-reel)
- Stuff lives in many places

Exploratorium Solutions

- Acquired Canto Cumulus
- Created free online digital library for educators
<http://www.exploratorium.edu/educate/dl.html>
- Internal Cumulus database for staff

Exploratorium Staffing

- 1.8 FTE in media archiving
- .45 FTE dedicated to KM/KS
- 2.75 FTE in the Learning Commons

Exploratorium Wrap-Up

- Still struggling with enterprise search
- Intranet has become info central
- Lots of PR to get staff to look there for info and to know when to ask for help
- Web 2.0 stuff

Endnote...

- “It is impossible to generalize how an enterprise unit ought to go about information and knowledge management (IKM). What is possible is to gauge the level of awareness among managers and team members as to the suitability of the practices being followed now or potential new practices to be followed in future.”

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Questions or comments?

Thank you for coming today.

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