The outside in : questioning the use of electronic information services in organizations
Nouwens, J.C.A.R.

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Memo

To: All employees
From: Board of Directors, <name>
Concerning: Survey Knowledge Management
Date: 19 September 1997
Reference: /knowman/enqmem.sam

Knowledge management is one of the key challenges that our organization is facing today. How do professionals get the right information to enable them to serve their clients optimally and surprise them occasionally? How do we keep up with or excel our competitors on this topic?

<name company> acquires a lot of information from various external information providers. This information is often delivered in electronic format (like cd-rom's, Notes databases or online databases). This will make it easier for us to share and exchange information, regardless of the physical location where we work.

To give us insight in your information needs and the tools you require to acquire information and knowledge, <name company> is cooperating with the University of Amsterdam to investigate the use of electronic information services. The research results will be very important for <name company>, because it can help us to anticipate more adequately to your information needs. The research will also provide us the opportunity to benchmark our organization with our direct competitors and other professional services organizations.

I therefore request you to participate in this survey. Filling in the questionnaire will take approximately 15 minutes of your time.

Thank you in advance for your cooperation,
Best regards,

<signature and name of member of the Board of Directors>
**Instructions**

This questionnaire deals with the use of information sources like KRC, Directorate Methodologies Auditing, Directorate Methodologies Tax, Lotus Notes and other external electronic information services, such as the Internet and databases from electronic publishers.

With most questions you are only allowed to mark one of the answer categories. If otherwise, this will be explicitly mentioned. If you have any questions about this survey, you can contact <name employee>, manager of the knowledge center, tel. xxx – yyyyyy.

Good luck with answering the questions!

Your occupation

1a. Within which department do you work?  
- O 1. Business Assurance  
- O 2. Tax  
- O 3. Legal Services  
- O 4. Management Consultancy  
- O 5. Other, namely ________________________

1b. To which sub-group or cluster do you belong?  

1c. What is the official title of your position?  

2. What is your specialisation?  

3. Within which sector group(s) do you participate?  

4. To what extent do you agree with the following statements? *(please mark one of the answering possibilities per statement)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>totally disagree</th>
<th>disagree</th>
<th>neutral</th>
<th>agree</th>
<th>totally agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I share a lot of information with people from other organizations (outside 1-of-6)</td>
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<td>I am continuously communicating with clients</td>
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<tr>
<td>For my work, I hardly have to deliberate with people from other organizations (outside 1-of-6)</td>
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<tr>
<td>I often have the feeling I lack information about what happens in other organizations (outside 1-of-6)</td>
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</table>

B. 2
5. How important is it for the performance of your job to be informed about the following developments (please mark one of the four answering categories per subject):

- in legislation (e.g. new laws, jurisprudence, political decisions)
- with (potential) clients (e.g. earlier work, financial results, general company figures)
- within industries (e.g. market developments, product/price information, competitor analysis, recent mergers, acquisitions and alliances)
- with competitors (other auditing, tax and management consultancy firms)
- concerning human resources (e.g. the labor market, employment agencies, recruitment & selection)
- in financial markets (e.g. shareholders, investors, interest and currency rates)
- concerning professional knowledge and technology (e.g. new work methods, research & development, information technologies)
- concerning management & organisation (e.g. quality management, marketing, strategy, restructuring approaches)
- concerning macro-economic information (e.g. inflation, economic development, income figures)
- concerning social-cultural information (e.g. societal trends, lifestyle, public opinion, consumer interests)
- concerning international developments (related to any or all of the above mentioned subjects)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Not Important</th>
<th>Reasonably unimportant</th>
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<th>Very important</th>
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<td>1.</td>
<td>2.</td>
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</table>
The use of Lotus Notes/Directorates / KRC

6. Which of the following Lotus-Notes databases do you use to get information about the above mentioned developments? (You can mark as many databases as appropriate)

- O 1. C&L Vaktechnische informatie
- O 2. BV1 Nieuws
- O 3. Legal Notes
- O 4. MKB database
- O 5. Delivery Bibliotheek
- O 6. Globe
- O 7. Datapro
- O 8. BRP databases
- O 9. Gartner
- O 10. Others, namely ______________________
- O 11. None of the above (continue with question 7)

6a. How much time do you spend on average per week with consulting these Lotus Notes Databases? (Please fill in the amount of hours per week)

___________ hours per week

7. How often do you ask the Directorate Methodologies for information? (Please fill in the amount of times per month)

___________ times per month

8. Which of the following products/services of the KRC have you ever used in your present position? (You may mark as many services as appropriate)

- O 1. Requesting a publication
- O 2. Requesting company data
- O 3. Database search
- O 4. Notification service (newspaper clippings)
- O 5. Official documents of Parliament
- O 6. Year reports (financial results)
- O 7. Short request for information
- O 8. Production of a reader
- O 9. Profile of a company
- O 10. Industry report
- O 11. Competition analysis
- O 12. Financial analysis
- O 13. Other, namely ______________________
- O 14. None of the above (continue with question 9)

8a. How often do you use the products and services of KRC? (Please fill in the amount of times per month) (Continue with question 10)

___________ times per month

Question 9a en 9b only need to be answered when you do not use any of the services of KRC.

9a. Do you expect to start using any of the products/services of KRC in the near future (within one year)?

- O 1. Yes
- O 2. No
- O 3. Don't know

9b. Why do you not use any of the products/services of KRC? (You can mark as many reasons as appropriate)

- O 1. I hardly know the KRC
- O 2. KRC does not offer me relevant information
- O 3. KRC is too expensive
- O 4. I do not know what kind of information KRC can provide
- O 5. Other sources of information are better
- O 6. I prefer to search for information myself
- O 7. KRC doesn’t understand my business
- O 8. I do not know whom to contact within KRC
- O 9. KRC is too slow in delivering information
- O 10. Other reasons, namely ______________________

B.4
Consequences for your own job
(Please mark one of the answering categories per statement)

10. Since the use of the above mentioned services (Lotus Notes, KRC, Directorates) I am able:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Totally disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• to find information more easily</td>
<td>1.</td>
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<td>• to get information more focused</td>
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<td>• to get information I can not find anywhere else</td>
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<td>• to better keep up with developments in other organizations (outside 1-of-6 NL)</td>
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<td>• to better serve my clients</td>
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<td>• to better generate new ideas and insights</td>
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<td>• I am less able to process the large amounts of information</td>
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External databases
Besides the internal facilities of 1-of-6, there are several external databases from electronic publishers available within 1-of-6.

11a. Which of the following Wolters Kluwer databases have you ever used within 1-of-6 in your present position? (You may mark as many databases as appropriate)

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<td>O 7. Europese Bibliothek (ELEX)</td>
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<td>O 13. None of the above</td>
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11b. Which of the following other external databases have you ever used within 1-of-6 in your present position? (You may mark as many databases as appropriate)

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<td>O 2. Kamer van Koophandel Online</td>
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<td>O 3. Het Financieele Dagblad</td>
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<td>O 4. Marketing Data</td>
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<td>O 5. Probase</td>
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<td>O 6. FT Profile</td>
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</table>

11c. Which other external database do you use yourself?

__________________________________________

__________________________________________

__________________________________________

B.5
If you do not use any of the external databases (as mentioned in question 11a to 11c), you can continue with question 16a.

12a. How much time do you spend in total on consulting the various external databases? (Please fill in the amount of time for one of the appropriate time slots)

   ______ hours per week
   ______ hours per month
   ______ hours per year

12b. How long are you already using external databases?

   ______ year(s)

13. Which of the following categories is most applicable concerning your familiarity with external databases? (Please mark one of the categories)

   0 1. Zeer gering
   0 2. Nog onvoldoend e
   0 3. Redelijk voldoend e
   0 4. Vrij goed
   0 1. Yes
   0 2. No
   0 3. Don't know

14. Do you search for others in any of the external databases?

14a. When you search for others in the external databases, how often do you do this? (Please fill in the amount of time for one of the appropriate time slots)

   ______ times per week
   ______ times per month
   ______ times per year

14b. When you search for others, for whom do you mostly search? (Please mark one of the possible answers)

   0 1. Junior/business analyst
   0 2. Senior
   0 3. Manager
   0 4. Partner
   0 5. Support Staff
   0 6. Others, namely ______________________

15. Since the use of the above mentioned external databases (Wolters Kluwer, Internet and otherwise), I am able: (Please mark one of the answering categories per statement)

   - to find information more easily
   - to get information more focused
   - to get information I can not find anywhere else
   - to better keep up with developments in other organizations (outside 1-of-6 NL)
   - to better serve my clients
   - to better generate new ideas and insights
   - I am less able to process the large amounts of information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Totally disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Agree</th>
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B.6
You only need to answer question 16a and 16b if you do not use any of the above mentioned external databases (Wolters Kluwer, Internet or otherwise)

16a. Do you expect to start using any of the external databases in the near future (within one year)?

16b. Why do you not use any of the products/services of KRC? (You can mark as many reasons as appropriate)

17. To what extent do you expect to use external databases in the future?

 Searching information with the help of colleagues

18. How often do you ask someone within your business unit to search information in the external databases for you? (Please fill in the amount of time for one of the appropriate time slots)

18a. If you let others search for you, in which databases do you ask them to search? (You may mark as many databases as appropriate)

Wolters Kluwer

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Option</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>1.</td>
<td>ADW</td>
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<td>2.</td>
<td>Arbeidsrecht</td>
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<td>3.</td>
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<td>4.</td>
<td>IP/VB</td>
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<td>5.</td>
<td>VPB</td>
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<td>6.</td>
<td>Business Bibliothek</td>
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<td>7.</td>
<td>Europese Bibliotheek (ELEX)</td>
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<td>8.</td>
<td>Fiscale Bibliothek</td>
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<td>9.</td>
<td>Juridische Bibliotheek</td>
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<td>10.</td>
<td>Sociaal-juridische Bibliotheek</td>
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<td>11.</td>
<td>Richtlijnen voor de jaarverslaggeving</td>
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<td>12.</td>
<td>Compendium voor de jaarrekening</td>
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Other external databases

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<tr>
<th>Option</th>
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<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Internet</td>
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<td>2.</td>
<td>KvK On-line</td>
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<td>3.</td>
<td>Het Financieele Dagblad</td>
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<td>4.</td>
<td>Marketing Data</td>
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<td>5.</td>
<td>Probase</td>
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<td>FT Profile</td>
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<td>7.</td>
<td>Bloomberg</td>
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<td>8.</td>
<td>Milieu CD-ROM</td>
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<td>9.</td>
<td>Reach Bedrijfsinformatie</td>
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<td>10.</td>
<td>SDU Arbeid</td>
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<td>11.</td>
<td>Weet niet</td>
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Never

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<th>Time Slots</th>
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B.7
18b. If you let others search for you, who mostly searches for you? (Please mark one of the possible answers)

- 1. A junior/business analyst
- 2. A senior
- 3. A manager
- 4. A partner
- 5. Support staff
- 6. Others, namely ____________

19. About which of the following subjects are you not sufficiently informed? (You may mark as many subjects as appropriate)

- 1. Legislation
- 2. (potential) Clients
- 3. Industries
- 4. Competitors
- 5. Human resources
- 6. Financial markets
- 7. Professional knowledge & technologies
- 8. Management & organisation
- 9. Macro-economic information
- 10. Social-cultural information
- 11. International information
- 12. Others, namely ____________
- 13. None of the above

20. Which of the following information sources provides you with the best information about above mentioned subjects? (Please mark one of the sources)

- 1. External databases of publishers
- 2. Internet
- 3. Lotus Notes
- 4. KRC
- 5. Directorates Professional knowledge
- 6. Colleagues
- 7. Don't know
- 8. None of the above

21. Which of the following information sources is the most accessible? (Please mark one of the sources)

- 1. External databases of publishers
- 2. Internet
- 3. Lotus Notes
- 4. KRC
- 5. Directorates Professional knowledge
- 6. Colleagues
- 7. Don't know
- 8. None of the above

22. How do you characterize the attitudes of your colleagues in your business unit about external databases?

- 1. Very positive
- 2. Moderately positive
- 3. Neutral
- 4. Moderately negative
- 5. Very negative
- 6. Don't know

23. To what extent do you think your colleagues in your business unit use the external databases?

- 1. Much more than I do
- 2. More than I do
- 3. About as much as I do
- 4. Less than I do
- 5. Much less than I do
- 6. Don't know

B.8
24. To what extent do other companies of the Big Six, use external databases, according to you?

- 1. Much more than in 1-of-6
- 2. More than in 1-of-6
- 3. About as much as in 1-of-6
- 4. Less than in 1-of-6
- 5. Much less than in 1-of-6
- 6. Don’t know

Accessibility and availability

25. Do you have an Internet connection on your PC? (Please only mark one of the answers)

- 1. Yes
  - a. at home
  - b. at the office
  - c. at home and at the office
- 2. No
- 3. Don’t know

26. Can you connect to the Lotus Notes network of 1-of-6 outside the office (e.g. at home or elsewhere)?

- 1. Yes
- 2. No
- 3. Don’t know

27. What kind of PC do you have at the office? (Please mark one of the answers in both columns)

- 1. Laptop
- 2. Desktop
- 3. Both
- 4. Don’t know

- 1. 486 microprocessor
- 2. Pentium
- 3. Pentium-pro
- 4. Power PC
- 5. Don’t know

28. How important is it for your work that you are able to: (Please mark one of the answering categories per statement)

- Use the Internet
- Use Lotus Notes databases at home
- Use external databases via Lotus Notes

Not important | Reasonably unimportant | Reasonably important | Very important
---|---|---|---
1. | 2. | 3. | 4.
O | O | O | O
O | O | O | O
O | O | O | O

29. To what extent do you agree with the following statements? (Please mark one of the answering categories per statement)

- 1-of-6 informs us sufficiently about the possibilities of external databases
- The use of market information is sufficiently stimulated by 1-of-6
- It is clear which external databases are available to me
- External databases are easy to use
- It takes too much time to use the external databases

Totally disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Totally agree
---|---|---|---|---
1. | 2. | 3. | 4. | 5.
O | O | O | O | O
O | O | O | O | O
O | O | O | O | O
O | O | O | O | O
O | O | O | O | O
Consequences of the use of external databases
(please mark one of the answers for each statement)

30. Because of the use of external databases in 1-of-6 employees of 1-of-6:
- Are better informed about what happens outside the organization
- Have the possession of more reliable information
- Are better able to anticipate the client's situation
- Are able to use information more efficiently
- Function more market-oriented
- Generate more new ideas for products, services and business concepts

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<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Agree</th>
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Finally: some individual characteristics

30. Are you a man or a woman
   O 1. Woman
   O 2. Man

31. What is your age?
    _______ year(s)

32. How many years are you employed at 1-of-6?
    _______ year(s)

33. In which city is your office located?

This is the end of the questionnaire. Once again, we would like to thank you very much for your cooperation. We are very interested in your opinion about this questionnaire. Your comments and remarks will help with the interpretation of the research results. If you want to explain some of your answers, or if you want to express specific demands, desires or complaints on these issues, we urge you to note them on this page. Thank you very much!