Preface

The idea for this book first came into mind when working with organizations regarding problems with their products, processes and general enterprise issues. It was found that many companies particularly SMEs operate in a chaotic, disorganized manner and that when problems arose they simply did enough to plug a hole in it to temporarily fix the problem rather than solving the issue permanently. The reason being was that companies did not invest the time into creating and amalgamating the knowledge to innovate at an organizational, process or marketing level to develop a sustainable solution to the problem that was often symptomatic of other problems in the organization. Furthermore people issues such as inertia to change, cultural issues and historical knowledge developed by senior management were experienced by the editors. There is a lack of structured tools and technologies available to companies to assist them to develop sufficient knowledge to reinvent themselves in order to address problems within the organization resulting in a competitive sustainable enterprise. The ability of a firm to continuously reinvent and innovate is key to survival in today’s economic climate.

The book focuses on the practical use of knowledge management as a tool for innovation. It determines the role of knowledge management to facilitate innovation in adding value to the organization. It focuses on the tools and technologies surrounding different types of innovation and how they can be used to maximize knowledge in order to encourage such outside thinking resulting in innovation. It discusses and identifies tools and technologies to foster product, process and marketing innovation in terms of their ability to add value to the organization. Furthermore it examines the role of organizational innovation and the management of intellectual assets in supporting these types of innovation and identifies practical applications of enabling such to take place.

OVERVIEW OF THE BOOK

It has long been recognised the role of innovation in increasing the competitiveness of a firm. Innovation provides a mechanism for a firm to respond to changes quickly and thus improve its lifecycle.

*Innovation involves the utilisation of new knowledge or a new use or combination of existing knowledge. New knowledge may either be generated by the innovating firm in the course of its innovation activities (i.e. through intramural R&D) or acquired externally through various channels (e.g. purchase of new technology). The use of new knowledge or the combination of existing knowledge requires innovative efforts that can be distinguished from standardised routines (OECD, 2005).*
Innovation is reliant on the use and reuse of existing knowledge to create new knowledge. Knowledge can be created or obtained internally within a firm or externally. Knowledge is viewed as an asset which is key to the organisation's sustainability. Maximising the use of such an asset is crucial to the innovation process. The ability to access and develop relevant knowledge quickly affects the firm’s capacity to respond to environmental changes and survive in today's fast pace business world. Traditionally innovation was viewed as the development of new products, however this view is changing and innovation is now considered "a new idea, method or device". Thus as well as at the product level innovation can occur at the organisational wide level, at a marketing level regarding the firm's ability to maximise its promotion mechanisms and at a process level regarding the reinvention of methods of conducting key business activities.

Because innovation is largely dependent on the application of existing knowledge to create new knowledge it is imperative that it is effectively managed. Despite the importance of knowledge in the innovation process, little research has been conducted into how knowledge management can be applied to make the innovation process more effective.

Knowledge Management for Process, Organizational and Marketing Innovation: Tools and Methods provides a practical guide to those companies and academics involved in the area of innovation and knowledge management. The aim is to provide a book from which individuals can take the information and apply it to their own organizations.

This book outlines to companies different tools and technologies that can be applied depending on the type of innovation they wish to adopt in their organisation. It provides concrete advice on the different types of innovation, situations in which they may be useful, the role of knowledge and different tools, and technologies to support it.

The book is divided into five main sections corresponding to the different types of innovation that can take place and the knowledge needed to maximise success in this area. The aim of these sections is to provide measurable results to companies:

- **Section 1 on Organizational Innovation** is concerned with looking at assessing the firm's readiness for knowledge management, knowledge resources and managing knowledge in project management, such chapters will aid companies to achieve increased organizational efficiency and decision making through organizational innovation.
- **Section 2 on Knowledge management in New Product Development** is concerned with the use of knowledge management to encourage NPD resulting in self-sustainable and increased innovation activity through product innovation from idea to launch and post launch follow up.
- **Section 3 on Process innovation** looks at the use of a model to maximize the knowledge within the firm to produce process innovations resulting in reduced cost and time to market, improved productivity and quality through process innovation.
- **Section 4 on Marketing Innovation** is concerned with acquiring market knowledge and the integration of ICT to enhance marketing innovation resulting in increased market share and companies becoming adaptive to customer requirements through marketing innovation.
- **Section 5 on Maximising Intellectual Assets** is concerned with treating knowledge as an asset and maximizing this asset.

We suggest you use this book chapter by chapter at different stages your organisation might want to adopt different types of innovation. Rather than reading the entire book it is recommended that you read the relevant sections to your situation at the time.