An Effective Assessment of Knowledge Sharing and E-Learning Portals

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ABSTRACT

In recent years, most of the companies have increasingly realized the importance of the knowledge sharing portal and E-Learning portals to provide competitive knowledge for their employees. The knowledge stored in these portals varies from technical, process and project knowledge functional or domain specific knowledge to face the competitiveness among other companies or organizations, especially in industrialized countries. More than three-fourths of organizations have focused on their investment in technology and process trends that encourage user collaboration through Knowledge sharing and e-Learning Portals. There are many number of challenges in evaluating the effectiveness of the E-Learning Portals and Knowledge Portals. The primary goal of this paper is to illustrate how a domain independent multi-dimensional metric model and metric database can be built to assess the effectiveness of the Web Based Knowledge and E-Learning Portals.

Keywords: E-Learning Portal, Effectiveness, Evaluation, Knowledge Sharing Portal, Metric Database, Multi-dimensional Model, Ranking, Rating

INTRODUCTION

Knowledge is defined that all that has been perceived or grasped by the mind; learning; enlightenment and also body of the facts and principles accumulated by mankind. Evaluation of the capabilities and effectiveness of the Web based E-Learning and Knowledge Portals is a challenging process. Based on many research works in this area, it has been identified that there are no proven reliable methods and metrics available to estimate the worth of the KM Systems (Kankanahalli & B.C.Y.Tan, 2005). So it is important to either enhance or develop new metrics, evaluation models. As the number of online users grows, it is important that the

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contents should be accessible and usable by all. Usability is a quality attribute that assesses how easy user interfaces are to use (Nielsen & Molich, R, 1990). The application of the usability guidelines and evaluation of usability alone will not provide effective feedback of the E-Learning or Knowledge Portals. Apart from the usability there are other key aspects/views to be considered such as Functionality, Availability, Relevance and Interaction. The first objective of this investigation is to put forth the descriptive information about the Knowledge and E-Learning Portals. The second objective is to describe the ways to identify key dimensions, quality factors and measures and design a multi-dimensional model and metric databases. The third and final objective of this paper is to apply Weighted Arithmetic Mean (WAM) to rank and rate the E-Learning and Knowledge Portals.

KNOWLEDGE AND E-LEARNING PORTAL

Knowledge Portal works as an integration tool to provide easy, unified and integrated access to an organization’s own resources. Most knowledge portals have existing, but diverse systems for collecting and accessing important information from all the different systems or groups. An effective knowledge portal would provide a single point of access to all of the systems and would be structured in such a way that the location and retrieval of such information would be quick and easy. Knowledge Portal helps as an access tool for other information sources to provide internal and external information which are beyond their own organization’s resources, which can be made available to staff. Knowledge Portal also serves as a communication tool to enables individuals, teams and communities of practice to share and discuss ideas and knowledge. Distance learning, sometimes called e-Learning, is a formalized teaching and learning system specifically designed to be carried out remotely by using electronic communication. It is less expensive to build and support e-Learning portal, and also not constrained by geographic considerations. It offers opportunities in situations where traditional education becomes more difficult in operating. Anyone can benefit from e-Learning anytime, anywhere. There’s no limit to the kind of content that can be developed into an effective e-Learning course. The reason why e-Learning has becoming the medium of choice since the direct teaching or training methodology is becoming expensive, due to the costs for trainer and other costs such as travel and facilities such as training room with supporting infrastructure.

Additionally, Interactive learning training is not always as efficient as complementary learning tool due to increase in student-to-teacher ratio. Many of the students request the teacher for web portal which teach them the concepts and the related techniques easily. The content may be text-based or any graphical based working demonstration. Hence E-Learning brings usability into a shared arena, highlighting the need for technical or design experts and academic experts to work together more closely than ever before to produce usable websites. The design of web based e-Learning is usually derived on the basis of learning content management system. The e-Learning framework consists of four modules namely Learning Management, Content Management, Knowledge Management and Interaction Management.
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