Abstract
This article adds to our understanding of the field of knowledge management as an evolving body of concepts, relationships, strategies, and practices. Using qualitative research methods, we examined the activities of a community of practice for knowledge management professionals operating in a large metropolitan U.S. city. Through the analysis, we produced an organizing framework that maps KM topics according to the tactical-strategic orientation of the KM issue and level of analysis (individual-group-enterprise). We constructed and populated the framework based on a content analysis of 44 presentations made from 2001-2005, from survey data, from interviews conducted with key informants, and from data collected as participant-observers. The work provides insight into the decision-making processes regarding the selection of KM topics and adds to our understanding of collective sense making (Weick, 1995) based on the differing needs, values, and perceptions of the multiple stakeholders in this KM community of practice.

Keywords: community of practice; concept map; knowledge management; KM; sense making

Introduction
This work adds to our understanding of the field of knowledge management (KM) through an examination of the sense making activities of a KM practice group. Members of such groups are knowledge workers and emblematic of the knowledge society (Drucker, 1969). They learn from a variety of interactions with vendors, peers, colleagues, and other stakeholders in an attempt to understand the practice of knowledge management through the application of tools, methods, and technologies. Participation in networks and communities of practice (Barab & Duffy, 2000; Lave & Wenger, 1991; Wenger, McDermott, & Snyder, 2002) is important to this learning process. This study focuses on the sense making activities of one such group by analyzing the KM topics it selected over a five year period from 2001-2005. The results of this analysis help us to identify the dominant ideas and concepts pertaining to KM, to clarify the “ambiguity inherent in the concept of knowledge management” (Swan & Scarbrough, 2001, p. 54), and to map the KM practices common to most business organizations.
SIGNIFICANCE AND CONTRIBUTION
The study contributes to our understanding of sense making (Brown & Duguid, 1991; Weick, 1995) in a multistakeholder environment for practice and provides empirical support for the hypothesis (e.g., Iverson & McPhee, 2002) that knowledge management is a function of the unique interactions that occur between people and technologies. It also offers a better understanding of the theory and practice of knowledge management as organizations attempt to respond to new strategic initiatives and innovations in KM-enabling technologies and builds upon case studies of knowledge management in projects and companies (Scarbrough & Swan, 1999). Additionally, this work augments bibliographic studies of KM communities based on published sources only. For instance, Raub and Ruling’s (2001) content analysis of over 400 articles about KM over an 18 year period among IT/IS professional makes the point that:

In order to substantiate ... propositions concerning the development of the knowledge management discourse as well as the relationship between the different groups of actors gathering around knowledge management, future research should complement the more “macro”-oriented view taken in the present paper with a closer look at actual knowledge management practices. (p. 126)

This article accomplishes that end and is a contribution to this area of research because it examines the actual words and practices of a KM community not filtered by peer review or editorial processes.

RATIONALE AND RELEVANT LITERATURE

Knowledge Management
This work was motivated by the theory that knowledge management processes such as knowledge creation, sharing and use, and KM strategies, are crucial for successful firms of the 21st century (Dixon, 2000; Davenport & Prusak, 1998). Knowledge originates in and with people; it creates networks, communities, and routines whose life span exceeds that of the tenure of the individual members (Czerniawska & Potter, 2001; Leibowitz, 2000). The salient appeal of knowledge management for corporations is that the value of knowledge endures beyond the minds of specific individuals who may have participated in the creation of that knowledge. In addition, KM systems offer opportunities for employees to access better practices, build on previous knowledge, reduce cycle time, improve quality, and provide access to expertise. However, a KM strategy does not have to rely on large investments in technology; it can focus on social processes and the creation of networks and communities. For instance, Nonaka and Takeuchi (1995) identify socialization as an aspect of knowledge management in connection with knowledge creation, transfer, and use. Communities and networks of practice can be viewed as an economical means for integrating people and technology around a shared interest (Stein, 2005, 2007); that is, they are a low cost entry into a corporate knowledge management strategy. Vera and Crossan (2001) note that “knowledge exists in socially-distributed activity systems, where participants employ their situated knowledge ... which is itself constantly developing” (p. 621). From this perspective, knowledge, action, and learning are intertwined. People and organizations who seek to capture, transfer, and recall ideas, practices, routines, and concepts of value to their work are all engaged in some form of knowledge management.

Communities of Practice
We chose to study knowledge management in the context of communities of practice for several reasons. A community of practice is a set of people who share a concern, a set of problems, or a passion about a topic (Wenger et al., 2002). These people improve their knowledge and expertise (Scarbrough, 1996) in the topic area by interacting on an ongoing basis (Wenger et al., 2002). These communities can