

Exploring Knowledge Needs in a Non-Profit Student Group

Discussing the knowledge sources, pathways, and users in a newspaper setting

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Background Information

Non-Profit Student Group

- Non-profit student group in a large post-secondary setting
- 13 paid staff members (editorial and business) and a large volunteer base
- Online newspaper and in-print (weekly)
- Yearly hiring of staff members

Literature Overview

- Pieces on the Knowledge Management (KM) of newspaper reference libraries
 - Alakus, 2011
 - Brown & Leith, 2007
 - Kotorov & Hsu, 2001
 - Prusak, 2001
- Pieces on the KM of Non-Profit Organizations (NPOs)
 - Huck, Al & Rathi, 2011
 - Hume & Hume, 2008
 - Lemieux & Dalkir, 2006
 - Shen, 2011
 - Stauss, 2007
- Unable to find sources on KM of the editorial staff
- Unable to find sources on student groups

Findings

- Preference of face to face communication
 - develop a sense of trust and bonding
- Importance in training and apprenticeship-style learning
 - 3 month learning period
 - transition reports
- Understanding the transfer from print to online
 - keeping up with technology and trends

Background Information

Hierarchy of Organization



Literature Overview

In a Broader Context

- Knowledge transfer in organizations of high turnover
 - Blair, 2002
 - Dalkir, 2005
 - Nguyen & Burgess, 2014
 - Wang et al, 2011
 - Wenger, 2009
- Wide breadth focusing on how to keep staff rather than their knowledge

Findings

Communities of Practice

- Relationship with Alumni
 - open line of communication for advice and suggestions
- Relationships with Volunteers
 - editor and volunteer section meetings
 - each section built relationships in different ways
- Relationship with Staff Members
 - experts within the organization

Recommendation Network

1. Socialize to learn the location of expertise within editorial team
2. Create & utilize a Facebook group to connect editors to volunteers, as well as volunteers to volunteers
3. Make transition reports a rich knowledge resource

Research Problem

Knowledge Audit

- Roles in the organization
 - who they were and their main role in organization
- Communication
 - tool of communication used
 - preferred types of communication
 - communication barriers
- Storage
 - where information was stored and retrieved
 - barriers in accessing information

(Dalkir, 2005)

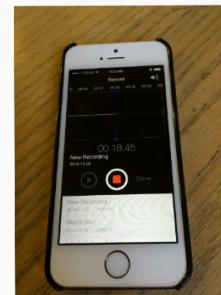
Methodology Framework

Knowledge representations presented by Rathi, Given & Forcer, 2014.

Knowledge needed about:

- community
- policies & legislation
- external environment
- organizational practices
- sources of funding
- derivative knowledge
- trends & current events
- resources
- best practices
- archived material
- tools & technology
- experiential knowledge

Methodology Framework

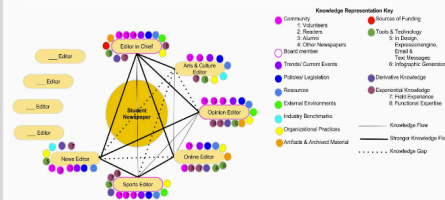


- ~45 minute semi-structured interviews all on the same day
- Conducted the first interview together to support consistency in the rest of the interviews
- Questions on their role, communication within CoP, information/knowledge storage systems

Recommendations

Repository

4. Customizable dashboard for each editor position
5. Orientation packages & tutorials for training purposes
6. Reflection processes for all implemented recommendations



"Knowledge exists to be imparted"
- Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803-1882)

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