



We live and work in times when changes in electronic products, both in terms of hardware and software developments, are taking place at a phenomenal speed. In fact, the saying, in cyber terms, that one Internet year is equivalent to one normal (human) month, has never been more true. And we all know the implications of applying one or more of these systems: not only has one to keep abreast of the updates in products and systems, but also has to keep a tab on the developments with regard to new and invariably innovative approaches as far as applying these new products and/or systems are concerned.

As in all other spheres, information management as such (including knowledge management for that matter) has not escaped the *one-month-one-year* predicament. Although information management has become the talking point in informational circles as long ago as the early eighties, it has only recently been accepted that information technology has an important role to play in the way we look at, think about and research the many issues embodying information as a resource. IT applications in developments such as data mining, corporate information portals, Web information management software and business intelligence systems are a few examples that prove this point.

Accepting this argument, it also implies that the *one-month-one-year* syndrome must have an effect on *applying* IT in the information and knowledge management environments. For example, one specific SMME (small, medium and micro enterprise) has just gone through the complete circle of designing, testing and implementing an intranet in an effort to develop and manage a company-wide intelligence system, when its business intelligence director discovered that the company's carefully selected intranet search engine has just been exceeded by a much better product with much more sophisticated (and intelligent) search facilities!

The three [peer-reviewed articles](#) published in this issue discuss various approaches to the *one-month-one-year* problem. The first article, by Elizabeth Orna, stresses the fact that companies should (first) think fundamentally about what knowledge means to them. If not, they are in danger of being captured by a bandwagon offering automatic IT 'solutions' to knowledge management. She 'thinks fundamentally' by addressing the real concerns of KM, and consequently proposes practical steps for laying strong foundations of knowledge management. The basis of this method is to ask questions such as: What do we need to know to succeed in achieving our aims? What information do we need to support that knowledge? How do people need to interact in using knowledge and information?

Lorna Ndlela and Adeline du Toit's article concentrates on one (*fundamental*) element, namely corporate culture. Their departure point is quite interesting and worth following up with further empirical investigations: they argue that corporate culture is a basic building block to knowledge management and must be considered when introducing a knowledge management programme because it affects how the company accepts and fosters that programme. Furthermore, they say, an organization's specific beliefs, values and norms create a unique culture with identifiable manifestations. This stresses the importance of the corporate culture in the success of knowledge management within thez. It also leads to the fact that organizations that are serious about knowledge foster an environment and culture that support continuous learning. The latter is a crucial element in an effective knowledge management culture.

To conclude, Ivan Altin provides a case study to establish in what way, if at all, an Intranet can be used to address the requirements of a total information management effort. The Amalgamated Banks of South Africa (ABSA) environment was used as an example for assessing the use of an intranet for managing information as a resource in a financial organization. In his article, Altin investigates what an intranet is, the nature of information management, as well as the implications of integrating the intranet with the information management processes. As an example, the ABSA group's intranet activities are described, in which three important assessment criteria were utilized, namely technology, information and, in tandem with Ndlela and Du Toit's article, organizational culture.

Regular readers may notice a new column, namely [Internet Trends](#). This will report regularly about the latest trends with regard to international developments as far as Internet and Web activities are concerned. We welcome Dr David Raitt, editor of *The Electronic Library*, and last year's Chairman of the Annual Conference on World Wide Web Applications, as the contributor to this new column. (Read more about the 2nd WWW conference in the news section.)

Similar to the previous issues of this journal, the column [Student Work](#) consists of a three high quality research reports. These were adapted slightly to fit into SAJIM's style, but were not peer-reviewed or improved in any way. Their contributions were selected for their appropriateness to the peer-reviewed articles of this issue. The Internet, and more specifically the World-Wide Web, has already and will have an astounding impact on the way we do business.

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