

Converting Information into Knowledge-Based Assets

When I developed my forecasting model in the early 1980s, I could see that a digital revolution would unfold, and as it did, an advanced form of capitalism would emerge, one where ideas and knowledge stimulated economic growth even more so than labor, land, money or other tangibles. It later became known as the Knowledge Era – or the Knowledge Age – in contrast to the Industrial Age.

A Few Strategic Questions to Consider

There is a big difference between data, information, knowledge and wisdom. Today we are all focused on big data, and we should be because it provides the foundation for the three higher levels. We all have a database, and as we all know, there is no shortage of information, but do you have a knowledgebase? Is your organization creating new revenue streams by converting information into actionable knowledge, sharing that knowledge internally to increase its value, and then selling it in non-competing industries? I helped a large global organization do this several years ago and they generated over \$100 million in the first year. All too often we fail to see the hidden value of the people part of the business. Are you actively using web-based technology to leverage the talents, knowledge and wisdom of employees to create new high-margin products, as well as solve problems faster?

All too often, as we grow larger and move faster, we can easily lose track of the wide variety of intellectual property (IP) we have created. Are you actively formalizing, capturing and leveraging your intellectual property (IP) to create higher value assets? Using today's digital tools, it has never been easier for any organization, regardless of size, to create new revenue streams by leveraging their enhanced IP.

Three Must-Have Components to Leverage Intellectual Capital

Everyone in the organization must see the tremendous opportunity and added value in going beyond the current activity of converting data into information, to higher levels of value by creating and delivering actionable knowledge and wisdom. In addition, auditing and valuating intellectual assets must be seen as a strategic direction.

Everyone in the organization must see that its technology infrastructure and organizational culture are the keys to unlocking the vast wealth of knowledge within the organization, both for the organization and your clients. Knowledge increases in value when it is shared within the organization, and that means shifting from being an Information Age organization to entering the Communication Age. Informing is a one-way activity that does not always produce a result. Communicating is two-way and dynamic and almost always causes action. That's why social media has grown so fast; it is a Communication Age enabling technology. An internal knowledge-sharing strategy, focused on fostering two-way communication and dialog, is crucial because as I said earlier, knowledge increases in value when it is shared.

Everyone in the organization must see their participation as essential to building a strong foundation for the enhancement, sharing and delivery of knowledge. When we have collective knowledge and wisdom at our fingertips, everyone can accomplish their work with less time and effort.

Keep in mind that you get the behaviors you reward; therefore, there must be a rewards system for

sharing knowledge. Remember, there are many ways to reward people and not all have to involve money.



About the Author:

DANIEL BURRUS is considered one of the world's leading technology forecasters and innovation experts, and is the founder and CEO of [Burrus Research](#), a research and consulting firm that monitors global advancements in technology driven trends to help clients understand how technological, social and business forces are converging to create enormous untapped opportunities. He is the author of six books including The New York Times best seller [Flash Foresight](#). This article is reprinted with permission. Reproduction without permission is strictly prohibited. For reprint permission, contact Burrus Research, Inc. at office@burrus.com.



INOVA
BUSINESS SCHOOL



INOVA
CONSULTING