WITS, a Web-based Intelligent Training and Support system, was developed for providing training and intelligent support for Small and Medium sized Enterprises (SMEs) in the use of Information and Communication Technologies. It was a pilot research project funded by the European Commission’s Leonardo Da Vinci programme and was inspired by statements that lack of adequate skills and knowledge are major barriers that SMEs exhibit in successfully adopting and running ecommerce and e-business. As a result, there is an emerging need for better education and decision support for SME managers who are eager to embrace the technology and afraid of being left behind.

Web-Based

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| **Advantages** | **Disadvantages** |
| The Internet is readily accessible | keeping up with rapid technological change to servers, interface components, inference engines, and various protocols |
| Web-browsers provide a common multimedia interface | reducing the potential delivery bottleneck caused by communication loads and a limited infrastructure. |
| Several Internet-compatible tools for KBS development are available | could possibly take away an element of self-learning and cognition |
| Internet-based applications are inherently portable |  |
| Emerging protocols support co-operation among knowledge-based system |  |
| a powerful aid to decision-making |  |

Standalone

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| --- | --- |
| **Advantages** | **Disadvantages** |
| Each application can be developed independently by using two different software packages and by having a clear comparison of the results of the two techniques in solving the same problem | Knowledge bottleneck – it is difficult to acquire knowledge from different sources. Experts are often unable to express explicitly their reasoning process |
|  | Performance brittleness – an ES is limited in its coded expertise, which relates to a narrow domain and the ES therefore performs poorly outside its boundary. |
|  | Software distribution – Updating the software and interface requires many separate installation and upgrades over time. This is often beyond the competence of the users. |
|  | Communication between distributed applications – A lack of common protocols for knowledge transfer tends to discourage designs involving co-operation or dynamic information sharing |
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