

house. These technologies provide virtually unlimited storage as part of huge server farms that may be located across the country or in another country.

Numerous technologies can have the potential to aid in capturing information from experts, from neural networks to genetic programming. These technologies hold some promise for the future of Knowledge Management. In addition, several companies are experimenting with smart workplaces, where sensors determine the physical location of a knowledge worker, changing information displays to suit the user's preconfigured preferences and adjusting the information access level accordingly. From a hardware perspective, tablet PCs, wearable PCs, and PDAs are likely to continue to increase in functionality and applicability to Knowledge Management, especially as they relate to the car-based office (telematics).

Clearly, the most significant challenge surrounding the effective use of KM technology is integration—not at the software or hardware level, but with the user. For example, decision support tools should be transparent to the current workflow, thereby augmenting current processes and contributing to the bottom line. The challenge on the horizon isn't in the hardware or software but work standards and processes. For example, digital rights management software—software that decides who can see a file by appending access rights to a document—is useless without standards for authenticating and authorizing users for reading, modifying, or printing files.

Summary

Knowledge Management, as a business strategy, is independent of technology. However, the appropriate technology, applied judiciously to the proper phase of the K life cycle, can significantly improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the KM process. Although there are no shrink-