

# Knowledge Organization - Business Taxonomy as a Key to Success

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In the twenty-first century, all workers are knowledge workers. Every worker in your business or agency needs information, and they need it fast. Sales staff need price lists, purchase



contracts and warranty information. Engineers need prior designs, technical specifications and blueprints. If a shop worker needs a blank work order or technical manual, time spent looking for one is time wasted.

Business runs on information. Many employees are not aware of information sources, or they don't have access to them all. When an employee can't immediately find what they need, they take one of several courses of action:

- They keep looking, for hours, if needed;
- They attempt to re-create the information or use a substitution, maybe an outdated version;
- They enlist co-workers into the search, or the effort to recreate the data they need;
- They do what they must without the information they need.

Contrast these expensive workarounds with your workforce having access at their fingertips to the specific piece of critical information they need. Whether they're working from the office, the client site or home, they could have access to vital data from all your projects, tasks and files, when they need it.

This white paper will discuss the importance of information asset organization and business taxonomy to a knowledge management structure and how CYIPRO fully supports all aspects of that migration.

## Business Taxonomy – What is it?

In its simplest definition, *taxonomy* is a classification scheme with logic behind the structure to relate information targets to others, and how those will be accessed, retrieved and archived.

*Business taxonomy* provides a visual and navigation structure for organizing content, or data, built on some type of hierarchy. Simple examples of a categorization, or taxonomy, would be:

- Organizational charts which show where a person's role is in the enterprise, who they report to and their peers;
- A drive, directory and file structure on your hard drive, which allows you to find the digital file you need and related information; or
- A paper filing system, with file rooms, cabinets, drawers and folders labeled to (hopefully) find the piece of paper you need.

Each of these structures enables you to find information faster, located within a logical pattern. A project-based structure works well for many businesses and agencies.

Information has a lifecycle – it is captured or created, stored, retrieved, used, revised, restored, archived and deleted. Information has owners, the subject matter experts who can provide more background or assistance. A large percentage of corporate information has rights – which employees have access. An architecture built on a well-designed business taxonomy serves all these needs.



Content management policies, storage and retrieval capability, and a well-designed taxonomy, are all necessary to give full accountability

for all information assets. Businesses structure their files, from their opening day. With no standards in place, legacy types of structures tend to grow within each vertical business organization and are different for offices or shops across the enterprise. Finance, legal, sales and management all have their own way of doing things, and sharing information across these silos is a nightmare. The old ways of doing things become ingrained and more difficult to change with time.

A well-crafted business taxonomy will serve the needs of the entire corporation. Content intelligence can address the huge amount of information generated by a large, dynamic business operation and is being used to leverage the value of Big Data.

## Ten Ways Good Organization provides Value

Taxonomy may sound like a dry subject, but the financial and productivity impacts of its proper application can be eye-popping.

*ROI figures range from 38% to over 600%, depending on whether the new information or content management system is an incremental improvement over an existing one or is an entirely new system replacing previously manual processes. [Feldman]*

Knowledge workers transform information, or unstructured data, to create value -- knowledge assets, services or products for the business. In the twenty-first century, all workers are knowledge workers, from the shop worker to the rocket scientist to the corporate executive.

The value of the availability of the right piece of information, right away is compounded across the entire workforce, every business day in the following ways:

1. **Save wasted time.** Knowledge workers need to be creating value, not futilely searching for the information they need. Extended and futile searches cost valuable hours. Studies found that these employees spend two to two and a half hours a day in searches, on average.
2. **Optimize improvement initiatives.** Standardization is a universally accepted practice to improve productivity and reduce risks, but that effort loses its value if the processes, policies, procedures and templates cannot be retrieved by those who should be using them. Ease of retrieval is important. In many instances, a well-designed and vetted template can serve across many lines of business activities, avoiding the excess costs of creating it multiple times.
3. **Avoid duplicate work.** 'Reinventing the wheel' costs labor and ignores best of breed identification. A critical template will be rebuilt if an employee needs it and cannot find the standard, maybe many times.
4. **Get the best information first.** Currency of information assets is critical. Using last year's price list could result in serious damage to revenue and customer satisfaction.
5. **Put information in context.** Frequently, the information being sought is associated in the employee's mind with a specific project or client or department.
6. **Maximize search results.** Simple text searches may not find the right file. A good taxonomy which provides an

**NOT FINDING** information has a high cost. Assuming a business of 1000 knowledge workers who earn an average salary of \$80,000, including benefits:

• **Knowledge workers spend from 15% to 35% of their time searching for information.** The time spent looking for and not finding information costs our hypothetical organization \$6 million a year. That doesn't include opportunity costs or the costs of reworking information that exists but can't be located.

• **Searchers are successful in finding what they seek 50% of the time or less.** The cost of reworking information that can't be found costs this organization a further \$12 million a year (15% of time spent in duplicating existing information).

• **40% of corporate users reported that they cannot find the information they need to do their jobs on their intranets.** Not locating and retrieving information has an opportunity cost of more than \$15 million annually.

*[Feldman, Susan and Sherman, Chris. 2001. The High Cost of Not Finding Information. An IDC White Paper. IDC, Framingham, MA. ]*

- intuitive visual depiction and navigation structure for organizing content can be invaluable. A structured, hierarchical approach identifies related documents, issues, emails and project plans.
7. **Associate Subject Matter Experts (SME's) with documents.** Finding people is important too. When using the stored data to build new information assets, the knowledge worker may need more than just files. They may need the author, project team members or technical subject matter expertise linked to the file.
  8. **Leverage your growing data store.** A well designed taxonomy helps the business manage the glut of information that keeps growing and avoid duplication, orphan processes, lack of ownership and loss of leverage on best practices or lessons learned.
  9. **Facilitate archiving.** Clean up is important too – to improve visibility of the target file and save storage and storage management costs.
  10. **Maintain compliance with legal requirements.** Regulatory compliance is better enabled. Against the categorized information store, the business can develop structured governance policies for editing, updating, access, archival and destruction of all the content, particularly that which is no longer useful or out of date. All intellectual capital is given review or update schedules.

Business is built on a mobile model today. The taxonomy and the technology behind it must be available to the remote workforce wherever they are working. People need information at other times when they are not behind their desk in the office. With CYIPRO, you get the information you need, wherever you're working.

## Developing a Business Taxonomy and Vocabulary

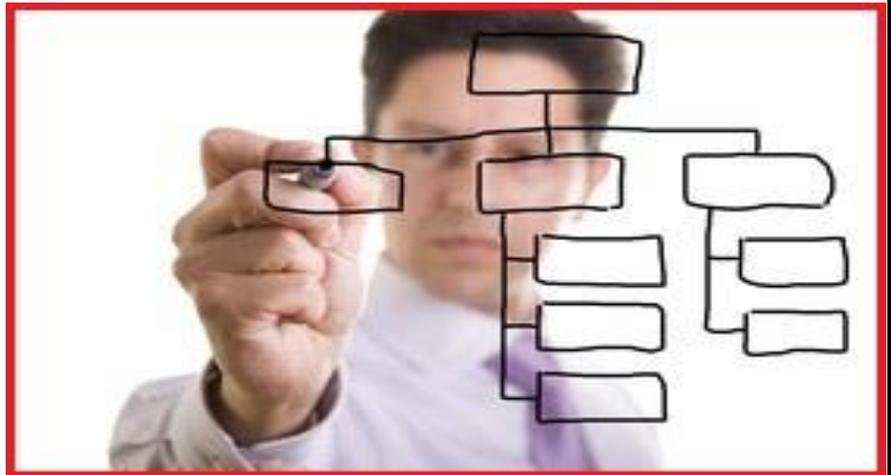
There are different approaches to develop a corporate taxonomy. Management must first decide on the scope of their efforts. They may decide that an initial pilot is the best plan and choose a department, division or business line for the first effort. This work can later be expanded outward to other groups, leveraging the work already completed.

After assembling a team and identifying stakeholders, the project will identify a categorization strategy, which reflects the type of business and its structures. They might choose one of four basic models.

- A **functional** taxonomy builds on the business model and its services or products. For example, in condominium management, this might show properties, clients and management activities.
- **Organizational** taxonomies look more like an organizational chart, breaking out into divisions, departments, teams, individuals, etc.
- A simple taxonomy might be based on **topics**, like contracts, leases, processes, policies, pricing or technical files.
- **Geographical** taxonomies might be built around a particular location.
- A web **Site map** can be used to better link corporate internets or intranets.

The team must examine not only the legacy information management structures but the strategic direction of the business, to ensure that the structure will be efficient during the transformation, and useful going forward.

In the initial phases, the team will also address a controlled **vocabulary** of standard descriptive terms to categorize work and will be used to assist in more precise retrieval of content. They may start with existing metadata terminology. The use of cross-functional teams will result in the best choice of terms.



After the initial structure is selected, it should be piloted and reviewed by an audience representing all stakeholders. There may be conflicts, but the team should constantly seek agreement and focus on the value to be provided. The work will be iterative, not only in the beginning but ongoing.

To accelerate the realization of the value of this effort, this definition work can be integrated with the deployment of an integrated business management platform which incorporates information asset management and dynamic process creation, like CYIPRO.

## Sustainability

The technology and process selected must be **sustainable**. Many ambitious business improvement projects fail due to their complexity or the effort required by staff to maintain them.

A single user friendly web portal for the integrated system interface makes content storage easy and sustainable – from wherever the employee is working – in a traditional or home office, in the field or travelling. While working on projects, staff can use the process library and add information that updates the documents, which is key for the lifecycle of agency processes.

Project documents are captured seamlessly during everyday work activities by an Email to Project (E2P) functionality in a project-based structure. Files are version-controlled, with the ability to set individual security settings and access rights.

Using the corporate vocabulary keywords in drop-down menus, allows the multiple properties of the document to be set in standard terms – author, department, project, service, customer, confidentiality, archival date, etc.

## **CYIPRO – Your Total Information Organization Solution**

CYIPRO's total integration of business office functions supports structured, accessible, reusable content based on a customized taxonomy.

CYIPRO provides an **interactive command and control center**, enables local and remote teams to **communicate and collaborate** and create most effectively in one **project centric system**, to captures the knowledge in the system and make it usable.

Access to all your information is at your fingertips based upon your organizational structure, teams and projects. The targeted document or file is surrounded by meaningful information on how it was produced, its version and related files. Team members can quickly find and retrieve content for which they are authorized.

A **Web based portal** offers the ability to collaborate with others and manage your knowledge base and process library via computer, Smartphone, tablet or any Internet device with **encrypted access**. The **interactive portal** allows teams to work together on information, and users to act on the information they are viewing.

An Enterprise level of security is installed through default or customized privacy settings. **Secure access rights** to view, edit, delete, and administer assets are created for security and auditability. Backups and disaster recovery are built into a cloud-based installation.

Innovation is ingrained in CYIOS' culture and our talented employees have built a legacy that continues today for our customers. **CYIOS** Corporation is a leading Department of Defense (DoD) contractor providing cutting-edge, innovative solutions since 1994. **CYIOS** built America's Army Online, the first Army Knowledge Management solution that was developed to become the core for **Army Knowledge Online (AKO)**, the U.S. Army's main intranet serving over 1.8 million registered users.

**CYIOS** continued innovating in knowledge management with the development of **CYIPRO**, a virtual office solution for collaboration, accountability, knowledge management and virtual work spaces that features document management and versioning, project and time management, e-mail encryption, full-text search, timesheets, meetings, and reports.

Contact CYIPRO today to take your group to the cutting edge of innovation and productivity.

**For more information on CYIPRO, go to <http://cyipro.com/>**