# A precis of the knowledge in Knowledge Management

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THESEUS
International Management Institute

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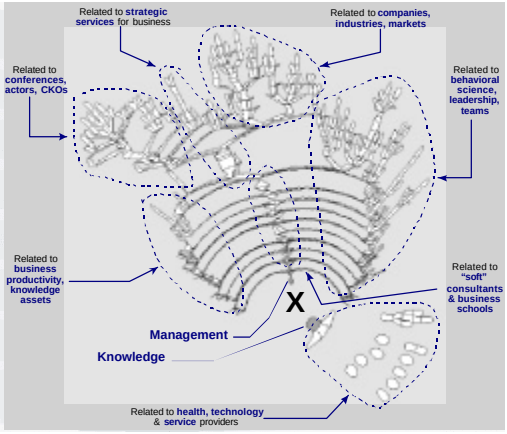
The European Center for Knowledge Management

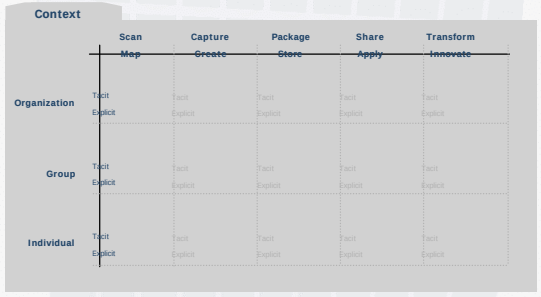
CCI Marseille-Provence
Groupe ESC



## Islands of discourse in Knowledge Management



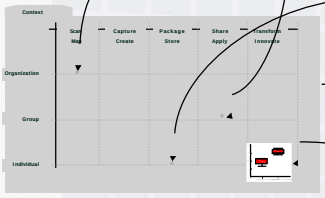

## A sensemaking model






## What are the benefits of this taxonomy ?

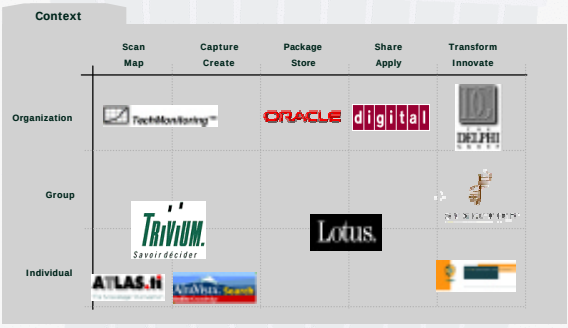
1. We can locate a company's KM **practices**
2. We can locate the **products / services** of a vendor
3. We can identify areas of (potentially missed) **opportunity**
4. We can use the model to **map** KM practices. A questionnaire has been developed to this end.





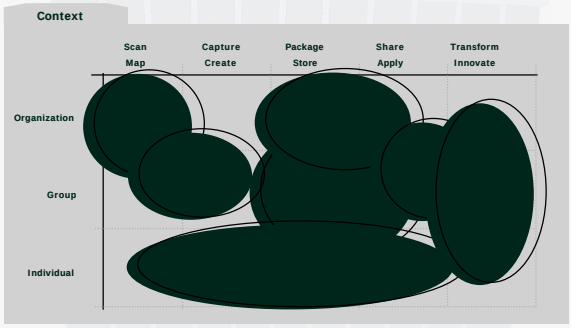
## Mapping practices

## Mapping vendors






## Regions of practice







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## Phase II

**Search**
**1179 articles**
**Jan 78 - Oct 99**

**72 titles of interest**

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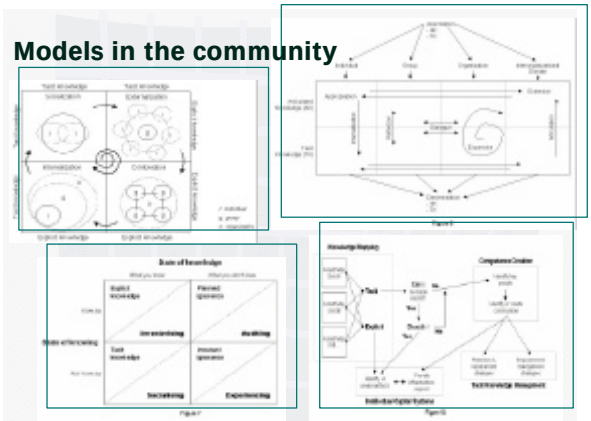
**Thematic Analysis**

## Models in the community





## Themes in the community

**Primary devices**
- Held in common across all authors
- Relate to fundamental issues
- Frequent use and definitional agreement

**Secondary devices**
- Employed frequently but dissimilarly
- Less definitional clarity
- Concepts communicated are similar



## Phase III

### Assumptions underlying the surveys in KM

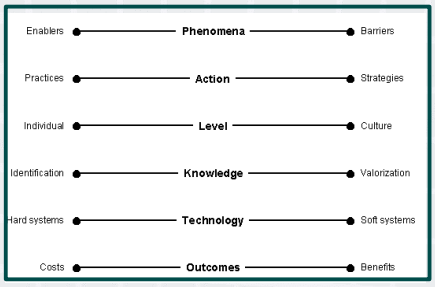
### Search

- 1997 - 2001
- 3 languages
- Databases (Anbar, Proquest, SSCI, Ebsco)
- Web (700 search engines)

- 59 hits
- 23 usable items

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1997 | **Europe's State of the Art in KM** | Cranfield Business School / Information Strategy / Xerox |
| 1997 | **Creating the Knowledge-Based Organization** | Journal of KM / Benchmarking Exchange / Best Practices Club |
| 1998 | **KM Research Report** | KPMG / Harris Research Center |
| 1998 | **What on Earth is a CKO** | Earl, M. / Scott, I |
| 1998 | **Survey on KM** | Management Review / AMA Research Institute |
| 1999 | **KM in France** | Arthur Andersen / Trivium / Valoris |
| 1999 | **MAKE** | Teleos / KNOW Network |
| 2000 | **KM Research Report** | KPMG / Harris Research Center |
| 2000 | **MAKE** | Teleos / KNOW Network |
| 2001 | **Global KM Benchmarking Survey** | Knowledge Associates |
| 2001 | **Assessing KM Initiative's Success as a Function of Organization Culture** | Vincent Ribiere |
| 2001 | **Creating a knowledge culture** | McKinsey |

## Conceptual structure of the surveys

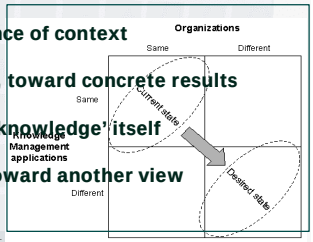





## Trends & parallels

| *Despres & Chauvel, 2000* | | *Chauvel & Despres, 2001* | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Definition | Dimension | Dimension | Definition |
| The movement of time, especially concerning the cognitive process | Time | Phenomenon | Conditions that lead to the success or failure of a KM initiative |
| Ways of conceptualizing knowledge, including typologies, classifications | Type | Action | Observable and concrete actions at all levels, as opposed to discourse |
| Ways of locating knowledge phenomena in social contexts | Social Space | Level | Individuals, groups, organizations and more expansive phenomena |
| Concepts of the environment in which knowledge resides | Context | Knowledge | Ways to identify useful knowledge, ways to leverage these assets |
| Processes which apply knowledge to some useful end | Transformations & Dynamics | Technology | Tools & techniques to manage knowledge in organizations |
| Ways of facilitating the transfer and transformation of knowledge | Carriers & Media | Outcomes | Costs & benefits associated with a Knowledge Management initiative |
| The context or ecology of a knowledge management initiative | Knowledge Culture | | |



## Conclusions

1. Phase II maturation as a 'discipline'
2. Greater emphasis on soft technologies
3. Continuing absence of context
4. Beyond intuition, toward concrete results
5. Struggling with 'knowledge' itself
6. Timid progress toward another view