

The Positive Impact of Automation in Training

In graphical environments such as Microsoft Windows, office automation applications give users and organizations the means to 'tailor' their behavior to meet specific requirements. No longer do users have to compose *and* design each letter they write in Word for Windows. No longer do they need to design *and* create each budget spreadsheet. Excel, Word, Access, Outlook all give organizations the ability to create template documents that store commonly used formats. In this regard, Office XP goes even farther than any of its predecessors.

In addition, these template formats can store commonly repeated procedures to automate document creation. Word letter templates store the letter format and Outlook gives them a user-definable bank of commonly used addresses. Excel templates store both formulas and formats. Windows and Exchange automatically mail-enable each of these applications.

Automating workflows and work patterns allows users and organizations to free themselves from nonproductive work. Users are more productive because they can concentrate on the task at hand, not the creation of tools and techniques that bend an office automation tool to their needs. It accelerates user training. It minimizes frustration because users are immediately productive.

Finally, it brings considerable savings to training budgets because training times are considerably shorter. Learning how to write an automated letter is much easier and faster than learning everything there is to know about Word. In addition, a course based on true office automation will incite the user to change because they will see immediate advantages.

The enterprise reaps all the benefits. Users are immediately productive. Budgets are smaller. Migrations are a success. In today's business world, we are constantly faced with new information. It is through the interpretation of this information that you acquire knowledge. If you can automate some of your internal processes, you will have more time for the interpretation of new information and gain an edge in knowledge management.

In a recent series of articles on Knowledge Management, André Boudreau states "Embedding knowledge means liberating this knowledge from individuals and groups and integrating it into information systems, work processes and infrastructures." This is one of the ways organizations can achieve success. Automation techniques allow organizations to embed internal knowledge into the tools they use. This is one of the keys to any knowledge management strategy.

