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Knowledge Exchange by Social Networking in a Globally Acting Company

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iTEC08 Conference
Darmstadt, Germany
November 6th-7th, 2008

All Siemens Sectors and Divisions
Building Technologies Division as Target Audience

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Target Audience ~ 34,000 employees

Industry

Industry Automation	Industry Solutions	Motion Control	Mobility	Osram (Lighting)	Building Technologies

Energy

Fossil Power Generation	Renewable Energy	Oil & Gas	Service Rotating Equipment	Power Transmission	Power Distribution

Healthcare

Imaging & IT	Workflow & Solutions	Diagnostics

November 6th+7th, 2008   References@BT, Johannes Müller   Building Technologies Division

The Application: References@BT ...

- ➢ is a web platform for the global exchange of business-related knowledge, experiences and best-practices,

- ➢ is a social networking tool, which networks colleagues and animates them to communicate to each other,

- ➢ is intended for internal use (by Siemens members) only and thus available within the Siemens intranet,

- ➢ contains knowledge references (customer projects, solution/service concepts, etc.) and suitable documents,

- ➢ contains discussion forums (Urgent Requests, Solution Talk, etc.),

- ➢ considers its users as global community (~ 5,300 members located in 73 countries) supporting each other.
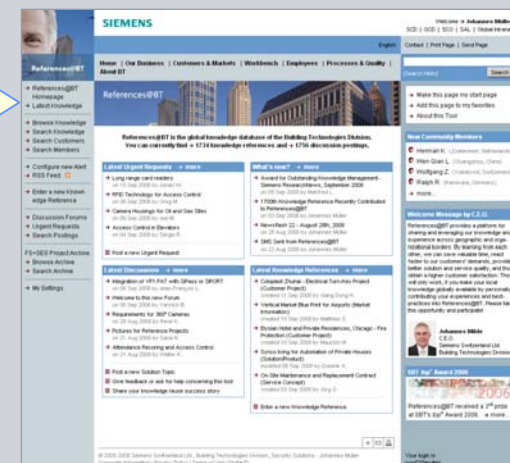
The Speaker's Responsibilities

Johannes Müller
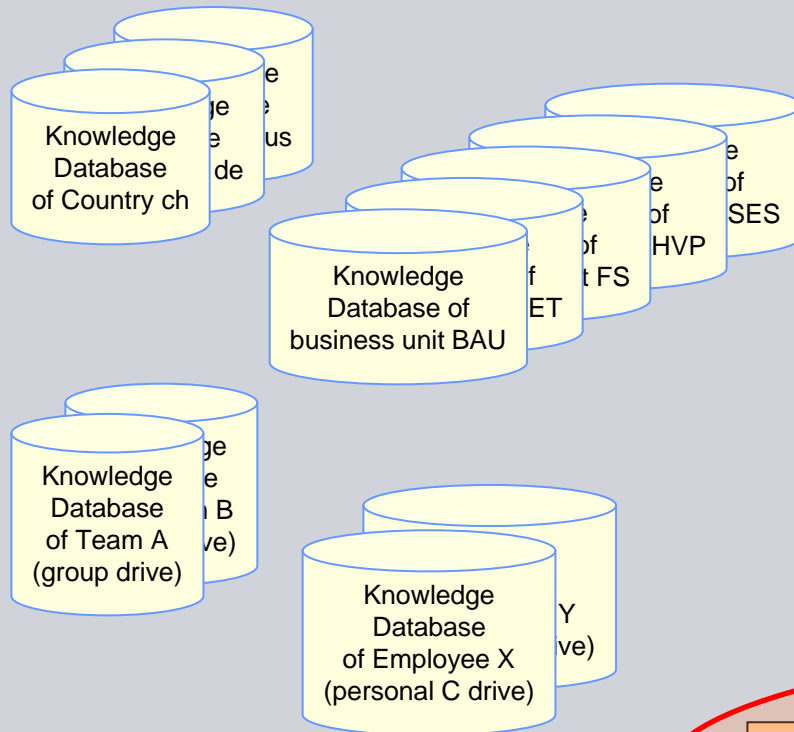Admin of References@BT

A lot of work and passion!

References@BT

➤ **Application Management**
  ➤ feature planning and definition
  ➤ code programming (VBScript)
  ➤ database design and maintenance

➤ **Content Management**
  ➤ check new contributions
  ➤ determination of the geographic position
  ➤ uncover potential content
  ➤ administer content structure and taxonomy
  ➤ user data administration

➤ **Community Building**
  ➤ community support ("Hotline")
  ➤ frequent communication
  ➤ incentive and reward system
  ➤ presentation, training, lobbying, networking

➤ **General Knowledge Management (KM) Topics**
  ➤ BT representative in the Siemens KM Community
  ➤ networking with academic KM institutions

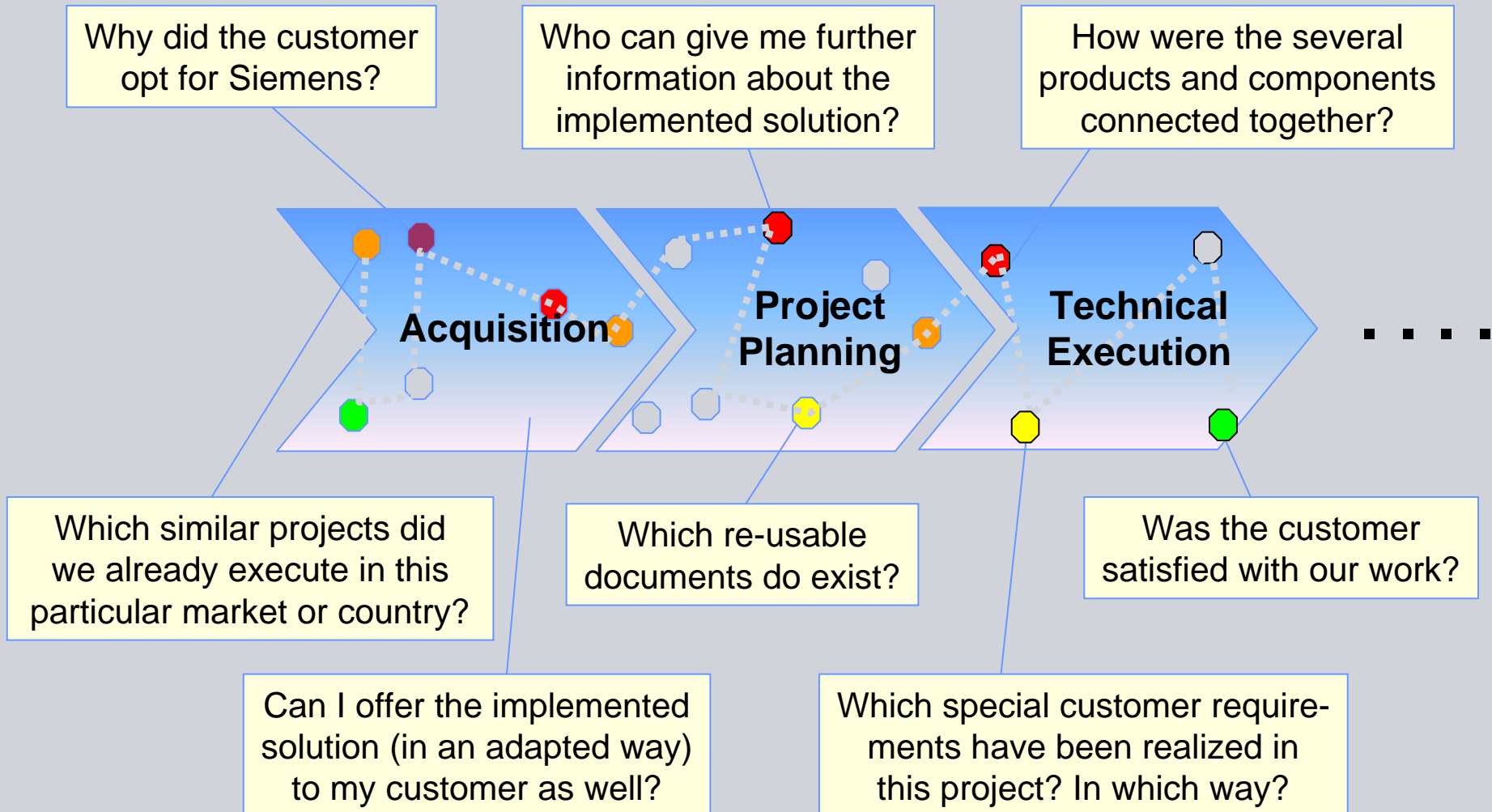# Where do we want to go?

previous situation:

our intention:

Knowledge Database of Country ch

Knowledge Database of business unit BAU

Knowledge Database of Team A (group drive)

Knowledge Database of Employee X (personal C drive)

References@BT

Social Networking Tool

Knowledge Database
for all BT business units
for all countries

Social Network

| potential contributor: any Siemens employee* | direct contact | potential reader: any Siemens employee |

* if the contribution is related to the BT business

Content in References@BT
Networking both Knowledge and People

Content in References@BT

Knowledge References
- Customer Projects
- Solution Concepts
- Service Concepts
- Technology Information
- Market Information
- External Awards
- Business Excellence Cases
- Lessons Learned

with feedback function

Discussion Postings
- Urgent Requests
- Solution Talk and General Ideas
- Successful Knowledge Reuse
- Application Feedback and Help
- SES Solutions Community
- Fairs and Conferences
- News, Trends and Innovations

contributes

posts

knowledge and information sharing

people networking

What's Interesting for a Reader of a Customer Project (Knowledge Reference)

Why did the customer opt for Siemens?

Who can give me further information about the implemented solution?

How were the several products and components connected together?

Acquisition

Project Planning

Technical Execution

. . . .

Which similar projects did we already execute in this particular market or country?

Which re-usable documents do exist?

Was the customer satisfied with our work?

Can I offer the implemented solution (in an adapted way) to my customer as well?

Which special customer requirements have been realized in this project? In which way?

Examples for Necessary Knowledge Transfer during the Customer Project Process

Project Phases according to PM@BT

| Pre Acquisition | Project Acquisition | Bid Preparation | Contract Negotiation | Project Handover | Project Opening and Clarification | Detailed Planning | Technical Execution | Acceptance | Warranty or Service |

knowledge flow

- find reference projects
- find replicable solutions
- enter success story
- find similar solutions
- find experts
- enter ongoing project
- enter finalized project
- find service opport'ties
- enter service business

References@BT

How to Find a Knowledge Reference (1)

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How to Find a Knowledge Reference (2)

Example for 'Member Page': More than just Displaying Contact Data

Example for Geographic Display in *Google Maps*: Customer Projects in the United States

Example for Geographic Display in *Google Earth*: Customer Projects in Switzerland
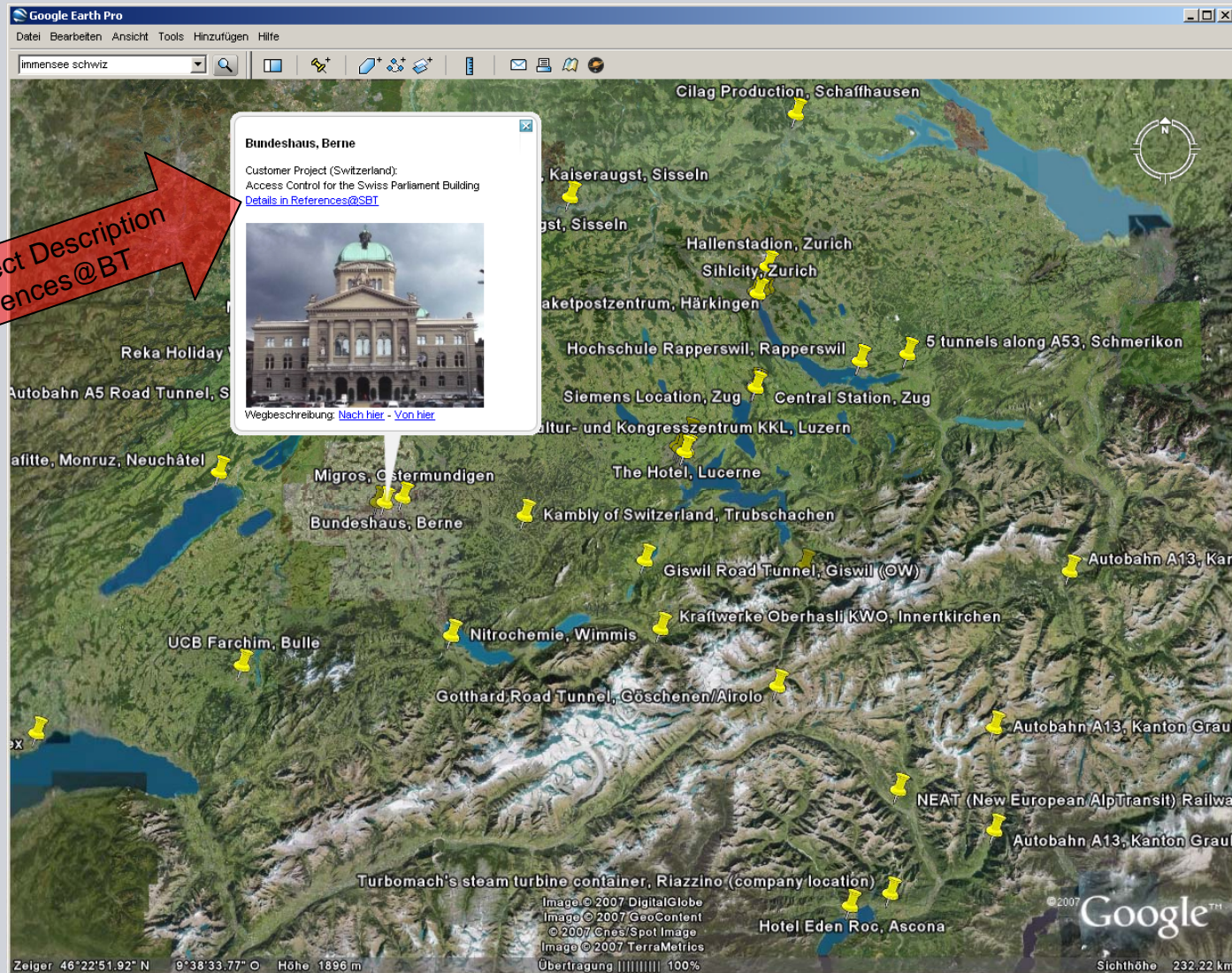
Several Ways to Access the Content

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References@BT
(web pages)

Other Intranet Pages
(via content import)

Google Maps
(AJAX web page)

Powerpoint & Excel
(via file download)

References@BT

Google Earth
(via KML file)

Notification Alert
(via e-mail)

Feed Subscription
(via RSS feed)
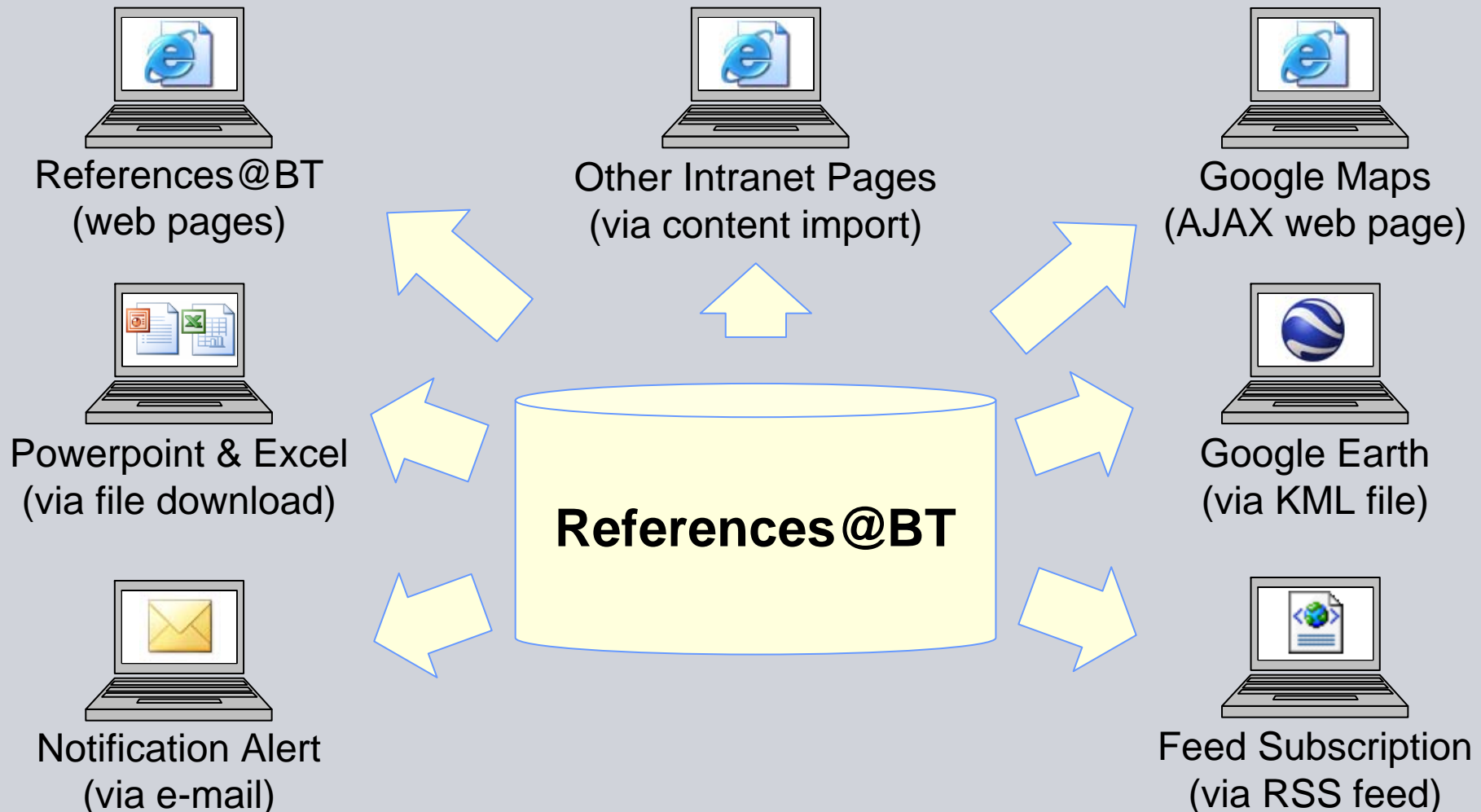
How to Motivate the Authors to Contribute?

- ➢ Four temporary reward competitions have been performed until today:
  - ➢ Oct. 2005 - Jan. 2006, 4 months
  - ➢ June 2006 - Sep. 2006, 4 months
  - ➢ Jan. 2007 - July 2007, 7 months (announced beginning of March 2007)
  - ➢ Jan. 2008 - July 2008, 7 months (announced mid-February 2008)
- ➢ Awards handed over by BT top-management or regional management
- ➢ Frequent communication (intranet, employee magazine, etc.)
- ➢ Top-Management Support

> The contribution activity during a period with incentive measure is about **1.5 times higher** compared to periods without incentive measure.

Long-term target: Knowledge exchange should be part of
- ➢ company culture,
- ➢ working routines and processes,
- ➢ business target agreements,
- ➢ annual bonus systems.

Statistics March – September 2008

	Mar 2008	Apr 2008	May 2008	Jun 2008	Jul 2008	Aug 2008	Sep 2008
page views	11,891	11,787	9,664	32,484	18,510	12,927	19,793
daily user authentications	2,729	2,661	2,277	6,509	4,834	3,698	4,503
authenticated users (different)	1,534	1,533	1,377	4,032	2,513	1,881	2,408
new user registrations	129	118	111	954	306	111	113
new knowledge references	23	23	28	31	60	22	59
new discussion postings	122	93	88	149	225	149	156

Total figures on October 6th, 2008:
1,754 knowledge references
1,784 discussion postings
5,251 registered community members
        located in 73 countries

Remark:
In mid-June, a promotion e-mail was sent to approx. 30,000 BT employees. This is the reason for this month's higher figures.

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Some Selected User Feedbacks

➢ *I just want to thank you for getting this tool operational. This is going to be an extremely valuable tool and is something that we have needed for a long time* (by a member of the BT marketing team, United States, October 2005).

➢ *I think References@BT is a great idea! It will be particularly useful as we try and position cross-selling opportunities, and multi-business unit offerings to our customers* (by a member of the Canadian BT management, October 2005).

➢ *Big thanks to my colleague Thorsten for his information. I posted my question onto the discussion board and the following day had all the required information, including drawings and potential suppliers. Yesterday a problem, today a solution* (by a British user, who quickly received a valuable answer on his urgent request from a colleague in Germany, September 2006).

➢ *Sieht toll aus, unglaublich. Können Sie auch das Blaue vom Himmel runter-programmieren?* (by a very active Austrian user, who suggested a feature improvement, which was immediately implemented, January 2007).

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2. How often do you use References@BT?

daily
45 (7%)

weekly (one or several times)
164 (27%)

monthly (one or several times)
115 (19%)

sporadically (on demand)
283 (47%)

Total: 607
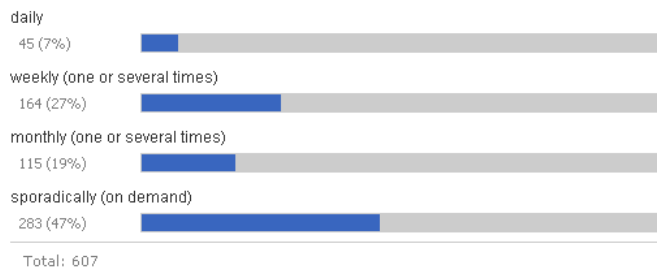
34% frequent users

66% occasional users

8. Overall, how helpful is References@BT for your daily work?

very helpful
56 (9%)

predominantly helpful
140 (23%)

partially helpful
346 (57%)

regrettably not helpful
65 (11%)

Total: 607
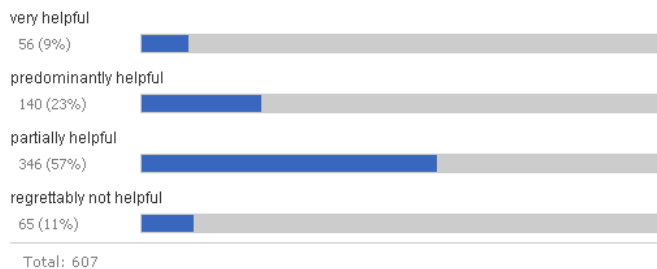
more or less helpful for 89%

9. By (re-)using the information found in References@BT, how much working time did you save in the past 365 days (estimated)?

several days saved
72 (12%)

one day saved
97 (16%)

one or several hours saved
222 (37%)

unfortunately no time savings
216 (36%)

Total: 607
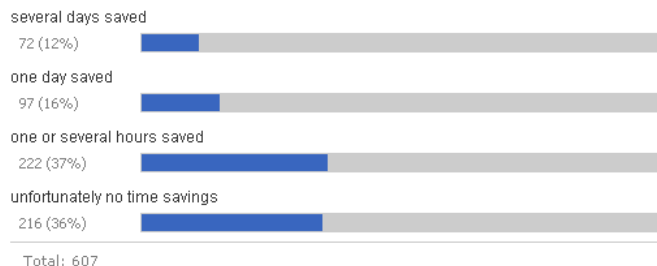
3 days

1 day

½ day
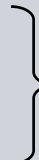
424 saved days per year
for 607 responders
(Ø **0.7 days** per person per year)

Pro's and Con's of User Generated Content

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Pro's* from subjective company perspective:

➢ Employees have the opportunity to publish personal experiences and implicit knowledge in an "uncensored" way. Thus the author him/herself can receive direct visibility.

➢ Implicit knowledge can be exchanged immediately over geographical and organizational borders and - after according adaptations - quickly re-used.

➢ The fast and direct knowledge flow helps to save precious time and to avoid additional work and already occurred mistakes.

➢ By commenting other authors' contributions, every community member can control and enhance the content quality.

➢ Intentional abuse is not usual, since every contribution clearly shows the author's name and contact data (and anonymous posting is not possible).

Con's* from subjective company perspective:

➢ Unverified opinions, which might differ from the "official" company position, can be published.

➢ Negative experiences, which might be undesirable for company-wide communication, can be published.

➢ There isn't any editorial release process, which is mandatory for the publication.

➢ The publication depends on the individual communication readiness and skills of the respective expert. (Are all experts willing and able to communicate their own know-how?)

➢ The language used in online media is more spontaneous and less formal. A post-processing is mostly necessary before the textual information can be forwarded.

* The allocation of the topics to Pro's and Con's can depend on the company culture.

Lessons Learned

➤ Always focus on the user community (not on the application).

➤ Never stop to address, moderate and motivate the user community.

➤ Ensure continuous attention and support of the top-management.

➤ Provide a self-explanatory application with an intuitive usability and a state-of-the-art look-and-feel. Avoid bulky manuals and time-consuming trainings as preconditions for successful use.

➤ Provide multiple communication channels, e.g. several web entry points, discussion forums, RSS feeds, e-mail notification, download to Excel. Allow the users to interact with the application according to their personal preferences.

➤ Get contributions of colleagues directly involved with first-hand knowledge (e.g. execution of customer projects, implementation of solutions, carrying out of services). "Content that matters is king!"

➤ Let the users immediately benefit from the content found in the database. Make the content easy reusable in the users' daily work.

# Publications about References@BT (formerly 'References@SBT')

Global Exchange of Knowledge and Best-Practices in Siemens Building Technologies with 'References@SBT', Author: Johannes Müller.

Proceedings of the '2007 International Conference on Knowledge Management' (Vienna, August 2007), World Scientific, ISBN-13: 978-981-277-058-5, pp. 55-64 (see: http://www.mueller24.info/pub/07mue1.php).

References@SBT – Globaler Wissensaustausch durch 'Social Networking' bei Siemens Building Technologies (in German), Author: Johannes Müller.

Proceedings of the KnowTech 2007 (Frankfurt am Main, November 2007), ISBN-10: 3-88260-077-2, pp. 349-357 (see : http://www.mueller24.info/pub/07mue2.php).
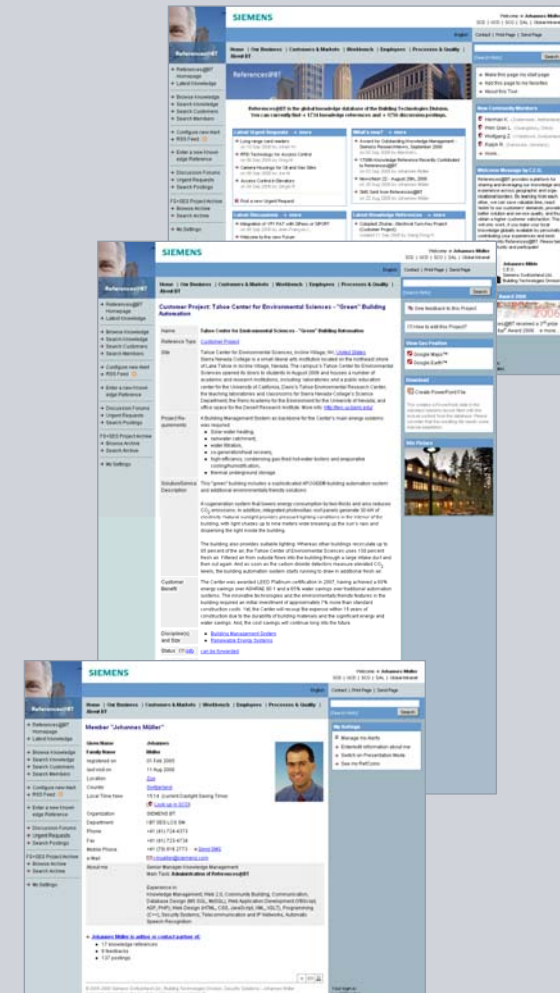
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