General Guidelines for Developing a Knowledge Bank

Developed by Mark Bell and Wil Agatstein

Farmers require access to credible relevant knowledge. The following steps outline the process to develop an on-line Knowledge Bank to provide such knowledge.

Goal of a knowledge bank project. Provide credible, relevant information to those helping farmers.

Key Characteristics (See Figure)
1. **Quality content.** How will you ensure that materials are credible and relevant (both in terms of format and content)?
2. **Sustainable delivery.** How will you ensure that both the content and the on-line resource are maintained, updated and sustained?
3. **Used resource (Application).** How will you ensure linkage to end-users who are using the resource information to ensure feedback for improvement of both the content and the delivery mechanisms?.
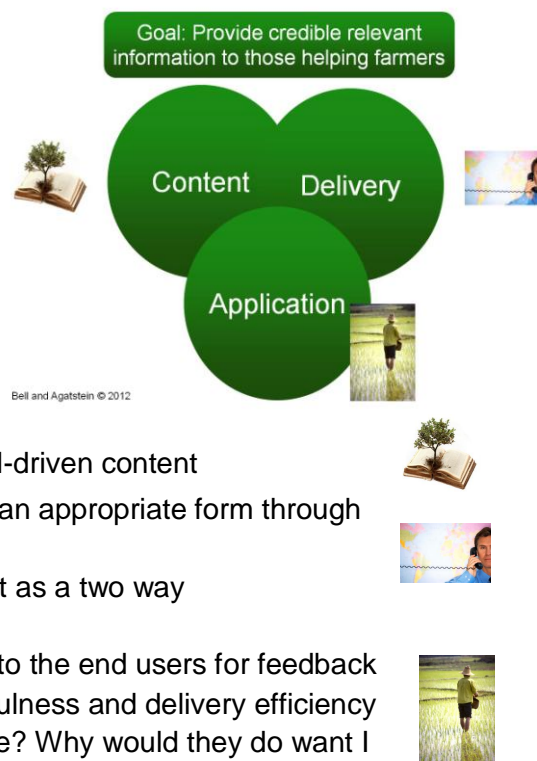
Example site: e-Afghan Ag http://eafghanag.ucdavis.edu

e-Afghan Ag
UCDAVIS

Project implementation requirements

Project Driver. Identify someone passionate about the project – committed to making sure it succeeds with support from their institute or organization management?

Sustainability? How will the project be maintained, updated and sustained? What happens if the project driver leaves?

Key Characteristics (See the following pages for more detail.)

Goal: Provide credible relevant information to those helping farmers
Content   Delivery
Application
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1. **Content** – Must provide credible, relevant demand-driven content

2. **Delivery** – Need appropriate material delivered in an appropriate form through an easily accessible channel.
   Note: While we use the term delivery, this is meant as a two way communication process.

3. **Application** – The process must include linkages to the end users for feedback on emerging needs plus feedback on content usefulness and delivery efficiency
   Why? Always ask why someone would use my site? Why would they do want I suggest? Why is this site needed?

1. Content – ensuring quality

Element	Consideration	Who responsible
Audience	**Focus?** Clearly identify who is the audience and what is the information they need. Start with the audience in mind – Have a clarity of both the system users and the ones they are serving. What are the needs and circumstances and what is the access to the tool?	
Needs driven	What is the information the audience needs and can use? How are needs of both the intermediaries and the target audience identified?	
Credible and relevant solutions	Is the information from a credible tested source? Are solutions proven under the expected farmer conditions?	
Material development	Ensure each message is clear, simple, practical and doable. What is the appropriate level of material for the audience (in terms of language used and content) Have a clear naming system for files	
Acknowledgement	Acknowledge all those contributing – builds support and willingness to contribute	
Material form	What forms of materials are best developed to reach the audience (PPT, FS, video,…)	
Material – value addition	What extra does your product add in terms of information already available – how does it make it easier for people to access and apply? What are the incentives to use the system – are there other (better) options out there?	
Material review	What is the process to ensure materials are credible, relevant and easily understood	
Sign-off	Who has the final say in terms of material being approved? Identify subject matter experts	

2. Delivery – building two-way communication

Element	Consideration	Who responsible
User conditions	Does the delivery technology match with the access options of the users? Do you need material available in different forms – written, CD/DVD and/or web	
Building trust in source	How will beneficiaries and intermediaries learn of the resource and why or how will they learn to trust it?	
Interface development	Need to develop and maintain an intuitive easy to navigate (with search option) interface **Simplicity** Keep site simple and intuitive – include a search option.	
Server management	Who will manage the server	
File management (naming, uploading)	Who will manage the files including different formats, backup naming and uploading	
Accuracy	Have a mechanism to ensure links are active and information correct Regularly check and ensure all links are active. Broken links quickly reduce site credibility.	
Linkage to other ICT options (radio, cell, video…)	Material delivery has to consider both new and traditional delivery channels. Materials have to be suitable for all approaches	
Promotion	How will the site be promoted and advertised (keeping in mind the need to build trust)?	

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3. Application – ensuring relevance and use

Element	Consideration	Who responsible
Linked to users	Make sure the project is linked to those who are using the information and that they provide feedback on content, format and ease of use?	
Feedback	Need a mechanism to collect and respond to feedback on • Content (Message and form) • Interface • Emerging needs	
Be open to criticism	Listen to openly to feedback – You do not have to accept all suggestions – but evaluate if there is a valid point to be made – and if so respond to improve your system.	