

Australian Information & Knowledge Management Benchmarking Survey 2015

An independent study covering key foundations of an information and knowledge management framework, processes and technology used, barriers that prevent the effective sharing of information and knowledge between staff, and the organisational benefits of good information and knowledge management.

VOTAR PARTNERS
BUSINESS CONSULTING SERVICES



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Executive Summary

Votar Partners conducted an online survey during August and September 2015 to gather data to benchmark the Information and Knowledge Management (IKM) practices of Australian organisations. The study covers the key foundations of an IKM framework, processes and technology used, barriers that prevent the effective sharing of information and knowledge between staff, and the organisational benefits of good IKM.

Survey responses were received from 129 organisations across Australia, and a further three from overseas (New Zealand and the UK). Most organisations in the benchmarking group were from the Government sector (69%). The median number of full time equivalent staff was 500, with a broad range of five to 120,000.

Key findings from this benchmarking study are as follows:

- Executives are often not responsible for IKM across their organisation
- Most organisations do have a current IKM strategy
- Performance measurement for IKM is often ad hoc or missing
- IKM processes are focussed on capture and control, not on use
- Practitioners have a positive outlook on their organisation's IKM culture
- There is a slow adoption of new IKM technologies
- System integration or consolidation is considered the biggest technology enabler for IKM
- People-based barriers to knowledge sharing are the most prevalent in organisations
- Process flows, information access and information security are the biggest issues that organisations are attempting to address with their IKM programs
- The greatest positive impacts from organisation's IKM program are increased compliance and productivity

This study highlights some positive indicators for the future of IKM in Australian organisations, including a strategic approach and positive organisational cultures. Key areas for improvement are a greater focus on removing people barriers to knowledge sharing, facilitating better access and use of information and integrating information systems. This will help organisations meet their compliance obligations and improve staff productivity.

Information and Knowledge Management is a core discipline for the digital economy. The challenge for IKM practitioners is to align their work more closely with the business, to focus on and deliver better business outcomes, and to do so in a rapid, iterative and scalable manner.

Customised reports are available, allowing you to understand how your organisation compares against your peers as captured in the benchmarking process. The customised report analyses the similarities and differences between your organisation's information and knowledge management program and comparative organisations (in terms of size, sector or location) from the benchmarking group. This personalised analysis will provide you with an assessment of your current position and importantly identify opportunities for improvement that can assist you to position and achieve business benefits through improved information and knowledge management.



1. Introduction

Votar Partners conducted an online survey during August and September 2015 to gather data to benchmark the Information and Knowledge Management (IKM) practices of Australian organisations. The study covers the key foundations of an IKM framework, processes and technology used, barriers that prevent the effective sharing of information and knowledge between staff, and the organisational benefits of good IKM.

Participation in the survey was optional and respondents could choose to remain anonymous. Individual results are stored securely and haven't be disclosed to any other organisation. Anyone who completed the survey and provided a contact email address has been provided with a copy of the de-identified results through this report.

Votar Partners are an independent Management and IT Services Consultancy. Established in 1989, Votar have built a reputation for service excellence by focusing on our clients, their needs and supporting them to achieve their objectives. We help organisations transform their information management and knowledge sharing culture to improve collaboration, support innovation and capture vital corporate knowledge before people leave organisations.

2. Benchmarking Group Profile

Survey responses were received from 129 organisations across Australia, and a further three from overseas (New Zealand and the UK). Most organisations in the benchmarking group were from the Government sector (69%). The median number of full time equivalent staff was 500, with a broad range of five to 120,000. A profile of the organisations that participated in this study is provided in figures one to three below.

Figure 1: Sector

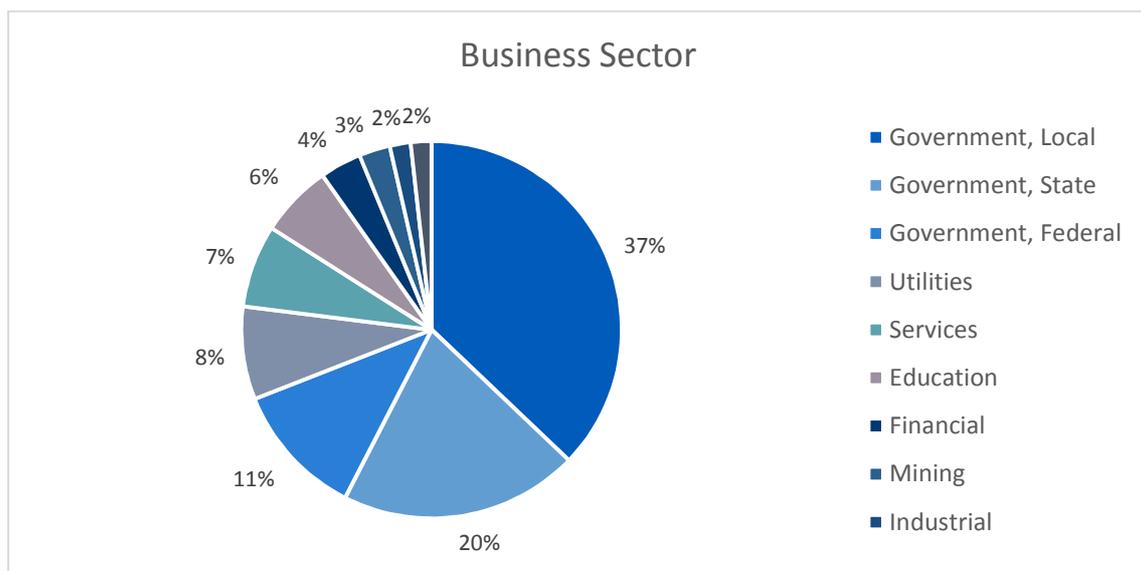




Figure 2: Number of Staff

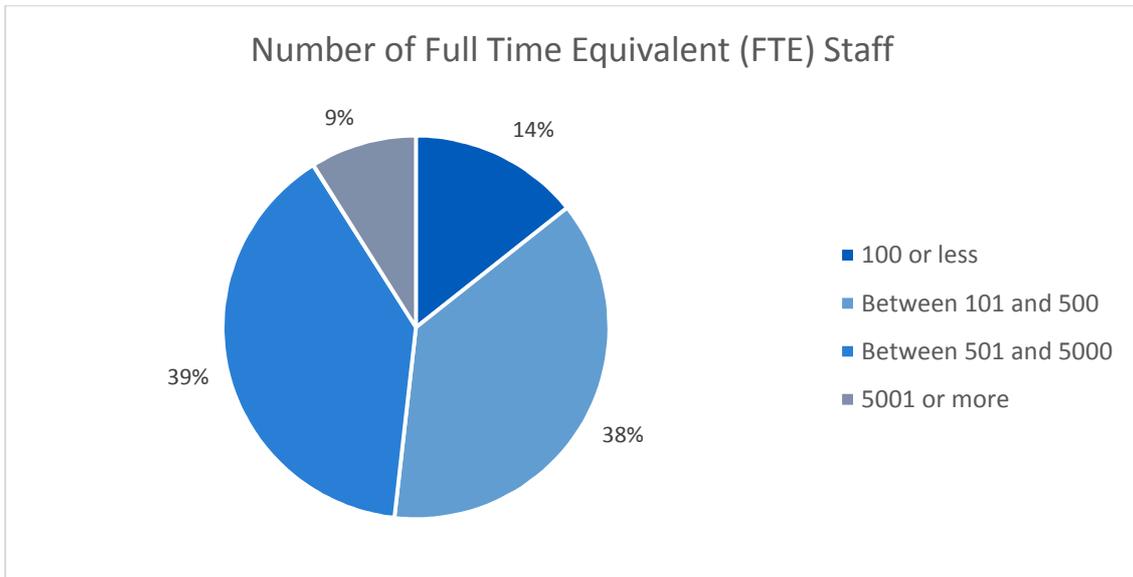
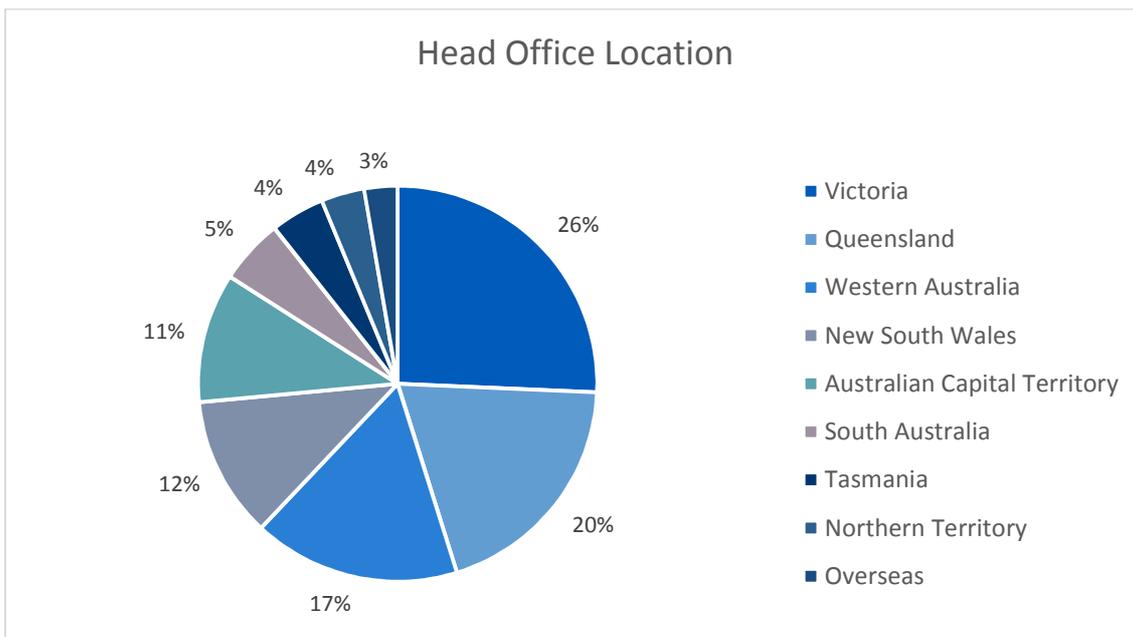


Figure 3: Location



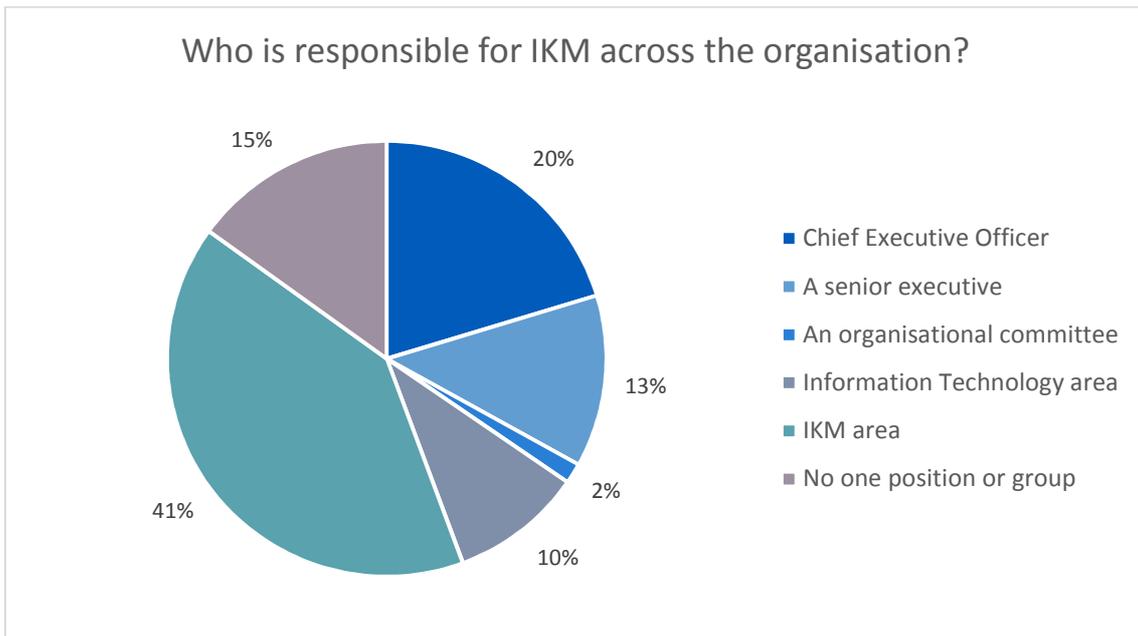


3. Findings

3.1 Responsibility

In only a third of organisations is the CEO or a senior executive responsible for Information and Knowledge Management (IKM). It is most common for a dedicated IKM area to be responsible (41%). A lack of senior sponsorship and accountability for IKM can be a major inhibitor to a successful program.

Figure 4: Responsibility for IKM across the organisation





3.2 Strategy

While a fifth of organisations either don't have a strategy for information or knowledge management, or have one that's out of date, most are in the process of developing a new one (27%) or are implementing it (53%). This is a positive indicator that organisations are recognising the importance of IKM to drive business success and sustainability.

Figure 5: Status of Information and/or Knowledge Management Strategy

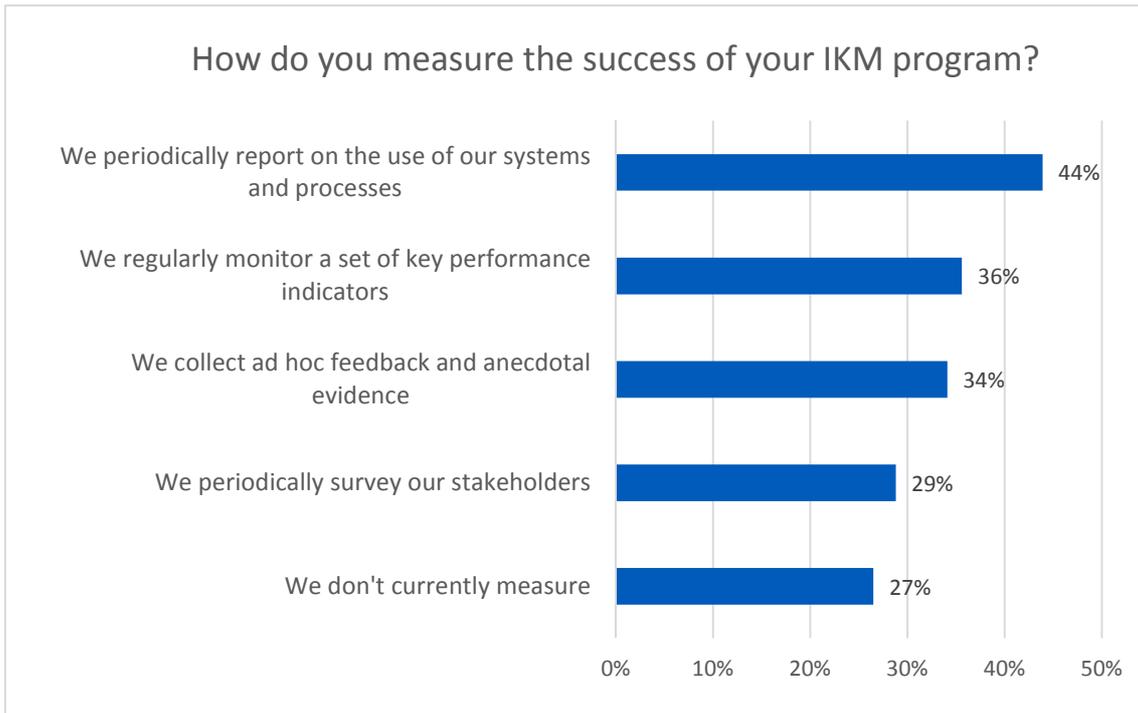




3.3 Measurement

Many organisations monitor the use of systems and processes (44%), KPIs are used by some (36%), and surveys are the least common (29%). Ad hoc feedback is used by some (34%) and more than a quarter (27%) don't measure at all. While measuring IKM outcomes can be difficult, it is key to demonstrating to management the return on their investment, in what are often expensive systems and programs.

Figure 6: Measuring the success of the IKM program

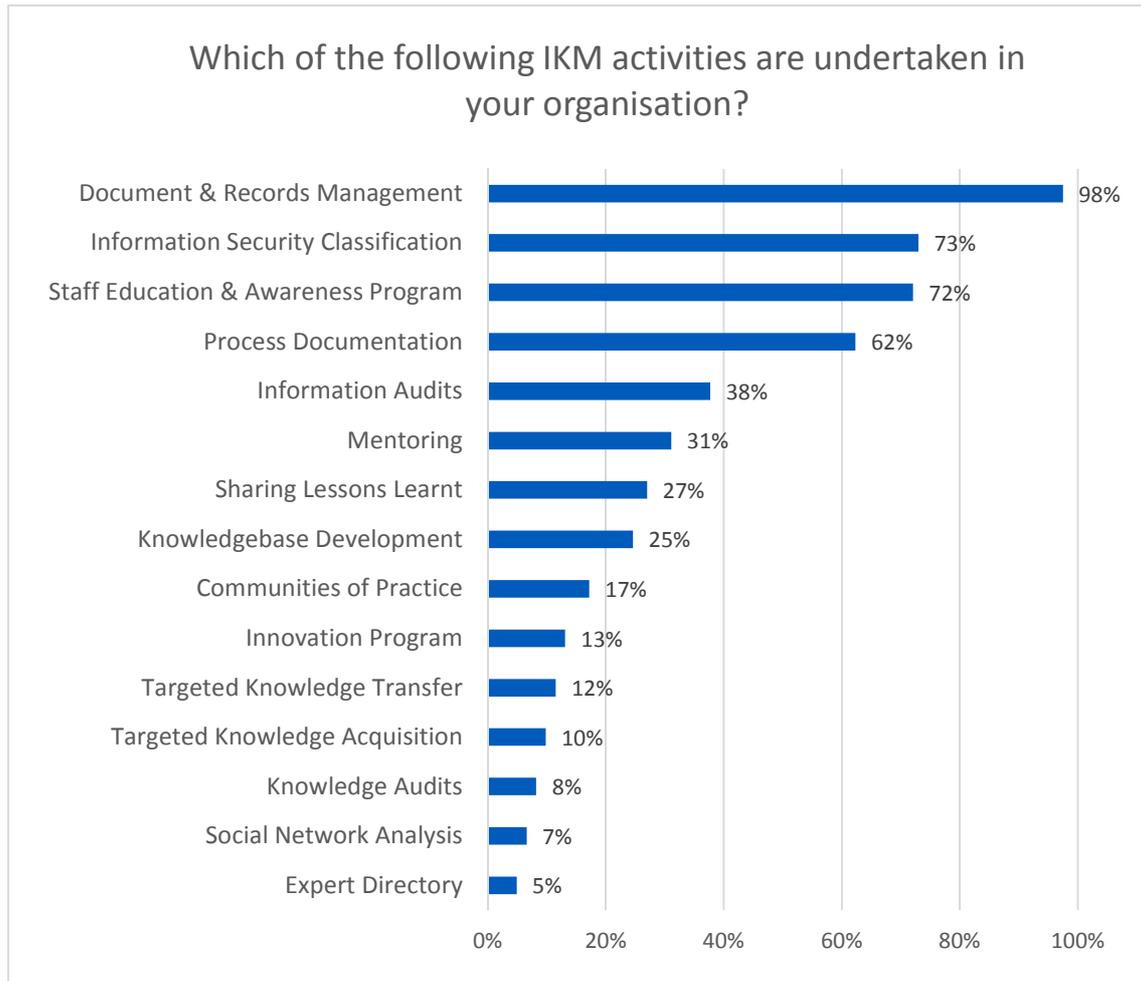




3.4 Processes

Most organisations have processes to manage documents and records (98%), but few have processes to encourage the use of information and knowledge, such as targeted knowledge transfers (10%) and expert directories (5%). Failing to encourage and facilitate staff to make use of corporate information and knowledge greatly limits the value of IKM programs to business processes, strategies and outcomes.

Figure 7: IKM activities currently undertaken

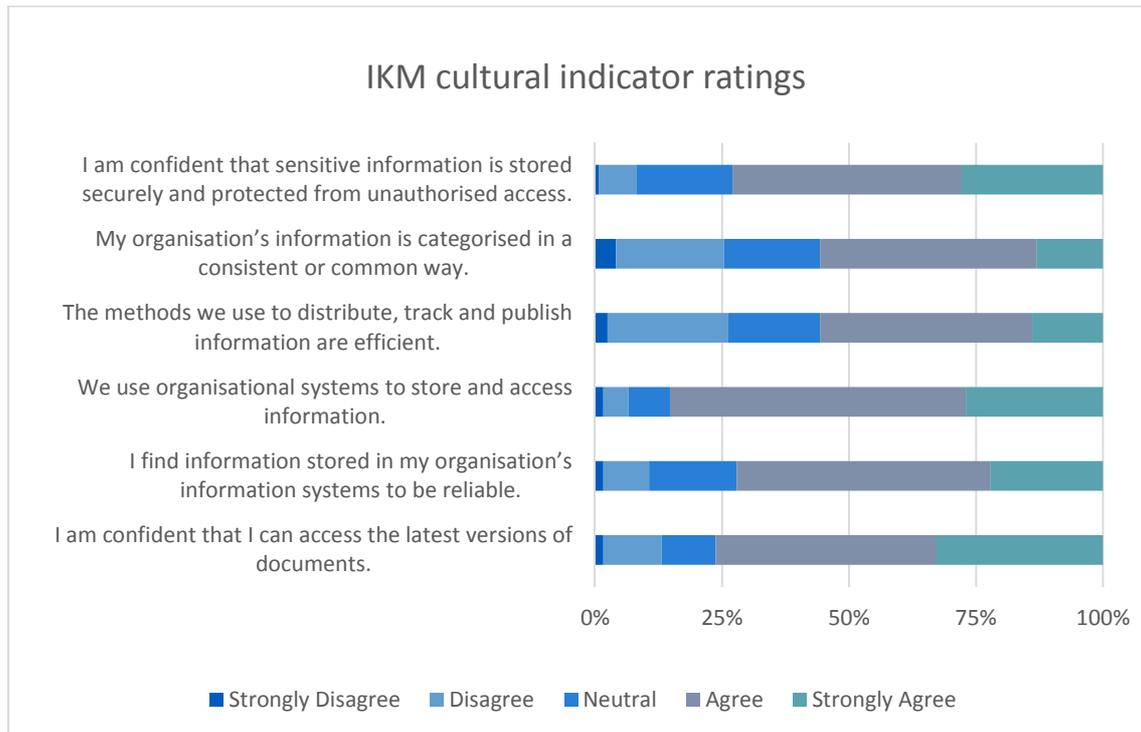




3.5 Culture

The majority of survey respondents believe their organisation has a very positive IKM culture based on consensus and negotiation of the organisation’s key information elements and reporting structures. While the use of organisational systems appears to be high, they often inefficient and consistently used across business areas.

Figure 8: IKM cultural indicators

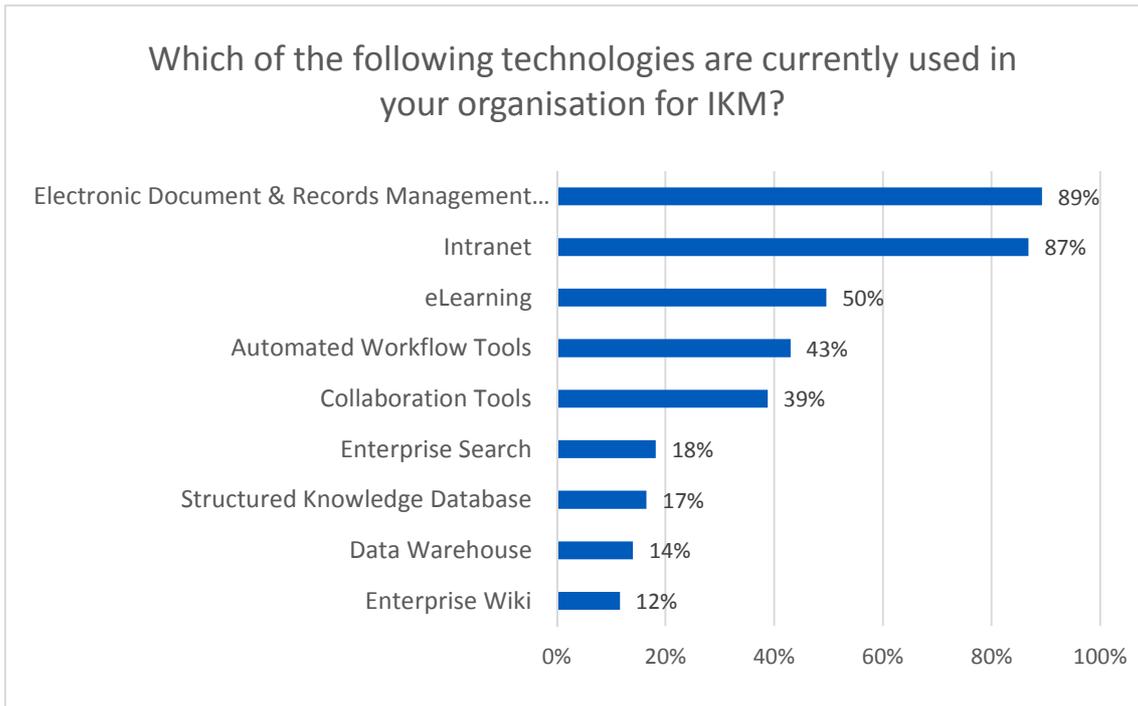




3.6 Technologies

While the use of some established technologies is very common, like EDRMS (89%) and Intranets (87%), the take-up of newer technologies is still slow, such as enterprise wikis (12%), data warehouses (14%) and enterprise search (18%). This may be due to budgetary limitations and the extensive planning and timeframes required to implement many of these technologies, particularly in the Government sector.

Figure 9: IKM technologies currently utilised

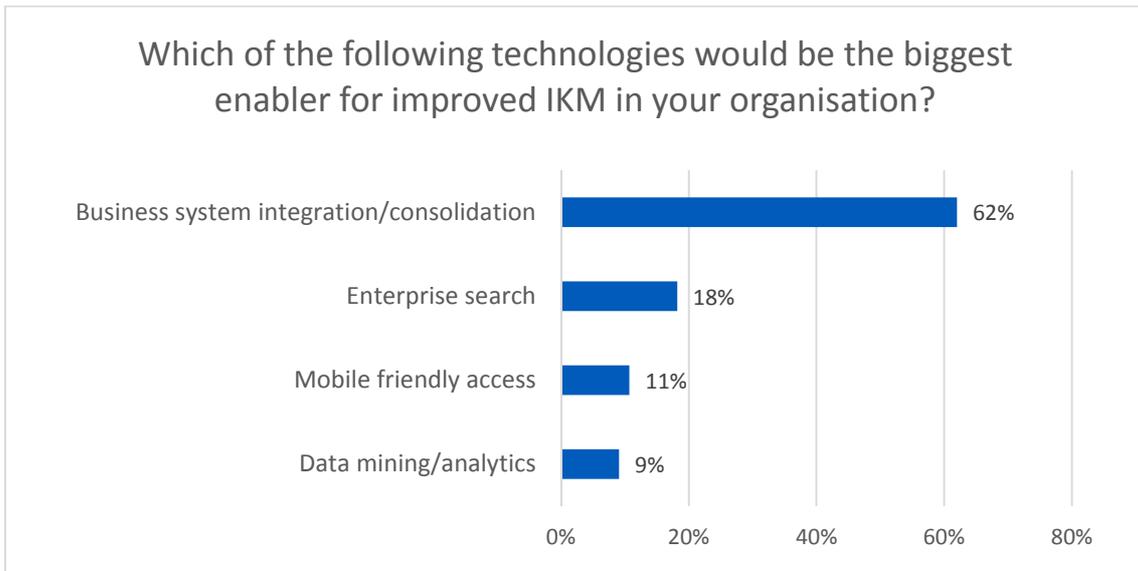




3.7 Enablers

System integration or consolidation is considered the biggest technology enabler for improved IKM in organisations, with 62% rating it ahead of mobility, data analytics and enterprise search. This highlights how more fundamental information and data management issues are still yet to be resolved in most organisations, preventing the introduction of more sophisticated technologies.

Figure 10: Biggest technology enablers for improved IKM

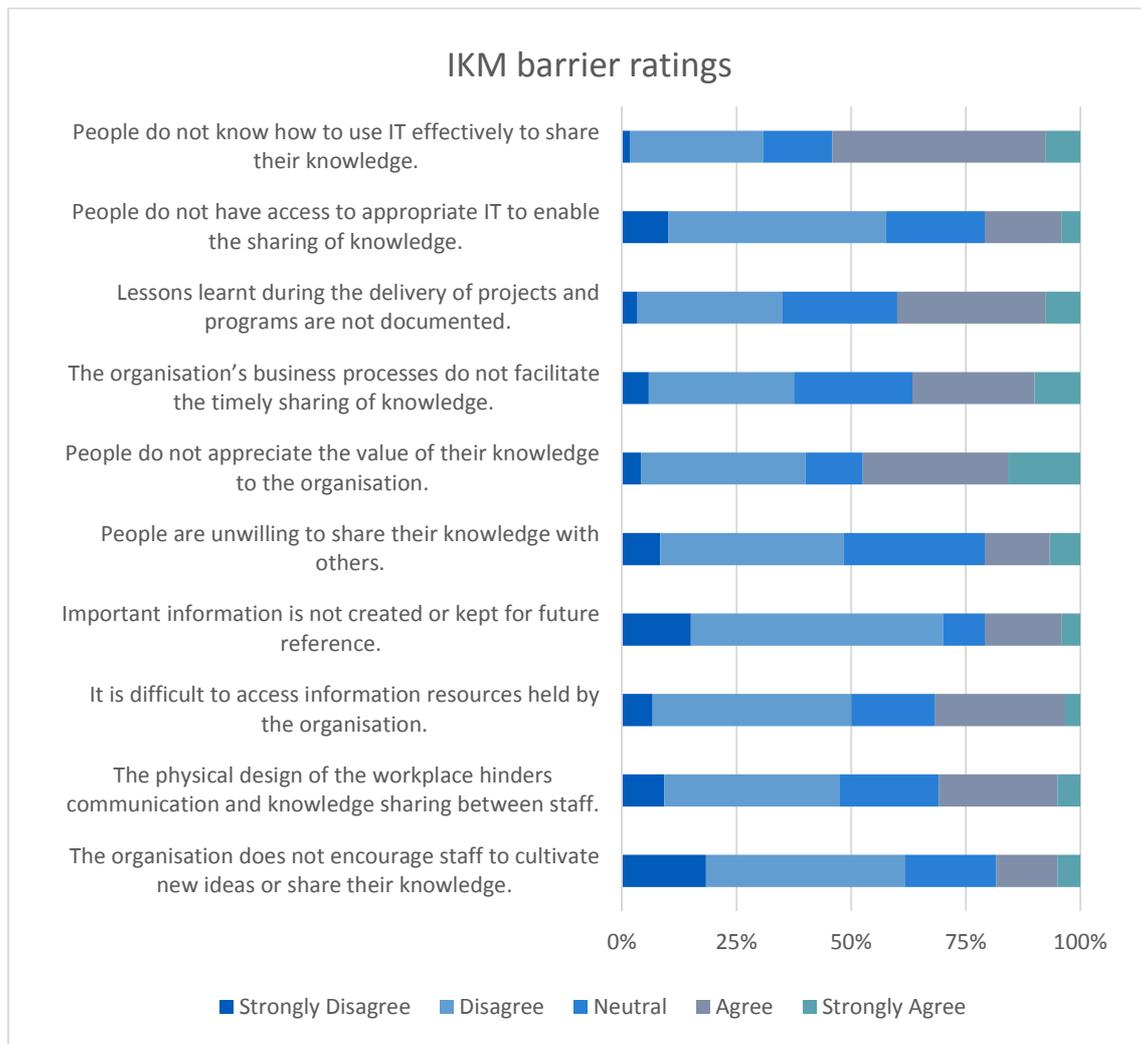




3.8 Barriers

People often don't appreciate the value of their knowledge to the organisation (47%) or don't have the skills to effectively use information systems to share their knowledge (54%). People however are often willing to share (48%). The barrier ratings indicate that people issues are the most prominent in organisations, rather than processes, culture or technology.

Figure 11: IKM barriers

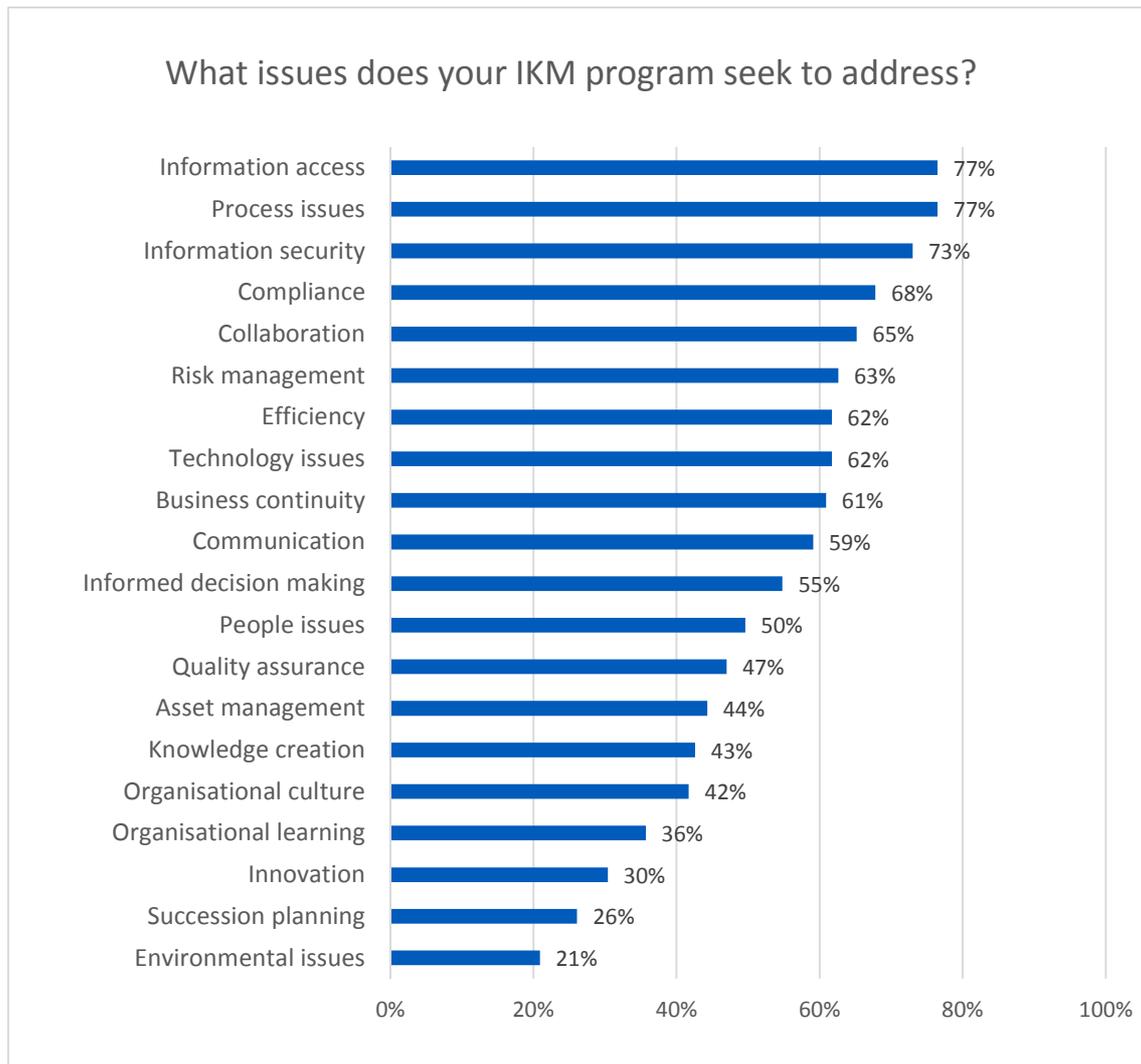




3.9 Issues

Key issues that IKM attempts to address in organisations are process flows (77%), information access (77%) and information security (73%). Also quite common are collaboration (65%), efficiency (62%) and compliance (68%). More traditional knowledge management drivers such as succession planning, innovation and organisational learning are the least common reasons for an organisation’s IKM program, suggesting a greater focus on information management.

Figure 12: Key issues IKM programs seek to address





3.10 Impacts

Good IKM has helped organisations with their regulatory compliance (77%) and improved staff productivity (68%). It has also improved quality of products or services (66%) and increased customer or community satisfaction (53%).

Figure 13: How IKM has positively impacted organisations





4. Conclusion

This study highlights some positive indicators for the future of IKM in Australian organisations. Most organisations are taking a strategic approach to IKM to ensure these programs are well structured and aligned to the organisations business drivers and strategic direction. Positive organisational cultures for information and knowledge sharing also indicate that staff are becoming more aware of the value of their information to their colleagues and the need to manage it consistently.

Key areas for improvement were identified in the people, process and technology domains:

- A greater focus on identifying and removing people barriers to knowledge sharing
- Better processes and information architectures to facilitate access and use of information
- Integration of business information systems to improve efficiencies and data quality

Experience from Australian organisations shows that an effective IKM program will assist organisations to meet their compliance obligations, improve staff productivity and enhance the quality of the organisation's products and services.

Information and Knowledge Management is a core discipline for the digital economy. The challenge for IKM practitioners is to align their work more closely with the business, to focus on and deliver better business outcomes, and to do so in a rapid, iterative and scalable manner.

5. More Information

Customised reports are available, allowing you to understand how your organisation compares against your peers as captured in the benchmarking process. The customised report analyses the similarities and differences between your organisation's information and knowledge management program and comparative organisations (in terms of size, sector or location) from the benchmarking group. This personalised analysis will provide you with an assessment of your current position and importantly identify opportunities for improvement that can assist you to position and achieve business benefits through improved information and knowledge management.

To order your report, or for more information on how you can successfully address the information and knowledge management issues facing your organisation, please contact Mark Williamson via email at markw@votar.com.au or call (03) 9895 9672 or 0425 317 770.



Appendix – Knowledge Management Framework



Knowledge Management Framework

