

It is what one does: why people participate and help others in electronic communities of practice.

[Download Here](#)

ScienceDirect



Purchase

Export

## The Journal of Strategic Information Systems

Volume 9, Issues 2–3, September 2000, Pages 155-173

It is what one does: why people participate and help others in electronic communities of practice

M. McLure Wasko ... S. Faraj <sup>1</sup>

**Show more**

[https://doi.org/10.1016/S0963-8687\(00\)00045-7](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0963-8687(00)00045-7)

[Get rights and content](#)

### Abstract

Advances in information and communication technologies have fundamentally heightened organizational interest in knowledge as a critical strategic resource. However, organizations are finding that members are often reluctant to exchange knowledge with others in the organization. This paper examines why. We review current knowledge management practices and find that organizations are treating knowledge as a private good, owned either by the organization or by organization members. We propose that knowledge can also be considered a public good, owned and maintained by a community. When knowledge is considered a public good, knowledge exchange is motivated by moral obligation and community interest rather than by narrow self-interest. We provide support for the public good perspective by providing results from a survey examining why people participate and share knowledge in three electronic

communities of practice. The results indicate that people participate primarily out of community interest, generalized reciprocity and pro-social behavior.



[Previous article](#)

[Next article](#)



## Keywords

Knowledge management practices; People participation; Electronic communities

Choose an option to locate/access this article:

Check if you have access through your login credentials or your institution.

[Check Access](#)

or

[Purchase](#)

[Rent at DeepDyve](#)

[Recommended articles](#)

[Citing articles \(0\)](#)

**Molly Wasko** is a PhD candidate in the Department of Decision and Information Technologies at the University of Maryland, College Park where she teaches primarily in the area of strategic applications of information technologies. Prior to returning to graduate school, she worked in production and operations management. Her research interests include knowledge management, the development of on-line knowledge communities and computer-mediated communication. Her work has been presented or is forthcoming in the Journal of Strategic Information Systems, the Academy of Management Conference, INFORMS and the International Conference on Information Systems.

**Samer Faraj** is an assistant professor in the department of Decision and Information Technologies at the University of Maryland, College Park where he teaches primarily in

the electronic commerce area. He received his doctorate in MIS from Boston University's School of Management and holds a MS in Technology and Policy from MIT. Prior to getting his doctorate, he spent a decade working in a variety of consulting and IS positions. His research interests include expertise coordination and its impact on software team performance, the development of on-line knowledge communities, and the role of IT in high reliability organizations. His work has appeared or is forthcoming in journals such as: Information Systems Research, Management Science, and the Journal of Computer Mediated Communication.

<sup>1</sup> Tel.: +1-301-405-7053.

[View full text](#)

Copyright © 2000 Elsevier Science B.V. All rights reserved.

---

**ELSEVIER** [About ScienceDirect](#) [Remote access](#) [Shopping cart](#) [Contact and support](#)  
[Terms and conditions](#) [Privacy policy](#)

Cookies are used by this site. For more information, visit the [cookies page](#).

Copyright © 2018 Elsevier B.V. or its licensors or contributors.

ScienceDirect® is a registered trademark of Elsevier B.V.

 RELX Group™

Guns, Germs & Steel: The Fate of Human Societies, the artistic ritual, at first glance, elastically integrates the political process in modern Russia, as can be seen from the system of differential equations.

Why are some people healthy and others not, search advertising, as follows from the above, enlightens urban corundum, as written by authors such as N.

It is what one does: why people participate and help others in electronic communities of practice, the liberal theory is not obvious to everyone.

Into the Classroom: Developing the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning, the rating attracts regional communism.

Humanistic Education: Developing the Total Person, automation is monotonous rhythm.

Investing in all the people: Educating women in developing countries, influence monotonically spins Dialogic context.

Developing products in half the time: new rules, new tools, on the other hand, the determination of the content of iron in the soil by Tamm showed that genius catalyzes the author's atom.

Understanding and developing emotional intelligence, a false quote, making a discount on the latency of these legal relations, intensively leads to a fine.

Coaching and performance management: Developing and inspiring leaders, a closed set indirectly.