

## 10 REASONS TO USE A TAXONOMY

**1. Narrow enterprise search.** "On the Internet, you have Web pages and links between them, and those links allow you to perceive relationships between pages," notes Yves Schabes, president of natural language search vendor Teragram. "[That's what] made page-rank algorithms famous and Google so successful."

In contrast, there are no links between Word, Excel, PowerPoint and other types of documents within the enterprise, so Web search techniques don't work well. By tagging information according to an enterprise taxonomy--with the aid of extraction and categorization technologies--results can be quickly narrowed down within categories.

**2. Improve site navigation.** Make sure people coming to your site can actually find the products or information they're looking for. Some search engines provide administrative tools that record when customers have looked for something and not found it. Upon investigation, it often turns out that available products or services simply weren't listed under the right headings.

**3. Eliminate redundancy.** One international utility company discovered it unknowingly had identical projects under way in the United Kingdom and the United States because the two teams were using different words to describe the efforts. A taxonomy provides companywide terminology, encompassing synonyms and alternative expressions, as well as structure to which information from many sources can be mapped.

**4. Maximize the value of intellectual assets.** In knowledge-intensive industries, such as publishing, consulting and financial services, intellectual assets gain value the more they're used. A taxonomy organizes and eases discovery of assets, thereby maximizing reuse.

**5. Support customer-facing employees.** Salespeople can be much more effective if they can quickly find pertinent information before calling on existing or potential customers. And in the call center, time is money, yet customer-service representatives constantly talk to customers who don't know the proper nomenclature for the company's products and services. A taxonomy can help CSRs interpret queries and find requested data.

**6. Make corporate resources more accessible.** HR, IT and other support areas on corporate intranets are often loaded with terminology only understood within those departments. Taxonomies standardize terminology and can help publishers present information in a logical way. "What's important is that there's an organization scheme you can depend on that most people in the organization carry around in their heads," Gartner analyst Rita Knox says.

**7. Ease mergers and acquisition.** When two companies merge, it can be hard to meld product lines and cultures; people in different organizations use disparate vocabularies. A unified taxonomy can help provide a common view.

**8. Support globalization and localization.** Translation and localization efforts are difficult enough. By establishing a global taxonomy, you can lower translation costs, maximize content reuse and avoid inconsistencies in brand building and corporate communications.

**9. Streamline business processes.** The amount of paperwork involved in drug trials, legal proceedings, legislative or regulatory proceedings and other complex processes can be overwhelming. The hierarchy inherent in taxonomy can at least ease navigation, and help researchers and analysts avoid working at cross purposes.

**10. Speed legal discoveries.** Lawsuits often lead to discovery requests for all documents related to a specific product or customer within a specified time period. Judges expect swift compliance, yet many companies pay steep fines for failing to comply in a timely fashion. A taxonomy can narrow and speed the search.