2009 Army Operational Knowledge Management (AOKM) Conference

Knowledge Management, Kansas City and barbecue. It just doesn’t get any better than that when all three come together, 19-23 October, at the Kansas City Airport Marriott, for the 5th Annual AOKM Conference.

Sponsored by the U.S. Army Combined Arms Center (CAC) and hosted by the Battle Command Knowledge System (BCKS) at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, the conference is for military KM professionals and KM experts in the private sector to share and exchange the latest KM industry information and military KM best practices, processes and lessons learned.

The theme for this year’s conference, "Winning the Current Fight," is driven by a sense of urgency to support the current fight. Spread over five days, program topics include Warfighting KM, KM best practices and updates on cutting edge knowledge exploration initiatives. Other highlights will include training sessions about:

- Boards, Bureaus, Centers, Cells and Working Groups (B2C2WGs)
- Using Social Media to communicate with the force
- Knowledge Management in the Future

The conference boasts a packed schedule of training sessions and workshops, as well as a full slate of great speakers, including:

- GEN Martin E. Dempsey – Commanding General, Training and Doctrine Command (taped)
- LTG P.K. (Ken) Keen – Military Deputy Commander, US Southern Command (USOUTHCOM)
- Mr. Dale Ormond – (SES) Deputy to the Commanding General, US Army Combined Arms Center (CAC)
- Mr. Frank Anderson Jr. – (SES) President, Defense Acquisition University, Office of the Undersecretary of Defense
- BG Edward Cardon – Deputy Commandant, Command and General Staff College, Deputy Commanding General, CAC
- BG Allen Batschelet – Deputy Chief of Staff-G3, United States Army Europe (USAREUR)
- Dr. Mark Nissen – C2 Chair and Director of Center for Edge Power, Naval Postgraduate School
- Dr. Nancy Dixon – President, Common Knowledge
- Mr. Jack Holt – Senior Strategist for Emerging Media, Department of Defense

Army Knowledge Management Qualification Course (AKMQC) — Where It's Been and Where It's Going

On August 14th, the first pilot of the AKMQC graduated 12 students at Fort Leavenworth, KS. The AKMQC trained designated knowledge management (KM) section personnel in the basics of Army KM, how to establish and maintain KM programs and strategies, and how to collect, organize, apply, and transfer knowledge. Among other important KM fundamentals and processes, the course also provided the students with KM tools, content management, and a foundation for conducting knowledge assessments.

During the course, the students conducted three projects, all designed to benefit them and the Army. They wrote a generic tactical and garrison KM SOP, revised/redesigned the Battle Command Knowledge System's (BCKS) KM Training page to make it more customer-oriented, and created a KM Toolkit (a one-stop KM professional library that captures best practices, tutorials and feedback from the field).

One feature of the new KM Training page is a section devoted to graduates, where they can exchange best practices, lessons learned, comments, suggestions, etc. among themselves and BCKS before publishing to the rest of the Army. Several of the students have used this reach back mechanism already to answer questions their command has or to improve presentations or briefing packets.

One of the most talked about features of the class was the interaction on Defense Connect Online (DCO) with tactical units in the field. The students were able to discuss job responsibilities, processes, and lessons learned from KM Officers and Content Managers from I Corps, XVIII Airborne Corps, and 1st Cavalry Division. They also assisted I Corps in providing feedback to their KM Plan. The KMO of MNC-I in Iraq, LTC Stewart Liles, said, "The input provided by the students was extremely helpful and saved me and my section literally hundreds of hours." The DCO events on the KM Plan were two of the six DCO sessions held with units in the field and will be a regular feature of future courses.

The AKMQC students provided three very constructive AARs which, in addition to the two internal BCKS AARs, will go a long way to improving the course schedule and content of future courses. The students from this first pilot will continue to provide feedback through a Level III Assessment packet they will fill out after having served in their new roles as a KMO or Content Manager in the field. This process will further validate the training objectives they received in the course.

Expected changes to future classes include: more hands-on demonstration of instruction; less theory and more practical application topics; more exposure to best practices, processes, and tools/technology; a reorganized curriculum, and more interaction with practicing KMOs and content managers in the field.

The Army now has 12 more Knowledge Management professionals to draw upon!
The I Corps Knowledge Management Office (KMO) has developed an effective process for creating and maintaining the Corps' battle rhythm based on the matrixed organization of the staff along both functional and cross functional lines.

Historically, military organizations have organized along the Napoleonic model which funnels information through functional staff sections. This process has traditionally led to the stovepiping of information along these functional lines. At best, this arrangement delays information reaching decision makers and hampers creative decision making. To address this issue, some DOD organizations adopted structures incorporating permanent cross functional cells and staff sections. While the creation of such an organization tends to result in greater creativity and increases in cross functional sharing, the down side is that senior functional specialists were taken out of the loop in regards to mentoring, advising and quality control within their respective specialties.

To capitalize on the advantages of both schemas, I Corps has organized itself as a matrixed organization. For the purposes of administration, mentoring and functional oversight, the Corps staff is under a traditional Napoleonic staff structure. Boards, Bureaus, Centers, Cells and Working Groups (B2C2WGs) are the primary means used by the Corps to achieve synchronization across functional areas. For planning purposes, the headquarters develops a series of B2C2WGs. The B2C2WGs allow the Corps to increase the speed of information sharing, increase cross pollination of ideas, and execute planning more quickly. Staff primaries assign functional representatives to these B2C2WGs to best fit requirements.

In reviewing how the Corps has organized itself, it is important to understand the B2C2WG development process. The overall process consists of 7 steps and is illustrated in Figure 1.

This process begins with the analysis of what information is required by decision makers and planners and the identification of the likely holders of the required information. By developing a detailed understanding of the information and knowledge requirements, we can determine a sequential requirement for inputs and outputs. Understanding these requirements allows for the development of functional groups or B2C2WGs. In step 1 we recognize the requirement for a B2C2WG and document the event requirements. The 7 Minute Drill is used to capture the requirements of the B2C2WGs. This document includes the following topics:

- Name of the B2C2WG
- Lead staff section
- Primary point of contact
Once the 7 Minute Drill for an event is assembled we are ready to move to step 2. In this stage of the process we present the proposed 7 Minute Drills to the Chief of Staff for his approval. Assuming it is approved, the 7 Minute Drill becomes the event’s charter and gives the B2C2WG lead the authority and power to levy resources required to execute the event.

Step 3 is the analysis step. The products identified in the 7 Minute Drill identify the outputs of events that become the corresponding inputs for other B2C2WGs. By analyzing inputs and outputs generated by each B2C2WG captured in the previous step, we are able to map the battle rhythm process which results in a "spider chart" that provides a visual depiction of the linkages and interdependencies between events. An example battle rhythm map "spider chart" is shown in Figure 2.

Step 4: Through analysis of the inputs, outputs and timing of the B2C2WGs depicted in the battle rhythm map, we can identify the Corps' critical path. The Critical Path identifies the key B2C2WGs that provide the primary decision making process with its required inputs and analysis. The point of the battle rhythm map is to depict the interdependencies between the Corps' B2C2WGs and how they relate to each other based on their inputs and outputs. Through analysis, we are able to determine the battle rhythm critical path.

The critical path is defined as the interlinked B2C2WGs that constitute the core events that must be accomplished by the organization to ensure mission success. In the illustrated I Corps example, it was found that the nexus of inputs and outputs for B2C2WGs in the battle rhythm centered on the chain of events that begins the Synchronization Working Group and culminates with commanding general's primary decision making event, the Plans and Operations Board. Through mapping and analysis, it became clear that this chain of events within the battle rhythm, which has been named the Op Synch Process, was the Corps' critical path. A summary
Steps 5 and 6 are the detailed work of scheduling the battle rhythm. **Figure 4** is an example battle rhythm schedule. In this step we arrange the B2C2WGs and ensure that inputs and outputs occur at such a time that follow-on B2C2WGs can take advantage of the inputs provided. Notice that in the samples provided that B2C2WGs that are dependent on each other have the correct timing relationship. Additionally, the battle rhythm is cyclic. The period of the cycle is adjustable to the requirements of the operating environment and one should always strive to maintain balance between operational requirements and the need for proper staff preparation.

As the battle rhythm is scheduled, we work to ensure that adequate time for analysis and thought has been included. If events are packed too closely, the battle rhythm can become a mechanism driven by requirements to generate products. The purpose of the battle rhythm is to discipline the process of planning and execution to encourage creative thought in solving complex problems in the planning process. Products should be the outcome of careful thought and collaboration.

Step 7: An approved battle rhythm is the end result of the process. The battle rhythm is a living document that should be modified to reflect changes in the operating environment, changes in reporting requirements of the higher headquarters and the developing information requirements of subordinate units.

I Corps found that it is critically important to consider the downstream effect of deviations from or change to an existing battle rhythm on subordinate units. The importance of evaluating the impact of changes on subordinate units prior to making any change can't be overstated.

In summary, I Corps found the battle rhythm is the critical tool that disciplines the staff and the planning process. The use of a matrixed organization structure

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**Figure 3:** The critical path is shown in Figure 3.

**Figure 4:** Sample Battle Rhythm Schedule

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and a well planned battle rhythm encourages creativity and increases organizational agility and adaptability. Proper battle rhythm planning is a complex task requiring careful thought and continuous monitoring. I Corps has found the effort has paid dividends that justify the investment.

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**Connected Annual Readership Survey**

After the first year of four issues, we are reviewing the content and style of **Connected**. As a reader of this eNewsletter, your input is valuable. **Connected**’s primary audience is Soldiers, KM practitioners and those who want to learn about KM and improve Soldier readiness, training and performance.

We hope you will spend a few minutes to answer some very brief questions about **Connected**. Please take our survey, which will close on November 13th, 2009.

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**Family Readiness Collaboration is 5-star at Fort Hood**

Units across the Army have submitted nearly 100 AKO-based Family Readiness Group (FRG) Web sites to Army Knowledge Online (AKO) for evaluation. Thus far, only 18 have received the top 5-star rating. BCKS personnel at Fort Leavenworth, in conjunction with BCKS Knowledge Management Advisors (KMAs) at Fort Hood, Texas built 14 of the 18 top rated sites, all at Fort Hood. The criteria for AKO’s 1 to 5-star ratings include: value and amount of information; use of branding; use of space; completion of channels; completion of page; and overall appearance and value to visitors.

The KM story behind the development of these top-rated Web sites reflects the power of collaboration.

In 2004 the Army established full-time employees as Family Readiness Support Assistants (FRSA) to assist commanders and support FRGs. In 2006 the Vice Chief of Staff of the Army directed the FRSA project to be a unit mission. Follow-on actions included the authorization and hiring of FRSAs as government employees, with roughly 90 FRSAs assigned to Fort Hood alone.

Initially, the FRSAs were decentralized and worked independently, with each FRSA working for his or her unit’s commander. There was no functional area position or hierarchy, and each FRSA from Battalion to Corps was hired at the same GS-6 grade-level. There were no established support systems or proponent, and each blazed a trail aided by their own experiences and effort.

An established and organized approach was needed to bring these disparate efforts together. Forces Command FRSA Program Manager Molly Lenk said, "It

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*It has become increasingly helpful to have those post-wide events/fliers/notices magically appear (with no effort on my part)."* FRSA Karol Pinkerton
 Lt. Gen. Rick Lynch, III Corps and Fort Hood commander, answers a question during a quarterly training session with brigade-, battalion- and company-level commanders, their Family Readiness Support Assistants and Family Readiness group leaders. Photo courtesy of Fort Hood Sentinel

was decided there was a need for standardization across the Army." While his supported unit was deployed for the second time, 1st Cavalry Division BCKS KMA David Shaw identified installation-wide problems connecting those FRGs to current knowledge and expertise. Drawing on his own KM experience and background, he applied KM principles to help solve the problem, and the solution became a KM best practice.

In concert with the III Corps lead FRSA Angela Oakley and his III Corps KMA counterpart Dan Elder, the three established a baseline for connecting FRGs using AKO portals. These sites are managed by FRG leaders and championed by LTG Rick Lynch, III Corps and Fort Hood Commander, and his wife, Sarah. The Commanding General declared III Corps as the "Families First" Corps and empowered the team to develop interconnected, online collaboration centers that simultaneously distributed key and relevant knowledge across a network of commanders, Soldiers and family members. The network was designed to be a secure, one-stop shop of official information and communication for family members across the installation.

An Operations Order directed all battalion-level and above units within III Corps to build and maintain these sites. III Corps established a 1 April 2009 deadline to ensure every FRSA from Battalion to Corps had an AKO site with three specific shared channels: announcements and unit specific information; a calendar of on-post events; and a Knowledge Center for files pertinent to Fort Hood families. BCKS personnel at Fort Leavenworth and Fort Hood built AKO FRG sites for every battalion-level and above unit on Fort Hood, including the top 5-star AKO-rated FRG sites. KMA facilitators conducted facilitator training for all FRG leaders which consisted of two, 3-hour sessions. A capstone event for all FRG leaders culminated the training and included the Commanding General and Deputy Commanding Generals' spouses.

The project greatly reduced the amount of duplicative work each FRSAs had to do. According to FRSA Karol Pinkerton, "It has become increasingly helpful to have those post-wide events/fliers/notices magically appear (with no effort on my part)." The over-arching plan included a protected online community for the FRG leaders to share good ideas and lessons learned. As other installations learned of the success at Fort Hood, they soon began adopting some of the techniques applied by the III Corps.

In evaluating the success of the knowledge management effort, project sponsor Angela Oakley noted that the sites "helped teach family members to go to one central location for their information rather than picking-up the phone to ask for help." As more and more families become more familiar with AKO, she predicted "benefits from usage will greatly improve."

Additional support for FRG leaders can be found on the BCKS Leader2Leader (L2L) Network FRSA Professional Forum; "Connecting in Conversation, Discovering New Ideas." You can find more information on III Corps FRSA sites on [AKO](https://www.ako.army.mil) and [BCKS Professional Forums](https://www.bcksmch.us).
What’s Hot in the BCKS Professional Forums!

On **S3-XO**: "24 Months as an XO- What I would tell anyone who asked?" This is a discussion that was initiated by a former Executive Officer of a Brigade Special Troops Battalion who dedicated his time into mentoring up-and-coming XOs on best practices he’s acquired throughout his tour of duty. To date, 30 members have found his writings to be helpful and informative, as he continues to contribute information on a daily basis.

On **KMNet**: "Growing BCKS Forums by 100,000 members; how do we get there?" The question was addressed on 09/02/09, and by 09/08/09 there were 49 replies to the thread. The discussions ranged from AKO rules based emails to incorporating BCKS into the current curriculum within military schools to assist in growing forums. The overall accord was that just having the numbers was not enough; member participation was a must in any forum.

On **Protection NET**: "LEADERSHIP: Why Iraqis Still Fight Like Arabs?" Although posted on Protection Net, this discussion thread has the potential to be extremely helpful on many other forums. Discussion starts with an article that addresses the concern from Iraqi troops as to why the Americans have been so much more effective in finding roadside bombs, and keeping the roads clear of them than the Iraqis, when they all receive the same training and are using the same equipment. The overall consensus, which was also conveyed to the Iraqi Army, was teamwork. It seems as if the Arab community is extremely compartmentalized and is not willing to share discoveries, training, capabilities, and expertise amongst various tribes, units, etc. This has been discovered as the underlying cause of their reduced level of success.

All BCKS Professional Forums require **AKO** access. Most BCKS forums require membership to view or participate in the forums. To join a forum, it’s a simple 3-step process:

2. Select the link to forum you want to join.
3. Then select "Become a Member," fill out the profile and submit.

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PEO C3T Catapults Army into Social Media Arena

*Amy Walker, Symbolic Systems, Inc., PEO C3T MilTech Solution*

With the explosive advent of social media taking the world by storm, Program Executive Office Command, Control, Communications-Tactical (PEO C3T), in close
partnership with Army Knowledge Online and Defense Knowledge Online (AKO/DKO) and Battle Command Knowledge System (BCKS), has stepped into this arena with both guns, offering the Army innovative enterprise solutions for these rapidly evolving forms of collaborative communication.

The organization's milSuite is comprised of three active sites - milBlog, milWiki and milBook. These three products will be integrated together as part of a greater solution to share information and connect with AKO/DKO users.

MilSuite is a product of MilTech Solutions, a PEO C3T Forward Operating Agency. Since its inception more than a year ago, milWiki has surpassed 8,700 pages and 4,000 individual articles. With more than 36,000 users from across the Department of Defense (DoD), milWiki enables disparate programs to prevent costly duplications of effort.

Collaborative tools, such as wikis, allow users to share input and track revisions to living and growing documents, according to Justin Filler, MilTech Solutions enterprise technologies chief. This has already proved effective in synchronizing subject matter experts throughout different communities by providing a method of sharing knowledge and viewing a broad scope of knowledge across organizations.

"A Soldier redeployed from Afghanistan, for example, could access the ATTP (Army Tactics, Techniques and Procedures) for site exploitation operations and make changes and add new material based on firsthand experiences in the country," said Gen. Peter W. Chiarelli, Vice Chief of Staff of the Army, at the 2009 LandWarNet Conference held in August at the Broward County Convention Center, Fort Lauderdale, Fla. "Wikis offer a great new way to get accurate and updated documents to the force more quickly."

The second element of the suite, milBlog, provides quick and easy access to mission-related knowledge and information. It is designed to invite collaboration through discussion and comments on the latest news, events, and announcements that impact the military community.

A brand new initiative that connects the workforce on a more personal level, MilBook is designed to leverage AKO/DKO profile information. Similar to the popular social media site, Facebook, it acts as a central hub to share professional networking capabilities. MilBook enables users to share information through group blogs, discussions, and private wiki documents allowing secure communities of interest to grow and connect with other members across the DoD.

In the future, MilTech Solutions will provide tools to streamline the process of locating subject matter experts and enhance the manner in which staff members communicate with one another on a day-to-day basis. By rolling over the name of a milSuite collaborator, one will be able to access a virtual business card with information on the individual's areas of expertise, professional information and hobbies.

"Soldiers leverage sites like Facebook, Wikipedia, and numerous blogs to communicate with each other and connect with information," said Emerson Keslar, Director of PEO C3T Miltech Solutions, supporting milSuite. "MilSuite bridges the gap of public and private by providing a collection of popular Web 2.0 technologies that are available to the military community through the security of AKO/DKO."
To Blog or To Wiki... That Is The Question

The rule of thumb for blogs or wikis is: "If you wish to collaborate with multiple people a wiki would be more beneficial, however it you just want to get your ideas and opinions available to a large number of people a blog would be more your style."

Why?

A wiki is an online resource that is easily editable by any user from any location as long as they have a connection to the network. Wikis allow for cross referencing or linking to outside sources or other pages in the same wiki. Anyone can edit anyone else’s work. A wiki can equate to true equalized collaboration allowing for input from many individuals with different experiences.

Wiki input will be scrutinized by the wiki community, a community that may be made up of dozens or even thousands of topic experts. The content of a wiki tends to grow rapidly with constant changes and updates. In a nutshell, a wiki is a collaborative website that can be edited by anyone who has access to that site.

Blogs are posts by an individual or organization in chronological order similar to a journal. These posts are editable by the blog author but can be commented on, however most comments may be approved by the blog author. Entries are normally by one author thus knowledge is limited to the opinions of a author. The content of blogs tend to grow slower and may become stale over a period of time.

When to Use a Blog or Wiki?

Wikis work great for creating TTPs, SOPs, and training documents that require the input of multiple individuals who may or may not be geographically dispersed. Blogs are great for publishing the Commander's intent or disseminating announcements for an organization.

ATTP Wiki

Army Tests Use of milWiki to update Doctrine

LTC Steven A. Chambers, Deputy Chief, Army Doctrine Proponency Division, Combined Arms Doctrine Directorate
LTC Brian Ray, Chief, Army Doctrine Proponency Division Combined Arms Doctrine Directorate

"If you've ever read an Army manual and thought you could make it better if only the Army would give you a chance, your moment has arrived." Those were the words a recent Army Times article used to announce a significant new Army initiative. The Combined Arms Center (CAC) has taken a bold step towards moving doctrine forward into the 21st Century. Faced with the reality of a rapidly changing operational environment, the Combined Arms Doctrine Directorate (CADD) and its principle partner in the effort, Battle Command Knowledge System (BCKS), initiated a pilot project that uses a Wiki environment for manuals designated as Army Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures (ATTP). Approximately 200 of these manuals will soon be available on a Wiki pilot program, where they can be edited by any Soldier. In effect, Soldiers can incorporate their knowledge directly into doctrine. As reported by the Associated Press, "The goal is to make the manuals living, breathing documents and not let them become stale. It's also a chance for soldiers and officers who have suggestions for improving the Army's tactics, techniques and procedures."
Initiated by the Commanding General of Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC), GEN Dempsey, CAC launched the project in June. From 22-26 June, CADD hosted a Tiger Team at Fort Leavenworth to develop the Wiki pilot project. Facilitated by BCKS, the event brought in key stakeholders from across the Army including representatives from PEO-C3T, the Army Publishing Directorate, the Intelligence Center of Excellence, the Infantry School, the Center for Army Lessons Learned and others. The team rapidly developed a prototype model for the system on the Army's milWiki site, behind AKO's single sign-on. During the four days of discussions, the team established initial governance rules and developed the path ahead for an initial pilot program for the ATTP Wiki. By 1 July, the team had successfully uploaded seven designated doctrinal field manuals for the pilot phase of the program.

The Army's milWiki suite incorporates the same software technology behind Wikipedia. Although some of the structural elements such as formatting are locked, Soldiers can edit words, sentences, paragraphs, or entire sections of content with changes published instantaneously. The result is doctrine that changes dynamically in response to the experiences of Soldiers in the field. Each ATTP has an assigned proponent, an agency responsible for the content of the manual. Periodically, each of these proponent agencies reviews the ATTP to ensure they remain accurate and consistent with established capstone doctrine and terminology.

Over the course of July and early August, the team evaluated the success of the pilot, making changes to procedures and the overall design of the Wiki site. The team reconvened at Fort Leonard Wood in August to evaluate the initial phase of the pilot program and to develop action plans for the remainder of the initial effort. At the Leonard Wood event, CADD assembled representatives from nine different agencies, all key players in the effort. The team also conducted training on the procedures for uploading and maintaining ATTP in the Wiki. By the conclusion of the event the participants had successfully added another nine ATTP to the Wiki.

The ATTP Wiki effort has generated significant buzz in the media. In a recent front page *NY Times* article about the program, LTG Caldwell, Commanding General of the Combined Arms Center, stated, "by embracing technology, the Army can save money, break down barriers, streamline processes and build a bright future." To ensure the technology is best leveraged to deliver savings and improve processes, CADD and BCKS continue to monitor progress, making adjustments and improvements to every aspect of the pilot program. At the time of this writing, the site has logged nearly 19,000 visits in its short life.

To access the ATTP Wiki pilot, log on to AKO and select "My Doctrine" under the "Self Service" drop down menu near the top left of the page. This will redirect you to the Doctrine page of the Army Publishing Directorate. Once there, select the prominent "ATTP Wiki" button near the top of the page. The pilot project is scheduled to end in late December 2009.
Transforming the Army...
One Brain at a Time

By providing an online environment to stimulate reflection and thought, BCKS has become one of the most cost effective endeavors supporting the Army's effort to build agile and adaptive leaders. Professional Forums do this by enhancing the decision making ability of its members. Forums allow soldiers to leverage the experience of its 140,000 members from their home or office. With planned expansion to a classified network for selected BCKS Professional Forums, Soldiers in theaters of operations will now have access to online discussions.

Professional Forums serve as a catalyst for transforming the Army by providing Soldiers’ the ability to recall both lived and learned experiences, and thereby improve future decision making. Forums create a virtual convergence of people, process and technology to leverage the individual cognitive development of all its members for the benefit of each individual member. Understanding how the brain works, specifically how it uses stored experiences to enable future decision making, is necessary to fully understand how Professional Forums are transforming the Army one brain at a time.

The transfer of memory from short term to long term is enabled by a number of conditions. Repetition and priming are two conditions of memory that Professional Forums leverage in support of improved long term decision making. By bringing the experiences of many Soldiers to a consolidated location and allowing access to those experiences by every Soldier, the Professional Forums give the human brain a virtual and substantial experience base from which to draw.

Professional Forums provide a virtual environment in which to create and replicate memory through the use of on-line discussions, storytelling, and leader challenges. When a Soldier has an experience, especially a combat zone experience, it is not necessary to relive that experience in order to transfer that memory to long term memory. Equally effective is writing about the experience. Through online Professional Forums, BCKS offers Soldiers the ability to "repeat" the experience in a safe environment, ensuring that the experience moves to long term memory and is available for future decision making. Safely repeating the experience through the forum increases Soldiers' ability to apply their experiential learning on future decisions and is critical to the development of adaptability and agility in decision making.

Priming is another cognitive activity that enables the movement of experiences from short to long term memory. Priming prepares the brain to receive and store the sensory input for a new experience, and it improves the brain’s detection, identification and response capacity. Priming does this by allowing the brain to create a route and location for long term memories related to a new experience. With the route and location established, the brain can more efficiently store the new experiences and then recall those experiences in support of decision making. For a Soldier, that new experience could be learning a new Military Occupation Specialty, arriving in a new unit, or an upcoming deployment to a combat zone.

Professional Forums offer a Soldier the ability to build a route and location for new or future experiences by entering into on-line discussions with Soldiers who are in theater and who are willing to relate their experiences. These discussions will form the route and location for all associated personal experiences in the future. The formation of the route and location will enable the storing of personal combat experiences, thereby making it more likely that the Soldier will be able to use the full depth of their experiences in support of all future decision making.

By enabling future decision making, Professional Forums are transforming the way Soldiers adapt to their environment. By enabling a Soldier to leverage the
experience of every Soldier on the Forum, Professional Forums increase the mental agility of its members by bringing to bear the power of the collective experiences of each individual member.

Call for Articles

Are you a KM professional or someone who's just getting involved with KM? Would you like to share a KM experience, Best Practice or TTP with the other Soldiers? Submit an article for publication in CONNECTED. KM is about sharing and exchanging knowledge, and CONNECTED can serve as your platform for doing that.

This is an opportunity for you to discuss your experience with KM and how it helped you or your unit save lives, time or money; prevent injuries; or improve training, a process or a procedure. Many people would have the opportunity to read your article in CONNECTED and it would also be preserved in archived copies of CONNECTED that are available online.

Whether you'd like to contribute an article or suggest a topic for CONNECTED to cover, we hope to hear from you soon at leav-bcks-webmaster@conus.army.mil

Index of Links

Links Disclaimer: The appearance of hyperlinks in this newsletter does not constitute endorsement by the Defense Department, U.S. Army or U.S. Army Command Arms Center of those websites or the information, products or services contained therein. Such links are provided consistent with the stated purpose of this DoD website.

Some NECs (Network Enterprise Centers), formerly DOIM, may have some sites linked from this publication restricted.

- Family Readiness Collaboration is 5-star at Fort Hood
  - AKO: https://www.us.army.mil
- What’s Hot in the BCKS Professional Forums! (AKO account required)
    - Growing of BCKS by 100,000 forum members; how do we get there?: https://forums.bcks.army.mil/secure/CommunityBrowser.aspx?id=876610&lang=en-US
  - AKO Access: https://www.us.army.mil
  - BCKS Professional Forum page: https://forums.bcks.army.mil
PEO C3T Catapults Army into Social Media Arena

- milBlog: [https://blog.kc.us.army.mil](https://blog.kc.us.army.mil)
- milWiki: [https://wiki.kc.us.army.mil](https://wiki.kc.us.army.mil)

- ATTP Wiki Army tests use of milWiki to update doctrine
- AKO: [https://www.us.army.mil](https://www.us.army.mil)

- Links to Other KM Periodicals
  - KM World magazine: [http://www.kmworld.com](http://www.kmworld.com)

**Publisher Information**

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Information provided is intended to help the Army improve Soldier and unit readiness, training and performance. Contents of this publication are not necessarily the official views of, or endorsed by the U.S. Government, the Department of the Army or the U.S. Army Combined Arms Center and Fort Leavenworth. Links throughout CONNECTED will work if you have an active Internet connection. Otherwise, you will need to copy and paste the URLs provided into your browser. Some links require AKO (Army Knowledge Online) access.

Send submissions, suggestions or questions for this publication to CONNECTED, BCKS, 627 McClellan Ave., Bldg. 43, Ft. Leavenworth, KS 66027; or via e-mail to leav-bcks-webmaster@conus.army.mil. We're on AKO/DKO. See us at [https://bcks.army.mil](https://bcks.army.mil). Editor: Bill Ackerly, Phone: (913) 684-6383, Fax: (913) 684-6352.