

BMSW5106 David Beltic Flnal report

by David Beltic

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Knowledge and Information Management Skills for the Workplace

Critical Evaluation and Recommendations for Knowledge Management Systems in Two E-commerce
Organizations

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Critical Evaluation and Recommendations for Knowledge Management Systems in Two E-commerce Organizations

Introduction

Effective knowledge management is crucial for organisations to gain a competitive edge in today's competitive business environment. As businesses strive to recover from the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic, they are also facing challenges such as the Russia/Ukraine war and rising energy costs. Despite these obstacles, organisations can thrive by efficiently managing their knowledge, enabling them to adapt and upgrade their products and services according to the prevailing market conditions. This report aims to conduct a critical evaluation and propose recommendations for the future development of knowledge management systems in two e-commerce organisations: Ocado and Deliveroo.

Brief Introduction to the Organizations

Ocado and Deliveroo are two prominent organisations in the UK e-commerce sector. Ocado, an online grocery retailer, utilises advanced technology and automated processes to provide customers with a seamless shopping experience while licensing its technology to other retailers (Ocado Group Plc, 2022). Deliveroo, a food delivery platform, connects customers with a wide range of local restaurants, leveraging technology and logistics algorithms to ensure efficient and timely deliveries. Both companies operate in competitive markets and have embraced technology to optimise their operations and meet customers' evolving demands (Goel, 2022).

Ocado:

Ocado, founded in 2000, has revolutionised the online grocery industry. It operates as an online retailer, offering a comprehensive range of products, including fresh produce, household essentials, and speciality items. What sets Ocado apart is its cutting-edge technology and automation systems (Marr, 2020). The company has developed state-of-the-art Customer Fulfillment Centers (CFCs) that utilise robotics and advanced logistics to efficiently process and fulfil customer orders. This enables Ocado to provide fast and reliable deliveries, ensuring a seamless shopping experience for customers (Ocado Group Plc, n.d.)

In addition to its online retail operations, Ocado has established strategic partnerships with other grocery retailers worldwide. The company have successfully collaborated with Bon Preu, Casino, Sobeys, Kroger, Coles, Aeon, Auchan Retail Poland, and many more (Ocado Group, n.d.). These strategic partnerships serve as strong validation of our core beliefs and principles. Through these partnerships, Ocado licenses its technology and automated warehousing systems to these retailers, helping them enhance their own online grocery capabilities (Vincent, 2018). This diversification has expanded Ocado's reach and solidified its position as a leading provider of e-commerce solutions in the grocery industry.

Deliveroo:

Deliveroo, founded in 2013, operates as a food delivery platform in more than ten markets worldwide. The platform offers a wide range of cuisines and dining options, allowing customers to browse menus, place orders, and have food delivered to their desired location (Ghosh, 2021). Deliveroo's mobile app and website provide a user-friendly interface, making it convenient for customers to explore and order from a variety of restaurants (Koziej, 2020).

One of Deliveroo's strengths lies in its proprietary logistics algorithm, which optimises delivery routes and ensures efficient and timely deliveries. This algorithm helps streamline the delivery process, enabling Deliveroo to provide quick and reliable service (Woodcock, 2020). The company has also built a strong network of partner restaurants, allowing customers to access a diverse range of culinary choices.

According to Subhash (2020), Deliveroo primarily focuses on food delivery, and the company has been exploring opportunities for employability and expansion. For instance, Deliveroo has ventured into the grocery delivery market by partnering with local grocery stores to offer on-demand grocery deliveries. This move enables Deliveroo to diversify its revenue streams and cater to customers' evolving needs.

Analysis of Knowledge Management Systems

Knowledge management is necessary to maintain a competitive advantage in this knowledge-based global economy (Santoro et al., 2018). Analysis of knowledge management systems involves evaluating and helping a firm to increase its innovativeness and efficiency, plus evaluating the impact of knowledge management initiatives and technologies within an organisation (Santoro et al., 2018). It aims to assess the performance of knowledge management systems and identify areas for improvement.

SWOT Analysis

Strengths

Ocado's knowledge management system benefits from advanced technology and automation. The company utilises robotics and logistics algorithms to streamline processes and enhance efficiency (CNBC, 2020). Additionally, Ocado has established strategic partnerships with other grocery retailers, enabling the licensing of its technology and contributing to expanding and developing its knowledge management system (Glasgow, 2023).

Deliveroo's knowledge management system leverages technology and logistics algorithms to optimise its food delivery operations. The company's proprietary logistics algorithm optimises delivery routes and ensures efficient and timely deliveries using historical data (Sen, n.d.). This technology-driven approach gives Deliveroo a competitive edge in the food delivery market.

Weaknesses

Ocado's reliance on technology and automated systems can be considered a weakness. Any disruptions or malfunctions in these systems could potentially impact the smooth functioning of the company's operations (Herrod, 2017). Furthermore, as a primarily online retailer, Ocado may face challenges in establishing personal connections with customers compared to traditional brick-and-mortar supermarkets.

One of Deliveroo's weaknesses lies in its gig economy model, where delivery riders are classified as independent contractors who must take responsibility for fees and taxes paid to HMRC (Doswell, 2022). This model has raised concerns about workers' rights and employment practices, which can impact the overall effectiveness of the knowledge management system.

Opportunities

The growing demand for online grocery shopping presents an opportunity for Ocado to further enhance and expand its knowledge management system (CNBC, 2020). By continuously investing in technological advancements and expanding its partnerships, Ocado can position itself at the forefront of the e-commerce grocery sector (Iddenden, 2022). Also, the company should consider expanding its operations globally with more grocery retailers to offer its advanced technology solutions.

Deliveroo has opportunities to expand its services and enter new markets. For instance, the company has explored partnerships with grocery stores to offer on-demand grocery deliveries, diversifying its revenue streams. Leveraging customer data and analytics to personalise the user experience and provide targeted promotions is another opportunity for Deliveroo to enhance its knowledge management system. The company can consider expansion of its

services to new markets and collaborating with more restaurants to increase its customer base.

Threats

Ocado faces threats such as increasing competition from both traditional retailers entering the online space and other online grocery delivery services. According to Alonso (2023), the competitive landscape requires Ocado to continuously innovate and differentiate its knowledge management system to stay ahead in the Waitrose market.

According to a report by Research and Markets (2023), Deliveroo operates in a highly competitive market with numerous food delivery platforms, such as Uber Eats, DoorDash, Swiggy, and Zomato, rivalling for market share. The intense competition threatens Deliveroo's market position and emphasises the need to differentiate itself and maintain customer loyalty (Chablani, 2021).



Figure 1: Bargaining power & market share of online food delivery — UK representative

(Source: <https://jitenchablani.medium.com/should-you-invest-in-deliveroo-7cab5dd43f>)

Similarities/differences seen in the organizations.

Similarities

Both Ocado and Deliveroo heavily rely on technology integration within their knowledge management systems. They leverage advanced technology and automation to streamline operations and enhance efficiency.

Both organizations prioritize providing a seamless customer experience. They utilize their knowledge management systems to optimize processes and ensure timely deliveries, catering to the evolving demands of their respective markets.

While their core services differ, both companies have expanded their offerings to include grocery delivery. Ocado, primarily an online grocery retailer, offers a wide assortment of grocery items. Deliveroo, known for restaurant meal delivery, has added groceries to its platform, either partnering with incumbent grocers or offering white-label partnerships (Leonards, 2023).

Ocado and Deliveroo offer mobile applications for customers to place orders, track deliveries, and manage their accounts. The mobile apps provide real-time updates, personalized recommendations, and convenient features for a user-friendly experience (Figure 4 and Figure 5).

Differences

The scope of Ocado can be described as a full basket offering, similar to supermarkets. The company aims to ³⁸provide a comprehensive range of products and services to customers. Ocado focuses on providing fast delivery services to customers. They strive to deliver orders within a few hours of the purchase, allowing customers to receive their groceries or other items on the same day (McKinsey, 2022). On the other hand, Deliveroo operates in the food delivery market, connecting customers with various local restaurants and eateries. In response to the growing demand for grocery delivery services, Deliveroo has expanded its offerings to include groceries. The platform now allows customers to order grocery items from select partner stores and have them delivered alongside their restaurant orders. This expansion into the grocery sector enables Deliveroo to provide a more comprehensive service to its customers, catering to their needs for both prepared meals and essential grocery items (McKinsey, 2022).

Ocado operates as an online grocery retailer, whereas Deliveroo functions as a food delivery platform. Deliveroo's knowledge management system is centered around logistics optimization for efficient food delivery, while Ocado's system encompasses a broader range of activities, including inventory management and fulfillment.

Deliveroo operates under a gig economy model, where delivery riders are classified as independent contractors. In contrast, Ocado's workforce structure is more traditional, consisting of employees who manage various aspects of online grocery operations.

Critical Evaluation of Knowledge Management Systems

Both Ocado and Deliveroo have implemented knowledge management systems to enhance their operations and gain a competitive edge. However, a critical evaluation of their systems reveals certain strengths and areas for improvement.

Ocado's knowledge management system demonstrates significant strengths. The integration of digitalization and automation allows for efficient inventory management, order processing,

and fulfillment (Lee et al., 2017). The strategic partnerships formed by Ocado to license its technology Ocado Smart Platform ('OSP') to other grocery retailers have contributed to the expansion and development of its knowledge management system (Ocado Group Plc, 2022). However, there may be potential weaknesses associated with the heavy reliance on technology. Any disruptions or malfunctions in the system could have a significant impact on Ocado's operations (Herrod, 2017). Additionally, while Ocado focuses on delivering a comprehensive range of products, it may face challenges in establishing personal connections with customers compared to traditional brick-and-mortar supermarkets.

As stated by a report of AWS, Deliveroo's knowledge management system leverages technology and logistics algorithms that run on AWS (Amazon Web Services). Its purpose is to optimize food delivery operations. The proprietary logistics algorithm enables efficient delivery route planning and timely deliveries. However, the gig economy model employed by Deliveroo, where delivery riders are classified as independent contractors, poses challenges related to worker rights and employment practices (Green, 2021). This could impact the overall effectiveness of the knowledge management system and the delivery experience for customers.

Knowledge Management Value Chain

According to Ermine (2013), the knowledge management value chain provides a framework for understanding the key activities involved in managing organizational knowledge. Both Ocado and Deliveroo engage in various stages of the knowledge management value chain.

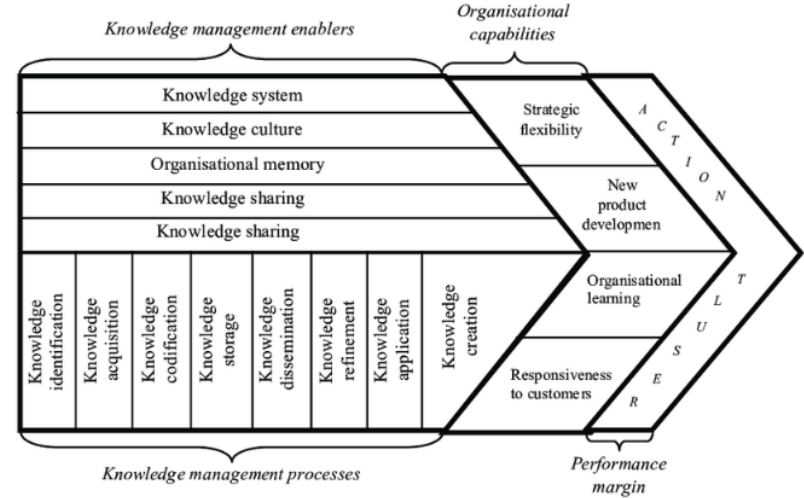


Figure 2 Knowledge Management Value Chain

(Source: https://www.researchgate.net/figure/Knowledge-Value-Chain_fig1_341980810)

Knowledge Acquisition

Knowledge acquisition refers to the process of obtaining, collecting, and assimilating new knowledge or information. It involves gathering data, facts, experiences, or insights from various sources, such as individuals, documents, databases, or other systems. Knowledge acquisition is essential for individuals and organizations to expand their knowledge base, learn new skills, solve problems, make informed decisions, and improve overall performance (Easterby-Smith, 2011).

Both organizations acquire knowledge through different means. Ocado gathers knowledge from customer interactions, supplier collaborations, and its own research and development efforts. Customer interactions provide insights into their preferences and needs, supplier collaborations offer industry expertise, and research and development efforts contribute innovative ideas (Kamalaldin et al., 2020). On the other hand, Deliveroo acquires knowledge through partnerships with local restaurants, customer feedback, predictive technology and data analytics (Deliveroo Plc, 2021). This is similar to obtaining puzzle pieces from different perspectives. Partnering with local restaurants provides insights into their operations and culinary expertise, customer feedback offers valuable information on their preferences and satisfaction, and data analytics provide a comprehensive view of trends and patterns (Siddiqui, 2023).

Knowledge Storage

Knowledge storage is organizational memory, it involves capturing, cataloging, and storing explicit knowledge (documented information, data, procedures, best practices) as well as tacit knowledge (personal insights, expertise, experiences) in a structured format. The purpose of knowledge storage is to make knowledge easily accessible, searchable, and retrievable, enabling individuals or organizations to preserve, reuse, and share knowledge effectively (Easterby-Smith, 2011).

Ocado utilizes Ocado Smart Platform to store and manage knowledge, including customer preferences, inventory data, and logistics information (Ocado Group Plc, *n.d*). Deliveroo stores knowledge related to customer preferences, restaurant partnerships, and delivery logistics in its systems.

Knowledge Transfer

Knowledge transfer is the process of transmitting knowledge from one individual or entity to another, facilitating learning, collaboration, and innovation (Easterby-Smith, 2011).

Ocado disseminates knowledge through its technology licensing agreements with other grocery retailers, sharing its expertise in online grocery operations. Deliveroo propagates knowledge to its network of partner restaurants, providing insights on customer preferences and delivery optimization (Pang1 et al., 2022).

Knowledge Application

Knowledge application refers to the practical utilization of acquired knowledge to solve problems, make decisions, innovate, improve processes, and achieve desired outcomes in organizations (Easterby-Smith, 2011).

Ocado applies knowledge to enhance its online grocery operations, improving inventory management, order fulfillment, and customer service. Deliveroo applies knowledge to optimize food delivery logistics, ensuring efficient and timely deliveries for customers.

Knowledge Creation

Knowledge creation is the process of generating new insights, ideas, and information by combining existing knowledge, experiences, and creativity, leading to the development of new knowledge, and understanding (Easterby-Smith, 2011)

Both organizations engage in knowledge creation through continuous innovation and learning. Ocado invests in research and development to enhance its technology and automation systems. Deliveroo explores new service offerings, such as grocery delivery, and leverages customer data to create personalized experiences.

Overall, both Ocado and Deliveroo demonstrate effective knowledge management practices through their engagement in various stages of the knowledge management value chain. However, there are areas for improvement, such as addressing potential weaknesses related to technology reliance (Ocado) and ensuring fair employment practices (Deliveroo).

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Information Technology Systems

Information Technology (IT) Systems play a crucial role in supporting and interacting with knowledge management systems. Ocado and Deliveroo deploy IT systems within their respective businesses.

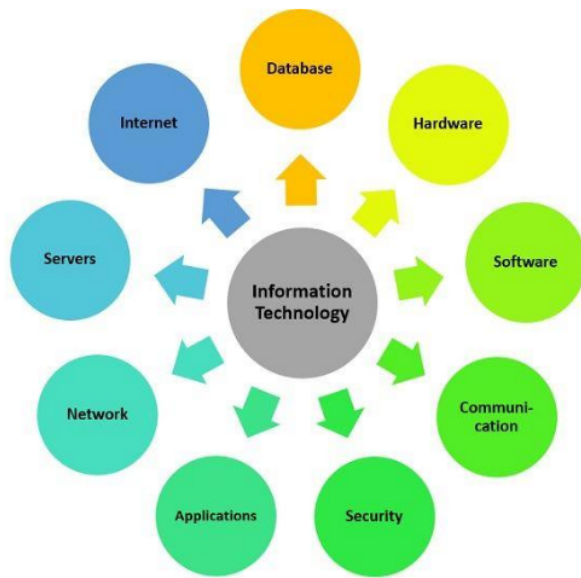


Figure 3 Information Technology Systems

(Source: <https://beingintelligent.com/information-technology.html>)

Ocado: Ocado's knowledge management system is supported by a range of Information Technology Systems. These systems are integral to the efficient management and processing of data and information. Some key IT systems utilized by Ocado include:

1. Warehouse Management System (WMS): Ocado uses an advanced WMS to enhance warehouse operations, including inventory management, order fulfillment, and logistics. The WMS optimizes the storage, retrieval, and packing processes to ensure efficient operations (Ocado Group, *n.d.*).
2. E-commerce Platform: Ocado operates ³¹ an e-commerce platform that enables customers to browse and purchase groceries online. The platform integrates with inventory management systems, order processing systems, and payment gateways to provide a seamless online shopping experience (Ocado Technology, 2022).
3. Mobile Applications: According to Ocado's website can be seen that Ocado offers mobile applications for both iOS and Android platforms. These apps allow customers to browse products, place orders, choose delivery time and date, track deliveries, and manage their accounts (Sharma, 2021). The mobile apps provide real-time updates and notifications to keep customers informed about their orders.

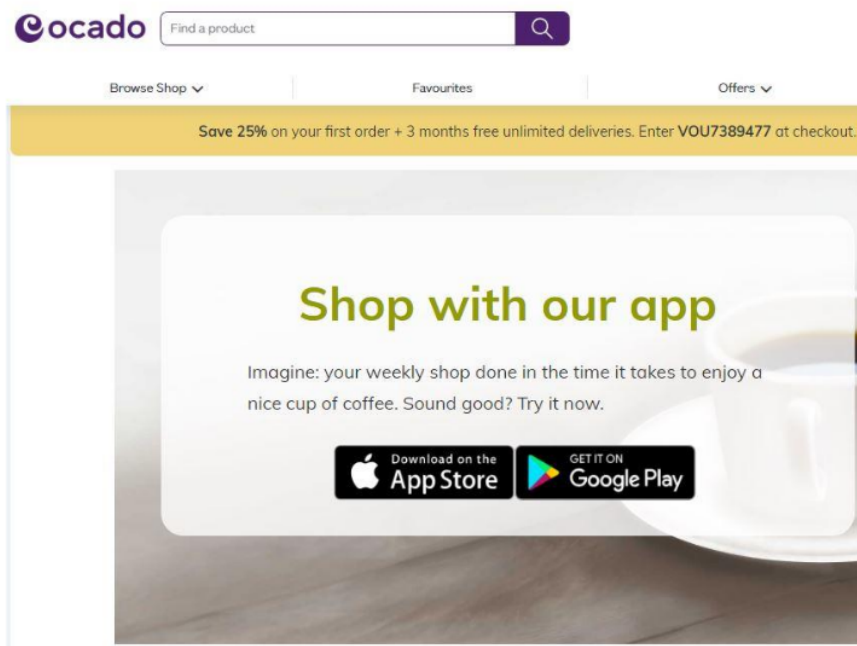


Figure 4: Ocado's applications for both iOS and Android

(Source: <https://www.ocado.com/content/the-ocado-app-122419>)

Deliveroo: Deliveroo also relies on Information Technology Systems to support its knowledge management system and food delivery operations. Some key IT systems utilized by Deliveroo include:

1. **Delivery Dispatch System:** Deliveroo employs a delivery dispatch system that optimizes delivery routes based on real-time data, traffic conditions, and order priorities. This system ensures efficient and timely food deliveries, enhancing customer satisfaction.
2. **Mobile Application and Website:** Deliveroo's mobile application and website serve as interfaces for customers, allowing them to place orders, track deliveries, and provide feedback. These platforms rely on IT systems to handle order processing, payment transactions, and customer communication. Moreover, same as Ocado, Deliveroo offers applications for both iOS and Android platforms.

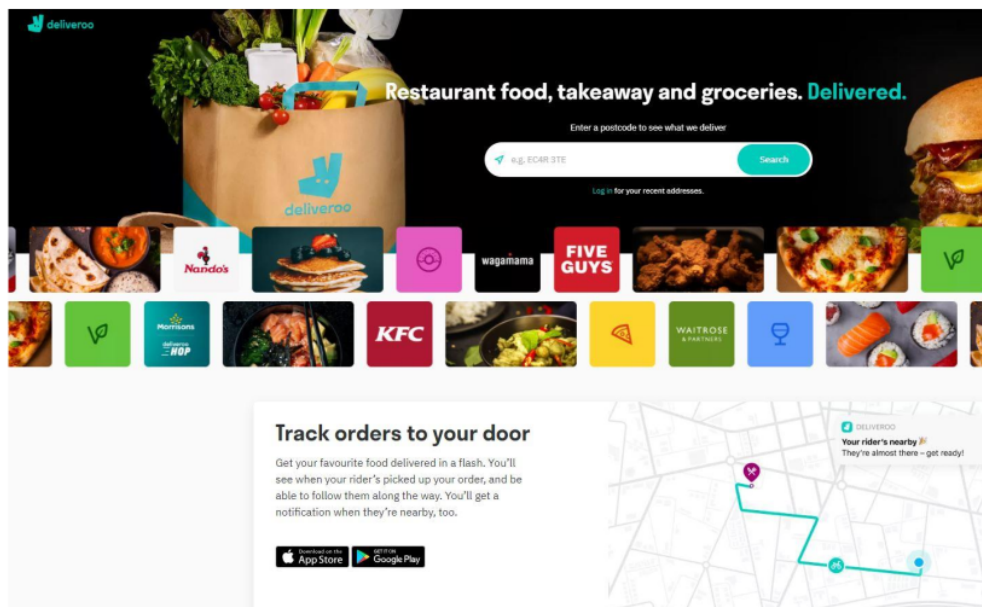


Figure 5 Deliveroo's Interface Website and application iOS and Android

(Source: <https://deliveroo.co.uk/>)

3. Data Analytics and Insights: Deliveroo leverages data analytics tools to analyse customer preferences, delivery patterns, and market trends. These insights inform decision-making processes, such as optimizing delivery zones, identifying popular cuisine choices, and facilitating targeted marketing campaigns.

By deploying these Information Technology Systems, both Ocado and Deliveroo enhance their knowledge management systems, improve operational efficiency, and provide a seamless experience for customers and partner restaurants.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the effective management of knowledge is crucial for organizations operating in the e-commerce sector like Ocado and Deliveroo. Both companies have implemented knowledge management systems to enhance their operations and gain a competitive advantage.

Ocado's knowledge management system benefits from advanced technology and automation, allowing for efficient inventory management, order processing, and fulfillment. The company's strategic partnerships and licensing of its technology to other grocery retailers contribute to the development and expansion of its knowledge management system. However, potential

weaknesses include the heavy reliance on technology and the challenge of establishing personal connections with customers in the online grocery space.

Deliveroo's knowledge management system focuses on optimizing food delivery operations through technology and logistics algorithms. The company's proprietary logistics algorithm enables efficient route planning and timely deliveries. However, the gig economy model and the classification of delivery riders as independent contractors pose challenges related to worker rights and employment practices, which may affect the overall effectiveness of the knowledge management system.

Recommendations

Based on the evaluation of Ocado and Deliveroo's knowledge management systems, the following recommendations can be made to support the future development of their systems:

1. Both Ocado and Deliveroo should invest in advanced data analytics capabilities to extract valuable insights from customer data, delivery patterns, and market trends. This will enable them to make data-driven decisions, optimize operations, and provide personalized experiences to customers.
2. Encourage a culture of continuous learning and knowledge sharing within the organizations. ²⁸ Implement knowledge-sharing platforms, mentorship programs, and training initiatives to facilitate the exchange of ideas and best practices among employees.
3. Both organizations should prioritize continuous innovation to stay ahead in their respective markets. Ocado should focus on differentiating its knowledge management system from competitors, while Deliveroo should explore new service offerings and collaborations to expand its market presence.
4. Both organizations should closely monitor the competitive landscape and adapt their knowledge management systems accordingly. They should stay updated on industry trends, competitor strategies, and customer preferences to stay ahead of the market and continuously improve their systems..
5. Recognize the importance of employee engagement and well-being in knowledge management. Create a positive work environment, provide opportunities for skill development, and ensure fair employment practices to attract and retain top talent.
6. Regularly assess the performance and effectiveness of knowledge management systems. ³⁴ Gather feedback from employees, customers, and stakeholders to identify areas for improvement and implement necessary enhancements.

7. Monitor market trends, customer preferences, and technological advancements closely. Stay agile and adapt the knowledge management systems accordingly to remain competitive in the dynamic e-commerce landscape.
8. Ocado and Deliveroo should prioritize data security and privacy in their knowledge management systems. They should implement vigorous measures to protect customer data and comply with relevant data protection regulations.

By implementing these recommendations, Ocado and Deliveroo can enhance their knowledge management systems, drive innovation, and remain at the forefront of the e-commerce sector, ensuring sustained growth and success in the future.

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