What is Knowledge Base

A knowledge base is a compilation of structured information with the purpose of helping people identify and solve issues through content searching and retrieval or be informed about the product or service. The knowledge base is a very important component of knowledge management.

Knowledge base with structured information makes it easier for content to be found and used. The most common types of information provided by a knowledge base are frequently asked questions (FAQs), how-to instructions, installation procedures, troubleshooting guidelines and white paper content.

Information available on a knowledge base is different from other forms of documentation. First, a knowledge base topic focuses on only one idea because this makes the information easy to understand and find. Second, the length of the knowledge base topic is short as it focuses more on the "how" instead of the "what". Third, knowledge base topics are presented through a conversational style to provide the reader with an informal, direct and effective way of getting the information.

Searching and retrieving content from a knowledge base is the most common method of delivering information to the reader. User-friendly knowledge bases display the "Search" box in the center of the page and give simple hints on how to perform a search that yields useful results. Presentation of the search results is also an important characteristic of a knowledge base because the information becomes very noticeable to the user at a glance.

A truly effective and useful knowledge base is characterized by easily searchable information, solid structured content and an ability to provide accurate and usable content where the reader is able to make sense of the information and resolve issues. The effectiveness of the knowledge base is also characterized by the timeliness of its content and its ability to provide a specific solution to a specific issue.