9 Content Types you can add to your knowledge base

Do you know that a whopping 90% of people use customer service and experience when deciding whether to buy from a business? This reinforces the importance of enabling top-notch customer service and boosting customer self-service options. **But how?**

Of course, a knowledge base comes in handy to solve this problem. But building a knowledge base can be challenging. There could be confusion about which content serves as the best choice to make the knowledge base as helpful. According to statistics, most customers prefer getting the answers to their queries independently. Hence, it would be a wise thought to encourage self-service among your customers. A customer could benefit significantly from different types of content or data about a product or service of the organization.

What is a knowledge base?

A knowledge base is a self-serve library of information about your company. Knowledge bases provide FAQs and troubleshooting guides to help the team, as well as explanations of products. The content you put on your knowledge base depends on many factors, such as the audience type and the functioning of the knowledge base.

Let us have a look into both these factors.

Types of Knowledge Bases based on audience

As an organization, you might come across different types of knowledge bases. One such knowledge base is intended for machines to learn from. Another knowledge base is for people to use and learn from.

On the other hand, knowledge bases meant for people could be aimed at external or internal audiences. Let us consider an electronics company with a customer-focused knowledge base for troubleshooting and maintenance instructions. It could also have an internal knowledge base for its employees to understand company policies and procedures.

Some companies even maintain a knowledge base that serves as a source of information and guidance to their customers and the general public interested in the field or product.

Types of Knowledge Base based on the functioning

Some knowledge bases use the benefits of artificial intelligence to increase the interactive quotient for their users. The AI-based knowledge base can efficiently respond to user input and interact with the users.

Other knowledge bases function just like simply indexed encyclopedias, while some knowledge bases are machine-readable and store the content in a system-readable format. The solutions are based on automated deductive reasoning, where if a user enters a particular query, the software itself narrows down the solution instantly.

Knowledge bases can generate automated responses to assist your team in any field. They provide a means to store and share information. Knowledge management improves your organization's ability to track and manage knowledge, thereby growing its competitive advantage, leading to success in business endeavors.

Why do you need a knowledge base?

As the world of technology evolves, knowledge will only be scattered to different places. Knowledge will get trapped in emails and forum discussions, or even stuck in the mind of a single person. You need to aggregate your knowledge into one centralized system.

We live in a connected world where people expect quick and easy access to reliable information. They are unwilling to conduct a phone call, send an email, or file a support ticket for the answer they need- which is why it is important for knowledge bases to be deep and unambiguous.

What type of data is provided in a knowledge base?

Often, the content in a knowledge base will be created by subject matter experts (people who know a lot about that specific subject/topic). For instance, a knowledge base could have explanations of how products work, which would be created by someone with extensive product-related knowledge. Knowledge bases may include FAQs, manuals, runbooks, and any other necessary information for your team members to help them do their jobs better.

For a knowledge base meant for the customers, let us look at some star content types that can be used to enrich it.

Content types you can add to your Knowledge Base

We are often asked what are the best/ideal content candidates that can be added to a customer support knowledge base. The most valuable customer-centric content types you can add to your knowledge base are listed below:

1. Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

The most popular or commonly asked questions regarding an organization's products or services are listed in this section. Even if you see Amazon product pages, each product has a list of FAQs that customers can browse before purchasing.

The concept of FAQ is to benefit from the fact that many people have already asked the same questions that an average customer ponders before hitting the 'add to cart button. Each question must have a short, precise, and straightforward answer. FAQs are usually listed in a section of the website of every organization.

But as the company's product offering or reach increases, there might be many more FAQs the company needs to address. Therefore, FAQs can be very well included in the knowledge base to encourage customer self-service.

2. Troubleshooting Guides

What is troubleshooting? Troubleshooting is the process of carrying out specific steps toward solving a problem with an appliance or piece of equipment.

The process of troubleshooting consists of 4 stages, namely,

Awareness
Confirmation
Identification
Resolution

A troubleshooting guide helps your customer identify the problem in their system, product, or application and fix it by following the steps listed. Troubleshooting guides are essential for product-based companies and are a must-have in their knowledge base.

3. User Manual or User Guide

A user manual is a guide that talks about how your customer can operate your product. It is a detailed walk-through of your product through which the customer can understand how your product can be used.

User manuals or guides are small handbooks generally accompanied by electronic appliances such as microwave ovens, DVD players, cell phones, etc.

Often, a customer may lose these physical manuals in unpacking or moving. However, they can easily browse your knowledge base and find the appropriate steps to operate their appliance at such times.

4. Runbooks

A runbook is a compilation of all the routine procedures and operations to be carried out by the system administrator or the operator. In organizations with computer networks or IT departments, the system administrators can benefit from runbooks as a reference. Runbooks can be provided in a physical book form as well.

> **What is a runbook?**
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> A runbook is a detailed "how-to" guide for completing a commonly repeated task or procedure within a company's IT

operations process. Runbooks are created to provide everyone on the team—new or experienced—the knowledge and steps to quickly and accurately resolve a given issue.

5. Glossaries

A glossary is a list of definitions of terms that may appear to be newly introduced, specialized, or uncommon in the user manual or guide. Usually included at the end of a book, glossaries can be helpful for customers looking to understand specific terms better.

6. Introductory Articles

The introductory article is the first section of a book, essay, or article and states the purpose and goals of the entire write-up. The body and conclusion follow it. It helps customers understand what the write-up is all about and what they will accomplish by the end of the write-up.

7. Step-By-Step Process Guides

Every product or appliance has many functions. Each function requires a series of steps to be followed. The step-by-step process guides help outline the entire process of accomplishing a particular function or activity. It is a precise, easy-to-understand document that helps the customer perform a specific task or activity.

8. Video Demonstrations

A video demo is a visual walk-through of the 'how-to' guide. It can be a screen recording or a video recording of the step-by-step procedure to accomplish a specific task related to the product. The average length of an effective video demo is close to 2 minutes. A lengthy video demo will make customers lose interest and skip the content altogether.

9. Specification or Data Sheets

A specification sheet lists all the specification details of a project or product. It helps the customer understand the product's configuration, functions, and operation. These sheets follow a strict taxonomical standard

Conclusion

The process of collecting and organizing information into a proper form is called knowledge management. And it is only through knowledge management that your knowledge base will become helpful to your readers.

PHPKB, a leading knowledge base, can help you can easily add all of the above content types and make them accessible to your customers worldwide. You can also try out a FREE DEMO or 30-day TRIAL or choose from the plans we offer.

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