

Original Knowledgebase

Pages about the original Knowledgebase project.

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What is the purpose of this knowledgebase?

The purpose of this knowledgebase is to share questions and answers among the dozens of Help Desks we have at UCLA. Some of our technology questions are specific to our departments, but our guess is that there are a large number of common questions. We believe that as the campus computing infrastructure becomes more and more interdependent, there is great value in sharing what we learn and know.

- Target Audience
 - First, our various help desk staff and student workers – if we don't use it no one will.
 - Second, campus groups and organizations such as BruinTech, Campus Web Publishers, UCLA Programmers Exchange, etc.
 - Staff, students and faculty – once we have enough in here that it's worth sharing.
- Use Cases
 - share writeups or tutorials
 - short FAQs to help with accuracy and training of student help desk workers
 - advertise obscure information, but useful, info on your own website
 - share your bookmarks and resources as you learn new technology
 - after a three hour search through MSDN, Google, or Stack Overflow, save the solution to your obscure problem so you and others can find it easily the next time
 - answers can be refined by others on campus to elaborate or make them clearer (and you can be notified if an answer changes)
- More Info
 - For the original writeup of the project, use cases, etc. See the project page at http://www.sscnet.ucla.edu/ssc/KnowledgeBase_Notes_from_CourseManagementConsortiumW

How will we measure success of this knowledgebase?

There will probably be many criteria for measuring the success of this UCLA Knowledgebase experiment. But the first one is how many people contribute to it and how often. Here are some numbers to start measuring that. For now they'll be added manually.

Date	5/1/2006	5/8/2006	5/15/2006	5/22/2006	5/29/2006	6/5/2006	6/19/2006	Articles with Answers
	110	155	306	363	434	458	488	Posts since last date — 45 151 57 71 24 30
	Articles w/o Answers	3	4	2	2	2	2	Contributors 28 29 42 51 64 69 74
	Contributed more than 5	4	4	5	9	11	13	15 16
	Days since start	31	38	45	52	59	66	80
	Articles/day	3.5	4	6.8	6.9	7.4	6.9	6.1

The database was announced to the Help Desk/CSC Meeting on April 12, 2006. At that time it had 23 answers and roughly 10 contributors.

Please suggest other measures of success. Remember the first target audience is the staff of the 43 Help Desks at UCLA.

Possible Evaluation Criteria

- relevancy of articles as judged by user ranking (if we add that feature)
- number of queries per day
- number of new articles per day
- number of regular contributors
- percentage of help desks that contribute regularly
- percentage of help desks that use it for queries regularly
- anecdotal evidence of knowledgebase success

Where can I find out more about this knowledgebase?

This UCLA Knowledgebase is being planned and built as an experiment first in cooperation between various help desks on campus, and then later as a resource for the entire campus. Here are some introductory questions and answers.

- [What is the purpose of this Knowledgebase?](#)
- [Finding things in this Knowledgebase](#)
- [Partial search terms don't work without wildcard](#)
- [What should be posted?](#)
- [Who can post?](#)
- [How do I post a new article in Knowledgebase?](#)
- [What to do about duplicate articles](#)
- [Etiquette](#)
- [Contributor First Steps](#)
- [Reporting bugs or feature requests](#)
- [How will we measure success?](#)
- [Knowledgebase Timeframe](#)
- [How do I format my submission?](#)
- [How the Knowledgebase searches](#)
- [What to do if kb.ucla.edu search isn't working](#)
- [How to delete an article](#)
- [How to delete an attachment](#)

For more information see the [Knowledgebase Project Page](#)

UCLA Knowledgebase

Presentation at UCCSC 2010

Knowledgebase Features

- Anyone employed by UCLA can edit any article, or add new ones.
- Or you can post questions.
- WYSIWYG editing, easy to learn.
- We keep track of all edits by name, and now you can diff between versions to see what changed.
- Can search, or browse by tags, authors or dates.
- RSS and email notifications.

Vision (pardon the jargon)

- this is an experiment in collaboration – attempt to get our 48 help desks to share information
- crowdsourcing – we have a lot of technical people across campus. We believe there is great value in sharing what we all learn and know.
- Institutional Memory
- opportunity costs – not sharing information costs the next person who has to discover it on their own
- low admin overhead – any employee at UCLA can edit any article, but we keep track
- zero based budget – except for some Nanos we gave away the first year.
- social networking – find experts on campus (if they post)
- folksonomy – of course it has a tagging system, try Browse by Tags <https://kb.ucla.edu/tags>

Guidelines

- Avoid private info or sensitive information. Anything you post is public. So don't post if you want it private.
- Any UCLA employee can edit any post. But you can set it to email you on any changes.
- If you absolutely don't want anyone to change it, put the info on your own site, and link to it from the KB.
- If you see something wrong, fix it. Or contact someone who can.

Stats

- Started April 1, 2006 (No joke)
- As of today, 01/27/2012, 1450 Articles by 240 Bruins
- Article with most edits (44): <https://kb.ucla.edu/link/240>
- That's also the article with the most contributors (22)
- Next, with 8 contributors is <https://kb.ucla.edu/link/910>
- 16 articles have 5 or more contributors.

N cnt url 1 22 <https://kb.ucla.edu/link/240> 2 8 <https://kb.ucla.edu/link/910> 3 7
<https://kb.ucla.edu/link/220> 4 7 <https://kb.ucla.edu/link/723> 5 7 <https://kb.ucla.edu/link/298> 6 7
<https://kb.ucla.edu/link/443> 7 7 <https://kb.ucla.edu/link/327> 8 6 <https://kb.ucla.edu/link/863> 9 6
<https://kb.ucla.edu/link/834> 10 6 <https://kb.ucla.edu/link/96> 11 5 <https://kb.ucla.edu/link/187> 12 5
<https://kb.ucla.edu/link/532> 13 5 <https://kb.ucla.edu/link/144> 14 5 <https://kb.ucla.edu/link/792> 15 5
<https://kb.ucla.edu/link/1048> 16 5 <https://kb.ucla.edu/link/140>

- 30 people have posted 10 or more new articles.
- 49 people have posted 5 or more new articles.
- 51 people have posted 1 new article.
- To get into the Top 10, you now need 26 articles.
- 208 people have contributed to 1 or more articles
- 67 people have contributed to 5 or more articles.
- 45 people have contributed to 10 or more articles.

- 18 people have contributed to 20 or more articles.
- 1571 days since KB went live.
- Which is roughly 1122 working days (not counting vacations or furloughs, so with 1255 articles, we're doing better than one per working day. But that's not nearly enough.
- So with 1435 Programmers and Computer Support people on campus, not counting student workers, and only 208 contributors so far, we're still at the early stages of this experiment.
- The last time we gave away a prize was Oct. 13, 2006 . (iPod Nanos in random drawings.)
- 634 articles since then.
- Little known fact. You can upload files along with an article. 7 articles have file uploads

N cnt url 1 2 <https://kb.ucla.edu/articles/locally-installing-cclemoodle> 2 2

<https://kb.ucla.edu/link/1157> 3 2 <https://kb.ucla.edu/link/1260> 4 1 <https://kb.ucla.edu/link/1197> 5 1

<https://kb.ucla.edu/link/1213> 6 1 <https://kb.ucla.edu/link/298-apache-multiple-virtual-host-configuration-for-moodle> 7 1 <https://kb.ucla.edu/link/1158>

Use Cases

- share writeups or tutorials
 - <https://kb.ucla.edu/link/1010>
- find out if anyone else is using something
 - <https://kb.ucla.edu/link/532>
 - <https://kb.ucla.edu/link/1070>
 - <https://kb.ucla.edu/link/1217>
 - <https://kb.ucla.edu/link/528>
- short FAQs to help with accuracy and training of student help desk workers
- advertise university resources
 - <https://kb.ucla.edu/link/89>
 - <https://kb.ucla.edu/link/581>
- document data sources
 - <https://kb.ucla.edu/link/1351>
 - <https://kb.ucla.edu/link/1350>
 - <https://kb.ucla.edu/link/1353>

- <https://kb.ucla.edu/link/134>
- add links to content on your own website
 - <https://kb.ucla.edu/link/499>
- share your bookmarks and resources as you learn new technology
- build a custom set of questions for certain groups
 - e.g. new instructors or TAs (including info on VPN access to Library resources, etc.)
 - <https://kb.ucla.edu/link/766>
 - <https://kb.ucla.edu/link/67>
- compile lists of campus resources
 - <https://kb.ucla.edu/link/327>
- get help from colleagues in answering support questions
 - <https://kb.ucla.edu/questions>
- summarize threads from mailing lists – Harry Mangalam from UCI has been a great source, letting me post these UCCSC listserv posts with his permission.
 - <https://kb.ucla.edu/link/1205>
 - <https://kb.ucla.edu/link/999>
- experiments
 - <https://kb.ucla.edu/link/240>
- after a three hour search through MSDN, save the solution to an obscure problem so you and others can find it easily the next time
- (potentially) daily reports can be made to see what questions are most popular
- answers can be refined by others on campus to elaborate or make them clearer

Biggest Problems

- Participation
- Cleanup of old articles.

Ideas for Future

- have a photo of someone, with a short blurb saying how they use the knowledgebase, and

their name and dept on the bottom, with a link to More Info, where they get a paragraph to give more detail. Below this, we could have an Add Yourself link, which lets any UCLA person upload an photo, and give their example. It then waits for an approval before it gets put into the rotation. This would simultaneously highlight techs across campus, and excite interest in who is going to be showing today. The key question is can we get enough people willing to let their photo go up? And do we want to limit this to contributors?

- UC-wide? Would that make sense?
- Managers need to tell their help desk staff to check the KB first. And if the answer isn't there, add it when you learn it.

Helpdesk Consortium and the UCLA Knowledgebase

UCLA HDC (<http://www.hdc.ucla.edu>) – PROMOTING IT COLLABORATION at UCLA

- Share expertise, solutions, ideas, and resources to increase efficiency
- Increase responsiveness to end-users and customers
- Encourage professional development for IT Staff

Helpdesks

- Provide orientation and ongoing training for IT staff
 - <https://kb.ucla.edu/link/67>
- Improve customer experience in a multi-help desks environment
- Off-Hour Support
- Sharing up-to-date IT issues
- Tapping UCLA's Cognitive Surplus and social media collaboration
 - Cognitive Surplus: Creativity and Generosity in a Connected Age, by Clay Shirky
 - The idea of "how the networked world allows people to form leaderless groups that still do useful work." <http://www.wired.com/wiredscience/2008/08/clay-shirky-is/>
- New Feature in KB 2.0
 - The ability to post questions

- RSS feed to website or email

Challenges

- Continue to promote usage and adoption
- Unanswered questions
- Accuracy of answers
- Obsolete articles

Thank you to Jackie Reynolds for all the support, and the iPod Nanos. And thank you to everyone who has contributed. And thanks to Timothy Ebertowski and Tom Phelan for letting us work on this.

Comments

Please add suggestions and comments here.

Are there any prizes for posting to the Knowledgebase?

This article is posted for historical purposes.

Here's our first contest:

"We Want Your Questions" raffle

Date: May 10, 2006 11:23:36 AM PDT

Dear Help Desk Consortium members: Please take advantage of this fun and valuable opportunity. Also please share this email with all your student workers (they are also eligible and our first raffle will take place before the end of the school year). If you can think of others in your area who might have Q&As for the KnowledgeBase, feel free to include them as well. Good luck to all of you. Help make our KnowledgeBase a terrific tool for yourselves and the entire campus!!

Thanks. Jackie Reynolds

We Want Your Questions (and Answers)!!

(Sorry if you've seen this more than once.)

The UCLA Knowledgebase (<https://kb.ucla.edu>) is up and running (in beta).

If you aren't familiar with the UCLA Knowledgebase, see this introduction.

<https://kb.ucla.edu/link/7>.

The good news is that 155 answers have been posted so far, by 29 people.

The bad news is that most of those people have only submitted one or two questions. Since we want you to get in the habit of posting questions and answers all the time, we came up with the idea of a raffle.

Starting with the initial announcement of the KB (April 12th) until May 30th, we will enter your name into our raffle for EACH question/answer you submit to the KB. If you submit 10 entries to the KB by 5/30/06, you will have 10 chances to win our raffle. And what will you win? A brand new iPod Nano (1GB)courtesy of BruinTech!!

So start thinking about the questions that pop up with any regularity from your clients. When a person calls with a question, make it a habit to submit that question and your answer to the KB while it's fresh in your mind. If you have a particular strength in an area, write up a related procedure for us. Or, if you just want to bookmark a particularly good resource, add it to the knowledgebase. Help us build our Knowledgebase!

We'll do another raffle for summer submissions. But don't miss out on this one. The more you submit, the better your chances.

If you have any suggestions, there is a link to a Forum, after you login to <https://kb.ucla.edu> where we can all discuss strategies, request features and generally talk about the knowledgebase. We're particularly interested in how to make this more useful, and how we can get more people to contribute answers.

If you have any questions, contact Jackie Reynolds or Mike Franks.

Notes:

- Jackie and Mike are disqualifying themselves from the raffle.
- In this contest, we're focusing on new questions with answers. So editing other people's answers doesn't get you points for the raffle. Although please fix things if you find a mistake.

Thanks,

Mike Franks, Social Sciences Computing

Jackie Reynolds, AIS/BruinTech

Knowledge Base Changes for March 2017

Keith Rozett updated this Knowledge Base after a 7-year hiatus.

The biggest change was the ability to review existing articles.

Review Articles feature

- Logged-in users are encouraged to check existing articles for correctness, broken links, etc.
- A Review Articles link exists on the home page. This takes the user to a list of the 10 oldest articles that have not been checked.
- When viewing any article, logged-in users are able to take 3 new actions: mark the article as reviewed, edit it, or mark it as deleted.
 - If the article's information is correct and all the links work, the user should mark it as reviewed. The review time and name of the reviewer is recorded.
 - If the user finds errors or broken links, they should edit the article with the changes. This is the same edit feature that always existed in the Knowledge Base.
 - If the user thinks the article should be deleted, they can say so, but they must also provide a reason (e.g. the article is specific to something that no longer exists).
- Viewing an article shows a history of all reviews and marks for deletion at the bottom of the page.
- When viewing the list of articles that need review, users can also see a list of articles marked as reviewed and a list of articles marked for deletion.

Other new features

- New articles and edits are picked up by the search engine immediately, instead of every half

hour.

- Deleting an article now keeps it in the database. Although it will disappear from the website, this gives us the ability to restore deleted articles in the future.
- The Knowledge Base now runs the latest version of Ruby on Rails (see technical details below).
- All requests are now HTTPS for added security.

Technical details

- Upgraded from CentOS 5.11 to 7.3.1611.
- Upgraded from Rails 2.3.5 to 5.0.2.
- Upgraded from Ruby 1.8.7 to 2.4.0.
- Sphinx search engine was upgraded to 2.2.11, which now supports real-time indices.
- More tests were added to give complete code coverage.