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Knowledge Base Concepts

Knowledge Base Concepts

Although the term has become a bit generic over time, **a knowledge base is simply a conceptual mechanism for storing both structured and unstructured information used by a computer system**.

Sometime during the 1970s, the term "knowledge-base" was coined to distinguish this from the term "knowledge store", which had begun adapting into the more common and widely used term database. The original use of the term knowledge base was to describe aspects of a knowledge-based system, which would be designed to represent facts about the world, and leverage an inference engine to reason about those facts.

> 💡During the 1970s virtually all large Management Information Systems (MIS) stored their data in some type of hierarchical or relational database.

One of the most common knowledge base paradigms in use today, at least one that almost every computer user is familiar with, is the ubiquitous frequently asked questions, or FAQs.

Frequently Asked Questions

Frequently asked questions are listed questions and answers, and are synonymous with the concept of Questions and Answers (Q&A). In general, FAQs are designed to be **commonly asked in some context, and pertaining to a particular topic**. The FAQ format is commonly used all over the internet, including email mailing lists, online forums, and even product descriptions.

> 💡The term "FAQ" as an Internet "tradition" originated due to the technical limitations of NASA mailing lists in the early 1980s.

This may not seem important at first pass, however, when you think about it, much of bot conversation and experience is based (pun intended) on the concept of a knowledge base, FAQ, or Q&A. The process of asking and answering questions, is really at the heart of almost all communication, including bot communication.

With this in mind, Microsoft has developed the free (and super easy to use) **QnA Maker**, ready to ingest questions and answers to power bot experiences.

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