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Introduction

The Knowledge Base tool (KB tool) is a complete knowledge base application that replaces the help-function of Sakai. It is context sensitive to sites, tools, permissions, level of experience, and it features a Lucene/Solr search engine. It was initially developed for the University of Amsterdam by Edia.

Key features

- **Context sensitive help.** The help content is filtered by:
 - Users' *permissions* (sakai permissions)
 - Users' *preferences* (level)
 - Current *context* (tool, site, or global)
- **Online authoring**, authors can create items online
- **Media support**, support for images and movies
- **Cross linking**, linking between articles
- **Read/write web functionality**
 - **User comments**, a user can place comments.
 - **Voting**, users can like / dislike items
 - **Favorites**, users can select favorites. Items can be accessed from the favorites list.
- **Searching** users can search in the context.
- **Browsing** users can browse categories

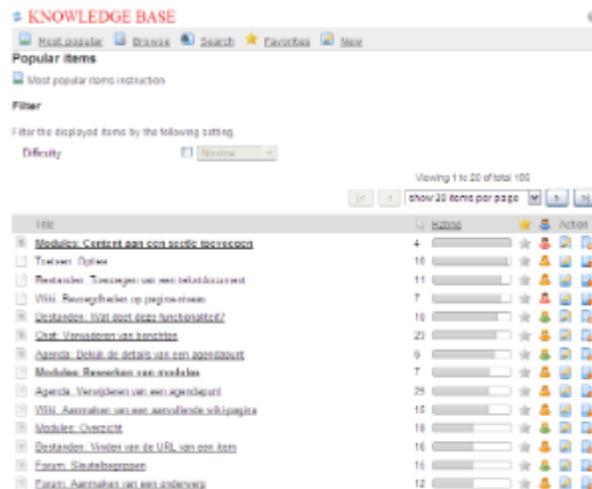
Use case

As organizations implement Sakai, many choices are made concerning the tools, user types and permissions that are used. Many instances are also customized to specific local needs, audiences or application areas. This makes most instances unique. The usecase for the development of the KB tool is to enable multi-level and context aware end-user support.

Finding & viewing

Articles inside the KB consist of text, media (video) and relations to other articles. Additional information on articles includes rating, comments, difficulty and required permissions. In order to search and find information, the knowledge base allows users to browse categories (tools, user types, permissions, difficulty) or search (full-text & lemmatised query). Results are shown in a sortable table as shown in in the screenshots below.

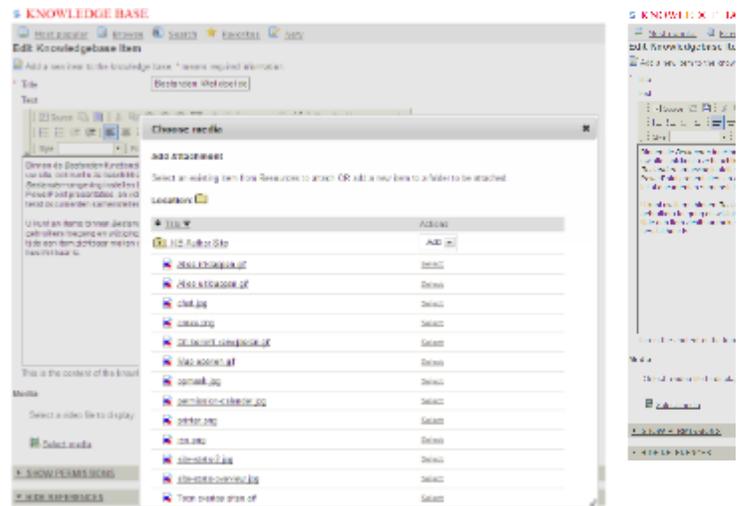
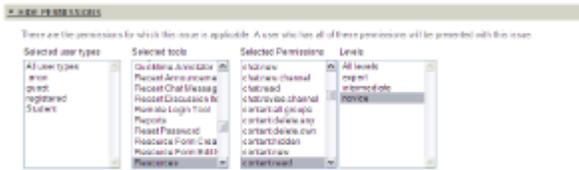
Screenshots results



Authoring

The KB tool has an interface for both end-users and authors of support documentation. The latter requires the knowledgebase.edit permission to be activated in the site or !user realm. Having the knowledgebase.edit/delete permission, authors can add, edit and delete articles in the KB.

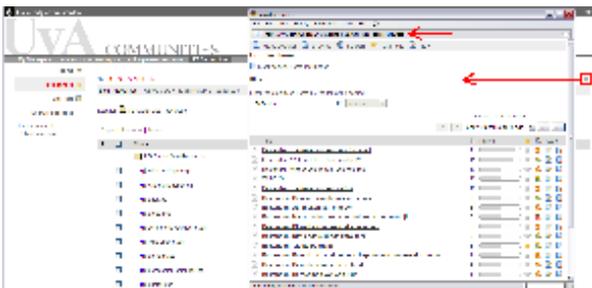
Screenshots authoring



Context

Similar to the standard Sakai help system, the KB can be used to replace the context-aware support information on the level of a single tool. By clicking the help icon in a tool, the KB will select all articles related to a tool that correspond with the user's current site permissions.

Screenshots context



Activated as a tool on a site level, the KB tool will only display support articles about the tools that are active on the pages of a site.

Tool status

Date	Description
14-07-2009	The KB tool will be taken in production in the summer of 2009 at the University of Amsterdam. The tool will be available under an open source license (ECL) in the next month. The next updates of this page will include a link to the source code and installation guidelines.
01-01-2010	Th KB tool has been in production for some time now.
22-03-2010	The KB tool is available for download at the Edia contrib svn repository
04-05-2011	The KB tool is migrated to 2.7, https://source.sakaiproject.org/contrib/edia/knowledgebase/branches/sakai-2.7.x/

Installation and setup

The installation and setup guide can be found here:

[Installation and Setup Guide](#)

Future directions

- i18n of the user interface.
- i18n, support for multilingual items.
- ~~Drop the database, use the search engine as primary persistence engine.~~
- Centralize the Search instance, in clustered setup 1 Solr instance per instance causes trouble, the options are:
 - Option 1: Integrate with the standard Sakai Search API. Search is moving towards Solr, but not there yet.
 - Question: does the Solr functionality fit on Lucene.
 - Option 2: Provide a cluster wide Solr/Elastic Search instance.
 - Complicates deployment
 - Introduces single point of failure
 - Option 3: Worldwide Solr instance: global Sakai KB. Is supplementary to option 2.
 - Permissions and rights?
 - Hosting?



Contributing

We are looking for partners/institutions to create articles in multiple languages. If you are interested in contributing, please contact us.